

DE GRUYTER

# EARLY THIRTEENTH- CENTURY ENGLISH FRANCISCAN THOUGHT

*Edited by Lydia Schumacher*

VERÖFFENTLICHUNGEN DES GRABMANN-INSTITUTES

## Early Thirteenth-Century English Franciscan Thought



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## **Volume 68**

# Early Thirteenth-Century English Franciscan Thought



Edited by  
Lydia Schumacher

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Lydia Schumacher

# Early Thirteenth-Century English Franciscan Thought

## Introduction

In the academic year 2018–19, I had the opportunity to organize a series of conferences on various aspects of the early Franciscan intellectual tradition before Bonaventure, specifically as it developed at the University of Paris. At its founding around 1200, this institution became the first degree-granting university in the world. Soon after its establishment, a number of other universities were founded, for example, at Oxford, and Cambridge;<sup>1</sup> however our conferences originally bracketed the investigation of intellectual trends that emerged in England for the sake of focusing on a rather neglected period in Paris. The product of these efforts was a series of three edited volumes which were published open access with De Gruyter in 2020 and 2021, and respectively dealt with the sources and context, doctrines and debates, and the legacy of early Parisian Franciscan thought.<sup>2</sup>

The founders of the Franciscan school at Paris included Alexander of Hales and John of La Rochelle, who played a significant role in composing the so-called *Summa Halensis*, a major four-volume work that was named for and overseen by Hales between 1236–45. The purpose of the *Summa* was evidently to lay down a distinctly Franciscan tradition of philosophy and theology for the very first time.<sup>3</sup> In the aforementioned edited volumes, contributors undertook to assess the work of Hales, Rochelle, and other early Franciscans who also contributed to the *Summa Halensis*, while maintaining a focus on the *Summa* itself as a larger Franciscan synthesis. This massive work has long been neglected in scholarship on account of the belief

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1 On the history of the English Franciscan order see the following works: Michael Robson, *The English Province of the Franciscans (1224–c. 1350)* (Leiden: Brill, 2017). A.G. Little, *The Grey Friars in Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892). A.G. Little, ‘The Franciscan School at Oxford in the Thirteenth Century,’ *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 19 (1926), pp. 803–74. A.G. Little and F. Pelster, *Oxford Theology and Theologians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934). A.G. Little, *Studies in English Franciscan History* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1917). David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), chapter 18, ‘The Early English Franciscan Scholastics,’ pp. 205–16. J.R.H. Moorman, *The Greyfriars in Cambridge, 1225–1538* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952). John Sever, *The English Franciscans under Henry III* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1915). Rega Wood, ‘Early Oxford Theology,’ in *Mediaeval Commentaries on Peter Lombard’s Sentences*, ed. G.R. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 289–343.

2 *The Legacy of Early Franciscan Thought*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021); *The Summa Halensis: Sources and Context*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020); *The Summa Halensis, Doctrines and Debates*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020).

3 Alexander of Hales, *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica*. 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1924–48).



that it is merely an ‘Augustinian encyclopaedia’ that early Franciscans composed for the sake of defending the Bishop of Hippo’s longstanding tradition in the context of increased interest in the recently-translated major works of Aristotle.

In contrast to this way of thinking, the studies submitted to the volumes showed that early Franciscans at Paris were not mere re-formulators of Augustine’s ideas but highly innovative thinkers who engaged with a diverse range of sources and deployed them to their own creative ends. These sources included but were not limited to Augustine, as well as Aristotle, and especially the new philosophical works of the 11th-century Islamic philosopher Avicenna and the Jewish philosopher Avicbron, whose major works had been translated from Arabic in the late 12th century, around the same time as Aristotle’s were rendered from Greek. The study of such sources helped to produce a clearer picture of the shape and distinctiveness of early Parisian Franciscan thought. In due course, this generated further questions about the contemporary developments that transpired at the young university of Oxford and the Franciscan school that existed there from at least 1230; it thus gave birth to this inquiry into early 13th-century English Franciscan thought.

As is well known, Agnellus of Pisa, minister provincial of the order, appointed Robert Grosseteste as the first master of the Oxford school, even though he was not a Franciscan, on account of his sympathy with the order and his own impeccable academic credentials. Under his tutelage, a whole generation of 13th-century English Franciscans emerged which went on to cultivate other talented English Franciscan academics in turn. Many of these important figures have been studied in their own right, oftentimes, by the distinguished contributors to this very volume. Such research is demanding, given the size of the output of some of the English scholars in question and/or complications around the manuscript traditions needed to determine their authentic works. As a result, the opportunity has not often arisen to try to draw conceptual comparisons between English and Parisian Franciscans, who worked in the major universities that existed at the time.

This volume cannot hope to remedy that gap in scholarship entirely but seeks to lay the foundation for doing so by presenting studies on a number of important English Franciscan thinkers who flourished mainly though not exclusively in the early 13th century. As we will discover, the figures selected for study here wrote on topics which help to highlight comparisons between their thought and that of their Parisian contemporaries who worked during the first half of the 13th century. This is arguably true notwithstanding the fact that the Parisian and English schools exhibited starkly different characteristics. In Paris, for instance, the study of theology quickly came to center around the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (1150/60), a work which organized key quotations from Scripture and the church fathers according to theological themes which provided a basis for commentary and debate in the university.<sup>4</sup> As early as

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<sup>4</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1994). Philipp W. Rosemann, *Peter Lombard* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

the 1220s, Alexander of Hales began employing the *Sentences* as the organizing principle for his lectures, so that in the 1220s and 30s, the use of the *Sentences* alongside the Bible as a tool for teaching in Paris became increasingly common.

By 1240s, consequently, the *Sentences* had come to serve as the university's standard textbook in theology, and a commentary on the *Sentences* was established as the medieval equivalent to a doctoral degree.<sup>5</sup> In such commentaries, scholars took Lombard's authoritative quotations as a point of departure for developing their own systematic approach to key topics that were debated at the time. The first and foremost among these, following the introduction of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, was the question whether theology is a science in the Aristotelian sense of providing principles that allow for drawing conclusions about the status of various phenomena. This question – and the use of the *Sentences* in general – baffled some English Franciscans like Roger Bacon, and especially the Franciscan lector Robert Grosseteste, both of whom argued that the Bible should remain the sole object of theological study and that deviating from this method could invite problematic and unorthodox speculations.<sup>6</sup> The first actual Franciscan lector of the school at Oxford, Adam Marsh, seems to have held the same opinion.<sup>7</sup>

On account of his intervention and that of his colleagues, the incorporation of the *Sentences* into the curriculum at Oxford was delayed until 1267. Thus, the first English Franciscan to comment on the *Sentences* while studying in Paris in the 1250s, namely, Richard Rufus of Cornwall, had to navigate carefully around Grosseteste's opposition to that very project and did so by trying to equate commenting on the Bible with the work of theology proper.<sup>8</sup> This was not an altogether uncommon practice at the time. After all, the *Summa Halensis* had also referred to the teaching of theology as 'sacra Scriptura'.<sup>9</sup> In doing so, however, the *Summa* only intended to imply that the work of theology was to articulate conceptually the doctrines that can be derived from Scripture, which pertain among other things to the creative

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5 Marcia L. Colish, 'From the Sentence Collection to the Sentence Commentary and the Summa: Parisian Scholastic Theology, 1130–1215,' in Colish, *Studies in Scholasticism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 9–29. *Medieval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, ed. Philipp W. Rosemann and G.R. Evans, 3 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2002–15). Philipp W. Rosemann, *The Story of a Great Medieval Book: Peter Lombard's Sentences* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

6 Nancy Spatz, 'Approaches and Attitudes to a New Theology Textbook: The *Sentences* of Peter Lombard,' in *The Intellectual Climate of the Early University: Essays in Honor of Otto Gründler*, ed. Nancy van Deusen (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1997), pp. 27–52. Peter Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall and the Tradition of Oxford Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 138.

7 C.H. Lawrence, 'The Letters of Adam Marsh and the Franciscan School at Oxford,' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 42:2 (1991), p. 237 in pp. 218–38.

8 Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall*, p. 150.

9 Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall*, p. 144. Hubert Philipp Weber, 'Alexander of Hales's Theology in his Authentic Texts (Commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, Various Disputed Questions),' in *The English Province of the Franciscans (1224–c.1350)*, ed. Michael J.P. Robson (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 273–93.

and salvific work of Christ. The mode of this Summa as well as the *Sentences* commentaries composed in Paris and elsewhere was unmistakably that of theological argument rather than biblical comment.

This difference in theological method might seem to situate the English and Parisian schools at some distance from one another, especially if we consider that members of the English school pursued another area of research that was largely foreign to their Parisian counterparts, namely, that of science. However, the preoccupation with scientific questions is not necessarily as incompatible with the theological drive of the Parisian masters as it may seem at first glance. As Cecilia Panti and other scholars have pointed out, Grosseteste and his followers in the English Franciscan school saw scientific examples, particularly concerning the nature of light, as helpful and important for explaining and teaching difficult theological concepts that arose in the reading of the Bible.<sup>10</sup> As Raedts sums it up:

Grosseteste had wished theological teaching and theological method to be traditional, based on the Bible, using allegory as its explanatory tool. His interest in natural philosophy was motivated by that purpose: to sharpen those tools. (...) The intellectual expression of that deep conviction was his use of the allegory of light: light as the unifying force of the universe was the origin of all existing things, and even now everything participates in the form of light.<sup>11</sup>

As this quote suggests, English Franciscan scholars pursued the tasks of theology, but simply assumed a slightly different approach to doing so. To recognize this is therefore to acquire a basis for discerning the obvious parallels in the actual theological and philosophical ideas that were advanced within the two schools.<sup>12</sup> As noted, this volume can only begin to highlight some of those similarities, which of course do not efface or negate the remarkable diversity and individuality of English let alone Parisian Franciscan thinkers, each of whom tended to have his own way of elucidating common themes or claims, and some of whom even departed from those Franciscan party lines altogether. In what follows, however, I will try to gesture towards areas of synergy by offering a summary of each of the contributions to this volume which highlights – unless the author chose to do so already – some areas of compatibility with the Parisian school that has been my own focus so far. As a preliminary to

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**10** Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall*, p. 133. A.C. Crombie, *Robert Grosseteste and the Origins of Experimental Science, 1100–1700*, 2nd imp. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961). Cecilia Panti, 'The Theological Use of Science at the Oxford Franciscan School: Thomas Doding, Roger Bacon, and Robert Grosseteste's Works,' in *The Franciscan Order in the Medieval English Province and Beyond*, ed. Michael Robson and Patrick Zutshi (Amsterdam University Press, 2018), pp. 181–210. Cecilia Panti, 'The Scientific Basis of Robert Grosseteste's Teaching at the Oxford Franciscan School,' in *The English Province of the Franciscans (1224–c.1350)*, ed. Michael J.P. Robson (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 247–72.

**11** Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall*, p. 199.

**12** On English Franciscan philosophy, see the important work of D.E. Sharpe, *Franciscan Philosophy at Oxford in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930).

that discussion, I offer below some brief biographical details on each of the main thinkers that will be discussed within the pages of this work.

**Robert Grosseteste (c.1170–1253):** Robert Grosseteste was born into a poor family from Suffolk.<sup>13</sup> In his early years, during which he wrote a number of scientific works, he was apparently on the staff of the bishop of Hereford. Around 1220, he completed the first medieval commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, and around 1225, he began to lecture in Oxford, where he took an increased interest in theological problems and in applying scientific principles to addressing them. Although he never joined the Franciscan order himself, Grosseteste (c.1168–1253) was appointed in 1229/30 by the English Franciscan minister provincial, Angellus of Pisa, as the first lecturer to the Oxford Franciscans. In this role, he enjoyed a particularly prolific period, composing several philosophical commentaries and theological treatises including his famous *Hexaëmeron* on the six days of creation. In 1235, he was made bishop of Lincoln, in which capacity he served until his death in 1253.

**Alexander of Hales (c.1185–1245):** Alexander was born in what is now Halesowen, England to a noble family but spent the majority of his academic career in Paris. He completed his masters in the arts at Paris in the first decade of the 13th century before turning to study theology there. Between the years 1224–27, he became one of the first scholars to write a Gloss on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* and later established this text as a crucial part of the curriculum in theology at the University of Paris. In 1236, he joined the Franciscan order and became regent master of the Franciscan school at Paris, thus bringing his chair in the university theology faculty into the possession of the Franciscan order.<sup>14</sup>

**Adam of Exeter (d. 1233/34):** Adam of Exeter (de Exonia, de Oxonia or Rufus) was born in Exeter but taught in Oxford, which is why he is sometimes also called Adam of Oxford. There, he was a student of Grosseteste and a friend of Adam Marsh, whom he encouraged to join the Franciscan order. He entered the Franciscan order himself in 1229 and died young in 1233/34 after traveling to the holy land to preach the gospel in 1232/33. As Cecilia Panti shows in her contribution to this volume, the main information about his life can be found in Thomas of Eccleston's chronicle on the coming of the Friars Minor to England, in Grosseteste's letters, which include high praise for Adam and his intellectual abilities, and in Thomas of Pavia's *Dialogue on the Deeds of the Holy Friars Minor*.

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<sup>13</sup> R.W. Southern, 'Robert Grosseteste,' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004. James McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). Richard Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986). Daniel Callus, *Robert Grosseteste: Scholar and Bishop* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955).

<sup>14</sup> For more details on Alexander's life, see the Prolegomena to *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1951–57), pp. 7–75. See also Kenan B. Osborne, 'Alexander of Hales,' in *The History of Franciscan Theology*, ed. Kenan B. Osborne (St Bonaventure: The Franciscan Institute, 2007), pp. 1–38.

**Adam Marsh (c.1200 – 59):** Adam Marsh was born in the diocese of Bath. Before 1226, he received the benefice of Wearmouth from his uncle, Richard Marsh, bishop of Durham, but around 1232/33 he entered the Franciscan order at the friary of Worcester, following the encouragement of Adam of Exeter.<sup>15</sup> He probably completed his studies in theology under Robert Grosseteste before 1245, when Grosseteste acknowledged him as a potential replacement for the recently-deceased friars Alexander of Hales and John of La Rochelle as regent master of the Franciscan school in Paris. Unfortunately, none of his theological works survives – only a collection of around 245 letters that he wrote between 1241 and his death in 1259, many even to Grosseteste himself.<sup>16</sup> Adam became the first Franciscan friar to serve as the regent master of the Oxford Franciscan school around 1243 – 50.<sup>17</sup> In 1256, he became regent master of the school at Cambridge, relieving William of Melitona of that duty so that the latter could finish the fourth volume of the *Summa Halensis*, on the sacraments, a task that was completed in 1256.<sup>18</sup>

**Richard Rufus of Cornwall (d. c.1259):** Rufus flourished between 1231–56, lecturing on Aristotle’s works of natural philosophy and especially the *Metaphysics* in Paris between 1230–38, in which year he joined the Franciscan order – three years after Grosseteste had officially left his role as lector to become bishop of Lincoln.<sup>19</sup> At this point, Rufus returned to Oxford to study theology, where Adam of Marsh was lector. According to Rega Wood, who has overseen a major effort to edit Rufus’ works,<sup>20</sup> however, there is little evidence that Marsh influenced Rufus, whose lectures on the *Sentences* in Oxford dating from before 1250 show more

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15 Lawrence, ‘The Letters of Adam Marsh,’ p. 223. Little, ‘The Franciscan School at Oxford,’ p. 832.

16 Lawrence, ‘The Letters of Adam Marsh,’ p. 220.

17 Lawrence, ‘The Letters of Adam Marsh,’ p. 233.

18 Little, ‘The Franciscan School at Oxford,’ p. 840.

19 Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall*, p. 117. For further details, see Rega Wood’s introductions to Richard Rufus of Cornwall in, among other places, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*; *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy Online*; *The New Dictionary of Scientific Biography*; *A Companion to Medieval Philosophy*, ed. J. Gracia and T. Noone (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003). See also her article, ‘Richard Rufus of Cornwall’s Significance in the Western Scientific Tradition,’ in *Albertus Magnus und die Anfänge der Aristoteles-Rezeption im lateinischen Mittelalter: Von Richardus Rufus bis zu Franciscus de Mayronis*, ed. L. Honnefelder et al. (Münster: Aschendorff, 2005), pp. 455–89.

20 Rega Wood, ‘The Works of Richard Rufus of Cornwall: The State of the Question in 2009,’ *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 76:1 (2009), pp. 1–73. Rega Wood, *Richardus Rufus, Sententia cum quaestionibus in libros De anima* 1–3, Redactio longior, with J. Ottman, N. Lewis, and C.J. Martin (Oxford: British Academy, 2018); Rega Wood, *Richardus Rufus, Scriptum in Metaphysiam Aristotelis*, books 3–11, with N. Lewis and J. Ottman, [rrp.stanford.edu/SMet11rb.shtml](http://rrp.stanford.edu/SMet11rb.shtml), [rrp.stanford.edu/SMet10rb.shtml](http://rrp.stanford.edu/SMet10rb.shtml) etc. 2010–18; Rega Wood, *Richardus Rufus, Memoriale in Metaphysicam Aristotelis*, with N. Lewis and J. Ottman, [rrp.stanford.edu/MMet.shtml](http://rrp.stanford.edu/MMet.shtml), 2013; Rega Wood, *Richardus Rufus, In Aristotelis De generatione et corruptione*, with N. Lewis and J. Ottman (Oxford: British Academy, 2011); Rega Wood, *Richardus Rufus, In Physicam Aristot* (Oxford: British Academy, 2003).

signs of resonance with the *Summa Halensis*.<sup>21</sup> In 1253, Rufus travelled to Paris and lectured on the *Sentences* for a second time before returning to England in 1256 to succeed Thomas of York as the fifth lector for the Oxford Franciscans.<sup>22</sup>

**Thomas of York (b. c.1220, d. before 1269):** Thomas joined the Franciscan order before 1245 and probably studied the arts in London before moving to Oxford by 1249. In 1253, he became the fourth lector to the Franciscans at Oxford, succeeding Adam Marsh, who held him in very high regard.<sup>23</sup> From 1256/57 until his death, York acted as the sixth Franciscan lecturer at Cambridge. His magisterial *Sapientiale*, currently the subject of a critical edition overseen by Fiorella Retucci, shows many signs of independent thinking while at the same time reflecting key aspects of the budding Franciscan intellectual tradition.<sup>24</sup>

**Bartholomew of England (b. before 1203, d. 1272):** The first mention of Bartholomew places him at Paris in 1224, as a new convert to the Franciscan order, though he is of unknown English parentage. Prior to this time, he may have studied at Oxford.<sup>25</sup> Between 1224–31, Bartholomew lectured on the Bible in Paris and was then sent to Magdeburg as lector for the Franciscan school there, which had been established in 1228 by Simon of Sandwich. During his time in Magdeburg, Bartholomew compiled his famous 19-book encyclopedia, *De proprietabus rebus*. This was completed by around 1245 – a date established in part by his use of the first version of the *Summa Halensis*. The encyclopaedia became a textbook at Paris in 1284 and was a very popular source both within and outside the order. He was later stationed in Austria, Bohemia, and Poland.<sup>26</sup>

**Roger Bacon (c.1220 – c.1292):** Roger Bacon was born in Ilchester in Somerset, England. He likely studied the arts in Oxford before moving to Paris, probably before 1245, where he lectured on Aristotle's works of natural philosophy. Around 20 years later, he seems to have altered his perspective, pursuing a more 'scientific' path under the influence of Robert Grosseteste and Adam Marsh, his teacher.<sup>27</sup> This reorientation post-dated his entry into the Franciscan order, probably around 1257, an event which may have taken place under Marsh's influence. Bacon's great seven-part *Opus maius* covers the whole range of natural knowledge, including the sciences, languages, mathematics, astronomy, astrology, and optics, and it had the prob-

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21 I am grateful to Rega Wood for bringing this to my attention. Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall*, p. 144.

22 Little, 'The Franciscan School at Oxford,' p. 84.

23 Little, 'The Franciscan School at Oxford,' p. 836.

24 E. Longpré, 'Fr Thomas d'York,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 19 (1926), pp. 875–930.

25 M.C. Seymour, 'Bartholomæus Anglicus,' *Oxford History of National Biography*, 2004.

26 M.C. Seymour, *Bartholomæus Anglicus and his Encyclopedia* (London: Routledge, 1992). Neslihan Senocak, 'English Franciscans and Their Influence on the Early History of the Order,' in *The Franciscan Order in the Medieval English Province and Beyond*, ed. Michael Robson and Patrick Zutshi (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), p. 213 in pp. 211–28.

27 George Molland, 'Roger Bacon,' in *Oxford History of National Biography*, 2004.



able purpose of aiming to convince the then Pope Clement IV of the need for educational reform in Latin-speaking Europe.<sup>28</sup>

**John Pecham (c.1230–92):** John Pecham was born in Sussex, England. After joining the Franciscan order in the early 1250s, he spent his novitiate at Oxford, moving to Paris around 1257 to study under Bonaventure and later serving as a master of theology between 1269–71. During this time he proved an outspoken opponent of the radical Averroistic Aristotelianism that was emerging in Paris and of Thomas Aquinas, whom he perhaps unjustifiably implicated in this movement. In 1272, he returned to Oxford to serve as regent master of the Franciscan school there.<sup>29</sup> In this context, Pecham apparently became the first to lecture on quodlibetal questions.<sup>30</sup> He also wrote commentaries on Lombard's *Sentences* and on some books of the Bible, grappling with the major theological questions of the day; his treatises on optics and astronomy appear to be influenced by Roger Bacon, whom he met in either Paris or Oxford. In 1275, he was appointed as minister provincial of the Franciscan order in England, and then archbishop of Canterbury, a position he occupied from 1279 until his death in 1292, thereby replacing the Dominican Robert Kilwardby, upon the latter's appointment to the cardinalate by Pope Nicholas I.

The chapters of this volume cover the aforementioned thinkers in roughly chronological order, starting with an initial contribution by **Michael Robson**, who provides invaluable context on the development of the Franciscan order and especially Franciscan education in England during the 13th century. As Robson notes, the Franciscans arrived on British shores in 1224 and became established in Oxford, in the Parish of St Ebbe's, that same year, settling also in Cambridge in 1225. From that point, and in the 1240s especially, the number of local convents mushroomed, so that by 1250, there were 43 Franciscan houses.<sup>31</sup> These local convents were the lowest 'rung' in a three-tier system of Franciscan education in England and more widely, where friars gained basic training in the arts, philosophy, theology (including the scriptures and the fathers of the church), as well as science, and above all, the ministry of preaching and hearing confessions. According to Robson, the seven custodial schools that existed at an intermediate level 'grounded friars in philosophy and theology, grooming them for higher studies.' As Robson notes, the custodial school of London had a particularly impressive list of members, including William of Ockham, Walter Chatton, and Adam Wodeham.

Ultimately, the *studia generalia* at the new universities of Oxford and Cambridge trained friars to serve as lecturers back in the convents or custodial houses. A small number of such lecturers could be selected to go on and take the baccalaureate and the doctorate, ideally at Paris, where each province of the order was permitted to

<sup>28</sup> *The 'Opus maius' of Roger Bacon*, ed. J.H. Bridges, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897–1900).

<sup>29</sup> D. Douie, *Archbishop Peckham* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952).

<sup>30</sup> Little, 'The Franciscan School at Oxford,' p. 852.

<sup>31</sup> Andrew Reeves, *Religious Education in Thirteenth-Century England: The Creed and Articles of Faith* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), p. 90.

have two students in residence without additional financial and practical provisions in place. This privilege was only normally awarded to those who showed exceptional scholarly promise – approximately 5% of the students for the lectorate – after they had already served a period as teachers in the local and custodial schools. The Paris *studium* in question had been founded in 1219, although its students initially had no teacher of their own and attended lectures in the university's theology faculty, particularly those delivered by Alexander of Hales. As we know, he later became a Franciscan in 1236, perhaps under the influence of his Franciscan pupils. At this point, he became regent master of the Franciscan school in Paris, which had been officially founded in the city in 1231 and to that point benefited also from the teaching of other university masters who had joined the order before him.

In his chapter, **Giles Gasper** builds on this important historical context concerning the 13th-century English Franciscan school by exploring the curriculum Robert Grosseteste may have employed in teaching the Franciscans between c.1229–35. Gasper's inquiry is based on research concerning the Englishman's works on natural philosophy, many of which were apparently prepared during his time as Franciscan lector. This research has partly been conducted in the context of Gasper's major 'Ordered Universe' research project on Grosseteste, which is based at Durham University and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council U.K. However, the chapter also draws heavily on Gasper's study of Grosseteste's correspondence, pastoral care treatises, theological works, *Dicta*, and his Anglo-Norman poem, *Le Chateau d'amour*. The importance of such sources is emphasized by external witnesses such as the Franciscan core of the *Lanercost Chronicle* and Thomas of Eccleston's *De adventu* (on the arrival of the Franciscans in England).

As Gasper notes, the scientific works were important for Grosseteste in that they provided spiritual analogies which helped him explain biblical passages to the Franciscans. This, as noted previously, represents a key difference between the education that was delivered to Franciscans at Oxford versus at Paris, where Alexander of Hales lectured to the Franciscans from the *Sentences* even before he himself became a friar in 1236. As mentioned above, Grosseteste was among the first to react against this approach, and as a result of his opposition to the *Sentences* tradition, he never prepared a systematic or comprehensive account of every major theological issue that was debated in the day such as can be found in Alexander of Hales' *Gloss*,<sup>32</sup> and especially in the *Summa Halensis*, which served as the basis for Franciscan education in 13th-century Paris.<sup>33</sup>

Despite the significant disparity between approaches to theological education in Paris and Oxford, Raedts and others have highlighted numerous areas in which Grosseteste's treatment of many issues resonates with that of his Parisian colleagues.

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<sup>32</sup> Alexander of Hales, *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1951–57).

<sup>33</sup> Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 126.



These include his views on the reasons for the Incarnation, free will, the six days of creation, and the conception of Mary. As Robson also noted, these were among the areas in which Grosseteste pioneered theories that came to characterize the Franciscan school more widely, all the way down to John Duns Scotus. Further support for this contention can be derived from the Anglo-Norman verse-treatise, the *Château d'amour* discussed by Gasper, in which Grosseteste offers an extended analysis of the loss and restoration of creation, and a poem that incorporates an allegorical description of the Virgin Mary as the castle in which Jesus Christ took refuge.

The next chapter by **Aaron Gies** undertakes a fascinating inquiry into possible images of Alexander of Hales that can be identified in the manuscripts of his works. This search is one the author took up as part of an effort to identify a cover image for a forthcoming English translation of Alexander's Gloss on Lombard's *Sentences* to which he himself has contributed. In particular, Gies draws attention to an image of a friar that is found in the manuscript Vat.lat. 705, f. 1ra, which likely dates to the late 1200s and probably contains the oldest extant image of Alexander of Hales.

In her chapter, **Cecilia Panti** summarizes the state of knowledge concerning the life and works of a little-studied friar, Adam of Exeter or of Oxford, who was a pupil of Robert Grosseteste at Oxford. As she observes, two short works are attributed to Adam in 13th-century manuscripts: an Anglo-Norman exposition of the *Our Father*, which was probably Adam's last work, and the *Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris* (question on the tide and ebb of the sea). A summary of Adam's theory of sound is also referenced by Master William of Clifford. On the basis of these works, Panti explores how Adam applied, and in some cases diverged from, Grosseteste's theory of light. In his known works, Adam held that the 'different degrees of incorporation of light rays in watery or aerial particles of different thickness produce diverse effects, such as sound, tides and heat. All these phenomena are due to the convergence of light rays and the subsequent scattering of the incorporated light.'

The identification of Adam's opinions on this score allows Panti to further attribute to him a short treatise *De calore solis* (on the heat of the sun), commonly held to be by Grosseteste, as well as a short work on rainbows, known by the incipit *Inter omnes impressiones*, both of which present ideas consistent with Adam's physics of light. Also tentatively attributable to him on this basis are a set of glosses on Boethius' *De institutione musica*, which argue that celestial bodies continuously pour forth light which, in passing through sublunary air, incorporates within aerial particles and produces sound. As regards these glosses, Panti notes that 'the theory of sound as the incorporation of light in air particles spread largely among the early English Franciscans, including Alexander of Hales and Richard Rufus, Geoffrey of Aspill, and others.'<sup>34</sup> In that sense, she shows that there is definite resonance with the early Franciscan school at Paris.

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<sup>34</sup> For Alexander and other holders of the theory of incorporation of light see Cecilia Panti, 'I sensi nella luce dell'anima: Evoluzione di una dottrina agostiniana nel secolo XIII,' *Micrologus* 10 (2002),

In her contribution, **Emilie Lavallée** examines the themes of counsel, deliberation, and illumination in the letters of Adam Marsh, which provide an important and indeed the sole surviving window into his theological perspectives. As she notes, Adam was highly regarded in his lifetime as a spiritual counsellor and advisor to major leaders of both state and church, even though he himself never held a high ecclesiastical office. In her study, Lavallée explores how Adam encouraged his readers to seek both divine and human counsel in order to reckon with the uncertain temporal circumstances of their lives. For Adam, divine counsel in particular is needed to compensate for the deficiencies and limitations of human knowledge. Whereas these obscure or darken our understanding of what to do in various circumstances, Adam argues that God who is the source of all certain truth can provide the illumination that is needed to discern the right course of action in any situation. This discernment should be sought through prayer, which opens us up to receive God's wisdom and thus makes it possible rightly to pursue an active life of ministry in the world.

While Adam regards divine counsel as the most significant resource for these purposes, Lavallée stresses that he also recognizes the value of the counsel that can be gained from other human beings who are illumined by divine wisdom and can therefore help in deliberating about what is best to do in different cases. In addition to providing such counsel himself, Adam's letters show that he sought counsel from respected figures like Grosseteste. In the give and take of human counsel, he acknowledges that debate and disagreement may arise amongst those with different opinions on how to proceed in dealing with a matter. However, Adam regards such conflicts as an essential part of the process of achieving wisdom and a knowledge of the truth. As Lavallée beautifully summarizes, he defines counsel as a crucial mediator between the certainty of divine truth and the uncertainty of human circumstances, between the divine light and the darkness and shadows of the world.

As is well known, the trope of divine illumination was ubiquitous in the 13th-century Franciscan school, including at Paris.<sup>35</sup> There it was advocated by John of La Rochelle who treated the topic in his *Summa de anima* and was likely responsible for its coverage in the *Summa Halensis* as well. Thus, it is quite poignant to see how this crucial Franciscan doctrine was applied in Adam Marsh's letters. Although Adam does not articulate his specific understanding of the doctrine in this context, it is not

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pp. 177–98. Alexander Of Hales, *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Quaestiones disputatae 'Antequam esset frater'*, (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1960), vol. 1, q. 18, n. 37, p. 312. 'Sicut enim est in lumine materiali, quod quoddam est quod concretum est, quoddam quod abstractum; illud quod concretum est nunquam imprimit formam sensibilem in virtute sensibili nisi fuerit mediante luce abstracta, scilicet nisi fuerit aliquid spirituale actu quod ducat formam quae potentialis est spiritualis in actu spiritualem. Verbi gratia in corpore colorato est lux incorporata; nisi autem abstraheretur per lucem separatam actu extra, non duceretur lux incorporate in actu in fieret actu spiritualis. Sicut autem est in spiritualibus formis.'

<sup>35</sup> Lydia Schumacher, *Divine Illumination: The History and Future of Augustine's Theory of Knowledge* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

difficult to imagine that he may have entertained a similar view of illumination to his early Franciscan contemporaries.<sup>36</sup> The most famous formulation of this theory from the period can be found in the *Summa Halensis*, whose authors followed Philip the Chancellor in identifying three main transcendental qualities, which characterize any given being (*ens*) and render them similar to God. These qualities include unity, truth, and goodness, which respectively define the identity of a thing as opposed to others; render it knowable as such; and useful for a purpose.<sup>37</sup> The original source of this doctrine of transcendentals – which were not named as such until Scotus – was actually Avicenna, for both the Franciscans and the Chancellor.

In a development on Philip's account, the Halensian Summists argue that their triad of concepts does not merely capture the key qualities of beings; it is also impressed upon the human mind, where it constitutes what Augustine had described as an image of the Trinity.<sup>38</sup> Although this image, or better, the concepts of unity, truth, and goodness it entails, do not provide the objects of human knowledge as such, they are essential to gaining a correct understanding of every being God has made and how it reflects the highest Being, or God, thus exhibiting his unity, truth, and goodness in some way. By relying on those concepts in performing acts of knowing, consequently, the human being becomes the beneficiary of divine illumination.<sup>39</sup> As Lavallée rightly points out, however, such illumination or insight is only attainable in the Franciscan view for the 'pure of heart', who not only seek to know God but also understand that it is him that they know whenever they know anything at all.

In his study, **Neil Lewis** sets out to explain how Thomas of York, Richard Rufus of Cornwall and Grosseteste sought to resolve the apparent tension between the many truths that can be known in the world and the single source of all truth, namely, God, a topic which had also been discussed by earlier thinkers like Augustine and Anselm.<sup>40</sup> As Lewis demonstrates, York's view is an elaboration of Grosseteste's. Both authors argue that there are many truths which somehow signify or 'supposit' the su-

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**36** For John of La Rochelle's account, see his *Summa de anima*, ed. Jacques Guy Bougerol (Paris: Vrin, 1995), p. 278. For more details, see Lydia Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), chapter 4 on 'theological vision'.

**37** Henri Pouillon, in 'Le premier traité des propriétés transcendentales: La *Summa de bono* du Chancelier Philippe,' *Revue néoscholastique de philosophie* 42 (1939), pp. 40–77. Antonella Fani, 'Comunissima, trascendentali e Trinità: da Filippo il Cancelliere alla prima scuola francescana,' *Il Santo: Rivista Franciscana de storia dottrina arte* 49:1 (2009), pp. 131–54. Odon Lottin, 'Alexandre de Halès et la *Summa de anima* de Jean de la Rochelle,' *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 2 (1930), pp. 396–409.

**38** *SH* II, In4, Tr 1, S1, Q3, T1, C5, Ar6 (n. 341), Solutio, p. 414: Memory, understanding will; see also Augustine, *De Trinitate* X.

**39** *SH* I, Tr3, Q1, M1, C2 (n. 73), Respondeo, pp. 114–15: On the relationship between unity, truth, and goodness; see also *SH* I, Tr3, Q2, M1, C2 (n. 88), Respondeo, p. 140.

**40** Rega Wood, 'Distinct Ideas and Perfect Solitude: Alexander of Hales, Richard Rufus, and Odo Rigaldus,' *Franciscan Studies* 53 (1993), pp. 7–46.

preme truth in an indirect or oblique way. The relationship between truths and Truth can be discerned by those who are pure of heart but is obscured for those whose darkened hearts render them incognisant of the Truth they obliquely know. For his part, Rufus similarly holds that every reference to a natural ‘truth’ involves what he calls an analogical reference to the supreme truth, which is the only truth that is true in an unqualified sense.

As Lewis notes, however, what Rufus has in mind here is an analogy of proportionality which differs from the kind of analogy one finds, for example, in Thomas Aquinas, in that it posits a direct but limited relationship between truth and Truth rather than a wholly incommensurable one.<sup>41</sup> In contrast to his contemporaries, Rufus concludes on this basis that ‘there is just one truth as a principle, but many in respect of participation.’ While he might therefore seem to differ from Grosseteste and York who posited numerous truths, Lewis argues that the difference between supposition or signification on the one hand and analogy and participation on the other is not all that great, pointing out that this is something Rufus himself intimates. As Lewis elaborates, ‘Rufus is prepared to say there are many truths too, provided we bear in mind that the name “truth” is being used in an extended sense of creatures, and is only applicable in a strict sense to God.’ All the authors in question ultimately therefore think there are many truths, but that these are all representations in some form of the singular truth that they signify or in which they participate. Thus, the differences in their positions are more verbal than substantive.

Although the *Summa Halensis* does not go into as much philosophical detail as can be found in the English authors on the topic at hand, it employs the language both of signification and participation or analogy in offering a very similar account of the relationship between creatures and God, or truths and the Truth. In a long treatise on the so-called ‘transcendentals’ of unity, truth, and goodness, which all creatures like God exhibit, the Summist – here probably John of La Rochelle – argues that while the human mind is unable to know God in full, it is entirely capable of capturing aspects of his nature, such as his truth, in a direct if limited – or ‘oblique’ way – through the things God has made.<sup>42</sup> That is not to say that God is composed of parts. As John insists, the multiplicity in question exists on the part of the creatures themselves, which bespeak God’s causal work in one finite way or another, not on the part of God himself who is the infinite cause of all beings.<sup>43</sup>

To illustrate how creatures reflect God, the Summa invokes the popular example of a circle with many radii deriving from its center. All of the radii signify or participate in the center in some way, but none encompasses it altogether, and instead the center virtually contains all the lines.<sup>44</sup> In a similar way, John argues, creatures stand

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<sup>41</sup> David Burrell, *Analogy and Philosophical Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

<sup>42</sup> See chapter 4 on ‘Theological Vision,’ in Lydia Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology*. See also *SH I*, P1, In1, Tr2, Q2, C1 (n. 36), Solutio, p. 59.

<sup>43</sup> *SH I*, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3, C2, Ar2 (n. 117), Ad objecta 2, p. 185.

<sup>44</sup> *SH I*, Tr Intro, Q2, M3, C2 (n. 21), Respondeo, p. 32.

in an analogical relationship to God – and here he clearly has in mind an analogy of proportionality.<sup>45</sup> In such an instance, there is a direct but finite relationship between the creature and God that allows for catching a limited glimpse of who he is.<sup>46</sup> For John, the key to gaining this glimpse into the infinite God is adherence to the ‘inner light’ of transcendental knowledge, that is, the innate knowledge of the transcendental concepts of unity, truth, and goodness, which God has implanted in all humans as his image, and which makes it possible, as noted above, to identify his unity, truth, and goodness as it is variously reflected in all beings.<sup>47</sup>

In their joint contribution, **Rega Wood and Zita Toth** seek to show that John Duns Scotus’ famous idea of the ‘formal distinction’ originated with Richard Rufus of Cornwall, although it also had precedent in the work of Franciscans like Alexander of Hales and John of La Rochelle. The distinction was commonly employed by Franciscans in treating the doctrine of the Trinity, in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, while comprising one identical being, themselves differ formally in the sense that they have varying definitions or characteristics as individual persons. However, the authors focus on another significant area where the distinction was utilized, namely, in addressing the thesis concerning the identity of the soul with its powers. This thesis was often attributed by scholastics to Augustine. As Magdalena Bieniak has shown, however, it actually derives from the tradition of Isidore of Seville, and was mediated to early scholastics by Peter Lombard.<sup>48</sup> The issue here again was that the powers of the soul, such as intellect and will, each perform unique operations and have distinct definitions but nonetheless comprise a single substance, that is, the soul.

As Wood and Toth point out, Alexander of Hales was the first Franciscan to try to reconcile the differences between the powers with their inclusion in the soul. By contrast to many of his contemporaries, who simply affirmed the identity of the soul with its powers, however, Alexander acknowledged that doing this would efface the distinction between creatures and God, in whom alone the soul and its powers can fully coincide. To differentiate creatures from God, Alexander, as well as John of La Rochelle and the authors of the *Summa Halensis* following him, argued that while the soul and its powers are not the same essentially, they are the same substantially. In other words, they belong to the soul in such a way that they cannot be removed

<sup>45</sup> *SH I*, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C4 (n. 31), Ad objecta, p. 42.

<sup>46</sup> *SH I*, P1, In1, Tr2, T3, M1, C2 (n. 46), II.2, p. 72. *SH I*, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3, C2, Ar2 (n. 117), 2, p. 184. *SH I*, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3 (n. 105), Ad objecta 5, p. 166.

<sup>47</sup> *SH I*, P1, In1, Tr3, Q2, C4 (n. 90), Contra 2, p. 146: ‘Veritas est lux interior.’ See also Respondeo 2: ‘Veritas prima lux interior dicitur (...) est vis animae interior (...) quantum ad suam essentiam, attingit omne quod est, sicut ponit Augustinus (*In Ion.* 2.1.19) exemplum de caeco posito in sole, quod praesens est ei lux, ipse tamen absens est ab illa. Ita ipsa summa sapientia, quae est prima veritas, omni iniquo praesens est, quamvis ipse absens.’

<sup>48</sup> Magdalena Bieniak, *The Soul-Body Problem at Paris, ca. 1200–1250: Hugh of St Cher and His Contemporaries* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010).

from it – like accidents or habits – though they are not the same as the soul as is the case in God. Rufus gave a similar account of the relationship between the soul and its powers, arguing ‘that the powers differ from the soul essentially only if we understand “essentially” in an extended sense – namely, definitionally.’

This was apparently his take on Alexander’s idea that the powers of the soul are only substantially identical with it. However, Rufus was the first to actually use the term ‘formal’ to describe the distinction between the powers, which was nonetheless implied by Alexander and his confrères. In elaborating the particulars of the position, both Alexander, his Parisian colleagues and Rufus further inquired what kind of entities the powers are. They cannot be substances strictly speaking, otherwise they would multiply the substance of the soul. Nor are they accidents or qualities that can change in a substance over time. Ultimately, the early Franciscans agreed that the powers could be described as virtual parts of the soul.

By contrast to the body and soul which are essential parts of a human being, or integral parts, such as the walls of a house, the Halensian Summists likened virtual parts to the radii of a circle that are united in its center and pre-contained in it. For his part, Scotus actually used the term unitative containment to describe how the lower entities, that is, the powers, are contained in the superior one, the soul. That is not to suggest that Scotus and Rufus, let alone the Halensian Summists, offered identical accounts of the soul and its powers or used the idea in exactly the same ways. Still, Wood and Toth successfully show in this chapter that there was a clear tradition for treating the powers the soul which originated with Alexander, was defined more explicitly by Rufus, and was ultimately adopted by Scotus. The latter accepted his predecessors’ account as the consensus view, affirming that the powers differ from the soul in merely formal terms.

In her essay on the commentaries on Aristotle’s *De generatione et corruptione* by Richard Rufus of Cornwall and an anonymous scholar whose positions closely resemble Rufus’, **Zita Toth** explores how these authors understand the principles of corruptibility or incorruptibility in both physical creatures like trees and humans as well as incorruptible beings like angels, and in specific how such beings undergo change. Many authors at this time, including the authors of the *Summa Halensis*, saw creatures of both kinds but especially material creatures like human beings as compounds of two substantial forms, first and foremost, the soul, and the body, which are naturally united to one another. The changes that such beings undergo involve the coming and going of further forms – in this case accidental ones – which are essences in their own right, though distinguishable from substantial forms like the soul and body in that they cannot exist independently of such substances.<sup>49</sup> As Toth demonstrates, Richard takes this kind of viewpoint a step further and posits a whole Por-

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<sup>49</sup> Lydia Schumacher, ‘The *De anima* Tradition in Early Franciscan Thought: A Case Study in Avicenna’s Reception,’ in *The Summa Halensis: Sources and Context*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020). Lydia Schumacher, *Human Nature in Early Franciscan Thought: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance* (Habilitation, Humboldt University of Berlin, 2021).



phyrian tree of forms that constitute any given being. In this regard, he acknowledges the existence of both incomplete and complete substantial forms.<sup>50</sup>

While a complete form consists in the individual actually existing substance, such as Sophie the cat, incomplete forms involve things like the general genus of the substance which gives it the potential to be a certain kind of thing. For instance, Sophie first exhibits potency in relation to the form of a corporeal rather than an incorporeal substance, which stands in turn in potency to the form of animate rather than inanimate things, and then to mammals, all the way down to feline creatures, and ultimately, to Sophie herself. In the case of corporeal beings like Sophie, the cause of corruptibility or changeability – in size, quality, or whatever – is matter, which following the tradition of the Islamic philosopher Avicenna adopted by many Franciscans, is positively defined as a kind of substrate or substance that is shared by all things, even though they do not exist as such until matter is imprinted on by a form.<sup>51</sup>

More specifically, Rufus understands change as a function of the privation of matter, which entails a potential to receive opposite forms – that is, to be formed in one way rather than another. Thus, Toth concludes, ‘the principle of such a corruption is a deficient cause and not an efficient cause.’ This is a far more clearly articulated account of substantial change than we find in the *Summa Halensis*, for instance, or even in its authors like John of La Rochelle, who had not yet ventured into such depths of metaphysical speculation, and did not to my knowledge distinguish between a deficient and an efficient cause in this context.

For this reason, it is difficult to determine whether the Parisian Franciscans would have opted to define an efficient cause, namely, God, as the agent of all changes in a being or if they would have instead ascribed this to a deficient cause, namely, matter. What we do know is that they resisted the tendency of some others at the time, even including some Franciscans like Roger Marston, to define God as the agent intellect, that is, the ultimate cause of all human acts of knowing natural beings, which they insisted are the prerogative of the human mind itself. This bespeaks their ultimate belief in the integrity of natural beings – which should presumably be able to perform their natural operations independently of divine aid – and thus suggests that there might have been agreement between the Halensian Summists and Rufus on this issue.

As noted already, **Fiorella Retucci** is currently overseeing an edition of Thomas of York’s *Sapientale*, which was written between 1250 – 60. In her chapter, she starts by addressing the common assumption that Thomas was a ‘mere’ Augustinian—a moniker often applied to other Franciscans of this period as well.<sup>52</sup> As she illustrates,

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<sup>50</sup> Daniel A. Callus, ‘Two Early Oxford Masters on the Problem of Plurality of Forms: Adam of Buckfield—Richard Rufus of Cornwall,’ *Revue néo-scholastique de philosophie* 42:63 (1939), pp. 411–45.

<sup>51</sup> Jon McGinnis, *Avicenna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>52</sup> Fiorella Retucci, ‘The *Sapientale* of Thomas of Yorke, OFM: The Fortunes and Misfortunes of a Critical Edition,’ *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 52 (2010), pp. 133–59.

however, Thomas quotes Islamic and Jewish sources in addition to the Latin translations of Aristotle by Grosseteste far more extensively than Augustine or other church fathers. This in her view should lead us to question the standard reading of Thomas, a project she pursues in offering three case studies into his thought, which concern his uses of the *Liber de causis*, which was attributed to Aristotle in this period even though it was later identified as a compilation based on Proclus' *Elements of Theology*;<sup>53</sup> the hermetic tradition; and the 12th-century Islamic philosopher, Averroes.

In undertaking the first case study, Retucci notes that Thomas used the *Liber* far more than many of his contemporaries. In this regard, he offers a new interpretation of the first section of the *Liber* which describes God as the efficient cause not only of causes but also of things caused. Apparently, some Christian authors at the time, whom Thomas does not name, interpreted this statement as implying occasionalism, according to which creatures are only the site for divine action, attributing that view to Augustine. However, Thomas opposes an occasionalist reading of the *Liber*, showing that not only Augustine but also philosophers like Averroes rejected it.

Likewise, Thomas was a uniquely committed user of the Hermetic corpus and especially the *Asclepius*. In a rare citation to chapter 22 of this work, Thomas argues that the body is a tool for exercising the soul and thus for acquiring merit. This on his account is because the body and specifically its materiality creates all kinds of potential for different choices, or freedom, which when realized for the good, confirms the ontological superiority of the human being over other creatures – which are bound by the necessity of their instincts. In this way, paradoxically, the body ultimately prepares the human being for seeing God. As Retucci aptly observes, this is quite a unique take on matter and the body, which attributes to it a dignity which is not always emphasized in pre-modern texts that often stress how bodily ties impede the path to virtue.

In a final case study, she notes that Thomas quotes Averroes over 1,000 times, and though he contests the philosopher's views on the eternity of the world, he mostly otherwise quotes him affirmatively. In particular, he supports in his own way Averroes' argument that the sciences prepare the way for human beings to realize their humanity and attain the perfection through which they become able to see God. Although Retucci rightly observes that Thomas was unique in his use of the *Liber de causis*, the *Asclepius* 22, and Averroes, she nonetheless highlights implicitly a commonality with the Parisian Franciscans of the same generation, who have likewise often been written off as 'merely' Augustinian, especially in the composition of the *Summa Halensis*, which has sometimes been mistakenly described as a sort of Augustinian encyclopaedia.

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<sup>53</sup> Peter Adamson, *The Arabic Plotinus: A Philosophical Study of the Theology of Aristotle* (London: Duckworth, 2002). *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes (5<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, Vol. 1: *Western Scholarly Networks and Debates*, ed. Dragos Calma (Leiden: Brill, 2019). Cristina D'Ancona, 'The *Liber de causis*,' in *Interpreting Proclus: From Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Stephen Gersh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 137–61.



As the detailed study of this text has demonstrated, the authors of the Summa, such as John of La Rochelle and Alexander of Hales, who oversaw the project, depart significantly from Augustine, often in the context of interpreting his own writings, both spurious and authentic. In this regard, these authors, like Thomas, drew extensively on the Arabic sources available to them, such as Avicenna and Avicbron, to define their theological and philosophical positions, which they nonetheless adapted for their own purposes and those of Christian orthodoxy. What the study of this Summa has in common with that of Retucci, therefore, is a tendency to rub away at the over-simplified reading of early Franciscans as Augustinians and to present them as innovative thinkers in their own right who were developing their own intellectual tradition, often with the help of Islamic and Jewish philosophical sources that were far removed both historically, contextually, and conceptually from Augustine.

In her chapter, **Sophie Delmas** describes Bartholomew the Englishman (Bartholomaeus Anglicus) as one of most celebrated Franciscans of the Middle Ages, who famously authored one of the first encyclopaedias in 1247, namely, his *Book on the Properties of Things* (*Liber de proprietatibus rerum*). This hugely successful and widely disseminated work survives in more than 200 manuscripts and was translated into seven vernacular languages and printed in numerous editions up until the 17th century. At the time of its composition, Bernard was lector of the Franciscan province in Saxony, Germany, based at Magdeburg, where he had been sent in the 1230s. However, Delmas draws attention to the fact that before his move to Germany, Bartholomew already had an active career in Paris. In that city, Thomas of Eccleston reports that on the date of 14 April 1224, Bartholomew was probably one of the four English masters including Haymo of Faversham, Simon of Sandwich, and Simon the Englishman, who joined the Franciscan order.

A number of works have been ascribed to Bartholomew in connection with his earlier career, the authenticity of which Delmas proposes to reconsider. These works include some allegories on the Old and New Testaments, a hagiographical compilation, a commentary on the gospels of Mark and Matthew, and biblical postils and sermons. The close scrutiny of the external and internal evidence concerning these works leads Delmas ultimately to conclude that such exegetical and pastoral works cannot definitively be attributed to Bartholomew. Nevertheless, she stresses that the *Book on the Properties of Things* remained a crucial resource for preachers who made use of it in their sermons in the 13th century, after which it became a basis for the *Thesaurus novus de sanctis*, which acknowledges Bartholomew as an important source and the authority.

As **Nicola Polloni** observes in his chapter, Roger Bacon is famous for the often harsh criticisms he levelled against his contemporaries and immediate predecessors. One of his critiques which has colored the modern scholarly perception of the medieval situation concerns the Latin translations of Aristotle's works which had become available in the late 12th and early 13th century but which Bacon regarded as unreliable. In this connection, Bacon argues that a true translation between two languages is basically impossible, or at least it is very difficult to achieve. A good translator

needs to be fluent in both languages in order to know how to render the concepts presented in one language in the terms of another. For this purpose, Bacon further contended, translators also require mastery of the disciplines of science, philosophy, and theology. Otherwise, they cannot possibly hope to translate works in these areas in a way that accurately conveys the original meaning.

Although some scholars in the past have taken Bacon's claims as an indicator of genuine problems with the translations available to scholastics, Polloni offers a more subtle reading. As he demonstrates, the work in which Bacon makes his claims concerning the translations, that is, the *Opus maius*, was clearly written with the purpose of persuading Pope Clement IV to initiate the reform of education in the Latin-speaking world. In light of this context, Polloni convincingly demonstrates more specifically that Bacon's claims concerning the translations are a rhetorical device he uses in an effort to persuade the pope of the need for better training in ancient languages (Hebrew, Greek, and probably Arabic) for university students. While there were admittedly mitigating factors in the reception of the Latin translations available in the period, often stemming from the circulation of spurious works of Neoplatonic patrimony that were attributed to Aristotle, or even Augustine, which scholars working on the period need to take into account, Polloni's study successfully shows that Bacon's claims about the flawed translations need to be taken with a grain of salt.<sup>54</sup>

In his chapter, **José Filipe Silva** traces two largely complementary but distinct strands in John Pecham's account of perception;<sup>55</sup> the first derives from perspectivist optics, and the second involves a psychological account of perception. As regards the second, Pecham advocates an active model of perception, which he associates with Augustine, 'according to which perception consists of a two-stage process: the object issuing corporeal species that are received in the corporeal sense organ, which excites the soul to making in itself an internal representation of that which is presented to the organ by the species.' This can be contrasted with a passive model of perception, where the impression of the species on the senses is the cause of the perceptual act. As Silva emphasizes, Pecham's decision to adopt an active model does not preclude passivity, that is, the receptiveness of a sense organ to external data; it simply stresses that an active effort of the soul is needed to register an image of that data. In other words, there can be no bottom-up epistemic causality of the perceptive act.

According to Silva, a parallel way of describing perception is found in Pecham's treatment of optics, in which the Franciscan favors an intromissive account of vision, where species are issued by external objects and travel through a medium until they are received in a perceiver's sense organs, which nonetheless emit some outgoing (extromissive) rays that facilitate reception. Here again, Pecham prefers an active rather

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<sup>54</sup> Lydia Schumacher, 'Christian Platonism in the Medieval West,' in *Christian Platonism: A History*, ed. Alexander Hampton and John Kenney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 183–206.

<sup>55</sup> See also, Rega Wood and Matthew X. Etchemmendy, 'Speculum animae: Richard Rufus on Perception and Cognition,' *Franciscan Studies* 69 (2011), pp. 53–115.

than a passive theory of perception, even though he does not explicitly link the psychological with the optical account. As Silva aptly observes, his emphasis on the activity of perception in both contexts is closely connected to and based upon a body-soul dualism which he inherited from Avicenna and shares largely in common with the authors of the *Summa Halensis* and other Franciscans.<sup>56</sup> On his account, the human person is a composite of two substances, namely, the soul and the body.

In turn, each of those substances is itself a composite of matter and form, which in the case of the soul entails a kind of spiritual matter. Following the tradition instigated by the Jewish philosopher Avicenna, whose work enjoyed enormous popularity amongst early 13th century Franciscans, such composition renders any thing a substance in the true sense of the term. Although body and soul in themselves are distinct, however, Pecham contends that they are untied by a principle of mutual inclination (*inclinatioe mutua*), which the Halensian Summists had followed Hugh of St Cher in describing as a substantial unitability (*unibilitas substantialis*).<sup>57</sup> In offering such an account, both the early Parisian Franciscans and Pecham found a way to affirm the indispensability of the body to the human being and thus its integrity as part of God's creation, which will ultimately be resurrected at the end of time, while at the same time distinguishing the two in a way that gave the soul the ultimate prerogative over the body's activities, presumably to prevent them from going astray.

As Silva points out at the end of his contribution, the kind of 'active' account of perception found in John Pecham finds resonances with the account, albeit less developed, of John of La Rochelle in his *Summa de anima* of 1236, which formed the basis for the section *De anima rationali* in the *Summa Halensis*.<sup>58</sup> A variation on this view is one I have also defended in describing how John advocates what has sometimes been described as an 'active' theory of cognition—or a theory in which the mind in some way 'determines' what it perceives in the world rather than simply receiving data passively. The contours of this account have already been outlined above in my response to the chapters of Levallee and Lewis, which explain briefly how certain transcendental concepts of the mind shape and organize human knowledge of reality, and ultimately, of God.<sup>59</sup>

The last contribution to this volume, by **Riccardo Saccenti**, takes the study of Pecham and especially his understanding of the body-soul relationship a step further. In particular, Saccenti treats this issue in the context of Pecham's well known opposition to Thomas Aquinas' view of the relationship between the soul and the body, which he ultimately helped to condemn in 1286 during his period of service as archbishop of Canterbury. As Saccenti points out, Aquinas took a more purely Aristotelian line on the matter and described the soul as the 'form' of the body. This

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<sup>56</sup> Schumacher, 'The *De anima* Tradition in Early Franciscan Thought.'

<sup>57</sup> Bieniak, *The Soul-Body Problem at Paris*.

<sup>58</sup> John of La Rochelle, *Summa de anima*.

<sup>59</sup> For more details, see Lydia Schumacher, *Human Nature in Early Franciscan Thought*.

means that the soul and the body form one substance in which each one is necessary to what the other is by nature and to its actual existence.

By contrast, Pecham took the view, described above, that the soul and body form two distinct substances which themselves each comprise matter-form compositions of their own kind. In the case of the soul, this involves a kind of spiritual matter, and in the case of the body, it entails prime matter and the form of bodiliness or ‘corporeity’ which makes the body whatever kind of body is appropriate for the soul in question, such as a human body in the case of a human soul. For Pecham, the importance of affirming such a form of corporeity is that it allows for confirming that a dead body that is no longer enlivened by a soul is still the body of the person who previously inhabited it. This was important for acknowledging that the dead body of Christ was nevertheless his body; the presence of his body in the Eucharist; and the resurrection of the bodies of the redeemed at the end of time.

In Pecham’s view, Aquinas’ account of the body-soul relationship had failed to explain these issues and was therefore unorthodox. As Saccenti illustrates, however, the alternative view Pecham advocates, originally based on the philosophy of Avicenna, can be found already in the *Summa Halensis*.<sup>60</sup> The same is true of a related question Saccenti treats in Pecham’s thought, which concerns his view of the unity of the soul’s powers – vegetative, and sensitive and rational. Following a common tradition at the time, the *Summa Halensis* argues that the three powers do not in fact form three substances but one within the soul. This however is only the case following the arrival of the third, rational, soul, which contains and perfects the others. In the absence of that soul, the human embryo initially has only the vegetative power, which is eventually perfected by and joined to the sensitive one, until those two become part of the rational soul. Before this point, the human being can only be said to live in the way that a plant or an animal lives; however it is not a plant or animal because unlike such beings, it is not perfected in vegetativeness or animality but in its humanity.<sup>61</sup>

## Conclusion

The foregoing examples gesture already towards the many areas in which Franciscan scholars born in England worked in commonality with their counterparts based in Paris. The chapters that follow not only highlight the commonalities between them in greater detail but also open further doors for research that does so.

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<sup>60</sup> Magdalena Bieniak, ‘The Body-Soul Union in the *Summa Halensis*,’ in *The Legacy of Early Franciscan Thought*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), pp. 37–48. Lydia Schumacher, ‘The *De anima* Tradition in Early Franciscan Thought,’ in *The Summa Halensis: Sources and Context*, pp. 155–70.

<sup>61</sup> SH II, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, Ti1, C2 (n. 332), Ad objecta 2, p. 404. *Summa de anima*, p. 142.



Michael J.P. Robson

# The Network of Franciscan Schools in England: From the Local *scholae* to the *studia generalia*

**Abstract:** The Franciscans were among the leading theologians in England, and many of them were innovative scholars; they began to monopolise the teaching of theology in the 13th century. There was a demand for English lectors to serve in different provinces of the order, as the chronicles attest. Behind these gifted figures lay an extensive web of local and custodial or regional schools, reaching from Newcastle to Chichester and from Dunwich to Carmarthen. Each friary was a school, and it provided friars with both continuous education in theology and the intellectual tools to minister as preachers and confessors. The seven custodial schools were centres of a more specialised training and offered a stepping-stone to higher studies. The schools at Oxford and Cambridge were at the apex of the scholastic system and it was there that friars were prepared for the office of lector and for degrees in theology.

Bartholomew the Englishman, Adam Rufus, Adam Marsh, Thomas of York, Richard Rufus of Cornwall, Roger Bacon, John Pecham, and Roger Marston made notable contributions to the study of science, philosophy and theology. These friars were inspired to live according to the prophetic insights of Francis of Assisi and belonged to a scholarly tradition which stemmed from the incisive teaching of Robert Grosseteste. Following their confrères' example at Bologna and Paris, friars forged strong links with the schools and received rich dividends. Agnellus of Pisa, minister provincial, opened a school of theology at Oxford and appointed Grosseteste as its master. The foundation of the friary in Cambridge followed hard on the heels of the Oxonian school and it became one of the order's three *studia generalia*. The order developed a three-tier scholastic system with Paris at its apex. Its local schools equipped the friars with both continuous education and a theological curriculum. The seven custodial schools grounded friars in philosophy and theology, grooming them for higher studies. The *studia generalia* stood at the summit of the order's educational structure and trained friars for the office of lector, with a small number taking the baccalaureate and the doctorate. This study examines the birth of the school at Oxford; the circuit of local schools; the role of the custodial schools; the *studia generalia* of Paris, Oxford and Cambridge; and the circulation of ideas, texts and friars between the different schools.

## Agnellus of Pisa, Robert Grosseteste, and the Oxford School

The friars imitated the life of the primitive Church through their evangelical poverty and humility. Within a short time, they multiplied in number.<sup>1</sup> Several members of the universities were drawn to their ranks. It was no longer thought necessary to flee the schools in order to give heed to the principles of the New Testament. The friars' wish to immerse themselves more fully in the life of the University of Bologna led them to relocate from the suburbs to a more central position in the city.<sup>2</sup> The same happened at Paris, where the friars moved from St-Denis to the *Jardin du Luxembourg*.<sup>3</sup> Gregory of Naples, minister provincial of France, was a popular preacher within university circles.<sup>4</sup> Jordan of Saxony, master of the Dominicans, targeted recruits from the universities and preached to students at Padua,<sup>5</sup> Paris,<sup>6</sup> and Oxford.<sup>7</sup> In the Michaelmas term of 1229 he voiced his hopes of having a good catch at England's leading university.<sup>8</sup> The Franciscans, too, looked to the universities for recruits, especially those who had studied logic, medicine, law and theology.<sup>9</sup> The Dominicans and Franciscans were overwhelmed by the torrent of vocations. Recruitment from the Parisian schools was reflected in a sermon delivered by Master Eudes de Châteauroux on 18 March 1229 in which he observed that *plurimi scolares* were

1 *The Historia Occidentalis of Jacques de Vitry: A Critical Edition*, ed. John F. Hinnebusch, Spicilegium Friburgense 17 (Fribourg: University Press, 1972), c. 32, pp. 158–60.

2 See Michael F. Cusato, 'The House that Peter Built: Bologna and the Origins of the Clericalization of the Order of Friars Minor,' *Frater Francesco* 84 (2018), pp. 261–82.

3 Damien Vorreux, 'Un sermon de Philippe le Chancelier en faveur des Frères Mineurs de Vauvert 1er septembre 1228,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 68 (1975), pp. 3–22; *Frater Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston, Tractatus de adventu Fratrum Minorum in Angliam*, ed. A.G. Little (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1951), p. 47; *John of Garland's De triumphis Ecclesie: A New Critical Edition with Introduction and Translation*, ed. and trans. Martin Hall (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), pp. 298–99.

4 *Frater Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 29. See also Marie-Madeleine Davy, *Les sermons universitaires parisiens de 1230–1231: Contribution à l'histoire de la prédication médiévale* (Paris: Vrin, 1931), pp. 139–41, 349–60.

5 *Beati Iordani de Saxonia Epistolae*, ed. Angelo Walz (Rome: Apud Institutum Historicum Fratrum Praedicatorum, 1951), pp. 24–25, 69. Later he states that he had admitted 33 recruits, including *magistri*.

6 *Beati Iordani de Saxonia Epistolae*, ed. Walz, p. 46: 'Circa autem scholares satis prospere per Dei gratiam mihi successit quia ab Adventu Domini usque ad Pascha circiter quadraginta novitii ordinem intraverunt, quorum plures fuerunt magistri et alii convenienter litterati et de multis aliis spem bonam habemus.'

7 Davy, *Les sermons universitaires parisiens de 1230–1231*, pp. 1–19.

8 *Beati Iordani de Saxonia Epistolae*, ed. Walz, pp. 19–20: 'Apud studium Oxoniense, ubi ad praesens eram, largam spem bonae capturae Dominus nobis dedit.'

9 *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum, I (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cesare Cenci and R. George Mailleux (Grottaferrata: Frati editori di Quaracchi, 2007), n. 41, p. 10.

entering the two mendicant orders.<sup>10</sup> The band of nine Franciscan friars who stepped ashore at East Kent prioritized foundations at Oxbridge. Before the end of October 1224 they reached Oxford, where they resided in the parish of St Ebbe at a house owned by Robert le Mercer. During their first year in Oxford many proven bachelors and nobles became friars.<sup>11</sup> Masters, too, were well represented among those admitted, beginning with Walter of Burgh, Richard the Norman, Vincent of Coventry, Henry of Coventry, Adam Rufus, William of York and Adam Marsh.<sup>12</sup> By 1225 the order planted a community in Cambridge, settling close to the town's Guildhall. Curiously, the chronicler does not mention any recruits from this Roman market town in the Fens and pays little attention to its school, apart from his roll call of regent masters.<sup>13</sup>

Eccleston says nothing about the friars' first five years in Oxford. Because in the early days there were few priests in the order,<sup>14</sup> the friars gave witness to the Gospel by their example and their ministry to the poor, the sick and the imprisoned; harmony was promoted in urban communities. The character of the order was, however, rapidly evolving from a group of laymen into a largely clerical body. Towards 1230 it was attracting more clerics and priests and was being drawn into the twin ministries of the pulpit and the confessional, creating the need for a solid theological formation and the appointment of a master of theology. Anthony of Padua's preaching in southern France and northern Italy recommended him to Francis of Assisi, who invited him to teach theology to his confrères within a spiritual framework.<sup>15</sup> He was subsequently chosen as the patron saint of the Oxford *studium*.<sup>16</sup> Did one of the first provincial chapters pass a resolution to open a school of theology at Oxford? It is unclear why Agnellus of Pisa did not appoint a friar such as Bartholomew, Haymo of Faversham or Ralph of Rheims to instruct their confrères. Instead the in-

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**10** Andre Callebaut, 'Le sermon historique d'Éudes de Châteauroux à Paris, le 18 mars 1229: Autour de l'origine de la grève universitaire et de l'enseignement des Mendicants,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 28 (1935), p. 111 in pp. 81–114.

**11** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, pp. 9–10, 22. Andrew G. Little, *The Grey Friars in Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892); Andrew G. Little, 'The Franciscan School at Oxford in the Thirteenth Century,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 19 (1926), pp. 803–74. See also Andrew G. Little and Franz Pelster, *Oxford Theology and Theologians c.A.D.1282–1302* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934); Maurice W. Sheehan, 'The Religious Orders 1220–1370,' in *The History of the University of Oxford: I. The Early Oxford Schools*, ed. Jeremy I. Catto (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 193–223.

**12** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, pp. 15–18.

**13** John R.H. Moorman, *The Grey Friars in Cambridge 1225–1538* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952); Damien R. Leader, *A History of the University of Cambridge: 1. The University to 1546* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

**14** Jacques Dalarun, 'Thome Celanensis Vita beati patris nostri Francisci (Vita brevior): Présentation et édition critique,' *Analecta Bollandiana* 133 (2015), no. 22, p. 44 in pp. 23–86.

**15** *Francesco d'Assisi Scritti*, ed. Carlo Paolazzi, *Spicilegium Bonaventurianum* 36 (Grottaferrata: St Bonaventura Press, 2009), pp. 170–71.

**16** *Fr Rogeri Marston O.F.M. Quodlibeta quatuor*, ed. Girard J. Etkorn and Ignatius C. Brady (Quarachi: St Bonaventura Press, 1968), pp. 42\*, 83.



vation was extended to Grosseteste, perhaps due to his stature as an accomplished scholar and his personal integrity, a combination which fuelled an attempt to secure his canonization in 1289. It is probable that Grosseteste worked closely with the friars about decisions regarding individuals' suitability for the office of preaching. Eccleston attests that the friars took enormous strides in their studies under the tutelage of their master, gathering materials for preaching. According to the statutes of the University of Paris, the master of theology was required to dispute, lecture and preach (*licenciam disputandi, legendi et predicandi*).<sup>17</sup> The link between the pulpit and the schools was manifest in the appointment of lectors as preachers and confessors. The Oxford *studium* was one of the earliest in the order after Bologna,<sup>18</sup> Magdeburg,<sup>19</sup> Padua<sup>20</sup> and possibly Paris.<sup>21</sup>

Grosseteste's lectures to the friars coincided with a highly creative period. Between 1229 and 1235 he completed several commentaries and treatises<sup>22</sup> and expanded his *Tabula* with the assistance of Adam Marsh.<sup>23</sup> His interest in the heritage of the Greek patristic world was growing and he began work on the translation and commentary of Greek texts.<sup>24</sup> He was dubbed as *unus de maioribus clericis de mundo* and was the second scholar after Burgundio of Pisa to translate John of Damascus' *De fide orthodoxa*, the *Testamenta patriarcharum XII* and many other books.<sup>25</sup> Traditional commentary is blended with the more thematic approach to theology in his

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17 Heinrich Denifle and Émile Chatelain, *Chartularium universitatis parisiensis*, 4 vols (Paris: Delalain, 1889–97), vol. 2, n. 1185, p. 683.

18 *Vita del "Dialogus" e "Benignitas,"* ed. Vergilio Gamboso (Padua: EMP, 1986), c. 13, n. 2, pp. 496–97: 'Primus fuit lector in ordine qui rexit, et hoc apud Bononiam.'

19 Johannes Schlageter, 'Die Chronica des Bruders Jordan von Giano: Einführung und kritische Edition nach den bisher bekannten Handschriften,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 104 (2011), pp. 3–63, n. 54, p. 55.

20 *Vita prima o "Assidua,"* ed. Vergilio Gamboso (Padua: Edizioni Messagero, 1981), c. 11, n. 7, pp. 332–35.

21 *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica a.1168–1287*, ed. Giuseppe Scalia, 2 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998–99), vol. 1, p. 138.

22 James R. Ginther, 'The *Super Psalterium* in Context,' in *Editing Robert Grosseteste*, ed. Evelyn A. Mackie and Joseph Goering (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), pp. 38–39 and 48–49 in pp. 31–60; James R. Ginther, *Master of the Sacred Page: A Study of the Theology of Robert Grosseteste ca.1229/30–1235* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004). See also Richard W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

23 Philipp W. Rosemann, 'Robert Grosseteste's "Tabula",' in *Opera Roberti Grosseteste Lincolnensis*, ed. James McEvoy (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), pp. 233–320.

24 See *Fr Rogeri Bacon, opera quaedam hactenus inedita*, ed. John S. Brewer (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1859), p. 434; *Roger Bacon, Compendium of the Study of Philosophy*, ed. and trans. Thomas S. Maloney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), n. 87, pp. 86–87, testifies to Grosseteste's contacts with Greek texts and teachers available in some parts of Italy. Grosseteste's contacts with Magna Graecia started in Oxford and continued in Lincoln.

25 *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, pp. 352–53.

*Expositio in epistolam Sancti Pauli ad Galatas*.<sup>26</sup> The *Hexaëmeron* reflects his increasing command of Greek and raises questions concerning creation,<sup>27</sup> while the *De cessatione legalium* explores the contingency of the Incarnation.<sup>28</sup> The development of the reasons for the Incarnation became emblematic of the Franciscan school at both Oxford and Paris.<sup>29</sup> In addition to this question, Grosseteste promoted the feast of the conception of St Mary and its theological structure. William of Ware was the first to claim him as an advocate of the *concepcio sancte Mariae*, but he did not cite any of *Lincolniensis'* texts.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, both Alexander Nequam and Grosseteste are named as champions of this feast by William of Nottingham, the 39th regent master at Oxford.<sup>31</sup> Thomas of Rossey points to Grosseteste's *Dicta* and a sermon which he gave on the conception of St Mary.<sup>32</sup> These two questions attained a new sophistication in John Duns Scotus' account of the reasons for the Incarnation<sup>33</sup>

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26 Robert Grosseteste, 'Expositio in epistolam Sancti Pauli ad Galatas,' in *Opera Roberti Grosseteste Lincolniensis*, pp. 1–175.

27 Robert Grosseteste, *Hexaëmeron*, ed. Richard C. Dales and Servus Gieben (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

28 Robert Grosseteste, *De cessatione legalium*, ed. Richard C. Dales and Edward B. King (London: Oxford University Press, 1986).

29 Alexander of Hales, *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Quaestiones disputatae "Antequam esset frater"*, 3 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1960), disputatio II, q. 15, m. 4, pp. 207–9; Alexander of Hales, *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica (SH)*, 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1924–48), Vol. III, In1, Tr1, Q3, C2 (n. 25), pp. 44–45; Odo Rigaldus, *III Sententiarum*, d. 21, ed. J.M. Bissen, 'De motivo incarnationis disquisitio historico-dogmatica,' *Antonianum* 7 (1932), p. 334 in pp. 314–36; *III Sententiarum*, d. 1, a. 2, q. 2, in Bonaventure, *Opera Omnia*, 10 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1882–1902), vol. 3, pp. 21–28.

30 *Fr Gulielmi Guarrae, Fr Ioannis Duns Scoti, Fr Petri Aureoli Quaestiones disputatae de Immaculata Conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis*, Bibliotheca Franciscana scholastica Medii Aevi, 3 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1904), p. 6. See also Bissen, 'Question inédite de Guillaume de Ware, O.F.M., sur le motif de l'incarnation,' *Études Franciscaines* 46 (1934), pp. 218–22.

31 *Guilelmi de Nottingham O.F.M. (†1336) Quaestiones sex de eucharistiae sacramento disquisitio et textus critice editus*, ed. Josip Barbarić (Vincenza: LIEF, 1976), p. 14: 'Istius opinionis [pro immaculata conceptione] fertur fuisse Lincolniensis et Alexander Neckam, in finem vitae suae, et Ricardus de S. Victore, in quodam sermone de conceptione quem non vidi. Inveni tamen apud abbatiam de Waltham in quodam magno libro et in sermone autentico; nescio tamen cuius fuit. Apparent tamen bene esse verba Hugonis. Ibi enim vidi si scriptum.'

32 *Tractatus Quatuor de Immaculata Conceptione B. Mariae Virginis nempe Thomae de Rossey, Andree de Novo Castro, Petri de Candia et Francisci de Arimino*, Bibliotheca Franciscana scholastica Medii Aevi, 16 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1954), p. 51. See also Servus Gieben, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Immaculate Conception with the Text of the Sermon, *Tota pulchra es*,' *Collectanea Franciscana* 28 (1958), pp. 211–17; Justus H. Hunter, *If Adam Had Not Sinned: The Reasons for the Incarnation From Anselm to Scotus* (Washington: Catholic University of Americas Press, 2020).

33 Scotus, *Ordinatio* III, d. 7, q. 3, in *Doctoris subtilis et mariani B. Ioannis Duns Scoti Opera* (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1950–), vol. 9, pp. 284–91. See also Allan B. Wolter, 'John Duns Scotus on the Primacy and Personality of Christ,' in *Franciscan Christology*, ed. Damian McElrath (New York: Franciscan Institute, 1997), pp. 139–53.

and the conception of St Mary.<sup>34</sup> Grosseteste, thus, pioneered two questions which came to characterize the Franciscan school. His authority prompted one Franciscan chronicler to record the English province's indebtedness towards its first master:

Lord Robert Grosseteste. The year of the Lord 1235, Master Robert Grosseteste was consecrated as bishop of Lincoln by St Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, at Reading. He died in 1253, a man truthful in his speech, just in his judgement and an exceptional doctor in both philosophy and sacred theology.<sup>35</sup>

The fruit of Grosseteste's teaching was the graduation of lecturers and their appointment to local and custodial schools from the middle of the 1230s. His innovative teaching inspired friars to explore the rich heritage of the Christian intellectual tradition in a stimulating theological forum.

Grosseteste was at the helm of the friars' school until his election as bishop of Lincoln on 25 March 1235, when he was succeeded by the first of three secular masters: Peter, who became a bishop in Scotland; Roger of Weasenham, archdeacon of Oxford, dean of Lincoln (1240–45) and bishop of Coventry and Lichfield (1245–56); Thomas of Waleys, the archdeacon of Lincoln from 1238 and bishop of St David's (1247–55).<sup>36</sup> Adam Marsh was the first friar to serve as regent master in theology c.1243.<sup>37</sup> His exceptional linguistic and theological skills were lauded by Roger Bacon, who associated him with the bishops of Lincoln and St David's.<sup>38</sup> He, too, was hailed as one of the greatest clerics in the world by Salimbene de Adam.<sup>39</sup> As a mark of the order's increasing scholastic renown Eccleston pithily re-

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**34** *Ordinatio* III, d. 3, q. 1 (Vatican ed., pp. 169–91). See also *John Duns Scotus: Four Questions on Mary*, ed. and trans. Allan B. Wolter (Santa Barbara: Franciscan Institute, 1988), pp. 36–52. See also Mary B. Ingham, 'Fired France for Mary without Spot: John Duns Scotus on the Immaculate Conception,' in *Medieval Franciscan Approaches to the Virgin Mary: Mater Misericordiae Sanctissima et Dolorosa*, ed. Steven J. McMichael and Katherine Wisley Shelby (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp. 174–95.

**35** Michael J.P. Robson, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Franciscan School at Oxford (c.1229–1253),' *Antonianum* 95 (2020), pp. 345–82 and 'A Franciscan Contribution to the *De gestis Britonum* (1205–1279) and its Continuation to 1299,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 107 (2014), pp. 299–300 in pp. 265–313: 'Dominus Robertus Grosseteste. Anno domini 1235 magister Robertus Grosseteste consecratus est episcopus Lincolnensis a Sancto Edmundo Cantuariensi archiepiscopo, apud Redinges. Obiit autem anno domini 1253, vir utique in sermone verax, in iudicio iustus, in philosophia et in sacra theologia doctor precipuus.'

**36** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, pp. 48–49.

**37** *Chronicon de Lanercost M.CC.I. – M.CCC.XLVI.*, ed. Joseph Stevenson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Print Co., 1839), p. 58; C. Hugh Lawrence, 'The Letters of Adam Marsh and the Franciscan School at Oxford,' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 42 (1991), pp. 218–38.

**38** See also *Fr Rogeri Bacon opera quaedam hactenus inedita*, ed. John S. Brewer (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1859), p. 88: 'Nam omnes sancti et philosophi Latini et poetae sciverunt de linguis alienis, et omnes sapientes antiqui, quorum multos vidimus durare usque ad nostrum tempus; ut dominum episcopum Lincolnensem, et sanctum David, et fratrem Adam, et multos viros.' See also p. 428.

**39** *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, p. 353.

marks that the gift of wisdom spread through the English province so that during the administration of William of Nottingham, minister provincial (1240–54), there were 30 lectors who taught solemnly with disputations and three or four who lectured without them. Students were also prepared in the universities to replace those who had vacated the lecture halls or died. These figures account for more than half the friaries at a time when foundations were still being made.<sup>40</sup> The chronicler mentions some unnamed lectors, such as the youth who was predicted to become a *lector egregius*.<sup>41</sup>

Eccleston reports that there were lectors at the capital city, the two universities, the cathedral cities of Canterbury and Hereford, the important trading centre of Bristol and the strategically located towns of Leicester and Oxford, the home of monasteries of the Augustinian canons. Schools of theology became a feature of the Franciscan conventual complex and they mushroomed from the 1240s,<sup>42</sup> a growth reflected in the crown's payments for the construction of schools of theology at Gloucester by 2 August 1246,<sup>43</sup> Stamford by 10 July 1255<sup>44</sup> and Northampton by 26 June 1258.<sup>45</sup> The Dominican and Franciscan dominance in the realm of theology was acknowledged by Roger Bacon about 1272, when he confirms that both orders had established schools in all the main cities and towns during the previous 40 years.<sup>46</sup> Evidence seems to point to the provision of lectors for the main centres of population and then the smaller friaries by the later 13th century.<sup>47</sup> The surfeit of theologians was sufficient for the English province to countenance the appointment of three suc-

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**40** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, pp. 48–50.

**41** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 88. See also Joanna Cannon, 'Panorama degli studia degli ordini mendicanti (Inghilterra),' in *Le scuole degli ordini mendicanti (secoli XIII–XIV) 11–14 ottobre 1976* (Todi: Presso l'Accademia tudertina, 1978), pp. 93–126, for details of schools and lectors.

**42** *Liber Chronicarum sive Tribulationum Ordinis Minorum di Frate Angelo Clareno*, ed. Giovanni Bocali (Assisi: Porziuncula, 1998), iii, lines 5 and 20–23, pp. 332–33, 336–39; *Expositio super regulam Fratrum Minorum di Frate Angelo Clareno*, ed. Giovanni (Assisi: Porziuncula, 1994), lines 102–3, pp. 676–77: 'Nam eo tempore quo Fr Crescentius generalis minister [...] et secularium scientiarum in religione introducta sunt studia et Aristotelis male artes, tanquam male pestes Egiptiace (...).'

**43** *Close Rolls, A.D.1242–1247*, ed. H.C. Maxwell Lyte (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1916), p. 447.

**44** *Close Rolls, A.D.1254–1256*, ed. A.E. Stamp (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1931), p. 112.

**45** *Close Rolls, A.D.1256–1259*, ed. A.E. Stamp (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1932), p. 241.

**46** *Fr Rogeri Bacon Opera quaedam hactenus inedita*, ed. Brewer, p. 428; *Roger Bacon, Compendium of the Study of Philosophy*, ed. Maloney, n. 18, pp. 12–13.

**47** See also A.G. Little, 'Educational Organisation of the Mendicant Friars in England (Dominicans and Franciscans),' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, new series 8 (1894), pp. 49–70. Benvenuto Bughetti, 'Tabulae Capitulares Provinciae Tusciae O.M. (saec. XIV–XVIII),' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 10 (1917), pp. 416–23, in pp. 413–97. A lector was assigned to every friary of the Tuscan province by the provincial chapter at Borgo San Lorenzo in 1394.

cessive lectors to teach at Christ Church cathedral priory in Canterbury between 1275 and 1314.<sup>48</sup>

Friars were among the leading theologians of the 13th century. Alexander of Hales was the first friar to hold a chair of theology. He is credited with introducing the *Sentences* as a manual for teaching theology and with devising and then introducing divisions in the Lombard's text.<sup>49</sup> John Pecham was the first to lecture on *quodlibetal* questions in the faculty of theology at Oxford.<sup>50</sup> The order fostered various aids to study, including the indexing symbols devised by Grosseteste.<sup>51</sup> Adam Marsh boasted to Geoffrey of Brie, minister provincial of France, that the resources for study in England were incomparable.<sup>52</sup> Later projects sired by the Oxford school were the *Registrum Anglie* and *Tabula septem custodiarum*.<sup>53</sup> The libraries assembled by the friars drew gasps of admiration from bibliophiles such as Richard de Bury, bishop of Durham (1333–45),<sup>54</sup> and featured in the later polemical exchanges. By 1248 there was already a scholastic hierarchy with a well-trodden path from the local schools to the Parisian *studium*.<sup>55</sup> Matthew Paris narrates the establishment of the order's schools of theology in the seven custodies, where teaching was accompanied by disputations.<sup>56</sup> There was a principal *studium* in each custody opening the way to the *studia generalia* of Oxford and Cambridge.

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**48** *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs, 2 vols (London: Longman & Co., 1879–80), vol. 2, p. 281; Michael J.P. Robson, 'Franciscan Lectors at Christ Church Cathedral Priory, Canterbury, 1275–1314,' *Archaeologia Cantiana (Kent Archaeological Society)* 112 (1993), pp. 261–81.

**49** *Chronicon de Lanercost*, ed. Stevenson, p. 53. *The Kirkstall Abbey Chronicles*, ed. John Taylor (Leeds: Thoresby Society, 1952), p. 98: 'Primus ipse titulos questionum super 4 libros sentenciarum adiuvet. Et super eisdem titulis summam notabilem questionum in omnes libros sentenciarum initialiter pertractavit formamque determinandi in eisdem libris suis successoribus dereliquit.' Ignatius Brady, 'The Distinctions of Lombard's Book of *Sentences* and Alexander of Hales,' *Franciscan Studies* 25 (1965), pp. 90–92 in pp. 90–116, points out that the oldest copies of the Lombard's text have no divisions, apart from those inserted by a later hand. Alexander was quite familiar with the use of distinctions in the Lombard's text.

**50** *Chronicon de Lanercost*, ed. Stevenson, pp. 100–1.

**51** Richard W. Hunt, 'Manuscripts Containing the Indexing Symbols of Robert Grosseteste,' *Bodleian Library Record* 4 (1953), pp. 241–55.

**52** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. C. Hugh Lawrence (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006–10), ii, pp. 518–19.

**53** *Registrum Anglie de libris doctorum et auctorum veterum*, ed. Roger A.B. Mynors, Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse (London: British Academy, 1991).

**54** *Philobiblon Ricardi de Bury*, ed. and trans. Ernest C. Thomas (Oxford: Blackwell, 1960), pp. 90–91.

**55** *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, p. 475. Benedict of Colle and Gerard of Prato studied at Pisa for many years before being sent to Toulouse in order to prepare themselves for study at Paris.

**56** *Matthaei Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, Historia Anglorum*, ed. Frederic Madden, 3 vols (London: Longman, Green, Reader & Dyer, 1866–69), vol. 2, p. 110.

## Local Schools

The lector was one of the major officers in the friary<sup>57</sup> and he was frequently associated with the guardian.<sup>58</sup> The lector and guardian had their individual rooms in the general study houses, while the other friars slept in the dormitory.<sup>59</sup> The minister provincial, custos, guardian, lector, confessor, procurator, and preacher, and all the other friars wore a habit of common cloth without any distinction.<sup>60</sup> On occasion the lector was delegated to examine candidates for the offices of preaching and hearing confessions. Sometimes he presented friars for ordination and received commissions from the local bishop.<sup>61</sup> The lector safeguarded the friars' orthodoxy<sup>62</sup> and dispensed devotional and scholastic nourishment for the friars, depending upon their intellectual gifts. This took two principal forms.

First, the lector gave the community theological instruction and his lectures were framed to ensure that each friar remained theologically articulate, refreshed, and invigorated in his pastoral ministry. Just as the *fratres laici* had the Rule of St Francis expounded to them in the vernacular during visitations,<sup>63</sup> it is probable that some instruction in catechetics and devotional writings was tailored to their needs. The lectures were to be attended by each member of the community, with no exceptions on the grounds of seniority of profession or offices held, thereby providing an early form of continuous education for the friars. An insight into the content and continuity of such theological studies is offered by Salimbene de Adam, who, writing in 1284, reflects on his last 45 years as a friar:

[...] having studied grammar from the very cradle, I entered the order of the Friars Minor. And, from the very beginning, even in my novitiate in the convent at Fano in the March of Ancona,

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57 *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, ii, n. 3, p. 72. The office was mentioned along with the custodes, guardians, confessors, preachers, and procurators. See also vii, n. 9, p. 86: 'Officia ordinis intelligimus non solum praelationis, sed praedicationis, confessionis, lectionis, visitationis, diffinitionis et electionis ad capitulum pro discretise.'

58 Bughetti, 'Tabulae Capitulares Provinciae Tusciae O.M. (saec. XIV–XVIII),' pp. 416–23. The appointments made by the Tuscan provincial chapter listed the guardian, vicars and lectors.

59 *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, iv, n. 16, p. 78.

60 *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, ii, n. 3, p. 72.

61 Dorothy M. Owen, *Cambridge University Archives: A Classified List* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 19. The bishop of Ely appointed the lector at Cambridge in the summer of 1293 as one of the adjudicators in a dispute regarding property.

62 *Fasciculus Morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher's Handbook*, ed. Siegfried Wenzel (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), pp. 232–33, offers an example of the place taken by the lector at the death bed of a friar, whose faith was tested by demons.

63 *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, vii, n. 21, p. 88.



I was assigned Brother Humile of Milan as my teacher in theology. And Brother Humile had studied under Brother Haymo [...]. And thus during my first year in the order, I was given lectures in Isaiah and Matthew, just as they are taught in the schools of theology, for Brother Humile had studied there. And since that time I have never ceased in my studies and I still attend lectures in the schools.<sup>64</sup>

It is noteworthy that the order looked to the theological schools as the model for instruction and acted on the advice of friars from the schools. The order followed scholastic practices in having lectures from one book of the Old Testament and the other from the New Testament in a single year.<sup>65</sup>

Secondly, the ordinands' studies started with the liberal arts and the sciences.<sup>66</sup> Knowledge of the *quadrivium* and the *trivium* was a prerequisite for admission to the order. Friars were sufficiently steeped in grammar or logic.<sup>67</sup> Schools devoted to the arts were established for the young friars by the ministers in the provinces.<sup>68</sup> It is not always easy to identify which schools specialised in the arts. Students had to be conversant with natural sciences and moral philosophy. There were divisions between the arts and the sciences. Law and philosophy were not to be taught by the same lector, according to the general constitutions of Strasbourg in 1282. The two sets of lec-

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**64** *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, p. 424. *The Chronicle of Salimbene de Adam*, trans. Giuseppe Baglivi, Joseph L. Baird, and John R. Kane (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1986), p. 274.

**65** See also Beryl Smalley, 'John Russel O.F.M.,' *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 23 (1956), p. 284 in pp. 277–320. The 22nd regent master at Cambridge seems to have followed the customary practice of expounding one book from the Old Testament and another from the New [Testament] during the same academical year.

**66** For example, Cesare Cenci, 'Fra Francesco da Lendinara e la storia della Provincia di S. Antonio tra la fine del s. XIV e l'inizio del s.XV,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 55 (1962), p. 173, n. 75 in pp. 103–92. He entered the order at Lendinara in 1382 and was admitted to the novitiate the following year at the same friary. The novitiate lasted for three years, with his second year at Padua and a third at Lendinara, where he remained in 1386, perhaps his first year of studies. The following year he was assigned to the friary of Treviso. In 1388 he was at Bologna *pro studio arcium* before moving to Ferrara in 1389 to study logic; there were 28 students enrolled at that *studium*; his second year at Ferrara was devoted to the study of logic. In 1391 he was assigned to the school at Piacenza, where he studied philosophy and remained for a second year during which he was ordained to the priesthood. In 1393 he stayed at the same convent *pro magistro studii*. He was a bachelor at the friary of Cesena in 1394 and Forlì in 1395. Finally, in 1396 he graduated to the study of theology at Bologna. See also Roest, 'The Role of Lectors in the Religious Formation of Franciscan Friars, Nuns and Tertiaries,' in *Studio e studia: le scuole degli ordini mendicanti tra XIII e XIV secolo, Atti del XXIX Convegno internazionale, Assisi, 11–13 ottobre 2001* (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2002), p. 94, n. 17 in pp. 83–115. He points out that Heinrich von Isny (†1288) was the *secundarius* lector in Cologne or Magdeburg before becoming lector in Basel and Mainz.

**67** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, i, n. 3, p. 70.

**68** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, n. 111, p. 58.

tures were not to be given by the same lector and at the same time.<sup>69</sup> The general constitutions of Milan in 1285 issued a similar ban regarding the teaching of law and physics in the schools of theology;<sup>70</sup> this was reiterated by the general chapter of Paris in 1292.<sup>71</sup> Some friars excelled in teaching music and the liberal arts.<sup>72</sup> The lectors' nomenclature varied from one school to another; the titles of *lector philosophiae*, *lector logicae* or *lector grammaticae* were employed. Bartholomew the Englishman,<sup>73</sup> Richard Rufus,<sup>74</sup> Roger Bacon,<sup>75</sup> John Pecham<sup>76</sup> and John Duns Scotus<sup>77</sup> were among the friars who commented on scientific and philosophical questions during the 13th century. Books on the sciences, philosophy and theology were prominent in the order's libraries.<sup>78</sup> In short, philosophy was propaedeutic to the study of theology.

**69** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, vi, n. 11d, p. 181.

**70** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, vi, n. 11d, p. 240.

**71** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, vi, n. 11d, p. 315.

**72** See Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 90, fol. 63v: 'Cuius operis finis primo erat pridie nonas Augusti anno domini M.CCC. quinquagesimo primo. Illo autem anno regens erat inter minores Oxon. frater Symon de Tunstude doctor sacre theologie qui in musica pollebat et eciam in septem liberalibus artibus.'

**73** For example Iolanda Ventura, 'Bartolomeo Anglico e la cultura filosofica e scientifica dei frati nel XIII secolo: aristotelismo e medicina nel *De proprietatibus rerum*,' in *I Francescani e le scienze: Atti del XXXIX Convegno internazionale Assisi, 6–8 ottobre 2011* (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2012), pp. 51–140 and *Bartholomaeus Anglicus, De proprietatibus rerum, 6: Liber XVII*, ed. Iolanda Ventura (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007).

**74** For example, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall In Aristotelis De generatione et corruptione*, ed. Neil T. Lewis, Rega Wood and Jennifer Ottman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) and *Richard Rufus of Cornwall In Physicam Aristotelis*, ed. Rega Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

**75** For example, Jeremiah M.G. Hackett, 'Roger Bacon and Classification of the Sciences,' in *Roger Bacon and the Sciences: Commemorative Essays*, ed. Hackett (Leiden: Brill, 1997), and Hackett, 'Roger Bacon and the Moralization of Science: From *Perspectiva*, through *Scientia Experimentalis* to *Moralis Philosophia*,' in *I Francescani e le scienze*, pp. 371–92. See also *The Art and Science of Logic, Roger Bacon*, ed. Thomas S. Maloney (Toronto: PIMS, 2009).

**76** For example, Barnabas Hughes, 'De Numeris Mysticis by John Pecham: A Critical Edition,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 78 (1985), pp. 3–28 and 333–83. See also *John Pecham and the Science of Optics: Perspectiva Communis*, ed. David C. Lindberg (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), and *A Critical Edition and Translation, with Commentary of John Pecham's Tractatus De Sphaera*, ed. Bruce R. MacLaren and Girard J. Etzkorn (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 2015).

**77** For example, *Ioannis Duns Scoti Notabilia super Metaphysicam*, ed. Giorgio Pini (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), and *Ioannes Duns Scotus, Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, ed. R. Andrews, Girard J. Etzkorn, Gedeon Gal, R. Green, F. Kelley, G. Marcil, T. Noone and Rega Wood (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 1997).

**78** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, xv, n. 4, p. 315. Benedict XII's statutes instructed communities to obtain books on grammar, logic, philosophy, and theology.



From the last quarter of the 13th century the lector's teaching was grounded in a cursory reading of the Bible and the commentary on the *Sentences*,<sup>79</sup> one of the aids to theological study. Friars, too, produced companions to theological study, such as Bonaventure's *Breviloquium*. The four types of scholastic texts open to the theologian are explained by Bonaventure in his *Collationes in Hexaëmeron*:

Therefore there are four kinds of writings around which an order must be exercised. First are the books of the sacred Scriptures. In the Old Testament there are, according to Jerome, twenty-two books, and in the New Testament there are eight. Second are books of the original writings of the Saints. Third are the [books] of the sentences of the masters. Fourth are [the books] of the worldly teaching or philosophers.<sup>80</sup>

Students were warned that the philosophers' teachings and the masters' manuals (*summae magistrorum*), which were drawn from patristic writings, were not free from error. The Fathers of the Church and the scriptures, however, enjoyed inerrancy. The latter, which contained the key to eternal life, should be considered in its allegorical, anagogical, literal, and tropological senses.<sup>81</sup> The importance of biblical glosses is reflected in many of the books donated to the friars.

The friars' studies were fuelled and informed by their expanding collections of books which were derived from recruits, donations, volumes transcribed by members of the order, and the texts of deceased friars which passed to the conventual library. Eccleston saw many gifts of books to the London Greyfriars.<sup>82</sup> Ralph of Maidstone, bishop of Hereford, gave his copy of the gloss on the gospels to the friary in Canterbury (British Library, MS Royal 3 C.iii) and Ralph of Corbridge, a former regent master in Paris and Oxford, donated his copy of the Pauline epistles (Lambeth Palace Library, MS 57) to the Lincoln Greyfriars, where he may have served as lector. Cambridge, Peterhouse Library, MS 89, was procured by Thomas of Whappelod with the help of friends by the licence of the minister provincial, Hugh of Hartlepool. One of the clerics who donated books to the friars was Richard Wich, bishop of Chichester (1244–53), who bequeathed biblical commentaries to the friaries of Canterbury, Chichester, Lewes, London, Winchelsea, and Winchester.<sup>83</sup> Already by the last quarter of the century lectors were accumulating small personal libraries. This was demonstrat-

<sup>79</sup> Michael Bihl, 'Statuta Provincialia Provinciarum Aquitaniae et Franciae (saec.XIII–XIV),' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 7 (1914), VII, nn. 2–4, p. 493 in pp. 466–501.

<sup>80</sup> *Works of St Bonaventure, Collationes on the Hexaëmeron: Conferences on the Six Days of Creation. The Illuminations of the Church, Translation, Introduction and Notes*, ed. Jay M. Hammond (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 2018), xix, n. 6, pp. 330–31.

<sup>81</sup> *Collationes in Hexaëmeron*, in Bonaventure, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 5, coll. 19, nn. 7–15, pp. 421–22.

<sup>82</sup> *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, pp. 21–22.

<sup>83</sup> *English Episcopal Acta 22, Chichester 1215–1253*, ed. Philippa M. Hoskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), n. 188, p. 158.

ed when the prior of Christ Church cathedral priory paid a messenger to transport the books of Ralph of Wodehey from London to Canterbury in September 1281.<sup>84</sup>

The episcopal registers of England and Wales for the 14th and 15th centuries show candidates moving seamlessly from one friary to another in the same custody during studies for the priesthood. This policy may have been enacted to give students a taste of life in various custodial friaries or exposure to a particular lector with his own theological specialization. Such movement was facilitated by the fact that the friars followed a common theological syllabus. For example, a provincial chapter prescribed which book of the *Sentences* was to be read in a particular year; the first book was the prescribed text for the Roman province in 1316.<sup>85</sup> Some of the lectors' names occur in the episcopal registers and comparable documentation.<sup>86</sup> For example, J., the lector at Doncaster, received an episcopal licence on 20 March 1290 to grant absolution; the permission was renewed on 27 March of the same year.<sup>87</sup> Nothing more is known of him. Various lectors are named in the correspondence of Adam Marsh, who comments on their qualities and gives a ringing endorsement of Walter of Maddely (Madeley):

I regard it as no small wonder that my dear brother Walter Madeley, who has continued until now to carry the burden of teaching divinity imposed upon him long since. [...] Yet he, as I hear, has gained this grace from heaven that he lectures beautifully, is acute in debate and in his writings (*in scriptis*) and his words is valuable and accepted by both the brethren and the seculars.<sup>88</sup>

Warin of Erwelle lectured solemnly in different friaries,<sup>89</sup> although the extant sources reveal no details. In contrast, Thomas of Pavia was known to have lectured at Parma, Bologna, Ferrara, and Lucca. He was one of the lectors who either compiled preaching materials or composed homilies.<sup>90</sup> The movement of lectors from the local schools to the universities is reflected in Walter of Ravenham, who had served as lec-

<sup>84</sup> Lambeth Palace Library, MS 242, fol. 46r.

<sup>85</sup> A.G. Little, 'Constitutiones provinciae Romanae, anni 1316,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 18 (1925), p. 367, c. 4, n. 9 in pp. 356–73: 'Ordinamus quod lectores uniformiter Libros Sententiarum legant, ita quod anno isto legatur primus.'

<sup>86</sup> Michael J.P. Robson, 'The Franciscan Lectors of the English Province in the 13th Century,' in "*Non enim fuerat Evangelii surdus auditor...*" (1 Celano 22): *Essays in Honor of Michael W. Blastic, O.F.M. on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday*, ed. Michael F. Cusato and Steven J. McMichael (Leiden: Brill, 2020), pp. 167–200.

<sup>87</sup> *The Register of John Le Romeyn, lord archbishop of York 1286–1296*, ed. William Brown, 2 vols (Durham: Andrews & Co., 1913–17), vol. 1, n. 251, p. 97.

