

**Retrieving the *imago agens* in the structure of systematic
theology and spiritual exercise: a
search inspired by the illumination of the Master of the early fourteenth- century
Luttrell Psalter**

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Abstract

This thesis examines the role of the *imago agens* in psychagogical practice within systematic theology in order to interpret the hitherto unrecognized *imago agens* in the illumination of the Dominican Luttrell Master. It is an interdisciplinary study, creating an area for manuscript studies, memory studies and systematic theology to interact.

The field of manuscript studies has produced vast scholarly research on the historic, economic, and social aspects of the Psalter but not recognized the signs of theological discourse in the illumination. This is because theology is considered to be derivative of cultural constructs rather than formulative of them.

The *imago agens*, a visual rather than a pictorial image, is a key feature of the *ars memorativa* dating back to the fifth century BC Greek poet Simonides, the deliberate arranging of memorial triggers in the form of images against a personalised background scene. It is a cognitive object that, through memory, enables the human mind to compose with fresh understanding. Aristotle took the *ars* from rhetoric into dialectic to enable the discussion of unsolvable problems. It entered psychagogy in philosophy and was later taken by rhetoricians such as Augustine into the service of monastic spiritual exercises. The *ars* depended on *intentione*, tuning one's soul to God.

The *imago agens* was used in systematic theology as an element in psychagogy, the guidance of the soul through the spiritual exercises of meditation, right judgement and examination of conscience, originating in Ancient Greek philosophy.

Augustine believed Cicero to be the author, not simply a user of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, the first century BC record of the *ars* and this gave the *Rhetorica* and the *ars* an authority and use that lasted into the sixteenth century. Cicero defined a particular use of the *imago agens* as keeping hold within memory things that can scarcely be embraced by an act of thought. For Augustine, seeking to understand how one could even communicate about a God who was infinitely greater than any words, this became a way of holding transitory thoughts about the intransitory. A bad memory was not a forgetful one but a disorganized one and known as fornication, being unfaithful to God. Augustine's rhetorical and psychagogical structure in *de Trinitate* is based on the *imago agens*. He also contributed to the *ars* through the development of *ductus*, moving effectively between memory places. *De Trinitate* was the structural basis for Eriugena's *Periphyseon*, where he too uses both the *imago agens* and a Holy Spirit-based psychagogy. He also gives theological shape to the *imago agens* through his reading of Dionysius and Aristotle on dissimilarity as a clearer means of understanding the transcendent than similarity.

Eriugena's psychagogy provides the idiosyncratic opening image of the Luttrell Psalter. The role of the *ars memorativa*, given fresh life by Albertus and Aquinas, is to lead the patron of the Psalter to atonement through contemplation of an *imago agens* based on the opening lines of *Periphyseon*. For Dominicans the *ars* contributed, never forgetting grace, both to the ethical life here below and the on-going relationship with God that would allow one to partake in the beatific vision. It was both a practical aid in university dispute and extempore preaching but also eschatological. These memories and the ability to manipulate them, would survive death.

I am the author of this thesis and all the work within it is my own. This work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

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(informal permission for limited number for private use only)

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Abbreviations

Ad Her

Ad Herennium *Rhetorica ad Herennium*

Rhetorica

Conf. *Conférences (Collationes)*

De Doc Chr *De Doctrina Christiana*

De Mem et Rem *De Memoria et Reminiscentia Commentarium*

DeTr *De Trinitate*

PP *Periphyseon*

Introduction

In this thesis my purpose is to show that the *imago agens* has a role in the cognitive process as a key component of the *ars memorativa*, which was used in spiritual exercise and systematic theology. The methodological assumption is that the illumination must be examined in the theological context of the soteriological and eschatological role of memory in the relationship between human and God and in the human understanding of God as unity and trinity in pre-modern times. The use of the *imago agens* as part of the *ars memorativa* in the Psalter follows a long tradition that originated in the sixth century BC. In Christian times the use becomes particularly evident where there is a symbiosis between systematic theology, the practice of which leads to one's mind being informed by study and spiritual exercise, the practice of which leads to one's soul being formed by study. Following the links from the Psalter to works by Augustine and Iohannes Scottus Eriugena will show furthermore how, taken together, works were connected through their use of the *imago agens* but also how, taken individually, a further layer of theological interpretation can be added to each work by recognizing the *imagines agentes*. Both Augustine and Eriugena also contributed significantly to the practical development of the shape and ordering of the *imago agens*. I argue, therefore, that the manuscript illumination of the Luttrell Master was not the work of an anonymous, mentally deranged illuminator of inappropriate images, as commonly held. Rather, these images are *imagines agentes* and part of a sophisticated *ars memorativa* scheme. Furthermore, I strongly suggest that the Master was in fact John Luttrell, Doctor of Theology, Chancellor of Oxford University, Dominican friar and illegitimate half-brother to Sir Geoffrey Luttrell, the patron of the Psalter. He both used the *ars* himself and had the means and periods of stability, unusual for most travelling and wandering friars, to produce it on vellum.

For the past century scholars have wrestled with the nature of the illumination by the Luttrell Master in the margins of the fourteenth-century Luttrell Psalter, illumination that is not an illustration of the psalms and seemingly highly inappropriate compared with the sumptuous calligraphy and expensive size and material of the codex. The Luttrell Psalter is a “monument of national importance”¹ due to the detailed and lively presentation in its margins of an agricultural year in the life of the Irnham estate of Sir Geoffrey Luttrell (1276-1345) and of important events in his life

1 Eric Millar, *The British Museum Quarterly*, Vol.4, No.3 (Dec.1929), p. 63

as feudal lord. The agricultural scenes, covering the lower margins of eight consecutive folios and culminating in the scene of the family at the high table during a feast, have contributed greatly to the general picturing and understanding of rural medieval life in England. These folios are the work of solely one hand, known hitherto only as the Luttrell Master, who also had overall control of the Psalter and control of the work of other hands that provided the more formulaic scenes of the life of Christ and Mary. His work has been considered almost as one of two halves, however, for along with the greatly acclaimed rural scenes he provided hundreds of original *babewyns*, the fourteenth-century term for the hybrid figures of human, animal and plant elements, scattered in the margins throughout the Psalter. The opinion on these is divided but not positive - they are regarded either as the work of a tortured psychology, subversive protest against Sir Geoffrey, the landed gentry and ecclesiastical authorities, fear of the Devil or, at best, light-hearted whimsy. They remain under intense scrutiny, however, because the Master went to great trouble to create an original design feature for some of them, for which Millar coined the term “telescopic”, which is found in no other psalter.² Indeed the Master only worked on this Psalter.

If one looks closely at the feast scene (Fig 10), the occasion for which has remained an enigma up to now because of the lavish heraldic decorations but the meagre nature of the food actually on the table, only two figures are looking directly out at the viewer. Sir Geoffrey is recognizable from his coat of arms, linked to the colophon in the Psalter. The other is one of the two Dominican friars. He is nameless but personalized – his tonsure is bare in two places at the front due to a receding hairline. Sir Geoffrey, his wife, sons and daughter-in-law pictured with him have been the subject of intense academic study with regard to their historical, political, cultural and economic backgrounds, without, however, solving the enigma of the feast scene or of the purpose of the *babewyn*. The identity of the Luttrell Master and the dating of the Psalter have also proved elusive. It is noted that the Dominicans are present but the reason why has received scant attention at best. The steady gaze of the older Dominican is created using a technique for painting the expression of the eye that was a speciality of the Master. All his illumination is constructed to arrest the attention and to be memorable, in which he succeeded so well that his work was bought at great cost

2 Eric George Millar, *The Luttrell Psalter* (London: Printed for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1932), p. 16

for the nation in 1929 by public subscription after a record-breaking auction because it was considered that to lose it to an American buyer would be to lose a piece of the essence of England - and this in spite of doubts about the babewyn figures.

It is the contention of this thesis that the work is so arresting because it was a memory scheme in the classical mode of the *ars memorativa*, incorporating memory storage spaces and *imagines agentes*, incongruous images that were marker hooks to mark the storage places. It is tailor-made for the Psalter's patron, Sir Geoffrey Luttrell and based around the Lady Day annual estate accounting in a year when Lady Day, March 25, coincided with Good Friday, constructed as part of the pastoral care directed at preparing Sir Geoffrey's soul for the beatific vision after death. The *ars memorativa* was so important to the Dominicans that it was learnt by all young postulants both for use in their spiritual exercises and for their pursuit of academic theology. They also taught it to the laity as part of their duty of *cura animarum*, the cure of souls. They had set up a department at Pisa University devoted to its study, for the *ars* had a long history.³ It originated in the sixth century BC and was taken up by classical Greek philosophy, spreading to all branches when Aristotle took the use of the *ars memorativa* from rhetoric into dialectic, which was the philosophical grounding of later Christian systematic theology. Rhetoric is closely connected to the spiritual exercises, in that the master would chose the best way of presenting material to challenge or console his pupil, just as the rhetor would chose the best way of presenting his material to gain the response he wanted from his audience. It moved into Latin philosophy around the time of Cicero, when Latin philosophical prose became established in its own right, rather than as a transliteration of the Greek and later into Christian monastic theology and spiritual exercise.

Augustine was particularly important in this transition as he considered that the first-century BC guidebook to the *ars*, the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, was the work of Cicero and included it as the second part of Cicero's actual work *De Inventione*. Memory thus came to be included in the triad of *memoria, intellectus, providentia* that Cicero lists at the end of *De Inventione* as the parts of Prudence that

3 For an account of the Dominican convent of Santa Caterina in Pisa as the hub for the international diffusion of important theological and philosophical texts see Nicholas Townson, 'Thought about Emotion among Dominicans in Pisa and the Roman Province in the Thirteenth Century' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2014), pp. 7-8

allow one to live an ethical and moral life. The discussion of memory that follows is that of the guidelines to the *ars memorativa* in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, now bound together with *De Inventione*. In Christian terms the *ars memorativa* was now part of the spiritual exercise that allowed one to live an eschatological life, looking forward to the ultimate goal of the beatific vision in the life of the world to come. It crossed over from pagan philosophy to systematic theology not only as a useful tool when memory was considered more important than the written word on parchment because it allowed you to live that word and to create new ideas during contemplation but particularly where there was a symbiosis between systematic theology and spiritual exercise. In his own work, *De Trinitate*, Augustine subtly develops this triad of Cicero of *memoria, intellectus, providentia* to become *memoria, intellectus, voluntas*. Augustine himself contributed to the practical use of the *ars memorativa* in his theological explanation for *ductus*, the way one navigates mentally between the storage places to actually find what one has committed to memory. In his *Confessions* (Book X.8) he also describes the difference between images in general and *imagines agentes*. The former are a disorganized mass of all the sorts of things perceived by the senses, crowding forward and these have to be driven away “by the hand of my heart from the face of my remembrance” in order to allow the *imagines agentes* to come up readily and in unbroken order when called, then to retreat out of sight but remain ready to come again when Augustine wills.

Iohannes Scottus Eriugena in the ninth-century gave the theological rationale for *imagines agentes* as incongruous, inappropriate figures, drawing on the work of Dionysius the Areopagite in which unlikeness conveys more about something that cannot be defined than likeness. Eriugena himself gave a master class in his work *Periphyseon* on the symbiosis between spiritual exercise and systematic theology as he guides his student to the realisation that there can be a vast chasm in divine matters between using a word and truly understanding that word. It is Eriugena's central construct of the *imago agens* as letter pattern that is translated into pictorial pattern as the literal centrepiece of the marginal illumination of the Luttrell Psalter. This construct seeks to portray the total eternal participation of the creation in its Creator, in spite of the fact that we feel ourselves to be existing separately in a world of time and space, against the background of Eriugena's idiosyncratic idea of the human contribution of will, in its combination with knowledge and memory, to the final

experience of heaven and hell. He proposed in *Periphyseon* (935D-936B) that those who persist after death in willing what they remember from their earthly lives, knowing that it is evil, will forever be tormented by knowing it is unattainable. That such perversity should be possible in the universality of God is suggested in the theology of Dionysius's *Divine Names* (733A-C), a work translated from the Greek by Eriugena, where providence does not remove all defect from God's universality, thus allowing for the inclusion of unrepentant sinners in the total participation in all eternity of all creation in the Creator.

In the thirteenth century the Dominican masters Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas both stressed the use of the *ars memorativa* in Dominican and lay life and indeed, having assimilated the *ars memorativa* to the newly-rediscovered works of Aristotle, both gave it fresh impetus and renewed afresh the link between Cicero's *memoria, intellectus, providentia* as the parts of Prudence at the end of the first part of *De Inventione* and its second part, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* with the *ars memorativa*. Memory would survive as intellectual knowledge after death and because it was initiated by the physical senses when we were alive before being stored in the intellect would be the link between our physical bodies and life in the world of space and time and our eternal life after death.

The sophistication of the references to systematic theology in the illumination, coupled with the illuminator's intimate knowledge of the personal life and career of Sir Geoffrey and of all aspects of life on the estate, suggests to me a connection to or even an identity for the Master, that of John Luttrell (died 1335), Dominican Chancellor of Oxford University, eventually canon of Salisbury Cathedral. Although illegitimate he is one of the eight children of Sir Geoffrey's father recorded at the estate at Irnham, being therefore Sir Geoffrey's half-brother.⁴ He is known in theological history only for instigating the heresy process against the young Franciscan monk William of Ockham at the Papal Court in Avignon.⁵ Dominic J. O'Meara suggests that

4 Genealogical research on the Luttrells has concentrated on the descent from Sir Geoffrey due to the drama of the early twentieth-century auction, when just prior to proceedings another family suddenly claimed ownership of the manuscript and it therefore became important to establish provenance between Sir Geoffrey and modern times.

5 See C. K. Brampton 'Personalities at the Process against Ockham at Avignon, 1324-26, *Franciscan Studies* Vol.26 (1966), pp. 4-25

it was the Dominican positive interest in theories of Eriugena that led to the latter's work being condemned by the Dominicans' rival, the Bishop of Paris, in 1241, theories passed on to Thomas Aquinas by Albertus Magnus.⁶ The choice of the legend of Eriugena's death as the opening image on the first folio, stabbed to death by the pens of his pupils, might well reflect his own experience of betrayal. He was forcibly removed from the chancellorship by the scholars and academics of the university, aided by the bailiffs and mayor of Oxford and the Bishop of Lincoln and protested, in vain, to the king.⁷

Thus one can only do full justice to the sophistication of the marginal illumination, I propose, if one examines the *imagines agentes* not only as represented in the Psalter illumination but also their roots in the contributory works that inform it, namely Augustine's *De Trinitate* and Eriugena's *Periphyseon* and also briefly at Albertus' and Aquinas' writing on the *ars memorativa* in their own work and in commentaries on Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, the work of Aquinas on Book Twelve of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (the Luttrell Master uses this to give overall structure to his scheme) and Aquinas's *Summa contra Gentiles*. A brief look at this latter, which will be discussed in detail in chapter 4, gives an example of why this is - the Luttrell Master's conflates, as part of his memory scheme, an image of his patron, Sir Geoffrey, with a well-known image taken from the *Summa contra Gentiles* of two men towing a boat, this image having been chosen by Aquinas to illustrate his discussion concerning the nature of the cooperation of man and God. In the Psalter margins the Luttrell Master has drawn Sir Geoffrey in the boat and he is seemingly rowing against the two men who are pulling the boat along a tow-path. (Fig. 6) The Master wants to gain and retain Sir Geoffrey's attention to the question of his own cooperation with God and what is hindering it. It is this context that makes this thesis interdisciplinary, occupying the hitherto dimly lit zone between systematic theology, memory studies and illuminated manuscript studies.

The thesis will therefore concentrate on demonstrating the use of the *imago agens* in three works, all of which are not only linked in the discussion of the work of the

6 'Eriugena and Aquinas on the Beatific Vision', *Eriugena Redivivus: Zur Wirkungsgeschichte seines Denkens im Mittelalter und im Uebergang zur Neuzeit*, ed. Werner Beierwaltes (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1987), p. 224-225

7 National archives, reference no. SC 8/267/13337, nationalarchives.gov.uk

Luttrell Master but which furthermore are also individually concerned with some permutation of the classic Aristotelian puzzle of how the individual relates to other individuals and to the universal. These three are perennial favourites in their genre whose use of the *imago agens* as a key component in formulating theology is unrecognized. If one finds the *imagines agentes*, however, a further layer of interpretation is possible, that of the symbiosis between spiritual exercise and systematic theology that occurs when giving close attention to an aporia, such as Aristotle's puzzle, that cannot be answered but whose constant reconsideration can enable an increase in knowledge and lived understanding. *De Trinitate* by the Church Father St. Augustine of Hippo (345-430 AD), presents this aporia of Aristotle in a Christian guise, the relationship between the Creator and creation in the light of the Creator's own Trinitarian nature. *Periphyseon* by the Carolingian court theologian and Irish monk Iohannes Scottus Eriugena (c. 815-877 AD) is an example of spiritual exercise in dialogue form between the master and his pupil, also reinterpreting Aristotle's puzzle to explore how the relationship between the Creator and creation can be one of complete, eternal participation. The illumination scheme of the Luttrell Psalter (dated at some point between Lady Day 1334 and John Luttrell's death in 1335, by my reckoning) has at its theological heart Eriugena's letter-pattern *imago agens* for the complete and eternal participation and translates it into a miniature painting in the margin of the Psalter. Not recognizing the use of the *imago agens* means all three have been judged incoherent at some stage. Augustine himself accused the copy, pirated by overzealous devotees, of part of his own *De Trinitate* of this and twentieth century commentators have so accused *Periphyseon* and the illumination of the Luttrell Psalter.

The methodological approach is that of illuminated manuscript studies, namely, that one starts with the visual evidence and looks for its context but this thesis extends its examination into a wider context than previously undertaken, namely the relationship in the long period under discussion between memory, spiritual exercise, and systematic theology. 'Visual' applies in the case of the *imago agens* not only to what we would term pictorial presentations but also to the patterning of letters that are intended to attract attention independently of their meaning, the pattern adding a further dimension to that meaning. In the scriptoria one would just as well write images as draw letters, unlike the modern division between calligraphy and art.

Augustine's triads in *De Trinitate*, which are linked together as cogwheels are in a watermill (a classic *ars memorativa* trope for the mind moving forward like the teeth in gears in spiritual exercise, that is also used by Augustine's contemporary Cassian), Eriugena's paranomastic constructs, a visual word technique found in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and the *babewyn* in the Luttrell Psalter are all *imagines agentes* because all are designed as marker hooks for material in memory storage.

A brief example of how recognizing the *imago agens* can also contribute to theological discussion now follows. Tracing the origin of the *imagines agentes* in *De Trinitate* back to the first cog, as it were, highlights how Augustine's reflection did not actually begin in chapter 8 of this work, with a consideration of the beloved, the loved one and the love between them as a triad that somehow reflects that of the Trinitarian relationship. It begins with Cicero's triad of memory, understanding and foresight as parts of Prudence (flagged up by Augustine himself in *DeTr*; 14.11.14) which is to be found at the end of the first part of the *Rhetorica - De Inventione*, the ensuing discussion of memory that becomes part of the most important triad – memory, understanding, will thus being found in the *ad Herennium* bound to it. The progression in *De Trinitate* is therefore from a triad that culminates in foresight to one that culminates in will as the last part of the triad – *memoria, intellectus, providentia* to *memoria, intellectus, voluntas*. This is the theological provenance that allows Eriugena to make *voluntas*, linked to memory and understanding, the centre of his eschatological vision, in which the human will has a role in determining the final heaven or hell. This is the background that contributes to a fresh understanding of the work of the Luttrell Master as a work of *ars memorativa* constructed as part of the pastoral care of the memory and will of his patron. Finding and following the *imago agens* provides another tool in the interpretation of academic and pastoral works.

The structure of the *ars memorativa* remained the same throughout this period. It had two main components, the storage places for things to be remembered in order to effect new compositions and the *imagines agentes*, striking, disconcerting, or absurdly amusing images that marked the position of each of the storage places. The storage places had originally been based on classical architecture and later in Christian practice on the architecture of church and monastery. Albertus recommended that when the *ars* was taught to the laity, real places familiar to them be used. For Sir

Geoffrey, this was his estate. The rules for creating the *imagines agentes* remained the same, in that they were barely elaborated in order to allow for as much personalization as possible and these *imagines agentes* in the Psalter were the babewyn. (Not all were necessarily used in the *ars memorativa*. At a time when there were no page numbers, psalm, chapter or verse numbering many served an essential role as the equivalent of book marks to find one's way around the Psalter.) A third element needs to be brought into the equation from the time of Augustine onwards, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* because the *ars memorativa* was used in conjunction with other rhetorical techniques in the work – paralipsis in the case of Augustine's *De Trinitate* and paronomasia in Eriugena's *Periphyseon*.

Technical terms and themes

After examining the scholarship relevant to the interaction of the disciplines of manuscript studies, memory studies and theology in the literature on the Psalter to see how this has impacted on the understanding of the *imago agens* over the last century, the following three chapters will examine the development of the *imago agens* from early Greek philosophy, its cross-over into the Christian Church Fathers and extension into pre-scholastic theology. This will provide the background that the Luttrell Master drew on when designing the Luttrell Psalter in the wider context of Dominican scholastic theology, when the order's theologians Albertus and Aquinas sought to assimilate the newly rediscovered thought of Aristotle with their use of the *imago agens* in the *ars memorativa*, unaware that he had been instrumental in its original development. Each discipline has its own technical language and so it is first intended to give an overview of the terrain to be covered to provide an explanation of some of the key terms and theories before turning to this interaction of the scholarship.

The *imago agens* is an integral element of the *ars memorativa*, the memory scheme formalized by the Greek poet Simonides around 520 BC. This scheme is an *ars* because it is a learnt practice, and dependent upon the psychological manipulation of emotion to secure memory, this manipulation being known as *affectus*. To be effective, *affectus* has to be highly personalized, although strictly adhering to a few basic rules. It is not rote learning. Its base is in correct judgement allowing one to align oneself ethically with a philosophical system or divine being, this process being

known as *intentio*. This one learns, initially with the aide of a guide but the individual creation of the *imago* means there is no system that can be generally applied and experience is needed to perfect both one's own *imagines* and judgements. In Ancient Greece this was in a circle of philosophers, later it was taken by converts into the Christian monastic context. Each *imago agens* acts as a key to unlock, as it were, a cache of deliberately stored facts, things, concepts, ideas and so on. Visualizing the *imago* allows you to bring everything in this cache out of memory into current thought, in order to allow its creative use in furthering knowledge and understanding. Deciding what to put into the cache and what to delete is what is closely linked in *intentio* to the practice of ethics and to the spiritual development of the practitioner, these two being closely related in the life of the ancient Greek and Latin philosophers and crossing over from there into the spiritual lives of the early Christian monastic desert communities. In a further practical use, by scholastic times the *ars* allowed practioners to immediately and accurately access texts from memory from any Biblical or theological codices that they had previously heard or read in physical monastic or university libraries using the *ars memorativa*. Thomas Aquinas, for example, dictated his works, complete with quotations, solely from memory whenever inspiration overtook him. The Franciscan William of Ockham likewise drew on his mental library to write when banished far from any codices as a result of fleeing the trial in Avignon in 1328 - what he lamented was not having access, through codices, to others' new ideas. Its use was more than practical, however, if one considers that images could be said to mediate between the sensual world here below and whatever was animating it from above. It was therefore a spiritual imperative to curate them with integrity.

At this point it is important to reiterate that an *imago agens* is not just an 'image' in the pictorial sense but includes visual patterns of letters that we would classify as words. This is a crucial difference with modern times when words are primarily considered to be connected with sounds, as in phonetic spelling. Rudolph Arnheim refers to “perceptual and pictorial shapes” with regard to visual thinking and this is very helpful here.⁸ It is particularly this kind of *imago agens* that slips under the radar in contemporary consideration of pre-Renaissance theological texts. Calligraphy was considered a visual, not an aural event.⁹

8 Rudolph Arnheim, *Visual Thinking* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) p. 134

9 It slightly muddies the waters that scholars using the Latin term *imagines agentes* in discussions of memory books from the mid fourteenth century humanist Renaissance of Petrarch onwards, the neo-

By the fourth century BC the *ars memorativa* was taught as a part of rhetoric but Aristotle (384-322 BC) widened it into the study of dialectic because of the peculiar ability of the *imago agens* to aid in the consideration of a philosophical aporia. The difference between dialectic and rhetoric can be briefly highlighted in the nature of its presentation. Dialectic is the use of questions and answers to explore logically matters of a universal, most probably theoretical nature. This is usually within a teaching environment but Aristotle was keen to point out that one could dialogue with oneself. Rhetoric is a more public affair, political gatherings, for example, characterized by the monologue that uses emotion as well as reason and addresses matters of a more practical, particular nature. Again, by the time of scholastic medieval universities both were combined in the arena of the dispute, where the master was dependent on his *ars memorativa* to give extempore responses, with precise quotations, in a formal and public situation to the questions of his students, questions of which he had no prior knowledge.

An aporia can be said to concern itself with the dissection of what cannot be defined. This makes it difficult to define it in itself but the Swiss architect le Corbusier makes a valiant attempt that is very helpful here. He took a mathematical problem he had tried to solve in his design work to a pure mathematician and received the answer

Your two initial squares are not square; one of their sides is larger by six thousandths than the other. In everyday practice, six thousandths of a value are what is called a negligible quantity, a quantity which does not enter into account; it is not seen with the eye. But in philosophy (and I have no key to that austere science) I suspect that these six thousandths of a value have infinitely precious importance: the thing is not open or shut, it is not sealed; there is a chink to let in the air; life is there, awakened by the recurrence of a fateful equality

Latin period, extend the meaning to any two or three- dimensional objects that remind the viewer to perform positive actions. These actions were concerned with the rediscovery of classical texts, the loss of which scholars considered had broken the collective memory of things known and which had to be glued back into this collective memory with the aid of the *imagines agentes*. The texts had to be incorporated into the organized memory. See K. A. E. Enenkel, '*Imagines agentes :geheugenboeken en de organisatie van kennis in de Neolatijnse literatuur*', (*Imagines agentes: memory books and the organization of knowledge in Neo-Latin literature*) (Leiden University; inaugural lecture *Stichting Akademieerstoelen Geesteswetenschappen*, 28 January 2005) <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl> handle: <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/4314>

which is not exactly, not strictly equal.....And that is what creates movement.¹⁰

Aristotle's main aporia was that of the relationship between individuals as individuals and individuals as instances of a (or maybe the?) universal, to the consideration of which he devoted his work, *Metaphysics*. Where no definitive opinions could be given because the problem was blown continuously just out of reach by the air currents let in by the gap, the *imago agens* could move beyond the mediating role of images to provide a provisional but ever-tightening grip on what was infinitely beyond precise knowledge. The Latin rhetorician Cicero (106-43 BC), in his search for Aristotle's use of aporia in psychagogy (see below), addressed the role and nature of the *imago agens* in his work *De Oratore*.

Things not seen and not lying in the field of visual discernment are earmarked, as it were, by a sort of outline and image and shape so that we can keep hold, as it were by an act of sight things that we can scarcely embrace by an act of thought. (II.lxxxvii.358)¹¹

Aristotle's students gathered to discuss the aporia, deciding what 'places', *topoi*, they were going to address that day, ie what cache of stored memories they were going to open. This brings us to the second vital element of the *ars memorativa*, the place in which the memories were stored. Each cache is placed mentally in a real or imagined architectural space. Initially, these were the built environments of the Greek or Roman streetscape. Later it was the various buildings and church of the Christian monastery, later still, the economic infrastructure of rural medieval estates. In talking of what *topos*, place, they were going to study that day they provide a direct link between our talk of topics for study and Aristotle's use of the *ars memorativa*.

The clarion call of Aristotle's aporia of the relationship between individuals as individuals and individuals as instances of the universal, considered in his *Metaphysics*, will reverberate in various permutations in all these works against a Christian background. How can one know God without particularising him and contradicting the indivisibility of his universality and how could he know himself

10 Charles-Edouard Jeannet-Gris, *Le Modulor* (Paris:1950), trans. by P. de Francia et A. Bostock, (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1954) pp. 234-5. See also Edward Booth, *Aristotelian Aporetic Ontology in Islamic and Christian Thinkers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) p.x

11 Cicero, *De Oratore* II. lxxxvi 351-353 trans. by E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham (London: Loeb Classical Library, Heinemann, 1957), p. 469

without doing the same? How are the members of the Trinity differentiated, given the universality of God? How does God, as universal and as Trinity relate to his creation and its members to him, particularly in a pastoral context? The *imago agens* was particularly useful for retaining something that one in some way apprehended but did not understand. Following Augustine, this 'something' was paradoxically what was most valuable, the very nature of God – as long as *intentio* was vigorously practised to stay on the Christian rails. “What then, brothers, shall we say of God? For if you have been able to understand what you would say, it is not God. If you have been able to comprehend it, you have comprehended something else than God. If you have been able to comprehend Him as you think, by so thinking you have deceived yourself. This then is not God, if you have comprehended it; but if this be God, you have not comprehended it. How therefore would you speak of that which you cannot comprehend?”¹² In *De Trinitate* this aporia for Augustine was the trinity of Father, Son and Spirit within the unity of God. The gap marked by the *imago agens* contained all that one somehow apprehended in ongoing spiritual and academic consideration of that relationship for use in psychagogy.

Cicero both formulated a particular role for the *imago agens* within the use of systematic theology within psychagogy and was also unwittingly instrumental in the *imago agens* entering the structure of systematic theology itself because Augustine believed him to be the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. Psychagogy is the guidance of the soul and for ancient philosophers this was the moral and ethical development that through the practice of true rhetoric guides the soul to true knowledge. (False rhetoric, in contrast, aims to deceive.) It is this partnership of rhetoric and psychagogy that spurred Aristotle to include the *ars memorativa*, a rhetorician's tool, within the dialectic toolbox. Wrestling with philosophical aporia and later with theological puzzles strengthened moral and ethical muscles, however the precious knowledge gained could often only be tentatively grasped. Often one had to remember the hard won knowledge that one had moved from the delusion of understanding to the knowledge that one did not actually understand. The influence of Plato (eg Phèdre 227d-278b) ran through the millenia in deeming *philosophia* to be a lived wisdom according to a reasoned way of life, not a theory or system of

¹² *Sermones de Scripturi Novi Testamenti*, 50, 6:16 trans. Richard Woods, *Mysticism and Prophecy* (London: DLT, 1998), p. 52-3

knowledge.

From Augustine's time what guidelines there were to the *ars memorativa* were inextricably linked to Cicero, whom he deemed to be the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. Both the author and Herennius, immortalized in the title of this collection of teachings, are still unknown but the text is thoroughly Greek both in content and style, written in Latin in a style that belongs to the beginning of prose in Latin, around 88-79 BC. It reflected centuries of established rhetorical teaching in legal, political, philosophical and religious practice. The *imago agens* took on particular spiritual heft and a collective communal nature with the importance of memory in the theology and practice of Judaeo-Christianity - in Judaism with the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 by the Romans and the subsequent diaspora and in the institution of eucharistic *anamnesis* in early Christianity. In both cases there is absence, a gap, that needs somehow to be grasped - of God, no longer in his Temple and of Christ no longer on mortal soil. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* was well-known in Milan when Augustine arrived to study with Ambrose, its Bishop, at the beginning of his religious life. He was already deeply attached to Tullius Cicero, being himself a trained and renowned rhetorician. The *Rhetorica* contained as detailed a description of the *ars memorativa* as one was going to get, given its highly personalised nature. It was in Milan that Augustine seems to have had it bound together with Cicero's *De Inventione* (the first part Cicero and the second part the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*) to form the work that was from then on known as Cicero's or Tullius's *Rhetoric*.

The (mis)understanding in the interaction of the scholarship

In the Luttrell Psalter, as discussed above, the Luttrell Master has inserted a portrayal of Sir Geoffrey Luttrell into an image he has taken from a theological work of the Dominican master Thomas Aquinas, using *ars memorativa* rules taken from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. A literature review of the past century of commentary on the Luttrell Psalter has to take into consideration scholarship from the fields of psalter illumination, systematic theology, spiritual direction and the medieval craft of memory. The aim is to evaluate how they impact on each other in the study of this particular psalter.

Beryl Smalley describes how English friars in the early fourteenth century, both Dominican and Franciscan, were using and sharing details of memory images that did not originate from any created two or three dimensional image and were never externalized as a physical image on parchment or wood.¹³ Such intangibility would obviously make them problematic within the field of art history. They only seem tentatively to offer visibility when linked into rhetorical paronomasia, which does survive but in written form.¹⁴ The bridge from rhetoric and specifically the *ars memorativa* within rhetoric to manuscript illumination and therefore art history was first made by Frances Yates. She is not addressing the Luttrell Psalter in particular, although her reference to 'tortured psychology' must be directly influenced by Eric Millar's 1932 assessment of the Luttrell Master in a work that was definitive throughout the twentieth century. Millar writes that "it is not easy to do justice to the powers of imagination displayed, even if of a decidedly morbid tendency. The mind of a man who could deliberately set himself to ornament a book with such subjects...can hardly have been normal".¹⁵ Yates, however, realises that there is method in the apparent madness.

Are the strange figures to be seen on the pages of medieval manuscripts and in all forms of medieval art not so much the revelation of a tortured psychology as evidence that the Middle Ages, when men had to remember, followed classical rules for making memorable images? Is the proliferation of new imagery in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries related to the renewed emphasis on memory by the scholastics? I have tried to suggest that this is almost certainly the case.¹⁶

Her attention was taken by two particular scholastics, the Dominican theologian Albertus Magnus who was responsible for a systematic reappraisal of the *ad Herennium* memory art because it was now revealed as reflecting the authority of the newly rediscovered Aristotle, making it a central part of the Dominican curriculum and his pupil Thomas Aquinas. Yates briefly examines their extensive commentaries on

13 Beryl Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960), pp. 114-115

14 Smalley, *ibid*, gives the example of the creation of an 'invisible' mental image to accompany some paronomasic lines highlighting the main elements of idolatry as fornication

*Mulier notata, oculis orbata,
aure mutilata, cornu ventilata,
vultu defomata et morbo vexata.*

15 Eric Millar, *The Luttrell Psalter* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1932), p. 16

16 Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge, 1966, this ed 2012), p. 112

Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia* to extract information about the memory art from them, drawing on the work of Paolo Rossi.¹⁷ Yates notes how Aquinas was more valued in the ensuing centuries as the Doctor of Memory than as a Doctor of the Church. “If Simonides was the inventor of the art of memory, and “Tullius” its teacher, Thomas Aquinas became something like its patron saint.”¹⁸ The art history world only responded to what were the original insights of Yates after the publication of Mary Carruther's *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* in 1990. Carruthers declared that “finally, and most importantly of all, any work on artificial memory systems must begin with the studies of Frances Yates and Paolo Rossi.”¹⁹ Her work was taken up in the diverse fields of history, music, the arts, literature, anthropology, neuropsychology, artificial memory and meditation within the field of religion. Yates' work then went into more than twenty reprints over the following twenty years. Rossi was translated into English after the publication of Carruther's book.²⁰

Yates' question now got a response from the art history field through a reading of Carruthers. Lucy Freeman Sandler asked if these images “are mnemonic devices intended to implant the words of the psalms into the memory?”²¹ She answered in the negative, having consulted the memory treatise of the fourteenth-century Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Bradwardine, which was his interpretation of the basic rules of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. There are two issues here. Firstly, Bradwardine, as a secular cleric was not enamoured of the mendicant orders in general and the Dominicans in particular. The friars, in their preaching and confessor ministry, did not fit into the parish system or its episcopal jurisdiction and were considered to be syphoning off money that would otherwise go to the local priest. Interwoven with this was the continued episcopal suspicion of the influence of the pagan Aristotle on the Dominicans. Anti-mendicant feeling against the Dominicans had also ran high

17 Yates, pp. 68-93. Paolo Rossi, *Clavis universalis: arti mnemoniche e logica combinatoria de Lullo a Leibniz* (Milan: Riccardi, 1960), pp. 9-20

18 Yates, p. 93

19 Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, this ed. 2008), p. 17

20 Paolo Rossi, trans. by S. Clucas, *Logic and the Art of Memory: the Quest for a Universal Language* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000)

21 Lucy Freeman Sandler, 'The Word in the Text and the Image in the Margin: The Case of the Luttrell Psalter', p. 97 *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, Vol.54, Essays in Honor of Lilian M. C. Randall (1996) pp. 87-99 and 'The Study of Marginal Imagery: Past, Present and Future', p. 40 *Studies in Iconography*, 18 – 1997 pp. 1-49

amongst the secular clergy in the universities, with their introduction of Aristotle to the curricula. Thomas Aquinas's inaugural lecture as Master in the University of Paris was accompanied by royal bowmen appointed to prevent a repeat of the attack on the Dominican convent of St Jacques by university students incited by the Bishop of Paris.²² At the time of the Dominicans portrayed in the Luttrell Psalter there was an ongoing conservative onslaught on Aristotelianism and the English Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Bradwardine, was equally scathing of the mendicant Dominicans and their theologian Thomas Aquinas. In addition, he considered that Aquinas's assessment of divine will had implications that could be potentially undermining of royal and episcopal authority.²³ Before becoming Archbishop Bradwardine had served as chaplain and confessor to Edward III and as a court diplomat. He does not stick to the text of the *ad Herennium* as the second part of Cicero, as Albert and Aquinas do but uses the rules as the basis for his own treatise. His interpretation, which is very convoluted, has no mechanism for dealing with open-ended situations. He opens by explaining that “the locations are permanent and fixed, whereas the images are at one moment inked on like letters and at another erased”.²⁴ This works on a practical level for rhetorical events such as an address within a liturgical service or at a court function but has nothing of the sophistication of the Dominican use of the art, absorbed from Cicero. This Dominican use would be needed for mendicant extempore preaching in a market square but also for all monastic spiritual formation that fostered a developing understanding of God gained from systematic theology as exercise, when the basic idea is not to erase images but to keep firmly in memory what could not quite be expressed in words for ongoing consideration. It therefore also allowed the friars to keep up both their own spiritual formation and academic theology when they had travelled far away from their home monastery, with no luggage and therefore no codices.

22 Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt, *Thomas Aquinas: Faith, Reason and Following Christ* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 27

23 See Janine Marie Idziak, 'In Search of "Good Positive Reasons" for an Ethics of Divine Commands: A Catalogue of Arguments', pp. 55-56 *Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers*, Vol. 6, Iss.1, Article 4, 1989 pp. 47-64.

It would be fair to say that although Thomas Aquinas was canonized in 1323 his theology was not. Not only was there ongoing opposition from the Franciscans but also from within his own order, which is the subject of Elizabeth Lowe, *The Contested Theological Authority of Thomas Aquinas: The Controversies between Hervaeus Natalis and Durandus of St. Pourçain* (New York: Routledge, 2003)

24 Thomas Bradwardine *De memoria artificiali acquirenda* MS McClean 169, MS Harley 4166 verso1, trans. by Mary Carruthers in *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), pp. 207-214

The second issue is that of the use of the psalter. There is no numbering of psalms or their verses in any psalter nor page numbers.²⁵ This is because all religious had to be *psalteratus*, to know the psalms by heart, to be professed and all secular clerics likewise to be ordained. Psalm numbering and verse numbers existed but were only used verbally, during lectures, for example, to allow listeners to activate their memories because all 150 psalms were known by heart (remembering that the heart is the medieval seat of memory, *ricordari* and the Aristotelian seat of thought). This was a long-standing monastic practice, clearly elaborated by Hugh of St Victor.

For surely, you do not think that those who wish to cite some one of the psalms have turned over the manuscript pages, so that starting their count from the beginning they could figure out what number in the series of Psalms each might have? The labor in such a task would be too great. Therefore they have in their heart a powerful mental device, and they have retained it in memory, for they have learned the number and the order of each single item in the series.²⁶

Sandler is right to question the feasibility of Bradwardine's memory scheme assisting the learning of the psalm words by placing illustrations next to them. However, that was never the intention of any memory art because that memorization happened aurally before any psalter codex was used.

In addition, this is not what Yates was suggesting. The classical rules for making images were being followed but Sandler has not realised to what these images relate. This is a failure to actually look at the psalter itself. She states “the image of the four men in the boat rowing for all they are worth in an empty sea is impossible to forget.”²⁷ This image is found on folio 160v (Fig. 6). This shows that they are not rowing at sea at all but are being towed along by two men on a tow path, who have to drag the boat because they are rowing against them. This image comes from Aquinas's *Summa contra errores Graecorum* where Aquinas is explaining how cooperation between Creator and created is to be understood and how this differs from the cooperation of the Trinity (See chapter 5). The whole edge of this folio is being used to construct an

25 Indeed there was no page numbering at all until the advent of printing because each scribe's hand varied.

26 Hugh of St Victor, 'The Three Best Memory-Aids for Learning History', p.341 trans. by Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, pp. 339-344

27 Sandler, (1996), p. 97

image that will enable memorisation not of the psalms but of another academic theological text. It is vital, in dealing with an art that is so heavily invested in the visual, to actually look at the images in their own right. Below the rowing boat is a large snail, drawn with immense botanical skill, the different textures of the shell and body almost palpable. This is marked simply as a snail in all the manuscript literature, which misses the fact that the shell markings as drawn by the Luttrell Master portray the golden ratio, the perfect proportion. For Aquinas proportion was a way of describing how the creature could know God, as stated in his *Summa Theologiae*.²⁸ The opposite folio bears another textured drawing of a bull but with human eyes. This is a reference to Aquinas, known as the dumb ox in his postulant days but portrayed as a bull because castrati could not be ordained.

Humbert of Romans, the Dominican Master General from 1254 to 1263 in his regulations for the order, *Opera de vita regulari* had set up silent reading rooms in which it was possible to study Aristotle in the years before the Dominicans had managed to include it on curricula outside their order and other controversial texts so as not to attract the notice that attended the usual practice of reading and chanting aloud of study texts.²⁹ The friars might not have access to these texts in other monasteries or to any texts at all when out on the road so it is understandable that

novices come to prefer the knowledge held safe in their memories to that available only in books.³⁰

When they did have regular access to a psalter, they took advantage to fix their *imagines agentes* related to these other texts, either for themselves or as part of their confessional ministry to their patrons. The emphasis on memory had predated the recovery of Aristotle's works, however and is particularly noted in the life St Dominic, who founded the order in 1216. Jordan of Saxony, St Dominic's biographer, highlights

28 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I.12.1 "Proportion is twofold. In one sense it means a certain relation of one quantity to another, according as a double, treble and equal are species of proportion. In another sense every relation of one thing to another is called proportion. And in this sense there can be a proportion of the creature to God, inasmuch as it is related to Him as the effect of its cause, and as potentiality to its act; and in this way the created intellect can be proportioned to know God."

29 Humbert of Romans, *Opera de vita regulari*, Vol 1 p. 421 ed. J.J. Berthier (Turin: Marietti, 1956)

30 Humbert of Romans, *Opera de vita regulari*, Vol. 2 c5.18, p. 230 ed. J.J. Berthier (Turin: Marietti, 1956)

the importance of the creativity of memory from the very beginning of the order, aligned to the systematic theological knowledge and spiritual development that informed the essential activities of preaching and hearing confessions.

The things which he easily understood were watered by the pious bent of his mind and blossomed into salutary works.....His memory, which was a storehouse of divine things, fruitfully spilled out from this to that and his external words and character bespoke what lay hidden within his sacred breast.³¹

Aquinas' interpretation of this – *contemplata aliis tradere* – became one of the mottos of this order that was dedicated to preaching.³²

The physical setting of the monastery itself, not just the scriptorium or quiet reading room, was a memory place. The *Libellus de instructione et consolatione novitiorum*, written by an anonymous Dominican friar no later than 1283, describes the monastery as an allegory of the soul, through which the novice learns to go on a contemplative journey, ordering his experiences of *affectus* and practising spiritual discipline.

The novice learns to order his soul by mystically transposing it with the convent and the community in which he dwells. Each room, each building, each officer in the convent represents a different aspect of spiritual discipline, just as on the literal level they function as the various arenas and duties of the regular life.³³

Christian monastic life had been linked from its beginning into the philosophical spiritual exercises, to the extent that it is considered that Athanasius' *Life of Anthony*, the hermit in the Egyptian desert (251-326AD) considered to be the founder of monasticism, was deliberately intended to mirror that of Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*, the Greek Hellenistic philosopher born and raised in Egypt who died in 270AD.³⁴ Both *Lives* were core texts well beyond the Renaissance. In both accounts, the conversion experience meant a reorientation to traditional culture and education,

31 Jordan of Saxony, *Libellus* n. 7 in ed. F.C.Lehner, *St Dominic: Biographical Documents* (Washington, DC: The Thomist Press, 1964), p. 10

32 *Summa Theologiae*, Ia-IIae q.188 a.6 co. See also Sermon 9 *Exiit qui seminat* pars 3

33 M. M. Mulchahey, "First the Bow is Bent in Study": *Dominican Education before 1350* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies, 1998), p. 119

34 See Aidan Nichols, OP, *What is the Religious Life* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2015), p. 17

known to the Greeks as *paideia*.

Conversion to philosophy meant a profound inward orientation in which one was in a sense reborn into a new awareness of everything most sublime in the cultural tradition.³⁵

For the monks this cultural tradition was that of the Word of God in both its senses, that of the Scriptures and of the person of Christ, as well as the writings of the Fathers. For Plotinus's novice philosophers it was “not sufficient simply to repeat Plato; it was necessary to elaborate and develop the truth implicit in the texts, so that each one might apprehend the truth in himself.”³⁶

Carruthers characterizes the role of the *ars memorativa* in this monastic version of the spiritual exercises as “enriched visualization” but it is to be remembered that this is a self-disciplined and exacting process subject to rigorous supervision. The Latin *meditatio* derives from the Greek *meletema* which was the mental and physical exercises undergone and used for athletes and philosophers equally.³⁷

a. *Curiositas* – fornication

The field of art history did not follow Yates's insight into the role of the *ars memorativa* in psalter illumination and therefore did not make the link into systematic theology. It also did not take account of the role of the *ars memorativa* when addressing St Bernard of Clairvaux's reform of the visual aspects of Cistercian life. Seemingly, St Bernard was not happy with all the *ars memorativa* type imagery that surrounded him in psalters, bibles, missals, misericords, church and monastery buildings, even in places that were normally inaccessible once the masons' scaffolding had come down. St Bernard was aware that the use of the images had degenerated into *curiositas*, which was undermining the effective use of memory images. It was the disordered use of memory images that Cassian had compared to fornication. Bernard

35 D. Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert. The Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 49

36 Ibid, p.53

37 Mary Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 127 n. 41

is often quoted in the first wave of art historical criticism on psalter illumination, as simply objecting to such imagery on account of its being in bad taste. Images in good taste, in contrast, were to be found in historical codices.³⁸

.....in the cloisters, before the eyes of the brothers while they read – what is that ridiculous monstrosity doing, an amazing kind of deformed beauty and yet a beautiful deformity? What are the filthy apes doing there? The fierce lions? The monstrous centaurs? The creatures, part man and part beast? The striped tigers? The fighting soldiers? The hunters blowing horns? You may see many bodies under one head, and conversely many heads on one body. On one side the tail of a serpent is seen on a quadruped, on the other side, the head of a quadruped is on the body of a fish. Over there an animal has a horse for the front half and a goat for the back; here a creature which is horned in front is equine behind. In short, everywhere so plentiful and astonishing a variety of contradictory forms is seen that one would rather read in the marble than in the books, and spend the whole day wondering at every single one of them than in meditating on the law of God.³⁹

Twenty-five years before Millar's assessment of the Luttrell Master as basically deranged, his predecessor at the British Museum, Sydney Cockerell, considered the Luttrell Psalter to be the decadent low point of the East Anglican style.⁴⁰ These views entered the mainstream via works such as those of the Anglican cleric F. Harrison.⁴¹

38 Such imagery in bad taste seemed to be exclusively found in monastic or church - related environments or in court rolls, which developed from the monastic involvement in the court system. This is admittedly a sweeping statement because so many objects have not survived from the period and because those that were church-related had a better chance of survival. However, objects where such exuberance might be expected, such as tarot cards, appear to be off-limits to such imagery. (Some of the earliest tarot cards can be found in the Accademia Carrara, Bergamo, Italy.) Codices on historical-political themes, such as Goffredo da Viterbo's 'Pantheon' of roughly the same date as the Luttrell Psalter, do not seem to have any illumination that a present day art historian would consider to disturb the stateliness of their subject matter. (Pantheon di Goffredo da Viterbo 1331 Italia www.centrodocumentazioneviterbo.it/pantheon) [accessed 22 May 2021]

39 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Apologia ad Guillelmum Abbatem*, trans. and ed. by Conrad Rudolph, *The "Things of Greater Importance": Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude Towards Art*, (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1990), p. 282
Ceterum in claustris, coram legentibus fratribus, quid facit illa ridicula monstruositas, mira quaedem deformis formositas ac formosa deformitas? Quid ibi immundae simiae? Quid feri leones? Quid monstruosi centauri? Quid semihomines? Quid maculosae tigrides? Quid milites pugnantes? Quid venatores tubicinantes? Videas sub uno capite multa corpora, et rursus in uno corpore capita multa. Cernitur hinc in quadrepede cauda serpentis, illinc in pisce caput quadrupedis. Ibi bestia praefert equum, capram trahens retro dimidiam; hic cornutum animal equum gestat posterius. Tam multa denique, tamque mira diversarum formarum apparet ubique varietas, ut magis legere libeat in marmoribus, quam in codicibus totumque diem occupare singula ista mirando, quam in lege Dei meditando. Opera, ed. by C. Talbot, J. Leclercq, H. Rochais (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1957) vol.3, p. 80

40 Sidney C. Cockerell, *The Gorleston Psalter* (London: Chiswick Press, 1907), p. 2

41 Revd. Canon F. Harrison, *English MSS of the 14th Century* (London: The Studio, 1937). Harrison suggests (p. 25) that the "beauty of holiness" finds little place here" which may be due to the lay artists taking control of religious manuscript production from the Church. This fails to understand

This evaluation segued into one that Lucy Freeman Sandler calls “distinctly retardataire” and reveals more about the nature of art history in the mid twentieth century than the Luttrell Psalter.⁴² Margaret Rickert and Derek Turner can thus appreciate the vitality of the images but cannot overcome a reaction to them as being basically in bad taste. Rickert laments the lack of “good design” to reign in the over exuberance.⁴³ Turner finds the overall effect crude and the design ugly⁴⁴ Both consider that they are following in the footsteps of the thirteenth century St Bernard in their judgement of the Psalter, without understanding that his was not a judgement of artistic merit.

Another mid-century approach was that seemingly nonsense marginal imagery was so ubiquitous that it was effectively meaningless and so not worth even trying to analyse. Lilian Randall, for example, provided what is still the definitive catalogue of themes in manuscript decoration but lumped the myriad seemingly nonsense permutations together in the nondescript category.⁴⁵ (By contrast she closely studied seventy examples of the fighting snail motif in twenty nine manuscripts dating from around 1290 to 1325.⁴⁶) Fifty years later Elizabeth Hunt examined a group of Flemish manuscripts with forensic precision, looking for definite links between words or syllables in the text and marginal images or links between the images themselves, concluding that for any links found “there may exist equal or many more cases, even within the same manuscript, lacking any conceivable relationship”.⁴⁷

If the marginal illumination was meaningless it could be perhaps be interpreted as the joyful high spirits of an unsophisticated past world, echoing the often-heard belief that the people of the Middle Ages were stuck in a perennial childhood. As such, marginal images did not actually need any meaning and were simply to be noted as

that it was the monastic community, not the secular clergy (the Church) that controlled manuscript production and that for the monastic community beauty was allied to truth – to talk of beauty as aesthetics is anachronistic.

42 Lucy Freeman Sandler, 'The Study of Marginal Imagery: Past, Present and Future', *Studies in Iconography*, Vol.18 (1997) p. 30

43 Margaret Rickert, *Painting in Britain: The Middle Ages* (London: Penguin, 1954), pp. 138-9, here citing p. 148

44 Derek Turner, *Illuminated Manuscripts Exhibited in the Grenville Library* (London: British Museum, 1967), p. 32

45 Lilian M. C. Randall, *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p. 15

46 Lilian M. C. Randall, 'The Snail in Gothic Marginal Warfare', *Speculum* 37, no.3 (1962) pp. 360-362

47 Elizabeth Moore Hunt, *Illuminating the Borders of Northern French and Flemish Manuscripts, 1270-1310* (New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 172

exuberant ways of filling the marginal spaces. Such was the conclusion of Emile Mâle but this reflects his underlying view that meaning had to be consciously constructed to be worth any analysis and that such conscious construction was only to be found in high art and not the low culture of the everyday that provided the motifs for marginal imagery.⁴⁸ The question remains, though, of why there was such a disconnect between the expensive calligraphy and production cost of the manuscripts, which witnessed to significant conscious construction and planning and therefore to the demands of “high” culture and the merely whimsical doodling in the margins. Commentators brought the work of Erwin Panofsky to bear on the marginal imagery, namely that must be evidence of some consciously hidden symbolism.⁴⁹ Howard Helsinger considered that it was possible that these everyday images were allegories of spiritual truths but searched in vain for any religious authority that had provided interpretations for these allegories.⁵⁰ Karl Wentersdorf addressed the upside down nature of such images – the hybrids, the scatological – as an encounter with the opposite. By expressing the demonic through such imagery the artist was attempting to deal with the all too real threat of sin and the Devil.⁵¹

The second wave of contemporary reaction to the actions of St Bernard regarded him as typical of the hostility of theologians and their writings to the image. This hostility was a result of a power struggle for authority between the image and the Church. The congregations were turning directly to images rather than allowing the influence of the images to be mediated through those who were part of the church hierarchy. Hans Belting writes in 1994,

(W)henver images threatened to gain undue influence within the church, theologians have sought to strip them of their power. As soon as images became more popular than the church's institutions and began to act directly in God's name, they became undesirable.⁵²

48 Emile Mâle, *The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 58-60

49 Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting : Its Origin and Character* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 1

50 Howard Helsinger, 'Images on the *Beatus* Page of some Medieval Psalters', *Art Bulletin*, 53 (1971) p. 161

51 Karl P. Wentersdorf, 'The Symbolic Significance of *Figurae Scatologicae* in Gothic Manuscripts', ed. by Clifford Davidson, *Word, Picture and Spectacle* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1984), pp. 1-19

52 H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. by E. Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) from *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (München: C.H. Beck 1990), p. 11

Rather than being irrelevant, theology was now seen as positively harmful to the art historical study of images (and indeed, 'art' itself was seen as a misleading term when associated with medieval images.) Jeffrey Hamburger and Amy Bouché state this discouraging attitude to theology clearly in 2006.

Theology and exegesis have hardly been absent from some of the most compelling recent writing on medieval art, but their presence has been cast almost entirely in negative terms. Theology has been characterized, if not as irrelevant to the formation of medieval images, as a baleful influence on the history of medieval art.⁵³

This form of criticism seems to have led to two reactions within commentary on the Luttrell Psalter. One was that of Janet Backhouse, who took the steady road of concentrating on the knowledge of rural life in its historic context that could be gleaned from the Luttrell Psalter.⁵⁴ The other was that of Michael Camille.⁵⁵ Camille takes the standpoint that popular culture is a way of creating a parallel universe where established authority could be safely mocked from the margins, a view that owes much to the work of Mikhail Bakhtin on subculture.⁵⁶ Religion does not exist in itself but is simply the way certain social relationships manifested themselves at this particular time. As such Camille does not address contemporary theology or philosophy or even wonder what the Dominicans, as Dominicans, might have brought to the table they sat around at the feast, even as he tried to establish what that feast celebrated. Mary

Die Theologen haben immer wieder versucht, materiellen Bildern ihre Macht zu streifen, wenn diese im Begriff waren, zuviel Macht in der Kirche zu gewinnen. Bilder waren unerwünscht, sobald sie größeren Zulauf erhielten als die Institutionen selbst und im Namen Gottes zu agieren begannen.

53 Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché, *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 12

54 Janet Backhouse, *The Luttrell Psalter* (London: British Library, 1989), *Medieval Rural Life in the Luttrell Psalter* (London: British Library, 2000); *The Illuminated Manuscript* (London: Phaidon, 2006)

55 Michael Camille, *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England* (London: Reaktion, 1998); *Image on the Edge: the Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion, 1993). *Gothic Art: Glorious Visions* (London:Reaktion, 1996), pp. 16-25 has a good short introduction to the medieval relationship between perspective and knowledge. There were two theories of vision, extramission and intromission. Extramission, favoured by Plato, is vision enabled by light that proceeded outwards from the eye. Intromission, favoured by Aristotle, basically because if extramission 'worked' humans could see in the dark, involved the object sending out rays that were perceived by the eyes. This was the theory behind the geometrical foundation of objects. These rays went through various understanding and storing processes in different parts of the brain. The involvement of thing seen and the one seeing meant that the medieval understanding of object and subject were virtually the opposite of today's use. Thus seeing was closely related to knowing.

56 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Indiana: Indiana University Press, this ed 2009)

Carruthers has pointed out that his parallel universe theory does not bear historical analysis because the established authorities in the form of monks and clergy were also the scribes and illuminators and that they co-existed in familial relationships with their patrons.⁵⁷ The Luttrell Psalter is a supreme example of this, as the Luttrell Master had privileged access to intimate information that could only come from Sir Geoffrey and furthermore was in a position of authority to use that information in his illumination in ways that were good for Sir Geoffrey's soul but not so much for his *amour proper*.

The main problem with Camille, as with Sandler, however, is that of not actually looking at the psalter. The image on f. 202v (Fig. 9) is one of the stars of the psalter, a half page of Sir Geoffrey in full knightly Luttrell regalia on a magnificent war horse, his wife and daughter-in-law at its head, the detailing in costly blue and gold pigments. For Camille, Sir Geoffrey is audaciously almost usurping the role of King David, considered the author of the psalms, in his secular authority allowed him by God. This, Camille asserts, is because "the integration of picture and psalm is so close here that the two ends of the crest fixed to Geoffrey's helm and the silver tip of his pennon break the frame to point to the letters 'o' and 'u' of his name."⁵⁸ His name, however, is not in the psalm text. It is in the colophon above the image that is actually deliberately separated from the psalm text above it by the words *Gloria Patri* and a large linear *babewyn*.⁵⁹ Picture and psalm are not integrated but deliberately held far apart. Camille wants the role of the margin to be to challenge the text and wants this to be about authority and therefore does not see the actual image. In other images this can be a choice of interpretation. For example, the depiction of the lock on the water mill door on f 181r (Fig. 8) indicates for Camille that the lord is asserting his authority over those who may use the mill, so they are suitably grateful.⁶⁰ This does not have to be the interpretation, however. Such mills were always locked because if an enemy were to empty the mill pond, using the levers in the mill, at the end of the summer, there

57 Mary Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: OUP, 2014), p. 29. For the relationship between monastic illuminators and patrons see also Lucy Freeman Sandler, 'Rhetorical Strategies in the Pictorial Imagery of Fourteenth-Century Manuscripts: The Case of the Bohun Psalters' in *Rhetoric Beyond Words: Delight and Persuasion in the Arts of the Middle Ages*, ed. M. Carruthers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 96-123; Jonathan J. G. Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators and their Methods of Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) and Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent* (Berkeley: University of California, 1997)

58 Camille, p. 51

59 This is the colophon *D(omi)n(u)s Galfridis louterell me fieri fecit* that affirms that Sir Geoffrey is the commissioner of the psalter.

60 Camille, p. 213

would be no means of grinding that autumn's harvest. A mill pond depends on the winter and spring rains swelling the stream to fill it up again. The whole village could starve, a prospect made more likely when the country was almost in a state of civil war following the regicide of Edward II. This is a matter of choice of interpretation. The example of the knight is, however, one of not actually looking at the psalter. The visual image has to be considered in its own right before one can begin to consider what its wider implication is. Camille's conclusion regarding the Luttrell Psalter is shackled by his starting point.

Whatever its images are doing....they were all placed there and can never escape the text of the psalms, which is their reason for existence, their anchor and their grave.⁶¹

This discouraged searching other texts and specifically theological ones that gave life to the images in the psalter and so did not advance the debate. Boulnois has a more nuanced approach to St Bernard's reforms, which he considers are a result of wanting to privilege the written word, which the monks could not concentrate on if they were distracted by their environment. He does not make the link into *curiositas* and fornication but he does consider that Bernard is concerned with re-ordering, not with destroying images. For a few years the Cistercians at Cîteaux actually restricted manuscript illumination to decorated initials and the use of one colour (Statute 80,31 dated 1134). The effect was quite dramatic. Bernard was not rejecting the image but radically re-ordering the architectural structure of its background, whether on stone or parchment. He was, from an *ars memorativa* point of view dramatically reforming the places, sweeping out the unnecessary debris to free them up for storage. His architectural style restored the clean lines of the original storage places drawn from classical architecture. Boulnois, following Étienne Gilson, notes that his actual preaching style became conspicuously image-laden at the same time.⁶²

In what is now his sermon 25 Bernard takes a verse from the first poem of the Old Testament Song of Songs, “ I am black but lovely, daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar, like the pavilions of Salmah”, to consider whether black but lovely is

61 Camille, p. 47

62 Boulnois, *Au-delà de l'image*, p. 114. É. Gilson, *La Théologie mystique de saint Bernard* (Paris: Vrin, 1934), pp.18-19 “*Les murs de ses monastères sont nus, mais non son style*”.

really such a contradiction as it appears.⁶³ He goes on to give three visual images that fit the criteria of the memory art, even though they are monochrome, in being striking and evoking emotion – the black of the pupil of the eye is not a detraction, the use of black stones enhances an ornament and the play of black hair over a white face has a lovely grace.⁶⁴ The text Bernard uses from the Vulgate is *Nigra sum, sed formosa*. Though they are in different grammatical categories, both colour and arrangement of shape share the characteristic of being seen, Bernard notes. Medieval *formae* were arrangements of words, deriving originally from the *formulae* that were the patterns of the conjugations and declensions of Latin words learnt visually by students as they chanted them. Both letter patterns and images that we would now differentiate as pictorial were equally memory images. Bernard is not privileging reading of words over viewing of images, both are taken in by the eye to allow cognition and this is even more so the case in silent reading. He is creating conditions whereby the spiritual exercise of systematic theology can be most effective and that is within a 'pure' memory art.

