

# FAITH AND REASON

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For medieval philosophers, faith and reason were both regarded as possible sources for genuine wisdom and knowledge. The contributions that each of them could make to the understanding of reality were regarded as different but complementary. Both played important roles in the eventual emergence of philosophy and theology as formal academic disciplines. Although philosophy and theology were recognized as distinct from one another in their goals and methods, the subject-matter proper to each of them had a certain overlap with the other. One could thus legitimately pursue such things as the truth about God, the nature of the world, the demands of morality, and many other topics from both perspectives.

This chapter will employ three interrelated pairs of terms in its effort to provide an overview of the medieval intellectual landscape in this sphere: faith and reason, wisdom and science, theology and philosophy. As with the other concepts treated in this book, there were differences of opinion among the various schools of thought as well as among the individuals within a given school on how best to make the necessary distinctions and how best to group things together. Further, there were significant shifts of opinion over the course of time, especially once the texts of Aristotle were rediscovered. But the fundamental orientation provided by these important pairs of ideas provides much that is crucial for understanding medieval philosophy.

We begin with the consideration of *fides* and *ratio* (“faith” and “reason”). The classic phrase *fides quaerens intellectum* (“faith seeking understanding”) can readily serve as a kind of motto for the whole medieval period, for it indicates not only the correlation of faith and reason, but also the relative priority of faith for medieval

thinkers. In the second portion of the chapter we take up the relation of *scientia* and *sapientia* (“science” and “wisdom”) as distinct ways in which to identify and pursue the goals of intellectual activity. From its origins in Greece, philosophy (a term that means “love of wisdom” in Greek) has had a sapiential orientation, and philosophers have continually worked at distinguishing knowledge that is well grounded by an understanding of the causes of things (in Greek *episteme*, in Latin *scientia*) from mere opinion (in Greek *doxa*, in Latin *sententia*). The idea of *scientia* continued to animate philosophical thinking throughout the entire Middle Ages, but the scholastic period of medieval philosophy in particular was marked by a new effort to identify and employ rigorous standards for what is to count as scientific knowledge. The third section will treat *philosophia* and *theologia* in tandem by considering the formal disciplines designated by these terms as they emerged with the rise of university culture in the high Middle Ages.

## 1 *FIDES QUAERENS INTELLECTUM*

For philosophers throughout the Middle Ages, faith (*fides*) and reason (*ratio*) were usually regarded as allies rather than adversaries. The voices of fideists like Tertullian with his pervasive skepticism about the usefulness of philosophy to the faith (“What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?”<sup>1</sup>) are relatively rare. Rare too are medieval thinkers who are skeptical about faith as a source of knowledge – at least until after the translation of various texts of Greek philosophy into Latin in the thirteenth century. One then begins to find figures like Siger of Brabant and Boethius of Dacia, who read Aristotle as offering access to knowledge that was not just independent of Christianity, but to be preferred where the two were in contradiction. Much more common throughout the period was the sentiment expressed in the pair of phrases that shaped Augustine’s attitude on this point: *credo ut intellegam* (“I believe so that I may understand”) and *intelligo ut credam* (“I understand so that I may believe”). We see the confluence of these ideas in Anselm’s formulation *fides quaerens intellectum* (“faith seeking understanding”). In this first part of the chapter we will consider the meaning of the terms faith and reason, certain

decisions made early on within Christianity's history about the importance of making use of philosophy rather than ignoring or even scorning such pagan learning, and some representative treatments of belief and unbelief by medieval philosophers.

The term *fides* clearly has a range of meanings across the medieval period. It includes trust and belief (especially belief in God), specific acts of giving one's assent to something or someone, the habitual state of having trust and belief, the body of beliefs held by believers, the grace of a divine light that illumines the mind about certain truths, and the gift of God by which one is able and ready to give God one's assent, love, and trust. In reading any medieval philosophical text on faith, it will always be helpful to ask which senses of "faith" are operative.

Similarly, the term *ratio* has a range of meanings that include a reason or a cause, a line of reasoning, and an act of discursive reasoning, but also the mind in general and the faculty or power by which one thinks and knows. The term can equally designate the basic mental capacity or the use of that capacity. Often *ratio* is used to refer specifically to thinking through an issue discursively (that is, in step-by-step fashion), and in this usage it stands in contrast to *intellectus*, which is the term that tends to be used in the sense of intellectual insight or intuition, that is, the grasp of some point without any apparent mental process. Once one has mastered an art or a science, such as geometry, or plumbing, or astronomy, one has an understanding of these bodies of knowledge and can use that knowledge on any number of questions without having to rethink the process by which the knowledge was acquired. To know something "by reason" can also refer to an explicitly philosophical use of the mind (e.g., by logical reasoning), and then by extension it can also refer to the body of truths known by the use of our intellectual powers without the light of any special divine grace. The range of meanings possible for these terms should make us alert to the complexity of the subject and hence the variety of opinions on it that one encounters during the medieval period.

In standard Latin usage *fides* primarily designates "good faith." By delivering whatever one promised, one shows fidelity and is worthy of trust. Readiness to believe (*credere*) someone is *fides* in the derived sense. One can use these terms to describe a single occasion or an ongoing relationship like a friendship, which presupposes mutual

fidelity. The Scriptures recount numerous dramatic cases of the making, keeping, and breaking of promises,<sup>2</sup> and even God is said to be one who keeps faith by fulfilling promises – not in the sense that God was ever in debt to human beings, but in the sense that God is always faithful to his people by his fidelity to his own nature.

Formal declarations of faith came to have special prominence in Christian liturgical practice, especially in the baptismal promises that were an important part of the sacramental rites of initiation for new Christians, and also in the community's worship of God at each Sunday Eucharist.<sup>3</sup> Not all religions, of course, have required an explicit profession of faith in this sense (that is, a creed). The pagan religions of ancient Rome, for example, concentrated on the precise execution of rituals, without apparent regard for what one personally believed.<sup>4</sup> Even religions like Judaism that did expect faith in God and that had a strong sense of the divine deeds that created and preserved Israel as God's "chosen people" did not demand the profession of a creed. The religion of Judaism centered upon the performance of certain actions required by *torah*.<sup>5</sup> But Christian religious practice from early on also demanded the profession of a creed, that is, an explicit statement of faith in God as deeply involved in human history and at the same time as beyond the sensible order, eternal and transcendent.

