

ALESSANDRO D. CONTI

Paul of Venice's Theory of Divine Ideas and its Sources

Paul of Venice (Paulus Nicolettus Venetus, O.E.S.A., Udine 1369 - Padua 1429) was the most important Italian thinker of his time, and one of the most interesting authors of the Late Middle Ages¹. His philosophical theories, culminating in a metaphysics of essences which states the ontological and epistemological primacy of specific natures, or essences, over any other kind of beings, are the final output of the whole preceding realistic tradition of thought. He fully developed the new form of realism started by Wyclif and his Oxonian followers in the last decades of the 14th century and renewed Burley's attacks against nominalistic views. The metaphysical convictions which are the ground of his philosophy and rational theology are an original mix of some of the most fundamental theses of Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus, where much more stress is put on the ontological presuppositions and entailments of their doctrines. Simultaneously, he was open to influences from other authors, as he held in due consideration the positions of Albert the Great and Giles of Rome, and critically discussed the main proposals of some prominent Nominalists of the 14th century, such as William Ockham, John Buridan and Marsilius of Inghen. His global philosophical strategy was a renewed version of the Thomistic programme of a careful revision of Christian Platonist tradition of thought on the basis of the Aristotelian paradigm and

¹ On Paul of Venice's epistemological and metaphysical theories see A. D. CONTI, *Il problema della conoscibilità del singolare nella gnoseologia di Paolo Veneto*, « *Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo e Archivio muratoriano* », 98, 1992, pp. 323-382; and ID., *Esistenza e verità. Forme e strutture del reale in Paolo Veneto e nel pensiero filosofico del tardo medioevo*, Edizioni dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, Roma 1996. On Paul's life and work see A. R. PERREIAH, *Paul of Venice: a Bibliographical Guide*, Bowling Green, Philosophy Documentation Center 1986 (who erroneously thinks that Paul of Venice is not the author of the *Logica Magna*), and CONTI, *Esistenza e verità*, pp. 1-20. Paul of Venice's writings to which I shall refer in this article are the following: *Lectura super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* (henceforward *In Met.*), ms. Pavia, Biblioteca Universitaria, *fondo Aldini* 324 (P), corrected on the basis of the other extant ms. of the work: Casale Monferrato, Seminario vescovile I.a.3-6 (C); *Quaestio de universalibus* (henceforward *QdU*), ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 6433B, fols. 116ra-135va, corrected on the basis of three other mss: Fabriano, Biblioteca Comunale, 17; München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 8403, fols. 83v-91v; and Pisa, Biblioteca Cateriniana del Seminario, 99 (115), fols. 43ra-60vb.

system. The original Aristotelian concepts and schemes were appropriately modified in order to be suitable for translating into that given philosophical apparatus the main contents of the Christian faith.

An instance of this approach is Paul's theory of divine ideas. The Austin Master deals *ex professo* with this problem in his commentary on Book VII of the *Metaphysics* (third treatise, second chapter)² and at the end of the *Quaestio de universalibus* (tenth conclusion: *universalia platonica et idealia sunt ex natura rei in mente divina causaliter ponenda*). The medieval common theory of divine ideas, developed by Augustine³ in his *De diversis quaestionibus* 83, q. 46, was intended to provide a pattern of answer to the question of the order and intelligibility of the world. The world is comprehensible since God has created it according to some of the formal patterns eternally present in His mind: the divine ideas. As God thinks of them, He knows everything other than Himself, and, as He looks to them, He rationally creates everything. Paul of Venice's doctrine of divine ideas is substantially the same in both works mentioned, yet the points of view from which he approaches the issue are different. In his *Commentary on the Metaphysics* Paul presents his own theory contrasting it against a historical background represented by the three chief opinions on the subject, those of Thomas Aquinas (and Giles of Rome), Duns Scotus, and Ockham. In the *Quaestio de universalibus* he simply expounds his position on the matter, articulating it into six theses (corresponding to the answers to six *dubitationes*)⁴, and highlighting the connections between his theory of divine ideas and that of universals. Therefore the two texts are complementary and can be analysed together.

² See the text in the Appendix, pp. 000-000.

³ Cf. AUGUSTINE, *De diversis quaestionibus* 83, q. 46, *PL* 40, cols. 29-31; re-edited by A. MUTZENBECHER, *Quaestio de Ideis*, in the *Corpus Christianorum* 44A, Brepols, Turnhout 1975, pp. 70-73. On Augustine's theory of divine exemplarism see T. KONDOLEON, *Divine Exemplarism in Augustine*, « Augustinian Studies », 1, 1970, pp. 181-195; and A. UNA JUAREZ, *Estudio introductorio a la Quaestio de Ideis de San Agustín. Platonismo, medievo y modernidad*, forthcoming, « Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale », 15, 2004. For an assessment of this Augustinian doctrine in Antiquity and the Middle Ages, see L. M. DE RIJK, *Quaestio de ideis. Some Notes on an Important Chapter of Platonism*, in *Kephalaion. Studies in Greek Philosophy and Its Continuation*, eds. J. MANSFELD - L. M. DE RIJK, Van Gorcum, Assen 1975, pp. 204-231.

⁴ They are the following: 1) why in God there are not ideas of genera and individuals; 2) how it is possible that God knows and creates many individuals belonging to the same species by one and the same formal principle; 3) whether in God there are ideas of accidents or not (the answer is: yes); 4) whether in God there is an idea of prime matter or not (no); 5) whether in God there are ideas of mere possibles or not (yes); 6) whether in God there are ideas of privations (*privationes*) and negative states of affairs (*negationes*) or not (no).

In the following I shall present a sketch of Paul's theory of divine ideas and its sources mainly based on the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*. Thus, in the first section of this paper the theories of Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Ockham will be summed up. In the second, I shall try to show the differences between their real positions and Nicoletti's short account of them⁵, and to analyse Paul of Venice's most important arguments against each opinion. The third section will deal with Paul's own theory. Finally in the concluding remarks some general conclusions will be stated. It will emerge that for Paul of Venice: 1) God thinks *sub specie specierum* but creates *sub specie individuorum*; 2) divine ideas are the specific essences of individual things themselves, considered according to their intelligible being in the mind of God; 3) divine ideas are really the same as the divine essence and formally distinct from it; 4) divine ideas are both objects of knowledge and that by means of which God understands anything different from Himself; and 5) there are not ideas which correspond to many entities that are constitutive elements of the actual world, i.e., individuals, both substantial and accidental, and prime matter.

PAUL OF VENICE'S SOURCES

However useful and powerful, the standard medieval doctrine of divine exemplarism posed some problems. In addition to the obvious question concerning the nature and status of divine ideas, those most important are the three following: how to reconcile the divine absolute simplicity with the multiplicity of ideas; how to reconcile God's omniscience and providence with the necessity of ideas for Him in order to conceive everything other than Himself⁶; how to determine the range of the items covered by divine ideas. Medieval theories differ from each other because of the answer to these three questions rather than because of the statement of the basic problem of the nature and status of divine ideas, since almost all medieval authors, with the remarkable exception of Ockham and his followers, agree on the essential of it. By conceiving of His essence insofar as it is capable of being imitated in infinite number of different ways, God gives rise to ideas. Ideas provide Him with a perfect distinct awareness of any possible thing other than Himself. Ideas are really the same as the divine essence. The divine essence itself is

⁵ The quotations are *ad sensum*, and each one is no longer than some thirty lines.

⁶ M. McCORD ADAMS, *William Ockham*, 2 vols., University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame (Indiana) 1987, vol. II, p. 1036, calls these two problems 'Simplicity Problem' and 'Representationalist Problem' respectively.

similar to anything produced and produceable and contains the perfection of every limited being in an eminent way.

Paul's exposition of the chief opinions on divine ideas starts with the examination of Ockham's theory, goes on with the account of Duns Scotus's doctrine, and ends up with an analysis of Aquinas's (and Giles of Rome's)⁷ view. This order, which is just the opposite of the chronological one, is 'convergent', in the sense that Paul begins his exposition with the one farthest from his own view and finishes it with the one that is most similar⁸. Yet, in this section I shall follow the chronological order, which makes it possible to better understand the relationships among the various doctrines at issue.

Thomas Aquinas

Aquinas's most complete presentation of the theory of divine exemplarism can be found in the *quaestio* 3 of the *De veritate*, but his last word on the subject are the *quaestiones* 14 and 15 of the first part of his *Summa theologiae*.

According to Thomas⁹, divine ideas are really the same as the divine essence, but distinct in reason from it, as God is absolutely simple and nothing different from his essence is present in Him. The really existent divine essence is one simple thing, that implies no real internal complexity. Divine ideas are the divine essence *qua* viewed by itself as imitable, since God's knowledge originates entirely within Himself. Therefore the divine essence itself is the unique idea of all possible things (« God is the similitude of all things according to His essence ; hence ideas in God are nothing else but His essence »)¹⁰, while the multitude of divine ideas is produced by those

⁷ As often, Paul considers Giles's opinion substantially the same as that of Thomas. This is not trivially true, but, since his description of the opinion is shaped on that of Aquinas, even though seen by the lenses of some of Giles's claims, I shall not take into consideration Giles's own doctrine in this article, but I shall simply recall some feature of it when necessary.

⁸ The opinions of Ockham, Duns Scotus, and Thomas Aquinas are qualified as *irrationalis*, *rationabilis*, and *probabilis et bene fundata* respectively.

⁹ On Aquinas's theory of divine exemplarism see V.P. BRANICK, *The Unity of the Divine Ideas*, « The New Scholasticism », 42, 1968, pp. 171-201 ; L.-B. GEIGER, *Les idées divines dans l'oeuvre de S. Thomas*, in *St Thomas Aquinas. Commemorative Studies*, 2 vols., Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto 1974, vol. I, pp. 175-209 ; M. D. JORDAN, *The Intelligibility of the World and the Divine Ideas in Aquinas*, « Review of Metaphysics », 38, 1984, pp. 17-32 ; J. ROSS, *Aquinas' Exemplarism ; Aquinas' Voluntarism*, « The American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly », 64, 1990, pp. 171-198 ; V. BOLAND, *Ideas in God According to Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Brill, Leiden 1996.

¹⁰ S. THOMAE AQUINATIS *Summa Theologiae*, Ia, q. 15, a. 1, cura et studio P. CARAMELLO, 4 vols., Marietti, Taurini-Romae 1952 : « Deus secundum essentiam suam est similitudo omnium rerum ; unde idea in Deo nihil est aliud quam Dei essentia ».

notional relations by means of which God views his essence as capable of being infinitely imitated, so that everything created has a certain similarity to the divine essence¹¹. These relationships which multiply the ideas are in God, and not in creatures, but they are not real entities; they are *notional* (or *mental*) entities¹². Therefore the name 'idea' refers to divine essence, but it does not connote the divine essence as it is in itself, but as it is the real model of every creature. The fullness of God's perfection is imitated by participation by every possible creature in its own way, as any imitation of the divine essence is always partial and inadequate. Thus the ideas are the standards against which the particular natures of created individuals are measured (*rerum perfectiones*), and the formal principles which show and determine the internal structure of things¹³.

When any given possible creature is brought into existence by the divine will, then the divine idea which is its corresponding formal principle also serves as a model of divine creation, thereby becoming an *exemplar* in the strict sense of the term. As a consequence, according to Aquinas, there is a difference between a divine idea as a *ratio* by means of which God eternally thinks of any given possible and as an *exemplar* by means of which God

¹¹ *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 15, a. 2 : « Deus enim essentiam suam perfecte cognoscit : unde cognoscit eam secundum omnem modum quo cognoscibilis est. Potest autem eam cognosci non solum secundum quod in se est, sed secundum quod est participabilis secundum aliquem modum similitudinis a creaturis. Unaquaeque autem creatura habet propriam speciem, secundum quod aliquo modo participat divinae essentiae similitudinem. Sic igitur in quantum Deus cognoscit suam essentiam ut sic imitabilem a tali creatura, cognoscit eam ut propriam rationem et ideam huius creaturae ».

¹² *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 15, a. 1 : « Respectus multiplicantes ideas non sunt in rebus creatis, sed in Deo. Non tamen sunt reales respectus, sicut illi quibus distinguuntur Personae, sed respectus intellecti a Deo ». See also SANCTI THOMAE DE AQUINO *Quaestiones Disputatae De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2, ad 6, Opera Omnia, t. XXV, vol. 1, Editori di S. Tommaso, Roma 1975, p. 106, ll. 299-301 : « Intelligit respectum rerum ad essentiam suam, et sic respectus illi sunt in Deo ut intellecti ab ipso », and *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 6, a. 2 : « Relatio autem qua aliquid de Deo dicitur relative ad creaturas non est realiter in Deo, sed in creatura ; in Deo vero secundum rationem ».

¹³ *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 14, a. 6 : « Quicquid perfectionis est in quacumque creatura, totum praeexistit et continetur in Deo secundum modum excellentem. Non solum autem id in quo creaturae communicant, scilicet ipsum esse, ad perfectionem pertinet ; sed etiam ea per quae creaturae ad invicem distinguuntur, sicut vivere, et intelligere, et huiusmodi (...). Et omnis forma, per quam quaelibet res in propria specie constituitur, perfectio quaedam est. Et sic omnia in Deo praeexistunt, non solum quantum ad id quod commune est omnibus, sed etiam quantum ad ea secundum quae res distinguuntur. Et sic, cum Deus in se omnes perfectiones contineat, comparatur Dei essentia ad omnes rerum essentias, non sicut commune ad propria, ut unitas ad numeros, vel centrum ad lineas ; sed sicut perfectus actus ad imperfectos ».

produces an individual or a certain set of individuals¹⁴. As a principle of understanding (*ratio*) the idea is linked to mere possibles, while as a paradigm (or pattern) of production (*exemplar*) it is linked to the things which are (or were or will be) part of the actual world. This distinction is fundamental, since it entails a rejection of the plenitude principle, so preventing Thomas Aquinas's system from lapsing into a form of necessitarianism. In fact, according to this account, the two spheres of existent and possible do not coincide, as the existent is a subset of the possible. God does not give existence to every possible individual corresponding to a certain idea or to every idea present in His mind. In this gap between the two spheres lies the mystery of divine volition and freedom, as nothing can prompt God to exert His omnipotence in order to give existence to one idea or another.