<sup>88</sup> *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 478–79; see also pp. 536–37, where he offers a similar commendation of Walter of Ravenham.

<sup>89</sup> *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, pp. 97–98.

<sup>90</sup> See *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 2, p. 648. See also *Le Pergamene del convento di S Francesco in Lucca (secc.XII–XIX)* (Rome: Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali, 1993), p. 110.

tor of the friars of Hereford in the 1250s.<sup>91</sup> He became the 10th regent master at Cambridge.<sup>92</sup> Walter of Knulle, a friar from the custody of Bristol, was the lector at the Hereford Greyfriars between 1275 and 1282. Afterward he was recalled to the Oxford Greyfriars, where he became the 19th regent master c.1288/89,<sup>93</sup> and then the 23rd at Cambridge c.1293/95.<sup>94</sup> John of Letheringset, the 14th regent master at Cambridge, was active in the custody of Cambridge and his views on the Knights Templar were cited by Thomas, the guardian of Babwell.<sup>95</sup>

The financial implications of the order's educational policies make an occasional appearance in the extant sources. Local communities were responsible for making adequate provision for lectors in the form of books and writing materials. Some of them, however, cut corners and neglected to provide the lector with suitable amenities. Adam Marsh took up the case of Hugh of Lewknor, who had been appointed as a lector of an unnamed community. It is clear that inadequate preparation had been made for him. Adam advised William of Nottingham that, if proper arrangements could not be made, Hugh should be released from the appointment.<sup>96</sup> Walter Maddeley also broached his working conditions with Adam, who expostulated that Walter had not been provided with a *socius* and took issue with such 'strict parsimony'. As a result of these conditions, Walter was exhausting his vital spirit by the fervor of his studies and wearing himself out by writing night and day with his own hand, whereas his predecessors had been provided with great volumes and supportive associates. The minister provincial was entreated to rectify this matter for the sake of Walter's students.<sup>97</sup> The minister provincial was also concerned about the provision of a suitable *socius* to assist the lector in the preparation of teaching materials.<sup>98</sup>

Gregory of Bosellis, the lector at Leicester, was declared to be a suitable deputy for Adam Marsh at Oxford, demonstrating the ease with which some lectors passed from lecturing in the local schools to the *studia generalia*.<sup>99</sup> The fact that the lectors' ranks included authors is a further sign of the quality of the education available in the local schools, the forum in which the vast majority of friars were educated. The standard of theological instruction there was sufficient to prepare friars for the min-

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91 *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 536–37.

92 *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 58.

93 *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 53.

94 *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 59.

95 *The Proceedings Against the Templars in the British Isles*, ed. Helen J. Nicholson, 2 vols (Farnham: Routledge, 2011), vol. 1, pp. 184–85, vol. 2, p. 194.

96 *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 482–83.

97 *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 478–79.

98 *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 470–71. Adam recommended Thomas Bacon (Bacun), a friar of Nottingham, as a suitable *socius* for Richard Rufus in early 1253.

99 *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 49; *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 358–59. Adam announced that there was no one available to undertake his teaching in the event of his being absent other than Gregory of Bosellis.

istry of preaching and hearing confessions. Although the vast majority of the friars did not taste a higher form of theological studies, they were thoroughly prepared for the priesthood and its duties; they were the Franciscan equivalent to what Fr Leonard Boyle, O.P., called the *fratres communes* among the Dominicans.<sup>100</sup> The fact that Franciscan lectors published materials is a further indication of the intellectual climate. Lectors in these schools made recommendations about which friars should be appointed to the custodial schools and the *studia generalia*.

## Custodial Schools

The custodial school of London was one of the first to receive a lector, Vincent of Coventry, who later became the first regent master at Cambridge.<sup>101</sup> About 1250 the friars of Norwich unsuccessfully lobbied for the appointment of Eustace of Normanville as their next lector.<sup>102</sup> Mindful of the type of education available in the custodial schools, Adam Marsh urged William of Nottingham to send A. of Hereford, his admirable *socius*, to study at London. He predicted that, if A. were to be left to make progress with his studies, he would soon be ready for the office of preaching and the instruction of the secular clergy. His opinion was that his *socius* was as well qualified as some of those already lecturing,<sup>103</sup> demonstrating the intellectual calibre of some friars selected for the office of *socius*. The way in which the custos took up educational issues is illustrated in a letter of Robert of Thornham, custos of Cambridge, c.1250.<sup>104</sup> Custodial schools served various pastoral needs for the order, such as forms of leadership within the local church. Guardians were sometimes delegated to discharge canonical duties by the bishop and required additional canonical knowledge.<sup>105</sup> For instance, from the later 13th century some friars served as episcopal penitentiaries, an office which required an additional study of moral theology

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**100** See also Leonard Boyle, 'Notes on the Education of the *Fratres communes* in the Dominican Order in the Thirteenth Century,' in *Xenia Medii Aevi Historiam Illustrantia oblata Thomae Kaeppli O.P.*, ed. Raymund Creytens and Pius Künzle, 2 vols (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1978), vol. 1, pp. 253–57 in pp. 249–67. See also M. Michèle Mulchahey, 'The Role of the Conventual *Schola* in Early Dominican Education,' in *Studio e studia: le scuole degli ordini mendicanti tra XIII e XIV secolo*, pp. 117–50.

**101** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, pp. 49, 58.

**102** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, pp. 420–21, 424–25.

**103** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 412–15. Charles L. Kingsford, *The Grey Friars of London: Their History with the Register of their Convent and an Appendix of Documents* (Aberdeen: The University Press, 1915), pp. 21–23.

**104** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 534–35.

**105** *Registrum epistolarum fratris Johannis Peckham archiepiscopi Cantuariensis*, ed. Charles T. Martin, 3 vols (London: Longman & Co., 1882–85), vol. 3, p. 1029. On 22 April 1282 J., the guardian of London, was appointed as one of commissaries to assist the executors of Walter Merton, bishop of Rochester, in finalizing their account.

and canon law. These friars kept records of the cases in which they had acted and some summaries were entered into episcopal registers.

One feature of the custodial school was the quality of its instruction in the arts. It enjoyed an exceptional reputation at an early stage. At an unknown date, but certainly before 1253, the order decided not to enrol friars in the faculty of arts at the universities. It is probable that this decision was taken by a chapter, provincial or general, at an unknown date; the same policy obtained in the Parisian school and again the date and circumstances in which the decision were taken are shrouded in mystery. The strategy placed the order in a quandary at the beginning of 1253, when Thomas of York was nominated to succeed Eustace of Normanville as the regent master. The first three masters, Adam Marsh, Ralph of Corbridge and Eustace of Normanville, had all lectured in the faculty of arts at Paris or Oxford and were eligible to proceed to the faculty of theology. Oxford University pointed out that Thomas of York did not meet their requirements because he had not ruled in the arts. The substance of the debates between the university and the order was reported by Adam Marsh between January and March 1253. The impasse was resolved by the university issuing a grace whereby Thomas was dispensed on the grounds of his thorough preparation for the office of regent master. The qualities of the new regent master were acknowledged:

It was enacted by the chancellor and masters of the University of Oxford, with the blessed assent of all – blessed be the divine name – that our very dear brother Thomas of York should be raised to a chair of a regent master to give the main lectures on Holy Scripture, on account of his distinguished conduct, his intellectual gifts, and his proven learning which commend him to many and great persons.<sup>106</sup>

This implicitly endorsed the thoroughness of the training in the arts which Thomas had already undertaken in the order's schools prior to his move to Oxford, where he had spent the previous eight years preparing himself for the office of regent master. A further sign of the imperceptible gap between the standards in the custodial schools and the universities is that friars expounded the same texts in the two centres.

Another function of the custodial school was the preparation of students for the *studium generale* at Paris. The general constitutions of Narbonne in 1260 required such friars to spend two or three years after their novitiate in a school of their province or one nearby; the requirements applied to the other schools of Oxford and Cambridge.<sup>107</sup> Study at the custodial school came to satisfy this requirement. For instance, John Duns Scotus was unusual because some of the academic exercises normally associated with the custodial school took place at Oxford. Timothy

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<sup>106</sup> *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 444–55, 464–71.

<sup>107</sup> *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, vi, n. 12, p. 315.

Noone maintains that Scotus moved from Oxford to Paris for the lectorate programme in 1286 and then returned to England four years later, when he was ordained priest and lectured on the *Sentences* in the 1290s.<sup>108</sup> His *Collationes Oxonienses* belong to that decade.<sup>109</sup>

There is evidence that the lecturers of the custodial schools were generally former regent masters in theology, who had returned to their native provinces or custodies. Adam of Lincoln was regent master at Oxford c.1293 and minister provincial before he returned to the custody of York to lecture. He was the lector at York on 1 July 1311, when he attended the trial of the Templars. Also present was Thomas of Pontefract, the 55th regent master at Oxford, who may have been a second lector at York.<sup>110</sup> Thomas Rondel, the 27th regent at Oxford c.1298, was the master of theology at the London Greyfriars, when he heard evidence against the Knights Templar in London between 23 October and 15 November 1309.<sup>111</sup> Peter Sutton was the 36th master at Oxford and heard evidence against the Templars on 30 March 1311 at St Martin's Ludgate.<sup>112</sup> Custodial schools enjoyed a greater level of staffing than the local schools. The daily round of teaching on physics, law, moral philosophy, systematic theology, canon law, the scriptures could not be shouldered by a solitary lector. The presence of a second lector became the norm for such schools. Peter of John Olivi, for instance, was appointed as lector at the custodial school of Santa Croce in 1287, where he was joined by Ubertino da Casale, both of whom had spent a considerable amount of time at Paris.<sup>113</sup> There are later references to the institution of the office of *lector principalis*, which implies at least one other master or bachelor of theology.<sup>114</sup> Bert Roest maintains that in some instances, there was a *lector principalis*

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**108** Timothy B. Noone, 'Duns Scotus and the Franciscan Educational Model,' in *John Duns Scotus, Philosopher: Proceedings of 'The Quadruple Congress' on John Duns Scotus*, ed. Oleg V. Bychkov and Mary B. Ingham (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2010), p. 136 in pp. 129–38.

**109** *Collationes Oxonienses Iohannis Duns Scoti*, ed. Guido Alliney and Marina Fedeli (Florence: SIS-MEL, Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2016). See also Stephen D. Dumont, 'William Ware, Richard of Conington and the *Collationes Oxonienses* of John Duns Scotus,' in *John Duns Scotus: Metaphysics and Ethics*, ed. Ludger Honnefelder, Rega Wood et Mechthild Dreyer (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 59–85.

**110** *Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church II. A.D.1205–1313*, ed. F. Maurice Powicke and Christopher R. Cheney, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), vol. 2, pp. 1323, 1329. *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, pp. 54–55.

**111** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 54. *The Proceedings Against the Templars in the British Isles*, ed. Nicholson, vol. 1, pp. 21, 28, 32, 37, 40, 44, 48, 58, 66, 73, 93, 97; vol. 2, pp. 23, 28, 30, 34, 38, 41, 44, 47, 52, 56, 62, 67–68, 84, 88.

**112** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 55. Kingsford, *The Grey Friars of London*, p. 22, maintains that Thomas Rondel, Peter of Sutton and Thomas of St Dunstan, former regent masters at Oxford, were lecturers at London. See also, *The Proceedings Against the Templars in the British Isles*, ed. Nicholson, vol. 1, p. 243; vol. 2, p. 270.

**113** David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), pp. 47, 62.

**114** Celestine Piana, *Chartularium Studii Bononiensis S. Francisci (saec. XIII–XVI)* (Florence: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1970), n. 71, pp. 52\*, 43.



and a *secundarius* and *tercianus*, although some of these positions were filled by senior students.<sup>115</sup> The lector was also assisted by bachelors of theology who were undertaking some prescribed teaching. There is later evidence that a second lector was appointed; elsewhere there were bachelors and cursors of theology.<sup>116</sup>

The statutes of Benedict XII, promulgated on 28 November 1336, codified many practices whose roots lay in the previous century and they identified the seven regional schools of the English province, showing that the custodies of Oxford and Cambridge located their principal schools at Stamford and Norwich respectively. They offer a glimpse of the level of the theological syllabus: bachelors were obliged to lecture at the University of Paris, unless they had already taught the four books of the *Sentences* with the recommended texts of the doctors in another approved school.<sup>117</sup> This requirement resulted in bachelors composing more than one commentary on the Lombard's text: one for delivery at a custodial school and another for the *studium generale*.<sup>118</sup> Russell L. Friedman explains that it became customary for theologians to compile commentaries on the *Sentences* or different versions of their commentaries, having either lectured on the *Sentences* on various occasions or having taken various opportunities to rework the materials employed in the lectures. William of Ware, for instance, lectured on the *Sentences* at Oxford c.1295 and later at Paris. In addition, he may have commented on the text for a third time.<sup>119</sup> Friars distinguished between a theologian's readings of the *Sentences*, referring to Scotus' *Lectura Oxoniensis*<sup>120</sup> and his *Lectura Parisius*.<sup>121</sup>

The custodial school constituted a more taxing forum for the study of philosophy and theology and prepared students for special roles. William J. Courtenay explains the excellence of the philosophical and theological education offered by these regional schools:

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**115** Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education (c.1210–1517)* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 79–80.

**116** *A Calendar of the Register of Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York, 1398–1405*, ed. Robert N. Swanson, 2 vols (York: University of York, 1981, 1985), vol. 2, n. 729, p. 12. On 30 August 1398, the archbishop licensed two lectors at the York Greyfriars and three cursors.

**117** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, ix, n. 14, p. 311. The 21 approved centres of study were at Rouen, Rheims, Metz, Bruges, London, York, Norwich, Newcastle, Stamford, Coventry, Exeter, Bordeaux, Narbonne, Marseille, Asti, Oradea, Prague, Pisa, Erfurt, Rimini, and Todi.

**118** William J. Courtenay, 'Early Scotists at Paris: A Reconsideration,' *Franciscan Studies* 69 (2011), p. 177 in pp. 175–229.

**119** Russell L. Friedman, 'The *Sentences* Commentary, 1250–1320, General Trends, The Impact of the Religious Orders, and the Test Case of Predestination,' in *Mediaeval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, Volume 1. Current Research*, ed. Gillian R. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 42 and 63 in pp. 41–128. See also *Adam of Wodeham, Lectura secunda in librum primum Sententiarum*, ed. Rega Wood and Gedeon Gál, 3 vols (St Bonaventure, NY: St Bonaventure University, 1990), vol. 1, pp. 8\*, 32\*, 33\*. He compiled a *Lectura Londoniensis*, a *Lectura Norwicensis* and a *Lectura Oxoniensis* in 1332.

**120** *William of Alnwick: Questions on Science and Theology*, ed. Francesco Fiorentino, trans. John Scott (Münster: Aschendorff, 2020), pp. 710–11.

**121** *William of Alnwick: Questions on Science and Theology*, ed. Fiorentino, pp. 700–1.

The custodial schools of the Franciscans held a place of importance only slightly less than that of the university convents. The full range of scholastic exercises were offered and some of the most talented Franciscans in the first half of the 14th century wrote major works in that environment. The custodial school of London could claim the impressive list of names: William of Ockham, Walter Chatton, Adam Wodeham, but Norwich at various times had Wodeham, Ralph Pigaz and Haverel [...].<sup>122</sup>

The custody of York also sent a stream of admirable scholars to Oxford in the closing quarter of the 13th century, including Ralph of Toft, Thomas of Barnby, Adam of Lincoln, William of Gainsborough, Adam of Howden, Philip of Bridlington, Robert of Beverley, Thomas of Pontefract, and William of Shirburn. They all subsequently served as regent masters at Oxford and some of them may have resumed their teaching in the local and custodial schools.<sup>123</sup> Two of them subsequently became ministers provincial and one lectured at the papal court from 1300. There was a strong partnership between the custodial school of Norwich and the *studium generale* at Cambridge with friars moving in both directions.<sup>124</sup> Despite the fact that Courtenay was writing about the 14th century, the procedures for the scholars were already in place during the previous century.

The appeal of the custodial schools drew friars from other provinces of the order to England, beginning with Nicholas of Carbio who arrived in the 1230s. He subsequently became the chaplain, confessor and biographer of Innocent IV and bishop of Assisi in 1250.<sup>125</sup> William of Nottingham was exhorted to appoint N. de Amilyeres (Anilers), a friar from the province of France, to Oxford, Cambridge or London for one or two years. The friar had been intending to study in France for up to two years.<sup>126</sup> The volume of friars from other provinces studying had so increased by the end of the century that the minister provincial consulted the general chapter of Paris in 1292 about securing help to accommodate them during the summer. The chapter determined that during the long vacation the foreign students at Oxford should be distributed between Oxford, Cambridge and London in proportion to the number of foreign students already there.<sup>127</sup> In the middle of the 14th century the custodial school of Norwich attracted a future pope, Peter Philargi, who became Nicholas V.<sup>128</sup>

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**122** William J. Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 67. He suggests that the stability of the schools combined with the order's practice of appointing their best scholars to those schools before, after and sometimes during their university teaching gave the custodial schools a prominence the *studia particularia* of the Dominicans do not appear to have enjoyed.

**123** Michael J.P. Robson, 'Franciscan Bachelors and Masters of Theology in the Custody of York (1250–1350),' *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 111 (2016), pp. 5–33.

**124** Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England*, pp. 107–9.

**125** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 88.

**126** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 414–17 and 518–19.

**127** Franz Ehrle, *Memorialia ministro Anglie*, in 'Die ältesten Redaktionen der Generalkonstitutionem des Franziskaner Ordens,' *Archiv für Litteratur- und Kirchen-Geschichte des Mittelalters* 6 (1892), p. 63 in pp. 1–138: 'Memorialia ministro Anglie. Ut tempore vacationis maioris onus conventus Oxonie ali-



Books belonged to the local friary, the custody or the province and were to be confined to those jurisdictions. The custodial books were mentioned by Benedict XII.<sup>129</sup> John Moorman observes that there were three distinct libraries at Cambridge: first, the friary library; secondly, the students' library; and thirdly, the custodial library. A 14th-century manuscript of Thomas Aquinas (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley, MS 355) belonged to the custody of Cambridge.<sup>130</sup> Custodial schools also attracted the loan or donation of manuscripts. Roger de Thoriz, archdeacon and later dean of Exeter, granted the use of his manuscripts to the Blackfriars and Greyfriars of the cathedral city on 2 February 1267 due to the *inaestimabilis fructus* of their ministry for the salvation of souls.<sup>131</sup> Ownership of these fourteen volumes of biblical and patristic texts was retained by the archdeacon at whose death they were to pass to the dean and chapter of the cathedral city. The Greyfriars appear to have been given a degree of priority in the use of the manuscripts, as William de Tukebire, guardian of the Exeter Greyfriars indicates, when he quotes the original grant in full. The memorandum was inserted at the end of the register of Walter Bronescombe, bishop of Exeter.<sup>132</sup>

Courtenay remarks that the area bounded by the precincts of Norwich cathedral and the city's Dominican and Franciscan friaries was its 'educational district' and affirms that the conditions for some theological exchanges existed, noting that the Carmelites and Austin Friars also had their *studia particularia* in the cathedral city.<sup>133</sup> There is no extant English equivalent to Marina Soriani Innocenti's *Simone da Cascina Introduzione, edizione e commento* in which she explains that some Franciscans

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qualiter relevetur, ordinat generale capitulum, quod studentes ibidem de provinciis inter ipsam Oxoniensem et Londonensem et Canteb[rigiensem] conventus pro tertia parte, connumeratis aliis studentibus extraneis, qui in prefatis Londonensi et Cantebrugiensi conventibus fuerint, ad ministri provincialis arbitrium dividantur.' See also Little, 'The Franciscan School at Oxford in the Thirteenth Century,' pp. 817–18; *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, p. 364.

**128** See *Continuatio Eulogii: The Continuation of the Eulogium Historiarum*, ed. Christopher Given-Wilson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 148–49.

**129** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, xi, n. 10, p. 316.

**130** Moorman, *The Grey Friars in Cambridge, 1225–1538*, pp. 56–57. Oxford, Balliol College, MS 214 was entrusted to Fr Thomas Wyndeale at the custodial chapter of 1390.

**131** *Registrum Johannis de Pontissara episcopi Wyntoniensis. A.D.MCCLXXXII–MCCCIV*, ed. C. Deedes, 2 vols (London: Canterbury and York Society, 1915–24), p. 222, offers a variant from his own diocesan statutes: 'Et quoniam ipsorum fratrum [Predicatorum et Minorum] predicacio et sancta conversacio noscuntur in ecclesia Dei fructum non modicum produxisse, cum per nostram transierint diocesim ubique eos reverenter hospicio recipi precipimus et honeste.'

**132** *The Registers of Walter Bronescombe (A.D.1257–1280), and Peter Quivil (A.D.1280–1291), Bishops of Exeter, with some Records of the Episcopate of Bishop Thomas de Bytton (A.D.1292–1307), also the Taxation of Pope Nicholas IV A.D.1291 (Diocese of Exeter)*, ed. F.C. Hingeston-Randolph (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1889), pp. 79–80.

**133** Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England*, p. 107.

were enrolled at the Dominican *studium* of Santa Caterina in Pisa during the 15th century.<sup>134</sup>

## The *studia generalia* of Paris, Oxford and Cambridge

The new universities and the friars emerged almost simultaneously and grew side by side, nurturing each other in a reciprocal relationship, although there were growing pains in the partnership, as attested by the disputes at Bologna, Paris, Oxford and Cambridge. The friars brought their exceptional skills in presenting the Gospel to the student communities and contributed to the teaching of theology. In return, the universities provided them with ample recruits in the form of masters, bachelors and students, many of whom went on to play a prominent role in its life, filling many of the major offices, such as minister general and minister provincial. A sign of the new direction of the order was the election of Haymo of Faversham as minister general in 1240, the first former Parisian *magister* to hold this office. Thereafter most of his successors and a procession of ministers provincial were equally drawn from the schools, much to the dismay of Ubertino da Casale and his fellow reformers.

The minister general was responsible for the provision of lectors, as three examples involving English friars illustrate: first, Simon became lector at Magdeburg in 1228 at the instigation of John Parenti;<sup>135</sup> secondly, Elias of Cortona sent Adam of York and Philip of Wales to lecture at Lyon in the 1230s;<sup>136</sup> thirdly, Ralph of Corbridge, a regent master of theology at Paris, was appointed to the Oxford *studium* in 1244 while still a novice at the behest of the minister general.<sup>137</sup> The minister general had a particular interest in the welfare of the Parisian school, the premier school in the order, whose students were drawn from all provinces.<sup>138</sup> John of Parma's efforts on behalf of the school during his general visitation of the English province are well documented. He encouraged lectors to return to the schools and applied pressure on William of Nottingham to release some seasoned theologians to spend time at Paris

**134** *Simone da Cascina, Actus scolastici: introduzione, edizione e commento*, ed. Marina Soriani Innocenti (Pisa: Biblioteca di memorie Domenicane, 2020), pp. 233–36, 237–40, 241–45, 246–49, 250.

**135** Schlageter, 'Die Chronica des Bruders Jordan von Giano,' n. 54, p. 55.

**136** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 49. See also Philipp W. Rosemann, 'Robert Grosseteste's Tabula,' in *Robert Grosseteste: New Perspectives on his Thought and Scholarship*, ed. James McEvoy (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), pp. 334–36 in pp. 321–55.

**137** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 50.

**138** William J. Courtenay, 'The Parisian Franciscan Community in 1303,' *Franciscan Studies* 53 (1993), pp. 155–73, and Courtenay, 'Early Scotists at Paris,' for a list of friars resident at Paris on 25 June 1303, when there were between 169 or 171 friars in residence. See also Lydia Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology: Between Authority and Innovation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

for specified periods, perhaps to assist with teaching and tutorials.<sup>139</sup> William of Nottingham was advised to keep John of Weston and Walter Maddely in England, but to permit other unnamed friars to go Paris.<sup>140</sup>

One of those who eventually crossed the channel was Richard Rufus of Cornwall in 1253, but the seeds of his departure were sown five years earlier.<sup>141</sup> Reflecting the spirit of Francis's letter to Anthony of Padua, the spiritual dimension of the friars' studies is reflected in the sacred names and the pious invocations inscribed in the margins of manuscripts.<sup>142</sup> The Parisian *studium* was conditioned by the general constitutions of Narbonne, which stated that friars should normally spend at least four years there. Each province of the order was entitled to have two students there without any special provision<sup>143</sup> and it was required to supply students with books, whose number was to be determined by the minister provincial and the provincial chapter. Friars were admonished not to divert alms earmarked for books to other purposes; they were not permitted to acquire expensive volumes made for them (*libri curiosi*). On their return from Paris they were obliged to give an account of all expenses and they should not accept or keep any books without the permission of the minister provincial. The antecedents of the general statutes can be foreshadowed in the practices of the order recorded in chronicles and collections of letters.<sup>144</sup>

The general constitutions of 1292 distinguished between friars studying for the lectorate and those reading for degrees (*sive ad bacalarium, lectoratum, magisterium*).<sup>145</sup> This legislation is echoed by the constitutions of the general chapter of Assisi

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**139** Neslihan Şenocak, 'The Franciscan *studium generale*: A New Interpretation,' in *Philosophy and Theology in the Studia of the Religious Orders and at Papal and Royal Courts*, ed. Kent Emery Jr., William J. Courtenay, and Stephen M. Metzger (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), p. 235 in pp. 221–36.

**140** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 478–79: 'Studio Parisiensi in presenti necessitatis urgentia providentes.'

**141** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 438–39, 484–85.

**142** D.H. Pouillon, 'Le manuscrit d'Assise, Bibl.Comm.196,' *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 12 (1940), pp. 329–58. Folios 67r, 113r and 118r of the manuscript invoke the sacred names of *Maria*, *Ihesus* and *Johannes*. Folio 79r: *Sancta Maria. Ihesus bone miserere mei. Inter mulierum (sic) Iohanne non surrexit maior*. Folio 103v has the invocation: *Ihesus sit amor meus*.

**143** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, vi, nn. 13, 14, 19, pp. 83–84. The friars sent to Paris should be able students in robust health, eloquent, and of good reputation. They should not be contentious, but meek (*mites*) and peaceful (*pacifici*) among their confrères.

**144** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, vi, nn. 19–20, 23, p. 84. For example, *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 486–87. Adam recommended that the Bible formerly used by the late P. of Worcester should be entrusted to Thomas of Docking. See also pp. 470–71. William of Nottingham was urged to provide Richard Rufus with the assistance of a suitable lector, who would supply him with the texts necessary for his studies at Paris in 1253.

**145** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, vi, n. 20b, p. 317.

in 1316 (*sive ad lectoriam, bachalariam, magisterium*)<sup>146</sup> and it is corroborated by the provincial statutes of Umbria at the beginning of the 14th century, employing the term *pro lectore* to distinguish the lectorate programme from the baccalaureate and the doctorate.<sup>147</sup> Courtenay explains that there were two distinct communities of students at *le grand couvent des Cordeliers de Paris*; each group of friars studied theology. The larger constituency followed the lectorate course inside the friary, while the smaller group studied within the framework of the University of Paris for a degree in theology and were subject to the university's statutes.<sup>148</sup>

The first cohort consisted of friars enrolled for the lectorate, that is, they were schooled for the office of lector, a course which lasted approximately four years. This was the programme destined for the majority of the friars, who were not members of the University of Paris; they may have numbered as many as one hundred. Their studies were conducted inside the friary school and they did not study for a degree. They probably heard the lectures of the bachelor who was commenting on the *Sentences*. Courtenay maintains that such students were generally in their third decade. The general chapter of Paris in 1292 ordained that, on the completion of his lectorate programme, the new graduate should obtain a testimonial letter from the lector and the guardian of the *studium generale* before returning to his province.<sup>149</sup> Accordingly, these friars returned to the country and custody of their origin and began their lectures in the local schools.<sup>150</sup> Some of these friars had already qualified as lectors before they were ordained to the priesthood. John Duns Scotus completed the lectorate programme at Paris c.1290 before he was ordained to the priesthood at Northampton on 17 March 1291.<sup>151</sup> Some newly qualified lectors stayed on at the *studium generale*, perhaps as part of a special project. Gerard of Borgo San

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**146** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Maillieux, vi, n. 28, p. 83.

**147** See also Cesare Cenci, 'Constitutiones Provinciales Provinciae Umbrae anni 1316,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 56 (1963), p. 27, vi, n. 8 in pp. 12–39. The chapter distinguished between friars attending Paris '*pro lectoribus theologie*' and others. Cesare Cenci, 'Ordinazioni dei capitoli provinciali umbri dal 1300 al 1305,' *Collectanea Franciscana* 55 (1985), p. 21, vi, n. 20 in pp. 5–31: 'Item provideatur cuilibet fratri studenti Parisius pro lectore.'

**148** William J. Courtenay, 'The Instructional Programme of the Mendicant Convents at Paris in the Early Fourteenth Century,' in *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life. Essays in Honour of Gordon Leff*, ed. Peter Biller and Barrie Dobson (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999), pp. 77–92.

**149** *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Maillieux, vi, n. 20f, p. 318. See also Cenci, 'Constitutiones Provinciales Provinciae Umbrae anni 1316,' p. 28, vi, n. 12.

**150** Courtenay, 'Early Scotists at Paris: A Reconsideration,' pp. 176–78.

**151** *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton, 1280–1299*, ed. Rosalind M.T. Hill, 8 vols (Hereford: Hereford Times; Lincoln: Lincoln Record Society; Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1948–86), vol. 7, p. 13.

Donnino was a lector by the early 1250s, remaining at Paris in that office.<sup>152</sup> Henry of Wodestone styled himself as a *lector Oxoniensis* in 1261 when he was lecturing.<sup>153</sup>

Secondly, after some years of teaching in the local and custodial schools, a small cohort of lectors was selected to return to Paris for the baccalaureate and the doctorate. These friars had cut their teeth as lectors in their native provinces and were designated to read the *Sentences* at Paris; as formed bachelors they participated in disputations. This category consisted of approximately 5% of the students for the lectorate and they amounted to fewer than ten friars at Paris.<sup>154</sup> These friars were in their fourth decade or older. Some of them had already lectured on the *Sentences* at one or more of the order's schools before returning to Paris. Those who incepted in theology generally had a short regency of one year. The role of the minister general in the appointment of friars is demonstrated by John Murro, minister general, who selected John Duns Scotus as the *sententiarius* in 1302. Because England had two universities, it rarely presented friars to read the *Sentences* and incept at Paris. Notable exceptions were William of Milton (Melitona), John of Wales, John Pecham, and William de la Mare. Courtenay's comment about the age of those preparing for a degree in theology is confirmed by William Shirburn, who was ordained priest on 17 March 1291. He became the 38th regent master at Oxford c.1311 aged approximately 45.<sup>155</sup>

Regulations regarding friars at Paris applied equally to the other general study houses,<sup>156</sup> that is, the schools at Oxford and Cambridge. The Oxford school quickly attracted friars from other provinces with some support from John of Parma. Two friars from Upper Germany were sent to study the scriptures in England, probably at Oxford, c.1250.<sup>157</sup> About the same time arrangements were made for N. de Amilyeres, a friar from the province of France, to continue his studies in England, subject to the agreement of the minister general and the minister provincial of France. Adam Marsh recommended that this friar spend two years in England.<sup>158</sup> In the later 13th century a number of provinces began to legislate for dispatching students to Oxford. For example, the province of Aquitaine was entitled to send students there.<sup>159</sup>

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152 *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, p. 358.

153 Robert J. Mokry, 'The "Summa de sacramentis" of Henry Wodestone, O. Min. A Critical Edition,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 94 (2001), p. 83 in pp. 3–84.

154 William J. Courtenay, 'Scotus at Paris: Some Reconsiderations,' in *The Opera Theologica of John Duns Scotus: Proceedings of 'The Quadruple Congress' on John Duns Scotus*, part 2, ed. Richard Cross (Münster: Aschendorff, 2012), p. 13, n. 30 in pp. 1–19.

155 *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton, 1280–1299*, ed. Hill, vol. 7, p. 13. *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 59.

156 *Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (Saeculum XIII)*, ed. Cenci and Mailleux, vi, no.16, p. 83.

157 *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 410–11.

158 *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 414–17.

159 André Callebaut, 'Acta capituli generalis Mediolani celebrati an. 1285,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 22 (1929), p. 290 in pp. 273–91.

A glimpse of the lectorate programme at Oxford is afforded by the inquiry into the cult of Thomas Cantilupe, bishop of Hereford (1275–82), which was held at the cathedral city on 29–31 August 1307. First, Walter of Risbury, then aged 66, testified that he had frequently seen Cantilupe in the schools and elsewhere and had conversed with him, when he was the chancellor of Oxford University. He himself had been a scholar (*in dicto autem studio Oxon' dictus testis dixit se fuisse scolarem*), when Cantilupe was studying canon law. During Cantilupe's episcopate he had been present in the diocese of Hereford, apart from a short time which he had spent as guardian of the Gloucester Greyfriars.<sup>160</sup> Secondly, Robert of Herton, then aged 63, gave evidence that he had seen Cantilupe at Oxford, but he had little personal knowledge of him. He had lived in the friaries of Hereford, Oxford, Gloucester, Dorchester, Bridgwater and Southampton, perhaps as a lector.<sup>161</sup> Thirdly, Walter of Knulle, then aged 60, swore that he had frequently seen Cantilupe in the schools (*in scolis et in pluribus aliis locis*), when he was a student c.1267 (*tunc scholaris Oxon'*). He served as lector at Hereford throughout Cantilupe's tenure as bishop.<sup>162</sup> The ages of these three friars verify Courtenay's observation that the graduates from the lectorate programme were generally in their twenties. Timothy B. Noone suggests that about 1280, when John Duns Scotus arrived at Oxford, there were about 70 or 75 friars there, that is, about half the size of the Parisian community.<sup>163</sup> On occasion, friars in the schools received alms from the Oxford Colleges.<sup>164</sup>

Shafts of light on the *studia generalia* of Oxford and Cambridge are provided by groups of *quaestiones disputatae* in Assisi, Biblioteca comunale, MSS 158 and 196. The first of these have been analysed by Frs François M. Henquinet, OFM, and Franz Pelster, SJ, charting the scholastic activities of a group of theologians from the secular clergy and friars of all four mendicant orders. There were questions debated in the Franciscan school at Cambridge by Hugh Brisingham, John of Letheringset, Thomas of Bungay, Robert of Worsted, and Bartholomew of Stalam between 1277 and 1281. Among their confrères named in questions at Oxford between 1284 and 1291 were Roger Marston, Alan Wakerfeld, Nicholas Ockham, John of Pershore, Wal-

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**160** Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS 4015, fols. 81r, 82r: 'In dicto autem studio Oxon' dictus testis dixit se fuisse scolarem.'

**161** Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS 4015, fol. 83v.

**162** Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS 4015, fols. 76rv, 78v.

**163** Timothy B. Noone, 'Duns Scotus and the Franciscan Educational Model,' in *John Duns Scotus, Philosopher: Proceedings of "The Quadruple Congress" on John Duns Scotus*, part 1, ed. Mary B.ingham and Oleg Bychkov, Archa Verbi, Subsidia 3 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2010), pp. 135–36 in pp. 129–38.

**164** See also *The Early Rolls of Merton College Oxford with an Appendix of Thirteenth-Century Oxford Charters*, ed. John R.L. Highfield (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 219. Nicholas of Ockham received 42 shillings from Merton College on the occasion of his inception in 1286.



ter Knull, Hugh of Hartlepool, John Pershore, John of Berwick, Adam of Lincoln, Thomas Rondel, and Philip of Bridlington.<sup>165</sup>

The second manuscript records contemporary exercises in theology debated by John of Berwick, John of Pershore, Nicholas of Ockham, Thomas of Bungay, Hugh of Hartlepool, Adam of Lincoln, Philip of Bridlington, and John Bassett.<sup>166</sup> Another group of friars at Oxford in the 1290s emerges in the *quaestiones* debated between 1300 and 1302 and contained in Worcester Cathedral Priory, MS Q.99, including John Basset, Robert of Beverley, Richard of Conington, John Duns Scotus, and Adam of Howden.<sup>167</sup> William of Nottingham's *Commentary on the Sentences* (Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College Library, MS 300/514) contains numerous *marginalia* concerning the views of the leading figures of the mendicant world, with particular attention to the Oxonian school. Academic sermons preached by Franciscan masters and bachelors at Oxford between 1290 and 1293 are contained in Oxford, New College, MS 92, and Worcester Cathedral Library, MS Q.46. Among the preachers in this period were Nicholas of Ockham, Adam of Howden, Hugh of Hartlepool, John of Berwick, Adam of Lincoln, and William of Gainsborough.<sup>168</sup>

The regent masters of the three universities are known to posterity and many of their writings have survived and been edited. There is less information on the different layers of instruction conducted below the level of the regent masters. John of Parma lectured cursorily on the *Sentences* at Paris before 1247, but he did not become a regent master.<sup>169</sup> Richard Rufus commented on the same textbook at Oxford in 1250 and again three years later at Paris as a bachelor.<sup>170</sup> Thomas Rondel read the *Sentences* in Paris before returning to Oxford.<sup>171</sup> Similarly, William of Ware lectured on the *Sentences* at Oxford and may have read the same text at Paris. John Duns Scotus was his pupil at Oxford, according to Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana cod. C.78, fol.1r.<sup>172</sup>

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**165** See Little, 'The Friars and the Foundation of the Faculty of Theology in the University of Cambridge,' in *Mélanges Mandonnet: études d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale du moyen âge*, vol. 2 (Paris: Vrin, 1930), p. 401 in pp. 389–401; François M. Henquin, 'Descriptio codicis 158 Assisii in Biblioteca comunale,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 24 (1931), p. 254 in pp. 91–108 and 215–54; Palémon Glorieux, 'Le manuscrit d'Assise, Bibl. Comm. 158,' *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 8 (1936), pp. 289–90 in pp. 282–95; and Little and Pelster, *Oxford Theology and Theologians c.A.D.1282–1302*, p. 3 in pp. 3–72.

**166** Pouillon, 'Le manuscrit d'Assise, Bibl.Comm.196.'

**167** Little and Pelster, *Oxford Theology and Theologians c.A.D.1282–1302*, pp. 219–362.

**168** Little and Pelster, *Oxford Theology and Theologians c.A.D.1282–1302*, p. 174 in pp. 149–215.

**169** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 73. See also *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, p. 456.

**170** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 51.

**171** *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, pp. 51, 58. Little, *The Grey Friars in Oxford*, p. 162.

**172** Stephen F. Brown, 'Reflections on Franciscan Sources for Duns Scotus's Philosophical Commentaries,' in *John Duns Scotus, Philosopher: Proceedings of "The Quadruple Congress" on John Duns Scotus*, part 1, p. 7, n. 33 in pp. 1–11: 'Guilielmus Varro, Scotti praeceptor in quattuor libros sententiarum.' See also Russell L. Friedman, 'The *Sentences* Commentary,' pp. 63, 76.

William of Ware and Robert Cowton were, according to Prosper of Reggio Emilia, active in Paris, but they were not licensed and did not incept.<sup>173</sup> A solitary witness to the different strata of tuition is an inscription on the flyleaf of a copy of the Bible. Peter Swynesfeld filled the office of tutor at Oxford and Paris.<sup>174</sup> Salimbene de Adam refers to the lectors' *repetitor* at Fano and Lyon; in the latter case the *repetitor* assisted the lector in the examination of candidates for the office of preaching.<sup>175</sup>

## The Circulation of Friars, Ideas and Texts between the *studia generalia*

While monks cultivated virtue and sanctity within the liturgical rhythm of the canonical hours and the discipline of the cloister, friars knew no such seclusion. The friars' vocation was to take the Gospel wherever people were. They were appointed to a particular friary, but their ministry was not circumscribed by its precincts, the town, the deanery, the archdeaconry or the diocese or an ecclesiastical province. For apostolic purposes, friars were itinerant and accompanied by a *socius*; unnecessary roaming was proscribed and the friars brusquely dismissed the charge that they were gyrovagues. Their urban ministry went hand-in-hand with an apostolate to the towns, villages and hamlets at some distance from their friary. This necessitated a friar's absence from the friary for weeks at a time as he visited all the parishes in a deanery and their outlying chapels, finding lodgings where they could. Friars were a familiar sight on the roads and rivers of western Europe as they went about their preaching tours and carried messages between friaries on legitimate business. The minister provincial normally resided at the London Greyfriars, but he and his team of advisers and assistants were away for protracted periods as they visited all 59 friaries in the province. In addition, there was an annual provincial chapter and every triennium a general chapter was held routinely north and south of the Alps. At the general chapter of Genoa in 1244 Peter of Tewkesbury obtained copies of two recent bulls by Innocent IV relating to the mendicants, leaving them at Lyon to be collected by Adam Marsh and John of Stamford for delivery to William of Nottingham.<sup>176</sup> William of Nottingham and Gregory Bosellis with John of Kethene, an English friar who was min-

<sup>173</sup> William J. Courtenay, 'Reflections on Vat.Lat. 1086 and Prosper of Reggio Emilia O.E.S.A.,' in *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages*, ed. Christopher Schabel (Leiden: Brill, 2006–7), vol. 2, pp. 348, 356, 357 in pp. 345–57.

<sup>174</sup> Neil R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books*, 2nd ed. (London: Royal Historical Society, 1964), p. 315. Hatfield House, Marquess of Salisbury, MS 309: 'Quod filius suus Fr Gaufridus sibimetipsi fecit fieri, set fratri Petro de Swinefeld assignavit qui tutor suus Oxoniis fuit, postmodum Parisius specialissimus amicus, postremo in fratrum minorum ordine minister tocius Anglie.'

<sup>175</sup> *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, pp. 61, 475.

<sup>176</sup> *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 514–15.



ister provincial of Ireland, stood united against the general chapter of Genoa in 1251, eventually persuading the capitulars to be guided by Gregory IX's *Quo elongati* rather than the more permissive terms of Innocent IV's *Ordinem vestrum*.<sup>177</sup> Letters were also a means of communicating information and news. On 18 January 1280 Robert Cross, minister provincial, announced to the unnamed custos of London that the minister general had enclosed a letter from Matthew Rossi Orsini, the cardinal deacon of Santa Maria in Porticu and protector of the order, regarding the implications of Nicholas III's *Exiit qui seminat* which was written at Soriano on 14 August 1279. Henceforth the bishops of England and Scotland would be required to appoint proctors to assess the value of the order's moveable goods.<sup>178</sup>

English lectors were found in Germany, France and Italy. Bartholomew, widely known as *Bartholomaeus Anglicus*, was appointed as the lector at Magdeburg in 1231. He was the author of the much copied *De proprietatibus rerum* and was hailed as a great cleric.<sup>179</sup> There was an Anglo-Saxon flavor to the theological formation of Salimbene de Adam. Two of his lectors were English, Sanson at Parma in 1239/40 and Stephen at Genoa in 1248/49.<sup>180</sup> In addition, Humile of Milan who taught him at Fano in 1238/39 had studied under Haymo of Faversham at Bologna, as already indicated in the second section. Walter was one of the English friars who studied abroad, when John of Parma was his lector at Naples.<sup>181</sup> The movement of friars from one *studium* to another and one province to another was replicated at the *studia generalia*. William of Poitiers, the second regent master at Cambridge, was undoubtedly appointed at the behest of the minister general. After the first council of Lyon there was speculation that Adam Marsh might replace either John of La Rochelle or Alexander of Hales.<sup>182</sup> William of Milton (Melitona), the fourth regent master at Paris, was appointed to Cambridge, where he became the fifth regent master before returning to Paris in response to Alexander IV's *de fontibus paradisi* of 7 October 1255 to complete Alexander of Hales' *Summa Theologica*.<sup>183</sup>

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177 *Fratris Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 42.

178 See *Registerum Joahnnis de Pontissara*, ed. Deedes, vol. 1, pp. 254–57. The minister provincial was then at Exeter.

179 Schlageter, 'Die Chronica des Bruders Jordan von Giano,' nn. 58–60, pp. 56–58.

180 *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, pp. 151, 477, 480.

181 *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 2, p. 830. See Piana, *Chartularium Studii Bononiensis S. Francisci (saec. XIII–XVI)*, p. 4, where John was described as the third lector. No date was given before 1247. Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education*, p. 50, claims that John was the lector at Naples between 1240 and 1245.

182 *Epistolae Roberti Grosseteste episcopi quondam Lincolnensis*, ed. Henry R. Luard (London: Longman & Co., 1861), p. 335.

183 *Guillelmi de Melitona questiones de sacramentis*, ed. Gedeon Gál and Celestino Piana, 2 vols (Florence: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1961), vol. 1, p. 12\* for a summary of discussions in favor of the date 7 October 1255 rather than 28 July 1256.

John of Wales was the sixth regent master at Oxford and then Paris. William de la Mare lectured at both Oxford and Paris, where he was the regent master.<sup>184</sup> Roger Marston sampled life at all three *studia generalia*. He was a student at Paris in the early 1270s, when he witnessed an inception in the presence of Gerard of Abbeville, Thomas Aquinas, John Pecham and 24 masters<sup>185</sup> before resuming his studies at Oxford. He later served as regent master at the two English universities. Such friars generally remained in office for no more than one or two years before giving way to a younger colleague and either returning to their own province or custody or entering the order's administration; they were frequently elected as minister provincial.<sup>186</sup> John Pecham joined the order at Oxford, incepted at Paris and succeeded Eustace of Arras as regent master there. He then returned to Oxford before his election as minister provincial and his appointment as *lector sacri palatii* from 1277 to 1279.<sup>187</sup> Internal evidence indicates that his *quodlibeta* were debated at three locations. The first and second *quodlibeta* seem to belong to Lent and Advent 1270 in Paris. The third points to Oxford, when he was the regent master. The fourth took place at the papal court in Rome and was known as the *quodlibetum Romanum*.<sup>188</sup>

The image of the peripatetic friar carrying his books in a satchel is evoked by Matthew Paris.<sup>189</sup> This process facilitated the cross-fertilization of ideas through the various provinces of the order. Stephen, an English friar, and his *socius* en route for Rome met Salimbene de Adam at Beaucaire in the late summer of 1248. The chronicler, itching for news about the Oxford school, remarked that the lector carried the best writings, including a copy of Adam Marsh's *Lectura super Genesim*, which Stephen read to the chronicler.<sup>190</sup> English friars routinely carried the writings of their confrères as they moved from school to another and made copies of texts available in different schools of theology. This transmission of texts in a cosmopolitan community is exemplified by the correspondence of Adam Marsh, who displays

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**184** Hans Kraml, 'The *Quodlibet* of William de la Mare,' in *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages*, vol. 1, p. 153 in pp. 151–70.

**185** *Fr Rogeri Marston O.F.M., Quaestiones Disputatae de emanatione aeterna, de statu naturae lapsae et de anima* (Florence: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1932), pp. 116–17.

**186** See William J. Courtenay, 'Academic Formation and Careers of Mendicant Friars: A Regional Approach,' in *Studio e studia: le scuole degli ordini mendicanti tra XIII e XIV secolo*, pp. 197–217.

**187** *Fratri Thomeae vulgo dicti de Eccleston*, ed. Little, p. 53.

**188** John Pecham, *Quodlibeta Quatuor*, ed. Ferdinand M. Delorme and Girard J. Etzkorn (Grottaferrata: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1989), pp. 21\*–25\*; Etzkorn, 'Franciscan *Quodlibeta*, 1270–1285 John Pecham, Matthew of Aquasparta,' in *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages*, vol. 1, pp. 136–41 in pp. 135–49.

**189** *Matthaei Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, Historia Anglorum*, ed. Madden, vol. 2, p. 110: 'Libros continue suos, videlicet Bibliotecas, in forulis a collo dependentes bajulantes.' One of the items recovered by a recent archaeological excavation at the Oxford Greyfriars was a leather book satchel.

**190** *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, p. 454.

an unflagging zeal for collecting new materials and information from friars and clerics from different provinces.<sup>191</sup>

Adam's copy of Richard of St Victor's *De Trinitate* was forwarded to Paris to be collated against the Parisian exemplar.<sup>192</sup> His correspondents included Eudes Rigaud, archbishop of Rouen, Hugh of Digne, the Provençal mystic and Joachite, Geoffrey of Brie, minister provincial of France, John of Parma, and Bonaventure, successive ministers general, Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, during his stay in Gascony, the minister of the Trinitarian Friars in Paris, Thomas Gallus, the abbot of Sant Andrea at Vercelli, and the unnamed custodian of the Cordeliers of Paris. Adam sent to Grosseteste letters by Louis IX, king of France, and Eudes of Chateauroux, cardinal bishop of Frascati, regarding the disaster of Egypt and the fate which had befallen the Holy Land<sup>193</sup> and he reminded Grosseteste to return some documents to be restored to William of Nottingham.<sup>194</sup> In the summer of 1251 he notified Grosseteste that a trustworthy friar had brought him an account of the damage perpetrated by the Pastoureaux against the Parisian clergy.<sup>195</sup> He arranged for Friar Laurence to send the quires of the prophetic mother (Hildegard of Bingen) to Thomas of York, who was then at London. He also promised to let him have headings distinguishing the *summae* of the booklet.<sup>196</sup>

The passage of texts between Oxford and the Mediterranean world was a salient feature of Adam's correspondence. There was a scholastic triangle uniting Oxford, Vercelli and Lincoln. In a letter to Thomas Gallus in 1242/43 Adam explained the movement of texts in both directions:

I am sending you, as you command, the commentaries on *The Angelic Hierarchies*, etc. Your fatherly kindness, of which I have much experience, gives me confidence to make a request. Wherefore I earnestly entreat you to allow me to have, as soon as you conveniently can, both the commentaries on *The Mystical Theology*, which you have recently produced, and the *Questions* that you are at present engaged with on *The Divine Names* – you were willing to inform me of both the former and the latter by letter.<sup>197</sup>

Another friend of Grosseteste and Adam was Hugh of Digne, a reformer of the order, who sent two friars, Arnulph and Arnold, to his friends at Oxford and Lincoln in the

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**191** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 564–65. He asked Warin of Ashwell, the eleventh lecturer to the friars at Cambridge, to send him a copy of his treatise, *A new light has appeared to the Jews*, which had been written during a provincial chapter at London.

**192** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 484–85.

**193** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, i, pp. 52–55. See also pp. 348–49. Adam sends Simon de Montfort copies of papal letters addressed to the archbishop of Canterbury regarding the Holy Land and the depopulation of the region of Antioch.

**194** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, i, pp. 44–45.

**195** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, i, pp. 56–57, 76–77.

**196** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, ii, pp. 542–43.

**197** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, i, pp. 220–21.

late summer of 1250.<sup>198</sup> A copy of Grosseteste's translation with a commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* was transcribed for Hugh. In 1252 Adam arranged to have the volume transported to Hugh and requested Grosseteste to deliver the text to the London Greyfriars for collection by Master Peter, the rector of Wimbledon and the physician of the queen.<sup>199</sup> Grosseteste was informed that a friar from beyond the Alps had recently brought various extracts from the writings of Joachim of Fiore, the Calabrian abbot and prophet.<sup>200</sup> Copies of significant letters (*cartulae*) were sent from Genoa and London to Adam.<sup>201</sup>

The influence of Alexander of Hales among early Franciscan theologians ran deep and he was celebrated as the *doctor antiquus*.<sup>202</sup> His writings were consulted at Oxford shortly after his death in 1245. Rega Wood maintains that Richard Fishacre and Richard Rufus were influenced by him and they probably knew his *Summa Theologica*. She also draws attention to Rufus' quotation of Richard of St Victor via Alexander of Hales' *Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum* which was probably derived from an English manuscript, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 347.<sup>203</sup> Several 13th-century manuscripts of Alexander's *Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum*, *Summa Theologica* and *Quaestiones disputatae* were in the library of the Sacro Convento in Assisi (MSS 103, 104, 138, 105, 108, 138, 182, 186, 189) as well as his scriptural commentaries.<sup>204</sup> In 1287 Matthew of Aquasparta, a former regent master at Paris and Bologna, divided his books between the libraries of San Fortunato at Todi and the Sacro Convento in Assisi. The former received the *Tertius Alexandri* [31a], the *Secundus fratris Alexandri* [43a], the latter *Primus frater Alexandri* [24b] and the *Quartus fratris Alexandri* [33b].<sup>205</sup> His writings also circulated outside the order and they were known by Robert Kilwardby, the Dominican, who lectured on the *Sentences* at Oxford c.1255.<sup>206</sup> Alexander's name occurs in probate materials at an early stage. Roger of Thoritz on 2 February 1267 made a collection of books available to the Dominicans and Franciscans of Exeter, including Alexander of Hales' commentary on the *Senten-*

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**198** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, i, pp. 138–39. *Salimbene de Adam, Cronica*, ed. Scalia, vol. 1, pp. 352–53, where Grosseteste and Adam were deemed to be the special friends of Hugh.

**199** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, i, pp. 62–63, 64–65.

**200** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, i, pp. 118–19.

**201** *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Lawrence, i, pp. 78–79.

**202** Eric Doyle, O.F.M., 'A Bibliographical List by William Woodford, O.F.M.,' *Franciscan Studies* 35 (1975), p. 101 in pp. 93–106.

**203** Rega Wood, 'Early Oxford Theology,' in *Mediaeval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, Volume 1. Current Research*, ed. Evans, p. 314, n. 100 in pp. 289–343. The text cites Hugh of St Victor, but this is corrected to Richard in the critical edition. See also pp. 319, 326.

**204** Cesare Cenci, *Bibliotheca Manuscripta ad Sacrum Conventum*, 2 vols (Assisi: Casa editrice Franciscana, 1981), vol. 2, p. 769.

**205** Enrico Menestò, *I manoscritti medievali della biblioteca del convento Franciscano di San Fortunato di Todi* (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2009) pp. 69–73.

**206** Wood, 'Early Oxford Theology,' p. 290, n. 6, p. 295.

ces.<sup>207</sup> Among the manuscripts left by Master Gerard of Abbeville was a copy of the *Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, cod.-lat.16406). The Franciscan school of theology was, according to John Pecham, shaped by the teaching of Alexander of Hales and Bonaventure.<sup>208</sup>

Richard Rufus' lectures on the *Sentences* at Paris were, according to Rega Wood, based on the teaching of Bonaventure, preserving as much of his thought as possible.<sup>209</sup> He grounded his students in the *Sentences* of Master Peter Lombard and the writings of Bonaventure of Bagnoregio. He was, according to Dr Peter Raedts, 'bridging the gap between the Paris and Oxford tradition.' He and Bonaventure had been members of the same community in Paris for three years and, on his return to Oxford, Richard compiled an abbreviation of the latter's commentary on the *Sentences* (Assisi, Biblioteca Comunale, MS 176).<sup>210</sup> John of Wales, too, was conversant with the writings of the Seraphic Doctor, as his commentary in *Ioannem, Collationes super Ioannem* and his *Collationes super Mattaeum* attest; his commentary in *Ioannem* includes Bonaventuran texts produced between 1254 and 1257.<sup>211</sup> He introduced Henry of Wodestone to the writings of Bonaventure. Fr Robert J. Mokry, OFM, observes that Wodestone's *Summa de sacramentis*, which was completed in 1261 at Oxford, was highly derivative; direct quotations and summaries from the Seraphic Doctor's commentary on the *Sentences* and the *Breviloquium* account for about 48% of the text.<sup>212</sup> Thus, within four years of the date of the earliest known manuscript of the *Breviloquium* (Bibliothèque Municipale de Troyes, MS 1891)<sup>213</sup> the text was being employed and quoted at Oxford. Wodestone's *Summa de sacramentis* is, thus, an early witness to the transmission of the Bonaventuran treatise in England. Cambridge, Pembroke College Library, MS 265, contains a copy of John of La Rochelle's brief exposition of the *Pater noster* and Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, which later passed to the college library. It is one of the datable manuscripts in Cambridge. The title of the treatise affirms that Bonaventure composed it while he was the minister general. This particular copy was transcribed after his resignation as minister general, that is, between 22 May and 15 July 1274, when he was a cardinal bishop.<sup>214</sup> Hereford Cathedral

**207** *The Registers of Walter Bronescombe (A.D.1257–1280)*, ed. Hingeston-Randolph, p. 79.

**208** *Registrum epistolarum fratris Johannis Peckham*, ed. Martin, vol. 3, p. 901.

**209** Wood, 'Early Oxford Theology,' p. 319.

**210** Peter Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall and the Tradition of Oxford Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 9, 41–63.

**211** See Jenny Swanson, *John of Wales: A Study of the Works and Ideas of a Thirteenth-Century Friar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 12–13.

**212** Mokry, 'The *Summa de sacramentis* of Henry Wodestone, OMin. A Critical Edition,' pp. 6–8.

**213** Jacques G. Bougerol, *Les Manuscrits franciscains de la Bibliothèque de Troyes* (Grottaferrata: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1982), pp. 7\*-8\*, 261–62.

**214** Michael J.P. Robson, 'An Early and Datable Copy of Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* (Cambridge, Pembroke College Library, MS. 265),' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 113 (2020), p. 65 in pp. 55–80: 'Itinerarium mentis in Deum, editum a fratre Bonaventura, tunc VII ministro generali ordinis fratrum minorum, nunc cardinali Sabinens', sancte Romane ecclesie.'

Library, MS P.III.3, a late 13th-century miscellaneous text, contains the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* and *De triplici via* on folios 189r-208r. The manuscript was also described as ‘presumably from a friary in south-eastern England.’ The two Bonaventuran treatises are preceded by two sermons by Eustace of Arras, a former regent master in Paris.<sup>215</sup>

## Conclusion

Agnellus of Pisa’s decision to appoint Robert Grosseteste as the master of the friars’ school at Oxford was a stroke of brilliance, connecting them with a figure of towering intellectual stature, whose pastoral antennae were finely attuned to the mendicant vision. Lectors were trained to teach theology to the friars and a threefold structure of schools evolved by the later 1240s. While the local schools groomed friars for the ministry of preaching and hearing confessions, custodial *studia* had a wider brief and, among other things, they trained friars for the *studia generalia* and specialized apostolates. The order’s schools at Oxford and Cambridge prepared friars for the office of lector and instructed candidates for the baccalaureate and the doctorate. Although England was deemed to be remote from Assisi and Rome, the Oxford and Cambridge Greyfriars were far from insular. New insights, ideas and texts flowed between the leading schools and were reinforced by the transfer of friars from one school to another, creating a rich cosmopolitan community of philosophers and theologians who drew on materials beyond the English Channel and the Alps.

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<sup>215</sup> Mynors and Rodney M. Thomson with a contribution on bindings by Michael Gullick, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Hereford Cathedral Library* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1993), pp. 81–82.



Giles Gasper

# How to Teach the Franciscans: Robert Grosseteste and the Oxford Community of Franciscans c.1229 – 35

**Abstract:** Robert Grosseteste (c.1170 – 1253), polymath and sometime bishop of Lincoln, was between about 1229 and 1235 the first lector to the newly established Franciscan community at Oxford. This paper will explore what Grosseteste may have taught the Franciscans, based on 1. the results of large-scale interdisciplinary project on Grosseteste’s scientific works, 2. Grosseteste’s correspondence, pastoral care treatises, theological works, *Dicta*, and his Anglo-Norman poem *Le Chateau d’amour*, and 3. the Franciscan core of the *Lanercost Chronicle* and Thomas of Eccleston’s *De adventu* (on the arrival of the Franciscan’s in England). The chapter re-considers the effect of Grosseteste’s lectorship and what it is possible to know about its details.<sup>1</sup>

Robert Grosseteste is well-known for his support for the Franciscan Order, and his warm relations with many brothers of the English province. The Dominican Nicholas Trevet (c.1257x65 – in or after 1334), writing between 1314 and 1320, summarized this relationship in the following way:

He embraced the brothers of the [mendicant] orders, both the Preachers [Dominicans] and Minors [Franciscans], with sincere affection, and had them continuously in his household, counting it a delight to confer with them on Scripture. Above all others he had as his close friend Brother Adam of Marsh, from the diocese of Bath, of the Franciscan order, a celebrated and famous teacher in sacred theology/learning; on account of whose affection he left all his books as a legacy to the Franciscan community of Oxford.<sup>2</sup>

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1 A significant debt of thanks goes to Dr Sigbjørn Sønnesyn for his advice and help with this paper, and to the Centre for Catholic Studies, Durham University for the opportunity to seek feedback on an earlier version of this paper at a conference to mark the meeting of Saint Francis and Sultan Malek Al-Kami, *The Franciscan Legacy from the 13th Century to the 21<sup>st</sup> Assessing the Continuing Significance of St Francis and Franciscan Traditions of Theology, Spirituality, and Action*, November 5–7, 2019. My thanks too to all of the participants in the e-conferences on ‘Thirteenth-Century English Franciscan Thought’ organized over the summer in 2020.

2 Nicholas Trevet, *Annales ex regum Angliae, 1135–1307*, ed. Thomas Hog (London: English Historical Society, 1845) p. 243: ‘Hic fratres ordinis, tam Praedicatorum quam Minorum, sincera caritate amplectens, eos habuit continue in comitiva sua, delicias computans cum eis de Scripturis conferre. Prae ceteris etiam familiarem habuit fratrem Adam de Marisco Bathoniensis diocesis, ordinis Minorum, in sacra theologia doctorem eximium et famosum; ob cuius affectionem libros suos omnes conventui fratrum Minorum Oxoniae in testamentum legavit.’ On the inadequacies of Hog’s edition, see Frank A. C. Mantello, ‘The Editions of Nicholas Trevet’s *Annales sex regum Angliae*,’ *Revue d’histoire des textes* 10 (1982 for 1980), pp. 257–75; on Trevet see James G. Clark, ‘Trevet, Nicholas (b. 1257x65, d.



The continuing relation with Greyfriars, Oxford, and the emphasis on scripture first, are worth noting here. The *Lanercost Chronicle*, a Franciscan chronicle adapted at the Augustinian Priory of Lanercost, composed in two parts (1201–97 and 1298–1346), speaks to Grosseteste's use of the Franciscans within the diocese of Lincoln.

He kept such a jealous watch over the cure of souls, moreover, that, excepting long prayer vigils with which he reconciled God and sinners, he did not cease from going around visiting, and preaching to the common people, or, when he was not free to do so, he deputed the Franciscans, whom he kept continuously with him for the salvation of souls.<sup>3</sup>

Lincoln was a large territory to cover in the period: all of Lincoln, Huntingdon, Northampton, Leicester, Oxford, Buckingham, Bedford, Rutland, and most of Hertford, in eight archdeaconries, 77 deaneries, and c.1600 parishes.<sup>4</sup> The purposeful and positive role Grosseteste saw for mendicant learning and pastoral care, and their recognition of his support is corroborated by the Dominican Father Hubert's verse *Life of Grosseteste* completed soon after the latter's death in 1253.

They who deliver the word of God [Dominicans], and the Friars Minor [Franciscans],  
Mourn the death of their Father.  
He was the father and guardian for both orders.  
Each order was always admirable to him.  
The presence of the brothers pleased him, as did their  
Arrival, their multitude, and frequent conversation.  
He decreed that the brothers should have partners to share  
the burden, so that they might more easily endure the burden of their labour.  
As a mother to her new-born, he fostered, loved,  
Protected, fed, and valued them.  
Whether in private or in public, he did not know how to live without the brothers,  
They were also to hand, and he always stayed by them.  
Who will now be the guardian of the orphan brothers, to whom  
They may flee, and from whom they may receive help?

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in or after 1334),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27744>, accessed 22 March 2017].

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Stevenson, *Chronicon de Lanercost, 1201–1346 [Lanercost Chronicle]* (Edinburgh: The Bannatyne Club, 1839), s.a. 1235, p. 43: 'Animarum vero curae tantum incubuit, quod, exceptis longis orationum vigiliis quibus reconciliabat Dominum peccantibus, non ceslabat circuire visitando, et in vulgari populo praedicando, vel quando fibi non vacabat fratres Minores subrogando, quos quasi continue fecum propter animarum salutem detinebat.' The original was known in the 16th century as the chronicle of Friar Richard of Durham, although it was the work of two separate Franciscans; see A. G. Little, 'The Authorship of the Lanercost Chronicle,' *The English Historical Review* 31 (1916), pp. 269–79 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/XXXI.CXXII.269>].

<sup>4</sup> Richard W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 235.

Behold as Robert is laid low so is the defence of the brothers,  
Aid languishes, and eloquence is silent.<sup>5</sup>

Grosseteste's letter collection includes exchanges extolling the virtues of Franciscans as an order and as individuals.<sup>6</sup> In a sermon for Advent, on the apocalyptic imagery of Luke 21:25 ('And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars'), Grosseteste compares traditional and mendicant forms of regular life, using the analogy of the luminaries: 'But recently the dark cloud of poverty has burst forth in such an effulgence of heavenly living among the Friars Preachers and among the Friars Minor who profess the Rule of the blessed Francis that the very sun of the earlier order [Benedictines] seems in comparison with the later one much dimmed.'<sup>7</sup> Light was an essential part of Grosseteste's scientific and theological vision, and, as the lucent vocabulary applied to the mendicants indicates, for pastoral care as well.

## Oxford

It is the Oxford Franciscan community with whom Grosseteste had the closest relations, and who would themselves take an active part in the preservation of his memory, and the promotion of his work. Thomas of Eccleston, the chronicler of the arrival and establishment of the Friars Minor in England, marks the foundation of the first Oxford house in 1224 and some of the early members of the community.<sup>8</sup> Such mat-

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5 Father Hubert, *De Vita Beati Roberti Quondam Lincolnensis Episcopi*, in Richard W. Hunt, 'Verses on the Life of Robert Grosseteste,' *Mediaevalia et Humanistica* 1 (1970), pp. 246–51 in pp. 241–51: 'Verbum qui domini dispensant atque Minores / Patrem deplangunt occubuisse suum. / Hic pater et tutor fuit ordinis huius et huius / Ordo gratus ei semper uterque fuit. / Illi complacuit fratrum presenciam, fratrum / Adventus, fratrum copia, sermo frequens. / Consortes oneris fratres, decrevit habendos, / Ut levius posset ferre laboris onus. / Ut fetus teneros mater, sic fovit, amavit, / Protexit, pavit, appreciavit eos. / Vivere nescivit sine fratribus intus et extra, / Semper habebat eos, semper adhesit eis. / Quis modo tutor erit pupillis fratribus, ad quem / Confugient, a quo subvenietur eis? / Presidium fratrum iacet ecce iacente Roberto, / Auxilium languet eloquiumque tacet.'

6 For example, Robert Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Henry Richards Luard (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1861), Letter 41, pp. 133–34. English translation: *The Letters of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln*, trans. F. A. C. Mantello and Joseph W. Goering (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), pp. 160–62.

7 Michael Robson, 'Robert Grosseteste's Two Sermons to the Friars Minor in Commendation of Evangelical Poverty,' in *Robert Grosseteste and His Intellectual Milieu*, ed. John Flood, James R. Ginther and Joseph W. Goering (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2013), p. 107 and n. 20 in pp. 102–27: 'Sed nuper nubes obscura pauperitas in tantam erupit lucem celestis conversacionis in fratribus predicatoribus et in fratribus minoribus, qui profitentur regulam beati Francisci quod ipse sol prioris religionis in comparacione subsequentis multum videtur obscurari (...).'

8 Thomas of Eccleston, *Tractatus De Adventu Fratrum Minorum in Angliam*, ed. A. G. Little (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1951), p. 22.

ters were not accorded any great attention by non-Franciscan authors, for example, Matthew Paris. Grosseteste is an important presence in Eccleston's work, as the first lector to the Oxford community from c.1229/30 (the exact date is impossible to identify) until his election as Bishop of Lincoln in 1235.<sup>9</sup> Of his appointment as lector Eccleston remarks:

In that celebrated place, where the first learning flourished in England, and where the community of scholars was used to meeting, Brother Agnellus established a sufficiently worthy school at the brothers' location [Greyfriars], and requested and secured agreement from Robert Grosseteste of sacred memory that he would lecture there for the brothers. Under him they made inestimable progress within a short period of time, both in questions and in subtle morality suitable for preaching. When he therefore was translated by divine providence from the magisterial [office] to an episcopal seat, Master Peter, who was later appointed as bishop in Scotland, lectured to the brothers at the same place.<sup>10</sup>

This passage presents a number of issues for note: the importance to this community of scholastic learning, the 'questions', and preaching and its individual formation. Further questions might also be raised as to the nature of the community, the significance of Grosseteste's appointment and his reputation in 1229/30. Some context is needed and the implications of the various items of evidence are not entirely straightforward.

There are few details for Grosseteste's early life.<sup>11</sup> An early attestation as Master in a charter of Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, and a position 1195–98 in the household of William de Vere, Bishop of Hereford, indicate a date of birth in around 1170. It is impossible to be certain where Grosseteste undertook higher learning, though it was possibly in the Cathedral school at Lincoln. He seems to have been in France in 1209–14 during the interdict on England and probably retained connections with leading figures in the Diocese of Hereford, notably Hugh Foliot, Archdeacon of Shropshire and later Bishop of Hereford (1219–34). Visits to Paris between 1215 and 1225 or so seem probable given his later friendships, including William of Auvergne, and the range of philosophical and theological interests, including light,

<sup>9</sup> A. G. Little, *The Grey Friars in Oxford* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892), p. 30.

<sup>10</sup> Eccleston, *Tractatus De Adventu*, Collatio XI, 'De promotione lectorum', p. 48: 'Ampliato loco, ubi principale studium florebat in Anglia, et ubi universitas scholarium convernire consuevit, fecit frater Agnellus scholam satis honestam aedificari in loco fratrum, et impetravit a sanctae memoriae magistro Roberto Grosseteste, ut legeret ibi fratribus. Sub quo inaeestimabiliter infra breve tempus tam in quaestionibus quam praedicationi congruis subtilibus moralitatibus profecerunt. Ipso igitur ab cathedra magistrali in cathedram pontificalem providentia divina translato, legit fratribus ibidem magister Petrus qui postmodum in episcopum in Scotia promotus est.'

<sup>11</sup> For a summary Giles E. M. Gasper, Cecilia Panti, Hannah E. Smithson, Tom McLeish, Sigbjørn Sønnesyn, David Thomson, et al, *Knowing and Speaking: Robert Grosseteste's De artibus liberalibus 'On the Liberal Arts' and De generatione sonorum 'On the Generation of Sounds'*, esp. Chap. 1, pp. 15–21 and Chap. 9, pp. 203–14.

which he shared with contemporary Parisian theology.<sup>12</sup> Although plausible, a connection with Oxford before Grosseteste's appointment as lector to the Franciscans is difficult to demonstrate despite the long-standing (and faulty) tradition which made him the first chancellor in 1215 and suggestions that he was already lecturing in the schools from about 1225.<sup>13</sup>

Whatever suggestions are made, the first evidence for Grosseteste's formal involvement at Oxford post-dates 1229, the year in which he recalled having heard Agnellus of Pisa, provincial ministers of the Franciscans in England, preach in the city.<sup>14</sup> In 1231 Grosseteste, still archdeacon of Leicester, was named as part of a delegation to seek the freedom of several students who had been caught hunting, and in 1234, no longer archdeacon, he was part of a commission together with the Dominican Robert Bacon and the chancellor of the university to remove prostitutes from the city.<sup>15</sup> On a similar theme of moral reform is another early letter from Grosseteste to a master in theology admonishing him to control his carnal appetites.<sup>16</sup> A date of 1232–34 can be suggested for the letter since Grosseteste is not archdeacon nor yet bishop, though clearly operating in a scholarly milieu. A reference to the unnamed master as a preacher of the cross might be connected to the preaching of crusade ordered by Pope Gregory IX in 1234. Interestingly too Grosseteste describes himself at the end of the letter as inferior to, and less experienced than, his addressee. This would fit with the suggestion made particularly by Goering that Grosseteste took up formal theological studies late in life and perhaps co-terminously with his engagement to the Franciscans.<sup>17</sup> That would make Grosseteste as Master of Arts inferior to the lustful Master of Theology, and less experienced.

When Grosseteste took up his role with the Franciscans he was probably sixty and had been promoted rapidly since receiving what appears to have been his first benefice, the rectory of Abbotsley in Lincoln diocese only in 1225.<sup>18</sup> He was appointed

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**12** Joseph W. Goering, 'When and Where did Grosseteste Study Theology?' in *Robert Grosseteste: New Perspectives on His Thought and Scholarship*, ed. James McEvoy (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), pp. 39–43 in pp. 17–51.

**13** See Daniel A. Callus, 'Robert Grosseteste as Scholar,' in *Robert Grosseteste, Scholar and Bishop*, ed. Daniel A. Callus (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 7–10 in pp. 1–69, esp. p. 9; G. Pollard, 'The Legatine Award to Oxford in 1214 and Robert Grosseteste,' *Oxoniensia* 39 (1974), pp. 62–72. *Robert Grosseteste*, ed. James McEvoy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 22–29, follows this position. The question will be revisited in Giles E. M. Gasper, Tom McLeish, Hannah Smithson, Sigbjørn Sønnesyn et al., *Mapping the Heavens: Robert Grosseteste's De sphaera 'On the Sphere'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), Chapter 1 (Giles E. M. Gasper). On Grosseteste and the Oxford schools see Southern, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 70–75.

**14** Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Richards Luard, Letter 2, pp. 17–21.

**15** *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III, 1227–1231* (London: HMSO, 1902), p. 520; *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III, 1231–1234* (London: HMSO, 1905), p. 568.

**16** Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Richards Luard, Letter 10, pp. 48–50. For dating notes see Mantello and Goering, *The Letters of Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 80–82, nn. 1–3.

**17** Goering, 'When and Where did Grosseteste Study Theology?,' pp. 43–46.

**18** *Rotuli Hugonis de Welles*, ed. F. N. Davis, vol. III (London, Canterbury & York Society, 1908), p. 48.

archdeacon of Leicester in 1229, and bishop of the diocese six years later. It is at the point of his promotion to archdeacon that he seems to have encountered mendicant evangelism in a powerful way. In the same year Grosseteste, as noted above, heard Jordan of Saxony, the Master-General of the Dominicans, preach in Oxford, on the sin of pride and academic achievement; later, when bishop, Grosseteste corresponded with Jordan recalling their conversations during this visit.<sup>19</sup> This encounter was, presumably, an important part of the process by which Agnellus came to appoint Grosseteste as lector.<sup>20</sup>

Grosseteste remained as archdeacon until 1232 when he resigned from this and all other positions, keeping only the income from St Margaret's Leicester, his prebend at Lincoln Cathedral.<sup>21</sup> This rather dramatic rejection of everything but a single benefice he reported in letters to his sister and to his friend, and soon-to-be Franciscan friar, Adam Marsh.<sup>22</sup> The extent to which this was in response to the mendicant life and ideals to which he had been exposed might be pondered.

There are other sources of connection between Grosseteste and the friars which relate to his Hereford connections. Grosseteste's probable sponsor and supporter Hugh Foliot who, as bishop of Hereford, may well have encountered the first Dominicans to enter England, when returning from pilgrimage to Santiago da Compostela at Easter 1221 in company with Peter des Roches.<sup>23</sup> Peter was Bishop of Winchester, tutor and guardian to the king, and one of the triumvirate ruling England from 1219 during Henry III's minority, but lost power and influence as the king's majority drew closer, and the pilgrimage almost certainly had a political aspect.<sup>24</sup> The Franciscans arrived in England in 1224, and were established at Canterbury, Oxford, and also Hereford before 1228; in the case of the latter supported by bishop Hugh. Whether the establishment of the order at Hereford had any further significance for Grosseteste's appointment at Oxford is impossible to say, but a broader range of possibilities should be borne in mind.

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<sup>19</sup> Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Richards Luard, Letter 40, pp. 131–33.

<sup>20</sup> See Eccleston, *Tractatus De Adventu*, p. 48.

<sup>21</sup> Southern, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 74–75.

<sup>22</sup> Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Richards Luard, Letters 8–9, pp. 43–47.

<sup>23</sup> Nicholas Trevet, *Annales*, ed. Hog, p. 209; on the pilgrimage itself *Annales de Dunstaplia*, in *Annales monastici*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, vol. iii (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1864), p. 68

<sup>24</sup> D. A. Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III* (London: Methuen, 1990), pp. 239–43; Nicholas Vincent, *Peter des Roches: An Alien in English Politics, 1205–1238* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 199–204.

## What was Grosseteste's Academic Work when Lector?

The current consensus of the chronology of Grosseteste's works places the beginning of his lectorship at an intriguing juncture. It is probable that his final treatise on natural phenomena, *On the Rainbow*, was completed in the year or two around 1230s.<sup>25</sup> This treatise brings to a close a long period of reflection on natural philosophy, commencing at the end of the 12th century, working through a significant body of Latin translation of Aristotle, Ptolemy, and Islamicate authors such as Abu Ma'shar, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, Thābit, and al-Bitrūjī. Twelve shorter treatises are accompanied by a full commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, a partial commentary on his *Physics* and textbooks *On the Sphere* and the *Compotus/On Time Reckoning*.<sup>26</sup> The fruits of this labour are to be seen in Grosseteste's later biblical exegesis, pastoral care literature, translations from Greek authors (including Aristotle), and speculative theology. How natural philosophy is put to the service of theology is a key element in Grosseteste's theological enterprise.

This enterprise coincides most clearly with Grosseteste's period as lector, although this also involves the complex, and probably unfeasible task, of identifying when his regent mastership in theology began.<sup>27</sup> It concluded at the same time as his office with the Franciscans in 1235 and his election to Lincoln. Various dates for its

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<sup>25</sup> For the current consensus on the chronology of these writings see Cecilia Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter's Physics of Light, Remarks on the Transmission, Authenticity, and Chronology of Grosseteste's Scientific *Opuscula*,' in *Robert Grosseteste and His Intellectual Milieu*, ed. John Flood, James R. Ginther, and Joseph W. Goering, pp. 165–190, summarised at p. 185.

<sup>26</sup> The current critical editions for these texts are: Robert Grosseteste, *Commentarius in VIII Libros Physicorum Aristotelis*, ed. R. C. Dales (Colorado: University of Colorado Press, 1963); Robert Grosseteste, *Commentarius in Posteriorum Analyticorum libros*, ed. Piero Rossi (Florence: Olschki, 1981); Robert Grosseteste, *Compotus*, ed. and trans. Alfred Lohr and C. Philipp E. Nothaft (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). The scientific opuscula were first edited by Ludwig Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke des Robert Grosseteste, Bishops von Lincoln* (Aschendorff: Münster i.W., 1912). A number have been re-edited: Cecilia Panti, *Moti, virtù e motori celesti nella cosmologia di Roberto Grossatesta: Studio ed edizione dei trattati 'De sphaera', 'De cometis', 'De motu supercelestium'* (Florence: Sismel-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2001). For the other scientific opuscula see Cecilia Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste's *De luce*: A Critical Edition,' in *Robert Grosseteste and His Intellectual Milieu*, ed. John Flood, James R. Ginther, and Joseph W. Goering (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2013), pp. 193–238 and translated by Neil Lewis in the same volume, pp. 239–47. The text of the critical edition of the *De luce*, without critical apparatus is printed in Cecilia Panti, *Roberto Grossatesta, La Luce* (Pisa: Edizioni Plus-Pisa University Press, 2011); G. Dinkova-Bruun, et al., *The Dimensions of Colour, Robert Grosseteste's De colore* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2013); the remaining opuscula will be published from the Ordered Universe project in six volumes, the first of which is in print: Gasper, Panti, Smithson, McLeish, Sønnesyn, and Thomson, et al., *Knowing and Speaking*.

<sup>27</sup> James Ginther, *Master of the Sacred Page: A Study of the Theology of Robert Grosseteste, ca. 1229/30–1235* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 5.

inception have been proposed from 1214 to 1225, all with their flaws, with issues relating to: the necessity or not of priesting, and when that took place; different models and assumptions for Grosseteste's career, and whether he undertook theological training in Paris in the first decade of the 13th century; and his putative role as *Magister scholarum*. The Franciscan lectorship itself forms a significant element in the evidence, suggesting a regency from about 1229 to 1235, and while an earlier date should not be ruled out entirely it is difficult to establish with any certainty.<sup>28</sup>

Whatever the case, the bulk of Grosseteste's theological writings, the relative dating of which is as complex as the case for the scientific works, seem to have been composed during his time with the Franciscans. The corpus of work comprises the *Commentary on Psalms*, the extracts of glosses on the Pauline Epistles and comments on Galatians, the *Hexaemeron* and the *De cessatione legalium* (preserving the lectures on Genesis, Daniel and Isaiah), the records of disputation, *De dotibus*, *De veritate*, *De ordine*, and *De libero arbitrio*, the *Dicta*, a number of sermons including three to the Franciscan community, the pastoral works *De decem mandatis* and the *Notus in Iudea Deus*, the twin treatises on angels and form which also circulate as Letter 1, and the next nine or so letters of his collection (most of which relate to other business than teaching, including legal cases and the resignation of his archdeaconry), and the Anglo-Norman verse treatise the *Chateau d'Amour*.<sup>29</sup>

The implications of this exegetical, theological, and pastoral output are important for Grosseteste's education of the Franciscans. A strong emphasis on the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* as cardinal, the fall of humanity and its consequences, and the restorative and redeeming work of Christ (including a role for the devil) form the core concerns. Differing levels of expertise are catered for across the range of Grosseteste's writing, which may reflect different audiences as well as different authorial intentions. It is possible that Grosseteste taught other students than only the Franciscans at Oxford. The importance of *pastoralia*, the literature of pastoral care should not be underestimated either.<sup>30</sup> Interest in *pastoralia* required theolog-

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**28** Callus, 'Robert Grosseteste as Scholar,' pp. 6–11; McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 25; Southern, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 69–71; Ginther, *Master of the Sacred Page*, p. 20. See also Goering 'When and Where did Grosseteste Study Theology?' The issues turn on, first, the question of whether Grosseteste could have learnt and taught theology as a deacon rather than as a priest: Southern insists on the priesthood, and a later date (1225) (Southern, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 70); McEvoy disputed whether this was necessary (McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 22–26). Goering in his summary, 'When and Where did Grosseteste Study Theology?' supports Southern on the later date. The second question concerns the chancellorship of the University at Oxford and its relationship to a regent mastership in theology (see above, n. 12).

**29** Ginther, *Master of the Sacred Page*, pp. 13–24; Michael Robson, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Franciscan School at Oxford (c. 1229–1235),' *Antonianum* 95 (2020), p. 355 in pp. 345–82.

**30** Joseph W. Goering and F.A.C. Mantello, 'The *Meditaciones* of Robert Grosseteste,' *Journal of Theological Studies* 36 (1985), pp. 118–28; Joseph W. Goering and F.A.C. Mantello, 'The *Perambulavit Iudas...* (*Speculum confessionis*) Attributed to Robert Grosseteste,' *Revue Bénédictine* 96 (1986), pp. 125–68; see also Leonard Boyle, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Pastoral Care,' *Medieval and Renais-*



ical literacy but not theological training of the sort demanded in the magistracy. In terms of sermons this underpins the crucial movement from classroom to preaching, part of the life of the university, and essential for the evangelical mission to the wider Christian community. By the time of his appointment to the Franciscans Grosseteste was also a master of the field of confessional and penitential literature, an interest which began perhaps as early as 1200 with the *De modo confitendi*, with other texts produced at regular intervals.<sup>31</sup> The *Meditations* seem to date to about 1215 or so, the *Templum Dei* from c.1219 onwards, with the *Speculum ecclesiae* following in the mid-1220s.<sup>32</sup> While *Deus est* is better placed in his episcopal period, the *Notus in Iudea Deus* may well date to the lectorship.<sup>33</sup> It is worth noting here that this last treatise deals with the issue of confession in the vernacular, which might be taken as additional material to establish Grosseteste's concerns in this area alongside the composition of the *Chateau d'Amour*.

## Grosseteste and Franciscan Learning

The nature and impact of Grosseteste's teaching at Greyfriars have been discussed to different purposes and the evidence can be interpreted to differing ends. Michael Robson's recent discussion examines the nature of Grosseteste appointment, his teaching and writing during the period, especially the three sermons to the community, a wider consideration of the theological formation for the brothers, and the continued interest shown to the school by Grosseteste during his episcopal career. Robson notes that 'Grosseteste was the midwife at the birth of the theological tradition in the English province and bequeathed an enduring interest in philosophical, mystical and pastoral texts to the friars.'<sup>34</sup> While it is clear that Grosseteste was influential over the generation of English Franciscans over whom he had charge, the longevity of that influence is more difficult to determine. Cecilia Panti, in her discussion of Grosseteste, Roger Bacon and Thomas Docking, and use and reuse of aspects of Gros-

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sance Studies 8 (1979), pp. 3–51, repr. in Leonard Boyle, *Pastoral Care, Clerical Education, and Canon Law, 1200–1400* (London: Variorum, 1981).

31 Joseph W. Goering and F.A.C. Mantello, 'The Early Penitential Writings of Robert Grosseteste,' *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 54 (1987), pp. 52–111.

32 Goering and Mantello, 'The *Meditaciones* of Robert Grosseteste,' pp. 118–28; Robert Grosseteste, *Templum Dei*, c. XXI.3–4, ed. Joseph W. Goering and F.A.C. Mantello (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984).

33 Siegfried Wenzel, 'Robert Grosseteste's Treatise on Confession, *Deus est*,' *Franciscan Studies* 30 (1970), pp. 218–93; Joseph W. Goering and F.A.C. Mantello, '*Notus in Iudea Deus*: Robert Grosseteste's Confessional Formula in Lambeth Palace MS 499,' *Viator* 18 (1987), pp. 253–73.

34 Robson, 'Grosseteste and the Franciscan School,' p. 381. I am much indebted to Robson's discussion of Grosseteste and the Oxford Franciscans; the current discussion approaches similar questions but from different evidential perspectives.



seteste's thought on light rays and the rainbow, points to the rather different and divergent routes taken by the later Franciscan writers.<sup>35</sup>

Part of what will be explored below are treatises known to date from the period of the lectorship, in a manner similar to Robson, but with a different purpose. There is, in Grosseteste's theological works, a frequent use of analogies drawn from his earlier treatises on natural philosophy, a good example being the *Hexaameron*.<sup>36</sup> The 'scientific' works were probably completed by 1229, the theology proper comes perhaps from the mid-1220s, perhaps later, and the *Dicta* offer a particularly intriguing crossover with the theological.<sup>37</sup> The interests of Grosseteste's Franciscan students can be brought to the fore in this connection, especially those attributed to Adam of Exeter. In addition, the question of Grosseteste's legacy amongst the Franciscans raises further evidential issues about how that legacy was curated. In the passage from Eccleston quoted above it is Robert Grosseteste 'of sacred memory [*a sanctae memoriae*]' who is recalled. Eccleston probably compiled his material from the early 1230s and completed his text by 1258. Grosseteste was, therefore, by this point deceased, and the early efforts to disseminate records of his sanctity had begun. The later *Lanercost Chronicle* is equally confident in Grosseteste's holiness, its earlier sections written during the period of the later 13th and early 14th centuries in which two attempts at canonization were made. Grosseteste's qualities, as holy, learned, and skilled in preaching, as emphasised within the narrative sources are instructive and should be held against the other evidence for his activities at Greyfriars. Association with holiness may have particular rhetorical force.

## What did the Brothers Learn?

As Robson notes the training of friars for pastoral ministry was a central emphasis of Grosseteste's lectorship. How this was done, what curriculum was followed is difficult to state in detail, though important elements can be discerned fairly straightforwardly. There seems to have been an early decision that the Franciscans at Oxford

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**35** Cecilia Panti, 'The Theological Use of Science at the Oxford Franciscan School: Thomas Docking, Roger Bacon, and Robert Grosseteste's Works,' in *The Franciscan Order in the Medieval English Province and Beyond*, ed. Michael Robson and Patrick Zutshi (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), pp. 185–96 at pp. 181–210.

**36** Robert Grosseteste, *Hexaameron*, ed. Richard C. Dales and Servus Gieben (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). See also Giles E.M. Gasper, 'The Fulfilment of Science: Nature, Creation and Man in the *Hexaameron* of Robert Grosseteste,' in *Robert Grosseteste and the Pursuit of Religious and Scientific Learning in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jack Cunningham and Mark Hocknull, *Studies in the History of Philosophy of Mind* 18 (Heidelberg: Springer, 2016), pp. 221–42.

**37** Joseph W. Goering, 'Robert Grosseteste's *Dicta*: The State of the Question,' in *Robert Grosseteste and his Intellectual Milieu*, ed. John Flood, James R. Ginther, and Joseph W. Goering (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2013), pp. 64–86.

would not enrol in the Faculty of Arts.<sup>38</sup> What Grosseteste taught them was probably more theologically orientated, which would fit the suggestions that these years mark his own magistracy in theology but incorporating the liberal arts and natural philosophy as well. It is hard to see why he would not have taught the importance of astronomy, computus, and the notions of heat, motion, light, and body, that his natural philosophical corpus includes. Or, that his commentaries on *Posterior Analytics* or *Physics* might not have enjoyed fraternal circulation, as tailored to the aptitude and interests of his students, individually and collectively. That all was bent to a pastoral end, however, is clear from the narrative sources.

Some general statements of the benefits of Grosseteste's teaching are recorded in Thomas of Eccleston's comments on other English Franciscans. Of Peter of Tewkesbury (the Guardian of Greyfriars, London, 1234–36, Custodian of Oxford 1236?–48, Minister of Cologne 1250, and the fifth provincial of England 1254–56x57), Eccleston notes that:

He merited a special love received from the Lord Bishop of Lincoln, from whom he often heard many nuggets of wisdom. For he [Lincoln] said to him [Peter] once that unless the brothers cultivated learning, and studiously devoted to themselves to the divine law, the same thing would certainly happen to us as to other religious who we see walking in the darkness of ignorance, for shame [Isaiah 9:2]!<sup>39</sup>

The emphasis on the importance of learning within the early Oxford Franciscan community is clear, as is the pastoral focus. In this connection Grosseteste's answer to a particular brother on the challenges of preaching are noted in the *Lanercost Chronicle*:

One time, when a brother asked him whether it was beneficial for the soul to hear foul things abroad in the province to expiate for the souls of others, and defile one's own soul with fetid thoughts as with heaps of dung, he responded with a parable in this way: 'If someone noticed his own kingdom, castle, or court about to be destroyed, having been set on fire, and ordered soldiers and others to act valiantly, and not spare themselves, to extinguish the roused flames, and he also saw some people, leave their work half-burnt, and some people fouled by smoke and soot, he would not on account of this think any less gratefully of them if they had ruined or spoiled the garments they had received from him in order to safeguard his honour. Thus, the Saviour easily restores the beauty of the soul itself, which had been disfigured on account of His honour.'<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Robson, 'Grosseteste and the Franciscan School,' p. 354.

<sup>39</sup> Eccleston, *Tractatus De Adventu*, Collatio XV, De speciali profectu quorundam fratrum – *Concerning a Particular Journey of Certain Brothers*, p. 91: 'Ipse speciali dilectione domini Lincolniae ditari meruit, a quo plura secreta sapientiae frequenter audivit. Dixit enim ei aliquando, quod nisi fratres foverent studium et studiose vacarent legi divinae, pro certo similiter contingeret de nobis, sicut de aliis religiosis quos videmus in tenebris ignorantiae, proh dolor! Ambulare.'

<sup>40</sup> *Lanercost Chronicle*, ed. Stevenson, s.a. 1253, pp. 43–44: 'Consulenti se cuidam semel fratri utrumne salubre effet animae in foro provinciae pro aliorum animabus expiandis turpia audire, et conceptionibus foetidis, quasi quibusdam stercorebus congestis, animam propriam foedare; respondit

Alongside preaching Grosseteste also addressed the most important emphasis of the Franciscan order, that of poverty. A sermon on Luke 6:20 ('Blessed are the poor for yours is the kingdom of God'), part of the Sermon on the Mount, was delivered to a Friars Chapter in Oxford, between 1229 and 1234.<sup>41</sup> The sermon, which is also recorded as a treatise *Tractatus de scala pauperitatis domini Lyncolniensis* (Cambridge, UL MS li.I.19, fol. 201a) encapsulates the theological programme outlined above; an exploration of the history of creation, original sin, the restoration of humanity by the Son of God, and the call to conversion. As Michael Robson analyses the sermon, the particular emphasis is on humility: the humility of Incarnation which then forms the pattern for Christian life; humility as an appropriate virtue for the penitent for example in the lives of the saints; the instinct to curb pride; and humble service for example of Paul in serving nascent Christian communities. Grosseteste then moves to pride, which goads people to the accumulation of wealth and falsity, a forerunner in some senses to his annoyance in 1247 at the two English Franciscans who organised the papal tax in that year and adopted too lavish a lifestyle in so doing (at least according to Matthew Paris). The temptations and dangers of wealth are given extra dimension with quotation of Bernard of Clairvaux's *Apologia to Abbot William* on the architectural excesses of Cluny.<sup>42</sup> The contemporary context of the building projects at Assisi managed by the sometime Minister General Elias, and the controversy that the grandeur of the construction provoked, should be recalled.<sup>43</sup> Here, then, Grosseteste brings together his lessons for the Franciscans: poverty does not preclude learning, but learning needs to be focused on its proper object.

## The *Château d'Amour*

The use of architectural imagery as an explanatory device plays a dominant role in Grosseteste's Anglo-Norman verse-treatise the *Château d'amour*. An extended treatment of the loss and restoration of creation, the poem incorporates an allegorical de-

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parabolice sic, "si quis suum regnum, castrum, vel curiam, abortis incendiis, adverteret destruenda, ac armigeris et aliis juberet fortiter agere, nec sibi parcere ut excitatas flammam extinguere, videret quoque quosdam de labore semiustos redire, quosdam fumo et fuligine denigratos, non propter hoc minus eos gratos sibi reputaret si indumenta ab eo recepta pro ejus honore salvando corrumpere vel foedarent. Sic Salvator facile animae suam restituit decorem, quae deturpata fuerit propter suum honorem."

<sup>41</sup> Robson, 'Robert Grosseteste's Two Sermons to the Friars Minor,' pp. 110–18; see also Michael Robson, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Greyfriars in the Diocese of Lincoln,' in *Robert Grosseteste and the Beginnings of a British Theological Tradition*, ed. Maura O'Carroll (Rome: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 2003), p. 299 in pp. 289–317; Robson, 'Grosseteste and the Franciscan School,' p. 355.

<sup>42</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *Apologia ad Guillelmum Abbatem*, in *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, vol. 3, *Tractatus et opuscula*, ed. H. Rochais and J. Leclercq (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1963).

<sup>43</sup> Michael Robson, *Francis of Assisi* (London: Chapman, 1997), pp. 267–68; Anna Welch, *Liturgy, Books and Franciscan Identity in Medieval Umbria* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), p. 73.

scription of the Virgin Mary as the castle in which Jesus Christ took refuge.<sup>44</sup> This comes at about the mid-point of the poem, which begins with a defence of the use of Anglo-Norman: ‘So that each in his own language might truly know his God and his redemption, I begin my account in French for those who have no acquaintance with learning or Latin.’<sup>45</sup> A summary of the author’s intentions follows: he will speak of the world, why it was made, and given to Adam; of Paradise and heaven, given to him also, then how it was lost, restored, and given back again.<sup>46</sup> Grosseteste then offers an attenuated account of creation and the fall of humanity in Genesis; he then moves to the story of the four daughters of a powerful king, and his son, by whom the father made all within his realm. The four daughters Mercy, Truth, Justice, and Peace were each given ‘a portion of his substance, of his mind, and of his strength.’<sup>47</sup> Arguments amongst the family are used to establish the point the virtue is a unity for God. The poem then moves to the need for Christ to become man, using Anselm of Canterbury’s thought on the matter, and the names of Christ as declaimed in Isaiah 9:6: ‘Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.’ The tour of the castle, with close attention to architectural and military detail, is placed under Wonderful, the evocation of Satan in the wilderness under Counsellor. The poem ends with the last judgment, and finally the entrance of the Prince of Peace.<sup>48</sup>

While older interpretations identify the poem as courtly literature, and date it to the 1250s, the dating of c.1230 proposed by the first critical editor seems far more plausible.<sup>49</sup> Half of the medieval records of the poem give the author’s title as *Magister*, that is ‘Master’, rather than bishop.<sup>50</sup> To visit the question of pre-episcopal authorship also begs the question of audience. Mackie, in particular, has advanced the convincing suggestion that the poem was composed for the Franciscans of Oxford.<sup>51</sup> If this is the case then what is presented is an example of what Grosseteste thought

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**44** See Abigail Wheatley, *The Idea of the Castle in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2004).

**45** Murray, *Le château d’amour de Robert Grosseteste, évêque de Lincoln* (Paris: Champion, 1918), p. 89: ‘E ke chescun en sun langage / En li conuisse sanz folage, / Son Deu e sa redempcio.’ English translation from Evelyn Mackie, ‘Robert Grosseteste’s Anglo-Norman Treatise On the Loss and Restoration of Creation, Commonly Known as *Le château d’amour*: an English Prose Translation,’ in *Robert Grosseteste and the Beginnings of a British Theological Tradition*, ed. Maura O’Carroll, p. 160 in pp. 151–79.

**46** Paraphrasing from Mackie, ‘Robert Grosseteste’s Anglo-Norman Treatise,’ p. 160.

**47** Murray, *Le château d’amour*, p. 95: ‘A chescune dona par sei / Sun afferant de sa sustance / De sun sen e de sa puissance.’ English translation from Mackie, ‘Robert Grosseteste’s Anglo-Norman Treatise.’

**48** Mackie, ‘Robert Grosseteste’s Anglo-Norman Treatise,’ pp. 158–59.

**49** Murray, *Le château d’amour*, p. 64.

**50** Mackie, ‘Robert Grosseteste’s Anglo-Norman Treatise,’ pp. 153–54.

**51** Mackie, ‘Robert Grosseteste’s Anglo-Norman Treatise,’ pp. 154–56. See also her ‘Scribal Intervention and the Question of Audience,’ in *Editing Robert Grosseteste*, ed. Evelyn A. Mackie and Joseph Goering (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2003), pp. 61–77.

appropriate for the communication of essential Christian teachings, both in terms of style and content. The emphasis on the range of analogies and visualization, the focus on an argument of atonement which allows the Devil his rights, go alongside arguments for the necessity of the Incarnation, and the hopefulness for salvation in all of its beauty, reflected by that of the Virgin, order, peace, and joy. Plenty of examples are offered for simple and striking ways to explain the complex arguments discussed. The vernacular offers the suggestion for an intended lay audience, and perhaps a comment on the prior learning and social status of some of the Oxford Franciscans. Although written in the vernacular, the theological frame is that of the *Hexameron* and *De cessatione legalium*, as well as Grosseteste's reflections on natural phenomena, or, as might be said, science.

## Science and the *Dicta*

As noted above, Grosseteste's interests in natural philosophy coincide with the beginning of his lectorship to the Franciscans. It is interesting in this connection to note the place given to the rainbow in the castle section of the *Château d'amour*. At the centre of the castle, in the middle of the tallest tower, the description reaches its denouement:

Inside this fine and beautiful tower there is an ivory throne which shines more brightly than daylight in midsummer. It is skilfully designed, with seven steps arranged to approach it. Nothing in the world is so beautiful. The rainbow with all its colours extends around it.<sup>52</sup>

Grosseteste's scientific interests provided more than spiritual analogies for the Oxford community. Adam of Exeter, one of the early members, who became close to Grosseteste before leaving on pilgrimage and dying in southern Italy in or around 1232, was the probable author of a text on a treatise *On the Ebb and Flow of the Tide*, for a long time attributed to Grosseteste.<sup>53</sup> This makes heavy use in particular

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<sup>52</sup> Murray, *Le château d'amour de Robert Grosseteste, évêque de Lincoln*, pp. 106–7: 'En cele bele tur et bone / I ad de ivoire une trone / Ki plus ad en sei blancheur / Ke en mi esté le beau jur. / Par engine est compassez; / Al munter i ad set degrez / Ki par order cochez sunt / Ni a si bele chose el mund / Le arc du ciel entour s'estent / Od la color k'a li apent.' English translation from Mackie, 'Robert Grosseteste's Anglo-Norman Treatise,' p. 167.