From the point of view of ancient philosophy, Christian claims about a God who is always unseen and yet who commissioned his only Son to take on human nature and to redeem humanity by his suffering, death, and resurrection involved a leap of faith far beyond what could be empirically shown or logically proven. Where Greek philosophy had reacted to the mythological presentation of deities as charming but often willful personalities and had progressively come to see God more and more as an impersonal force,<sup>6</sup> even the most philosophical presentations of Christian doctrine always insisted on the personal nature of God. The stories of God's creation of the world, the choice of Israel as God's people and its divine guidance through history, and then the incarnation and mission of Christ as the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises were central to Christian evangelizing. But concurrently with the presentation of these stories about God's interventions into history, apologists<sup>7</sup> for the Christian faith from the beginning saw the need to include a philosophical dimension in their work to distinguish it from the mythic religions

of antiquity.<sup>8</sup> These apologists employed philosophical demonstrations to show that this religion included not just claims to truth about certain historical facts but also claims of universal validity that are accessible to anyone (e.g., that there necessarily has to be a supreme being). In part, they introduced these philosophical distinctions to make clear what Christian belief did and did not entail (e.g., that Christianity held Christ to be a divine person who came to assume a human nature, not some hybrid being inferior to God and yet superior to human beings). In part, they brought philosophical definitions to bear, the more clearly to outline the paradoxes entailed in Christian belief (e.g., that Christian belief in the Trinity of divine persons is not a polytheism with three gods but a monotheism in which each of the three divine persons within the unity of God should be defined as a subsistent relation with the other persons).<sup>9</sup>

Accordingly, philosophically inclined Christian apologists in the early centuries struggled with the problem of how best to articulate Christianity's beliefs in lands and cultures outside those of their origination (Palestine and Judaism). What could be explained in categories recognizable to Jews, such as the fulfillment of promises recorded in the Hebrew prophets, had to be explained to Gentiles in terms intelligible for them, yet without compromising the particularities of the new Christian faith. In particular, there were profound questions about whether their explanations and defenses of their religion ought to employ philosophical terminology at all. To do so risked inadvertently altering the truths that were disclosed by revelation in the very effort to render them more intelligible to other cultures. Restating these truths in the more *universal* fashion demanded by the canons of philosophical reason (whether the specific philosophical approach being used was Platonic or Aristotelian, Stoic or Neoplatonic) could somehow distort the *particularity* of the historical claims about God's interventions into history. But the alternative to embracing some philosophical approach presumably meant confining the presentation of this religion to the form of narrative and story. The advantage of that approach would have been to keep the focus on the events of the history of Israel and the events of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. But such an approach risked allowing the claims being made by the Christian story simply to appear on a par with those of other religions that conveyed their messages by stories and myths. Recourse to the philosophical forms of reasoning that

were so highly developed in Hellenistic civilization reflected a certain confidence about being able to express adequately what the Christian religion meant in these new forms. The apologists also wanted to show that sound reasoning could disclose by means of reasoning the cogency of at least some portions of what they had been given to know by faith.<sup>10</sup> Later generations of Christian thinkers took philosophy to be useful for generating the precise definitions and distinctions that were needed to articulate and defend the biblical faith against what were judged to be false interpretations.

A classic example of this somewhat reluctant admission of the need for a resort to philosophical terms to explain and preserve biblical beliefs occurs in the creed that was adopted at the Council of Nicaea in 325 and then slightly modified in 381 at the Council of Constantinople. Despite a strong desire to use only biblical words in this account of Christian faith, the Council ultimately chose to include within this creed one non-biblical phrase of philosophical provenance (the assertion that the Son of God is “of the same substance” as the Father – in Greek *homoousios*, in Latin *consubstantialis*) in order to protect biblical faith about the divine nature of the second member of the Trinity from those interpretations of biblical passages about Christ that would have been at variance with their understanding of the tradition on this question.

Christian thinkers, almost without exception, embraced some use of philosophical approaches within their theological work, both as appropriate for the purposes of evangelization and apologetics and as helpful for the technical articulation of religious doctrines. But they also frequently voiced their sense of the need to be vigilant against trading away any of what they considered to be the non-negotiable elements of revelation and tradition for what might seem more philosophically attractive but might unwittingly threaten to alter what had been received as the deposit of faith. Much could thus be *adopted* directly from pagan philosophers, but there was also reason to *reject* certain otherwise attractive philosophical ideas in the interests of religious orthodoxy, and to be ready to *adapt* other concepts in significant ways that might have surprised their originators. The early scripture-scholar Origen is an interesting case in point. Origen had founded a catechetical school at Alexandria, where he combined scriptural exegesis and research on the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament with the training of teachers in Christian doctrine. In

his more speculative writings, Origen explored the appropriation of certain ideas drawn from what is now called “Middle Platonism.”<sup>11</sup> His effort to explain the Trinity as a hierarchy of principles descending from “the One” (God the Father) to the *Logos* (the Divine Word) to the *Pneuma* (the Holy Spirit) along the general lines taken by his slightly younger contemporary Plotinus were ultimately judged unsuccessful by Christian evaluation. His use of these philosophical notions appeared to place the members of the Divine Trinity in an order of subordination rather than to preserve their equality with one another. But even in its failure, his effort serves as evidence of the general willingness of theologians to think philosophically and as a lesson in the need to reflect on whether any given philosophical perspective could be adopted straightforwardly or only with certain adaptations. Only a handful of theologians, often arguing from texts such as 1 Corinthians 2: 1–5, where St Paul insists that he relies on no human wisdom when preaching the wisdom of Christ, tried to resist any use of philosophical ideas or methods at all.

One particularly important instance of the theological adaptation of a philosophical notion (discussed at greater length below in the chapter on divine ideas) is the transformation of the Platonic theory of Ideas or Forms.<sup>12</sup> During the patristic period we find the relocation of the Ideas from the place in a separate world that Plato had envisioned for them in the *Timaeus*: Christian Platonists think of these Ideas as residing in the mind of God. This doctrine had sustained importance as a crucial philosophical component of the medieval understanding of creation. The philosophical fruitfulness of the concept of divine ideas extends very broadly, especially for philosophical theories of morality.

Christian thinkers thus tended to use philosophical approaches to various questions with considerable enthusiasm, but they generally resisted the inclination to start thinking of Christianity as wholly or even primarily a new philosophy among others. It is vital to keep in mind here that many ancient philosophies were seen not merely as dispassionate bodies of knowledge but as holistic ways of living, and often as ascetical disciplines.<sup>13</sup> In its self-understanding, Christianity shared this sense of offering a way of life, but it did not regard itself as something that could be known by reason alone independently of revelation. Even in asserting the fundamental harmony of faith and reason, Christian theorists resisted the notion that one could ever

reduce the truths of the Christian faith to a set of conclusions attainable through reasoning about human experience.