In Aquinas's view, the plurality of ideas is not repugnant to the divine absolute simplicity, because ideas are not to be regarded as forms by which God understands (*intelligibiles species*), but as objects of understanding, since within Thomas's system it is the divine essence itself which plays the role of *species intelligibilis*, and a multiplicity of things understood does not cause any composition in the mind which understands them¹⁵. So — as we have already seen — the really existent divine essence is one simple thing, without any real internal complexity but only a rational composition, since divine ideas are the divine essence as understood by itself as imitable.

On the other hand, if ideas were the sole objects of divine intellection (*quod intelligitur*) when God thinks of Himself, then He could not know individuals adequately and consequently could not exercise his providence and justice. As far as the problem of the divine knowledge of individuals is concerned, Aquinas thought that God conceives of not only created natures (which directly correspond to divine ideas), but also created individuals

¹⁴ *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 15, a. 3 : « Idea secundum quod est principium factionis rerum, *exemplar* dici potest ; et ad practicam cognitionem pertinet. Secundum autem quod principium cognoscitivum est, proprie dicitur *ratio* ; et potest etiam ad scientiam speculativam pertinere. Secundum ergo quod exemplar est, secundum hoc se habet ad omnia quae a Deo fiunt secundum aliquod tempus. Secundum vero quod principium cognoscitivum est, se habet ad omnia quae cognoscuntur a Deo, etiam si nullo tempore fiant ; et ad omnia quae a Deo cognoscuntur secundum propriam rationem, et secundum quod cognoscuntur ab ipso per modum speculationis ».

¹⁵ *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 15, a. 2 : « Hoc autem quomodo divinae simplicitati non repugnet, facile est videre, si quis consideret ideam operati esse in mente operantis sicut quod intelligitur, non autem sicut species qua intelligitur, quae est forma faciens intellectum in actu. Forma enim domus in mente aedificatoris est aliquid ab eo intellectum, ad cuius similitudinem domum in materia format. Non est autem contra simplicitatem divini intellectus, quod multa intelligat, sed contra simplicitatem eius esset si per plures species eius intellectus formaretur. Unde plures ideae sunt in mente divina ut intellectae ab ipso ».

perfectly. He argued that, since God is the first cause, whose proper effect is being (*esse*), and it is through His knowledge (*scientia*) that God produces everything, therefore He necessarily conceives of all that He creates¹⁶. It could not be otherwise, since the intelligible species of the divine intellect is the divine essence itself, which is the efficient cause of the individual creatures and of their own metaphysical principles. Individuals fall within the horizon of divine science as God knows perfectly their metaphysical constituents, i.e. form, which is an instantiation of one of the divine ideas, and matter, which is their true principle of individuation.

This last affirmation introduces the third (sub)problem connected with the doctrine of divine exemplarism, that is, the question of what items are covered by ideas, and in particular, whether prime matter and individuals have their corresponding ideas in the mind of God or not. According to Aquinas, since matter has been created by God, though not apart from form, matter has its idea in God, but not apart from the idea of the composite; for matter in itself can neither exist, nor be known¹⁷. It is not impossible, however, that there is a distinct idea of prime matter in God, if 'idea' is taken broadly to signify a simple principle of understanding (*ratio*), and not an *exemplar*¹⁸. This same way of reasoning holds for inseparable accidents: because they come into being along with their subjects, they have no distinct idea apart from the ideas of their subjects¹⁹. More difficult is to determine Aquinas's view about individuals. Modern scholars affirm that he admits ideas of individuals²⁰, but from Duns Scotus²¹ onwards, medieval thinkers

¹⁶ Cf. THOMAS AQUINAS, *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 14, a. 11: « Cum Deus sit causa rerum per suam scientiam, in tantum se extendit scientia Dei, in quantum se extendit eius causalitas. Unde, cum virtus activa Dei se extendat non solum ad formas, a quibus accipitur ratio universalis, sed etiam usque ad materiam, necesse est quod scientia Dei usque ad singularia se extendat, quae per materiam individuuntur ».

¹⁷ *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 15, a. 3: « Ad tertium dicendum quod Plato, secundum quosdam, posuit materiam non creatam: et ideo non posuit ideam esse materiae, sed materiae concausam. Sed quia nos ponimus materiam creatam a Deo, non tamen sine forma, habet quidem materia ideam in Deo, non tamen aliam ab idea compositi. Nam materia secundum se neque esse habet, neque cognoscibilis est ».

¹⁸ *Q. De ver.*, q. 3, a. 5, p. 112, ll. 50-51: « Si autem large accipiamus ideam pro similitudine vel ratione, tunc illa possunt distinctam habere ideam quae possunt distincte considerari quamvis separatim esse non possint, et sic nihil prohibet materiae primae etiam secundum se ideam esse ».

¹⁹ *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 15, a. 3: « Similiter etiam est de accidentibus quae inseparabiliter concomitantur subiectum: quia haec simul fiunt cum subiecto. Accidentia autem quae superveniunt subiecto, specialem ideam habent ».

²⁰ See BOLAND, *Ideas in God*, pp. 226-229, and the bibliography quoted there.

²¹ DUNS SCOTUS, *Reportata Parisiensia* I, d. 36, qq. 3-4, n. 16, in T. B. NOONE, *Scotus on Divine Ideas*: Rep. Paris. I-A, d. 36, « Medioevo », 24 (1998), pp. 359-453: p. 429: « Quinto excluduntur individua ab idea practica per se, et ideo non habent aliam ideam practica ab idea speciei ».

almost unanimously claim that Aquinas denies that in God there are ideas of individuals, at least in the strict sense of the term, as ideas are *exemplaria*, although there are ideas of individuals in the broad sense of principles of speculative knowledge (*rationes*).

Notwithstanding the different opinion supported by modern scholars, I believe that Scotus²² was not wrong: within Thomas's system exemplary ideas of individuals are redundant, since the ideas of species are sufficient for explaining the creation of individuals. First of all, Thomas argues that genera can have no idea apart from the idea of species, in so far as the term 'idea' designates an *exemplar*, for genera can exist only *qua* constitutive parts of some species²³. If we apply this same scheme of argumentation to the case of the relationship between species and individuals, the sole logical conclusion is that species can have no idea apart from that of individuals, as species exist only *in* individuals and not apart from them. Yet no similar affirmation is stated by Aquinas in his *Summa Theologiae*. On the contrary, Thomas many times maintains that divine ideas are universals and more precisely that they are ideas of species. Moreover, since individuals are the outcomes of the union of specific forms with prime matter, so that matter and form are the metaphysical components of individuals, complete knowledge of the components is sufficient for assuring also complete knowledge of the composite. And practical knowledge of the idea of a given species is sufficient, according to the Dominican Master, for assuring both practical knowledge of the form and the matter of a certain essence²⁴. Finally, the individual substance is not the aim of nature, but the species is²⁵. It is true that in the commentary on the *Sentences* (Book I, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3) and in his *Quaestiones de veritate* (q. 3, a. 8) Thomas seems to admit the existence in God of ideas of individuals, but 1) the expressions that he employs in the commentary on the *Sentences* suggest that he thinks that the ideas of individuals, like those of genera, are mere principles of understanding, and not patterns for producing something, since he speaks of *ratio Petri et Martini*²⁶. 2) The statements of the

²² Paul of Venice also seems to hold this same interpretation — see below, Appendix pp. 000-000.

²³ THOMAS AQUINAS, *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 15, a. 3: « Ad quartum dicendum quod genera non possunt habere ideam aliam ab idea speciei, secundum quod idea significat exemplar: quia nunquam genus fit nisi in aliqua specie ».

²⁴ *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 15, a. 3, ad 3m — see the text above, n. 16.

²⁵ *S. Th.*, Ia, q. 85, a. 3: « Et inde est quod ultima naturae intentio est ad speciem, non autem ad individuum, neque ad genus; quia forma est finis generationis, materia vero est propter formam ».

²⁶ S. THOMAE AQUINATIS, *Scriptum Super Librum Sententiarum*, Lib. I, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3, ed. P. MANDONNET, 2 vols., Lethielleux, Paris 1929, p. 845: « Ad tertium dicendum quod particularia habent proprias ideas in Deo; unde alia est ratio Petri et Martini in Deo, sicut alia ratio hominis

De veritate are ambiguous, as Thomas asserts that a unique exemplary idea is sufficient for creating an individual man *and* his species *and* his genus, since, for example, Socrates, man and animal have the same being; but three different ideas (*rationes* or *similitudines*) are necessary in order to make God capable of fully understanding Socrates' being, because thinking of Socrates *qua* Socrates and thinking of Socrates *qua* man, and thinking of Socrates *qua* animal are three distinct thoughts²⁷. This implies that the individual exemplary idea does not give rise to a complete knowledge of what it enables to create and consequently that God could create something in an irrational way — an evident absurdity. In any case, in the later *Summa theologiae* Aquinas does not mention exemplary ideas of individuals, but of species only, and simply declares that divine providence extends not merely to species, but to individuals also.

Duns Scotus

Duns Scotus's theory of divine ideas²⁸, which is a development of Henry of Ghent's view²⁹, shows a completely different approach to the matter. Scotus refuses the Thomistic explanation on many important points and tries to fit the theory into his general philosophy. Since he affirms the primacy of individuals over any other kind of entity and the absolute freedom of God,

et equi. Sed tamen diversitas hominis et equi est secundum formam, cui perfecte respondet idea; sed distinctio singularium unius speciei essentialis est secundum materiam, quae non perfecte habet ideam; et ideo perfectior est distinctio rationum respondentium diversis speciebus quam diversis individuis, ita tamen quod imperfectio referatur ad res imitantes, et non ad essentiam divinam quam imitantur ».

²⁷ THOMAS AQUINAS, *Q. De ver.*, q. 3, a. 8, arg. 2, p. 115, ll. 9-18: « Praeterea, si singularia habent ideam in Deo, aut est eadem idea singularis et speciei aut alia et alia: si alia et alia, tunc unius rei sunt multae ideae in Deo, quia idea speciei est etiam idea singularis; si autem est una et eadem, cum in idea speciei omnia singularia quae sunt eadem specie conveniant, tunc omnium singularium non erit nisi una idea tantum, et sic singularia non habebunt ideam distinctam in Deo »; ad 2, p. 116, ll. 74-78: « Ad secundum dicendum quod, si loquamur de idea proprie secundum quod est rei eo modo quo est in esse producibilis, sic una idea respondet singulari, speciei et generi, individuatis in ipso singulari, eo quod Socrates, homo et animal non distinguuntur secundum esse; si autem accipiamus ideam communiter pro similitudine vel ratione, sic cum diversa sit consideratio Socratis ut Socrates est et ut homo est et ut est animal, respondebunt ei secundum hoc plures ideae vel similitudines ».

²⁸ DUNS SCOTUS, *Ordinatio*, I, d. 30, qq. 1-2; d. 35, q. unica; and d. 36, q. unica, Opera Omnia, VI, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Civitas Vaticana 1973, pp. 181-190, 245-270, and 281-290; *Lectura* I, d. 35, q. unica, and d. 36, q. unica, Opera Omnia, XVII, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Civitas Vaticana 1966, pp. 445-453, and 468-471; *Reportata Parisiensis* I, d. 36, qq. 1-4, in NOONE, *Scotus on Divine Ideas*, pp. 395-453. On Scotus's theory of divine ideas see McCORD ADAMS, *William Ockham*, vol. II, pp. 1042-1050; and NOONE, *Scotus on Divine Ideas*, pp. 359-390.

who cannot have pre-set ends that He must seek or follow³⁰, Scotus substitutes ideas of individuals for ideas of species and subordinates their existence to God's thought and will.

He believes that the traditional (Thomistic) interpretation of this Augustinian doctrine is misleading, since it assumes that God thinks of possibles as they (*qua* ideas) are present in His mind from eternity; it is just the opposite: possibles are present (*qua* ideas) in God's mind because He thinks of them. According to Scotus, were Thomas's opinion true, divine ideas would be something real, grounded on mental relations and to a certain extent independent of the divine intellect. In fact, the principle of knowledge (*ratio intelligendi*) naturally precedes the act of understanding itself and is independent of it; thus, if divine ideas were principles of knowledge, they would precede and be independent of the act of understanding by which God thinks of His essence as infinitely imitable. Therefore, the ideas would not be the effect of God's intellection of his essence *qua* imitable, but the cause — an unacceptable conclusion³¹. As a consequence, Scotus describes the logical steps of the mental process which precedes the free act of creation, through which God chooses the possibles that will become realities and gives them *esse reale*, as follows: 1) the divine intellect thinks of the divine essence in itself; 2) it produces the ideas of the possibles in their intelligible being (*esse intelligibile*) and thinks of them; 3) the divine intellect compares its own intellections to the intelligibles, and thereby produces a relation of reason (*relatio rationis*) for each intelligible; 4) it reflects on these mental relations and knows them as such³². The relation of imitability plays no decisive role in this chain of mental

²⁹ Cf. DE RIJK, *Quaestio de ideis*, pp. 208 ff.

³⁰ Cf. NOONE, *Scotus on Divine Ideas*, p. 376.

