Loving and being

THE SPIRIT AS AGENT OF UNITY

In earlier chapters I traced the emergence of Augustine's account of the Spirit's 'role' in the Trinity. We followed his early accounts of the Spirit's status as that which draws us to God, as the love through which we are drawn, as the will and goodness of God in creation, and as the love between Father and Son. In the summary of Trinitarian faith at the beginning of *De trinitate* 1 we first see Augustine making reference to texts that identify the Spirit as the Spirit of Father and the Spirit of Son, such as Galatians 4.6 ('God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts') and Romans. 8.9–11 ('the Spirit of Christ … the Spirit of Him who raised Christ from the dead'). This language is again mentioned in the 9th of his tractates on John and in summary statements in *Sermon* 52 and *De trinitate* 4, and then is first subject to extensive discussion in *De trinitate* 5 and 6. Further extensive discussion is offered around a decade later in *De trinitate* 15, and the language is also present in many summary contexts.[1] Augustine's reflections on this language constitute a key plank of his increasingly subtle mature treatments of the Spirit.

In Book 5 Augustine tells us that the Spirit is spoken of relatively (*relative dicitur*) when he is said to be of the Father and of the Son; but the relation that is spoken of is only revealed by the title Gift. The Spirit is the Gift of Father (John 15.26) and of Son (Rom. 8.9) and that which they give is 'some sort of ineffable communion' (*ineffabilis est quaedam … communio*). Thus the Spirit is named something common to both – 'Spirit' – that we might know that it is their communion that we receive.[2]

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[1] See *Io. ev. tr.* 9. 7 and *Trin.* 1. 4.7, 1. 8.18, 4. 20.29. The relevant texts from Books 5–6 and 15 are discussed below. For the use of this language in summary statements and short discussions see, for example, *Io. ev. tr.* 9. 7 (probably its first appearance after *trin.* 1).

[2] *trin.* 5. 11.12 (CCSL 50. 219). While Augustine commonly speaks of the Spirit as Love, it should be noted that he also frequently supplements this with other possible titles and with important qualifiers – the Spirit as 'something common'. In large part, I suspect he does so because Scripture

Augustine exhorts us to remember that even though Spirit is a relative title here, we are speaking of a relation that goes only one way: the Gift is of the Father and of the Son – we should not speak of 'the Father of the Spirit' in case we think of the Spirit as another Son.[3] Later in Book 5, Augustine also argues that the Spirit is eternally and unchangeably Gift (*sempiterne donum*) even if he is given in time.[4]

These various themes are drawn out a little further in Book 6:

> Whether [the Holy Spirit] is the unity between [Father and Son], or their holiness, or their love, or whether the unity, therefore, because he is the love, it is obvious that he is not one of the two. Through him both are joined together; through him the begotten is loved by the begetter, and in turn loves him who begot him; in him they preserve the unity of spirit through the bond of peace, not by a participation, but by their own essence [*non participatione sed essentia sua*], not by the gift of anyone superior to themselves but by their own gift [*neque dono superioris alicuius sed suo proprio*] … Whatever the Holy Spirit is, therefore, it is something common [*commune aliquid*] between the Father and the Son. But this communion is consubstantial and co-eternal … and this again is a substance, because God is a substance, and 'God is Love' [1 John 4.16].[5]

The passage suggests as many questions as it answers, but those questions reveal important developments under way in Augustine's thought. In the *De fide et symbolo* Augustine's concern was to argue that the Spirit could be conceived of as irreducible even as he was also a relation between Father and Son. Here we find a far more complex set of concerns related to the task of conceiving the Spirit as 'something common'. In *De trinitate* 5 Augustine has already inferred the Spirit's irreducibility from a standard grammatical argument: if we speak of giver and gift and of the Spirit 'of' Father and Son as the Gift, we find the Spirit's distinctiveness insinuated in Scripture's linguistic patterns. But, in the last sentence of the passage from Book 6 quoted above, Augustine hints at a far more complex argument in his statement that because God is substantial so must love be. In the paragraphs immediately preceding this quotation Augustine

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predicates of the Spirit a number of common titles which must be identical in God – each one thus escaping the analogies that present themselves in the created order. The complexity of the Spirit's existence as fully 'person' and yet as that which is given by Father to Son, as the essence of Father and Son – a theme explored later in this chapter – only enhances the mystery of the Spirit's existence and the difficulty of naming. But, for Augustine, this difficulty stems not from a failure of naming on Scripture's part, but from the fact that to understand the Spirit is to understand one of the deepest mysteries of the divine life.

[3] *trin.* 5. 12.13.

[4] *trin.* 5. 15.16–16.17. In the penultimate section of this chapter, I discuss Augustine's description of Father and Son as the one *principium* of the Spirit.

[5] *trin.* 6. 5.7 (CCSL 50. 235).

has argued that if we say of Father and Son 'God of God' we necessarily signify two realities, each of which has the unique mode of existence in which the virtues are identical and identical with the being of those realities: both 'God' and 'God' must be fully God.[6] If then, the Spirit is the love or communion of Father and Son, and 'God is Love' (1John 4.16), then the Spirit as love *must* be substantial, fully identical to all that we might name as the 'qualities' of divinity, or the Spirit could not be termed 'God'.[7] Augustine here offers an early version of his insistence that each of the divine three is fully the rational life of wisdom itself that defines divinity. This may help us to see why Augustine sees the Spirit as necessarily an irreducible divine 'person', but it forces upon us some hard questions about the relation between the Spirit as irreducible 'person' and as the essence of Father and Son.

In the passage from Book 6 we are examining, Augustine speaks of the Spirit as distinct from Father and Son *and as also* a gift from and of *the essence* of Father and Son. To be precise he states that Father and Son give their own gift, not that which they are given by another, and they are one in that gift not by participation but by their own essence (*essentia*). We have seen enough to rule out the possibility that Augustine understands Father and Son to be one because they participate in a divine substance prior to their individuality, and so his meaning here seems to be that 'their own gift' which is also that 'in which' they are one without participation is their own essence. In this context we should also note Augustine's invocation of 1 Corithians 6.17 ('he who cleaves to the Lord is one spirit'). Someone cleaving to the Lord does not increase the Lord, and thus Father and Son cleaving to each other, or the Spirit doing likewise to Father and Son does not increase the divinity.[8] This argument further reinforces the sense that Books 5 and 6 present the Spirit as irreducible person *and* as the essence of Father and Son. Even if this reading is correct, however, Augustine offers only a few clues as to the manner in which he links the Spirit's existence as the essence of Father and Son and as distinct individual. Following through some of the ways in which Augustine speaks of

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[6] *trin*. 6. 2.3–4.6.

