

What Does a *habitus* of the Soul Do? The Case of the *habitus* of Faith in Bonaventure, Peter John Olivi and John Duns Scotus

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Abstract: While a *habitus* can be described as a disposition towards a certain type of act, such a definition is not sufficient to encompass the diversity of uses the medieval thinkers made of this concept. It is the aim of this paper to examine the *habitus* of faith in the voluntarist Franciscan tradition in order to illustrate several of its functions and how these varied from author to author. Studying how the *habitus* of faith works for Bonaventure, Peter John Olivi and John Duns Scotus allows us to examine different takes on these functions and illustrate the variety of possible positions even within a tradition that emphasizes the freedom and agency of the moral subject above all. We will emphasize the capacity a *habitus* grants to pick out its proper objects, in the present case, the objects of faith; the capacity to elicit certain acts that without it would not have been possible or at least that would not have had the moral value the *habitus* grants them; the capacity to unite several powers in the accomplishment of a given act.

Keywords: faith, *habitus*, Bonaventure, Peter John Olivi, Duns Scotus, freedom, virtue.

Introduction

For all medieval thinkers, *habitus* are to be thought of as dispositions towards certain types of acts. Their first and main function is to condition the way in which an act is done: better, more quickly, more easily, or more pleasurably. A simple example is a mind becoming better at mental calculation through performing different calculations repeatedly. In medieval terms, only one power, the intellect, would be habituated, and only one operation (though it might be divided into several sub-operations of the same nature) is concerned: calculating. The more I calculate, the quicker my intellect becomes at it and the easier it becomes for it to reach results without error.

The object of the present paper is to determine the precise role of a very specific *habitus*: the *habitus* of faith. This *habitus* disposes the agent who possesses it towards acts of faith, defined here as acts of intellectual assent to a given object, by which this object is held to be

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true with firmness, that is with neither hesitation nor fear that the opposite might be true. Acts of faith are also free and voluntary in the sense that an act of the will commanding this assent to the intellect is required for it to occur and to be firm.

The *habitus* of faith is much more complex than a *habitus* such as the calculating *habitus* I described, in several ways. First, faith is a specific kind of *habitus*, namely a virtue. This means that the acts of faith, towards which it inclines the agent, are supposed to be morally good. Therefore, by contrast with the calculating *habitus*, which concerns any number at all, the subject who elicits acts of faith must somehow be able to pick out which objects it is morally good to assent to. In other words, the calculating *habitus* disposes an intellect to a certain type of act (adding, multiplying, etc.) whatever its object (any number), while the *habitus* of faith disposes a power (or more than one power; see below) to a certain type of act (assenting intellectually or accepting as true) that has a very specific type of object (what must be believed by a Catholic). Our first line of inquiry will be to examine the way in which the *habitus* of faith helps, or not, in picking out the right objects of assent.

Second, faith is a theological virtue, which means that it is given by God to the believer. It thus stands to reason that, for our authors, this *habitus* not only inclines the believer towards an act but also makes possible an act that is naturally impossible without this *habitus*—or at least it makes it possible to elicit this act in a way that is naturally impossible without God's help. Otherwise, there seems to be no reason to conceive faith as a God-given habit. Our second line of inquiry will be to examine what act, or at least what aspect of an act, the *habitus* of faith makes possible.

Finally, the *habitus* of faith predisposes its subject to the act of faith. But this act, inasmuch as it is free and virtuous, must be an act of the will, the only power of the soul able to have free acts. This act, inasmuch as it is by definition an act of apprehension of something as true, must also be an act of the intellect, the power of the soul that can make judgments

about truth or falsity. Are there two acts (or sub-acts) of faith, one of the will, the other of the intellect? Or is there a single act of faith that somehow involves both powers?

Correspondingly, are there two *habitus* of faith inclining to two acts, or only one *habitus*?

And if there is only one, does it incline the will or the intellect? This will be our third line of inquiry.

These questions will be examined through the study of three Franciscan thinkers: Bonaventure², Peter John Olivi³, and John Duns Scotus⁴, whose doctrines of faith have received little attention until now.⁵ As far as I know, I provide here the first detailed study of the inner workings of the *habitus* of faith for these authors, in a diachronic perspective. As I have shown in previous works,⁶ Bonaventure simplifies the model inherited from Alexander of Hales and his intellectual milieu, and allows for a conception of faith that can be explained by resorting only to the intellect and the will. Olivi and Scotus, both influenced by Bonaventure, reprise such a view and, in very different ways, emphasize the absolute freedom of the act of faith, which proceeds in its core from an act or acts of the will, no matter how the objects of faith are known or taught to the believer.

² On Bonaventure's view of the general characteristics of *habitus*, see Thompson (1956). According to him, in *Sent.* II, d. 25, p. 1, art. 1, Bonaventure distinguishes three types of *habitus*. One merely describes the unenhanced basic capacities of a power, such as the capacity of the mind to know itself; the second one is a real accident added to a given power which makes it capable to do something it couldn't without it, such as when the intellect knows mathematical objects through an acquired accident; the third kind of *habitus* merely adds a real relation between faculties. As will become apparent below, if the *habitus* of faith were to find its place within this classification, it seems it would fit in the second and the third categories, as it both adds some new knowledge about objects of faith (that they should be believed) and facilitates the interactions between the intellect and the will that result in the performance of the act of faith..

³ On Olivi's view of the general characteristics of *habitus*, see in the present volume Toivanen's chapter, p. 000.

⁴ On Scotus's view of the general characteristics of *habitus*, see in the present volume Boulnois's chapter, p. 000, and Roques's chapter, p. 000.

⁵ In general, the study of medieval doctrines of faith is, with some exceptions, a recent endeavour. See, for instance Aubert (1943, 1946, 1948), Faucher (2014), Faucher and Roques (2015), and Grellard (2014a, 2014b). I also quote below some more specific literature on the studied authors considered.

⁶ Faucher (2015).

This sharply distinguishes these thirteenth-century Franciscan authors from their contemporaries, such as the secular masters Henry of Ghent and Godfrey of Fontaines. Both Henry and Godfrey are strongly intellectualist in matters of faith, in that for them the *habitus* of faith given by God is sufficient to produce faithful assent without any more contribution from the will than a desire and effort to attend to what should be believed and to examine reasons for rather than against believing.⁷ Aquinas appears to have a similar position.⁸ By contrast, Franciscan authors insist that the agency of the believer is central. The believer not only is making himself receptive to God's grace, but also takes an active part in eliciting the act of faith. It is our aim to highlight the diversity of positions within Franciscan thought that can result from this common ground.

The first part of the paper will show how, for Bonaventure, even though the *habitus* of faith is received from God, it never constrains the intellect to assent, but requires an act of the will to do so. The *habitus* of faith has the function of helping both powers in eliciting the necessary acts about the appropriate objects. The second part of the paper, devoted to Olivi, shows that the latter has a much more naturalistic model: the *habitus* of faith seems to be produced by repeated acts of the will and of the intellect, while a natural instinct distinct from faith picks out its objects. Finally, Scotus's model is a different take on a quasi-naturalistic view of faith: the *habitus* of faith, which is only intellectual, is produced by the will. Only the authority of the church can help us to choose what to believe.

⁷ Faucher (2015, ch. 3 and 4).

