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ARTICLE

On the Troped 'Kyrie Eleison': A Thomistic Perspective

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Abstract

This paper examines, from a Thomistic perspective, the possible consequences of the twentieth-century reform of the 'Kyrie eleison' from ninefold set of invocations to a sixfold call-and-response structure. First, we present Aquinas's distinctly Trinitarian exegesis of the 'Kyrie' in light of the history of troped liturgical texts. Next, we will account for the historical diversity of the troped 'Kyrie' genre while emphasizing importance of the Trinitarian elements. The third section recounts recent work on Aquinas's theory of the passions and their effects of language formation; this leads to the fourth section, which casts a philosophical eye on the role of melisma in the liturgy. To conclude this study, we suggest the restoration of some troped 'Kyrie' texts in the Roman Rite.

Keywords: Kyrie; liturgy; melisma; Thomas Aquinas; Trinitarian; tropes

1. Introduction

One of the more evident changes wrought by the twentieth-century reform of the Roman Rite[1] was the *de facto* replacement of the ninefold *Kyrie eleison* with a sixfold call-and-response format.[2] While the scholarly justifications for this particular reform are not the main subject of the present essay, we can consider, from a

[1]In this paper, I refer to the Latin text of the General Instruction (= '*IGMR*') for the Third Typical Edition of the Roman Missal (2002), as presented in *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani. Textus, Synopsis, Variationes* ed. by Maurizio Barba (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006). With regard to English language versions of *IGMR* (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal* = '*GIRM*'), I have consulted those respective editions with approved adaptations for England and Wales, the United States of America, and Canada all of which show identical parallel texts for *IGMR* n. 52. See Liturgy Office of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (London: Bishops' Conference Liturgy Office, 2011); United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2011); and Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, Canadian edn (Ottawa: National Liturgy Office, 2011).

[2]It should be noted that *IGMR* n. 52 does not mandate a strict replacement of the ninefold *Kyrie*. Indeed, it foresees the possibility that each acclamation might be repeated more than twice, 'ratione ingenii diversarum linguarum necnon musicae artis vel rerum adiunctorum', thereby sanctioning the use of (*inter alia*)

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Thomistic perspective, the possible philosophical and theological consequences of this change in the liturgical recitation or chanting of the *Kyrie*. However, to examine this question more fruitfully – with reference to Saint Thomas – requires reflecting on the history of the *Kyrie* and its various historical forms. To that end, this study will proceed in four sections and a conclusion. First, we will consider Aquinas's distinctly Trinitarian exegesis of the *Kyrie* in light of the history of troped texts in the liturgy. Next, we will account for the diversity of the troped *Kyrie* genre while still highlighting the critical importance of the Trinitarian elements. The third section will briefly reference recent work on Aquinas's theory of the passions and their effects of language formation in preparation for the fourth section, which offers a philosophical understanding of the role of *melisma* in the liturgy. Finally, by way of conclusion, we present a moderate case for restoring some troped *Kyrie* texts in the liturgy of the Roman Rite.

2. Aquinas on the *Kyrie*

The employment of allegorical interpretation, for purposes as diverse as scriptural exegesis and liturgical commentary, carries the risk of imputing to the revealed text or ritual action notions foreign or even inimical to the original. Nevertheless, as David F. Wright noted in an article on conflicting medieval approaches to liturgical allegorization, 'the medieval author who could avoid allegory is rare indeed'.[3] Wright's paper, a study of Albert the Great's critique of the more allegorical techniques utilized by a type of liturgical commentary running from Amalarius of Metz in the ninth-century, to twelfth-century works by Rupert of Deutz and Lothar of Segni, shows the ways in which Albert attempted – with varying degrees of success[4] – to offer an interpretation of the liturgy which, while reserving a proper place for allegory, restrained its usage when it seemed to depart clearly from the rite's actual celebration or literal text. Albert's desire to ground allegorical and spiritual interpretation in the liturgical *sensus litteralis* hearkens back to the prior contributions of Hugh of Saint-Victor with regard to the senses of scripture, as well as to the threefold consideration of the sacraments in terms of *sacramentum tantum, res et sacramentum*, and *res tantum*.[5] Thomas Aquinas will later follow Hugh and Albert in exalting the fundamental importance of the *sensus litteralis* for scriptural exegesis,[6] but whether Thomas consistently applies the same restraint to allegory in his liturgical commentaries[7] is a preliminary question

older chant and polyphonic *Kyrie* settings in the Mass. Nevertheless, the sixfold *Kyrie*, as presented in the Pauline Missal itself, is given priority, such that the use of the perichoretic 'tripled triples' remains optional rather than normative.

[3]David F. Wright, 'Albert the Great's Critique of Lothar of Segni (Innocent III) in the *De Sacrificio Missae*', *The Thomist*, 44 (1980), 584–96.

[4]Ibid., 586–87.

[5]See Hugh of Saint-Victor, *De Sacramentis Christianae Fidei* II.8 (*PL* 4:462–72); *Commentarium in Hierarchiam Coelestem* II (*PL* 175:935–56); *De Scripturis et Scriptoribus Sacris* V (*PL* 175:13–15); *De Arca Noe Morali* I (*PL* 176:619–34).

[6]*ST* I, q. 1, a. 10, *resp.*: 'Illa ergo prima significatio, qua voces significant res, pertinet ad primum sensum, qui est sensus historicus vel litteralis. Illa vero significatio qua res significatae per voces, iterum res alias significant, dicitur sensus spiritualis; qui super litteralem fundatur, et eum supponit'.

[7]While Aquinas does not produce a stand-alone *expositio missae* like many other medieval authors (e.g, the aforementioned Amalarius, Rupert, Albert, and Lothar, *inter alia*), one can find his own interpretation of the Mass in two principal places: *In IV Sent.*, d. 8, *exp.*, and *ST* III, q. 83, aa. 4–5.

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worth examining. As a case in point, let us consider the *Kyrie* of the Mass as interpreted by Thomas.[8]

The ninefold *Kyrie* (i.e., the recitation or singing of 'Lord, have mercy' three times, 'Christ, have mercy' three times, and again 'Lord, have mercy' three times) is for Thomas an act of preparation through 'humility'[9] as one humbly begs the mercy of God.[10] Several interpretations are offered for the ninefold structure: in the *Sentences Commentary*, each invocation corresponds to the nine choirs of angels[11] while in the *Summa*, each set of three stands against 'the threefold misery of ignorance, fault, and punishment'.[12] Most importantly for Thomas, the *Kyrie* is an expression of Trinitarian faith: the penitential text says '*Kyrie eleison* three times for the person of the Father; three times for the person of the Son, when *Christe eleison* is said; and three times for the person of the Holy Spirit, when *Kyrie eleison* is added'.[13] Common to both the *Sentences Commentary* and the *Summa Theologiae* is the understanding that the *Kyrie* also expresses the doctrine of *perichoresis* or *circumincessio*, that is, the mutual indwelling of each Person in the other two. Each set of three is said 'according as each person is considered in himself and in order to the other two',[14] because 'all three persons are in one another'.[15]