³¹ DUNS SCOTUS, *Ordinatio*, I, d. 35, q. unica, ed. cit., p. 253: « Item, contra primam opinionem specialiter videtur sequi quod illae relationes sint reales, quia ratio intelligendi ut est ratio, praecedit naturaliter intellectionem, — et per consequens quoad nihil quod est eius ut est ratio intelligendi, causatur per intellectionem, nec sequitur intellectionem; si ergo [*supple*: essentia divina] sub relatione rationis est ratio intelligendi lapidem, illa relatio rationis non producitur in essentia intellectione lapidis, quia praecedit naturaliter illam intellectionem. Ergo illa [scilicet relatio rationis] produceretur per aliam [scilicet intellectionem]. Sed illam [scilicet relationem rationis] non praecedit nisi illa [scilicet intellectio] quae est essentiae ut essentia; hac [scilicet intellectione] non producitur [*supple*: illa relatio] (quod concedunt); ergo illa relatio erit in essentia ut est ratio, et non per aliquam actionem intellectus ».

³² DUNS SCOTUS, *Ordinatio*, I, d. 35, q. unica, ed. cit., p. 258: « Deus in primo instanti intelligit essentiam suam sub ratione mere absoluta; in secundo instanti producit lapidem in esse intelligibili et intelligit lapidem, ita quod ibi est relatio in lapide intellecto ad intellectionem divinam, sed nulla adhuc in intellectione divina ad lapidem, sed intellectio divina terminat relationem 'lapidis ut intellecti' ad ipsam; in tertio instanti, forte, intellectus divinus potest

actions, nor do the *respectus rationis*, which, in contrast, were the cause of the multiplicity of ideas according to Thomas Aquinas.

Another feature of Aquinas's theory that Scotus criticises is the distinction between ideas as *exemplaria* and ideas as mere *rationes (intelligendī)*, or, in other terms, between practical and speculative knowledge in God. According to the *Doctor Subtilis*, although this distinction is valid for human beings, it is meaningless if applied to God, since it arises in a setting wherein there are naturally preordained ends and naturally given states of affairs which limit the operating of the free agent — something unacceptable in the case of God's actions. So that divine ideas are of one and the same type: at the same time, speculative and practical. And the ideates also are of one and the same type, as far as they are all pure possibles, to some of which God's will, in a second, logically distinct moment, gives actual being³³.

Duns Scotus's explanation has the merit of avoiding the two main problems raised by the common (Thomistic) theory of divine exemplarism — that is, the presence in God of a plurality of things co-eternal to His mind, and the possibility of perfect knowledge of individuals —, as far as the ideas are the objects produced by the mental activity of God, and they are not only ideas of universal natures, but of individuals also (more precisely, of all the producible

comparare suam intellectionem ad quodcumque intelligibile ad quod nos possumus comparare, et tunc comparando se ad lapidem intellectum, potest causare in se relationem rationis; et in quarto instanti potest quasi reflecti super istam relationem causatam in tertio instanti, et tunc illa relatio rationis erit cognita. Sic ergo non est relatio rationis necessaria ad intelligendum lapidem, tamquam prior lapide, ut obiectum, immo ipsa 'ut causata' est posterior (in tertio instanti), et adhuc posterior erit ipsa 'ut cognita', quia in quarto instanti ».

³³ DUNS SCOTUS, *Reportata Parisiensis*, I, d. 36, qq. 3-4, nn. 18-19, pp. 430-431: « Sed contra hoc quod distinguit ideam practicam a speculativa, per ideabile fiendum et non-fiendum, hoc non video esse verum, quia illa quae uniformiter respiciuntur ab idea non distinguunt ideam practicam a speculativa. Haec est manifesta. Sed possibile fiendum et non-fiendum uniformiter et eodem modo respiciuntur ab ideis ante actum voluntatis. Ergo fiendum et non-fiendum, ante omnem actum voluntatis, non distinguunt practicam ideam a speculativa. Ergo, cum secundum omnem opinionem ideae sint in intellectu ante quemcumque actum voluntatis, sequitur <quod> possibile fiendum et non-fiendum non distinguunt eas. (...) Item distinctio habituum aliquorum penes practicum et speculativum non est divisio per accidentalia (...) Distinctio etiam ex parte finium est essentialis, quia habitus non distinguuntur penes quoscumque fines, ut fines praeistitutos ab operante, (...) sed distinguuntur penes fines qui sunt fines ex natura rei. Sed fiendum et non-fiendum non sunt aliquae differentiae essentialis, possibiles in obiectis vel in finibus, ideae practicae vel speculativae. Sed solummodo per actum voluntatis divinae acceptantis hoc fieri et non acceptantis aliud fieri, illud est possibile fiendum et aliud non-fiendum. (...) Unde si poneret in Deo ideam practicam, poneret eam respectu cuiuslibet possibilis. Credo enim respectu eorum in Deo esse ideam practicam et speculativam ».

singular creatures that the divine mind can conceive of)³⁴. Yet Duns Scotus's theory is weak in one important point : it does not clarify the relation between the divine essence which God thinks of *at the first instant* and the ideas of possibles that He produces straight afterwards. The relationship between these ideas and the divine essence is left ambiguous, since these ideas appear to have no close relationship to the divine essence.

What Scotus seems to suggest is that God produces the ideas of possibles as He is able to create — that is to say, as He is omnipotent. In fact, God creates the world since He can, and He thinks of every makeable thing before creating the world since He is an infinitely intelligent agent and every intelligent agent acts according to some plan³⁵. Scotus's position on the problem of the scope of ideas derives from this thesis. As God is the paradigmatic case of an intelligent agent, He must have perfect knowledge of each part of what He will create, even those parts that cannot exist inseparably from their own *supposita* and/or *subiecta*³⁶. So, in Scotus's view, matter has its own distinct divine idea, since it has some entity and intelligibility as a constitutive element of composite substances (*materia est ex se et secundum se ens, ergo per se potest fieri, et per consequens habet propriam ideam in Deo*)³⁷, just as species, genera and inseparable accidents do³⁸.

By modifying the status of divine ideas and enlarging the items covered by them, Scotus is attempting to formulate a new theory more consistent than that of Aquinas with the thesis of divine simplicity and actuality, as it dispenses with the mental relations on which divine ideas would be grounded according to the common (Thomistic) opinion, and it maintains that divine

³⁴ Cf. DUNS SCOTUS, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, Lib. VII, q. 15, in *Opera Philosophica*, IV, Franciscan Institute Publications, The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, NY 1997, p. 299: « Ideae divinae maxime erunt singularium, quia distincte representant omnia alia intelligibilia a Deo »; see also the discussion of Thomas Aquinas's opinion about divine ideas in *Reportata Parisiensia* I, d. 36, qq. 3-4, pp. 428-436, especially the argumentations against Aquinas's exclusion of matter and individuals from the range of exemplary divine ideas (nn. 20-24 and 29-32).

³⁵ Cf. DUNS SCOTUS, *Ordinatio*, I, d. 2, pars 1, qq. 1-2, Opera Omnia, II, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Civitas Vaticana 1950, p. 174: « Ostenso esse de proprietatibus relativis primi entis, ulterius ad ostendendum illius primi infinitatem et per consequens esse de ente infinito procedo sic: primo ostendo quod primum efficiens est intelligens et volens ita quod sua intelligentia est infinitorum distincte et quod sua essentia est representativa infinitorum (quae quidem essentia est sua intelligentia), et ex hoc secundo concludetur sua infinitas. Et sic cum triplici primate ostensa erit quadruplex medium ad ostendendum eius infinitatem ». See also *ibidem*, pp. 175-188.

³⁶ Cf. NOONE, *Scotus on Divine Ideas*, p. 377.

³⁷ DUNS SCOTUS, *Reportata Parisiensia*, I, d. 36, qq. 3-4, nn. 20-24, pp. 431-433.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, nn. 25-28, pp. 433-435.

ideas are only a secondary object of God's intuitive understanding, inasmuch as they are secondarily contained in the divine self-cognition.

Ockham

Ockham's theory of divine ideas stems from his conception of God as an omniscient direct knower and an omnipotent creator³⁹. Ockham thinks that God knows creatures not mediately, by understanding something else, but immediately in themselves, and creates what He creates directly, without using anything else as a formal principle of His action, as the rationality of His acts implies that He knows perfectly what He creates, and His omnipotence requires that He wants to create just what He creates — and He creates concrete individuals. Thus the central thesis of Ockham's doctrine is that divine ideas are the creatures themselves *qua* known by God as pure possibles (*ipsa creatura est idea*)⁴⁰ — a thesis which cuts off the problem of divine exemplarism.

Ockham articulates his treatment of the question into four points : first of all, he examines what the nominal definition of the term 'idea' is ; then he identifies the entities which fit that definition ; thirdly, he discusses the problem of the necessity of ideas ; and finally he poses seven conclusions which follow from what has been stated.

In Ockham's view, the term 'idea' is a relative term, as any idea is the idea of some ideal or ideate, and hence it has no real definition⁴¹. Consequently the noun 'idea' does not designate a given set of objects which can be conveniently described by means of one or more common features, but it merely signifies a certain function : an idea is anything which, once understood by an intelligent and productive power, makes it able to bring into being something concrete⁴². Therefore, according to the *Venerabilis Inceptor*, divine ideas are not really the same as the divine essence but distinct in reason from it, nor does God conceive of creatures only insofar as they are represented by the divine

³⁹ On Ockham's theory of divine ideas see McCORD ADAMS, *William Ockham*, vol. II, pp. 1033-1063.

⁴⁰ OCKHAM, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 5, *OTh.*, IV, p. 488 : « Ipsa creatura est idea. (...) Nam ipsa est cognita ab intellectuali activo, et Deus ad ipsam aspicit ut rationaliter producat. Nam quantumcumque Deus cognosceret essentiam suam, si non cognosceret suum producibile, ignoranter produceret et non rationaliter, et per consequens non per ideam. Ergo ipsam creaturam producibilem vere aspicit et ipsam aspiciendo potest eam producere ».

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 485 : « Sciendum quod 'idea' non habet quid rei quia est nomen connotativum, vel relativum secundum alium modum loquendi. Nam omnis idea necessario est alicuius idealis vel ideati idea ».

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 486 : « Idea est aliquid cognitum a principio effectivo intellectuali ad quod ipsum acitvum aspiciens potest aliquid in esse reali producere ».

essence itself⁴³ — as, on the contrary, Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent and Giles of Rome have taught. After all, if the ideas were really identical with the divine essence — argues Ockham — then any idea would be exactly (*praecise*) the divine essence, or it would be the divine essence *plus* something else — that is, in this case, plus a relation of reason. Were any idea exactly the divine essence, then the divine essence would be multiplied as many times as there are ideas, and so there would be an infinite number of divine essences. Were any idea the divine essence plus a relation of reason, then the ideas would be really different from the divine essence and not identical with it⁴⁴. The only possible solution of this aporia is that the creatures themselves are the divine ideas (*cum Deus ipsammet creaturam producibilem praecognoscat, ipsamet vere erit idea*), because the understanding of the sole divine essence is insufficient for granting the rationality of creation, since the production of something is rational if and only if the producer analitically knows what he is going to produce — and creatures in no way are the divine essence⁴⁵.

This explanation of the definite description of divine ideas anticipates the answer to the second question, concerning the identification of the entities which fit the definition: as we have already seen, they are creatures themselves. Hence the term 'idea' refers to creatures both in direct (*in recto*) and indirect way (*in obliquo*)⁴⁶. This means that, according to Ockham, an idea is the detailed description of a creature *qua* present in the mind of God, and, in its turn, this

⁴³ OCKHAM, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 5, *OTh.*, IV, p. 487: « Patet quod ideae sunt quaedam exemplaria cognita, et quod ad illas respiciendo potest cognoscens aliquid producere in esse reali. (...) Ista descriptio non convenit ipsi divinae essentiae, nec alicui respectui rationis, sed ipsimet creaturae. Primum patet primo quia, secundum omnes, plures sunt ideae. (...) Sed essentia divina est unica, nullo modo plurificabilis; igitur ipsa non est idea. Si dicatur quod quamvis essentia divina non sit realiter plurificabilis, tamen secundum quod potest ad diversas creaturas comparari, potest esse alia et alia idea; et secundum hoc erunt plures ideae, non quidem realiter differentes, sed differentes sola ratione: sed ista et consimilia superius sufficienter improbantur, ubi ostenditur quod impossibile est aliqua esse idem realiter et tamen differre ratione ».

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 487-488: « Si divina essentia est realiter plures ideae, quaero: aut idea est praecise divina essentia, aut est divina essentia et aliquid aliud, — scilicet respectus rationis, secundum istos. Si primum, igitur essentia divina est plures divinae essentiae, si sint plures ideae. Si detur secundum, ergo divina essentia non est idea ».

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 488, the Latin text is quoted above, n. 40. See also p. 489: « Posito per impossibile quod Deus cognosceret creaturam producibilem et non cognosceret suam essentiam, si haberet potentiam productivam posset vere rationaliter producere. Et quantumcumque Deus cognosceret suam essentiam, nisi cognosceret creaturam, non diceretur rationaliter producere quantumcumque produceret. Igitur ipsa creatura est idea ».

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 490: « Unde idea importat ipsammet creaturam in recto et etiam ipsammet in obliquo, et praeter hoc importat ipsam divinam cognitionem vel cognoscens in obliquo. Et ideo de ipsamet creatura est praedicabilis ut ipsa sit idea, sed non est praedicabilis de agente, cognoscente vel cognitione, quia nec cognitio nec cognoscens est idea, sicut non est exemplar ».

detailed description is nothing else but the creature itself *qua* perfectly understood, as the highest understanding of a thing is that one which enables the knower to bring into being that thing⁴⁷.

As far as the third issue is concerned, Ockham's view is that there is no necessity of postulating the existence of ideas in God, if they are considered as formal principles of knowledge distinct from creatures themselves, or as principles of imitability of the divine essence, or as entities of reason by means of which God knows and produces creatures. According to him, each idea is the detailed description of one possible creature, which God looks to when He wants to bring into being a given possible creature⁴⁸.