⁸ See Dougherty (2005), Duroux (1956), Grellard (2014a, 35–44), and Michon (2014).

1. Bonaventure's view

To understand the function of the *habitus* of faith in Bonaventure's thought, as outlined in his commentary of the *Sentences*,⁹ one must first understand what characteristics the act of faith must have in order to be properly virtuous. Bonaventure paints a fairly clear picture, which is in conformity with the authority of Paul the Apostle, who famously states that the intellect must be taken captive in the service of Christ (II Cor. 10:5). For Bonaventure, this means that the intellect must assent above all else to the supreme truth that is God. This is the only way in which a human soul can be righteous (*recta*). Assenting to God above all else implies assenting to Him above oneself, which, for Bonaventure, can happen only when one wills to have one's intellect taken captive in the service of Christ. Rather than trusting one's own intellect in its natural apprehension of what is true, one must want to submit it to God so that it holds what God revealed to be true, whether or not it can be proven rationally.

Willing to capture the intellect in this manner characterizes a righteous will (*voluntas*). The *habitus* of faith is a virtue inasmuch as it prepares and helps the will to perform this operation, and thus contributes to the rectitude (*rectitudo*) of the will.¹⁰ Indeed, though the role of a virtue is to facilitate a certain act,¹¹ this does not suffice to define it. The *habitus* of faith would not be a virtue if it did not somehow rectify the will: this is what differentiates it from other intellect-illuminating gifts from God, such as the gift of prophecy. The gift of

⁹ For a detailed account of Bonaventure's doctrine of faith from a theological point of view, see Ménard (1974). For a view of Bonaventure's doctrine on faith in his commentaries to the Scripture, see Lorenzin (2014).

¹⁰ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 1 (Bonaventure 1941 [hereafter OTS], 3: 461–462): “Iustum enim est ut intellectus noster ita captivetur et subiaceat summae Veritati sicut affectus noster debet subiacere summae Bonitati; nec potest esse anima recta, nisi intellectus summae Veritati propter se et super omnia assentiat et affectus summae Bonitati adhaereat. Hanc autem rectitudinem non habet quis nolens, sed volens. Nemo enim plus credit Deo quam sibi, nisi per hoc quod vult intellectum suum captivare in obsequium Christi. Si ergo captivatio intellectus in obsequium summae Veritatis spectat ad rectitudinem vitae, voluntas, qua quis vult sic se captivare, est voluntas recta, et habitus, quo mediante ad hoc expeditur et adiuvatur, facit ad voluntatis rectitudinem.”

¹¹ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 2 (OTS 3: 466): “Virtus etiam est habitus reddens potentiam facilem respectu alicuius actus.”

prophecy illuminates the intellect just as faith does, and both help it to apprehend the same objects (they are *ad eadem*). But the will does not contribute anything to the prophetic illumination: prophets merely receive intellectual knowledge supernaturally imparted by God. Thus, the gift of prophecy cannot be called a virtue.¹²

Thus it is necessary for the will to contribute to the act of faith. There are two distinct reasons for this: first, because the truth that is faithfully believed cannot be seen; second, because this truth is salutary and thus it is to be believed meritoriously.¹³ So the will is required because the intellect, left alone, could not believe unseen—that is, non-evident and unproven—truths, as it believes the objects of science, which are evident and/or proven.¹⁴ The will is also required because the act of faithful belief, inasmuch as it is meritorious, must be free and thus voluntary. The causal power of the will is not enough, however, because no one can assent to the divine truth for itself and above all else without divine help.¹⁵ So the *habitus* of faith allows for a direct reliance on God’s authority that makes the meritorious act of faith possible and gives the will strength to command faithful assent to the divine truth.

¹² Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 2 (OTS 3: 468): “Numquam enim fides esset virtus, quantumcumque intellectum illuminaret, nisi etiam voluntatem quodam modo rectificaret, sicut patet in dono prophetiae: quia illuminat intellectum ad eadem ad quae illuminat fides, et tamen non ponitur esse virtus, quoniam in illa illuminatione non cooperatur voluntas, secundum quod cooperatur in fidei assensu et actu.”

¹³ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 1 (OTS 3: 462–463): “Est enim in veritatem non visam et veritatem salutiferam. Quia enim non visa est, creditur voluntarie; quia autem non solum non visa, sed etiam salutifera, creditur voluntarie et meritorie.”

¹⁴ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 1 (OTS 3:462–463): “Dicendum est quod aliter verum est obiectum fidei, aliter obiectum scientiae. Scientiae, inquam, obiectum est, quia est verum visum; fidei autem est obiectum, quia est verum: verum inquam, non visum, sed salutiferum. Quia enim est non visum, requiritur ad ipsum cognoscendum alius habitus quam sit habitus scientiae. Quia salutiferum, deo habitus ille ad salutem ordinat et ad vitam beatam, et ideo habet rationem virtutis completam. Et sic patet quod nihil impedit quin fides possit esse in verum et tamen nihilominus esse virtus, pro eo quod alio modo est in verum quam scientia, secundum duplicem conditionem praeassignatam.”

¹⁵ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 2, q. 2 (OTS 3: 481): “[D]icendum quod credere, secundum quod est actus fidei-virtutis, debetur auctoritati, non cuilibet, sed auctoritati divinae, cui quidem auctoritati nemo assentit propter se et super omnia nisi per divinam illuminationem; et sic talis credulitas non est acquisita, sed infusa.”

This does not mean, however, that the *habitus* of faith merely helps the will. Indeed, it is also a *habitus* of the intellect in two different respects. First, it is through this *habitus* that the intellect is taken captive and relies on the supreme truth that is God, and so it is a *habitus* of the intellect, taken as speculative, i.e. as capable of grasping something as a truth. Second, it is also through this *habitus* that the intellect is made capable of assenting not according to its own judgment but according to the command of the will (or the inclination of the *affectus*, which is synonymous¹⁶).

So the *habitus* of faith disposes a rational agent towards the act of faith, which consists in the intellect assenting to the supreme truth that is God, above all else and by the command of the will, in three different ways: it helps the will to command this assent, it helps the intellect to comply with this command, and it helps the intellect to actually accomplish the act of assent that is commanded.¹⁷ Basically, the *habitus* of faith eases every step of the way leading to the act of faith, whichever power of the soul is primarily concerned at each step. The *habitus* of faith is thus chiefly defined by the ultimate intellectual act it helps to perfect. This seems to be a fairly complicated way to define the act and *habitus* of faith, but it is nonetheless the result of an effort towards simplification. Indeed, Bonaventure inherits from his predecessors quite a complex view of the powers of the soul. In this view, given that every virtue is the principle of merit and praise, it must be posited in the power of the soul which is the principle of praiseworthy and meritorious acts. That power is none other than *liberum*

¹⁶ In Bonaventure, the term *affectus* is another name for the will, i.e. for the power of the soul which elicits acts of volition and acts of affection, such as emotion regarding a certain object.