What began to be worked out regarding the relations between faith and reason within the patristic era developed further during the Middle Ages. The philosophers of this period did not tend to pose questions about, say, the relations between science and religion with the assumption of their incompatibility that is sometimes found today, but with the conviction that faith was a higher source than reason.<sup>14</sup> The philosophers of the period did deal frequently with questions of unbelief and with difficulties in belief. In Augustine's account of a preliminary stage of his conversion, for instance, he records his difficulties with three interrelated problems that constituted intellectual impediments that he needed to resolve before he could give his free assent to faith. Until he learned from the Neoplatonists that God must be understood as spiritual rather than material in nature, he was troubled by the corruptibility inherent in all the images of God that he had ever considered. He did not feel that he could offer his faith to a supreme being who was not incorruptible.<sup>15</sup> Likewise, he felt perplexed by the reality of evil in the world. He could not reconcile the claim of an all-good God who was the creator of everything in the universe with the reality of pain, suffering, and wickedness until he came to understand the privative character of evil and the genuine freedom possible in human choices. Release from this set of stumbling-blocks on the road to faith came with the philosophical insight that evil is not a being in its own right but the absence of the goodness that ought to be present in a given being. Finally, deeper understanding about the causal connectedness of the material cosmos and about the root of free choice in the spiritual nature of the will allowed Augustine to rid himself of worries about astrological fatalism and to repudiate the superstitions of Manichaeism to which he had been attracted. Yet in Augustine's own judgment, none of these philosophical clarifications enabled him to make an act of faith in the God of the Bible. The resolution of these problems only cleared away what were intellectual roadblocks for him. He tells us that faith came to him as an impulse of grace while he wrestled with the demands of chastity that conversion would require.<sup>16</sup>

Precisely because Augustine was an adult convert to the Christian faith, the issue of unbelief has a deeply personal dimension for him.



Making a commitment meant a drastic change in his life. Most medieval philosophers, by contrast, grew up within a culture already Christian, and so the question of unbelief tended to have a rather different cast for them. In his *Proslogion*, for instance, Anselm makes his opening gambit a line from Psalm 13(14) “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’” The connotations of the word “fool” here could cause his point to be misunderstood. Although the sentence in question clearly implies a warning about the misconduct that one might be tempted to justify on the basis of denying God’s existence, there is nothing of condescension or contempt in Anselm’s use of the term “fool” within his philosophical treatment of the question about the existence of God. Quite the opposite: Anselm’s argument (discussed in its own right in the chapter below on God) uses for its starting point the case of a person who denies the existence of God in order to show the need for sound reasoning about this most important of topics. That Anselm takes very seriously what the “fool” has to say is evident from the sustained treatment that he gives to the position. In fact, most editors of the *Proslogion* have respected Anselm’s own wish that future editions of his work always contain as a companion piece an extensive set of objections to his arguments by Gaunilo, a monk of the Marmoutier, “on behalf of the fool,”<sup>17</sup> as well as Anselm’s judicious replies to these objections.

As R. W. Southern argues in his intellectual biography of Anselm,<sup>18</sup> what Anselm accomplishes here is not only the give-and-take of good argument but also a new use for philosophical reasoning. In preceding centuries philosophical reason had often been instrumental for progress in clarifying the exposition of Christian faith, especially by drawing distinctions, making analogies, or providing explanations of the paradoxes involved in beliefs such as the unity of persons in the Trinity or the unity of human and divine natures in Christ. But now philosophical reason is being used for examining faith itself. Anselm does so by considering the topic of unbelief. It would not just be a matter of asking what someone of this faith should believe on specific questions, but of asking philosophical questions about belief itself. It is not Anselm’s position that reason can decide what the content of faith should be, but simply that good reasoning can provide a special kind of security for faith. What is believed on the basis of faith need not be thought to be destroyed when submitted to natural reason. Rather, there is a complementarity. Belief grounded on divine

authority will tend to come first in the order of time. But faith is being taken as an acceptance of something not yet clearly seen in all respects and it ought to lead toward understanding as its fulfillment.<sup>19</sup>

The style of philosophizing most often at work in the first half of the Middle Ages was often more meditative than dialectical. It tended to be done by bishops and monks and commentators on Scripture. In the later periods of medieval philosophy it more often bears the marks of the classroom. There are advantages and disadvantages that come with philosophizing within an institutional setting like the university, including a tendency that arises from professional specialization to set faith and reason on different but complementary tracks, if not to make them actually opposed to one another. These aspects of the relation of faith and reason can be considered by reflecting on the relations between wisdom and understanding and between theology and philosophy.

## 2 SCIENTIA AND SAPIENTIA

Histories of philosophy that pass quickly over medieval thought as predominantly theological and insufficiently philosophical risk missing not only the richness of medieval philosophizing but also the relative novelty of theology as a distinct academic discipline that formally emerged in the scholastic era. For all of the spiritual writing done during the Middle Ages, there was no separate discipline called theology for much of that period. If anything, authors preferred to speak of the *philosophia Christi* (“the philosophy of Christ”). Many of the works that we might be inclined to see as theological tended to take the form of moral exhortations or reflections on the Scriptures.<sup>20</sup> Even the term “theology,” for instance, is a somewhat alien term for Augustine. In the *City of God*, he contrasts the *philosophia Christi* with the three spheres of pagan “theology” identified by the Roman philosopher Varro: (1) civil theology, which was focused on the cultic activities of various civic and ethnic groups; (2) mythical theology, which contains the myths about the gods found in the likes of Homer and Hesiod; and (3) natural theology, which considers the arguments of philosophers for the existence and nature of the gods.<sup>21</sup>

The philosophical arguments typical of natural theology provided material that could find a place within Christian thought, but Augustine takes it as unlikely that they will have as much prominence among adherents of revealed wisdom as they did for pagan philosophers. Such arguments at best, he thinks, might be helpful in an auxiliary way to support and elucidate the Scriptures.

For the long period of Augustinian dominance within medieval thought, there is greater attention given to the themes of *sapientia* (“wisdom”) and *scientia* (“science”) than to reflection on theology and philosophy as distinct disciplines.<sup>22</sup> It may prove helpful here to consider the place that a thinker like Augustine accorded to divine wisdom in ordering our thoughts about the structure of reality, and then to turn to the type of differences that he envisioned to stand between wisdom and science. Many of the distinctions that he employed on this question persisted long into the scholastic period.

While Augustine wrote no metaphysics in the formal Aristotelian sense of a treatise on being, his works nevertheless contain a metaphysics that is a scripturally informed version of Neoplatonism. At the peak of the hierarchy is God the Creator. The middle range is the sphere of angelic spirits and souls, including the human mind. At the base is the vast world of bodies, lowest in the hierarchy but still good precisely because created by God who is good.<sup>23</sup> To each of these three levels corresponds a *ratio*, a principle that accounts for the structure of the being and its intelligibility.<sup>24</sup> At the level of the elements, for instance, there are the “seed-principles” (*rationes seminales*) that God planted in the created world and that direct the development of material bodies. Within the mind of God, Augustine locates the divine ideas (*rationes aeternae*, “eternal reasons”) that are his version of the Platonic Forms; these are the prototypes for everything that God creates.<sup>25</sup> As thoughts in the mind of God, they are unchangeable, necessary, and eternal, the exemplary causes of all creatures. In between the lowest and highest levels of reality is the sphere of angelic intelligences and spiritual souls, including the *ratio hominis*, the human rational soul.<sup>26</sup> The possession of a rational soul not only accounts for the distinctive human essence and for the intelligibility of human nature, but also makes human minds capable of understanding other things above and below them within the hierarchy. By virtue of its intermediate position, human reason is able to

consider material creatures through the *ratio inferior* (“lower reason” or “reason directed to lower things”) as well as to contemplate the eternal reasons through the *ratio superior* (“higher reason” or “reason directed to higher things”).<sup>27</sup>