Within a few years the lure of the margin was too great and Cistercian manuscripts became famous for their magnificent marginal illumination. It is from the analysis of these manuscripts that the latest developments in understanding the marginal imagery have come. Recent study of marginal imagery that has concentrated on studying one or a limited group of manuscripts has rejected the idea that the illumination is related to words that are situated next to or near the illumination. Instead, the focus is on the relation between the images and the wider devotional practices of the worshipping community that used the manuscript. Lieke Andrea Smits refers to the images in an early fifteenth century manuscript as abstract illustrations, in that they do not illustrate the text but belong to a non-linear mode of reading in which images function both as a starting point and as a point of return for a liturgy.⁶⁵ Diane Reilly, looking at a group of earlier twelfth century manuscripts produced by the Clairvaux scriptorium, decides that the decoration is not inspired by the words adjacent to the motifs but drawn from

63 The Song of Songs 1:5 (New Jerusalem Bible) *Nigra sum sed formosa filiae Hierusalem sicut tabernacula Cedar sicut pelles Salomonis* Vulgate Canticum Canticorum 1:4

64 *Non omne denique quod nigrum est, continuo et deforme est. Nigredo, verbi causa, in pupilla non dedecet; et nigri quidam lapilli in ornamentis placent; et nigri capilli candidis vultibus etiam decorem augent et gratiam.* Ed. Talbot *Opera* 1.164.14-17 *Sermones super Canticum canticorum*

65 Lieke Andrea Smits, 'Practice, Process and Performance: Shaping a Devotional Habitus in the Margins of Bernard of Clairvaux's Sermons on the Song of Songs', *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures*, Vol 47, No 1 (2021) pp. 1-20

two sources. These are firstly from canticles, prayers and chants associated with the liturgy they are using at Clairvaux but which they originally committed to memory from liturgy used at the mother house at Cîteaux. Secondly, they are associated with writings of favourite Church Fathers, in the Cistercian case here with Jerome.⁶⁶

To accompany the Folio edition of the Luttrell Psalter Michelle Brown produced a monograph that sought to synthesize all the available information on the psalter from all the disciplines concerned. She has called this a holistic approach and this allows her to gain as complete an understanding of the context of the psalter as is possible.

Sir Geoffrey Luttrell commissioned the volume and he, or his clerical advisors, worked particularly closely with the artists to ensure that the programme of illumination was customised to an extraordinary degree to reflect the devotional, cultural, political, economic and dynastic needs and aspirations of himself and his family. The influence of the preachers and homilists of the day, especially the friars, can be detected and there is a strong confessional and penitential strand which, along with what is known of the Luttrells' domestic devotional arrangements – with a confessor and two chaplains on the payroll – would suggest a heightened personal piety on the part of the patron.⁶⁷

This holistic approach has provided the most solid base from which to examine the Psalter from a systematically theological point of view – it becomes a case of the Psalter in one hand and theological works up until 1340 in the other, guided by the memory art's guidelines to pick up what is similar, dissimilar and arresting, either for positive or negative reasons. In this respect, there is value in all the commentary produced on the Luttrell Psalter and on marginal illumination in so far as it helps to build up a picture of the Luttrell world, irrespective of any questionable analysis that might follow. Michael Camille, for example, has found evidence from a sermon by John Mirk on shaving beards on Maundy Thursday, which becomes an important piece of evidence in this thesis for identifying the feast scene, though he himself does not make the connection.⁶⁸ For an understanding of how rhetoric is able to function effectively one must consider “the context of the author's system taken as a whole”⁶⁹

66 Diane J. Reilly, *The Cistercian Reform and the Art of the Book in Twelfth Century France* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), pp. 95-140

67 Michelle Brown, *The Luttrell Psalter: Commentary* (London: Folio Society, 2006), p. 80

68 Camille, *Mirror in Parchment*, p. 292

69 P. Albert Duhamel, 'The Function of Rhetoric as Effective Expression', *Journal of the History of Idea*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Jun 1949) pp 344-354 University of Pennsylvania Press p. 345

Michelle Brown's concluding thoughts allow the field of search to be narrowed by recognizing the Dominican influence, which she discerns historically from the Luttrell family's Marian interests and paleographically from the illumination depicting the Dominican friars at table with the family.

The impression given is that this gifted but idiosyncratic master artist (who was also responsible for the most imaginative and outlandish grotesques (*sic*) and who may well have been influenced by the genre within Italian legal manuscripts, as well as in English, French and Flemish illumination) was working in isolation and not part of the team that worked on the first part of the book. He may have been resident within the Luttrell household and himself have been a friar, perhaps helping to plan the book. He may have been working at the same time as the other artists but apart from them, or may subsequently have taken up the programme of illumination that he had left incomplete. When the first part of the book came into his hands, he felt the need to overpaint some of the faces, perhaps to integrate his own style....⁷⁰

Analysis of the scholarship on the friars would therefore move the debate with regard to the Luttrell Master forwards in the following way. His style is distinctive because he does not outline figures in black as was habitual in English illumination but uses shading. This suggests either he was travelling to the mainland or had travelled from it. His incorporation into his work of an intimate knowledge of Sir Geoffrey's life within a context of pastoral care, his knowledge of Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magus, the major Dominican theologians and the knowledge of the life and work of Eriugena, suggest strongly that he was himself a friar. The Dominicans had examined and rejected an alternative memory scheme devised by Raymond Lull that was also based on Eriugena's *Periphyseon*, staying loyal to the *Rhetorica*. If Eriugena's own works (though not his highly regarded translations of Dionysius) had disappeared off the theological radar, the comparison of the two schemes would have brought him back. The Luttrell Master would have been one of the friars who were often solitary travellers on roads far from their home friary, living among the laity and at odds with the local clergy. He would have experienced first hand how the whole memory scheme training provided the friars with social and emotional cohesion as an order, linked as it was mentally, physically and spiritually to the places in which they had experienced their soul formation. He could now tailor this to the pastoral needs and

⁷⁰ Brown, pp. 82-83

social conditions of his patron.

Consequences of the scholarship

An important conclusion from the review of the interaction of the scholarship in the fields of memory studies, theology and manuscript studies and how these have impacted on the study of the Psalter is that in the fields of theology and manuscript studies this has mostly been to muddy the waters. It is in the field of memory studies that the full import of marginal illumination has been addressed and so the depth of method of Yates combined with the breadth of interest of Carruthers will be applied to this particular Psalter⁷¹, against the background of the soteriological and eschatological role of memory in the relationship with the triune God.

This thesis will therefore approach the Psalter with the attention to the history of the *ars* that Yates applied to memory theatres, in order to fully appreciate the Psalter's relationship to memory work, while drawing on the wider field covered by Carruthers, setting it in the context of the illuminator's sophisticated appreciation of theology and accomplished artistic skill. The first chapter will examine the history of the *imago agens* from Simonides to Cassian, a contemporary of Augustine, as an integral part of the *ars memorativa*. It considers the ubiquity and longevity of the *ars* within the context of Greek and Latin philosophy, early monasticism, scholasticism and the Renaissance. The role of place, particularly with regard to Aristotle and dialectic, and image is examined. There is a discussion of the role of the *imago agens* within the New Testament narratives of Christ's Passion, to show the ubiquity of the techniques of the *ars memorativa* and its link to *affectus* within oral and subsequent written narrative in Greek-speaking and Jewish circles at this time. The issue of the difference between the *imago agens* and images of God are then discussed in Cassian's account of the use of the *imago agens* in private prayer and spiritual exercise. This is followed by a discussion of how the monastic community compared itself to a bee colony with regards to cognition, both dependent on community, ritual, seasonal patterns and the cell, where the brood develops into fresh life for bees and the material stored in memory becomes new and more insightful composition for the monk. This highlights

71 Ivan Illych, 'Guarding the Eye in the Eye of Show', *Guardipu.doc*, 31.10.00 (with my thanks to Johannes Hoff for providing this) says Carruthers is "full of anecdotes and wide scholarship", p. 17

that knowledge has to pass through the physical body at some point, just as nectar only becomes the valuable wax and honey after passing through glands within the bees' bodies.

The second chapter focusses on the *ars memorativa* and *imago agens* in Augustine. The chapter begins with Augustine's contribution to the *ars memorativa* technique of *ductus*, that is the way one navigates mentally between the markers to find what is needed among all the places that have been marked. This also enables a wider consideration of his writing on memory. It then turns to Augustine's *De Trinitate* to show how he had turned to the use of *imagines agentes* to resolve a pastoral situation that he considered to have arisen as a result of his incomplete work being pirated. From his discussion on the unity of various Virtues in what is now Book 7 it could seem that, being made in the image of God, humanity had only to look within itself to discover an understanding of the Trinity of God. He reveals in Book 10.8.11 that he is refuting this because of the nature of humanity itself. Love is the chief virtue but in humans it is “*glutino amoris*”, the glue of love, a two-edged sword that makes it impossible to distinguish between oneself and the things – good or bad - one loves. This is the uncleanness that Augustine believes St Paul is referring to in his letter to the Corinthians when he says that now we see in a glass darkly but then we shall see face to face. One has to begin the ever ongoing process of stripping these things one loves from oneself. A curated memory, the *ars memorativa*, plays a vital part in this because, as Augustine continues in Book 10.12.19, we forget that there was a time when we did not know something and think we have always known it. Thus we can forget that we had to search for knowledge of God to reach the knowledge we have and cease to continue searching. He compares this to when we forget how much we love something that is always present but that our hearts yearn for it when it is absent. If his flock felt that they had simply to look within themselves, without the rigours of spiritual exercise that included academic study, ritual and charity – which is *intentione* – they would lose God in fatal complacency. He therefore guides them from the triad of love as lover, beloved and the love between them to memory, intellect and will, by way of the *ad Herennium* technique of paralipsis, using the triads as *imagines agentes* to mark the gaps in the aporia of the Trinity. He stresses that these remain *imagines agentes*, not similitudes - “I, by all these three things, remember, I understand, I love, I,

who am neither my memory, nor my understanding , nor my love, but I have these.”⁷²

The third chapter gives a close reading of Eriugena's *Periphyseon* to uncover its use of the *ars memorativa* within a work of systematic theology that is structured as a spiritual exercise. It is a conversation between the student and his master, though unlike Augustine who used paralipsis in gentle mode in *De Trinitate*, Eriugena is very much of the vigorous Aristotelian school of aporetic challenge, often reducing his student to despair. This thesis argues that if one does not appreciate that he is constantly wrong-footing his student, the work can indeed appear incoherent. It is revealed that from the very start of this work Eriugena uses technical *ars memorativa* terms and begins with a paronomastic marker *imago agens* that academically encapsulates the subject matter of the whole work for memory use and also provides the pastoral context. This *imago* uses only five consonants and four vowels, as a letter-pattern perceptual image, to encapsulate the whole of created and uncreated nature throughout all finite time and infinity -

1 *quae creat et non creatur*

2 *quae creatur et creat*

3 *quae creatur et non creat*

4 *quae nec creat et nec creatur.*

This makes plain that there is total eternal participation between Creator and creation, all aspects contain the same building blocks, nothing can be jettisoned or added, even if there is differentiation in their arrangement. This means that at the end time, nothing can be eliminated from God, even into hell. However, one can will one's own torment by refusing to give up the memory of what one knows to be wrong and continuing to will it, in vain. The underlying structure of his work is taken from Augustine's *De Trinitate*, though he hangs somewhat more daringly from his scaffolding. To give himself an extra safety line he uses another rhetorical technique from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, paronomasia and specifically in its allusive form that was originally used by writers in the Old Testament. In paronomasia one takes a group of words from the anchoring source, in this case *simul et semel et semper* from

⁷² *De Trinitate*, 15.22.42 trans. Stephen McKenna, *Augustine: On the Trinity*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)

Augustine's *de Genesi ad litteram*, and creates variations on them with which to make potentially unorthodox statements. Eriugena is important himself for the *ars memorativa* as, in his work as a translator and commentator on the Greek-speaking Christian theologian Dionysius, he provides theological justification for the dissimilar image. It is in the Carolingian Court that Cicero, Augustine and Dionysius come together, through politics as well as theology. Cicero was held to have “deeply influenced Augustine's reasoning, terminology and rhetorical mode of expression, as well as his political discourse and reflection on morality within politically organized communities.”⁷³ The Carolingian rulers had Augustine's *City of God* read to them by their theologians because of its link to Cicero's *Republic* and were deeply interested in the works of Dionysius, whom they regarded as their patron saint Denis, whose bones gave legitimacy to the founding of Paris. The dissimilar image is both a more powerful aid to memory than the similar (and here Eriugena also seems also to have a close knowledge of Aristotle's actual words on dissimilarity and opposite in memory images at a time when physical copies were not yet rediscovered) and is an important element in the role of apophatic theology in furthering knowledge. This chapter finishes with a discussion of the gold and precious-jewelled cover of the ninth-century Lindau gospels, which portray a theology distinctive to Eriugena. Eriugena is considered to have had minimal influence on later theology after the destruction of his work some three centuries later. This thesis holds that these gospels are one example of how physical objects created by the illumination and decoration of codices in the monastic scriptoria witnessed to the transmission of theology, which, accompanied by the monastic mental practice of the *ars memorativa* operated outside of the official church and academic circles. The portrayal of the distinctive legend of his death, stabbed by his students' pens, on the first folio of the Luttrell Psalter and subsequent references to *imagines agentes* originating in *Periphyseon* in the margins of this Psalter is an example of the survival of knowledge of Eriugena's theology.

The final chapter discusses the survival of this knowledge and strongly challenges the established consensus that the Master produced an incoherent scheme of illumination, that, although fascinating, was not the product of a “normal” mind and “of a decidedly morbid tendency”. These words in 1932 of Eric Millar, keeper in the

⁷³ Sophie Moesch, *Augustine and the Art of Ruling in the Carolingian Imperial Period* (London: Routledge, 2020), pp. 22-23

British Museum Department of Manuscripts, cast a long shadow. No scholars have drawn as yet on systematic theological texts as a source for the Luttrell Master, though the visual evidence points to works by Albertus Magnus, Aquinas and Eriugena and reveals that he took the underlying illumination structure from Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book 12. Furthermore, if one applies Augustine's principles of *ductus* to the Psalter, concentrating simply on the visual evidence, one is led to the understanding that the margins portray the Luttrell estate at the start of the feudal financial year, that is also Lady Day, the Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to Mary that she is to be with child, March 25th and indeed in a year when the celebration of Lady Day coincided with that of Good Friday, the death of that child, of which by extraordinary occurrence there were three in the life of Sir Geoffrey. The Master has taken the physical structure of the codex into the *ductus*, by translating Eriugena's paranomastic *imago agens* –

1 *quae creat et non creatur;*

2 *quae creatur et creat*

3 *quae creatur et non creat*

4 *quae nec creat et nec creatur*

into a deconstructed peacock babewyn marginal illumination. He places it at the heart of the Psalter by arranging the sewing of the quires in such a way that the codex would fall open here if gently released. Following the *ductus* reveals that it was Sir Geoffrey Luttrell's guilt at being forced, as a feudal lord, to follow his king into the Scottish wars and their atrocities that occasioned the scheme of illumination. The intimate knowledge of Sir Geoffrey's life suggests strongly that the Master was his confessor, a Dominican friar and also his half-brother, who, following the practice of his order taught the *ars memorativa* to the laity in the context of pastoral care, in order to further their chances of fulfilling the Christian goal “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” The many scenes depicting his estate are Sir Geoffrey's places, his version of the monastic church or ancient Greek street scene.

Theologically, referring to Eriugena gives eschatological hope. If everything is contained in a permutation of the five consonants and four vowels, nothing can be so fallen that it is beyond God. At the same time it is a warning. There is room in God's universality for some defect, according to Dionysius, that would allow the perverse

will of unrepentant creatures to torment them through the knowledge in memory of their forever unrequited desires.

This chapter starts with a demonstration of the high regard in which the *imago agens* was held in scholastic theology, with Aquinas instructing that abstract ideas should be bound to such particular images, pulling together the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Aristotle's recently rediscovered *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*. It continues with an example of how the Luttrell Master visually commented on Dominican theological discussion by means of an *imago agens*. The meaning of *intentione* had become entangled in the Latin translations of various Arabic translations of Aristotle's Greek. The Master cuts through the knot with a classic Ciceronian image of attuning oneself to the One, here conveyed by the Beatus Vir of David tuning his harp. John Luttrell and his relationship with Sr Geoffrey and the estate are also examined, highlighting how, for Dominicans the physical inputs into earthly memory survive with that memory beyond death.

Chapter One

Ars Memorativa and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*:

Simonides to Cassian

This chapter will outline the history of the *ars memorativa* and its journey from classical Greek philosophy into Christian monasticism. It will address the difference between an *imago agens* and an image of something particular, against the controversy of graven images in Cassian's account of the use of the *imago agens* in prayer and contemplation. It ends with the early monastic comparison of its communities to bee colonies, in the cells of which new life and ideas are produced that only become fully activated after death.

In 55 BC Cicero gave a lively and detailed account of the invention of the art of memory as part of his treatise on the five parts of rhetoric, *De Oratore*⁷⁴. He credits the Greek poet, Simonides of Ceos (c.556-468 BC) with its invention. In giving this account Cicero, who enjoyed enduring respect, would lend his authority to a rhetorical *ars memorativa* that would persist and be adapted according to philosophical, theological and psychological needs well into the Renaissance.

Antonius, in Book II of *De Oratore* is addressing the benefits of a trained memory and tells the story of a banquet given at the home in Thessaly of a nobleman called Scopas. Simonides had been engaged to declaim a poem in honour of the host of the banquet, which he duly did but only received half the promised fee because he had taken up half the poem in addressing the gods Castor and Pollux. Scopas was of the opinion that these two gods should pay Simonides the other half of the fee. When

74 Cicero, *De Oratore* II. lxxxvi 351-353 trans. by E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham (London: Loeb Classical Library, Heinemann, 1957), pp. 464-467

...gratiamque habeo Simonidi illi Cio quem primum ferunt artem memoriae protulisse. Dicunt enim cum cenaret Crannone in Thessalia Simonides apud Scopam fortunatum hominem et nobilem cecinissetque id carmen quod in eum scripsisset, in quo multa ornandi causa poetarum more in Castorem scripta et Pollucem fuissent, nimis illum sordide Simonidi dixisse se dimidium eius ei quod pactus esset pro illo carmine daturum: reliquum a suis Tyndaridis quos aequae laudasset peteret si ei videretur. Paulo post esse ferunt nuntiatum Simonidi ut prodiret: iuvenes stare ad ianuam duos puosdam qui eum magnopere evocarent; surrexisse illum, prodisse, vidisse neminem; hoc interim spatio conclave illud ubi epularetur Scopas concidisse; ea ruina ipsum cum cognatis oppressum suis interiisse; quos cum humare vellent suineque possent obtritos internoscere ullo modo, Simonides dicitur ex eo quod meminisset quo eorum loco quisque cubuisset demonstrator uniuscuiusque sepeliendi fuisse; hac tum re admonitus invenisse fertur ordinem esse maxime qui memoriae lumen afferret.

Simonides was called away from the banquet by a message that two young men had requested his presence outside, the roof collapsed, killing all in such a gruesome way that the corpses were unrecognisable. As the young men had also disappeared, Simonides realised that his life had been saved – and his fee thus paid – by the two gods. More importantly for the art of memory, he was the only one who could help the grieving relatives bury their dead. He had remembered exactly who was sitting where just before the roof collapsed. This unforgettable experience encouraged Simonides to organise the principles of the art of memory that was then credited to his invention.

The ubiquity and longevity of the *ars memorativa*

As Frances Yates points out this account does not preclude that, as the role of poet was becoming more formalised, Simonides had honed into a professional tool a practice that may have had even older roots in Pythagoras, or even the ancient Egyptians.⁷⁵ Antonius goes on to explain the basics of the scheme of memory that was linked specifically to Simonides.

He inferred that persons desiring to train this faculty must select localities and form mental images of the facts they wish to remember and store those images in the localities, with the result that the arrangement of the localities will preserve the order of the facts, and the images of the facts will designate the facts themselves, and we shall employ the localities and the images respectively as a wax writing tablet and the letters written on it.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Pimlico, reprint 2012), pp. 43-44

Galinsky wonders if this could be “another iconic instance of the invention of tradition”, referring to Hobsbaw and Ranger's work in this important concept. Karl Galinsky, ed. *Memoria Romana :Memory in Rome and Rome in Memory* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2014), p .2. “Invented tradition is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to incalculable certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.....However, insofar as there is such reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of such invented traditions is that the continuity with it is largely fictitious. “ E. Hobsbaw and T. Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 1-2. This may well be so but it is not Cicero's invention for Simonides' name appears on a marble tablet of around 264 BC, uncovered at Paros, that dates his invention of the *ars memorativa* to 213 years previously. Yates musters further evidence that Simonides at the very least took an active part in the shaping of the art, citing not only Cicero and Quintilian but also Pliny, Aelian, Ammianus Marcellinus Suidas and others. (Yates, p. 43) Further discussion of the Simonides anecdote is to be found in Bettina Bergmann, 'The Roman House as Memory Theatre', *Art Bulletin*, Vol.76 No.2 (New York; College Art Association, 1994), 225-226 (pp. 255-256); A. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization: Arts of Memory* (Cambridge;:Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.35-38; Joseph Farrell, 'The Phenomenology of Memory in Roman Culture', *The Classical Journal*, Vol.92, No.4 (1997), 373-393 (pp. 383-393) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3298408> [accessed 8 May 2021]

⁷⁶ Cicero, *De Oratore* II. lxxxvi 354

Itaque eis qui hanc partem ingeni exercerent locos esse capiendos et ea quae memoria tenere vellent

The first thing to note before turning to these key concepts of the scheme - image and locality - described in this one sentence is the brevity of the description. These essential nuts and bolts of a memory structure that facilitated complex rhetorical oration are mentioned almost in passing.⁷⁷ The description of how the *ars memorativa* works is brief because it was well-known to the others taking part in the discussion and to Cicero's readers generally.⁷⁸ Antonius, ever conscious of his credentials as an orator, is more worried about being "prolix and tedious" if he dwells too long on such a well-known subject than the minimal chance that he might leave his hearers in the dark.⁷⁹ Its initial development as a technique has left sparse traces in the Greek world but when it crossed over into the Latin world it received extended treatment in three works that are still extant. These are Cicero's *De Oratore*, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, a work written by an anonymous Latin teacher of rhetoric and dedicated to his pupil, Gaius Herennius, dating to the second decade of the first century BC and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, dating to the last decade of the first century AD, all of which bear witness to its use being long and widely established.⁸⁰ It had been passed on through the past centuries orally and by demonstration and, crucially, this is chiefly how it would be passed on in the ensuing centuries. Both Cicero's *De Oratore* and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* would disappear as textual works through most of the period under discussion in this thesis.

This thesis will therefore follow what is now known as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which is both the oldest surviving treatment of the subject and the most enduringly influential, though the trail is not straightforward.⁸¹ This is not simply due to the passage of time. Until the forensic work of the linguist Lorenzo da Valla in the

effingenda animo atque in eis locis collocanda: sic fore ut ordinem rerum locorum ordo conservaret, res autem ipsas rerum effigies notaret, atque ut locis pro cera, simulacris pro litteris uteremur.

77 The anonymous author of the *Ad C. Herennium de ratione dicendi (Rhetorica ad Herennium)*, the oldest extant recording of the mnemonic system refers to "the treasure-house of the ideas supplied by Invention, to the guardian of all the parts of rhetoric". Trans. Harry Caplan (London: Loeb Classical Library, Heinemann, 1954) III. 28

78 Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, trans. James M. May and Jakob Wisse (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) Introduction p. 37, p. 219 n.342

79 Cicero, *De Oratore* II. lxxxvi 358

80 The relevant passages from Cicero, as above, *Auctor ad Herennium (sic)* III, 28-40 and Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* XI. 2, 1-51 all appear in Herwig Blum, 'Die antieke Mnemotechnik', *Spudasmata: Studien zur Klassischen Philologie und ihren Grenzgebiete*, Vol. 15 (New York, Hildersheim: 1969), pp. 194-204

81 *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Introduction p. xix-xx

fifteenth century, confirmed by Raphael Regius in 1491, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* was wrongly attributed to Cicero.⁸² It had at one stage been bound into Cicero's *De Inventione* and became known as the second Rhetoric of Tullius, *De Inventione*, becoming the First Rhetoric of Tullius. Its relationship with both Quintilian and Cicero did not depend on correct assignment of authorship with regard to content, however, because practitioners of the *ars memorativa* throughout the ensuing centuries simply incorporated into it or interpreted it through the lens of whatever memory aids proved effective. Although almost 600 manuscripts of the full *Rhetorica* have survived, the *ars memorativa* within it was particularly suited to oral transmission and could be adapted with the changing conditions. It ended the Middle Ages as an amalgam of *ad Herennium*, Quintilian's *Instituto Oratoria*, Boethius's *De Differentiis Topicis* and bits and pieces from all the various and numerous memory schemes that had been proposed over the years since its inception.⁸³ By this time it had acquired an even greater authority through its adoption by St Thomas Aquinas who, with his teacher Albertus Magnus re-worked it with insights taken from the newly re-discovered Aristotle. It was one of the earliest manuscripts after the Gutenberg Bible to appear in print, again attesting to the staying power of its popularity but also prolonging the incorrect original attribution to Cicero.⁸⁴ The rationale for binding it to a work of Cicero becomes understandable when examining the subject matter of *De Inventione*, which was composed in 91BC, probably just prior to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and deals with the assembling of the various items that would contribute to the content of an effective speech.⁸⁵ Questions of authorship have tended to centre around the issue of whether Cicero copied the *ad Herennium* or the author of *ad Herennium* drew inspiration from Cicero. Textual analysis indicates that both Cicero

82 Ibid, p. ix

83 John O. Ward says that in restoring what they saw as the 'fragmented' classical rhetorical inheritance of the medieval period the Renaissance scholars themselves actually "sundered a serviceable unity". By restoring the original texts and removing the abridgements and assimilations of the medieval period they actually limited their usefulness with regard to rhetoric. "In this process of turning the classical texts into icons, the Renaissance scholars were predictably unable to re-create the kaleidoscopic, one-thousand-year reality of rhetorical attitudes and texts in antiquity, from the fragments that the Middle ages had used to build up their new form of integrated text. Much had been lost." pp. 231-232

'Quintilian and the Rhetorical Revolution of the Middle Ages', *Rhetorica : A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (Summer 1995) pp. 231-284

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/rh.1995.13.3.231> [accessed 8 May 2021]

84 MS.Canon Class Lat. 249. Printed Venice c. 1470

www.bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/serlet/detail/ODLodl~1~1~36144~120166:Rhetorica [accessed 8 May 2021]

85 Cicero, *On Invention. The Best Kind of Orator. Topics*, trans. H. M. Hubbell (London: Loeb Classical Library; Heinemann, 1949), Part One, *De Inventione*

and the author of *ad Herennium* drew in certain areas on a common Greek source that had been translated by a third party into Latin.⁸⁶ What became the first part does not contain any *ars memorativa* but so ubiquitous had this become that it is perhaps justified to speculate that such an art would have been considered missing, rather than accidentally or deliberately omitted. *De Inventione*, draws to a close with a discussion of virtue, interpreted as that habit of the mind that is aligned both with the goodly ordering of nature and with reason. Virtue is first divided into Justice, Fortitude, Temperance and Prudence and these are then subdivided, Prudence into *memoria*, *intelligentia* and *providentia* to enable the knowledge of what is good, what is bad and what is neither good nor bad. “Memory is the faculty by which the mind recalls what has happened. Intelligence is the faculty by which it ascertains what is. Foresight is the faculty by which it is seen that something is going to occur before it occurs.”⁸⁷ The second part, therefore, the memory scheme, by association, was assumed to be part of the virtue of prudence, emphasising the honourable role of rhetoric as a means of conveying truth rather than simply a useful set of techniques to win an argument regardless of truth or to impress with theatrical fireworks. One could say that this development was incipient in the story of Simonides as told by Cicero. Simonides was not praised for reciting his poem by memory, impressive though this might have been or for inventing techniques that facilitated such recitation but for using his trained memory in a new and unexpected situation to effect a higher moral purpose – enabling the proper burial of the victims.⁸⁸ The initial binding of the *ad Herennium* with *De Inventione* is traced back to a manuscript by St Augustine between 384 and 388 AD during his time as a teacher of rhetoric in Milan.⁸⁹ (see below)

Places

The key concepts of the *ars memorativa*, however, the mental image and the place, remain constant regardless of what other adaptations to historical circumstances occur.

⁸⁶ See Caplan, pp. xxv-xxvii

⁸⁷ Cicero, *De Inventione* II. liii 160 trans. by H. M. Hubbell (Loeb Classical Library. London: Heinemann, 1949)

⁸⁸ Sophocles and Euripides portray in their plays both titled *Antigone* a classic example of the ethical imperative to bury the dead in ancient Greece. For an overview of the philosophical issues see : Gerald Frank Else, *The Madness of Antigone* (Heidelberg: Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Winter, 1976)

⁸⁹ P. Ruth Taylor, 'Pre-history in the Ninth-Century Manuscripts of the 'Ad Herennium'', *Classica et Mediaevalia*, 44 (1993) (Aarhus: Museum Tusulanum Press), pp. 181-254

Images are placed separately in an organised set of architectural backgrounds, the localities or places. Images change continuously but it is a vital part of the art that the storage places remain constant and in the same spatial relationship to each other. This concept of places is more amenable to modern understanding. If one considers classical Greek and Roman architecture it becomes apparent how suitable this symmetrical, measured style with its precise vertical and horizontal space divisions was for such a memory scheme. To retrieve the information or fact required one first turns to the place and then finds in it the image that calls to mind the information required. It can be compared today to retrieving papers filed in a set of pigeon holes – indeed the term pigeon hole for a vertically and horizontally divided set of shelves ultimately derives from the Roman linking of memories and thoughts with birds housed in a dove-cote.⁹⁰ Quintilian is the better guide for understanding more clearly the role of place because, concerned chiefly with the education of students from a very young age onwards, he had observed the developmental aspect of memory and due to this empirical study was alert to the ongoing debate regarding the relative merits of nature or art in memory practices. He therefore subjects Cicero's account to a critical analysis that unintentionally elucidates the memory art itself for the modern reader.⁹¹

This achievement of Simonides appears to have given rise to the observation that it is an assistance to the memory if places are stamped upon the mind, which anyone can believe from experiment. For when we return to a place after a considerable absence, we not merely recognize the place itself, but remember things that we did there, and recall the persons whom we met and even the unuttered thoughts which passed through our minds when we were there before. Thus, as in most cases, art originates from experiment.

Places are chosen and marked with the utmost possible variety, as a spacious house divided into a number of rooms. Everything of note therein is diligently imprinted on the mind, in order that thought may be able to run through all the parts without let or hindrance.

90 Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, this ed. 2008), pp. 42-44

91 He starts by correcting Cicero on various minor details of the story of Simonides, which he considers factual apart from the detail regarding Castor and Pollux, which he cannot find in any account by the poet himself and which he is sure would have been emphasised in any account by him. Quintilian, XI.II.16

The first book of his *Institutio Oratoria* is particularly concerned with education virtually from birth: "The infancy of the mind is as important as the infancy of the body and needs as much attention" I.I.1-24.

In the third book he notes that some people were reducing the five parts of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, expression, memory and delivery or action) to three because memory and action were given by nature and not by art but that these views could be disregarded. III.III 3-4

The first task is to secure that there shall be no difficulty in running through these, for that memory must be most firmly fixed that helps another memory. Then what has been written down, or thought of, is noted by a sign to remind of it. This sign may be drawn from a whole thing, as navigation or warfare, or from some word; for what is slipping from memory is recovered by the admonition of a single word. However, let us suppose that the sign is drawn from navigation, as, for instance, an anchor; or from warfare, as, for example, a weapon. These signs are then arranged as follows. The first notion is placed, as it were, in the forecourt; the second, let us say in the atrium; the remainder are placed in order all round the impluvium,⁹² and committed not only to bedrooms and parlours, but even to statues and the like. This done, when it is required to revive the memory, one begins from the first place to run through all, demanding what has been entrusted to them, of which one will be reminded by the image. Thus, however numerous are the particulars which it is required to remember, all are linked one to another as in a chorus nor can what follows wander from what has gone before to which it is joined, only the preliminary labour of learning being required.

What I have spoken of as being done in a house can also be done in public buildings, or on a long journey, or in going through a city, or with pictures. Or we can imagine such places for ourselves.

We require therefore places, either real or imaginary, and images or simulacra which must be invented. Images are as words by which we note the things we have to learn, so that as Cicero says, 'we shall use places as wax and images as letters'. It will be as well to quote his actual words; - 'One must employ a large number of places which must be well-lighted, clearly set out in order, at moderate intervals apart and images which are active, which are sharply defined, unusual, and which have the power of speedily encountering and penetrating the mind'.⁹³

The idea of memory or even the mind itself being like wax on which imprints are made by experience, stemming from the physical senses or a mental process, is a very common simile dating back well before Simonides.⁹⁴ Quintilian links it into the housekeeping aspect of places, that is that the memory images that are no longer

92 An impluvium is an architectural feature, a hole in the centre of the atrium roof, under which a square basin is placed to catch rainwater. *Cassell's Latin Dictionary*, compiled by M. I. Thomas (London: Cassell, 1927)

93 Quintilian, XI.II 17-22

94 See Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* for multiple entries on wax and wax tablets in their relation to forming memory initially, composition and aiding in the recall of memory. See Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp. 22-3, 34, 38, 49-50, 64 and 98 for the comparison of mental images to wax imprints.

needed have to be tidied out to make room when a new set of images is made. This is similar to erasing marks from the wax to make it smooth to receive new marks. He also refers to using an actual wax tablet and this reveals the difference between learning by heart and the *ars memorativa*. To learn by heart one commits the actual text to writing on the tablet and then commits it to rote memory using that same tablet, so that “he will have certain tracks to guide him in his pursuit of memory and the mind's eye will be fixed not merely on the pages on which the words were written but on individual lines and at times he will speak as though he were reading it aloud”.⁹⁵ Here there is no creation of mental images but a direct engagement with the full text. Things remembered by the place system do not need to be in textual form. Quintilian suspects that a man who could remember all the details of a full day's auction, the items sold, their price and the buyers' names, did so by means of the place system.⁹⁶ This, impressive as it is, is a form of rote learning, though and not the true *ars memorativa* with its creation of memory images.

Place, Aristotle and dialectic

The difference had been illustrated earlier by Aristotle in two of his works.⁹⁷ These contain explicit negative criticism of those who teach their students by instructing them to learn ready-made arguments by heart. Aristotle understands that the complex relationship between place and memory image situates the *ars memorativa* firmly within the arena of dialectic debate. Rote learning, Aristotle elaborates, does not impart the art of dialectical debate but simply its findings.⁹⁸ This he compares to offering to teach someone to cure or avoid foot ache by giving them shoes, instead of teaching them the skills necessary to become cobblers. In turn, his use of the *ars memorativa* and other teachings would impact on the text of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* as it was written by the anonymous Latin rhetoric teacher who had

⁹⁵ Quintilian, XI.II 32-35 Looking forward, this attachment to one writing support will be very influential on the use of codices in the Middle Ages. Hugh of St Victor, for example, advises always using the same copy of a text in memory work so that you can orientate yourself to known marks on the page. These marks will be like mental images – they may well be illuminations in which case they are also physical images – and these, through colour, shape and position will assist in 'imprinting' the text on the memory. ' *De tribus maximis circumstantiis gestorum* ', ed. W. Green from BnF MS. lat. 15009, translated by Mary Carruthers, eds Carruthers and Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), pp. 33-40

⁹⁶ Quintilian, XI.II 24

⁹⁷ Aristotle, *Topica* 101a36-b4 and *De Sophisticis Elenchis* 172a19, as paraphrased by Richard Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, this ed. 2004), pp. 28-29

⁹⁸ *De Sophisticis Elenchis* 183b35-184a10

travelled to the great rhetorical centre at Rhodes and attempted to link rhetoric to philosophy. “The treatise is altogether Greek in doctrine..... a synthesis of various teachings: pre-Aristotelian (Isocratean and “Anaximean”), Aristotelian and Peripatetic, Stoic, Hermagorean, and possibly Epicurean.”⁹⁹ Cicero notes in *De Inventione* that Isocratean and Aristotelian theory had been fused into one by their successors and such fusions from all the different Hellenistic schools resulted in a common store of teachings from which later theorists drew.¹⁰⁰ Caplan has traced references to at least fourteen of Aristotle's works in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.¹⁰¹

It is Aristotle who connects the places which are the mnemonic *loci*, to *topoi*, the topics that are an element of dialectics. The content of the discussion, all the varying materials needed for the discussion, were encapsulated in one or more memory places, as advised by the *ars memorativa* and thus *topoi* became synonymous with topic, meaning the theme of discussion itself, (perhaps from the habit of students asking what memory place they were going to be discussing that day.)

For just as in a person with a trained memory, a memory of things themselves is immediately caused by the mere mention of their 'places', so these habits too will make a man readier in reasoning, because he has his premises classified before his mind's eye, each under its number. It is better to commit to memory a proposition of general application than an argument; for it is not very difficult to get a supply of first principles and hypotheses.¹⁰²

More traditionally, *topoi* have often been explained by comparing them to 'standpoints', from which subjects may be viewed.¹⁰³ There is, however, a subtle difference between a standpoint as an attitude of mind and a place as a container for content that will be useful in constructing an argument. It is as a common-place in which to store first principles and hypotheses that the *topoi* become useful in dialectic

99 Caplan, p. xv

100 Caplan, n. c, p. xv

101 These are *Rhetorica*, *Analytica Priora*, *De Partibus Animalium*, *Ethica Nicomachea*, *Historia Animalium*, *Magna Moralia*, *De Memoria et Remiscentia*, *Meteorologica*, *Physica*, *Poetica*, *Politica*, *Problemata*, *Protrepticus*, *Topica*, and the Pseudo-Aristotelian *De Mundo*

102 *Topica* VIII 14, 163b27-33 trans. W. A. Pickard-Cambridge, *Complete Works (Aristotle)* (Princeton NJ: Jonathan Barnes, Princeton University Press, 1991):

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF ARISTOTLE THE REVI.pdf,

(original ed. W. D. Ross., Oxford, 1928 vol. 1), pp. 135-6

103 As, for example, in D. J. Allan, *The Philosophy of Aristotle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 128

debate.¹⁰⁴ Dialectic reasoning differs from demonstrative reasoning in that the latter is based on self-evident truth. The classic example is that 'if equals are taken from equals, equals remain'.¹⁰⁵ Only one example is required to convince that this must always be true and one cannot imagine that any need exists to find a previous or underlying truth from which this may be deduced. One can also not imagine that one could prove the opposite of this premise to be true. There are also premises whose 'truth' is based on the respect in which the authority that proclaims it is held, or whose 'truth' is widespread and generally held so to be.¹⁰⁶ One can imagine that the opposite of these premises could be proved but it seems highly unlikely that this would ever be the case. Aristotle addresses these special problems of dialectical reasoning in his work *Topica*, clarifying this acceptance of premises on a lesser basis in that work as

104 *Topos* is translated as 'a place', Latin *locus*, in Liddell and Scott *Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, this ed. 2001) and *amplified* as 'a topic' (Aeschylus), 'a common-place' (*Rhetorica*, Aristotle). The common-place has been defined by Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, p. 222 as "common-places...are, as it were, concentrated 'rich' schemata of the memory, to be used for making judgements and forming opinions and ideas." Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory*, p. 29 points out that following *Rhetorica* 1358a2-32 and *Topica* 119a12-24 one must further differentiate between common *topoi* or common-places and proper *topoi*. The proper topics are limited in subject matter to the fields of Physics, Geometry, Ethics or some other specialised field whereas common-places are not limited and therefore common to any field.

By the time of the Roman monk Cassiodorus (490-c.585 AD) 'common-places' were firmly linked to *hexis*, the habits of thought that led to habits of character and even, in the Quintilian sense of *hexis*, to self-mastery of self and subject. In his *Institutiones*, II 3.17 Cassiodorus equates memory with the place of the free and wilful mind, for "whatever thoughts it enters into, of necessity the human mind falls into some one of those common-places earlier mentioned". Cassiodorus Senator, *Institutiones*, ed. R.A.B. Mynors (London: Oxford Classical Texts, Oxford University Press, 1937), trans. by L. W. Jones, *An Introduction to Divine and Human Readings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946). This link continued with the development of the common-place book, a personalised and hand-written collection of readings and sayings, taken from the common cultural store but intended for individual use. These were initially found in a monastic context but became increasingly popular in lay circles as the population became more literate and continued in popularity right through to the early twentieth century. *The Collins Dictionary of the English Language*, ed. Patrick Hanks (London: Collins, this ed. 1986) refers to them as "a notebook in which quotations, poems, remarks etc that catch the owner's attention are entered".

Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 1-23 gives a brief history of ancient and medieval commonplace as an introduction to Renaissance commonplace. She also notes how the word was gradually degraded in all Western European languages, signalling a journey from the leading text which was cited in argument of the ancient rhetoricians to the random accumulation of interesting snippets of poetry by the twentieth century.

105 Allan, p. 127

106 *Topica* I 1,100a30 Allan, p. 3

"Things are true and primitive which are convincing on the strength not of anything else but of themselves; for in regard to the first principles of science it is improper to ask any further for the why and wherefore of them; each of the first principles should command belief in and by itself. On the other hand, those opinions are reputable which are accepted by everyone or by the majority or by the wise – ie by all, or by the majority or by the most notable and reputable of them."

Dialectic has tended to be received as inferior to demonstration. It is not necessarily the case that Aristotle considered it so. Hamlyn has argued that for Aristotle it is more important that there is a distinction to be made between what is true and what is accepted as true. See D. W. Hamlyn, 'Aristotle on Dialectic', *Philosophy*, Vol. 65, no. 254 (Oct 1990) Cambridge University Press on behalf of Royal Institute of Philosophy pp. 465-476

acceptance by “everyone or by the majority or by the wise, ie by all, or by the majority or by the most notable and reputable of them.” (I 1, 100b23-3)

There is a further distinction to be made between dialectic debate and rhetorical commonplaces, especially if both are viewed from the 'ideal', that is to say the promotion of ethical behaviour or the reaching of ethical conclusions. (This was by no means always the case, however. From the beginning rhetoric had inevitably also been used without concern for truth or justice, capable in certain circumstances of becoming “ a bag of tricks, a technique of fallacious advocacy and intellectual blackmail”.¹⁰⁷) From a rhetorical point of view ethics is the wielding of a *res*, that is to say a generalized content, in one particular situation that is not private because there is an audience of some description present. The *res* is chosen or assembled for this very situation from material that has previously been examined, perhaps in different or in neutral circumstances. Rhetoric, therefore, “composes common-places by a process of adaption.”¹⁰⁸ Dialectic reasoning, ethically-speaking, is seeking to discover a moral truth “ that is universal and timeless, amid the detritus of the event, unconditioned by audience, occasion, speaker or text. But rhetoric does not normalize an occasion, it occasionalizes (*sic*) a norm.”¹⁰⁹ Rhetoric and dialectic are counterparts but rhetoric (and indeed all other disciplines) will always rely on dialectic for its understanding of the fundamentals of argument.¹¹⁰

107D. Russell, 'The Art of Prose: the early Empire', ed. J. Boardman, J. Griffin, O. Murray, *The Oxford History of the Classical World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 656

Aristotle's *Rhetoric* was essentially a defence against such charges, particularly from Aristophanes and Plato, who highlight the rhetoric's undoubted potential to foster injustice and warp the truth. Aristotle sought to present rhetoric as “ a bridge between private and public, passion and reason, individual interest and common good, and equity and law. Rhetoric thus appears as a means for statesmanship rather than a tool of despotism.” see p. 657 in Mary P. Nichols, 'Aristotle's Defense (*sic*) of Rhetoric' *The Journal of Politics*, Vol 49, No 3 (Aug 1987) pp. 657-677 (University of Chicago Press on behalf of the Southern Political Science Association)

URL:<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2131273> [accessed 21 May 2018]

108Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, p. 225

109Ibid, p. 225

110James Allen, 'Aristotle on the Disciplines of Argument: Rhetoric, Dialectic, Analytic', *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Winter 2007) University of California Press on behalf of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric, pp. 87- 108, p. 96. Allen's point is that dialectic for Aristotle was not just the art or discipline of one practice of argumentation but is also the master discipline of argument to which other disciplines turned for their understanding of the fundamentals of argument. Even in a seemingly straightforward case of demonstration, dialectic would be used to explain why - to someone who did not agree with what was self-evidently demonstrated - he was wrong. For an overview of the development of dialectic in its relationship to philosophy and knowledge see Emile Janssens, Henry W. Johnstone Jr (translator), 'The Concept of Dialectic in the Ancient World', *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Summer 1968) Penn State University Press, pp. 174-181. This article is an overview of Livio Sichirollo's book *Dialektik von Homer bis Aristotle* (Hildersheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1966) that traces the

There is also an undoubted similarity between the two with regard to the individualised combination of material. Rhetorical memory supplies a selection of material in response to an often *ex tempore* situation as it presents itself. Dialectic, if practised properly, always involves an on-going synthesis, resulting in an informed admixture of material.¹¹¹ This selection and combination of material, or matter (*res*), means that *memoria* “embraces the speaker's command of his material as well as of his words.”¹¹² This command, in both rhetoric and dialectic is not for static purposes, merely presenting the material that has been stored but for new invention. For Aristotle, rhetoric is therefore a counterpart to dialectic and as such is part of his larger philosophical project.¹¹³ Looking forward, this would ensconce the *ars memorativa* firmly within both the philosophical and theological arena when thirteenth century Dominican scholastics reinterpreted it in the light of Aristotle's newly rediscovered *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*. As both leading Dominican theologians, Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas wrote commentaries on this work, it will be discussed in that context later in this thesis.¹¹⁴ Diogenes Laertius thought that Aristotle had written a work on the subject of mnemonics, which would therefore now be lost but Yates

evolution of the term dialectic from when it was acquired as a verbal term and its meaning equated with conversing with someone or dialoguing to its use by philosophers in a specific sense, that of conversing with oneself or deliberating. It is Sichirollo's contention that dialectic had reached a rather confused state by the time of Aristotle, on the one hand as an art or kind of general technique that corresponded to rhetoric but on the other, following Plato, as a science, a critical activity that sought to achieve a deeper and more fruitful understanding of concepts. The latter would define it as philosophy itself in its attention to seeking an understanding of the supreme, the Good. In so doing, however, he would remove it from the wider field of Socrates' understanding of dialectic technique as 'simply' the act of questioning and answering in short phrases. For most at the time dialectic was understood as something of an amalgam between Socrates' and the rhetorical understanding. Janssens, pp.176-177

111“For he who is capable of a synthetic view (συνοψις) is a dialectician; he who is not capable is not.” Plato, *Republic* (534B-C)

Janssens, p. 176

112Caplan, n.a, p. 214

Rerum similitudines exprimuntur cum summatim ipsorum negotiorum imagines conparamus. Ad Herennium III.xx 33

113Brad McAdon, in his article 'Rhetoric is a Counterpart of Dialectic', *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2001) pp.113-150, includes a very useful appendix chart that gives an overview of the characteristics of the fields of discourse, demonstration, dialectic and rhetoric, as used by Aristotle and their relationships. This is to illustrate how rhetoric functions as a counterpart to dialectic but is also a reminder that the *res* of the *ars memorativa* also includes the true and primitive first principles that are the starting point of demonstration. An important part of his argument is that, within his understanding of discourse, rhetoric is as important as dialectic “when each are understood within their intended purposes and intended participants and/or audiences”. p. 114

114One of the main conundrums for the medieval scholastics would be the integration of the temporal nature of memory that they found in Aristotle. The *ars memorativa*, as it entered and continued to develop within monastic use retained its understanding of memory primarily as locational, composed that is of places.

considers that Diogenes had most probably confused this with the *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*.¹¹⁵ It is in this work, for example, (452a17-24) that Aristotle discusses various techniques for getting the subject matter out of the background places where they have been stored.

Aristotelian retrieval will also be discussed in more detail in the general Dominican debate but the fact that it is not obvious how one retrieves the *topoi* is a reminder that minimal guidelines were given for all aspects of the *ars memorativa*. It understood and respected the way individuals differed in their response to the same stimuli and exploited this by encouraging personalization – this is one of the reasons that it is so difficult to understand now exactly how it was meant to be used. The *ad Herennium* positively relishes the lack of direction in the *ars memorativa*.

Why do we wish to rob anybody of his initiative, so that, to save him from making any search himself, we deliver to him everything searched out and ready? Then again, one person is more struck by one likeness and another more by another. Often in fact when we declare that some one form resembles another, we fail to receive universal assent, because things seem different to different persons. The same is true with respect to images: one that is well-defined to us appears relatively inconspicuous to others. Everybody, therefore, should in equipping himself with images suit his own convenience. Finally, it is the instructor's duty to teach the proper method of search in each case, and for the sake of greater clarity, to add in illustration some one or two examples of its kind, but not all.¹¹⁶

Aristotle considered that the use of the *topoi*, the *res* in its allotted place, in what Sorabji calls 'one-man form' is perhaps of even greater value than in its more obvious two-man form. As the two-man form of debating is actually so similar to the way solitary thought is conducted, it provided valuable preparation for rhetorical battle.¹¹⁷

115 Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Aristotle, Chapter 1.26 ed. R D Hicks

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>

[accessed 12 June 2018]

see also Sorabji, p. 26; Yates, n.9, p. 377

116 *Ad Herennium* III.xxiii 38 -39

Cur volumus ab industria quemquam remove, ut, ne quid ipse quaerat, nos illi omnia parata quaesita, tradamus? Praeterea, similitudine alia alius magis commovetur. Nam ut saepe, formam si quam similem cuiquam dixerimus esse, non omnes habemus adsensores, quod alii videtur aliud, item fit in imaginibus ut quae nobis diligenter notata sit, ea parum videatur insignis aliis. Quare sibi quemque suo commodo convenit imagines comparare. Postremo, praeceptoris est docere quemadmodum quaeri quidque conveniat, et unum aliquod aut alterum, non omnia quae eius generis erunt exempli causa subicere, quo res possit esse dilucidior.

117 Sorabji, p. 28

It is within this disciplined and targeted solitary thought world that the *imagines agentes* are constructed.

Images

That there was already a nascent interest in some sort of memory scheme for use in dialectic training is evidenced by Aristotle's condemnation of a work that seems to promote arguing simply from rote memory, the *Dissoi Logoi*, just the sort of dialectic training of which he was so scornful. This work, which survives as a fragment, concludes with the equally fragmented *Dialexeis*, dating from around 400 BC.

A great and beautiful invention is memory, always useful both for learning and for life.

This is the first thing: if you pay attention (direct your mind), the judgement will better perceive the things going through it (the mind).

Secondly, repeat again what you hear; for by often hearing and saying the same things, what you have learned comes complete into your memory.

Thirdly, what you hear, place on what you know. For example, Χρύσιππος (Chrysippus) is to be remembered; we place it on χρύσος and ἵππος (horse). Another example: we place πυριλάμπης (glow-worm) on πύρ (fire) and λάμπειν (shine).

So much for names.

For things (do) thus: for courage (place it) on Mars and Achilles; for metal-working, on Vulcan; for cowardice, on Epeus.¹¹⁸

The fragment mentions both memory for words and memory for things, the latter being the things going through the mind that would become Aristotle's *topoi*. Quintilian affirmed this connection between *topoi* and things going through the mind when he stated that *topoi* were actually “storehouses for trains of thought”¹¹⁹ The images for words as simple etymological division is an example of what would more or less become a dead end, in that its use was soon discovered to be extremely limited. The *ad Herennium* roundly pronounces it “*ridiculumst*” because of the thousands of individual memory cues that would have to be created. Quintilian and Cicero are equally underwhelmed.¹²⁰ Also present in an embryonic form are the *imagines*

118H. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin: 1922), II p. 345

<https://archive.org/details/diefragmenteder00krangoog> [accessed 15 June 2018]. This translation by Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p. 44

119Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* V.x 20

120*Ad Herennium* III.xxii 38, Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI.ii 23-6. Cicero sees the value of learning words as a drill to sharpen the brain but not as indispensable as memory for things which he

agentes, people or gods actually involved in doing something active, that would eventually form the mainstay of memory image formation. These could capture a train of thought, rather than just a word, so one would need fewer of them and they were held to adhere longest in the memory.¹²¹

The actual retrieval mechanism of the image from its holding place is not elucidated in any of the Latin texts but retrieval, just as the whole *ars memorativa*, is dependent on the primacy of the sense of sight above the other senses of hearing, taste, touch and smell, evocative though these all are. At its most basic it involves mentally casting one's eyes around the storage space. Cicero addresses this in *De Oratore* through his protagonist, Antonius. Having told the story of Simonides, Antonius continues his discourse on memory as one of the five canons of rhetoric.¹²² He gives a description of the primacy of sight for any memory scheme, even if the initial material to be remembered is not obtained visually, thus linking the physical sense of sight with all instances of mental image.

It has been sagaciously discerned by Simonides or else discovered by some other person,¹²³

considers to be essential for the rhetor. *De Oratore* II.lxxxviii 359

See Lina Bolzoni, 'Iconologia e arte della memoria', *Arte Lombardia*, Nuova serie, No. 105/107 (2-4). Metodologia della Ricerca Orientamenti Attuali: Congresso internazionale in onore di Eugenio Battisti – Parte prima (1993) pp. 114-118 on the privileging of memory for concepts over memory for words as a feature of the Latin development of the originally Greek memory art, p. 114.

121 *Ad Herennium* III.xxi 37 *Imagines.....quod genus in memoria diutissime potest haerere.....si non multas nec vagas sed aliquid agentes imagines ponemus.*

122 Though memory comes lower down the list than invention in the five parts of Rhetoric - Invention, Disposition, Style, Memory and Delivery – (which is why the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* was known as the second or new rhetoric when it was bound with Cicero's *De Inventione*, the latter then being the first rhetoric) it was the storehouse for everything that rhetoric and dialectic have in common. “By virtue of the acts of finding, discovering, reminiscing, writing and preserving, *memoria* rendered rhetoric just as “inventional”, just as creational, and just as epistemological a process as dialectic; even the canon of *inventio* could not have existed without it.” J. Enders, 'Memory, Allegory and the Romance of Rhetoric', *Yale French Studies*, No. 95 Rereading Allegory: Essays in Memory of Daniel Poirion (1999), pp. 49-64 Yale University Press p. 50

123 R. A. Pack, 'An *ars memorativa* from the Late Middle Ages', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age*, Vol. 46 (1979), pp. 221-275 Librairie Philosophique J Vrin <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44403705> [accessed 8 May 2021] considers this other (p. 221) may have been Democritus. Yates would place Democritus in another tradition that does not mention the striking *imagines agentes* of the *ad Herennium* but is based solely on Aristotle's laws of association with regard to memory. (These laws will be discussed in this thesis when considering Albertus and Aquinas's commentaries on Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*.)

This would be of relevance after the end period under discussion in this thesis as Yates surmises that it may be part of the Byzantine influence that accompanied the retrieval of Byzantine manuscripts in the Latin West in the fifteenth century. It is a reminder that the *ars memorativa* was certainly known in early Greek culture before it lost contact with the Latin West. See Yates, p. 115. Caplan, Introduction p. xxxi gives the earliest Greek translations directly from the Latin of the section on Memory in *ad Herennium* Book III as attributed to Maximus Planudes, early 14th century or Theodore Gaza, 15th century.

that the most complete pictures are formed in our minds of the things that have been conveyed to them and imprinted on them by the senses, but that the keenest of all our senses is the sense of sight, and that consequently perceptions received by the ears or by reflexion can be most easily retained in the mind if they are also conveyed to our minds by the mediation of the eyes, with the result that things not seen and not lying in the field of visual discernment are earmarked by a sort of outline and image and shape so that we keep hold of as it were by an act of sight things that we can scarcely embrace by an act of thought. But these forms and bodies, like all the things that come under our view require an abode, inasmuch as a material object without a locality is inconceivable.¹²⁴

Both steps in the *ars memorativa*, firstly forming the image and then storing it, are visual activities. The act of sight is so powerful, that it can enable the retention of something that it is actually hard to put into words, even mentally ('scarcely embrace by an act of thought'). This takes *memoria* and its storehouse far out of the arena of 'simple' verbatim repetition. At its most straightforward interpretation this means that from these forms that cannot be verbalized in some way, in conjunction with things stored that can be completely discerned, the production of new ideas, thoughts or concepts can be effected, which will then be turned into words that can be conveyed. In turning to the *ad Herennium* this interpretation becomes more nuanced with *memoria* helping to 'flesh out' what is indistinct, "making a mute thing or one lacking form articulate and attributing to it a definite form and a language or a certain behaviour appropriate to its character."¹²⁵ Note that it is by using the vocabulary of the *imagines agentes* – speech and behaviour betoken movement of some kind - that the author seeks to convey how a greater definition is given to the ideas, concepts or thoughts for which these images are the memory cue. These images are considered to be material objects (*corpus intellegi*), which is why they require a structured place, the crux of locational memory. Although none of the texts make it clear, it would seem that because they are regarded as material objects, they are not, as in Quintilian's metaphor for memory, images scratched indelibly on a wax tablet that the structured place contains, so preserving the ideas, concepts or thoughts (Quintilian's trains of thought). The images are rather both gateway to the storage places and trigger that sets the train of thought in motion. This is why one's memory is held to be at fault if one

124Cicero, *De oratore* II. lxxxvii 357-358

125Ad *Herennium* IV. liii 66

aut cum res muta aut informis fit eloquens, et forma ei et oratio adtribuitur ad dignitatem adcommodata quae actio quaedam.

cannot control the *imagines agentes*, rather than if one cannot 'simply' remember. It is also why people with bad rote memory can make excellent practitioners of the *ars memorativa*.

There is therefore a distinction to be maintained between the forging of these mental images and the mental images of thought itself. The guidelines that would be available for forming the former kind of images throughout the historical period under consideration were those in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. The *Rhetoric* itself did not contain an account of Simonides' discovery of the art of memory, however, that account was given, amongst others, by Quintilian and Cicero. Simonides appears to be most noted within the *Rhetorica* for his pronouncement that “a poem ought to be a painting that speaks and a painting ought to be a silent poem”, again privileging the sense of sight.¹²⁶ If one compares the guidelines with the manner in which the original story of the discovery is presented, however, it would seem evident that knowledge of the story is being taken for granted. This may again, as with Antonius's original account, be because the connection was so well known. That it was well-known can be seen in Horace's taking a satirical side-sweep at the story of Simonides that depends on him being the poetic originator of the *ars memorativa* in the tale of a similar banquet where only the canopy, not the whole roof, collapses.¹²⁷ The satire only works because the author is sure that his audience will get the joke without him having to explain it, as part of their common culture. Horace is a contemporary of Cicero, active perhaps some thirty years after the author of the *Rhetorica*. In many ways the original story of Simonides, as it is told, is composed of just those types of image that strikingly arrest the attention and it is these images that form the crux of the guidelines given in the *ad Herennium*.

We ought, then, to set up images of a kind that can adhere longest in the memory. And we shall do so if we establish likenesses as striking as possible; if we set up images that are not many or vague, but active; if we assign to them exceptional beauty or singular ugliness; if

126*Ad Herennium* IV. xxviii 39

Poëma loquens pictura, pictura tacitum poëma debet esse.

Ascribed to Simonides in Plutarch, *De glor.Athen* 3(346F), Caplan, n.c p. 327

127See Ilaria Marchesi, 'In Memory of Simonides: Poetry and Mnemotechnics chez Nasidienus', *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, (1974-2014) Vol. 135 No. 2 (Autumn 2005) pp. 393-402 John Hopkins University Press <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20054138> [accessed 8 May 2021]. In *Satire* 2.8 Fundanius insists on naming the guests around Nasidienus's table after the canopy collapses on the banquet, though not with the deadly results of Scopas's whole roof collapse.

we ornament some of them, as with crowns or purple cloaks, so that the likeness may be more distinct to us; or if we somehow disfigure them, as by introducing one stained with blood or soiled with mud or smeared with red paint, so that its form is more striking, or by assigning certain comic effects to our images, for that, too, will ensure our remembering them more readily. The things we easily remember when they are real we likewise remember without difficulty when they are figments, if they have been carefully delineated.¹²⁸

The chief points to note about this list are firstly, the emotive nature of the effects and secondly, the fact that it is human figures and their actions that are supplying the images, albeit it in a manner that is skewed in some way. The images can loosely be grouped into different categories. There are non-human attributes given to images, such as the crown and the purple cloak, which are chosen to distinguish one image clearly from another but are also symbols in their own right. There are images emphasizing physical attributes, such as outstanding beauty or ugliness. There are images conforming to what might be termed particular types, comedic, for example, or tragic. There are those images that portray a physical condition involving injury or maiming in some way and so involve bleeding or disfigurement with red paint or mud. They are sharply delineated but they are not given an individuality that would make them difficult to reuse in another context (and it is this that will allow them to permeate and underpin the many disciplines of creative expression over the following one and a half millennia).

The writer of the *ad Herennium* declines to give worked examples of this method but I suggest that an understanding of all the main features is available if one compares the *ad Herennium* guidelines to the story concerning their source, Simonides. If one lays, therefore, the template of the guidelines over Cicero's account of Simonides at the banquet the correspondences become clear. (This may, perhaps, as with the actual Simonides banquet story, have been too well-known or obvious to his pupils to need

128Ad Herennium III. xxii 37

Imagines igitur nos in eo genere constituere oportebit quod genus in memoris diutissime potest haerere. Id accidet si quam maxime notatas similitudines constituemus; si non multas nec vagas, sed aliquid agentes imagines ponemus; si egregiam pulchritudinem aut unicam turpitudinem eis adtribuemus; si aliquas exornabimus, ut si coronis aut veste purpurea, quo nobis notatior sit similitudo; aut si qua re deformabimus, ut si cruentam aut caeno oblitam aut rubrica delibutam inducamus, quo magis insignita sit forma, aut ridiculas res aliquas imaginibus adtribuamus, nam ea res quoque faciet ut facilius meminisse valeamus. Nam quas res veras facile meminimus, easdem fictas et diligenter notatas meminisse non difficile est.

stating.) There is a noble lord, perhaps dressed in the ancient Greek version of the Roman purple cloak, the beauty of the lavish banquet and guests, the initial comedy of the poet being tricked out of his fee, the unexpected meanness of the lord, the dramatic mystery of the messenger and the absent gods, famed for their non-appearance on this evening, the disaster and the disfigurement and the red blood of the victims in the suddenly ensuing tragedy. Cicero's *De Oratore* (55BC) would seem to postdate the *ad Herennium* by about twenty years, so Cicero is using well-established conventions and these conventions are summarized in the *ad Herennium*. These conventions are responding instinctively to an underlying impulse affecting both memory and its expression. Rhetoricians at the time considered that the natural goad of memory was what was known as *affectus*, the emotional impulse. *Affectus* is a natural human quality, though it can be harnessed in ways that are not so natural.

