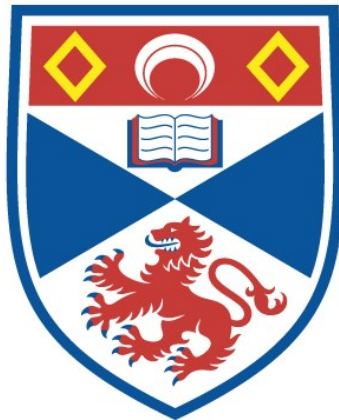


**CHARITY, ACTION AND CONTEMPLATION:
TWELFTH-CENTURY CISTERCIAN AND PREMONSTRATENSIAN
TEACHINGS**

Beatrise Bandeniece

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil
at the
University of St Andrews**



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Charity, Action and Contemplation: Twelfth-century Cistercian and Premonstratensian Teachings

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University of
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of MPhil
at the
University of St Andrews

30 May 2017

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to examine twelfth-century Cistercian and Premonstratensian texts in order to discern teachings about charity, action and contemplation. Previous scholarship has differentiated Cistercian and Premonstratensian attitudes towards teaching, action and contemplation. This thesis analyses texts to discern whether there are differences between Cistercians and Premonstratensians in terms of their attitudes towards charity, action and contemplation, and whether they connect these terms. Building on conclusions reached by previous scholarship, this thesis proceeds by providing context and detailed analyses of these works.

The first chapter examines the history of monasticism from the third until the twelfth century: the origins of monasticism, Western monastic development with particular regard to Cistercians and Premonstratensians, medieval rules, as well as medieval education and exegesis. The second chapter views Cistercian teachings within *De consideratione* by Bernard of Clairvaux and *The Mirror of Charity* by Aelred of Rievaulx. It first introduces the life and works of Bernard and Aelred, then provides the context for each text. Texts are analysed in terms of content, structure, themes, as well as claims and justifications concerning charity, action and contemplation, using the Latin text in order to discern where authors use such terms as “*caritas*”, “*contemplatio*” and others. The third chapter proceeds in the same manner, viewing Premonstratensian texts: *Epistola apologetica* and Book One of *Anticimenon* by Anselm of Havelberg; *On the Knowledge of Clerics* by Philip of Harvengt and *Sermon XII* by Adam Scot.

This thesis draws several conclusions: charity is an underlying concept in all the texts. Discussing meditation or reading may imply contemplation. Teachings

concerning action and contemplation differ regardless whether the writer was Cistercian or Premonstratensian. Philip of Harvengt is closest to combining all three terms in his teachings.

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Introduction

Medieval religious life comprised theoretical ideals and actual practice. This thesis is more closely related to the former, analysing twelfth-century Cistercian and Premonstratensian teachings concerning charity, action and contemplation. In order to place these teachings in context, the first chapter views the history of monasticism until the twelfth century, outlining the rise of two different and widespread orders, Cistercians and Premonstratensians. The second and third chapters examine texts by providing context as well as close readings. The second chapter views Cistercian treatises – *De consideratione* by Bernard of Clairvaux and *The Mirror of Charity* by Aelred of Rievaulx. The third chapter examines Premonstratensian texts: *Epistola apologetica* and Book One of *Anticimenon* by Anselm of Havelberg; *On the Knowledge of Clerics* by Philip of Harvengt and *Sermon XII* by Adam Scot. These writers address charity, action and contemplation to varying extents, demonstrating differences in their teachings. This thesis will conclude by identifying these differences as well as similarities, suggesting the significance of these concepts for the religious life.

Chapter I: Monasticism from the third to the twelfth century

Purpose and origins

Christian monasticism based on the Gospel is directed towards union with God. “Christian renunciation of the world” – asceticism, withdrawal, and renunciation of marriage and property – is the means for reaching that union. Although ascetic practices are also associated with other religions, including ancient Greco-Roman philosophical traditions of Stoicism and Neoplatonism,¹ reliance on the Gospel makes Christian monasticism unique. The cry in the wilderness according to Mark, Christ’s venture into the desert, and the teaching to sell all possessions and keep all the commandments in order to be saved are all examples from the Gospel. Christian monks therefore follow evangelical guidelines in order to reach “union with God through prayer.”² Assuming that original sin undermines reason and the senses, newness of life can still be reached:

“[It] could only be realised in this life by the continual mortification of the natural appetites and the progressive purification of the mind. In the solitude, beyond the frontiers of human society and freed from its distractions and temptation, a man might through grace achieve that detachment from created things that led him in prayer to the supreme encounter with God.”³

¹ Clifford H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of religious life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, 3rd edition (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 2001), 2

² Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 2-3.

³ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 3.

Although earliest Christian monasticism is clearly ascetic, the identity of the earliest ascetics – the unmarried and celibate who lived in voluntary poverty, devoted to prayer and good works – is uncertain.⁴ Ascetics possibly lived among the earliest Christian communities;⁵ they might have been anchorites, desert solitaries living in Egypt and Palestine at the end of the third century.⁶ In either case, third-century Christian withdrawal is reported in the Egyptian desert from the start of Decius's persecutions in 250-51. Some Christians remained withdrawn from the world after persecutions ended.⁷

Early Egyptian asceticism “reflects the dominance of the east Roman provinces in the polity of the early Church, and particularly the leading role played by the church of Alexandria in the theological world of the patristic age.”⁸ By the fourth century, laypeople also migrated from towns to hermit colonies in the Judaeian wilderness.⁹ The Egyptian ascetic movement branched into eremitic solitary life (from the Greek *eremos* or “desert”), and cenobitical monasticism (from the Greek *koionos* or “common”). Cenobitical monasticism signified ascetic life in a community or monastery. St Anthony (c. 251- c. 350) and St Pachomius (c. 292- 346) are the acknowledged founders of eremiticism and cenobiticism respectively. Both branches inspired medieval monasticism in Eastern and Western Christendom.¹⁰

Christianity became further accepted in the fourth century. The Edict of Milan ended Christian persecution in 313, and Emperor Constantine looked to the Church for

⁴ Peter King, *Western Monasticism: A History of the Monastic Movement in the Latin Church* (Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1999), 15

⁵ King, *Western Monasticism*, 15; 31.

⁶ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 4.

⁷ King, *Western Monasticism*, 16-17.

⁸ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 4.

⁹ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 1.

¹⁰ Lawrnce, *Monasticism*, 4; cf. King, *Western Monasticism*, 16.

support. Christianity became a state religion, and bishops were appointed as the emperor's advisers, holding positions in court. Monks, however, continued to avoid worldly influence, living ascetically.¹¹ Monasticism eventually spread from the desert to the West through refugee bishops, such as Athanasius, and ascetics (Cassian moved to Gaul from the East), as well as literature. The influential *Life of St Anthony* and other desert Fathers' lives were written in Latin, as well as Cassian's *Conferences* and *Institutes* which were foundational for Western spirituality.¹² Western monks also travelled to Syria and Egypt (Jerome journeyed to a Syrian hermitage in 374).¹³

After spreading to the West, monasticism in the fifth century extended northward from Marseilles and Lérins. This "fringe phenomenon" became absorbed into the ecclesiastical structure. After the Council of Chalcedon in 451 monasteries were proclaimed subject to bishops who approved new foundations; monks "[were not to] interfere in ecclesiastical business."¹⁴ By the fifth century transmission of desert asceticism from the East to the West was complete. The monastic rules appeared as the "coherent plan" for monastic communities. The earliest rules were composed by St Caesarius of Arles, the anonymous Master and St Benedict, all of whom were inspired by traditions from the East.¹⁵

¹¹ King, *Western Monasticism*, 27-28.

¹² Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 10-12.

¹³ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 12-14.

¹⁴ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 14-15; see *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: Volume I*, eds. G. Alberigo and Norman Tanner (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 89.

¹⁵ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 14-16.

Western monasticism until the twelfth century

From the early Middle Ages until the twelfth century, Western monasticism continued to expand and began to branch into various orders. Benedictine monasticism, foundational for medieval monasticism, originated in sixth-century Italy when Gothic invasions marked the end of the Western Roman Empire. Italy was politically unstable and in decline. Rule frequently changed – from Justinian’s arrival in 535 to the Lombard invasions in 568. By the end of the sixth century, circumstances for monasticism in Italy were poor. Gregory the Great, wishing for improvement, attempted to raise monastic administrative standards. He declared St Benedict and the Benedictine Rule exemplars for Latin monasticism, praising the Rule for its clarity.¹⁶ Although primitive Benedictine monasticism under St Benedict was short-lived, as the Lombards destroyed his Montecassino monastery in 577,¹⁷ the Benedictine Rule survived. It gradually became the standard monastic rule in England and France by the ninth century, and eventually all Western Europe.¹⁸

The Cistercian order originated in the eleventh century. Robert of Molesme, a former Benedictine, created a new monastic foundation at Molesme. However, he left in 1097 with followers Alberic and Stephen, preferring a more austere interpretation of the Benedictine Rule, creating another foundation at Citeaux (also called “the New Monastery”). However, he was recalled to Molesme in 1099 by Archbishop Hugh of Die. Alberic became abbot of Citeaux, which faced difficult circumstances. Eventually the Cistercian order became highly organized, led by influential leaders and

¹⁶ Cf. King, *Western Monasticism*, fn. 100, 100.

¹⁷ King, *Western Monasticism*, fn. 1, 103.

¹⁸ King, *Western Monasticism*, 103-112.

exemplifying the new monastic ideals of its age.¹⁹ Stephen Harding (d. 1134), former Benedictine oblate, succeeded Alberic as Citeaux's abbot after 1099, gaining endowments for Citeaux's survival. Its charter *Carta caritatis* was written because Stephen wished for strict application of the Benedictine Rule.²⁰

Around the same time, canons regular also emerged. Alternatively called “regular canons” or “Augustinians”, canons regular were priests who lived in common. They have been described as a “hybrid order of clerical monks, congregations of clergy living under a monastic rule.”²¹ Their origins are found within the eleventh and twelfth-century Gregorian Reform which claimed that apostles were monks, and that secular clergy as heirs to apostolic office should imitate the apostles.²² The reform aimed for extensive renewal of community and the separation of clergy from secular affairs. This was achieved in varying ways: some clergymen formed their own groups; more often a bishop ordered reform. In other instances, clergy and laity organised themselves with the aid of a bishop.²³ Legislation regarding priests was changed – while the council of Aachen in 817 had allowed priests or canons to divide revenues into prebends, legislation created by councils in Rome in 1059 and 1063 prescribed the use of the Augustinian Rule for canons regular. They were to live similarly to monks, living frugally, fasting, performing complex liturgy and showing obedience to a superior. Although canons took an oath, this was not a monastic vow. Interpretations and later versions of Augustine's Rule varied. Some called for stricter routine than others, such as Norbert of Xanten (1085-1134), an itinerant preacher who settled in

¹⁹ King, *Western Monasticism*, 168-170; see Louis Lekai, *The Cistercians: Ideals and Reality* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1977).

²⁰ King, *Western Monasticism*, 170-173; cf. fn. 50, 171.

²¹ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 160.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 161.

Prémontré.²⁴ Hence Premonstratensians or Norbertines were a type of canons regular. The life of canons regular attracted scholars and contemplatives. “Augustinian canon” could also signify cathedral or hospital clerics, town priors, chapel staff, or enclosed contemplatives such as the Premonstratensians.²⁵

Medieval rules

The Benedictine and Augustinian Rules were the main influence for subsequent medieval rules, including Cistercian and Premonstratensian documents.²⁶ Gregory the Great (c. 540) reported that St Benedict of Nursia (c. 480-550), abbot of Montecassino, composed the Benedictine Rule; Gregory’s witness dates the Rule to the sixth century.²⁷ This Rule outlines monastic spiritual doctrine and regulations, stressing moderation.²⁸ Its spiritual doctrine comprises ascetical guidelines, administrative roles, a catalogue of good works, and the virtues of obedience, silence and humility. Regulations stipulate liturgical, penitential and satisfaction codes, admission, and other practices.²⁹ The Rule also specifies the formation and profession of novices.³⁰ Prayer, reading and work were at the core of the schedule. The Divine Office was celebrated

²⁴ King, *Western Monasticism*, 191-192; fn. 169, 192.

²⁵ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 165.

²⁶ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 16; 20-21; cf. Claude Peifer, “Pre-Benedictine Monasticism in the Western Church,” in *The Rule of St. Benedict: In Latin and English with Notes*, ed. Timothy Fry (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1981), 64.

²⁷ Claude Peifer, “The Rule of St Benedict,” in *The Rule of St. Benedict*, 69-79; see *St Gregory the Great: Dialogues*, trans. O. Zimmerman (New York: FC Inc., 1959); on other monastic rules, see Peifer, “The Rule of St. Benedict,” 70-90.

²⁸ Peifer, “The Rule of St Benedict,” 91-96; see “The Rule of St Benedict” (hereafter cited as *RB*), in *The Rule of St Benedict*, trans. Timothy Horner et al., 156-197; on moderation, see *RB*, Prologue 46-47; 39-40; 64.17.

²⁹ Peifer, “The Rule of St Benedict,” 91-2.

³⁰ Claude Peifer, “Monastic Formation and Profession,” in *The Rule of St. Benedict*, 458; see *RB* 58.7; 58.16.

seven times during the day, with Vigils at night.³¹ Reading (*lectio*) was allocated approximately four hours a day, including private prayer, meditation and memorization of the Bible. Monks regularly reviewed the Word of God by reflecting on Scripture and exegesis.³² While work supported the monks, their guests and the sick, and included maintenance of the monastery, it was not practised outside the monastery in the spirit of apostolic life.³³ However, the Rule stresses: “[The] Lord waits for us daily to translate into action, as we should, his holy teachings.”³⁴

The Cistercian *Charter of Charity* was compiled by Stephen Harding circa 1117 (confirmed by Calixtus II in 1119).³⁵ The aim of their *Charter* was to ensure pure observance of the Benedictine Rule, and consistent observance of customs, ceremony and discipline by all Cistercians.³⁶ Certain chants and books were used to ensure uniform worship, so “that [Cistercians] may all dwell in one love and under one rule and with like custom.”³⁷ The *Charter of Charity* was so titled “because it casts off the burden of all exactions, pursues love alone and promotes the welfare of souls in things human and divine.”³⁸ The decree proclaims “with what love the monks of their Order, though separated in body in abbeys in different parts of the world, might be knit together inseparably in spirit.”³⁹

³¹ *RB*, 8; 16.

³² *RB*, 4.55; 4.56.

³³ Mark Sheridan et al., “Introduction,” in *The Rule of St Benedict*, 96; on care of the sick and weak, see *RB* 35-36.

³⁴ *RB*, *Prol.* 35.

³⁵ “Charter of Love,” in *English Historical Documents*, Vol. II, 2nd ed., eds. David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway (London: Eyre Methuen, 1981), 737.

³⁶ *English Historical Documents*, 737-8; cf. *Charter of Charity*, 15 (hereafter cited as *CC* with clause number), in *English Historical Documents*, 738-742; see PL 166, col. 1377-1584.

³⁷ *CC*, 4.

³⁸ *CC*, Prefatory clause

³⁹ *Ibid.*

The fourth-century Augustinian Rule was another major influence within medieval monasticism. Various scholars argue for various dates and circumstances of its composition, the earliest possible date being 391, but in Lawless's view more likely circa 397, around the time Augustine left the lay monastery at Hippo for his new episcopal residence. It was possibly composed for the Hippo monastery which had been granted to him while he was presbyter, and where he was resolved to live as a monk.⁴⁰ The Rule's history is intricate and at times vague. It is associated with an array of texts (Lawless identifies eight legislative works and a letter, including *Ordo monasterii* and *Praeceptum*) whose authorship is debated. Scholarship suggests that the original Rule was later adapted by other writers who assembled several texts.⁴¹ For instance, one version consists of the opening of the *Ordo* and the full text of the *Praeceptum*. The *Ordo* articulates the principle of mutual love in communal living: "Love God above all else, dearest brothers, then your neighbour also, because these are the precepts given us as primary principles."⁴² The *Praeceptum* gives guidance for communal living, common property and status, prayer, reading and personal conduct.⁴³ The main motivation for a shared life is harmonious living, "and to have one heart and one soul seeking God."⁴⁴ This spiritual and ascetic programme is expressed in broader terms than Benedict's Rule.

⁴⁰ George Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule* (Oxford Scholarship Online: October 2011), accessed 16 September, 2016, <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198267416.001.0001/acprof-9780198267416>, 59-60; 143-153.

⁴¹ Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo*, 65-68; 121-135; cf. T. J. van Bavel, *The Rule of Saint Augustine: Introduction and Commentary*, trans. R. Canning (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1996), 3; cf. Janet Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain: 1000-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 43-45.

⁴² *Ordo Monasterii*, 1, trans. George Lawless, in *Augustine*, 75; *ibid.*: fn. 1, 118; Matt. 22: 37-40.

⁴³ *Praeceptum*, trans. George Lawless, in *Augustine*, 81-103.

⁴⁴ *Praeceptum*, 1.2; cf. Lawless, *Augustine*, ffn. 6-7, 118; Ps. 67:7; Acts 4:32a.

From the eleventh century onwards, the Augustinian Rule was gradually adopted by canons regular, Premonstratensians and others.⁴⁵ The eleventh-century version or “received text” of the Augustinian Rule was adopted as “Regula recepta” in the early twelfth century under pope Gelasius II.⁴⁶ Canons regular followed the Rule in the twelfth century to varying degrees. Premonstratensians adopted it in 1121, following a stricter interpretation.⁴⁷ However, after Norbert founded another community of canons regular in Magdeburg, Hugh de Fosses compiled new statutes for Prémontré. While Norbert’s apostolic life had been centred around organised poverty and preaching, Hugh’s statutes were modelled on the customs of Cluny and the Cistercian *Carta caritatis*, and directed towards living in enclosure and contemplation. Eventually the Order diverged into different factions due to different interpretations of *vita apostolica*.⁴⁸

Medieval education, monastic thought, exegesis

The monastery, cathedral libraries and schools, and urban schools were all institutions of learning within the medieval period.⁴⁹ The sixth to eleventh centuries are termed the “monastic centuries of education.” Monasteries provided education for the community and child-oblates, preserved classical thought, and produced monastic

⁴⁵ Burton, *Religious Orders*, 43; Bavel, *Rule of Augustine*, 6; cf. Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 163.

⁴⁶ Lawless, *Augustine*, Appendix I: “Regula recepta: Later Versions of the Rule,” 165-6.

⁴⁷ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 163; Kevin Madigan, *Medieval Christianity: New History* (New Haven: Harvard University Press, 2015), 162; cf. Francois Petit, *Spirituality of the Premonstratensians: The Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, trans. Victor Szcurek, ed. Carol Neel (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2011), 35.

⁴⁸ Lawrence, *Monasticism* 167-8; Madigan, *Medieval Christianity*, 162.

⁴⁹ Michael Haren, *Medieval Thought: The Western Intellectual Tradition from Antiquity to the Thirteenth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1985), 85-88.

theology.⁵⁰ Since Late Antiquity education comprised the curriculum of the seven liberal arts divided into the Trivium and Quadrivium.⁵¹ The monastic school curriculum included the Trivium and Quadrivium, but rarely theology itself.⁵² Monastic and clerical writers alike used ancient classical literature, but their attitude towards pagan texts was ambiguous. Interest in the Classics certainly increased in the twelfth century when the growth of cities rose alongside the demand for skills in theology, law and medicine, as well as logic in the latter half of the century.⁵³ The use of classics ranged from free citation, sometimes without acknowledgement, to interpretation and use in the curriculum.⁵⁴ These texts were the best examples of Latin, highly appreciated for their aesthetic, intellectual and, arguably, moral value: “To put the in contact with the best models would, at one and the same time, develop their taste for the beautiful, their literary subtlety, as well as their moral sense.”⁵⁵ In the eleventh century, monastic schools faced decline, as they were situated in remote locations and were generally less concerned with scholarship, while cathedral and urban schools rose in prominence alongside growing cities. However, Benedictine authors were consistently prominent; Cistercians eventually developed an interest in academic learning as well.⁵⁶

Eleventh and twelfth-century monastic thought is characterised by humanism and exegesis. Humanism broadly refers to thought about human nature, associated with the cultivation of the personal for the good. Key notions include introspection,

⁵⁰ John W. Baldwin, *The Scholastic Culture of the Middle Ages: 1000-1300* (Lexington, Mass.: Heath, 1971), 35; cf. Madigan, *Medieval Christianity*, 257.

⁵¹ Gert Melville, *The World of Medieval Monasticism: Its History and Forms of Life*, trans. James D. Mixson (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2016), 370.

⁵² Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. Catharine Misrahi (New York: Fordham University Press, 1978), 1-3.

⁵³ Baldwin, *Scholastic Culture*, 64; cf. Leclercq, *Love of Learning*, 156-58.

⁵⁴ Leclercq, *Love of Learning*, 149.

⁵⁵ Leclercq, *Love of Learning*, 139; 149; 155.

⁵⁶ Haren, *Medieval Thought*, 87-88.

friendship, relationships among people and with God, and Christ's humanity and suffering. Southern argues that largely due to monasteries, humanism reached "one of its greatest ages within Europe: perhaps the greatest of all" within the period 1100-1320. Medieval humanism is understood as a precursor to the more widely recognised humanism of the Renaissance.⁵⁷ Exegesis was a significant expression of medieval theology. Scripture permeated medieval thought and literature: "Bible study represented the highest branch of learning."⁵⁸ In the Latin Middle Ages a "quasi-scholastic" memory aid was gradually created, a "doctrine relative to the four senses of Sacred Scripture" – the literal, allegorical, moral, and anagogical.⁵⁹ For instance, as Constable demonstrates, Mary of Bethany and Martha were interpreted as symbolising action and contemplation.⁶⁰ Bible reading or *lectio divina* was part of the monastic routine. Depending on the religious order, learning could be viewed as "serious" in the scientific sense rather than "holy". Some orders had biblical scholars of their own. Exegesis and divine reading in schools and monasteries converged to some extent. However, schools "[concentrated] themselves into universities in the course of the twelfth century. One must take into account both the spiritual moods of the cloister and the course of study prescribed by the academic syllabus."⁶¹

⁵⁷ R. W. Southern, "Medieval Humanism," in *Medieval Humanism and Other Essays*, ed. R. W. Southern (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 33-35; cf. Leclercq, *Love of Learning*, 170.

⁵⁸ Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 3rd edition (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), xxvii.

⁵⁹ Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis, Vol. I: The Four Senses of Scripture*, trans. Mark Sebanc (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 1. See Nicholas of Lyre, *Postilla on the Letter to the Galatians: "Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria, / Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia"*, in de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 1; fn. 1, 271.

⁶⁰ Giles Constable, *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought: The Interpretation of Mary and Martha, the Ideal of the Imitation of Christ, the Orders of Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)

⁶¹ Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, xxx-xxxii.

To conclude, religious life developed from obscurity into widespread and highly-organized institutions. By the twelfth century, numerous religious orders were regulated by rules that resulted from interpretations of the earlier Benedictine and Augustinian rules. Early medieval monasticism preserved and developed education, literature and theology allowing twelfth-century thought to emerge.

Chapter II: Cistercian teachings of charity, action and contemplation

Introduction

Charity is a ubiquitous theme in early Cistercian writing. Works analysed within this chapter reveal how twelfth-century Cistercian writers Bernard of Clairvaux and Aelred of Rievaulx made nuanced connections between charity, action and contemplation, contributing to theology, as well as monastic thought concerning monastic spirituality and ecclesiastical office. This chapter outlines the biographies of Bernard of Clairvaux and Aelred of Rievaulx, and introduces *De consideratione* and *The Mirror of Charity*. The analysis of each of these works will reveal the content, structure, themes and claims about charity, action and contemplation.

St Bernard of Clairvaux: life; works; context of *De consideratione*

As a major figure of medieval Western Europe, St Bernard of Clairvaux was engaged throughout his life with high matters of Church and State, and was a prolific writer. Due to the monumental contribution, not to mention the complexity of his interaction with major figures and events, his biography is only briefly outlined here.

St Bernard of Clairvaux (1090 – 1153) was born into Burgundian nobility, and schooled by canons regular at St.-Vorles near Dijon.⁶² In 1113 he entered the Citeaux

⁶² Jean Leclercq, "Introduction," in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works*, trans. and foreword by Gillian R. Evans, preface by Ewert H. Cousins (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1987), 15-26.

monastery together with thirty relatives and friends.⁶³ Sent to establish Clairvaux in Champagne in 1115, he was soon elected abbot, creating sixty-eight foundations in total.⁶⁴ Writing several works in the 1120s, such as *On Loving God*,⁶⁵ Bernard became involved in politics and the administration of Clairvaux's daughter-houses.⁶⁶ From 1135 he interpreted *Song of Songs* through a series of sermons which became an ongoing project until his death, and were left unfinished.⁶⁷ Bernard was also engaged in a theological dispute against Abelard's teachings, the first of these starting in 1140. During this decade he was engaged in promoting a Crusade by request of Eugene III, and wrote other works, including the treatise *De consideratione*. On his return to Clairvaux from a mission in Metz, he died on August 20, 1153.⁶⁸ Bernard was a dominant figure within Citeaux's second monastic generation. Widely acclaimed for his genius and originality, he is also called "the last Father of the Church".⁶⁹ Scholarship concerning Bernard's life and work has been prolific, showing continual interest in his written works, particularly his affective spirituality and theology.

Bernard's body of work includes treatises, sermons and letters. Scholarship usually focuses on certain themes such as "eschatological humanism,"⁷⁰ and the human body and soul. Sommerfeldt concludes, for instance, that Bernard teaches a strong unity between the two both before and after the Fall, the human soul being restored

⁶³ G. R. Evans, *The Mind of Bernard of Clairvaux* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), xi; cf. Leclercq, who states that he entered Citeaux in 1112, "Introduction" in *Bernard of Clairvaux*, 17.

⁶⁴ On abbacy, see Evans, *Mind*, 3; on missions to Clairvaux and elsewhere, see Leclercq, "Introduction," in *Bernard of Clairvaux*, 16.

⁶⁵ Leclercq, "Introduction," in *Bernard of Clairvaux*, 17-19.

⁶⁶ Evans, *Mind*, 3.

⁶⁷ Leclercq, "Introduction," in *Bernard of Clairvaux*, 21-22.

⁶⁸ Leclercq, "Introduction," in *Bernard of Clairvaux*, 22-26; cf. Martin Smith, "Contemplation and Action in the Pastoral Theology of St Bernard," in *The Influence of St Bernard*, ed. Benedicta Ward (Oxford: S.L.G. Press, 1976), 14-15.

⁶⁹ Louis Bouyer, *The Cistercian Heritage*, trans. Elizabeth Livingstone (Oxford: Mowbray, 1958), 1-14.

⁷⁰ Bouyer, *Cistercian Heritage*, 62-3; see Bernard, *On Loving God*, ch. 11, https://www.ccel.org/ccel/bernard/loving_god.xiii.html, accessed May 23, 2017.

through the body.⁷¹ Others note Bernard's affective mysticism bridging the divide between love of God and love of neighbour which, in Bernard's view, are united.⁷² He is best known for his work on connections between the human and the divine. That Bernard wrote considerably about human nature should not draw away attention from the fact that his work remains theological.⁷³

Bernard's writing also shows understanding of administrative affairs and leadership; in his own time he was chastised for being involved in court and councils as a monk.⁷⁴ As Evans notes, Bernard is associated with the dual aspect of monasticism and administration. Bernard was aware of these paradoxes, believing that God can balance both sides.⁷⁵ Smith goes further by claiming Bernard dismissed a divide between action and contemplation. Although Bernard's writing reveals his personal misgivings, these are resolved by him through the notion of spiritual marriage (a theme of the *Sermons on the Song of Songs*) which reconciles the vocations of prayer and service.⁷⁶

De consideratione might be considered an example illustrating this "unbearable paradox" facing Pope Eugene III.⁷⁷ Bernard realises the pope's need to pay great attention to ecclesiastical administration, yet also the need for contemplation. Bernard

⁷¹ John R. Sommerfeldt, *The Spiritual Teachings of Bernard of Clairvaux: An Intellectual History of the Early Cistercian Order* (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1991), 3-41.

⁷² Leclercq, "Introduction," in *The Influence of Saint Bernard*, viii-ix; see Andrew Louth, "Bernard and Affective Mysticism," in *The Influence of St Bernard*, 1-10.

⁷³ On the Trinity, soul and God's self-emptying, see Bernard *On the Song of Songs, Sermon 11:6-7*, trans. Kilian Walsh. *On the Song of Songs: I* (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1971); Bouyer, *Cistercian Heritage*, 49-50.

⁷⁴ Bouyer, *Cistercian Heritage*, 19; G. R. Evans, "Foreword," in *Bernard of Clairvaux*, 3. On tensions with the Curia, see Leclercq, "Introduction," in *Bernard of Clairvaux*, 25.

⁷⁵ Evans, *Mind of St Bernard*, 218-223; see Bernard, *De Gradibus Humilitatis*.

⁷⁶ Leclercq, "Introduction" in *Influence*, vii-xviii; Smith, "Contemplation and Action," 15; 20: see Bernard, *Letters* 22; 92; *Sermons* 57; 85.

⁷⁷ Elizabeth Kennan, "Introduction," in *Five Books on Consideration: Advice to a Pope*, trans. John Anderson and Elizabeth Kennan (hereafter cited 'DC' with book, chapter and paragraph numbers) (Cistercian Publications: Kalamazoo, Mich., 1976), 16.

encourages balance and advises a unity of purpose: the execution must be moderate as well as balanced, and the purpose of his life ultimately should be to realize God fully in his life and to live for Him.