Higher and lower reason have different ends or goals.<sup>28</sup> The goal of higher reason is the wisdom (*sapientia*) achievable through contemplation, while the goal of lower reason is the knowledge of things in the changeable world of time (*scientia*). This sort of knowledge is more restricted than *sapientia* and subject to error, but extremely valuable in the practical order.<sup>29</sup> Augustine believes wisdom to be constituted by knowledge of the eternal and immutable truths in the mind of God:

Action, by which we use temporal things well, differs from contemplation of eternal things; and the latter is reckoned to wisdom [*sapientia*], the former to knowledge [*scientia*]. . . . When a discourse relates to [temporal] things, I hold it to be a discourse belonging to knowledge [*scientia*], and to be distinguished from a discourse belonging to wisdom, to which those things belong which neither have been nor shall be, but are; and on account of that eternity which they are, are said to have been, and to be, and to be about to be, without any changeableness of times. . . . And they abide, but not as if fixed in some place as are bodies; but as intelligible things in incorporeal nature, they are so at hand to the glance of the mind, as things visible or tangible in place are to the sense of the body. . . . If this is the right distinction between wisdom and knowledge, that the intellectual cognizance of eternal things belongs to wisdom, but the rational cognizance of temporal things to knowledge, it is not difficult to judge which is to be preferred.<sup>30</sup>

For Augustine, the divine ideas play a crucial role in human knowledge. Human minds need to be in accord with the eternal ideas in order to know any necessary truths. *Scientia* is a methodical knowledge about the truth of things in this world and their mundane causes, whereas *sapientia* is a knowledge of Truth itself. For this reason, the contemplative life is higher than the active life. Although Augustine sometimes warns against allowing excessive curiosity about worldly concerns,<sup>31</sup> lest one be distracted from higher things and thereby fail to establish the right order of loves in one’s life, he clearly holds *scientia* in high regard. The superiority of *sapientia* to

*scientia* comes from the greater importance of a goal than the means to that goal.

In the distinctions that Augustine articulates here one can discern the influence of his respect for revelation as more certain and more insightful than anything that could ever be attained by natural reason. Charles Norris Cochrane argues that the wisdom accessible through the Scriptures seemed to Augustine to offer a way to escape from “the insoluble riddles of classicism” about the identity of the supreme good in a universe conceived to be endless. This new source of wisdom pointed the way to a new synthesis, a vision of the final order and goal toward which change and history are directed.<sup>32</sup> Augustine’s subordination of reason to faith and of *scientia* to *sapientia* thus does not mean a repudiation of reason in favor of impulse or emotion, but a route by which one could hope actually to reach the certitude about the meaning of life that classical reason always desired but could never seem to achieve. The approach of *fides quaerens intellectum* does place faith as prior to reason. But rather than treating them as antithetical, it sees a deeper understanding of reality as one of the fruits that faith will provide.

In the sapiential books of the Old Testament<sup>33</sup> medieval exegetes in the tradition of Augustine found considerable support for this position.<sup>34</sup> The *Wisdom of Solomon* is frequently cited in this regard, and especially the passage (7: 17f) in which Solomon, who is taken as the epitome of a wise king, testifies to his fellow rulers that wisdom (*sapientia*) had come to him as a grace from above, and with it learning (*doctrina*) and understanding (*scientia*) in the various disciplines, practical and speculative. Yet it was not simply in isolated passages that medieval thought found a connection between *sapientia* and *scientia*. Medieval exegesis found this relationship to be pervasive, especially because of the complementary roles played by faith and reason in what they considered to be the most crucial aspect of proper biblical interpretation, namely, ascertaining the four senses of scripture.<sup>35</sup>

The Scriptures were understood to have four “senses” or levels of meaning. At the heart of this approach to interpretation is a distinction between the literal level and the three spiritual levels. Contrary to what the term might lead one to expect, the “literal level” does not mean that everything in the Scriptures is to be read as if a simple historical account. The literal level includes not only straightforward

narrative but metaphor and simile and a variety of other rhetorical devices too. The *sensus ad litteram* consists of whatever is intended by the human author, whether the authorial intention is historical (such as the Gospel narratives about Jesus' life or the record of Israel's exile in Egypt and wanderings in the desert), figures of speech (such as the use of metaphor in Psalm 18: 2, "The Lord is my rock"), or even wisdom stories and tales such as Job and Jonah. The three spiritual senses – the "allegorical" (perhaps better called the "typological"), the "moral," and the "anagogical" – are designated as "spiritual" because of their source. They are said to come from the Holy Spirit, but they can only be properly discerned within the text once its literal sense is understood. The medieval exegete is thus concerned to apply reason (*ratio*) and learning (*scientia*) to the text in order to discover the wisdom (*sapientia*) awaiting there in the spiritual levels of meaning that were implanted by the divine author.

While most medieval interpreters employed the discernment of these various levels of meaning in the Scriptures creatively but cautiously, there were some whose practice has given allegory a bad name through the excessively imaginative connections they made. But the more disciplined masters of the art used it responsibly and by the later portion of the Middle Ages the method could even be applied to non-biblical texts. Dante's famous letter to Can Grande della Scala, for instance, explains that the *Commedia* employs a four-level structure of meaning, like that found in the Bible.<sup>36</sup>

In order to appreciate the medieval use of what today we might call hermeneutics, it may be helpful here to consider briefly the philosophically informed distinctions at work in this four-level structure of interpretation. The first of the three spiritual levels is usually called the "allegorical sense" in the Middle Ages, but recent scholarship has more appropriately entitled it the "typological" level.<sup>37</sup> The central idea here is that the life of Christ as recounted in the Gospels provides the proper guide for understanding the whole of the Old Testament according to the rule of recapitulation: at each stage of his life Christ "recapitulates" the life of the people of Israel, which is to be taken as if it were a single lifetime. Each of the figures from the Old Testament is called a "type," and the corresponding moment from the life of Christ is called the "anti-type." At each stage Christ completes what is incomplete, perfects what is imperfect, and sanctifies what is

sinful in the type. Seen in this way, Christ is thought of as the new Adam, who repairs what Adam's fall damaged. He is the new Isaac, who actually suffers what the original Isaac did not have to suffer when God sent Abraham a lamb to replace the son he was about to sacrifice. He is the new Moses who in his own person delivers commandments of love (see Matthew 22: 37–9) that perfect the understanding of the commandments that Moses delivered to the people at Sinai (see Exodus 20: 1–17 and Deuteronomy 5: 6–21).