¹⁷ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 2 (OTS 3: 466–467): “[S]i fides habitus est per quem intellectus captivatur in obsequium Christi et innititur primae Veritati propter se, et hoc modo dicitur intellectus quodam modo speculativus, necesse est quod habitus fidei quodam modo sit in intellectu secundum quod habet rationem speculativi. – Et quoniam intellectus non habilitatur ad assentiendum ipsi Veritati primae secundum suum iudicium, sed secundum voluntatis imperium, ideo fides non respicit intellectum tamquam pure speculativum, sed necessarium est quod ipsa sit in ipso intellectu secundum quod est quodam modo extensus et ab affectu inclinatus. – Rursus, quoniam ipsum velle credere est essenziale ipsi fidei, hinc est quod habitus ille non tantum respicit intellectum ut speculatur summam Veritatem nec etiam ut inclinatur ab affectu, sed etiam ipsum affectum.”

arbitrium, which is therefore where every virtue is to be posited.¹⁸ In turn, *liberum arbitrium* is composed of three different powers: the rational, the concupiscible and the irascible, divided according to the type of operation accomplished by *liberum arbitrium*.¹⁹ This provides an even more precise way to locate the *habitus* of faith in the soul: as its act is of grasping a truth, it is an act of the rational.

It might be said that Bonaventure's is a functionalist definition of *habitus*: every characteristic that it has is subordinated to its one defining property: facilitating the act of faith taken as a truth-grasping, intellectual act. That a *habitus*, as well as its location within the soul, is defined according to the ultimate act it helps accomplish, even though several different acts of several different powers might be involved in the process, is nothing to be surprised at, for Bonaventure. Indeed, for him, the *habitus* of science, for instance, facilitates at least two acts of two different powers:²⁰ the retention of a species by memory and the turning towards it by intelligence. What is important is that there is a certain continuity between the different powers involved, just as health is to be attributed to several different members of a given body and the health of one affects the health of another, even though to

¹⁸ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 2 (OTS 3: 466): "Si ergo virtus est principium laudis et meriti necessarium est eam poni in illa potentia animae quae est principium primum operis laudabilis et meritorii. Nam si poneretur in potentia inferiori, tunc virtus potentiae naturalis imperaret virtuti gratuita. Si ergo liberum arbitrium principium est meriti et demeriti, necesse est omnem virtutem in libero arbitrio poni."

¹⁹ The rational is the power that elicits acts aimed at attaining true objects, such as propositions taken to be true; the concupiscible elicits acts aimed at attaining good objects, such as objects loved and desired; the irascible elicits acts aimed at attaining objects that are hard to get. See Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 2 (OTS 3: 466): "Rursus, cum habitus sit in ea potentia circa cuius actum explicat difficultatem, et virtus sit habitus, necesse est eam reperiri in ea potentia sicut in subiecto quam ad opus habilitat. Quoniam igitur quaedam virtutes explicant actus rationalis, quaedam actus concupiscibilis, quaedam actus irascibilis, ideo quasdam necesse est poni in rationali, quasdam in concupiscibili, quasdam in irascibili."

²⁰ The notion of power of the soul is here to be understood in its broadest sense as any identifiable faculty to which a certain kind of act can be attributed. For instance, acts of memory and intelligence are acts of the intellect.

be healthy is not the same for the heart and for the stomach.²¹ In the same way, though intellect and will do not contribute to the act of faith in the same way, their acts are nonetheless facilitated by the same *habitus* in order to elicit an act of faith.

Bonaventure thus accepts that the *habitus* of faith is located in a number of different powers, given his functionalist definition of *habitus*. Nonetheless, his discussion of the different aspects of the act of faith boils down to a distinction between the respective contributions of the intellect and the will. The intellect (also called reason, not to be confused with the rational) is charged with the material aspect of the act, while the will is charged with its formal aspect.²² The difference between these aspects is easily illustrated by the case of the small child, who has received the supernatural *habitus* of faith. This child has what is formal in the *habitus* of faith, namely the readiness and ease in assenting to every article of faith if they are presented to him once he is an adult. But he has none of the material aspect of the *habitus*, i.e. he knows none of the objects that he is supposed to believe.²³ This is what makes teaching the objects of faith essential, because if they are not taught, then the *habitus* has no

²¹ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 2 (OTS 3: 467): “[H]abitus scientiae quoad quid respicit memoriam, scilicet quoad retentionem speciei, et quoad quid intelligentiam, scilicet quoad facilitatem conversionis, et tamen dicitur unus habitus simplex. Quamvis enim potentiae distinctae sint, nihilominus tamen continuari habent in uno subiecto, ratione cuius potest esse in eis unitas proprietatis, sicut una sanitas ponitur esse in multis membris corporis interius.”

²² Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 1, q. 2 (OTS 3: 467): “[N]ihil impedit dicere unam et eandem virtutem esse simul in libero arbitrio et ratione et voluntate, quia [...] liberum arbitrium non dicit potentiam distinctam a ratione et voluntate secundum rem et essentiam, immo, secundum quod vult beatus Augustinus, liberum arbitrium complectitur tres potentias, scilicet irascibilem, concupiscibilem et rationalem. Et ideo nullum inconueniens est quod unaquaeque virtus, quae reponitur in unaquaque illarum potentiarum secundum quod habitus, in libero arbitrio reponatur secundum quod virtus et meriti principium. – Similiter nullum est inconueniens ponere unum habitum esse in ratione et voluntate, ita quod unam illarum potentiarum respiciat quantum ad actum materiale, alteram quantum ad actum formalem.”

²³ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 2, q. 2, ad 5 (OTS 3: 482): “[P]arvulus habet habitum fidei quantum ad illud quod est in ea formale; habet enim aliquid quo promptus erit et facilis ad assentiendum omnibus articulis fidei, si ei proponantur cum ad adultam aetatem pervenerit. caret tamen ea cognitione quae est materialis respectu fidei, sine qua, etsi illud formale possit in animam parvuli infundi, non tamen potest radicari et stabiliri.”

opportunity to be brought into act and can easily be expelled from the soul of the baptized, who will fall into error just as easily as if he had never received it in the first place.²⁴

But the question is: what exactly happens when the baptized actually learns the objects of faith? Do they immediately appear to him as true? If this were the case, then there would be no place for the will, because the intellect could easily adhere to them without it, nor would there be any freedom in the act of faith. Nonetheless, Richard of St Victor, quoted by Bonaventure, famously defines an article of faith as that which constrains (*arctat*) us to believe.²⁵ How could this be? The solution, for Bonaventure, is to define constraint (*arctatio*) in two ways: the constraint which is incompatible with freedom and the constraint which is incompatible with ambiguity. Only the second definition characterizes an article of faith. It works “by removing ambiguity, because the mind of the believer is fixed in a determinate way in the truth of the article, so that it is in no way inclined towards another side.”²⁶ I suggest that this admittedly (and ironically) ambiguous passage should be interpreted in the following way: though the intellect is not able to directly apprehend the truth of the articles of faith, it nonetheless appears unambiguously good to adhere to this truth. It is then the responsibility of the will to act upon this appearance of goodness or not.

To summarize: for Bonaventure, the *habitus* of faith is defined by what it helps to accomplish, namely the act of faith. It does this by making it possible, as a gratuitous gift

²⁴ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 23, art. 2, q. 2, ad 5 (OTS 3: 482): “Et propterea, si, cum ad adultam aetatem pervenerit, proponatur ei error sub ratione credibili, facillime expellitur habitus fidei, et ita de facili assentit ac si habitum fidei nunquam habuisset, propter hoc quod liberum arbitrium propter inassuetudinem nescit illo uti et ille habitus non fuit in potentia radicans, quamvis esset in ea infusus.”

