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THE FRANCISCAN AND DOMINICAN AESTHETICS IN MIDDLE ENGLISH RELIGIOUS LYRIC POETRY

by

GREGORY J. SCHRAND

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

Jane C. Nitzsche
Chairman, Thesis Committee
Professor, Department of English

Edward O. Doughtie
Associate Professor,
Department of English

Baruch A. Brody
Professor, Department of Philosophy

HOUSTON, TEXAS

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Abstract

This study proposes two aesthetics, Franciscan and Dominican, to account for two types of lyrics. The Franciscan aesthetic accounts for lyrics which present a simple Christian truth for emotional reaction. But this aesthetic is too generally defined, and does not account for lyrics which present Christian paradox for intellectual appreciation. This study is an effort to provide a more exact definition of the Franciscan emotive aesthetic, and to begin to define a Dominican intellectual aesthetic.

The arrival of Aristotelianism in the thirteenth century indicated the human creature to be an intrinsically capable intellect; Thomism incorporated this intellectualist view into a Christian philosophy which was at odds with Bonaventurianism. The binary philosophical milieu—Thomist-Dominican and Bonaventurian-Franciscan—contemporary with the Middle English lyric makes the possibility of co-existing aesthetics not unreasonable.

Dominicanism and Franciscanism came to disagree especially on the Thomist doctrine of unicity. "The Debate Between the Body and the Soul" affirms pluralism, and therefore may be associated with Franciscanism. Examination of "The Debate" and many emotive lyrics finds them similar in purpose and structure, providing a more exact definition of the Franciscan aesthetic as "open" and "linear." An "open" aesthetic structures facile poetry which avoids intellectual complexity, and involves the will in "linear" movement towards its ultimate, simple good. An aesthetic so defined reflects the Bonaventurian tradition, which affirms primacy of the will in the human soul.
Those lyrics which express paradox address the reader's intellect, the primary faculty of the soul according to Thomism. A Dominican aesthetic accounts for these lyrics. This aesthetic structures a "closed" lyric which the reader analyzes for meaning. The rhetoric of closed expression, a barrier to universal communication in the Augustinian view, is appropriate to all readers and the subject matter. The ultimate Christian truths represented in the "closed" lyric defy science; only poetry has a point of contact with such truth. "Closed" lyrics are also "cyclic." Since the subject matter is beyond reason, the intellect returns to the poetic representation after failure to move to full understanding.
I. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to propose two different aesthetics in Middle English lyric poetry. This proposal would begin to account for two very different types of religious lyrics which exist in Middle English. Many lyrics encourage the reader to react emotionally to a simple truth of Christianity. This type of lyric is usually described as "Franciscan," and its emotive aesthetic is linked to the Bonaventurean philosophic tradition. But there are a number of lyrics which present the reader with some paradox or symbolic expression of Christian doctrine for intellectual appreciation, not emotional reaction. The Franciscan aesthetic does not account for this type of lyric; such lyrics are better explained by a Dominican aesthetic.

Until now, the Middle English religious lyric has been associated only with a Franciscan aesthetic. This critical concept has indeed made many lyrics more accessible to the modern reader. But the Franciscan aesthetic is somewhat unsatisfactory, being both defined and applied too generally. Because there is no precise definition of the Franciscan aesthetic, and because this study makes a proposal beyond the Franciscan aesthetic, this study must be but a modest beginning towards further investigation. This beginning will be a twofold effort: (1) to provide a more exact definition of the Franciscan aesthetic; (2) to propose and begin to define a Dominican aesthetic.

In order to define the Franciscan aesthetic, this study will examine a longer poem, "The Debate Between the Body and the Soul." This poem's
allegiance to Franciscanism will be established by proving that the poem affirms the Franciscan metaphysical doctrine of pluralism. The poem will then be used as a touchstone, along with many lyrics, to derive a more exact definition of the Franciscan aesthetic. Finally, lyrics of a very different type, whose rhetoric is paradoxical and symbolic rather than emotive, will be examined to begin to define a Dominican aesthetic antithetic to the Franciscan.

But before dealing either with the Franciscan or a Dominican aesthetic, this study will first present a historical review of the development of Aristotelianism into the Christian philosophy of Thomism. This review will illustrate the possibility of a Dominican aesthetic co-existing with the Franciscan aesthetic in Middle English. For the historical fact of a truly binary philosophical milieu, Bonaventuran and Thomist, in thirteenth century England makes the plausibility of co-existing aesthetics not unreasonable. The historical review will also introduce the Franciscan-versus-Dominican conflict over the Thomist doctrine of unicity, or unity of substantial form. Unicity contradicted Bonaventuran pluralism, the pluralism affirmed by "The Debate Between the Body and the Soul." Finally, the historical review will introduce the Thomist view of the human creature as intrinsically capable of knowledge. This Aristotelian viewpoint, made explicit in the Thomist doctrine of primacy of the intellect, is also antithetic to Bonaventuran doctrine, and is the basis of this study's proposed Dominican aesthetic.

As an overview, here are the elements of the Franciscan aesthetic and a proposed Dominican aesthetic which this study puts forward for consideration:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Franciscan</th>
<th>Dominican</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bonaventurean philosophy</td>
<td>Thomist philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. reader = will</td>
<td>reader = intellect</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. emotive address</td>
<td>intellectual address</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. lyric structure:</td>
<td>lyric structure:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. open</td>
<td>a. closed</td>
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<td>b. linear</td>
<td>b. cyclic</td>
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<td>5. lyric = moral tool</td>
<td>lyric = moral artifact</td>
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</table>

Presently, the elements of the Franciscan aesthetic usually invoked by critics—Bonaventurean philosophy and emotive address—are not extensively developed in terms which describe their effect upon poetic structure. Therefore, the Franciscan aesthetic is not fully defined. The Bonaventurean psychology views the human creature as primarily will, but this doctrine not only dictates that the lyrics ought to be an emotive address. Examination of lyrics reveals that the doctrine also structures and "open" poetry—facile poetry which avoids intellectual complexity—in order to insure "linear" success—salutary movement of the reader's will towards its ultimate good. On the other hand, a Dominican aesthetic, antithetic to the Franciscan, best accounts for "closed" lyrics, those which subordinate emotionalism to intellectualism in a complex structure of paradox and symbol. These lyrics involve the reader as intellect in a "cyclic" movement from the poem towards understanding and then back again to the poem.

Recent studies of the Middle English religious lyric, notably Stephen Manning's *Wisdom and Number* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1962), Rosemary Woolf's *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), and David L. Jeffrey's *The Early English Lyric* and...
Franciscan Spirituality (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), affirm that the aesthetic by which the lyric operates is emotive. For Manning, the religious lyric is an automatically emotional event. In any lyric the speaker (for example, Christ, Mary, or Everyman) and the dramatic situation (speaking from the cross, lullabying, or regretting sinfulness) have pre-established emotional values, commonly held by the audience; the lyric is an experience of intensity, not of depth or uniqueness.\textsuperscript{1} Rosemary Woolf defines this emotive aesthetic of the lyric more precisely, as an attempt to move the faculty of the will.

Woolf's study stresses the indebtedness of the Middle English religious lyric to Latin sources:

The English religious lyric did not spring from the intention of putting secular conventions to the service of religion: it grew directly and unselfconsciously from a Latin devotional movement, the authors using the vocabulary and verse-forms conveniently at hand.\textsuperscript{2}

The Middle English lyrics are vernacular versions of Latin meditations:

. . . the lyrics can immediately be recognized as meditative poems, for their sources are invariably Latin works that are overtly and unmistakably meditations.\textsuperscript{3}

The lyrics, like their Latin sources, operate according to pre-Ignatian meditative theory, which attempts to elicit an emotional response from the will in order to facilitate love:

The Ignatian method required the exercise of the three faculties, memory, reason, and will. But the medieval method did not require all three faculties to be used, and, indeed, to make easy the emotional response of love, it largely excluded the activity of the reason, for love is not the natural end of intellectual exploration.\textsuperscript{4}

Woolf also states that the lyrics, since they exclude reason in their purely emotive appeal to the reader's will, avoid striking expression and paradox, and, in agreement with Manning, that they minimize imagery.\textsuperscript{5}
David L. Jeffrey builds upon Woolf's view that the Middle English religious lyric operates according to the emotive aesthetic of Latin meditations. But Jeffrey finds that although many religious lyrics do share themes with the Latin tradition, the Latin sources and their meditative aesthetic do not account for the originality of many lyrics. Therefore he argues for a more accurate emotive aesthetic which was contemporary with the emergence of the Middle English religious lyric, an aesthetic based upon Franciscanism. This aesthetic embraces thirteenth to fifteenth century Franciscan spiritual concerns and methodology, including an emotive psychology. Such Franciscansim was rooted in Bonaventurean philosophy, which of course was an extension of the Latin traditions of Anselm and Augustine, important sources in Rosemary Woolf's study. Whereas Woolf defines the emotive aesthetic of the lyric as an attempt to elicit a response from the will to facilitate love (or, in the case of death lyrics, to inspire fear), Jeffrey defines the lyric's emotive aesthetic as a characteristically Franciscan evangelical attempt to move the will towards sacramental penance, especially by utilizing the authority of Scripture and by stressing the humanity of Christ. In addition, Jeffrey claims that the use of natural imagery, excluded from or severely limited in the emotive aesthetic as defined by Manning and Woolf, was integral to Franciscan methodology, since its use was established by the practices of St. Francis himself, and philosophically sanctioned by Bonaventure as exemplarism.

Jeffrey's study of the relationship between Franciscanism and the lyric is an effort to document the existence and especially to specify the meaning of "the Franciscan school" referred to, for example, by Manning in Wisdom and Number. As Jeffrey points out, references to this "school" evolved from a suggestion by Carleton Brown to study the effects upon literature caused by the
arrival of the friars in England, and from subsequent historical investigations of the Middle English religious carol by R. L. Greene and R. H. Robbins which associated it with Franciscanism. Then in 1940 Robbins wrote:

In a recent article I attempted to reinforce the claims of the Franciscans as progenitors and authors of the early religious carols. In this present paper I shall point to a more extensive field likewise dominated by the Franciscans, namely, the whole body of early Middle English religious lyric verse.

From Brown, Greene, and Robbins, through Manning and Woolf to Jeffrey, the gradual emergence of an apparently valid Franciscan emotive aesthetic to apply to Middle English religious lyric poetry has made much of this poetry more understandable.

But a Fundamental problem remains. The Franciscan emotive aesthetic does not account for the non-emotive varieties of experience—imagistic, paradoxical, witty—at the heart of many Middle English religious lyrics. Jeffrey's inclusion of Bonaventurean exemplarism in the Franciscan school of poetry accounts for symbology to a degree. But surely the Franciscan emotive aesthetic is not in force when the experience of a lyric resides essentially in its being an intellectual rather than an affective event. Critics side-step this problem rather than give up the emotive aesthetic. For example, Manning makes wit an adjunct to emotion; nevertheless, he ends up admitting that the emotive poetic method has little to do with many lyrics:

When the medieval poet uses wit, he may merely ornament an inherently valuable subject much as he may employ an elaborate sound structure; or he may heighten his audience's emotional response to the truth; or he may actually deepen his audience's understanding of the religious mystery. The poetry of wit in Middle English comprises a larger corpus than most commentators have realized. Examples of wit are not only incidental, as we have just observed, but characteristic of entire poems.
Manning concludes by declaring that "I syng of a myden"—a lyric he experiences as essentially an intellectual event—is the "supreme achievement" of Middle English religious lyric poetry.\textsuperscript{15}

In his study of medieval Latin hymnology, Walter Ong suggests the existence of and the basic distinction between two schools of poetry, Franciscan and Adamic-Thomist.\textsuperscript{16} His purpose is to argue the superiority of certain intellectual Latin verse usually neglected in favor of the traditional emotive favorites, the "Dies Irae" and "Stabat Mater Dolorosa." Ong, in critical sympathy with "New Criticism" figures Leavis, Brooks, Warren, Kenner, Empson, et al., does not hide his disdain for the Franciscan emotive approach. Nevertheless, the accuracy of his observations is such that even Jeffrey quotes him to establish just what one means by "the Franciscan school" in Middle English religious lyric poetry.\textsuperscript{17}

This school, whose piety is generally described as affective, characteristically finds the source of its rhetoric in the commonplaces of ordinary life—the love of son for mother, of mother for child, of brother for brother, St. Francis of Assisi's love of animals—encouraging the effort to transfer these or similar emotions to higher and nobler objects. This kind of piety seldom turns to theological elucidation in the effort to grow by a fuller and deeper explication of divine Reality. ... The existence of a Bonaventure shows that this school is not entirely averse to theological explanation; still, in fostering piety, far more readily than it takes to its theologians' findings, it takes to the conscription of popular notions and fashions which happen to be at hand. It loves to contemplate Christ not uttering mysteries but speaking of fish and sheep to his fisherman and shepherd friends.\textsuperscript{18}

In contrast to this Franciscan school, Ong finds in Latin hymnody that Adam of St. Victor and Thomas Aquinas characteristically find the source of their poetry in wit:
The trail of wit leads to one of the most vital centers of mediaeval literature. Here Christian teaching does more than merely supply the matter for poetry, and more than suggest an "architectonic" framework for literature. . . . Rather, at the point to which the trail of wit leads, the very texture of poetry itself--the element which makes literature literature--is seen to come into functional contact with the heart of Christian doctrine. . . . We can here identify wit poetry sufficiently for the present purpose as that poetry which characteristically employs conceit, that is, paradoxical or curious and striking comparison and analogy, and which favors the development of word-play. 19

This type of poetry in the corpus of Middle English religious lyrics, for example, "I syng of a myden" as described by Manning, ought to be accounted for by an intellectual aesthetic.

Let us hypothesize that certain Middle English religious lyrics address a reader/listener conceived of as primarily intellect, and especially attempt to engage that intellect:

Erpe toc of erpe, erpe wyp woh,
Erpe ober erpe to erpe droh,
Erpe leyde erpe in erbene broh--
Po heuede erpe of erpe erpe ynoh. 20

In this lyric the reader is preoccupied trying to resolve paradox. Other lyrics appeal to an audience conceived of as primarily will, and are designed for an emotive response:

Quanne hic se on rode
Ihesu mi lemmann,
An be-siden him stonden
Marie an lohan,
And his rig i-suogen,
And his side i-stingen,
For pe luue of man,
Wel on hic to wepen
And sinnes for-leten,
yif hic of luue kan,
yif hic of luue kan,
yif hic of luue kan. 21
This is not to say an emotive lyric disavows thought processes and that an intellectual lyric cannot provoke any emotional response. But this study's overall binary hypothesis about the Middle English religious lyric introduces the possibility of boundaries for the Franciscan aesthetic, so that it can apply consistently and appropriately.

Perhaps criticism has been hesitant to posit a Dominican school of poetry because of the seemingly low stature assigned to poetry in the writings of Thomas Aquinas himself:

(P)oetica scientia est de his quae propter defectum veritatis non possunt a ratione capi; unde oportet quod quasi quibusdam similitudinibus ratio seducatur; theologia autem est de his quae sunt supra rationem; et ideo modus symbolicus utrique communis est, cum neutra rationi proportionetur.22

Any hesitancy on the part of critics is a case of apples and oranges; Aristotelians do not expect poets to regard metaphysical demonstration as the highest form of poetry. The Aquinas who defined poetic expression as the lowest art of verbal reasoning also wrote poetry:

Pange, lingua, gloriosi
Corporis mysterium
Sanguinisti pretiosi,
Quem in mundi pretium
Fructus ventris generosi
Rex effudit gentium.23

When he did so he was a poet, not a philosopher. Furthermore, the doctrines of Thomism should not be confused with the results of Thomism. Even if Aquinas had condemned all poetry, which he did not,24 his doctrines could still affect poetic practice. Apparently his Aristotelianism did influence him to write poetry in a certain way; he wrote for an audience he believed to be by nature primarily intellect, whose purpose is to understand. And so his poetry aims to
engage the intellect, in paradox and conceit. Ong's theis is that poetry of wit provides an experience curiously akin to the paradoxes and conceits at the heart of the Christian faith which defy reasoned, metaphysical demonstrations:

"The impact of Christian teaching on the human being gives rise to a state of mind which not only exhibits certain affinities for poetry... but which finds a poetry of "wit"... a natural expression of its tensions."

Aquinas wrote poetry of wit because he recognized that the devices of intellectual poetry and the paradoxes of Christianity "both operate on the periphery of human intellect." Thus, the importance of the quote from Aquinas (above) is not that it denigrates poetry, but that it clearly links poetry to theology, the truths of Christianity. In Middle English religious lyric poetry, whether an emotive or an intellectual aesthetic has a more accurate affinity for Christian truths depends on what aspect of the subject is considered apropos for the audience. For example, Mary may be a typical human mother in her grief for her son, or she may be the paradox "makeles." But if one agrees with Ong's view regarding Latin hymnody, then his observations should apply with some validity and profit if projected forward to Middle English religious lyrics, and reinforce the hypothesis of a Dominican aesthetic.

The two Thomist doctrines which especially concern this study are unity of substantial form and primacy of the intellect. Both of these doctrines of the Thomist psychology contradicted traditional philosophy, whose psychology indicated a plurality of forms and affirmed primacy of the will. The philosophical debate—or perhaps, more accurately, battle—between the Franciscan traditionalists and the Dominican Thomists, especially in England, came to focus specifically upon the question of unity of substantial form. Ultimately, Franciscanism formulated the doctrine of pluralism, invoking the
authority of Bonaventure; and the Dominicans permanently and officially
drafted Thomism and unicity. As noted, this study will examine "The Debate
Between the Body and the Soul," whose affirmation of pluralism illustrates the
responsiveness of Middle English poetry to contemporary doctrines of
philosophy. In addition, because it affirms pluralism, here is a work which can
be tentatively associated with the Franciscan aesthetic. Thus, "The Debate"
can be looked at as a test case not just for the existence of the emotive
aesthetic as usually defined, but for this study's proposed additional elements of
the the lyric as a linear, open structure and as a moral tool.

Unlike pluralism, Thomism's unicity did not find expression in Middle
English poetry. But the Thomist doctrine of primacy of the intellect sanctioned
a poetic aesthetic diametrically opposed to the Franciscan aesthetic. This
intellectual aesthetic had been inspired, but never satisfactorily explained, by
Augustine. The Thomist psychology universalized legitimizes Christian poetic
intellectualism. The new psychology established what this study proposes be
called the Dominican aesthetic, which structures that body of Middle English
lyric poetry which addresses an audience regarded as primarily intellect. An
examination of lyrics will reveal the closed structure of the intellectual lyric,
antithetic to the Franciscan open structure. In addition, the lyric of the
Dominican aesthetic will prove to be an artifact, not a self-extinctive moral
tool as in the Franciscan aesthetic.

The first task at hand, however, is to document the arrival and societal
impact of Aristotelianism, Christianized as Thomism. This history is familiar
to students of philosophy, but perhaps too rarely held in mind by critics of
Middle English literature. Exceptions to this situation have led to fruitful results; for example, Greta Hort (Piers Plowman and Contemporary Religious Thought) has made certain complexities of Piers more accessible through her awareness of the Thomist doctrines which coexisted with Franciscan thought.27 The following review from Augustine to Aquinas, Bonaventure, Kilwardy, Peckham, and the English Thomists is not presented as new information. But it is a necessary step to insure a proper perception of the intellectual heritage and binary philosophical milieu at the time of the Middle English religious lyric.
I. Notes

1 "In discussing the three major personae--Mary, Christ, the sinner--that
the lyricists assume, we have seen that only a few approach the technique of the
dramatic lyric. The speakers do not need objective correlatives to establish the
validity of their experiences, for the subject matter of which they speak has
value of itself, as the medieval audience recognized. The poets therefore
characterize their speakers with intensity rather than depth. If the speaker is a
sinner, the poet may express his sinfulness in formulas rather than in
individualizing sins under particular circumstances, for his audience can
immediately place his speaker within the emotive context required to make the
lyric meaningful. The audience knows what a sinner is and what his relationship
to the chosen addressee is. To justify his poem artistically the poet needs
therefore to intensify this given emotive context so that his audience will
contemplate it and deepen its perception of the subject matter. To do this, he
needs perhaps only a few individualizing touches, for when his audience takes
the value of the experience for granted, validating the experience through
elaborate or subtle characterization is unnecessary. The song therefore owes
its emotive structure to the fact that its intensity centers in the intensity of
the speaker and not in the intensity of a unique experience." (Manning, pp. 50-
51.)

2 Woolf, p. 2.

3 Woolf, p. 4.

4 Woolf, p. 9.

5 "Since it is the poet who meditates, it is fitting in the seventeenth
century that a poem should be highly wrought and imaginatively inventive, but
when it is the reader who meditates, any technical or imaginative flourish is
likely to intrude between the reader and the meditation" (Woolf, p. 8). "The
exclusion of the intellect from religious poetry prevents an equal emphasis upon
the Divinity and Humanity of Christ and therefore leads to the exclusion of
paradox arousing wonderment" (Woolf, p. 9). "From the fact that the medieval
lyric makes very little use of intellectual ideas there follows the further point
that it is very bare of imagery. To the modern reader this may at first seem
strange, for since the nineteenth century we have come to think of imagery as
being primarily emotive, and we should therefore suppose it to be particularly
appropriate to a poetry of affective meditation. But to the medieval poet the
chief function of imagery was to convey a truth, not to the heart or
imagination, but to the intellect, and there is little room for it in a poetry
designed only to touch the emotions" (Woolf, p. 11). "The analogies which the
Middle Ages saw between the corporeal and the spiritual levels of existence is
(sic), as we have been noting, reflected in the imagery which the poets use. If
we restrict imagery, as I do here, to include primarily simile, metaphor,
allegory, and symbol, the poets wrote many image-less lyrics. And when we
examine those that do contain imagery, we often find the images very few and
insignificant in the structure of the poem as a whole" (Manning, p. 106).
"The most useful book to appear on Middle English lyric verse is the one recently published by Rosemary Woolf... She studies many of the important themes in this body of poetry, illustrates them, and recognizes that the poetry is fundamentally emotional and meditative in style and devotional in content.... Generally speaking, however, she seems to have difficulty in showing the relationship between the specific Latin works she cites as sources and individual poems. ... For many of the cases... the likely reason that no close Latin source for the English poem has been discovered in that the poem is, with good reason, an independent response to the source Scripture..." (Jeffrey, pp. 5-6).

"If we summarize the elements of Franciscan theology and spirituality... the features achieving prominence are: Scripture, the humanity of Christ, affectual response, and the sacramental grace in contrition and identification (or conformity). The Franciscans gave to the Scriptures first authority in their theological and spiritual world, and with respect to doctrine and handling of the Scriptures organized Biblical materials so that they focused on the Passion of Jesus Christ. They gave second priority to the sacraments, and when elaborating their doctrines traced all investment of effective grace to the Passion of Christ. The most notable aspect of their evangelical spirituality was contrition-evoking, affective contemplation of the Cross, sometimes through the intermediary Virgin, prescribed in such a way as to promote Spiritual conformity to the Passion of the Suffered-Christ." (Jeffrey, pp 71-72.)

"The view of nature held by St. Francis was not... a proto-Romantic worship of the universe... He saw in all creatures an expression of God, but did not view that creation as something vague and undifferentiated. Franciscans following him were characterized in their aesthetic by rejoicing not merely in the lofty, noble, or grand, but equally in a particular flower, leaf, or pebble. Faith made it possible for the simplest of men to read the Book of Nature; only the literate could attempt the Book of God's Word. The most insignificant of God's works was still a divine signpost, and one element of the typical Franciscan message in the thirteenth century was precisely a call to the simplest people to know God in his works. St. Bonaventure merely set out, in his usual fashion, to give intellectual development (perhaps he thought also respectability) to St. Francis' theology of nature." (Jeffrey, p. 90.)

"Such poems exemplify the Franciscan appeal to basic emotions. Just as the affective school of piety utilized devices of sound to arouse the desired emotional response, so also it seized upon situations which inherently elicit normal human reactions, situations involving Mary or Mary and Christ" (p. 47). "Franciscan poetry in general recognizes what the speaker, the addressee, and the general context can do for a poem's emotive value" (p. 81). "The line is in perfect keeping with the emotional emphasis of what becomes the Franciscan school" (p. 81). "The Franciscans, who were so influential in shaping the course of the Middle English religious lyrics, were concerned more with arousing emotional response with their poems than they were in philosophical significances" (p. 107).

pp. 3-7.


13 "The Authors of the Middle English Religious Lyrics," JEGP, 39 (1940), 230.

14 Manning, pp. 144-145.

15 "I Syng of a myden," then, exhibits an amazing complexity in its puns, the multiple connotations and interactions of its images, and the profundity with which the poet has contemplated Mary's virgin-maternity. He has drawn freely upon traditional materials and upon his thirteenth-century source. But if this lyric is characterized by complexity and wit, it is characterized also by freshness and simplicity. As a final example of the poet's wit, we may notice that our poem has five stanzas, which, as we have seen, form a logical and poetic whole. We may see in this number a tribute to the Virgin..." This number symbolism is one more facet of the poet's use of wit, which makes 'I Syng of a myden' the supreme achievement of the Middle English religious lyric." (pp. 166-167.)


17 Jeffrey, pp. 7-8.

18 Ong, p. 321.

19 Ong, p. 312.

20 English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century, ed. Carleton Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), no. 73; this collection hereafter cited as 13, followed by lyric number, then line number(s) if appropriate.

21 13, 35b.

22 ("The science of poetry is about things which because of a deficiency of truth cannot be laid ahold of by reason; therefore the reason has to be led aside by means of certain comparisons. On the other hand, theology is about matters which are beyond reason; thus the symbolic mode is common to both poetry and theology, since neither is suited to reason.) Commentum in Lib. I Sententiarum, prol., q. 1, a. 5 ad 3, in Opera Omnia, VII (Paris: Vives, 1872-1880), 10.

"Among the arguments adduced against the study of poetry during the Middle Ages, perhaps the most significant were those found in the Summa theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas. We should understand at the outset that St. Thomas had in mind pagan poetry. The first argument (1-1.9. ad 1) appears in a defense of the allegorical character of the Bible, where it is directed against the view that Scripture should not use metaphors, which are proper only to poetry, "the lowest among all the disciplines." St. Thomas replies that poetry uses metaphors for purpose of representation, which is naturally delightful; but the Scriptures use metaphors on account of necessity and utility. ... Actually, St. Thomas' distinction involves simply the difference between figurative expressions used for pleasing ornament or emphasis and figurative expressions used in a Pauline sense. No one expected to find the latter in pagan poetry. The second argument (1-2. 101.2 ad 2) appears in answer to the proposition that rituals are improper because they are "theatrical and poetical," St. Thomas replies to the effect that poetry contains little truth, whereas ritual, because of the divine mysteries it contains, must use sensible figures. Again, it is obvious that pagan poetry cannot be expected to contain divine mysteries." From D. W. Robertson, Jr., A Preface to Chaucer (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1962), p. 354.