Reason's role in ascertaining the typological meaning is to elucidate the truths that are present in revelation but often hidden under shadows and figures. It would not be possible even to begin to grasp the spiritual senses without a thorough penetration of the literal sense, and it is for this reason that we see throughout the Middle Ages so many efforts to better appreciate the literal sense. Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram*,<sup>38</sup> for example, is only one of the four commentaries that he wrote on Genesis. Yet the literal sense, that is, the understanding of what the human authors intended, can never be the end of the matter. It is simply the privileged point of access for reason's search for the higher and deeper truths of divine wisdom.

The second of the spiritual levels is the moral sense. In the course of exhortatory treatises on virtue and vice, one sees in a particularly strong way the medieval sense of the collaboration expected between reason and faith. One finds this moral level of meaning not only in those passages concerned with the commandments and beatitudes, various exhortations to virtue and admonitions against vice, prophetic invectives against idolatry, and morality tales like the stories of Noah and Job; this level is also evident in the moral lessons that can be drawn from the stories about the sinful habits and practices of even some of the Bible's greatest heroes, such as Abraham's readiness at one point to sell his wife Sarah in order to make his own escape, the account of David's adultery with Bathsheba, and the betrayal of Jesus by Peter. And in texts such as the first chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans, scholastic authors of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries found biblical warrant for the philosophical theory of the natural law that they were developing (a point to be considered in more detail in chapter 6 below).

To use the categories of later scholastic philosophy, we see in the reasoning being employed in this type of scriptural exegesis a concern

with both divine commands and with appeals to reason in the exegetical effort to understand biblical texts about right and wrong, goodness and wickedness, virtue and vice. Ultimately, the truth of the moral lessons is guaranteed by faith, but it is always a faith seeking understanding by the vigorous use of reason. One makes progress in this sphere not only by considering how human life prospers when lived in accord with divine commands and falters under disobedience, but also by noting how deeply reasonable biblical morality is when the text is understood more fully. Medieval commentaries on the Gospels, for instance, take note of those passages in which Jesus deepens some of the commandments of the Decalogue by explaining that the prohibition on murder extends not just to killing but to holding someone in contempt, or when he takes the commandment on adultery to include lustful looks. In noting how deeply insightful the commandments are for human well-being,<sup>39</sup> the commentators trace the suitability of these moral truths back to God's plan for humanity at the creation described in Genesis and note how accessible many of these points are to human reasoning even apart from their mention in the Bible. In the judgment of these medieval authors, even after the loss of likeness to God brought about by Adam's fall, human beings remain creatures who are made in God's image even though that image has been disfigured by the fall. For this reason they possess a dignity superior to that of any other creature, and they ought to seek the recovery of that likeness by works of moral reform.<sup>40</sup>

The third of the spiritual senses is the "anagogical" level. Reason's task was to discern in certain scriptural texts important signs about the way to return to God (in Greek, *anagoge* means "a going back up" or "a return"). At this level of the text's meaning, medieval commentators found in the images and symbols of scriptural stories anticipations of the sacraments (the escape of the people of Israel from Egypt through the crossing of the Red Sea, for instance, is taken to anticipate the escape of a person from sin and death through baptism). Philosophical consideration of the pervasive use of signs and symbols in the Bible led them to think about the part of philosophy that is today called semiotics. Augustine's work *De Doctrina Christiana*,<sup>41</sup> for instance, is not only philosophically interesting for its sophisticated theory of signs,<sup>42</sup> but for its contribution thereby to a philosophically informed Christian ethics. At one point,



for instance, Augustine brings up his philosophical perplexity about rightly ordering our love for other people. Only God is to be loved purely for himself, and to love a person like that would be idolatrous. But it does not strike Augustine as right to say that we should then only love other people the way we love other things, namely, as objects of use and as the means to some end.<sup>43</sup> Augustine's solution, that human beings should be loved not "as God" but "in God," depends on appreciating that all human beings are made in the image of God. Even when that likeness to God has been defaced by sin, it is never entirely blotted out and should always serve for us as a sign of the way in which God loves us and thus as an indication of how we ought to bear love for each other out of love for the God who made us.

Over the course of the Middle Ages these reflections on the analogical and moral senses of the Scriptures progressively involves the philosophical articulation of more and more distinctions, both to resolve questions that arose from biblical texts and to find practical answers to problems encountered in life. Medieval treatises on the *scientia* of morals differentiate, for instance, among types of killing – from the inexcusable and intolerable form that is murder, through those forms that are justifiable, such as self-defense,<sup>44</sup> to those killings thought to be required, such as the killing involved in capital punishment and just war. The reasoning that develops to handle questions like these shows great philosophical sophistication when trying to resolve apparent conflicts, such as the biblical injunction against killing in general (for the fifth commandment itself makes no further distinctions) when considered in light of the need for those charged with care of the community to defend the innocent and to protect the peace of the community. The work of reason involves making the necessary distinctions, identifying the conditions for a lawful resort to arms, and devising a set of steps through which one must pass before claiming the right to the use of force.

Although there was agreement about the relative priority of faith to reason, there were sometimes disagreements about how just reason ought to be used, and one can see this tension in the area of ethics. For instance, Abelard, a philosophically inclined theologian of the early twelfth century, has a voluntarist dimension to his moral theory that can be seen in his inclination to ground moral obligation on decisions by the will (divine or human) rather than on an intellectual

recognition of what human nature requires for its flourishing. This voluntaristic approach is later taken up and developed further by various fourteenth-century nominalists. In stressing that morality does not consist in external observances but in rightness of mind and heart, Abelard's teachings in this area clearly spring from the Gospels, but they emphasize practical reason almost to the exclusion of speculative reason. His attempt at a morality of pure intention risks neglecting such other crucial aspects of morality as the nature of the action under consideration and the way in which circumstances can affect one's obligations. To argue, for instance, that what is wrong with murder or lying or breaking of vows is the contradiction of one's latest choice with one's earlier efforts at a previous life-determining choice does put emphasis on the important aspects of conscience, personal intention, and the consent that flows from a free choice. But to limit one's argument, at least for practical purposes, to these considerations is to sideline speculative reason by minimizing the value of reflecting on the nature of things and even to miss the universal scope of certain negative moral precepts that forbid intrinsically evil actions (e.g., that one may never deliberately take innocent life). Abelard eventually aroused the wrath of the authorities not only because of his affair with Héloïse, a young woman for whom he served as a tutor, but because of certain worrisome implications that figures like the Cistercian abbot Bernard of Clairvaux saw in his ethics.<sup>45</sup>

Bernard tended to distrust not just Abelard but the entire movement toward dialectical philosophizing, then still new, that later came to flourish with the rise of scholasticism. But despite Bernard's efforts, the general movement in this direction proved unstoppable. The rise of the universities encouraged the responsible use of the new methods of reasoning. With the renewal of appreciation for Aristotle's theory of science (especially as articulated in the *Posterior Analytics*) after the recovery of his texts in natural philosophy, scholastic philosophers worked to provide a *scientia* of ethics, and thinkers like Thomas Aquinas developed an ethics that balanced respect for the sovereign will of God with a vigorous naturalism that combines both the virtue ethics that medieval thinkers saw with fresh eyes in the *Nicomachean Ethics*<sup>46</sup> and the incipient form of natural law theory (discussed at greater length in chapter 6 on cosmos and nature) that Christian asceticism had received from ancient Stoicism.