On the ground of these analyses, Ockham draws the following seven conclusions, which completely deprive the question of any real content: 1) ideas are present in God as the objects of his understanding (*objective tamquam quaedam cognita*), and not as something real in a substrate of existence (*subjective et realiter*), since they are possible creatures themselves. 2) There is a distinct idea for any possible thing that God can create. 3) To the singular matter and form of any substantial individuals there corresponds a distinct idea in God's mind. 4) Any divine idea is the idea of something singular, as singulars only can be brought into being (*ipsa singularia sola sunt extra producibilia et nulla alia*). 5) There are not ideas of species, genera, differences and so on in God, since universals are concepts existing in our intellects only. 6) There are not ideas of privations and negations, nor of evil and fault, as their reality is not distinct from that of the positive things actually existent (*non sunt res distinctae ab aliis rebus*). 7) God's ideas are infinite in number, since God can create an infinite number of things⁴⁹.

⁴⁷ OCKHAM, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 5, *OTh.*, IV, p. 490: « Ex praedictis patet quid est idea. Quia non est nisi aliquid cognitum ad quod cognoscens aspicit in producendo, ut secundum ipsum aliquid simile illi vel ipsummet producat in esse reali ».

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 492: « Dico quod non sunt ideae ponendae tamquam quaedam similitudines representantes intellectui divino ipsas creaturas, quia illae similitudines non possunt esse divina essentia, cum ipsa sit omnino implurificabilis. Nec oportet quod sint entia rationis, quia nullum tale requiritur nec ad producendum nec ad cognoscendum. Ideo dico quod ideae sunt ponendae praecise ut sint exemplaria quaedam ad quae intellectus divinus aspiciens producat creaturas ».

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 493: « Primo sequitur quod ideae non sunt in Deo subjective et realiter, sed tantum sunt in ipso objective tamquam quaedam cognita ab ipso, quia ipsae ideae sunt ipsaemet res a Deo producibiles. Secunda conclusio est ista, quod omnium rerum factibilium sunt distinctae ideae, sicut ipsae res inter se sunt distinctae. Alia conclusio sequitur quod materiae et formae et universaliter partium essentialium et integralium omnium sunt distinctae ideae. Quarto sequitur quod ideae sunt primo singularium, et non sunt specierum, quia ipsa singularia sola sunt extra producibilia et nulla alia. Quinto sequitur quod generis et differentiae et aliorum universalium non sunt ideae, nisi poneretur quod universalia essent quaedam res subjective existentes in anima et solum communia rebus extra per praedicationem. Sexto sequitur quod negationum, privationum, mali, culpae et huiusmodi, quae non sunt res distinctae ab aliis rebus, non sunt ideae. Septimo sequitur quod Deus habet infinitas ideas sicut ab eo sunt infinitae res producibiles ».

Ockham's theory of divine ideas matches his rejection of the species theory of cognition. In his view, both divine ideas and human intelligible species are unnecessary for explaining knowledge. This is the inner sense of his identification of ideas with creatures themselves. Ockham agrees with Aquinas that ideas are the objects of God's cognition, but as such they cannot be but creatures themselves. In fact, according to Ockham, it is logically inconsistent that the objects of divine intellection (ideas) are different from the objects of divine creation (individual creatures), if God is both omnipotent and omniscient. Furthermore, since all ideas are ideas of individuals, God's knowledge is by direct acquaintance, without any kind of law, rule or standard under which individuals can be subsumed or by which they can be explained.

PAUL OF VENICE'S CRITIQUES

Paul of Venice accepts the Aristotelian thesis of the absolute simplicity and actuality of God; moreover, he stresses that the divine essence is the proper object of God's knowledge. On the other hand, following Augustine, he acknowledges that there is a plurality of ideas in God and that He perfectly knows any individual creature, although divine ideas are universal. So he admits the core of the Thomistic assessment of the theory of ideas. In fact, he tries to remove the tension between the Aristotelian and Christian demands by diminishing the requirements of the Aristotelian horn of the dilemma. He chooses to remain as faithful as possible to Christian principles by appropriately modifying Aristotelian concepts and schemes, in order to adapt them to the Christian belief — as Aquinas did. As a consequence, he 1) fully rejects Ockham's approach to the subject, as much as it destroys the essential of Augustinian doctrine, 2) criticises two theses of Duns Scotus's theory, though he does not get the general sense of it, 3) corrects some faults in Thomas's account of the exemplar causality, and 4) proposes a new solution for the question of divine ideas, where a) much more stress is put on the close similarity between God's act of creation and the production of some artificiate by human makers, and b) an original conception of the relationships between the divine essence and ideas, and between ideas and creatures is worked out.

Nicoletti's account of the three main views with regard to the question of divine ideas begins with the exposition of Ockham's. As often when he summarises other people's doctrines, Paul's précis is partially misleading, because, no matter how familiar he is with the theory he is discussing, he tends to describe other opinions in his own terms and from his own point of view. Thus, he quite correctly claims that according to the *Venerabilis Inceptor* 1) divine ideas are creatures themselves, 2) any idea is the idea of something singular, 3) ideas are present in God as mere objects of his understanding, and

4) there are distinct ideas corresponding to the different essential and integral parts of individuals (*quarumlibet partium essentialium atque integralium sunt distincte idee*), but, on the other hand, he ascribes to the *Venerabilis Inceptor* the thesis that ideas are outside the divine intellect⁵⁰ — a (pseudo-)consequence, that Paul draws from Ockham's identification of ideas with creatures, but without any ground within Ockham's system, as we have seen.

Less convincing is the interpretation of Scotus's doctrine, that the Italian Master reduces to a general statement about the nature and status of ideas, and four minor conclusions. Paul misses the central points and the novelty of Scotus's theory, and focuses on those aspects which can be considered more traditional. According to him, Scotus claims that divine ideas are formal principles (*rationes*) eternally present in God's mind, by means of which something is rationally producible *ad extra*⁵¹, and, from this, infers the following corollaries: 1) ideas are the objects of divine understanding, considered according to their intelligible being⁵²; 2) every possible creature has its own intelligible being in the divine mind⁵³; 3) infinite ideas have an objective existence in God's mind⁵⁴; 4) a divine idea in God's mind is nothing but divine cognition of something producible or actually existent⁵⁵.

As far as Thomas Aquinas's (and Giles of Rome's) opinion is concerned, Paul confines his explanation to the sole thesis that there is only one divine idea, that is, the divine essence itself considered as imitable (*divina essentia sub respectu imitabilitatis*). This imitability proper to the divine essence is sufficient to expound the production of creatures as well as God's knowledge of them. In fact, each creature is somehow similar to the divine essence and, conversely, the divine essence is similar to each creature, since it is their model. God, who does not know anything but Himself, can therefore perfectly conceive of and create each possible individual in virtue of the fact that each individual can be traced back to one of the infinite possible imitations of His essence⁵⁶.

This account of Thomas's doctrine is apparently influenced by Giles of Rome's own remarks about the nature and status of divine ideas and their

⁵⁰ PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, cap. 2, fol. 297rb — Appendix pp. 1, 42 - 2, 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 297va — Appendix p. 2, 26-31.

⁵² *Ibid.* — Appendix p. 2, 32-36.

⁵³ *Ibid.* — Appendix p. 2, 37-41.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* — Appendix p. 2, 42-47.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* — Appendix p. 2, 48-56.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 297vb — Appendix p. 3, 28-48.

relations to the divine essence⁵⁷, since nowhere in Thomas's works can we find this thesis so sharply stated. On the contrary, it seems that according to Thomas there is a multiplicity of distinct ideas in God, although God is the similitude of all things according to His essence, and therefore the ideas in Him are identical with His essence (*idea in Deo nihil est aliud quam Dei essentia*). Yet, Paul's description of Thomas's opinion is not a misinterpretation of Aquinas's authentic thought. What Nicoletti wants to point out is that, within Thomas's system, the 'Simplicity Problem' has no effective solution, insofar as the only logical tools that the Dominican Master can use for describing the relationships between the divine essence and the divine ideas are the two relations of real identity and notional (or mental) distinction (or difference of reason), which are inadequate to the goal — as we shall see better in analysing Paul's critique.

According to Paul of Venice, Ockham's solution to the problem of divine ideas is unsatisfactory just because of the identification of divine ideas with creatures themselves. The truth of this thesis implies the falsity of the very keystone of the traditional theory: the definition of ideas as principles of understanding and standards in the production of things⁵⁸. In fact, 1) the relation of similarity, which holds between the idea and its ideate, requires a real distinction between its extremes, i.e., between the idea and its ideate — something that Ockham implicitly denies⁵⁹. 2) As Aristotle himself declares⁶⁰, mental entities can only play the role of standards in producing something real, but according to Ockham's account it is the real object itself which plays the role of standard in its own production⁶¹. 3) God knows future things, for instance the Antichrist, but this would be impossible if Ockham were right, since God knows the Antichrist by means of the idea of the Antichrist, and, if the Antichrist were its corresponding idea, He should know the Antichrist by means of nothing — an impossible conclusion.

⁵⁷ GILES OF ROME, *Quodlibet*, I, q. 9, Lovanii 1646, pp. 20-21 : « Sciendum est quod omnes ideae in mente divina realiter sunt una res et una divina essentia. Divina autem essentia, licet una sit realiter, distincte tamen repraesentat infinitas res, quia in ea sunt infinitae rationes rerum, ita quod non eadem ratione conditus sit homo et equus, ut vult Augustinus. Ratio autem quare divina essentia possit distincte repraesentare et habeat in se tot rationes rerum est quia non comprehendunt divinam essentiam, sed omnia creata ab ea deficiunt. Nulla ergo creatura repraesentat Deum totaliter et per omnem modum, sed aliqua repraesentat ipsum uno modo et alia alio modo. Et prout aliter et aliter divina essentia est imitabilis a rebus, aliter et aliter est exemplar rerum et dicitur esse alia et alia ratio rerum et alia et alia idea rerum ».

⁵⁸ PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, cap. 2, fol. 297va — Appendix p. 2, 20-25.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, fol. 297rb — Appendix p. 2, 4-7.

⁶⁰ ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, VII, c. 9, 1034a22-25.

⁶¹ PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, cap. 2, fol. 297rb-va — Appendix p. 2, 8-12.

Therefore the Antichrist and the idea of the Antichrist must be two really different things⁶².

These remarks are very interesting, since they show us what kind of misunderstanding affects Paul's interpretation of Ockham's opinion. None of them is a real charge, as Paul did not find effective inconsistencies within Ockham's theory. He only stresses some differences between Ockham's conception and the common doctrine. Not even does the last argument reach the target: according to Ockham's mental-act theory, what makes a certain act of thinking the act of thinking of a given entity (say, the Antichrist) is not the fact that it is pointed towards an actually existent entity, but rather the fact that it *really* is the act of thinking of that given entity. So, in order for God to think of the Antichrist from eternity, it is not necessary for the Antichrist to have any kind of existence from eternity, but it is sufficient that God's thought really is from eternity the act of thinking of the Antichrist⁶³.

Duns Scotus's proposal seems to Paul of Venice more convincing than Ockham's, but insufficient on two points: 1) every possible creature, including individuals, has its own corresponding idea in the divine mind; 2) a divine idea in God's mind is nothing but divine cognition of something producible or actually existent. Against the first statement Paul argues that it is doubtful, because it entails an unnecessary multiplication of divine ideas in God's mind. The Austin Master notes that for explaining the production of artefacts by human makers we postulate the existence, in the mind of the maker, of one and the same idea for all the artefacts of the same kind or type — since they share all the main features and therefore they are almost identical with each other, they have to be produced on the basis of a unique general model. According to him, it is the same in the case of God⁶⁴. As far as the second statement is concerned, Paul thinks that it is false, as the idea and the cognition of a producible thing are two different entities in the mind of human makers (*idea in mente creati artificis non est cognitio rei artificialis*). In fact, while the idea is always identical with itself and independent of the actions of the maker, the cognition of a thing changes during the time following the modifications of that thing and depends on it as well as on the production of the thing itself. Because of the close analogy between human makers and God as a creator, Paul infers that the same holds in the case of God (*ergo neque idea in mente artificis increati est cognitio rei producibilis*)⁶⁵.

⁶² PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, cap. 2, fol. 297va — Appendix p. 2, 13-19.

⁶³ Cf. McCORD ADAMS, *William Ockham*, vol. II, pp. 1058-1059.

⁶⁴ PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, cap. 2, fol. 297vb — Appendix p. 3, 1-20.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* — Appendix p. 3, 21-26.

Paul's evaluation of Aquinas's conception of divine ideas is substantially positive (*hec opinio probabilis est et bene fundata*), but, according to him, Aquinas's account of the relationship between ideas and divine essence does not adequately guarantee the reality of ideas themselves, and therefore it is insufficient for explaining the presence of a plurality of natural species in the world. In Paul's opinion, to affirm that divine ideas are really the same as the divine essence, but distinct in reason from it, is an ineffective solution to the 'Simplicity Problem' since it is equivalent to asserting that there are not ideas in God, and consequently that there is only one idea, i.e. the divine essence itself. But, if this were the case, then men and horses (for instance) could not be really distinct from each other, nor could this unique idea be 1) the standard against which the various degrees of perfection of creatures are measured and 2) the formal principle which explains the different metaphysical structures of created things — as Thomas maintained⁶⁶. So in arguing against Thomas, Nicoletti states two important traits of his own version of divine exemplarism, on which attention must now be focused: an idea is nothing but the specific essence of some set of creatures *qua* extant in God's mind; and ideas are formally distinct from the divine essence (*idea in Deo est quidditas aut species aliqua in esse intelligibili creature non realiter distincta, sed formaliter tantum, ab essentia divina*)⁶⁷.