While a general Trinitarian construal – especially evident when the *Kyrie* is executed in its ninefold form – enjoys a certain fittingness from the numerical structure alone,[16] the distinctly *perichoretic* proposal might possibly be considered a 'merely allegorical' superimposition, a fanciful high medieval interpretation imposed upon a rather straightforward plea to the Triune God. The relative simplicity of the ritual text as celebrated today in the various forms of the Roman Rite – mere repetitions of the phrases 'Kyrie eleison' and 'Christe eleison' – offers no obvious indication of the more complex theological notion of circumincession; indeed, when celebrated in the sixfold manner as prescribed in the Missal of Paul VI, the *Kyrie* loses the very possibility of a perichoretic interpretation, an interpretation which Aquinas holds as most important and proper to this part of the Mass. Thus one may ask: what is Aquinas's source for the perichoretic interpretation of the *Kyrie*? Since he doesn't explicitly cite any known authority, could Aquinas be guilty of mere fanciful – if original – allegorization, or is he drawing from another source? More seriously, has the Angelic Doctor perpetuated the mistake of those *homines illiterati* condemned by his master Albert[17] by allegorizing far beyond the *sensus litteralis missae*?

[8] I am grateful to Urban Hannon, whose hitherto unpublished synthesis of Aquinas's two Mass commentaries is a valuable summary guide and introduction to Thomistic mystagogy. The following paragraph is a paraphrase of Hannon's section on the *Kyrie.*

[9] *In IV Sent.*, d. 8, *exp.*

[10] *In IV Sent.*, d. 8, *exp.*; cf. *ST* IIIa, q. 83, a. 4, *resp.*: '… commemorationem praesentis miseriae, dum misericordia petitur'.

[11] *In IV Sent.*, d. 8, *exp.*: 'Dicitur novies propter novem choros angelorum'.

[12] *ST* III, q. 83, a. 4, *resp.*: '… contra triplicem miseriam ignorantiae, culpae et poenae'.

[13] *ST* III, q. 83, a. 4, *resp.*: '… kyrie eleison ter pro persona patris; ter pro persona filii, cum dicitur Christe eleison; et ter pro persona spiritus sancti, cum subditur kyrie eleison'.

[14] *In IV Sent.*, d. 8, *exp.*: '… propter fidem Trinitatis, secundum quod quaelibet persona in se consideratur et in ordine ad alias duas'.

[15] *ST* III, q. 83, a. 4, *resp.*: '… ad significandum quod omnes personae sunt in se invicem'.

[16] This was already observered by Amalarius in *Liber officialis* III.

[17] Albert, *De sacrificio missae* III, c. 10.

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We need not look too far for an answer, if we acknowledge – as has been overwhelmingly proven[18] – that the Mass and Office of Corpus Christi in its universally promulgated form was composed and compiled by Thomas Aquinas. In the principal manuscript source which forms the basis for the critical edition of the Corpus Christi liturgy (Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Latin 1143),[19] which Pierre-Marie Gy convincingly argues to be an original exemplar for later manuscripts ('le livret originel de la fête') and perhaps even dates from Aquinas's lifetime,[20] the *Kyrie* of the Mass is clearly indicated at 17v: *Kyrie fons bonitatis*, a troped text in which the nine petitions are interpolated with unique poetic additions. *Kyrie fons bonitatis*, furthermore, is not a little-known text or geographically localized variant; indeed, this Carolingian troped *Kyrie* enjoyed widespread diffusion across Western Europe by the thirteenth century, and was almost certainly familiar to Aquinas.[21] Gy's tentative willingness to date MS 1143 on paleographical grounds as early as 1264 (i.e., the year of Corpus Christi's promulgation as a universal solemnity) further supports its proximity to Aquinas's own agency in the compilation of the Corpus Christi liturgy, such that the decision to select *Kyrie fons bonitatis* for the Mass belongs as much to the Angelic

[18]See Pierre-Marie Gy, 'Office du Corpus Christi et s. Thomas d'Aquin: etat d'une recherche', *Revue des sciences philosphiques et theologiques*, 64 (1980), 491–507; idem, 'L'Office du Corpus Christi et la theologie des accidents eucharistique', *Revue des sciences philosophiques et theologiques*, 66 (1982), 81–6; Gy, 'Office liegeois et office romain de la Fête-Dieu', in *Actes du Colloque de Liège: Fête-Dieu, vol. 1 (1246-1996)*, ed. by Andrew Haquin (Louvain-la-Neuve: Institute d'Etudes Medievales de l'Universite Catholique de Louvain, 1999), pp. 117–26; Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas, vol. 1: The Person and his Work* (Washington: CUA Press, 1996), pp. 131–2, famously considers the philosophical argument in the matutinal lesson on the Eucharistic accidents 'the equivalent of a signature', since Thomas's 'rigorous Aristotelian perspective makes him probably the only one of his contemporaries who would think to use it in such a context'. For a summary of arguments in support of Aquinas's authorship of the Corpus Christi liturgy, see Jan-Heiner Tück, *A Gift of Presence: Theology and Poetry of the Eucharist in Thomas Aquinas*, trans. by Scott Hefelfinger (Washington: CUA Press, 2018), pp. 170–3.

[19]See the edition of Barbara R. Walters, Vincent J. Corrigan, and Peter T. Ricketts, *The Feast of Corpus Christi* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2006), pp. 240–369 for the Mass and Office of BNF 1134.

[20]Gy, 'L'Office de la Fête-Dieu', p. 500: 'Le *lat. 1143* a donc été copié à la Curie romaine entre 1264 et 1295, et la première de ces deux dates semble paléographiquement possible. Il est possible – mais pas pour autant certain – que nous ayons là le livret originel de la fête, tandis que les exemplaires non notés étaient semblables à ceux qui avaient été envoyés interclusa aux divers destinataires de la bulle *Transiturus*'.

[21]There is at least one extant tenth-century source containing an early form of this musical setting; David Hiley, *Western Plainchant: A Handbook* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 211 mentions the 'earliest sources, from Winchester and Arras, of the late tenth and early eleventh century'. See the critical notes and list of manuscripts in *Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi*, vol. 47, ed. by Clemens Blume and Henry Mariott Bannister (Leipzig: Reisland, 1905), pp. 54–6. (This edition is hereafter cited as '*AH* 47'.) The number of Parisian and northern French manuscripts containing *Kyrie fons bonitatis* dating from the thirteenth century and earlier indicate that the liturgical culture encountered by Aquinas and his scholastic colleagues at the University of Paris was one in which this troped *Kyrie* was very well known (see also footnote 22 for further indications). That the 1256 exemplar of Dominican liturgy promulgated under Humbert of Romans contains no troped *Kyrie* texts in the Mass ordinary section of the *Graduale* (cf. Santa Sabina MS XIV L1, ff. 361v–362r) cannot sufficently prove Thomas's (or any Dominican's) ignorance of *Kyrie fons bonitatis*, since Humbert's liturgical project was one of simplification as much as of unification. Troped *Kyrie* texts do exist in the Dominican liturgy, for example, at the celebration of Tenebrae during the Triduum; see Santa Sabina XIV L1, ff. 255v and 256v. I am grateful to Dr Eleanor Giraud (University of Limerick) and Fr Augustine Thompson OP (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies) for these insights.