Bernard wrote *De consideratione* having acted as a papal advisor for Innocent II from 1131. From this point until his death in 1153, Bernard advised subsequent popes, undertaking missions to reconcile various parties, preached the Second Crusade, and influenced ecclesiastical reform in his own right. These developments involved meeting Lothar III and interactions with other rulers and kingdoms (Germany, France, England) which in turn affected the papacy.⁷⁸ When Eugene III was elected pope (1145-1153), the Cistercian Order had been expanding throughout Europe, and was urging reform by appealing to the papacy.⁷⁹ Italy, however, resisted the papacy, Rome rebelling against temporal rule in 1143 and declaring the renewal of the republic. This rebellion outlasted Eugene's papacy. By Bernard's death in 1153, however, the papacy had centralised its power within Germany, England, France, Portugal and elsewhere.⁸⁰

Bernard recognized the value of papal leadership, which he believed was meant to draw people to the Lord. He also realized the interplay of power, saintliness and manipulation for purposes of spiritual government.⁸¹ A concrete consideration within *De consideratione* is Rome itself, which had rebelled against papal power in the 1140s, the uprising continuing in the following decade. Hence Bernard's consideration of the City and Curia, especially the rebellion of the City which Eugene is invited to meet with preaching or excommunication instead of military intervention.⁸²

⁷⁸ Kennan, "Introduction," 6-8.

⁷⁹ Kennan, "Introduction," 10; Bernard Jacqueline, "Appendices," in *DC*, 183.

⁸⁰ Kennan, "Introduction," 10-11.

⁸¹ Kennan, "Introduction," 12.

⁸² Kennan, "Introduction," 14; see *DC IV*: 1:1-3:7.

Eugene's own career began upon entering the Clairvaux monastery in 1138. His career in the Church swiftly progressed, and he succeeded Lucius II as pope in 1145. Bernard initially wrote Eugene a letter offering advice. According to Smith, Bernard's letter to the Curia demonstrates indignation at the result: "God have mercy on you; what have you done?" He considered Eugene a man "crucified to the world [...] a beggar, a penitent, a rustic," and emphasised that Eugene at this stage was taken "from the secrets of contemplation and the sweet solitude of his heart [...] plunged into a vortex of great affairs like a child snatched from its mother's arms."⁸³

De consideratione was composed over a decade at different stages from 1148 until 1153. Scholarship notes Bernard's sources: Scripture, the Church Fathers and classical sources, and the influence it has had in its own right from the twelfth to the twentieth century, being cited in works by Innocent III, William of Ockham, Petrarch, St Ignatius Loyola and Paul VI.⁸⁴ Others compare it to Bernard's other works examining action and contemplation.⁸⁵

St Aelred of Rievaulx: life, works and context of *The Mirror of Charity*

St Aelred of Rievaulx (c. 1110-1167) was born at Hexham, Northumberland. His father Eilaf was a married priest whose ancestors had been servants of the church for several generations: Eilaf's father was a prebend at St Cuthbert's shrine in Durham. Due to several ecclesiastical reforms instituted by Gregory VII and William the

⁸³ Bernard, *Letter* 315, trans. Bruno Scott James in Smith, "Contemplation and Action," 12-13.

⁸⁴ Jacqueline, "Appendices," 184-9.

⁸⁵ Smith, "Contemplation and Action," 12-14; cf. Evans, *Mind of Bernard*, 197-217.

Conqueror, Aelred's father moved several times between Durham and Hexham.⁸⁶

Aelred's early education probably included learning Latin.⁸⁷ During his youth Aelred became associated with royal circles, sent to the court of King David I (1124-1153) at Roxborough. This followed a feudal tradition of training sons in manners and forming their connections among the upper class. Aelred was raised with prince Henry, heir to the throne, and David's step-sons Simon and Waldef. Life at Roxborough was part of the broader Anglo-Norman culture. Aelred possibly acted as steward here, perhaps pursuing a classical education by reading Cicero's *De amicitia*.⁸⁸

While on a mission to York circa 1134, Aelred discovered his vocation when he visited Rievaulx and later entered it as a novice.⁸⁹ He soon became representative of the abbot at Rome circa 1142 for a legal controversy. Around this time he met St Bernard at Clairvaux, and started writing *The Mirror of Charity*. Aelred became a novice master, writing short conferences which he later used for writing *Mirror*.⁹⁰ Called to lead the foundation of Revesby Abbey, Lincolnshire in 1143, he probably undertook writing sermons and notes. There is no information regarding Aelred's leadership of Revesby itself, but he acted as its abbot between 1143-47. At this time he also headed a mission group for Hoyland Abbey which converted into a Cistercian abbey, and assisted Gilbert of Sempringham in the administration of the newly founded Gilbertine Order's double-monasteries.⁹¹

⁸⁶ Douglas Roby, "Introduction," in *Spiritual Friendship*, trans. Mary Eugenia Laker (Cistercian Publications, Washington D.C., 1974), 3-14; 3-5; Charles Dumont, "Introduction," in *The Mirror of Charity*, trans. Elizabeth Connor (Washington D.C.: Cistercian Publications, 1990), 20.

⁸⁷ Roby, "Introduction," 4-5; Dumont, "Introduction," 11-67; 20-21.

⁸⁸ Roby, "Introduction," 5-6; Dumont, "Introduction," 21.

⁸⁹ See Walter Daniel's *vita* of Aelred: Dumont, "Introduction," 25-6; Roby, "Introduction," 8-9.

⁹⁰ Roby, "Introduction," 8-9; Dumont, "Introduction," 27-9; 55.

⁹¹ Dumont, "Introduction," 29-41; Roby, "Introduction," 9-10.

In 1147, Aelred was called to act as Rievaulx's abbot after Abbot Maurice resigned. Aelred's activity was concerned with the administration of approximately six hundred monks, visiting daughter houses (Wardon, Melrose and Dundrennan) and the General Chapter. Around this time he also began writing *Spiritual Friendship*, but stopped composing it for twenty years. In the last decade of his life, Aelred suffered from poor health, and died January 12, 1167. Although his sanctification was not officially ratified, as canonization at that time was not yet a centralised process, he was named a saint by his fellow Cistercians, and styled "Bernard of the North."⁹²

Aelred's legacy was the circulation and articulation of Cistercian ideas, the Cistercian order itself having been established around the same time as Aelred was born. Stephen Harding was head of Citeaux in 1109, and Bernard of Clairvaux entered that monastery in 1113. Rievaulx was founded in 1132 following orders by King Henry and Clairvaux Abbey, as well as the support of Archbishop Thurstan and the grant of land by Walter Espec. Aelred entered it soon after, his own conversion happening during the expansion of the Cistercian Order and its spiritual doctrines. However, Cistercians co-existed with other religious orders in England, some of whom objected to strict Cistercian practices.⁹³

Aelred's works include sermons, historical works, spiritual treatises and hymns: *Genealogy of the Kings of England*, a homily and *vita* about St Edward the Confessor, various hymns and *De anima*, a philosophical treatise and last work.⁹⁴ He also wrote a *vita* of St Ninian; *Spiritual Friendship* is his other best-known work.⁹⁵ Scholarship

⁹² Roby, "Introduction," 10-14; cf. *ibid.*, fn 35, 14; David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1963), 240; Dumont, "Introduction," 44-45.

⁹³ Dumont, "Introduction," 12-13; Roby, "Introduction," 7-8.

⁹⁴ Dumont, "Introduction," 41-3; 66 Roby, "Introduction," 11-12.

⁹⁵ *Spiritual Friendship*, tr. Mary Eugenia Laker. Washington, D.C.: Cistercian Publications, 1974.

about Aelred generally falls into categories of textual analysis and biographical studies,⁹⁶ historical studies of Rievaulx,⁹⁷ lists of Aelred's works,⁹⁸ translations,⁹⁹ and studies of his humanistic literary style.¹⁰⁰

The Mirror of Charity, Aelred's first work, was compiled from his notes and letters, including new insertions.¹⁰¹ There is no firm date for its composition: according to Walter Daniel and judging from *Mirror* itself, Aelred composed it within a year (1142-1143), assuming that Bernard suggested he write when Aelred visited Clairvaux in 1142. Alternatively, Aelred wrote the first draft during 1142-43 and completed the final version later judging by the length of the work.¹⁰²

An aspect of its historical context is the existence of other religious orders, such as the black monks and regular canons, some of whom believed Cistercian monasticism was too strict for leading a life of charity and contemplation. Bernard asked that these objections be answered by Aelred in *Mirror*.¹⁰³ From a literary viewpoint, works titled "Mirror" were common in the Middle Ages, and usually concerned knowledge or morality. St Augustine composed the first of such works, *De Scriptura sacra speculum*. Imagery of mirrors and reflection appears in citations by other authors.¹⁰⁴ Scholarship

⁹⁶ See Aelred Squire, *Aelred of Rievaulx: A Study* (London: SPCK, 1969); Marsha L. Dutton, "A Mirror for Christian England," in *Aelred of Rievaulx: The Lives of the Northern Saints*, ed. Marsha L. Dutton (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 2006), 1-32.

⁹⁷ Emilia Jamroziak, *Rievaulx Abbey and Its Social Context, 1132-1200: Memory, Locality, and Networks* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2005).

⁹⁸ *Aelredi Rievallensis: Opera Omnia: I Opera Ascetica*, eds. A. Hoste and C. H. Talbot (Turnholt: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontici, 1971).

⁹⁹ I.e., Dutton, *Lives of the Northern Saints* (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 2006).

¹⁰⁰ Bouyer, *Cistercian Heritage*, 125-160.

¹⁰¹ Dumont, "Introduction," 59-63; 67.

¹⁰² Dumont, "Introduction," 55-5 8, esp. fn. 128, 58; cf. Aelred Squire, *Aelred*, 25-6, fn. 128, 58.

¹⁰³ Dumont, "Introduction," 28.

¹⁰⁴ Dumont, "Introduction," 48-9.

about *Mirror* includes analysis of composition,¹⁰⁵ analysis of genre¹⁰⁶ and explications of the text.¹⁰⁷

Analysis: *De consideratione* by Bernard of Clairvaux

Content and general structure

De consideratione is a treatise by Bernard advising Pope Eugene III in papal office. Bernard outlines Eugene's duties, paying close attention to Eugene as an individual acting within the ecclesiastical administration. He emphasises that the pope may act best if he takes time to consider himself and others whilst recognizing that all, including those in highest office, are subjected by the overarching rule of God, and are affected by His actions and attributes as Creator, Savior and Judge.

The treatise comprises five books. The preface describes Eugene's request for the work and Bernard's response as "maternal obligation."¹⁰⁸ Book One describes Eugene's office, combining an illustration of Eugene's nature, his evil surroundings, and the virtues. Bernard remarks on Eugene's transition from solitude to ecclesiastical office, which is the cause and occasion for giving advice. Bernard here merely mentions consideration as a necessity, describing its effects and difficulties of application in Eugene's situation.¹⁰⁹ Book Two describes the historical period, and

¹⁰⁵ Dumont, "Introduction," fn. 128, 58: see Squire, *Aelred*, 25-6; Squire, "The composition of the *Speculum caritatis*," *Cîteaux* 14 (1963) 135-146, 219-233.

¹⁰⁶ Dumont, "Introduction," fn. 149, 64: Jean Leclercq, *Nouveau visage de Bernard de Clairvaux*, trans. Marie-Bernard Said, (Kalamazoo, Mich: Cistercian Publications, 1990), 28.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Dumont, "Introduction," *Mirror*, 13-20.

¹⁰⁸ *DC*, Preface.

¹⁰⁹ *DC*, I:1-9:12.

investigates consideration more closely, differentiating consideration from contemplation. Bernard distinguishes four objects or areas of consideration: the self, which he discusses in greater depth, and below, around and above oneself.¹¹⁰ Book Three views consideration of that which is below the pope – within and outside the Church. He demonstrates the arrangement of offices under the pontiff and the bonds of obedience between offices, the need for order in monasteries, and censure of false doctrines. Bernard invites Eugene to act as debtor to Jew, Greek and Gentile, as well as the oppressed and ambitious. This shows Eugene to be a universal figure to all people, particularly in all areas of the Church.¹¹¹ Book Four describes that which is situated around Pope Eugene – that which is really below him, but is troublesome (City, Curia and household). Unlike the previous book, which provides a broader description of the pope’s place within the world and ecclesiastical structures, Book Four discusses entities and individuals the pope would contend with daily.¹¹² Book Five reflects on consideration of God and heavenly beings, reviewing the definition of consideration and its relation to contemplation.¹¹³

Stylistically, Kennan notes and contrasts the prosaic beginning of Book One with the “celestial finale” of Book Five.¹¹⁴ In terms of subject, Bernard claims that Books 1-4 concern action.¹¹⁵ Discussing Eugene’s consideration of self, that below and around him within these books, Bernard connects actions in office to consideration itself. Book Five raises the outlook to non-earthly entities, and returns to the discussion of consideration and contemplation started in Book Two.

¹¹⁰ *DC*, II.

¹¹¹ *DC*, III.

¹¹² *DC*, IV.

¹¹³ *DC*, V.

¹¹⁴ Kennan, “Introduction,” 12.

¹¹⁵ *DC*, I:1.1.

The main line of argument is difficult to discern because its genre lies between a spiritual and theocratical treatise. As Kennan observes:

“Despite the clear principles on which *De consideratione* is organized, it is a very difficult work. Written for two distinct ends, it is both a treatise on the politics of theocracy and a paternal admonition to a spiritual son whose very soul is imperiled by his office. Bernard wrote as an abbot [;] he also wrote as a political strategist, and in this treatise he inextricably mixed the two modes of thought.”¹¹⁶

This allows us to see that Bernard articulates a third main line throughout the text, namely paradox: there are tensions awaiting for Eugene between spirituality and responsibility, as a Cistercian and pope. Kennan finds this tension usual: “[The] paradox exists for every pope. [...] Paradox is at the very heart of spiritual government.”¹¹⁷ Bernard reveals this tension, yet offers a middle course of moderation, the “classical rule of virtue: moderation in all things.”¹¹⁸ As Smith notes, *De consideratione* is coherent in its pastoral instructions “towards a new spiritual orientation,” even though Bernard personally found himself in the “ambiguous existence” of monastic seclusion and public action.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Kennan, “Introduction,” 15-16.

¹¹⁷ Kennan, “Introduction,” 16.

¹¹⁸ Kennan, “Introduction,” 16-17.

¹¹⁹ Smith, “Contemplation and Action,” 14.

Structure

Book One

Book One discusses the demands of Eugene's office, expressing the hope that he will neither harden his heart, nor be a slave. Bernard introduces the theme of consideration by observing: "[Action] suffers if not preceded by consideration."¹²⁰ Planning one's actions demonstrates the harmony of virtues – prudence, fortitude and temperance. Consideration brings man to the mean between excess and necessity.¹²¹ Excess is foreshadowed by the discussion of civil and ecclesiastical courts. Bernard warns about those ambitious for office. Eugene is to distance himself from business matters, yet at the same time pass judgement on those doing evil.¹²²

Book Two

Having outlined the obvious areas of consideration in office, Bernard turns to the definition and objects of consideration. Consideration is defined as an investigation or the search for truth by the mind (elsewhere merely a search), whereas contemplation signifies knowing. The four objects of consideration are the self, and that which is below, around and above the self. Starting with Book Two, Bernard discusses the consideration of each object, providing practical advice in management of those spheres.¹²³ The tension between spirit and responsibility is revealed.

This book explores consideration of the self by posing questions about what, who and what sort of person Eugene is – that is, man and Pope, characterised by

¹²⁰ *DC*, I:5.6; I:1-4.

¹²¹ *DC*, I: 8.9.

¹²² *DC*, I:9.12-11:14.

¹²³ *DC*, II-V.

various attributes. Bernard first describes who Eugene is as Pope, and who he was in his former profession as a Cistercian monk. From this he turns to examining the reason for election to the pontificate – service rather than rule. Inheriting his office from the Apostles and Prophets, the Pope’s office comprises going out to the world, and acting by serving.¹²⁴ When discussing the sort of person Eugene is, seeing his attributes not ill-suited for office, Bernard advises him to acknowledge his own deficiencies.¹²⁵

Returning to who Eugene is, Bernard lists many titles, comparing him to Old Testament figures and Christ. By interpreting passages about the Resurrection and St Peter, Bernard demonstrates that Eugene has power over others, emphasising his role as universal Shepherd.¹²⁶ Bernard stresses that Eugene remains a man despite his office, explicitly distinguishing Eugene’s papal title from his humanity. The question “what he is” may also be considered alongside “what he was” – this never changes.¹²⁷

Bernard advises moderation and cautious self-consideration, taking into account what may be attributed to God, and what to oneself.¹²⁸ Finally, Bernard offers practical advice on considering personal traits, forgiveness, action within tribulations, fleeing idleness, avoiding partiality towards sinners, and freedom from credulity.¹²⁹

Book Three

Having considered that Eugene presides but does not rule, Bernard considers that which is below the pontificate.¹³⁰ Re-emphasising Eugene’s role as a debtor and

¹²⁴ *DC*, II: 2.5- 6.12.

¹²⁵ *DC*, II: 7.14.

¹²⁶ *DC*, II: 8.15-16.

¹²⁷ *DC*, II: 9.17- 10.18.

¹²⁸ *DC*, II: 10.19.

¹²⁹ *DC*, II: 9.20- 14.23.

¹³⁰ *DC*, III: 1.1- 5.19.

servant, his service includes action outside and within the Church. On one hand, Eugene is to convert unbelievers, restrain or correct heretics, and engage with Jews and Gentiles.¹³¹ On the other, he must act within the Church, discerning how to act within court cases (advised merely to tolerate them).¹³² He also must act upon Church complaints, and apply threefold consideration of lawfulness, suitability and advantageousness in all undertakings.¹³³ Finally, he must be vigilant over the entire universal Church – ensuring people obey clerics, and clerics their superiors. Monasteries and religious houses must maintain order, while false doctrines are to be censured.¹³⁴

Book Four

Bernard reviews the previous content of Books 1-3, in this book considering those around the pope – the City, Curia and papal household.¹³⁵ When describing the clergy and Roman people, Bernard advises that they should be well ordered, yet admits the tumultuous nature of the Romans. He advises Eugene to preach to them, and attack them by word.¹³⁶ Regarding the Curia, he advises how to choose colleagues and assistants, providing such figures as Martin and Geoffrey of Chartres as examples of excellence.¹³⁷ Concerning his household, his staff should be delegated certain duties. Bernard advises how to choose assistants, suggesting Eugene be familiar with their character and how he should relate to them.¹³⁸ Bernard delivers a statement on the Holy

¹³¹ *DC*, III: 1.1-3.

¹³² *DC*, III: 2.6- 9.

¹³³ *DC*, III: 4.14-15.

¹³⁴ *DC*, III: 5.19.

¹³⁵ *DC*, IV: 1.1 -7.23.

¹³⁶ *DC*, IV: 1.1- 3.7.

¹³⁷ *DC*, IV: 4.9 - 5.16.

¹³⁸ *DC*, IV: 6.17- 22; on testing friends, see Aelred, *Spiritual Friendship*, III.108

Roman Church as mother rather than mistress of churches, reminding Eugene is its head, and inviting him to consider himself a mirror of Justice and friend of the Bridegroom. Bernard assures him that the Lord will provide him understanding.¹³⁹

Book Five

Closing Bernard's outline of consideration, Book Five views those things which are above – God and heavenly beings.¹⁴⁰ Book Five differs from previous books: by Bernard's own admission, Books 1- 4 discuss action, whereas Book Five explores consideration alone.¹⁴¹ Secondly, its style is intensely meditative and theological as it reflects upon the divine character of God, devoting several sections on this topic. Thirdly, while Book Two defines consideration, distinguishing it from contemplation, Book Five reassesses this, describing consideration, contemplation and meditation in close succession when discussing the attributes of God. That is not to say these terms are understood identically by Bernard; however, they appear similar and are not distinguished within the latter section.

Considering non-earthly beings is, metaphorically speaking, a return home.¹⁴² Bernard views consideration in groups of three, such as practical, scientific and speculative consideration.¹⁴³ Similarly, God and angels may be considered through opinion, faith and understanding, which accordingly rely on the appearance of truth, on authority, and reason.¹⁴⁴ Bernard turns to considering various heavenly beings according to their rank – seraphim, cherubim, Dominions, Principalities, Powers,

¹³⁹ *DC*, IV: 7.23.

¹⁴⁰ *DC*, V: 1.1- 14.32.

¹⁴¹ *DC*, V: 1.1.

¹⁴² *DC*, V: 1.1- 2.

¹⁴³ *DC*, V: 2.3- 4.

¹⁴⁴ *DC*, V: 3.5- 6.

virtues and angels, justifying these categories according to the Old and New Testaments.¹⁴⁵

Bernard begins investigating God in terms of who, where and what God is.¹⁴⁶ His Trinitarian theology emphasises the unity of Trinity as explained through faith, illustrating various types of unity, culminating with the example of the Supreme Unity of the Trinity.¹⁴⁷ He also views the unity of Christ's soul and body as an example of a person's unity, and discusses matters of Marian theology.¹⁴⁸ Recapitulating, Bernard attempts to describe God through salvation, light, and punishment of the perverse.¹⁴⁹

The final section views God through the quartet of length, width, height and depth as described by Paul.¹⁵⁰ This section not only describes God, but also man's contemplation of God's attributes. The four attributes – length, width, height and depth – correspond to God's eternity, charity, power above all things and wisdom underlying all things. Bernard pairs eternity with charity, and height with depth. Distinguishing knowledge from comprehension, Bernard believes that saints comprehended the four attributes in pairs – the saints' holy affection comprises holy fear of wisdom and power, while their holy love is for love itself in its eternity.¹⁵¹

Bernard also matches human aspects to divine attributes. For instance, loving with perseverance creates length (eternity), widening love to include enemies brings width; fear of God and observance create height and depth.¹⁵² As an alternative he suggests three further levels in which human aspects correspond to the four divine

¹⁴⁵ *DC*, V: 4-5.

¹⁴⁶ *DC*, V: 6-7.

¹⁴⁷ *DC*, V: 8.

¹⁴⁸ *DC*, V: 9-10.

¹⁴⁹ *DC*, V: 11-12.

¹⁵⁰ *DC*, V: 13-14. Cf. Eph. 3:18-19.

¹⁵¹ *DC*, V: 13.28- 14.30.

¹⁵² *DC*, V: 14.30.

attributes. The order of terms associated with length, width, height and depth are here discussed in a different order, so that the term associated with height appears first, then depth, width and length. In other words, the pair of height and depth appear in the first two places of the order, and length and width are inverted. Possibly done for rhetorical effect, this arranges God's attributes into an alternative and more mysterious order, allowing us to sense His incomprehensibility.

The correspondence between human and divine is apparent in three levels. Firstly, man marvels at lofty majesty, fears the abyss of judgement, is fervent as demanded by charity, and perseveres and endures according to eternity.¹⁵³ On a second level, reflection upon each attribute of God happens by a different practice: marvelling is equated with contemplating the glory of God, fearing with examining His wisdom, being fervent with meditating on God's charity, and persevering in love with emulating the eternity of charity.¹⁵⁴ Thirdly, types of contemplation correspond to each attribute, and each type of contemplation has its fruits. The greatest kind of contemplation is admiration of majesty; the rest are observing God's judgements, remembering blessings, and meditating on eternity.¹⁵⁵ Bernard compares these to the Apostle's terms, returning to the original order of length, width, height and depth: meditation on promises encompasses length; remembering blessings – width; contemplating majesty – height, and examining judgments – depth.¹⁵⁶ He closes with a plea for prayer and continued exploration:

¹⁵³ *DC*, V: 14.31.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *DC*, V: 14.32.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

“He must still be sought who has not yet sufficiently been found and who cannot be sought too much; but he is perhaps more worthily sought and more easily found by prayer than by discussion. Therefore, let this be the end of this book but not the end of the search.”¹⁵⁷

To summarise, Bernard’s work on consideration ends with an invitation for further consideration and contemplation of the divine, placing Eugene’s office in lesser focus than was shown in the previous four books. In these Bernard showed awareness of the tensions of spirituality and holding office. By closing with a complicated discussion concerning meditation upon God seems to indicate that this, instead, is the most important aspect of Eugene’s office, since God is all-encompassing and transcendent, yet permeates all earthly matters. Compared to Him, Eugene’s office and worries about duties and mundane annoyances, although not unimportant, may seem less formidable, which may offer some comfort. Bernard teaches that Pope Eugene should not lose sight of God, as it were, but pray and meditate upon Him. His skill in office may well increase, since wisdom will be given. Man’s nature, duties, actions, the Church and the world are all subordinate matters for consideration, while consideration of God – in Unity and Trinity – remains the foundation of Eugene’s office.

Themes

Although the initial purpose of the work may seem to be offering advice solely about papal duties, the final consideration offers a perspective on contemplating God,

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

demonstrating Bernard's understanding that God and man stand in relation, in this case, specifically through man's contemplation of God. There are various ways of categorizing the themes of this work. This section discerns the most significant themes, which are inextricably intertwined: papal office, virtue, consideration, theological questions (Trinity, etc.) and contemplation.

When describing papal office, Bernard discusses its nature and history (examples of Paul, Apostles, Prophets etc.), Eugene's current situation, and human nature, both its good and evil aspects. These are all matters which must be acted upon, set in motion by consideration. Consideration here signifies planning, judging character and specific events, testing and choosing people with whom to work. Another theme is virtue (Bernard lists various virtues) and their excellence in moderation. The virtues appear in harmony when consideration presides.

Consideration can, when applied to office, signify planning, judging and testing. Bernard also discusses consideration in itself and its relation to God: the definition, significance and branches of consideration.¹⁵⁸ The first branch comprises what to consider (self, below, around, above), each with subcategories.¹⁵⁹ The final category, God and heavenly beings, relates and transitions to the second branch – types of consideration (practical, scientific and speculative).¹⁶⁰ The third branch concerns examining God and angels (by opinion, faith and understanding).¹⁶¹

Bernard also contemplates theological questions related to Trinity, Unity, and Marian theology.¹⁶² He includes charity and the Apostle's distinctions of length, width,

¹⁵⁸ *DC*, II.2.

¹⁵⁹ *DC*, II:2-9; III; IV:4.

¹⁶⁰ *DC*, V:4-14.

¹⁶¹ *DC*, V:3.

¹⁶² *DC*, V:3.

height and depth.¹⁶³ A complex passage on the contemplation of God's attributes demonstrates that each divine attribute affects contemplation or meditation differently, and corresponds to various types of contemplation – contemplation itself, meditation and examination. Hence the act of consideration is affected by God, who, unlike other matters of contemplation, changes the nature of contemplation itself depending on which aspect of God is contemplated.

Although no less important for the purposes of this chapter, charity is addressed to a lesser extent and precision than consideration, although it is a significant topic alongside it, appearing in sections where Bernard explains the reason for writing to Eugene, as well as the theological passages describing God. The topic of action appears in discussions within Books 1 – 4, the purpose of the text being to recommend consideration before taking action, and also in his discussion of God's attributes, where Bernard mentions emulation.

Claims and justification

Charity: Bernard's "Preface"; theology

Bernard mentions charity in describing his relationship with Eugene. While this relationship itself cannot be exactly identified as charity, but more precisely as affection and love, charity is the reason for addressing his reader. At the beginning of the work, Bernard states that he wishes to write something to "edify, delight or console" Eugene.

¹⁶³ DC, V:13.28; 14:31.

His methodology depends on the genre being a “formal yet intimate treatise”.¹⁶⁴ A paradox meets Bernard from the start: Eugene’s majesty restrains Bernard’s style of writing, while love “draws [him] on.”¹⁶⁵ Love (*amor*) remains Bernard’s ultimate motive, since “[love] knows no master”.¹⁶⁶ When Bernard describes Eugene’s condescending majesty and ascendancy to the throne, he foreshadows the four divine attributes (length, depth, height, depth) described in Book Five. Bernard’s love for Eugene disregards these, comparing himself to a humble lover rather than teacher.¹⁶⁷

Unlike for the fearful or avaricious, for Bernard “charity never fails (1 Cor. 13:18).” He addresses his “maternal obligation” in describing his affection for Eugene – although Eugene has left Bernard’s womb, so to speak, he has not left his heart.¹⁶⁸ Divine attributes re-appear: Eugene will not escape Bernard should he ascend to heaven or descend to the depths.¹⁶⁹ Bernard uses forms of “*amo*” to describe his former and future love of Eugene. The text displays stylistic devices such as wordplay on words denoting “fool” and “loving” and layering words from the same root (*amans*, *amat*, *amoris*).¹⁷⁰ Hence charity is instrumental for identifying the stance of speaking directly and fearlessly to Eugene. It demonstrates Bernard’s trust in Eugene to accept his advice in the spirit Bernard offers it, even when he may seem wary of Eugene’s abilities or offers advice that may seem obvious (e.g., avoiding easy credulity).

Charity is central to Bernard’s theological discussion in Book Five. Firstly, Bernard describes God as length, width, height and depth.¹⁷¹ While length corresponds

¹⁶⁴ *DC*, Preface.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ “I will instruct you not as a teacher [...]” *DC*, Preface.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*; see Ps. 106:26.

¹⁷⁰ *DC*, fn. 2, 193: “[...] *plane ut amans. Amens magis videar.*”; fn. 3, 193.

¹⁷¹ *DC*, V:13.28-9: “*Quid igitur est Deus? Longitudo, inquam. Quid ipsa? Aeternitas. Haec tam longa, ut non habeat terminum, non magis loci, quam temporis. Est et latitudo. Et ipsa quid? Charitas.*” PL

to eternity (spatial and temporal), charity corresponds to width, since God's charity encompasses all creatures, none of whom He hates. This does not deny the existence of the unjust, as His "bosom encloses even His enemies."¹⁷² Secondly, his description becomes two-dimensional, focusing on the equal width and length:

"And not even content with [all-encompassing charity], he stretches to infinity, exceeding not only every affection, but every thought, as the Apostle goes on to say, 'and to know the charity of Christ which surpasses all understanding.' [...] Do you see that the width is as great as the length?"¹⁷³

Hence God's charity becomes as infinite as His eternity, surpassing understanding. Christ's charity is thus also beyond understanding. One must be careful to avoid misunderstanding that Bernard means to describe humans as equal to God because both share similar attributes. Within his previous explanation of Trinitarian theology, God is unchanging, having "nothing in himself but himself." Quoting Boethius, God "has nothing beyond that which it is. Neither can it be made subject to forms, for it is form."¹⁷⁴ This implies how radically different God is, since He "has nothing beyond that which it is" – the attributes of God which appear as dimensions of measurement (height, length, etc.) are a shorthand to express that God bursts the confines of human language and understanding. However, the shorthand is used to

182, col. 895, A-D; cf. "*Quid item Deus? Sublimitas et profundum. [...] Et illa una res est longitudo propter aeternitatem, latitudo propter charitatem, sublimitas propter majestatem, profunditas propter sapientem.*" PL 182, col. 895, C-D.