²⁵ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 24, art. 3, q. 2 (OTS 3: 520): “Richardus definit articulum prout est obiectum fidei generaliter, et ideo dicit quod est ‘arctans nos ad credendum’.”

²⁶ Bonaventure, *Sent.* III, d. 24, art. 3, q. 1, ad 6 (OTS 3: 519): “[D]icendum est quod est arctatio quae repugnat libertati et est arctatio quae repugnat ambiguitati; et cum dicitur articulus, quia arctat ad credendum, hoc non dicitur per coactionem voluntatis, sed hoc dicitur per remotionem ambiguitatis, quia in ipsa veritate articuli determinate figitur mens credentis, ut nullatenus ad partem aliam inclinetur.”

from God, to directly rely on Him in believing in the truths of faith in such a way that this belief is meritorious. If my hypothesis is correct, the *habitus* of faith also makes it so that the objects of faith appear as unambiguously good objects of belief, i.e. that it appears morally good to believe them. Finally, the *habitus* of faith facilitates the act of the will by which it commands the intellect's act of belief, it makes the intellect receptive to this command, and finally, it makes it easier for the intellect to actually comply with this command and to believe what it ought to believe. So the *habitus* of faith appears to have three distinct functions: it allows for a meritorious act (a common feature of all theological virtues); it modifies the way in which believers apprehend objects of faith; and it facilitates every act leading to the act of faith, in the proper sense of assenting to the truth of an object of faith. Are these functions similarly distinguished and accepted by Olivi and Scotus?

2. Olivi's view

Olivi's doctrine of faith²⁷ displays a peculiar absence of reflection on the supernatural or natural character of the act and *habitus* of faith, and of the typical vocabulary used to talk about this distinction (infused vs. acquired, formed vs. unformed, which frequently appear in the doctrines of most other authors²⁸). Olivi seems to be uninterested in the subject, especially as regards the question of the link between grace and meritorious belief, which is entirely absent. However, a deeper examination shows that he actually endeavours to develop a conception of faith which both is natural and allows for the direct reliance on God that Bonaventure thought was possible only thanks to supernatural grace. It is only against the background of such a doctrine that Olivi's account of the role of the *habitus* of faith can be understood.

²⁷ For discussion of this, see my introduction in Olivi (2017); see also Stadter (1960).

²⁸ See for instance Lottin (1949).

Before examining the psychological mechanism behind the act of faith in Olivi, I will first examine how, according to him, it is possible to determine what should be believed. For Olivi, everything begins with the mere conception of God as the supreme being, and of His supreme justice, power, and goodness. A natural instinct (*naturalis* or even *naturalissimus instinctus*) to fear, revere, and love God then kicks in:

Indeed, right away, by a certain most natural instinct, from the sense of its own inferiority, the mind senses that it can have a superior whom it ought to fear or revere—even more, [it is] as if it sensed [this superior being] itself.²⁹

Such an apprehension constitutes the motivation for believing in God's existence (*credere Deum*) and adhering by faith to what God says (*Deo per fidem adhaerere*) ever more perfectly. It therefore must precede belief.³⁰

This apprehension is nonetheless considered to be divine testimony, or divine *relucentia*.³¹ This term, which one might translate as God's "shining," seems to refer to God's appearing to us as a principle and an end (in the different ways underlined above, i.e. as an object of reverence, fear, and love). This entails belief in God and the various truths of faith, not

²⁹ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de Deo cognoscendo*, q. 3 (ed. Jansen, 544): "[C]um [mens] audit vel per se concipit altitudinem summi entis summamque eius iustitiam et potestatem et bonitatem, quodam naturali instinctu timore tam reverentiae quam poenae concutitur et in ipsius cogitatu et auditu admirationis stupore repletur et quodam naturali amore eius afficitur. Statim enim quodam naturalissimo instinctu ex sensu inferioritatis sentit se posse habere superius quem timere et revereri debeat, immo, acsi ipsum sentiret, mens cogitatu vel auditu sic afficitur, quantum est de se vi naturalis instinctus."

³⁰ Olivi's conception of this sense of a superior being seems strikingly similar to Calvin's famous *sensus divinitatis* (also defined in terms of a natural instinct), both in the idea that God's existence, or at least its possibility, can be sensed and that this knowledge of God comes with a feeling of moral duty. This does not seem, however, to be articulated with any form of doxastic voluntarism or direct link between affect and belief in Calvin. On this *sensus divinitatis*, see Helm (1998).

³¹ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9, ed. Stadter (Peter John Olivi 1981, 354.20–30): "[S]ufficit quod prius apprehendat in aliquo objecto rationem finis vel principalitatis solum cogitando quid est quod dicitur per nomen; non autem oportet quod prius hoc credat aut iudicet ita esse, sicut in praecedenti quaestione satis est ostensum. Quando autem dicimus quod nos credimus Deo propter se et cetera propter ipsum, non est sensus quod illa credamus propter hoc quod ipse sit, sed potius quod propter hoc credimus illa, ut perfectius Deum credamus et ut perfectius Deo per fidem adhaereamus. Vel sensus est quod credimus illa propter Deum testificantem illa et in illis quodammodo relucentem."

inasmuch as they are true but inasmuch as belief in them leads to worshipping and believing in God in a better and more dutiful way. In other words, God is the principle and end of belief because belief is one of the ways we do our duties to Him. Our desire to do them follows from the love we acquire for Him from merely apprehending the concept of God, even before we posit His existence. When it comes to how we can determine what precisely we should believe in this way, Olivi again uses the concept of *relucentia*:

The uncreated truth shines in them majestically and as a principle and overexcessively; but other truths shine here as coherent with it, subordinated to it and leading to it as to the ultimate end. It also shines universally and fundamentally everywhere in all truths of faith and in all testimonies for it; which is not to be said of the other [truths].³²

Thus, if we are to accept that the apprehension of God as the dutiful object of our love and faith is a case of *relucentia*, and that this apprehension is nothing but the entering into action of a natural instinct, it stands to reason that we are similarly able to naturally distinguish, in the truths of faith as well as in the testimonies in favour of faith, that we should believe them in order to dutifully worship God in different ways.³³

For Bonaventure, distinguishing what should be believed was possible only through the supernatural *habitus* of faith. We can conjecture that, for Olivi, such a distinction is naturally possible thanks to a natural instinct that is not faith, but merely what guides us towards it.³⁴ In any case, no mention is made of divinely infused faith, be it formed or unformed.

³² Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 354.4–9): “Veritas enim increata relucet in eis maiestative et principative et superexcessive; reliquae vero relucet ibi ut illi cohaerentes et subordinatae et in ipsam tamquam in ultimum finem ducentes. Ipsa etiam universaliter et fundamentaliter relucet ubique in omnibus veritatibus fidei et in omnibus testimoniis eius; quod non est sic dare de aliis.”

³³ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 345.9–12): “[G]eneralis ratio obiectiva fidei [...] est aut veritas divinitus proposita ad credendum et colendum Deum, aut veritas necessaria ad debite credendum et colendum Deum, aut veritas credibilis perfecte in Deum ducens.”