[7] With this argument should be compared Augustine's account in *ep. Io. tr.* 7. 4–6. In passing it is worth noting how little of Augustine's argument there depends on the possibility of reversing *deus* and *dilectio* in 1John 4.8. The possibility of so doing in Latin serves mostly as icing on the cake of his argument. The same passage also offers an important instance of Augustine using his second exegetical rule (as explored in Chapter 6): because love is also 'of' God it must refer either to Son or Spirit.

[8] *trin*. 6. 8.9.

the Spirit in subsequent discussion may help us a little in understanding the direction of his thought even in *De trinitate* 5–7.

  In the first place, if we look forward a few years to *De trinitate* 15, not surprisingly we see much greater clarity in Augustine's discussion of the Spirit's agency. Once again, while 'gift' itself is used by Scripture of that which is given to Christians for their salvation,[9] Augustine contends that the Spirit is *eternally* gift on the basis of further links that he suggests Scripture invites us to draw.[10] The term 'gift' is used, Augustine tells us, *because* the Spirit is also love.[11] That which the Father gives us is the Spirit of his Son (Gal. 4.6), but the gift *of* the Spirit *is* the Spirit, and the Spirit is love (Rom. 5.5). 'Love' like 'Spirit' is a term which may be predicated of all three persons, but, Augustine argues, Scripture uses it so that when we grasp that the love which the Spirit gives is the Spirit, we will understand that the love which we receive is the love with which Father and Son love each other. Augustine then emphasizes the Spirit as an active giver of himself:

Nor because they give and he is given is he, therefore, less than they, for he is so given as the Gift of God that he also gives himself as God [*Ita enim datur sicut dei donum ut etiam se ipsum det sicut deus*]. For it is impossible to say of Him that he is not a master of his own power, of whom it was said: 'the Spirit breathes where he will' [John 3.8] … there is no subordination of the Gift and no domination of the givers, but the concord between the Gift and the givers [*concordia dati et dantium*].[12]

The Spirit gives himself as the Father's gift and as the Son's gift. Father and Son are one because the Spirit gives himself in the begetting of the Son and gives himself as the Son's love for the Father.[13] This text takes us forward to around 420, but it may be complemented with an exegetical analogy that appears much earlier in Augustine's thought.

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⁹ See *trin*. 15. 19.35.

¹⁰ See, for example, *trin*. 5. 16.17 (CCSL 50. 224): 'sempiterne Spiritus donum'.

¹¹ See *trin*. 15. 18.32. As we saw, the first explicit linking of the two titles occurs at *fid*. 9. 19. The association of the Gift of God with the love that is spoken of in Rom. 5.5 also begins around the same period, see, for example, *exp. prop. Rm*. 20 and 52.

¹² *trin*. 15. 19.36 (CCSL 50. 513).

¹³ My language here owes something to Rowan D. Williams, '*Sapientia* and the Trinity: Reflections on the *De trinitate*', in B. Bruning *et al*. (eds.), *Collectanea Augustiniana: Mélanges T. J. Van Bavel* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990) [= *Aug(L)* 40–1 (1990–1)], 1: 317–32, here 327–8: 'The Spirit is "common" to Father and Son not as a quality characterizing them equally, an impersonal attribute, but as that active divine giving, not simply identical with the person of the Father, which the Father communicates to the Son to give in his turn … the Father, in eternally giving (divine) life to the Son, gives that life as itself a "giving" agency, for there is no pre-personal or sub-personal divinity; he gives the Son the capacity to give that same giving life'.

Before we do so, however, we must note how Augustine's reflections here reinforce the account of appropriation I offered at the end of Chapter 8. Scripture identifies the third of the divine three with a name common to each in order to suggest a reflection on the Spirit's existence being from or of God. But, unlike the case of the Son being named Wisdom, the appropriated title does not reveal further dimensions of the unique title; the Spirit is most appropriately named by a combination of appropriated titles – Holy and Spirit. Even when the unique title Gift provides the key (and Augustine does not always turn to this title), it does so because it reveals dimensions of the appropriated titles Holy, Spirit and Love. These titles must take centre stage because only meditation on them helps us to understand that all of the Spirit's actions are founded in and reveal the Spirit's status as the (co-equal) Spirit of Father and Son. Only by learning that this is so do we grasp what it means for the Spirit to be eternally gift and fully 'personal'.

We see the same perspective presented perhaps a little more clearly at *De civitate Dei* 11. 24 when Augustine asks if the Spirit may be said to be the goodness (*bonitas*) of Father and Son. Without direct scriptural warrant Augustine hesitates, but he is willing to assert that the Spirit is the holiness (*sanctitas*) of both (not as *qualitas*, but as *substantia* and *persona in trinitate*), because holiness is predicated of the Spirit *proprie*, as his own or properly. The divine *bonitas* is identical to the divine *sanctitas*, Augustine argues, and we see something of this when we ask of creation the three questions: who made it?; by what means, through what, was it made?; for what purpose was it made? We should answer that the Father effected creation through speaking his Word. But when we remember that he then 'saw that it was good', we can see that Scripture shows us the Father noting that the product accords with the blessedness that was the reason for its creation and the end to which it is aimed. But this end is the Holy Spirit, the creation finds its end in rejoicing in and adhering to the Spirit who is the divine goodness.[14] This chain of argument again locates Scripture's appropriation of common titles as part of Augustine's second rule of scriptural predication: Scripture appropriates to the Spirit terms common to each of the divine three in order to show the character of the Spirit's derivation from and consubstantiality with the Father. To

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[14] *civ.* 11. 24 (CCSL 47. 343–4). I return to this passage of *civ.*, which dates from *c.*416–18, at the beginning of Chapter 11. In this passage I assume *proprie* is used somewhat loosely. Augustine does not think that *sanctitas* is the Spirit's *proprium* in a technical sense, and thus here he must be only indicating that the combination of *sanctitas* and *spiritus* identifies *this* particular referent of *spiritus*.

see this dependence and equivalence is to see the true mystery of God's love for and immediate presence to his creation.