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Doctor as does the composition of the hymns and antiphons (to include the selection of the contrafacta and musical settings).[22] This *Kyrie* is cited in full below, with English translation.

Kyrie, fons bonitatis, Pater ingenite, a quo bona cuncta procedunt, eleison.	O Lord, source of goodness, unbegotten Father, from whom all good things proceed, have mercy.
Kyrie, qui pati natum mundi pro crimine, ipsum ut salvaret, misisti, eleison.	O Lord, who for our sins sent your Son into the world that he should suffer to save it, have mercy.
Kyrie, qui septiformis dans dona pneumatis, a quo caelum terra replentur, eleison.	O Lord, who gives the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit by which heaven and earth are filled, have mercy.
Christe, unice Dei Patris genite, quem de virgine nasciturum mundo mirifice sancti praedixerunt prophetae, eleison.	O Christ, only begotten of God the Father, whose birth from the virgin the holy prophets wondrously foretold, have mercy.
Christe, hagie, caeli compos regiae, melos gloriae cui semper astans pro munere angelorum decantat apex, eleison.	O Christ, holy one, master of the kingdom of heaven, to whom the height of angels dutifully and always sing the hymn of glory, have mercy.

[22]See Corrigan, 'Critical Editions of the Liturgical Manuscripts', in Walters, et al., *The Feast*, p. 306 for the *Kyrie* of MS 1134. Corrigan reproduces the incipit 'Kyrie fons bonitatis' as lyrics set in modern notation, corresponding to folio 17v, where the incipit 'Kyrie fons bonitatis' is presented as lyrics set in chant notation, not as a rubrical indication of the melody alone. Compare the indications of contrafacta for the antiphons and hymns, which are given in the margins, not in the columns of the main text (see, e.g., the marginal rubric 'contra aeterne rex altissime de ascensione' for the hymn *Verbum supernum* on folio 15v, or 'contra nativitas gloriose de sancta maria' for the Alleuia verse *Caro mea* at 18v). The presence of notation for the new hymns and antiphons means that the reader need not know the source texts, but this is not the case when *Kyrie fons bonitatis* is itself notated. The strong implication is that the *Kyrie* is to be sung with the tropes; this perhaps explains why the online *Corpus Thomisticum*, ed. by Enrique Alarcón, <https://www.corpusthomisticum.org/pcx.html> [accessed 25 July 2023] reproduces the entire text of *Kyrie fons bonitatis* in the *Missa Cibavit eos*. If MS 1143 is indeed a Roman exemplar, and if the appearance of the phrase 'Kyrie fons bonitatis' constitutes part of the notated text and is not a rubric, then the document likely presumes a familiarity with the full trope on the part of both its audience and its promulgators. Gy's observation on the breadth of the manuscript's musical repertoire lends further indirect yet probable support for Aquinas's knowledge of the *fons bonitatis* tropes ('Office du Corpus Christi', p. 499, my translation): 'These melodies [in MS 1143] were taken from the repertoire of the Roman Curia, from that of the Dominicans, and from a Parisian or English Office for Thomas of Canterbury: such rich musical documentation could not have been available except in a center like that of the Roman Curia or Paris', both attested locations for Aquinas's activity. If we take Aquinas's work of Patristic *ressourcement* in his Orvieto period (enabled by his access to the papal archives) as an analogous case, we could say that his work on the Corpus Christi liturgy involved similar a *ressourcement* of liturgical archival material, which would include sources for Mass cycles.

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Christe, caelitus assis nostris praecibus, pronis mentibus quem in terris devote colimus; ad te, pie Iesu, clamamus: eleison.	O Christ, heavenly one, attend our prayers, you whom we devotedly worship on earth with humbled hearts; to you, kind Jesus, we cry: have mercy.
Kyrie, Spiritus alme, cohaerens Patri natoque, unius usiae, consistendo, flans ab utroque, eleison.	O Lord, dear Spirit, one with the Father and Son, of the same substance, breathing out from both, have mercy.
Kyrie, qui baptizato in Iordanis unda Christo effulgens specie columbina apparuisti, eleison.	O Lord, who brightly appeared in the form of a dove upon Christ baptized in the Jordan's tide, have mercy.
Kyrie, ignis divine, pectora nostra succende, ut digni pariter proclamare possimus semper, eleison.[23]	O Lord, divine fire, set our hearts alight, that worthily we might always proclaim you equally, have mercy.[24]

We thus are in possession of a text, already 'traditional' by Aquinas's time,[25] which expresses the perichoretic interpretation of the ninefold *Kyrie* given by Thomas in both the *Sentences Commentary* and *Summa Theologiae*. While the Person vocatively addressed in each threefold set of invocations follows the customary order of Father (*Kyrie*), Son (*Christe*), and Spirit (*Kyrie*), the individual invocations within each set are each articulated with reference to each person, respectively. For example, the third invocation, while addressed to the Father, refers to the gifts of the Spirit, while the eighth invocation, addressed to the Spirit, refers to the baptism of the Son. Only the third *Christe* invocation appears as an outlier, containing no explicit epithet for the Spirit. Nevertheless, the structure of *Kyrie fons bonitatis* makes the doctrine of circumincession – *quod omnes personae sunt in se invicem*, as Thomas says – especially apparent. Perhaps Aquinas even had this particular text in mind when writing his commentaries on the *Kyrie*, as he did when composing the Mass of Corpus Christi. In any case, Albert need not worry about his pupil on this point, for Aquinas's perichoretic construal is no mere allegorization unrooted in the prayers and actions of Mass; rather, this seems to be a case of the Angelic Doctor commenting upon the received liturgical tradition and its *sensus litteralis* in support of a robust explication of Trinitarian faith.

At this point, we should acknowledge that an explicitly Trinitarian-perichoretic *Kyrie* like *fons bonitatis* is certainly not prototypical for the medieval liturgy. Among the more popular *Kyrie* texts collected in *Analecta Hymnica* 47, only a few, such as *fons bonitatis* and *Kyrie virginitatis*[26] (both widely diffused throughout Paris, northern France, and both sides of the Rhine) explicitly manifest the perichoretic form; meanwhile, the rarer yet more numerous troped *Kyries* of limited disribution (many in England alone),[27] show only the basic form of three sets of invocations for

[23] See the critical text in *AH* 47, pp. 53–56.

[24] English translation mine.

[25] Blume (*AH* 47, pp. 40–41) lists seventeen contrafacta based on *fons bonitatis* – a testament to this setting's popularity.