PAUL OF VENICE'S THEORY

As we have just seen, Paul of Venice's theory of divine exemplarism flows logically from his objections to the doctrines of his most important predecessors, and particularly from the remarks on Thomas Aquinas's. His cornerstone is the conviction that there is a close parallelism between human *artifices* as producers of artefacts and God as a creator — only in this way, according to Paul, the main goal of every theory of divine ideas (that is, the explanation of the rationality of creation as a free act of God) can be achieved. Paul is quite explicit on this point both in the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*⁶⁸ and in the *Quaestio de universalibus* (glosses to the tenth conclusion), where he develops four rational pieces of evidence for supporting the thesis of the

⁶⁶ PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, cap. 2, fol. 298ra — Appendix p. 4, 1-29. It is worth noticing that Nicoletti's interpretation of Thomas Aquinas's doctrine is just the opposite of that of Peter Auriol (see A. D. CONTI, *Divine Ideas and Exemplar Causality in Auriol*, « Vivarium », 38.1, 2000, pp. 99-116, at pp. 106-110). This fact can be explained if we think of the problematic nature of Thomas's solution to the 'Simplicity Problem' and the ambiguity of his formulations, which are open to many readings.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 297ra — Appendix p. 3, 7-10.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 298ra — Appendix p. 4, 33-39.

eternal existence in God's mind of a multiplicity of ideas, conceived of as the formal patterns and principles (*exemplaria*) of creatures.

The first argument goes as follows: since the *prima causa* produces individuals which differ in species (type) from each other (say men and horses), then they are produced according to different formal principles, as the effects of a same principle are identical in type. The second argument is that if A and B are two different creatures (say a man and a donkey) that God is going to create, their mutual differences cannot be grounded on their own beings, since they are not yet existing things; therefore they have to be found in something pertaining to God's productive potency, which will act according to different principles present in it. The third argument is unsound: Paul argues that since in God each generic principle (*ratio generis*) is different from any corresponding specific principle (*ratio speciei*), then specific principles too are different from each other. Unfortunately, the proof he makes use of for showing the difference in reality between generic and specific principles is inconsistent. He affirms that if the generic and specific principles were not distinct, then God could not create anything according to the generic principle without creating it according to a correlated specific principle — while this is just the case, since no animal can be created which is not an animal of a certain species or type (a man or a monkey or a mouse). The fourth argument is that, since God knows that animal is the genus of man and that being-an-animal is included in the definition of man, then He thinks of them by means of two different principles, otherwise He could not distinguish them⁶⁹.

⁶⁹ PAUL OF VENICE, *Q. de Univ.*, fols. 133vb-134ra: « Universalia platonica et idealia sunt ex natura rei in mente divina causaliter ponenda. Probatur: nam prima causa est productiva hominis et equi; et non sub eadem ratione causali; ergo omnino sub diversis rationibus idealibus. Patet consequentia cum maiori, et minorem probō: quia, si prima causa omnia eadem ratione produceret seu omnium eadem ratione esset productiva, tunc omnia essent eiusdem rationis. Patet consequentia, quia idem in quantum idem semper facit idem, VII *Metaphysicae*. Secundo sic: et pono quod A et B non sint, sed erunt A homo et B asinus. Tunc sic: A et B sunt diversimode factibilia; sed non propter diversitatem aliquam consurgentem ex illis, quia illa non sunt; ergo propter diversitatem aliquam fundatam in potentia productiva; sed prima causa e primo productiva, et ab illa A et B sunt primo producibilia; ergo hec diversitas producendi est reperienda in causalitate prima; et per consequens diverse rationes causales sunt in mente divina. Sed ista vocavit Plato ideas; ergo etc. Tertio sic: alia est ratio generis in Deo et alia est ratio speciei in eodem; ergo pariformiter alia est ratio specifica productiva A in Deo et alia est ratio productiva B in eodem; sed tales rationes vocantur a nobis et a Platonicis rationes ideales; ergo etc. Antecedens probatur: nam si in Deo non foret alia ratio generis et alia ratio speciei, tunc Deus non posset aliquid producere sub ratione generis quin produceret illud sub ratione speciei; et sic non posset aliquid producere sub ratione qua animal nisi illud produceret sub ratione qua homo — cuius oppositum experimus. Quarto arguitur sic: Deus intelligit animal esse genus ad hominem et rationem animalis includi in ratione specifica hominis; ergo rationem

In the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, the Italian Master, after denying that the ideas are self-subsistent entities, as Plato thought⁷⁰, maintains that the meaning of the term 'idea' is twofold (*idea sumitur dupliciter*): broadly speaking (*communiter*), an idea is a specific essence or nature (*quidditas specifica*), existing in a mind as a causal model for the production of something⁷¹; properly speaking (*proprie sumpta*), an idea is a specific essence existing in God's mind as a causal model for the production of something⁷². From these definitions, which he considers consonant with the teaching of Aristotle and Averroes, Paul derives four consequences or theses, which, taken together, represent the very core of his theory of divine ideas, as they consist of the principles to the solution of its main problems (Simplicity Problem, Representationalist Problem, What are there ideas of?)

1) Ideas are ideas of specific essences and not ideas of genera nor of individuals, because ideas are formal principles, and they are acts or forms in relation to any other thing (*idea habet rationem actus et forme*); on the contrary, both genera and individuals are as matter⁷³ in relation to species⁷⁴.

2) Ideas are present in the mind as in a substrate, or subject (*idea debet esse subiective in intellectu*), since ideas are the tools of the mind, and the mind can only use tools closely connected with and existentially dependent on it⁷⁵.

genericam animalis et rationem specificam hominis intelligit per diversas ac plurimas rationes, que non nisi in Deo formaliter sunt ponende. Consequentia arguitur sic: quandocumque unum ponitur et includitur in ratione alterius, necessario illa intelligitur ut distincta, quia unum intelligitur ut includens et aliud ut inclusum; sed ratio animalitatis includitur in ratione specifica hominis; ergo ille rationes necessario intelliguntur ut ad invicem condistincte; sed illa non intelliguntur ut ad invicem condistincta prout in una ratione intelligibilitatis conveniunt, quia ut sic intelligerentur solummodo convenire; ergo prout eis correspondent intelligibilitatis diverse rationes. Tales autem rationes non nisi in prima intelligentia sunt ponende; ergo etc. Multa possent hic fieri argumenta et multa subtilia applicari ad hanc pertinentia materiam, que causa brevitatis dimitto ».

⁷⁰ PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, cap. 2, fol. 298ra – Appendix p. 4, 31-33.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 298rb – Appendix p. 4, 40-42.

⁷² *Ibid.*, fol. 298va – Appendix p. 5, 21-22.

⁷³ But according to different senses of the term 'matter'. In fact, genus is the material part of the essence of species, whereas individuals are as matter in relation to species in the sense that their existence is functional to the existence of specific natures, since they are the material substrates (*partes subiectivae*) of natures themselves. For that reason the Italian Master, in his theory of individuation, modifies Scotus's notion of *differentia individualis* — which he usually calls *haecceitas*, or *ratio individualis*, or *ratio suppositalis* —, inasmuch as, according to him, within the individual compound, the *haecceitas*, even if it is a formal principle, acts as the matter which is to be determined whereas the specific essence (or nature) acts as the determining form — on this topic see A.D. CONTI, *Paul of Venice on Individuation*, « *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales* », 65, 1998, pp. 107-132.

⁷⁴ PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, cap. 2, fol. 298rb – Appendix p. 4, 43-46.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* — Appendix p. 4, 50-51. According to Paul, this is a further reason for refusing Ockham's thesis that divine ideas are nothing but creatures as known by God — see Appendix p. 4, 51-56.

3) Ideas are efficient causes (*causa effectiva*) in relation to their effects⁷⁶.

4) Ideas are models (*exemplaria*) in relation to their effects, since their effects are similar to them (*effectus consimilis*). This entails that ideas are both direct objects of knowledge (*obiectum cognitum absolute*) and that by means of which the mind knows something else (*obiectum cognitum respectivo*), just as the *phantasma* is a direct object for our knowledge and that by means of which we know the individual from which it has been drawn. As a consequence — Paul adds, restating what he had already argued against Scotus — an idea is not the notion of something (*cognitio rei*), but the essence of a thing (*quidditas rei*) considered according to its intelligible being in a mind (*in esse intelligibili presentata intellectui*)⁷⁷.

In sum, according to Paul, divine ideas play a threefold role in relation to God and creatures: they are 1) the specific essences of individual things themselves, considered according to their intelligible being in the mind of God; 2) God's principles of cognition of creatures; and 3) the eternal models of creatures. If we also take into account that in his opinion: 1) divine ideas are really the same as the divine essence and formally distinct from it⁷⁸, and that 2) this distinction originates from their being efficient (con)causes in relation to the different kinds of creatures, we can easily realise how close his position is to Wyclif's, considered heretical because of its consequences (metaphysical and theological necessitarianism, restriction of divine omnipotence, negation of the process of transubstantiation in the Eucharist)⁷⁹.

As is well-known, Wyclif defines ideas as the divine nature in action, since they are the means by which God creates all that is outside Himself. In this way, any distinction between ideas as pure *rationes* and ideas as *exemplaria* is abolished. Furthermore, ideas are the constitutive principles of the divine

⁷⁶ PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, cap. 2, fol. 298rb — Appendix p. 5, 1-5.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* — Appendix p. 5, 6-13. Cf. also the *Q. de Univ.*, fol. 134vb: « Pro solutione huius est notandum quod ad hoc quod aliqua ratio sit idea oportet quod habeat quattuor condiciones. Prima condicio: quod ipsa sit cognitiva et representativa, ita quod ducat intellectum in cognitionem producibilis. Secunda condicio: quod sit exemplativa, ita quod intellectus productivus alicuius respiciat illam rationem tamquam formam exemplarem. Tertia condicio: quod ipsa sit causalis et effectiva, ita quod non sit solum ratio cognoscendi seu exemplandi, sed etiam causa efficiendi, sic quod necessario cum intellectu concurrat ad productionem sui exemplati. Quarta condicio: quod ipsa sit actualissima, ita quod nulla alia ratio secundum quam est formale individuum sit formaliter sumpta ita actualis ».

⁷⁸ The logical terms of this relation will be explained below, pp. 000-000.

⁷⁹ On Wyclif's form of necessitarianism and its theological consequences see A. D. CONTI, *Annihilatio e divina onnipotenza nel Tractatus de universalibus di John Wyclif*, in *John Wyclif: Logica, politica, teologia*, eds. M. FUMAGALLI BEONIO BROCCIERI - S. SIMONETTA, Sismel-Edizioni del Galluzzo, Florence 2003, pp. 71-85.

nature, essentially identical with it. Thus divine ideas become as necessary as the divine nature itself⁸⁰. On the other hand, ideas are the first of the four levels of being proper to creatures⁸¹. Because of the necessary links between 1) the divine essence and the eternal mental being that every creature has in God and 2) this first level of being of creatures and the remaining three, for God to think of creatures is already to create them. But God cannot help thinking of creatures, since to think of Himself is to think of His constitutive principles, that is, the ideas of creatures. Therefore God cannot help creating. Indeed, He could not help creating just this universe. As a consequence, everything which is necessary and a necessary object of God's volition: the three spheres of possible, existent and necessary totally coincide.

⁸⁰ JOHN WYCLIF, *Tractatus de universalibus*, c. 15, ed. I. J. MUELLER, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1985, pp. 371-374.

⁸¹ Among the many kinds of beings that Wyclif lists, the most important set is that consisting of categorial beings. They are characterised by the double fact of having a nature and of being the constitutive elements of finite corporeal beings or atomic states of affairs. These finite corporeal beings have a very complex metaphysical structure, since they have two different kinds of essence and four levels of being. In Wyclif's opinion, within any finite corporeal being a singular essence and a universal essence (*essentia quidditativa speciei vel generis*) might be distinguished. The singular essence is the form that in union with matter brings the substantial composite about. The universal essence is the type that the former instantiates; it is present in the singular substance as a constitutive part of its nature, and it discloses the inner metaphysical structure of the substantial composite (*Tractatus de universalibus*, c. 6, pp. 116-118). Furthermore, he speaks of a fourfold level of reality (*esse*). The first one is the eternal mental being (*esse ideale*) that every creature has in God, as an object of His mind. The second one is the potential being that everything has in its causes, both universal (genus, species) and particular. It is closely connected with the nature of the individual substance on which the finite corporeal being is founded, and is independent of its actual existence. It is called '*esse essentiae*' or '*esse in genere*'. The third one is just the actual existence in time as an earthly object. The fourth one is the accidental being (*modus essendi accidentalis substantiae*) caused in a substance by the inhering in it of its appropriate accidental forms (*Tractatus de universalibus*, c. 7, pp. 126-128). Consequently Wyclif speaks of a formal difference (*distinctio* or *differentia formalis*) — which he calls also 'difference of reason' (*distinctio rationis*) — between essence and being. More precisely, he holds that 1) the *esse ideale* is formally distinct from the singular essence; 2) the actual existence is formally distinct from the universal essence; and 3) the singular essence is formally distinct from the actual existence. In this way, Wyclif establishes a close connection between singular essence and essential being, on the one hand, and a real identity between universal and individual (that is, between universal essence and singular essence), on the other hand. The essential being is the level of being which matches singular essence, while the actual existence is in a certain way accidental to the singular essence, as the latter is nothing else but the universal essence considered as informing matter — on Wyclif's metaphysical theories see A. D. CONTI, *Analogy and Formal Distinction: On the Logical Basis of Wyclif's Metaphysics*, « Medieval Philosophy and Theology », 6, 1997, pp. 133-165.

In order to avoid this form of necessitarianism, Paul, both in the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*⁸² and in the *Quaestio de universalibus*⁸³, maintains that in God there is an *infinite* number of ideas, some of which only have been brought into existence by Him. In fact, there is a formal difference between the supreme principle of understanding of possibles, which is the divine essence itself as infinitely imitable *ad extra*, and divine ideas, which are the practical principles of the production of creatures⁸⁴. But he admits that we should conclude that ideas in God are finite in number, if we considered the problem exclusively from the point of view of natural philosophy⁸⁵.