However positively enhanced or negatively distorted, the images remain firmly human in their attributes. This is because the *ars memorativa* is built on an intrinsic capability that is part of human nature, rather than an external artifice that is foreign to human nature, though this capacity needs to be consciously manipulated to function in its particular role. Memory naturally, one could almost say instinctively, responds to the novel or striking occurrence.

Now nature herself teaches us what we should do. When we see in everyday life things that are petty, ordinary and banal, we generally fail to remember them, because the mind is not being stirred by anything novel or marvellous. But if we see or hear something exceptionally base, dishonourable, extraordinary, great, unbelievable, or laughable, that we are likely to remember a long time. Accordingly, things immediate to our eye or ear we commonly forget; incidents of our childhood we often remember best. Nor could this be for any other reason than that ordinary things easily slip from the memory while the striking and novel stay longer in mind. A sunrise, the sun's course, a sunset, are marvellous to no one because they occur daily. But solar eclipses are a source of wonder because they occur seldom, and indeed are more marvellous than lunar eclipses, because these are more frequent. Thus nature shows that she is not aroused by the common, ordinary event, but is moved by a new or striking occurrence. Let art, then, imitate nature, find what she desires, and follow as she directs. For in invention nature is never last, education never first; rather the beginnings of things arise from natural talent and the ends are reached by discipline.¹²⁹

¹²⁹*Ad Herennium* III. xxii 35-36

Nunc quoniam solet accidere ut imagines partim firmae et acres et ad' monendum idoneae sint,

That the image is striking is what is all important, its coherence is to itself, as it were, not to any external factor. Indeed this coherence is not even with the train of thought that it is encompassing, for the mental *imagines agentes*, as discussed earlier, are to be held distinct from the mental images of thought. It achieves both, the arresting nature and the separation by consciously seeking out the “exceptionally base, dishonourable, extraordinary, great, unbelievable, or laughable, that we are likely to remember a long time” and attaching it to what needs to be remembered. This is the natural, albeit striking, goad to memory that the guidelines embody and its power is understood to come from the emotions thus generated.

It is impossible to teach defined patterns of attachment, though because to function well such attachments must also adhere to the individual's own internal patterns of associations and interests. (This is why the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* determines to give the minimum of prompting with regard to individual image choice. “Then again, one person is more struck by one likeness and another more by another. Often in fact when we declare that some one form resembles another, we fail to receive universal assent, because things seem different to different persons. The same is true with respect to images: one that is well-defined to us appears relatively inconspicuous to others”.¹³⁰) To sum up at this point, the guidelines present the user with a series of qualities, attributes, modes of being that can be applied to what is a blank image, in the sense that that image will be drawn from the user's personal store of associations. There is a clear contrast between the opaqueness of the image and the clarity of the source of all these additional qualities and attributes – the former is personal, the latter are drawing from a spring that is fed by an even deeper reservoir of natural, common

partim imbecillae et infirmae quae vix memoriam possint excitare, qua de causa utrumque fiat considerandum est, ut, cognita causa, quas vitemus et quas sequamur imagines scire possimus. Docet igitur nos ipsa natura quid oporteat fieri. Nam si quas res in vita videmus parvas, usitatas, cotidianas, meminisse non solemus, propterea quod nulla nova nec admirabili re commovetur animus; at si quid videmus aut audimus egregie turpe, inhonestum, inusitatum, magnum, incredibile, ridiculum, id diu meminisse consuevimus. Itaque quas res ante ora videmus aut audimus obliviscimur plerumque; quae acciderunt in puerita meminimus optime saepe; nec hoc alia de causa potest accidere nisi quod usitatae res facile e memoria elabuntur, insignes et novae diutius manent in animo. Solis exortus, cursus, occasus nemo admiratur propterea quia cotidie fiunt; at eclipses solis mirantur quia raro accidunt, et solis eclipses magis mirantur quam lunae propterea quod hae crebriores sunt. Docet ergo se natura vulgari et usitata re non exsuscitari, novitate et insigni quodam negotio commoveri. Imitetur ars igitur naturam, et quod ea desiderat id inveniatur, quod ostendit sequatur. Nihil est enim quod aut natura extremum invenerit aut doctrina primum; sed rerum principia ab ingenio profecta sunt, exitus disciplina comparantur.

130 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* III. xxiii 38-39

human emotions and thus connected through what rhetoricians called *affectus*.

Memory images, *affectus* and the Passion of Christ

This reservoir, the source of what in rhetoric was known as *affectus*, is the emotional basis of remembering. Both the memory image formation in relation to the *ad Herennium* guidelines and the related Simonides story that was memorable because it adhered to the guidelines, even in predating them, are rooted in this emotional source of remembering. In now comparing the *ad Herennium* text to the Gospel accounts of the last twenty four hours of the earthly life of Jesus Christ one can clarify how this ability of images to be imprinted radically on the mind is a natural result of human nature. At the same time this will show how the *ad Herennium* will enter the sphere of creative expression of all kinds in the Christian theological arena, not merely in the field of rhetoric by Christian theologians such as Augustine and onwards to the Dominicans of the fourteenth century. Peter Parshall is investigating how *affectus* is revealed in medieval depictions of the Passion and has drawn comparisons with the image guidelines in the *ad Herennium*, having perceived the similarities of the latter to the visual elements that are consistently taken from the Gospel accounts of Jesus' death in the former.¹³¹ This is not to say that one draws consciously on the other but that both draw on a common spring of emotional responses. The elements that remain indelibly in the mind of the teller and hearer of the Gospel accounts are elements that are constantly reproduced in both art and liturgy throughout Parshall's period of interest. It is these elements that will ensure certain emotional reactions within the viewer of the visual artefact. It is just these same elements, in their context of the *ars memorativa*, that will ensure that the *imagines agentes* can be called up to allow the user of the memory art to retrieve and then manipulate the things that he has stored in memory. In both cases the underlying intention is to arrest and retain attention.

If one now places the template of the guidelines over the sparse and tense narrations of this horrific event, taken from the biblical Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John one again sees correspondences. Present are the blood, the pain and disfigurement, the crown and the cloak, the lord who tries to cheat the crowd, the

¹³¹Peter Parshall, 'The Art of Memory and the Passion', *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 81 No. 3 (Sep 1999) pp. 456-472 College Art Association

ultimate disaster and physical torture of the Crucifixion and the threat of no tomb for the body and therefore the final dishonour of no proper burial. If one follows the narratives to the third day of Resurrection one even finds a messenger and an absent god. At the heart of all these attributes, however, is a blank centre – that of Jesus Christ himself. There is no description of his appearance, only of the disfiguring acts that are wrought on him through beating, the crown of thorns and his manner of death. There is no given account of his emotional responses, only of his words. By the time the accounts were recorded, orally and then in writing, his physical appearance had become irrelevant compared with the overwhelming theological significance of how, or if, he could actually be presented. Linked to this, as Parshall observes, there is no possibility of describing how Jesus felt “without presuming to describe the essential mystery of his nature and condition.”¹³² In the same way the *imago agens* is blank, in that it is for each user to create and personalize in order that it can function as a secure gateway to the cache of particular memories.

It is at this point that the *affectus* exploited by memory formation of the *ars memorativa* and formative in the details of the presentation of the Passion narrative coincide. It is because there is no defining image of Jesus given that medieval artists, in spite of the seemingly limited paucity of details available for a visual work can create an infinite variety of such works – each uses *affectus* to make the viewer create their own emotional response which fills in the details that have to be blank, thus also increasing the impact of the visual work. The account in Mark's gospel in the Vulgate text, (which is the late 4th century Latin translation by Jerome from the original Greek, used during the period under discussion) even avoids using any personal name. Instead it repeats the pronoun '*eum*' as a way of depersonalizing the central figure and throwing emphasis on the attributes.¹³³

So Pilate, anxious to placate the crowd, released Barabbas for them and, after having Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified. The soldiers led him away to the inner part of the palace, that is, the Praetorium, and called the whole cohort together. They dressed him up in purple, twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him. And they began saluting him, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' They struck his head with a reed and spat on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage. And when they had finished making fun of him,

132Ibid, p .459

133Parshall, p. 459

they took off the purple and dressed him in his own clothes.¹³⁴

Matthew's account differs in one slight detail but this is significant in showing how great the influence of the attributes associated with *affectus* are, namely the use of the colour red. "And they stripped him and put a scarlet cloak round him" (Matt 27:28). The New Jerusalem Study Bible adds a footnote here to the effect that it was the Roman soldier's cloak that, being red, suggested the imperial purple to the mocking soldiery. This account has thus added another of the attributes suggested by the *ad Herennium*, the use of red and conflated it with the purple cloak.

It is important for an understanding of the role of the *imago agens* to separate the biblical accounts from the later influence of Isaiah's depiction of the Suffering Servant on the depiction and the theology of the Passion. This was subsequently held to be a prophesy of the behaviour exhibited by Christ during the Passion.

He was so inhumanly disfigured
that he no longer looked like a man
Like a sapling he grew up before him,
like a root in arid ground.
He had no form or charm to attract us,
no beauty to win our hearts;
he was despised, the lowest of men,
a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering,
one from whom, as it were, we averted our gaze,
despised, for whom we had no regard.
Yet ours were the sufferings he was bearing,
ours the sorrows he was carrying,
while we thought of him as someone being punished
and struck with affliction by God;
whereas he was being wounded for our rebellions,
crushed because of our guilt;

¹³⁴Mark 15:15-20 *Jerusalem Study Bible*

Pilatus autem volens populo satisfacere dimisit illis Barabbas et tradidit Iesum flagellis caesum ut crucifigeretur. Milites autem duxerunt eum intro in atrium praetorii et convocant totam cohortem et induunt eum purpuram et inponunt ei plecentes spineam coronam et coeperunt salutare eum have rex Iudaeorum et percutiebant caput eius harundine et conspuebant eum et ponentes genua adorabant eum. Et postquam inluserunt ei exuerunt illum purpuram et induerunt eum vestimentis suis. Et educunt illum ut crucifigerent eum. Vulgate Evangelium secundum Marcum 15:15-20
http://vulgate.org/nt/gospel/mark_1.htm [accessed 8 May 2021]

the punishment reconciling us fell on him,
and we have been healed by his bruises.¹³⁵

Though the voluntary acceptance of humiliation by Christ had become an important theological theme by the time of Augustine's *Sermo humilis*, there was no such understanding of the Messiah's role or conflation of the Man of Sorrows with the Messiah that would have informed the oral composition of the biblical accounts.¹³⁶ The example of the victim's silence in the face of violent wounding and death, causing the onlookers to wonder without understanding at what is going on in the mind of the victim, is given in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* in its discussion of εὐάργεια, (translated by Caplan as ocular demonstration), referred to by Quintilian as *evidentia*.¹³⁷ Ocular demonstration concentrated on “amplifying a matter and basing on it an appeal to pity, for it sets forth the whole incident and virtually brings it before our eyes.”¹³⁸ Tiberias Gracchus is murdered in a convocation of the Assembly while he is reciting a prayer to the gods. Though encouraged to flee by the crowds, who then flee themselves stricken with fright, he does not move and is struck on the temple. “Gracchus does not impair his inborn manliness by a single cry, but falls without uttering a sound”, leaving his assassin “bespattered with the pitiable blood of the bravest of heroes.”

Once again it should be noted that the relationship between the two texts does not have to be one of conscious influence but that both texts have a relationship with the manner in which *affectus* informs memory. Both the Gracchus and the Passion

135Isaiah 52:14, 53:2-5, Fourth Song of the Servant. The sufferings of the servant horrify the onlookers. *New Jerusalem Study Bible*

136For an account of the excavation of the Suffering Servant link to Jesus see M. D. Hooker, *Jesus and the Servant* (London: SPCK, 1959), originally her MA thesis, that overturned centuries of misunderstanding. Such a link between the expected Messiah and the Suffering Servant was at the time and still is alien to Jewish theology. The Jews “are not ascetical people as the early Christians were, they have never glorified or worshipped or sought or praised suffering but only experienced it.... According to the Jewish law men cannot become saints through suffering, as in Christianity.” Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. by John Cumming (London: Verso, 1997), p. 152

137*Rhetorica ad Herennium* IV. lv 68 and also footnote c p. 405

For a discussion of *enargeia* as *demonstratio*, *evidentia*, *illustratio*, *repraesentatio* see Matthew Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History 400-1500*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press; 2011), pp. 265-349, 356, 459, 504-5, 514, 516, 539, 546 and *ibid* as vividness pp. 327-330 For an overview of Christianity and classical rhetoric see George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 257-270

138*Ibid*, p. 69

Haec exornatio plurimum prodest in amplificanda et commiseranda re huiusmodi enarrationibus, statuit enim rem totam et prope ponit ante oculos.

narrative are examples of description as *evidentia* as used by Quintilian in his *Institutio Oratoria* and as such is strongly linked to eyewitness proof. It is bound up with violence, war and peace, crime and punishment but crucially it is never gratuitous or ornamental. The word pictures, used in such description, like *imagines agentes*, seek to encode horror, dismay, surprise or reassurance. As such it “has powerful forensic connotations”.¹³⁹ It is distinctly separate from a modern idea of description as an event that provides purely aesthetic experience. If it has no purpose beyond that of bright lights and amusement, it is condemned as *ekphrasis*.¹⁴⁰

An important distinction is that the word pictures of *evidentia* are most often drawn consciously from a shared cultural store whereas *imagines agentes* are deemed to be most effective if they are personal and private. This is why the possibility that the strange images in medieval psalters are *imagines agentes* has only recently been raised, not in the field of manuscript studies but in that of medieval memory studies. The personal and private nature means that to come to any further understanding of such figures in the Luttrell Psalter, as is the aim of this thesis, one has to enter the personal storehouse of *imagines agentes* of the Master. This is only possible because Augustine developed a rhetorical strategy for deploying such images to effect the manipulation of those that view them, leaving clues, as it were, for posterity and because the Luttrell Master drew the underlying inspiration for his images from his monastic world of theological studies.

The Gospel accounts have shown that it is possible to create a concrete memory structure when the central element is actually beyond defined vision and understanding, in this case the mystery of Christ. It is this aspect that links back to Cicero's description of the importance of the *imagines agentes* for mental activity when one cannot see or understand clearly.

Things not seen and not lying in the field of visual discernment are earmarked by a sort of

139Michel Beaujour, 'Some Paradoxes of Description', *Yale French Studies*, No. 61, Towards a Theory of Description (1981) pp. 27-59 Yale University Press <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2929876> [accessed 15 May 2021]

140Ibid, p. 30. Beaujour continues with an account of Philostratus's *Imagines*, descriptions of numerous paintings that resemble the *imagines agentes* as outlined in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. He is careful to point out that this does not mean that all paintings that contained scenes that could carry complex narrative are actually mnemonic schemes in camouflage but nevertheless there is a “homology between the two” that cannot be gainsaid.

outline and image and shape so that we keep hold of as it were by an act of sight things that we can scarcely embrace by an act of thought.¹⁴¹

Differentiation of the marker from what is marked: in private prayer

The need to understand that the *imago agens* is the marker and not an image of what is marked is not just a problem of the 21st century as the work of the monk and theologian John Cassian, a contemporary of Augustine, reveals. He gives an account of a monk who, when confused about issues of iconoclasm, had abandoned his *imago agens* that marked the place where he stored his thoughts of God and, having lost his marker, discovered that he can no longer find God in prayer, resulting in great distress and desolation. His experience not only affected his whole community but was often quoted in the ongoing wider discussion of iconoclasm at this time and the issues related to it.

This incident has often been cited in connection with the major controversy that repeatedly returns in the history of Christian doctrine - whether physical envisaging during interactions with God, whether in liturgy, prayer, created aids to worship in the form of paintings, sculptures and so on, is equivalent to actually worshipping images and thus contravenes the commandment given to Moses forbidding this. The perplexing aspect of this case is that it was clear to all involved that no doctrinal error had been committed with regard to worshipping an image of God. If, as a modern commentator, one is unaware of the role (or even existence) of the *imagines agentes*, any theological conclusions drawn about this dispute may prove to be insufficiently resourced. John Cassian gives a clear example of how *imagines agentes* should work and encourages their use as an important part of monastic contemplation. He is aware that many people, lay and monastic or clerical, will have been taught the *ars memoratitia* as young people in a non-Christian environment and therefore will have background places and *imagines agentes* that are linked to heathen culture. He is encouraging such Christians, who most probably will be converts or from Christian families whose children still made use of their local, pagan educational facilities, that these memory places can be adapted or even overridden, if need be. Constant

141Cicero, *De Oratore* II. lxxxvii 358

ut res caecas et ab aspectus iudicio remotas conformatio quaedam et imago et figura ita notaret ut ea quae cogitando complecti vix possemus intuendo quasi teneremus.

vigilance is needed, however, to maintain the adjusted settings, as it were, firstly by making the Christian material learnt by rote almost part of one's physical being and then by organizing its various contents effectively with the *ars memorativa*.

The human mind is unable to be empty of all thought. If it is not engaged with spiritual matters it will necessarily be wrapped up in what it previously learned. As long as it has nowhere else to go while in its tireless motion, its irresistible inclination is toward matters with which it was imbued since infancy, and it mulls over incessantly those materials which long commerce and attentive meditation have given it to think with. Spiritual knowledge must therefore achieve a similarly long-lasting, secure strength in you.....It is something to be hidden away within you, perceived as though it were palpable and felt in your guts.....If thus these matters were lovingly gathered up, put away in a compartment of your memory, and marked with an identifying sign impressed during a period of silent reading, they will be to you ever afterward like wine of sweet aroma bringing joy to the heart of man.....they will pour forth like a great fragrance from the vessel of your breast.....And so it will happen that not only your memory's concentrated meditations but all its wanderings and strayings will turn into a holy, unceasing rumination of the Law of the Lord.¹⁴²

There is here a desire to control and tidy the memory that reflects the fact that in the pre-modern period under discussion a bad memory was not a forgetful one but a disorganized one. Cassian himself, when a newly converted Christian, had been told by his spiritual guide Abba Nesteros that his problem as a novice was that he suffered from an excess of remembering. The will has to be harnessed to give the concentrated effort needed to edit and order one's memory to ensure a spiritually healthy content.¹⁴³ The control as to content does not rest with the individual but with the community, through its doctrines and approved sources. There is, however, one crucial element that is totally in the individual power of the practioner of the *ars memorativa* and that

¹⁴²Jean Cassien, *Conférence (Collationes)*, translation by Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) of original edited and translated by E Pichery, *SC 42, 54, 64* (Paris: Eds du Cerf, 1955) XIV.13 SC 54 pp. 199-201

Vacare enim cunctis cogitationibus humana mens non potest, et ideo quamdiu spiritualibus studiis non fuerit occupata, necesse est eam illis quae pridem didicit implicari. Quamdiu enim non habuerit quo recurrat et indefessos exerceat motus, necesse est ut ad illa quibus ad infantia inbuta est conlabatur eaque semper reuolat quae longo usu ac meditatione concepit. Vt ergo haec in te scientia spiritalis perpetua soliditate roboretur...ut sensibus tuis inuiscerata quodammodo et perspecta atque palpata condatur....Si itaque haec diligenter excepta et in recessu mentis condita arque indicta fuerint taciturnitate signata, postea ut uina quaedam suaue olentia et laetificantia cor hominis....cum magna sui fragrantia de uase tui pectoris proferentur....Atque ita fiet ut non solum omnis directio ac meditatio cordis tua, uerum etiam cunctae euagationes atque discursus cogitationum tuarum sint tibi diuinae legis sancta et incessabilis ruminatio.

¹⁴³Cassien, *Conférence* XIV.13 SC 54

is the choice and manipulation of the materials that become the *imagines agentes*. Beaujour, who in the above discussion with regard to the Passion pointed out the forensic nature of the *imagines agentes*, has noted that producing such *imagines* can give rise to an unexplainable feeling of yearning within the practitioner and considers that in this respect to further the discussion would be to veer into the discipline of psychology.¹⁴⁴ It is this yearning for what he did not yet know but only recognized with hindsight that starts Augustine on his spiritual quest, as he relates in the first chapter of his *Confessions*. Parshall relates that this psychological effect, while linked into the universal nature of the rhetorical notion of *affectus*, is also linked to the appropriation of the content that is marked by such *imagines agentes*. These *imagines*, it will be remembered, always involve some distortion or even wounding.

Inventing an image to evoke the recollection of a thing is overtly a gesture of authority, not so much an accommodating act of translation as a decisive act of appropriation. Implicitly, therefore, the election of a mnemonic image is also an act that itself involves a kind of honor (sic) and disfiguration. The object or idea to be remembered is privately overwritten with an image that absorbs and subordinates its prototypeFrom this perspective it is surely consequential that the criteria offered for striking images entail an overwriting of the human body, as fundamental an act of authority as one can imagine.¹⁴⁵

Before turning to the consequences of such appropriation when dealing with the nature of God, one of the main areas of contemplation and meditation, it must first be considered if such an assessment of appropriation is compatible with the nature of pre-modern thought. In the period that is covered by this thesis, it is commonly held, the psychological subject-agent of thought is an anachronism.¹⁴⁶ Thought was held to be more two-directional, rather than divided into a subject and an object of thought and can thus better be understood by considering that people would accept that “a thought occurred to me” rather than “I thought”. This softens the subject/object opposition involved into something more akin to a joint enterprise. This means thought had less of the randomness that it can carry in the current understanding of it. It could never

144Beaujour, p. 57

145Parshall, p. 458

146See Alain de Libera, *Archéologie du Sujet III : La double révolution: L'acte de penser I* (Paris: Vrin, 2014) (and its exhaustive bibliography) which covers the period under discussion and is part three of a multi volume project not yet completed on the Archaeology of the Subject. De Libera traces the roots of the modern understanding of the individual as subject into the late medieval period and its understanding of its classical roots.

simply freewheel because the thing thought about drew attention to itself, rather than passively becoming the object of thought. Creating *imagines agentes*, however, is definitely a proactive event and even potentially a subversive one. Alain de Libera in his *Archéologie du sujet III*¹⁴⁷ is seeking to trace the early roots of the emergence of the subject as is currently understood back into the thirteenth century. He considers that a major factor in the emergence of such a subject was the eventual rejection in the thought process of an agent intellect that tied all thought into an act of cooperation with a greater being. At the same time there was active interest in the thirteenth century in re-examining the memory art in the light of newly rediscovered works of Aristotle. The private act of appropriation of one's thought material, through the creation of *imagines agentes*, may well have highlighted the possibility of individual thought - an act of independence that increasingly helped to tip the subject-object scales towards the subject-agent. Such an understanding would have been growing from well before the second phase of interest in the memory art, as monks turned constantly from seeking to link into God, the source of the agent intellect, however defined, as they contemplated and meditated, to appropriating the results of such contemplation and meditation into individualised, private *imagines agentes*.

The consequences if such appropriation was disrupted could be dire, however, and this is what happened to the holy but simple old monk Sarapion, the monk in Cassian's account. Sarapion lived as a hermit in the Scetis desert in Egypt but was part of a Coptic group, that had formed an intellectually rigorous monastic community.¹⁴⁸ Cassian (thankfully) gives a “smoothed-over account”¹⁴⁹ of what was an extremely complex affair and also a very sympathetic one, especially considering the on-going and violent nature of the controversy in which it occurred. Olivier Boulnois gives a detailed account of this controversy from a theological point of view and also draws on Mary Carruthers to contrast it with her assessment of it from the standpoint of the *ars*

147Ibid

148William Harness, SJ, 'Remembering Poemen Remembering: the Desert Fathers and the Spirituality of Memory', *Church History*, Vol. 69, No. 3 Cambridge University Press for American Society of Church History, 2000 pp. 483-518 emphasizes that Scetis, founded originally around 330 by Macarius, a founding father of the monastic movement, “had enjoyed an international reputation for its ascetic rigor (sic) and incisive wisdom.” (p. 483) Its destruction by a tribe of barbarian raiders in 407 was considered by Augustine to be catastrophic and it changed the course of the development of early Christian monasticism.

149Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric and the Making of Images 400-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, this ed. 2008), p. 70

memorativa.¹⁵⁰ Boulnois' account is within the context of what eventually became a doctrinal war regarding the veneration of icons, linked to the question of how, if at all, one can view God.¹⁵¹ His account is compelling, his conclusion less so, as he considers that after the Sarapion incident monastic spirituality passed from visual to aural, ie the inward chanting of a psalm text, avoiding any visual imaging.¹⁵² This is in spite of noting that in her account of this incident Carruthers demonstrates how, for Cassian, text in meditation is classed as a visual image and not an aural event.¹⁵³

Cassian is speaking in this *Conference* to the monk, Isaac, about prayer and in particular considering how one can pray to God if one cannot visualize Him.¹⁵⁴ This had become an urgent issue when the Patriarch of Alexandria formulated and sought to introduce a new doctrine that was formed to combat what was now seen as a problem, namely that some monks had misunderstood the verse from Genesis that man was made in the image of God to anthropomorphize God.¹⁵⁵ Photinus, an orthodox deacon, was sent to explain to them that the phrase in Genesis 1:26 *imago et similitudo Dei* could only be understood spiritually, not earthly or literally. While his brother monks were grateful that the error of their ways had been pointed out, Sarapion became particularly distressed because, as Cassian records, he found he could not pray at all.

And then amid these prayers the old man became confused, for he sensed that the particular human image of God which he used to draw before him as he prayed was now gone from his

150Olivier Boulnois, *Au-delà de l'image: Une archéologie du visuel au Moyen Âge Ve-XVIe siècle* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2008). He references (p. 68) the 1998 edition of Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought* in the French edition trans. by F. Durand-Bogaert, *Machina memorialis. Méditation, rhétorique et fabrication des images au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002), p. 102.

151Boulnois, pp. 55-95, 187-242

152Boulnois, p. 69

153Boulnois, n.1 p. 68

154Cassian, *Conference* trans. by Luibheid *ibid* X.3 (SC 54)

155 The anthropomorphism of God had a long history of discussion within Jewish commentators from late antiquity. See Meir Bar-Ilan, 'The Hand of God: A chapter in Rabbinic Anthropomorphism' for a very brief introduction.

<https://faculty.blu.ac.il/~barilm/articles/publications/publications0035.html#f28> [accessed 19 May 21]

There was potentially an influence from this on Coptic monks in the desert but also an influence on the attractiveness of the incarnated Christ for those Jews sympathetic to anthropomorphism. Elliott R. Wolfson, *Giving Beyond the Gift : Apophasis and Overcoming Theomania* (New York: Fordham,2014), p. 32 . Also José Costa, ' Le corps de Dieu dans le judaïsme rabbinique ancien. Problèmes d'interprétation', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* Vol. 227, No. 3 (Juillet-Septembre 2010) pp. 283-316 on the relationship between notions corporeity and divinity in Judeo-Christianity and paganism between 0 and 500 AD.

heart. Suddenly he gave way to the bitterest, most abundant tears and sobs. He threw himself on the ground and with the mightiest howl he cried out: “Ah, the misfortune! They've taken my God away from me, and now I don't have one I might hold on to, and I don't know whom to adore or whom to call out to.”¹⁵⁶

Sarapion was quite in agreement with the doctrinal position that man being *imago et similitudo Dei* in no way meant that God was the image and likeness of man. He adhered in no way to the beliefs of some pagans that gods had to be in some way human or part human. Abba Isaac pronounced that he was in no way assailed by demons. He was considered innocent by his fellow monks of any heresy, which is why his anguish at his inability to pray, as a result of banishing all images, after so many years of devotion was so distressing for all.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, thinking further about it, his fellow monks themselves realized that they were not making as much progress in the goal of acquiring on earth an idea of the beatific vision (*imaginem futurae beatitudinis*), promised in Matthew 5:8 because their minds were constantly wandering. They then requested some method to help them master their memory. These are two linked problems. Firstly, Sarapion was in a sense made the victim of his own success in the use of the *ars memorativa*. He had set up an *imago agens* to find the place in which was stored that of which he could not lay hold by an act of thought. In rejecting all images he therefore loses everything. As Cassian emphasizes, one must place an identifying sign, like a seal, over what is to be remembered and with the nature of God one must be particularly aware of the words of Cicero. That which is to be remembered is unknowable and ineffable, as it is of God and it is immaterial. The sign, however, is visual and not immaterial and that is why it is anchored to a storage place. Sarapion did not have the sophistication to challenge the bishop on the difference between a marking image and an image of that which was being marked, the

¹⁵⁶Ibid

ita est in oratione senex mente confusus, eo quod illam anthropomorphon imaginem deitatis, quam proponere sibi in oratione consueuerat, aboleri de suo corde sentiret, ut in amarissimos fletus crebrosque singultus repente prorumpens in terramque a me deum meum, et quum nunc non habeo uel quem adorem aut interpellem iam nescio.

¹⁵⁷ Sarapion is not guilty of anything with regard to imaging that is condemned by Paul in his letter to the Romans. “For what can be known about God is perfectly plain to them, since God has made it plain to them; ever since the creation of the world, the invisible existence of God and his everlasting power have been clearly seen by the mind's understanding of created things. And so these people have no excuse: they knew God and yet they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him but their arguments became futile and their uncomprehending minds were darkened. While they claimed to be wise, in fact they were growing so stupid that they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for an imitation, for the image of a mortal human being, or of birds, or animals or crawling things”. Romans 1:20 (New Jerusalem Study Bible)

imago being a material signpost to the immaterial. Abba Isaac does, however, and offers both Sarapion and his fellow monks a way of concentrating the mind so as to gain control over what was at the bottom of both their problems, the organization of the memory art. He recommends that the first verse of Psalm 69 “*Deus in adiutorium meum intende: domine ad adiuuandum mihi festina*” should be held constantly in mind and reviewed when it is necessary to regain control.¹⁵⁸ This is not to replace the *imagines agentes* but to remind the monk to avoid false images, to discriminate between them and to help deal with the stress that this might cause. Indeed, this verse can aid in various other times of stress and he gives copious examples of these, including being unable to resist food at times of fasting, general stomach upsets, headache when reading, “when sleep glues my head to the sacred page” when trying to study, falling asleep in services, insomnia, general lust, bad temper, boredom and pride. He uses the verse at times when he cannot collect his scattered thoughts to pray without interruption by “images of vain figures” as well as the recollection of conversation and events of the day. He especially uses it when he seems to have made particular progress in his prayer life and felt the closeness of God and angels, as he is then in danger of too blasé an attitude to his salvation. He ends by evoking the Old Testament habit of inscribing prayers on the threshold and door frame of a house, transferring the image to his mouth and more importantly to his heart.

Chapter 10 of Cassian's work is set out to facilitate rote memory, with an almost hypnotic rhythm and repetition. The psalm verse is repeated some sixteen times, each repetition at the end of an example from monastic life of where it could be useful. In the following chapter he explains that such repetition is needed while the monks are still spiritual hedgehogs, quoting the Book of Proverbs that “hedgehogs are feeble folk, who have made their homes in the rock”, all the time aspiring to be the stags whose refuge is in the high hills. This aspiration has two goals. Firstly, in this life the monks aspire to seeing what is happening in the Psalms, not merely reading about it.

For all these feelings we find expressed in the Psalms so that by seeing whatever happens as in a very clear mirror we understand it better, and so instructed by our feelings as our

¹⁵⁸Cassien, *Conférence* X.10 (SC 54) see also <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/350810.htm> [accessed 19 May 2021]

Ps 69:1 Be pleased, God, to rescue me,
Yahweh, come quickly and help me. (New Jerusalem Study Bible)

teachers we lay hold of it as something not merely heard but actually seen, and, as if it were not committed to memory, but implanted in the very nature of things, we are affected from the very bottom of the heart, so that we get at its meaning not by reading the text but by experience anticipating it.¹⁵⁹

Secondly, eventually, at the final time of ecstasy, both sight and sound are surpassed because the mind is affected by an ecstasy of heart that is produced by some “unaccountable keenness of spirit” so that “without the aid of the senses or any visible material pours it forth to God with groanings and sighs that cannot be uttered.”¹⁶⁰ Thus, in contrast to Boulnois, the visual *imago agens* is never replaced by an aural psalm phrase until both visual and aural are replaced at the final time by something beyond the human senses.

A close reading of Cassian has confirmed that the visual, autonomous *imagines agentes*, founded on the notion of affect and its psychological connotations, were therefore not part of the iconoclastic controversy that so beset the early church. Augustine, who disagreed sharply with Cassian in other matters of theology, in particular his perceived semi-Pelagian approach to the nature of man's involvement in his own salvation¹⁶¹, was in total agreement with Cassian on the importance of the practice of the *ars memorativa*.

Both Cassian and Augustine were aware of the risk of overlap between the *imago agens* and what it pointed to, a distinction that, as Cassian noted, had to be maintained with constant vigilance when addressing the ineffable nature of God. The risk has to be run, however, because the whole focus of memory is of creating new knowledge through combinations of what is stored. Memory is essentially forward-looking and even the most nebulous intimations, firmly stored if only dimly grasped, can effect progress in understanding when they interact with more concrete matters in other

¹⁵⁹Cassian, X.11

¹⁶⁰ Ibid

¹⁶¹ Pelagius was a British monk, probably originally from Ireland, who, on arrival in Rome in 400 was disconcerted by the lack of ethical behaviour. He was shocked by Augustine's words in his *Confessions* (Book 10, Chap 29), in which he prayed “My whole hope is in your mercy. Give what you command and command what you will” (trans. by E.M.Blaiklock), considering that more moral effort was needed. See *Documents of the Christian Church* selected and edited by Henry Betterson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, this ed. 1979), p. 52

For an overview of the argument that Pelagianism is primarily a construct of Augustine himself, as a useful foil for some of his own original doctrines of original sin, prevenient grace and predestination see Ali Bonner, *The Myth of Pelagianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018)

stored areas during the practice of meditation and contemplation. The practitioner constantly runs through his storage areas, reinforcing, updating and also eliminating material, enabling and reflecting growth in the spiritual beatific vision.

Differentiation between marker and marked: the monastic hive mentality

Before turning to a detailed examination of Augustine's use of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and the *ars memorativa* in his treatise *De Trinitate*, a public use of the marker and the marked, it must first be explained how, throughout the time of Augustine and for a thousand years after, the mind and the interior life associated with it was understood in the Latin West. It may help to look more fully at one description of the mind that particularly appealed to Christians, that of the comparison of the mind to beeswax hive cells. From the very beginning of Christian monasticism this was associated with the contemplative life of the monk within his cell, a word itself derived from this hive vocabulary.¹⁶²

Since Christian antiquity, metaphors for spiritual experiences taken from the language of beekeeping appear whenever new communities of monks grow out of old hermitages.¹⁶³

There are three aspects of hive life that have been overlooked by modern theological commentators, however, that of the nature of pre-modern monastic and lay beekeeping and that of the equally important presence of hive cells apart from honey cells, namely brood cells.

Firstly, bees were kept in skeps, generally made of wicker woven from osier. The modern wooden hive as we know it, with its removable and reusable wooden frames, was not invented until the eighteenth century.¹⁶⁴ (Although the actual container for the

162 The metaphor of honey bees in scholarship and memory is given particularly nuanced treatment in Adam Alberto Vázquez Cruz, 'Ars memorativa, abejas y miel en la Ceslestina/ Ars memorativa, bees and honey in la Celestina', *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, T. 66, No. 2 (Julio-Diciembre 2018), pp. 529-554 El Colegio de México. For the roots of medieval monastic beekeeping and its association with intellectual life going back to Aristotle see Elizabeth Keen, *The Journey of a Book: Bartholomew the Englishman and the Properties of Things* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2007), pp. 29-56.

163 Ivan Illich, *In the Vineyard of the Text: A Commentary to Hugh's Didascalion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 55 n.19

164 See Tickner Edwardes, *The Law of the Honey-Bee* (London: Methuen, 1908) particularly the introduction and pp. 1-34 for the history of beekeeping from antiquity to the Middle Ages. Also Ted Hooper, *Guide to Bees and Honey* (Poole: Blandford Press, this ed. 1985) and H. J. Wadey, *The Bee*

bee colony is known as a hive, the hive is primarily the totality of the 50 -100,000 bees, depending on the time of year and the geographical location, that live together, all regarded as parts of one animal.) Before this invention in order for the wax, destined to be rolled into candles, to be harvested or for the honey to be extracted, the bees had to be killed, generally by lighting a fire and adding arsenic that gave off toxic fumes under the skep. The eschatological implications of this was always evident to the monks and this link between death as a necessary first step in the subsequent transformation of the hive products was used as a way of explaining the relationship between *species* and *substantia*.¹⁶⁵ Hive products, whether wax or honey, would be transformed in some way after harvesting, into candles, mead, cakes, medicines and so on. From death came light and health. (Looking forward to the scholastic rediscovery of the works of Aristotle, this would be of particular importance when Aristotle's teaching on the relationship between a thing's outer appearance and inner substance seemed to contradict that of the Church.) The monks were well versed in apiculture as they depended on the bees for their wax candles, as were those lay people who had to pay rents and tithes in wax.

Secondly, not all cells created by the worker bees in the wax are simple honey cells. The queen bee lays each of her eggs within a wax cell, which is filled with honey and capped with wax by the worker bee. At certain times of the year the brood cell is filled with enriched honey, royal jelly, to ensure a queen is formed, rather than a worker bee or drone bee.¹⁶⁶ Within this capped cell the egg develops into a bee and releases itself when ready. These cells were dotted around in small groups amidst the honey cells. Just as the bee keeper provided the bees with everything possible to flourish and then waited, so the monk had to feed his mind, carefully storing it with all that was conducive to faith and then, through patient seeking and contemplation, wait to see what was emerging. From some cells, for the bees, this would not just be honey

Craftsman (Crawley: Bee Craft Ltd, 1978) for details of the colony and its housing.

165 Keen, p. 48, for example, discusses Bartholomew Anglicus's discussion of the transformation of honey into mead and medicines and wax into candles and therefore light as a way of explaining Eucharistic transubstantiation.

166 This takes place six weeks before a spell of fine weather and therefore varies every year. When the new queen cell hatches, the existing queen that lay the egg will swarm with a large group of the bees to look after her. They may have to spend a night or two in a tree while they look for a suitable natural or man-made cavity in which to start building a new home of combs of wax. How the bees know what the weather forecast will be in six weeks was unknown to the monks and is still unknown but it furthered the comparison of the hive as a place of existing knowledge yet to be discovered with the memory as a store of things existing but not expressible even by an act of thought.

that had already been stored but it would be new life. For the monk, this would not just be the knowledge as it was stored but it would be new knowledge as a result of a growth in understanding of that knowledge. For Augustine, the things that were being sought existed already but the knowledge of them did not and therefore he refers to such knowledge as an offspring that is born.¹⁶⁷ The remembering mind as a hive is thus firmly linked into Cicero's description of the storage of that which can never be fully known but which nevertheless allows a process of new life to elucidate more and more what can only be glimpsed at, until there is a death and then transformation. However much we collaborate with our minds by collating our memories, we never control them as a static entity because they are constantly digesting and reproducing in ways that are always unique – no bee is a clone of another. We do increase in knowledge of ourselves, however, by attending to our spiritual lives, just as the hive grows and transforms by attending to the gathering of pollen and nectar.

Thirdly, neither nectar or pollen are honey or wax. The nectar must be digested and worked on by two different glands in the bee abdomen to become one or the other. For this reason Aristotle considered the bee to have something divine about them (*Generation of Animals*, Book 3), though he did not understand how it worked and this combination of physicality and divine inspiration chimed particularly with those who believed in the resurrection of the body and divine grace.

This chapter has provided a history of the development of the *ars memorativa* from Simonides to fourth-century Christian monasticism, examining the core elements of a place to store memories and the *imago agens*, the striking image that marks the storage place. It followed the development of the use of the *ars* from rhetoric into dialectic, initiated by Aristotle and highlighted the emotional component of *affectus* in a study of its use in the Passion narrative. It then undertook a study of Cassian's account of the desert monk Serapion to demonstrate how the *imagines agentes* were used in private prayer, how they were distinguishable from images of the deity and how a disorganized, rather than a forgetful, memory was considered to be a bad memory and that such disorganization was even regarded as being unfaithful to God. It finished with an account of the monastic community as hive, with its storage cells

¹⁶⁷ Augustine, *De Trinitate* 9.12.18

Nam etsi iam erant res quas quaerendo invenimus, notitia tamen ipsa non erat, quam sicut prolem nascentem deputamus.

that lead to new life a metaphor for the *ars memorativa* memory cells that lead to new mental composition. In the hive, as in Christian life, death leads to new life and new, resurrected life is a physical process linked to the earthly life – the bee's internal organs have to work on the nectar to produce honey and wax that is then regurgitated – in the survival of memory.

The next step in the development of the *ars memorativa* into the field of liturgy, monastic contemplation and the doctrine of the incarnated Word is taken by Augustine. In particular he harnesses the energy generated in their construction that the *imagines agentes* share with the word pictures of *energeia* and combines this with the “yearning” that results from the disorientation that such construction also deliberately provokes (and which is perverted by *ekphrasis*).¹⁶⁸ This becomes the active searching for God that results from human restlessness.

You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You .¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸Beaujour, p. 57

¹⁶⁹Augustine, *Confessiones* I

cor nostrum inquietum est donec requiescat in Te. The use of *cor* for both heart and memory (the root of 'record', for example) reveals the involvement of memory.

Chapter 2

Augustine and the embedding of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* in Christian theology

This chapter examines how Augustine developed the technique of *ductus*, plotting paths through the various memory places to facilitate the order without which, agreeing with Cassian, memory could not fulfil its proper purpose. Augustine was aware that he could be overwhelmed with *imagines agentes* if he did not practise control, as indeed were all those engaged in considering the holiest of subjects, the Trinity, noting

(Y)ou, too, hast been able [to discern this], although you have not been, neither art, able to unfold with adequate speech what, amidst the clouds of bodily likenesses, which cease not to flit up and down before human thoughts, you have scarcely seen.¹⁷⁰

He is adamant that the practice of *ductus* demands conscious and ongoing maintenance. This parallels memory itself that demands either love or will, or both, to maintain it (*DeTr* 15.27.50). The *ars memorativa* is thus in a reciprocal relationship with “praying, seeking and living well” (*DeTr* 15.27.49), to ensure constant mental growth in understanding and spiritual maturity, just as the cell in the beehive constantly nurtures new life. It will then examine Augustine's use of *imagines agentes* in public discourse, namely in his work *De Trinitate*. This was a masterclass in how, when considering and subsequently communicating about matters of a divine nature that could not be expressed in words – for God “is more truly thought than expressed; and he exists more truly than He is thought” (*De Trinitate* 7.4.7) – Augustine could turn to the *ars memorativa*.

Memory and *ductus*

(Memory) is a power of my mind and is a part of my nature and I myself do not understand all that I am.¹⁷¹

170 *DeTr* 15.27.50

Potuisti et tu, quamvis non potueris neque possis explicare sufficienti eloquio, quod inter nubila similitudinum corporalium, quae cogitationibus humanis occursare non desinunt, vix vidisti.

171 Augustine, *Confessions* X viii.15 trans. by Blaiklock, p. 248

Et vis est haec animi mei atque ad meam naturam pertinet, nec ego ipse capio totum, quod sum.

In spite of considering himself an enigma to himself, perhaps especially where memory is concerned, Augustine fully realized that as an embodied creature who is memory, his memory is both stretched horizontally in the world of time and space and vertically up to the God who created that world. The ordered care of memory is therefore inextricably linked to thinking about God in all aspects of daily life, such being the way to participate in divine grace.¹⁷² From a practical point of view he has a special relationship with memory because of his grounding in and continued practice of rhetoric. At its most basic, every word of more than one syllable that he uses, depends on the memory of the preceding syllables because these syllables are absent when the next is pronounced. The absence, therefore, defines the understanding of what is and what will be subsequently pronounced.¹⁷³ Thus his relationship with and understanding of memory in daily life actually informs his relationship and understanding of God who could seem so obscure as to be absent and yet whose seeming absence is always present. In his use of rhetoric the relationship between the Word that is God and the words that are available to God's creation is constantly before him. These words are born from the knowledge that is retained by his memory (*De Tr* 15.10.19). Unlike God, who creates and is aware of his creating at all times, Augustine realises that when he creates he loses self-consciousness.¹⁷⁴ He cannot afford, however, to lose memory, especially to the extent that he does not even remember that he once knew. “A lost notion, then, which we have entirely forgotten, we cannot even search for”. (*Confessione* 10.19.28) In his night-time meditations on self-consciousness he was also developing his use of the *ars memorativa* and extending it into the physical and aural environment of architecture, liturgy and landscape around

172 See Carol Harrison, *On Music, Sound, Affect and Ineffability (Reading Augustine)* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019) for the equivalent in the practice of music. Her theme is that in *De Musica* and *Confessionum* Augustine develops a psychology and ethics of musical perception, the result of which is that music enables this perception to be a means of participating in divine grace.

173 See Colish, p.57. Also Rowan Williams, *On Augustine* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p.2 “There is no meaning without this passage into *absence* because we cannot accumulate sounds without succession in language.”

174 Miles Hollingsworth, *Saint Augustine of Hippo* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013) 'To write against self-consciousness and its effects' pp. 204-240. “But the real discovery of this time is that he cannot be creative and self-conscious at the same time. His *Soliloquiorum*, written during the privacy of his night-time meditations, breaks new literary and philosophical ground by exploring this problem.” p. xviii.

Similarly, James Wetzel, 'The force of memory: reflections on the interrupted self', p.159, *Augustinian Studies*, 38.1 (2007) pp. 147-59 <https://www.pdcnet.org> [accessed 15 May 2021] “If Augustine were to achieve a state where he is fully present to himself, with no possibility of interruption, he will have forgotten God beyond all possible means of recall”.

him.

I will pass beyond memory, too, to find you.....where, truly good, and sweetness without care – to find you.....where? If I find you apart from my memory, I am not remembering you. And how shall I find you, if I do not remember you?¹⁷⁵

Memory that is just allowed to happen within the monastic context, is considered as *fornicatio*, in the Biblical sense of being the opposite to constancy rather than to celibacy.¹⁷⁶ This is because it lacks *skopos*, which was originally an archery term for the target mark at which the Bowman gazes.¹⁷⁷ Without it the mind wanders aimlessly, wasting energy because it would never acquire rest in thought, as a Bowman needs concentrated stillness to prepare for a shot. Cassian (see section on the *imago agens* in private prayer, above,) is particularly concerned to discourage the monks from this and proceeds again to proffer the advice originally given by Abba Moses to show them how to overcome it. Abba Moses considers *skopos* to be the remedy when a mind “ which lacks an abiding sense of direction veers hither and yon by the hour and by the minute is a prey to outside influences and is endlessly the prisoner of what strikes it first.”¹⁷⁸ Cassian himself is particularly displeased when such lazy wandering around occurs when thinking about Scripture, calling it *nesciens stupensque*, unknowing and stupid, implying a positive failing rather than something akin to day dreaming. It should be noted that he is not talking about flicking through the pages of a biblical codex. The passages being contemplated are all drawn from

175 *Confessionum* X.xvii translated by Blaiklock, p 257

Transibo et memoriam, ut ubi te inveniam, vere bone, secunda suavitas, ut ubi te inveniam? Si praeter memoriam meam te invenio, immemor tui sum. Et quomodo iam inveniam te, si memor non sum tui?

176 For the metaphorical use of fornication and its relationship to adultery see *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* edited by Alan Richardson (London: SCM Press, this ed. 1990), p. 16. In the New Testament (Matt.12.39, Mark 8.38 and Rev.14.8, 17.2 and 22.15) the adulterous generation is equated with unfaithfulness to God. The roots of this use of spiritual fornication or idolatry lie in the Old Testament prophets, particularly Ezekiel and Hosea.

177 Σκοπός II. the object on which one fixes the eye, a mark; σκοπέω 2. metaph. to look to, consider, examine, perceive.

Liddell and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, this ed 2001)

178 John Cassian, *Conferences* I.5 <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/350810.htm> [accessed 15 May 2021]

Necesse est enim mentem quo recurat cuius principaliter inhaereat non habentem per singulas horas atque momenta pro incursum varietate mutari atque ex his quae extrinsecus accedunt in illum statum continuo transformari qui sibi primus occurrerit. Sources chrétiennes 42 p 83

Also *John Cassian: the conferences*, translated and annotated by Boniface Ramsey OP, Ancient Christian Writers 57 (New York: Paulist Press, 1997) Cassian spoke both Latin and Greek, facilitating the dispersal of the teachings of the Egyptian elders into the Latin world and basing his own foundation in the Latin West on those teachings and his own experiences in the Greek East.

memory, one is flitting between memories. The memory is stocked like a library but the passage between the shelves has to be as ordered as the shelves themselves.

Our minds think of some passage of a psalm. But it is taken away from us without our noticing it, and stupidly, unknowingly, the spirit slips on to some other text of Scripture. It begins to think about it, but before it has been fully considered, another text slides into the memory and drives out the previous one. Meanwhile another one arrives and our mind turns to another meditation. So the spirit rolls from psalm to psalm, leaps from the gospel to St Paul, from Paul to the prophets, from there it is carried off to holy stories. Ever on the move, forever wandering, it is tossed along through all the body of Scripture, unable to settle on anything, unable to reject anything or hold on to anything, powerless to arrive at any full and judicious study, a dilettante and a nibbler on spiritual interpretation rather than being its creator and possessor.¹⁷⁹

His remedy for such cognitive *fornicatio* is vigil, meditation and prayer, bound up with the repetition of the psalm verse (Psalm 69:1) that he had recommended when discussing the case of Sarapion, again in order to properly focus the mind, not to take the place of *imagines* used correctly in memory.

Having stocked the shelves using *skopos* one now has to navigate from one bookcase to another and Augustine develops this into the practice of *ductus*. Three passages from his writings interact to give a clearer understanding of how this works, like a textual triptych, the centre panel being an extract from Augustine's *Confessions* Book 10.8 on memory, flanked by the two passages that inform his notion of *ductus*, one from *De Doctrina Christiana* and the other his commentary on Psalm 41-42 in the Vulgate numbering (and Gallican version of the Luttrell Psalter). The triptych as an entity portrays how for Augustine dwelling on God is the key to the desired aim of dwelling in God.¹⁸⁰ It also shows how for Augustine this act of dwelling, just as in

179 Cassian *Conferences* X.13 *ibid*

Cum enim capitulum cuiuslibet psalmi mens nostra conceperit, insensibiliter eo subtracto ad alterius scripturae textum nesciens stupensque deuoluitur. Cumque illud in semet ipsa coeperit uolutare, necdum illo ad integrum uentilato oborta alterius testimonii memoria meditationem transfertur, et ita animus semper de psalmo rotatus ad psalmum, de euangeli textu ad apostoli transiliens lectionem, de hac quoque ad prophetica deuolutus eloquia et exinde ad quasdam spiritales delatus historias per omne scripturarum corpus instabilis uagusque iactatur, nihil pro arbitrio suo praeualens uel abicere uel tenere nec pleno quicquam iudicio et examinatione finire, palpator tantummodo spiritalium sensuum ac degustator, non generator nec possessor effectus. Sources Chrétiennes 54 p 94

180 In his rule Augustine writes of being *in Deum* not *in Deo*. “*Primum, propter quod in unum estis congregati, ut unanimes habitetis in domo et sit vobis anima et cor unum in Deum*” *Regula Sancti*

any habitation, required arranging the mental furniture to allow both for stability of place and at the same time to enable the easy and flexible flow of movement from one place to another.. In his *De Institutione Oratoria* Quintilian had used *ductus* when analyzing how a person is guided to various goals through the way a presentation is put together. He used a derived term, *diducere*, to describe the movement of analyzing such a presentation in its constituent parts and ordering these into places within some kind of mental storage scheme.¹⁸¹ It entered the mainstream of rhetorical pedagogy in Fortunatianus's textbook, a work that would remain influential throughout the Middle Ages, in which choosing different paths when presenting material would change the level of challenge the audience faced in following the clues to comprehension.¹⁸² It was Fortunatianus's contemporary, Augustine, however, who took the *ductus* of rhetoric and both transformed it into the “contrived flow of liturgical performance” and embedded it into “Christian monastic meditation.”¹⁸³ More exactly, perhaps, he took advantage of the two ways of arranging material, which are known as *dispositio*, in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. The first follows various rules of rhetoric for producing speeches in set circumstances, judicial disputes, for example. The second allows the speaker free rein to achieve his objective.

Since it is through the Arrangement that we set in order the topics we have invented so that there may be a definite place for each in the delivery, we must see what kind of method one should follow in the process of arranging..... But there is also another Arrangement, which, when we must depart from the order imposed by the rules of the art, is accommodated to circumstance in accordance with the speaker's judgement.¹⁸⁴

Augustini, Caput I: De fine et fundamento vitae communis

<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/augustine/reg.shtml> [accessed 8 May 2021] Aidan Nicols translates this as “intent upon God: keen to hear his voice and attain him”, conveying the movement that would not be present with the use of the ablative after the preposition 'in'. *What is the Religious Life? From the Gospels to Aquinas* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2015), p. 45. For a brief history of the versions of the rule see Walter Gumbley, 'The Rule of St Augustine', *Blackfriars*, Vol. 26, no. 300 (March 1945) pp. 106-110 (published by Wiley) and *The Rule of Saint Augustine: Masculine and Feminine Versions* introduction and commentary by Tarcisius J. van Bavel, translation by Raymond Canning (London: DLT, 1984)

181 Quintilian, *De Institutione Oratoria* VII.x.5 trans. by Butler. See Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, pp.77-79

182 Consultus Fortunatianus, *Artis rhetoricae libri III* 1.7 ed. by Lucia Calboli Montefusco (Bologna: Patron, 1979)

183 Paul Crossley, 'Ductus and memoria: Chartres cathedral and the workings of rhetoric', p. 230 in *Rhetoric Beyond Words: Delight and Persuasion in the Arts of the Middle Ages*, ed. by Mary Carruthers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 214-249

184 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* III.IX 16-17

Quoniam disposito est per quam illa quae invenimus in ordinem redigimus ut certo quicquid loco pronuntietur; videndum est cuiusmodi rationem in disponendo habere conveniat....Est autem alia dispositio, quae, cum ab ordine artificioso recedendum est, oratoris iudicio ad tempus

Based on this rhetorical technique Augustine facilitated a *ductus* that rose above words and the art of preaching to eventually inform all forms of Christian communication – processions, contemplation, liturgy, architecture, plainsong, artworks and manuscript illumination. At its heart was its use in the curating of and the journeying through one's personal memory places

The close link between persuasion and memory that is evident in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* can be seen if one now turns to the creed that is attributed to Athanasius and considers it as a rhetorical text.¹⁸⁵ The following study of *De Trinitate* will show how aware Augustine was of the difference between rote learning, paraphrasing and true understanding. “Even if we have memorized the words, we should not either just recite by rote,.... or, by retelling in our own words, disclose and explicate everything..... but dwelling on it a piece at a time as though to loosen it up and expand it, offer it for inspection and wonder.”¹⁸⁶ On closer inspection the creed is constructed to facilitate the contents being organised into memory building blocks that can be rearranged to provide source material for theological development. Athanasius is noted as a bridge from classical rhetoric into Christian use - in his discussion of the order of presentation of evidence, he references Quintilian, who himself referenced Homer, comparing the presentation of rhetoric to a commander mustering his forces and putting the horsemen with horses and chariots first, the valiant foot soldiers in the bulwark and driving his weaklings into the midst of the formation.¹⁸⁷ (This conformation to a rhetorical style, as well as theological content,

adcommodatur.

185 For the creed itself see *The Pseudo-Athanasian Symbol*, Quicumque, Doctrinal Documents, 16-17 in ed. G. R. Evans & J. Robert Wright, *The Anglican Tradition: A Handbook of Sources* (London: SPCK, 1991), p. 68

186 *De catechizandis rudibus* III.5(2).3-15 <https://www.augustinus.it/latino/catechesi-cristiana/index.htm> [accessed 15 May 2021]

187 See Caplan's footnotes in his translation of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. n. b. pp. 184-5, n. a. p. 188

The roots of the theory of arrangement are considered to go back to the invention of the art of rhetoric in Sicily by Corax and Tisias in the fifth century BC. D A G Hinks, 'Tisias and Corax and the Invention of Rhetoric', *The Classical Quarterly*, Vol. 34 No ½ (Jan – Apr 1940) pp. 61-69 Cambridge University Press URL:<https://www.jstor.org/stable/636787> [accessed 15 May 2021] Aristotle preferred to give the honour of inventing rhetoric to Empedocles in *Prolegomenon Sylloge*, ed. Hugo Rabe (Leipzig: Teubner Verlag, this reprint (Wiesbaden) 1998), p.189 which might be of little importance were it not that Athanasius seems to refer to Aristotle in distinguishing arrangement as οἰκονομία, a word that has resonance for Christian theology as the ordering of God's plan for saving his creation. (Rabe, p. 176). Also Liddell and Scott *Greek-English Lexicon* which notes Aristotle's metaphorical use of household management as an artist treating or handling a subject. Athanasius is following Quintilian in this. For the roles of Quintilian, Cicero, Consultus Fortunatianus and Martianus Capella (the last two active towards the end of Augustine's life and of

may be why the Trinitarian creed was attributed to Athanasius.) The authority of a creed that dealt with the unfathomable was inevitably enmeshed in its persuasiveness, its memorability and its ensuing ongoing use in formulating theology.

We now turn to the central panel of this triptych which is memory, a memory that exists to have God as its proper object and Augustine places it firmly within the examination of his faith in his *Confessions*.

So I will rise beyond that natural power, by degrees rising to him who made me. I arrive at the fields and broad mansions of memory, where are laid up the treasures of countless images, brought there by all manner of experience. There is stored away also whatever we think by way of enlarging or lessening or in any way modifying, what sense has encountered, together with anything else approved and put away, which forgetfulness has not yet devoured and buried. When I am there, I order what I wish to be brought out, and some things appear right away, others require longer search, as if they are produced from remoter storerooms. Some things rush out in a heap, and while something else is sought and looked for, they crowd forward as though to say: 'Perhaps we are what you want'. With the hand of my heart I dismiss these from the face of my remembrance, until there appears at last what I want, coming into view from its hidden storage. Other things are stacked up promptly as required, and in ordered sequence, those in front making way for those behind. As they give place they are packed away, to be forthcoming again on demand. It all takes place at once when I repeat anything from memory.

There all things are systematically stored, each under its proper head, in accordance with its delivery, each through its proper gate – light, for example, and all colours and corporeal shapes by way of the eyes, through the ears, too, all kinds of sound, and all scents by the nose's ingress, and things hard or soft, hot or cold, smooth or rough, heavy or light, whether within or without the body. All this that huge storage place of memory, with its unimaginable secret nooks and indescribable corners, receives, to be recollected and brought back at need. They all enter by the appropriate gate, and are there laid up. The things themselves however, do not go in, but only images of things perceived. There they are at hand for the thought that calls them up. Who tells us how such images have been formed, though it is obvious by which senses they have been seized and packed away inside?¹⁸⁸

continual influence in education over the next thousand years) in the earlier development of *ductus* see Lucia Calboli Montefusco, 'Ductus and Color: the right way to compose a suitable speech', *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, Vol. 21, No. 2 Spring 2003 pp. 113-131 (Oakland: University of California Press).

188Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 10. 8 Blaiklock, pp. 246-247

The natural power is the untrained memory, which varies from individual to individual. However, if any form of education was undertaken in Augustine's time this natural memory would not be left untrained. To explain how it rises by degrees, as Augustine puts it, it is necessary to turn at this point to one of the side panels of the textual triptych, where this increase in knowledge towards God is given further elucidation by Augustine in his account of spiritual conversion as a form of meditation in *De Doctrina Christiana* II. vii 9-10. This is a wandering meditation that gradually finds defined routes through various locations until it climbs in seven steps from fear of God to wisdom. Coupled with this wandering is an emotional journey that takes the reader from fear to joy and onto tranquillity, allowing the traveller to draw on the well of *affectus*. He brings in many of the same themes that have occurred throughout the discussion of the markers and the marked. Firstly, is the appeal to the two great commandments - loving the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and spirit and your neighbour as yourself. Secondly, the concern with the all-encompassing object of knowledge, the Trinity in unity. Thirdly, a constant theme for Augustine, the enigma of the obscure and difficult images as one looks now in, now through the glass, from St Paul's letter to the Corinthians.¹⁸⁹ The way in which Augustine weaves the quotations from St Paul into his own text, without reference, is itself an example of “textual intimacy that only the familiarity of secure memorization can give”.¹⁹⁰ Such intertextuality, drawing on the *ars memorativa* becomes the template for monastic discourse in both the private and public sphere. From a practical point of view it must be remembered that codices were mostly memorized, rather than possessed or borrowed, due to extremely limited access and that the modern aid to memorization of chapter, verse or page numbering was absent from those folios for another thousand years – the fourteenth-century Luttrell Psalter has no psalm numbers, no verse numbers and no page numbers.

First of all, then, it is necessary that we should be led by the fear of God to seek the knowledge of His will, what He commands us to desire and what to avoid. Now this fear

189 1 Cor 13:12 is “the scriptural text to which [Augustine] referred more frequently than any other throughout his authorship” *Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate; tunc autem facie ad faciem*. Augustine also spoke of the mirror in association with the Scriptures and the soul. Andrew Hofer, 'Looking in the Mirror of Augustine's Rule', *New Blackfriars*, Vol. 93, No. 1045, 2012 pp. 263-275, p. 265

190 Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, n. 73 p. 302

will of necessity excite in us the thought of our mortality and of the death that is before us, and crucify all the motions of pride as if our flesh were nailed to the tree. Next it is necessary to have our hearts subdued by piety, and not to run in the face of Holy Scripture, whether when understood it strikes at some of our sins, or when not understood, we feel as if we could be wiser and give better commands ourselves. We must rather think and believe that whatever is there written, even though it be hidden, is better and truer than anything we could devise by our own wisdom. After these two steps of fear and piety, we come to the third step, knowledge, of which I have now undertaken to treat. For in this every earnest student of the Holy Scripture exercises himself, to find nothing else in them but that God is to be loved for His own sake, and our neighbour for God's sake; and that God is to be loved with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and one's neighbour as one's self – that is, in such a way that all our love for our neighbour, like all our love for ourselves, should have reference to God.the fourth step – that is strength and resolution – in which he hungers and thirsts after righteousness. For in this frame of mind he extricates himself from every form of fatal joy in transitory things and turning away from these, fixes his affection on things eternal, to wit, the unchangeable Trinity in unity.....the fifth step – that is, in the counsel of compassion – he cleanses his soul....and in this stage he exercises himself diligently in the love of his neighbour...He mounts to the sixth step, in which he purifies the eye itself which can see God....but yet, although that light may begin to appear clearer and not only more tolerable but even more delightful, still it is only through a glass darkly that we are said to see because we walk by faith, not by sight, while we continue to wander as strangers in this world, even though our conversation be in heaven.wisdom is the seventh and last step and which he enjoys in peace and tranquillity. For the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. From that beginning, then, till we reach wisdom itself, our way is by the steps now described.¹⁹¹

This ordering of all the signposts into defined routes is called *ductus* by Augustine in his commentary on Psalm 41, the other flank of the triptych.

