

AQUINAS

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Polysemy and Strategies

- What STRATEGIES does Aquinas deploy to deal with POLYSEMY?
 - STRUCTURE/LOGICAL FORM
 - AUTHORIAL INTENT
 - PRIVILEGING OF THE “TENOR” (what he calls ‘LITERAL SENSE’)

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Structure

How does Aquinas use the STRUCTURE of his essay to contain polysemy and to clarify his INTENT?

- Scholastic Argument structure—function of each statement is clear because of *where it appears*:
 - Question
 - Objections
 - Opposing Position
 - Response to Objections

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Intent: “Literal Sense”

“When Scripture speaks of God’s arm, the **literal sense** is not that God has such a member, but only **what is signified by that member**, namely, **operative power**” (Aquinas 246, my emph).

SEMANTIC SPECIFICITY and CONTEXT are crucial in understanding the text.

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The Role of Representation?

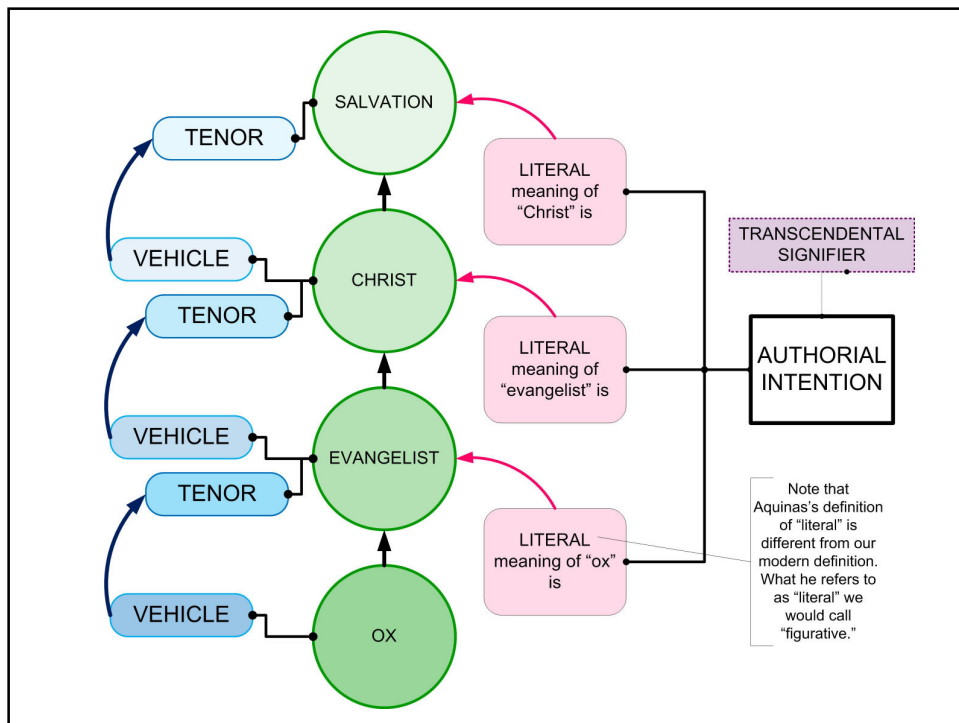
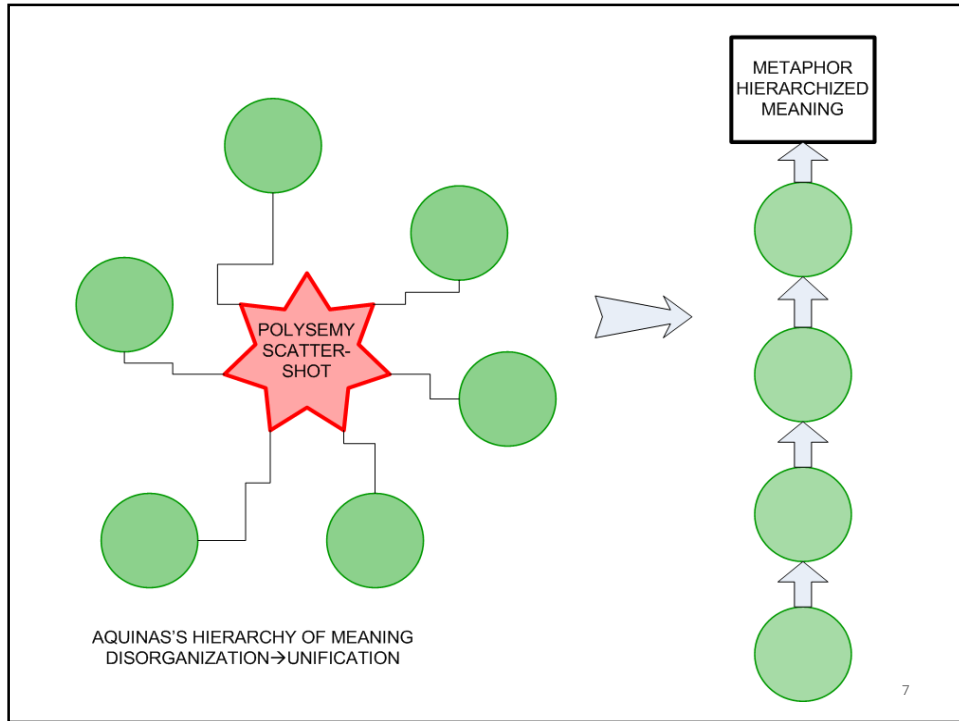
- What is the role of representation (in this case, metaphor) in Aquinas's model?
- Art MEDIATES between the SENSUAL and the INTELLIGIBLE.
- METAPHOR is the connecting point, like a zipper.

5

HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE

- Instead of the scattershot of polysemy, there is a HIERARCHY of "layers" that all ultimately mean the SAME THING
- I.e the LITERAL MEANING (AUTHORIAL INTENT) organizes and unifies

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Connections

- How is Aquinas similar to ARISTOTLE?
- How is Aquinas similar to AUGUSTINE?
- How is Aquinas different?
- What other connections do you see? HUME?
HORACE?

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