¹⁷² DC, V:13.28.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ DC, V:7.17; *ibid.*, p. 161: see Boethius, *De trinitate* 2, PL 64: 1250 C.

conclude that connections exist between humans and God through their contemplation of Him, and that the analogies, while mirroring God, reflect Him imperfectly.

Thirdly, meditation on God's charity leads to fervour, as if becoming animated and acquiring divine attributes:

“Who is fervent if not he who meditates on the charity of God? Who endures and perseveres in love if not he who emulates the eternity of charity? Indeed, perseverance offers a certain image of eternity, for it is to perseverance alone that eternity is given [...]”¹⁷⁵

The complicated pattern of connections here is based on, to begin with, the four characteristics of God. Bernard assumes width corresponds to charity. Following from that, humans are characterised by their stance towards God's attributes – hence those who are fervent focus on the charity of God. Lastly, that fervour is brought about by reflecting on God's charity – in this case, through meditation.

Moreover, as Bernard has established the eternity of charity earlier, humans will also require perseverance in their emulation of charity. Charity in this scheme seems to be not just a virtue, but similar to an entity with its own attributes (eternity). Just as charity is eternal, so humans must persevere in their emulation of charity, so to speak, eternally. The analogy is imperfect, since eternal emulation is impossible within the limitations of human physicality; perhaps Bernard intends to speak of the human beyond limitations in a perfected state. Alternatively, he may intend to show the

¹⁷⁵ DC, V:14.31: “*Fervorem exigit charitas, aeternitas perseverantiam sustinendi. [...] Quis fervet, nisi qui meditatur charitatem Dei? Quis sustinet et perseverat in amore, nisi qui aemulatur aeternitatem charitatis?*” PL 182, col. 896 C.

impossibility of eternal emulation in the present state to highlight the vast difference between humanity and the divine.¹⁷⁶

Action and contemplation: action and consideration

Bernard contrasts the contents of books 1- 4 to Book Five.¹⁷⁷ Action is associated with Eugene's office and duties: these have been summarised earlier. This section will attempt to discern the attitude towards action and consideration generally by outlining the main principles of Bernard's advice.

Firstly, Bernard distinguishes an order of visible things that can be acted upon, ranked relatively lower to that which cannot be acted upon – the eternal. That which is visible must be considered and acted upon, and is explained in Books 1- 4, while eternal matters require only examination, not action as explained in Book Five. Lesser, visible things can be acted upon through practical application, or used as a source of knowledge, as well as official employment. Furthermore, such lesser things may be considered.¹⁷⁸

Secondly, the nature of actions that Bernard discusses pertains strictly to office – listening to legal cases, converting, correcting or restraining heresy. Work in office bears paradoxes – duties are worthy of attention yet also unworthy; possible to accomplish yet limitless. When attending to court cases, for instance, this paradox may

¹⁷⁶ On likeness to God, see Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Ia, 93, ad 4, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Benziger Bros., 1947) <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/summa/FP/FP093.html#FPQ93A4THEP1>, viewed May 24, 2017; on divinization, see Gilles Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Francesca Aran Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 401.

¹⁷⁷ *DC*, V:1.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

be solved by taking a moderate approach. Bernard observes that servitude is necessary yet should not be unrestrained. One is required to fulfill tasks, yet due to physical limitations it is impossible to fulfill them completely. These examples show a moderate approach reached by common sense and awareness of human capabilities and limitations.¹⁷⁹ Moderation is not only expedient, but also implies a choice to harmonize one's mind and body by means of consideration and practical action. It probably also implies the application of virtues to one's work.¹⁸⁰

Thirdly, consideration is advised as a precursor to action, so that action may not suffer. This allows Bernard to say that consideration dictates Eugene to take himself into consideration alongside those to whom he is devoted in service.¹⁸¹ To conclude, consideration is advised with regard to things Eugene can act upon, whereas there is no call for action upon things Eugene cannot act upon, but can still contemplate. This does not exclude the possibility of acting upon things after one considers God or heavenly things, although Bernard does not mention this. The purpose of the distinction highlights human capabilities and limitations rather than sets a moral teaching of human action and contemplation, although a moral understanding of the virtues underlies his discussion. The contemplation of God corresponds to certain attributes, drawing the human observer closer to greater similarity to God whom he observes, as it were, through contemplation. This involves a similarity of attributes. The closest term to "action" Bernard uses in Book V:13-14 is "emulation". If one emulates the eternity of charity (Bernard seems to be personifying Charity as God) one endures and perseveres in love.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ *DC*, I: 3-4.

¹⁸⁰ See *DC*, I: 8.

¹⁸¹ *DC*, I: 5.

¹⁸² See *On Loving God*, ch. 1

Bernard does not specify the type of emulation. By connecting it to enduring and persevering in love, emulation possibly includes being acted upon (even suffering) and somehow taking action in the spirit of love or living according to it. In other words, the person emulating the eternity of charity would endure and persevere in love. Bernard possibly intentionally leaves it to the discretion of the reader to decide whether this applies to actions taken for others, or merely loving God. In either case, Bernard has previously explained that the kind of consideration he discusses here regarding God requires no action, but only examination.¹⁸³ Consideration of God does not require any action upon God, since one cannot act upon God. Bernard seems to dissociate higher beings from “lesser, visible things” in such a way that contemplation of God does not bear any direct connection between the two. In other words, no action need be taken for other beings, yet it is neither forbidden nor encouraged.

Consideration and contemplation: Books Two and Five

Throughout Books 1- 4, Bernard discusses consideration as prior to action. However, he distinguishes consideration from contemplation in Book Two, and the terms are more fully explored in Book Five. A common term for both might be “observation”. Bernard assumes the existence of the object as distinct from its observer, and that the observed object may be capable of observation itself, and that it is greater than the first observer. This kind of observation presumes a mental or spiritual activity. Although Bernard speaks of God in terms of “length” and other dimensions, these are useful for describing God from the human observer’s viewpoint, who can comprehend

¹⁸³ DC, V:1:1, 139.

these terms. These are analogues ultimately offering further ways of contemplation, rather than a completely adequate description of God. The following section will show how Bernard distinguishes contemplation from consideration, and his further views on contemplation in Book Five.

Bernard is keen to create a distinction between consideration and contemplation:

“For I do not want [consideration] to be understood as entirely synonymous with contemplation, because the latter concerns more what is known about something while consideration pertains more to the investigation of what is unknown. Consequently, contemplation can be defined as the true intuition of the mind concerning something, or the apprehension of truth without a doubt. Consideration, on the other hand, can be defined as thought searching for truth, or the searching of a mind to discover truth. Nevertheless, both terms are customarily used interchangeably.”¹⁸⁴

Bernard mentions further aspects of the self to consider (who, what, what sort), which has been discussed in the summary of Book Two above.¹⁸⁵ The difference between consideration and contemplation has implications for the relationship between observer and object. Consideration concerns an investigation of the unknown, while contemplation regards “what is known”. Thus when considering an object the observer does not know it, while when contemplating it, does. Consideration also implies continuous action (searching), whereas contemplation shows completed action (known). Furthermore, Bernard emphasises action in consideration – the observer *searching* for

¹⁸⁴ *DC*, II:2.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

something – and the object of the search in contemplation – “*what* is known”. The nuances help associate contemplation to the promised ultimate rest.¹⁸⁶

However, both terms are often used interchangeably, and Bernard defines them flexibly. From one aspect, this causes a difficulty – contemplation “*concerns more* what is known about something”, while “consideration *pertains more* to the investigation of what is unknown.”¹⁸⁷ In Book Five Bernard uses “contemplation”, “meditation”, “examination” when discussing human observations about God. If investigation of unknown things pertains to self, that around us, below us and above us in particular, then within Book Five consideration concerns the contemplation of God and angels. It therefore seems that Bernard advises an investigation of the self which will be incomplete, meaning man remains unknown to himself. God, on the other hand, can be considered (above one, as a fourth kind of consideration) as well as contemplated, and therefore known, even if to a small degree. Yet Bernard admits God is incomprehensible, resulting in self-contradiction.¹⁸⁸ However, Bernard has previously admitted to using terms flexibly, perhaps assuming the reader’s familiarity with them, and expecting them to use their discretion in practical application. These distinctions between contemplation and consideration reveal different objects of observation, the relation between observer and observed and the observer’s degree of knowledge.

Bernard revisits the notion of consideration in Book Five when encouraging Eugene to consider the divine – God and angels.¹⁸⁹ This requires no action, only examination. The terms “contemplation” and “consideration” are used almost

¹⁸⁶ *DC*, V:14.32.

¹⁸⁷ *DC*, II: 2.

¹⁸⁸ *DC*, V: 6.14.

¹⁸⁹ *DC*, V: 3-14.

interchangeably throughout this book. Firstly, Bernard uses both terms throughout this chapter when discussing what to contemplate in heavens,¹⁹⁰ how humans consider God and angels,¹⁹¹ and the doctrine of God: what should be contemplated of God's essence (that God is One),¹⁹² His attributes through corresponding human examination (contemplation, meditation etc.),¹⁹³ and four kinds of contemplation of God (admiration of majesty, observing His judgement, remembering blessings and resting in expectation of what has been promised).¹⁹⁴ Such judgement is known by intuition or certainty. Mainly, Bernard seems to use "contemplation" when discussing the doctrine of God's being and heavenly beings, and "consideration" for general method of examining higher beings.¹⁹⁵ He uses other terms of examination in V:13-14 when demonstrating how attributes of God correspond to humans, but Bernard does not differentiate contemplation from meditation.¹⁹⁶

Secondly, Bernard categorises three ways of consideration of God and angels: practical, scientific and speculative.¹⁹⁷ This is rooted in the assumption that the best and most free kind of being can have a vision without the medium of a bodily sense, because "to be assisted from without" makes one dependent.¹⁹⁸ He seems to imply angels see the Word without a medium. However, if one has a medium, it can be bodily sense, philosophy or through sudden ecstasy. These types of consideration are called practical, scientific and speculative. Practical consideration employs senses and sense objects; scientific consideration "prudently and diligently scrutinizes and ponders

¹⁹⁰ *DC*, V: 4-5.

¹⁹¹ *DC*, V: 3.

¹⁹² *DC*, V: 6-7.

¹⁹³ *DC*, V: 13-14.

¹⁹⁴ *DC*, V: 14.32.

¹⁹⁵ *DC*, V: 2- 5.

¹⁹⁶ *DC*, V:14.31.

¹⁹⁷ *DC*, V: 2.

¹⁹⁸ *DC*, V:1.1.

everything to discover God”, and speculative – “when it recollects itself and, insofar as it is aided by God, frees itself for the contemplation of God.”¹⁹⁹ Furthermore, all are connected sequentially, that is, each is ordered sequentially according to level of fulfillment.

Bernard perceives three further avenues of consideration – by opinion, faith and understanding, which are supported by a “semblance of the truth,” authority and reason respectively. These distinctions help ascertain the veracity or foundation of the findings of the investigation.

Summary

For Bernard, contemplation is the means for human beings to experience God whom they observe. Contemplation pertains to something already apprehended, albeit imperfectly; consideration investigates the unknown. Having said that, Bernard obscures this theoretical distinction to an extent. He discusses consideration preceding action in books 1- 4, showing both principles of consideration (a moderate stance; categories of consideration) as well as offering practical advice for action in concrete circumstances. Charity, action and contemplation are connected in the final book of *De consideratione*, as Bernard encourages the emulation of charity, and teaches that through contemplation of God one observes His charity as an attribute.

¹⁹⁹ *DC*, V: 2.4.

Analysis: *The Mirror of Charity* by Aelred of Rievaulx

Content and overall structure

The Mirror of Charity by Aelred of Rievaulx is a collection of meditations and was commissioned by Bernard of Clairvaux who wished Aelred to respond to complaints made by certain monks, and to demonstrate “the excellence of charity, its fruit and proper ordering.”²⁰⁰ Bernard even gives the work its title, as he wishes it to convey “as in a mirror what charity is, how much sweetness there is in its possession, how much oppression is felt in self-centredness, which is its opposite, how affliction of the outer man does not, as some think, decrease, but rather increases the very sweetness of charity, and finally what kind of discretion should be shown in practice.”²⁰¹

Aelred, following these instructions, discusses human nature, charity and its opposite, self-centredness, as well as charity within man’s relationships with God and other creatures. His aim is to show charity’s excellence and exhort others to apply it in their relationships. As a collection of meditations, these chapters form loosely structured groups, with chapter headings describing a particular topic. Aelred names the chapter titles himself, listing them for Bernard’s convenience. Aelred states that the work is divided into three parts, stating in the preface that the first book intends “to recommend especially the excellence of charity” by showing its worth and the faults of its opposite, self-centredness[.]”²⁰² The second book – “to reply to the inappropriate

²⁰⁰ Bernard, “A Letter of Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, to Abbot Aelred,” in *The Mirror of Charity*, hereafter cited as *MC*, trans. Elizabeth Connor (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1990), 1; 6 (hereafter citing paragraph).

²⁰¹ Bernard, “Letter,” 6.

²⁰² *MC*, Preface, 4 (hereafter citing paragraph).

complaints of certain people.”²⁰³ This refers to certain monks. The third book aims “to show how charity should be practised.”²⁰⁴ The following paragraphs will demonstrate the structure of the entire work.

Book One discusses humans: their love for their Creator and their nature – their being created in the Creator’s image, capability of happiness, history through the Fall, spiritual disfigurement, renewal through the Saviour, and the future perfection of their renewal.²⁰⁵ Aelred turns to discussing man’s present relation to God, and how humans withdraw from God “by an attachment of the mind”²⁰⁶ while “[by] the attachment of charity, God’s image in the human person may be restored.”²⁰⁷ He discusses man’s present condition (love divided against itself, his free choice, grace).²⁰⁸ From this point, the book’s structure becomes more indefinite; broadly speaking, Aelred discusses charity (in terms of perfection; spiritual circumcision; seeking the spiritual sabbath in charity and commending God’s charity on the seventh day; its trace in all creatures and easy yoke; virtues as servants of charity; Christ’s restoration of humanity).²⁰⁹

Intermittently Aelred addresses the happiness of rational creatures, as well as their craving and search for rest.²¹⁰ Turning to complaints about the onerousness of the Lord’s yoke, he traces the source of their labour and oppression to self-centredness and the world.²¹¹ Separate chapters praise God’s justice,²¹² provide commendation of the number six and seven in connection with God’s work and rest,²¹³ address the elect and

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ *MC*, I: 1-5 (hereafter citing book, chapter, paragraph).

²⁰⁶ *mentis affectus*, *MC*, I: 7; see *MC*, fn. 3, 77.

²⁰⁷ *MC*, I: 8.

²⁰⁸ *MC*, I: 9-14.

²⁰⁹ *MC*, I: 15.44; I.16-19; 21; 27; 31-33.

²¹⁰ *MC*, I: 22-23; 25-26.

²¹¹ *MC*, I: 29- 30.

²¹² *MC*, I: 15.

²¹³ *MC*, I: 20.

reprobate among the rich,²¹⁴ and threefold concupiscence.²¹⁵ The book ends with a report of the death of his friend, interrupting Aelred's composition and writing.²¹⁶

Book Two returns to addressing work and inner struggles, specifically, complaints about the Lord's yoke. He clarifies that he excludes the vice-ridden from his discussion.²¹⁷ Following chapters concern spiritual visitations, consolation and experience of gentle attachments.²¹⁸ Aelred discusses questions from an anonymous novice about loving God within the monastic life: the apparent paradox of being deprived of pleasure, which the novice senses is missing from his present monastic life, when loving God.²¹⁹ Other chapters concern the effects of charity and self-centredness on progress;²²⁰ overcoming yearning,²²¹ as well as desires, pride, vanity and domination.²²²

Book Three discusses types of sabbath, reviewing the notion of rest through an understanding of love, and how the perfect sabbath is found within God's love.²²³ Aelred defines love, charity and self-centredness.²²⁴ He discusses choices about the use of love and enjoyment;²²⁵ the nature of attachments, their types, objects and use.²²⁶ Aelred also discusses action towards God and neighbour, as well as attitude towards neighbour;²²⁷ natural, necessary and voluntary order of humanity;²²⁸ the essential

²¹⁴ *MC*, I: 24.

²¹⁵ *MC*, I.

²¹⁶ *MC*, I: 34.

²¹⁷ *MC*, II: 2; 4-7.

²¹⁸ *MC*, II: 8-16.

²¹⁹ *MC* II: 17-20.

²²⁰ *MC* II: 21.

²²¹ *MC* II: 22.

²²² *MC* II: 23-26.

²²³ *MC* III: 1-6.

²²⁴ *MC* III: 7.

²²⁵ *MC* III: 8-9; 39-40.

²²⁶ *MC* III: 10-30.

²²⁷ *MC* III: 31; 37-8.

²²⁸ *MC* III: 32-4; 36.

character of the monastic profession according to the Rule of St Benedict and the Rule of St Augustine, and its relation to vows of profession and charity.²²⁹ The final chapter closes with a direct appeal to Bernard:

“If [*Mirror's*] excellence, fruits, and the appropriate way of showing it are by them made – like an image of it – to appear, this book may be called a *Mirror of Charity*, as you have directed. Yet I beg you not to display the mirror in public, for fear that instead of charity gleaming from it, the likeness of its author may make it dingy.”²³⁰

To summarise, although loosely structured, the work moves from addressing the fallen nature of man, to recognising his inward toil, struggle and yearning for rest, and the attainment of rest. This could seem less a manual for attaining that rest, as Aelred does not discuss methods of contemplation, and more of an analysis of human nature and its goal. As he refers to the Rules of Benedict and Augustine, Aelred probably presumes the reader leads a monastic life. The work could still be useful for self-understanding, however, as it outlines the present state of humanity after the Fall and the final state of man's perfection, analysing human nature and attachments.

Themes

As the aim of this work is to praise charity's excellence and exhort others to uphold charity in their relationships, Aelred addresses two main topics: charity and humanity. Aelred discusses charity theoretically by defining it alongside its opposite, self-centredness, and by explaining why charity is needed. In discussing humanity,

²²⁹ *MC* III: 35-36.

²³⁰ *MC* III:40.113.

Aelred ultimately shows how to apply charity to relationships. He analyses human nature, history and future perfection, the image of God within humanity, its various orders (natural, voluntary, necessary), as well as attachments and relationships with God and other creatures.

Attachments form a major part of Aelred's discussion, as he indicates the way man relates to someone else.²³¹ Aelred describes attachments by discussing the human faculty with which each attachment is associated, and its predicted outcome. Attachments are significant to discern in order to identify in which attachments man withdraws from God, and in which God's image is restored. While attachments concern the way man relates to someone else, relationships describe the personal connection with God as Creator and other creatures. As monks may experience, personal relationships are met by various inner struggles. Aelred positions the discussion of man's relation to other creatures (neighbours) as concerning the attitude and action towards the other. Enjoyment of another is a topic concerning neighbourly relationship, and combines previous conclusions about attachments and relationships.

Aelred also discusses the monastic life, which is characterised by a specific relationship between people bound by a common life, profession and monastic vows with other monks, and directed toward cultivating a relationship with God. The particular interaction with others will depend on the specific charism of each order; Cistercian characteristics are apparent in Aelred's teachings. Discussion of the monastic profession is a reminder of the specific monastic audience for whom these teachings are written. The reader was to praise the excellence of charity and cultivate it

²³¹ See *MC* III: 11.31: *Affectus* signifies "a kind of spontaneous, pleasant inclination of the spirit towards someone."

in his monastic life, as Aelred does. As meditations, these chapters reveal twelfth-century monastic concerns: the need to articulate the essential characteristics of monastic life and to live it as perfectly as possible. While various rules emphasise different details of monastic life, Aelred stresses that both canons and monks profess stability, conversion of life and obedience, and that both Benedictine and Augustinian rules recommend charity.²³²

Aelred's discussion of charity stands within a broader Cistercian tradition of discussing love and charity, as exemplified by their Charter's title and Bernard's works.²³³ Aelred's discussions with monks probably reflect genuine concerns and difficulties met by ascetic Cistercians. Aelred writes as someone with considerable experience in Cistercian monastic life. The work's discussion about the monastic profession is therefore not a deviation, but a natural part of it, considering that Aelred's teachings could help Cistercian novices.

Overall, Aelred sees charity extending through all aspects of human life, from human nature and yearning for rest in God's charity, to specific relationships; from those debased or withdrawn from God to those close to attaining perfect rest in Him. The absence of charity is discussed through its opposite, self-centredness. The title *Mirror of Charity* conveys the aim of the work: to provide a glimpse of charity's place within creation itself and in practical application. The close connection between charity and humanity is reflected throughout the text.

²³² MC III: 88-95.

²³³ I.e., Bernard, *De diligendo Deo*.

Charity: claims and justification

As charity is discussed throughout the entire work, the following claims are analysed to show *Mirror's* most representative teachings. It will first present Aelred's theoretical definition of charity, then show its relative position within relationships.

Charity: definition

Aelred explains charity, firstly by comparing it to love, and secondly, by demonstrating it as a combination of choice, development and fruit. In the first case, he classifies love and charity as genus and species: charity is love, yet not all love is charity. To show this, he explains that love is said to be two-fold: on one hand, love is called a power or nature of the rational soul whereby it can love or not love something. On the other, love is an act of the rational soul exercising this power when it uses this power to love something (regardless whether it should or not). Love as an act is always "of" something (e.g. of money, or of wisdom). The main difference between love as power and act is that as a power, love is always a good of the soul, since it belongs to the nature of the substance from God who made all things very good.²³⁴ This power can be used or abused by free choice, but in itself is always good. However, love as an act is either necessarily good or evil.²³⁵

The second half of Aelred's definition of charity builds upon the notion of love as a power, in its right and wrong uses. The distinction between these uses depends on the choice, development and fruit. If the mind chooses what it should, if it awakens the

²³⁴ Citing Gen. 1:31, fn. 43, 234.

²³⁵ *MC* III.7.20, 234-5.

spirit to desire the object appropriately, and enjoys this object, then the combination of this kind of choice, desire and fruit is called charity. The definition of charity therefore consists of the correct combination in three categories. However, “if the soul chooses foolishly, or is moved improperly, or misuses [love] shamefully,” this is termed self-centredness.²³⁶ Aelred explicates this without biblical quotation, but is most influenced by Paul, Augustinian thought (free will), Cistercian and classical ideas.²³⁷ Biblical knowledge is presumed throughout (Genesis etc.).

Charity: choices of love; relationship with God and creatures

Choices regarding love are summarized by Mt. 22:37 and 22:39 – “You shall love your God with your whole heart, all your soul and all your strength” and “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”²³⁸ This choice is made by the mind; through contemplation, all else is rejected, making the soul consent in its choice.²³⁹ Hence Aelred’s transitions from defining charity within a theoretical outline to expressing it within the context of relationship.

Aelred explores the relationships of man with God and other creatures. As Aelred has explained through the Fall of Adam, the first man had free choice, but withdrew from God: “he diverted his love from that changeless good, and, blinded by

²³⁶ *MC*, III.8.22-4.

²³⁷ Charity and self-centredness exist in polar opposition: in appetites (i.e. citing Gal 5:17, conflict exists not between spirit and flesh, but between new and older states of mind, *MC* I.9.27); in their effects on progress (charity raising a person, and self-centredness oppressing, *MC* II.21), and their general effects on the soul – its tranquility or ultimate destruction, *MC* II.3.6. On desire, see Cicero *De amicitia*, 6.22, 23.86. http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/Laelius_de_Amicitia/text*.html Viewed May 15, 2017.

²³⁸ *MC*, III.9.28, 239.

²³⁹ *MC*, *ibid.*

his own self-centredness, he directed his love to what was inferior.”²⁴⁰ Thus he lost both himself and God.²⁴¹ Yet the trace of the Trinity remained in the rational soul through the remembrance, knowledge and love of itself, and various other combinations concerning these three, reflecting the Unity in substance and Trinity.²⁴² A renewal of God’s image came after the Saviour, yet perfect renewal will happen in the future.²⁴³

Aelred indicates that the restoration of the image of God may be achieved by charity, suggesting continual renewal after the time of the Saviour. Within this scheme, the Saviour gives the precept of charity.²⁴⁴ The mind may “[put] on this charity perfectly,” after which charity will reform memory and knowledge which are both “equally disfigured”. Charity “flowing in from above” raises up the self towards Goodness “to which it owes its birth.”²⁴⁵ Charity from this perspective of relationship is shown to be a gift from God; as a gift, it may be rejected by the mind. Not defining this further, Aelred describes its effects. His teaching remains consistent within his understanding of free choice.

Charity also appears in relationships to other creatures.²⁴⁶ If one directs the self to others (those who weep, rejoice with him, are weak together with him) – those who endure literally share compassion with one another:

²⁴⁰ *MC*, I.4.11-12, 92-93.

²⁴¹ *ibid*; citing Augustine’s *Enchiridion* 9, 30: “nam liberio arbitrio male utens et se perdidit et ipsum” with Aelred’s additional “et Deum”, fn. 11, 160.

²⁴² *MC*, I.4.13, 93. Cf. Augustine.

²⁴³ *MC*, I.5. Aelred teaches that man may still withdraw from God by an attachment of the mind – Aelred prays to Jesus that he may embrace the Lord, citing Sg. 1:3; 8:14; *MC*, I.7.

²⁴⁴ cf. Eph. 4:23-24, “I give you a new commandment”.

²⁴⁵ *MC*, I.8.25; see *ibid.*, fn. 17, 161; Augustine, *Soliloquia*, I, 14, 24; and Aelred *De Institutione Inclusionum* 33, CCCM 1, p. 677f.; “Therefore charity raises our soul up to that for which it was created,” *MC*, I.8.26, 101.

²⁴⁶ Aelred discusses love of self in *MC*, III.2-3: “*diligat animam suam*,” *MC* III.3.6; PL 195, col 597 A.

“[If] he senses there that his soul is united with the souls of all his brothers by the cement of charity, and that it is not vexed by any pricks of envy [and other vices], then he clasps them to the utter tranquil bosom of his mind. There he embraces and cherishes them all with tender attachment and makes them one heart and one soul with himself.”²⁴⁷

Paul is an example of someone “who kept continual sabbath, [and] is a witness that in the quiet of this sabbath fraternal charity permits no evil habits to dwell.”²⁴⁸

At this point Aelred transitions to using the terms “love” (*dilectio*) and “charity” more flexibly in order to describe how charity radiates through six degrees of connection: blood-relatives, special friends, those who share one’s profession (Aelred does not specify whether monks or other religious professions), Christians, non-Christians, and enemies.²⁴⁹ Regarding the love of enemies Aelred invites to consider the inspiration for the “perfection of fraternal charity” – the Lord’s Passion.²⁵⁰ Aelred links Christ’s own example to the love of neighbour, thereby directing the reader to consider the source of charity in order to inspire a love for enemies, and illustrating the restoration of God’s image.

Action and contemplation: claims and justification

Aelred’s focus in this work is not the contrast between action and contemplation, but rather the theoretical discussion and practical application of charity: he reflects

²⁴⁷ MC, III.4.7, 226.

²⁴⁸ MC, III.4.8. cf. fn. 15, 226: Rm 13:9.

²⁴⁹ MC, III.4.9-12, 227-9.

²⁵⁰ MC, III.5.14, 231. “*Porro ad inimicorum dilectionem, in qua fraternae charitatis consistit perfectio, nihil nos ita animat, ut illius miriae patientiae grata consideratio, qua ille ‘speciosus forma prae filiis hominum,’ (Ps. 49) [...]’*, PL 195 col 582 A.

upon charity in order that it may be practised. The following sections will explore how Aelred considers action and contemplation separately, then in relation to each other, and finally, where action, consideration and charity are combined in a single passage. While patristic influence (Augustine, Gregory the Great) certainly permeates his thought, Aelred's own experience as a Cistercian monk is evident.

Action: soul; behaviour and physical labour

This section will exclude teachings about the sabbath rest or inner toil – although both could be considered as the opposite of any activity and spiritual activity respectively, they are considered metaphors concerning the soul.²⁵¹ Aelred uses the word “action” in a literal sense with regard to the soul, deeds or works, and physical labour. Action with regard to the soul is connected to consent, love, desire and attachment. Aelred bases this discussion on the notion of free choice, a natural power by which it gives consent by rational judgment. While free choice is constituted by the will and reason together, actual consent is “an action of the soul” made or manifested by the will.²⁵² By citing Pauline texts, Aelred concludes that God influences the will so that one consents willingly.²⁵³ However, God does not take away free choice, will or rational judgment; instead, co-operation between God and man happens through grace and consent. The merit belongs to man, and grace to God.²⁵⁴ For instance, God acts so that the creature may will what is good by being influenced to want the good. Hence a good deed is performed in conjunction with the will, since a good deed is good if it is

²⁵¹ *MC* I: 22.62; I: 28.79; I: 29.85; I: 32.90.

²⁵² *MC* I: 10.29.

²⁵³ *MC* I: 11.32; *ibid.*, fn. 77, 104; see 1 Tim. 1:13.

²⁵⁴ *MC* I: 10.28; I:11.

voluntary.²⁵⁵ This particular understanding of grace and free will is assumed when Aelred discusses love and charity.