It is disorder that Augustine experiences at the beginning of his journey into the temple in his commentary on Psalm 41. Here his meditative journeying takes him through the house of God, starting from the confusion of a memory where the shelves are ordered but the bookcases are all over the place, kicking its toes aimlessly on the threshold of the temple, to an ordered one that allows him to orientate eventually

191 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* II. vii 9-10 <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/12022.htm>
[accessed 15 May 2021]

De Doctrina Christiana II. vii 9 – 10 https://www.augustinus.it/latino/dottrina_cristiana/index2.htm
[accessed 15 May 2021]

towards the sanctuary. Here one encounters Augustine's recognition that in striving step by step ever higher in his desire to reach a place that is as invisible as is God, he paradoxically becomes enabled to home in on God more securely in the earthly temple. In the physical and communal setting of the C/church he uses all his senses as he wanders around. There is still an inevitable tension between corporeal and incorporeal elements and Augustine signals this by changing voice in the sermon between the first person and the third person of the psalmist. Following Cicero's use of corporeal images to mark the incorporeal there is no need to solve this tension, though, as, with disciplined memory, it can be safely held. There is a barrier but it is not between corporeal and incorporeal, it is between the place outside the temple where there is no *skopos* but aimless wandering and the place of the Tabernacle, which Augustine presents as a place, a series of memory locations, in the *ars memorativa* sense. As discussed earlier, it is a vital part of the art that storage places remain constant and in the same spatial relationship to each other. An organised set of architectural backgrounds thus remained constant throughout the use of the art, from the classical temples of Greek and Roman times to the Gothic churches, cathedrals and monasteries of the Middle Ages. This could also be extended for lay use into streets of buildings, or as with the Luttrell Psalter, fixed places on a rural estate. One has to leave the outside place of confused thought behind to learn the ways through the temple to the eventual goal. Quintilian had advised that one always use the same tablets when doing the initial memorizing, in order to place the text securely in relation to the space around it. Later it would be advised to always use the same codex, if there was a choice, for the same reason. The placing in these later codices would include the relationship to what is now known as the marginal imagery. The images are indeed in the margins, or even between or at the end of written lines. However, considering Augustine's threefold division of space in this commentary on psalm 41, it can now be seen that such imagery was not at the time considered of little importance because it is on the edge of the written word. Rather it is part of the middle space of organised memory thought, where its function is to assist in reaching the final place of the *Domus Dei*.

As he walks around Augustine notes the various groups of men and their attributes dotted around the temple, who equate to the *imagines agentes* in their function of markers fixed within the background place, attached to whatever needs to be stored. It

is only by attending to the position of these markers, examining the content of what is marked and exploring different routes between them that the space gradually comes more and more into focus. It can be mapped with increasing clarity, though this will always be a work in progress and thus able to function as a guide to the third space. Likewise it is by constantly curating one's *ars memorativa* that one has a clearer overview of the spiritual journey ahead.

When I [remembered and] poured out my soul within me in order to touch my God, how did I do this? “For I will enter [ingrediar] into the place of the Tabernacle”. These words suggest that I will first blunder about [errabo] outside the place of the Tabernacle seeking my God. “For I will enter into the place of the wonderful Tabernacle, even to the house of God.”....And now I look with wonder at many things in the Tabernacle. Behold the things I admire in the Tabernacle. Faithful men are the Tabernacle of God on earth; I admire in them their control over their members, for not in them does sin reign by obedience to their desires, nor do they show off their limbs armed with the sin of iniquity, but show them to the living God in good works; I marvel at the disciplined physique of a soul in service to God. I look again upon the same soul obeying God, distributing the fruits of his activities, restraining his desires, banishing his ignorance.....I gaze also upon those virtues in my soul. But still I walk about in the place of the Tabernacle. And I cross through even that ; and however marvellous the Tabernacle may be, I am amazed when I come right up to the house of God..... Here indeed is wisdom's water fountain, in the sanctuary of God, in the house of God.....Ascending the Tabernacle, [the Psalmist] came to the house of God. Even while he looked upon the parts of the Tabernacle he was led up to the house of God, by following a certain sweetness, I know not what inner and hidden delight, as though some kind of *organum* sounded sweetly all through the house of God; and all the while he might walk about in the Tabernacle, having heard a sort of interior music, led by sweetness, following the instrument making the music, removing himself from all the noise of body and blood, he made his way up to the house of God. For thus he remembers his way and his *ductus*, as though we had said to him: You are gazing upon the tabernacle in this world; how have you come to the hidden place of God's house? “With the voice,” he says, “of joy and praise, with the sound of one celebrating a festival”....From that eternal and perpetual feast, there sounds I know not what song so sweet to the ears of my heart; as long as the noisy world does not drown it out. To one walking about in that tabernacle and considering the wonders of God for the redemption of the faithful, the sound of that festivity quiets the ear and carries off the hart to the water fountains..¹⁹²

192 Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmis* XL.I 8.4-6, 9.1-24, 35-46, 58-62 (*Corpus Christianorum*, series latina 38 pp. 465-466)

If one's mental eyes return to the central panel of the triptych one encounters the “field and broad mansions of memory” and it is in these that the memory storage places are distributed. He refers to these memory places repeatedly in Book X, so also later in section xviii to “the great hall of my memory.....that great treasure house of memory.....a vast, a boundless inner room, whose depths none can reach” and in xvii to the “numberless fields, caves and caverns of my memory.” In this storage is everything that “forgetfulness has not yet devoured and buried”, quite ferocious language. He is here referring to what could be termed positive forgetting, clearing out memories that are not wanted for various reasons. As discussed earlier, many Christians, Augustine included, had an education based on classical rhetoric that used what were considered to be pagan memory references. These had to be forgotten, through repurposing if possible or if not through suppression in order to be devoured and buried. Augustine refers in section ix “to all those principles of liberal sciences, which have not yet been forgotten, removed to some remoter place – or no place at all.” He mentions forgetting almost as much as remembering but not to oppose the one to the other, as would be the case in present times. “The difficulty of the current conjuncture is to think memory and amnesia together rather than simply to oppose them”.¹⁹³ Forgetting is not an omission for the *ars memorativa* – the omission is disorganization. Thinking memory and amnesia together meant that in some cases the original material had to be forgotten through reuse. Everyone knew Virgil's poem *Aeneid* by heart. Augustine tells of a friend called Simplicius who was able to recite it backwards.¹⁹⁴ So engrained was it in memory, both by rote and then divided up in chunks that it was turned into a Christian *cento*, a kind of puzzle poem made up of half lines, the half lines now attached to Christian matters to be remembered. The original message – but not the words – of the poem were forgotten in order to remember the new meaning. It only worked, however, if one knew the original poem inside out. As long as education was delivered through the medium of Latin, the Latin poets were considered indispensable, even for Christian families.¹⁹⁵ Within the

Translation in Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 252, also <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1801042.htm> (psalm is here numbered as psalm 42) [accessed 15 May 2021]

193 Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 7

194 Augustine, *De Anima, Lib. IV. cap. vii*

195 Carruthers, n. 115 p. 292 for an account of how Christian parents proceeded after the decree of emperor Julian in 362 which outlawed the use of the pagan classics for Christians,

memory places, the middle space, such remembering and forgetting were on the route to the final memory place, the house of God. For Augustine and his fellow Christians, as reflected in their understanding of memory, the end was viewed more as an understanding of such memory place than as a physical time in the future.¹⁹⁶

The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* bears witness to the “canonization” of memory by the classical Greeks from Simonides onwards and its subsequent adoption by the Romans. Memory “in its manifestation in the Greek concept of mnemosyne (both the name of a goddess in Greek mythology and the abstract term for “remembrance”) was consistently invoked to both assay the divides and bridges between human interiority and cultural exteriority as well as to delineate the spiritual or intellectual capacities of humans from their affective and biological facilities”.¹⁹⁷ For Augustine the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* was an essential part of his methodology of knowledge for both practical, philosophical and theological reasons. He places his discussion of it in Book X of *Confessionum* at the centre of three main themes, what is God, how do we know Him and why do we seek Him because it is our memory that holds God. (X.xxiv). In *De Trinitate* 12.15.24 he has rejected the view of dialectic with regard to memory espoused by Plato, in which dialectic brings knowledge that has always been there into the active awareness of the mind. Instead, he is presenting a view of dialectic that brings to the mind the knowledge of something that had entered the mind at a specific moment in time, to be then held by the memory.¹⁹⁸ To maintain cognition in this world of time and space, a cognition linked to sensory input, Augustine needs to curate an active memory. Rhetoric enables his theology through his wider reading of Cicero with regard to the *imagines agentes* in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. God is ineffable and yet “things not seen and not lying in the field of visual discernment are earmarked by a sort of outline and image and shape so that we can keep hold of as it

196 Huyssen, p.8 refers to the development of time as past, present and future, with the future asynchronous with the past as a construct of the late seventeenth/early eighteenth century. Earlier Christian time in comparison was static and spatial.

197 Jeff Pruchnic and Kim Lacey, 'The Future of Forgetting: Rhetoric, Memory, Affect', *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 5 pp. 472-494 Routledge, The Rhetorical Society of America 2011 p. 474

198 Colish, p. 36 approaches this entry from within the rhetorical discipline, Williams, *On Augustine* p. 19 from a philosophical. “(Augustine's) response is not that we all already possess a truth that needs only to be galvanized into visible life”. The relevant passage is *DeTr* 12.14.24 “And hence that noble philosopher Plato endeavored (*sic*) to persuade us that the souls of men lived even before they bare these bodies; and that hence those things which are learned are rather remembered, as having been known already, than taken into knowledge as things new.” This passage indicates that Augustine's concern is with the reincarnation of souls that this seems to require. Such reincarnation runs counter to the Christian credal belief in the resurrection of each individual soul.

were by an act of sight things that we can scarcely embrace by an act of thought”.¹⁹⁹ Through the *imagines agentes* he had a mechanism for holding what could not be held, God in his ineffability, in memory, a mechanism that echoed his felt experience of the immanence of the God he could not (yet) see.

Memory and the aporia of the nature of the triune God

Augustine, in his work *De Trinitate*, expressed Cicero's description of the particular use of the *imago agens* in the *ars memorativa* as the way in which the eye or gaze of the mind attempts to hold fast to a transient thought of a thing not transitory in order to commit it in some way to memory “*per disciplinas*”. He continues that this will allow the mind to retrieve through recollection what it can of the thought from the memory in order to “*ruminare*”, chew the cud over it and eventually add it to more secure knowledge.²⁰⁰ For Christians what could “scarcely be embraced by an act of thought” was actually at the very heart of their faith and this was the nature of God. God was deemed to be eternally ineffable and transcendent but yet immanent at the same time. This applied not only to his presence with regard to the created world as a whole but also to his relationship with humans as individuals. For Augustine, God was more inward to him than his innermost being and at the same time higher than his highest being.²⁰¹

Any understanding of God's nature was further immensely complicated by two main considerations. Firstly, the doctrine of the Trinity, as it evolved over the first four centuries after Christ's death, was based around the principle that God was one and undivided, yet at the same time triune, expressible as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Moreover, this triune yet undivided Unity had, at the Incarnation of Christ in the created world of space and time, been both human and God. Secondly, the witness of Scripture with regard to whether or how God (whose Trinity is also never explained in the Scriptures) had been seen in the created world or would be seen in the life to come was frankly contradictory, within and between both the Hebrew Testament and the

199 Cicero, *De Oratore* II.lxxxvii. 358

200 Augustine, *De Trinitate* 12.14.23

Ad quas mentis acie pervenire paucorum est, et cum pervenitur, quantum fieri potest, non in eis manet ipse perventor, sed veluti acies ipsa reverberata repellitur, et fit rei non transitoriae transitoria cogitatio.

201 Augustine, *Confessionum* III, VI, also *Soliloquies* I,i(1-6)

interior intimo meo et superior summo meo

Christian writings that eventually became the New Testament. This question of seeing God then became itself increasingly contested as 'seeing' developed to become both a metaphor for understanding (and is still a colloquialism for understanding today – as I hope you see what I mean) and also literally the physical initiation for the mental images used in mental understanding. This use of visual images in intellectual activity promoted sight to the prime of the five physical senses.

Beyond rote memory: *ars memoria* and understanding the words

Augustine was keenly conscious that the mere learning of words by rote did not automatically entail an advance in the understanding of their content. As a mature teacher and preacher he was aware of those who could remember the words of Scripture but, in his words,

... are careless about knowing the meaning. It is plain we must set far above these the men who are not so retentive of the words but see with the eyes of the heart into the heart of Scripture. Better than either of these, however, is the man who, when he wishes, can repeat the words, and at the same time correctly apprehend their meaning.²⁰²

The differentiation between language as isolated units of meaning and the theme of language resulting from the combination of these units had initially become clear to him through his reading of Cicero, before he had acquired his mature faith in the Scriptures. In his *Confessionum* he relates, with hindsight, how he had turned to Cicero at the beginning of his quest for true understanding of the Christian faith, although at the time he did not actually realise this was his goal. This reading of Cicero had highlighted the difference between knowing a word and knowing its meaning and he came to understand how he himself had been deceived by those speakers whose words, he realised later, remained sounds in the mouth, leaving the heart void of truth.²⁰³

After much deliberation he realises that the sounds in the mouth (or written words on parchment or wax) can only function as truly effective means of communication and therefore aids to understanding because of the Incarnation of the Word that is

202Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, Bk. 4 ch. 5

203Augustine, *Confessions*, I.iv and vi

Christ. Although words as sounds and signs always remain what would anachronistically be termed a cultural construct, their underlying meaning results from the creation of the world through Christ, whose subsequent entry into time and space allows this meaning to be, as far as humanly possible, apprehended. He thus gives an account in his work *De Trinitate* of a Trinity that is related to his understanding of the Incarnated Word, Christ, as the means by which human words can function at all as effective communication. Augustine, as teacher and preacher, wants his listeners, not just to know about the Trinity, but, within the confines of what is doctrinally permissible and humanly possible, to know the Trinity, in some way. This is the only way that meaning will move into the heart as truth. He painstakingly builds up a pattern of interlinking allegories of instances of triune relationships of characteristics within and among humans, over many chapters. Then, in the final chapter, he deliberately rejects the pattern because none of the allegories can reflect the fact that humans can have these triune relationships of characteristics in various permutations that differ for each individual, as part of their wider being but they cannot be them - and God is Trinity, he does not have a Trinity. Augustine seems to undermine everything he has said in the previous chapters. He aims by concluding in this surprising way to firmly position the Trinity beyond the reach of any metaphorical understanding, in the realms of impenetrable mystery.

However, at the end of chapter 14, before the explanatory final chapter 15, perhaps the original end of his work if extracts from it had not been circulated without his permission long before he had finished writing, he explains the true purpose of his work with regard to spiritual exercise. Again, he turns to Cicero, from his dialogue now lost, *Hortensius*.

But if, as the ancient philosophers agreed – and indeed the greatest and by far the most illustrious among them – that we have eternal and divine souls, then we must needs think, that the more they were always in their proper course, that is, in reason and in an eagerness for investigating, and the less they mingled with and became entangled in the vices and delusions of men, so much the easier would be their ascent and return to heaven.²⁰⁴

Understanding how much one does not understand is actually an increase in knowledge and a spur to use reason wisely in carrying on the search and thus be

204Augustine, 14.19.26 trans. by Stephen McKenna

motivated to avoid the moral pitfalls that would distract from this search.

Various interpretations of what he is doing, however, have entered theological folklore, primarily that Augustine is advocating that humanity can indulge in some sort of spiritual navel-gazing to come to an understanding of God within itself because it is made in God's image, or that Augustine's is a true failure to understand anything about the Trinity and that this failure was repeated innumerable times by subsequent theologians, who could seek comfort from his failure. When one places the *ad Herennium* template over this work, however, it is revealed that with these allegories he has actually built up a series of *imagines agentes* that point to the storage place and within this place, even if scarcely discernible to an act of thought, is the deeper truth. In Book 12 of his *De Trinitate*, which is part of this work that was 'pirated' many years before the rest was completed, so must have been composed at the start, Augustine gives an account of how the *ars memorativa* relates to his problem, quoting St Paul, that we “see now through a glass in an enigma but then in clearness” (12.14.22). What is seen is in the eye of the mind and comes to be a transient thought of a thing not transitory. And yet this transient thought is committed to the memory through the instructions by which the mind is taught (12.14.23). He does not see how the mind could come to reason at all without this memory instruction - “if, to be sure, it could attain to it at all without the phantasy of local space” (12.14.23). Augustine is one of the most daring users of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* in Christian works for public consumption at a time when the differentiation between the marker, the *imago agens*, from what is marked within storage was being addressed in a number of related fields, primarily private prayer and monastic contemplation.

**Differentiation between the marker and the marked in public discourse:
Augustine's *De Trinitate***

At this point it may be well to actually use a technique from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* used by Augustine in the work to be discussed, namely descanting on a theme, the aim of which is to approach the work in a different register – providing a descant over the main tune, as it were by turning to Cassian. He illustrates the symbiosis between spiritual exercise and academic theology as the workings of a

water-mill.²⁰⁵ The mind works like a series of cogwheels, moving along as it considers and thinks. The products of thought are then stored in separate bins, as in a mill, where the grain is moved along the bins with each grinding until the desired fineness is reached. Each bin is marked to allow the contents to be identified and returned to the grinding stone. The miller decides what to put into the mill – wheat or barley being good inputs but never excluding the possibility of using dandelion, weeds, instead – and depends on the water of the Holy Spirit to keep the whole thing turning but he must work constantly both to refine the product and to resist the temptation to grind weeds. For Augustine, the triads are the markers of the storage bins, in that the contemplation of what is stored under each triad brings fresh understanding of oneself and one's relation to God and the community around one but the grinding is never ending in this life because the grain, the understanding of the Trinity, is too fine for earthly minds to produce. The grain is, however, refined each time it goes on the wheel so one must devote oneself to this work. Just as Aristotle's students used *imagines agentes* to call up topics from their storage places to discuss each day, so Augustine's students could use a triad to call up everything that had been discussed about that triad for further discussion or contemplation, as grist to their mill.

a. Paralipsis and De Trinitate

Augustine's treatise on the triune nature of God, *De Trinitate*, was written over a long period of time, resulting in some of the earlier parts being pirated, much to his annoyance, as they circulated without the benefit of his final editing or the last chapters even being written. This initially caused him to stop writing altogether because, in addition to the lack of correction, his whole rhetorical strategy for presenting *De Trinitate* had been undermined. He had already declared in his *Confessions* that to investigate groups of three things in their own selves would be a good exercise for people to see how far this would take them in understanding the Trinity but also reveal how far away from such an understanding they would still be and moreover that if they then thought they had in some way captured the Trinity, that they would be deluding themselves.²⁰⁶ In the work that developed out of this idea his strategy depends on a

205 Cassian, *Conférence* 1.18

206 Augustine, *Confessionum* 13.11.12

Vellem, ut haec tria cogitarent homines in se ipsis. Longe aliud sunt ista tria quam illa Trinitas, sed dico, ubi se exercent et probent et sentiant quam longe sunt.....certe coram se est: attendar in se et videat et dicat mihi. Sed cum invenerit in his aliquid et dixerit, non iam se putet invenisse illud,

final shock dénouement, namely, that the whole project, due to the respective natures of God and humanity was one in which he had attempted more than he had achieved (15.25.45) and that to imagine otherwise was at best to become complacent and at worst to commit the sin of thinking oneself equal in any way to God. He explains his decision to continue in a letter to Aurelius, bishop of Carthage and primate of Africa, accompanying the presentation of the fifteen books that make up *De Trinitate* when they were finally completed. This very short letter dates from after 420, the work having originally been started sometime around 399.

....But, compelled by the strongest requests of many brothers and especially by your command, I took care to complete, with the help of the Lord, this very laborious work and I sent to your Reverence by our son, the deacon Cresimus, the same books that I had corrected, not as I wished but as I was able to do, so that they did not disagree very much with those copies that were taken from me and had already come into the hands of some people. And I gave permission that they be heard, copied, and read by anyone. If I had been able to carry out my plan in them, the books would have been less complicated and clearer as much as the difficulty in explaining such important topics and our ability would have permitted, though they would have contained the same ideas. There are, however, some who have the first four, or rather, five books without their introductions and the twelfth book without the last part, which is not a small one. But if they can become familiar with this edition, they will correct everything if they want to and are able. I ask, however, that this letter be placed at the beginning of the same books, though set apart. Good-bye. Pray for me.²⁰⁷

Note that Augustine is careful not to pre-emptorily reveal the contents of the last book of the treatise, Book 15, in this explanation because that would have undermined the

quod supra ista est incommutabile, quod est incommutabiliter et scit incommutabiliter et vult incommutabiliter.

207 Augustine, Letter 174, *Letters 156-210 Epistulae II*, trans. by John E. Rotelle (New York: New York City Press, 1990), pp. 132-133

.... Verum multorum fratrum vehementissima postulatione, et maxime tua iussione compulsus, opus tam laboriosum, adiuvante Dominoterminare curavi; eosque emendatos non ut volui, sed ut potui, ne ab illis qui subrepti iam in manus hominum exierant, plurimum discreparent, Venerationi tuae per filium nostrum Cresimum misi, et cuicumque audiendos, describendos, legendosque permisi: in quibus si serari mea dispositio potuisset, essent profecto, etsi easdem sententias habentes, multo tamen enodatiores atque planiores, quantum rerum tantarum explicandarum difficultas et facultas nostra pateretur. Sunt autem qui primos quatuor vel potius quinque etiam sine prooemiis habent, et duodecimum sine extrema parte non parva: sed si eis haec editio potuerit innotescere, omnia si voluerint et valuerint, emendabunt. Peto sane ut hanc epistolam, seorsum quidem, sed tamen ad caput eorumdem librorum iubeas anteponi. Vale. Ora pro me.

[Http://www.augustinus.it/latino/lettere/index2.htm](http://www.augustinus.it/latino/lettere/index2.htm) [accessed 15 May 2021]

intended rhetorical shock.

When he comes to write this Book 15 he is in the difficult position of having to deliver that shock, while at the same time conscious that his strategy has been undermined by the piecemeal reading of earlier completed sections of a tightly plotted structure, which now needs an elaboration that could weaken it rhetorically. The structure itself is built around a reference to St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians "now we see in a mirror/glass darkly, then we shall see face to face." In compiling his letter Paul himself used distinctive rhetorical elements that drew on the Rhodian rhetoric reflected in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* rather than from the Latin rhetoric characteristic of Cicero and later found in Quintilian or from Hebrew rhetorical forms.²⁰⁸ Augustine makes this explicit reference to chapter 13 of Paul's letter at a crucial point in his treatise in Book 8. The rhetorical weakness, which would be caused by needing to explain what he is doing, which Augustine skilfully avoids in Book 15, would potentially undermine his aim in using this rhetorical strategy, namely that of gaining the advantages of the use of paralipsis (*occultatio*). Paralipsis is used when one wishes to avoid alienating one's hearers by insisting directly on a statement that cannot be made clear or is refutable and instead gently lead them to believe that they themselves have reached the conclusion you wanted.

Paralipsis occurs when we say that we are passing by, or do not know, or refuse to say that which precisely we are saying.....This figure is useful if employed in a matter which it is not pertinent to call specifically to the attention of others, because there is advantage in making only an indirect reference to it, or because the direct reference would be tedious or undignified or cannot be made clear or can easily be refuted. As a result, it is of greater advantage to create suspicion by Paralipsis than to insist directly on a statement that is refutable.²⁰⁹

208 For Paul's "extensive and *conscious* use of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s Complete Argument (2.18-28-29.46) and limited and *conscious* use of the handbook's argument by Amplification of a Theme (4.43.56-44.57) as a means to conduct argument" p. 193 see Robert Steven Reid, 'Ad Herennium Argument Strategies in 1 Corinthians', *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism*, 3 (2006) pp. 192-222 <http://jgrchj.net/> [accessed 15 May 2021]

209 *Ad Herennium* IV. xxvii 37

Occultatio est cum dicimus nos praeterire aut non scire aut nolle dicere id quod nunc maxime dicimus.....Haec utilis est extornatio si aut ad rem quam non pertineat aliis ostendere, quod occulte admonuisse prodest, aut longum est aut ignobile, aut planum non potest fieri, aut facile potest reprehendi; ut utilius sit occulte fecisse suspicionem quam eiusmodi intendisse orationem quae redarguatur.

See also Quintilian, 9.2.75. (In 9.3.98 he assigns paralipsis to the figures of thought. In the *Rhetorica* it is included in figures of diction. See Caplan, n.a p. 320)

It carries the listener or (but very seldom) reader with it to the end, both denying them the opportunity to jump ship and pursue their own pre-conceived route and allowing them to think that they had reached the conclusion independently. The reason that Augustine uses it in discussion of the Trinity is that everyone with any theological pretensions had their own particular boat to row.²¹⁰ The nature of the Trinity had been and is still hotly contested. Quite bluntly, rhetorically he is stringing his hearer along and literally he is stringing a memory catena, a chain of associated ideas. Seeming to agree with them that the current trend of viewing triads of characteristics in the human mind was a brilliant way of understanding the triune God... he hesitates because..... this allegory doesn't quite work, so suggests changing it a bit to reconfigure the triad... but no, that doesn't work either – you agree – we'll change it a bit again ... and so on. Finally he can confirm that he agrees with them, even though they had no idea this was going to be their conclusion, that this triad idea is fatally flawed because God is triune in a totally different way to anything triune discernible in humanity. Do not despair, however, he concludes because there is a way forward, which is basically that of the two great commandments, love of God and love of community, expressed in rightly directed sacrament, deed and study. They agree because this idea has a familiar ring to it – Augustine having actually woven it deeply into the first seven books of his treatise.

However, it would be a mistake to think that Augustine is actually dooming humanity to perpetual ignorance. He is using the *ars memorativa* technique of creating dismay to create *affectus* because he wants his reader/listener to pay full attention to what he now says, namely, that because the gap in time between the memory of something and the knowledge of it can be easily forgotten and memory and knowledge elide into one, one forgets that there was a time when one did not know. The urge to seek further knowledge thus diminishes. He compares it to taking a loved one for granted when they are always present as opposed to the heightened love one feels when one is missing an absent loved one. If we think we have understood God, we do not feel the need to seek understanding, we lose the sense of need and therefore

210 For a concise but thorough introduction to Augustine's treatise, including its historical setting at a time of great controversy as reaction to the formulation of the Nicene creed, see Mary T. Clark, 'De Trinitate', *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine* (Cambridge Companions Online: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 91-102

achieve less true knowledge through complacency.²¹¹ Augustine gives the theological ground here for the importance of the practice of the *ars memorativa* within spiritual exercise, the ongoing conscious curation of one's memory heightens the longing for God. The mind, just like the memory, forgets the gap between images of things it has taken in by the senses and the time before those images were taken in, assuming they were always a natural part of the mind.²¹² For this reason the *imagines agentes* are a vital part of the art, always arresting in some way to enable the thinker to order their mental memory and to shake them out of complacency.

For Augustine, the conclusion is deeply serious. It implies an active waiting on God, fully conscious of the distance between humanity and God, even if unclear about the quality or quantity of that distance, waiting while that which is unclear but still securely stored, comes gradually, eventually, in this life to some degree perhaps or maybe in the life to come, to maturity. It is so serious that he underpins it with a plethora of classical rhetorical techniques that he now puts to the advancement of the Christian faith. This conclusion gains theological heft because of its rhetorical principle. The aim of rhetoric, as understood by Augustine and following Plato and Aristotle, is to make truth effective.²¹³ If the triune God is true – which is infinitely more than to say that God is truth, as one attribute – then this is demonstrated and made effective in the life that grows through sacrament, action and study. The triads also are deeply serious. The first, based on the experience of love, is drawn from the deep well of *affectus*, the source of the passions, from which the memory images are drawn. Exploring them at length can only enrich the search for understanding because, even though they are ultimately unable to plumb the depths of God's triune nature, they can function as memory images, enabling the searcher to earmark the place, within which is that which can scarcely be embraced by an act of thought, with a visual sequence of words.

In its opening sentence the letter of Augustine to Bishop Aurelius states that the

211 Augustine, 10.12.19

212 Augustine 10.8.11

213 “There is a very wide difference between what is said for effect and what is said or made to be effective and must work, or would not have been worth saying or making.” Ananda K.

Coomaraswamy, *Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought* (London: Luzac & Co, 1946), p. 2. Plato *Phaedrus* 260E “A real art of speaking, says the Laconian, which does not seize hold of truth, does not exist and never will.”

theme of his treatise is *de trinitate, quae Deus summus et verus est* - the triad, which is the sovereign and true God - because Augustine has not found a way of allowing the word “Trinity”, which simply means triad, to express what he needs to say without the addition of further description. (In the title of his work, *de trinitate* he uses the lower casing “t” for triad, not the upper casing “T”, the use of which has since acquired doctrinal significance as the Trinity.)²¹⁴ Eriugena, who is visually quoted in the most important theological part of the Luttrell imagery explains precisely why this is in his ninth-century work *Periphyseon*. “As St Augustine says, 'A definition contains nothing greater or less than what it has undertaken to explain. Otherwise it is utterly faulty.'²¹⁵ Augustine is therefore set on the path of engaging with his topic where he can but not defining it - and this is precisely his theological point with regard to an understanding of the triune God. One can engage with God in some way but not define God.

b. The relationship between imagines agentes and rhetorical images used in allegory

The premature release of parts of this treatise, however, has had one major benefit for the present day study of *imagines agentes* and their relationship to rhetorical images used in allegory. (Allegory is a technical term in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and will be addressed below. It is more akin to comparison and does not have the modern connotations of fable.) The last book of his writings, as a result of the unintended sabotage of his strategy, is devoted to a detailed summary of what he had said in the first seven books, why he considered at this point that he had not succeeded in what he had hoped to achieve and of how he had turned to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* when he reached an impasse after book eight. (First and last are not used chronologically here but with regard to their final rhetorical presentation.) He combined Cicero's explanation of the use of the *imagines agentes* when knowledge was beyond human comprehension and the *ad Herennium* guidelines on the rhetorical

214 For a brief history of the possible influence of various combinations of triads on a general 'being/life/mind' theme in the slightly older philosophers Plotinus, Iamblichus and Marius Victorinus see Peter Manchester, *Temporality and Trinity* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), pp. 63-69. Also Rowan Williams, 'De Trinitate', ed. Allan D Fitzgerald, *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), pp. 845-846 for the influence of Marius Victorinus's *Adversus Arrium* with its triad of being, living and understanding on Augustine and the context and influence of controversies around the relationship between Father, Son and Spirit current throughout his life.

215 Iohannes Scotus Eriugena, *Periphyseon* Book 1.41 trans. Myra L. Uhlfeder (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 1976), p. 53

device of allegory which latter Augustine linked into the famous passage of St Paul concerning the enigma of humanity's knowledge in this world, to construct a distinctive framework for the following books. This framework was based on examining various permutations of a triadic structure that was held to be present in human beings. The core of this structure was the combination of memory, understanding and will, *memoria, intelligentia, voluntas*, that informs the mind of the soul, *mens animi*. This presupposes, very briefly, that Augustine differentiates mind from soul in the same way as the third century Greek-speaking neo-Platonic philosopher Plotinus does, the latter following Aristotle's usage in *De Anima*.²¹⁶ Plotinus, in his work *Enneads* IV.6, is adamant that the memory does not entail an imprint in the soul and this allows for the rearranging and culling of memories by the *ars memorativa*. The wax cell image of the beehive, in its multiple dimensions and flexible use, is not at all the same thing as the image of a two-dimensional imprint on a wax tablet.²¹⁷ Mind, as a particular power of the soul is engaged with matters that are intelligible, just as perception is concerned with those generated by the senses.²¹⁸

Augustine seems to sacrifice the usefulness of these triadic structures, a potent rhetorical gesture but in fact he does not allow them to go to waste. They are the perfect marker as an *imago agens*, extended into a memory catena, for holding firm the place of what is marked, however indistinct its contents. They are not faulty in themselves because they seek not to define but to respond to the underlying biblical truth that humans are made in the image of God. If applied only to humans – and not imposed on God - they can engage the human criteria outlined in the *ars memorativa* for memorableness, while respecting the most sacred of discourses, that of the nature of God. They enable the most important thing, which is to fix the place and this will always be constant, even if its contents vary. He very much hopes that this will be the case, for attention to study, liturgy and community life should bring them into ever sharper focus. He declares this forthrightly at the end of Book 8, following his

216 Looking forward, the Dominicans will seek to reconcile the work of Aristotle on soul and memory with the *ars memorativa* and this will be influential in the work of the Luttrell Master. Cicero makes a major departure from Aristotle, who places rhetoric within the remit of dialectic, by subordinating it to logic. Marcia L. Colish, *The Mirror of Language* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, this ed. 1983), pp. 13-14 discusses this briefly within her chapter on Augustine's use of rhetoric to express a common sign theory that addressed the basic problem in the medieval theory of knowledge, the problem of the human word versus Christ the Word (pp. 7-55) .

217 Richard Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, this ed. 2006), n2 p.

5

218 Manchester, *Temporality and Trinity*, p. 62

announcement that the first of the triads in the catena that he develops will be the permutations of love.

There, then, also are three things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love. It remains to ascend also from hence, and to seek those things which are above, as far as is given to man. But here for a little while let our purpose rest, not that it may think itself to have found already what it seeks; but just as usually the place has first to be found where anything is to be sought, while the thing itself is not yet found, but we have only found already where to look for it; so let it suffice to have said thus much, that we may have, as it were, the hinge of some starting-point, whence to weave the rest of our discourse.²¹⁹

Being unaware of Augustine's rhetorical intentions in *De Trinitate* and presenting it as a narrative of failure, however, is to take at face value what is actually Augustine's use of rhetoric to mark for memory a major theological point concerning the relationship between God and humankind - that if you comprehend, it is not God. Such a narrative of failure, however, has gained traction because it is particularly useful to those seeking to highlight the difficulties of the doctrine of the Trinity when discussing other theologians. In the following quote Hall, for example, is emphasizing the trouble Thomas Aquinas had when reflecting on Boethius's thesis on the Trinity, by comparing it to what he understands is Augustine's failure.

And yet, while he made only a few changes in the text at the end of his life, it is clear that he was less than completely satisfied with it....Augustine, the theologian who most of all must be encountered in the outpouring of his self-revealing communication, concluded his painful struggle with Mystery in Trinitarian theology in a gasping psalm of lament: "And you, O my soul, where do you find yourself to be, where do you lie down.....? You recognize indeed that you are in that inn to which that Samaritan brought him whom he found half-dead from the many 'wounds'." If such was the fate of Augustine, should lesser mortals dare to gaze into such blinding, wounding Mystery?²²⁰

Hall is quoting *De Trinitate* 15.27.50, unaware that Augustine is here summoning up all the forces of the rhetorical tool *affectus*. Augustine encourages the reader or hearer – so memorably – to identify with the anguish of the wounded traveller, robbed of all

219 *DeTr* 8.10.14

220 Douglas C. Hall, *An Analysis of St Thomas Aquinas' Expositio of the De Trinitate of Boethius* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), p. 2-3

he has.²²¹ There is red blood, shocking disfigurement and then the absence of the rescuer, the Good Samaritan. These are all elements found in the original Simonides story of the invention of the art. This is in order to fix his point. He introduces the *affectus* with the declaration that indeed the “ineffableness of that highest Trinity...and the wonderful knowledge of Him is too great for me and that I cannot attain to it” but follows it with the assertion that the attempt to seek knowledge will have a positive result, even if not a clear result. It will leave one with the knowledge that there is a true word, which cannot be articulated or thought in any known language, yet is fixed in the mind's eye, and the memory place where it is fixed will be marked by an *imago agens*. The fact that it can scarcely be embraced by an act of thought, so has to be earmarked by a sort of outline and image and shape to keep hold of it as it were by an act of sight (to paraphrase Cicero) does not make it any less true. It is memory that plays the key role in this fixing of knowledge, even knowledge that cannot be adequately understood, such as the ineffability of God, with the aid of will or love, or a combination of the two.

You cannot fix your sight there, so as to discern this lucidly and clearly; I know you cannot. I say the truth, I say to myself, I know what I cannot do; yet that light itself shows to you these three things in yourself, wherein you may recognize an image of the highest Trinity itself, which you cannot yet contemplate with steady eye. Itself shows to you that there is in you a true word, when it is born of your knowledge, ie when we say what we know: although we neither utter nor think of any articulate word that is significant in any tongue of any nation, but our thought is formed by that which we know; and there is in the mind's eye of the thinker an image resembling that thought which the memory contained, will or love as a third combining these two as parent or offspring.²²²

As well as the danger of not recognizing Augustine's rhetorical strategy of paralipsis and therefore lamenting his failure, there is another danger for modern commentators, that of jumping off the rhetorical ship too early and missing the ultimate implication of why each triad had to be reconfigured. If, in addition, there is no knowledge of the pre-modern hive mentality to enable one to check one's bearings, one will not even realize that one is at sea but has dropped Augustine as a pilot. This produces various

221 Jesus's Parable of the Good Samaritan tells of a traveller who is set upon brutally by thieves, robbed of all he has and left for dead until rescued and taken to an inn where he slowly recovers physical health, his expenses paid for by a sum of money given by the Good Samaritan who had rescued him and who had since gone on his way. Luke 10:29-37

222 Augustine, 15.27.50

permutations of the theory that because the human mind is a trinity it can be used as a mirror in which to see the triune God, who cannot be perceived by intuition. One such is that of Johannes Brachtendorf.

Augustine gives this tradition [of the image of God] a new meaning by claiming that the human mind is an image of God because it, too, is trinitarian in structure. The triune God is withdrawn from our faculty of intuition but nothing is closer to the human mind than itself. If the human mind is a trinity we can perceive in it the triune God as in a mirror or in an image.²²³

As will be seen, Augustine makes it plain that he is not actually sure what he sees in the glass, nor whether he is actually seeing a dim reflection in it, or obscurely through it. (It is this latter position that equates to that of the place and its *imago agens*.) A close reading of Augustine, therefore, also does not allow one to take an interpretation such as Brachtendorf's and use it to explain the way in which rhetoric aids understanding, as Marcia Colish attempts .

The faculty of human speech was to be recast as a Pauline mirror, faithfully mediating God to man in the present life; and the agency appointed for the translation of man's partial knowledge by faith into his complete knowledge of God by direct vision was to be redefined as modes of verbal expression.²²⁴

Those who do pay closer attention are still not clear whether Augustine is succeeding in, or merely striving to, undertake his aim if they do not factor in the importance he gives the *ars memorativa* within memory, a memory that in modern terms would be more akin to mind. Thus, referring to the triad of being, knowing and willing discussed by Augustine in his *Confessions* (13.11.12) Gareth Matthews writes

Could one use the complexities of this mental three-in-oneness to illuminate the three-in-oneness of God? Augustine suggests this possibility in the *Confessions* passage above and he undertakes to make the possibility an actuality in the last half of his great *De*

223 Johannes Brachtendorf, 'Augustine on Self-Knowledge and Human Subjectivity', p. 102, *Self-Knowledge: a History*, edited by Ursula Renz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 96-113. This particular account assumes that, for Augustine, the human mind can be self-relational. This is illogical, in the terms of his argument, as it would detach the image from whatever it was the image of. At this period and throughout most of the Middle Ages, God had an ongoing input into intellectualization.

224 Marcia Colish, *The Mirror of Language*, p. 16

Missing the rhetorical punchline and unawareness of his use of paralipsis totally undermines Augustine's rhetorical strategy with theological implications for the relationship between human and God.

c. Augustine's outline in Book 15 of his aims in the preceding books

The storage of that which can never be fully known forms the crux of Augustine's explanation of what he has been trying to do in his treatise and this is what he outlines in the last of its fifteen books. Briefly, he starts with a summary of the first seven books in chapters 1-5 of this last book but suddenly he realises that what he has done is actually simply to give an expanded paraphrase of the doctrine that is in a Trinitarian creed and expound on the undoubted necessity of leading a holy, considered life of sacrament and study in community to have any hope of growing in understanding. Worthy as this is, this was not his intention, however - he had not addressed the major question he had set himself, which was how to move from belief to reasoned understanding and had not ventured that far from the rote learning that accompanied a creed such as the Athanasian.

How, then, do we understand this wisdom, which is God, to be a trinity? I do not say, How do we believe this? For among the faithful this ought to admit no question. But supposing there is any way by which we can see with the understanding what we believe, what is that way?²²⁶

He recounts in book 15 that he was now on the threshold of writing book eight when he realised that only at this point is “a trinity” (15.6.10) actually beginning to show itself to his own understanding. More disturbingly, when he tries to discern what is actually incorporeally present somehow in that memory place when he thinks of the trinitarian nature of God, he has to admit that the Trinity still does not appear to him, only a feeling that the two or three shapes are not more weighty together than the one alone. This is when he reveals that he is changing tack by introducing the triads in

225 Augustine, *On the Trinity*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews, trans by Stephen McKenna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. x.

226 *DeTr* 15.6.9

human nature, starting with a triad based on love and linking them into the image of God in humankind. Two chapters later he links the latter into the writings of St Paul and their association with allegory (in the *ad Herennium* sense) and enigma (*aenigmata* in the Latin translation of Paul Augustine uses), which brings him back to Cicero and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. (See below.) The eventual success of his work, not its failure, rests on two affirmations. The first is the celebration of incomprehension, “for things incomprehensible must be so investigated, as that no one may think he has found nothing, when he has been able to find how incomprehensible that is which he was seeking”. (15.2.2) Such a search allows the seeker to become “ever better and better while seeking so great a good” (15.2.2). Secondly, he is able to come to a reasoned account of the Holy Spirit as fully one of the Trinity and endowed especially but not exclusively with love. However, given his realisation that he was unsure about seeing a three-in-one initially and not two, Father and Son alone, he concludes that he will need to wait until the final bliss to understand how the Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son. His “failure” is seemingly in equating the allegory of triads in humanity with the threeness of God. Simply, humanity has triads but is not solely composed of them, whereas the one God is nothing but triune.

But these three are in such way in man, that they are not themselves man. For man, as the ancients defined him, is a rational mortal animal. These things, therefore, are the chief things in man but are not man themselves.²²⁷

This is no failure because the triads, though images, are functioning primarily as markers, pointing to the memory place where the Trinity is and it is essential that they are not confused with it. The markers, as *imagines agentes* have to be differentiated from what is so marked but have to be memorable. The corporeal images fix the place of the incorporeal – as a point of further departure.

d. Reading through the rhetorical lens of the imago agens

The above brief summary will hopefully give a sense of the overall structure of Augustine's work. The rhetorical aspect of it is now examined in detail, concentrating mainly on chapters 6- 10 of Book 15. The aim is to show how, without knowledge of

227 *DeTr* 15.7.11

Augustine's use of the *imago agens* his work can be misunderstood. Augustine's desire in this part of his work is to discover if there is any way in which we can see with the understanding apart from belief (15.6.9) and is an echo of the opening chapter of Book Fifteen, the concluding book of his work.

And whether this is the Trinity, it is now our business to demonstrate, not only to believers by authority of divine Scripture, but also to such as understand, by some kind of reason, if we can. And why I say, if we can, the thing itself will show better when we have begun to argue about it in our inquiry.²²⁸

This doubt about achieving the goal is itself a reference back to the opening of Book One, where Augustine is immediately concerned to qualify any confidence that may be had in reason in the matter of God. He stresses that since mortal speech, whether thought, written or said, in this world of space and time is changeable and God is unchangeable, there is an inevitable mismatch. One must always be aware of the resulting shortfall in understanding and never fall into the three traps that can result from forgetting this. One such trap is to transfer to incorporeal and spiritual things ideas that have been gleaned via the bodily senses or natural human wit, diligent quickness, art and so on, from corporeal things. It is folly to think one could measure and understand the former by the latter. The second trap is to frame one's opinions of God according to discourse that is derived from the nature and affections of the human mind and therefore base one's pronouncements on human rules that, with respect to God, can only be fallacious. The third trap is to realise that one has to raise oneself above the changeable creation if one is to think about the unchangeable substance which is God but then not realise that, being mortal, this is not possible. One then digs oneself deeper into this trap by thinking that one has grasped what one does not and cannot know as yet and thus does not even start walking in earnest along "the very path of understanding".²²⁹ He sums up this introduction by rejecting the possibility of knowing God through terms derived from the body, mind or power.

228 *DeTr* 15.1.1

229 *DeTr* 1.1.1-3

intercludunt sibimet intellegentiae vias. The very path of understanding (that they bar themselves from) is a theme that Augustine returns to in describing the paths that one builds around the memory places in the *ars memorativa* and also in ecclesiastical architecture to guide one from the theology of the font to that of the altar, for example and also in liturgy, to move one in understanding through the different rubrics until one comes to the Eucharist. This will be discussed below in Augustine and *ductus*.

For he who thinks, for instance, that God is white or red, is in error; and yet these things are found in the body. Again, he who thinks of God as now forgetting and now remembering, or anything of the same kind, is none the less in error; and yet these things are found in the mind. But he who thinks that God is of such power as to have generated Himself, is so much the more in error, because not only does God not so exist, but neither does the spiritual nor the bodily creature; for there is nothing whatever that generates its own existence.²³⁰

At this point he has radically undermined any possibility that a glib reliance on reason as some kind of obvious reading of the book of created nature could be of any use. Yet for Augustine reason, as the expression of the intellect, is that which makes it possible for humanity to know at all. He had previously compared, in *De Decem Chordis*, the relation between God and his human creation to a coin that is impressed with the image of the emperor. Unlike a coin, however, that does not know it carries the image of the emperor, humanity does know because God has provided it with an intellect and a “certain life”. The intellect allows us to know both that we bear the impression of this image and whose image it is.²³¹ Crucially, it also allows us to understand that, as images, we are both deficient to that of which we are the image but, being images, this deficiency points in some way towards the original. In spite of this insurmountable deficiency we are aware, through our intellect, that reason dictates that we should imitate that of which we are the image, inspired by the ultimate image of the Father, which is the Son. It is this life, following holy example, that Augustine directed his readers and hearers to live in the first books of *De Trinitate*. The changeable medium of human communication, however mismatched, is all that we have with which to contemplate the unchangeable nature of God, so there is a basic requirement to respect the importance of faith, to adopt a godly life of purification through appropriate spiritual and moral behaviour and to be attentive to the insights gleaned from the writings that were in the process of becoming the Old and New

230 *DeTr 1.1.5-7*

231 Augustine, *Sermon IX. 8,9 De decem chordis, Sermones* (PL 38, 82b)

Sicut enim in nummo imago imperatoris aliter est et aliter in filio – nam imago et imago est, sed aliter impressa est in nummo; aliter habetur in filio, aliter in solido aureo imago imperatoris – sic et tu nummus dei es, ex hoc melior quia cum intellectu et cum quadam uita nummus dei es ut scias etiam cuius imaginem geras et ad cuius imaginem factus sis, nam nummus nescit se habere regis.

<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/augustine/serm9.shtml> [accessed 8 May 2021]

Quoted in O Boulnois, *Au-delà de l'image* (Paris: Seuil, 2008), p. 52, also Jean Wirth, *L'image à l'époque romane* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1999), p. 32

Testaments.²³² He repeats this at the end of book 15.

And to be sure, when they have steadfastly believed in the Holy Scriptures as most true witnesses, let them strive by praying and seeking and living well, that they may understand, i.e. that so far as it can be seen, that may be seen by the mind which is held fast by faith.²³³

What is paramount in Augustine's warning of the three traps at the beginning of his treatise has also been linked in the description of humans, like coins impressed with the images of God but with the addition of reason, in *De Decem Chordis*. This is the warning that God wants to make you similar to him but that you are endeavouring instead to make God similar to you.²³⁴ In the same way the various allegories that Augustine will offer for the Trinitarian relationship must not be mistaken for a mould into which one can force God and thus make him into one's own image. Separating the marker from the marked is vital. It is even more so when the marker has to be used in the realms of communication between humans and not merely in a purely individual use.

Augustine states that it is in the eighth book that he tried to raise the aim of the mind. This does not mean that he had not been trying before but that, following roughly the rhetorical scheme for the work he was engaged in, he was now at the stage of 'second expression in new form'. This scheme is called 'descanting upon a theme' in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (VI.xlii 54) and it consists in dwelling on the same topic and yet seeming to say something ever new. It comprises simple pronouncement, reason, second expression in new form, contrary, comparison, example and conclusion. The whole builds up to a crescendo and this is why Augustine is particularly annoyed at the treatise arriving out of order in the public domain. The *Rhetorica* states specifically that "a Refinement of this sort, which will consist of numerous figures of diction and of thought, can therefore be exceedingly ornate".²³⁵ These numerous figures will be the various permutations of triads.

232 Augustine, *de Trinitate* 1.1.3 – 1.2.4

233 *DeTr* 15.27.49

234 Boulnois, p. 53

235 *Rhetorica* IV. xliii 56

Ergo huiusmodi vehementer ornata poterit esse expolitio, quae constabit ex frequentibus exornationibus verborum et sententiarum.

George Kennedy, in his work on Christian rhetoric, has cited Augustine's, seeming concentration on ornamentation over content, as typical of the particular triviality exhibited by rhetoric in the Roman, late Greek and medieval periods in *A Classical Rhetoric and its*

For if we recall where it was in these books that a trinity first began to show itself to our understanding, the eighth book is that which occurs to us; since it was there that to the best of our power we tried to raise the aim of the mind to understand that most excellent and unchangeable nature, which our mind is not. And so we contemplated this nature as to think of it as not far from us, and as above us, not in place, but by its own awful and wonderful excellence, and in such wise that it appeared to be with us by its own present light. Yet in this no trinity was yet manifest to us, because in that blaze of light we did not keep the eye of the mind steadfastly bent upon seeking it; only we discerned it in a sense, because there was no bulk wherein we must needs think the magnitude of two or three to be more than that of one.²³⁶

Augustine cannot keep the eye of the mind steadfastly bent upon seeking. The possibility of finding a stable interiority, in which God can be reflected and therefore known, is not one recognized by Augustine, though it was long attributed to him. It appears to be linked to the equally prevalent misunderstanding of Augustine's position on the strict divide between body and soul.²³⁷ This position was first challenged in the

Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times (Chapel Hill: University of Carolina Press, 1980), p. 159. Mary Carruthers challenges this from the memory art direction, pointing out that for monastic rhetoric, inherited from the ancient Greek via the Roman, such ornamentation was linked to the unpacking of biblical material that could not be simply analysed and to the memory schemes that held this important material in memory, so that it could be brought out for constant re-evaluation in times of meditation and contemplation. Such ornamentation was not trivial but an integral part of the rhetoric's effectiveness as a springboard to further – future - thought grounded in memory. In her later work she moves closer to an understanding of the motivation for Augustine's style that could be said to be theological, opining that Augustine displays a “basic preference for paradox over resolution, for complexity over simplicity, for change over monotony”. *The Craft of Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, this ed. 2008), p. 122

²³⁶ *DeTr* 15.6.10

²³⁷ Augustine's use of the *imagines agentes* can contribute to the wider debate that is now current regarding the misunderstanding of Augustine, particularly the assumption that he makes a strict divide between the corrupt body and the soul and that he therefore shuns all use of the visual, derived from the senses, when engaged in contemplation of the divine. This misunderstanding could appear wilful. See, for example, Henry Chadwick, 'Augustine', ed. R. I. Coggins and J. L. Houlden, *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (London: SCM Press, 1990), pp. 65-69 that refers to “the immense shift away from his theology and exegesis associated with the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and since. His polemic against Ambrosiaster's exegesis of I.Cor.11 (*De Trinitate* 12.9) denying woman to be in God's image as well as man, did not much diminish the success of Ambrosiaster's opinion in medieval times, nor prevent modern writers from mistakenly ascribing to him the view he expressly rejected.” Also Carol Harrison, 'Augustine', ed. Adrian Hastings, *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 52-55. “Augustine's positive reflections on marriage and sexuality as part of humanity's original creation are often ignored by those who simply wish to regard him as the *eminence grise* of Western negative attitudes.” Such misunderstandings have long roots into the scholastic times and can also arise when the desire is to reflect faithfully Augustine's teachings. The ramifications can throw a long shadow when they then become de-contextualised in the modern period, as Lydia Schumacher examines in *Divine Illumination: The History and Future of Augustine's Theory of Knowledge (Challenges in Contemporary Theology)* (Chichester: Wiley, 2011). She traces the late thirteenth century

secondary literature by Calvadini who wished to stress that for Augustine there was no “stable interior reality, always ready to be glimpsed by the purified inner vision” but rather a process of representing oneself to oneself, always in relation to God.²³⁸ The continual shifts this entails are consciously held in memory. Seen from an *ars memorativa* perspective such shifts, even, perhaps especially, those that are beyond comprehension and beyond pictorial image are pinned down but not represented by *imagines agentes*. Rowan Williams gives a full and nuanced account of how this insight of Calvadini was countered by a pendulum swing back to some sort of “fully truthful self-presence in the process of reflexive recognition”.²³⁹ In turn, this was followed by a swing back to refining the position as being away from a defined self-

interpretation of the Augustinian order of St Francis of Augustine's theology of divine illumination – the theological context of which is given by Augustine in *De Trinitate*, – back into at least two wrong turns. The first is their assumption that their order's theologian, Bonaventura, was faithful to Augustine's concept of knowledge when he was actually demonstrating his skill in “the scholastic practice of bolstering personal opinions through efforts to 'find' those opinions in authoritative sources.” p.2.

The second, which also has wider application, particularly when the Trinity is included in what is under consideration, is assuming that the same word will metaphorically point to only one meaning, despite earlier warnings from distinguished sources such as Plato, Augustine himself and Dionysius. “Realities.....must be learned and sought out not from names, but rather through themselves.” Plato, *Cratylus* 439B. “Realities signified are to be valued more highly than their signs.” Augustine, *De Magistro* 9.25. “It would be unreasonable and silly to look at words rather than at the power of the meanings. Anyone seeking to understand divine things should never do this, for this is the procedure followed by those who....do not wish to know what a particular phrase means or how to convey its sense through equivalent but more efficient phrases.” Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus* 708C p.vi. Rowan Williams writes that this shift in understanding has now made it “harder to repeat the clichés about Augustine's alleged responsibility for Western Christianity's supposed obsession with the evils of bodily existence or sexuality, or its detachment from the world of public ethics, its authoritarian ecclesiastical systems, or its excessively philosophical understanding of God's unity, or whatever else is seen as the root of all theological evils”. *On Augustine* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p.vii .

238 John C. Cavadini, 'The Darkest Enigma: Reconsidering the Self in Augustine's Thought', *Augustinian Studies*, (38.1) (2007) pp. 119-32 here citing p. 122

239 Rowan Williams, *On Augustine*, pp. 21-24 and in particular n. 32. How far the pendulum had swung can be illustrated by considering how Neo-Augustinian was used as an adjective eg. Michael J. Scanlon, 'Karl Rahner: A Neo-Augustinian Thomist', *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review*, Vol. 43, no. 1 (Catholic University of America Press, Jan 1979) pp. 178- 185 <https://muse.jhu.edu/issue/34091> [accessed 15 May 2021] “Neo-Augustinian may be an apposite substitute for 'transcendental' as Rahner moves from his philosophical 'turn to the subject' to his theological reflection on the subject informed by grace .” p. 179. Transcendental, he notes, as in the Cartesian and Kantian self-centred approach to knowledge.

For an overview of systematic theologians interest in the implications of Augustine's theology for the development of Trinitarian doctrine before what Williams calls the Cavadini watershed (*On Augustine*, p.21) see Michel René Barnes, 'Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology', *Theological Studies*, 56 (1995) pp. 237-250

That the pendulum is still swinging can be observed in the thought of Christos Yannaras, for example. Barnes, (p. 243) notes that Yannaras (Geneva, 1986) blames Augustine's influence on the Western Christian theological paradigm for the rise of “logocentrism” in Western civilization. Thirty years later he still regards Augustine as the source of a preference for individualistic salvation, which he then links to the rise of Islam in the West. See Norman Russell, *Metaphysics as a Personal Adventure: Christos Yannaras in Conversation with Norman Russell* (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2017) (Also Robin Ward's review 'Strong views from the East' in *Church Times*, 4 January 2019 p. 21 which provides a brief summary of Yannaras' book.)

awareness and back to a relational self-awareness that recognizes that there is no definition if one cannot know the boundaries of what is beyond comprehension. This is an issue for later interpreters - due to his use of the *ars memorativa*, this was not a theological problem for Augustine. As Parshall noted in his discussion of the Passion Narrative (see previous chapter), the *imago agens* as signifier allows for appropriation even when lack of boundary seems to imply an empty signified. The empty chair at the feast, the absent gods and in Christianity the empty tomb are all pregnant with significance. Also, this appropriation, as with self-awareness and the knowledge that ensues, is an internalization that starts with and then flows back into the external. Augustine affirms in *De Trinitate* that the “bodily senses also bring word of all things” to the mind that indeed “as though honourably presiding in a higher and inner place” because it has been granted an insight into invisible things does not dwell there in splendid isolation (15.27.50). It is tied into the created life of the community, through its physicality and its shared cultural assumptions.²⁴⁰ For Augustine, this was the life of the monastic and episcopal community, committed to study, prayer and preaching. There is never a defined answer produced out of an interior mental space that has escaped the body but a questioning life that is constantly relating to God. This is itself the resolution.

Using the *ars memorativa* Augustine could safely park the indistinct shapes or forms or images of that what he had discerned while he considered what to do next. Two things stand out. Firstly, the felt experience of love is somehow a way forward in understanding because the feeling is similar to the one he experiences when considering the triune God. Love is called God in the Scriptures and particularly associated with the Holy Spirit. Secondly, it is the blaze of light that is preventing him from gazing steadfastly. He continues

240 Care must be taken with the use of the word appropriation as in Trinitarian theology, including Augustinian, it is applied to the assigning of attributes to the different elements of the Trinity, eg *De Trinitate* Book 6.10.

Parshall uses it in its psychological context.

M. Esteban-Guitart, 'Appropriation', ed. T. Teo, *Encyclopaedia of Critical Psychology* (New York: Springer, 2014) .

“Appropriation (from Latin *appropriare*, “to make one's own”), is concept borrowed from Hegel by Marx. The emergence of higher mental functions (verbal thought, focussed attention, deliberate memory, and so on) – unique to humans, culturally mediated and passed on by teaching – is characterised by internalization. (L. S. Vygotsky *Mind in Society* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1978). It can be defined as “the conversion of social relations into mental functions”. Vygotsky, 'The genesis of higher mental functions', ed. J.V.Wertsch, *The Concept of Activity in Soviet Psychology* (Armonk NY: Sharpe, 1981), p. 165. Individual development cannot be understood without reference to the social and cultural context within which it is embedded.

(B)ut when we came to treat of love, which in the Holy Scriptures is called God, then a trinity began to dawn upon us a little, ie one that loves, and that which is loved, and love. But because that ineffable light beat back our gaze, and it became in some degree plain that our weakness of mind could not as yet be tempered to it, we turned our back in the midst of the course we had begun, and planned according to the (as it were) more familiar consideration of our own mind, according to which man is made after the image of God, in order to relieve our overstrained attention; and thereupon we dwelt from the ninth to the fourteenth book upon the consideration of the creature, which we are, that we might be able to understand and behold the invisible things of God by those things which are made.²⁴¹

The experience of love will form the first of a series of triads derived from human characteristics, the triads slotting into each other like cogs in a series of wheels. The description of thought being driven forward notch by notch in spiritual exercise was a favourite of Cassian.

This exercise of the heart is not inappropriately compared to that of a mill which is activated by the circular motion of water...if we turn to the constant meditation on Scripture, if we lift up our memory to the things of the spirit then the thoughts deriving from all of this will of necessity be spiritual.²⁴²

Augustine himself speaks of the first triad as the *articulus*, a moving joint that is the starting point of the ensuing discussion (see footnote 216 above).

This is Augustine's way of descanting upon a theme. This interlocking series of ideas or texts is known as a *catena* in later medieval memory rhetoric, a chain. It is not simply ideas strung one after another like beads on a string, however, each component must somehow be hooked on to the next to prompt the memory, retaining the idea of the notches on the cog.

The bright light suggests to him two Scriptural texts that are linked to each other, referring to humanity's nature being in the image of God, to the special work of the Holy Spirit and to the rhetorical device of allegory. These are 2 Cor 3:18 "But we with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the

241 *DeTr* 15.6.10

242 Cassian, *Conférence* I.18

same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” and 1 Cor 13:12 “We see now through a glass, in an enigma, but then face to face.”²⁴³ Both are from letters of St Paul to the Christian community in Corinth and both letters make allusion to the bright face of the Hebrew leader Moses after he had conversed with God during the Exodus in the desert.

Although he spends books nine to fourteen discussing the triads, in book fifteen he dismisses their usefulness immediately after introducing them because, even apart from the impossibility of discussing things of God in words of man, they are all triads that make up a part of a human being, none of them are that human in entirety. God, however, is Father, Son and Spirit, no more, no less. In addition, the Father is in the Son and in the Spirit, the Son in the Father and in the Spirit and the Spirit in the Father and in the Son, for God is not triplex but triune. Likewise the blinding light is summarily dealt with at the end of book 15, after repeated reference has been made to it throughout books nine to fourteen. Only the final healing of sin will allow vision in the blinding light and indeed it is now better to give up all argument and turn to prayer.