[26] *AH* 47, p. 62.

[27] See, for example, the following *Kyrie* tropes listed sequentially in *AH* 47: *Rex genitor, Conditor kyrie, O pater excelse, Rex splendens, Summe pater* (pp. 75–82).

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each Person. Other early Frankish types, such as those contained in Paris, BNF MS Latin 887 (of Aquitanian origin) and investigated by David Bjork, often show a purely Christological character (i.e., the troped petitions refer to Christ only).[28] But, like the aforementioned tropes of English origin, the nine *Kyrie* texts of MS 887 were not widely diffused; three have no concordances in other sources, three are found in only one other source (Wolfenbüttel Herzog, August-Bibliothek Gud. Lat. 79), and three are found respectively in three manuscripts (Apt, Basilique Sainte-Anne 17; Paris, BNF Lat. 1120; and Limoges, Bibliothèque Municipale 2[17]). A preliminary observation now emerges: despite the composition of many troped *Kyrie* texts which do not manifest a perichoretic structure, *Kyrie fons bonitatis* finds its way into the repertoire of many local liturgies and eventually into the Roman Mass of Corpus Christi. Thus, despite the existence of what we might call non-perichoretic *Kyrie* tropes, the perichoretic type represented by *fons bonitatis* obtains a place of honor, which Thomas Aquinas singles out for special recognition, both in his Mass commentaries and in the selection of *fons bonitatis* for the new Eucharistic solemnity.

3. Two problems

If, as Thomas suggests, the Trinitarian-perichoretic aspect of the *Kyrie* pertains to the *sensus litteralis missae* and is thus fundamental to a proper understanding of the liturgy, what are we to make of the fact that his own Order's *ordo missae* makes no use of the troped *Kyrie*? Moreover, if the Trinitarian-perichoretic aspect is fundamental, what are contemporary Catholics to make of Aquinas's interpretation in light of the *sixfold* Kyrie in the Missal of Paul VI? We will tackle these two problems sequentially. With respect to the first question, we should first say that, while the exemplar of Dominican liturgy given in Santa Sabina XIV L1 contains no troped *texts* for the Mass *Kyrie*, the chant settings in folios 361v–363v were originally troped settings, according to the following chart.

***Kyrie* Mass settings in Santa Sabina XIV L1, ff. 361v–363v**

Type of Mass	***Modern Vatican Edition***	***Trope incipit/title*** (not mentioned in OP codex)
Feasts of the Blessed Virgin	Mass IX	*Cum jubilo*
Totum duplex with duplex feasts	Mass IV	*Cunctipotens genitor Deus*
Semiduplex feasts	Mass XIV	*Jesu Redemptor*
Sundays and simplex feasts	Mass XII	*Pater cuncta*
Matutinal and octave Masses	Mass XVI	n/a
Weekday Masses	n/a	n/a
Requiem Masses	Mass for the Dead (*Liber Usualis* 1807–1815)	n/a

[28]David A. Bjork, 'The Early Frankish Kyrie Texts: A Reappraisal', *Viator*, 12 (1981), pp. 9–36.

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The connection between the selected *Kyrie* setting and the type of feast becomes apparent when one considers, for example, the tropes of *Kyrie cum jubilo* for Masses of the Blessed Virgin.

Cum jubilo jubilemus Filio Mariae, kyrie eleison.	With jubilation let us rejoice in the Son of Mary; Lord, have mercy.
In hac die laudes demus Filio Mariae, Kyrie eleison.	On this day let us give praises to the Son of Mary; Lord have mercy.
Cum gaudio concinamus canticum Mariae, Kyrie eleison.	With joy let us sing a song to Mary; Lord have mercy.
Christe, Deus homo, natus sine semine, eleison.	O Christ, God-man, born without seed, have mercy.
Christe, nos defende precibus Mariae, eleison.	O Christ, defend us by the prayers of Mary, have mercy.
Christe, natus ex Maria semper virgine, eleison.	O Christ, born of Mary ever Virgin, have mercy.
Kyrie, preces audi, nos exaudi, Pater optime, eleison.	O Lord, hear our prayers, graciously hear us, O Father most high, have mercy.
Kyrie, nos tuere interventu Mariae, eleison.	O Lord, keep us by Mary's intervention, have mercy.
Kyrie, peccantes salva semper et rege, nos custodi, nos guberna, pie protege, Domine, Deus trine, pro Mariae meritis, eleison.[29]	O Lord, save and guard us sinners always, preserve us, govern us, kindly protect us, O Lord, triune God, through the merits of Mary, have mercy.[30]

Thus,despite the absence of these full tropes in the Humbert of Romans Codex, the selection of the *Kyrie cum jubilo* setting for Marian Masses shows the close link between the festal celebration and the original troped text. The use of the particular setting therefore functions as something analogous to the incipit of a hymn or psalm, wherein the enunciation of the first line implies the full content of the text. Just as Christ's cry 'My God, my God, why have you abandoned me'[31] suggests not a total loss of faith but the recitation of an entire Psalm rooted in invincible hope, the very intonation of the *Kyrie cum jubilo* brings to bear the full Marian character of the original tropes. In this light, the *Kyrie Pater cuncta*[32] for Sunday Masses, whose text closely – if imperfectly – shows elements of the perichoretic style in the first two sets of petitions,[33] likewise

[29] See critical text in *AH* 47, pp. 160–61.
[30] English translation mine.
[31] Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34; cf. Psalm 22:1.
[32] *AH* 47, pp. 63–65.
[33] For the first set of *Kyrie* petitions: 'cuncta qui gubernas' refers to the Father, 'sede sedens in superna' recalls Christ's epithet 'qui sedes ad dexteram' in the *Gloria*, while 'plebem pio vultu cernas' could be

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invokes the doctrine of circumincession simply by virtue of its musical intonation. If the Order of Preachers had selected this *Kyrie* for the sung conventual Masses of Sunday, then the Trinitarian doctrine implicit therein would be commemorated at the principal liturgical commemoration of each week. By the promulgation of Humbert's liturgy, therefore, Thomas Aquinas and his Dominican brethren would celebrate the Lord's Day by, *inter alia*, chanting a *Kyrie* tone firmly rooted in the dogma that the Trinitarian Persons indwell mutually in each other.[34]

If we have thus far provided a somewhat adequate accounting for the loss of the troped *Kyrie* in Aquinas's time by showing how the melody and ninefold form of *fons bonitatis* and *Pater cuncta* are still linked closely to the perichoretic interpretation, a greater difficulty arises in demonstrating the continuity between this complex Trinitarian understanding of the *Kyrie* and the analogous Penitential Rite in the Missal of Paul VI. In the latter, the ninefold medieval form is often replaced by a call-and-response sixfold structure which, as mentioned before, makes a perichoretic interpretation impossible. Furthermore, the standardized 'troped' petitions of the Pauline Missal which may be added by the priest celebrant hearken not to the high medieval Trinitarian development of this rite, but more closely resemble the purely Christological early Frankish types.

understood as the providential divine gaze sent through the proceeding Spirit. In the *Christe* petitions, 'splendor patris' clearly references the Father, 'Fili matris' invokes Christ in his humanity as born of the Virgin, while 'ne claustris demur atri' might recall the sending of the Spirit by Christ into the locked Upper Room.