As discussed earlier, love can be considered an act “of the rational soul exercising this power, when the soul uses it with regard to those things it should or those it should not [love].” This love as act is either good or evil, while love as a power of the soul is necessarily good.²⁵⁶ Aelred creates further distinctions of love: considering love as a power, he discerns an initial choice (that is, choosing what to enjoy) and a development which he also calls “love”. Love in turn awakens the spirit to desire what it has chosen. Furthermore, if the soul attains what it desires through action, then the fruit of this love is acquired. Aelred proceeds to argue that charity consists in the right combination of choice, development and fruit.²⁵⁷ The spirit is moved towards action when some hidden force of love impels the mind to accomplish an outward act.²⁵⁸ In a similar passage, Aelred describes how the spirit is moved by consent of the will either in a hidden way, called desire, or manifested when the desire breaks out into activity.²⁵⁹

The soul’s desire is mentioned with regard to God and neighbour: it should be directed “that we enjoy one another mutually in God (as is fitting) and we enjoy God reciprocally in one another. Yet since man is composed of body and soul, our action should certainly keep both in view, insofar as our means make this possible.”²⁶⁰ Although spiritual attachment should encourage activity, due to man’s physical capabilities, it should not regulate activity, since it may prove too demanding.

²⁵⁵ *MC I*:12.38.

²⁵⁶ *MC III*: 7.20.

²⁵⁷ *MC III*:7-8.

²⁵⁸ *MC III*:10.29; *ibid.*, fn. 57, 240: the “hidden force of love [*amor*]”.

²⁵⁹ *MC III*: 16.

²⁶⁰ *MC III*: 22.

Moderation is key, so that some undertakings are left undone. This safeguards the attachment itself, lest it become lukewarm through lack of moderation.²⁶¹

Secondly, Aelred discusses action in terms of conduct, acts, good works and manual labour. Regarding conduct within the religious life, Aelred's dialogue with a novice reveals the novice's altered conduct and actions compared to his previous way of life. The novice correlates better conduct with the ascetic religious life, listing physical labour as one of its features, and describing the peace emanating from the monastery.²⁶² Similarly, ascetic men show "gravity of conduct and holiness of life" as well as "very dear attachment."²⁶³

Aelred discusses conduct and acts in relation to the presence of holy people and Christ within a broader discussion of rational attachments. A rational attachment arises from contemplating another's virtues, and can lead to loving one's neighbour. For instance, one may wish another to be present in order to provide correction and help. Aelred considers the difference between coming into the presence of holy people and Christ. The former happens through travel, or physical movement, while the latter (eternal presence), by "living in a holy, just and godly manner."²⁶⁴ The eternal presence is associated with both inward and outward practices. Outward practices should be done moderately; similarly, one should seek holy people reasonably.²⁶⁵

Aelred also distinguishes deeds in relation to thoughts and words. If, after considering the interior self, one finds that thoughts, words and deeds are well-ordered and in peace, this results in a sense of security and joy – also called the spiritual sabbath

²⁶¹ *MC* III: 23.

²⁶² *MC* II:17.43.

²⁶³ *MC* III: 28.67.

²⁶⁴ *MC* III: 24. 56.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, see on Paul and Barnabas.

preceded by six days, that is, a perfection of deeds. Another example is working, then pausing “in the tranquillity of conscience.” On the first sabbath, no “servile works of the world are performed in even the slightest way” – there are neither passions nor concupiscence.²⁶⁶

Actions within the natural order (distinguished from necessary and voluntary orders) may be either licit or illicit. Someone who has not acted illegitimately can make use of licit things legitimately and with moderation. Examples include marriage, possessing riches, eating certain foods, etc.²⁶⁷ Actions are distinguished the same way within the necessary order, adding the explicit mention of work: “someone who has committed illicit acts should restrict himself in the use of things licit.” Restricting oneself to certain actions will help -- “application to work holds the tedium of mind at bay.”²⁶⁸

Advancing his discussion, Aelred considers good works in a series of analyses about the relation to God and neighbour. In the recognition of true love for God, Aelred finds that if one chooses to love God for the sake of enjoying sensual pleasures, then the choice, which had integrity, while the desire was perverted, will bring forth nothing. Similarly, if one chooses God, and desires nothing but God, yet attempts to attain him by acts that are not appropriate (Jewish ceremonies, pagan sacrifice, superstition), the fruit of love will be empty.²⁶⁹

In another passage, loving God signifies aligning one’s will to His. Judgement will happen through suffering sent by God as well as activity. Citing Gregory the Great, Aelred demonstrates the correlation between good works and love of God:

²⁶⁶ *MC III:3.*

²⁶⁷ *MC III: 32.76-77.*

²⁶⁸ *MC III.33.*

²⁶⁹ *MC III.21.*

“Without good works, let no one believe what his mind tells him about his love of God.”²⁷⁰ A second teaching directs keeping God’s commandments in context of interior visitations which God dispenses at His discretion, seemingly with no correlation to toil.²⁷¹ Experiencing sweetness is a “stimulus to good works for the negligent, a much-needed consolation for those who toil laboriously at good works, and a pleasant, sure refreshment for those who arrive at the summit of perfection.”²⁷²

Among neighbours, those who do generous deeds are placed in special stead within the heart. Using imagery of Noah’s ark, Aelred describes each creature or figure signifying types of person – beasts (enemies), reptiles and beasts of burden (those debased in sensual pleasure), human beings (may not desire perfection; sub-divided into kin, friends, or those “better disposed [to one] by the generosity of good deeds”), and birds (possessing spiritual virtues). Jesus appears at the top of the ark, claiming the most important place in a person’s heart.²⁷³

Neighbours may also encourage good actions. After discussing types of attachment, Aelred discerns that attachment has utility: one may desire what should be loved and maintain that love, as well as “practise those acts by which we tend toward the object of desire with greater attachment to the extent there is greater pleasure, and with greater pleasure to the extent there is greater [fervour].” It is useful for an attachment to urge “to practise good works and to be sustained in these good works by attachment” – yet it goes against order to regulate works according to an attachment.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ *MC* II.18.53-55; *ibid.*, fn. 156, 201: Gregory the Great, *Homily* 30.

²⁷¹ *MC* II. 18. 55; *ibid.*, fn. 157, 201: John 14:21.

²⁷² *MC* II.19.57.

²⁷³ *MC* III.38.

²⁷⁴ *MC* III.30.

In distinguishing acts meant for God and neighbor, Aelred pays attention to the neighbour's needs or salvation, and speaks of acts that are fitting, just and godly.²⁷⁵

Physical labour is discussed in context of the religious profession, both in theoretical discussion and illustrations of medieval life. In theory, outward toil which empties pleasure from the mind (extreme ascetic practices such as unceasing vigils, daily toil, poor sustenance) is not opposed to charity. Aelred supports this teaching by referring to the cross. Afflicting the flesh does not go against the spirit, provided "healthy intention and [...] discretion is observed."²⁷⁶ Aelred recognises that a person may chastise the body to such a degree that it may be wondered whether any consolation is received. Aelred insists that afflictions induce divine consolation, based on his own experience and Paul's example. Sharing in Christ's suffering by mortifying the will and body is not only commendable, but necessary.²⁷⁷

As another point of theoretical discussion, outward and inward toil are related: "outward toil is often lessened by inward, and the most oppressive ardours of the body are attenuated by the ardours of the spirit."²⁷⁸ Outward toil is determined by inward toil, the latter sometimes lessening the former. Both are counterparts within one person, yet spiritual effort determines the persons's state of being and metaphysical direction. The state of mind will influence a person's rest and another person's toil. Aelred illustrates this by comparing hunters, fowlers and apostles in terms of the intensity and worth of their actions.²⁷⁹ Valuing physical labour highly within the religious profession, Aelred describes his late friend Simon who always worked hard: "he

²⁷⁵ *MC* III.31.74.

²⁷⁶ *MC* II:5.9.

²⁷⁷ *MC* II:5-6.

²⁷⁸ *MC* II: 2.4.

²⁷⁹ *MC* II:2.4; II:3; *ibid.*, fn. 6, 165; Acts 5:41.

shouldered the yoke of discipline in the flower of youth,” choosing “in the sweat of his brow to eat his bread.”²⁸⁰ The account of Simon’s actions complements the account of his contemplative life.²⁸¹

For Aelred, the monastic life is defined by guidelines instituted by the Rules, as well as a certain mindset. The essential practices within the monastic life are found in the Benedictine and Augustinian Rules. Aelred cites a letter in which an anonymous writer had enquired about the essential characteristics of monastic life.²⁸² Aelred believes there is no single essential characteristic, but that all regulations, including those about physical labour, dress, silence, length of reading, and other aspects together form the Rule.²⁸³ He is surprised that the letter does not mention reading alongside the vows of stability, conversion and obedience, which demonstrates that he assumes that the vows are a part of leading the monastic life.²⁸⁴

Aelred notes how novices practising the Rule of Benedict find regulations for daily work, food, clothes, fasts and vigils to be very strict.²⁸⁵ That strictness is justified in the Rule’s prologue, which Aelred believes expresses the reason for these practices and the institution itself quite clearly.²⁸⁶ Elsewhere Aelred emphasises the state of mind and fullness of spirit within all monastic practices, from reading to physical labour – “anyone who aspires to the summit of perfection in the voluntary order” should keep in mind charity and the approach toward God. The monk should strive towards fullness by his spirit through promises of the profession – including work and reading: “Let

²⁸⁰ *MC* I:34.108; *ibid.*, fn. 254, 153: Gen 3:19.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² *MC* III: 35.

²⁸³ *MC* III: 35.85.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁵ *MC* III:35.94.

²⁸⁶ Citing *RB* Prologue: “If following the dictates of sound reasoning [...] for the correction of vices and the preservation of charity, something should turn out to be rather strict ...”, *MC* III: 35.95; *ibid.*, fn. 153, 286.

abstinence fight for this end, vigils serve it, *lectio* be alert for it, and daily toil sweat for it.”²⁸⁷

Thus far Aelred has discussed actions with regard to their end and manner, both concerning the soul and body which are regarded with similar detailed attention. The next section will analyse passages where Aelred discusses contemplation as distinct from action, before showing the relation between action and contemplation.

Contemplation: apologetics, contemplative practices and charity

Firstly, Aelred mentions contemplation within his apologetics. In refutation of the fool claiming there is no God – Aelred has just explained the history of mankind through the Fall and God’s image in man – Aelred’s invites the fool to consider where wisdom and the existence of creatures originates.²⁸⁸ He argues that they become wise by wisdom which previously exists – man does not create wisdom even if he meditates and completes asectic exercises. Wisdom that makes others wise can only be wise, as it cannot be folly.²⁸⁹ Regarding man’s existence, Being – the source of all other being – was not created, just as “wisdom from which all others derive wisdom was not created.”²⁹⁰ Aelred pleads:

“Let Wisdom itself and Being itself speak to your heart and no longer will you say in your heart, there is no God, because in it you will plainly see that you could not even exist to say in your heart, there is no God, unless God also existed.”²⁹¹

²⁸⁷ MC III.36.96; *ibid.*, fn 161, 289: Hugh of St Victor, *De meditatione* III: 7.

²⁸⁸ MC I: 4-5.

²⁸⁹ MC I: 6.17-19.

²⁹⁰ MC I: 6.20.

²⁹¹ MC I:6.20.

Similarly, he invites the reader to realize the unity of concepts “to be, to be wise, to will” as existing in a person, yet not originating from him.²⁹² Secondly, in describing contemplative practices, Aelred recalls how his friend Simon, whom he perceived as a role model, practiced contemplation in the final years of his life:

“Therefore, finding almost nothing exterior in which to delight, he withdrew to the interior solitude of his mind, sitting alone and being silent, but not listless in his inactivity. He used to write or read, or devoted himself privately to meditation on the Scriptures, for which his senses were always keenly alert. He hardly ever spoke of necessities, even with the prior. [...] Indeed if anyone [...] approached him, such gentleness soon marked his speech [...] that his moderation in speaking and his humility in listening disclosed how free of bitterness and how full of sweetness was his silence.”²⁹³

This Simon is the same friend whom Aelred described earlier doing physical work. This passage shows that action and contemplation are not compared, but are complementary. It also demonstrates the medieval perception of contemplation as an interior practice characterised by physical inactivity, yet alert senses. A contemplative may be brought outward to speech if approached, but otherwise remains in silence.

Meditation, which Aelred does not define, but which is closely associated with contemplation, can be perceived in public. When near death Simon cried “Mercy!” Aelred perceived his friend’s joyful soul: “striving upwards by the nimblest movements of its own natural impulse and exulting to divest itself at any moment of the remnants of the flesh, it meditates on the great mercy of God on whom it relies absolutely.”²⁹⁴

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ *MC* I:34.108.

²⁹⁴ *MC* I:34.114; *ibid.*, fn. 270, 158: Ps 100:1.

Reception of divine visitations involves contemplation. Describing different types of divine visitation (awakening, purification and enjoyment of tranquillity), in the third state which is “experienced by very few,” the mind has a “foretaste of the first-fruits of its future reward,” – passing to the house of God, “with his soul melting within himself, one is inebriated with the nectar of heavenly secrets. Contemplating with the purest regard the place of his future rest, he exclaims with the prophet: ‘This is my place of rest forever and ever. Here will I dwell, for I have chosen it.’”²⁹⁵ Here Aelred clearly relates the role of free will and choice in the soul’s actions on one hand, with the reception of rest and its contemplation.

Contemplative practices are applied not just for oneself, but also for another, as teachings about *lectio* and prayer should be applied to the body as well so that it becomes purified: “everything to be spurned or employed or changed for the sake of one’s own salvation should also be done for the salvation of one’s neighbour.”²⁹⁶ Alternatively, contemplative practices may involve others. When discussing the trace of divine charity in all creatures, Aelred suggests all are inclined to rest (as signified by the metaphor of the sabbath). Contemplating all creatures from the lowest to highest orders, one will discover divine goodness (divine charity) which “contains, enfolds, and penetrates all things, not by pouring into a place, or being diffused in space, or by nimbly moving about, but by the steady, mysterious, and self-contained simplicity of its substantial presence.”²⁹⁷ This implies that contemplation of order reveals a link through all the orders of the creatures, and that they hold divine goodness or charity.

²⁹⁵ MC II:11.26-28; *ibid.*, fn. 65, 182: Ps. 131:14.

²⁹⁶ MC III.37.102.

²⁹⁷ MC I: 21.59; “*contempleris [...] quam ejus charitatem; non locali infusione, [...] sed substantialis praesentiae stabili et incomprehensibili in se permanente simplicitate omnia continentem, [...] ima superis conjungentem, contraria contrarii, [...] quem ipsi universitati praefixit [...]*” PL 195, col. 524 A-B.

This is similar to what Aelred taught earlier about the power of love itself being a good because its being comes from God. Here, not only creatures, but their order itself is also divine. Contemplation reveals not so much that there is an order, but rather its origin.²⁹⁸ Hence the creatures may be instrumental for recognizing the divine, indirectly leading one towards salvation.

In another example, Aelred compares the seventh day, year and fiftieth jubilee year to the “foundation of charity [...], its increase, and [...] its fullness. On each of these there is rest, on each of these there is leisure, on each of these there is a spiritual sabbath. First there is rest in purity of conscience, then in the very pleasant joining together of many minds, and finally in the contemplation of God himself.”²⁹⁹

It can be inferred that Aelred means here rational creatures existing in various states of rest described by what seems to be spiritual or mental states. He does not define contemplation here, but what seems to be implied is a certain hierarchy: firstly, self-awareness of one’s conscience, followed by a the connection of several minds, finally, contemplation of God. This could be explained by God’s immutable nature in which the contemplative finds greatest rest, unlike the changing mind or conscience (which would not likely remain in the same state whilst linked to the body), or the connection of minds (which would not likely remain in fixed connection with one another). Rather, the connection of self to God means a person’s greatest rest most likely because it has connected to its source which is also a constant source of charity.

Contemplation is not restricted to God alone as its subject: “rational attachment arising from contemplation of someone else’s virtues is more perfect than the other

²⁹⁸ On origins of being and wisdom, see *MC* I: 4-5.

²⁹⁹ *MC* III: 6; *ibid.*, fn. 39, 232; Lev. 25:10.

attachments by which we are kindled to love of neighbour.”³⁰⁰ Here “contemplation” is applied to the virtues within a person, rather than God explicitly. Aelred could be using it in a general sense to signify “reflection”, yet “contemplation” appropriately links a person to considering a higher principle. The reason for its being a fuller kind of attachment is the same reason that contemplation of God brings the fullness of charity: in both cases, contemplation is directed outward to a higher, in this case, third principle between two persons, rather than to the self or other person alone. In this way, the attachment depends on a rational recognition and appreciation of another’s virtues. The attachment is therefore based on a higher principle which originates from the divine, shining through a particular subject for whom one’s attachment increases.

Action and contemplation: complementarity or conflict?

Because action and contemplation overlap in Aelred’s discussions,³⁰¹ it has been suggested Aelred believes in the complementarity of action and contemplation: “[there] are [...] certain means such as *lectio*, meditation, manual work, fasting, the pleasantness of prayer, and other things of this type, all of which should be arranged, varied, changed, and sometimes even omitted for the sake of a brother’s salvation.”³⁰² However, Aelred’s interpretation of Romans 9:3 possibly suggests conflict between the two, specifically in the situation of interrupting one’s contemplation for the sake of a brother. Aelred’s interpretation of Romans 9:3 (“I would willingly be separated from Christ for the sake of my brothers”) reads:

³⁰⁰ MC III: 24.55; *ibid.*, fn. 96, 258: *dilectio*.

³⁰¹ MC I: 34.108; III.37.102.

³⁰² MC III:37.102.

“from the secrecy of his prayer, at which he reposed [...] in Jesus’ embraces, from that ineffable height of contemplation where, with utterly pure eyes, he gazed upon the secrets of heavenly mysteries [...] he would have chosen to be drawn away to the din of the world for his brother’s salvation. No-one who, according to his own measure, remains at leisure and tastes how sweet the Lord is [...] doubts that being called away this way must be termed separation from Christ. Anyone who chooses to be separated from Christ, either because he is urged on by brotherly love or because he consents to it when obliged by the authority of his superiors, must watch out for himself, so that this necessity not overwhelm him and sweetness not be lost.”³⁰³

This compares the contemplative to Christ, and teaches that being called from contemplation for someone else’s salvation – this possibly includes action as well as prayer – is, from the contemplative’s point of view, a separation from Christ. Aelred seems to imply intimacy with Christ within contemplation, and separation in other states or activities. Therefore the call for the sake of a brother – possibly action – must be met as a necessity to be regulated rather than fully embraced for its own sake. Aelred does not suggest, for instance, seeing Christ in the other, or acting as Christ for another. Rather, he suggests vigilance and self-regulation in order to return ultimately to that intimacy in contemplation.

Consideration, action and charity

The closest example of all three terms viewed in combination involves consideration rather than contemplation. This concerns consideration of neighbourly

³⁰³ Ibid.

love, and is based on teachings concerning the soul's choices, desire and love explored earlier. Firstly, one should consider the reason for choosing a neighbour (either for company, "which is in God," or for "base desire or inordinate activity").³⁰⁴ Secondly, while loving God does not involve any need from God's part towards us, within mutual human love exists mutual need. Thirdly, desire and activity should be twofold: desire should be directed towards the fact "that we enjoy one another mutually in God" and that "we enjoy God reciprocally in one another."³⁰⁵ The action should keep these two points in view, that a person comprises both a body and soul. Furthermore, the more prudent in these matters, "the more perfect he is in charity, too". Consideration thus is needed to discern "which of these attachments should be followed, and how far they should be followed."³⁰⁶

Aelred is consistent with his previous teachings on free choice, consent, desire, love, moderation and charity. Consideration prepares the choice by which one consents; desire and activity fulfill this choice, resulting in a certain degree of charity, depending on prudence (implying moderation). It is also consistent with his theory of attachments: the type of attachment one consents to contains a certain result, but consideration, not attachment itself, should determine the course of that attachment. Here, activity is seen as a fulfillment of consideration, rather than something which draws one away from God or Christ, provided that the choice, attachment and other elements are appropriate.

Enjoyment and rest are in a sense similar: neither signify an activity in the way Aelred understands it. Activity most probably concerns the body while rest and

³⁰⁴ *MC* III:22.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

enjoyment point to different means. Rest is associated with contemplation, preferred before action for a brother's salvation, and enjoyment of another is associated with another person, suggesting a continuous, renewed action. It requires consideration of the other. This is not the same as rest in God as Aelred envisages, which is the resting in the subsistent source of all being. In the specific case of enjoyment in the contemplation of God, this relates to resting in God while enjoyment of others within God concerns neighbour and God together.³⁰⁷

Summary

Aelred's teaching reveals numerous connections between contemplation, charity and action. Charity is the prevailing principle which Aelred usually refers to when considering humanity, its nature and history, as well as attachments and love. Contemplation and action are usually seen as complementary, yet contemplation is also regarded as intimacy with Christ, while anything interrupting it is regarded as a separation. Hence his teachings on contemplation and action remain ambiguous. Aelred's teachings all rely on a consistent understanding of human nature and love, as well as biblical citation and Augustinian thought. *Mirror* demonstrates the place charity should take within the monastic life. Aelred emphasises the guidelines of the Benedictine and Augustinian rules to remind novices of the common mindset and ultimate end of all monastic life – resting in God.

³⁰⁷ MC III:37.102.

Conclusion

The different contexts of these two works by Bernard and Aelred are reflected in their different teachings about action and contemplation, although these also reveal certain similarities. For Bernard, the advice to Eugene III reveals the challenge of bridging spirituality and administrative duties. However, contemplation of God's charity allows to reconcile the two: without God's charity, there would be no purpose of action or reason for being. Action in *De consideratione* mainly concerns secular administration. In this field, Bernard stresses moderation and servitude to the other, yet not complete submission to worldly affairs. Aelred, on the other hand, composes *Mirror* for monastic use, contemplation taking precedence. His discussion reveals nuanced distinctions between spiritual and physical actions. The relation between action and contemplation remains ambiguous: on one hand, he commends his friend who was hard-working and highly contemplative; however, Aelred considers any interruption of contemplation a threat to reaching closer intimacy with Christ, even if that interruption is due to service for a brother's salvation. Both *De consideratione* and *Mirror* reveal concerns of identifying and balancing contemplation and action, both also recognising the significance of charity to form closeness to God out of free choice, and contemplation as a particular means to attaining this intimacy.

Chapter III: Premonstratensian teachings of charity, action and contemplation

Introduction

Scholarship has viewed the distinctions between regular canons and monks,³⁰⁸ individual biographies³⁰⁹ and themes within their works.³¹⁰ According to Bynum, monks focus on reaching individual salvation, whereas regular canons in their treatises express the necessity of edifying the other, and of teaching by word and example.³¹¹ This chapter builds upon this, focusing on the teachings of charity, action and contemplation within the writings of Anselm of Havelberg, Philip of Harvengt and Adam Scot. The first section provides a brief history of the Premonstratensian order. The second section comprises biographies of the authors and demonstrate the context of their works. The third part analyses the texts, concluding with a summary.

³⁰⁸ Caroline Walker Bynum, *Docere Verbo et Exemplo: An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press for Harvard Theological Review, 1979).

³⁰⁹ Jay T. Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg: Deeds into Words in the Twelfth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

³¹⁰ I.e., Paul F. Gehl, "Philip of Harvengt on Silence," in *Essays in Medieval Studies*, Vol. II, eds. Mark D. Johnston et al., 1985, <http://www.illinoismedieval.org/ems/VOL2/gehl.html>, viewed May 24, 2017, 168-181; Carol Neel, "Philip of Harvengt and Anselm of Havelberg: The Premonstratensian Vision of Time," *Church History* 62 (1993): 483-93; et al.

³¹¹ Bynum, *Docere*, 195-6.

History of the Premonstratensian Order

Norbert of Xanten and the first generation

A previous chapter examined the regular canons and their origins within the Gregorian reform, their characteristics and legislation. The term “Augustinian canon” included a wide range of occupations, from cathedral clerics to contemplatives living in enclosure, such as those at Prémontré.³¹² Norbert of Xanten (1085-1134) called for a stricter interpretation of the Augustinian Rule.³¹³ Founding the house at Prémontré, he and his disciples lived according to the Augustinian Rule from 1121. Norbert established another house at Magdeburg in 1125. Since Prémontré subsequently followed statutes drawn by Hugh de Fosses, it diverged from the course followed by other houses established by Norbert.³¹⁴

Highly revered in his own lifetime, several of Norbert’s contemporaries regarded his works more highly than the written works of St Bernard.³¹⁵ Several twelfth-century texts allude to his biography.³¹⁶ His *vita* appeared between 1155-1164, surviving in two versions (*Vitae* A and B).³¹⁷ However, Norbert left no writings of his own, hence only secondary records provide some information as to his ideas about spirituality. Secondary records comprise the first generation of Premonstratensians who wrote about Norbert’s life and work.³¹⁸

³¹² On general history, see Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 165-8.

³¹³ King, *Western Monasticism*, 191-2.

³¹⁴ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 166-8.

³¹⁵ Petit, *Spirituality*, 15; cf. Herman of Tournai, *De miraculis Laudunensis de gestis venerabilis Bartholomaei episcopi et S. Norberti libri tres*, PL 156, col. 995.

³¹⁶ Petit, *Spirituality*, ffn. 2-4, 26: cf. Herman of Tournai, *De miraculis*; Siegbert of Gembloux, *Chronica*, PL 160, cols. 47-546; *Analecta Norbertina*, PL 170, cols. 1343-50.

³¹⁷ Petit, *Spirituality*, ffn. 5-6, 16: [*Vita* A] *Vita Norberti archiepiscopi magdeburgensis*, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptorum* 12, ed. Roger Wilmans (Hanover, 1956), 663-703; [*Vita* B] *Vita S. Norberti auctore canonico Praemonstratensi coaevo*, PL 170, cols. 1257-1343.

³¹⁸ Petit, *Spirituality*, 16.

Norbert's life is roughly reconstructed by Petit: born circa 1085, Norbert spent his early life at Xanten cloister and in courts of the archbishop of Cologne and Emperor Henry V. Petit understands that this was a joyful, but decadent period of Norbert's life. Between 1115-1121 he was converted and ordained a priest, setting out to preach and live in poverty. The Order of Prémontré was founded between 1121-1126. From 1126 until the end of his life in 1134 Norbert acted as archbishop of Magdeburg, reforming the diocese, expanding the order and conducting missions in Northern Germany, and taking action against the anti-pope Pierleoni. Norbert's success as a leader of the order was due in part to his talent and demeanour. As a popular personality many were drawn to hear him. He was also known for his literacy and eloquence, particularly in Latin. He was familiar with Scripture and patristic literature. His time at court gave him experience in state and diocesan administration.³¹⁹

For Norbert and the first generation of Norbertines, evangelical and apostolic mission, that is, preaching the Gospel and imitating the life of the apostles, were the ideals of their new conception of religious life. In 1121 after prayer and reflection Norbert together with his disciples in Prémontré professed a life dedicated to preaching and poverty, living according to the precepts of the Apostles in Acts as expressed in the Rule of Augustine. White wool habits signified their priestly and penitential life. Norbert emphasised three canonical practices: worship of God, correction in the religious chapter, as well as hospitality and care for the poor.³²⁰

Norbert's first disciples included Hugh de Fosses, who became the abbot of Prémontré in 1128 after Norbert became archbishop of Magdeburg. Hugh developed

³¹⁹ Petit, *Spirituality*, 17-21.

³²⁰ Petit, *Spirituality*, 21-39.

the statutes at Prémontré, providing practical details which, as he perceived, the Augustinian Rule had lacked. Similar to monastic practices, life at Prémontré included the celebration of Mass, chanting divine offices, manual labour and *lectio divina*. The order became oriented towards contemplation and meditation. Petit believes that lay people were so enthusiastic at the order's establishment, that the order turned towards contemplation and meditation in order to focus away from outer distractions. Preaching became an activity restricted to the abbey. Other first-generation Premonstratensians included Walter of Saint Maurice who had approached Norbert to have him reform the canons of Saint Martin outside Laon.³²¹ Luke of Mount Cornillon had joined Norbert at Laon in 1120, and was one of the first prelates of the order who interpreted and commented on other interpretations of the *Song*. Anselm of Havelberg met Norbert in his youth and accompanied Norbert in Magdeburg as bishop of Havelberg.³²² Among many other writers, Philip of Harvengt (early twelfth-century) and Adam Scot (mid-twelfth-century), whose life and works will be later described in greater detail, stand out: oriented towards *lectio divina*, they represent a more contemplative strand of Premonstratensian spirituality.³²³

Expansion to England

The Premonstratensian order expanded within Norbert's own lifetime throughout France, ultimately also to northern Germany, Belgium and Bohemia. Houses were founded directly also in Italy and Scandinavia. Within the twelfth to the

³²¹ Petit, *Spirituality*, 44-52

³²² Petit, *Spirituality*, 59-70.

³²³ Petit, *Spirituality*, 147-8.

fourteenth centuries, it encompassed territories from the Iberian peninsula to the Baltic, and from the Eastern Mediterranean to Ireland.³²⁴

Canons regular and Premonstratensians extended to Britain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries as it accepted new types of monasticism.³²⁵ Canons regular spread throughout England in the twelfth century, becoming its largest order and establishing 274 houses (versus 219 Benedictine). The first clerical community that probably became canons regular was in St Botolph's, Colchester, established circa 1107.³²⁶ Premonstratensians who combined qualities of both canons regular and Cistercians arrived in the 1140s. The first British Premonstratensian foundation was Newhouse (1143), founded on the estate of the Lincolnshire nobleman Peter of Goschill. By 1267, there were thirty-seven abbeys, three nunneries and six cells. Premonstratensian houses also spread to Scotland. Dryburgh (1150) was established by Hugh de Morville, constable of Scotland and in the possession of canons from 1154.³²⁷ Other Premonstratensian houses north of the border were Souleseat (traditionally 1148)³²⁸ and Whithorn (Candida Casa). Unlike Augustinians, Scottish Premonstratensian houses were not patronised by royalty. In Wales only one house, Talley, was established between 1184 and 1189.³²⁹

³²⁴ Bernard Ardura, *The Order of Prémontré: History and Spirituality*, trans. Edward Hagman, ed. Roman Vanasse (De Pere, Wisconsin: Paisa Publishing, 1995), 88-9; 663-665; cf. Petit, *Spirituality*, 61; 72.

³²⁵ Burton, *Religious Orders*, x.

³²⁶ Lawrence, *Monasticism*, 164.

³²⁷ Burton, *Religious Orders*, 57; 60.