In his 14th tractate on John, which has been dated to both 406–7 and *c*.413, Augustine writes that Father and Son are not be spoken of as two Gods, as Gods individually,

For so great is the love of the Holy Spirit there [*tanta enim ibi est caritas Spiritus Sancti*], so great the peace of unity that when it is asked about each one, let your answer be 'God'; when it is asked about the Trinity, let your answer be 'God'. For if the spirit of man is one spirit when it cleaves to God, since the Apostle clearly says 'He who cleaves to the Lord is one spirit' [1Cor. 6.17], how much more is the Son as equal, cleaving to the Father, one God together with him … Hear a second testimony … 'They had one soul and one heart toward the Lord' [Acts 4.32]. If the love from so many souls made one soul and from so many hearts made one heart, how great is the love between Father and Son?[15]

The first sentence of the quotation links the power of the Holy Spirit's love and the rules of predication that govern our speech about the divine unity: the love and peace that the Spirit produces is such, not simply that God is one, but that we must confess the equality of the divine three *and* their unity. In *Tractate* 18 – discussed at length in Chapter 9 – Augustine is a little more direct about the active role of the Spirit: if the love which God sent and which makes one heart and soul out of many, how much more are Father and Son one 'in the fount of love' (*in fonte dilectionis*)?[16] It is interesting that this increasing clarity about the Spirit as the active agent of the divine unity appears in the very set of tractates where we found Augustine's mature reading of John 5.19. The parallel between these pneumatological passages and the Christological set examined in Chapter 9 continues: Augustine's mature reading of Acts 4.32 appears

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[15] *Io. ev. tr.* 14. 9 (CCSL 36. 147–8). Acts 4.32. 'Anima una et cor unum' is the most common version of the key phrase of the verse in Augustine, but he knows more than one version. See M.-F. Berrouard, 'La première communauté de Jérusalem comme image de l'unité de la Trinité. Une des exégèses augustiniennes d'Act 4, 32', in *Homo Spiritalis. Festgabe für Luc Verheijen* (Würzburg: Augustines-Verlag 1987), 207–24. In what follows I treat only Acts 4.32. A similar case could be made by following Augustine's reading of 1Cor. 6.17. See the early use at *trin*. 6. 3 and later uses at *serm*. 238. 2, *serm*. 241. 2, *conl. Max*. 14 and 15. 20, 1. 10, 2. 10.2, 2. 20.1, 2. 22.2. In this case, Augustine speaks mostly of the Son 'clinging' to the Father to produce unity of substance, but pneumatological material is also present.

[16] *Io. ev. tr.* 18. 4 (CCSL 36. 181–2).

most clearly in *Tractate* 39, the very text in which we found Augustine speaking of Father and Son existing *ad aliquid*:

[if] many souls through love are one soul, and many hearts are one heart, what does the very fountain of love do in the Father and the Son? … If, therefore, 'the love of God [which] has been poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us' [Rom. 5.5] makes many souls one soul and many hearts one heart, how much more does [the Spirit] make the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit one God, one light, one *principium*? [*si ergo caritas Dei … multa corda facit unum cor, quanto magis pater et filius et spiritus sanctus, Deus unus, lumen unum, unumque principium?*][17]

The same analogy also appears in a number of texts addressed directly to Homoians or Homoian converts to the Catholic faith, including his debate with the Homoian bishop Maximinus in 427.[18] Thus, following a pattern we have already traced in a number of contexts, clear statement of the Spirit as active lover and active agent of unity within the Godhead appears most clearly *c.*420, even if it seems to lie just beneath the surface of texts from around a decade earlier.

The striking character of Augustine's reading of Acts 4.32, even in its earliest forms, may be seen in comparison with his sources. The passage from *Tractate* 14 quoted above probably draws directly on Ambrose, *De fide* 1. 2:

if in all those who believed there was, as it is written, one soul and one heart [Acts 4.32], and if everyone who cleaves to the Lord is one Spirit [1Cor. 6.17], as the Apostle has also said, if a man and his wife are one flesh, if all we mortal men are, so far as regards our nature, of one substance [*quantum ad naturam pertinet, unius substantiae sumus*]: if this is what Scripture says of created persons, that, being many, they are one, who can in no way be compared to the divine persons [*quorum nulla potest esse cum divinis comparatio*], how much more are the Father and Son one in divinity, with whom there is no difference either of substance or of will?[19]

Ambrose is the only Latin pro-Nicene to use Acts 4.32 as an analogy for the Trinity and he does so only here. The fact that in this text he uses Acts 4.32 alongside 1 Corinthians 6.17 seems to mark it as Augustine's source. But note the difference. Ambrose draws the sort of parallel one finds in a number of his Greek contemporaries between the unity of human beings in a universal nature and the unity of the divine persons.

[17] *Io. ev. tr.* 39. 5 (CCSL 36. 348).
[18] *ep.* 238. 2 11; *ep.* 170. 5; *conl. Max.* 12; *symb. cat.* (= *serm.* 398) 4.
[19] Ambrose, *fid.* 1. 2.18 (CSEL 78. 10–11).

He gives us little clue about the sort of universal he envisages and insists anyway that 'no comparison' is possible. Augustine uses the same texts as part of a far more complex suggestion about the effect of the persons' activity towards each other. Augustine's analogy does not rely on drawing consequences from the existence of a universal and unitary nature, but on the dynamic language of agents producing unity. Augustine's very personal reading of Acts 4.32 reflects the same theology that we found in his way of contributing to the long exegetical tradition concerning John 5.19.

This exegesis of Acts 4.32 can now draw us back to the balance Augustine seeks between speaking of the Spirit as irreducible 'person' and as the essence of Father and Son. The complementarity of Augustine's mature accounts of Son and Spirit suggests with even greater force a vision of the divine communion as constituted by the intra-divine acts of the divine three, in an order eternally established by the Father. While Augustine does not simply identify the Spirit with the act of loving or self-giving – he uses nouns such as *dilectio* or *amor* rather than verbal or participial forms – the equation is clear enough. The Spirit is the communion of Father and Son which, as we have seen, is a mutual act of adherence and love; the Spirit is the love and the fount of love between Father and Son who eternally gives himself; the Spirit, as also 'God from God', shares in the simple mode of divine existence in which he is what he might be thought to possess. Thus, in these mature texts, Augustine presents the Spirit as the agent identical to the act of communion between Father and Son.

But Augustine is not suggesting that Father and Son are somehow brought into unity by the gift of the Spirit as an act subsequent to the generation of the Son. It makes sense only to read him as saying that the Father from eternity establishes the Son as one who is all that the Father is, and as one who loves the Father in and with the love that is God from God and also all that the Father is. The Father establishes the Son as one who also has as his essence the love that is identical with the essence of God, of the Father, but that love is also the active agent of his love for the Father. It seems true to say then both that the Son loves the Father and that the Spirit is the love and communion which joins Father and Son in love – the Son both loves (being himself love itself) and the Spirit is the love with which he loves. But, again, this is to offer a summary of

emergent themes that Augustine himself never does, and even this summary misses a layer of complexity.