The differences between Paul's doctrine and that of Thomas Aquinas, his main source, on the one hand, and Wyclif's⁸⁶, on the other side, are quite evident. Paul agrees with Wyclif against Thomas that the divine ideas are the specific essences of individual creatures, considered according to their intelligible being in the mind of God, and efficient con-causes in relation to the different kinds of creatures; while he agrees with Thomas against Wyclif that there is a distinction between being a mere principle of understanding (*ratio*) and being an effective model of production (*exemplar*). If Paul did not accept such a distinction, his theory would be substantially the same as Wyclif's. On the contrary, not only does he accept this Thomistic distinction, but he develops it in an autonomous way, which makes his admission of the existence of an infinite number of ideas in God superfluous. According to Thomas, divine *rationes* and divine *exemplaria* are two different types of ideas, the former linked to pure speculative knowledge only, the latter linked to practical knowledge. Only *exemplaria* are ideas in the strict sense of the term. Paul's definition of divine ideas excludes that the (Thomistic) divine *rationes* can be considered as ideas, since a divine idea is 1) the specific nature (of a certain set of individuals) existing in God's mind, 2) principle of

⁸² PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, c. 2, fol. 298va – Appendix p. 5, 46-47.

⁸³ PAUL OF VENICE, *Q. de Univ.*, fol. 135rb: « Theologice loquendo mere possibilia habent ideas proprias in Deo, et consequenter dicitur quod non quelibet species producibilis est producta, nec quelibet species possibilis est in rerum natura, quoniam infinitarum specierum productivus est Deus quarum nullam adhuc produxit; immo infinitarum est productivus quarum nullam producet perpetuo. Et sic consequenter loquendo dicitur quod in Deo sunt infinite idee formaliter condistincte, infinitam multitudinem specierum causaliter intuentes ».

⁸⁴ PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. VII, tr. 3, c. 2, fol. 298va — Appendix p. 5, 48-55.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* — Appendix p. 5, 44-46; see also *Q. de Univ.*, fol. 135rb: « Physice vero loquendo dicitur quod in Deo non sunt nisi finite idee, productive tamen infinitorum individuorum tam futurorum quam mere possibilium ».

⁸⁶ On Wyclif's theory of divine ideas see J. A. ROBSON, *Wyclif and the Oxford Schools*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1961, pp. 171-176; G. LEFF, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 2 vols., Manchester University Press, Manchester 1967, vol. 2, pp. 500-510.

actuality, and 3) efficient cause in relation to creatures. Now, the Thomistic *rationes* do not satisfy any of these requirements. Within Paul's system, what plays the role of the Thomistic *rationes* is the divine essence itself, which is the supreme principle of knowledge of possibles, but not an idea. Moreover, in Paul's view, divine ideas are formally distinct from the divine essence. This means that, in principle, the divine essence and divine ideas are different entities. In fact, Paul's definition of formal distinction inverts the terms of the question in relation to the preceding approaches. By means of formal distinction Duns Scotus⁸⁷ and Wyclif⁸⁸ had tried to explain how it is possible to distinguish many different real aspects internal to the same substance (the passage is from one to many). On the contrary, Paul is attempting to reduce multiplicity to unity (the passage is from many to one). What Paul wants to account for is the way in which many different entities of a certain kind (i.e. of an incomplete and dependent mode of existence) can constitute one and the same substance. Nicoletti recognises two main types of distinction (or difference): material and formal. There is material distinction when the *material cause*⁸⁹ is different, so that the objects at issue are separable entities. In general, there is formal distinction when the formal cause is different. This happens in two ways. If the material cause is also different, then there is a particular case of material distinction. If the material cause is the same, then further analysis is necessary. If the material cause is the same by species only, then there is an improper case of formal distinction; but if the material cause is the same in number, then there is properly formal distinction, since the forms at issue have different definite descriptions, but share the same substrate of existence, so that they are one and the same thing in reality. For example, this is the case of the two properties of being-capable-of-laughing (*risibile*) and of being capable of learning (*disciplinabile*), which are connected forms instantiated by the same set of individual substances. Material distinction is a necessary and sufficient criterion for real difference, traditionally conceived, whereas there is formal distinction if and only if there is one substance in number and a multiplicity of formal principles with

⁸⁷ On Duns Scotus's theory of formal distinction see M. McCORD ADAMS, *Ockham on Identity and Distinction*, « Franciscan Studies », 36, 1976, pp. 5-74, esp. pp. 25-43; A. B. WOLTER, *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca-London 1990, pp. 27-48.

⁸⁸ On Wyclif's conception of formal distinction see CONTI, *Analogy and Formal Distinction*, pp. 154-163.

⁸⁹ That Paul speaks of material cause is very important, since being-a-material-cause-of-something is not equivalent to being a piece of matter, but to being the substrate of existence of something. Thus, within his system, an immaterial substance too can be a material cause in relation to something else. See also above n. 73.

different descriptions instantiated or supported by it⁹⁰. Hence, within Paul's theory of divine ideas the gap between the sphere of the possible and the sphere of the existent is deeper than in Thomas's. The possible is grounded on God considered as a knower, while the existent is grounded on God considered as a maker; ideas play a role in creation only, while the sole divine essence is sufficient for allowing God to know possibles⁹¹.

As far as the three main problems of every form of medieval exemplarism are concerned, Nicoletti's view can be summarised as follows: divine ideas are really identical with and formally different from the divine essence; ideas are both direct, but secondary, objects of divine intellection (the primary object being the divine essence itself) and that by means of which God knows every existent other than Himself; there are neither ideas of individuals nor of prime matter.

His position is more influenced by (Neo)platonian presuppositions than that of Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas appealed to a sort of non-real mode of existence of divine ideas, originating from the relations of imitability holding between divine essence and possible creatures, so that the existence of divine ideas is purely of reason. Paul of Venice tries the opposite way of hypostatizing ideas — his peculiar version of the formal distinction enables him to do so without breaking the divine simplicity. He can therefore claim that the divine essence is the substrate of divine ideas, as if they were a sort of accidents inhering in a substance. As a consequence, the statement that ideas are direct, but secondary, objects of the divine intellection means that God's intellection first grasps the divine essence and then ideas, even though God's intuition of Himself and God's intuition of ideas are not distinct. In fact, divine ideas are not the specific natures of creatures as they are conceived of *terminative* by God, but as they are conceived of *subiective* in Him (*ergo prima substantia omnia cognoscit, non quidem terminative in se ipsis, sed subiective in propria essentia*), that is, by means of a different reality (the divine essence) and

⁹⁰ Cf. PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. V, tr. 2, c. 3, fol. 185ra-b. On Paul of Venice's theory of identity and distinction see CONTI, *Esistenza e verità*, pp. 20-31.

⁹¹ Cf. PAUL OF VENICE, *In Metaph.*, Lib. XII, tr. 2, c. 3, pars ii, fols. 466vb-467ra: « Prima substantia intelligit se ipsam modo speculativo; sed essentia prime substantie non potest representari ei secundum se ipsam quin sibi representetur secundum omnia alia, quia naturaliter representatur et naturaliter aggregat in se perfectiones omnium rerum; ergo prima substantia cognoscendo se modo speculativo cognoscit omnia alia per intellectum speculativum. (...) Divina essentia nullius est propria ratio cognoscendi nisi sui ipsius, et tamen prima substantia per ipsam tamquam per speciem intelligibilem omnia alia distinctissime cognoscit sub propriis rationibus, quoniam in ea relucent omnia alia sub propriis rationibus. (...) Omnes species intelligibiles sunt formaliter aut virtualiter in prima substantia. Ergo prima substantia omnia cognoscit, non quidem terminative in se ipsis, sed subiective in propria essentia ».

according to their relation of ontological dependence upon the divine essence itself. The identity between divine ideas and the *esse ideale* proper to specific natures, and the relation of one-to-many, holding between specific natures and the individuals which originate from them, explains how God can know individuals perfectly — even though mediately, through ideas. In fact, infinite individual causal principles derive from one and the same divine idea, formally distinct from each other. They correspond to the thisnesses (*haecceitates*), which on the level of existence give rise to individuals from species. As thisnesses are the formal principles in virtue of which individuals are what they are, something particular, concrete, and perfectly determined in itself, so these individual causal principles deriving from ideas are what causes the passage from the specific ideal standard to the analytical description of its instantiations⁹². Prime matter, which is a necessary constituent of any corporeal thing, is known by God in the same way as individuals are: not in itself, but derivatively in something else⁹³.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Having examined Nicoletti's theory of divine ideas in the light of his sources, I may now make a short comment on both the inner consistency and historical value of his solution in relation to its sources.

Paul of Venice's view is consistent in itself and with his metaphysical system, but contains an unclear point. To utilize his peculiar version of formal distinction makes it easier for him to solve the main questions connected with the doctrine of divine ideas — as we have seen. On the other

⁹² PAUL OF VENICE, *Q. de Univ.*, fol. 135ra: « Sicut una et eadem humanitas est in diversis individuis secundum aliam et aliam contractionem rationum suppositivum, quae quidem rationes non sunt idem realiter nec formaliter, ita a ratione ideali in Deo originantur infinite rationes causales individuales non cognitive nec ex-emplative, sed solummodo contrahentes ipsam rationem idealem, non quidem ab alia nec inter se realiter distincte, sed solum formaliter. Intellectus ergo divinus respiciens talem idealem rationem ab infinitis infinitis contractam rationibus causalibus, solum singularia concernentibus, intelligit omnia singularia per illam rationem idealem, secundum aliam et aliam applicationem rationis individualis. Et consequenter alicuius speciei omnia individua realiter distincta producit per eandem rationem idealem, secundum quod contrahitur ab alia et alia ratione causali ».

⁹³ *Ibidem*, fol. 135rb: « Dicitur quod materia prima non habet propriam ideam in Deo, quoniam ratio idealis debet esse alicuius speciei ratio actualissima; cum ergo ratio primae materiae in Deo non sit ratio actualissima sicut nec materia prima in rebus formatis vel formabilibus, ergo etc. Nec obstat quod cognoscatur per propriam rationem, quoniam etiam genus cognoscitur per propriam rationem, et actualius quam prima materia, et tamen non habet in Deo propriam ideam ».

hand, his strong propensity for hypostatizing is the reason which explains the differences between his doctrine and Thomas Aquinas's, as well as the use of formal distinction in this context. He methodically replaces logical and epistemological rules with ontological criteria and references and tries to find an ontological grounds for every kind of distinction he introduces. This fact accounts also for the (Neo)platonian characterisation of his theory of ideas. Paul stresses more than any other author of the 13th and 14th centuries the reality and (partial) independence of ideas. At the level of being which is proper to pure essences, divine ideas are something distinct from God, because the definitions of the divine essence and that of any of the divine ideas (say man, or horse) are totally different. On the level of existence, however, the divine essence is the ontological substrate necessarily presupposed by the incomplete form of existence peculiar to ideas. Unfortunately, the formal distinction which holds between the divine essence and divine ideas raises the problem of how divine ideas originate from the divine essence, given that they do not share any constitutive features. This is the *punctum dolens* of Paul's theory, since he does not clarify the passage from divine essence to ideas. He simply states that the divine essence itself *qua* imitable is the principle of knowledge of all possibles and ideas are the models of production of the existent. According to Thomas, divine ideas are produced by those notional relations by means of which God views his essence as capable of being infinitely imitated. Paul does not speak of such relations, nor, for him, does God's thinking of the divine essence as imitable *ad extra* seem to be sufficient for giving rise to ideas — as we have seen. To explain the passage from divine essence to ideas, he could only have resorted to the inscrutable divine will, but in fact he did not ; such an move, after all, might not have been approved by a 'rationalist' as radical as he was.

APPENDIX

PAULUS VENETUS
<De ideis>

Lectura super librum Metaphysicorum, Liber VII, Tr. 3, cap. 2
<excerpta>

- Notandum quod de ideis fuerunt quattuor opiniones, quarum prima fuit Platonis, dicentis ideas esse quasdam substantias separatas a suis singularibus, existentes in orbe signorum, ad quorum exemplar Deus universa hec inferiora producit. Et sicut dicit Philosophus de universalibus quod non sunt in loco neque in tempore nisi per accidens ratione singularium, ita dicebat Plato quod idee numquam sunt per se neque in celo neque extra celum, per accidens autem sunt in orbe signorum ratione primi entis, cuius sunt instrumenta agendi. Constat autem quod primus motor est in circumferentia orbis signorum, ut testatur Philosophus, VIII *Physicorum*¹.
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- 10 Sed Eustratius, super I *Ethicorum*², excusans Platonem dicit quod non posuit ideas in orbe signorum, sed in intellectu primi entis, dicens ideas esse rationes superstantes omnino et supererectas corporibus et naturis, et numerum quemdam divinum per quem, velut per exemplum, conditorem operari contingit materialem factionem. Ubi Eustratius quattuor dicit de
- 15 ideis secundum mentem Platoniorum. Primum est quod sunt rationes, non quidem extra mentem primi, sed stantes supra totam naturam, sicut et ipsum primum. Secundum est quod ille rationes sunt factive et practice, quia non solum sunt rationes cognoscendi, sed etiam faciendi, aliter non per eas velut per exemplum conditor operaretur. Tertium est <P 297rb> quod habent
- 20 quemdam numerum, ita quod finite sunt et species finitas habent, et omnia producunt secundum aliquem numerum aut secundum unitatem aut secundum dualitatem, et ita de aliis. Que enim habent tantum esse dicuntur produci secundum unitatem. Que quidem habent esse et unitatem dicuntur produci secundum dualitatem numeri binarii. <C 65rb>Et ita de aliis. Quartum est quod
- 25 habent esse divinum, quoniam idee ille non differunt realiter, sed solum secundum rationem, sicut et omnia que sunt in intellectu primi solam distinctionem

15 secundum] ad C 16 mentem] intellectum C 26 solam distinctionem] distinctionem tantum C

¹ ARISTOTELES, *Ph.* VIII, c. 10, 267b14-26.