The same trend that is evident in this example from the area of ethics was pervasive in the philosophy faculties of the new medieval universities. The *scientia* that was their goal was not limited to empirical “science” in our modern sense of the word, but could be found in any area of knowledge. The scholars worked at organizing knowledge by the articulation of the foundational principles of each discipline and the elaboration of conclusions that could be demonstrated to follow by the rigorous application of logic.

### 3 PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

The scholastic period of the Middle Ages saw the professionalization of philosophy and theology as university disciplines. Often their subject-matter overlapped, but there remained a crucial distinction in their methods and sources.

Tempting as it might be simply to associate faith with theology and reason with philosophy, it would be a mistake to try to differentiate them from one another in this way. As we have just seen, there are tremendous demands on the theologian for the use of reason to ascertain the proper interpretation of scriptural texts. Further, scholastic theologians received considerable impetus for the development of their discipline from the application of questions in logic, natural philosophy, and metaphysics to the mysteries of the faith; and, in turn, the interest in resolving these theological questions prompted further philosophical work.<sup>47</sup> The controversies over the nature of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist emerged in part by asking questions derived from the distinctions about substance and accident in twelfth-century treatises on grammar and logic. Thirteenth-century treatises on the nature of Christ profited greatly from the new level of sophistication achieved in natural philosophy after the recovery of Aristotle’s texts in that area. Likewise, theological attention to questions about the very knowability of God benefited from metaphysical consideration of the transcendental properties of being and of the debate on the question whether “being” can rightly be predicated analogously or must be predicated univocally.

It is not just that theology as well as philosophy is dependent on a highly disciplined use of reason. It is also the case that faith played

a crucial role in philosophy as well as in theology. In the case of medieval theology, the type of faith in question is technically called “divine faith,” that is, the trust (made possible by God’s grace) that one places in God’s self-revelation and the church’s fidelity in handing down the tradition received from Christ. From the point of view of method, scholastic theologians considered premises known by divine faith to have special warrant for the definitions, distinctions, and demonstrations on which they labored. Even when dealing with precisely the same topics, philosophers of the scholastic period sought to make their arguments without the aid of premises guaranteed by divine faith.<sup>48</sup> They were often guided in their choice of problems by their understanding of theological positions and concerns, and in this sense even philosophy received a certain direction from faith. But in the course of its growth as an academic discipline within the medieval university, philosophical method was progressively restricted to demonstrations attainable without invoking revealed premises.<sup>49</sup>

In addition to these connections to divine faith, medieval philosophers also operated with a kind of philosophical faith, that is, a systematic trust in certain fundamental principles of being and of reason. In the systematization of the many fields of learning that emerged during the rise of universities, there was considerable reflection on the presuppositions and methods of scientific disciplines and of philosophy itself. One sees, for instance, in the commentaries on Aristotle’s *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics*<sup>50</sup> a sustained interest in the very notion of the *principia* (“principles”) of a *scientia* (“science” or “discipline”), for instance, in the realization that the principles or starting points of a given discipline could not be proven within that discipline but needed to be assumed for the work of defining, distinguishing, and demonstrating within that sphere. Optics, for instance, depended on physics, and physics in turn depended on metaphysics. But the principles of metaphysics, as Aristotle had taught, were as indemonstrable in principle as they were crucial for any meaningful discourse at all, let alone for the rigorous work in the specialized areas of learning. In a sense, then, medieval philosophers recognized in these indemonstrable first principles of being and of reasoning a set of commitments in which they needed to put their trust as the presuppositions of realism.

Among the first principles explicitly discussed by medieval philosophers are the principles of non-contradiction, identity, and excluded

middle. Both as a principle of logic and of metaphysics, the principle of non-contradiction has a certain primacy among the rest, and a validity for every order of being as well as of knowledge: *nothing can belong to a given thing and simultaneously not belong to it in the same respect*. Whether the insight is expressed in this way in terms of being and non-being, or put in terms of assertion and denial (e.g., *the same attribute cannot be simultaneously affirmed and denied of the same subject in the same respect*), this principle provides a norm and basis for every affirmation and yet is itself indemonstrable. Aware of Aristotle's comment that the principle cannot be proven but only defended indirectly,<sup>51</sup> medieval philosophers treat it as a lynch-pin for everything else, as the following quotation from Aquinas suggests:

For that which first falls under apprehension is being, the understanding of which is included in all things whatsoever a man apprehends. Therefore, the first undemonstrable principle is that the same thing cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time, which is based on the notions of being and non-being, and on this principle all others depend.<sup>52</sup>

Correlative with the principle of non-contradiction is the principle of identity (*a being is identical to itself and is one in itself*), which is once again not just a logical principle for our thinking but a metaphysical principle of reality.<sup>53</sup> The insight here, whatever the precise formula used, is that there is an ontological structure in things by virtue of which things that are different in number can be recognized to be the same in form and come under one species or genus. This principle can also be understood in reference to any one being when considered over time and recognized as the same being. A given horse, for instance, is the same organism when a colt or when full grown; its unity as a substance comes from its form and abides the same over the course of many changes in quality, quantity, and relationships.

Closely connected to both of the above principles is the principle of excluded middle. As stated by Aristotle, "There cannot be an intermediate between contradictions, but of one subject we must either affirm or deny any one predicate."<sup>54</sup> In both ancient and medieval sources this principle tends to be formulated for the sake of

explaining how demonstrations in a science work, but its basis is once again in being and in a certain insight about how one must speak of being. It is true to say of what is, that it is, and of what is not, that it is not, whereas it is false to say of what is, that it is not, and of what is not, that it is. But to say that anything is, one must either say something true or something false. Either the affirmation or the negation will be true, and there is no middle ground (hence, the name of this principle).<sup>55</sup> Anyone who tries to hold to some intermediate between contradictory opposites is failing to recognize that one must say of a given being that it is or that it is not.

The confidence that medieval philosophers generally show in putting their faith in principles like these is an aspect of their philosophical realism.<sup>56</sup> In later scholasticism one finds some philosophical worry over whether these principles are perhaps innate or whether they might be constructions of the human mind, but this tendency seems generally correlated with a subordination of metaphysics to logic. The mainstream tradition generally held these principles<sup>57</sup> to be human realizations about the nature of being itself, and took these metaphysical principles naturally to have correlates in logic, for logic was regarded as an art in service of philosophy proper.