25 Ong, p. 325.

26 Ong, p. 339.

27 (New York: The MacMillan Company, n.d.) pp. 65-66; 68-71; 74-84; especially 92-94: "Langland begins by presenting the body as a castle in which the soul lives, and in doing so leads us to expect a description of the body-soul relationship along Augustinian lines. But almost immediately he changes the illustration--the castle itself becomes "man with a soul."... this is not an Augustinian conception at all; it is Thomistic. To St. Thomas, ... "the soul of man is not spirit only; it is the form of the human being." Man is "man with a soul," and not "a soul using a body." ... It was the insistence on the transcendence of soul over body, together with his insistence on their unity, which had made St. Augustine's thought so fruitful; he did not himself succeed in formulating the unity; but he paved the way for St Thomas to do so. ... The two different points of view existed in Langland's day, ... and Langland sided with St. Thomas."
II. Aristotelianism and Thomism

Middle English religious lyric poetry is now a more understandable, and therefore appreciable, literature because in recent years critics have shown how Latin meditational verse and Franciscan spirituality dictated an emotive aesthetic which determined the lyric's nature. The emotive aesthetic is a result of contemporary cultural forces. Other forces by which the Middle English religious lyric or any other medieval works must be approached—a knowledge of Scripture, the Fathers, Augustine, Boethius—were not forces contemporary with the Middle English religious lyric, but bedrock culture subsumed by the contemporary forces. In the early thirteenth century, the date of the earliest Middle English religious lyrics, a new cultural force had tremendous impact in the intellectual centers of Europe, notably Paris and Oxford. This new force was Aristotelianism.¹

In a sense Aristotelianism arrived gradually, through the development of dialectic studies. But more dramatically, there was in the thirteenth century the arrival of the Greek-Islamic corpus of Aristotelianism, an entirely new knowledge and new methodology for Europe. The reactions in Christian Europe to this knowledge and methodology ranged from heretical acceptance of Greek-Islamic doctrines, such as monopsychism, to overall condemnation of Aristotelianism, such as at Paris in 1210. The vigor of all these reactions points to Aristotelianism as a culturally impacting force worthy of consideration as genuinely influential, even revolutionary, not only in philosophic studies but in
other areas of intellectual endeavor, including literary.

Prior to the thirteenth century, a limited knowledge of Aristotle comprised the study of dialectic in the trivium. By the close of the thirteenth century, Western Europe had received an overwhelming Aristotelian corpus, including commentaries and impressive derivative philosophic systems, notably those of Avicenna, Alfarabi, and Averroes. This tremendous increase in knowledge suggested to some the possibility that a system of philosophy, independent of theology and based upon reason, could provide a comprehensive explanation of reality. Such an idea shook the thirteenth century intellectual world down to its bedrock cultural traditions. For Aristotelianism threatened the tradition of Augustinianism, "Credo ut intelligam." Even in representative orthodox form, as in the system of the sainted Thomas Aquinas, Aristotelianism was a break with Augustinian assumptions and doctrines about the nature of man and his world.

This partial knowledge of Aristotle which comprised the study of dialectic before the thirteenth century should not be underestimated in its impact. The development of the Christian syllabus, originating with Augustine's De Doctrina Christiana, increasingly stressed the study of Aristotelian dialectic from the tenth century onwards. Initially Boethius' works were the source of Aristotelian dialectic studies. Gerbert, at the end of the tenth century, became the first teacher to utilize the whole corpus of Boethius' works on logic. Until the mid-twelfth century, dialectic was studied through Boethius' translations of Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione and of Porphyry's Isagoge (Introduction to Aristotle). Even though Boethius' translations of the other books of the Organon (Prior Analytics and Posterior Analytics, Topics, and Sophistical Arguments) were lost (until the mid-twelfth century), Boethius'
commentaries, treatises, and abridgements based on these works were available. Just as importantly regarded, Boethius’ theological writings (e.g., De Consolatio Philosophiae, De Trinitate) provided Aristotelian terminology and methods.

In the two centuries following Gerbert, dialectic emerged from the trivium as the basis of education. Hugh of St. Victor, in his syllabus Didascalion (c.1135), states;

It is logic which ought to be read first by those beginning the study of philosophy, for it teaches the nature of words and concepts, without both of which no treatise of philosophy can be explained rationally.

In 1128 James of Venice translated Aristotle’s Prior and Posterior Analytics, Topics, and Sophistical Arguments from the Greek into Latin, as did Gerard of Cremona in 1187. The influx of new Aristotelian knowledge had begun. Direct access to these "lost" works superceded the Boethian-Aristotelian corpus, which became known as the "logica vetus." The arrival of the "logica nova" and the philosophical debate over universals culminated the emergence of dialectic from the trivium as the preeminent tool of intellectual endeavor. The syllabus of John of Salisbury, Metalogicon (1159), is an attack against conservatism and a detailed plan for the use of the "logica nova";

Against those who, in their conservatism, excluded the more efficacious books of Aristotle, and content themselves almost exclusively with Boethius, much could also be said. There is, however, no necessity to advance any arguments on this point. The inadequacy of the knowledge of those who have consumed all their time and energies studying Boethius, with the result that they hardly know anything, is so universally apparent that it excites compassion.

In addition, John devotes a chapter to explain why Aristotle merits the title "The Philosopher." His explanation bases Aristotle's merit on his inventing the "science of demonstration." In the century following John the knowledge
derived from Aristotle would be many times that of "logica nova," and "The Philosopher" would never again be Plato.

The philosophical tool of dialectic, even after the arrival of the "logica nova," was used in an Augustinian manner. Dialectic was put to work exploring established theological truths. Indeed, not until Aquinas is there any precise, systematic distinction made between philosophy, reasoning to truth, and theology, reasoning about dogma. The greatest figure in the Augustinian use of dialectic was Anselm of Canterbury (d.1109). His proofs for the existence of God in the Monologium are Aristotelian in their "a posteriori" nature and reliance upon principles of causality. But the Monologium is Augustinian in its Platonic reference to degrees of perfection, and in its application of dialectic to the mystery of the trinity. Anselm's Prosologium, which contains his famous "ontological" proof for the existence of God, opens with his statement of his Augustinian outlook on the use of dialectic:

Non tento, domine, penetrare altitudinem tuam; quia nullatenus comparo illi intellectum meum, sed desidero aliquatenus intelligere veritatem tuam, quam credit et amat cor meum. Neque enim quaero intelligere, ut credam; sed credo, ut intelligam. Nam et hoc credo quia nisi credidero, non intelligam.

The arrival of the "logica nova" was just the beginning of an influx into Europe of an Aristotelianism that was essentially new knowledge. Beginning around 1130 "the whole course of medieval intellectual life was changed and enriched by the arrival of the whole Aristotelian corpus." This huge corpus included older Latin translations of Aristotle (such as Boethius' lost sections of the Organon), new translations into Latin made from Aristotle in Greek or Arabic, and Latin translations of Islamic commentators and Islamic philosophical systems based upon Aristotle. Of the many translators, of special note is the Greek scholar, William of Moerbeke, a Flemish Dominican. Aquinas,
like all scholars, needed accurate texts of Aristotle; Moerbeke, working at the
papal court of Urban VI at the same time as Aquinas (1259-68), provided
especially literal translations. Overall, however, for Aquinas as for the other
philosopher-scholars of the period, the arrival of Aristotle was spread over
years, piecemeal, reduplicative, and variant.20 In summary, the following
works by Aristotle were translated by 1260:

- c.1150 Organon (Categories, De Interpretatione, Prior Analyti
cs, Posterior Analytics, Topics, Sophistical Arguments)
- c.1140-1200 Physics, De Caelo et Mundo, De Generatione et
Corruptione, Meterologica (Book 4, c.1160 by Henricus
Astrippus; Books 1, 2, 3, c.1180 by Gerard of Cremona)
- c.1210-1215 De Animalibus
- c.1235 De Anima, Parva Naturalia
- c.1210-1260 Metaphysics (a complex history of translation)
- c.1250 Ethics (an even more complex history)
- c.1260 Politics, Economics, Rhetoric.

The desire for accurate knowledge of Aristotle, the inventor of dialectic,
"The Philosopher," posed a problem. Islamic commentators and philosophers
"considered Plato and Aristotle as exponents of the same philosophy."21 As
translations of Islamic texts became available, scholars were confronted with
Aristotle intermingled with Neoplatonism, or Moslem doctrines, or both. As the
work of recovering "genuine" Aristotle progressed, the impact of both
Aristotelian and Islamic philosophy was the same:

Through the new translations the medieval world came into
possession of some of the greatest treasures of the Greek
philosophical genius and the truly remarkable systems of the
philosophers of the Islamic countries. In these writings
Christian philosophers were confronted with a scientific and
philosophic vision of the universe far superior to any they had
known before. By this new standard the early Middle Ages were
philosophically poor and immature. The Greeks and Moslems taught the schoolmen the meaning and method of philosophy. Since their writings were products of the human mind unassisted by revelation, they opened up unexpected reaches of reason and gave the schoolmen enormous confidence in the power of the human mind.22

This confidence in the power of the human mind was foreign to the spirit of the Augustinian tradition. From Augustine through Anselm to Bonaventure, the acknowledged locus of confidence was in the authoritative word of God, provided by revelation, dogma, or illumination. This confidence implied a humility about the nature of man as passive and dependent in acquiring the gift of truth, as in Anselm's "Non tente, domine, penetrare altitudinem tuam; quia nullatenus compario ills intellectum meum. . . ." Aristotelianism proclaimed a much greater confidence in human ability. This locus of confidence in the process of reason required a redefinition of humility, or the view of man as active and independent in gaining truth could easily lead to sinful pride.23

The new Christian humility, as the following lyric passage indicates, was a realization not of the futility of reason, but of the limits of reason in penetrating the supernatural truths of the Christian faith:

Mervell nothyng, Joseph, th3 mary be with child.  
 she hath conceyved verre god & man & yet she vndefiled.  
 Conceyved man, how may that be by reasoun broght abowte?  
 By gode reason aboue all reasons hit may be withowten dowte,  
 For god made man above all reason3 of slyme of erthe  
 wys. wyld.  
 Wherfor, Joseph, mervell not thaghe mary be withe chyld.26

The three conventional interpretations of Joseph's reaction to Mary's pregnancy25 ("and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly")26 were: he thought her to be adulterous;27 he knew her to be the Messiah's mother and wished to disengage out of humility;28 he was uncertain what to do, so decided to follow the law,
but without exposing her. The angel's words to him ("... do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit"), in any case, provided revelation, guidance, and reassurance. But in this lyric the angel's words are elaborated into a criticism. Joseph becomes a figure of intellect forgetful of his lowly origin in the "slyme erthe most wyld." His deliberation about what to do ("But as he considered this," i.e., to divorce) is recast as a state of amazement that a supernatural event defies his rational attempt to understand it. This rather unconventional treatment of the Scriptural account of Joseph illustrates the moral threat which was to be consistently associated with the new intellectualism introduced by Aristotelianism. Aquinas himself described the proud man:

Superbus enim Deo intellectum suum subjicit.

Alfarabi (d.950) and Avicenna (Ibn-Sina, d.1037) were Islamic philosophers whose impact on the West in the thirteenth century was comparable to that of Aristotle himself. Both not only were sources for recovering "The Philosopher," but also further developed Aristotelian principles, and fused Aristotelianism with other traditions, producing comprehensive philosophical systems. The great and original contribution of Alfarabi to the development of metaphysics was his distinction between essence and existence. This led him to the distinction between a necessary and a contingent being, and to the concept of existence as an accident of essence. Like Augustine in his own way, Alfarabi's view of the universe created and causally dependent upon God was Neoplatonic as well as Aristotelian. From God, eternally and necessarily, proceeds the universe through a series of intermediate intelligences, the last of which is the active intellect. Man receives his knowledge through illumination from the active intellect. These metaphysical, cosmological, and epistemological
concepts Avicenna, the greatest of the Islamic philosophers, incorporated into his system, transmitting them to the West.\textsuperscript{33}

In dialectic, Avicenna clarified and developed Aristotle.\textsuperscript{34} He saw universals as having three modes of existence: in God's mind prior to the existence of the individual thing; existing in the individual thing with accidents; in the mind abstracted from the individual thing. He divided perception into first intention and second intention; first we perceive things as they exist outside our mind, the we perceive them as objects of knowledge, rationally considered, broken down by the mind. Avicenna defined science as the study of essences in individual things, while logic considers essences of things in themselves.\textsuperscript{35}

In metaphysics, Avicenna posited three primary notions that the mind apprehends: being, thing, and necessity. He utilized the Aristotelian principle of physical being as matter and form, but he extended it rigorously to every level; therefore, a higher level of physical being would have also the forms of the levels below (man has corporeity, vegetality, animality, humanity). The Franciscans would come to formulate a similar pluralism in opposition to the Thomist doctrine of unity of substantial form. In Avicenna's pluralism, matter in its prime state is pure potency, deprived of form, and is the principle of individuation.

In his cosmological system Avicenna reasoned to the existence of the necessary, uncaused, ultimate Being by utilizing the concepts of necessity and contingency, essence and existence, in a finite chain of causality of being (not motion). Using Aristotelian notions of change, potency, and act, he reasoned to a being whose essence is to exist, and therefore is One, Truth, Goodness, Love, and Life, or Pure Act. As one, God creates as he is, one effect. This effect is
an intelligence (or Aristotelian sphere), necessarily and eternally emanating from God, and from which in turn necessarily and eternally proceeds the next intelligence, and so on, down to the tenth (sublunary) sphere. Therefore God does not immediately create, know, or direct the sensible, contingent particulars of the world. The tenth intelligence creates the four elements and the individual souls, all by a necessity originating eternally in God.

In epistemology, Avicenna distinguished between Aristotle’s active and passive intellects by making the active intellect synonymous with the tenth intelligence, or sublunary sphere. The active intellect is therefore external and unitary in relation to the passive intellect of each individual. This active intellect illuminates each individual, passive, human intellect with knowledge of universal forms, the basis of highest knowledge. The passive intellect is self-sufficient in processing sense impressions, necessary as a prerequisite to knowledge, and in making types of judgements. The soul of man is more or less equivalent to the passive intellect, and is independent, spiritual, and immortal. The body is extrinsic and accidental to the soul, and upon death the soul, or passive intellect, unites with the active intellect.\(^{36}\)

By 1200 Western Europe had access to translations of many of Avicenna’s works, those on medicine, astronomy, mathematics, and physics as well as logic, metaphysics, and cosmogony.\(^ {37}\) He was popularly regarded as a medical authority (his actual profession); his Quanun fi’l-Tibb (Canons of Medicine) was the standard European text on medicine until the seventeenth century. Chaucer’s Physioun read Avicenna along with Galen and Hippocrates,\(^ {38}\) and the Pardoner refers to him on the subject of poisons:

But certes, I suppose the Avycen
Wroot nevere in no canon, ne in no fen,
Mo wonder signes of empoisonyng.\(^ {39}\)
His major philosophical work, *Al-Shifa*, or *Healings* (from error), translated as *De Sufficientia* is a *summa* of logic, physics, mathematics, and metaphysics.\(^4\) Before Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* was entirely translated, Avicenna’s cosmogony was regarded as Aristotle’s.\(^4\)

For Europe Avicenna was a source for the development of Aristotelianism. In addition, some of Avicenna’s Neoplatonic tendencies which he shared with Christian Augustinianism, European Aristotelianism rejected, thereby signalling the Aristotelian break with tradition in philosophy. Aquinas utilized the dialectic clarifications (three modes of existence of universals; two intentions of perception).\(^4\) In metaphysics, Aquinas built upon the distinction between essence and existence, utilized the notion of matter as the principle of individuation,\(^4\) and recognized the intellect’s primary apprehension (the apprehension of being).\(^4\) But certain notions common to Avicenna and to the Augustinian Neoplatonic tradition Aquinas rejected. In metaphysics, Aquinas rejected multiplicity of forms (pluralism), so rigorously applied by Avicenna and later by the Franciscans. For this rejection and the new theory of unity of form, Aquinas came under attack, as did later the English Dominican Thomists led by Richard Knapwell.\(^4\) In epistemology, illumination of the intellect, even in a Christian Neoplatonist form as in Bonaventure, Aquinas also rejected.

Despite the familiarity to the Augustinian tradition of the idea of illumination of the intellect, Avicenna’s Neoplatonism was unique\(^4\) and clearly at odds with Christian doctrine. For example, his remote uncaused Being, his stress on necessity, and his union of the soul (passive intellect) with the tenth intelligence (active intellect) at death deny divine providence, free will, and union with God. Since his cosmogony was regarded as Aristotle’s until the latter’s *Metaphysics* was fully translated, Aristotelianism was attacked for this
cosmogony, c.1249. Two of the points included in the attack, creation of the world from eternity and matter as the principle of individuation, became points in Aquinas' philosophical system.

The other major figure from Islamic culture to contribute greatly to the growth of Aristotelianism was Averroes (Ibn Rushd, d.1198), of Spain. Just as Aristotle came to be "The Philosopher," for the thirteenth century Averroes came to be "The Commentator." Averroes' purpose was not to create a philosophical system, but to understand and clarify the one true philosophy, that of Aristotle. For he regarded Aristotle's knowledge, distorted by Neoplatonism as in Avicenna, to be in its original form the culmination of human intellectual development. Between 1217 and 1230 Michael the Scot translated into Latin Averroes' commentaries on Aristotle's De Caelo et Mundo, De Anima, De Generatione et Corruptione, Physics, Metaphysics, and Meteorologica.

In metaphysics, Averroes' analysis of being is basically true to Aristotle. He also proves the existence of God through the Aristotelian argument based upon motion, the passing from potency to act. God is the prime mover, the highest in the divine hierarchy of intelligences. The intelligences are the uncreated and eternal movers of an uncreated and eternal universe. Averroes rejects the distinction between essence and existence. And the human soul, the form of the body, he defines as an inextricably corporeal form. This soul has but corporeal powers and is not immortal in any individual, personal sense. For in his epistemology, not only is the active intellect, the intelligence of the sphere of the moon, unitary. The passive intellect in man is also a unitary or collective intellect, not individual for each soul. The active intellect illuminates the passive intellect to make human knowledge possible. In
eschatology, man has no personal immortality since at death only man's unitary, collective, passive intellect survives.\textsuperscript{53}

The contribution of Averroes to the development of European Aristotelianism in the thirteenth century ranged from Christian orthodox use of Averroes, as by Aquinas, to radical adherence to heretical doctrines of Averroes, as by Siger of Brabant.\textsuperscript{54} Avicenna's Aristotelian eschatology had united the individual soul with the active intellect upon death, thus not denying personal immortality; Avicenna could be "corrected" by viewing his error as a pagan failure to recognize the active intellect, the source of illumination, as God.\textsuperscript{55} But Averroes' epistemology attributed one passive intellect to all men; this monopsychism\textsuperscript{56} allows for no possibility of personal immortality. The Latin Averroists of the arts faculty at Paris, headed by Siger of Brabant, taught the Averroist doctrine of monopsychism, thus denying personal immortality. They also taught the Averroist doctrine of the eternity of the world as demonstrable (accurately Aristotle's position).\textsuperscript{57} These two doctrines, clearly irreconcilable with Christianity, made the Latin Averroists the target of censure. Aquinas himself reputed Siger of Brabant and monopsychism in his On the Unity of the Intellect Against the Averroists (1270).\textsuperscript{58} But the Latin Averroists by implication made all Aristotelianism suspect and radical. That Aquinas put Averroes, Avicenna, and Aristotle to orthodox use is more easily seen by hindsight.
The impressive epistemological and cosmological systems of the Greek-Islamic corpus, as in Avicenna, contain Neoplatonic speculations (e.g., illumination, emanation). It is important to note the more empirical focus of many of the earlier-translated works of the Greek-Islamic corpus: Physics, De Caelo et Mundo (astronomy), Meteorologica, De Animalibus (zoology), Parva Naturalia (psychobiology). The characteristic of thirteenth century Aristotelianism was a heightened degree of confidence in unaided human reason as an instrument for attaining truth. This confidence was a break with the Augustinian tradition of humility and submission which was implied by centering the realm of knowledge in revealed dogma. This humility and submission might also be viewed as a state of empirical futility, a Platonic universe where things have only the appearance of being and where intelligibility exists only outside the sphere of man. A heightened degree of confidence in human reason requires a corollary confidence: that the sensible world is intelligible. Such a confidence the Aristotelian works on physics, astronomy, meteorology, zoology, and biology provided.

"Man's attention now focused on the world of matter and sense, on the study of life and its laws, on the phenomena of generation. The results revealed in this appeal to experience appeared wonderful when compared to the wretched contents of the lapidaries and bestiaries. . . . (T)here was a feeling of anticipation concerning the resources of intelligibility contained in a notion of nature defined as the internal principle in every being and a cause sufficient to explain all of its operations without recourse to super-natural influences or symbolic interpretations bringing about a disbelieving of the unity of knowledge. In brief, what now appeared was a world that was real, a world capable of being understood."

Avicenna's reputation as a physician was paralleled by "the Philosopher's" reputation as a natural scientist. The world as intelligible is at the heart of thirteenth century Aristotelianism, and Aristotelianism in England, at Oxford, developed a tradition of this empiricism which Paris did not.
At this point it is convenient and historically accurate to equate thirteenth century Aristotelianism with the system created by Thomas Aquinas. His accomplishment was to understand fully, execute successfully, and bequeath definitively a philosophy as well as a theology. He thereby established natural knowledge as a legitimate, even necessary, process by which the human creature arrives at truth. In his revolutionary, but finally orthodox, system, Aristotelianism was assimilated into Christian culture:

Thomism naturally established itself in the estimation of Christian thinkers owing to its completeness, its lucidity and its depth: it was a closely reasoned synthesis of theology and philosophy which drew on the past and incorporated it into itself, while at the same time it utilized the greatest purely philosophical system of the ancient world.\textsuperscript{63}

Aquinas' self-imposed task was to "Christianize Aristotle" before the obviously superior Aristotelian explanations of reality, as in the natural sciences, undermined Christianity.\textsuperscript{64} The rewards of new knowledge, obtained from the works on natural sciences in the Greek-Islamic corpus which reasoned convincingly about an intelligible world, led to an uncritical acceptance of the systems of epistemology and cosmology. These comprehensive systems wandered from a solid metaphysical basis in Aristotle to subjectively derived Neoplatonic fusions, then by reason again led to denials of immortality, providence, or direct creation. These variations of Neoplatonism were accepted as valid reasoning about an intelligible world.
It would not be impossible to show that, in more than one respect, the Thomistic philosophy is the continuation and amplification in the thirteenth century of the struggle which Aristotle originally began against Plato. Plato is the objective of St. Thomas' attacks behind Avicenna, . . . and even St. Augustine; it is in opposition to him that he denies innate ideas, rejects the proof "a priori" of the existence of God, denies the need of a special illumination of the intellect by divine ideas, refuses to consider the soul as a substance subsisting per se and independently of the body to which it is bound, maintains the efficacy of secondary causes in a universe whose very texture is made up of the relations of a real causality between things. 

Since the refutation of heresy (for example, Averroism) involved the refutation of Neoplatonism, Aquinas found himself at odds with the great Franciscan Bonaventure, the thirteenth century systematizer of Augustinianism. Therefore, to see the differences between Dominican Aristotelianism and Franciscan Augustinianism, the systems of Aquinas and Bonaventure are usually compared.

That thirteenth century Aristotelianism and then Thomism were cultural forces is a matter of public record. The following chronology reveals more than a century of lively drama involving popes and friars, Franciscans and Dominicans, heretics and saints, Oxford and Paris. Especially noteworthy is the gradual focus of conflict, between the Franciscans and Dominicans in England at Oxford, concerning the Thomist doctrine of unity of substantial form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1210</td>
<td>Provincial Council of Paris forbids public or private teaching of Aristotle's natural philosophy or commentaries thereupon, under penalty of excommunication. Applied to the University of Paris.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1215</td>
<td>Statutes of the University of Paris sanctioned by papal legate, thereby upholding the prohibition of 1210.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1221</td>
<td>Birth of Bonaventure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1225</td>
<td>Birth of Aquinas.</td>
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1229 The newly opened University of Toulouse advertises: "Here, those who wish to make a searching study into the bosom of nature, will be able to hear lectures on the books on nature that have been proscribed at Paris." 69

1231 Gregory IX maintains the Paris prohibition, but appoints a commission to correct the prohibited books. 70

1245 Innocent IV extends the prohibition to Toulouse (but by this time it is impossible to check the spread of Aristotelianism). 71

1263 Out of fear of Averroism, Urban IV renews the prohibition of 1210; Moerbeke and Aquinas are at work at the papal court. 72

1268 Aquinas completes Summa Contra Gentiles.

1270 Debate in Paris before Bishop Tempier. The Dominican Kilwardy and the Franciscan Peckham accuse Aquinas of opinion (unity of substantial form) contrary to the teachings of Augustine and Anselm. 73

1270 Bishop Tempier condemns thirteen propositions (dealing with eternity of the world, divine providence, and the unity of substantial form) with penalty of excommunication for those who teach them. 74 Siger of Brabant is clearly condemned.

1273 Aquinas completes Summa Theologica.

1274 (March 7) Death of Aquinas.

1274 (July 15) Death of Bonaventure.

1276 Albertus Magnus journeys from Cologne to Paris to defend the teachings of Aquinas.

1277  (March 18) Robert of Kilwardy, Archbishop of Canterbury, condemns thirty propositions (involving unity of substantial form and passivity of matter). Applies to Oxford.75

1277  Franciscan General Chapter affirms the Condemnation of 219 Propositions.76

1278  (Pro-Thomist) Augustinian Giles of Rome writes the treatise Contra Gradus et Pluralitates Formarum. Dominican Giles of Lessines writes De Unitate Formae. English Dominicans William Hothum, William Macclesfield, Robert Orford, and Thomas of Sutton also write treatises which defend unity of substantial form.77

1278  (Anti-Thomist) English Franciscan William de la Mare writes his Correctorium Fratris Thomae, which judges 117 of Aquinas' propositions erroneous.78

1278  (Pro-Thomist) De la Mare is refuted by English Dominicans Robert Orwood, Correctorium "Scienendum," Richard Knapwell, Correctorium "Quare," High of Billom, Correctorium "Quaestione," by Bolognese Dominican Robert Primadizzi, Correctorium "Apologeticum Veritatis," by Parisian Dominican John Quidort, Correctorium "Circa."79

1278  Dominican General Chapter sends Raymond of Mevouillon and John Vigroux to England to enforce respect for Aquinas' writings among all English Dominicans.80

1279  Dominican General Chapter issues an ordinance enforcing respect for Aquinas and his doctrines.81

1282  Siger of Brabant is assassinated.

1282  Franciscan General Chapter decrees that only notably competent professors, using de la Mare's Correctorium, may study Aquinas' Summa Theologica.82

1284    (October 29) Dominicans at Oxford issue a manifesto against the action of Peckham and affirm Thomism, especially unity of form.83

1284    (December 6) Peckham demands the names of the teachers of Thomism at Oxford.84

1286    (April 30) Richard Knapwell, Dominican master regent of Oxford, continuing to teach unity of substantial form, is excommunicated as a heretic by Peckham.85

1286    (June) Dominican General Chapter meets in Paris to declare that Thomism is the official doctrine of the Dominican Order.86

1288    Knapwell's case is heard by Franciscan Pope Nichols IV. Knapwell is enjoined to perpetual silence.87

1289    Knapwell dies while defiantly teaching at Bologna.88

1323    (July 18) Thomas Aquinas is canonized.

1325    Bishop Stephen Bouret of Paris revokes Tempier's condemnation of 1277 insofar as it involves Thomistic doctrine.89

1366    Legates of Urban V require a knowledge of all the known works of Aristotle from candidates for the Licentiate of Arts at Paris.90

Thomism was finally acknowledged in England only indirectly. Peckham's successor tacitly ignored the Oxford Prohibition of 1284.91

As this chronology proceeds from 1210 to 1300, the Thomistic system gradually gains acceptance. First both the older Franciscans and Domicans resisted Thomism; then the ranks of pro and con formed according to fraternal order. Finally ecclesiastical policy sadly lagged behind the reality of acceptance. This arrival of Aristotelianism and development of Thomism
produced a range of effects in personal destinies: Aquinas soared to
 canonization; Knapwell died rebellious and unvindicated; Siger of Brabant was
 stabbed to death. In literature the most famous, and controversial, treatment of
 the central figures in the controversy of thirteenth century Aristotelianism is
 Dante's Canto X of the Paradiso; here, in the sphere of the sun, Siger of
 Brabant is placed next to Aquinas and receives his praises.  

