Richard of St. Victor's Argument for the Necessity of the Trinity: An Exposition and Analysis of the Argument for a Tri-Personal God in *De Trinitate*

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Abstract

In his magnum opus, *De Trinitate*, the twelfth century canon Richard of St. Victor offers sustained reflection on core dogmatic claims from the Athanasian creed. At the heart of the treatise is Richard's argument for exactly three divine persons. Starting with the necessity of a single, maximally perfect divine substance, Richard reasons along four steps: (i) God must have maximal charity, or other-love; (ii) to be perfectly good, delightful, and glorious, God's other-love must be shared among at least two, and (iii) among at least three, divine persons; (iv) the metaphysics of divine processions and love each ensure the impossibility of four divine persons. Scripture and trustworthy church authorities already give Richard certainty in these truths of faith. Even so, as an act of ardent love Richard contemplates on the Trinity as seen in creation. From this epistemic point of departure, he supports his conclusions from common human experience alone.

Recently, philosophers of religion – such as Richard Swinburne, William Hasker, and William Lane Craig – have used Richard's trinitarian reflection as a springboard for constructive work in apologetics and ramified natural theology. Additionally, medieval and Victorine scholars have increasingly recognized the novelty and rigour of Richard's contribution to trinitarian philosophical-theology. However, to date there has been no dedicated study of the heart of Richard's project in *De Trinitate*. In this thesis I offer an historically informed exposition of Richard's argument for the necessity of the Trinity, as well as philosophically informed analysis. Further, I address some of the most pressing concerns with Richard's argument. Richard's work is not only suggestive, but highly compelling. If sound, it is situated to contribute to the contemporary philosophical and theological trinitarian discussion. I conclude by considering its application for (so called) Latin and Social, as well as heterodox, trinitarian theologies.

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INTRODUCTION

0.1 Renewed Interest in Richard of St. Victor's Trinitarian Thought

Speculation on divine triads and on the Christian Trinity has a deep history and pedigree, from Pherecydes to Plato, Plotinus to Proclus, through Origen, Bonaventure, Hegel and beyond.¹ One of the most sophisticated examples of specifically trinitarian speculation in the Western philosophical-theological tradition is Richard of St. Victor's *De Trinitate* (published c. 1171). At the centre of the treatise is an argument for the necessity of the Trinity. This thesis is devoted to understanding that argument.

The present study stands at the intersection of two fairly recent research programs. The first is a budding – I dare say blooming – field of Victorine studies, which studies the thought and lives of those from the abbey of St. Victor.² Previous generations of scholars often viewed Richard one dimensionally, usually as a 'mystic'. Today, scholars increasingly recognize his multi-faceted contributions, attending, for instance, to his philosophical-theological themes. This has recently yielded some excellent studies on Richard's view of Trinity, divine personhood, and love, among other topics.³

The second research program is the relatively new field of 'ramified' (that is, expressly Christian) natural theology, which has reignited interest in trinitarian argumentation.⁴ This work is natural

¹ For examples of each, see: See Hermann Schibli, *Pherekydes of Syros* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). For a shorter, though less focused overview, see Herbert Granger, "The Theologian Pherecydes of Syros and the Early Days of Natural Philosophy," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 103 (2007): 135–63. Plato, *Timaeus and Critias* (London: Penguin Books, 1971), 4 (29B-E); see also *Phaedrus* 247Aff. For a place to start with Plotinus, see James Wilberding and Plotinus, *Plotinus' Cosmology: A Study of Ennead II.1 (40): Text, Translation, and Commentary* (OUP Oxford, 2006).

For Proclus see, Dennis Clark, "The Gods as Henads in Iamblichus," *International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 4, no. 1 (April 2010): 54–74. About these early Greek thinkers Abelard would (controversially) aver, "they clearly expressed a compendium of the whole Trinity after the prophets." Abelard, "Theologia Christiana," in *Opera Theologica*, ed. E.M. Buytaert, vol. 2, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), sec. 1.68.; quoted in Tullio Gregory, "The Platonic Inheritance," in *A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*, ed. Peter Dronke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 59. For Bonaventure, see Dennis Bray, "Bonaventure's Argument for the Trinity from Beatitude," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Fall 2021, (forthcoming). Hegel's triadic speculation is part of his notion of dialectic; out of the sea of literature on this topic, a work focused on the triadic argument is Dale M. Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim: A Critical Reflection* (SUNY Press, 2012).

² Besides many stand-alone articles and books, two series stand out, both published by Brepols: the *Bibliotheca Victorina* is a series of monographs dedicated to Victorine studies. More than anything else, though, the *Victorine Texts in Translation* will smooth the paths for English speakers to study of Richard and his contemporaries at St. Victor. For a recent overview of the growth of Victorine scholarship, see Dominique Poirel, "An International Revival of Victorine Studies," in *Omnium Expetendorum Prima Sapientia: Studies on Victorine Thought and Influence*, ed. Dominique Poirel and Jan Janecki, Bibliotheca Victorina 29 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2021), 11–20.

³ An example of each: Martin Schniertshauer, *Consummatio caritatis: Eine Untersuchung zu Richard von St. Victors De Trinitate*, Tübinger Studien zur Theologie und Philosophie 10 (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1996); Nico den Bok, *Communicating the Most High: A Systematic Study of Person and Trinity in the Theology of Richard of St. Victor*, 1996; Pierluigi Cacciapuoti, *Deus existentia amoris: teologia della carità e teologia della Trinità negli scritti di Riccardo di San Vittore (+1173)*, Bibliotheca Victorina 9 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998).

⁴ A good place to start is the ramified natural theology themed issue of *Philosophia Christi* 15, no. 2 (Winter 2013).

theology because participants look to non-scriptural, publicly accessible sources to support their claims. It is Christian because participants seek to provide reasons for believing certain trinitarian doctrines. Largely responsible for the current resurgence of interest is Richard Swinburne's *The Christian God* (1994), in which Swinburne mentions Richard of St. Victor by name and uses Richard's argument for the Trinity from love as a starting point for his own constructive argument.⁵ Other contemporary proponents include Thomas Morris, Stephen Davis, William Lane Craig, and William Hasker.⁶ These thinkers follow Swinburne's lead by drawing from Richard and basing their arguments in our common experiences of love.

All of this renewed attention to Richard's trinitarian thought is quite welcome. However, despite this excellent work, scholars have failed to give *De Trinitate's* arguments serious, sustained consideration.⁷ Worthy of study in and of themselves, critical attention to *De Trinitate's* arguments can also strengthen some weak points in both contemporary analytic trinitarian theology and Ricardine scholarship. Let me sketch one example of each.

Early specialists focused on what they took to be Richard's mystical, or spiritual, works, such as his famous *Twelve Patriarchs* and *Mystical Ark*.⁸ Viewing Richard as a mystic, however, led to reading other works, such as *De Trinitate*, through the lens of mysticism. On this reading, *De Trinitate* is understood as a vehicle for mystical ascent, a depository of psychological insight, or an early example of the phenomenology of love. Whichever of these mystical-psychological features, and whatever else, accurately characterize it, one thing is clear: *De Trinitate* offers a cumulative-case of hard-nosed, philosophically demanding arguments. In *De Trinitate*, Richard makes measured claims and supports them with sober, methodical reasoning. Even a passing reading of *De Trinitate* reveals that Richard expects his reader to consider his arguments with something like the same seriousness with which he constructs them. Further, in some important respects *De Trinitate's* other characteristics stand or fall with the arguments. Stated another way: the contemplative mystical ascent, the psychological insight, and all the other features of *De Trinitate* recognized by scholars really matter most if the arguments are good ones. If those arguments fail, then the treatise is of less interest – useful perhaps as a sourcebook of novel trinitarian thinking or, more damning, as a

⁵ Richard Swinburne, *The Christian God* (Oxford England : New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 170–91. See also Richard Swinburne, *Was Jesus God?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, USA, 2010), 28–38.

⁶ Thomas V. Morris, *Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2002), 174–84. Stephen T. Davis, *Christian Philosophical Theology* (Oxford; New York: OUP Oxford, 2006), 60–78. J.P. Moreland and William Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 2003), 594–95. William Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 220–23.

⁷ Two studies give philosophical analysis, though are far from exhaustive: Andrew Kirschner, "Will-Independent Mereological Trinity Monotheism: A Defense of the Logical Coherence of, A Priori Motivation for, and a Particular Model Concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity" (PhD thesis, University of Arkansas, 2019); Bok, *Communicating the Most High.*

⁸ For good contemporary examples, see: Jean Châtillon, *Trois opuscules spirituels de Richard de Saint-Victor: textes inédits accompagnés d'études critiques et de notes* (Études Augustiniennes, 1986). Michael W. Blastic, "Condilectio: Personal Mysticism and Speculative Theology in the Works of Richard of Saint Victor" (PhD thesis, Saint Louis University, 1992). Steven Chase, *Angelic Wisdom: The Cherubim and the Grace of Contemplation in Richard of St. Victor*, Studies in Spirituality and Theology 2 (University of Notre Dame Press, 1995).

case study in intellectual overreach.⁹ Alternatively, if Richard's arguments are overall effective, then their import and application goes beyond (though does not diminish) the aspects of spiritual ascent.

Among philosophers of religion, *De Trinitate's* arguments are treated even more casually. Those arguments, to the limited extent that they are recognized, are used almost purely as a springboard for the author's constructive account. The arguments themselves receive almost no attention. Thus, the most basic features of Richard's case are borrowed, i.e., the philosopher advances a philosophical argument for the existence of the Trinity, in some way grounded in the notion of love.¹⁰ But other than as very general inspiration, Richard's arguments serve little purpose.

A dedicated study of Richard's arguments can advance our understanding of Richard's philosophical significance, his mystical-spiritual thought, and his contribution to trinitarian theology. Such a study can also advance trinitarian natural theology since a deep grasp of Richard's arguments will only serve to improve our own arguments. The need, then, is for an historically sensitive, analytically rigorous exposition, analysis, and evaluation of Richard's trinitarian arguments. In this thesis I aim to deliver just that.

0.2 Aims, Scope, and Objectives

This thesis presents a close reading of Richard's trinitarian argument in *De Trinitate*. The treatise itself is an extended argument for key claims from the first half of the Athanasian creed (the *Quicumque Vult*¹¹). The first half of the creed – the half to which Richard attends in *De Trinitate* – is about God *ad intra*, namely, the single divine substance and the relationship between the three divine persons. Briefly summarized, *De Trinitate's* six books proceed as follows. The first book (*DT* 1) argues for the existence of a single necessary substance that is identical to its attributes (e.g. power, wisdom, and divinity), that is supreme (maximally good), and that is the ultimate cause of the rest of the universe. Identifying the supreme substance as God, *DT* 2 argues for some of God's key attributes (e.g. eternality, immeasurability, immutability), argues that these properties are incommunicable (i.e., they cannot be had by other substances), that God cannot be fully comprehended, and that God is maximally good and happy. Employing the attributes of goodness, joy, and glory, *DT* 3 argues that there are at least three divine persons in (or had by) the single substance. *DT* 4 advances a detailed analysis of personhood to pinpoint the nature of the object of study in books three and five. *DT* 5 employs the notions of causality and love to argue against

⁹ Thus I cannot join with Salet in his willingness to overlook failures in the argument (e.g. Richard's argument against four divine persons): "We [can] forgive an author of almost anything, so long as he is suggestive." Nor do I agree with Salet when he continues: "The thinker is valued [evaluated, *vaut*] by his fundamental intuition; it is this contribution that nothing will be able to devaluate. Now, is there an intuition more precious and more suggestive than that which helps us to see and think better of the Trinity as infinite Love, as subsisting Charity?" If Richard's arguments are on the whole bad, then they are suggestive, but false, dramatically decreasing the "preciousness of the fundamental intuitions." Richard of St Victor, *La Trinité: Texte Latin, Introduction, Traduction et Notes*, trans. Gaston Salet, Editions Du Cerf (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1959), 32.

¹⁰ Examples are, again: Swinburne, *The Christian God*; Morris, *Our Idea of God*; Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*; Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*.

¹¹ Alternatively known as the Pseudo-Athanasian creed since it was probably not written till the fifth century and so not written by Athanasius himself.

the possibility of four (or more) divine persons. *DT* 6 argues that certain names appropriately belong to each divine person, such as Father, Son, Word, Spirit, and Gift.¹²

I will direct my attention to the part of *De Trinitate* that bears most immediately on the necessary existence of exactly three divine persons.¹³ This will place our focus almost entirely on *DT* 3 and $5.^{14}$ The project in these two books of *De Trinitate* can be outlined in four steps, in which Richard argues that, necessarily:

Step 1 – The divine, a se substance has supreme charity

Step 2 – Supreme charity obtains between at least two divine persons

Step 3 – Supreme charity obtains between at least three divine persons

Step 4 – It is impossible for there to be four or more divine persons

These four steps are the heart of *De Trinitate*, and I will refer to them collectively as *The Argument*. My goal in this thesis is to secure a deep understanding of The Argument. Following its four-step structure, I aim to understand The Argument by meeting the following five objectives: (i) providing a line-by-line exposition that is (ii) historically contextualized and (iii) philosophically informed; (iv) restating my exposition in streamlined outlines, and (v) translating all quotations into English. Since these are the five criteria by which I will gauge the success of the thesis, I will say a bit more about each.

First, I will give a line-by-line exposition of each sub-argument composing the four stages. I do this primarily by outlining the individual claims of a sub-argument. In my outlines, I stay close to Richard's language and ordering of premises. As I work through each premise, though, I will sometimes rearrange Richard's arguments into new outlines for the sake of clarity. Second, since the best interpretive practice is historically conscientious, I examine key terms and concepts in their twelfth century context and, when necessary or helpful, identify some intellectual predecessors to certain ideas Richard deploys. Third, throughout my exposition I attend to metaphysical elements of The Argument, and to the logical relations between its premises. Fourth, to aid further study and use of Richard's speculation, I add my own outlines of Richard's arguments. As often as possible these are streamlined forms of the argument they represent; even so, they seek to express an argument's logical progression, and so at times are more complex than Richard's version (since they state hidden claims, underlying principles, etc.). Additionally, fifth,

¹² My summary is about as terse as they come. A good longer summary is Chase, *Angelic Wisdom*, 23–58. More thorough still is Uwe Kühneweg, "Der Trinitätsaufweis Richards von St. Viktor," *Theologie Und Philosophie* 62 (1987): 401–22.

¹³ As the title *De Trinitate* indicates, the whole work is about the triune God. Richard fits snuggly into the larger Western tradition in that he makes no sharp division between the so called '*de Deo uno*' and '*de Deo trino*' – that is, between treatises on divine oneness and on threeness. The upshot is that the entire *De Trinitate* is about the one single divine substance that is three divine persons. If Richard's arguments are on the whole good, then our concept of divine persons includes that of a single, simple divine substance. On the unity of arguments for single divine substantiality and tripersonality, see Gonzàlez, who considers the variant title *De Unitate Trinitate* as telling; Olegario González de Cardedal, *Misterio trinitario y existencia humana: estudio histórico teologico en torno a San Buenaventura* (Madrid: Rialp, 1966), 304.

¹⁴ To best understand books three and five, and therefore to best understand The Argument, we would read them along with *DT* 1, 2, 4, and 6. Even so, the argument for three, and only three persons – i.e., The Argument – is the heart of matter, and can be understood without diving deeply into the surrounding books. Cf. Richard of St Victor, *La Trinité: Texte Latin, Introduction, Traduction et Notes*, 27; Peter Hofmann, "Analogie Und Person: Zur Trinitätsspekulation Richards von St. Victor," *Theologie Und Philosophie* 59 (1984): 196.

since much of the current work in analytic trinitarian theology is done by Anglo-American thinkers, I translate all quotations (both of Richard and secondary sources) into English. Finally, I address some concerns and objections to The Argument. This effort is not on my list of aims because space simply prevents a comprehensive defence of Richard's project. However, I do work to anticipate and engage with concerns over individual points of The Argument.

0.3 Outline

This thesis has six chapters and a short conclusion. Chapter one lays the contextual groundwork, chapters two and three the conceptual. Chapters four through six exposit the heart of The Argument. I conclude by briefly reflecting on some implications of The Argument for contemporary philosophical theology. Summarized with more detail, this thesis takes the following shape.

Chapter one surveys some of the cultural and conceptual context most relevant to Richard's construction of The Argument. While *De Trinitate* was written, the twelfth century renaissance was in full bloom, characterized in part by a growing valuation of human reason, as well as an increase in the number and stature of church-schools. One of these, the abbey of St. Victor, was marked by its dedication to community, love, reason, and trinitarian reflection. In chapter one I consider these Victorine distinctives and their synthesis in *De Trinitate*. Looking at the treatise itself, I also describe my stance on three methodological issues: *De Trinitate's* relationship to contemplation, the nature and role of necessary reasons, and the a priori-a posteriori distinction applied to The Argument.

Chapter two examines Richard's argument that God has supreme charity. First, I survey three conceptual pairs that are foundational to the charity argument, namely, aseity and participation, fullness and perfection, and goodness and blessedness. These three pairs are the core of Richard's metaphysics of goodness and, therefore, of The Argument. After looking at them, I exposit Richard's *Argument for Supreme Charity* in the divine substance.

Chapter three exposits two further arguments about charity. In the *Conditions of Charity* argument, Richard establishes self-love and other-love as necessary conditions of charity. In the *Argument Against Supreme Love for Created Persons*, Richard rules out the possibility that God could share his supreme charity with created persons. If God has supreme charity, then it must be shared among divine persons.

Chapter four turns to the heart of The Argument. Here we examine Richard's three arguments for multiple divine persons, one each from the notions of supreme goodness, happiness, and glory. Richard argues that supremely good love must be shared among two supremely perfect, and therefore divine persons. Since the divine substance is supremely good, it must instantiate such multi-personal love. Richard reasons along a similar trajectory for supreme happiness and glory, arguing that both notions require at least two divine persons. Chapter five advances on the three notions, arguing that supreme goodness, happiness, and glory not only require two divine persons, but three. In both chapters four and five I exposit these arguments and respond to some difficulties and critiques.

Chapter six sets out Richard's two arguments for the impossibility of four (or more) divine persons. Using the notion of processions – the giving and reception of being from one divine person to another – Richard argues that only three divine persons are possible. Next, he argues that only three modes of supremely perfect love are possible, once again ruling out the possibility of a fourth person. After considering these arguments in chapter six, I conclude with some brief reflections on The Argument's import for Latin, Social, heterodox, and non-trinitarian theologies.

1. DE TRINITATE: CONTEXT AND METHOD

1.0 Introduction

Nearly a millennium stands between us and Richard, whose twelfth century context is often less widely familiar than its thirteenth and fourteenth century counterparts. Therefore, before turning to The Argument itself, a few contextual notes will prove useful. In this chapter I will identify some critical aspects of Richard's social and intellectual setting. Outside the abbey walls of St. Victor, the twelfth century renaissance was in full bloom, and I will detail some of its import for the writing of *De Trinitate*. Inside St. Victor's abbey we find an enduring commitment to communal life, love, reason and education, and trinitarian theology – all elements directly reflected in *De Trinitate*. After reviewing these contextual details, I will touch on three methodological issues: *De Trinitate's* relationship to contemplation, the role of necessary reasons (*rationes necessarias*), and the a priori-a posteriori distinction as applied to the The Argument. Disagreement, and often misunderstanding, surrounds all three issues. Rather than enter into extended debate, I will concentrate on describing my own position and let my exposition in the following chapters support the stance I take here.

1.1 Twelfth Century Europe and the Abbey of St. Victor

Richard well knew that he was doing a new thing in *De Trinitate*.¹ Early in book one he lists several major trinitarian dogmas, including the singularity of substance and plurality of persons, the distinction by personal properties, the identification of personal properties with the relations of procession, and propriety of speech such as 'God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit' along with 'there are not three God's, but one God'. After listing these and similar dogmatic commitments, Richard declares,

I frequently hear or read all these assertions, but I do not recall having read how all these assertions are proven. Authorities abound in all these issues, but argumentations are not equally abundant; proofs are lacking in all these assertions and argumentations are rare. Therefore...I think that I have accomplished something if I am able to assist even to a modest degree studious minds in a study of this kind...²

¹ Richard is of course familiar with Anselm's arguments in *Monologion*. *De Trinitate* is distinguished, in part, because its scope is slightly wider (encompassing more dogmatic trinitarian claims), and also more focused (directed at propositions from the Athanasian creed alone).

²De Trinitate, 1.5; cf. 1.3-4. There are two English translations of De Trinitate, both relatively recent, viz., that of Ruben Angelici and of Christopher Evans. Unless noted, I draw all English quotations from Evans, "Richard of St Victor: On the Trinity," trans. Christopher Evans, in Boyd Taylor Coolman and Dale Coulter, eds., Trinity and Creation: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Richard, and Adam of St Victor, Victorine Texts in Translation 1 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010). See also Ruben Angelici, Richard of Saint Victor, On the Trinity: English Translation and Commentary (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2011). All Latin quotations are from Ribaillier's critical edition, Richard de St Victor, De Trinitate: Texte Critique Avec Introduction, Notes et Tables, trans. Jean Ribaillier, Textes Philosophiques Du Moyen Age 6 (Paris: J. Vrin, 1967). Ribaillier is the industry standard for Latin editions of De Trinitate, and is the primary edition Evans used for his translation. An alternative is Salet's Latin and French edition, which follows the Migne 1855 edition. Richard of St Victor, La Trinité, trans. Gaston Salet, SJ, 2nd ed., Sources Chrétiennes 63 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1999); Richard of St Victor, "De Trinitate," in Patrologia Latina,

Part of Richard's project, then, is to argue for certain creedal trinitarian truth claims. I will say more about the nature of Richard's argumentation below. Here I want to highlight the fact that, in attempting to reason deeply about a great many truths of the trinitarian faith, Richard was very much a man of his times.

1.1.1 Renaissance and humanism in the twelfth century

Beginning in the latter half of the eleventh century and extending through the twelfth, much of Europe experienced a social, economic, and intellectual transformation commonly referred to as the twelfth century renaissance. To whatever degree this transformation represented a true renaissance, one thing is clear: few areas of life went untouched.³ The aspects of the renaissance most important to this study are the rise of humanism and the growth of the church-schools.

Twelfth century humanism and the related advancements in natural philosophy⁴ were spurred by a sudden influx of Greek texts (most notably, Aristotle) and their Muslim commentaries.⁵ These texts advanced European understanding of natural philosophy,⁶ and also the liberal arts.⁷ A prevailing thought of twelfth century humanism was that the universe is not only well-ordered by God (i.e., it has a *ratio*, or rationale), but also that humans have extraordinary epistemic access to many of these *rationes*.⁸ One result was a higher evaluation of reason, both of its scope and the degree to which it was trusted. Of course, the pursuit of reasons in and above nature was not universally welcomed. Some pushback was apparently so stiff that William of Conches could rail,

Ignorant themselves of the forces of nature and wanting to have company in their ignorance, they don't want people to look into anything; they want us to believe like peasants and not ask the reason behind things...But we say that the reason behind

⁴ Corresponding roughly to our categories of the arts and sciences.

⁶ Roughly equivalent to what we today call the sciences.

ed. Jacques Paul Migne, vol. 196, col 887–992 (Paris, n.d.). In footnote citations, I will first list *De Trinitate's* (hereafter DT) book and chapter number – this will allow the reader to easily find the citation in whichever version of DT she has to hand. Following the book and chapter reference, I will list the page number in both Evan's translation and Ribaillier's critical Latin edition in parentheses. Thus, the above passage is found at DT 1.5 (Evans, 216; Ribaillier, 91). When I mention a section from DT (or an idea therein), but do not quote it, I will only cite the book and chapter number, and forego the references in Evans and Ribaillier. Finally, typically I will quote the English translation alone: due to space I include Richard's Latin only when it is necessary for the discussion.

³ Charles Haskins first introduced the thesis of a twelfth century renaissance, Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1927). There has been considerable debate over its nature and extent (i.e., whether it really was a renaissance). For an overview of the literature, see Gerhart Ladner, "Terms and Ideas of Renewal," in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson, Giles Constable, and Carol D. Lanham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 1–33.

⁵ Haskins sees the introduction of classical texts and their Arabic translations as one of the primary catalysts of the renaissance. Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, 278–302.

⁷ Many fields, such as cosmology, lie between both, so that there was not a thick distinction as we have between disciplines today. See Winthrop Wetherbee, "Philosophy, Cosmology, and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance," in *A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*, ed. Peter Dronke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 21–53.

⁸ This is one of Southern's main themes of analysis of the twelfth century renaissance. R. W. Southern, ed., *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe, Volume I: Foundations* (Cambridge, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 1995).

everything should be sought out...If they learn that anyone is so inquiring, they shout out that he is a heretic, placing more reliance on their monkish garb than on their wisdom.⁹

Even if some traditionalists dragged their feet, such as those about whom William complains, the progress of reason was unflagging. Coupled with the rising prominence of reason, another strand of particularly Christian humanism proffered a higher view of the dignity of the human – the *individual* human. Thinkers in this strand of humanism were willing to look inside the person to explore her nature, powers, and worth.¹⁰ Somewhat related to the heightened estimation of the person and interest in her psychology was the dramatic transformation of thought regarding love. I will return to the concept of love in chapter two, but we may note that the twelfth century saw the introduction of several conceptualizations of love beyond classical pagan eros and Christian *caritas*. Twelfth century developments include monastic (or 'ecstatic') love for God, tragic love (epitomized by Abelard and Heloise), and romantic or courtly love (much praised by the troubadours).¹¹

A second important aspect of the twelfth century renaissance was the growth of the church-school. As monarchs consolidated territory and power, states became increasingly centralized, stable, and wealthy. Rulers invested in great building projects, especially cathedrals and other church structures. Before the rise of universities in the thirteenth century, houses of worship were one of the primary centres of learning. Due to agricultural advancements, population explosion, and the growth of towns, there were increasing numbers of people with the time and means to study the newly received knowledge. Even at the church-schools – or perhaps more accurately, *especially* at them – reason was coupled with faith.¹²

In sum, Richard's social-cultural milieu included: a heightened estimation and larger scope for the human intellect; the application of the intellect to understanding the order and reasons (*rationes*) of the world; a greater appreciation of the person, viz., as an individual with complex psychological powers and inter-personal relations; a dramatic broadening of views and interest in love; and finally, a growth of church-schools where learning, reason, and introspective reflection could take place.

1.1.2 The abbey of St. Victor

Richard's general cultural milieu included a growing appreciation of human understanding and a corresponding search for *rationes* in (and of) the world, a growing appreciation of the individual

⁹ William of Conches, *Philosophia Mundi*, I.22 (PL, CLXXII, 56), quoted in Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, 2nd ed. (University of Toronto Press, 1996), 10–11.

¹⁰ Southern's work is again foundational. He argues that the turn inward began with Anselm's introspective writings. See R. W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992). For a more current opinion, see Caroline Walker Bynum, "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31, no. 1 (January 1980): 1–17.

¹¹ Moore gives an overview of these new expressions of love, and others, in John C. Moore, *Love in Twelfth-Century France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).

¹² The Cistercian monk William Harding could argue about the proper understanding of their Rule by appealing to reason: "By reason the Supreme Author of things has made…" Giles Constable, "Renewal and Reform in Religious Life: Concepts and Realities," in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Giles Constable, Robert L. Benson, and Carol D. Lanham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 61.

person and her psychological complexity, and a broadened understanding of the nature of love. Richard's more immediate surroundings at the abbey of St. Victor concentrated, or intensified, the features on this list, and add several features of their own. Of the many characteristics of the abbey that are relevant to the production of *De Trinitate*, I will limit my attention to four that have the most direct bearing on The Argument: community, charity, reason, and reflection on trinitarian dogma. These features overlap with one another, but for the sake of clarity I will tease apart what was in practice highly integrated.

Community. At the very roots of the abbey of St. Victor was a sense of the value and need for giving oneself to the community. Indeed, relational community, as self-giving communal living, went to the roots of the abbey of St. Victor. William of Champeux, the lauded director of the school at Notre-Dame, founded the abbey early in the twelfth century. Famous in his intellectual pedigree (he studied under Manegold of Lautenbach, Rosceline, and later with Anselm of Laon), William attracted some leading European minds to Notre-Dame, including Peter Abelard.¹³ After intense debate-cum-confrontation with Abelard over the nature of universals, in 1108 William left his post as arch-deacon and retired to the abandoned chapel of St. Victor on the bank of the Seine beyond the walls of Paris. William's intention was to leave the active life of teacher and pastor and adopt the contemplative life – i.e., the quiet routine of reflection and prayer. Realizing that his absence represented a tremendous intellectual loss for European Christendom, William's friend Hildebert sent a letter urging William to return to teaching. Hildebert wrote,

A man does not do all the good of which he is capable so long as he refuses to be useful to others. It is an act of perfection to offer one's neighbour the means of virtue...Render therefore your whole self to the Lord God seeing you have vowed your whole self to Him, otherwise you shrink from the promised sacrifice. What use after all is hidden wisdom or buried treasure...Is there any difference between common stones and jewels if they are not displayed to the light? It is the same with learning; when one shows it to others it bears increase...Take good care therefore not to deprive your brethren of the founts of living water, but as Solomon says "pour out the springs and spread their waters abroad."¹⁴

William acquiesced to his friend's exhortations and returned to teaching, this time at his new abbey home at St. Victor. Critically, the drive to share all one has with his neighbour – both physical and intellectual goods – became a definitive characteristic of the Victorine ethos.¹⁵ The commitment to holding all things in common is set out in Augustine's monastic Rules, which each Victorine canon adopted. Take for instance the first instruction of the *Praeceptum*: "In the first place – and this is the very reason for your being gathered together in one – you should live in the house in

¹³ Luscombe treats both the conflict between Abelard and William (among others), as well as Richard's engagement with Abelard in D. E. Luscombe, *The School of Peter Abelard: The Influence of Abelard's Thought in the Early Scholastic Period*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought 14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹⁴ Quoted in J. C Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and Their Introduction into England.* (London: S.P.C.K., 1950), 191.

¹⁵ Wheeler calls this letter "the founding document" and "spiritual charter" of the abbey of St. Victor. Penny McElroy Wheeler, "The Twelfth-Century School of St. Victor" (PhD thesis, University of Southern California, 1971), 11.

unity and spirit and you should have one soul and one heart centred on God."¹⁶ Canons¹⁷ lived this out practically by donating all private property to the Order at canonization, and by holding all goods in common (each according to his need).¹⁸

Charity: The basis of Victorine community was charity, and was pervasive in ethical, theological, doxological, and intellectual life. For example, in the Augustinian Rule for monastic living, the author repeatedly stresses charity as the controlling virtue: "Before all else, dearest brothers, let God be loved and then your neighbour, because these are the chief commandments which have been shown us."¹⁹ The theme of charity was a distinctive of the Victorine liturgy, seen in the opening lines of the sequence sung during the feast of the Reception of St. Victor's Relics:

From the root of charity, From the state of piety let this church sing; Let it sing with the heart; let it sing with the mouth And let the household of Victor rejoice in Victor.²⁰

Victorine worship was so inundated with the theme of charity that "the act of praise...could lead to the abundance of love for God and neighbour," which is "a key idea for understanding Victorine liturgical sensibilities."²¹ Charity was a topic heavily represented in Victorine writing, so that most Victorine masters produced at least one work dedicated to the subject.²² Finally, and related to the previous feature of relationality, the Victorine conception of charity was such that an act of this type of love necessarily includes sharing of all one has. Thus, Hugh could preach, "Do not say something is your property, but let everything be [held in] common," and all this because "For there is more delight/profit [*fructus*] from charity than from property."²³

Richard scholar Gervais Dumeige notices that "the intellectual teaching of religious orders" often propose ideas that are "pre-contained in their spiritual temperament." The "spiritual temperament

¹⁶ Augustine, *Praeceptum* 1.2, quoted in Boniface Ramsey, *The Monastic Rules* (Hyde Park, N.Y: New City Press, 2004), 110.

¹⁷ The nature of regular canons – who were neither monks nor secular clergy (i.e., clergy not part of a monastic or ruled community) – may not be a category familiar to many modern readers. For a brief introduction, using Hugh and Richard of St. Victor as examples, see Hugh Feiss, "The Regular Canons," in *Christian Spirituality: Origins to the Twelfth Century*, ed. Bernard McGinn and Meyendorff McGinn, Illustrated edition, World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest 16 (New York: Independent Publishers Group, 1987), 218–28. ¹⁸ Augustine, *Praeceptum* 1.3-4, quoted in Ramsey, *The Monastic Rules*, 110.

¹⁹ Augustine, Ordo Monasterii, 1, quoted in Ramsey, 106.

²⁰ From *Ex radice caritatis*, quoted in Margot E. Fassler, *Gothic Song: Victorine Sequences and Augustinian Reform in Twelfth-Century Paris*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011), 317.

²¹ Margot E. Fassler, "The Victorines and the Medieval Liturgy," in *A Companion to the Abbey of Saint Victor in Paris*, ed. Hugh Feiss and Juliet Mousseau RSCJ, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 79 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 402.

²² E.g.: Richard, Four Degrees of Violent Charity; Hugh, On the Substance of Love; Achard, Sermon Five: On the Sunday of the Palm Branches. These and others can be found in Hugh Feiss, OSB, On Love: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Adam, Achard, Richard, and Godfrey of St Victor, Victorine Texts in Translation 2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011).

²³Hugh of St Victor, "Exposito in Regulam S. Augustini," in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. Jacques Paul Migne, vol. 176, col. 881c (Paris, n.d.). My translation.

of the Victorine Order," he continues, "develops in the line of charity." ²⁴ Richard's trinitarian writing, as Dumeige rightly notes, is rooted in what he experienced practically in his communal life.

Reason: William's Victorine successors thoroughly adopted his commitment to education. Hugh, for instance, famously instructed his students to "Learn everything, you will find that nothing is superfluous."²⁵ This tag reveals some of the foundational character of Victorine learning. It is not an instruction to mechanically ingest data, but rather an exhortation to bring all fields of knowledge to bear in pursuit of wisdom, and ultimately Wisdom, the second person of the Trinity.²⁶ The unification and employment of all knowledge, guided by grace throughout, helps alleviate the effects of sin and allows man to achieve his telos, namely, union with the triune God. For Hugh, Achard, and later Richard, the primary object of study is the order and causes of the universe – again, causes which trace back to the single divine cause.²⁷ While Abelard sought to show the contradiction among traditional authorities in his *Six et Non*, the Victorines worked to combine authorities with non-authoritative reasons. "The highest argument is one supported by both reason and authority," as Hugh Feiss describes the twelfth century situation.²⁸

Reflection on trinitarian dogma: Contemporary theologian Gilles Emery's pins the "Trinitarian question" as the "great theme" of twelfth century theologizing, a century he also calls the "golden age of Trinitarian reflection in the West."²⁹ Certainly Victorine emphasis on trinitarian theology was one contributing factor,³⁰ and B.T. Coolman adds that "the Victorine contribution to that development, especially that of Hugh and Richard, should figure centrally in accounts yet to be

²⁴ Gervais Dumeige, Richard de Saint-Victor et l'idée chrétienne de l'amour (Presses Universitaires de France, 1952), 18–19.

²⁵ Omnia disce. Videbis postea nihil esse superfluum. Hugh of St Victor, "Didascalicon: Eruditionis Didascalicae Libri Septem," in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. Jacques Paul Migne, vol. 176, cols. 800d–801a (Paris, n.d.).

²⁶ So Vasquez: "The purpose of expanding one's knowledge did not have as its governing concern to fill oneself up with new information; rather, every source from which knowledge could be obtained was put in the service of the spiritual purity of the individual. The purity of the subject matter being studied mattered little in comparison to the inner purity of the soul undertaking the study... Thus at St. Victor, even non-theological works were studied in such a way as to refine one's own knowledge of the truth and sharpen one's own moral and spiritual proclivities: e.g., How might the errors in this work refine my own knowledge of the truth? How might the vanity and perversions of this work sharpen my own resolve to live a holy life before God and develop my soul in accordance with virtue? This "inner purity" was in the service of the richer goal of developing a soul that was, as Richard says, "to a full and perfect purity." Todd Vasquez, "The Art of Trinitarian Articulation: A Case Study on Richard of St. Victor's 'De Trinitate'" (PhD thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 2009), 55–56. The quotation at the end of this passage is from Richard's *Mystical Ark* II.10.

²⁷ See especially Hugh of St Victor, "Didascalicon: Eruditionis Didascalicae Libri Septem," 1. See also Hugh of St Victor, "De Sacramentis Christianae Fidei," in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. Jacques Paul Migne, vol. 176, col 299–301 (Paris, n.d.), 1.3. John Philip Kleinz, *The Theory of Knowledge of Hugh of Saint Victor* (Catholic University of America Press, 1944). For an overview of thinkers other than Hugh and Richard, see David Albertson, "Philosophy and Metaphysics in the School of Saint Victor: From Achard to Godfrey," in *A Companion to the Abbey of Saint Victor in Paris*, ed. Hugh Feiss and Juliet Mousseau RSCJ, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 79 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 353–86.

²⁸ From unpublished work shared in private correspondence. Hugh Feiss, email with Dennis Bray (St Andrews, Winter 2021).

²⁹ Gilles Emery, Trinity in Aquinas, 2nd edition (Naples, FL: Catholic University America Pr, 2013), xxviii.

³⁰ Emery, 2.

written."³¹ Not just Hugh and Richard, but most major Victorine thinkers contributed trinitarian works.³² One motivation for Victorine theologizing was the daily recitation of the Athanasian Creed. Coupled with the practice of *lectio divina* (a thorough, prayerful reflection on the creed and biblical trinitarian texts), Church dogma provided a rich research trajectory for Victorine thinkers.

1.1.3 De Trinitate's integration of Richard's twelfth century context

I have sketched four ways that life at the abbey of St. Victor provided a cultural and intellectual context in which *De Trinitate* could be constructed.³³ This context was characterized by a high valuation of communal life and giving, the primacy of love, a commitment to reason, and a continuous reflection on trinitarian dogma. These characteristics help explain how, and why, *De Trinitate* came to be. While my sketch includes only four characteristics, many more could be added, including Victorine practices of interiority (i.e., looking inward as a first step toward being formed by the Spirit),³⁴ a hermeneutic methodology that begins with the literal meaning of scripture, and a dedication to integrating all aspects of monastic life³⁵ into worship.

The upshot is this: De Trinitate reasons about the value of community and love, and makes conclusions about the necessity of the Trinity. We should expect something like this given the

³¹ From Coolman's general introduction to Coolman and Coulter, *Trinity and Creation: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Richard, and Adam of St Victor*, 26.

³² For a survey of thinkers other than Hugh and Richard, see Hugh Feiss, "Victorines on the Trinity," in *A Companion to the Abbey of Saint Victor in Paris*, ed. Hugh Feiss and Juliet Mousseau RSCJ, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 79 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 328–52.

³³ The abbey of St. Victor is widely recognized as a singular example of the union of the spiritual and intellectual in the twelfth century. One statement as example: "A gulf had opened between monks and scholars. Contemporaries constantly stress their difference in function: the scholar learns and teaches; the monk prays and 'mourns'. The canons regular courageously refused to admit the dilemma...they [the Victorines] were unique at Paris in being both *scholars* and *claustrales*." Beryl Smalley, *Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), 83.

³⁴ Along with the Cistercians, Victorines are widely recognized for their interest in the interior life, that is, the psychology of the individual. Taylor describes Hugh's stress on the necessity of self-awareness "as the indispensable condition of man's movement toward the divine Wisdom." Hugh of St Victor, The Didascalicon of Hugh of Saint Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts, trans. Jerome Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 177. Hugh traces an epistemic arc from the interior self (specifically the spirit (spiritus) which is the power of knowledge of higher things, in distinction from the soul (anima), which pertains to the powers which animate and govern the body) to the invisible creator: "if one begins to pay attention to what one truly is", that is, if a human "under the guidance of his reason, enters to know himself", then he "may arrive at knowledge of the Creator from a consideration of himself." Stated another way, "the first and principal representation of uncreated wisdom is created wisdom, that is, the rational creature, which because in one aspect it is visible and in another invisible, becomes a door and path of contemplation" of the Creator. Hugh of St Victor, "On the Three Days," in Trinity and Creation: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Richard, and Adam of St Victor, ed. Boyd Taylor Coolman and Dale Coulter, Victorine Texts in Translation 1 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 77 (17.1-3). Van't Spijker has done good work in this area. For a general study, see Ineke van 't Spijker, Fictions of the Inner Life: Religious Literature and Formation of the Self in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004). For a study on Richard specifically, see his I. van 't Spijker, "Exegesis and Emotions: Richard of St. Victor's De Quatuor Gradibus Violentiae Caritatis," Sacris Erudiri 36 (January 1, 1996): 147-60.

³⁵ Richard's gives a powerful statement of the significance of self-examination in *The Mystical Ark (Benjamin Major)* 3.3. On Richard's acute attention to the individual, as well as his integration of the individual in community, see Grover Zinn's introduction to Grover Zinn, *Richard of St. Victor* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 1–50.

culture of the abbey of St. Victor, and of the wider European life setting. Even so, we should also expect *De Trinitate* to be a highly integrated work – integrated in such a way that personal reflection and experience are properly exegeted so as to properly view God, and all this done as an act of worship. Admittedly, few of the features we have touched on are critical for expositing The Argument or for following its logical progression. Nevertheless, we do Richard and his arguments a great disservice if we ignore them.³⁶ Further, we can miss out on the opportunity of being Spiritually formed by reading *De Trinitate* if we approach it only cerebrally. Richard admits that he writes because he ardently desires to reflect on the triune God, to see God in all created things (Richard quotes Romans 1.8 more than any other bible verse). Richard would doubtless wish the same for his readers in the twenty-first century.

1.2 Three Notes on Method in De Trinitate

We turn now from Richard's context to the text of *De Trinitate* itself. In lieu of a general introduction to the treatise,³⁷ I raise three pertinent methodological issues: The Argument as contemplative ascent, the nature of necessary reasons, and the a priori-a posteriori question. These are a few of the core philosophical aspects of The Argument. Looking at them, even briefly, will give us some initial purchase on the nature of Richard's argumentation, as well as an indication of Richard's driving motivations and aims for the treatise. There is little scholarly consensus on these issues, or on the precise nature of *De Trinitate's* arguments generally. Since my treatment must necessarily be brief, I cannot enter into any larger debates. Therefore, I will not argue for my position so much as state it, and then allow the ensuing chapters to support the stance I take here.

1.2.1 De Trinitate as contemplative ascent

In the prologue to his *De Trinitate*, Richard makes several references to contemplation. For example, Richard exhorts his readers to "erect that sublime ladder of contemplation" and explains that it is not "enough for us to ascend in the contemplation of the mind to the secrets" of the corporeal.³⁸ Instead, believers should ascend "in contemplation from the visible to the invisible, and from the corporeal to the spiritual," especially by considering the mysteries of eternity, namely, the Trinity.

To those familiar with Richard's mystical works, such as *Benjamin Major* and *Benjamin Minor*, these exhortations to contemplation come as no surprise; indeed they are fully expected. As is widely recognized in Ricardine scholarship, contemplation is a major theme of Richard's oeuvre, and was obviously dear to the man's heart. It is for good reason that Dante included Richard on his list of

³⁶ I agree with Blastic that "Richard's work is impoverished by any attempt to understand him apart from the community of canons regular of which he was part." Blastic, "Condilectio," 3.

³⁷ The best introduction is Schniertshauer, *Consummatio caritatis*. A briefer introduction, though now somewhat dated, is Kühneweg, "Der Trinitätsaufweis Richards von St. Viktor." The best option in English is Matheus Purwatma, "The Explanation of the Mystery of the Trinity Based on the Attribute of God as Supreme Love: A Study on the 'De Trinitate' of Richard of St. Victor" (PhD thesis, Romae, Pontificia Universitas Urbaniana, Facultas Theologica, 1990). Purwatma offers a general overview of Richard's main theological moves, but the study includes little critical analysis.

³⁸ DT prologue (Evans, 210; Ribaillier, 82).

"ardent spirits" and says of him "he whose meditation made him more than man."³⁹ Thus, we recognize that *De Trinitate* is somehow related to *Benjamin Major*. Put another way, clearly the arguments that compose *De Trinitate* bear some close relationship with Richard's theology of contemplative ascent, as developed in the *Benjamin Major*, *Benjamin Minor* (and many other places besides). How, precisely, they relate is less clear. The matter is complicated by *De Trinitate's* 'speculation' language,⁴⁰ since Richard elsewhere makes a strong distinction between contemplation (*contemplatio*) and speculation (*speculatio*). Take for example the following passage from *Benjamin Major*, where Richard laments that the two notions are too often fused,

For although contemplation and speculation are accustomed to be used with the same meaning and in this way often obscure and cover over the proper sense of Scripture, nevertheless we more aptly and expressly call something speculation when we see by a mirror; but we call it contemplation when we see the truth in its purity without any covering or any veil of shadows.⁴¹

This passage is an unambiguous statement that contemplation and speculation are distinct, a distinction Richard made in his first works and maintained throughout his writing career.⁴² Put very roughly, contemplation is directed at some particular object and is direct, non-discursive knowledge. The fifth stage of contemplation (of six total) is the most important for thinking about contemplation in *De Trinitate*. In this stage the subject of contemplation (i.e., 'the contemplative') employs reason to its fullest. Taking the divine substance, even the Trinity, as the ultimate object of her contemplation, the contemplative employs the entire body of knowledge she has collected from all fields of learning (especially of scripture, the theological sciences, and trinitarian doctrine). In some way the contemplative knows the Trinity directly, *during* and *by* knowing the created object of contemplation.

In contrast to contemplation, speculation is a rational, discursive process.⁴³ The object of sight/knowledge is known after the speculating subject makes a series of comparisons and contrasts between the created object of knowledge and some second object. Regarding the Trinity, in speculation we know about God indirectly, by finding similarities and dissimilarities (*similtudines*, *dissimilitudines*) between God and some created object. Perhaps the distinction between speculation and contemplation may be expressed this way: in speculation, the Trinity is seen *through* creation, as a reflection; in contemplation, the Trinity is seen *in* or even *on* creation, as an immediate vision or knowledge of both the created object and the divine.

Given Richard's distinction between contemplation and speculation, his mention of both notions in *De Trinitate* is puzzling. We may make headway toward clarification by addressing three questions: (i) Is *De Trinitate* an instance of contemplation or speculation? (ii) If *De Trinitate* is an

³⁹ Dante, "Paradiso 10," Columbia University, Digital Dante, accessed June 29, 2021, https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/dante/divine-comedy/paradiso/paradiso-10/.

⁴⁰ E.g. *DT* 2.21, 5.6, 6.15, 6.21.

⁴¹ Grover Zinn, "The Mystical Ark (Benjamin Major)," in *Richard of St. Victor*, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 335-336 (5.14).

⁴² On this point I find Németh's argument convincing. See Csaba Németh, "Contemplation and the Cognition of God: Victorine Theological Anthropology and Its Decline" (PhD thesis, Central European University, 2013), 114–16.

⁴³ It is not clear how speculation maps onto the *cogitatio, meditatio, contemplatio* distinction. Assumedly, speculation is a form of meditation.

instance of contemplation, which stage(s) does it fall on Richard's six-stage taxonomy? (iii) If speculation, how do we make sense of his words in the prologue that seem to indicate that *De Trinitate* is an act of contemplation? Admittedly, these questions deserve more attention than I can give them here. Nevertheless, I will sketch my view in the broadest strokes, which will be sufficient to frame the expository portion of the thesis. Further, these successive chapters will bear out the plausibility of the claims made here.

My position on the questions posed above is guided heavily by my interaction with *De Trinitate's* arguments themselves. Rather than approach these issues by starting with a systematic interpretation of Richard's theory of contemplation, I begin in *De Trinitate* and look backwards to the wider – and frankly much more opaque – field of study of Richard's view of mystical ascent. On my reading, *De Trinitate* is not a contemplative text. *De Trinitate* is a book of arguments – a long, cumulative case for certain propositions of the Athanasian creed.⁴⁴ Those arguments are deductive demonstrations, with at least one proposition grounded in human experience (along with some widely accepted metaphysical, logical, axiological, and aesthetic principle; more on all this in the next section). Therefore, the arguments composing *De Trinitate* are unambiguously discursive. Indeed, it is difficult to find more ratio-centric thought in Richard's corpus. We must conclude, therefore, that *De Trinitate's* arguments – and therefore *De Trinitate* itself – is not an instance (or record) of contemplation. But if not contemplation, then what?

Given the textual evidence in *De Trinitate*, the only other live option is speculation. Viewing *De Trinitate* as a speculative work resolves many of the puzzles that result from viewing it as contemplation. For instance, it explains Richard's speculative language peppered throughout *De Trinitate*. Moreover, it coheres with, even helps explain, the discursive nature of *De Trinitate*. The remaining difficulty is over *De Trinitate's* relationship to contemplation – a relationship explicitly, if enigmatically, noted by the prologue's references to contemplation. We must again ask, What is *De Trinitate's* relationship to contemplation?

De Trinitate is the product of Richard's contemplation. As a Victorine, Richard has applied himself to learning all he can about the created world. Richard's labours are tokened by becoming a master in the liberal arts.⁴⁵ In other words, Richard has devoted extensive time to meditation (*meditatio*:

⁴⁴ While it is correct to say that the Athanasian creed is a doxastic starting place for *De Trinitate*, Den Bok, Coulter, and others, go too far when advancing the thesis that the treatise is a commentary on the creed. Such commentaries were a popular genre in the twelfth century, and *De Trinitate* has very little in common with them. More damaging to the thesis are Richard's own words in the prologue and early in book one. There he makes clear his goal is to provide reasons for believing (parts of) the creed; never does he declare any intentions to exposit, clarify, or expand upon the creed. G. R. Evans, "The Academic Study of the Creeds in Twelfth-Century Schools," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 30, no. 2 (October 1, 1979): 463–80. In one article, Pascale Bourgain recognizes a Victorine literary style, and correctly identifies its antecedents in Anselm. However, Bourgain's focus is on writing style (e.g. syntax and structure), and not literary genre. A worthwhile project would be to extend Bourgain's work by contending that Anselm and his Victorine readers developed a novel theological genre. Pascale Bourgain, "Existe-t-II En Littérature Un Style Victorin?," in *L'école de Saint-Victor de Paris: Influence et Rayonnement Du Moyen Âge à l'Époque Moderne*, Bibliotheca Victorina 22 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 41–55.

⁴⁵ That is, the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, dialectics), and *quadrivium* (arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy). See Goubier Frédéric and Irène Rosier-Catach, "The Trivium in the 12th Century," in *A Companion to Twelfth-Century Schools*, ed. Cédric Giraud and Ignacio Durán, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 88 (Leiden:

the strenuous work of study, learning, and focused attention to some object or body of knowledge). Through meditation, Richard has built a deep foundation of knowledge, particularly about trinitarian theology, psychology (as we would call it today), love, and interpersonal relations. Contemplation is an activity distinct from, and possible only after, meditation. In contemplation Richard looks at creation while actively holding his store of trinitarian knowledge. That is, during contemplation Richard views truths of trinitarian dogma (gained in meditation) while simultaneously considering corporeal and invisible objects (such as created persons). Thus, Richard sees directly, on or with creation, what he learned during meditation: namely, that the one God is necessarily three persons. Stated yet again, in contemplation, Richard beholds the Trinity (to the extent he is able) and, secondarily, beholds non-divine objects. While contemplating, Richard does not see the divine reflected in creation, but sees the triune God superimposed on creation. After contemplation Richard records his findings, listing out propositionally that which he already knows experientially and directly. For the sake of his readers, Richard states discursively, step-by-step, a series of reasons to believe truths he saw (or knew as true) while contemplating the Trinity on creation. De Trinitate, then, is not a description of the contemplative journey: while reading the treatise, we do not follow Richard up the contemplative ladder. Rather, De Trinitate is a sort of annotated travelogue. Richard records some of the landmarks (i.e., truths of trinitarian doctrines) he beheld in contemplation. In De Trinitate, Richard gives reasons for us to believe the truth claims that he beheld immediately and experientially. This annotated record is useful to readers as an example of some of the fruits of contemplation, and as a pedagogical tool for other canons to study in their own meditation.

I have told a just-so story, leaving out many details needed for a thorough account. Nevertheless, my story makes sense of major parts of Richard's general theory of contemplation, and, more importantly, explains the data as presented in *De Trinitate* itself. If I am wrong about some part of this story, or the story as a whole, we may still proceed with exposition of The Argument in *De Trinitate*, though how to explain its references to contemplation and speculation will continue to be puzzling.

1.2.2 Necessary reasons

The second methodological issue I want to address is the role of necessary reason in The Argument. Richard states his research goals quite clearly at the outset: "Our intention in this work will be to introduce, insofar as the Lord allows, not only probable but also necessary reasons for what we believe and to season the teachings of our faith with an exposition and explanation of the truth."⁴⁶ Richard's primary goal in *De Trinitate* is to articulate necessary reasons (*rationes necessarias*)

Brill, 2020), 141–79; Cédric Giraud, Ignacio Durán, and Irene Caiazzo, eds., "Teaching the Quadrivium in the Twelfth-Century Schools," in *A Companion to Twelfth-Century Schools*, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 88 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 180–202.

⁴⁶ *DT* 1.4 (Evans, 215; Ribaillier, 89). Richard says that *De Trinitate* will include an exposition of the truth (*enodatione veritatis*). This *enodatio* does at times expand on or clarify claims from the first half of the Athanasian creed, and so can be viewed as exposition in a limited sense. However, Richard's *enodatio* is not systematic, nor does he attempt to be comprehensive, and therefore we should not understand *De Trinitate* as a commentary on the *quicumque*.

for certain dogmatic claims to which he already assents in faith.⁴⁷ Necessary reasons have a long history, and were increasingly important in twelfth century theology.⁴⁸ In *De Trinitate*, the concept of necessary reason is complex and Richard gives no systematic attention to the notion. Even so, we may identify at least four elements of necessary reason in *De Trinitate*. These are: ontological, modal, epistemological, and logical. I will quickly touch on each, but it is important to point out that these elements are intimately related, and it is not always clear which element – or group of elements – Richard has in mind when using the terminology of necessary reason.

The primary sense of 'necessary reason' is an ontological reality as an aspect of God's being. A necessary reason, then, is often viewed as a concrete object, and not an abstract one. As far as *De Trinitate* is concerned, the loci of necessary reasons are the divine substance and the divine persons. Some divine attribute is necessary because it is a way that God is which cannot be otherwise (more on this modal element in a moment). That same attribute is a reason in the sense of being a rationale, or having some explanatory power.⁴⁹ Stated generally: attribute F is a reason for attribute G because F is the cause or ground or explanation of G.

Now, grounding relations are notoriously tricky, and in *De Trinitate* God's attribute F grounds G if G is metaphysically necessary given F. To Richard's mind, some divine attributes require that other attributes obtain. Given Richard's commitment to divine simplicity, the divine attributes are identical to each other and are only distinguishable as way of conceptualizing the simple divine substance. Thus, it is more accurate to state matters this way: some conceptually distinct aspects of the simple divine nature can be seen to stand in necessary explanatory relations.⁵⁰ For instance, by considering the concept of God's supreme charity-love we find that God's tri-personality is metaphysically necessary. Supreme charity is a necessary reason for tri-personality.

⁴⁷ Minimally, 'faith' here is a belief that P is true, grounded primarily on Church authority. Authorities include scripture, conciliar statements, early fathers, and the magisterium (i.e., the top levels of the Church hierarchy) – each of which has a high degree of trustworthiness, and together yield certainty.

⁴⁸ Regarding Anselm see Paul Vignaux, "Nécessité Des Raisons Dans Le Monologion," *Revue Des Sciences Philosophiques Et Théologiques* 64, no. 1 (1980): 3–25; A.M. Jacquin, "Les 'Rationes Necessariae' de Saint Anselme," in *Mélanges Mandonnet : Études d'histoire Littéraire et Doctrinale Du Moyen Age*, vol. 2 (Paris: J. Vrin, 19030), 67–78. In Abelard, see Jean Jolivet, *Arts Du Langage Et Theologie Chez Abelard*, Etudes de Philosophie Medievale 57 (Paris: J. Vrin, 1981). Hugh of St Victor, "Didascalicon: Eruditionis Didascalicae Libri Septem," 2.30; Hugh of St Victor, "De Sacramentis Christianae Fidei," 1.3.31. For necessary reasons in some twelfth century logic manuals, see L. M. De Rijk, *Logica Modernorum: A Contribution to the History of Early Terminist Logic*, vol. 2: The Origin and Early Development of the Theory of Supposition (Van Gorcum, 1967), 119, 165, 193. For earlier sources with which Richard was familiar with, see Augustine, *De Utilitate Credendi* 36; Cicero, *Topica* 2.6. I take several of these references from Den Bok's discussion of necessary reasons, Bok, *Communicating the Most Higb*, 184–94.

⁴⁹ The Latin '*ratio*' has a very wide semantic range, and can denote an argument, much like the English 'explanation' and 'rationale' can denote argument. Yet Richard does recognize a distinction between necessary reasons (*rationes*) and necessary arguments (*argumenta*), though he sometimes uses 'necessary reason' to refer to discursive inference (as we will see in the logical aspect, below). Hence the ontological and epistemological elements of the notion: in the former sense necessary reasons refer to God's concrete nature and can be *experienced* or *discovered* by us; in the latter sense necessary reasons are abstract relations that obtain between propositions and so can be *given* by us via deductive arguments. See *DT* 1.4.

⁵⁰ Here we see the overlap between ontology and epistemology, which is precisely why *ratione necessarias* language extends so wide semantically.