In the case of the Son we spoke of titles and relationships that were unique to him: in the case of the Spirit the picture is much more complex because the title 'love' is appropriated. A passage from *De trinitate* 15 quoted in the first section of the chapter may now help to reveal the complexity this creates:

(28) … we should so conceive these three [memory, understanding, will] as some one thing which all have, parallel to wisdom itself, and which is so retained in the nature of each one, as that he who has it, is that which he has …

(29) … in that simple and highest nature, substance is not one thing, and love another, but that substance itself is love, and that love itself is substance, whether in the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, and yet the Holy Spirit is properly called love.[20]

Once again, because there is one simple and divine nature, we must be careful not to speak only of each of the divine three as fullness, without also noting that the fullness they possess in such a way that they are identical with it, is the one fullness that is God. And thus we cannot speak simply as if the Spirit as person were the essence of Father and Son. That the Spirit is named as love should not lead us towards a picture of Father and Son having as their essence something that is not their own, not identical with them. Rather, we must say both that Father and Son are in their essence love *and that* the Spirit is the love of Father and Son and fully another beside and in them. There is no impersonal or pre-personal essence of the persons; Father, Son and Spirit have an essence that is their own, which is eternally one, and also which is the Spirit. When Augustine notes the difficulty of grasping why the Spirit is named by terms common to each of the divine three, the difficulty does not only consist in the basic problem of understanding how divine love *must* also be irreducible 'person', it also consists in the extra complexity that reveals itself once we grasp how Father and Son are also love and love itself.[21] There is no 'essence' before the divine 'persons', and yet the persons are each identically the fullness of the Godhead, and must also in some sense be the others' essence. Thus the summary that I offered in the previous paragraph based almost entirely on the agential language of the 'inter-personal' acts of the divine three certainly corresponds to a central line of thought in the mature Augustine, but more is required.

[20] *trin.* 15. 17.28–9.   [21] *trin.* 15. 17.27.

The French Benedictine theologian Ghislain Lafont has written very suggestively about the importance of 'redoublement' – reduplication or repetition – in Trinitarian theology. If we are to do any justice to the mystery revealed in scriptural language, Lafont argues, we must describe the same ground twice over, using the language of irreducible persons and the language of a unity of essence and will. It is not simply that we should have available language for both 'levels' of Trinitarian discussion, but that we need to understand how speaking about the divine three as 'persons' involves showing that those 'persons' each possess the divine essence in a particular mode, and how speaking about the divine essence involves showing that essence to exist through and as subsisting relations.[22] The language of the last sentence should betray that for Lafont and a number of his best recent adapters, the high point of the process is reached in Thomas's peculiarly sophisticated articulation of Trinitarian terminology.[23]

I suggest that there are in fact many forms of 'redoublement' to be found in Trinitarian tradition, and that the tensions we see in the mature Augustine offer important and distinct examples from the Thomistic patterns to which those who have recently sought to appropriate Lafont have (rightly) pointed. Augustine's pattern of 'redoublement' does not proceed via an examination of the language of persons and essence, but

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[22] Ghislain Lafont, *Peut-on Connaître Dieu en Jésus-Christ?* (Paris: Cerf, 1969), esp. 130, 160 and 234, here 130: 'Si nous reprenons l'ensemble de ces précisions sur le langage, il apparaît que l'expression trinitaire obéit à ce que l'on pourrait appeler une *loi de redoublement*: pour dire un aspect quelconque du Mystère, il faut toujours employer en succession continue deux formulas qui, sans doute, se complètent, le Révèlation nous en est garante, mais dont nous ne pouvons saisir que la non-contradiction. l'aspect positif de la coexistence des aspects soulignés par ces formulas est reconnu dans la foi, sans que la raison puisse faire autre chose que le pressentir. C'est qu'en effet, ces deuz formulas nécessaires sont le plus souvent en position dialectique l'une par rapport à l'autre: d'un côte on affirme l'identité (de l'essence avec le relation, de la relation avec la procession, etc.) et de l'autre on affirme le non-identité (des même termes sous un autre rapport), et il ne s'agit pas là seulement de prises de vue logiques; le Mystère tient précisément à ce que identité et non-identité sont également réelles au moins en certains cas, quand il s'agit de l'être et de la *ratio*, bien que non sur le même plan.' At p. 234, Lafont speaks more clearly of the need for a number of different reduplications, but this point is not discussed at length. I disagree with Lafont's wider account at two key points: I do not share his narrative of the supposed separation between *theologia* and *oikonomia* after Nicaea, nor his narrative in which the mistakes of the Cappadocians are partially rectified by Augustine but only fully overcome in the synthesis of Thomas. For an excellent critique, see André D'Halleux, 'Personnalisme ou Essentialisme Trinitaire chez Les Pères Cappadociens', in *Patrologie et Oecuménisme. Recueil d'études* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990), 215–68.

[23] See, for examples, Gilles Emery, 'Essentialism or Personalism in the Treatise on God in St Thomas Aquinas?', in *Trinity in Aquinas* (Ypsilanti, MI: Sapientia Press, 2003), 165–208; Matthew Levering, *Scripture and Metaphysics: Aquinas and the Renewal of Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), esp. 214ff.

via the interweaving of two strands of exegesis and philosophical reflection. The first strand focuses on the divine three as active agents, and here Augustine seems to have moved cautiously towards an account of the three as existing dynamically *ad aliquid*. Such discussions culminate a line of argument emergent since Augustine's earliest attempts to state that there is nothing 'in' the Trinity other than the three persons. We can perhaps speak of a certain 'analogical personalism' here. The term 'personalism' is used in many senses: I mean by the term Augustine's insistence that the divine irreducible rational life and self-presence is essential to being God, such that there can be no pre-personal divine.[24] In this sense divine personhood is the fundamental unit of Augustine's Trinitarian ontology. Interestingly, Augustine's rejection of person and nature language is *in favour of* this 'personalism' in which, from the Father as *principium*, the divine three (each of whom is and all of whom together are the divine rational life) eternally constitute the 'one substance' of the Trinity. 'Analogical' is, however, the necessary qualifier of 'personalism' because Augustine is clear about the ways in which divine 'persons' transcend human persons and the categories that we use to speak of them.[25]

The second strand of discourse focuses on the divine three as each being the one fullness of the Godhead and as also the fullness of the indivisible Godhead inseparably with the others. The relationship of irreducible

[24] In using the term I am not arguing that Augustine makes any extensive equation between the 'personal' nature of God and the ultimately or foundationally 'personal' nature of the created order as an ontological principle. He does, of course, treat the 'highest' form of created existence as the inherently personal rational life of those made *in imagine Dei*.