<sup>53</sup> Attributions to this text have varied: to Grosseteste in R.C. Dales, 'The Text of Robert Grosseteste's *Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris* with an English Translation,' *Isis* 57 (1966), pp. 455–74. Dales changed his mind about the attribution a decade later, preferring Adam Marsh: 'Adam Marsh, Robert Grosseteste, and the *Treatise on the Tides*,' *Speculum* 52 (1977), pp. 900–1. Southern preferred an identification with Adam of Exeter, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 122–23, which is followed by Panti, 'Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter's Physics of Light,' pp. 168–73. See also Edgar Laird, 'Robert Grosseteste, Albumasar, and Medieval Tidal Theory,' *Isis* 81 (1990), pp. 684–94.

of Abu Ma'shar, although to different conclusions than Grosseteste's own treatment of tides in his *On the Nature of Places* composed between 1225 and 1229.<sup>54</sup>

Scientific explanation and analogy abound in another, important set of Grosseteste's writings, the *Dicta* which have a close relation to his time at Greyfriars. The *Dicta* consists of 147 pieces, longer and shorter, which may have originated as 'notes for his lectures, disputations, and sermons held in that very building.'<sup>55</sup> Although compiled during his episcopacy they seem to have been written for the most part in a compressed period in the early 1230s. They include commentary on Psalms 1–64, sermons, and other short notes on particular subjects. *Dictum* 141 provides a good example of the way in which Grosseteste blends his interests to serve an exegetical and moral point:

Humility is the love of persisting in a rank proportionate to one's entire state of being, in the way that arrogance is the love of persisting in a rank higher than appropriate for oneself. This love, moreover, may exist in a human being before they become aware of what is proportionate to themselves according to themselves according to their specific and diverse circumstances. But when the knowledge of ranks proportionate to individual states of being is added to this love, it is as if drawn towards the specific nature of humility.

To make what I am now saying clearer, I will present the following example: the light of the sun is the only light in the sun or in the Ether, having in itself nothing except the nature of light; and as far as its own nature goes, it could exist in this way itself and not be incorporated into these inferior natures. When the sun nevertheless is joined to colour existing in the transparent [thing] through which it passes, for instance the colour of glass, it incorporates itself by necessity in this colour and draws it along with itself, and this colour comes to be in the nature of the light and the light in the nature of the colour, and the colour becomes yellow, or green, or red, in accordance with the colour through which it passes. Nor can this ray not be a coloured ray, even if it is separate from all colour in the Ether or in the sun.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Dales, 'The Text of Robert Grosseteste's *Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris*,' pp. 458–68, English translation at pp. 468–73.

<sup>55</sup> Goering, 'Robert Grosseteste's *Dicta*,' p. 72. Robert Grosseteste, *Dicta*, transcription of Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 798 (SC 2656), ed. Joseph W. Goering and Edwin J. Westermann (2003): <https://ordered-universe.com/dicta/>.

<sup>56</sup> Grosseteste, *Dictum* 141: 'Humilitas est amor persistendi in ordine sibi congruo secundum omnes condiciones suas, sicut superbia est amor persistendi in superiori quam sibi congruit. Iste autem amor potest esse in homine antequam cognoscat que congruant sibi secundum singulas et diversas condiciones. Cum autem huic amori additur cognitio ordinum congruencium condicionum singularum, distrahitur quasi in specialiore naturam humilitatis. / Ut autem quod nunc dico sit evidencius, pono exemplum tale: Lux solis in sole vel in ethere sola lux est, nichil habens in se nisi naturam lucis, et quantum est de natura sua, talis posset in seipsa existere et numquam incorporari in hiis inferioribus naturis. Cum tamen lux solis adiungitur colori existenti in perspicuo per quod transit, utpote colori vitri, incorporat se necessario illi colori, et trahit secum colorem illum, et fit ille color in natura luminis et lumen in natura coloris, et est radius vel croceus, vel viridis, vel rubeus, secundum quod est color per quem transit. Nec potest illi radius non esse radius coloratus, licet in ethere et in sole sit divisus ab omni colore.'

The *Dictum* draws on and moves further than Grosseteste's treatise *On Colour*, which states that colour is light embodied in something transparent, in this case glass, as well as his enduring interest in light.

Nothing in the collection suggests a peculiarly Franciscan audience, as against a scholastic, and all of the texts are in Latin. Nevertheless, some twenty-seven of the *Dicta* offer thoughts on the subject of the poor, or more specifically of poverty.<sup>57</sup> *Dictum* 94 on 'The Opposition of Poverty and Riches' inverts the material understanding of wealth, which is false, and emphasizes Christ as pre-eminently poor. *Dictum* 143 'That Poverty is Glorious because Similar to the Life of Paradise and Heaven' is one of the shortest:

Since a rich man is said to be one who possesses many things, that poor man is said to be so by virtue of having nothing of his own. According to this understanding of poverty, it appears glorious, because it is similar to the life of paradise and the life of heaven. For in the happiness of paradise, before the fall of humanity, nothing was owned personally. Similarly, in the country of heaven there will be no possessions, but all things in common for all; so, the reward of the kingdom of heaven is properly promised to poverty.<sup>58</sup>

Natural phenomena, biblical exegesis, preaching, and practical Christianity characterize the *Dicta* and make them, alongside their general scholastic valence, a potentially intriguing insight into Franciscan learning under Grosseteste.

## Library and Legacy

It is, unfortunately, difficult to know the extent of the library resources open to the friars at Oxford; the library suffered badly at the dissolution, and no catalogue survives. That said, and as Kathryn Humphreys has demonstrated, some of the library can be reconstructed from comments by medieval readers, which occasionally include mention of pressmarks. As she states, 'This is mainly due to the presence of books and working notes inherited from Robert Grosseteste.'<sup>59</sup> How far any of these mentions can be taken to refer to the early years of the house is moot, but the references include the commentary on the *Physics*, according to notes made by William of Alnwick and a glossed version of Abu Ma'shar by Grosseteste, which is

<sup>57</sup> Grosseteste, *Dicta* 2, 11, 13, 23, 30, 35, 36–37, 46, 50, 52, 57, 61, 72, 84, 90, 91, 100, 102–3, 108, 116, 137, 140, 147.

<sup>58</sup> Grosseteste, *Dictum* 143: 'Cum Dives dicatur qui multa possidet propria, ille merito pauper dicetur qui nichil habet proprium. Secundum hanc itaque rationem paupertatis apparet paupertas gloriosa, quia vite paradisi et vite celesti similima. In felicitate namque paradisi, ante hominis lapsum, nichil fuit proprium. Similiter in celesti patria nulla erunt propria, sed omnibus omnia communia, unde bene promittitur paupertati premium regni celorum.'

<sup>59</sup> *The Friars' Libraries*, ed. K.W. Humphreys (The British Library in association with The British Academy, 1990), F9 Oxford Franciscans, p. 224 in pp. 224–29.



indicated from John Lathbury, from the mid-14th century, in a treatise *On Lamentations*: ‘*Hic notandum quod in libro Lincolniensis Oxonie scribitur sic in glosa etc.*’<sup>60</sup> An interesting note which may relate to the *Dicta* is found in Corpus Christi College, Oxford, MS 251, f. 83v: ‘The square of a circle: Let there be a semicircle around the straight line AB... to which is subtended a squared side. I found this demonstration in Oxford in a certain note [cedula for schedula] of the Lord of Lincoln.’<sup>61</sup>

This is in addition to the *Hexaameron*, copies of which at Greyfriars are referenced by both Thomas Netter and Thomas Gascoigne. The former records a marginal note to the effect that:

Hence, also in a certain book from the study of the Great Lincolnite, which I saw amongst the Franciscans of Oxford, [which] had a note in the margin in the hand of the Great Lincolnite: ‘Note that accidents can be divided from the subject, for instance light from heat,’ with a long treatise ending with the words ‘stellam signatam [a specific star].’<sup>62</sup>

A number of letters, several sermons on luxury and education, the commentary on Psalms 1–100 and commentary on Paul, complete the references to the Greyfriars collection. On the evidence of the catalogues and bibliographical indicators the Oxford community preserved more of Grosseteste than other Franciscan houses; this is hardly surprising in view of the donation of his books to the library, facilitated by Adam Marsh as noted by Nicholas Trevet.<sup>63</sup>

## Pastoral Lessons to the Franciscans

English Franciscan historiography leaves no doubt as to the high esteem in which the order held Grosseteste from the mid-13th century onwards, honored in particular for his teaching and learning. Within the tradition too comes an occasional glimpse of a more personal side to his interactions with the community, as opposed to individuals like Adam Marsh, or Adam of Exeter, with whom he corresponded. The *Lanercost Chronicle* offers one such vignette, in a record of a strange episode, involving a dying novice.

This man [Grosseteste] was the first to direct the studies of the Franciscan scholars at Oxford, as a result of which he was also raised to direct the studies at the place. At this time it happened

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<sup>60</sup> *Friars’ Libraries*, p. 225.

<sup>61</sup> *Friars’ Libraries*, p. 224: ‘Quadratura circuli. Esto circa lineam rectam AB semicirculus (...) cui subtenditur latus quadrata. Hanc demonstracionem inueni Oxon’ in quadam cedula domini Lincol.’

<sup>62</sup> *Friars’ Libraries*, p. 225: ‘Unde et in libro quodam de studio magni Lincolniensis, quem vidi inter Minores Oxoniarum, habebat notatum in margine de manu magni Lincolniensis “Nota quod diuidi possunt accidentia a subiecto, ut lux a calore, cum longo tractu et in fine eius stellam signatam.”’

<sup>63</sup> Trevet, *Annales*, ed. Hog, p. 243: ‘(...) ob cuius affectionem libros suos omnes conventui fratrum Minorum Oxoniae in testament legavit.’

that, among the brothers, a certain young novice was taken ill, to the point when it seemed that his end approached. After the indulgence of his soul had been sought for him in haste, according to custom, he said, as if saying farewell, to all the brothers standing around him that ‘you holy and honourable men, I give thanks to God and to you for my conversion, and moreover to you in particular for the teaching, example, and fellowship that you have offered to me for the last twelve weeks. You will have known that I see the path to my salvation, and on account of the limited period I spent with you, I am numbered among the twelve holy apostles.’

Having said these words he turned inwards and was silent for a long time. The simple brothers were marvelling and exulting and awaiting the outcome. He who was about to depart, was shaken by the suffering of death, and shouted with a loud voice, ‘Lord’, he said, ‘do you truly punish, do you truly strike? I should say you strike in order to spare and punish in order not to punish!’ The brothers ran to him, and thinking he had lost his mind, they took some things from him, and stuffed other things in his ears; and in this way the innocent soul departed to the life that was not denied him. The brothers went to see Robert, he being their teacher, and explained what had happened. They implored him to say what he thought.

He said, ‘I consider you to have acted rashly, for he [the dead novice] was reading from the book of life, and you would have learned, had he continued, many secret things of God.’<sup>64</sup>

This passage offers an image of Grosseteste at Oxford preserved, presumably, amongst the community, retold to the friar responsible for the chronicle. It is an image of authority, correction, and parental reproof, framed in the hope of salvation and the virtues of the brotherhood, however much they may have misjudged the situation. Grosseteste’s task was to prepare the friars for their life of ministry, and, as far as the evidence shows, he did so successfully, bringing together all facets of his learning and experience: of scientific inquiry, theology, and pastoral care. His formation of the community at Oxford, and his influence on the first generations of Franciscan scholars both here, and, by wider networks at Paris, from Adam Marsh to Alexander of Hales, should not be underestimated, and is perhaps worth more em-

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**64** *Lanercost Chronicle*, ed. Stevenson, s.a. 1235, p. 45: ‘Vir iste primus cathedram scholarum fratrum Minorum rexit Oxoniae, unde et assumptus fuit ad cathedram praelatae. Quo tempore contigit inter fratres, ut quidem novicius, aetate juvenis, infirmitate superveniente, tandem ad exitum videretur properare, properatis sibi secundum morem animae stipendiis, circumstantibus omnibus fratribus, quasi valefacturus ait, “viri sancti et honesti, Deo gratias ago et vobis de conversione mea, insuper vobis specialiter de doctrina, exemplo et confortio mihi iam per duodecim hebdomodas praestitis; viam noveritis salutis meae conspicio, et pro modico quod vobiscum confeci spatio, connumeratus sum in sanctorum apostolorum duodenario.” His dictis introrsus rediens diu filuit, fratribusque simplicibus mirantibus et exultantibus, et rei eventum expectantibus, is qui profecturus erat, cum passione lethali vexaretur, voce alta clamavit, “Domine,” inquit, “nunquid punis, nunquid percutis? immo percutis ut parcas, punis ut non punias!” Accurrentes fratres, et eum alienatum putantes, surripuerunt ei talia, et alia auribus eius inculcaverunt; et sic innocens anima ad vitam quae non veteratur abcessit. Adeuntes fratres Robertum, utpote paedagogum, exponunt quid e venerit; supplicant ut dicat quid senserit. “Ego,” inquit, “reputo vos temerarie egisse, quoniam ille legebat in libro vitae, et vos docuisset, si continuasset, multa Dei secreta.”

phasis in the general accounts of the order.<sup>65</sup> While he held reservations about the sustainability of a total reliance on mendicancy, seeing the productive practices of the Beguines as worthy of the highest praise, his advocacy of the Franciscans within universities anticipated many of the arguments put against them, and the Dominicans, in the 1250s.<sup>66</sup> What Grosseteste offered above all was a framework whereby the community could hold in creative tension the life of poverty and the life of learning.

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<sup>65</sup> See Giles E.M. Gasper, 'Creation, Light, and Redemption: Hexaemeral Thinking, Robert Grosseteste, and the *Summa Halensis*,' in *The Summa Halensis: Sources and Context*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), pp. 295–316.

<sup>66</sup> Eccleston, *Tractatus De Adventu*, pp. 98–99.



Aaron Gies

## Medieval Images of Alexander of Hales

**Abstract:** Although Alexander of Hales, OFM (d. 1245) was a famous and influential theologian during his own lifetime and for some time thereafter, only a scant handful of medieval and early modern representations of him are known. Taking as its occasion the need for a cover illustration for a new English translation of Alexander's largest authentic work, the *Glossa in Sententias Petri Lombardi*, this chapter documents a search for medieval images of Alexander of Hales, concluding that the technically anonymous image of a teaching friar found in Vatican City, Biblioteca apostolica Vaticana, Vat.lat. 705, f. 1ra, made before 1373 but likely dating to the late 1200s, is the oldest extant image currently known representing Alexander of Hales.

Medieval figure painting was not representative of the population. Too often, it does not show us the people about whom we are most curious. Saints are probably most well-represented. The use of their images in devotion saw to that, although those images are often far removed in time and space from the subjects they depict. After them come rulers, who were represented for propaganda purposes, their image furnishing a kind of virtual presence. Other sorts of notable but not holy people: nobles, bishops, scholars, physicians, artists, merchants, etc., were represented haphazardly, if at all.

Alexander of Hales (d. 1245) is such a person. Although he was once celebrated in a private chapel as *bienheureux Alexandre*, there was never a serious cause for his canonization.<sup>1</sup> His reputation was not for holiness, but for learning. In the academic year 1236–37, he became the first regent master of theology at the university of Paris to join the Franciscan order, in the process bringing the Franciscans their first university chair in theology. This rendered their private house of studies near the Porte Saint-Germain a full-fledged school. It would afterwards become the most important general studium belonging to the order.<sup>2</sup> Alexander's example was imitated and his accomplishments celebrated, but he was apparently not represented in art. Among those of us who study Alexander, there has long been a running informal dia-

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1 An earlier version of this article appeared on the *Franciscan Connections* blog. Thanks to Krijn Pansters of the Tilburg University School of Catholic Theology Franciscan Study Center and David Couturier of the Franciscan Institute at St Bonaventure University for their kind permission to publish it here. Victorin Doucet, Prolegomena to Alexander of Hales, *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, vol. 1 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1951), \*51–52 (Prolegomena hereafter).

2 See Bert Roest, *Franciscan Learning, Preaching and Mission c. 1220–1650* (Boston: Brill, 2015), pp. 30–32.

logue about images of Alexander: where the few that exist are to be found and whether more may yet be discovered.

About ten years ago, the Franciscan philosophy scholar Lydia Schumacher, of Kings College, London, approached Philipp Rosemann, philosophy scholar at the University of Ireland, Maynooth, editor of Dallas Medieval Texts and Translations series, about forming a scholarly initiative to publish an English translation of the *Glossa in Sententias Petri Lombardi*, Alexander's pioneering lectures on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. Probably delivered in the years 1224–27, they introduced the *Sentences* as a textbook to be studied alongside Scripture within the University theology curriculum.<sup>3</sup> Thought to be lost for centuries, they were rediscovered in an Assisi manuscript by Fr François-Marie Henquinet, OFM, on 18 May 1945.<sup>4</sup> By 1957, the Quaracchi editors had produced a critical edition that promised to revolutionize the study of early Franciscan theology.<sup>5</sup>

The study of the Franciscan school before Bonaventure has indeed moved forward by leaps and bounds in the succeeding decades, but the *Glossa* remains underutilized, probably because Latin literacy has been in a steep decline since the Second Vatican Council. By translating the *Glossa* into English, it is hoped that a new generation of students will finally be able to access one of the earliest and most formative monuments of Franciscan theology. Professors Boyd Taylor Coolman and Ian Levy, of Boston College and Providence College respectively, agreed to serve as general editors for the series. The Quaracchi editors graciously gave their consent for Dallas to republish their Latin text in a facing-page format with the translation.<sup>6</sup> The first volume is scheduled to appear in late 2021 or early 2022.<sup>7</sup>

The series was jump-started by a translation of the *Gloss on the Sentences Book 1* by Fr Roland Teske, SJ, longtime professor of philosophy at Marquette University and a prolific translator of both patristic and medieval works, publishing translations of Augustine, William of Auvergne, Henry of Ghent and many, many others.<sup>8</sup> Fr Teske's

<sup>3</sup> See Philipp W. Rosemann, *The Story of a Great Medieval Book: The Sentences of Peter Lombard*, Rethinking the Middle Ages 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), pp. 62–67

<sup>4</sup> François-Marie Henquinet, 'Le Commentaire d'Alexandre de Hales sur les *Sentences* enfin retrouvé,' in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, Studi e Testi 122, vol. 2 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1946), pp. 359–82; Victorin Doucet, 'A New Source of the "Summa fratris Alexandri:" The Commentary on the *Sentences* of Alexander of Hales,' *Franciscan Studies* 6 (1946), 403–17; Description in 'Prolegomena,' \*77–80.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander of Hales, *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1951–7).

<sup>6</sup> Dallas Medieval Texts and Translations hosts a homepage for the project: <http://dallasmedievaltexts.org/alexander-hales-project/>

<sup>7</sup> Alexander of Hales, *Gloss of the Sentences of Peter Lombard, Book 1, Distinctions 1–18*, trans. Aaron Gies and Roland Teske, Dallas Medieval Texts and Translations 28 (Louvain: Peeters, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> A bibliography of Fr Teske's works may be found in *Tolle Lege: Essays on Augustine and on Medieval Philosophy in Honor of Roland J. Teske, SJ*, ed. Richard C. Taylor, David Twetten, and Michael Wreen (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2011), pp. 17–60.

translation was still incomplete when he died in 2013, but plenty of work had been done to make it a useful place to start. The draft translation had been intended to stand alone, and so necessarily followed Alexander's formulaic, jargon-ridden Latin very closely. To benefit from the DMTT facing-page translation format, where the Latin would always be present for reference, the translation would need to be revised to be more flowing and idiomatic. I was approached to revise and complete this translation for the first volume of the series. Of course, I was happy to accept: in a world with declining latinity, the translation of important primary sources is one of the most necessary and effective modes of teaching theology. I also foresaw that the effort to think Fr Teske's thoughts after him would be an education in itself.

With the volume's completion, a conundrum arrived: what were we to put on the cover of this monumental new translation? Inside we would place an image of Fr Henquinet's great discovery, the Assisi manuscript of Alexander's *Gloss on the Sentences*, but for the cover we hoped for something more, well, iconic. I became preoccupied with the idea of finding a new medieval image of Alexander.

A quick Google image search will show you that there are almost no medieval images of Alexander, but, as I scrolled, one thumbnail seemed to offer a striking exception. A beautiful manuscript decoration from Cambridge, University Library MS Mm.5.31, was copied as a woodcut and printed in an early modern album with a caption indicating that it represented Alexander of Hales.<sup>9</sup> The painting unfolds in two panels. In the first, Alexander receives communion, meditating on a crucifix placed close by on the altar. In the second, Alexander writes. The text in question is a commentary on the Apocalypse, and the image fittingly echoes John the Evangelist eating the scroll to *prophesy again about many peoples, nations tongues and kings* (Rev. 10:11).

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<sup>9</sup> 'Alexander of Hales,' image ID: H9MYG9, alamy.com. I have been unable to identify the printed album which was the source for this image.





Fig. 1: Alexander of Bremen, *Expositio in Apocalypsim*, frontispiece.<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately, the attribution in the album is false. Upon examination of the original manuscript, now online, the friar represented turns out to be Alexander of Bremen, also known as Alexander Minorita (d. 1271), the author of the Joachite commentary on the Apocalypse which it introduces.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Cambridge, Univ. lib. MS Mm.5.31, f. 1v: <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-MM-00005-00031/6>. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

<sup>11</sup> On this manuscript and its many illustrations, see: Cambridge University Library, *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, vol. 4 (Cambridge: 1856), p. 359; Max Huggler, *Der Bilderkreis in den Handschriften der Alexander-Apokalypse* (Rome: Antonianum, 1934), pp. 113–16; Sabine Schmolinsky, *Der Apokalypsenkommentar des Alexander Minorita: zur frühen Rezeption Joachims von Fiore in Deutschland* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1991); Alexander and Alois Wachtel, *Expositio in Apocalypsim* (Weimar: H. Boehlaus Nachf, 1955).



Fig. 2: Schedel, *Weltchronik*<sup>12</sup>



Fig. 3: Schedel, *Liber chronicarum*<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Michael Wolgemut and workshop, 'Alexander von ales doctor,' in *Weltchronik*, ed. Hartmann Schedel (Nuremberg, 1493), f. 214v. Source: Klassik Stiftung Weimar: <https://haab-digital.klassik-stiftung.de/viewer/%20resolver?urn=urn:nbn:de:gbv:32-1-10016192927>. All rights reserved.

<sup>13</sup> Michael Wolgemut and workshop, 'Alexander de ales doctor irrefragabilis,' in *Liber chronicarum*, ed. Hartmann Schedel (Nuremberg, 1493), f. 214v. Image courtesy of Paul Spaeth, The Franciscan Institute, St Bonaventure University.

Given the late medieval popularity of the *Summa Halensis*, early printed books provided another possibility. Between the advent of printing in the 1450s and the close of the middle ages around 1500, the *Summa Halensis* was produced in three separate printed editions. None of these carried any illustrations of their putative author.<sup>14</sup> However, the two most widely known medieval images of Alexander come from differing versions of the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, f. 214v (1493).<sup>15</sup> Both are from woodcuts made in the large workshop of famous Nuremberg artist Michael Wolgemut. The first, currently featured on Alexander's Wikipedia page, is from the German version. It is also used for some other notables, including Peter Abano (f. 224r), a Paduan philosopher who died in 1316. This image, with long, curly hair, an elaborate scholar's hat and a dyspeptic expression, does not seem to me to capture Alexander's dignified, direct Gregorian style at all.

The other image, from the Latin version of the *Chronicle*, is a better (to my mind) image of a secular doctor reading a codex, featuring a simple tipped felt cap and robes without the wild hair and concentrated grimace of the former image. Neither, of course, tells us anything essential about the historical Alexander, or recalls his specific life and ideas. They are, quite literally, interchangeable.

One likely place to search for an image of a non-venerated medieval person is at their tomb. Unfortunately, Alexander's funerary monument is lost to us. He was buried very prominently in the Church of the Cordeliers at Paris: 'only one tomb distant from the entrance to the choir.' It included a sculpted effigy of the master, for the anonymous 14th-century commentator who recorded the epitaph found there noted that it was written 'in the tabernacle at the head of the sculpted image.'<sup>16</sup> The carving may have been a low-relief set into the floor, as suggested by the comment of a 15th-century Italian traveler.<sup>17</sup> Of known images, only this one would likely

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**14** Alexander of Hales, *Super Tertium Sententiarum* (Venice: Johannes de Colonia et Johannes Manthen, 1474); Alexander of Hales, *Summa Universae Theologiae: Pars 1–4* (Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 1481–82); Alexander of Hales, *Summa Theologica: Pars 1–4* (Pavia: Joannemantonus de Brirretis et Franciscus Gyrardengus, 1489), thanks to Paul Spaeth of the Franciscan Institute Library at St Bonaventure University and William Short of the Quaracchi Library at Sant'Isidoro, Rome, for their help in checking the incunables. On the printed editions of the *Summa Halensis*, see Frederick R. Goff, *Incunabula in American Libraries* (New York: Bibliographical Society of America, 1964), p. 22; Riccardo Saccenti, 'The Reception of the *Summa Halensis* in the Manuscript Tradition until 1450,' in *The Legacy of Early Franciscan Thought*, *Veröffentlichungen des Grabmann-Institutes zur Erforschung der mittelalterlichen Theologie und Philosophie* 67, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), pp. 353–54; Irenaeus Herscher, 'A Bibliography of Alexander of Hales,' *Franciscan Studies* 5 (1945), pp. 434–54.

**15** Of course, if one begins the early modern period with Columbus's voyage in 1492, the *Nuremberg Chronicle* would be considered early modern.

**16** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 15327, f. 1v; Quoted in 'Prolegomena,' \*29: 'In tumba que de directo distat per unam tumbam tantum ab introitu chori ecclesie fr Minorum Parisius, hec scribuntur. In tabernaculo capitis ymaginis sculpte in dicta tumba scribitur.'

**17** Giovanni Francisci de' Neri Cecchi, *Il viaggio degli ambasciatori Fiorentini al re di Francia nel MCCCLXI*, ed. G. Milanesi, *Archivio Storico Italiano*, ser. 3, vol 1.1 (1865), p. 32; Quoted in 'Prolegome-

have been what might be called a likeness, since it was sculpted soon after Alexander's death at the instance of his own community.<sup>18</sup> However, it is irretrievably lost. If it managed to survive the fire that engulfed Les Cordeliers in 1580, when many of the medieval tombs were destroyed, it perished in the Revolution.<sup>19</sup> There might have been more possibilities in the library, cloister or lecture hall at Les Cordeliers, had they survived, but they did not.

There is one currently known medieval representation of Alexander in a former Franciscan church. St Katherine's in Lübeck, Germany, built in early the 14th century, boasts a set of choir stalls, installed in 1329, whose backs are decorated with a large cycle of portraits depicting significant Franciscans.<sup>20</sup> One of the paintings features Alexander as a friar wearing a simple tipped red felt cap and holding a red book, surrounded by a *titulus* reading: *Magister Alexander de Hales. Hic prius inter omnes scripsit super Sententias*.<sup>21</sup> As is clear from its style, the painting does not date back to the early 14th century. It dates to a reconfiguration and embellishment of the choir carried out in 1473.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, this is a medieval image of Alexander which predates the Nuremberg images by 20 years.

Manuscripts are another possibility. Representations of famous scholars such as Anselm of Canterbury, Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas decorate luxury manuscripts of their more famous works. Alexander was famous in the late 13th and 14th centuries. His long career, innovations in the curriculum and dramatic conversion to the friars made an immediate impression on his contemporaries, while the contributions of scholars who are more famous today, such as Albert, Aquinas and Bonaventure, took longer to be recognized.<sup>23</sup> Could it be that, as a famous scholar, he might be depicted in manuscripts written not too long after his death? Most scholastic manuscripts of real scholarly value are ugly things. They were tools in a difficult profession. Franciscan manuscripts are, if anything, even worse than aver-

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na,' 45\*: 'La sepultura d'Alexandro de Ales è tra 'l coro e la chiesa, di sotto, in uno spatio in mezo, la quale è in terra.'

**18** John of Garland, in a poem of 1245, recorded the fact that the funeral of Alexander took place six days after his death in the church of the Cordeliers; See 'Prolegomena,' 16\*-17\*.

**19** Laure Beaumont-Maillet, *Le Grand couvent des Cordeliers de Paris: etude historique et archeologique du XIIIe siècle a nos jours* (Paris: H. Champion, 1975), p. 276, p. 283.

**20** Heike Trost, *Die Katharinenkirche in Lübeck: Franzikanische Baukunst im Backsteingebeit vor der Bettelordensarchitektur zur Bürgerkirche*, Franzikanische Forschungen 47 (Kevalaer: Butzon und Bercker, 2006), pp. 157–8.

**21** 'Alexander de Hales,' Choir, Katharinenkirche, Lübeck, Germany. Image credit Concord, wikimedia commons, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alexander\\_Hales\\_Katharinen.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alexander_Hales_Katharinen.JPG). Thanks to William Short for directing my attention to this image.

**22** Trost, *Die Katharinenkirche*, 167, fn. 34; citing Johannes Baltzer, *Die Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler der Hansestadt Lübeck*, bd. 4 (Lübeck: Nöhring, 1926), p. 113.

**23** For example, Victorin Doucet, Prolegomena to *SH III*, xxxi, noted that the *SH III* alone boasts more 13th-century exemplars (36) than the *Commentarii in libros IV Sententiarum* by Albert the Great (~20).





Fig. 4: Anonymous. 'Alexander de Hales,' Katharinenkirche, Lübeck, Germany.

age. Although convent libraries certainly came by the occasional luxury manuscript, on the whole, the order's dedication to poverty is evident in the quality of its books. It was, after all, the doctrine contained in the books, and not the books themselves, that the scholars valued. Further, all of these manuscripts have been examined by some of the greatest Franciscan scholars of the past four hundred years: Lucas Wadding, Fidelis a Fanna, François-Marie Henquinet, Victorin Doucet. All searched through the same codices looking for biographical information on Alexander of Hales. Would they not have noticed and popularized any medieval image of him before now? Perhaps, but it was also just possible that images were beside the point for them. They knew, as we know, that unless they were created at a place quite close to his own place and time, such images tell us nothing about the historical Alexander

that might be included in a critical biographical sketch like that published in the Prolegomena to the *Glossa in Sententias*. So there was reason enough to hope.

During the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021, I searched the manuscript inventories for the editions of the *Summa Halensis*, *Glossa in Sententias* and *Quaestiones antequam esset frater*, reading descriptions published by Doucet and Jacques Bougerol with notes from Fanna and Ignatius Brady recovered from the Quaracchi archives.<sup>24</sup> As I expected, there are very, very few luxury manuscripts containing works of Alexander of Hales. Yet, to my amazement, while searching through manuscripts recently digitized by the Vatican Library, I discovered an image, also noted by Doucet in his Prolegomena for *Summa Halensis, pars III*, never before published in a modern setting.<sup>25</sup> I believe it to be the oldest image representing Alexander of Hales.

The image comes from a manuscript that once belonged to Tomasso Parentucelli di Sarzana, a Bologna-educated fifteenth-century theologian and humanist who collected books on diplomatic missions to England, France and Germany while serving as an aide to blessed Nicolo Albergati (1373–1443). Albergati was a truly exceptional leader. A Carthusian hermit, scholar and diplomat, he was bishop of Bologna from 1417–43, in the process mentoring two popes, Parentucelli and Silvio Enea Piccolomini, who became Pius II.<sup>26</sup> After Albergati died in May, 1443, Parentucelli was appointed bishop of Bologna in his place. In 1447, he was elevated to the papacy, taking the name Nicholas to honor his mentor. Nicholas V, theologian, humanist and bibliophile, became the first Renaissance pope.<sup>27</sup> Besides his diplomatic accomplishments and a huge building campaign for which he is justly famous, he dedicated large amounts of time and money to rebuilding the papal library, which had been almost completely dispersed in the upheavals of the Great Western Schism and the Avignon papacy. Having himself discovered important copies of Lactantius, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, Ignatius, and Polycarp on his travels, Pope Nicholas understood the importance of recovering and preserving the literary remains of the early church.<sup>28</sup> Large teams of copyists and humanists were employed to copy and acquire manuscripts from all over Europe. At the fall of Constantinople, he dispatched a team to rescue manuscripts from its library, in the process saving many patristic

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<sup>24</sup> Ignatius Brady, *Early Franciscans on Scripture*, unpublished notes, S-207 (Quaracchi archive, Collegio Sant'Isidoro, Rome); Fidelis a Fanna, *Catalogus generalis rerum omnium quas R.P. Fidelis a Fanna in diversis Europiae bibliothecis perlustrandis recensuit et adnotavit ordine alphabetico digestus*, unpublished manuscript, S223–1 (Quaracchi archive, Collegio Sant'Isidoro, Rome), pp. 10–11; 'Prolegomena' to *SH I*, pp. xii–xxi; *SH IIa*, pp. x-xvii; *SH IIb*, pp. xii-xv; *SH III*, pp. xv–xxx; 'Prolegomena,' 76\*-85\*; *QD 1*, 7\*-24\*.

<sup>25</sup> Doucet, 'Prolegomena,' p. xxvii.

<sup>26</sup> J. G. Rowe, 'Pius II, Pope,' *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1967).

<sup>27</sup> See Charles L. Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), esp. pp. 235–91.

<sup>28</sup> See Giovanni Sforza, *La patria, la famiglia, e la giovinezza di Papa Niccolò Quinto* (Lucca, 1884), pp. 160–61.

works from oblivion. His personal library, naturally, was incorporated into the collection that would become the Vatican Library, forming the kernel of the *fons Vaticanus latinus* and *graecus*.<sup>29</sup> At his death in 1455, the collection of Latin volumes in the papal library had grown from the 136 of his predecessor, Eugenius IV, to 824, one of Europe's largest.<sup>30</sup>

In his days as an aide to Albergati, Parentucelli already possessed a set of volumes of the *Summa Halensis*. Vat.lat. 701, 702 and 704 contain *Summa Halensis I–III* with some redundant text. They are in the oversized 'royal' format, with pages measuring approximately 37 cm high and 25 cm wide. Marginal notes and an *ex libris* mark in Vat. lat. 702, mark them out as Parentucelli's property.<sup>31</sup> There is also substantial evidence that he was intimately familiar with their contents. It is carefully described in his *Inventarium*, a list of *desiderata* for a first-class humanist library the pope sent to Cosimo di Medici, which survives in a copy dated 1465.<sup>32</sup>

Vat. lat. 705 is a second copy of *Summa Halensis, pars III*, in a slightly smaller format (32 x 23 cm). While it lacks an *ex libris* mark identifying it with Parentucelli, Manfredi identified several comments in his hand.<sup>33</sup> He also designated all four as northern productions dating to the 13th or early 14th centuries. Auguste Pelzer, in his 1931 summary catalog of the *Codices Vaticani Latini*, assigned Vat. lat. 705 to the 13th century *tout court*.<sup>34</sup> All four codices feature the gothic textualis script decorated with alternating pen-flourished red and blue initials typical of the Paris book

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<sup>29</sup> Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, pp. 283–86.

<sup>30</sup> John Monfasani, 'Popes, Cardinals, Humanists: Notes on the Vatican Library as a Repository of Humanist Manuscripts,' *Manuscripta* 62.2 (2018), p. 221. By 2011, the Vatican Library's main Latin manuscript collection, the fondo vaticano latino, had grown to 15,384 manuscripts.

<sup>31</sup> Antonio Manfredi, *I codici latini di Niccolò V: Edizione degli inventari e identificazione dei manoscritti*, Studi e testi, 359 (Vatican City: Tipografica Vaticana, 1994), n. 288–90, n. 353, pp. 183–85, p. 221. Although Manfredi correctly identified the text, he did not correctly identify the parts of the *SH* contained in n. 288 and n. 289. In fact, n. 288 [=Vat. lat. 701] contains *Summa I–IIb*, n. 289 [=Vat. lat. 702] contains *Summa IIa-IIb*. The *ex libris* mark in Vat. lat. 702, f. 294v, reads: 'Iste liber est mei Thome de Sarzana qui servio domino episcopo Bononiensi.'

<sup>32</sup> The Quaracchi editors did not include this source in their list of testimonia for the vita Alexandri in the Prolegomena to the *Glossa*. See Giovanni Sforza, *La patria, la famiglia, e la giovinezza di Papa Niccolò Quinto* (Lucca, 1884), pp. 359–81 in 373–74: 'Alexander de Hales scripsit opus insigne, comprehendens totum negocium theologicum, quod in quatuor libros partitum est, secundum ordinem Magistri Sententiarum; licet ipsum non ex toto servaverit. Primus et secundus habentur integri; tertius et quartus incompleti. Nam tertius non invenitur nisi usque ad expositionem symbolo Athanasii. Quartus autem non habetur nisi usque ad tractatum de praesentia incolusive.'

<sup>33</sup> Manfredi, *I codici latini*, 221. See f. 66v, 129v and compare autographs of Nicholas V in Manfredi, *I codici latini*, tables.

<sup>34</sup> Auguste Pelzer, *Codices Vaticani Latini*, t. 2, cod. 679–1134 (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanae, 1931), p. 28.



trade in this period. Each possesses a single decorated initial at the beginning of the main text.<sup>35</sup> All appear in the inventory made after Nicholas' death, 1455–57.<sup>36</sup>

While paleographical and codicological features suggest a 13th-century date for Vat. lat. 705, another famous owner provides a convenient *terminus ante quem*. Using UV light, Manfredi was able to identify an *ex libris* mark at the end of the text, f. 318v, which he read: *iste liber est ad usum fratris Francisci de Fabrica sacre theologiae magister*.<sup>37</sup> Franciscus de Fabrica was a 14th-century Umbrian friar who, having served as *lector Sententiarum* at Paris, came to the Franciscan studium in Toulouse as lector, probably in 1362.<sup>38</sup> There, in May of 1363, he was given the title *magister in sacrae theologiae* by order of Pope Urban V.<sup>39</sup> This is important because it is the title by which he identified himself in the *ad usum* mark in Vat. lat. 705. Therefore, although Franciscus could very well have brought the codex with him from Paris, it was not reserved for his use there. His mark must have been made in Toulouse, where he taught from before 1363 until his accession as minister provincial of the province of St Francis (Umbria). He was appointed to that post sometime after March of 1372 and before July of 1373.<sup>40</sup> Those duties would have removed him from active teaching and hence the need to have a copy of the *Summa fratris* reserved for his use. The manuscript, therefore, must have been made before 1373, but its paleographical and codicological features indicate that it was made much earlier, likely in the later 13th or early 14th century. Thus, even if we assume the latest possible date for its production, it is still approximately 100 years earlier than the earliest image of Alexander of Hales heretofore known, painted c. 473 at the Katherinenkirche, Lübeck.

The image in question is an 'inhabited initial'. That is to say, it is a large capital letter, a 'T' in this case, in which a person or animal may be found. In this case, both are present. The 'T' is formed by the bodies of two fantastic serpentine beasts. The figure inside has the tonsure of a cleric and wears the hooded robe of a religious.

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<sup>35</sup> Vat lat. 701, f. 2ra, has a flourished 'Q' of four lines in red and blue. It also has a decorated initial 'I' in its flyleaves, f. 1v, taken from a legal text. Vat. lat. 702, f. 3ra, has an initial 'C' of four lines in red, blue, brown and gold leaf, inhabited with lions. Vat. lat. 704, f. 1ra, has a decorated initial 'N' of four lines in red and blue. The decoration in Vat. lat. 705 is described below.

<sup>36</sup> Manfredi, *I codici latini*, pp. xlv-xlix. The manuscripts may be viewed online at [digi.vatlib.it](http://digi.vatlib.it).

<sup>37</sup> Manfredi, *I codici latini*, p. 221.

<sup>38</sup> Although the document appointing him to the lectorship in Toulouse has not survived, Nicolaus Glassberger's *Chronica, Analecta Franciscana* 2 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1887), p. 196, mentions a large outbreak ('magna mortalitate') of Plague in Toulouse in late 1361, which claimed the lives of ten masters of theology. We may therefore suspect that Franciscus was appointed in spring of 1362 to fill one of these vacancies.

<sup>39</sup> *Bullarium Franciscanum VI*, n. 866 (Rome, 1902); cited in Brigide Schwarz, *Kurienuniversität und stadtrömische Universität von ca. 1300 bis 1471* (Boston: Brill, 2012), p. 577. The medieval Fabrica is now Valfabbrica in the Province of Perugia, Umbria, Italy.

<sup>40</sup> He was deputed to Aragon as a visitator while still a professor in March of 1372, but named in a document as minister provincial for the province of St Francis in July of 1373, see *Bullarium Franciscanum VI*, n. 1175, 1275. He died before October of 1374. See *Bullarium Franciscanum VI*, n. 1352.



Fig. 5: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 705, f. 1r, © 2021, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana<sup>a)</sup>Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 705, f. 1r, reproduced by permission of Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, with all rights reserved.

He is seated in a chair and reading from a lectern against a gilt background. The painting possesses no caption or *titulus* to let us know just who it represents, but there are powerful indications. The text he inhabits is that which opens the third part of the *Summa Halensis* in all of its complete manuscript copies, *tota Christianae fidei*. The text is so important, so descriptive of the *Summa*'s method and outworking, that the Quaracchi editors moved it to the beginning and gave it the title of *Prologus generalis*. Vat. lat. 705 is technically anonymous: it does not contain a contemporary ascription to Alexander of Hales or any another medieval author. However, Parentucelli certainly knew its putative author, as shown by his *Inventarium* to Cosimo di Medici and his possession of another attributed volume of *Summa III*. I believed that this image was intended to show Alexander, but I still harbored some doubts. Most troublingly, I was not sure I could be certain that the decorative elements were contemporary with the main text. Since I am not an art historian, I wrote to two experts to be sure.

Gigetta Dalli Regoli, of the University of Pisa, the Louvre and the Academy dei Lincei, is a noted expert on Leonardo Da Vinci who has also taught and published extensively in the field of medieval painting and manuscript decoration. Although she was only able to access low-resolution images, she concurred in my opinion that the production was likely late 13th or early 14th century and from the area of northern France.<sup>41</sup> This judgment would apply to the decorations as well as the main text.

<sup>41</sup> Gigetta dalli Regoli, email to the author, 12/10/2020.

M. Michèle Mulchahey, of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies at the University of Toronto, is a paleographer and historian whose work traces the early history of the Dominican order. She is the author, most recently, of a monograph on the early cult of Thomas Aquinas in which she tackles iconographic problems very similar to the one I was facing. Mulchahey agreed in placing the manuscript in Northern France (likely Paris) in the late 13th or early 14th centuries. Her comments on the inhabited initial, based on the high quality images available online from the Vatican Library, are worth quoting at length:

That the manuscript is a northern production is clear enough, I think, palaeographically. But I would note that the friar, in wearing grey, would tend to confirm that this is not an Italian production: Italian Franciscans tended to wear habits made of something more like hessian or burlap, and brown; it's the English and French Franciscans who are 'greyfriars', the cheaper cloth in these regions being a grey wool. I've been looking at the tonsures in author portraits of friars, too, as further confirmation of identity, if any were needed: compared to Benedictines and Cistercians and other regular religious the friars are supposed to have tonsures larger in diameter, i.e. a narrower ring of hair. This can be slightly ambiguous, insofar as the diameter also increased with one's rank in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, but the small *coronae* of monks are usually a good indicator that they are not prelates. Your author here has a narrow fringe, so another tick in the friar category. His posture shows a slight variation on the typical teacher's posture, with no hand raised in the teaching/speaking gesture. So he is clearly reading, not writing, if not so clearly teaching. It is also not absolutely clear that he is seated in a proper *cathedra* and not just on a more basic seat (it is backless) with a reading stand before him. But I think all that is probably splitting hairs, and we are meant to read this as a teacher in his *cathedra* at his lectern.

All that is a long way of saying, I think you are right to conclude that this portrait is contemporaneous with the original production of the manuscript, not 15<sup>th</sup>-century embellishment done when the set was rebound. I think you do indeed have an early image of Alexander of Hales.<sup>42</sup>

Mulchahey also points out that the position of the hood could be an important indicator.<sup>43</sup> As suggested by contemporary rules for novices, friars normally to have kept their hoods raised, but lowered them for moments of public address, such as preaching or teaching.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, a raised hood would probably indicate that the friar is reading; a lowered hood would probably indicate that he is teaching. To my eye, the

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<sup>42</sup> M. Michèle Mulchahey, email to the author, 12/9/2020.

<sup>43</sup> M. Michèle Mulchahey, email to the author, 2/14/2021.

<sup>44</sup> According to Bernard of Bessia, *Speculum Discipinae* I, c. 25.5, *Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae opera omnia*, vol. 8 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1898), p. 608: The hood is to be raised in public, whether in choir or the refectory or other place, where the Brothers are gathered together, especially among outsiders, but not so that the face is hidden: 'In omni siquidem publico loco, sive chorus, sive refectorium, sive alius fuerit locus, Fratrum congregatione praesente, et multo magis inter extraneos, operto decenter capite Religiosus incedat, nisi ob reverentiam alicuius ministerii vel personae aliter sit agendum. Non est tamen caputium, sive coram Fratribus sive coram extraneis, nimis in capite sine rationabili causa profundandum.' See also *Ibid.* 15.8, 12, pp. 596–97; 21.5, p. 603; 32.7, p. 614.

hood of the friar in question is in an ambiguous, halfway down position, which appears in contemporary illustrations of both activities.



Fig. 6: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 705, f. 1r, detail © 2021, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana<sup>45</sup>

To draw all of this together, the manuscript decoration experts I have consulted concur in general with the judgments of Pelzer and Manfredi, the Vatican Library paleographers who described the manuscript, and with Victorin Doucet, the Quaracchi editor who composed the most recent *elenchus codicum* of the *Summa Halensis, pars III*, that the inhabited initial in Vat. lat. 705, folio 1r, belongs to the late 13th or early 14th century and represents a seated religious teaching. Further, Prof Mulchahey thinks it likely that the religious is a friar in a northern-style habit. He is certainly reading at a lectern, but this lectern may be a *cathedram* and he may be in the act of teaching, indicating that he is a master. The one and only Franciscan master universally associated with the text in question, the *Summa fratris Alexandri*, is

<sup>45</sup> Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 705, f. 1r, reproduced by permission of Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, with all rights reserved.

Alexander of Hales.<sup>46</sup> The image derives from the late 13th or early 14th century, the period of his fame, and the milieu of Paris, the place he was most well known. Although technically anonymous, therefore, this initial is very likely the oldest surviving image of Alexander of Hales. It will therefore decorate the cover of the new translation of Alexander's *Gloss on the Sentences*.

With thousands of his pages in print and mentions in all of the relevant chronicles and history books, it seems unlikely that a picture that gives no new information about Alexander could make a difference in contemporary appreciation for him, but I believe that it may. The first visual pattern human beings learn to recognize is the face of another human being. At two months, infants can recognize the faces of their caregivers.<sup>47</sup> As irrational as it may seem, I feel a connection when I look at this image different in kind from that evoked by reading his manuscripts. Perhaps this new image, particularly when placed on the cover of a new series of English translations, will help a new generation of students come to appreciate the exceptional life and work of Alexander of Hales.

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**46** Some contemporaries, such as Roger Bacon, did note the fact that Alexander was not solely responsible for the text, but contemporary textual witnesses, where ascribed, were almost universally ascribed to him, apart from Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, cod. Ottob. lat. 435, ascribed on f. 2r to 'Scotus' (!) and Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borgh. lat. 359, where it is described on f. 3ra as 'edite a Fratres Minoribus,' Prolegomena to *SH* I, pp. xii, xx, xxv; See Saccenti, 'The Reception of the *Summa Halensis*,' p. 367.

**47** Faraz Farzin, Chuan Hou, Anthony M. Norcia, 'Piecing it Together: Infants' Neural Responses to Face and Object Structure,' *Journal of Vision* 12.6 (Dec. 2012) <https://jov.arvojournals.org/article.aspx?articleid=2121335>.





Cecilia Panti

## Adam Rufus of Exeter, Master and Minor (d. 1234): A State of the Art

**Abstract:** The paper presents an account of the life and works of the almost unknown Friar Minor and Master Adam of Exeter (*de Exonia*, *de Oxonia* or *Rufus*), who was one of Grosseteste's pupils and a collaborator of Adam Marsh. Adam of Exeter taught the arts at Oxford and entered the Franciscan order about 1229, dying prematurely in 1233/34, while travelling to the Holy Land. Information about his life can be found in Thomas of Eccleston, Grosseteste's letters, and Thomas of Pavia's *Dialogue on the Deeds of the Holy Friars Minor*. Two short works are attributed to Adam in 13th-century manuscripts: an Anglo-Norman exposition of the *Our Father* and the *Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris*; moreover, a summary of Adam's theory of sound is reported by Master William of Clifford. The paper thus examines Adam's ideas about tides and sound, which are grounded on his theories concerning the incorporation of light into aerial and watery particles, and their divergencies from Grosseteste's genuine theories. This comparison also allows for ascribing to Adam the short treatise, *De calore solis*, commonly held to be by Grosseteste. In addition to these works, the paper considers a set of glosses on Boethius' *De institutione musica* and a short work on the rainbow, known by the incipit *Inter omnes impressiones*, both of which present ideas consistent with Adam's physics of light. The last section of the paper deals with the *Exposition on the Our Father*, which is the only theological text ascribed to Adam and was likely his last work.

The present paper aims at presenting a 'state of the art' on the life and works of an almost unknown English Minor and Master, that is, Adam of Exeter (*Adam de Exonia*), known also as 'of Oxford' (*de Oxonia*) or 'the Red' (*Rufus*). In the last 20 years, I have had several occasions to engage with this scholar's writings, which were relevant to my research on Robert Grosseteste and specifically his teaching to the Oxford Franciscan community.<sup>1</sup> Adam, indeed, was one of Grosseteste's pupils and a friend and

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<sup>1</sup> These are the studies in which, extensively or in part, I have dealt with Adam of Exeter and his works: Cecilia Panti, 'Suono interiore e musica umana fra tradizione boeziana e aristotelismo: le glosse pseudo-grossetestiane al *De institutione musica*,' in *Parva naturalia: saperi medievali, natura e vita*, ed. Chiara Crisciani, Roberto Lambertini, and Romana Martorelli Vico (Pisa; Rome: Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali, 2004), pp. 219–45; Cecilia Panti, 'Meccanica, acustica e armonia delle sfere celesti nel Medioevo,' in *Sphaera: Forma Immagine e Metafora tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna*, ed. Luisa Valente and Pina Totaro (Florence; Rome: Leo Olshki – CNR Istituto per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo e Storia delle Idee, 2012), pp. 81–115; Cecilia Panti, 'Scienza e teologia agli esordi della scuola dei Minori di Oxford: Roberto Grossetesta, Adamo Marsh e Adamo di Exeter,' in *I francescani e le scienze: Atti del XXXIX Convegno internazionale Assisi, 6–8 ottobre 2011* (Spoleto: Fonda-

collaborator of Friar Adam Marsh, who was in turn friend and collaborator of Grosseteste. Adam of Exeter entered the Order about 1229, and died prematurely in 1233/34 at Barletta, while waiting to travel by ship to the Holy Land, as a pilgrim and preacher.

Two works are attributed to Adam of Exeter in 13th-century manuscripts: one is a vernacular exposition on the prayer *Our Father*; the other is the *Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris*, which had been previously and wrongly ascribed to Grosseteste. On the basis of the contents of the latter, I have proposed to ascribe to Adam another short treatise commonly held to be by Grosseteste, namely, the *De calore solis*, on account of its doctrinal affinities with the *De fluxu* and patent divergences from Grosseteste's genuine theory of heat.<sup>2</sup> I have also tentatively attributed to Adam a set of glosses on Boethius' *De institutione musica*, since they present doctrinal concepts which are consistent with what we may regard as the central component of Adam's scientific theory, namely, his physics of light, which he partly inherited from Grosseteste and partly reworked and elaborated autonomously.<sup>3</sup> The interest of Adam in Boethius' theory of music is also attested in a note by master William of Clifford (d. 1306), who mentions the peculiar way in which *magister A. de exon* interpreted the Boethian tripartition of music. Adam's core idea, which is present in the scientific writings attributable to him, is that different degrees of incorporation of light rays in watery or aerial particles of different thickness produce diverse effects, such as sound, tides and heat; all these phenomena are due to the convergence of light rays and the subsequent scattering of the incorporated light. Another peculiarity to Adam concerns his frequent references to 'reasons and experiments' in refuting or verifying specific ideas. The presence of these same features in a short work on the

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zione CISAM, 2012), pp. 311–51; Cecilia Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter's Physics of Light: Remarks on the Transmission, Authenticity and Chronology of Grosseteste's Scientific Opuscula,' in *Robert Grosseteste and His Intellectual Milieu: New Editions and Studies*, ed. John Flood, James R. Ginther, and Joseph W. Goering (Toronto: PIMS, 2013), pp. 165–90; Cecilia Panti, 'The Scientific Basis of Robert Grosseteste's Teaching at the Oxford Franciscan School,' in *The English Province of the Franciscans (1224–c.1350)*, ed. Michael J.P. Robson (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 247–72; Cecilia Panti and Greti Dinkova-Bruun, 'Robert Grosseteste's *De iride* and its *Addendum* in the Vatican Manuscript Barb. Lat. 165: Transmission, Reception, Meaning,' in *Manuscripts in the Making: Art and Science*, ed. Stella Panayotova and Paola Ricciardi, 2 vols (London: Harvey Miller Publication, 2018), vol. 2, pp. 23–31; Cecilia Panti, 'Sound, Light and Cosmic Music: Grosseteste's Commentary on *Posterior Analytics* and the pseudo-Grossetestian Glosses to Boethius,' in *The Scientific Works of Robert Grosseteste, Volume 1. Knowing and Speaking: Robert Grosseteste's De artibus liberalibus 'On the Liberal Arts' and De generatione sonorum 'On the Generation of Sounds'*, ed. Giles E. M. Gasper, Cecilia Panti, Tom McLeish, and Hannah E. Smithson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 367–83.

<sup>2</sup> This attribution has been proposed in Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter's Physics of Light.'

<sup>3</sup> I proposed this attribution in Panti, 'Suono interiore e musica umana.'



rainbow, namely, the pseudo-Oresmian *Inter omnes impressiones*, may suggest the attribution to Adam also of this work.<sup>4</sup>

In what follows, I collect the data on Adam's life and the main philosophical issues of the above-mentioned works in order to offer an overview on the intellectual achievements of this unknown, but once celebrated, young master who became a fervent Franciscan, but unfortunately departed too early to realize the fullness of his scholarly promise.

## A Biographical Profile

### Adam of Exeter in Thomas of Eccleston's 'De adventu fratrum Minorum in Anglia'

First-hand information regarding Adam's life is found in Friar Thomas of Eccleston's chronicle of the Minors' arrival to England (*De adventu fratrum Minorum in Anglia*), which covers the period from 1224 to 25 January 1258. Eccleston mentions that on the day of Saint Paul's conversion, namely January 25 (though unfortunately he does not mention the year), some scholars including Master Adam 'of holy memory' entered the Order.<sup>5</sup> When Eccleston wrote his chronicle, Adam was already dead; as we will see below, indeed, he died a few years after his entrance in the Order, namely in 1233–34. His entrance is therefore to be placed in c.1229.

The two complete manuscripts of the *De adventu* register a different toponym for Adam: this man 'of Exeter' (*de Exonia*) is reported in the late 13th century manuscript that once belonged to the Friars Minor of Oxford (Oxford, BL, Lat. Misc. C.75), while 'of Oxford' (*de Oxonia*) is the reading of the later 14th-century codex from Durham (York Minster, xvi.K.4).<sup>6</sup> Hereafter, I adopt 'of Exeter', following the oldest manuscript as well as Little's edition of the *De adventu*, but we will see that it is not possible to exclude the other toponym, which might refer to where Adam taught and/or

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4 Cecilia Panti, 'The Oxford-Paris Connection of Optics and the Rainbow: Grosseteste's *De iride*, pseudo-Oresme's *Inter omnes impressiones* and Bacon's *Perspectiva* in Paris, BnF, lat. 7434,' in *Les Sciences au Moyen Âge (XIIIe-XVe siècle): Autour de Micrologus*, ed. Agostino Paravicini Bagliani and Danielle Jacquart (Florence: SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2021), pp. 251-80.

5 For a recent study of Eccleston's chronicle, see Michael J.P. Robson, 'Thomas of Eccleston, the Chronicler of the Friars' Arrival in England,' in *The English Province of the Franciscans*, ed. Robson, pp. 3–45.

6 Thomas de Eccleston, *De adventu fratrum Minorum in Angliam*, ed. A.G. Little, revised R.H. Moorman (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1951), p. xi. The Oxford Lat. Misc. C.75, part 4 contains, *inter alia*, two sermons by Grosseteste addressed to the friars of Oxford (see [https://medieval.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/catalog/manuscript\\_6596](https://medieval.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/catalog/manuscript_6596)). Given its provenance and early date, its reading seemed preferable to Little. However, it must be noted that Grosseteste's letter 2 to Agnellus mentions Adam as 'of Oxford', as we see below.

entered the Order rather than his birthplace.<sup>7</sup> Adam indeed, together with the other masters who entered with him, helped advance the English Friars' scholarly reputation, serving as 'the beginning of that long line of Franciscan masters and readers whose fame throughout the Catholic world was at once a glory to their Order and to the schools with which they were connected.'<sup>8</sup>

Eccleston makes several remarks about Adam. For instance, he was 'famous throughout the whole world' (*toto famosus orbe*), and he entered the Friars Minor for the love of the Blessed Virgin. The story Thomas recounts in this regard is quite detailed. Adam disclosed to a nun (*inclusa*) that he had made a vow to do whatever was required of him through the love of the Blessed Virgin, to whom he was a fervent devotee. That woman revealed Adam's vow to monks and Friars Preacher, given that he was a 'coveted prey'. But Adam was protected by the Virgin Mary, who wished that he should become a Minor. This happened, as Eccleston indicates, after Adam had a dream in which he tried to cross a bridge where men had set nets in the water to catch him; but he escaped and came to the Friars' convent, where William of Colville the elder asked him: 'For the love of the Mother of God, enter the Order and raise up our simplicity.'<sup>9</sup>

Eccleston's report of Adam's dream supposes that the request by Friar William happened in the dream, not in reality. At any rate, it must be noted that William of Colville had come to England from Paris with Haimo of Faversham shortly after 1224, the year of the arrival in England of Friar Agnellus of Pisa, who in turn had previously founded the Franciscan school at Paris. Thus, it is reasonable to think that these learned friars from France were recruiting young scholars at Oxford, to set up a permanent school there. Indeed, in c.1229 Robert Grosseteste was asked by Agnellus to teach the Friars, according to Eccleston, with a view to improving their preparation for ministry. Thus, it is likely that Adam took the Franciscan habit on 25 January 1229.<sup>10</sup> For sure, as Eccleston narrates in the last part of his report con-

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<sup>7</sup> Eccleston, *De adventu*, pp. 16–17.

<sup>8</sup> Father Cuthbert, 'Introduction' to *The Chronical of Thomas of Eccleston: De adventu fratrum Minorum in Angliam*, trans. Father Cuthbert (Edinburgh; London: Sands, 1909), p. xviii. See also Robson, 'Thomas of Eccleston' and the studies in the volumes *The English Province of the Franciscans (1224–c.1350)*, and *The Franciscan Order in the Medieval English Province and Beyond*, ed. Michael J.P. Robson and Patrick Zutshi (Amsterdam: AUP, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> Eccleston, *De adventu*, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> Eccleston, *De adventu*, p. 16. As Eccleston reports, Adam entered on 25 January, but the year is unclear; perhaps 1227 or 1229. See Michael J.P. Robson, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Greyfriars in the Diocese of Lincoln,' in *Robert Grosseteste and the Beginnings of a British Theological Tradition*, ed. M. O'Carroll (Rome: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 2003), p. 295 in pp. 289–317. On the first stages of Oxford's school and Grosseteste's teaching, as well as for further bibliography on these topics, see Panti, 'Scienza e teologia agli esordi della scuola dei Minori' and Panti, 'The Scientific Basis of Robert Grosseteste's Teaching,' pp. 251–58.

cerning Adam, the latter entered before Adam Marsh, who took the habit in about 1232.<sup>11</sup>

Eccleston, indeed, states that Adam was the ‘companion’ (*socius*) and ‘at the service’ (*ad robas*) of Master Adam Marsh, who was a noble scion of the *de Marisco* family and nephew of Bishop Richard of Durham. Eccleston’s words suggest that Adam of Exeter assisted Marsh in teaching the Arts and served as secretary of his possessions in the period before Marsh’s entrance in the Order. Eccleston reports that Adam of Exeter ‘sagaciously induced’ the other Adam ‘to enter the Order not long after’ his own entrance.<sup>12</sup>

Again, Marsh’s conversion is narrated by means of a dream, or better ‘vision’ (*visio*). On a certain night, Adam Marsh had the impression that he was following his friend Adam of Exeter in a castle, in which they entered after having kissed the crucifix on the door. Once inside, Adam of Exeter ran swiftly up the stairs to go up on the tower, and was soon out of sight, so that Marsh cried out ‘Not so fast! Not so fast!’ Eccleston’s report, evidently, does not address Marsh’s own vocation, but Adam of Exeter’s Franciscan zeal. Indeed, Eccleston’s story ends by stating that after entering the Order, Adam of Exeter went to Rome in order to ask permission from Pope Gregory IX to preach among the Saracens; but he died at Barletta, ‘where he gained renown by his miracles.’<sup>13</sup> Eccleston’s narration has elements of historical plausibility, since in the spring of 1233 the pope sent friars to Damascus, and several Franciscan documents testify to the martyrdom of Franciscan missionaries in Barletta.<sup>14</sup> As we will see below, however, apart from Eccleston, other reports of Adam’s death in Barletta are related to his nickname *Rufus*.

In Eccleston’s report, there is nothing save the friendship with Adam Marsh that links Adam of Exeter directly to Robert Grosseteste. To acquire a sense of their profound acquaintance we must look at Grosseteste’s letter 2, written in 1229–32 and addressed to Friar Agnellus of Pisa and the community of Oxford. This long and wholehearted letter entirely deals with the resolution of Friar Adam ‘of Oxford’ (*de Oxonia*, according to Luard’s edition) to preach to the infidels, as we will see below. Further sections of this paper will also consider other references to Master Adam of Exeter, such as a mention by William of Clifford and two 13th-century manuscripts which, respectively, ascribe to Adam the *Exposition on the Our Father* and the question on tides. Since all of them refer to Adam ‘of Exeter’ as a master, while the moniker ‘of Oxford’ is found in the letter by Grosseteste which refers to Adam as a friar (but in the other two letters by Grosseteste, as we will see below, Adam is called

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<sup>11</sup> See C.H. Lawrence, *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 2006–10), vol. 1, pp. xiv–xviii, and C.H. Lawrence, ‘Adam Marsh at Oxford,’ in *The Franciscan Order in the Medieval English Province*, ed. Robson and Zutshi pp. 159–79.

<sup>12</sup> Eccleston, *De adventu*, p. 17.

<sup>13</sup> Eccleston, *De adventu*, pp. 17–18.

<sup>14</sup> Eccleston, *De adventu*, pp. 17–18, note *n*.

*Rufus*), it is reasonable to assume that Exeter might have been Adam's birthplace, while Oxford was the place where he taught and took the Franciscan habit.

## Adam Rufus in Thomas of Pavia's 'Dialogue on the Deeds of the Holy Friars Minor'

Let us now turn to the biographical data about Adam Rufus. Apart from Grosseteste's letter 1 (c.1228) addressed to *Master Adam Rufus*, and letter 38 (c.1237) in which the late *Friar Adam Rufus* is mentioned as having been present at Pope Gregory IX's court in Rome,<sup>15</sup> the only 13th-century source that refers to a Minor by this name is, to my knowledge, the *Dialogue on the Deeds of the Holy Friars Minor*, likely written by Thomas of Pavia (c.1212–c.1280), a Minor and theologian who was Minister Provincial of Tuscany and author of a history of the Roman emperors and popes (to 1279).<sup>16</sup> The *Dialogue* devotes a couple of pages to miracles that occurred at the tomb of Adam Rufus 'who is buried in Barletta' (*qui iacet Baruli*); no information is given about his life, save that the record of his miracles opens the section 'on present-day friars' (*ad fratres quosdam nostri temporis*).<sup>17</sup> The miracles, mostly in favor of women, include two exorcisms, seven healings from serious diseases, and the rescue of a pregnant woman. The *Dialogue* also mentions that Adam's body was held in a church before being buried and that one of these miracles happened by means of a ring which had previously touched his body. In addition to the *Dialogue*, the *Franciscan Martyrology* assigns the feast day of Blessed Adam Rufus to 22 September and fixes his death in 1234.<sup>18</sup> There is no mention of Adam's scholarship or works.

It seems evident that Adam Rufus is the same person as Adam of Exeter/Oxford, because otherwise it would be difficult to account for the overlaps in the biographical account of his death in Barletta, his presence at the papal court, the miracles on his tomb, his previous occupation as master, and so on. But a problem emerges as a

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<sup>15</sup> Robert Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Henry Richards Luard (London: Longman, 1861), pp. 129–30, n. 38 and see below for further details.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas de Papia, *Dialogus de gestis sanctorum fratrum Minorum*, ed. Ferdinand M. Delorme (Quaracchi: St Bonaventure, 1923), pp. 246–50; in the introduction, there are the data on Thomas' life. I wish to thank my colleague Prof Emore Paoli for helping me with the research on Adam Rufus during the pandemic lockdown. For a synthesis of these data see also Roberto Paciocco, *Da Francesco ai 'Catalogi sanctorum': Livelli istituzionali e immagini agiografiche nell'Ordine francescano (secoli XIII–XIV)* (Assisi: Edizioni Porziuncola, 1990), pp. 85 and 141.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas de Papia, *Dialogus*, p. 246.

<sup>18</sup> *Martirologio Francescano*, ed. Arturo du Monstier di Rouen et al. (Vatican: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1946), pp. 294–95. It is worth mentioning that Adam Rufus of Exeter was confused in the past with Friar Adam of Adami or 'of Marca', who died c.1285 at the Franciscan convent of Fermo, in the Marche region. See, for instance, Fr Benedetto Mazzara, *Leggendario francescano* (Venice: D. Lovisa, 1722), pp. 280–81, in which the entry 'Adamo della Marca' deals in fact with 'Adamo Rufo' and confuses the hagiographical and biographical data of the two Franciscans.

result of these overlaps. We have seen that Grosseteste wrote letter 2 for the departure of Friar Adam ‘of Oxford’. By contrast, his letter 1 is addressed to Master Adam Rufus, and letter 38 mentions again Rufus, though now as a friar. Now, why does Grosseteste’s letter 2 refer to Adam ‘of Oxford’ instead of ‘Rufus’ as well?<sup>19</sup> The only solution I see is that Adam was named in three different ways among his colleagues and friends: *Rufus* might have been his *cognomen* or nickname; ‘Exeter’ his birthplace, while ‘Oxford’ where he taught and joined the Minors. A few words, however, must be added as regards Grosseteste’s letters referring to Adam.

## Adam in Robert Grosseteste’s Letters

Letter 1 is an epistolary double treatise *On God as the First Form of Everything* and *On the Intelligences*, namely, the angels (*De prima forma omnium-De intelligentiis*).<sup>20</sup> This letter is the first of Grosseteste’s early pre-episcopal *epistolae*, in which the bishop gives a glimpse into his relations with the friars before his election to the episcopate. We know that Grosseteste’s election met with the favor of the Franciscans, as he had been their master in the newly-established Oxonian school.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the choice to open the *epistolarium* with a doctrinal letter sent by a *master* – as Grosseteste qualifies himself – to a *master*, as he describes Adam also, who was soon to enter the Friars Minor, was not at all accidental. Adam was a special pupil for Grosseteste, and, in a certain sense, he seems to represent the model of a brilliant mind, in line with Eccleston’s above-mentioned remark about the shift brought about by the learned young masters – Adam above all – who entered the Order in mid-1220s.

Letter 1 presents theological themes which were discussed at length in the third and fourth decades of the 13th century, particularly in the Franciscan and Dominican schools, namely, concerning the possibility of designating God as the first form of all things, and the relation of an angel to physical place. The treatment of these themes was inspired by the introduction of the works of the Greek Fathers, mainly Pseudo-Dionysius and John Chrysostom, as well as the heretical teaching of Amauric of Béne (died 1206) and its link to the first condemnations of Aristotle’s natural philosophy in

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**19** It is worth mentioning that Andrew G. Little, *The Grey Friars in Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), pp. 178–79, distinguishes *Adam of Oxford* from *Adam Rufus*, while A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), p. 660, identifies the two Adams. Their identity is also established by James McEvoy, ‘Der Brief des Robert Grosseteste an Magister Adam Rufus (Adam von Oxford O.F.M.): ein Datierungsversuch,’ *Franziskanische Studien* 63 (1981), pp. 221–26, and Richard Sharpe, *A Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), p. 15.

**20** Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Luard, pp. 1–17; F.A.C. Mantello and Joseph Goering, *The Letters of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2010), pp. 35–49.

**21** See Pantì, ‘Scienza e teologia agli esordi della scuola dei Minori.’

1210 and 1215, and of Eriugena in 1225.<sup>22</sup> These different but somehow related events had the consequence of keeping the ecclesiastical authorities constantly alert. One of the most provocative reactions, in 1241 and again in 1243, came from the bishop of Paris William of Auvergne, who reproved ten theological statements, including one concerning the location of angels.<sup>23</sup> The topics of the letter, therefore, and in particular, the very choice of the location of angels as a second topic to address – introduced abruptly in Grosseteste’s letter after the discussion of God as first form – suggests that Grosseteste might have reworked his epistle, if not entirely introduced *ex novo* the second query by Adam and its response,<sup>24</sup> at the impetus of the 1240/41 Parisian condemnation. Thus, the year c.1228 seems appropriate for dating the original letter to Adam (who was still a master at that time), or at least the first part of the work, on God as first form. Yet, the later need of Bishop Grosseteste to present his past *magisterium in sacra pagina* might have induced him to reshape letter 1 after he started collecting his epistles, that is, about 1245.<sup>25</sup> At this time, he decided to discuss another important theological theme that was debated at the time of Grosseteste’s teaching and was still subject to the scrutiny of ecclesiastical authorities. This may also justify the final reference to ‘the wise men’ with whom Adam conferred, and the invitation to Adam to ‘write back’ concerning their opinion on the subject. These references to a *cenaculum* of sages may well be part of Grosseteste’s strategy for showing the gravity and relevance of letter 1 as well as the deep esteem he had for Adam.<sup>26</sup>

Letter 2 was written a few years after letter 1, when Grosseteste was archdeacon of Leicester, that is in 1229–32; as already mentioned, it is addressed to Friar Agnellus of Pisa and the community of Oxford. It deals entirely with the resolution of Friar Adam ‘of Oxford’ (*de Oxonia*, according to Luard’s edition) to preach to the infidels.

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**22** See, for instance, P. Lucentini, *Platonismo, Ermetismo, Eresia nel Medioevo* (Louvain-La-Neuve: FIDEM, 2007), pp. 363–470. A connection between letter 1 and Eriugena’s condemnation is hypothesized by McEvoy, ‘Der Brief des Robert Grosseteste.’ On the topic of the movement of angels and the motivation of the second part of the letter see Cecilia Panti, ‘Non abest nec distat: Place and Movement of Angels According to Robert Grosseteste, Adam Marsh and Roger Bacon,’ in *Lieu, espace, mouvement: physique, métaphysique et cosmologie (XIIe–XVIe siècles)*, ed. Tiziana Suarez-Nani, Olivier Ribordy, and Antonio Petagine (Barcelona; Rome: FIDEM, 2017), pp. 58–63 in pp. 57–77. I am presently preparing a critical edition of this interesting letter.

**23** Luca Bianchi, ‘Gli articoli censurati nel 1241/1244 e la loro influenza da Bonaventura a Gerson,’ in *Autour de Guillaume d’Auvergne († 1249): Etudes réunies*, ed. Franco Morenzoni, Jean-Yves Tilliette (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 155–71; Deborah M. Grice, *Church, Society and University. The Paris Condemnation of 1241/4* (London; New York: Routledge, 2020).

**24** The manuscripts of Grosseteste’s letters separate the two parts of Letter 1 with a mark or a blank space or a marginal remark, and the two parts also had a separate circulation as independent treatises in the *opuscula* manuscript transmission. These features may be further signs that they did not originate at the same time.

**25** On the date and process of the composition of Grosseteste’s epistle see Mantello and Goering, *The Letters of Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 18–23.

**26** See Panti, ‘Non abest nec distat,’ pp. 58–63.

Grosseteste underlines that, in spite of Adam's still incomplete theological training, his faith, humility, firm will, and remarkable intellectual gifts would perfectly inform his preaching:

And no one should be concerned that he [Adam] has studied Sacred Scripture for only a short time. For he has the articles of faith firmly fixed in his humble heart (...). He has a quick and keen intellect, he has the anointing (*confirmatio*) that teaches about all things, he has the Paraclete as his master, who teaches him all the truth [John 16:13]. Your order could not be more adorned or honoured by so glowing a jewel than by setting it against the darkness of unbelief.<sup>27</sup>

Apart from Grosseteste's insistence on Adam's personal and intellectual excellence, the letter offers a heartfelt summons to acknowledge the difference between the physical departure of the bodily man and the spiritual union of the soul within the community. Such a serious tone might have been provoked either by the anticipation of Adam's forthcoming death or, more probably, by a stylistic reworking in the form of an 'ex-post' necrologium inserted by Grosseteste in the original letter to the community when he was organizing his *Epistolarium*.

The last epistle mentioning Adam, namely, letter 38, was written about 1236, during Grosseteste's early years of episcopacy, and was addressed to Brother Arnulf, a Friar Minor, penitentiary of Pope Gregory IX. The letter asks Arnulf to take care of some affairs that Arnulf already knew about, since Grosseteste mentions in the letter that he had already received a written report from Brother Adam Rufus 'of happy memory' about Arnulf's precious help regarding these same concerns during his (Adam's) stay in Rome. Thus, this letter testifies to Adam's presence in Rome at the court of Gregory IX, in agreement with Eccleston's story about Adam's trip to Rome to ask permission to go to the Saracens. Moreover, the letter confirms that Adam had died before 1236, and, again, that he had been a beloved 'former pupil' of Grosseteste, to whom he was 'very dear in Christ.'<sup>28</sup>

## Adam of Exeter and his Theory on Sound in William of Clifford's 'Questiones super De anima'

The sources concerning Adam of Exeter examined up to now are totally silent about this master's teaching and ideas. Eccleston states that Adam was a very famous master, but does not mention how he acquired his fame. Luckily, an important note on Adam's scholarly prowess and his interests as regards the theory of sound can be found in the anonymous *Questiones super De anima*, written about 1270 and attrib-

<sup>27</sup> Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Luard, p. 21 in pp. 17–21; Mantello and Goering, *The Letters of Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 52–53 in pp. 49–53.

<sup>28</sup> Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Luard, pp. 129–30; Mantello and Goering, *The Letters of Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 156–57.



uted to the English master William of Clifford (d. 1306).<sup>29</sup> In answering the question ‘whether a celestial ray (*radius celestis*) passing through the air and rarefying it generates sound,’ William mentions the position of the ‘distinguished scholar’ (*vir excellens*) ‘A. of Exeter’, who in referring to Boethius’ tripartite division of music into *mundana*, *humana* and *instrumentalis* held that ‘the music of the spheres’ is not due to the movements of the celestial bodies, as Boethius states, but to light rays and aerial rarefaction; human music, instead, is due to the subtlety of the spirits (*spiritus*) of the vocal tract, while instrumental music to the collision of a solid body against another solid body or air:

[1] We must now ask about the efficient cause of sound, namely, whether a heavenly ray falling in the air and rarefying it [*ipsum rarefaciens*] can provoke a sound or not [...]. Clearly, this is difficult to answer; yet, a valuable scholar, master A<dam> of Exeter [*magister a. de exon*’], holds that sound is generated from rays and through rarefaction [*ex radiis et per rarefactionem*] and also from the rarefaction of the spirits and even from the collision of a solid body against another one [*duri cum duro*] or against air. And he holds that the first kind of sound is that of the music of the universe, the second one that of human music, and the third one that of instrumental music.<sup>30</sup>

Clifford’s reference to master *A. de Exon*’ as a *vir excellens* matches the already mentioned remark by Eccleston concerning Adam’s celebrity. Moreover, Clifford’s mention of Adam’s doctrine of sound is surrounded by some observations on the physics of light or, better, ‘of rays’ which seem to have been inspired by Adam’s theory; for instance, that the celestial ray exceeds the divisions of the air, and that the rays ‘congregating’ (*congregati*) in the ear increase the volume of the sound. But Clifford also states that not only the sound, but also the color is due to the ray (*effectus radii in medio est color vel illuminatio*). In particular, it is extremely relevant that Clifford mentions that color as well as sound, are due specifically to the presence of light (*lux est de essentia soni sicut et coloris*), and therefore ‘given that light multiplies itself immediately in the medium, both color and sound will change the medium immediately because of <their> light’ (*cum lux multiplicet se in medio subito et similiter color ratione lucis, similiter sonus inmutabit medium subito*). However, one may question whether sound changes the medium immediately or not; and this is the answer:

[2] To that <argument> it must be said that sound does not change <the medium> immediately, but gradually [*successive*] because, although light is in its [i.e. the sound’s] composition and essence, nonetheless, it is more materially [*magis materialiter*] in its essence than in the essence of color. And therefore, although color can immediately change the medium because of light,

<sup>29</sup> For William of Clifford and the contents of manuscript Peterhouse 157, see Silvia Donati, ‘Guglielmo di Clifford (+ 1306) e alcuni commenti anonimi ai *Libri naturales* del ms. Cambridge, Peterhouse, 157 (*De anima, De generatione et corruptione, Meteora, De somno et vigilia, De vegetabilibus*),’ *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 19 (2008), pp. 512–13 in pp. 501–618; see also Panti, ‘Suono interiore e musica umana,’ p. 225.

<sup>30</sup> Donati, ‘Guglielmo di Clifford,’ p. 512 (Cambridge, Peterhouse MS 157, f. 117ra), my translation.



sound cannot do it <immediately>. Therefore, although sound in itself could change the medium immediately, nonetheless, given that it is generated together with the movement of the air, because of the very moved air it cannot change the medium immediately, but gradually by necessity.<sup>31</sup>

This suggestion regarding a ‘more material’ presence of light in air, which distinguishes the phenomenon of sound from that of color is a very peculiar one, because it seems to match with the idea of Adam (see below) of the different degrees of light incorporation into aerial and watery particles, which differentiates the works attributable to Adam from those by Grosseteste, in which this idea is *not* present; and, more importantly, it distinguishes Adam’s from Grosseteste’s explanation of the phenomenon of heat (see below). Clifford’s statement on Adam of Exeter, therefore, is very precious as it gives us a key for detecting some aspects of Adam’s teaching: it tells us that Adam, as a Master of Arts, was interested in music as a quadrivial discipline and developed Grosseteste’s theories on light in an original way. Thanks to these few but significant hints, the attribution to Adam of the works hereafter examined may be grounded on a more solid basis.

## Adam of Exeter’s Works

Hereafter, I will consider five works attributable to Adam. First, the already mentioned glosses on Boethius’ *De institutione musica*, the attribution of which remains tentative; secondly, the *Question on the tide and ebb of the sea*, which is openly ascribed to Adam in a 13th-century manuscript, thirdly the *Question on the heat of the sun*, commonly ascribed to Grosseteste but very close in language and principles to the work on tides and therefore soundly attributable to Adam; fourthly, a short work on the rainbow, the pseudo-Oresmian *Inter omnes impressiones*, which also presents some hints in line with Adam’s principles; finally, the *Exposition of the Our Father*, a devotional work, in Anglo-Norman, composed by Adam according to a 13th-century manuscript. The ideas presented in the scientific texts, their links, and above all the disagreements of their ideas with corresponding topics in Grosseteste’s genuine works will help us to define Adam’s debts as well as his advancements and original solutions.

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31 William of Clifford, *Super de anima* (Cambridge, Peterhouse MS 157, f. 117rb): ‘Ad illud dicendum quod sonus subito non inmutat, immo successive, quoniam, licet lux sit de eius compositione et essentia, tamen magis materialiter est de eius essentia quam de essentia coloris. Et ideo, licet color ratione lucis possit medium subito inmutare, tamen non poterit sonus. Et iterum, licet sonus, quantum est de se, possit medium inmutare subito, tamen, quia non fit nisi cum motu aeris, non potest ratione aeris moti subito, immo successive necessario, medium inmutare.’ The handwriting of this MS draws the first ‘o’ of *color*, *-ris* in the same triangular shape as the ‘a’, so that the word can be read *calor*, *-oris*. Yet, the reading *color* is supported by the context as well as by other occurrences of the link ‘ol’ (for instance, in *collisio* from extract 1 mentioned above).

Before we turn to these writings, specifically the scientific works, it is important to underline that Adam's tenets on light stemmed from Grosseteste's physics of light, particularly the principles of the mixture or incorporation of light in elemental particles and of the geometrical behavior of the light rays. These tenets can be found in his commentaries on Aristotle's *Physics* and *Posterior Analytics*, in treatises such as the *De lineis* and *De luce* as well as in exegetical works, such as the *Hexaameron*.<sup>32</sup> It is not at all surprising that Adam adopted these same ideas, since he had been a pupil of Grosseteste and was part of his *entourage*, and it is not surprising that the topic of the 'physics of light' spread and developed in the Oxonian milieu during the second decade of the 13th century, mostly in connection with the initial reception of the Aristotelian natural philosophy amongst masters who took the Franciscan habit.<sup>33</sup>

These shared principles, in fact, complicate the task of distinguishing Adam's works from Grosseteste's, in particular because two treatises by Adam, the *De fluxu* and the *De calore solis*, are transmitted also in the late manuscript collections of Grosseteste's *opuscula* on natural philosophy, while the tentatively attributable *Tractatus de iride* is inserted as an addendum to Grosseteste's own *De iride*. This attraction of Adam's – as well as of other scholars' – works within the genuine production of Grosseteste is not unexpected, since Grosseteste's works and books remained in the library of the Oxford Grey Friars, where they were read and copied.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the later collections of Grosseteste's works may well have incorporated inauthentic writings, particularly those by pupils closer to Grosseteste.

Moreover, it must also be noted that Adam's and Grosseteste's theories of light are fairly similar but, on deeper analysis, reveal peculiar nuances as well as evident dissimilarities, particularly as regards the theory of heat. Indeed, the very reconsideration of the alleged Grossetestean paternity of the treatises now attributed to Adam, namely, the *De fluxu* and the *De calore solis*, clarifies Grosseteste's own theory on this phenomenon, which has preoccupied distinguished scholars, such as Richard Dales and James McEvoy.<sup>35</sup>

A final note must be added on the dating of this production. Adam could not have been a prolific writer, mainly because of his premature death. Now, since his works are inspired by the physics of light that Grosseteste developed in the 1220s, and since Adam became a friar in 1229, his extant production must be dated in

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<sup>32</sup> For Grosseteste's theory of light and its application to natural phenomena, see in particular James McEvoy, *The Philosophy of Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 149–205; for an updating and reassessment of McEvoy's view see my introduction and commentary to Robert Grosseteste, *La luce*, ed. Cecilia Panti (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2011).

<sup>33</sup> For the theories of light in the early Oxonian Franciscan milieu, in relation with Grosseteste's teaching, see Panti, 'The Scientific Basis of Robert Grosseteste's Teaching.'

<sup>34</sup> Richard W. Hunt, 'The Library of Robert Grosseteste,' in *Robert Grosseteste Scholar and Bishop*, ed. D.A. Callus (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), pp. 121–45.

<sup>35</sup> See n. 81 below.

the same decade, which should correspond to Adam's *magisterium* in the arts, possibly at Oxford. The glosses to Boethius – provided they really were by Adam – may well have derived from his lessons on the quadrivium, since Boethius' *De institutione musica* was the required textbook for teaching in music. As we will see, the *Questio de fluxu* was written while Adam was *in scolis suis*, and this text, as well as the *Questio de calore solis* and the short work on the rainbow, attest to Adam's interest in meteorological problems stemming from the initial diffusion of the Aristotelian natural philosophy. Of a different tenor is the *Exposition on the Our Father*. This is a beautiful devotional work that Adam wrote for an unknown religious woman very dear to him. Might this unknown nun be Adam's confidant, i.e. the *inclusa* (see above), mentioned by Eccleston? It is impossible to ascertain this. At any rate, the evident Franciscan topics of this inspired work as well as an open reference to the necessity of preaching the Saracens encourage me to collocate it in the years of Adam's novitiate, around 1230, or, at latest, immediately before his departure for the Holy Land, in 1232–33. Perhaps the *Exposition* was Adam's last work.

## The Glosses to Boethius' 'De institutione musica'

It was Alison White Peden who first noticed the relationship between Grosseteste's thought on sound and light and the contents of a set of glosses on the first book of Boethius' *De institutione musica*, which is transmitted in two extant manuscripts and written by an English scholar around the mid-13th century: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmolean 1524 and Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Q.9.Sup.<sup>36</sup> On the basis of her analysis, I have examined these glosses to determine any analogies to doctrinal elements developed by Grosseteste and, then, Adam of Exeter.<sup>37</sup> Two main ideas mark the striking similarity of these glosses with Grosseteste's theories, namely, that of sound as incorporated light, and of the spirits as intermediary in sense perceptions. Other interesting aspects of these glosses are, by contrast, not present in

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36 Alison White, 'Boethius in the Medieval Quadrivium,' in *Boethius, His Life, Thought and Influence*, ed. Margaret Gibson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981), pp. 184–85 in pp. 162–205. The glosses cover the first book and were added in the margins by a late 13th- or 14th-century hand. See also Calvin M. Bower, 'Boethius' *De institutione musica*: a Handlist of Manuscripts,' *Scriptorium* 42 (1988), pp. 223 and 227 in pp. 205–51. On their possible attribution to Grosseteste, see Gilles Rico, *Music in the Arts Faculty of Paris in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (University of Oxford, DPhil Thesis, 2005), chapter 2, at <https://www.diamm.ac.uk/documents/42/RicoFull.pdf>. For the tradition of glosses on Boethius' *De musica*, see *Glossa maior in institutionem musicam Boethii*, ed. Michael Bernhard and Calvin M. Bower, 3 vols (Munich: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1993–96).

37 See Cecilia Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste's Theory of Sound,' in *Musik – und die Geschichte der Philosophie und Naturwissenschaften im Mittelalter*, ed. Frank Hentschel (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 1998), pp. 13–15 in pp. 3–17; Cecilia Panti, 'Suono interiore e musica umana,' p. 239; Cecilia Panti, 'Meccanica, acustica e armonia delle sfere celesti,' pp. 112–14; Cecilia Panti, 'The Quadrivium and the Discipline of Music,' in *The Scientific Works of Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 144–51 in pp. 112–51.

Grosseteste's genuine works, particularly their extensive use of Euclid's *Elements* in determining the division of the tone and the consonances, the remarks concerning the nature of sound as a discrete or continuous quantity, the mention of the *Liber de figura alchata* (here named *de kata*) by Thebit, and the deep analysis of Boethius' theory of musical proportions, an analysis which is unique, to my knowledge, in 13th-century musical treatises. Thus, if we consider that the theory of light incorporation and the principle of the spirits as intermediary in sense perception were not developed by Grosseteste alone and that no evidence associates Grosseteste to a commentary on Boethius' musical work,<sup>38</sup> his paternity of these glosses seems improbable. Instead, William of Clifford's statement (extract 1) associating Adam with an unusual interpretation of the Boethian tripartition of music can be quite confidently used to attribute these glosses to Adam, since they present a similar interpretation of the tripartition. Hereafter, I will refer to them as if they were by Adam, because up to now I have not found a better candidate for their paternity than him, but it must be said that this attribution remains tentative, because Clifford's statement does not exactly correspond to a specific sentence of the glosses.

First, let us consider the *musica mundana* or 'music of the spheres.' According to Clifford, Adam held that this music is due 'to rays and through rarefaction.' According to the glosses, the celestial bodies pour forth light continuously; in its passing through the sublunary air, light incorporates within the aerial particles. Sound is precisely this incorporated light. Yet, celestial sound is not audible to us, because its thin aerial medium is less dense than the air in our ears:

[3] It must not be thought that Boethius thinks that the celestial harmony is made in such a way that a celestial body strikes another violently [*violenter impellat*] and thus elicits a sound from it. But light, which is incorporated and bound [*incorporata et ligata*] in these [i. e. earthly] complexed bodies, does not escape except because of a striking. Instead, light is continuously diffused from the celestial bodies and penetrates the parts of this air, and the amount of that light arriving to us without incorporation in subtle air is visible; while the amount of that light which is incorporated in the most subtle part of air [*in aeris subtilissimo*] and arrives to us as much as it is audible in its nature, is sound. Yet, it is not audible for us, because the composition of our hearing is thicker [*grossior*] than the composition of that sound; and so their [i. e. of the celestial bodies] sound is not where they are, but in this air, where they are not.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> This does not mean, however, that Grosseteste did not know and use the *De institutione musica*. In fact, in Grosseteste's *Notes on the Physics* there is a long quotation from book 5, chapter 1 of Boethius' work. See Robert Grosseteste, *Commentarius in VIII libros Physicorum Aristotelis*, ed. Richard C. Dales (Boulder, CO: University of Colorado Press, 1963), pp. 4–5. (Dales wrongly attributed the passage to book 1, chapter 5).

<sup>39</sup> Panti, 'Grosseteste's Theory of Sound,' p. 16. This passage is also in Panti, 'Sound, Light and Cosmic Music,' p. 378. It is interesting that Richard Rufus uses the same expression *ligata* in referring to the incorporated light causing color. See Richard Rufus of Cornwall, *Sententia cum quaestionibus in libros De anima Aristotelis*, ed. Jennifer R. Ottman, Rega Wood, Neil Lewis, and Christopher J. Martin (Oxford: The British Academy 2018), bk. 2, pt. 6, q. 1, pp. 353–54; this term is also in the commentary on *De anima* by Aspoll (see the same work, pp. 373–74, n. 258: 'Lux autem multiplicans speciem soni

This solution is highly ingenious, given that it serves to maintain the traditional Platonic and Pythagorean idea of the harmony of the spheres without giving up Aristotelian natural philosophy. The celestial sound, in fact, though not due to the movements of the heavenly bodies, an account resolutely denied by Aristotle, is acceptable as a phenomenon of light incorporation on the earth.<sup>40</sup>

Basically, the content of the gloss, in particular the note about the ‘subtlety’ of the aerial particles in which the light incorporates itself, can be associated with Clifford’s observations that the ray transmits sound ‘by rays and through rarefaction’ (extract 1) and that ‘the essence of sound is light’ (extract 2). The gloss, indeed, clearly distinguishes celestial sound, which is not provoked by collision, from the sound generated on earth, which instead is due to the ‘violent collision’ of solid bodies. This distinction is also consistent with Clifford’s words about ‘instrumental music’, the sound of which is due precisely to ‘the collision of a solid body against another one or against air.’<sup>41</sup>

Regarding the theory of sound ‘on earth’, then, the glosses introduce the Augustinian theory of sense perception also held by Grosseteste and derive from it the idea of sound as incorporated light and the description of the generation of sound.<sup>42</sup> Unlike Grosseteste, however, the scholiast thinks that incorporated light is pushed out from the subtle air because of the movement of the parts of surrounding air:

[4] When an object is struck violently, by means of the violent striking it is shaken and partly pressed, partly expanded, and therefore there occurs a movement of those parts away from their natural position. Nature however inclines and moves them back to their natural position. And this nature, which inclines and moves the parts on the occasion of a violent striking, because of its inclination makes the light incorporated in air, which is the substance of sound, escape; and thus a sound is generated.

[...]

Once the parts of the object have gone out of the natural position due to the violence <of the striking>, nature inclines and moves them to the natural position. And when, by the first inclination, it has led a certain part back to its position, given the strength of the impulse of nature, it happens that <this part> passes the position. Because of this, <nature> inclines and moves that part in the opposite direction so that it comes back to the natural position. And when, again, <this part> arrives at the natural position it possibly surpasses the natural position by the

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[...] est alligata materiae’); moreover, also Adam de Whitby’s commentary on *De anima* refers to the same theory of sound and color as incorporated light (see also p. 374, n. 258).

**40** For a more detailed account, see Panti, ‘Meccanica, acustica e armonia,’ pp. 107–15.

**41** See also Panti, ‘Suono interiore e musica umana,’ pp. 223–32 in pp. 219–45.

**42** The *Glosses* explain each sense in relation to one of the four elements: ‘Lux est essentia cuiuslibet sensus et sensibilis, sed non incorporata visibilis est per se et per illam color videtur. Subtilissimo et tenuissimo aeris incorporata sonus est, fumo aeris incorporata odor est, umido et grosso aeris incorporata et subtili aqua sapor, terreo incorporata tangibile. Lux igitur non incorporata subito diffunditur usque ad obstaculum. Sonus non subito sed paulatim.’ See Panti, ‘Robert Grosseteste’s Theory of Sound,’ pp. 14–15. For the Augustinian source of such a topic see also White, ‘Boethius in the Medieval Quadrivium,’ p. 165.

strength of the moving nature, until – with the movement gradually decreasing – this going forth and coming back gradually stops.<sup>43</sup>

As can be easily seen by comparing these words with Grosseteste's passages from *De artibus liberalibus*, *De generatione sonorum*, and the *Commentary on Posterior Analytics* concerning sound generation, it is evident that Adam – if he was the author of the glosses – drew directly from them, specifically from the *Commentary*.<sup>44</sup> However, he develops further Grosseteste's ideas, because he envisages a direct proportion between the moving virtue (*virtus inclinans*), the speed it generates, the number of the oscillations of the particles, and the pitch of the resulting sound, so that 'the stronger the virtue the thinner the light escaping from the subtle air, and the less strong the virtue the thicker the light' (*maior autem virtus lucem subtiliorem egredi facit, et minor grossiorem*); accordingly, the resulting pitch will be higher or lower.<sup>45</sup> The gloss, moreover, justifies the duration and loudness of the sound as an effect of the slowing down of the oscillatory movements, which make the physical sound be considered as a numerical quantum:

[5] Therefore, what has been said concerning the identity of the ratios of these three <sound, number and speed> must not be understood with reference to the speed that the parts <of the body> moved by an external agent effectively have, but with reference to the speed and number that they [parts] have only from the power of the agent and mover. Given that the moving power is uniform as much as pertains to it, it always moves uniformly and in virtue of the same numbers. Yet, when the parts are more removed from their natural place because of a greater violent <stroke>, it happens that they gain a more violent movement along the <corresponding> natural inclination towards the natural place. And this speed is not the same along the whole movement, and it is not the cause of pitch, but of duration and loudness. And also, from what we have said, it is clear that the whole sound of the sounding <body> is naturally discrete, and if it is considered as quantity, it is necessarily a discrete quantity.<sup>46</sup>

A last note should be added with regard to these glosses, namely that the theory of sound as incorporation of light in the air particles spread largely among the early English Franciscans, including Alexander of Hales and Richard Rufus, Geoffrey of

<sup>43</sup> For the Latin text see Panti, 'Suono interiore e musica umana,' pp. 226–27 and Panti, 'Sound, Light and Cosmic Music,' pp. 375–76.

<sup>44</sup> This comparison is given in Panti, 'Sound, Light and Cosmic Music,' pp. 375–76.

<sup>45</sup> The entire passage is reproduced in Panti, 'Grosseteste's Theory of Sound,' pp. 15–16, hereafter a brief extract: 'Sicut igitur est proportio virtutis ad virtutem sic erit proportio velocitatis ad velocitatem, et ita erit proportio numeri motuum ad numerum motuum et similiter soni ad sonum. Soni namque ad sonum est proportio sicut lucis incorporate egredientis, que est substantia soni, ad lucem aliam incorporatam. Maior autem virtus lucem subtiliorem egredi facit, et minor grossiorem, sicut videmus in hiis que emittunt lucem visibilem, quod lucens maius magnitudine et potentia eundem aerem subtiliori et clariori perfundit lumine.' Other scholia are quoted in Panti, 'Suono interiore e musica umana,' pp. 226–27.

<sup>46</sup> The text is given in Panti, 'Sound, Light and Cosmic Music,' p. 379.

Aspall, and others.<sup>47</sup> Also the anonymous *Summa philosophiae*, formerly attributed to Grosseteste, considers sound as light embodied in the most subtle air, and refers to this theory as developed by Augustine and Avicenna.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, the idea of celestial sound as an effect due to light diffused from the heavens did not fail to raise interest: it is mentioned in a group of works produced in the Oxonian milieu for university teaching as early as the mid-13th century, as the *Philosophica disciplina*.<sup>49</sup> Here, in particular, we find an account close to Clifford's words.<sup>50</sup> The same is also in the *Divisio scientiarum* (c.1250) by Arnulf of Provence, who explicitly asserts that the idea of celestial rays as the cause of sound is held 'by some scholars'.<sup>51</sup> Roger Bacon himself refers to the 'radial theory' of the cosmic music, using the same terminology (violent collision, intersections of rays and so on). Yet, although Bacon recognizes that such a wondrous idea was elaborated by 'subtle students in philosophy' and 'great and wise men', he nonetheless admits that they were wrong in this regard.<sup>52</sup>

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47 For Rufus see n. 39 above and the *Introduction* to Richard Rufus, *Sententia De anima*, pp. 141–65. For Alexander and other holders of the theory of incorporation of light see Cecilia Panti, 'I sensi nella luce dell'anima: Evoluzione di una dottrina agostiniana nel secolo XIII,' *Micrologus* 10 (2002), pp. 177–98. I wish to correct two references of this paper: at pp. 192–94, I refer to the pseudo-Peter of Spain's commentary to the *De anima*, which is now known to be Richard Rufus' *Sententia in libros De anima* (see above, at note 37); at pp. 190–91, note 34, the quotation is not from Alexander of Hales' *Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi* – as I state there – but, instead, from his *Quaestiones disputatae antequam esset frater*, vol. 1, q. XVIII, 37 (Quaracchi, ex Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1960), p. 312. I thank Lydia Schumacher for having drawn my attention to this wrong reference.

48 The *Summa* is edited in Ludwig Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke des Robert Grosseteste Bischofs von Lincoln* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1912), pp. 275–643; for the sound see here at p. 510. See also Alistair C. Crombie, *Robert Grosseteste and the Origins of Experimental Science 1100–1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), pp. 162–64.

49 Claude Lafleur, *Quatre introductions à la philosophie au XIIIe siècle: Textes critiques et étude historique* (Montreal: Institut d'Études médiévales; Paris: Vrin, 1988), pp. 257–87.

50 Lafleur, *Quatre introductions à la philosophie au XIIIe siècle*, p. 268 (my translation): 'Of the first kind is celestial music, which does not consider sound <as made> from the collision of celestial bodies, because this is refuted in the book *On the Sky and the Earth*, but from rays of these bodies, which intersect each other and break up the parts of the air (...). Of the second kind is human music, which considers the proportions of sounds generated from the movements of the spirits in the vocal tract, and it deals with proportions in the human voice. Of the third kind is instrumental music, and it considers sound that is made from the collision of a solid body with another solid body, such as in instruments like the chitara and others.' See also Panti, 'Sound, Light and Cosmic Music,' p. 381.