Richard avers that all necessary (or eternal) attributes, with the exception of one, have necessary reasons. Once again he gives no detailed statement of his view, but we may identify a principle on which The Argument operates,

(Necessary reason principle) For any necessary divine attribute G, either (i) some necessary reason F obtains, where F is also a necessary divine attribute, or (ii) G is its own necessary reason and no F obtains.

This principle highlights the nature of necessary reasons as divine attributes,⁵¹ but also includes the notion of modality. The very term 'necessary reason' raises the question regarding the kind of necessity involved. Since they are ways God must be, necessary reasons obtain of metaphysical necessity (as distinguished from, say, nomological or logical necessity). Like most of his contemporaries, Richard's concept of necessity is heavily tied to that of eternality and immutability.⁵² However, these notions do not collapse into one another. For Richard, God's eternal attributes are eternal because they are necessary, i.e., they cannot be otherwise. As Hugh puts it, "what is necessary is that without which something cannot be."⁵³ Tracing the chain of necessity on which Richard will extrapolate: God's tri-personality is necessary because his supreme charity is necessary; supreme charity is necessary because supreme goodness is necessary; supreme deause the Father is *a se*; and the Father's aseity is explanatorily brute – it is its own explanation (*ratio*) and the ultimate explanation of all the others. Once again, we see that each necessary divine attribute (save one) has some other necessary attribute as a metaphysically necessary condition. Each attribute in the chain is a necessary reason for an attribute below, with the explanatory chain ending at God's aseity.

An epistemological element is added to the concept of necessary reasons when created minds inquire about necessary divine attributes. God's supreme charity, for example, is necessary and grounds his tri-personality, as we have seen. Additionally, divine charity can be known by us and, more to the point, it can be known as an explanation for God's tri-personality. Richard is always cautious at this point, stressing the difference between knowing about some divine attribute, on the one hand, and circumscribing the full scope of the divine substance and persons, on the other.⁵⁴ Continuing with the example of divine charity, to some limited extent we can know about divine

⁵¹ It also allows the possibility that some attributes are necessary reasons of one another. Thus, plausibly, God's perfect love is not only a reason for his tri-personality, but his tri-personality is a necessary reason for his perfect love.

⁵² Cf. Klaus Jacobi, *Die Modalbegriffe in den logischen Schriften des Wilhelm von Shyreswood und in anderen Kompendien des* 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 89ff. See also Lesley-Anne Dyer, "Translating Eternity in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance" (PhD thesis, Indiana, University of Notre Dame, 2012), 63–11.

⁵³ Hugh of St Victor, "On the Three Days," 62. Importantly, *On the Three Days* is Hugh's main work of triadic speculation, and serves as an inspiration for Richard's *De Trinitate*.

⁵⁴ "The necessary reasons with which Richard wants to advance in knowledge are therefore not external reasons, but develop out of the reflexive understanding of faith. That is, the *ratio necessaria* does not mean a closed system of argumentation, but the ontological necessity of the divine mystery, which is exposed through experience and is brought into consciousness to a certain extent by rational arguments (*Vernunftgründe*) guided by faith. But even when this ontological necessity comes to a certain degree of awareness, it is only grasped and never fully comprehended." Schniertshauer, *Consummatio caritatis*, 90. Cf. Ewert Cousins, "The Notion of the Person in the 'De Trinitate' of Richard of St. Victor" (PhD thesis, New York, Fordham University, 1966), 64.

charity, and its role as a necessary reason for the existence of three divine persons. However, we cannot know the full nature of God's love, nor of the triunity of persons and substance.⁵⁵

Finally, Richard's concept of necessary reason includes a logical element. The attributes of God's being that we know about can sometimes be expressed in truth claims. Those claims can serve as premises in discursive reasoning. In *De Trinitate*, that reasoning is formulated syllogistically, as deductive proofs (*demonstrata*).⁵⁶ A necessary attribute can serve an indirect role, as the subject of a proposition in a deductive argument, where a proposition about some attribute bears certain logical relations to other propositions in the argument. In a sound deductive argument, a conclusion follows of logical necessity from its premises, and it can be easy to mistake these propositions for necessary reasons. We must bear in mind that, for Richard, necessary reasons are not abstract objects, and therefore are not propositions. Rather, they are concrete,⁵⁷ eternal, divine attributes. The logical element of necessary reasons comes from our discursive reasoning *about* them. Necessary reasons are said to have a logical element only obliquely, and this element is of far less importance to Richard's concept than the previous three.

1.2.3 A priori or a posteriori?

One thorny issue is determining whether Richard's project is a priori or a posteriori. Such a determination is complicated in several ways in that contemporary use of the a priori-a posteriori distinction is different from the medieval understanding. Furthermore, both our contemporary analytic usage and its original scholastic Aristotelian context is somewhat foreign to Richard's twelfth century logic. Here I will sketch a picture of this aspect of Richard's methodology. After this sketch I will describe his project in contemporary and Aristotelian categories which, while potentially misleading, are more familiar to most modern thinkers, and may be usefully deployed if done so with care. We will find that The Argument can be viewed as either a priori or a posteriori, depending on which understanding of that distinction we apply to Richard's work.

Richard's arguments in *De Trinitate* all include a premise that is grounded on experience, or a premise whose grounds are ultimately reducible to experience. Before I give some examples, let me explain what I mean by 'experience'. In *De Trinitate* experience includes two related elements: (i) what I will call first-hand experience, and (ii) intuition. First-hand experience includes knowledge of the physical world (i.e., knowledge gained by the five physical senses), as well as introspective knowledge of the subject's own personal/psychological states.⁵⁸ Intuition includes knowledge of principles: metaphysical, logical, axiological, aesthetic, and others.⁵⁹ Some of these principles are indemonstrable and appear obviously true to a subject whose intellect is in good

⁵⁵ Richard often finishes a book of *De Trinitate* by making some statement of this kind. E.g., *DT* 2.20, 2.22, 3.24. ⁵⁶ For the sake of the reader, Richard renders his syllogisms in longform, and includes explanations, supports, and repetitions of key claims. Cf.: Bok: "Richard in fact uses very elementary forms of inference: most of his argumentations are concatenations of straight-forward syllogisms (even if the formulation is not straightforward)." Bok, *Communicating the Most High*, 181.

⁵⁷ Concrete because they are identical to the divine substance.

⁵⁸ In other works Richard at times refers to the instruments (*instrumenta*) used to gain introspective knowledge as a kind of sense, analogous to the five physical senses e.g. *Benjamin Minor* 17. See Ritva Palmén, *Richard of St. Victor's Theory of Imagination*, Investigating Medieval Philosophy 8 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), chap. 3, "The Fundamentals of Richard's Anthropology," 50-81.

⁵⁹ See Christopher Evans' extended endnote in Coolman and Coulter, *Trinity and Creation: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Richard, and Adam of St Victor*, 360–64. See also Bok, *Communicating the Most High*, 177–78.

working order.⁶⁰ Some principles are not intuited, but grounded in first-hand experience, and are therefore inductive and, once again, reducible to experience.⁶¹ Epistemically, experience yields certainty, where certainty is a mental-state, a very strong psychological assent to some proposition. Some beliefs grounded in experience are so strong, of such high certainty, as to be indubitable.⁶² On my reading of *De Trinitate*, Richard takes all the propositions grounded in experience to be of this strength, and so I will hereafter deploy the notion of certainty interchangeably with that of indubitability.⁶³

With this analysis of experience in mind, let us look at two of Richard's arguments as examples. First is the cosmological argument that kicks off *De Trinitate*. *DT* 1 starts with a couplet of evident truths ("assertion[s] that no one can doubt or presume to repudiate."⁶⁴):

 $(1^{st}$ Evident Truth) Every possible object either exists from eternity or begins to exist in time.

(2nd Evident Truth) Every possible object either has its being from itself or has its being from some other source.

With these two self-evident suppositions, Richard identifies three possible modes of being. For any object, that object exists: from eternity and from itself; neither from eternity nor from itself; from eternity but not from itself.⁶⁵ Using these concepts of modes of existing, Richard makes a rather standard cosmological argument,⁶⁶ which can be expressed in three-steps (this will be helpful when we view the arguments as Aristotelian demonstrations):⁶⁷

1) If no object is from itself, then there would be no objects whose being is from another (i.e., no created, contingent objects).⁶⁸

⁶⁰ It is easy to mistake Richard's claims to the effect that "only a fool would deny P" as hyperbolic or even ad hominem. However, though such language is abrasive to contemporary sensibilities, I believe his anthropology and tight syllogistic reasoning proves that Richard means what he says: a person's cognitive faculties are faulty if she denies a claim whose truth is self-evident or grounded in her personal experience.

⁶¹ Examples of self-evident principles include the principle of sufficient reason (DT 2.24) and the identity of indiscernibles (DT 4.9). One inductive principle is that love is the best possible good (DT 3.3).

 $^{^{62}}$ For instance, the principle that the more united persons are, the more intimate they are (DT 5.2).

⁶³ Clearly not all certain beliefs are indubitable. However, in the context of this study, viz. of The Argument, Richard takes the certainty of the relevant beliefs to be of this high strength.

⁶⁴ DT 1.6 (Evans, 216; Ribaillier, 91).

⁶⁵ The fourth mode, from itself but not from eternity, is impossible, since 'this object is from itself' implies 'this object is from eternity'. Contemporary particle physics posits a theoretical entity, 'gluons' which are those (fundamental) physical objects that come into and out of existence without a cause (or are 'random'). If they exist, gluons are not a counterexample to Richard's taxonomy because on his account, everything has being from itself or from another (the 2nd Evident Truth). Therefore, any gluon has its being from by another or from itself. If a gluon is from itself, then it has the power of being (i.e., is Being Itself). But anything that has the power of being (i.e., is Being Itself) exists necessarily, and cannot come into existence nor go out of existence. Gluons, though, by definition are those particles that come into and go out of existence randomly. Thus, any gluon must have its being from something other than itself.

⁶⁶ DT 15.6. Cf. Augustine, Confessions 11.4.6; Anselm, Monologion 2.

⁶⁷ This argument is not strictly an Aristotelian syllogism since The Philosopher does not use conditionals.

 $^{^{68}}$ This argument is found at DT 1.8 I have reworked it to remove a triple negative Richard employs in the longform version, and to highlight its nature as a modus tollens. In short, Richard is trying to express the idea that an object which is from itself is a necessary condition for non-eternal objects.

2) But there are objects whose being is from another (i.e., objects that are contingent).

Therefore,

3) There is an object from itself.

Premise (1) is derived from the 1st and 2nd Evident Truths; premise (2) is confirmed by sense experience when we encounter objects that begin or cease to exist; belief in (1) and (2) are grounded on self-evidence or first-hand sense experience, and therefore both premises are indubitable.

For our second example, we will skip ahead to the triadic thought in DT 3. There Richard makes the following argument:⁶⁹

- 4) The supreme goodness cannot lack that-than-which-nothing-is-more-pleasing.
- 5) Nothing is more pleasing than charity.

Therefore,

6) The supreme goodness cannot lack charity.

Premise (5) is once again grounded in experience, this time in internal, psychological knowledge.⁷⁰ Some may attempt to ground the first premise, (4), in intuition.⁷¹ In *De Trinitate*, however, claims about the divine substance all rest, ultimately, on the original cosmological argument: the attribute 'lacking nothing most pleasing' is grounded in the supreme goodness; the supreme goodness is grounded in simplicity; simplicity is grounded in aseity; and we know of aseity through intuition (returning to premise (1)) and experience (premise (2)). Thus, the chain of Richard's reasoning always traces back to experience, both first-hand and intuitional, and is therefore always indubitable.⁷²

Viewed from later, Aristotelianized scholasticism, Richard's arguments are unambiguous instances of demonstrations *quia*, where the effect or explanandum is contained in the premises (viz., in the minor premise), and the cause (or α iti α , or explanation) is in the conclusion. That is, our knowledge of (4) and (5) is from intuition and experience, respectively; we have knowledge of God's maximal goodness and of the maximal pleasure of charity. Our knowledge does not cause God's having charity, but rather God's supreme goodness and charity cause our knowledge. In short, we must reason from the effects of God's nature to conclusions about that nature. On this analysis, *De Trinitate's* arguments are a posteriori.

Similarly, viewed from a contemporary perspective that wants to apply the a priori-a posteriori distinction, the arguments are all a posteriori since they all follow experiential data (though occasionally at some remove, i.e., when a premise traces its experiential grounds back through

⁶⁹ DT 3.3.

⁷⁰ Richard supports this claim saying, "Let each person examine his own conscience, and without a doubt…he will discover that…nothing is more pleasant than charity." *DT* 3.3 (Evans, 249; Ribaillier, 138).

⁷¹ In one place Augustine makes a similar argument, reasoning that humans naturally attribute what is most good to God. Augustine, *Free Choice of the Will*, 1.3. See also Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy* 3.10; Anselm, *Monologion* 15, *Proslogion* 3.

⁷² Recall that the beliefs based on experience relevant to The Argument are taken by Richard as indubitable. Richard would surely admit that many beliefs about our experiences can (or should) be doubted. But our belief, say, that there exists contingent objects, ought not be doubted, which is all The Argument needs to get going.

several steps of reasoning). That is, Richard's reasoning depends on sense experience and cannot be accomplished only through logically necessary premises.

Finally, *De Trinitate's* arguments are related to faith or, more accurately, dogma (*donum fidei*) in two ways pertinent to the a priori-a posteriori distinction. First, Richard's arguments may be considered a posteriori in the sense that they take as their endpoint certain Christian doctrine. Trinitarian dogma – provided by Scripture, church fathers, and church authority – are the target conclusions toward which Richard's arguments seek to reason. But why give philosophical support for what is already held by faith and with certainty?

Richard explains in the prologue that what is believed by faith and (therefore) with certainty enflames the believer to seek greater knowledge.⁷³ Richard is already convinced of the truth of the Athanasian creed. So convinced, in fact, that he wants to undertake an experiment as an act of love: can reasoning about experience alone yield support for some of the creed's key claims? Trinitarian doctrine, and certain faith in it, then, are the starting point of The Argument in the sense that certain belief in their truth motivate him to perform the experiment of reason. They are the end-point of The Argument in that creedal statements are conclusions for which he argues.

Second, *De Trinitate's* arguments may be understood as a priori, in the contemporary sense of the distinction, insofar as they are independent of faith evidentially, or epistemically. Recall that none of *De Trinitate's* arguments use a datum of faith (scripture, creeds, fathers, etc.) as a premise or for support of a premise. The whole endeavour, of course, is to find necessary reasons independent of these authorities.

De Trinitate generally, and therefore The Argument specifically, is an a posteriori argument in this sense: it takes faith as its motivation and telos, but not as its evidence. Richard seeks to deepen his understanding of the Trinity, as well as to add further reasons for his belief – belief which is already firm, but also so vigorous that it cannot help but pursue its object (viz., the triune God) with both affect and intellect.

In sum, the a priori-a posteriori distinction may be considered in various senses. Depending on the sense in view, The Argument may be viewed as either a priori or a posteriori. This has led some Richard scholars to label *De Trinitate* both a posteriori *and* a priori.⁷⁴ An evaluation like this is prudent, though the safest route is probably to just bear in mind that the distinction between a priori and a posteriori is neither uniformly understood nor helpful when applied to Richard's work. A better way to approach The Argument is to largely avoid the distinction altogether, asking instead about *De Trinitate's* relationship to reason, its use of experience, the place of faith, and the ultimate sources of indubitability.

 $^{^{73}} DT$ prologue.

⁷⁴ Ebner, *Erkenntnislehre Richards* and Purwatma see both a priori and a posteriori elements. Ottaviano and Copleston take The Argument to be an a priori deductive proof. Carmelo Ottaviano, *Riccardo di S. Vittore: la vita, le opere, il pensiero*, Rendic. Acc. dei Lincei 6 (Rome: Dott. Giovanni Bardi, 1933), 505; Frederick Copleston, *History of Philosophy: Medieval Philosophy*, New Ed edition, vol. 2 (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2003), 178–83; Joseph Ebner, *Die Erkenntnislehre Richards von St. Viktor* (Aschendorff: Aschendorff, 1917), 73; Purwatma, "The Explanation of the Mystery of the Trinity Based on the Attribute of God as Supreme Love," 42.

1.3 Conclusion: *De Trinitate* Viewed Through the Contemporary Philosophy-Theology Paradigm

We may express The Argument's method and goals by borrowing a pair of distinctions from a recent essay by Scott MacDonald. The first distinction is between *natural theology narrowly and broadly considered*, and the second distinction is the between the philosophical enterprises of *justification and clarification*.

First, MacDonald distinguishes between natural theology construed narrowly and broadly. Considered narrowly, natural theology "consists of truths about God which are either (1) self-evident or evident to sense perception or (2) derived by deductively valid proofs the (ultimate) premises of which are evident in one of these two ways."⁷⁵ In other words, the natural theologian is limited to evident truths for her data, and deductive argument for her method. Construed broadly, natural theology is open to the many forms of inductive argumentation, and takes testimony as an epistemically respectable source of data. Scripture, as divine testimony, is fair game, and the clear demarcation between natural and revealed theology (or truths of reason and truths of faith, as in Aquinas) begins to fade.

Whatever the differences between natural theology construed broadly or narrowly, in both cases the natural theologian's objective is to provide strong epistemic support for certain theological claims. MacDonald calls this objective 'justification' and, as his second distinction, he contrasts justification with 'clarification'. In clarification, the philosopher sets justificatory pursuits to the side and seeks to understand, develop, systematize, and explain certain propositions or theories.

With both sets of distinctions, MacDonald offers a paradigm for thinking about the philosopher's relationship to theology. According to MacDonald, the philosopher is not limited to natural theology narrowly construed, but instead she can practice the broader version. That is, the philosopher can seek to justify *any* questions raised by or in scripture, and she can use scriptural testimony itself as support in her arguments. Further, the philosopher is not limited to the justificatory goals of natural theology at all, but instead she can engage in clarificatory projects. MacDonald recognizes that his vision for the philosopher-cum-philosophical-theologian blurs traditional lines between philosophy (as natural theology) and theology (as revealed theology). One wonders, though, if MacDonald recognizes any difference between the philosopher-as-clarifier and the plain-old-theologian. This question will resurface when we apply his paradigm to Richard. Indeed, it is time to ask, How does Richard's own project in *De Trinitate* map onto MacDonald's paradigm?⁷⁶

On my view, The Argument has characteristics from all quarters of MacDonald's distinctions. The Argument's data set is comprised of evident truths, and uses (primarily) deductive arguments. In this way The Argument can be viewed as an example of natural theology, narrowly construed. However, Richard freely draws his subject-matter and the conclusions for which he intends to argue from divinely revealed testimony (i.e. creeds and, ultimately, scripture). Thus, The Argument

⁷⁵ Scott MacDonald, "What Is Philosophical Theology?," in *Arguing About Religion*, ed. Kevin Timpe (New York: Routledge, 2009), 21.

⁷⁶ Using MacDonald's proposal to view Richard is not overly anachronistic because MacDonald's proposal is largely developed from medieval practices and models.

goes beyond a narrow construal of natural theology.⁷⁷ I must iterate that Richard never uses scripture or other authoritative testimony as a premise in his arguments or as support for one. Finally, while advancing his deductive arguments grounded in evident reasons, Richard does develop, explain, and, on the whole, seek to further understand a certain theory, viz., creedal trinitarianism. This explanation, though, is a felicitous effect of Richard's primary goal, which is the pursuit of necessary reasons for the Trinity. The Argument, then, ranges across all the categories of MacDonald's taxonomy. For those who share MacDonald's vision for philosophy's relationship to theology, this is welcome news, since *De Trinitate* is an exemplar of philosophical-theology (as MacDonald conceives it).

However, some may not be as comfortable as MacDonald with blurring the traditional lines between faith and reason. These folks will want to know what exactly the nature of *De Trinitate* is: Systematic theology? Philosophy (i.e., natural theology)? Apologetics? Creedal commentary? Certainly it has been (mis)understood as each in modern scholarship. Given these categories, however, we must recognize that *De Trinitate*, and The Argument specifically, is not a text-book example of any of the above. Viewed through such modern paradigms, *De Trinitate* is *sui generis* and belongs in its own genre.⁷⁸ If we really want to deploy contemporary classifications, then *De Trinitate* must be given a compound description: it is a philosophical-theological-mystical treatise. Philosophical in that its data are ultimately evident truths, and its methods are strict deductive proofs. Theological in that its practical starting place is contemplate his beloved, and during contemplate has seen the Trinity on creation. His commitment to education and sharing drives Richard to record his findings in hopes of preparing the hearts and minds of his brethren.

It should be clear by now that Richard is not a modern and *De Trinitate* does not fit snugly into any single of our fields of study or literary genres. Much like our conclusions regarding the a priori-a posteriori distinction, categories that philosophers of religion find useful today are less useful when trying to understand a unique trinitarian treatise from the twelfth century. The Argument, it appears, demands to be understood on its own terms.

In reading *De Trinitate* we get the chance – and a rare one it is – to experience a work as fresh and exciting to the contemporary mind as it is intellectually serious and demanding. Let us turn in earnest, therefore, to Richard's argument for the necessary existence of the Trinity.

⁷⁷ For this reason, most brands of Thomism reject Richard's project in *De Trinitate* outright. My sense is that Richard's project is considered neither philosophy/natural theology, nor is it revealed theology done very well. ⁷⁸ More accurately, it falls within a sparsely populated genus, or literary-philosophical-theological genre that includes Anselm's *Monologion* and Achard's *De unitate Dei et pluralitate creaturarum*. Perhaps the set also includes the first few questions of Bonaventure's *Sentence Commentary*, and a group of writings by Duns Scotus. But my reading of these later two Scholastics is that they deploy arguments similar in style to Richard, but do so with different motivations and they place those arguments in texts which are more systematic instances of philosophicaltheology.

2. THE ARGUMENT FOR DIVINE CHARITY

2.0 Overview

My central aim in this thesis is to secure a deep understanding of Richard's argument for the Trinity. To achieve this aim, the present chapter and those that follow give a degree of analysis that, on first blush, appears somewhat fastidious. But a nuanced argument requires a nuanced reading. I believe our attentiveness will result in a depth of understanding of Richard's argument hitherto unachieved in contemporary scholarship.

In this chapter I will exposit and analyse The Argument's first step, in which Richard argues that the supreme substance necessarily has supreme charity and, therefore, necessarily has other-love. Here is the argument in Richard's words,

We have learned from the previous discussions that the fullness and perfection of all goodness lies in the supreme and universally perfect good. Moreover, where the fullness of all goodness is, true and supreme charity cannot be lacking. Indeed, nothing is better than charity, and nothing is more perfect than charity.¹

This argument establishes the presence of divine charity-love. The passage gives a summary statement of Richard's charity argument and I will outline it more formally later in the chapter.² Right now I want to highlight its role in The Argument and discuss the foundational metaphysical ideas that it so tersely expresses.

Charity is the pivotal concept in The Argument, and so the charity argument serves as a conceptual starting point for all speculation that follows.³ Adding to the charity argument's importance, the claim that "the fullness and perfection of all goodness lies in the supreme and universally perfect good" is a summary statement of the key conclusions from DT 1 and 2, and thus serves as the metaphysical foundation for the rest of The Argument. To understand this claim and its role in the charity argument we need to know something of Richard's metaphysics of goodness. Richard drew liberally from the Western tradition, and this is no place for a detailed study of his complex position. Instead, I will canvas three aspects of his view that are most fruitful for understanding the charity argument. Those three aspects, or groups of aspects, are: (i) aseity and the related notion of participation; (ii) fullness and perfection; (iii) goodness and blessedness. Gaining some purchase on these concepts will allow us to unpack the above argument and to follow Richard's reasoning.

2.1 Three Components of Richard's Metaphysics of Goodness

Richard's most sustained reflection on goodness is found in DT 2.16, where he touches upon many of the main themes of his view. Chapter sixteen is particularly helpful because it introduces us to the core components of his metaphysics of goodness, components that will appear repeatedly throughout The Argument. The chapter's title is *God Himself is His Own Good and the Supreme Good*,

¹ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 136).

² Section 2.2.

³ For Salet, *DT* 3, and especially the notion of love therein, is the aesthetic heart of *De Trinitate*. For Hofmann, love and personhood form "the middle- and pivot-point, as it were, of the entire treatise." Richard of St Victor, *La Trinité*, 27; Hofmann, "Analogie Und Person," 196.

*and that the Supreme Good is Entirely Perfect.*⁴ This title reflects the same subject (viz., the *summum bonum*) and language (e.g., *universaliter perfectum*) used in the claim that "the fullness and perfection of all goodness lies in the supreme and universally perfect good." *DT* 2.16 is relatively brief, and I will quote it in its entirety,

But he who is truly omnipotent cannot lack anything to be desired. No fullness [plenitudo] and no perfection can be lacking where there is omnipotence; otherwise, if God's supreme [summe] power were lacking even a little perfection that he could not have, then he absolutely would not be omnipotent. However, he is entirely perfect who lacks or can lack no perfection in any way. Nothing can be better [melius] and nothing can be greater [majus] than that which is full [plenum] and perfect in every respect. And so, it is certain that the Almighty himself is the supreme good and, consequently, is his own good to himself. Indeed, just as he who holds the highest place cannot have a superior, so the supreme being of all cannot be made good or blessed [beari] by a being inferior to it. How could he, who has all that he has from himself, be made good or blessed by another? Thus, he is good from himself and is blessed from himself. Therefore, he is himself his own goodness, he is the supreme goodness; he is himself his own happiness, he is the supreme happiness. It is certain then, as it was said, that God is the supreme good, and the supreme good is entirely perfect. After all, what is blessedness other than the fullness and perfection of all good things? It is certain then that the supreme good and absolute perfection lacks absolutely nothing, the addition of which could make it better.⁵

Many of the metaphysical themes composing Richard's view of goodness are represented here, including: fullness, perfection, and the fullness of perfection; the fullness of goodness; the supreme good and the supreme being; relational notions such as 'greater-than' and 'better-than'; self-sufficiency; blessedness and joy.⁶ I will focus on three pairs: *aseity* and *participation, fullness* and *perfection*, and *goodness* and *blessedness*. These three sets of components are foundational to Richard's metaphysic, serving as the primary grounds for many claims in The Argument.

2.1.1 Aseity and participation

In *DT* 1 Richard argues for the necessary existence of a single substance that has being (*habet esse*) from itself (*a semetipso*), and therefore from eternity.⁷ Put roughly, Richard advances a cosmological argument on which, for any possible substance, that substance's existence is "from itself, or from another."⁸ That is, necessarily, any possible substance is either uncaused, or caused by something else. Tacitly employing a form of the principle of sufficient reason, Richard concludes that,

⁴ Quod Deus ipse sit suum, ipse sit summum bonum, et quod summum bonum sit universaliter perfectum. DT 2.16 (Evans, 238; Ribaillier, 123).

⁵ DT 2.16 (Evans, 238-9; Ribaillier, 136-137).

⁶ Though not present in *DT* 2.16, to this list can be added the notions: hierarchy of being; the identification of goodness and being; God as goodness and being itself; and God as the source of all goodness.

⁷ The English term 'from' is used in two senses here. Existing from oneself (*a semetipso*) denotes a certain explanatory relation. Existing from eternity (*ab eterno*) denotes a relation to time (viz., not having a beginning in time). Cf. *DT* 2.2. For a detailed study on the notions eternity and sempiternity in *De Trinitate*, see Dyer, "Translating Eternity in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance," 63–111.

⁸ For example, "everything that is or can be either has its being from itself or from some source other than itself." *DT* 1.6 (Evans, 216; Ribaillier, 91-2).

necessarily, the contingent substances of common experience are not uncaused. Instead, the ultimate causal explanation of all contingent reality is a single, uncaused substance. On pain of having received its existence from nothing, which is impossible (another employment of the principle of sufficient reason), the uncaused substance also exists from eternity.

By looking at his conception of the *a se* substance,⁹ we can gain some initial insight into Richard's view of goodness. In DT 1.11 he develops his position on divine aseity, arguing that an *a se* being: exists from itself; receives nothing from another; and is the origin of all other things. Richard provides two arguments for these attributes of aseity, each helpful points of entry to the notion of participation.

2.1.1.1 Argument 1 for aseity

The first argument is stated thus,

We must now discuss in more detail that being which is from itself and, consequently, is clearly from eternity, as we have already said. It is most certain and thus, as I believe, no one can doubt that some supreme being necessarily exists amid the great multitude of existing realities and so many different grades of being. We call the [supreme] of all beings that-than-which-nothing-is-greater and that-than-which-nothing-is-better. Now, without a doubt rational nature is better than irrational nature. Thus, it is necessary for some rational substance to be the highest of all beings.¹⁰

Richard makes several notable moves in this argument. (i) He identifies the eternal and *a se* substance with the 'supreme being' (*summum esse*). Further, (ii) he claims that necessarily the supreme being exists, and (iii) it is the 'greatest' and 'best'¹¹ of all beings. Finally, (iv) he claims that it is better than not to have rationality, concluding that the supreme being is rational. Let us reflect on these interlocking moves, beginning with the second.

In (ii), Richard states that "it is most certain" and "no one can doubt" the existence of a supreme being. On what grounds is this belief based, and why does he take it to be so unassailable? For Richard, (iii) – i.e., the notions of 'that-than-which-nothing-is-greater' and 'that-than-which-nothing-is-better' – are excellent reasons for the indubitability of (ii). Following an Augustinian and, ultimately, Plotinian line of thinking, every nature is ranked in an ascending hierarchy of excellence;¹² in Richard's language, "the different grades of being" (*differentia graduum*). At the top

⁹ To avoid confusion, it is imperative that Richard's view of aseity be understood on its own terms. In *De Trinitate* 'aseity' refers to the idea that the divine substance has no causal source, and no explanatory source beyond itself. Further, this is a metaphysical notion, not a psychological one. The view must not be conflated with stronger versions of aseity that include the notion of impassibility, so called real-relations, or any other commitments not laid claim by Richard. I use 'aseity' and '*a se*' simply to talk about the idea that a substance is uncaused. Further, Richard does not use the term *a se*, but rather *ab eo* (literally 'from him/it[self]') and, more often *a semetipso* (literally 'of himself' or 'out of himself'). Though slightly anachronistic, 'aseity' is less unwieldy than 'ab eoty' or 'semetipsoness', and is conceptually close enough to serve the present discussion. Therefore, with this proviso, I will use '*a se*' and its cognates in lieu of '*ab eo*'.

¹⁰ DT 1.11 (Evans, 219; Ribaillier, 95).

¹¹ Majus and melius, respectively, and their cognates.

¹² For an overview of this system of thought in Augustine, see Scott MacDonald, "The Divine Nature: Being and Goodness," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump and David Meconi, 2nd ed.
of this hierarchy is the greatest and best being. I will call this line of thinking the *approach from below*, since it begins with the lower, common objects of everyday experience and reasons up the hierarchy to conclusions about the single, supreme object.¹³

In (iv), Richard employs the approach from below to make a conclusion about the nature of the supreme being. The supreme substance, recall, is 'that-than-which-nothing-is-better' and '-greater'. To Richard's mind, there is no doubt that a rational nature is better than an irrational one: a rational object (even if it's a bad example of its kind) is always higher on the grade of being than an irrational object. Therefore, Richard takes it as firmly established that the supreme being has a rational nature.

Thus far in his first argument (i.e., moves ii-iv), Richard has used the notions of 'nothing-greater' and 'nothing-better' in the approach from below to argue for the existence and rationality of a supreme being. But how does he connect these moves with (i)? That is, how does Richard identify the supreme being with the eternal, *a se* substance? He does so at the close of chapter eleven, telling us, "it is certain that this substance, which holds the highest place in the universe of realities, cannot receive the very thing it is from a source inferior to it." The key assumption in this last move is that the supreme being cannot receive its being or nature from anything lower on the hierarchy, and therefore must be from itself. This assumption is apparently an instance of an ancient principle: *the cause is greater than its effect.*¹⁴ Richard simply employs the principle here and neither explains nor defends it. However, his reticence on the matter in chapter eleven is abandoned in chapter twelve, where it is an important part of the second argument.

2.1.1.2 Argument 2 for aseity

Richard considers the second argument, advanced in chapter twelve, to be "the greater reason" for divine aseity (which is perhaps surprising since he was "most certain" about the previous one). The second argument has two stages, both centred on the notion of aseity. Stage one establishes the existence and aseity of 'the power of being', and stage two further characterizes its nature.

Stage one argues that all objects – possible and actual – must have the "possibility of being" (*possibilitatem essendi*). This quality, though, must have a source. The source of the possibility of being is the "power of being" (*posse esse*). The power of being cannot receive its own possibility for existence from some other source; in such a case, that other source would be the power of being. Thus, the power of being is not a quality received from another, but is the Power of Being Itself, and so is the source of the possibility of being of all other existents.¹⁵ In short, the power of being receives nothing from another as if from a source. This because the power of being first gave all

⁽Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), esp. 22-6. For Neoplatonic roots and the connection between Augustine and Plotinus, see Stephen Menn, *Descartes and Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 73–208.

¹³ I take my cue here from Scott MacDonald who describes Augustine's metaphysics of goodness as "approaching God from below." MacDonald, "The Divine Nature: Being and Goodness," 22f.

¹⁴ On this (ultimately Aristotelian) principle and its medieval reception, see A. C. Lloyd, "The Principle That the Cause Is Greater than Its Effect," *Phronesis* 21, no. 2 (1976): 146–56.

¹⁵ Hence, we have at least two reasons for thinking that Richard views the power of being as a concrete object (and not an abstract object or property). First, because the power of being is intensely causal, which is often taken to be necessary, and even sufficient, for concreteness. Second, because the power of being is ultimately identified with the Power of Being Itself, which is identical to the divine substance and so is a concrete object.

other existents their being, and so they have nothing to give the power of being which it does not already have.

The second stage characterizes the power of being with several positive attributes. "[I]f all things are from the power of being," Richard tells us, "then every essence, all power, and all wisdom come from it." Richard then introduces a more nuanced form of the principle he used in *DT* 2.11: "it is impossible to give something greater than one has." This Neoplatonic axiom was popular among medieval thinkers and has roots at least as far back as Aristotle. Employing the principle, Richard concludes, "If every essence is from the power of being, then the power of being is the supreme essence. If all power is from the power of being then it is supremely powerful. If all wisdom is from the power of being, then it is supremely wise."¹⁶ Richard is fond of the notion of divine supremacy and in his hands it extends over a broad field of concepts. Here we gain some purchase on the nature of supremacy – part of what it means to be supreme is to be a source. If substance S is the ultimate source of being, then S is the supreme being; *mutatis mutandis*, S is supreme in power, wisdom, and any other quality of which it is the ultimate source. We should also note that Richard's use of supremacy always includes that of maximality: to be supremely F is to be the most possible F.

2.1.1.3 Identity of the a se substance with God

When Richard develops his foundational metaphysics in DT 1, he most often refers to the *a se* being as the 'supreme substance'. By DT 3.2, where the charity argument occurs, Richard refers to the supreme substance as the 'divine substance' and 'God', using the terms interchangeably. To see how he makes this connection, we will quickly summarize the aseity arguments, which directly support Richard's identification of the supreme substance with the divine substance.

In his case for the eternal and *a se* substance, Richard advances two arguments for the necessity of a being that is from itself. Both arguments contribute to a picture of the *a se* substance and some of its attributes. For instance, aseity involves being the source of all one has, since there is no other eternal source from which one could draw. Indeed, the Power of Being Itself is the causal explanation of all other existence – both causing things to be, and causing them to be in their specific modes or natures. Also, in both arguments Richard connects aseity with supremacy, where the latter notion is characterized primarily as being the greatest and best possible thing.

Shortly after the aseity arguments Richard identifies the *a se* and supreme substance with the divine substance. In *DT* 1.16 Richard argues that everything that exists, including divinity, comes from the necessary, *a se* substance (i.e., the 'supreme substance). Employing an Augustinian move, Richard states that whatever is divine cannot have a superior.¹⁷ But having no equal or superior is part of what it means to be the supreme substance. Further, if, *per impossibile*, the supreme substance was to give divinity to another, then the supreme substance would no longer be supreme. Therefore, the supreme substance alone has divinity. Expressed two other ways, the supreme substance is the divine substance, the supreme substance is God.

¹⁶ DT 1.12 (Evans, 220; Ribaillier, 96).

¹⁷ See the opening lines of Augustine, Augustine, *On the Nature of Good*, trans. Albert Newman, vol. 4, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers 1 (Buffalo, New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1887).

2.1.1.4 Participation

Next, divine aseity is connected to the notion of participation through the two characteristics just discussed, viz. source and supremacy. The broad idea is that all beings receive their goodness from the *a se* substance by participating in its goodness, that is, receiving some share of goodness from the ultimate source, Goodness Itself.¹⁸ But what does it mean to share in the divine goodness? This question lands us squarely into a bundle of issues – metaphysical, logical, and epistemological – notorious for being some of the thorniest in medieval, as well as ancient, scholarship.¹⁹

Nowhere does Richard discuss participation with anything like systematic detail. Several elements salient to this study may be discerned nevertheless.²⁰ Most important is that, by participating, the creature is intensely causally dependent on the creator. God not only efficiently causes creatures, but also continually gives them their essence, or nature.²¹ "If all things are from the power of being," Richard tells us, "then every essence, all power, and all wisdom come from it."²² Created substances "delight in the participation (*participatione*)" of divine power and "not in the fullness of it."²³ Though brief, these statements show that a point made by Katherin Rogers about Anselm applies also to Richard: "The doctrine of participation entails that it is the constant causal activity of the Creator which makes the copy which is the creature to be and to be what it is."²⁴ This goes some way toward answering our question, What does it mean to share in divine goodness? But, given the complex issues involved, I am not sure how much further we *can* go: the participation relation is notoriously resistant to analysis.

Perhaps we do best in following the approach of another set of Anselm scholars. Visser and Williams sidestep much of the controversy by lumping the whole knotty matter together under the notion of *divine ultimacy*. Unsurprisingly, ultimacy is closely related to aseity, "Anselm has not merely argued that God is supremely good and great and existent. He has argued that God is all these things *through himself*, we will call this feature of God *divine aseity*. Furthermore, whatever is good

¹⁸ Following tradition, I will capitalize all tokens of the type 'Fness Itself' since, on Platonic metaphysics like that of Richard, these tokens can serves as proper names of God.

¹⁹ Jasper Hopkins begins his treatment of Anselm's view of universals thus: "Proverbially, the medieval controversy over the ontological status of universals defies clarification." Gyula Klima uses the term 'bundle' and helps give the lay of the land in his Stanford Encyclopedia Article. Anselm, *Anselm of Canterbury*, trans. Jasper Hopkins (London: S.C.M. Press, 1974), 57. Gyula Klima, "The Medieval Problem of Universals," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2017), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/universals-medieval/.

²⁰ Katherin Rogers details four aspects in Anselm's view of participation: (1) creature as image or copy of the creator; (2) causal dependence of creature on creator; (3) the creature shares in the creator; (4) creator is nonetheless distinct from and transcends the creature. All four are present in Richard's *De Trinitate*. Katherin A. Rogers, *The Neoplatonic Metaphysics and Epistemology of Anselm of Canterbury*, Studies in the History of Philosophy 45 (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997), chap. 3.

²¹ Richard does not specify between kind-essence and individual-essence, though it appears as if he has kind-essences primarily in mind.

²² DT 1.12 (Evans, 220; Ribaillier, 96).

²³ DT 1.14 (Evans, 222; Ribaillier, 98).

²⁴ Rogers, The Neoplatonic Metaphysics and Epistemology of Anselm of Canterbury, 94.

(or is great, or exists) is good (or is great, or exists) through God; we will call this feature of God *divine ultimacy*."²⁵

Visser and Williams do not give the specifics of divine ultimacy further investigation, and perhaps this is the best way to consider the issue in Richard's work. Like Anselm, Richard treats ultimacy as a corollary to aseity. Like Anselm and Augustine, participation answers the question, How is the goodness (or existence, or perfections) of creation related to the creator? What participation *is,* is difficult to say with any precision. But neither is it necessary for the present investigation – the important point already made about Anselm also applies to Richard: created beings participate in, and are thus heavily causally dependent upon God because God is *a se.* Once again we see that God's aseity is fundamental.

The divine goodness is given in levels of strength to created beings in the form of individual good qualities, or 'perfections', and in the next section we will look at this in greater detail.²⁶ Sticking with the connection between aseity and participation, we see more fully why the *a se* substance is supreme: as a rule, a source can only give to others what it already and more powerfully has in itself – thus the supreme substance is greater and better than creation precisely because all other beings receive their goodness from it.

Aseity is the fundamental notion of Richard's metaphysics of being, as I hope this all-too-brief of a review has gone some way to show. I will not argue the claim, but will only state: all other aspects of Richard's philosophical theology are ultimately built on the notion of aseity, including his view of goodness. Aseity leads him to source-hood and supremacy, both of which help explain the idea of participation. Participation is further explained by the next pair of notions, *fullness* and *perfection*, the central components of his metaphysics of the good.

2.1.2 Fullness and perfections

At the heart of Richard's view of goodness are two closely related ideas: there exist distinct *types* of good qualities, and these qualities are exemplified to varying rates of *intensity*. Essentially, this is the distinction between kind and degree, and is a common thread running through most medieval metaphysics of goodness and being.²⁷ Both of these notions are used to great effect in *De Trinitate*, but it is not obvious whether Richard employs discrete terminology specific to each notion. I believe he frequently does: using 'perfection' most often in reference to a substance's good qualities, and 'fullness' (*totius*) in reference to the degree with which these qualities are had. But the issue is rarely so clear,²⁸ and I may read more consistency into Richard's language than is actually

²⁵ Sandra Visser and Thomas Williams, *Anselm*, Great Medieval Thinkers (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 96.

²⁶ One may wonder whether it is goodness or *divine* goodness that is shared with creatures. On a Platonic participation metaphysic, there is no real distinction here. All goodness is given by Goodness Itself. Indeed, for a creature to have any good quality that creature actively receives it from Goodness Itself, that is, from God. In short, *all* goodness is divine goodness.

²⁷ See McDonald's introduction in Scott MacDonald, ed., *Being and Goodness: The Concept of the Good in Metaphysics and Philosophical Theology* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 5–7.

²⁸ So Châtillon: "...Richard's vocabulary is of great elasticity. Different words can refer to the same reality, and the same word can correspond to dissimilar objects. Richard broadens or restricts the meaning of the terms he uses, according to the circumstances or according to the requirements of his rhetoric. This is a way of doing things of which he is also perfectly aware." In short, Richard "adjusts a term's semantic range according to his

present.²⁹ At least for the sake of clarity, in the present discussion I will use the terms 'fullness' and 'perfection' in reference to the notions of degree and kind, respectively. With this caveat, let us turn to the notions themselves.

2.1.2.1 Perfections

The first notion is the idea that the divine substance has conceptually distinct attributes.³⁰ Richard discusses many of these in books one and two, and looking at a couple places where he does so will give us some wider perspective on the notion. In *DT* 1.17-18 Richard speaks of God's 'perfections' (*perfectiones*) and 'consummations' (*consummationes*), which include knowledge, wisdom, and power, but also God's divinity and his very being (*esse*).³¹ In his discussion of the supreme good (*summum bonum*) and universal perfection (*univeraliter perfectum*) in *DT* 2.16, Richard claims that such a being "cannot lack anything to be desired."³² What is the 'anything' that is impossible for the supreme good to lack? Partly, it cannot lack its attributes to any degree, as we will see momentarily. But neither can it lack any type of good quality.³³ The distinction, then, is between degree and kind, and is highlighted several times in the chapter: "However, he is entirely perfect who lacks or can lack no perfection in any way;" "Nothing can be better and nothing can be greater than that which is full (*plenum*) and perfect in every respect;" "After all, what is blessedness other than the fullness and perfection of all good things?"³⁴ In these passages we see time and again the contrast between having an attribute, and having it in some degree.

2.1.2.2 Fullness

Fullness is the second notion at the heart of Richard's metaphysics of the good. The distinction between fullness and perfection is further evidenced in several places in *De Trinitate*. In *DT* 2.16 Richard argues that an omnipotent being cannot lack "even a little perfection"³⁵ (*qualicumque*

present needs." Jean Châtillon, "Richard de Saint-Victor," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, ed. Aimé Solignac and Michel Dupuy, vol. 13 (Paris: Beauchesne Éditeur, 1988), col 628.

²⁹ Except for some ease of comprehension of Richard's argument, not much is lost if I am incorrect in my understanding of how the two terms are used. The *concepts* of perfection and fullness are still present, even if they do not correspond as neatly to *perfectio* and *totius* as I am inclined to see.

³⁰ Richard's view of simplicity is strong enough that he takes all the divine attributes to be distinct in the mind only, and not in reality.

³¹ Some of the divine perfections argued for in books one and two include omnipotence, omniscience, goodness, everlastingness, immutability, eternity, infinity, omnipresence, indivisibility, immensity. For a helpful overview, see Ruben Angelici's introduction to his translation of *De Trinitate*, Angelici, *Richard of Saint Victor*, *On the Trinity*, esp. 37-42.

³² DT 2.16 (Evans, 238; Ribaillier, 123).

³³ Coulter notices a distinction similar to mine: "attributes concomitant with a perfect being can be determined in two respects: they must be qualitatively the best on the scale of being; and they must be fully realized. Richard uses the adjective *summus* to designate the former and *plenitudo* to refer to the latter. Dale M. Coulter, *Per Visibilia Ad Invisibilia: Theological Method in Richard of St. Victor*, Bibliotheca Victorina 19 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 210. ³⁴ DT 2.16 (Evans, 238-239; Ribaillier, 123).

³⁵ This is one place where my distinction between kind and degree may be cutting things too fine. Evans translates *qualicumque* as 'even a little', which I think accurately reflects Richard's meaning in the passage as a whole. A more literal translation would be something like, 'of some sort or another', indicating type instead of degree. The term can be difficult to translate, as Robert J. O'Connell recognizes in the midst of a study on Augustine's *Confessions* 7.10.16. O'Connell points out that Augustine uses *qualicumque* in a neoplatonic

perfectione), pointing to degree of goodness. The idea is more pronounced in DT 1.18 where the "integrity" (*integritas*) of God's perfections is compared and judged to be equal – his wisdom, for instance, cannot be greater than his power, or vice versa. The distinction between kind and degree is further supported in DT 1.14 where, as we have seen, Richard argues that created existents "delight in the participation" of God's attributes (*alicujus rei*) but "not in the fullness (*plenitudeni*)" of those attributes.

Concerning the notion of fullness, the way the divine substance has its perfections differs from the way all other substances do. My focus in this section is divine goodness, but investigating creaturely goodness will allow us to view God's goodness in sharper relief.

The end or goal for any created substance is to exemplify each perfection proper to its kind to the fullest degree possible. As we saw in the previous section, all created substances ultimately receive their being – that is their existence and nature – from God, who is the 'power of being' and therefore the source of all existence. Natures are sets of qualities, or perfections, that specify species. Take for example a human person, Anthony. For Anthony to be human it is necessary that he 'have' or exemplify rationality. As a created substance, Anthony does not receive rationality from himself, but instead receives it from – that is, he participates in – God's rationality. We see then that participation is an asymmetric relation: creation participates in God's perfections, but God does not participate in creation's perfections. Nor could he, as we will see.

The picture is significantly different for God's goodness. Perhaps a common way to think about the divine substance is to view it as having its perfections to the highest degree. On such a conception God is maximally wise (powerful, etc.), where, again, maximal is understood as having a quality to the highest possible degree. For Richard, however, this way of stating matters is not entirely accurate. On the Platonic scheme of participation to which Richard subscribes, a substance participates in some perfection by receiving it from a source, and ultimately from the Perfection Itself. Returning to our previous example, Anthony is wise because he participates in Wisdom Itself does not receive wisdom from another source, or even from itself; wisdom is wise because it *is* wisdom. God is the ultimate source of every perfection, and so God just is Wisdom Itself, Power, Goodness, and all the rest. Therefore, the divine substance, strictly speaking, does not have its perfections in degrees, even a maximal degree, because the divine substance does not participate. It simply does not *receive* any goodness or perfection from anything, including itself: the supreme substance *is* its perfections and *is* its goodness. We find, then, that participation is not only asymmetrical, but also non-reflexive: a substance cannot participate, or receive being or perfections, from itself.

The upshot of all this is that when Richard speaks of fullness (*plenitudo*), he should be understood as referring to the 'supra-maximal' (to hesitantly coin a phrase³⁶), which can share itself with others without losing any degree of its own perfections. Putting the matter a bit differently, the eternal

⁽specifically, Plotinian) context of intellectual ascent. O'Connell believes 'some sort' is a poor fit for *qualicumque*, and thinks level or degree more accurately captures Augustine's idea. I think Richard employs the term in a similar way, and in a (broadly) similar Platonic context. Thus, in this instance, *qualicumque* is better expressed by denoting level or degree than kinds or sorts. Robert J. O'Connell, *St. Augustine's Confessions: The Odyssey of Soul* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), 208–9.

³⁶ This does not go too far beyond Richard, who is not afraid to speak of the divine substance as supersubstantial (*supersubstantiale*), cf. *DT* 5.1.

and *a se* substance is, for instance, Wisdom Itself. As eternal and necessary, Wisdom Itself cannot possibly cease to exist, and therefore can give itself – can give wisdom – to others without ever decreasing in its own wisdom and therefore fading out of existence.

The notions of kind and degree are jointly present whenever Richard speaks of perfections. The language he employs in these circumstances is not always uniform, and it is difficult in some places to know if he has one or the other notion in mind, or both. In any case, the kind-degree distinction is thoroughly evident in *De Trinitate*, and both notions are present in the charity argument. The expression "fullness and perfection of all goodness" is to be read in light of both perfections and degree, though God has the latter, degree, in the special sense I detailed above.³⁷ Finally, we would expect that supreme and universal perfection has its benefits, and it certainly does to Richard's mind. One benefit in particular, blessedness, will play a key role in The Argument.

2.1.3 Goodness and blessedness

Of the notions *aseity*, *fullness* and *perfection*, and *blessedness*, the last component plays the smallest role in Richard's metaphysics of the good. However, blessedness (*beatitudo*) and the related happiness (*felicitas*) add enough conceptual dimension to warrant inclusion in the present study (I will use 'happiness', 'blessedness', 'joy', and their cognates, interchangeably). Happiness is explanatorily satisfying because it is an essential datum of God's goodness – it explains the nature of perfect goodness per se and ad intra, not in relation to creation. Happiness also serves as a supporting datum for much of Richard's Trinitarian speculation.

In the introductory passage from DT 2.16, Richard argues that the *summum bonum* is its own good and is entirely perfect. Midway through the argument, he takes a moment to reflect on what this means for the supreme good,

Indeed, just as he who holds the highest place cannot have a superior, so the supreme being of all cannot be made good or blessed by a being inferior to it. How could he, who has all that he has from himself, be made good or blessed by another? Thus, he is good from himself and is blessed from himself.³⁸

The core idea here is that happiness is grounded upon goodness, and Richard repeats this idea three times in the quote above, and a fourth time at the end of DT 2.16: "After all, what is blessedness other than the fullness and perfection of all good things?"³⁹ This statement provides a tight definition of blessedness as the fullness of all goods. However, Richard does not explain why this is the case, or what the experience of blessedness is like. Once again, Richard expects his reader to employ some of the logic already developed in *De Trinitate*: created, contingent beings cannot give God any goods because, as Goodness Itself, God lacks no perfection – of kind or in degree – and so cannot be made any more good. Also, again employing the Platonic principle *the cause is greater than the effect*, created beings cannot give a good to God that he does not already have, and have supremely. From this we see why God cannot be made any more good. Still, the nature of the connection between the fullness of goodness and blessedness remains unsettled.

³⁷ We may speak of God having wisdom fully or maximally, but this is only shorthand for speaking about substantial wisdom, or Wisdom Itself.

³⁸ DT 2.16 (Evans, 239; Ribaillier, 123).

³⁹ DT 2.16 (Evans, 239; Ribaillier, 123).

To understand that connection, we must look to the tradition from which Richard draws. *DT* 2.16 exhibits some extraordinary parallels with book 3 of Boethius' *The Consolation of Philosophy*.⁴⁰ There Boethius explains that happiness is the result of having some good. Further, happiness is the highest good, since any other good is desired, ultimately, because its presence causes happiness. And most illuminating, "true happiness" is described as the having of pleasure and joy. With these observations from Boethius, we can make further inroads into Richard's own condensed argument. For instance, happiness is a sort of ultimate good – a state of pleasure caused by, or at least supervening upon, the presence of other goods. Additionally, on Boethius' view God's complete happiness ensures self-sufficiency: God has all good things, and thus wants for nothing from anyone else. Richard applies Boethius' ideas about goodness and happiness in his hypothetical question, "How could he, who has all that he has from himself, be made good or blessed by another?" Further, and this is the true importance of happiness for The Argument, Richard advances upon Boethius' ideas by using happiness and joy to support claims about multiple divine persons.

2.1.4 The three components

Briefly summarized, Richard's notions of supreme and perfect goodness include the following:

- 1. God is the one *a se* and necessary existent. As *a se*, God is identical with his attributes. He is Being (Goodness, Power, etc.) Itself, and is the source of (the kinds and degree) attributes had by non-divine beings. God does not participate in goodness, but all other things participate in his goodness in some way and to some degree.
- 2. God has all types of perfections and has each perfection to the maximal degree.⁴¹ Thus it can be said that God is, or has, that-than-which-nothing-is-better.
- 3. God has the fullness of all perfections and cannot receive more in type or degree. Having a good is the source of joy and pleasure, and so God is supremely happy and blessed.

With this survey of Richard's metaphysics of goodness in tow, let us return to the explication of *The Argument for Divine Charity*.

2.2 Exposition of The Argument for Divine Charity

I have touched on some of the foundational metaphysical ideas of the charity argument, and now it is time to examine it *as an argument*. To do so I will begin by following Richard's expression of his argument, examining his own words and ideas, largely in the order he delivers them. At the outset of this chapter I quoted Richard's argument for charity from *DT* 3.2. Below I restate that argument with the conclusion at the end and with key claims numbered in bold to facilitate discussion.

⁴⁰ I make no claims about the full extent of Boethius' influence on Richard's view of goodness generally, or of happiness as one component of that view. However, the parallels are obvious, and certainly pronounced enough to allow us to look to Boethius for help in filling out some positive content of Richard's compact presentation of the main argument. If further evidence is needed, Richard was deeply familiar with the work of Boethius. The fifth century thinker is one of the few authorities Richard identifies by name, in *DT* 4, where he spends several chapters dissecting, critiquing, and advancing Boethius' notion of person.

⁴¹ To iterate: strictly speaking God does not have his attributes to any degree, but rather is his attributes and allowing us to correctly use metaphorical language such as 'having' and 'fullness' of perfection.

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[1] the fullness and perfection of all goodness lies in the supreme and universally perfect good...[2] nothing is better than charity, and nothing is more perfect than charity.
[3]...where the fullness of all goodness is, true and supreme charity cannot be lacking.⁴²

The Argument for Divine Charity ('DC' for short) is brief, containing only two premises (DC1 and DC2), and a conclusion for the presence of divine charity (DC3). While it may appear straightforward, several steps of reasoning go quietly unvoiced and need to be drawn out.⁴³ As we trace Richard's argument as stated above, I will highlight implicit premises and sub-conclusions. These tacit propositions will be compiled when I present a full statement of Richard's deductive proof at the end of the chapter. Readers who would like to access that more comprehensive formulation may find it on page 48 and in the following footnote.⁴⁴

2.2.1 Premise DC1: The fullness and perfection of all goodness lies in the supreme and universally perfect good

The first premise in Richard's Trinitarian speculation is a terse summary of the main lines of argumentation of *De Trinitate* books one and two. In *DT* 1 Richard argues for the necessary existence of an *a se* substance, and identifies that substance as 'supreme', 'divine', and 'God'. In *DT* 2 Richard argues for many divine perfections composing a classical view of God, but Richard waits until *DT* 3.2 to argue for divine love.

To deduce that the divine substance possesses charity, and possesses it supremely, Richard must establish that charity is a good and that God necessarily has that good. Premise DC2 satisfies the first requirement, while DC1 satisfies the second. DC1 states in summary form what Richard already argued in the first two books of *DT*, viz., that the supreme good has *all* goods, has them in a superlative way, and that the supreme good is God. DC1 claims that fullness of goodness 'lies' in the supreme goodness, and elsewhere Richard says that God 'has' supreme goodness and 'is' supremely good. All this must be understood in the qualified way discussed earlier, namely, that

⁴⁴ For discussion of this expression of the argument see page 48.

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 $^{^{42}}$ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 136). See also Richard's summary of the same argument at the end of DT 3.2: "only God is supremely good...But the fullness of divinity cannot be without the fullness of goodness; the fullness of goodness cannot be without the fullness of charity." (Evans, 249; Ribaillier, 137)

⁴³ This practice is not uncommon. As Irving Copi, et al. explain, "many inferences are expressed enthymematically. The reason is easy to understand. A large body of propositions can be presumed to be common knowledge, and many speakers and writers save themselves trouble by not repeating well-known and perhaps trivially true propositions that their hearers or readers can perfectly well be expected to supply for themselves." In Richard's case, he expects his readers to be familiar with the main lines of argument from the previous two books of *De Trinitate*. Irving Copi, Carl Cohen, and Victor Rodych, *Introduction to Logic*, 15th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2020), 241.