Of the many events in the chronology of the arrival of Aristotelianism and
the birth of Thomism, the Paris Condemnation of 1277 and its sister Oxford
Condemnation of 1277 are landmark events. Both condemnations were
especially aimed at combating radical Aristotelianism, the adherence to
heretical doctrines of Avicenna and Averroes which maintained determinism,
monopsychism, eternity of the world, and denied personal immortality and
divine providence. But to traditionalist authorities like Tempier, Kilwardy, or
Peckham, "radical Aristotelianism" was almost a redundant phrase. Aquinas
during his time was a radical simply because he was to a degree an Aristotelian.
As already mentioned, Aquinas vigorously opposed the heresy of monopsychism
taught by Siger of Brabant which went under the guise of Aristotelianism.  

But in his opposition to this particular Platonist fusion and in his confidence in
accurate Aristotelianism, Aquinas inevitably was at odds with the overall
Platonic-Augustinian tradition of Christianity. Thus he was accused, in 1270,
of contradicting Augustine and Anselm by maintaining unity of substantial
form. And the condemnations of 1277 clearly indict Thomism on a number of
other theological and metaphysical propositions.  

But the condemnations involve Aquinas and his followers in a broader sense than specific points of
doctrine. For Aquinas' philosophical system, although in retrospect highly
orthodox and in service to theology, accorded the process of natural knowledge
an autonomy that was alien to Christian tradition.
The condemnations of 1277 regard natural philosophic knowledge as a suspect process, prone to arriving at divergent and erroneous conclusions. Based upon principles derived from experience instead of drawing upon authority, it is but dangerous license for wild speculation and proud claims of self-sufficiency. On a higher plane, natural knowledge plays down the role of God in granting men truth; it makes man and the world the means to knowledge and the concern of knowledge. The thirteenth century Augustinian, such as Bonaventure, found certainty and fullness of knowledge as descending from divine, impenetrable truths, not in a limited creatural ascent from a starting point in the material world:

Lux ergo intellectus creati sibi non sufficit ad certam comprehensionem rei cuiuscumque absque luce Verbi aeterni.\textsuperscript{95}

The contrast between the Augustinian mode of acquiring knowledge and the Aristotelian can be seen in the ways in which Bonaventure and Aquinas explain how every human being has an implicit knowledge of God. For Bonaventure, the implicit knowledge of God is a dim awareness implanted by God in the soul. Such an awareness is proven, for example, by the human desire for ultimate wisdom, for one cannot desire an object without a certain degree of awareness of its existence.\textsuperscript{96} For Aquinas, the implicit knowledge of God is not an innate idea, but an acquisition gained by the innate ability to reason from effects to cause.\textsuperscript{97} For Bonaventure, truth originates in divine revelation, either exteriorly, in dogma, or interiorly, with an innate idea. But for Aquinas, some truth is wholly natural. Such natural truth arises from reasoning about sense experience, and can build to include knowledge which coincides with revealed truth. Thus, dogma can be used as a guide in acquiring natural, i.e., philosophic, knowledge. And correct reasoning cannot contradict Christian theology, only fall short of its mysteries:
God hym-selfe byddyt vs by his senttens
To so sxe owre resoun and owre eydens,
And to his wordys yef wholl credens.  (15, 121, 25-27.)

In Thomism, certain and valid natural knowledge results from the action
of the mind deriving principles from sense perception and then ascending to
higher knowledge. The human soul inevitably seeks knowledge and
understanding for the primary faculty of the soul is the intellect, not the will:

(S)equitur quod secundum se et simpliciter intellectus sit altior
et nobilior voluntate. 98

This doctrine was contrary to the traditional view incorporated into
Bonaventure's thought, in which the superior will attains what the intellect
cannot:

Et ideo dicitur in Cantico: "Averte oculos tuos a me, ipsi me
avolare fecerunt." Tunc Christus "recedit," quando mens oculis
intellectualibus nititur illam sapientiam videre; quia ibi non
inrat "intellectus," sed "affectus." 99

As articulated by Bonaventure, Franciscanism viewed the human creature as
primarily a will seeking love, union with God as goodness. All moral human
acts, that is, acts conducive to salvation, including writing or reading poetry,
should somehow promote love, union with God. With the arrival of Christian
Aristotelianism, formulated in Thomism, a dormant aspect of morality became
explicit. Dominicanism viewed the human creature as essentially an intellect
seeking knowledge, possession of God as truth. As an alternative to promoting
love, moral human actions, including poetic, might stress knowledge, possession
of God. In a Middle English religious lyric, one aspect or the other of morality
predominates. Above all other concerns, a certain lyric will provide a good to
be willed, for example, sorrow for sin, love of Christ, fear of death. Another
lyric, above all other concerns, will provide a truth to be understood, even if
this truth is complex or even if it defies total intellectual possession.
II. Notes

1 David Knowles, in The Evolution of Medieval Thought (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962), states: "The history of Western thought in the thirteenth century is dominated by the revolution caused by the introduction into the consciousness of northern Europe of the great stream of Aristotelian philosophy" (p. 221). F. C. Copleston, in A History of Medieval Philosophy (London: Harper and Row, 1972), writes: "The greatest impact on the thought of the thirteenth century was made by the extended knowledge of Aristotelianism. By means of the translations Aristotle was converted from being more or less a logician into the expounder of a comprehensive system" (p. 155).

2 F. C. Copleston, in A History of Philosophy (Garden City: Image Books, 1962), states: "The translation of works of Aristotle and his commentators, as well as the Arabian thinkers, provided the Latin Scholastics with a great wealth of intellectual material. In particular they were provided with the knowledge of philosophical systems which were methodically independent of theology and which were presented as the human mind's reflection on the universe. The systems of Aristotle, of Avicenna, of Averroes, opened up a wide vista of the scope of the human reason and it was clear to the medievals that the truth attained in them must have been independent of Christian revelation, since it has been attained by a Greek philosopher and his Greek and Islamic commentators" (Vol. 2, Part I, pp. 235-236). Copleston also states: "Since, historically speaking, Aristotelianism was a 'closed' system, in the sense that Aristotle did not and could not envisage the supernatural order, and since it was a production of reason unaided by revelation, it naturally brought home to the medievals the potentialities of the natural reason: it was the greatest intellectual achievement they knew. This meant that any theologian who accepted and utilized the Aristotelian philosophy . . . was compelled to recognize the theoretical autonomy of philosophy . . . " (Vol. 2, Part II, p. 151).

3 This summary of the method of Augustinianism, like any summary of a greatly influential and highly wrought body of thought, does not do justice to the subtlety and complexity of its source. For a judicious investigation of Augustine's doctrine which in its thrust is summarized "Credo ut intelligam," see Frederick E. Van Fleteren. "Authority and Reason, Faith and Understanding in the Thought of St. Augustine," Augustinian Studies, 4 (1973). As Van Fleteren points out (p. 67), the classic statement of Augustine's position that faith must precede rational understanding is in Augustine's Epistle 120.


5 Southern, p. 175.

7 De Wulf, p. 89. Boethius' commentaries included a double commentary on the Isagoge and Categories, two on De Interpretatione, one on the Analytics. His treatises were De Syllogismo Categorico, De Syllogismo Hypothetico, De Divisione, and De Differentiis Topicis.

8 "The De Consolatio Philosophiae reproduces the argument for the Unmoved Mover, the De Trinitate studies the application of grammatical forms to the Divinity, etc." (De Wulf, p. 89).

9 Knowles, The Evolution, p. 93.


11 According to Knowles (The Evolution, p. 190), the translation by James of Venice was obscure and not widely used; the translation by Gerard of Cremona became standard.

12 Copleston, A History of Philosophy, 2, I, 232. From this point on this work will be abbreviated as HOP; Copleston's A History of Medieval Philosophy will be abbreviated as HOMP.


14 Metalogicon, IV, 7, 213.

15 Knowles, p. 98.

16 Copleston, HOP, 2, I, 179-182.

17 Anselm's contemporary, Gaunilo of Marmontier, was the first to criticize the argument's logic. It has been analyzed, interpreted, attacked, and defended ever since. Bonaventure, Descartes, Leibniz, Hegel, and Barth accepted it. Aquinas, Locke, Kant, and Goyer rejected it. See Knowles, pp. 102-106, and Copleston, HOP, 2, I, 183-185.

18 PL, 158, 227 (Sancti Anselmi, Prosologium, Caput Primum).

19 Knowles, p. 193.

21 Maurer, p. 87.

22 Maurer, p. 88.

23 "Coming into contact with this self-sufficiency of reason, the soul of Christendom reacted immediately with shock, as though it were faced with the lust of the spirit that had brought about original sin." (M.-D. Chenu, p. 35.)

24 Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, ed. Carleton Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), no. 117, ll. 1-4; this collection hereafter cited as 15, followed by lyric number, then line number(s) if appropriate.


27 Augustine, Epistolarum 153, IV, 9 in PL, 33, 657.

28 Bernard, Super "Missus Est" Homilae, II, 14 in PL, 183, 68.

29 Filas, p. 1107.


35 Knowles, pp. 197-198.

36 A summary of: Copleston, HOMP, pp. 110-115; Copleston, HOP, 2, I, 215-220; Fakhry, pp. 147-183; Maurer, pp. 94-100; Morewedge, pp. 221-284.

37 Copleston, HOP, 2, I, 232-235.


39 Pardoner's Tale, I. 889-891. Knowles points out (p. 197) that it was Avicenna's authority that made the correlation between the bodily humors and the four elements a medical tenet.

41 Copleston, HOP, 2, I, 219-220.

42 Knowles, p. 197.

43 Copleston, HOP, 2, I, 220.

44 Maurer, p. 94.

45 Copleston, HOP, 2, II, 152-153.

46 Morewedge points out that Avicenna differs from Aristotle on the fundamental issues of the nature of the ultimate Being, and the mode of creation. Avicenna is Neoplatonist in holding creation by emanation. But he differs from Neoplatonism (Plotinus, Proclus) in his concept of the active intellect. See p. xvi, pp. 236-242, 244-276.

47 Copleston, HOP, 2, I, 219-220. The points of the cosmogony which were held in error by William of Auvergne (d.1249) were: intermediaries in creation (divine power given to creatures), denial of divine freedom, eternity of the world, matter the principle of individuation, separate active intellect as efficient cause of souls.

48 Aquinas said that philosophy can demonstrate that the world was created, but cannot demonstrate that the world was not created from eternity. Only by theology (revelation) can we know the world was not created from eternity. Matter as the principle of individuation Aquinas fully adopted, and came into conflict with authorities.

49 Fakhry (p. 305) states: "Historians of medieval philosophy have tended to concentrate on the study of Ibn Rushd as commentator and consequently to highlight his contribution to the exegesis of Aristotle. Ibn Rushd's place in the history of philosophical ideas in Islam is radically different, however." Fakhry feels that Averroes is too often portrayed as the figurehead of a rebellion against the church's authority. This denationalization of Averroes ignores his contribution to theology in Islam.


51 Fakhry, p. 307.

52 The object of the intellect is being, an individually existing thing. There are no universal substances; universals exist only in the intellect. The primary substances are the intelligences, immaterial forms and pure act. Material substances are forms individuated by matter. The soul is the form of the body (Summary of Copleston, HOMP, p. 119; Maurer, p. 103).
53 Copleston, HOMP, pp. 119-123; Copleston, HOP, 2, I, 222-225; Maurer, pp. 102-103.

54 Siger of Brabant's system was not entirely Averroistic. See Copleston, HOP, 2, II, 157-158.

55 This is described as "leaving Avicenna for Augustine" by Copleston, HOP, 2, I, 219.

56 An extremely convenient term provided by Copleston, HOP, 2, II, 156.

57 The Latin Averroists were concerned with teaching the genuine thought of Aristotle. As it turned out, monopsychism, or unity of the passive intellect, was Averroes' idea, not Aristotle's. See Copleston, HOMP, p. 201.

58 One of Aquinas' arguments against monopsychism in his On the Unity of the Intellect was that it is not truly Aristotle. See Copleston, HOMP, p. 201, note 1.

59 De Animalibus is the title of the three main zoological works of Aristotle. It consists of Historia Animalium, ten books, De Partibus Animalium, four books, and De Animalium Generatione, five books. De Animalibus was translated from the Arabic by Michael the Scot c.1210; William of Moerbeke translated it from the Greek c.1260, and this translation superseded the earlier. Albertus Magnus wrote a twenty-six-book commentary on De Animalibus c.1265; Vincent of Beauvais constantly cites De Animalibus in his Speculum Naturale of 1250. The earliest citation of De Animalibus is by Alexander of Neckham, d.1217, in his De Natura Rerum. (See S. D. Wingate, pp. 72-92.)

60 Parva Naturalia included the following works:

(1) De Sensu et Sensato
(2) De Memoria et Reminiscentia
(3) De Somno et Vigilia
(4) De Longa et Brevi Vita
(5) De Inventute et Senectute
(6) De Inspiratione et Expiratione
(7) De Morte et Vita I
(8) De Morte et Vita II
(9) De Motu Cordis
There were no Arabic-to-Latin translations of these works, but Michael the Scot translated Averroes' commentaries and paraphrases of them. The Greek-Latin translations of at least some of the works of the Parva Naturalia were early thirteenth century because Alfredus de Sareshel (d.1217) cites De Somno, De Inspiracione, and De Motu. William of Moerbeke probably provided the definitive Greek-Latin translations. (See Wingate, pp. 48-52, 92-98, 120-124.)

61 M.-D. Chenu, p. 33.
62 Knowles, p. 280.
63 Copleston, HOP, 2, II, 154-155.
64 "The triumph of Aristotle was inevitable, and wisdom urged that steps be taken to make this triumph a help to Christian thought, rather than a menace. In other words the task to be undertaken was to Christianize Aristotle: to reintroduce exemplarism and the creation into the system, to maintain providence, to reconcile the unity of substantial form with the immortality of the soul; to show, in short, that even accepting the Aristotelian physics, the great truths of Christianity remain unshaken; better still, to show that these great truths find in the physics of Aristotle their natural support and their strongest foundation." From Etienne Gilson, The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, trans. Edward Bullough, ed. G. A. Elrington (Cambridge: W. Heffner and Sons Ltd., 1929), p. 17.
65 Gilson, pp. 21-22.
66 Regarding Aquinas' polemic strategy in refuting Averroes, Avicenna, et al., see R. J. Henle, Saint Thomas and Platonism (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1956), pp. 420-425. Henle points out that: "Reduction of (heretical) positions to the rejected 'via Platonica' allows St. Thomas to turn the full force of his critique of Plato against others by assimilating, to a greater or lesser degree, their positions to Platonic ones. Thus positions of Avicenna . . . are brought under the general condemnation. On the other hand, the 'positio-auctoritas' treatment of Plato enables him to use the great names of both the outstanding Greeks—Plato and Aristotle—in constructing his own doctrines and defending his own views. . . . (T)he most striking case is the double use of Plato against the Averroistic doctrine of the separated agent intellect. For, in some points, Saint Thomas is able to assimilate Averroistic positions to objectionable Platonic ones while in others he can appeal to Plato in direct opposition to Averroes and thus assist him in his efforts to deprive Averroes of the support of the Greek position" (pp. 424-425).
67 Gilson summarizes the areas of conflict between Aquinas the Aristotelian and Bonaventure the Augustinian: (1) Platonic exemplarism; (2) Augustinian doctrine of illumination against Aristotelian doctrine of abstraction; (3) hierarchical plurality of forms against unity of substantial forms (p. 16).
"Natural philosophy" probably included metaphysics, compendia of these works, and commentaries, including Averroes'. Study of Aristotle's logic was ordered; study of Ethics was not forbidden. (Copleston, *HOP*, 2, I, 236-237.)

M.-D. Chenu, p. 33.

The appointment of the commission would indicate that the books were not regarded as fundamentally unsound. The prohibition tended to be neglected. (Copleston, *HOP*, 2, I, 237.)


"This opposition must be looked at against the background of alarm caused by Averroism. . . . St. Thomas was regarded by some zealous traditionalists as selling the pass to the enemy. They accordingly did their best to involve Thomism in the condemnation levelled against Averroism. The whole episode reminds us that St. Thomas in his own day was an innovator. . . . Thomist Aristotelianism was once regarded as 'dangerous' and . . . the man who now stands before us as the pillar of orthodoxy was once regarded, by hotheads at least, as a sower of novelties." (Copleston, *HOP*, 2, II, 152.)


Kilwardy's condemnation, unlike Tempier's, did not define the propositions as heretical, but as dangerous. Kilwardy offered forty days indulgence to whomever abstained from teaching the dangerous ideas. (Copleston, *HOP*, 2, II, 153.)


Hinnebusch, *History*, 2, 150.


Hinnebusch, *History*, 2, 154; *Early English*, pp. 344-345.

"Since . . . Friar Thomas of Aquinas brought great honor to the Order by his praiseworthy life and by his writings, it is not at all to be tolerated that any speak disrespectfully or unbecomingly about him or his works—-even those who hold other opinions. We enjoin priors provincial and conventual, their vicars and all visitors, to punish sharply and without delay anyone they find offending in these ways." (From Hinnebusch, *History*, 2, 155.)
Hinnebusch, History, 2, 154.

Hinnebusch, Early English, p. 351.

Hinnebusch, History, 2, 151; Early English, p. 351.

Peckham summoned him to appear in London to defend or retract. Knapwell refused the summons and was declared a heretic because of eight theses, including unity of form. (Hinnebusch, Early English, p. 353.)

"We strictly enjoin and command each and every friar, to the extent of his knowledge and ability, to work effectively towards promoting the doctrine of the venerable master, Friar Thomas of Aquinas of revered memory, and to defend it, at least as an opinion. And should any have attempted assertions to the contrary, whether masters, bachelors, lectors, priors, or also other brethren, even though they maintain other opinions, they are 'ipso facto' suspended from their respective offices and the good graces of the Order until they are reinstated by the Master of the Order or a general chapter, and notwithstanding are to be penalized by their superiors or visitors according to the gravity of their offense." (From Hinnebusch, History, 2, 155.)

Hinnebusch, Early English, p. 355.

Hinnebusch judges the chronicler of his death as somewhat uncertain and prejudiced. The chronicler states: "Eodem anno (1283) fr. Ricardus de Clampaill, qui anno precedentibus pluribus transgressionibus fidei corrupit fuerat, obtulit se in curia domini Papae. Et ibi impositum est ei perpetuum silentiem super suis opinionibus. Postea adit Bononiam, ipsas hereses renovat: sed ibi incidunt in desipientiam et miseriam magnam valde; ita ut, evulsis oculis, vitam cum angustia terminaret." (In Hinnebusch, Early English, p. 355.)

Hinnebusch, History, 2, 152.

Copleston, HOP, 2, 1, 238.

Hinnebusch, History, 2, 152.

In cantos X-XIII, Aquinas guides Dante, the longest period in the Paradiso that anyone other than Beatrice does so. Also in this sphere are Albertus Magnus, Aquinas' teacher, and Bonaventure. The placing of Siger in heaven, next to Aquinas, receiving his praises, is one of the most famous juxtapositions and sources of critical controversy in Dante studies. See, for example, E. Gilson, Dante The Philosopher, trans. David Moore (London: Sheed & Ward, 1949).
Aquinas was in Paris from 1268 to 1272 to combat Averroism; he wrote *De Unitate Intellectus Contra Averroistas* in 1270.

Copleston (*HOP*, 2, II, 153) lists the areas of condemnation which involve Thomism as: the necessary unicity of the world; matter as the principle of individuation; the individualization of angels and their relation to the universe.


*Opera Omnia*, V, 46 ("De Mysterio Trinitatis," q. 1, a. 1, 6): "Item, insertus est mentibus hominum appetitus sapientiae, quia dicit Philosophus: 'Omnes homines natura scire desiderant'; sed sapientia maxime appetibilis est sapientia aeterna: ergo illius sapientia potissime insertus est appetitus menti humanae."

*Opera Omnia*, 14, 557 ("De veritate," q. 10, a. 12, ad 1): "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod cognitio existendi Deum dicitur omnibus naturaliter inserta, quia omnibus naturaliter insertum est aliquid unde potest pervenire ad cognoscendum Deum esse."

*Opera Omnia*, I, 514 (Summa Theologica, I, q. 82, a. 3).

III. Franciscan Pluralism and "The Debate Between the Body and the Soul"

As a review of the history of Aristotelianism and Thomism indicates, at the time of the development of the Middle English lyric, c.1250 onwards, there existed a vigorous philosophic milieu basically divided according to fraternal orders, Dominican and Franciscan. The Dominicans held a Thomist psychology, which inferred unity of substantial form and primacy of the intellect; the Franciscans held a Bonaventurean psychology, which inferred a plurality of forms in the human creature, and primacy of the will. This study will now look at the Middle English poem "The Debate Between the Body and the Soul" and see that it affirms Franciscan pluralism. This affirmation illustrates that Middle English religious poetry responded to contemporary philosophic doctrines.

"The Debate" is a dream vision in which a Body and a Soul blame each other for the sinful life of the knight which they were. Each arguing its own innocence, the Body claims the Soul was in charge, while the Soul claims the Body would not obey. Devils drag the Soul off to damnation, leaving the Body to decay and eventual reunion with the Soul at doomsday. More specifically, the Body argues its moral innocence by asserting its own level of existence in the hierarchy of creation is roughly equivalent to that of an animal, and only in a submissive union with the Soul did it become involved with good and evil and their consequence:

(Body:) For god be schope after his schaft,  
And 3af pe bob wit and skille;  
In þi lokoing y was laft,
To wissi after pine owen wille.
I no coupe neuer of wichecraft;
No wist what was gode no ille,
Bot as a bodi doumbe and daft,
As pou tau3test me pertille.
Søben y was tau3t be to 3eme,
A witteles best as y was born,
And for to serui be to queme,
Bope an euen and eke a morn.
þou þat coubest dedes deme,
þou schult haue ben war biform;
Of me, soule, þou haddest to 3eme;
Wip þiself þou art forlorn.\(^2\) (193-208)

The analogy of the Body to a speechless, stupid object ("a bodi doumbe and daft") and then more specifically to a mindless animal ("a witteles best") has both moral and philosophical implications.

The poem develops the moral implication of the analogy by refining the animal analogy to that of a horse. First the soul complains of the Body's disobedience by speaking metaphorically of moral guidance as a bridle and tether:

(Soul:)  þe bridel wip þe tep þou lau3t,
And dedest ay o3ain mi red... (227-228)

Then the body refers to itself as the soul's horse:

(Body:)  Or whare 3ede ich up and doun,
þat y no bare þe at mi bac,
And was pine hors fram toun to toun,
At eueri stede ymake þe mak? (273-276)

This equine imagery continues throughout the poem to provide unity and to drive home the moral point.\(^3\) The moral criticism is the same as hinted at by Chaucer in his description of the Monk on pilgrimage:

Ful mæry a deynte hors hadde he in stable.\(^4\)

As D. W. Robertson, Jr., explains:
The analogy horse/flesh is very old and very common. Thus St. Gregory wrote, "Indeed the horse is the body of any holy soul, which it knows how to restrain from illicit action with the bridle of continence and to release in the exercise of good works with the spur of charity." The same figure is familiar in the Middle English "Debate of the Body and the Soul," and a fourteenth-century commentator on Scripture sums it up succinctly, "Thus 'moraliter' our flesh is the horse and the reason spirit is the rider".5

The poem's conclusion parodies the body-to-horse analogy. When the devils carry the Soul off to damnation, they force the Soul to ride painfully upon a saddled devil:

be stede was bridled wib a bridel,
A cursed deuel as a cot,
bat loude grad and 3ened wide,
be blo fire flei3e out at his prote;
Wib a sadel vp to be midsde,
Ful of scharp pikes yschot,
As an hechel on to ride;
And al was gloweand eueri grot. 6

(513-520)

In Dantesque manner, the Soul's sin--failure to restrain the Body--becomes figured in the Soul's punishment.

However, the more general introductory analogy of the Body to an animal works to another purpose in the poem. The poem develops this analogy in a second direction in order to convey a metaphysical concept about the relationship between the human body and the human soul. This concept is the doctrine of pluralism, characteristic of Franciscanism.

In terms of specific doctrine, the philosophic controversy that polarized thirteenth century Oxford into the Franciscan and Dominican "schools" was pluralism versus unicity.7 The Paris Condemnation of 1277 involved Thomism, but Kilwardy's Oxford Condemnation of 1277 explicitly attacked the Thomist doctrine of unity of substantial form. A Dominican of the old school, Kilwardy expressly forbade unicity: the teaching that the vegetative, sensitive, and
intellective aspects of man's nature are derived from a single form, the soul. This condemnation, although it did not carry the threat of excommunication, set off the vigorous treatise warfare of 1278. In 1284 the Franciscan John Peckham, Kilwardy's successor to the archbishopric of Canterbury, renewed Kilwardy's condemnation, and singled out unity of form as an especially dangerous and erroneous doctrine from which other errors derive. In 1286 Peckham declared unicity a heretical doctrine, and excommunicated Richard Knapwell, the leader of the Oxford Thomists, for his "De Unitatae Formae." One of the immediate effects of English Thomism, therefore, was that the Franciscan pluralist doctrine became an enforced philosophic position at Oxford, inhibiting open disputation on the subject until the mid-fourteenth century. "The Debate Between the Body and the Soul" affirms this "orthodox" Franciscan pluralism.

Pluralism and unicity employ the Aristotelian metaphysical principles of primary matter and substantial form. Matter and form are principles, not things. Things result from the joining of the two principles. Since they are not things, they cannot be imagined. The metaphysician posits their existence by reasoning. Since matter and form are principles, not things, they are incomplete in themselves. They need each other to become an entity of some sort, such as a tree or a dog or a human.

The Aristotelian view generally is that primary matter is by definition nothing but pure potency for form. Primary matter has no dimensions or qualities. If it had dimensions or qualities that would mean it is something actual instead of pure potency.

All primary matter is the same. It is incomplete in itself and can join with any form to make an entity. Joined with a tree form, primary matter is a
tree. The same prime matter could join with a dog form instead, and become a
dog. The matter is a must to make an entity, but has nothing to do with
deciding the type of entity, such as a tree.

The Aristotelian view generally is that substantial form is the essence of
an entity. Form makes the entity the type of entity that it is, decides its
nature. A tree form is what accounts for the tree's treeness. But alone it does
not account for the tree's existence; the tree form needs matter.

In both pluralism and unicity, matter and form unite to become an entity.
Each entity is a composite of perfections. The entity of a tree is a composite
of more perfections than the entity of a rock. The rock has the perfection of
corporality, but the tree has corporality plus the perfection of life. Similarly,
the entity of a human being is a composite of more perfections than the entity
of a rock, or a tree, or a dog.

The human creature, like all entities, is a union of matter and form. The
human form is the soul. The question is: does the soul join with prime matter,
and account for all the perfections of the human creature, conferring all at one
time corporality like the rock, life like the tree, sense like the dog, and
intellect and will in the image of God? The Thomists said yes; the soul as the
form of the human creature virtually includes all human perfections, corporal,
vegetative, sensitive, and intel lective.