What reason, then, is there why you can not see that light itself with steady eye, except certainly infirmity? And what has produced this in you, except iniquity? Who, then, is it that heals all your infirmities, unless it be He that forgives all your iniquities? And therefore I will now at length finish this book by a prayer better than by an argument.²⁴⁴

This appraisal of the *imago agens* in its structure is not to deny the grandeur of the

243 Augustine's translation of Paul from *DeTr* 15.8.14

Nos autem revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes, in eadem imaginem transformamur de gloria in gloriam, tamquam a Domini Spiritu.

Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem.

There are almost as many interpretations of the above as there are biblical scholars and theologians, due to the ambiguity of the original Greek and as much discussion about whether such ambiguity was actually intended.

“Out of all the symbolic, metaphorical and literary images implied or directly attested in the early Christian writings, the vision in the enigmatic mirror depicted by Paul in 1Cor 13:12 remains one of the strongest and most vivid sources of inspiration, as its many quotations, allusions and elaborations from every period and in every field of literature stand to demonstrate up to this day. Another powerful metaphor of the mirrored image can be found in 2Cor 3,18” Dorota Hartman, 'Through a glass, darkly' (1Cor 13:12) in Paul's literary imagination', *Vetera Christianorum* Vol.54, 2017 <https://edipuglia.it> [accessed 8 May 2021] pp. 59-71 gives an overview of the incredibly complex exegetical history of these two verses and their varied relationship that results from the ambiguity of the original text.

244 *DeTr* 15.27.50

theological content of Augustine's treatise²⁴⁵ but an attempt to pull the rhetorical element out of the theological to see in what way they interact. It is now proposed to turn first to a discussion of the triads and then to a discussion of the allegory of the enigma of looking in a glass darkly.

e. The triads

His first triad in his exploration of the Trinity is that of the lover, the beloved and love, *amans, et quod amatur, et amor*.²⁴⁶ There is an echo also of the two great commandments, for one cannot love God without loving one's neighbour as oneself.²⁴⁷ With this first allegory Augustine is already attempting to convey that the Trinitarian relationship is one of reciprocity, aiming ultimately at exploring how all three are in some way in each third of the triad. He has elsewhere given an example of the two-way action of love, in a situation where the *imago agens* as marker is employed in public discourse, namely in the teaching and preaching roles of the cleric. In some almost indefinable way, the teacher is enriched themselves by what they cause to happen within the student that they are teaching.

Let us then adapt ourselves to our students with a love which is at once the love of a brother, of a father and of a mother. When once we are linked to them in heart, the old familiar things will seem new to us. So great is the influence of a sympathetic mind that, when our

245 "The genius of *De Trinitate* is its fusion of speculation and prayer, its presentation of trinitarian theology as, ultimately, nothing else but a teasing out of what it is to be converted and to come to live in Christ.....it stands alone as a meditation on the trinitarian mystery as a mystery at once of theology and of anthropology....the climax of the argument is a clarification, unprecedented in the Eastern Fathers, of the Spirit's role as the ground and enabler of the entire process of theologizing and sanctification as they advance together, the efficient cause of our inclusion within the trinitarian life." Rowan Williams, *'De Trinitate'*, p. 850

246 Augustine, *De Trinitate* 8.10.1 <https://www.augustinus.it/latino/trinita/index2.htm> [accessed 15 May 2021]

Quid est autem dilectio vel caritas, quam tantopere Scriptura divina laudat et praedicat, nisi amor boni? Amor autem alicuius amantis est, et amor aliquid amatur. Ecce tria sunt: amans, et quod amatur, et amor. Quid est ergo amor, nisi quaedam vita duo aliqua copulans, vel copulari appetens, amantem scilicet, et quod amatur? Et hoc etiam in extremis carnalisibusque amoribus ita est. Sed ut aliquid purius et liquidius hauriamus, calcata carne ascendamus ad animum. Quid amat animus in amico, nisi animum? Et illic igitur tria sunt amans, et quod amatur, et amor. Restat etiam hinc ascendere, et superius ista quaerere, quantum homini datur. Sed hic paululum requiescat intentio, non ut se iam existimet invenisse quod quaerit, sed sicut solet inveniri locus, ubi quaerendum est aliquid. Nondum illud inventum est, sed iam inventum est ubi quaeratur. Ita hoc dixisse suffecerit, ut tamquam ab articulo alicuius exordii cetera contexamus.

247 Matt 22:37-40 . "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets too." New Jerusalem Bible, Study Edition.

students are affected by us as we speak and we by them as they learn, we dwell in each other and thus both they, as it were, speak within us what they hear, while we after a fashion learn in them what we teach.²⁴⁸

He next considers if this allegory of the trinity of love can be refined, given that it concerns two distinct persons perhaps by refining it to a comparison of the soul of an individual, which would seem a theological better fit for the one God who is triune, since the lover and the beloved in this case would be one being. He first has to address a potential problem, that of the seeming selfishness of self-love. He decides that a proper, ie Christ-centred love of self is not only part of the second great commandment but is also actually a prerequisite for the charitable love of others that is *agape*. This is the greatest of the virtues according to Paul in his first letter to the Christian community in Corinth 13:13. “As it is, these remain: faith, hope and love, the three of them; and the greatest of them is love.” From the point of view of knowledge, it is the interaction of the soul and its love that is directed to self knowledge that gives the Trinitarian allegory. This is the second triad, that of *mens, notitia, amor*.²⁴⁹

It is in examining this point that theology can address a commonly held supposition within the field of rhetoric and memory studies. Does this triad indeed imply, as Colish, writing on Augustine as rhetorician, states, that “as an object of knowledge, however, the soul is not sensible. It gains knowledge of itself by intuition,

248 Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus, Liber unus*, 12.17

<https://www.augustinus.it/latino/catechesi-cristiana/index.htm> [accessed 15 May 2021]

249 *DeTr* 9.4.4

Mens, amor, et notitia eius tria quaedam sunt et haec tria unum sunt et cum perfecta sunt aequalia sunt.

Sicut autem duo quaedam sunt, mens et amor eius, cum se amat; ita quaedam duo sunt, mens et notitia eius, cum se novit. Ipsa igitur mens et amor et notitia eius tria quaedam sunt et haec tria unum sunt, et cum perfecta sunt, aequalia sunt. Si enim minus se amat quam est, verbi gratia, tantum se amet hominis mens, quantum amandum est corpus hominis, cum plus sit ipsa quam corpus; peccat, et non est perfectus amor eius. Item si amplius se amet quam est, velut si tantum se amet, quendam amandus est Deus, cum incomparabiliter minus sit ipsa quam Deus; etiamsi nimio peccat, et non perfectum habet amorem sui. Maiore autem perversitate et iniquitate peccat, cum corpus tantum amat, quantum amandus est Deus. Item notitia si minor est, quam est illud quod noscitur, et plene nosci potest, perfecta non est. Si autem maior est, iam superior est natura quae novit, quam illa quae nota est, sicut maior est notitia corporis, quam ipsum corpus quod ea notitia notum est. Illa enim vita quaedam est in ratione cognoscentis; corpus autem non est vita. Et vita quaelibet quolibet corpore maior est, non mole, sed vi. Mens vero cum se ipsa cognoscit, non se superat notitia sua; quia ipsa cognoscit ipsa cognoscitur. Cum ergo se totam cognoscit, neque secum quidquam aliud, par illi est cognitio sua; quia neque ex alia natura est eius cognitio, cum se ipsa cognoscit. Et cum se totam nihilque amplius percepit, nec minor nec maior est. Recte igitur diximus, haec tria cum perfecta sunt, esse consequenter aequalia.

by pure intellection, and it forms a strictly intellectual image of itself” and that it can do this because it 'uses' an “inner word or intramental intention, ultimately derived from the Stoic idea of the *lekton*, a word that is immaterial and obedient to the rules of thought alone.”²⁵⁰? This statement follows the authoritative assessment within the field of memory studies of Frances Yates, namely “ the transition from Cicero, the trained rhetorician and religious Platonist, to Augustine, the trained rhetorician and Christian Platonist was smoothly made and there are obvious affinities between Augustine on memory and Cicero on memory in the *Tusculan Disputations*.”²⁵¹ Williams would counter that Augustine's relationship with Plato, through the limited works available to him, was not always as smooth, despite his admiration for Cicero. For Augustine it is not the case that we can first know ourselves and then proceed to a knowledge of God as reflected in that self-knowledge because we are created in the image of God. The deepest level of self knowledge is the knowledge of God's prior action and therefore our utter dependence on the relation that can only be expressed through the Christian life.²⁵² There is no privileged interiority that can function independently.

Colish observes that “for Augustine, in the present setting, the inner word's lack of corporeity is an asset rather than a metaphysical liability”²⁵³. Lack of corporeity is indeed not a metaphorical or theological problem with regard to thought. However, this is because there is always an image that Cicero defines as a material object in intellection, the *imago agens*, that must be grounded in corporeity, on which to anchor any incorporeal mental action, particularly such as must be when concerned with the divine. Cicero, unlike the Stoics, had come to regard as divine the attributes displayed by the soul in memory that allowed humankind to flourish socially, culturally and intellectually in all disciplines.

I am convinced entirely that that which effects so many and such great things must be a divine power. For what is memory of words and circumstances? What, too, is invention? Surely they are things than which nothing greater can be conceived in a God! ...Therefore

250 Marcia L. Colish, *The Mirror of Language: A Study in the Medieval Theory of Knowledge* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, revised edition 1983), p. 51

251 Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p. 62

252 Williams, *On Augustine*, p. 23

253 Colish, p. 51

the soul, (which is, as I say, divine) is, as Euripides more boldly expresses it, a God.²⁵⁴

For Augustine, the word that intimates the things of the divine cannot be articulated because the mind cannot convert into conventional terms, as it were, what it is intimating. As Williams says, it is not simply the case that there is “ a truth that needs only to be galvanized into visible life.”²⁵⁵ Such inexpressible words, however, for a Christian, are always known and understood by God, who, Augustine affirms, can see them, along with those which are expressible, within the human mind (15.10.17). St Paul states in the same verse that “I shall know, just as fully as I am myself known” (I Cor 13:12). This is why the *ars memorativa* as a way of curating past, present and future thought was so important. In his relationship with God, Augustine, as he states in his *Confessions*, is memory.²⁵⁶

Augustine's next allegory therefore picks up memory out of the previous triad and spins it on into a new three part example, that of *memoria, intellectus, voluntas* and then, following the rhetorical *catena* practice of linking ideas to facilitate finding easily what is stored in memory for future use, spins that triad into that of *vita, mens, essentia*.²⁵⁷ This last functions almost as a summing-up example. Having laid out his

254 Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes* I xxvi 65 <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/14988/14988-h/14988-h.htm> [accessed 15 May 2021]

255 Williams, *On Augustine*, p. 19

256 Augustine, *Confessions* Xviii. An indiscriminate memory – not a bad one – is thus considered to be committing fornication, in the biblical sense of unfaithfulness to God. See below.

257 Augustine, *De Tr* 10.11.18

This passage is a concise example of the various elements of descanting on a theme – simple pronouncement, reason, second expression in new form, contrary, comparison, example and conclusion – in miniature, as discussed above. (See also Caplan, p. lviii)

Haec igitur tria, memoria, intelligentia, voluntas, quoniam non sunt tres vitae, sed una vita; nec tres mentes, sed una mens, consequenter utique nec tres substantiae sunt, sed una substantia. Memoria quippe, quod vita et mens et substantia dicitur, ad se ipsam dicitur; quod memoria dicitur, ad aliquid relative dicitur. Hoc de intelligentia quoque et de voluntate dixerim; et intelligentia quippe et voluntas ad aliquid dicitur. Vita est autem unaquaeque ad se ipsem, et mens, et essentia. Quocirca tria haec eo sunt unum, quo una vita, una mens una essentia; et quidquid aliud ad se ipsa singula dicuntur, etiam simul, non pluraliter, sed singulariter dicuntur. Eo vera tria quo ad se invicem referuntur. Quae si aequalia non essent, non solum singula singulis, sed etiam omnibus singula; non utique se invicem caperent. Neque enim tantum a singulis singula, verum etiam a singulis omnia capiuntur. Memini enim me habere memoriam, et intelligentiam, et voluntatem; et intellego me intellegere, et velle, atque meminisse; et volo me velle, et meminisse, et intellegere, totamque meam memoriam, et intelligentiam, et voluntatem simul memini. Quod enim memoriae meae non memini, non est in memoria mea. Nihil autem tam in memoria, quam ipsa memoria est. Totam igitur memini. Item quidquid intellego, intellegere me scio et scio me velle quidquid volo; quidquid autem scio memini. Totam igitur intelligentiam, totamque voluntatem meam memini. Similiter cum haec tria intellego, tot simul intellego. Neque enim quidquam intellegibilem non intellego, nisi quod ignoro. Quod autem ignoro, nec memini nec volo. Quidquid itaque intellegibilem non intellego, consequenter etiam nec memini, nec volo. Quidquid ergo intellegibilem memini et volo, consequenter intellego. Voluntas etiam mea totam intelligentiam totamque memoriam meam capit,

allegories so meticulously, Augustine virtually stops dead, again a rhetorical device, in order to highlight that the reader might understand more about these human triads but that this only serves to throw into sharper focus the realm of unknowing around the triune God. At the most basic level the individual is more than the sum of all the various elements included in the allegories he has constructed in *De Trinitate*. The Trinity, in contrast, is all that God is. However, just as Sarapion needed his *imago agens* to mark the place where the divine things are to be sought, not to stand in for them, so in public discourse the allegories are invaluable in marking the place and the direction of search.

f. Allegory and enigma

Just as Sarapion's fellow monks were given a safeword, the first verse from Psalm 69 to be used when they were in danger of confusing their images with their memory *imagines agentes*, so Augustine provides his readers and hearers with such a safeword – the verse from Paul's letter to the Corinthians, now we see through a glass darkly, then we shall see face to face. This is keep them alert to the fact that what they know now about the Creator, given the constraints of created nature, can only be an inkling of what they will know in the world to come. Augustine is also aware of the need to differentiate between images and the *imago agens*.

Who, upon reading or listening to what Paul the apostle wrote or what has been written about him, does not fashion in his mind both the appearance of the Apostle and also of all those whose names are there remembered? And since among the large number of men by whom these words are so noted one person represents his features and figure in one way, and another in a different way, it is assuredly uncertain whose thoughts are closer to and more like the reality.....Even the earthly face of the Lord Himself is represented differently by all the different people having thoughts about Him, even though in actuality His face was only one, whatever it was really like. But for our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not the image which the mind forms for itself [to use for thinking] (which may perhaps be far different from what he actually looked like) that leads us to salvation, but, according to our mental representation, what [sorts of thoughts we have] about his humankind.²⁵⁸

dum toto utor quod intellego et memini. Quapropter quando invicem a singulis et tota et omnia capiuntur; aequalia sunt tota singula totis singulis, et tota singula simul omnibus totis; et haec tria unum, una vita, una mens, una essentia.

258 Augustine *de Trinitate* 8.4.7 (CCSL 50) quoted in Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 121

It is the nature of the thought that is attached to the image that is all important. His initial 'sighting' of an incorporeal intimation that could be either two or three that are together not greater or heavier than one, defeated by a blinding light, is a sighting into a memory storage place, as it were. Two chapters later he ties this into the expression from St Paul regarding our provisional knowledge that has come to be known as 'seeing in a glass darkly', not to explain the sighting but to indicate how he is going to proceed with allegories and why these are necessary.

Allegory is a technical term in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and it is not interchangeable with analogy. Both allegory and analogy are ways of conveying distinction through the choice of ornamentation. Such distinction is divided into figures of diction and figures of thought.

It is a figure of diction if the adornment is comprised in the fine polish of the language itself. A figure of thought derives a certain distinction from the idea, not from the words.²⁵⁹

Allegory falls within figures of diction and analogy within figures of thought. Descanting upon a theme, Augustine's basic rhetorical pattern, is a figure of thought. Paralipsis and allegory are figures of diction, as is paronomasia, which will be a crucial element linking Augustine to Eriugena and on to the Luttrell Master. Analogy is simply the act of citing an analogue but without any amplification, leaving the hearer to draw their own conclusions.²⁶⁰ Allegory, however, is a far more complex beast.

Allegory is a manner of speech denoting one thing by the letter of the words but another by their meaning. It assumes three aspects: comparison, argument and contrast. It operates through a comparison when a number of metaphors originating in a similarity in the mode of expression are set together, as follows: For when dogs act the part of wolves, to what guardian, pray, are we going to entrust our herds of cattle?" An Allegory is presented in the

259 *Rhetorica* IV.xiii 18

Dignitas est quae reddit ornatum orationem varietate distinguens. Haec in erborum et in sententiarum exornationes dividitur. Verborum exornatio est quae ipsius sermonis insignita continetur perpolitione. Sententiarum exornatio est quae non in verbis, sed in ipsis rebus quandam habet dignitatem.

Colish, *The Mirror of Language*, (see above) uses 'analogy' throughout her discussion of the triads and what she terms a "Pauline mirror faithfully mediating God to man" (p. 16) and this may be why she is led astray by a theological misconception.

260 *Rhetorica* IV.liv 67

Per similitudinem, cum aliqua re simili allata nihilamplius dicimus, sed ex ea significamus quid sentiamus....Haec exornatio plurimum festivitatis habet interdum et dignitatis; sinit enim quiddam tacito oratore ipsum auditorem suspicari.

form of argument when a similitude is drawn from a person or place or object in order to magnify or minify, as if one should call Drusus a “faded reflection of the Gracchi.” An Allegory is drawn from a contrast if, for example, one should mockingly call a spendthrift and voluptuary frugal and thrifty. Both in this last type, based on a contrast and in the first above, drawn from a comparison, we can through the metaphor make use of argument. In an Allegory operating through comparison, as follows: “What says this king – our Agamemnon, or rather, such is his cruelty, our Atreus?” In an Allegory drawn from a contrast: for example, if we should call some undutiful man who has beaten his father “Aeneas” or an intemperate and adulterous man “Hippolytus”.²⁶¹

When dealing with allegory one always has to examine the beast carefully for there is sure to be a sting in the tail. In *De Trinitate* Augustine provides the sting by abruptly terminating his *catena* of allegories because the gap between what they can convey and what God is is a yawning chasm. These allegories are *imagines agentes* signposting the chasm.

Augustine is not particularly concerned with all the intricacies of translating Paul's Greek text, except to state firmly that 'in a glass' does not mean 'looking from a watchtower', the Latin *specula*, watchtower and *speculum*, mirror, being an ambiguity that does not exist in the Greek language (15.8.14). His attention is fully taken by the rhetorical implications of the relationship between allegory and enigma. He notes that every enigma is an allegory but not every allegory is an enigma, just as every horse is an animal but not every animal is a horse (15.9.15). Allegory itself, however, is not straightforward because of the reluctance of Latin translators to use any word to describe the Greek 'αλληγορία'.

And hence some Latin translators, through unwillingness to employ a Greek word, where the

261 *Rhetorica* IV.xxxiv 46

Permutatio est oratio aliud verbis aliud sententia demonstrans. Ea dividitur in tres partes: similitudinem, argumentum, contrarium. Per similitudinem sumitur cum translationes plures frequenter ponuntur a simili oratione ductae, sic: “Nam cum canes funguntur officiis luporum, cuinam praesidio pecuaria credemus?” Per argumentum tractatur cum a persona aut loco aut re aliqua similitudo augendi aut minuendi causa ducitur, ut si quis Drusum Graccum nitorem obsoletum dicat. Ex contrario ducitur sic, ut si quis hominem prodigum et luxuriosum inludens parcum et diligentem appellet. Et in hoc postremo quod ex contrario sumitur, et in illo primo quod a similitudine ducitur, per translationem argumento poterimus uti. Per similitudinem, sic: “Quid ait hic rex atque Agamemnon noster, sive, ut crudelitas est, potius Atreus?” Ex contrario, ut si quem impium qui patrem verberarit Aeneam vocemus, intemperantem et adulterum Hippolytum nominemus.

Aeneas was noted for his devotion to his father, Anchises and Hippolytus rejected the advances of his stepmother, Phaedra. (Caplan, n.a, n.b p. 346)

apostle says “which things are an allegory” have rendered it by a circumlocation – which things signify one thing by another.²⁶²

The Latins use some permutation of the phrase *aliud dicatur*, following the etymology of the Greek 'allo/ other' and 'agoreuo/ say', to construct these circumlocations. Cicero is one such, in *De Oratore*. (Book 3 167.42) This leads to confusion because it is then easy to miss the differentiation in his work between the preceding description of metaphor and of allegory. This distinction mattered to Augustine, who is keen to place enigma within allegory because allegory has different connotations in the *Rhetorica* to metaphor, for example. Cicero considers in this passage that it is obscurity that leads to *aenigmata*, to be understood as 'riddle' and that this is not suited to single words but to phrases. This linkage of *aenigmata* with “conveying deeper meaning through veiled or even symbolic language” had probably been in existence for some time and was the reason Cicero linked it to a riddle.²⁶³ Unlike Cicero in *De Oratore*, the *Rhetoric ad Herennium* takes pains to distinguish the two, both through finding a Latin term for allegory – *permutatio* – and through descriptions of their different use, employing vocabulary that is echoed by Augustine.

Metaphor occurs when a word applying to one thing is transferred to another, because the similarity seems to justify the transference.....they say that a metaphor ought to be restrained, so as to be a transition with good reason to a kindred thing, and not seem an indiscriminate, reckless, and precipitate leap to an unlike thing. Allegory is a manner of speech denoting one thing by the letter of the words but another by their meaning. It assumes three aspects: comparison, argument and contrast.²⁶⁴

262 *DeTr* 15.9.15

263 Cicero, *De Oratore Book III* translation and commentary by David Mankin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 253

264 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* IV.xxxiv 45-46

Translatio est cum verbum in quandam rem transferetur ex alia re, quod propter similitudinem recte videbitur posse transferri.....Translationem pudentem dicunt esse oportere, ut cum ratione in consimilem rem transeat, ne sine dilectu temere et cupide videatur in dissimilem transcurrisse. Permutatio est oratio aliud verbis aliud sententia demonstrans. Ea dividitur in tres partes: similitudinem, argumentum, contrarium.

Gualtiero Calboli, *Cornifici Rhetorica ad Herennium* (Bologna: Pàtron, 1969), p. 394 notes that Cicero uses *inversio verborum* in *De Oratore* Book II, LXV.261 when discussing allegorical jests dependent on language but as he also uses *immutata* in the same list it is unclear quite how this relates to metaphor and irony. Quintilian (8.6.44-53) uses *inversio* but does use *allegoriae* when discussing what Cicero is doing (8.6.47). See again Mankin, p. 253

Enigma in allegory provides the obscure and difficult likenesses for which Augustine is looking.

Accordingly, as far as my judgement goes, as by the word glass he meant to signify an image, so by that of enigma any likeness you will, but one yet obscure and difficult to see through. While, therefore, any likenesses whatever may be understood as signified by the apostle when he speaks of a glass and an enigma, so that they are adapted to the understanding of God, in such a way as he can be understood; yet nothing is better adapted to this purpose than that which is not vainly called his image.²⁶⁵

“Any likeness you will..... any likeness whatever” - these are the *imagines agentes*. It is recommended in the *ars memorativa* that they fulfil certain criteria for *affectus* but visually they can be anything whatsoever that whoever is appropriating the material finds memorable. Here, however, the images have to enter public discourse and so Augustine looks for an obscure and difficult image that everyone will recognize. This image is humanity itself – not because it is an obscure and difficult image of God, though that is also true. Augustine is clear that at this stage he is talking about a reflection, not about the shape that he discerned when he tried to look through the obscuring bright light. What is reflected, humanity – made indeed in the image of God - is obscure and difficult because humanity finds itself obscure and difficult to understand and impossible to talk properly about. It is humanity that is the riddle.

We know and are absolutely certain, that all this takes place in our mind or by our mind; but how it takes place, the more attentively we desire to scrutinize, the more do our very words break down and our purpose itself fails, when by our understanding, if not our tongue, we would reach something of clearness.²⁶⁶

Thus humanity, in trying to understand itself, through examining the whole chain of triads and realising the difficulty of this, comes to understand just how immense is the task of understanding the ineffable God. It is not God's transcendence that is the problem because he is also totally immanent. Yet this does not make him more understandable because we are totally immanent to ourselves and yet are beyond our

265 *DeTr* 15.9.16

266 *DeTr* 15.7.13

own comprehension. Humanity is the enigma that allows the enigma of God to be fully appreciated.

Augustine then seems to switch back to an understanding of the glass as glass, rather than mirror to return to his earlier experience of trying to look through the bright light, to bring enigma into this other meaning of 'seeing through' and to emphasize why understanding is impossible but yet something to be striven for, even in tiny increments.

Whoever, then, is able to understand a word, not only before it is uttered in sound, but also before the images of its sounds are considered in thought – for this it is which belongs to no tongue, to wit, of those which are called the tongues of nations, of which our Latin tongue is one – whoever, I say, is able to understand this, is able now to see through this glass and in this enigma some likeness of that Word of whom it is said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.”²⁶⁷

He then references both of St Paul's texts, summarizing what have become his two main concerns. The first is the need for a life of faith and the attendant Christian commitments in order to achieve eventually the understanding that will come when the face can be raised to that bright light. The second is the role of the Holy Spirit within the triune God, again not fully understood but firmly within the shape that he had been unable to discern initially as holding two or three forms. Whatever the Spirit is, it is certain that for created humanity it is transformative.

But this perfection of this image is one to be at some time hereafter. In order to attain this it is that the good master teaches us by Christian faith, and by pious doctrine, that “with face unveiled” from the veil of the law, which is the shadow of things to come, “beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord” ie gazing at it through a glass, “we may be transformed into the

267 *DeTr* 15.10.19

Quisquis igitur potest intellegere verbum, non solum antequam sonet, verum etiam antequam sonorum eius imagines cogitatione volvantur: hoc enim est quod ad nullam pertinet linguam, earum scilicet quae linguae appellantur gentium, quarum nostra latina est: quisquis, inquam, hoc intellegere potest, iam potest videre per hoc speculum atque in hoc aenigmate aliquam Verbi illius similitudinem, de quo dictum est: In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum.

Whether he is justified in doing so is a moot point given the ambiguity of the original. The Romans began to use glass in windows in Alexandria in the 1st century AD, so St Paul may have been aware of this.

same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord;” as we explained above.²⁶⁸

The art is a visual activity, the act of sight being so powerful that it provides the wherewithal to allow an intimation of something like the triune nature of the undivided God, for which there will always be insufficient words, even mentally as thoughts, to be retained. (Following Cicero this is an instance of what one could 'scarcely embrace by an act of thought'.) Augustine has set up his visual arena with his description of the too bright light that prevented him from discerning exactly what he saw when he considered the Trinity. He then turns to St Paul's allegory of seeing dimly in a glass, noting that such an obscure because unclear allegory (*obscura allegoria*) is the definition of an enigma (*DeTr* 15.9.15). This is only the beginning, however, for he is not concerned with simply remembering what he has seen so that he can repeat it *verbatim*. He gives the triads the dual function exhibited by the *imagines agentes*, in a catena form. The first triad, love, the lover and the beloved fixes the place where Augustine is viewing the Trinity, recalling also that Paul's allegory is located within his chapter on love.(1Cor 13). This establishing of place is the first function. The second function is to be also the point of departure from that place that allows the understanding to be developed by constant refinement and combination with things that can be given words, so that Augustine can actually communicate new information about what he is discerning. This is the definition of memory according to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, “making a mute thing or one lacking form articulate and attributing to it a definite form and a language or a certain behaviour appropriate to its character.”²⁶⁹ Ultimately in *De Trinitate* what becomes clearer and what can be communicated is a deeper understanding of the nature of humans to more clearly realize that their triadic activities are not triune in the way that God must be triune, thus increasing understanding of God.

268 *DeTr* 15.11.20

Verum haec huius imaginis est quandoque futura perfectio. Ad hanc consequendam nos erudit magister bonae fide christiana pietatisque doctrina, ut revelata facie a Legis velamine quod est umbra futurorum, gloriam Domini speculantes, per speculum scilicet intuentes, in eandem imaginem transformemur de gloria in gloriam, tamquam a Domini Spiritu, secundum superiorem de his verbis disputationem.

269 *Ad Herennium* IV. liii 66

aut cum res muta aut informis fit eloquens, et forma ei et oratio adtribuitur ad dignitatem adcommodata quae actio quaedam.

Job, in the book named after him, was a wealthy and honoured man who within a very short space of time, for no apparent reason, lost all his children, possessions, reputation and health. Psalm 8:5 is itself based on the creation narrative in Genesis 1. This psalm verse becomes the “Gravitationszentrum” around which Job bases his remonstrance against God.²⁷¹ If one looks at the verse in Job as a pattern of letters, rather than reading it as such, it becomes more obvious that he establishes continuity with the psalm verse by faithful repetition of the letters but then introduces one or two variations before finally seeming to jump away into discontinuity. He remains, however, anchored in psalm 8 even as the letter pattern loosens. The overarching theme of this psalm is where exactly does humankind fit into the world that the Sovereign God has created. Job does not deny that humanity seems to be the pinnacle of God's creation, as affirmed in Psalm 8 but somehow the care has turned into pitiless scrutiny and however lofty humankind is, there is seemingly an unbreachable void between him and God. The world is not as it should be and the letter pattern is also upset to bear witness to this.²⁷²

The source of the fusion between paronomasia and *imagines agentes* that is the ultimate focus of interest in this thesis is the theological method of John Scottus Eriugena, the ninth-century Irish monk and Carolingian court theologian who also translated the works of Dionysius into Latin. In seeking to address the question of how the one undivided God can be related to the divided multiplicity of his creation Eriugena draws on paronomasia to sonically and visually model how one word can give rise to a myriad of related variations. This in turn models his unique theory of how the one undivided God, through the primordial causes, is in a continuous even though seemingly discontinuous relationship with the myriad diversity of the created world. Finally there is a brief study of how the idiosyncratic theology of Eriugena enters the non-lettered visual domain, in monastic illumination of the highest level. The portrayal of his theology is literally set in precious stones and solid gold on the

271 Christian Frevel, “Eine kleine Theologie der Menschenwürde”: Ps 8 und seine Rezeption im Buch Job, pp. 244-74 *Das Manna fällt auch heute noch: Beiträge zur Geschichte und Theologie des Alten, Ersten Testaments; Festschrift für Erich Zenger*, ed. by Frank-Lothar Hossfeld und Ludger Schwienhorst-Schoenberger (Freiburg: Herder, 2004), p. 269-70

272 For a detailed analysis of this example of paronomasia, the relative dating of Genesis, Psalm 8 and Job and their relationship see Jonathan G. Kline, *Allusive Soundplay in the Hebrew Bible* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), pp. 43-47

cover of the ninth-century Lindau gospels. Although his theological writings were officially banned and some copies even burnt in the twelfth-century, the witness of manuscript illumination had an economic as well as theological, value that ensured its survival.

Dissimilar shapes

References to the *imagines agentes* exist in two other rhetorical works that became a staple part of education well into the Renaissance, that of Martianus Capella (c. 365-440) and of Gaius Julius Victor, active in the late fourth century. In *de nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, the most popular Latin textbook on the seven liberal arts, Martianus gives the traditional story of Simonides and affirms that well-lighted places and images form the core of the art. Martianus was heir to a long-established practice of the art in Carthage, in North Africa. It is very possible that it was from here that the art was re-exported to Milan, where the North African Augustine during his stay with its bishop Ambrose both recognized it and gave it enhanced authority by associating it with the *De Inventione* of Cicero.

Now order brings in the precepts for memory which is certainly a natural [gift] but there is no doubt that it can be assisted by art. This art is based on only a few rules but it requires a great deal of exercise. Its advantage is that it enables words and things to be grasped in comprehension quickly and firmly. Not only those matters which we have invented ourselves have to be retained [in memory] but also those which our adversary brings forward in the dispute. Simonides, a poet and also a philosopher, is held to have invented the precepts of this art, for when a banqueting-hall suddenly collapsed and the relatives of the victims could not recognize [the bodies], he supplied the order in which they were sitting and their names which he had recorded in memory. He learnt from this that it is order which sustains the precepts of memory. These are to be pondered upon in well-lighted places in which the images of things are to be placed.²⁷³

The fourth century Roman rhetor, possibly from Gaul, Gaius Julius Victor was not impressed by the art of 'Marcus Tullius', though he confirms that its use was

273 Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, ed. Adolf Dick (Leipzig: Treubner, 1925), pp. 268-70

Liber V De Retorica 538 <http://digilibl.lett.unipmn.it> [accessed 22 May 2021]

widespread, considering it too much effort and preferring Quintilian's more prosaic approach. In his *Ars rhetorica* he states that

(F)or the obtaining of memory many people bring in observations about places and images which do not seem to me to be of any use.²⁷⁴

Neither had any objections to the use of images per se. With the growth of monasticism as both the bulwark and innovator of education and cultural life in the Western Christian sphere the use of *imagines agentes* and places as found in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* came to dominate in intellectual use.

The main influence on their eventual physical appearance on parchment, however, would come from the Eastern Greek-speaking theological world, direct heirs to the culture where six centuries previously Simonides and his art had originated. Cassian had seen the need to carefully describe the difference between *imagines agentes* and images of God which could breach the prohibition against making graven images of the divine. Dionysius, the fifth-century Greek theologian who adopted the name of the disciple converted by St Paul in Athens (Acts 17:34), saw a further, more subtle need to distinguish between *imagines agentes* and the images of things divine that humanity was too prone to make in its own image. These both carried the danger of blurring the distinction between marker and marked. In so doing Dionysius drew on the Greek tradition of apophatic theology and wove into it that aspect of Simonides' *ars memorativa* that had been influenced in its development by Aristotle. Aristotle, as noted earlier, had brought the art into dialectic as well as rhetoric. He also gave laws of association for memory that encompassed "similar, opposite or neighbouring" images (*De Memoria et Reminiscentia* 451b 19-20) as being more effective in fixing the memory of a thing than a direct image of the thing itself. (Aristotle will be discussed in more detail in the chapter on the Dominican theologians as Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas both wrote commentaries on Aristotle reconciling what they saw as a natural affinity in Aristotle's other work with the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, not realising his initial contribution to the formation of the *ars memorativa*. In this Dominican form the *ars memorativa* would come to dominate the non-monastic centres of education throughout Europe for at least the next three

274 Reproduced in Carolus Halm, *Rhetores Latini Minores* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1863), p. 440
<http://digiliblt.lett.unipmn.it> [accessed 22 May 2021]

centuries.) Thus, for Dionysius,

(S)ince the way of negation (apophasis) appears to be more suitable to the realms of the divine and since positive affinities are always unfitting to the hiddenness of the inexpressible, a manifestation through dissimilar shapes (anaplasia) is more correctly applied to the invisible. So it is that scriptural writings, far from demeaning the ranks of heaven, actually pay them honor (sic) by describing them with dissimilar shapes so completely at variance with what they really are that we come to discover how those ranks, so far removed from us, transcend all materiality. Furthermore, I doubt that anyone would refuse to acknowledge that incongruities are more suitable for lifting our minds up into the domain of the spiritual than similarities are. High-flown shapes (hieroplastias) could well mislead someone into thinking that the heavenly beings are gleaming men.²⁷⁵

Before considering first apophasis and secondly the way in which Scripture, in seemingly dishonouring the divine by using descriptions of dissimilar shapes, actually honours it, it will be informative to look at how Eriugena, the translator of all Dionysius's works, gave a detailed explanation of Dionysius's high-flown and dissimilar shapes.

This explanation is found in his own major theological work *Periphyseon* (On the Division of Nature). Eriugena sets out the dilemma – God is “the Incomprehensible and Ineffable Nature” but at the same time humans need the wherewithal “to reflect and speak in order to prevent the zeal for true religion from being inarticulate in all”.²⁷⁶ Predications are therefore used, drawn from that which has been created by the Cause of all and these predications are divided into a higher, middle and lower group. The highest group includes life, virtue and the names of the other virtues. The middle group includes predications such as sun, light, star and any other things from the higher regions of the visible world. The lowest group of this hierarchy comprises things that come from the lower movements of visible creation. This includes wind, the

275 Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, CH 2.2.3 trans. by C. Luibheid, *Pseudodionysius: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), pp. 149-50

Εἰ τοίνυν αἱ μὲν ἀποφάσεις ἐπὶ τῶν θεῶν ἀληθεῖς, αἱ δὲ καταφάσεις ἀνάρμοστοι τῆ κρυφιστητι τῶν ἀπορρητῶν, οἰκειότερα μᾶλλον ἔστιν ἐπὶ τῶν ἀοράτων ἢ δια τῶν ἀνομοίων ἀναπλάσεων ἐκφαντορία. Τιμῶσι τοιγαροῦν, οὐκ αἰσχυρὸς ἀποπληροῦσι τὰς οὐραανίας διακοσμησεις αἱ τῶν λογίων ἱερογραφίαται ἀνομοίοις αὐτὰς μορφοποιίαις ἐκφαίνουσαι καὶ διὰ τούτων ἀποδεικνύσαι τῶν ὑλικῶν ἀπαντωπ ὑπερκοσμιῶς ἐκβεβηκνίας. (Migne 141A)

https://archive.org/details/Patrologia_Graeca_vol_003/page/n69/mode/2up

276 John the Scot, *Periphyseon*, trans. Myra L. Uhlfelder (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 1976), p. 89

magnificence of a cloud, sunrise, thunder, dew, storm, rain, water, river, earth, rock, tree, vine, olive, cedar, hysop, lily, man, lion, ox, horse, bear, leopard, worm, eagle, dove, fish and sea monsters. This list by no means exhausts all those things that have at some time been transposed from the created nature to the creator when discussing the divine.

Even more remarkably, the artful Scriptures have made transpositions not only from creation to Creator but also from things contrary to nature viz, madness, drunkenness, gluttony, forgetfulness, wrath, rage, hatred, concupiscence and the like, by which the minds of the simple are less deceived than they are by the higher metaphorical figures derived from nature.²⁷⁷

He explains that a simple, though rational, soul, might well be deceived into thinking God is the sun, for example. However, this soul would not be deceived into thinking that natural things not regarded generally as positive attributes should be taken literally when talking of God because drunkenness, madness hatred, concupiscence and the like are so obviously ridiculously contrary to any predication that would apply to the Judaeo-Christian God. Either this simple soul would absolutely refuse to entertain such descriptions of God or they would readily understand that they are being used figuratively.

Eriugena is explaining the meaning of Dionysius to his student, the whole work *Periphyseon* being structured around a question and answer discussion format between the two. One therefore has to be attentive to where his explanation of another theologian gives way to his explanation of own unique theology and this occurs here when he speaks of the artful Scriptures. Eriugena was the first successful translator of the works of Dionysius from Greek into Latin, during his time as court theologian to the Carolingian dynasty in Northern France, having fled the rich intellectual monastic tradition of Ireland where monasteries were being ravaged by repeated Viking raids. The Carolingian tradition was to appoint theologians from the Western fringes of the old Roman Empire, which the dynasty's founder, Charlemagne, began with Alcuin. The Carolingians treasured the works of Dionysius, whom they knew as Dionysius the

²⁷⁷ *Eoque mirabilis non solum ex create Creatorem artificiosa Scriptura translatione verum etiam ex naturae contrariis, ex insarlicet, ebrietate, crapula, oblivione, ira, furore, concupiscentia, ceterisque similibus, quibus simplicium animi falluntur, quam super transfigurationibus, quae ex natura fiunt.* Eriugena, *Periphyseon*, Book 1 512A trans. Uhlfeder, p. 89

Areopagite, initially for political reasons. It was assumed that he was not only the disciple converted by St Paul in Athens in the biblical account in the Acts of the Apostles but that this disciple became first Bishop of Athens and later Bishop of Paris and therefore as such was the St Denis whose bones were buried in Paris. This gave both ecclesial and political legitimacy to the Carolingian dynasty and this was the diplomatic motivation for the gift of the works of Dionysius to the Carolingians by the Byzantine Court.²⁷⁸ Normally a precise translator, in translating the *Celestial Hierarchy* Eriugena made a deliberate 'error' with regard to the artfulness of Scripture. Dionysius's original had spoken of the use of imaginative language in Scripture as *ἀτεχνως*, artificial, ie not an artistic endeavour but a necessary tool to overcome human limited ability to understand. Eriugena translates this, not as negation but, using *ἀ* a prefix intensifying the meaning, as *valde artificialiter*, very artful, suggesting that the whole realm of human creation subsumed under art, can be considered positively useful in understanding the divine.²⁷⁹

Sequitur: ETENIM (sic), VALDE ARTIFICIALITER THEOLOGICA FACTITIIS SACRIS
FORMATIONIBUS IN NON FIGURATIS INTELLECTIBUS USA EST, NOSTRUM, VT
DICTUM EST, ANIMUM REVELANS, ET IPSI PROPRIA ET CONNATURALI

278 Dionysius has variously been known as Denys, Pseudo-Dionysius and Dionysius the Areopagite or a combination thereof. He has latterly been known as Pseudodionysius (see Luibheid, above) and more recently simply Dionysius. At the time of Eriugena's translation of his "rediscovered" work he was considered to be a convert who had been present when St Paul gave his speech to the Athenians, later becoming the Bishop of Athens, travelling to Gaul, where his relics, as St Denis, the patron saint and martyred Bishop of Paris, are now to be found. As such he had a twofold importance in the period under consideration in this thesis. He was a direct theological link to St Paul and he was the personal saint of the Carolingian royal family, who had received his manuscript *The Celestial Hierarchy* as a gift from the Byzantine Emperor. When it was realised in the post-medieval period from his references to Proclus that he was probably a Syrian monk living at some time in the fifth century he became known as Pseudodionysius. For a full account of the varied life stories of Dionysius see Paul Rorem, *Eriugena's Commentary on the Dionysian Celestial Hierarchy* (Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies; Toronto, 2005), pp.1-20. The tendency is now to drop the Pseudo in acknowledgement of his status as a theologian, whatever his name. (Following Johannes Hoff this dropping of 'Pseudo' could even be seen as an illustration of an act of apophatic theology in its own right. It is an abnegation in the spirit of Gal 2:19-20 ie the author no longer speaking in their own name because this person has been crucified in Christ. See Johannes Hoff, *The Analogical Turn* (Eerdmanns; Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2013), p. 12). The ancient world had no notion of plagiarism as understood today – linking oneself to a respected name was seen rather as an act of homage.

For a general introduction see Andrew Louth, *Denys the Areopagite* (London: Bloomsbury, 2002); Eric Perl, 'Symbol, Sacrament and Hierarchy in St Dionysius the Areopagite', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 39 (1994) pub by Holy Cross Hellenic College pp. 311-355; Alexander Golitzin, 'Dionysius Areopagita: A Christian Mysticism?', *Pro Ecclesia*, 12.2 (2003) published by Center Catholic and Evangelical Theology pp.161-212; Wayne J. Hankey, 'Denys and Later Platonic Traditions', *Oxford Handbook of Catholic Theology* Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2019), ed. by Lewis Ayres and Medi Ann Volpe, pp.496-510

279 Dionysius, CH 2.19.9 Migne 137B

REDVCTIONE PROVIDENS, ET AD IPSVM REFORMANS ANAGOGICAS SANCTAS
SCRIPTVRAS.²⁸⁰(from Eriugena's own commentary)

Eriugena thus chooses to translate Dionysius' text in such a way that there is a vital role for all the products of “(God-given) human creativity in theology”²⁸¹. Eriugena's interpretation of Augustine's attitude to creation would therefore be that Augustine is advocating using rather than merely enjoying the things of this world of sense perception, not to deny enjoyment but in the sense of inspiration for human artfulness in order to aid the journey back to God, as Augustine expressed in his work *De Doctrina Christiana*.

Suppose, then, we were wanderers in a strange country, and could not live happily away from our fatherland, and that we felt wretched in our wandering, and wishing to put an end to our misery determined to return home. We find, however, that we must make use of some mode of conveyance, either by land or water, in order to reach that fatherland where our enjoyment is to commence.....Such is a picture of our condition in this life of mortality. We have wandered far from God; and if we wish to return to our Father's house, this world must be used, not enjoyed, so that the invisible things of God may be clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made -that is, that by means of what is material and temporary we may lay hold upon that which is spiritual and eternal.²⁸²

For Augustine, human artfulness is caught up in the emotional *affectus* that underpins memory and the idea of wandering and journey caught up in his attention to *ductus*.

Apophatic theology

Eriugena's *Periphyseon* is set out in the format of question and answer. Rhetorically this is a formal strategy and one of the characteristics of the use of apophatic statements. At the time when classical rhetoric was prevalent there was a heightened awareness of different layers in discourse, a distinction being possible between the content of statements and their presentation. Eriugena's use of negative theology could be provocative in its play on words that was designed to grab attention

280 *Ioannis Scoti Opera : Sancti Dionysii Areopagitae De Caelesti Ierarchia* Migne 1040A.

He then repeated this translation precisely in his own commentary on *The Celestial Hierarchy*, Exp 2.124-158, *Expositiones in Ierarchiam coelestem Iohannis Scoti Eriugenaes*, edited by J. Barbet, *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 31 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975), pp. 23-24

281 Paul Rorem, *Eriugena's Commentary on the Dionysian Celestial Hierarchy*, p.74

282 Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* Bk.1, Ch.4

– his statement that 'God is nothing', for example, actually meaning that God is no thing because God is above all things. This provocation soon became a deeply serious exposition of how, if God is nothing, then creation must be from nothing – *ex nihilo*.²⁸³ At the same time, therefore, it would be *ex Deo*. This would then pose the major question of theophany. Commentary on Eriugena has suggested that he seemed to turn his attention away from negative theology to concentrate on the question of theophany. Willemien Otten, for example, writes that Eriugena considered the

sharpness inherent in negative theology as a way of overhauling the structure of theological language... discusses (Bk 1) the dynamics of negative and affirmative theology at some length but ultimately seems to give up on the enterprise, as he is more attracted by the lustre of a theophanic universe.²⁸⁴

In consistently maintaining a rhetorical formal structure of question and answer characteristic of negative theology, however, he can be seen to be simultaneously maintaining an interest in both that and his subject under consideration. Indeed, if one considers the discussion on negative and affirmative theology in the light of Cicero's observation with regard to holding the ineffable within memory even when one cannot grasp it in thought, then Eriugena does not have to “give up on the enterprise” or any other, even when not actually discussing it. He is not giving up on it when he turns to a further element in his systematic approach because he can store it for ongoing examination and readjustment.

It is Eriugena who enriches the scope of the *imago agens* by combining it with the dissimilar shapes of Dionysius, a specifically theological enrichment that would stretch far into the ensuing centuries and influence the physical appearance of 'marginal' imagery in medieval manuscripts. John Milbank gives a thumbnail portrait of Eriugena that, from an *ars memorativa* perspective includes both the *imago agens* and

283 *Periphyseon* Book 3 634B. See Deirdre Carabine, *John Scottus Eriugena* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 46-50 for a brief introduction to his creation *ex nihilo* and its relation to theophany. Also Donald Duclow, 'Divine Nothingness and Self-Creation in John Scottus Eriugena', *Journal of Religion*, 57 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977) pp. 114-15 and É. Jeauneau, 'Néant divin et théophanie: Érigène disciple de Denys', ed. A. de Libera *Langages et philosophie: Hommage à Jean Jolivet* (Paris: Vrin, 1997), pp. 331-337

284 Willemien Otten, 'Anthropology between Imago Mundi and Imago Dei: the Place of Johannes Scottus Eriugena in the Tradition of Christian Thought', p. 472 *Studia Patristica*, Vol XLIII *Augustine, Other Latin Writers*, edited by F. Young, M. Edwards, P. Parvis (Leeuven: Peeters, 2006), pp. 459-472 Eriugena's discussion of negative theology is in *Periphyseon* Bk 1 458A-462D

intentio.

In Eriugena.....the things of this world are paradoxical symbola, hybrid 'grotesques' like to God in their very unlikeness, and leading us back to God who is more like to ourselves in his utter incomprehensible infinite difference. (Our traverse through this benign perplexity must be one of liturgical persistence and of reaching towards a good which we can only respond to in astonishment beyond the scope of conceptualising reason.)²⁸⁵

Eriugena firmly places his own use of positive and negative statements in the rhetorical writings of Cicero but then shows that he considers it more accurate to use Dionysius's terminology rather than Cicero's because Dionysius highlights the theological nature of such use.

We said, I believe, that there are two highest parts of theology; and our statement rested not upon ourselves but upon the authority of St Dionysius the Areopagite. As we have said, he very clearly asserts that theology is twofold, ie., *kataphatiké* and *apophatiké*, terms which Cicero translates as *intentio* and *repulsio*, but which we preferred to translate as “affirmation” and “negation” to disclose the force of the words more closely.²⁸⁶

Eriugena is here referring to Cicero's *De Inventione* (1.x 13), which he knew as the first part of the volume of which the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* was the second part. In classical Greek use a kataphatic statement was a straightforward positive statement of affirmation, while an apophatic one was a straightforward negation. Rhetorically, however, even apparently negative statements can have a positive bite – especially when persuasion is involved. In a court case one can say simply “X did it”. Or one can say “There were only three places X could have been at that night, at home, on the

285 John Milbank, 'Afterword', *The Radical Orthodoxy Reader*, edited by John Milbank and Simon Oliver (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), p 370. It must be noted that care should be taken with the use of the word grotesque as a noun as it stems from later 16th century French descriptions of a style of hybrid animal, plant and human figures. It entered French from the old Italian word for cave paintings, deriving ultimately from *grotto*, cave. Milbank on Eriugena echoes Rowan Williams on Augustine – in view of the impossibility of 'knowing' the Trinity, the way forward is liturgy, study and a holy life in community in the widest sense.

286 Uhlfeder, p 25

Book 1 461B (Migne)

Duas namque, ni fallor, sublimissimas theologiae partes esse diximus; et hoc non ex nobis, sed auctoritate S. Dionysii Areopagitae accipientes, qui apertissime, ut dictum est, bipertitam Theologiam asserit esse, id est, καταφατικῆς et ἀποφατικῆς, quas Cicero in intentionem et repulsionem transfert, nos autem, ut aperitus vis nominum clarescat, in affirmationem et negationem maluimus transferre.

train or holding that knife at the murder scene. We know he wasn't at home, we know he wasn't on the train". The jury is persuaded into thinking they know positively what has happened through a series of negative statements, even though positively one could say very little. They experience greater conviction because they have more information than they would have from a simple affirmative statement that X was there. 'Apophatic', as a term derived from the Greek via its Latin equivalent, only passed into vernacular use in England in the seventeenth century, by which time rhetoric had shrunk to an overriding interest in delivery and style.²⁸⁷ (Kataphasis never came into vernacular use.) In addition, at that time apophasis became confused with a crude understanding of the rhetorical technique of paralipsis. Paralipsis, as was seen in Augustine's *De Trinitate* is used when there is greater advantage in raising a suspicion about something rather than insisting directly on a statement because it could be refuted too easily.²⁸⁸ Rhetorically, apophasis was then used to describe the device of talking about a subject by saying it would not be mentioned ie "I shall not discuss his obvious guilt." In its classical use apophasis was derived from verbs meaning to show, declare, deny or speak out and so could be used to convey decree, judgement, declaration, negation and denial. Therefore there was always a linguistic ambiguity about its negativity in its use. This was ultimately due to the lexical linkages in the case of both apophasis and kataphasis. "Insisting on a narrow, rigid and exclusive understanding of these terms is characteristic of modern rather than classical approaches to language and reality".²⁸⁹

In the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* the Greek terms *κατάφασις* and *'απόφασις*²⁹⁰ are used in situations when a simple decision of guilty or not guilty to an act is impossible

287 Jeff Pruchnic and Kim Lacey, 'The Future of Forgetting: Rhetoric, Memory, Affect', *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, Vol. 41 No. 5 pp. 472-494 published by Routledge for The Rhetorical Society of America 2011 p 472.

288 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* IV.xxvii 37

Haec utilis est exornatio si aut ad rem quam non pertineat alis ostendere, quod occulte admonuisse prodest, aut longum est aut ignobile, aut planum non potest fieri, aut facile potest reprehendi; ut utilius sit occulte fecisse suspicionem quam cuiusmodi intendisse orationem quae redarguatur.

The *Rhetorica* gives an example dating from a trial during the Marsic war (about 90 BC) when the speaker starts by announcing that he is not going to mention the accused's previous thieveries and robberies, when he despoiled cities, kingdoms and homes of allies, before turning to the current charge, having raised suspicion in passing.

289 Richard Woods, *Mysticism and Prophecy: The Dominican Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1998), n.3 p. 143. Kataphasis can be formed from *kataphainō* (declare, make public, *kataphasō* (answer, affirm) and *kataphēmi* (assent). In like fashion apophasis can be formed from *apophainō* (show or declare), *apophaskō* (deny) or *apophēmi* (speak out, declare)

290 Caplan, *Rhetorica*, n.b,c,d p. 52

to establish because the accusation either is not based on proof or it is based on there having been an admittance of having committed the act but an overriding justifying motive that might preclude punishment is presented by the defence. Instead, it is based on conjecture. (This is corroborated in Cicero's direction in his *De Inventione* 1.xiv 19.)

The Points to Adjudicate will be found in this way in all Types of Issue and their subdivisions except the conjectural. Here the Justifying Motive for the act is not in question, for the act is denied, nor is the Central Point of the Accusation sought, for no Justifying Motive has been advanced. Therefore the Point to Adjudicate is established from the Accusation [*κατάφασις*] and the Denial [*ἀπόφασις*], as follows: Accusation: “You killed Ajax.” Denial: “I did not.” The Point to Adjudicate: Did he kill him? The complete economy of both speeches must.....be directed to this Point to Adjudicate.²⁹¹

Later in Book IV this use of *ἀπόφασις* in Book I is referred to in connection with reasoning by question and answer.

Through the figure, Reasoning by Question and Answer, we ask ourselves the reason for every statement we make and seek the meaning of each successive affirmation.²⁹²

Caplan notes that this use of *ἀπόφασις* (*infitiatio*) is to be distinguished from reasoning from analogy (*ratiocinatio*), which is occasioned by the Type of Issue.²⁹³ The *Rhetorica* explains that there are six subtypes of a Legal Issue, which is an issue that occurs “when some controversy turns upon the letter of a text or arises from an implication therein.”²⁹⁴ Analogy is one of these subtypes.

The controversy is based on Analogy when a matter that arises for adjudication lacks a specifically applicable law but an analogy is sought from other existing laws on the basis of

291 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* I. xvi 27

In omnibus constitutionibus et partibus constitutionum hac via iudicationes reperientur, praeterquam in coniecturali constitutione; in ea nec ratio qua re fecerit quaeritur, fecisse enim negatur, nec firmamentum exquiritur, quoniam non subest constituitur, hoc modo: Intentio: “Occidisti Aiacem;” Infitiatio: “Non occidi;” Iudicatio: “Occideritne?” Ratio omnis utriusque orationis.... ad hanc iudicationem conferenda est.

292 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* IV. xvi 23

Ratiocinatio est per quam ipsi a nobis rationem poscimus quare quidque dicamus, et crebro nosmet a nobis petimus unius cuiusque propositionis explanationem.

293 Caplan *Rhetorica*, n. f p. 285

294 I.xi.19 *Legitima est constitutio cum in scripto aut e scripto aliquid controversiae nascitur. Cf Cicero De Inventione* I. xiii 17

a certain similarity to the matter in question.²⁹⁵

Dionysius, in the late fifth century, developed the simultaneous opposition and link between the two terms to produce a Christian theological use specifically to be deployed when discussing God. Eriugena explains to his student in Book 1 of his own work *Periphyseon* how this works, following on from his differentiation, given above, of Cicero's terms from Dionysius's for affirmation and negation. He starts by asking his student a leading question – does he see that these two, affirmation and negation are opposites? His student falls into the rhetorical trap that has been laid, answering that they are definitely opposite. Not so, counters Eriugena, for when dealing with Divine Nature “these two ostensible opposites are not at all opposed to each other but are harmonious in all respects.”²⁹⁶

If “It is Truth”, when applied to Divine Nature, is an affirmative statement and “It is not Truth” is the negation, then it would seem that they must contradict each other. However, this is not the case. The affirmation “it is Truth” does not claim that God is properly Truth but that such a name can be used if one transfers it metaphorically from creation to the Creator. The affirmation covers the bareness of a Divine Nature that Itself has no proper designation. The negation “it is not Truth” obviously recognizes that God is incomprehensible and ineffable. It does not negate anything about God but rather denies that God is properly truth or properly called such. Affirmation covers the bareness with names, not only 'Truth' but 'Wisdom', amongst others and negation constantly reminds us that they are merely coverings.²⁹⁷

His student affirms that he now understands that, when referring to God,

295 I. xiii 23

Ex ratiocinatione controversia constat cum res sine propria lege venit in iudicium, quae tamen ab aliis legibus similitudine quadam aucupatur.

296 Uhlfeder, p. 26

Book 1 461B-C

haec duo, quae videntur inter se esse contraria, nullo modo sibimet opponai, dum circa divinam naturam versantur, sed per omnia in omnibus sibi invicem consentiunt.

297 *Verbi gratia, καταφατικη dicit, veritas est; αποφατικη contradicit, veritas non est. Hic videtur quaedam forma contradictionis; sed dum intentius inspicitur, nulla controversia reperitur. Nam quae dicit, veritas est, non affirmat, prope divinam substantiam veritatem esse, sed tali nomine per metaphoram a creatura ad Creatorem vocari posse; nudam siquidem omnique propria significatione relictam divinam esentiam talibus vocabulis vestit. Ea vero, quae dicit, veritas non est, merito divinam naturam incomprehensibilem ineffabilemque clare cognoscens, non eam negat esse, sed veritatem nec vocari proprie, nec esse. Omnibus enim significationibus, qua καταφατικη Divinitatem induit, αποφατικη eam spoliare non nescit. Una enim dicit, sapientia est, verbi gratia, eam induens; altera dicit, sapientia non est, eandem exuens. Una igitur dicit, hoc vocari potest, sed non dicit, hoc proprie est; altera dicit, hoc non est, quamvis ex hoc appellari potest.* Book 1 461C-D

statements that seemed in opposition to each other are actually in harmony and not at all in discord. However, he has to admit that he cannot see how it solves the problem posed at the beginning of their discussion of how one can maintain that the Divine Substance is ineffable on the way hand and at the same time say it can properly be expressed in any way at all, whether in Latin or Greek, in simple or in compound words. His teacher advises him to concentrate harder and consider whether the terms 'Superessential', 'More than Truth', 'More than Wisdom' and so on belong to affirmative or negative theology. His student proceeds cautiously, realising that there are no negatives in these designations, so he does not consider they belong to negative theology but at the same time they are not truly affirmative. This is because they do actually contain a negation. 'Superessential', for example, actually means that one is denying that something is essential. The negation is absent from the construction of the words but is evident to those who carefully sift the meaning of those words. Therefore those kinds of designation, though affirmative in construction belong more properly to negative theology.

The teacher is pleased that by reasoned question and answer his student has unpacked the meaning of successive affirmative statement with the necessary subtlety to reveal the negative.²⁹⁸ He himself sums up as follows.

*It is Essence is an affirmation; It is not Essence is a denial; It is Superessential is at once an affirmation and a denial. On the surface, of course, it has no negative but the negative shows its force in the meaning. By saying "It is Superessential" one is not saying what It is but what It is not, i.e., that It is not essence but More Than Essence. The statement does not, however, express what it is that is more than essence when it declares that God is not any of those things which have being but is more than they are. It does not at all, however, define what that being is.*²⁹⁹

Anything predicated of God, therefore, can only hold if it is taken as axiomatic

298 *Cautissime et vigilantissime respondisse te video, multumque approbo, quomodo in pronunciatione affirmativae partis intellectum negativae subtilissime perspexisti.* 462B

299 Uhlfeder, p. 27, Migne 462C-D

Essentia est, affirmatio; essentia non est, abdicatio; superessentialis est, affirmatio simul et abdicatio. In superficie etenim negatione caret; in intellectu negatione pollet. Nam qui dicit, superessentialis est, non, quid est, dicit, sed quid non est; dicit enim essentiam non esse, sed plusquam essentiam. Quid autem illud est, quod plusquam essentia est, non exprimit, asserens. Deum non esse aliquid eorum quae sunt, sed plus quam ea quae sunt esse: illud autem esse quid sit, nullo modo definit.

that it does not hold of Him in a way that applies in any other situation. Augustine, however, had already provided the classic example of this in demonstrating that “God is good” only has meaning if it is understood that He is not good in the way that ordinary mortals are good. In *De Trinitate* “he” must include the triune nature of God and “to be”, when referring to God means eternally to be good.³⁰⁰ Statements about God are thus freighted with a baggage that humans cannot carry. This necessity of holding positive and negative in some kind of tension in speaking about God is extending to seeing God. Vision and knowledge operate almost as synonyms during the period under consideration. This is because Scripture itself gives both a positive and a negative answer to the possibility of actually seeing God. Richard Woods points out that it is not so much the commandment against making graven images that produces the Biblical declarations of the impossibility of seeing and knowing God but that rather it is the impossibility of seeing God that precludes making divine images.³⁰¹

Though it was impossible to see God's face it was possible to be aware of his presence, particularly through the medium of a dark cloud. Here in the Scriptures is the ambiguity that fed into the later theological dialectic of kataphatic and apophatic linkage. The cloud both reveals that there is a presence but also hides it. The usefulness of the *imagines agentes* for enabling creative thought in situations that used such dialectic was a specifically Judaeo-Christian adaption of the Greek use within memory situations. As Cicero had recommended, they were particularly useful for giving a corporeal marker to an incorporeal thought event that could scarcely be discerned let alone classified in any way. (To complicate matters, this cloud of darkness was not always ambivalent, however, sometimes it indeed indicated the total absence of God's presence.) Genesis 1 opens in the darkness of God and this is a darkness full of God's presence and pregnant with creation. When God meets Moses

300 Rowan Williams, *De Trinitate*, ed. Allan D Fitzgerald, *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), p. 847. “In God, “to be” and “to be good” or “to be just” are the same (5.8.9; 6.4.6): to be one in the active exercise of the characteristically divine qualities, the divine life, is to be one in being, in *essentia*. No one divine agent has “less” of the divine life than others, nor is the divine life the aggregate of what different subjects have: hence we call God *trinitas* but not *triplex* (6.7.8)”.