³²⁸ Burton stresses this date is ascribed traditionally, and considers Dryburgh as the first house established by the white canons north of the border. Burton, *Religious Orders*, 57.

³²⁹ Burton, *Religious Orders*, 60.

Anselm of Havelberg, Philip of Harvengt and Adam Scot

Anselm of Havelberg: life, works, context of “Epistola apologetica” and “Anticimenon”

Anselm of Havelberg (ca. 1095-1158) was a Premonstratensian bishop. His career followed the trajectory of most courtier bishops which included obtaining an education, patronage, and positions both in the Church and at the imperial court. Anselm was mentored by Norbert and became bishop of Havelberg. He was subsequently received into court by various emperors and sent on several missions. Within ecclesiastical circles he came into favour with popes, and was ultimately made archbishop of Ravenna. However, his career was shaped by tensions between various powers.³³⁰

Besides acting as bishop, Anselm of Havelberg was an advocate of canonical reform, founder of religious establishments and a theologian.³³¹ While his work contains some apocalyptic themes, *Epistola apologetica* and *Anticimenon* are mainly concerned with defending regular canons (*Epistola*), as well as discussing the diversity of religious life, the Holy Spirit and the Eucharist (*Anticimenon*, Books 1-3). Political and theological activities intertwined constantly throughout his career. Tensions with his superiors partly led him to compose the *Anticimenon* and *Epistola* which perhaps partly explains their tone and arguments.

Anselm's career may be divided into four periods: early life (ca. 1095-1129);

³³⁰ Lees, *Anselm*, 11-122.

³³¹ Theodore Antry and Carol Neel, “Anselm of Havelberg, *Apologetic Letter* – Introduction,” in *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality*, eds. Theodore Antry and Carol Neel (New York: Paulist Press, 2007); cf. Lees, *Anselm*, 33; 47.

1129-1136: ordination as bishop of Havelberg, association with Norbert and imperial service to King Lothar III; 1136-1152: imperial service to King Conrad III, participation in the Wends Crusade and exile to Havelberg; 1152-1158: imperial service to King Frederick Barbarossa, ordination as archbishop of Ravenna and the siege of Milan.³³² *Epistola* and *Anticimenon* were written within the third period of his career (1136-1152).

Birth and education: ca. 1095-1129

Although there is no record of his parentage, Petit believes Anselm originated from the Rhineland or Lower Lorraine. It is speculated that he was a pupil of Ralph of Laon, and a student when Norbert came to preach at Laon's cathedral school.³³³ Lees claims that Anselm was schooled at Liège: "The single piece of evidence for Anselm's early life strongly suggests that as a young man, he received his education in Liège [.]"³³⁴

1129-1136: Anselm, Bishop of Havelberg; association with Norbert of Xanten and Lothar III

Lees stresses that 1129, the year Norbert appointed him bishop of Havelberg, is the first sure date of Anselm's biography, although Anselm had met Norbert previously

³³² This mainly follows Lees's outline of *Anselm of Havelberg*.

³³³ Petit, *Spirituality*, 59-60; cf. Lees, *Anselm*, fn. 33, 30: on the Laon theory, see Franz Winter, "Die Prämonstratenser," (Aslen, 1965), 56; cf. Wilifred Grauwen, "Norberts reis naar Laon," *AP* 69 (1993): 41-50.

³³⁴ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 30; cf. Lees, *Anselm*, 14-18; cf. C. Stephen Jaeger, "Cathedral Schools and Humanist Learning: 950-1150," in *Deutsche Vierteljahrschrift* 61 (1987): 596-616; see C. Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 939-1210* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 19-53; 213-19.

at some point.³³⁵ Anselm's ordination date (1129) is determined by Jerichow's foundation charter of 1144, dated as the fifteenth year of Anselm's episcopacy.³³⁶ Havelberg was located in the diocese of Magdeburg. Its see had been established in the tenth century, and was oriented against the Slavic people (Wends) who had taken violent action against Havelberg in 983.³³⁷ The city's inhabitants were still pagan when Anselm was made bishop.³³⁸ These factors could explain Anselm's unwillingness to enter this area, as it was some time before he established his residence there.³³⁹

By the time Archbishop Norbert of Magdeburg appointed Anselm bishop, Anselm was in a powerful position due to his association with Norbert.³⁴⁰ Norbert introduced Anselm to the court of Lothar III, and Anselm subsequently entered papal circles and other imperial courts.³⁴¹ While Anselm remained with Norbert in Magdeburg during the period of violence directed against Norbert in that city, Anselm exercised no diocesan functions.³⁴² Records reveal Anselm's presence in the court of Lothar III and the meeting between Pope Innocent II and Lothar in Liège in 1131 when Norbert mediated negotiations for Lothar's right to invest bishops and abbots in exchange for military protection. Norbert's involvement was significant as he supported Innocent over Anacletus II in the papal schism.³⁴³

³³⁵ Lees, *Anselm*, 13; 22; fn 5, 13; cf. Petit, *Spirituality*, 59-60; cf. Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 30; fn. 13, 253.

³³⁶ This in turn helps determine his birth date, as according to canon law, Anselm was at least thirty years old at ordination, meaning he was born in 1099 at the latest: Lees, *Anselm*, 13; 22.

³³⁷ Lees, *Anselm*, 27.

³³⁸ Petit, *Spirituality*, 59.

³³⁹ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 29.

³⁴⁰ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 29; on Norbert as mentor, see Lees, *Anselm*, 17; cf. Petit, *Spirituality*, 59-60.

³⁴¹ Lees, *Anselm*, 22; 33-35; 48-97.

³⁴² Lees, *Anselm*, 33.

³⁴³ Lees, *Anselm*, 32-35.

Before Norbert died in 1134, Anselm was summoned to Lothar's court, and was delegated to repair certain abbeys and dedicate a monastery; he also accompanied Lothar to Merseburg.³⁴⁴ These demonstrate Anselm's experience of monastic administration and imperial business. In 1133 Anselm accompanied Lothar and Norbert to Italy where he was asked to preach by Innocent II.³⁴⁵

In 1136, Lothar sent Anselm to Constantinople as a delegate. The purpose of the mission remains unclear. Petit believes that Anselm conducted theological conversations with the Greeks about the Holy Spirit and unleavened bread, later recording these conversations at Pope Eugene's request.³⁴⁶ Lees, however believes Anselm's *Anticimenon* to be an unreliable source: although it describes Anselm's participation in debates during the visit, Lees perceives that the mission was conducted in connection with a general cooperation between empires, and Lothar's wish to secure military support from the Greeks for his Italian campaign.³⁴⁷

1136-1152: Exile to Magdeburg, imperial service to Conrad III, Wends Crusade, Havelberg exile

Both *Epistola* and *Anticimenon* were written around the two separate occasions of exile. Anselm had been involved in the court and papal palaces in 1136.³⁴⁸ A setback to his career occurred in 1137 when Lothar III died. Anselm hesitated to

³⁴⁴ Lees, *Anselm*, 40-42.

³⁴⁵ Anselm also cooperated with Abbot Wibald of Stavelot in reconciling the pope with the emperor. Petit, *Spirituality*, 60.

³⁴⁶ Petit, *Spirituality*, 60.

³⁴⁷ Lees, *Anselm*, 42-46; 91; cf. Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 30.

³⁴⁸ Anselm advised Lothar for the successful Italian campaign, helped govern Northern Italy for Lothar's wife, Queen Richenza, and preached to Innocent as did Bernard of Clairvaux: Lees, *Anselm*, 48-69.

support Conrad III over Henry the Proud and was forced into exile, heading to Magdeburg and probably writing the *Epistola* there in 1138.³⁴⁹ In 1139 he established his residence in Havelland.³⁵⁰ Until his return to the royal court, Anselm was involved within the court of Archbishop Conrad. He also worked with his successor Archbishop Frederick, creating a Norbertine foundation at Jerichow in 1144 before returning to the royal court in 1145.³⁵¹

Between 1145-52, Anselm accompanied Conrad III to Speyer where he met Bernard of Clairvaux, the Wenden Crusade was undertaken, Anselm met Pope Eugene, and was exiled a second time. Meeting Pope Eugene and the second exile formed the circumstances for the composition of *Anticimenon*.³⁵² Pope Eugene requested Anselm to compose *Anticimenon* in 1149 which Anselm ultimately did during his second exile (1149-50).³⁵³ This exile happened because Anselm was caught among the tensions between Pope Eugene and King Conrad concerning their alliance, and was forced by the Pope to report to Conrad the news of the failed Crusade, the disarray of Italy and the rebellion against him. Anselm describes Conrad's anger, comparing himself to Christ before Pilate: "After having been praised, the sun of divine contemplation darkens, the foundation of the body trembles, the rock of faith splits, the veil of the temple is rent."³⁵⁴ Anselm was effectively exiled from the imperial circles of Hohenstaufen

³⁴⁹ Lees, *Anselm*, 48-69; 71; cf. Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 30.

³⁵⁰ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 29.

³⁵¹ Lees, *Anselm*, 48-69; 71; cf. Petit, *Spirituality*, 59-60.

³⁵² On the Wenden Crusade, see Lees, *Anselm*, 28; 70-81; cf. Petit, *Spirituality*, 59-60; cf. Anselm, *Epistola CCXXV Ad Wibaldum abbatem*, PL 189, cols. 1319-20; cf. Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 29.

³⁵³ Lees, *Anselm* 85-92.

³⁵⁴ Lees, *Anselm*, 88; cf. Wibald of Stablo, *Epistolae*, ed. Philip Jaffé. Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum 1. Monumenta Corbeiensia. (Berlin, 1864), 182, p. 302.

Conrad III.³⁵⁵ During 1149-50 Anselm wrote *Anticimenon* in Havelberg.³⁵⁶ Antry and Neel date *Anticimenon* to 1150.³⁵⁷

Notwithstanding his exile and harsh conditions, it was a productive time in Havelberg, considering his composition of *Anticimenon* and establishment of a Premonstratensian house within the cathedral church chapter where Anselm lived in a community. Anselm's letter to Wibald describes himself in Havelberg as a "poor man of Christ among [his] brothers," as well as the divine services, fasting, prayer, divine reading, meditation and his own awareness of the danger of pagan attacks and potential martyrdom.³⁵⁸ Forgiven in 1150, Anselm remained a representative of Havelberg and Magdeburg until Conrad's death in 1152.³⁵⁹

1152-1158: Anselm and Frederick Barbarossa, Second Constantinople visit, siege of Milan, death

The final stage of Anselm's career saw his association with Frederick Barbarossa, the elected successor of King Conrad in 1152. Anselm attended the new imperial court where he served as royal adviser; he helped settle tensions between the emperor and pope, this time concerning the Magdeburg archbishopric.³⁶⁰ Closely associated with Frederick, Anselm acted as high councilor of Barbarossa.³⁶¹ He was sent as a legate to Constantinople a second time by Frederick in 1154-55 via Italy, and

³⁵⁵ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 29; cf. Lees, *Anselm*, 48-63.

³⁵⁶ Lees, *Anselm*, 85-96.

³⁵⁷ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 30.

³⁵⁸ Petit, *Spirituality*, 59-60; cf. Anselm of Havelberg, *Epistola CCXXXV Ad Wibaldum*.

³⁵⁹ Lees, *Anselm*, 85-96.

³⁶⁰ Lees, *Anselm*, 98-104.

³⁶¹ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 31; cf. Lees *Anselm*, 112-22.

possibly debated at Thessalonica. He later appeared as a candidate for Ravenna, receiving the title of archbishop and pallium from Hadrian IV in 1155 on the same day Frederick was crowned emperor in Rome.³⁶² Petit highlights Anselm's role in negotiating the coronation of Frederick I together with the ambassadors of Pope Eugene III in 1154.³⁶³ During Frederick's campaign against Milan Anselm instructed to show Milan no mercy, and he died unexpectedly on August 12, 1158.³⁶⁴

To summarize, Anselm's biography is marked by perpetual change of imperial and papal power, uncertain loyalties and tensions between emperor and pope, as well as between Christians and pagans. In some cases Anselm successfully fulfilled his role; in others, he failed although this was not unequivocally his fault. Despite his misfortunes, Anselm kept his position and even advanced to the archbishopric, proving himself useful to both the imperial administration and the Church.

Works: context of "Epistola apologetica" and "Anticimenon"

Anselm seems to have left few works. Migne's *Patrologiae* lists three: *Apologetic Letter (Epistola apologetica)*, *Anticimenon (Dialogi)*, and *Liber de ordine canonicorum*.³⁶⁵ Only the first two shall be viewed in more detail here. These were written when Anselm was already bishop of Havelberg, having undertaken significant roles within the Norbertine order, and known within imperial and papal circles.³⁶⁶

³⁶² Lees, *Anselm*, 105-114; Petit, *Spirituality*, 60.

³⁶³ Petit, *Spirituality*, 60.

³⁶⁴ Lees, *Anselm*, 117-22; cf. Petit, *Spirituality*, 60.

³⁶⁵ See PL 188.

³⁶⁶ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 29-30; Petit, *Spirituality*, 59-60.

As mentioned earlier, *Epistola* was written in exile caused by Anselm's hesitation to support the new king Conrad III after the death of Lothar III in 1137. Until that point, Anselm had been employed in the imperial court. He returned to Magdeburg, originally Norbert's diocese, and set to writing the *Epistola*.³⁶⁷ *Epistola* (1138) is his first significant work, a rigorous defence of regular canons against monks and addressed to Egbert, abbot of Huysburg.³⁶⁸ Lees has addressed the various dating issues surrounding *Epistola*, but agrees it could have been composed in 1138.³⁶⁹

Although *Epistola* was written in response to Egbert, it reveals the resentment of the ongoing debate apparent since the 1120s.³⁷⁰ In Anselm's time, an Augustinian provost had left a religious house to join a Benedictine monastery in Huysburg (diocese of Halberstadt). In the resulting debate between Egbert and Anselm, Anselm defends the regular canons' way of life. Egbert wrote three letters; Anselm's *Epistola* is a response to Egbert's third letter.³⁷¹

Anticimenon (ca. 1150) is a later work containing three books: two books of dialogues with the Greeks as well as a prefatory book *De Una Credendi* (*On the Unity of the Faith and the many Ways of Living from Abel the Just to the Last of the Elect*) which will be examined in greater detail. Lees interprets *Anticimenon* as having five divisions: a prologue addressed to the pope; *De Una Credendi* (Book One); a proem addressed to the brothers; the first debate on *Filioque* (Book Two); and a second debate on sacraments and the pope (Book Three).³⁷² The date of this work is disputed – Petit

³⁶⁷ Lees, *Anselm*, 48-69; 71; cf. Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 30.

³⁶⁸ Petit, *Spirituality*, 62-7; Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 29.

³⁶⁹ According to Antry and Neel, "Introduction," fn. 1, 252: see Lees, "Charity and Enmity in the Writings of Anselm of Havelberg," *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 25 (1994): 53-62.

³⁷⁰ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 32-33; on Egbert's argument see Kurt Fina: "Anselm von Havelberg," 93-7.

³⁷¹ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 31; cf. Walter Zollner, "Ekbert von Huysburg," *Forschungen und Fortschritte* 38 (1964): 25-28; on the response, see Lees *Anselm*, fn. 22, 54; fn. 23, 136; 162.

³⁷² Lees, *Anselm*, 106-133.

regards it as 1143, while Lees, Antry and Neel consider it to be circa 1150. Although set in Constantinople, Lees is hesitant to claim that Anselm actually held a debate there at the time, and considers that Anselm's mission concerned the creation of a military alliance.³⁷³ This work was written during Anselm's second exile to Havelberg.³⁷⁴

Some scholarship considers *Epistola* and *Anticimenon* in light of Anselm's immediate biographical context, perceiving that these form an "apologia for his own life."³⁷⁵ Lees argues that the *Epistola* is an "early attempt by Anselm to conceptualize his active life by comparing the actions of biblical figures with the deeds of men active in the clerical hierarchy."³⁷⁶ In *De Una Forma Credendi*, Anselm goes further by thinking about history containing related actions, while in *Anticimenon* he "takes an event from his own life and dramatically reshapes it through words to present a model of action and to illustrate the potential such action has for promoting a united Christendom."³⁷⁷ Thus Anselm describes a "model he aspired to, a model inspired by the teachers of his youth who themselves wrote little."³⁷⁸ That is, these are works attempting to show a model of the active life according to Anselm's understanding.³⁷⁹ While these observations show the trajectory of Anselm's thought across his works, the forthcoming analysis will show that the model that Lees perceives can be understood as contemplation in balance with action.

Besides Anselm's immediate biographical context, the works relate to broader historical and theological questions. The concern with religious diversity is apparent in

³⁷³ Petit, *Spirituality*, 67-70; Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 30; Lees, *Anselm*, 48-69..

³⁷⁴ Antry and Neel, "Introduction," 29; cf. Lees, *Anselm*, 48-63; 85-96.

³⁷⁵ Lees, *Anselm*, 7.

³⁷⁶ Lees, *Anselm*, 6.

³⁷⁷ Lees, *Anselm*, 7.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Lees, *Anselm*, 284.

both works – within discussions about religious orders in the eleventh and twelfth centuries as shown in *Epistola*, and in dialogue about the differences between Roman and Greek Orthodox Churches in *Anticimenon*. Scholarship recognizes Anselm’s ecumenical legacy: as Evans mentions, Anselm informed the West about the East in such a way that Eastern Christians could be perceived as “fellow-members of a richly diversified Body of Christ to whom particular gifts of the Spirit had been given.”³⁸⁰ With this ecumenical outlook, Anselm “[sets] out [...] the ecumenical importance of resolving the issue of essentials and inessentials, and the related question of the place of diversity in a united Church.”³⁸¹ Moreover, Anselm’s concern for language shows sensitivity to both Greek and Latin sides. However, it is also clear that for Anselm the authority of the Roman Church stands above all Churches.³⁸² Lees remarks that the debates were not influential in Anselm’s time.³⁸³ Another issue was the debate concerning differentiation of monks and canons in *Epistola*.³⁸⁴ Rupert Deutz had produced a text in the 1120s, which shows that this debate had been present fifteen years before the *Epistola*.³⁸⁵ The question about the right of transferring between orders is related to this debate.³⁸⁶

³⁸⁰ Gillian R. Evans, “Unity and Diversity: Anselm of Havelberg,” *AP* 67 (1991): 52.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*

³⁸² Evans, “Unity and Diversity,” 45-50; cf. PL 188: cols. 1209, 1216-17.

³⁸³ Lees, *Anselm*, 285.

³⁸⁴ On defining the regular canons’ charism, advocating Augustinianism, see Antry and Neel, “Introduction,” 32; on novelty of regular canons, *ibid.*, fn. 20, 253; cf. Giles Constable and Bernard S. Smith “Introduction” in *Libellus de diversis ordinibus*, 2nd ed., ed. and trans. Constable and Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), xi-xiii; cf. Antry and Neel, “Introduction,” 32-33; cf. John van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 324; 328; cf. Bynum, *Docere*, fn. 10, 109; cf. Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800-1200* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 198-99.

³⁸⁵ Antry and Neel, “Introduction,” 33; on Egbert’s argument, see Kurt Fina, “Anselm von Havelberg”, 93-7.

³⁸⁶ Antry and Neel, “Introduction,” 32; on *transitus*, see Roby, “Philip of Harvengt’s Contribution,” *AP* 49 (1973), 69-71.

Exegesis concerning action and contemplation (exemplified by Martha and Mary) had been evident since the patristic era.³⁸⁷ Another theological debate concerns the *Filioque* clause, discussed within Book Two of *Anticimenon*. Anselm's works also show characteristics of affective spirituality associated with other twelfth-century monastic writing (see *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, p. 79), as well as an apocalyptic theme characteristic in some strands of medieval Christian thought.³⁸⁸

Philip of Harvengt: life, works, and context of Knowledge of Clerics

Philip of Harvengt (d. 1183) was a canon, prior and abbot of Bonne Esperance in Brabant. Although a more prolific writer than Anselm, there is less scholarship in English that focuses specifically on Philip's biography and works. In the early 1120s Philip became a convert of Norbert and was an early member of Prémontré, and was schooled in Laon.³⁸⁹ Sent to Bonne Esperance in Hainult in 1126 or 1127, he served as prior under Abbot Odo. A controversy arose in the 1140s concerning an individual transferring from a canons' house to a Cistercian house, resulting in Philip being removed from the priorate and exiled from Bonne Esperance. He was restored to the priorate in the 1150s, and elected abbot about five years later, a position he held for more than twenty years.³⁹⁰ Existing scholarship about Philip includes a short biography, summaries of his works,³⁹¹ as well as translations of and introductions for

³⁸⁷ Constable, *Three Studies*, 14-22.

³⁸⁸ Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), xiv; for excerpt from Anselm's *Dialogues*, Book One, trans. G. Salet, see *ibid.*, 114.

³⁸⁹ Carol Neel, "Philip of Harvengt, 'On the Knowledge of Clerics' – Introduction," (hereafter "Introduction: Philip", 193-4; on Anselm, see Petit, *Spirituality*, 149.

³⁹⁰ Neel, "Introduction: Philip", 193-4.

³⁹¹ Petit, *Spirituality*, 165-196.

Knowledge of Clerics and *Life of Oda*.³⁹² Articles discuss his views on history and theology³⁹³ and silence,³⁹⁴ others analyse his thought concerning regular canons and teaching as such within a broader analysis of the differentiation of regular canons from monks,³⁹⁵ as well as his *Vita Augustini*,³⁹⁶ and the passage between religious orders.³⁹⁷

Petit describes Philip's works, but does not assign any date to most of them. Among his works are descriptions of his school life, three brief theological treatises (on the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, the salvation of the first man, and Solomon's damnation).³⁹⁸ Referring to the above-mentioned controversy of the 1140s, Philip addressed two letters to Bernard of Clairvaux after a canon from Bonne Esperance fled to the Cistercian house of Clairavaux where Bernard welcomed him; the canon did not return. After this controversy, Philip went into exile but eventually returned to Bonne Esperance.³⁹⁹ During his exile, he wrote a series of works on the formation of canons, often cited as his synoptic work *On the Education of Clerics*. The series discusses the status, knowledge, silence, justice, self-restraint and obedience of clerics.⁴⁰⁰ Petit refers to this as one large theological and ascetical work, one of the greater attempts in defining clerical and monastic spirituality.⁴⁰¹ Philip also wrote *Mystical Commentary on the Canticle of Canticles*, a Marian commentary on the *Song of Songs*. There Philip interprets the *Song* as illustrating various relationships between God, Christ, Mary, the

³⁹² Philip of Harvengt, *On the Knowledge of Clerics*, (hereafter 'Knowledge', citing page numbers), trans. Theodore Antry and Carol Neel, in *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 2007), 201-217; *Life of Oda*, *ibid.*, 224-242.

³⁹³ Neel, "Philip of Harvengt and Anselm of Havelberg," 483-93.

³⁹⁴ Gehl, "Philip of Harvengt on Silence," 168-181.

³⁹⁵ Bynum, *Docere*, 9-33 et al.

³⁹⁶ Carol Neel, "Philip of Harvengt's *Vita augustini*: The Medieval Premonstratensians and the Patristic Model," *AP* 71 (1995): 300-311.

³⁹⁷ Douglas Roby, "Philip of Harvengt's Contribution," 69-100.

³⁹⁸ Petit, *Spirituality*, 149-152; see PL 203, cols. 709-710.

³⁹⁹ Petit, *Spirituality*, 150-151; Antry and Neel, "Introduction: Philip," 194-5.

⁴⁰⁰ Neel, "Introduction: Philip," 194-5.

⁴⁰¹ Petit, *Spirituality*, 152; see PL 203 cols. 665-1206.

Church, and the individual. Mary receives particular attention, Philip focusing on her status with regard to original sin, and her role not only as a figurative bride of Jesus and her love and knowledge of Christ, but also as mother, contemplative, teacher of the apostles, and carer for the apostles' successors.⁴⁰² *Life of Oda* was written circa 1158, the death date of Oda.⁴⁰³ He composed other biographies, including one of St Augustine.⁴⁰⁴

The Knowledge of Clerics is part of the synoptic *On the Education of Clerics*. The title of the latter was created in the seventeenth-century edition of Nicholas Chamat, abbot of Bonne Esperance. Philip composed this work when he had been removed from the priorate during the controversy in the 1140s concerning a canon's transfer to a Cistercian house.⁴⁰⁵ It is unclear for whom he wrote this work: some suggest his confrères, whereas Bynum suggests Augustinian priests. Antry and Neel consider that Premonstratensians were his specific audience, rather than Augustinian canons in general.⁴⁰⁶

Adam Scot: life, works and context of "On the Order, the Habit and the Religious Profession of the Regular Canons of Prémontré"

Adam Scot (1150-1213/1214) was born in Berwickshire. After receiving his education he became drawn to the religious life, entering the Premonstratensian Dryburgh Abbey (established 1152) in the diocese of St Andrews. He was ordained a

⁴⁰² Petit, *Spirituality*, 183-196; see PL 203, cols. 181-490.

⁴⁰³ Neel, "Introduction: Philip," 194-5.

⁴⁰⁴ Petit, *Spirituality*, 152.

⁴⁰⁵ Neel, "Introduction: Philip," 194-5.

⁴⁰⁶ Neel, "Introduction: Philip," 197-8.

priest at the age of twenty-four, and was a widely-read intellectual and contemplative.⁴⁰⁷

Around 1180 he was elected to ultimately replace Abbot Gerald and led the abbey. He was preferred by the chapter to become an abbot officially in 1181, and was invited by Prémontré's abbot to visit Prémontré. Adam became abbot of Dryburgh when Gerald died in 1184.⁴⁰⁸ After the general chapter of 1188 or 1189, Adam visited the Carthusian house of Val Saint-Pierre near Verrines (Aisme) together with the abbot of Prémontré. He subsequently lived as a Carthusian for twenty-four years.⁴⁰⁹

Adam was a prolific writer who composed a dictionary, sermons, and spiritual treatises. Not all his works survive, such as *On Sweetness of God*. Adam's earliest known work, *Allegories of Sacred Scripture*, is a dictionary of allegorical interpretations.⁴¹⁰ His fourteen sermons *On the Order, the Habit and the Religious Profession of the Regular Canons of Premontré* is dated circa 1180.⁴¹¹ Around the same time, Adam composed *On the Tabernacle*, an exegetical work in three books interpreting the tabernacle of Moses in literal, allegorical and moral mode.⁴¹² His *Threefold Nature of Contemplation* is considered his masterpiece. It discusses the successive stages of the soul's journey towards God, as well as hell and the sweetness of God towards the elect.⁴¹³ It was probably composed when he received the abbatial blessing. After that he wrote *On the Instruction of the Soul*, comprising dialogues between Reason and the Soul.⁴¹⁴ Before becoming a Carthusian, Adam wrote a

⁴⁰⁷ Petit, *Spirituality*, 198-199.

⁴⁰⁸ Petit, *Spirituality*, 199-201.

⁴⁰⁹ Petit, *Spirituality*, 201. Cf. J. F. Worthen, 'Adam of Dryburgh and the Augustinian tradition', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 43:2 (1997): 339-347.

⁴¹⁰ Petit, *Spirituality*, 202-3.

⁴¹¹ Petit, *Spirituality*, 203; 223-30.

⁴¹² Petit, *Spirituality*, 208-9.

⁴¹³ Petit, *Spirituality*, 209-216.

⁴¹⁴ Petit, *Spirituality*, 216-223.

collection of a hundred sermons, contained by two volumes.⁴¹⁵ *Four Exercises from The Cell*, a work from his period as a Carthusian, is representative of Carthusian spirituality. Nevertheless, the similarity between his teachings to both Carthusians and Premonstratensians is noted.⁴¹⁶

The fourteen sermons were never preached, but meant for reading in the refectory. While they are significant as an early example of Premonstratensian spirituality, Petit finds that Adam's success in this regard is limited as by the time of composition the order had shifted away from its original inspiration of Norbert and the spontaneity which had characterised it. Instead the order was becoming more formally structured around contemplation. Throughout these sermons, Adam explores the dignity of canons, the symbolism of their habit, and their obedience and devotion.⁴¹⁷

Analysis: *Epistola apologetica* by Anselm of Havelberg

Epistola apologetica: content

Anselm's letter to Abbot Egbert of Huysburg argues for the superiority of regular canons over monks. Anselm's supporting arguments are twofold: firstly, that the best kind of religious life contains a balance between action and contemplation. Clerics fulfill this better than monks, since clerics can be both active and contemplative, whereas monks are not active. Secondly, Anselm argues that clerics are necessary for

⁴¹⁵ Petit, *Spirituality*; 223-230.

⁴¹⁶ Petit, *Spirituality*, 230-231.

⁴¹⁷ Petit, *Spirituality*, 203-8.

the Church, whereas monks, though excellent, only adorn it.⁴¹⁸ In a sense, Anselm is arguing against the previous Benedictines, and for the position of regular canons. This latter term was not well-defined, allowing Anselm to shape that definition within his argument. He voices the perspective of those who did not understand the clerical position as inferior to that of the monastic. Anselm defines the monk as a contemplative.⁴¹⁹ Anselm attempts to define the differences between canon, cleric, and monk by speaking of their ideal in conjunction with deeds.⁴²⁰

Anselm supports his point through rational argumentation and biblical citation. When discussing the definition of a canon and the ranks of canon and monk, he uses rational argumentation. Anselm is careful to note that there are good monks as well as good clerics, but that these are good by virtue of their goodness, not their office. Their respective ranks, however, are compared through biblical exegesis (allegorical and moral) of Old and New Testament figures (Moses, David, Paul, Martha, Mary) and Christ himself. Allegorical interpretation by Anselm's contemporaries already compared some of these figures in pairs as representative of action and contemplation – Rachel with Leah, and Mary with Martha.⁴²¹ Anselm also cites Church authorities, and even utilizes Bernard of Clairvaux and himself as examples within his argument. He includes a specific case of someone transferring between vocations to reinforce his argument.⁴²²

⁴¹⁸ Anselm, *Epistola apologetica*, 58 (hereafter 'Ep.', citing page number in Antry and Neel's translation), trans. Carol Neel in *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 2007), 38-62; translation is based on PL 188, col. 1091-1118

⁴¹⁹ Lees, *Anselm*, 130-1.