[34]As Bjork, 'Early Frankish Kyrie', p. 12, observed regarding many tenth-century Kyries, 'melody and text are contemporaneous, and seem to have been designed for each other; they are not necessarily instances of textual underlay of preexistent, melismatic melodies'. The same observation could be made of the later *Kyrie fons bonitatis*. Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, p. 211, observes that the earliest manuscript evidence for the *fons bonitatis* melody, 'from Winchester and Arras, of the late tenth and early eleventh century, do not have the Latin text', suggesting that the later 'correspondence of note- and syllable-groups' when the *fons bonitatis* text is attested demonstrates that the text is indeed a prosula. Hiley's tentative judgment does not seem to account adequately for John Boe's work on the sources of *fons bonitatis*. Boe, following Blume, notes that the earliest form of the melody is found in the Winchester Kyriale, dated 978–986. This tenth-century Norman melody is not the exactly the same as that of what is now known as the *fons bonitatis* melody: 'the melody without verse is found in the original layer of the Winchester Tropers, in a version to which the text *Kyrie fons bonitatis* cannot be sung because one repeated note in the melody for the first Kyries and Christes is missing – namely, the repeated note a of the second phrase member, a a G F E D. However, the Winchester form of the melody can be sung to the unusual Kyrie verse *Kyrie Sabaoth iudex dicheos* … dated between 1024 and 1028' and attributed to Hermannus Contractus (1013–1054) of Reichenau Abbey. An adaption of the original melody, attested in a late twelfth-century manuscript from Montecassino (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, MS Latin 602, ff. 27v–29v) 'differs from the usual Norman form of the melody just at that point where an extra note would have been needed in the Winchester form … to accommodate the text *Kyrie fons bonitatis*'. Likely composed in northeastern France (Boe suggests Cambrai or Metz), 'the new text fits the judiciously adapted melody perfectly'. MS 602 sets this adjusted melody to the troped text *Kyrie per quem subsistit*, while another Italian manuscript (Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS VI, G. 34, ff. 29v–31r) is our source for linking the *fons bonitatis* text with the melody in MS 602, thus witnessing to what we now recognize as *Kyrie fons bonitatis. Beneventanum troporum corpus II, Part 1a: Kyrie eleison. Prefatory Essays and Commentary*, ed. by John Boe (Madison, WI: A-R Editions, 1989), pp. 50–52. The history of the *Kyrie fons bonitatis* testifies to the interplay between musical and poetic development; not only does each influence the other, but the close bond between the two – at least in the case of *fons bonitatis* – is such that the intonation of one almost implies the invocation of the other.

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Qui missus es sanare contritos corde: Kyrie eleison.	You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.
Qui peccatores vocare venisti: Christe eleison.	You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.
Qui ad dexteram Patris sedes, ad interpellandum pro nobis: Kyrie eleison.[35]	You sit at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.[36]

We cannot be in the business of directly contrasting a Christological perspective against a Trinitarian one, as if these could be mutually exclusive. Proposing such a confrontation is inadmissable even from an historical point of view, given the long coexistence of Trinitarian and Christological *Kyrie* tropes across medieval manuscripts. We can certainly acknowledge that, for Thomas Aquinas and other high medieval writers,[37] the perichoretic perspective gained a certain prestige and importance which both grew alongside and developed out of the earlier Christological tropes. We can even objectively note how the abandonment of the perichoretic form in favor of a series of simpler invocations to Christ alone might involve a certain reduction of theological depth in the Mass. Nevertheless, in order to assess more comprehensively, the consequences of this liturgical shift in the Missal of Paul VI, we must make recourse to methods other than the mere juxtaposition of two options and stating a preference based on superficial criteria.

The remainder of this essay will propose such a method, and to that end, we will engage in a slight shift of perspective. Invoking recent work on Aquinas's anthropology and its relation to an account of language formation, we will consider the effects of the shift from the syllabic *chanting* of complex *Kyrie* tropes like *fons bonitatis*, on the one hand, to the *melismatic* chanting of only the words 'Kyrie eleison – Christe eleison – Kyrie eleison' which arises when the tropes are removed but the melodies are retained. This analysis will therefore be applicable to both the gradual loss of troped texts in the late medieval period and to the modern Vatican editions of chant settings common to both the pre-conciliar and post-conciliar liturgical books as celebrated today.

4. Aquinas on the cogitative power and language

In a recent *Modern Theology* article, I investigated the relationship between passion and reason according to Aquinas's philosophical anthropology, showing how the 'mitigation of the cogitative power' caused by vehement passions of the sensitive soul can lead to vocal utterances which are repetitive, stammering, onomatopoieic, or otherwise

[35] John Paul II, *Missale Romaum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum*, Editio typica tertia (Vatican City: Typis Vaticanis, 2002), p. 508.

[36] John Paul II, *Roman Missal renewed by decree of the most holy Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican*, English translation according to the Third Typical Edition (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2010), pp. 553–54.

[37] Durandus, *Rationale divinorum officiorum* IV, c. 20, nn. 2–6.

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prelingusitic or pre-rational.[38] The cogitative power, one of the four internal senses of human beings (alongside the common sense, imagination, and memory), has the general task of identifying particular instantiations of a universal genus, which is further specified by the formation of the minor premise of a practical syllogism.[39] In other words, the *vis cogitativa* is a proposition-forming power which produces particular (minor) propositions. While this first refers to an internal cognitional process, vocalized words are 'signs of the passions of the soul',[40] and thus any hindrance or mitigation of the cogitative power will impede the proper formation and vocalization of such propositions according to conventional language. These mitigations, for Aquinas, occur when powerful passions lead the reason astray by causing 'the imagination to apprehend wrongly' and 'the cogitative power to judge badly'.[41] Strong passions can further impede the proper enunciation of words through the bodily transmutation caused by the passions (recalling that, for Aquinas, passions are *bodily* motions of the sensitive soul). The utterances that result from emotionally charged moments, therefore, can take the form of those asyndetic, repetitive, stammering, and onomatopoieic interjections. As I summarized,

> the aggregate effects of bodily transmutation linked to the passions can lead to certain irrational or pre-rational oral utterances (e.g., groans, sighs, crying, laughter) which signify, even if temporarily, the vehemence of the passions and – possibly – their overpowering of the reason. Onomatopoeic interjections and monosyllabic exclamations, sometimes repeated to the point of stuttering, likewise signify a moment of unresolved struggle between passion and reason. This struggle, however, occurs not principally in the reason, but in the sensitive powers; specifically, Aquinas locates the conflict in the imagination and cogitative power.[42]

The article goes on to contrast the variegated wordplay and clever diction of Aquinas's poetry with the expansive identical repetition and near-onomatopoeic exclamations in poems by the Franciscans Bonaventure (d. 1274) and Iacopone da Todi (d. 1306), showing how the construal of Franciscan mysticism and theology as 'more affective' is generally accurate.[43] The 'ecstasy' signified by undifferentiated voicing is moreover interpreted differently by Aquinas and his Minorite contemporaries.