51 Lafleur, *Quatre introductions à la philosophie au XIIIe siècle*, p. 327.

52 Roger Bacon, *Opus Tertium*, in *Opera quaedam hactenus inedita*, ed. John S. Brewer (London: Longman, 1859), p. 229.



## The ‘*Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris*’

This *Question on the Tide and the Ebb of the Sea* was discovered in 1926 by Franz Pelster in a very famous English manuscript, namely, Assisi, Biblioteca del Sacro Convento, Fondo Antico della Biblioteca Comunale 138 (fol. 261vb), which transmits treatises by Franciscan masters. The *Question on the Tide* precedes the *Question on the Subsistence of Things* (*Questio de subsistentia rei*) ascribed in the margin to *Magister R. Grosseteste*.<sup>53</sup> The *questio* on tides, instead, is accompanied by the marginal note: ‘*Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris a magistro A. exon. in scolis suis determinata.*’ The ‘A’ was wrongly read ‘R’ by Pelster and Thomson, who also assumed that Exon. means Oxon.; hence their attribution of the work to Grosseteste (*Robertus Oxoniensis*).<sup>54</sup> The work is transmitted in other three manuscripts. The earliest of these three is Vatican City, BAV, Barb. lat. 165, dated to 1288, which preserves only the first part of the text, here inserted, together with Grosseteste’s *De iride* (plus the ‘addendum’ to it attributable, as well, to Adam) in a group of four works ascribed to ‘Boethius’. The remaining two manuscripts are Florence, Biblioteca Marucelliana, C 163, which is a late paper codex written in the XV century and containing the largest collection of Grosseteste’s scientific writings, and Prague, Knihovna Národního muzea, XII.E.5, a 15th century manuscript from Bohemia, in which the *De fluxu* is again inserted among Grosseteste’s scientific works.<sup>55</sup>

The *De fluxu* was edited by Ezio Franceschini, who relied upon Thomson’s attribution, but Daniel Callus rejected the Grossetestian authorship and attributed the text to Adam Marsh. Richard Dales, in turn, defended the attribution to the English bishop in his re-edition of the text, but later he also suggested Marsh as the most probable author.<sup>56</sup> Finally, Richard Southern recognized that the work was by

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<sup>53</sup> For Assisi 138, see [https://manus.iccu.sbn.it//opac\\_SchedaScheda.php?ID=235736&lang=en](https://manus.iccu.sbn.it//opac_SchedaScheda.php?ID=235736&lang=en). This important manuscript transmits philosophical and scientific writings mostly ascribed, or attributable, to Franciscan masters: Alexander of Hales, John of La Rochelle, Gueric of Saint-Quentin, William of Melitona, Odo Rigaldus, and Richard Rufus. On these data and for further bibliography, see Osmund Lewry, ‘Robert Grosseteste’s *Question on subsistence*: An Echo of the Adamites,’ *Mediaeval Studies* 45 (1983), pp. 1–21.

<sup>54</sup> Samuel Harrison Thomson, *The Writings of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, 1235–1253* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), p. 89.

<sup>55</sup> On the Marucelliana and Prague collections see Cecilia Panti, *Moti, virtù e motori celesti nella cosmologia di Roberto Grossatesta: studio ed edizione dei trattati De sphaera, De cometis, De motu supercelestialium* (Florence: SISMEL–Edizione del Galluzzo, 2001), pp. 255–56 and 274; on the Barberini MS see Greti Dinkova-Bruun and Cecilia Panti, ‘Robert Grosseteste’s *De iride* and its *Addendum* in the Vatican Manuscript Barb. Lat. 165: Transmission, Reception, Meaning,’ in *Manuscripts in the Making: Art and Science*, ed. S. Panayotova and P. Ricciardi, 2 vols (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2018), vol. 2, pp. 23–31.

<sup>56</sup> Ezio Franceschini, ‘Un inedito di Roberto Grossatesta: La *Questio de accessu et recessu maris*,’ *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* 44 (1952), pp. 11–21; Daniel A. Callus, ‘Robert Grosseteste as Scholar,’ in *Robert Grosseteste, Scholar and Bishop: Essays in Commemoration of the Seventh Centenary of His Death*, ed. D.A. Callus (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 22 in pp. 1–69; Richard C. Dales, ‘The



Adam of Exeter,<sup>57</sup> but both James McEvoy in his study on the chronology of Grosseteste's works on natural philosophy and Edgar Laird in a study on the doctrine of *De fluxu* published in 1990 insisted on its Grossetestian paternity.<sup>58</sup> I summarized their convergent opinions adducing other reasons to reinforce the ascription to Grosseteste of the treatise,<sup>59</sup> but after a detailed textual comparison of several genuine scientific treatises by Grosseteste, I eventually realized that the latter cannot be its author and consequently that the ascription of the Assisi manuscript to Adam of Exeter is genuine.<sup>60</sup>

The *De fluxu* adopts Grosseteste's idea that light is the medium of the heaven's action upon the earth, and that such a task is due to a specific physical principle: the incorporation of light into natural elements such as water and air. This, as already noted, is the typical Grossetestian theory of light incorporation which was held in several of his scientific works; nonetheless, several aspects distinguish Grosseteste's theory from what we find in the *De fluxu*. The most relevant of these distinctions is the very application of the principle of incorporation to the explanation of heat: as we will see in detail also with regard to the *De calore solis*, while Adam applies the idea of incorporation to explain how heat is produced, namely because of the convergence and rapid scattering of the incorporated light, Grosseteste holds that heat is due to the distance and angular inclination of sun rays on a surface alone.

As regards the dating of the *De fluxu*, a *terminus post quem* can be determined from its exposition and rejection of the theory of the tides explained in Alpetragius' *De motibus celorum*, which Michael Scot translated into Latin in 1217. The *terminus ante quem* can be assigned to 1229, since the *De fluxu* was written when Adam was a master (*in scolis suis determinata*), as the Assisi manuscript recites. Thus, its composition can be assigned to the mid-1220s, the same years during which Grosseteste developed his own theories on light and consequently offered his pupils and colleagues an opportunity to examine natural phenomena in the light of the same principles.<sup>61</sup>

Although both the Assisi manuscript and the text itself (at the passage '*et vertitur hec questio circa tria*') qualify the work as a *questio*, it is in fact a question of an early

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Text of Robert Grosseteste's *Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris* with an English Translation,' *Isis* 57 (1966), pp. 455–74; Richard C. Dales, 'Adam Marsh, Robert Grosseteste, and the Treatise on the Tides,' *Speculum* 52 (1977), pp. 900–1.

57 Richard Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 122–23.

58 McEvoy, 'The Chronology of Robert Grosseteste's Writings on Nature and Natural Philosophy,' *Speculum* 58:3 (1983), pp. 629–31; Edgar S. Laird, 'Robert Grosseteste, Albumasar and the Medieval Tidal Theory,' *Isis* 81 (1990), pp. 684–94.

59 Cecilia Panti, 'L'incorporazione della luce secondo Roberto Grossatesta,' *Medioevo e Rinascimento* 13 (1999), pp. 70–78 in pp. 45–102. See also Panti, *Moti, virtù e motori celesti nella cosmologia di Roberto Grossatesta*, pp. 133–67 and pp. 321–28.

60 See also Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter.'

61 See n. 60 above.

type: it does not present the features and structure of the mature scholastic *questio*. Adam divides his presentation into three parts: the first one deals with the material and efficient cause of tides, the second with the mechanism of the rising and lowering of the water, the third with the kinds of sea in which tides occur.<sup>62</sup>

The first section is by far the most important in the work. It opens with Alpetragius' explanation of tides, which states that they are due to the celestial power moving the heavens and planets as well as the upper elements of fire, air, and water; the subsequent refusal of this account is based on 'experiments' (*experimenta*) and 'reasons' (*rationes*) proving that the phenomenon is, instead, due to the moon's movements. The moon is therefore the efficient cause of the tides. An important argument adduced here by Adam concerns the principle of the rarefaction and condensation of water, due respectively to the stretching (*per subtiliationes*) of the watery particles causing their elevation and to their subsequent compression (*per condensationem*) determining the ebb.<sup>63</sup> Next, Adam examines how the moon causes two tides and two ebbs each day according to the four quarters of its movement around the earth. This opens an unresolved question (*ratio difficilis*): how is it possible that the moon, when it is over a certain part of sea and acts on it, may act in the same way in the opposite place of the earth? The answer is that 'astronomers say that that opposite quarters of the sky have the same effects, but whether this is true remains to be proved and needs further investigation.'<sup>64</sup> The 'astronomers' is in fact Albumasar, whose *Introductorium* Adam follows as regards the horary determination of the tides.<sup>65</sup>

The last section of the first part of the *De fluxu* deals with the material cause of the tides, namely, condensation and rarefaction. This is the most crucial theory of the text: for Adam water and air are capable of both condensation and rarefaction, a phenomenon due to the incorporation of light rays in the particles of these elements. Since the degree of incorporation depends upon the greater or lesser subtlety of these particles, the material cause of the tides is found exactly in the density of watery particles which retain the vapors and incorporate the moon rays. When the incorporated light is sufficiently compressed, it suddenly scatters everywhere and in so doing provokes heat and the elevation of the water. Indeed, in fresh water, tides do not happen exactly because the subtlety of its particles renders it incapable of retaining vapors and incorporating light:

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<sup>62</sup> Adam of Exeter, *Questio de fluxu*, in Dales, 'The Text of Robert Grosseteste's *Questio de fluxu*,' p. 459.

<sup>63</sup> Adam of Exeter, *Questio de fluxu*, in Dales, 'The Text of Robert Grosseteste's *Questio de fluxu*,' p. 460.

<sup>64</sup> Adam of Exeter, *Questio de fluxu*, in Dales, 'The Text of Robert Grosseteste's *Questio de fluxu*,' p. 462.

<sup>65</sup> On the relevance of Albumasar in the *De fluxu* see Laird, 'Robert Grosseteste, Albumasar and the Medieval Tidal Theory.'

[6] But this water <of the sea>, because of the heaviness and viscosity of its parts, will not let them [i.e. vapours] escape (...) but since fresh water is subtle and its parts are penetrable (...) it [i.e. vapour] is expelled at once; hence it [i.e. fresh water] does not, strictly speaking, have tides. Also, if a heavenly body acts on lower bodies only by its light rays, since these light rays are in some manner incorporated with the elements, they intersect themselves at one point when they are reflected, and thus they generate heat by scattering the parts of matter [*distrahendo partes materie*] in various directions as is clear from the last proposition of Euclid's *Catoptrics*. Therefore, the subtler the matter, the less heat will be generated by the ray. For this reason, snow remains longer on the top of mountains than on valleys, because the air is subtler there. Therefore if fresh water is much more subtle than sea water, the lunar rays will be much less incorporated in it than in sea water, and thus they will generate less heat and a smaller effect.<sup>66</sup>

Thus, it is evident that for Adam the tides are due to heat provoked by the sudden scattering of the rays incorporated in thick watery particles and bubbles of vapours. The terminology here employed is very similar to that of the *De calore solis*, as we see below.

The second part of the *De fluxu* deals with the eight causes of why tides are sometimes stronger and sometimes weak. This section is inspired by Albumasar and these reasons are found in the movements of the moon, their relation with the movements of the sun and the astrological principle that every star has a special operation due to its special nature (*operationem specialem ex natura speciali sua*). The third and last part of the *De fluxu* considers different kinds of sea and the lands that limit them and determines the presence or absence of tides from the features of those waters and lands. Each section is fully and clearly developed, and each topic is examined and clarified in a plain style with clear statements.

## The 'De calore solis'

The *De calore solis* is transmitted as an anonymous text in manuscript Madrid, Biblioteca nacional, 3314, in a folder copied by an English hand in the third quarter of the 13th century; this section of the Madrid manuscript opens with Richard Rufus' *Commentary on the De anima* – which, as mentioned above, presents the theory of light incorporation. Rufus' text precedes the *De calore solis*, which, in turn, precedes an anonymous *Questio de calore*. Then, there are the *De cometis*, *De iride*, *De colore*, and *De operationibus solis* by Grosseteste, and finally, a short work *On time* attributed in the margin to 'D. Bacun' (perhaps Roger Bacon).<sup>67</sup> The *De calore solis* is also trans-

<sup>66</sup> Adam of Exeter, *Questio de fluxu*, in Dales, 'The Text of Robert Grosseteste's *Questio de fluxu*,' p. 471 (Latin text at p. 464).

<sup>67</sup> For the description of the manuscript, see Samuel Harrison Thomson, 'An Unnoticed Treatise of Roger Bacon on Time and Motion,' *Isis* 27 (1937), pp. 219–24; see also the Introduction to Richard Rufus, *Sententia De anima*, pp. 182–184; James McEvoy, 'The Sun as *res* and *signum*: Grosseteste's

mitted in later continental collections of Grosseteste's works and in the Venetian print. All continental collections are closely linked together, at least as regards some shared groups of works. In particular, the short works *De calore solis*, *De generatione stellarum*, *De colore* and *De statu causarum* are transmitted only in these manuscripts, in which they follow one another in an identical order, testifying that they derive from a common source. The grouping also includes the work *De generatione stellarum*, which is not considered authentic.<sup>68</sup>

The *De calore solis* investigates the phenomenon of solar heat on the basis 'of the essential elements of the logical procedures used in experimental verification and falsification,' and has therefore been regarded as one of Grosseteste's most original contributions to scholastic physics, and 'one of the most beautifully executed of Grosseteste's scientific works.'<sup>69</sup> The treatise, however, cannot be by Grosseteste: as I proved elsewhere, it should be ascribed to Adam of Exeter on the basis of its strong connections with the *De fluxu* and clear disagreement with Grosseteste's genuine theory of heat and of its effects on earth.<sup>70</sup> If we compare *De calore solis* with *De fluxu*, we immediately recognize their many doctrinal similarities. First, the two works elaborate and apply a theory of heat original to them: heat is a consequence of the sudden scattering of rays incorporated in aerial or watery particles, a theory which is not by Grosseteste.<sup>71</sup>

Secondly, tides and climatic changes are both effects of this explanation of heat, and this, again, is not held by Grosseteste. Thirdly, both works insist on the theory that the thicker the *diaphanum* (air or water), the deeper the incorporation of light, a theory which, again, is not the view of Grosseteste. Fourthly, they are also very close to one another in terminology and literary style, referring to matching technical terms such as *disgregatio*, *distractio aeris* and to expressions such as *incorporantur quodammodo* or *aliquomodo*. Finally, both works are scholastic, well organized and fully structured. They distinguish and consider separately various problems, and they solve them consecutively, as a good academic text should do. Grosseteste's

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Commentary on *Ecclesiasticus* ch. 43, vv. 1–5,' *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 41 (1974), pp. 38–39 in pp. 38–91; Panti, *Moti, virtù e motori celesti*, pp. 257–58.

68 Southern, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 124–25.

69 Quotes taken respectively from: Alistair C. Crombie, *Science, Optics and Music in Medieval and Early Modern Thought* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1990), p. 133 in pp. 115–37 ('Grosseteste's Position in the History of Science,' with an English translation of the *De calore solis*); McEvoy, 'The Sun as *res* and *signum*,' p. 76; Dales, 'Robert Grosseteste's Scientific Works,' p. 398.

70 Such a link had been discussed by McEvoy, 'The Sun as *res* and *signum*,' pp. 76–77, and McEvoy, 'The Chronology of Robert Grosseteste's Writings,' pp. 635–36; for my reconsideration see Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter.'

71 For this see also Laird, 'Robert Grosseteste, Albumasar and the Medieval Tidal Theory,' p. 687. Doctrinal similarities between *De fluxu* and *De calore solis* are discussed in Dales, 'Robert Grosseteste's Scientific Works,' pp. 390–91 and in Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter.'

style is noticeably different, and this is probably why the former have been considered 'beautifully executed' *opuscula*.<sup>72</sup>

The text opens by considering that there are three ways of generation of heat: by heat itself (i.e. by contact with a hot body), by movement, and by a collection of rays (*collectio radorum*). These three ways are an effect of the univocal cause of heat, which is the scattering of particles (*per disgregationem materierum*). This scattering is firstly examined according to movement. Adam specifies that there is a double kind of movement, natural and violent, and both movements are composed of a double power (*virtus*) that is, again, natural and violent (*naturalis et violenta*). The natural power prevails in natural movements while the violent power in violent movements. These powers move in different directions and therefore this determines the greatest scattering and consequently the greatest heat (*maxime consequitur disgregatio et maxime calidum*) in violent movements, and this is evident by means of reason and experiment (*ratione et experimento*).

Also natural movements are partly violent, and this is determined by the fact that all parts of a body naturally falling toward the centre of the earth move in parallel. For this reason, these parallel lines are not really convergent towards the centre, and consequently the body is not entirely moved by a natural movement, which would require the total convergence of all parts toward the centre. Since the violent component of natural movements is minimal, however, heat is generated at a minimum in naturally moved bodies. This section on the impulse of movements natural and violent exhibits some similarity with the gloss examined above on the oscillation of parts provoking sound (extracts 4 and 5).

The central section of the *De calore solis* deals with how the collection of rays determines heat. This is justified according to Euclid's *Catoptrics* (*De speculis*), mentioned also in the *De fluxu* as we have seen (extract 6), and to the principle of the scattering of aerial particles, which takes place through a concentration of rays incorporated in a transparent medium, in this case air, while in the *De fluxu* it was water. Again, Adam states that the denser the medium, the greater the incorporation, and concludes by asserting that the equatorial zone is the hottest region in the world, due to the strongest scattering (*maxima disgregatio*) of aerial particles at that altitude.<sup>73</sup>

The second section of the *De calore solis* answers the problem of how the sun generates heat, whether by contact, by movement, or by the collection of rays. Rays draw with them the air particles, which congregate in a single converging point, in which a great scattering and consequently a great heat is produced. Clearly, this is the theory of heat adopted in the *De fluxu*, as we have seen (extract 6). This is how the theory is now exposed:

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<sup>72</sup> Dales, 'Robert Grosseteste's Scientific Works,' p. 398 for the *De calore solis*, while McEvoy, 'The Chronology of Robert Grosseteste's Writings,' p. 630 for the *De fluxu*.

<sup>73</sup> Adam of Exeter, *De calore solis*, in Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke*, p. 81. For this discussion see also Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter,' pp. 177–79.

[7] The ray has a better incorporation in a denser transparent medium than in a subtler one, and I am not speaking about a total incorporation, as <it is generally that of> heat, but about a certain subtle incorporation [*levem incorporationem*]: and in this last kind of incorporation, <the ray> scatters aerial particles [*distrahet partes aeris*], that is: when the rays converge in a single point, here each of them <follows> its straight direction, and therefore there will be a maximum scattering [*distractio*] of air in different directions near that very point, and therefore there will be dispersion [*disgregatio*] of air from which heat is generated.<sup>74</sup>

In agreement with the way in which ‘experiments and reasons’ are adopted in the *De fluxu*, in the *De calore solis* Adam also considers an ‘experiment’, namely, the fact that the tops of mountains are cold, since the rarefied air of the upper regions incorporates solar rays minimally (*parva incorporatio*), and therefore no scattering is possible in heights:

[8] Therefore, in the upper aerial zone, where air is the most subtle, heat is seldom generated, as is evident from an experiment [*quod patet experimento*]. In fact, the snow is copious on the top of mountains, where sun rays are lighter than in valleys, and, nonetheless, radial reflection is the same as in valleys; but because of the subtlety of air, there is a little aerial density and a subtle incorporation of light [*parva incorporatio lucis*] within air, and therefore there is a modest scattering of aerial particles, when rays converge. Here, on the contrary, there is a deeper incorporation of rays and therefore a stronger scattering [*disgregatio*] and heat.<sup>75</sup>

This conclusion confirms that in the heavens heat is not present because solar rays cannot incorporate in it, since the fifth element (*quinta essentia*) is *not* a dense body:

[9] And if someone asks why heat is not generated from sun rays in the fifth essence, this can be answered by two means: firstly, because <rays> do not intersect themselves and reflect there; secondly, <because> even if they intersect and reflect themselves in totally opposite directions, heat or hot air is not generated. In fact, since in that transparent air there is no density, sun rays cannot be incorporated <in that air> at all, and so they cannot disperse particles of matter [*disgregare partes materie*].<sup>76</sup>

The ideas presented in the *De calore solis* are very close to those of the *De fluxu* and, at the same time, distant from Grosseteste’s tenets which can be found in genuine treatises, such as the *De natura locorum* and *De operationibus solis*, the latter transmitted in a single manuscript copy in manuscript Madrid 3314 which also includes, as already noted, the *De calore solis*. James McEvoy pointed out that conceptual and linguistic parallels link Grosseteste’s *De natura locorum* and *De operationibus solis* which were both written around 1230.<sup>77</sup> However, those very similarities are plain di-

<sup>74</sup> Adam of Exeter, *De calore solis*, in Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke*, p. 81.

<sup>75</sup> Adam of Exeter, *De calore solis*, in Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke*, p. 84.

<sup>76</sup> Adam of Exeter, *De calore solis*, in Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke*, p. 84.

<sup>77</sup> Grosseteste’s *De natura locorum* is also edited in Baur, *Die Philosophischen Werke*, pp. 65–72; *De operationibus solis* in James McEvoy, ‘The Sun as *res* and *signum*,’ pp. 41–45. The edition of the text is at pp. 62–91.

vergencies that separate these works from the *De fluxu* and *De calore solis*. These discrepancies include, for instance, the theory of the density of the sky, used in *De natura locorum* to solve the problem of tides, whereas the *De fluxu* openly states that the sky has no density (extract 9).<sup>78</sup> Another divergence is that for Grosseteste altitudes are essentially hot because of the shortness and inclination of the rays,<sup>79</sup> while *De fluxu* and *De calore solis* state that altitudes are cold in themselves because of the rarefaction of the air (extracts 6 and 8).

Another difference is that for Grosseteste the equatorial zone is temperate, although it is difficult for him to justify why.<sup>80</sup> Instead, for Adam this zone is torrid, as we have seen above. Yet, the most significant difference concerns the theory of heat, which for Grosseteste is due to the length, reflection and refraction of solar rays and pyramids of light but not to the incorporation of rays: the opposite of Adam's theory. These and other discrepancies are dramatically evident, because Grosseteste's *De natura locorum* and *De operationibus solis* are contemporary to Adam's *De fluxu* and *De calore solis*;<sup>81</sup> yet, these very differences, once clarified in terms of the authorship of the treatises, testify to Adam's independence of thought and capacity to elaborate in his own way the heritage of Grosseteste's magisterium.

## The 'Tractatus de iride' (Inter omnes impressiones)

The last scientific work to be examined for its possible attribution to Adam is a short treatise on the rainbow by the incipit *Inter omnes impressiones*. This treatise was first inspected by Greti Dinkova-Bruun and myself in a recent paper in which we label it as an *addendum* to Grosseteste's *De iride*, being transmitted after Grosseteste's *De iride* in manuscript Vatican City, Barb. lat. 165.<sup>82</sup> We ascertained that this *addendum* could not be by Grosseteste, but stemmed from the early spread of his theories on light and its action in natural phenomena. We thought that it was a rectification of Grosseteste's theory of the rainbow, and we provisionally ascribed it to Adam of Exeter for two reasons: first, because Adam's question on tides is transmitted in the same manuscript in close association with Grosseteste's *De iride*; secondly, because

<sup>78</sup> Grosseteste, *De natura locorum*, in Baur, *Die Philosophischen Werke*, p. 70: 'Et ideo reflexio radiorum solvit istud, quoniam radii lunares multiplicantur ad caelum stellarum, quod est corpus densum.' (And therefore, radial reflection solves this <problem> because moon rays multiply themselves in the sphere of the fixed stars, which is a dense body.)

<sup>79</sup> Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke*, p. 66 in pp. 65–72.

<sup>80</sup> On this see McEvoy, 'The Sun as *res* and *signum*,' pp. 74–75 and Panti, *Moti, virtù e motori celesti*, pp. 82–86.

<sup>81</sup> On these divergences and difficulty to reconstruct Grosseteste's theory of heat see McEvoy, 'The Chronology of Robert Grosseteste's Writings,' pp. 636–43; Dales, 'Robert Grosseteste's Scientific Works,' pp. 395–96; Southern, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 131–33. Clearly, all difficulties disappear with the attribution to Adam of the *De fluxu* and *De calore solis*.

<sup>82</sup> Panti and Dinkova-Bruun, 'Robert Grosseteste's *De iride* and its *Addendum*.'



it also contains theories inspired by Grosseteste but significantly divergent, as happens in Adam's works.<sup>83</sup>

More recently, thanks to the knowledge of Aurora Panzica's edition and the study of Nicole Oresme's *Questiones in Meteorologica de prima lectura* (c.1320–82), presently in publication,<sup>84</sup> I realized that this *addendum* is precisely the unknown work credited to be by Oresme and to which he refers in his *Questiones* and in the *Livre du ciel et du monde*. This discovery, together with my identification of another copy in the late 13th-century manuscript Paris, BnF, lat. 7434, in which the *Inter omnes* follows again an up-to-now unknown copy of Robert Grosseteste's *De iride*,<sup>85</sup> confirmed the Grossetestian milieu of the treatise, and, at the same time, revealed an unexpectedly strong influence of this 'old' intellectual milieu on the early scientific interests of Oresme, an influence which still deserves an in-depth investigation. Eventually, thanks to Panzica's careful inspection, a third copy of the *Inter omnes* has been identified in the late 13th-century manuscript Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conv. Soppr. G.III.464. This is a decisive witness for the edition of the text, which is now in the course of preparation.<sup>86</sup> The Florence manuscript does not transmit the *Inter omnes* in association with Grosseteste's *De iride* or Adam's known works, but under the rubric *Questiones super libros Metheorum* (fols. 41va–43vb), which follow an early anonymous commentary on this Aristotelian work, likely of English origin. Indeed, the Florence manuscript includes several commentaries on Aristotle's natural works, one of which is attributed in the margin to Adam of Whitby, another to Adam alone.<sup>87</sup> Its English, perhaps Oxonian, milieu is therefore confirmed.

The *Inter omnes* actually consists of very brief 'queries' answered on the basis of what 'reason (*ratio*) and experiment (*experimentum*)' testify. Its main source is, naturally, Aristotle's *Meteorology* quoted according to the Arab-Latin *vetus translatio* by Gerard of Cremona, which remained the reference translation up to the 1260s.<sup>88</sup> The *Inter omnes* examines the theory of the rainbow on the basis of two principles: the one is the definition of color as incorporated light, and the other is the principle of light refraction. Both principles are applied also in Robert Grosseteste's *De colore*

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**83** See on this Dinkova-Bruun and Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste's *De iride* and its *Addendum*,' and Panti, 'The Oxford-Paris Connection of Optics and the Rainbow.'

**84** A. Panzica, *Nicole Oresme, Questiones in Meteorologica de prima lectura: Study of the Manuscript Tradition and Critical Edition* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, forthcoming). See also Panzica, 'Nicole Oresme à la Faculté des Arts de Paris: Les Questions sur les Météorologiques,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 84 (2017), pp. 7–89.

**85** Panti, 'The Oxford-Paris Connection of Optics and the Rainbow.'

**86** Greti Dinkova Bruun and Cecilia Panti, 'The *Tractatus de iride* "Inter omnes impressiones" formerly attributed to Oresme and Its Grossetestian Milieu: Introduction and Edition,' *Vivarium* (forthcoming).

**87** It is worth mentioning that Adam of Whitby also refers to the physics of light in his works. See above n. 39.

**88** Aristotle, *Meteorologica*, ed. Pieter L. Schoonheim, in *Aristotle's 'Meteorology' in the Arabico-Latin tradition* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2000).

and *De iride*, but the *Inter omnes* diverges from Grosseteste since it considers a simple, not a triple, refraction of light as the cause of rainbows, and attributes a fundamental role to the single drop, not the misty cloud as a whole, as the place in which refraction happens;<sup>89</sup> moreover, the author holds that light is incorporated in the particles of air or water according to different degrees, and this is due to the density of the transparent medium. This idea is absent from Grosseteste's notion of incorporation, but can be found, as we have seen above, in the writings of Adam of Exeter.<sup>90</sup>

The text opens with an explanation of the term 'rainbow' (*iris*) which evidences the human limits for its rational justification. It quotes verbatim from Alfred of Sarshele's commentary on Aristotle's *Meteora*, in which the rainbow is likewise considered an obscure phenomenon.<sup>91</sup> Thus, the author attributes the solution of this wondrous phenomenon to 'reason and experiment'. This clearly recalls the double path of 'experiments and reason' we find in Adam of Exeter, as well as in Grosseteste's works and in other treatises of the same milieu.<sup>92</sup>

The first *experimentum* is fundamental to the subsequent explanation of the rainbow in nature: if we take a spherical glass vessel full of pure water, the sun rays falling on it 'refract' (*franguntur*) and converge in a single point on the other side of the bowl. From here, the rays emerge, forming a 'hollow cone' (*pyramis cava*), with the vertex at the point of the rays' convergence. Here, the colors of the rainbow appear. However, they will not be disposed in the same order of the natural rainbow. Similar 'experiments' with spherical glass vessels filled with water or urine are referred to in medieval scientific treatises on optics in order to have a model to describe light refraction. One of these texts is Euclid's *Catoptrics*, also mentioned by Adam (excerpt 6).<sup>93</sup> The first experiment raises a question as to why the colors appear only in the cone formed beyond the convergence of the rays. The author answers by adopting the definition of color as 'light incorporated in a transparent medium,' which is given in Grosseteste's *De colore*.<sup>94</sup>

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**89** On Grosseteste's theory of rainbow and the related bibliography, see Panti and Dinkova-Bruun, 'Robert Grosseteste's *De iride* and its *Addendum*,' and Cecilia Panti, 'The Theological Use of Science in Robert Grosseteste and Adam Marsh According to Roger Bacon: The Case Study of the Rainbow,' in *Robert Grosseteste and the Pursuit of Religious and Scientific Learning in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jack P. Cunningham and Mark Hocknull (Cham: Springer, 2016), pp. 143–63.

**90** Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter,' pp. 167–73.

**91** Panti, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam of Exeter,' pp. 50–51; see also Aristotle, *Meteoreologica*, I.8 (349a11–13), ed. Schoonheim, p. 50.

**92** Robert Grosseteste, *De iride*, in Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke*, p. 75 in pp. 72–78: 'Hoc autem nobis manifestum est per experimentum et consimiles ratiocinationes (...):' Adam of Exeter, *De fluxu*, in Dales, 'The Text of Robert Grosseteste's *Questio de fluxu*,' p. 460, line 70: 'Rationes et experimenta sufficient (...);' see also p. 461, line 82: 'Item experimento scimus (...)' and so on.

**93** Carl B. Boyer, *The Rainbow from Myths to Mathematics* (Princeton: Macmillan, 1987), p. 80.

**94** See Robert Grosseteste, *De colore*, in Greti Dinkova-Bruun et al., *The Dimensions of Colour: Robert Grosseteste's De colore* (Toronto: PIMS, 2013), p. 16: 'Color est lux incorporata perspicuo.'

However, the author interprets it in his own way, since he distinguishes between 'strong' and 'feeble' light, which allow for different degrees of incorporation. This last idea is not from Grosseteste, but, as we have seen, it can be found in the writings by Adam of Exeter. Basically, where the refracted rays converge, light is too much strong and cannot incorporate itself within the airy medium; instead, in the hollow cone formed after the convergence of the rays, the rays are dispersed and the luminosity decreases, so that the resulting weak light can incorporate itself into the density of the medium. The variety of density generates different colors in the hollow cone.

The explanation of the rainbow considers the innumerable drops (*sperule*) of water descending in the mist, and forming a sort of continuous surface, as if each of them were the vessel of water, in which the sun rays refract, forming small hollow cones everywhere. In the presence of a dark cloud, the rainbow will appear similarly to what happens in the vessel of water, but, in the natural rainbow, each portion of the colored arch will be the result of the projection of each cone onto the dark cloud, and the continuity of the arch will depend upon the continuity of the figures made by the drops in the mist.

This theory has interesting elements of originality, which seem to anticipate very roughly the theory of the rainbow which would be fully developed by Theodoric of Freiberg. The author, however, still considers the number of drops, not the single one, as accounting for the rainbow as a whole. Regarding the idea of the refraction of sun rays as the cause of the rainbow, Grosseteste seems to have been the first to hold it,<sup>95</sup> and consequently the author seems to have taken the idea from him. However, while Grosseteste considers a triple refraction within a misty cloud as having three layers of different density, our author thinks of it as a single refraction within each drop in the mist.

This same principle of light refraction poses the problem of why the rainbow appears as a half-circle or less than a half-circle alone, and this problem, inexplicable to ignorant people (*inexpertis*), is explained by the 'good experimenter' (*diligens experimentator*). This second experiment considers three observers placed respectively north, in between, and south of the imagined line joining the sun and the dark cloud, which will see three differently oriented and disposed rainbows, due to their own angular position. Three problems emerge from this experiment: why is the entire cloud not colored, but only a part of it? Why is the rainbow circular and not another form? Why is it not larger than half a circle but can be smaller than half a circle?

The solution to these questions is given thanks to the theory of the spiritual nature of colors.

The idea of the spirituality of the sensibles in the medium emerges at the beginning of the 13th century from the convergence between the Augustinian idea of the vehicle of the soul and the Aristotelian theory of the spirituality of the forms in

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<sup>95</sup> Boyer, *The Rainbow from Myths to Mathematics*, pp. 89–92.

the medium.<sup>96</sup> The author envisages three different degrees of spirituality: total, when the medium is fully transparent, such as pure air; partial, so that color is visible in specific places alone in a denser medium, such as water; absent, when colors are visible everywhere ‘in reverberation on a dark body’ (*in resplendentia ad opacum*), namely, when they are reflected upon a solid surface. Thus, the spiritual colors of the rainbow explain the reason why different rainbows can be seen by observers in different places: when, in fact, colors reverberate in a watery surface such as the cloud, they are seen only where the rays of the colors are perpendicular to the observer’s sight. As regards the circularity of the rainbow, it is justified because the circle is the most capacious (*capacissima*) of the geometrical figures, and consequently has more multiplied luminosity than other figures.<sup>97</sup> The idea of the multiplication of light is, again, typically Grossetestian.<sup>98</sup>

The final sentence of the *Inter omnes* states again that all these incredible facts regarding the rainbow are fully understood when they are indagated by means of ‘experiment and reason’. The attribution of this text to Adam of Exeter is likely, because of the reference to the degrees of incorporation, the insistence on ‘experiment and reason’, the transmission of the text in close association with Adam’s *De fluxu*. After all, the fact that the treatise adopts the Grossetestian idea of light incorporation but *does not* mention Grosseteste’s theory of the triple refraction might also indicate that it was written a bit earlier than Grosseteste’s *De iride* itself. As *terminus post quem*, we may consider c.1225, because of the adoption of the theory of the spirituality of colors in the medium by Averroes, whose first diffusion starts approximately in those years.<sup>99</sup> Provisionally, therefore, the *Inter omnes* can be collocated between c.1225–29, but nothing except the attribution to Adam precludes the possibility of a bit later dating. The absence of a fully developed *question* structure, however, posits its collocation not later than mid-13th century.

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**96** On the early reception of this theory and its connection with the Augustinian and Aristotelian theories of sense perception, see Cecilia Panti, ‘I sensi nella luce dell’anima,’ pp. 186–90; Rega Wood, ‘Spirituality and Perception in Medieval Aristotelian Natural Philosophy,’ in *Medieval Perceptual Puzzles: Theories of Sense Perception in the 13th and 14th Centuries*, ed. E. Băltuță (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 153–78.

**97** The principle of capaciousness can be found in several sources, including Sacrobosco’s *Sphere*; while Sacrobosco and others define ‘the roundness’ (*rotunditas*) as the *figura capacissima*, the *Summa Halensis* has *circulus*, exactly as our author: Alexander of Hales, *Doctoris inrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica (SH)*, 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1924–48), Vol. IV, In1, Tr3, Q1, Ti2, M3 (n. 115), p. 161: ‘Circulus enim est capacissima figura respectu aliarum.’

**98** See Cecilia Panti, ‘La moltiplicazione della luce e la sua funzione nel *De luce* di Roberto Grossatesta,’ in *Immagini della luce: Dimensioni di una metafora assoluta*, ed. Salvatore Lavecchia (Milan; Udine: Mimesis, 2019), pp. 97–122.

**99** René Antoine Gauthier, ‘Notes sur les débuts (1225–1240) du premiere “averroïsme”,’ *Revue de sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 66 (1982), pp. 321–74.

## The ‘Exposiciun sur la Pater nostre’

This theological or, better, devotional work is an interesting Anglo-Norman text transmitted in manuscript Cambridge, Pembroke College 112 (fols. 71–92), of the late 13th century, possibly from Reading. The text is explicitly attributed to Adam in the rubric *Exposiciun meistre Adam de Eccestre sur la Pater nostre*, which opens the treatise. This codex contains several Anglo-Norman devotional works. The ascription to Master Adam ‘of Exeter’ (*Eccestre* is the Anglo-Norman name of Exeter), has been given for sound by Tony Hunt, who has recently examined and edited the work, which is transmitted in three other manuscripts.<sup>100</sup> The Cambridge codex has been adopted as the base text because it bears the first redaction of the exposition, which was originally addressed to a religious woman. The references to her (*‘chere mere’*, *‘bele mere’* and the like), however, have been partially erased in the codex, and substituted with a male addressee. The new framework for male readers has been adopted in the other witnesses of the treatise, but the original female recipient of the text is evident because of a few references which were overlooked in the correction and also from an early 14th-century Middle English translation of the text, which maintains the female recipient.<sup>101</sup>

Adam’s exposition is a plain explanation of the prayer, illustrated by brief and clear examples which help non-Latinate female readers to appreciate the ‘joy and devotion’ which should accompany the religious life and prayer, in line with the ideals of salvation for all people promoted by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, enthusiastically embraced by the most advanced representatives of the English church, including Grosseteste himself during his episcopacy (1235–53).<sup>102</sup> The text is divided into a general introduction followed by separate commentaries on each of the canonical seven petitions of the prayer in Matthew’s version (Matt. 6:9–13): the first three petitions are concerned with God, and the last four with the human needs. The introduction opens by stressing the importance of understanding what is said in prayers, because ‘spiritual joy does not come from knowledge, but from loving Jesus.’<sup>103</sup> Adam states that to know God’s will is true wisdom, ‘which is not learned by study but by humility’ and insists also on the brotherhood of all human beings, as true images of God. An illuminating sentence states that nobody should think that ‘the soul of a Saracen’ is not redeemed by Christ, because all human beings are created as images of God. This assures that ‘we are all brothers’ since the human soul is ‘the noblest created thing in all creation’ and ‘surpasses all creatures’.<sup>104</sup> Brother-

**100** Adam of Exeter, *Exposiciun sur la Pater Nostre*, in *“Cher alme”: Texts of Anglo-Norman Piety*, ed. Tony Hunt (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2010), pp. 71–125.

**101** See also Lesley Smith, ‘Friars and the Preparation of Pastoral Aids,’ in *The English Province of the Franciscans*, ed. Robson, pp. 188–89 in pp. 175–92, for Adam of Exeter.

**102** For a brief introduction and further bibliography see again *“Cher alme”*, ed. Hunt, pp. 3–9.

**103** Adam of Exeter, *Exposiciun sur la Pater Nostre*, ed. Hunt, p. 79.

**104** Adam of Exeter, *Exposiciun sur la Pater Nostre*, ed. Hunt, p. 103 and pp. 87–89.

hood, humility and poverty are the main topics of the introduction and are linked together as if they were mutually dependent the one upon the others. It is worth noting that the name of Mary is recurrently invoked as the highest example of humility, poverty and fraternity; and in the name of Saint Mary, Adam closes the exposition itself of the *Our Father*, which is clearly in line with Eccleston's note on Adam's love for the Virgin.<sup>105</sup>

The *Exposiciun*, however, also presents some hints denoting Adam's teaching as a master. For instance, the first petition allows for affirming that a name has two properties: it spreads into many places and lets the designated person be known. It is curious that one of Roger Bacon's notes concerning Adam Marsh – the dear friend of Adam of Exeter, as we have seen above – mentions a similar teaching, which Bacon claims to have openly received from Marsh's mouth.<sup>106</sup> A clear echo, then, of Boethius' *Consolatio philosophie* (II, 7) is in the passage stating that 'nothing is rightfully yours which can be taken from you against your will. Those are all things that come to an end.'<sup>107</sup> A few other examples are, instead, related to medicine: one of these states that the decay of the human body is due to the corruption (*ordure*) and the foulness which is accelerated as it happens in the ill man who does not feel the desire for food; in fact, the decay is contrasted by the natural hunger of the healthy man.<sup>108</sup> Again, the metaphor of the healthy man offers the hint to rework Plato's myth of the cavern: an ill man who had never been out of a prison nor seen a healthy man does not recognize that he is sick, unless 'by the light of the sun' he may see a healthy man; and this image, in turn, offers the opportunity to mention the theory of the Adamic state of man, in which all senses were perfect and man 'could effortlessly master all the arts and sciences of the world by himself.'<sup>109</sup> It is worth noting also the criticism of the unworthy and careless prelates, a topic heavily debated by Grosseteste in his letters, sermons, and pastoral works.<sup>110</sup>

However, the most interesting feature of Adam's exposition concerning his extensive use of brief examples, to clarify the meaning of the passage under discussion in an unequivocal and easily understandable way. For instance, the image of the flaming brand is adopted to illustrate that 'nothing can be good unless it is common to

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**105** Adam of Exeter, *Exposiciun sur la Pater Nostre*, ed. Hunt, pp. 105, 113, 119, and several other occurrences up to the end at p. 125.

**106** See Panti, 'Non abest nec distat,' p. 74: 'Brother Adam said: Just as two sentences are not physically distant according to their nature, so it is for two spiritual beings.' The passage is from the *Opus tertium*.

**107** Adam of Exeter, *Exposiciun sur la Pater Nostre*, ed. Hunt, pp. 119–21.

**108** Adam of Exeter, *Exposiciun sur la Pater Nostre*, ed. Hunt, p. 109. Here Hunt's translation needs a few changes in punctuation and the substitution of 'heat' (*ardor*) with 'corruption' (*ordure*).

**109** Adam of Exeter, *Exposiciun sur la Pater Nostre*, ed. Hunt, p. 111.

**110** Adam of Exeter, *Exposiciun sur la Pater Nostre*, ed. Hunt, p. 101. On Grosseteste's criticism of careless prelates see Leonard E. Boyle, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Pastoral Care,' in *Proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Summer 1976*, ed. Dale B.J. Randall (Medieval and Renaissance Series 8) (Durham, N.C., 1979), pp. 3–51.

all,' like the spreading of brightness: the more brightness, the more 'the things around it' are seen.<sup>111</sup> But the more interesting of these examples is the parallelism which illustrates the second petition 'Thy kingdom come'. The kingdom is like the human being, whose body is the land, the five senses are five cities, sense perceptions are the citizens, and reason is the judge. The king, that is God, rules over every part of the kingdom, while the judge has to rule over the citizens to apply the laws of the king.<sup>112</sup>

The *Exposition* is a very well-constructed devotional text: clear in the presentation of each issue, easy to be understood thanks to the abundance of plain examples, rigorous in presenting each petition in good order, and appropriate in terms of the organization of the commentary. In a few words, it is the work of a good master, one who knows his pupil and adapts his teaching to the pupil's capacity.

## Conclusion

The present paper has tried to shed some glimpses of light on Adam of Exeter's life and works. Although it has not been possible to confirm his paternity of the glosses on Boethius and the treatise on the rainbow, the ideas that emerged from these works, and above all from the *De fluxu* and the *De calore solis*, the attribution of which is sufficiently sound, testify that Adam absorbed in his own way the physics of light firstly elaborated by Grosseteste and discussed in the Oxonian milieu in the thirteenth century. As we have seen, the idea of the incorporation of light into particles of air and water as the cause of natural phenomena such as sound, heat, and tides circulated before Grosseteste started teaching theology to the Franciscans in 1229–30, and Adam, as we have seen, wrote his *Questio de fluxu* while he was a master *in scolis suis*, i.e. before he entered the Order in 1229.

These data mean that Grosseteste and Adam's physics of light were developed in the same years, and we may assume that agreements and disagreements between the two masters on the tenets related to light and its effects in nature promoted the teaching of natural philosophy at Oxford during the 1220s and supplemented theological education in the first Franciscan community in the early 1230s.<sup>113</sup> Although improbable, it might even be that some aspects of Adam's ideas influenced Grosseteste, instead of the reverse: to my knowledge, none of Grosseteste's colleagues or subsequent masters explicitly addresses him as the father of the theory of light incorporation.

The principle of the incorporation of light into elemental particles was applied also, as already mentioned, by Alexander of Hales, Richard Rufus, the *Summa phi-*

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<sup>111</sup> Adam of Exeter, *Expositiun sur la Pater Nostre*, ed. Hunt, p. 95.

<sup>112</sup> Adam of Exeter, *Expositiun sur la Pater Nostre*, ed. Hunt, p. 99.

<sup>113</sup> On this see, again, Panti, 'Scienza e teologia agli esordi della scuola dei Minori di Oxford,' Panti, 'The Scientific Basis of Robert Grosseteste's Teaching.'



*losophiae* and other masters, and a now lost work on light and its functions is also attributed to Adam Marsh.<sup>114</sup> The mention in academic literature of the theory of sound as incorporated light and its application to the celestial music, then, is a clear example of the influence of Grosseteste's teaching, to which Adam also contributed, at least according to William of Clifford's words, as we have seen. In the 14th century, however, scholars seemingly ceased to trust these ideas of the radial cosmic music, or of sound or heat as incorporated light. Aristotle's philosophy had definitely obtained the highest regard among masters and scholars, and these odd and fascinating theories, which had helped in the early assimilation of Aristotle and had partially contributed to the diffusion of ideas from the first 'learned' English Franciscans, such as Adam of Exeter, received no further attention.

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**114** Servus Gieben, 'Robert Grosseteste and Adam Marsh on Light in a Summary Attributed to St Bonaventure,' in *Aspectus and Affectus: Essays and Editions in Grosseteste and Medieval Intellectual Life in Honor of Richard Dales*, ed. G. Freibergs (New York: AMS Press, 1993), pp. 17–35.



Emilie Lavallée

# Lights in the Darkness: Counsel, Deliberation, and Illumination in the Letters of Adam Marsh

**Abstract:** Adam Marsh (d. 1259) was a prominent spiritual counsellor to princes, prelates, and the superiors of his order. Counsel and exhortations are prominent features of his surviving letters, through which he sought to advance his theological vision, particularly with regard to the pastoral work of the church and its need for correction and reform. Although confident in the immutability of divine truth and its ultimate victory, Adam often expresses uncertainty and anxiety in his letters concerning what he and many of his correspondents viewed as a spiritually (and politically) fraught and dangerous landscape, in which truth had become more difficult to discern and sound counsel more difficult to provide. In his letters, Adam confronts the difficulties of such uncertainties and considers how he and his recipients can determine not only what is true but what course of action they ought to take. Over the course of various correspondences, Adam refers himself and others to several external sources of insight—the illumination of divine counsel, the exchange of human counsel, and the interchange of multilateral deliberation—all mechanisms which, to differing degrees, rely on the aid of both divine mercy and human fellowship in order to provide the support necessary to navigate the contingencies of changing circumstance. Together, these considerations emphasize the interconnectedness of those seeking the will of God, as those engaged in the active life rely on the prayers, exhortations, counsels, and even the disagreements of others to help them to navigate the darkness of temporal uncertainties.

## Introduction

The Franciscan friar Adam Marsh (d. 1259) never held a high ecclesiastical office, but he rose to prominence during his lifetime as a spiritual counsellor and influential advisor to princes, prelates, and the superiors of his order. The letters which survive him are filled with counsels and exhortations through which he sought to advance his theological vision, particularly with regard to the pastoral work of the Church and its need for correction and reform. His contemporaries confirm the value they placed on such counsel: Robert Grosseteste, a former master of Adam's who shared much of his theological vision, wrote to him in the latter months of 1235, shortly after being consecrated bishop of Lincoln, expressing his gratitude for Adam's effective persuasion. 'For I have learned from my experience of that persuasiveness,' he wrote, 'that you, and you alone, are a truthful friend, a loyal counsellor, a person whose concern is the truth and not what is illusory, and who rests on a firm and

solid foundation, not on a hollow and fragile reed.<sup>1</sup> Despite their mutual dependence on this certain foundation of theological truth, however, Adam and Grosseteste still saw themselves as living in a time of great danger and uncertainty as the world drew inexorably closer to the Day of Judgement. Amidst what he and many of his correspondents viewed as a spiritually (and politically) fraught and dangerous landscape, even Adam was not immune to doubts and uncertainties, when truth had become more difficult to discern and sound counsel more difficult to provide. Indeed, uncertainty, as others have noted, proves a prominent feature of his letters.<sup>2</sup>

As a man frequently sought for his counsel, Adam was perpetually confronted with the difficulties of such uncertainties and forced to consider how they might be mitigated, not only for himself as an individual but within the network of friendships and connections evidenced by his letters. Even as he offered counsel and consolation to assuage the anxieties of others, he framed himself as a man who similarly required and was seeking insight and illumination: 'I am much disturbed by anxiety and uncertainty over the intricate question you have raised,' he writes in response to one such request for his counsel, 'because even before God I do not know how to give a clear answer. I have said this in no way as if I were offering counsel, but as one searching for what is true.'<sup>3</sup> Throughout his corpus of surviving letters, Adam returns repeatedly to these issues of truth and certainty, insight and discernment. How can he and those to whom he is providing counsel determine not only what is true but what course of action should best be followed? His letters' frequent imagery of light and darkness not only highlights the ongoing battle of good and evil, but also illustrates the difficulty of finding one's way with confident discernment without an external source of light. Over the course of various correspondences, Adam offers his considerations on several such external sources of insight, which can somewhat

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1 Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, Rolls Series (London: Longman, 1861), letter 20, p. 69; translation in *Letters of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln*, trans. Frank A.C. Mantello and Joseph Goering (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), pp. 101–2: 'In ipsa namque persuasione te solum expertus sum veracem amicum, fidelem consiliarium, respicientem veritatem non vanitatem, imminentem solido et firmo fulcimento, non vacuo et fragili baculo arundineo.'

2 Amanda Power, 'The Uncertainties of Reformers: Collective Anxieties and Strategic Discourses,' in *Thirteenth Century England XVI: Proceedings of the Cambridge Conference, 2015*, ed. Andrew M. Spencer and Carl Watkins (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2017), pp. 1–20. Power's essay focuses on the strategic and institutional implications of rhetorical uses of certainty by Adam and other 'reformers', rather than the theological means by which they mitigated their own anxieties and uncertainties.

3 Letter 75 to Richard Gravesend, Dean of Lincoln (28 May 1254), *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. and trans. C.H. Lawrence, Oxford Medieval Texts, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), vol. 1, pp. 190–91: 'Coarctationis pauide anceps anxietas meam admodum afflixit animam in hac uestre disertitudinis questione perplexa, cui quoniam ignoravi ecce coram Domino quid certius responderem, hoc locutus sum, nequaquam quasi prebens consilium, sed uelut uerum inuestigans (...)' (While this essay makes use of Lawrence's facing translation, it has often been silently amended for reasons of consistency and terminological exactitude. Few of the letters have sufficient internal evidence for precise dating; any suggested dates are Lawrence's.) See similar phrasing in Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, ep. XCIX to Walter Cantilupe (April 1242), p. 304.

artificially be divided into three heavily intertwined categories: the illumination of divine counsel, the exchange of human counsel, and the interchange of multilateral deliberation. All of these mechanisms, to differing degrees, rely on the aid of both divine mercy and human fellowship in order to provide the support necessary to navigate the contingencies of the mutable sublunary sphere.

## Challenges of the Source Material

Accessing Adam's theological thought through his writing presents some particular challenges when compared to some of his contemporaries: none of his theological works themselves are known to survive, leaving only a single manuscript collection of 245 of his letters, composed between 1241 and his death in 1259.<sup>4</sup> This collection provides a limited and partial view of his many correspondences. Of the sixty letters we possess from Adam to Robert Grosseteste, for example, only two survive in the other direction.<sup>5</sup> Further contextual difficulties arise from the fact that the letters, ranging from hasty notes to lengthy epistles, are largely undated, grouped by their Franciscan collectors according to their recipients without regard for chronological order. Adam's writing style, which looks to the masters of the *dictamen* for much of its orotund vocabulary and fulsome forms of address, is also not without its challenges, as scholars have been quick to note.<sup>6</sup> Despite certain conventionalities and convolutions of form, however, Adam's spiritual convictions and desires still communicate themselves with force even to the modern reader, the more so as he frequently writes in a mode of fervent exhortation.

There are no indications that Adam ever intended these letters for collection or wider publication; even while drawing on dictaminal models, each letter is written for a particular recipient in particular circumstances. There is very little reliance on authorities other than scripture, and theological lines of thinking are often alluded to rather than developed. These are not methodical theological treatises; they are primarily pastoral letters of counsel, entreaty, and admonition, written by a man seeking to establish footholds of confidence and security in a world he considered to be entering ever more spiritual dangers. Adam's letters contain an application

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4 British Library Cotton MS Vitellius C VIII, ff. 22r–84v. The lengthy final letter of the collection (letter 245), incomplete in the Cotton manuscript, is found in full in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby MS 104, ff. 90–101 and Vienna, ONB MS 4923 (Theol. 457), ff. 40v–42v. On Adam Marsh's possible non-extant works, see Lawrence, 'Introduction,' in *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, vol. 1, pp. xvii–xviii.

5 Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, letters 9 and 20.

6 C.H. Lawrence, who edited and translated the collection, labelled it 'an elaborate and highly convoluted rhetorical style,' while John Maddicott has described the hallmarks of Adam's style as obliqueness, allusiveness, and the ability to cover pages without saying anything of much consequence: Lawrence, 'Introduction,' pp. xlv–xlvi; Maddicott, 'Review of *The Letters of Adam Marsh*: Vol. II,' *English Historical Review* 127:525 (2012), pp. 422–23.

of his theological thought, conceptions, and ideas not just in the abstract, but marshalled and applied to particular situations and individuals. Even as he expressed his longings for the leisure of the contemplative life, Adam's connections to powerful people including at the royal court inevitably drew him into what he considered 'the disturbing business' (*occupatio inquieta*) of more political matters.<sup>7</sup> Adam's persuasive intent shapes his use of language and imagery; he uses rhetoric of certainty and uncertainty, light and darkness, truth and deceit to strategic effect in advancing his own views about necessary reforms within the Church and society.<sup>8</sup> Adam's views of divine illumination, counsel, and deliberation, rooted in longstanding theological discussions, are therefore applied in his letters with practical force as he seeks to 'accuse, plead, chasten and arouse people to the severe demands of salvation' and to give and receive guidance on how to discern truth and the right course of action.<sup>9</sup>

## Celestial Certainty and Temporal Anxiety

Adam expresses no doubts as to the changeless certainty of divine truth and its ultimate victory. This immutability of divine truth undergirds his confidence in divine aid: 'Will the changeless truth of incomparable mercy refuse us what he bids us to ask when he has been asked for it?'<sup>10</sup> The almighty God also provides the overall direction and destination for his path in life, being 'the way by which we travel, the truth at which we arrive, and the life in which we ever remain.'<sup>11</sup> The ultimate victory of the side of truth, in opposition to the evil forces of fraudulent seduction, should be self-evident; as Adam instructs Simon of Montfort, earl of Leicester: 'Only one whose mind is darkened by unbelief doubts ... that the truthful simplicity [*simplicitas ueridica*] of the faithful shall rebut the deceitful cunning [*fallacem calliditatem*] of the lost (...)'.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, the Church still plays a critical role in the defence of this truth: a large part of Adam's deep concern for suitable leadership in the Church

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7 Letter 73 to Walter Cantilupe, bishop of Worcester (1253), vol. 1, pp. 176–77. On Adam's political involvement, see Lawrence, 'Introduction,' pp. xxxvii–xliii and Amanda Power, 'The Friars in Secular and Ecclesiastical Governance, 1224–c. 1259,' in *The English Province of the Franciscans (1224–c.1350)*, ed. Michael J.P. Robson (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 28–45. Adam's role as a counsellor to the powerful was not without its setbacks: he writes of incurring Henry III's displeasure 'on account of [speaking] words of life [*propter uerba vitae*]' and subsequently being refused access to the king and queen for a time: letter 141 to Simon of Montfort (1250), pp. 348–49.

8 Power, 'The Uncertainties of Reformers,' pp. 7–8.

9 Letter 44 to Grosseteste, vol. 1, pp. 120–21.

10 Letter 245.9a to Sewal, archbishop of York (1256x1257), vol. 2, pp. 586–87.

11 Letter 47 to Grosseteste (7 March 1252), vol. 1, pp. 126–27; see John 14:6.

12 Letter 141 to Simon of Montfort (1250), vol. 2, pp. 342–43: 'Quis enim ambigit, preterquam is quem obtenebrauit perfidei caligo (...) quin fallacem calliditatem perditorum fidelium simplicitas ueridica refellat (...)'.<sup>12</sup>

stems from his belief that it is through the ‘invincible leaders of the Church’ that ‘catholic truth is affirmed and heretical falsity refuted.’<sup>13</sup>

The certainty of eternal truth and the confidence that it will eventually prevail cannot, however, entirely mitigate the shifting nature of decision-making on earth. This contingency does not undermine Adam’s spiritual confidence, but he is very aware that it may require additional care in navigation. He writes that ‘the wise man never fears the odious label of inconstancy where he clings with constancy to heavenly truth, which, according to the changing conditions of transitory things, though it remains constant, demands changes in one’s counsels [*precipit uicissitudines consiliorum*].’<sup>14</sup> The divine truth may remain constant, but one’s *consilium*, one’s plan or counsel, must adapt to changing circumstance. Humans living transitory lives must determine not only what is right and true, but also how to apply this to the decisions, plans, and actions which they are required to make in particular circumstances.

Adam repeatedly refers in his letters to his own anxiety amidst such uncertainty: to Grosseteste, for example, he writes of having a mind in suspense with long-standing doubts and uneasiness.<sup>15</sup> Some of Adam’s perplexity expressed in his letters concerns specific challenges, such as his uncertainty over how to give a clear answer to a request for counsel from Richard Gravesend, dean of Lincoln, regarding the collation of the prebend of Thame.<sup>16</sup> Much of Adam’s apprehension also relates more generally to the perilous state of the world which he believed to be drawing near to its end. He writes of:

very bad and dangerous times, when in almost the whole Christian world we see, for shame, those who have obtained the ministry of working for salvation turning (...) the highest office, shining truth [*clarissimam ueritatem*], and the fragrance of holiness into, alas, an arrogant display of power, a quest for ephemeral wealth, and the pleasures of lust. On this account, as though the abyss is opened and Satan unbound, a monstrous and omniform strength, unheard of for centuries past, opposes itself to the kingdom of God.<sup>17</sup>

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**13** Letter 245.24a, vol. 2, pp. 610–11.

**14** Letter 172 to William of Nottingham, provincial minister of England (undated), vol. 2, pp. 414–15: ‘Nunquam tamen formidat sapiens odibilem inconstantie notam, ubi superne ueritati constanter in heretur, que secundum rerum transmutabilium uarietates diuersas, taman eadem manens, precipit uicissitudines consiliorum.’

**15** Letter 52 (3 June 1250), vol. 1, pp. 144–45: ‘(...) littera suspense menti nuper transmissa diutine prestolationis ancipitem sollicitudinem non mediocri subeleuauit exultatione.’

**16** Letter 75 (see above, n. 3).

**17** Letter 8 to James Erlandson, bishop of Roskilde (1251), vol. 1, pp. 18–19: ‘(...) presertim diebus pessimis periculosissimi temporis, cum conspiciantur, proh nefas, pene per uniuersum orbis Christiani spatium qui salutis operande celeste ministerium sunt assecuti, et altissimam dignitatem et clarissimam ueritatem et suauiissimam sanctitatem in fastum pompaticę potestatis, in questum euanidę facultatis, in luxum sordide uoluptatis (...) detorquere. Propter quod contra regnum Dei usquequam seculis omnibus inaudita, quasi abyssu rupta et soluto Satana, omniformis grassatur immanitas.’



In the midst of a time Adam describes as characterized not only by violence but also by seductive and deceptive blandishments, when the leaders of the church ‘flee without any courage before their pursuers,’ he confesses to Grosseteste that ‘for some days past, more than usually, I know not what should be done [*quid fieri opus sit pro-rsus nescio*] about these things which affect the profession of both your holiness and my wretched self,’ expressing his longing for Grosseteste’s guidance.<sup>18</sup> Adam often frames such human ignorance in the context of divine omniscience. In a letter to some fellow Franciscan brothers, he writes that the remedy for the current evils is known only to God ‘who sees the prayers of the humble.’ Adam himself, contrary to his hopes, is in ignorance: ‘For this reason,’ he writes, ‘I am in no way adequate to find what needs to be done,’ his letters and speeches having failed to have had the desired result.<sup>19</sup>

Faced with such human deficiencies in knowledge, discernment, and efficacy, Adam must consider means of mitigation. Undergirded by a confidence in changeless divine truth and reaching from temporal uncertainties towards eternal certainties, he refers himself and his letters’ recipients to the mechanisms of illumination, counsel, and deliberation in order to seek truth and determine what ought to be done in their particular circumstances. Adam prays throughout his letters for divine illumination from God, and in particular the spiritual gift of counsel, but also proffers his own counsel and solicits the counsel of others, while also advocating the value of multi-lateral discussion and deliberation, all as means of inquiring into the truth and determining what ought to be done.

## Divine Counsel and Illumination

Throughout his letters, Adam refers to divine counsel as a necessity amidst uncertainties, and an essential source of truth and illumination. If humans lack the ability to see clearly, they must depend upon God for insight. ‘In this abysmal darkness of the prince of the world,’ he writes to Richard Gravesend, ‘who will see what ought to be considered well-advised [*consultum*], except one who has been illuminated by revelations “coming down from the Father of heavenly lights” [James 1:17]?’<sup>20</sup> Adam’s choice of scripture here emphasizes the immutable certainty of such illumination; in the Father of lights, as the Vulgate continues, there is no change (*transmutatio*) or shadow of alteration (*vicissitudinis obumbratio*). Here we see the imagery of light and darkness which is pervasive throughout Adam’s letters, particularly with regard to truth, knowledge, and discernment. Adam most frequently refers to such

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<sup>18</sup> Letter 38 to Grosseteste (undated), vol. 1, pp. 110–11.

<sup>19</sup> Letter 243, vol. 2, pp. 570–71: ‘Propter quod quid facto opus sit inuenire nullatenus sufficio (...).’  
<sup>20</sup> Letter 75, vol. 1, pp. 188–89: ‘Sed inter has abyssales mundani principis obtenebrationes quid esset consultum censi debet, quis aliquatenus uidebit, nisi quem illustant reuelationes “desursum descendentes a Patre luminum”?’

divinely-bestowed insight as *illuminatio*, the giving of light – wording common in authorities such as the Vulgate, Augustine, and Pseudo-Dionysius. Such heavenly illumination pierces the blinding darkness of ignorance and moral contagion and provides new clarity of sight, allowing those who are illuminated to illuminate others in turn.<sup>21</sup>

Prayer allows petitioners to turn directly to the source of this divine light, and Adam naturally counsels those who face darkness and uncertainty to turn to the Lord, calling upon him to provide them with aid and illumination. In one letter, questioning what ought to be done regarding a certain urgent matter of business, Adam writes to Peter of Savoy that ‘the infallible remedy for our fear of the outcome of uncertain events [*ambiguorum eventuum exitus*] is to follow the example of men who triumph and with untiring perseverance supplicate [the Lord] (...). Indeed, when we do not know what we ought to do [*quid agere debeamus*], let us cast all our care upon him who loves souls.’<sup>22</sup> Prayer concerns both the outcomes of uncontrollable events and the actions that one may decide to take in the face of them. Adam similarly writes to Eleanor of Montfort, regarding the difficulty of appointing a suitable priest to her household, that ‘there can be only one counsel to offer in this matter, and that is to appeal humbly to him who judges not according to appearances, but sees into the heart.’<sup>23</sup> Such divinely-provided insight works in concert with other sources of authority and revelation. Adam speaks of ‘high minds, illuminated to whatever extent by canonical tradition or the commands of the Gospel or heavenly inspirations or shining revelations,’ who are able to attain an understanding of a more blessed and glorious justice.<sup>24</sup> Adam repeatedly refers to inspiration as operating alongside Scripture, the examples of the saints, reason, and experience to direct the faithful and grant them clear sight of the truth.<sup>25</sup>

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**21** Letter 37 to Grosseteste, pp. 110–11 (see below, note 51); letter 212 to Geoffrey of Brie, minister provincial of France (undated), pp. 518–19. Adam’s letters are relatively unconcerned with the epistemological implications or mechanics of such illumination, generally focusing instead on illumination as an aid to practical discernment. On theories of divine illumination in the 13th century, see Lydia Schumacher, *Divine Illumination: The History and Future of Augustine’s Theory of Knowledge* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

**22** Letter 145 to Peter of Savoy (undated), vol. 2, pp. 360–61: ‘Contra formidabiles ambiguorum eventuum exitus hoc infallibile semper recurrit remedium, quod secundum salutaria exempla uirorum triumphalium illi diligentia indefessa supplicetur (...). Cum etenim ignoramus quid agere debeamus, omnem sollicitudinem nostrum in Ipsum proiciamus qui amat animas.’ See also 2 Chronicles 20:12 and 1 Peter 5:7.

**23** Matthew 3:9; letter 158 to Eleanor of Montfort, Countess of Leicester (1249x1250), vol. 2, pp. 382–83.

**24** Letter 245.24a to Sewal, archbishop of York (1256x1257), vol. 2, pp. 610–11: ‘Qualiter unquam sublimes animi quantumcunque uel traditionibus canonicis uel euangelicis sanctionibus uel inspirationibus celicis uel lucidis reuelationibus illuminati, poterunt intelligere iustitiam aliquam beatoris glorie (...).’

**25** See letter 245.28a, vol. 2, pp. 614–15 and letter 58 to an anonymous clerk, vol. 1, pp. 156–57.

One particular means of illumination which Adam discusses is that of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, specifically the gift of counsel, frequently referenced in Adam's letters in conjunction with the gift of fortitude. The medieval conception of the gifts (*dona*) was derived from the seven 'spirits' listed in a passage of Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 11 – wisdom and understanding, counsel and fortitude, knowledge and piety, and the fear of the Lord.<sup>26</sup> These gifts received an increasingly systematic treatment in the 12th and 13th centuries, although their precise nature and operation (such as their relation to the virtues) continued to be subject to debate. Texts which specifically addressed the gift of counsel generally focused less upon the bestowal of particular words of counsel from God and more upon its preparation of the heart to heed, and to desire to heed, the counsel of God and to imitate Christ, especially in matters of doubt or difficulty.<sup>27</sup>

Such discussions also frequently employed imagery of divine light or illumination providing clarity of sight.<sup>28</sup> An influential early treatment was that of Gregory the Great, who in his *Moralia in Iob* stressed not only the distinct action of each gift, but also the gifts' interdependence. According to Gregory, the gift of counsel (*consilium*) stays us from acting precipitately and fills the mind with reason, while the gift of fortitude (*fortitudo*), fearing no adversity, gives the alarmed soul confidence. Each gift has its own weaknesses – counsel may multiply itself and grow into confusion, fortitude may give confidence in a way which leads into precipitate action – yet each also works against particular vices, counsel against rashness, and fortitude against fear.<sup>29</sup> Each gift also depends on another: counsel is worthless without fortitude, since whatever it discovers through consideration it will never actually carry out in action; similarly, fortitude is destroyed without the support of counsel, since the greater it estimates its own power, the more it will rush headlong into

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<sup>26</sup> Isaiah 11:2–3.

<sup>27</sup> For an overview of medieval theological treatments of the gifts, see D.O. Lottin, 'Les dons du Saint-Esprit chez les théologiens depuis P. Lombard jusqu'à S. Thomas d'Aquin,' *Recherche de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 1 (1929), pp. 41–97; Jacques of Blic, 'Pour l'histoire de la théologie des dons avant Saint Thomas,' *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique* 22 (1946), pp. 117–79. On the gift of counsel, see Carla Casagrande, 'Virtù della prudenza e dono del consiglio,' in *Consilium: teorie e pratiche del consigliare nella cultura medievale*, ed. Carla Casagrande, Chiara Crisciani and Silvana Vecchio (Florence: SISMEL, 2004), pp. 1–14. Systematic treatments of each of the gifts, largely missing from Lombard's *Sentences*, were added by his early commentators. On the gift of counsel, see Albert the Great, *Super IV libros Sententiarum*, III dist. 35 art. 5–8, in *Alberti Magni Opera omnia*, vol. 28, ed. Étienne César Auguste Borgnet (Paris: Apud Ludovicum Vivès, 1894), pp. 650–52; Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, III dist. 34, q. 9, in *Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae opera omnia*, vol. 3 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1887), pp. 780–82; and Aquinas, *Super IV libros Sententiarum*, III dist. 35, q. 2, art. 4.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Albert the Great, *Commentarii* III, dist. 35, art. 5–7, pp. 363–64; Bonaventure, *Collationes de septem donis Spiritus sancti*, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 5 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1891), VII.12, p. 491.

<sup>29</sup> Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, ed. Marcus Adriaen, CCSL 143 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1979), I.xxxv.48, p. 51 and II.xlix.77, p. 106.

ruin without the governance of reason.<sup>30</sup> The spirit of counsel, in Gregory's formulation, aids the act of deliberation, considering what ought to be done and making a reasoned choice, while the spirit of fortitude provides the strength with which to enact that choice.

It is unsurprising, therefore, that in the midst of uncertainties it is this pairing – counsel and fortitude – to which Adam refers most frequently, most notably in his salutations and valedictions, in which he prays that the recipient of his letter will also be in receipt of these spiritual gifts.<sup>31</sup> Adam is not unique in using this pairing in an epistolary context – while it does not appear in Grosseteste's contemporaneous collection of letters, it can be found, albeit infrequently, in earlier letter collections such as those of Ivo of Chartres and Bernard of Clairvaux.<sup>32</sup> However, Adam's usage is striking both in its relative frequency and the context in which it appears. The dozen or so letters in which Adam references these gifts tend to concern matters of difficulty in which spiritual discernment and courage are evidently required. Adam actively prays in these letters for the divine gift of counsel and fortitude to be bestowed upon his letters' recipients so that they may be able to act rightly in their given circumstances.

Such prayers for divine aid by means of these gifts are much in evidence over the course of Adam's long friendship and correspondence with Robert Grosseteste. For example, Adam ends a letter about the lack of suitable pastoral candidates by writing that 'in the midst of such great and critical matters, I pray that Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, may grant you a spirit of counsel to plan your choice, and a spirit of fortitude to empower you to act.'<sup>33</sup> Here, the co-operation of this pair of gifts is evident. While the spirit of counsel aids the *industria* of decision-making, the spirit of fortitude provides the *potestas* necessary to carry that decision through to action. In another letter, Adam similarly prays on Grosseteste's behalf 'that in spiritual matters the spirit of counsel may go before you and the spirit of fortitude may

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**30** Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, l.xxxii.44, pp. 48–49.

**31** See salutations of letters 58, 79, 90, 96, 97, 116, 123, 134, and 196, and valedictions of letters 20, 40, 72, and 75.

**32** Ivo of Chartres, *Epistolae* (PL 162:11–288), letters 14, 196, 223, 247, and 270; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistulae*, in *Bernardi opera*, vol. 7–8, ed. J. Leclercq and H.M. Rochais (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1974–77), letters 109, 134, 332, and 353. While the pairing of counsel and fortitude is not found in the salutations or valedictions of Grosseteste's surviving letters, he does consider the gift of counsel in *Epistolae*, letter 106 to Master Martin, p. 315, discussing it in the light of Aristotle's discussion of counsel in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and letter 124 to Henry III, p. 350, treating it amongst the other spiritual gifts bestowed upon the king of England through the sacrament of anointing.

**33** Letter 40 to Robert Grosseteste (undated), vol. 1, pp. 114–15: 'Det uobis, oro, inter tantarum rerum discrimina Christus, Dei uirtus et Dei sapientia, spiritum consilii ad electionis industriam, spiritumque fortitudinis ad executionis potestatem.'

follow close behind,' again emphasizing the paired benefits of foresight and of enaction.<sup>34</sup>

The spiritual gifts also provide aid when even friends are prevented from providing assistance themselves. Explaining that he will not be able to come to Grosseteste any sooner than previously arranged, Adam writes, 'It is not, in the light of frequent experience, to be expected that the spirit of counsel and fortitude, "with patience and the consolation of the Scriptures," will fail you in the cause of salvation,' even in the absence of such human counsellors as bishop Walter Cantilupe and himself.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, the absence of human aid and counsel might even be providential, as a means of increasing one's dependence upon divine aid and counsel: having already referred Peter of Savoy to prayer, Adam notes that 'surely it is a dispensation of heavenly wisdom that sometimes removes human aid from desperately difficult causes,' causes which divine patronage will always magnificently bring to their fulfilment.<sup>36</sup> Such trust in divine assistance is in keeping with the confidence Adam elsewhere expresses for those whom he sees as working faithfully for the Lord's cause.<sup>37</sup>

At other times, however, Adam's desire to see a spirit of counsel and fortitude in his recipient reads more as a reprimand. In one letter, Adam wishes an anonymous clerk 'a spirit of salutary counsel and a spirit of true fortitude [*cum spiritu salutaris consilii spiritum valide fortitudinis*]' and directs him to scripture, telling him, 'I fail to see how you can find a pretext to avoid without damnation obeying the call of Christ in the cause of salvation transmitted to you through a religious superior.'<sup>38</sup> Adam similarly greets Nicholas of Sandwich, prior of Christ Church Canterbury, with 'a spirit of salutary counsel and a spirit of unvanquished fortitude,' before chiding him for not yet confirming the peace settlement between the bishop of Lincoln and the chapter of Canterbury, 'where failing strength [*uis*] has not effectively given birth to what was salubriously conceived.'<sup>39</sup> His expressed desire that the prior might have divinely-provided counsel and fortitude is clearly meant to supply something deemed lacking. Adam's prayers for counsel and fortitude are not reserved for clerics: he also writes 'greetings and a spirit of salutary counsel with a spirit of unvanquished fortitude' to Simon of Montfort in 1251, in a letter which reprimands the earl for depriving a church of its vicar by bringing the cleric with him overseas. 'I do not know,' Adam

<sup>34</sup> Letter 44 to Robert Grosseteste (undated), vol. 1, pp. 122–23: 'Preueniat, oro, uos in rebus spiritualibus spiritus consilii; subsequatur quoque spiritus fortitudinis.'

<sup>35</sup> Letter 13, vol. 1, pp. 32–33: '(...) Nec sicut post frequentem sperandum est experientiam, benedicta sit gloria Domini de loco suo, in causis salutaribus propter semetipsum uobis sit defuturus spiritus consilii et fortitudinis "cum patientia et consolatione Scriptorum" [Rom. 15:4].'

<sup>36</sup> Letter 145 to Peter of Savoy (undated), vol. 2, pp. 360–61: 'Hec est certe sapientie celestis dispensatio, ut nonnunquam presidium auferat desperabili causarum difficultati quibus magnifice disponit diuinum prestare patrocinium (...).'

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, letter 36 to Grosseteste, vol. 1, pp. 144–45.

<sup>38</sup> Letter 58 to anonymous clerk, vol. 1, pp. 154–57.

<sup>39</sup> Letter 90 to Nicholas of Sandwich (undated), vol. 1, pp. 226–29: '(...) Ubi uis defecta conaminis, que salubriter concepit, nequaquam edidit efficaciter.'

goes on to write in the same letter, ‘what obscured the clarity and prudence of your pious mind to cause such an error. (...) May a heavenly illumination enlighten you to consideration of the true will of God, that you be not seduced, which God forbid, by the deceits of the present age (...).’<sup>40</sup> Adam’s use of this phrasing together with exhortations and reprimand may bear some relation to a similar formulation used in the *dictamina* in cases where a greeting of salvation (*‘salutem’*) cannot appropriately be given to the recipient, such as in the case of pagans, Jews, excommunicants, or those not leading pure lives. In such cases, ‘in place of the salutation, it is said rather that they should have a spirit of sounder counsel [*spiritum consilii sanioris*].’<sup>41</sup> Such a formulation at the opening of a letter was therefore a clear and efficient way of signalling one’s belief that the recipient had strayed from the right path and can be found in such diverse documents as papal letter collections and Henry III’s patent rolls.<sup>42</sup> While Adam never employs this stronger formulation, his own references to the spirit of counsel at times carry a hint of the same reprimand.

Adam’s repetition of the pairing of the spirits of counsel and fortitude has strong parallels to his understanding of the mixed life undertaken by those in ecclesiastical office. As he reminds several of his ecclesiastical correspondents, the ‘mixed life’ referred to by Augustine, which mingles the active and the contemplative life, is particularly appropriate to those who have been called to higher positions within the government of the Church.<sup>43</sup> Such pastors need to engage in both activities, ‘ascending at times to contemplate truth in God, and at other times descending to engage in active business out of charity for your neighbour.’<sup>44</sup> Just as counsel enables the action of fortitude, contemplation of divine truth through prayer and meditation enables one to undertake the activity of charitable works. As Adam writes to the Archdeacon of Lincoln, ‘How will you fulfil the pastoral ministry by preaching the Gospel (...) unless you perceive through contemplative respite the works which you do with active

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**40** Letter 134 to Simon of Montfort (October 1251), vol. 2, pp. 326–27: ‘Quid etenim claram pie mentis circumspectionem obtenebrauerit ignoro in re tam euidentis erroris (...). Reuelet uobis oculos celestis illuminatio ad considerandam diuine uoluntatis ueritatem, ne presentis seculi fallaciis seducti, quod absit (...).’

**41** Guido Faba, *Summa dictaminis, Il Propugnatore* 3:13–14 (Bologna: R. Commissione pe’ Testi di Lingua, 1890), lxii, p. 327.

**42** On epistolary salutations, see Frank Anthony Carl Mantello and A.G. Rigg, *Medieval Latin: An Introduction and Bibliographical Guide* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), pp. 184–85. See for example, Innocent III’s letter to King John (1212), *Innocentii III Regestorum*, letter 234 (PL 216:772D), and *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry III: Volume 1, 1216–1225*, ed. H.C. Maxwell Lyte (London: HMSO, 1901).

**43** Letters 76 to William Lupus, Archdeacon of Lincoln, pp. 192–95, and 245 to Sewal, archbishop of York, pp. 580–81; Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Bernhard Dombart and Alfons Kalb (Stuttgart: G. Teubner, 1981), xix.2, vol. 2, p. 351.

**44** Letter 78, to Giles Rufus, archdeacon of Northampton, vol. 1, pp. 202–3: ‘(...) Nunc per actionem otiosam ascendere ad contemplandam ueritatem in Deo, nunc per negotiosam actionem descendere ad impendendam caritatem proximo (...).’

solicitude amid the darkness of men?”<sup>45</sup> The consideration of divine things brings insight, leading to right action. Adam tells Sewal, archbishop of York, that when he appoints ministers, he must do so with foresight born of heavenly consideration.<sup>46</sup> Consideration of the truth should similarly preserve Simon of Montfort from being seduced by worldly deceits.<sup>47</sup> By intentionally devoting themselves to contemplation, pastors attain perception of the truth and inspiration toward charitable ministry; by seeking divine counsel, they are similarly equipped to complete arduous tasks with fortitude.

Adam’s exhortations to seek divine counsel in a range of circumstances are particularly noticeable in his correspondence with Grosseteste, who has been provided with the steadfastness he requires for all his work through his trust in divine illumination.<sup>48</sup> In one letter, Adam writes that Grosseteste has already acted by the inspiration of divine illumination and that the only counsel he can think to offer is that he should continue to refer all his work to God, relying on him to supply his words, just as the Apostles did, ‘for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak [Matt. 10:19].’<sup>49</sup> More specifically, Adam emphasizes that divine aid is of great benefit to the bishop in selecting suitable candidates for presentation to ecclesiastical offices. He writes to Grosseteste that such candidates are found to be suitable ‘as shown by the Holy Spirit’ through Grosseteste’s ‘very searching investigation [*per exactissimam uestre requisitionis industriam*];’ indeed, the worthy bishop is one who allies ‘his tireless attention to the candidates for presentation to the cure of souls with the holy shrewdness of heavenly counsels [*sancta celestium consiliorum calliditate*].’<sup>50</sup> The need for divine counsel also crops up in more particular circumstances where additional discernment is required. On one occasion, Adam writes to Grosseteste about a ‘cheerful feast’ which has taken place in London in which ‘priests of God and ministers of the altar were divinely encouraged to participate,’ but thereafter were censured for their lack of restraint. While disclaiming any knowledge of the circumstances of the case beyond common gossip, Adam underlines the need for careful and divinely-guided reflection, utilizing a fourfold consideration: ‘What is proper to do concerning this, what is permissible, what is seemly, what is expedient, I pray that a genuine message from God may tell us, illumining a pure heart in a pious breast, piercing the darkness of contagion – “the clarity of eternal light, a mirror without

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<sup>45</sup> Letter 76 to William Lupus, vol. 1, pp. 194–95: ‘Qualiter namque per predicationem euangelii ministerium pastionis adimplebitis (...) nisi per contemplatiuam uacationem in lumine conspiciatis quod per actiuam sollicitudinem in tenebris hominum faciatis?’

<sup>46</sup> Letter 245.6a, vol. 2, pp. 580–81.

<sup>47</sup> Letter 134, vol. 2, pp. 326–27 (see above, n. 40).

<sup>48</sup> Letter 52 to Grosseteste (3 June 1250), vol. 1, pp. 144–45.

<sup>49</sup> Letter 52 to Grosseteste (3 June 1250), vol. 1, pp. 144–45. See also letter 245.39a, vol. 2, pp. 632–33.

<sup>50</sup> Letter 36 to Grosseteste (undated), vol. 1, pp. 106–9.



blemish” [Wisd. 7:26].<sup>51</sup> Having no certain opinion of how to judge or respond to these circumstances, Adam turns to prayer for divine illumination.

## Human Counsel

Direct and individual divine illumination is not the only source from which Adam seeks insight: he also considers human counsel an important and accompanying means of navigating times of darkness and uncertainty – not in place of divine counsel but working alongside it. This aspect can be seen particularly clearly in Adam’s writing because of the interpersonal nature of the epistolary genre, his letters often prompted by matters of concern or uncertainty in which it was only natural that counsel would be sought and given. Counsel was seen as one of the benefits of spiritual friendships and community, a means of assisting one another to fulfil the work of God and the Church. Adam makes several references in his letters to the importance of friendship and fellowship, not only to personal comfort and consolation but also to the spiritual battle. He even lists human fellowship (*consortia humana*) as one of the blessings called down from heaven, along with divine patronage and the protection of angels, by saints who persevered in their struggles against the tyrannies, violence, and falsities of the world.<sup>52</sup> To Grosseteste, who has written lamenting the absence of every one of his friends, Adam writes acknowledging that ‘anyone who is excluded from the intercourse of friendship, which means mutual goodwill in adversity and the joy in one another’s company, is recognized to be inexplicably tormenting himself.’<sup>53</sup> This absence of human aid, however, diverts attention to divine aid: Adam adds that no man can lack the consolation of friends when he is joined in fellowship with Christ.<sup>54</sup> Likewise, human fellowship can prove an aid to spiritual insight: when Adam fears he is suffering ‘incalculable harm to heavenly illuminations, that is to thoughts of eternity, truthful reasoning, or a tranquil will, on account of [being sucked into] the darkness of a vast abyss of worldly concerns,’ he implores William of Nottingham, the provincial minister, to send him Brother John the papal nuncio, so that he might ‘restore to me the stability and ordered progress I so desire.’<sup>55</sup>

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51 Letter 37 to Grosseteste (undated), pp. 110–11: ‘Circa hec quid oporteat, quid liceat, quid deceat, quid expediat, insplendeat, oro, mundi cordis pio pectori emanatio illa Omnipotentis Dei sincera, decussa contagiorum caligine, “candorque lucis eterne, speculum sine macula”’; see also Bernard of Clairvaux, *De consideratione libri v*, in *Bernardi opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H.M. Rochais (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1963), III.iv.15, p. 442.

52 Letter 48 to Grosseteste (August 1250), vol. 1, pp. 132–33.

53 Letter 28 to Grosseteste (May x June 1251), vol. 1, pp. 74–75.

54 Letter 28 to Grosseteste (May x June 1251), vol. 1, pp. 74–75.

55 Letter 171 to William of Nottingham (January x March 1250), pp. 408–11: ‘(...) Inestimabilia celestium illuminationum detrimenta, uidelicet eternitatis in mente, ueritatis in ratione, tranquillitatis in

With counsel forming a fundamental part of his own spiritual role, Adam repeatedly emphasizes to his letters' recipients the importance of having wise and discerning spiritual counsellors. While the office of such a counsellor was rarely formal, it could form a very real part of a person's perceived role.<sup>56</sup> Giving counsel was often considered one of the accepted responsibilities of holy people, especially those with a reputation for wisdom and discernment, such as Adam himself.<sup>57</sup> Adam cites various characteristics which mark the excellent human counsellor, variously describing their counsels as faithful, discerning, God-fearing, truthful, wise, eloquent, prudent, and experienced. He also recommends counsellors who themselves possess the spirit of counsel: not being able to join Simon of Montfort in person, Adam reminds Simon that he has with him 'the lords of Lincoln [Robert Grosseteste] and Worcester [Walter Cantilupe], and Brother Gregory, who have, as I believe, the spirit of counsel, and who can, with God's favor, satisfy your requirements far better than my inadequate self, especially those that cannot be postponed.'<sup>58</sup> Good counsellors are particularly important for men in positions of power and governance.

In advising bishops on the appointments necessary for them to make in order to accomplish their evangelical mission, Adam also includes amongst the required appointments of assistants, officers, and just judges the important role of faithful and discerning counsellors.<sup>59</sup> Adam does not confine the need for counsel to strictly spiritual matters: for example, he advises Grosseteste to seek 'the counsel of the prudent' in dealing clemently with the case of an important nobleman.<sup>60</sup> Good counsel can come from many quarters: Adam encourages Eleanor of Montfort to give counsel to her husband, not only 'to give him her constant help and care for everything related to the worship of God, righteous living, and right judgement,' but also to direct him in matters of governance.<sup>61</sup> If, he writes to her, the earl has entered incautiously into treaties or contracts and made extravagant payments of money, 'it will be your part, through the very good efforts of your kind circumspection (...) to direct him by

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uoluntate, propter immensas terrenarum caliginum uoragines (...) restituendo tam desiderabilem stabilitium profectuum ordinem.'

<sup>56</sup> Mendicant preachers and confessors were particularly expected to be approached for counsel on both spiritual and temporal matters: see, for example, Humbert of Romans, *De eruditione praedicatorum in Opera de vita regulari*, vol. 2, ed. J.J. Berthier (Rome: Typis A. Befani, 1888), XLIII, pp. 475–77.

<sup>57</sup> See, for example, Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, letter 99 to Walter Cantilupe (1242), p. 304.

<sup>58</sup> Letter 142 to Simon of Montfort (c.1250), pp. 352–53 (see note 75): 'Habetis presentiam dominorum Lyncolniensis, Wygorniensis, Fratris Gregorii, in quibus ut credo, est spiritus consilii, qui uobis diuinitate propitia satisfacere poterunt longe melius quam mea insufficientia super requisitis, presertim (hiis) que differri nequeunt.' Women could also be seen as providing counsel through the spirit of counsel: see, for example, Jacques of Vitry's early 13th-century *Vita Marie de Oegnies*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, CCCM 252 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), II.6, pp. 127–28.

<sup>59</sup> Letter 1, vol. 1, pp. 4–5; letter 8, vol. 1, pp. 22–23.

<sup>60</sup> Letter 25 to Grosseteste (1249), vol. 1, pp. 60–61.

<sup>61</sup> Letter 157 to Eleanor of Montfort (undated), vol. 2, pp. 378–79: '(...) Iugem iuuaminis impendere sedulitatem ad omnia in quibus aut Deus colitur, aut iuste uiuitur, aut recte iudicatur.'

the tranquillity of your counsels to negotiate with more care in future.’<sup>62</sup> Her position as Simon’s wife gives her a responsibility to provide him with discerning counsel.

Adam too feels an obligation to provide counsel. He offers his own counsel and assistance freely, particularly to his friends, even while humbly disclaiming its value. ‘If there is in me any of the counsel or consolation that you mention in your letter,’ he writes to Grosseteste, ‘am I not available when required to be of use or in case of necessity?’<sup>63</sup> He seems to feel keenly the tension of responsibility required by him as a spiritual counsellor, especially to men he sees as instrumental to bringing about reform in the Church. When Boniface, archbishop of Canterbury, requests Adam’s presence, Adam has doubts as to whether he should join the archbishop’s active company or remain in silence and contemplative leisure. A point in favour of joining the archbishop seems to be the readiness with which he is now prepared to accept Adam’s counsel, heeding him and bearing with his words of admonition.<sup>64</sup> Adam sees the opportunity for his counsel to bear fruit.

Adam himself frequently calls upon Robert Grosseteste’s counsel, either on his own or on others’ behalf. In one letter, he beseeches him to receive Boniface and to give him ‘efficacy of aid, eloquence of counsel, and guidance in his undertaking.’<sup>65</sup> In another, Adam requests that ‘the circumspection of [Grosseteste’s] more experienced counsel’ should attempt to provide a remedy for an impending disturbance in the schools of Oxford, while also informing the bishop that Simon and Eleanor of Montfort are in much need of his salutary counsel, ‘so that a written word may make up for what the spoken word cannot accomplish.’<sup>66</sup> As this last phrase implies, Adam has a strong preference for face-to-face counsel, but is frequently forced to rely on the written letter where distance and circumstance prevent meeting in person – it ought to be remembered that what his letters reveal is but the tip of the iceberg, a small indication of the abundance of counsel exchanged in person which has left no similar mark upon the historical record.

Divine and human counsel are not entirely separate sources of insight, but rather work together as one seeks counsel from those who have themselves been inspired by the Holy Spirit. Adam repeatedly returns requests for his counsel with exhortations for his letters’ recipients to pray for divine counsel, even as he offers his own counsel alongside. Beginning his letter to Richard Gravesend about the prebend

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**62** Letter 159 to Eleanor of Montfort (1249x50), vol. 2, pp. 384–85: ‘(...) Vestrum erit per piissimam benigne circumspectionis industriam (...) ipsum ad cautius negotiandum de cetero per tranquillitatem consiliorum dirigere.’

**63** Letter 13 to Grosseteste (undated), vol. 1, pp. 32–33: ‘Et si quid in me poterit consilii aut consolationis, quarum meministis in littera, numquid non presto sum, cum hoc aut utilitas requirit aut compellit necessitas?’

**64** Letter 180 to William of Nottingham (August 1253), vol. 2, pp. 436–37.

**65** Letter 32 to Grosseteste (June 1250), vol. 1, pp. 92–93: ‘Rogo igitur (...) cum ea que decet reuerentia suscipientes, et efficaciam auxilii, et consilii disertitudinem, et directionem propositi (...).’

**66** Letter 21 to Grosseteste (1249x1250), vol. 1, pp. 48–51.

of Thame, Adam writes, ‘But since you ask for the counsel of my humble self in a great matter, allow, I beg you, the Angel of Great Counsel [*magni consilii angelus*] to answer you for the great increase of your salvation.’<sup>67</sup> The ‘Angel’ here refers not to a heavenly messenger but to Christ himself, a natural title to use when calling for divine counsel.<sup>68</sup>

Although Adam certainly offers Richard Gravesend plenty of his own counsel, urging him to assist the pope in appointing a suitable pastor to every vacant church, he also tells him that he cannot give a clear answer to Richard’s ‘intricate question’ and speaks not as one offering counsel but one seeking truth.<sup>69</sup> ‘Truly,’ he writes, ‘I am in a thick darkness imposed by my own limitations. As far as I can see with trembling eyes, enabled by that light that shines in darkness, you would seem well advised, in the heavenly illuminations of the divine scriptures that illumine your humble mind, to strive to banish the infernal darkness that blinds you (...).’<sup>70</sup> He concludes his letter with a prayer that by the inspiration of Almighty Wisdom, the spirit of counsel and fortitude will inspire Richard with the truth.<sup>71</sup> Such juxtaposition with divine counsel can serve rhetorically to strengthen Adam’s counsel – he tells his recipient to seek the counsel of God, confident that it will be seen to match what he himself has urged – but it also provides a kind of ‘safety net’, a surer foundation and a certain source of counsel when Adam’s own counsel may be uncertain.

## Multilateral Deliberation

In his discussion of both divine and human counsel, Adam remains fairly close to the conceptions and terminology of earlier thinkers, although his status as a spiritual counsellor and the nature of his letters lends the subject particular emphasis. His discussions of a third means of seeking truth, multilateral deliberation, however, take a more idiosyncratic approach. In a medieval context, deliberation (*consiliari*, also *deliberare*, *tractare*) was closely connected to *consilium*; it could cover both the process of turning a matter over within one’s own mind, and that of engaging

<sup>67</sup> Letter 75 to Richard Gravesend (May 1254), vol. 1, pp. 186–87.

<sup>68</sup> This title originally appeared in the Vetus Latina translations of Isaiah 9, transmitted through the medieval period in patristic and liturgical texts: ‘Puer natus est nobis, datus est nobis, cuius principium super humeros eius et vocabitur nomen eius magni consilii angelus (...).’ *Isaias*, ed. R. Gryson, *Vetus Latina*, vol. 12 (Freiburg: Herder, 1989), Isaiah 9:6 (variant E1), pp. 288–93.

<sup>69</sup> Letter 75, pp. 190–91 (see above, note 3).

<sup>70</sup> Letter 75 to Richard Gravesend (May 1254), pp. 188–89: ‘Verum sicut michi inter densissimas defectuum meorum caligines, ex luce que in tenebris lucet michi sublucere tremulis cum oculis aspicio, consultum esse uidetur ut iuxta celicas illuminationes celestium scripturarum humilem mentis uestre mansuetudinem luculentius illustrantes, densissimas infernalium execrationum tenebras (...).’

<sup>71</sup> Letter 75 to Richard Gravesend (May 1254), pp. 190–91.

in multilateral discussions over the matter with others.<sup>72</sup> In considering this latter process, Adam focuses on the interpersonal nature of discussion and debate. While letters obviously play an important role in delivering and receiving counsel, Adam sets particular store by the potential of in-person deliberation, framing the perpetual search for truth and the correct course of action within a context of lively discussion and inquiry, with a potentially positive role even for disagreement.

As seen above, Adam seems to take great solace and consolation from his conversations with others. Encountering him as we do only through his letters, we often find him chafing against the constraints of pen and parchment, longing for a more active, multilateral discussion. He repeatedly sets his discussions of counsel within the wider value he places on friendship and on face-to-face ‘living conversation’, for which he often admits letters are but a poor substitute: ‘the pen must supply, as it is able, what the tongue cannot do.’<sup>73</sup> He writes to Eudes Rigaud, the Franciscan archbishop of Rouen, of his anxiety at not being able to come and speak with the archbishop in person, ‘to be granted the heavenly consolation of a much desired conversation [*colloquium*] and to gain from the sacred abundance of your breast a mind singly set upon eternity, reason made clear by truth, and with God’s favor a will rendered tranquil, more effective, and more transparent.’<sup>74</sup> Speaking together brings benefits of clarity and insight not fully possible through the slow and distanced exchange of letters.

The value of the spoken voice is made particularly clear in a letter Adam writes to Simon of Montfort, likely around 1250 while Simon was lieutenant in Gascony.<sup>75</sup> Alluding warily to the ‘very great matter’ which Simon has referred to him, Adam enters into an explicit consideration of discussion and debate as a means of arriving at the correct course of action. He begins by contrasting the dead letter (*mortua littera*), which presents but a single meaning, with the living voice (*vox viva*), which communicates its ideas in many forms (*plures forme*). The more complex nature of speech allows it to grapple more effectively with doubtful matters, for in the face of uncertainties, ‘mute writing cannot at all answer anxious questions in the way that can be done by the multiplicity of living speech.’<sup>76</sup> He continues:

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72 On *consilium* as deliberative rhetoric, see Shawn D. Ramsey, ‘*Consilium*: A System to Address Deliberative Uncertainty in the Rhetoric of the Middle Ages,’ *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* 15:2 (2012), pp. 204–21.

73 Letter 39 to Grosseteste (January 1250), vol. 1, pp. 112–13.

74 Letter 6 to Eudes Rigaud [= Odo Rigaldi] (1248 or later), vol. 1, pp. 16–17: ‘(...) Ut per optatum celice consolationis colloquium de sancta pii pectoris affluentia menti simplex eternitas, rationi clara ueritas, uoluntati placida tranquillitas, et efficacius et manifestius et salubrius diuinitate propitia concederetur.’

75 On dating of letter 142 (formerly 144), see Roger Haas, ‘Adam Marsh (De Marisco), a Thirteenth-Century English Franciscan,’ (PhD dissertation, Rutgers University, 1989), p. 380, n. 67.

76 Letter 142, vol. 2, pp. 350–51: ‘(...) Et secundum sensum sapientis mortua littera unicum sensum preferat, uox autem uiua plures formas demonstrat, et nullatenus muta scriptura sic respondere ualeat

I know very well that courses of action, above all those related to great matters, are in no way so eloquently or so beneficially communicated through written words as are those that are openly transacted thanks to the illumination of the divine mercy through the diligence of deliberations and the many-sided nature of discussions [*per diligentiam tractuum et multiformitatem discussionum*] when men sincerely seek the honor of God and work for eternal life.

Is not this the reason why the blessed Apostles, each of whom received an immeasurable outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the totality of ecclesiastical persons in their discernment, and the princes of the world with their shining wisdom, and the assemblies of lay people, have not ceased from the beginning of time to search [*inuestigare*] for what is right and to decide on courses of action through the living inquiries of conversing with one another [*per colloquiorum uiuaces disquisitiones*]?<sup>77</sup>

Again, Adam highlights the ‘many-sided’ nature of such discussions, the need to gather together in person in order to investigate a matter and determine what is right. Grosseteste makes a similar point in a letter to Walter Cantilupe, answering his request for counsel as to whether he should accompany the king overseas. Grosseteste, relying on more philosophical terms than Adam, refrains from giving an immediate answer, claiming that his lack of experience in such matters prevents him from prudently anticipating the contingencies on both sides of the matter and thereby determining what decision ultimately will be best for the salvation of souls. He longs for Walter’s presence, which would allow him to ‘discuss this subject with [him] as carefully as possible, for many points are often revealed in mutual discourse [*in mutuam collationem*] that are completely overlooked in individual inquiries.’<sup>78</sup> Since he cannot meet with Walter, Grosseteste defers his answer until he has met with the wise and prudent Adam Marsh and discussed the matter (*‘habere collationem’*) with him; only after such deliberation will he inform Walter of what seems, to him, to be the best course of action.<sup>79</sup> Grosseteste’s description of *mutua collatio* and Adam’s of *multiformitas disussionum* argue that the multilateral deliberation is more than the sum of its parts: they wish to discuss matters face-to-face, not just to benefit from others’ counsel, but so that important considerations might come

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solicitis interrogationibus sicut potest sermonis multiplicitas.’ See also II Corinthians 3:6: ‘Littera enim occidit, Spiritus autem vivificat’ [‘For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.’]

<sup>77</sup> Letter 142, vol. 2, pp. 350–53: ‘Et scio certissime quod nullo modo innotescunt aut tam prudenter aut tam salubriter ea quae sunt agenda, maxime circa res grandes, per caracteres scripture, que copiose et utiliter per diligentiam tractatum et multiformitatem discussionum ex illuminationibus patefiunt diuine clementie, cum honor Dei sincere queritur et propter uitam eternam laboratur. Nonne propterea et beati apostoli, quorum unusquisque inestimabilem Spiritus Sancti affluentiam suscepit, et tota ecclesiasticarum personarum discretio et mundi principes, qui tanta splenduerunt sapientia, et populorum secularium contiones, a temporum exordiis per colloquiorum uiuaces disquisitiones ea que recta sunt inuestigare non desistunt et ea que exsequenda sunt disponunt?’