³⁴ That such an instinct exists puts into question the meaning of the notion of revealed truth but no more than the existence of an infused faith that would be able to infallibly point us to

Having established this, we must now understand what is the precise relation between God and the other objects of faith appearing to us as *credenda*, and the actual act, or acts, of faith. For Olivi, the subjective certainty that is characteristic of faith requires that all doubt regarding the truth of the objects of faith be pushed aside, or at least that it not be stronger than the appearance of this truth, and also that the adherence to this truth be fixed and unmovable. This is made possible by the will as *causa motiva*, though acts of faith are ultimately acts of the intellect.³⁵ Indeed, for Olivi, it is possible for the will to “apply” the intellect to an object so that the more strongly it is applied to it, the more intensely it assents to it.³⁶ In a way, it could be said that Olivi’s doctrine of voluntary certainty follows from his theory of attention: the intellect’s attention can be focused so strongly on an object that it becomes united to it³⁷ and ends up assenting to its truth.³⁸ Such a voluntary assent, however, is possible only when the object of faith is presented *sub modo debito* (i.e. as something that

what ought to be believed. Indeed, when one is granted that kind of “compass”, then the fact that such or such object has been revealed by God at a certain point in history, by a certain medium ceases to be the motivation or reason for belief. Rather, the reason is to be found in the pointing of the “compass”. It may be said that revelation consists precisely in this pointing. Nonetheless, historical revelation remains of crucial importance, since neither infused faith nor Olivi’s instinct provide the content of the objects of faith to the believers. This content has to be passed down from a historical revelation, so that it can be recognized by the faithful thanks to their “compass”.

³⁵ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 329.1–8): “[C]ertitudo fidei duo aut tria in se includit. Primum est realis et infallibilis veritas creditorum. – Secundum est firma et inconcussibilis adhaesio ad veritatem creditam, repellens a credente omnem dubietatem aut saltem eius aequiparantiam respectu sensus veritatis creditae et fixae adhaesionis ad ipsam. Duo autem ultima possunt dari a voluntate tamquam a causa motiva, quamvis actus illi immediate eliciantur ab intellectu.”

³⁶ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 321.15–20): “[I]ntellectus movetur et applicatur a voluntate ad illa quae volumus cogitare, et secundum hoc quod magis volumus vel nolumus, majus et minus applicatur vel retrahitur. Constat autem quod quanto fortius applicatur, tanto ceteris paribus fortiori nexu invisceratur et unitur suo obiecto, ac per consequens et tanto firmiter et intensius assentit.”

³⁷ It is not obvious what such a unity is. It seems to me that “united” may be understood as meaning that the intellect becomes focused only on the object of faith, stops considering that any alternative might be true and accepts as true only that which is antecedent or follows from the object in question. An example might be that of a scholar who, for a variety of reasons, becomes strongly attached to a hypothesis she first put forward, embraces it wholeheartedly and refuses for not entirely rational motives to question it afterwards.

³⁸ On this theory, see Pasnau (1997, 130–134, 168–181); Toivanen (2013, 25–42, 141–191).

must be believed to dutifully worship God) and the will is divinely “affected, erected, and invigorated” to do it.³⁹

Now, we may interpret this as meaning that in order to command belief the will needs some sort of supernatural divine help. To be sure, Olivi sometimes alludes to a *habitus* of faith that must be in the soul before any act of faith can be accomplished and which is thus not acquired by the repetition of such acts,⁴⁰ and this usually refers, as in Bonaventure’s case, to supernaturally infused faith. However, another interpretation is possible. For Olivi, we can, in ordinary circumstances, believe without evidence, and even against the evidence if we have a practical reason to do so, for instance when we maintain the belief that our friend is innocent despite overwhelming evidence, simply because we love him.⁴¹ Since voluntary belief is a natural possibility (a possibility which is not clearly admitted by Bonaventure), then divine help seems superfluous. What is not superfluous is that it should appear somehow good to the will to cause the intellect to believe, for without this what reason would the will have to act? This is precisely the role of the aforementioned natural instinct. Indeed, as Olivi explains, since faith is a *habitus voluntarius*, it requires a final cause, which is God.⁴² And, as mentioned above, it is because of this natural instinct that God can appear as a final cause.

³⁹ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 329.8–11): “Non tamen possunt sibi quomodocumque dari, immo oportet objectum prius sub modo debito sibi proponi et ipsamet voluntatem ad sic movendum intellectum divinitus affici et erigi ac vigorari.”

⁴⁰ See Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones in secundum librum Sententiarum*, q. 74 (ed. Jansen, 3: 117–118); see also Toivanen’s article in the present volume, p. 000.

⁴¹ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 321.5–8): “[C]onstat quod potest amore affici nunc ad hoc, nunc ad oppositum, et libentius consentire in unum eorum credendum quam in reliquum. Unde et videmus multos libentius credere et praesumere mala de inimico quam de amico, et bona libentius et facilius de amico quam de inimico, quamquam plures rationes habeant pro parte contraria quam pro sua.”

⁴² Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 349.15–18): “Quia enim fides est habitus voluntarius, ideo in se includit habitudinem causae finalis, qua propter Deum volumus credere omnia quae credimus, ut scilicet debite inhaereamus, saltem quoad rectitudinem credendi.”

We know now that for Olivi the *habitus* of faith is a *habitus* of the will. Its function is likely to help the will in causing the intellect to be united with the object of faith so that it assents to it. But it is also a *habitus* of the intellect, since it has to do with both the consent of the will and the assent of the intellect.⁴³ Olivi defines the function of the *habitus* in unmistakably intellectualist terms: it makes the object of faith appear as true, and truer and more credible than its opposite.⁴⁴

So the *habitus* of faith is a *habitus* of both the will and the intellect. Does this mean that it should be defined, as it is in Bonaventure, by the act it ultimately helps perfect, independently of the powers it is in and which it disposes? Olivi does not answer this question, but examines two possibilities without rejecting either: either the *habitus* of faith is composed of partial *habitus* or it is one *habitus*.⁴⁵ In the first case, the partial *habitus* must be considered as causing each other, the *habitus* in the will being the cause of the *habitus* in the intellect, and the *habitus* that has God as its object being the cause of the *habitus* that concern the other objects of faith. In other words, the *habitus* which disposes the will to the voluntary act of causing the intellect to assent causes the *habitus* which disposes the intellect to the act of assenting; and the *habitus* that dispose the will to the act of loving God and the intellect to thus believing in God cause the *habitus* that dispose the intellect to acts of believing all that

⁴³ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 342.4–6): “[Q]uidam sunt habitus et actus, qui in sua essentia includunt meram subiectionem et subiectam adhaesionem ad Deum, ita quod sunt idem quod habitualis vel actualis innisus, quo mens principaliter innititur soli Deo; et huiusmodi est fides, non solum quantum ad consensum voluntatis, sed etiam quantum ad assensum intellectus.”

⁴⁴ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 327.22–26): “[H]abitus fidei facit quod obiectum eius sibi occurrat ut verum et ut verius et credibilis quam suum oppositum; sicut et caritas facit quod inimicus occurrat sibi ut diligibilis et quod bonum inaccessible occurat nobis ut accessibile, ac per consequens ut amabile.”