P1) Necessarily, God has supreme goodness. [Premise]

P2) Necessarily, if God has supreme goodness, then God has every maximal property. [Premise]

C1) Necessarily, God has every maximal property. [P1, P2: Necessity Elimination & Introduction, Modus Ponens]

P3) Necessarily, charity is a maximal property. [Premise]

C2) Necessarily, God has charity. [C1, P3: Necessity Elimination, Universal Elimination, Modus Ponens, Necessity Introduction]

P4) Necessarily, if God has charity, then God has supreme charity. [Premise]

C3) Necessarily, God has supreme charity. [C2, P4: Necessity Elimination & Introduction, Modus Ponens]

God is identical to his properties. The necessary *a se* substance has goodness because it is Goodness Itself. DC1, then, serves as the metaphysically rich foundation for grounding God's goodness, as well as his happiness (*DT* 3.3) and glory (*DT* 3.4).

In DC2 Richard will claim that nothing is better than charity, that is, that charity is a maximal property. To conclude that God must have charity Richard needs to show that God must have all maximal properties. Richard does that in summary form here in DC1. The *approach from below* and the *approach from above* are two ways by which Richard argues that supreme goodness must include, or have, every possible perfection and have them maximally.⁴⁵ Supreme perfections – or, in Richard's words, "that-than-which-nothing-is-better" – is a necessary condition for supreme goodness. In *DT* 1.11 Richard established the identity between the supreme good and that-than-which-nothing-is-better. This last line of reasoning from *DT* 1.11 is Richard's strongest support for the claim that necessarily, God has every supreme perfection.

2.2.2 Premise DC2: Nothing is better than charity, and nothing is more perfect than charity

DC2 is the claim that charity is one of the best possible goods a thing can have. "Nothing is better than charity," Richard tells us, "nothing is more perfect."⁴⁶ This claim is widely recognized as the crux of Richard's trinitarian argument, the pivot point of the entire *De Trinitate*.

⁴⁵ On Richard's view, God's essential nature is to be supremely good. Expressed symbolically, $\Box(x)$ (x is God \rightarrow x has each supreme perfection). However, Richard is making the stronger claim that to be God is to have all supreme perfections necessarily, which we can express, $\Box(x)$ (x is God $\rightarrow \Box(x)$ has each supreme perfection)).

⁴⁶ Here Richard makes the move from perfect being theology to perfect love speculation. In the interest of historical understanding, compare the following:

i. Richard: The highest being is "that-than-which-nothing-is-greater and that-than-which-nothingis-better" (*quo nichil est majus, nichil est melius*). DT 1.11 (Evans, 219; Ribaillier, 95).

Achard: "It is clear, therefore, that nothing greater or more beautiful can either be or be thought to be..." (*Liquet igitur...summae illius convenientiae pulchrius nihil vel maius esse sed nec excogitari potest*). De Trinitate 5.1. Quoted in John Bligh, "Richard of St Victor's De Trinitate: Augustinian or Abelardian?," *The Heythrop Journal* 1, no. 2 (1960): 128.

iii. Anselm: Necessarily there exists "something-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought" (*aliquid quo maius nibil cogitari potest*) which is also "that-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought" (*quo maius cogitari nequit*)." Anselm, "Anselm's Proslogion," chap. 2, accessed June 30, 2021, http://www.logicmuseum.com/authors/anselm/proslogion/anselm-proslogion.htm.

iv. Boethius: "since nothing better than God can be imagined, who can doubt that if something can have no better, it is good? Reason in fact establishes that God's goodness is such as to demonstrate further that perfect good resides within him...God is totally full of the highest and perfect good" (*summi perfectique boni esse plenissimum*). Boethius, *Theological Tractates And Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. H. F. Stewart, E. K. Rand, and S. J. Tester, Loeb Classical Library 74 (Cambridge, Mass: Loeb, 1989), 3.10 (277).

v. Augustine: God is that "than which there is nothing better or more exalted" (*aliquid quo nihil sit melius atque sublimius*). Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, trans. R. P. H. Green (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 1.7.7 (11).

vi. Cicero: "The world on the contrary, since it embraces all things and since nothing exists which is not within it, is entirely perfect (*perfectus undique est*); how then can it fail to possess that which is the best (*optimum*)? But there is nothing better (*nihil melius*) than intelligence and reason; the world therefore cannot fail to possess them...a perfect and complete being is bound to possess that which is the best thing in all the world (*in omni mundo optimum sit id in perfecto aliquo atque absoluto esse debere*); but no being is more perfect than the world, and nothing is better than virtue (*nihil mundo perfectius, nihil virtute melius*); therefore virtue

In this sub-section I will treat several aspects of DC2. First, I will sketch a rough picture of the concept of charity. Second, the claim that 'nothing is better (or more perfect) than charity' has led to some confusion, and I will discuss the meaning of charity's perfection. Third, I will consider Richard's reasons for thinking DC2 is true.

2.2.2.1 Charity in the twelfth century

As The Argument progresses, Richard elaborates on the notion of charity, giving the reader enough information to understand his claims as he makes them. I will note these developments as they occur. For the present, there are a few tacit assumptions about love particular to Richard's context that will need to be drawn out to continue with the explication of DC2.

Twelfth century Europe experienced a dramatic change in attitudes towards love, and in beliefs about its nature and place in the world.⁴⁷ C.S. Lewis describes the impact of the French poets who largely led the movement,

They effected a change which has left no corner of our ethics, our imagination, or our daily life untouched, and they erected impassable barriers between us and the classical past or the Oriental present. Compared with this the Renaissance is a mere ripple on the surface of literature.⁴⁸

The twelfth century experienced a tectonic shift in thinking about love. Schools and monasteries felt the impact, including one epicentre, the school of St. Victor, where Richard taught and wrote during the high point of this sea-change. The notion of charity is the crimson thread running through Richard's corpus, and it is one that attracts much attention from Ricardine scholars.⁴⁹ Similar to contemporary Western views, and the language with which it is described, love is an extremely wide-ranging concept during Richard's time – extending over a myriad of relational and mental states – almost all of which are supported by the word 'love' and a few related terms.⁵⁰ Also like today, there was no consensus on the nature or form(s) of love, though, minimally, it was generally accepted to be a relation involving the will, emotions, and mind of the lover. The object of one's love, the beloved, may be interested in reciprocating the lover's love (though she may not

is an essential attribute (*est propria*) of the world." Cicero, *Cicero: On the Nature of the Gods*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library 268 (Harvard University Press, 1951), 2.14 (159).

⁴⁷ Lewis, in one of the scholarly works of his specialized field, goes so far as to call it "revolutionary," something he admits has only occurred a handful of times in human history. C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study In Medieval Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 141–94.

⁴⁸ Lewis, 4.

⁴⁹ Cacciapuoti's is the most recent study that finds love to be the primary motif. Following his chronology of Richard's oeuvre, we see a marked rise in writings about or including the theme of love, culminating in the mystical *Four Degrees of Violent Charity* and his final work, *De Trinitate*. Cacciapuoti, *Deus existentia amoris*, 49–96. Blastic, and Dumeige before him, also view Richard's theology of love to be the theme tying Richard's works. Blastic, "Condilectio," 4–5; Dumeige, *Richard de Saint-Victor et l'idée chrétienne de l'amour*, 155ff. Due the global pandemic, I was unable to obtain Hideki Nakamura, *Amor Invisibilium': Die Liebe Im Denken Des Richards Von Sankt Viktor*, Corpus Victorinum 5 (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2011). Coming to my attention too late to read is Aage Rydstrøm-Poulsen, "Kærlighed Og Treenighed. Et Hovedtema i Richard Af St. Victors De Trinitate," *Dansk Teologisk Tidsskrift* 47 (1984): 109–30.

⁵⁰ For a helpful overview, see Hélène Pétré, *Caritas: étude sur le vocabulaire latin de charité chrétienne* (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1948).

be interested, as in courtly love). The object of love may also be inanimate, though in all historical discussions the relevant love is always a relation between persons.

With this very basic historical overview, it appears that in *De Trinitate*, and specifically here in *The Argument for Divine Charity*, Richard expected that his contemporaries heartily agreed with the following four points: (i) *love is a perfection* (ii) *charity is a special form of love*; (iii) *charity is necessarily a supreme perfection*; (iv) *perfect charity lacks nothing proper to charity*. I will say a bit more about each.

(i) Love is a perfection. There are various conceptions of love, such as courtly love, Christian love, and friendship love. Whatever its particular mode, however it is expressed, and whatever metaphysical or psychological theory is offered to account for the phenomena, the Victorine worldview took the following to be apparent: love is valuable; it is to be pursued (indeed, it cannot be avoided); it is worth thinking, writing, and singing about. In Richard's language, love is a perfection, a quality its bearer is better for the having. (ii) Charity is a special form of love. Charity (caritas) is that type of love by which lover and beloved are united. It is the love that allows enemies to forgive, to bring individuals into community. Charity is not natural to man, but is a gift from God. The effects of shared charity are intense pleasure and delight. As reflected in DC2, charity is the best possible expression of love. (iii) Charity is necessarily a supreme perfection. On Richard's view, love is necessarily an instance of that-than-which-nothing-is-better. That is, there is no possible world or set of circumstances in which having some other property is better than having charity. This is not to say that every instance of love is perfect. Richard recongizes that most examples of love are imperfect, namely, all instances of love between human persons. But a perfect instance of love is in all cases better than a perfect instance of any other quality (or at least equally as good). (iv) Perfect charity lacks nothing proper to charity. This last detail is a metaphysical point rather than a historical or cultural one. An instance of perfect charity has all elements proper to charity (though we must still determine which elements are proper), and has them to the highest degree.⁵¹ We will further explore the nature of perfect charity below.

This is a thumbnail-sketch of a few aspects love and charity in late twelfth century France, and Richard's assumptions about what his readers were congenial toward.⁵² Even so, it is sufficient to allow us to now look at the nature of perfect charity in greater detail.

2.2.2.2 Misunderstanding the nature of perfection

DC2 claims that 'nothing is better than charity' and 'nothing is more perfect than charity'. Here I examine what Richard has in mind for each node, and for the premise as a whole. One recent thinker on the matter, calling himself 'Palamas', identifies two possible interpretations of DC2.⁵³

⁵¹ On this point, see Vasquez, "The Art of Trinitarian Articulation," 119–20.

⁵² For an overview of the Victorine conception of love, see the general introduction to Feiss, OSB, *VTT 02 On Love, Feiss*, 22–112.

⁵³ This thinker should not be confused with the thirteenth century theologian Gregory Palamas; 'Palamas' is the screen-name of one consistent interlocutor on the series of explorations of Richard's Argument collected on Dale Tuggy's website. Though this thinker is otherwise anonymous, their ideas are sophisticated and articulate; further, four professional philosophers take Palamas' argument seriously. Thus the view itself is immediately pertinent to the present study and so merits some scholarly attention here. All of the indented material in this section are quotations from Palamas' post. "Richard of St. Victor 2 – God's Goodness Requires Charity (JT) – Trinities," accessed June 30, 2021, https://trinities.org/blog/richard-of-st-victor-2-%e2%80%93-god%e2%80%99s-goodness-requires-charity-jt/.

Palamas sees DC2 as having two conceptually distinct parts: (A) Nothing is better than charity, and (B) Nothing is more perfect than charity. Both parts are given a descriptive and modal reading. First, part (A),

(A-Descriptive) For any two attributes x and y, where x is charity and y is some attribute other than charity, x is better than y.

(A-Modal) For any two attributes x and y, where x is charity and y is some attribute other than charity, it is possible that y be either worse than x or y be just as good as x, but it is impossible that y is better than x.

Palamas will opt for the modal reading, but believes both alternatives are fine interpretations of (A). (B) is given similar treatment,

(B-Descriptive) For any two attributes x and y, where x is charity and y is some attribute other than charity, y is less perfect than x.

(B-Modal) For any two attributes x and y, where x is charity and y is some attribute other than charity, it is possible that y be either less perfect than x or y be just as perfect as x, but it is impossible that y is more perfect than x.

This way of casting DC2 is not foreign to The Argument since Richard himself approaches the supremacy of charity from both angles.⁵⁴ All is not well, however. With the descriptive and modal interpretations in sight, Palamas detects a problem with (B),

Neither of these [i.e. (B-Descriptive) or (B-Modal)], however, makes any sense; for while it is possible that one perfect thing can be just as perfect as another perfect thing, it is impossible that one perfect thing be less or more perfect than another perfect thing. Perfection does not come in degrees. It's all or nothing. Something is either perfect or not.

By Palamas' lights, perfection is binary and thus (B), on both its descriptive and modal reading, is unintelligible.⁵⁵ Palamas suggests a fix to the incoherence of perfection in (B), where the problematic premise is revamped as,

(B-Modal*) For any two perfect attributes x and y, where x is charity and y is some attribute other than charity, it is possible that y be just as perfect as x, but it is impossible that y be either less or more perfect than x.

Palamas recognizes that this fix gives an intelligible interpretation of (B), but admits that it is certainly not what Richard has in mind with the premise. I agree. So far as historically accurate

⁵⁴ DT 3.11 (Evans, 256; Ribaillier, 146).

⁵⁵ I take Palamas as my test case because of his acuity in describing the problem. Theologian R.C. Sproul seemingly takes a similar stance on the nature of perfection in his analysis of the Westminster Confession of Faith. When commenting on the line "There is but one only, living, and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection...', Sproul writes: "Anselm of Canterbury described God as the *ens perfectissimum*, the most perfect being. This idea of God has enjoyed a long life in the church and in theology, but "most perfect" seems redundant. Absolute perfection does not admit to degrees. An altogether perfect being cannot become more perfect or most perfect." R. C. Sproul, *Truths We Confess* (Orlando: Ligonier Ministries, 2019), 35.

In this excerpt, Sproul conflates the concepts of perfection and maximal perfection, and this conflation has ramifications for his teaching on God's perfection.

interpretations of (B) go, (B-Modal*) is not a live option, and for this reason must be abandoned. On the whole, Palamas' attempt at interpreting (B) suffers from an anachronistic understanding of the notion of perfection. Naturally enough, he thinks of 'perfection' in the way the term is commonly used in contemporary English. On this understanding, perfection does not have a range of intensity, and thus the claim "x is more perfect than y" makes as much sense as saying "the result of the function 1+1 is 2, but the result of the function 3-1 is 2 even more so." The property *being two*, like *being perfect*, does not come in degrees.

On Richard's understanding perfection has two qualities salient to our study of the premise. First, each species is specified by a set of essential qualities that distinguish it from other species in the genus. Second, it is often the case that some of those qualities are degreed. Take for example two essential qualities of charity, *having a lover and beloved*, and *reciprocal sharing of joy*. The first specifies charity as a relation that, by definition, has at least two relata; the second specifies the sharing of joy between lover and beloved. The property *having a lover and beloved* is (assumedly) not degreed: the condition is either met or it is not. But sharing joy is degreed, and the higher the degree of joy shared, the more perfect an instance of charity. The gulf between the contemporary understanding of perfection and the more complex medieval understanding is wide, and Palamas should be excused for finding DC2 a little disconcerting. Even so, because of this historical misreading of Richard, Palamas' problem with (B) is a non-starter.

Although abortive, Palamas' attempt at understanding Richard is worthwhile to our study. It brings Richard's view of perfection into sharper relief and keeps us alert to the necessity for a historically sensitive study of his claims. I appreciate the particularly close reading Palamas gives the second half of DC2 and I agree with him that the premise has two distinct halves. I will now offer my own take on them while endeavouring to keep the historical context in sight.

2.2.2.3 Nothing better and nothing more perfect

Palamas misunderstands the nature of perfection in DC2, but he correctly identifies the premise's two elements: (A) nothing is better than charity, and (B) nothing is more perfect than charity. I believe that both ideas are best understood in light of certain Platonic currents of thought, present in Augustine and others, from which Richard draws throughout *De Trinitate*. I outlined above one of these patterns of thought in my overview of Richard's metaphysics of goodness, so I will give only a brief summary here before moving on.

The first idea is that natures, and the substances instantiating them, can be ranked against one another in an ascending scale of being, with the supreme substance at the top of the hierarchy. On this approach a nature somehow has the properties of those indexed below it, in addition to other properties. Human nature, for example, is indexed above those of cats and trees, because humanity has those basic elements (e.g. nutrition, growth, reproduction), but further includes intellect. This way of thinking about the supreme substance begins with the 'lower', common objects of experience and reasons upward, so I call this the *approach from below*.

Understood this way, element (A) of DC2 – namely, nothing is better than charity – is the claim that no other individual property is ranked higher than charity.⁵⁶ On the approach from below,

⁵⁶ There is, however, logical space for properties to be ranked equally high as charity. Notice that Richard does not say that charity is uniquely best and most perfect. Instead, Richard offers the slightly weaker claim that

Richard seems to reason this way: of all the objects with which we have common experience, humans are the highest on the hierarchy of being. One perfection that humans have that no other types of objects have is shared-love, or charity. Charity, then, is one of the highest properties.

The second Neoplatonic current is the *approach from above*. For Augustine, this involved thinking as highly of God as possible.⁵⁷ For Richard, it means, "whatever [quality] is the best is attributed to God."⁵⁸ Thinking about God this way employs something like the following method. First, two states of affairs are compared regarding some property, P: one where P obtains and one where P does not. Next, a determination is made about which state of affairs is superior. Finally, P (or its absence) from the superior state of affairs is attributed to God. Elsewhere, Richard follows roughly this method when thinking about the supreme being.⁵⁹ In the present case, charity – not the supreme being – is the object of consideration.⁶⁰

Part (B) is more than just the claim that charity is superior to the lack of charity (though this idea is certainly present). The claim that nothing is more perfect than charity expands on the approach from above because, when weighed against charity, *every* property will be seen as inferior, or at least equal. Thus, Richard leaves it in the hands of his readers to test his claim: they are invited to use their experience and weigh any other property against charity to see if it would be better to have than charity.

The approaches from above and below are two methods to which Richard may appeal to support his claim that nothing is better than charity. These methods are consistently overlooked by many who examine Richard's key claim in DC2. Most often, brute intuition is taken to be Richard's only reason for someone to believe DC2. Take for example Ewert Cousins' gloss,

nothing is better or more perfect than charity. Most contemporary readers interpret Richard as making the former, stronger claim. This may be correct. But there is much to be said for both understandings. No one has yet investigated this aspect of the claim, and it goes too far afield from the present study for me to do so here. For the time being, I will treat DC2 as the weaker claim: nothing is better or more perfect than charity, but there may be properties equally good and perfect.

⁵⁷ E.g., Augustine, *Augustine: On the Free Choice of the Will, On Grace and Free Choice, and Other Writings*, ed. Peter King, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1.3 (5).

⁵⁸ DT 1.20 (Evans, 225; Ribaillier, 102).

⁵⁹ E.g. *DT* 2.16.

⁶⁰ Dale Tuggy thinks Richard's approach obscures the relationship between *being-greatness* and *property-greatness* in DC2,

It's just that [Richard] has a badly abstract way of putting things. Though his case really turns on intuitions about being-greatness, he's wont to put it all in property-terms...So, he thinks that from God being perfectly good, it follows that 'goodness' itself is present in God in the highest degree...The problem with putting it in terms of properties is...that we've got a concept of being-greatness, and now also one of property-greatness, and it's not clear how exactly to the relate the two. "Richard of St. Victor 2 - God's Goodness Requires Charity (JT) - Trinities."

I take it as beyond dispute that Richard is an inheritor, and transmitter, of a tradition of perfect being theology practiced by Plato, Augustine, Boethius, and Anselm. If this is so, then the relationship between property speculation and being speculation is rather straightforward: like those before him, Richard must reason about individual properties (e.g. charity) and natures (e.g. personhood and divinity) in order to make determinations about the supreme substance. In short, Richard asserts predicates about the divine substance, and about the predicates of the predicates, so that maximality, for instance, is a property of properties.

[Richard] does not give reasons for his statement or try to prove it in any way. The reader might feel inclined to challenge Richard to prove his position; or at least he might wonder at Richard's silence, since elsewhere he is so concerned with casting his thought in the form of proofs. It is our opinion that Richard is silent here because he thinks that no proof is necessary and that no proof is possible, since he is dealing with a matter of primary value perception – the grasp of a *ratio necessaria* that is a reflection of the *ratio aeterna* of the absolute good.⁶¹

On Cousins' view, in other words, "Richard merely states his first proposition."⁶² Indeed, on Cousins' view, mere statements about love are all that Richard *can* make. Cousins appears to understand 'primary values' as intuitions or obviously true moral propositions. On such an understanding Richard has no recourse to further argument because there is no evidence which could support his claims about charity. The reader either sees the truth of charity's supremacy, or she does not. Cousins and others find support for this interpretation from a passage in the next chapter where Richard extends the following invitation to his readers: "Let each person examine his own conscience, and without a doubt or without contradiction he will discover that just as nothing is better than charity, so nothing is more pleasant than charity."⁶³ The German theologian Martin Schniertshauer sees in this appeal Richard's one, and only one, source of support for DC2,

The "nothing is better than charity, nothing more perfect" is not reached by just any means. Rather, the appearance of the highest expression of the eternal good, [i.e., charity], only comes through human experience; it can only be understood through analyses of internal experience, and not derived through deductive reasoning.⁶⁴

By Schniertshauer's lights, DC2 is fully at the mercy of each reader's intuitions; beyond this lies no further investigation or means of support. I believe that Schniertsthauer overstates his case, in part because the passage just quoted is about the supreme *pleasantness* of charity (the topic of DT 3.3), *not* its supreme goodness (the topic of DT 3.2). In any case, Richard has recourse to the approaches from below and from above, giving him further resources to support DC2. Richard is confident that his contemporaries were amenable to DC2 because of the high regard in which love was held. But this is not his only foundation. For those today who do not have such a high view of love, or whose personal experience has left them lukewarm towards it, the supremacy of charity may be doubted. In reply Richard may use the approaches from below and above to argue his case.

2.2.3 Conclusion DC3: Where the fullness of all goodness is, true and supreme charity cannot be lacking

While DC3 is the conclusion of the charity argument, there is still some work to be done. So far Richard has explicitly argued that necessarily, God has charity. But DC3 states that God has *supreme* charity, and so Richard must argue that if God has charity, then God has maximal charity. In Richard's words, he must show that God's charity is "true and supreme." Viewed in light of similar

⁶¹ Ewert Cousins, "A Theology of Interpersonal Relations," *Thought: Fordham University Quarterly* 45, no. 1 (1970):
66.

⁶² Cousins, 66.

⁶³ DT 3.3 (Evans, 249; Ribaillier, 138).

⁶⁴ Schniertshauer, Consummatio caritatis, 120–22.

language in *DT* 1-3, we gather a few relevant findings about 'true' and 'supreme'.⁶⁵ A 'true' quality, F, is complete; all conditions of Fness are met, and met to the highest degree. Stated negatively, a substance S has true F when S lacks no quality proper to F, and lacks F to no degree. Further, we see that true F is the best, greatest instance of F; there is no superior instance, F¹, to true F, nor is it possible for there to be. Finally, for any F, true F is only had by the eternal, supreme substance – indeed having true F explains, in part, what it means to be supreme.

For Richard, 'true' language corresponds very closely to his concept of supremacy and our contemporary understanding of maximality. Charity is the highest form of love, and true charity is the highest instance of that highest form of love. True charity is tightly connected to supreme charity, and in the current premise, the two are probably used interchangeably. (Even if they are not, the connection is so close that nothing is lost, ultimately, in the distinction).⁶⁶

To find support for DC3 we turn once again Richard's metaphysics of goodness. Because God has the fullness of goodness, and indeed is Goodness Itself, he has his perfections supremely. Using another concept Richard introduced in *DT* 1 and *DT* 2, the *summum bonum* has all goods necessarily, and only the *summum bonum* has its goods supremely and substantially. It is not only necessary that God has charity love, but that God has it maximally.⁶⁷ God's love cannot possibly be improved on, be better, or more complete.

The conceptual bridge DC2 is the conditional statement, 'If God has supreme goodness, then God has supreme charity'.⁶⁸ This proposition contains a material conditional revealing that supreme charity is a necessary condition of supreme goodness. We can further specify the relationship between supreme goodness and charity. The philosopher J.T. Paasch posits two possibilities:⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Richard uses the two adjectives interchangeably, though not synonymously. In the immediate textual vicinity, for example later in DT 3.2, Richard speaks of "true divinity" as divinity that lacks nothing proper to it – in this case, it does not lack charity. DT 3.2 (Evans, 249; Ribaillier, 137). In the next chapter, DT 3.3, "true goodness" is that-than-which-nothing-is-better, and lacks no fullness. True goodness is also compared positively to supreme happiness because the latter lacks no quality proper to happiness and has each of its qualities to the fullest. Finally, in the same chapter, true goodness is used interchangeably with the 'supreme good'. This is fine initial evidence from the immediate surrounding text for thinking that Richard uses 'true charity' interchangeably with 'supreme charity'. Looking deeper into the *De Trinitate*, we see 'true' and 'supreme' receive similar treatment as in book three. For example, the treatise's first instance of 'true' uses the term to assert that the supreme substance has "true divinity" (Evans, 223; Ribaillier, 100). There, true divinity is described as having two characteristics with which we are already familiar: aseity (all that it has, including divinity, is had from itself), and supremacy (it is the best of all possible beings). Later on, Richard gives a technical discussion of the nature of truth (DT 2.2). One implication of this discussion is that 'true being' is being that is from itself (*a semetipso*) and eternal. In the next chapter, DT 2.3, we are told that "there is true immutability where" no change of any kind is possible DT 2.3 (Evans, 229; Ribaillier, 110).

⁶⁶ If I am wrong, our survey of Richard's language shows, at least, that true charity and supreme charity are had only by God. Further, whatever their conceptual distinctions, due to divine simplicity, they are the same attribute and indeed the divine substance itself.

⁶⁷ Though Richard avoids making the explicit connection, it is true to say that God is his charity, God is Love Itself. Many commentators like to say these words on Richard's behalf. Richard's avoidance of stating 'God is love' is notable, particularly when the connection is at his fingertips. I suggest that Richard avoids the identity statement between God and love to steer clear of biblical quotations, which might be received as appeals to authority on Richard's part.

⁶⁸ I have replaced the 'something' of DC2 with 'God' by the rule of universal instantiation.

⁶⁹ These interpretations are taken from a series of posts on the Dale Tuggy's website, *trinities.org*. Here, four philosophers (Dale Tuggy, JT Paasch, Joseph Jedwab, and Scott Williams), take turns presenting an argument from the *De Trinitate*, providing analysis, and moderating discussion. For the post on the argument for charity specifically, see "Richard of St. Victor 2 – God's Goodness Requires Charity (JT) – Trinities."

- (1) "Perfect goodness and perfect charity are two distinct features that are necessarily instantiated together, similar to, say, being human and being able to laugh."
- (2) "Perfect charity is what *makes* something perfectly good, i.e., charity *perfects* goodness, as if something can be really...good, but it won't be totally good until it becomes charitable."

Call (1) the *coextensive* reading. Paasch's example points to a way the two qualities may be related: charity is a capacity essential to the nature *goodness* similar to the way rationality is essential to *humanity*. The analogy breaks down in regards to exercising capacities: humans necessarily have the ability to laugh but do not necessarily laugh, whereas God necessarily has the ability to love another and necessarily loves another (as we will see in upcoming chapters). (1) fails to recognize that in the divine substance, charity is not merely a capacity coextensive with God's goodness, but God must also *exercise* that capacity. So (1) is true as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. The main points are clear nevertheless: goodness and charity are conceptually distinct and necessarily co-extensive. Also, something akin to a property-essence relation answers the question What grounds their necessary co-extension?

On (2), perfect charity is the causal or explanatory grounds of perfect goodness. Call this the *perfective* reading. On it, a substance's goodness cannot be complete without the specific perfection, charity. The problem with this reading is a principle that Paasch includes by way of explanation, "something can be really" good but is not perfect "until it becomes charitable." Stated another way,

(Perfective principle) For any *x*, if *x* is perfectly good, then *x* is perfectly charitable.

Arguably, this principle obtains for human and divine persons, but it fails for other genera, for example, inanimate objects and perhaps plants. A house and a cherry tree may be perfect instances of their kinds, but neither has, nor could have, charity. These examples are not counterexamples to the perfective principle because the principle actually extends over a single member, namely, God. A cherry tree *would* be perfectly charitable if it were maximally good, but it is impossible for cherry trees, or anything else besides the divine substance, to be maximally good.

The perfective reading should be understood as requiring more than merely the capacity for charity (as on the coextensive reading). To be perfective, charity must be instantiated – 'charity', in the perfective reading, does not refer to a power or capacity, but to the realization or instantiation of that capacity. The perfective reading, then, gives us greater insight into the relationship between supreme goodness and supreme charity: supreme charity makes supreme goodness complete, and it does so only by being realized. The capacity alone is not perfective, but rather its manifestation.

Charity is perfective, and considered as an approach from below, a genus with charity scales higher on the hierarchy of being than those without it. Through another line of thought, call it the *approach from above*,⁷⁰ a state of affairs where a substance has charity is better than the state of affairs where it lacks charity, all else being equal. Therefore, charity is a necessary condition of perfection.

Finally, Paasch asks the following about the charity argument,

In this [argument], Richard wants to show that God's perfect goodness somehow requires that God is perfectly charitable. I say 'somehow requires' because the logical relation here

 $^{^{70}}$ I will say more about this approach in the next section.

is not clear. Richard is saying 'God's goodness _____ perfect charity', but what fills in the blank? Is it 'entails', 'presupposes', or some other logical relation?⁷¹

We are now in a position to fill in the blank. God's goodness necessitates perfect charity, and the nature of that necessity is metaphysical.⁷² Supreme goodness requires charity because charity is perfective. God necessarily has charity and that charity is *supreme* because it is identical to the simple, supreme substance.

2.2.4 Full expression of the charity argument

The goal of this this chapter is to understand *The Argument for Divine Charity*. To accomplish this goal I have sketched some fundamental aspects of Richard's metaphysics of goodness, and have followed Richard's reasoning for the claim that God must have supreme charity. Since Richard takes himself to have given philosophically serious, logically coherent arguments,⁷³ it will be useful to view the argument expressed in a more formalized way.⁷⁴ Further, many of Richard's arguments do not map directly into a valid deductive proof. As Richard states them, most of his arguments are enthymemes when they are stated formally. For the sake of readable and persuasive prose,

⁷¹ "Richard of St. Victor 2 - God's Goodness Requires Charity (JT) - Trinities."

⁷² Here much rides on one's understanding of 'metaphysical'. On Richard's strong view of simplicity, God's goodness is his charity. Contrary to what our language suggests, we are not talking about one divine property requiring another divine property. What *are* we talking about, then? It is correct to say that 'God's goodness requires his charity' so long as we bear in mind that the utterance is a circumlocution for 'God's *simple* goodness requires his *simple* charity'. The latter expression is itself shorthand for 'God's simple essence, as Goodness Itself, is necessarily Charity Itself'. The discursive nature of our knowledge allows, or forces, us to distinguish between God's qualities, though they are not distinct in reality. On one plausible understanding, the metaphysical necessity does not fill in the blank, but conceptual or logical necessity might (since divine goodness is identical to divine charity). I grant that a case could be made for either alternative. Even so, our discussion is not about mere concepts. Instead, the object of The Argument is ultimate being (and value). We are talking about Being (and Goodness and Charity) Itself. But this just is the classical conception of metaphysics, namely, the study of fundamental ontology, of being qua being. Thus, our answer to Paasch's question is on the right track.

⁷³ Richard's arguments are expressed in natural language (Ecclesiastical Latin). There are several ways we may attempt to formalize those arguments, such as with Aristotelian categorical syllogisms, or hypothetical (conditional) syllogisms. These forms of reasoning were standard fare for the educated in the medieval West, and Richard would have been well versed in them. (It is also apparent that Richard knew of categorical syllogisms with modal qualifications). However, as with so many other areas of learning, the twelfth century experienced a surge in logical thinking, due mainly to the re-introduction and widespread reception of Aristotle's complete logical texts (the *Organum*). Therefore, it is almost impossible to discern precisely which materials Richard had access to beyond the traditional texts of the *logica vetus* ('old logic'). Capturing the system Richard would have used to formalize his arguments would be a highly speculative project (though fruitful for the study of twelfth century philosophy). Cf. Bok who points out that Richard's arguments are essentially syllogisms: "Richard in fact uses very elementary forms for of inference: most of his argumentations are concatenations of straight-forward syllogisms (even if the formulation is not straight-forward)." Bok, *Communicating the Most High*, 181. What is more, stringing long chains of three step syllogisms would be much too cumbersome for this thesis and would largely work against the goal of bringing illumination to The Argument.

⁷⁴ I take it as part of my task both to show that Richard's arguments are formally valid, but also to make that validity apparent to a variety of readers. What I need is a language with the expressive power of second order logic and the ability to include modality as a logical operator. What I want to avoid is symbolic expression of propositional and predicate logics, as well as the extensive number of steps needed to show basic inference patterns (such as universal introduction/elimination or negation introduction). Thus, I will use a formalized version of the natural language English. This allows me the range of expression of second order modal logic but will also allow purists to easily map my sentences into a formal system (all derivations will be valid in system K of modal logic). This formalization of English allows me to identify my rules of inference but also to remain relatively faithful to Richard's statements of the propositions treated.

Richard gives his readers the main claims and leaves us to fill in the inferential gaps.⁷⁵ In the following formulation I will paraphrase Richard's claims for the sake of consistency and I will include the premises which Richard left unstated. We may outline the argument this way:

The Argument for Divine Charity* – DC*⁷⁶

- P1) Necessarily, God has supreme goodness. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if God has supreme goodness, then God has every maximal property. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, God has every maximal property. [P1, P2: Necessity Elimination & Introduction, Modus Ponens]
- P3) Necessarily, charity is a maximal property. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, God has charity. [C1, P3: Necessity Elimination, Universal Elimination, Modus Ponens,⁷⁷ Necessity Introduction]
- P4) Necessarily, if God has charity, then God has supreme charity. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily, God has supreme charity. [C2, P4: Necessity Elimination & Introduction, Modus Ponens]

On this representation, there are four premises that must be argued. P1 is given extensive argument in *DT*1 and *DT*2 and that argument is summarized in DC1. P2 expresses the idea that the supreme good has that-than-which-nothing-is-better, which is also implicit in DC1.⁷⁸ P3 is the claim that charity is a maximal property: in its perfect instances, no other property can be more good. Richard sees this as true based on experience, and can support the claim with *the approaches from below* and *above*.⁷⁹ P4 employs the notion of God's simplicity to reason that God's charity, like all his properties, are identical to the supreme substance, and therefore is supreme charity. Finally, we may note that 'God has supreme charity' in C3 looks significantly different than Richard's expression in DC3, 'Where the fullness of all goodness is...supreme charity cannot be lacking'. Specifically, my paraphrase in C4 replaces 'the fullness of all goodness, is Goodness Itself, as I explained in the section on Richard's metaphysics of goodness, above.

2.3 Summary and Conclusion

The *Argument for Charity* is rather short but is foundational to Richard's case for the Trinity since Divine, supreme charity plays a role in every following sub-argument. Because it is so important, and because to date the argument for charity has not received detailed exposition, I have given it a close reading. At times the discussion is technical so I shall conclude by briefly summarizing the key points.

Premise DC1 is a terse summary of books one and two, and is the metaphysical foundation of the *Argument for Charity*. Richard turns to the notions of fullness and perfection of goodness to ground the presence of supreme charity, and later, supreme happiness and glory (*DT* 3.3 and 3.4). DC1

⁷⁹ Cf. section 2.2.2.

⁷⁵ Richard's statements are enthymeme in the general sense that some inferential steps are missing, regardless of whether or not the argument is a three-step Aristotelian syllogism.

 $^{^{76}}$ In my proofs I will use the Axiom T: If necessarily ϕ then $\phi.$

⁷⁷ C2 follows from C1 and P3 by Modus Ponens because in a formal language we would write C1: 'Necessarily, if X is a maximal property, then God has X'. The logical form of C1 is indeed a conditional, and P3 states the antecedent of the conditional. However, the formalization of English with which I express Richard's arguments is not strictly a formal language, and so in this instance the conditional nature of C1 is not readily apparent.

 $^{^{78}}$ See section 2.2.1 for the support of both P1 and P2.

also directs our attention to a necessary condition of supreme goodness, namely, that-than-whichnothing-is-better. God has supreme goodness and so has all maximally good perfections.

DC2 claims that charity is such a perfection, that nothing is better than charity. DC2 allows for the logical that God has charity. Importantly, the premise's strength keeps it from sinking into debate about the ontological ranking of charity. As a most-perfect property, charity is necessarily exemplified by God.

DC 3, the argument's conclusion, states that the fullness and perfection of charity in the *summum bonum*, where the two terms 'fullness' and 'perfection' are used interchangeably to describe God's charity as complete: lacking no element proper to charity, and lacking no degree of intensity. God's charity is supreme because all the properties that God has are supreme. This conclusion about God's supreme charity will be further developed as Richard specifies the conditions of charity, and only possible objects of supreme charity. Let us turn to that next step in The Argument now.

3. THE CONDITIONS AND ORDER OF CHARITY

3.0 Introduction and Overview

Having established the presence of supreme charity in the supreme divine goodness, Richard moves to two final foundational steps for The Argument. First, he argues that love for another person is an essential aspect of charity,

However, no one is properly said to have love on account of a private and exclusive love of oneself. And so, it is necessary that 'love be directed toward another, so that it can be charity'. Therefore, charity absolutely cannot exist where a plurality of persons is lacking.

Love for another, 'other-love', is necessary for charity. Next, Richard addresses an important objection to this condition, arguing that God could not share supreme other-love with created persons,

But perhaps you say: "Even if there were one person alone in the true divinity, nevertheless he would still be able to have, or he would have, charity toward his creation." But surely God would not be able to have supreme charity toward a created person. After all, his charity would be disordered, if he were loving supremely someone who should not be loved supremely. However, it is impossible that charity be disordered in the supremely wise goodness. And so, a divine person could not have supreme charity toward a person who would not be worthy of supreme love.¹

Richard scholar Victor Guimet sets the scene for our reading of these arguments,

All this is a beautiful view. The deductive continuity with which Richard has an incontestable mastery – and which he gives to the argumentation here – must not, however, conceal from us the complexity of the spiritual movements and themes implemented by the living spontaneity of his thought. At the risk of appearing to kill it through the dryness of analysis, we must detail these [movements and themes].²

In this chapter I will look to Guimet, and others, to give these arguments a thorough hearing. My goal is to continue to delve more deeply into The Argument than has yet been attempted. In the present chapter, this involves some intensive investigation of the principles at work, whether explicitly or implicitly, in the two arguments Richard provides. My scrupulosity is justified, in part, because what seemed obviously true to Richard may appear just as obviously false to a modern reader. My hope is that rather than harming the spiritual impact of these passages – killing it through dryness of analysis – our attentiveness to The Argument's movements and themes will show it to be full of life for the modern reader.

3.1 The Conditions of Charity

The first argument establishes a necessary condition for charity. We begin by directing our attention to Richard's claims,

¹ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 136-37).

² Fernand Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," Archives d'histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire Du Moyen Âge 14 (1945): 375.

The Conditions of Charity – CC

[1]...no one is properly said to have love on account of a private and exclusive love of oneself. [2] And so, it is necessary that 'love be directed toward another, so that it can be charity'. [3] Therefore, charity absolutely cannot exist where a plurality of persons is lacking.³

3.1.1 Premise CC1: no one is properly said to have [charity]⁴ on account of a private and exclusive love of oneself

The first premise makes a claim about the definition of charity, signified by Richard's language, "no one is *properly said*." It is incorrect to attribute charity to someone who only has self-love because other-love is part of the very concept of charity. Charity is a species of other-love, and therefore charity necessarily includes love for another person. In CC1 and CC2 Richard is looking for those qualities essential to all forms of charity. He explicitly states that self-love is not sufficient, given the definition of charity. Yet several salient questions are raised: Is self-love necessary for charity? And, Whose love is Richard talking about in the conditions of charity discussion, human or divine? Let us turn to these questions now.

3.1.1.1 Is self-love necessary for charity?

By Richard's lights, and those of his contemporaries, self-love⁵ alone is unable to account for charity. Thus, as we will see, "no one is properly said to have charity on account of a private and exclusive love of oneself" is a common view of charity. Self-love is not a sufficient condition for

P2) Necessarily, it is not the case that self-love alone is sufficient for charity. [Premise]

³ The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 59. *The Conditions of Charity** – CC*

P1) Necessarily, either self-love alone is sufficient for charity, or other-love is necessary for charity. [Premise]

C1) Necessarily, other-love is necessary for charity. [P1, P2: Necessity Elimination and Introduction, Disjunctive Syllogism]

P3) Necessarily, if there is other-love, then there are multiple persons. [Premise]

C2) Necessarily, if there is charity, then there are multiple persons. [C1, P3: Necessity Elimination and Introduction, Transitivity of Implication]

⁴ Christopher Evans translates the *caritate* cognate as 'love' here. This rendering is problematic in several respects. On this reading, Richard's claim comes out as patently false, demonstrated by replacing *caritate* with love: "no one is properly said to have love on account of a private and exclusive love of oneself." This is not a claim Richard agrees with and, if it were true, would rule out the existence of self-love. In *De Trinitate* Richard advances a view on which charity is one species of the genus love. Evans' translation makes the distinction opaque. The choice of 'love' over 'charity' is puzzling since both Dumeige's critical text (which Evan's primarily follows), and the older Migne edition (which Evans looks to at times) both include the *caritate: "Nullus autem pro privato et proprio sui ipsius amore dicitur proprie <u>caritatem</u> habere."*

⁵ Richard describes what I call 'self-love' in two ways: *amor privatus* ('private' or 'exclusive' love); and *proprio sui ipsius amore* ('one's own love belonging to himself'). Dumeige points out a mistake in Migne's critical text that is the root of some poor interpretation of Richard on this point: *Quandiu autem quis nullum alium quam seipsum diligit, ille quem erga se habet <u>privatus</u> amor convincit quod summum charitatis gradum necdum apprehendit.* Essentially Dumeige argues that, because Migne incorrectly included 'quam' ('than') instead of 'quantum' ('as much as'), the only option is to then understand the 'amor privatus' as exclusive to the fullness of charity. If 'quantum' replaces the 'quam', then 'amor privatus' is actually included in charity. Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 387–88.

charity, but is it a necessary one? Richard does not explicitly state as much, but there is strong reason to believe it is.

In a tradition of thought going back to Augustine, the idea that self-love is somehow necessarily included in one's love for God is almost unanimously held well into the thirteenth century.⁶ In Augustine's broadly eudaimonist view, God, as the *summum bonum*, is each person's ultimate and complete source of happiness; loving God is the greatest way in which one may love themselves. Thomas Osborne summarizes a position Augustine staked out early, and which he would advance throughout his career,

...Augustine claims that it is certain that everyone wishes to live happily. In order to have happiness, we must love that which is best for man. The happy life, then, is the state in which we enjoy that which we love, the good for man, which is greater than all other good...God is this good: the happy life is the love and enjoyment of God.⁷

For Augustine, self-love is embedded in love for God. Beyond this philosophical reasoning, he gives a biblical account for the presence of self-love in charity, such as his reflection on Jesus' two love precepts in the gospels,

And if God is to be loved more than any man, each one must love him more than his own self. Likewise, another man is to be loved more than our body, since on account of God all things are supposed to be loved, and it is possible for another man to enjoy God with us, which the body is not able to do; since the body lives through the soul by which we enjoy God.⁸

Osborne helps make sense of this passage: "There is a clear order of love here: first, God; second, one's own soul and one's neighbour, and third, one's own body."⁹ Clearly self-love is included in both the command to love God and in the command to love one's neighbour. Osborne once again: "Augustine argues that since we must love our neighbour *as ourself*, the love for self is included in this second precept." Thus, Augustine comes to the conclusion that self-love is a necessary condition of perfect love in two ways: through the idea of natural inclination to love the good, and the biblical precepts of love for God and neighbour.

These grounds for self-love – natural inclination to love the good, and the gospel precepts to love neighbour as oneself – were widely accepted and continued to develop in the medieval West.¹⁰

⁸Augustine, On Christian Teaching, 1.27 (21).

⁶ For an overview of self-love in Augustine, as well as its role in eleventh and twelfth century theology, see chapter one of Thomas M. Osborne, *Love of Self and Love of God in Thirteenth-Century Ethics* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 13–44. For a dedicated study see Oliver O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2006).

⁷ Osborne, *Love of Self and Love of God in Thirteenth-Century Ethics*, 15. Osborne includes a number of parenthetical translations of the Latin as he seeks to establish some of the key terminology in the medieval discussion. They are not pertinent to the present discussion so I have removed them from the quotation.

⁹ Osborne, Love of Self and Love of God in Thirteenth-Century Ethics, 19.

¹⁰ We must not overestimate the place of the biblical data in Richard's argument, though. Richard's claim is about the supremacy of other-love, and his listeners may accept this claim (in part) because of their reading of Scripture. This does not mean that Richard appeals to scripture in any way in arguing for the truth of his claim. Thus, Den Bok goes too far in saying, "Richard has succeeded in showing that God's commandment (Love you

Immediately prior to Richard's period of writing, his predecessor at St. Victor, Hugh, advanced an influential position on love. Hugh's view included the traditional ideas of the *bonum nostrum*, God as the final good of every agent, and self-love as a criterion for other-love. As the *bonum nostrum*, God is the supreme and final source of joy and rest, and therefore is to be loved for his own sake and for one's own good. In fact, Hugh strengthened the Augustinian idea that self-love is included in other-love. One of several examples is his gloss on Jesus' love precepts,

But consider that the order of love is not such that man loves his neighbour before himself, whose love he is ordered to take and to form from his own...For if he loves his neighbour as himself, how does he love his neighbour when he does not love himself?...Thus he should first love himself well that afterwards according to himself he may love his neighbour also...Therefore, first love your own soul by loving the good of your own soul. Then love also your neighbour as yourself by loving the good for him which you love for yourself...For this is to love someone as himself, to desire and to wish for him what he wishes for himself. For he does not love him as himself, unless first he should love himself.¹¹

Rousselot says of this passage, "The love of self is the necessary condition and as it were the form of the love of another. There is no question then of giving up the first in favour of the second," and concludes later that "the love of self is in this way the general condition of the love of others, it has the same magnitude as the love of God…And if no explicit precept of the love of self is found in Scripture, this is because this precept is contained elsewhere: not in the commandment to love other humans, but in the commandment to love God."¹²

Richard's consonance with Augustine and Hugh on self-love in *De Trinitate* is muted, but nevertheless present. Given statements from his two predecessors, the following may sound familiar: "no one is properly said to have charity on account of a private and exclusive love of oneself," and later in *DT* 3.2, "As long as someone loves no one else as much as himself, that private love, which he has toward himself, proves that he has not yet apprehended the highest degree of love."¹³ On first blush it may appear as if Richard rejects self-love altogether as a condition of perfect – and therefore other-related – love. Indeed, some early Richard scholars gave this sort of interpretation to the matter. Here is one example:

Maurilio Penido distinguishes heavily between self-love and other-love in his investigation of DT 3.2, "The foundation on which Richard builds" – the foundation, that is, on which Richard builds his entire Trinitarian argument – "is of proven solidity: it is the perfection of love in God."¹⁴ But

neighbour as yourself) has its counterpart and original in God himself." Richard succeeds in no such endeavour because he never attempts it. Better to say that Richard's argument lays a philosophical foundation for understanding Jesus' love command. Further, Richard does not argue that a divine person loves another divine person in obedience to a divine command, as Den Bok's comments may imply. Instead, as we will see, any divine person loves the other divine persons because it is supremely good, joyful, and glorious to do so – and a divine person is necessarily supremely good, joyful, and glorious. Bok, *Communicating the Most High*, 291.

¹¹ Hugh of St Victor, "De Sacramentis Christianae Fidei," 2.13.10.

¹² Pierre Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages: A Historical Contribution*, trans. Alan Vincelette (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2001), 139–40.

¹³ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 136).

¹⁴ Maurílio Teixeira-Leite Penido, "Gloses Sur La Procession d'amour Dans La Trinité," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 14 (1937): 48.

in his reading of Richard's argument Penido immediately spots a difficulty, asking, "Why is it that in examining this perfection, [Richard] shows a disconcerting anthropomorphism?" Richard's anthropomorphism is primarily located in, and results from, his distinction between self-love and other-love. Penido continues,

The distinction of private love – selfish (*égoïste*), withdrawn into self, stingy with one's gifts – and of friendship-love (*l'amour d'amitiê*) – gratuitous, disinterested, generous. There is a need for a friendly sharing for the plenitude of happiness. All things very veridical when it comes to men, but precisely too human for being transposed to God!

I will return to the issue of Richard's disconcerting anthropomorphism in a later chapter.¹⁵ The important point here is that, for Penido, self-love is absolutely opposed to other-love. On his reading of *DT* 3.2, self-love and divine love are mutually exclusive.¹⁶ A few recent scholars have continued to interpret Richard this way. Bok summarizes the argument in *DT* 3.2 as "Where goodness is, there must be love; where love must be, however, there must be another *person*, for love is directed to another *person*. Love directed to oneself cannot properly be called love."¹⁷ At one point Schniertshauer hints toward a similar interpretation of 3.2.4, stating that "Richard distinguishes between charity and self-love."¹⁸

In a pointed argument Gumeit responds to such interpretations of *De Trinitate DT* 3.2. In short, he argues that self-love (*amor privatus*) is the grounds and measure of other-directed love. Self-love grounds other-love because it is the necessary and natural point of departure for all further love: we know how to love others because we first love ourselves. Self-love measures because it is a boundary: we know how much and how well we love others by comparing our other-love to our self-love. Further, the degree of our other-love cannot exceed the degree of our self-love. Negatively, the consequence of "the exclusion of *amor privatus* in God" is "the true ontological extinction" of his charity altogether. A divine person's self-love is the origin and ground for his other-love. Guimet concludes,

¹⁵ It is worth noting that Penido begins his investigation of DT 3.2 by stating that "we are not doing history or psychology, we confine ourselves to demarcating the route and justifying our assertions, with the aid of the characteristic texts." Penido, 49. However, in spite of claims about sticking to Richard's arguments, Penido immediately unloads psychological baggage, (e.g. the innate egoism and selfishness of self-love), into his explication of Richard – baggage that could be avoided if Penido only stay the course he originally set. It does not help that – in spite of claims for adherence to the texts – he does not cite or quote Richard even once, explaining "The texts of the Victorine are so well known, that it seemed useless to reproduce them." For my own part, I will endeavour to find some use for Richard's words in a study of Richard.

¹⁶ This setting of self- and other-love in opposition to one another results from Penido's judgment on the fundamental incompatibility of Augustinian and Greek Trinitarian analogies. Since, on Penido's understanding, Augustine's mental analogy includes self-love (along with memory and knowledge of self), the Greek social analogy must exclude self-love. Even if Richard's view was an analogy – or for that matter Greek (he reminds us, "We are not Greek!" in DT 4.4) – I do not see that mutual exclusion would follow. In any case Penido's conclusions about Richard results from prior categorizing of Western-Augustinian and Greek thought, not from a close reading of Richard.

¹⁷ Bok, *Communicating the Most High*, 304. Italics are Bok's.

¹⁸ Though Schniertshauer later distances himself from too thick a distinction: "It is clear that charity includes love self and love of other," and charity "stands higher than mere self-love." Richard distinguishes between other-love and *mere* self-love, which it what I believe Schniertshauer is getting at. Schniertshauer, *Consummatio caritatis*, 123–24.

It is extremely clear then that love of others does not exclude self-love, but on the contrary supposes it, since it is self-love which gives other-love its measure, and the supreme degree of charity is attained when it is the same quantity of love that is accorded to others as one accords to oneself...in Richard of St. Victor, even in God it is necessary to say that ordered charity begins with oneself.¹⁹

The evidence from *De Trinitate* and the tradition preceding it is conclusive: the distinction is not between charity and self-love, but between charity and *mere* self-love. I have given the matter of self-love in Richard's conception of charity attention because, to a few thinkers, self-love and charity are not well-paired. For example, we saw from Penido that the *Conditions of Charity* argument is weakened because self-love is egoistical. For other thinkers, if self-love is *not* an element of charity, then charity ceases to exist altogether. Richard advocates a mediating position that addresses both concerns. Further, in Richard, as in all the previous thinkers just surveyed, self-love and other-love are relations that obtain between persons, where the former is reflexive personal love, and the latter is non-reflexive.

Finally, returning to Richard's predecessors, it is worth noting that Augustine and Hugh both clearly identify whose love they speak about. Augustine addresses the issue of God's love, and Hugh addresses that of human love. Things are not so clear regarding *The Conditions of Charity*. Guimet assumes that Richard is speaking about God's love, but this is not obvious. It is worth looking into the question, Whose love is Richard talking about?

3.1.1.2 Whose charity in The Conditions of Charity argument: divine or human?

Situated between an argument for divine charity and an argument against divine charity being supremely shared with created persons, it is reasonable to assume that the conditions of charity discussion is about divine charity. I believe this understanding is wrong. Richard does not speak specifically about divine charity. Look at the passage again,

However, no one is properly said to have charity on account of a private and exclusive love of oneself. And so, it is necessary that love be directed toward another, so that it can be charity. Therefore, charity absolutely cannot exist where a plurality of persons is lacking.²⁰

Nowhere does Richard hint at whether the charity he describes is the kind had by angelic, human, or divine persons. I believe this is intentional. In the previous argument Richard clearly specifies charity as had by the divine substance. In the argument following this one he delineates some differences between divine and human expressions of charity. In the final argument of *DT* 3 he again explicitly names divine charity as the subject of discussion. In all other places Richard is careful to articulate what type of love he has in mind and to whom that love belongs. We can safely conclude, then, that in the present argument Richard is not ambiguous about the type of charity, but is purposefully general: these conditions apply to *all* instances of charity, *tout court*. That is, CC2 and CC3 establish, or at least clarify upon, principles of charity – principles that apply to all its instances.

¹⁹ Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 388.

²⁰ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 136).

Recall that CC1 merely maps out the conceptual territory regarding the possible objects of love. CC2 points out that one of the two objectual categories is insufficient for charity. Since charity is a species of love, it must have an object. But if one of the types of objects is not sufficient for charity, the other category must be necessary. The thrust of *The Conditions of Charity* is not to convince us of some novel or exotic conclusion, but to work out the implications of propositions Richard's contemporaries already accept. Richard aims to make the conclusion unmistakably clear: multiple persons are necessary for charity (CC5). To see how this conclusion unfolds, let us examine CC3 and CC4 in more detail.

3.1.2 Sub-conclusion CC2: And so, it is necessary that 'love be directed toward another, so that it can be charity'

3.1.2.1 A logical gap

CC2 is a sub-conclusion, signified by the conclusion indicator "And so" (or 'therefore', *itaque*). However, Richard has only given us a single premise, CC1, and so there is a logical gap between CC1 and CC2 that he expects the reader fill. To see this we may paraphrase CC1 and CC2 to capture the critical idea of each:

Paraphrase of CC1)Self-love is not sufficient for charity.Suppressed premise)???Paraphrase of CC2)Therefore, other-love is necessary for charity.

To draw the conclusion in CC3, Richard must apply some principle or idea, and assumedly it is an idea that he took to be obviously true since he neither mentions it nor argues for it. It turns out that the principle that bridges CC1 and CC2 is both straightforward and has ancient philosophical roots. The idea is that all the possible objects of one's love may be sorted into one of two categories: self-love and other-love. That is, a person may love herself, or some object other than herself.²¹ This idea goes unstated in Richard's representation of *The Conditions of Charity*. However, the idea that there are only two general classes of the object of love is an obvious assumption throughout DT 3. What is more, Richard's philosophical and theological sources also clearly arrange the objectual furniture in this way. As we will see in chapter 4.1, from Plato and Aristotle to Jesus and Paul, the discussion about love consistently centres around self-love and other-love as the only two possible types of objects of love. The upshot is that charity must have at least one object and that object will fall into one of the two aforementioned classes.

With these two types of objects exhausting the logical space, the necessary and sufficient conditions for charity have the following groupings:

- i. Self-love alone is necessary and sufficient for charity. Other-love is neither necessary nor sufficient for charity.
- ii. Self-love is necessary but not sufficient for charity. Other-love is necessary but not sufficient for charity.
- iii. Self-love is neither necessary nor sufficient for charity. Other-love alone is necessary and sufficient for charity.

²¹ Though it goes unstated until CC3, Richard has in mind personal-love. As discussed in *The Conditions for Charity*, both self-love and other-love are types of love that obtain between persons.

Premise CC1 says that (i) cannot be true. The suppressed, or implicit premise is that if (i) is false, then either (ii) or (iii) is true. The common element among both (ii) and (iii) – and the element that (i) lacks, is that other-love is necessary for charity. Thus, if self-love is not sufficient for charity, then other-love must be necessary.²²

We may now fill in the lacuna:

| Self-love is not sufficient for charity. |
|--|
| Either self-love is sufficient for charity, or other-love is necessary |
| for charity. |
| Therefore, other-love is necessary for charity. |
| |

3.1.2.2 A note on other-love

As a conclusion, CC2 does not make a claim that needs to be defended. However, it does direct attention to the notion of other-love and so I will discuss that notion in more detail here.

The idea that the highest form of love is multi-personal traces at least as far back as St. Gregory (and perhaps further²³), whose sermon on the gospels includes the following,

He sent his disciples to preach in pairs because there are two precepts of charity, namely, the love (*amor*) of God and of neighbour, and charity cannot exist among fewer than two. For nobody is properly said to have charity towards himself; but love (*dilectio*) must go out to another to be able to be charity.²⁴

As early as the sixth century charity was commonly taken to include other-love. In this passage we see both ideas that Richard takes up in his own definition of charity. Regarding the insufficiency

²² JT Paasch gives charity a dispositional analysis, where the premises are interpreted as,

CC1) For any person x, if x has a charitable disposition P, x is not perfect if x does not exercise P. And,

CC2) For any person x, if x has a charitable disposition P, x is not perfect if x does not exercise P on some person y, where x is not identical to y.