<sup>78</sup> Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, letter 99 to Walter Cantilupe (1242), p. 304; translated in *Letters of Robert Grosseteste*, p. 322: ‘(...) Super his vobiscum diligentissime tractaremus; cum per mutuam collationem multa saepe pateant quae per se divisim disquirentes omnino latent.’

<sup>79</sup> Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, letter 99 to Walter Cantilupe (1242), p. 304.

to light through the multiformity of their deliberative interchange which might not occur to any one of them on their own.

Adam makes clear in his letter to Simon that important decisions should not be matters for individual insight alone – even for individuals who have received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit – or for the one-sided counsel of a letter. Even the Apostles, direct recipients of the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, did not possess sufficient knowledge and discernment within themselves to make great decisions without meeting together in councils.<sup>80</sup> Rather, such matters may be best hammered out in many-sided communal discussion and debate, particularly in ‘great matters’ in which there may be uncertainty and grounds for fear. These discussions should be undertaken with diligence and sincerity, guided by God-fearing intention. Of course, Adam here in no way abandons divine illumination in favor of human deliberation, but rather considers how such illumination might work through the discussions of those sincerely seeking God’s will. It is by the grace of such divine illumination that these discussions can be brought to their proper end. While ‘mute writing’ is all that is now accessible to the historian, Adam’s letters therefore point to a much richer foundation of deliberative and interpersonal counsel lying just beneath.

Involved as he was in difficult and contentious matters within the Church, the schools, and the royal court and parliaments, Adam cannot be accused of a naïve view of human deliberations. He is well aware of the disagreements that arise even amongst godly men and often exerts himself in the role of peacemaker. Even in the midst of his efforts for peace, however, there are indications that such disagreements may not always be harmful, and may in fact even further the truth. He discusses this possibility in a letter, also written around 1250, to Master John of Stokes, a member of Grosseteste’s household, who had written to him of his difficulties in winning the hearts of Simon of Valence and Robert Marsh, both men well known to Adam (the latter is believed to be his brother). Adam responds to John, writing:

I am driven with all my poor strength by an urge to restore peace among churchmen, and also by the compulsion of a special friendship with each one of you. But the creator of souls and lover of souls commands heaven’s rectors by the force of eternal law to display the prudence of a serpent and the simplicity of a dove [Matt. 10:16] for the salvation of souls; though He sometimes encourages disagreements without animosity [*dissensiones sine odio*], and is known to allow contests of sweet disputes [*suavium litigiorum certamina*], not to engender conflict but to establish concord; but discerning piety is ever active for the protection of beloved truth in such a way that true charity suffers no harm.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> For example, Acts 15:5–22.

<sup>81</sup> Letter 118 to John of Stokes (c.1250), vol. 2, pp. 306–7: ‘(...) Totis exilitatis mee uiribus, preter saluificam emulationem pacis reficiende in uiris ecclesiasticis, me compellit apud unumquemque ues-trum singularis amicitie necessitudo. Ceterum prudentie serpentine columbina simplicitas, qua spiritali legum eternarum cogentia rectores celicos pollere precipit saluandis animabus Auctor animarum, “qui amat animas”, licet nonnumquam foueat dissensiones sine odio, et interdum dispensata suauium litigiorum certamina exercere cognoscatur, non controuersiis instaurandis sed con-



The word he uses for ‘contests’, *certamina*, has forceful connotations, including physical battle, but it can also be used for exercises of training and testing. The book of Wisdom, for example, from which Adam frequently quotes, refers to the wisdom that is found in the ‘contest of her [i.e. Wisdom’s] speech [*in certamine loquellae illius*].’<sup>82</sup> *Litigium* and its cognates, on the other hand, only appear in the Vulgate in reference to quarrels, dissensions, and legal disputes, and would rarely be combined with such a positive term as *suavis*. The adjective not only recasts *litigium* in a more positive light, but it also emphasizes the role of persuasion, as *suavis* shares its root with *suadere*, ‘to advocate, to persuade.’<sup>83</sup> Adam’s intentionally provocative word choice serves to emphasize his point as he describes a method of inquiry and peace-making that goes not around conflict but through it, articulating his confidence that truth and agreement may be preserved and perhaps even formed through disagreement.

The investigation and preservation of the truth through debate and disagreement had for some time been of concern to the schools. The explicit goal of the scholastic disputation was to inquire into a question, to mitigate doubt, and to pursue the truth regarding a matter of uncertainty, presenting opposing arguments and refutations before a definitive solution was arrived at by the master.<sup>84</sup> In this context, opposition and dispute were framed as an aid, not a detriment, to investigating the truth. Masters and teachers of this mode of discussion were, however, well aware of its potential to stir up intemperate rancour and discord. Peter the Chanter’s (d. 1197) discussion of the disputation, for example, stressed the *modus disputandi* necessary in order to dispute without engendering quarrels or contentions. He cautions against haste in speech and turns in contrast to the stability of counsel, noting that the saints of the early church ‘resolved nothing and responded to nothing unless deliberation and counsel had already been held.’<sup>85</sup> Similar concerns about the uncharitable dangers of disputation can be found in the writings of Adam’s contemporaries.<sup>86</sup> Adam

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cordiis; semper tamen satagat discreta pietas ut sic ueritas cara defendatur, ne offendatur uera caritas.’

<sup>82</sup> Wisdom 8:18.

<sup>83</sup> See for example Huguccio of Pisa’s entry on *sueo*. *Derivationes*, ed. Enzo Cecchini and Guido Arbizoni (Florence: SISMEL, 2004), §S210.2, p. 1121: ‘Item a suavis *suadeo* -es -si -sum, hortari, consuere, monere, quod autem dicitur *suadere* quasi *suavia* dare vel dicere (...)’

<sup>84</sup> On medieval practices of disputation, see Alex J. Novikoff, *The Medieval Culture of Disputation: Pedagogy, Practice, and Performance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); Olga Weijers, *In Search of the Truth: A History of Disputation Techniques from Antiquity to Early Modern Times* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); Olga Weijers, *A Scholar’s Paradise: Teaching and Debating in Medieval Paris* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015).

<sup>85</sup> Peter the Chanter, *Verbum abbreviatum*, bk. 5 (PL 205:35D): ‘Item, exemplo sanctorum primitivae Ecclesiae, necnon et iustorum eos praecedentium, etiam et aliorum seniorum praedictos sequentium, qui nihil solvebant, ad nulla respondebant, nisi deliberatione et consilio prae habito et praecedente.’

<sup>86</sup> For example, Vincent of Beauvais’ *De eruditione filiorum nobilium*, ed. Arpad Steiner (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1938), XXI, pp. 73–75; Humbert of Romans, *De officiis ordinis*, in *Opera De Vita Regulari* (Rome: Typis Abefani, 1888), XII.iv, pp. 260–61.

here agrees that these disagreements should be without animosity, but conceives of a particularly active divine role amongst these dissensions, not only allowing but encouraging them in order to establish concord out of conflict, arriving through dialectic at a clearer understanding of the truth.

## Conclusion

These passages, taken together with Adam's other considerations of truth, counsel, and human fellowship, emphasize the interconnectedness of those seeking the will of God. Those among the faithful engaged, at least to some degree, in the active life rely on the prayers, exhortations, counsels, and even the disagreements of others to help them to navigate the shadows of temporal uncertainties. However, while these counsels and deliberations do assist in mitigating uncertainty, Adam is very clear that the counsels of men ultimately rest in the hands of Almighty God. It is his *consilium*, his ultimate plan, which shall prevail. As Adam writes to Simon of Montfort, 'When confidence in worldly assistance is gone, the triumphant courage of the warriors becomes entirely dependent upon the invincible strength and protection of heaven, which in all ages cries aloud of itself with the words, *Counsel and equity are mine; prudence is mine; strength is mine. By me kings reign* (...) [Prov. 8:14–15].'<sup>87</sup> It is for this reason that 'although much experience gives one slender hope that the needful circumspect counsels will prevail,' Adam tells the recipients of his letters to on no account lose faith but to direct their actions 'with the uncertainty of their outcome to a sure end which is the will of God.'<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Letter 138 (1250x51), vol. 2, pp. 334–35.

<sup>88</sup> Letter 136 to Simon of Montfort (after June 1252), vol. 2, pp. 330–31: 'Etsi multiplex experientia tenuem prestat fiduciam ad habenda super negotiis de quibus scripsistis circumspecta secundum quod res requirunt consilia, diuinitate tamen propitia, in cuius manu corda sunt regum, diffidendum nullatenus est (...) amiguos actionum nostrarum exitus ad certum finem diuine voluntatis dirigamus.'



Neil Lewis

# The Problem of the Unicity of Truth in the Early Oxford Franciscan School

**Abstract:** This paper examines the closely related treatments of the unicity of truth in Robert Grosseteste, Richard Rufus of Cornwall, and Thomas of York. Its focus is on their use of logical notions in their treatments, notably Grosseteste's and York's use of the notions of supposition and signification, and Rufus' use of the notion of analogy. Although at first appearance Grosseteste and York appear to posit, and Rufus to deny, a plurality of truths, I suggest this apparent disagreement is more verbal than substantive.

## Introduction

That there is just one truth (*veritas*), the supreme truth, is proposed in numerous passages in patristic authors, notably Augustine, and was defended by Anselm in his treatise *De veritate*. Yet there are also many passages in patristic authors, and in both Augustine and Anselm themselves, suggesting there are many truths (*veritates*).<sup>1</sup> Resolving this apparent conflict seems to have been an important motivation for the medieval thinkers I consider here to take up the question of the unicity of truth.

An adequate resolution must retain the idea that there is a single supreme truth, the eternal Word, which plays a special role in regard to truth, while also making sense of talk about a plurality of truths. In this paper my concern is to survey just one aspect of the treatment of this issue in three thinkers, namely their use of logical notions in their attempts to meet this desideratum.

The thinkers I will consider are Robert Grosseteste, Richard Rufus of Cornwall, and Thomas of York. Grosseteste (c.1168–1253) was the first lecturer to the Oxford Franciscans, from 1229/30 until 1235, when he was made Bishop of Lincoln. Although

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<sup>1</sup> As Thomas of York notes; see *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale Liber Sextus (Sapientiale)* 6.25, in *Reality and Truth in Thomas of York*, ed. John P.E. Scully, 3 vols (PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 1960), vol. 2, pp. 365–66: 'Ipse Anselmus, qui probare videtur unitatem veritatis, multas distinguit veritates singularum exprimens proprietates. Sapiens etiam Augustinus duplicem distinguit veritatem in libro suo *De mendacio*.' A new edition of the *Sapientiale* is currently under preparation at the Thomas Institut under the direction of Fiorella Retucci, but at this point in time book 6 is only available in Scully's edition. For an excellent account of conflicting authorities regarding the unicity of truth and the theories of Anselm and Grosseteste and their relationships, see Travis James Cooper, *One Truth or Many Truths? Two Medieval Accounts of Truth: Anselm of Canterbury and Robert Grosseteste* (PhD dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 2012).

never a Franciscan himself, Grosseteste left a deep impression on English Franciscans, both in personal example and thought.<sup>2</sup>

Rufus (*fl.* 1231–56) lectured on Aristotle's works on natural philosophy and metaphysics in Paris from the early 1230s until 1238. He was one of the most important figures in the early reception of these works in the Latin West. In 1238 Rufus renounced his career as a secular master and joined the Franciscan order in Paris. He left Paris for Oxford to make his profession and to study theology. In 1256 he became the fifth Franciscan lecturer to the Oxford Franciscans. Preceding Rufus in 1253 as the fourth Franciscan lecturer at Oxford was Thomas of York. From 1256 until his death (possibly c.1260), York was the sixth Franciscan lecturer at Cambridge.<sup>3</sup>

The question of the unicity of truth is treated by all three authors. Grosseteste devoted a treatise *De veritate* to it, probably written at Oxford between c.1225 and the early 1230s.<sup>4</sup> This seems to be the first extensive treatment to follow Anselm's. Rufus considers it in book 1 of his early and short questions commentary on the *Metaphysics*, the *Memoriale in Metaphysicam* (*MMet*; c.1231–34); and in book 1 of a subsequent large exposition-plus-questions commentary on the *Metaphysics*, the *Scriptum in Metaphysicam* (*SMet*; c.1237–38). Later, now a Franciscan, Rufus considers the issue in the prologue to his Oxford lectures on the *Sentences* (*SOx*; c.1250), and in book 1, distinction 8 of his Paris lectures on the *Sentences* (*SPar*; c.1253).<sup>5</sup> York treats the topic in book 6, chapter 25

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**2** For Grosseteste's biography and relations to the Franciscans, see James McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 19–30, 51–61.

**3** For Rufus' biography, see Peter Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall and the Tradition of Oxford Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 1–19; Rega Wood, 'Richard Rufus of Cornwall,' in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jorge J.E. Gracia and Timothy B. Noone (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 579–87. For York, see Fiorella Retucci, 'The *Sapientiale* of Thomas of York, OFM: The Fortunes and Misfortunes of a Critical Edition,' *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 52 (2010), pp. 133–59, and references therein.

**4** Robert Grosseteste, *De veritate*, in *Die philosophischen Werke des Robert Grosseteste, Bischofs von Lincoln 1235–1253*, ed. Ludwig Baur (Münster i. W.: Aschendorfsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1912), pp. 130–43. For a volume of new editions of Grosseteste's theological and philosophical opuscula I am preparing with Cecilia Panti and Pietro Rossi, I am making a new edition of *De veritate*, and in quotations below I occasionally indicate significant changes to Baur's edition.

**5** The works of Richard Rufus of Cornwall are being edited by the Richard Rufus of Cornwall Project, of which I am a member, under the direction of Rega Wood. In quotations from Rufus I use the following sources.

1. *Memoriale in Metaphysicam* (*MMet*), ed. Rega Wood and Neil Lewis, 2013 (<http://rrp.stanford.edu/MMet.shtml>). 2. *Scriptum in Metaphysicam* (*SMet*). This work survives in a longer redaction containing exposition of Aristotle's text and questions, and a shorter redaction with most of the questions but no exposition. The text of the questions does not vary significantly between the two redactions. Quotations from such questions (indicated by Q in the section numberings below), all taken from books 1 or 5, are from the edition of the shorter redaction published on the Richard Rufus Project website (<http://rrp.stanford.edu/works.shtml>). Parts of the longer redaction not present in the shorter are quoted from the manuscript Salamanca, Biblioteca Universitaria, Biblioteca General Histórica 2322 (=S) and employ section numberings to be used in our edition. The Rufus Project expects to publish the first of two volumes containing an edition of this work in the near future. In the introduction

of his massive philosophical *summa*, the *Sapientiale*. We do not know when York commenced this work, but it remained unfinished.<sup>6</sup>

How are the treatments of truth in these works related? There is no indication that Rufus used Grosseteste's *De veritate* in *MMet* or *SMet*. *SOx* and *SPar* by contrast show clear use of *De veritate*, as does York's *Sapientiale*. The *Sapientiale* draws also from *SMet*.<sup>7</sup> There is closely parallel material on truth in the *Sapientiale* and *SOx*,<sup>8</sup> but the direction of borrowing remains to be determined, given uncertainty over the dating of the *Sapientiale*. *SPar* borrows material from *SOx*.

## Two Preliminaries

In speaking of the unicity of truth, the word 'truth' renders *veritas*. No one doubted there are many *vera*, that is, things that are true. That there is a supreme truth (*veritas*), identified with God or more particularly, the eternal Word, is also not in dispute. The question is whether there are other truths (*veritates*) besides this by which true things are true. The fact that there are many true things does not settle this issue. Our authors all mention Anselm's point that although there are many simultaneous temporal items, there is only one time. The question is whether the supreme truth is related to true things in an analogous way. To avoid confusion, I will henceforth always use the word 'truth' to translate *veritas* and 'true thing' or 'item' to translate *verum*.

A second preliminary point concerns what sort of truth is at issue. Medieval thinkers apply the term 'true' to quite different kinds of things. Therefore we must consider the possibility that the debate over the unicity of truth is intended to concern only the truth of some, but not all true things. Now the most important distinction among true things is between propositions or proposition-like items in the soul – what are often called compositions and divisions – and extra-mental things. The

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to this edition we defend our view that this work was written at Paris c.1237–38. Timothy B. Noone, by contrast, argued that it was written at Oxford in the 1240s; see 'Richard Rufus of Cornwall and the Authorship of the *Scriptum super Metaphysicam*,' *Franciscan Studies* 49 (1989), pp. 55–91.

3. Lectures on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. Quotations from the *Sententiae Oxonienses* (*SOx*) are from the manuscript Oxford, Balliol College 62 (= B); those from the *Sententiae Parisienses* (*SPar*) are from the manuscript Vatican, Bibl. Apost. Vat. Lat. 12993 (= V). For a full list of manuscripts containing Rufus' works, see <http://rrp.stanford.edu/manuscripts.shtml>.

6 York, *Sapientiale* 6.25, ed. Scully, pp. 361–79.

7 This claim and the claim that there is no indication of use of Grosseteste's *De veritate* in *SMet* are defended in the introduction to the edition of the *Scriptum* in preparation by the Richard Rufus of Cornwall Project.

8 In particular, in the treatment of the question whether truth exists, a question not taken up in Rufus' *Metaphysics* commentaries. See York, *Sapientiale* 6.24, ed. Scully, pp. 348–51, and *SOx* Prologue (B, fol. 9va).

truth of these is often called complex and non-complex truth respectively. Although contemporary analytic philosophers tend to reserve the term ‘truth’ for complex truth, this was not so in medieval authors. Indeed, a conception of non-complex truth and true things had a long history preceding the Middle Ages.<sup>9</sup> It is certainly present in all three authors considered here.

There is no doubt that in their treatments of the unicity of truth, our authors have in mind non-complex truth. It is less clear whether complex truth is also at issue. I’m inclined to think it is, but this raises additional issues I can’t go into given limits of space, and so I shall leave this issue unresolved here.

In their attempts to meet the desideratum mentioned above our authors employ ideas drawn from the logical theories of their day. It is on this aspect of their treatments that I focus in this paper. Grosseteste and York propose similar views, with York’s being an elaboration of Grosseteste’s. Their basic point is that the supreme truth is in some way always signified or predicated when we speak of truth, and yet expressions such as ‘every truth’ or ‘truths’ stand for, or ‘supposit’, many truths, and thus there are many truths. Rufus holds that ‘truth’ is a name said analogically or multiply. Whenever we use the name ‘truth’, there is some sort of indirect reference to the supreme truth. This is because when we speak of other truths, they are not truths in the strictest or an unqualified sense. Instead, they are called truths because they bear a certain kind of relationship to what is truth in a strict and unqualified sense, the supreme truth. All three authors therefore take some sort of indirect reference to the supreme truth to be involved in our talk of truth, but Grosseteste and York hold that there are also other truths, while Rufus says that although we may speak of other truths, they are not truths in a strict and unqualified sense. I will propose in the last part of this paper that despite this verbal difference and their appeal to different logical notions of their day, these authors are in substantive agreement.

## Robert Grosseteste

One of Grosseteste’s chief reasons to reject the unicity of truth is given at the start of *De veritate* in the first pro-argument he gives for a plurality of truths. He notes that ‘if there is no truth other [than the supreme truth], then truth is one and singular and does not admit distribution or plurality, so that we may say “every truth” or “many truths”.’<sup>10</sup> And yet, Grosseteste notes, in the Gospel [John 16:13] we read: *He will teach you every truth*. Despite the various theological authorities and arguments

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<sup>9</sup> See Timothy B. Noone, ‘Truth, Creation, and Intelligibility in Anselm, Grosseteste, and Bonaventure,’ in *Truth: Studies of a Robust Presence*, ed. Kurt Pritzl (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America, 2010), pp. 102–26.

<sup>10</sup> Grosseteste, *De veritate*, ed. Baur, p. 130: ‘Si enim nulla est alia veritas, tunc veritas est unica et singularis nec recipit distributionem aut pluralitatem, ut dicatur “omnis veritas”, aut “multae veritates”. Sed e contra in Evangelio legitur: *Ipse docebit vos omnem veritatem*.’



pro and con subsequently considered, it is this point that Grosseteste expressly provides later in the text as his reason for rejecting the unicity of truth.

At the very start of *De veritate*, then, Grosseteste introduces logical considerations into his treatment of the unicity of truth. The same holds for his account of the nature of truth in general. Since this account plays an important role in York's treatment of unicity, a brief overview is appropriate.

Grosseteste starts this account by considering truth as it is considered in logic, noting that we are most accustomed to speak of the truth of a spoken declarative sentence (*oratio enuntiativa*). From an account of the truth of declarative sentences, he spins out an all-embracing account of truth, complex and non-complex, created and uncreated, which he takes to be equivalent to Anselm's definition of truth as 'rectitude perceptible by the mind alone.' Now the truth of a spoken declarative sentence,

as a philosopher says, is nothing other than so to be in the thing signified as speech says. And this is what others say: that truth is the adequation of speech and thing, and the adequation of things and thoughts.<sup>11</sup>

Grosseteste takes the first definition<sup>12</sup> to be extensionally equivalent to the definition of truth in terms of adequation, a conception new in his day.<sup>13</sup> Whether he proposes one or two definitions in terms of adequation is unclear. Thomas of York takes these to be two distinct definitions.<sup>14</sup> Possibly Grosseteste treats them as equivalent, or per-

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**11** Grosseteste, *De veritate*, ed. Baur, p. 134: 'Sicut dicit philosophus, non est aliud, quam ita esse in re signata, sicut dicit sermo. Et hoc est, quod alii <aliqui Baur> dicunt veritatem esse "adequationem sermonis et" rei et "adequationem rerum et intellectuum" <et adaequationem ad intellectum Baur>.' See also Grosseteste, *De veritate propositionis*, in *Die philosophischen Werke des Robert Grosseteste*, ed. Baur, p. 144: 'Veritas enim sermonis vel opinionis est adaequatio sermonis vel opinionis et rei. Haec autem adaequatio nihil aliud est, quam ita esse in re, sicut sermo vel opinio dicit;' and *Dictum* 21, British Library, MS Royal 6.E.v, fol. 14vb: 'Veritas est adaequatio sermonis et rei, cum scilicet res est sicut dicitur. Praecipua itaque veritas est adaequatio sive correspondentia vel conformitas rerum summo sermoni, hoc est Verbo Patris aeterno.'

**12** Although one might expect a reference to *philosophus* in this context to be to Aristotle, Grosseteste perhaps has in mind contemporary or earlier logicians, or perhaps their glosses on Aristotle, since his first definition is much closer to what we find in Abelard than in Aristotle (*Categories* 5.4a35; *Metaphysics* 4.7.1011b25). See Peter Abelard, *Glossae super 'Peri hermenias'* 9, ed. Klaus Jacobi and Christian Strub, *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* 206 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), p. 253: 'Omnis enim propositio uera dicitur, quia ita est in re, ut proponit.'

**13** On the history of use of the notion of adequation to define truth in the Latin West, see Philotheus Boehner, 'Ockham's Theory of Truth,' *Franciscan Studies* 5 (1945), pp. 138–61. As Boehner notes, the earliest uses seem to be by Philip the Chancellor and William of Auxerre. Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono* 1.0.2, 2 vols, ed. Nikolaus Wicki (Bern: Francke, 1985), vol. 1, p. 10. William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea* 1.9.3, 7 vols, ed. Jean Ribailier, *Spicilegium Bonaventurianum*, 16–20 (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique; Grottaferrata: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1980–87), vol. 1, p. 195.

**14** York, *Sapientiale* 6.27, ed. Scully, p. 404: 'Si ad signum, tunc est illa definitio Boethii: Veritas est adaequatio sermonis et rei seu signi et signati. Si respectu intellectus, igitur est illa definitio Isaaci:

haps as two parts of a single definition, because he treats adequation as a symmetric relation and treats thought as a kind of inner speech.

Indeed, Grosseteste goes on to note that inner speech, namely the thought expressed by vocal speech, is truer than outer or vocal speech, for outer speech is an expression of inner speech.<sup>15</sup> Now if there is inner speech that is not just adequated to things but is its own adequation to them, it will not just be true, but will itself be truth. But this is how it is with the speech or Word of the Father. It is not just adequated to what it says, but is adequation itself and so is truth.

According to Grosseteste, not only may speech be adequated to things, but things may also be adequated to speech, and thus true. Considering the adequation of things to speech, he notes that there will be a conformity, or adequation, of things said by the Word to the Word, or more particularly to their *rationes* in the Word. This conformity is their rectitude and obligation to be what they are. And since a thing is true to the extent that it is as it ought to be, ‘the truth of things is their being as they ought to be and their rectitude and conformity to the Word by whom they are eternally said.’ Since this sort of rectitude is perceptible only by the mind, Anselm correctly defined truth as ‘rectitude perceptible by the mind alone’ – a definition applying both to a rectifying rectitude, the Word, and to a rectified rectitude, the truth of things.<sup>16</sup>

The truth of created things, then, is their conformity to their *rationes* in the eternal Word. But this raises a problem. Since each created thing necessarily conforms to its *ratio*, this account seems to find no place for falsity. In particular, propositions belong to the created realm, and so they too will be in conformity to their *rationes* in the eternal Word, and so must be true. But of course, propositions can be, and often are, false.

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Veritas est adaequatio rerum et intellectuum.’ York’s attributions to Boethius and Isaac (Israeli) are both incorrect. It is noteworthy that the oldest manuscript containing Grosseteste’s *De veritate*, Oxford, Lincoln College, 54, copied around the end of Grosseteste’s lifetime, simply contains the first definition in terms of adequation. The second oldest manuscript (XIV<sup>v</sup>), Oxford, Exeter College 28, contains the text I substituted in note 11 above for the text Baur printed, which he based on a single late and very low-quality manuscript. It is in fact possible that Grosseteste provided only the first definition in terms of adequation and that Lincoln College, 54 transmits the correct text.

15 Grosseteste, *De veritate*, ed. Baur, p. 134.

16 Grosseteste, *De veritate*, ed. Baur, pp. 134–35: ‘In rebus autem, quae dicuntur hoc aeterno Sermone, est conformitas ipsi sermoni, quo dicuntur. Ipsa quoque conformitas rerum ad hanc aeternam dictionem est earum rectitudo et debitum essendi, quod sunt. Recta enim est res et est ut debet, inquantum est huic Verbo conformis. Sed inquantum est res ut debet, intantum vera est. Igitur veritas rerum est earum esse prout debent esse, et earum rectitudo et conformitas Verbo, quo aeternaliter dicuntur. Et cum haec rectitudo sit sola mente perceptibilis et in hoc distinguatur a rectitudine corporali visibili, patet, quod convenienter definitur ab Anselmo veritas cum dicit, eam esse rectitudinem sola mente perceptibilem. Et complectitur haec definitio etiam summam veritatem, quae est rectitudo rectificans simul cum veritatibus rerum, quae sunt rectitudines rectificatae.’

Grosseteste solves this problem by distinguishing between a thing's first and second being.<sup>17</sup> The first being of a thing is its essential nature; the second being is its perfection. Something cannot lack first being if it exists, but it can lack second being. Thus the *ratio* of a thing in the Word seems to specify not just its essential nature – an ought-to-be it cannot fail to accord with – but also its perfection, an ought-to-be it can fail to accord with. Therefore every proposition will be a true proposition in that it asserts or denies something of something, for in doing so it will conform to its *ratio* in the Word, since it is the first being of a proposition to do this. But at the same time a proposition may be false, in not conforming to its *ratio*, if things are not as it signifies them to be, since for things to be as it signifies is a proposition's second being or perfection. What we ordinarily call a true proposition is true in both ways. So too, a human being will be true inasmuch as she is composed of body and soul, but a false human being if she is vicious or mendacious. Grosseteste takes this account to be equivalent to treating the truth of a thing as fullness of being (*plenitudo essendi*). In this way he links this account up to the idea that truth is being, an idea expressed in Augustine's formula that truth is *id quod est*.

In response to the question whether there is only one truth Grosseteste returns to the initial pro-argument and the semantics of the name 'truth'.

We also think, as Augustine suggests in his book *On Lying*, that the truth of things is multiple, otherwise the name 'truth' would not admit plurality or distribution. (For simply the relation of one thing to many does not make that one thing many, any more than the relation of one time to many simultaneous temporal things makes that one time many times, for there are not many simultaneous times. In the same way, if there were only the supreme truth, which in itself is just one, on account of the relation of that one [truth] to many things, many things could be true, just as there simultaneously are many temporal things. But there would not on account of this be many truths, any more than many simultaneous times.) For a plural name or one distributed by means of a universal sign requires many supposita. Accordingly, we could not say 'many truths' or 'every truth' unless there were many truths supposita. Therefore in such expressions the truths of things are supposita, these [truths] being conformities to the reasons of the things in the eternal truth. But perhaps the name 'truth' is used nowhere without signifying the supreme truth as the form of the name in some way, at least adjacently or obliquely. For just as the truth of a thing can be understood only in the light of the supreme truth, so perhaps neither is it supposita by the name 'truth' except with signification of the supreme truth. There is therefore a single truth everywhere signified and predicated by this name 'truth', as Anselm maintains, but in the many truths of things that one truth is called many truths.<sup>18</sup>

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**17** Grosseteste, *De veritate*, ed. Baur, pp. 135–36. See also Anselm, *De veritate* 2, in *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis archiepiscopi opera omnia*, 2 vols, ed. Franciscus Salesius Schmitt (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1940–51), vol. 1, pp. 169–99.

**18** Grosseteste, *De veritate*, ed. Baur, pp. 138–39: 'Putamus etiam, sicut innuit Augustinus in libro de mendacio, multiplicem esse rerum veritatem. Alioquin non susciperet nomen veritatis pluralitatem et distributionem. Unius enim ad multa sola comparatio non facit illud unum multa, sicut comparatio unius temporis ad plura temporalia, quae simul sunt, non facit illud multa tempora. Non enim sunt multa tempora simul. Similiter, si non esset veritas nisi summa, quae in se est unica propter collationem illius unius <nominis Baur> ad multa, possent esse multa vera, sicut simul sunt multa tem-

Here Grosseteste notes that the fact that there are many true things does not, as such, entail that there are many truths. Instead, he defends a plurality of truths on the basis of the way plural and distributed names work. He alludes to a logical principle in his day that a name distributed by the distributive word ‘*omnis*’ requires at least three *supposita*<sup>19</sup> – that is, to correctly speak of ‘every truth’ requires that there be at least three truths that the expression stands for or supposits. Likewise, the correct use of a plural, as in ‘many truths’, requires it to supposit for more than one truth.

The notion of supposition is one of two central notions from the terminist logic of Grosseteste’s day. The other is that of signification. These very roughly correspond to reference and meaning. By appeal to supposition Grosseteste defends a plurality of truths, but by appeal to signification he defends a special role for the one supreme truth. These and other logical notions appear from time to time in Grosseteste’s writings as parts of a presupposed conceptual framework, but are not explained. Exactly how he understands the notions of signification and supposition therefore remains unclear. But the general framework operative in his day, to which we may suppose he owes allegiance in broad outline, may be briefly presented as follows.

Signification is a fixed feature of a spoken sound. Spoken sounds are given signification when they are introduced into the language, or ‘imposed’, to use the technical term. William of Sherwood, writing in Paris probably c.1235–50, defines signification as ‘the presentation of a form to the intellect.’<sup>20</sup> Often to signify is also described, following Boethius’ translation of Aristotle’s *De interpretatione*, as ‘to establish a thought,’<sup>21</sup> with a word signifying what it brings to mind in the listener as a matter of its conventional introduction. What a name signifies was typically taken in

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poralia. Sed propter hoc non essent multae veritates, sicut nec multa simul tempora. Nomen enim plurale aut distributum per <per *om.* Baur> signum universale exigit multa supposita. Quapropter non possent dici “plures veritates”, aut “omnis veritas”, nisi essent multae veritates suppositae. Supponuntur ergo in talibus locutionibus veritates rerum, quae sunt conformitates rationibus rerum in aeterna veritate. Sed forte nusquam ponitur nomen veritatis, quin significet ut formam nominis aliquo modo saltem adiacenter vel oblique veritatem summam. Sicut enim veritas rei nec intelligi potest nisi in luce veritatis summae, sic forte nec supponitur per nomen veritatis nisi cum significatione veritatis summae. Unica est ergo veritas ubique significata et praedicata per hoc nomen veritas, sicut vult Anselmus, scilicet veritas summa. Sed in multis veritatibus rerum dicitur illa una veritas multae veritates.’

**19** Or, as it is also often stated, three *appellata*, that is, presently existing things to which it applies. See for example, William of Sherwood, *Syncategoremata*, ed. Christoph Kann and Raina Kirchoff (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2012), p. 8. Peter of Spain attributes this doctrine to Aristotle, in *De caelo* (1.1, 268a16–19), but rejects it on account of true propositions with ‘every sun’, ‘every moon’ or ‘every phoenix’. See *Tractatus called afterwards Summule Logicales (Tractatus)*, ed. Lambertus Marie de Rijk (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1972), pp. 213–14.

**20** William of Sherwood, *Introductiones in logicam*, ed. Charles Lohr, Peter Kunze and Berhard Mussler, *Traditio* 39 (1983), p. 266 in pp. 210–99: ‘Est igitur significatio praesentatio alicuius formae ad intellectum.’

**21** See E. Jennifer Ashworth, ‘Signification and Modes of Signifying in Thirteenth-Century Logic: A Preface to Aquinas on Analogy,’ *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 1 (1991), pp. 43–50 in pp. 39–67.

the 13th century to be a form or common nature of some sort.<sup>22</sup> Such a form, York will expressly tell us, is what is meant by the expression ‘form of the name’ used above by Grosseteste.

Supposition is a property of a name as it occurs in a proposition. Unlike what it signifies, what a name supposits or stands for may vary depending on propositional context. Medieval thinkers devised a complex scheme of kinds of supposition, since propositional context can radically vary what the same name stands for. For example, in ‘man is a name’, the name ‘man’ stands for itself. In ‘man is a species’ it stands for what it signifies, the form of man. But in the proposition ‘A man is running’, the name ‘man’ supposits or stands for the things having that form – that is, individual human beings. As this latter case indicates, what a name supposits for typically is not the same as what it signifies. A name is said to be imposed *for* things for which it supposits, but to be imposed *from* the form it signifies, in this case, the form of man.<sup>23</sup>

In logic texts of Grosseteste’s day, treatments of supposition typically focus on concrete common names, such as ‘*homo*’. But Grosseteste’s concern above is with the abstract name ‘*veritas*’ in either plural form or as distributed by ‘*omnis*’. And he takes it as so used to supposit or stand for the truths (*veritates*) of things, not for the things that are true (*vera*). He identifies these truths with the conformities of the things to their *rationes* in the eternal Word. Thus in such contexts ‘*omnis veritas*’ or ‘*veritates*’ supposits for the many particular relations of adequation or conformity of things to their *rationes* in the Word.

As for the supreme truth, Grosseteste identifies this with the form signified by the name. He holds that ‘perhaps the name “truth” is used nowhere without signifying as the form of the name in some way, at least adjacently or obliquely, the supreme truth.’ Here Grosseteste uses the notion of signification to account for the special role played by the supreme truth. Even so, exactly what he has in mind is unclear. His remarks suggest some hesitation, or at least, qualification in proposing this thesis. This is not so much, I think, because of his use of the word ‘perhaps’ (*forte*), used frequently in his writings as an expression of modesty, but of the words ‘in some way, at least adjacently or obliquely (*nominis aliquo modo saltem adiacenter vel oblique*).’<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> I simplify, as our authors seem to do too, since often a distinction is drawn between a name’s primary significate – a thought or concept in the mind – and its secondary one, the form or nature thought of.

<sup>23</sup> See Ashworth, ‘Signification and Modes of Signifying,’ p. 47; Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libro tertio Sententiarum*, 3.6.1.3, ed. R.P. Maria Fabinaus Moos (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1933), p. 232: ‘In quolibet nomine est duo considerare: scilicet id a quo imponitur nomen, quod dicitur qualitas nominis; et id cui imponitur, quod dicitur substantia nominis. Et nomen, proprie loquendo, dicitur significare formam sive qualitatem, a qua imponitur nomen; dicitur vero supponere pro eo cui imponitur.’

<sup>24</sup> See above, n. 18.

‘Adjacently’ and ‘obliquely’ are technical notions of medieval grammar and logic. The adverb ‘obliquely’ was standardly used – as we will see York and Rufus use it – to describe situations where something is mentioned, or would be perspicuously mentioned, using an oblique case,<sup>25</sup> rather than the nominative (*directe* or *in recto*). In the present context, Grosseteste has in mind predications made using the name ‘truth’, holding that the supreme truth signified by ‘truth’ is predicated when a created item is called a truth. But the predication is not direct, but oblique. In calling it a truth, it is being said that that item is related in some way to the supreme truth, and if this were perspicuously spelled out the supreme truth would be mentioned using an oblique case. Likewise, Grosseteste’s reference to the supreme truth as being signified adjacently seems to indicate that in such cases it is something distinct from, though related to that of which it is predicated.<sup>26</sup> This is not to say that in all cases where the name ‘truth’ is used the supreme truth is signified in these indirect ways. In some contexts, the signification would be direct, as in ‘God is truth’. Thus, Grosseteste is implying that there is a distinction between the form signified by ‘truth’, this in all cases being the supreme truth, and the different ways in which that form is signified in different predications of the name ‘truth’.

Grosseteste relates his claim that the supreme truth is signified indirectly in the application of ‘truth’ to created truths to an epistemological doctrine. Towards the end of the long passage quoted above, he notes that ‘just as the truth of a thing can be understood only in the light of the supreme truth, so perhaps neither is it supposed by the name [“truth”] except with signification of the supreme truth.’ According to Grosseteste, as our knowledge of created truth requires the light of the supreme truth, so supposition, or reference to created truths, involves signification of the supreme truth.

Consideration of this parallel helps to forestall the objection to Grosseteste’s view that it is hardly the case that all those who use the name ‘truth’ are aware of the supreme truth, or that it comes to mind for them, as its role as the form signified by ‘truth’ suggests it should. For in considering our knowledge of truth, Grosseteste holds that there are different levels of cognition, and that everyone cognizant of something true is also in some way, ‘either knowingly or unknowingly, cognizant of the supreme truth itself.’<sup>27</sup> In particular, those who are not pure of heart are unknow-

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25 As Grosseteste uses it in his *Commentarius in viii libros Physicorum Aristotelis* noting that motion falls obliquely in the definition of time ‘*tempus est numerus motus*’, that is, that ‘*motus*’ here is in the genitive case; see *Commentarius in viii libros Physicorum Aristotelis* 4, ed. Richard C. Dales (Boulder, CO: University of Colorado Press, 1963), p. 88

26 Roger Bacon, for example, mentions an objection that takes to signify adjacently to mean by a relationship to something. See his *Summa grammatica*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus inedita Rogeri Baconi*, Fasc. 15 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 81.

27 Grosseteste, *De veritate*, ed. Baur, p. 138: ‘Nemo est igitur, qui verum aliquod novit, qui non aut scienter aut ignoranter etiam ipsam summam veritatem aliquo modo novit. Iam igitur patet, quomodo soli mundicordes summam vident veritatem et quomodo nec etiam immundi penitus eius visione frustrantur.’

ingly cognizant of the supreme truth: it is an object of their cognition, but they do not realize this. So too, in using the term ‘truth’ the supreme truth comes to mind, even if the speaker or listener may not realize that it is that which comes to mind. We might well ask then what does expressly come to mind. The answer, I think, will be adequation or rectitude. So at least, York will tell us.

Grosseteste is clearly thinking of the form or nature signified by ‘truth’ not as a created form, but as identical with God. In his treatise *De unica forma omnium*, Grosseteste defends the view that God is ‘form and the form of creatures.’<sup>28</sup> He relates Augustine’s view in *De Trinitate* 8.2 that God is beauty and truth, and that it is this beauty and truth that is grasped when we first hear these terms, a grasp, however, that is clouded over once we begin to inquire into them. It seems likely that in regard to other so-called transcendental names applying both to creatures and God, such as ‘goodness’, ‘entity’ or ‘oneness’ Grosseteste would also have held that the form from which the name is imposed in fact is the divine goodness, entity, or unity (and that these themselves, due to the divine simplicity, are God). We see hints of such a view from time to time in his writings regarding ‘entity’.<sup>29</sup>

## Thomas of York

Although Rufus is chronologically the next of our authors to treat the unicity of truth,<sup>30</sup> I turn now to Thomas of York’s account, since, unlike Rufus’, it is an elaboration of Grosseteste’s treatment.<sup>31</sup>

In particular, York examines just why in thinking of created truth we must also have in mind in some manner the uncreated truth, and makes more explicit some

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**28** Grosseteste, *De unica forma omnium*, in *Die philosophischen Werke des Robert Grosseteste*, ed. Baur, p. 108.

**29** See his *Commentarius in viii libros Physicorum* 1, ed. Dales, pp. 7–8 (punctuation altered): ‘Cum ergo esse de uno tantum dicitur substancialiter, et de aliis secundum dependenciam ab illo uno secundum <sed Dales> prius et posterius, manifestum est quod dicitur equivoce;’ ‘Si aliquid verum intellexerunt per sermonem suum hoc potuit esse: quod ens, de quocumque dicitur, non predicat ens nisi ens primum, quod ens de ente primo dicitur substancialiter; de creatis, cum dicitur esse, predicatur id idem, sed adiacenter et nuncupative.’ See also, *De decem mandatis* 1, ed. Richard C. Dales and Edward B. King, *Auctores Britannici Medii Aevi* 10 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 17: ‘Hoc verbum *sum*, cum dicit *Ego sum Deus*, ponitur substancialiter et signat quod per se et substancialiter et necessario est, cuius comparacione alia non sunt.’ For the doctrine of transcendentals in Grosseteste, including in his commentaries on the Pseudo-Dionysius, which postdate the works with which I am concerned, see Gioacchino Curiello, ‘Robert Grosseteste on Transcendentals,’ in *Robert Grosseteste and the Pursuit of Religious and Scientific Learning in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jack P. Cunningham and Mark Hocknull (Cham: Springer, 2016), pp. 189–208.

**30** Assuming that Rufus’ *MMet* postdates Grosseteste’s *De veritate*.

**31** There are close parallels between Rufus’ *SMet* and the *Sapientiale* in arguments offered pro and con regarding the unicity of truth, but York’s response to the problem is an elaboration of Grosseteste’s view.



of the logical elements in Grosseteste's account. One notion that is missing, however, or at least only implicit in York's account, is that of signification. Where Grosseteste distinguishes the signification and supposition of 'truth', York distinguishes the supreme truth as form and form of the name 'truth' from truth as a *suppositum* of 'truth'. There is just one truth as form of the name 'truth', but as Grosseteste had said, many truths supposed by that name.

Like Grosseteste, York affords the notion of adequation a central role, defining truth most generally as 'adequation, that is, rectitude.' As Grosseteste says, in the eternal Word there is adequation to the things it says, and so truth. And the Word is not just adequated, but is adequation itself, since

whatever is said of God is said in a concrete way and in an abstract way. God is not just adequated, but is adequation itself, and therefore truth. For the same reason, truth is called rectitude, since all adequation is a kind of rectitude.<sup>32</sup>

York begins his response to the question of unicity by distinguishing two kinds of form and two kinds of truth. The distinction of two kinds of truth is explicit in Grosseteste's *De veritate*: the supreme uncreated truth and created truth. The distinction of two kinds of form is at best implicit there, but is explicit in Grosseteste's treatise *De unica forma omnium*,<sup>33</sup> and derives, as York is well aware, from Augustine, notably his *De libero arbitrio voluntatis* 2.16–17. According to York, form and truth are similar in that the definition 'by which a thing is that which it is' applies to both, though the name 'truth', unlike 'form', must extend to everything that exists, even matter apart from form. The two kinds of form are God, the unformed form of all things who gives form to all things, and forms formed by this form, which are the essences of things or are rooted in those essences. These formed forms vary as things themselves vary and are numbered.<sup>34</sup>

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**32** York, *Sapientiale* 6.25, ed. Scully, pp. 372–73: 'Similiter et multo fortius <foret Scully> est in sermone interiori, id est verbo ipsius intellectus, quod ejus adaequatio cum re erit veritas. Nihilominus et hoc verum est in veritate prima, quae est in ipso Deo, immo ipse Deus. Nam si sermo interior, ut esto intellectus, esset ipsa adaequatio, tunc ipse esset veritas. In Deo autem sic est, quod propter simplicissimam essentiam quidquid dicitur de ipso dicitur concrete et abstracte; ipse est non tantum adaequatus, sed ipsa adaequatio; quare et veritas. Ex eadem ratione dicitur veritas rectitudo, quoniam omnis adaequatio rectitudo quaedam est.'

**33** Grosseteste, *De unica forma omnium*, ed. Baur, pp. 106–11. Whether York used *De unica forma* is not clear. I have not found any clear sign of its use in the *Sapientiale* in likely places.

**34** York, *Sapientiale* 6.25, ed. Scully, pp. 370–71: 'Dico igitur quod sicut est duplex forma rerum in genere, sic est duplex veritas rerum in genere. Nam forma et veritas nonnullam habent similitudinem; utrique enim convenit definitio una, quae est "qua res est id quod est," nisi quod nomen veritatis oportet extendere ad omne quod est, etiam ad materiam praeter formam (...) unde cum habeat essentiam, habet veritatem. Dico igitur quod est duplex forma rerum: Una non formata, sed omnium formosissima, sicut dicit sapiens Augustinus, *De Vera Religione*; et haec est Deus, qui est forma omnium, sicut ipse dicit, *De Libero Arbitrio*, per quem cuncta formantur, prout etiam probat in eodem. Alio modo dicitur forma rerum forma formata a forma priori, quae quidem forma secundo modo dicta est

As for form, so for truth, York continues, ‘for the first form itself is truth.’ So paralleling the giver of form – the first form – and what is formed, its recipient, in the case of truth there is what is adequating, the supreme truth, and what is adequated. To explain, York adapts an analogy used by Grosseteste in *De veritate* to explain why nothing is seen to exist except in the supreme being. Grosseteste notes that just as water has no intrinsic shape, but is given shape by the shape of a container, so of itself a creature does not exist, but is liable to slip into non-existence. For a creature to exist is for it to be supported by the eternal Word, just as for water to have shape is for it to be shaped by its container.

York applies this analogy to adequation. He notes that in the case of water a distinction is to be made between two distinct shapes, that of the container and that of the water contained, the latter being a quality of the water produced by the container. So too we must distinguish adequation as it is in what is adequating (the supreme truth) from adequation in what is adequated. Just as the shape that is a quality of the water cannot exist without shape in the container, so ‘adequation in what is adequated cannot exist without adequation in what is adequating.’ Since truth is adequation or rectitude, there ‘cannot be an adequated truth, which is an adequated adequation or rectified rectitude, without a rectifying and adequating rectitude and adequation.’<sup>35</sup>

In the case of water York notes that we cannot think of the shape of water without thinking of the shape of its container. Moreover, the shape of the container is obliquely predicated in the shape of what is contained. So too in the case of the names ‘being’ and ‘truth’, the first entity and first truth are predicated, but they are not *principally* predicated of any (created) entity or truth, but, York intimates, are predicated obliquely.<sup>36</sup> Here too York follows Grosseteste. As we saw, in predications of ‘truth’ of

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ipsa essentia rerum vel radicatur in ipsa, sicut superius manifestavi tibi; et haec forma variatur secundum quod ipsae res variantur et numerantur.’

35 York, *Sapientiale* 6.25, ed. Scully, pp. 373–74: ‘Adequatio vero dupliciter considerari potest: Ut est in adaequante et ut est in adaequato. Et adaequatio in adaequato non potest esse sine adaequatione in adaequante, sicut nec passio sine actione, nec figuratio nec in figurato sine figuracione figurante, nec sicut color illuminans sine lumine illuminante, similiter sicut nec rectitudo rectificata sine rectitudine rectificante. Unde cum veritas sit adaequatio sive rectitudo, impossibile est quod sit veritas adaequata, quae est adaequatio adaequata aut rectitudo rectificata sine rectitudine et adaequatione rectificante et adaequante, sicut si poneretur aqua in vase, figuraretur figura vasis, ut esto quadrata, impossibile est aquam esse quadratum nisi per figuram continentis quadratam. Et propter hoc dicimus quod aqua sola figura continentis figuratur, quia hac sola posita, fit figura, remota, non figuratur. Et tamen in ipsa aqua est figura quae est qualitas ejus praeter figuram continentis, quae efficitur a continente; et ideo quantum ad hanc rationem, dici potest quod sola illa figura figuratur. Qualitercumque dicatur, impossibile est unam figuracionem sine alia cogitare.’

36 York, *Sapientiale* 6.25, ed. Scully, p. 374: ‘Similiter autem est de veritate; nam impossibile est aliquam creaturam subsistere nisi per conformationem veritatis primae, id est per hoc quod conformis ei supponatur in esse; alioquin in nihilum <nihil non Scully> caderet... Et ideo sicut oblique praedicatur figura continentis in figura contenti, et tamen hoc non de illa, sic in nomine essendi, et per con-

created truths, the first or supreme truth is predicated, but obliquely and adjacently – a fully perspicuous statement of the predication would involve mention of the first truth in an oblique case, reflecting the fact that when created items are called truths we are stating a relationship of them to it.

York sums up his view in these words:

I say therefore, from what has been said above, that since ‘truth’ is imposed from adaequation, and that adaequation is the form of this word ‘truth’, because form is that from which a name is imposed according to Aristotle, and the *suppositum* of this name ‘truth’ is that for which the name is imposed, the *suppositum* of this name ‘truth’ is multipliable. And since its *supposita* are all the entities, truths are numbered and multiplied as entities are numbered and multiplied. But in regard to form there is just one truth, namely the uncreated divine [truth], which is [that] to which there is the adaequation of all truths. And therefore it is more truly called [truth] than every [other].<sup>37</sup>

Here York deploys the distinction between the form from which a name is imposed and that for which it is imposed, expressly identifying the former with what Grosseteste calls the ‘form of the name’, and the latter with the *supposita*. There are many truths, because there are many *supposita*, but there is a single truth in regard to form, the first truth. And where Grosseteste had left it somewhat obscure exactly what he took the name ‘truth’ to be imposed from, York makes it clear: it is imposed from adaequation. Thus, it is the form or nature *adaequation* that the name ‘truth’ signifies and brings to mind. This nature is also rectitude. I suggest that when both Grosseteste and York hold that the supreme truth is the form signified by ‘truth’, they have in mind the point that anyone who speaks of truth has in mind the idea of how something ought to be, and thus of rectitude: ‘truth’ is an inherently normative notion and the norm in question just is a thing’s *ratio* in the Word, this being identical with God himself. In thinking of a thing’s truth, and thus of its ought-to-be, we are thinking, though perhaps unwittingly, of God.

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sequens in nomine veritatis praedicatur ens primum et veritas prima, nec tamen de aliquo ente aut veritate principaliter ipsum ens primum aut veritas prima.’

37 York, *Sapientiale* 6.25, ed. Scully, p. 377: ‘Dico igitur ex antedictis, quod cum veritas imponatur ab adaequatione, et illa adaequatio est forma hujus dictionis “veritas”, quia forma est a qua imponitur nomen secundum Aristotelem, et suppositum hujus nominis “veritas” est cui imponitur nomen, quod suppositum hujus nominis “veritas” est multiplicabile. Et cum supposita ejus sunt omnia entia, tunc secundum quod numerantur et multiplicantur entia, numerantur et multiplicantur veritates. Quantum vero ad formam est una sola veritas, divina videlicet et increata, quae est ad quam omnium veritatum est adaequatio, et ideo dicitur omni verius, sicut superius dictum est.’

## Richard Rufus of Cornwall

Rufus first treats the unicity of truth in *MMet*. His brief treatment ends with the conclusion that ‘there is just one truth as a principle, but many in respect of participation.’<sup>38</sup> Here Rufus speaks of many truths. In subsequent works he asserts the unicity of truth. But these works do not clash. When Rufus asserts the unicity of truth in later works, he means there is just one truth in a strict or unqualified sense, but allows that we may speak of other truths in a qualified sense. This is another way of making the point made in *MMet* with the qualifications ‘as a principle’ and ‘in respect of participation’.

*SMet* contains a much more detailed treatment than *MMet*. At its end Rufus claims there is just one truth – or more precisely, that there is just one truth in the sense that there is just one truth without qualification (*simpliciter*).<sup>39</sup> His argument for this conclusion that is of interest for us here is the first he gives. It is based on the idea that the concrete name ‘true’ (*verum*) is said multiply (*dicitur multipliciter*) of God and creatures. In his discussion later in *SMet* of the name ‘entity’, another name said multiply, Rufus describes such a name as said analogically (*analogice*). In his lectures on the *Sentences*, Rufus holds that that both the adjectival name ‘true’ and the abstract name ‘truth’ are said by analogy (*per analogiam*).

Rufus therefore introduces a different logical consideration into his treatment of unicity than do Grosseteste and York. They work with the notions of supposition and signification. Rufus uses the notion of a name said multiply or analogically.

Before we consider truth in more detail, it will be useful to look briefly at Rufus’ treatment of entity (*ens*). In *SMet* 7 he notes that Aristotle holds that entity is said multiply and not equivocally but analogically, because it ‘is said of one nature primarily, namely substance, and of others, namely accidents, derivatively (*per posterius*) on account of their relationship (*attributionem*) to substance.’<sup>40</sup> Here Rufus uses the language of Averroes’ commentary as translated by Michael Scot and Aristotle’s notion of *pros hen* equivocation.<sup>41</sup>

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**38** *MMet* 1.2: ‘Dicendum secundum opinionem Aristotelis in parte sequenti quod “unumquodque sic se habet ad veritatem ut se habet ad esse;” sed unum est quod habet esse per se et verissime; similiter una est veritas per se et verissime. Alia autem sunt quae habent esse ab illo, et sic secundario, et sic sunt aliae veritates secundario. Patet igitur quod una sola est veritas tamquam principium; multae autem secundum participationem.’

**39** *SMet* 1.1.Q2: ‘Sed sicut non est perfecta scientia de aliquo causato sine scientia Primi, sic non est veritas alicuius causati veritas simpliciter; ipsum autem Primum est veritas simpliciter. Sic autem relinquitur quod una sola est veritas.’

**40** *SMet* 7.4.E3 (S, fol. 95va): ‘Consequenter distinguit ens, dicens quod ens dicitur multipliciter, non tamen aequivoce sed analogice; ens enim dicitur de una natura primo <natura primo] prima S>, ut de substantia, et de aliis per posterius, ut de accidentibus, et hoc propter aliquam attributionem quam habent ad substantiam. Unde ista multiplicitas non est pura aequivocatio.’

**41** Averroes, *In Metaph.* 4.2, Venice, 1562, 8: fol. 65rb-66rb. See also E. Jennifer Ashworth, ‘Analogy and Equivocation in Thirteenth-Century Logic: Aquinas in Context,’ *Mediaeval Studies* 54 (1992), pp. 94–135.

Rufus proceeds to distinguish four different kinds of names: simply univocal, simply equivocal, analogous (*analogus*), and multiply-said. They are distinguished in terms of the spoken sound (*vox*), the thing or nature, and the account (*ratio*) or notion (*intentio*) corresponding to the thing. With a simply univocal name there is one spoken sound, one nature, and one account. With a simply equivocal name, there is one spoken sound, more than one nature, and more than one account. With an analogous name, there is one spoken sound, more than one nature, but only one account. Finally, with a multiply-said name, there is one spoken sound, one nature, but more than one account.<sup>42</sup>

Rufus' notion here of a name said multiply (*multipliciter*) should not be confused with that of an analogous name (*nomen analogum*). As his definitions indicate, these are not the same thing. By an analogous name Rufus appears to have in mind what is called the analogy of proportionality,<sup>43</sup> a notion of analogy involving the comparison of two relationships that plays a relatively peripheral role in medieval treatments of analogy. By contrast, it is the different notion of what is said analogically or multiply that applies to the names 'entity' and 'true', where there is one spoken sound, one thing or nature, but more than one account or notion.

Rufus does not explain how the spoken sound (*vox*), the thing or nature, and the *ratio* or *intentio* relate to the name (*nomen*). Probably he understood a name as it was standardly defined as a spoken sound (*vox*) conventionally endowed with signification.<sup>44</sup> As for the *res* or nature and the *ratio* or *intentio*, in similar treatments of multiply-said names by other authors in the mid-13th century, the thing (*res*) signified is dis-

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42 *SMet* 74.N2 (S, fol. 95va): 'Et nota differentiam inter nomen analogum <analogicum S> et multipliciter dictum et nomen simpliciter aequivocum et simpliciter univocum. Et est talis: Illud nomen est simpliciter univocum quando vox est una, et natura sive res una, et ratio sive intentio correspondens rei una. Illud autem est nomen simpliciter aequivocum quando vox est una, nec res sive natura una, nec intentio sive ratio correspondens ei. Illud autem est nomen analogum quando vox est una, et ratio sive intentio una, res sive natura cui respondet ratio non una, ut "totum" in continuis et discretis. Est enim vox huius nominis "totum" una hinc inde, et similiter ratio sive intentio, quia haec est ratio "aggregatum ex partibus", res autem sive natura diversa; unitas enim aliud est a puncto, et numerus a magnitudine. Nomen autem multipliciter dictum est quando vox est una, res autem sive natura una, ratio autem sive intentio non una, ut hoc nomen "ens".' See also *SPar* 1.29 (V, fol. 74ra), where in place of the *ratio* or *intentio* Rufus speaks of what is connoted: 'Nomen differenter accipi potest esse tripliciter. Aut quantum ad suppositum, et hoc non inducit aliquam multipliciter. Aut quantum ad significatum, et hoc inducit aequivocationem. Aut quantum ad connotatum, et hoc inducit multipliciter secundum analogiam.'

43 As Silvia Donati points out in 'English Commentaries Before Scotus: A Case Study: The Discussion on the Unity of Being,' in *A Companion to the Latin Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, ed. Gabriele Galluzzo and Fabrizio Amerini (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 137–207, at p. 150. See also Ashworth, 'Analogy and Equivocation,' pp. 98–100.

44 More particularly, a name is defined by William of Sherwood, closely following Aristotle's account in *De interpretatione* 2 as translated by Boethius, as 'vox significativa ad placitum, sine tempore, cuius nulla pars separata aliquid significat, finita, recta' (*Introductiones in logicam*, ed. Lohr et al., p. 223).

tinguished from the *intentiones* or *modi*, and it would seem that by *res* or *natura* Rufus too means a thing or nature signified.<sup>45</sup>

Thus in the case of the name ‘entity’, Rufus remarks that the spoken sound is one and the nature is one, namely substance. Yet the *ratio* of the name ‘entity’ is diverse, ‘for one sort of entity exists in its own right, and one does not.’ Wherever the name ‘entity’ is said, substance is thought of – the nature predicated – but *how* it is thought of differs depending on the items of which ‘entity’ is predicated. When it is predicated of a substance, just substance is thought of. But when it is predicated of an accident a relationship to substance is thought of, one indicated when we say an accident is strictly speaking not a substance, but, using ‘*substantia*’ in an oblique case, *of* a substance, and so the account (*ratio*) is different.<sup>46</sup> The predication of ‘entity’ of an accident is an extended use of ‘entity’. Therefore, while it is not incorrect to say that accidents are entities, any more than, to use another example of a word said multiply, to say that urine is healthy, we must bear in mind that these are not direct predications of the natures in question (substance or health) signified by the names ‘entity’ and ‘healthy’.

Regarding truth, in *SMet* Rufus presents the point that the concrete name ‘true’ is multiply said as a reason for holding that there is just one truth (*veritas*).<sup>47</sup> His thought seems to be that since the concrete name ‘true’ can only be said in a primary sense of one thing, namely of the First, there will likewise only be one truth in a primary sense, since, as we’ve also seen York note, concrete and abstract names co-apply in the case of God.<sup>48</sup> So if God is the one true thing, he is also the one truth.

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45 Thus, Lambert of Auxerre says that an analogous term (his terminology for what is said multiply) such as ‘entity’ signifies one thing (*unum*) but under different notions (*intentiones*); *Logica*, ed. Franco Alessio (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1971), p. 149. Peter of Spain describes the type of equivocation in question using the example, drawn from Aristotle, of *sanus* (healthy), distinguishing the thing signified, the health of an animal, from the different ways (*modi*) it is signified in application to things such as urine, medicine, and so forth; *Tractatus*, ed. de Rijk, pp. 98–99. Rufus himself developed a very complex theory of signification in *SMet*, as Rega Wood shows in ‘Appellation, Signification, & Universal Names According to Richard Rufus (d. circa 1259),’ *The Modern Schoolman* 86 (2008–2009), pp. 65–122.

46 Rufus, *SMet* 74.N2 (S, fol. 95va): ‘Est enim vox una et natura una, quia substantia; de nullo enim alio praedicatur ens directe. Unde Aristoteles: Accidentia non <non vel forsitan: vero S> sunt entia, sed entis. Unde ubicumque dicitur ens, ibi intelligitur substantia, sive oblique sive recte. Ratio autem huius nominis “ens” est diversa; ens enim dicitur quoddam per se existens et quoddam non.’

47 Possibly in this regard Averroes had influenced Rufus’ treatment of truth. As Richard Taylor has informed me, in his commentary on *Metaphysics* 2 (comment 4) Averroes writes: ‘Omnia enim entia non acquirunt esse et veritatem nisi ab ista causa [prima]. Est igitur tantum ens per se et verum per se, et omnia entia et vera per esse et veritatem eius;’ see *In Aristotelis librum II (α) Metaphysicorum Commentarius*, ed. Gion Darms (Freiburg: Paulusverlag Freiburg Schweiz, 1966), p. 59. However, there is no express reference to this passage in Rufus’ treatment of this part of Aristotle’s text.

48 See Rufus’ *Speculum animae* (written at Oxford c.1245), where Rufus makes this last point and holds that God is predicated of creatures when they are called true or just: ‘Nonne igitur tibi videtur de veritate quae una tantum est, et Deus est, qua omnia vera dicuntur vera, scilicet quod ipsa veritas quae Deus est, ut probat Beatus Augustinus, de omnibus veris praedicetur? Et similiter de iustitia idem Augustinus probat quod eadem sit et unica, et quae Deus est, qua omnia iusta dicuntur

The First cause is true (*verum*), and caused things are true. Therefore this name ‘true’ is said of the First cause and of caused things. Either therefore it is said equivocally, or univocally, or multiply.<sup>49</sup> Not univocally, because nothing is said purely univocally of the creator and creatures. Not equivocally, because then there would be no ordering or implication between ‘true’ said of the First himself and [said] of these things; in the same way nor [would this be the case with] good, if it were said equivocally. But there in fact is an ordering; therefore etc. Therefore it will be said multiply. But a name said multiply of many things primarily belongs to one and is imposed on others derivatively, namely on account of some relationships they have to that primary [thing to which it belongs]. And wherever such a name is predicated, that nature is predicated for which it is primarily imposed, though sometimes [that nature is predicated] directly, and sometimes obliquely. If this is so, then since ‘true’ belongs to the First, it will sometimes be predicated directly, namely when it is predicated of the First, and of other things obliquely. Therefore there is only one true item (*verum*).<sup>50</sup>

Rufus is claiming that the nature for which the name ‘true’ is primarily imposed is predicated whenever this name is predicated. But that nature is predicated directly only when it is predicated of the first cause, God; otherwise, it is predicated indirectly or obliquely. Since it is only predicated directly of one thing, when other things are said to be true, what is being said is that they stand in some sort of relationship to the nature predicated. It cannot be directly said of any other true item that it is true. Although Rufus does not expressly say what this nature is, though it is in fact identical with the First, we will see him hint in *SOx* that it is, as York holds, adequation.

An important difference between Rufus’ treatment of ‘true’ and his treatment of ‘entity’ in *SMet* is that as *SMet* treats it, ‘entity’ can be directly predicated of many substances. This difference reflects the fact that a name can be said analogically

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iusta; et hoc de omnibus creaturis iustis praedicatur, scilicet concretive. Quanta benignitas, quanta largitas quam ut Creator praedicari se permittat aliquo modo, scilicet concretivo, et per aliqua nomina ipsum signantia, qualitatem scilicet designantia! Sed tale nomen de ipso Creatore praedicatur, scilicet concretive et abstractive, nam essentialiter. De creaturis vero solum concretive – hoc est, per participationem, et non essentialiter. Non est enim creaturae hoc esse iustum [est], hoc esse quod est esse verum. Et ideo nulla creatura essentialiter et abstractive, sed per participationem et concretive dicitur iustum et verum;’ Rufus, *Speculum animae*, ed. Rega Wood in Matthew X. Etchemendy and Rega Wood, ‘*Speculum animae*: Richard Rufus on Perception and Cognition,’ *Franciscan Studies* 69 (2011), p. 129 in pp. 53–140.

<sup>49</sup> It may be noted that Rufus here makes no mention of the category of the analogous name (*nomen analogum*) mentioned elsewhere in *SMet*.

<sup>50</sup> *SMet* 1.1.Q1: ‘Prima causa verum est, et causata vera sunt. Hoc igitur nomen “verum” dicitur de prima causa et de causatis. Aut ergo aequivoce aut univoce aut multipliciter dictum. Univoco non, quia nihil pure univoce dicitur de creatore et creaturis. Aequivoce non, quia sic non esset ordinatio nec consequentia inter verum dictum de Primo et de istis rebus; eodem modo nec bonum, si aequivoce diceretur; nunc autem est ordinatio; ergo etc. Ergo multipliciter dicitur. Sed nomen multipliciter dictum de multis primo uni convenit et imponitur aliis consequenter, scilicet propter aliquas attributiones ipsorum ad primum. Et ubicumque tale nomen praedicatur, praedicatur illa natura cui primo imponitur, sed aliquando recte, aliquando oblique. Si hoc ita est, cum “verum” conveniat Primo, praedicabitur aliquando directe, scilicet cum de Ipso praedicatur, et de aliis oblique. Igitur unum solum verum est.’



over two dimensions. *SMet*'s treatment of 'entity' concerns its application across the categories. It is predicated directly of substances, but obliquely or indirectly of accidents. But in *SMet* Rufus speaks about 'true' as a name said analogically as it applies to God and creatures, considering the applicability of this name to God and creatures rather than across the categories. In this case he holds that it can only be primarily and directly predicated of one thing, God.

But 'entity' too is a name applying to God and creatures, and in his *Sentences* commentaries, where he is working as a theologian, Rufus also treats 'entity' as a name multiply said of God and creatures and takes it to be akin to 'true'. The account of 'entity' given in *SMet* should be understood in terms of the limited perspective of the philosopher.<sup>51</sup>

In *SOx* Rufus also expands a little on how he understands the relationships (*attributiones*) to God of the things of which 'entity' is predicated derivatively or indirectly. In analogy, he holds, there is always one primary and principal item signified, and the name in question applies to other things on account of their relationships to that one. These other things participate in the primary thing signified and it is thought of in their names, though obliquely, not directly. Indeed, Rufus holds that the unqualified entity, God, is understood obliquely in the name of every creature.<sup>52</sup>

Rufus equates the notion of participation here with that of likeness, suggesting the relationship involved in calling created things entities is that of likeness, and that all names said of both God and creatures, including 'good', 'just' and 'true', as said of creatures involve some sort of likeness to God. Rufus calls this likeness an imitative likeness (*imitatoria similitudo*), an uncommon terminology probably drawn from Grosseteste's *De libero arbitrio* or *Hexaëmeron*, works Rufus employed in his lectures on the *Sentences*.<sup>53</sup>

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51 According to Rufus the first philosopher as such is concerned only with caused things, and hence not with the first cause. See *SMet* 5.8.Q2D: 'Ad aliud quod causa prima non continetur sub significatione "entis per se" nec "substantiae"; non enim comprehendit primus philosophus sub "ente" et "substantia" nisi causata, quia non alia nisi quae sunt sub genere, et ideo sub modis "entis" et "substantiae" non comprehenditur causa prima.'

52 *SOx* 1.2I (B, fol. 22va-vb): 'In analogia est semper unum significatum primum et principale, et propter aliquas attributiones aliorum ad illud conceditur nomen illis aliis, et illud primum ab omnibus aliis participatur et in eorum nominibus intelligitur, sed oblique, non in recto. Verbi gratia, in definitione hominis picti accipitur vivus. Est enim homo pictus imago hominis vivi, et est haec definitio hominis picti. Similiter dico in nomine cuiuslibet creaturae intelligitur simpliciter ens, scilicet Deus, sed oblique. Et forte bene et verissime sic definiretur quaelibet creatura. Lignum est entis talis similitudo, homo talis, asinus talis, si quis veraciter sciret harum similitudinum distinctiones exprimere.'

53 *SOx* 1.2I (B, fol. 22vb): 'Quod dixi de communitate huius nominis "ens", puto simile iudicium de omnibus aliis dictis de Deo et creaturis, sicut de 'bono'. Non enim est creatura bona nisi quia qualisqualis similitudo boni, nec iusta, nec vera. Similiter caritas de Deo dicta et de dilectione hominis vel angeli. Nec est forte dilectio angeli caritas vel dilectio nisi quia vere et simpliciter caritatis qualis qualis imitatoria similitudo.' For Grosseteste's use of the expression 'imitatoria similitudo' see below, n. 57.

Now when he wrote *SOx* Rufus had before him Grosseteste's *De veritate*, and he expressly paraphrases Grosseteste's response to the question of the unicity of truth, and Rufus' remarks here throw a little more light on his own view. Though he does not mention Grosseteste's view that 'truths' in application to creatures suppositis or stands for many created truths, Rufus correctly holds that the many created truths Grosseteste speaks of are the adequations of things to the eternal Word. Rufus treats these adequations as likenesses to the eternal Word. And at one point in laying out Grosseteste's view, he says that these thinkers – that is, Grosseteste – attest *with him* that the truth of a thing is its adequation to itself in the Word.<sup>54</sup> Rufus thus seems to intimate that Grosseteste's view does not really differ from his own, once we see that what Grosseteste expresses in terms of adequation, he is expressing in terms of participation, understood in terms of likeness: the adequation of a thing to its reason in the Word just is its likeness of itself in the Word.<sup>55</sup>

Of course, Grosseteste says that there are many truths, since there are the many adequations of creatures to the Word. But Rufus is prepared to say there are many truths too, provided we bear in mind that the name 'truth' is being used in an extended sense of creatures, and is only applicable in a strict sense to God. This is clearly stated in *SOx* and then in *SPar*, his last word on the subject, where Rufus notes that the names 'entity' and 'truth' both apply to God alone in a strict sense, and that truth is said of creatures by analogy and by extension. In particular, "truth" and "true" said of creatures express some sort of likeness of the unqualifiedly first truth. Hence created truth is called truth by imitation, and is a trace of the first truth.<sup>56</sup>

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54 *SOx* pr. H (B, fol.10va): 'In hac tanta difficultate respondent quidam, concedentes quod sit veritas creata et increata, et quod sunt veritates creatae etiam multae. (...) Volunt etiam quod veritas cuiuslibet causati sit adaequatio et conformitas sui ad ipsum Verbum Dei, quia tunc dicitur verus homo cum conformatur homini existenti in aeterno Verbo, similiter verus lapis cum conformatur lapidi existenti in aeterno Verbo, et ita de aliis. Sed etiam secundum istum modum de necessitate erunt plures veritates causatae. Nam haec adaequatio lapidis sive conformitas quid est nisi eius qualisqualis similitudo ad ipsum Verbum aeternum? Haec autem similitudo non est natura media in qua assimilentur Verbum aeternum et lapis, sed est id idem quod ipse lapis. Hoc etiam ipsi mecum testantur, dicentes quod veritas rei est adaequatio eius ad se ipsam in aeterno Verbo. Haec autem adaequatio nihil aliud est nisi id quod exprimimus per definitionem cuiusque. Planum est igitur secundum istam viam quod erunt plures veritates et differentes. Addunt etiam quod cum duplex sit esse cuiuslibet causati, primum scilicet et secundum; primum esse in se secundum quod ipsum est, secundum esse, scilicet esse secundum quod comparatur ad finem suum. Dicunt ergo quod cum sic sit esse duplex cuiuslibet causati et utrumque esse sit veritas, quot sunt creaturae, non solum tot, sed duplo plures erunt veritates creatae. Sic ergo, secundum eos, manifestum est quod non omnis veritas est aeterna veritas.'

55 Where Rufus does go beyond Grosseteste is in identifying this adequation with what is expressed by a creature's definition. In *Sapientiale* 6.25 (ed. Scully, p. 376) York writes in a similar vein that 'ipsa essentia rei non est aliud essentialiter a sua adaequatione cum veritate prima.'

56 *SOx* pr. H (B, fol. 10va): 'Sine omni assertionem dixerim quod Augustinus forte senserit in hoc nomine "veritatis" quod in aliis nominibus de Deo et creatura dictis, scilicet quod secundum analogiam sive secundum prius et posterius dicatur veritas, et quod proprie et principaliter et maxime dicta non est

## Concluding Remarks

It is clear from what I have said above that despite verbal differences between Grosseteste and York, on the one hand, and Rufus on the other, there are also similarities in the views they present. Are their views really that different then?

Apparently not. The differences do appear to be more verbal than substantive. In particular, both Grosseteste and York propose accounts of the predication of ‘truth’ of created things akin to Rufus’ account. They all agree that in predicating ‘truth’ of a created thing we are expressing some sort of relationship of it to the supreme truth or Word, and that the term ‘truth’ only applies directly to the supreme truth itself. They all agree that there are many adequation relations of things to the supreme truth. Grosseteste and York think this sufficient reason to say there are many truths. Rufus takes this as sufficient ground to say that there are many truths too, but only in a qualified manner, since what makes ‘truth’ predicable of these relations is the fact that they imitate the supreme truth itself. Thus ‘truth’ is said multiply or analogically of God and creatures. But Grosseteste and York too hold that ‘truth’ is predicable of such relations because they are relations to the supreme truth. And so, the key difference seems to be that, having made this point, on which they agree with Rufus, they do not introduce the idea of analogy, but simply state that there are many truths, whereas Rufus introduces reference to analogy.

Even so, both Grosseteste and York are clearly committed elsewhere in their writings to denial of univocity in the application of names to both God and creatures. And so since ‘truth’ is applied to both, and is not purely equivocal, it is being used in some manner intermediate between these.

Now Grosseteste expressly denies that any names can be said univocally of God and creatures, and yet he holds that there are some names said in common of God and creatures that, although equivocal, are not purely equivocal. And in the case of names said in common of God and *rational* creatures, such as ‘*liberum arbitrium*’, Grosseteste holds such a name can be applied to the rational creature as well as to God because the rational creature is an imitative likeness (*similitudo imitatoria*)

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nisi ipsum Verbum aeternum, accommodato tamen nomine et per extensionem accepto possit dici veritas creata, ita et sapientia, sic et bonitas.’ *SPar* 1.8 (V, fol. 26rb): ‘Sed sicut hoc nomen “ens” simpliciter et proprie dictum non convenit nisi Deo, sic et hoc nomen “veritas”. Et hoc intelligunt Augustinus et Anselmus, non quod nullo modo sint plures veritates, sed quod veritas per analogiam dicitur, et simpliciter et proprie non nisi de Deo, per extensionem de creaturis. Unde dicit Anselmus, *Monologion*, capitulo 28, “Creatura quia tam mutabiliter sunt, non immerito negantur simpliciter et absolute esse, et asseruntur fere non esse et vix esse.” Similiter intelligendum est de veritate et vero, scilicet quod haec dicta “veritas” et “verum” de creaturis similitudinem qualemqualem dicunt veritatis simpliciter primae, unde veritas creata imitatione dicitur veritas et est vestigium aliquod veritatis primae.’

of God – a terminology we have seen Rufus borrow.<sup>57</sup> And as we noted above, Grosseteste holds that ‘entity’ (*ens*) and ‘being’ (*esse*) are said of God and creatures ‘according to prior and posterior.’<sup>58</sup>

Likewise, although York does not speak of analogy in his treatment of the unicity of truth, he hints at it at the end of the last passage I quoted from him, where he says the uncreated truth is truer than every other. And a little later in the *Sapientiale*, citing this very point in support, he uses the same terminology of names said multiply or analogically that we have seen in Rufus, expressly adopting a doctrine of analogy in respect of the name ‘truth’. Thus, in *Sapientiale* 6.27 he writes that:

just as ‘an entity’ (*ens*) and ‘entity’ (*entitas*) are names said multiply, that is, analogically, so are ‘true’ and ‘truth’. For otherwise one true thing would not be truer than another, which goes against Augustine in *Soliloquies* 2. Now the nature of things said multiply is that they are attributed to one nature and primary notion, which is partaken differently in the others.<sup>59</sup>

Therefore, York too, though expressly positing many truths, also is committed to the view that ‘truth’ is a name applying analogically to created truths and the supreme truth.

I have touched on just the tip of the iceberg in these remarks on the unicity of truth, focusing only on logical issues raised by our authors. A fuller treatment of their views on unicity would also need to examine much more closely the metaphysical background they are working with, which in the case of Rufus, and especially Grosseteste, is not an easy task given that they devote no question expressly to pertinent metaphysical issues. Even so, it is clear from this investigation that the treatments of unicity in these authors are intertwined. This I suspect will be found to be true for other important topics of their day – as it is, for example, regarding the complex debate over the eternal truths also treated by all three authors. We should expect much more light to be shed on their relations, and thereby on philosophical developments in England before c.1260, once the ongoing critical editions of works by Rufus and York are completed.

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<sup>57</sup> Grosseteste, *On Free Decision*, ed. Neil Lewis, *Auctores Britannici Medii Aevi* 29 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 226; *Hexaëmeron* 8.1.2, ed. Richard C. Dales and Servus Gieben, *Auctores Britannici Medii Aevi* 6 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 217–18.

<sup>58</sup> See above, n. 29.

<sup>59</sup> York, *Sapientiale* 6.27, ed Scully, pp. 410–11: ‘Sicut ens ita verum, sicut entitas ita veritas est nomen multipliciter, id est analogice dictum; aliter enim non esset verum vero verius, quod est contra Augustinum, *Soliloquiorum* II. Multipliciter autem dictorum natura est quod attribuantur uni naturae et intentioni primae, quae differenter participetur in aliis.’

Rega Wood and Zita V. Toth

## ***Nec idem nec aliud*: The Powers of the Soul and the Origins of the Formal Distinction**

**Abstract:** This article shows that Scotus' notion of the formal distinction originated with Richard Rufus of Cornwall and belongs in the tradition of early Franciscan theology. We confirm Fr Gedeon Gál's discovery that Richard Rufus was the ancient doctor whom Scotus had in mind when introducing the distinction. Focusing on the relation of the powers of the intellectual soul, we compare Rufus' notion of formal predication both with Scotus' formal distinction and with earlier Franciscan discussions of this topic. We focus on Alexander of Hales and the *Summa Halesiana*, showing the decisive role of Augustine's authority played in this discussion. Important in this context is the notion of virtual containment. We also explore the possibility that Rufus formulated his claims about predication as a way to clarify Alexander of Hales' claim that its powers constitute the intellectual soul substantially but not essentially. Finally, we seek to clarify the similarities and differences between Scotus' account of these powers and that of his predecessors. We conclude by suggesting that this Franciscan tradition is an important instance of thoughtful philosophers seeking to reconcile faculty psychology with the unity of the human soul.

'[I]t is no easier to comprehend [the formal distinction] than the Trinity of persons in the unity of its essence,' as William of Ockham complained.<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the fact that the formal distinction was used in the trinitarian contexts, Ockham rightly indicates that the formal distinction itself is rather puzzling. It is not, however, a puzzle we will try to solve, and we will also leave aside trinitarian questions for the most part. Instead, our aim is to show that Scotus' notion of the formal distinction originated with Richard Rufus of Cornwall and belongs in the tradition of early Franciscan theology as it bears on the question of how the soul and its powers are related.

We will proceed as follows. First, we look at how Scotus and Rufus explain the formal distinction, and confirm what Fr Gedeon Gál already pointed out, namely,

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**Note:** This paper originated in a presentation by Rega Wood at a conference organized by Lydia Schumacher, 'Thirteenth-Century English Franciscans' (14 August 2020). We are grateful to the participants for their contributions to the discussion. Rega's name appears first because she began the project.

1 Ockham, *Scriptum in librum primum Sententiarum (Ordinatio)* I, d. 2, q. 1, in *Opera Theologica* 2, ed. S. Brown and G. Gál (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 1970), p. 17; see also I, d. 2, q. 3 (ed. Brown and Gál, *Opera Theologica* 2: 78). See also, Allan B. Wolter, 'The Formal Distinction,' in *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, ed. Marilyn McCord Adams (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1990), p. 27 in pp. 27–41.

that the distinction can be found in Rufus, and that he is the ancient doctor whom Scotus had in mind when introducing the distinction.<sup>2</sup> Second, we look at how Rufus and some other early Franciscans discussed the powers of the soul and their relation to the soul itself. In this section, we explore the possibility that Rufus formulated the formal distinction as a way to clarify Alexander of Hales' account of that relationship, and briefly note some similarities to Scotus' account. Third, we will consider some objections that may arise concerning our attribution of the formal distinction to Rufus. As we show, Scotus and Rufus use the distinction in remarkably similar ways, but this does not mean that their understanding of the distinction is entirely the same.

Overall, our argument supports Fr Gedeon's claim that Richard Rufus is the ancient doctor to whose authority Scotus appeals in statements of the formal distinction. However, we do not mean to deny that Scotus also developed his position in response to more contemporary authors, such as Henry of Ghent, as Timothy Noone has suggested.<sup>3</sup> Nor do we deny that other thinkers such as Bonaventure and Peter John Olivi posited degrees of difference that may be related to the formal distinction.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, we do assert that Rufus is the only 'ancient' doctor known to have described a degree of non-identity in terms of formal predication, in the way Scotus' authority does. This should not be surprising, given Bacon's claim that Rufus exercised great influence at Oxford for more than 40 years, from 1250 until after 1290, just at the time Scotus was studying there.<sup>5</sup> And since as Fr Jansen notes, various sug-

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**2** Gedeon Gál, 'Opiniones Richardi Rufi Cornubiensis a Censore Reprobatae,' *Franciscan Studies* 35 (1975), pp. 137–93, esp. pp. 144 and 156–57. See also Gedeon Gál, 'Viae Ad Existentiam Dei Probandam in Doctrina R. Rufi OFM,' *Franziskanische Studien* 38 (1956), p. 182 in pp. 177–202, where he already makes the claim albeit more briefly. Fr Gedeon is following the lead of Franz Pelster, who in 1936 identified Rufus as the ancient doctor; see F. Pelster, 'Die älteste Abkürzung und Kritik vom Sentenzenkommentar des hl. Bonaventura ein Werk des Richardus Rufus de Cornubia (Paris 1253–1255),' *Gregorianum* 17 (1936), pp. 195–223, esp. pp. 218–20.

**3** Timothy B. Noone, 'Alnwick on the Origin, Nature, and Function of the Formal Distinction,' *Franciscan Studies* 53 (1993), pp. 231–45.

**4** Bonaventure would certainly count as an 'ancient doctor' for Scotus, but the remarks usually cited about degrees of difference in the Trinity say nothing about formal predication. See his *Commentaria in quatuor libros Sententiarum* I, d. 22, q. 4, in *Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae Opera Omnia*, 10 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1882–1902), vol. 1, pp. 398–99. For Olivi, see Petrus Ioannis Olivi, *Quaestiones in secundum librum sententiarum*, 3 vols, ed. Bernard Jansen (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1922–26), vol. 1, p. 136, q. 7. For mid-14th-century developments in the understanding of the term *antiqui* see William J. Courtenay, 'Antiqui and Moderni in Late Medieval Thought,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 48 (1987), pp. 3–10.

**5** Roger Bacon, *Compendium of the Study of Theology*, ed. Thomas S. Maloney (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1988), 2.4, p. 86: 'Ab illo 1250 igitur tempore remansit multitudo in huius magistri erroribus usque nunc, scilicet, per quadraginta annos et amplius, et maxime invalescit Oxoniae, sicut ibidem incepit haec dementia infinita.'

gestions about the identity of the ‘ancient doctor’ have been forthcoming since 1677,<sup>6</sup> we think it unlikely that other plausible candidates will soon emerge.

## The Formal Distinction

The proper interpretation of Scotus’ formal distinction has been a subject of debate since the 14th century. In this discussion we seek not to take a stance on the controversial issues, or on whether or not Scotus changed his mind about them, since our focus is less on Scotus himself than on his sources.<sup>7</sup> As Scotus notes,

Consequently, we should say that [a divine person and the divine essence] are not formally the same, and yet they are the same by identity. And this is no different from saying that some things are the same that are not formally the same – *which is nothing but the teaching of the ancient doctors* who suppose that for the divine [persons and essence] there is predication by identity, which is not formal predication.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, here Scotus (1) makes a distinction between what he calls ‘predication by identity’ and ‘formal predication’, explaining that there are some things that are the same by identity, even though not formally the same; and (2) attributes this distinction to some ‘ancient doctors’.

(1) As to the meaning of the distinction in Scotus, the bare minimum will suffice here. Scotus seems to be describing cases of containment in which there is real identity but there are differences in definition. More precisely, as Scotus elaborates:

I say this, because ‘to formally include’ means to contain something in its essential definition (*ratio*), so that if we were to assign a definition to the containing thing, it would include the def-

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6 Bernhard Jansen, ‘Beiträge zur geschichtlichen Entwicklung der *Distinctio formalis*,’ *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 53 (1929), pp. 317–44, 517–44. See Barthomäus Barberis, *Flores et fructus philosophici ex seraphico paradiso excerpti* (Lyons: Arnaud & Borde, 1677).

7 For a careful analysis of Scotus’ view in the Parisian Lectures, see Stephen D. Dumont, ‘Duns Scotus’s Parisian Question on the Formal Distinction,’ *Vivarium* 43 (2005), pp. 7–62. For a general overview of the distinction in Scotus, see Allan B. Wolter, ‘The Formal Distinction,’ in *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, ed. Marilyn McCord Adams (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1990), pp. 27–41, and the many studies cited therein. For an overview of Scotus’ account and Ockham’s rejection of it, see Marilyn McCord Adams, ‘Ockham on Identity and Distinction,’ *Franciscan Studies* 36 (1976), pp. 5–74.

8 John Duns Scotus, *Lectura in librum primum sententiarum (Lectura)* I, d. 33–34, q. 1, n. 4, in *Opera Omnia* 17, ed. Commissio Scotistica, pres. C. Balić (Vatican City: Typis polyglottis Vaticanis, 1966), p. 443: ‘Unde dicendum est consequenter quod non sunt idem formaliter, sed tamen sunt idem per identitatem. Et hoc non est aliud quam dicere quod aliqua sunt idem quae non sunt formaliter idem – *quod non est nisi doctrina doctorum antiquorum*, ponentium praedicationem in divinis esse per identitatem, quae non est praedicatio formalis.’ (Emphasis added.) See also John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio (Ord.)* I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 4, n. 194, in *Opera Omnia* 4, ed. Commissio Scotistica, pres. C. Balić (Vatican City: Typis polyglottis Vaticanis, 1956), p. 262.



inition or a part of the definition of the thing contained. Moreover, [this is] just as the definition of goodness in general does not include wisdom (...). Therefore, there is some formal non-identity between wisdom and goodness in so far as they would have distinct definitions if they were definable.<sup>9</sup>

In other words, two things are formally different just in case one can be defined without the other, and the definition of the one cannot be predicated of the other. Scotus' example is goodness and wisdom; we can define goodness without including 'wisdom' in the definition, and vice versa, which means that they are not formally identical, even if, at least in the divine case, they have the same extension. In the case of the Trinity, if one is inclined to describe the difference between the divine persons by utilizing the formal distinction, one can say that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit differ formally even though they are the same in some important sense; or that the divine attributes differ formally even though all of them are identical with God.<sup>10</sup>

(2) Fr Gedeon Gál argued that Scotus' attribution of the distinction to an 'ancient doctor' referred to Rufus. As he notes, 'there is little doubt but that the Subtle Doctor has none other than Richard Rufus in mind' when he attributed his view to some ancient doctors.<sup>11</sup>

Indeed, he called attention to a passage where Rufus makes the relevant point:

Thus, even though none of them is other than God, nevertheless, none of them is [identical to] the other – I mean, *according to formal predication*.<sup>12</sup>

What we show in the remainder of this paper complements Fr Gedeon's findings. Scotus' and Rufus' use of the expression 'formal predication' is distinctive, and so is the range of cases where they make use of the distinction. As was mentioned above, they both use it to characterize the kind of distinction that obtains in the Godhead. They also use it to explain the distinction between hylomorphic composites and their individual forms, as well as that between universals and the singular entities of which they can be predicated. What we are most interested in here, however, is the way Rufus and Scotus use the notion of formal distinction to explain the way in

<sup>9</sup> *Ord.* I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 4, n. 193 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 4: 261–62): 'Hoc declaro, quia "includere formaliter" est includere aliquid in ratione sua essentiali, ita quod si definitio includentis assignaretur, inclusum esset definitio vel pars definitionis; sicut autem definitio bonitatis in communi non habet in se sapientiam, ita nec infinita infinitam: est igitur aliqua non-identitas formalis sapientiae et bonitatis, in quantum earum essent distinctae definitiones si essent definibiles.'

<sup>10</sup> For an elaboration on how the formal distinction was used in the Trinitarian context, see for example Russell L. Friedman, *Medieval Trinitarian Thought from Aquinas to Ockham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), esp. pp. 94–113. See also Paul Thom, *The Logic of the Trinity: Augustine to Ockham* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), esp. pp. 143–60.

<sup>11</sup> Gedeon Gál, 'Opiniones Richardi,' p. 144. See n. 3 above.

<sup>12</sup> *Sententiae Oxonienses (SOx)* I, d. 2E (MS Oxford, Balliol 62, fol. 19va): 'Unde etsi nullum illorum aliud sit quam Deus, nullum tamen illorum est alterum secundum *formalem, dico, paedicationem*.' (Emphasis added.)

which the soul and its powers differ.<sup>13</sup> As will be seen, their use of the distinction is very similar. To put their views into some context, we will also show how Rufus' Franciscan contemporaries dealt with the same problem – especially Alexander of Hales, the *Summa Halesiana*, and John of La Rochelle. Though as we show, a related distinction is made in some of their discussions, none of them makes reference to formal predication, the characteristic phrase Scotus identifies as that of the ancient doctor.

## The Powers of the Soul

Whether the powers of the soul, such as memory, intellect, and will, are identical to the soul itself, is a question that had been addressed by Augustine and continued to be discussed throughout most of the medieval period.<sup>14</sup> Some later thinkers – such as William of Ockham – thought that the powers of the soul were identical with the soul itself; while others – such as Giles of Rome or Thomas Aquinas – maintained that they were different.

According to the identity view, the powers of the soul differ only conceptually but not really, and there are at least two considerations that may support this thesis. First, one may think that we should posit the same kind of distinction between the different powers as the kind of distinction that holds between the objects towards which these powers are directed. According to consensus, the intellect is directed towards the true as its proper object, while the will is directed towards the good; true and good are both transcendentals, and thus only differ conceptually but not really. Hence, one may think that the powers themselves that grasp them also only differ conceptually but not really.

Second, perhaps more importantly, the main motivation for the identity view had already been formulated by Augustine. As he writes in the *De Trinitate*:

Since these three, memory, understanding, and will, are, therefore, not three lives but one life, not three minds but one mind, it follows that they are certainly not three substances, but one substance. For when we speak of memory as life, mind, and substance, we speak of it in respect

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**13** An important earlier examination of this topic in Scotus is John H.L. Van den Bercken, 'John Duns Scotus in Two Minds about the Powers of the Soul,' *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 82 (2015), pp. 199–240.

**14** For a general overview of the 13th- and 14th-century debates especially about the distinctness of the soul's faculties, see Pius Künzle, *Das Verhältnis der Seele zu ihren Potenzen problemgeschichtliche Untersuchungen von Augustin bis und mit Thomas von Aquin* (Freiburg: Schweiz Umversitätsverlag, 1956); Peter King, 'The Inner Cathedral: Mental Architecture in High Scholasticism,' *Vivarium* 46 (2008), pp. 253–74; and Magdalena Bieniak, *The Soul-Body Problem at Paris 1200–1250: Hugh of St Cher and his Contemporaries* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010). See also, especially for the later debates, Joël Biard, 'Diversité des fonctions et unité de l'âme dans la psychologie péripatéticienne (XIVe–XVIe siècle),' *Vivarium* 46 (2008), pp. 342–67.

to itself; but when we speak of it simply as memory, we speak of it in relation to something else. We may also say the same of the understanding and the will (...). Wherefore, when all are mutually comprehended by each one, and are comprehended as wholes, then each one as a whole is equal to each other one as a whole, and each one as a whole is equal to all together as wholes; and these three are one life, one mind, and one essence.<sup>15</sup>

While the implications of this passage are subject to debate,<sup>16</sup> Augustine's basic argument is relatively straightforward. The soul, and living things in general, have only one life and not multiple ones; but the soul has life in virtue of its powers, and hence if these powers were really distinct, they would give rise to not one but multiple lives in the soul. Memory, intellect, and will are therefore not three substances but one, and we distinguish them merely based on their relation to other things. There is also a strong mutual containment and identity claim, which our later authors will elaborate on: 'all are mutually comprehended (*capiuntur*) by each one,' and 'each one as a whole is equal to all together as wholes.'

Augustine's view seems plausible, but it is not without problems. Perhaps the most popular argument for the distinction thesis can already be found in Plato: it seems that the powers can operate independently of one another, occasionally even against one another. We can desire something contrary to our intellectual judgment, and in more usual cases, one power can have operations while the other one does not, such as when we think about or remember a thing without forming any volition concerning it. All this suggests that thinking and desiring and remembering are performed by distinct faculties.<sup>17</sup>

Our authors, including Alexander of Hales, Rufus, and Scotus, recognize both sides of the debate. On the one hand, as Alexander of Hales argues, the soul is nothing else but its powers. On the other hand, positing that the soul is identical to its powers would lead to what our Franciscans consider the absurd consequence that the soul is simple in the same way as God is simple. To put it differently, only God is identical to what he has (more technically, only in God are the *quod-est* and

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**15** *De Trinitate* X, c. 11, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004–), 16:300–1: 'Haec igitur tria, memoria, intellegentia, uoluntas, quoniam non sunt tres uitae sed una uita, nec tres mentes sed una mens, consequenter utique nec tres substantiae sunt sed una substantia. Memoria quippe quod uita et mens et substantia dicitur ad se ipsam dicitur; quod uero memoria dicitur ad aliquid relatiue dicitur. Hoc de intellegentia quoque et de uoluntate dixerim. (...) Quapropter quando inuicem a singulis et tota et omnia capiuntur, aequalia sunt tota singula totis singulis et tota singula simul omnibus totis, et haec tria unum, una uita, una mens, una essentia.' Translation by Stephen McKenna, in Augustine, *On the Trinity*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 58–59. See also Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*. I, d. 3, q. 2, ed. I. Brady (Grottaferrata: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1971).

**16** For a detailed analysis of the passage, and an examination of some of the controversial issues surrounding it, see for example Edward Booth, 'A Note on Some Themes of St Augustine's *De Trinitate*,' present in *De Libero Arbitrio*, *Augustiniana* 38 (1988), pp. 25–36.

**17** For Aquinas' formulation of this argument, with reference to Plato, see *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 76, a. 3, co. See also his *Summa contra gentiles* II, c. 57. For Rufus, see *SOx* I, d. 1C (Balliol 62, fol. 13vb).

*quo-est* identical); the soul has its powers; therefore, the soul cannot be identical to its powers.<sup>18</sup>

Rufus advances similar considerations. On the one hand, as he presents it, the main problem with the distinction thesis is that it would result in the absurdity that we have multiple lives – a life of understanding, a distinct life of willing, and so on.<sup>19</sup> Apart from the absurdity already thereby apparent, this position would also imply that one faculty could be rewarded while another was not; and in general, that these faculties inhere in the soul almost as if they were *homunculi*, distinct entities or substances. On the other hand, Rufus also points out, if the soul is the same as its powers, then the powers cannot be numbered, and so there will only be one power of the soul, which is no less absurd.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, understanding seems to precede liking or desire in general; since we cannot desire what we do not know. But if desiring and knowing were the same act, this would lead to the absurd conclusion that the same act could precede itself.<sup>21</sup> Finally, one might hold that the operations of the powers of the soul differ from one another in genus – desiring falls under the genus of appetite, while knowledge falls under the genus of intellective activity. If this is true, then it seems that not only the operations, but also the operating powers themselves must differ in genus as well, which would not be possible if they were identical.<sup>22</sup>

Faced with these two options and the seemingly strong arguments on both sides, the authors we consider argue that the soul is neither the same as nor different from

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**18** *Quodl.* 2, a. 1 (Paris, BN Lat. 16406, fol. 70rb). The same position is stated earlier in his *Glossa* I, d. 3, n. 36, 43–52, in *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1951–57), vol. 1, pp. 56, 61–67. See also Victorin Doucet, ‘Prolegomena in librum III necnon in libros I et II *Summa fratris Alexandri*,’ in *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica*, vol. 4 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1948), pp. 110\*–16\*. Interestingly, Scotus seems to think that it is not necessary that *id-quod* and *id-quo* differ in creatures: see *Ord.* IV, d. 12, n. 288, ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 12: 384.

**19** Rufus, *SOx* I, d. 1C (Balliol 62, fol. 13vb), quoting Augustine. Scotus makes a related point – namely, that if its powers were accidents, the soul itself would be only accidentally beatified. See Scotus, *Reportatio (Rep.)*, in *Opera Omnia*, vol. 11/1, ed. L. Wadding (repr. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1969), II, d. 16, q. un., n. 15, p. 348.

**20** Rufus, *SOx* I, d. 1C (Balliol 62, fol. 14vb): ‘Nam quaero: ipsi animae rationali aut est idem esse quod posse aut non. Si sic, ergo si non numeratur esse, non numeratur posse; non erunt igitur ipsius animae plures potentiae sed una tantum. Si non, ergo eius potentia addit aliquid super eius essentiam, ergo est ibi aliquid et aliquid, et erit vere composita ex duobus.’

**21** Rufus, *SOx* I, d. 1C (Balliol 62, fol. 13vb): ‘Item, intellectus naturaliter praecedat affectum, sed nulla vis eadem praecedat se ipsam, ergo etc.’

**22** Rufus, *SOx* I, d. 1C (Balliol 62, fol. 14ra): ‘In affectu intelligitur aspectus, nec tamen est hic ille, et in aspectu cogitatione intelligitur et praesupponitur aspectus scientia, nec tamen est hic ille. Alterius quippe generis est cognoscere et alterius diligere, et universaliter apprehensivum et motivum, et ideo non differunt solum sicut res absoluta et eadem comparata.’

its powers, endorsing thereby some kind of a middle position.<sup>23</sup> To make this view intelligible, they spend great effort describing the ontological status of the powers, which is a difficult problem in the Aristotelian categorical framework. As they argue, powers are neither substances in the strict sense, nor do they belong in the category of accidents. They also hold that the powers are virtual parts of the soul. As we show in the rest of this paper, these claims form a common thread linking Alexander of Hales, Considerans in the *Summa Halesiana*, Rufus, and Scotus.

## Neither the Same, Nor Different (*nec aliud*)

As a first approximation of an answer to the initial question of whether the powers of the soul are identical to or different from the soul, our authors argue that they are neither. In other words, while it is false to say that the soul differs from its powers and that these powers also differ from one another, it is also false to say that they are entirely one and the same thing. Since, however, our authors also believe that the logical principle of bivalence holds, they have to explain how this is possible.