But the pluralists had a very different idea. They held that the human
soul joins with matter already perfected to the point where it only lacks one
perfection, which is the soul. In pluralism, the human soul completes the
perfection of the human creature by conferring only will and intellect in the
image of God. The human form, the soul, joins with an entity that already has
corporality, life, and sense.
In Thomism, the soul, the substantial form of the human creature, informs prime matter. The Franciscan pluralist position, such as held by Peckham in 1235, utilizes Aristotelian terminology. But in pluralism, the human soul does not inform pure matter. The immediate subject of the human soul is said to be matter already informed, by a sensitive form. And this sensitive form had informed vegetative matter, whose form had informed corporal matter. Thus in man there is a plurality of forms (corporal, vegetative, sensitive, and intellective) arranged in a hierarchy, crowned by the substantial form, the human soul.\(^{12}\)

Pluralism developed out of Bonaventure's analysis of the human soul. Bonaventure was not one to reason only by metaphysical principles to acquire a purely natural, philosophical knowledge of the human soul. He believed that Scripture and the traditional store of authoritative knowledge derived from scripture by sainted theologians such as Augustine and Anselm provided an explanation of the nature of the human soul.\(^{14}\) Therefore, in discussing the soul of man Bonaventure states a credo:

\[ \text{De anima igitur rationis haec in summa tenenda sunt secundum sacram doctrinam, scilicet quod ipsa est forma ens, vivens, intelligens, et liberate utens.}^{15}\]

But despite his seeming deference to "sacram doctrinam," Bonaventure provided an explanation of the nature of the human soul and its union with the body which went beyond the details of traditional dogma by employing the Aristotelian diction of thirteenth century philosophy.\(^{16}\) Although Bonaventure did not explicitly posit plurality of forms, his analysis of the human soul, by which he refuted Averroism (which denied the immortality of the human soul), and his analysis of the soul's union with the body, by which he refuted heretical Platonism (which viewed the body as the prision of the soul), are built upon a
system of plurality of forms. On the authority of Bonaventure, pluralism, and
the involved notion of hylomorphism (universal matter), became established
doctrines of Franciscan philosophy.¹⁷

Bonaventure's explanation of the immortality of the human soul is rooted
in certain ideas of matter and form in Augustine, in Avicenna, and especially in
the Jewish philosopher Avicebron (Ibn Gabirol, 1021–1058/70).¹⁸ According to
this tradition, all creation, not just physical creation, is matter. Creation
began with universal matter, which was neither spiritual nor corporal.
Bonaventure clearly states:

Materia in se considerata nec est spiritualis, nec corporalis.¹⁹

The universal matter is formless and pure capacity for forms:

Nam materia secundum sui essentiam est informis per
possibilitatem omnimodam; et dum sic consideratur, ipsa
formarum capacitas sive possibilitas est sibi pro forma.²⁰

Matter is a principle of finiteness and limitation which distinguishes creation
from creator; thus, in Bonaventure's thought all creatures from angels to rocks
are inevitably "hylomorphic," or composite of matter and form.²¹

Matter receives either the form of spirituality or the form of
corporeality. Spiritual matter Bonaventure describes:

Illa autem materia sublevata est supra esse extensionis, et
supra esse privationis et corruptionis, et ideo dicitur materia
spiritualis.²²

Spiritual matter has capacity for additional forms. The human soul is one form
for spiritual matter; angelic form is another. Because the human soul informs
spiritual matter, the human soul is immortal, "supra ... corruptionis."

As in Aristotle, that which is matter and form is a "hoc aliquid," a
complete substance:

Item, omne quod habet materiam et formam ut partes
constitutivas, est hoc aliquid et est completum.²³
The human soul is matter and form, and so is a complete substance with no dependence upon the human body for its existence. Then how and why is the soul joined to the body? This union involves plurality of forms and "appetitus."

When spiritual matter receives a form of an angel, the angelic form does not displace the form of spirituality. An additional form does not displace an antecedent form; this is the essence of pluralism. An antecedent, or intermediate, form achieves its perfection by both making possible and receiving the consequent form. Bonaventure, in an influential statement, is more than emphatic regarding the preparatory function of intermediate forms:

Unde insanum est dicere, quod ultima forma addatur materiae primae sine aliquo, quod sit dispositio vel in potentia ad illam, vel nulla forma interlecta.²⁴

Spiritual matter is perfected by preparing for and receiving angelic form. Spiritual matter is also perfected by the form of the human soul, but an "appetitus" remains.

In the case of an angel, the spiritual matter completely satisfies the appetite of the angelic form for matter, and the angelic form completely satisfies the appetite of the spiritual matter for form. But the human soul, although a "hoc alicuim," has an appetite to perfect a corporeal substance:

Licet autem anima rationalis compositionem habeat ex materia et forma, appetitum tamen habet ad perficiendam corporalem naturam.²⁵

Similarly, the human body has an appetite to receive a human soul:

(S)icut corpus organicum ex materia et forma compositum est, et tamen habet appetitum ad suscipientiam animam.²⁶
Because of appetite the body does not imprison the soul; the body and soul unite in mutual harmony as one creature. This perfection union of spiritual and corporeal substances, so dissimilar yet both material, is a testimony to God's power.

Although a "hoc aliquid," the soul is the ultimate form of the body, and vivifies the body. According to Bonaventure the body is corporeal matter progressively organized as it acquires forms of physiological development. The stages of physiological development are from elements to a mixture to a complexion:

(S)ed is est ordo, quod forma elementaris unitur animae mediante forma mixtionis, et forma mixtionis disponit ad formam complexionis.\(^{28}\)

In the form of a complexion, the human body is organized sufficiently to receive the substantial form of the human soul. When the soul is united with the body, the soul is the principle of life. This act of vivifying belongs to the soul only when it is united with the body:

Vivificare est actus animae rationalis, quem habet in corpus...\(^{29}\)

The body exists to receive and to live through its soul.

Bonaventure's explanation of the immortality of the soul and its harmonious union with the body, clearly involving multiplicity of forms and a special type of hylomorphism, firmly established these tenets in what was to become, in opposition to the Thomist doctrine of unicity, the Franciscan doctrine of pluralism. Prior to Bonaventure, Robert Grosseteste (1170-1253) and the English Franciscan Alexander of Hales (1175-1249), one of
Bonaventure's teachers, implied types of pluralism and hylomorphism in their metaphysics. Variants of Bonaventurean pluralism and hylomorphism are explicit in the systems of the English Franciscans Roger Bacon (1212-1292), John Peckham (1230-1292), Matthew of Aquasparta (1240-1302), Roger Marston (d.1303), Richard of Middleton (d.c.1300), and Raymond Lull (c. 1233-1315). In his metaphysics, Duns Scotus (1265-1308) argues the necessity of plurality of forms to explain, for example, how a body retains corporeality after the vivifying soul departs. Scotus is not clear on whether hylomorphism is universal, that is, that it is characteristic of all creatures.

Historically, there may be a direct link between "The Debate Between the Body and the Soul" and the origins of English Franciscan pluralism. The Middle English poem follows the overall structure of the early thirteenth century Latin "Dialogus inter Corpus et Animam, Conflictus Corporis et Animae, Visio Philiberti." This poem apparently was very popular, surviving in 132 manuscripts. Scholarship assigns the authorship of the "Visio Philiberti" variously to St. Philbertus, St. Bernard, Walter Mapes, Philip de Greve, and Robert Grosseteste, with the last being the most favored. Grosseteste, a pluralist, perhaps studied theology at Paris from 1209 to 1214; in 1215 he was at Oxford, as its first chancellor. When the Franciscans arrived in England in 1224, several went to Oxford where in 1229 Grosseteste became their first reader. Under his direction, until he became Bishop of Lincoln in 1235, English Franciscan scholarship had its origins.
The Middle English poet of "The Debate" exhibits a "tendency to ignore the more intellectually involved arguments" found in its source, the Latin "Visio." The Middle English poet prefers imagery and drama to abstract debate. However, there is one exception to this tendency. Part of the first speech by the Body in "The Debate" clearly duplicates one of the intellectual arguments by Caro in the "Visio." This duplication occurs in the speech (quoted above) in which the Body first argues its relationship of submissive union with the Soul. A short example illustrates this similarity between the two speeches. Caro states:

Sed, sicut jam dixerat, Deus creavit,
Et bonam et nobilum, sensusque dotavit,
Et ad suam spiciem pariter formavit,
Et ut ancilla fierem tibi me donavit.

(110-113)

In parallel, the Body argues:

For god be schope after his schaft,
And 3af pe bop wit and skille;
In þi lokoing y was laft,
To wissi after þine owhen wille.

(193-196)

It would seem that the appropriateness which the Middle English poet saw in this section of the Latin source indicates that here is to be found the Middle English poet's intellectual sympathies.

In this same section of the Latin source, Caro makes a pluralist observation about the metaphysical relationship between the body and the soul:

Caro sine spiritu nihil operantur,
cujus ad minimculo vivens vegetatur... (122-123)
According to this observation the soul confers a higher form of existence upon an antecedent lower form. The vivifying Spiritus involves Caro in cognitive action. The crux in interpreting Caro's observation is the suggestive meaning of "operandur." "Operor" means to work, perform, accomplish, be engaged, busy, occupied. Restricting the meaning of "operandur" to this general denotative area, Caro's observation stresses the importance of Spiritus as the principle of vivification by which Caro can act at all. This interpretation calls to mind the incomplete and preparatory nature of the antecedent form, an idea upon which Bonaventure so strongly insisted. The use of "nihil" also emphasizes the incompleteness of Caro. But "operor" often connotes a mindfulness of purpose, a conscious agency, a cognitive rather than a merely sensitive ability. In thirteenth century usage in England, the Latin verb sometimes had the precise meaning of performing charitable works; even in classical Latin the verb often meant to perform a religious duty. Such meanings associated with the verb suggest that Spiritus not only vivifies and completes, but confers a noble faculty of moral agency upon Caro. In "The Debate" the Body does not repeat Caro's pluralist metaphysical observation so abstractly. Instead, the Body makes its initial comparison of itself to "a bodi doumbe and daft" and to "a wittieies best," thus establishing the body-to-animal analogy, later to be developed.

As already noted, the Middle English poem develops its moral doctrine (that the soul should direct the body) by refining the body-to-animal analogy into the patristic horse-and-rider image. In so doing, the poem rejects the image provided by the Latin source, the image of the body as a maid servant:
"Et ut ancilla fierem tibi me donavit."\(^{42}\) No doubt the image of the maid-servant was rejected in the interest of artistic unity. For the poem also develops its pluralist philosophical doctrine by refining the body-to-animal analogy, in the Body's second speech, into specific animals:

(Body:) Ac 3iue ichadde ben a nete,  
Ober a schep, ober a swine,  
bat 3ede about and drank and ete,  
And were yslawe and passid pine...  

(289-292)

Here the Body states that without the Soul it would have had an amoral, mindless, finite form of existence, comparable to oxen, sheep, or swine. This passage views a body without a soul has having acquired a level of perfection similar to that of a sensitive form, a level experienced in the everyday world of familiar animals. The animals named also enhance the moral argument that the soul directs the body, since the animals are those domesticated by man and known for their submission to his will.

This passage does not literally mean that the Body might have lived without the Soul. It poetically dramatizes a rather clearecut system of plurality of forms, in which the human soul bestows one perfection upon a body composed of a hierarchy of antecedent forms, from corporeal to sensitive. The problem with the pluralism of this passage is that vivification by the soul appears superfluous if the soul is held, as by Peckham, to confer the intellective perfection upon an already vegetative, and sensitive, substance. In such a system, the composite of a hierarchy of forms is viewed as a unified substance dependent upon the soul for life by stressing the Bonaventurean concept of the preparatory nature of the antecedent forms. Without the intellective soul, the antecedent forms have no purpose; with the intellective soul, the composite is complete, including living.\(^{43}\) Such a system was espoused not only by Peckham,
but was generally characteristic of the English Franciscan school, as in the systems of Matthew of Aquasparta, William de la Mare, and Roger Marston.44

Regarding "The Debate," the critical statement that "latitude must be allowed the composer when he depicts the Soul as possessed of a sensible body of its own and the soulless Body as retaining the capacity to reason and speak . . ." seems judicious.45 For "The Debate" is not a philosophical treatise; the poem conveys a moral view and pluralist doctrine in the ways peculiar to poetry. Further examination of "The Debate" in relation to hylomorphism, vivification, and appetite reveals a consistent Franciscan pluralism. And approaching the poem with these Franciscan concepts in mind, one finds the above critical statement perhaps a short evaluation.

The Franciscan concept of Bonaventurean hylomorphism makes all creatures material, some of which are spiritual, some corporeal. Spiritual forms of matter, such as the human soul, are quite different from corporeal forms, such as the human body. Yet in their hylomorphic natures they are also on the same plane, the plane of creatural substance. In "The Debate" the Soul does not necessarily have a "sensible body," but a material one, which the dreamer (and critic), as corporeal, can only conceive of as corporeal. Or, the Soul and the Body are both substances, and this doctrine is dramatized by having the Soul and the Body on the same conceivable plane, the sensible, which symbolizes substance.

Since the Body and Soul are no longer "togider," the Soul, as a composite of matter and form, or a "hoc aliquid," exists intrinsically, with no need of the Body for subsistence. The opening of the dream vision dramatizes this substantiality of the Soul apart from the Body:
A bodi apon a bere lay;
He hadde ben a modi kni3t
And litel serued god to pay;
Forlorn he had his liues li3t;
Þe gost moued out and wald oway.

When þe gost it schuld go,
It biwent and wispede,
Biheld þe bodi bat it com fro,
Wip reweful chere and dreri mode. . . .

Unlike the Soul's, the Body's hylomorphism involves corporeal, not spiritual, matter; in addition the Body only exists for the Soul and vivification ("liues li3t"). Therefore the now soulless Body has begun to corrupt down through its levels of finite forms which in succession had each prepared for the next, and finally for vivification and perfection by the Soul. Eventually the Body will corrupt down to the most basic form of corporeality, the elemental:

(Soul) ðeþ bou leþe loken in clay?
And þeþ bou roti pil and piþ,
And blowe wip þe winde oway. . . .

Since the Soul is the principle of vivification, at no time in the dream vision does the Body have the ability to see, speak, or hear, as the Soul observes;

þine eiþen er blinde and may nou3t kenne,
þi mouthe is doumb, þin er is def. . . .

The Body itself points out to the Soul:

For al þe while þou was me fere,
Ich hadde all þat me was nede,
Ich mi3t yse, speke and here,
3ede and rode, drank and ete.
Lobliche ischaunched is mi chere,
Sébben þe time bat þou me lete;
Def and doumbe y ligge an bere.
Y no may stir hond no fet.
While the license of dream vision poetry and a moral purpose allow for a moving, speaking, even thinking Body, it is doctrinally clear in the poem that the Body can perform none of these acts without the Soul.

The concept of appetite in Franciscan pluralism perhaps explains the puzzling tradition of the damned soul’s farewell visit or lingering with the body in Middle English poetry, as in:

When the gost it schulde go,
It bewent and wibstode,
Biheld the bodi þat it com fro. . .

These lines suggest that the concept of appetite might be dramatized by a soul’s reluctance to leave the environs of the body which divine purpose designed to accommodate it and from which divine purpose has severed it. But in fact this reluctance is rather the signal that the soul is damned, and why it is damned. The soul’s lingering is a manifestation not of appetite, but of appetite which became perverted.

The Soul’s bitterness that this irresistible attraction to the Body has somehow led to damnation provides motivation to stir up a debate. In one speech, the diction of the Soul’s reminiscence of its appetite to perfect the Body, and of its failure to control the Body, is that of a melancholy lover:

(Soul) For loue softliche y þe lede,
No durst y neuer do þe wo;
To lese þe þi was fordrin,
Y nist whereto gete mo.

I seiþe þe fai of flesch and blod,
Al mi loue on þe þi cast;
þatow me brewe me þouȝt gode,
And lete þe haue ro and rest.
þat mid þe wel stern of mod
And of dedes wel wrwrast;
To wer wiþ þe was me no bot,
þou bar me opon þi brest.
Here the Soul reveals that its appetite for the Body was not a union in which the Body was perfected so much as one in which the Soul was somehow degraded. The Soul lost its ability to be aware of and to move towards union with its ultimate good, God ("Y nist whare to gete mo . . .".). The sin of the Soul is that it yielded to narcissism, a fatal facination with the Body ("I sei3e ðe fair . . . / Al mi loue on ðe y cast . . ."). Thereby the Body became dictator ("To wer wip ðe was me no bot . . ."). The Soul's lingering with the Body reveals a deviant appetite that became out of habit the Soul's permanent nature. In the Middle English convention of the damned soul's farewell visit, the soul's physical immobility symbolizes a spiritual loss of direction caused by a perverted appetite.

Utilizing the concept of appetite and the diction of love, the poem merges its moral lesson and pluralist doctrine so that one becomes the expression of the other. Such poetic unity occurs more perfectly elsewhere, by involving the poem's sustained genus of animal imagery. The Soul ironically admits its moral error by employing the poem's already established images of pluralism. In its second speech, the Body established the pluralist view by the comparison of its form of existence to the level of oxen, sheep, and swine. In its fourth speech, the Soul uses two of the same animals as images for itself in arguing that the Body caused their mutual damnation:
And when y bad þe arliche arise,
And nimen of þi soule kepe,
þou seydest, þou no miȝtest in non wise
For þi miri morweslepe.
When 3e þre hadde sett 3our asise,
No wonder þei y sour wepe;
3e ladde me bi 3our enprise,
As þe bucher dop þe schepe.

When þou hast ytold þi fals tale,
Ay þou were oȝain me forsworn;
Al þou held tretufale,
þat men toid þe biforn.
3e ladde me bi doun and dale,
As men dop ox bi þe horn,
þer him schal be browe his bale,
þat his þrute schol be forsworn.

(401-416)

Although arguing its innocence and the Body's guilt, the Soul here admits it did not fullfill its function of directing the Body. In ironically equating itself to a sheep and an ox, the Soul suggests that it did not live up to its level in the hierarchy of creation; it acted no more perfectly than a merely sensitive form. Since the Soul failed to control the Body, the destructive "þre" of the world, the flesh, and the devil inevitably attracted the Body ("When 3e þre hadde sette 3our assise . . . "). And the Soul followed the Body ("3e ladde me . . . " being stated twice) to disaster in a morally and metaphysically inverted relationship. In the final analysis, the Soul's overall argument in "The Debate" that the Body's predilections (for such things as sleeping late after a night of merrymaking) brought them to damnation is true, but the guilt is clearly the Soul's.

There is no Middle English poem involving the Dominican doctrine of unicity comparable to "The Debate." One possible reason is that Peckham's censure of Knapwell and unicity inhibited the propagation of English Thomism. But technically the restriction did not apply outside the see of
Canterbury, and Thomism, after all, became the official doctrine of the Dominican Order in 1286, just two months after Knapwell's excommunication. The real reason that there is no poem involving unicity per se comparable to "The Debate" is that this Thomist metaphysical doctrine was too novel to possess a traditional store of imagery upon which to draw for poetic expression. By contrast, pluralism developed as an explicit doctrine only because it was implied in the non-metaphysical moral tradition embodied in the acquired symbology. When provided analytic terminology by Aristotelianism, and then challenged by Thomism, the metaphysics of pluralism developed from the much older moral tradition.

The affirmation of pluralism in "The Debate" does not automatically allow the Franciscan aesthetic to be associated with the poem. In fact, this affirmation of a complex psychological doctrine, pluralism, points to an intellectualism about the poem. The poem is Franciscan because it is pluralist, yet it is not structured by the Franciscan aesthetic unless it addresses an audience regarded as primarily will. But an affirmation of pluralism along with an emotive aesthetic would make "The Debate" especially Franciscan. As such it would be a better than average test case, or proving grounds, for the additional elements of the Franciscan emotive aesthetic proposed by this study.

In this study's next chapter, comparison of Franciscan death lyrics with "The Debate" will reveal that above all intellectual concerns, including affirmation of pluralism, the poem attempts to elicit a response from the will, employing emotive rhetoric. Because the poem affirms pluralism, but
subordinates this intellectualism to an emotive address, the poem clearly is structured by the Franciscan aesthetic. In precise terms, the poem's pluralism is embedded in a poem which, like many Franciscan death lyrics, attempts to move the reader's will into a state of salutary servile fear.
III. Notes


2 zemae: heed, care for; queme: please.
3 Sister Mary Ursula Vogel points out that horse and rider images permeate the poem; for example, the sinner in life was "...ywo:nt to ride / So fa:r on hors in and out, / A queint kni3t, ykid ful wide, / Als a iion fers and prout..." (15-18). This portrait is mocked by the devil-ride at the end of the poem.


6 A cursed dewel as a cot: a devil as cursed as a coot; hecel: a toothed instrument for combing flax.


8 See list of treatises in chronology, Chapter II of this study.

9 Aristotle, Metaphysica, 1050a15, in The Works of Aristotle, trans. J. A. Smith and W. D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), VIII, Bk. IX, Ch. VIII: "Further, matter exists in a potential state, just because it may attain to its form; and when it exists actually, then it is in form."

10 Aquinas defines primary matter as pure potency ("Et haec est vera natura materiae, ut scilicet non habeat actu aliquam formam, sed sit in potentia ad omnes . . .") in Metaphysicorum, I, viii, in Opera Omnia, XXIV, (Paris: Vives, 1872-1880), 382. However, Franciscan philosophy generally allowed matter, even in its primal state, a degree of actuality in addition to potency. For a brief survey of the idea of the actuality of primal matter in Franciscan philosophy, see Anton Pegis, St. Thomas and the Problem of the Soul in the Thirteenth Century (Toronto: The Institute of Medieval Studies, 1934), pp. 67-71.

11 Aristotle, Metahysics, 1029a29-30, 1032b1, in Works, VIII, Bk. VII, Ch. VII.


Breviloquium, II, ix, in Opera Omnia, V (Quaracchi, Florence: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1883-1902), 226. All subsequent quotations from works of Bonaventure will be from Opera Omnia.


"Now it is possible to find indications of the doctrine of spiritual matter in St. Augustine, held, however, somewhat hesitatingly" (Pegis, pp. 74-75). Avicenna, as noted above (Chapter II), rigorously applied plurality of forms. Avicebron's major work, originally in Arabic, translated as Fons Vitae, clearly was the primary source for Bonaventure's doctrines of universal matter, spiritual matter, and plurality of forms according to F. C. Copleston, A History of Philosophy (Garden City: Image Boks, 1962) 2, I, 228-229. Avicebron was translated in the middle of the twelfth century by Dominicus Gundissalinus, archdeacon of Segovia, for Raymond, Archbishop of Toledo; see Husik, pp. 59-63, for a history of the transmission of Avicebron's work.

Opera Omnia, II, 98 (Commentaria Sententiarum, Dist. III, P. I, Art. I, q. 2).

II, 294 (Comm. Sent., Dist. XII, Art. I, q. 1).

Copleston, A History of Philosophy, 2, 228. Hereafter references to this work will be abbreviated HOP.

23 II, 413 (XVII, I, 2).

24 V, 351 (In Hexaemoron, Coll. IV, 10).


26 II, 416 (XVII, I, 2).

27 V, 228: "Ut igitur in homine manifestaretur Dei potentia, ideo fecit eum ex naturis maxime distantibus, conjunctus in unam personam et naturam; cuivismodi sunt corpus et anima, quorum unum est substantia corporea, alterum vero, scilicet anima, est substantia spiritualis et incorporea; quae in genere substantiae maxime distant" (Breviloquium, II, x).


32 HOP, 2, II, 236-239.

33 The Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, XVI, 1841), 95-106. Lines quoted from Wright's edition will be numbered in text.


37 Ackerman, pp. 553-554.
"The extraordinary vividness and power of the best known English version of the Debate of the Body and the Soul is the result of...infusion of the local and concrete into the 'Visio Philiberti.'" From James H. Hanford, "The Mediaeval Debate Between Wine and Water," PMLA, XXI (1913), 336.

This fact is pointed out by Ackerman, pp. 553-554, but he does not supply parallel Latin and Middle English passages. Caro presents this particular intellectual argument in 11. 110-129 (in Wright's ed.); the Body echoes the argument in 11. 185-208 (in Linow's ed., Auchinleck).

"The body accomplishes nothing without the soul / by whose support life is quickened...."


More accurately, the image of "ancilla" in the Latin source no doubt suggested the horse image. In patristic tradition the comparisons of the flesh to a woman or to a horse are often synchronous. D. W. Robertson, Jr., in A Preface to Chaucer, Plate 6, shows a painting by Veronese in which a woman is wearing a horse bridle, controlled by a saintly man holding a riding crop.

Bonaventure's implied system of pluralism is more subtle and complex than later pluralism. See Gilson, The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure, pp. 299-302.

Pegis, pp. 53-58.

Ackerman, p. 564.

Rosemary Woolf (The Early English Religious Lyric) states that there was a superstitious tradition in Old English that as a part of its punishment the damned soul visits its body after death, but that in Middle English the farewell of the soul to the body is not clearly related to this older tradition (p. 91).

The tone of much of the debate is strident and hostile, a prelude to the taunts and accusations, both of self and of others, characteristic of hell. Note the very first words of the Soul to the Body turn immediately from general lament to blame and ridicule (l. 13-16):

(Soul:) ... Alas and walewo!
  þou fikel flesche, þou fals blod!
  Whi liistow stinking so,
  þat whilom was so wilde and wode?
The "ubi sunt" and "quid profuit" passages which make up most of the Soul's first speech are equally wrathful, not just learned tradition (See Woolf, p. 96).

48 "The condemnation had no juridical effect outside Peckham's province; yet it painfully hampered the freedom of discussion, causing perplexities and anguish of minds. In Oxford the hindrance was more deeply felt. John Baconthorpe, as late as the first half of the 14th century, is a striking example. Comparing Oxford with Paris, he deplored that, whereas the Parisians were free to accept whatever opinion they preferred, the Oxford Masters were compelled to discuss it in Peckham's terms." From Callus, "Unicity and Plurality of Forms."

49 "When the test came, Peckham's attempt to crush Aristotelianism and Thomism met with frustration at every turn. The Dominicans openly challenged him, risked episcopal displeasure and personal discredit, carried their case to Rome, and even continued to teach the prescribed propositions at Oxford. In the end, the condemnations of Kilwardy and Peckham were ignored and Thomism gained the day." From William A. Hinnebusch, The Early English Friars Preachers (Rome: Instituto Storico Domenico, 1951), p. 356.
IV. The Franciscan Aesthetic

As the pluralism of "The Debate" indicates, contemporary philosophy influenced Middle English poetry. But such influence was not confined to specific doctrines, Thomist or reactive to Thomism, expressed only in isolated poems. A number of Middle English religious poems, in accordance with Franciscan psychological doctrine, attempt to accomplish a similar purpose by a similar means. These poems attempt to elicit a response from the will by proposing a good to be desired. The rhetoric of their proposal is emotive; the poems concentrate on presenting images, situations, and persona as emotionally charged, thereby making them readily accessible to the will without any obstacle of extended analysis or judgment. The following lyric is representative in purpose and means:

Man and wyman, loket to me,
u michel pine ich þolede for þe;
loke up-one mi rig, u sore ich was i-biten;
loke to mi side, wat Blode ich haue i-leten.
mine uet an mine honden nailed beth to þe rode;
of þe þornes prikung min huied urnth a blode.
fram side to side, fro hiued to þe fot,
turn mi bodi abuten, oueral þu findest blod.
man, þin hurte, þin hurte, þu turne to me,
for þe vif wndes þe ich tholede for þe.

(14, 4.)

The good to be desired proposed by this poem is love of Christ. Overall, the situation (a direct address from the here-and-now suffering Christ) and the images (the traditional wounds), as Manning points out, are inherently emotional for an audience holding Christian values. It is difficult to measure such emotion, but a fair assessment of this lyric must admit it is there. More
demonstrably, the poem uses techniques which can be analyzed. In this lyric Christ is readily accessible to the will because he is so uncomplex. The lyric presents only aspects of him which, in their simplicity, cannot obstruct movement of the reader's will towards him. One aspect is his purely physical nature, established by the anatomical catalogue of his wounds. The physicality of Christ becomes three-dimensional and tactile in line 8, where Christ invites inspection at the reader's hands: "turn mi bodi abuten, ouerel þu findest blod." Christ's familiar physical nature is synonymous with and inseparable from another uncomplex aspect, a totality of self-sacrifice, comprehensible because also solely physical. As Walter Ong notes in his characterization of the Franciscan school:

This kind of piety seldom turns to theological elucidation in the effort to grow by a fuller and deeper explication of divine Reality. In reference to Christ, such piety concentrates on His human nature, which provides it with a kind of bridge over which it can transfer to His Person responses, principally affective, with which it is familiar from elsewhere.³

Finally, Christ is uncomplex in his insistent and singular request: "þin hurte, þin hurte, þu turne to me." The emotive aesthetic of this lyric, its rhetoric and primary aim at the will, is representative of many Middle English religious lyrics; such lyrics make up the Franciscan school of poetry.