[&]quot;The idea," Paasch explains, "seems to be that charity is a disposition to love another," which requires two elements: charity must be manifested or realized, and the lover must direct it to another person. He summarizes, "someone with a charitable disposition is not perfect unless they actually act charitably," and "a charitable disposition cannot be exercised perfectly unless one directs it to a distinct person." By my lights, Richard's view of love is wide enough to allow for a dispositional account. Cosmic love – the idea that all beings, both divine and created, are inclined to love the good – is present in the Neo-Platonic tradition from which Richard draws. Perhaps, then, Richard's view of love, at rock bottom, demands a dispositional account. But such matters take us too far afield. In the present context we must continue to view charity primarily within the mode of Richard's discourse, that is, as a relation obtaining only between two or more distinct persons. "Richard of St. Victor 3 – Perfect Charity Must Be Directed at Another Person (JT) – Trinities," accessed July 1, 2021, https://trinities.org/blog/richard-of-st-victor-3-%e2%80%93-perfect-charity-must-be-directed-at-another-person-jt/.

²³ Maybe as far as Origen's *Homiliae duae in Canticum Canticorum*, 2.8, where he discusses ordered charity and considers only forms of other-love, never self-love, as expressions of charity; but to claim this is the genesis of other-love as the highest form of love is to argue from silence. Guimet provides an extensive excavation to show the lineage of the idea of ordered love (*caritas ordinata*), which includes the notions of other-love as raised in our CC2 and CC3. Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 379–82.

²⁴ Gregory the Great, "Homiliae in Evangelia," in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. Jacques Paul Migne, vol. 76, col 1075–1312 (Paris, n.d.), 1139a.

of self-love Richard tells us, "no one is properly said to have love on account of a private and exclusive love of oneself," which is quoted almost verbatim from Gregory. Regarding the necessity for other-directed love Richard says, "it is necessary that 'love be directed toward another, so that it can be charity," which is quoted verbatim from Gregory. Both ideas are found in Augustine, as well as Jerome, Lombard, Bernard, and Hugh, among others.²⁵ A venerable lineage. The scope and depth of this tradition shows us that, when Richard says in **[1]**, "no one is properly said to have charity on account of a private…love," he not only quotes Gregory, but actually states a fact about the accepted theological and cultural definition of charity. Schniertshauer can thus conclude,

The idea of charity's superiority to self-love and, by implication, the demand for a corresponding person (*Gegenüber*) is therefore not Richard's invention, but rather owe themselves to theological tradition and reflection on human experience. Concurrently, this thought is embedded in the specific intellectual climate of his time, which is characterized by a new appreciation of friendship and love.²⁶

The cultural capital of this belief is so strong that Richard does not feel it is necessary to argue the case. To his mind, he need only single out the accepted condition in CC1 and clarify some of its entailed meaning in CC2, and move on to his own original application in the remainder of The Argument. Even so, Richard does not accept other-love on cultural capital alone – he will give a forceful argument in DT 3.4 and we will examine this in the next chapter. For now though we shall complete our investigation of the current argument.

3.1.3 Main conclusion CC3: Therefore, charity absolutely cannot exist where a plurality of persons is lacking

The love that Richard discusses in the present argument, and *De Trinitate* generally, is personallove. The assumption goes unstated because personal love is so obviously the type of love at issue in traditional treatments about perfect love (divine love, supreme love, etc.). Other-love is the love that obtains between two more persons. With this assumption, CC3 conclude that charity obtains between two or more persons. The following diagram serves as a visual aid for understanding Richard's view on the objects of love:

²⁵ For an extended list, see Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 381.

²⁶ Schniertshauer, Consummatio caritatis, 123.



This chart reflects only the barest outline of the conditions of charity, namely, that it requires other-love, and that other-love is personal-love. Of course, there are more conditions, and Richard spends large portions of his corpus discussing the other elements of charity, though we need not explore them now.

3.1.4 Full expression of the conditions of charity

Gathering the pieces from the discussion so far we may now formally outline the conditions argument, giving special care to state the implicit premises and recognize Richard's inferential steps.

The Conditions of Charity* – CC*

- P1) Necessarily, either self-love alone is sufficient for charity, or other-love is necessary for charity. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, it is not the case that self-love alone is sufficient for charity. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, other-love is necessary for charity. [P1, P2: Necessity Elimination and Introduction, Disjunctive Syllogism]
- P3) Necessarily, if there is other-love, then there are multiple persons. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, if there is charity, then there are multiple persons. [C1, P3: Necessity Elimination and Introduction, Transitivity of Implication]

In CC* there are three assumptions. P1 supposes that charity either requires other-love or, if it does not, then self-love is sufficient for charity. Following the definition of charity, P2 finds that self-love alone is not sufficient.²⁷ P3 is a clarificatory premise, pointing out that other-love is a

²⁷ See section 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 for the support of both P1 and P2.

relation that obtains between multiple persons. The main conclusion in C2 points out that in all cases, where there is charity, there are multiple persons. Multiple persons are necessary for charity. This conclusion will serve as the key supposition at work in all three of Richard's arguments for a plurality of divine persons. Before entering into those arguments though, Richard completes one final task for erecting The Argument's infrastructure by responding to a key objection.

3.2 The Argument Against Supreme Charity for Created Persons

Richard now responds to a plausible defeater of The Argument, namely, that God could satisfy charity's prerequisite for multiple persons by loving created persons. Fernand Guimet, who has devoted more attention to this part of Richard's Trinitarian speculation than any other scholar, gives us some bearing on this objection and Richard's response, "Richard's reasoning here is at a decisive juncture. Having posited in God a charity that is altruistic, it is a question of answering an objection which presents itself in the mind of the reader."²⁸ That is, we are introduced to an objection by a hypothetical listener, perhaps a student, since Richard "imagines [the objector is] very close to him, interrupting his exposition, in the manner of a listener familiar with his teaching: *Sed dicit fortassis...* ['But perhaps you say...']"

In the line to which Guimet refers, Richard says, "But perhaps you say: 'Even if there were one person alone in the true divinity, nevertheless he would still be able to have, or he would have, charity toward his creation."²⁹ Guimet continues, "This objection – and it is an objection –" suggests that "even in the case where there is only one person in the true divinity, such altruistic charity would still have room to express itself, vis-à-vis its creature." That is, the objector refers us back to the previous argument, where multiple persons is specified as a necessary condition of charity. The defeater proposed here is that God could love a *created* person with charity, thus removing the necessity for multiple divine persons, and bringing The Argument to a halt. In response Richard articulates the following argument,

The Argument Against Supreme Charity for Created Persons – ASCC

[1] But surely God would not be able to have supreme charity toward a created person. [2] After all, his charity would be disordered, if he were loving supremely someone who should not be loved supremely. [3] However, it is impossible that charity be disordered in the supremely wise goodness. [4] And so, a divine person could not have supreme charity toward a person who would not be worthy of supreme love.³⁰

²⁸ Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 377.

²⁹ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 136).

³⁰ The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 70. The Argument Against Supreme Charity for Created Persons* – ASCC*

P1) Necessarily, if God has supreme charity for X and it is not the case that X is worthy of supreme charity, then God's supreme charity is disordered. [Premise]

P2) Necessarily, it is not the case that God's supreme charity is disordered. [Premise]

C1) Necessarily, it is not the case that (i) God has supreme charity for X and that (ii) it is not the case that X is worthy of supreme charity. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Modus Tollens]

P3) Necessarily, if X is a created person, then it is not the case that X is worthy of supreme charity. [Premise]

C2) Necessarily, it is not the case that God has supreme charity for X and X is a created person. [C1, P3: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Negation Introduction]

This argument is noteworthy in several respects. First, the conclusion, ASCC1, is placed at the beginning of the passage, perhaps alerting us to some of the argument's historical significance. The conditional claim in ASCC2 introduces us to another ancient principle, that of *caritas ordinata*, or 'ordered charity'. For Gaston Salet, "The *caritas ordinata* is an indispensable middle term in the entire dialectic of book three."³¹ Limiting our attention to the current passage, the argument against supreme charity for created persons is the middle point of *DT* 3.2. It connects the previous argument for divine charity with the coming arguments for multiple divine persons. The objection Richard addresses here is potentially devastating to The Argument. Much rides on Richard's counter-argument, so we will consider it in detail.

3.2.1 Main conclusion ASCC1: But surely God would not be able to have supreme charity toward a created person

ASCC1 is the conclusion that the remainder of this argument seek to support. The 'surely' in "surely God would not be able to have supreme charity toward a created person" has some rhetorical impact: at this point the reader may not, in fact, be very sure that the conclusion is true; further, the hypothetical objector who initially raises the question appears to be just as sure that God *can* have charity towards creation. Assumedly, readers such as these give little credence to the argument so far. To convince such readers, Richard allows his confidence in ASCC1 to shine through.

But the 'surely' does more than garner rhetorical momentum, it also signals some of the argument's historical intricacies. Richard composes his *De Trinitate* close on the heels of the Abelardian controversy (well, one of Abelard's controversies anyways). Put briefly: in his own Trinitarian speculation Abelard employs Gregory's principle about the mutuality of love, but finds that the 'other' required by God's perfect charity must be satisfied by creation. One unfortunate theological result, and there are several, is that Abelard seems committed to the necessity of creation, and perhaps even eternal creation.³² For this and other reasons, his Trinitarian theology was condemned by a papal council in 1121 and besides a short imprisonment, Abelard was forced to burn a copy of his own *Theologia Summi Boni*.

With this background in mind, we see why Richard may have been inclined to clearly and unambiguously place his conclusion about God's supreme love for creation at the *beginning* of the argument! In premise ASCC2 Richard will employ the same principle Abelard got into so much trouble using, and in ASCC1 he is careful to take an unequivocally orthodox stance on this touchy issue. Schniertshauer summarizes: "In Abelard, [the Gregorian principle] is applied...in a dangerous way, so that God would now be a Trinity of love only insofar as He loves creatures. Richard avoids this position by showing that creatures are not worthy of the highest possible divine

³¹ Gaston Salet, Richard De Saint-Victor: La Trinitité, 481.

³² "And so it seemed to us that God, who is supremely good, and cannot increase or decrease in His goodness which He has as His nature and substance from Himself, not in our manner as an act, is always aflame, to speak in a human manner, from his own ineffable goodness, so that he necessarily wills what He wills, and necessarily does what He does...And so with one who is necessarily as good as He is good, and cannot decrease in goodness, it is necessary that He wills as well of individuals as He wills well, and that He conducts Himself well toward individuals as much as He can. Otherwise, as even Plato says, He would be jealous and not perfectly kind...God, therefore, necessarily willed the world to exist and created it." *Theologia Christiana*, b.V, ad fin., 1. C., 1329-1330; quoted in Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages*, p.163, fn. 90.

love."³³ Richard does more than reject the condemned position, though. This argument also serves as a positive corrective to Abelard. After identifying an area where Abelard goes wrong and rejecting the condemned conclusion, Richard offers a constructive way forward in ASCC2 through ASCC4.

3.2.2 Premise ASCC2: After all, his charity would be disordered, if he were loving supremely someone who should not be loved supremely

With premise ASCC2, Richard begins the argument proper. Simplified and slightly re-ordered, we see that it is a straightforward conditional,

If God supremely loved someone who should not be supremely loved, then God's love would be disordered.

This claim introduces another principle about supreme charity,³⁴ namely, that of *caritas ordinata*, or 'ordered charity'. Like the Gregorian principle we examined in the first half of the chapter, this one has ancient roots, going back to Origen in the mid-third century. Once again I will give some background to the operative principle so that we may see why Richard lays claim to this idea, how he and his readers understood it, and why they were inclined to accept it. After this I will raise a few investigatory questions to help make the principle accessible to modern readers, readers whose sensibilities may differ markedly from Richard's contemporaries.

3.2.2.1 Background of caritas ordinata: Its meaning and development

By the time Richard writes his *De Trinitate*, the idea of ordered charity was prevalent in the intellectual milieu. This due chiefly to its biblical and theological qualifications, as Guimet outlines,

So, the notion of *caritas ordinata* presented itself in the twelfth century, as it did throughout the Middle Ages, with the highest authority that could attach itself to an object of thought since it was a question given in revelation, which had its source in Scripture. It is indeed, due to the exegesis of the famous half-verse of the Song: 'he ordered charity to me' [*ordinavit in me caritatem*] (Songs 2:4b), that the notion of ordered charity was immediately connected with the words themselves.³⁵

This tie between the biblical term *caritas ordinata* and the principle of love's proper ordering was strong even early in the idea's development, so the notion was taken seriously as a biblical one. A theologian as eminent as Origen gave it some detailed consideration. The interpretation of the verse in his *Commentary on the Song of Songs* would serve as the basis for the traditional understanding throughout the Middle Ages,

³³ Schniertshauer, p.122-123. See also Salet: "When Richard is given the objection: 'But perhaps you say: 'Even if there were one person alone in the true divinity, nevertheless he would still be able to have, or would have, charity towards his creation.', it is the exact position of Abelard that he rejects with this sentence: 'But surely God would not be able to have supreme charity toward a created person.'" Gaston Salet, *Richard De Saint-Victor*, 484.

³⁴ The first condition, that other-love is necessary for charity, was discussed in *The Conditions of Charity*. The second will be discussed in the next chapter, in *The Argument for Multiple Persons from Goodness*.

³⁵ Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 379.

Most certainly all men love something; and there is no one who has reached the age when one is capable of loving, who does not love something... But whereas in some people this love or this charity advances in due order and is suitably directed, with very many its advance is out of order. We say that charity is out of order in a person, when he either loves what he ought not to love, or else loves what he ought to love either more or less than it is right for him to do. In people of the latter kind charity is said to be inordinate; but in the former – and they are very few, I think – those, namely, who go forward on the way of life and turn not aside to the right hand nor to the left, in those and those alone charity is ordinate, and keeps the order proper to itself.³⁶

In the remainder of his exegesis of this verse Origen attempts to ground the notion of ordered love in scriptural data, primarily by looking to Jesus' love commands as a schema for properly ordering love for self, others, and God. But even with these efforts the idea of ordered charity was well on its way to existing "outside of time, stripped of any personal and subjective notes"³⁷ – that is, stripped of its historical and textual moorings. The term *caritas ordinata* comes from "*ordinavit in me caritatem*," a poor translation of the Hebrew, which reads "his banner over me is love."³⁸ Further, the notion of ordered love itself was too large a conceptual edifice to be cogently grounded by the slim half verse in the Song, or by Jesus' love precepts in the synoptic gospels.

We may pardon Origen of these critical transgressions since, given the exegetical norms of the day, "To proceed with this sort of immediate abstraction upon the sacred text was not in any way going beyond the [biblical] data."³⁹ Thus, Origen's instruction on ordered charity was accepted as a sound interpretation of scripture. Even so, the teaching was so tenuously tied to scripture that,

Very soon...the notion of ordered charity had to be released from the link which united it to the exegesis of the text of the Songs, and become capable of independent treatment: From Origen (who seems to have a genitive role in all of this) onward, this process is complete. From then on, it became a common datum whose use was not linked to any definite text, on which the agreement of minds was to be made on [the notion] itself.⁴⁰

Origen's biblical theology of *caritas ordinata* was readily adopted by his immediate successors. But it was so quickly and deeply integrated into the larger worldview that it was soon accepted as self-evidently true – an obvious aspect of reality apparent to the intellect of anyone who directs her attention to such matters. Guimet traces this "intellectualist sense" of the half-verse as it passed through St. Ambrose to Lombard, and through Lombard to "the whole of the Christian West." By the twelfth century the ties between its scriptural origin and its settling-place as an obvious datum were severed. Severed enough for Richard to use the notion without fear of having appealed to any scriptural or church authorities. The notion had truly become "intellectual common property."⁴¹

³⁶ Origen, Origen: The Song of Songs, Commentary and Homilies, trans. R. P. Lawson, Ancient Christian Writer 26 (New York: Paulist Press, 1957), 3.7 (187-188).

³⁷ Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 379.

³⁸ Song of Songs 2:4b. In the Masoretic text: וְדָּגְלוֹ עָלִי אַהְבָה.

³⁹ Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 379.

⁴⁰ Guimet, 380.

⁴¹ Schniertshauer, Consummatio caritatis, 124-25.

3.2.2.2 Some critical questions about the notion of ordered charity

We are now generally familiar with the origin of the notion of ordered charity and its dialectical appeal: it has biblical roots, though these were severed early on, leaving a free-standing theological principle; this principle was axiomatic by the twelfth century and ready to be plucked from the philosophical ether and plugged into a deductive proof. With the historical circumstances in view, we must now examine the principle itself, asking, What does ordered charity mean for Richard?

In the current argument ordered charity does not deviate very far from the core of Origen's description, "We say that charity is out of order in a person, when he either loves what he ought not to love, or else loves what he ought to love either more or less than it is right for him to do." In ASCC2 Richard hypothesizes that God supremely loves someone who ought not be supremely loved; this *per impossibile* hypothesis contradicts the first clause of the second half of Origen's dictum, namely: "charity is out of order when he...loves what he ought to love...more...than it is right for him..." Loving something more than one should is the relevant part of the principle in ASCC2. But immediately the question is raised, *Why* shouldn't human persons be loved supremely? Why would it be wrong for God to love human persons supremely? And what is the nature of the 'ought' and the 'right' at work in Richard's application of the principle?

The central notion at issue here is that of dignity (*digna*), which we can roughly characterize as a person's worth, and by extension her worthiness as an object of love. Richard first mentions the idea in ASCC4,

And so, a divine person could not have supreme charity toward a person who would not be worthy of supreme love (*summa dilectione <u>digna</u> non fuit*).⁴²

And again later in DT 3.2,

...it is necessary for a divine person not to lack fellowship with a person of equal dignity... (...oportuit divinam aliquam personam persone <u>condigne</u>...)⁴³

I will give both passages a more thorough examination later,⁴⁴ but here a brief comparison of the *dignatus* language will prove informative. The first quotation uses the adjective *dignus*, and the second a very close derivative, *condignus*. The semantic range is so close that the terms are virtually synonymous. In both quotations the worth or value of a person is posited as a relevant aspect of the charity relation. Charity must be appropriately accorded to one's value. Richard does not comment on the nature of that value, but I don't see how it can be anything other than an ontological worth – which would fit into Richard's Platonism, particularly his chain of being philosophy. I suspect that for Richard, an object should be loved according to its degree of ontological goodness. Due to their sophisticated essence, humans have a worth corresponding to charity love – that is to say, humans are worthy of charity. This is why God may love humans without transgressing the first half of Origen's axiom by "lov[ing] what he ought not to love." Because of their type(s) of perfection(s), humans are worthy of charity, but because the degree of human perfection is less than the supreme degree, humans are not worthy of *supreme* charity.

⁴² DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 136).

⁴³ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 137).

⁴⁴ ASCC4 is part of the subject matter of this chapter; the second quotation is part of the conclusion for the first of three arguments for plurality of divine persons, the subject of the next chapter.
We see, then, that humans, like all other objects, have a value grounded in their nature. Human nature is ontologically rich enough to warrant charity, but not rich enough to warrant supreme charity. But in the current argument Richard's claim is not,

God's charity would be disordered, if he were loving supremely someone *who is not worthy* of being loved supremely.

Richard's claim is instead,

God's charity would be disordered, if he were loving supremely someone *who should not* be loved supremely.⁴⁵

The difference is that the former premise employs a descriptive claim about the ordering of charity; the latter employs a moral claim. If Richard had the former in mind, his argument would develop along different lines, looking something like:

- i) Humans are not worthy of supreme charity.
- ii) God only loves supremely what is worthy of supreme love.
- iii) Therefore, God does not love humans supremely.

While (ii) is true and Richard would no doubt accept the claim, his second premise is different:

- i) Humans are not worthy of supreme charity.
- ii*) God only loves supremely what *ought* to be loved supremely.
- iii) Therefore God does not love humans supremely.

Notice that the 'ought' in supreme love is related to the worth of its object: God should supremely love only those who are worthy of supreme love. In this sense the truth of (ii*) is grounded on that of (ii) and therefore 'worth' is more fundamental than 'ought'. So why does Richard choose to express his argument in normative terms ('should'), rather than descriptive ('worth')? The most obvious answer may be the best one: he takes the 'ought' from Origen, or at least the Origen-inspired principle which was "intellectual common property" in the twelfth century. Even if the descriptive expression is more fundamental, the normative expression is the one that was "immediately perceptible for a reader of the twelfth century,"⁴⁶ and thus the form of the principle best suited for the current argument.

We have made inroads in establishing why Richard uses the principle, and expresses it as he does. Now we must ask about both the nature and cogency of the 'ought': What does it *mean* to say that a person should, or should not, be loved supremely? According to ASCC2, something is wrong about loving a person to a degree beyond their ontological value. But is this correct? It seems permissible, perhaps even highly virtuous or ethically laudable, to love somebody beyond their station, to love them beyond their worth. With these two questions I believe we run firmly aground on the keen medieval sensitivity to *fittingness*.

⁴⁵ The gerundive *diligendus* would not typically carry the moral force conveyed in the English 'should not'. However, within the context of the long tradition of thinking about disordered love, the strong normativity expressed in the English translation is fully warranted.

⁴⁶ Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 379.

3.2.2.3 Fittingness

Fittingness can be understood, very roughly, as an epistemic heuristic for determining the truth of a proposition or the nature of an object. Dale Coulter identifies three criteria of fittingness that were common to eleventh and twelfth century thinkers: metaphysical, aesthetic, and logical.⁴⁷ According to the latter two criteria – again this is a rough and ready sketch of the position – fittingness occurs when a thing's parts are well-proportioned to one another (beauty), and when a proposition is appropriately related to another proposition (logic).

The logical and particularly the aesthetic criteria of fittingness find some place in Richard's corpus, and there is more work to be done in exploring this area. For example, it looks to be the case that one implication of Richard's account is that a person can love beautifully, or un-beautifully. However, for our investigation of premise ASCC2 the metaphysical criterion of fittingness does most of the heavy lifting, and so we will focus on appreciating what Richard may have had in mind with his notions of worth, dignity, and fittingness in relation to the act of love.

Let us look to Anselm, who was one of the major proponents of the metaphysical criterion. For him,

fittingness could convey how something should act or function. He grounded this type of fittingness upon the nature of some object or person as a way of holding together ontological and ethical necessity. As such it denoted what was proper to one's nature (ethical) based on how that nature was designed to function (ontological).⁴⁸

Coulter cites a particularly relevant passage in which Anselm presents a set of criteria for evaluating God's choices regarding atonement: "That nothing unfitting in God, even in the least, be accepted by us and that no reason, even in the least, be refused if a better reason does not conflict with it. For just as impossibility follows from any unfitting thing in God, even a minor one, so also necessity accompanies any reason, however minute, if a greater reason does not defeat it."⁴⁹ From this passage we can gather that fittingness is always found in God. Also, the metaphysical criterion of fittingness is powerful enough to show the impossibility of any un-fitting qualities or actions in God. Coulter summarizes some of the criterion's consequences for Anselm,

The attachment of fittingness to Anselm's perfect-being theology provides the ground for its function as a methodological principle. It was because of passages like the present one that...one cannot presuppose a difference between Anselm's understanding of rationality and fittingness in terms of the kind of necessity they envision. Fittingness defines how God should act through an appeal to the nature of God's own being and as such serves as a criterion of equal value with logic.⁵⁰

In fittingness Anselm finds a criterion for determining that which is right or wrong, permissible or impermissible, and even necessary and impossible for God. In other words, fittingness "provides

⁴⁷ In this section I depend heavily on Dale Coulter's study of fittingness in Coulter, Per Visibilia Ad Invisibilia.

⁴⁸ Coulter, 177–78.

⁴⁹ Cur Deus Homo, 1.10. Quoted in Coulter, 179.

⁵⁰ Coulter, 179–80.

a link between ontological and ethical necessity by referring to the nature of the divine being."⁵¹ A similar link is found in Abelard, who teaches,

Indeed it is clear that [God] can only do good things (*bona*) and these things are only what is fitting for God to do and what is good for God to do. Similarly, it is clear that he cannot send forth anything, that he may only do what is fitting for him to send forth or what is good for him to send forth. Yet that it is not fitting for him to do and to send forth is the same as it not being good.⁵²

In Abelard, as in Anselm, we see the coincidence of the ontological and the ethical in the principle of fittingness. Richard waded in these same waters, making use of fittingness throughout his writings. He used fittingness methodologically, in *how* he argues for the Trinity, and in how he writes to further the spiritual formation of his readers.⁵³ But fittingness also plays a part in the arguments themselves. The trinitarian speculation *DT* 5, for example, heavily deploys fittingness. Here in premise ASCC2, though, the notion is not explicit. For Richard – like Anselm, Abelard, and others before him – "fittingness has its basis in the nature of [the object] under consideration" and therefore "fittingness always entails…appropriate correspondence" between a being and its actions.⁵⁴ In the present case, God's nature is supreme goodness, and therefore he may love supremely, indeed *must* love supremely with charity. But that supreme charity must (1) appropriately flow from its source, and (2) appropriately correspond to its object. Richard treats both elements in the remainder of the argument. In ASCC3 Richard argues that God's charity must fit appropriately with God's wisdom. And in ASCC4 Richard considers the appropriateness of supreme charity for humans.

3.2.3 Premise ASCC3: However, it is impossible that charity be disordered in the supremely wise goodness

Recall the conditional statement of ASCC2: If God supremely loved someone who should not be supremely loved, then God's love would be disordered. In ASCC3 Richard denies the consequent in the strongest way, claiming that it is impossible for God's charity to be disordered. He hints at the supremely wise goodness as the reason for this impossibility. Initially this terse denial seems satisfactory, since all along Richard has operated on a methodology of supreme value, that is, "attributing to God all that is most perfect,"⁵⁵ a method preventing him from attributing to God imperfectly ordered love. As a methodology, adhering to supreme value may be correct as far as it goes, but for Richard it may not go far enough: on this principle it is *false* that God loves disorderedly, but may not be *impossible*, as is the claim in ASCC3. Perhaps this is why Richard looks specifically to wisdom and goodness to do the needed work, since "the flame of love in the supremely wise goodness does flare up neither differently nor more intensely than the supreme wisdom mandates."⁵⁶ Guimet seeks to clarify upon this passage: "In God sovereign wisdom, which goes hand-in-hand with the sovereign goodness, directs and circumscribes the flame of love. Just

⁵¹ Coulter, 181.

⁵² Abelard, *Theologia 'Scholarium'* 3.27-28. Quoted in Coulter, 180-81.

 ⁵³ Coulter discusses fittingness used methodologically in Richard's proofs. Coulter, 173–220. Vasquez discusses Richard's use of fittingness for spiritual formation. Vasquez, "The Art of Trinitarian Articulation," 91–95.
 ⁵⁴ Coulter, *Per Visibilia Ad Invisibilia*, 182.

⁵⁵ Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 389.

⁵⁶ DT 3.7 (Evans, 252; Ribaillier, 141).

as it does not burn for another object, it does not burn more than the sovereign wisdom dictates."⁵⁷ Guimet's language here is a bit evocative and may obscure the point. He is more helpful here,

in God love reaches the supreme degree of intensity as a burning fire. But as soon as it is indicated by metaphorical allusion, this necessity of nature negates itself in a law of perfection, rational more than moral. In God an interior law of discernment and wisdom rules the expansion of this flame; in him a sovereign reason presides over this infinite fire of love.⁵⁸

On Guimet's reading, God's wisdom ensures the impossibility of loving disorderedly by 'dictating' or otherwise directing His acts of charity as a law or rule. Premise ASCC3, then, invites us to inquire further into such a rule, What about the supremely wise goodness ensures the impossibility of it loving disorderedly? The first step forward requires that we understand Richard's view of God's wisdom and goodness. Helpfully, he provides a lucid account in *DT* 6.15,

no goodness will be present where wisdom or power is totally absent. After all, the power to will the good is a kind of power. Discerning between good and evil is a property of wisdom, and without such discernment the will does not know what it ought to choose. Therefore, in order to be able to have goodness, it is necessary for you to know how to choose the good and to be able to choose the good. Power gives the ability (*posse*), wisdom gives the know-how (*nosse*), and without them goodness does not come to be (*esse*). And so, true goodness draws its own being both from wisdom and power.⁵⁹

Here, wisdom and goodness are examined in a discussion about which attributes are most proper to each person of the Trinity. The passage still shows something of Richard's thoughts on the properties themselves, independently of the issue of the divine appropriations. The main takeaway from this passage is that through wisdom an agent knows *how* to choose the good. With this key piece of insight our questions about ASCC3 may be addressed: in the case of love, a divine person will know the worth of his beloved, know which type of love is proper for the beloved, and know the proper degree to give the beloved. From the passage we also see that goodness entails wisdom *and* power. Thus, as supremely good, a divine person will in all instances be able to love according to his knowledge.

In the argument so far, Richard has argued that the supreme substance necessarily loves – as Guimet describes it, "the fact that in God Love is carried to its infinite degree by a necessity of nature."⁶⁰ However, against the Abelardian conclusion for the necessity of creation, which may be viewed as an instance of "disordered" and "uncontrolled effusion," Richard argues for the impossibility of disordered love due to the divine wisdom. As Dumeige explains, this rule is not some exterior principle that a divine person must abide by, but rather,

The sovereign loving-kindness allows the discovery of a sovereign rule which is none other than the divine Wisdom Itself. Love is rigorously proportioned to knowledge. They are completely fitting to one another. It should be possible to avoid any fragmentation that

⁵⁷ Fernand Guimet, "Caritas Ordinata et Amor Discretus Dans La Théologie Trinitaire de Richard de Saint-Victor," Revue Du Moyen Âge Latin 4 (1948): 230.

⁵⁸ Guimet, 230.

⁵⁹ DT 6.15 (Evans, 335-36; Ribaillier, 247-48).

⁶⁰ Guimet, "Caritas Ordinata et Amor Discretus Dans La Théologie Trinitaire de Richard de Saint-Victor," 230.

may give the impression that this rule of discernment objectively imposes itself on the divine Being. In fact this perfectly wise Love, this perfectly loving Wisdom, is the divine nature itself.⁶¹

Because of divine wisdom, it impossible for charity to be disordered. Of metaphysical necessity, grounded in the divine nature, a divine person may only love orderly, that is, according to the value of the beloved. Dennis Ngien summarizes this point and the conclusion Richard draws,

For to love with the highest love that which does not deserve such a love, in Richard's rendering, is a 'disordered love', which God cannot exhibit. The object of his love cannot be human beings. God's love, like Eros, is guided by the worth of the object. Only God, the Supreme Good, is worthy of absolute love...God alone must be loved supremely, a divine person could not express supreme love to a person who lacks divinity.⁶²

The comparison with *eros* strikes me as ill-placed, being quite foreign to Richard and his contemporaries. Even so, Ngien's summary hits close to the mark, though it would be more accurate to say that God's love is guided by his *wisdom* to appropriately fit to the worth of the object. Still though, Ngien correctly sees Richard's conclusion that a divine person cannot supremely love a created person. And yet, Richard never overtly says this. He simply states that God cannot supremely love someone who is not *worthy* of supreme love. The notion at hand is that God's love cannot be disordered. To make the connection we turn to ASCC4.

3.2.4 Sub-conclusion ASCC4: And so, a divine person could not have supreme charity toward a person who would not be worthy of supreme love

ASCC4 is the last step toward the conclusion, which was stated up front in ASCC1. Richard has already introduced all of the operative principles and assumptions needed to make his case, and here he seeks to connect the body of the argument with the conclusion. Below I will simplify and slightly rearrange the outline of the argument thus far to underscore the logical flow.

- 1) If God supremely loved someone who is unworthy of supreme love, then God's charity would be disordered.
- 2) It is impossible that God's charity be disordered.
- 3) Therefore, a divine person could not have supreme charity toward a person unworthy of supreme charity.
- 4) ???
- 5) Therefore, God would not have supreme charity for a created person

This simplified outline reveals several issues requiring consideration. First, in 1, 2, and 5 Richard uses 'God', whereas in 3 he uses 'divine person'. Richard will devote the entirety of DT 4 making

⁶¹ Dumeige, Richard de Saint-Victor et l'idée chrétienne de l'amour, 87. See also Salet: "Since God is identically good and wise, Charity is necessarily enlightened [éclairée] and ordered: it can only love proportionally to the value of the lovable. Also, from an absolutely perfect divine person, sovereign love can only be addressed to another equally perfect divine person. There is a law of the divine being, which...does not impose itself on God from the outside, being Divine Wisdom itself." Richard of St Victor, La Trinité, 481.

⁶² Dennis Ngien, "Richard of St. Victor's Condilectus: The Spirit as Co-Beloved," *European Journal of Theology* 12, no. 2 (October 2003): 81.

careful distinctions between divine persons and divine substance. In this place, though, we recognize that he uses the terms interchangeably.

A second issue is the suppressed premise 4. The argument needs a bridge between 'God cannot have supreme charity for a person unworthy of supreme charity' to 'God cannot have supreme charity for a created person'. The lacuna is filled by something like 'A created person is not worthy of supreme charity'. Though unstated here, Richard has already firmly established that divine persons are supremely valuable and therefore the only worthy objects of supreme charity.⁶³ If the reader is not in a position to gauge her own lack of supreme value then she may logically infer from the proposition, '*only* divine persons are worthy of supreme love' the proposition that 'every other type of person is unworthy of supreme love'. Since created persons are not divine persons, created persons are not worthy of supreme love.

3.2.5 Full expression of the argument

The Argument Against Supreme Charity for Created Persons* – ASCC*64

- P1) Necessarily, if God has supreme charity for X and it is not the case that X is worthy of supreme charity, then God's supreme charity is disordered. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, it is not the case that God's supreme charity is disordered. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, it is not the case that (i) God has supreme charity for X and that (ii) it is not the case that X is worthy of supreme charity. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Modus Tollens]
- P3) Necessarily, if X is a created person, then it is not the case that X is worthy of supreme charity. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, it is not the case that God has supreme charity for X and X is a created person. [C1, P3: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Negation Introduction]⁶⁵

⁶⁵ It might not be immediately clear that C2 follows from C1 and P3 via the rule of Negation Introduction. To better understand the proof strategy, the interested reader can look at the following expanded regimentation of the AASC.

| The Argument Against Supreme Charity for Created Persons** [Expanded] – ASCC** | | |
|--|--|--|
| Vocabulary: | Connectives and Operators: | |
| P = God has supreme charity for X. | Where 'P' is a sentence, read ' \neg P' as 'not P'. | |
| Q = X is worthy of supreme charity. | Where 'P' is a sentence, read ' \Box P' as 'Necessarily P'. | |
| R = God's supreme charity is disordered. | Where P' and Q' are sentences, read $P \land Q'$ as P and Q' . | |
| S = X is a created person. | Where 'P' and 'Q' are sentences, read 'P \lor Q' as 'P or Q'. | |
| | Where P' and Q' are sentences, read $P \rightarrow Q'$ as 'If P then Q'. | |
| 1) \Box ((P & \neg Q) \rightarrow R) [Premise; correspondence] | onds to P1 in AASC*] | |
| 2) \Box (\neg R) [Premise; corresponds to P2 in | n AASC*] | |

- 3) $(P \land \neg Q) \rightarrow R$ [1, Necessity Elimination]
- 4) $\neg R$ [2, Necessity Elimination]
- 5) \neg (P \land \neg Q) [3, 4 Modus Tollens]
- 6) $\Box (\neg (P \land \neg Q))$ [5, Necessity Introduction; corresponds to C1 in AASC*]
- 7) \Box (S $\rightarrow \neg$ Q) [Premise; corresponds to P3 in AASC*]
- 8) $S \rightarrow \neg Q$ [7, Necessity Elimination]
- 9) $P \land S$ [Assumption for Negation Introduction]

⁶³ See especially ASCC3.

⁶⁴ In this argument and several that follow I use 'X' and 'Y' as individual variables. Statements containing 'X' or 'Y' are to be read as universally or/and existentially quantified. The context will be sufficient to disambiguate between the possible readings.

The ASCC reveals three assumptions. P1 applies the ancient notion of ordered charity to God, claiming that God's charity would be disordered if the degree of his love is not commensurate with the beloved's value.⁶⁶ P2 then claims that God's love cannot be disordered, which we know because God's love is supremely perfect.⁶⁷ Finally, in P3 we are told that humans are not worthy of God's supreme love. We are not worthy of such love because we are not supremely perfect, which Richard takes as a plain datum of experience.⁶⁸

3.3 Conclusion

The ASCC is a necessary response to a powerful objection to The Argument, but it is not Richard's only response. In the remainder of book two, Richard will pursue another answer to his hypothetical objector. But where the ASCC is purely negative, proving that God cannot supremely love a created person, the next argument is unhesitatingly positive: Richard will employ the philosophical and theological tools introduced here to argue for the necessary existence of at least two divine persons. In effect, the *Conditions of Charity* argument and the current *Argument Against Supreme Charity for Created Persons* are the final foundational moves in Richard's trinitarian speculation. He has established divine perfection and goodness, divine charity, and has now developed some important principles and implication of charity as well as responded to a major objection. He will immediately use all of this to great effect in a series of arguments for divine duality, and then Trinity, which we will investigate in chapters four and five, respectively.

- 12) ¬Q [8, 11 Modus Ponens]
- 13) $P \land \neg Q$ [10, 12 Conjunction Introduction]
- 14) $(P \land \neg Q) \& \neg (P \land \neg Q)$ [5, 13 Conjunction Introduction Contradiction]
- 15) \neg (P \land S) [9, 14 Negation Introduction]
- 16) \Box (\neg (P \land S)) [15, Necessity Introduction Corresponding to C2 in AASC*]

67 Cf. section 3.2.3.

¹⁰⁾ P [9, Conjunction Elimination]

¹¹⁾ S [9, Conjunction Elimination]

⁶⁶ Cf. section 3.2.2.

⁶⁸ Cf. section 3.2.2.2.

4. ARGUMENTS FOR MULTIPLE DIVINE PERSONS

4.0 Overview

In the previous two chapters I examined Richard's argument for God's supreme charity, and his description of the nature of divine charity. Richard immediately advances on these discussions by arguing that the divine substance must include at least two divine persons. He supports this conclusion with three arguments grounded in the notions of goodness, happiness, and glory (or majesty¹). These are the *Arguments for Multiple Divine Persons from Goodness*, *Happiness*, and *Majesty*, or MP-G, MP-H, and MP-M for short. In this chapter I will exposit and analyse these three arguments. Before our detailed investigation, a wide-angle snapshot will be useful.

So far, Richard has argued that, necessarily, there is (i) a supreme divine substance that is (ii) supremely perfect and, therefore, (iii) has supreme charity-love. The line of reasoning in (i)-(iii) has been the object of our study in the previous two chapters. Now Richard will argue that supreme charity is supremely (iv) good, (v) pleasurable, and (vi) glorious. Supreme goodness, pleasure, and glory, Richard concludes, (vii) each independently requires a minimum of two divine persons. The content of (iv)-(vii) is the object of study in this chapter. Expressed schematically, we may view The Argument so far this way:



¹ Most English translations of *gloria* and its cognates correctly render it 'glory'. Along with 'glory', I will occasionally use 'majesty'. I do this only so that my abbreviations of the MP arguments do not include two 'MP-G' (i.e., the arguments from goodness and from glory). Therefore, in this study I use the term 'majesty' simply as a cipher for 'glory', and this only for ease of abbreviation and reference.

The primary aim of this chapter is to exposit the Arguments for Multiple Persons from Goodness, Happiness, and Majesty. After the exposition I will address two pressing objections.

4.1 The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Goodness

4.1.0 Introduction

Richard's first argument is for the existence of at least two divine persons, grounded in the supreme substance's perfect goodness. Richard makes his case this way,

The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Goodness – MP-G

 Moreover, in order for charity to be supreme and supremely perfect, it is necessary that it be so great that no greater love can exist, and that it be so excellent that no better love can exist. [2] As long as someone loves no one else as much as himself, that private love, which he has toward himself, proves that he has not yet apprehended the highest degree of love. [3] But a divine person would surely not have someone whom he could love as worthily as himself, if he absolutely were not having a person of equal dignity.
 [4] However, a person who was not God would not be of equal dignity to a divine person.
 [5] Therefore, so that the fullness of charity can occur in true divinity, it is necessary for a divine person not to lack fellowship² with a person of equal dignity and, for that reason, a divine person.

This sub-argument is quite compact, even for Richard. He employs several new principles along with some he has already established (and which we discussed in previous chapters). Richard leaves out many of the minor steps that would fully articulate the logical progression of this argument. I will assay this argument, unpacking its conceptual content and historical background. This will situate us for a fuller lid statement.³

- C1) Necessarily, if X loves X more than some other Y, then it is not the case that X has supreme charity. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Modus Tollens]
- C2) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and X loves X more than some other Y, then it is not the case that X has supreme charity. [C1: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Weakening]
- P3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X has supreme charity. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then it is not the case that X loves X more than some other Y. [C2, P3: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Modus Tollens, Disjunctive Syllogism]

² Evans' English translation inserts a 'the' here: "...not lack *the* fellowship..." I omit the superfluous definite article.

³ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248-49; Ribaillier, 136-37). The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 82.

The Argument For Multiple Divine Persons from Goodness* – MP-G*

P1) Necessarily, if X has supreme charity, then X's supreme charity is supremely good. [Premise]

P2) Necessarily, if X loves X more than some other Y, then it is not the case that X's supreme charity is supremely good. [Premise]

4.1.1 Premise MP-G1: Moreover, in order for charity to be supreme and supremely perfect, it is necessary that it be so great that no greater love can exist, and that it be so excellent that no better love can exist⁴

This premise has three pairs of concepts, each pair centred around the goodness of charity. Supreme charity is: supreme and supremely perfect; great and no greater; excellent and no better. This description raises several questions about the paired qualities. What is 'supreme charity' and 'supremely perfect charity', and what is the difference between the two? Similarly, what is '*tanta-major*' (excellent-greater) and '*talis-melior*' (excellent-better)?; what, if any, difference obtains between the two pairs?

We begin with the idea of 'supreme and supremely perfect charity'. Richard already argued for this in the *Argument for Divine Charity* where premise DC2 reads, "Nothing is better than charity and nothing is more perfect than charity."⁵ As we have seen this claim echoes some historical antecedents,

Augustine: There exists a being "than which there is nothing better or more exalted."6

Anselm: There exists "something-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought."7

Richard: The highest being is "that-than-which-nothing-is-greater and that-than-which-nothing-is-better."⁸

P7) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and X loves Y with supreme love, then Y is equally valuable as X is. [Premise]

P4) Necessarily, if it is not the case that X loves X more than some other Y, then X loves some other Y as much as X loves X. [Premise]

C4) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X loves some other Y as much as X loves X. [C3, P4: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Transitivity of Implication.]

P5) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X loves X with supreme love. [Premise]

P6) Necessarily, if X loves some other Y as much as X love X and X loves X with supreme love, then X loves some other Y with supreme love. [Premise]

C5) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X loves some other Y with supreme love. [C4, P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Conjunction I, Conditional E & I]

P8) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is equally valuable as X is, then Y is a divine person. [Premise]C6) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and X loves Y with supreme love, then Y is a divine person.

[[]P7, P8: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Conjunction I, Conditional E & I]
C7) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X loves some other Y with supreme love and Y is a divine person. [C5, C6: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Conjunction I, Conditional E & I]

P9) Necessarily, if there is some X such that X is a divine person and X loves some other Y with supreme love and Y is a divine person, then there are at least two divine persons. [Premise]

P10) Necessarily, there is some X such that X is a divine person. [Premise]

Necessarily, there are at least two divine persons. [C7, P9, P10: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Conjunction I, Conditional E & I]

⁴ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 136-37).

⁵ DT 3.2 (Evans, 248; Ribaillier, 136).

⁶ Augustine, On Christian Teaching, 1.7.7 (11).

⁷ Anselm, "Anselm's Proslogion," chap. 2.

⁸ DT 1.11 (Evans, 219; Ribaillier, 95).

Unlike Anselm in the *Proslogion*, in MP-G1 Richard does not engage in perfect being speculation, but rather perfect *attribute* speculation. Dumeige observes that Richard never makes explicit reference to the biblical claim that God is love (1 John 4:8) in *De Trinitate*.⁹ This is to be expected given the evidential parameters Richard has set for himself in purely philosophical argumentation. Even so, the metaphysical entailments of this claim would not have escaped Richard's notice: God's substance is identical to his attributes,¹⁰ God has the attribute of supreme charity, therefore God is supreme charity. The current context would be an ideal place for such a direct and apparently strong argument. And yet it is noticeably absent. I think one reason may be that Richard does not want to distract from his primary aim. Here, that aim is not to convince the reader that God is love, but instead argue that because God is perfectly loving, God is necessarily multiple divine persons.

To reach that conclusion Richard must extrapolate further upon the logic of perfect love. We have already learned that God has 'true and supreme' charity (DC3), and that nothing is better or more perfect than charity (DC2). In this last premise we encounter the notions of goodness and perfection, which we can very roughly summarize as the distinction between degree and kind. Thus, charity is the greatest possible or most intense good ("nothing is greater..."), and it is the best kind or type of thing ("...or more perfect"). The distinction is employed again in MP-G1, where 'supreme' and 'supremely perfect' pick out the intensity and completion of charity, respectively. But what makes for supreme and supremely perfect charity? The heart of this premise are two necessary conditions of supreme and supremely perfect charity, one about its goodness and the other its perfection.

The first condition is on charity's goodness: "it is necessary that it be so great that no greater love can exist" (*oportet ut sit tanta quo non possit esse major*). The adjective *tantus* functions here to pick out charity's measure or extent so that it may be compared to something; the adverb *ut* confirms this role by directing our attention to the mode or manner by which charity will be compared. The object of comparison is any love which is greater (*major*). *Major*, the comparative of *magnus*, is a common and straightforward denotation of degree or value, which confirms that Richard here speaks about goodness.

The second condition is on charity's perfection: it is necessary "that it be so excellent that no better love can exist" (*oportet ut et sit talis quo non possit esse melior*).¹¹ Like *tantus, talis* readies its object for comparison, in this case picking out charity's quality or nature (perhaps even hinting at a speciesgenus distinction). *Melior* is the comparative of *bonus*, picking out a thing's excellence, particularly its excellence in a class or family. With *talis-melior*, Richard draws our attention to the nature of

⁹ "Supreme and perfect value are realized in the perfect Being. The '*Deus caritas est*' of St. John [Jn. 4:8] is in the background, but we are not surprised when we do not encounter this in its explicit form. Such is not the purpose of the Victorine." Dumeige, *Richard de Saint-Victor et l'idée chrétienne de l'amour*, 83.

¹⁰ *DT* 2.17, 18, 20.

¹¹ So far I have used Christopher Evans' translation for the sake of uniformity, but his rendering of *tantus-melior* is vague, leaving the distinction between goodness and perfection opaque. Compare Evans' translation with that of Angelici and Cousins, who get closer to the heart of *talis*. Angelici: "...[charity] must be so great not to be able to admit another greater love, and it must be *such* not to allow a better one." Cousins: "it is necessary that [charity] be so great that nothing greater can exist and that it be of *such a kind* that nothing better can exist." (The emphasis in both excerpts is mine). Angelici, *Richard of Saint Victor*, On the Trinity, 117; Grover Zinn, ed., *Richard of St. Victor*, trans. Ewert Cousins, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 375.

supreme and supremely perfect charity, and compares it to any love which has a better or more complete nature – that is, any love which has more or greater perfections.

In both clauses, supreme and supremely perfect charity have no equal for comparison. There are neither any loves more intensely good, nor any with more or better perfections. The degree-kind distinction is clear enough in the present passage to warrant the following classification of Richard's terminology into two conceptual groups,

| <u>Goodness (degree)</u> | <u>Perfection (kind)</u> | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Supreme charity. | Supremely perfect charity. | (MP-G1) |
| So great that no greater love can exist. | Such that no better love can exist. | (MP-G1) |
| The <i>summum bonum</i> has supreme charity. | The summum bonum has true charity. | (DC3) |
| Nothing is better than charity. | Nothing more is more perfect than | (DC2) |
| | charity. | . , |

Diagraming the distinction this way reveals that each conjunct in 'supreme and supremely perfect charity' has one necessary condition. To be supreme, charity must be the most good love; to be supremely perfect, it must be the most perfect of all the kinds of love.¹² Stating these conditions in terms of maximality we have,

(Maximal Goodness) Charity is maximally good iff it is impossible for it be any more intense; supreme charity is other-love instantiated to the highest possible degree.¹³

(Maximal Perfection) Charity is maximally perfect iff it is impossible for it to be any more complete; supremely perfect charity has every attribute essential to other-love.

Reformulating MP-G1 in terms of maximality:

(MP-G1*) Supreme charity is the most intense other-love possible; supremely perfect charity is the most complete other-love possible.

With this premise Richard carefully explicates the conditions of supreme and supremely perfect charity. If any reader was unsure whether supreme charity is merely the best love, or is instead the best *possible* love, Richard has now made the matter as clear as he can: supreme and supremely perfect charity is the best possible love in both kind and degree.

4.1.2 Premise MP-G2: As long as someone loves no one else as much as himself, that private love, which he has toward himself, proves that he has not yet apprehended the highest degree of love

In MP-G2 Richard is not merely claiming that other-love is necessary for charity (which he argued previously in ASCC). Here he makes that bigger claim that self-love is a measure of other-love. Self-love helps the lover evaluate her *degree* of other-love; if she does not love someone with at least as much love as she has for herself, then she does not have supreme charity. This premise

¹² Guimet seems to posit the same distinction between degree and kind, as his gloss on the argument shows: "For charity to be supreme and supremely perfect, it must be, from the point of view of both intensity and quality, so great that no other can be better off, of such a nature that no other can be better." Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 374.

¹³ The claim that love has an intrinsic maximum is a strong one, and Richard may be in trouble if it turns out that charity has no upper limit.

depends heavily on CC1, where Richard claims that self-love alone is insufficient for charity; selflove and other-love are two necessary conditions for charity to be complete, that is, to have every proper perfection.¹⁴ 'True charity', to use Richard's language, has both reflexive and non-reflexive relations. Let us briefly look at the reflexive element so that we may better understand its application in 3.2.12.

4.1.2.1 Four sources on self-love

Traditionally, it is taken for granted that self-love is a natural, necessary aspect of personhood. That each person loves himself is the most natural and intractable datum of love.¹⁵ Early in the Western tradition Plato gives us a famous passage in his *Laws*,

The greatest evil to men, generally, is one which is innate in their souls, and which a man is always excusing in himself and never correcting; I mean, what is expressed in the saying, "that every man by nature is and ought to be his own friend." Whereas the excessive love of self is in reality the source to each man of all offenses; for the lover is blinded about the beloved, so that he judges wrongly of the just, the good, and the honourable, and thinks that he ought always to prefer his own interest to the truth.¹⁶

In this discussion of love, Plato assumes the presence of self-love. Aristotle follows suit,

For people say that we ought to love most the one who is most a friend, and the one who is most a friend to another is he who wishes goods on the other for the other's sake, even if no one is to know it. But these characteristics are found most of all in a person's relation to himself, and so are all the others by which a friend is defined; for, as we have said, all the features of friendship towards others extend from this relation...All these apply most of all to a person's relation to himself, because he is most of all a friend to himself and so ought also to love himself most of all.¹⁷

Both passages focus on vicious self-love, self-love gone wrong, and both are part of a wider explanation of and argument for virtuous self-love. *Not* at issue in either passage is that all people love themselves. It is simply assumed. The Hebrew and early Christian line of thought on the issue has some remarkable parallels to this Greek traditions. In his famous summary of the law, Jesus quotes the ancient command to "love your neighbour as yourself."¹⁸ Even St. Paul did not leave the subject untouched, at one point making a universal statement about the reflexive nature of love,

¹⁴ Cf. with CC2.

¹⁵ This is not to say the notion faces no difficulties. In Christian ethics, particularly, self-love has received some careful attention. For a treatment of the issue in Hugh of St. Victor and St. Bernard see Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages*, 134–51. In Augustine see O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine*. In post-Ricardine thought see Osborne, *Love of Self and Love of God in Thirteenth-Century Ethics*.

¹⁶ Plato, "Laws," in *Dialogues of Plato: Translated into English, with Analyses and Introduction*, ed. Benjamin Jowett, Reissue edition, vol. 4 (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 5.4 (251).

¹⁷ Aristotle, *Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Roger Crisp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1160b (172).

¹⁸ Mark 12:31; Matthew 22:39; cf. Leviticus 19:18 (NASB).

So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body.¹⁹

Thinkers no less than Plato, Aristotle, St. Paul, and Jesus of Nazareth himself had something to say about self-love. For this group of thinkers – and quite the group it is – self-love is an assumed starting point from which to make further reflection on other-love. I cite these thinkers not because Richard appeals to them in support of his claims. Such an appeal to the biblical data would go beyond the bounds he sets for himself. (However, he could in good conscience appeal to Plato and Aristotle, if he had access to the relevant works). I include these to show how philosophically and theologically respectable it is to assume the presence of self-love. The principle Richard employs in premise MP-G2 is eminently sound.

Self-love is not merely an epistemic starting point though. It is also an ontological point of departure for further reflection. That is, the self is the natural, unavoidable, and unchosen term of love. This idea is more direct in Plato and Aristotle, but I think it is implicit in Jesus and Paul's statements as well. As Christian thinkers reflected upon love for others, the recalcitrance of self-love would pose some serious issues – issues which we fortunately do not need to take up here. The important point is that self-love was accepted as a universal fact not only from Plato to Paul, but also from Origen to Aquinas, and beyond.²⁰

I want to highlight two themes that run through these passages which are relevant to MP-G. First, as I just mentioned, the universality of self-love is always assumed. Second, in none of these passages does self-love stand alone. Never is it given independent attention, but instead is tied closely to other-love. Plato and Aristotle emphasize that self-love is the starting place for other-love. The biblical authors emphasize that it is a measure, one that shows how much to love others. In all instances self-love is conceptually present as starting-place and measure. Richard employs both ideas in the next premise, MP-G2.

4.1.2.2 Self-love in premise MP-G2

In a previous argument we saw that self-love is a necessary condition for charity.²¹ We are now positioned to see why. In MP-G, self-love is the assumed starting-point from which the lover extends love to the beloved. Fernand Guimet comments,

It is extremely clear then that love of others does not exclude self-love, but on the contrary supposes it, since it is self-love which gives other-love its measure, and the supreme degree of charity is attained when it is the same quantity of love that is accorded to others as one

¹⁹ Ephesians 5:28-30 (NASB).

²⁰ Cf. Origen, who quotes Eph. 5:29, *The Song of Songs*, Homily 2.8. Also Aquinas: "by natural appetite or love every particular thing loves its own good for the sake of the common good of the entire universe, which is God." Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologiae Of St. Thomas Aquinas: Latin-English Edition* (Scotts Valley, CA: NovAntique, 2009), 1.2, q.109, a.3. This appears to be Aquinas' reformulation of Aristotle's statement, "The origin of relations of friendship towards our neighbours, and of the characteristics by which we distinguish the various kinds of friendship, seems to be in our relations to ourselves;" in short, the beginning of all friendship is self-love. Aristotle, *Aristotle*, 9.4, 1166a1-2 (168). For a detailed study see Osborne, *Love of Self and Love of God in Thirteenth-Century Ethics*, 6–9; Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages*, 82–93.

²¹ Premise CC1.

accords to oneself...[I]n Richard of St. Victor, even in God it is necessary to say that ordered charity begins with oneself.²²

As a universal phenomenon, self-love is an ontological given, and for this reason can serve as the conceptual or dialectical starting-place for deeper insight into divine other-love. In the present premise Richard only makes the general claim about self-love as starting-place and measure. In the remainder of MP-G he will apply these features to supreme charity.

Before moving on to the next premises, I want to address a misconception and anticipate an objection to MP-G. First the misunderstanding. Fernand Guimet, whom I quoted above, argues that MP-G is not a deductive argument for the necessity of multiple divine persons. Guimet contends that MP-G is a 'demonstration' which *begins* with multiple divine persons and extrapolates some entailments of their self-love and other-love. At this point in the argument, says Guimet, Richard puts aside philosophical argumentation and turns to divinely revealed data. In other words, Richard assumes the Trinity at this stage of the argument.²³ I disagree with Guimet's reading and will sketch one reason for taking Richard at his stated purpose, namely, to give a philosophical, deductive argument. Recall that he begins *De Trinitate* exhorting us to "always strive to comprehend with reason what we hold by faith,"²⁴ which for him involves "demonstrating the object of our faith with the testimony of reason"²⁵ through "necessary arguments."²⁶ In *DT* 3 he iterates this goal for his investigation of the three divine persons, declaring that he means to "prove these things from reason."²⁷ It would be odd indeed if Richard aborted the program at one of its critical junctures; particularly odd if MP-G is a 'theological demonstration' while its two supporting arguments (MP-H and MP-M) are philosophical proofs.²⁸

We must take Richard at his stated word and so reject Guimet's reading of MP-L. I have already investigated the philosophical underpinnings for Richard's claim that charity is multi-personal.²⁹ Of course Richard supposes multiple persons when discussing charity – this is the very nature of charity, as he argued in *The Conditions of Charity*. Guimet overplays his hand in claiming that MP-

²² Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 388.

²³ Guimet, 385–87.

²⁴ DT prologue (Evans, 210-49; Ribaillier, 81).

²⁵ DT prologue, (Evans, 211; Ribaillier, 84).

²⁶ DT 1.4 (Evans, 215; Ribaillier, 89).

²⁷ DT 3.1 (Evans, 247; Ribaillier, 135).