⁴⁵ Peter John Olivi, *Quaestiones de virtutibus*, qq. 8–9 (ed. Stadter, 354.11–19): “[S]ecundum quosdam una pars fidei seu unus partialis habitus eius est quodammodo causa alterius, ita quod habitus qui est in voluntate, est causa eius qui est in intellectu, et habitus qui est [respectu] Dei immediate, est aliquo modo causa habitus quo creduntur alia propter Deum. – Dato autem quod non sit ita, potest dici quod etiam unus habitus potest esse diversorum inaequaliter; sicut et punctus aliter est partium lineae, quarum est immediatus nexus vel terminus, aliter illarum quas solum respicit mediate.”

has to be believed for God to be revered and believed in properly. If the *habitus* of faith is to be considered one *habitus*, however, Olivi seems to think this is no problem, since one *habitus* can relate to different powers and objects differently. This is akin to Bonaventure's position, described above.

Now, we have seen that Olivi mentions that the *habitus* of faith must be there for acts of faith to occur,⁴⁶ and I indicated that this could refer to a supernatural *habitus*. It is indeed quite probable, as no other author of the time thought that a properly virtuous act was possible without any infused disposition. However, it might also refer to acquired faith; indeed, given the close connection between his theory of attention and his theory of voluntary belief, and that focusing the intellect's attention on something is an act, it is quite possible that the volitional act of commanding belief causes the intellectual act of believing. But it might also be that this volitional act rather causes the *habitus* to be produced in the intellect, and only then would the intellect assent because of the *habitus*, working as a filter making the object of faith appear true. Faith would then be required for acts of faith, and not acquired by its acts; but it would be acquired nonetheless.

In the present volume, Juhana Toivanen writes:

One of the most interesting aspects of Olivi's theory of the cognitive role of *habitus* is the distinction he makes between dispositions that make one person quick to learn and understand on the one hand, and dispositions that change the mode of assenting on the other.⁴⁷

It is interesting to note that Olivi's conception of the *habitus* of faith seems to correspond to the second type of disposition as regards the intellect, and to the first type of disposition regarding the will. Indeed, while the *habitus* of faith (or the relevant partial *habitus*) disposes the intellect to apprehending the objects of faith as true, the same *habitus* (or the relevant

⁴⁶ See note 33 above.

⁴⁷ See Juhana Toivanen's article in the present volume, p. 000.

partial *habitus*) disposes the will not to perceiving objects as good, but to better (more intensely, more fixedly) causing the intellect to assent.

To summarize, Olivi's conception of the *habitus* of faith allows for a very articulated understanding of the act of faith and what leads to it. An instinct at first presents God as having to be worshipped and believed in. Upon this presentation, the will loves Him and causes the intellect to believe in Him. Afterwards, the will causes the intellect to believe all truths of faith that appear to have to be believed in order to better worship and believe in God.

We can say that Olivi's conception of the *habitus* of faith and its function is markedly different from Bonaventure's conception. First, Olivi's doctrine allows for supernatural elements but does not require them. To know what must be believed, an instinct appears to be enough, and the process by which the will causes the intellect to actually believe occurs naturally in us. For Bonaventure, the *habitus* of faith is required in order to know what ought to be believed, and he does not explicitly say that the will can naturally cause the intellect to believe. Second, and concomitantly with this naturalization of the process leading to the act of faith, it is clear that the *habitus* of faith plays a less important role in Olivi than in Bonaventure, since the identification of the objects of faith is a function of instinct and not of *habitus*. Finally, though Olivi accepts that the *habitus* of faith can be one, as it is for Bonaventure, even though it disposes different powers to different acts, he sketches another possible conception, where the *habitus* of faith is divided into several partial *habitus* that are defined by their objects and the power in which they inhere.

3. Scotus's view

We will now see how these tendencies in Olivi appear to be even more salient in Scotus.

Scotus's conception of faith,⁴⁸ by comparison with the previous conceptions examined, is peculiar in that it prominently features the use of the principle of parsimony in deciding which kind of faith—that is, supernaturally infused or naturally acquired—should be posited. In fact, Scotus uses a dual principle of parsimony. First is the general principle, according to which several things should not be posited when one is enough.⁴⁹ In the present case, the idea is that only as many *habitus* as necessary should be posited to account for our acts. If our act of faith, as we know it by inner perception, can be explained by an acquired *habitus*, then no other *habitus*, infused faith included, should be posited.

Second, without explicitly articulating it, Scotus uses what might be called a naturalistic variant of the principle of parsimony, according to which everything in our common experience that can be explained by natural mechanisms must be so explained; supernatural elements should be used only when they are absolutely necessary to account for what we experience or are explicitly posited by Scripture and the Catholic church.⁵⁰ As can be expected, such a model drastically reduces the role of the supernatural, but it also does away with one of the main features of previous models, namely the capacity of the believer to unambiguously determine what should be believed, whether by infused *habitus* or by natural instinct.

⁴⁸ I will be quoting Scotus's questions on faith in both the *Lectura* (*Lect.*) and *Reportatio* (*Rep.*), as well as the *Quodlibet* (*Quodl.*). The texts of book III, questions 23 and 25 are almost identical in the *Lectura* and the *Reportatio*, but sometimes one of them will give a more detailed account or nuance that is absent from the other. Scotus's questions on faith have been recently examined by Staudinger (2006) and Poppi (2014).

⁴⁹ John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 23, nn. 2–3 (Vat. 21: 97): “Ad omnem certitudinem actus credendi quem experimur in nobis talium credibilium, sufficit nobis fides acquisita; ergo superfluit ponere fidem infusam. Consequentia patet, quia non ponitur habitus nisi propter actum, et superfluit ponere plura quando unum sufficit.”

⁵⁰ For more conceptual and historical detail on this use of the principle of economy, see Faucher (forthcoming).

For Scotus, it is clear that firm belief does not require anything but acquired faith. Just as I believe in stories told or written by famous men, similarly it is enough that the Catholic church tells me that the men who wrote the Gospels were truthful for me to believe them.⁵¹ Why then would one have to rely on infused faith? Scotus suggests that it could be for two reasons: infused faith, as opposed to acquired faith, would make it impossible to doubt or to be deceived in one's assent.⁵² Scotus rejects both possibilities. Indeed, for him, it belongs to the very definition of faith to be incompatible with doubt. If one is to accept the existence of acquired faith, one has to accept that we can naturally be free of doubt. As for the possibility of deception, Scotus thinks that having this or that *habitus* has nothing to do with the possibility of deception. For him, one does not run the risk of being deceived by having a certain *habitus* or the corresponding assent; it is only in the way a certain object is presented to the believer that he might be deceived.⁵³ This view is thus Scotus's equivalent of Olivi's

⁵¹ John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 23, n. 14 (Vat. 21: 101): "Sed tunc, si nulla esset fides infusa, crederem tamen fide acquisita historiis librorum Canonis, propter auctoritatem Ecclesiae: sic credo, quemadmodum aliis historiis a viris famosis scriptis et narratis. Credo igitur fide acquisita Evangelio, quia Ecclesia tenet scriptores veraces esse, – quod ego audiens, acquiro mihi habitum credendi eorum dictis."