## 4 OVERVIEW

Difficult as it is to discern the precise beginning or ending dates for medieval philosophy, the typical attitude of thinkers from this entire period on the topics under discussion in this chapter constitute a distinctive philosophical stance. The quest for understanding by means of reason in ancient philosophy brought figures like Plato to rank *pistis* (“faith”) along with *doxa* (“opinion”) as different in kind and far below the levels of *episteme* (“scientific knowledge”) and *nous* (“intellectual insight”) in his Divided Line.<sup>58</sup> Even in the occasional dialogue in which claims to divine inspiration are discussed, such as the *Ion* or the *Phaedrus*, there is much reason to suppose that Plato is arguing for the superiority of reason by virtue of philosophy’s ability to explain what the artist or the prophet can only recount but not explain. Aristotle shows the same general tendency to place faith in the general region of opinion.<sup>59</sup> They understand that faith is a

human act of belief that is useful in the process of learning and discovery and that the value of this act depends on the trustworthiness of the source that one is choosing to believe. But their focus is on reaching higher levels of cognition by coming to know a thing's causes (*episteme*) and eventually achieving understanding by intellectual intuition (*nous*). In certain important respects the entire project of ancient philosophy is an effort to break away from the brand of trust given to the stories of mythology, so as to find compelling and cogent reasons of a universal character.<sup>60</sup>

Likewise, thinkers from the period of classical modern philosophy as well as many contemporary philosophers have taken the problem of faith and reason very seriously.<sup>61</sup> For various reasons that include scholarly conviction about the autonomy proper to natural reason, skepticism over the scandal of the sixteenth-century wars of religion, weariness with the interest in minutia of logic and with the fideism that tended to accompany late medieval nominalism, and the optimism of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment that human reason could solve new problems through empirical research, philosophers of the modern period tend to separate faith and reason rather sharply.<sup>62</sup> It is not that every philosopher of the modern period was hostile to religion, but the preponderance of views antithetical toward revelation and institutional religion typical of the Enlightenment made the very term *philosophy* suggest a split between faith and reason into different intellectual spheres that was reinforced politically and socially by new demarcations of what was properly public and what should be considered private.<sup>63</sup>

Philosophers of the medieval period give clear evidence of respecting the difference between faith and reason as sources of knowledge and wisdom, but they also stressed a deep connection between them. Ultimately, their juncture is rooted in their convictions that religious faith as they knew it was truly a gift from God that elicited a human response of trustworthy belief, that human reason is a creaturely participation in divine reason, and that this participation means that there must be in principle a fundamental harmony between what faith and what reason each show. Admittedly, some medieval thinkers were fideists who either distrusted reason altogether or thought the spheres of reason to be separate and distinct. But the majority worried that asserting too great a difference between faith and reason would risk making belief seem unreasonable or arbitrary. Without

presuming to claim that faith could be reduced to reason or reason to faith, most medieval philosophers were inclined instead to see them as complementary. Their religious conviction that divine intelligence had created an orderly world of creatures gave them a certain confidence with which to pursue philosophical wisdom in the ordering of human affairs and the scientific understanding of the natural world, especially in the period of scholasticism that emerged with the rediscovery of Aristotelian natural philosophy in the twelfth century, a topic to which we will return in a number of the chapters that follow.

## NOTES

- 1 *De Praescripto*, ch. 7 in Tertullian (1994). For an overview of Tertullian, see Dunn (2004).
- 2 For instance, the promises that Moses and the people make in response to God's gift of the covenant (e.g., Deuteronomy 23: 21–3); the promises that God makes to his people in the course of establishing his covenants (summarized in Hebrews 6); or Jephthah's rash vow in Judges 11–12. For a fine review of the entire topic of promising, see Mansini (2005).
- 3 See Kelly (1981) and Pelikan (2003).
- 4 See Ando (2003).
- 5 There are certain expressions within Jewish religious practice that can function as something comparable to a creed, such as the *Shema*: "Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one" (Deuteronomy 6: 4); see also its context, Deuteronomy 6: 4–9.
- 6 I have developed this theme at greater length in chapter 2 on God. See also Gerson (1990).
- 7 "Apologists" in the sense of "defenders," much as Socrates' *Apology* was his defense speech, not an admission of wrong-doing.
- 8 See Ratzinger (1990), esp. part I, ch. 3: "The God of Faith and the God of the Philosophers," pp. 94–137.
- 9 See Koterski (2004).
- 10 See Danielou (1973) and Ratzinger (1990), esp. pp. 46ff. For a discussion of a similar strategy used by scholastic philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas in their discussion of the "preambles of the faith," see McInerney (2006), esp. pp. 159–306.
- 11 See Dillon (1990), Dillon (1996), and Rist (1985).



- 12 One of the central features of Platonic philosophy is the notion that there are archetypal Forms or Ideas for every kind of thing. The use of Form and Idea as synonyms for these archetypes serves both metaphysically as a way to unify the multiplicity of instances within a kind by their “participation” in a common Form, and epistemologically as a way by which we can recognize in an Idea what is common to these many instances.
- 13 See Hadot (2002).
- 14 For an overview on this question, see Cochrane (2003), esp. chs. 11 and 12.
- 15 For the problem of God’s incorruptibility as a roadblock on Augustine’s way to faith, see *Confessions* VII.1–4, in Augustine (1991b). The problem of evil is discussed at VII.5, and the problem of the free choice of the will at VII.6; see also his classical treatment of this problem in *On Free Choice of the Will* in Augustine (1982b). In the remainder of the *Confessions* (esp. VII.7–17) Augustine recounts how what he learned, particularly from the Neoplatonists, emancipated him from an overly corporeal way of thinking. In the final section within the same book (VII.18–21) he describes his need for Christ’s grace to liberate him from his sinfulness and the emotional chains that kept him from faith. In book VIII we read the story of his conversion experience.
- 16 The story of Augustine’s conversion is recounted in book eight of the *Confessions*, culminating in the voice he heard calling out *tolle, lege* (“take up and read”) that moved him to imitate the example of St. Anthony and read a passage chosen at random from the Scripture. When he read from Romans 13: 13–14, he saw no need to read any further: “At once, with the last words of this sentence, it was as if a light of relief from all anxiety flooded into my heart. All the shadows of doubt were dispelled.”
- 17 Gaunilo of Marmoutiers, *Pro Insipiente* (“On Behalf of the Fool”) in Anselm (1998), pp. 105–10. Anselm’s reply to Gaunilo can be found on pp. 111–22.
- 18 See Southern (1990).
- 19 *Fides quaerens intellectum* is the subtitle of Anselm’s *Proslogion*. See Anselm (1998), p. 83. In this respect Anselm is following closely on Augustine’s lead. See also *On Order* II.16.26–7, in Augustine (2007); *Against the Academicians* III.43, in Augustine (1995b); and *Soliloquies* I.12–14.23, in Augustine (1990).
- 20 See Wilken (2003).
- 21 *The City of God* VI.5, in Augustine (1984). See Gerson (1990), pp. 1–5.
- 22 See Gilson (1969).