301 Woods, *ibid* p. 45. Exodus 20:4-5 “You shall not make yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything in heaven above or on earth beneath or in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God and I punish a parent's fault in the children, the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren among those who hate me; but I act with faithful love towards thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.” If no images can be made of God than no images should be made at all because humans might be tempted to invest them with a power that can only belong to God.

in Exodus, the darkness masks the undoubted presence of God. Darkness could be a divine event but be distinctive by the deliberate absence of God, such as the ninth plague in Egypt before the exodus.³⁰² Such ambivalence, given the eternal nature of God and the mortal one of humankind, with their corresponding intellects, acts as a spur to move humanity forward in its quest to find God in spite of the insuperable nature of the task. In this it functions in the same way as the *imagines agentes* – the element of appropriation encourages the belief that even minuscule advances are infinitely worthwhile. One can turn to the end of Augustine's *De Trinitate* (15.10.19) to see this in action. Augustine has consistently said that he was considering the threeness of the one God by looking at an enigmatic image, that of himself as image of God, in a glass that acts as a mirror. However, at the very end of his work he switches his interpretation of St Paul – now he seems to look through the glass at a barely discerned likeness of the Word on the other side. This is part of his rhetorical strategy, as outlined above, but it is also a spur and encouragement to persevere in seeking knowledge. The apophatic tilts slightly towards the kataphatic. Augustine uses a short paronomastic phrase, in the Hebrew biblical manner (see above), at this point to signal that he is here concerned with the relationship of humanity to God – *speculantes, per speculum scilicet intuentes. (deTr 15.11.20)*

This presence of God can be both revealed and hidden by the celestial beings, so that one knows that God's presence is there but cannot see Him, as happens in the Old Testament book of the prophet Isaiah.

In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne; his train filled the sanctuary. Above him stood seraphs, each one with six wings: two to cover its face, two to cover its feet and two for flying; and they were shouting these words to each other: Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh Sabaoth. His glory fills the whole earth. The door-posts shook at the sound of their shouting and the Temple was full of smoke. Then I said: 'Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips, and

302 Gen 1:4-5 God said, "Let there be light and there was light. God saw that light was good and God divided light from darkness. God called the light 'day' and darkness he called 'night'. Evening came and morning came: the first day. (The Book of Genesis, which opens the the collection of texts we know as the Bible, is not chronologically the oldest of these texts.)

Exodus 10:21-22 Yahweh then said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand towards heaven and let darkness, darkness so thick that it can be felt, cover Egypt." So Moses stretched out his hand towards heaven and for three days there was thick darkness over the whole of Egypt.

Exodus 20:21 So the people kept their distance while Moses approached the dark cloud where God was.

my eyes have seen the King, Yahweh Sabaoth.' Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding in its hand a live coal which it had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. With this it touched my mouth and said: 'Look, this has touched your lips, your guilt has been removed and your sin forgiven.' then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: 'Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?'.³⁰³

Dionysius's discussion of this event was to be a defining moment in his influence on later theologians because he framed it within the context of “incongruities” and “similarities” in apophatic theology. In Chapter 2 of *The Celestial Hierarchy* he had affirmed that the way of negation was more suitable to the ways of the divine because positive statements were unfitting to the hiddenness of the inexpressible.³⁰⁴ Dissimilar shapes are therefore more correctly applied to the invisible. Such shapes, being dissimilar, point to the truth rather than contain it. Dionysius here, following the guidelines for the *ars memorativa*, firmly separates the marker from the marked. Later, in Chapter 13 of *On the Celestial Hierarchy* he extends this to this passage of Scripture, finding it incongruous that a seraph should have flown down and touched Isaiah with the flaming coal. This is because Dionysius had established an angelic hierarchy in which there was a strict line of command, from God, through the ranks of angels, down to human beings, who were also subject to an ecclesiastical order.³⁰⁵ This line of command meant that whatever was transmitted became progressively weaker as it went down the line but that each member in the hierarchy was lifted up to the greatest of which its rank was capable, including knowledge of the origin of the transmission. It seems that this order was inspired by Dionysius's reading of the theory of the fifth-century, Greek neo-Platonist philosopher, Proclus, who also inspired Dionysius's device of similar and dissimilar shapes. Only an angel at the very bottom of the angelic line should have touched a human, therefore the seraph would have had

303 Isaiah 6:1-8

304 Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, CH 2.2.3 trans. by C Luibheid, *Pseudodionysius: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), pp. 149-50
P. Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to their Influence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); R. Roques, 'Introduction', *Denys l'Aréopagite, La hiérarchie céleste*, ed. by M. de Gandillac (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1958), pp. V-xci (also Sources chrétiennes 58); I. P. Sheldon-Williams, 'Henads and Angels: Proclus and the Pseudo-Dionysius', *Studia Patristica*, 11 (1972) published by Peeters, Leuven, pp. 65-71; Jeffrey Fisher, 'The theology of Dis/similarity: Negation in PseudoDionysius', *The Journal of Religion*, vol. 81 no. 4 (Oct 2001) pp. 529-548 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1206053> [accessed 22 May 2021]

305 For a concise introduction to the angelic hierarchy in this context see Donald F. Duclow, 'Isaiah meets the Seraph: Breaking Ranks in Dionysius and Eriugena?', edited by Bernard McGinn and Willemien Otten, *Eriugena: East and West* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), pp. 233-251

to pass the coal to a lower order angel and this angel would have touched Isaiah.³⁰⁶ However, the very incongruity of the seraph touching Isaiah pointed to the deepest truth. It must indeed have been a lower rank angel that actually touched Isaiah, that is the similarity. However, this was ordered by God and was an expression of God's omnipresent transcendence and so what was revealed was how this transcendence is manifested to all human beings in the manner that is most appropriate to their place in the hierarchy (which is also a hierarchy of knowledge). This revealing of the divine is so exceptional that only an incongruity can begin to do it justice. Scripture seems to be lying, causing shock and horror in the reader or listener at the very thought. This, when the real situation is affirmed becomes shock and awe at the presence of God. This passage from Dionysius was discussed by all the major theologians in the period up to the Reformation and beyond, mainly due to an extra problem - Dionysius seemed to contradict St Paul himself, who in Hebrews 1:14 wrote that all angels are “ministering spirits, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation.” As Dionysius was believed to be the disciple mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles who personally knew St Paul, many felt the need to address this issue.³⁰⁷

Eriugena goes at some lengths to explain this interpretation in Book V of *Periphyseon*, drawing on Dionysius's discussion in *On the Celestial Hierarchy* 7.1. In the Book of Genesis it is written that one of the Cherubim is posted before the gates of Paradise to guard them. Cherubim as a name is to be interpreted as 'full knowledge' or 'the knowledge of many'. Such a spiritual being always moves around God so it is inconceivable it would be put on menial sentry duty in front of a local and earthly paradise. Scripture must therefore mean that the Cherubim had ordered a lower order angel to fulfil this duty and this was called cherubim because it was under the orders of

306 Direct translations of Proclus from the Greek would not begin to appear until the end of the thirteenth century, which is why Dionysius and his translator and commentator Eriugena are so important in the transmission of his ideas. See Boulnois, pp. 156-160 for Proclus's development of dissimilar symbols. Proclus, *Im Rempublicam* 73, 25-26; 82, 20-23; 86, 15-19 ; 198, 13-19. He references Plato, *Republic* II 377e- 378c with regard his opposition to myths about the gods.

For the discovery of Proclus in Dionysius's *Celestial Hierarchy* see Salvatore Lilla, 'Introduzione dello Ps.Dionigi l'Areopagita', *Augustinianum*, 22/3 (1982), pp. 554-6: section 6 'Le legge che regolano la gerarchia angelica e di riflesso anche quelle ecclesiastica.' Lilla refers particularly to Proclus's *Elements of Theology*, prop. 148 which is discussed in Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, ed. by E. R. Dodds (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963)

307 Wayne John Hankey gives the history of this debate, with particular attention to Thomas Aquinas, who, from his first to his last of his many works, following Dionysius, denied what Isaiah said he saw. 'Aquinas, Pseudo-Denys, Proclus and Isaiah VI.6', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 64 (Paris: Vrin,1997) pp. 59-93
Hankey calls Dionysius Pseudo-Dionysius.

a Cherubim. In like manner, when the Scriptures say a seraphim cleansed the prophet Isaiah with a burning coal, it was a lower angel under the orders of a Seraphim. Eriugena develops this argument by pointing out that St Paul himself in Romans 1:20 took the interpretation in the opposite direction, by claiming that the Word as Wisdom of God is also called Cherubim, in the sense of 'full knowledge', though obviously infinitely beyond angelic being. This can be extended to the flaming sword as the Word of God, since it is for the salvation of humanity.³⁰⁸

The ongoing discussion of Dionysius's incongruous Scripture over the next five or more centuries ensured that the idea of the validity of the dissimilar as the most suitable vehicle for the manifestation of the divine entered and remained in the monastic scriptorium. It became allied to the *imagines agentes* of the *ars memorativa* of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* because in the scriptorium theological study did not make a strict differentiation between word, either written or heard and image - images in thought, in memory and physically depicted on vellum in illumination.

This ambivalence of how or if God is present, however, could also accommodate direct viewings, firstly because these were exceptional and secondly because God was always incognito, as it were and thus in a sense not present.³⁰⁹ The most direct view of God would seem to be the human view of the Son. With the Incarnation of Christ, however, the need for a dialectic that encompassed apophatic and kataphatic elements

308 *Periphyseon* Book V 863C- 864A

Interpretatur itaque Cherubim multitudo scientiae, vel fusio sapientiae, ut sanctus Dionysius Areopagita in libro de Caelesti Ierarchia scribit. Cui etiam astipulatur Epiphanius in libro de hebraicis nominibus; dicit, enim, Cherubim cognitionem plenam vel cognitionem multorum interpretari. Sed si caelestem essentiam in hoc loco divina voluit significari Scriptura, necessario cogemur fateri, paradysum spiritualis naturae esse. Non enim ratio sinit nos credere, spirituale Deoque proximam naturam, ac circa eum semper motam, ante localem terrenumque paradysum posse collocari, nisi forte dicamus, non ipsum Cherubim, sed unum de extremo ordine caelestium virtutum, qui prope angelicus dicitur, ante paradysum locatum fuisse, qui propterea Cherubim appellatus est, quoniam ab ipso Cherubim ante paradysum collocari iubetur. Quicquid enim ab inferioribus caelestium ordinibus in rerum natura perficitur, ad superiores referetur, quoniam inferiores nil agunt, praeter quos a superioribus agere praecipuntur. Eadem quippe ratione Seraphim scribitur Isaiam purgasse prophetam, cum non ipse seraphim, ut sanctus Dionysius Areopagita exponit, per se ipsum purgarit prophetam, sed per unum angelorum extremi ordinis caelestium essentiarum, qui propterea Seraphim appellatione meruit vocari, quoniam, sicut ei iussera Seraphim, purgavit prophetam, et quod ipsa purgatio non ad purgatores refertur, sed ad eum, quoniam iussit prophetam purgari.

309 Gen 16:13 Hagar gave a name to Yahweh who had spoken to her, "You are El Roi" by which she meant 'Did I not go on seeing here, after him who sees me?'

Gen 32:30 Jacob named the place Peniel, "Because I have seen God face to face" he said "and have survived".

Exodus 33:11 Yahweh would talk to Moses face to face, as a man talks to his friend.

remained and evolved. The historical Jesus was available to the human senses but to what extent did this affect the vision and knowledge of God? Any discussion had to focus on the relationship that was the Trinity, which is not defined in the Biblical writings and was the focus of constant re-evaluation by successive Christian Fathers and theologians throughout the period after the death of Christ under discussion in this thesis and beyond. In addition there were philosophical problems relating to what it meant to be an image, stemming ultimately from Plato, who saw that an image had to be deficient in some way to its original in order to be an image.³¹⁰ If an image was a perfect copy in all respects, it became another original.³¹¹ This problem became theological because one could not ascribe deficiency in any way to Jesus, which Scripture seemed to do in calling Him the image of the invisible Father.³¹² The Son was not deficient to the Father in any way but nor, given the understanding of the Trinity, was He another original, another God. Hilary of Poitiers recognized this dilemma and tried to solve it by asserting that an image was in fact a form of the original, that could not be differentiated from the original.³¹³ Augustine realised that this argument, however well intentioned, did little to address Hilary's underlying theological concerns. His resolution, briefly, was to look at the relationship of dependence that an image has with its original.³¹⁴ If the image, of which there are many kinds – for example, a reflection, a resemblance, an imprint, a work of art, even a parent/child relationship – is in any way dependent on the original, it is deficient in some way because of that dependence. If it is not dependent, it can still be an image of the original and not deficient. As Father and Son are here one in the Trinity, the Son is both not deficient and, due to the Incarnation, can indeed be the visible image of the invisible. This is the only image relationship that is not dependent and thus the trinitarian relation initiates the problem but is actually also the solution.

A further development in the study of the invisibility of God was provided by the

310 Sedley, David, "Plato's *Cratylus*", *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, (Fall 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/plato-cratylus/> [accessed 22 May 2021]

311 Plato, *Cratylus* 432c

312 Paul's letter to the Christian community in Colossae 1:15 "He is the image of the unseen God". (New Jerusalem Study Bible)

313 Hilary of Poitiers *De Trinitate* Book 2:1 <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/330202.htm> [accessed 22 May 2021]

For a full discussion of this problem and Augustine's solution see Olivier Boulnois, *Au-delà de l'image: une archéologie du visuel au Moyen Âge Ve-XVIIe siècle* (Paris: du Seuil, 2008), pp. 26-31

314 Augustine, Question 74 pp. 189-191

contradictory witness to his visibility in the life to come. Here the conflation between seeing as vision and seeing as knowledge becomes even more entangled. The two main contradictory Scriptural passages were both from St Paul. First, is the second part of the verse from 1 Corinthians that had inspired Augustine's structure in his treatise *De Trinitate*. "Now we see in a glass darkly: then we shall see face to face". This seemed to promise definite direct sight. The second was from his letter to Timothy.

I charge you to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; and this will be made manifest at the proper time by the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see. To him be honour and eternal dominion. Amen.³¹⁵

Augustine is the first major theologian of the Latin West to engage with a theology of unknowing, occasioned by the realisation that the ineffability of God meant it was easier to say what God is not, than what He is.³¹⁶ This tradition of unknowing had long roots in the Christian East, stretching back into Judaic apophatism through Philo of Alexandria³¹⁷. Alexandria was the centre for study of the Hebrew Testament through the medium of Greek and subsequently was influential in the writings of the period between the Hebrew Testament and what eventually four centuries later became the New Testament and the Christian commentary on those writings. The influence of Philo passed into Christian education in Alexandria via a catechetical place of training founded there in around 180 AD and then influenced the early Christian thinkers Clement, who became the second leader of the school and his pupil and successor Origen. Though there was great variation of interpretation all through this period, a major shift in approach occurred in the fourth century. The earlier assumption of a "spiritual affinity" between the human soul and God became for Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory Nazianzen and Basil a state where God is eternally hidden and removed from

315 1Timothy 6:14-16 NRSV

316 Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* LXXXV 12

De Deo facilius dicimus quid non sit quam quid sit.

www.augustinus.it/latino/esposizioni.salmi [accessed 22 May 2021]

317 Elliott R. Wolfson, *Giving beyond the Gift: Apophasis and Overcoming Theomania* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 69 for a brief analysis of Philo. Wolfson makes the important point that negative theology is not nihilism, as often misunderstood in modern analysis. One has to believe in God in order to be disturbed that one cannot see him.

“natural human accessibility”.³¹⁸

The knowledge of God is an unknowing in which the person soars above and beyond the perceptible and the intelligible. It is a rhythm of enstasis and ecstasis, of light and darkness, in which the more the soul is filled with the divine presence, the more it reaches out towards the Other that is always beyond its reach. Participation increases desire; God is the more unknown the more he is known; humanity advances from marvelling to marvelling, in a dynamism in which otherness is never separation nor unity confusion.³¹⁹

Augustine echoes another Alexandrian resident, Athanasias,³²⁰ when he affirms,

What then, brothers, shall we say of God? For if you have been able to understand what you would say, it is not God. If you have been able to comprehend it, you have comprehended something other than God. If you have been able to comprehend Him as you think, by so thinking you have deceived yourself. This then is not God, if you have comprehended it; but if this be God, you have not comprehended it. How therefore would you speak of that which you cannot comprehend?³²¹

He recognizes, however, that this ineffability has deeper consequences than “simply”

318 Richards Woods, p. 50

St Basil of Caesarea (c.329-379), his brother Gregory of Nyssa (c.330-c. 395) and their friend Gregory of Nazianen (c.330-390) were known as the Cappadocian Fathers from the geographical area of Cappadocia in Asia Minor that was immersed in Greek culture. Gregory Nazianzen was known as the 'Christian Demosthenes' for his study and practice of the art of rhetoric and as 'The Theologian' for his articulation of the Trinity (elaborating on the one Essence and three Persons, 'hypostases', that formed the idea of homoousion, consubstantiality, of the earlier deliberations on the Trinity at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD) not only in words but in his own life. Basil and Gregory's father was also a noted orator and Basil and Gregory Nazianen met at the university in Athens. At this time Christianity in the East was in transition from martyrdom – there were recent martyrs in both families – to monasticism. Though Gregory of Nyssa married, he extolled the life of virginity and with his brother and friend was influential on the development of Greek monasticism. For further biographical information see Olivier Clément, *Sources* (Paris, Éditions Stock, 1982), pp. 315-317, 335-339

319 Clément, p. 338

320 Athanasias (295-373) became Bishop of Alexandria in 328, three years after the Council of Nicaea but after conflict with the civil authorities and continuing battles of doctrine was exiled to Trier, Rome and Aquileia during the period 335-346 with a brief return to Alexandria from 337 to 339. He then fled voluntarily into the Egyptian desert with a group of monks, joining St Anthony, whose *Life* he wrote, where he contributed to the formation of Egyptian monasticism and the distinctively monastic use of memory in contemplation.

321 Augustine, *Sermones de Scripturi Novi Testamenti* 2,16 quoted in Richard Woods, p. 53 <http://www.augustinus.it/latino/discorsi/index2.htm> [accesses 22 May 2021] *Sermo* 52, *de Trinitate* 6:16

This sermon occurs with slight variations under two titles, see F. Dolbeau, 'Le Sermon 117 d'Augustin sur l'ineffabilité de Dieu. Édition critique', *Revue bénédictine* 124 (2014) (Brepols on behalf of Maredsous Abbey, Belgium, by the Order of St Benedict) pp. 213-253

avoiding affirmative statements because the ineffability of God is not ineffable if it can be spoken of as ineffable, thus confounding speech at all.

God is not even to be called ineffable because to say even this is to speak of Him. Thus there arises a curious conflict of words; for if the ineffable is that which cannot be spoken of, it is not ineffable if it can be spoken of as ineffable. And this conflict of words is rather to be avoided by silence than to be reconciled by speech.³²²

This conflict had long been recognized in Judaic apophatism, where the potential (and the attendant problems of this power if misused), of turning from words to images had been explored because images were recognized to have eschatological resources that exist when words fail.³²³ That which is looked at is relieved of language, as light does not speak in words of clarity but without these words it does illumine. Thus again the visual usefulness of *imagines agentes* is reinforced to meet theological need.

Returning to Dionysius's interweaving of apophatism and dissimilarity there is one more point to make before moving on to Eriugena's contribution to the dissimilar figure that will be illustrated by the Luttrell Master. Jeffrey Fisher calls it dis/similarity, while apologising for the post-modern cast of the term.³²⁴ He does this to make a point that will also be important for the understanding of Eriugena. Modern commentators on how Dionysius was read throughout the later Middle Ages tend to share the conviction that it was uniformly considered that similarity moves into dissimilarity in order to return to or move on to similarity.³²⁵ However, this is precisely what does not happen because the Dionysian move into dissimilarity can only point to something that will always be beyond both dissimilarity and similarity. It is because everything is dissimilar to God that everything can be used to mean God – because nothing can mean God, there are, therefore, no better or worse similarities. There is a distinction to be made here with Plato's consideration that images are always

322 Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, Libro I. 6,6

http://www.augustus.it/latino/dottrina_cristiana/index2.htm [accessed 22 May 2021]

323 Wolfson, p. 69 talks of “apophasis and the eschatological overcoming of word by image” He quotes the work of Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Stern der Erlösung* (Freiburg: Universitätsbibliothek, 2002) “That which can be looked at is relieved of language, put into relief above it. Light does not talk; but shines” [*Was angeschaut werden kann, ist der Sprache überhoben, über sie hinausgehoben. Das Licht redet nicht, es leuchtet.*] p. 328

324 Jeffrey Fisher, 'The Theology of Dis/similarity: Negation in Pseudo-Dionysius', *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 81, No. 4 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Oct 2001) pp. 529-548

325 For example, Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1968), pp. 98-145

deficient in some way to the original or they would be originals and no longer images. In such a way, metaphors are of necessity deficient in some way to what they are trying to convey, otherwise they would be definitions and similarities must all necessarily be deficient otherwise they would be equalities. Dissimilarities, however, are not deficient, they are straightforwardly dissimilar. Counterintuitive as it may seem, they do not have to be resolved. This is where an understanding of the monastic 'hive mentality' provides a different reading for what Fisher regards as this “dissimilarity in dis/similarity as amounting to the necessity of semiotic failure” for Dionysius.³²⁶ Fisher's concern in his article is whether or not Dionysius risks but avoids nihilism and totalism in his relationship between affirmation and negation, arguing against Derrida who denies that he takes this risk. What these writers do not take into account in their deliberations is the influence of the *ars memorativa*, which would have affected how Dionysius was interpreted from Eriugena onwards. The *imagines agentes* point continually from the marker to the marked, even if the marked is not (yet) discernible. This is a process of ongoing growth, however seemingly hidden, and a successful strategy for capturing what is on the tip of the mental tongue, even if impossible to articulate.

Eriugena and paronomasia

Eriugena's work *Periphyseon 'Concerning Nature'* presents a systematic theology within which he seeks to understand how the undivided God can be related to the multiple divisions of nature and how through Christ these divisions are overcome. There is continuity and discontinuity as the one becomes the varied. Theologically for Eriugena, although humanity has been both expelled from Paradise and inhabits the sphere of time and space, it cannot be divided from God because all creation is created *ex nihilo* and because God is everywhere immanent and transcendent.

We ought not to understand God and the creature as two things distant from one another but as one and the same. For both the subsisting creature is in God and God, in a marvellous and ineffable way, is creating himself in the creature.³²⁷

326 Fisher, p. 536

327 *Periphyseon* III 678C

Proinde non duo a seipsis distantia debemus intelligere Deum et creaturam sed unum et id ipsum. Nam et creatura in Deo est subsistens et Deus in creatura mirabili et ineffabili modo creatur.

Neo-Platonic philosophy had sought to explain the movement from the one to the many as the precursor of a return of the many to the one. The problem for Eriugena was that the one is not subject to motion. If there is nothing outside of the one, then all must be within it in some way. Eriugena explains to his student that any talk of movement with regard to God cannot be said to be circular or spherical or even linear in any way, though his creation tends to use such terms metaphorically. By extension, humanity cannot circle out from God and then return, or move spherically away and back to him, or more linearly away and back to him. Theologically for Eriugena, therefore, creation never returns to Paradise but does achieve a place in heaven. As there is no movement with regard to God, Christ must be in the place of time and space that the created world inhabits before its creation and is the initiating cause of creation's final place in a heaven that is not 'elsewhere'. Ultimately, there is a timeless totality of relationship between the one, the principles of diversity that must originate with the only one and which are also present in the created world that displays diversity and the final space that for Christians is heaven.

Eriugena explains these principles of diversity through the means of primordial causes and illustrates visually and aurally how they 'work' by means of the rhetorical technique of paronomasia. Although a classical tool in rhetoric, paronomasia had roots even older than the classical tradition, in Mesopotamian omen writings and ancient dream readings.³²⁸ Its entry into the Judaic writing of the Hebrew Scriptures comes from both these directions and evolved into implicit but intentional allusion, applied to the consideration of God's relationship with humanity. Rhetorically, to recognize paronomasia one is looking for or hearing patterns of letters, rather than concentrating on their meaning and then pinpointing the source of these patterns. This separation of patterning from meaning is easier to recognize when it is based on rhythm. We shall now turn briefly to this technique, called *gradatio*, translated by Caplan as 'climax', before addressing the more complicated paronomasia because rhythm functions without any need for language.

328 Further detail can be found in Jovan Bilbija, 'Interpreting the Interpretation: Protasis-Apodosis-Strings in the Physiognomic Omen Series, *Summa Alamdimmû* 3.76-132' in *Studies in Ancient Near Eastern World View and Society presented to Marten Stol on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday, 10 November, 2005 and his Retirement from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam*, ed. R. J. van der Spek (Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2008), pp. 19-27;

Scott B. Noegel, 'Dreams and Dream Interpreters in Mesopotamia and in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)', *Dreams: A Reader on Religious, Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Dreaming*, ed. Kelly Bulkeley (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 45-71

Climax is the figure in which the speaker passes to the following word only after advancing by steps to the preceding one.³²⁹

Augustine expands on this when explaining that *gradatio* is the Latin translation of κλίμαξ,

And yet here we find the figure which is called in Greek κλίμαξ and by some in Latin *gradatio*, for they do not care to call it a *scala* (ladder), when the words and ideas have a connection of dependency the one upon the other.³³⁰

The *Rhetorica* illustrates this with various examples from Greek history but Augustine turns to the writings of St Paul, demonstrating how Paul deliberately used *gradatio* in his epistle to the Romans. This is an early demonstration of an important factor in paronomasia as well as *gradatio* – that it is intended by the composer at the point of composition, not discovered by the listener or reader at a later stage. This becomes even more important when one text quotes another allusively and it is this that differentiates it from intertextuality. Augustine shows how Paul deliberately sets up a rhythmic step pattern.

We glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation works patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope makes not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.³³¹

Augustine uses this rhythmic pattern earlier in the same work (2.7:7-10) when he describes the seven steps from piety and fear to wisdom. He does this to show that knowledge is a ladder and, as discussed earlier, links this into the *ductus* of his memory art. Crucially, he is echoing the beat of St Paul and this echo is intended to then bring St Paul's words to mind. In *Periphyseon* Eriugena uses this technique of *gradatio* in his description of reason wandering the desert tracks of sacred Scripture seeking the word of God.

329 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* IV.xxv 34

Gradatio est in qua non ante ad consequens verbum descenditur quam ad superius ascensum est.

330 Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* 4. 7:11

Et tamen agnoscitur hic figura, quae κλίμαξ, graece, latine vero a quibusdam est appellata gradatio, quoniam scalam dicere noluerunt, cum verba vel sensa connectuntur alterum ex altero.

331 Romans 5:3-5 quoted in Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* 4. 7:11, as above

With the guidance, help and co-operation of frequent and laborious study of God's words and with divine grace advancing it toward this goal, turning back it may arrive, arriving it may love, loving it may remain, remaining it may rest in the contemplation of Truth, which it had lost by the fall of the first man.³³²

Eriugena uses the rhythm of St Paul to bring the echo of his words in Romans 5:3-5 to the reader or hearer as they take in his own words. *Gradatio* is something of a calling card of St Paul. Another example occurs later in his letter to the Romans (10:14).

How then can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Augustine is clear in his introduction to his discussion of St Paul and *gradatio* that this is not about the art of rhetoric but about recognizing wisdom. (Linguistically, the only example where this use of *gradatio* as wisdom is still evident in modern use is perhaps Welsh, where 'ysgol', derived from *scala* means both 'school' and a common or garden 'ladder'.)

Caplan cites Augustine's *Confessionum* 7:10 as an example of *gradatio*.³³³ In this short passage one can acquire a feeling for how the rhythmic beat of *gradatio* differs from the aural and sonic letter patterns of paronomasia. The first part works by means of holding '*novit*' as a repeated beat, almost regardless of language. The second is dependent for maximum effect on the variation of the actual letters used and the links created by the variation to provide continuity and discontinuity in meaning.

*Qui novit veritatem, novit eam, et qui novit eam, novit aeternitatem. Caritas novit eam. O aeterna veritas et vera caritas et cara aeternitas.*³³⁴

³³² *Periphyseon* Book 4 744B Uhlfeder, p. 209-10

Hoc est, donec ad veritatis contemplationem, quam lapsu primi hominis perdidit, frequenti literarum divinarum laboriosoque studio ducente et adjuvante et cooperante, et ad hoc movente divina gratia, redeundo perveniat, perveniendo diligit, diligendo permaneat, permanendo quiescat.

³³³ Caplan, n.d, p. 315

³³⁴ <https://www.augustinus.it/latino/confessioni/index2.htm> [accessed 22 May 2021]

“He who knows the truth knows that light; and he that knows it knows eternity. Love knows it. O

The classical explanation of paronomasia in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* is very detailed. It illustrates the variety of ways in which the relationship of continuity and discontinuity, similarity and dissimilarity between the arrangement of letters and sounds can be formed. Paronomasia is taken from the Greek term παρονομασία, which the *Rhetorica* translates as *adnominatio*.

Paronomasia is the figure in which, by means of a modification of sound, or change of letters, a close resemblance to a given verb or noun is produced so that similar words express dissimilar things. This is accomplished by many different methods.³³⁵

Fortunately, there are precise instructions for constructing the many different methods, which means it is possible to recognize paronomasia in whatever kind of text it is found. These instructions are applied in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* to Latin examples but are the same as those used in other languages, classical Greek and biblical Hebrew, for example. Eriugena's use of "linguistic procedures whereby permutations or substitutions of letters or syllables initiate rather than follow semantic changes" are derived not only from his Greek reading but also from the Hebrew via Jerome and Epiphanius.³³⁶ Each instruction, of which there is a great variety, is accompanied by an example. The *Rhetorica* divides these methods into three separate groups, the first group involves manipulating the same letter in various ways, the second uses words that do not resemble each other as closely as in the first group but are not dissimilar and the third depends on changing the case of proper nouns. For the author of the *Rhetorica* there were four parts of speech, *nomen* (proper name or noun), *verbum* (verb), *vocabulum* (common noun or appellative) and *coniunctio* (conjunction). There is no separate group for adjectives, which were included in the group of *verbum*.³³⁷

The first group in the figure of paronomasia, "which depend on a slight change or

eternal Truth and true Love and loved Eternity." <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/110107.htm>
[accessed 22 May 2021]

335 *Ad Her* IV.xxi 29

Adnominatio est cum ad idem verbum et nomen acceditur commutatione vocum aut litterarum, ut ad res dissimiles similia verba adcommoventur. Ea multis et variis rationibus conficitur.

336 Stephen Gersh, 'Eriugena's *Ars Rhetorica*', pp. 267-268 in *Iohannes Scottus Eriugena: The Bible and Hermeneutics*, ed. by Gerd van Riel, Carlos Steel and James McEvoy (Leeuven: Leeuven University Press, 1996), pp. 262-278

337 Caplan, p. 301 n.i

lengthening or transposition of letters and the like”³³⁸ is further divided into 8 instructions. These eight can be further divided into two. In the first of this further division the same letter can be a) thinned or contracted or b) the opposite, c) lengthened or d) shortened. (Contracting is related to *complexio*, συστολή) The following corresponding examples are given.

- a) *Hic qui se magnifice iactat atque ostentat venīt antequam Romam venīt.*
(*Venīt* is a contraction of *veniit* and precedes the even shorter vowel *venīt*.)
- b) *Hic quos homines alea vincīt, eos ferro statim vincīt.*
(*Vincīt* is a contraction of *vinciit* and follows the even shorter vowel *vincīt*.)
- c) *Hinc āvium dulcedo ducit ad āvium.*
- d) *Hic, tametsi videtur esse honoris cupidus, tantum tamen cūriam diligit quantum Cūriam?*

In the second division e) letters are added, f) omitted, g) transposed or h) changed, giving the following corresponding examples.

- e) *Hic sibi posset temperare, nisi amori mallet obtemperare.*
- f) *Si lenones vitasset tamquam leones, vitae tradidisset se.*
- g) *Videte, iudices, utrum homini navo an vano credere malitis.*
- h) *Deligere oportet quem velis diligere.*³³⁹

An example of the second group, in which words resemble each other but not as closely as in the first group while continuing to contain significant similarity, is “*Quid veniam, qui sim, quem insimulem, cui prosim, quae postulem, brevi cognoscetis.*”³⁴⁰

338 *Ad Her IV. xxi 29*

Haec sunt adnominatioes quae in litterarum brevi commutatione aut productione aut transiectione aut aliquo huiusmodi genere versantur.

339 a) That man who carries himself with a lofty bearing and makes a display of himself was sold as a slave before coming to Rome.

b) Those men from whom he wins in dice he straightway binds in chains.

c) The sweet song of the birds draws us from here into pathless places.

d) Does this man, although he seems desirous of public honour, yet love the Curia as much as he loves Curia?

e) This man could rule himself, if only he did not prefer to submit to love.

f) If he had avoided panders as though they were lions, he would have devoted himself to life.

g) See men of the jury, whether you prefer to trust an industrious man or a vainglorious one.

h) You ought to choose such a one as you would wish to love.

Translations are from Caplan, n. b, c, d, p. 302, n. e, f, g, p 303 and n. a and b pp. 304-305, who also gives further information on the sources of various examples, as appropriate.

340 *Ad Her IV. xxii 30* “Why I come, who I am, whom I accuse, whom I am helping, what I ask for you will soon know.” See Caplan, n. c p. 305 for a further example.

The third group depends on changing the case of proper nouns. An example of this shows how paronomasia can be 'lost' and therefore unnoticed when translated into a language such as English that does not show case endings. “*Alexander Macedo summo labore animum ad virtutem a pueritia confirmavit. Alexandri virtutes per orbem terrae cum laude et gloria vulgatae sunt. Alexandrum omnes maxime metuerunt, idem plurimum dilexerunt. Alexandro si vita data longior esset, trans Oceanum Macedonum transvolassent sarisae.*”³⁴¹ In translation this statement suffers in two ways. Firstly it seems to be merely a tedious repetition of Alexander when use of a pronoun might be more elegant. Secondly, it is not possible to start each sentence with Alexander. “Alexander of Macedon with consummate toil from boyhood trained his mind to virtue. Alexander's virtues have been broadcast with fame and glory throughout the world. All men greatly feared Alexander, yet deeply loved him. Had longer life been granted Alexander, the Macedonian lances would have flown across the ocean.”³⁴² By deploying all the case variations of Alexander (derived from Greek, which has no Latin ablative, in the Latin order) and putting them at the beginning of each sentence the writer is underlining his complete and total admiration and respect for each facet of Alexander. These are the hallmarks of paronomasia – it is intentional and functional, it is not an ornamentation of language but an integral part of the meaning of language use. As the writer of *ad Herennium* states, constructing such figures “seems impossible without labour and pains”.³⁴³

Eriugena takes such labour and pains at the very beginning of his work *Periphyseon*.³⁴⁴ He is regarded as one of the few true systematic theologians because he seeks both to address all objects of Christian theology within an interlinking framework and also to address all aspects and the varying views thereon of each object.³⁴⁵ He uses paronomasia to present that framework and indeed takes it up a

341 *Ad Her* IV. xxii 31

342 Translation Caplan, p. 307

343 *Ad Her* IV. xxiii 32

344 The Migne edition of Eriugena's works notes that the title *de divisione Naturae* stems from a copy dated 1681, edited in Oxford. 'Division' was not present in the title in the period under discussion.

345 “By his isolated and idiosyncratically creative handling of theological and philosophical themes, John Scotus Eriugena (c. 810-c. 877) has provoked much specialised research”. Edward Booth, *Aristotelian Aporetic Ontology in Islamic and Christian Thinkers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, this ed. 2008), p. 80. The following is an overview of the secondary literature pertaining to this research - Johann Kreuzer, 'Von der Insel der Heiligen ins Zentrum der karolingischen Renaissance: Johannes Scottus Eriugena', ed. by Knapp u. Kobusch, *Querdenker: Visionäre und Aussenseiter in Philosophie und Theologie* (WBG; Darmstadt, 2005), pp. 84-94

notch by combining it with the rhetorical technique of *commutatio*, which Caplan translates as reciprocal change.³⁴⁶ *Commutatio* is used when one transposes two discrepant thoughts in such a way that the latter follows on from the former, even though the latter contradicts the former.³⁴⁷ As an example of this the writer of *ad Herennium* gives a saying attributed by Plutarch to Simonides.³⁴⁸ *Poëma loquens pictura, pictura tacitum poëma debet esse.*³⁴⁹ With this example various threads considered earlier begin to draw together again at the service of theology. This is Simonides' use of *imagines agentes* within the *ars memorativa*, a description Cicero, the supposed author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, applies in his *De Oratore* to the use of *imagines agentes* when one is trying to grasp on to something beyond the means of vocabulary and mixing up the aural and visual senses. “ Things not seen and not lying in the field of visual discernment are earmarked by a sort of outline and image and shape so that we can keep hold of as it were by an act of sight things that we can scarcely embrace by an act of thought.”

Eriugena, the imagoagens and spiritual exercise.

The opening sentence of Eriugena's *Periphyseon* uses two words, *cogitare* and *intentio* that are important parts of the technical vocabulary of the *ars memorativa*. *Cogitare* is the “activity of putting images together in a consciously recollected,

What that philosophy and theology entailed is open to a variety of interpretations, particularly regarding his influences. Beierwaltes and Gersh present what could be called the traditional approach of Eriugena influenced by and continuing his work in the vein of Proclus's Neoplatonism and of Dionysius the Areopagite. Werner Beierwaltes, ed. *Eriugena: Studien zu seinen Quellen*, (Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, Heidelberg, 1980). Stephen Gersh, 'The problem of Immediate and Mediate Causation in Eriugena and his Neoplatonic Predecessors', ed. R. Roques, *Jean Scot Erigène et l'histoire de la philosophie* (CNRS; Paris, 1977), pp. 367-376. Schrimpf emphasises Eriugena's interaction with the *artes liberales* of his time, particularly with regard to his innovation with regard to dialectic in Gangolf Schrimpf, 'Die systematische Bedeutung der beiden logischen Einteilungen zu Beginn von Periphyseon' *Giovanni Scotus nel suo tempo – Atti del XXIV Convegno storico internazionale Todi, 11-14 ottobre 1987* (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1989), pp. 113-151. Moran is particularly impressed with the strength of the influence of the Greek Fathers in Dermot Moran, *The Philosophy of John Scotus Eriugena: a study of idealism in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1989). Jeaneau highlights the influence of Augustine in Édouard Jeaneau, *Études Erigeniennes* (Études Augustiniennes; Paris, 1987). Similarly J. J. O'Meara and L. Bieler, eds. *The Mind of Eriugena* (Irish University Press; Dublin, 1973). Bernard McGinn addresses the undoubted mysticism of Eriugena in 'Eriugena Mysticus' in *Giovanni Scotus nel suo tempo* as above pp. 235-260. For Eriugena as an exegete see G. van Riel, C. Steel and J. J. McEvoy, eds., *Iohannes Scottus Eriugena: The Bible and Hermeneutics* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996)

346 Caplan, p. 325

347 *Ad Her* IV.xxviii 39 *Commutatio est cum duae sententiae inter se discrepantes ex transiectione ita efferuntur ut a priore posterior contraria priori proficiscatur.*

348 Plutarch, *De gloria Atheniensium* 3 (346 F)

349 *Ad Her* *ibid.* “ A poem ought to be a painting that speaks; a painting ought to be a silent poem”.

deliberative way”³⁵⁰ *Intentio* is a difficult concept to understand because it is situated within a psychology that, unlike the modern, did not recognize an unconscious mind that had any influence on emotions. Memory, following Aristotle, was considered to be part of the sensory, affective part of the soul and it could be consciously mentally controlled. *Intentio*, which will be discussed in more detail below, is the emotional attitude towards memory images that serves as a kind of hook to attach and reattach them in different storage places. The right ordering of this *intentio* was the work of spiritual formation.³⁵¹

Eriugena announces in this first sentence that the object of his cogitation is everything that has and that does not have being.³⁵² The term for everything this encompasses he gives in both Latin - *natura* and Greek – *physis*. He then differentiates this 'everything' for the purposes of further consideration into four species, not by definitions but by *differentiae* and presents them in a paronomasic structure to be used as an *imago agens*. These *differentiae* are:

1 *quae creat et non creatur*

2 *quae creatur et creat*

3 *quae creatur et non creat*

4 *quae nec creat et nec creatur*³⁵³

1 what creates and is not created; 2 what is created and creates; 3 what is created and does not create; 4 what neither creates nor is created.

This pattern of just five consonants and four vowels in Latin functions both aurally and visually as an *imago agens*. It is visually and aurally memorable in a way that allows it to be used as a marker and this does not depend on actually understanding what it may mean. At this point the only elaboration that Eriugena gives on its meaning is that these divisions are two pairs of opposites, the third is the opposite of the first and the

350 Carruthers, 2008, p. 244

351 The opening sentence of *Periphyseon* is: *Saepe mihi cogitanti diligentiusque quantum vires suppetunt inquirenti rerum omnium quae vel animo percipi possunt vel intentionem eius superant primam summamque divisione esse in ea quae sunt et in ea quae non sunt horum omnium generale vocabulum occurrit quod graece ΦΥΣΙΣ, latine vero natura vocitatur.*

Nicola Gorlani, (traduttore e curatore), *Giovanni Scoto Eriugena: Divisione della natura* (Milano:Bompiani, 2013)

352The Scriptural basis for this he gives a little later (*PPI* 445C-D, [Migne]) as Romans 4:7.

353 1 what creates and is not created; 2 what is created and creates; 3 what is created and does not create; 4 what neither creates nor is created.

fourth is the opposite of the second. Opposite is a 'technical' term that was brought into the *ars memorativa* by Aristotle. A little later in the first book Eriugena quotes almost verbatim from Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia* regarding the use of opposition in memorising something and conflates it with how one can actually acquire better knowledge about something by considering its opposite. Thus “everything from the highest down can reasonably be said about Him because of a certain similarity or dissimilarity or contrariety or opposition.”³⁵⁴ One can talk about God in human terms and about humans in divine terms but they remain opposite. Importantly, with regard to refuting interpretations over the ensuing centuries of Eriugena's writing as pantheistic, neither similar, dissimilar, contrary or opposite things can be the same as or equal to the thing they are describing.³⁵⁵ In addition, all the differentiations participate in the same five consonants and four vowels, nothing being added or taken away in any of the four parts, simply rearranged. The two pairs are opposite, not equal, however, to each other. Creation may participate in the Creator and the Creator may be fully present in all creation but there is still an absolute distinction.

That the first and third divisions are opposite is a condition that is experienced daily in the use of the *ars memorativa*. The vagaries of human memory is one mark of creation's being opposite to the creator, even as it seeks understanding. For Augustine, as discussed at the end of the last chapter with regard to the conclusion of *De Trinitate* (15.23.45), it is the individual's fallible and variable memory and therefore the need for the *ars memorativa*, that eventually conclusively reveals that the triads, even the most promising one of memory, understanding and love, can function as an *imago agens* but cannot function, because of the nature of memory as a mirror to the triune nature of God. This *imago agens* works, therefore, as a signpost in the journey towards such knowledge.

The *differentia* of the fourth is its inability to be – it is among the things that are impossible.³⁵⁶ The student's emotional reaction of astonishment at this, flags up that

354 Eriugena *PP1* 510C/D, Aristotle, *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, 451b 19-20. The idea of dissimilarity being a less confusing way of approaching difficult concepts than similarity had been discussed by Proclus (*Remp* 1.21.17 [=11.369.4-370.23]) and was a great influence on Dionysius and his depiction of the dissimilarity of scripture. Proclus does not, however, mention opposition.

355 For a traditional refutation of Eriugena's pantheism see Dermot Moran, *The Philosophy of John Scottus Eriugena* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 89

356 *PP1* 442A *quarta inter impossibilia ponitur, cujus differentia est non posse esse.*

affectus, a crucial element in the *ars memorativa*, is at play here. It is a sign that the student, the hearer and/or the reader are on a journey, the *ductus*. This introduction is a classical use of the *imago agens*, a visually memorable aid to assist in the assimilation of complex theological considerations while acting as a kind of bridge between this systematic and theoretic theology and the individual's emotional and active life of piety and witness. The *imago agens* is a sign post that will lead in the direction of the *skopos*, the goal of the *ductus*.

In the *Periphyseon* Eriugena is using the same underlying structure of a journey that Augustine uses in *De Trinitate*, that of theological psychagogy. Psychagogy is the use of rhetoric to guide the soul. The monastic communities had adopted Hellenistic rhetorical exercises used by philosophers in moral development, as the base for spiritual formation.³⁵⁷ In *De Trinitate* Augustine is concerned that the systematic and theoretical assimilation of a growing awareness of just how beyond human understanding the Triune God is should serve to enrich the individual's life of sacrament, study and charity. Eriugena in *Periphyseon* is seeking - and gains - a truer understanding of and dependence on the Holy Spirit for his student and for the latter to realize that words do not always equate with understanding. The four divisions in their paronomasic shape are the *imago agens*, the signpost therefore, that Eriugena employs in this journey, not the *skopos* itself.

Eriugena's *Periphyseon* is a complete system of theology taking up nearly 600 columns of the *Patrologia Latina*, a journey over a vast and varied landscape of biblical hermeneutics, Latin and Greek patristic theology and pagan philosophy. Secondary literature has been mainly concerned with the source of the four differentiations in order to determine the ensuing main influence on Eriugena's thought. The three main contenders show the breadth of this landscape - Aristotelian logic mediated through Latin interpretation, Pythagorean number theory and Greek neo-Platonic idealism.³⁵⁸ None of these has prevailed, however, as Eriugena roams

357 In Hellenistic philosophy these had been "practices....intended to effect a modification and a transformation in the subjects who practise them". Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), p. 8. Rhetoric had a major role. "the discourses could be presented in such a way that the disciple, as auditor, reader or interlocutor, could make spiritual progress and transform himself (sic) within. Pierre Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2002), p. 6

358 Aristotelian logic would be mediated by the *Categoriae Decem*, the account of Aristotle's ten

widely over all this terrain. There is, however, agreement in the majority of secondary literature that he “wanders where Augustine can no longer be his guide”.³⁵⁹ This thesis will show that the opposite is the case and that Eriugena holds tightly to Augustine through his rhetorical structuring and particularly to Book 15 of Augustine's *De Trinitate*. The trade mark of an *ars memorativa* journey is that it is always a work in progress. Here, too, Eriugena ends his final summing up of the meaning of the impossibility of the fourth division at the close of the five books of *Periphyseon* with a question mark regarding the end of all things, a direct reference to Augustine and so

categories that was assumed to be by Augustine and was probably Boethius's translation of Aristotle. The distinctive element of this theory is the distinction between substance and accident in four classes. That which is of a subject but not in a subject (universal substances), that which is not in a subject and not of a subject (individual substances), that which is in a subject and of a subject (universal accidents), that which is in a subject but not of a subject (individual accidents.) For details of this and the accompanying propositional theory see Stephen Gersh, 'Eriugena's Fourfold Contemplation: Idealism and Arithmetic', *Eriugena, Berkeley and the Idealist Tradition*, ed. Stephen Gersh and Dermot Moran (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), pp. 152-153. Pythagorean number theory would come to Eriugena through Philo of Alexandria, possibly via Origen. In Philo, *On the Making of the World* (99-100) is found that some numbers beget without being begotten, some beget and are begotten, some are begotten without begetting and one neither begets nor is begotten. See Deirdre Carabine, *John Scottus Eriugena* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 31. The third area is a result of Eriugena's exceptional knowledge of the Greek Fathers of the Church such as Gregory of Nyssa and of Dionysius, who was influenced by the non-Christian Proclus. It centres around the role of intellection in configuring reality. (This has acquired additional discussion with the realisation that subjectivity and objectivity are concepts that did not exist in the same way for the mediaeval mind, as discussed earlier.)

359 In general, Eriugena is held to have followed Dionysius into “the ineffable and incomprehensible and inaccessible brilliance of the divine goodness, unknown to any intellect' (PIII 681A) where Augustine can no longer be his guide.” See Wayne J. Hankey, 'John Scottus Eriugena', <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/classics/faculty-staff/wayne-hankey-publications.html> p. 1 [accessed 22 May 2021] (as submitted to *The Cambridge History of Late Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, vol. II, ed. Lloyd Gerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 829-840 where the text 'differs markedly') This view is held, for example, by Donald F. Duclow, 'Divine Nothingness and Self-Creation in John Scotus Eriugena', *The Journal of Religion*, Vol 57, No.2 (Apr., 1977), pub by The University of Chicago Press pp. 109-123; Dermot Moran, *The Philosophy of John Scottus Eriugena. A study of idealism in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 212-240, Werner Beierwaltes, 'Eriugena's Platonism', *Hermathena*, No. 149, Winter 1990, Special Issue: The Heritage of Platonism published by Trinity College Dublin pp. 53-72; Deirdre Carabine, *John Scottus Eriugena*, pp.34-43; Paul Rorem, *Eriugena's Commentary on the Dionysian Celestial Hierarchy*, pp. 105-112.

An 'important alternative interpretation' (Hankey p 1) is that of Robert Crouse which 'instead of viewing Eriugena's thought through a Proclean and Damascene meontology derived from the Greek Fathers, sees the Greeks being accommodated to Augustine, and judges that both the Neoplatonism of Plotinus and Porphyry, on the one hand, and that extending from Iamblichus to Damascius, on the other, submit to Christian trinitarian theology in the Fathers.' (ibid n.3 , p.1) Robert Crouse is a representative of that view and specifically of Augustine's role in Eriugena's work. Robert D. Crouse, '*Primordiales Causae* in Eriugena's Interpretation of Genesis: Sources and Significance', *Iohannes Scottus Eriugena; The Bible and Hermeneutics* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996), ed. v. Riel, Steel, McEvoy pp. 209-220. He proposes that “ the whole theological matrix of Eriugena's theory was constituted by St Augustine's exegesis of Genesis, especially in *Confessions* XI-XIII, *De Genesi ad litteram* and the central books of *De civitate Dei*, taken in conjunction with the characteristically Augustinian doctrine of God in *de Trinitate*. Within that matrix, Eriugena developed his theory, with significant help from Pseudo-Dionysius, St Maximus and others at those points at which St Augustine's position seemed tentative or incomplete.” p. 212

reveals not that he is doubting Augustine but that the journey has indeed not ended.

The story of Eriugena's death is relevant because it indicates the difference between Augustine's method of theoretical theological psychagogy in *De Trinitate* and Eriugena's in *Periphyseon*. The early monastic communities had adopted Hellenistic rhetorical exercises used by philosophers to further moral development as the base for spiritual formation. This was known as psychagogy, that is guidance of the soul to self-knowledge, a term that seemed to originate in Plato's *Phaedrus* (261a-b, 271d-272a), in a way appropriate to each individual.³⁶⁰ Augustine, as discussed in the previous chapter, uses the rhetorical device of paralipsis in his approach in *De Trinitate*, where in the discussion of a contentious subject you do not give your listeners/readers any cause to disagree with you but gradually manoeuvre them to a conclusion for which you had subtly prepared them from the beginning. (This is why he was so annoyed when his work was circulated before he had finished it, piecemeal and out of order.) This contrasts with the more harrowing personal account of the experience of the use of *ars memorativa* in the course of his own conversion in *Confessions*.³⁶¹ Whatever the rhetorical approach, the aim is the same. Pierre Hadot notes the influence on Augustine of the third century neo-Platonist Plotinus, who

360 See Geoffrey Sterling, 'Hellenistic Moral Philosophy and the New Testament', *Dictionary of Biblical Criticism and Interpretation*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (London: Routledge, 2009) pp. 151- 156, for an overview of its development by philosophers including Philo Judaeus (c. 20 BC to c.50.AD) and Cicero and its use in New Testament writings. He notes that psychagogy spans multiple traditions within both Hellenistic philosophy, first century Judaism and early Christianity and that “on a more sophisticated level, it probably controlled the ways in which Paul related to his churches.” p. 153

361 Augustine's *Confessions* (VIII.vii-xii.19-30) gives a clear example of how an integral part of the *ars memorativa*, the *imago agens*, contributes to spiritual development. Augustine tells of his conversion experience in a garden in Milan, where he had gone to teach and to further his studies in rhetoric, inspired as a nineteen year old by reading Cicero's *Hortensius* while at the same time being drawn further and further to the teaching of Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan. As he reads the book of the apostle with his friend Alypius he experiences the anguish of *affectus*, struggling with his will to withstand any further commitment - and the life changes that would entail - to God. He reads the psalms and he goes into his *ars memorativa* to bring up the figure of Lady Continence and an accompanying group of attendant *imagines agentes* set in the *locus* that he has created and recalling and examining everything needed to enable him to address the problem of his conflicted will and the spiritual dilemma into which this puts him. Then he hears a child's voice calling “*tolle, lege*”, take up and read. *Lege* is a further instance of paronomasia used as emphasis since *lege* can mean both read and pick up. He picks up and reads St Paul's Romans 13:13-14 and finds the resolve he needs.

This account of his conversion has been the subject of much controversy over the past century as his use of Romans reflects the attitude of a maturer Augustine reinterpreting what happened, rather than an accurate account of an event. However, from an *ars memorativa* perspective, this is how it should be, as the point is to hold something tight as its meaning comes increasingly into focus over time. See F. B. A. Asiedu, 'Memory, Truth and Representation at Augustine's Conversion Scene: A Review', *Augustiniana*, Vol. 51, No. 1/2 (2001) pp. 77-104 for an overview of the debate over the last century. See also Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric and the Making of Images*, pp. 175-6

constantly altered the presentation of the same precisely constructed argument according to the needs of the character formation of his students. This was in order to produce “un certain effect psychagogique” in their development.³⁶²

Above all, the work, even if it is apparently theoretical and systematic, is written not so much to inform the reader of a doctrinal content but to form him, to make him traverse a certain itinerary in the course of which he will make spiritual progress. This procedure is clear in the works of Plotinus and Augustine in which all the detours, starts and stops and digressions of the work are formative elements.³⁶³

Eriugena's approach is much more brutal than Augustine's and only possible because he has adopted the structure of a conversation between master and student and can therefore control the emotion aroused, the *affectus*. The *Periphyseon* provides an abundance of such detours, starts, stops and digressions, which has caused consternation in modern readers who are unaware that this is a carefully constructed psychagogical structure. Dermot Moran, for example, finds that Eriugena “is often curiously unresponsive to the demands of his own logic.”³⁶⁴ Wayne Hankey observes that

(C)ertainly Eriugena remained in dialogue with himself in *Periphyseon*, just as he had deepened his understanding of the first principle during his advance toward writing it. Since 2003, we have a complete edition of the text giving significantly differing versions owed to Eriugena himself. It shows he left, not a finished canonical work but a perpetually changing text.³⁶⁵

Hankey, with no knowledge of the concern with soul formation or the *imagines agentes* that flag this up, attributes this to Eriugena finding digressions and reconsiderations irresistible, causing him to alter as he rewrote. Hankey is astute,

362 Pierre Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 2002), p. 68. Hadot is quoting from the life of Plotinus written by his student Porphyry, (*Vita Plotini* 4.11; 5.60).

363 “Surtout l'oeuvre même apparemment théorique et systématique, est écrite, non pas tant pour informer le lecteur au sujet du contenu doctrinal, que pour le former, en lui faisant parcourir un certain itinéraire au cours duquel il a progresser spirituellement. Ce procédé est évident chez Plotin et chez Augustin.” Pierre Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*, p.278 trans. by Michael Chase in Peter M. Candler Jr., *Theology, Rhetoric, Manuduction*, (London: SCM Press, 2006), p. 37

364 Dermot Moran *The Philosophy of John Scottus:Eriugena: A Study of Idealism in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 226

365 Wayne J. Hankey, “John Scottus Eriugena” *ibid* p. 8

however, in realising that something more structured is going on and suggests that it is almost as if the pupil is Eriugena's younger, Latin-educated self before he advanced in his Greek philosophical reading.³⁶⁶ He is, in a way, talking to himself. As discussed earlier, it was Aristotle who took the *ars memorativa* from rhetoric into dialectic because contemplation could be regarded as a form of dialogue, in that one was in discussion with oneself. (Early texts of *Periphyseon* have the Nutritor instructing the Alumnus. William of Malmesbury, who brought a codex of *Periphyseon* from France to his renowned library at Malmesbury Abbey in the early twelfth century, turned this into the Magister addressing the Discipulus and Migne follows this designation in the *Patrologia Latina*.)

Eriugena assails his student with the full force of his intellect and extensive knowledge of Latin and Greek philosophy and theology in the classical philosophical manner of formation that derived ultimately from Aristotle via Cicero. Like Aristotle he seeks to enlighten by demonstration rather than descriptive pedagogy. Edward Booth describes Aristotle's use of this approach to ethical formation through the theoretical arguments about aporia, translating these latter as statements of insoluble difficulties. The chief of these aporia for Aristotle, described in his *Metaphysics*, is how particular instances of a universal are related to that universal and to each other as particulars. In similar view one of Eriugena's main questions is how creation is at once eternal and made. (Booth is tracing the attempts to solve this aporia by Christian and Islamic theologians culminating in the works of the Dominicans Albertus Magnus and his pupil Thomas Aquinas. The illumination structure of the Luttrell Master is taken from Aquinas's Commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Book 12, Lesson 12.)

At first sight the acknowledged and unacknowledged aporias seem to be nothing but a statement of insoluble difficulties; but this is not the whole case: the aporias are artfully exposed so that the reader may be led by them into ontology, or epistemology, itself. To appreciate the aporia from within is a mark of competence; like an initiate he then perceives what kind of problem the philosopher again and again attempts to resolve, what limits the factors that refuse to come together, their area of operation and their area of independence; and what kind of a partial answer is temporarily tolerable.³⁶⁷

366 Ibid

367 Edward Booth, *Aristotelian Aporetic Ontology in Islamic and Christian Thinkers* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, reprint 2008), p 2

Cicero was the main channel of this method of challenging, testing but ultimately resisting closure from the classical philosophic community to the monastic community. Cicero uses the classical rhetorical phrase *mihi videtur* in his work to signal when he is using this method, for example to start the discussion of fundamental principles in *De Inventione*.³⁶⁸ Augustine, it will be remembered, had *De Inventione* bound into the front of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, so that the *Rhetorica* became known as the second part of Cicero's *De Inventione*. Eriugena uses this signal *mihi videtur* at the very beginning of *Periphyseon* (442A) and in numerous variations within the first five columns, when, having introduced his *imago agens*, he proceeds to a summary of how various philosophers and theologians have interpreted the way of being. Robin Weiss traces the connection between the methods of Aristotle and Cicero, which results from Cicero's interest in Stoicism.

...the old Socratic method of speaking against the opinion of another (as a means of discovering truth). For it is a characteristic of the Academy to put forward no judgements of its own but to test those that seem most similar to the truth, to compare arguments; to draw forth all that may be said on behalf of any opinion; and without asserting any authority of its own, leave the judgement of the auditor whole and free. Cicero, therefore, endorses no doctrine straightforwardly but writes dialogues in which [the same] doctrines are both defended and attacked.³⁶⁹

It is from this philosophical use of rhetoric, creating a journey, a *ductus* and yet never reaching the *skopos* but reaching a place that is “temporarily tolerable” that monastic spiritual discipline is derived.³⁷⁰ The *imago agens* in monastic use takes on a more developed role. It allows for the assimilation in some way of complex theoretic

368 For example in *De Inventione* I,II 3 and I,IV 5, which Augustine had bound into the front of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and *Topica* II, II 6

369 Robin Weiss, “The Stoics and the practical: a Roman reply to Aristotle” (2013). *College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Theses and Dissertations*. 143 <https://via.library.depaul.edu/etd/143> p. v. Also Appendix One: 'Historical Evidence for the Relationship Between Aristotle, Cicero and the Stoics', pp. 213-217

370 See P. Rabbow, *Seelenführung: Methode der Exerziten in der Antike* (München: Koesel, 1954), pp. 55-90 for an account of how monastic meditation as spiritual formation was inspired by the methods of classical rhetoric. Intensity of concentration was enhanced by typical rhetorical techniques of step-by-step comparison, amplification by division of a theme and contrast to highlight both differences and similarities. He points out that spiritual exercises are very much in the oral tradition and often occurred out loud, so that one seemed to be speaking to oneself. Memory within spiritual exercises is rooted in magic/religious shamanic practices of breathing exercises and memory retrieval as described in E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), pp. 135 – 178.

and systematic theology but then mediates between this theology and the personal life of religious practice to deepen and reinforce that life. Cicero notes that the *imago agens* is of particular value when you have to commit to memory what is temporarily tolerable - “things not seen and not lying in the field of visual discernment are earmarked by a sort of outline and image and shape so that we can keep hold of as it were by an act of sight things that we can scarcely embrace by an act of thought.” Augustine (*DeTr* 15.27.50) expresses this as “you, too, hast been able [to discern this], although you have not been, neither art, able to unfold with adequate speech what, amidst the clouds of bodily likenesses, which cease not to flit up and down before human thoughts, you have scarcely seen.” As discussed in the last chapter, Augustine, in *De Trinitate*, lays great stress on the enrichment of the communal life of liturgy, study and charity, the extended part of the *imago agens* in its monastic setting.

Mary Carruthers notes that theologians using this method seem to work by deliberate oversight, for example by not giving pertinent biblical references and thus undermining the confidence and preconceived notions of the initiate to encourage a genuine fresh engagement with the material under discussion.³⁷¹ From the point of view of memory studies the method is one of shaking the initiate out of their comfort zone and leaving them there. Gregory, instructs his student Peter on his *Life of St Benedict* by “giving him the farthest-out, the most obscure, link of a chain that should lead him to the far more important, central matter” and Peter of Celle refers to “literary puzzle-solving that can lead to ethical good.”³⁷² Eriugena is very much in this school of hard intellectual challenge and his student suffers for it.

The initial emotional astonishment, *affectus*, of the student at hearing that the fourth *differentia* is its inability to be is, is only the first of many of such instances engineered by Eriugena in *Periphyseon*. For example in the first book the student starts to get tetchy, protesting “that is a ridiculous question”, by the middle of the text, book three, he announces “I am completely amazed and virtually paralyzed in thought” and a little further on “I was dumbfounded by the difficulty of the subject and by speculation about matters still unknown to me; and so I was lifted outside myself”.³⁷³

371 Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric and the Making of Images 400-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, this ed 2008), p. 195

372 Ibid

373 Translation Uhlfeder, p. 54, p. 157 and p. 175

This being lifted out of oneself is the effect that the spiritual guide is trying to achieve through the discussion of systematic theology.