Alexander of Hales, for example, claims that the soul and its powers are not the same essentially but only substantially:

When it is said that the soul is its powers [*vires*], this should be understood [to mean] that its powers inhere in the soul substantially. For this is said regarding the difference between habits and powers with respect to the soul: habits sometimes recede from the soul, but powers do not, and therefore its powers are substantial to it. And, therefore, to say that the soul is the same as its powers is not to say that the powers *are* the soul essentially, but only substantially. (...) Nor should it be conceded that the powers of the soul are contained under the second species of quality.<sup>24</sup>

Alexander's reasoning seems to be that while habits, such as the knowledge of a particular thing, can come and go, the powers of the soul belong to the soul in such a way that they cannot be removed from the soul. This means that these powers cannot be accidents in the usual sense. In particular, Alexander claims that the powers do

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<sup>23</sup> Some other versions of this 'middle position' are examined in Van den Bercken, 'John Duns Scotus in Two Minds about the Powers of the Soul,' section 1, who makes a distinction between a 'substantial identity and essential difference' approach and a 'part-whole' approach. While Van den Bercken argues that Scotus' main achievement is the unification of these approaches, it seems that our earlier Franciscan authors already endorse both of them.

<sup>24</sup> Alexander of Hales, *Quodl.* 2, a. 1 (Paris, BN Lat. 16406, fol. 70rb): 'Cum xv [*De Trinitate*] dicitur quod anima est suae vires, hoc est intelligendum quod animae insunt suae vires substantialiter. Quia enim dicitur ad differentiam habituum et potentiarum respectu animae: Habitus quandoque ab anima intendunt sed non potentiae, et ideo suae potentiae sunt ei substantiales. Et ideo dicere animam esse idem quod suae potentiae non est dicere potentias esse essentialiter animam, sed solum substantialiter. (...) Nec est concedendum quod potentiae animae contineantur sub ii specie qualitatis.'

not belong to the second species of quality – a view that, for instance, Aquinas held,<sup>25</sup> and to which we will return below.

This might suggest that since the powers of the soul are not accidental, they are essential parts of the soul. Alexander, however, immediately goes on to deny that the powers of the soul constitute the essence of the soul. It is not true to say that the powers *are* the soul, essentially speaking, he says. While Alexander does not elaborate on this point here, we can recall the consideration mentioned above: only God is identical to his power, and thus the soul *has* its powers but is not the same as *them*. Thus, the conclusion that Alexander reaches is that the powers belong to the soul ‘only substantially’ (*solum substantialiter*).

A similar view is expressed by Considerans in the *Summa Halesiana*:

We should say that ‘the soul is its [parts]’, so as to make a distinction between the substantial potencies or powers on the one hand, and the accidental [powers] on the other hand, insofar as the potencies and powers adhere substantially, and are one with the soul insofar as substance is concerned – but I do not mean in essence. For the soul subsists by substantial powers; but the accidents, such as prudence, courage, and such, do not adhere to it substantially, because they adhere accidentally. Therefore, the substantial potencies and powers are called the same as the soul, by reason of its indivision and substantial adherence; but the accidental [powers] are not [called the same as the soul], because they do not adhere substantially.<sup>26</sup>

Like Alexander, Considerans calls attention to the usual distinction between powers and habits. The latter, such as prudence, or courage, inhere in the soul accidentally, since one can acquire or lose them. But the powers, such as intellect and memory, are not such; they cannot be lost like accidents, and, indeed, the soul subsists by its substantial powers. And this is, according to Considerans, what the identity claim

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**25** For Aquinas’ view, see especially *De spiritualibus creaturis*, a. 11. See Nicholas Kahm, ‘Aquinas and Aristotelians on Whether the Soul Is a Group of Powers,’ *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 34 (2017), pp. 115–32, for analysis and further bibliography. The second species of quality contains natural powers and capacities, as described by Porphyry in his commentary on Aristotle’s *Categories* – see Porphyry, *On Aristotle’s Categories*, trans. Steven K. Strange (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 1992), pp. 139–41, and Aristotle, *Categories*, 9a21–23. One may object here that not *all* accidents are such that they can come and go; there are *propria* that even though accidental, belong to an individual of a certain kind for as long as it exists. While Alexander does not consider this option explicitly, it seems that thinking and willing pertain to the soul even more strongly than, for instance, risibility does to human beings. While Bob would be, in principle, still human if he lost his ability to laugh, a soul cannot be a soul if it does not have the capacity to think, will, and remember.

**26** Alexander of Hales, *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica (SH)*, 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1924–48), Vol II, In2, Tr3, S1, Q1, C1 (n. 116), p. 159: ‘Dicendum quod “anima est quaedam sua,” ut fiat distinctio inter potentias substantiales sive vires ex una parte et accidentia ex alia, quantum ad hoc quod potentiae et vires substantialiter adhaerent et unum sunt cum anima quantum ad substantiam, non dico quantum ad essentiam: potentis enim substantialibus subsistit anima; accidentia vero, ut prudentia, fortitudo et huiusmodi non adhaerent substantialiter, quia haec accidentaliter adsunt. Unde potentiae et vires substantiales dicuntur idem quod anima ratione indivisionis et adhaerentiae substantialis, accidentia vero non, quia substantialiter non adhaerent.’ Victorin Doucet, ‘Prolegomena in librum III,’ in *SH IV*, p. lxxx.

really means: it does not imply that the soul is, in every respect, the same thing as the intellect, but that the intellect adheres to or is the soul substantially.

A little later, quoting John of La Rochelle on the issue of inseparability, Considerans elaborates:

Some say that ‘the essence of the thing is the same as its power in nothing other than in the First; therefore, they say that the soul’ is not its power, yet they say that they are the same in substance. ‘However, they say that they are the same in substance, for the reason that the soul does not subsist without its powers, nor is it understood [without its powers], nor do these powers [exist] without the soul. Therefore, the identity that is posited by Augustine, should be referred to substance, and not to essence.’<sup>27</sup>

Here, Considerans repeats the standard argument seen above: that only God is identical to God’s power, thus the soul cannot be identical to its powers, at least essentially speaking. Nevertheless, since the soul also cannot subsist without its powers (and vice versa), the powers must be identical to it substantially speaking.

Rufus seems to hold something similar. As he notes in his Oxford commentary on the *Sentences*, ‘[The soul and its powers] differ, and not accidentally nor essentially, unless we extend the name of “essence” to its quiddities and definition.’<sup>28</sup> Again, like Alexander, Rufus seems chiefly concerned to show that the soul and its powers do not differ accidentally. But while Alexander simply claims that the powers of the soul are not essentially in the soul, but only substantially, Rufus glosses this by saying that the powers differ from the soul essentially only if we understand ‘essentially’ in an extended sense – namely, definitionally.

Two additional things should be noted about Rufus’ passage. First, it was written at a time when Rufus was maximally influenced by Alexander, quoting him in almost every distinction of his commentary on the first book of the *Sentences*.<sup>29</sup> Second, the gloss Rufus provides with its reference to quiddity and definition allows just the difference he postulates between the soul and its powers, difference by formal predication, since for Rufus to predicate formally is to predicate quidditatively – that is, to predicate a thing’s definition of that thing.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> SH II, In4, Tr1, S2, Q1, C1 (n. 349), p. 425: ‘Dicunt quidam “quod in nullo alio a Primo est idem essentia rei quod sua potentia; unde dicunt quod anima” non est sua potentia, dicunt tamen quod sunt idem in substantia. (...) “Dicunt tamen quod idem est in substantia, eo quod anima non subsistat sine suis potentiis nec etiam intelligatur nec ipsae potentiae sine anima. Identitas ergo quam ponitur Augustinus, referenda est ad substantiam, non ad essentiam.”’

<sup>28</sup> SOx I, d. 1C (Balliol 62, fol. 14ra): ‘Differunt et non accidentaliter nec tamen essentialiter nisi extendamus nomen essentiae ad suas quidditates et definitiones.’

<sup>29</sup> Fr Gedeon indicated this in the Quaracchi edition of Alexander’s *Glossa*; see n. 19 above.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, SOx I, d. 2G (Balliol 62, fol. 28va): ‘Puto, ut praedictum est, quod “substantia” ibi dicit existentiam vel subsistentiam, et non penitus in modo significandi dicit essentiam, sed dicit quidditatem personae formalem. Unde nec hypostasim omnino exprimit nomine “substantiae”, sed quidditatem hypostasis. Nam communior est intentio “exsistentiae” quam “personae”, et praedicatur in quid et formaliter de persona, sed est in plus, et ideo additur “incommunicabilis” sive “individua”.’



Thus, so far, although Rufus has added a significant qualification, he joins the consensus view of the other Franciscan authors active between 1236 and 1250: Though the powers are not identical to the soul, neither are they entirely different.

Scotus also accepts this consensus view:

Similarly, the powers are not formally or quidditatively the same among themselves, nor even with the essence of the soul, but yet they are not other things, but identically the same. Therefore such [powers] are just as distinct according to their formal accounts (*rationes*), as they would be if they had a real distinction [as they would be] if they were different things really distinct.<sup>31</sup>

Here, Scotus explicitly applies the formal distinction to the soul and its powers: they are ‘identically the same’ (*idem identitate*) as the soul itself, and yet are ‘distinct according to their formal accounts.’ He elaborates with the example of the transcendentals. While we *can*, in some way, distinguish the true from the good, we cannot make this distinction by pointing to two different things. Similarly, while the powers of the soul are not quidditatively or formally the same – in other words, they have different definitions, and this difference is not merely in the human mind – nevertheless, we cannot point to three different things when pointing them out, since they are not distinct things.

Overall, our authors agree that the powers of the soul are neither identical to nor different from it. This, however, raises a question. What is the ontological status of these powers? What kind of thing can be substantially the same as, and yet not essentially identical with, something?

## Neither Substance, Nor Accident

As the passage quoted from Alexander of Hales above already indicates, he thinks (and the other authors agree) that the powers do not belong to the second species of quality, and hence – since there are no other plausible candidates among the accidental categories<sup>32</sup> – they are not accidents. Nevertheless, they are not properly speaking substances either. Our authors elaborate on both of these points.

1. That the powers are not substances follows from the claim (already present in Augustine’s *De Trinitate* passage quoted earlier) that they are not absolute things but

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<sup>31</sup> *Rep.* II, d. 16, q. un., n. 18 (ed. Wadding, vol. 11/1), p. 348: ‘Similiter non sunt potentiae idem formaliter vel quidditative, nec inter se, nec etiam cum essentia animae, nec tamen sunt res aliae, sed idem identitate. Ideo talia habent talem distinctionem secundum rationes formales, qualem habent realem distinctionem, si essent res aliae realiter distinctae.’ See also *Ord.* I, d. 19, n. 66 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 5: 297–98).

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Bonaventure, *Commentaria in quatuor libros Sententiarum*, I, d. 3, p. 2, a. 1, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, vol. 1, pp. 85–86). But Bonaventure like his confreres allows for a natural power that belongs to the category of substance.

concern the soul as it relates to other things. For instance, Considerans in the *Summa Halesiana* notes, quoting John of La Rochelle on the same point:

For just as being and acting are not the same, neither are essence and power: for the essence of the soul is that by which the soul is essence, absolutely; power is that by which the soul is productive or receptive with respect to another thing.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, while essences are in themselves absolute, powers are not; instead, they relate the soul to other things. The sense of vision, in its very essence, relates the soul to visible objects, and generally speaking, powers themselves are related to their objects or their effects (or, in case of passive powers, to the corresponding active power).

Rufus expresses a similar view, albeit with a more emphatic identity claim:

Therefore, this essence [of the soul] is three modes, and it is the singular [instance] of these three modes, neither is it greater when it is all three modes at once than when it is a single one in itself. (...) But by whichever of those three modes it is said, it is always understood that none of them adds anything to it in essence, but beyond this there is a twofold mode of being, absolute and relative, and that relation is its essence, but not by formal predication. (...) We cannot number essence as essence, but we can number it as modes or relatives. For that essence is three relatives related to three operations, and that essence is the single cause of those three.<sup>34</sup>

Rufus' expression strongly echoes that of Augustine, and its main point seems to be that the powers of the soul are what relate it to its proper operations. While all these powers flow from the soul's essence, and are, in some way, identical to this essence, nevertheless, they can be differentiated and enumerated based on their related operations. Thus, when we talk about intellect or memory, we are not talking about two absolute things that would 'add anything' to the essence of the soul, but rather, we are talking about the essence of the soul itself as related to thinking or remembering.

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**33** SH II, In4, Tr1, S2, Q1, C1 (n. 349), p. 425: 'Sicut enim non est idem esse et operari, ita nec essentia et potentia: essentia enim animae est id per quod anima est absolute essentia; potentia est id per quod anima ad aliud est efficiendum vel recipiendum,' quoting John of La Rochelle, *Summa de anima di Frate Giovanni della Rochelle dell'Ordine de' minori*, ed. J. Bougerol (Paris: J. Vrin, 1995), 60, p. 184.

**34** SOx I, d. 1C (Balliol 62, fol. 14vb): 'Unde haec essentia [animae] est tres modi et est singulus trium modorum, nec est ipsa maior cum est omnes tres modi insimul quam cum est singulus per se. (...) Sed quocumque istorum modorum dicatur, semper intelligatur quod nullum horum addit aliquid ipsi essentiae, sed est super eandem rem duplex modus essendi, absolute et relative, et ipsa relatio ipsa essentia est, sed non formali praedicatione. (...) Numerari non potest essentia in ratione essentiae, numeratur vero in ratione modi et relativi. Nam ipsa [essentia] est tria relativa ad tria opera relata, et est ipsa essentia unica causa horum trium.'

Rufus makes a similar point in another passage, where he points out that although its powers belong to the same category as the soul itself (that is, substance), nevertheless, they are not substances but substantial qualities:

What, therefore, is a power of the soul? Perhaps the principle operating the proper operation of the soul. But the proper operation of the soul or the animal is life, according to (...) Damascene. Therefore, the threefold power of the soul is a threefold principle of three modes of living. For 'to live' is said in multiple ways; for affection is to live, and cognition or apprehension is also to live. (...) But a natural power belongs to no genus other than the category that of which it is a power. *Therefore, the natural power of the soul is also in no other genus than the genus of substance, even though it is not a substance, but a substantial quality or substantial differentia of the soul.*<sup>35</sup>

Rufus argues that since the soul is its life and it lives by its powers, it and its powers must belong to the same highest genus, the category of substance. Nevertheless, as Rufus also points out, the powers are not themselves substances but rather 'substantial qualities' or 'substantial differences'. By claiming that the powers are the soul's *differentiae*, Rufus is in effect claiming that the relation between the soul and its powers is like the relation between 'animal' and 'rational' in human nature. Just as humans are animals that reason, so also the intellect is a soul that understands, and so on for the other powers. While the 'reasoning part' is not a real, distinct part of a human animal, neither are the understanding and willing real, distinct parts of the soul. As can be seen from this characterization, Rufus' position implies that there are entities falling under the category of 'substance' that are nevertheless not substances strictly speaking.

Scotus also seems to hold the view that the powers of the soul are not purely absolute things but include something relational. When discussing the persons of the Trinity in the *Reportatio*, he notes:

Therefore, that which has and that which is had are identical by some identity. And since a person has the essence most perfectly – because a person would not be most perfect by a partial identity – therefore it is identical with the essence in an unqualified sense by a most perfect identity. Nevertheless, they [i.e. person and essence] are in some way distinct from the very nature of things in a qualified sense, because they are not formally and adequately the same, as we said earlier. Not formally, because insofar as the identity is founded in the essence and terminates in the person, it is not true that the essence is formally the person, for an absolute or non-relative thing does not include anything relative in its formal notion. But insofar as the iden-

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35 *SOx I, d. 1C (Balliol 62, fol. 14va):* 'Quid ergo est potentia animae? Forte principium operandi propriam operationem animae. Est autem propria operatio animae seu animalis vita secundum (...) Damascenum. Triplex ergo potentia animae est triplex principium triplicis modi vivendi. Multipliciter enim dicitur vivere; affectio enim vivere est, et cognitio seu apprehensio etiam vivere est. (...) Non est autem potentia naturalis de genere praedicamenti quam sit illud cuius est potentia. *Unde et potentia naturalis animae non est de alio genere quam de genere substantiae, nec tamen ipsa est substantia, sed qualitas substantialis seu differentia substantialis ipsius animae.*' (Emphasis added.)

tity is understood to be founded in a person and to terminate in the essence, in this sense they are the same formally.<sup>36</sup>

As Scotus argues, in the case of the Trinity, the essence is something absolute, and hence cannot contain anything relative in its *formal ratio* or definition. But the persons are not absolute in this way. How is this divine essence then related to the persons? Are they related with the relation of identity? According to Scotus, it depends on how we look at it. (It should be kept in mind that for the medievals, relations are always directional: when *A* is related to *B*, we have a relation that is founded on *A* and terminated in *B*. While in most ordinary cases the *A-B* and the *B-A* relations coincide, it is not necessarily so.<sup>37</sup>) If we look at the relation as founded in the essence and terminated in the person, there will be formal difference (since again, the definition of the divine essence cannot contain anything relational, while the definitions of the persons of the Trinity do). But if we look at the relation of identity from the other direction, from the person to the essence, then they will be identical.

While Scotus does not discuss the powers of the soul explicitly in this passage, he seems to conceive of the relation between these powers and the soul in an analogous way. This means that in some way, the powers are identical to the soul, but in some way they are different from it. This is so because for Scotus, the meaning of an identity claim greatly depends on what kind of thing – absolute thing or relational thing – we are talking about, and while the essence of the soul belongs to the former kind, its powers also have something of the latter.

2. While our authors hold that powers are not absolute things, and consequently they cannot, properly speaking, belong to the category of substance in the same way as a human being or the soul does, they also hold that they are not accidents either, and especially that they do not belong to the second species of quality. As Alexander of Hales puts it,

Nor should it be granted that the powers of the soul are contained under this [second] species of quality. For that which is called the second species of quality is natural potency or impotency, that does not refer to the essence of potency, but rather to its ease or difficulty, just as it is clear in the same place from the example that the Philosopher gives there; but the ‘powers of the

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**36** *Reportatio* I, d. 34, q. 1, n. 4, in John Duns Scotus, *The Examined Report of the Paris Lecture, Reportatio I-A*, ed. and trans. Allan B. Wolter and Oleg V. Bychkov (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2008), vol. 2, p. 343: ‘Est ergo idem habens aliqua identitate et quod habetur, et cum persona perfectissime habeat essentiam, quia non identitate partiali, eo quod non esset tunc perfectissima persona, ergo est sibi eadem perfectissima identitate et simpliciter. Et tamen aliquo modo distinguuntur, quia secundum quid ex natura rei, quia non sunt eadem formaliter et adaequate, sicut dictum est prius. Non formaliter, quia prout identias fundatur in essentia et terminatur ad personam, non est verum quod essentia sit formaliter persona, quia absolutum in ratione sua formali non includit respectivum. Sed prout identitas intelligitur fundari in persona et terminari ad essentiam, sic sunt eadem formaliter (...)’

**37** For details of this view, see Mark G. Henninger, *Relations: Medieval Theories, 1250–1325* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

soul,' as such, refer only to the essence of the powers of the soul, and not to any ease or difficulty.<sup>38</sup>

Alexander's example is illuminating. The reference is to the passage in the *Categories* where Aristotle makes the claim that in order to be a runner, it is not enough that one is able to run, but that one runs with ease.<sup>39</sup> The capacity to be a runner is a standard example of powers belonging to the second species of quality. If this is the case, however, then the powers of the soul cannot belong there: to have the power of understanding implies nothing about the ease with which one understands, but only that one *has the ability* to do so.<sup>40</sup>

Like the earlier thinkers, Scotus also holds that powers are not qualities, while making a point similar to Alexander of Hales':

When it is said in the *Categories* that natural powers are in the genus of quality, I say that that power, which is in the second species of quality, is the principle of acting with ease, and is not a natural power absolutely speaking – neither [a power of] acting well, nor of [acting] badly, but some ease of using that power. (...) For someone is said to be a runner or a weightlifter because he uses the power of running with ease (...).<sup>41</sup>

The main argument is the same as Alexander's, relying on the distinction between a power and its habitual exercise. While the ease of running (or lifting weights) belongs to the second species of quality, the capacity to be able to run at all does not. The powers of the soul, such as intellect, memory, and will, are more similar to the latter, and thus they do not belong to the second species of quality either.

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**38** *Quodl.* 2, a. 1 (Paris, BN Lat. 16406, fol. 70rb): 'Nec est concedendum quod potentiae animae continentur sub hac [secunda] specie qualitatis. Quod enim dicitur quod secunda species qualitatis est naturalis potentia vel impotentia, hoc non ad essentiam potentiae refertur, sed potius ad eius facilitatem vel difficultatem, sicut ibidem patet per exempla Philosophi ibi posita; potentiae vero animae secundum hoc huiusmodi de se solum essentiam potentiarum animae nominant non facilitate vel difficultatem.'

**39** *Categories* 8, 9a14–27.

**40** Another Franciscan contemporary, Odo Rigaldus, makes the same point perhaps even more clearly: '[Potentiae] in genere substantie sunt; potentia enim naturalis uel impotentia que dicitur esse secunda species qualitatis non est potentia qua dicimur potentes sed qua dicimur facile potentes. (...) Cursor enim non dicitur qui potest currere sed qui aptus est uel facilis ad currendum; potentie autem solum dicunt quo potentes sunt et ideo substantialiter insunt, nec ad qualitatem sed ad substantiam reducuntur.' *Quaestio disputata*, 'Utrum anima sit sue potentie uel non' (Toulouse 737, fol. 243ra), quoted in Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1948), p. 496.

**41** *Rep.* II, d. 16, q. un., n. 20 (ed. Wadding, vol. 11/1, p. 349): 'Cum igitur dicatur in Praedicamentis quod sunt potentiae naturales in genere qualitatis, dico quod ista potentia, quae est in secunda specie qualitatis, est principium faciliter agendi et non est potentia naturalis absolute, neque ad bene agendum, neque ad male, sed quaedam facilitas ad utendum illa potentia. (...) Nam secundum istam dicitur aliquis cursor, vel pugillator, quia faciliter utitur potentia currendi, et sic agilitas et ingeniositas sunt tales potentiae in secunda specie qualitatis.'

All in all, according to these authors, while the powers of the soul are not substances since they are not absolute things but relate the soul to the objects of its operations, nevertheless, they are not accidents either. In particular, they do not belong to the second species of quality.

One may wonder here why there is so much focus on the second species of quality, when the main claim is not that our powers do not belong in that species, but more generally that they are not accidents. Especially, since these thinkers emphasize the relational characteristics of the powers – understanding, for example, is what relates the soul to the true – it may seem strange that there is no attempt to show that our powers are not relations.

In Rufus' case, the answer is that strictly speaking, our powers are not relations, but rather the soul itself as it is related to the true and the good. Thus, the soul is a single essence related to diverse things by its diverse operations.<sup>42</sup> And though he sometimes speaks of relations, he almost always makes it clear that 'relations' should be understood as related things. More generally, Rufus thinks we should not be realists about the category of relations; every relation can be reduced to the things related. (He argues for this claim, for example, in the case of a coin which does not change by adding or subtracting an accident when it is related to something as its price.<sup>43</sup>)

Scotus makes a similar point about the powers that are the principles of the soul's proper operations. But rather than describing its powers just as 'substantial', he calls them formally distinct substantial perfections,<sup>44</sup> perfections,<sup>45</sup> perfections as first acts,<sup>46</sup> but also virtual perfections,<sup>47</sup> and realities.<sup>48</sup> While the ontological status of perfections is not entirely clear, as is well known, Scotus denies Rufus' claim that

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**42** SOx II, d. 24E (Balliol 62, fol. 161ra–rb): 'Nec aliquam naturam addit potentia supra essentiam animae sed relationes sui ad opera diversa [voluntatis, intellectus, et memoriae] dicuntur "potentiae diversae". Ipsa autem essentia relata est istae tres relationes. Ipsa est tria relata sive tres relationes, unica tamen essentia.'

**43** SOx I, d. 30E (Balliol 62, fol. 70va): 'Aliter forte dici potest ad principalem quaestionem quod cum dicitur "nummus est praetium et prius non fuit," nulla mutatio facta est in eo, et haec relatio nullum est accidens in ipso nummo, *sed ipsa relatio est ipse relatus.*' (Emphasis added.)

**44** Ord. I, d. 5, p. 1, q. 1. (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 4: 18).

**45** *Lectura* I, d. 3, n. 438 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 16: 399); Ord. I, d. 3, n. 580 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 3: 344); Ord. II, d. 2, nn. 320–21 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 7: 156); Ord. IV, d. 44, n. 80 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 14: 114); *Quaestiones super Libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* 4, q. 2, n. 143, ed. G. Etzkorn et al., *Opera Philosophica* 3 (St Bonaventure NY: Franciscan Institute, 1997), p. 338.

**46** Ord. I, d. 3, n. 580 (ed. C. Scot, *Opera Omnia* 3: 343); *Rep.* 1 A, d. 3, n. 104 (ed. and tr. Wolter and Bychkov, vol. 1, p. 245).

**47** *Rep.* 1 A, d. 33, n. 34 (ed. and tr. Wolter and Bychkov, vol. 2, pp. 319–20).

**48** Ord. 1, d. 3, n. 580 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 3: 344).

relations can be reduced to their foundations and terms,<sup>49</sup> and indeed he regards relations as having an ontological standing like that of things in the other non-absolute categories. That means, however, that if the powers of the soul were relations, they would have to be really distinct from one another and from the soul also – a view that Scotus has already ruled out. As Scotus also argues, primarily against Henry of Ghent’s position, relations as such cannot be the *per se* principles of operations, and that is precisely what we are interested in now – the principles of thinking, willing, and remembering.<sup>50</sup>

Thus, regardless of the difference concerning the ontological status of relations, our Franciscan thinkers agree that the powers of the soul are not accidents, but they are not substances either, strictly speaking.

## Powers as Virtual Parts

The powers of the soul are neither identical to the soul itself, nor different from it; they are neither substances nor accidents. What *are* they then? According to our authors, they are *virtual parts* of the soul.

According to Alexander of Hales, Rufus, and Scotus, there is a specific kind of containment relation that obtains between the soul and its powers, which containment – call it ‘virtual containment’ – is distinguished from the sense in which *integral parts* or *essential parts* are contained in a whole. A house has its walls as integral parts, which means that the walls, themselves things, actually make up the house; the syllable *ba* has the letters *b* and *a* as integral parts, which make up the syllable. Body and soul are essential parts of a human being, or, according to most medieval theories of mixture, the elements are essential parts of mixts.<sup>51</sup> Virtual parts, however, are distinguished from both of these kinds of parts.

We can find the roots of the notion of virtual containment both in the Neoplatonic and in the Aristotelian tradition, as is often the case in discussions of efficient cau-

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49 For a comprehensive overview of Scotus’ realist view of the ten categories, see Giorgio Pini, ‘Scotus’s Realist Conception of the Categories: His Legacy to Late Medieval Debates,’ *Vivarium* 43 (2005), pp. 63–110.

50 *Rep.* II, d. 16, q. un., nn. 11–13 (ed. Wadding, vol. 11/1, p. 347). As at n. 41 above.

51 How exactly the elements make up material things was a vexed issue throughout medieval philosophy. For some recent literature, see Rega Wood and Michael Weisberg, ‘Interpreting Aristotle on Mixture: Problems About Elemental Composition from Philoponus to Cooper,’ *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 35 (2004), pp. 681–706; Lucian Petrescu, ‘John Duns Scotus and the Ontology of Mixture,’ *Res Philosophica* 91 (2014), pp. 315–37; William O. Duba, ‘Franciscan Mixtures: William of Brienne on the Elements,’ in *Materia: Nouvelles Perspectives de Recherche Dans La Pensée et La Culture Médiévales (Xiiie–Xvie Siècles)*, ed. Tiziana Suarez-Nani and Agostino Paravicini Bagliani (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2017), pp. 123–49 (the latter two studies considering some later Franciscans). For the start of the discussion, see Anneliese Maier, *An Der Grenze von Scholastik und Naturwissenschaft* (Essen: Essener Verlagsanstalt, 1943).



sation. Pseudo-Dionysius already illustrates the notion in both causal and non-causal contexts. As he explains, the single sun is a principle and cause of all living things, as it renews them, nourishes them, and makes them grow; thus, all living things in some way, virtually and unitively, pre-exist in the sun as in a universal cause.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, all the numbers pre-exist, unitively, in the number one (which was regarded, both in the Platonic and in the Aristotelian tradition, as the principle of all the numbers).<sup>53</sup> The perhaps most illuminating example Pseudo-Dionysius uses is the radii of a circle being unitively contained in its center. The center point, while indivisibly one, contains, virtually, the multiplicity of straight lines passing through it.<sup>54</sup>

Similar considerations were employed by Aristotelians. According to a broadly speaking Aristotelian theory of causation, causes and effects are similar: fire produces heat, which heat resembles the fire. However, as was recognized very early, this similarity cannot always be construed simply; as the ancient commentators noted already, a murderer cannot be dead (let alone *more* dead) than their victim!<sup>55</sup> To solve this apparent difficulty, authors often characterized such cases by saying that the effect is contained in its cause *virtually*. As Aquinas later explains, every effect is vir-

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52 *Explanatio in libros Dionysii de divinis nominibus*, Latin trans. Thomas Gallus, ed. D. A. Lawell (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), c. 5, §6, p. 344: ‘Et hoc est: NON IGITUR EST INCONVENIENS, immo congruum et utile, nos ASCENDENTES AD CAUSAM OMNIVM EX OBSCVRIS IMAGINIBVS creaturarum (supra 4a: “bonum super solem sicut super obscuram imaginem etc.”; AI 2b: “est enim super omnem etc.”), CONTEMPLARI OMNIA ET, etiam, SIBI INVICEM CONTRARIA, que nihilominus in summo simplici bono uniuntur (supra 4 l: “omnis statio etc. usque: in pulcro et bono EST”), VNIFORMITER ET VNITIVE, indifferenter et simpliciter, IN CAUSA OMNIVM omnia simpliciter continente.’ By the time of our early Franciscans, Pseudo-Dionysius’ works were available in several different translations by Johannes Scottus Eriugena, Thomas Gallus, John Sarrazin, and Grosseteste. (See, for example, Gioacchino Curiello, “‘Alia translatio melior est’: Albert the Great and the Latin Translations of the Corpus Dionysiacum,” *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofia medievale* 24 [2013], pp. 121–51). It is unclear to us what translation our Franciscans used. And though all these translations use the word ‘unitive’ in the examples that follow, our Franciscans, with the exception of Scotus, do not; and indeed, Alexander does not seem to cite Ps.-Dionysius at all.

53 *De divinis nominibus*, trans. Gallus, ed. Lawell, c. 5, § 6, p. 341: ‘ETENIM IN VNITATE originaliter PREEXISTIT OMNIS NVMERVS VNIFORMITER, id est indifferenter, eque maior et minor, ET VNITAS, que simplex est et indiuisibilis, HABET originaliter IN SE OMNEM NVMERVM (omnes enim numeri originaliter fluunt ab unitate) SINGVLARITER, id est unitiue et simpliciter.’

54 *De divinis nominibus*, trans. Gallus, ed. Lawell, c. 5, § 6, p. 342: ‘ET IN CENTRO (EXEMPLIFICAT de lineis in centro unitis) ET OMNES LINEE CIRCULI COEXTITERVNT SECUNDVM VNAM, id est simplicem, VNITIONEM IN CENTRO, in quo omnes ille linee terminantur et uniuntur et a quo omnes fluunt; ET SIGNVM, id est centrum, in quod omnes linee diriguntur sicut sagitte in signum, HABET OMNES LINEAS circuli sui VNITAS VNIFORMITER, id est omnino indifferenter, IN SE IPSO in cuius simplicitate omnes terminantur; VNITAS dico ET AD SE INVICEM ET AD VNVM suum PRINCIPIVM, id est ipsum centrum a quo fluunt.’

55 Originally in Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, trans. Jonathan Barnes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 104. Cited by Stephen Makin, ‘An Ancient Principle about Causation,’ *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, New Series* 91 (1990), p. 136 in pp. 135–52.

tually contained in all its higher causes, and ultimately in the first cause, God.<sup>56</sup> In non-causal contexts, we can say that a genus contains all its species virtually, and in a syllogism, the premises virtually contain the conclusion.

Although there is little evidence of influence in Alexander of Hales himself, Rufus and the authors of the *Summa Halesiana* seem to be influenced by both of these traditions. The authors of the *Summa*, for example, seem to be fond of the Ps.-Dionysian example of the point at the center of the circle. Regarding parts, they distinguish five kinds of proper parts: 1. integral parts divide quantity; 2. numerical parts that can be regarded as part of a larger number; 3. form and matter as essential parts; 4. parts that divide the definition; and 5. non quantitative parts that divide form. Virtual or potential parts are not explicitly listed, though they can be reduced to the fifth category, and though they compose a substance, they do so only broadly speaking, because unlike in usual part-whole composition, a virtual whole does not derive its being from its parts.<sup>57</sup>

Scotus also relies on both the Dionysian and the Aristotelian notions,<sup>58</sup> and posits a specific relation he calls ‘unitive containment’, which appears in some (but not all) respects similar to the more traditional virtual containment. As he describes this kind of containment,

The word ‘unitively’ includes some kind of distinction of the contained things, which suffices to become a union, and nevertheless it is such a union that is contrary to any composition and ag-

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<sup>56</sup> Aquinas, *Super librum De causis expositio*, ed. H.D. Saffrey, O.P. (Paris: Vrin, 2002), prop. 24, pp. 120–23.

<sup>57</sup> *SH* II, In1, Tr2, Q2, Ti2, M2, C2 (n. 58), pp. 72–73: ‘Est enim compositio materiae et formae (...) est iterum compositio ex substantia et suis potentiis. [A]ttendendum est quod quaedam dicitur compositio non proprie, ubi totum non trahit esse ab ipsis quae dicuntur partes, sed magis e converso, sicut est ubi est totum potentiale. Partes enim potentiales plus trahunt esse a toto quam e converso. (...) Dicitur enim pars a Philosopho uno modo, in quo possibile est quantitatem dividi quoquo modo: et secundum hunc modum dicuntur partes integrales et partes quantitativae. Alio vero modo dicitur pars quod numerat totum vel quod cum alio constituit illud numeratum. (...) Dicuntur etiam partes, in quae dividitur aliquid, sicut sunt forma et materia. (...) Praeter hos etiam modos dicitur illud pars, in quo possibile est formam dividi absque quantitate, secundum quod species dicuntur partes generis, non quia ex illis componitur. Similiter ad hunc modum possunt reduci partes virtuales: non enim ex illis componitur substantia (...).’

<sup>58</sup> He explicitly cites Dionysius’ pertinent passage just before the *Reportatio* passage quoted below (*Rep.* II, d. 16, q. un., n. 18 [ed. Wadding, vol. 11/1, p. 348]). For virtual containment in the causal context, see, for example, *Lectura* II, d. 18, where Scotus gives the example of heat containing health virtually (heat causes health, but we would not, in itself, call it ‘healthy’). For a helpful analysis of Scotus’ notion of unitive containment, see Stephen D. Dumont, ‘The Question on Individuation in Scotus’s “Quaestiones super Metaphysicam”,’ in *Via Scoti: Methodologica ad mentem Joannis Duns Scoti*, ed. L. Sileo (Rome: Edizioni Antonianum, 1995), pp. 193–227, esp. pp. 213–17. The suggestion that Scotus’ notion of unitive containment derives from Pseudo-Dionysius was made earlier by Jan Aertsen, ‘Being and One: The Doctrine of the Convertible Transcendentals in Duns Scotus,’ *Franciscan Studies* 56 (2015), p. 62 in pp. 47–64, and by Van den Bercken, ‘John Duns Scotus in Two Minds,’ p. 211.

gregation of distinct things; this cannot be unless we posit a formal non-identity with real identity.<sup>59</sup>

Thus, it seems that we have unitive containment when we have several things that are only formally distinct, which, consequently, do not compose an aggregate but are united in a more simple unity.<sup>60</sup>

Scotus elaborates on this meaning of ‘unitive containment’ in the *Reportatio*, where he also gives some examples:

Unitive containment is twofold. In one mode as an inferior contains its essential superiors, and there the contained things are of the essence of the container (...) as sensible quality and quality (...) are unitively contained in whiteness. The other is the unitive containment when the subject unitively contains some things that are as it were [its] passions, just as the passions of being are not different things from being, because whenever being is determined, it is a true and good being.<sup>61</sup>

According to this passage, unitive containment can go both ways. In one sense, the lower can virtually contain all the higher, as whiteness contains its proximate genus as well as all the more universal genera on the Porphyrian tree. The more relevant meaning for our present question, however, is exemplified by the way passions pertain to being; as Scotus elaborates, this relation is that of the transcendentals mutually containing one another. They have the same extension (that is why they are transcendentals; everything that exists is both true and good), and consequently are one in that sense, nevertheless, they are not formally the same, since they do not have the same quidditative definition.

According to our Franciscan authors, the soul–powers relationship shares some characteristics with the above examples. In this case too, the virtual whole is common by predication, and has only one essence to which its diverse powers pertain, actually and potentially – and so it is not composed of multiple substances, even though in some sense, the powers are its parts.

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59 *Ord. IV*, d. 46, n. 47 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 14: 217): ‘Hoc ergo vocabulum “unitive” includit aliqualem distinctionem contentorum quae sufficit ad unionem, et tamen talem unionem qua repugnat omni compositioni et aggregationi distinctorum; hoc non potest esse nisi ponatur non-identitas formalis cum identitate reali.’

60 Scotus distinguishes various strengths of unity in *Lectura I*, d. 2, pars 2, q. 1–4, n. 275, Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 16: 216; cf. Van den Brecken, ‘John Duns Scotus in Two Minds,’ p. 223.

61 *Rep. II*, d. 16, q. un., n. 18 (ed. Wadding, vol. 11/1, p. 348): ‘Est ergo continentia unitiva duplex. Vno modo sicut inferius continet superiora essentialia, et ibi contenta sunt de essentia continentis, sicut eadem est realitas a qua accipitur differentia in albedine et a qua genus proximum, ut color et qualitas sensibilis et qualitas et quamquam essent res alie unitive continerentur in albedine. Alia est continentia unitiva, quando subiectum unitive continet aliqua que sunt quasi passionem, sicut passionem entis non sunt res alia ab ente, quia quandocumque determinatur ipsa res, est ens, vera et bona (...).’ See also *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis IV*, q. 2, nn. 173–74, ed. G. Etzkorn et al., 1997, *Opera Philosophica* 3: 362.

That the powers of the soul are virtual parts of the soul, is stated often in the *Summa Halesiana*.<sup>62</sup> Right after the *Summa* makes the above-mentioned distinction between five kinds of parts, it distinguishes between part-whole relationships in which the whole derives its being from that of its parts (such as quantitative and integral parts), and those in which the parts derive their being from the whole (such as potential or virtual parts). Since the powers of the soul draw their being from the soul rather than the converse, they do not actualize the soul. Hence we read: ‘a substance, which has virtual parts, is not composed of these virtual parts, as the substance of the soul is not composed of memory, intellect, and will.’<sup>63</sup> And somewhat later also: ‘Those are called properly virtual parts, which come together in one substance of the soul, and differ by acts that are specifically different.’<sup>64</sup>

Rufus agrees with most of what Alexander says about the soul having virtual parts:

The soul itself is similar to a genus, as Boethius says, but is not properly a genus, but a virtual whole and has three virtual parts, namely the aforesaid powers. Therefore, when it is asked, whether the powers of the soul are the soul itself, one can say that if one wants to, because the part of the soul is not an essential part, nor integral, but a qualitative or virtual part; it is also, as was said, the principle operating the proper operations of the soul.<sup>65</sup>

According to Rufus, the soul is in one way similar to a genus: just as a genus contains all its species virtually, so the soul contains all its powers virtually. Again, these virtual parts are parts in a special way. They are neither integral parts like the letters that bring a syllable into being, nor essential such as form that actualizes matter.

While according to Alexander and Rufus, the powers are virtual parts of the soul, Scotus spells out the same idea in terms of unitive containment. Right after explaining in the above quoted *Reportatio* passage what he means by that kind of containment, he applies the notion to the powers of the soul:

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<sup>62</sup> John of La Rochelle agrees that the soul is a virtual whole composed of parts. See his *Summa de anima*, ed. Jacques Guy Bougerol (Paris: Vrin, 1995), 24, pp. 183–84.

<sup>63</sup> *SH* II, In1, Tr2, Q2, Ti2, M2, C2 (n. 58), p. 73: ‘Non enim ex illis [partibus virtualis] componitur substantia, cuius sunt partes virtuales, ut substantia animae non componitur ex memoria, intelligentia et voluntate.’ See also note 57.

<sup>64</sup> *SH* II, In4, Tr2, S2, Q1, C2, Ar2 (n. 351), p. 427: ‘Hae proprie dicunt partes virtuales, quae in una substantia animae conveniunt et differunt per actus differentes in specie.’

<sup>65</sup> *SOx* I, d. 1C (Balliol 62, fol. 14va): ‘Revera anima valde similis generi est, sicut vult Boethius, nec tamen proprie genus est, sed totum virtuale et partes virtuales habet tres, scilicet potentias dictas. Unde cum quaeritur: potentia animae quid ipsius animae est? Dicatur si placet, quia pars animae est, non pars essentialis, nec integralis, sed pars qualitativa seu virtualis, est etiam, ut dictum est, principium operandi operationes animae proprias.’

Therefore, the principle of willing and of understanding is immediate in the second instant of nature, and those principles are unitively in the essence of the soul, which is in the first instant of nature.<sup>66</sup>

Scotus is explicitly claiming here that the soul contains its powers unitively; and when he points out that the soul is conceptually prior to its powers (in the first, not the second instant of nature), he seems to be making a point similar to the *Summa*'s, namely that the powers derive their being from the soul and not vice versa.

We can find the same claim, perhaps more clearly, in the *Ordinatio*, where Scotus also explains how different things can unitively contain something that is formally identical:

But that is very well possible, that the containing things differ in species and nevertheless the contained things do not differ in species. (...) For the unity of a stone (which is not really distinct from the stone [itself]) and the unity of a human (which is the same in reality as the human) are not distinguished in species as the man and the stone are; rather, this and that unity seem to differ only in number. And this is also shown in another way: because just as a thing that is identically the same can contain those in which there is a formal or specific distinction (*just as the same soul contains the intellectual and sensitive perfections, so that they are formally distinct as if they were two things*), so can, in the other way, something formally indistinct be contained by distinct things.<sup>67</sup>

In this passage, Scotus uses the example of the soul and its powers to illustrate a more general point about unitive containment. Formally distinct things (such as the powers) can be unitively contained in one substance (the soul), while it can also occur that formally the same thing (such as transcendental oneness) is contained by numerically and specifically distinct things (a stone and a human). This also indicates that for Scotus, while unitive containment and formal distinction are strongly related concepts, they are not the same.

All in all, it seems that Scotus and his Franciscan predecessors explain in similar ways what it means to say that the powers of the soul are formally distinct yet numerically identical. They agree that the powers of the soul pertain to a single life and so cannot be numerically multiple, and yet, we must be able to distinguish and enumerate them somehow. They think that we can make this distinction

<sup>66</sup> *Rep.* II, d. 16, q. 1, n. 18 (ed. Wadding, vol. 11/1, p. 348): 'Principium igitur volendi et intelligendi immediatum est in secundo instanti naturae, et illa principia sunt unitive in essentia animae quae est in primo instanti naturae.'

<sup>67</sup> *Ord.* II, d. 2, nn. 320–21 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 7: 156): 'Istud autem est bene possibile, quod continentia aliqua differant specie et tamen contenta non differant specie. (...) Unitas enim lapidis (quae non est aliud realiter a lapide) et unitas hominis (quae est eadem realiter homini) non ita distinguuntur specie sicut homo et lapis; immo haec unitas et illa videntur tantum differre numero. Hoc etiam declaratur per aliud: quia sicut in eodem possunt contineri per identitatem illa quorum est distinctio formalis quasi specifica (*sicut in eadem anima includuntur perfectiones intellectivae et sensitivae, ita quod sunt distinctae formaliter sicut si essent duae res*), ita e converso potest aliquid "indistinctum formaliter" contineri in distinctis.' (Emphasis added.)

based on the operation of these powers, and accommodate thereby both Augustine's argument for the identity thesis, as well as the considerations for the distinction thesis. They also agree that the powers of the soul are not absolute things, and yet they are not accidents in the same way as, for instance, qualities are. Finally, they posit some kind of virtual containment relation between the soul and its powers. These considerations recur in a strikingly similar way in Alexander of Hales, Rufus, and Scotus, even though it is only in Rufus and Scotus that we find the view expressed with the phrase 'formal predication'. This provides further support for Fr Gedeon's discovery that Scotus' 'ancient doctor' is indeed Rufus.

## Objections and Replies

There are a few objections that we need to consider before we close this paper. While we have argued that Rufus is a forerunner of Scotus' notion of formal distinction, and that he is the 'ancient doctor' mentioned by Scotus, these objections aim to question this conclusion.

First, while Scotus talks about identity (or lack thereof), Rufus most often talks about non-otherness. We think, however, that this terminological difference is not significant, and that Rufus' motivation for using the phrase 'non aliud' was that it was the same phrase that had been used by some earlier theologians.

For instance, Hugh of St-Victor writes in the *Didascalion*, about the soul and its powers:

For neither can we say that reason alone, or wrath alone, or desire alone is the third part of the soul. For [reason] is not other (*nec aliud*) or less than the soul in substance. (...) Nor is desire other or less than the soul, but rather to one and the same substance different names are assigned in accordance with its different powers.<sup>68</sup>

Rufus' expression *non aliud* thus seems to be picking up on Hugh's *nec aliud*, by which he describes how the powers of the soul are not other than the soul itself. The same phrase already occurs in Augustine's *De civitate Dei*,<sup>69</sup> and in a sermon of a 12th-century thinker, Isaac of Stella.<sup>70</sup>

Since these earlier authorities use the phrase *non aliud* when discussing the soul, there is reason to suppose that Rufus wanted to continue the terminological tra-

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**68** *Didascalion* 2.5 (PL 176:754): 'Neque enim vel rationem solam, vel iram solam, vel concupiscentiam solam tertiam partem animae dicere possumus: cum nec aliud, nec minus sit in substantia ratio quam anima, (...) nec aliud, nec minus concupiscentia quam anima, sed una eademque substantia, secundum diversas potentias suas diversa sortitur vocabula.'

**69** Augustine, *De civitate Dei* VIII, c. 6, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 47:223: 'Nec aliud illi est uiuens, aliud intelligere, quasi possit uiuere non intelligens.'

**70** Isaac of Stella, *Sermo* 21 (PL 194:1758): 'Unde ab eo, quod est, nec majus, nec minus, nec aliud, nec aliter esse potest.'

dition. Consequently, in Rufus' formulation, the expression is most often *non aliud* and not formulated in terms of identity as in Scotus; nevertheless, this does not result in significant philosophical difference between the two thinkers. As the examples of the earlier theologians show, there is also good reason to think that the expression *nec aliud* stems primarily from theological rather than philosophical concerns; it is theologically safer to say that the persons are not other than the essence whose persons they are than to posit simple identity. And once the case is made for the Trinity, due to the soul's analogous nature, there is some philosophical pressure to do the same when discussing the latter.

Second, also a terminological concern, while Scotus most often refers to formal distinction, Rufus talks about formal predication. However, just as in the case of *non aliud* versus *identitas*, it seems that the terminological difference does not signal a philosophical one.

First, it should be noted that Scotus himself frequently uses the phrase 'formal predication'. While most of these occur in trinitarian contexts,<sup>71</sup> it also has a more general use,<sup>72</sup> and thus the phrase itself signals a common thread linking Scotus and his Franciscan predecessors, as our very first Scotus quotation in this paper already indicates.

Second, as is clear in Scotus, we can talk about formal identity when the definition of one thing includes the other. As he explains it in the *Reportatio*,

On the contrary, for something to be 'formally such' or [simply] 'formally' in another means for it to be in it actually, determinately and distinctly, as well as according to its quidditative principle, apart from every act of any relating potency. (...) Indeed, to be formally such, or to be formally in something else, or to be formally identical with something means to belong to its *per se* and primary notion. For example, 'animal' belongs to the *per se* and primary notion of 'man'. But the will is not identical with the essence in this sense: this is evident, because if each is defined, neither would end up in the definition of the other, and consequently, neither is formally identical with the other.<sup>73</sup>

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71 See, for example, *Lectura I*, d. 4, q. 1 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 16: 408–9): 'Unde tres personae includunt aliquid – ut relationem – quod non est formaliter essentia, et ideo praedicando essentiam in quantum essentia, de eis non est praedicatio formalis sed praedicatio per identitatem.' *Ord. I*, d. 4, p. 2, q. 1 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 4: 4): "Deus est Pater" etc. habet aliquam veritatem – loquendo de praedicatione formali – quam non habet ista "deitas est Pater" etc.'

72 For example *Lectura I*, d. 8, q. 4 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 17: 47): 'Praedicatio in abstracto non est vera nisi sit per se primo modo; sed ubi est propositio per se primo modo, ibi est praedicatio formalis, ita quod formaliter subiectum includit praedicatum.'

73 *Rep. IA*, d. 45, q. 2, nn. 20–21 (ed. and tr. Wolter and Bychkov, vol. 2, pp. 544–45): 'Dico hoc esse "tale formaliter" et esse "formaliter" in alio, quod est in eo actualiter, determinate et distincte, et secundum suam rationem quidditativam, circumscripto omni actu cuiuslibet potentiae comparativae. (...) Esse formaliter tale, vel esse in alio formaliter, vel esse idem alicui formaliter, est ipsum esse de per se et primo intellectu eius, ut animal est de per se et primo intellectu hominis. Sed sic non est voluntas eadem essentiae: patet, quia si utrumque defineretur, neutrum caderet in definitione alterius, et per consequens neutrum est idem alteri formaliter.'



Scotus' point is clear, and he makes it similarly in the *Ordinatio* and in the *Lectura* as well.<sup>74</sup> If the quidditative definition of a thing includes another, then we can say that one is in the other formally speaking. In this sense, whiteness is formally in color, since we cannot define 'whiteness' without mentioning 'color'. And if two things have the same quidditative definition altogether, then they are formally identical. Formal distinction, on the other hand, is the lack of formal identity; two things are formally distinct if the definition of one does not contain the other.

As was seen above, Rufus also accepts this sense of formal distinction. Therefore, even though Rufus and Scotus use slightly different terminology, they agree that to differ formally is to differ in the things' *ratio formalis*, and that this is precisely the way in which the soul and its powers differ. Thus, again, the terminological difference does not constitute a philosophical one.

Finally, as we have seen, while Rufus and Alexander primarily describe the parts of the soul as virtual parts, Scotus describes them, most often, as being unitively contained in the soul. While like virtual containment, unitative containment presupposes formal distinction, it is not obvious that the two notions are identical.

One thing to notice, however, is that Scotus also uses the language of virtual parts, even if less frequently than that of unitive containment. And when he does, he seems to treat them as analogous, as we find, for instance, in the *Reportatio*:

Dionysius says that God is whole, *containing all perfection unitively*, to which the soul is likened, so that its correlative in this way is not a part but something of a whole. (...) But the whole in the divine is similar to a *virtual whole* in creatures; such a whole is in the soul as regards its powers.<sup>75</sup>

Thus, here Scotus explains the usual analogy between God and the soul in terms of both unitive containment and virtual parts. God and the soul are both wholes; God contains all perfections unitively, while the soul contains all its powers virtually.

Therefore, even though we can only say this tentatively at this point, it seems that the difference between unitive containment and virtual parts may be mostly a difference in emphasis: the expression 'unitive containment' emphasizes that the containing thing is truly one and a whole, while 'virtual parts' explain how such a thing can still have what very much look like parts. If this is correct, then again, the difference between Scotus and his predecessors regarding virtual parts vs. unitive containment is more terminological than philosophical.

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<sup>74</sup> *Ord.* I, d. 2, p. 2, q. 1–4, n. 403 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 2: 356–57): 'Voco autem identitatem formalem, ubi illud quod dicitur sic idem, includit illud cui sic est idem, in ratione sua formali quidditativa et per se primo modo.' See also *Lectura* I, d. 2, p. 3, q. 1–4, n. 275 (ed. Commissio Scotistica, *Opera Omnia* 16: 216).

<sup>75</sup> *Rep.* IA, d. 19, nn. 108–9 (ed. and tr. Wolter and Bychkov, vol. 1, p. 561): 'Dicit Dionysius quod Deus est totum, continens omnem perfectionem unitive, cui assimilatur anima, ut sic correlativum eius non sit pars, sed aliquid totius. (...) Assimilatur autem totum in divinis toti virtuali in creaturis, quale totum est in anima respectu suarum potentiarum.' (Emphasis added.)

## Concluding Remarks

As can be seen from all the above, Scotus' characterization of the formal distinction closely resembles Rufus' description, and there is every reason to suppose that when Scotus mentioned the 'ancient doctor', he had Rufus in mind. We have also shown how the distinction was used in describing the relation between the soul and its powers. The way Scotus treats these questions is similar to the way his Franciscan predecessors had done, which provides further evidence that Rufus' and Scotus' use of the distinction are closely related. We have also discussed some possible objections that may arise concerning our treatment of these issues.

Overall, we have seen that there is real continuity in the Franciscan tradition from Alexander of Hales to John Duns Scotus. All these thinkers present an Augustinian description of the human soul, which emphasizes the identity of the soul and its powers. They seek to justify this picture in a variety of ways, starting with Alexander's claim that the soul and its powers are substantially but not essentially the same, and terminating with John Duns Scotus' that the soul and its powers are really the same but formally distinct. Along the way the *Summa Halesiana* endorses Alexander's claim about essential distinction, as does Richard Rufus in a qualified way – that is, provided 'essential' is understood in a quidditative or definitional sense. Strictly speaking, however, Rufus claims that the soul and its powers are distinct by formal predication, which is, as we have seen, the Franciscan position to which Scotus appeals in stating his claim that the powers of the soul are formally distinct from it.

Scotus also agrees with his Franciscan predecessors that the powers of the soul do not fall into the accidental categories, and especially not into that of the second species of quality. However, the powers are not, strictly speaking, substances either; as the *Summa Halesiana* describes them, they are 'substantial' but not 'substance'.

As we have shown, there is strong evidence for a continuous tradition from Alexander, through the *Summa Halesiana* and Rufus, to Scotus. If we wished to describe the continuity in the strongest terms, we might claim that just as Rufus' difference by formal predication can be considered a gloss on Alexander's essential difference, so also Scotus' discussion of formal distinction is just a further development of Rufus' difference by formal predication. But merely to state this claim shows how misleading it is. Each of these thinkers made an important and importantly distinct contribution to the tradition of describing the sameness and difference of the soul and its powers. And the differences are important. For example, on the one hand, Rufus thinks that the powers of the soul are virtual parts of the soul, and are formally distinct from it, which may indicate that for him, the concepts of formal distinction and virtual containment are closely connected. As it has been already noted, however, this is not obviously the case in Scotus.<sup>76</sup> While we have suggested that the differ-

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<sup>76</sup> See the text quoted in n. 76 above. For the defense of the claim that the two notions are different,

ence between these notions may be mostly a difference in emphasis, Scotus clearly tends to use one rather than the other in certain contexts, as can be especially seen in his various discussions of the principle of identity. Regarding the bigger picture, there may also be a difference in the way Scotus and the earlier authors conceive of the ontological status of the powers. Investigating the nature and extent of this difference may provide fertile ground for further research. Most generally, of course, this is an interesting and important instance of thoughtful philosophers seeking to reconcile faculty psychology with the unity of the human soul.

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see also Giorgio Pini, 'Scotus on Individuation,' *Proceedings of the Society for Medieval Logic and Metaphysics* 5 (2005), pp. 50–69; Stephen D. Dumont, 'The Question on Individuation.'



Zita V. Toth

# ‘They Tend into Nothing by Their Own Nature’: Rufus and an Anonymous *De Generatione* Commentary on the Principles of Corruptibility

**Abstract:** In this paper, I consider Richard Rufus’ account of generation and corruption. This is a fundamental metaphysical question in the Aristotelian framework. Given that there are things that are corruptible (such as trees and cats and the human body), and things that are incorruptible (such as the celestial bodies and angels), what is it that makes one one, and the other the other? In other words, what is the ultimate explanation (in Rufus’ terminology, the principle or principles) of corruptibility and incorruptibility? Do corruptible and incorruptible things have the same principles – the same fundamental metaphysical constitution – or are their principles different? Richard Rufus was among the first to lecture on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* at the University of Paris. He addresses these questions in book 4 (Gamma), lectio 1, question 2 of his longer commentary on Aristotle’s work (the *Scriptum*), which will provide the main textual basis of this paper. The other textual basis is an anonymous commentary on Aristotle’s *On generation and corruption*, found in Oxford, Corpus Christi MS 119, whose treatment of these issues is remarkably similar to Rufus’. As I show, we can learn a great deal about Rufus’ general metaphysical commitments by looking at this particular question, especially concerning his view of prime matter and his view of the qualities of the resurrected bodies.<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

‘Now Atreyu saw what they were staring at in fascinated horror. On the far side of the field lay the Nothing.’ What fascinates the heroes and readers of Michael Ende’s fairytale,<sup>2</sup> also fascinated Richard Rufus of Cornwall (*fl.* 1231–56) and his contemporaries. Why is it that some things cease to exist, while others do not? Those things that do cease to exist, do they recede into pure nothing? What are the most basic principles of generation and corruption?

Rufus was among the first to lecture on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* at the University of Paris just after it had come out of a period in which teaching his works was ban-

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1 The quote is from Rufus’ *Lectura Oxoniensis* (hereafter *SOx*) IL.17D: ‘Ex sui natura tendunt in nihil’ (Oxford, Balliol College, 62, fol. 145va). I am grateful to Rega Wood for providing me with a transcription of this text.

2 Michael Ende, *The Neverending Story*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Puffin Books, 2018), p. 139.

ned.<sup>3</sup> He wrote two commentaries on the work: a shorter one (*Memoriale quaestionum in Metaphysicam Aristotelis*), which is the first known Western commentary on it, and a longer one (*Scriptum super Metaphysicam*), where Rufus treats some central issues in much more detail. It is part of this latter that provides the textual basis of the present paper.

I will focus on Rufus' account of generability and corruptibility, or as he puts it, the principles of corruptible and incorruptible things, which he addresses in book 4 (*Gamma*), lectio 1, question 2 of the *Scriptum*. We need not recapitulate the historical debates that concern the exact date and place of composition of this work;<sup>4</sup> its authenticity is uncontested, and while I will also occasionally rely on some for which this is not the case,<sup>5</sup> establishing authorship will not be my aim in this paper.

The other textual basis of the paper is an anonymous commentary on Aristotle's *On generation and corruption*, found in Oxford, Corpus Christi MS 119.<sup>6</sup> CC119 is a composite manuscript, written around 1250. The first 10 folios (1ra-10vb) contain the anonymous commentary on Aristotle's *On generation and corruption*; the next quires contain Kilwardby's commentary on the Priscianus minor (fols. 11–124).<sup>7</sup> It also contains a commentary on the *De interpretatione*<sup>8</sup> written by Kilwardby.

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**3** For an introduction on the life and works of Rufus, see Rega Wood, 'Richard Rufus of Cornwall,' in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jorge J.E. Gracia and Timothy B. Noone (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 579–87.

**4** In short, while the authenticity of the *Scriptum* is uncontested, it has been questioned whether Rufus wrote it while in Paris (which would put the date of authorship earlier) or while in Oxford as a Franciscan. For the former claim, see Rega Wood, 'The Earliest Known Surviving Western Medieval Metaphysics Commentary,' *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 7 (1998), pp. 39–49. For the latter, see Timothy B. Noone, 'Richard Rufus on Cornwall and the Authorship of the "Scriptum Super Metaphysicam",' *Franciscan Studies* 49 (1989), pp. 55–91, and Timothy B. Noone, 'Roger Bacon and Richard Rufus on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*: A Search for the Grounds of Disagreement,' *Vivarium* 35 (1997), pp. 251–65.

**5** For the commentary on the *Physics*, see Rega Wood, 'Richard Rufus of Cornwall and Aristotle's *Physics*,' *Franciscan Studies* 52 (1992), pp. 247–81. See also Silvia Donati, 'The Anonymous Commentary on the *Physics* in Erfurt, Cod. Amplon. Q. 312 and Richard Rufus of Cornwall,' *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 72 (2005), pp. 232–362, and Rega Wood, 'The Works of Richard Rufus of Cornwall: The State of the Question in 2009,' *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 76 (2009), pp. 1–73, for further discussion.

**6** For a description and brief analysis of the contents of CC119, see Jennifer R. Ottman, 'Anonymous Corpus Christi, in *Aristotelis de Generatione et Corruptione*, Oxford, Corpus Christi Cod. 119,' <http://rrp.stanford.edu/OttmanCorpusChristi119DGen.shtml>, accessed 15 April 2021.

**7** See *A Companion to the Philosophy of Robert Kilwardby*, ed. Paul Thom and Henrik Lagerlund (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 74; see also Mary Sirridge, 'Robert Kilwardby: Figurative Constructions and the Limits of Grammar,' in *De Ortu Grammaticae: Studies in Medieval Grammar and Linguistic Theory in Memory of Jan Pinborg*, ed. G.L. Bursill-Hall, Sten Ebbesen, and Konrad Koerner (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1990), pp. 321–38, n. 4.

**8** See Sten Ebbesen, *Greek-Latin Philosophical Interaction: Collected Essays of Sten Ebbesen, Volume 1* (London: Routledge, 2017), section 2, n. 49.

As will be seen below, the anonymous author's treatment of the question of corruptibility very closely resembles Rufus' as found in the *Scriptum*. The account in CC119 contains every major claim that Rufus makes, and the arguments for these claims are also parallel to those given in Rufus' text. Sometimes CC119 elaborates more on an argument than Rufus does, and overall one may regard CC119's treatment as somewhat clearer than Rufus'. This may suggest a later writer, although I will not aim to establish that conclusion here.

The problem I will be concerned with in this paper is just one aspect of Rufus' thought: his account of generation and corruption, or more precisely, generability and corruptibility. This is a fundamental metaphysical question in the Aristotelian framework. Given that there are things that are corruptible (such as trees and cats and the human body), and things that are incorruptible (such as the celestial bodies and angels), what is it that makes one one, and the other the other? In other words, what is the ultimate explanation (in Rufus' terminology, the principle or principles) of corruptibility and incorruptibility? Do corruptible and incorruptible things have the same principles – the same fundamental metaphysical constitution – or are their principles different?

One may be tempted to think that these questions are relatively straight-forward – for instance, that it is obviously matter, or being composite of matter and form, that makes something corruptible. There are a few boundary constraints, however, that Rufus keeps in mind when answering them, which make the answers more complicated. Some of these constraints stem from philosophical, others from theological considerations to which Rufus was committed. As we will see, staying within these constraints is one of Rufus' primary aims when formulating his theory, so it will be useful to spell them out here as desiderata that the theory must satisfy.

(1) First, perhaps trivially, the account must not lead to metaphysical absurdities, and it must be consistent with our other convictions and with what we already know about the world. This is a *prima facie* obvious desideratum of any metaphysical theory, although as we will see, it is not always so easy to meet. At any rate, this first desideratum means that for instance, if an account of corruptibility resulted in the claim that an object is both corruptible and incorruptible, that would be strong evidence against the account. Again, if an account implied that the heavenly bodies are corruptible, thereby contradicting a universally held assumption of medieval cosmology; or if it implied that Sophie the cat is incorruptible, thereby contradicting our observations – again, that would be strong evidence that the account is not correct.

(2) Second, perhaps less obviously for the modern reader, the account must be able to explain, or at least be compatible with, the impassibility of the resurrected bodies of the blessed. Since this is a less familiar desideratum than the previous one, it will be worth taking a closer look at it.

Theologians thought, from early Christianity, that at some point, our bodies will be resurrected. There was a motley collection of metaphysical puzzles connected to bodily resurrection – if the resurrected bodies will be numerically identical with the current ones, will they be made out of the same matter? What about those eaten by



cannibals? And so on – but however those may be, it was taken as a theological given that the resurrected body will be a material body, consisting of roughly the same kind of matter as it consists of right now; that it will be somehow numerically identical to our present body, and will be joined to our soul.<sup>9</sup>

Apart from figuring out some of the metaphysical details of this theological outline, one question immediately arises: what will this body be like? Assuming that it will be *our* body, what characteristics will it have? Medieval theologians usually turned to Paul's first letter to the Corinthians for an initial approximation of an answer. As Paul briefly notes there, 'what is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.'<sup>10</sup>

Although Paul's description is rather vague, it was generally taken to imply that after the resurrection, although our bodies will be the same kind, they will also be quite different from what they are now. More specifically, it was believed that the bodies will be given what are called the 'four dowries': agility, subtlety, the inability to die, and the inability to suffer.

One of these characteristics, the inability to suffer (usually called *impassibility*), gave rise to a quite interesting debate in the later 13th and 14th century, having to do with the questions of how causal powers bring about their effects, and what happens when this bringing about apparently fails.<sup>11</sup> While unfortunately Rufus never seems to have written a commentary on the final part of the *Sentences* where this question

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**9** Belief in bodily resurrection is already stated in the Apostolic Creed, and the claim was repeated throughout early Christianity. That the bodies that will rise will be the same that we bear now is also a recurring theme, found in numerous early fragments of professions of faith. See, for example, Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum / Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, ed. Peter Hünermann, Robert Fastiggi, and Anne Englund Nash, 43rd ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), §§23, 72, 76, 540, 574, 797. As the Eleventh Synod of Toledo (675) formulates: 'We confess that there is a true resurrection of the flesh for all the dead. And we do not believe that we shall rise in ethereal or any other flesh, as some foolishly imagine, but *in this very flesh in which we live and are and move*' (Denzinger, *Enchiridion* §540, emphasis added). Or, as the Fourth Lateran Council puts it later (1215), 'All of them will rise again with their own bodies which they now bear (...).' The same formulation is repeated in Lyon (1274). See Denzinger, *Enchiridion* §801 and 854. See also the Synod of Constantinople (543), against what may seem as a logical view of a perfect body: 'If anyone says or holds that in resurrection the bodies of men are raised up from sleep spherical and does not agree that we are raised up from sleep upright, let him be anathema (Denzinger, *Enchiridion* §407).

**10** 1 Corinthians 15:42–44 (ESV). For a thorough discussion of various aspects of these characteristics, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), esp. chapter 6.

**11** An analysis of some of these views can be found in Thomas Jeschke, 'Per virtutem divinam assistentem: Scotus and Durandus on the Impassibility of the Glorified Bodies – Aristotelian Philosophy Revisited?' *Philosophia* 1 (2012), pp. 139–65. See also Zita V. Toth, 'Perfect Subjects, Shields, and Retractions: Three Models of Impassibility,' *Vivarium* 59 (2021), pp. 79–101.

is usually discussed,<sup>12</sup> as will be seen below, both he and the anonymous author of CC119 consider impassibility as a test case when discussing the principles of corruptibility and incorruptibility. This will mean that for Rufus, if a theory cannot account for how the glorified bodies are impassible, or would lead to the consequence that the glorified bodies are corruptible, that would be another piece of evidence that the theory is not viable.

(3) Third, another theologically-driven boundary, the account of corruptibility must be able to accommodate the assumption that contrary to the glorified bodies of the blessed, the bodies of those in hell will suffer eternally. In other words, while the bodies of the blessed and the bodies of the damned will share the eternity of their state (and hence they will both be incorruptible), the bodies of the damned will be capable of suffering, whereas those of the blessed will not.<sup>13</sup> This means that, for instance, if a theory of corruptibility implied that incorruptibility necessarily leads to impassibility and that only corruptible things can be acted on – that would be yet another piece of evidence against the theory.

(4) Finally, fourth, another meta-theoretical desideratum: the theory of corruptibility, when accounting for desiderata (2) and (3) above, should not be *ad hoc*. While *adheccity* seems to come in degrees and consequently this desideratum will be a less clear-cut guideline than the ones above, Rufus and the anonymous author are at least trying to avoid theories that could only account for the impassibility of the blessed and the passibility of the damned by, for instance, introducing some special divine action in every single case. They will also object to theories that can only respond to desiderata (2) and (3) by introducing some entirely new feature in the theory.

As we will see, Rufus and the anonymous author take these desiderata seriously. They consider multiple proposed theories of corruptibility, and reject most of them on the grounds that they fail to satisfy at least one of these desiderata. I will turn to their discussion of corruptibility shortly, but since Rufus’ account is embedded in his broader metaphysical views, it will be useful to revisit some of these views first.

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<sup>12</sup> His Oxford lectures end with book III, whereas his Paris lectures end with distinction 22 of book IV. The resurrection and its metaphysical problems are usually considered in book IV, distinctions 43–44.

<sup>13</sup> How the bodies of the damned will suffer raised a host of other issues, including whether, or how, a spiritual body can be affected by a physical fire. (Not to mention the difficulties arising from the further assumption that even the separated souls suffer in the fire of hell, before the final judgement.) For some of these difficulties, see Pasquale Porro, ‘Fisica Aristotelica E Escatologia Cristiana: Il Dolore Dell’anima Nel Dibattito Scolastico Del Xiii Secolo,’ in *Henosis Kai Philia; Unione E Amicizia: Omaggio a Francesco Romano*, ed. Maria Di Pasquale Barbanti, Giovanna R Giardina, and Paolo Mangano (Catania: CUECM, 2002), pp. 617–42; and Jeschke, ‘Per Virtutem Divinam Assistentem.’

## Some Metaphysical Background

We can only examine Rufus' general metaphysical background here rather briefly and superficially.<sup>14</sup> There are two elements of it that will play a role in Rufus' account of corruptibility: his view of substantial form, and his view of matter, especially prime matter.

### Substantial Form

Although the debate of the unicity of substantial forms is perhaps most famous for its later 13th- and 14th-century culmination,<sup>15</sup> it originates at least as early as the early 13th century.<sup>16</sup> While Callus claims that 'the real meaning of substantial form is misunderstood'<sup>17</sup> by Rufus, the case is rather that Rufus' understanding of substantial forms is somewhat unusual.

While most of the later discussion centered on the question of whether a single substance can have more than one substantial form – e.g. whether, beside the (rational) soul, the human body also possesses a substantial form of corporeity – Rufus thinks that there is not one or two, but a whole Porphyrian tree of substantial forms present in every individual, starting from the form of most general genus (the form of 'substance'), down to the most proper, individual form of the particular thing. Nevertheless, Rufus also thinks that all this multiplicity of substantial forms does not exist in the individual in full actuality.<sup>18</sup>

As this already suggests, Rufus recognizes both complete and incomplete substantial forms, where the different degrees of completeness generate a whole spectrum, and on this spectrum the incomplete forms are in potency to the more com-

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**14** An analysis of some of these views, especially as related to substantial forms, is given in Elizabeth Karger, 'Richard Rufus' Account of Substantial Transmutation,' *Medioevo* 27 (2002), pp. 165–89.

**15** For an overview of the later debates, as well as for further bibliography, see Robert Pasnau, *Metaphysical Themes, 1274–1671* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2011), chapter 24.

**16** For some background of the early part of this debate, see Daniel A. Callus, 'Two Early Oxford Masters on the Problem of Plurality of Forms: Adam of Buckfield – Richard Rufus of Cornwall,' *Revue Néo-Scholastique de Philosophie* 12 (1939), pp. 411–45, who, however, thinks that Rufus' 'philosophical contribution is not very valuable' (p. 432).

**17** Callus, 'Two Early Oxford Masters,' p. 432.

**18** For the claim that an individual possesses, in some sense, the form of the species, that of the genus, and so on up to the form of the most general genus, see his *Lectura Parisiensis* (hereafter *SPar*) II.3, and also *SOx* II.17. For the claim that there are more and less complete forms, see Richard Rufus of Cornwall, *In Pysicam Aristotelis* (hereafter *In Phys*), ed. Rega Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), VII. Although it is difficult to establish direct influence, according to James A. Weisheipl, 'Albertus Magnus and Universal Hylomorphism: Avicbron,' *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy* 10:3 (1979), pp. 239–60, these doctrines became known to the 13th-century thinkers via Avicbron's *Fons vitae* through Gundissalinus' *De anima*.

plete ones.<sup>19</sup> On one end of the spectrum, we find the substantial form of the individual substance, which is the most complete form: it is not in potency to anything else. On the other end of the spectrum, we find the form of the most general genus, which is the most incomplete form, and in potency to all its completions, that is, all the other forms under it on the Porphyrian tree. For instance, the form of substance is in potency to the form of corporeal substance *and* of incorporeal substance, and in turn, the form of corporeal substance is in potency to the form of animate things and that of inanimate things. The form of animate things, in turn, is in potency to the form of mammals, and so on, all the way down, let us say, to the form of Sophie, an individual cat.

When an incomplete form evolves into a more complete form, it becomes identical with it – even though this identity is only partial. In the above example, the form of substance *becomes* the form of corporeal substance and, in turn, the form of mammal, and so on. But, as Rufus points out, positing full identity in this case would lead to transitivity problems: if the form of substance is identical with the form of Sophie the cat, *and* it is also identical, for the same reason, with the form of Fido the dog, then – since identity is transitive – the form of Sophie would also be identical with the form of Fido, which is of course not the case. Therefore, Rufus thinks that the identity between more and less complete forms is only partial, which can avoid the transitivity-problem.<sup>20</sup>

One consequence of this view is Rufus’ general account of generation and corruption, which, as Elizabeth Karger has argued, is able to accommodate both Aristotle’s most fundamental metaphysical commitments as well as Augustine’s notion of

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**19** Rufus, *In Phys* VII.2.3 (ed. Wood, pp. 214–15): ‘Dicendum ut mihi videtur sic: “Aliquid” dicit completum, et propterea “aliquid” in genere essentiae dicit completam essentiam. Et dicendum quod genus non est aliquid – id est, non est una essentia completa – sed genus est in se una essentia incompleta. Sed eo modo quo est essentia completa, et hoc est secundum potentiam, est multae essentiae. Et hoc est quod dicitur, genus est idem per essentiam unam omnia diversa – id est, omnes species differentes secundum essentiam. Ita ergo possumus videre quod licet genus non sit aliquid unum, non tamen est aequivocatum penitus, nec tamen ita univocum sicut species specialissima, quae est essentia completa et non est in potentia essentiae diversae nisi numero tantum.’

**20** Rufus, *In Phys* VII.2.4 (ed. Wood, p. 215): ‘Dicendum quod non sequitur si A et B sint idem ipsi C quod est idem – si fuerit, dico, incompletum et illa completa – quod sint idem inter se. Ita enim est in incompletis quae sunt in potentia activa quod unum incompletum est duo completa in potentia. Dico potentiam activam quando hoc est in potentia respectu illius quod hoc fiat hoc vel cedat in hoc. Exemplum de hoc possumus habere de puncto in medio lineae super quem, si dividatur linea, ille qui prius fuit unus numero fit duo numero. Et utrumque illorum duorum est idem numero cum puncto praecedente, diversa tamen inter se numero, et hoc est quia ille punctus praecedens ante divisionem non fuit completus sed fuit in potentia, ita quod fuit in potentia duo puncta. Ita est ex hac parte quod aliqua duo diversa secundum essentiam sunt eadem secundum essentiam cum aliquo uno incompleto, inter se tamen diversa. Hoc non est mirum, supposita hac propositione, quod essentia incompleta – quod est genus – cedit in diversas essentias, sicut punctus cedit in diversa puncta. Et quod genus cedat in diversas essentias, hoc oportet dicere si dicamus quod fiat species per receptionem non alterius essentiae.’

*rationes seminales*. Rufus thinks that when a substantial change happens, there is an instantaneous ascent and descent into and then from the more general substantial form (*how* general of a substantial form this stopping point is, is not clearly expressed by Rufus, and may depend on the generation and corruption in question). For instance, when Sophie dies, and we see a cat ‘turning into’ a corpse, what happens, on the metaphysical level, is that Sophie’s form of felinity ‘ascends’ into the form of mammals, which further ascends into the form of animate things, until it reaches a point where it stops and descends, in this case, to the form of a corpse.

This also means that on Rufus’ view, neither the individual thing’s matter, nor its substantial form is completely destroyed when the thing ceases to exist; just as there is no natural generation *from* nothing, there is also no natural return *into* nothing. The matter as substrate of the change will be the same as it was before, and the substantial form at least partly survives as well, since the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ individual (such as Sophie and the corpse) share a general form, which is partially identical to both of the individuals’ proper form.<sup>21</sup>

## Prime Matter

Rufus’ doctrine of prime matter complements his view of substantial forms. A few elements of this doctrine will also play a role in his explanation of generability and corruptibility.

First, Rufus thinks that while prime matter has no actuality on its own, it is *something* – a substance, at least in the loose sense of the term. Ontologically speaking, it is between the form of the most general genus (such as ‘substance’) and pure nothing. It is not pure nothing, since in that case it would not be intelligible and also would not be able to serve as a receptacle for the substantial forms; moreover, denying *all* actuality of prime matter would also lead to the absurd consequence that God could not have an idea of it, and hence would not be able to create it either. Thus, Rufus often uses the expression *substantia materiae* for prime matter, even though he also notes that prime matter cannot be fully actual either, since the first actuality is given by the substantial form of the most general genus, and prime matter, considered on its own, is devoid of that form.<sup>22</sup>

Rufus also thinks that prime matter is shared among all created things – a view handed down from Averroes, and at least partly endorsed later by Aquinas.<sup>23</sup> Rufus,

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<sup>21</sup> For Rufus’ argument for and elaboration on this ascent and descent, see *SOx* II.17 D.

<sup>22</sup> See Rufus, *In Phys* II.8.2.

<sup>23</sup> I am not proposing here any particular interpretation of Aquinas’ view. For some of surrounding controversy, see Marilyn McCord Adams, *William Ockham* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), chapter 16, esp. pp. 672–76; John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press,

however, unlike Aquinas, views this as a universal claim, true of all created beings; in other words, he thinks that the same prime matter that material creatures have is also shared by immaterial ones.<sup>24</sup> Although this is a surprising view, since it means that Sophie the cat has the same prime matter as Gabriel the archangel, it follows from Rufus’ conviction that *every* specification of and distinction between things already presupposes some substantial form, which prime matter on its own does not have.

In the context of generation and corruption, a perhaps surprising element of Rufus’ view of prime matter is that – contrary to what many Aristotelians seem to think – he does not regard it as the ultimate substrate of natural substantial change. As Rufus elaborates, the underlying substrate in an instance of change is *more* than just prime matter: it is prime matter, together with what he calls the ‘potencies of matter’ (*potentiae materiae*).<sup>25</sup> The main reason for this view seems to be that Rufus regards the alternative as absurd: if prime matter were the substrate of natural change, then a natural agent would be able to induce a new form in prime matter; it would be a *dator formarum*, a giver of forms, which title, Rufus thinks, is reserved for God alone.<sup>26</sup>

Oxford, Corpus Christi 119 seems to agree with most of Rufus’ metaphysical commitments about substantial form and prime matter, and its close resemblance to some of Rufus’ formulations seems to indicate that the author was at least familiar with Rufus’ text. Although, being a commentary on the first book of Aristotle’s *On Generation and Corruption*, it does not deal with the notion of substantial forms in great detail, it alludes to the hierarchy of forms, and often mentions the form of the most general genus.<sup>27</sup> It also argues that prime matter is common (numerically identical) in all created things; that it is ungenerated; and that the potency of

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2000), chapter 9; Richard Cross, *The Physics of Duns Scotus: The Scientific Context of a Theological Vision* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), esp. pp. 17–26.

<sup>24</sup> Richard Rufus of Cornwall, *Scriptum in Metaphysicam Aristotelis* (hereafter *SMet*) 2.2 (Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, Dep. Erf., Codex Amplon, Quarto, 290 [hereafter E290]); *Memoriale quaestionum in Metaphysicam Aristotelis* (hereafter *MMet*) 11.4, <http://rrp.stanford.edu/MMet.shtml>, accessed 16 April 2021; Richard Rufus of Cornwall, *In Aristotelis de Generatione et Corruptione* (hereafter *In De Gen*), ed. Neil Lewis and Rega Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), I.5.6. Perhaps Scotus at some point held a similar view, although see *Quodlibet* IX, a. 2, where he argues that angels do not have, nor can they inform even in principle, matter. For an analysis, see Thomas M. Ward, *Duns Scotus on Parts, Wholes, and Hylomorphism* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 112–13.

<sup>25</sup> While I translate *potentia* as ‘potency’ here, it is a notoriously ambiguous term. Rega Wood tends to translate it as ‘potential’, but it could also be simply translated as ‘power’ (the same term is used both for active and passive powers – *potentiae activae et passivae* – in the later discussion).

<sup>26</sup> See Rufus, *In De Gen* I.2 (ed. Wood, p. 113); and *SOx* II.17 D.

<sup>27</sup> See especially Oxford, CC119, fol. 5rb, where the author asks whether the form in generation is prior or posterior to the most general form. For example: ‘Omnis forma sequens formam generalissimam in ordine est forma generalis, specialis, vel individualis (...)’

prime matter (*potentia materiae*) belongs neither to the substance nor to the accidents of matter.<sup>28</sup>

## The Principles of Corruptibility and Incorruptibility

Given the outlined desiderata as well as some general metaphysical background, the main concern of Rufus and the anonymous author of CC119 is to determine the principles of corruptibility and incorruptibility, or the most basic metaphysical explanation of why some things are corruptible while others are incorruptible.

To make the question more precise, Rufus and the anonymous author make a distinction. As they explain, the term ‘incorruptible’ can be taken in two ways. First, commonly speaking (*communiter*); something is incorruptible in this sense if, even in principle, it cannot be destroyed, that is, cannot return to nothing. Since God is the only being that was not created *ex nihilo*, God is also the only being that cannot return *ad nihilum* and so is incorruptible in this sense of the term.

For our present context, however, the more relevant meaning of ‘incorruptible’ is the second one; in this sense, some created things are also incorruptible. Although the heavens, the angels, or the bodies of the resurrected were all created from nothing and consequently have at least in principle a possibility to return there, they do not have this possibility in the same way as, for instance, a cat or a fruit fly does.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, the question Rufus and the anonymous author are investigating is this: what is it that makes it the case that Sophie the cat be corruptible and Gabriel the archangel be incorruptible?<sup>30</sup> Their treatment is divided into two parts. First, in an attempt to characterize the principles, they examine a dilemma, which will ultimately lead to a dead end, but makes clearer what they are looking for from the theory. Sec-

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**28** CC119, fol. 4va: ‘Ex his colligamus materiam primam esse unam numero et hoc eodem modo ab omnibus causatis participatam.’ CC119, fol. 5ra: ‘Ad hoc quod quaeritur de potentiis materiae puto quod potentia materiae nec est eius substantia nec eius accidens, quia nomen potentiae nec est nomen substantiae nec accidentis; omne enim potens est potens per suam potentiam, sicut omne agens est agens per suam virtutem. Unde nomen “potentiae” est nomen virtutis et non substantiae neque accidentis.’

**29** CC119, fol. 5vb: ‘Forte posset aliquis dicere quod dupliciter posset fieri quaestio quae quaerit de causa corruptionis. Communiter, ita scilicet quod dicamus esse corruptibile omne quod de sui natura posset non esse, et secundum philosophos et maxime Platonem nihil est incorruptibile praeter primam causam (...). Aut potest ferri sermo in propriissima eius acceptione secundum quod dicimus quod eorum quae causata sunt quaedam sunt corruptibilia, quaedam incorruptibilia. Verbi gratia, animalia et plantas esse corruptibilia, corpora autem supracaelestia et intelligentias separatas incorruptibilia.’ See also Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q3 (E240, fol. 7va–vb).

**30** It should be noted that sometimes Rufus and the anonymous author talk about the principles of corruptibility or corruption (*principia corruptionis*), while other times they talk about the principles of corruptible things (*principia corruptibilium*). This, however, does not result in much unclarity, since the main question is the same: we are inquiring after what it is that makes a thing corruptible or incorruptible.



ond, having found no obviously satisfactory escape from the dilemma, they embark on a new start, investigating *what* exactly makes something corruptible.

## The Dilemma of Identity

The dilemma Rufus and the anonymous author investigate concerns the question of how the principles of corruptible and incorruptible things are related. As it will turn out, whether one thinks that these principles are identical or that they are different, the result will fail in giving us an account with all the desiderata outlined at the beginning.

(1) The first horn of the dilemma is constituted by the theory proposed first (call it the *Identity theory*), according to which corruptible and incorruptible things have the same basic principles. Rufus thinks, however, that this is impossible. If corruptible and incorruptible things had the same principles, that would mean that those principles would sometimes produce corruptible things and sometimes incorruptible things, which, as Rufus points out, is absurd. While he does not elaborate on the kind of absurdity invoked here, such a case would indeed violate the basic Aristotelian principle of the uniformity of nature, that is, that similar things in similar circumstances produce similar effects. The anonymous author indeed notes,

The same thing, insofar as the same, is apt to cause always the same; therefore, if the principles of corruptible and incorruptible things were the same, then corruptible and incorruptible would be the same.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, Rufus and the anonymous author think that the Identity theory, in this form, would violate our first, most basic desideratum – that the account should not imply any metaphysical absurdity, which is precisely what would ensue if we posited that different things have the same principles.

(1b) The second account that Rufus and the anonymous author consider is a modified version of the Identity theory. According to this version (call it the *Mode theory*), the principles of corruptible and incorruptible things are identical but differ in mode. More precisely, the Mode theory maintains that corruptible and incorruptible things have the same principles, but these principles are related differently to the corruptible and to the incorruptible things, and it is due to these different relations that the two effects of the same principles also differ.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> CC119, fol. 5va: ‘Idem inquantum idem semper natum est idem facere; ergo si corruptibilium et incorruptibilium essent eadem principia, idem esset corruptibile et incorruptibile.’ See also Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q2.

<sup>32</sup> Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q3 (E240, fol. 7va): ‘Licet sint eadem, tamen alio modo se habent, hoc est diversis dispositionibus disponuntur prout sunt principia rerum corruptibilium et incorruptibilium.’ See also CC119, fol. 5va.

While the Mode theory seems to avoid the immediate metaphysical absurdity that the Identity theory implies, Rufus and the anonymous author do not think that it is ultimately satisfactory. The difficulty with the Mode theory arises once we try to characterize the relations or modes involved. On the one hand, if these modes add something substantial to the principles themselves, then they would, after all, make these principles different, forcing us to confront the other horn of the dilemma. On the other hand, if the modes do not make the principles different due to their merely accidental nature, then they will not be able to account for the vast and essential difference between corruptible and incorruptible things – in other words, if the modes are merely accidents, we arrive at the same absurdity as with the Identity theory.<sup>33</sup>

(2) Since the first horn of the dilemma of identity showed no promise, Rufus and the anonymous author turn to the other one: that corruptible and incorruptible things have different principles (call it the *Distinction theory*). However, the Distinction theory presents some further difficulties, once we try to characterize the principles of corruptible things. Given that they are not identical to those of incorruptibles, are these principles themselves corruptible or incorruptible?

(2a) On the one hand, as Rufus points out, the principles of corruptible things cannot be incorruptible. First, in that way they would not be different from the principles of incorruptible things; in other words, we would be forced back again to the first horn of the dilemma of Identity.

Second, from the definition of a proper cause or principle it follows that whenever it is posited, the effect (or principled thing) is also posited. If the principles of corruptibles are incorruptible, that, by definition, means that they are always posited; in that case, however, the corruptibles themselves must always be posited as well, which is a straight-out contradiction.<sup>34</sup>

(2b) This shows the principles of corruptibles cannot be incorruptible. On the other hand, however, if they are corruptible, what is it that *makes* them corruptible? It seems that since every corruptible thing needs a principle that makes it corruptible, these corruptible principles will need some further principles of corruptibility; and since the same question can be asked about these further principles as well,

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<sup>33</sup> See Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q3 (E240, fol. 7va): ‘Istae condiciones diversae aut sunt accidentales istis principiis aut essentielles. Si accidentales, igitur non erunt causae tantae diversitatis in principiatis sicut est diversitas corruptibilitatis et incorruptibilitatis. Et item, ex hoc sequitur quod non erunt principia proxima eadem. Si essentielles, igitur proxima principia non sunt eadem.’ See also CC119, fol. 5va.

<sup>34</sup> Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q3 (E240, fol. 7va): ‘Positis propriis principiis et propriis causis ponuntur ea quorum sunt propria principia et propriae causae. Igitur manente propria causa, manet causatum; sed principia rerum corruptibilium sunt incorruptibilia et semper manent; ergo res corruptibiles semper manebunt, ergo erunt incorruptibiles – quod falsum est.’ This is one of the few arguments that do not have parallels in CC119.

this will lead to a vicious infinite regress of positing an infinite number of principles.<sup>35</sup>

As can be seen from the discussion so far, although the first desideratum of an account of corruptibility was the most fundamental one – it should entail no metaphysical absurdity – it is not easy to satisfy. The dilemma of identity has shown that the principles of corruptibles and incorruptibles can neither be identical nor different, which suggests that no matter how one spells out these principles, one will be likely to find oneself in metaphysical inconsistency. Rufus and the anonymous author will return to this dilemma after they establish what the principle of corruptibility is, and show how the inconsistency can be avoided.

## Cause of Corruptibility

Having arrived, seemingly, at a dead end in discussing the original dilemma, Rufus and the anonymous author of CC119 embark on a new start. Instead of attempting to characterize the principles of corruptible and incorruptible things, they now inquire directly about *what* it is that makes something corruptible. We should still keep in mind our original desiderata, since fulfilling those will be the guiding principle of this part of the discussion as well.

## Not the Contrary Qualities of Elements

According to the first proposal that Rufus and the anonymous author consider, bodies are corruptible because they are composed of elements with contrary or opposing qualities. As the standard view of Aristotelian natural philosophy holds, sublunar bodies are made of earth, water, air, and fire, which have qualities contrary to one another: earth is cold and dry, air is hot and moist, and so on for the others.<sup>36</sup> Thus, it may seem that it is due to these contrary qualities of the elements that the mixed bodies composed of them are, so to speak, somewhat unstable: when cor-

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<sup>35</sup> CC119, fol. 5vb: ‘Cum omne corruptibile vadit ad sua principia, principiorum corruptibilium erit principium. Et similis est quaestio de illis, et erit sic processus in infinitum.’ See also Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q3.

<sup>36</sup> How exactly the mixture is composed from the elements is a rather vexed issue. For Rufus’ and some contemporaries’ view, see Rega Wood and Michael Weisberg, ‘Interpreting Aristotle on Mixture: Problems About Elemental Composition from Philoponus to Cooper,’ *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 35 (2004), pp. 681–706. See also Lucian Petrescu, ‘John Duns Scotus and the Ontology of Mixture,’ *Res Philosophica* 91 (2014), pp. 315–37 for further background, and Anneliese Maier, *Zwei Grundprobleme Der Scholastischen Naturphilosophie: Das Problem der Intensiven Größe* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1968) for much of the basis of the discussion.

ruption happens, the opposite qualities ‘win over’, and the mixture dissolves into its elements.<sup>37</sup>

While this proposal may indeed seem plausible given most medievals’ commitment to the elements and their contrary qualities, Rufus and the anonymous author reject it on the ground that it would not satisfy our second desideratum, namely, it could not account for the incorruptibility of the resurrected bodies. As Rufus notes:

These qualities will remain in their contrariety in the glorified mixt; for the flesh is numerically the same in this corruptible [body] and in the glorified [body], therefore, [it is composed of] numerically the same elements, therefore, same qualities, therefore, same contrariety – and nevertheless, there will be no corruption.<sup>38</sup>

In other words, since the resurrected body is numerically identical to the body we have now, it is also the *same kind* of body as we have now, composed of the same kind of matter, that is, of the same elements with the same contrary qualities. Thus, if corruptibility were due to the contrary qualities of the elements, then the resurrected body would also be corruptible, which, however, Rufus rejects. This means that corruptibility cannot be explained by the contrary qualities of elements.

One may think here that Rufus’ reasoning is less than convincing. After all, we may think that you do not have numerically the same flesh that you had a week ago, since due to nutrition and the various biological processes going on in a body, a lot of it has been replaced. Since this replacement seems to pose no great metaphysical risk of you, as a human being, losing your numerical identity,<sup>39</sup> someone may think that we do not need the same flesh and same elements in the resurrected body for the resurrected person to be the same either.

What exactly grants the numerical identity of the resurrected person is a contentious topic throughout medieval philosophy, which I cannot address here. Aquinas, at least according to some interpreters, infamously maintains that the resurrected body must be composed of the same particles as the person deceased.<sup>40</sup> However

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**37** CC119, fol. 5va: ‘Forte dicet quis quod contrarietas est causa sufficiens ad distinguendum corruptibile ab incorruptibili.’ See also Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q4 (E240, fol. 7vb).

**38** Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q4 (E240, fol. 7vb): ‘Istae qualitates retinebunt suas contrarietates in mixto glorificato; eadem enim est caro secundum numerum in hoc corruptibili et in eodem glorificato, igitur eadem elementa secundum numerum, igitur eadem qualitates, ergo eadem contrarietas, et tamen non erit corruptio.’ See also CC119, fol. 5vb.

**39** This does not mean that the question of *how* exactly the digested food becomes the body while the body remains the same was not a problem for the medievals. For the anonymous author’s treatment of the issue, see CC119, fol. 7rb. For an overview of the problem especially in Aristotle, Albert the Great, and Aquinas, see Philip Lyndon Reynolds, *Food and the Body: Some Peculiar Questions in High Medieval Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

**40** For some (ambiguous) textual support, see *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Summa Contra Gentiles Liber Quartus*, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 15, ed. Commissio Leonina (Rome: Typis Riccardi Garroni, 1930), c. 80–81, pp. 251–59. However, see Marilyn McCord Adams, ‘The Resurrection of the Body According to Three Medieval Aristotelians: Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, William Ockham,’ *Philosophical*

this may be, Rufus’ objection here does not assume this strong account of the numerical identity of resurrected bodies. What his objection presupposes is merely that since the resurrected body will be numerically the same, it must be composed of the very same *kinds* of elements that it is composed of now. While you can have the same body with different bits of flesh due to nutrition, your body could not turn into the steel body of a robot while preserving its numerical identity.

### Not the Action and Passion of the Elements

Second, one may modify the previous theory and propose that although the contrary qualities of elements do not necessarily lead to corruption, their action and passion do. This account would not be subject to the previous criticism, since one could maintain that even though the resurrected glorified bodies will be composed of the same elements, there will be no action and passion in them – and hence no corruption either.<sup>41</sup>

However, Rufus and the anonymous author are not satisfied with this solution. As they point out, in this case, if one wants to have a full account of corruptibility, one would need to explain the cause or principles of action and passion. *Why* is it that the elements – some elements at least – act and are acted on? The most plausible answer seems to be that they act and are acted on because of their contrary qualities. But in this case, one would either have to say that the glorified bodies – composed of the same elements – are not impassible after all (in other words, the proposed theory would be subject to the criticism of the previous one); or that although they are composed of the same elements, having the same contrary qualities, nevertheless, these contrary qualities do not lead to action and passion. Rufus and the anonymous regard this last option absurd or at least marvelous (*mirum*); if contrary qualities explain action and passion, that means that they necessitate it.<sup>42</sup>

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*Topics* 20:2 (1992), pp. 1–33, and Eleonore Stump, ‘Resurrection, Reassembly, and Reconstitution: Aquinas on the Soul,’ in *Die menschliche Seele: Brauchen wir den Dualismus?*, ed. B. Niederbacher and E. Runggaldier (Frankfurt: Ontos Verlag, 2006), pp. 151–72 for alternative interpretations. According to Bynum (*The Resurrection of the Body*, pp. 260–61), Aquinas’ account is ‘inherently full of tension.’

<sup>41</sup> CC119, fol. 5vb: ‘Forte dicit ad hoc quod contrarietas cum actione et passione qualitatum activarum et passivarum est causa corruptibilitatis. Unde etsi in corpore glorificato sint qualitates contrariae, non tamen agunt nec patiuntur.’ See also Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q3.

<sup>42</sup> CC119, fol. 5vb: ‘Sed mirum est de hoc, cum contrarietas sit causa actionis et passionis.’ Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q3, is not much more elaborate: ‘[Q]uid est causa actionis et passionis? Non est aliud nisi contrarietas; sed contrarietas manebit ibi; ergo [etc.]’

### Not the Passibility of Matter as Such

Yet another proposal that Rufus and the anonymous author consider is that the cause of corruptibility is the passibility of matter (*passivitas materiae*) as such. This would seem to avoid the difficulty with the previous proposals, since one may maintain that while there will be action in the resurrected body, there will not be any passion, and consequently no corruption either. Rufus gives an analogy of how this proposal may be supposed to work:

Light multiplies its species in some matter, just as in the matter of air; but let's posit that the matter is incorruptible, even though light multiplies its species there; so this is not passion but action.<sup>43</sup>

In other words, we could imagine an incorruptible and unchangeable transparent medium, in which light would still traverse. Thus, light would multiply its species in this medium, and so in one sense act on it; however, the medium would not be strictly speaking acted on, since it would not change.<sup>44</sup> According to this proposal then, the glorified bodies are incorruptible because they receive every species in the same way as the unchangeable air receives the species of light. While fire can burn the present body because the body receives its species in a corporeal way and thereby changes (accidentally or substantially), in the world to come this reception of species will be spiritual, and hence no physical change and no corruption will ensue.

Rufus and the anonymous author, however, reject this solution on the ground that it cannot account for our third or fourth desideratum. If passibility were the cause of corruption, that would mean that anything that is passible is also corruptible. But the bodies of the damned provide a counterexample: they suffer – as Rufus notes, they ‘change from the most cold into the most hot’<sup>45</sup> – and so are passible; nevertheless, they do not perish. And if one tries to salvage the proposed theory

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**43** Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q4 (E240, fol. 7vb): ‘Lux multiplicat suam speciem in aliqua materia, sicut in materia aeris; ponamus autem quod ista materia sit incorruptibilis; nihilominus multiplicabit lux suam speciem ibi; hic non est passio, est tamen actio.’ See also CC119, fol. 5vb.

**44** Whether or not the species of light was received by the air in a spiritual or corporeal manner was a debated issue from at least Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen). While Alhazen and Averroes thought that the air receives the species of light in a spiritual manner, undergoing therefore no corporeal change, Bacon famously argued for the opposite. See also Alhazen, *De aspectibus* I.5.29; Bacon, *Perspectiva* I.6.3–4. See also Roger Bacon, *Roger Bacon and the Origins of Perspectiva in the Middle Ages: A Critical Edition and English Translation of Bacon's Perspectiva with Introduction and Notes*, ed. David C. Lindberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. lxxix.

**45** Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q4 (E240, fol. 7vb): ‘Corpora damnatorum sunt passibilia; mutantur enim de maxime calido in maxime frigidum; et non sunt corruptibilia; igitur passibilitas non est causa corruptionis.’ See also CC119, fol. 5vb.

by referring to some other special circumstance of the damned, that would lead to the kind of *adhaecceity* that the fourth desideratum warned against.

### Prime Matter Revisited

Having rejected these proposed theories, here is what Rufus says about the principle of corruptibility, taken in the strict sense:

The cause of such a corruptibility is the privation of matter, by which matter has a potency to opposite forms. Therefore, the principle of such a corruption is a deficient cause and not an efficient cause, and it is a principle in becoming (*principium in fieri*) and not a principle that is the term of a thing.<sup>46</sup>

The anonymous author first presents Rufus' view as just another attempt to answer the question, but then ends up endorsing it:

And this you should understand so that form and matter according to its substance are the principles of incorruptibles *per se* and not *per accidens*, but privated matter insofar as privated is the principle of corruptibles, and this is matter insofar as privation is joined to it.<sup>47</sup>

There are a few things to note about the account suggested by these texts.

First, Rufus thinks that the corruptibility of things, strictly speaking, have only a *deficient* cause, and not an efficient one. While ordinary things, such as cats, dogs, or even being white, have efficient causes and can also be themselves efficient causes of other things, privations as privations do not have *per se* efficient causes (and also cannot be *per se* efficient causes of other things) but only deficient causes. While the sun is, in some sense, the cause of both sunlight and shadow, properly speaking, the sun is an efficient cause of light, while only a deficient cause of shadow.<sup>48</sup> Interestingly, Rufus thinks that corruptibility itself is a kind of privation, and therefore, similarly to shadows, its cause is a deficient cause.