[38]J. I. Belleza, 'Football, Mysticism, Thomistic Poetics', *Modern Theology*, Special Edition 'Metaphysics and Poetics' (2023). Currently available via Open Acess only. <https://doi.org/10.1111/moth.12864>. Page numbers cited refer to the electronic pre-print edition.

[39]For Aquinas on the cogitative power, see: *In De Anima* 2, lc. 13, n. 13; *ST* I, q. 78, a. 4, *resp*. and ad 4; and q. 81, a. 3, *resp., inter alia*. See also Daniel De Haan, 'Perception and the *Vis Cogitativa*: A Thomistic Analysis of Aspectional, Actional, and Affectional Percepts', *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, 88 (2014), 397–437, especially the extended bibliography at 398–9, n. 4; Robert Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: A Philosophical Study of Summa Theologiae Ia 75–89* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 253–56; Robert Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions: A Study of Summa Theologiae 1a2ae 22–48* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 69–82.

[40]Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*, 16a2; cf. Aquinas, *In I Sent*., d. 22, q. 1, a. 1, *inter alia.*

[41]Paraphrased from *ST* I-II, q. 77, a. 1, *resp.*

[42]Belleza, 'Football, Mysticism, Thomistic Poetics', p. 8.

[43]Ibid., pp. 14–19.

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While the Franciscans tended to construe the ascent to ineffable mystical union as consummated in a univocal relinquishing of intellectual and bodily mediations in a purely affective state, the Thomistic notion of 'returning to phantasms' means that, after intellectually 'grasping' a universal and spiritual reality, cognition which is fully human must reconcretize such knowledge with recourse to intellectual and corporeal images.[44] This signifies the restoration of the reason's 'political' (not 'despotic') rule over the passions and a proper participative reintegration of corporeal and spiritual powers within the body-soul composite constitutive of the human person.[45] Aquinas's employment of clear and concrete imagery in his Eucharistic verses, coupled with his evident aversion to the identical anaphoric repetition and sustained apostrophic outbursts seen in Bonaventure and Iacopone, bespeak an understanding that ecstatic, ineffable speech from the part of the human being represents not the 'end' of mystical ascent but a provisional state which is consummated only with the return to concrete language. Franciscans like Bonaventure, on the other hand, speak of a much clearer dichotomy: to obtain the mystical climax described in *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, the Seraphic Doctor urges his audience to 'seek the groaning of prayer, not the study of lectures'.[46] While the Franciscans might reach for the total collapse and surpassing of human language and rationality in God, Aquinas understands mystical union to involve the perfective elevation of reason and language. With this Thomistic characterization of onomatopoeic and underdifferentiated vocal exclamations in mind, we can now consider a type of vocalization in the liturgy which bears close similarities to these types of pre-rational utterances – the *melisma*.

5. Melisma and the liturgy

Melisma, or the chanting of a single syllable over an extended melodic phrase, has enjoyed a particularly long-lasting interpretation which, beginning with Hilary of Poitiers and Augustine of Hippo, is thereafter diffused throughout Latin Christianity. For these Fathers, the melisma was called *iubilus*, for the ascending path of the melody signified the joyful ascent of the soul to God. Hilary, capable in both Greek and Latin, noted how the Septuagint term *alalagmos* – *iubilus* in the Vetus Latina – 'means the non-verbal shouting of country-folk', or more importantly 'the war cry of an army pursuing the enemy underfoot, or the cry announcing the triumph of victory'.[47] Augustine, in

[44]Ibid., p. 11.

[45]*ST* I, q. 81, a. 3, ad 2.

[46]Bonaventure, *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, c. 7: 'Quaere … gemitum orationis, non studium lectionis'.

[47]Hilary, *Tractatus in Psalmum LXV*, n. 5 (*PL* 9:425): 'In latinis codicibus ita legimus: *Jubilate Deo omnis terra*. Et quantum ad eloquii nostri consuetudinem pertinet, *jubilum* pastoralis agrestisque vocis sonum nuncupamus, cum in solitudinibus aut respondens aut requirens, per significantiam ductae in longum et expressae in nisum sonus vocis auditur. In graecis vero libris, qui ex hebraeo proximi sunt, non eadem significantia scribitur. Namque ita se habent: *alalaxate to theo pasa he ge*, et cum illis *alalagmos*, quem latine *jubilum* ponunt, significat vocem exercitus praeliantis, aut in concursu proterentis hostem, aut successum victoriae exsultationis voce testantis. Quam rem ubi ita se translationis ratio temperavit, absolutius in psalmo intelligimus, cum dicit: *Omnes gentes, plaudite manibus, jubilate Deo in voce exsultationis*. Vox autem exsultationis dissentit ab jubilo; sed pro translationis conditione, quia propria exsultantis vocis nuncupatio non reperta est, per id quod *jubilum* dicitur, vox exsultationis ostenditur'.

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his commentaries on the thirty-second[48] and ninety-ninth[49] Psalms (Vetus Latina), considers this type of enunciation as signifying the ultimate inadequacy of human language as it rises to praise the ineffable God – an interpretation to become standard among the medievals. 'Psalm commentaries', writes James McKinnon, 'from Cassiodorus in the sixth century to Gerhoh of Reichersberg in the twelfth, simply repeat at each occurrence of the word *jubilare* the basic idea of textlessness'.[50] For Amalarius of Metz, the eminent Carolingian liturgist who will influence almost all subsequent medieval Mass commentaries, the verse of the alleluia stirs the cantor within to consider why he should praise the Lord…. This jubilation, which the cantors call *sequentia*, calls to mind to that state of being where the speaking of words will not be necessary; rather, one mind will explain to another what it has within by thought alone'.[51]

This wordless, direct transference of thought between persons suggests a distinctly angelic mode of communication, a theme explicitly adopted in a twelfth-century Mass commentary once attributed to Hugh of Saint-Victor. The Alleluia for this Pseudo-Hugonian author expresses 'the glory which is none other than that of the eternal company of the angels and blessed spirits'; he then takes up Augustine's notion that the melismatic *neuma* or *iubilus* is the apt expression of praise at the point where human words fail.[52] William Durandus, whose monumental *Rationale divinorum officiorum*

[48] Augustine, *Ennaratio II in Psalmum XXXII*, Sermo 1, n. 8 in *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, vol. 38, eds. Dekker & Fraipont (Turnhout: Brepols, 1956), pp. 253–4. 'Ecce veluti modum cantandi dat tibi; noli quaerere verba, quasi explicare possis unde Deus delectatur. *In iubilatione* cane. Hoc est enim bene canere Deo, in iubilatione cantare. Quid est in iubilatione canere? Intellegere, verbis explicare non posse quod canitur corde. Etenim illi qui cantant, sive in messe, sive in vinea, sive in aliquo opere ferventi, cum coeperint in verbis canticorum exsultare laetitia, ut eam verbis explicare non possint, avertunt se a syllabis verborum, et eunt in sonum iubilationis. Iubilum sonus quidam est significans cor parturire quod dicere non potest. Et quem decet ista iubulatio, nisi ineffabilem Deum? Ineffabilis enim est, quem fari non potes; et si eum fare non potes, et tacere non debes, quid restat nisi ut iubiles, ut gaudeat cor sine verbis, et immensa latitudo gaudiorum metas non habeat syllabarum? *Bene cantate ei in iubilatione*'.