⁴²⁰ Lees, *Anselm*, 142.

⁴²¹ Lees, *Anselm*, 131-2; cf. *ibid.*, ff. 4-5, 131-2.

⁴²² Ep., 41-46.

Structure

Anselm's two main points – that the best kind of religious life finds a balance between action and contemplation (clerics fulfill this better than monks), and that clerics are necessary for the Church – are reached starting from two general claims which his opponent could not oppose through faith or reason. Firstly, that charitable acts are related to the law of charity (“he who administers acts of charity is to be embraced according to its law”).⁴²³ Secondly, according to Scripture, not all the faithful in the Old and New Testaments were monks.⁴²⁴ Starting with these general claims allows a gradual transition towards his conclusive statements. For instance, he also suggests that monastic life is lesser than clerical excellence, and that good monks and clerics are good by virtue of their goodness, not their order.⁴²⁵

Anselm launches into a sharper attack by examining the case of provost canon Peter of Hamersleben who transitioned to a monastic life but was recalled.⁴²⁶ Anselm argues this recall was just, employing various reasons concerning heavenly and earthly ranks. He defends novelty through rational argument, but cites authorities in order to speak of presumption and the impulse to transition to a different vocation.⁴²⁷ Ultimately Anselm suggests there are correct procedures for transitioning between monastic and canonical life.⁴²⁸

The attack brings him to the central issue: either the monastic order is greater, or it is not. Anselm argues that the authority of canons is in fact greater than other

⁴²³ Ep., 38.

⁴²⁴ Ep., 38-9; 58.

⁴²⁵ Ep., 40.

⁴²⁶ Ep., 41-8.

⁴²⁷ Ep., 41-2.

⁴²⁸ Ep., 46.

institutions: a monk may become a cleric, but when a cleric transitions to monastic life, he is demoted in vocation.⁴²⁹ Ultimately, Anselm will show that the Church in fact needs clerics, whereas the monks are inessential additions to it.⁴³⁰

However, before he delivers that final argument, Anselm argues as if starting on common ground, mirroring the method used at the beginning of the letter. Explaining that both monks and clerics make sacrifices, he calls himself a “poor man of Christ” which for his readers would have had strong connotations, possibly evoking Norbert.⁴³¹ Conceding that clerics and monks have different roles, he argues that balance between the active and contemplative life is best, using various biblical interpretations.⁴³² This culminates with the interpretation of the story of Mary, Martha and Christ. Anselm chooses Christ to exemplify balance: Christ is the highest model for contemplation and action.⁴³³ Anselm illustrates the Apostle John as symbolised by the eagle:

“Full of the spirit of wisdom and intellect, endowed with the special privilege of divine love, he penetrated the secrets of divinity [...] Crossing into the active life at Ephesus [...] he founded churches [...] and established priests. See how the living creatures of God burn and gleam like lightning! They wander into contemplation and return to action undiminished, rather expanded in their merit and in their reward.”⁴³⁴

⁴²⁹ Ep., 43-5.

⁴³⁰ Ep., 58.

⁴³¹ Lees concedes that Anselm’s imitation of Norbert was superficial, as it missed “the essence for the trappings”, 163 ; see Lees, *Anselm*, 144-5.

⁴³² Ep., 47, 52-3.

⁴³³ Ep., 53-55.

⁴³⁴ Ep., 55.

Paul is a similar proof that Christ can be imitated.⁴³⁵ Reversing the initial concession that a monastic life may be good, Anselm goes so far as to point out that all the dangers of contemplation stem from the devil.⁴³⁶ He subtly criticizes monks who pursue secular business, showing that members of the monastic profession are not above reproach, swiftly qualifying that statement by conceding that a contemplative life itself is not idle.⁴³⁷ He urges clear-sighted contemplation and rational compliance with one's profession.⁴³⁸

A recapitulation serves to remind of the letter's purpose – discussing monastic rather than clerical life – before stating that the clerical life is necessary, while the monastic is merely additional.⁴³⁹ He repeats some points of the argument, re-evaluating St. Paul whose active life left a superior legacy compared to his contemplative life in Anselm's view.⁴⁴⁰ He provides a closing statement barely hiding his contempt for Egbert, then adopts a conciliatory, polite tone. Citing charity as his reason for writing, Anselm invites all to be humbled, calling competition among Christians vain both in heaven and on earth in the Church.⁴⁴¹ Less subtly, he bids Egbert depart into a life of penance, while Anselm will carry, so to speak, the Ark of the Testament.⁴⁴² Finally, stressing that both sides are pilgrims, he invites Egbert to act in the Lord's name and to abstain from judgement, and hopes that charity may preside.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁵ Ibid. On Paul's action and contemplation, see Lees, *Anselm*, 159-161.

⁴³⁶ Ep., 56-7.

⁴³⁷ Ep., 57.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Ep., 58.

⁴⁴⁰ Ep., 59-60.

⁴⁴¹ Ep., 60.

⁴⁴² Ep., 61.

⁴⁴³ Ep., 62.

Themes: charity, action and contemplation

Anselm's main argument – claiming superiority of clerics over monks⁴⁴⁴ – contains two main themes: the balance between action and contemplation, and the necessity for clerics from the Church's point of view. Subordinate topics to these themes include the transition between religious orders⁴⁴⁵ as well as the clerical duties of sacrifice.⁴⁴⁶ Biblical and patristic examples, as well as extensive exegesis concerning Mary and Martha serve as illustrations for his argument.

As Lees considers the work “caustic”, he claims the *Epistola* “is not a work of love.”⁴⁴⁷ The “brotherly love” that Anselm mentions is merely a “pretension.”⁴⁴⁸ The passion of his work obstructs the “way of charity.”⁴⁴⁹ However, as Anselm claims, Egbert has created a “meaningless controversy, defending the monastic order when no one attacks it, and pursuing personal ambition to make a name for himself.”⁴⁵⁰

Lees points out the difference between *Epistola* and *De Una Forma Credendi*: the former is characterised by an invective, while the latter is not. In fact, the latter praises variety,⁴⁵¹ while the *Epistola* does not. Viewing the tension between the two works, he adds that the the former is not a mature expression of its author, but that this should not distort the view of his latter mature expression in the *Anticimenon*.⁴⁵²

The following analysis will argue, however, that charity occurs as a theme within Anselm's work, taking into account his caustic rhetorical tone, but also

⁴⁴⁴ Ep., 43-5; 58.

⁴⁴⁵ Ep., 45-7; 49.

⁴⁴⁶ Ep., 49; 50; 62.

⁴⁴⁷ Lees, “Charity and Enmity,” *Viator* 25: 58; 61.

⁴⁴⁸ Lees, *Anselm*, 161.

⁴⁴⁹ Lees, *Anselm*, 163.

⁴⁵⁰ Lees, *Anselm*, 139.

⁴⁵¹ Lees, “Charity and Enmity,” 61.

⁴⁵² Lees, “Charity and Enmity,” 62.

distinguishing this from his actual claims about charity. *Epistola* contains rhetorical attacks directed against Egbert, yet which are at the same time associated with the concept of charity, such as Anselm's justification for his critique, as well as general criticism and instructions for Egbert.⁴⁵³ This is also associated with his fear for Egbert, a wish to reconcile with him and his general plea for charity.⁴⁵⁴ To summarise, the topic of charity is part of Anselm's rhetorical method; it will be suggested that charity is also foundational for this text.

Charity: claims and justification

Charity is repeated throughout the entire text, suggesting not only its importance within the formal vocabulary, but its permeating significance. The word "charity" is used formally (i.e., Anselm intends to build up charity with Egbert; charity compelled Anselm to write; inviting charity to preside; commanding Egbert to direct his charity),⁴⁵⁵ illustratively (i.e., Egbert rips charity's garment in attack)⁴⁵⁶ and in his argument (i.e. he who administers acts of charity is to be embraced according to its law).⁴⁵⁷

Thus "charity" runs throughout the text in different modes – formal, illustrative and argumentative. Charity is mentioned within the first point of his argument: "He who administers acts of charity is to be embraced according to its law, but he who acts outside that law should be admonished."⁴⁵⁸ Anselm follows this with an illustrative

⁴⁵³ Ep., 38; 41; 60-1.

⁴⁵⁴ Ep., 40-1; 50; 61; 62.

⁴⁵⁵ Ep., 41; 53; 60; 62.

⁴⁵⁶ Ep., 40.

⁴⁵⁷ Ep., 38.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

passage of metaphors contrasting good and evil (light and darkness; sweetness and bitterness). Without the admonition according to the law, good and evil might otherwise become confused in the eyes of the actor.⁴⁵⁹ He describes how he received Egbert's letter, seeming to direct the earlier claim about charity and the law to Egbert himself. Thus what initially seems an argumentative point becomes a rhetorical attack against Egbert's exegesis.⁴⁶⁰

From one aspect this argumentative opening statement is a personal attack against Egbert. On another level, it introduces the idea of the close relation between charity, action and law. It supposes that charitable acts fulfill the law and vice versa. Later he will suggest that contemplative acts can be dangerous, yet admit that a balance between the action and contemplation is best.

Anselm also suggests that charitable acts distinguish clerics from monks, who, according to Anselm, mainly contemplate. Anselm's attack and correction of Egbert's assumptions about monks point to his concern for teaching and correction.⁴⁶¹ This does not provide conclusive proof of Anselm's own charitable attitude, but charity remains a conspicuous term throughout the text. The apparent contradictions between Anselm's own life and his teachings have been noted and show the complex relationship between what he advocated at different times: his request to show no mercy to Milan, for instance, stands in contrast to the literary tone in *Anticimenon*. This section has not attempted to resolve that tension, but rather to show that Anselm uses the concept of charity within *Epistola* not merely in possible affectation, but in various ways.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ Ep., 38-9.

⁴⁶¹ See Bynum, *Docere*, 195.

Action and contemplation: claims and justification

Anselm clearly identifies the close bond between charity and action, and claims that a balance of action and contemplation in the religious life is best. His discussion of this balance is used to differentiate various religious vocations.

Action and contemplation: proportions and balance in the religious life

Anselm claims that best religious life is balanced between action and contemplation based on his exegesis of Old and New Testament passages, as well as examples of Bernard and himself.⁴⁶² Old Testament characters such as Abel, Noah and Abraham exemplify the contemplative life. However, Leah and Rachel are interpreted as representing action and contemplation respectively. Not discussing these characters further, he demonstrates Moses as a contemplative prepared for action: “As a servant to the Lord’s house he was divinely taught, made ready through heavenly contemplation for terrestrial action.”⁴⁶³ Such actions concern the Law, the rule of the people and ordination of priests. Subsequent leaders Joshua and Caleb, having contemplated and explored the promised land, revealed its secrets to their people inspiring them to act. Anselm characterises them as “teachers of virtue in God’s church [...] who set an example by going before the people.”⁴⁶⁴ David acted as a perfect contemplative, God finding him “a man according to my own heart.” He interprets Ezekiel 3:22-24 as

⁴⁶² Cf. Ep., 48.

⁴⁶³ Ep. 51.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.; Neel, Ep., fn. 48, 51: cf. Num 13.

urging contemplation as well as preaching, contemplation meaning “to separate the mind from [...] preaching and to conserve the joy of life spiritually, within oneself [...]”⁴⁶⁵ Anselm concludes that the biblical fathers clearly considered the combined life of contemplation and action as perfect.⁴⁶⁶ Anselm’s biblical citation relates Moses and Ezekiel to a priestly role through their knowledge and learnedness, as Philip of Harvengt similarly does, in addition mentioning also Belseel and Ooliab.⁴⁶⁷

Anselm’s New Testament exegesis, particularly of Mary, Martha and Jesus at Bethany is used to prove the superiority of clerics. This exegesis defines the differences between monks and clerics and establishes that balance is best before proceeding to claim that clerics are necessary for the Church. Hence, this exegesis is key for his argument.

Anselm’s interpretation is both allegorical and moral: Martha signifies the active life, and Mary, the contemplative. He advances by demonstrating their worth relative to each other. For instance, compared to Martha, Mary chooses the better part, but not in comparison to Christ himself.⁴⁶⁸ These three figures also signify listening, serving and teaching.⁴⁶⁹ In relation to Martha, Mary as a listener (*auditores*) chooses the better part, but not in relation to Christ, who is a teacher (*doctores*) and the worthiest.⁴⁷⁰ Those prior to Christ manifested a likeness (as *figura*) of the two lives. Christ is the ideal: seen face to face he is the “single manifestation of how one’s life

⁴⁶⁵ Ep., 52.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ Philip of Harvengt, *Knowledge*, 201-204.

⁴⁶⁸ Ep., 53.

⁴⁶⁹ Ep., 53-4.

⁴⁷⁰ Ep, 53.

should be lived.”⁴⁷¹ Lees claims Anselm’s education at Liège is reflected in this exegesis, since his teacher would have been a model for student behaviour.⁴⁷²

However, Anselm suggests a further interpretation: Christ transcends the role of teacher, and is an example of all three lives, and besides teaching, displays perfect action and contemplation. Action is manifested by his various works (visiting God’s people according to Luke 7:16) etc. Regarding the contemplative role, Anselm refers to Christ in the desert (Luke 4:1-2) and the mountains.⁴⁷³ However, Anselm’s understanding of Christ as teacher is ambiguous – is it action? Within Anselm’s exegesis, Christ teaching in the Temple or the mountain, as well as his healing people appear close together in the passage.⁴⁷⁴ As Christ embodies all three paradigms of action, contemplation and teaching, the lines between those roles in each example are not clearly distinguished. The lack of clarity does not strengthen Anselm’s argument for the superiority of clerics, particularly if he considers them as teachers. Perhaps the lack of distinction reflects the growing independence of schools, and the rise of the secular school. In this sense, Anselm may be referring to “teacher” as a non-religious vocation. If this is so, then it is particularly significant that Anselm considers Christ a paradigm of each profession, the “norm of right living in both his deeds and words.”⁴⁷⁵

To summarise, Anselm shifts from allegorical and moral interpretation to an historical interpretation, as he shows examples of Christ in contemplative and active states.⁴⁷⁶ After showing Christ as “chief of the contemplatives,”⁴⁷⁷ Anselm interprets

⁴⁷¹ Lees, *Anselm*, 155.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Ep., 54-55; on praying see Matt. 14:23; Mount of Olives, Luke 22:39-43; Mount of Transfiguration, Matt. 17:1-2.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Ep., 55.

⁴⁷⁶ Lees, *Anselm*, 157-8.

⁴⁷⁷ Ep., 52.

Christ balancing both the active and contemplative life, allowing him to argue for the superiority of clerics. Christ's example is followed by the apostles, instituting the apostolic life as according to his life in following Christ's commands.⁴⁷⁸ Anselm's case studies of the apostles Paul and John probably imply that medieval *vita apostolica* is modelled on their original apostolic life which strengthens the authority and credibility of Anselm's points.

Action and contemplation: the definition of monk and cleric

From this point onwards Anselm distinguishes monks and clerics. A fundamental aspect that he ignores is that monks might take part in the *vita activa*. Anselm instead strictly equates the monastic life with withdrawal, not nuancing this position. This is simplistic and inaccurate, since his own friend Abbot Wibald took an active position in court.⁴⁷⁹ Similarly, Bernard of Clairvaux preached to the pope and took part in councils, as Anselm himself mentions in both his *Epistola* and *Anticimenon*.⁴⁸⁰ However, Anselm's earlier discussion of the word "choose" foreshadows his differentiation. As the lower rank (Mary) may choose silence and quiet, but not teaching, for which members of this rank must be selected.⁴⁸¹

Anselm's argument follows a rhetorical rather than exegetical course. Firstly, he mentions Satan potentially manipulating contemplatives.⁴⁸² Furthermore, he proceeds to demonstrate, not always consistently, that the contemplative is not synonymous with

⁴⁷⁸ On Paul and John, see Ep. 55-6.

⁴⁷⁹ Lees, *Anselm*, 138.

⁴⁸⁰ Ep., 48.; *Anticimenon*, I: 10.

⁴⁸¹ Ep., 54.

⁴⁸² Ep., 56.

the monastic. For instance, he perceives monks as contemplatives regardless of the kind of actions they conduct, such as exiting their community for secular business, or extorting money. Even when they assume Martha's part, doing good works, or taking "action in writing, reading, singing, and maintaining the rhythm of the good work and usefulness of the monastery,"⁴⁸³ they remain contemplatives.

Whether they even fulfill their single contemplative role is another question. In Anselm's eyes, monks are not contemplative when they "sit lazily in the cloister with folded hands and in embroidered sleeves, [...] have a leisurely meal, [...] keep useless clothes, [...] sleep soundly," – walking purposelessly, and constantly complaining if something is not according to their will.⁴⁸⁴ Anselm uses the word "contemplative" in two ways. The first describes the monastic person who only supposedly contemplates. The second meaning describes the actual contemplative monastic person. Anselm wishes to demonstrate that monks have only taken on the title of contemplation, usurping it for themselves.⁴⁸⁵ Clerics, in contrast, may "be lifted devoutly, by some grace, to the highest citadel of contemplation – and this can happen the better when they take on the care of theirs. [...] [The] two orders present different purposes for their members' lives. Each is good." – but clerics are more necessary.⁴⁸⁶ Hence clerics may be contemplative as well as active.⁴⁸⁷ St Paul, for instance, is an example of the active and contemplative apostle.⁴⁸⁸

To summarise, Anselm has argued that clerics may be differentiated from monks on account of fulfilling both active and contemplative roles. Differentiation helps him

⁴⁸³ Ep., 57.

⁴⁸⁴ Ep., 57-8.

⁴⁸⁵ Ep., 58.

⁴⁸⁶ Ep., 58-9.

⁴⁸⁷ Ep., 50-2.

⁴⁸⁸ Ep., 59-60.

argue that the clerical life is different and superior to the monastic. He hints that monks do not fulfill their contemplative vocation well, and that it is in fact not rightly called their own vocation in the first place. His generalized criticism omits any mention of any faults of clerics.⁴⁸⁹

However, the differentiation of religious orders on earth amounts to nothing if there is not charity: “Just as here [different orders] do not fall down unless they are puffed up and hateful, so there they will not ascend to those high places without charity.”⁴⁹⁰ This forms part of the closing paragraphs which end on a conciliatory note.

Conclusion: action, contemplation, charity

To conclude, by generalizing characteristics of clerical and monastic life, Anselm’s letter reveals bias, flawing his argument. For instance, he exaggerates the dangers of contemplation. However, he admits that individual monks and canons may be good, but this is due to their individual goodness rather than their vocation. Overall, in *Epistola* the discussion about action and contemplation is central. However, charity is a ubiquitous term throughout the text in formal phrases, and as a term of his opening argument: those who do charitable acts fulfill the law and should be embraced. Charity is revisited at the end of his letter: no religious order can succeed without charity. Hence charity is closely associated with the law, goodness and achievement.

⁴⁸⁹ Philip of Harvengt does not hesitate to indicate clerical faults: see *Knowledge*, 210.

⁴⁹⁰ Ep., 61.

Analysis: *Anticimenon*, Book One by Anselm of Havelberg

Content: argument

Book One of *Anticimenon* is titled: “On the Unity of the Faith and the Many Forms of Life From Abel the Just to the Last of the Elect” (*De Una Credendi*).⁴⁹¹ This title contains terms used in Anselm’s main argument: Anselm addresses the criticism and scepticism about the multiformity of the religious life – the mutability and seeming inconsistency within the Church as exemplified by its various orders, rules, monks and canons. In reply, he argues that the Church is governed by one Spirit, and that it manifests different kinds of grace: in other words, that this multiformity is good as its sole source is the one Holy Spirit.⁴⁹²

His argument is supported by two examples. Firstly, that the Old Testament displays multiformity, yet holds to the one faith (the ancient fathers are saved by the same faith of the present Church, and the transition to the New Testament does not bar this).⁴⁹³ Thus he places an historical and biblical warrant for multiformity of worship and practice. The second supporting point, transitioning into the time of the Church, claims that the “church of the elect” is one in faith, hope and charity. This “church of the elect” encompasses seven stages of the Church. By saying that the Church is one in faith, hope and charity, Anselm defends against the contention that multiformity of religious life distorts the divine plan.⁴⁹⁴ In fact, such multiformity might rather be said to be part of the divine plan.

⁴⁹¹ Lees, *Anselm*, 106-133.

⁴⁹² Anselm, *Anticimenon: Book One*, trans. Ambrose Criste and Carol Neel (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2010), 47-51 (hereafter citing chapter and page numbers of the translation of Book One).

⁴⁹³ *Anticimenon*, chapters 3-5.

⁴⁹⁴ *Anticimenon*, chapters 7-13.

The Holy Spirit is emphasised as active in history and manifested among people. Distinctions between monks and canons are not highlighted in this work, just as the relative value of action and contemplation are not compared. When Anselm makes distinctions about people, he distinguishes between the good and evil,⁴⁹⁵ and between mature and hypocritical actions.⁴⁹⁶ Ultimately, Anselm defends multiformity, provided differences in religious life conform to the same faith in God and are brought about through the Holy Spirit.⁴⁹⁷

Structure and methods of argument

Book One contains thirteen chapters. The first expresses the widespread amazement of the varied forms of Christian life in Anselm's time.⁴⁹⁸ The second chapter contains his main statement: the Church is governed by one Spirit and manifests different kinds of grace, comparing the Church to a mother with many children.⁴⁹⁹ The rest of Book One defends this statement. The first supporting point demonstrates the Old Testament: sacrificial rites followed natural law, and the ancient fathers were saved in the same future faith.⁵⁰⁰

Transitioning from the Law to the Gospel, and from the Old to the New Testament,⁵⁰¹ Anselm arrives at the second supporting point, examining seven ages of the Church. These illustrate the Church's history, classified as the ages of miracles,

⁴⁹⁵ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 74-5.

⁴⁹⁶ *Anticimenon*, chapters 10; 13.

⁴⁹⁷ In *Anticimenon*, Book 2 Anselm calls the Holy Spirit "charity".

⁴⁹⁸ *Anticimenon*, chapter 1, 47-49.

⁴⁹⁹ *Anticimenon*, Book 2, 49-51.

⁵⁰⁰ *Anticimenon*, chapters 3-4.

⁵⁰¹ *Anticimenon*, chapters 5-6.

persecution and acceptance of Christians, heresy, false Christians, the cry of saints, the coming of the Anti-Christ, and the final stage of the Church.⁵⁰² Within these seven ages of the Church, Anselm examines figures such as Benedict, Norbert, Bernard and others to illustrate multiformity.⁵⁰³ However, the diversity of these figures should not be conflated with other diverse figures such as persecutors or heretics. Anselm presents these in stark contrast to holy men. According to Anselm, different forms of religious life are gifts from God brought about by His will. In other words, multiformity is caused by the Spirit.

Anselm stresses that in the final stage comes silence, an infinite beatitude and revelation of mysteries. Time seems to become disjointed – the seventh stage is not necessarily linked to historical time as comprehended by humans, and is perhaps understood atemporally. That it occurs beyond human comprehension is signalled: “[Although the] elect will contemplate God in his glory, no creature may be understood to comprehend [...] the fullness of the divine substance as it exists.”⁵⁰⁴

Anselm returns to the subject of Church and humanity in relation to God. On one hand, both mutability and variety within the Church (though not in God) and human weakness are present in contemporary history.⁵⁰⁵ On the other, the church of the elect demonstrates both unity and constancy:

“ [It is] one and subject to one God. She is one in the faith in which she steadfastly holds to those things we must believe about both past and future. She is one in the hope in which she patiently looks toward the things for which the faithful must hope. And she is

⁵⁰² *Anticimenon*, chapters 7-13.

⁵⁰³ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10.

⁵⁰⁴ *Anticimenon*, 77-79.

⁵⁰⁵ *Anticimenon*, chapters 9; 13: see 78.

one in the charity in which she loves God and her neighbour in God, and whose embrace she extends even to her enemies for God's sake."⁵⁰⁶

Arguing this further, Anselm uses an analogy of a king's daughter to illustrate that the Church's "faith (...) remains the same even if her form of life changes."⁵⁰⁷ Finally, Anselm hopes that sceptics will be satisfied with his answers, hoping that "no scandal may otherwise offend them so that they despise any form of religious life or turn away from some religious community – if they are willing and if God, who draws all things to himself, presents it to them."⁵⁰⁸ This final idea elaborates the notion of the Church being oriented towards God in unity and in faith.

To reiterate, Anselm moves from observing multiformity in the twelfth century towards explaining and evaluating it. He develops his initial observations about the Church to suggest that between God and Church exists reciprocity. God guides the Church (as a mother guides her children) but the Church, though people are fragile and times change, is one in its faith towards God. The seventh stage is characterised by divine blessedness and silence, creation showing no dissent or rejection of God. Similarly, multiformity displays conformity to God, since the Church is bound to Him. Those doing evil are separate from that phenomenon of multiformity guided by the Spirit. Evil persecutors and heretics dissent, reject God, and destroy, while various holy men (Benedict, Norbert, Bernard) consent to Him, building up religious communities in the Church.

⁵⁰⁶ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 79.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Themes

This section relates charity, action and contemplation to the main theme of multiformity. Considered in this context, charity, action and contemplation are related to a divine plan. Anselm's notion of religious multiformity is informed by his theology and understanding of history, which are to an extent interdependent aspects. His theology is concerned with the relationship between God and the Church, which provides religious multiformity a theological basis. The relationship between God and Church is inextricably linked to religious multiformity, as will be shown. Anselm's historical description spanning from the Old Testament to the end of all ages illustrates various kinds of multiformity, but in particular that of the Church. This historical description comprises most of the text (chapters 7-13). Scholarship has attempted to bridge both Anselm's theology and history, resulting in a "theology of history": Edyvean argues that Anselm's historical outlook is a coherent theology of Christian history. God is continually involved in His Church: just as God is close to the individual soul, so He is also involved in the "progressive development of the essential institutional composite."⁵⁰⁹

Anselm's historical illustration may be more vivid and persuasive than his theological reasoning. Among the seven stages of Church history, the emergence of religious orders appears among other events. Anselm does not discuss specific religious orders or vocations in depth, as might be expected. His discussion of multiformity at the beginning of the work does not lead to a discussion about monks and canons, for

⁵⁰⁹ Walter Edyvean, *Anselm of Havelberg and the Theology of History* (Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1972), 4; 70-74; see 12-35 for analysis of *Anticimenon*, Book 1.

instance; rather, religious orders are used merely as an example. When contrasting persecutors to holy men such as Benedict, Norbert and Bernard, he assumes a relationship between God and his people or the elect.⁵¹⁰

Towards the end of the work, Anselm elaborates the notion of the relationship between God and Church, acknowledging not only steadfastness, but the fragility of human nature and a perpetually changing historical context.⁵¹¹ Multiformity is partly explained through God's guidance and the fragility of human nature, causing the historical context to shift. Various religious orders never fail to be good, appearing at the appropriate time in history and led by holy men. Anselm praises multiformity, perhaps in order to defend Premonstratensians in particular.

Charity, action and contemplation: claims and justification

Action, contemplation and charity are topics interwoven among the major themes, sometimes forming loose connections between each other, at times disappearing from the discussion altogether. This section will discuss charity only where it is explicitly mentioned in the translation by Criste and Neel, avoiding analysis of statements containing the word "love" (e.g. "love of the world," p. 74).

⁵¹⁰ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 77.

⁵¹¹ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 78.

Charity: claims and justification

Charity is mentioned explicitly in three statements concerning the relationships, in various combinations, between God, Church, one's neighbour, false brothers and enemies.

Charity: God and Church

The following claim explains and defends multiformity of the Church: “[The Church] is one – one in faith, one in charity, the only one without any stain of impious infidelity, without any blemish of perverse duplicity.”⁵¹²

This claims that the Church is in fact united, being “one in herself but multiform in respect to her children[.]”⁵¹³ This is not a claim in the sense that it requires justification; rather, it itself is the justification for Anselm's argument, being a part of catholic faith, yet also taken from Holy Scripture:

“May we invite them to consider what we must hold and believe according to catholic faith and Sacred Scripture, how the church of God is one in herself and in her nature but multiform in respect to her children [.]”⁵¹⁴

⁵¹² *Anticimenon*, chapter 2, 50

⁵¹³ *Anticimenon*, chapter 2, 49.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*

The claim itself: “one in faith, one in charity, etc.” is from Ephesians 5:27.⁵¹⁵ The significance of this justifying statement is revealed by its relation to the rest of the passage. Chapter Two is titled: “That the one body of the Church is ruled and governed by one Holy Spirit, and manifests varied kinds of grace.”⁵¹⁶ Hence this statement about the Church being one describes the Church’s relation to God: it is firstly subject and bound to God (suggested by the absence of “impious infidelity” as well as the chapter’s title describing it as “ruled and governed by the one Holy Spirit,”) and in its orientation and faith directed towards God, united in faithfulness.

Secondly, prior to this statement Anselm quotes Song 6:8: “One is my dove, my perfect one [...] the only one of her mother, the chosen of her that bore her.”⁵¹⁷ Anselm explains that just as there is only one generation of the just, so there is only one body of the Church (citing Psalm 111:2), linking this to citation from the Song. Criste and Neel point to Wisdom 1:22-23 when Anselm describes the Holy Spirit the following way:

“[One] in being, manifold, singular, mobile, eloquent, unpolluted, certain, sweet, loving of the good, sagacious, unhindered in his beneficence, humane, benign, stable, sure, having every virtue, foreseeing all, containing every spirit, intelligible, and beautiful in form.”⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁵ Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. 16, 50.

⁵¹⁶ *Anticimenon*, chapter 2, 49.

⁵¹⁷ *Anticimenon*, chapter 2, 50

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*; Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. 17, 50: Gregory of Nazianzus also lists the Spirit’s attributes in his *Faith gives Fullness to Reasoning: The Five Theological Orations of Gregory of Nazianzen* 31.29, trans. Lionel Wickham and Frederick Williams, *Supplements to Vigilae Christianae* 13 (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 295-97. Criste and Neel indicate the work was “virtually unknown in the West.” See Lees, *Anselm*, fn. 109, 197.