[25] Andrew Louth in 'Love and the Trinity: Saint Augustine and the Greek Fathers', *AugStud* 33 (2002), 1–16, is one of the few recent authors to speak of Augustine's 'personalism', but he does so as a form of critique. I disagree with Louth's article in three respects. First, Augustine describes the Spirit as the love between Father and Son well before *trin.* 5–6 and the theme appears from a wide matrix of contexts, not simply an observation of the Spirit's function among Christians. Augustine's early order pneumatology in which the Spirit perfects the creation and draws it to God is of particular importance. At the same time, Augustine's attempts to link this theology to an account of what it means for the Spirit to be common to Father and Son or a *res naturae* seem to draw on a wider pro-Nicene dynamic. Second, Louth overlooks Augustine's consistent expression of the impossibility of our understanding fully what we are able to say about the divine communion, and especially about the individual existence of each of the divine three. Augustine does not, as I hope to have shown, '[move] between human and divine love without much sense of difference' (p. 6). Third, but beyond the scope of this book, I am not as certain as Louth that Augustine's Greek contemporaries offer quite such a consistent account of which scriptural texts speak of *theologia* and which of *oikonomia*. That division is still under development (see the discussions of Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, *Divine Simplicity in Basil of Caesarea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010)). Of course, there are significant differences between Augustine and his Greek (and Latin contemporaries) here: but I do not think those differences are best identified by presenting Augustine as differing because of an epistemological hubris. For discussion of another, Catholic, personalist reading of Augustine, see my '*Sempiterne Spiritus Donum*'.

persons to each other, to the one essence that God is, is not explored by manipulation of a genus or species terminology. It is explored in part by Augustine's use of some basic principles of divine simplicity to articulate the divine processions such that no division of the divine essence is involved even as each person is the fullness of that essence; in part by carefully placed insistence that appropriated titles do shape our understanding of a divine individual, but only by also showing how that individual is necessarily so absolutely 'personal' because they are identical to the one divine fullness. Thus, the case of appropriated titles offers a particularly clear example of the way in which this second strand of discourse exists in a mutual relationship with the first. This second level of discourse thus also has an 'apophatic' function, forcing upon us one key point at which the Trinitarian mystery escapes our thought (let alone our speech): the unity of the persons despite their irreducibility. A similar 'apophatic' function is of course seen also at the first level; Augustine's discussions of the persons in that manner frequently emphasizes the difficulty of our imagining the lack of the accidental in the divine three, their existence simply as what we are always tempted to imagine them as possessing.

'Apophatic' is a dangerous term to apply at a time when its popularity frequently robs it of dense significance: here I mean it as almost synonymous with Augustine's *ineffabilis*. In Trinitarian contexts *ineffabilis* seems to indicate not merely that we cannot speak of a topic; but that the rational order enables a process of intellectual ascent towards understanding, but one that enables increasing precision about how the divine transcends any categories available either in the material or the intelligible sphere.[26] At the same time, Augustine sees the divine ineffability as part and parcel of the particular intelligible structure of the creation as revealing of its Creator, rather than as preventing us from seeing the creation as intelligible in this way. But something more of this relationship will be seen through the course of the next two chapters, in discussion of *De trinitate* 9 and 10, and I leave it until then.

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[26] One way of tracing Augustine's understanding of *ineffabilis* is to explore how he links the term with *intellectus* or *intellegere*. For example, cf. *ord*. 2. 7.24 and *qu. XVI in Matt*. 13. At *ep*. 242. 5, written to the 'Arian' Elpidius, Augustine writes: 'there are many things which may be said about the ineffability of the Trinity, not in order that it may be expressed in words – otherwise it would not be ineffable – but in order that it may be understood from the words that are said that it cannot be understood in words'. The ineffable is thus not simply resistant to understanding or speech, but requires of us a specific mode of understanding, one that finds its completion in confession of transcendence even as it achieves. Augustine is not, however, 'apophatic' if that is taken to necessarily include a ps. Dionysian sense of God's transcending of ever Goodness and Being.

AND 'FROM' THE SON?

It is enough for the Christian to believe that the only cause of all created things, whether heavenly or earthly, whether visible or invisible, is the goodness of the Creator, the one true God; and that nothing exists but himself that does not derive its existence from Him; and that He is the Trinity – to wit, the Father, and the Son begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the same Father, but one and the same Spirit of Father and Son.[27]

In the final two sections of this chapter I want to consider two questions that follow from my discussion of the divine three and their interpersonal acts. The first concerns one of the most hotly disputed questions about Augustine's pneumatology: his account of 'double procession'. The brief discussion I offer here is intended to show, first, that this account flows from some of the principles I have just outlined and, second, how it thus not only escapes some of the criticisms frequently aimed at it, but also suggests a number of lines for investigation that could lead debate on this question in new directions.

I will begin by turning to one of his most extended mature discussions of the question. At *De trinitate* 15. 17.29 Augustine famously writes:

only he from whom the Son was begotten and from whom the Spirit principally [*principaliter*] proceeds, is God the Father. I have added principally therefore because the Holy Spirit is also found to proceed from the Son. But the Father also gave this to him, not as though he already existed and did not yet have it [*non iam exsistenti et nondum habenti*], but whatever he gave to the only-begotten Word, he gave by/in begetting him [*sed quidquid unigenito verbo dedit gignendo dedit*]. He so begot him, therefore, that the common gift should also proceed from him, and that the Holy Spirit should be the Spirit of both.[28]

This passage is frequently used to demonstrate that Augustine envisages the Father as *principium* within the Trinity. But I think it equally important that we see the extent to which Augustine is here simply filling out a picture we have already seen him sketch. Note that Augustine equates the Father's giving to the Son that the Spirit proceed from him with the Father's establishing the Spirit as the Spirit *of* Father and Son. Thus the Father's begetting of the Son is identical with the establishment

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[27] *ench.* 3. 9.
[28] *trin* 15. 17.29 (CCSL 50. 503). Fundamental for interpreting Augustine's discussion of pneumatology in *trin.* 15 is Basil Studer, 'Zur Pneumatologie des Augustinus von Hippo (De Trinitate 15.17.27–27.50)', in *Mysterium Caritatis: Studien zur Exegese und zur Trinitätslehre in der Alten Kirche*, Studia Anselmiana 127 (Rome: Pontifico Ateneo S. Anselmo, 1999), 311–27. Studer shows clearly how this discussion should not be interpreted solely in terms of the mental 'analogy' developed in *trin.* 8–15.

of the communion of Father, Son and Spirit because *in* the begetting of the
Son the Father gives his love (or substance), thus eternally establishing
the Son as lover of the Father and the Spirit as the personal giving love of
Father and Son.