Furthermore, Rufus specifies that the deficient cause in question is prime matter. More precisely, while the remote principles of all created things, whether corruptible

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<sup>46</sup> Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q4 (E240, fol. 7vb): 'Causa autem talis corruptibilitatis est privatio materiae per quam habet materia potentiam ad oppositas formas. Unde principium talis corruptionis est causa deficiens et non causa efficiens, et est principium in fieri et non principium quod est terminus rei.'

<sup>47</sup> CC119, fol. 5vb: 'Et hoc intellige quod [forma et] materia secundum sui substantiam sunt principia [in]corruptibilium per se et non per accidens, materia vero privata secundum quod privata est principium corruptibilium, et hoc est materia secundum quod ei coniungitur privatio.'

<sup>48</sup> For Rufus' characterization of deficient causes, see *SMet* V, 1.Q1. This notion of deficient causality likely originates from Augustine; see, for example, *De civitate Dei*, XII.7–8, where Augustine argues that the evil will has no efficient but only a deficient cause. See also Pietro Antonio Ferrisi, 'Creazione Dal Nulla: Esegesei Metafisica Di Agostino a Gen. 1,1–2,' *Augustinianum* 51 (2011), pp. 123–46, for an analysis of how his theory of *creatio ex nihilo* leads Augustine to treat Nothing as a deficient cause.



or incorruptible, are prime matter and the first form (in the case of substances, the form of substance), the proximate principle of corruptible things is prime matter with privation joined to it. Thus, what makes Gabriel the archangel incorruptible and Sophie the cat corruptible, on Rufus' account, is prime matter – but different prime matter. It is true that according to Rufus, as was mentioned earlier, the prime matter of Gabriel and Sophie are *ultimately* numerically the same, since prime matter is common to all created things. Nevertheless, Sophie's prime matter has an added element, privation, which Gabriel's prime matter does not have. Consequently, while Sophie's prime matter has the potency to take on opposite forms, Gabriel's prime matter does not have that potency.

Rufus, unfortunately, does not elaborate on the notion of privation invoked in this characterization, but we can see that it is something added to the substance of prime matter, so at least in *that* sense, it is an accident. In particular, it is what makes the most general difference among things – a more general one even than the one between corporeal and incorporeal entities (consider that both Gabriel and the celestial spheres are incorruptible, but only the former one is incorporeal). This is a rather unusual feature of Rufus' account, at least in light of the later discussions: prime matter *as such* is not privated, which is to say it is not subject to all forms (including opposite forms). Instead of being a universal subject from the start, prime matter *acquires* this potency for opposite forms only by the addition of privation. This privation, however, is not added to *all* prime matter in the same way, and something can also lose it while remaining numerically the same individual; in *this* sense, then, privation is an accident of prime matter.<sup>49</sup>

As we have briefly seen above, however, the anonymous author explicitly says otherwise. Privation is a potency for opposite forms, but 'the potency of prime matter belongs neither to the substance nor to the accidents of matter.'<sup>50</sup> Thus, the privation of prime matter cannot, strictly speaking be an accident. Perhaps as Rufus would point out, privations as such do not fall into any specific ontological category.

Rufus and the anonymous author think that their theory fares better with respect to our four desiderata than the other proposed accounts. The first major problem some of the accounts ran into was the dilemma of Identity. Are the principles of corruptibles and incorruptibles identical, or are they different? The anonymous author thinks that it depends on what principles we are looking at:

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<sup>49</sup> This may suggest treating the distinction between privated and non-privated prime matter – or corruptibles and incorruptibles – as the highest, most universal division on the Porphyrian tree. Nevertheless, we must take caution of doing so, both because of the below, and also because of the fact that at least in most cases, a thing cannot jump from one branch of the Porphyrian tree to the other. If the privated/non-privated distinction produced the two most general trunks of the Porphyrian tree, then things would be 'jumpy'.

<sup>50</sup> See above, n. 28.

Therefore, if the question is asked whether the former or the latter have the same principles, we have to divide the investigation whether it asks about the proximate and immediate, or about the remote principles. If the remote principles, it is clear how the principles are the same, because matter and the first form, which is the form of the most general genus, are the intrinsic principles of anything that participates in existence in the genus of substance, and thus the corruptibles and incorruptibles have the same principles. But perhaps in proximate and immediate, they are not the same (...) but the principle of incorruptible will be the principle of corruptible by some addition.<sup>51</sup>

Rufus seems to agree:

Therefore, as was said, we must say that the principles of corruptibles and incorruptibles are not the same, since one and the principal of the principles of corruptibles is privation. But the proximate principles of incorruptibles are form and the substance of matter; but the principles of corruptibles as such are matter as privated (*materia sub privatione*) and that privation itself.<sup>52</sup>

Thus, Rufus and the anonymous author think they can escape the dilemma of identity by maintaining that the proximate principles are distinct, endorsing thereby some version of the Distinction theory, while also maintaining that the remote principles are identical.

As was seen above, one difficulty arising from the Distinction theory is that it leads to a further dilemma: whether one thinks that the principles of corruptible things are incorruptible, or one thinks that they are corruptible, both cases lead to absurdity. Rufus, however, can answer this dilemma easily, since as we have seen, he thinks that the principle of corruptible things is a composite principle. Thus, as he remarks,

And if it is asked about these principles whether they are corruptible or incorruptible, we must say that matter is an incorruptible principle and privation is a corruptible principle. And if someone argues that privation therefore has another principle, this is true, because [it has] a deficient principle, such as pure negation, because of which matter so privated as such is corruptible, but in its substance is incorruptible. Therefore these principles are resolved into the substance of prime matter and pure nothing. And if it is asked about these, whether they are corruptible or incorruptible, we should say about the matter that it is incorruptible, but about the other that it is neither corruptible nor incorruptible; for the pure negation into which privation is resolved is not anything.<sup>53</sup>

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51 CC119, fol. 5vb: ‘Si igitur fiat quaestio utrum illorum aut istorum sint eadem principia, est dividendum in scrutatione utrum quaerit de proximis et immediatis vel de remotis. Si de remotis, manifestum est quoniam eadem sunt principia, quoniam materia et forma prima, quae est forma generis generalissimi, sunt principia intrinseca cuiuslibet principiatu existentis in genere substantiae, et ita corruptibilium et incorruptibilium sunt eadem principia. Sed forte de proximis et immediatis non sunt eadem...sed principia incorruptibilis erunt principia corruptibilis per additamentum.’

52 Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q4 (E240, fol. 7vb): ‘Sicut igitur dictum est, dicendum quod non eadem sunt principia corruptibilium et incorruptibilium, quia unum principiorum corruptibilium et principalis est privatio. Incorruptibilium autem principia proxima sunt forma et substantia materiae; principia autem corruptibilium inquantum sunt huiusmodi sunt materia sub privatione et ipsa privatio.’

53 Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q4 (E240, fol. 7vb): ‘Et si quaeratur de istis principiis aut sunt corruptibilia aut incorruptibilia, dicendum quod materia est principium incorruptibile et privatio principium corruptibile. Et si arguat, ergo privatio habet aliud principium, verum est, quia principium deficiens, ut

In other words, both Rufus and the anonymous author think that in the composite principle of corruptibles, matter itself (considered as such) is incorruptible; but privation, the other element of the composite, is corruptible. This escapes the dilemma of identity, since positing a corruptible part of an incorruptible principle does not generate the vicious infinite regress.

The second desideratum was that the account should be able to accommodate the claim that the resurrected glorified bodies are impassible. This does not seem problematic for Rufus' account. Accounting for impassibility is only a problem if one links action and passion to being composed of matter or to the qualities of the elements; but Rufus' account has no such implication. He can maintain that while the elements currently compose a body that can undergo passions, in the world to come they will compose one that does not undergo the same kind of passions. As was mentioned above, this also means that while now our bodies are composed of prime matter that is privated, our resurrected bodies, while numerically the same, will be composed of prime matter that is not privated in the same way.

Third, the account of the principles of corruptible and incorruptible things should be able to accommodate the claim that the bodies of the damned, although incorruptible, are capable of suffering. This would rule out views on which corruptibility follows from being able to undergo passion. But Rufus' account does not imply this. As he explains,

To the other that when I say 'privation is the cause' etc., that privation is not only with respect to accidental forms but also of substantial forms. And thus in the damned there will be no such privation, because there is no transmutation from the substantial form to substantial [form].<sup>54</sup>

In other words, Rufus thinks that privation, or privated matter, is the cause of change, both substantial and accidental. On the one hand, matter that is privated with regard to substantial form (or matter that can take on opposite substantial forms) is the cause of substantial change and hence corruption. On the other hand, matter that is privated with regard to accidental form (or matter that can take on opposite accidental forms) is the cause of accidental change. In the bodies of the damned, however, only this second kind of privation is present. This means that these bodies will be able to undergo

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puram negationem, unde materia sic privata in quantum huiusmodi est corruptibilis, in sua autem substantia est incorruptibilis. Unde ista principia resolvuntur usque ad substantiam materiae primae et pure nihil. Et si quaeratur de istis, aut sunt corruptibilia aut incorruptibilia, dicendum est de materia quod est incorruptibilis, de alio autem quod neque corruptibile neque incorruptibile; pura enim negatio in quam resolvitur privatio non est aliquid.' See also CC119, fol. 5vb, where the anonymous author describes the principle as itself incorruptible with a corruptible part, similarly to how the totality of fire can be incorruptible even though its parts (the particular instances of fire) are corruptible.

<sup>54</sup> Rufus, *SMet* IV, 1.Q4 (E240, fol. 7vb): 'Ad aliud quod cum dico 'privatio est causa' etc., non solum est illa privatio respectu formarum accidentalium sed et substantialium. Et ideo in damnatis non est ista privatio, quia non est transmutatio de forma substantiali in substantialem.'

accidental change and consequently suffer, while they will not be able to undergo substantial change and consequently will be incorruptible.

This highlights the main advantage of Rufus' account compared to the proposals according to which there will be (for one reason or another) no passion in the resurrected bodies. While, at least in Rufus' understanding, being or not being able to undergo passion is a binary function, admitting of no degrees or further qualifications, the privation of prime matter does admit of such qualifications. Thus, Rufus' theory is able to, while the 'no passions' theories cannot, account for the differences between passibility and corruptibility, and between the glorified and the damned bodies.<sup>55</sup>

Finally, the fourth desideratum of the theory was that it not be *ad hoc* when accounting for the impassibility of the blessed and the passibility but incorruptibility of the damned. Rufus' account seems to be in good standing regarding this requirement. His account is purely metaphysical in the sense that it does not invoke any divine action in accounting for impassibility, and the theory can account for both the impassibility and passibility/incorruptibility case. In the later discussions of impassibility, this criterion becomes perhaps the most difficult one to meet.

## Concluding Remarks

Although there are many interesting aspects of Rufus' thought connected to the problem of corruptibility that would require further study – his notion of prime matter, the immortality of the soul, or his view of the celestial bodies and their influence – this brief overview of his account already points to some peculiar characteristics.

First, as was seen above, Rufus' account implies that he can explain the impassibility of glorified bodies merely by their metaphysical composition. While this, arguably, is not very far from how Aquinas would later deal with the same question, it remarkably differs from how early 14th-century thinkers would characteristically do so.<sup>56</sup> In the later discussion, the question of impassibility became a question on its own (usually discussed towards the end of the fourth book of the commentary on the *Sentences*), and strongly intertwined with the problem of divine concurrence and the necessity of the cause-effect relation. By contrast, Rufus makes no reference to divine action at all in this context, and as was seen above, the problem of impassibility is less a problem for him in its own right than just a basis for an objection when considering various views about his more general question of corruptibility.

Another surprising feature of Rufus' account, as was also mentioned above, is the notion of prime matter that is in play. As is well known, Aquinas will later maintain that prime matter is pure potency. Scotus will maintain that prime matter has

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<sup>55</sup> Aquinas will later suggest that we can draw a non-arbitrary distinction between passions, based on whether or not they are contrary to a thing's nature (see especially *In Sent.* IV, d. 44, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 1, co). Rufus does not consider this option.

<sup>56</sup> See above, n. 11.

actuality on its own, even though it is in potency to any form. Rufus, however, maintains that prime matter *as such* is *not* in potency to all forms; indeed, the potency of prime matter is an added element, at least insofar as privations can be regarded as additions. What *is* prime matter then, without this addition? Is it a purely metaphysical supposit? Rufus does not say. God knows prime matter, since God created it; we only know that it is numerically one in all things. Rufus does little to illuminate this notion, but perhaps no greater illumination is possible.

It is also worth noting that in some way, Rufus takes Aristotle more literally than some of his later readers. As Aristotle describes in the *Physics*, there are three distinct principles of change: matter, form, and privation.<sup>57</sup> While the later metaphysical discussion greatly emphasized the first two of these, paying relatively little attention to the third, in Rufus it is very clear that these are indeed three principles that are equally important and irreducible to one another. Change only happens when all of them are present, and there are various ways that privation can be present or absent in matter.

I will briefly close with a worry that seems to arise concerning Rufus' account of generability and corruptibility: that ultimately, it is rather shallow if not tautological. Corruption, for Aristotle and his followers, is nothing else than matter losing one substantial form and acquiring another; this is just how we universally describe substantial change. According to Rufus, corruptible things are those that have (prime) matter joined with privation, where by 'privation' we mean the potency for opposite forms. But this amounts to nothing more than saying that corruptible things are those that have matter capable of losing and acquiring substantial forms; in other words, corruptible things are those that are able to undergo substantial change. Which may not seem as a highly informative or explanatory description.

It is difficult to know how Rufus would respond to this worry, although perhaps he could point out that the objector misunderstands how metaphysics works. When in a metaphysical explanation we do not achieve a mechanical description or a truly reductive analysis of a process, that is not necessarily a sign of failure but can actually be a sign of success. A metaphysical explanation can clarify basic processes, not necessarily by reducing them to something even more basic but sometimes by calling attention to some curious feature of reality. As Rufus has argued, the principles of generation and corruption are matter, form, and privation, which is ultimately pure nothing (*pure nihil*); he has shown that the metaphysical texture of created reality is not perfectly dense with being, but just like *Fantastica*, interspersed with patches of Nothing.

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<sup>57</sup> Aristotle, *Physics* I.7 (190b29–191a22).

Fiorella Retucci

# Intersecting Wisdom: Thomas of York and His Sources

**Abstract:** Thomas of York was a careful and pioneering reader of some philosophical texts that had little or no circulation in the Middle Ages. His major work, the *Sapientiale*, was the first medieval instance of a purely metaphysical investigation that falls outside the conventional frameworks of theological *summae* and commentaries to Aristotle. Despite this fact, the *Sapientiale* has long been read as a clear example of a form of ‘authentic Augustinianism’. This reading of the text treated Thomas of York as the founder, along with Bonaventure and Alexander of Hales, of a uniform Franciscan tradition that was later inherited by William de la Mare, John Peckam, Peter John Olivi, Peter of Trabibus, and Richard of Middleton. In this essay, Fiorella Retucci attempts to question the historiographic category of ‘authentic Augustinianism’, too often applied to Thomas of York’s thought, by carefully analyzing the *Sapientiale* and its sources. The study focuses in particular on three sources that play an important role in Thomas of York’s philosophical system: the *Liber de causis*, the *Asclepius* and Averroes.<sup>1</sup>

The *Sapientiale* of Thomas of York (c.1250 – 60) was brought to the attention of philosophical medievalists by Martin Grabmann, now more than a century ago (1913). Grabmann’s enthusiasm in presenting Thomas of York’s work was considerable: the *Sapientiale* was, according to Grabmann, ‘the only major exposition of the system of metaphysics from the era of high scholasticism.’<sup>2</sup>

A few years later (1919), Parthenius Minges announced the imminent publication of the critical edition of the *Sapientiale* by the Commission of St Bonaventure in Quaracchi, which was also engaged at that time in preparing the edition of the *Summa Halensis* or *Summa fratris Alexandri*.<sup>3</sup> The announcement, however, was

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1 I would like to thank Lydia Schumacher for the patient kindness with which she supervised the preparation of this study and revised it linguistically. In this essay, I have returned to some of the studies I had previously carried out, indicating the relative bibliographical references in the footnotes. The systematic research on the presence of Averroes in the *Sapientiale* was carried out within a research project financed by MIUR (PRIN 2017: 2017H8MWHR\_002).

2 Martin Grabmann, ‘Die Metaphysik des Thomas von York,’ in *Studien zur Geschichte der Philosophie: Festgabe zum 60. Geburtstag Clemens Baeumker*, ed. J. Geysler (Münster i.W.: Aschendorff, 1913), p. 191 in pp. 181–93.

3 Parthenius Minges, ‘Robert Grosseteste Übersetzer der *Ethica Nicomachea*,’ *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 32 (1919), p. 239 in pp. 230–43.

never followed by any publication: the edition, ready for printing, was burned along with Minges' entire legacy during the First World War.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, the *Sapientiale* continued to attract the attention of specialists, and from 1924 onwards it fully entered the textbooks on the history of medieval philosophy. In the fifth edition of his *Histoire de la philosophie médiévale* (1924), Maurice De Wulf mentioned Thomas' work, describing it as 'the first attempt at metaphysical systematisation that the 13th century produced.'<sup>5</sup> In the second edition of his *Philosophie au Moyen Age* (1947), Etienne Gilson devoted three dense pages to the *Sapientiale*, which was in his opinion an important work, unfortunately still unpublished, and the result of an 'open and curious, but shapeless spirit,' which tried to assimilate 'the mass of metaphysical information of Greek-Arabic origin that penetrated the schools at the time.'<sup>6</sup>

Despite this debut on the scene of medieval philosophical studies, and the numerous efforts made at the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto for almost half a century, first by Reginald O'Donnell, and then by Virginia Brown,<sup>7</sup> the text of the *Sapientiale* is only beginning in recent months – more than a century after the first announcement – to see the light in a modern edition: the third book has just been published;<sup>8</sup> the first is in print. Perhaps it is too early to attempt a definitive evaluation of a work as complex and long as the *Sapientiale*. However, this is not my purpose. Rather, my intention is to offer a mere footnote on the *apparatus fontium* of the work, while at the same time trying to draw some conclusions from the textual evidence.

The *Sapientiale* has long been read as a clear example of a form of authentic Augustinianism. This dominant reading of the text, which was inaugurated by Martin Grabmann,<sup>9</sup> and further advanced by Ephraim Longpré,<sup>10</sup> Christopher Krzanic,<sup>11</sup> Giulio Bonafede<sup>12</sup> and Edgar Scully,<sup>13</sup> treated Thomas of York as the founder, along with

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4 Sigfried Grän, 'Parthenius Minges OFM: Ein Förderer des modernen Scotismus,' in *De Doctrina Ioannis Duns Scoti: Acta Congressus Scotistici Internationalis Oxonii et Edimburgi 11–17 sept. 1966 celebrati* (Rome: Societas Internationalis Scotistica, 1968), pp. 707–15.

5 Maurice de Wulf, *Histoire de la philosophie médiévale* (Louvain: Institut supérieure de philosophie, 1924), p. 340.

6 Etienne Gilson, *La philosophie au Moyen Age* (Paris: Payot, 1947), pp. 474–76.

7 For a general overview of the editorial work on the *Sapientiale* conducted in Toronto, see Joseph Goering, 'Editions of Thomas of York's *Sapientiale* by students at the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies and the University of Toronto, 1950–1992,' *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 52 (2010), pp. 156–59.

8 *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale, liber III, cap. 1–20*, ed. Antonio Punzi (Florence: SISMEL – Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2020).

9 Grabmann, 'Die Metaphysik des Thomas von York,' pp. 191–92.

10 Ephrem Longpré, 'Fr. Thomas d'York, O.F.M. La première somme métaphysique du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 19 (1926), p. 893 in pp. 875–930.

11 Cristoforo Krzanic, 'Grandi lottatori contro l'Averroismo,' *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* 22 (1930), pp. 161–207.

12 Giulio Bonafede, *Il pensiero francescano nel secolo XIII* (Palermo: Mori e Figli, 1952), pp. 187–89.



Bonaventure and Alexander of Hales, of a uniform Franciscan tradition that was later inherited by William de la Mare, John Peckam, Peter John Olivi, Peter of Trabibus, and Richard of Middleton.<sup>14</sup> For Thomas of York, as for many other 13th- and 14th-century Franciscans, the Augustinian tradition would be ‘the very embodiment of Christian wisdom to such a degree that Aristotle, or any other philosopher, could not essentially alter the time-honored doctrines of Augustine, Boethius and Anselm.’<sup>15</sup> The anti-philosophical and anti-averroistic attitude of the *Sapientiale* was so evident that Krzanic did not hesitate to open his list of ‘*great fighters against Averroism*’ with the name of Thomas of York.<sup>16</sup>

To the reader who glances even briefly at the table of contents that the author attaches to the *Sapientiale*,<sup>17</sup> the historiographic category of ‘authentic Augustinianism’ and the anti-philosophical and anti-averroistic attitude attributed to Thomas of York may seem, however, somewhat forced: the work is in fact a complete treatise on metaphysics, divided into three parts of different lengths. The first part of the work, which corresponds to the first book, after describing in detail the purpose and method of the work (c. 1–4), deals with God and his properties (c. 5–34), divine providence and justice (c. 35–43), and human beatitude (c. 44–45).<sup>18</sup> The second part of the work comprises books II–VI and deals with being, its divisions and causes.<sup>19</sup> Finally, Thomas intended to divide the third and last part of the *Sapientiale* into two books: the first dedicated to the world, the second to the intellect.<sup>20</sup> Only the first of the two books has been preserved. It is divided into 23 chapters, of which the first

**13** Edgar Scully, ‘Thomas of York and his Use of Aristotle: An Early Moment in the History of British Philosophy,’ *Culture* 20 (1959), pp. 420–36.

**14** Krzanic, ‘Grandi lottatori contro l’Averroismo,’ p. 164.

**15** Scully, ‘Thomas of York and his Use of Aristotle,’ pp. 422–23.

**16** Krzanic, ‘Grandi lottatori contro l’Averroismo.’

**17** The *tabula contentorum* is placed before the text in two manuscripts (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conv. Soppr. A.VI.437 [henceforth F], ff. IIra-Vva; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. Lat. 6771 [henceforth R], ff. 1ra–8va), while it can be found at the end of the *Sapientiale* in the manuscript Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. Lat. 4301 [henceforth V], ff. 195va-199ra. For a description of the manuscripts, see Antonio Punzi and Fiorella Retucci, ‘Introduzione,’ in *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, ed. Punzi, pp. xv–xvi in pp. xv–xxxv. The transcription of the *tabula* handed down from the Florence manuscript was published by Longpré, ‘Fr. Thomas d’York,’ pp. 906–30.

**18** Longpré, ‘Fr. Thomas d’York,’ p. 906: ‘Sapientialis huius prima pars est de Creatore benedicto, quae una cum quibusdam ad totius operis elucidationem in uno comprehenditur libro continente capitula 45.’

**19** Longpré, ‘Fr. Thomas d’York,’ p. 911: ‘Sapientialis huius secunda pars est de ente, secundo quod ens, et divisionibus eius necno de principiis entium, quae et qualia et quomodo exeant a principio primo, et comprehenditur in libris quinque.’ The three surviving manuscripts testify to a different order of the books from III to VI: see Punzi, Retucci, ‘Introduzione,’ in *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, ed. Punzi, pp. xviii–xxv.

**20** Longpré, ‘Fr. Thomas d’York,’ p. 927: ‘Sapientialis huius pars tertia est de partibus entis in speciali habens libros duos, quorum primus est de ente creato perfectissimo, videlicet mundo, necnon de parte rationalis creaturae, quae est intelligentia, et continet capitula 23.’

seven deal with the world (c. 1–7), the middle chapters with the soul (c. 8–18), and the final chapters with the intellect (c. 19–23).

The curious reader who flips through the *Sapientiale* cannot ignore the enormous density of sources that characterize every single page of the work. The library to which Thomas had access must have been very well stocked and, above all, constantly updated. Thomas of York was among the first authors to use the Greek-Latin translations completed by Robert Grosseteste in the years immediately before the composition of the *Sapientiale*. He was, for instance, an accurate reader of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and of the complex of commentaries and *scolii* on the Aristotelian text, probably assembled in Constantinople in the first half of the 12th century at the initiative of Anna Comnena and translated by Grosseteste between 1246/47:<sup>21</sup> over 170 explicit quotations, some of which are quite extensive, attest to the interest that this corpus had for the English Franciscan.<sup>22</sup> Thomas was among the first to read Moses Maimonides' *Dux neutrorum*, from which he quotes long passages in his own work. As is clear from a letter by Adam Marsh,<sup>23</sup> Thomas of York came into contact with Maimonides' work in 1251 at the latest, i. e. only a few years after the first attested traces of the text's circulation.<sup>24</sup> Thomas was familiar with classical authors, as

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**21** The dating of the translations is still controversial. Almost all scholars agree, however, that Grosseteste completed his translation work by 1246–47. See Daniel A. Callus, 'The Date of Grosseteste's Translations and Commentaries on Pseudo-Dionysius and the *Nicomachean Ethics*,' *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 14 (1947), pp. 186–210; Michele Trizio, 'From Anna Comnena to Dante: The Byzantine Roots of Western Debates on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*,' in *Dante and the Greeks*, ed. Jan M. Ziolkowski (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2014), pp. 105–140.

**22** On the reception of Byzantine commentaries in the *Sapientiale*, see Fiorella Retucci, 'Nuovi percorsi del platonismo medievale: i commentari bizantini all'*Etica Nicomachea* nel *Sapientiale* di Tommaso di York,' *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 24 (2013), pp. 85–120.

**23** See *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, ed. Clifford H. Lawrence, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006–10), vol. 2, n. 225, pp. 540–42. In this letter, Adam Marsh informs Thomas of York that Brother Laurence 'mittit vobis frater Laurentius quaternos matris propheticæ' ['is sending you the quires for the prophetic mother']. *Propheticæ* is a hypercorrection that the editor Lawrence uncritically borrows from Brewer ('*Adae de Marisco Epistulae*,' in *Monumenta Franciscana*, ed. John S. Brewer [London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1858], pp. 394–96, esp. p. 395, n. 2), whereas the manuscript tradition transmits the reading *philosophie*. Lawrence assumes, again together with Brewer, that *matris propheticæ* is the reference to the prophetic writings of Hildegard of Bingen. However, as Longpré has rightly remarked ('Fr. Thomas d'York, O.F.M.,' p. 878), the original reading *quaternos matris philosophiæ* does not pose any textual problem, since it is a reference to the work titled *Mater philosophiæ*: this was actually the title under which Thomas of York knew and quoted Maimonides' work. Moreover, the *Dux neutrorum* was known under the title *Mater philosophiæ* in England, as attested by the English manuscript tradition: see Diana Di Segni, 'Introduction,' in Moses Maimonides, *Dux neutrorum vel dubiorum*, ed. Diana Di Segni (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), p. 101\*.

**24** As Diana Di Segni clearly demonstrated, in her 'Maimonides's Guide of the Perplexed in the Latin Middle Ages,' in *Interpreting Maimonides: Critical Essays*, ed. Charles H. Manekin and Daniel Davies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 207 in pp. 190–207, 'the earliest clearly identifiable

documented in an unpublished study by Virginia Brown, which analyses in detail the quotations from Latin classical authors in the *Sapientiale*:<sup>25</sup> Cicero is mentioned by name 356 times. Most of the quotations come from the *De natura deorum* (200 quotations) and the *Tusculanae disputationes* (100 quotations), although other minor works of Cicero find space in the *Sapientiale* (28 quotations from *De divinatione*, 17 from the *Paradoxa*, four from *De amicitia* and *De Senectute* respectively). Seneca's name appears 315 times, 275 times with reference to the *Epistulae*, 36 to the *De beneficiis* and four to the *De clementia*. Alongside Cicero and Seneca, Thomas must have been familiar with Valerius Maximus (8 quotations) and Pliny (12 quotations). He quotes from more than 50 authorities and more than 100 different works,<sup>26</sup> for a total of about 20,000 explicit quotations, according to Virginia Brown's estimate.<sup>27</sup>

The works cited in the *Sapientiale* can be divided into three categories: ancient philosophers and Latin classics (called *sapientes mundi*); Fathers and medieval Latin authors (called *sapientes Dei*); Arabic and Jewish sources (called *sapientes mundi*).<sup>28</sup>

A quick glance at the sources of the volumes already published is sufficient for understanding the different weight that the various authorities have in the *Sapientiale*: in the first twenty chapters of the third book, which deal with being in general (c. 1–8) and the causes (c. 9–20),<sup>29</sup> Thomas invokes more than 400 times the authority of the *sapientes mundi* (in particular Algazel, Aristoteles, Averroes, Avicenna, and Maimonides), and about 70 times the *sapientes Dei* (first and foremost Augustine). The situation does not change much if we consider the first book,<sup>30</sup> which deals with the existence, nature, and properties of God: here too the *sapientes mundi*, among whom Thomas includes Aristotle, Plato, Averroes, Avicenna, Hermes, Avicbron, Maimonides, and Algazel, are mentioned by name 1,267 times. The *sapientes Dei*, represented above all by Augustine, Boethius, Dionysius the Areopagite, Gregory the Great, Anselm, John Damascene, and Bernard of Clairvaux, are mentioned explicitly only 397 times.

The sheer quantitative evidence makes it clear, even at first glance, that the philosophical sources of the *Sapientiale* have in no way a merely decorative function. This fact becomes even more evident if we look in more detail at three case studies

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quotations from the *Dux neutrorum* date back to the years 1241–44 for Moneta of Cremona and between 1241–46 for Albert the Great.'

**25** Virginia Brown, 'Latin Classical Authors in the *Sapientiale* of Thomas of York,' unpublished study, found among Brown's archival papers at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies.

**26** For an exhaustive overview of the sources used in the *Sapientiale*, see Dorothea E. Sharp, *Franciscan Philosophy at Oxford in the Thirteenth Century* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), pp. 53–55.

**27** Brown, 'Latin Classical Authors.'

**28** As is well known, a few years after the composition of the *Sapientiale*, the definition of the philosophers as *sapientes mundi* would be condemned by Bishop Etienne Tempier: see *La condamnation Parisienne de 1277*, ed. David Piché (Paris: Vrin, 1999), art. 154, p. 126.

**29** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale, liber III, cap. 1–20*, ed. Punzi.

**30** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale, liber I*, ed. Fiorella Retucci (Florence: SISMEL – Edizioni del Galuzzo, forthcoming).

that deserve special attention: the *Liber De causis*, the hermetic tradition, and Averroes.

## The *Liber de causis*

The presence of the *Liber de causis* in the *Sapientiale* has recently been investigated in detail, leading to rather unexpected results.<sup>31</sup> Thomas exhibits a completely different attitude towards *De causis* than his confreres. As recent studies on the medieval tradition of *De causis* have shown,<sup>32</sup> the *Liber* was sometimes dismissed with disinterest, and sometimes read with suspicion by the Franciscans. Bonaventure, one of the first Franciscans to use *De causis*, not only made very limited use of the text, quoting only 13 propositions from the *Liber* in just over 20 explicit quotations, but openly condemned some of its doctrines as heretical, such as that of the production of souls through intelligence.<sup>33</sup> In his work, Thomas of York shows deep confidence in his use of *De causis* and quotes it several times. Within his *Sapientiale*, he refers literally or explicitly to the *Liber de causis* 107 times, quoting from 22 different propositions. Thomas' use of *De causis* is widespread and always in support of his own doctrines. At no time does Thomas of York take a stand against the doctrines conveyed by the *Liber*.

This fact becomes particularly important if we consider that, contrary to common belief,<sup>34</sup> Thomas of York was fully aware that the *Liber de causis* cannot be ascribed to a Christian author, but to a philosopher, of whose identity he is rather uncertain.<sup>35</sup> Yet, Thomas does not hesitate to use *De causis*, and together with it other *sapientes mundi*, to correct and rectify the interpretation that some *sapientes Dei* have given of particular doctrinal problems.

This is what happens in a passage found in the third book of the *Sapientiale*, which is particularly significant in my opinion. In chapter eleven of this book, Thomas of York analyses in detail the characteristics of the agent or efficient cause, concluding that God is not only the efficient cause of the causes, but also the efficient

31 Fiorella Retucci, 'The *De causis* in Thomas of York,' in *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes: Volume 1*, ed. Dragos Calma (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2019), pp. 70–119.

32 Dragos Calma, 'Du néoplatonisme au réalisme et retour. Parcours latins du *Liber de causis* aux XIIIe–XVIe siècles,' *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 54 (2012), pp. 217–76, esp. pp. 234–36; Retucci, 'The *De causis* in Thomas of York,' pp. 70–72.

33 Bonaventure, *Commentaria in quattuor libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi*, bk. 2, d. 18, a. 2, q. 3, in *Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae opera omnia*, 10 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1882–1902), vol. 2, pp. 452b–453a.

34 Longpré, 'Fr. Thomas d'York, O.F.M.,' p. 897; Daniel A. Callus, 'Introduction of Aristotelian Learning to Oxford,' *Proceedings of British Academy* 29 (1943), p. 261 in pp. 229–81; Henri Dominique Saffrey, 'Introduction,' in *Thomas de Aquino, Super librum de causis expositio*, ed. Henri Dominique Saffrey (Paris: Vrin, 2002), p. xix in pp. xv–lxxiii.

35 See Retucci, 'The *De causis* in Thomas of York,' pp. 74–78.

cause of all that is caused, and consequently of everything, in accordance with what is stated in the first proposition of *De causis*.<sup>36</sup> Immediately afterwards, a long digression begins that has all the characteristics of a *questio* (arguments *pro* and *contra*, conclusion, response to the arguments). The topic of this *questio* is clear and well-defined: whether in every action, not so much of creation, but also of induction into being, God is the first and immediate agent, or whether in some action he acts through an intermediary.<sup>37</sup>

According to the reconstruction provided by Thomas of York, some (*aliqui*) have answered this question by considering God as the sole immediate agent, thereby denying the action of any creature even in natural processes: in their view, creatures are merely occasions for the causal activities of the first cause.<sup>38</sup>

The supporters of this doctrine rely on the authority of some Christians, who believe that the induction of natural forms into matter is attributed solely to the action of the creator, in accordance with what Augustine says in the 12th and 22nd books of *De civitate Dei*, in the seventh book of *De Genesi ad litteram* and in the third book of *De Trinitate*.<sup>39</sup> Adherents of this form of occasionalism further defend (*muniunt rationibus*) this doctrine by arguing that the creator is more intimate to each creature than each creature is to itself; that only God can penetrate the essence of the creature; that only God is the sufficient cause of all action, and therefore requires no intermediary.

Thomas of York does not give any clue as to the identity of the (probably Christian) supporters of this doctrine, but he clearly shows that this view cannot be supported philosophically.<sup>40</sup>

The criticism developed by Thomas of York against occasionalism is articulated in three different stages: firstly, Thomas of York quotes Averroes' criticism of Islamic

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**36** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, p. 143, 74–76: 'Ipse est efficiens omnium et causarum et causatorum, utopote causa prima plus influens in causata omnia quam cause secundarie.' For Thomas' use of the first proposition in the critique of occasionalism, see Retucci, 'The *De causis* in Thomas of York,' pp. 81–85.

**37** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, p. 143, 78–80: 'Hoc igitur premissio ponam questionem, an in omni actione, non tantum creationis, sed etiam eductionis, sit ipse primus immediate agens, an in aliqua actione agat per medium.'

**38** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, pp. 143, 80–144, 83: 'Et iam fuerunt aliqui, qui posuerunt ipsum immediate agere omnino et non posuerunt creaturam agentem in aliqua actione naturali, sed tantum occasionem, qua per actionem primi forma naturalis inducitur in materia.'

**39** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, p. 144, 83–87: 'Isti autem suam opinionem confirmare voluerunt per sermones sapientum Christianorum, per quos videtur quod inductio formarum naturalium in materia attribuitur solummodo actioni creatoris, secundum quod dicit sapiens Augustinus.'

**40** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, p. 145, 117–19: 'Scias igitur lector in principio hanc opinionem a philosophia reprobata, secundum quod habetur ab Averroee *Super IX Metaphysice* capitulo 4.'

occasionalism in the ninth book of his Commentary on *Metaphysics*;<sup>41</sup> secondly, he gives a whole series of arguments that deprive occasionalism of any foundation. These arguments, with which Thomas defuses occasionalism, are first and foremost philosophical, and come from Aristotle (book II of the *Physics*, books VII and XI of *Metaphysics*), and the related commentaries by Averroes, from Maimonides' *Dux neutrorum* (book II, chapter 5) and from *De causis* (prop. 23[24]).<sup>42</sup> Finally, Thomas calls into question the arguments of the *sapientes Dei*, first and foremost, Augustine.<sup>43</sup> On the basis of these arguments, first philosophical and then theological, Thomas concludes that God cannot be regarded as the sole agent in natural processes, and that creatures are not merely occasions for God's all-encompassing activities.<sup>44</sup>

He finally replies point by point to the arguments put forward by the supporters of occasionalism, or more precisely, to the occasionalist interpretation of Augustine. The occasionalists seem – in Thomas' view – to betray the true intention of Augustine, who in his works did not in any way want to negate any kind of natural causality, but rather wanted to attribute to God a form of pre-eminence in the causal chain, in accordance with what is stated in the first proposition of *De causis*.<sup>45</sup>

Some observations can be made on the basis of what has been said so far.

1. Thomas calls *De causis* into question within the debate on causality without intermediaries in order to demonstrate the philosophical invalidity of occasionalism, thus offering a very early – and to some extent pioneering – interpretation of the first proposition of the *Liber*. As Dragos Calma has recently observed, it is possible to recognize a paradigm shift in the exegetical tradition of *De causis*, and in particular the first theorem: while in the commentaries prior to Siger of Brabant the Latin medievals concentrated mainly on the description of flow, after Siger's commentary the first proposition began to be used in order to explain the relations between primary and secondary causes and to neutralize the erroneous position of the occasionalists.<sup>46</sup>

2. In his reply to occasionalism, Thomas refers almost exclusively to philosophical sources, citing Averroes' critique of the Islamic occasionalists in his commentary on the ninth book of the *Metaphysics* and Maimonides' critique in the second book of

41 *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, p. 145, 117–22.

42 *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, pp. 145, 123–149, 203.

43 *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, pp. 149, 204–151, 255.

44 *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, p. 151, 256–59: 'Hiis igitur et consimilibus sermonibus liquet, quod nature non absolvuntur ab actionibus suis in educationibus formarum de materiis, sed quod sunt agentes medii extractores seu eductores, et non tantum occasionum largitores.'

45 *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 11, ed. Punzi, p. 151, 260–65: 'Scito igitur, quod intentio Augustini in sermonibus suis, cum dicit Deum formatorem et formam induci per ipsum in inferioribus, est non excludere ipsum ab operibus secundario agentium, immo potius attribuere principalitatem, cum causa primaria plus influat, secundum quod dictum est superius.'

46 Dragos Calma, 'Sine secundaria: Thomas d'Aquin, Siger de Brabant et les débats sur l'occasionalisme,' in *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes. Volume 1*, ed. Calma, pp. 268–300.



*Dux neutrorum*, and thus demonstrating an uncommon awareness and knowledge of the sources.

3. Thomas of York appears, however, to be concerned not so much with Islamic occasionalism, but with a form of Christian occasionalism that finds confirmation specifically in certain passages of Augustine's work. In order to exclude any possible occasionalist reading of Augustine, Thomas relies on the doctrines conveyed by the *Liber de causis*. In other words, in order to avoid falling into the error of defending a doctrine, such as occasionalism, which has been widely rejected by philosophers, Augustine must – in his view – be read through the filter of the first proposition of the *Liber*.

4. Thomas of York, instead of being the promoter of a form of authentic Augustinianism (as Longpré, Krzanic, Bonafede and Scully unanimously believed) that would reject the demands of philosophy (as Krzanic assumed), not only solves the apparent contradictions between Augustine and the philosophers in complete favor of the latter, but also claims the need to read Augustine through the filter of an exclusively philosophical text, namely the *Liber De causis*.

## The Hermetic Tradition

The influence of the Hermetic tradition on Thomas of York has been the subject of a fundamental and well-documented study by David Porreca,<sup>47</sup> and not without reason. Thomas of York is one of the authors in the Middle Ages who referred most heavily to the authority of Hermetic philosophical texts. Moreover, in the Middle Ages, Thomas of York was the author who used a particular hermetic text, i.e. the *Asclepius*, most extensively. The number of *Asclepius*' citations in the *Sapientiale* (197) is particularly significant, especially when compared to the number of quotations from this Hermetic text in Albertus Magnus' *opera omnia* (87).<sup>48</sup> With very few exceptions, Hermes is mentioned by Thomas of York in a positive way, that is, in support of Thomas' own doctrine, as David Porreca clearly demonstrates in his study.<sup>49</sup> For this

<sup>47</sup> David Porreca, 'Hermes Trismegistus in Thomas of York: A 13th-Century Witness to the Prominence of an Ancient Sage,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 72 (2005), pp. 147–275. On this point see also Paolo Lucentini, 'Ermetismo e pensiero cristiano,' in *Universalità della ragione: Pluralità delle filosofie nel Medioevo. XII Congresso internazionale di filosofia medievale. Palermo 17–22 settembre 2007. Sessioni plenarie*, ed. Alessandro Musco (Palermo: Officina di studi medievali, 2012), pp. 195–214.

<sup>48</sup> Porreca, 'Hermes Trismegistus in Thomas of York,' p. 149. For the reception of hermetic texts in Albert the Great, see Loris Sturlese, 'Saint et magiciens: Albert le grand en face d'Hermès Trismégiste,' *Archives de Philosophie* 43:4 (1980), pp. 615–34; Loris Sturlese, 'Proclo ed Ermete in Germania da Alberto Magno a Bertoldo di Moosburg: Per una prospettiva di ricerca sulla cultura filosofica tedesca nel secolo delle sue origini (1250–1350),' in *Von Meister Dietrich zu Meister Eckhart*, ed. Kurt Flasch (Hamburg: Meiner Verlag, 1984), pp. 22–33.

<sup>49</sup> Porreca, 'Hermes Trismegistus in Thomas of York,' p. 158.



reason, Porreca does not hesitate to define Thomas of York's *Sapientiale* as 'the high-point of the influence of Hermes Trismegistus during the Middle Ages.'<sup>50</sup>

On one point the influence of *Asclepius* is, in my view, of special relevance. And this for at least two reasons: first, Thomas of York quotes a passage from *Asclepius* that had no particular fortune in the Middle Ages – I am referring to *Asclepius* 22; second, Thomas uses *Asclepius* 22 to describe the nature of the human being in a way that was very unusual for the medievals.<sup>51</sup>

Whereas other Latin medieval authors seem to have completely overlooked chapter 22 of *Asclepius*,<sup>52</sup> Thomas of York quotes this text in three different contexts.

1. In chapter 40 of the first book, Thomas tries to reply to the arguments of those who deny providence because it is incompatible with the daily perceivable presence of evil.<sup>53</sup> Two interconnected elements characterise Thomas' solution: the first is the absence of Augustine; the second is the exclusive presence of philosophical sources. Plato, Aristotle, Avicenna, Cicero, Seneca, Boethius and Trismegistus are the only authorities Thomas invokes in his defence of divine providence.

In chapters 16 and 22 of *Asclepius*, Thomas finds a very clear and valid answer to the age-old question *Unde malum?* Evil – maintains Thomas, following *Asclepius* to the letter – exists because God has granted human beings the possibility to sin. Sin is not, therefore, the result of a divine punishment inflicted on the *massa damnationis* that is humanity, but is the natural consequence of a (generous) free gift of God: free-

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**50** Porreca, 'Hermes Trismegistus in Thomas of York,' p. 182.

**51** I had the opportunity to examine Thomas' use of this text in Fiorella Retucci, 'The Human Being and its Dignity: Three Medieval Models,' in *Homo, Natura, Mundus: Human Beings and Their Relationships. Proceedings of the XIV International Congress of the Société Internationale pour l'étude de la Philosophie Médiévale, July 24–28, 2017, Porto Alegre, Brazil*, ed. Roberto Hofmeister Pich, Alfredo C. Storck, and Alfredo S. Culleton (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021-forthcoming).

**52** No other cases of intensive use of *Asclepius* 22 in the Middle Ages are known to me. Antonella Sannino, 'La tradizione ermetica a Oxford nei secoli XIII e XIV: Ruggero Bacone e Tommaso Bradwardine,' *Studi filosofici* 18 (1995), pp. 23–56, esp. pp. 51–52 finds a probable quote from *Asclepius* 22 in *De causa Dei* by Thomas Bradwardine. For a synthetic overview of the spread of *Asclepius* in the Middle Ages, see Claudio Moreschini, *Dall'Asclepio al Crater Hermetis: Studi sull'ermetismo latino tardo-antico e rinascimentale* (Pisa: Giardini, 1986); Claudio Moreschini, *Storia dell'ermetismo cristiano* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2000); Carlos Gilly, 'Die Überlieferung des Asclepius im Mittelalter,' in *From Poimandres to Jacob Böhme: Gnosis, Hermetism and the Christian Tradition*, ed. Roelof van den Broek, Cis van Heertum (Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan, 2000), pp. 335–64; *Hermetism from Late Antiquity to Humanism: La tradizione ermetica dal mondo tardo antico all'umanesimo. Atti del Convegno nazionale di studi, Napoli, 20–24 novembre 2001*, ed. Paolo Lucentini, Ilaria Parri, Vittoria Perone Compagni (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003); Florian Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus: Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2011), pp. 37–58.

**53** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, c. 40 (F, f. 45ra in marg. inf.; V, f. 35v in marg. inf.): 'In solvendo, quod videntur impugnare esse providentie, scilicet quod scelerati videntur prevalere contra innocentes, et unde probatur, quod omnis iniurans miser et miserior patiente, similiter in respondendo rationi, que videtur destruere providentiam per hoc, quod mala sunt in mundo, et quod homo potest peccare, et malum facere, et ideo datur causa permissionis mali, et tandem quomodo sit providentia de bonis et malis.'

dom. The human being, free to sin, is a better being than other creatures which have no such special privilege. The human being is also better than the angelic creatures that are immortal and are, therefore, not free to sin. Only the human being is, in fact, granted the freedom to choose to follow his mortal nature, by sinning, or his divine one, by aspiring to immortality. Since the human being is composed of a twofold nature, a mortal and a divine one, this is the only creature that is allowed the freedom to choose and construct its own destiny.<sup>54</sup> Those who believe – Thomas continues – that evil is to be attributed to privation or matter do not grasp the real nature of the problem. Matter in itself is neither evil nor sinful, but rather the possibility of doing evil (*possibilitas ad malum*) and the possibility to sin (*ad peccandum potestas*).<sup>55</sup> But it is precisely this possibility, which is the root of human freedom, that confirms the superiority of the human being over all other creatures, including immortal ones.

2. In the second book, from chapter 11 onwards, Thomas describes in detail the characteristics of matter and form. In chapter 16, after describing the characteristics of matter and concluding that matter is ontologically good because it derives from God, Thomas introduces two interconnected questions: how do sins depend on matter, since according to some wise ones they depend on the soul or on free will? And if matter is the cause of evil and corruption, why did God provide the human being with a body, and therefore with matter?<sup>56</sup> For Thomas of York, the answer to these

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54 *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, c. 40 (F, f. 45ra–b; R, f. 56rb; V, f. 36ra): ‘Tertio autem movet homines ad negandum providentiam, quia videlicet non omnes efficit bonos Deus. Malos enim multos constat esse, quod non videtur consonum providentie sapientissimi et summi benigni provisoris. (...) Rationem autem illam solvit idem Trismegistus in eodem. Manifestavit, quare creavit Deus homines potentes fieri malos et unde oritur malitia in mundo. (...) Fecit igitur Deus hominem peccare potentem, quia sic homo conditus melior effectus est, secundum quod dicit idem in eodem: “Fecit” – inquit – “hominem ex parte corruptiore mundi et ex divina,” hoc est immortalis, natura quantum ad animam. “Eterna” – inquit – “lege constituit, ut ex animalibus cunctis de sola ratione disciplinaque cognoscens, per que vitia corporum homines avertere atque abalienare potuissent, ipsos ad intentionem spemque immortalitatis protendens. Bonum igitur hominem et qui possit immortalis esse ex utraque natura composuit, divina atque mortali, et sic compositum hominem per voluntatem Dei constitutum esse meliorem diis, qui sunt ex sola immortalis natura formati, etc.” Vult enim hominem esse meliorem, quod ex tali natura constitutus est, qui mori potest et peccare, quam dii, qui hoc non possunt.’

55 *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, c. 40 (F, f. 45rb; R, f. 56rb–va; V, f. 36ra): ‘Possibilitas autem mali in homine ponitur secundum philosophantes in divinis, quod est de nichilo; secundum philosophantes vero in mundanis ponitur in materia, sicut dicit Avicenna IX *Metaphysice* cap. 6, quod “malum sequitur materiam.” (...) Oportet autem hoc sane intelligere, non quod materia sit causa necessario malum inducens, sed possibilitas ad malum est ex esse possibili, quod sequitur materiam. Nam in eo, in quo non est materia, non est possibilitas, ut nomen materie extendamus ad omne id, quod non est forma purissima et simplicissima, qualis in solo creatore invenitur. In quo autem non est possibilitas, non est ad peccandum potestas.’

56 *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber II, c. 16 (F, ff. 73vb–74ra; R, f. 83va–b; V, f. 51ra): ‘Quomodo peccata sequuntur materiam cum, secundum aliquos sapientes, sequantur animum sive liberum arbitrium? (...) Amplius si materia qualitercumque sit causa mali seu corruptionis et maxime hec turbida et tenebrosa, sicut dictum est, non immerito queri potest quare talem dedit Deus homini.’

questions is crystal clear. From the body, the human being does not derive the necessity to do evil, but only the possibility, and therefore the freedom to sin (by succumbing to the vices of the body) or not to sin (by alienating oneself from the impulses of the flesh and leaning towards immortality). Matter does not necessarily force the human being to sin: on the contrary, it provides an opportunity for the constant exercise of the soul (*ad anime exercitium*) and the possibility of increasing the merits of the human being (*propter augmentum meriti*).<sup>57</sup>

Relying on the *Asclepius*, Thomas discovers a new and positive dimension of corporeity, which insofar as it affords the occasion and possibility to (not) sin, equips the human being to freely choose his divine part and to pursue the goal of the human being insofar as it is human: to comprehend the intelligibles and to choose honorable things.

3. *Asclepius* 22 is mentioned again in chapter 16 of the third book within the discussion of the final cause. Thomas has no doubt that God is not only the efficient, but also the final cause of all things. More difficult for him, however, is the question whether there is some other end to all things apart from God (*an aliquis alius sit finis ceterorum omnium preter ipsum*). Once again, Hermes' words seem to be decisive for the English Franciscan. Being equipped with a double nature, corporeal and mortal on the one hand, divine on the other, the human being contains all things in itself, like a world in miniature (*minor mundus*) or a microcosm (*microcosmus*). The body does not in any way undermine the ontological superiority of the human being over all other creatures. On the contrary, it is its essential condition. Indeed, the co-existence of a divine immortal nature and a corporeal mortal one suits the human being for its unique and exalted role in comparison with the rest of creation, namely to be the end of all other creatures.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber II, c. 16 (F, f. 74ra; R, f. 83vb; V, f. 51va – b): 'Ex hoc autem planum est, quod non erit homini necessitas mali operandi ex corpore. Verum si queras quare sic copulavit Deus formam nobilem cum materia tali, respondet Trismegistus *Ad Asclepium*, quod homo sic melior constitutus est ex mortali et immortalis natura, quare per hoc quod compositus est ex corruptibili et mortali natura potuit vitia corporum avertere atque abalienare et ad intentionem spemque immortalitatis protendere. Secundum Rabbi Moysen in eodem quo supra, dedit Deus talem materiam homini ad anime exercitium et ad frangendum vires istius materie et diminuere ipsas in concupiscibilis earum et non admittere nisi quantum necessitas exigit. Et sic intelligat intelligibilia et eligat ex eis honorabilia et magis eligenda. Et hec est scientia creatoris et angelorum et aliorum operum eius secundum posse suum. Hic est enim finis hominis in quantum homo, sicut ipse dicit. Summa igitur sermonis est, quod talis materia data est propter augmentum meriti.'

<sup>58</sup> *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber III, c. 16, ed. Punzi, pp. 224, 190 – 225, 211: 'Verum an aliquis alius sit finis ceterorum omnium preter ipsum questio est non pretermittenda. (...) Amplius numquid non secundum sapientiam Christianorum est homo universitas, et ideo dicitur omnis creatura et minor mundus seu microcosmus? Quomodo igitur non erit finis omnium, cum contineat omnia secundum rationem finis, que supra dicta est? Preterea numquid non ipse ultimo creatus est secundum sapientiam Christianorum tamquam omnium perfectio et consummatio? Quod si sic est, quomodo non erit finis omnium? Ex rationibus Trismegisti *Ad Asclepium* videtur id ipsum, cum vult, quod homo sit animal optimum nomine animalium comprehendens omnes species rationales more Plato-

To sum up: thanks to his in-depth reading of *Asclepius* 22, Thomas of York discovers a new dimension of corporeity. Matter and body acquire a new value and a new dignity in the *Sapientiale*. Far from an impediment on the path to virtue, the body becomes a tool for exercising the soul, an opportunity to increase merit and an essential condition for the ontological superiority of the human being over all other creatures, including angels.<sup>59</sup> Matter and body allow the human being not only to be, together with God, the final cause of creation, but also to escape the regime of necessity that rules all other creatures, including immortal ones. Thanks to the body, the human being lives and operates in the realm of possibility, that is, of freedom. The realization of the human being and the attainment of immortality thus become human – and only human – achievements, completely independent of any pre-established divine plan. *Asclepius* 22, in Thomas' view, legitimizes the claims of the human being to self-constitute himself as a divine human being (*homo divinus*),<sup>60</sup> freely choosing to follow his own immortal nature and abandoning the instincts of his mortal one. Far from passively inspired by the traditionalism of Saint Augustine, Anselm and Saint Bernard, Thomas of York seems to me to be very close to what Eugenio Garin has identified as the leitmotif of Pico's *Oratio de hominis dignitate*: what the human being is must depend, above all, on what the human being does and chooses.

## Averroes

Thomas of York constantly refers to Averroes' authority in his work. The name of Averroes appears more than 1,000 times in the *Sapientiale*. There are also many literal but implicit quotations from Averroes' works. With very few exceptions, Averroes is called upon only to support Thomas' own doctrines. Thomas actually criticizes Averroes only with reference to the doctrine of the eternity of the world. To Averroes' eternalistic model, however, Thomas does not reply by following Augustine, but by referring to the solution that Moses Maimonides had given to the problem.

Thomas does not read or cite Averroes' doctrines with any prejudice. Rather, it is in Averroes that Thomas of York finds confirmation that the philosophers were able

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nicorum. Et ne credas obstare sue optimitati, quod habet in sui compositione naturam corpoream et mortalem, dicit quod ex hoc homo constitutus est melior, quod videlicet ex divina corporea mortali-que natura constitutus est. Quare videtur ex hiis, quod homo sit melior ceteris creaturis et ob hoc finis earum.'

<sup>59</sup> See here, the text in n. 54 above: 'Bonum igitur hominem et qui possit immortalis esse ex utraque natura composuit, divina atque mortali, et sic compositum hominem per voluntatem Dei constitutum esse meliorem diis, qui sunt ex sola immortalis natura formati, etc. Vult enim hominem esse meliorem, quod ex tali natura constitutus est, qui mori potest et peccare, quam dii, qui hoc non possunt.' My conjecture is that here, where *Asclepius* speaks of gods of immortal nature, Thomas is referring to angels.

<sup>60</sup> See text in n. 74 below.

to penetrate the Trinitarian mysteries. According to Thomas, the Commentator on Aristotle, together with Porphyry, Hermes, Seneca, Cicero, and Aethicus Ister, clearly spoke of the Holy Spirit.<sup>61</sup>

Thomas somehow defends Averroes even when the latter would seem to deny God a knowledge of singular things. Averroes – as Thomas of York explains – only reported (*recitat*) the opinion, without defending it, of some others (*aliqui*), whose identity is not disclosed.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, Averroes' position on the divine knowledge of individual things is – according to Thomas – fallacious only from a linguistic, formal, and not real point of view (*non tantum in re sed sermone*).<sup>63</sup>

Thomas relies on Averroes' authority, even quoting from a text that remained almost completely neglected by the medievals: the prologue to the VIII book of the *Physics*.

As many scholars have already noted,<sup>64</sup> few Latin medievals followed Averroes on this point. The same manuscript and printed tradition of Averroes' prologue also mirrors the perplexity that this text must have provoked in its medieval reader.

The medieval copyists who had to reproduce this text were probably in trouble. The manuscript tradition of the Prologue is indeed very large (a total of 34 witnesses<sup>65</sup>), though far from uniform. The Prologue is transmitted in 33 of the 50 complete

**61** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, c. 14 (F, f. 14va; V, ff. 11vb-12ra; R, ff. 27vb-28ra): 'De tertia persona locuti sunt, licet non adeo manifeste. (...) Istam autem personam tertiam, quam nominavit mediam Porphyrius, nominat nomine proprio Trismegistus, videlicet nomine "spiritus", cum dicit *Ad Asclepium*: "Fuit nequit deus et hyle, quem Grece mundum credimus et mundo concomitabatur spiritus vel inerat mundo spiritus" (...). Ex quibus omnibus liquet, quod predicta non possunt intelligi de spiritu creato, quia nullus gubernat, implet et vivificat omnia, nisi divinus Spiritus, secundum quod premitit Cicero *De natura deorum* II capitulo 15 de operationibus huius spiritus (...). Ethicus philosophus Cosmographus in sua *Cosmografia*, quam transtulit beatus Ieronimus, luculenter exprimit personas tres. (...) Unde et Trinitatem per hanc viam insinuans Porphyrius (...). Habes igitur ex hoc sermone Patrem et Filium et voluntatem, quam superius dixit amborum medium, sicut manifestum est ex Augustino *De civitate* Dei X. Huic autem appropriationi, per quam ostenditur Trinitas personarum in summo Spiritu, attestatur Averroes *Super XI Pilosophie prime capitulo* 15.'

**62** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, c. 24 (F, f. 30va; V, f. 24rb; R, f. 42vb): 'Errorem autem alium, quo dixerunt aliqui scire Deum omnia scientia universali et non particulari, recitat Averroes *Super XI Prime philosophie* cap. 24, et hic error destruitur per tres propositiones.'

**63** *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, c. 25 (F, f. 30vb; V, f. 24va; R, f. 43ra): 'Vide ex his sermonibus quomodo non tantum in re, sed sermone expressus est sermo Averrois, quomodo sciat singularia.'

**64** Mario Grignaschi, 'Indagine sui passi del "Commento" suscettibili di aver promosso la formazione di un averroismo politico,' in *L'averroismo in Italia* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1979), pp. 237–88, esp. pp. 258–62; Horst Schmieja, 'Drei Prologen im grossen Physikkommentar des Averroes,' in *Aristotelisches Erbe im arabisch-lateinischen Mittelalter*, ed. Albert Zimmermann (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 1986), pp. 175–89; Luca Bianchi, 'Filosofi, uomini e bruti: Note per la storia di un'antropologia "averroista",' in *Studi sull'Aristotelismo del Rinascimento* (Padua: Il Poligrafo, 2003), pp. 41–61, esp. pp. 50–52.

**65** Schmieja counts only 33 manuscripts that transmit the text of the prologue. See Schmieja, 'Drei Prologen im grossen Physikkommentar des Averroes,' p. 185.

manuscripts that transmit Averroes' commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*. A further witness (Vatican City, Barb. Lat. 165), datable to the 13th century, which transmits, among other texts, Latin translations of many Aristotelian works, presents on the last folio (f. 415r) Averroes' Prologue to the third and eighth book of the *Physics*.<sup>66</sup> Of the 33 manuscripts that transmit this text, 14 place it at the end of the seventh book without any particular indication, while two manuscripts indicate the prologue as the last commentary (number 40) of book VII; 11 MSS present the prologue as the beginning of the eighth book and clarify through marginal notes that it is the *Prologus super octavum Physicorum Averrois*; one manuscript presents the text at the end of book VIII, although through a note in the upper margin by a later hand the text is inserted at the beginning of book VIII; five further manuscripts contain the prologue not in the body of the main text, but in the margins.

No less confusing is the situation in the printed editions of Averroes' commentary.<sup>67</sup> The text is found in the first printed edition by Laurentius Canotius of Padua (1472) and in the edition printed at Venice by Nicolettus Vernias (1483). In both editions the text is placed as the very beginning of book VIII. The edition printed at Venice by Bernardinus Stagninus (1489) inserted the text at the end of book VII, immediately after the commentary 39. Following Paolus Israelita's indication, the editors of the edition published at Venice in 1550–52 decided, by contrast, to omit the text of the prologue, specifying in an editorial note the reasons for their choice.<sup>68</sup> For the editors, Averroes' so-called prologue to the eighth book of the *Physics* was nothing more than an illegitimate, superfluous, and erroneous repetition of the prologue to the first book. For this reason, the editors decided to correct the text, completely eliminating the prologue to the eighth book, but then reusing part of it in the prologue to the first book. The final part of the prologue to the eighth book (from *Et*

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<sup>66</sup> See *Aristotele Latinus: Codices. Pars Posterior*, ed. Lorenzo Minio-Paluello (Cambridge: Typis Aca-  
demiae, 1955), n. 1717, pp. 1162–64.

<sup>67</sup> For humanist and Renaissance editions of Averroes' Commentaries, see. F. Edward Cranz, 'Editions of the Latin Aristotle accompanied by the Commentaries of Averroes,' in *Philosophy and Humanism: Renaissance Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. Edward P. Mahoney (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 116–28; Jill Kraje, 'The Printing History of Aristotle in the Fifteenth Century: A Bibliographical Approach to Renaissance Philosophy,' *Renaissance Studies* 9:2 (1995), pp. 189–211.

<sup>68</sup> See *Aristotelis Stagiritae De physico auditu libri octo cum Averrois Cordubensis variis in eosdem commentariis*, Venetiis Apud Iuntas, 1500, f. 153vb: 'In huius Septimi Libri fine, in impressis hactenus codicibus omnibus legebatur ad verbum ea pars proemii ipsius Averrois, Primi, Physicorum, incipiens, Utilitas autem, usque ad illud, Ordo vero, quam, veluti illegitime, superflue, ac vitiose hoc in loco posita, abscondimus, praecipue autem ad id Pauli Israelitae, Hebraei, viri doctissimi sententia coadiuvante, nonnullisque Antiquis codicibus, eam non legentibus.' The same annotation is in the Giunta's edition of 1562 (reprinted anastatically by Minerva at Frankfurt in 1962), f. 337vb.



*cum aliquis to intentione*) became, indeed, in Junta's edition, the central part of the prologue to the first book.<sup>69</sup>

Probably because of the chaotic history of the textual tradition, the traces of circulation of this text in the Latin Middle Ages are very scarce. The well-known medieval florilegium *Auctoritates Aristotelis* briefly mentions the prologue, with reference to the theme of the equivocal nature of the word 'human being': 'In prologo hujus libri VIII, hoc nomen homo dicitur aequivoce de eo qui est perfectus per scientias speculativas et de aliis hominibus, hoc est de sciente et ignorante.'<sup>70</sup>

A longer and more articulate quotation from this text occurs in the *Philosophia* written by Alberich of Reims: 'Nam, ut ait Auerrois in prologo octauis Phisicorum, esse hominis ex sui ultima perfectione uel completionem est ipsum esse perfectum per scientias speculativas; estimatur enim, ut ibidem dicit, quod hoc nomen homo aequivoce dicitur de homine perfecto per scientias speculativas et de aliis, sicut animal dicitur aequivoce de animali homine et de picto.'<sup>71</sup>

Finally, a quick but literal quote from the prologue is also found in Henry Bate's *Speculum divinatorum*.<sup>72</sup>

On closer inspection, in all the cases mentioned above, the prologue to the eighth book of the *Physics* is always and exclusively used to support the idea that the word *homo* is attributed equivocally to philosophers and non-philosophers alike. Relying on Averroes' authority, the anonymous compiler of the *Auctoritates Aristotelis*, Alberich of Reims, Oliver Brito, and Henry Bate thus argued for the existence of internal differences within humankind, a doctrine that – as Luca Bianchi has demonstrated – the medievals generally preferred to avoid.<sup>73</sup>

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69 I do not address here the question whether the prologue to book I and the prologue to book VIII are two different translations, made by two different translators (Theodore of Antioch and Michael Scotus), of the same text, as argued by Grignaschi, 'Indagine sui passi del "Commento",' pp. 258–59, or whether they are completely different texts, as Schmieja, 'Drei Prologen im grossen Physikkommentar des Averroes,' p. 185, seems to argue.

70 *Auctoritates Aristotelis*, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse (Louvain: Publications universitaires; Paris: Bêatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1974), n. 3, 229, p. 159, 72–74.

71 Alberich of Reims, *Philosophia*, in René A. Gauthier, 'Notes sur Siger de Brabant II: Siger en 1272–1275, Aubry de Reims et la scission des Normands,' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 68:1 (1984), p. 29, 12–17 in pp. 3–49. On Alberich and his *fiducia philosophandi*, see: Irene Zavattero, 'L'entusiasmo per la filosofia di Aubry di Reims,' in *Metamorfosi della filosofia antica: Studi in onore di P. Gualtieri*, ed. Ferdinando Abbri (Arezzo: Dipartimento di Studi Storico-sociali e filosofici [Università di Siena], 2006), pp. 9–18. Gauthier points out that the same quote is also in Oliver Brito, *MS Oxford, Corpus Christi College 283, f. 151vb* (see Gauthier, 'Notes sur Siger de Brabant,' p. 29).

72 Henry Bate, *Speculum divinatorum et quorundam naturalium: Parts VI–VII: On the Unity of Intellect: On the Platonic Doctrine of the Ideas*, ed. Carlos Steel, Emiel Van der Vyver (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1994), VI, c. 8, p. 27, 93–96: 'Unde Commentator in Prologo 8 Phisicorum, de quibusdam, inquit, hominibus aequivoce dicitur hoc nomen "homo" sicut dicitur de homine vivo et mortuo, immo sicut dicitur de animali rationali et picto.'

73 Bianchi, 'Filosofi, uomini e bruti,' p. 115.



In his *Sapientiale*, Thomas of York inherits from Averroes' prologue the reading on the equivocation of the word 'human being'. This same conclusion emerges again when Thomas quotes a passage from the commentary on the tenth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Together with Michael of Ephesus, Thomas establishes a clear distinction between two kinds of humanity: a true humanity, dedicated to speculation and to that divine part which is the intellect, and a derived, secondary humanity, represented by the human being who is composed of body and soul.<sup>74</sup>

But that is not all: Thomas of York is, actually, the only author known to me who in the Latin Middle Ages used almost entirely and explicitly the prologue to the eighth book of the *Physics*, as the synopsis below tries to show.

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Averroes, *Phys.*, VIII, Prologus<sup>75</sup>

Thomas of York, *Sapientiale*

*liber I, c. 1 (F, f. 1vb; R, f. 13vb; V, f. 2va)*

Utilitas autem istius scientiae est pars utilitatis scientiae speculativae et declaratum est in scientia morali, scilicet quae considerat de actionibus voluntariis quod esse hominis in sua ultima perfectione est ipsum esse perfectum per scientias speculativas, et quod ista dispositio est ultima fortunitas, et secundum fatuos vita aeterna, et apparet in illa scientia quod hoc nomen homo dicitur aequivoce de eo, qui perfectus est per scientias speculativas et de aliis hominibus, et hoc secundum insipientes philosophos sicut dicitur de homine vivo et mortuo, immo sicut dicitur de animali rationali et picto.

Hec est enim ultima fortunitas, videlicet esse perfectum ultima perfectione per scientias speculativas secundum Averroem super principium VIII *Physicorum*. Et ideo dicit, quod homo dicitur quasi aequivoce de tali homine et de aliis hominibus, et hanc fortunatam dicit esse vitam eternam secundum fatuos.

Cum tamen secundum vere sapientes completa visio veritas sit vita aeterna, sicut docuit piissimus magister Christianorum, unde, cum sapientia sit beatificativa, quo plus anima a curis et cupiditatibus absolutior sapientiam acquisiverit, eo magis compos est beatitudinis.

*liber I, c. 1 (F, f. 1va; R, f. 13va; V, f. 2rb-va)*

Cum hoc quod sequitur cognitionem scientiarum speculativarum de moribus bonis, necesse est, cum artifices istarum scientiarum fuerint secun-

Preterea ipsa est virtutum insertiva, secundum quod dixit Alexander, prout recitat Averroes super principium VIII *Physicorum*, quod cognitionem scientiarum speculativarum sequuntur boni mores, quia, cum artifices istarum scientiarum

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<sup>74</sup> *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, cap. 44 (F, f. 48rb; V, f. 38va; R, f. 59rb): 'Tres apparent operationes hominis secundum expositionem Commentatoris: propria, et hec est secundum virtutem actio, magis propria, et hec est operatio, que est politica felicitas, propriatissima, et hec est speculatio eius, quod in nobis est optimum, et hoc est intellectus, qui est primus et verus intellectualis et divinus homo, quem Plato nominat vitam rationalem, respectu cuius secundario homo est ille, qui est ex anima et corpore.'

<sup>75</sup> Here I use the text published by Schmieja, 'Drei Prologen im grossen Physikkommentar des Averroes,' pp. 185–88.

Continued

Averroes, *Phys.*, VIII, Prologus<sup>75</sup>

dum cursum naturalem, necesse est, ut sint virtuosus omnibus modis virtutum moralium ut iustitia et castitate et audacia et magnanimitate et liberalitate et veracitate et aliis virtutibus.

Et Alexander in prohemio istius libri declaravit quomodo sequuntur istae virtutes ex cognitione istarum scientiarum. Nam cum aliquis sciverit parvitatem suae vitae in respectu istius esse aeterni et motus continui et quod proportio suae vitae in respectu temporis aeterni est sicut proportio minimi finiti ad infinitum, non cupiet vitam, quare erit audax. Et similiter cum sciverit quod mors est de necessitate materiae et maxime cum acquisiverit humanam perfectionem, tunc enim percipiet in aliqua hora quod melius est ei mors quam vita, sicut fecit Socrates Athenis, licet aestimetur quod Socrates non distinxerit inter vias proprias et communes in scientiis, quia nitentur procedere via propria cum vulgo.

Et est manifestum quod debent esse iusti et casti, quoniam cum sciverint naturam iustitiae existentis in substantia entium, diligunt se assimilari illi naturae.

Et similiter, cum sciverint vilitatem appetitivum et quod non sunt de numero dispositionum necessariorum in permanentia hominis nedum ut sint perfectiones, sed sunt accidentia de necessitate materiae, expellent eas a se omnino et odient eas maximo odio, et sic erunt casti, retinentes leges divinas et oboedientes legibus naturalibus.

Et est manifestum etiam quod erunt liberales, quoniam reputant pecuniam vilem, et erunt magnanimi, diligentes veritatem in sermone et actione.

Thomas of York, *Sapientiale*

fuert secundum cursum naturalem, necesse est, ut sint virtuosus omnibus modis virtutum moralium ut iustitia, castitate, audacia, magnanimitate, liberalitate et veracitate et aliis virtutibus.

Nam sicut dicit, ex scientia proportionis huius vite ad eternam vitam, istam non cupiet homo et ideo erit audax.

*liber I, c. 1 (F, f. 1va; R, f. 13va; V, f. 2r)*

Preterea est contemptus huius vite generativa, sicut dixit Alexander, prout recitat Averroes super principium VIII *Physicorum* in prologo, quod ex cognitione scientiarum scitur parvitas huius vite respectu esse aeterni et quod eius proportio ad ipsam est sicut proportio minimi finiti ad infinitum, unde non cupiet homo vitam. Maxime cum acquisiverit humanam perfectionem, tunc enim percipiet in aliqua hora, quod melior est ei mors quam vita, sicut fecit Socrates Athenis, et vilem habebit pecuniam.<sup>76</sup>

Et cum sciverint homines naturam iustitiae existentis in substantia entium, diligunt se assimilari illi nature.

Et cum sciverint vilitates appetitivum, expellent eas a se omnino et odio habebunt odio maximo, et sic erunt casti, retinentes leges divinas et oboedientes legibus naturalibus.

Et erunt liberales, quoniam reputabunt pecuniam vilem, et erunt magnanimi, diligentes veritatem in sermone et actione.

<sup>76</sup> See also *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber II, c. 16 (F, f. 73va): 'Et propterea – ut infert – omnis corruptio vel amissio vel imperfectio non est nisi propter materiam, adeo quod mors est secundum ipsos de necessitate materie et hominum et animalium, secundum quod dicit Averroes super principium VIII *Physicorum* in prologo. Et propter hoc – ut aiunt – cum aliquis adquisierit perfectionem humanam, percipiet in illa hora, quod melior est ei mors quam vita.'

Continued

Averroes, *Phys.*, VIII, Prologus<sup>75</sup>

Thomas of York, *Sapientiale*

Sed si aliquis dixerit quod nos videmus plures artifices istarum scientiarum in contraria dispositione, dicendum est quod hoc accidit eis ex dispositione innaturali, et hoc potes scire ex hoc quod Alexander et alii ratiocinantur super hoc, scilicet quod omnes philosophi sunt studiosi sicut erant in suo tempore. Et cum aliquis perscrutatus fuerit de hac dispositione, inveniet quod illa perfectio, quam expectant in assuetudine hominum, in qua nutriebantur, valde est remota ab hac perfectione. Et non solummodo accidit hoc eis, sed credunt ex modo hominum et consuetudine, in qua nutriebantur, quod hec perfectio est valde vilis, et hoc non accidit eis ex lege, sed corrumpentibus eam.

Accidit igitur istis hominibus, cum incipiunt speculari contempnere illum modum perfectionis, quem expectabant, sed cum desperaverint pervenire ad hanc perfectionem et viderint omnes homines contempnere eam et credere quod expectantes eam non debent esse pars civitatis aut credunt quod omnia dicta de hac perfectione forte sunt similia dictis de illa prima perfectione, quam expulerunt, scilicet illam, in qua nutriebantur.

Et tales sunt plures istius temporis, scilicet illi, qui sunt dialectici. Tunc omnino declinabuntur ad appetitus et accidet eis dispositio innaturalis adeo quod non debent esse omnino pars civitatis, quoniam cum eis non potest fieri contractus civilis neque amicitia humana neque utilitas alterius, sed omnes actiones eorum sunt ad seipsum et ideo philosophia in hoc tempore abhorretur, et iam exivimus a nostra intentione.

Quod, si quis dicat plures artifices scientiarum in contraria esse dispositione, dicendum est, quod hoc eis accidit ex dispositione innaturali.

*liber I, c. 2 (F, f. 2vb; R, f. 14vb; V, f. 3rb)*

Nam sicut vult Averroes *Super VIII Physicorum* in principio, quod, cum declinant homines ad appetitus, accidit eis dispositio innaturalis, et ideo contempnunt philosophiam.

Unde non debent esse pars civitatis nec cum eis fieri contractus civilis nec amicitia humana neque utilitas alterius, quia omnes actiones eorum sunt ad ipsos et ideo – ut ait – abhorretur philosophia in hoc tempore.

In quoting this text, Thomas is convinced that Averroes is right on many points.

1. First of all, Thomas shares with Averroes the idea that the final perfection of the human being can be achieved through the speculative sciences.

2. Averroes believes that this final perfection (*ultima fortunitas*) is what some fools call eternal life. Although Thomas quotes this (in my opinion explosive) passage, he does not follow Averroes on this point, but corrects him slightly: eternal life consists, as the wise say, in the complete vision of the truth. However, the more the soul distances itself from bodily impulses and gains wisdom, the more it prepares itself for achieving beatitude (*quo plus anima a curis et cupiditatibus abso-*

*lutior sapientiam acquisiverit, eo magis compos est beatitudinis*). Thomas is therefore certainly more cautious than Averroes, but he is nonetheless the spokesman for an impudent – and in some ways dangerous – enthusiasm for philosophy. Wisdom, or rather perfection in the study of the speculative sciences, not only guarantees moral rectitude, but in a certain way prepares one for beatitude, or eternal life.<sup>77</sup> A few years after the composition of the *Sapientiale*, Bishop Etienne Tempier did not hesitate to condemn this doctrine.<sup>78</sup> Thomas, on the contrary, has no doubt that the utility of the sciences consists precisely in the acquisition of human perfection, which prepares and predisposes *in effectu* for the achievement of future happiness: ‘Utilitas omnium scientiarum est acquisitio perfectionis humane preparantis eam in effectu ad futuram felicitatem.’<sup>79</sup> Thomas of York, moreover, sees no danger in identifying speculative happiness with the knowledge of separate substances – described by Averroes in his commentary on the ninth book of *Metaphysics* – and with eternal life – mentioned in John’s Gospel.<sup>80</sup>

3. Finally, from the prologue to the eighth book of the *Physics*, Thomas derives the idea that the human being remains, by virtue of the intellectual faculty alone, responsible for the perfection of his nature: thanks to the knowledge of the speculative sciences, the human being can realize its humanity and achieve perfection in all the moral virtues, none excluded. In the exercise of rationality consists, therefore, the metaphysical and moral fulfilment of the human being, since the human being in the proper sense is only the intellectual one. Deviating from philosophy, on the other hand, is a totally unnatural tendency of the human being, who thereby loses its rightful place within proper humanity.

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<sup>77</sup> The idea that speculation makes the human being fit for happiness returns again in the *Sapientiale*, this time on the basis of Gundissalinus and Avicenna: See *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, c. 45 (F, f. 49va; R, f. 60rb–va; V, f. 33va): ‘Istud idem dicit Gundissalinus in libro suo *De anima*, quod anima, dum est in corpore, non potest recipere intelligentiam agentem subito, cum autem liberatur a corpore, tunc poterit coniungi eidem et inveniet in ea pulchritudinem intelligibilem et delectationem. Per habitudinem verumptamen, quia speculatio facit aptitudinem ad felicitatem, unde speculator quanto plus addiderit speculationis, tanto plus addetur aptitudo ad felicitatem, sicut dicit Avicenna tract. IX.’

<sup>78</sup> See *La condamnation Parisienne de 1277*, ed. Piché, art. 156, p. 126: ‘Quod homo ordinatus quantum ad intellectum et affectum, sicut potest sufficienter esse per virtutes intellectuales et alias morales de quibus loquitur philosophus in ethicis, est sufficienter dispositus ad felicitatem eternam.’

<sup>79</sup> *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, c. 1 (F, f. 1va; R, f. 13va; V, f. 2va). Thomas here quotes Avicenna, *Liber de Philosophia prima sive Scientia divina*, 3 vols, ed. S. van Riet (Louvain: Peeters; Leiden: Brill, 1977–83), pp. 18, 41–19, 43.

<sup>80</sup> *Thomae Eboracensis Sapientiale*, liber I, c. 44 (F, f. 48rb; R, f. 59rb; V, f. 38va): ‘Cum igitur perfecta felicitas sit in speculatione, et hec non in quorumcumque, sed optimorum, et divina sunt optima, quare in divinatorum speculatione erit felicitas, sicut manifestum est ex Aristotele X cap. 10. Deum igitur inspicere est summa felicitas et beatitudo, secundum quod dicit Averroes *Super IX Philosophie prime* cap. 10, quod fortunitas maxima est inspicere intellectum separatum primum. Et hec speculatio est intellectus per potentiam, quam habet apud suam ultimam perfectionem. Hec non est aliud, quam quod dicit Theologus Iohannes in *Ioh.* 17: Hec est vita eterna, cognoscere te etc.’

## Conclusion

Cristoforo Krzanic was convinced that ‘Thomas of York was the first – and all the Franciscan masters followed him – who chose to absorb traditional philosophy in order not to touch the sanctity of dogmas with the acceptance of Aristotelianism. Thomas was a Franciscan and could not choose otherwise, he could not prefer Aristotle to Augustine. It is always theology that appears in every statement of Franciscan thought.’<sup>81</sup>

It is too early – and it would go far beyond the limits of this study – to evaluate the role played by Thomas of York in establishing a Franciscan philosophical tradition along the lines of Augustine’s legacy. On some points, however, the historiographic category of ‘authentic Augustinianism’, too often applied to Thomas of York’s thought, should in my opinion be reviewed. Thomas of York is a careful and pioneering reader of texts that had little or no circulation in the Middle Ages. He uses these texts, along with many others, for a single purpose: to legitimize, on the one hand, the claims of philosophy to be an all-encompassing science of reality and a valid science of the divine, and on the other, the aspirations of human beings to freely construct their own destiny, preparing themselves, with the help of philosophy, for future happiness.

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81 Krzanic, ‘Grandi lottatori contro l’Averroismo,’ pp. 167–68.



Sophie Delmas

# Bartholomew the Englishman, ‘Master of the Properties of Things’: Between Exegesis and Preaching

**Abstract:** Bartholomew the Englishman (Bartholomaeus Anglicus) was among the most celebrated Franciscans of the Middle Ages. He became one of the first encyclopaedists in composing his *Book on the Properties of Things* (in Latin, *Liber de proprietatibus rerum*). This work, written about 1247, enjoyed considerable success and is found in more than 200 manuscripts, translations into seven vernacular languages, and numerous printed editions from the period of incunables through to the 17th century. In this essay, I first propose to offer a survey of the non-encyclopaedic works (allegories on the Old and New Testament; a hagiographical compilation; a commentary on the gospels of Mark and Matthew; biblical postils and sermons) that have been attributed to Bartholomew. Second, I demonstrate how the *Book on the Properties of Things* was fruitful, providing a resource for preachers who made implicit use of it in the subject-matter of their sermons in the 13th century. Thereafter, in the 14th and especially the 15th centuries, as in the *Thesaurus novus de sanctis*, the authority of Bartholomew was acknowledged as the ‘magister de proprietatibus’.<sup>1</sup>

Bartholomew the Englishman (Bartholomaeus Anglicus) is among the most celebrated Franciscans of the Middle Ages. He was one of the first encyclopedists who wrote the *Book on the Properties of Things* (in Latin, *Liber de proprietatibus rerum*). This work, written about 1247 in Magdeburg in present-day Germany, enjoyed considerable success: it exists in more than 200 manuscripts, translations into seven vernacular languages, and numerous printed editions from the period of incunables through to the 17th century.<sup>2</sup> At the time he was composing this work, Bartholomew was a lector in the Franciscan province of Saxony in Germany, where he had been sent by the minister general of the order in the 1230s.

What is less well known is that at an earlier stage, in the 1220s, Bartholomew pursued studies at the schools in Paris. The bibliography on Bartholomew has focused essentially on his encyclopedic work *De proprietatibus rerum* which was widely disseminated through manuscripts and incunables, as well as being translated into several languages. But what traces can be discerned of his exegetical work?

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<sup>1</sup> The translation of this chapter from French was prepared by David Gascoigne.

<sup>2</sup> Heinz Meyer, *Die Enzyklopädie des Bartholomäus Anglicus: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferungs- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von ‘De proprietatibus rerum’* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2000).



## Bartholomew: A Student in the Kingdom of France

Sources relating to the earliest period of the Franciscan monastery in Paris, and thus concerning the *studium* there, are few in number. Three chroniclers, however, provide us with valuable information on the early stages of Bartholomew's career: Thomas of Eccleston, Jordan of Giano, and Salimbene of Adam. In his *Treatise on the arrival of the Friars Minor in England*, written at the end of the 1250s, Thomas of Eccleston refers to the development of the Franciscan order in Paris:

The arrival of brother Haymo of Faversham, of the order of priests and a preacher of repute, who entered Saint-Denis along with three other masters on Good Friday, contributed greatly to the advancement of those who undertook preaching and enhanced their authority and reputation.<sup>3</sup>

On that Good Friday, 14 April 1224, Haymo of Faversham was admitted into the Franciscan order in the abbey of Saint-Denis along with three other masters who can be identified as Simon of Sandwich/Sandwiz, Simon the Englishman (Simon Anglicus), and Bartholomew the Englishman.<sup>4</sup> This collective entry into the order of Friars Minor has sometimes been attributed to the efficacy of the preaching of Gregory of Naples, who was at that time minister of the province of France.

The second piece of evidence comes from the *Chronicle* of Jordan of Saxony, written in 1262. This confirms the presence of Bartholomew in France, as it was from there that he was sent to Saxony:

As brother Simon, first reader and first minister of Saxony, had died, brother Leonard, custodian of Saxony and brother Jordan, custodian of Thuringia (...) travelled to the Rhineland chapter held at Worms. (...) The minister general wrote to the minister of France to get him to send John the Englishman [Johannes Anglicus] as minister of Saxony and brother Bartholomew the Englishman as reader.<sup>5</sup>

Lastly, Bartholomew's studies in France, and more particularly his exegetical work, is referred to by a third chronicler, Salimbene of Adam, writing some years later, in the 1280s. He provides more information on Bartholomew's career (emphasis and translation mine):

In his book *On the Properties of Things*, brother Bartholomew the Englishman of the order of Friars Minor has spoken at length about their [the animals of Ethiopia] nature and their proper-

<sup>3</sup> Francis of Assisi, *Écrits, vies, témoignages*, ed. Jacques Dalarun (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2010), p. 1941.

<sup>4</sup> Neslihan Şenocak, *The Poor and the Perfect: The Rise of Learning in the Franciscan Order, 1209–1310* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), p. 53. B. Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education (c.1210–1517)* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000), p. 12. On the arrival of the English Masters in France, see Nathalie Gorochov, 'Les maîtres parisiens et la genèse de l'Université (1200–1231),' *Cahiers de recherches médiévales* 18 (2009), pp. 53–73.

<sup>5</sup> Francis of Assisi, *Écrits, vies, témoignages*, p. 2077 (§58) and p. 2080 (§60).

ties; he divided this treatise into nineteen chapters. He was a great cleric and **read cursorily the whole Bible** in Paris.<sup>6</sup>

The final sentence of the text in Latin reads: *magnus clericus fuit et totam Bibliam cursorie Parisius legit*. The recent translation of Salimbene's *Chronicle*, overseen by Gisèle Besson, offers the following wording: 'He directed in Paris a course of study on the entirety of the Bible.' The wording suggested by Baudouin Van den Abeele is similar: 'He lectured cursorily on the whole Bible in Paris.'

It seems to me that these translations present a misreading, for it was not in the capacity of a teacher in the *studium*, as a 'reader', but rather as a student that Bartholomew cursorily read the Bible. This cursory reading (*cursorie*) of the whole Bible consisted in of a complete but rapid presentation of Scripture, focusing simply on the text with no digression or debate, such as was delivered by the bachelor students of biblical studies at the university.<sup>7</sup> That is the interpretation suggested by Isabelle Draelents when she refers to a comprehensive course of commentary on the Bible taught to bachelor students of biblical studies in Paris.<sup>8</sup> The General Constitutions of the order of Friars Minor are not at all forthcoming about how the Bible was studied in the Franciscan *studia*. This practice is confirmed by the statutes of the Franciscan provinces, unfortunately of a much later date: for instance, according to the statutes of the province of France in 1337, students were required to read cursorily both the Bible and the text of the *Sentences* under the guidance of the principal teacher called a reader (*lector*).

Little is known of Bartholomew's early years of study. Some have suggested that he may have commenced his studies at Chartres or at Oxford before completing them in Paris. A point worthy of note is that a Chartres manuscript passed through his hands: a glossed Bible featuring some historiated or decorated initials. Regrettably, this manuscript was damaged by flames in the fire of 1944, and some fragments are scorched and fragile. This manuscript comprises 19 volumes bound together. The *ex libris* bearing Bartholomew's name is found at the end of volume XVI containing the epistles of St Paul. It reads: *Iste liber est fratrum predicatorum Carnotensium, quem habuerunt a fratre Bartholomeo qui fuit Anglicus*.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Salimbene of Adam de Parme, *Chronique*, French translation, introduction and notes, ed. Gisèle Besson and Michèle Brossard-Dandré, Latin text ed. Giuseppe Scalia (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2016), vol. 1, p. 210. Baudouin Van den Abeele, 'Introduction Générale,' in Bartholomeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*, ed. Baudouin Van den Abeele, Heinz Meyer, Michael W. Twomey, Bernd Roling, R. James Long, and Iolanda Ventura (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Le Moyen Âge et la Bible*, ed. Pierre Riché and Guy Lobrichon (Paris: Beauchesne, 1984), p. 222.

<sup>8</sup> Isabelle Draelents, 'La science naturelle et ses sources chez Barthélemy l'Anglais et les encyclopédistes contemporains,' in *Bartholomäus Anglicus, De proprietatibus rerum, [...] Lateinischer Text und volkssprachige Rezeption*, ed. Baudouin Van den Abeele and H. Meyer (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), p. 61, n. 52 in pp. 43–99.

<sup>9</sup> Chartres, BM, 0385 (0390), vol. 16, f. 218v (from the library of the Friars Preachers of Chartres). H. Omont, A. Molinier, C. Coudrec, and E. Coyecque, *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques*

## The Non-Encyclopaedic Works of Bartholomew the Englishman: A Survey

No detailed research has been carried out in recent years on the works of Bartholomew other than on his encyclopedic writings. In his general introduction published in 2007, Baudouin Van den Abeele lists a number of works attributable to Bartholomew:

- allegories on the Old and New Testament;
- a hagiographical compilation;
- a commentary on the gospels of Mark and Matthew;
- biblical postils;
- sermons.<sup>10</sup>

This enumeration is drawn from the *Compendium Auctorum Latinorum Medii Aevi (500–1500)*, which itself derived these indications from the research of Stegmüller and Glorieux.<sup>11</sup> I have therefore attempted to trace these pieces of information back to their sources and where possible to verify their accuracy. That investigation reveals how, little by little, various historians from both medieval and modern times have assembled and reiterated these items and in so doing have often confused the sources.

The oldest data we have concerning these works are provided by Abbot Trithemius (1462–1516). In his *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, completed in 1494, he presents chronological entries on the great theologians.<sup>12</sup> He explains how, among the works of Bartholomew, he identified the 19 books of his *De proprietatibus rerum* and a book of various sermons (*sermone varios*).<sup>13</sup>

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*ques publiques de France: Départements, Tome XI, Chartres* (Paris: Plon, 1890), pp. 176–77. Y. Delaporte, *Les manuscrits enluminés de la bibliothèque de Chartres* (Chartres: Société archéologique d'Eure-et-Loir, 1929), pp. 58–68, no. CXXXI–CXLII, pl. XI, argues that the 19 volumes have been wrongly grouped together. It is likely that vols I, III, IV, V, VI, IX, XII, and XIX, despite some differences in the number of lines, belonged to one and the same series, now incomplete (having the same type of decoration). The others (vols II, VII, VIII, X, XI, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, and XVIII) came from other Bibles, or were copied separately. See <http://bibale.irht.cnrs.fr/830>.

**10** Baudouin Van den Abeele, 'Introduction générale,' in Bartholomeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*, p. 4 and n. 7.

**11** *Compendium Auctorum Latinorum Medii Aevi (500–1500)*, ed. M. Lapidge and C. Leonardi, t. I, 2, (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2003), pp. 684–85.

**12** Referred to by Thomas Plassmann, 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 12 (1919), pp. 68–109, esp. pp. 73–74.

**13** Johannes Trithemius, *Liber de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* (Basel: Johann Amerbach, 1494): 'E quibus ego reperi tantum volumen, quod praenotavit De proprietatibus rerum, lib. 19 (Cum proprietates rerum), Sermone varios, lib. 1.'

Later, in a mid-16th-century Summa entitled *Scriptorum illustrium majoris Britanniae*, John Bale adds in numerous further items.<sup>14</sup> In this list of 'illustrious British writers', Bartholomew the Englishman is described as the author of *De proprietatibus rerum* and of *sermones varios*, but to these Bale adds more works: *De rerum accidentibus*, a *Chronicon de sanctis*, and some *Postillas scripturarum*. As Thomas Plassmann has pointed out, John Bale was the originator of erroneous attributions which would subsequently be repeated by others.<sup>15</sup> The *De rerum accidentibus* in fact corresponds to the 19th book of *De proprietatibus rerum*. Bale also appears to be the first to attribute to Bartholomew a hagiographical work, the *Chronicon de sanctis*, and an exegetical work, the *Postillas scripturarum*.

Most of the information presented there was taken up again in the early 17th century by John Pits (1560–1616) in his *Relationum historicarum de rebus anglicis* Tomus I,<sup>16</sup> and then by Henry Wharton (1664–95) in his complement to the work of William Cave.<sup>17</sup> In the mid-18th century, Sbaralea amplified the work of the Franciscan Luke Wadding (1588–1657), writing a very detailed entry in volume I of the *Supplementum*, which however at some points confuses Bartholomew the Englishman with Bartholomew of Glanville.<sup>18</sup>

## Allegories on the Old and the New Testament: A Work by Richard of St Victor

According to Stegmüller's listing (n. 1561), some *Allegories on the Old and the New Testament* are indeed attributed to Bartholomew the Englishman: the title given by Stegmüller is *Allegoriae et tropologiae in utrumque testamentum*.<sup>19</sup> This attribution can also be found among the incipits of Franciscan works listed by Gaudens E. Mohan, under a different title *Allegoriae Evangeliorum*.<sup>20</sup> This time an incipit is duly given: *In praecedentibus praemissa descriptione originis ac discretionis artium et quorundam aliorum ortum*.

Stegmüller wrongly mentions Hugh of St Victor, since these allegories are in fact by another member of the Victorine school, Richard of St Victor.<sup>21</sup> Both the article by

<sup>14</sup> John Bale, *Scriptorum illustrium majoris Britanniae* (Basel: Apud Ioannem Oporinum, 1557), p. 453.

<sup>15</sup> Plassmann, 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus,' pp. 68–109, esp. pp. 76–77.

<sup>16</sup> Joannis Pitsei, *Relationum Historicarum De Rebus Anglicis*, Tomus I (Paris: Rolinum Thierry & Sebastianum Cramoisy, 1619), pp. 494–95.

<sup>17</sup> Henry Wharton, *Appendix ad Historiam Litterariam Guil. Cave* (Basel: Joh. Rudolph. Im-Hoff., 1744), p. 56.

<sup>18</sup> Sbaralea, *Supplementum et castigatio* (Rome, 1806), pp. 115–17.

<sup>19</sup> F. Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*, II (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1949), n. 1561.

<sup>20</sup> G.E. Mohan, 'Initia operum Franciscalium (XIII–XV S.),' *Franciscan Studies* 37 (1977), p. 200 in pp. 179–375.

<sup>21</sup> I am obliged to Gilbert Dahan for this suggestion.

Mohan and the internet site of Bert Roest on Franciscan authors offer a reference to MS 148 in the Biblioteca comunale of Assisi.<sup>22</sup>

What conclusion can one draw from this? These *Allegoriae* are not by Bartholomew the Englishman. The fact that this work corresponds to certain parts of the *Liber exceptionum* has occasioned many errors in attribution. The Assisi manuscript does in fact correspond to a widely disseminated work by Richard of St Victor: it was published in 1958 under the title *Liber exceptionum* in an edition by Jean Châtillon who was not aware of Assisi MS 148.<sup>23</sup> The *Liber exceptionum* comprises 24 books divided into two parts: it is books I–IX and XI–XIV of the second part which have often been copied or published separately under the title *Allegoriae in Vetus et Novum Testamentum*.<sup>24</sup> Such is the case with the Assisi manuscript which bears the title *Allegorie quinque librorum moysi* and presents from fol. 93ra the prologue of book I of part II (*In praecedentibus praemissa descriptione originis*, p. 221 of the edition) to fol. 141vb with the end of book XIV (*sumus bonus Deus, conservatur et non peribit. Expliciunt Allegorie Evangeliorum*). The mistake in attribution stems from the fact that the first printed editions of the *Liber exceptionum* formed part of the *Opera omnia* of Hugh of St Victor.

Many databases make reference to a 16th-century edition: Paris, 1574.<sup>25</sup> That reference comes from Wadding. It is possible to trace its origin: Plassmann refers to *Allegoriae simul et tropologiae in locos utriusque Testamenti selectiores indicio collectae ac propensiore studio depromptae, et in ordinem digestae, e monimentis unius et triginta Authorem* of which he found an edition by Godefroy Tillman from 1551.

To complete our survey of the exegetical works attributed to Bartholomew the Englishman, a final reference needs to be mentioned: the *Locutiones divinarum Scripturarum*. This work is mentioned by Gaudens E. Mohan in his list of Franciscan works with this incipit: *Magnarum rerum, sicut Ecclesiasticus sit, etsi non detur successivus... Ego igitur aliquid magnum mihi*.<sup>26</sup> It is a work which exists in MS 232 in the Bibliothèque municipale of Toulouse.<sup>27</sup>

According to Auguste Molinier, this work is entitled *Libellus introductorius ad figurativas loquutiones divinarum Scripturarum* and begins at fol. 42. Its author, we are told, explains that he used notes left by Bonaventure to whom he does not give the title of saint, and declares himself to be a Franciscan. It is for that reason that the

<sup>22</sup> [http://users.bart.nl/~roestb/franciscan/franautb.htm#\\_Toc427589406](http://users.bart.nl/~roestb/franciscan/franautb.htm#_Toc427589406). This manuscript can be consulted on this site [http://www.internetculturale.it/it/16/search/detail?instance=&case=&id=oai%3Awww.internetculturale.sbn.it%2FTeca%3A20%3ANT0000%3APG0213\\_ms.148&qt](http://www.internetculturale.it/it/16/search/detail?instance=&case=&id=oai%3Awww.internetculturale.sbn.it%2FTeca%3A20%3ANT0000%3APG0213_ms.148&qt).

<sup>23</sup> Richard of St Victor, *Liber exceptionum*, ed. Jean Châtillon, *Textes philosophiques du Moyen Âge 5* (Paris: Vrin, 1958).

<sup>24</sup> Richard of St Victor, *Liber exceptionum*, p. 13.

<sup>25</sup> For example: [https://www-app.uni-regensburg.de/Fakultaeten/PKGG/Philosophie/Gesch\\_Phil/alcuin/work.php?id=6984](https://www-app.uni-regensburg.de/Fakultaeten/PKGG/Philosophie/Gesch_Phil/alcuin/work.php?id=6984).

<sup>26</sup> Mohan, 'Initia operum Franciscalium (XIII–XV S.),' esp. p. 231.

<sup>27</sup> Auguste Molinier, *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques des départements, Tome VII: Toulouse-Nîmes, Manuscrits 1–887* (Paris: Plon, 1885), pp. 148–49.

cataloguer made the link to the work mentioned by Wadding, supposedly published in Paris in 1574. Molinier states that he was not able to trace this publication. Finally, he adds that the work consists of ten distinctions, subdivided into chapters. This work therefore cannot be by Bartholomew the Englishman (who died in 1272), as it postdates the death of Bonaventure in 1274.<sup>28</sup>

## No Work of Hagiography

In the mid-16th century, a hagiographical work, a compilation of 'Lives of Saints', was attributed to Bartholomew the Englishman. In his *Scriptorum illustrium majoris Britanniae* published in 1557, John Bale adds to the supposed list of Bartholomew's works a *Chronicon de sanctis*. As Thomas Plassmann has pointed out, John Bale was the originator of erroneous attributions which would subsequently be repeated by later thinkers.<sup>29</sup> He seems to be the first to attribute to Bartholomew a hagiographical work, the *Chronicon des sanctis*. This attribution appears to be quite unfounded.