Hence the Church, one in charity, is as the beloved woman in the Song, only her beloved is not identified with Christ as usual in twelfth-century exegesis, as Criste and Neel observe, but the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is described in similar terms to the beloved in the Song, and is even called “humane”. As Criste and Neel demonstrate, the Song was a significant text within twelfth-century reform: Bernard of Clairavaux’s commentary proves its significance within the medieval world. Premonstratensians were similarly interested in this text as shown by Philip of Harvengt’s commentary. However, Anselm is less affective than Philip in this case.⁵¹⁹

The significance of calling the church “one in charity” highlights the deep personal relationship with the Spirit; it also reflects the Holy Spirit’s attributes: just as the Holy Spirit is singular and manifold, so the true body of the Church “is always one in the singularity of its singular faith but expressed in multiple forms by the manifold variety of its ways of life.”⁵²⁰ The statement about charity allows Anselm to provide his historical illustration of Abel starting in Chapter Three.⁵²¹

Charity: God, neighbours, false brothers

Anselm’s second claim concerns charity in relationships between God, neighbour and false brothers. Regarding false brothers, Anselm states:

“But let us bear [false brothers, i.e., false prophets and false apostles] in charity and prayerfully wait for them to lay aside their pretence and become true brothers.”⁵²²

⁵¹⁹ Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. 15, 49-50; see Fulton *From Judgment to Passion*, 295-350.

⁵²⁰ *Anticimenon*, chapter 2, 50-51.

⁵²¹ *Anticimenon*, chapter 3, 51.

⁵²² *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 74; Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. 92, 74: cf. 1 Peter 2:1; 2 Peter 2:1.

This describes Anselm's own contemporary historical age of false brothers where many profess the faith and lead a religious life. Anselm seems to consider mainly laymen who publicly profess Christ but deny it in their works: acting in a reverent manner while inwardly iniquitous and hypocritical.⁵²³

This is related to multiformity in two ways: firstly, because Anselm describes the multiformity of religious practice (attending Mass, imposing fasts, et al.) and secular practices informed by religion (suitable comportment, building churches, et al.). Secondly, it describes diverse historical examples of leaders and institutions of religious life: Augustine, Norbert, Benedict, Citeaux, and even the Eastern church following the Rule of Basil the Great.⁵²⁴ Anselm evokes the ascending eagle referring to the rise of new religious life, ascending in contemplation.⁵²⁵

The guidance of the Spirit distinguishes religious leaders, who create new models of life, from hypocrites:

“[The] Spirit sees that, when [faithful people cloyed by a long-familiar religious life] see others ascend to a higher form of religious life they are the more inspired by new models. Leaving behind that sluggishness and love of the world in which they are held back, they then quickly and fearlessly grasp perfection [.]”⁵²⁶

⁵²³ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 65-66; Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. 12, 49: Criste and Neel have translated “*religio*” according to context, since “*religio*” can refer to religious life according to a rule, general religious practice and holy faith.

⁵²⁴ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 68-73.

⁵²⁵ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 74; on Premonstratensian eagle imagery, see Carol Neel, “Philip of Harvengt and Anselm of Havelberg: Premonstratensian Vision of Time”, 488-90; 491-93.

⁵²⁶ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 74.

In other words, false brothers may be led through charity and are potentially transformed into new brothers through the inspiration of new models of religious life: “For they mingle with us and we with them[.]”⁵²⁷ The invitation to bear false prophets and false apostles follows 1 Peter 2:1 and 2 Peter 2:1.⁵²⁸ Anselm justifies this exhortation by considering the outcome, indicating Rev. 14:4 and alluding to Matthew 13:30: although false brothers are among the true ones, ultimately they will not be counted among the saints, but found in hell.⁵²⁹ The invitation to pray suggests a responsibility or at least care for them, reflecting Anselm’s concern for all brethren, including false ones.⁵³⁰ Within broader context of the passage, Anselm points back to the historical example of the Gospels, where Christ claims to the apostles: “Have not I chosen you twelve; and one of you is a devil?”⁵³¹ Anselm argues from this that the existence of false brethren should not be considered remarkable:

“If the devil was present in the company of the apostles, those few chosen by the Lord himself, how could one think that in such a great crowd of just men there would not be false brethren, limbs of the devil?”⁵³²

The section praying for charity of false brethren may give a clear indication of what to do; it is not clear that Anselm provides any other means for ascertaining which brethren are false. He addresses the counter-argument from those who oppose the multiformity of religious life found within his own day, as well as the risk of confusing

⁵²⁷ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 75.

⁵²⁸ Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. 92, 74.

⁵²⁹ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 74-5; Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. 93, 75.

⁵³⁰ cf. Bynum, *Docere*, 195-6.

⁵³¹ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 74; citing John 6:70.

⁵³² *Ibid.*

activity of various religious practices with true faithfulness. Anselm seems to address monks, clerics and even the laity.

Charity: God, Church, enemies

Anselm also describes the charity within the relationship between God, the Church, and her enemies:

“Yet the church of the elect is one and subject to one God. She is one in the faith in which she steadfastly holds to those things we must believe about both past and future. She is one in the hope in which she patiently looks toward the things for which the faithful must hope. *And she is one in charity* in which she loves God and her neighbour in God, and whose embrace she extends even to her enemies for God’s sake.”⁵³³

Anselm reinforces the notion that the Church is united in its relationship to God through faith, hope and charity. For His sake the Church extends charity even to her enemies.⁵³⁴ Anselm does not so much explain multiformity, but emphasises the Church’s uniformity in light of its multiformity. This claim is a justification of multiformity, an interpretation of 1 Corinthians 13:13.⁵³⁵ Anselm reveals an interpretation including all four senses of Scripture. As a passage about virtue, Anselm cannot but interpret it literally. Yet by personifying the Church he reveals an allegorical interpretation. Morally, Anselm uses the passage to suggest what the Church should do.

⁵³³ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 79.

⁵³⁴ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 78-79.

⁵³⁵ Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. 101, 79.

Lastly, as an anagogical reading it speaks of both past and future, suggesting that the virtues (faith and hope) hold to what “we must believe about both past and future” and to what “[the Church] patiently looks toward the things for which the faithfully must hope”. Anselm has already hinted as to what that is previously in the analysis of the seven stages. Charity, it would seem, is ever-present throughout time. The Church is united in charity in loving God, neighbour and enemy: charity is a unifying force.⁵³⁶

He elaborates with further imagery:

“The glory of that daughter of the king, that is of the church, is therefore within, in the beauty of the faith and the testimony of a pure conscience, but she is clothed in golden threads, that is in the variety of forms of religious life and works. She is the chariot of God [...] attended by ten thousands, thousands of them that rejoice (Ps. 67:18).”⁵³⁷

This allegorical exegesis illustrates the inner faith of the church, and the outer manifestations of a multifmortality of religious life and works: in other words, the Church is like the king’s daughter. She has the inner beauty of faith, and the outer beauty of being adorned by different forms of religious life and works.

In conclusion, Anselm’s reference to charity is significant in elaborating the relationship between God and the Church by signifying that the Church must not only hold to God and to each other in charity, but even extend it to its enemies.⁵³⁸ As the statement is at the end of the book it may be considered Anselm’s final word on charity within Book One.

⁵³⁶ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 79.

⁵³⁷ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 79; see Psalm 44:14, Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. fn 102, 79.

⁵³⁸ On difference between charity and friendship, see Aelred, *Spiritual Friendship*, trans. Lawrence C. Braceland (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2010), 2.18-19.

Initially Anselm discussed charity to describe the relationship between Church and God, then to exhort the Church in dealing with its false brothers and finally, to describe and exhort the Church to have charity towards its enemies for God's sake. His use of imagery signifying charity changes, but is mainly feminine, alluding to the Song, Psalm 44 and other texts. Although Anselm defends multiformity, charity seems to be the end towards which multiformity is directed.

Action and contemplation: claims

Anselm discusses various kinds of action, such as bad and mature actions.⁵³⁹ As discussed earlier, Anselm demonstrates religious men taking action to institute various forms of religious life, and their action is driven by charity. This section will now turn to the specific discussion of the stage of contemplation at the end of time, giving a sense of Anselm's understanding of the ultimate relation between action and contemplation.

Action and contemplation: the final stage

Anselm asserts that in the seventh stage of history ultimate contemplation overwhelms the world.⁵⁴⁰ An infinite beatitude occurs on the so-called eighth day:

“a solemn day ... even to the horn of the altar, that is, even to the highest summit of contemplation, among the branches (Ps 117:27) that is, among all the throngs [...] But because this silence [that is to fall on the eighth day] is said to last half an hour, I think

⁵³⁹ *Anticimenon*, chapter 10, 65-6; chapter 12, 76.

⁵⁴⁰ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 77.

this is really what is meant: that although all the elect will contemplate God in his glory, no creature may be understood to comprehend – to know as if actually seeing it – the fullness of the divine substance as it exists.”⁵⁴¹

To place this in context, this passage appears after Anselm’s description of the sixth stage of the Church characterised by the Antichrist, terror, persecution and iniquity. The passage therefore contrasts the oppressive sixth stage with the divine goodness of the seventh. In broader context of the entire work, it implies that Anselm’s contemporary and multifarious age is oriented towards an era of perfect goodness.⁵⁴²

In order to understand the precise relation between action and contemplation within this passage, it is useful to consider it from historical and theological perspectives, both which are linked in Anselm’s exegesis. From the historical perspective, the seventh stage of contemplation stands outside the ordinary active course of history since it signals the beginning of an end: silence of divine contemplation falls abruptly after all has ended.⁵⁴³ The celebration of the infinite beatitude begins, the Holy of Holies is opened to the faithful, and singing commences. As the summit of contemplation, the mysteries are revealed. This all seems to happen within the period of silence, however. Anselm elaborates on this supposedly literal interpretation, transforming it into an allegorical one: the half-hour of silence signifies

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.; Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*, fn. 96, 77: Anselm’s use of *puto*, “I think” stresses that it is his understanding that allegorical figures will be explained at the end time. On revelation and doctrine, see John J. Heneghan, *The Progress of Dogma according to Anselm of Havelberg* (New York: Paulist Press, 1943).

⁵⁴² *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 78.

⁵⁴³ Karl F. Morrison considers Anselm’s theology of the Holy Spirit in *Anticimenon*, Book Two as related to certain models of history and the notion of cyclical movement; Anselm’s historical model shifts to “anti-historical unity” in Books Two and Three. Karl Morrison, “Anselm of Havelberg: Play and the Dilemma of Historical Progress,” *Religious Culture and Society in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of Richard E. Sullivan*, eds. Thomas F. X. Noble and John Contreni (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Medieval Institute Publications, 1987), 224-5.

that the elect will contemplate God's glory, but no one will understand the fullness of the divine substance. Hence the half-hour signifies a beatitude rather than full knowledge of God.⁵⁴⁴ The interpretation seems consistent within itself theologically, even if the allegorical interpretation seems unconvincing. However, to return to the historical aspect, although Anselm offers a certain chronology in terms of the end time and events within it, it is not clearly expressed, suggesting Anselm perceives these as mysteries which cannot be known perfectly or expressed plainly.

That the literal or historical interpretation of Scripture concerning the end time is not particularly fruitful points to the usefulness of allegory for theological expression. Theologically, the passage above relates to an understanding of God's relationship to man in terms of contemplation and revelation about God. Anselm specifies that this will happen when "all has come to an end" and "after many trials,"⁵⁴⁵ giving divine revelation its eschatological perspective. Multiformity within the Church seems at this point to have ended, since time as understood by mankind has come to an end. Multiformity is therefore instrumental for the elect in contemplating God at the end of time. Contemplation becomes the end towards which multiformity and action is directed.

There are two sets of claims regarding contemplation: firstly, a general silence falls during which the elect contemplate God; secondly, contemplation is distinguished from complete knowledge of God. Regarding the former, Anselm understands contemplation to fall according to his interpretation of Rev. 8:1 ("And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven, for about half an hour"). This

⁵⁴⁴ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 77-78.

⁵⁴⁵ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 77.

seems to be a literal interpretation since it follows a sequence of events: after the Church's trial in giving birth to God's sons, a silence of divine contemplation falls in an instant (citing 1 Cor. 15:52). Within this seemingly atemporal end-time, however, Anselm distinguishes a further sequence of events although their precise arrangement is not easily discerned – silence, celebrations and singing are all predicted. Contemplation simultaneously reaches a high summit (citing Ps. 11:27: “among the branches”). Anselm seems to waver between literal, allegorical and anagogical interpretations of Scripture.

Anselm relates his specific understanding of contemplation to revelation, but stresses there is no complete knowledge of the divine substance. Transitioning into more technical and theological language (“divine substance”, “full knowledge” etc.) rather than Scriptural citation, Anselm seems to qualify his previous statements which suggested complete revelation (“the Holy of Holies will be opened to the faithful”)⁵⁴⁶ in order to claim the incomprehensibility of God, including for the elect.⁵⁴⁷

In conclusion, final contemplation falls after the historical ages of multiformity, illustrating Anselm's eschatological outlook.⁵⁴⁸ This specific contemplation seems to be placed in time after the end of the world; generally, contemplation is seen as the ultimate activity of the elect. Anselm does not discuss its resemblance to contemplation within the religious life, although it is associated with silence. Judging by this passage alone, Anselm seems to understand action as a part of history and religious practice (not specifying evangelism or any concrete actions of the regular canons). As Morrison suggests, Anselm understands action and contemplation as complementary for the

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁷ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 77-78. Cf. Bernard of Clairvaux, *DC*, II;V.

⁵⁴⁸ *Anticimenon*, chapter 13, 78.

embodied.⁵⁴⁹ However, for the elect contemplation is the ultimate state where action is not combined with contemplation. Although the precise features of that ultimate contemplation remain unknown it does not necessarily include a complete understanding of God.

Analysis: *Knowledge of Clerics* by Philip of Harvengt

Content: the argument

In the treatise *On the Knowledge of Clerics* Philip argues that clerics should be learned in Scripture to fulfill their role as priests perfectly. Manual labour and acts of care in aid of the Church should be of secondary importance, although potentially called for by necessity or charity.⁵⁵⁰ Learnedness in Scripture – comprising reading and meditation – is equivalent to knowing divine law, enabling clerics to be better teachers, living well, and being guarded from the dangers of ignorance.⁵⁵¹ Philip’s arguments are mainly justified by Old and New Testament quotations.⁵⁵² He also suggests study methods in order to fulfill his stated goals.⁵⁵³ Furthermore, Philip compares monastic and canonical life, criticizing the cloistered life in particular.⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁴⁹ Morrison, “Anselm of Havelberg,” 233.

⁵⁵⁰ Philip of Harvengt, *Knowledge of Clerics* (hereafter “Knowledge”), trans. Carol Neel, *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 2007), 195 (citing page numbers).

⁵⁵¹ *Knowledge*, 201-215.

⁵⁵² *Knowledge*, 197-8.

⁵⁵³ *Knowledge*, 214-216.

⁵⁵⁴ *Knowledge*, 194-5; 212-13.

Structure

Philip's main argument appears near the beginning: clerics should have knowledge of the Holy Scriptures because they are meant to be teachers, to be "filled with the spirit of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge – with all learning."⁵⁵⁵ The rest of his text supports that statement, and could be said to be divided into seven sections.⁵⁵⁶

In the first section, Philip examines the office of clerics as such, inspired by the Old Testament and relying on its authority.⁵⁵⁷ He interprets the tabernacle and various figures from the Old Testament's tabernacle as symbolizing the church and clerics respectively. Moses himself claimed that the clerical office provides judgement.⁵⁵⁸ Philip indicates that Old Testament figures were learned themselves.⁵⁵⁹ This brings him to the point that the clerical office offers help, as humans are liable to uncertainty and potential danger regarding sin: one's mind may change about it, or the senses offer entry into the soul for death as well as life.⁵⁶⁰ Therefore the function of the clerical office is to offer clear guidance so that people may "not struggle in doubt any longer."⁵⁶¹ In order to end misperception, the Lord has chosen the Church as the place for ending the struggle against doubt: "I have chosen, and have sanctified this

⁵⁵⁵ Paraphrasing Exod 31:3. *Knowledge*, 201.

⁵⁵⁶ I. Clerical office: history, function and significance. II. Knowing divine law through reading. III. Proof texts and interpretation on learning and teaching. IV. Learning Scripture in view of human nature V. Criticism of monks and unlearned clerics VI. Nature and study of Scripture. VII. Work in clerical office

⁵⁵⁷ *Knowledge*, 201-3.

⁵⁵⁸ *Knowledge*, 201-2.

⁵⁵⁹ *Knowledge*, 201

⁵⁶⁰ Interpreting Deut. 17:8, Philip writes: "Here I believe that the gates signify our five senses, through which either life or death may enter our soul." *Knowledge*, 202.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*

place [...].⁵⁶² The place is called “the congregation of holy clerics, the convent of religious life to which Moses, that is, divine law, warned those whom he saw dying of the disease of ignorance to enter in humility.”⁵⁶³

The second section begins by arguing that the cleric may know the law through divine reading. This fulfills God’s command and is pleasing to Him.⁵⁶⁴ Philip confirms the purpose of learnedness is to teach, “to educate others to fulfill those commandments as much by word as by example.”⁵⁶⁵ Philip cites a pagan poet unidentified by the translator: “No one can say what he does not know.”⁵⁶⁶

A lengthy digression of prooftexts appears as the third section in order to prove the value of Scripture itself. Within this digression, Philip cites Old Testament prophets.⁵⁶⁷ New Testament prooftexts are meant to demonstrate the value of knowledge arising from Scripture, such as recognizing Christ, gaining everlasting life, with Jesus commending scribes and study. Philip considers Christ’s own methods of teaching the apostles. He also reflects on how Scripture contains all that is to be fulfilled.⁵⁶⁸ Bringing the digression to a close, Philip argues that not just apostles, but that clerics in particular should be knowledgeable in order to obtain salvation for themselves and others, indicating and citing Paul who educated his disciples.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶² 2 Chr. 7:16, *Knowledge*, 202-3.

⁵⁶³ *Knowledge*, 202.

⁵⁶⁴ See Deut. 17:18-19; Jer. 3:15. *Knowledge*, 203.

⁵⁶⁵ *Knowledge*, 203; fn. 2, 275: For Philip’s understanding of mission, see Bynym, *Docere*, 50-55.

⁵⁶⁶ *Knowledge*, 203; fn 3, 275: See Hans Walther, ed., *Carmina medii aevi posterioris latina* 2.4, *Proverbia sententiaeque latinitatis medii aevi* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965), 25884, p. 464, and 25942, p. 473.

⁵⁶⁷ Ezekiel 2:9-3:2 suggests how the study of books enriches one in order to teach. Ezekiel’s vision of eating a book in Philip’s interpretation signifies: “Because the office of the cleric is to enrich with the page of knowledge, he should himself not suffer hunger.” Jeremiah 1:6-7 is cited to show the end of knowledge is teaching. *Knowledge*, 204.

⁵⁶⁸ *Knowledge*, 205-8.

⁵⁶⁹ 1 Tim. 4:13 et al. Further prooftexts from Pauline literature emphasise doctrine (“the mother of virtues”), since “a cleric is only a false example of good works if he is unwilling to embrace doctrine.” (see Tit. 2:7) *Knowledge*, 208-9.

The fourth section reverts to the previous topic of study, and Philip proceeds to describe how to learn. However, this in large part concerns his observations of human nature and vices – for clerics there is no excuse for neglecting to study, not even a lack of means.⁵⁷⁰ Laziness, neglect and impatience do not necessarily stop some from rising in office, a situation which Philip condemns:

“They think it enough simply to be able to read, if they see themselves raised high by riches and honours [...] So we see many who are heaped with riches and profits, decked with ecclesiastical offices, but who nevertheless are simple, idiots and illiterate, so that when they come among clerics gathered for one reason and another, they scarcely dare to speak Latin among them. And if by chance they presume to do so, their speech does not reflect scholarly training.”⁵⁷¹

The fifth section criticizes unlearned clerics and monks in order to indicate what the cloistered cleric should avoid. Unlearned clerics who teach are called presumptuous. Philip finds the cloistered generally “sluggish about diligent reading.”⁵⁷² The cloistered cleric, however, should “entirely [...] be involved in [divine law, i.e., sacred Scripture], if he is to oppose the secular world the more perfectly.”⁵⁷³ The purpose is reiterated: to “make his conversation in heaven” (Phil. 3:20) and “to glory in the beatitude of the perfect” so that “[when] he has learned the law by reading and meditating, he ought to pour it forth to those who seek it in preaching.”⁵⁷⁴

⁵⁷⁰ *Knowledge*, 210.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.* On medieval preaching in Latin and vernacular, see Giles Constable, “The Language of Preaching,” *Viator* 25 (1994): 131-152.

⁵⁷² *Knowledge*, 212.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁴ *Knowledge*, 213.

The sixth section explains the nature of Scripture and offers guidance on studying.⁵⁷⁵ Scripture is mostly obscure and contains hidden meaning. This invites man to investigate it more closely in order to recognize Christ, which is done by pushing “aside all the tumult of the world from our hearts so that nothing inappropriate stands in the way of our reading or blocks our meditation[.]”⁵⁷⁶ Once found, Christ provides spiritual understanding (cf. Matt. 13:11-12). Philip summarizes: “[He] who has diligence will receive understanding.”⁵⁷⁷ Prayers and tears should help obtain understanding as well, clearing the interior eye and transforming the sense spiritually so that Scripture is perceived more clearly.⁵⁷⁸

In the final section, Philip discusses the secondary place of manual labour in relation to study. Clerical involvement in manual labour should not to be criticized, since it may be forced by charity or necessity, as indicated by the example of Paul.⁵⁷⁹ However, study is primary so that a cleric may know, love and worship God better.⁵⁸⁰ He becomes a temple of God in the spiritual sense, “as he provides a holy example to those in his knowledge.”⁵⁸¹ Temple imagery loosely links the end of the work with the beginning where Philip described the tabernacle.⁵⁸² That manual labour is useful,⁵⁸³ but not essential in terms of attaining godliness is shown through interpretation of Pauline literature.⁵⁸⁴ Philip ends with the sentence:

⁵⁷⁵ *Knowledge*, 214-6.

⁵⁷⁶ *Knowledge*, 214.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁸ *Knowledge*, 215-6; see Apoc. 5:1; 5:3; 5:5-8.

⁵⁷⁹ *Knowledge*, 216.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸¹ *Knowledge*, 216-7.

⁵⁸² Cf. *Knowledge*, 201.

⁵⁸³ “Work is indeed useful when it maintains the health of the body, returning to it still more eager for reading.” *Knowledge*, 217.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

“Therefore the cleric ought to keep this resolve first and foremost, that he open himself to the desire for inquiry and knowledge of truth, and that he not engage in manual labour or the care of churches because of curious levity but in obedience to pure and sincere charity.”⁵⁸⁵

Themes: charity, action and contemplation

Philip’s main topic – the office of clerics – branches into subordinate themes: the role of priests,⁵⁸⁶ their education⁵⁸⁷ and the place of work and reading.⁵⁸⁸ Philip discusses charity in connection with manual labour,⁵⁸⁹ as well as reading and methods of reading Scripture. Action and contemplation are mainly discussed with regard to physical labour. Philip only indirectly refers to contemplation by discussing meditative reading.

Charity: claims and justification

This section will first view how charity relates to active ecclesiastical roles as well as physical labour, and secondly, even though Philip omits any mention of charity, the relation between love and reading.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁶ *Knowledge*, 202.

⁵⁸⁷ Teaching methods, nature of Scripture etc., 206-11, 214-5.

⁵⁸⁸ *Knowledge*, 216-17.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid.

Charity and work

Philip considers work to be a useful interlude from reading, but only if done by necessity or through charity.⁵⁹⁰

“Clerics can rightly obtain ecclesiastical roles and from time to time indulge in manual labour, if charity or necessity has forced them to do so, but not because levity has lured them to it.”⁵⁹¹

Philip re-emphasises the cleric’s primary quest for truth:

“ [He] ought to keep this resolve first and foremost, that he open himself to the desire for inquiry and knowledge of truth, and that he not engage in manual labour or the care of churches because of curious levity but in obedience to pure and sincere charity.”⁵⁹²

Philip justifies this with St Paul’s example, who “bore great concern for churches because charity constrained him, and he labored with his hands when necessity pressed.”⁵⁹³ Hence charity and action have a strong connection within clerical duties. Action itself may comprise an ecclesiastical role or physical work: both are possible within the clerical life, as the apostolic example of St Paul reveals. Charity and necessity are both valid reasons for taking action, but truth comes before all else.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁹¹ *Knowledge*, 216; “*Possunt enim et curas ecclesiasticas licenter obtinere, et labori manuum aloquoties indulgere; si tamen ad haec eos non vitium levitatis illexerit, sed vel charitas vel necessitas quasi violenter impulerit.*” PL 203, col.706 A

⁵⁹² *Knowledge*, 217; “*Debet ergo clericus hoc primum et praecipium habere propositum voluntatis, ut vacar appetat inquirendae et scientiae studio veritatis: labori autem manuum, vel curis ecclesiasticis non serviat curiosae impulsu levitatis, sed purae et sincerae obedientia charitatis.*” PL 203, col 708 A.

⁵⁹³ *Knowledge*, 216; “*Apostolis quippe et sollicitudinem gerebat Ecclesiarum, quia eum charitas perurgebat, et laborabat manibus quando necessitas incumberat.*” PL 203, col. 706 B.

Love and reading

While “*caritas*” is not mentioned regarding familiarity with Scripture, affective language is still present. For instance, Philip argues that in order to love God better, priests must know Scripture.⁵⁹⁴ Similarly, the attitude towards and characteristics of reading Scripture – persistence, transformation, etc. – are meant for the purpose of loving God better.⁵⁹⁵ Philip also describes the personal encounter with Christ through Scripture in an affective manner: “For those who wish to find Christ alone must knock, demanding his answer devoutly, for he rejoices to open up the riddles of scripture to those who ask.”⁵⁹⁶ There is a similarity with the *Song* in terms of finding, knocking, answering and rejoicing.⁵⁹⁷ Clearing the heart to make place for reading will allow one to recognize Christ and love him: “Then [when we have laid aside blocks from our hearts] we can focus our understanding on the sacred page in order to recognize Christ the more fully in the benefit of reading and love him whom we know, cling to him whom we love.”⁵⁹⁸

Here Philip uses “*diligamus*” and “*dilectum*”, and establishes a cyclical connection between reading, meditation and the love of Christ. Christ may be found in reading Scripture; in turn, Christ may unlock its spiritual meaning. A personal

⁵⁹⁴ “*Pietatem appellat attentum studium in Scripturis, per quod, juvante gratia, debet clericus et amplius Deum cognoscere, et cognitum tenerius diligere [...]*” PL 203, col 706 C.

⁵⁹⁵ *Knowledge*, 214-7.

⁵⁹⁶ *Knowledge*, 214; “*Est etiam idem Christus devota interrogatione pulsandus, qui aenigmata Scripturum gaudet interrogantibus aperire, si tamen interrogantes singularem eum potuerint invenire.*” PL 203, col. 704 B.

⁵⁹⁷ See Sg. 3:1-5; 6:1; 8:13 .

⁵⁹⁸ *Knowledge*, 214; “*Quaero, quaeso vos, fratres mei, Christum invenimus singularem, nisi quando de cordibus nostris omnem repellimus tumultum saecularem, ut nihil indecens nostrae obstrepat lectioni, nihil obsistat meditationi; sed eo intuito sacros paginis insistamus, ut beneficio lectionis Christum amplius cognoscamus, cognitum diligamus, dilectum teneamus?*” PL 203, col. 794C.

connection with Christ is established in this search for deeper understanding of Scripture, which in turn leads to Christ again.

To summarize, the term “charity” appears in discussion when a cleric is acting for someone else. Care of the Church and manual labour appear together throughout Philip’s argument.⁵⁹⁹ Work for the Church is not discussed in detail, but possibly meant as any ecclesiastical work ordered by a superior, hence the necessity and mention of obedience. Philip does not specify for what purpose manual labour may be employed – possibly implying work for one’s sustenance, or the Church by St Paul’s example. In contrast, terms deriving from “*diligo*” or “*dilectum*” are used in discussions about understanding Scripture and finding Christ, deepening one’s relationship with him as one deepens in understanding of Scripture. Thus Philip uses more intimate language with respect to Christ than one’s fellow people and the Church. Philip possibly believes that charity is meant to be extended to everyone, and that a special relationship is reserved for Christ alone. Philip nowhere speaks of Christ as “friend” but rather in language reminiscent of the Song.⁶⁰⁰

Action and contemplation: attack on cloistered; reading as meditation; teaching

Action has already been discussed to some extent above within a clerical capacity: clerics are to do manual labour or fulfill an ecclesiastical role if necessity or charity demands it. This section will not repeat that discussion, but will attempt to infer Philip’s views on action and contemplation, since Philip does not discuss these

⁵⁹⁹ *Knowledge*, 216-17.

⁶⁰⁰ Cf. Aelred, *Spiritual Friendship*, 1.1.

separately as such, nor in relation to each other. This section will suggest, firstly, Philip's views on action and contemplation in their relation to one another. Secondly, it will consider contemplation in relation to Scripture reading. Thirdly, it will view his ideas on teaching within the framework of action and contemplation.

Action and contemplation: critique of cloistered

This section will attempt to illuminate Philip's notions of action and contemplation by examining his attack on the cloistered, as he clearly considers their practices to be mistaken.⁶⁰¹ His critique is reminiscent of Anselm's criticism in *Epistola*; however, Philip does not generalize as Anselm does.⁶⁰² Furthermore, unlike Anselm, Philip criticizes clerics in high ecclesiastical office who are "simple, [...] and illiterate," unable to speak Latin, or if they do, devoid of scholarly instruction.⁶⁰³ By criticizing those who have, in a sense, a similar vocation to his own he avoids bias against monks, creating a more persuasive argument. To return to the critique of the cloistered, it is not clear, however, whether "cloistered" does in fact signify "monk". He does not mention the word "monk," always signifying them as "cloistered" or "cloistered cleric."⁶⁰⁴ This might reveal perceptions about Premonstratensians as cloistered clerics rather than monks. In either case, Philip contrasts two vocations without specifying them. If he intended to criticize all cloistered people – cloistered clerics (which would include Premonstratensians) as well as cloistered monks – then his attack is against the attitudes that a cloistered life encourages or upholds.