² EUSTRATIUS, *In Eth. Nic.*, G. HELBUYT ed., CAG 20, 1892, pp. 40-41.

rationis habent. Et concludit Eustratius quod Platonici dicebant illa extra rationes, condiciones et speculationes, non ut qualitates quasdam vel substantias supervenientes ab extra, sed ut principaliter entia et subsistentia et intellectualia et eorum que natura archetypa, id est principalia, que rationes exemplares existentes in mente divina dicuntur habere principalitatem respectu formarum in materia.

Ista excusatio laudabilis est, si non derogaret fame Aristotelis. Numquam enim laborasset Aristoteles tantum contra Platonem, si ideas posuisset in intellectu primi entis, cum hoc sit verum et necessarium, aliter non diceret V huius³ quod Deus aggregat in se perfectiones omnium rerum. Plato enim posuit universalia separata a suis singularibus, quia intellectus intelligit ea non intelligendo singularia. Constat autem quod intellectus humanus, sicut concipit hominem vel equum sine singularibus, ita sine primo ente. Ideo posuit ea separata a primo ente. Deinde concessit quod universalia predicantur de suis singularibus et quod illa sunt que diffiniuntur et de quibus habetur scientia, et quod species componuntur ex genere et differentia, et quod huiusmodi universalia sunt substantie et quidditates rerum. Sed certum est quod ista non conveniunt intellectui divino neque ideis existentibus in eo.

Secunda opinio fuit Ockham⁴, ponentis ideas extra divinum intellectum, et tot esse ideas quot sunt creature producte vel producibiles, ita quod quelibet creatura idea est atque exemplar sui ipsius. Unde — inquit ipse — idee sunt proportionaliter ponende in artifice creato et increato. Sed si artifex creatus cognosceret precise artificiatum producendum ab eo, ita vere ageret per exemplar sive per ideam sicut si cognosceret unum cuius simile deberet producere. Ergo respectu artificis creati ipsum producibile est vere idea atque exemplar. Constat autem quod Deus creaturam producibilem precognoscit. Ergo ipsa creatura est vere et realiter idea, ita quod idea non est nisi aliquid cognitum ad quod cognoscens aspicit in producendo, ut secundum ipsum aliquid simile illi aut ipsum producat in esse reali, sicut una domus est idea et exemplar alterius domus per hoc quod artifex ipsam respiciens ad illius similitudinem aliam domum facit. Ita etiam si artifex domum producendam in particulari cognosceret, ipsa sui ipsius idea esset atque exemplar. Et ex hoc concedit quod idee non sunt in Deo subjective, sed tantum objective, sicut et res ab ipso producibiles, et quod quarumlibet rerum factibilium sunt distincte idee, sicut et ipse res distincte sunt; et

47 atque] et C 52 quod] intellectus creatus add. C 53 precognoscit] pre- interl. C 54 aliquid] aliquod C 60 res] ipsa add. et del. C ; producibiles iter. et exp. C

³ ARISTOTELES, *Metaph.*, V, c. 16, 1021b30-1022a1.

⁴ OCKHAM, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 5, *O. Th.* IV, pp. 479-505.

consequenter quod quarumlibet partium essentialium atque integralium sunt distincte idee. Et ex hoc Deus habet infinitas ideas, sicut in continuo sunt infinities infinite partes; et quia non sunt universalialia ex parte rei, sed solum singularia, ideo non universalialia sed solum singularia habent ideas.

Ista opinio irrationalis est, quoniam similitudo est relatio requirens distinctionem realem extremorum, sicut et equalitas, ut colligitur de mente Philosophi V huius⁵. Ergo nihil est sibi simile vel equale. Et per consequens nihil est idea sive exemplar sui ipsius. Patet consequentia, quia idea et exemplar dicit similitudinem ad ideatum et exemplatum.

Item, in hoc VII⁶ declaravit Philosophus quod domus que est in materia est a domo que est in anima, et sanitas <C 65va> que est in corpore sanabili est a sanitate que est in mente artificis; cum ergo unumquodque fiat a suo simili, ut multipliciter <P 297va> demonstravit, sequitur quod domus que est in anima et sanitas que est in mente medici sit idea et exemplar, non autem domus aut sanitas que est in materia.

Preterea, Deus cognoscit Antechristum per ideam Antechristi; sed Deus nihil cognoscit per illud quod non est; ergo idea Antechristi est. Constat autem quod Antechristus non est. Ergo idea Antechristi non est Antechristus. Ut arguatur sic: Deus eternaliter cognovit Antechristum; sed Antechristus non eternaliter terminavit cognitionem divinam quia ipse numquam fuit; ergo aliud ab Antechristo eternaliter terminavit illam eternam cognitionem. Hoc autem videtur esse idea Antechristi. Ergo idea Antechristi eternaliter fuit. Ipse autem Antechristus numquam fuit. Ergo idea Antechristi non est Antechristus.

Et si domificator ad similitudinem .a. domus facit .b. domum, non debet dici quod .a. sit idea .b., sed tantum exemplar, quia idea ultra similitudinem dicit rationem cognitivam et causalem. Ideo, domus existens in mente artificis est idea domus existentis in materia, quia non solum est similis illi, sed etiam est ratio cognitiva et causalis illius. Propterea, si artifex nihil cognosceret nisi domum faciendam — quod tamen est impossibile —, illius domus nihil esset exemplar neque idea.

Tertia opinio fuit Scoti⁷, describentis ideam per hunc modum: idea est ratio eterna in mente divina, secundum quam aliquid est formabile secundum propriam rationem eius. Nam, cum Deus nihil irrationabiliter agat, oportet quod cum

95 agat] agit C

⁵ ARISTOTELES, *Metaph.*, V, c. 9, 1019a15-18.

⁶ ARISTOTELES, *Metaph.*, VII, c. 7, 1032a32-b2, 1032b11-12.

⁷ DUNS SCOTUS, *Lectura I*, d. 35, q. unica, ed. Vaticana XVII, pp. 445-453; *Ordinatio*, d. 35, q. unica; d. 36, q. unica, ed. Vaticana, VI, pp. 245-270, 281-290.

ratione producat creaturas ; non autem per rationem extra se, quia hoc diceret imperfectionem in Deo ; ergo per rationem existentem in se. Omnis autem ratio existens in Deo est incommutabilis et eterna ; ergo idea est ratio eterna, ex quo huiusmodi ratio existens in mente divina nihil aliud sit quam idea.

100 Ex qua conclusione infert quattuor correlaria. Quorum primum est : idea est obiectum cognitum per intellectum divinum in esse intelligibili determinatum. Patet, quia tale obiectum cognitum est propria ratio rei factibilis ad extra, sicut domus in mente respectu domus in materia, ita quod lapis aut equus in esse intelligibili est idea lapidis aut ligni existentis in
105 propria natura. Talis enim equus aut lapis in esse intelligibili videtur terminare divinam cognitionem.

Secundum correlarium : cuilibet rei factibili respondet proprium esse intelligibile in mente divina, sicut et extra intellectum divinum in proprio genere habet proprium esse distinctum a quolibet alio. Si enim Deus solum
110 cognosceret Sortem, in eo esset idea Sortis per hoc quod in eo esset intelligibile esse Sortis ; sed iam Sortis et Platonis Deus habet proprium intelligibile esse ; ergo iam cuiuslibet illorum habet propriam ideam.

Tertium correlarium : infinitarum idearum pluralitas consistit obiective in mente divina. Patet, quoniam in quocumque est esse intelligibile alicuius,
115 in eodem est propria idea illius ; sed in mente divina est obiective esse intelligibile cuiuscumque tam possibilis quam realiter existentis, sicut in eodem est esse cognitum illius, alioquin Deus posset ignoranter aliquid producere — quod est absurdum. Constat autem infinita esse producibilia ab intellectu divino. Ergo etc.

120 Quartum correlarium : idea existens in mente divina est divina intellectio tam producibilis quam realiter existentis, quia sicut se habet in nobis intellectio nostra ad esse intellectum, sic divina intellectio ad esse intellectum ; sed in nobis intellectio nostra et esse rei intellectum sunt idem ; ergo etc. Probatur minor. Nam, dum cognosco patrem meum non existentem queritur quid est
125 illud esse intellectum patris mei ; et patet quod non est pater meus, quia ille non est, nec est intellectus, <C 65vb>quia tunc, cum intellectus desineret intelligere, ipse desineret esse intellectus — quod est falsum ; non etiam aliquod fictum factum ab intellectu, quia tale numquam fuit sensatum. Relinquitur ergo quod illud intellectum patris mei est ipsa cognitio intellectus.

130 Ista opinio <P 297vb> rationabilis est, quia non ponit ideas esse extra intellectum divinum, sed solum in intellectu divino per modum obiecti cogniti, non quidem habentis esse reale in proprio genere, sed solum habentis esse intelligibile in intellectu divino. Est tamen dubia quoad duo dicta alia, quorum

135 primum est quod cuilibet rei factibili respondet propria idea, ita quod infinitis
 creaturis productis vel producibilibus respondent infinite idee in mente divina
 sicut et infinita intelligibilia esse, quoniam sicut est in artifice creato ita <in>
 increato. Sed artifex creatus habet unam ideam correspondentem pluribus
 artificialibus. Ergo etiam artifex increatus habet unam ideam respondentem
 140 pluribus producibilibus. Tenet consequentia cum maiori ex sufficienti
 similitudine data per opinionem recitatum, et minor est Aristotelis in hoc VII⁸,
 intendentis quod ab eadem domo numero existente in mente artificis plures
 domus possunt fieri. Ars enim est recta ratio factibilium. Sicut ergo non
 requiruntur plures rationes neque plures habitus factivi ad producendum
 diversa artificialia eiusdem speciei, ita non multiplicatur domus aut sanitas
 145 que est habitus factivus in anima iuxta multiplicationem domorum existentium
 extra animam aut sanitatum existentium in corpore sanabili.

Item, ars assimilatur nature et forma dicitur species et idea in quantum
 potest producere sibi simile, ut colligitur de mente Philosophi II *Physicorum*⁹.
 Constat autem quod agens naturale per eandem naturam numero potest diversa
 150 producere eiusdem speciei. Ergo etc. Etiam artifex per eandem artem numero et
 Deus per eandem ideam numero potest plura eiusdem speciei producere. Et per
 consequens non cuilibet producibili correspondet propria idea.

Secundum quod dicitur hec opinio est quod idea in mente divina est cognitio
 ipsius rei producibilis — quod non videtur verum, quia idea in mente creati
 155 artificis non est cognitio rei artificialis. Ergo neque idea in mente artificis
 increati est cognitio rei producibilis. Patet consequentia a sufficienti
 similitudine. Antecedens autem est manifestum, quoniam sive artifex
 consideret sive non consideret, sive agat sive non agat, continue manet eadem
 idea, sicut et eadem ars et idem habitus factivus.

160 Quarta opinio fuit beati Thome et Egidii¹⁰, dicentium quod non sunt
 plures idee in intellectu primi entis neque extra intellectum illum, sed est una
 tantum idea omnium, scilicet divina essentia sub respectu imitabilitatis, ita
 quod sicut prima materia sub infinitis respectibus existens infinitarum
 formarum est receptiva, ita divina essentia sub infinitis respectibus
 165 imitabilitatis existens infinitorum tam productorum quam producibilium est

136 in *om.* C 143 requiruntur] requiritur P 155 est *iter.* P 159 habitus] factivus
add. C 168 a] priori et *add.* C

⁸ ARISTOTELES, *Metaph.*, VII, c. 7, 1032b11-14.

⁹ ARISTOTELES, *Ph.*, II, c. 1, 193a28-33.

¹⁰ THOMAS AQUINAS, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2; *De veritate*, q. 3; *STh I*, qq. 14-15; AEGIDIUS
 ROMANUS, *Quaestiones de esse et essentia*, q. 3, ed. Venetiis 1503, ff. 6va-rb; *Quodlibet*
 I, qq. 9-10, ed. Lovanii 1646, pp. 19-23.

representativa. Si enim aliqua qualitas, videlicet conceptus Sortis, est
 representativa omnium dissimilium, scilicet substantie et accidentis, quia
 seipsum representat et Sortem, a fortiori divina essentia est representativa
 per unicam simplicissimam rationem omnium quantumcumque dissimilium.
 170 Ideo omnium ipsa est idea unica sicut omnium est similitudo atque exemplar.
 Unde aliqua est similitudo que est representativa tantum unius, sicut conceptus
 singularis, et aliqua est que est representativa omnium eiusdem speciei, sicut
 conceptus specificus, et alia que est representativa omnium que sunt eiusdem
 generis, ut conceptus genericus, et alia que est representativa omnium rerum
 175 indifferenter, ut conceptus transcendens. Harum similitudinum prima est
 distincta et omnes alie confuse. Imaginemur ergo unam similitudinem
 representantem per modum transcendentis quoad communitatem et per
 modum individui quoad distinctionem, <C 66ra>et talis est divina similitudo
 respectu omnium creaturarum. Unde cognitio generis et transcendentis est
 180 multorum, sed confusa. Quod sit multorum est perfectionis, et quod sit
 confusa est imperfectionis. Cognitio autem individui est unius tantum, sed
 distincta. Quod sit unius solum est imperfectionis, et quod sit distincta est
 perfectionis. Amoveamus ergo omnem imperfectionem retenta perfectione,
 et quia omnis <P 298ra> perfectio est Deo tribuenda, remanebit divina
 185 essentia multorum similitudo distincta et propria.

Item, quanto aliqua intelligentia est perfectior, tanto intelligit per pauciores
 species et magis universales atque distinctius; ergo illa que intelligit per
 solum conceptum entis, perfectius atque distinctius cognoscit. Modus enim
 cognoscendi intelligentiarum opponitur modo cognoscendi humano. Constat
 190 autem quod intellectus humanus quanto cognoscit per species magis
 universales tanto confusius cognoscit; ideo e contra intelligentie separate
 quanto per species magis universales cognoscunt tanto perfectius et distinctius
 intelligunt. Deus autem perfectissime cognoscit et plura quam aliqua
 intelligentia creata; et non per aliquam speciem accidentalem, sed per
 195 essentiam suam; ergo divina essentia est distincta atque perfectissima omnium
 cognitio tam possibilium quam actualiter existentium; et per consequens est
 omnium idea unica absque multitudine idealium rationum.