²⁸ Guimet's reading forces MP-G to undergo too many interpretive contortions, and I cannot commend it. My hunch is that Guimet elects for this interpretation because, to his mind, the only other option is to view MP-G as question-begging. Guimet rightly identifies a similarity between our premise and Jesus' command to 'love your neighbour as yourself'. To Guimet's mind however, MP-G, and premise MP-G2 specifically, do not merely allude to the biblical verse, but are a full-blown applications of Jesus' command. Guimet explains, "With a change of grammatical person, it does not seem that it is an excess of subtlety to see here a very clear allusion to the evangelical ideal of the love of the neighbour: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." At the decisive stage when we envisage it, Richard's trinitarian speculation appears as an attempt to transpose to God the evangelical ideal of love of neighbour..." Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 385. Though Guimet says that the biblical ideal is merely "in the background" of MP-G2, in actuality he believes Christ's command is MP-G's driving motivation. On Guimet's reading, Richard does not only assume the biblical principle, but also assumes multiple divine persons as part of the very notion of charity. For both of these reasons Guimets concludes that it is "neither necessary or possible" for MP-G to be a deductive proof. Guimet, 389. ²⁹ See *The Conditions of Charity* argument.

G2 is an "attempt to transpose the gospel ideal of the love of neighbour to God."³⁰ Above, we surveyed four thinkers on the universality of self-love; one point those passages make clear is that Richard is *not* dependent on biblical testimony for his view of self-love; in fact he is not dependent on any particular thinker or source. Those passages show that across cultural, philosophical, and theological traditions, self-love is accepted as a starting-place and measure of other-love.³¹ Richard could point to Aristotle or Plato on the issue, but he need not: more powerful than any philosopher's assertions of self-love is the universal, first-hand experience itself.

The principles about self-love Richard employs in MP-G2 are philosophically (i.e. evidentially) strong enough to stand on their own. For these reasons we do not need to view MP-G as question-begging. Further, we have good reasons to reject the claim that MP-G relies on biblical testimony or any other authority.

4.1.2.3 Self-love and the evaluation of supreme charity

We have seen that self-love acts as a measure of a person's other-love. Self-love is a gauge or standard by which one can determine the degree of her other-love: if she loves another less than herself, her charity is lacking.

In the next two premises, Richard will apply these findings about the nature of self-love to God's supreme charity.³² However, in MP-G2 Richard does not speak specifically about human or divine charity. Instead, self-love is employed as a measure in both cases. Once more, Richard observes a universal principle grounded in common human experience. We are intimately acquainted with our self-love; we feel its drive and see its effects throughout our conscious experience. When we consider our self-love and measure it against our love for others, we can determine quite readily if the former surpasses the latter. We have immediate knowledge of our self-love, and therefore we can judge the level of our other-love with surprising accuracy. If S1's love for S2 is less than S1's self-love, then it is obvious that her other-love is not supreme. We may restate MP-G2,

MP-G2 *) S1's love for S2 is the most intense other-love possible only if S1's self-love and other-love are of equal degree.

In MP-G1 we saw that supreme charity must be maximally intense. Richard now focuses on evaluating that intensity. For a person to love with her best charity, the degree she loves another must match the degree she loves herself. Thus, self-love reveals charity's limits: S1 may love S2, but if S1 does not love S2 as much as possible, then her charity is not supreme.

³⁰ Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 390.

³¹ In this way, Richard's case for premise MP-G2 can be construed as an inductive *consensus genitium* argument. The 'inductive' is important because this is one of the few commonly accepted instances in which the *consensus genitium* is not taken to be an example of the *ad populum* fallacy. Cf. Douglas Walton, *Appeal to Popular Opinion* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998).

³² I use the term 'maximal other-love' because *summum caritatis gradum* in MP-G2 is best translated with some recognition of the '*gradum*' (grade or level). 'Supreme level of charity' more obviously points to the dual elements of kind and degree within supreme charity. (Both Cousins and Angelici render *gradum* as 'level' in their translations of book three). Thus, maximal other-love is charity, the best possible type of love, and instantiated to the highest possible degree.

4.1.3 Premises MP-G3: But a divine person would surely not have someone whom he could love as worthily as himself, if he absolutely were not having a person of equal dignity

In *The Conditions of Charity* argument from the previous chapter, we saw a negative deployment of the notion of ordered charity, viz., that it excludes disorder, and therefore excludes supreme charity for a created person. In the present argument we see ordered charity deployed positively, as a requirement of ordered charity. Properly speaking, ordered charity only demands that the lover love according to the beloved's value. Richard now couples the idea of *caritas ordinata* with that of supreme charity. We may restate MP-G3: 'A divine person would have someone as worthy as himself (*seipsum digne*) to love only if he has a person of equal dignity (*condignam personam*).³³ Premise MP-G3 claims that only divine persons are maximally valuable, a point already made in ASCC4. The primary aim of this claim is to introduce the necessity for a person of equal dignity, or value. Secondarily, but still quite important for *De Trinitate* as a whole, Richard wants to introduce the idea of *condignus*.³⁴ Here the term expresses the notion of a person of equal value. But soon Richard will expand upon this notion in developing his *condilectus* as a co-beloved and co-lover of the *condignus*.

4.1.4 Premises MP-G4: However, a person who was not God would not be of equal dignity to a divine person

MP-G4 does not argue for the maximal value of God directly. Instead, it does so indirectly by appealing to the impossibility for any created person to ever match the value of a divine person. If the taxonomy of all possible existents is divided between created and uncreated, then there are only two logically possible options: (i) a created thing is of equal (or greater) value to an uncreated thing, or (ii) a created thing is not of equal (or greater value to an uncreated thing. MP-G4 denies (i), leaving (ii) as the only other option. Given the above taxonomy, one entailment of the proposition that a created thing is not of equal or greater value to God is that only a divine person is equal to the worth of a divine person.

³³ Digne is used adjectivally here, though Evans translates it adverbially to make for a smoother read.

³⁴ The term *condignus* is difficult to render concisely in English, particularly so given Richard's expansive use of the notion. In MP-G3 condignam personam can certainly be translated 'companion of dignity' as de Regnon does. Théodore de Régnon, Études de théologie positive sur la Sainte Trinité, vol. 2 (Columbia University: Retaux, 1898), 323. This anticipates the theological freight Richard will put on the related condilectus in DT 3.14, 15. Guimet argues against such a rendering: "A term in Richard's text accurately expresses this relationship of proportion. It is that of *condignus* which, in the rest of the treaty, takes a technical value to designate the second person of the Holy Trinity. It may be feared that the elegant translation by Fr. De Regnon, by ingeniously splitting the prefix from the root, follows a procedure otherwise quite Richardine: 'companion of dignity', does not weaken the value: by prematurely giving the prefix a social meaning, he does not let appear enough of what is prolonged here, these are, first of all, the rational requirements of ordered charity. Perhaps Father de Regnon has yielded to the temptation to establish a perfect symmetry between the two terms used to describe the speculations of Richard and the second and the third person of the Holy Trinity 'condignus' and 'condilectus', 'companion of dignity', and 'companion of dilection'? It remains that before becoming a technical term of Richard's vocabulary, condignus, the usual meaning in Latin is well attested, and that this meaning is 'proportionate', or better, using a compound expression with the merits of both introducing us to a value of order and standing closer to the root, 'of proportionate dignity"." Guimet, "Notes En Marge d'un Texte de Richard de Saint-Victor," 384. To avoid overor under-translating, I will typically use the untranslated *condignus* in this part of my study.

4.1.5 Conclusion MP-G5: Therefore, so that the fullness of charity can occur in true divinity, it is necessary for a divine person not to lack fellowship with a person of equal dignity and, for that reason, a divine person

The conclusion is complex and draws together several claims so far established. Indeed, read carefully, we find that MP-G5 is not strictly a conclusion, but rather a final premise stating that if there is a divine person who loves with supreme love, then there must be a second divine person. Richard has of course already argued for the necessary existence of at least one divine person ('God') in *DT* 1, and argued for supreme love in *The Argument for Divine Charity*. For this reason Richard leaves it to the reader to fill-in the final steps of the proof.

4.1.6 Full expression of the argument and conclusion

Completing the MP-G argument, we have the following argument:

The Argument For Multiple Divine Persons from Goodness* – MP-G*

- P1) Necessarily, if X has supreme charity, then X's supreme charity is supremely good. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if X loves X more than some other Y, then it is not the case that X's supreme charity is supremely good. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, if X loves X more than some other Y, then it is not the case that X has supreme charity. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Modus Tollens]
 - C2) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and X loves X more than some other Y, then it is not the case that X has supreme charity. [C1: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Weakening]
- P3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X has supreme charity. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then it is not the case that X loves X more than some other Y. [C2, P3: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Modus Tollens, Disjunctive Syllogism]
- P4) Necessarily, if it is not the case that X loves X more than some other Y, then X loves some other Y as much as X loves X. [Premise]
 - C4) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X loves some other Y as much as X loves X. [C3, P4: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Transitivity of Implication.]
- P5) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X loves X with supreme love. [Premise]
- P6) Necessarily, if X loves some other Y as much as X love X and X loves X with supreme love, then X loves some other Y with supreme love. [Premise]
 - C5) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X loves some other Y with supreme love. [C4, P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Conjunction I, Conditional E & I]
- P7) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and X loves Y with supreme love, then Y is equally valuable as X is. [Premise]
- P8) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is equally valuable as X is, then Y is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C6) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and X loves Y with supreme love, then Y is a divine person. [P7, P8: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Conjunction I, Conditional E & I]

- C7) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X loves some other Y with supreme love and Y is a divine person. [C5, C6: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Conjunction I, Conditional E & I]
- P9) Necessarily, if there is some X such that X is a divine person and X loves some other Y with supreme love and Y is a divine person, then there are at least two divine persons. [Premise]
- P10) Necessarily, there is some X such that X is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C8) Necessarily, there are at least two divine persons. [C7, P9, P10: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Existential E & I, Conjunction I, Conditional E & I]

This formulation of the argument articulates a number of assumptions from Richard's prose. P1 expresses the same proposition as MP-G1³⁵ and P2 corresponds to MP-G2.³⁶ P3 restates a supposition argued in *The Argument for Divine Charity*, namely, that divine persons must have supreme charity.³⁷ P4 draws out the idea that a person either loves himself more than another, or loves another more than (or as much) as himself.³⁸ P5 claims that a divine person must love himself supremely, a claim Richard believes given a divine person's perfect love of his own maximal worth. This sets P6 up to argue that, when a divine person loves some other person with as much love as himself, he loves that other with supreme love. This idea is grounded in the evaluation of supreme love by comparing one's self-love with her other-love.³⁹ P7 and P8 tease apart the ideas in MP-G3 and MP-G4, which state that since only a divine person is worthy of supreme love, only a divine person can be loved with supreme love. P9 corresponds to the complex hypothetical conditional in MP-5.⁴⁰ P10 completes the proof by stating explicitly the supposition, from *DT* 1, that there necessarily exists at least one divine person.⁴¹

The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Goodness is the centrepiece of DT 3. In the book's closing lines, Richard summarizes the argument,

See therefore how easily reason proves that a plurality of persons cannot be lacking in true divinity. Surely, only God is supremely good. Only God therefore ought to be supremely loved. And a divine person could not show supreme love to a person who lacked divinity. But the fullness of divinity cannot be without the fullness of goodness; the fullness of goodness cannot be without the fullness of charity; and the fullness of charity cannot be without the plurality of divine persons.⁴²

This summary statement hides a tremendously subtle line of reasoning which the above extended outline seeks to unveil. There exists a complexity to MP-G that a superficial reading of Richard's terse prose may easily miss. Richard presents equally complex reasoning in the next argument from happiness.

³⁸ See section 4.1.4.

³⁵ See section 4.1.1

³⁶ See section 4.1.2.

 $^{^{37}}$ See section 4.1.3.

³⁹ See section 4.1.2.3.

 $^{^{40}}$ See section 4.1.5.

⁴¹ See section 2.1.

⁴² DT 3.2 (Evans, 249; Ribaillier, 137).

4.2 The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Happiness

4.2.0 Overview

The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Happiness (MP-H) is one of the more intriguing lines of thought in De Trinitate. Where the argument from goodness is original, many of its pieces had already been developed in the history of thought, waiting for a keen mind to put them together. The argument from happiness, on the other hand, is truly novel. Few of its pieces are found in Richard's predecessors. Instead, Richard appears to have developed the argument from penetrating insight into the human psyche and the nature of love. In previous generations Richard scholars liked to describe Richard as psychologist or phenomenologist.⁴³ To non-specialists, this sort of talk can appear vapid. But I do not think it goes too far to declare that here, in the argument from happiness, Richard touches upon the beating heart of human affect and will. Richard introduces the argument,

The fullness of happiness confirms with a similar reason what the fullness of goodness demonstrates and proves about the plurality of persons. One property confirms what another property says, and, in one and the same confirmation of truth, one property acclaims what another property proclaims.⁴⁴

Here Richard introduces the project he will undertake with MP-H and bridges that project with the arguments from goodness and glory. MP-G concluded that there must be at least two divine persons related by charity. MP-H confirms (*approbat*) and attests (*attestur*) to that truth by arguing for a nearly identical conclusion. The "similar reason" (*ratione*) shared among the two arguments is the notion of love. The two differ in that MP-G investigates the entailments of love in regards to supreme goodness, whereas MP-H investigates love as a cause of supreme happiness. A careful reading of Richard's statement reveals that he gives two arguments in quick succession, the first in MP-H1 through MP-H3, and the second in MP-H4 through MP-G12, with both sharing the main conclusion in MP-H13.

The First Argument for the Necessity of Multiple Divine Persons from Happiness – MP-H

Let each person examine his own conscience, and without a doubt or without contradiction he will discover that just as nothing is better than charity, so [1] nothing is more pleasant than charity. Nature herself teaches us this, and so do many experiences. And so, just as that-than-which-nothing-is-better cannot be lacking in the fullness of true goodness, so [2] that-than-which-nothing-is-more-pleasant cannot be lacking in the fullness of supreme happiness. [3] Moreover, in order for charity to be in the supreme good, it is impossible that there can be lacking either someone who communicates charity or someone to whom charity is communicated.⁴⁵

⁴³ E.g., Barbara Nolan, "The 'Vita Nuova' and Richard of St. Victor's Phenomenology of Vision," *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, no. 92 (1974): 35–52.

⁴⁴ DT 3.3 (Evans, 249-250; Ribaillier, 137-38).

 $^{^{45}}$ DT 3.3 (Evans, 249-250; Ribaillier, 137-38). The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 95.

The First Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Happiness* – MP-H*

P1) Necessarily, if X has charity, then X's charity is supremely pleasant. [Premise]

Immediately after this argument, Richard continues with another:

The Second Argument for the Necessity of Multiple Divine Persons from Happiness – MP-H [4] Moreover, your longing to be loved greatly by one whom you love greatly is a property of love, without which it absolutely cannot be love. [5] Therefore, love cannot be pleasant if it is not also mutual. [6] And so, just as pleasant love cannot be lacking in that true and supreme happiness, [7] so a mutual love also cannot be lacking. [8] Moreover, it is absolutely necessary that in mutual love there be one who bestows love and one who requites love. [9] And so, one will be the bestower of love and the other will be the requiter of love. [10] Moreover, a true plurality is discovered where two persons are demonstrated to exist. [11] And so, a plurality of persons cannot be lacking in the fullness of true happiness. [12] It is certain, moreover, that the supreme happiness is identical to divinity. [13] Therefore, the communication of a gratuitous love and the return of an owed love demonstrate without a doubt that a plurality of persons cannot be lacking in true divinity.⁴⁶

P3) Necessarily, God has supreme happiness. [Premise]

C2) Necessarily, God has charity. [C1, P3: Necessity E & I, Universal Instantiation, Modus Ponens]⁴⁵

P4) Necessarily, if God has charity, then God has supreme charity. [Premise]

C3) Necessarily, God has supreme charity. [C2, P4: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

P5) Necessarily, if God has supreme charity, then there are at least two divine persons. [Premise]C4) Necessarily, there are at least two divine persons. [C3, P5: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

⁴⁶ DT 3.3 (Evans, 249-250; Ribaillier, 137-38). The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 96.

The Second Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Happiness* - MP-H*

- P1) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then X desires that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if X desires that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited and it is not the case that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited, then X's supreme other-love is not supremely pleasant. [Premise]
- P3) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then X's supreme other-love is supremely pleasant. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then X desires that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited, and X's supreme other-love is supremely requited. [P1, P2, P3: Necessity E & I, Modus Tollens, Disjunctive Syllogism, Conditional E & I]
- P4) Necessarily, if X's supreme other-love is supremely requited, then there is a person Y who supremely loves, and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love. [Premise].
 - C2) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then there is a person Y who supremely loves, and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love. [C1, P4: Necessity E & I, Transitivity of Implication]
- P5) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X has supreme other-love. [Premise]
- P6) Necessarily, there is at least some Y such that Y is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily, there is a person Y who supremely loves, and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love. [C2, P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Universal Elimination, Existential Elimination, Modus Ponens]

P2) Necessarily, if X has supreme happiness, then X has all the Ys such that if X has Y, then X's Y is supremely pleasant.⁴⁵ [Premise]

C1) Necessarily, if X has supreme happiness, then X has charity. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal Instantiation]

The arguments from happiness and glory have both been largely ignored, with attention given almost exclusively to the argument from goodness. This may explain in part why no scholars have yet recognized the presence of two MP-H arguments.⁴⁷ The two are evidenced in the following ways. First, MP-H1 – MP-H3 do not depend on any other claims to reach their conclusion in MP-H13. Nor does the second MP-H depend on the first. Since the premises from the two arguments do not support or otherwise depend on one another, attempting to understand the argument as a single entity only confuses matters. Once we correctly discern two distinct arguments, Richard's clarity shines through.

That each is a stand-alone argument is further demonstrated by internal terminological differences. Charity is the subject of the first MP-H while the more general love (*amor*) is the subject of the second MP-H. The clear and dramatic change in language signifies the distinction between proofs. Further, a spiritually formative reading of *De Trinitate* shows that Richard is highly intentional in the aesthetic aspects of the work. Following the medieval sensibility to fittingness, Richard carefully crafts three arguments for three persons. It should come as no surprise that, when possible, he gives two arguments for at least two divine persons.⁴⁸

4.2.1 MP-H1: Nothing is more pleasant than charity

In the opening lines of MP-H Richard calls the reader to "examine his own conscience," where he will find the deep-seated belief that "nothing is more pleasant than charity."⁴⁹ That charity is most pleasant is evidenced in two places, namely nature and experience. Richard does not take this belief to be an innate moral fixture, but rather a result of living life as a human. That is, we believe other-love is so enjoyable because we naturally desire it, and we feel its undeniable effects once it is obtained. We begin our examination of MP-H1 by briefly investigating its historical framework.

4.2.2.1 Sources and background

An early statement of the pleasantness of other-love is made by Seneca in a letter to his friend Lucilius,

And when you say, "give me also a share in these gifts which you have found so helpful," I reply that I am anxious to heap all these privileges upon you, and that I am glad to learn

P7) Necessarily, if there is a person Y who supremely loves and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love, then there is a divine person W who supremely loves and there is a different divine person V who supremely requites W's love. [Premise]

C4) Necessarily, there is a divine person W who supremely loves and there is a different divine person V who supremely requites W's love. [C3, P7: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

C5) Necessarily, there are at least two divine persons. [C4: Conjunction Elimination, Conjunction Introduction]

⁴⁷ In most analyses, MP-H2 is the only claim from the first happiness argument treated, with all other attention devoted to the second happiness argument. If *DT* 3.3 contains only one argument, then the first third of that argument appears superfluous given the weight of attention from most Richard scholars. For two examples, see Ottaviano, *Riccardo di S. Vittore*, 514; Purwatma, "The Explanation of the Mystery of the Trinity Based on the Attribute of God as Supreme Love," 66–68. Both Ottaviano and Purwatma indicate that *DT* 3.3 offers only one argument.

⁴⁸ The rhetorical-aesthetic moves Richard makes in support of his logical program are detailed in Vasquez, "The Art of Trinitarian Articulation."

⁴⁹ DT 3.3 (Evans, 249; Ribaillier, 138).

in order that I may teach. Nothing will ever please me, no matter how excellent or beneficial, if I must retain the knowledge of it to myself. And if wisdom were given me under the express condition that it must be kept hidden and not uttered, I should refuse it. No good thing is pleasant to possess, without friends (*sine socio*) to share it.⁵⁰

The last line is an unambiguous, universal assertion on the tie between pleasure and friendship. The statement virtually begs to be plucked by later thinkers and applied as an independent philosophical principle. Bonaventure did just this, quoting the line verbatim as philosophical support for his own Trinitarian arguments.⁵¹

Jean Ribaillier glosses the idea in MP-H1 as "charity is that than which nothing is sweeter" (*nihil est caritate dulcius*) and cites chapter fourty-nine from Anselm's *Monologion* as a possible source for this idea.⁵² It reads,

But look, as I enjoyably consider (*delectabiliter intueor*) the common properties of the Father and the Son, I find nothing in them more enjoyable (*nibil delectabilius*) to contemplate than the feeling of mutual love.⁵³

If these sentiments influenced Richard in the happiness arguments, then the relationship is not direct adoption, but one of a foil or counterpoint. Anselm's self-report in this passage gives us no insight into the affective state of God, or the profound effects of intra-Trinitarian love. If anything, Anselm stopped too soon, at the intellectual effects of divine love upon *him*, the outside observer. Richard peers into the flames of love and discovers that the joys of contemplating charity pale in comparison to the joys of charity itself. If *Monologion* 49 is connected to *De Trinitate* 3.3, its distance is further evidenced by the difference of language. Though both consider mutual love (*mutui amor*), Anselm speaks of the delectability (*delectabile*) of contemplation, while Richard speaks of its great goodness and joys (*bonus* and *jocundus*).

Achard of St. Victor provides a more direct link than Anselm. In *De Unitate* Achard develops a robust trinitarian argument grounded in the concept of beauty. At one point in the argument he mentions,

The same reasoning [about God's supreme beauty] applies to mutual love. Love, like the unity just discussed, cannot exist except in several, nor can one conceive with the mind anything better or more pleasing.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Seneca, *Seneca Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales: With an English Translation*, trans. Richard M Gummere, vol. 1 (London: William Heinemann, 1925), Letter 6.4 (27). This and several of the following sources come from Ribaillier's critical apparatus. Richard de St Victor, *De Trinitate: Texte Critique Avec Introduction*, *Notes et Tables*, 138. ⁵¹ Bonaventure, *Commentary on the First Book of Sentences*, dist. 2, art. sole, quest. 2.1. Whether or not Richard had access to Seneca's *Moral Letters to Lucilius* is not clear. Until further historical work is done, hypotheses on putative ties must remain tentative.

⁵² Richard de St Victor, De Trinitate: Texte Critique Avec Introduction, Notes et Tables, 138.

⁵³ Anselm, "Monologion," in Patrologia Latina, ed. Jacques Paul Migne, vol. 158, col 1r–18r (Paris, n.d.), 200.

⁵⁴ Achard of St. Victor, *De Unitate*, 1.5. Hugh Feiss, OSB, ed., *Achard of St Victor: Works* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications Inc, 1989), 382.

Like Seneca, Achard makes a strong, absolute claim, this time about the maximal delights of love. But where Achard states the insight almost in passing, Richard cultivates it into the centrepiece of *De Trinitate*. The whole of *DT* 3 is the outworking of this one sentence in Achard.⁵⁵

4.2.2.2 Explication

In MP-H1 Richard claims nothing gives, or possibly could give, more pleasure than charity. What support does Richard provide for this claim? He refers to three: conscience, nature, and experience. The first, conscience, is most developed. "Let each person examine his own conscience," Richard tells us, "and without a doubt or without contradiction he will discover that just as nothing is better than charity, so nothing is more pleasing."⁵⁶ Up to this point in *De Trinitate* Richard has appealed only to experience for support of his major claims. Here, though, Richard turns inward. Of all the faculties to which he may look for support, he picks out the moral one. Why?

The ethical sensibilities of thinkers in twelfth century France, and of the Victorines in particular, were acutely aware of the demands and effects of love. This is true of France because it was the site of *the* tectonic shift in thinking about love in Western history. The abbey of St. Victor specifically was an epicentre of that shift; a community devoted to thinking about, and living out, the primacy of charity love.⁵⁷ For Victorines, the righteous life was one devoted to charity. They took this as the central aspect of the Christian ethic. The good life was the enjoyment of the fruits of charity. Richard's conscience, then, and those of his readers, were highly sensitive to the goodness and pleasure of love. The moral sense clearly detected and reported on the truth of MP-H1, and the other senses confirmed that truth in the world and other experiences.

Looking to the triad of conscience, nature, and experience is essentially an appeal to psychology and society. Thus, a full analysis of MP-H1 would need to involve the psychological and social sciences to test the soundness of this claim. For the purposes of explication, it is sufficient to account for Richard's understanding of the claim. For him, MP-H1 is indubitable. Richard invites "each person" to "examine his own conscience." There the examiner will find that MP-H1 is unassailable, being left "without a doubt" that charity is most pleasing. Further, to Richard's mind this testimony is universal, *every* person can discover that truth. That truth is only further supported by observing relationships in the world (i.e. nature) and participating in charity relationships (i.e. experience).

The idea that nothing is more pleasant than charity is nearly identical to the move in DC2 and MP-G1, where charity's goodness is in focus. In fact, Richard here restates that idea along with the new one, "just as nothing is better than charity, so nothing is more pleasant."⁵⁸ Once again, Richard gives a maximality thesis. MP-H1 can be restated: charity is maximally pleasant.

⁵⁵ The order of publication of *De Unitate* and *De Trinitate* is difficult to discern, making it hard to state with any certainty which influenced the other. Most scholars believe that Achard's treatise predates Richard's. I agree. Though modest, Achard's passage from *DT* 1.5 is another piece of evidence pointing to his predating Richard. Achard's focus is almost completely on beauty. Achard's aside about love is pursued no further. If Achard drew from Richard's third book, then we could expect him to cite all three sources of confirmation, viz., goodness, happiness, *and* glory. However, he only mentions the first two. Richard likely discovered the argument from glory as he brought the other two incipient ideas into maturity.

⁵⁶ DT 3.3 (Evans, 249; Ribaillier, 138).

⁵⁷ See Chapter One.

⁵⁸ DT 3.3 (Evans, 249; Ribaillier, 138).

We have already examined charity's maximal goodness. What about its maximal enjoyability? Given this idea, humans pursue other-love not only because it is the greatest good (and so, considered ethically, they should pursue it), but also because it is the most pleasing (and so, considered experientially, they *desire* to). Stated another way, humans pursue charity because they ought to, but also because they naturally *want* to. Between MP-G and MP-H Richard brings together ontology, ethics, and value.

4.2.2 Premises MP-H2: That-than-which-nothing-is-more-pleasant cannot be lacking in the fullness of supreme happiness

Here Richard connects the maximality of pleasure with a participation metaphysics. Supreme happiness, as Happiness Itself, has all that is pleasing. Since charity is maximally pleasing, supreme happiness necessarily has charity. Richard developed a similar thought regarding supreme goodness in the *Argument for Charity*. There he argued that the divine substance has, or is, supreme goodness; therefore divinity has what is maximally good, which is charity. In the final step of the current argument, Richard will connect supreme happiness to divinity.

The concept of pleasure in MP-H2 is wider than the one moderns typically have in mind when using the term. On the classical conception of pleasure, a tree can be said to enjoy sunlight. But the tree's enjoyment is not psychological; it includes no rational or affective elements. The tree, then, has pleasure in an extended sense. What is that sense? For MP-H, Richard uses a metaphysical notion, where pleasure is the rest or cessation of activity which results when a subject has obtained some good.⁵⁹ This notion of pleasure in the supreme happiness raises two questions.

First, is metaphysical pleasure sufficient to account for the claims made in the arguments from happiness? Both MP-H1 and MP-H2 explicitly discuss the rich psychological components of love. But metaphysical love seems quite stripped of these affective and volitional features. Richard needs the metaphysical notion of pleasure for the arguments to work, but the arguments themselves are deeply personal. How, in other words, can the two be reconciled? The answer is simply that metaphysical pleasure is not exclusive to the personal features. If supreme happiness necessarily has charity, which is a form of personal love, then supreme happiness will include the personal, or psychological, features of pleasure.

The second question concerns the idea that supreme happiness must include, in some way, all that is pleasing. If sunlight gives a tree pleasure, sunlight is pleasing and participates in Pleasure Itself. If supreme happiness must have charity, must it also have sunlight? 'Sunlight' here is not used metaphorically, but refers to the sun's literal rays or photons; the proposition that God is substantially sunlight is obviously false, so something seems amiss with the principle Richard uses to argue that God has supreme happiness.

The idea that God necessarily has other-love but does not necessarily have all other goods is a point where some have attacked trinitarian arguments.⁶⁰ I cannot give a full defence of this critique here, though we can briefly anticipate a response. Richard would deny that supreme happiness, i.e. divinity, actually has sunlight substantially. God is Happiness Itself, but not Sunlight Itself.

⁵⁹ See Hugh of St Victor, "De Sacramentis Christianae Fidei," 10.6.6.

⁶⁰ Dale Tuggy, "On the Possibility of a Single Perfect Person," in *Christian Philosophy of Religion: Essays in Honor of Stephen T. Davis,* ed. C.P. Ruloff (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015), 128–48.

Richard's claim in the MP arguments is not that God must substantially have (and therefore be) *all* that is good, pleasant, and glorious.⁶¹ His claim is only that God must substantially have what is *maximally* good, pleasant, and glorious. This more modest claim gives the arguments for multiple divine persons room to explain the different ways in which God has various goods: sunlight may be had in God's mind; we know God does not have sunlight substantially because it is created and contingent. Charity on the other-hand, is maximally good (pleasant, and glorious), and so God has it necessarily and substantially.

The claim that supreme happiness must have what is maximally pleasant can be stated more tersely: Necessarily, supreme happiness includes whatever is maximally pleasant. The set of maximally pleasant things can be referred to as 'the maximally pleasant', or 'maximal pleasantness'. This allows for a more concise statement of MP-H2: Maximal pleasantness is necessary for supreme happiness. Stated as such, MP-H2 highlights maximal pleasantness as a necessary feature of supreme happiness.

4.2.3 Premises MP-H3: For charity to be in the supreme good, it is impossible that there can be lacking either someone who communicates charity or someone to whom charity is communicated

So far Richard has argued that a necessary condition for supreme happiness is whatever is most pleasing, and that charity is necessary for whatever is most pleasing must have charity. Now Richard argues that multiple persons are necessary for charity. Once again Richard uses a negative mode of expression: the supreme good may 'not lack' a lover or a beloved. There are different ways a being may 'not lack' a quality, such as exemplification or participation. Elsewhere Richard uses the verb 'to have' (*habere*), and explains that for the supreme substance, the 'having' relation is in fact the identity relation.⁶² Thus, for supreme happiness to not lack charity is for supreme charity to be Charity Itself. We may restate MP-H3 as: Therefore, charity is necessary for supreme happiness. This formulation of MP-H3 is much more straightforward. Why doesn't Richard just say this?

In the current premise Richard does not make the positive metaphysical statement because this would obscure his main point. It follows from the argument so far that God is charity, but Richard is not interested in developing that idea. (Richard is noticeably reticent to ever outright state that 'God is love'). Instead, he wants to explore the multi-personal aspect of divinity. By focusing on charity as a substantial attribute, Richard would only obscure the personal entailments of charity. Richard wants to highlight the property of charity as a real, dynamic relation between living persons. If Richard focuses on the fact that God is charity, then it is not immediately clear that God is multi-personal. If, however, Richard limits his attention to the claim that God *has* charity, then the conclusion to multiple divine persons is close to hand.

In the final premise of MP-H¹ Richard explicates the requirements of divine charity. A fundamental aspect of charity is that it is love for another. By definition, charity includes a personal lover, and a personal beloved. Therefore, if the supreme happiness has charity, then the supreme happiness has at least two persons. However, Richard does not state the conclusion explicitly until the end of the second argument, to which we now turn.

⁶¹ Though this is a claim in the Argument for Charity.

⁶² E.g. DT 1.12 (Evans, 220-21; Ribaillier, 96-7); DT 1.13 (Evans, 221; Ribaillier, 98).

4.2.4 Premise MP-H4⁶³ – **Premise 3.3.5**: Longing to be loved by someone who is loved greatly is a property of love, without which it cannot absolutely be love

Where MP-H¹ is concerned with *caritas* specifically, the subject of MP-H² is the more general notion *amor*. On some readings, the first premise of MP-H² appears to make the universal claim that *all* instances of love include the desire for requital.⁶⁴ In the next premise Richard will refer to requited love as 'mutual love'; using that terminology here, MP-H4 may apparently be restated:

MP-H4*) Mutuality is a necessary condition of love.

However, a close reading of MP-H4 reveals several problems with this formulation. First, MP-H4 is not a claim about love simpliciter, and therefore is not true of all expressions of love. Premise MP-H4 stipulates a psychological phenomenon, viz., wishing or desiring (*velle*).⁶⁵ But not all forms or expressions of love can meet this stipulation because not all subjects of love have a psychology. We have seen that metaphysical love⁶⁶ is a transcendental, a universal relation had by all existing things. The tree is said to 'want' or 'desire' sunlight only loosely, in an analogical sense. The rock's longing to fall back down to the earth after being thrown into the air is an even looser extension

- P3) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then X's supreme other-love is supremely pleasant. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then X desires that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited, and X's supreme other-love is supremely requited. [P1, P2, P3: Necessity E & I, Modus Tollens, Disjunctive Syllogism, Conditional E & I]
- P4) Necessarily, if X's supreme other-love is supremely requited, then there is a person Y who supremely loves, and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love. [Premise].
 - C2) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then there is a person Y who supremely loves, and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love. [C1, P4: Necessity E & I, Transitivity of Implication]

- P6) Necessarily, there is at least some Y such that Y is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily, there is a person Y who supremely loves, and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love. [C2, P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Universal Elimination, Existential Elimination, Modus Ponens]
- P7) Necessarily, if there is a person Y who supremely loves and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love, then there is a divine person W who supremely loves and there is a different divine person V who supremely requites W's love. [Premise]
 - C4) Necessarily, there is a divine person W who supremely loves and there is a different divine person V who supremely requites W's love. [C3, P7: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]
 - C5) Necessarily, there are at least two divine persons. [C4: Conjunction Elimination, Conjunction Introduction]

⁶⁴ Purwatma glosses this part of the argument saying, "indeed love is reciprocal." Purwatma, "The Explanation of the Mystery of the Trinity Based on the Attribute of God as Supreme Love," 68.

⁶⁵ Richard uses the present infinitive form of *volo*: "...*ab eo quem multum diligis multum diligi velle*." Literally, "desiring to be much loved by him who is much loved."

⁶⁶ Also referred to as 'cosmic' or 'universal' love because all actual objects are attracted to other objects in some way.

⁶³ The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 97. The Second Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Happiness* – MP-H2*

P1) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then X desires that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited. [Premise]

P2) Necessarily, if X desires that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited and it is not the case that X's

supreme other-love is supremely requited, then X's supreme other-love is not supremely pleasant. [Premise]

P5) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X has supreme other-love. [Premise]

of 'longing'. Examples like these show that, though loosely, we can speak about non-personal subjects of love – items that 'desire' the object of their love in some ways comparable to the desire which persons experience. The longing discussed in MP-H4, however, cannot be attributed to non-personal items. We cannot say that the tree longs for the sun to requite her love, or that the rock pines for mutuality. This further step is too uniquely personal; there simply is not a close enough analogue outside of personal experience to warrant this sort of talk. For this reason MP-H4* is false. The desire for requital is not a condition of all love, but only of personal love.

Second, MP-H4* fails in stipulating mutuality as a necessary condition of love. Richard does not state that love must be returned, only that the (personal) lover *desires* that his love be returned. This is important because Richard's claim resists obvious counterexamples, situations in which the lover does not wish for or expect her beloved to return her love. Such situations are possible, and they are the exception that reveal a key rule. The desire for requital is a condition of absolute personal love because, ultimately, it is a desire for happiness. Simply put, requited love is more satisfying than un-requited love. The greater the lover's love, the greater her desire for requital, and the greater her joy when that love is returned.⁶⁷ Richard finds MP-H² amply supported via immediate human experience.

Finally, MP-H4* is weak because it does not recognize the fullness of love. The second half of MP-H4 reveals that the desire condition does not apply to every instance of personal love. As we just saw, it is possible for some persons to lack this condition. Instead, Richard specifies that without the desire for requital, love " absolutely cannot be love" (*omnino non possit esse*). The 'absolutely' here is important. This adverb modifies verbs for wholeness or entirety. MP-H4* may be improved to:

MP-H4**) The desire for mutuality is necessary for perfect personal love.

This restatement better expresses MP-H4's target, namely, those instances of personal love which are complete instances of their kind, not lacking anything proper to personal love. In sum, the desire condition is essential to perfect personal love.

4.2.5 Premise MP-H5: Love cannot be pleasing if it is not mutual

From MP-H4 we know that a robust expression of personal love includes the lover's desire for requital. When fulfilled, the result is pleasure or joy (*jocund* and its forms). Premise MP-H5 does not merely point out these effects, but makes the stronger claim that requited love alone is pleasant. Stated another way:

MP-H5*) Mutuality is necessary for perfect, pleasant personal love.

Mutuality is a symmetric exemplification of the love relation. According to MP-H5* symmetric, or requited, love is required for love to result in joy. Is this correct though? Does asymmetric love ever result in joy? Can a lover ever take pleasure in her unrequited love? Once again, we near a field ripe for psychological harvest. From a historical viewpoint, there are examples of pleasurable, unrequited love. For instance, the troubadours sang high praise for courtly love, which is essentially

⁶⁷ As with MP-H¹, this claim looks to be a rich field for subject for empirical investigation.

unrequited.⁶⁸ As another putative counter-example, it seems plausible that the pleasure a subject enjoys from loving her beloved – say her infant – may accompany, even surpass, the lack of mutuality. As a universal statement about personal love, MP-H5* is false. However, MP-H5* is not a universal statement about love, but rather a statement about *perfect* love – instances which are complete examples of the kind 'personal love'. With this in view, MP-H5* fails only if courtly love, or any types of unrequited love, turn out to be perfect species of personal love.

Once again Richard is in the thick of perfect attribute speculation. Mutuality is certainly a good quality, and one which improves love. But is it in fact a necessary condition of perfect love? There are plenty of good qualities love *can* have, but which are not necessary. In other words, perfect love lacks many good qualities, so why must it include mutuality? For Richard, the answer must be primarily located in the experience of joy. While unrequited love *may* yield some pleasure, mutual love is the limit. Mutuality holds the greatest promise for pleasant love. Mutuality, then, is the greatest possible quality of personal love.⁶⁹ Once again Richard's claim is not that personal love must have *all* goods, but the more modest claim that it must have the greatest good.

4.2.6 Premise MP-H6 and sub-conclusion MP-H7: Pleasant love cannot be lacking in [the] true and supreme happiness. [Therefore,] mutual love cannot be lacking in the true and supreme happiness

Typically Richard uses only 'supreme' when speaking about the divine substance. It is notable that here he specifies the supreme *and* 'true' substance. As discussed in previous chapters, 'true' picks out completeness: the supreme happiness lacks no quality proper or necessary to happiness. With the force of metaphysical necessity, supreme happiness, or Happiness Itself, has what is most pleasing. From MP-H5, it follows that supreme happiness has perfect, personal, pleasant love. MP-H6 points out that mutual love, as necessary condition of perfect personal love, is also a necessary condition of supreme happiness. Restated and including the previous premise:

| MP-H5*) | Mutuality is necessary for perfect, pleasant personal love. |
|---------|--|
| MP-H6*) | Perfect, pleasant personal love is necessary for supreme happiness |
| MP-H7*) | Therefore, mutuality is necessary for supreme happiness. |

Here the sub-conclusion in MP-H6* follows by the transitivity of the material conditional (or chain-argument) from the previous two premises. From this base Richard will complete his proof in several quick moves.

4.2.7 Propositions MP-H8 through MP-H12

4.2.7.1 Premises MP-H8 and sub-conclusion MP-H9: It is necessary that mutual love have one who bestows love and one who requites love. And so one will be the bestower of love and the other will be the requiter of love

Mutuality entails a bestower and a requiter of love. To bestow (*impendo*) is to devote some good, or to expend some resource on another's behalf. In classical Latin, the term even bore some sense

⁶⁸ Francis Newman says of courtly love that it is "a doctrine of paradoxes, a love at once illicit and morally elevating, passionate and disciplined, humiliating and exalting, human and transcendent." Assumedly, this type of love cannot be edifying or transcendent, without also being somewhat pleasurable. Francis Newman, *The Meaning of Courtly Love* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1969), vii.

⁶⁹ Or perhaps one of the maximal qualities of other-love: in *DT* 3.11 Richard states that nothing is more good than the desire for a co-beloved. We will look at this claim in greater detail in the next chapter.

of lavishness and eagerness, which carried over into ecclesiastical use. Its corollary, *rependo*, continues the almost transactional nature of mutuality as it denotes compensation, returning, and (re)establishing equilibrium. These two verbs characterize mutuality as somewhat transactional, even commercial. This transactional significance might give the reader pause if it was not for the rich context in which Richard employs the terms. That is, in supreme love the bestower spends all he has on his beloved; holding nothing back, the only compensation he desires is equally ardent love from his beloved. Looking to human experience, Richard observes that when a person is much loved, she naturally begins to desire her lover. Heading off any easy counterexamples, we must bear in mind that Richard does not have in mind only romantic love, but love from the broad range of human relations.

He applies this observation to perfect, or supreme, love. In it the beloved returns the gift in full. Since divine persons have no limits on the resources they can expend in loving, there is no loss whatsoever in the exchange, only a net positive. For this reason, divine persons cannot be accused of manipulation or egocentric manoeuvring. As Happiness Itself, a divine person cannot lose happiness when he gives happiness. With no fear of loss, a divine lover has no possible ulterior motives in his supreme act of love. He is motivated only by his desire to lavish love upon, and to enjoy the loving company of, his beloved.⁷⁰

In the prose of this argument, Richard tells us "it is absolutely necessary" that mutual love have a bestower and requiter.⁷¹ If the 'absolutely' is not here for mere literary flourish, then it does some work in the claim. Probably that work is to highlight that bestowal and requitement are not only necessary, but also sufficient conditions of mutual love.⁷²

Premise MP-H9 complements MP-H8 by distinguishing between the bestower and requiter explicit. Angelici explains the goals of this premise,

The immediate sense of the Latin is much plainer: "He who donates love is different from the one returning it." However, the deeper meaning that Richard wants to convey here and that he introduces in this case, in a very subtle and almost furtive fashion, is the fact that otherness as "distinction" is detectable in the one essence of God…Unfortunately, the needs of modern English are such that in order not to lose the more fundamental reference to the idea of "*the Other*" in God, the rhetorical and linguistic force of Richard's original is somewhat lost.⁷³

In sum, in MP-H8 and MP-H9 Richard articulates two conditions for supreme happiness: one person who gives love, and one who requites it.

⁷⁰ For these reasons, translators of *De Trinitate* need not fear the rather commercial language Richard uses. While a 'giver' or 'bestower' of love and its accompanying 'requiter' are fine translations, 'one who devotes' and 'one who returns' love are closer to Richard's use, though more cumbersome in English.

⁷¹ (Evans, 249; Ribaillier, 137).

⁷² 3.3.9 looks like a formal definition of mutuality, with jointly necessary and sufficient conditions. My analysis here may be incorrect, though, and the two conditions might only be necessary. Nothing in MP-H2 rides on it. ⁷³ Angelici, *Richard of Saint Victor, On the Trinity*, 118, fn.3. The original reads, *Alter itaque erit amorem inpendat, et alter amorem rependens*.

4.2.7.2 Premises MP-H10 and MP-H11: A true plurality is discovered where two persons are demonstrated to exist. A true plurality of persons cannot be lacking in the fullness of true happiness

Once again Richard goes to lengths to sharpen the distinction between persons. Richard will not provide analysis of the nature of persons until book four. But here he wants the conclusion as unambiguous as possible: a bestower and requiter of perfect love are sufficient for *vera pluralitas*, true distinction between persons. Further, the plurality of persons somehow exists in or as true happiness. In previous premises, Richard has spoken primarily of supreme happiness, and he will do so again in MP-H12. Here, though, he speaks only of true happiness. This interchanging of 'true' and 'supreme' confirm that the referent is one and the same entity.

Because of their conceptual overlap, premises MP-H9 through MP-H11 may be simplified as:

MP-H9-11*) Two persons are necessary for supreme happiness.

This formulation largely ignores the idea that supreme happiness somehow has or contains the two persons. But since Richard only hints at these matters indirectly, they can be side-lined until further clarification is needed.

4.2.8 Premise MP-H12 and main conclusion MP-H13: The supreme happiness is identical to divinity. Therefore, a plurality of person cannot be lacking in the true divinity

The last premise removes some loose ends by iterating that the supreme happiness is Happiness Itself, that is, God. As with MP-G and, we will see next in MP-M, the happiness argument closes by employing the participation metaphysic. Supreme happiness is perfect happiness, and each just is the divine substance. The conclusion seeks to express the idea that the two persons exist 'in' divinity. Without commenting on the relationship between Divinity Itself and the persons had by divinity (or 'in' divinity), MP-H13 only lays claim to the fact that those necessary, supremely happy persons are divine.

4.2.9 Full expression of the arguments

We may now survey the completed proofs for multiple persons from the notion of happiness:

The First Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Happiness* – MP-H¹*

- P1) Necessarily, if X has charity, then X's charity is supremely pleasant. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if X has supreme happiness, then X has all the Ys such that if X has Y, then X's Y is supremely pleasant.⁷⁴ [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, if X has supreme happiness, then X has charity. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal Instantiation]
- P3) Necessarily, God has supreme happiness. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, God has charity. [C1, P3: Necessity E & I, Universal Instantiation, Modus Ponens]
- P4) Necessarily, if God has charity, then God has supreme charity. [Premise]C3) Necessarily, God has supreme charity. [C2, P4: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]
- P5) Necessarily, if God has supreme charity, then there are at least two divine persons. [Premise]

⁷⁴ Note that 'Y' is a second order variable.

C4) Necessarily, there are at least two divine persons. [C3, P5: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

Corresponding to MP-G1, P1 captures the idea that perfect charity is maximally pleasing. While imperfect charity can be highly unpleasant, we know from experience that it has the potential to be the most pleasant relation humans can have when the mutual-love relationship goes right. Since supreme charity is a relation in which the mutual-love only goes right – i.e., the lovers love maximally – then we know that supreme charity must be supremely pleasing to its relata.⁷⁵ Like MP-G2, P2 claims that whatever is supremely pleasurable is a necessary condition for supreme happiness.⁷⁶ Regarding the conclusion in C1, to better understand how it follows from P1 and P2, consider that P1 is equivalent to, "Charity is one of the Ys such that, if X has Y, then X's Y is supremely pleasant." P3 goes unstated in Richard's prose version of the first happiness argument, having been discussed already in *DT* 1 where Richard argues that the Supreme Good is supremely happy.⁷⁷ Like its counterpart in the goodness argument, P4 draws our attention to an outcome of divine simplicity. Whatever attributes God can be said to have, he has them substantially and supremely.⁷⁸ P5 iterates one entailment of the definition of charity, namely, that charity obtains between at least two divine persons.

The second happiness argument:

The Second Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Happiness* – MP-H²*

- P1) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then X desires that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if X desires that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited and it is not the case that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited, then X's supreme other-love is not supremely pleasant. [Premise]
- P3) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then X's supreme other-love is supremely pleasant. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then X desires that X's supreme other-love is supremely requited, and X's supreme other-love is supremely requited. [P1, P2, P3: Necessity E & I, Modus Tollens, Disjunctive Syllogism, Conditional E & I]
- P4) Necessarily, if X's supreme other-love is supremely requited, then there is a person Y who supremely loves, and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love. [Premise].
 - C2) Necessarily, if X has supreme other-love, then there is a person Y who supremely loves, and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love. [C1, P4: Necessity E & I, Transitivity of Implication]
- P5) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X has supreme other-love. [Premise]
- P6) Necessarily, there is at least some Y such that Y is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily, there is a person Y who supremely loves, and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love. [C2, P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Universal Elimination, Existential Elimination, Modus Ponens]
- P7) Necessarily, if there is a person Y who supremely loves and there is a different person Z who supremely requites Y's love, then there is a divine person W who supremely loves and there is a different divine person V who supremely requites W's love. [Premise]

⁷⁵ See section 4.2.1.

⁷⁶ See section 4.2.2.

⁷⁷ See section 2.1.3 on God's goodness and blessedness.

⁷⁸ See sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 on participation and God's fullness.

- C4) Necessarily, there is a divine person W who supremely loves and there is a different divine person V who supremely requites W's love. [C3, P7: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]
- C5) Necessarily, there are at least two divine persons. [C4: Conjunction Elimination, Conjunction Introduction⁷⁹]

P1 refers to the desire that Richard claims accompanies other-love: we know from experience, across the many types of love (romantic, familial, etc.) that a lover wishes for her beloved to return her love.⁸⁰ P2 is the claim that a person's other-love is not perfectly pleasing if her desire for requital is not met, another claim drawn from immediate experience.⁸¹ P3 returns to the metaphysics of supremacy, in which, for example, perfect other-love lacks no good or pleasing thing.⁸² P4 expresses the notion of mutuality, stating that supreme love will have both a lover and a requiter of that love.⁸³ P5 refers back to the DC argument which argued that God has supreme charity, and P6 refers to *DT* 1 which argued for the existence of at least one divine person. Finally, P7 seeks to explicate that multiple lovers require multiple persons, an idea taken up by the conclusions C4 and C5.

4.3. The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Glory

4.3.0 Introduction

Richard's third argument for a plurality of divine persons is this,

[1] Certainly, if we maintain that there is just one person in true divinity, just as there is just one substance alone, then consequently this person will definitely not have someone to whom he can communicate the infinite abundance of his own fullness. [2] But, I ask, why is that the case? Is it because he is not able to have someone to share with, although he wants it? Or is it because he does not want to have someone with whom to share, although he is able? [3] But he who is undoubtedly omnipotent cannot be excused by the impossible. [4] But, because it is certain that this is not from a defect of power, surely it will not be from a mere defect of benevolence? [5] But if he absolutely were not willing to have someone with whom to share, although he really could have someone if he wanted, then bear in mind, I say, what the nature or gravity of that defect of benevolence would be in the divine person! [6] Certainly, as we have said, nothing is sweeter than charity, and nothing is more pleasing than charity. [7] A rational life experiences nothing sweeter than the pleasures of charity, and it never enjoys anything more delightful than the delight of charity. [8] A divine person will lack these pleasures in eternity, if he lacks a fellowship and remains isolated on the throne of majesty. And so, from these reasons we can consider what the nature and gravity of that defect of benevolence would be, if he were greedily preferring to retain for himself alone the abundance of his fullness, which he could, if he

⁷⁹ To see how C5 follows by conjunction elimination and introduction, consider the following. If we were to express C4 in a natural deductive proof, then we would eliminate its necessity, conjunction, and existential quantifier. This would isolate several simple sentences, including: "There is a divine person W', "There is a divine person V', and 'W is not identical to V'. We would then reintroduce these sentences into a complex conjunction. That conjunction is equivalent to 'There are two persons'.

⁸⁰ See section 4.2.4.

⁸¹ See section 4.2.5.

⁸² See section 4.2.6.

⁸³ See section 4.2.6.

wanted, communicate to another with such great overflow of joys and with such a great increase of pleasures. [9] If this were the case, then he would rightly shun the sight of angels and everyone. He would rightly be ashamed to be seen or to be recognized by them, if there were such a grave defect of benevolence in him. [10] But far be it! Far be it that there is something in his supreme majesty, in which he cannot glory and for which he ought not to be glorified. [11] Otherwise, where will the fullness of be? After all, as we previously demonstrated, no fullness can be lacking in the divinity. [12] But what is more glorious and what is truly more magnificent than to possess nothing that one refuses to communicate? [13] It is certain then that in that unfailing good and supremely wise counsel there can be neither a greedy withholding nor a disordered profusion. [14] Behold, you clearly understand, as you can see, that the fullness of glory requires a partaker of glory from not being absent in the highest and supreme exaltation.⁸⁴

The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Glory, or MP-M,⁸⁵ is one of The Argument's longest. Contrasted with MP-G and MP-H, MP-M borders on sprawling. Richard gives himself the freedom to make various rhetorical moves, to provide many examples, and to include much descriptive language. Such freedom allows us greater access to Richard's mind on the issue at hand. However, the diffuse prose makes exposition difficult. To aid the exposition of this argument I will outline the critical propositional content from the above passage while retaining its order. Further, I will alter some of the language for concision and clarity:⁸⁶

The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Glory – MP-M

⁸⁴ DT 3.4 (Evans, 250-51; Ribaillier, 138-39).

⁸⁵ To avoid having two MP-G acronyms – one from goodness and another from glory – I refer to the argument from glory as MP-M, using glory and majesty interchangeably

⁸⁶ The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 106. The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Glory* – MP-M*

P1) Necessarily, if there is only one X such that X is a divine person, then X is a divine person and there is no different Y such that Y is a person and X communicates X's fullness to Y. [Premise]

P2) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and there is no different Y such that Y is a person and X communicates X's fullness to Y, then either (1) it is not the case that X is willing to communicate X's fullness, or (2) it is not the case that X is able to communicate X's fullness. [Premise]

C1) Necessarily, if there is only one X such that X is a divine person, then X is a divine person and either (1) it is not the case that X is willing to communicate X's fullness, or (2) it is not the case that X is able to communicate X's fullness. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Transitivity of the Conditional]

P3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X is willing to communicate X's fullness. [Premise]

P4) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X is able to communicate X's fullness. [Premise]

C2) Necessarily, it is not the case that there is only one X such that X is a divine person. [C1, P3, P4: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens, De Morgan, Negation Introduction]

P5) Necessarily, if it is not the case that there is only one X such that X is a divine person, then either (1) it is not the case that there is some Y such that Y is a divine person, or (2) there is some Z such that Z is a divine person and there is some different W such that W is a divine person. [Premise]

C3) Necessarily, either (1) it is not the case that there is some Y such that Y is a divine person, or (2) there is some Z such that Z is a divine person and there is some different W such that W is a divine person. [C2, P5: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

P6) Necessarily, there is some Y such that Y is a divine person. [Premise]

C4) Necessarily, there is some Z such that Z is a divine person and there is some different W such that W is a divine person. [C3, P6: Necessity E & I, Disjunctive Syllogism]⁸⁶

| MP-M1) | If there is only one divine person, then he has no other person with whom to |
|---------|---|
| | communicate his fullness. |
| MP-M2) | If he has no other person with whom to communicate his fullness, then he is |
| | either unable to communicate his fullness, or is unwilling to communicate his |
| | fullness. |
| MP-M3) | A divine person is omnipotent and therefore not unable to communicate his |
| | fullness. |
| MP-M4) | If a divine person is unwilling to communicate his fullness, then he has a defect |
| | in his benevolence. |
| MP-M5) | Unwillingness to share is a greedy withholding. |
| MP-M6) | Greedy withholding is a cause for being ashamed (i.e., is a lack of glory). |
| MP-M7) | But a divine person has nothing of which to be ashamed (i.e., lacks no glory). |
| MP-M8) | A divine person has the fullness of divinity. |
| MP-M9) | If a person has the fullness of divinity, then he has supreme glory. |
| MP-M10) | Willingness to share all that one can share is maximally glorious. |
| MP-M11) | Therefore, DP1 is willing to share all that he can. |
| MP-M12) | Therefore, DP1 is able and willing to communicate his fullness with another. |
| MP-M13) | Therefore, DP1 has another person with whom to communicate his fullness. |

After an overview we will examine this complex argument.

4.3.1 Overview and precedents of MP-M

Viewed broadly, MP-M articulates a dilemma faced by anyone who proposes that there is only one divine person. If there is only a single divine person, then he does not communicate his fullness with another. But this has only two possible explanations: he cannot, or he will not. But both are impossible. Therefore, a divine person must communicate with another divine person. In its broad form, this argument traces into antiquity. We find antecedents as far back as Plato, who argues through the mouth of Timaeus:

[The framer of this universe] was good, and what is good has no particle of envy in it; being therefore without envy he wished all things to be as like himself as possible...It is impossible for the best to produce anything but the highest. When he considered, therefore, that in all the realm of visible nature, taking each thing as a whole, nothing without intelligence is to be found that is superior to anything with it, and that intelligence is impossible without soul, in fashioning the universe he implanted reason in soul and soul in body, and so ensured that his work should be by nature highest and best.⁸⁷

While Christian thinkers would jettison Plato's conclusion that the world is "a living being with soul and intelligence," the kernel of the Christian form of the argument is present. The best $(\dot{\alpha}\varrho i\sigma\tau \phi)$ god is both willing and able to share his goodness, resulting in another "blessed god."⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Plato, *Timaeus and Critias*, 42.

⁸⁸ Plato, 30a (42). Cf Plato's *Phaedrus*, in which we are told that there is no envy ($\varphi\theta\dot{o}vo\varsigma$) among the gods, "for jealousy is excluded from the celestial [choir]." Plato, "Phaedrus," in *Plato 1: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, ed. H.N. Fowler, Loeb Classical Library 36 (Harvard University Press, 1982), 247a (475).