Augustine further refines his argument a little later in Book 15:

And he who can understand in that which the Son says: 'as the Father has life in
himself, so he has given to the Son to have life in himself' [John 5.26], that the
Father did not give life to the Son already existing without life, but so begot him
apart from time that the life which the Father gave to the Son by/in begetting is
co-eternal with the life of the Father who gave [*sed ita eum sine tempore genuisse
ut uita quam pater filio gignendo dedit coaeterna sit uitae patris qui dedit*]; let him
understand that, just as the Father has in himself that the Holy Spirit should
proceed from the Father, it is so to be understood that his proceeding also from
the Son comes to the Son from the Father [*de patre habet utique ut et de illo pro-
cedat spiritus sanctus*].[29]

Augustine also quotes at this point from *Tractate* 99:

the Holy Spirit has it from the Father himself that he proceeds also from the
Son, just as he proceeds from the Father.[30]

Augustine has refined his argument by speaking not so much of the role
of the Father in relationship to the Son, but of the Father's relationship to
the Spirit, and in so doing he emphasizes the importance of viewing the
Father as the cause and source of the Trinitarian communion. The ques-
tion of the Father's *principium* here should detain us a little further.

In the *De fide et symbolo* of 393 Augustine tells us that the Spirit is said
to come from the Father so that we know there to be only one *princip-
ium*. The derivation of Son and Spirit from the Father prevents Christians
from proposing a plurality of divine principles who would necessarily
require a further principle common to them all.[31] In *De trinitate* 5, how-
ever, Augustine asks whether the Son can be said to be the Spirit's *prin-
cipium*. If the Spirit does proceed also from the Son Augustine sees this
predication as possible, but he immediately adds that only as the Father
and Son are one Lord in relation to the creation are they one *principium*
in relation to the Spirit.[32]

To understand this comment we must look to the paragraphs that pre-
cede it. Augustine has just argued that Father and Son are both named
Creator, but are one *principium* in relation to the created order. They

[29] *trin* 15. 26.47 (CCSL 50. 528).   [30] *trin*. 15. 27.48 and *Io. ev. tr.* 99. 8.
[31] *fid*. 9. 19.   [32] *trin*. 5. 14.15.

are one *principium* because they are one God.[33] I suggest that this comment, in turn, needs to be interpreted in the light of Augustine's mature account of inseparable operation. As we have seen, in that account, the Father elects from eternity to work always through the Son. And thus, we can perhaps take Augustine to be arguing that just as creation is worked by the Father through the Son, so too the Spirit proceeds from the Father, but proceeds as the Father's eternal gift to the Son and eternally as the Son's love given (and giving itself) to the Father. In which case, Augustine tries to suggest, because the Father eternally works through the Son he eternally establishes it in generating the Son that both Father and Son are the *principium* of the Spirit.

But Augustine here is pressing on into territory for which no maps were (or are) available, and it is significant that apart from this one text in *De trinitate* 5 Augustine never again speaks in this manner of Father and Son as the one *principium* of the Spirit. Instead, we see him develop the formulae I quoted above, stating that the Father gives it to the Son and to the Spirit that the Spirit proceeds also from the Son. Such formulae allow him to avoid the unwanted connotations that might follow from describing the Son as also *principium*. In 427, against the 'Arian' bishop Maximinus, Augustine writes: 'when the Son spoke of the Spirit he said "He proceeds from the Father", because the Father is the author [*auctor*] of his procession. The Father begot a Son and, by begetting him, gave it to him that the Holy Spirit proceeds from him'.[34] Gerald Bonner correctly comments that this passage demonstrates Augustine's continuing concern to find a way of distinguishing the roles of Father and the Son in the Spirit's procession, even as the Spirit is the Spirit of both.[35] Augustine's account of the Father's *principium* does not, thus, involve him so much in compromising the Father's status as *principium*, but in suggesting to us that for the Father to act eternally as *principium* is for the Father eternally to give rise to two who share the divine fullness and through whom the Father eternally works. The Father's status as *principium* is thus not that of an autonomous agent who stands 'above' Son and Spirit, but one who works eternally through the Son and Spirit he generates and spirates.

Augustine never discusses directly the extent to which we can speak of the Spirit having a role in the Son's generation. But because Augustine envisages the Father eternally constituting the Son through giving him his own personal and active Spirit who is love, we do seem to be able

[33] *trin.* 5. 13.14.   [34] *c. Max.* 2. 5.
[35] Gerald Bonner, 'St Augustine's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit', *Sobornost* 4/1 (1960), 51–66.

to conclude that the Son is generated *in* the Spirit. But this supposition remains just that. I suspect Augustine never discusses this question because of the lack of significant scriptural warrant, and because of his commitment to the standard *taxis* of Father–Son–Spirit. We find ourselves in the presence of ideas that certainly seem to follow from more well-established principles, but which demand of us a great deal of reserve when Scripture provides us with so little. Noting, however, that this might seem to be an implication of Augustine's presentation helps us to see even more clearly that Augustine does not see the Son as possessing any secondary mediatorial role in the eternal procession of the Spirit. This is so because our question about the possible role of the Spirit in the generation of the Son only arises because Augustine is clear that the Spirit comes from the Father to the Son as the fullness of divinity, as the personal loving that constitutes the Son as fully God in the Trinitarian life. The Son's seeing of and love for the Father occurs *because* the Son is the fullness of the divinity and in some sense has the Spirit as his essence: if the Spirit 'proceeds' from the Son it is because this is the manner in which the Father is eternally the sole Trinitarian 'cause'.

Noting that Augustine pushes tentatively in this direction is of relevance for modern debate over the *filioque*. Fundamental to recent discussions between Catholic and Orthodox theologians has been the 1995 'clarification' on the meaning of the *filioque* produced under the auspices of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.[36] Much of the text focuses on identifying what it takes to be persistent confusions in terminology between Latin and Greek traditions, and on establishing an outline history of the controversy. The concluding paragraphs of the text, however, suggest that Western understandings of *filioque* do not contravene assertion of the Father's priority in the Trinitarian life. One of the most interesting tactics pursued in these paragraphs is the dual argument that, first, it is 'in' the Spirit that the relationship between Father and Son achieves 'Trinitarian perfection' and that, second, the Father generates the Son 'by breathing through Him the Holy Spirit'.

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[36] 'The Greek and Latin Traditions Regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit', issued by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *L'Osservatore Romano* (weekly English-language edition) n. 38 (1408), 20 Sept. 1995 (originally in French in *L'Osservatore Romano* n. 211 (41.050) 13 Sept. 1995). For a particularly helful outline of the history involved here, see Brian E. Daley, 'Revisiting the "Filioque": Roots and Branches of an Old Debate. Part One', *Pro Ecclesia* 10 (2001), 31–62; Daley, 'Revisiting the "*Filioque*". Part Two: Contemporary Catholic Approaches", *Pro Ecclesia* 10 (2001), 195–212.