In "The Debate," as in many death lyrics, there is a change in the usual pattern of the Franciscan school's aesthetic. Instead of presenting Christ or salvation or virtue as desirable by making them accessible emotionally, the poem takes an alternative approach, derived from Scripture and developed by the Fathers. This alternative approach is to present damnation and vice as highly undesirable by making them fearful.⁴ Since they are undesirable, the reader wills their avoidance and embraces their opposites.
The propriety of using fear as a motivator to virtue is sanctioned scripturally as "fear of the Lord." For example, fear of the Lord is the dominant theme in the book of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), in which fear and love are cited as coequal in moral efficacy:

Those who fear the Lord will not disobey his words,
and those who love him will keep his ways.
Those who fear the Lord will seek his approval,
and those who love him will be filled with the law.⁵

The Patristic theory of fear came to define two types: "timor servilis," fear of punishment for sin, and "timor castus," fear of losing God through sin.⁶ The first type, servile fear, is an extension of the type of fear in Sirach made especially valid by the words of Christ (Matt. 10.28), "...fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

The conclusion of "The Debate" is intent upon provoking servile fear in its audience by providing a description of the sinful Soul's initiation into eternal punishment. Like the sufferings of Christ in "Man and wyman," the Soul's punishments are limited to the physical, uncomplex and designed to make the audience squirm.

In þe sadele he was yslong,
As he schuld to þe turnament;
A thousand fendes on him dong,
And al to peces him torent;
At euerie dint þe sparke outsprong,
As a brond þat were forbrent;
Wip hote speres he was ystong
And wip þer hokes al torent.
...When he com to þat foule won
þe fendes casten vp a 3elle;
þe erpe opened and tochon
Smok and smorþer þerout weile;
Of wild fir and of bronston
Seuen mile men mit haue þe smelle
Well wo is þe soule bigon
þat schal suffir þat tende del.7

(521-523; 545-552.)

As Woolf points out, this conclusion to "The Debate" is a "set piece" borrowed from doomsday poetry. But here the brimstone eschatology is applied only to a single Soul. Such a presentation is perhaps more fearful than generalized doomsday descriptions, since the tortures are inflicted upon a persona with whom the audience has come to note some affinity.

A number of Middle English lyrics dwell upon the signs of death, the physical details of burial, the minutiae of decay. Woolf suggests that such death lyrics provoke a greater emotional response than doomsday descriptions of the punishments of the damned because fear of death is a natural emotion. Another way of saying it would be that the situations, truisms, and images of a death lyric are literally accurate to natural facts; therefore, no groping for comprehension of the supernatural interferes with reaction. By stressing images of death rather than punishment, a lyric can make the concept of punishment fearful, illogically but effectively, by association and indirection.

Furthermore, it is the threat of death which makes servile fear work, as in Sirach 7.36:

In all you do, remember the end of your life,
and then you will never sin.

The threat of death is the hinge component in salutary servile fear. If death is remote, servile fear is acknowledged but not salutary; the will postpones its movement from vice to virtue. The result is damnation.
Do not say, "I sinned, and what happened to me?"
     for the Lord is slow to anger.
     ... Do not delay to turn to the Lord,
     nor postpone it from day to day;
     for suddenly the wrath of the Lord will go forth,
     and at the time of punishment you will perish.
     (Sirach 5.4; 5.7.)

But if there is a continuous awareness of the certainty and closeness of death,
movement of the will from vice to virtue is not postponed. Some lyrics are
simple outlines of this approach to salvation:

Remember that thou shalt dye,
ffor this world yn certentee
Hath nothyng save deth truele.
Therfore yn thy mynde vse this lessone:
Liffe so that deth take the yn sesone.

(15, 155, 5-9.)

The following lyric more effectively proposes the ideal state of salutary
servile fear, a state in which death is a constant threat and therefore sin is
constantly avoided:

If man him bidoccte
inderlike & ofte
wu arde is te fore
fro bedde to flore,
wu teuful is to flitte
fro flore te pitte,
fro pitte te pine
dat neuer sal fine
i wene non sinne
sulde his herte winnen.

(13, 13.)

This lyric points to four factors involved in salutary servile fear—sin, death,
punishment, reform—but emphasizes the emotional hinge component, death
itself. Just as the lyric "Man and wyman" concentrates upon Christ's human
nature rather than his divinity, this lyric dwells upon death more than eternity.
Punishment is fearful by its close association with death, not of itself. It is
associated by continuing the downward physical movement of the dead body to include punishment, and by the paralogism of the pun "pitte" = grave/hell. This lyric is apropos of the Franciscan aesthetic: a proposal to the will made facile by emotion.

As in "If man him bidocte," in "Wanne mine eyhnen misten" death details predominate in order to insure emotional effect:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Wanne mine eyhnen misten} \\
\text{and mine heren sissen,} \\
\text{and mi nose koldet,} \\
\text{and mi tunge ffoledet,} \\
\text{and mi rude slaket,} \\
\text{And mine lippes blaken,} \\
\text{and mi mup grennet,} \\
\text{and mi spotel rennet,} \\
\text{and min her riset,} \\
\text{and min herte griset,} \\
\text{and mine honden biulen,} \\
\text{and mine ffet stiuien,} \\
\text{al to late, al to late,} \\
\text{wanne be bere ys ate gate.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{\'ban y schel fflutte} \\
\text{ffrom bedde te fflore,} \\
\text{ffrom fflore to here,} \\
\text{ffrom here to bere,} \\
\text{from bere to putte,} \\
\text{and te putt ffor-dut.} \\
\text{\'banne lyd min hus vppe min nose,} \\
\text{off al pis world ne gyffe ihic a pese.}
\text{(13, 71.)}
\end{align*}
\]

According to Edmund Reiss, this lyric is "humanist."\textsuperscript{10} The last two lines express a contempt for the ultimate grotesquerie of the human condition which the images of the poem have established; the speaker has no spiritual awareness. It is noteworthy that this ending which so defines the speaker's vision does not necessarily define the poem's vision. Using Reiss's interpretation, the lyric could be viewed as an attempt to move the reader to a
state of salutary servile fear by being an *exemplum* of the futility and crueness of life when lived without awareness of spiritual values. Perhaps certain Middle English lyrics concentrate upon death, the hinge component of servile fear, so exclusively that to the modern sensibility they appear "humanist," when actually they are emotive attempts of the Franciscan school to elicit servile fear. An even better interpretation of "Wanne mine eyhnen misten" is that the lyric is an exemplum of unsalutary servile fear, a tragic instance of someone whose postponement of reform has been made permanent by death. The speaker's disclosure of this tragedy, given emotional power by being led into by an elaborate list of the details of death, is in the despairing lament "al to late," meaning there is now no time left to abandon sin and embrace virtue. More details of death follow in the downward movement of burial and then, instead of descending to punishment, the speaker stops short, both a refusal and an inability to express such punishment. As an escape and moral habit, the speaker tries to restrict his thought only to the physical. But for the reader the emotional state and descent established by the physical details of death make punishment present.

"Wen þe turuf is þi tuur" (13, 30) is a most successful servile fear death lyric. The first four lines emphasize death by understatement and indirection:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Wen þe turuf is þi tuur,} \\
\& þi put is þi bour, \\
þi wel & þi wite þrote \\
ssulen wormes to note.
\end{align*}
\]

For example, Edmund Reiss observes that the reader focuses on the images of skin and throat, and is never told exactly what they are ultimately subjected to.
Instead the infinitive "to note" disguises the imminent action and suggests more horrors than an explicit statement could call up. The last two lines of the lyric,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Wat helpit be benne} \\
\text{al be worlde wnte?}
\end{align*}
\]

with similar understatement, suggest reform by speaking only of the futility of worldliness when measured against the inevitable physical future. There is no direct mention of spiritual concepts of sin or punishment. In contrast, "Wrecche mon, wy artou proud" (14, 133) is a less successful servile fear death lyric:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Wrecche mon, wy artou proud,} \\
\text{pat art of herth l-maked?} \\
\text{hydyr ne browtestou no schroud,} \\
\text{bot pore pou come & naked.} \\
\text{Wen pi soule is faren out,} \\
\text{pi body with erthe y-raked,} \\
\text{pat body pat was so ronk and loud,} \\
\text{Of alle men is i-hated.}
\end{align*}
\]

Again, concentration is almost exclusively upon physical death, without talk of sin or punishment. But the details of death are directly stated truisms. And the lyric cannot resist the urge to head the reader towards spiritual concerns ("Wen pi soule is faren out"), thereby making physical death immediately complex, dividing the reader's focus between the emotional physical hinge and supernatural factors, such as sin and punishment.

Rather than a servile fear death lyric, in which physical death is stressed and functions as the hinge component, a poem may be a servile fear lyric which emphasizes a different factor (sin, punishment, postponement/reform) or gives a factor besides death equal attention. Such a lyric is much less effective in
eliciting a response from the will even though it is much more explicit as a
program of salutary servile fear. In this representative stanza from a longer
lyric, the factor of postponement is emphasized as much as death:

      Fare well, this world! I take my leve for euere,
        I am arysted to aper at goddes face.
      O myghtyfull god, þu knowest that I had leuere
        Than all this world, to haue oone houre space
      To make a-sythe for all my grete trespase.
      My hert, alas! is brokyne for that sorowe,
        Som be this day that shall not be to-morow.

      (15, 149, 1-7.)

In this stanza, death is a co-factor and a truism rather than the hinge
component and the emotive source of servile fear. There is no transfer of
stirred-up emotion from relentless or abhorrent natural death to supernatural
punishment. Punishment is no more vague than in "Wanne mine eynnen misten"
or "Wen þe turuf is þi tuur," yet here the desirability of servile fear lacks
urgency, ironically just as it once did for the speaker in the poem.

In another servile fear lyric (13, 20), the factor of sin receives as much
emphasis as physical death. A sinful man is alive, then suddenly is dying:

      Nou is mon hol & soint
        & huvel him comit in mund;
      þenne me seint aftir þe prest
        þat wel con reden him to crist.
      Þe þe prest boit iocomin
        þe feirliche deit him haut inomin.

Burial is a matter-of-fact chore:

      Me prikit him in on vul clohit
        & legget him by þe wout.
      A-moruen bopin sout & norit
      Me nimit þat bodi & berrit hit forit,
         Me grauit him put ober ston,
        þer-in me leit þe fukul bon.
Then the soul addresses the body, blaming the body for various sins. This list of moral failures stalls the emotive attempt of the poem for the sake of doctrinal reinforcement.

```
penne sait pe soule to pe licam,
Wey pat ic ever in pe com!
pe noldes friday festen to non,
Ne pe setterday almesse don,
Ne pen sonneday gon to churche,
ne cristene verkis wrche.
Neir pu never so prud
of hude & of hewe ikud....
```

The lyric ends with the soul’s description of the body’s physical fate, to be food for worms and loathed by those who formerly loved it:

```
pu salt on horpe wonien & wormes pe to-cheuen
& of alle ben lot pat her pe vere lewe.
```

Here again, no attempt is made to describe punishment for the sins; the suddenness of death, the details of burial, and the final condition of the body are expected to generate the fear of punishment for sin.

In the following lyric, the factor of physical death is altogether in the background. The poem especially deals with the factor of sin, typically illustrated as a complex of worldliness, the flesh (gluttony), and the devil (pride):

```
Nu pu vnseli bodi up-on bere list
Were bet pine robin of fau & of gris?
Suic day haut i-comin pu changedest hem gris,
pad makit pe Heuin herpe pad pu on list,
pad rothyn sal so dot pe lef pad honkit on pe ris.
pu ete pine mete y-makit in cousis,
pu lettis pe pore stondin brute in forist & in is,
pu noldist not pe bi-ベンchen forte ben wis,
For-ʁi hauistu for-lorin pe loye of parais.
```

(13, 38.)
With its focus upon the factor of sin, and its abstract definition of punishment (loss of joy), this lyric is more an individualized paradigm of divine justice than an emotive expression. It attempts to speak to the will by accessibility rather than emotion. The dramatic situation, a soul addressing the body, is as familiar as the triad, and must be received as an exemplum which recommends servile fear.

In the lyric "Euen, it is a rich3 ture" the factor of death is not present at all. The whole lyric operates within a spiritual universe where physical concerns are non-existent:

```
Euen, it es a rich3 ture—
wele bies im þat itte may win—
of Mirthes ma þan ert may think
and þa iois sal neuer blin.
Sinful man, bot þu þe mend
and for-sak þin wikkid sin,
þu mon singg hay, 'wallaway!'
for comes þu neuer mare þar-Inne.
```

(P, 50.)

Punishment is indirectly defined, as in "Nu þu vnseli bodi," as loss of joy. The lament "wallaway" provides near-physical proof that such a loss is fearful. But the real proof is in the emotional letdown experienced through the structure of the poem. The reader spends the first half of the lyric practically in the tower of mirth and endless joy, then the last half of the poem moves the reader out.

In contrast, some servile fear death lyrics present a purely physical universe dominated by death in which spiritual values are inexplicable if acknowledged at all. The desolation and wretchedness of existence in such a universe create for the reader an emotional craving for an alternative reality in which relief and purpose to existence are provided according to some
intelligible design. In "Wanne ich þenche þinges þre" (13, 12A, one of many variant versions\textsuperscript{12}), the ultimate fact of the physical universe, death, possesses the speaker's consciousness. In addition, if the speaker is aware of any spiritual reality, this awareness does not extend to its intelligible design.

\begin{verbatim}
Wanne ich þenche þinges þre
ne mai neuere blipe be:
bat on is ich sal awe,
bat ober is ich ne wot wilk day.
bat þridde is mi meste kare,
i ne woth nevre wuder i sal fare.
\end{verbatim}

Since the speaker has no control over death, he assumes he has no control over "wuder i sal fare." The reader goes along with all the speaker says, sharing the speaker's victimization, until the fallacy of the last line. Gratefully the reader escapes from the speaker's fearful universe of death where "ne mai neuere blipe be." The reader knows more than the speaker, that one can control "wuder i sal fare." The lyric forces the reader to call to mind, even crave, the somewhat intelligible Christian universe in which, although death remains capricious and inescapable, spiritual reform provides escape from punishment for sin.

Rosemary Woolf says the lyric "is mnemonic, ... the intention is not to arouse emotion but to enumerate three points to be memorized."\textsuperscript{13} It does not seem accurate to say that someone needed mnemonics to remember that death is certain and the time of death is uncertain. And regarding the third of the "three sorrowful things," it is not correct to say that Christian culture popularized moral ambiguity of divine justice. In addition, Woolf points out that the first two of the three are derived from Anselm's "Nihil certius morte, nihil hora mortis incertius."\textsuperscript{14} The third is therefore noticeably unauthoritative, artistically added to express poetic, not doctrinal, ignorance. This poetic ignorance must be interpreted, not objectified.
The lyric "Kyndeli is now mi coming" has a larger view than "Wanne ich þenche þinges þre." The speaker here is not so consciously possessed by the thought of death that broader observations cannot occur. Basically the speaker feels that things began unpleasantly, then rapidly deteriorated. This speaker is also slightly more aware of spirituality, enough to invoke Christ's mercy.

\[
\text{Kyndeli is now mi coming} \\
\text{in to 3is werld wiht teres and cry;} \\
\text{Litel and pouere is myn hauing,} \\
\text{brïšel and sone i-falle from hi;} \\
\text{Scharp and strong is mi deying,} \\
\text{i ne woth whider schal i;} \\
\text{Fowl and stinkande is mi roting—} \\
\text{on me, ihesu, 3ow haue mercy!}
\]

(14, 53.)

Nevertheless, the speaker seems unaware of the elemental Christian formula of divine justice, and in the same words: "i ne woth whider schal i." The speaker's ignorance of eternal punishment or reward and what determines it causes the reader gratefully to remember basic Christian doctrine, as in "Wanne ich þenche þinges þre." The ignorance may well be feigned by the speaker, who after all does know about "ihesu." The speaker would rather not act according to the morality he really knows and throws himself upon Christ's mercy, leaving salvation or damnation up to Christ. This moral inertia is the deadly sin of sloth ("accidia"), exactly what the emotional state of servile fear combats. The line may also reveal not ignorance or refusal, but the speaker's genuine inability to express the incomprehensible horror of punishment, which is—hard to imagine—even worse than living, or to express the joy of paradise, which in this speaker's experience certainly has no analogue. As an expression of this inability, the line is a poetic device of understatement and indirection which
generates emotional response to punishment by association with the images of death in the lines before and after it. This method of presenting punishment for sin forcefully by concentrating instead upon the hinge component of servile fear, death, should by now be familiar.

"The Debate Between the Body and the Soul" attempts to move the will of the reader to the ideal state of salutary servile fear. The poem is an expanded servile fear death lyric. Like a servile fear death lyric, "The Debate" emphasizes the emotional hinge, death itself. Each of the first 23 stanzas of "The Debate," with a few exceptions, can be lifted from the poem and read as an individual emotive lyric dwelling upon death. Most of these lyrics deal with the folly of sin and worldliness in the face of the inevitable reality and fine details of death. Thus, servile fear death lyrics strung together make up the first one-third of this servile fear death poem, "The Debate."

For example, stanza 3 (11. 17-24) is part of the Soul's first long address to the Body. But by itself it is a lyric which addresses the reader as already dead, a hyperbole for inevitability. The lyric employs the "quid profuit" motif, and deals with the sin of pride:

\begin{verbatim}
po hab wrot to ride
So far on hors in and out
A queint kni\ldt, ykld ful wide
Als a lioun fers and prout,
Wher is now pi michel pride,
And pi lede pat was so loude?
Whi liistow now so bare of side,
Ypricked in a pouer schroude?
\end{verbatim}

Stanza 11 (11. 81-88), also part of the Soul's first speech, includes the "quid profuit" motif and the commonplace contrasts of isolation versus the company
of worms, the palace versus the grave. Within the poem the Soul is telling the Body it will be buried the next day; lifted from the poem, the lyric's "To morwe anon as it is day" is poetically the readers own short time to live:

To morwe anon as it is day,
Out of kip from alle þine kin
Alle bare þou schalte wende away,
And leuen al þine worldes winne.
From þe palays þat þou in lay
Wip wormes is now ytaken þin in;
þi bour is blit wel cold in clay,
þi rof schal take to þi chin.

Stanza 21 (11. 161-168), part of the Body's first speech, combines "ubi sunt" with physical decay. As a separate lyric, it forces the reader to become the speaker and admit death's application to self:

Wele y wot þat y schal rote;
So dede Alisaunder and Cesar,
þat no man miȝt of hem finde a mot,
Ne of þe moder þat hem bar.
Wirmes ete her white þrote,
So schal hye mine, wele am y war;
When dep so scharpliche schet his schot,
þer nis non helpe oȝain char.

Each of these stanzas, and a number of others similar to them, can be heard as an individual servile fear death lyric. Each is an attempt to move the reader's will to reform by indirectly presenting sin and punishment as fearful. As in "Wen þe turuf is þi tuur" and many other lyrics, only death is directly treated.

At the same time, the reader can hear each stanza as but a portion of a sustained speech. In this case, the effect of the stanzas is cumulative, not a series of immediate effects. But still, the cumulative effort of the stanzas is to move the will to reform through fear. Rather than being directly involved (addressed or forced to speak) and thereby moved, the reader is a distanced
spectator as the lyric stanzas accumulate to form a portrait of the knight: a
dead person guilty of sins who postponed reform; and therefore is on the way to
eternal punishment. But this knight is an Everyman, and so the reader is
involved. What is true for the knight is true for the audience; what is fearful
for the knight's soul is fearful to the soul of the reader.

The weakness of this approach is that the knight is not an Everyman
primarily because he shares an elemental humanity with the reader, that is,
because of the (pluralist) relationship of his soul to his body and a basic failure
of his soul in this union to achieve the moral purpose for which he was created.
Rather the poem uses an excess of evidence of his failure as the bridge between
the knight and the reader. The knight is portrayed as having so many faults,
sins that prove his soul's failure, that one of them will surely fit the reader.

The knight was gluttonous:

Whare be þine cokes snelle,
þat schuld go to graybe þe mete
Wiþ swot spices, for to smelle,
þat þou were neuer ful to frete,
To make þi foule flesche to swelle,
þat wilde wormes schal now ete?
And ich haue þe peyne of helle
þurch þi glotonie ygete.

The knight was lecherous:

þar nis no leudi, bright of ble,
þat wele was wont of þe to lete,
þat o niȝt wald ly bi þe,
For þing þou miȝtest hir bihete
þou art vnymly for to se,
Vncomly for to kis swete;
þou hast no frend þat nil þe fle
And þou com starteling in þe strete.
The knight, unfortunately, did it all:

Glotione and licherie,
Pride and hat and coueystise,
Nipe and ond and envie
O3aines god and alle hise,
In þat luste for to lye,
Was þi won in al wise;
þat schal y wel dere abye
Ne wonder þei me sore aguise.

Nevertheless, this method which makes the Soul's faults and fears the reader's faults and fears is artistically superior to a sermon or a catalogue of sins in providing religious instruction. As speech the references to the knight's sins have a unity since the lyrics take on some semblance of memories. In addition, their sustained discussion is motivated by animosity between the two speakers.

Like a servile fear death lyric, "The Debate" stresses death because death is a natural fact which excites the emotion of fear more effectively than the associated supernatural concept of punishment. But since the poem is an expanded version of a servile fear death lyric, all the factors of such lyrics—sin, death, punishment, postponement/reform—are amplified, are quantitatively present in large measure. As a debate, the poem develops at length the factors of sin, death, and postponement, from a pluralist viewpoint. The bracketing structure, the dream vision of the debate, provides an opportunity not only to view the Soul's punishment at the end of the debate, but also to illustrate the alternative to postponement, immediate reform, which is enacted by the dreamer.

We have seen that the poem, borrowing from doomsday tradition, describes punishment. Such description is not usually found in a servile fear death lyric, but "The Debate" is an expansion of such a lyric. And it should be noted that the poem describes only the Soul's first encounter with punishment
and entrance into Hell, not eternal punishment itself. This preview of
punishment, like stressing the factor of death, is a device of understatement
and indirection which implies a much greater horror which any attempt to
describe would render anticlimactic.

We have also seen that the poem, in Franciscan pluralist terms, examines
the factors of sin and postponement, seeing the origins of both in an inversion
of the hierarchical relationship between the soul on one hand and the body and
the other lower forms of the human creature on the other. This philosophic
view imagistically merges with the poem's less complex instruction about sin,
such as sin's organization into the popular triad and into the seven deadlies.
This popular Christianity is but another point of contact between "The Debate"
and Franciscanism. In his article "The Debate of the Body and Soul and
Parochial Christianity," Robert Ackerman argues that the poem is an expression
of everyday rather than intellectual Christianity; the poet "rather
systematically revised downward the intellectual level of... his Latin source"
and concentrated upon providing "formulations and concepts characteristic of
religious instruction," such as found in sermons and priests' manuals.17 This
"parochial Christianity" which Ackerman finds to be characteristic of "The
Debate" is a hallmark of Franciscanism. It is what Walter Ong does not like and
what David L. Jeffrey, in his effort to document the existence of a Franciscan
school, sees as its strength:

The Middle English Franciscan poets—who are not abstrusely
theological like the Adamic-Thomist poets—are nevertheless
entirely successful in transmitting basic dogma infused with
their own spirituality into simple simile and metaphor,
exemplum and lyric, in what is perhaps the most effective
missionary use of a popular medium in the history of the
Church.18
As an expanded version of a servile fear death lyric, when it is dealing with the factors of sin and postponement, "The Debate" is Franciscan both in its intellectualism of pluralism and in its non-intellectualism of "parochial Christianity." Perhaps most important, however, for the purpose of this study is that neither the poem's pluralism nor parochialism is as pervasive as the poem's basic nature: an emotive address to an audience regarded as primarily will. The poem quantitatively expands all the factors of the servile fear death lyric is an extended effort to provoke servile fear, and thereby reform. The factor of reform, in fact, like sin, death, punishment, and postponement, is developed in "The Debate," as we shall see. At this point, however, it should seem clear that "The Debate" operates according to the Franciscan emotive aesthetic of Middle English poetry.

As an expanded version of a Franciscan lyric, "The Debate" fully exhibits certain structural characteristics of the poetry of the Franciscan aesthetic. Up to this point, the elements of the Franciscan aesthetic critics have recognized and this study has utilized are a Bonaventurean philosophic base, a psychology in which the human creature is regarded as primarily will, and an emotive rhetoric which provokes a response. The Franciscan aesthetic also defines a poem's structure. This structure has two characteristics: linear and open. As an expanded lyric, "The Debate" typifies the linear, open structure of the Franciscan aesthetic. These characteristics are especially apparent in "The Debate" since they are fully developed, whereas in lyrics they may be overlooked. Nevertheless, in the lyrics they are present, sometimes implicitly or potentially or indirectly by omission. This unbalanced parallelism between "The Debate" and Franciscan lyrics, in which "The Debate" develops fully what
a lyric presents less obviously, we have already observed. For example, a servile fear death lyric always deals with punishment, but quite often only indirectly, even by omission, in order to enhance emotive response; "The Debate" explicitly describes punishment (yet maintains an indirectness by not quite describing Hell itself).

The structure of "The Debate" is linear, in a simple physical sense; the poem presents spatial movement, from point A to point B. The Soul moves out of the Body, lingers to debate, then moves to Hell via devil-horse. Franciscan lyrics are similarly linear. In servile fear death lyrics, the movement from point A to B is often a descent, from deathbed to grave, as in "fro bedde te flore,... fro flore to pitte..." (13, 13). In "Wanne mine eyhnen misten" (13, 71) the same descent from bed to grave is initiated by a downward description of the bodily signs of death: "eyhnen misten,... lippes blaken,... herte griset,... tfet stiuie..." Many fear lyrics reduplicate a linear movement by presenting a series of contrasts between physical locales or trappings in life and physical surroundings in death, as in "Wen þe turuf is þi tuur, / & ði put is þi bour..." (13, 30) or in "Nu þu vnseli bodi up-on bere list / Where be þine robin of fau & of gris?" (13, 38). In those lyrics which claim "I know not where I will go" (13, 12A and variants; 14, 53), the vagueness of point B, either through ignorance or inability to express its horror, is the source of fear. In servile fear lyrics, point B is clearly punishment, the source of fear; in servile fear death lyrics, point B is death, the emotive metonym for punishment.

Linear movement from A to B is also the characteristic structure of emotive lyrics which, unlike fear lyrics, directly propose a good to be desired,
such as love of Christ, sorrow for sins, or salvation. Occasionally this linear
structure of physical movement appears superficial, as in "chanson d'aventure"
lyrics in which the narrator seems simply to happen to arrive at point B.

\begin{quote}
I Passud boru a garden grene,
I fond a herbere made full newe—
A semelyour syght I haff noght sene,
O ylke treo sange a tyrtull trew—
There-yn a mayden bry3t off hew,
And euuer sche sange, & neuer sche sest:
Thies were þe notus þat sche can schew,
Verbum caro factum est.
\end{quote}

In other lyrics, the movement is more subtle; these lyrics often set up rather
than complete the linear movement. They define points A and B so that the
movement is possible, probable, or inevitable, to varying degrees.