[49] Augustine, *Ennaratio in Psalmum XCIX*, nn. 4–5, in *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, vol. 39, eds. Dekker & Fraipont (Turnhout: Brepols, 1956), p. 1394: 'Qui iubilat, non verba dicit, sed sonus quidam est laetitiae sine verbis; vox est enim animi diffusi laetitia, quantum potest, exprimentis affectum, non sensum comprehendentis. Gaudens homo in exsultatione sua, ex verbis quibusdam quae non possunt dici et intelllegi, erumpit in vocem quamdam exsultationis sine verbis; ita ut appareat eum ipsa voce gaudere quidem, sed quasi repletum nimio gaudio, non posse verbis explicare quod gaudet. Tamen ut hoc quod dico intelligitis, immo recordemini rem cognitam, maxime iubilant qui aliquid in agris operantur; copia fructum iucundati ut messores, vel vindemiatores, vel aliquos fructus metentes, et in ipsa fecunditate terrae et feracitate gaudentes, exsultando cantant; et inter cantica quae verbis enuntiant, inserunt voces quasdam sine verbis in elatione exsultantis animi, et haec vocatur *iubilatio* … Quando ergo nos iubilamus? Quando laudamus quod dici non potest'.

[50] James McKinnon, 'Preface to the Study of the Alleluia', *Early Music History*, 15 (1996), 213–49, at 216.

[51] Amalarius, *Liber officialis* III.17: 'Versus alleluia tangit cantorem interius, ut cogitet in quo debeat laudare Dominum, aut in quo laetari. Haec iubilatio, quam cantores "sequentiam" vocant, illum statum ad mentem nostram ducitm qyando non erit necessaria locutio verborum, sed sola cogitatione mens menti monstrabit quod retinet in se'. Latin and English text in Amalar of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, vol. 2, ed. by Eric Knibbs (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), pp. 96–97.

[52] Pseudo-Hugh of Saint-Victor, *De officiis ecclesiasticis* II, c. 19 (*PL* 177:422): 'Alleluia sequens aeternam gloriam vel vitam contemplativam significat, quam activa promeretur, sed in hac vita non assequitur. Illa enim gloria quid est nisi aeternum angelorum beatorumque spirituum convivium, quod est semper

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represents a late thirteenth-century summation of the anterior commentarorial tradition, is worth mentioning. Durandus synthesizes many points from the previous authors: that the Alleluia is a conformity to angelic speech, that the Alleluia and its *iubilus* expresses ineffable joy, and that its melisma stirs the soul to ascend to God.[53] The textless, undifferentiated voicing which distinguishes the *iubilus* is thus almost univerally understood in the Latin tradition as sign of ecstatic, quasi-angelic ascent to God.

While Aquinas also interprets the Alleluia as a chant of exsultation,[54] he does not explicitly mention the melismatic *iubilus*. Nevertheless, he does recognize in another place the same Augustinian notion of prayerful speech which, through the intensity of devotion, can turn into 'sighs and jubilations (*iubilus*) and untempered voicings'.[55] In line with the commentatorial tradition hitherto traced, and in light of the Thomstic reflections on language in the previous section, we can first observe that Aquinas *does* recognize a liturgical place for onomatopoeic and undifferentiated utterances, a notion which perhaps departs from the preference for linguistic concreteness seen in his cognitional theory and mystical theology. Still, just as Thomas construes the moment of abstraction (whether in natural cognition or in mystical union) as a provisional state which must be 'completed' by a return to phantasms and rational-linguistic clarity, the Alleluia *iubilus* likewise marks a provisional affective moment which must eventually yield to the concrete proclamation of the Gospel. Melisma, therefore, does not represent the peak of spiritual experience, but denotes a preparation for the reception and explication of determinate intellectual content.

By way of contrast, we can place into further relief the nature of the melismatic Alleluia by considering its replacement in Masses of mourning or penance, i.e., the Tract.[56] While for Aquinas the Tract signifies 'spiritual groaning', this groaning is not expressed through the melodious undifferentiated vocalization of a *iubilus*.

laudare Deum… Notandum autem quod *Pneumata* quae in Alleluia et caeteris cantibus in paucitate verborum fiunt *jubilum* significant, qui fit, cum mens aliquando sic in Deum afficitur et dulcedine quadam ineffabili liquescit, ut quod sentit plene affari non possit. Affectus enim hoc habet proprium, ut quanto intus ferventior fuerit, tanto minus extra explicare possit. *Beatus populus qui scit jubilationem*, id est qui saepe experitur et praegustat hanc dulcedinem, et sic interius movetur, ut quod praesentit nec dicere sufficiat, nec potest tacere'. Cyrille Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy: An Introduction to the Sources*, trans. by William Storey and Niels Rasmussen (Portland: Pastoral Press, 1986), p. 14 attributes this work to the twelfth-century author Robert Paululus.

[53]Durandus, *Rationale divinorum officiorum* IV, c. 20, nn. 2–6: 'Alleluia is an angelic praise, and cerainly a short expression that contains great joy that arouses us to joyfulness.… "Alleluia" is a Hebrew term; a word signifying more than expressing the ineffable joy that is foreign to this world: namely, the joy of Angels and men rejoicing in eternal happiness… [At the Alleluia] there is more rejoicing than singing, and we prologue one short syllable of an important word with many *neumae*, so that the attentive spirit will be filled with this delightful sound, and it will be snatched up to that place where there is always life life without death and day without night.… Alleluia is a small word with a great melody, because the joy it expresses is greater than what can be explained in a word. For the *neuma* or *iubilus* which is at the end expresses the joy and love of the believers'. English text from William Durand, *Rationale IV: On the Mass and each Action Pertaining to it*, ed. and trans. by Timothy M. Thibodeau (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), pp. 176–81.

[54]Aquinas, *In IV Sent.*, d. 8, *exp.*, and *ST* III, q. 83, a. 4, *resp.*

[55]*In IV Sent.*, d. 15, q. 4, a. 2, ad qla. 1: '… ex vehementia devotionis in orante vox sequitur; quia motus superiorum virium, si sit fortis, etiam ad inferiores redundat; unde et cum mens orantis per devotionem accenditur, in fletus et suspiria et jubilos et voces inconsiderate prorumpit'.