This idea was worked out in greater detail by Plotinus. When discussing the emanation of the Intellectual-Principle from the First Good, he asks,

How then could the most perfect remain self-set – the First Good, the Power towards all, how could it grudge or be powerless to give of itself, and how at that would it still be the source? If things other than itself are to exist, things dependent upon it for their reality, it must produce since there is no other source. And, further, this engendering principle must be the very highest in worth; and its immediate offspring, its secondary, must be the best of all that follows.⁸⁹

The second half of this passage is a cosmological argument for an ultimate source (Richard gives an extensive one of his own in *De Trinitate* books one and two). The first half is most pertinent because Plotinus explicitly raises the issues of greedy withholding and powerlessness regarding divine-to-divine generation. Like Plotinus, Richard dismisses divine greed out of hand. Unlike Plotinus, Richard treats powerlessness less casually. Richard, who had access to *Timaeus*, explicates in greater detail than Plotinus the first divine person's willingness to share with another.

We find Christian precedence of this type of argument in the Church Fathers. Two that stand out as having some direct influence on Richard are Augustine and Gregory of Nazianzus. Augustine gives a similar expression to Richard's in *Contra Maximinum*; Richard even quotes the locution "abundance of his fullness" (*plenitudinis sue abundantia*) from *De Correptione et Gratia.*⁹⁰ Gregory Nazianzen sought to combat Eunomius of Cyzicus' extreme heterousianism by arguing that Eunomius posits a monadic divinity "that is constricted and mean" and which is not the source of a divine product. Gregory reasons: "precisely because it cannot or will not, and this for two reasons, either envy or fear: envy, because it wishes to avoid the introduction of something that is of equal importance; fear, lest it take on a hostile and belligerent element."⁹¹ While Gregory is not the first to argue along these lines,⁹² his focus on divine fullness, honour, and worship all point to some influence on Richard's composition of MP-G.⁹³

⁸⁹ Plotinus, *The Enneads: Abridged Edition*, ed. John Dillon, trans. Stephen MacKenna, Abridged Edition (London: Penguin Classics, 1991), 388.

⁹⁰ Cf. Contra Maximinus II.7 (P.L. XLII 762) ; De corrept et gratia X.27 (P.L. XLIV, 933). Both references are listed in Ribaillier's critical apparatus, Richard de St Victor, De Trinitate: Texte Critique Avec Introduction, Notes et Tables, 139.

⁹¹ Oration 23.6. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, *Select Orations*, trans. Martha Vinson, Fathers of the Church Series 107 (Place of publication not identified: The Catholic University of America Press, 2017), 135.

⁹² E.g. Origen: "And who that is capable of entertaining reverential thoughts or feelings regarding God, can suppose or believe that God the Father ever existed, even for a moment of time, without having generated this Wisdom? For in that case he must say either that God was unable to generate Wisdom before He produced her, so that He afterwards called into being her who formerly did not exist, or that He possessed the power indeed, but--what cannot be said of God without impiety--was unwilling to use it; both of which suppositions, it is patent to all, are alike absurd and impious." Origen, "On First Principles," New Advent: Fathers of the Church, accessed July 5, 2021, https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/04121.htm.

⁹³ Cf.: Oration 23.6, "In fact, God is the object of proportionately more honour than his creatures are to the degree that it is more in keeping with the greater majesty of the first cause to be the source of divinity rather than of creatures..." Nazianzus, *Select Orations*, 136. *Oration* 23.8, "I on the other hand, by positing a source of divinity that is independent of time, inseparable, and infinite, honour both the source as well as its issue: the source, because of the nature of the things of which it is the source; the issue, because of their own nature as
My intent in this overview is not to make a case for the genitive links of MP-M, though we do have some initial evidence pointing toward Plato (via *Timaeus*), Augustine, and Gregory. The important point is that pagan and Christian thinkers had been arguing along these lines for fifteen centuries. However (in)directly, Richard draws from this rich tradition and crafts the dilemma to fit his particular dogmatic (e.g., trinitarian) and dialectical (e.g., necessary reasons) needs.

4.3.2 Developing the dilemma – Premises MP-M1 through MP-M4

4.3.2.1 Premise MP-M1: If there is only one divine person, then he has no other person with whom to communicate his fullness

Premise MP-M1 tacitly supposes that a divine person cannot communicate his fullness to created persons. Richard develops this in the *Argument Against Supreme Charity for Created Persons*, which we discussed in chapter two. The key concept in MP-M1 is the 'communication of fullness', which runs throughout the glory argument. We can best understand it by analysing its two main parts, 'communication' and fullness'.

The act of communication (*communicans*), or sharing, is also an act of benevolence – a term that itself connotes giving and, etymologically, willing good toward someone. Richard also describes the nature of communication indirectly, through instances where it is missing. For example, Richard describes as a "greedy" withholding any instance in which a person does not share.⁹⁴

If communication is sharing, as Richard describes, the immediate question is, Sharing what? When reflecting on divine persons, Richard settles for nothing less than everything possible. For a divine person to share "the abundance of his fullness," he must give everything he has to give. For divine persons, this includes supreme power, wisdom, goodness, and eternality, among other attributes.⁹⁵ This act of communication *is* the act of charity, and results in 'blessedness', or joy, for both giver

well as of the nature of the source from which they are derived, because they are disparate neither in time, nor in nature, nor in holiness." Nazianzus, 137. *Oration* 23.8, "...a triad defined by its perfection since it is the first to transcend the synthesis of duality in order that the Godhead might not be constricted or diffused without limit, for constriction bespeaks an absence of generosity; diffusion, an absence of order." Nazianzus, 137. For an extended study of Gregory's argument, see Dennis Bray, "Gregory of Nazianzus' Trinitarian Argument in Oration 23," *TheoLogica* 4, no. 2 (December 31, 2020): 138–60.

⁹⁴ Richard does not detail whether self-communication or sharing with oneself is possible. While self-love is a necessary element of other-love, self-sharing may not be part of other-sharing. Richard's attention is dedicated to the other-directedness of communication. Minimally, communication involves a non-reflexive relation, a giving to another what is one's to give.

⁹⁵ Cf. DT 3.6: "We found that there is nothing more glorious and more magnificent than the desire that you have nothing that you refused to communicate." (Evans, 252; Ribaillier, 140-41). DT 3.7: "Moreover, where each of the two persons ought to be loved equally by the other, it is necessary that each be equally perfect, and so, each ought to be equally powerful, equally wise, equally good, and equally blessed. Thus, the supreme fullness of love requires the supreme equality of perfection in those mutually loved...Moreover, in order that they be equal in every respect, it is necessary that they be similar in every respect...indeed, you will find the same [equality] in every other property if you run through them individually." (Evans, 253; Ribaillier, 142). DT 3.8: "We have sought and found that, in order that supreme love should exist worthily in the two aforementioned persons who are mutually loved and ought to be loved mutually, there must be in each supreme perfection and the fullness of total perfection. And so the fullness of power, the fullness of wisdom, the fullness of goodness, and fullness of divinity will be in each person." (Evans, 253; Ribaillier, 143).

and receiver.⁹⁶ The idea that a divine person can share or give his 'being' – in just about any sense of the term – is not universally accepted. We will explore a few objections in premise MP-M3. Granting the idea for the moment, we look to MP-M2 where Richard elaborates on an ancient triadic dilemma.

4.3.2.2 Premise MP-M2: If he has no other person with whom to communicate his fullness, then he is either unable to communicate his fullness, or is unwilling to communicate his fullness

Premise MP-M2 introduces the horns of the dilemma: a lone divine person is alone either because he cannot communicate with another, or wills to not communicate with another. As mentioned above, this is an ancient argument for some sort of divine plurality. While a few thinkers are comfortable accepting one horn or the other,⁹⁷ no one has yet argued for an alternative. In other words, the dilemma may not be fatal but it is accurate. For instance, it will not do to suggest that a single divine person's monadic existence is un-analysable. This because a divine person, as volitional, must will its monadicism or will against it.⁹⁸ Stated generally, a lone divine person either *could not* be otherwise, or would not *want* to be otherwise.

As I have stated it, MP-M2 portrays the lemma as inability or unwillingness. But my shortened version leaves out some information that, while not essential, is helpful for grasping the fuller picture. In Richard's words, God is either "not able to have someone to share with, *although he wants it*" or "does not want to have someone with whom to share, *although he is able*." The riders which follow both lemmas help us explore the logical space in which Richard operates. That is, Richard gives only two options, but we can extrapolate four logical alternatives:

- 1. Able & unwilling
- 2. Unable & willing
- 3. Unable & unwilling
- 4. Able & willing

Richard seeks an explanation for why a divine person would not have someone with whom to share his fullness. Since in (4) a divine person does have someone (4) is not an explanation of why a divine person would not have someone. (3) is also a logical possibility. Richard addresses the suggestion of divine inability and unwillingness to share when he addresses (1) and (2). The following two premises explain why either alternative is unacceptably problematic.

4.3.2.3 Premise MP-M3: A divine person is omnipotent and therefore not unable to communicate his fullness

Richard states the second lemma this way, "But he who is undoubtedly omnipotent cannot be excused by the impossible." For Richard, God's power (*potentia*) is supreme. To see what this means we can turn to *DT* 1.12 where Richard explains why the divine substance is the ultimate source of all existents,

⁹⁶ Cf. *DT* 3.4: "A rational life experiences nothing sweeter than the pleasures of charity, and it never enjoys anything more delightful than the delight of charity." (Evans, 250; Ribaillier, 139). We will have more to say about this in premises MP-M10 and MP-M11.

⁹⁷ For example, Dale Tuggy accepts the second horn but denies that imperfection follows. Tuggy, "On the Possibility of a Single Perfect Person."

⁹⁸ Even on Plotinus' theory, in which "The One' is not personal, the triadic emanation is necessary (though for a different set of reasons).

And so, everything which subsists in the universe of realities receives its being from the power of being. But if all things are from the power of being, then the power of being certainly exists only from itself and it has nothing except from itself. If all things are from the power of being, then every essence, all power, and all wisdom come from it. If every essence is from the power of being, then the power of being is the supreme essence. If all power is from the power of being then it is supremely powerful.⁹⁹

The divine substance has the power of being (*potentia esse*) from itself. This means there is no further explanation of God beyond himself and, further, God is Power Itself. As Power Itself, God's power is maximal – God can do anything possible. The pressing question concerns the extent of that possibility: Can a divine person cause another divine person? Richard thinks so. In DT 1.9 he avers, "It should not seem impossible to anyone that there was some being from eternity which is not from itself," adding "as if it is necessary for a cause always to precede its effect and for every being that is from another always to follow its origin."¹⁰⁰ In other words, Richard believes it is possible for at least *some* effects to be contemporaneous, and co-eternal, with their cause. In support of the idea, he constructs a probability argument by modifying a traditional sun/ray analogy,

Certainly, a ray of the sun proceeds from the sun and draws its origin from the sun, and yet the ray is coeval [*coevum*, 'contemporaneous'] with the sun. From the time it existed the sun produced its ray from itself, and at no time was it without the ray. Therefore, if corporeal light possesses a ray coeval with itself, why should the spiritual and inaccessible light not have a light beam coeternal with itself?¹⁰¹

With the light metaphor one could easily end up holding several unacceptable conclusions. Reasoning by analogy, pagan Platonists and some early Christian thinkers made several erroneous conclusions: the source (Father/sun) is temporally prior to its effect (Son/ray); the effect is therefore unequal to the source; the source is simple while the effect is stratified or compound; the effect is always departing from and so is not unified with its source.¹⁰² Richard is aware of the pitfalls and avoids them with his version of the analogy. To prepare for his main conclusion, Richard must move from observations about the sun to the divine substance. He does so, saying, "We read in created nature what we ought to think or estimate about uncreated nature." Since "we see daily how existence produces existence by a natural operation" and "existence proceeds from existence," we are justified in thinking something similar may happen in the divinity. He asks,

What then? Will it be necessary that that superexcellent nature does not have and cannot have any operation of nature? Will that nature which gave the fruit of fertility to our nature remain absolutely sterile in itself? And will that nature which bestowed reproduction to others be sterile and without reproduction?¹⁰³

⁹⁹ DT 1.12 (Evans, 220; Ribaillier, 96).

¹⁰⁰ DT 1.9 (Evans, 218; Ribaillier, 94).

¹⁰¹ DT 1.9 (Evans, 218; Ribaillier, 94).

¹⁰² In her study on the concept of eternity in *De Trinitate*, Dyer discusses Richard's employment of the sun metaphor. She mentions several of the errors I list here, and includes some helpful citations for further exploration of the debate. Dyer, "Translating Eternity in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance," 88f. ¹⁰³ *DT* 1.9 (Evans, 218; Ribaillier, 94).

Here Richard wonders how the source of fertility could be completely infertile. He asks how it could be possible for the creator of the contemporaneous sun-ray relation to lack contemporaneous relations himself. If Richard has successfully argued thus far, the reader should resist each hypothetical situation. That is, Richard is warming the reader into accepting the claim that the creator of contemporaneous relations has analogous relations. From these probable arguments, the reader is receptive to the main conclusion: "From this, therefore, it seems probable that in that superessential immutability there is some being which is not from itself and was from eternity."¹⁰⁴ Some critics have incorrectly suggested that before Richard may argue for the necessity of multiple divine persons, he must first argue for its very possibility.¹⁰⁵ Even if that suggestion were true (and it isn't), we see that in book one Richard argues for precisely such a possibility.

In summary, Richard begins from sense experience and argues for the metaphysical possibility of a mode of existence by which a being (*aliquod*, 'something') exists from eternity but is not from itself (*a semetipso*). Indeed, Richard concludes that it is not only possible, but probable. This all supports the claim in MP-M3 that a divine person may possibly share his fullness, i.e. be the source, of another eternal, fully divine person.

4.3.2.4 Premise MP-M4: If a divine person is unwilling to communicate his fullness, then he has a defect in his benevolence

Richard locates the second horn of the dilemma in the goodness of the divine will.¹⁰⁶ However, this lemma is not as obviously true as the previous, and Richard devotes several lines of argumentation to it. Before looking at the sub-argument, it is worthwhile to look at the dilemma as a whole. Besides the ancient roots, some of which have already been mentioned, similar arguments were advanced by Augustine, Lombard, and Robert of Melun.¹⁰⁷

In these thinkers, as in Richard, the dilemma runs this way: If a divine person cannot be excused for *inability* to perform the possible, neither can he be excused for *unwillingness* to perform the most glorious. Richard employs and builds on some previously established ideas to support this claim. In what follows he develops on the nature of the defect of benevolence, arguing against divine unwillingness to share (MP-M5 – MP-M7) and for supreme glory in divinity (MP-M8 – MP-M9), and one for divine willingness to share fullness (3.4.10). We will quickly examine these three arguments before finishing with the main proof's conclusion (3.4.11-12).

4.3.3 Premises MP-M5 through MP-M7: Unwillingness to share is a greedy withholding. Greedy

withholding is a cause for being ashamed (i.e., is a lack of glory). But a divine person has nothing of which to be ashamed (i.e., lacks no glory)

In this section of the glory argument Richard explains why a divine person is not unwilling to communicate his goodness. Premise MP-M5 defines greed as "preferring to retain for himself what

¹⁰⁴ DT 1.9 (Evans, 250; Ribaillier, 139).

¹⁰⁵ The claim is a bad one. One good way to show that a proposition is possible is to show that it is necessary. That said, arguing the possibility for a conclusion before arguing for its necessity is dialectically prudent. For this reason Richard gives precisely such an argument early in *De Trinitate*, well before his trinitarian arguments proper. Cf. John Bligh's verdict that The Argument is invalid because it only argues for necessity, and does not (first) argue for possibility. Bligh, "Richard of St Victor's De Trinitate."

¹⁰⁷ Augustine, Contra Maximinum Arrianum 2.7; Lombard, Sententiae 1.20.3; Robert of Melun, Sententiae 1.1.19.

he could, if he wanted to, communicate with another."¹⁰⁸ Greed, then, is a complex property involving will ("preferring") and power ("what he could"). This counterfactual analysis is such that DP1 can be greedy even if there are no other persons in existence from whom to withhold.¹⁰⁹ Richard's definition of greed may be debateable,¹¹⁰ but the sub-argument is not focused so much on the precise nature of greed as the tremendous extent to which a lone divine person would be exemplifying it.

There are at least three ways in which the divine goodness is marred by such a withholding. First, by withholding a sharable good, a divine person denies a possible (divine) person actual existence. Withholding perfect charity does not just leave a would-be lover in the lurch, it ensures that there is no such lover. Second, the divine withholder also denies himself the "overflow of joys" and "great increase in pleasures."¹¹¹ By withholding communication, the divine person does not merely deny another existence and joy, but denies himself supreme joy as well. Third, communication would cost a divine person nothing. As we discussed in chapter two, a divine person is identical to goodness and, as Goodness Itself, loses nothing by sharing goodness. On a cost-benefit analysis, it costs nothing for a divine person to communicate his fullness, and the benefits are that-than-which-nothing-is-sweeter (or more pleasing). This final consideration is most damning of three, since it shows no overriding good reason, no mitigating factor to excuse a divine withholder.

Richard next connects the notion of greed with that of glory (MP-M6). Glory is the divine goodness considered as laudable. But greedy withholding is a "defect of benevolence" (*defectu benivolentie*), that is, a distorting lack of divine goodness. Thus, greedy withholding entails a lack of goodness and, therefore glory. To this ontological picture Richard adds a parallel psychological one. The greed is so tremendous, in the three ways just examined, that the divine withholder experiences a resulting shame. Richard describes the effects of shame as hiding from the angels,

¹⁰⁸ DT 3.4 (Evans, 218; Ribaillier, 94).

¹⁰⁹ In this way Richard's definition of greed avoids Tuggy's critique that greed only obtains when there is someone else from whom to withhold. On Richard's view, a person S1 may be greedy to S2 whether S2 is actual or merely possible.

¹¹⁰ One initial difficulty with Richard's definition is that it is too wide, since on it *any* instance of withholding what is in our power to give counts as greed. If true, then it seems that most humans are actively and dramatically greedy. An unpalatable implication, and therefore harmful to this sub-argument's cogency. There are a couple ways Richard might respond. Given his enmeshment in the Victorine community – a community dedicated to developing the self only to better serve one's neighbour – he may simply accept the moral implications. That is, it may be the case that most humans are quite greedy. My guess is that Richard would have little reserve in accepting this entailment of his definition. Rather than weakening the argument, it only strengthens it by showing how truly liberal divine persons are.

If we really want to avoid the unsavoury conclusion that we live lives humming steadily along in greed, we could try to slim the definition of greed. For the sub-argument to work, Richard need only commit himself to a view of greed on which the withholder loses nothing by sharing. Something like the following,

⁽Greed*) If S1 has some good G which he may share and not lose G (in any way or to any degree), and S1 withholds G though he could share it, then S1 greedily withholds G.

This trimmed-down stance on the nature of greed allows for an instance of sharing in which a divine person communicates the fullness of his goodness, but does not lose any of that goodness. However we understand Richard's characterization of greed, whether the wide or slim view, the result is that greedy withholding betrays a lack of goodness.

¹¹¹ DT 3.4 (Evans, 218; Ribaillier, 94).

but we need not suppose that there are any other beings in existence for the monopersonal God to feel shame. Once again we may give shame a dispositional analysis: *if* there were other persons to take notice, *then* the shamed party would avoid being "seen or…recognized by them."¹¹²

Richard leaves off from drawing the conclusion of this sub-argument until MP-M11, but it is clear already: a divine person is not, and cannot be, unwilling to communicate his fullness in the act of supreme charity. Richard will give one more sub-argument before stating that conclusion.

4.3.4 Premises MP-M8 through MP-M10 and sub-conclusion MP-M11: *A divine person has the fullness of divinity. If a person has the fullness of divinity, then he has supreme glory. Willingness to share all that one can share is maximally glorious. Therefore, DP1 is willing to share all that he can*

This section of the glory argument is the positive counterpart to the previous set of premises. There, in MP-M5 – MP-M7, Richard argued negatively: God lacks no glory; God is not ashamed; therefore, God is not unwilling to communicate supreme charity. Here, Richard points out that a divine person has divinity (MP-M8), and that supreme glory is a condition of divinity (MP-M9). Premise MP-M10 connects the previous sub-argument with this one. DP1 has supreme glory (MP-M9), and so he cannot lack any glory, nor can he be ashamed (MP-M5- MP-M7). Therefore, he has supreme communication (MP-M10). Finally, if he has supreme communication, then he wills to have supreme communication (conclusion MP-M11).

4.3.5 Completing the proof – conclusions MP-M12 and MP-M13: Therefore, DP1 is able and willing to communicate his fullness with another. Therefore, DP1 has another person with whom to communicate his fullness

Richard finishes this complex line of reasoning with a series of conclusions. MP-M12 rejects both horns of the dilemma as impossible for a divine person. If a person – divine or otherwise – is both able and willing to perform some action then he will perform it (barring any overriding reasons or inhibiting force). But Richard has eliminated the possibility of any good reasons for willing to not share. Further, a divine person is Power Itself, so there is no possible external force able to stop a divine person intent on sharing. In other words, there are no overriding reasons or inhibiting outside forces. Therefore, DP1 communicates the fullness of his goodness and being with another, thereby producing at least one other equally divine person (MP-M13).

4.3.6 Full expression of the argument

We may express the complete proof from glory this way:

The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Glory* – MP-M*

- P1) Necessarily, if there is only one X such that X is a divine person, then X is a divine person and there is no different Y such that Y is a person and X communicates X's fullness to Y. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and there is no different Y such that Y is a person and X communicates X's fullness to Y, then either (1) it is not the case that X is willing to communicate X's fullness, or (2) it is not the case that X is able to communicate X's fullness. [Premise]

¹¹² DT 3.4 (Evans, 218; Ribaillier, 94).

- C1) Necessarily, if there is only one X such that X is a divine person, then X is a divine person and either (1) it is not the case that X is willing to communicate X's fullness, or (2) it is not the case that X is able to communicate X's fullness. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Transitivity of the Conditional]
- P3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X is willing to communicate X's fullness. [Premise]
- P4) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X is able to communicate X's fullness. [Premise]
 C2) Necessarily, it is not the case that there is only one X such that X is a divine person.
 [C1, P3, P4: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens, De Morgan, Negation Introduction]
- P5) Necessarily, if it is not the case that there is only one X such that X is a divine person, then either (1) it is not the case that there is some Y such that Y is a divine person, or (2) there is some Z such that Z is a divine person and there is some different W such that W is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily, either (1) it is not the case that there is some Y such that Y is a divine person, or (2) there is some Z such that Z is a divine person and there is some different W such that W is a divine person. [C2, P5: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]
- P6) Necessarily, there is some Y such that Y is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C4) Necessarily, there is some Z such that Z is a divine person and there is some different W such that W is a divine person. [C3, P6: Necessity E & I, Disjunctive Syllogism]

In this formalization of the glory argument P1 corresponds to MP-M1, expressing the idea that a lone divine person does maximally share his goodness with some other.¹¹³ P2 states the dilemma: if a lone divine person does not maximally share, then there are only two possible explanations.¹¹⁴ P3 is the claim that a divine person is willing to share, the denial of one of the dilemma's horns. Richard argues extensively for this, giving both a negative and positive reason for assenting to the proposition.¹¹⁵ In short, a divine person cannot have anything that causes shame, such as greed.¹¹⁶ Positively, his supreme glory results in his desire to share all he has.¹¹⁷ P4 rejects the other horn: a divine person is able to maximally share because a divine person is omnipotent.¹¹⁸ P5 is worded so as to retain consistency in language with the other sentences in the proof. It can be read as saying that if there is not one divine person, then either there are no divine persons, or there are at least two divine persons. P6 refers back to DT1 in claiming that there exists at least one divine person. Finally, the main conclusion is equivalent to "Necessarily, there are multiple divine persons," where 'multiple' means 'at least two'. Thus C4 is also equivalent to "Necessarily, there are at least two divine persons."

4.3.7 Objections

4.3.7.1 Eunomius of Cyzicus against substantial production

Not everyone is satisfied with reasoning like that which Richard pursues in MP-M. As we saw in the historical antecedents, Gregory Nazianzen offered a similar dilemma to his heterousian contemporaries. The most influential – not to mention doggedly tenacious – was Eunomius of

¹¹³ See section 4.3.2.1.

¹¹⁴ See section 4.3.2.2.

¹¹⁵ See section 4.3.2.4.

¹¹⁶ See section 4.3.3 and 4.3.4.

¹¹⁷ See section 4.3.5.

¹¹⁸ See section 4.3.2.3.

Cyzicus, who taught that God does not, and cannot, generate substantially. Gregory attacked this teaching with equal vigour, charging Eunomius with positing a God who is either impotent or envious. In other words, with a God who either could not or would not share the Godhead. Gregory pressed the argument home by pointing out that both alternatives commit gross impiety, casting God as weak, envious, or fearful.

Such charges may have been rhetorically effective, but Eunomius did at least have some response. On Eunomius' metaphysic, generation involves division of essence, an essence is shared only if it is divided. This is fine for humans, who have compound natures, but not for God who is absolutely simple. Further, to Eunomius' mind, the fundamental characteristic of divinity is to be un-caused; to be God is to have no causal explanation. The idea that the Son is of the same essence as the Father would result in a conceptual contradiction: the Son would be both caused (since generated from the Father), and uncaused (since divine). For these and other reasons, Eunomius was more than happy to accept both horns of Gregory's dilemma. That is, Eunomius accepted that God does not will to share his essence because he cannot. Further, on Eunomius' view, it is trivial that God cannot produce essentially: God is no less praiseworthy for not producing substantially than he is for not creating a square circle. In sum, Eunomius' ontology was such that Gregory presented, if not a false dilemma, then a trivial one.

If someone wanted to avoid Richard's dilemma by taking the Eunomian route, Richard could respond by following Gregory, who did not argue over ontology, but attacked the implications of Eunomius' commitments. For example, Gregory argued that Eunomius' God could not do any better than produce the low stuff of creation, while the homousian God produces two perfect equals.¹¹⁹

4.3.7.2 Dale Tuggy against perfect generosity

Tuggy levels several attacks on arguments from perfect generosity, arguments similar to MP-M. He gives trinitarian arguments from generosity the following general form:

- P1. If there were a perfect self, he would be perfectly generous.
- P2. A perfectly generous being shares every good he enjoys which can be shared.
- P3. There's a good G such that any perfect being must have it, and it is shareable, and if G is shared, there must be another perfect being.
- P4. If there is a perfect self, there must be another perfect self.
- P5. Therefore, it is not possible for there to be exactly one perfect self.¹²⁰

While this outline is structured differently than Richard's plurality arguments, it accurately captures his general line of thought. Tuggy expresses reservations with P3, specifically with finding some G that makes the premise true. G cannot be the property 'being absolutely perfect' since this

¹¹⁹ Theologically, Gregory attacked Eunomius' view of the Son. On Eunomius' theology, the Son is just a very good example of lowly creation – a sort of 'the best of the worst'. In this way Gregory could claim to hold a higher view of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. Next, Gregory incisively argued that a son who does not share a nature with his father is no son. Further, because of his low and disconnected status as mere creation, the Son does not share a will with the Father, and so could not fully enact the Father's will in creating, saving, or (in the future) ruling the world; only a fully divine, and therefore homousian, Son could do all which Scripture describes. This reply assumes certain scriptural commitments and so is not a purely philosophical response.

¹²⁰ Tuggy, "On the Possibility of a Single Perfect Person," 138.

property "arguably entails existing *a se*," and "in principle nothing could have that feature because of something else."¹²¹ If aseity is necessary for absolute perfection, then we run into a contradiction: DP1 communicates his aseity when communicating his fullness, therefore DP2 both is and is not *a se*. How might Richard avoid the absurdity?

There are a few routes Richard could take,¹²² but he would probably begin by rejecting outright the claim that aseity is essential to absolute perfection. Tuggy is correct in saying that aseity is arguably a great-making property, though he does not actually argue the point. If he did, no doubt he would specify that great-making properties are always considered with accompanying *ceteris paribus* clauses. In the case of perfection and aseity, all things are not equal.

On Richard's understanding, supreme (i.e. maximal) perfection is part of the nature of the divine essence. Being divine is necessary and sufficient for supreme perfection. Importantly, Richard also teaches that there are different ways to be divine, different modes of having or being the divine essence. I will explore these modes in far greater detail in chapter six. For now I want to point out that Richard crafts a more subtle view of the divine essence than Tuggy's argument recognizes. Richard understands the divine essence (which, among other attributes, includes power, intellect, eternality, omnipresence, goodness) to be identical with the single, concrete divine substance. The divine substance is *a se*, it receives nothing from any source.¹²³ DP1 has the divine essence (is the divine substance) as un-received; while *a se*, he is absolutely perfect because he is fully divine. DP2 and DP3 have the divine essence as received; while *ab alio*, they are absolutely perfect because they are fully divine. Richard, then, posits that the 'G', or good, in P3 is divinity, which itself is *a se*, though not all divine persons are *a se*.¹²⁴

4.4 Conclusion

Step 2 of The Argument, the case for a plurality of divine persons, is Richard's detailed, complex set of arguments. It is also the most important. Assenting to the existence of two divine persons represents a certain psychological summit, or perhaps better, hurdle. Once crossed, it is much easier to credit the existence of three divine persons. In this way The Argument has some compounding force as it progresses. A force increased even more by Richard's employment of the same themes from Step 2 – goodness, happiness, and glory – in Step 3. If the reader finds the case

¹²¹ Tuggy, 139.

¹²² Whether he knows it or not, Tuggy here touches on a cluster of issues at contention during the great *autothean* controversies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is pertinent because Richard may have recourse to several orthodox options developed during the debates. Here I want to avoid anachronism and stay within the trinitarian system Richard develops in *De Trinitate*. See Brannon Ellis, *Calvin, Classical Trinitarianism, and the Aseity of the Son* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

¹²³ Richard does not use '*a se*' language, but rather '*a semetipso*' and '*ab alio*' ('from himself' and 'from another', respectively). The conceptual content between *a se* and *a semetipso* is close enough to use the more common terminology in this discussion.

¹²⁴ Perhaps surprisingly, Tuggy recognizes the validity of the traditional response to his critique of P3. That is, Tuggy goes on to admit that the *actual* property satisfying P3 is divinity, which does avoid the contradiction (though Tuggy cannot fathom how a divine person can both lack aseity and be perfect). Tuggy seems to think that proponents of the traditional view actually believe DP2 and DP3 to be less than maximally perfect. In any case, after apparently talking himself out of his objection to P3, he doubles back to reject P1, for which he "is not aware of any…reason to think it is true." Tuggy, "On the Possibility of a Single Perfect Person," 141.

in Step 2 plausible, then it is very likely she will find the case in Step 3 plausible as well. We turn to that step next.

5. ARGUMENTS FOR THREE DIVINE PERSONS

5.0 Introduction: What Happened in DT 3.6-10?

In the previous chapter we examined Step 2 of The Argument, where Richard develops a threefold case for multiple divine persons. The arguments we analysed there are all drawn from DT 3.2-5. In Step 3 Richard again advances three arguments, this time for the existence of at least three divine persons. However, he does not offer arguments for Step 3 until DT 3.11. In the meantime, in DT 3.6-10, he takes up an extended discussion of the "perfect equality and unity" which obtains among the divine persons. Summarized, DT 3.6 argues that the divine persons are co-eternal, DT3.7 that they each share all the divine perfections (i.e., all have similitude), and share them supremely (i.e., all have equality), and DT 3.8-9 explore the persons' substantial unity. Why this extended excursus? Richard could have included these thoughts at the end of the book, or left them out of book three altogether since he picks these themes up later.¹

On my reckoning, Richard wants to address the most pressing, and therefore most distracting, questions in the reader's mind. As one moves along in The Argument, several objections must be dealt with before any further steps can receive a fair hearing. This for two reasons. First, arguments in Step 3 build on previous steps both logically and also materially as Richard re-uses and develops key concepts and principles. If certain theses about goodness, supremacy, charity, etc., are not understood up front, confusion will only compound as The Argument proceeds. Second, The Argument's cogency drops dramatically in the minds of readers if some of their most pressing philosophical and theological concerns are not adequately treated at the outset. The topics covered between the duality-trinity arguments (i.e., in DT 3.6-10) may very well be concerns Richard's students and co-educators addressed to Richard, ones he knew must be answered before the rest of The Argument could receive a fair hearing.²

Indeed, we have good reason for believing that the topics of the excursus were hot-button issues during Richard's day. Abelard had recently been condemned for attributing certain characteristics heavily to each divine person. So heavily that it appeared, for example, that the Father is to be identified with power; while the Son and Spirit do not share in power in equal measure with the Father.³ Plausibly, then, Richard was highly motivated not only to convince readers, but also to keep his books out of council fires. A clear and extended early statement affirming orthodoxy is prudent and would explain the odd interruption of The Argument in book three.

¹ E.g. *DT* 3.21-25, 4.24-25.

² On the likelihood that *De Trinitate* had its roots in the classroom, see Bok, *Communicating the Most High*, 99.

³ Jeffrey Brower glosses the foundational problematic issue in Abelard's trinitarianism: "the divine persons, Abelard always says, are the same in virtue of their substance or essence, but differ in virtue of what is proper to each." Jeffrey Brower, "Trinity," in *The Cambridge Companion to Abelard*, ed. Jeffrey Brower and Kevin Guilfoy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 226. Like most of his contemporaries, Abelard holds that the distinguishing personal 'properties' of each divine person is *unique* to that person. Where Abelard strays, according to his contemporaries, is in predicating more than mere 'fatherhood' to the Father, 'begotteness' to the Son, and 'procession' to the Spirit. Abelard takes the stronger step of, apparently, predicating 'power' to the Father *alone* or in some unique sense, and similarly, 'wisdom' to the Son, and 'goodness' to the Spirit. This division of the latter three properties seemed strong enough to ecclesial authorities to censure the view as tritheism. At the Council of Soissons, Abelard's view was condemned and he was forced to throw his own books on the pyre.

In chapters 11 through 15 Richard gives three arguments for the existence of a minimum of three divine persons. He segues into those arguments saying,

It is already certain that there is a plurality of divine persons, but it is not yet certain that there is a Trinity. After all, plurality can even occur where there is no trinity; for example, duality itself is plurality. And so, concerning the affirmation of the Trinity let us interrogate the same witnesses, whom we summoned above to bear witness for plurality.⁴

Those witnesses, of course, are goodness, happiness, and glory. We will take each in turn.

5.1 The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Goodness

5.1.0 Overview

Richard begins with the following argument,

[1] Now, it is necessary for supreme charity to be entirely perfect. [2] But, in order for it to be supremely perfect, it is necessary for it to be so great that no greater love can exist, in the same way that it must also be so excellent that no better love can exist. [3] For, just as what is the greatest cannot be lacking in supreme charity, so it is certain that what is excellent will not possibly be lacking in it. [4] The desire for another to be loved as oneself certainly seems excellent in true charity. [5] In fact in a mutual and very ardent love nothing is rarer and more excellent than your desire for the person, whom you supremely love and who supremely loves you, to love equally another person. [6] And so, the proof of perfected charity is the votive communion of the love that was bestowed to oneself. [7] The excellent joy for someone, who loves supremely and desires to be loved supremely, usually lies in the fulfilment of his desire, that is, the acquisition of a desired love. [8] And so, the fact that someone is not yet able to be satisfied in the sharing of his excellent joy proves that he is not perfect in charity. [9] The inability, then to permit a partaker of love is an indication of great weakness, **[10]** but the ability to permit a partaker of love is a sign of great perfection. [11] If the ability to permit is great, then it will be greater to undertake it with joy; however it will be the greatest to seek it with longing. [12] The first is very good, the second is better, and the third is the best. [13] Therefore, let us give to the supreme what is excellent, and let us give to the best what is best. [14] And so, in order for perfection to be completed in the two mutually loved persons, whom our previous discussion treated, it needs, for the same reason, a partaker of the love which was shown to them. [15] Indeed if he does not desire what perfect goodness requires, then where will the fullness of goodness be? [16] But if he desires what cannot be done, then where will the fullness of power be?⁵

In outlining this long argument I will retain the order in which Richard presents it along with the essential propositional content, staying as close as possible to his language:⁶

⁴ DT 3.11 (Evans, 256; Ribaillier, 146).

⁵ DT 3.11 (Evans, 256-57; Ribaillier, 146-47).

⁶ The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 118. *The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Goodness** – MP-G*

The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Goodness – TP-G

- TP-G1) It is necessary for supreme charity to be entirely perfect.
- TP-G2) For supremely perfect charity it is necessary for it to be (i) so great that no greater love can exist, and (ii) so excellent that no better love can exist.
- TP-G3) Supreme charity cannot lack what is greatest, or what is excellent.
- TP-G4) The desire that another be loved as he is is an excellence of true charity.
- TP-G5) In mutual love, in which supreme love is mutually given and returned, nothing is more rare or excellent than the desire that your lover love another equally.
- TP-G6) The proof of perfect charity is the votive communion of love that was bestowed on oneself.
- TP-G7) Someone who loves supremely and desires to be loved supremely takes excellent joy in the acquisition of that desire.
- TP-G8) If someone is not able to be satisfied in sharing his excellent joy, then he does not have perfect charity.
- TP-G9) The inability to permit a partaker of love is a great weakness.
- TP-G10) The ability to permit a partaker of love is a great perfection.
- TP-G11) If the ability to permit a partaker of love is great, then undertaking to permit a partaker of love with joy is greater; it is greatest to seek a partaker of love with longing.
- TP-G12) The first is very good; the second is better; the third is the best.
- TP-G13) We should ascribe the supreme to what is excellent, and the best to what is best.

- P5) Necessarily, there is supreme charity. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, either X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, or it is not the case that X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled. [C1, P5: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

P7) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X is able to fulfil X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X. [Premise]

- P8) Necessarily, if there is an X such that X is a divine person and X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, then there are distinct V, W, and K such that (i) V is a divine person, (ii) W is a divine person, and (iii) K is a divine person. [Premise]
- P9) Necessarily, there is an X such that X is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C4) Necessarily, there are distinct V, W, and K such that (i) V is a divine person, (ii) W is a divine person, and (iii) K is a divine person. [C3, P8, P9: Necessity E & I, Universal E, Existential E & I, Modus Ponens]

P1) Necessarily, if there is supreme charity, then there is supremely perfect charity. [Premise]

P2) Necessarily, if there is supremely perfect charity, then there is maximally good charity and there is maximally excellent charity. [Premise]

P3) Necessarily, if there is maximally excellent charity, then there are distinct X, Y, Z such that X loves Y and X desires that Y loves Z as Y loves X. [Premise]

P4) Necessarily, if there are distinct X, Y, Z such that X loves Y and X desires that Y loves Z as Y loves X, then either X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, or it is not the case that X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled. [Premise]

C1) Necessarily, if there is supreme charity, then either X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, or it is not the case that X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled. [P1, P2, P3, P4: Necessity E & I, Transitivity of Implication]

P6) Necessarily, if it is not the case that X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, then it is not the case that X is able to fulfil X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X. [Premise]

C3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled. [P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Modus Tollens, Conditional E & I]

- TP-G14) In order for perfection to be completed in two mutually loved persons, it needs a partaker of the love which was shown to them.
- TP-G15) If a divine person does not desire that which is required by perfect goodness, then he will not have the fullness of goodness.
- TP-G16) If a divine person desires the impossible, he will not have the fullness of power.

In summary, TP-G's general moves are: premises TP-G1 – TPG-3 iterate previously established metaphysical content; TP-G4 – TPG-6 are the psychological heart of the TP-G; TP-G7 – TPG-12 apply the logic of supreme goodness to those psychological findings; TP-G13 – TPG-16 finish the proof with the theological methodology of the 'approach from above'. Richard leaves it to the reader to draw the main conclusion for herself. Let us examine each move in greater detail.

5.1.1 Metaphysical foundations – Premises TP-G1 through TP-G3: It is necessary for supreme charity to be entirely perfect. For supremely perfect charity it is necessary for it to be (i) so great that no greater love can exist, and (ii) so excellent that no better love can exist. Supreme charity cannot lack what is greatest, or what is excellent

TP-G1 iterates the definition of supreme, discussed in *DC*2, on which two conditions must be met for something to be supremely perfect: it must (i) have all qualities proper to it, and (ii) those qualities to the highest degree. Premise TP-G2 applies these to conditions to charity. Supreme charity, then, is maximally good and maximally perfect. TP-G3 does no more than restate these two conditions. By this point, Richard has presented much support for these conditions and I will grant them without rehearsing his arguments.⁷

5.1.2 The psychology of desire in supreme charity – Premises TP-G4 through TP-G6

5.1.2.1 Premise TP-G4: The desire that another be loved as he is is an excellence of true charity⁸

Premises TP-G4 – TP-G6 are the psychological heart of TP-G. If veridical, these observations prove Richard is the keen phenomenologist for which he has received no little praise.⁹ In TP-G4 Richard claims that true – that is, complete – charity includes a certain type of desire, what I will call 'co-beloved desire'. In a relationship of perfect love, both lovers desire that some third party

⁷ See the MP-G in section 4.1.

⁸ Admittedly, this English construction is a bit awkward, and may not be an improvement on a word-for-word translation, such as: 'Willing another to be loved as himself truly appears eminent in true charity' (*Precipuum vero videtur in vera caritate alterum velle diligi ut se*).

⁹ According to Cousins, Richard "approaches the question [of divine love] not through the abstraction of the schools, but through a psychological analysis of interpersonal relations" and his "minute and penetrating analyses of affective states have much in common with contemporary phenomenology and psychology." Cousins, "A Theology of Interpersonal Relations," 56. In Dumeige we find echoes of this analysis. Richard of St Victor, *Richard de Saint Victor: Les Quatre Degres de la Violente Charite: Les quatre degrés de la violente charité*, trans. G. Dumeige, Textes Philosophiques Du Moyen-Age 3 (Paris: J. Vrin, 1955), 109ff. Ribaillier argues convincingly for a slightly different understanding. While not denying any of Richard's psychological merits, he stresses that Richard writes not as a psychologist, but as a "theologian of the spirit." Jean Ribaillier, "Richard of Saint-Victor: De Statu Interioris Hominis," *Archives d'histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire Du Moyen Age* 34 (1967): 7–128.

be loved. In Richard's words, the lover "desire[s] for another to be loved as [himself]." Put another way,

(Co-beloved desire) If DP1 shares supreme mutual love with DP2, then DP1 desires that there be a DP3 who is loved by DP2 in the same way that DP1 is.

A couple questions must be asked about co-beloved desire. First, DP1 desires that another, DP3, be loved as he is loved. How, then, is DP1 loved? What kind of love does he receive? On Richard's taxonomy, there are only two modes of loving which apply to all expressions of personal love, namely, *amor gratuitus* and *amor debitus*. I will refer to these as *gratuitous love* and *requited love*, respectively. As I have described it, co-beloved desire does not specify that DP1 desires that third parties only be loved in the way he is loved. That is, TP-G4 does not make a claim like the following: if DP1 is loved only with requited love, then he desires for there to be some DP3 who is loved only with requited love. Indeed, such a state is impossible since, as we will see in the next chapter, the modes of loving are identical with the modes of personal distinction. No two divine persons share their particular mode of charity be). Therefore, co-beloved desire does not specify that a perfect lover desires for another, but instead states only that a perfect lover desires for a third party to be loved *maximally*.

This leads to the second question: Why does it seem excellent for a divine person to have such a desire? Why should we believe that co-beloved desire is a perfection of DP1's love? As an initial line of support, we can look back to *The Argument for Multiple Divine Persons from Glory*. There Richard argues that generosity, i.e. the desire to communicate one's goodness, is glorious. The desire for another to be loved maximally is excellent because this desire too is generous; DP1's desire to share charity with DP3 is not just a solitary desire, but in fact a desire to *join with* DP2 in sharing. In this way we have a distinct type of generosity compounding the glories of DP1 and DP2's mutual charity. Further, the desire that DP3 be loved is an excellence because it results in even greater joy for DP1 and DP2 than their dyadic love yields: by turning to a third party, they both receive the delights of joining together in love for a third. If generosity and joy are good reasons for the desire to share with a second, then they look like solid reasons to share with a third.¹⁰ Richard coins a term for this third person, *condilectum*, which aptly describes DP3 as a corporately ('con') loved ('dilectum') person: in short, 'co-beloved'.

5.1.2.2 Premise TP-G5. In mutual love, in which supreme love is mutually given and returned, nothing is more rare or excellent than the desire that your lover love another equally

In co-beloved desire we learn that supreme charity requires that DP1 desires a DP3 to be loved maximally. Here Richard explains that in order for DP3 to be loved maximally, he must be loved by DP1 *and* DP2. DP1, then, must desire that DP2 actually love the third party. Richard thinks such a desire is the most excellent quality of love. This is a bold claim, and appears as if Richard overstates his case. That is, of all the excellent qualities – or perfections – of charity, the very best is S1's desire for his beloved, S2, to love some S3.

¹⁰ True, they also give good reasons for requiring a desire to share with a fourth person. That is, unless we have overriding good reason for rejecting DP4 as impossible, then we ought to posit a fourth person. We will examine Richard's arguments against such a possibility in chapter six.

Of course, Richard seems to recognize that his stance is strong, which may be why he gives the addendum that such a desire is not only most excellent, but also most rare. Rare or not, to be convincing this argument must accord with common experience. That is, we must experience such desires (whether first or second-hand), and know them to be necessary for perfect other-love. Only after confirmation in common human experience may we cogently apply the principle to less well-known circumstances, such as the relationship between divine persons. And in common experience, it appears as if S1 typically does *not* want her beloved to love some third party as she is loved. We can see this by way of example: in romantic love, it is almost universally the case that a lover desires his partner to only love him, and *not* others. But this example misses the point of co-beloved desire. Richard does not propose that a lover desires for her beloved to love some third party in an identical way that she is loved. For instance, a father does not desire that his child love the mother precisely as he (the father) is loved. In other words, Dad wants Son to love Mom *as Mom*, not as Dad.¹¹ (Recall that co-beloved desire underdetermines the mode of love which obtains between lovers).

When applied to divine persons, we find that DP1's desire is for DP3 to be loved in the way appropriate to DP3. DP3 must be loved *qua* DP3. Generally, it is a great perfection of love when S1 desires that his lover turn her love outward to others. Whomever S3 may be, surely it is a great excellence of love in the created order to join with some person(s) in loving others appropriately, according to their make-up and needs. If so, then we have excellent reason for believing that TP-G4 and TP-G5 are on the right track. Whether we have good enough reason to view such desire as the most excellent aspect of other-love is uncertain. The best reading of this sub-argument is to view the claim in TP-G5 as somewhat hyperbolic: it is neither most excellent nor most rare to have the desire under discussion. Fortunately, I do not believe that Richard's argument depends on the matter. That co-beloved desire is *an* excellence of true charity is sufficient for the argument to work.

5.1.2.3 Premise TP-G6: The proof of perfect charity is the votive communion of love that was bestowed on oneself

Richard offers one final line of support for co-beloved desire. He argues that charity between S1 and S2 is only completed when S1 desires to share that love and its resulting joy with another. This sharing with S3 is a 'votive communion'. The term 'votive' (*votiva*) requires some explanation. In the Middle Ages, the most common use was *missa votiva*, a mass offered to a saint on behalf of another. While we catch a glimpse of the three-party connotation of the term in this common use (offeror-saint-beneficiary), we may best understand Richard's employment as a play on words: *votum* is Latin for wish or desire. Indeed, in a *missa votiva* the celebrant brings to the observance a specific *votum*, or desire.¹² From this context we can appreciate Richard's double entendre. The votive communion (*votiva communio*), like the votive mass, brings two parties together on behalf of a third. Further, the *votum* root loads *votiva* with tones of desire, the core phenomena at issue in TP-G generally and this segment of the argument specifically. Premise TP-G6 highlights the place of desire within charity. Charity love includes: desire for another (part of the definition of love);

¹¹ Cf. Stump's 'offices of love', which are "the sort of sharing and closeness suitable in that relationship." Eleonore Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative And The Problem Of Suffering* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 97.

¹² For more on the eleventh and twelfth century votive mass, see Sally Elizabeth Harper, *Medieval English Benedictine Liturgy: Studies in the Formation, Structure, and Content of the Monastic Votive Office, c. 950-1540* (New York: Routledge, 2019), ii–iii.

desire to be loved by that other (a necessary condition of charity); desire to share the results of requited love with another.

5.1.3 Acquiring co-beloved desire – Premises TP-G7 through TP-G12: Someone who loves supremely and desires to be loved supremely takes excellent joy in the acquisition of that desire. If someone is not able to be satisfied in sharing his excellent joy, then he does not have perfect charity. The inability to permit a partaker of love is a great weakness. The ability to permit a partaker of love is a great meakness.

Premise TP-G7 makes a further claim about co-beloved desire, namely, that it results in supreme joy.¹³ We know from earlier arguments¹⁴ that joy results from a desire obtained, and joy also results when love is requited. Applying this phenomenological data to the desire for a *condilectus*, we have the following: when a divine person achieves his desire for mutual love with a third person, he experiences supreme joy.

Premise TP-G8 states that sharing supreme joy is necessary for perfect charity. But why does Richard employ the notion of *joy* instead of, say, charity? Charity has been the primary notion employed in The Argument so far, indeed TP-G4 – TP-G6 are about the desire for a third recipient of charity. Why the switch from desire to joy as the critical condition of supreme charity?

Richard uses the joys of charity as a cipher for supreme charity because charity always effects the joy. He may also be laying a conceptual path for the next argument, TP-H, in which he argues from shared joy. Conceptually, joy has been present all along in the psychology of charity: DP1 experiences joy in loving DP2; DP1 shares the fullness of his being with DP3, that is, his love for DP3 includes *everything* he has, including his joy from loving DP-2.¹⁵ Joy can stand in for charity here because the two are conceptually and experientially so closely tied. Further, in TP-G we see Richard quietly prepare his reader for the TP-H.

The upshot of all this is that joy necessarily accompanies supreme charity, and supreme charity is sufficient for supreme joy. This couplet of implications introduces an idea which will appear again in TP-H and TP-M, where Richard develops the logic of joy more fully. For now we need only see that (i) joy is an effect of mutual love, and (ii) a divine person desires to share that joy with another, third, divine person in a distinct relation of love.

Premise TP-G9 explores the unacceptable consequences of not engaging in triadic love. On a simple reading TP-G9 seems apparent, since lacking the power to engage in other-love appears to be a fault of some kind. But as we saw in MP-M, not all powerlessness is faulty. For instance, inability to do the impossible is no true weakness in the divine. Another example: all created beings have powers or potencies specific to their nature; a being's inability to perform an action requiring powers outside of its nature is only vacuously called a weakness. We must therefore inquire into the nature of a divine person's inability to permit a lover. What could explain or cause such an inability? Richard does not pursue the matter any further here, so he probably has in mind the two possible causes from MP-M, viz., lack of ability to share, or lack of will. If so, TP-G9 follows the same general dilemma he developed in MP-M.

¹³ For consistency, I will translate 'excellent joy' (*precipuum gaudium*) as 'supreme' joy.

¹⁴ E.g. MP-H¹, specifically premise MP-H1; MP-M5 – MP-M7.

¹⁵ More on all this in the next section on the Argument from Happiness.

It may appear that TP-G10 is the contrapositive of TP-G9. On this reading, we could state TP-G10: If S is able to permit a partaker of love, then S does not have a great weakness. But in fact TP-G10 is the stronger claim that the ability to permit a partaker of love is not merely the absence of weakness, but the presence of great perfection. Richard no doubt is comfortable with the stronger claim because of the many arguments already developed for such an idea.¹⁶

5.1.4 The supremacy of willed charity – Premises TP-G11 and TP-G13: If the ability to permit a partaker of love is great, then undertaking to permit a partaker of love with joy is greater; it is greatest to seek a partaker of love with longing. The first is very good; the second is better; the third is the best. We should ascribe the supreme to what is excellent, and the best to what is best

In TP-G11 – TP-G13, Richard deploys some perfect-attribute reasoning to argue for a particular great-making property. Premise TP-G11 makes the argument, TP-G12 summarizes it, and TP-G13 applies it to the supreme substance.

Premise TP-G11 brings together findings from several previous premises to describes a complex psychological state. The *power* to love a DP3 is a great perfection (from TP-G10), the *joy* resulting from that love is a great perfection (TP-G7 and TP-G8), and the *desire* to love him is a great perfection. Richard takes no stance on which, if any, of these states is greatest among the others. Instead, the greatest possible state instantiates all three together. Premise TP-G11 presents a complex mental state involving the three perfections involved in supreme love of a third divine person: power, joy, and desire. In this way TP-G11 is a culminating claim in TP-G.

Premise TP-G12 summarizes TP-G11 while emphasizing the supremacy of the three-fold state of desire, power, and joy. That is, the desire and power to love a third divine person, and the actualization of that desire and power in a relation of love, results in joy. Having all three of desire, power, and joy is clearly better than merely having any one or two. Premise TP-G13 re-applies the method from below (discussed in chapter 2), in which the highest perfections are ascribed to God. In this way Richard avoids the following counterargument: if God must have any single perfection, then he must have *all* possible perfections. It is apparent that God does not have all perfection. Richard avoids this argument by minimizing his operative metaphysical principle. God does not necessarily have *all* perfections, only the *greatest* (i.e. supreme) ones. In TP-G11 and TP-G12 he argues that the complex state of power-joy-desire is a supreme perfection, and so we are compelled to ascribe it God.

5.1.5 Conclusion and avoiding the dilemma from TP-G8 and TP-G9 – Premises TP-G14

through TP-G16: In order for perfection to be completed in two mutually loved persons, it needs a partaker of the love which was shown to them. If a divine person does not desire that which is required by perfect goodness, then he will not have the fullness of goodness. If a divine person desires the impossible, he will not have the fullness of power

TP-G14 claims that perfection is achieved among two divine persons only when they love a third. More specifically, and as a summary of TP-G, the love between DP1 and DP2 is only complete

¹⁶ E.g. MP-H5; MP-M3.

when they join with one another in loving a third, DP3. Since divine love is complete, there are at least three divine persons.

Along with this conclusion, Richard appends a quick two-part argument to address the dilemma in TP-G8 and TP-G9, which states that unwillingness and inability to love a third party are great imperfections. To address this concern, we may recall that the desire for a co-beloved is supremely excellent (TP-G4 and TP-G5), and is therefore necessary for supreme goodness. Since a divine person has supreme goodness, he is not unwilling to love a third person. Further, as omniscient, he knows the impossible and does not desire it. Divine persons only desire the possible. Because DP1 and DP2 desire a third lover, that desire is possibly met. Finally, since it is possible, and since they can do all that is possible, they are not only willing, but able to act on their desire.

5.1.6 Full expression of the argument

The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Goodness* – MP-G*

- P1) Necessarily, if there is supreme charity, then there is supremely perfect charity. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if there is supremely perfect charity, then there is maximally good charity and there is maximally excellent charity. [Premise]
- P3) Necessarily, if there is maximally excellent charity, then there are distinct X, Y, Z such that X loves Y and X desires that Y loves Z as Y loves X. [Premise]
- P4) Necessarily, if there are distinct X, Y, Z such that X loves Y and X desires that Y loves Z as Y loves X, then either X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, or it is not the case that X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, if there is supreme charity, then either X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, or it is not the case that X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled. [P1, P2, P3, P4: Necessity E & I, Transitivity of Implication]
- P5) Necessarily, there is supreme charity. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, either X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, or it is not the case that X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled. [C1, P5: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]
- P6) Necessarily, if it is not the case that X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, then it is not the case that X is able to fulfil X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X. [Premise]
- P7) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X is able to fulfil X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person, then X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled. [P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Modus Tollens, Conditional E & I]
- P8) Necessarily, if there is an X such that X is a divine person and X's desire that Y loves Z as Y loves X is fulfilled, then there are distinct V, W, and K such that (i) V is a divine person, (ii) W is a divine person, and (3) K is a divine person. [Premise]
- P9) Necessarily, there is an X such that X is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C4) Necessarily, there are distinct V, W, and K such that (i) V is a divine person, (ii) W is a divine person, and (iii) K is a divine person. [C3, P8, P9: Necessity E & I, Universal E, Existential E & I, Modus Ponens]

In this argument P1 identifies perfection as a necessary condition of supreme charity. P2 further stipulates that maximal goodness and maximal excellence are necessary for supreme charity. Richard supports both P1 and P2 by appealing to the nature of supremacy (i.e., maximality).¹⁷ Corresponding to TP-G4, P3 introduces the idea of co-beloved desire, which Richard observes as

¹⁷ See section 5.1.1.

a phenomenon in the best instances of the other-love.¹⁸ P4 states that co-beloved desire is either satisfied or unsatisfied, and P6 states the only possible explanation for co-beloved desire to go unsatisfied: the lover is not able to satisfy the desire.¹⁹ P7 denies the inability to satisfy co-beloved desire, given God's supreme power. P8 unpacks a key requirement of co-beloved desire, namely, that it requires three persons to be satisfied.²⁰ P9 directs us to the necessary existence of at least two divine persons, a supposition established in the MP arguments. C4 closes the proof and is equivalent to, "Necessarily, there are at least three divine persons."

5.2 The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Happiness

5.2.0 Overview

Richard states his second argument for three persons thus,

[1] If someone contends that there are only those two mutually loved persons in the true divinity, which the above reason discovered, then what reason, I ask, will he possibly give for his assertion? [2] Can it be, I ask, that each of these persons will lack a partaker of their excellent joy? Maybe this is because neither wanted to have a partaker, or maybe because one wanted it but the other did not. [3] But if the one person did not want what the other wanted, then where will that property be which usually always belongs and must always belong to true and perfect friends? [4] Where, I ask, will that special prerogative of intimate love be, namely, the unanimity and intimate concord of minds? [5] And certainly, if someone asserts that one desires a partaker but the other does not, then he will concede that whoever cannot prevail in his volition will be denied the supreme power. [6] But if someone asserts that neither can be satisfied with the communion of the love which was shown to them, then how, I ask, will he be able to excuse them from the defect of love which was previously specified? [7] But we know that nothing can be hidden from those who are supremely wise. [8] And so, if they truly and supremely love one another, then how will any one of them be able to see the defect in the other and not grieve? [9] After all, if one of them sees the defect of the other and does not grieve, then where will the fullness of love be? [10] If one does see it and grieves, then where will the fullness of happiness be? [11] But it is certain that the fullness of happiness will not be able to exist where a cause for grieving is never absent. [12] For that reason, therefore, it is concluded and apprehended with unquestionable reason that the fullness of happiness removes every defect of charity, [13] whose perfection, as we have said, requires the trinity of persons and also shows that a trinity of persons cannot be lacking.²¹

The following outline retains Richard's order of presentation and the essential propositional content. I attempt to stay as close to Richard's language as possible. However, the above passage is highly rhetorical and to achieve clarity regarding the truth-claims being made, significant paraphrase is necessary:²²

¹⁸ See section 5.1.2.