A closer examination of the middle of the text in book 3 will show firstly how Eriugena breaks down his student's over-confidence and then rebuilds it. Secondly, it will show how during this same lengthy discussion, Eriugena creates another *imago agens* again based on paronomasia but this time allusive paronomasia, alluding to words of Augustine that Augustine himself used as a paronomasia from one of his own works. The *imago agens* is functioning as a bridge between the layer of spiritual exercises and the theoretical text. Such images gave shape to the rhetorical presentation of theoretical material and then remained within the memory of the hearer/reader to become part of their private meditation.

Firstly, Eriugena relies heavily on *affectus* in this part of his discussion, the main theme of which he proposes is “how everything is at once eternal and made”.³⁷⁴ He really is giving him the farthest link here, if not downright giving him false direction because the goal of the discussion is for the student to realise that actually he should not be asking *quomodo*, how but why they are said to be at once made and eternal. In the course of their discussion just previously on the nothingness of God the student had become well and truly lost: “I feel myself envelopped by the dark mists of my reflections. In such matters I have nothing left except faith handed down by the authority of the holy fathers. When I try to reach a clear state of understanding about these matters to which I cling by faith alone, I am thrust back, struck by the extreme dimness, or rather blinded by the excessive blindness of the subtle reasons which elude me.” A little later, “Don't you see that I have reason to be agitated and lashed, as it were, by the opposing waves of different thoughts.” At this point Eriugena narrows the discussion down to the main theme, the student having started to realize that in some way the temper of his faith is the bedrock on which reason will build theoretical understanding. “I should think that these very finespun investigations would not be so clear to the inner eyes even of those closer to perfection than I am”.

After a long discussion the student is still not convinced. “I do not regard it as reasonable for the made to be eternal and the eternal made. In fact, there will seem to

374PPIII 638 C *quomodo omnia simul et aeterna et facta sunt*

be no difference between creation and the eternity of the universe in the Word if eternity is created and creation eternal". Eriugena's reply is sharp. "I am amazed and deeply disturbed that you are looking for reason in what lacks all reason, or understanding in what surpasses all understanding. Surely you do not believe that the plan of the Divine Wisdom can become manifest to intellects, either of men or of angels." At this point in the discussion Eriugena introduces the *imago agens*, based on allusive paronomasia, (discussed below). For the spiritual development layer this exchange ends shortly afterwards with the student affirming that he is "not seeking a rational explanation about the creation of the universe in the Word and about its eternity" but to ask "not how they are eternal and made but why they are said to be both made and eternal". He has worked his way round to the correct response to this theme, which is not to question 'how' but to address the question of 'why'. Eriugena then directs him to the creation narrative in the first three chapters of Genesis for the next stage of their discussion.

Eriugena has been deploying *affectus* as part of his spiritual formation strategy. He has also introduced an *imago agens* for the student to use in his memory work. The student at this point is engaged in *intentio*. This is the second part of creating or adopting an *imago agens* and refers to your intention towards it, in the sense of how did you experience the moment of creating it. This experience will be coloured by one's attitude, which is itself a complex mix of character, teaching, spiritual development, religious and ethical practice and the direction of one's spiritual aims. The emotion of the experience triggers the choice of where to store the memory it goes with in a suitable and useful place and subsequently to pursue the process of comparing and combining it perhaps with other memories already stored. This can result in reducing multiple images to one, perhaps or in expanding one image into more in order to refine storage. It is this latter action that takes an active memory from rhetoric into dialectic, just as its use in theoretical discourse was taken from rhetoric into dialectic by Aristotle. Cicero compared *intentio* to the tuning of a string – if the string is properly attuned than the subsequent plucking will resonate in a way that both produces harmony and can sound alongside other strings. He was impressed with the description of the Greek philosopher and musician Aristoxenus of Tarentum that the soul is a special tuning up of the natural body.³⁷⁵ This tuning was taken up within

375Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* I.10 “ *musicus idemque philosophus, ipsius corporis intentionem*

monastic spiritual exercises as being attuned to love. Augustine takes from Cicero this idea of *intentio* as attitude that involves motion. This attitude, from a Christian point of view must be that of love. He pronounces in *De Doctrina Christiana* that this love is “a movement of the mind toward fruitfully enjoying God for His own sake and self and my neighbour for God's sake.”³⁷⁶ Doctrine and *intentio* are interwoven.

'*Intentio*' is, like opposition, another technical term in the *ars memorativa*. Eriugena uses this and other *ars memorativa* terms again at the beginning of Book 2 (*PP* II 523D-528A) when he is summarizing his fourfold division in the introduction. He also uses the *ars memorativa* terms *contemplatio*, *theoria*, *consideratio* and *habitus*. If one leaves the *ars memorativa* and its attendant *imagines agentes* and practice out of the equation, the reading of Eriugena's work proceeds quite differently. In an essay seeking to place Eriugena in the idealist tradition, Stephen Gersh cites these terms as evidence of “overt idealistic features” that contribute to an understanding of the possibility of Eriugena “constituting reality through intellection”.³⁷⁷ Eriugena's relationship to what was later known as idealism, in various forms, is certainly a valid field of study but all these words refer to an emotional response that comes initially via the senses, emotion being an affect of the natural body and a response, albeit inevitably coloured by an individual's background, to reality, not a constitution of reality.

Secondly, the *imago agens* based on allusive paronomasia that Eriugena uses in this middle section is *simul et semel et semper*, simultaneous, once and always.

Their eternity was created and their creation is eternal in the dispensation of the Word. All things which are seen to arise in the order of the ages in times and places through generation were made eternally at once and together in God's Word. (*simul et semel in Verbo Domini facta sunt*) For we must not believe that they have just begun to be made at the time when

quandam, velut in cantu et fidibus quae harmonia dicitur, sic ex corporis totius natura et figura varios motus cieri tamquam in cantu sonos.”

376 *De doc chr* III.x16 “*Caritatem voco motum animi ad fruendum deo propter ipsum et se atque proximo propter deum.*”

Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 281 n. 21 notes Cicero's use of *motus animi* in *De Oratore* III.57 with regard to emotive rhetorical *intentio*.

377 Stephen Gersh, 'Eriugena's Fourfold Contemplation', in *Eriugena, Berkeley and the Idealist Tradition*, ed. Stephen Gersh and Dermot Moran (Notre Dame; University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), p. 154

they are seen arising in the world. (*semper enim fuerunt in Verbo Domini substantialiter*).³⁷⁸

It is deliberately allusive - but not a quote – because he has taken it from Augustine's *Confessionum* and uses it to remain anchored in Augustine's authority while he further develops his own ideas. Augustine says,

Will you say that these things are false, which, with a strong voice, Truth tells me in my inner ear, concerning the very eternity of the Creator, that his substance is in no wise changed by time, nor that His will is separate from his substance? Wherefore, he wills not one thing now, another anon, but once and for ever (*sed semel et simul et semper*) He wills all things that He wills; not again and again, nor now this, now that; nor wills afterwards what He wills not before, nor wills not what before He willed. Because such a will is mutable and no mutable thing is eternal; but our God is eternal. Likewise He tells me, tells me in my inner ear, that the expectation of future things is turned to sight when they have come; and this same sight is turned to memory when they have passed. Moreover, all thought which is thus varied is mutable, and nothing mutable is eternal; but our God is eternal. These things I sum up and put together and I find that my God, the eternal God, has not made any creature by any new will, nor that His knowledge suffers anything transitory.³⁷⁹

Augustine himself is making an allusion when he speaks of simultaneousness to an earlier writing where he talks of the simultaneousness of the creation of all things by God in Genesis 1-3, *De Genesi ad litteram*.³⁸⁰ This latter is what Eriugena is particularly interested in flagging up through this double allusion because the crux of

378 PP3 669B translated by Uhlfeder, p. 185

379 Augustine, *Confessionum* Book 12 15.18

Num dicetis falsa esse, quae mihi veritas voce forti in aurem interiorem dicit de vera aeternitate creatoris, quod nequaquam eius substantia per tempora varietur nec eius voluntas extra eius substantiam sit? Unde non eum modo velle hoc modo velle illud, sed semel et simul et semper velle omnia quae vult, non iterum, neque nunc ista nunc illa, nec velle postea quod nolebat aut nolle quod volebat prius, quia talis voluntas mutabilis est et omne mutabile aeternum non est: deus autem noster aeternus est, item quod mihi dicit in aurem interiorem, expectatio rerum venturarum fit contuitus, cum venerit, idemque contuitus fit memoria, cum praeterierint, omnis porro intentio quae ita variatur mutabilis est, et omne mutabile aeternum non est: deus autem noster aeternus est, haec conligo atque coniungo, et invenio deum meum, deum aeternum, non aliqua nova voluntate condidisse creaturam nec scientiam eius transitorium aliquid pati.

380 Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* VI.10.17

Sed haec aliter in verbo Dei, ubi isti non facta sed aeterna sunt, aliter in elementis mundi, ubi omnia simul facta futura sunt, aliter in rebus, quae secundum causas simul creatas non iam simul, sua quaequae tempore creantur; in quibus Adam iam formatus ex limo et Dei flatu animatus, sicut fenum exortum, aliter in seminibus, in quibus rurus quasi primordiales causae repentuntur de rebus ductae, quae secundum causas, quas primum condidit, exstiterunt, velut herba ex terra, semen ex terra.

his argument is that creation is not only created simultaneously by but is simultaneous with God. Eternally created and made is not restricted to one or the other, just as the peacock feather is not either green or blue. That one seems to see it as either green or blue or even another colour is merely a question of light not substance.

These are the two main components of the use of the *ars memorativa* in spiritual discipline, the *imago agens* as visual and aural letter pattern and the *intentio* and this discussion has shown that it was in the latter that the student particularly needed an expert guide. The student now never doubts the links between memory and the divine, equating the *phantasiae* that enter the memory with theophanies, “for we can be sure that anything from the nature of things formed in the memory has its occasions in God”.³⁸¹ The role of *intentio* determines the final use of those memories. At the end, however the *differentiae* are understood, the same palette of vowels and consonants remain, nothing is added, nothing taken away. In the same way nothing is added or taken away, at the end, from the spiritual bodies of the just and unjust. Eriugena uses a particularly mellifluous example of paronomasia to illustrate this.

*Semper erit humana natura: utrisque erit similis corporum spiritualitas ablata omni animalitate, similis incorruptibilitas subtracta omni corruptione, similis naturae gloria, quando auferetur omnis contumelia, similis essentia, similis aeternitas.*³⁸²

What will happen then, after the final judgement? Some will still refuse to align their *intentio* with God, as it were, and will persist in a perverse free will that will allow their memories to torture them with things that are forever unattainable.³⁸³ If one looks back at the earlier description by Cassian of an unordered memory as fornication, a sin against faithfulness to God, this original idea of Eriugena is seen to be rooted in monastic practice. Others will submit gratefully to this tuning and will be in bliss. The modern idea of memory has wandered far from the medieval.

The Beatitude “Blessed are the pure in heart, *beati mundo corde*, for they shall see God” had a paronomasic meaning because heart was a synonym for memory,

381 Trans, Uhlfeder, p. 175 PPIII 662 *omne enim, quod ex natura memoria formatur, occasiones ex*

Deo est dubitandum

382 PPV 946A

383 PPV 935D-936A

leaving the linguistic link between to record and to remember. Those who would enjoy the beatific vision were the pure of memory.

The very last columns of *Periphyseon* (PPV 1010B-1022B) bear striking similarities with the end of Chapter 15 of Augustine's *De Trinitate*, in structure and vocabulary. There is an appeal to the Lord Jesus by the student that he might understand the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and for a spiritual banquet of true knowledge. It is acknowledged that understanding is only truly advanced by understanding why one cannot understand. The student says that he and Eriugena must therefore move on in their discussions and not fill them with words rather than understanding. There is again the appeal to an ordered memory. St Paul's phrase, "now we see in a glass darkly" is repeated but this time introduced by a verse from St John "If we say that we have no sin we are deceiving ourselves and there is no truth in us." (1 John 1:8), thus linking understanding with spiritual life. Eriugena punctuates with a question mark the big question of what will be at the end, when God will be all things in all things, the phrase itself taken from the end of Augustine's *De Trinitate*. At the very end Eriugena acknowledges his method is that of the *ars memorativa* as, faithful to Augustine's directions he has engaged in *ductus*, weaving around the points set up by the four differentiations of his *imago agens*, in the depth of the night – *meae contemplationis obtusae lucubrationibus*³⁸⁴ – the results of which he offers up for the engagement of others. Even when his 217,450 words are burnt in Paris following condemnation for heresy the *imagines agentes* produced in these cogitations are easily passed down through the generations in the monastic scriptoria.³⁸⁵

Eriugena's theology cast in gold

Boulnois has what amounts to a gut-feeling that there must be a link between Eriugena's theology of dissimilarity (see beginning of chapter) and the monstrous

384 PP5 1022C

385 The *Periphyseon* had previously been condemned in 1050, 1059 and after 1210 it disappears from university records. By 1225 it is recorded as having been condemned in 1210. The main focus of the 1210 condemnation was the Cathar Almaric of Bena and ten of his followers. Prior to this Eriugena's thought had seemed to be regarded as strange but not dangerous but now he was held to have influenced Almaric with regard to the doctrines that all things are God, the primordial causes create and are created and at the end of the world there will be no distinction of the sexes and so considered pernicious. See Stephen Lakey, 'Eriugena's Condemnation and His Idealism', *A Companion to John Scottus Eriugena* (Leiden; Brill, 2019), pp. 447-448; Uhlfeder, p. xxiii

hybrid figures with which scribes have decorated the margins of medieval manuscripts but does not consider it possible to prove it. He holds it evident, though, that such figures have both an archaeological and an eschatological dimension.³⁸⁶ His interest is the influence that the seemingly monstrous dissimilarity of Scripture, Isaiah 6 in particular (see beginning of chapter), had, not only on theological debate but also on design, reflected in the monstrous figures of illuminated manuscripts.

The first tentative step in this link can, however, be made if Eriugena's theology can be shown to have entered the monastic scriptoria, not only through through calligraphy but also through visual design. The idiosyncratic and distinctive nature of much of his theology enables his name to be put to the design of one such tangible object created in Laon at the time he was court theologian. This shows the influence of his theory of a theophanic hierarchy based on individuality rather than rank, where each soul has its own experience of beatitude at the level that was appropriate to it. Each soul was tuned, as it were, to the *intentio* that it had achieved and would be in harmony with but not necessarily homogenous with all the other souls. Another was the simultaneousness of everything in his four differentiations of nature, the *simul, semel et semper* which carried with it a lack of motion because God is motionless, motion in circle, sphere or even straight line are not relevant with reference to him.³⁸⁷

The introduction of Eriugena's theology to the monastic culture of manuscript illumination is witnessed to in very tangible form in the three dimensional gold and jewelled cover that eventually became attached to the gospels which, by the seventeenth century, had come into the possession of the monastery at Lindau. (Figs. 11 and 12) This cover had been created originally at some point between AD 860 and 880 during Eriugena's time in the Carolingian court at Laon.³⁸⁸ Eriugena's use of imagery in *Periphyseon*, drawn from accurate observation of architecture,

386 Boulnois, *Au delà de l'image*, p. 171. “Et sans qu'il soit possible d'établir un lien entre la théologie savante de Jean Scot et la pratique silencieuse des artisans du Moyen Âge, on trouve en cette-là, par avance, le meilleur commentaire des figures monstrueuses de l'art roman.....le symbole a une dimension archéologique et eschatologique.”

387 PP1 523A-B *Moveri enim ipsum pie arbitrandum, non secundum delationem, aut alienationem, aut alternationem, aut conversionem, aut localem motum, non rectum, non circulariter ferentem, non ex ambobus, non intelligibilem, non amabilem, non naturalem.*

388MS M.1 Lindau Gospels, New York Pierpont Morgan Library

See Jeanne-Marie Musto, 'John Scottus Eriugena and the Upper Cover of the Lindau Gospels', *Gesta*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2001), pp. 1-18 pub by The University of Chicago Press for the International Center of Medieval Art <http://www.jstor.org/stable/767192> [accessed 3 October 2017] for the art historical context of this depiction.

goldsmithing and fine craftsmanship is of a piece with the value he placed on art as a part of the whole realm of human creation that is a positive contribution to the understanding of the divine, as discussed above. This cover consists of a central gold repoussé panel depicting the crucifixion pose (ie there is no visible cross), with Christ portrayed in the typical Carolingian style of the time. He is still, triumphant, peaceful and calm with his arms thrown wide, with the loin cloth tied in the centre. He is symmetrical, apart from his head turned a little to the right but held firm and upright. (In later renditions of the crucifixion Christ's head sinks to one side, the body is contorted and the ribs very visible, the loin cloth tied to the side with the drapery reflecting the contortion.) Under each nail mark in the hands of Christ hangs a bunch of grapes, referring to theological debate at the time about whether the blood received in the form of wine in the Eucharist was that of the crucified Christ or that of the risen Christ. There is no movement or emotion but because the arms are a little longer than normal perspective there is a sense of dominance over the whole cover. It is in the four panels around the Crucifixion that the goldsmith has incorporated elements that have no parallel elsewhere (Musto refers to these as 'iconographical enigmas'³⁸⁹) and it is these that are taken from *Periphyseon*. These panels are separated by a border of gemstones from the central gold panel but connected to it by marker stones of sapphire and pearl that draw the eye from them to the glorification of Christ. These gold elements are then in turn surrounded by hundreds of symmetrically arranged gemstones. The two upper panels each depict a seraphim and a cherubim, arranged so that their horizontal bodies form semi circles in flight above and below heavily jewelled clouds of pearl and sapphire. The seraphim are closest to Christ, remembering the injunction that they should be an intermediary between the cherubim and the Lord but all face inwards towards Christ. The two lower panels depict the traditional figures around the cross according to John's gospel (John 19:25-27), John, the beloved disciple, Mary, mother of Jesus, Mary, wife of Clopas and Mary of Magdala. The figures are not standing on the ground, however, but mirror the bodies of the angels, floating with their bodies forming horizontal semi-circles above and below jewelled clouds. John and Mary are above the clouds, looking directly at Jesus, while the two Marys are below, their bodies directed towards Christ but looking upwards at the figures of Mary and John above them, rather than directly at Christ. John was the theologian *par excellence* for Eriugena, a tradition he inherited from the Irish church

389 Ibid, p. 4

that in turn had inherited it from St Augustine. Eriugena considered that John, having left behind all reason and understanding would fly directly to God and bring back an account of the God-Word in the God that speaks and of the Holy Spirit in both, that is the Trinity.³⁹⁰ The Irish monastic tonsure was called St John's tonsure. John was an example of those who will have the closest possible vision of God, themselves 'theophanies of theophanies', as it were, although God is always only partially visible amongst the clouds of speculation. After his paronomastic description of the bodies of the just and unjust cited earlier Eriugena goes on to describe how each will find its own place.

But the others, who do not attain the power of pure contemplation, gain possession of the lower orders, whether in theophanies or in the heights of lower natures. I have spoken of theophanies in the plural, since neither intellectual nor rational natures will contemplate Truth in the same way, but the height of speculation is distributed and defined for each of them proportionally. This the Lord says about the nature of angels and men, which hold the loftiest place in the created universe. We do not make this statement because any creature except the Word in human form can rise above all theophanies and attain to Him "who alone is immortal, whose home is in inaccessible light"; but because some theophanies are so sublime that they are understood to be exalted above all creatures to a very close contemplation of God and are believed to be, as it were, theophanies of theophanies. For God in himself is not wholly visible to any creature, but is seen and will be seen in the clouds of speculation. As the Apostle says: "We shall be taken up in the clouds to meet Christ and so we shall always be with Him."³⁹¹

John and Mary, the mother of Jesus, both participate in this fuller access, each in their own way, while the two Marys have each achieved their individual level of direct insight, fulfilling their individual potential of *intentio*.

The central panel dominates the whole cover, which is quite a feat because the cover is magnificently three-dimensional with hundreds of jewels raised on clawed posts that allow them to float as clouds about the human and angelic figures. The panel draws the eye inwards, in spite of the intricate beauty of the gems and their

390 Migne 288A Eriugena, *Hom IX* 240.2-242.5

Beatus evangelistes divina revelavit misteria, deum verbum videlicet in deo loquente, in ambobus intelligentiam sancti spiritus divinae scripturae contemplatoribus reliquens.

391 Uhlfeder, p. 310 *PP5* 903B-C

Note that another Apostle, Paul, achieves human nature in its original perfection but does not ascend as John does. See Migne 285D *Hom V* 220.1-222.6 *PP5* 980C-D

arrangement and the superb goldsmithing that this itself involves. Christ displays the still magnetism that allows him to be completely unmoving but yet compel movement towards him. This is the magnet to which Eriugena compares the Cause of all things, pulling all things back to it without being in any way affected by what it attracts, not through the exertion of any motion but by the sole power of its beauty.³⁹² There is no motion, circular, spherical or linear in God.

This cover was a tangible witness to Eriugena's theology, preserved because of its extreme financial value and known or known of over generations throughout the monastic scriptoria. However, when it came to portraying the two basic letter paronomasias of Eriugena's construction, the mutual participation of all four differentiations in none of whom anything is added or taken away and the *semel et simul et semper* of these differentiae, the Luttrell Master would create his own image, the dissimilar figure that six centuries later caused so much distress to the twentieth century art critic who was unaware even of the use of the *ars memorativa*.

392 PP1 520B

Sicut ergo lapis ille, qui dicitur magnes quamvis naturali sua virtute ferrum sibimet propinquans ad se attrahat, nullo modo tamen, ut hoc faciat, se ipsum movet, aut a ferro aliquid patitur; quod ad se attrahit: ita rerum omnium causa omnia, quae ex se sunt, ad seipsam reducit, sine ullo sui motu, sed sola suae pulchritudinis virtute.

Chapter Four

The context of the illumination scheme of the Luttrell Master

This chapter firstly highlights the ongoing regard for the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and its continued attribution as the second part of Cicero's *De Inventione* in the academic and spiritual life of the thirteenth and fourteenth century Dominican order, such that it sought to assimilate the *Rhetorica* to the newly-discovered works of Aristotle. It then proceeds to an account of the confusion caused when the various Arabic understandings of 'manan' in their translations of Aristotle were translated into Latin as *intentione*. I suggest that the depiction in the Psalter of the opening *Beatus Vir* might be an occasion where one can pinpoint the Luttrell Master entering contemporary debate, for he conveys Cicero's straightforward explanation of *intentione* as a tuning-up of the soul. The chapter then seeks to bring together the various strands explored in the preceding chapters alongside the actual Psalter illumination. It concludes with an account of the Dominican understanding of memory after death, a death which would be followed by the resurrection of the body and its link to the physical body before death.

Albertus and Aquinas reconcile the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* with Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*

The Dominican theologians Albertus Magnus and his pupil Thomas Aquinas, both also masters of their order, both wrote commentaries on Aristotle's work on memory and recollection, *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*. Both interweave the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* into Aristotle's work. Aquinas introduces his commentary to this work of Aristotle, which was part of group of nine texts forming the *Parva naturalia*, with a brief overview of the relationship between prudence, reason and memory in humankind and between inanimate and animate things.³⁹³ He refers in these opening lines to passages from Aristotle's *On the History of Animals* (8.1:588b), *Ethics* (7.10:1152a), *Metaphysics* (1.1:980b) and *On Sense and Sensible Objects* and, as the only

393 Thomas Aquinas, *In Aristotelis libros, De sensu et sensato, De memoria et reminiscencia commentarium* ed. by Raimondo M. Spazzi (Turin: Marietti, this ed. 1973). *De Memoriam et Reminiscentia* is originally known as the second part of *de sensu et sensato*. This translation by John Burchill O.P., *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, ed. by Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), pp.156-188

non-Aristotelian reference, to Cicero's *Rhetorica*.

Cicero, in his *Rhetoric*, proposes as the parts of prudence not only foresight, by which the future is planned, but also understanding, by which the present is comprehended, and memory by which the past is perceived.³⁹⁴

Aquinas is referring to Cicero's *De Inventione* (2.53), which he knew as the first part of the *Rhetorica*. He then discusses Aristotle's actual work on memory and shortly after returns again to Cicero and his *Rhetorica*, this time the second part, namely *ad Herennium* 3.20.33-37, being keen to explain the need for the *ars memorativa* and to give it the reflected authority of Aristotle. Aristotle states

It is apparent, then, to which part of the soul memory belongs, namely the same part as that to which imagination belongs. And it is the objects of imagination that are remembered in their own right, whereas things that are not grasped without imagination are remembered in virtue of an incidental association.³⁹⁵

Aquinas elaborates this “incidental association” in his commentary to include the *ad Herennium* memory art.

He says that the part of the soul to which memory belongs is clear from what has been said, because it belongs in that part to which imagination belongs, and because the things which are essential objects of memory are those of which we have phantasms, that is, sense objects, while intellectual matters, which are not perceived by man without his imagination, are incidental objects of memory. For this reason we cannot remember well those things which we regard as rarified and spiritual; those objects that are corporeal and perceived by the senses are better objects of memory. It is necessary, if we wish to facilitate remembering abstract ideas, to bind them to particular images, as Cicero teaches in his *Rhetorica*. (*ad Herennium* 3.20.33-37)³⁹⁶

394 Aquinas, *De Mem et Rem* 298 trans. Burchill

Unde Tullius, in sua rhetorica, partes prudentiae ponit non solum providentiam per quam futura disponuntur, sed etiam intelligentiam per quam considerantur praesentia et memoriam per quam apprehenduntur praeterita. corpusthomisticum.org/Sentencia De sensu, tr.21.1 n.1 [accessed 28 November 2021]

395 Aristotle, *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, 450a22 trans. by Richard Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, this ed.2004), p.49

396 Aquinas, *De Mem et Rem* 326 trans. Burchill

Et dicit manifestum esse ex praemissis ad quam partem animae pertineat memoria, quia ad eam, ad quam pertinet phantasia; et quod illa sunt per se memorabilia, quorum est phantasia, scilicet sensibilia; per accidens autem memorabilia sunt intelligibilia, qua sine phantasia non apprehenduntur ab homine. Et inde est quod ea quae habent subtilem et spiritualem

Aquinas sets out his own version of these *ad Herennium* rules when he is discussing Prudence in his *Summa Theologiae* (II-IIae 49.1), the part of his work that became a handbook for Dominican confessors. These images are *imagines agentes*, “ images leading to something else and the starting point of remembering.”³⁹⁷ Albertus, Aquinas's teacher, had introduced the works of Aristotle to the university curriculum and, as is seen in his commentary on Aristotle (below), studied the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* closely. Under Aquinas the Dominicans established an academic platform for Cicero's memory work that led to the establishment of a memory centre in Pisa university. Any study of a psalter that is connected to a Dominican must therefore take into account the influence of Aristotle and Cicero with regard to the relationship between memory and image formation.

Intentione and the Beatus vir

The present day discussion of *intentione* has become clouded because when the works of Aristotle were reintroduced into the Latin West from the writings of Arabic philosophers, the Arabic word 'manan' was translated as *intentione*. 'Manan' was not used in the same way in Arabic as *intentione* was in the *ars memorativa*. For Averroes the word 'manan', that is translated into Latin as *intentione*, means primarily an object of memory and it also has a broader use as the abstracted content of sensory, imaginative or intelligible forms.³⁹⁸ For Avicenna *intentione* can refer variously to concept, meaning of a word, something intelligible by the intellect or perceptible through estimation (one of the areas of the brain that processes sensory input) as opposed to directly from the external senses. The 'maani' become such when they are used in attaining knowledge. He distinguishes between forms and intentions.

A form is that which...an external sense first apprehends and then gives to an internal sense

considerationem, minus possumus memorari. Magis autem sunt memorabilia quae sunt grossa et sensibilia. Et oportet, si aliquas intelligibiles rationes volumus memorari facilius, quod eas alligemus quasi quibusdam aliis phantasmatis, ut docet Tullius in sua rhetorica.
corpusthomicum.org/Sentencia De sensu, tr. 2l. 2 n. 16 [accessed 28 November 2021]

397 Aquinas, *De Mem et Rem* 340 trans. Burchill

imago in aliud ducens, et principium memorandi corpusthomicum.org/Sentencia De sensu, tr. 2l. 3 n. 14 [accessed 28 November 2021]

398 See Deborah Black, 'Memory, Individuals, and the Past in Averroes's Psychology', p. 166 *Medieval Philosophy and Theology*, Vol. 5 (2), September 1996 pp. 161-187

<https://doi.org/10.5840/medievalpt1996527> [accessed 3 March 2021]

– for example, when a sheep apprehends the form of a wolf: its shape, condition and color (sic). An intention is that which the soul apprehends of the sensible, even though the external sense has not previously apprehended it – for example, when a sheep apprehends the intention that it has of the wolf: that it ought to fear it and flee from it – even though its senses do not in any way apprehend this.³⁹⁹

In their respective commentaries on Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia* Albert and Aquinas have to deal with this linguistic confusion when Aristotle poses one of his major themes as an *aporia*.

One might be puzzled how, when the affection is present but the thing is absent, what is not present is ever remembered. For it is clear that one must think of the affection, which is produced by means of perception in the soul, as being like a sort of picture, the having of which we say is memory.⁴⁰⁰

Albert turns to Averroes and Aquinas to Avicenna but both find the process rather tortuous. Aristotle does not solve this puzzle as such. As noted in the chapter on the discussion of the roots of philosophical spiritual exercises in Aristotle's *aporia*, the point is not to solve the *aporia* but to work out “what kind of partial answer is temporarily tolerable”.⁴⁰¹ It is relevant to note briefly at this stage how the works of Aristotle arrived at the scholastic curriculum, namely “through Greek commentary, Arabic commentary and systematisation, Christian commentary and systematisation; and, in addition, syncretism with inherited Platonism and then both theological and philosophical exploitation.”⁴⁰² The medieval university *Quaestiones* method, therefore, is not in direct descent from the *aporia* tradition. Some consider the university method an attempt to put Aristotelian dialectic into practice, others contend that the *quaestio* was in practice before the rediscovery of Aristotle from the Latin translations of Arabic translations from the Greek of his works from around 1140 onwards.⁴⁰³ From an *ars memorativa* vantage point this is not an issue, as Aristotle himself had extended the use of the art from rhetoric into dialectic and the art had been

399Avicenna, *De anima* I.5 ed. S. van Riet, *Liber de anima sue Sextus de naturalibus* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), p. 86

400Aristotle, *De Memoria et Reminiscentia* 450b25

401Booth, *Aristotelian Aporetic Ontology in Islamic and Christian Thinkers*, p. 2

402Booth, p.x

403Bauerschmidt, p. 4

in ongoing use before and after Aristotle. The use of the art is definitely attested to in the university quodlibetal questions system where the master had to answer any question thrown at him from the audience, whether on complex abstract questions concerning the nature of God or practical pastoral concerns - “performing without a net”.⁴⁰⁴ This was not possible without the ongoing practice of the *ars memorativa*.

Aristotle gives the partial answer that is temporarily tolerable to his *aporia* by not answering how exactly anything is ever remembered but by noting instead when this happens and opening a philosophical gap between direct and remembered images.

This happens when one changes from contemplating the image as the thing that it is to contemplating it as being of something else.⁴⁰⁵

He then continues by recommending that one be assiduous in practising the memory art.

Exercises safeguard memory by reminding one. And this is nothing other than contemplating something frequently as a copy and not as a thing in its own right.⁴⁰⁶

Albertus follows Aristotle closely in his commentary on this passage.⁴⁰⁷ However, instead of following Aristotle to address the first main topic of chapter 2 he digresses, to cover the same theme according to the opinion of the peripatetic and Arab interpreters, listing Averroës, Avicenna, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius and Alfarabi. Albertus seems to be following Averroës rather than Avicenna. Averroës

404Bauerschmidt, p. 13

405Aristotle, *De Memoria et Reminiscentia* 451a5

406Aristotle, *De Memoria et Reminiscentia* 451a12

407 Albertus Magnus, *Liber de memoria et reminiscencia*, trans. by Jan M. Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory*

Albertus's main concern in his commentary on this passage seems to be how a memory image is differentiated from physically seeing the object again and how all these images are related if one never sees the object again but starts each reflection from the memory. This would have been of concern to those seeking a philosophical appraisal of the *ars memorativa*, especially as the *imago agens* is specifically designed to allow an ongoing reappraisal and ensuing change of what is stored in memory. He questions whether the rational consideration of something that starts from a mental image is triggered by that mental image or by what was perceived that gave rise to the image in the first place – is such an activity memory or not. His 'solution' is also to turn to the *ars memorativa*. “The proof of the statements that have been made is that acts of meditation make the memory healthy. To meditate is nothing other than to reflect repeatedly upon the same thing as an image of the past thing and not in itself. Therefore memory begins from that which is in itself like an image and it does not begin in and of itself.” 106, p. 136

uses the same word 'manan', that is translated into Latin as *intentione*, as primarily an object of memory, that is to say as being of images. “They were not objects of perception on the same level as images (or sensory forms) but something like the meaning that an image has for the perceiver”.⁴⁰⁸ Albertus links this straightaway into the paraphernalia of the *ars memorativa* - memorable characteristics of *imagines agentes*, place and conditions of memorization and it is possible that he is taking linguistic advantage to kill two birds with one stone, as it were.

The third is what the Arabs call the power of discernment, which involves assembling all these steps and attaching characteristics to the object by all possible means; as by likeness, opposition, place, time, and so forth, so that what has fallen into oblivion may be drawn out according to intention, as we will show below.⁴⁰⁹

'Drawn out according to intention' means both according to the meaning that the image has for the perceiver and according to the way that he has tuned his soul so that he can store and then retrieve the memory object. Both are related – to avoid the fornication of idle curiosity the image attached to the *imago agens* must be part of a considered, curated memory scheme. (Albertus was aware that vocabulary was proving a problem. Earlier in his discussion of Aristotle's *aporia* he suggests a new word, *imitago*, to distinguish between memory images that reside firmly in the soul and those that need to be triggered by some property in the object itself, though he does not seem to use it elsewhere.⁴¹⁰) What he “shows below” is how he himself turns to *ars memorativa* techniques given in Tully's second Rhetoric (the scholastic designation of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*) (3.19.32)⁴¹¹. In this digression he comes to the same conclusion, by means of a consideration of Arabic commentators, giving the preference to Averroes, as he did after his preceding close reading of Aristotle.

Aquinas brings Avicenna directly into his commentary on Aristotle's text in order to show how being in the past is a condition that leads to the acquisition of knowledge, one of the key justifications for an ongoing memory scheme.

408Dag Nikolaus Hasse, 'The soul's faculties', *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, vol.1 p. 315 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2014 [revised ed.])

409Albertus Magnus, *Liber de memoria et reminiscentia*, 107 trans. by Jan M. Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory*, p.137

410Tunc vocatur imago quasi imitago dicta. (105) Albertus Magnus, *Liber de Memoria et Reminiscentia*, p.57 in *Ratisbonensis Episcopi Ordinis Praedicatorum Parva Naturalia* vol. 5 Jammy-volumen 05(1) PDF) [accessed 5 May 2021]

411Albertus, 108 referring to *Rhetorica ad Herennium* III.xix 32

Therefore, it is evident that when the soul turns itself toward the phantasm, insofar as it is a particular form retained in the sensitive part there is in this an activity of the imagination or the fantasy, even when the intellect considers it in the abstract. If, however, the soul turns to it as an image of what we previously heard or understood, it relates to an activity of remembering. Therefore, because its being a phantom implies that it signals a particular response (*intentio*) with respect to its form, Avicenna aptly says that memory looks to the response, imagination the form perceived by the senses.⁴¹²

Avicenna did not actually say anything about *intentione* being in the past in his distinction between form and intention and this would have been a problem for Aquinas because Aristotle begins his work by saying that memory has to be of the past (449a9). Aquinas later showed how he had solved this in his *Summa Theologiae* I. 78.4c by making the state of being in the past an object for the consideration of *intentione* in itself and furthermore links this in the *Summa* to the fact that heightened emotion at the initial time would make the formation of memories more effective. This is the emotional *affectus* of Simonides' *ars memorativa*, curated by the correct tension of the soul, that allows the memory image to be hooked onto the *imago agens* in the *ars memorativa*. Aquinas, too, less directly than Albert, brings in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* at this point.

The situation is further complicated by *esse intentionale* being seen as the opposite of *esse naturale* to express the difference between the individualised form in real material (*naturale*) and the universal form immaterially in mind (*intentionale*). Anthony Kenny considers Aquinas's contribution to this debate “one of the most interesting contributions ever made to the philosophical problem of the nature of thought.”⁴¹³ He addresses the question of why my having the thought of the nature of a cow does not mean that my mind has the nature of a cow and opens the vast debate of what makes a thought a thought of something and further what makes it my thought? This may seem to be wandering away from the technical use of *intentione* in the *ars*

412 Aquinas, *De Memoria et Reminiscencia* 343

413 Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 80

A related issue is how does one differentiate between all the various kinds of images and the way they represent and the being that they represent. Olivier Boulnois provides an overview of this for scholasticism in the thirteenth and fourteenth century. *Être et représentation: Une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l'époque de Duns Scot (XIIIe-XIVe siècle)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2e tirage 2008)

memorativa but the terrain has been muddied by the various Islamic translations of *intentione*. The Franciscan Roger Bacon kept Avicenna's *intentione* as an element of perception in the present, taking it into optics, as a part of the process of estimating what we see every time we see something, in order to register it, rather than simply seeing it.⁴¹⁴ When the Franciscan theologian Duns Scotus rejected this need for such a step some of his order began to look favourably on the memory scheme constructed in the thirteenth century by Raymond Lull, that was rote memory by step and did not include *intentione*. The irony of this is that Avicenna's *intentione* was not that of Cicero and the Dominicans had rejected Lull's scheme when he brought it to them, for without *intentione* and *imagines agentes* it was merely a way to remember Lull's ideas.⁴¹⁵ *Intentione* was a vital prerequisite for the *ars memorativa* but Aquinas is clear that it is the *imago agens* that ensures knowledge.

Now the reason for the necessity of finding these illustrations or images is that simple and spiritual impressions easily slip from the mind (*quia intentiones simplices et spirituales facilius ex anima elabuntur*) unless they be tied as it were to some corporeal image, because human knowledge has a hold on sensible objects.⁴¹⁶

The Luttrell master takes the classic Ciceronian *ars memorativa* route in his memory scheme. The influence of Cicero on the illumination of the Luttrell psalter can be seen in the decoration within the initial B of the first psalm, known as the *Beatus vir* from its first words. (Fig. 2) This is not a marginal image but a 'straightforward' illuminated initial. The initial page of the first psalm always has something of the glitz of an opening night about it. It is not the first folio, being preceded by the calendar. The calendar in the Luttrell psalter contains the babewyn figure of the student holding his pen as a weapon that leads the memory *ductus* in various directions. This initial B illumination is designed to stress from the outset the importance of *intentione*, which, as was discussed in the chapter on Eriugena, is the attuning of oneself correctly, as a result of the state of mind created when engaged in

414 For Bacon and scholastic perceptual theory please see A. Mark Smith, 'Perception', *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, vol. 1, ed. by Robert Pasnau (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 334-345. For Duns Scotus's objection to perceptual *intentione* see *Ordinatio* III.15 nn. 34-42, tr. By A. B. Wolter, *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality* (Washington D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1986), pp.358-9

415 Yates, pp. 176-177

416 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* Q49 a1 ad2 Iia-IIae q

spiritual exercise, in order to create the hooks on which to attach the *imagines agentes* and thus to enable a fruitful development of all the things stored in memory. The Psalter's opening illumination and Eriugena's opening sentence in his work *Periphyseon* both reflect the same underlying structure.

As noted in the discussion of *intentio* in Eriugena's opening sentence, Cicero compared *intentio* to the tuning of a string – if the string is properly attuned than the subsequent plucking will resonate in a way that both produces harmony and can sound alongside other strings. Following the description of the Greek philosopher, musician and harpist Aristoxenus of Tarentum Cicero stressed that the soul is a special tuning up of the natural body.⁴¹⁷ *Intentio*, as tuning up, was subsequently carried over from philosophical exercises into monastic spiritual exercises, with the goal of being attuned to love. Augustine combines love with the idea of an attitude of motion in Cicero's *intentio*. He pronounces in *De Doctrina Christiana* that this love is “a movement of the mind toward fruitfully enjoying God for His own sake and self and my neighbour for God's sake.”⁴¹⁸ *Intentio* is woven into Christian doctrine. This striving as *intentio* was encountered earlier in the chapter on Augustine's use of the triads as *imagines agentes* and specifically in Book 11 of his *De Trinitate*. For Augustine there has to be something that fixes the senses on a perceptible object that allows cognition because we are constantly discriminating between the objects in our field of vision to decide which to actually look at. We can also happen or decide to look at the same thing in different ways. Three things are therefore going on in perception, it is not a two-way action. This *intentio* he compares in Book 11 to the Holy Spirit mediating between the Father and Son. This comparison cannot be completely defined, though, just as the triads cannot exactly represent the trinity of the triune God.

Traditionally the *beatus vir* shows King David, considered the composer of all the psalms, playing the harp. In the Luttrell Psalter, however, he is depicted not playing his harp but tuning it with an ostentatiously large tuning handle. This would bring a

417Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* I.10 “*musicus idemque philosophus, ipsius corporis intentionem quandam, velut in cantu et fidibus quae harmonia dicitur, sic ex corporis totius natura et figura varios motus cieri tamquam in cantu sonos.*”

418 Augustine, *De doc chr* III.x.16 “*Caritatem voco motum animi ad fruendum deo propter ipsum et se atque proximo propter deum.*”

Carruthers, (*The Craft of Thought*), p. 281 n. 21 notes Cicero's use of *motus animi* in *De Oratore* III.57 with regard to emotive rhetorical *intentio*.

wry smile to any harpist's face because one always spends longer tuning a harp than playing it and it is also amusing that at the beginning of this epically illuminated codex there is a hold-up – the musician is not ready. David has not passed this chore over to a servant, he is doing it himself because this illumination is stressing the importance for each individual of *intentione*, introducing it at the very beginning, just as Eriugena introduces it at the beginning of *Periphyseon*.

The full panoply of allusive paranomasia is used visually here, extending back to both Latin and earlier Greek rhetorical tradition. There is the play on *cor* - to stress the association between *cor*, as heart and *ricordare*, to remember, stemming from David's harp which is strung with *cordae*. Augustine's contemporary Cassian in the fourth century had defined meditation as “exercitium cordis”, exercise of the heart⁴¹⁹ The heart as the organ of understanding, linked to the primacy of sight and hearing, had not only Greek philosophical authority and Latin rhetorical confirmation through the works of Cicero and Quintilian but also scriptural sanctification in the book of Isaiah and the gospels of Matthew and John when Jesus quotes Isaiah.

Make this people's heart coarse,
make their ears dull, shut their eyes tight,
or thy will use their eyes to see,
use their ears to hear,
use their heart to understand,
and change their ways and be healed.⁴²⁰

Cassian himself was alluding further to the *corda* that is the bow string. For Cassian aimless curiosity was a failure of *intentione* and the neglect of a rigorous memory scheme. The monks had to keep their eye on the *skopos*, the target. This use of *intentione* can be traced back into Greek philosophical exercise use. Socrates had suggested in *Cratylus* (420B-C) that it is from *toxon*, bow, that the word *doxa*, belief,

419Cassien, *Conf.* 1.18 *Conférences (Collationes)*, ed. and trans. by E. Pichery, *Sources Chrétiennes* 42 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1955)

420Isaiah 6:10 *New Jerusalem Study Bible* ; (referred to in Matthew 13:14-15, John 12:40) These verses are part of the scene depicting Isaiah's calling that Dionysius called the scandalous dissimilarity of Scripture designed to be memorable and to increase understanding. As discussed in the last chapter, the seraph touches Isaiah's lips with a hot coal, going against all the rules of hierarchy. The debate on how this could be indeed continued and it was the subject of Aquinas's first work of theology *Expositio super Isaiam ad Litteram*. Vol.28 *Opera Omnia iussu Leonis XIII P.M. Edita* (Rome: Editori di San Tommaso, 1974)

is derived and false belief can be compared to a bad archer who widely misses his target and falls into error (*Theaetetus* [194A]). The Luttrell Psalter contains various figures with monastic tonsures struggling to prime their bows (f. 54v, f. 56v, which latter also includes an arrow made from a peacock pinion) . Another motto of the Dominicans, as discussed above, came from their provincial Humbert of Romans “first the bow is bent in study, then the arrow is loosed in preaching”. (It has to be remembered that both Socrates and Humbert are talking about pre-modern archery that is known as instinctive archery. Both eyes are kept wide open and focussed on the target and this focus translates into a muscle action that prompts the release of the arrow that is being held with the fingers under the tension of the bow.)

***Ductus*: interpreting the calendar**

This thesis will now take a fresh look at the calendar in the Luttrell Psalter. The calendar at the beginning of a psalter, month by month, lists the saints days and gives obits that were of particular importance for the intended users. Discussion of the Luttrell Psalter in the currently available secondary literature is concerned with how the choice of saints days shows the geographical source of the psalter and, through the obits, the dates before which it cannot have been created. This is all written on the right side of the recto and verso of each folio. Commentary on this psalter also agrees on the scrappy nature of its very limited illumination of the calendar folios.

However, even a cursory look reveals that the calligraphy again is of the highest and most expensive order, executed by the same hand as the psalms. What has not been the subject of discussion is the particular significance of what is on the left side, namely the meticulousness of the notation of its astronomical data, relating to the 365 day cycle of the sun and the metonic cycle of the moon, whereby the new moon falls on 1 January every nineteen years. All calendars provide at least three vertical columns of such data. The one closest to the text is normally the day of the month, not in the format now used but in the Roman Julian use by which the month is divided into Kalends, Nones and Ides and the date is the number of days before Kalends, Nones or Ides.⁴²¹ To the left of that is the Dominical Letter (taken from *dies dominica*), running

⁴²¹Kalends, Nones and Ides are the first, fifth and thirteenth day of the month, except for March, May, July and October, when Nones and Ides are the seventh and fifteenth. See F. P. Pickering, *The Calendar Pages of Medieval Service Books* (Reading: Reading University Centre for Medieval

from A,b,c,d,e,f to g allowing the user to work out which days throughout the year are Sundays. The first day of January in the psalter is given as A and the year letter is that of the first Sunday after this day. The column on the outer left is that of the Golden number of the day, which is the day of the new moon according to the Golden Number of the year. Each year has a Golden Number giving its position in the lunar cycle. To find this add one to the year date (because the cycle starts on 1BC) and divide by 19. The remainder gives the position in the cycle. Next to the days is the Golden Number in Roman numerals of a year that has a new moon on that day.⁴²² These are all needed to find the date of Easter for any year, which is the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox (March 21), since Easter is tied into the Hebrew lunar cycle of Passover. The Luttrell Psalter calendar contains only this essential information – other more elaborate calendars contain additional computistical headings for each month with the number of month and moon days, the hours of day and night, or whether there are *dies aegyptiacae* deemed to be unlucky. It contains it accurately, however, which is not always the case. Even calendars produced for lavishly illuminated and gold-inlaid service books for the French Royal household, for example, contain mistakes, either through carelessness or to make space for illumination.⁴²³

Closer inspection of the calendar reveals that a date has been given for Easter, VI Kalends April (March 27) which is noteworthy, as Easter is not a fixed date. Easter Day has to be a Sunday and there is a Dominical Letter 'b' next to this entry, which means January 1st was a Saturday. Tracing back fifteen days between this day, remembering the Spring Equinox on 21st March, which is a fixed date and the earliest possible for Easter, finds four golden numbers, 16, 5 13 and 2. 16, 5 and 13 also have the Dominican Letter 'b', 2 has 'c' which means 1st January was on a Friday, so this can be excluded. These three years correspond to 1323, 1334 and 1345 within the life of Sir Geoffrey. The last time Easter was on March 27 before this was 1250 and the following time would be 1407, so it is not a common occurrence. All three years

Studies, 1980) for everything to do with calendars that is not illumination. He notes, p. 39, “that it was unusual to attempt to 'calendarize' moveable feasts”. In the Medieval church that year's date for Easter would be announced on January 6 after the Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany, as it still is in churches that follow the Ambrosian rite. This would be taken from special codices of tables used to compute Easter each year.

422 This cycle is 14,3,11,19,8,16,5,13,2,10,18,7,15,4,12,1,9,17,6

423 Pickering, *ibid* p.10

feature prominently in his life. 1323 was the betrothal of his eldest son to the daughter of an influential ally in the turbulent times of regicide in which they found themselves. 1334 was the year he and his wife received a dispensation for having unwittingly married in consanguinity, (at some point between 1297 and 1300), which would have automatically annulled their marriage and the legitimacy of their children. 1345 was the year Sir Geoffrey died.

Even more portentously, when Easter Sunday is on March 27, Good Friday is on March 25. March 25 is the Feast of the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary, known as Lady Day, the day when Lenten fasting was suspended and Eucharist permitted. Theologically, to have both Good Friday and Lady Day literally on the same day was considered particularly holy. Lady Day was also the fiscal and legal first day of the year.⁴²⁴ On this day an inventory was made of all the buildings, livestock, land use, serfs and so on in order to draw up new contracts for the year. If new tenancies were entered into, people would move house on this day. The whole day was crowned by the estate owner providing everyone with a meal – a welcome practical touch in the upheaval of the day.

Attention to the calendar thus solves the mystery of what the Luttrell feast scene is alluding to and the myriad scenes of life on the estate that surround it are a visual reference to what was being noted down in the estate audit on that day.⁴²⁵ These scenes provide Sir Geoffrey with a ready-made set of storage places that he can wander around mentally when practising the *ars memorativa*. The psalter builds Geoffrey's world and personal history (escorting Queen Philippa to France, for example, ff.181v -182r) around him in a visual equivalent of the mental three dimensional space of a monastery church and cloister used by monks.⁴²⁶ To make the occasion of the feast

424This is why today the British tax year, seemingly bizarrely, begins on April 6, which was March 25 in the Julian calendar, this being abandoned for the reformed Gregorian calendar in 1751, this latter being adopted the following year. Lady Day agricultural grazing tenancies, valid for three generations, still exist and are still renewed on March 25, payments being due on this day and on Michaelmas.

425This has been one of “such problems as are still unsolved in connexion with this great and altogether fascinating English book”. Millar, p. 51

426Albertus recommends in *De Bono* 15 following Tullius's (Cicero) advice that some will be moved and therefore remember better if using their own places rather than church or cloister, “if we are not content with our ready-made supply of backgrounds, we may create a region for ourselves and obtain a most serviceable distribution of appropriate backgrounds” (*Tractatus IV, Quaestio II “De partibus Prudentiae”*, Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, p. 351) while Bradwardine in *On Acquiring a Trained Memory*, (ibid p. 361) advises using real places that one can frequently inspect.

scene clearer the Luttrell Master adds other touches to it. The Passover is referenced in a servant carrying a Jewish prayer scarf and Sir Geoffrey's cap bears two horns signifying Moses.⁴²⁷ The male servants have nattily trimmed beards, one elaborately forked, which it was the custom to clip on Maunday Thursday. Two Dominicans are present at the high table.⁴²⁸ The Dominicans had taken on the Augustinian mantle of arbitrators in civil contracts.⁴²⁹ The actual food for the feast is sparse (even more so for the Dominicans) because, although the Lenten rules were suspended, this remained a very sombre day. There is therefore a contrast between the specially decorated room, with all the heraldic accoutrements displayed and what on other feast occasions would be a heavily laden table. The AD692 Council of Constantinople that dealt with the Feast of the Annunciation is referred to on f.164v. Here is portrayed a typical North European walled town in the early spring under the caption *Constantinus nobilis*, from which emerges a procession celebrating the joys of fresh life.

Millar notes that “it is difficult for a modern eye not to be struck by the expression of hopeless misery on the faces of most of the diners, although this can hardly have been intentional on the part of the artist”⁴³⁰ On the contrary, the Master was expressly portraying the diners attempting very hard to look suitably solemn for the occasion. It may well be that relaxing at the end of a hectic Lady Day it was this due solemnity that they were finding difficult to maintain.

Sir Geoffrey's Cap

Sir Geoffrey's bizarre little cap with the two horns symbolising Moses occurs previously on folio 160v (Fig 6). Here he is seated in a rowing boat being towed along by two men on a tow path, who have to drag the boat because they are rowing against

⁴²⁷March 25 was considered to be the day of Creation in Genesis and the day Moses crossed the Red Sea with the Israelites. In addition, Jacobus de Voragine, Archbishop of Genoa, in his 1275 *Golden Legend* – which provides much of the iconography for the extensive cycle of saints in the psalters – elaborates further to include the Fall, Cain's murder of Abel, Melchisedek's offering of bread and wine to Abraham, the sacrifice of Isaac, the beheading of John the Baptist and the freeing of James and Peter from prison as occurring on this date.

⁴²⁸There is no indication of the identity of these two Dominicans. Sir Geoffrey's will makes a bequest to his confessor, brother William of Fotheringay, who is also appointed assistant to the executor. *Item fratri Willelmo de Fodringeye confessori meo do lego ei pro vestura sui corporis v marcas.* Will in *Bishop Becke's Register* (1342-1347), Lincoln ff.100-101 (new numbering 212-213). Probate dated July 1345.

⁴²⁹Nichols, *What is the Religious Life*, p. 45

⁴³⁰ Millar, *The Luttrell Psalter*, p. 49

them. This image comes from Aquinas's *Summa contra errores Graecorum* where Aquinas is explaining how cooperation between Creator and created is to be understood and how this differs from the cooperation of the Trinity. The Luttrell Master has placed Sir Geoffrey, identifiable from the distinctive headgear (unique, in fact in manuscript illumination) he is wearing in the feast scene, in the boat with his servants. The instruments referred to by Aquinas are here their oars. He makes the image funny and topical by linking into the fledgling attempts at drainage at that time in the Lincolnshire fens by Dutch craftsmen that brought the new innovation of primitive tow paths. This passage from Aquinas raises echoes of Augustine's *De Trinitate*, with its questions of the nature of the Trinity and how this can relate to creation and of Eriugena's *pernomasia*, questioning how God and nature all fit together.

It must be borne in mind, however, that something that is said to cooperate with another in two ways. First, because it works toward the same effect but by a different power, as a servant cooperates with his lord, or an instrument with the artisan by whom it is moved. Second, something is said to cooperate with another in so far as it effects conjointly with another the same operation, as when two men carry a single burden or drag a boat. A creature, therefore, can cooperate in the first way with the Creator in respect to effects which come to pass through the creature, but not in respect to those effects which are immediately from God such as creation and sanctification. A creature, however, does not cooperate in the second way with the Creator; only the three persons of the Trinity cooperate in this way, since theirs is a single operation: not, however, as if each possessed a part of the power by which the operation is performed as is the case with many men dragging a boat, for thus the power of each would be imperfect; but in the sense that the entire power sufficient for the effect is in each of the three Persons.⁴³¹

431 Aquinas, *Contra Errores Graecorum* pars 1, caput 23

www.dhspriory.org/thomas/ContraErrGraecorum www.corpusthomicum.org/opera [accessed 22 May 2021]

Sed sciendum, quod aliquid dicitur cooperari alicui dupliciter. Uno modo, quia operatur ad eundem effectum, sed per aliam virtutem; sicut minister cooperatur domino, dum eius praeceptis obedit, et instrumentum artificis, a quo movetur. Alio modo dicitur aliquid cooperari alicui, in quantum operatur eandem operationem cum ipso: sicut si diceretur de duobus portantibus aliquod pondus, vel de pluribus trahentibus navem, quod unus alteri cooperetur. Secundum ergo primum modum creatura potest dici creatori cooperari quantum ad aliquos effectus, qui fiunt mediante creatura: non tamen quantum ad illos effectus qui sunt immediate a Deo, ut creatio et sanctificatio. Secundo autem modo creatura creatori non cooperatur, sed solum tres personae sibi invicem cooperantur, quia earum est operatio una; non autem ita quod quaelibet earum partem virtutis possideat, per quam operatio completur, sicut accidit in multis trahentibus navem: sic enim cuiuslibet virtus esset imperfecta; sed ita quod tota virtus ad operationem sufficiens est in qualibet trium personarum.

The whole edge of this folio is being used to construct an image that will enable memorisation not of the psalms but of another academic theological text. It is vital, in dealing with an art that is so heavily invested in the visual, to actually look at the images in their own right. Below the rowing boat is a large snail, drawn with immense botanical skill, the different textures of the shell and body almost palpable. This is marked simply as a snail in all the manuscript literature, which misses the fact that the shell markings as drawn by the Luttrell Master portray the golden ratio, the perfect proportion. For Aquinas proportion was a way of describing how the creature could know God, as stated in his *Summa Theologiae*.⁴³² The opposite folio bears another textured drawing of a bull but with human eyes. This is a reference linking the *Summa* to Aquinas, known as the dumb ox in his postulant days but portrayed as a bull because castrati could not be ordained. In the outer margin of that folio is a young male, not a babewyn, with a tiny man on his head. This is a reference to the proceeding *caput* 18 in the *Summa contra Gentiles* where Aquinas is explaining that Basil's statement that the Holy Spirit works through the Son is wrong because a divine person is said to work through the person who proceeds from him, not vice versa. Therefore the Holy Spirit can only be said to work through the human nature of Christ, not his divine nature. The young man is carrying one of the stone crosses in the shape of a cathedral tower erected by King Edward I to mark the places where the coffin of Queen Eleanor rested on its journey to London in 1290. There was one in nearby Stamford, all the crosses quickly becoming places of pilgrimage. The scene represents Aquinas's quote from Athanasius in *caput* 18 "The Godhead made man has conformed the Church to himself through his Spirit."

Ductus : structure and Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics

This place construction occurs within another structure, however, that of Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, with its underlying theme of how the universal relates to the particular and, in Lesson 12, with the order of the universe.⁴³³ Three

432Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I.12.1 "Proportion is twofold. In one sense it means a certain relation of one quantity to another, according as a double, treble and equal are species of proportion. In another sense every relation of one thing to another is called proportion. And in this sense there can be a proportion of the creature to God, inasmuch as it is related to Him as the effect of its cause, and as potentiality to its act; and in this way the created intellect can be proportioned to know God."

433Aquinas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Lesson 12: God is the Final Cause of All Things, The

kinds of order are examined in Aristotle, that of the army commander, the lord's household with its children, servants and livestock and the order of plants and animals. The only 'proper' miniature in the psalter is the almost half-page depiction of Sir Geoffrey in full military armour on horseback, surrounded by heraldic imagery, with his wife and daughter-in-law and their heraldic imagery, establishing the family's feudal connections to crown and allies (folio 202v, Fig. 9). The depiction of the household and its estate is that of all the people, property, chattels and estate activities of the Lady Day audit, which run all through the section of the psalter that is the exclusive work of the Luttrell Master (ff.145r – 214v) culminating in the feast scene (f.208r, Fig.10). The relationship between plants, animals and humans – and specifically its disordering – is how the hybrid, dissimilar figures are formed, animal heads flowing into human bodies with foliage tails, for example, of which there are thousands, all different, in the psalter. (Aristotle's text 1103-1104)

These hybrid figures are the *babewyn* and it is by no means a derogatory term. The fourteenth century poet Geoffrey Chaucer emphasizes the subtleness of the segueing from one life form to another in his *The House of Fame* (II. 1187-91).

Wythouten peces or joynnynges
 But many subtil compassinges
 Babewynnes and pynacles
 Ymageries and tabernacles.

Aquinas opens his commentary on Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia* with a reference to Aristotle's *On the history of animals* (8.1; 588b), where Aristotle describes the natural progress from the inanimate to the animate, which Aquinas expands from plant to animal to human to investigate in what way prudence is present not only in human but in non-human animals as a result of their sense perception (quoting Aristotle's *Metaphysics* [1.1; 980b] and Cicero's *De Inventione* [2.53]).

If one now turns briefly to Aquinas's *Compendium Theologiae*, 52 in connection with the *babewyn* many of the themes of this thesis will begin to come together. The *Compendium*, unfinished at the time of his death, was dictated to his fellow friar,

Order of the Universe dhspriority.org/thomas/Metaphysics.htm [accessed 21 May 2021] (Aristotle's text Chapter 10: 1075a 11-1076a 4).

Reginald and summarizes the main points of his *Summa* in a way that would be particularly useful in ministry to the laity.⁴³⁴ Here Aquinas brings together this progression of the vegetative soul, which provides nutrition, growth and generation with the animal, which allows (and he quotes Aristotle's *De Anima* III, 4 (429b 21) the senses to provide matter for instinctive behaviour in non-human animals and thought in humans.⁴³⁵ In the same section he turns to Augustine's triad of the lover, the beloved and love from *De Trinitate*, though he gives it no direct reference, presumably because it was doing its job as an *imago agens* well and was in the collective memory. He compares the relation between Father, Son and Spirit to that between vegetative, non-human and human soul as being the same in substance but distinct in their progression from each other. Thus humans do not have a vegetative, an animal and a human soul but all are subsumed into the one soul. Aquinas has picked up an *imago agens* from Augustine and repurposed it – which is the point of the *ars memorativa*. In the same paragraph in section 52 he speaks of *intentio*, again within the same relation of lover, beloved and love. The intellect must in some way proceed from the knower, so far as he is knowing; and in its procession it is to some extent distinct from him, just as the conception of the intellect, which is the intellectual likeness, is distinct from the knowing intellect. He is using *intentio intellecta* to mean “that which the intellect conceives within itself of the thing understood”.⁴³⁶ At this point the relationship to Cicero's *intentio* becomes clearer, the soul being a “special tuning-up of the natural body analogous to that which is called harmony in vocal and instrumental music”.⁴³⁷ The conscientious tuning allows for a meaningful *imago agens* to be formed, even if

434Perhaps Aquinas was aware that even some of his brother friars were finding the subtleties of his work intellectually challenging. MS 121, f. 376v (New College, Oxford) contains the comment by the anonymous scribe “Here ends the second part of the *Summa* of the Dominican brother Thomas Aquinas, the longest, most verbose and most tedious to write; thank God, thank God and again thank God”

See Christopher de Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Phaidon Press, 1986), p. 126

The *Compendium Theologiae* is interesting from a memory point of view. It is unfinished due to Aquinas's death which occurred a little while after an accident in which he suffered a head injury. If one reads the *Compendium* straight through one notices a difference in style after chapter 240. The work contains many references to Scripture and Church Fathers that Aquinas dictated from memory, rather than consulting manuscripts. These are woven into the argument. Suddenly, there is a change in style, in that the work becomes almost a list of quotes. This shows the difference between rote memory and the *ars memorativa* that is used for composing new material. Perhaps it was at this point that his brain injury occurred.