In the following lyric, points A and B are distanced, and the lyric awaits
movement. The contrast between the two points serves to encourage
movement.

\begin{quote}
Quanne híc se on rode
iheusu mi leemman,
An be-siden him stonden
marie and Iohan,
And his rig i-suongen,
and his side i-stungen,
for þe luue of man,
Wel ou hic to wepen
and sinnes for-leten,
yif hic of luue kan,
yif hic of luue kan,
yif hic of luue kan. \hfill (13, 35B.)
\end{quote}

Point B is Christ on the cross, whose suffering, as it is so often designed,
awakens the reader's sense of guilt for not doing something in return. In
addition, point B is where everybody else is. The reader may move to B (by
weeping for Christ and renouncing sin), joining Mary and John. If so the reader
will escape point A, which is not just a lonely place, but a void where love is so absent that it must be conjured up.

In "Senful man, be-þing & se," instead of awaiting movement, the lyric engineers it. Point A is the world of indifference to Point B, the suffering Christ.

Senful man, be-þing & se
Quat peine i pole for loue of þe.
Nith & day to þe i grede,
Hand & fot on rode i-sprede.
Nailed i was to þe tre,
Ded & biri3ed, man, for þe;
Al þis i drey for loue of man,
But wers þe deot, þat he ne can
To me turnen onis is ey3e,
þan al þe peine þat i dry3e.

(14, 70.)

Seemingly, the argument of the poem, the double disparity (disparity between Christ's generous suffering on the cross and the reader's indifference; disparity between Christ's painful suffering on the cross and even greater pain from the reader's indifference), should awaken enough guilt to motivate the reader at least to look at Christ, which will establish a bridge between points A and B, and a beginning of movement. Actually, however, by the end of the lyric the reader has in fact been moved to point B by a syntactic trick, and been made to want to stay there by an emotional strategem. The poem begins with a direct address from Christ to the reader, which forces the reader to look at Christ and review his suffering and death. In line 7 Christ changes to a third person statement about those who will not look at him, who increase his suffering. Since the reader has just looked at Christ because of the direct address, the reader feels but is not technically guilty of the blanket third person condemnation. Grateful for a way to escape this extra guilt, the reader is in
the awkward position of being at point B without having really done anything to get there. What the reader has to do now is begin to act according to the new location's obligations.

"Man and wyman, loket to me" (14, 4) is another lyric which maneuvers the indifferent reader of point A towards point B. Although suffering, Christ is loquacious and buttonholes the reader. As already noted, the line "turn mi bodi abuten, overal þu findest biod" establishes a tactile-visual link between the crucified Christ, at point B, and the reader, at point A. The linear structure of this lyric, and many others, is a sensory union between two points, A and B, in which A is the human will and B is the good to be desired. Such a union, as in "Man and wyman," is really the result of B moving towards A, for A does not initially desire or request the union.

In "The Debate" there is this linear structure of sensory union as well as the linear structure of physical movement. In the poem the dream vision, B, moves to the dreamer, A. The undesired, unrequested vision (of the debate and the Soul's physical movement into Hell) is a sensory benefit which comes to the dreamer. This linear movement of sensory union in which B, the unsought good, moves to link with A, the will, is characteristic of lyric addresses from Christ as well as dream vision lyrics. In the following lyric address, an entirely unbidden Christ seeks visual contact with the reader, whose interests are elsewhere:

3e þat pasen be þe wey3e,
Abidet a litel stounde!
Be-holdet, al mi felawes,
3ef ani me lik is founde.
To be tre with nailes þre
Wol fast i hange bounde,
With a spere al þoru mi side
To min herte is mad a wounde. (14, 74.)
Similarly, in the typical dream vision lyric, the dreamer receives an unbidden experience which presents to the dreamer's will an emotionally attractive good to be desired:

\[
\text{Als i lay vp-on a nith} \\
\text{Alone in my longging,} \\
\text{Me pouthe i sau a wonder sith,} \\
\text{A maiden child rokking.} \quad (14, 56.)
\]

This linear structure of sensory union which is uninitiated by the human will, once identified, may be recognized as a characteristic in many lyrics of the Franciscan school. For example, the chance sound of a bird's song comes to the narrator, and causes him to love Christ:

\[
\text{Nv yh she blostme sprynge,} \\
\text{hie herde a fuheles song.} \\
\text{a swete longinge} \\
\text{myn herte purephut sprong,} \\
\text{pat is of luue newe,} \\
\text{pat is so swete and trewe} \\
\text{hit gladiet ai my song;} \\
\text{hic wot mid ywisw} \\
\text{my lyf and heke my blysse} \\
\text{is al por-hon ylong.} \\
\text{Of iesu crist hi synge,} \\
\text{pat is so fayr and fre} \\
\text{swetest of al le bynge....} \quad (13, 63, 1-13.)
\]

Here, as in an address or a dream, a sensory union comes about between a will and a good which somehow maneuvers to that will. The active nature of point B is especially evident in the following lyric, in which B, Christ, does not buttonhole or call to the reader, but energetically confronts the reader to the point of intimidation:
I Am iesu, þat cum to fith
With-outen seld & spere,
Elles wer þi det3 i-dith
3if mi fithing ne were.
Sipen i am comen & haue þe broth
A blissful bote of bale,
Vndo þin herte, tel me þi þouth,
þi sennes grete an smale. (14, 63.)

The out-of-the-blue arrival of Christ the warrior so suddenly before the reader has the same inexplicability and abruptness as the dreams and chance meetings various narrators tell the reader about:

I 3ard a maydyn wepe
ffor here sonnys passyon;
yt enterd into my hart full deipe,
wyth grete contricion. (15, 93.)

Even the providential patterns of nature come to the human will as unbidden sensory experiences which propose the good to be desired:

Wynter wakeneþ al my care,
nou þis leues waxeþ bare;
ofte y sike & mourne sare
when hit comeb in my boht
of þis worldes ioie hou hit geb al to noht. (14, 9.)

To the modern sensibility, the dream or the encounter with a maiden are fortuitous, artistically forced and artificial. In addition, these poems seem to be of a different order than a narrator's thoughts upon hearing a bird or observing the weather, which the modern sensibility accepts as valid emotional subjectivity. In fact all of these poems are of the same order. They are variations of the same linear structure of sensory union, in which the unbidden good, B, moves towards the will, A.

Other lyrics of the Franciscan school have a linear structure of sensory union in which A, the will, intentionally moves towards B, the sought good. In "The Debate," the dreamer (motivated by servile fear evoked by the unsought
vision of the debate and the Soul's physical movement into Hell) moves towards Christ, as manifest in the sacrament of penance. This movement is, of course, the poem's full development of the factor of reform:

\begin{quote}
W3an it was forth, pat foule lod,
   To hellewel, or it were day,
On lik a her a drope stod,
   For fri3t and fer as i lay;
To Jhesu Christ with mid mod
3erne i kalde and lokede ay,
3wan þo fendes hot fot
   Come to fette me away.

I þonke him þat þolede deth,
His muchele merci and his ore,
þat schuld me from mani a qued,
A sunful man as i lai bore.
þo þat sunfol ben, i rede hem red,
To schriven hem and rewen sore;
Nevere was sunne idon so gret,
þat Christes merci ne is wel more.  \(585\text{-}600.\)
\end{quote}

In lyrics, A may seek B, but with varying degrees of intensity and accuracy. In "chanson d'aventure" lyrics, the will has slight movement towards B in general; at the other extreme, in mystical lyrics the will moves passionately and precisely towards B.

In Franciscan lyrics, the human creature is regarded as primarily will; the essential activity of such a creature is to seek union with the ultimate good. In "chanson d'aventure" lyrics, the narrator's linear physical movement of the quest expresses the will's naturally active search. However, the narrator does not know what to look for, or where, and often the narrator expresses dissatisfaction with those goods so far encountered:
As I walked this endurs day
to be grene wod for to play
& all heynness to put away
my-self alone. (15, 2, 1-4.)

Therefore, B must still come to meet the confused narrator, whose movement is slight and general in comparison to B's greater activity and precision. Of course, told from the narrator's point of view, the reader does not see B's movement to A at all. The narrator appears to stumble upon some archetype of ultimate goodness. The impression is the same abruptness and inexplicability as in a dream vision or address:

As I walked vnder þe grene wode bowe
I sawe a maide fayre I-now;
a child she happid, she song, she laugh—
þat chile wepid alone. (5-8.)

Even in dream visions and addresses, in which the linear union results from B's coming to A entirely unbidden, A is often portrayed as a will which is in its naturally active state, but misdirected:

3e þat pasen be þe wey3e,
Abidet a litel stounde!

Or the will is portrayed as frustrated from the failures of its general quest and in an inactive state of despair:

Als i lay vp-on a nith
Alone in my longging... 

This confusion, misdirection, and passivity of the will is in great contrast to the activity of the will in mystical lyrics.

In mystical lyrics the will moves passionately and precisely towards B. In "Gold & al þis werdis wyn" the narrator unequivocally rejects all lesser goods as sins which crucified Christ, and moves directly towards sensory union with the ultimate good:
Gold & al þis werdis wyn
Is nouth but cristis rode;
I wolde ben clad in cristis skyn,
þat ran so longe on blode,
& gon t'is herte & taken myn In—
þere is a fulsum fode.
þan þef i litel of kith or kin,
For þer is alle gode. Amen. (14, 71)

The persona of Mary serves well as a surrogate for the ultimate good, for
sensory union may be expressed my making her the object of active courtly
devotion:

Vpon a lady my loue ys lente,
With-ohtene change of any chere,
That ys louely & contynent
And most at my desyre.
... Therfor wyll y non opur spowse,
Ner none opur loues, for to take;
But only to here y make my vowes,
And all opur to forsake. (15, 48, 1-4, 9-12.)

In some mystical lyrics, the fervor of A moving towards B makes B appear
inactive, even dormant. B must be urged to fulfull its historical role as the
awesome source of the will's ultimate good. The lyric "Leuedi, ic þonke þe"
recalls to Mary her role in redemption:

Leuedi, ic þonke þe
wid herte suiþe milde
þat gohid þat þu hauest idon me
wid þine suete childe. (13, 27, 1-4.)

Then the lyric begs her to establish sensory union in the present by looking at
the narrator. The mere look fully satiates the will to a point beyond physical
existence:

Moder, loke one me
wid þine suete eyen,
reste & blisse gef be me,
mi lehed, þen ic deyen. (13-16.)
Similarly, in "Ihesu, god sone, lord of mageste" Christ is urged to reactivate his bloody love, to inflict upon the narrator a love-wound with his spear:

Ihesu, þe mayden sone, þat wyth þi blode me boght,
Thyrl my sawle with þi speere, þat mykel luf in
men has wrought. . . .
Wounde my hert with-in, & welde it at þi wille;
On blyssse þat neuer sal blyn, þou gar me fest
my skylle. . . .

(14, 83, 5-6, 13-14.)

In these examples, the active nature of A, its passionate need for B to act, the historically awesome power of B, and the need for B to be roused, are complete reversals of the roles played by the human will and Christ in "Senful man, be-ping & se." In that lyric address from Christ to the human creature, Christ suffers more pain because the insignificant reader withholds his mere look than he does from all the bloody pain of the redemptive act.

Once the linear structure of sensory union, and the variations within it of A and B, are understood, other emotive lyrics fall into place. For example, the following lyric is a presentation of an active point B, the good. This is the good that is automatically sought by the human creature, whose nature it is to embark upon the quest of "chanson d'aventure." This point B is the confrontation, address, dream, or archetype which comes to intercept the vague and confused will:

At a spryng wel vnder a þorn,
þer was bote of bale, a lytel here a-forn;
þer by-syde stant a mayde,
fulle of loue y-bounde.
Ho-so wol seche trwe loue,
yn hyr hyt schal be founde. (14, 130.)

The next lyric is also a presentation of point B, the good. But this is the inactive good that awaits precise and passionate movement to it by a will that was once confused and misdirected:
Stedefast crosse, inmong alle oþer
þow art a tre mykel of prise,
in brawnche and flore swylk a-nóþer
I ne wot non in wode no rys.
sweþe be þe nalyþs,
and sweþe be þe tre,
and sweþer be þe birdyn þat hangis vpon þe!  
(14, 40.)

"Louerd, þu clepedest me" is a presentation of point A, the will, after an active B ("At a sprynge wel vnder a þorn") has come to it. The lyric examines the situation of a will which is no longer confused, and should move towards the B of "Stedefast crosse." This will knows it is postponing a passionate and precise movement to B because its former misdirection has become habitual:

Louerd, þu clepedest me  
an ich nagt ne ansuareþe þe  
Bute wordes scloe and sclepie:  
'pole yet! pole a litel!'  
Bute 'yiet' and 'yiet' was endelis,  
and 'pole a litel' a long wey is.  
(14, 5.)

The next lyric is point A, the will, of the last lyric carried much further, to despair:

God wiht hise aungeles i haue for-lore,  
Alas! 3e while 3at i was boren.  
To sorwe and pine i bringe at eende  
Man 3at me louet, i schal him schende.  
to 3e fende i owe fewte,  
Truage, homage, and gret lewte.  
(14, 54.)

This despair is not an inactive state of the naturally active will not yet intercepted by an active B. This despair is that of a will whose postponement of precise movement to B has become permanent.

The linear structures characteristic of the Franciscan aesthetic express Bonaventurean doctrine. The "chanson d'aventure" lyric, and the implied "chanson d'aventure" situation of the reader in addresses and confrontations, and of the narrator in dream visions, are expressions of the Bonaventurean
notion of the dim awareness of God implanted in the human soul and the ensuing attempts of the will to find that ultimate good so dimly defined. God brings every narrator, reader, addressee, or dreamer to fuller awareness with revealed archetypes of divine goodness and love. Although Scripture and dogma derived from Scripture are the sources of revelation, an accurate reaction to a providentially provided natural experience coincides with revealed archetypes. Both the linear structure of physical movement and the linear structure of sensory union express the spiritual motion of the will towards ultimate goodness, and of God towards the will. Linear physical movement tends to deal with the human creature as a finite composite of matter and forms in time and space, as in death lyrics, and with the primary faculty of the highest of the forms in the human creature, the soul's will, in a state of dim awareness. Linear structure of sensory union tends to stress the soul as spiritual material, and the will in a state of greater awareness of the direction of ultimate goodness, as in mystical lyrics.

As the linear structures of "The Debate" and the lyrics indicate, the overall metaphor which best describes Franciscan poetry is that of a pilgrimage. The various definitions of Franciscan poetry provided by Manning, Woolf, Jeffrey, and Ong are proposals of terminology each critic judges most accurate to describe who or what is on the pilgrimage, towards what, and how. For Manning, the pilgrimage is that of a Christian towards reaffirmation of Christianity by re-experiencing commonly held values. For Woolf, the pilgrimage is that of a pre-Ignatian will towards love by emotive meditation in the Latin tradition. For Jeffrey, the pilgrimage is that of the sinner towards Scripture, the passion of Christ, and the sacrament of Penance in response to
Franciscan evangelical practices. For Ong, the pilgrimage (in Latin lyrics) is that of a reader towards Christian commonplaces by stock response to emotive rhetoric. For this study, the pilgrimage is that of a Bonaventurean soul towards a good by involvement in a linear structure.

The Bonaventurean soul becomes involved in the linear structure because it is also an open structure. The Bonaventurean soul is primarily will. The Franciscan lyric especially accommodates this will. The will is greeted by an absence of obstructions requiring extended analysis and judgment, and by a presence of constructions eliciting emotion and empathy. In such a relationship between the reader and the lyric, the lyric is active and the reader is passive; the lyric is working and the reader is worked upon.

As an expression of pluralism, "The Debate" requires and supports extended analysis. But a fair evaluation of the poem must admit that the poem's intellectualism is embedded in a broader expression of linear movement which is immediately accessible rather than closed until carefully scrutinized. Indeed, as pointed out earlier, the metaphysical doctrine of pluralism was an intellectualization of a simpler traditional moral imagery, explicitly formulated as a complex doctrine only in response to the unicity of Thomism. Franciscan lyrics, like "The Debate," are not dominated by a need for analysis and judgment. They eliminate or minimize such a need by dealing in images and in traditional dramatic situations and organizational devices.

The imagery of "The Debate" is predictable when we recall the factors it develops as an expanded servile fear death lyric. The images of death, sin, postponement, and punishment are common both to the poem and to Franciscan lyrics: the decayed body, the gluttonous feasts and worldly clothes, the
carousing and oversleeping rather than attending Mass or confessing sins, the
devils and hell-fire. This predictability does not imply lack of art; the use of
familiar images insures the reader's access to subject matter by using proven
techniques. Such an approach is one definition of artistic. In addition "The
Debate" and Franciscan lyrics deal in images in order to avoid evanescent
concepts which elude the mind. Gluttony is an overweight knight eating spicy
meat prepared by cooks who run to his bidding ("Debate," 41-45) and the man
feasting on hot soup while beggars freeze in the snow ("Nu pu unseli bodi," 13,
38). Such specificity is, of course, the strength of all poetry, not just
Franciscan. But such specificity is appropriated and justified by different
aesthetics for different reasons; the Franciscan reason is to provide the
reader's will with a minimum of intellectual obstruction. Nowhere is this
preference for the manifest over the ineffable more apparent in Franciscan
poetry than in the poetry's presentation of the good, point B, in the linear
structure. The Franciscan lyric attempts to provide the reader's will with the
ultimate good in tangible form. This effort imitates the divine strategy of
manifestation in revelation, the incarnation, and the sacraments.

The unsought good, point B, which moves towards the will in "The Debate"
and in Franciscan lyrics, is always tangible. The tangible image of the good
partakes of the spiritual according to Christian, often specifically Franciscan,
document. The imagery which moves to the dreamer in "The Debate," or that of
any servile fear lyric, is divine justice made tangible; within this economy,
physical death derives from original sin, and physical torment is fit expression
for the punishment inflicted upon the damned human soul because the soul is
material. The bloody Christ on the cross who speaks in lyric addresses is
divinity who took on recognizable human physicality. The maiden with the child who intercepts the random quest of a narrator in a "chanson d'aventure" is a scriptural archetype. In other lyrics, the bird's song or the cycle of the seasons, like any natural phenomenon, is natural scripture.\(^{19}\) The spiritual meaning of natural scripture is readily—inescapably—apparent:

> Whoever is not enlightened by such brilliance of things created must be blind; whoever is not awakened by their mighty voice must be deaf; whoever fails to praise God for all his works must be dumb; whoever fails to discover the First Principle through these signs must be a fool.\(^{20}\)

Despite such doctrinal explanations of the physical as participatory in the spiritual, the various images which are unsought goods require little analysis or judgment unless, as here, one wishes to justify them intellectually.

Like the unsought good, the point B which is sought is also tangible. In "The Debate," the dreamer moves towards the ritual of sorrow for and forgiveness of sins, the sacrament of penance.\(^{21}\) Lyrics move towards a variety of tangible ultimate goods, such as the cross, the wounds of Christ, Christ the infant. Invariably these images are aspects of the ultimate manifestation in Christianity, the incarnation; movement towards any one image is movement to all of them:

> Lullay, lullay litel child, child reste be a browe,
> Fro heye hider art þu sent with us to wono lowe,
> Pore and litel art þu mad, vnkut & unknowe,
> Pine an wo to suffren her for þing þat was píne owe.
> (14, 65, 1-4.)

In some mystical lyrics, the ecstasy of love which is so passionately sought from Mary or Christ is directly antithetic to the unimaginable horrors of damnation in servile fear lyrics. Therefore, the same problem of inexpressibility recurs:
Her bewte holy to dyscryve
Who is she that may sussyce?
ffor soth no clerk bat is on lyve,
ssyth she is only withutowyn vyce;
Her flauour exceth the flowr-delyce.
Afor all floweris I haue hur chose
Enteley in myn herte to close.  (15, 46, 29-35.)

The fear lyric solves the problem of inexpressibility by substituting the
sensational images of death for the incomprehensible concept of damnation.
The mystical lyric solves the problem obliquely by borrowing this
"inexpressibility topos" from secular panegyrics. Other lyrics which do
attempt to make tangible the ecstasy of divine love perhaps ought to be called
servile joy lyrics:

Lufe es hatter þen þe cole, lufe may ðane
be-swynke;
þe flawme of lufe wha myght it thole,
if it war ay I-like?
Luf vs confortes & mase in qwart & lyftes
tyl heuenryke;
Lufe rauysches cryste in-tyl owr hert—
I wate na lust it lyke.  (14, 84, 13-16.)

And by logical extension, there is also the servile joy death lyric:

Thynk & dred noght for to dy,
syn þou sall nedis þer-to;
Thynk þat ded is opyny
ende off werdes wo;
Thynk als so, bot if þou dy,
to god may þou noght go;
Thynk & hald þe payed þer-by,
þou may noght ffle þer-fro.
With an .O. & an .I., ban thynk me it is so,
þat ded sal be þi saui frend, & erthly lyff
þi ffo.  (15, 163, 51-60.)

Here the joy of death (escape from the world) substitutes for the
incomprehensible concept of salvation; thus, death itself becomes point B as a
sought, tangible good.
The Franciscan aesthetic not only dictates images to insure a minimum of intellectual obstruction, but also traditional dramatic situations and organizational devices. The dramatic situations are familiar to the point of having become genres unto themselves: dream vision, debate, "chanson d'aventure," address, mediation, "reverdie." Similarly, when a Franciscan poem requires a structure to impose order or direction upon a generic situation, it uses the familiar organizational devices: the seven deadlies, the world-flesh-devil triad, the five/seven joys/sorrows, the five/seven wounds, the fifteen Antiphons, and so on. As in imagery, the predictability of dramatic situations and organizational schemes is the result of an authoritarian approach to artistry, imitation of models of excellence and sanctioned paradigms in order to insure access to subject matter. Rosemary Woolf's study, The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages, fully reveals the traditional dramatic situations and organizational devices. But such use is often only a preparation of the reader's will for involvement in the pilgrimage to the tangible good. By using the traditional, the lyric demands that the reader recognize that there is a thing of value. By using the familiar, the lyric puts the reader at ease, guard down, ready to be worked upon. Many lyrics make just a gesture to a genre to establish the dramatic situation:

Als i lay v-pon a nith
Alone in my longing
Me þouth i sau a wonder ith,
A maiden child rokking.

This gesture invokes a dream vision tradition which demands respect. In addition, there is no challenge to the reader to figure out the situation; the familiarity of the dream vision assures the reader that here is an event of
guaranteed accessibility. The familiarity of the traditional situations and traditional organizations of the lyrics eases the reader into the presence of those constructions which elicit emotion and empathy, responses from the will.

The primary source of emotion in "The Debate" and in Franciscan lyrics is in the good itself. Point B of the linear structure, the tangible destination of the pilgrimage, attracts (or repulses) the reader's will by its inherent design as a provocative image. The tangibility of point B, therefore, has two purposes: to be manifest rather than evanescent, thereby minimizing intellectual effort; to be provocative rather than neutral, thereby forcing affective response. In "The Debate" and in servile fear death lyrics, point B, death (the metonym for punishment) is always repulsively tangible. In the many Franciscan lyrics in which point B is Christ upon the cross, Christ is always attractively tangible. This does not mean that bloody anatomical details are charming; the sensational details of the five wounds in the address or meditation endear Christ to the reader. His passion is a physical event which forces the reader to affirm his goodness (generosity/love/concern/understanding/brotherhood) and therefore his attractiveness. Any analysis or judgment involved in the affirmation of his goodness is conducted in an urgent, even disorderly, atmosphere of emotion.

The following lyric uses the linear structure, but moves from an abstract point A, the world of falsehood, to an abstract point B, truth. This intellectual pilgrimage, especially the destination of the pilgrimage, is evanescent and emotionally opaque:

Hose wolde him wel a-vyse
Of þis wrecched world I weene,
I hope ful wel he schulde dispise
þe foule falshede þat þer-in bene.
Sertes, sum day schal beo sene
Much eorply labour schal be lest;
When good and vuel vr dedes schal deme,
We schal wel fynde pat treupe is best.

(14, 108, 1-8.)

Affirmation of the goodness of point B takes place, if at all, with no urgency, in an intellectual atmosphere. In contrast, a typical passion address of the Franciscan school focuses upon a provocative point B, Christ on the cross:

Man, þu haue þine þout one me,
þenc hou dere i bouthe þe;
I let me nailen to þe tre—
hardere deth ne mai non ben—
þenc, man al hit was for þe.

I gaf mi fles, i gaf mi blod,
for þe me let i-don on rod,
Wt of mi side erne þe flos;
I boled hit al wid milde mod—
Man, hit was al for þi god.  

(14, 3, 1-10.)

This lyric does not really expect an orderly theological consideration of the redemptive act as kenosis nor an analysis of the redemptive act as personally efficacious. The so-called "thought" repeatedly called for is for the reader to feel guilt or a debt of gratitude. The image of a man nailed to a tree defies any calm, analytical reasoning; the image speaks for itself as Christ's goodness, his generous and personal love.

In many lyrics, point B is actually two points, the provocative good and a terminal good. In "The Debate," the provocative B is punishment, and the terminal B is a manifest sorrow for sins, the sacrament of penance. The two B's are one, in a cause-to-effect relationship, bonded together by the provoked emotion. The cause, death and punishment, produces the effect, sacramental penance, through fear. All other servile fear lyrics work in the same manner.
First the reader, A, is moved to the provocative point, B':

If man him bipocte
. . . wu reuful is te flitte
. . . fro pitte te pine
plat neure sal fine. . . .

The emotion generated by B', servile fear, links it successfully with the terminal point, B'':

i wene non sinne
sulde his herte winnen. (13, 13.)

Similarly, a lyric address may provide the reader with both the provocative image of Christ on the cross, B', and a terminating good, B'':

Lo! lemmen swete, now may pou se
plat I hawe lost my lyf for þe.
What myght I do þe mare?
For-bi I pray þe speciali
plat pou forsale ill company
plat wounds me so sare. . . . (14, 78.)

Here B' provokes a feeling of indebtedness to Christ for his act ("What myght I do þe mare?") and a feeling of guilt for causing his passion ("plat wounds me so sare"). The reader is thereby provoked to B'', "forsake ill company."

The existence of B as (B', B'') holds for the linear varieties of Franciscan lyrics. In "Nv yh she blotstme spring," the bird's song, B', comes to the narrator. The song provokes an emotional state:

a swete longinge
myn herte þrepht sprung. . . .

Because of this emotional state, B' becomes linked with B'', Christ:

Of iesu crist hi synge,
plat is so fayr and fre. (13, 63, 3-4, 11-12.)
In the same manner, in "Wynter wakenèp al my care," B' is winter, and B" is awareness of mortality; the two are linked by the emotive state the season of winter provokes:

Wynter wakenèp al my care,
    nou þis leues waxèp bare;
ofte y sike & mourne säre
    when hit comeèp in my þoht
of þis worldes ioie hou hit geþ al to noht.

(14, 9, 1-5.)

In "I am iesu," an active B confronts the reader, a passive A:

I am iesu, þat cum to fith
    With-outen seld & sperë...
    . . . Vndo þin herte, tel me þi þouth,
þi sennes grete an smale.

(14, 63, 1-2, 7-8.)

This active B is tangible, Christ the warrior. As a warrior, he is intimidating and generous, a provocative B'. Swayed by his power and his love, A not only accepts him, but his compulsory program of confession, B".

In the mystical lyrics "Leuedie, ic þonke þe" and "Ihesu, god sone, lord of magese," an active A, the will, moves passionately towards B, Mary or Christ. Both Mary and Christ seem passive or dormant, and A reminds them of their natures as the will's ultimate good. Then A asks them to effect sensory union:

Moder, loke one me
    wid þine suete eyen,
reste & blisse gef þu me,
    mi lehedi, þen ic deyen.

(13, 27, 13-16.)

Ihesu, þe mayden sone, þat wyth þi blode
    me boght,
Thryl me sawle wyth þi sperë, þat myke!
    luf in men hase wroght. . .

(14, 83, 5-6.)