⁵² John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 23, nn. 52–54 (Vat. 21: 117–118): "[Q]uando dicis fidem infusam poni necessario ut firmiter assentiret creditis, aut intelligis quod per illam assentit quis ita firmiter quod non possit non assentire vel dubitare de eo cui assentit, – vel quod assentit infallibiliter, id est indeceptibiliter, quod non decipitur in assensu suo: Si primo modo loquaris, sic est de fide acquisita, quia stante illa fide et dum homo assentit alicui obiecto per illam, non potest dubitare vel non assentire, aliter de eodem obiecto et sub eadem ratione esset fides sive adhaesio et resilitio vel dubitatio, et ita opposita, – quod falsum est; ergo propter firmam adhaesionem non oportet ponere fidem infusam. Si propter hoc quod indeceptibiliter adhaeret et infallibiliter, assentiendo per fidem infusam (potest autem falli per adhaesionem fidei acquisitae), – contra: 'decipi' vel 'non decipi' non est a parte habitus, nec ex parte assensus quem facit, sed ex parte obiecti secundum quod obiectum – in quod assentit – praesentatur vero vel falso habitui inclinanti; sed in proposito uterque habitus inclinatur naturaliter et per modum naturae assensum praebet, sed error in assensu est ex parte obiecti sic vel sic occurrentis. [...] Et ideo non est certior – quantum ad 'non decipi' – fides infusa quam acquisita."

⁵³ John Duns Scotus, *Rep.* III, d. 23, §19 (WV 23: 442): "[D]ecipi et non decipi non est nisi per objecta diversa, quibus creditur, quae vere vel false praesentantur intellectui per habitum fidei inclinantem; ergo hoc non est propter habitus et assensus, qui non inclinant non habentes objecta, unde utrumque habentes naturaliter inclinantur, et per modum naturae assensum

view that dispositions change the mode of assenting, that is, that they function as a kind of intellectual filter that changes the way certain objects appear to us.

In the present case, the believer has an acquired *habitus* of faith through which everything that the Catholic church deems true appears true to him. So every time he thinks something is considered true by the Catholic church, he assents to it. There is nothing wrong with this *habitus*. Deception will occur only when someone I believe tells me that a certain object is deemed true by the Catholic church but this is not actually the case. But, one might answer Scotus, it is precisely the acquired *habitus* that is fallible, because it inclines one to assent to what the Catholic church deems true in general, but we have no way, through this *habitus*, to know what this actually is. The infused *habitus*, by contrast, is a gift of God: thus it is in its very nature to incline only towards assent to true objects.

Scotus admits this without difficulty: infused faith always inclines to true objects, while acquired faith does not.⁵⁴ But that does not prevent deception, for when infused faith inclines towards believing a certain object, it is impossible for the believer to know it: if he did, he would know that a *habitus* that can never incline someone to a false object inclines him to believe a given object. But then he would know that this object is true and would therefore not need to believe it. Therefore, it must be concluded that we can never know whether our acts of

praebent, in quo assensu error si sit, non erit ex parte habitus inclinantis, sed ex objectis falso occurrentibus; ergo secundum hoc non est certior fides infusa quam fides acquisita.”

⁵⁴ John Duns Scotus, *Quodl.*, q. 14, §7 (WV 26: 11–12): “[F]ides infusa non potest inclinare ad aliquod falsum, inclinatur autem virtute luminis divini, cuius est participatio, et ita non nisi ad illud quod est conforme illi luminis divini; actus igitur credendi in quantum innititur isti fidei, non potest tendere in aliquod falsum. [...] Et quandocumque ad idem inclinatur fides infusa et acquisita, tunc necessario acquisitae non subest falsum, non quod haec necessitas sit ex ipsa fide acquisita, sed ex infusa concurrente cum ipsa ad eundem actum. Innititur igitur actus credendi fidei infusae tanquam regulae certae, et omnino infallibili, a qua actus habeat, quod non possit esse falsus; sed innititur acquisitae tanquam regulae minus certae, quia non per illam repugnaret actui, quod esset falsus, vel circa falsum objectum.”

belief proceed from infused faith and acquired faith or merely from acquired faith.⁵⁵ So infused faith does not lead us towards the objects of faith, simply because we never know when it is in act and when it is not.

But then, what tells us what we should believe? Scotus is clear on this question: there can be no assent to the objects of faith when they are presented to the believer unless one has been taught that they should be believed. Experience shows this, according to Scotus: an uneducated person will never assent to an object of faith that has no evidence by itself.⁵⁶ While Bonaventure and Olivi granted man an inner compass, be it grace or instinct, for Scotus, experience shows that there can be no such thing.

For all that, Scotus's scenario is not a skeptical one. He believes that true faith can rely on teaching and transmission and that we can actually show, on the basis of Scripture and the history of the Catholic church, that the latter is likely truthful. He devotes a significant part of

⁵⁵ John Duns Scotus, *Quodl.*, q. 14, §8 (WV 26: 12): “[N]on percipio me inclinari in actum per fidem infusam, sive secundum illam elicere actum; sed tantum percipio me assentire secundum fidem acquisitam, vel ejus principium, scilicet testimonium, cui credo, quia si perciperem me habere actum secundum fidem infusam, et cum hoc scirem quod secundum fidem infusam non potest haberi actus nisi determinate verus, perciperem quod actus meus non posset esse falsus, quia ex hoc sequitur quod perciperem quod objectum actus non posset esse falsum, et tunc scirem illud, id est, infallibiliter cognoscerem illud esse verum, quod nullus experitur in se, ut credo, quantumcumque aliquis habeat utramque fidem et secundum utramque assentiat.”

⁵⁶ John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 23, n. 45 (Vat. 21: 114): “[S]i totus assensus sit ab ipso habitu fidei, tunc positus omnibus quae concurrunt ad actum credendi in esse primo, sequitur necessario actus credendi; sed ponatur aliquis baptizatus nunc, et occurrant sibi phantasmata istorum terminorum simplicium ‘mortui’ et ‘resurrectionis’, ex quo ponitur potentia habituata et necessario inclinata ex obiecto praesentato in phantasmate, sequitur necessario actus quo iste assentiret huic complexo ‘mortui resurgent’, – quod falsum est: numquam enim, omnibus istis positus, plus assentiret quam ante, nisi prius esset edoctus de hoc articulo quod talis articulus est credendus; igitur videtur quod fides acquisita sufficit quae acquiritur ex auditu, nec experitur aliquis aliam cum tali assensu.” *Lect.* III, d. 25 (Vat. 21: 169–170): “Non sic est de fide; nec sufficit quicumque occursus credibilium ad intellectum, ad hoc quod habitus inclinet in actum firmiter elicendum, – sicut patet de baptizato nunc, cui, si statim occurrant phantasmata istorum terminorum ‘mortui’ et ‘resurgere’, et componat apud se ‘mortui resurgent’, non oportet credere nisi prius constiterit sibi per aliquem quod sit articulus credendus.”

the prologue to his *Sentences* commentary to showing just that.⁵⁷ The problem is that the arguments Scotus uses to do this are only probable, and thus unable to produce the kind of doubtless certainty that is the hallmark of faith. For this, and to make faith meritorious, the act of faith needs to somehow depend on the believer's will.⁵⁸

For Scotus, the will moves the intellect to assent as a “general moving motor.”⁵⁹ To understand what this means, we must look at how the act of faith is produced. Duns Scotus lists the necessary factors: the terms of the proposition to be assented to must be apprehended and composed so that they form the proposition, and the *habitus* of acquired faith as well as that of infused faith must incline towards assent. Then the act of faith occurs.⁶⁰ The will plays no role, except that it causes acquired faith “remotely” (*ut remote*).⁶¹ This can be explained as meaning, quite simply, that once the will has caused the *habitus* of faith to exist in the soul (by one previous act, one can surmise) it is no longer needed.⁶² the *habitus* does all the work

⁵⁷ See John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio*, Prol., pars 2, q. un. (Vat. 1: 61–82). See also Faucher (2015, ch. 5, sect. II.3).