Hec opinio probabilis est et bene fundata; sed remanent dubia propter
 similitudinem quam omnes concedunt inter artificem creatum et increatum
 200 preter distinctionem realem repertam in artifice creato. Certum enim est quod
 intellectus artificis creati, aut essentia illius, sub quocumque respectu signato
 non est idea domus aut sanitatis existentis in materia, sed necesse est dare
 unam formam superadditam intellectui et essentie artificis per quam producitur

domus aut sanitas in materia ad eius similitudinem, ut supra patuit ex doctrina
 205 Aristotelis et Commentatoris¹¹. Ergo consequenter loquendo idea in Deo non
 est formaliter intellectus divinus neque essentia divina sub aliquo respectu
 imitabilitatis, sed quidditas aut species aliqua in esse intelligibili creature non
 realiter distincta, sed formaliter tantum, ab essentia divina.

Deinde, forma et perfectio sunt unum, ut colligitur de mente Aristotelis et
 210 Commentatoris II *De anima*¹² et etiam Avicenne VI *Naturalium*; sed in Deo
 sunt perfectiones omnium rerum, per Philosophum V huius¹³; ergo in Deo
 sunt forme omnium rerum; huiusmodi autem forme non videntur esse nisi
 quidditates creaturarum obiective existentes in Deo, in quibus divinus
 intellectus cognoscit creaturas et ad illarum similitudinem illas producit in
 215 esse, eo modo quo intellectus artificis creati habet in se formam sanitatis aut
 domus in qua cognoscit sanitatem vel domum materialem, et ad illius
 similitudinem producit in materia sanitatem vel domum.

Preterea, si in Deo est unica idea, et idea est ratio exemplaris productiva
 effectus consimilis, ergo eadem ratione eodem exemplo et eadem similitudine
 220 producitur homo et equus — quod est inconueniens et contra Augustinum,
 libro 83 *Questionum*¹⁴, dicentem quod alia ratione conditus est homo et alia
 conditus est equus. Si enim inconueniens est quod artifex creatus eadem
 ratione producit sanitatem et domum, magis inconueniens est quod artifex
 increatus eadem ratione producat hominem et equum, cum rationabilius
 225 operetur artifex increatus quam creatus. Sicut ergo in Deo est multitudo
 attributalium rationum, videlicet sapientie, scientie, iustitie, bonitatis et
 huiusmodi, ita in eo est multitudo idealium quidditatum non realiter differentium,
 sed tantum ratione. Ita quod in eo est quidditas hominis et quidditas equi non
 in esse reali, sed solum in esse <C 66rb> intelligibili atque intentionali.

230 Dicendum ergo quod non est dare ideas separatas per se existentes,
 videlicet hominem preter hunc hominem, quia de ratione nature communis
 est quod sit in alio, sed est dare ideas separatas a sensibilibus existentes in
 intellectu creato vel increato. Constat enim quod omnia naturalia et omnia
 constituta infra essentias creatas necessario a Deo procedunt; non autem per
 235 modum nature; ergo per modum intellectus <P 298 rb> et artis. Omne autem

207 esse *interl.*, in linea ratione *scr. et exp.* C 221 alia ²] ratione *add.* C 226
 videlicet] scilicet C 227 differentium *post* ratione C

¹¹ ARISTOTELES, *Metaph.*, VII, c. 7, 1032a32-b2; AVERROES, *In Metaph.*, VII, t. c. 23, in *Aristotelis Opera Omnia cum Averrois Cordubensis commentariis*, ed. Venetiis (apud Iuncta), vol. VII, f. 174ra.

¹² ARISTOTELES, *De Anima*, II, c. 1, 412b10-18; AVERROES, *In De An.*, II, t. c. 4, F. S. CRAWFORD ed., Cambridge (Mass.) 1953, pp. 133-134.

¹³ ARISTOTELES, *Metaph.*, V, c. 16, 1021b30-1022a1.

¹⁴ AUGUSTINUS, *De diversis quaestionibus 83*, q. 46, PL 40, coll. 29-31.

procedens ab aliquo per modum artis procedit ab eo per modum exemplati ;
 et non procedit aliquid per modum exemplati nisi exemplar habeat in mente
 artificis ; ergo in Deo sunt exemplaria omnium creaturarum, que quidem
 exemplaria vocantur idee atque forme divini intellectus, iuxta illud Boethii in
 240 libro *De Trinitate*¹⁵ : « Omnis forma que est in materia est deducta a forma que
 non est in materia ». Unde idea sumitur dupliciter, videlicet communiter et
 proprie. Idea communiter sumpta est quidditas specifica in intellectu
 causaliter existens, ad cuius exemplar generans effectum producit.

In hac descriptione ponuntur quattuor que sunt de ratione idee, iuxta
 245 doctrinam Aristotelis et Commentatoris in hoc VII. Primo quidem : idea debet
 esse quidditas specifica, quoniam idea habet rationem actus et forme, genus
 autem et individuum habent rationem materie ; ergo idea non potest esse
 quidditas generis neque individui. Propterea male dicunt illi qui opinantur
 quamlibet denominationem perfectionis simpliciter existentem in Deo, scilicet
 250 essere, vivere et intelligere, esse ideam creature, quia idea debet esse ratio
 determinata ; huiusmodi autem denominationes perfectionis simpliciter sunt
 rationes indeterminate.

Secundo : idea debet esse subiective in intellectu, quoniam sicut natura
 agit per instrumentum coniunctum sibi, ita et intellectus. Instrumentum
 255 autem intellectus est idea. Ideo non bene dicunt qui concedunt creaturas
 extra intellectum esse ideas, quia domus que est in materia, aut sanitas que
 est in corpore animalis, non debet dici idea, sed sanitas aut domus que est in
 anima, quam Commentator superius vocavit quidditatem intrinsecam, que
 est forma eius existens in lapidibus et lignis. Habet etiam quidditatem
 260 extrinsecam, que est forma existens in anima productiva domus in materia.

Tertio : idea debet esse causalis, id est : causa effectiva, effectus consimilis.
 Dixit enim superius Philosophus¹⁶ quod domus que est in materia est a domo
 que est in anima, et sanitas que est in corpore sano est a sanitate existente in
 anima. Propterea scriptura aut pictura ad cuius similitudinem scriptor scribit
 265 et pictor pingit non debet vocari idea, quia non concurrat ut causa effectiva,
 sed tantum ut exemplar et similitudo.

Quarto : idea debet esse exemplar, ut ad similitudinem illius effectus
 producat. Per hoc idea debet esse in intellectu non tantum subiective, sed
 etiam obiective, ut sit in prospectu intellectus tamquam obiectum cognitum
 270 non tantum absolute sed etiam respective, ut sicut intellectus respiciens

255 dicunt... concedunt] dicit qui concedit **C**

¹⁵ BOETHIUS, *De Trinitate*, II, 49-51, in *Opuscula theologica*, R. PEIPER ed., Leipzig 1871.

¹⁶ ARISTOTELES, *Metaph.*, VII, c. 7, 1032a32-b2, 1032b11-12.

phantasma non tantum cognoscit phantasma sed etiam cognoscit universale aut particulare relucens in eo, ita intellectus aspiciens ideam, que est quidditas rei in esse intelligibili, non tantum eam cognoscit, sed etiam rem ipsam relucentem in ea. Et ex isto patet quod idea non est
275 cognitio rei, sed est quidditas rei in esse intelligibili presentata intellectui ut obiectum cognitum.

Quando ergo querebatur : dum intelligo patrem meum defunctum, quid est illud esse intellectum patris mei? Dicitur quod est species phantastica aut aliqua alia species intelligibilis in qua relucet pater meus. Sicut enim
280 datur duplex color, scilicet realis, qui est in pariete, et intentionalis existens in medio aut in oculo, ita preter patrem realem est dare patrem intentionalem, qui est similitudo patris realis remanens in memoria aut in intellectu defuncto patre. Huiusmodi autem similitudo est species phantastica vel intelligibilis <C 66va>objective presentata intellectui, in qua intellectus
285 patrem cognoscit defunctum.

Sed idea proprie sumpta est quidditas specifica causaliter existens in mente divina ad cuius exemplar supremus conditor creaturas <P 298va> producit in esse. Ista descriptio patet per beatum Augustinum in libro 83
290 *Questionum*¹⁷, dicentem has autem rationes non esse arbitrandum nisi in mente creatoris. Non enim extra se positum intuebatur ut secundum illud constitueret quicquid constituebat. Ecce quod beatus Augustinus rationes quas vocat ideas tantummodo in mente creatoris ponit. Quod quidem confirmat eodem libro, dicens¹⁸: «sunt namque idee principales quedam forme atque rationes rerum stabiles atque immutabiles, et ipse formate non
295 sunt, atque eterne et semper eodem modo se habentes, que in divina essentia continentur ». Constat autem dictum hoc non verificari de formis causalibus existentibus in mente creati artificis. Ideo proprie non invenitur idea nisi in mente divina, quam beatus Augustinus vocat formam et rationem. Commentator vero XII huius dicit eam esse artem divini intellectus, que
300 etiam quidditas intelligibilis vocatur, sicut et ipsam formam domus in intellectu existentem Commentator superius quidditatem expressit¹⁹.

Ex predictis sequitur primo quod non cuilibet rei factibili respondet propria mentis idea. Patet, quoniam in omnibus individuus eiusdem speciei

271 tantum] solum C ; cognoscit¹] singulare *add. et exp.* 280 scilicet] intentionalis *add. et exp.* C; qui est] existens C 286 causaliter] communiter C 288 beatum *om.* C 291 constitueret] constituitur C

¹⁷ AUGUSTINUS, *De diversis quaestionibus* 83, q. 46, PL 40, col. 29.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ AVERROES, *In Metaph.*, VII, t. c. 23, f. 173vb.

305 non invenitur nisi una quidditas specifica in esse reali; ideo in intellectu
 divino non invenitur respectu omnium illorum individuorum nisi una quidditas
 specifica in esse intelligibili. Et non sequitur: Cuilibet rei factibili respondet
 proprium esse intelligibile, ergo cuilibet tali respondet proprium esse ideale.
 Nam quilibet domus producibilis habet proprium esse intelligibile in mente
 artificis, sicut et propriam cognitionem et propriam speciem intelligibilem,
 310 non tamen habet propriam ideam. Constat enim quod domificator per eandem
 formam domus quam habet in mente producit plures domus in materia.

Secundo sequitur quod non est necesse ponere in mente divina infinitas
 ideas, quia licet in mente divina sint infinita intelligibilia esse respectu
 infinitorum producibilium, non tamen quodlibet illorum est idea, quoniam
 315 idea non est forma exemplaris tantum unius, sed omnium eiusdem speciei, ut
 asserit Plato et etiam Aristoteles secundum quod apparet in parte sequenti
 huius capituli. Si enim teneatur cum philosophis quod species sunt solum
 finite, neque plures possunt esse, dicatur quod in intellectu divino non sunt
 320 alie species possunt fieri, sicut infinite possunt esse species numerorum, sic
 in Deo ponende sunt idee infinite.

Tertio sequitur quod licet intellectus divinus per unam simplicem rationem
 omnia cognoscat, non tamen per unam ideam omnia ad esse producit.
 Unde, sicut artifex habet duplicem formam in mente, unam speculativam, per
 325 quam tantum cognoscit, aliam vero practicam per quam cognoscit et operatur,
 ita Deus habet in se duplicem conceptum, unum quidem speculativum per
 quem infinita cognoscit, et iste conceptus est divina essentia sub infinitis
 respectibus creaturarum, alium vero per quem cognoscit et operatur, et iste
 est idea formaliter differens ab essentia divina. Et multiplicatur formaliter
 330 talis conceptus in Deo sicut multiplicatur realiter quidditas specifica in
 rebus creatis.

Quarto sequitur quod idea, licet sit quidditas specifica intellectualis,
 adhuc est unum numero habens rationem totius et non partis. Patet per
 Eustratium, super I *Ethicorum*²⁰, dicentem quod idea habet per essentiam
 335 quicquid forma in materia habet per participationem, et habet unitive et
 totaliter quicquid forme in materia habent particulariter et disperse. Ideo
 forma in materia dicitur pars. Ipsa autem idea vocatur totum. Unde ibi
 distinguit triplex totum, scilicet in partibus, post partes et ante partes. Totum
 in partibus est illud quod constituitur ex suis partibus; et tale non potest esse
 340 idea, quia tale totum concernit quantitatem, non autem idea. Totum post

321 ponende sunt *inv.* C 325 aliam vero] et aliam C 328 alium] aliquando P

²⁰ EUSTRATIUS, *In Eth. Nic.*, p. 40.

partes est intentio universalis quam accipit intellectus per abstractionem, ut quando intelligit speciem sine individuo et genus absque specie. Et iterum tale totum non est idea, sed universale, de quo loquitur Philosophus in prologo *De anima*²¹, dicens : « universale <P 298 vb> aut nihil est aut posterius est ». Totum autem ante partes est illud ad cuius exemplar fiunt partes, sic quod tale exemplar habet <per> quamdam supereminentiam et essentiam quicquid partes habent modo participato et diminuto. Et huiusmodi totum idea est, que etiam unum numero dicitur, quoniam unum et idem exemplar sufficere potest omnibus individuus unius speciei. Quia, ut dictum est, omnes domus aut omnes arche fieri possunt ad unum exemplar in mente artificis. Neque tale totum est de essentia partium, sed est illud ad cuius imitationem fit tota substantia partium et secundum maiorem et minorem participationem et imitationem huius totius exemplaris ipsum exemplatum magis vel minus

350 aut... arche] et omnes archiis C 353 imitationem] immutationem P

²¹ ARISTOTELES, *De Anima*, I, c. 1, 402b7-8.