⁶⁰¹ *Knowledge*, 212-4.

⁶⁰² Cf. Ep., 59-60.

⁶⁰³ *Knowledge*, 210.

⁶⁰⁴ *Knowledge*, 212.

Philip criticizes the cloistered for their weakened interest in Scripture and, paradoxically, distractions within their cloistered life. Their initial zeal grows slack, and they become “reprehensibly sluggish about diligent reading.”⁶⁰⁵ They become “bored by meditating on divine law [i.e., sacred Scripture] with appropriate assiduity.”⁶⁰⁶ Instead, a cloistered cleric, “ought to be entirely involved in it, if he is concerned to oppose the secular world the more perfectly, according to what he has vowed [...]”⁶⁰⁷ Furthermore, Philip claims that the cloistered criticize those who attend to reading, “thinking that anyone engaged in transient business is lazy or idle.”⁶⁰⁸ They themselves wish to be occupied with irrelevant matters, and complain when nothing is assigned to them. In other words, they would rather be busy with anything but reading. Finding reading difficult, they neglect it altogether, or if they have no permission to occupy themselves with temporary matters, “they still think about them.”⁶⁰⁹ Philip’s main point is that all those cloistered should read carefully, steadily, diligently and with understanding.

This digression perhaps reveals an assumption that the balance of action and contemplation is difficult to achieve. That the cloistered ought to be engaged in divine reading is clear. However, the purpose of reading for cloistered clerics is to “oppose the secular world.”⁶¹⁰ Reading, associated with meditation and therefore contemplation, is meant to strengthen the cloistered cleric towards a “conversation in heaven” – Scripture “purifies its readers from earthly feeling”.⁶¹¹ Although the world may tempt the

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ *Knowledge*, 213.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁶¹⁰ *Knowledge*, 212.

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

cloistered cleric, he is meant to oppose it, seeing that temporal attractions are misleading.⁶¹² As viewed earlier, a cleric may, in Philip's view, be forced to work within office or even do manual labour – thus perhaps in some level be engaged with the outer world – of necessity. Therefore, theoretically, action in the outer world should be done carefully, so as not to disrupt contemplative reading.

Without stating it explicitly, Philip manages to maintain the position that an active and contemplative life is possible, but that its balance is more difficult than may be previously imagined. For the cloistered barred from temporary business, temptation enters the mind as they grow distracted in their thoughts and unwilling to commit to *lectio divina*.⁶¹³ For those who may be forced to do ecclesiastical work or manual labour, the challenge lies in controlling the level of work, so that desire for reading is not overcome by levity: “It is useful when a cleric controls the work so that it not exceed its bounds, so that desire for reading not yield to levity.”⁶¹⁴

Hence the balance of work and reading, of action and contemplation remains a challenge for all those in the religious life, cloistered or otherwise. Philip suggests that reading remains a primary goal so that knowledge can be manifested afterwards in works: “Because they did not seek first to obtain knowledge, they cannot afterward show its works.”⁶¹⁵ Hence the connection between reading, meditation (possibly contemplation) and action. Philip values reading highly, which would involve some form of contemplation, although this is not specified. It is to this aspect that the next section turns.

⁶¹² Ibid.

⁶¹³ *Knowledge*, 213.

⁶¹⁴ *Knowledge*, 217.

⁶¹⁵ *Knowledge*, 211.

Meditation and reading

Throughout the text, Philip associates reading with meditation. This connection will be examined to understand what significance he places on contemplation, if any. That clerics ought to study is clear from Paul: “Meditate upon these things, be wholly in these things, that thy profiting may be manifest to all.”⁶¹⁶

Similarly: “[We find Christ alone] when [...] nothing inappropriate stands in the way of our reading or blocks our meditation [...]”⁶¹⁷ Reading ought to be diligent, as he suggests in the sixth section on the nature of Scripture and study.⁶¹⁸ Philip’s own guidance only indirectly refers to meditation, and as will be seen, offers an alternative guide to the standard *lectio divina* framework of reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation. That is, he creates a compressed version, using the same concepts. His guidelines for *lectio divina* are characterised by an attitude of asking and receiving from Christ, rather than a series of steps.

As Philip has been emphasising, reading ought to be done assiduously. Meditation is discussed in little depth, perhaps implying the traditional technique of meditation which includes memorizing Scripture.⁶¹⁹ Philip suggests focusing on any “hidden meaning”, which ultimately is associated with prayer. One must ask for Christ’s answer by loving him. Those who find him will be given to understand the spiritual meaning of Scripture.⁶²⁰ Philip concludes:

⁶¹⁶ 1 Tim. 4:15. *Knowledge*, 208.

⁶¹⁷ *Knowledge*, 214.

⁶¹⁸ *Knowledge*, 212.

⁶¹⁹ *Knowledge*, 208; on Philip’s conception of monastic *lectio divina* and academic *lectio*, see Smalley, *Study*, fn. 4, 243; PL 203 col. 165; 1589.

⁶²⁰ *Knowledge*, 214.

“We must therefore pray to Christ when he is alone that he lift the veil of obscurity over the letter of the law and the cloud of blindness over our heart, because the book that has brought letters to our knowledge does not delight as long as it is sealed with seals we cannot break.”⁶²¹

Philip here assumes a two-fold sense of Scripture, of letter and spirit. A certain unification with Christ is completed by the revelation of its spiritual meaning, and delight in knowledge. Philip further suggests that if prayer does not assist then tears are an effective means for clearing and transforming the interior sense, freeing the meaning of Scripture of its obscurity.⁶²² Philip’s variation on the traditional pattern of reading Scripture describes an attitude towards Scripture that is bound up with one’s relationship with Christ. The ultimate result remains similar to monastic *lectio divina* – a certain unitive delight with and about Christ – but the purpose of the reading itself is to fulfill duties of clerical office, including teaching.

Teaching: connections with action and contemplation

Teaching, broadly associated with word, example and preaching specifically, relies on action and contemplation. Teaching is the cleric’s purpose in his divinely instituted ecclesiastical office, and at stake is the life and death of the soul. A cleric’s attitude is oriented towards the other: “Indeed, those judges show the truth to those who ask, for devoting themselves to scriptural study and holding mentally to its commandments, they try diligently to fulfill what they learn – to educate others to fulfill

⁶²¹ *Knowledge*, 215.

⁶²² *Knowledge*, 216.

those commandments as much by word as by example.”⁶²³ He adds – when “[the cleric] has learned the law by reading and meditating, he ought to pour it forth to those who seek it in preaching.”⁶²⁴ In this manner, reading has become a tool for teaching, and a basic requirement for the clerical role.

Within these passages, teaching may be associated with education by word, example and preaching. As Philip has stressed, a balance between action and contemplation is difficult to achieve for those doing any kind of work besides reading, which should be intensely meditative and prayerful. In order to preserve this balance, manual work may temporarily allow time away from reading; however, attentive reading should be constant, since a cleric may educate merely by his example rather than preaching. Theoretically, teaching is the solution to balancing action and contemplation in the religious life, as it combines preparatory meditative reading with subsequent action by example, word or preaching.

Summary

There is a strong connection between all three terms within Philip’s thought regarding clerical duties, especially teaching. Teaching requires reading with love, understanding gained about and from Christ, and action by word, example or preaching. “Word” is not clearly specified as either written or spoken, but probably implies the preaching of the Word. Christ is therefore present, as it were, within reading, meditation, revealing, understanding, teaching. Charity concerns the cleric’s action for

⁶²³ *Knowledge*, 203; cf. Bynum, *Docere*, 195.

⁶²⁴ *Knowledge*, 213; cf. Fulton, *Judgment*, 295-6.

someone else, either work in the Church or manual labour. These examples of action appear in tandem throughout Philip's argument, but are not specified. In either instance, charity or necessity are valid reasons for taking action.

Analysis: *De conversatione virorum religiosorum qui in claustro commorantur* by

Adam Scot

Content

De conversatione virorum religiosorum qui in claustro commorantur compares different roles in the religious life.⁶²⁵ Adam interprets Luke's account of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, declaring Mary superior to the others. He interprets Mary's actions towards Christ as metaphors for the monastic life (resting, learning, recognizing and loving), urging believers to imitate Mary's love for Christ.

Structure

Adam starts by describing the soul's approach to Christ, and Christ's taking the soul to himself. Using bridal imagery and citations from Pauline letters, Adam confirms that the purpose of the soul holding to God is to "be one in spirit with him[.]"⁶²⁶ Essentially, the text describes the goal of the monastic life as expressed in the Rule of St Augustine. Adam intends to examine how the soul is modelled on Mary

⁶²⁵ "On the Life of Those Who Dwell in Enclosure", hereafter "*Sermon XII*" trans. Demetrio Yocum, *CQ* 50;3 (2015): 293-305. Yocum uses the Latin text *Sermo XII in Ad viros religiosos – Quatorze Sermons d'Adam Scot*, (hereafter "Ad viros") ed. François Petit (Tongerloo [Anv.]: Librairie Saint Norbert, 1934, pp. 222-232. Petit's edition is based on the ms. 1003 (Paris, Bibl. Mazarine). Yocum translates only §§1-8; 13-19.

⁶²⁶ Sermon XII: §1 (hereafter citing paragraph numbers in Yocum's translation).

of Bethany, who perceives only God, and in her love Christ is superior to Martha and Lazarus.⁶²⁷ Within this interpretation, Martha and Lazarus symbolise officials and novices respectively.⁶²⁸ In §§4-8 Adam turns to Mary's actions of sitting, listening, as well as touching and anointing Jesus, interpreted as resting, learning, recognition and love.⁶²⁹ Adam digresses, introducing the image of the tree which elaborates his interpretation of Mary.⁶³⁰

The second main part of Adam's sermon (§§9-12) describes the danger of leaving the enclosure without valid reason which results in losing inner quiet. He urges sustaining this inner quiet by shunning exterior concerns and watching the heart vigilantly.⁶³¹ In the third section (§§14-19) Adam interprets Mary's anointing in order to show her as an example for the cloistered. Practices of inner quiet – divine reading and meditation – are associated with her.⁶³² Anointing Jesus signifies knowing him through devotion and love, rather than merely faith and reason.⁶³³ Citing the Song and referring to bridal imagery, Adam specifies how to love Christ perfectly.⁶³⁴ Adam concludes by encouraging individual reflection on what it means to be in relation to Christ as Mary was.⁶³⁵

This structure demonstrates emphasis on the relationship between the individual soul and God. Adam highlights the love between the soul and Christ by using bridal imagery both at the beginning and end of the text. Given this work's context, Adam's teachings may be understood to be directed to those specifically leading the religious

⁶²⁷ Sermon XII: §§1-3.

⁶²⁸ Sermon XII: §3.

⁶²⁹ See *Sermon XII*: §7.

⁶³⁰ *Sermon XII*: §8.

⁶³¹ *Sermon XII*: §§13-14.

⁶³² *Sermon XII*: §§15-19.

⁶³³ *Sermon XII*: §16.

⁶³⁴ *Sermon XII*: §§17-18.

⁶³⁵ *Sermon XII*: §19.

life in enclosure, rather than the religious life generally or laypeople, although the teachings about divine reading, meditation and love of Christ may be useful for anyone.

Themes

This sermon invites consideration of Mary of Bethany as a model of the enclosed religious life which is characterised by contemplation, although contemplation itself is not discussed. One theme is practice within the enclosed religious life (divine reading, meditation, devotion) illustrated through interpretations of Mary sitting, listening and anointing. A second theme is the soul's relation to Jesus within the enclosed religious life. This is also illustrated by exegesis of Mary, as well as bridal imagery. Both of these themes are related because practices within the enclosure are meant to aid the soul in growing closer to Christ. Furthermore, these themes interlock at the end of the text: at the beginning Adam considers the soul drawing closer to Christ; in the middle – religious practice; at the end, the soul's relation to Christ in light of religious practice and the exegesis concerning Mary, particularly anointing.⁶³⁶

Within this scheme, Adam does not contrast action and contemplation as a pair. Firstly, “contemplation” is not mentioned – Adam discusses reading and meditation instead, terms closely associated with contemplation. Secondly, action is not discussed in detail either. He warns against going out of the monastery without good reason. Activity in the sense of “evangelisation”, preaching, or physical work is not discussed.

However, Adam demonstrates an awareness of the contrast between contemplative practices and the active life when discussing Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

⁶³⁶ *Sermon XII*: §§ 18-19.

However, all three figures are associated with roles within the religious house (the “household of obedience”) rather than ranks within the Church. Mary “reminds us of the singular privilege of those who live in enclosure.”⁶³⁷ Martha is in essence a servant within the enclosure:

“Martha reminds us of obedientaries, who are accustomed to be called officials, having been appointed to various offices because, like them, she is drawn and compelled to this service by paternal commission, rather than by her own enthusiasm. The faithful in the household of obedience are assigned in the same way to serve the various needs and concerns of the brothers and sisters.”⁶³⁸

Lastly, Lazarus “reminds us of the novices whose spirits are raised from the dead, who are now in the same household of obedience that we have called Bethany, having been admitted to dine with the Lord.”⁶³⁹ Of all three he writes: “Martha reminds us of ministering and Lazarus of reclining at the table, but Mary reminds us of anointing.”⁶⁴⁰ Adam does not set out to contrast action with contemplation in detail.

The term “charity” is found only once in the text, when citing Sg. 4:9 (“*Vulnerata caritate ego sum.*”)⁶⁴¹ Adam prefers to use words derived from “*amo*”, “*diligo*” and “*dilecto*” throughout the text; Yocum translates all of these as “love”. Further consideration of this will be viewed in the discussion on charity. The sermon is written for Adam’s own brethren – whom he addresses as as “*carissimi*” and

⁶³⁷ *Sermon XII*: §3, 295.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁰ *Sermon XII*: §4.

⁶⁴¹ Petit, *Ad viros*, §18, 231.

“*dilectissimi*”⁶⁴² – and is intended for their benefit and delight: “Understand, brothers, that such a soul is modeled on Mary’s. Today’s sermon will consider her for your pleasure.”⁶⁴³

Charity and love: claims and justification

As mentioned earlier, charity is cited only once: “I am wounded by love.”⁶⁴⁴ This citation is used to describe the one who loves Christ steadfastly and who will delight in him; in turn, this love is precious to Christ.⁶⁴⁵ Otherwise, Adam prefers to use affective words derived from “*amo*”, “*diligo*” and “*dilectio*” throughout the sermon. This reveals a significant difference from Cistercian authors of the same period. The following section turns to Adam’s discussion of charity and other concepts associated with affective spirituality. These notions concern the soul’s relation to Christ through desire, emotion, faith and reason.

Charity and affective terms: suffering, desire and emotion

Adam’s citation “*Vulnerata caritate ego sum*” does not seem to derive from Jerome’s Vulgate, which reads “*vulnerasti cor meum soror mea sponsa vulnerasti cor meum* [...]”⁶⁴⁶ Adam’s citation of Sg. 4:9 is used to suggest that charity has wounded the bride; the bride on the other hand desires a vision granted by the bridegroom. The

⁶⁴² Petit, *Ad viros*, §1; §3, 222-223.

⁶⁴³ *Sermon XII*: §1.

⁶⁴⁴ “*caritate*”; Sg. 4:9: *Sermon XII*: §18.

⁶⁴⁵ *Sermon XII*: §18.

⁶⁴⁶ <http://www.latinvulgate.com/lv/verse.aspx?t=0&b=24&c=4> Accessed May 28, 2017.

bride prays that the saints may help her, who tell her “that nothing is hidden to the one who has this sort of love and who says with great desire, I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you may find my beloved tell him this: ‘I am faint with love.’ (Sg. 5:8)”⁶⁴⁷ While the bride has been wounded by “*caritas*”, “*affectum*” signifies her own love, and “*amore*” – her languishing in love. This produces a rich affective tone. Adam adds further shades of steadfast and jealous love.⁶⁴⁸ However, charity clearly refers to the soul’s reception of Christ (rather than relationships with others) and to the perfection of that relationship.

Love: faith, reason, and works

Adam is clear that loving Christ perfects knowledge and belief in him.⁶⁴⁹ Ointment and anointing are images used for signifying reason, faith and love. The scent of the ointment signifies both faith and reason:

“What is the light of reason in us, what is the certainty of faith? Is it not certain sweet-smelling fragrance? As we said above, we may be able to detect an object when it is not present.”⁶⁵⁰

Similarly, “by the scent of searching reason, we seek what is absent [...] until we can embrace what is present, comprehending by faith.” The tone shifts with the

⁶⁴⁷ “*Nihil est occultum quaelm erga ipsum habet affectum et cum magno desiderio dicit: Adjuro vos, filiae Jerusalem, ut si inveneritis dilectum meum nuntietis ei quia amore languo.*” Petit, *Ad viros*, §18, 232.

⁶⁴⁸ *Sermon XII*: §§17-18; Sg. 4:9.

⁶⁴⁹ *Sermon XII*: §16.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

citation of Rom. 1:21 (on knowing God but not honouring Him) and Lamentations 1:7 (people experiencing their downfall by not sitting, listening, discerning, understanding and preparing for the end).⁶⁵¹ Adam has already evoked regal connotations through anointing imagery, but the mention of honour brings Christ's majesty to the forefront. Love, significantly, is not merely the desire to find Christ, or to know and believe in him, but also to honour him fully. Adam associates this honour with love and works:

“[Since they who do not love] have no works, faith is dead, and reason likewise has been blinded because virtue was not embraced. They touched him and did not anoint him, because they recognized him and did not love him.”⁶⁵²

Adam suggests that Christ is pleased by the “sweetness of true love” which “consists in the full consideration of his benefits.”⁶⁵³ To encourage honouring Christ, Adam invites consideration of all benefits throughout time:

“Therefore, you must keep the benefits of [past, present and future] in mind as much as you can, considering the times past and providing for the present, just as if you could anoint him with the ointment in the alabaster jar.”⁶⁵⁴

Hence faith and reason are pleasant and even necessary, but without love there is no perfection of the personal relationship with Christ. The initial wound of charity can be considered Christ's touching the inner being or soul so that it receives him passively,

⁶⁵¹ Ibid.

⁶⁵² Ibid.

⁶⁵³ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

followed by spiritual activity – a rational search, faithful comprehension and love replete with honour.

Action and contemplation: claims and justification

Although Adam does not discuss action and contemplation explicitly, this section refers to his interpretation of Martha as a figure representing action, before discussing meditation and reading as indirect references to contemplation.

Action: Martha's ministering

The closest discussion of action occurs when Adam discusses Martha ministering to other brothers and sisters. However, Adam does not discuss action in the sense of evangelisation or manual labour, or even teaching by priests. Martha's role is subordinated to Mary's, albeit with some qualification: Martha's role is that of obedientia. She is "great and eminent, and to be called to minister to [Christ] is to command, to serve him is to rule, and to be called into active service for him is to govern."⁶⁵⁵ The same level of dignity is allocated to Lazarus, or the novices, who have come to dine with the Lord, that is, entered the household of obedience to sense his sweetness, to become part of his family and "members of the household of God."⁶⁵⁶

Martha's role partly includes serving Christ, but not him exclusively. Part of active service implies a relation of superiority to others. However, the essential aspect

⁶⁵⁵ *Sermon XII*: §2.

⁶⁵⁶ *Sermon XII*: §3; see Eph. 2:19.

of Martha is her ministering generally, hence ministering to others. Mary, on the other hand, is only involved in standing in direct relationship with Christ through love and contemplation.⁶⁵⁷ Adam does not criticize Martha, but he describes Mary in more depth and praises her highly.

A factor for considering why Martha is placed in a relatively lower status is the perceived danger outside the cloister. Those ruling the cloister would be presumably in more contact with the outside world.⁶⁵⁸ The inside of the cloister is associated with Mary and blessedness, whereas the outside – with disinheritance:

*“Conversimini igitur in interioribus vestris qui Mariae figuram tenetis, de qua scriptum habetis quia Maria domi sedebat. Manete domi et cum Jacob, si ad paternam desideratis pertingere benedictionem. Foras Esau moratur et exhaedetur, intus vero Jacob benedicitur.”*⁶⁵⁹

Adam’s judgement about the active role comes through the consideration that contemplation places one in a close relationship with Christ, while action is necessary for the functioning of the cloister to create the necessary conditions for exterior and interior stillness.

⁶⁵⁷ *Sermon XII*: §4.

⁶⁵⁸ Adam possibly associates the outer world with the diabolical: *“Nam praetenduntur quaedam causae honestae, sicque foris claustralis attrahitur, sed ab eodem qui attrahit eum mox insidiatore capitur, et raptus devoratur cum per consensum hostis eum antiquus deglutit.”* Petit, *Ad viros*, §9, 226.

⁶⁵⁹ Petit, *Ad viros*, §10, 226; not translated by Yocum.

Contemplation: clearing the mind, reading and meditation

Adam makes no reference to contemplation directly, but indirectly by referring to meditation and *lectio divina*. Prior to this, quiet and stillness must be attained – Adam indicates that secular business can be responsible for loss of interior quiet, as much as engaging in gossip.⁶⁶⁰ Having cleared away distractions protecting inner stillness, “pure meditation” and reading Scripture are two ways of hearing Christ in imitation of Mary.⁶⁶¹ Adam previously mentioned Mary’s sitting, hearing, touching and anointing as signifying resting, learning the commandments, comprehending with insight, and loving Christ. These are all recommended for the enclosed life, and Adam interprets them as signifying the acquiring of tranquility, experience and enlightenment as well as becoming enkindled.⁶⁶²

Meditation is closely associated with *lectio divina*. These are only two spiritual exercises among others, Adam adds, that are successful and necessary. For Adam, reading pertains to possessing knowledge and simply knowing, whereas meditation signifies to retaining knowledge and recalling it. Jesus is involved with both practices:

“in both cases indeed Jesus speaks; one word of his is expressed *for* us, the other truly *in* us – one you are taught through reading the Scriptures, the other through the Holy Spirit, whose anointing teaches not only some things, but everything (1 Jn. 2:20, 27).”⁶⁶³

⁶⁶⁰ *Sermon XII*: 299; §13.

⁶⁶¹ *Sermon XII*: §15.

⁶⁶² *Sermon XII*: §7.

⁶⁶³ *Sermon XII*: §15.

In other words, reading Scripture means reading the words, while the spirit or meaning is unveiled by the outpouring of the anointing Spirit, who provides understanding. Adam reaffirms the inseparability of the letter and spirit of Scripture, hence the inseparability of reading and meditation. Furthermore, Mary is someone with whom to hear Christ: “So you, who are called to Mary’s role, sit at the feet of Jesus; in this way, with her, you will hear his words.”⁶⁶⁴ Reading and meditation are means for gaining knowledge and love of Christ. It is significant to realize that knowledge of Christ following reading and meditation is still the result of being taught (“once you are still, and are taught, you will rise in knowledge of him”),⁶⁶⁵ rather than growing more knowledgeable merely by one’s own powers. Adam assumes that knowledge of Christ is received by grace, although through the aid of faith and reason: “in [...] present life we have that knowledge of him that is made up of faith and reason.”⁶⁶⁶

The Gospel demonstrates that “knowledge through faith pertains to touch” – this association between knowledge and touch is found in several Gospel passages.⁶⁶⁷ This knowledge is called a “double touch” (through faith and reason); furthermore, it is a mystical and hidden way to Christ.⁶⁶⁸ To summarize, reading and meditation bring a means of contact with Christ through the Holy Spirit, and these spiritual exercises lead to knowledge of Christ, and ultimately, through love and total concentration upon God, and unity with Him.⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid.; cf. Mk 6:25-34 et al.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁹ *Sermon XII*: §1; §15.

Summary

On some level, charity within this sermon is reflected throughout all discussions of religious practices and the soul's relationship with Christ. "*Caritate*" and other affective vocabulary describes that relationship. Charity itself wounds the soul, and the soul responds to this. This response is illustrated by an interpretation of Mary anointing Christ. Therefore charity ultimately leads to intimacy with Christ through reading, meditation and love. Contemplation here is most likely implied, but is not explicitly stated. The contemplative attitude is instrumental, as love is of ultimate importance in perfecting that relationship. Regarding action, Martha symbolizes the superior within the enclosed life who ministers, serves Christ, and is called into active service. Though highly commended, she stands in lower rank to Mary. Departing from other interpretations of these figures, Martha and Mary here do not signify a particular vocation, such as monk or cleric, but a role within the enclosed life.

Conclusions: Premonstratensian teachings on charity, action and contemplation

Anselm, Philip and Adam stand on various points of the spectrum regarding action and contemplation. Anselm's *Epistola* advocates a balance of action and contemplation, sharply criticizing monastic contemplative life, since a life without action may lead to a dislike of meditation. In his interpretation, Christ is a teacher balancing both action and contemplation, therefore outranking both Martha and Mary. *Anticimenon*, however, teaches an ultimate state of contemplation for the elect. Philip considers that action and contemplation may need to be balanced, but envisages a

cyclical scheme whereby reading and meditation serve the purposes of teaching and preaching – active ecclesiastical work. Manual labour can be beneficial if done temporarily, but always out of charity or necessity. Adam in context of the enclosed religious life teaches that meditation helps constitute a relationship with Christ, which is ultimately perfected by love.

To a lesser extent, all three writers refer to charity, at times using affective vocabulary. However, when charity is mentioned, they refer either to work, relationships or the soul. Although some perceive that Anselm invokes charity ironically, he does discuss charity in combination with action as a way of fulfilling the law, as in *Epistola*. In *Anticimennon*, his reference to charity elaborates his vision of the relationship between God and the Church: although he speaks of “love for the world,” he teaches that the Church must not only hold to God and to each other in charity, but even extend charity to its enemies. In *Knowledge of Clerics*, charity interlocks with action: Philip references charity only in relation to work, either for someone else or the Church; this could include teaching and preaching. Otherwise, Philip uses terms associated with “*diligo*” when discussing reading. Adam’s sermon indicates that the soul is wounded by charity, which serves as a starting point for the soul’s emotional reactions and desire for Christ. However, when constituting that relationship with Christ, Adam uses words such as “*affectum*”.

Knowledge of Clerics is closest to combining the notions of charity, action and contemplation into an organic whole. Philip clearly envisages the specific purpose of clerics in their work, reading, preaching, teaching, all of which are done for the sake of charity. What unites all these works, however, is a certain didactic tone, although this should not be overstated. Anselm attempts to correct Egbert and teaches goodness of

multiformity, encouraging religious groups;⁶⁷⁰ Philip assumes teaching is part of clerical duties; Adam exhorts his readers. To this extent, perhaps inadvertently, they display teaching and edification by word for the sake of another.

⁶⁷⁰ On Premonstratensians teaching others, see Bynum, *Docere*, 195-6.

Final Conclusion

This thesis aimed to view Cistercian and Premonstratensian teachings on charity, action and contemplation. Although to a certain extent all texts contain such teachings, the three terms are rarely viewed together. More often they appear in various combinations such as action and contemplation, charity and contemplation and so forth. Authors cite various biblical passages or other authorities. Where explicit justification is not given, they rely on Scripture, the Church Fathers, classical texts, and also their own experience.

The texts reveal a broad spectrum of teachings concerning action and contemplation, which do not correspond to a particular religious order. For instance, contemplation remains in higher stead for both Adam Scot and Aelred. For Bernard and Philip, contemplation and action must remain in balance, especially within ecclesiastical office. Cistercians demonstrate a more nuanced view of action, referring to spiritual as well as physical activity, while Premonstratensians tend to use it merely in the sense of physical action. All writers refer to charity, but with different emphases and purposes. Generally speaking, Cistercian writers refer to charity explicitly and more often. Some of the texts refer to charity when addressing the reader directly. When discussed as a topic, writers refer to the ultimate end of time (Anselm), human nature and relationships (Aelred), or divine attributes (Anselm and Bernard). Charity is rarely discussed together with action and contemplation by writers from either order. Aelred connects it to the ways to pursue an attachment to neighbour. Among Premonstratensians, Philip is closest to discussing all three terms, teaching that a basic requirement within the clerical profession is reading, preaching and work.

There are a few possible reasons for the differences and similarities between the teachings of both orders. Besides the different professions and circumstances of each author, Cistercians and Premonstratensians followed different Rules, placing different emphases in their religious life. As Bynum notes, they had different ideals of action and contemplation: Cistercians are generally more concerned with the salvation of the self, while Premonstratensians broadly support the idea of helping others. However, the Cistercian texts here clearly display an interest in helping their fellow brothers, whether in papal office or the novitiate.

Monks and regular canons as members of different religious professions reveal a common medieval mentality, as both believe in the importance of the intentions and actions of the soul and body. They share similar exegetical methods, relying on the four senses of Scripture, as well as conviction that the religious life brings closer union with God. Both Cistercians and Premonstratensians were keen at articulating what that religious life meant, explicating the meaning of such terms as “regular canon” and “monk” (cf. Rupert of Deutz, Anselm, Aelred). This necessarily involved discussing action, contemplation and charity as basic aspects of the religious life. Martha and Mary as figures symbolising action and contemplation since the patristic age are used to teach the correct balance between action and contemplation in the religious life. All writers use similar exegetical methods, and are more concerned with practice rather than knowledge for its own sake. Finally, these twelfth-century texts demonstrate medieval humanistic theology, focusing on the inner nature of humans and their relation to God, both individually and as a group within the religious profession. Charity, action and contemplation are fundamental terms within these discussions. Precursors to scholastic theology, these texts distinguish shades of meaning for action, contemplation and

charity but do not categorise these in the manner of scholastic theology. Discussed in no particular order, the writers almost informally demonstrate how to apply these teachings in life. Their ultimate goal was to show their readers how to draw into closer union with God, charity at the centre of the religious life radiating through action and contemplation.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

<i>AP</i>	Analecta Praemonstratensia
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis
<i>CQ</i>	Cistercian Quarterly
PL	Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne. 221 vols. Paris: Migne, 1841-64.

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