¹⁹ See section 5.1.2.

 $^{^{20}}$ See section 5.1.3.

²¹ DT 3.12 (Evans, 257-58; Ribaillier, 147-48).

²² The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 125.

The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Happiness – TP-H

- TP-H1) If there are only two divine persons, then neither has a partaker of his excellent joy.
- TP-H2) If neither of the two divine persons has a partaker of his excellent joy, then either (i) neither wanted a partaker, or (ii) one wanted a partaker and one did not.
- TP-H3) Unanimity of minds is the special prerogative of intimate love, and must be had by true and perfect friends.

The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Happiness* – MP-H*

- P1) Necessarily, if there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then it is not the case that X has a partaker of X's excellent joy, and it is not the case that Y has a partaker of Y's excellent joy. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if it is not the case that X has a partaker of X's excellent joy, and it is not the case that Y has a partaker of Y's excellent joy, then either (i) it is not the case that X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy, or (ii) X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, if there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then either (i) it is not the case that X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy, or (ii) X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Transitivity of Conditional]
- P3) Necessarily, it is not the case that (i) X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and that (ii) it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, if there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then it is not the case that X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy. [C1, P3: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Conditional E & I, Disjunctive Syllogism]
- P4) Necessarily, if it is not the case that X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy, then X greedily withholds charity and Y greedily withholds charity. [Premise]
- P5) Necessarily, if X greedily withholds charity and Y greedily withholds charity, then X has a defect of benevolence and Y has a defect of benevolence. [Premise]
- P6) Necessarily, if X has a defect of benevolence and Y has a defect of benevolence, then X knows that Y has a defect of benevolence, and Y knows that X has a defect of benevolence. [Premise]
- P7) Necessarily, if X knows that Y has a defect of benevolence and Y knows that X has a defect of benevolence, then X grieves and Y grieves. [Premise]
- P8) Necessarily, if X grieves and Y grieves, then it is not the case that X has supreme happiness and it is not the case that Y has supreme happiness. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily if there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then it is not the case that X has supreme happiness and it is not the case that Y has supreme happiness. [C2, P4-P8: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Transitivity of Implication]
- P9) Necessarily, it is not the case that: X doesn't have supreme happiness and Y doesn't have supreme happiness. [Premise]
 - C4) Necessarily, it is not the case there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person. [C3, P9: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Modus Tollens]
- P10) Necessarily, if it is not the case there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then it is the case that there are distinct X, Y, Z such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and Z is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C5) Necessarily, there are distinct X, Y, Z such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and Z is a divine person. [C4, P10: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

- TP-H4) If one wanted a partaker and one did not (option (ii)), then there is no unanimity of minds.
- TP-H5) And if one wanted a partaker and one did not (option (ii)), then one divine person is not omnipotent.
- TP-H6) If neither wanted a partaker (option (i)), then each divine person greedily withholds the charity which was shared with him and has a defect of benevolence.
- TP-H7) Divine persons are supremely wise and therefore will know of any defect in another divine person.
- TP-H8) Divine persons supremely love each other and therefore, if one sees a defect in the other, then he will grieve.
- TP-H9) If a divine person sees a defect in another divine person and does not grieve, then he does not have supreme charity.
- TP-H10) If a divine person sees a defect in another divine person and does grieve, then he does not have supreme happiness.
- TP-H11) If there is a cause of grief, then there cannot be supreme happiness.
- TP-H12) If there is the fullness of happiness, then there is perfect charity.
- TP-H13) If there is perfect charity, then there are at least three divine persons.

This argument seeks to defeat the claim that there are only two divine persons. The argument has three parts: first, TP-H1 – TP-H2 presents the claim with a dilemma; second, TP-H3 – TP-H12 argues for the impossibility of both lemmas; finally, TP-H13 concludes with the existence of three divine persons. I will address each part in turn.

5.2.1 Presentation of the dilemma – Premises TP-H1 and TP-H2

5.2.1.1 Premise TP-H1: If there are only two divine persons, then neither has a partaker of his excellent joy

Speaking to a hypothetical objector who posits only two divine persons, Richard counters with a question. "What reason," he asks, could the objector "possibly give for his assertion?" Whatever reason the objector offers, it must include the proposition 'DP1 and DP2 lack a partaker of their supreme joy'. Richard pounces on this part of the objector's reasoning (or entailment of the objector's reasoning). He explains that if one or both divine persons lack a third party with whom to share joy, then necessarily there will result a psychological state which a divine person cannot have. To see why, we must rehearse some of Richard's ontology of love.

S1's love for S2 involves a desire for S2.²³ Part of S1's desire for S2 is that S2 requite S1's love. When that desire is met, i.e. when S2 requites S1's love, S1 experiences joy. Focusing his attention on the joy resulting from mutual charity, Richard makes an important discovery in the psychology of love. The joy S1 experiences from S2's requited love is distinct from S1's love. Put another way, S1's love for S2 is different from the joy S1 experiences when S2 returns her love.

Richard applies this insight from human love to love among divine persons. When DP2 requites DP1's supreme love, DP1 experiences a resulting joy, call this 'joy¹⁻²'. Joy¹⁻² is supreme because DP1 shares the fullness of his thoughts, desires, and feelings with S2, as Richard argued in MP-G. Joy¹⁻² must be distinct from DP1's love for DP2 because it is a result of DP2's requital. DP1's love

²³ Cf. MP-H5.

for DP2 is a prior condition for joy¹⁻². Joy¹⁻² comes *from* DP1's love for DP2, and so cannot be *part of* that love. (If DP1 shared joy¹⁻² with DP2, joy¹⁻² would simply fold back into the original act of love. In this case joy¹⁻² would be its own cause and effect, which is impossible. Therefore, joy¹⁻² must be distinct from the love between DP1 and DP2).

The upshot of this insight is that DP1 is left with a joy which resulted from his love for DP2, but is distinct from that love. DP1 cannot share joy¹⁻² with DP2. Richard will focus on this unshared joy as the theme of his dilemma.

5.2.1.2 Premise TP-H2: If neither of the two divine persons has a partaker of his excellent joy, then either (i) neither wanted a partaker, or (ii) one wanted a partaker and one did not

At the end of the MP-M we saw that a divine person who is both able and willing to perform some action will necessarily do so (MP-M12).²⁴ Call this the *Necessitarian Principle*. That principle is applied here, and prevents the objector from positing two divine persons as a brute fact. In other words, Richard may demand that the objector give an explanation of why there are only two divine persons and, therefore, why those persons do not share their excellent joy.

Beside the Necessitarian Principle, Richard may appeal to the metaphysics of supreme charity to demand an explanation from his objector. We know that supreme love involves the act of sharing everything one may possibly share. It appears metaphysically possible, and certainly logically possible, that DP1 can share joy¹⁻². If DP1 does not share joy¹⁻² with anyone, then DP1 is withholding some good, and his charity is not supreme.

Now, recall that DP1 cannot share his supreme joy with DP2, since that joy is a result of their love. DP1 and DP2 are each *able* to share their joy, and so if they do not, the only alternative is the other horn of the now familiar dilemma: one or both persons desire to withhold their joy from another. That is, if DP1 does not share his joy¹⁻² with DP3, then DP1 greedily withholds supreme charity, resulting in all the unacceptable negative aspects covered in MP-M. Further, in such a scenario, DP1 greedily withholds his charity from DP3 while DP2 goes his separate way, attempting to share his own excellent joy (joy²⁻¹) with DP3. In a second scenario, *neither* DP1 nor DP2 desire to share their excellent joy (joy¹⁻² and joy²⁻¹, respectively).

We may now summarize the discussion so far on how Richard builds the TP-H dilemma. If there are two divine persons, as the hypothetical objector concedes, then their dual existence has certain metaphysical implications. One is that these two share supreme love. A necessary result of their mutual love is that both persons have an instance of 'excellent joy'. Richard presses the objector for an explanation for why there are only two persons. Whatever reason the objector supplies, it must explain why each person does not share his excellent joy. The only possible explanations involve volition and power: either one of the two divine persons desires to withhold his excellent joy and the other does not (option ii), or both divine persons desire to withhold their joy (option i). Richard next works to defeat both options in detail.

²⁴ Cf. section 4.3.5.

5.2.2 Impossibility of (ii) - Premises TP-H3 through TP-H5

Richard gives two reasons to reject option (ii), that is, against the assertion that one divine person desires to withhold his excellent joy while the other does not.

5.2.2.1 Reason 1 – Premises TP-H3 and TP-H4: Unanimity of minds is the special prerogative of intimate love, and must be had by true and perfect friends. If one wanted a partaker and one did not (option (ii)), then there is no unanimity of minds

Richard expresses the first argument in two-steps. First he claims that agreement, 'unanimity of minds', is a necessary condition of perfect love. Second, that if one persons wants a partaker (a third person) and if the other person does not want a partaker, then there is no agreement. There are a few gaps here which the reader is expected to fill in. Doing so gives us a fuller picture of argument:

- 1) Unanimity is necessary for perfect love. [Premise]
- 2) DP1 and DP2 have perfect love. [Premise]
- 3) Therefore, DP1 and DP2 have unanimity. [1, 2: Modus Ponens]
- 4) If a divine person wanted a partaker of his excellent joy but another divine person did not, then they would not have unanimity. [Premise]
- 5) Therefore, it is not the case that a divine person wants a partaker of his excellent joy but another divine person does not. [3, 4: Modus Tollens]

A key notion at work here is that of 'unanimity' (*unanimitas*). While Richard does not specify the full nature of unanimity, we get a sense of its baseline conditions. One aspect of unanimity is that of belief states: DP1 and DP2 are both omniscient, so both assent to the same true propositions (namely, all of them). Another aspect of unanimity, the one most relevant to the present argument, is that of volitional agreement. Two (or more) persons have unanimity – in the sense relevant to TP-H – when they each desire the same object or state of affairs. Minimally, then, unanimity is a meeting of wills.²⁵

Richard puts the idea to work in this argument by claiming that unanimity is necessary for supreme friendship and love. But why should we believe that unanimity is necessary for supreme love? The next reason supports this claim.

5.2.2.2 Reason 2 – Premise TP-H5: And if one wanted a partaker and one did not (option (ii)), then one divine person is not omnipotent

Premise TP-H5 claims that if only one divine person desires to withhold his joy from a third, then he is not omnipotent. In Richard's words, "and certainly, if someone asserts that one desires a partaker but the other does not, then he will concede that whoever cannot prevail in his volition will be denied the supreme power."²⁶ Summarizing the main steps, Richard argues that if a divine

 $^{^{25}}$ On Richard's view, the divine persons each share, or have, the single divine will (cf. *DT* 5.23). Congruity of wills (as well as beliefs), then, is baked into Richard's notion of divine personhood. Whether or not this view satisfies the reader's intuitions about personhood (e.g., what does it mean to say that two persons have numerically one will?) is at this time beside the point. At this stage in our analysis, the point is that numerically one will, had by two, persons satisfies the conditions of supreme perfection and happiness, and results in supreme joy.

²⁶ DT 3.12 (Evans, 257-58; Ribaillier, 148).

persons, say DP1, desires a partaker of excellent joy and DP2 does not, then one will have his desire met and the other will not. However, a divine person who cannot realize his desire for (or against) a partaker of excellent joy is impotent. But divine persons are not impotent and so either both divine persons desire to have a partaker of excellent joy, or both desire to not have a partaker of their excellent joy.

In reason 1 just above (premises TP-H3 and TP-H4), we saw that DP1 has excellent joy (specifically, joy¹⁻²) as a result of DP2's requited love, but independent from his love for DP2. The current argument reveals that excellent joy, while independently had by each divine person, must be communicated to a third, and that DP1 and DP2 must together communicate their joys with DP3. There cannot be a state in which one divine person shares his excellent joy, but the other does not. This because in willing a partaker of excellent joy, DP1 and/or DP2 also wills the existence of a third divine person. So, while DP2 may desire to withhold his excellent joy, he cannot simultaneously desire to withhold his excellent joy *and* desire the existence of a third divine person. The decision to withhold joy is also a decision to deny existence for DP3. The problem, then, is not that DP1 and DP2 have different desires regarding their joy and whether to share it or not. The problem is between competing desires to give DP3 being. Either there is or is not a DP3. If there is no DP3, then either DP1 or DP2 is exposed as impotent to achieve his desire. But since divine persons are omnipotent, they must both desire the same state of affairs: both want DP3, or both want no DP3.²⁷

5.2.3 Impossibility of (i) – Premises TP-H6 through TP-H11: If neither wanted a partaker (option (i)), then each divine person greedily withholds the charity which was shared with him and has a defect of benevolence. Divine persons are supremely wise and therefore will know of any defect in another divine person. Divine persons supremely love each other and therefore, if one sees a defect in the other, then he will grieve. If a divine person sees a defect in another divine person and does not grieve, then he does not have supreme charity. If a divine person sees a defect in another divine person and does grieve, then he does not have supreme happiness. If there is a cause of grief, then there cannot be supreme happiness

This argument against (i) flows in much the same way as MP-M. There Richard argued against the possibility of a single divine person greedily withholding his fullness. The fulcrum of that argument was the idea that such an action always represents a defect of glory. Richard presses the universal principle into a specific application: if *any* greedy withholding is inglorious, then certainly *two* divine persons greedily withholding is inglorious.

TP-H9 addresses a possible objection, namely, that the divine persons do not grieve over their withholding. In this scenario, DP1 endorses DP2's decision: they are unanimous in willing to withhold. Not so, replies Richard: both divine persons may consort in their greed, but because they are both omniscient they still recognize the defect of glory and benevolence in one another. Since each loves the other, they desire the best for each other. In the case of divine persons, the best is nothing short of fullness and supremacy of perfection. Although DP1 shares DP2's greedy desire, his heartache is not lessened. Seeing his beloved's greed yields a grief that, as TP-H11 points out, is eternal.

²⁷ It seems that Richard assumes that for any state of affairs, a divine person either wills that state to obtain or wills that state to not obtain. Therefore, there is no option on which DP1 wills for/against DP3, while DP2 has no will regarding DP3.

5.2.4 Conclusions about the trinity of divine persons – Premise TP-H12 and main conclusion TP-H13: If there is the fullness of happiness, then there is perfect charity. If there is perfect charity, then there are at least three divine persons

Richard ties together the notions of happiness and charity in the final steps. TP-H12 expresses the idea, argued in MP-H, that supreme happiness is sufficient for supreme charity. Since each divine person is supremely happy, then each shares his excellent joy. Therefore, the fullness of happiness requires a third divine person. At the end of TP-H Richard gives a short concluding remark, "Behold how the supreme goodness and supreme happiness shout harmoniously the proclamation of the Trinity and confirm it with mutual attestation."²⁸ To these two voices, goodness and happiness, Richard will now add the third, that of glory.

5.2.5 Full expression of the argument

The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Happiness* – MP-H*

- P1) Necessarily, if there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then it is not the case that X has a partaker of X's excellent joy, and it is not the case that Y has a partaker of Y's excellent joy. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if it is not the case that X has a partaker of X's excellent joy, and it is not the case that Y has a partaker of Y's excellent joy, then either (i) it is not the case that X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy, or (ii) X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, if there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then either (i) it is not the case that X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy, or (ii) X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent of Y's excellent joy. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Transitivity of Conditional]
 - P3) Necessarily, it is not the case that (i) X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and that (ii) it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, if there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then it is not the case that X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy. [C1, P3: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Conditional E & I, Disjunctive Syllogism]
 - P4) Necessarily, if it is not the case that X wants a partaker of X's excellent joy and it is not the case that Y wants a partaker of Y's excellent joy, then X greedily withholds charity and Y greedily withholds charity. [Premise]
 - P5) Necessarily, if X greedily withholds charity and Y greedily withholds charity, then X has a defect of benevolence and Y has a defect of benevolence. [Premise]
 - P6) Necessarily, if X has a defect of benevolence and Y has a defect of benevolence, then X knows that Y has a defect of benevolence, and Y knows that X has a defect of benevolence. [Premise]
 - P7) Necessarily, if X knows that Y has a defect of benevolence and Y knows that X has a defect of benevolence, then X grieves and Y grieves. [Premise]

²⁸ DT 3.12 (Evans, 258; Ribaillier, 148).

- P8) Necessarily, if X grieves and Y grieves, then it is not the case that X has supreme happiness and it is not the case that Y has supreme happiness. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily if there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then it is not the case that X has supreme happiness and it is not the case that Y has supreme happiness. [C2, P4-P8: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Transitivity of Implication]
- P9) Necessarily, it is not the case that: X doesn't have supreme happiness and Y doesn't have supreme happiness. [Premise]²⁹
 - C4) Necessarily, it is not the case there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person. [C3, P9: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Modus Tollens]
- P10) Necessarily, if it is not the case there are distinct X and Y such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and nothing else apart from X and Y is a divine person, then it is the case that there are distinct X, Y, Z such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and Z is a divine person. [Premise]³⁰
 - C5) Necessarily, there are distinct X, Y, Z such that X is a divine person and Y is a divine person and Z is a divine person. [C4, P10: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]³¹

In this formulation of the argument P1 expresses the idea that exactly two divine persons leaves each person without a third with whom to share their joy. This idea is an analytic truth, true by the definition of 'two divine persons', since exactly two persons means there is no third with whom to share anything, be it joy or whatever else. P2 introduces the argument's central dilemma. If there is no third divine person, then Richard sees only two possibilities: one person wants a third and the other does not, or both persons do not want a third.³² P3 rejects the first lemma. We know from MP-H that the two divine persons have perfect love, and Richard now argues that perfect love requires agreement.³³ P4 begins the rejection of the second lemma, stating that withholding their joy from a third is greedy. P5 and P6 continue this line of thought by arguing that greed is a defect of goodwill, and that any defects of goodwill by one person will be known by the other person. P7 recognizes that such knowledge would cause grief, and P8 argues that grief is incompatible with supreme happiness. P9 completes the line of thought in claiming that the divine persons do have supreme happiness, argued earlier in MP-H.³⁴ The conclusion in C4 is that the proposition 'there are only two divine persons' is false. To complete the argument, P10 divides the landscape into two logical possibilities: either there are two divine persons (since we know that there is at least two from DT 3), or there are at least three persons. Since the first option is rejected in C4, we arrive at the conclusion that there must be at least three.

²⁹ For readability I have here replaced the sentence, "It is not the case that X has supreme happiness" with the sentence "X doesn't have supreme happiness." I consider these two sentences to be equivalent.

³⁰ P10 is equivalent to the sentence, "Necessarily, if it is not the case that there are only two divine persons, then there are at least three divine persons."

³¹ C5 is equivalent to the sentence, "Necessarily, there are at least three divine persons."

³² See section 5.2.1.

³³ See section 5.2.2.

³⁴ Section 5.2.3.

5.3 The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Glory

5.3.0 Introduction

The final argument of Step 3 is also the briefest and most simple, introducing no new concepts or principles. Indeed, Richard cannot help but to include elements from the happiness argument as a parallel to that of glory,

The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Glory – TP-M

[1] The inability to experience a fellowship of love is undoubtedly a great defect of charity. Who does not know this or who can conceal this fact? [2] If then that frequently mentioned defect were present in the two mutual lovers, then each would have not only what causes grief in the other but at the same time what also causes shame in himself. [3] For just as a true and intimate friend cannot see the defect of one, whom he loves intimately, and not grieve, so surely he cannot avoid being ashamed of his own defect in the presence of his friend. [4] But if something that rightly ought to cause shame is present in that plurality of persons, then where, I ask, will the fullness of glory be that cannot possibly be lacking in true divinity? [5] But just as a cause for grieving cannot belong to supreme happiness, so also a matter of shame cannot belong to the fullness of supreme glory. [6] For who does not see how utterly insane it would be to suppose even slightly that anything could belong to the supremely happy majesty that can obscure however moderately the splendour of such great glory?³⁵

There is significant overlap between this argument from glory and the one from happiness. Richard has already given his full case for TP-H, which we examined in detail in above. Therefore, I direct my attention to the notion of glory in this argument.³⁶

³⁵ DT 3.12 (Evans, 258; Ribaillier, 148-49).

³⁶ The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 129. The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Glory* – TP-M*

P1) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person and there is no other person Z such that X loves Z and Y loves Z, then X's charity is defective and Y's charity is defective. [Premise]

P2) Necessarily, if X's charity is defective and Y's charity is defective, then X has cause for shame and Y has cause for shame. [Premise]

C1) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person and there is no other person Z such that X loves Z and Y loves Z, then X has cause for shame and Y has cause for shame. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Transitivity of Implication]

P3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person and X has supreme glory and Y has supreme glory, then it is not the case that X has cause for shame and Y has cause for shame. [Premise]

P4) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person, then X has supreme glory and Y has supreme glory. [Premise]

C2) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person, then it is not the case that X has cause for shame and Y has cause for shame. [P3, P4: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Transitivity of Implication]

C3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person, then there is another person Z such that X loves Z and Y loves Z. [C1, C2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Modus Tollens, Disjunctive Syllogism]

5.3.1 Premises TP-M1 through TP-M5 and sub-conclusion TP-M6: The inability to experience a fellowship of love is a great defect of charity. If that defect were present in the two mutual lovers, then each would have what causes shame. A person cannot avoid being ashamed of his own defect in the presence of a true and intimate friend. If something that causes shame is present in the plurality of persons, then the fullness of supreme glory will be lacking. But a matter of shame cannot belong to the fullness of supreme glory. Nothing can belong to supreme majesty that obscures the splendour of such great glory

The "fellowship of love" (*consortium amoris*) in premise TP-M1 refers to the co-beloved (*condilectus*), or third divine person. So far Richard has spoken of the fellowship of mutual-love as only obtaining between two persons. Here, though, Richard speaks specifically of the fellowship between three persons. Fellowship, like that of love and charity, is an evolving concept in *De Trinitate*, and has developed in *DT* 3.11-12 to include a minimum of three persons. We have seen Richard's use of the 'true F' formula, on which some property is true when it is a complete instance of its kind, lacking no qualities proper to it. True charity, then, must be a triadic relation, obtaining between (at least) three divine persons. This for several reasons, all of which we have discussed in previous arguments. Positively, it is a perfection of love for DP1 to have someone with whom to share the joy that resulted from his mutual-love with DP2;³⁷ the desire for a third person to be loved is also a perfection (TP-G4). Negatively, the absence of love for DP3 is a defect of charity because it betrays a great weakness, namely, either the inability to permit a third, or the unwillingness to do so.

Whether from weakness or greed, if DP1 and DP2 do not join in loving a DP3, the two lovers have a cause for shame, as TP-M2 states. Shame is to be understood in the sense articulated in the MP-M argument, as caused by lacking a proper perfection or having some dishonourable quality and, therefore, being unworthy of praise. Premise TP-M3 examines the effects of shame among perfect persons. If DP1 has a cause for shame, then necessarily, DP2 knows; further, DP1 knows that DP2 knows. There is no hiding any aspect of glory, or its lack, from omniscient friends. Divine persons have no fig leaves behind which to hide. Therefore, it is necessarily the case that any person with a defect both has a cause for shame, and would experience the full, social effects of his defect. As TP-M4 states, the fullness of glory would be lacking.

Premise TP-M5 supplies the last piece needed for the contradiction. Divine persons cannot simultaneously be supremely majestic (that is, have supreme glory) and have shame (that is, have a defect of glory). We must reject either the defect or the supreme glory. TP-M6 concludes that "the fullness of glory...cannot possibly be lacking in true divinity," a claim already argued in MP-M. Divine persons are necessarily supremely glorious, so we must reject the claim that they possibly have any defect of glory. Necessarily, then, there must be a co-beloved, a third divine person sharing in the love and joy of the first two.

^{P5) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person and there is another person Z such that X loves Z and Y loves Z, then there are distinct V, W, and K such that (i) V is a divine person, (ii) W is a divine person, and (iii) K is a divine person. [Premise]}

P6) Necessarily, there are distinct X and Y such X is a divine person and Y is a divine person. [Premise]

C4) Necessarily, there are distinct V, W, and K such that (i) V is a divine person, (ii) W is a divine person, and (iii) K is a divine person. [C3, P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Modus Ponens]

5.3.2 Full expression of the argument

The Argument for Three Divine Persons from Glory* – TP-M*

- P1) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person and there is no other person Z such that X loves Z and Y loves Z, then X's charity is defective and Y's charity is defective. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if X's charity is defective and Y's charity is defective, then X has cause for shame and Y has cause for shame. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person and there is no other person Z such that X loves Z and Y loves Z, then X has cause for shame and Y has cause for shame. [P1, P2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Transitivity of Implication]
 - P3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person and X has supreme glory and Y has supreme glory, then it is not the case that X has cause for shame and Y has cause for shame. [Premise]
 - P4) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person, then X has supreme glory and Y has supreme glory. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person, then it is not the case that X has cause for shame and Y has cause for shame. [P3, P4: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Transitivity of Implication³⁸]
 - C3) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person, then there is another person Z such that X loves Z and Y loves Z. [C1, C2: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Modus Tollens, Disjunctive Syllogism]
 - P5) Necessarily, if X is a divine person and Y is another divine person and there is another person Z such that X loves Z and Y loves Z, then there are distinct V, W, and K such that (i) V is a divine person, (ii) W is a divine person, and (iii) K is a divine person. [Premise]
 - P6) Necessarily, there are distinct X and Y such X is a divine person and Y is a divine person. [Premise]
 - C4) Necessarily, there are distinct V, W, and K such that (i) V is a divine person, (ii) W is a divine person, and (iii) K is a divine person. [C3, P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Modus Ponens]

This formulation of the glory argument parallels Richard's expression quite closely. P1 claims that divine charity is defective when it lacks a third divine person. The reason for its defect is the inability, or powerlessness, to have a third. But defective charity is a reason for shame among divine persons, as P2 states. P3 points out that glory regarding some quality is exclusive to shame

1. \Box ((P \land Q) \rightarrow R) [This corresponds to P3]

From 2 we can infer that \Box (P \rightarrow (P \land Q)). Thus, 2, 1, and transitivity of the material conditional yield 3.

³⁸ The transitivity of the conditionals P3 and P4 become apparent when we assume the antecedent of P4, namely, 'X is a divine person and Y is another divine person'. If 'X is a divine person and Y is another divine person' is true, then 'X has supreme glory and Y has supreme glory' is also true. But these two propositions form the conjunction that is the antecedent of P3. Using propositional logic:

P = X is a divine person and Y is another divine person.

Q = X has supreme glory and Y has supreme glory.

 $[\]mathbf{R}=\mathbf{It}$ is not the case that X has cause for shame and Y has cause for shame.

^{2.} \Box (P \rightarrow Q) [This corresponds to P4]

^{3.} \Box (P \rightarrow R) [This corresponds to C2]

regarding that same quality, and supreme glory is exclusive to any shame whatsoever. Per P4, divine persons have maximally perfect glory, which is part of the nature of divinity. P5 seeks to explicitly state that the existence of two divine persons must also include a third, distinct person. P6 returns to the conclusions of the MP arguments that there exist at least two divine persons. Finally, C4 stresses the distinction of the three persons, and is equivalent to the sentence: "Necessarily, there are at least three divine persons."

5.4 Conclusion

Richard has now developed three separate arguments for believing that there must be at least two and, indeed, at least three divine persons. The grounds of these arguments – viz. goodness, happiness, and glory – seem to require more than three persons. The sentiment, stated roughly, is that if love among three divine persons is so good, then why isn't love among four even better? But if four, then why not five...and onward towards a vicious infinite regress?³⁹ Richard recognizes that the principles and experiences with love which he has identified push us to posit further divine persons. To combat the infinite regress, Richard develops two arguments against the possibility of four (or more) divine persons, the subject of our next chapter.

³⁹ Some interpreters incorrectly read Richard's argument as successful in requiring at least three persons, but then the argument runs out of steam and requires no further. Stephen Holmes, for instance, glosses this part of Richard's argument saying, "with three persons, each one may love the beloved and rejoice in the love of a third for the beloved; there is thus no need to extend the series further." On this analysis, Richard's logic of love motivates us to posit three persons; after that, however, nothing about Richard's view requires us to posit any more persons. A contemporary advocate of speculative triadology, Richard Swinburne, argues along these lines: "I believe that there is overriding reason for a first divine individual to bring about a second divine individual and with him to bring about a third divine individual, *but no reason to go further*." However sound Swinburne's case, this is not how Richard (of St. Victor) argues. His arguments *do* give overriding reasons to go further, and therefore *do* require an argument eliminating the possibility of four or more persons. Stephen Holmes, *The Holy Trinity: Understanding God's Life* (Milton Keynes, U.K.: Paternoster, 2011), 153. Swinburne, *Was Jesus God*?, 28– 38.)

6. ARGUMENTS FOR THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF FOUR DIVINE PERSONS

6.0 Introduction: Foundations of the Arguments Against Four or More Divine Persons

Richard's answer to the question Why stop at three divine persons? is one of the least understood aspects of The Argument. Some believe The Argument runs out of logical steam at three divine persons. On this reading, Richard does not offer a positive argument against four persons so much as point out that all the requirements of perfection are met by three.¹ Others miss the positive argument altogether, asserting that Richard does not argue against the possibility of four persons² or, if he does, he fails to argue from the notion of love.³ DT 5 offers a pair of arguments against the possibility of four divine persons.⁴ The first argument is developed within a discussion of divine processions, that is, the causal relations between the divine persons (DT 5.1-15). The second argument is grounded in an analysis of the nature of love (DT 5.16-23). These are the arguments against four divine persons from processions and love, or 'AF-P' and 'AF-L', for short. As an introduction to these arguments I will briefly look back at several conclusions Richard argues in books one through four, conclusions that Richard presses into service in support of AF-P and AF-L.

At the beginning of *DT* 5, Richard summarizes his analysis of the nature of divine personhood from *DT* 4. "We have glanced over this as a recapitulation of our previous discussions," Richard explains, "so that the more versed we are, the more ready we are to approach those issues that still remain to be investigated."⁵ One remaining issue is to discover "through reasoning (*ratiocinando*) those properties that are applicable to [the divine persons] individually."⁶ Analysis of those properties will yield good reasons for limiting the number of divine persons to exactly three. To construct those reasons Richard employs three suppositions established earlier in *De Trinitate*. Summarized, the first is the unity of the divine substance: necessarily, there exists only one divine substance,⁷ which is the ultimate causal source;⁸ this substance is simple in that it is identical to its being, power, knowledge, and goodness.⁹ Second is the plurality of persons: a minimum of three persons exist in, or have, the divine substance;¹⁰ the persons are "Differentiated by certain

¹ So says O'Byrne: "Richard argues that the process of multiplication does not, however, continue beyond three, since already with three it is perfect and any more would be superfluous." Declan O'Byrne, *Spirit Christology and Trinity in the Theology of David Coffey* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2010), 140. In one place, Richard Swinburne argues in the way O'Byrne attributes to Richard of St. Victor. Cf. Swinburne, *The Christian God*, 177.

² E.g. Jin Hyok Kim, "A Trinitarian Logic of Divine Love: Richard of St. Victor's Rational Argument for the Trinity and Modern Appropriations of His Trinitarianism," 신학논단 *(Theological Forum)* 82 (December 2015): 7–37.

³ Thus Kirschner: "why must the number of divine persons sharing the one divine substance be limited to three? Richard's answer is not based on love, as is his explanation for the need of three divine persons, but is based on the nature of generation." Kirschner, "Will-Independent Mereological Trinity Monotheism," 75.

⁴ I only speak of an argument against 'four divine persons', and not against 'four *or more* divine persons'. If it is impossible for there to be four divine persons, then it follows that five or more is also impossible.

⁵ DT 5.1 (Evans, 292; Ribaillier, 195).

⁶ DT 5.1 (Evans, 293; Ribaillier, 195).

⁷ *DT* 1.12, 14, 16-17.

⁸ DT 1.12, 16-17.

⁹ DT 1.12-13, 15-16.

¹⁰ See the arguments for three divine persons, chp. 5.

properties" (*quidbusdam proprietatibus*), that is, each divine person has an incommunicable distinguishing characteristic – a property that cannot be shared by another being.¹¹ Third, the unity of divinity does not exclude the plurality of persons, and plurality of persons does not negate the unity of divinity. Simplicity requires that the personal properties be conceptually located in the relations of origin.¹² With these suppositions in mind, we may direct our attention to the first argument against the possibility of four divine persons.

6.1 The Argument Against Four or More Divine Persons from Processions

6.1.1 Introduction and overview

DT 5.1-15 builds an argument for the impossibility of a fourth divine person from the notion of processions. Several elements of AF-P are reused from earlier in The Argument, though most of the content is new. Richard spends much time constructing a metaphysical framework of divine processions, from which he builds several sub-arguments. In this section I will detail the main parts of that structure and the various sub-arguments. Let us quickly glance at the endpoint of AF-P in DT 5.15, where Richard concludes that it is impossible for there to be four divine persons,

the differentiation of properties pertains to two things: it consists in giving and receiving. As it is clear from the previous discussion, the property of one person consists in giving alone, the property of the other persons consists in receiving alone, but the middle property between these two consists in both giving and receiving...And so, we know that a fourth property has no place in the divinity, and, for that reason, the suggestion of a quaternary is totally excluded. It is clear then that a fourth person absolutely cannot exist in the divine nature.¹³

This passage mentions several key elements to AF-P: the personal properties; that those properties are causal; that they involve giving and receiving; and that there are two causal relations which may be combined in three different modes. We will now look at the nature of the causal relations in more detail, see them at work in a big-picture outline the AF-P, and then examine AF-P premise by premise. These two arguments are supported by almost a score of sub-arguments, which is much more than the three or so arguments from previous chapters. To cover so much conceptual ground, at times it is necessary to summarize the sub-arguments in outline form. This affords us a concise point of reference to exposit and investigate the two primary arguments, AF-P and AF-L.

¹¹ See especially *DT* 4.20.

¹² Richard summarizes his reasoning why in DT 4.15: "As we have proven, there is absolutely no dissimilitude and inequality among the divine persons. Whatever one person is, so is the second person, and so is the third as well. They cannot be differentiated according to nature when they are all entirely similar and equal to one another. Indeed, as a clear reason already proved, in no way can they who have one and the same supremely simple being in every respect, be different from one another through some difference of nature. And so, since they can by no means differ from one another according to some property of nature, it remains that we believe that they do have some difference according to the mode of origin." (Evans, 279; Ribaillier, 177) This is a summary; the arguments themselves are given in DT 3.21-24.

¹³ DT 5.15 (Evans, 309; Ribaillier, 213).

6.1.2 The divine properties as causal relations

The first 15 chapters of DT 5 are about the modes of existence (modus existendi) of divine persons. Richard explains that "the three in the Trinity... are differentiated by certain properties," and that "we must seek those properties only in the distinction of their original cause."¹⁴ This is because any divine person is identical to any other in fully having the divine nature, and so each person's mode of being must be his inter-personal relations. The language with which Richard refers to the modes reveal some of their character. Besides 'mode' (modus), Richard speaks of: 'procession' (processio); 'exist from' (sit a); 'has being from' (habeat esse ab); 'draw his origin' (originem trahat); as well as the more general 'being from himself' (a semetipsa) and 'from another' (ab alia).15 Richard uses these terms interchangeably, though they express different aspects of the relations. As some of these terms reveal, the personal modes of existence include elements of sharing and communication; further, the modes are the interpersonal acts of love (more on this when we examine AF-L). Foundational to all of this, though, is their causal nature. Richard says quite explicitly that "...one person is the cause of another," and "The second person receives the cause of existence from the first person who is the source of his existence."¹⁶ These all refer to a divine person's causal activity by which he gives or communicates everything he possibly can with another, including being (esse), existence, power, wisdom, and love. Saying that DP2 proceeds from DP1 makes a dual reference: DP1 actively causes DP2 by giving DP2 being; DP2 passively receives being from DP1.¹⁷

Richard explores the notions I just mentioned in some detail. As an overview, we may summarize the key claims in the following outline:

The Argument Against Four Divine Persons from Processions – AF-P

- AF-P1) Necessarily, there is at least one divine person who only gives being to other divine persons.
- AF-P2) Necessarily, there is only one divine person who only gives being to other divine persons.

¹⁴ DT 5.1 (Evans, 2792; Ribaillier, 195).

¹⁵ Ribaillier comments on several ideas under discussion: "[Richard] pursues the differentiation of the persons in the original cause: one is his own cause, and he is at the same time the cause of the second; these first two are the cause of the third. But in Richard the words cause and origin are synonymous." Ribaillier is correct about Richard's pursuit of personal distinction in the causal relations. However, he goes too far when he states that 'cause' and 'origin' are synonymous. Further, the first divine person is uncaused, and not self-caused (which is impossible on Richard's broadly Platonic metaphysic). Richard de St Victor, *De Trinitate: Texte Critique Avec Introduction, Notes et Tables*, 31–32.

¹⁶ DT 5.1 (Evans, 2792; Ribaillier, 195).

¹⁷ Of course, the idea that a divine being can cause another, fully divine being, is disputed. As a brief sampling, see: Eunomius, *Apology*, 9 (cf.Michel Rene Barnes, *The Power of God: Dynamis in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University America, 2016), chap. 5.); Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.13.19-23 (cf. Ellis, *Calvin, Classical Trinitarianism, and the Aseity of the Son.*); Tuggy, "On the Possibility of a Single Perfect Person," 137–41.). I will not enter into that debate but only state a few of Richard's commitments. Though he does not use the term 'monarchy', Richard fully holds to the idea that the Father is the ultimate source of divinity. He squarely denies any ontological or axiological hierarchy, instead affirming full equality of each divine person in virtue of each fully possessing divinity. He solidifies this stance by pointing out that divine persons do not participate in divinity, but have the plenitude of divinity; together the divine persons are Divinity Itself (and Being, Power, etc.).

- AF-P3) Necessarily, there is at least one divine person who only receives being from other divine persons.
- AF-P4) Necessarily, there is only one divine person who only receives being from other divine persons.
- AF-P5) Necessarily, there is at least one divine person who both receives being from (an)other divine person(s), and gives being to (an)other divine person(s).
- AF-P6) Necessarily, there is only one divine person who both receives being from (an)other divine person(s), and gives being to (an)other divine person(s).
- AF-P7) Therefore, there is at least one and only one divine person who only gives being to other divine persons (DP1), at least one and only divine person who receives being from other divine persons (DP3), at least one and only one divine person who both receives being from (an)other divine person(s) and gives being to (an)other divine person(s) (DP2).
- AF-P8) Necessarily, if there is a fourth divine person (DP4), then DP4 either only gives being to other divine persons, only receives being from other divine persons, or both receives being from (an)other divine person(s) and gives being to (an)other divine person(s).
- AF-P9) Necessarily, if DP4 either only gives being to other divine persons, only receives being from other divine persons, or both receives being from (an)other divine person(s) and gives being to (an)other divine person(s), then DP4 is identical to DP1, DP2, or DP3.
- AF-P10) Therefore, necessarily, there is no DP4.

As mentioned above, this outline is a general summary.¹⁸ Richard devotes an entire chapter (sometimes two) to each step. The first six steps are neatly divided into three pairs: 1-2 argues for the existence of *at least* one, and then *no more than* one person with the relevant mode of being (i.e., who only give being). 3-4 and 5-6 follow suit in arguing for a second and third mode of being. Step 7 collates the previous findings and step 8 claims that there are no other modes of being

¹⁸ The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 147. The Argument Against Four Divine Persons from Processions* – AF-P*

P1) Necessarily, there is only one X such that (i) X is a divine person, (ii) X gives being to other divine persons, and (iii) X doesn't receive being from other divine persons. [Premise]

P2) Necessarily, there is only one Y such that (i) Y is a divine person, (ii) Y doesn't give being to other divine persons, and (iii) Y receives being from other divine persons. [Premise]

P3) Necessarily, there is only one Z such that (i) Z is a divine person, (ii) Z gives being to other divine persons, and (iii) Z receives being from other divine persons. [Premise]

C1) Necessarily, there is only one X such that (i) X is a divine person, (ii) X gives being to other divine persons, and (iii) X doesn't receive being from other divine persons [call it DP1]; and there is only one Y such that (i) Y is a divine person, (i) Y doesn't give being to other divine persons, and (iii) Y receives being from other divine persons [call it DP2]; and there is only one Z such that (i) Z is a divine person, (ii) Z gives being to other divine persons, and (iii) Z receives being from other divine persons [call it DP2]; not there is only one Z such that (i) Z is a divine person, (ii) Z gives being to other divine persons, and (iii) Z receives being from other divine persons [call it DP3]. [P1, P2, P3: Necessity E & I, Conjunction I]

P4) Necessarily, if W is a divine person, then either (i) W gives being to other divine persons and W doesn't receive being from other divine persons; or (ii) W doesn't give being to other divine persons and W receives being from other divine persons; or (iii) W gives being to other divine persons and W receives being from other divine persons. [Premise]

C2) Necessarily, if W is a divine person, then either W is DP1, or W is DP2, or else W is DP3. [C1, P4: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Conditional E & I, Existential Elimination]

possible for divine persons. Thus, per step 9, DP4 would collapse back into (would be identical with) one of the first three persons. Therefore, it is impossible for there to be a fourth divine person, stated in 10. We will now examine the main moves of each step.

6.1.3 AF-P1: Necessarily, there is at least one divine person who only gives being to other divine persons

Richard offers three discrete arguments for AF-P1: (i) a cosmological argument employing the principle of sufficient reason; (ii) an argument from below, reasoning up the Platonic chain of being; (iii) an argument for the viciousness of the infinite regress which results if there is no self-existing person. Let us look more closely at each.

The cosmological argument references an earlier argument from DT 1.6 and developed more fully in DT 1.8,

If nothing had existed from itself then there would be no possible source for the existence of those beings which do not have nor can have their own being from themselves. It is demonstrated then that some being is from itself and for that reason also from eternity...otherwise, there was a time when there was nothing. And then no one will have ever existed, because there was absolutely no one around to give or able to give the beginning of existence to himself and others.¹⁹

This is a form of traditional cosmological argumentation for a substance that is *a semetipso*, or 'from itself'.²⁰ (The ultimate causal source, i.e. the divine substance, is not self-caused. As Being Itself, it is self-explanatory, and so satisfies the principle of sufficient reason). Augustine, Anselm, and Hugh of St. Victor all advanced similar reasoning.²¹ Richard directs our attention to the fact that, though this argument is about the divine substance, it applies directly to a divine person: "What we said about substance at the beginning of this work," that is, the cosmological argument just quoted, "can be repeated here decisively and verbatim about the person. The same reason suggests itself in both cases, and a similar conclusion derives from similar arguments."²²

Adding a few details not included in the quotation from the passage just quoted (DT 1.8),²³ the first argument can be outlined:

Argument 1 for an A Semetipso Person

- 1) Necessarily, if nothing exists from itself, then there is no source of those things that do not exist from themselves. [Premise]
- 2) Necessarily, if there is no source of those things that do not exist from themselves, then there are no things that do not exist from themselves. [Premise]
- 3) Necessarily, if nothing exists from itself, then there are no things that do not exist from themselves. [1, 2: Transitivity of Implication]

¹⁹ DT 1.8 (Evans, 218; Ribaillier, 95).

²⁰ Richard does not use '*a se*' when discussing a being, whether substance or person, which is 'from itself'. Instead, he uses '*a semetipso*' for 'from himself' and '*ab alio*' (and occasionally '*ab eo*') for 'from another'. *A se* language would become popular by the thirteenth century and is often read back into Richard's work, along with later connotations.

²¹ Augustine, *Confessions* 11.4.6, *De Trinitate* 15.6; Anselm, *Monologion* 2; Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis* 1.2.2, 1.3.9-11.

²² DT 5.3 (Evans, 294; Ribaillier, 198).

 $^{^{23}}$ But is fully represented in *DT* 1.6, 8, 11-12 taken together.
- 4) There are things that do not exist from themselves. [Premise]
- 5) Therefore, something exists from itself. [Modus Tollens, 3, 4]

In this expression of the cosmological argument Richard speaks of a substance that is the ultimate causal source of all other existents. In a similar argument, he reasons from the goodness of contingent reality to the goodness of the ultimate, necessary being.

Richard also gives an 'argument from below', or from the chain of being:

Argument 2 for an A Semetipso Person

- 6) Necessarily, if God is highest of all beings, the God is that-than-which-nothing-isgreater. [Premise]
- 7) Necessarily, if God is that-than-which-nothing-is-greater, then God cannot receive his existence from something inferior. [Premise]
- 8) Necessarily, God is the highest of all beings. [Premise]
- 9) Therefore, necessarily, God cannot receive his existence from something inferior. [6, 7: Transitivity of Implication; 6, 7, 8: Modus Ponens]
- 10) Necessarily, if God cannot receive his existence from something inferior, then God exists from himself. [Premise]
- 11) Therefore, necessarily, God exists from himself. [9, 10: Modus Ponens]

This argument from the chain of being reaches similar results as the cosmological one, concluding with a necessary, *a semetipso* substance. But Richard takes them as sufficient for showing the necessity of a *person* who is from himself. Both arguments have resources to locate personhood in the divine substance. In *Argument 1*, we know that the ultimate substance is simple, and also that it has wisdom (since it is necessarily the source of any wisdom in the universe), therefore, it is Wisdom Itself. But to be wise is to be intellective, and therefore personal. Similarly, *Argument 2* reasons that the substance at the top of the hierarchy of beings has all the perfections of those below. Since some of those below have intellect, the highest of all beings is intellective and, therefore, a person.²⁴

Finally, Richard argues that the non-existence of a person who is from himself results in an vicious infinite regress and so must be rejected:

Argument 3 for an A Semetipso Person

- 12) Necessarily, if it is possible that no person exists who is only from himself, then it is possible for an infinite number of persons to exist in divinity. [Premise]
- 13) Necessarily, if an infinite number of persons existed in divinity, then for any person there is one before him from who he comes. [Premise]
- 14) Necessarily, if for any person there is one before him from who he comes, then the infinite series of persons would have no beginning. [Premise]
- 15) Necessarily, a series must a beginning. [Premise]
- 16) Therefore, necessarily, it is not possible that no person exists who is only from himself. [12, 13, 14: Transitivity of Implication;, 15, 14, 13, 12: Universal Insanitation, Modus Tollens]

²⁴ In this discussion I look only at intellect as a condition of personhood, ignoring Richard's examination of incommunicable existence, which is the larger issue under discussion in *DT* 5.

Under scrutiny in this argument is the idea that the causal bridge of an actual infinite can ever be crossed. In 15 Richard takes as obvious that it cannot. If there were no ultimate, self-explaining person, then there would be no other persons.²⁵ But there must be other persons, as the MP and TP arguments have shown.²⁶ The conclusion in 16 is equivalent to the sentence, "Necessarily, a person who is only from himself exists."

6.1.4 AF-P2: Necessarily, there is only one divine person who only gives being to other divine persons

In AF-P1 Richard argued that there must be at least one divine person who is from himself. Richard now argues that there can be *only* one person with this mode of being (DT 5.4). Richard supports the conclusion with a brief argument from simplicity, but his main line of support is from the notion of participation, to which I will direct my attention.

Argument for Incommunicability of DP1's Mode

- 17) Necessarily, if DP1 exists from himself, then DP1 has power from the participation of power. [Premise]
- 18) Necessarily, DP1 exists from himself. [Premise]
- 19) Therefore, necessarily, DP1 has power from the participation of power. [17, 18: Modus Ponens]
- 20) Necessarily, if DP1 has power from the participation of power, then DP1 has power from the plentitude of power. [Premise]
- 21) Therefore, necessarily, DP1 has power from the plentitude of power. [19, 20: Modus Ponens]
- 22) Necessarily, all other power comes from the plentitude of power. [Premise]
- If, necessarily, (i) DP1 has power from the plentitude of power, and (ii) all other power comes from the plentitude of power, then all other power comes from DP1. [Premise]
- 24) Therefore, necessarily, all other power comes from DP1. [21, 22, 23: Conjunction I; Modus Ponens]
- 25) Necessarily, if all other power comes from DP1, then all other beings receive their existence from another. [Premise]
- 26) Therefore, necessarily, all other beings receive their existence from another. [24, 25: Modus Ponens]
- 27) If, necessarily, all other beings receive their existence from another, then DP1's mode of being is incommunicable. [Premise]
- 28) Therefore, necessarily, DP1's mode of being is incommunicable. [26, 27: Modus Ponens]

6.1.4.1 Explanation of the key premises

Premise 17 follows from the definition of participation, which specifies two ways of having some property, "according to plentitude or according to participation."²⁷ Stated another way, for any property F, S has F either because S *is* F Itself, or S receives F from F Itself. By existing from

²⁵ For a contemporary study, see William Craig and Quentin Smith, *Theism, Atheism, and Big Bang Cosmology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 3–76.

²⁶ See chps. 4 and 5.

²⁷ DT 5.4 (Evans, 296; Ribaillier, 199).

himself, DP1 has all that he has from himself, and receives nothing from another. DP1, then, is identical to any property which we may single out notionally, as Richard does with power in premise 20.

Premise 22 follows from the definition of participation. As I explained in an earlier chapter, participation is a non-reflexive, non-symmetric causal relation. DP1 can neither participate in another being's power (since he is the source) nor his own. As the plentitude of power, DP1 is the participated source for everything else that has power (conclusion 24). But, as we have also seen earlier, everything that exists does so because it has the power to be (potentia esse).²⁸ Every other being receives its power (esse) by participating in DP1 (premise 25). Richard explains, "If every power is from him, then every being is from him, and every existence is from him. And so, all that is is from him: every essence, every existence, every person; I say, every human, angelic, and divine person is from him."29 Richard moves directly from 25 to the conclusion in 28, saying, "If therefore, all others have being from him, then it is certain that this person alone lacks a beginning; and it is no less clear that no other can exists unless from him, from whom is every power. You certainly see that such existence is absolutely incommunicable, and it cannot be common to several persons."³⁰ I have included the extra steps in 26 and 27, which answer the question, Why it is that DP1's mode of being is incommunicable? As the source of all other beings, DP1 alone is a semetipso; therefore no other beings can be a semetipso. But a characteristic that cannot be shared with others is, by definition, incommunicable.

6.1.4.2 A difficulty with the argument

Even if sound, this argument employs some metaphysical principles that appear difficult to reconcile with other of Richard's commitments. For example, each divine person has being from the plentitude of being. Further, each divine person is identical to Being (Power, Wisdom, etc.) Itself, and each is the divine substance (each according to his particular mode). However, DP1 is the causal source of the plentitude of being; any other divine persons have (or are) the plentitude of being because DP1 communicates it to them.

The difficulty with this picture is not the one typically levelled against it by critics, namely, that the Father does not communicate the divine substance,³¹ or that a divine person could not possibly do so.³² Instead, the difficulty I want to highlight centres on Richard's denial that DP2 and DP3 participate in being (or anything else). At the same time, Richard affirms that DP2 and DP3 receive being from DP1 in a non-reflexive, non-symmetric, causal relation, which sounds suspiciously like participation. If DP2 and DP3 do not participate in DP1's being, Richard must give further explanation why their reception of being does not count as participates F only when S receives a limited share of F. DP2 receives the fullness of being from DP1, and so does not count as participation so defined. This initial response may draw some fine lines, but I do not see such cutting to be harmfully ad hoc. It may even be a positive feature of Richard's metaphysic that it illuminates some

²⁸ Chp. 4, MP-G; cf. DT 1.12 (Evans, 220; Ribaillier, 96).

²⁹ DT 5.4 (Evans, 296; Ribaillier, 199).

³⁰ DT 5.4 (Evans, 296; Ribaillier, 199).

³¹ E.g., Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.13.19-23.

³² Tuggy, "On the Possibility of a Single Perfect Person," 137–41.Dale Tuggy, On the Possibility of a Single Perfect Person, 137-141.

of the nature of the participation (a relation otherwise so shrouded): for any property, that property can be shared in two ways, by degrees (i.e., in participation), or by fullness (i.e., in processions).

6.1.5 AF-P 3: Necessarily, there is at least one divine person who only receives being from other divine persons

The argument in this step has two main elements. First, there is at least one divine person who does not give being to any others. This element satisfies the 'only' condition of "only receives being." Second, there is at least one divine person who receives being from each other divine person. This element satisfies the 'receives being' part of "only receives being." Richard makes a case for both elements.

6.1.5.1 Element 1

The first element argues that if there is no divine person who does not give being, then there would be an unending series of divine persons, each giving being to those who come after. But an unending causal series is impossible. In Richard's words,

...if some person in the true divinity were not existing from whom no other person would proceed, but every person proceeding from another would have a person proceeding from him, then the extension of this sort of deduction would continue infinitely, and the series of persons infinitely extended would find no end for its plurality. But no one accepts this opinion, nor does anyone admit it for any reason.³³

Clearly this argument presumes that there are multiple divine persons, a key assumption going into the AF arguments.³⁴ We may state the first claim positively: if every divine person had one or more divine persons proceeding from him, then there would be an infinite number of divine persons. Richard takes the consequent to be obviously false, and for this reason gives no argument for the idea that an infinite number of divine persons is impossible. However, he could point to any number of traditional sources for support, such as Augustine or Peter Lombard.³⁵ Richard concludes that there is a divine person from whom no other divine persons proceed. In other words, that there is at least one divine person who does not give being to any others. This divine person ends the causal chain. Anticipating Richard's conclusion at the end of AF-P, I will refer to

³³ DT 5.11 (Evans, 305; Ribaillier, 209).

³⁴ One question which may arise, and which I have not treated so far in this thesis, is this: Is it impossible for there to be three (or any number greater than one) independent or *a se* divine substances? In DT 1 and 2, Richard advances several arguments in support of an affirmative answer. I will sketch one. Suppose that an *a se* substance is identical with its attributes. As the ultimate, necessary, eternal, and *a se* cause of all contingent reality, the *a se* substance is identical with its power – it is Power Itself, and therefore omnipotent. If there were two *a se* substances, both would be omnipotent. But an omnipotent being can "render any other power powerless." That is, both *a se* beings have the power to make one another powerless. In other words, if there are multiple divine substances, then they could be both omnipotent and non-omnipotent; they could both be Power Itself and not-Power itself. DT 1.25 (Evans, 227; Ribaillier, 105-6). (One naturally wonders how this principle applies to divine persons since, on Richard's view, each divine person is omnipotent, indeed is Power Itself. Richard is ready with a response in book three: each divine person shares the single divine power – there is only one power (being, will, wisdom, etc.) had by all three persons. DT 3.22).

³⁵ Augustine, *Contra Maximinum Arrianum* 2.12.3; Lombard, *Sententiae* 1.7.1. See also Achard of St. Victor, *Unitate* 1.21.

this person as DP3, though it is still an open question whether there may be more than three persons.

6.1.5.2 Element 2

The second element in AF-P3 specifies that DP3, as the person who only receives being, must receive his being from one or more divine person. This is really an iteration of premise 28, a support argument for AF-P2, which states that all beings except DP1 "receive their existence from another." Here Richard addresses the question, From *whom* must DP3 receive his being? Richard contends that DP3 must receive it from DP1 and DP2 together, and not just one or the other. In Richard's words,

But we must be absolutely certain about this point and we ought to uphold it firmly: the third person receives the cause of existence from the two persons who are the source of his existence. Behold we now have a reason for affirming that the third person in the Trinity possesses his being from the other two persons.³⁶

In this passage Richard takes himself to have successfully argued that DP3 receives being from DP1 and DP2. The argument he gives is long and complex, but we may sketch the main moves. The central idea is that DP1, as the single, ultimate source of being/power, has omnipotence and shares it with DP2. Employing the notion of divine simplicity,³⁷ Richard argues that there are not multiple instances of omnipotence, but the single divine omnipotence (or power or substance) had by both DP1 and DP2. For this reason, DP3 must receive omnipotence from DP1 and DP2. In this way Richard concludes that DP3 only receives being from others, and not from himself: the "third person in the Trinity…possesses his being from the other two persons" and "draws his origin from the two persons."³⁸

However, this conclusion can be extended for *any* further divine person (DP4, DP5, etc.). That is, like DP2 and DP3, any other divine person must receive his being from the preceding³⁹ ones. If there are two divine persons, then they are together the source of DP3's omnipotence. Similarly, if there are four divine persons, then DP1, DP2, and DP3 would together be the source of DP4's omnipotence. The same reasoning will continue for each further divine person. This fact about processions will play a part in a later argument.

In sum, AF-P3 has two elements yielding two conclusions. First, DP3 does not give being to any divine persons. Second, there is at least one divine person (DP3) who receives being from all preceding persons. Richard next argues that there is *only* one person who does not give being: DP3's property of 'only receiving being and not giving it' is incommunicable.

6.1.6 AF-P 4: Necessarily, there is only one divine person who only receives being from other divine persons

Richard continues his investigation by averring, "It is certainly necessary for such a person to exist in the divinity from whom...no other person proceeds. But one can still doubt whether this very

³⁶ DT 5.8 (Evans, 301; Ribaillier, 205).