This second point is phrased thus, I suspect, to serve the wider goal of suggesting the ecumenical possibilities of our speaking of the Spirit processing *through* the Son. Whether or not 'through the Son' as understood in current Catholic/Orthodox discussion adequately captures Augustine's intent, the terse sentences in this document do parallel some key themes in Augustine's presentation. The Father's giving of the Spirit to the Son is intrinsic to his generation of the Son as the one who loves the Father with the fullness of divine love. This line of thought has not, however, been much pursued subsequently. As an indication it may be noted that the otherwise very helpful document produced by the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation in 2003 sees itself as following down a path opened by the earlier Vatican document, but offers no discussion of this theme.[37] This latter text builds on the first by suggesting further clarification of the range of meaning inherent in the Latin *procedere*, and by arguing that Latins use the term in a sense which accords the Father the status of 'primordial source' and 'ultimate cause' in the Trinity. But it shies away from pursuing the hints I identified in the final paragraphs of the 1995 'clarification'.[38]

The documents I have mentioned here tend to focus their energies on (what some Orthodox theologians present as the traditional Catholic tactic of) arguing historically that distinctions between Greek and Latin pneumatologies are mainly matters of terminological confusion. At the same time they struggle to suggest formulae that may point an ecumenical way forward. My sense, however, is that much work remains to be done looking in some detail at the variety of different accounts of double procession and at the wider contexts within which they occur.[39] It may well be that the Latin *procedere* covers distinctions between a number of Greek verbs, and that it is ecumenically helpful to note the confusions that have resulted, but Augustine's texts suggest to us that we need also to pay close attention to the ways in which the very flexibility of the verb means that it can be used to raise questions about how the Father

[37] 'The Filioque: A Church Dividing Issue?', 25 Oct. 2003. Available at http://www.usccb.org/seia/filioque.shtml.
[38] See the useful parallel discussion and critique of David Coffey, 'The Roman "Clarification" of the Doctrine of the *Filioque*', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 5 (2003), 3–21.
[39] One of the strongest and most eloquent critiques of the Vatican 'Clarification' comes from Jean-Claude Larchet, 'La Question du "Filioque"', *Le Messager Orthodoxe* 129 (1998), 3–58. My reading of Augustine differs in almost every particular, but one parallel between Larchet and the 'clarification' is the tendency to offer a narrative distinction between positions within the tradition that divides those traditions far too easily into clear units. Further progress may perhaps be achieved by questioning further this tactic.

to be *principium* within the Trinitarian life. The wide semantic range of the verb means that we must examine with some care its actual use and, when we do so, note the broader theological questions about the character of the divine life that are raised.[40]

For many of those modern writers on Trinitarian theology who are strongly critical of 'Western' approaches, the idea of the divine persons as 'subsistent relations' has been read as not only intertwined with, but also dependent on, Trinitarian theologies that (often implicitly) rely on models of 'internal' self-relatedness.[41] It is moreover seen as a doctrine that either begins with Augustine or at least is the outworking of principles he establishes. This brief discussion is intended to show the complexities inherent in exploring the relationship between Thomas and Augustine on this question.

As *both* Augustine's and Thomas's texts are often misinterpreted in broad narratives of Western theology's failure, I will first spend a few moments with one key text from Thomas's *Summa Theologiae*. The notion of *relatio subsistens* – 'subsisting relation' – arises against the background of a debate concerning whether 'person' in God signifies the divine substance (or essence) or whether it signifies the *relatio*, the distinctive character of the divine person.[42] Thomas distinguishes his position from a number of alternatives. Person cannot signify the divine essence as does the word 'God', because then any use of person in the plural is an accommodation to which little sense can be attached. Perhaps, then, person directly refers to the divine essence and indirectly 'co-signifies' a relation: this opinion actually takes us little further as the problems with the term 'person' remain. Perhaps we can reverse this opinion and suggest

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[40] We should note that Augustine understands 'procession' to be incomprehensible every bit as clearly as does Gregory Nazianzen.

[41] For example, William Hill, *The Three-Personed God: The Trinity as a Mystery of Salvation* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1982), 61: 'the fullest implications of Augustine's thought are that God is *one* "person", within whose divine consciousness there is a threefold self-relatedness'. It may be that some Neo-Thomists offer ammunition to those seeking to make such charges in offering a narrative of Thomas's 'completing' Augustine precisely by giving a more focused alignment of Son and Spirit with mental faculties, but it is vital to avoid projecting onto Thomas Neo-Thomist positions without careful examination. For example, see Reginald Garrigou-LaGrange, *The Trinity and God the Creator: A Commentary on St Thomas's Theological Summa Ia, q. 27–119*, trans. F. C. Eckhoff (St Louis: Herder, 1952), 68.

[42] My account here owes much to that found in Emery's *The Trinitarian Theology of St Thomas Aquinas*, 114ff.

that person refers primarily to the relation and secondarily to the divine essence. This appears to have been the position of William of Auxerre.

Thomas finds this last opinion fruitful, but insufficient insofar as it does not seem to do justice to the full individuality, the being for itself, of a person. Accordingly, he develops William's solution, emphasizing that in God relations cannot exist as accidental to the divine essence: they must subsist just as does the divine essence. But, at the same time, for the word 'person' to be used appropriately, it must signify that which most truly distinguishes one person from another. The solution, then, is this: 'a divine person signifies a relation as subsisting. And this is to signify relation by way of a substance, and such a relation is a *hypostasis* subsisting in the divine nature.'[43] Continuing, Thomas writes that 'person' thus can be said to signify relation directly, but only insofar as it signifies the relation expressed in the *hypostasis* that Father, Son or Spirit is. This move then permits Thomas to say that 'person' can also be said to signify essence directly, as long as we understand that this is because essence and *hypostasis* are the same, the essence expressed by means of the *hypostasis*/relation (a point to be noted by any who would argue that a 'relation' of necessity indicates a lesser degree of irreducibility than the category of 'person' or 'hypotasis'!). Thomas's move is sophisticated and yet dependent on the application of fairly simple principles, the lack of anything accidental in God and the impropriety of understanding the divine essence to be distinct from the persons.

