HENRY OF GHENT’S THEOLOGY
In the catalog of the Dominican Henry of Erfurt’s († 1370) Book of noteworthy things, Henry of Ghent’s Summa received this high praise: “From the second year of (King) Adolf (of Nassau) the doctor solemnis, Henry of Ghent, became very famous. He wrote a Summa Theologiae; it is not suited for dullards, because of its complicated, difficult expressions and broad scope, but it is highly prized by many insightful people, because it is rich and fruitful in its comprehensive conceptual acumen and wonderful depth. He also wrote in the same way 15 Quodlibeta and on the Metaphysics. To this day (1355), at Paris he is called the doctor solemnis.”

This judgment concerning the Summa of Henry of Ghent is noteworthy in two respects. It is not the 15 Quodlibeta, which subsequently and even until today have received the special attention of researchers, but rather it is the theological Summa which primarily justifies Henry’s honorific title of doctor solemnis. Accordingly, what was principally studied at first were not the problems of the quaestiones disputatae in the Quodlibeta, but rather Henry’s theological ideas in his thoroughly systematic and encompassing theological vision presented in his Summa. The Master from Ghent did not write a theological Summa that, comparable to that of Thomas Aquinas, set forth the entirety of theological teaching (for the beginner), that is in the form of a medieval theological textbook, namely a commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard. Like other contemporary secular teachers, the Master from Ghent left behind no Sentences commentary; rather it was in his Summa that Henry organized his basic understanding of (Christian) theology. He wrote a survey of theological knowledge and research, based upon the (weekly) quaestiones ordinariae, which he discussed during his usual classes with his students of theology. These students would have already obtained a basic