[56]*In IV Sent.*, d. 8, *exp.*, cf. *ST* IIIa, q. 83, a. 4, *resp.*

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Rather, the sense of grumbling is achieved through the Tract's combination of 'prolixity' and 'harsh voices'.[57] The Tract texts are often longer than an Alleluia verse, while the almost exclusive usage of either the second (Hypodorian) or eighth (Hypomixolydian) modes produce a plangency that reinforces the mourning character of seasons like Septuagesima and Lent. Thus, the melismatic elements, while present, are reduced on account of the Tract's verbosity, and these often do not match the extensive ornamentation of the Alleluia *iubilus*. Because the Tract is a penitential text, the expressions of sorrow contained therein – just as in the tropes of *Kyrie fons bonitatis* – are pronounced clearly as in a truly contrite confession. Correctly recognizing and voicing one's own penitence requires this concretization of language; here human tongues do not yet ascend to joyfully praise the ineffable God with quasi-angelic, highly affective outbursts, but first descend to a mode of speech more proper to the penitent's wayfaring state.

6. Conclusion: reassessing the untroped *Kyrie*

Now we can address more precisely the consequences of excising troped texts from settings like *Kyrie fons bonitatis*. First, the removal of the tropes creates a sort of structural converse to the Tract; abandoning the unique petitions greatly extends the *Kyrie* melismas, which introduces something like the *iubilus* – and its joyful, quasi-angelic character – into what should properly be a ritual of penance, an act of humility[58] which commemorates our present misery.[59] If, as argued above, penance should involve a concrete vocal recognition of one's unworthiness before God, then the transformation of the troped penitential chants into settings dominated by extended melisma might risk obscuring their deprecatory content. Perhaps the ongoing development of the Roman Rite might look to fill this melismatic 'gap' by considering the variety of orthodox doctrinal expressions – like references to circumincession – proposed by the medieval tropes.

Even if we concede, as above, that the perichoretic *Kyrie* was never unique or archetypical for the genre, we can still affirm that, by the time of Thomas Aquinas, the widespread diffusion of *Kyrie fons bonitatis* and others like it – signals an eminent place for the Trinitarian-perichoretic interpretation of the *Kyrie* in the high medieval period. The *Rationale* of Durandus, completed only a few years after the death of his contemporary Aquinas, further confirms the eminence of this exegesis by the close of the thirteenth century.[60] If by this time the *sensus litteralis missae* includes this complex perichoretic theology of the *Kyrie*, one can thus speak of a true organic development in the liturgy, wherein a robust defense of Trinitarian theology – which had always been a Carolingian concern – reaches a sort of interpretative climax by the explicit invocation of circumincession within the structure of various troped *Kyrie* texts. Removing the tropes, even if the *Kyrie* is sung in the ninefold manner, recalls the state

[57] *In IV Sent.*, d. 8, *exp.*: 'Loco ejus, tractus ponitur, qui asperitate vocum et prolixitate verborum praesentis miseriae incolatum insinuat'.

[58] *In IV Sent.*, d. 8, *exp.*

[59] *ST* III, q. 83, a. 4, *resp.*

[60] Durandus, *Rationale* IV, c. 12: 'Moreover, the *Kyrie* is said three times with respect to the Father, three times with respect to the Son, and three times with respect to the Holy Spirit to note that the Father is in the Son, the Son is in the Father, and the Holy Spirit is in both of them'.

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of the early Dominican liturgy's adaptation of troped Mass cycles without the actual troped texts: the silent doctrinal elements remain present, but by implication only. This is more true for settings like *Kyrie cum iubilo*, for example, where the articulation of its Marian content is not necessarily dependent on the *number* of petitions. But in the case of perichoretic tropes like *fons bonitatis* and *Pater cuncta*, the ninefold structure is intrinsically tied to – and most fitting for – an explication of Trinitarian circumincession. Since the *Kyriale* already assigns the untroped *Kyrie fons bonitatis* for use 'in festis solemnibus',[61] utilization of its troped version might be an appropriate means for highlighting the underlying Trinitarian character of solemn liturgies.

We close by returning to the problem first identified in the beginning of this essay: the difficulty of mediating allegorical and literal interpretations of the liturgy. If, as we have argued, that the perichoretic nature of the *Kyrie* pertained to the *sensus litteralis* by the late thirteenth century – well after texts like *fons bonitatis* enjoyed wide circulation – then, in order to avert the perception of an allegorial interpretation not rooted in the Mass rites or otherwise imposed outside the process of organic development, perhaps it would be worth considering the reintroduction of troped texts like *fons bonitatis* and *Pater cuncta* into the celebration of the liturgy – even into potential future editions of the Missal of John XXIII. As a parallel development, modifications of the Pauline Missal might consider the ninefold troped *Kyrie* as a potential treasury of doctrinal content that would in fact break the current repetitiousness of the untroped *Kyrie*. Recourse to tropes in either the sixfold or ninefold form – a possibility left open by *IGMR* n. 52 – could serve as an avenue for authentic liturgical *ressourcement*[62] which would in turn explicitly reinforce the Trinitarian structure of all doxology, address the perceived 'lack' of pneumatology in Latin theology and liturgy,[63] and foster deeper contemplation of the Triune God, who is the source and terminus of all divine worship. For if 'it is through the liturgy that Christians enter into the mystery of God the Trinity and find the light to live out their lives with God',[64] then let our confession of sins in preparation for the Eucharist also be an explicit confession of our belief that, to quote Saint Thomas, *omnes Personae sunt in se invicem*.[65]

[61]Pius XII, *Kyriale Sacrosanctae Romanae Ecclesiae, S.S. D.N Pii X Pontificis Maximi iussu restitutum et editum ad exemplar editionis typicae concinnatum et rhythmicis signis a solesmensibus momachis diligenter ornatum* (Paris-Tournai-Rome-New York: Desclee, 1961), p. 9.

[62]Indeed, at least one work compiling troped *Kyrie* settings for use with the Pauline Missal has been published: *Tropen zum Kyrie im Graduale Romanum*, ed. by Anton Stingl (Sankt Ottilien: EOS, 2011).

[63]On the supposed lack of pneumatology in the Latin theological tradition, see Yves Congar, *The Spirit of God: Short Writings on the Holy Spirit*, trans. by Susan Mader Brown et al. (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2018), pp. 100–01; cf. Yves Marie-Joseph Congar, 'Pneumatologie ou "christomonisme" dans la tradition latine?' in Albert Descamps (ed), *Ecclesia a Spiritu Sancto edocta* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1970), pp. 41–64.

[64]Gilles Emery, *The Trinity: An Introduction to Catholic Doctrine on the Triune God*, trans. by Matthew Levering (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), p. 3.

[65]*ST* III, q. 83, a. 4, *resp.*

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