⁵⁸ John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 23, n. 46 (Vat. 21: 114): “[S]i fides infusa praebeat talem perfectionem vel assensum per modum naturae inclinans potentiam in actum, cum termini articulorum possint apprehendi ante omnem actum voluntatis, sequitur quod actus credendi esset independens a voluntate, et ita non meritorius, et quod inesset homini naturaliter, – quod negat Augustinus dicens quod ‘cetera potest homo nolens, credere autem non nisi volens’; sequitur etiam quod sine fide acquisita, quia habitus perfectus non eget alio per quem praesentetur obiectum eius.”

⁵⁹ John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 25, n. 45 (Vat. 21: 174): “[V]oluntas non movet ex non-evidente ad assentiendum sibi statim, tamen movet ut generalis motor movens.”

⁶⁰ John Duns Scotus, *Rep.* III, d. 25, §12 (WV 23: 465): “Habita enim apprehensione terminorum, et facta compositione et fide acquisita, quam causat voluntas, et fide infusa inclinante, non virtute obiecti, sed virtute voluntatis habet intellectus, unde credibilia moveant ad actum credendi. Dices, non sufficit tamen, sed cum fide acquisita et infusa, voluntas movet ad actum. Dico quod sufficit quod non contra moveat contra fidem acquisitam.”

⁶¹ John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 25, n. 45 (Vat. 21: 174): “[H]abita enim apprehensione terminorum, facta compositione et fide acquisita quam causat voluntas ut remote, et fide infusa inclinante (non virtute obiecti, sed virtute infundentis), habetur actus. Unde credibilia movent ad actum credendi, – non sufficienter tamen, sed cum fide acquisita et infusa.”

⁶² John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 25, n. 45 (Vat. 21: 173–174): “Et dico quod credibilia movent aliquo modo: quandoque ex fide acquisita, quandoque ex fide infusa; unde posita fide acquisita, non est voluntas necessaria.” *Rep.* III, d. 25, §12 (WV 23: 465): “[D]ico quod credibilia movent aliquo modo quandoque ex fide infusa; unde posita fide acquisita, non est voluntas necessaria.”

and makes the intellect assent when it should. Accordingly, in contrast to Bonaventure and Olivi, Scotus locates the *habitus* of faith only in the intellect.⁶³ If the will is unneeded in individual repeated acts of faith, there is no reason why it should have a *habitus* of faith.

To summarize, we can say that Scotus's conception of the *habitus* of faith is the result of a reduction motivated by the principle of parsimony: what we should posit is only what is absolutely necessary to account for our experience of acts of faith. Consequently, almost every supernatural element is eliminated from the equation, as well as what would separate faithful belief from ordinary belief: it is only because of the Catholic church's teaching that we know what to believe, and it is through a natural act of the will unaided by grace or by any preceding natural instinct or *habitus* that we acquire the *habitus* of faith.

Thus, this *habitus* of faith, at least the acquired one, is reduced to being merely the disposition of the intellect to adhere to the objects of faith. This disposition is extremely strong since by itself it constrains the intellect to assent, independently of any further involvement of the will, which neither Bonaventure nor Olivi seem to accept. In a way, Scotus's *habitus* of faith can be said to be much more focused and much stronger as well.

As for the infused *habitus*, it must be noted that, as opposed to most thirteenth-century thinkers, such as Alexander of Hales and Bonaventure among the Franciscans, Scotus thinks it does not replace or improve upon acquired faith but is complementary with it. Thus, whenever someone elicits by acquired faith an act of assent to a true object of faith, infused faith (provided the agent has it) is actualized in the very same act.

This plays the crucial role of making the act of faith meritorious in the eyes of God. It also appears to make this act more voluntary, and not only to rule out that doubt could win over

⁶³ John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 25, n. 40 (Vat. 21: 171–172): “Si quaeritur quid sit subiectum fidei, – respondeo quod intellectus est subiectum eius, quia perfectio prima ipsius intellectus est fides.”

certainty (as acquired faith does) but also to eliminate doubt itself, which can be interpreted as meaning that movements of doubt simply do not occur anymore in the believer.⁶⁴ As one can see, however, this infused *habitus* seems to play no causal role in the production of the act of assent itself, except for its meritorious character. In any case, it could certainly not play any perceptible role, for the reasons outlined above: if one knew that one's act of faith is an act of supernatural faith, then one would know the object of this act to be true and so would not need to believe it any more.

Conclusion

As I have endeavoured to show, the *habitus* of faith can have very different roles for different authors in the thirteenth-century Franciscan tradition. For Bonaventure, the infused *habitus* helps pick out what should be believed, while for Olivi, such a function is devoted to a natural instinct that is not faith. As for Scotus, he thinks that nothing in man has such a function, and the believer should rely on the Catholic church.

For Bonaventure, the *habitus* of faith “federates,” so to speak, several powers, including the intellect and the will, in order to accomplish one act of faith that is brought about by several previous acts. Olivi finds such a view acceptable, but introduces the possibility of a causal order between several partial *habitus* of faith, each devoted to a specific act leading to the act of faith, and inhering in only one power. Scotus pushes this fragmentation to its limit:

⁶⁴ John Duns Scotus, *Lect.* III, d. 23, n. 48 (Vat. 21: 116): “[N]on solum propter actum primum dat caritatem, sed propter actum secundum, ut sit perfectior et intensior actus diligendi ex potentia et caritate quam ex potentia tantum; [...] sic hic de fide infusa, eodem modo proportionaliter, quia sicut caritas facit actum secundum perfectiorem in substantia actus quam fuit sine ea, sic fides.”

See also *Lect.* III, d. 23, n. 49 (Vat. 21: 116–117): “Nec pono habitum fidei infusae solum propter gradum in actu, sed etiam propter assensum, quia assensus non est totaliter a voluntate. Aliqui enim sunt qui magis vellent assentire, et tamen minus assentiunt. [...] Nec fides excludit omnem dubitationem, sed dubitationem vincentem et trahentem in oppositum credibilis.”

the *habitus* of faith is reduced to being a *habitus* of the intellect, inclining its subject only to one type of truth-grasping act.

In a way, for Scotus, and possibly for Olivi, the will occupies a position comparable to that of God in Bonaventure's view: just as God infuses the *habitus* of faith independently of an act of the believer, the will seems to cause the *habitus* of faith to take hold in the intellect without the intellect eliciting an act. It is only when an object of faith is presented as such that it will adhere to it. As for the infused *habitus*, it contributes nothing perceptible to the act of faith inasmuch as it is an act of assent. It mostly makes this act acceptable to God and thus meritorious.

The thirteenth century presents a varied picture of what makes the *habitus* of faith what it is and of its different possible functions. As time passes, it appears that models tend more and more towards simplified, focused, and mostly natural conceptions of this *habitus*. As we hope to have shown, the study of the different elaborations of the concept of faith in the Middle Ages, because it is at the crossroads of such concepts as *habitus*, virtue, will and intellect, and truth and goodness, provides an ideal vantage point from which to consider various different developments in medieval philosophy.

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