³⁷ For more on this, see *DT* 1.25; 2.13, 15; 3.22; 4.19.

³⁸ DT 5.8 (Evans, 301; Ribaillier, 205).

³⁹ Logically preceding, not temporarily. Cf. DT 5.7.

property belongs exclusively to one person alone, or whether it can also be common to others."⁴⁰ Richard's next task, then, is to show that the property 'receiving being from (an)other(s) and giving being to no one' is incommunicable. To do so Richard gives the following argument:

- 29) Necessarily, if there are two divine persons from whom no persons proceed, then neither proceeds from the other. [Premise]⁴¹
- 30) Necessarily, if neither proceeds from the other, then neither are united immediately with the other. [Premise]
- 31) Necessarily, if neither are united immediately with the other, then they are united only mediately. [Premise]
- 32) Necessarily, divine persons are not united only mediately. [Premise]
- 33) Therefore, necessarily, there are not two divine persons from whom no persons proceed. [29, 30, 31: Transitivity of Implication, Universal E & I, Modus Tollens]
- 34) Necessarily, if there are not two divine persons from whom no persons proceed, then it is the property of only one divine person to have no divine person proceed from him. [Premise]
- 35) Therefore, it is the property of only one divine person to have no divine person proceed from him. [33, 34: Modus Ponens]

This argument introduces the notions of mediate and immediate procession.⁴² Drawing from human experience, Richard observes that humans receive their being (i.e., proceed) immediately and mediately. As a mundane example of mediate procession, Richard points to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Isaac proceeds immediately "from the loins" of Abraham. Jacob proceeds immediately from Isaac, but also mediately from Abraham. To find an example of a person who proceeds immediately and mediately from the same person, Richard must get a bit more creative. Reflecting again on Genesis, he explains that Eve proceeds immediately from Adam. Seth proceeds immediately from Adam, but also mediately from Adam through Eve.

Applying this data to divine persons,⁴³ Richard posits three logically possible ways in which a divine person may proceed from another: (i) only immediately, (ii) immediately and mediately, (iii) only mediately. Assuming multiple divine persons, we see that (i) is metaphysically necessary: per AF-P1, there must be at least one person who has being from himself. Now, mediate procession – like any intermediary link in a causal chain – is logically dependent upon a prior, immediate procession. Therefore, if there are multiple divine persons, then there must be at least one immediate procession. Next, (ii) is necessary because, as we saw in AF-P3, DP3 must receive his power from both DP1 and DP2 as from a single source. This means DP3 receives being immediately from DP1, and both immediately and mediately from DP2.

⁴⁰ DT 5.12 (Evans, 306; Ribaillier, 210).

⁴¹ A concrete example may help clarify: Abe and Ben both have no children. Having no children, Abe is not (and cannot be) the son of Ben; *pari ratione*, Ben is not the son of Abe.

⁴² Richard gives considerable attention to these two types of procession, devoting three chapters (DT 5.6-8) to the mediate and immediate processions. He puts the distinction to use intermittently in DT 5, and throughout DT 6. I sidestep these discussions except as they pertain to AFP-P.

⁴³ Richard recognizes the risks of arguing from human analogy to conclusions about the divine. See Coulter, *Per Visibilia Ad Invisibilia*, 61–124.

Premise 32 claims that (iii) is impossible, and so is the pivot of this argument. Richard supports the claim this way,

There is one thing that I do not believe anyone in his right mind can think, namely, that there is some person in the divinity who is not permitted or does not wish to see immediately the Unbegotten, so to speak, face to face. What else does it mean for a divine person to see unless to know by seeing and to see by knowing? And what else does it mean to know the Unbegotten unless to have the fullness of wisdom? Moreover, wisdom and being are identical for a divine person. Thus, he receives wisdom and being from the same source, the Unbegotten. The same source who gives him wisdom also gives him existence. And if he receives wisdom immediately from the Unbegotten, then he certainly also receives existence immediately from him.⁴⁴

Here Richard argues that every divine person beyond DP1 receives being immediately from DP1. What should we make of this argument? Much rides on the initial claim, which has it that divine persons are maximally united. The whole argument from love discussed so far is probably sufficient to get Richard this claim: What would it mean for a divine person to love another 'through', or purely mediated by, another person? Why would DP1 withhold immediate love from DP3 if DP1 could give it? The whole thrust of *De Trinitate* chapter three pushes against such a conclusion. Besides this positive argument, Richard gives a negative one,

But if someone asserts that this person [DP3] does not see the Unbegotten immediately, then he consequently admits that this person does not have a fully formed contemplation of the truth. And if that is true, then neither does he have complete plenitude and, consequently, true divinity.⁴⁵

Here Richard explores the implications of mediate knowledge among divine persons. To 'see' DP1 is to have immediate, direct, first-hand personal experience with DP1. Only this type of knowledge can yield the fullness (*plenitudo*) of wisdom, being, and divinity. Any divine person is just that, *divine*, therefore any divine person (other than DP1) must have immediate relationship with the source of divinity. A mediate relationship, by definition, involves some indirect knowledge: If DP3 was mediately related to DP1, then DP3 would not receive his being directly from DP1, and would not love DP1 directly (given the identity of the causal relations with the love relations).

6.1.7 AF-P5: Necessarily, there is at least one divine person who both receives being from (an)other divine person(s), and gives being to (an)other divine person(s)

Richard now moves to the middle term between DP1 and DP3. "From the two properties of the two aforementioned persons," Richard tells us, "we can conclude…what we ought to think concerning the property of him who is in the middle of these two persons."⁴⁶ Richard employs his findings from AF-P2 and AF-P4 in the following argument,

If there can be only one person alone in the divinity who is not from any other person, then it follows that the person, about whom we are now discussing [DP2], is not from himself. Likewise, if there can be only one person alone in the divinity who does not have

⁴⁴ DT 5.9 (Evans, 302; Ribaillier, 206).

⁴⁵ DT 5.9 (Evans, 302; Ribaillier, 206).

⁴⁶ DT 5.13 (Evans, 306; Ribaillier, 210-11).

a person proceeding from him, then it is necessary for this person [DP2]...to have a person proceeding from him. And so, he proceeds from another person, yet in such a way that another person still proceeds from him.⁴⁷

Here Richard restates the main conclusions so far established in AF-P1 – AF-P4. In short, those steps argue that only giving and only receiving being, had by DP1 and DP3 respectively, are incommunicable properties. The only remaining logical possibility is a causal position between the two. Since there are at least three divine persons, DP2 must both give and receive being. If there are more divine persons, they also must both give and receive being. In the next step, Richard works to show that the double property of giving and receiving being is incommunicable.

6.1.8 AF-P6: Necessarily, there is only one divine person who both receives being from (an)other divine person(s), and gives being to (an)other divine person(s)

The last substantial step of AF-P is to show that DP2's personal property, that of receiving and giving being, is incommunicable. Richard returns to the notion of fittingness, and once again appeals to medieval sensibilities regarding arithmetic, geometry, and harmony. Appealing to these intuitions, Richard argues that it is impossible for two or more divine persons to both proceed and have another proceed from him. That is, Richard next argues for the impossibility of some DP4 who shares a property with DP2. DP2, and DP2 alone, both receives and gives being.

Richard's case here has two parts. He first argues that the web of relations which obtains between three persons is supremely beautiful (*summa pulcritudo*). Richard argues that a state of affairs in which exactly three divine persons exist is perfectly characterized by arithmetic mean, geometric symmetry, and harmony.⁴⁸ Richard next argues that DP2's personal property, if shared with DP4, destroys the supreme perfection of that beauty. In short, a trinity is supremely beautiful; a quaternity is not. I will first examine these two parts of the argument. Only after investigating them will I outline the argument as a whole and offer some analysis.

6.1.8.1 Part 1 – a trinity is supremely beautiful

To begin, Richard states, "First we must note and carefully consider how both properties of the two persons gaze at one another as opposites, and they correspond to one another as contraries."⁴⁹ To understand Richard's thinking here we can diagram the two personal properties under discussion:

| | Personal Property |
|-----|-------------------|
| DP1 | Gives being |
| DP3 | Receives being |

With this diagram, it is easy enough to understand how DP1 and DP3 "gaze at" each other as opposites: each has the property the other does not. But how do they "correspond as contraries" (*per contrarium respondeat*)? Arithmetically, DP1 and DP3 each engage in only one activity, namely,

⁴⁷ DT 5.13 (Evans, 306; Ribaillier, 211).

⁴⁸ These three conditions for beauty, fully satisfied by a triad of divine persons, are taken from Boethius, *De Arithmetica*, 2.43-47.

⁴⁹ DT 5.14 (Evans, 307; Ribaillier, 211-12).

either giving or receiving being. The procession relation is dyadic, and both persons completes the relation as necessary terms (or relata).

The upshot of all this is that DP1 and DP3 are not merely opposites, opposing one another in their difference. Rather, they are intimately and necessarily related: DP1 can only give being, DP3 can only receive it. If, *per impossibile*, DP1 did not give being to DP3, there would be neither supreme unity (since there would be no dyadic giving-receiving relation), nor difference (since DP1 and DP3 would both share a personal property). In other words, in a pure monad, there would be no order, which is the essence of beauty.⁵⁰

Finally, adding in DP2, the symmetry is retained and expanded:

| | Personal Property | |
|-----|-------------------|----------|
| DP1 | Gives | |
| DP2 | Gives | Receives |
| DP3 | | Receives |

6.1.8.2 Part 2 – a quaternity is disordered

In the second half of step 6, Richard seeks to show how a fourth divine person would destroy the beauty of the triad. More specifically, if two persons share the property 'receiving-and-giving being', then the resulting tetrad would not be supremely beautiful. Once again, a visual map helps us understand Richard's argument (I place the persons slightly out of numerical order to highlight the symmetry of this state of affairs):

| | Personal Property | |
|-----|-------------------|----------|
| DP1 | Gives | |
| DP2 | Gives | Receives |
| DP4 | Gives | Receives |
| DP3 | | Receives |

Given a tetrad, the personal properties are: DP1 receives being from no other; DP2 receives being from one other (viz., DP1); DP4 receives being from two others (DP1 and DP2); DP3 receives being from three others (DP1, DP2, DP4). Now, Richard recognizes that there is a certain mathematical order here, since DP2 and DP4 form a mean (*arimetica medietate*) between DP1 and DP3. That is, DP2 and DP4 each have two activities as their personal properties (receiving and

⁵⁰ Richard only discusses beauty in passing, so we must work out his understanding from intermittent discussion. In context of AF-P6 (*DT* 5.14), the central aspect of beauty is unity in diversity. This understanding of the essence of beauty corresponds well with Hugh, whose *De tribus diebus* takes unity in diversity as a major motif (see esp. 4.1-15.2). Even a cursory reading of Hugh shows how indebted he is to Augustine who, arguably, includes unity in diversity as the essential feature of beauty. Thus Hayes: "the property of an object that fundamentally accounts for its beauty, the primary aesthetic property in Augustine's system, is unity. To state this strongly, there is no beauty without unity, and there is no unity without beauty. This property holds a prominent place precisely because it is both a necessary and sufficient condition for sensible beauty. All other explanations of beauty, whether in terms of number or harmony or symmetry or whatever are parasitic on it." Matthew Joseph Hayes, "Beauty's Resting Place: Unity in St. Augustine's Sensible Aesthetic" (Marquette University, 2003), 19.

giving). Thus, there are four activities divided between two persons, for a mean of two. Indeed, no matter how many persons there are beyond three, the resulting mean will always be two. That mean stands in contrast to DP1 and DP3, who each have one activity (one property per person always yields a mean of one).

The problem as Richard sees it is that a complete geometric mean does not obtain in the tetrad. DP1 is united to DP2 and DP4 in one way, namely, they each give being. Stated a bit differently, DP1, DP2, and DP4 have in common that they each give being. Similarly, DP2, DP4, and DP3 have in common their reception of being. The problem is that DP2 and DP4 share two commonalities: they both receive and give being. In this way DP2 and DP4 are more closely united to one another than they are with DP1 or DP3, and are more closely united than DP1 is with DP3 (who only share one commonality⁵¹). A triad, and only a triad, maintains the mathematical mean, or balance of unity in difference, which is the essence of beauty. For this reason Richard declares, "You certainly see how the doubling and communication of one property confounds rather than extends the principle of proportionality, and how it decreases rather than augments the beauty of order." Having brought the aesthetic argument to a close, he concludes, "And so, it is clear that the particular property of one of the persons is to give and receive the fullness, and that this property, just like the other two, is incommunicable."⁵²

6.1.8.3 Outline and analysis

On an initial reading AF-P6 looks like an inductive, or probabilistic, rather than deductive argument. Alert to this, Richard makes his intentions clear at the very beginning of *DT* 5.14,

But because we already know from the testimony of reason that two of the aforementioned properties are incommunicable, we are, consequently, urged to think the same about the third. But lest this reason seems probable rather than necessary, let us investigate this argument more thoroughly.⁵³

Richard is clear that AF-P6 is a necessary reason, or proof deduced from the nature of beauty. With this in mind, we may summarize the above negative and positive lines of reasoning:

- 36) Necessarily, if the relations between the divine person are maximally beautiful, then there are not four divine persons. [Premise]
- 37) Necessarily, the relations between the divine persons are maximally beautiful. [Premise]
- 38) Therefore, necessarily, there are not four divine persons. [36, 37: Modus Ponens]

And the positive argument:

- 39) Necessarily, if there are only three divine persons, then the relations between the divine persons are maximally beautiful. [Premise]
- 40) The relations between the divine persons are maximally beautiful. [Premise]
- 41) Therefore, necessarily, there are only three divine persons. [39, 40: Modus Ponens]

⁵¹ See 6.1, above.

⁵² DT 5.14 (Evans, 309; Ribaillier, 213).

⁵³ DT 5.14 (Evans, 307; Ribaillier, 211).

In its appeal to aesthetic-mathematical intuitions, the argument in AF-P6 may be foreign to contemporary thought. This makes analysis and critique difficult using modern expectations and metrics. Premise 36, and its counterpart 39, in particular may look suspicious. To support these claims Richard appeals to a view of beauty in which beauty is well-ordered unity in difference – an Augustinian and, ultimately, Platonic metaphysics of beauty. Not only are the conditions of beauty highly disputed, as any introductory aesthetics text readily shows, but the very notion of objective beauty is commonly doubted. I cannot here offer too much in support of Richard's characterization of the essence of beauty, much less defend the existence of objective beauty.⁵⁴ The claims are further supported by the notions of arithmetic mean and geometric symmetry, which may be on firmer ground than the classical definition of beauty. Perhaps surprisingly, a western predilection for positivistic scientism yields an awareness and appreciation of the aesthetic attractiveness of certain mathematical and geometric aspects of reality.⁵⁵

6.1.9 AF-P7 through AF-P10

The remaining three steps of AF-P complete the proof against the possibility of a fourth divine person. Once again, they are:

- AF-P7) Therefore, there is at least one and only one divine person who only gives being to other divine persons (DP1), at least one and only divine person who receives being from other divine persons (DP3), at least one and only one divine person who both receives being from (an)other divine person(s) and gives being to (an)other divine person(s) (DP2).
- AF-P8) Necessarily, if there is a fourth divine person (DP4), then DP4 either only gives being to other divine persons, only receives being from other divine persons, or both receives being from (an)other divine person(s) and gives being to (an)other divine person(s).
- AF-P9) Necessarily, if DP4 either only gives being to other divine persons, only receives being from other divine persons, or both receives being from (an)other divine person(s) and gives being to (an)other divine person(s), the DP4 is identical to DP1, DP2, or DP3.
- AF-P10) Therefore, necessarily, there is no DP4.

So far Richard has established that, necessarily, there are three divine persons. One of those must only give being, one must receive and give being, and the third must only receive being. Finally, Richard has argued that these three personal properties are the only ones possible.⁵⁶ AF-P7 explains that any further divine persons must share a property with one of the first three. AF-P8 claims that it is impossible for DP4 to share a property with any of the first three. Richard supports the claim with two reasons. First, he establishes in AF-P2, AF-P4, and AF-P6 that there can only

⁵⁴ Though strong cases have been made. For an extended case for aesthetic realism, see Francis J Kovach, *Philosophy of Beauty* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 51–136..

⁵⁵ For a recent exploration, see Thomas Dubay, *The Evidential Power of Beauty: Science and Theology Meet* (San Fransisco, CA: Ignatius, 2006), 63–81, 112–25.

⁵⁶ The idea that the relations of opposition are wholly responsible for distinguishing the divine persons became highly contested in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. See Russell Friedman, *Intellectual Traditions at the Medieval University: The Use of Philosophical Psychology in Trinitarian Theology among the Franciscans and Dominicans, 1250-1350*, vol. 1, Studien Und Texte Zur Geistesgeschichte Des Mittelalters 38 (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

be one person with the corresponding property. In other words, the three possible divine personal properties are incommunicable. As a further line of support, Richard utilizes a form of the identity of indiscernibles, arguing that by sharing a personal property with any of the other persons, DP4 would be identical with that person. In short, positing a fourth person with three incommunicable properties yields a contradiction: DP4 both exists (and so is DP4), and is identical with DP1, DP2, or DP3, and therefore is not DP4. More tersely: DP4 would both exist and not exist. Thus, Richard concludes that it is impossible for a fourth divine person to exist.

6.1.10 Full expression of the argument

The Argument Against Four Divine Persons from Processions* – AF-P*

- P1) Necessarily, there is only one X such that (i) X is a divine person, (ii) X gives being to other divine persons, and (iii) X doesn't receive being from other divine persons. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, there is only one Y such that (i) Y is a divine person, (ii) Y doesn't give being to other divine persons, and (iii) Y receives being from other divine persons. [Premise]
- P3) Necessarily, there is only one Z such that (i) Z is a divine person, (ii) Z gives being to other divine persons, and (iii) Z receives being from other divine persons. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily, there is only one X such that (i) X is a divine person, (ii) X gives being to other divine persons, and (iii) X doesn't receive being from other divine persons [call it DP1]; and there is only one Y such that (i) Y is a divine person, (i) Y doesn't give being to other divine persons, and (iii) Y receives being from other divine persons [call it DP2]; and there is only one Z such that (i) Z is a divine person, (ii) Z gives being to other divine persons, and (iii) Z receives being from other divine persons [call it DP3]. [P1, P2, P3: Necessity E & I, Conjunction I]
 - P4) Necessarily, if W is a divine person, then either (i) W gives being to other divine persons and W doesn't receive being from other divine persons; or (ii) W doesn't give being to other divine persons and W receives being from other divine persons; or (iii) W gives being to other divine persons and W receives being from other divine persons. [Premise]
 - C2) Necessarily, if W is a divine person, then either W is DP1, or W is DP2, or else W is DP3. [C1, P4: Necessity E & I, Universal E & I, Conditional E & I, Existential Elimination]

This expression follows the general outline of DT 5.1-15. P1-P3 each claim that there is one and only one divine person corresponding to the three modes of being Richard has identified. P4 claims that any divine person must have one of the three modes. This claim entails that there are no other modes of being. C2 concludes that any divine person must be one of three that necessarily exist, and is equivalent to the sentence, "There are at most three divine persons," which is equivalent to, "It is impossible for there to be four divine persons."

6.2 The Argument Against Four or More Divine Persons from Love

6.2.0 Introduction

On the heels of AF-P, Richard spots another reason to believe that four or more divine persons cannot exist,

We can further confirm with a more thorough and clearer reason our previous discussion on excluding the suggestion of quaternary from the divine nature. If we bring into consideration the fullness of true love, and if we pay careful attention to the distinction of properties pertaining to the same consideration, then perhaps we will sooner discover what we are seeking.⁵⁷

Judged against AF-P, Richard considers *The Argument Against Four Persons from Love* (AF-L) to be the stronger of the two. Specifically, he takes AF-L to offer both a "higher" (*altion*) and "clearer" (*evidention*) reason. Richard does not tell us why he takes the argument from love to be more thorough than the one from processions. Indeed his appraisal seems counterintuitive to me. AF-P is significantly longer (fourteen chapters compared to four), and more complex than AF-L. Further, AF-L maps an analysis of love onto the key aspects of AF-P. In some of most critical places, AF-L depends upon work done by AF-P. The argument from love appears *less* thorough than the one from processions in most respects.

However, Richard correctly calls AF-L clearer than AF-P. Borrowing conclusions established in its predecessors allows AF-L to be significantly streamlined.⁵⁸ The following is not a formal statement of AF-L, but a summary of the four steps Richard takes in building his case:⁵⁹

The Argument Against Four Divine Persons from Love – AF-L

- AF-L1) Necessarily, DP1 alone loves only with gratuitous love.⁶⁰
- AF-L2) Necessarily, DP3 alone loves only with owed love.
- AF-L3) Necessarily, DP2 alone loves with gratuitous and with owed love.
- AF-L4) Necessarily, if DP1 alone loves only with gratuitous love and DP3 alone loves only with owed love and DP2 alone loves with gratuitous and with owed love, then there is no DP4.
- AF-L5) Therefore, necessarily, there is no DP4.

P2) Necessarily, if Y loves with gratuitous love and Y loves with owed love, then Y is DP2. [Premise]

C1) Necessarily: if X loves with gratuitous love and it is not the case that X loves with owed love, then X is DP1; and if Y loves with gratuitous love and Y loves with owed love, then Y is DP2; and if Z loves with owed love and it is not the case that Z loves with gratuitous love, then Z is DP3. [P1, P2, P3: Necessity E & I, Conjunction Introduction]

C3) Necessarily, if X is divine, then either X is DP1 or X is DP2 or X is DP3. [C2, P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

⁵⁷ DT 5.16 (Evans, 309-10; Ribaillier, 214).

⁵⁸ E.g. AF-P, MP-C, TP-C.

⁵⁹ The following is the full expression of this argument, for further discussion see page 155. The Argument Against Four Divine Persons from Love* – AF-L*

P1) Necessarily, if X loves with gratuitous love and it is not the case that X loves with owed love, then X is DP1. [Premise]

P3) Necessarily, if Z loves with owed love and it is not the case that Z loves with gratuitous love, then Z is DP3. [Premise]

P4) Necessarily, if it is the case that [if X loves with gratuitous love and it is not the case that X loves with owed love, then X is DP1; and if Y loves with gratuitous love and Y loves with owed love, then Y is DP2; and if Z loves with owed love and it is not the case that Z loves with gratuitous love, then Z is DP3;] then it is the case that there are no other modes of loving. [Premise]⁵⁹

C2) Necessarily, there are no other modes of loving. [C1, P4: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

P5) Necessarily, if there are no other modes of loving, then: if X is divine, then either X is DP1 or X is DP2 or X is DP3. [Premise]

⁶⁰ It is important to note that throughout this discussion Richard only considers intra-divine, and therefore supreme, love. None of the claims Richard makes about the requirements of supreme love can be satisfied by created persons. I will typically leave the supremacy modifier out of my discussion for the sake of simplicity.

The primary concepts at work are here are the two types (*modi*) of love, gratuitous and owed. Richard Richard introduced the distinction in *DT* 3.11, but it does not come into its own until now. Richard is careful to state precisely what he means by the terms,

Love is gratuitous when someone gladly bestows love to a person from whom he did not receive any favours. Love is owed when someone requites nothing but love to the person from who he freely received it. And love is a combination of both when by loving in both ways a person freely receives love and freely bestows it.⁶¹

Though there is no temporal priority, divine lovers do love one another with logical priority. In this way divine owed love follows, or is a response to gratuitous love. Further, the extended discussion on the nature of processions in AF-P gives us some of the conceptual content of interdivine love: supreme gratuitous love is, among other things, a causal act in which the lover gives to the beloved being, divinity, and all the rest in his possession. With this distinction between gratuitous and owed love, Richard moves immediately to his argument.

6.2.1 AF-L1: DP1 alone loves with gratuitous love

Richard makes the following case for AF-L1,

It is already most certain that one person in the Trinity possesses nothing except from himself, receives absolutely nothing from any other source, and has nothing at all from a foreign gift. It does not seem at all possible for this sort (*modo*) of owed love, which we described to you above, to belong to a person who is discovered to have received nothing from anyone for which he would become obliged to him or become a debtor to him. But when he bountifully, generously, and freely bestows the abundance of his fullness to those who proceed from him, he shows that he possesses a gratuitous love. Indeed what can those persons proceeding from him demand from him, what, I ask, can they demand from him as an obligation, seeing that they even receive as his gift this owed love which they are returning for his gratuitous love? Otherwise, they would have something that they had not received from him...⁶²

We can discern two arguments from this passage. First, DP1 cannot love with, or have, owed love. Second, DP1 has gratuitous love. The first in more detail:

Argument for the Impossibility of DP1 Having Owed Love

- 42) Necessarily, if DP1 has owed love, then he receives gratuitous love from another source. [Premise]
- 43) Necessarily, DP1 does not receive love from another source. [Premise]
- 44) Therefore, necessarily, DP1 does not have owed love. [42, 43: Modus Tollens]

Premise 42 comes from the definition of gratuitous and owed love, since owed love (*amor debitum*) just is the love requited to an initiator.⁶³ 43 is a familiar claim from AF-P, viz., that DP1 does not

⁶¹ DT 5.16 (Evans, 310; Ribaillier, 215). Richard is aware of other connotations for each term coming from human experience. Elsewhere he carefully sets these other meanings to the side. See DT 4.11, 6.8, 6.18.
⁶² DT 5.17 (Evans, 310; Ribaillier, 215).

⁶³ With the previously detailed caveats regarding atemporal initiation.

receive being, and therefore love, from another. One way to complete the line of thought is not one that Richard takes, but which is persuasive nevertheless:

- 45) Necessarily, if DP1 does not have owed love, then he loves only with gratuitous love. [Premise]
- 46) Therefore, necessarily, DP1 loves only with gratuitous love. [44, 45: Modus Ponens]

This conclusion follows from a classification of the three possible modes of inter-personal divine love: (i) gratuitous alone, (ii) owed alone, (iii) both gratuitous and owed. We will examine this classification more fully below. If the three-fold taxonomy is veridical, then DP1 cannot possibly have (ii) or (iii) since both include owed love. With the logical space exhausted, we may conclude that DP1 necessarily loves only gratuitously. Again, Richard does not reason the way just outlined. Instead, to support the conclusion in 46 he opts to give an independent positive argument, which begins this way:

Argument for DP1 Only Loving Gratuitously

- 47) If someone gives his fullness bountifully, generously, and freely, then his giving is an act of gratuitous love. [Premise]
- 48) DP1 gives his fullness bountifully, generously, and freely. [Premise]
- 49) Therefore, DP's giving is an act of gratuitous love. [47, 48: Universal E, Modus Ponens]

Premise 47 lists three aspects of DP1's causal relation to other divine persons, namely, giving bountifully, generously, and freely. We have looked at the first two already, in books five and three, respectively. *DT* 5's discussion of processions fleshed out much of the meaning of giving 'bountifully'. As we saw in detail there,⁶⁴ a divine person gives another all that is possible for him to give, including divinity and existence itself. Book three discussed intra-divine generosity as an inclination toward bountiful giving, an inclination necessarily acted upon.⁶⁵ What about the 'freely' element? What does it mean to say that DP1 gives his fullness freely? We must immediately dismiss any notions of libertarian freedom. Richard excludes this understanding at the end of AF-L,

Moreover, when we say that the fullness of gratuitous love consists in giving alone, and the fullness of owed love consists in receiving alone, no one should take this to mean that in that equality without differentiation this is a work of grace rather than an operation of nature.⁶⁶

The key to understanding 'works of nature' and of 'grace' is that of necessity. A work of nature is an activity which its subject necessarily engages. Drawing from created reality, Richard gives the example of the sun which must cause its rays.⁶⁷ A work of grace is an activity in which its subject does not necessarily engage. In one place Richard states that creation is a work of grace since "whatever comes from God through an operation of grace rather than necessity of nature could be created by him or could also not be created by him according to the decision of his good-

⁶⁴ See the first half of this chapter.

⁶⁵ See the MP and TP arguments, in chapters 4 and 5, respectively.

⁶⁶ DT 5.22 (Evans, 315; Ribaillier, 221).

⁶⁷ DT 1.9 (Evans, 218; Ribaillier, 94).

pleasure."⁶⁸ The phrase "necessity of nature" alerts us to the modal quality of the distinction. An operation of nature, unlike one of grace, is a power its bearer necessarily manifests. Returning to premise 47, how are we to understand DP1 freely giving his fullness?

One important aspect of DP1's free giving overlaps with his generosity. That is, DP1 is disposed to give, and necessarily acts on that disposition, but he does not require anything in return. Of course, owed love *is* returned by DP1's beloveds, but they requite love of their own (dispositional) volition. In sum and stated colloquially: DP1's love is free because it has no strings attached: he asks for nothing in return. Further, fullness is a divine gift that, once given, will not be taken back.

A third aspect of fullness freely given is the inclusion of the will. The nature-grace distinction may appear as one between choice and the absence of choice. But Richard makes clear that divine wisdom and volition are never absent from divine action (nor could they be, given his view of simplicity). The distinction, then, is between DP1's choice to do what he must do, and his choice to do otherwise. In other words, there is plenty of conceptual space for DP1 to happily *consent* to his natural activity. The philosopher Norman Kretzmann notices a similar notion at work in Aquinas, who explains in the *De Veritate* that "the divine will is under a necessity, not of force but of natural ordination, which is not incompatible with freedom."⁶⁹ Kretzmann points out that Aquinas is no compatibilist; free choice is the kind of choice "said in relation to the things that one wills, not of necessity, but of his own accord."⁷⁰ The sort of choice Kretzmann has in focus is what he describes as 'willing freely' and 'willingness'.⁷¹ Kretzmann gives willingness a counterfactual analysis: an agent has willingness for a state when he necessarily desires that state but *would* have freely chosen it had he not necessarily done so.

While I refrain from taking a stance on Kretzmann's interpretation of Aquinas, I do think Richard's argument is amenable to the sort of will Kretzmann describes. Indeed, the pieces are present for making out something like *willingness* in Richard: each divine person is fully pleased to engage in other-love; since joy results from satisfaction of desire, it seems obvious that DP1 wills his act of nature, and would have willed it even if it had not been necessary. This spotlights a third way in which interpersonal divine love, though necessary, can also be rightly described as 'free'.

In premise 49 Richard concludes that DP1 loves gratuitously, not that he loves *only* gratuitously. To finish the proof, Richard argues:

- 50) Necessarily, if the other divine persons receive all they have from DP1, then they do not love DP1 gratuitously. [Premise]
- 51) Necessarily, the other divine persons receive all they have from DP1. [Premise]
- 52) Therefore, necessarily, the other divine persons do not love DP1 gratuitously. [50, 51: Modus Ponens]

⁶⁸ DT 2.8 (Evans, 232; Ribaillier, 114-15).

⁶⁹ Aquinas Thomas, *Truth*, trans. Robert W. Mulligan, James V. McGlynn, and Robert W. Schmidt (Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 1995), 23.4, resp. (111).

⁷⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles: Book One: God*, trans. Anton C. F. R. S. C. Pegis, New edition, vol. 1 (University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), 1.88 (270).

⁷¹ Norman Kretzmann, "A General Problem of Creation, Being and Goodness," in *Being and Goodness: The Concept* of the Good in Metaphysics and Philosophical Theology, ed. Scott MacDonald (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 216. Kretzmann later points to a similar distinction in Bonaventure's trinitarian theology (225).

- 53) Necessarily, if the other divine persons do not love DP1 gratuitously, then DP1 does not love with owed love. [Premise]
- 54) Therefore, DP1 does not love with owed love. [52, 53: Modus Ponens]

In the passage quoted at the outset of AF-L1 Richard iterates the claim, from AF-P, that any divine persons except DP1 necessarily receive all they have. He reiterates the same claim here in 50. Receiving fullness is identical to receiving gratuitous love. Any divine persons who receive gratuitous love from DP1, such as DP2 and DP3, cannot love DP1 gratuitously, but only requite his love with *amor debitum* (premise 53). But without ever receiving gratuitous love, DP1 never has a lover to whom he owes love (main conclusion 54).

6.2.2 AF-L2: DP3 alone loves only with owed love

Richard next turns his attention to DP3. Richard does not assume that there are only three divine persons, which is the very point under consideration. Instead, he only supposes that there are at least three divine persons, one of these whom only receives the fullness of being and does not give it (for which he argued in AF-P3). However many persons there are in total, it is the one at the end of the causal – and, as we shall see, loving – chain whom he considers in this argument.

Richard aims to show that DP3 only loves with owed love. He does so by arguing, first, that DP3 cannot love with gratuitous love, and then by showing that he must love with owed love:

Argument Against DP3 Loving with Supreme Gratuitous Love

- 55) Necessarily, if a divine person gives the fullness of being to DP3, then that person loves DP3 with supreme gratuitous love. [Premise]
- 56) Necessarily, a divine person gives the fullness of being to DP3. [Premise]
- 57) Therefore, necessarily, a divine loves DP3 with supreme gratuitous love. [55, 56: Modus Ponens]
- 58) Necessarily, if a divine person loves DP3 with supreme gratuitous love, then DP3 does not love that person with supreme gratuitous love. [Premise]
- 59) Therefore, necessarily, DP3 does not love a divine person with supreme gratuitous love. [57, 58: Modus Ponens]
- 60) Necessarily, if DP3 loves a created person with supreme gratuitous love, then DP3's love is disordered. [Premise]
- 61) Necessarily, DP3's love is not disordered. [Premise]
- 62) Therefore, necessarily, DP3 does not love a created person with supreme gratuitous love. [60, 61: Modus Tollens]
- 63) Necessarily, if DP3 does not love a divine person with supreme gratuitous love and DP3 does not love a created person with supreme gratuitous love, then DP3 does not love with supreme gratuitous love. [Premise]
- 64) Therefore, DP3 does not love with supreme gratuitous love. [59, 62, 63: Conjunction I; Modus Ponens]

We saw above that Richard carves up the loving landscape into three possible modes in which a divine person may love: (i) only gratuitously, (ii) only owed, (iii) gratuitously and owed. The previous argument eliminates (i) and (iii), leaving only mode (ii) for DP3. Exhausting the logical space is sufficient to prove his point, but Richard gives further evidence for why DP3 love with owed love alone:

Argument for DP3 Loving with Supreme Owed Love

- 65) Necessarily, if DP3 does not supremely requite the supreme gratuitous love he receives from other divine persons, then he is not worthy of supreme gratuitous love. [Premise]
- 66) Necessarily, if DP3 is not worthy of supreme gratuitous love, then no other divine persons love him with supreme gratuitous love. [Premise]
- 67) Necessarily, other divine persons do love DP3 with supreme gratuitous love. [Premise]
- 68) Therefore, necessarily, DP3 does supremely requite the supreme gratuitous love he receives from other divine persons. [65, 66, 67: Transitivity of Implication, Modus Tollens]
- 69) Necessarily, if DP3 supremely requites the supreme gratuitous love he receives from other divine persons and DP3 does not love with supreme gratuitous love, then DP3 loves only with supreme owed love. [Premise]
- 70) Therefore, necessarily, DP3 loves only with supreme owed love. [64, 68, 69: Conjunction I; Modus Ponens]

Richard argues extensively for 65 and 66 in AF-P, where he employs the notion of disordered charity to argue that a divine person must love an object strictly according to its worth. Premises 67 and 69 build on the nature of the giving relation: it is the counterpart to the receiving relation, and it is asymmetric.⁷² The conclusion in 70 is reached from premises in this argument and the conclusion from the previous argument.

In AF-L2 Richard gives two arguments, the *argument against DP3 loving with supreme gratuitous love*, and the *argument for DP3 loving with supreme owed love*. The first aims to shows that it is impossible for DP3 to love with supreme gratuitous love or, put another way, to love divine persons gratuitously. The second re-treads ground regarding ordered and disordered love. Either argument is sufficient to prove that DP3 loves any other divine persons only with owed love.

⁷² Premise 3 is one of Richard's most explicit statements about the necessary requital of gratuitous love. An 'obligation' (debito) appears to be some moral relation – akin to a right or duty – necessarily had by recipients of the divine being. Put another way, a divine person who receives the divine being, or substance, from DP1, is obligated to DP1 in some way: DP2 has a duty toward DP1 or, examined from the other direction, DP1 has a right against DP2. Such a relation, however, seems otiose when speaking of divine persons - and particularly out of place when speaking of obligation to love, where talk of duty may seem out of place. For instance, we saw in AF-L1 that DP1 gives his love freely, without any further requirements. How can it be true to say both 'S1's gift to S2 is free, S1 requires nothing in return' and 'S2 is required to give something to S1 in return for S1's gift'? The contradiction appears obvious. I think the answer lies in the nature of love. As Richard understands it, love can be freely given and simultaneously carry requirements, but in different senses. First, DP1's love for DP2 and DP3 is 'free' since DP1 requires nothing in return, as we have seen. However, DP1's love, the act of giving itself, does carry a moral weight. Once again axiology and ethics intersect. DP1's love is so valuable that it is right, and also desirable, to requite it. I think human experience attests to this phenomenon in a diminished way. When a human beloved receives love without further obligation, she seems naturally inclined to love her lover. Love breeds love. Richard gives a perfect being argument to further support the idea. In short: if S2 does not requite S1's love, S2 is not worthy to receive supreme love. DP1 knows that DP2 and DP3 are perfect and worthy of his love, and so gives it to them. If they did not requite DP1's love, then they would be holding something back which they could share and, finally, would deny DP1 (as well as themselves) supreme joy. All this to say, they would not be worthy of supreme love and so would not receive it. But they are worthy of supreme love, they do receive it, and they naturally desire - or are obligated - to love the initial giver of supreme love.

6.2.3 AF-L3: DP2 alone loves with gratuitous and with owed love

AF-L3 is the shortest of the AF-L arguments and I will quote it in full,

Because it is the particular property of one person both to proceed from another and have a person proceeding from him, it is necessary for him to abound in both a gratuitous and owed love and to bestow completely the fullness of both loves, namely, the fullness of a gratuitous love to one person and the fullness of an owed love to another person. It is obviously an obligation that he loves with a supreme love the first person from whom he receives everything and to whom he gives nothing; but it is gratuitous that he supremely loves the other person from whom he receives nothing but bestows everything.⁷³

In this passage Richard argues that giving supreme being is identical to supreme gratuitous love, and receiving being is identical to supremely requiring love. Outlined:

Argument for DP2 Loving with Supreme Owed and Requited Love

- 71) Necessarily, if DP2 receives being and gives being, then DP2 loves with supreme owed love and supreme gratuitous love. [Premise]
- 72) Necessarily, DP2 receives being and gives being. [Premise]
- 73) Therefore, necessarily, DP2 loves with supreme owed love and supreme gratuitous love. [71, 72: Modus Ponens]

Stopping a 73 would only show that *at least* one person loves with both modes. In the fourth and final step of AF-L, Richard works to ensure that *only* one person does so.

6.2.4 AF-L4: There are only three modes of loving. Therefore, it is impossible for there to be four divine persons

Richard completes the AF-L by identifying the modes of being of the divine persons with their modes of loving. Just before that, though, he summarizes an important step from earlier in AF-L.

...no love can exist in that mutual charity of persons that is not either gratuitous alone, owed alone, or both owed and gratuitous at the same time. Concerning the three aforementioned persons, it is no less clear that the fullness of a gratuitous love belongs to one person alone, the fullness of an owed love belongs to a second person alone, and the fullness of both an owed and gratuitous love belongs to a third person alone.⁷⁴

In this passage Richard rehearses the three possible modes of intra-divine love, discussed in AF-L1: (i) gratuitous love only; (ii) owed love only; (iii) both gratuitous and owed love. He then argues that only DP1 only loves with gratuitous love; only DP3 only loves with owed love; only DP2 loves with both gratuitous and owed love. Richard says 'only' DP2 has both owed and gratuitous love. Richard does not mean that DP2's mode of loving in incommunicable, since this is the very idea being investigated. Instead, Richard means that among DP1, DP2, and DP3, only DP2 has the mode 'loving with gratuitous and owed love'. Richard must still show that DP4 cannot have this mode. Richard does this by incorporating some data from divine simplicity,

Surely each of the three divine persons and their love are not distinct things? Surely, for each of these persons, being is not distinct from loving, nor is loving distinct from

⁷³ DT 5.19 (Evans, 312; Ribaillier, 217).

⁷⁴ DT 5.20 (Evans, 312; Ribaillier, 218).

being?...Therefore, for any of the three, their person will be identical to their love...And so, the number of persons will be consistent with the number of properties. Therefore, as we have said, because any person is identical to his love, and because the designated differentiation of each person consists only in the three aforementioned properties, just as we will in no way be able to find a fourth property in divinity, so we will not be able to find a fourth person in it.⁷⁵

The core of the argument is the idea that the divine persons are identical to their mode of loving. Richard argues for a theory of divine simplicity in DT 2.17-18. Here he applies that theory to divine persons, arguing that divine persons are identical to their act of loving, and identical to divine love itself. Richard concludes,

And so, 'several persons are in one divinity' will denote nothing other than...'several persons are one and the same love, namely, the supreme love, from a different property'.⁷⁶

Richard finishes by arguing that DP1 is divine love given gratuitously; DP3 is divine love returned; DP2 is divine love given and returned. Further, a fourth mode of divine love is impossible. He concludes that a fourth divine person is impossible.

Here Richard identifies each divine person with one of the three possible combinations of modes of inter-personal love. By doing so, Richard shows that any further divine persons would be identical with one of the first three. These finishing touches of the AF-L get the job done, but they are a heavier touch than I think is necessary. That is, Richard makes a strong identification between the persons and their properties, so heavy that the persons are identical with their properties. To make AF-L work, though, he need only prove that the three modes of inter-personal love map directly onto the three modes of being. There are only three possible modes of being, each necessarily had by one divine person. If the modes of loving are identical to the modes of being, as Richard argues they are, then the three possible modes of loving are necessarily had by one divine person. Even if I am correct and the claims are stronger than necessary to achieve Richard's immediate purposes, I do not think they are too strong. The argument is remains sound, though cogency may be strengthened if Richard is willing to reduce the identity claim. Thus concludes Richard's argument for three, and only three, divine persons.

6.2.5 Full expression of the argument

The Argument Against Four Divine Persons from Love* – AF-L*

- P1) Necessarily, if X loves with gratuitous love and it is not the case that X loves with owed love, then X is DP1. [Premise]
- P2) Necessarily, if Y loves with gratuitous love and Y loves with owed love, then Y is DP2. [Premise]
- P3) Necessarily, if Z loves with owed love and it is not the case that Z loves with gratuitous love, then Z is DP3. [Premise]
 - C1) Necessarily: if X loves with gratuitous love and it is not the case that X loves with owed love, then X is DP1; and if Y loves with gratuitous love and Y loves with owed love, then Y is DP2; and if Z loves with owed love and it is not the case that

⁷⁵ DT 5.20 (Evans, 313; Ribaillier, 218).

⁷⁶ DT 5.20 (Evans, 313; Ribaillier, 218).

Z loves with gratuitous love, then Z is DP3. [P1, P2, P3: Necessity E & I, Conjunction Introduction]

- P4) Necessarily, if it is the case that [if X loves with gratuitous love and it is not the case that X loves with owed love, then X is DP1; and if Y loves with gratuitous love and Y loves with owed love, then Y is DP2; and if Z loves with owed love and it is not the case that Z loves with gratuitous love, then Z is DP3;] then it is the case that there are no other modes of loving. [Premise]⁷⁷
 - C2) Necessarily, there are no other modes of loving. [C1, P4: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]
- P5) Necessarily, if there are no other modes of loving, then: if X is divine, then either X is DP1 or X is DP2 or X is DP3. [Premise]
 - C3) Necessarily, if X is divine, then either X is DP1 or X is DP2 or X is DP3. [C2, P5, P6: Necessity E & I, Modus Ponens]

This is the final argument of Richard's case for exactly three divine persons, and we find that it relies on the AF-P in some important ways. First, P1-P3 identify the modes of love with the divine persons, who were identified with their mode of procession in AF-P. Stated another way, the modes of love are identical to the modes of procession. P4 states that there are no other possible modes of love. Richard does not draw from AF-P to support this premise, but rather from common experience of love and requited love. P5, like its counterpart in AF-P, claims that any divine person, including a fourth, is identical to one of the three. From this Richard concludes C3, which is equivalent to: "Necessarily, there are at most three divine persons."

6.3 Concluding Thoughts: AF-L's dependence on AF-P

As Richard construes it, AF-L depends on some claims established in AF-P. Specifically, AF-L4, "Only DP1 only loves with gratuitous love; only DP3 only loves with owed love; only DP2 loves with both gratuitous and owed love." The counterpart to each of these claims, though, were established in AF-P.⁷⁸ To the extent that it depends upon AF-P, AF-L will manifest any weaknesses of AF-P, and be prone to its objections. Put another way, AF-L is only as strong, or weak, as the premises it borrows. This poses no special difficulties: Richard employs premises from previous arguments throughout The Argument; it stands to reason that the fourth and final step in the Argument borrows most heavily.

One wonders, though, about the feasibility of an independent AF-L argument. Independent, that is, of AF-P. Jettisoning any reliance upon the nature of divine processions, such an argument might look like this:

- AF-L*1) There are only three possible modes of divine loving: (i) gratuitously alone, (ii) owed alone, (iii) both gratuitously and owed. (Argument from analogy; *DT* 3.11 and 5.16)
- AF-L*2) Divine persons are identical to their mode of loving. (DT 5.20)
- AF-L*3) There are at least three divine persons. (From TP arguments)
- AF-L*4) Therefore, there are only three possible divine persons.

⁷⁷ By using 'P' as a propositional constant standing for the proposition expressed by C1, we can paraphrase P4 as, "If P, then there are no other modes of loving."

⁷⁸ Viz., AF-P2, AF-P4, and AF-P6.

Free from any notion of causation, this form of AF-L can stand on its own reasoning about the nature of love. I take this to be a strength of the modified version. Another attractive feature of this version is the ease with which it is expressed in more contemporary terms:

- AF-L*5) There are only three possible ways a person may love: only by initiating love, only by requiting love, by both initiating and requiting love. (From observations about love)
- AF-L*6) A divine person is his act of love. (Divine simplicity)
- AF-L*7) There are at least three divine persons. (From the TP arguments)
- AF-L*8) Therefore, there are only three divine persons.

I do not claim that Richard would endorse this argument. The trade-off is between cogency and explanatory depth. The independent version may be more marketable to contemporary thinkers but, even if sound, it is not as enlightening as Richard's version. Since AF-L maps onto discussion of processions, claims about love are rich with content about interpersonal causation. Such insights are largely missing from the modified version. I only propose it as a possible route, not diverging terribly far from the original, which a contemporary proponent may present in hopes that it falls more favourably on the ears of her listeners.

7. CONCLUSION

7.0 Review

My overarching aim in this thesis is to obtain a deep understanding of Richard's argument for the necessity of the Trinity (what I have called 'The Argument'). To this end I have given The Argument a detailed exposition, mainly in the form of a premise-by-premise discussion of its sub-arguments. While doing this I kept one eye on The Argument's twelfth century historical context, and the other eye on its philosophical content (e.g., its metaphysics, validity/soundness). At points along the I have addressed some of the main difficulties and critiques of the sub-arguments (though a fuller defence must wait till a later time).

A short recap: chapter one gave an overview of Richard's project in *De Trinitate* and its Victorine, twelfth century context. The bulk of my attention was then spent on The Argument itself, in chapters two through six. There I gave a detailed exposition of The Argument while looking at some antecedents to certain parts of The Argument addressing some critique. By way of conclusion I want to look at one place in contemporary scholarship where Richard's trinitarian argument has immediate bearing, namely, analytic trinitarian theology. Assuming that it is sound, The Argument has implications for social trinitarians, Latin trinitarians, and unorthodox trinitarian theories. Below I touch on just a few points for each theory.¹

7.1 Implication for Social Trinitarians

Recent work by both analytic philosophers of religion and analytic theologians has looked to Richard's trinitarian thought as inspiration for social accounts of trinitarian theorizing.² Social trinitarians like these find Richard's thought appealing, in part, because in the inter-personal relations of love that Richard develops in detail, they find something like self-conscious centres of affect, intellect, and will. Viewing persons (divine or otherwise) as having distinct intellect/will is widely considered a necessary condition of social trinitarianism. While few scholars go so far as to claim that Richard holds such a view, Richard's arguments are cherry-picked and employed directly for those conclusions. Thus, Richard is viewed by many – whether social, Latin, or otherwise – as an early or proto social trinitarian, an ally or, at the very least, a friendly non-combatant to the social theory of the Trinity.

I am sympathetic to folks who see Richard this way. Given our post-modern (or better, hypermodern), Enlightenment, Western views of the individual person, it is easy to find our contemporary psychological world-view represented in Richard's detailed phenomenology of

¹ Many of these points are taken from a more extensive study, Dennis Bray, "Richard of St. Victor's Argument from Love and Contemporary Analytic Theology of the Trinity," in *Analytic Theology and the Tri-Personal God* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium: Peeters Publishers, Forthcoming).

² Philosophers include: Swinburne, *The Christian God*; Davis, *Christian Philosophical Theology*; Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*. One leading analytic theologian (who leans towards social trinitarianism) is Thomas McCall, *Which Trinity? Whose Monotheism?: Philosophical and Systematic Theologians on the Metaphysics of Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2010).

love³; even easier to modify parts of *De Trinitate* for social conclusions, while shedding the Latinleaning parts. In general I have no qualms with appropriating some thinker's themes and ideas for constructive use. Philosophers and theologians alike, *nous prenons notre bien là où on le trouve* – we take our treasure where we can find it. And, as I claimed in the introductory chapter, I believe Richard gives plenty of grist for trinitarian mills. However – and this is the main implication for social trinitarians – *De Trinitate* is firmly, deliberately, and at times belligerently, Latin.⁴

That De Trinitate is thoroughly a Latin trinitarian work should give social trinitarians some pause. This is because the treatise is not a dogmatic or systematic statement of Latin trinitarianism. Instead, it is a persistent, cumulative case argument for the truth of a Latin theory of the scriptural and early creedal doctrine. Again, I fully endorse the practice of looking to Richard for retrieval and inspiration for constructive purposes. However, if one of those purposes is to employ The Argument for anti-Latin trinitarianism, then the going will be tough. If Richard, and others, can look to our experiences of love to argue for Latin trinitarianism while contemporary philosophers can argue for social trinitarianism from the same experience, then at the very least the divergence needs to be noted by the contemporary thinkers. Unless he could be persuaded to abandon his traditional view, Richard would disagree with some of the fundamental conclusions of social trinitarians. At the very least this means that social trinitarians who mean to use Richard as a dialogue partner or launching pad should think very carefully about places of disagreement between Richard and their use of him. First, this is a fair-use practice of a man who may recoil from being used as motivation or endorsement of social trinitarianism. Second, it is due diligence for thinking through one's own independent account: if Richard's thought is good enough to borrow the elements of love, goodness, etc., why is it not good enough to borrow the other, more foundational, elements? The work of social trinitarians can only be strengthened by interacting more critically, more carefully, with their source material - not least by identifying weak-points in (Richard's) Latin trinitarianism, and by responding to defeaters of their own social theories.

7.2 Implications for Non-Social Trinitarians

Among many traditional trinitarians, Richard of St. Victor is something of a bogeyman. He was already suspect among many Thomists since at least the early twentieth century.⁵ Latin trinitarians who find the deployment of Ricardine themes and arguments intolerable can easily find Richard's work equally otiose. In short, Richard is guilty by association. Where the big idea to take away

³ For some thinkers it is almost impossible not to. For instance, in conversation Richard Swinburne reported to me that he cannot see the plausibility of an entity sharing a numerically identical affect/will/intellect with another entity and those entities having anything like the love relations that Richard of St. Victor describes. In other words, some thinkers cannot conceive of divine persons, as described by Latin trinitarians, having love for one another. Richard Swinburne, conversation with the author, September 2019.

⁴ At one point Richard exclaims "We are not Greek (*Greci non sumus*)." Of course this is not a response to contemporary social trinitarianism, but it is a strong affirmation of Western theological attitudes, in this case Western hesitation over the Greek term *hypostasis*. DT 4.4 (Evans, 27; Ribaillier, 165). Cf. Richard of St Victor, *La Trinité*, 486–87.

⁵ For some notable examples, see: Penido, "Gloses Sur La Procession d'amour Dans La Trinité"; St Thomas Aquinas, *Somme Théologique: La Trinité , Tomes I et II*, trans. H.F. Dondaine (Paris: Cerf, 1946), 387–409; Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas, Volume 2: Spiritual Master*, trans. Robert Royal (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University America Press, 1996), 184–85; Gilles Emery OP, *The Trinitarian Theology of St Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 234.

from the previous section is that social trinitarians can and should utilize *De Trinitate*, but must do so with greater care, to Latin trinitarians the message is good tidings. *De Trinitate* is readily supportive amenable to Latin theorizing, and need not be feared or rejected. The philosopher Alexander Pruss sees Richard as a useful resource and has taken initial steps in putting *De Trinitate* to use in defence of Latin trinitarianism. Love, Pruss argues, includes (or is) generosity and unity. But divine generosity requires sharing the greatest good possible, which is the divine being, and sharing requires multiple persons. Unity requires the minimal possible distinction among the persons. By Pruss' lights, Latin trinitarianism is the best theory on offer for meeting these requirements, allowing Pruss to conclude that Ricardine-type arguments from love "supports Latin trinitarianism very nicely."⁶

Latin trinitarians who follow Pruss' lead and desire to reinvest in Richard will also need to proceed thoughtfully regarding several issues. For instance, Richard's substance metaphysics (and particularly his Platonic, participation metaphysics) is foreign to many contemporary analytic thinkers. Further, modern notions of the person are quite different from Richard's definition of divine persons. These notions and metaphysical tools must be understood, argued, and shown to be useful for thinking about the Trinity generally to make Richard's trinitarian arguments most cogent. Even so, Pruss' initial steps make a strong case for *De Trinitate* as a resource for Latin trinitarians.

7.3 Implications for Heterodox Christian Theologies

If The Argument is sound then orthodox trinitarians have an additional source for engaging with heterodox views. I will use Keith Ward's trinitarianism as an example of how the conversation may be advanced using Richard's work. Ward recognizes some limited threeness in the being of God (the immanent Trinity), but that threeness does not include consciousness or other faculties that would qualify for personhood. Further, Ward dislikes trinitarian arguments like those Richard gives, largely because of the concept of love that they employ. Ward asks,

Would these divine persons really be loving, in any intelligible sense? It is notoriously difficult to define love, but it seems to imply admiration and respect, even devotion and desire. It implies willingness to put oneself to some trouble to help others. It implies a willingness to cooperate with others in realizing their purposes. And it implies being interested in the experiences of others, and sharing new experiences with them.⁷

On Ward's view, love involves learning, sacrifice, "put[ting] up with another's foibles," hurt, and then forgiveness.⁸ Given this account of love, we cannot meaningfully speak of intra-trinitarian love.⁹ Richard could grant that love, among humans, often goes just how Ward describes. What Richard would press, though, is that nothing about the concept of love itself *requires* ignorance,

⁶ Alexander R. Pruss, "Latin Trinitarianism and the Perfection of Love," *Alexander Pruss's Blog* (blog), April 28, 2008, http://alexanderpruss.blogspot.com/2008/04/orthodox-trinitarianism-and-perfection.html.

⁷ Keith Ward, "Reimagining the Trinity: On Not Three Gods," *Philosophia Christi* 18, no. 2 (October 1, 2016): 285.

⁸ Keith Ward, *Christ and the Cosmos: A Reformulation of Trinitarian Doctrine* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 179.

⁹ "To speak of love between divine persons is virtually vacuous. The reason is simple: each being perfect, they need no others." Ward, 179.

loss, or hurt. Additionally, divine love includes desire, but not lack (as Ward seems to recognize).¹⁰ Plausibly, then, it is possible for an instance of love to obtain that involves no risk, no loss, no imperfection. But this is all that Richard needs to get The Argument going. Notice that this line of thinking does not depend on any Platonic/Greek metaphysics (of which Ward is particularly wary). As Richard's methodology always demands, we need only examine our own experiences of love to see both its imperfection, and its nature when it goes right. Finally, Ward is also wary of perfect being speculation. But so far we are only doing perfect *attribute* speculation. Though Richard employs Anselmian means to conclude that God has supreme(ly perfect) love, he could also use scripture to ground that claim.¹¹ Now Ward finds it difficult to call a relation like the one Richard describes 'love'. That is, if it does not involve risk, loss, etc., it is just too far afield from our experience to count as love. While we may argue with Ward's assessment of love, we do not need to.¹² Instead, we may simply call that relation something else, say 'charity', and continue to press the point that this relation is both possible and, if possible, something that obtains within Ward's divine threeness. Once again, we are on our way with Richard's argument.

7.4 Conclusion

I have only been able to touch in the lightest way on The Argument's application to contemporary trinitarian discussions. However brief, I hope the point is clear: Richard's trinitarian speculation does have direct bearing on live issues among trinitarians and their interlocutors. A growing number of Victorine scholars are finding Richard's trinitarianism worthy of study in itself. The short survey in this concluding chapter, I hope, will encourage philosophical trinitarians of all stripes to engage more seriously with Richard's thought in order to strengthen and advance their own.

¹⁰ Again: "each being perfect, they need no others" Ward, Christ and the Cosmos, p.179.

¹¹ For one recent example of a theologian doing just that, see Jordan Wessling, *Love Divine: A Systematic Account of God's Love for Humanity* (Oxford: O.U.P., 2020).

¹² For instance, a proponent of The Argument could reply that she *does* experience perfect love from God (though not maximal love). Similarly, she could point to near-perfect examples of human-to-human love she has encountered. These serve to support the claim that non-risky/lacking love is possible, which again, is all she needs to get The Argument going.

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