In both these lyrics, A moves fervently to B because A has shaped a tangible B to its own liking by recalling B's historical role in lovable terms. A not only evokes a lovable B', but then proposes the terminal good, B" (the love-look, the
love-wound), sensory union beyond physical life. This terminal good derives from A’s emotion of love provoked by B’.

In "No more willi wicked be" the subject of the lyric is the terminal good, B". The narrator has decided to become a friar:

No more ne willi wicked be
Forsake ich wil pis world-is fe,
pis wildis wedis, pis folen gle;
ich wul be mild of chere,
of cnotis scal mi girdil be,
becomen ich wul frere.
... Wurche i wille pis workes gode,
for him þat boyt us in þe rode;
fram his side ran þe blode,
sod dere he gan vs bie—
for sothe i tel him mor þan wode
þat hantit lichere.

(13, 66, 1-6, 13-18.)

B", the decision to become a friar, was provoked by the tangible Christ on the cross, B’. The narrator has moved to B, a place of peace, from A, the world of wickedness, riot, and mad pursuit of pleasure.

Many lyrics do not specify the terminal good, or they provide only a very general terminal good. In "Man and wyman" the terminal good (B") provoked by the image of Christ on the cross (B’) is vague and poetic:

... þin hurte, þin hurte, þu turne to me...

In "Wit was his neked brest," there is no B", only B’:

Wit was his nacked brest and red of blod his side,
Blod was his faire neb, his wenden depe an uide,
starke waren his armes hi-srepid op-on þe rode;
In fif steden an his bodi stremes hurne of blode.

(14, 1B.)

These lyrics are permanently emotional and urgent. Provocative B comes to A, is perceived by A as fully B’, and awaits A's own B". As the primary source of involvement of the reader's will in the pilgrimage unto itself, the tangible good
does not downplay its own emotive energy by bonding its provocative power to a lone effect.

The linear structure of the Franciscan lyric is open because it greets the will with an absence of obstructions and the presence of a provocative good. In addition it recruits the reader's will. While the tangible image of the provocative good elicits the reader's emotion, the lyric also guarantees that the reader is a part of the poem, not an observer of it and of the self's emotion. Thus, the poem is empathic as well as emotive.

"The Debate" uses all the approaches to ensure empathy which Franciscan lyrics employ. These approaches fall into three categories: first person, in which the reader is the undefined speaker or narrator; second person, in which the reader is addressed; third person, exemplum, in which the reader sees a distinct persona of the poem as self, whether this persona be first, second, or third person. In this study's analysis of "The Debate" as a servile fear death lyric and of other specific lyrics, these three approaches have been acknowledged, but not formally designated as constructions which open the linear structure. As already noted, in "The Debate" the reader may hear individual stanzas of the poem as individual lyrics in which the "I" of the lyric (the Body or the Soul) or the "you" of the lyric (the Body or Soul) are the reader. These individual lyrics also accumulate to form a portrait of the knight who is an Everyman with whom the reader can identify.

Lyrics are often clearly assignable to one of the three categories of empathic approach. For example, in
Quanne hic se on rode
ihesu mi lemman
... Wel on hic to wepon
and sinnes for-leten
yif hic of luue kan ... (13, 35B.)

the reader is the speaker or narrator by syntactic compulsion. Likewise, in "Man
and wyman, loket to me" the reader is the addressee. Other lyrics become
assignable to a category of empathic approach more clearly by first identifying
them as a certain variety of linear structure.

It will be remembered that within linear structure, many lyrics are
expressions of B coming to A. In addition, B may be entirely unsought, a
sensory good which providentially maneuveres to the will. In such a case, the
will finds before it inexplicably and abruptly its ultimate good:

I am iesu, pat cum to fith
With-outen seld & spere....

This lyric is a second-person address, stripped of introductory etiquette. By not
taking time to formally acknowledge the reader, such an address increases its
emotive force as a tangible presence:

Wit was his nekede brest and red of blod his side,
Blod was his faire neb, his wnden depe an uide.... (14, 1B.)

Suddenly, provocative B stands unabashedly before the reader. The medium of
the poem is entirely the image of the provocative good, undiminished by words
of second-person relationship.

Sometimes the linear structure expresses general or confused movement
by A which B precisely maneuveres to intercept. This structure is usually a
"chanson d'aventure" lyric; B appears inexplicably (from the viewpoint of A):
As I walked me this endurs day
  to be grene wod for to play
& all heuyness to put away
my-self alone.
As i walkyd vndir be grene wod bowe
I sawe a maide fayre l-now;
a child she hapid, she song, she laugh—
  bat child wepid alone. (15, 2.)

Here the reader is not the narrator by syntactic compulsion. This empathic approach is a third-person exemplum. The dim awareness of the will for its ultimate good expressed by the narrator as desire to put away heaviness and to seek solitude enables the reader to establish kinship with this persona. Such affinity for the persona is not based upon the persona’s likability or believability. Quite simply, if the persona is a human creature, the persona’s soul is the same as the reader’s soul. What applies to the persona applies to the reader.

Such an exemplum—a human creature, therefore affinity—is the narrator of "The Debate." What is true for the dreamer is true for the reader; as the dreamer reacts to the provocative good, so should the reader react:

  On ilk a her a drope strode,
    For fri3t and fer þer as i lay;
    To Jhesu Crist with mild mod
  3erne i kalde and lokede ay.... (587-592.)

Here the emotion provoked by the unsought sensory good of the vision, servile fear, is itself tangible, drops of anxious sweat upon every hair. And immediately the terminal good, Jesus Christ, bonds to the provocative good through that fear. As an expanded lyric "The Debate" fully and explicitly presents each step of the empathic approach of exemplum in an attempt to guarantee openness of the linear structure. On the other hand, many dream vision lyrics simply end when the vision ends, thereby not restricting the
emotional impact by defining it or limiting the vision to a lone terminal good. The reader is expected to react as the reader; the dream vision narrator is an introductory device to establish empathy (as well as value and familiarity). Another variation is Chaucer's comic narrator, who is bewildered by or immune to his vision.

Because she may be portrayed as physically and intimately present with Christ at birth or the passion, Mary is sometimes a third-person exemplum for the reader. As an exemplum she is a human creature whose soul is the same as the reader's soul. The reader is to react to the image of Christ as a doomed child or a crucified savior in the same personal way in which she reacts. Her special mother-to-son emotional response is a model of reaction, just like the first-person narrator's sweaty fear in "The Debate," not a situation to react to. The reader is to feel deeply for Christ just as Mary feels deeply; the reader is not to feel for Mary because she feels for Christ.

That Mary is an ordinary human creature, not a unique soul, is made clear in "Stond wel, moder, cunder rode." In this lyric Christ himself equates Mary to humankind, and says she would go to hell if he did not suffer and die:

'Moder, nou I may þe seye,
Betere is þat ich one deye,
þen al monkun to helle go.'
'Sone, I se þi bode I-swonge,
þine honde, þine fet, þi bode I-stouge;
Hit nis no wonder þey me be wo.'

'Moder, if ich þe dourste telle,
If ich ne deye þou gost to helle;
I þolie dep for monnes sake.'

(13, 49, 19-27.)
Thus, the modern reader cannot assume that the persona of Mary in a Franciscan lyric is always a surrogate for the ultimate good. In the following lyric, Mary's speech expresses a state of emotion which is ideally to be the reader's state:

Wy haue 3e no reuthe on my child?  
Have reuthe on me ful of murnig,  
Taket doun on rode my derworpi child,  
Or prek me on rode with my derling.

More pine ne may me ben don  
Pan laten me liuen in sorwe & schame;  
Als loue me bindet to my sone,  
so lat vs dey3en bo3en i-same.  

(14, 60.)

Provoked by the sight of Christ on the cross, Mary proposes a terminal good of sensory union, to be one with the dying Christ. This B" is the same as in "Gold & al þis werdis wyn" (14, 71),

I wolde be clad in cristis skyn, . . .

in which the reader is narrator by syntax. By using the persona of Mary as an exemplum, the lyric provides the reader with a comprehensible model of reaction and movement:

Suete sone, reu on me & bring me out of þis liue,  
for me þinket þat i se þi det3, it neyhit suïpe;  
þi feet ben nailed to þe tre—nou may i no more þriue,  
For al þis werd with-outen þe ne sal me maken blipe.  

(14, 64, 9-12.)

Mary's involvement is historical and human. But at the same time, she is the supreme standard of human personal feeling, a benchmark of reaction to which the reader must aspire.
Of course, many lyrics present a figure of Mary who is a distinct persona with whom the reader may feel no kinship. In these lyrics she is a unique human creature whose soul is quite unlike the reader's soul:

O Hie Emperice and quene celestiall,
Princes eterne and flour Immaculate,
Oure souerane help quhen we vnto the call,
Haile! ros Intact, virgyne Inviolate,
That with the fader was predestinate
To bere the floure and makar of vs al,
And with no spue of crime coinquinate,
Bot virgyne pure, clerare than Cristall.  

(15, 13, 1-8.)

This is the figure of Mary as the Immaculate Conception, that is, a human creature whose soul was by special privilege exempted from original sin. The three centuries of the Middle English religious lyric were, in fact, a period of the most intense debate over this doctrine. It was the Franciscans, especially the Oxford philosopher Duns Scotus (c. 1264–1308), who favored and developed the doctrine. As this unique creature, Mary is often the point B of linear movement of the will, instead of images of the cross, or the wounds of Christ, or Christ the infant. Mary is another aspect of the ultimate manifestation, the incarnation; movement towards her image is movement to the ultimate good:

Ave gracia plena, devoide of all trespace,
Ryght well knowen to god before the world began,
Promysed of prophetes for oure chyefe solace,
Annunciat by Aungell was thy concepcioun,
Without originall synne as diuerse maketh mencioun—
Bothe gotene and borne, non in like case—
Wherfore, hail! glorious lady, mary full of grace.  

(15, 69, 1-7.)

Nevertheless, those poems of the Franciscan school which concentrate upon using Mary as an exemplum, a model of emotional reaction to some event in the
life of Christ, do not use her as point B. She is a device to make the linear structure open, to involve the reader in the pilgrimage to point B.

In one lyric, Mary is both point B and an exemplum. This poem is a "chanson d'aventure" in which the narrator determines to enter a city, but before entering meets Mary, who is roaming about wildly distraught at her son's execution.

As Reson Rywyldre my Rechlyes mynde,  
by wayes & wyldernes as y hadde wente,  
a solemne cite fortunyd me to find;  
to turne þer-to wes myne entente.  
I met a mayde at þe citeys ende,  
snobbunge & syȝnge sche wes ny schente,  
a fayrer foode had y not kende.  
hurre herre, hure face, sche all to-rente,  
Sche tuggyd & tere with gret turment;  
sche brake hure skynne bope body & breste,  
and saide þese wordys euer as sche wente,  
'filius Regis mortuus est.' (15, 6, 1-12.)

Here Mary is point B in that she intercepts the narrator, who is an exemplum for the reader. The narrator moves to ultimate goodness, sensory union with one aspect of the incarnation, the mother of Christ.

But Mary is also a hyperbolic exemplum for the narrator, and therefore for the reader. She not only provides the narrator with images of Christ's passion. She reacts emotionally to the passion because of a relationship to Christ which is more universal than mother-to-son; she reacts as should all humankind:

'I sownedde, I fyll downe in þe feelde,  
I wolde haue spoke but y ne myȝte.  
I snobbudde, I sykyd, I knowde not welde;  
sorowe smote at myne herte, y fyll downe ryȝte.  
My sone sawe his modur þus y-dyȝte,  
so rufully his yes on me he keste,  
as who seyth "fare wel, my moder bryȝte,  
ffilius Regis mortuus est."
I cried bo died myne owne sone dere;
I swette, y sownydye, y saide "alas!"
no wondur bowe y carefulli were—
my fadur, my broper, my spouse he was,
Myne help, myne socour and all my chere.
nowe without broper and spowe y moste hens pas,
fadurless & modurles y am lafte here,
as a woman forsake pat no goode has.'

Finally, this poem is a statement of the Franciscan view of how the individual soul achieves salvation.

The poem affirms the primacy of the will in the human soul, and the necessity for emotive response to Christ as tangible goodness. The poem affirms primacy of the will in that the narrator's dim awareness and ensuing search for ultimate good have been directed by "Reson," and the search has been disappointing and fruitless. As usual, it is divine providence which insures that ultimate good intercepts the narrator's confused quest:

As Reson Rywylde my Rechles mynde,
by wayes & wyldernes as y hadde wente,
a solemn cite fortunyd me to find....

Although the narrator is confronted with this sacred city, immediate entrance as intended is stalled; Mary intercepts and shows how to react to Christ as well as what to react to. Provocative B, B', is Christ suffering his passon, whose images are provide by Mary's description:

'Throwe lerlm stretis a man my3te trace
be blode of my childe like a beeste.'

'Thou scourge, with cordis thou brak the skyne
With hard knottis, I crye vpon th@
Ye bete my sonne that neuer did synne;
Why bete bou hym & spare me,
Made he nott the? thou woldest not blyne,
Thou teryst hys skynne & wold nott lett.
Thou myghte nott sett the poynyt of a pyne
Vpon hole skynne, so thou hym bett.

(41-56)
Terminal B, B", is the extreme emotional reaction itself, proof of the soul's love for B'. Mary as exemplum demonstrates this terminal good.

In this chapter, lyrics heretofore generally described as Franciscan or emotive have been shown to possess a structure which more accurately isolates such lyrics as instances of a corpus of poetry. Examination of "The Debate," which is Franciscan in its pluralism, revealed that it is an expanded attempt to elicit salutary servile fear, fully developing all the factors which shorter fear lyrics do not necessarily fully utilize, and typically stressing the emotive metonym for punishment, physical death, which shorter fear lyrics often stress. Having established "The Debate" as wholly emotive or Franciscan, its structure as linear and open was found also to be the structure of shorter lyrics. In addition, the linear structure of "The Debate" and these lyrics has two significant variations, physical movement and sensory union; and within each of these the will and its ultimate good may have different degrees of activity or passivity. The openness of "The Debate" and the lyrics derives from their accessibility and tangibility as opposed to intellectualism and abstractness, and from their rhetoric as provocative and empathic. The emotive rhetoric of the Franciscan poem was found to reside especially in the ultimate good of the linear structure, which not only provokes emotion, but often proposes a terminal good. The fact that a corpus of lyrics, like "The Debate," possess the linear and open structure provides an accurate method for specifically defining the Franciscan aesthetic.
IV. Notes

1 The source of each lyric quoted in this chapter will be identified in the text, using the following abbreviations for each source:

   12, for English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century, ed. Carleton Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932);
   14, for Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century, ed. Carleton Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927);

Each abbreviation will be followed by the lyric number assigned by the source, and line number(s) if appropriate.


5 The Oxford Annotated Bible (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), Sirach 2:15-16. Hereafter, unless otherwise noted, scriptural quotations will be from this edition.

6 Peter Lombard, Sentences, III, xxxiv, 4, in PL, 192, 824-825:

   Timor autem servilis est... cum per timorem gehennae continet se homo a peccato, quo praesentiam judicis et poenas metuit, et timore facit quidquid boni facit, non timore amittendi aeternum bonum quod non amat, sed timore patiendi malum quod formidat... Boni est iste timor et utilis, licet insufficiens; per quem fit paulatim consuetudo justitiae, et succedit initialis timor, quando incipit quod durum erat amari, et sic incipit excludi servilis timor a charitate, succedit deinde timor castus sive amicabilis; quo timemus ne sponsus tardet, ne discedat, ne offendamus, ne eo careamus. Timor iste de amore venit.

7 All quotations from "The Debate" are from Wilhelm Linlow's 1889 publication reprinted as be Disputisoun Bitwen b Bodi and be Soule (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1970), Auchinleck Ms. Lines will be sited by number in the text.
The Art of the Middle English Lyric (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1972), pp. 88-92.

p. 85.

Brown prints three other variants along with 12A. In "Notes," pp. 171-173, numerous other variants are cited, all listing "three sorrowful things."

p. 86.


Stanzas 3-18 (11. 17-144), spoken by the Soul; 21-23 (11. 161-184), spoken by the Body.

Woolf (p. 96) defines the "quid profuit" tradition as slightly different from "ubi sunt." In the former, abstract nouns or worldly possessions govern the verb. This tradition is derived from Wisdom 5.8: "What has our arrogance profited us?" The latter is derived from Baruch 3.16: "Where are the princes of nations, and those who rule over the beasts on earth?" Reiss (p. 83), in his discussion of "Wen pe turuf is pi tuur," distinguishes "ubi erunt" from "ubi sunt." In the former, the future rather than the past is questioned. Reiss does not limit "ubi erunt" to a noun type.

Speculum, XXXVII, 4, p. 564.


(C)olligere possumus, quod omnes creaturae istius sensibilis mundi animum contemplantis et sapientis ducunt in Deum aeternum, pro eo quod illius primi principii potentissimi, sapientissimi et optimi, illius aeternae eriginis, lucis et plenitudinis, illius, inquam, artis efficientis, exemplantis et ordinantis sunt umbrae, resonantiae et picturae, sunt vestigia, simulcra et sectacula nobis ad contingendum Deum proposita et signa divinitus data...

(We) may draw the conclusion that all creatures of this sensible world lead the soul of the wise beholder toward the eternal God. They are the shadow, echo, image, vestige, likeness, and representation of that most good, most wise, most powerful First Principle, who is the eternal Origin, the Light and Plenitude, and, finally, the efficient, exemplary and co-ordinating Art. They are offered to us as a sign from heaven, as a means toward the discovery of God.


Qui igitur tantis rerum creaturarum splendoribus non illustratur caecus est; qui tantis clamoribus non evigilat surdus est; qui ex omnibus his effectibus Deum non laudat mutus est; qui ex tantis indicis primum principium non advertit stultus est.


V. The Dominican Aesthetic

There is a corpus of Middle English religious lyrics whose closed structure is antithetic to the open structure of the Franciscan lyric. These lyrics must be approached primarily through intellect, not will. The reader's intellect is challenged by poetic expression which requires extended analysis and judgment. In such a relationship between the reader and the lyric, the reader is active and the lyric is passive; the reader is working and the poem is worked upon. Such lyrics make up a corpus whose aesthetic is best termed Dominican.

The term "Dominican" is suitable for several reasons. First of all, the term indicates that the aesthetic will structure lyrics whose subject matter is religious. Secondly, the term, like "Franciscan," refers to a cultural force contemporary to the lyrics. Finally, as this study's survey of medieval Aristotelianism indicates, the Thomist psychology of Dominicanism affirmed primacy of the intellect in direct opposition to the Bonaventurean psychology of Franciscanism, just as it affirmed unicity in opposition to pluralism. A lyric is structured by the Franciscan aesthetic if above all other concerns it provokes a response from the will; a lyric exhibits the Dominican aesthetic if above all other concerns it is an artifact which demands appreciation by the intellect.

The famous lyric "Erpe toc of erpe" is an excellent example of a lyric which is closed:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Erpe toc of erpe, erpe wyp woh,} \\
\text{Erpe ober erpe to be erpe droh,} \\
\text{Erpe leyde erpe in erpene } \text{broh,}-- \\
\text{bo heuede erpe of erpe erpe ynoh.}
\end{align*}
\]

(12, 73.)
This lyric is not open; it is not a proposal of a good to the will made facile by emotion. The lyric is closed, requiring the reader to make a special effort to think through the poem, and actively judge and analyze. The lyric challenges the intellect to assign specific meanings to the term "erpe," and then to determine the overall appropriateness of such assignments by syntactic testing. In the act of evaluating one assigned paraphrase, the intellect perceives that there are possible alternatives, perhaps equally or even more appropriate, and that these alternatives are being discarded even though also syntactically feasible. Therefore, the lyric's superior richness of meaning is being lost in favor of prosaic limitation. More precisely, the greater truth of paradox is being sacrificed for the sake of a limited truth of comprehensibility. Such paradoxical ambiguity is irresolvable; the lyric cannot be reduced without destroying its greater but elusive meaning.

The origin of the lyric's paradox lies in the poem's avoidance of specific images in favor of word-play. Many possible specific images commonly participate in the meaning of "erpe" at some universal level. The syntax of the poem assumes the presence of such specific images functioning according to their distinct natures. But in place of specific images the lyric uses the generic "erpe." Thus instead of simple syntactic sense, a larger truth of paradox arises, in which identicalness and pattern account for individuality and action. If "erpe" is generic morally or metaphysically, the paradox is moral or metaphysical accordingly.

Edmund Reiss admits the closed nature of "Erpe toc of erpe" by classifying the lyric as a Middle English verse riddle or aenigma,² but such a label is misleading. There is no "answer" to the poem, only various possible
prose-statement reductions of the poem which make sense, but are incomplete substitutes for the lyric, which simultaneously states all such answers or meanings. Rosemary Woolf sees the poem as a "punning elaboration" of the Ash Wednesday liturgical admonition "Memento homo quod cinis es et in cinerem revertis."³ She lends support to this study's contention that Middle English lyrics such as "Erpe toc of erpe" share a distinct aesthetic, for she points out that for the Middle Ages, puns and paradox were "linguistic indictors of the intricate unity of the divine plan."⁴ Therefore, lyrics rhetorically preoccupied with such linguistic indicators are expressions aimed at the intellect, for intricacy is not an emotive good. Franciscan lyrics insist upon the simplicity of the divine plan: the physicality of the incarnation, the clear image of God in creation, the elemental paradigm of divine justice. Curiously, after Woolf affirms the ambiguity of "Erpe toc of erpe," she claims there is a singular meaning to the conclusion of the poem: "(T)he last line ... is bluntly clear in meaning and gives a savagely ironic summing up of the end of the avaricious man."⁵ Her specification of the poem in the direction of avarice makes sense; but immediately, as the mind inevitably compares the experience of her paraphrase to the poem itself, one senses a need to expand avarice poetically, to understand avarice to include all sin, and the disposition towards sin that is the permeating condition of the postlapsarian world. The inadequacy of paraphrase leads back to the lyric itself, which in turn rechallenges the intellect.

Finally, it is true that "Erpe toc of erpe" affirms some sort of "contemptus mundi" viewpoint. But the lyric is not, above all other concerns, a facile attempt to move the will to that viewpoint. Beyond the experience of
the lyric, after wrestling with the poem, the intellect may or may not propose that viewpoint as a good to the will. Meanwhile the lyric itself remains foremost a challenging expression which the intellect appreciates and to which the intellect may return for further appreciation.

"Erpe toc of erpe" is a closed structure because its ambiguity of paradox and wordplay engages the intellect. Other lyrics are closed by originating their ambiguity in specific imagery. The reader must analyze these images as having more than literal or usual significance; that is, they are symbolic. For purposes here, it is not necessary to distinguish between allegory and symbol, or to define any rhetorical subdivisions of allegory and symbol. Quite simply, many lyrics' specific images have a primary function of being other than what they usually are, of meaning more than what they literally mean. These poems have symbolic ambiguity.

For the modern reader, this symbolic function of imagery is perhaps synonomous with poetry itself. But as has been demonstrated, in the open lyric of the Middle English Franciscan aesthetic, the primary function of specific imagery is not to be ambiguous, but to be unequivocally tangible. Simple tangibility in a Franciscan lyric is a guarantee of accessibility, and a method of avoiding a challenge to the intellect. In addition, the tangible good is always provocative, thereby addressing the will. It is true that in a Franciscan lyric the provocative image, such as Christ's wounds or his flowing blood, may also suggest symbolic meanings. For a provocative image often has an exegetical tradition of symbolic interpretation which recommends its us over a more novel image. In the closed lyrics of the Dominican school such sanctioned images, as well as novel images, function primarily as symbols, whose ambiguity must be
analyzed and judged. The readers intellect is expected to come to grips with these images, perhaps utilizing the exegetical tradition.

"Maiden in the mor lay" is a lyric which is closed because of the ambiguity of its specific imagery:

Maiden in the mor lay—
in the mor lay—
seuenyst fulle, seuenist fulle.
Maiden in the mor lay—
in the mor lay—
seuenistes fulle ant a day.

Welle was hire mete.
Wat was hire mete?
  be primerole ant the—
  be primerole ant the—
Welle was hire mete.
Wat was hire mete?
  the primerole ant the violet.

Welle was hire dryng.
Wat was hire dryng?
  be chelde water of be—
  be chelde water of be—
Welle was hire dryng.
Wat was hire dryng?
  be chelde water of be welle-spring.

Welle was hire bour.
Wat was hire bour?
  be rede rose an te—
  be rede rose an te—
Welle was hire bour.
Wat was hire bour?
  be rede rose an te lilie flour. (SL14,15,18.)

D. W. Robertson, Jr., and allegorist critics, opposed by E. T. Donaldson and others, analyze this lyric's seemingly secular description as highly wrought religious symbolism derived from an exegetical tradition.⁶ Reiss points out that unless one wishes to read the poem as some sort of "playful gibberish" the precise details provided by the poem must be interpreted for some sort of symbolic meaning.⁷ After all, since when are flower bowers characteristic of
the moors? The symbolic meanings for the images which coalesce with convincing homogeneity are religious, and interpret the lyric as a statement about Mary as the mother of Christ. The moor, the seven days plus one, the primerole and violet, the cold water from the spring, and the bower of roses and lilies, are symbolic of the desolate world awaiting the rejuvenation of redemption through the unique role and special attributes of Mary. Just exactly what symbolic meanings for the specific images are most appropriate—for example, exactly what attributes of Mary are indicated by associating the primerose with her—is for our puorses here not important. What is important is that the poem's ambiguity, like that of "Erpe toc of erpe," is its essential nature. In this case, it is a closed structure which engages the intellect in symbolic ambiguity.

In *De doctrina Christiana*, Augustine investigates the purpose of symbolism in Scripture. In order to account for such closed expression, Augustine contrasts an unambiguous statement with an ambiguous statment. First he proposes an unambiguous literal statement about the saints of the Church:

> For example, it may be said that there are holy and perfect men with whose lives and customs as an exemplar the Church of Christ is able to destroy all sorts of superstitions in those who come to it and to incorporate them into itself, men of good faith, true servants of God, who, putting aside the burden of the world, come to the holy laver of baptism and, ascending thence, conceive through the Holy Spirit and produce the fruit of a twofold love of God and their neighbor.8

In contrast to this literal statement he points out the curiously superior effectiveness of saying the same thing symbolically:

> But why is it, I ask, that if anyone says this he delights his hearers less than if he had said the same thing in expounding that place in the Canticle of Canticles where it is said of the Church, as she is being praised as a beautiful woman, "Thy
teeth are as flocks of sheep, that are shorn, which come up from the washing, all with twins, and there is none barren among them? Does anyone learn anything else besides that which he learns when he hears the same thought expressed in plain words without this similitude?9

Augustine explains that by introspection he finds the superior efficacy of the symbolic statement is due to the unexplainable pleasure of dealing with images which mean more than they literally mean:

Nevertheless, in a strange way, I contemplate the saints more pleasantly when I envisage them as the teeth of the Church cutting off men from their errors and transferring them to her body after their hardness has been softened as if by being bitten and chewed. I recognize them most pleasantly as shorn sheep having put aside the burdens of the world like so much fleece, and as ascending from the washing, which is baptism, all to create twins, which are the two precepts of love, and I see no one of them sterile of this holy fruit.10

Thus, Augustine establishes that such closed expression is more effectual, especially since it gives delight. But he cannot explain how symbolism and its challenge actually coincide with the nature of man, thereby providing understanding and pleasure:

But why it seems sweeter to me than if no such similitude were offered in the divine books, since the thing perceived is the same, is difficult to say and is a problem for another discussion. For the present, however, no one doubts that things are perceived more readily through similitudes and that what is sought with difficulty is discovered with more pleasure.11

Instead of seeing symbolism as congenial to human nature, Augustine initiated a tradition which actually viewed such closed expression as somewhat ill-suited to human nature.