435Aquinas, *Compendium theologiae*, 52 (New York: Sophia Institute, 1993), edited by Cyril Vollert, pp. 46-48

436*Compendium Theologiae*, 52 is a condensed version of *Summa contra Gentiles* IV, 11 where he elaborates more fully. *Dico autem intentionem intellectam id quod intellectus in seipso concipit de re intellecta* see *Compendium theologiae* n 53 p. 48

437Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* I.10 see above

the actual content of what is to be remembered cannot be defined, as in the case of the nature of the Trinity. There is thus a provisional grasp on that reality but one that will tighten with future adjustments. By around 1290 *intentionatus* is recorded as meaning disposed or conditioned.⁴³⁸

The calendar babewyns

The decoration of the 11 calendar folios consists of 11 babewyns, one per recto, ranged vertically down the outside margins. These 11 babewyns are the only figures to occur twice in the thousands of figures in the psalter, so the sign of an *imago agens* – something dissimilar, opposite, arresting is flagged up. All eleven reoccur on consecutive folios so that the first can easily be found again when thumbing through the psalter. This thumbing through occurred daily simply to find the psalms and this is a reminder that not all babewyns, whether or not in hybrid version, were *imagines agentes*. Most functioned as book marks because the sequential chanting of the psalms had ceased by late Roman times as the liturgical seasons took shape, demanding specifically suitable psalms and with the proliferation of saints' days these psalms took preference over normal use. Writing in the late thirteenth century Radulphus considered the situation one of “continual perturbation and great confusion”.⁴³⁹ This would make the unique decoration of each folio a practical necessity, with no folio, psalm or verse numbering, especially as the vocabulary of the psalms as they are grouped can be very similar.

The babewyn on the first folio of the Psalter, the January calendar page, has the head and body of the scholar wielding his pen as a weapon, in reference to the supposed fate of Eriugena, killed by the pens of his students, with a smooth lizard-like tail that ends in acanthus-type foliage. (Fig. 1) The Luttrell Master wanted this figure to stand out and it has sole possession of the page.⁴⁴⁰ He is indicating the reason for this *ductus*, the *ars memorativa* spiritual journey here at the very beginning, namely Sir Geoffrey's spiritual worries caused by his participation, due to feudal obligations, in Edwards I's wars with the Scots, which were characterised by the mass slaughter, by

438 *Medieval Latin Word List*

439 Radulphus, *De Canonum Observantia*, prop 21, 22 www.medievalsourcebook.com [accessed 21 May 2021]

440 The details below the border were added at the turn of the seventeenth century

both sides, of non-combatants.⁴⁴¹ The figure's pen is pointing at the octave of the Feast of the Slaughter of the Innocents on the fourth of January. (The actual feast is three days after Christmas on 28 December but the figure would then have been hidden on folio 12v, losing dramatic effect.⁴⁴²) It is written in red, rather than black, to highlight it and to recall the blood shed when, following the visit of the Magi seeking for a newborn king, Herod ordered all the male children under two years of age to be killed in Bethlehem and the surrounding district. (Matthew 2: 16-17)

This figure appears again on folio 86r. Here it points to a depiction of the Annunciation of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary, the event celebrated on Lady Day, March 25. This is confirming the nature of the place structure, the audit of all places on the estate, that has been set up for the memory scheme. It also indicates that, although the Luttrell Master was the exclusively responsible artist for only part of the psalter, he planned the whole scheme because he has lightly underpainted the Annunciation, to be completed by another hand. It is known that Dominican friars directed artists - an illumination of one doing so appears in the Holkham Bible, produced in London during the early fourteenth century.⁴⁴³

The slaughter of the innocents

Only one verse in all the 150 psalms is illustrated and that is on folio 169r (Fig. 7) where the slaughter of innocent children is graphically portrayed. This is the spiritual problem for which the Luttrell Master, as confessor, was guiding Sir Geoffrey. The slaughter scene runs down the outside margin and below it, in the horizontal margin, is the confessor's solution – a ram, with four massive horns and fierce eyes (but a very naturalistic and skilled portrayal) that comes from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and is described in various places by Albertus as he explains how he himself is using Tullius's *ars memorativa*. The translation of the Vulgate Ps 93:6 reads “they murder the widow and the stranger, bring the orphan to a violent death”.

441 Within the feudal system Luttrell himself had no more freedom with regards to the king than his serfs had to him. According to F. Palgrave's *Parliamentary Writs* (for details see Millar, p. 3) he received writs to engage in military service in Scotland in 1297, 1300, 1301, 1309, 1311, 1313, 1314, 1315, 1316, 1317, 1319 and 1322.

442 Medieval calendars still used the Roman notation of Nones, Ides and Kalends, counting forwards. The octave of the Feast of the Slaughter of the Innocents is therefore given as two days before Nones - *Octave sancti Innocentii* II Non. Ian.

443 MS 47682, opening folio, British Library

Viduam et aduenam interfecerunt et pupillos occiderunt. (Luttrell Psalter, Gallican version). The widow is battered to death, the children hacked to pieces and the stranger attacked from behind. This stranger has the blue skin of the foreigner and the red hair of Judas Iscariot. Examples from the thirteenth century of the red hair of Judas occur in a variety of media, for example, surviving wall paintings in the church in Ramersdorf, a stained glass window in Chartres cathedral and an illuminated miniature in the *Emblemata Biblica* (Bibliothèque Nationale, ms.37). The priesthood was banned to men with red hair in medieval France because of the association with Judas and colloquial speech in medieval England referred to those with red hair as Judas-born.⁴⁴⁴ Blue skin was used in glass and manuscript throughout Europe to depict otherness or foreignness. Here the *aduena* as the figure of the other, who is the enemy and the figure of Judas Iscariot links this into the Luttrell master's feast scene, where a servant carries a Jewish prayer shawl. Judas, too, died on Good Friday.

The ram is taken via Albertus from *Rhetorica* III.xix 22 where it is used to illustrate how the *ars* might work, being there an *imago agens* to remember the details of a particular law suit. Albertus refers to this passage from the *Rhetorica* twice, in his commentary on Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia* 108 and in his *Tractatus de bono*, 'on the parts of Prudence', point 16. Yates notes that Albertus was particularly affected by this ram, probably because dwelling on it too long as he sought to master the art in the quiet of the night had given him nightmares, saying in his commentary on Aristotle that he saw “some ram with huge horns and testicles coming towards us in the darkness.”⁴⁴⁵ The Luttrell ram is a Scottish Soay with four large horns, turning it into an image with specific significance for Sir Geoffrey.

Albertus was recommending the *ars memorativa* for all, laymen included, who wanted to lead a moral life.

We say that the *ars memorandi* which Tullius teaches is the best and particularly for the things to be remembered pertaining to life and judgement (*ad vitam et iudicium*) and such memories pertain particularly to the moral man and to the speaker (*ad ethicum et rhetorem*) because since the act of human life consists in particulars it is necessary that it

⁴⁴⁴Paull Franklin Baum, 'Judas's Red Hair', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, Vol.21, No.3 (July 1922) pp. 502-529

⁴⁴⁵Yates, pp 79-80. She suggests he had been doing too much memory work at night in order to take advantage of the silence, as advised by Martianus Capella.

should be in the soul through corporeal images; it will not stay in memory save in such images.⁴⁴⁶

Whence we say that among all things which point towards ethical wisdom, the most necessary is trained memory.⁴⁴⁷

Albertus advocated the memory scheme for lay people as well as preachers. Around 1260 two versions of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* had been translated into Italian, indicating that the art was being used by lay people as a devotional exercise.⁴⁴⁸ The *ars memorativa* had been taken into pastoral use by the secular cleric who later joined the Cistercians, Alain of Lille, who wrote the 'Alanus' commentary on the memory passages of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* at the end of the 12th century. He brought the memory art into the doctrine and practice of penance, a major part of pastoral care especially with regard to confession. This work was titled *De sex aliis Cherubim*,⁴⁴⁹ and was based on a drawing of the Seraph with the six wings who brought the flaming coal to touch Isaiah's lips. (This was discussed above in the account of Dionysius's finding dissimilarity in Scripture to enable apophatic knowledge.) The wings were partitioned up to make a series of spaces that could be used as mental pigeon holes for concepts connected with penance.

Aquinas also made his use of the *ars memorativa* part of the exercise of Prudence. In his discussion he states explicitly that he is following Tullius, who gives *memoria*, *intelligentia* and *providentia* as the three parts of Prudence.⁴⁵⁰ Aquinas expands this to *memoria*, *ratio*, *intellectus*, *docilitas*, *solertia*, *providentia*, *circumspectio* and *cautio*. For Aquinas, quoting Tullius in the words of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, it is the exercise of the memory art that actually proves that memory is

446 Albertus Magnus, *De bono*, Tractatus IV Quaestio II "De partibus Prudentiae", Solutio

447 Ibid

448 See F. Maggini, *I primi volgarizzamenti dei classici latini* (Florence: F. Le Monnier, 1952), pp. 3-7 for an account of the *Rhetorica* as one of the first works to be translated from Latin into a vulgar tongue.

449 *Patrologia Latina*, 210 269-280. Note the continued controversy, caused by Dionysius, about whether a cherub or a seraph held the coal, discussed above. There is a suggestion that the Augustinian Clement, Prior of Llanthony Secunda near Gloucester from around 1152 to sometime between 1166 and 1177 was the original creator of a manuscript called *De sex alis cherubim* that found its way in the late twelfth century to a Cistercian house on the Yorkshire/Lancashire border.

450 *Summa Theologiae*, IIa-IIae quaestio 48 prooemium Tullius enim, in II Rhet., ponit tres partes prudentiae, scilicet memoriam, intelligentiam et providentiam.

<https://www.corpusthomisticum.org/sth3047.html> accessed 9 May 2021

part of Prudence. Both Prudence and memory are natural aptitudes but both need to be honed by the exercise of art and industry. He continues with his own four points for the *ars memorativa*, basing the first and the third on the *ad Herennium* and the second and fourth on Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*. (Aquinas does not realize that Aristotle took his memory rules from the *ars memorativa* as it already existed, centuries before it is later recorded by Cicero in his own work and in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* that is later attributed to Cicero.)⁴⁵¹ The first deals with *imagines agentes* and *intentio*, the second with places and the fourth with frequent practice. The only time he deviates from his sources is in the third point, which is taken from *ad Herennium* III, xix, 31, which advises practising the art in solitude because distractions make it difficult to fix the *imagines agentes* in their places, “*solitudo conservat integras simulacrorum figuras*”. Aquinas changes this to “*sollicitudo conservat integras simulacrorum*”. If the *ars memorativa* was to function effectively within lay spirituality it would have to be acknowledged that living conditions outside the cloister mitigated against solitude (also, indeed, for mendicant friars) but that without sollicitude in concentration and in *intentio* the practitioner could fall into the state of idle curiosity that Cassian had termed *fornicatio*.

The Rabbit Warren and Eriugena's Commentary on Dionysius

The Luttrell Master's scheme of places for Sir Geoffrey and the very few *imagines agentes* that he provides - for the idea, after all, is for Sir Geoffrey to make his own - are kept distinct from each other, except perhaps on one occasion. The Luttrell rabbit

451Ibid quaestio 49 a.1 ad2 *Ad secundum dicendum quod sicut prudentia aptitudinem quidem habet ex natura, sed eius complementum est ex exercitio vel gratia ita etiam, ut Tullius dicit, in sua rhetorica, memoria non solum a natura proficiscitur, sed etiam habet plurimum artis et industriae. Et sunt quatuor per quae homo proficit in bene memorando. Quorum primum est ut eorum quae vult memorari quasdam similitudines assumat convenientes, nec tamen omnino consuetas, quia ea quae sunt inconsueta magis miramar, et sic in eis animus magis et vehementius detinetur; ex quo fit quod eorum quae in pueritia vidimus magis memoremur. Ideo autem necessaria est huiusmodi similitudinum vel imaginum adinventio, quia intentiones simplices et spirituales facilius ex anima elabantur nisi quibusdam similitudinibus corporalibus quasi alligentur, quia humana cognitio potentior est circa sensibilia. Unde et memorativa ponitur in parte sensitiva. Secundo, oportet ut homo ea quae memoriter vult tenere sua consideratione ordinate disponat, ut ex uno memorato facile ad aliud procedatur. Unde philosophus dicit, in libro de Mem., 'a locis videntur reminisci aliquando, causa autem est quia velociter ab alio in aliud veniunt.' Tertio, oportet ut homo sollicitudinem apponat et affectum adhibeat ad ea quae vult memorari, quia quo aliquid magis fuerit impressum animo, eo minus elabitur. Unde et Tullius dicit, in sua rhetorica, quod 'sollicitudo conservat integras simulacrorum figuras.' Quarto, oportet quod ea frequenter meditemur quae volumus memorari. Unde philosophus dicit, in libro de Mem., quod 'meditationes memoriam salvant', quia, ut in eodem libro dicitur, consuetudo est quasi natura; unde quae multoties intelligimus cito reminiscimur, quasi naturali quodam ordine ab uno ad aliud procedentes.*

warren (f. 176v) was an important asset to the estate and all rabbits belonged to the lord. “The rabbit was a rare beast in medieval England and much sought after for both its meat and its fur.”⁴⁵² The mound was specially dug and maintained and would have been included as an asset in the Lady Day review. The Luttrell Master creates such a luxurious warren on f. 176v and then recreates the mound on f. 185r. This time, however, it is full of worms, snakes and other slithery things, causing Millar to experience revulsion.⁴⁵³ As has been seen, Millar's reaction is normally a good sign that the Luttrell Master is deploying an *imago agens* in his memory arsenal. The Luttrell Master is evoking the scandal of Scripture, as discussed earlier, proposed by Dionysius when describing the call of Isaiah, with the cherubim seemingly usurping the place of the Seraphim.⁴⁵⁴ The mound takes up the bottom margin and vertically along the outer margin is a babewyn wearing a realistic snail shell as a hat, complete with Aquinas' golden ratio. Here the Luttrell Master is referring to Eriugena's commentary on Dionysius's *Celestial Hierarchy*⁴⁵⁵ where the Incarnation of Christ is described as being like that of the most lowly of material things in nature, a worm, which is conceived not from seed but from simple earth. It is because Christ is more than human that he can penetrate the very depths of the earth in the innermost folds of created nature, as does a worm. “Thus the worm that penetrates the hidden things of all creation is the Wisdom of the Father, which while human transcends all humanity.”⁴⁵⁶ Eriugena continues his discussion by making plain what is the role of the *imago agens*.

They honor (sic) the dissimilar representation of the holy, so that the divine things might not be handled by the profane and so that industrious contemplators of marvellous images might not remain with the figures as if they were true. And they honor the divine things by true negations and by diverse similitudes to the lowest of the created reverberations.⁴⁵⁷

The *penna pavonis*

452Mark Bailey, 'The Rabbit and the Medieval East Anglian Economy', *Ag Hist Rev*, 36, 1, pp. 1-20, p. 1

453“A green mound.....strongly suggesting a nightmare” Millar, p. 46

454See above. This controversy from Isaiah 6 was the subject of Aquinas' first work *Expositio super Isaiam ad Litteram*, (Cap VI, 6-8, p. 51) and he returns to it in his *Summa Theologiae*, (q.112 a.1).

455There was a copy in the Dominican library in their monastery of St Jacques, Paris, annotated in another hand to that of the original scribe with the caveat '*cave hic ab errore*' with regard to the eternal incomprehensibility of God in himself to man and angel. See Boulnois, *Au-delà de l'image*, p.254

456Translated by Roerem, p. 195 (*Expositione*, 2.5.49)

457*Ibid Expositione* 2.5.50 p. 196

It is with Eriugena that all the threads of memory studies, manuscript studies and theology begin to come together because the Master, as will be discussed below, is not only grounded in Eriugena's theology but refers to him as the subject of various *ars memorativa* figures in the margins of the Luttrell Psalter and these are *imagines agentes*. Indeed he is alluded to in the only figure on the very first folio of the psalter, the month of January in the introductory calendar. This depicts a figure holding a feathered writing implement as a stabbing tool. This works in two ways. Firstly, it refers to the history accepted in the Middle Ages that Eriugena moved to Winchester at the end of his life and was stabbed to death by his students with their pens. Secondly, the implement points to the Octave of the Holy Innocents in the calendar, which commemorates the slaughter of male children under two years of age by Herod, seeking to kill the Christ child. The need for redemption for the slaughter of the innocent by Sir Geoffrey Luttrell in the Scottish Wars is the underlying cause of the creation of the memory scheme in the Luttrell Psalter as an element in spiritual guidance. This initial figure points to the start of the itinerary of memory places that is Augustine's *ductus*.

The marginal imagery of folio 35v (Fig. 3) contains a very scrappy peacock, particularly when compared to the other naturalistic depictions of animals by the Luttrell Master. On closer examination it is not actually a full peacock but a peacock feather bent into a peacock shape with merely the addition of feet and eyes. This refers to the *imago agens* that Eriugena creates in *Periphyseon*, the *penna pavonis*. (PP4.749C). Above it, in the same margin, is the figure of Lady Philosophy, in whom Eriugena, following Boethius' *Consolation*, sees the power to open the door of heaven and, in view of her ability to be both heavenly and earthly, after long study to bring the soul to an uncomplicated intuition where visions of the heavenly and earthly can combine. The Psalter layout of the two images is the same as their position in Eriugena's text, (fortuitously in the same column, PP4.749 in Migne's edition of *Periphyseon*, at point A for philosophy and point C for the feather of the peacock.) Depicted in the Psalter as a babewyn, a hybrid of human, animal and plant that plays on the similarity/dissimilarity, Lady Philosophy's lower body ends in a long tendril of foliage that links her into the *penna pavonis*. In Eriugena's text philosophy is the dialectic approach to all matters, dissecting them, he says, into genera and species just

as creation divides animals into genera and species. He affirms that dialectic is part of creation, created in the nature of all things by God in his guise as the Author of all arts that are truly arts, to be discovered in them by wise men. When dialectic philosophy meets the apparent contradictions of Scripture there is the need to remember the peacock's feather. "The understanding of God's words is manifold and infinite. Why, in one and the same feather of a peacock, a remarkable, beautiful variety of countless colors (*sic*) is seen in one and the same spot of a small part of the same feather."⁴⁵⁸ Colour was considered to be activated by light, which allows its beauty to become fully apparent. For the neo-Platonist Plotinus this light was reason and this idea fed into the Christian understanding of God as light.⁴⁵⁹ The feather may seem blue at one time and green at another but both are true because both result from God's light. Seemingly contradictory Scripture passages such as 1 Cor 13:12 (seeing God face-to-face) and 1 Tim 6:16 (that God will remain in a light inaccessible to human knowledge) must both be true because all words of Scripture are God's, who is Truth. It is for philosophy to apply reason in seeking to further understanding but not to eliminate one or the other passage by means of reason.⁴⁶⁰

Ductus: the quire gatherings – physical structure and the unique 'telescopic' design feature in the Master's pictorial rendering of Eriugena's paranomastic imago agens

The Luttrell Master places his most idiosyncratic *imago agens*, his pictorial rendering of Eriugena's paranomastic letter figure

1 *quae creat et non creatur*

2 *quae creatur et creat*

3 *quae creatur et non creat*

4 *quae nec creat et nec creatur*⁴⁶¹

458Trans. Uhlfeder, p. 216

459"The simple beauty of a colour is derived from a form that dominates the obscurity of matter and from the presence of an incorporeal light that is reason and idea." Plotinus, *The Enneads*, I.6 trans. by Stephen MacKenna (Burdett: Larson Publications, 1992)

460See Carabine, p. 18 - 20

461 The first is the division into what creates and is not created; the second into what is created and creates; the third into what is created and does not create; the fourth into what neither creates nor is created.

on the folio where the psalter would have landed if you place it on its spine and gently allow it to fall open. (Fig. 5) This is the mid-point of the binding, there are thirteen quires on either side, each quire containing six sheets of vellum folded in half, except one that contained five. This he would have calculated at the time that the psalter existed only as a number of prepared calf skins, at which time he also foresaw that one quire would have to be adjusted to accommodate the position of the only large miniature of Sir Geoffrey on his warhorse.⁴⁶² He therefore intended this *imago agens* to be easily found for its own sake - it stands in no relation to the psalm above it. Millar had to invent a descriptive name for a design feature of this image – 'telescopic' - because it is found in no other manuscript illumination or other work in any other media. The Master therefore also went to considerable trouble to create something uniquely dissimilar that could convey how the Creator “proceeds into all, is made in each one and contains all...it proceeds into everything, remains in itself and always moves though standing still”.⁴⁶³ 'Telescopic' refers to the segmented nature of the limbs and the neck, that can draw up and down into four different positions. It is the base of this babewyn that in its upper body immediately references Eriugena's famous *penna pavonis* of Scripture, discussed above, being an invented bird/lizard type hybrid with a trailing wing, patterned with the eyes of a peacock feather, that can retract snail-like into an all-embracing shell. It bears a peacock's sharp beak and crown that have been weaponised into blade-like appendages, reminiscent of the students' quills that became weapons in their attack on Eriugena. It has the sinuous flow of all his hybrid figures, yet possesses a curious stillness, due to its strange texture.⁴⁶⁴

This stillness, the opposite of the 'normal' *agens* aspect of the *imago*, is a marker statement of Eriugena's core theology, that there is no neo-Platonic exit from and return to Paradise because Paradise is a mere *figurata locutio*, a figure of speech by

462Each quire starts life as a skin (here vellum, which is calf but sheep or goat is also possible) folded in half, then possibly in half again before being cut along the upper and lower edges. This means in the case of the Luttrell Psalter that f.1 is one piece of skin with f.12, f.2 with f.11 (and so on, 3-10, 4-9, 5-8, 6-7) and together form the first quire. Everything is loose until the work is finished and then each quire is sewn together and the quires sewn into the binding. The Eriugena figure is on the outside folio of the thirteenth quire, the seventeenth quire is one fold short to allow for the positioning of Sir Geoffrey.

463Book 3 644D-645A Uhlfeder, p. 154-155

464Millar, p. 38 notes that it is 'telescopic'. Brown, p. 145 notices the strange stillness of the figure. “It has a metallic or leathern appearance, like an automaton”. The Luttrell Master is known for his remarkable depiction of texture that contributes to the impression that whatever is depicted, either babewyn or scene of rural life, is caught suspended in mid-motion.

which holy scripture signifies the human nature that was made in the image of God.⁴⁶⁵ Paradise is made up of earth, soil, water, air and ether. The fertile soil is the essential body which possesses a possible immortality in potency for the natural body is said to die because it appears to share the death of that which is added to it ; but in fact it is always immortal in itself. This is a reminder of Augustine's command in *De Trinitate* (10.8.11) to examine oneself in spiritual exercise in order to remove what has become glued to us. Water is the sense of the incorruptible body able to receive forms and formed by imagines of sensible things without being deceived. Air is reason, illuminated by rays of divine wisdom, by which it might have knowledge of all things. Ether is the mind, centred on the divine nature in an eternal and ineffable motion and mutable stability. Thus Genesis actually teaches a rearranging of the letters and vowels of the third division to conform to that of the first, which is why the fourth division cannot be.⁴⁶⁶ Jean Potter in her introduction to Uhlfeder's translation of *Periphyseon* uses the term 'telescopic' to describe Eriugena's understanding of the creation narrative.

All events in Eden are telescoped into one timeless moment: simultaneous with his creation were man's sin and his downfall. With that mysterious act time and space began, and there came about the division and dispersal of all the primordial causal unities into the myriad things of the familiar world of empirical effects.⁴⁶⁷

Creator and creation are simultaneously at the beginning and at the end, in the sense of creation's participation in the Creator. The painting technique here allows simultaneous to include seamless to express the 'all-in-one-go' of timeless. It is a visual paronomasia, equivalent of Eriugena's *semel, simul et semper*, which itself, as discussed in the preceding chapter, is a paronomasia of Augustine's *Confessionum* 12.15.18. Unlike other illuminators of the period the Luttrell Master does not outline his images in black which separates an arm from a body, for example. He uses tonal variations of the colour he has chosen, rather than introducing other pigments. In this image his colour palette is composed of a limited range of colours, just as Eriugena used a limited palette of vowels and consonants. He differentiates by conveying varying textures of the same colour. Eriugena does not just use paronomasia in his

465Eriugena, *PP822A-822C*

466Ibid, *PP856B*

467Uhlfeder, Introduction p. xxxvii

introductory word image, he uses allusive paronomasia in the biblical sense, where a possibly contentious idea is hooked linguistically onto accepted Biblical authority that God created the world. More than that, Eriugena in *Periphyseon* is using internal paronomasia – his opening pattern, that God creates and is not created is anchored in what would be an acceptable credal statement. It is its following threefold rearranging to discuss primordial causes, created kind and non-creation that continues to give rise to debate. In the same way the Luttrell Master's hybrid, as such, is just another witty hybrid but its flow into telescopic neck and legs causes ongoing puzzlement. He may be influenced by the snail bearing the golden ratio that he created so realistically on f. 160r (Fig. 6) under the image of Sir Geoffrey and his servants being towed in their rowing boat (see above). There is a similar fascination with the texture of the snail, the contrast between the body and the shell, though both are one creature and both are composed of the same material, the egg, that as the creature grew gradually hardened into shape from its original soft translucence.

The *imago agens* does not illustrate the psalm above it. However, this psalm is linked to the one psalm verse that is illustrated, Vulgate 93:6, the slaughter of the innocents (see above). It is psalm 81, which asks for justice for the weak and the orphans and it is so arranged that the words *peccatoris liberate* sit portentously above the *imago*. The Master intends this to be viewed repeatedly because the *imago* is in the tradition of Aristotelian aporia within spiritual exercise, that is there is no right, final interpretation at this time but a demand for on-going consideration. One thing is non-negotiable, however, and that is that there is a differentiation, it is not pantheism.. This is so important that the Luttrell Master went to great lengths to invent an illumination technique that suggests it, now termed 'telescopic'. The creation is not God, even though He has flowed or is flowing or is - or perhaps a combination of all three - in all parts of it. Humanity is not God but through participation in God all the elements are there to enable partaking in the divine nature.⁴⁶⁸ The Luttrell Master's image therefore works like one of Aristotle's aporia, in demanding on-going attention rather than an inauthentic solution. It is possible to view the image as a hybrid divided into segments or as a hybrid united through colour and texture. The point of the spiritual exercise is not to solve the enigma but to enable a change of perspective so that the latter comes ever more clearly into focus. This ultimately will provide the

⁴⁶⁸ Peter 1:2 “that you may become partakers of the divine nature”.

comfort that Sir Geoffrey seeks from his confessor.

Sir Geoffrey, John and academic assassination

John Luttrell is recorded in wider history only for the bit part he played in the drama of William of Ockham's life.⁴⁶⁹ However, this role provides evidence for events in his own life, in that the letter he wrote to the king asking for permission to travel to Avignon in 1323 still exists. In his petition to the king to be allowed to travel to the Papal Court he specifically asks for Sir Geoffrey Scrope to endorse the petition. Sir Geoffrey Luttrell had married two of his sons to two of Sir Geoffrey Scrope's daughters, an important ally in the turbulent times of Edward II leading up to his regicide.⁴⁷⁰ In it John also petitions the king for assistance in a dastardly plot by scholars and masters, assisted by the mayor, ministers and bailiffs of Oxford, as well as the Bishop of Lincoln, that has removed him from his chancellorship of Oxford and asks the king to demand that the Archbishop of Canterbury forbid the errors uttered at Oxford. He had been incepted as Doctor of Theology in on 15 October 1317 and elected chancellor a few days after Ockham began lecturing on the Sentences, aspects of these lectures being the substance of his trial in Avignon.⁴⁷¹ At some point the students had forcibly entered the Dominican church, desecrating the altars and threatening to burn it down and the Dominicans had been shunned in the streets and excluded from University functions.⁴⁷² The legend of Eriugena's death, which William of Malmesbury had brought to the Abbey library along with a copy of Eriugena's *Periphyseon* in the twelfth century, was growing in popularity over time, to the extent that by 1586 he was entered in the *Roman Martyrology* as 'St Iohannes Scottus'. The

469 Before their status as illuminated manuscript stars the Lincoln Luttrells were known in genealogies as a minor branch of the Somerset and Dunster Luttrells. In the Somerset account John is referred to discretely in a footnote. "In the reign of King Edw. II. flourished John Luttrell, Chancellor of the University of Oxford, from the year 1317 to 1324.- Antiq. Oxford". James Savage, *History of the Hundred of Carhampton, in the County of Somerset* (Bristol: William Strong, Clare Street, 1830), p. 505. Sir H. Maxwell Lyte, *A History of Dunster*, vol.ii (London: St Catherine's Press, 1909), Appendix C, pp. 504-38 refers to him as the eight child of Sir Geoffrey's father, Sir Robert Luttrell, "John Luttrell, a theologian of some note, Chancellor of the University of Oxford in 1317, is known to have been a bastard.". The Church was a refuge for illegitimate sons whose parents bought them a dispensation to enable ordination and illegitimacy was then no bar to rising to high office. See Helen Sarah Matthews, 'Illegitimacy and English Landed Society c.1285-c.1500', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, Royal Holloway, 2013), pp. 198-9

470 National archives, reference no. SC 8/267/13337, nationalarchives.gov.uk

471 C. K. Brampton 'Personalities at the Process against Ockham at Avignon, 1324-26, *Franciscan Studies* Vol.26 (1966), pp. 4-25

472 H. E. Salter, W. A. Pantin and H. G. Richardson, *Formularies which bear on the history of Oxford* (Oxford: OUP, 1942), pp. 3-5

Master undoubtedly had knowledge of Eriugena's theology but could his own personal experience of academic assassination have influenced this choice of opening image? The king had written to the Pope demanding John's return as a valued servant.⁴⁷³ The Pope had refused because he too valued him and after his return granted him the episcopal seat at Salisbury in 1331. He was known for his debating skills, particularly in the university quodlibetal warfare that depended on the *ars memorativa* rhetorical memory skills.⁴⁷⁴ An earlier visit to Avignon in 1318 had impressed Pope John XXII who was a fellow Thomist.⁴⁷⁵ These visits would have allowed John to study the illumination in the local scriptoria and account for the French or Italian influence that Michelle Brown notes in the Master's style.⁴⁷⁶

The opening image may have been an in-joke among the brothers and would reveal something of the personal relationship of the Master to the family, who would share his indignation and to the estate. He undoubtedly had more than a superficial knowledge of estate life, as can be seen if one considers details not addressed in any of the Psalter scholarship. What is known as the spinning scene (f. 193r) does not actually involve spinning at all, the two ladies are carding and twining spun threads into a thicker ply, as can be seen from the position of the fingers. These are the ladies of the house, the long, elegant folds of their gowns trailing on the ground. This is the glamorous part of the thread process. The actual spinning, as the Master shows (f. 166r), the hard drudgery of turning spindle and distaff in every spare moment, is done by the serf whose short gown reveals bare feet, as she guards the hens. The portrayal of the skep (f. 204r) - not hive, as given in the Psalter scholarship - is so detailed one could use it as a blueprint to construct one today. What is noted as trees or vegetation close by is in fact a carefully maintained willow coppice whose pliable wands of one year's growth provided the material from which the skep was woven, vital material when the skeps and bees were destroyed each year to take the honey and wax crop. The harvest scene (f. 172r) is not a bucolic ballet, as is usual in illumination but one of obvious back pain due to the bent-over position caused by the short-handled sickles. The windmill (f.

473 A. Pelzer, ed. 'Les 51 articles de Guillaume Occam censurés, en Avignon, en 1326', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 18 (1922), pp. 246-7

474 He is referred to as having a "plenitudo omnis sapientiae", a "subtilitas opponendi" and a "maxima gratia bene et solempniter disputandi" in a letter of Stephen of Kettelburgh while he was still chancellor. H. E. Salter, *Snappe's Formulary* (Oxford: OUP, 1924), p. 303

475 A. Wood, (tr. J Gutch), *The History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford I* (Oxford: printed for the editor, 1792), p. 392

476 Brown, p.83

158r) is atypical for England but with its detailed brick tower, small windows and tiled roof is firmly Dutch, the adjoining council to Irnhem still being known today as Holland because of the influx of Dutch dyke and dam masters in the fourteenth century. The Master had obviously seen this particular mill in this place. One scene in particular may attest to the relationship between the Master and Sir Geoffrey as boys, the scene where a well-dressed boy has climbed a cherry tree to eat the fruit (f. 196v.) Children are otherwise remarkable in these folios by their absence. Here he has left his little shoes below to climb in his bright red stockings and as an irate adult approaches he sits in the tree and stuffs the cherries in so quickly that his cheeks are full of little bumps. His will to eat the cherries overcomes the memory of the punishment he knew was coming. Is John, in his role as spiritual guide, reminding Sir Geoffrey of an early incidence for the contemplation of *memoria, intellectus, voluntas*, or maybe wryly remembering himself in the tree?

John Luttrell died in 1335 and the Psalter illumination remained unfinished. A date for the Psalter illumination work could therefore be proposed as the time between Lady Day 1334 and his death in 1335, the vellum and quire planning and then calligraphy at some point before this. This would accord with the age of the family members portrayed. It would explain why John is not mentioned in Sir Geoffrey's will, who by his death in 1345 had acquired other clerics and confessors, who are left sums, none of whom have Dominican connections.⁴⁷⁷ Sir Geoffrey's overriding concern remained the state of his soul, making considerable inroads into his son's inheritance to order an inordinate number of wax candles be lit at his funeral and to fund on-going masses by twenty chaplains for his soul over the following 5 years at Irnhem, as well as in 15 other chapels including St Paul's in London, the cathedrals of Canterbury and York and widespread charitable donation to eleven other churches and chapels.

The Dominicans and memory after death

The Dominican friars who wandered the length and breadth of Europe at this time enabled the spread of the *ars memorativa* by teaching it to those in their pastoral care, motivated by Aquinas's insistence on "the continuity in the manner of knowing

⁴⁷⁷ MS 121, New College, Oxford

between this life and the next”.⁴⁷⁸ Aquinas addresses the subject in Question 89, a.5.4 of the first part of the *Summa Theologiae* in the part now known as the treatise on human nature. It is put to him that knowledge is sometimes destroyed by physical illness or such like and that death is a rather extreme form of illness. It has obviously preyed greatly on his mind for when Bernard Gui prepared an account of Aquinas's life shortly after his death, with a view to his beatification, he recounts a meeting between Aquinas and a colleague who it later transpired had died. On hearing this Aquinas immediately asks him “What is the right solution of that problem we used often to discuss together, whether knowledge gained in this life remains in the soul after death?”⁴⁷⁹ The answer was vague but in the contra to question 89 Aquinas quotes firmly from Jerome's letter to Paulinus, “Let us learn on earth the knowledge that stays with us in heaven”.⁴⁸⁰ Bauerschmidt would even place Aquinas's whole intellectual project as being motivated primarily by his being a Dominican confessor.⁴⁸¹ Aquinas' insistence on the importance of physical sensual perception as the start of knowledge becomes a theological issue when considering the physical resurrection of the individual body after death, when God, through grace, is experienced in the beatific vision. Even when, after death, there are no more inputs from life in this world, the thoughts and memories that are a continuing part of the individual will always bear traces of the physical world. This is because, following Albertus's description of the order's memory scheme, memory is both the storage of thoughts initially triggered by sense perception and their recollection. Recollection, that is using those thoughts stored in memory to generate other thoughts in a mental realm that seems to have no connection with the physical world will, in fact, be so connected because the original thought, even if it is almost what would be called sub-conscious now, was always linked to a physical input. Memory had to be honed by reasoning and contemplation because it was going to be a part of the life to come as an integral part of the soul that was thus linked to the body before and after death.

478 T. L. Smith, *Thomas Aquinas' Trinitarian Theology* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), p. 51

479 *The Life of Saint Thomas Aquinas: Biographical Documents*, trans. and ed. by Kenelm Foster (London: Green & Co, 1959), pp. 40-41

480 tr. Pasnau, p. 212

481 F. C. Bauerschmidt, *Thomas Aquinas: Faith, Reason and Following Christ* (Oxford: OUP, 2013), pp. 41-81. Bauerschmidt compares van Steenberghen, McInery, Gilson, Kerr, Pieper and Hadot's views on Aquinas's intellectual project.

Concluding Thoughts

The *imago agens*, a visual image that includes both the pictorial and the patterning of letters, is an integral part of the *ars memorativa* considered to have been formalized by Simonides in Greece around the year 520 BC. As an *ars* it is a learned practice, deliberately and continuously applied to curate one's memory and enable recollection, for the composition of new material. It thus had a place in rhetoric, in dialectic argument, in university dispute and in the creation of works such as the great scholastic *Summae*. It enabled the academic nature of the extempore preaching of the far wandering friars, who could carry no codices. It also informed their role as confessors to the laity and this was because of the other elements of *affectus* and *intentio* within the *ars* that allowed it to become aligned with the practice of spiritual exercise, firstly within the community of philosophers in Ancient Greece and later in Christian monastic communities.

Central to this crossover from the philosophical practice of spiritual exercise to that of the Christian monastic communities is Augustine's appreciation of Cicero. This had a number of impacts on the *ars*. Firstly, Augustine considered that Cicero had been the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which was the best description of how the *ars* was to be used, set in a rhetorical and dialectical context. Cicero gave the *Rhetorica* an authority that lasted almost into the twentieth century, ensuring, for example, that when the works of Aristotle were newly discovered by the scholastics, theologians such as Albertus and Aquinas sought to reconcile them with the *Rhetorica*. This is one of the loops within its chronology, as Aristotle had contributed to the *ars* within the *Rhetorica* by introducing it into dialectic from rhetoric and affirming the greater power of *affectus*, the emotional retention, of *imagines* that were dissimilar or the opposite to what was to be remembered. Secondly, in his own work *De Oratore* Cicero both recounted the story of Simonides and more importantly, recommended the use of the *imago agens* for those intimations of understanding that are beyond straightforward words or thoughts but whose place in the memory can be marked.

Things not seen and not lying in the field of visual discernment are earmarked, as it were, by a sort of outline and image and shape so that we can keep hold, as it were by an act of sight

things that we can scarcely embrace by an act of thought.⁴⁸²

Thirdly, he provided in his *Tusculan Disputations* the best description of *intentio* as the tuning up of oneself in harmony with the supreme being to enable right judgement in the curation of one's memory. This is linked, fourthly, to his description of the spiritual exercises that Augustine quotes in his work *De Trinitate*.

In *De Trinitate* Augustine uses *imagines agentes*, in the form of the psychological triads in humanity because he is addressing an issue that fits Cicero's description of the *imagines'* particular use in matters that cannot be straightforwardly expressed. This matter for Augustine is the Trinitarian nature of God, which occasions transitory thoughts of things not transitory. At the same time this work is an exercise in spiritual discipline, where, following Aristotle's description of the gap that always remains when discussing aporia, it is important that the practitioner understand the ongoing, though hopefully lessening, incompleteness of understanding as part of the knowledge of the subject being considered. Augustine quotes from Cicero's dialogue *Hortensius* to explain the eschatological link between systematic theology and spiritual exercise.

But if, as the ancient philosophers agreed – and indeed the greatest and by far the most illustrious among them – that we have eternal and divine soul, then we must needs think, that the more they were always in their proper course, that is, in reason and in an eagerness for investigating, and the less they mingled with and became entangled in the vices and delusions of men, so much the easier would be their ascent and return to heaven.....Therefore, to end my discourse at last, if we wish either for a peaceful extinction when we have spent our life in the pursuit of these subjects, or to migrate without delay from this home to another that is certainly much better, we must devote all our labor (sic) and care to these studies.⁴⁸³

Thus the systematic study of theology in the monastic community is part of the spiritual exercises as is the *ars memorativa*, whose *imago agens, intentione and affectus* assist in the remembrance and subsequent recollection of what has been contemplated.

There is a more fundamental need for a curated memory, however. At the end of Book 10 of his *De Trinitate*, when he is bringing his discussion of the *catena* of triads

482 Sutton & Rackham, p. 469

483 tr. McKenna in Matthews, pp. 165-166

in humanity to a close Augustine warns that if the gap between memory and knowledge is forgotten, we forget that there was a time when we did not know something and then become complacent, forgetting that there had ever been a need to search for that knowledge. To stop searching is to assume that one has found everything. To assume one has found understanding of God is to deny oneself that very God. He is an early proponent of the cliché that absence makes the heart grow fonder.

And love itself is not so plainly felt when the sense of need does not reveal its existence, since the loved object is always present.⁴⁸⁴

A curated memory ensures that one remembers what one has not remembered before, sees what one has not seen before and loves what one has not loved before. Without it love of God can be marred by complacency.

The positioning of both the above passages from Augustine's *De Trinitate* are important because they reveal that he is using rhetorical techniques from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* with the *ars memorativa*. The first, revealing that his work is a work of spiritual exercise comes at what would have been the very end if an explanatory Book 15 had not become necessary due to the piecemeal circulation of his treatise many years before its completion. The second comes at the end of the section on the triads in Book 10, after which he announces that he is going to approach his investigation from a different angle, which in the *Rhetorica* is part of descanting on a theme. The use of *imagines agentes* always reveals that there is something not quite straight forward going on. He is using paralipsis, whereby one seems to agree with one's opponents, in order to gently manoeuvre them into a position where they agree with you because when you spring the denouement on them, they feel it was their idea all along. Augustine offers no definition of the Trinity but a positive assessment of the nature of the gap between creation and its Creator that allows the infinite magnitude of the Creator in his Trinitarian nature to be better understood. The gap demands ethical behaviour, liturgical practice, study, contemplation, in short, the spiritual exercises.

Finally, Augustine turns to the practical needs of the *ars*, developing the practice of *ductus* whereby one plans the routes between all the *imagines agentes* that

484 *ibid*, p. 59

point to the stored caches. Nor does he neglect the importance of forgetting as a structured activity, of removing material from the cache. The point of spiritual exercise, he says in Book 10, is not to contemplate oneself as if one could withdraw from oneself but to withdraw from oneself that which one has added to oneself. Augustine has learnt from his study of St Paul's words from his letter to the Corinthians "now we look in a glass darkly, then we shall see face to face", in connection with the Trinity that the true enigma to which Paul refers is humanity's knowledge of itself, made in the image of God though it may be.

Eriugena reveals a close knowledge of Augustine's *De Trinitate* in his work *Periphyseon*. With his knowledge of the Greek Christian Fathers, particularly Dionysius, comes a more apophatic approach to the enigma that is humanity to itself, as revealed in the second of *Periphyseon's* five books.

For the Creator (Who is) invisible and incomprehensible and passes all understanding created His image similar to Himself in all these things. For even our intellect is not known as to what it is in its essence either by itself or by any other save God Who alone knows what He has made; but as concerning its Creator it knows only that He is but does not perceive what He is.⁴⁸⁵

We are indeed as unknowable to ourselves as He is to us, precisely because we are made in His image.

Eriugena also uses paralipsis and indeed gives a miniaturised summing up of *De Trinitate* using this rhetorical technique. His student blithely asserts that he knows all about the Trinity because St Augustine has summed it up in his *De Trinitate* as *mens, notitia, amor*. Eriugena gently unpacks the student's certainty, beginning with a discussion of the relationship between fire, heat and light until the student realises that all they can do is investigate as far as their weak minds allow but not attempt to jump to any definition. At which point the student asks if they could now move on – at this point one almost feels his teacher repressing a smile. (603A-615D) He is not always so gentle with his student, often using the more Aristotelian approach to spiritual exercise in which the student is made forcefully aware of the gap in the aporia under discussion and reduced to despair by being thrown out of his comfort zone. If one

485 tr. O'Meara, 585B, pp. 190-191

does not recognize the use of paralipsis in spiritual exercise Eriugena's work indeed seem to lack internal coherence.

From the very opening sentence of his work, however, Eriugena makes it clear that this is systematic theology in its spiritual exercise guise, using the technical language of the *ars memorativa* with regard to *intentione* and *cogitare*, putting images together as part of the curation of recollection. He sums up his whole theory of the differentiation of nature in a letter pattern of just five consonants and four vowels that cover the beginning and end of the created world within the infinity of the Creator, an aural and visual *imago agens*. It is supremely memorable in a way that does not rely on actually understanding what it might mean – because this would be impossible at this time. What is held within this pattern is elaborated on in five books but the result is a question mark – what will It create, when It will be all things in all things and will not appear in anything but Itself? This aporia is captured but not closed by the opening *imago agens*,

quae creat et non creatur
quae creatur et creat
quae creatur et non creat
quae nec creat et nec creatur

At the same time this *imago* is totally reassuring. Nothing is outside the five consonants and four vowels, everything participates and always will in its Creator. This *imago agens* is created using another rhetorical technique from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, paronomasia. This involves linking words through their letter patterns to each other and in allusive paronomasia can be used to link ideas to a more established source, as Eriugena does when he uses expressions from the works of Augustine to remain anchored in him, as it were, when his ideas wander into more contentious fields. *Simul et semel et semper*, originally used by Augustine in his *De Genesii ad litteram*, is a favourite and like all *imagines agentes* not only offer a sign post for memory work but also indicate that something not straightforward is going on.

Eriugena also contributes to the theological underpinning of the *imago agens* through his writing on dissimilar images in his commentary on Dionysius's *Celestial*

Hierarchy. His translations of Dionysius made the latter's comment on dissimilar shapes available for centuries of academic and spiritual use of the *ars memorativa*.

Furthermore, I doubt that anyone would refuse to acknowledge that incongruities are more suitable for lifting our minds up into the domain of the spiritual than similarities are. High-flown shapes could well mislead someone into thinking that the heavenly beings are gleaming men.⁴⁸⁶

The shock of the dissimilar, the unexpected, reinforces the gap between creation and Creator and is also a spur to remain attentive.

Eriugena's theology was captured in his lifetime by solid physical means in the world of the monastic scriptoria, on the cover made of precious metal and jewels of the Lindau Gospels. This theology found on-going refuge in the scriptoria, the home of systematic theology, spiritual exercise and the *ars memorativa*. A study of the use of the *imago agens* would thus refute the contention that Eriugena is “the loneliest figure in the history of European thought.....whatever adequate appreciation of his remarkable genius there has been belongs to modern times.”⁴⁸⁷

A study of the use of the *imago agens* would also challenge the assertion of Eric Millar that the work of the Luttrell Master was “incoherent” and inspired by a mind that was not “normal” but “of a decidedly morbid tendency”.⁴⁸⁸ An alternative assessment of such work was first mooted some thirty years later in the field of memory studies by Frances Yates.

Are the strange figures to be seen on the pages of manuscripts and in all forms of medieval art not so much the revelation of a tortured psychology as evidence that the Middle Ages, when men had to remember, followed classical rules for making memorable images? Is the proliferation of new imagery in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries related to the renewed emphasis on memory by the scholastics?⁴⁸⁹

This renewed emphasis on memory in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was a

486 tr. Luibheid, p. 150

487 Henry Bett, *Johannes Scotus Eriugena: A Study in Mediaeval Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, this ed. 2014), p. 1

488 Millar, p. 13, 16

489 Yates, p. 112

result of the theological significance of memory within Dominican eschatology. All thought is stored in the memory but crucially only some is chosen (today we would say consciously or unconsciously but that would be anachronistic here) for recollection. That choice to recollect is for the Dominican order, following the teaching and practical example of their theologians Albertus and Aquinas, the basis of soul formation through spiritual exercise. This soul formation contributed, never forgetting the grace of God, both to the ethical life here below and to the on-going relationship with God that would allow one to partake in the beatific vision.

When one examines the visual evidence in the Luttrell Psalter through this theological lens the seeming incoherence is resolved. The Master lays a very clear Augustinian *ductus* through the manuscript, visually quoting works by Albertus and Aquinas and Eriugena as he goes. He firstly explains why he is doing this, which is to pastorally assist his patron to prepare himself for the beatific vision, following the Dominican instruction for confessors to teach the *ars memorativa* to the laity as part of spiritual exercise. The babewyn armed with a pen at the very beginning of the codex both refers to the legend of Eriugena's death and points to the date of the Feast of the Slaughter of the Innocents. The mass slaughter in the Scottish Wars, in which Sir Geoffrey Luttrell had to take part as a feudal lord, was the cause of his anxiety about the state of his soul and the illumination of the Psalter depicts such slaughter on the same folio as depiction of the ram which gave Albertus nightmares when he was studying the *ars memorativa* in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. The Master takes a snippet of Aquinas's Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics as the template for the memory places he constructs for the *ars memorativa*, the order of the lord as commander of the army, the ordering of his household family and servants and the order of plants and animals. This last order he subjects to the disorder of the dissimilar *imagines agentes* in the *ars memorativa* that gained theological meaning from Eriugena's study of Dionysius. Following the *ductus* also reveals that the feast scene takes place on the Feast of the Annunciation on a 25 March that is also a Good Friday. If one then looks at the visual evidence of the calendar through this lens that theology has provided one can answer major practical questions with regard to the nature of the feast scene and to the date of the Psalter.

Visual evidence of the most practical kind also combines with an understanding

of the theological background of the *imagines agentes* to provide a reading of the unique telescopic figure at the physical and theological centre of the Psalter. This figure is the distillation of a lifetime of study by the Dominican Doctor of Theology for his half-brother's pastoral care. The translation into a babewyn of the letter pattern of Eriugena's *quae creat et non creatur, quae creatur et creat, quae creatur et non creat, quae nec creat et nec creatur* provides the patron of the Psalter with the aporetic material needed for ongoing spiritual exercise, guided by his Dominican confessor, in the eschatological hope that they and their memories had for the final beatific vision.

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6:Rhetorica

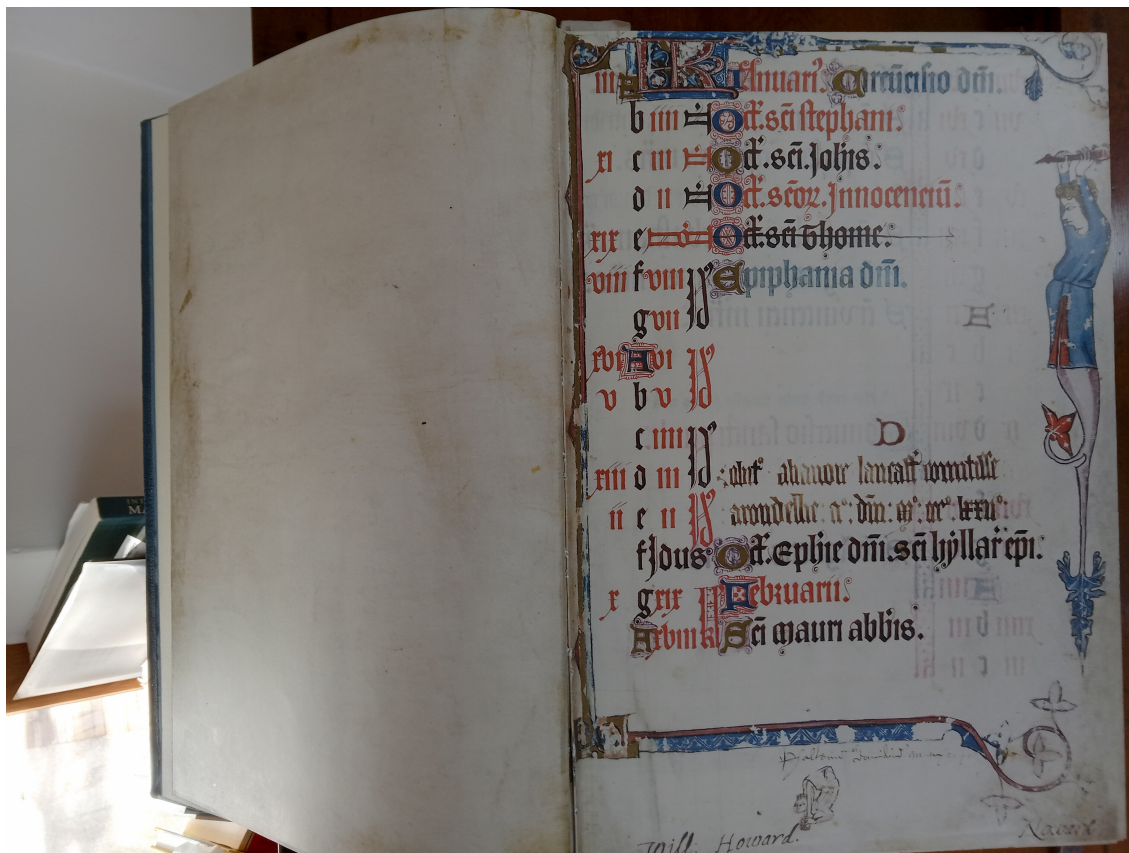


Fig. 1 Folio 1 recto Luttrell Psalter



Fig. 2 Folio 13 recto Luttrell Psalter

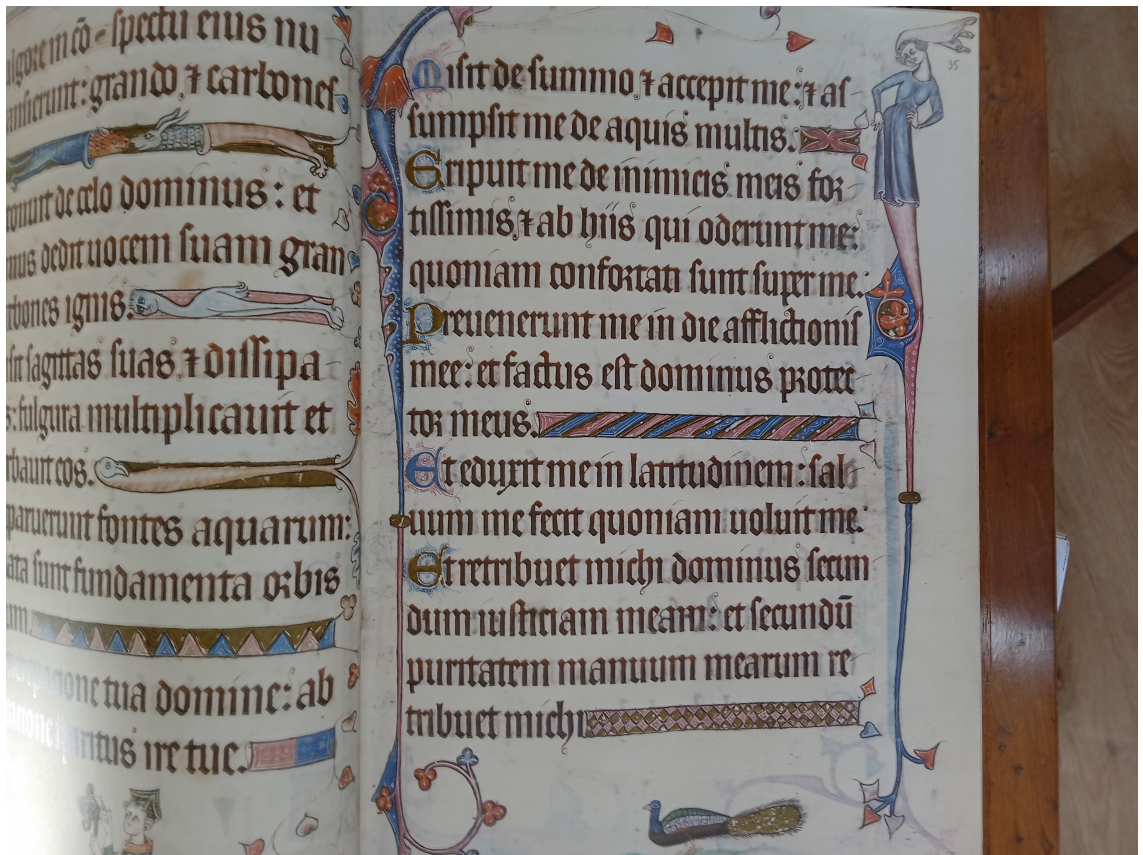


Fig. 3 Folio 35 recto Luttrell Psalter



Fig. 4 Folio 56 recto Luttrell Psalter



Fig. 5 Folio 150 verso Luttrell Psalter

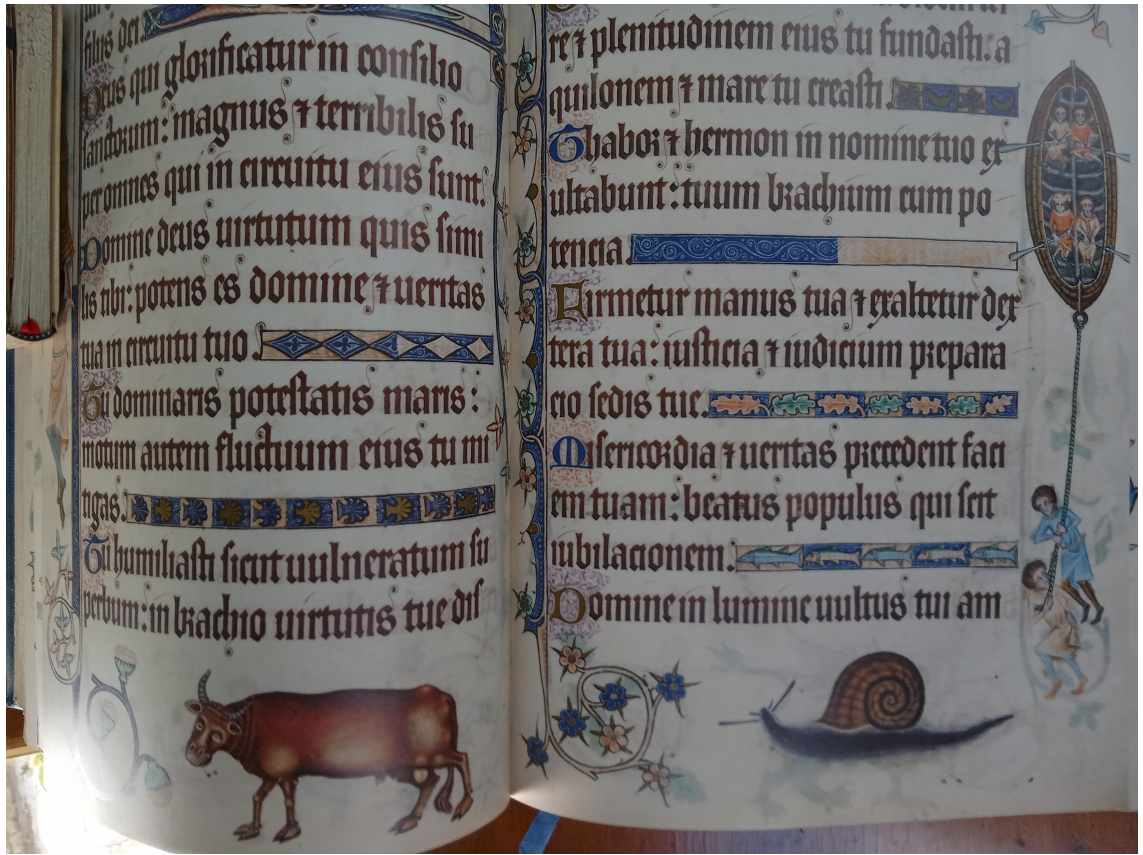


Fig. 6 Folio 160 recto Luttrell Psalter



Fig. 7 Folio 169 recto Luttrell Psalter

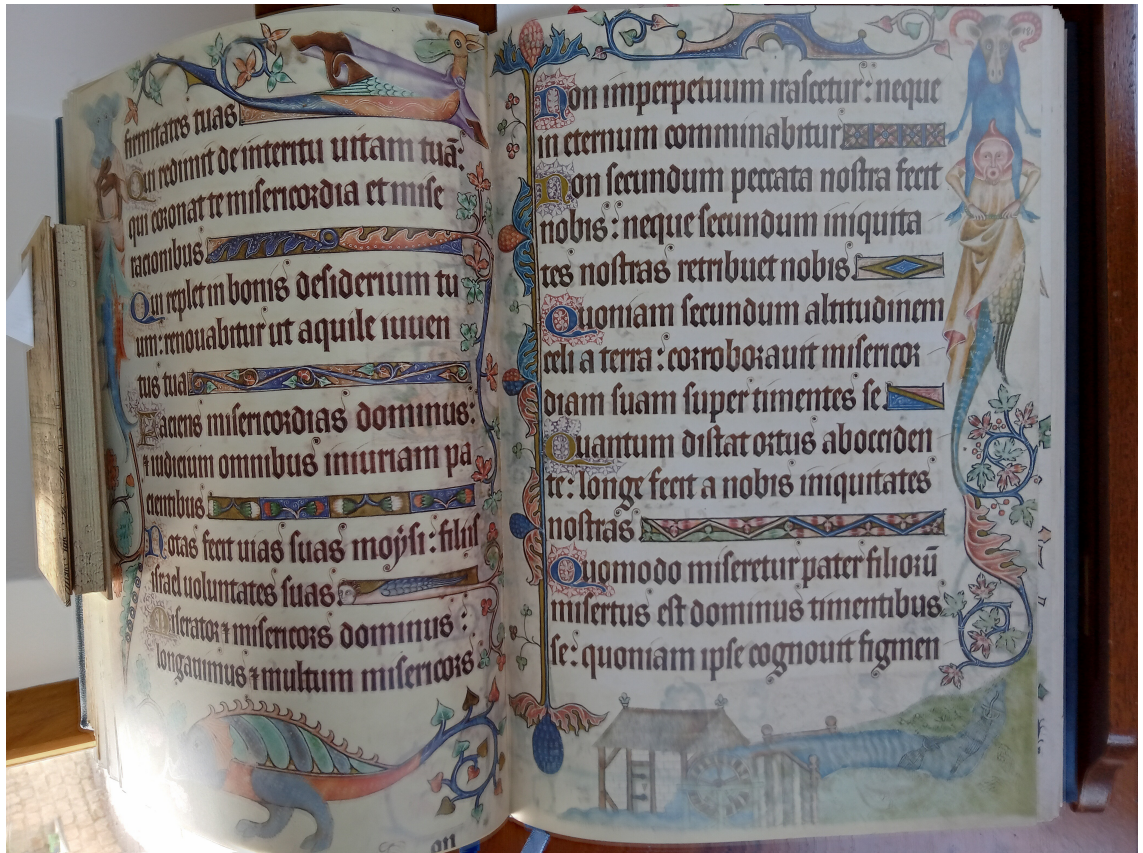


Fig. 8 Folio 181 recto Luttrell Psalter



Fig. 9 Folio 202 verso Luttrell Psalter



Fig. 10 Folio 208 recto Luttrell Psalter



Fig. 11 Cover Lindau Gospels (detail)



Fig. 12 Cover Lindau Gospels