- 23 In chapter 5 on the transcendentals, I discuss in further detail the commitment found throughout the Middle Ages to the thesis that all beings as beings are good, in the sense of possessing various inherent perfections that can be the object of desire of a being with appetitive drives. As a philosophical position, the doctrine of transcendental goodness reaches back at least as far as Plato's *Republic*. For the Middle Ages, it was also a religious doctrine stemming from the account of creation in Genesis.
- 24 For a collection of Augustine's texts on this subject, see Bourke (1978), pp. 43–66. For example, *Letter 18* to Coelestinus: "There is a nature which is susceptible of change with respect to both place and time, namely, the corporeal. There is another nature which is in no way susceptible of change with respect to place, but only with respect to time, namely, the spiritual. And there is a third Nature which can be changed neither in respect to time, that is, God."
- 25 See, for instance, *Eighty-Three Different Questions*, q. 46.1–2, in Augustine (1982c).
- 26 See Burnell (2005), esp. pp. 18–53.
- 27 See, for instance, *The Trinity* XIII.1.1–2, XIV.1.3, and XIV.6.11, in Augustine (1991a). See also *The Literal Meaning of Genesis* in Augustine (1982a).
- 28 See Nash (1969).
- 29 See *Enchiridion*, ch. 17 in Augustine (1961).
- 30 *The Trinity* XII.14.21–15.25, in Augustine (1991a).
- 31 For instance, *Confessions* X.34.54, in Augustine (1991b).
- 32 Cochrane (2003), pp. 399–400. Cochrane explains the problem as Augustine saw it to be a kind of stalemate between the Apollonian quest for a principle of an abiding order vis-à-vis the Dionysian recognition of the inevitability of process and change.
- 33 Included in this set are the books of Proverbs, Job, Qoheleth (known in the Middle Ages as Ecclesiastes), Sirach (called Ecclesiasticus in the Middle Ages), Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom of Solomon, and some of the psalms.
- 34 For a more detailed discussion of other sapiential books (e.g., Proverbs, Job, Qoheleth, Sirach, and Canticles), see Koterski (2003).
- 35 See the English translations of vols. I and II of de Lubac (1959).
- 36 "Letter to Can Grande della Scalla" in Alighieri (1318).
- 37 For a fine discussion of the merits of this term and a detailed account of how the entire method worked, see Quay (1995).
- 38 *The Literal Meaning of Genesis* in Augustine (1982a).
- 39 This is true not only of the natural law tradition of thinkers like Aquinas, but even of voluntarists like Duns Scotus, who emphasizes

that morality is necessarily geared to the nature that God has chosen for us. See Ingham and Dreyer (2004), esp. pp. 173–85.

- 40 See Ladner (1959).
- 41 *On Christian Doctrine* in Augustine (1995a).
- 42 See Deely (2001), esp. pp. 220–2.
- 43 In Augustine’s language, to love something for its own sake is called *frui* (“to delight in”), whereas to love something as a means to something else is *uti* (“to make use of”). With his penchant for clever use of words, he puts the issue in terms of the rhetorical choice between *uti* and *frui*. See *On Christian Doctrine* I.73ff, in Augustine (1995a).
- 44 The principle of double effect, so important to later medieval casuistry, seems to have been developed primarily to handle questions about killing in self-defense.
- 45 For the lives of Abelard, Héloïse, and Bernard of Clairvaux, see Clanchy (1997), Mews (2005), and Evans (2000).
- 46 See Kent (1995).
- 47 Commenting, for instance, on the work of Aquinas, J.-P. Torrell explains: “Contrary to a deductive method that is sometimes attributed to him but which is not his, Thomas does not want to prove the truths of the faith, nor to demonstrate other truths from those that he holds in faith. He simply wants to bring to the fore the connections that bind together the truths that we do hold and to show how all of this is explained as coming from God.” Torrell (2005), pp. 50–1.
- 48 See Dulles (1994), especially on the medieval understanding of divine faith.
- 49 Some scholars, however, have argued that this progressive restriction of philosophical method to naturalistic reasoning was a contributory cause to the eventual rise of secularism. See Buckley (1987).
- 50 See McKirahan (1992). There were various such commentaries, including some by Averroes, whose translation into Latin assisted the composition of yet others such as Robert Grosseteste, Walter Burleigh, and Thomas Aquinas. See DiLascia et al. (1997).
- 51 See *Metaphysics* 1006b8–10, in Aristotle (1984): “If words have no meaning, our reasoning with one another, and indeed with ourselves, has been annihilated; for it is impossible to think of anything if we do not think of one thing.”
- 52 *Summa of theology* I–II 94.2, in Aquinas (1945). See also *Metaphysics* 1005b32–4, in Aristotle (1984).
- 53 See, for instance, *Metaphysics* 1015b17–1017a7, in Aristotle (1984), and the comments on this text at *Commentary on Aristotle’s Metaphysics* V.8–9, in Aquinas (1995), and *Summa of Theology* I.11.1 ad 2, in Aquinas (1945).

- 54 *Metaphysics* 1011b23–4, in Aristotle (1984).
- 55 Aristotle himself recognized that future contingents present a special problem. See *On Interpretation* 18a28–19b4, in Aristotle (1984). His medieval commentators show their respect for the difficulty of the problem by the number and the length of their treatments of this issue. For them, the problem is further complicated by the omniscience of God and their commitment to human free will.
- 56 It should be noticed here, of course, that there are also medieval thinkers who do not share or at least question these realist assumptions. Bonaventure, Meister Eckhart, and Nicholas of Cusanus, for instance, accept in one way or another the “coincidence of opposites,” which puts in question the principle of non-contradiction. See Cousins (1978), Casarella (2006), and McGinn (2001).
- 57 In the history of philosophy, perhaps the most controversial of these first principles is one that the medieval period often used but rarely formulated as such, namely, the principle of sufficient reason (*that for anything, there must be a sufficient reason for its existence, either in itself or in another*). Correlative with this principle is that of causality (*for anything whose sufficient reason does not reside in itself, the sufficient reason must reside in another*). The principle of sufficient reason is controversial especially because of Leibniz’s formulation of the principle, a formulation that Kant and others considered excessively strong. See Pruss (2006) and Gurr (1959).
- 58 *Republic* VI.509d1–511e3, in Plato (1997).
- 59 See, for instance, *On the Soul* III.3.428a20–b9, in Aristotle (1984).
- 60 For a cross-cultural comparison between the relation of mythological and philosophical thinking in ancient Egypt, Persia, Israel, and Greece, see Frankfort (1977).
- 61 For an overview of this topic, see Koterski (1998), pp. 12–21. See also Collins (1978, 1984).
- 62 Russman (1987) provides a sophisticated account of the context for the change in attitude on the question of faith and reason.
- 63 On this subject, see Weiss (1983) and Ariès and Duby (1987), esp. vol. II: *Revelations of the Medieval World*. Political philosophy is beyond the scope of this book, but one can readily see the difference on this question between, say, the medieval tendency to unite the orders of religion and politics in the legal arrangements of Christendom as a juridical order and the modern tendency to require the separation of church and state.