Augustine justifies symbolism in Scripture as expedient to ends ancillary to communication itself. First of all, symbolism protects the subject matter from distortion by indiligent or incompetent readers:
But many and varied obscurities and ambiguities deceive those who read casually, understanding one thing instead of another; indeed, in certain places they do not find anything to interpret erroneously, so obscurely are certain sayings covered with a most dense mist.

Secondly, symbolism makes meaning difficult to acquire, thereby marking it and enhancing it as truly worthwhile in contrast to ordinary information:

I do not doubt that this situation was provided by God to conquer pride by work and to combat disdain in our minds, to which those things which are easily discovered seem frequently to become worthless.

From the time of Augustine to Thomas Aquinas, who incorporated the Aristotelian psychology of man into a Christian philosophy, there was no definition of man which could begin to weaken the Augustinian tradition of viewing symbolism as an expedient barrier to communication itself. Thomist psychology provided for a truly proportional relationship between closed expression and human nature.

Augustine's remarks on symbolism do not apply only to Scripture. In proposing remedies for the misunderstanding of Scripture, Augustine divides the signification of all writing into literal and symbolic:

There are two reasons why things written are not understood: they are obscured either by unknown or by ambiguous signs. For signs are either literal or figurative.

But since his concern is Scripture, Augustine's choice of an example to illustrate the difference between literal and symbolic meanings is scriptural:

They are called literal when they are used to designate those things on account of which they were instituted; thus we say *bos* (ox) when we mean an animal of a herd because all men using the Latin language call it by that name just as we do. Figurative signs occur when that thing which we designate by a literal sign is used to signify something else; thus we say "ox"
and by that syllable understand the animal which is ordinarily designated by that word, but again by that animal we understand an evangelist, as is signified in the Scripture, according to the interpretation of the Apostle, when it says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."\textsuperscript{15}

A lyric, or any form of sacred or profane writing, may be symbolic in the same manner, that is, according to the basic sense which Augustine illustrates. Of course, a profane work's symbolic meanings were considered of a different order than the ultimate truths expressed in divine Scripture's symbols. Just how different an order is a very big question. Scholarly criticism has established that exegetical values and practices did transfer to some extent from Scriptural study to the production or analysis of profane writing.\textsuperscript{16}

Whether strict allegorical, tropological, and analogical meanings are proper concepts to apply to the Middle English religious lyric is beyond the concern of this study. The point is that Augustine indicated that symbolism per se is pleasurably effective. Yet at the same time he contradictorily derived a value for symbolism by defining it as a barrier to communication.

As a barrier to communication, symbolism requires justification as a device to discourage undeserving or incompetent readers. Such a "pearls before swine" theory is elitist and poses problems. In Scripture, it makes truth, perhaps even salvation, available only to those favored with intelligence and training. Augustine remedies this problem by claiming that "hardly anything may be found in those obscure places which is not found plainly said elsewhere."\textsuperscript{17} In poetry, the unintelligent or the untrained do not fare so well; for example, Petrarch states:

\begin{quote}
And it is provided for the less capable, lest in vain they waste themselves away on the surface of things, that, if they are wise, they are deterred from approaching them.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}
That this elitist position was genuinely held in the Middle English period is perhaps best indicated by the open structure of Franciscan lyrics. The simple tangibility of images in Franciscan lyrics clearly is an attempt to involve all readers, not just clever ones, in the pilgrimage to Christ. These lyrics downplay symbology because in the Augustinian tradition such closed expression is not meaningful or appropriate for all readers.

The Augustinian tradition mistakenly associates symbolic expression with high style and lofty subject matter. But symbolism does not necessarily signal that here is worthwhile meaning nobly expressed, nor does symbolism make extraordinary demands which guarantee to enhance the reader's regard for the meanings obtained. Deriving an understanding of symbolism from Scripture misled the Augustinian tradition. Outside the realm of exegetical symbology, such closed expression of itself does not assure high truths. The Bonaventuran exemplarist doctrine that every creature obviously reveals the Creator does make every profane image obliquely sacred. But true symbolism is equally efficacious expressing vulgar meanings in low style, and may be understood without valuing the meaning obtained:

I Have a gentil cook,  
crowyt me day;  
he dop me rysyn erly,  
my matyins for to say.  
... his eylyn arn of cristal,  
lokyn al in aumbyr;  
& eury ny3t he perchit hym  
in myn ladyis chaumbyr.  

(SL 14, 15, 46.)

Thomist philosophy accounts for the efficacy of this symbolism, and of all closed expression. The Dominican lyric utilizes closed expression because Thomist psychology makes intellectual analysis the primary activity of human
nature. Symbolic as well as paradoxical ambiguity provide the human creature
with opportunity to engage in distinctly human endeavor.

The challenge to the intellect often dominates a lyric:

Nou goth sonne vnder wod,—
me reweth, marie, þi faire Rode.
Nou goþ sonne vnder tre,—
me rewþþ, marie, þi sone and þe. (13, 1.)

Many readers probably automatically associate this lyric with the Franciscan
aesthetic because they read it as an expression of the narrator's grief for both
Mary and Christ at the dark moment of the crucifixion. The first error in such
an automatic association is to hold that all expressions involving feeling in any
way whatsoever must be Franciscan. This study has proposed that a Franciscan
lyric has linear and open structure; therefore, a Franciscan lyric is specifically
identifiable, not every poetic expression which somehow includes feeling. The
second error in automatically associating this lyric with the Franciscan
aesthetic is to fail to notice that it especially requires the reader to understand
puns and symbols in order to see the poem as an expression of anything at all.
Only after the reader deals with, and continues to deal with, the irresolvable
ambiguities of word-play does the lyric assume and maintain any shape as an
expression of grief.

The Augustinian tradition affirms the pleasurable efficacy of symbolism;
Thomism accounts for and universalizes this efficacy. The Aristotelian
psychology of Thomism makes all closed expression congenial to human nature
by stressing understanding as the foremost concern of the human creature.
Understanding is achieved by the intellect, which according to Thomism is the
primary faculty of the soul. In Thomism, the intellect is a higher and more
noble faculty than the will because the object of the intellect, being, includes
the object of the will, goodness. In other words, the good presupposes being. This metaphysical proof justified an Aristotelian psychology which was revolutionary; the hierarchy of intellect over will was antithetic to the Christian tradition typified by the Bonaventurean psychology of Franciscanism. Prior to Thomism, the human creature was regarded as passive and dependent in acquiring knowledge from revelation, dogma, and illumination. The impressive sciences, including philosophies, of pagan Aristotelianism which arrived in Europe in the thirteenth century proclaimed and proved the human creature to be active and independent in gaining knowledge. Thomism assimilated this view of humanity into Christian culture, and the Thomist psychology inverted the traditional hierarchy of will over intellect in the new definition of man as an intrinsically capable intellect.

Because closed expression—word-play, paradox, symbolism—engages the intellect, closed expression addresses all human creatures. Because closed expression engages the primary faculty of the soul, it is especially communicative, and efficacy becomes inevitable. Contrary to the Augustinian tradition, in symbolism there is no barrier to communication; instead, there is reciprocal suitability between the poem and the reader. On the side of the poem, the intellectual demand of symbolism aims at human nature; on the side of the reader, the drive to achieve understanding embraces such closed expression. The pleasure derived from dealing with symbolism is not relief or reward after enduring an un congenial event; the pleasure arises from the very experience of a suitable union between human nature and an object, the symbolic poem, proportioned to that nature's purpose.
The strategy of the Franciscan open lyric is to avoid evanescent concepts and deal in tangibles:

Wit was his nake d brest and red of blod his side.

(14, 1B, l.)

A Franciscan lyric presents specific imagery to provoke an emotional response in the reader, who is presumed to be primarily will. These images are not symbolic, for symbolism is a barrier requiring extraordinary effort to penetrate for meaning, which stalls emotional response. Dominican lyrics also deal in tangibles, but ambiguous ones:

Wat was hire dryng?
pe chelde water of pe welle-spring.

The Dominican lyric presumes the reader to be primarily intellect. The symbolic images of the closed lyric are congenial to intellectual human nature, for they must be interpreted. They mean more or other than what they literally denote. At this point the Bonaventurean doctrine of exemplarism deserves consideration. For Bonaventurean philosophy is essential to the Franciscan aesthetic, and exemplarism may seem to hold that natural images function in an ambiguous manner, requiring intellectual interpretation, as in symbolism. Such is not the case.

Bonaventurean exemplarism is a doctrine which holds that natural images function in a decidedly unambiguous manner. In exemplarism, every sensible creature is a likeness of the Creator.22 If this doctrine makes natural images symbolic, they are symbolic in a peculiarly singular and inevitable sense. For a natural image, or exemplar, signifies to the human mind its Creator as much as it signifies itself:

They are offered to us as a sign from heaven, as a means toward the discovery of God.23
Every creature is such a clear representation of the Creator that one must refuse to see this clear signification (be blind, deaf, dumb, and a fool) in order not to see it:

From all this it follows that since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen...being understood through the things that are made; and so those who pay no heed to this and fail to recognize, praise, and love God in all these things, are without excuse, for they refuse to be brought out of the darkness into the marvelous light of God.

Exemplarism requires a good will, not exercise of the intellect. Exemplarism is not symbolism, but synchronous perception made possible by the beholder's faith allowing it to happen.

Certain lyrics of the Franciscan aesthetic illustrates the event of synchronous perception. Natural images are dramatized as unambiguous exemplars, not as symbols. A persona in the poem acts out seeing the spiritual in the material. In Chapter IV of this study, examples of the linear structure of sensory union included lyrics in which a bird's song (13, 63) and the season of winter (14, 9), natural images, come unbidden to the narrator ("They are offered to us as a sign from heaven, as a means toward the discovery of God."). The bird's song and the winter season were shown to bring the narrator "into the marvelous light of God"; in each case the narrator, reacting rather than analyzing, moves toward Christ. As we noted, the narrator's heightened spiritual awareness in response to the natural event is accepted by the modern reader as valid emotional subjectivity. But this romantic view fails to recognize that the bird's song or the winter season (B') which come from God to the narrator (A) are exemplars. They are synchronously perceived as themselves (B') and as supernatural (B''). This perception is not due to intellect; B' and B'' are bonded by emotion.
Natural images in Dominican lyrics are never exemplars. In the
Dominican lyric natural images exhibit genuine ambiguity, thereby engaging the
reader's intellect.

Al nist by be rose, rose—
al nist bi the rose i lay;
darf ich moust be rose stele,
and set ich bar be flour away.

(SL 14, 15, 17.)

In this lyric the reader tries to assign meanings to rose and flour to resolve the
impossibility of the paradox, or at least to improve its comprehensibility. The
meanings of rose and flour cannot be as synonymous as the images suggest if
this paradox is to be resolved or lessened. But their meanings must somehow be
intimately connected or the close relationship clearly expressed by the symbols
will be lost. Rose may in some way include flour, or vice versa. Another
possibility is that rose and flour may not be of the same order of existence even
though intimately related; perhaps one is physical, one spiritual. Syntactic
restrictions must also be considered: the rose is lain by, at night, and the
speaker is afraid to take it; the speaker carries away the flour. As was the case
in "Erpe toc of erpe," this paradox arising from word-play indicating
identicalness resists satisfactory resolution—unless the reader is willing to limit
the poem by making rose and flour denotatively symbolic. For example, one
might define rose as virginity, flour as love. But the poem appeals as a superior
expression, of whatever it is expressing. For it is an inclusive statement of the
intricate unity of creation; any limited interpretation of the lyric is but an
instance of this intricate unity.

In the open lyric of the Franciscan aesthetic, images have maximal
tangibility. In the Dominican closed lyric, images have minimal tangibility.
Erbe, rose, and flour in their respective lyrics hardly strike the reader as natural images which forcefully maintain their literal meaning. They are incidentally themselves while especially making intellectual demand for other meaning (sexual, moral, metaphysical). They downplay their own physicality to function at some generic level in wordplay to establish supra-physical paradox. The reader occasionally sees them tangibly as points for reference and reorienting while attempting to supply symbolic meanings; the reader does not dwell on the concrete things they care so little to denote. In "Maid in the mor lay" the natural images completely deny their own tangibility. No coherent meaning is located in their denotative values; the maid is said to eat primeroles and violets.

In "I syng of a mayden" (15, 81) the natural images have characteristic minimal tangibility since they are ambiguous symbols. Here the ambiguous symbols are used not to establish but to explain a paradox. The impact of the explanation mimics the impact of a common-sense argument of unambiguous physical fact. Such an effect arises because the symbolic explanation, ambiguous though it may be, is far less incomprehensible than the paradox it explains. For the paradox is a religious paradox, the most ambiguous, least comprehensible, highest of truths.

The first stanza of the lyric states the paradox:

I Syng of a myden  bat is makeles,
kyng of alle kynges  to here sone che ches.

The pun makeles means matchless, unstained, and, most significantly, mateless. The mateless maiden has a son. This paradox, the virgin mother, raises other paradoxes—the incarnation, and thereby, the trinity. In addition, the virgin
mother is the greatest of paradoxes for the human mind in the sense that it joins two concrete concepts experientially known to be mutually exclusive.

How and why this paradoxical state of virgin motherhood came about is then symbolically explained in the three central stanzas. In comparison to the paradox itself, this explanation seems quite clear.

he cam also style
as dew in apryle,
he can also style
as dew in apryle,
he can also style
as dew in apryle,
þer his moder was
þat fallyt on þe gras.
þo his moderes bowr
þat fallyt on þe flour.
þer his moder lay
þat fallyt on þe spray.

In "Erpe toc of erpe" and "Al nist bi þe rose" the natural images minimize their physicality to function symbolically to produce the paradoxes. Here the natural images function symbolically to minimize the paradox. The symbols of dew, apryle, gras, flour, and spray seem to be a part of a demonstration of the paradox, although really only a representation and evasion of it. The lyric evades the paradox by not giving the two concepts of the paradox, virginity and motherhood, equal treatment. The lyric stresses virginity; in addition, motherhood is muted by remaining pre-natal. The paradox is further evaded by making virginity and pregnancy both the same spiritual state of virtue rather than contradictory and physiological facts.

The lyric's diction acknowledges the sexual aspect of the paradox in the words bowr and lay. But conception, like virginity, is minimally physiological. The stillness and the gently falling dew symbolizing (among other things) the act of sexual conception make physical impregnation an almost imperceptible event. The comparison of conception to fallen dew also talks around the actual event of impregnation; dew is something that wasn't there, that one simply
finds now is there. Finally, dew is a spread out, widely dispersed, exterior covering; such an image entirely precludes any phallic shapes, while establishing a symbolic notion of fertility, especially in the exegetical tradition.

Mary as gras, flour, and spray, with symbolic meanings in the exegetical tradition of humility, chastity, and excellence, presents Mary the conceiver of Christ as a virtuous soul more than a physical creature. This tactic distracts the reader from the physical meaning of makeles, and from the physiological paradox itself. Virginity is primarily a spiritual state of virtue. The sequence of botanical hierarchy in gras (vegetation), flour (blossom), spray (fruit) also makes Mary as spray, or pregnant with Christ the fruit of the womb, more virtuous than Mary as gras; therefore, pregnant, she is more a virgin, or virtuous, than before pregnancy.

In the last stanza the paradox, now slanted by the lyric towards virginity, which in turn means virtue, is confidently stated explicitly

moder & mayden was nuere non but che—

for the poem has reduced the paradox to just a way of saying that Mary is virtuous. So the paradox itself becomes tautological proof that she ought to be God's mother:

wel may swych a lady godes moder be.

Lyrics of the Dominican aesthetic are closed because Thomist psychology expands the applicability of closed expression to all readers by viewing the human creature as an intrinsically capable intellect. The Thomist definition of human nature has the effect of universalizing the pleasurable efficacy of symbolic expression, thereby eliminating the elitism of the Augustinian tradition. Dominican lyrics are not only closed, but are cyclic. Cyclic means a
failure to be linear, a failure to move from point A to point B. However, here the movement is that of the intellect, not of the will. The Franciscan linear lyric, best embodied as a fully developed structure in "The Debate," involves the reader in a movement of the will towards an unambiguous good. This good attracts or repels the will by its simplicity, and arouses the will by its provocativeness towards an emotionally related terminal good. The tangibility of death and punishment in "The Debate" repels the dreamer from sin by arousing the dreamer's fear, whereby he turns to the terminal good of Christ in the sacrament of penance. Because of the openness of the linear structure of "The Debate," the reader is involved in the dreamer's exemplary linear movement, and the reader's will arrives at a new locus, union with its ultimate good, Christ, or at least a desire for him which can be immediately implemented in sacramental union. In the Dominican lyric, the reader's intellect does not arrive at understanding, knowledge, or possession of truth. The Dominican lyric is a failed attempt to move to this new locus. The reader returns to the starting point, the poem itself, whose ambiguity again deceptively hints at meanings which will lead to full understanding.

The cyclic nature of the Dominican lyric has already been illustrated. It was pointed out that in "Erphe toc of erphe" any specific paraphrase of the lyric, when compared to the experience of the poem itself, seems to make sense but be an incomplete substitute for the lyric, which simultaneously states that paraphrase as well as all others. The inadequacy of a paraphrase leads back to the lyric itself, which in turn rechallenges the intellect. The same cycle occurs in "Al nist bi ḫe rose." Any specific meanings assigned to ḫe and Ḿour, although extremely satisfactory in terms of understandability, do not seem
proportional to the poetic statement of the lyric; the specific meanings seem to be mere instances of the poem's broader truth, a truth which the wordplay proves to exist.

Poetic criticism has terminology to account for, or at least describe, the superiority of a poem over its paraphrase. The doctrine of the organicism of poetry recognizes that the whole of the poem is greater than the sum of its parts; a paraphrase of a poem is like reducing a person to chemical components which will fetch $5.00 at a chemist's. Or a poem is the "supreme fiction," or "must be" rather than mean. Thomist philosophy holds a similar view, but in far different terms. Thomism accounts for the lyric's cyclic nature, or evident superiority of itself over any derived meaning, by rating poetry as the lowest of sciences.

According to Thomism, the human creature is not a true intelligence, for the human intellect does not apprehend truth. The human intellect arrives at understanding by the process of reasoning; therefore, the human creature is really a rational being. The process of reasoning to certitude is science, or demonstration, and the better the evidence and the more excellent the subject matter, the higher the science.

The highest science is theology because its subject matter is God and its evidence is God's own authoritative revelation. Since its truth is beyond human understanding, it must be expressed obliquely in symbols. Within human intellect, various sciences utilize syllogistic reasoning to demonstrate truth. Such reasoning is movement of the human intellect. Principles derived from sense experience are applied to new experience or ideas. The mind moves from truth it possesses to a new understanding. The highest science of demonstration
is philosophic theology; the lesser sciences prepare for this human knowledge of God.\textsuperscript{29} The lowest science is poetry, since it does not demonstrate truth at all. Instead of a demonstration, poetry is a representation.\textsuperscript{30} As a science, it is deficient.

The subject matter of a religious lyric is inevitably a paradox, or some event or fact which cannot be isolated from paradox. This situation can be evaded by approaching the subject matter with a non-intellectual focus and addressing the subject to the will. Mary the mother (without acknowledging her virginity) of Christ (who is only physical) is not difficult to identify with as an exemplar of grief. Christ (who is only physical) hanging on the cross (out of love like that of a brother) and bleeding (not undergoing kenosis or dispensing a reservoir of grace) is not paradoxical or too complex to provoke grief. But Mary as pre-ordained especial creature in the strategy of the incarnation ("Maiden in the mor lay") or as virgin-mother ("I syng of a myden") is beyond understanding. Even when the intellect, enlightened by faith, considers subject matter which is seemingly immediate and comprehensible, such as physical progression from birth to death ("Erpe toc of erpe"), Mary simply as mother witnessing the death of Christ her son ("Now goth sonne"), or the experience of human love ("Al nist by pe rose"), puns crop up to reveal the paradoxical unity which patterns the immediately sensible world.

Like all speech, poetry is an expression of intellect, but an intellect out of necessity not employing reason. The Dominican closed lyric uses the pleasurably effective methods of symbolism, paradox, and wordplay only partially because these traditionally approved ambiguities engage the intellect and therefore address all readers. From the Thomist philosophic view, the poet
may be a scientist who is limited to the devices of closed expression if he wishes to communicate his subject matter to his reader's intellect. For his subject matter cannot be demonstrated to his reader; his subject matter is beyond reason. The poet is in a sense using the highest possible science, poetry, that can be applied to his subject matter.

Poetry is the lowest of sciences since it only represents truth instead of moving the intellect along the path of reason to apprehension of truth. The highest human science, philosophic theology, knowledge about God, demonstrates truths about God, who as being is analogously known and is not an object of faith. But according to Aquinas poetry is the only science which has any point of contact (symbolic mode) with theology:

The science of poetry is about things which because of a deficiency of truth cannot be laid ahold of by reason therefore the reason has to be led aside by means of certain comparisons. On the other hand, theology is about matters which are beyond reason; thus the symbolic mode is common to both poetry and theology, since neither is suited to reason.\textsuperscript{31}

In theology, revelation provides truths about God which are above reason and are the objects of faith. These truths are proposed to humankind in the form of closed expression—symbolic, paradoxical—which do not demonstrate truth. For the principles of demonstration are derived from sense experience (the basis of all human knowledge\textsuperscript{32}) and cannot be applied to purely theological truth, such as the trinity, the incarnation, the virgin birth. In a Thomist philosophic sense, both poetry and theology are by necessity linear failures, or cyclic.\textsuperscript{33} In the Dominican lyric, the reader's intellect is engaged by the poem's expression, but is not moved to full understanding. The reader falls back to the lyric itself; possession of the poem, the ambiguous representation of truth, is the closest possible approximation to possessing the truth itself. In theology, the mind falls
back upon God's authority and the gift of faith, and the excellence of this proof exceeds the proof of all other sciences, thereby providing certitude if not understanding. 34

In the first stanza of "I sayh hym" (14, 36), the narrator witnesses the second coming of Christ:

I sayh hym wiþ ffless al bi-sprad
I sayh hym wiþ blod al by-ssad
I sayh þet manye he wiþ hym brouȝte
I sayh þet þe world of hym ne rouȝte

He cam vram
He cam vram
He cam vram
He cam vram

Est.
West.
souȝ.
north.

In the second stanza, Christ speaks and describes himself as a spouse, knight, merchant, and pilgrim. These symbolic images collaborate in parallel the narrator's description of Christ in the first stanza.

I come vram þe wedlok as a svete spouse,
þet habbe my wiþ wiþ me in-nome.
I come vram viȝt a staleworp þe knyȝt,
þet myne vo habbe ouercome.
I come vram þe chepyng as a Riche chapman,
þet mankynde habbe iȝbouȝt.
I Come vran an vncoûþe londe as a sely pylegrym.
þet ferr habbe i-souȝt.

The paradoxes of arrival from four different directions at once and Christ's different simultaneous guises, as well as the symbolic meanings of the terms of the paradoxes, engage the intellect. Christ as a spouse in wedlock symbolizes his incarnate state, and collaborates the narrator's description of Christ arriving covered with flesh from the east, the direction of the rising sun, a symbol of Christ's birth. Christ as a victorious knight symbolizes his triumph over his foe Satan, collaborating the description of Christ arriving covered with
the blood of his crucifixion from the west, the direction of the setting sun, or death. As a rich merchant Christ successfully bought the redemption of humankind, which is why he arrives with a crowd of people from the south, the directional symbol of the Church. Finally, as a pilgrim Christ is still searching for love in the world which rejects him, symbolized by the north.35

But despite the meanings found in the symbols, the lyric ultimately only represents the theological paradox of the incarnation and its complicated implications. The lyric does not, since in Thomist terms it cannot, explain the paradox. Rather, the paradox of the incarnation justifies further paradox: simultaneous arrival from four directions, in four different roles; Christ triumphant as also Christ the beggar for love; the past incarnation as an ever-present and future second coming. Even singular images are paradoxical; Christ "wyth fless al bisprad" is Christ's birth into flesh and at the same time his death spread out on the cross.

This lyric is Dominican and antithetic to the Franciscan lyric because it is closed and cyclic. The Dominican aesthetic, rather than ignore the intellectual complexity of theological truth and the intellectual drive of the reader, attempts the subject matter and all the paradoxes it spawns. Since this truth cannot be demonstrated, the aesthetic represents it in a lyric of symbol and paradox. Such closed expression defies understanding even though engaging the intellect. Instead of arriving at understanding, the pilgrimage to truth is a linear failure. Within the realm of certain rational knowledge, the intellect has only the poem to return to after truth has been ambiguously represented rather than demonstrated. Outside the realm of rational understanding, the soul has
scientific certainty through faith that what in time could only be poetically represented will in eternity be intellectually apprehended.
V. Notes

1 The source of each lyric quoted in this chapter will be identified in the text, using the following abbreviations for each source:
   13, for English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century, ed. Carleton Brown
      (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932);
   14, for Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century, ed.
      Carleton Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924);
   15, for Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, ed. Carleton Brown
      (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939);
   SL14,15, for Secular Lyrics of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, ed.
   Each abbreviation will be followed by the lyric number assigned by the
   source, and line number(s) if appropriate.

2 The Art of the Middle English Lyric, (Athens: University of Georgia

3 The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages, (Oxford: Clarendon
   Press, 1963), p. 34.

4 Woolf, p. 85.

5 Woolf, p. 85.

6 D. W. Robertson, Jr., "Historical Criticism," Essays in Medieval Culture

7 Reiss, pp. 99-100.

8 On Christian Doctrine (Indianapolis and New York: The Liberal Arts

9 Augustine, II, vi, 7.

10 II, vi, 7.

11 II, vi, 8.

12 II, vi, 7.

13 II, vi, 7.
14 II, x, 15.

15 II, x, 15.


17 Augustine, II, vi, 8.


19 "Si ergo intellectus et voluntas considerentur secundum se, sic intellectus eminentior inventur; et hoc apparex ex comparatione objectorum ad invicem. Objectum enim intellectus est simplicius et magis absolutum quam objectum voluntatis; nam objectum intellectus est ipsa ratio boni appetibilis: bonum autem appetibili, cujus ratio est in intellectu, est objectum voluntatis." From Opera Omnia, I, (Paris: Vives, 1872-1880), 514 (Summa Theologica, I, q. 82, a. 3). Hereafter, references to Summa Theologica will be abbreviated as ST.


21 Aquinas defines pleasure as arising from union with a suitable object in ST, I-II, q. 31, a. 5. He states the superiority of intellectual pleasure over sensible in the same place.

22 See Chapter IV, note 19, of this study.


24 See Chapter IV, note 20, of this study.

25 de Vinck, I, 27 (II, 13).

26 Cf. "wod" and "tre" in "Nou goth sonne vnder wod."

27 ST, I, 79, 8, ad Resp.

28 ST, I, q. 1, a. 5.
29 *ST*, II-II, q. 2, a.4.

30 *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 9, para. 1.

31 *Opera Omnia*, VII, 10 (Commentum in Lib. I Sententiarum, prol., q. 1, a. 5, ad. 3). Chapter I of this study cites this passage in Latin.

32 *ST*, II-II, q. 85, a. 1.

33 The failure of symbolic or paradoxical expression in divine revelation to provide full understanding (although allegorical, tropological, and analogical meanings are derived) is not a failure as in a closed poem written by a human creature. God knows what he means, and talks down to humankind; the poet does not even understand what he is representing in his own poem if his subject is an object of faith, a mystery.

34 Walter Ong in "Wit and Mystery: A Revaluation in Mediaeval Hymnody," *Speculum*, 22 (1947, 235) notes: "For Thomas, Christian theology and poetry are indeed not the same thing, but lie at opposite poles of human knowledge. However, the very fact that they are at opposite extremes gives them a common relation to that which lies between them: they both operate on the periphery of human intellection."

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