Thomas's understanding of a divine person as a subsisting relation needs also to be read in the context of his account of the unique character of relations of origin. Among the various kinds of relation that Thomas identifies is that of a relation which is 'real' – that is, a relation which exists 'in the nature of things' and not purely logically, existing only by way of conceptual abstraction – in both of two things related. Thomas argues that such relations in God must be founded on activity, and thus on the Father's generating of the Son and spirating of the Spirit.[44] Remembering this account of real relations in God helps because it reinforces the extent to which Thomas sees the persons, as subsisting

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[43] *ST.* 1. q. 29. a. 4. resp.: 'Distinctio autem in divinis non fit nisi per relationes originis, ut dictum est supra. Relatio autem in divinis non est sicut accidens inhaerens subiecto, sed est ipsa divina essentia, unde est subsistens, sicut essentia divina subsistit. Sicut ergo deitas est Deus, ita paternitas divina est Deus pater, qui est persona divina. Persona igitur divina significat relationem ut subsistentem. Et hoc est significare relationem per modum substantiae quae est hypostasis subsistens in natura divina'.

[44] *ST.* 1. q. 28 a. 4, resp.

relations, existing because of the Father's eternal and ordered activity of generating and spirating.[45]

Some of the differences between Thomas and Augustine may now be apparent. As we have seen, Augustine simply does not offer (and may strategically wish to avoid) the sort of logical and philosophical precision so central to Thomas's exposition. We have seen many examples of this distinction through the course of the book: it may also be worth nothing that Augustine does not even offer clear definitions of the four traditional scholastic relations (*paternitas*, *filiatio*, *spiratio* and *processio*).[46] Nor do we see anything like Thomas's speculative attempt to demonstrate that the existence of real relations between the persons would divide the Godhead.[47] Thomas inhabits a scholastic culture and tradition that enables a very different style of work from that we see in Augustine. Thomas's preference for the use of person and nature terminology found in such Latins as Hilary and Ambrose reflects the fact that he stands in a tradition stretching from Boethius and through Alcuin and Anselm which was far more willing than Augustine to invest with deep significance for describing the structure of the Trinity a complex metaphysical terminology. This is so even as we should note that Thomas himself both takes with full seriousness the analogical character of all our talk about God and is willing to state directly that the divine cannot be comprehended by genus and species terminologies.[48]

This observation can perhaps be raised to the level of a general principle. Scholastic Trinitarian theologies draw frequently on Augustine, but often under misapprehensions: Augustine becomes a source for discussions and terminological distinctions in ways that he would not have envisaged. We can perhaps distinguish two ways in which scholastics draw on Augustine's Trinitarian theology. In the case of his discussions of love and knowledge, scholastics use Augustine in ways that allow us to see his texts as a central foundation for such discussion, even if his approach is far more tentative. As we shall see through the next

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[45] I make no comment here on the complexities of Thomas's views on the *filioque*.

[46] *ST*. 1 q. 28 a. 4.

[47] For discussion of these in Thomas, see Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of St Thomas Aquinas*, 89ff.

[48] For example, *in sent*. 1. 19.4.2. Richard Cross has suggested that such denials are a standard part of Western tradition after Augustine. This is an interesting claim, and I hope he will eventually offer a more extensive discussion of it. Even were it so, I do not think it would alter my account of the distinctive manner in which Augustine not only states the principle but also seeks ways to speak of the Trinity without reference to such language. See Richard Cross, 'Duns Scotus on Divine Substance and the Trinity', *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 11 (2003), 181–201.

two chapters, Augustine's discussions of memory, intellect and will simi-
larly have a tentative quality that is somewhat different from the imme-
diate explanatory force that Thomas (for example) assumes they possess.
But when scholastics consider person, nature and relation (as well as later
use of arguments about the ways in which activity reveals power and
nature), a different situation obtains. Here scholastic Trinitarian theolo-
gies are deeply imbued with the traditions of discussing such concepts
mentioned at the end of the last paragraph. Augustine, and especially
some key passages of the *De trinitate*, are quoted as *auctoritates* in their
accounts. And yet, as we have seen, Augustine actually stands out
because of the thoroughness with which he struggles not to define but to
avoid such terminology.

Nevertheless, despite these differences, there is a deep consonance
between Augustine's account of persons as constituted by their eternal
intra-divine acts, which are in turn identical with their eternally being
generated and spirated, and Thomas's account of subsisting relations.
We should, however, continue to recognize that we deal here with two
conceptions which emerge in very different theological-rhetorical con-
texts. The differences between the theological cultures and concerns of
Thomas and Augustine are well illustrated by noting how, in his *Lectures
on John*, Thomas's John 5.19 exegesis differs from that of Augustine. For
Thomas, John 5.19 shows that Christ possesses divine power through his
eternal generation and, hence, is constituted perfect in his knowledge
and ability to act. Thomas begins his reading by accepting Augustine's
second exegetical rule: John 5.19 reveals something about the Son's
being from the Father, but should not be taken as implying inferior-
ity.[49] A little later he comments directly on the readings of Hilary and
Chrysostom: the former he takes to argue that the Word's eternal see-
ing of the Father indicates that the Word is eternally a perfect entity.
The latter he takes to argue that a correct reading of the Son's 'cannot'
shows that the Son's action conforms to the Father's. Augustine, Thomas
tells us, offers both of these in different contexts.[50] A little before, how-
ever, Thomas has offered his own preferred reading. Seeing is a mode of
receiving knowledge or of the derivation of knowledge, and the Son's
receiving of knowledge is identical with his being generated from the
Father's Wisdom. Thus the Son's 'seeing' is identical to his proceeding

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[49] *Ioan.* 5, lect. 3, n. 747–8.   [50] *Ioan.* 5, lect. 3, n. 751–3.

from the Father by an 'intellectual procession' (*procedere intelligibili processione a patre operante*).[51]

Thomas's solution parallels Augustine's: both think of the Son's seeing as identical to the Son's eternal generation. And yet there are differences. Thomas shows a clear preference for an explanation that interprets the Son's 'seeing' in terms of an already established metaphysical terminology. As part of this solution Thomas also presents the Son's 'seeing' as a cipher for the Son's intellectual procession. Augustine's solution invests the Son's 'seeing' with more significance, perhaps because he easily and naturally interprets seeing within a Plotinian context, perhaps also because he assumes a very particular style of correspondence between biblical terminology and divine reality itself. But despite these differences we are examining two options within a complex tradition. Augustine's influence here is vast, and yet not only does his work offer us a number of possible roads not taken by later tradition, but that tradition itself eventually marked out tracks that he could not have foreseen. While we can certainly speak of a 'Latin tradition' between Augustine and Thomas, good negotiation of and existence within that tradition now requires of us much sensitivity to its own internal modulations, disputes and conversations.

[51] *Ioan.* 5, lect. 3, n. 750.