## Pastoral Work: An Incunabular Edition of the Sermons?

This attribution of sermons to Bartholomew has a long history, dating to the end of the Middle Ages. This is to be found in the data gathered by the Benedictine abbot Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516). In his *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, completed in

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**28** See also <https://grpl.hypotheses.org/424> which provides the text of the prologue and attributes it to Richard Rufus of Cornwall. This text has been studied and edited by Marc Ozilou. See Marc Ozilou, 'Étude sur un traité de théologie symbolique attribué à saint Bonaventure,' *École pratique des hautes études, Section des sciences religieuses: Annuaire*, Tome 99 (1990), pp. 479–81; Marc Ozilou, *Un Deutéro-Bonaventure: La Symbolica Theologia de Richard Rufus de Cornouailles* (Paris, unpublished dissertation, 1990). This attribution appears to be in dispute and is not consistent with the prologue: 'Magnarum rerum, sicut Ethicus ait, etsi non detur successus, honestus est tamen ipse conatus. Ego igitur, aliquid magnum mihi et transcendens ingenii proprii facultatem aggressus sum, inuestigari scilicet diuine Scripture locutiones s[ym]bolicas siue figuratiuas, occasione accepta, a quibusdam memorialibus domini fratris Bonauenture, **clare memorie**, olim episcopi Albanensis, que sibi (quasi quedam semina) in huius opus ipse parauerat. Quamuis ea (aliis occupatus curis, primo generalis ministerii, deinde cardinalatus), nequaquam usque ad plena germina explicando confouerit. In hoc igitur, ego, ipsius temptans imitari uestigia, licet nouerim me non posse tanti uiri conceptus attingere, uel successum dignum altis ingeniis obtinere, ex ipso tamen conatu, puto me, sapientibus inquirendi et inueniendi potiora, nonnullam prebuisse materiam. Mihi uero, ipsa exercitatio partes aliquas temporis, alicui forsitan uane uacationi, subduxit. Qui ergo, potuerit ex iis (que scripta sunt hic), aliquid utile carpere, laudet Deum, cuius munere agitur omne quod bonum est. Si cui uero, inutilia uel superflua uidebuntur, patienter sustineat, propter eos qui eadem sibi in aliqua parte crediderint profutura. Placuit autem, opusculum hoc in decem particulas distinguere, quas et distinctiones uolui uocare, quarum quelibet habet sua capitula.' (Emphasis mine).

**29** Plassmann, 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus,' esp. pp. 76–77.

1494, he presented chronological entries on the great theologians.<sup>30</sup> He reports that he discovered among Bartholomew's works the 19 books of his *De proprietatibus rerum* as well as a book of various sermons (*sermones varios*): '*E quibus ego reperi tantum volumen, quod prae-notavit De proprietatibus rerum, lib. 19 (Cum proprietatibus rerum), Sermones varios, lib. 1.*'

A century later, in 1586, the monk Pietro Ridolfi de Tossignano published his *Historiae seraphicae religionis libri tres* in which he makes a brief mention of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, whom he also calls Burgundus: like Trithemius, he attributes to him: '*XIX lib. De proprietatibus rerum et sermonum variorum librum unum, impressos Argentinae, anno 1491.*' He is thus the first to give an indication of an incunabular edition of the sermons, from Strasbourg in 1491.

These references to an incunabular edition were taken up by other scholars who cite not only the date of 1491, but also 1495, since these sermons were allegedly published in Strasbourg in 1491 (according to Rodolphus of Tossignano and Pits) while other bibliographers (Du Pin, Hurter) mention a 1495 edition.<sup>31</sup> It is for this reason that Palémon Glorieux, in his book on the masters of the faculty of arts, refers to the two incunabular editions, that of 1491 and that of 1495.<sup>32</sup>

It is likely that this error in attribution can be linked to an incunable of the *Liber de proprietatibus rerum* which was itself published in Strasbourg in 1491.<sup>33</sup> The anonymous printer of that volume was indeed also the printer of the sermons of Jordanus of Quedlinburg (*sermones Jordani*).<sup>34</sup> The printer in question may have been Georg Husner. The incunable bears no printer's name, and concludes as follows: '*explicit liber de proprietatibus rerum, editus a fratre Bartholomeo anglico, ordinis fratrum minorum, impressus Argentinae, anno domini mccccxci, finitus altera die post festum Sancti Laurentii martyris [i.e. 11 August 1491].*'<sup>35</sup>

At the conclusion of this survey, the fruits of our enquiry seem meagre indeed, since the works wrongly attributed to Bartholomew the Englishman have had to

**30** Mentioned by Plassmann, 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus,' esp. pp. 73–74.

**31** Plassmann, 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus,' esp. p. 4. To these references can be added the work of the English philologist and bibliographer Michael Maittaire, who in the 18th century mentions 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus sermones [I. 600] Argentina. 1495.' (cf. *Annalium typographicorum tomus quintus et ultimus, indicem in tomos quatuor prae-euntes complectens*, p. 113). He makes reference also to the first volume of his *Annales typographici ab artis inventae origine, ad annum MDCLXIV* (Amsterdam: Apud Petrum Humbert, 1733), p. 600.

**32** Palémon Glorieux, *La Faculté des arts et ses maîtres au XIIIe siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1971), p. 101.

**33** <https://data.cerl.org/istc/ib00140000?style=expanded>.

**34** Ludwig Hain, *Repertorium bibliographicum, in quo libri omnes ab arte typographica inventa usque ad annum MD typis expressi ordine alphabetico vel simpliciter enumerantur vel adcuratius recensentur*, vol. 2 (Paris: Renouard; Stuttgart: Cotta, 1925), n. 9438. On this printer, see Victor Scholderer, 'The Printer of Jordanus De Quedlinburg, Strasburg, 1481–1502,' *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 46:3 (1952), pp. 179–85.

**35** See the full entry for this incunable in <https://gesamtkatalogderwiegendrucke.de/docs/GW03412.htm>.



be set aside, and most particularly his exegetical works. In order to study his work on the Bible and its reception, one must return to the *Liber de proprietatibus rerum* and its exegetical and pastoral use.

## Exegesis and Preaching in Bartholomew the Englishman

Encyclopedias are useful both to preachers and exegetes.<sup>36</sup> As Gilbert Dahan states, these works set out to describe the realities of the world and of Scripture, and that in fact is what Bartholomew spells out in his prologue:

Since the properties of things follow their substances according to their distinction and their order, the order and distinction of properties derive from them. The present work concerning these, compiled with God's help, will be useful to me and perhaps also to others who have no knowledge of the natures and properties of things which are to be found scattered throughout the books of saints as well as those of philosophers, in order to understand the mysteries of scripture, handed down and veiled by the Holy Spirit beneath the symbols and properties of things natural and artificial, as St Denis shows in his *Hierarchy of Angels*. (...) Theology [that is, holy scripture] has made use of sacred and poetic observations so that, from the similitudes of things visible, allegories may be formulated and mystical meanings transmitted, and that thus spiritual and invisible realities may be conjoined with fleshly and visible realities.<sup>37</sup>

Gilbert Dahan emphasizes how exegetically unusual this text is, in the context of medieval encyclopedias of the period: Bartholomew insists on the need to interpret the spiritual meaning (*allegorice locutiones*, which implies a 'hermeneutic leap', that is, a shift from the literal to the spiritual meaning) and the transmission of meaning (*transumptio* or *translatio*) revived in the 13th century by the thought of Pseudo-Denis. This spiritual interpretation is authorized by what Gilbert Dahan calls 'integrated moralizings', perhaps better described as 'marginalized' in the case of *De proprietatibus rerum*, since the term refers to marginal annotations in the manuscripts, which have recently been studied.

In the majority of compendia in the 13th to 15th centuries, the text is accompanied by numerous brief marginal notes of the *nota de* type which point to the allegorical and moral meaning to be ascribed to the realities described in the body of the text. Heinz Meyer has shown that these notes, far from being copyists' additions,

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<sup>36</sup> Sophie Delmas, 'La réception des encyclopédies naturelles dans les sermons au XIIIe siècle: Quelques exemples,' *Rursus* 11 (2017), published online 20 October 2017; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/rursus.1340>.

<sup>37</sup> Translation into English of the French translation of Gilbert Dahan, *L'exégèse chrétienne de la Bible en Occident médiéval XIIe-XIVe siècles* (Paris: Cerf, 1999), p. 336; Gilbert Dahan, 'Encyclopédies et exégèse de la Bible aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles,' *Cahiers de recherches médiévales* 6 (1999), published online 11 January 2007; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/crm.927>.

were an integral part of the text from the start.<sup>38</sup> Such allegorical-moral glosses are present in almost 70% of the manuscripts.<sup>39</sup> Such prevalence points to the conclusion that they formed part of the original text.

Baudouin Van den Abeele has for instance studied the remarks devoted to animals: some are allegorical, others moral, which seems to support the notion of pastoral use being made of the encyclopaedia.<sup>40</sup> Iolanda Ventura has likewise looked at allegorical interpretations concerning plants and their derivatives, such as perfumes.<sup>41</sup>

One of the most significant examples of such use is that of the *Liber septiformis* attributed to Marcus of Orvieto, which is thought to have been written in the 1280s. In this work, also known under other titles such as *Proprietates rerum moralisatae* or *Liber moralitatum*, the author draws on seven of the 19 books of Bartholomew the Englishman including their marginal notes.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, Giovanni di San Gimignano contributed to the dissemination of these notes in his *Liber de exemplis*.

But it is most of all in the sermons that we need to look for traces of the encyclopedic observations of *De proprietatibus rerum* and their allegorical or moral interpretation. This task is made all the more difficult by the fact that, initially, in the mid-13th century and thereafter, Bartholomew the Englishman is not explicitly quoted as

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**38** Bartholomeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*, pp. 10–11. See in particular Heinz Meyer, 'Zu Formen und Funktionen der Textbearbeitung und Werkerschließung in der Überlieferung des *Liber de proprietatibus rerum*,' in *Der Codex im Gebrauch*, ed. C. Meier, D. Hüpper and H. Keller (Munich: W. Fink, 1996), pp. 211–23.

**39** Heinz Meyer, *Die Enzyklopädie des Bartholomäus Anglicus: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferungs- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von 'De proprietatibus rerum'* (Munich: Fink, 2000). Christel Meier has established that 24 manuscripts of the *De proprietatibus* include notes on minerals and stones, but that tradition is not uniform. Three others present the moralization not in the margins but in abridged form in the columns; see 'Text und Kontext: Steine und Farben bei Bartholomäus Anglicus in ihren Werk- und Diskurszusammenhängen,' in *Bartholomäus Anglicus, 'De proprietatibus rerum': Texte latin et réception vernaculaire: actes du colloque international, Münster, 9.–11.10.2003*, ed. Baudouin Van den Abeele and Heinz Meyer (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 151–83.

**40** Baudouin Van den Abeele, 'Simbolismo sui margini: Le moralizzazioni del *De proprietatibus rerum* di Bartolomeo Anglico,' in *Simbolismo animale e letteratura*, ed. D. Faraci (Rome: Vecchiarelli, 2003), pp. 159–83.

**41** Iolanda Ventura, 'Plant Symbolism in Thirteenth-Century Biblical Exegesis and in Bartholomäus Anglicus' *De proprietatibus rerum*,' *Schola Salernitana annali* 12 (2007), pp. 121–34. I am grateful to Iolanda Ventura for providing me with her article.

**42** This work has recently been edited: *Marci de Urbi Veteri Liber de Moralitatibus*, ed. Girard J. Etzkorn (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 2005). The links with Bartholomew are studied in more detail by John B. Friedman, 'Peacocks and Preachers: Analytic Technique in Marcus of Orvieto's *Liber de moralitatibus*, Vatican lat. MS 5933,' *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages: The Bestiary and its Legacy*, ed. W.B. Clark and M. McMunn (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), pp. 179–96; Adrienne Hamy-Dupont, 'La production encyclopédique de Marc d'Orvieto et Juan Gil de Zamora: ressources pour la prédication,' *Rursus* 11 (2017); DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/rursus.1369>.

an authority.<sup>43</sup> The implicit borrowings from Bartholomew occur from the mid-13th century onward, notably in the work of the Franciscan Servas Sanctus de Faenza: passages have been identified on the subject of the heavenly bodies, and also on the effects of heat on metals.<sup>44</sup>

In the 1260s, the Parisian theologian Eustache d'Arras chose in his sixteenth sermon to reflect on the eight characteristics of the fig tree.<sup>45</sup> These are partly borrowed from the *De proprietatibus rerum* of Bartholomew the Englishman, who is nevertheless not specifically named. To each mention of the properties of the tree, Eustache attaches a spiritual interpretation designed to show that these properties are also those of divine consolation. The theme of the sermon is taken from the Gospel of Luke 21:29–31: 'Look at the fig tree, or any other tree. As soon as it buds, you can see for yourselves that summer is near. In the same way when you see all this happening, you may be sure that the kingdom of God is.' Building on this biblical theme, Eustache d'Arras explains that the Lord has given to human souls a remedy which arms them against danger. The fig tree and its fruit possess eight characteristics which afford divine consolations to humanity.

The first is that the fig tree, more than all the other trees, is fruitful; likewise, divine consolation renders the soul more fruitful in the riches of the spirit. The second is that, compared to other fruits, the fig is much sweeter; likewise, consolation makes the soul sweeter. The third is that it brings more comfort than other fruits; likewise, divine consolation brings more comfort than anyone else can. The fourth is that figs smooth away the wrinkles of old men who have partaken of them; likewise, divine consolation smooths away the wrinkles of sin. The fifth is that the fiercest bulls become mellow once they are tied to a fig tree; likewise, divine consolation mellows tyrants and emperors and the impious. Here Eustache borrows a passage from the beginning of the epistle to the Galatians in which Paul describes the persecutions he carried out, prior to his inner revelation which led him to become an apostle among the heathen.

The sixth is that the sap of the fig tree has the power of 'coagulation' and the property of coagulation to make cheeses; likewise, divine consolation enables the soul to gather itself together and to become united with God. The seventh is that fig trees are by nature to be found where the winds blow from the south rather

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<sup>43</sup> Juris G. Lidaka, 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus in the Thirteenth Century,' in *Pre-Modern Encyclopaedic Texts: Proceedings of the Second COMERS Congress, Groningen, 1–4 July 1996*, ed. Peter Binkley (Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 393–406.

<sup>44</sup> On the heavenly bodies, see Isabelle Draelants and Eduard Frunzeanu, 'Le savoir astronomique et ses sources dans le *De mundo et corporibus celestibus* de Barthélemy l'Anglais,' *Rursus* 11 (2017), published online 22 December 2017; URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/rursus/1352>. On the metals, see José Rodríguez Guerrero, 'Mineralogía y Alquimia en Sermones del siglo XIII: El ignorado caso de Servasanto de Faenza,' *Azogue* 8 (2018), pp. 23–143, esp. p. 61.

<sup>45</sup> Sophie Delmas, *Un franciscain à Paris au milieu du XIIIe siècle: Le maître en théologie Eustache d'Arras* (Paris: Cerf, 2010), pp. 264–65.

than the north; likewise, one must be open to inspiration from the Holy Spirit and repel the storm winds of the world, the flesh and the Devil. The eighth is that figs offer a treatment for many illnesses; likewise, divine consolation wipes away all the infirmities of the soul. However, it is difficult to know whether Eustache had recourse to the marginal notes of *De proprietatibus rerum*: the passage from book XVII does include numerous *notae*. Only one of these refers to consolation (*nota de consolatione*) which is the central theme in Eustache's sermon. None of the other *notae* (*de pietate, de caritate* etc.) in this passage seems to have inspired the Franciscan preacher. The following table gives a clearer picture of the use of encyclopedic data:

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**Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*, vol. 6, bk. 17, ed. Iolanda Ventura (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 91–94.**

**Eustache d'Arras, sermon 16, in Sophie Delmas, *Un franciscain à Paris au milieu du XIIIe siècle: Le maître en théologie Eustache d'Arras* (Paris: Cerf, 2010), pp. 263–65.**

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*Ficus est arbor a fecunditate dicta; aliis enim arboribus feracior est, nam terque quaterque per singulos annos fructum gignit, atque altero maturescit aboritur alter statim.*

*Habet autem ficulnea cum fructu suo octo proprietates anime et uite hominis sentientis et procurantis sibi consolationes celestes conuenientes.*

(...) *Inter fructus carica est dulcior, et est utilis in cibo et in medicina; multum enim nutrit et impinguat.*

*Prima est quia ficus omnibus aliis arboribus est fructu fecondior siue feracior. Nam ter quinque in anno fructificat et, uno fructu nato, alter est in nascendo et, uno maturo, alter est in maturescendo (...).*

(...) *Ante tempora vero Pythagore alebantur ficibus Galathe, alias Athelete, antequam idem cos ad carnis usum, in quo fortior est cibus, transulisset.*

*Secunda est quia omnibus aliis fructibus est dulcior et pinguior (...). Tercia est quia maioris ceteris fructibus est confortacionis. In cuius signum, ante tempora Pictagore, athlete alebantur ficibus sicut modo carnibus (...).*

(...) *A senibus autem in cibo sumpte ficus rugas eorum distendere feruntur.*

*Quarta est quia ficus a senibus in cibo sumpte rugas eorum contendunt (...).*

(...) *Taurus quoque ferocissimos ad fici arbores colligatos dicunt repente mansuescere.*

*Quinta est quia tauri ferocissimi ad fici arborem alligati dicuntur mansuescere (...).*

(...) *Fici lac vim habet coaguli ad faciendos caseos.*

*Sexta est quia lac fici uim coagulari (sic) habet ad faciendos caseos (...).*

(...) *In aquilonati parte minus proficiunt fici et plus arescunt, quia earum humor lacteus facillime consumitur.*

*Septima est quia arbor fici naturalius situatur contra uentos australes quam contra aquilonem. Nam lacteus eius humor facile consumitur ab aquilonaribus uentis (...).*

*Octaua est quia contra multas egritudines ualent ficus: nam pectus mundificant, tussim sedant, faucium tumorem mitigant et huiusmodi multa faciunt.*

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Thereafter, from the 14th century onward, the authority of Bartholomew gained wide recognition, since he was henceforward described in manuscripts as the 'master of

the properties of things' (*magister de proprietatibus rerum*). For example, in the mid-14th century, Pope Clement VI devoted a sermon (as yet unpublished) to the feast of Louis d'Anjou on a theme taken from a verse from Ecclesiasticus 50:13: 'a garland of brothers like a plantation of cedar' (*corona fratrum quasi plantatio cedri*).<sup>46</sup> The allusion to the cedar was the occasion for a discussion of its fruits, borrowed from book 17, chapter 23 of *De proprietatibus rerum*: 'Nam ut dicit magister *De proprietatibus rerum* libro xvii: *poma cedrina expellunt inflaturam in dentibus vel alibi. Item arbor et fructus defendunt hominem a morsu serpentis et quia est ille serpens nisi dyabolus qui per inflaturam et superbiam est deiectus?*'<sup>47</sup> Likewise, the Archbishop of Toulouse, Jean de Cardaillac (1313–90), began a sermon (unpublished) for Pentecost, preserved in MS BnF lat. 3294 on the theme *Flavit spiritus ejus et fluent aquae...* (Ps. 147:18) and gave a lengthy disquisition on this biblical passage, referring to book 8 of Bartholomew on the subject of fish and in particular whales (*Dicunt naturales et potissime magister de proprietatibus li. XIII capitulo ultimo*).

Furthermore, Bartholomew the Englishman gained further consecration from being quoted when certain themes are introduced. Many examples are to be found in the corpus of sermons entitled, *Thesaurus novus de sanctis*, erroneously attributed to Pierre de Palud.<sup>48</sup> This volume probably dates from the 1440s. As Pietro Delcorno has pointed out, the sermons *de sanctis* include four sermons devoted to the conception of the Virgin, which are followed by the decree of the Council of Basle concerning the Immaculate Conception: it is therefore inconceivable that the author could be a Dominican. Some have argued for an attribution to a Franciscan, Petrus de Colle (d. 1450), but the compilation also does not include any sermons honoring Franciscan saints, hence the difficulty in determining its author.<sup>49</sup>

Be that as it may, the author sometimes introduces these biblical themes by starting from an encyclopedic reference taken from the plant or animal realm. For example, several quotations from Pliny are to be found in the introductions to sermons

<sup>46</sup> See Aleksander Horowski, 'Sermoni medievali latini su san Ludovico d'Angio: un incipitario,' *Frère Francesco* 83 (2017), pp. 9–50, esp. p. 18.

<sup>47</sup> Sainte-Geneviève MS 240, sermon for the feast of St Louis d'Anjou, *Corona fratrum* (date unknown), in J.-B. Schneyer, *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters für die Zeit von 1150–1350 (Repertorium)*, 11 Tomes (Münster i.W.: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1969–90), t. 4, p. 759, n. 17, f. 489 V, quoted by Étienne Anheim, *Clément VI au travail: Lire, écrire, prêcher au XIVe siècle* (Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2014), chapter 7. Available online: <http://books.openedition.org/psorbonne/26448>.

<sup>48</sup> Isabelle Draelants and Eduard Frunzeanu, 'Le savoir astronomique et ses sources dans le *De mundo et corporibus celestibus* de Barthélemy l'Anglais,' *Rursus* 11 (2017), published online 22 December 2017; URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/rursus/1352>.

<sup>49</sup> Pietro Delcorno, *In the Mirror of the Prodigal Son: The Pastoral Uses of a Biblical Narrative (c. 1200–1550)* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), p. 171; Leonide Mees, 'Petrus a Colle, auteur des Sermones The-sauri novi?' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 79 (1986), pp. 516–18. A noteworthy feature is the presence of a passage in old German, particularly in sermon 26 in which we read '*medullam cedri, id est den kern ceders boms.*'

20 *De nativitate Domine* ('Dicit Plinius in speculo naturali: sol cum oritur grandis fragor et strepitus in orientatibus regionibus auditur'); 36 *De circumcissione Domini* ('Plinius dicit in speculo naturali quod arbor morus ets medicinalis tota precipue quoad cortices, fructus, folia et radices'); 108 *De sancto Iacobo* ('Dicunt naturales quod arbores que non fuerunt mote per ventum non habent fructus... qui secundum Plinium...'); 119 *De decollatione Iohannis baptiste* ('Dicit Plinius in speculo naturali : aper silvestris est tante crudelitatis'); 157 *De sancta Katharina* ('Dicit Plinius in speculo naturali quod flos rose inter omnes flores obtinet principatum').

In addition we find references to the *Liber de similitudinibus rerum* of Giovanni di San Gimignano in sermon 29 ('Lagitur de similitudinis rerum li. V quos canis rabidus multas habets proprietates'), and also to Isidore of Seville in sermons 60 *De sancta Dorothea* ('Zizania secundum Isidorum nascitur inter triticum et quodammodo similis est herba tritico, sic quod ab eo vix poterit discerni et cum creverit separatur et eradicatur') and 77 *De sancta cruce* ('Scribit Isidorus de quadam arbore que est in India et habet fructus dulcissimos'). More curiously still, in sermon 123 on the nativity of Mary, the author quotes book 8 the work on agronomy by Pietro de' Crescenzi (1230–1320) entitled *Ruralium commodorum opus: Petris de Crescentiis li. viii: qui vult viridarium plantare debet locum eligere planum, non paludinosum in quod sit fons et debet extirpare adulterinas radices* etc.

But in at least five cases, it is 'the master of the properties of things,' Bartholomew the Englishman, who is invoked straight after the theme, to introduce the subject of the sermon. The first of these is a sermon for St Andrew whose biblical theme is *Relictis retibus continuo secuti sunt eum. Mat IIII*. This verse is immediately followed by a reference to book 8 of *De proprietatibus rerum* which deals with the sun's power of attraction, which draws up from the sea 'vapors' which turn into clouds, yielding rain and snow. In like fashion, the sun of divine justice attracts people of humility.

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**Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De rerum proprietatibus* (Frankfurt: Minerva, 1964), book 8, chapter 17: *De sole*.**

***Thesaurus novus de sanctis*,<sup>50</sup> Sermon for St Andrew.<sup>51</sup>**

*Item virtutem habet attractivam. Calore enim suo attrahit a mari fumos et vapores, et tandem eos condensat in nubes et sic condensatos resolvit eos nunc in grandines, nunc in pluvias, nunc in nives.*

*Magister in li. viii De proprietatibus rerum dicit quod sol habet virtutem attractivam. Nam vapores de mari attrahit et tandem in nubes condensat et sic condensatos eos resolvit nunc in pluvias, nunc in grandines, iam in nives.*

*Spiritualiter sic sol iustitiae virtute sue deitatis attrahit ad se homines humiles que sunt summo*

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<sup>50</sup> Pseudo-Petrus de Palude, *Sermones Thesauri novi de sanctis* (Strasbourg: Martin Flach, 1491). A keyword search in the Répertoire of Schneyer makes clear how important references to the *Liber de proprietatibus rerum* are in this compilation.

<sup>51</sup> Schneyer, *Repertorium*, t. 5, p. 537, n. 180.

Continued

**Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De rerum proprietatibus* (Frankfurt: Minerva, 1964), book 8, chapter 17: *De sole*.**

***Thesaurus novus de sanctis*,<sup>50</sup> Sermon for St Andrew.<sup>51</sup>**

*similes. Sap v: quasi sumus qui a vento est diffusus. Et sumus seu vapor fuerunt hi duo apostoli ante vocationem. Sed dominus eos ad se traxit et in nubes convertit, de quo Isa lxi: qui sunt hi qui ut nubes volant? Et bene Andreas nubibus comparatur quia nubes de se fundunt pluviam que terram rigat et fecundat. Sic beatus Andreas imbre sue doctrine fudit et corda ydolatrancia ir-rigavit et in fide roboravit.*

In the same collection, another sermon on the Conception of the Virgin Mary takes as its starting point a passage on light. The theme of the sermon is *erunt signa*, in which the preacher starts by expounding the properties of light:

**Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De rerum proprietatibus*, book 8, chapter 29: *De luce et eius proprietatibus*.**

***Thesaurus novus de sanctis*, Sermon for the Conception of the Virgin Mary.<sup>52</sup>**

*Lux tenebras expellit meroresque dissolvit, insidias prodit, securitatem parit, omnem speciem letam iucundamque inducit, rebus omnibus formam et decorem tribuit, quia sine luce omnia corpora occulta remanent et ignota.*

*Lux habet multas proprietates ut dicit autor de proprietatibus rerum. Primo tenebras pellit; secundo gaudium parit; tercio securitatem inducit; quarto viam ostendit; quinto in oculis vibrat.*

*Spiritualiter per lucem intelligitur Maria in sanctificatione. Unde de ea canit ecclesie: cuius vita gloriosa lucem dedit seculo. Et primi lux tenebras pellit, sic gratia Marie quas invenit vitiorum fugat (...) Secunda proprietas lucis est quod gaudium adducit (...) et sic conceptio beata Marie attulit nobis gaudium (...) Tercio lux securitatem parit (...) et sic Maria parit nobis securitatem (...) Quarto lux viam ostendit (...) et sic Maria per eius virtuosam vitam ostendit nobis viam ad dominum (...). Quinto lux vibrat in oculis signanter si clari fuerunt, sic claritas gratie sanctificationis Marie in oculis nostre intelligentie vibrat quam etiam eam non valeamus enarrare.*

Likewise, in another sermon for the feast of St John the Baptist, on the sermon's theme *Johannes est nomen eius*, the author of the *Thesaurus novus* once more

<sup>52</sup> Schneyer, *Repertorium*, t. 5, p. 538, n. 189.



takes the work of Bartholomew the Englishman as a starting point, this time as it relates to the chaste and solitary turtledove.

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**Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De rerum proprietatibus*, book 12, chapter 34: *De turture*.**

*Turtur autem avis casta ex moribus appelletur, eo quod comes sit castitatis. Amisso enim pari suo alterius copulam non requirit. Solitarie incedit, meor societatis perditae semper gemit, loca solitaria diligit et eligit, consortiaque hominum valde fugit (...). Vernali tempore advenit et novitatem instantis temporis querula voce prodit.*

***Thesaurus novus de sanctis*, Sermon for the feast of St John the Baptist.<sup>53</sup>**

*Legitur in libro De proprietatibus rerum: turtur est avis casta querens deserta et loca solitaria diligens et fugit consortia. Hec avis adventiente vernali tempore querula voce nunciat novitatem temporis. Canti II: iam hiems transiit imber abiit et recessit, flores apparuerunt in terra nostra quia vox turturis audita est in terra nostra. Spiritualiter per turturem intelligitur beatus Iohannes. Primo quia turtur est avis casta et sic beatus Iohannes quia perpetuus virgo (...). Secundo avis ista fugit consortia et sic beatus Iohannes de quo canit hymnus (...). Tercio in adventue suo novum tempus annuntiat. Mat iii: penitentiam agite.*

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A fourth case can be identified, in which Bartholomew is implicitly referred to with the term 'naturales', in sermon 34: *De circumcissione Domini*. The subject is the vine and its branches.

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**Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De rerum proprietatibus*, book 27, chapter 179: *De vitulamine*.**

*Vitulamen a vite dicitur illa planta bastarda sive spuria et infructosa que nascitur a radice vitis sive alis, non procedens ex ipsis gemmis et tales plantae degenerescunt et innaturales et ideo non fructificant, sed vitem onerant et gravant et fructum impediunt ac retardant. Nam humorem attrahunt a radice qui deberet transferri ad fructum nutriendum et augmentandum et ideo debent citius extirpari ne diutius crescentes diminuant fructum vitis.*

***Thesaurus novus de sanctis*, sermon 34: for the Circumcision.**

*Postquam impleti sunt dies octo ut circumcideretur puer, scribitur Luce II et legitur in hodiernae diei officio.*

*Dicunt naturales quod a vite procedunt quidam palmites infructuosi qui non fructificant, et cum hoc fructum in aliis impediunt eo quod humorem attrahunt a radice qui deberet transire ad alios palmites et nisi tales circumcidant impediunt fructum.*

*Spiritualiter: per vitem intelligitur Adam quem Deus plantavit et posuit in paradysum voluptatis ut botros virtutum et vinum dilectionis ferret. Sed heu ab eo processerunt quidam palmites infructuosi sive originalium peccatorum qui in omnes posteros suos sunt transfusi. (...) Ideo necesse est et fuit quatenus preciderentur et eradicarentur ut*

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<sup>53</sup> Schneyer, *Repertorium*, t. 5, p. 544, n. 267.

Continued

<b>Bartholomaeus Anglicus, <i>De rerum proprietatibus</i>, book 27, chapter 179: <i>De vitulamine</i>.</b>	<b><i>Thesaurus novus de sanctis</i>, sermon 34: for the Circumcision.</b>
	<i>asserit salvator. (...) Et hec eradicatio facta est per circumcisionem que data est ad culpam originalem tollendam.</i>

A fifth case is similar since the passage from Bartholomew is referred to through the term *naturales*. The subject here is the heliotrope.

<b>Bartholomaeus Anglicus, <i>De rerum proprietatibus</i>, book 17, chapter 55.</b>	<b><i>Thesaurus novus de sanctis</i>, sermon 115: for the Assumption of the Virgin.</b>
<i>De heliotropio</i>  <i>Nam sole oriente flores suos aperit et cum sol occubuerit, iterum se claudit (...). Solsequium sponsa solis dicitur et est herba frigida et humida in secundo gradu, cuius succus bibitus, valet contra venenum sumptum interius, valet etiam contra morsum caninum et venenosum.</i>	<i>Assumpta est Maria in celum gaudent angeli laudantes benedicunt Dominum. Dicunt naturales quod herbe quedam que dicitur sponsa solis est herba frigida et humida in secundo gradu et est communis omnibus; eius succus cum bibitur valet contra venenum, valet etiam contra morsum canum venenosum. Si trita super vulnus ponatur, venenum ad se trahit. Hunc florem sol ad se trahit et quando sol oritur suos flores aperit et cum occubuerit, iterum se claudit et sequitur motum solis. Spiritualiter: per hunc florem intelligitur beata Virgo Maria que fuit frigida ab omni ardore peccatorum et humisa ex plenitudine gratiarum.</i>

A sixth case is less explicit, since the reference is only to '*naturales*' and the quotation is not a literal one. It may be that it was drawn from another encyclopedia. The passage concerns the sun: '*Sol etiam, ut dicit Beda, si fuerit maculosus vel sub nube latens, pluvialem dies presagit, si rubeat, si vero palleat tempestuosem*' (book 8, chapter 17). In the *Thesaurus novus*, in the introduction to the theme *oportet prevenire solem ad benedictionem tuam* (Wisdom 16) relating to the Nativity (sermon 18), the author explains that, according to what the naturalists say (*dicunt naturales*), when the sun rises and is hidden by clouds, that presages rain (*quando sol oritur sub nube, tunc est signum future pluvie*). As in the previous examples, this observation is followed by a spiritual interpretation (*spiritualiter*), according to which the sky represents Christ (*per solem intelligitur Christus*), and the rain presaged by the cloud of humankind signifies divine grace (*hic sol iusticie ortus est sub humanitatis et hoc fuit pluvie gratiarum*).

At about the same time, during the 15th century, the preacher Michael of Hungary, a mendicant friar (it is unclear whether he was Franciscan or Dominican) pro-

ceeded in a similar fashion,<sup>54</sup> as in an extract from his *sermones tredecim universales*. These sermons have the particular characteristic of being constructed around a keyword taken from a list presented at the outset: *sequitur-humiliat-dominus-filius-vocatur-servit-stans-moritur-diligit-venit-ambula-surge-resurge*. In the sermon beginning with *surgere*, Bartholomew is again quoted as the lead-in to the sermon, on the subject of elephants who take their rest by leaning against a tree, a behavior which hunters take advantage of by making them fall over (*Dicit magister De proprietatibus rerum quod elephas non habet tibias iunctures et ideo non poteste bene flecti. Unde, quando vult quiescere, appodiat se forti arbori et tunc veniunt venatores et prescindunt arborem et sic cadit in terram et sic capitur qui non potest surgere*). This example is given a moralizing interpretation: the elephant represents the sinner who does not manage, by his own efforts, to lean on virtues (*Moraliter per istum elephantem intelligo peccatorem quis de se non potest flecti ad virtutes, sed multotiens labitur in peccatum a quo, secundum Augustinum, non potest surgere per seipsum nisi gratia Dei adiuvetur et ideo orandum est*).

To conclude: the scrutiny of the documentation on the biography and works of Bartholomew the Englishman does not serve to confirm the attribution to him of exegetical and pastoral works. Either there is a lack of sources which might provide a definite answer on this score, or the works in question are in fact by earlier authors such as Richard of St Victor, or later ones such as Bartholomew de Glanville, with whom Bartholomew the Englishman has often been confused. It is thus in the *De proprietatibus rerum* and in the integral moralizing glosses in the margins of the manuscripts that traces of his exegetical work can be discovered. This work was fruitful, providing a resource for preachers who made implicit use of it in the subject-matter of their sermons in the 13th century. Thereafter, in the 14th and especially the 15th centuries as in the *Thesaurus novus de sanctis*, the authority of Bartholomew, now acknowledged as the ‘*magister de proprietatibus*’, carries such weight that many sermons in their introduction take plants, animals, or the elements as a basis on which to launch their arguments, or even to construct the sermon as a whole.

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54 Zoltan J. Kosztolnyik, ‘Some Hungarian Theologians in the late Renaissance,’ *Church History* 57 (1988), pp. 5–6 in pp. 5–18, with bibliographical references; G. Borsa, *Michael de Hungaria, élete és művének nyomtatott kiadásai* (Budapest: Borda Antikvárium, 1997), pp. 33–45; G. Borsa, *Michael de Hungaria: A Medieval Author in Britain, His Person and a Biography of the Printed Editions of His Work Between 1480 and 1621* (Budapest: Borda Antikvárium, 1998).

Nicola Polloni

# Disentangling Roger Bacon's Criticism of Medieval Translations

**Abstract:** In his harsh polemics against the Latin *curriculum studiorum*, Roger Bacon often attacked Greek-and Arabic-to-Latin translations and their translators. Whereas many studies have focused on the *pars destruens* of Bacon's criticism, this contribution examines the *pars construens* implied by Bacon's discussion. By analysing the main arguments he levelled against some translators of his time, the paper shows how, behind a veil of criticism and rhetoric, Bacon envisioned a set of requirements that should be met by any translator. They constitute the profile of the 'good' translator, which is similar to another profile sketched by Bacon: that of the 'good' practitioner of philosophy and science, who needs to have a fluent knowledge of the ancient languages in order to properly understand the Latin translations as well. Accordingly, Bacon's criticism of medieval translations can be considered as an epiphenomenon of his wider syncretic approach to wisdom – its attainment being like resolving a puzzle whose pieces are scattered among different languages, cultures, and religions.

In his *Compendium studii philosophiae*, Roger Bacon declares that 'were I to have power over the books of Aristotle I would have them all burned because it is nothing but a waste of time to study them, a cause of error, and a multiplication of error beyond what can be accounted for.'<sup>1</sup> Bacon's pyromaniac attitude to Aristotle is not due to his dislike of the acclaimed philosopher, but rather to the Latin rendering of his works. Bacon points out that 'since the labors of Aristotle are the foundations of all of science, no one can estimate how great the damage is to Latins because of the bad translations philosophers have received.'<sup>2</sup> Apparently, nothing can be better than something, if the latter is a source of error and discord. Expanding on the same line of reasoning, Bacon observes that it would be better to do as Robert Grosseteste did (*pace sua*), when he 'entirely disregarded the books of Aristotle and their meth-

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1 Roger Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, ed. T.S. Maloney (Oxford: The British Academy, 2018), p. 166: 'Si enim haberem potestatem super libros Aristotelis, ego facerem omnes cremari, quia non est nisi temporis amissio studere in illis et causa erroris et multiplicatio ignorantiae ultra id quod valeat explicari.' The English texts I quote from Bacon's *Compendium* have been translated by Maloney in his edition of Bacon's work.

2 Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 166: 'Quoniam labores Aristotelis sunt fundamenta totius sapientiae, ideo nemo potest aestimare quantum dispendium accidit Latinis, quia malas translationes receperunt philosophi.'

ods' – at least according to Bacon.<sup>3</sup> One might wonder, what was so bad about the Latin translations of Aristotle to motivate such harsh criticism by Bacon?

In the following pages, I want to discuss Roger Bacon's critique of the Latin translators and present a different interpretation of Bacon's stance. This topic has been studied by Gabriel Théry and Richard Lemay.<sup>4</sup> In their discussion of Bacon's position, however, both scholars appear to have been quite unable to distinguish theory from rhetoric, purpose from persuasiveness, and the historical actor from the historical witness. As a consequence, the biases they see and blame in Bacon's criticism of the translators are mirrored by their own criticism of Bacon's words.

Roger Bacon directly criticizes the Latin translators in *Opus maius*, *Opus tertium*, and *Compendium studii philosophiae*.<sup>5</sup> As often happens with Bacon's texts, these passages are interrelated, and Bacon's criticism is repeated with few modifications in the three works. This redundancy is connected to the functions that Bacon's critique was aimed to carry out within the theoretical structure of the three works. These functions are related to three levels of Bacon's line of reasoning that should be recalled. Firstly, Bacon's attack against the Latin translators is an expression of his epistemological reflections on the problem of the interpretative access to a written text. As we shall see, Bacon claims that Latin practitioners of science, philosophy, and theology need to have a basic knowledge of the ancient languages (Hebrew, Greek, and probably Arabic), in order to properly understand the translated texts they use. For this reason, translators and translations are criticized in the sections that Bacon dedicates to the study of languages in the three works.

Secondly, Bacon displays an analytic attitude in dissecting causes and effects that bad translators and lack of linguistic fluency have on Latinate knowledge. Such an attitude compels him to consider the work of the translators as both an error and a cause of error. As a consequence, he fragments the deceiving effects of their unreliable work into a plurality of despicable problems, from doctrinal controversies to medical malpractice. Thirdly, it should be recalled that both the study of languages and the treatment of the effects of bad translations are aspects of Bacon's discussion of his project of education reform. Both *Opus maius* and *Opus tertium* were aimed at persuading Pope Clement IV to sponsor this project. Therefore, Bacon's line of reasoning is intrinsically bound to the socio-cultural purposes that he

<sup>3</sup> Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 166: 'Neglexit omnino libros Aristotelis et vias eorum.'

<sup>4</sup> See Gabriel Théry, 'Note sur l'aventure "bélénienne" de R. Bacon,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 13 (1950–51), pp. 129–47; and Richard Lemay, 'Roger Bacon's Attitude Toward the Latin Translations and Translators of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,' in *Roger Bacon and the Sciences: Commemorative Essays*, ed. Jeremiah Hackett (Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 25–47. In my examination, I will not discuss Rignani's article on the topic, because it reiterates Lemay's analysis and criticism almost to the letter. See O. Rignani, 'Ruggero Bacone su traduttori e traduzioni,' *Doctor Virtualis* 6 (2007), pp. 203–20.

<sup>5</sup> See Roger Bacon, *Opus maius*, ed. J.H. Bridges (London: William and Norgate, 1900); *Opus tertium*, ed. N. Egel (Hamburg: Meiner, 2020), bk. I, pp. 180–94; and *Compendium studii philosophiae*, pp. 160–76.

wanted to achieve in leveraging the pope.<sup>6</sup> The later *Compendium studii philosophiae* follows this tendency and reflects Bacon's disillusionment with the possibility of implementing his reform after the death of Pope Clement IV.

In my examination, I will focus mostly on the case of the philosophical translations discussed by Bacon. In fact, Bacon himself observes that the translations of philosophical works better exemplify problems and mistakes arising during the translating process than the translations of theological texts.<sup>7</sup> I will proceed as follows. Firstly, I will examine Bacon's critique of the methods of translations and the possibility of translating from a language to another. Secondly, I will analyse the *pars construens* of Bacon's reasoning, so often left out of consideration by scholarship. Finally, in my conclusions I will address how Bacon's theory of translation is connected to contextual aspects related to the purpose and rhetorical coordinates of his texts.

## Critique of the Methods of Translation

Roger Bacon appears to express some doubts about translatability as such.<sup>8</sup> He observes that every language is structured according to a series of grammatical, semantic, and stylistic peculiarities that cannot be rendered into the other language. As a consequence, 'it is not possible for what is done in one language through a unique variation to be conveyed properly and truthfully (*proprie et veraciter*) in another, especially in the case of the sciences, which present difficulties all their own.'<sup>9</sup> For the same reasons, in the *Opus maius* he concludes that 'an excellent piece of work in one language cannot be transferred into another as regards the peculiar quality that it possessed in the former.'<sup>10</sup>

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6 For a more general perspective on 13th-century Franciscans and the papacy, see Amanda Power, 'Franciscan Advice to the Papacy in the Middle Ages,' *History Compass* 5:5 (2007), pp. 1550–75. See also Jeremiah Hackett, 'Philosophy and Theology in Roger Bacon's *Opus Maius*,' in *Philosophy and the God of Abraham: Essays in Memory of James Weisheipl OP*, ed. Raymond James Long (Toronto: PIMS, 1991), pp. 55–71.

7 See Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 172: 'Sed longe maior error accidit in philosophia translata, quia, si sancti erraverunt in suis translationibus, multo magis alii qui parum aut nihil de sanctitate curaverunt.'

8 For a historical account of how translation theory has discussed the problem of translatability, see Raquel De Pedro, 'The Translatability of Texts: A Historical Overview,' *Meta* 44:4 (1999), pp. 546–59.

9 Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 160: 'Non est possibile ut quod in una lingua secundum proprietatem factum est explicetur proprie et veraciter in alia, et maxime de scientiis, quae sunt difficultates ex seipsis.'

10 Bacon, *Opus maius*, bk. III, pp. 66–67: 'Quod bene factum est in una lingua, non est possibile ut transferatur in aliam secundum ejus proprietatem quam habuerit in priori.' English trans. R. Belle Burke (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1928), vol. I, p. 75.

Bacon's doubts highlight a fundamental and controversial point which is still debated in translation theory. What does it mean to translate a text from one language into another? What is missed in this process, if anything? Bacon appears to reject the very principle of translatability: the translating process is unable to establish a true equivalence (*proprie et veraciter*) between the two languages. Bacon seems to imply that any translation always implies a semantic transfer: it is not a copy, but a new object epistemically characterized by a varying closeness to the original. Naïvely, a good translation could be one that gets as close as possible to the original text (the 'source domain') in its rendering into the other language (the 'target domain'). Accordingly, the translator may try to render into the target domain all the linguistic variables of the source domain at the levels of grammar, semantics, style, and even prosody. Yet, a translation cannot work as a mere mirror of the original text. The variables characterizing the source domain need to be rendered within the coordinates proper to the language of the target domain. Otherwise, the resulting text would be unintelligible, as Bacon observes referring to Jerome's stances on this issue.<sup>11</sup>

As is frequently the case with Bacon, however, one should not indulge too much in a single passage but rather look at the bigger picture. Bacon is surely sceptical about the true equivalence between source and target domains. However, his scepticism does not entail a complete denial of the possibilities of making a reliable translation: it is primarily centred on stressing the difficulty of its completion.<sup>12</sup> He is not denying the possibility of making a reliable translation but stressing instead the difficulty of the task. As we shall see, there are good translators that make good translations, even if they are few. A good translator needs to be fluent in the languages of both source and target domains. Such fluency ideally enables them to move proficiently among the different sets of linguistic variables of the languages of both source and target domains, adapting the former to the latter. However, there are also many bad translators that make bad translations. The reason of their unreliability is simple: their method and skills – and therefore, their practice – are not good. Going beyond its abrasive rhetoric, one should appreciate the *pars construens* of Bacon's criticism: reliable translations are possible when some crucial conditions are met.

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**11** Concerning this point, Bacon refers to Jerome's remarks about the impossibility of making a reliable literal translation of Homer. See Bacon, *Opus maius*, bk. III, p. 67; *Opus tertium*, bk. I, p. 182; and *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 160. On Bacon's criticism of literal translations, see also Charles Burnett, 'Translating from Arabic into Latin in the Middle Ages: Theory, Practice, and Criticism,' in *Éditer, traduire, interpreter: essais de méthodologie philosophique*, ed. Steve G. Lofts and Philipp W. Rosemann (Louvain-la-Neuve and Leuven: Peeters, 1997), pp. 71–72 in pp. 55–78.

**12** From this point of view, I believe that Bacon was less committed to his *pars destruens* than it might appear. Indeed, it seems to me that he is not aiming at a simple rejection of translations as such, but rather trying to facilitate his own education reform through the criticism of the available translations. My interpretation of Bacon's doubts about the feasibility of literal translations follows this consideration.



Gabriel Théry links Bacon's criticism to one particular method of translation: the bi-phasic word for word translations, which were commonly used by Arabic-to-Latin translators in Toledo.<sup>13</sup> This method required the collaboration of two translators fluent in Arabic and Latin, respectively. Adopting a word for word approach, the former translated the Arabic term into Spanish vernacular and the latter rendered that term into Latin. Evidently, bi-phasic word for word translations imply different levels of translations beyond the apparent (S→T) rendering of the text.<sup>14</sup> As a consequence, the process of translation is a slippery slope where each translator must have linguistic fluency in two languages and textual reinterpretation can occur in three different stages:

1. The interpretation implied by the linguistic rendering of Arabic into Spanish, which is characterised by the first translator's expertise:  $t_1(\text{Ar} \rightarrow \text{Sp})$ .
2. The interpretation established at the inter-personal level of communication between the two translators:  $t_1 \rightarrow t_2$ .
3. The interpretation entailed by the linguistic rendering of Spanish into Latin, which is in turn characterized by the second translator's expertise:  $t_2(\text{Sp} \rightarrow \text{Lat})$ .

Clearly, two different aspects appear to carry a crucial function in defining the 'expertise' proper to each translator: (a) their fluency in Spanish and the source or target language, and (b) their mastery of the disciplinary contents of what they are translating. Albeit evident, this is a fundamental point. Knowledge of the relevant languages is a necessary yet not sufficient condition for a reliable translation. I can be fluent in English and able to translate a philosophical text from Italian into English. However, if I were trying to translate a specialized text from a discipline in which I have no expertise – for instance, an essay on practices of oil extraction in Saudi Arabia – I would probably make a rather poor translation. In order to make a good translation, I must have a preliminary knowledge of the epistemic and semantic coordinates of the text I am about to translate. And needless to say, I also need to know the target and source languages. As we are going to see, these two requirements are the criteria for a good translation to which Bacon refers throughout his critique.

In the *Compendium*, Bacon refers to bi-phasic translations indirectly, by naming some translators that used that method. His criticism focuses on both the variables mentioned above, but particularly on linguistic fluency:

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**13** See Marie-Thérèse D'Alverny, 'Les traductions à deux interprètes, d'arabe en langue vernaculaire et de langue vernaculaire en latin,' in *Traduction et traducteurs au Moyen Âge: Actes du colloque international du CNRS organisé à Paris, Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, les 26 – 28 mai 1986*, ed. Geneviève Contamine (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1989), pp. 193–206.

**14** Albeit often neglected, the different epistemic levels implied by the bi-phasic model of translation show both richness and complexity of that process.

Nor did he [Herman the German] know Arabic well, as he acknowledged, for he more assisted [in making] the translations than was a translator himself, since *he retained Saracens with him* in Hispania who *took the lead in their translations*. Likewise Michael the Scot *ascribed many translations to himself*, but it is clear that Andrew, a certain Jew, *worked more on these*. So Michael, like Herman, translated, but they knew neither the sciences nor languages.<sup>15</sup>

Bacon recalls that Herman the German and Michael Scot used the bi-phasic method to make their translations, collaborating with Arabic native speakers. The text underlines that both Michael and Herman lacked what they were supposed to possess: linguistic fluency and disciplinary mastery. In addition, Bacon criticizes both authors for having ascribed to themselves the translations, while they were working in teams. In his opinion, the Arabic native speakers ‘worked more’ than them on the translations, for which they took the credit. Given the text, one wonders whether Bacon is criticizing the bi-phasic method or just the attitude of the individuals – Herman and Michael – involved in it.

Théry’s interpretation is grounded on three main claims that: (a) Bacon was not aware of how translations were actually made in Toledo; (b) he mistakenly ascribed most of the work to the Arabic native speaker rather than the Latin translator; and (c) he engaged hypocritically in his discussion of the translation teams working in Toledo and in England. I believe Théry’s claims are ungrounded and based on a mistaken interpretation of both text and context.

Concerning the first point (a), there are no reasons to believe that Bacon was not aware of the details of the Toledan translating process. Bacon’s text does not provide any clue pointing to his misunderstanding of the process or his lack of knowledge. To the contrary, it is very likely that Bacon had access to some accounts of how translations were made in Toledo. Although not all manuscripts circulating at the time included them, it should be recalled that many translations were accompanied by prefaces written by the translators. In some cases, these prefaces explicitly mention the translating process. The Latin translation of Avicenna’s *De anima* – a work that Bacon surely knew, and which had been translated in Toledo by Abraham ibn Daud and Dominicus Gundissalinus – is a very good example of this tendency. The preface recalls that, ‘[h]ere you have the book translated from Arabic, as I have first uttered the [meaning of its Arabic] words in vernacular, one by one, while Dominicus, the archdeacon, has translated them into Latin, one by one.’<sup>16</sup> Théry refers to Gundissalinus and Ibn Daud repeatedly claiming that Bacon did

<sup>15</sup> Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 174: ‘Nec Arabicum bene scivit, ut confessus est, quia magis fuit adiutor translationum quam translator, quia Saracenos tenuit secum in Hispania, qui fuerunt in suis translationibus principales. Similiter Michael Scotus ascripsit sibi translationes multas sed certum est quod Andreas quidam Iudaeus plus laboravit in his. Unde Michael sicut Hermanus retulit, nec scivit scientias neque linguas.’ Italics are mine.

<sup>16</sup> Avicenna Latinus, *Liber de anima seu Sextus de naturalibus*, 2 vols, ed. S. van Riet (Louvain: Peeters; Leiden: Brill, 1968–72), vol. I, p. 4: ‘Habetis ergo librum, nobis praecipiente et singula verba vulgiter proferente, et Dominico Archidiacono singula in latinum convertente, ex arabico translatum.’

not know their works.<sup>17</sup> In this case, too, Théry is overinterpreting the text. It is true that Bacon does not refer to either Gundissalinus or Ibn Daud in his critique of the translators.<sup>18</sup> However, an absence of evidence is not evidence of an absence, and Bacon surely used many of the translations made by these translators either together or with other members of their team (e.g. Avicenna's *De anima*, Ibn Gabirol's *Fons vitae*, and so on).<sup>19</sup> Therefore, Théry's claim that Bacon did not know how the Tolédan translators worked is at best unsubstantiated.

Similarly, also Théry's second claim (b) that Bacon mistakenly ascribes much of the work to the first translator (the Arabic native speaker) appears to be unfounded. As I have mentioned above, the bi-phasic translating process implies three distinct levels of interpretative access directly bound to the target and source languages: Arabic to Spanish by translator  $t_1$ , Spanish to Spanish from translator  $t_1$  to translator  $t_2$ , and Spanish to Latin by translator  $t_2$ . It is evident that both translators are responsible for this process and reinterpretations can happen at any of the three stages. It is also clear that the apparent process of translation (Ar→Lat) is a compound of two translations (Ar→Sp and Sp→Lat). As a consequence, the rendering of the Latin text (Sp→Lat) is mostly due to the Latin translator while the semantic unveiling of the original – corresponding to the initial interpretation of the text implied by (Ar→Sp) – is mostly due to the Arabic translator.

As I have recently pointed out in relation to the *Fons vitae*, the difference in the translators' access to the text is crucial and may result in the translation's reinterpretation of the original texts.<sup>20</sup> Bacon seems to bear in mind this question of epistemic access when he claims that most of the work was made by the Arabic-to-Spanish translator. Among the reasons why Bacon claims that a knowledge of languages is fundamental for the Latins much relevance is given to the access to the *true* meaning of the text. The same point seems to be implied by Bacon's reasoning on bi-phasic translations. The epistemic unveiling is indeed made by the Arabic-to-Spanish translator while the Spanish-to-Latin translator elaborates the words already interpreted

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17 See Théry, 'Note sur l'aventure "béléniennne"', p. 135: 'A aucun moment de ses œuvres il n'a pris conscience du mécanisme des traductions tolédanes. C'est précisément pour remédier à leur ignorance linguistique que les traducteurs tolédans eurent recours à des juifs qui, eux connaissaient l'arabe. Si Roger Bacon eût connu ce stratagème, il n'aurait pas accusé Michel Scot ni les autres traducteurs, de larcin littéraire. Il ne les aurait pas accusé non plus d'ignorance de l'arabe.'

18 There are evident reasons why Bacon does not refer to Gundissalinus and Ibn Daud: his criticism is indeed focused on the Latin translations of Aristotle's works.

19 Bacon also knew Gundissalinus' own philosophical works, which he mentions twice in his *Questions on Aristotle's Physics*. See Roger Bacon, *Questiones supra libros octo Physicorum Aristotelis*, ed. F.M. Delorme and R. Steele (Oxford: Clarendon, 1935), pp. 44 and 59. See also Nicola Polloni, *The Twelfth-Century Renewal of Latin Metaphysics: Gundissalinus's Ontology of Matter and Form* (Toronto: PIMS, 2020), pp. 268–69.

20 See Nicola Polloni, 'Misinterpreting Ibn Gabirol? Questions, Doubts, and Remarks on the Latin Translation of the *Fons vitae*,' in *Unravelling Ibn Gabirol's Metaphysics: Philosophical and Historical Studies*, ed. Nicola Polloni, Marienza Benedetto, and Federico Dal Bo (forthcoming).

by their team-member and renders them into Latin. Again, one should refrain from exaggerating this aspect: translations were the result of a team work, and both translators were accountable for the result. Nonetheless, Bacon seems to acknowledge the crucial significance of the Arabic translator in the process, something that Théry himself maintains elsewhere in his study.<sup>21</sup>

Théry's third claim (c) refers to Bacon's different treatment of the two Toledan translators he criticizes (Herman the German and Michael Scot) and Robert Grosseteste. I will not discuss Théry's suppositions about Bacon's crypto-nationalism and his supposed 'sentiment de supériorité anglaise.' Luckily, yet painfully, history has buried such chauvinist biases.<sup>22</sup> Théry's criticism is based on a short passage in which Bacon recalls that Grosseteste, not knowing Greek well, was helped by many *adiutores*.<sup>23</sup> Notwithstanding this collaborative framework – which evidently collides with the 'fluency in languages' requirement – Bacon maintains that Grosseteste's translations are good. According to him, the reason of their reliability is that Grosseteste 'knew the sciences' – i. e. he had disciplinary mastery of the topics of the texts he was translating. In Théry's opinion, Bacon did not understand the 'différences de méthode' between the bi-phasic method in Toledo and the team-work translations by Grosseteste.<sup>24</sup> Yet again, Théry's criticism seems to be ungrounded, both historically and theoretically. He does not mention either passage in which Bacon supposedly misconceives these translations or the way in which the translating methods should have been different. Cecilia Panti is currently editing a special issue dedicated to Grosseteste's translations, and that will significantly contribute to clarify this aspect. For the moment, I limit myself to stressing that, at least to my knowledge, there are not sufficient grounds to claim either of the two aforementioned points implied by Théry.

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**21** See Théry, 'Note sur l'aventure "bélénienne",' p. 136: 'Dans ces versions tolédanes, le juif et le chrétien ont leur part de responsabilité respective et totale. C'est le juif qui traduit tout l'ouvrage arabe en romance et c'est le chrétien qui traduit tout l'ouvrage en latin, le juif et le chrétien se rencontrant dans une langue commune: le romance. C'est donc une profonde erreur d'attribuer, comme le fait Bacon, la part principale aux 'Sarrasins' et de rabaisser Hermann au rang d'auxiliaire.'

**22** See Théry, 'Note sur l'aventure "bélénienne",' p. 139: 'Roger Bacon est un anglais et il n'aime guère que les habitants de son île. C'est le sentiment de sa supériorité anglaise qui explique sans doute le parti pris de Roger Bacon vis-à-vis des Latins, en infériorité au point de vue pratique et commercial; en infériorité dans les sciences; en infériorité en philosophie et tout cela, à cause de leur ignorance des langues, qui les rend inaptes à tout.'

**23** Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 174: 'Quia Graecum et Hebraeum non scivit sufficienter ut per se transferret, habuit multos adiutores.'

**24** See Théry, 'Note sur l'aventure "bélénienne",' p. 139: 'Roger Bacon ne s'est pas rendu compte que ces adjutores n'avaient absolument rien de commun avec les adjutores des traducteurs tolédans. Il y a des différences essentielles entre les traductions par dichotomie élaborées à Tolède et les traductions par équipe, comme celles que nous attribuons à Robert Grossetête, considéré comme chef d'entreprise. Roger Bacon n'a rien discerné des différences de méthode dans les traductions médiévales. Peu lui importerait d'ailleurs, cette connaissance des méthodes.'

Roger Bacon's stance seems to be rather different from Théry's interpretation of it. Bacon does not appear to be criticizing mainly the bi-phasic method of translation, either in Toledo or elsewhere. Of course, a good translator should be fluent in the languages of both source and target domains. Yet, the main problem seems to lay elsewhere, in the attitude of the translators that Bacon criticizes. Herman the German and Michael Scot do not meet the necessary criteria for making good translations: they have neither linguistic fluency nor disciplinary mastery. Furthermore, Bacon blames them for one additional reason: they have taken the credit for translations that resulted from a collaboration with other people who did more than them to make the translation. Indeed, they had access to the original text and interpretatively 'broke' it into the shared semantic coordinates that were then used and applied by the second translator. Accordingly, both Herman the German and Michael Scot fall into the category of those who are ignorant and, unaware of their ignorance: 'although they are in the densest shadows of error, they think that they are in the full light of truth.'<sup>25</sup> Both Herman the German and Michael Scot are exemplary cases of this reproachable attitude, while Grosseteste is not.

## Ingredients of a Good Translation ... and a Bad One

It is now clear that for Bacon translations are possible, although it is rather difficult to make a good translation. This is why Bacon believes that one should know the ancient languages, namely, to properly study and understand a (translated) text. This point, too, is rather controversial. Mentioning a passage from the *Compendium* in which Bacon claims that Aristotle's works must be read in their original language, Richard Lemay points out Bacon's hypocritical attitude. In fact, while claiming that sources must be read in Greek or Hebrew, Bacon was working with translations (as his contemporaries did), without reading the original versions of those works.<sup>26</sup> In his study, however, Lemay only quotes the first part of Bacon's text, which presents a fundamental qualification of the statement referred to by Lemay: 'Whoever wants to boast of a knowledge of Aristotle has to acquire it in the latter's own native tongue, *for the inaccuracy of the translations is pervasive, both in theology and philosophy.*'<sup>27</sup>

The second part of the sentence clarifies the meaning of Bacon's words: direct access to the original version of the work has a *corrective function* in the considera-

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<sup>25</sup> Bacon, *Opus maius*, bk. I, p. 3: '(...) Cum sint in tenebris errorum densissimis, aestimant se esse in plena luce veritatis.' English tr. Belle Burke, vol. I, p. 4.

<sup>26</sup> See Lemay, 'Roger Bacon's Attitude,' at pp. 43–44.

<sup>27</sup> Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 166: 'Quicumque vult gloriari de scientia Aristotelis oportet quod eam addiscat in lingua propria et nativa, cum ubique est falsitas translationum tam in theologia quam in philosophia.' Italics are mine. Lemay only refers to the first part of the sentence, stopping his quotation at 'propria et nativa'.

tion of the bad translations that were circulating at the time.<sup>28</sup> In other words, Bacon is observing that the translations of Aristotle were so poor that the only way to properly understand Aristotle was by reading the original text. He is not claiming that texts should be studied in their original languages, but that the knowledge of languages carries out specific corrective functions in relation to the translated texts. Elsewhere in the *Compendium*, Bacon makes this point quite clear by claiming that ‘not only is it fitting for Latins to know languages when using a translated text, it is impossible for them to understand its truth unless they have been instructed in other languages.’<sup>29</sup>

These corrective functions are only partially related to the translating process. They cover different levels and ways in which one can approach a text, either translated to or written in Latin. Their effectiveness and utility are described in the sections on the study of languages in *Opus maius*, *Opus tertium*, and *Compendium studii philosophiae*. In the latter, Bacon gives his most detailed account of why Latinate practitioners need to attain at least a basic knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. These reasons can be summarized into three main groups concerning knowledge and its foundation, access, and practice.<sup>30</sup>

*Foundation:* (a) Latin grammar follows the Greek; (b) Latin knowledge is based on Greek and Hebrew knowledge; (c) imitation of the ancients, who knew Greek and Hebrew.

*Access:* (a) interpretation of ancient books; (b) appreciation of ancient authors’ retractions; (c) understanding of Latin translations; (d) correction and understanding of calques; (e) access to all the works of Aristotle; (f) direct access to book prescinding from unreliable translations; (g) access to the untranslated books in philosophy, science, and theology.

*Practice:* (a) understanding and implementation of correct pronunciation, spelling, and etymology; (b) practice of wisdom.

In all these cases, knowledge of languages provides a set of corrective functions at the three levels of foundation, access, and practice, correcting possible misinterpretations, mis-renderings, mispronunciations, and so on. Accordingly, one should

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**28** My interpretation of Bacon’s stance on the required linguistic knowledge of the source domain language to properly understand a translated text is stronger than Pérez González’s. In his discussion of Bacon’s theory, Pérez González maintains that translations are, for Bacon, the ‘lesser evil’. See Maurilio Pérez González, ‘Rogerius Bacon, teórico de la traducción,’ in *Scripta philologica de Media Latinitate Hispanica: Estudios sobre el latín medieval hispánico reunidos con ocasión de su 70<sup>o</sup> cumpleaños*, ed. Estrella Pérez Rodríguez and José Ramón Morala Rodríguez (León: Universidad de León, 2016), pp. 745–53. My interpretation is rather different: Bacon acknowledged that translations were necessary for the advancement of Latin knowledge but, in order for their content to be properly understood, readers must have a basic linguistic training.

**29** Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 160: ‘Non solum est consonum ut Latini sciant linguas propter textum translatum, sed impossibile est quod veritatem <eius> intelligant nisi linguas instructi fuerint alienis.’

**30** See Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, pp. 82–226.

distinguish between two kinds of linguistic knowledge that, according to Bacon, are required by two different kinds of practitioners:

1. Philosophers, scientists, theologians: they must have a *qualifying knowledge* of languages enabling them to assess possible mistakes at different levels of their approach to the text.
2. Translators: they must have a *linguistic fluency* enabling them to render the linguistic and theoretical contents of the source domain into the linguistic and semantic coordinates of the target domain.

There is a fundamental difference in the linguistic expertise required by translators and non-translators. Concerning the former, I have already mentioned two of the ingredients necessary to make a good, reliable translation: linguistic fluency and disciplinary mastery. Bacon adds a third one: the trustworthiness of the translatable text. Both linguistic fluency and disciplinary mastery are mentioned by Bacon in clear terms:

For in order for a translation to be accurate the translator must know *the language from which he translates and the language into which he is translating* as well as *the science which he seeks to communicate*. 'But who is this and we shall praise him, for he has done wonders in his life.' Certainly none of those just mentioned knew anything worthwhile about languages and sciences; this is clear not only from their translations but also from the status of the persons.<sup>31</sup>

The first criterion that a translator should meet involves fluency in the languages of both the target (Greek/Hebrew/Arabic) and the source (Latin) domains. As we have seen, the criterion can be amended: Grosseteste was helped by other translators who knew Greek well and their translations are reliable. In turn, Michael Scot, too, was helped by another translator who had access to the Arabic original, but their translations are not reliable. This fact makes clear that linguistic fluency is a necessary yet not sufficient condition to make a good translation. The translator must know the discipline whose main coordinates characterize epistemically the text to be translated.

Quite surprisingly, Bacon appears to ascribe greater importance to this second condition than to the first. Although he is repetitive in stressing the importance of knowing the languages in order to translate, the case of Grosseteste is crucial in clarifying Bacon's overall theory. In the *Compendium studii philosophiae*, Bacon observes that,

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<sup>31</sup> Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 172: 'Nam ad hoc quod translatio fiat vera oportet quod translator sciat linguam a qua transfert et linguam in quam transfert et scientiam quam vult transferre. Sed "Quis est hic et laudabimus eum? Fecit enim mirabilia in vita sua." Certe nullus praedictorum scivit aliquid dignum de linguis et scientiis, ut manifestum est illud non solum ex eorum translationibus sed ex conditionibus personarum.' Italics are mine.



all the things he [William of Moerbeke] translates are false, and he corrupts the wisdom of the Latins, for *only Boethius sufficiently knew the languages of all interpretations. Lord Robert alone, because of the length of his life and the marvellous methods he employed, knew the sciences more than any other men.* Because he did not know Greek and Hebrew sufficiently to translate by himself, he had many helpers.<sup>32</sup>

Similar considerations are expressed in the *Opus maius*, where Bacon claims that,

although the translator ought to be perfectly acquainted with the subject which he wishes to translate and the two languages from which and into which he is translating, *Boethius alone, the first translator, had full mastery of the languages; and Master Robert, called Grosseteste, lately Bishop of Lincoln, alone knew the sciences.*<sup>33</sup>

Boethius and Grosseteste are exemplary cases of the two criteria required to make a reliable translation: knowledge of languages and science, respectively. However, while the required linguistic fluency can be attained through team collaborations (as in the case of Grosseteste's *adiutores*), a lack of disciplinary mastery appears to be more problematic and difficult to attain. Bacon gives an example of this crucial limitation referring to Herman the German, who supposedly told him that he would not translate into Latin an Arabic text on logic because he did not have expertise on the subject.<sup>34</sup> Leaving aside the question whether this conversation actually took place, the point that Bacon wants to make is that, in order to translate a text, you must be able to understand its meaning. But to understand its meaning, you need to have mastery of both its language and contents.

Although these two criteria do not seem to be problematic – present-day translators still follow them – Théry and Lemay harshly criticize Bacon's stance. This is another outcome of Bacon's antagonizing attitude and abrasive rhetoric that he used against many of his contemporaries.<sup>35</sup> How could Bacon claim that translators like Gerard of Cremona or Michael Scot did not master the discipline of the works they were translating? Gerard of Cremona moved to Toledo in order to translate

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32 Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 174: 'Et ideo omnia transfert falsa et corrumpit sapientiam Latinorum. Solus enim Boethius scivit de omnibus interpretationibus linguas sufficienter. Solus dominus Robertus, propter longitudinem vitae et vias mirabiles quibus usus est, prae aliis hominibus scivit scientias. Quia Graecum et Hebraeum non scivit sufficienter ut per se transferret, habuit multos adiutores.' Italics are mine.

33 Bacon, *Opus maius*, bk. III, p. 67: 'Oportet quod interpres optime sciat scientiam quam vult transferre, et duas linguas a quibus et in quas transferat. Solus Boethius primus interpres novit plenarie potestatem linguarum. Et solus dominus Robertus, dictus Grossum Caput, novit scientias.' English trans. Belle Burke, vol. I, p. 76. Italics are mine.

34 See Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, pp. 172–74.

35 See Lemay, 'Roger Bacon's Attitude,' p. 39: 'Without any serious examination of the translations, Bacon declares *ex cathedra* that these translators ignored both the sciences they were handling in the translations and the languages from which they were translating. Such a serious charge should have been thoroughly documented to escape being considered absolutely unconscionable.'

the *Almagest* and was probably a master in the cathedral school of Toledo.<sup>36</sup> Michael Scot wrote treatises in alchemy and astrology and became the official astrologer of the court of Frederick II.<sup>37</sup> It seems to me that Bacon cannot be referring to their mastery of *those disciplines* or their translations of *those disciplinary texts*.

Although Bacon's position is rather plain, a quick look at the translators he mentions can be useful in this respect. They are seven. Five are examples of bad translations: Gerard of Cremona, Michael Scot, Alfred the Englishman, Herman the German, and William of Moerbeke. In turn, two are exemplary of good translations: Boethius and Robert Grosseteste. As Théry observes, Bacon does not mention other translators, like Gundissalinus, and many others whose names he could probably have found in the prefaces of the translations he was using. The reason why Bacon mentioned these seven translators and no others is quite simple. They lived in different periods and areas and translated different sets of works and authors in either Arabic or Greek. Yet, they have one aspect in common: they all translated works authored by or ascribed to Aristotle.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, Bacon limits his criticism to the Latin translations of Aristotle. Probably, he does so in virtue of the eminent and unique role that Aristotle's works played in the Latin system of knowledge. By attacking these translations, Bacon was certifying to the pope that Latin knowledge is rooted in mis-rendered texts and misinterpreted stances. Failure to appreciate how rhetoric and socio-political goal-directedness accompany and characterize Bacon's criticism of the translations would result in a simplistic misconception.

By targeting the Latin translations of Aristotle, Bacon seems to suggest that this set of work has an implicit status differentiating it from other sets of translations and texts. In other words, it seems that the criterion of disciplinary mastery should be applied to the specific case of Aristotle's works as if they were a sort of sub-genre. Such a strong interpretation would resolve the main frictions in Bacon's line of reasoning. It would place the examples of Herman the German recalled by Bacon on a different light: as Herman was unable to translate a work in logic because he did not know logic, so also the five *bad* translators were unable to translate Aristotle's works because they did not know Aristotle. It would clarify why Bacon attacks only some of the translators using the same method and working in the same place. Moreover, it would provide a different, fairer context to Bacon's criticism of translators who did

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**36** Concerning Gerard of Cremona's activities in Toledo, see Charles Burnett, 'Communities of Learning in the Twelfth-Century Toledo,' in *Communities of Learning: Networks and the Shaping of Intellectual Identity in Europe, 1110–1500*, ed. Constant J. Mews and John N. Crossley (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 9–18; and Charles Burnett, 'The Coherence of the Arabic-Latin Translation Programme in Toledo in the Twelfth Century,' *Science in Context* 14 (2001), pp. 249–88.

**37** On Michael Scot's biography, see Charles Burnett, 'Michael Scot and the Transmission of Scientific Culture from Toledo to Bologna via the Court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen,' *Micrologus* 2 (1994), pp. 101–26; and Charles H. Haskins, *Michael Scot and Frederick* (Brussels: Weissenbruch, 1921).

**38** For an overall perspective on the Latin translations of Aristotle, see Ezio Franceschini, 'Ricerche e studi su Aristotele nel Medioevo Latino,' in *Aristotele nella critica e negli studi contemporanei* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1956), pp. 144–66.

have the relevant expertise on some subjects, like Michael Scot, by limiting the critique to the case of Aristotle's works considered as a sort of sub-genre. In other words, the seven translators mentioned by Bacon would not be good or bad translators *qua* translators, but *qua* translators of Aristotle's works.

Nonetheless, a strong interpretation of the criterion of disciplinary mastery seems to clash with Bacon's own words about Grosseteste. As we have seen, Bacon claims that Grosseteste 'knew the sciences' but also that he 'entirely disregarded the books of Aristotle and their methods.' Yet, did Bacon actually believe that Grosseteste had no mastery of Aristotle's thought, as the latter passage maintains? This does not appear to be the case, considering that Bacon knew and bestowed great value on Grosseteste's interpretation of Aristotle, while it is undeniable that Grosseteste knew Aristotle very well. In Bacon's view, Grosseteste was antithetical to the Paris masters, their method, and their attitude toward Aristotle. The claim that Grosseteste disregarded Aristotle should be considered as expressing that distance from the Paris method which, according to Bacon, multiplied errors in the interpretation of Aristotle also because it is grounded on bad translations.<sup>39</sup>

In returning to the problem of the second criterion for good translations, Bacon does not clarify explicitly whether he considers the translations of Aristotle as a special case requiring a more specialized mastery (strong interpretation). Although this seems to be the case, the question is still open and less stringent interpretations are possible. In any case, Bacon's discussion is limited to the translations of Aristotle only. This fact restricts the scope of his criticism of the translators only *qua* translators of Aristotle's works, not *qua* translators in general. Bacon is not referring to Gerard's translation of Ptolemy or Scot's translation of al-Bitruji and is not assessing their expertise in those subjects. As a consequence, Bacon's critique cannot be generalized to consider those cases as well.<sup>40</sup>

Until now, I have discussed two main criteria formulated by Bacon and according to which it is possible to produce a good translation:

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<sup>39</sup> See Jeremiah Hackett, 'From *Sapientes antiqui* at Lincoln to the New *Sapientes moderni* at Paris, ca. 1260–1280. Roger Bacon's Two Circles of Scholars,' in *Robert Grosseteste and the Pursuit of Religious and Scientific Learning in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jack P. Cunningham and Mark Hocknull (Berlin: Springer, 2016), pp. 119–42.

<sup>40</sup> Moreover, we should always bear in mind that any text – medieval or contemporary, disciplinarily specialized or not – is structured as an organized complex of epistemically intertwined claims and stances, style and rhetoric. Authors can and do give detailed accounts of events but also make rhetorical exaggerations. And authors never write with the aim to provide future historians with a reliable account of what they were doing, but with theoretical and practical goals bound to their personal context. This is why philosophy and history are different: we can evaluate a philosophical theory without contrasting it to the historical context, but we cannot reconstruct history without contextualizing what the author is saying. Accordingly, we should not mistake Bacon's theory of translation for an objective account of medieval translations. His criticism is aimed at something else and shaped by its functions to persuade the reader (the pope and any other reader) of the need to implement a profound reform of the education system in medieval Europe.

1. *Linguistic fluency* of the languages of both domains S and T, which should be individual but can be attained also by teamwork collaborations.
2. *Disciplinary mastery*, which needs to be individual and grounded on a number  $n$  of features characterising the translatable text  $Y$  as a member of a discipline  $\Delta$ .

These two criteria prescribe for the *translator* a set of requirements that they have to meet in order to deliver a good translation. Such are practical criteria that the translator must apply while working on the translation. However, there is a third criterion that is not related to the translator but to the *translatable text*. This is the criterion of the textual trustworthiness of the translatable text. In order to be reliable, a translation only needs the two criteria prescribed for the translators. When both are applied, the translating process ( $S \rightarrow T$ ) produces a version  $T$  which represents the meaning of  $S$  at its different linguistic and semantic levels within the coordinates of the language of  $T$ . Evidently, a mutilated or corrupted version of the source domain ( $S_{\text{cor}}$ ) will necessarily produce a mutilated or corrupted translation ( $T_{\text{cor}}$ ) even when both criteria are met. In fact, it is highly unlikely for ( $S_{\text{cor}} \rightarrow T_{\neg \text{cor}}$ ) to happen. Accordingly, the criterion certifies the truthfulness of the text to be translated. This aspect is linked to the historical context in which the practitioner works and its social and political characteristics. On this point, Bacon observes that,

Since in these times the enemies of Christians such as the Greeks, Arabs, and Hebrews have the sciences in their own languages, they do not make available to Christians truthful books but mutilate and corrupt them all, and especially when they see men untutored in languages and the sciences presume to make translations.<sup>41</sup>

Bacon considers Greeks, Arabs, and Hebrews as 'enemies' of Christianity, Byzantium being schismatic and Muslims and Jews following a different religion. As a consequence, Bacon supposes that they are not particularly keen to provide the Latinate audience with the treasure of knowledge they have – why should they, if that science and wisdom will be used for the benefit of Latin Christendom? Without providing any proof – his line of reasoning is clearly highly rhetorical and politically motivated – Bacon assumes that some of the unreliability of the Latin translations is due to the untruthfulness of the manuscripts acquired from these linguistic areas. Nonetheless, his criticism is again turned against the translators. Such detrimental commerce is possible only because the purchasers (i.e. the translators) are ignorant of what they are buying.

In this respect, Bacon appears to suppose that an application of the practical criteria be fundamental in order to respect the criterion of textual truthfulness. When a

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<sup>41</sup> Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 174: 'Cum enim istis temporibus inimici Christianorum, ut Graeci et Arabes et Hebraei, habeant scientias apud linguas suas, non concedunt Christianis libros veraces sed detruncant et corrumpunt omnes, et maxime quando vident homines indoctos in linguis et scientiis praesumere de translationibus faciendis.'

translator knows both language and science, she is able to discern between truthful and untruthful versions of a translatable text. By contrast, without meeting these criteria, or meeting only one of them, the result is the purchase and subsequent translation of a corrupt text whose effect would be detrimental for Latinate scholarship.

The problem with the translators' impossibility to assess the status of the translatable text is part of a wider question of accessibility. Although much scholarly attention has been focused on the latter, Bacon writes passionate and visionary pages about the staggering books Latinate society was missing. In this case, too, the responsibility for this lack of important works is ascribed to the translators, whose social function cannot be reduced solely to the production of a translated text. In the *Opus maius* Bacon recalls that, among philosophical texts, so many are missing:

Such is the second philosophy of Avicenna, which he calls oriental, which is devoted to pure philosophy, and does not fear the thrusts of the lances of contradicters, and the third, conterminous with his life, in which he collected secret experiments, as he noted in the introduction to his first philosophy. Likewise, although Aristotle completed the eight principal parts of natural philosophy containing in them many sciences, we do not have all of the first part, and almost nothing of the others. And in the same way although he himself completed the nine sciences composing mathematics, we have no part of his text. What we have on metaphysics can be reckoned of no value on account of many grave defects. Although there are five great sciences composing morals, we have only the first and a little of the second. Also there is missing from his logic a book better than the others, and the book next in excellence to it has been badly translated, and cannot be known, nor is it in general use, because it has come only lately into the hands of the Latins in a defective and rough translation.<sup>42</sup>

According to Bacon, these fundamental texts need to be sought and made available to the Latinate audience. Yet, who should look out for them? Implicitly, it seems that the translators should do so, since they alone have the capability to understand the importance and trustworthiness of a translatable text. This means that the translators have two interconnected functions in Latin society:

1. They seek new translatable texts.
2. They make available those translatable texts into Latin.

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<sup>42</sup> Bacon, *Opus maius*, bk. III, pp. 70–71: (...) ut est secunda philosophia Avicennae, quam vocant orientalem, quae traditur secundum puritatem philosophiae in se, nec timet ictus contradicentium lancearum; et tertia quae fuit contermina vitae suae, in qua experientias secretas congregavit, sicut ipse in prologo primae philosophiae suae annotavit. Et similiter cum Aristoteles complevit octo partes naturalis philosophiae principales, quae multas sub se continet scientias, de prima parte non habemus omnia, de aliis vero quasi nihil. Et eodem modo de metaphysica, quae sunt novem, cum ipse compleverit eas, nihil habemus quod de metaphysica una dignitate vocari potest propter defectus multiplices et praegrandes. De mathematicis vero, cum sint quinque scientiae magnae, non habemus nisi primam, et parum de secunda. Etiam de logica deficit liber melior inter omnes alios, et alius post eum in bonitate secundum male translatus est, nec potest sciri, nec adhuc in usu vulgi est, quia nuper venit ad Latinos et cum defectu translationis et squalore.' English trans. Belle Burke, vol. I, p. 79.

In order to carry out both functions, they need to meet the two criteria of linguistic fluency and disciplinary mastery. However, the translators often lack these two prerequisites. Therefore, they are unable to find the texts needed for an advancement of Latin wisdom. And when they do find them, they are often unable to translate them.<sup>43</sup> Not being translated, these texts are kept away from Latinate scholarship, secluded and inaccessible.

Bad translations have detrimental effects on scholarship for two interconnected reasons. First, they are unreliable and deceptive, since they render the source domain in an untrustworthy fashion. Second, their audience does not have a sufficient knowledge of the languages of the source domains; therefore, the reader is unable to understand where and how the translation is unreliable. Bacon's criticism of the translators expands on the former. Following his reasoning, one can distinguish the detrimental effects of bad translations in two classes:

1. Mistakes in the understanding of the text rendered into Latin.
2. Mistakes in practicing the discipline in which the text is used.

The first class of mistakes (1) is grounded on how the original text is rendered into Latin at the two levels of terminology and phrasal semantics. Two main types of errors are implied at these levels. On the one hand, (a) the translator's scarce knowledge of vocabulary in both languages may result in the use of a mistaken Latin rendering, a calque, or a vernacularism. On the other hand, (b) the translator's lack of understanding of the original text may result in a mistaken rendering of entire sentences and paragraphs. Bacon gives examples of both types of mistakes. Concerning (1b), Bacon refers to the supposed mistakes in the Latin translation of Aristotle's theory of rainbow in *Meteorology* III. According to him, Aristotle's theory is wrong only because the Latin translator of his work misunderstood and misrepresented it.<sup>44</sup> In turn, Bacon discusses (1a) by recalling a personal anecdote:

Very many words from the Lombard language, the Hispanic, and the other languages of the Latins have been placed in the translated books. E. g., there is that of one of Aristotles' plants, *belenum* – something very noxious in Persis but when transplanted in Jerusalem became edible. When I lectured on this in my classes but did not know how to explain it, as was required, my Spanish students derided me. I later learned from them that [the name] was not Arabic, as all the doctors believe, but Spanish, and [the plant] is seed of henbane. (Herman, the translator, told me this.) And this is the way it is with uncountable other [words], granted the Latin doctors do not realize it, nor are they embarrassed, even though they are ignorant of [correct] interpretations. They take something to be Arabic or Greek and say they are excused [from in-

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<sup>43</sup> According to Bacon, this is the case of Herman the German's translation of Aristotelian logical works, which he possessed but 'did not dare to translate'. See Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 176.

<sup>44</sup> See Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, pp. 174–76: 'Verumtamen, ut excitem memoriam, sciat quilibet illud in tertio capitulo Meteorum Aristotelis esse falsissimum ubi dicitur quod iris non accidit ex radiis lunae nisi in quinquaginta annis bis, cum tamen potest contingere omnimense in plenilunio, si vapor dispositus sit in oppositum lunae et luna luceat in vigore.'

dicating its meaning] because of their ignorance of languages since this ignorance is widespread.<sup>45</sup>

Bacon had been deceived by the presence of the term ‘belenum’ in Nicholas of Damascus’s *De plantis*, which Bacon as many other medieval philosophers believed was a work by Aristotle. Without knowing the meaning of the term, Bacon thought it was an Arabic calque but, apparently, it was a Spanish vernacularism, as Herman the German later told Bacon (again, supposedly). As a result, Bacon was ridiculed by his Iberian students; thus, he blames the translators for inserting mistaken or unintelligible terms into their translations. Bacon’s anecdote, recalled also in the *Opus maius* and *Opus tertium*, attracted much of Théry’s attention.<sup>46</sup> His discussion of the Latin rendering from the Greek and through the Arabic versions of *De plantis* is remarkable. However, I agree with Franco Alessio in rejecting Théry’s assumption that Bacon’s criticism of the translator is grounded on this embarrassing episode of Bacon’s teaching activity.<sup>47</sup>

Bacon’s repetitive references to this anecdote do not seem to be linked to a personal grudge, but to the persuasive nature and the strict bond among the three works discussing the problem of translations. Moreover, the passage plays a specific role in the structure of the text. It refers to the real-life dimension and appeals to the possibility that many other practitioners among the readers of Bacon’s works may have experienced something similar. And it certifies with a practical example what might otherwise appear as the elucubrations of a philosopher obsessed with languages and far removed from everyday life. Bacon’s anecdote shows that this is not the case: mistakes are frequent, and it is easy to get caught in them, as his classroom experience confirms.

Bacon’s example of the second kind of mistakes (2) are similarly characterized by references to real-life experiences. An unreliable translation obfuscates the true meaning of the text. As a result, it has despicable effects concerning the practitioners’ use of that translation. Bacon refers to two crucial examples. The first is medicine. Because of calques and misrendered terms, physicians are unable to understand what ingredients should be used to make medicines, which prevents them

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<sup>45</sup> Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, pp. 162–64: ‘Sunt etiam vocabula quamplurima de lingua Lombardicac, et Hispanica, et aliis Latinorum linguis posita in libris translatis, ut est illud de vegetabilibus Aristotelis, belenum, in Perside perniciosissimum, transplantatum Hierusalem factum est comestibile. Quod cum legi in scholis meis, et nesciretur interpretari, ut oportuit, deriserunt me Hispani scholares mei, a quibus postea didici quod non fuit Arabicum, ut omnes doctores credunt, sed Hispanum, et est semen cassilaginis. (Hermanus translator mihi dixit.) Et sic est de aliis innumerabilibus, licet hoc Latini doctores nesciant nec verecundantur, licet ignorent interpretationes, quia aestimant esse Arabicum vel Graecum et dicunt quod excusantur propter linguarum ignorantiam quia haec ignorantia est communis.’

<sup>46</sup> See Bacon, *Opus maius*, bk. III, p. 67; and *Opus tertium*, bk. I, pp. 186–88. See also Théry, ‘Note sur l’aventure “bélénienne”,’ pp. 140–47.

<sup>47</sup> See Franco Alessio, *Mito e scienza in Ruggero Bacone* (Milan: Ceschina, 1957), pp. 44–45.



from properly using the texts.<sup>48</sup> The second is philosophy. Bacon maintains that bad translations may give rise to philosophical controversies which could have been avoided were practitioners able to understand the real meaning of Aristotle's words:

A clear proof of this is the variety of opinions, because of which, however many studious men there be desirous of the truth of science, no one is in agreement with another. In one reading one says this, and another the contrary, and in a third the contradictory, a fourth something different, and however many others [they all pronounce] in accord with their own sense [of the text]. This also happens because now without parallel incomparably less is known about the philosophy of Aristotle than in olden times.<sup>49</sup>

As we have seen, a good, reliable translation of Aristotle's works, like those made by Grosseteste, would have helped avoid such pointless controversies. Yet, this is not enough. In order to properly understand a good translation, Bacon believes that one has nonetheless to know at least the basic aspects of the source language. Indeed, also good translations can and do generate controversial interpretations when they are not accompanied by some degree of understanding of the original language. These are the cases of false interpretations 'even when the letter is absolutely true' (*etsi litera esset verissima*).<sup>50</sup> When lacking the required knowledge of the original language, the reader has to take a leap of faith: she has to substantively self-limit the possibility of her understanding of the text and delegate that epistemic disclosure to the translator alone. A perilous interpretative venture that, according to Bacon, should not be attempted.

## Conclusions

Roger Bacon's rhetoric can be deceiving. As David C. Lindberg observes, 'Bacon was always making arguments, and many of them contain important philosophical points; but these were set adrift in a sea of rhetoric.'<sup>51</sup> This abrasive sea of rhetoric often attracts more attention than the refined doctrines that Bacon elaborates. The sections of *Opus maius*, *Opus tertium*, and *Compendium studii philosophiae* dedicated

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<sup>48</sup> See Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 162: 'Medici enim in recepta medicinali inveniunt fere omnia vocabula herbarum et specierum et aliarum rerum medicinalium de aliis linguis vel pro magna parte. Et ideo non possunt intelligere quid libri dicant nec operari secundum quod ars medicinae requirit.'

<sup>49</sup> Bacon, *Compendium studii philosophiae*, p. 164: 'Cuius etiam manifesta probatio est diversitas opinionum, quare, quantumcumque sint studiosi homines et desiderantes veritatem scientiae, nullus concordat cum alio. Sed in uno passu unus dicit hoc et alius contrarium et tertius contradictorium et quartus diversum et alii quotlibet iuxta sensum suum. Et hoc etiam accidit quia longe minus et sine comparatione scitur modo de philosophia Aristotelis quam antiquitus.'

<sup>50</sup> See Bacon, *Opus maius*, bk. III, p. 81.

<sup>51</sup> David C. Lindberg, 'On the Applicability of Mathematics to Nature: Roger Bacon and His Predecessors,' *British Journal for the History of Sciences* 15 (1982), p. 16 in pp. 3–25.

to the medieval translators are marked by a corrosive style, personal attacks, and rhetorical exaggerations. Naturally, Bacon did not want to burn all of Aristotle's Latin translations. Nor did he believe that translations in general were useless or impossible – in fact, he worked mainly with translations and was extremely enthusiastic about Grosseteste's translating activity. Théry believes that much of Bacon's positive attitude toward Grosseteste's translations can be explained by his attachment to the Franciscan order and biases against the Dominicans.<sup>52</sup> Surely, Bacon had biases, philosophically and methodologically. And it is beyond any doubt that he held Grosseteste's approach to science and philosophy in high regard. This does not mean, however, that we can reduce Bacon's perspective to some clerical partisanship. That would result in demoting Bacon's political and philosophical reflections substantively. If we do so with Bacon or any medieval actor, we should consistently apply the same criterion to modern scholarship, ending up in a storm of biases and historical-epistemic failures.

Our approach to a historically-determined philosophical text implies a series of considerations that sometimes needs to be repeated. We shall distinguish between the philosophical and non-philosophical contents of the text. Philosophy can and should be discussed in its theoretical dimension, in which the historical context can and does offer an epistemic surplus without determining its fundamental meaning. A fundamental part of this historical context is given by the non-philosophical contents of the text. These contents have a different set of epistemic coordinates and should be read accordingly. While it is highly unlikely that any philosopher exaggerated rhetorically their analysis of modal ontology or their stance on universals, it is quite possible that they exaggerate or even lie in their account of people, socio-political problems, and so on. In fact, any text is open to different levels of goal-directed functions. Although scholarship sometimes tends to imagine the text as if it were written for modern historians to help them in reconstructing its context, this is clearly not the case. A historical actor becomes a historical witness only by reason of the historian's interpretation of their accounts. Historians have to dissect the different levels of the text in consideration of their different goal-directed functions.

In a philosophical text broadly considered, at least three main levels are in place, each marked by goal-directed functions: 1. the topical coordinates of the genre to which the text belongs; 2. the historical contexts *in* which and *toward* which the text has been written; and 3. the theoretical kernel that the text expresses through a series of claims, stances, and refutations. Although intertwined, we shall not mistake the second for the third levels, nor overinterpret the first.

The historical context of Bacon's criticism of medieval translators is made clear by considering the works in which those stances are expressed. The three works are grounded thematically and chronologically on the *Opus maius*, of which the *Opus tertium* is an update and the *Compendium* a thematic development. The

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<sup>52</sup> See Théry, 'Note sur l'aventure "béléniennne"', pp. 138 – 39.

*Opus maius* was written with a precise function: to persuade the pope to start a reform of the education system in Latin Europe. Bacon's reform included the language training of a new generation of scholars that needed to be fluent in the ancient languages. Consistently, Bacon's attack on the translators is placed within the third section of the work, dedicated to the study of languages. And it is instrumental to that feature. There are other reasons why languages should be studied: access to knowledge is accompanied by reasons of foundation and practice. The problem of the Latin translations is only part of the context of Bacon's promotion of the study of languages. And within it, Bacon's criticism of the translations carries out an instrumental *confirmative function* of his main thesis: the pope ought to promote the study of languages through a reform of the education system.

Bacon's strategic aim is to persuade the pope that the pillars on which Christian wisdom is grounded (sacred texts in theology and Aristotle's works in philosophy) are rotten. This is why Bacon attacks so harshly the Latin translators of Aristotle's texts. He wanted to convince the pope that the bleak status of Christian wisdom included its very fundamentals. And from there, it spread errors and controversies everywhere. Does this mean that Bacon *actually* thought that the translations made by Michael Scot or Gerard of Cremona were completely unreliable? That might be, but the purpose-driven political context of his discussion indicates that other non-theoretical motivations were in play. The thin line dividing rhetorical persuasion and philosophical commitment is difficult to discern, and it often originates a plurality of possible interpretations enriching the meaning of that text.

There is another aspect that is worth noticing. Descriptions of the bleak state of the Latin world are among the topical coordinates of medieval translations. Such descriptions were often used to justify the necessity of the translation and the novelty of its content.<sup>53</sup> Bacon seems to use a remarkably similar approach in his discussion of why languages should be studied, and translations remade in a better fashion. In both cases, the description of the supposedly miserable condition of Latin wisdom is instrumental to the justification of actions needed to better Christendom – a translation freshly made and a reform of knowledge and their translations to be made, respectively.

In this paper I have examined much of the theoretical core of Bacon's stance on translations and translators. Good translations can be identified when the two criteria of linguistic fluency and disciplinary mastery are met, and the translator is able to find a trustworthy version of the translatable text. The education reform that Bacon tried to introduce required translators to possess both language fluency and disciplinary mastery. Only by this set of skills, would they be able to render the complexity of

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<sup>53</sup> Good examples of this attitude are offered by the prologues to Avicenna's *De anima* and to Gundissalinus' translation of al-Farabi's *De scientiis*, among others. It is interesting to note that also original works directly connected to the translators seem to apply the same coordinates. See for instance, Daniel of Morley, *Philosophia*, ed. G. Maurach, *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 14 (1979), pp. 212–13 in pp. 204–55.

language and the meaning of a text into another language and its coordinates. And only through those skills would they be able to seek and find the many missing texts that Bacon so dearly craved. At the same time, Latinate readers must have a basic knowledge of the ancient foreign languages in order to 'go beyond' the Latin rendering of the text and appreciate its original meaning when it is necessary. Practitioners of philosophy, science, and theology need to have a basic understanding of the languages in which their main sources were written so as to gain more stable and reliable epistemic access to its theoretical content.

This means that a Latin scholar should have a qualifying knowledge of *Greek* to read Aristotle in *Latin*. In this way alone, the reader becomes a *reflective reader* able to discern, assess, and contingently interpret the meaning rendered by the translator. This is why, according to Bacon, the problem of translations is part of the study of language, and the latter is a crucial aspect of the overall reform of Latin education.

José Filipe Silva

# John Pecham's Theory of Natural Cognition: Perception

**Abstract:** In my paper, I argue that John Pecham develops his theory of perception in two distinct ways throughout his works: the first is an account influenced by the model of perspectivist optics: the second is a psychological account of perception as an active process that is influenced by Augustine. I try to show that these two models are not incompatible, but they are thought of as describing two *aspects* of the perceptual process: whereas the perspectivist model aims at accounting for the mode of transmission of sensory information from the object and its reception in the sense organ, the psychological model aims at accounting for those processes that follow upon that reception. In order to explain the nature of these psychological processes, I provide an excursus into the Pecham's metaphysics and in particular the nature of the relation between the body and soul in the context of a pluralist theory of forms in the human composite. The complementarity of these two models is not however complete, as the perspectivist model also provides a description of psychological processes operating on the received sensory information. I claim that Pecham never attempts to explain how these two models come together and so the resulting picture is of two parallel running tracks with few contact points. Now, one feature that arises from the psychology aspect of the perspectivist model of perception, as Pecham develops it, is the apparent influence of reason on human perceptual experience. In the final section of the paper, I suggest a number of similarities between this account and the early Franciscan tradition (the *Summa Halensis* and John of La Rochelle), at least in what concerns action. The final, tentative suggestion is that this role of higher order powers on perception is the result of the significance of the will to (early) Franciscan authors.

John Pecham (Iohannis Pecham), known as the ingenious doctor (*Doctor Ingeniosus*), was born in Sussex, studied in Paris under Bonaventure and probably Walter of Bruges, taught theology from around 1270 to 1274 (first in Paris and then in Oxford), was appointed Minister Provincial of the Franciscan Order in England (1275), and then archbishop of Canterbury, a position he occupied until his death (1279–92) replacing the Dominican Robert Kilwardby, upon the latter's appointment to the Cardinalate by Pope Nicholas III.<sup>1</sup> Pecham's influence is felt in his numerous notorious students,

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<sup>1</sup> It is worth remarking that this constitutes probable evidence of the influence of anti-Thomist movement within the Curia and also in the English province: otherwise, the Pope would not have substituted Kilwardby, whose 1277 Oxford Prohibitions included Thomist views, namely on the unicity of the human soul, with Pecham, a well-known critic of Aquinas with whom he had publicly disputed

namely Matthew of Aquasparta, Peter John Olivi, Vital du Four (in Paris) and Roger Marston (in Oxford).<sup>2</sup> Scholars have long disagreed on some key elements of Pecham's intellectual profile, often revealing a clear mistrust in his judgment and regarding him as a source of untrustworthy testimony due to Pecham's recognized opposition to Thomas Aquinas on a number of theological and philosophical issues. The aim of this article is not however to focus on any of the polemics Pecham was involved in during his time but, as the title suggests, on Pecham's theory of human cognition, in particular his account of perception.

In what follows, I will argue that Pecham is of two minds when investigating the way we come to know the world, here focused on visual perception: there is on the one hand a psychological type of description, focused on the activity of the soul operating on the passively-received incoming sensory information (species) in the sense organs; we find this mode of description in the *Quodlibeta*, *Quaestiones de anima*, and *Tractatus de anima*. According to a second level of description, which we may call epistemological or simply optical, the account of visual perception is focused on the mode of transmission of that information from the object to the sense organ via the medium plus the pathways from sense organs to central visual perceptual powers. This account, which is found in his two treatises on optics – the *Perspectiva* and *Perspectiva Communis* – also includes elements of faculty psychology when describing the three levels of processing incoming sensory information Pecham adopts from Ibn al-Haytham's (Alhazen's) *De aspectibus* (c.1028–38). This second type of description develops around three numbers: 3 levels of visual perception, from the 'naked sight' to 'syllogistic apprehension'; 8 necessary conditions for a veridical perceptual episode; and 22 visual intentions – i.e. types of properties – that can be perceived by sight.

These two types of description are tied to two distinct philosophical traditions in the philosophy of perception that we find in a few authors in mid-13th century. The first results from the influence of Augustine and the second from Alhacen (and the perspectivist tradition of geometrical optics with such authors such as Witelo and

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on the issue of the unicity of the human soul. On this, see A. Boureau, *Théologie, Science et Censure au XIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle: Le cas de Jean Peckham* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1999); and G.A. Wilson, 'The Critique of Thomas Aquinas's Unicity Theory of Forms in John Pecham's *Quodlibet IV (Romanum)*,' *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998), pp. 423–31. His views on this matter were clearly well-known among the Curia, as he elaborated on them when teaching at the papal university – which came down to us as the *Quodlibet Romanum*. On this, see D.L. Douie, *Archbishop Pecham* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), pp. 43–44. Pecham's promotion brings into question the traditional understanding of Kilwardby's appointment to the Cardinalate as a way to punish and remove him from England following his Prohibitions.

<sup>2</sup> Douie, *Archbishop Pecham*, pp. 5 ff.; see also S.T. Livesey, 'De viris illustribus et mediocribus: A Biographical Database of Franciscan Commentators on Aristotle And Peter Lombard's *Sentences*,' *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998), p. 218 in pp. 203–37.

Bacon).<sup>3</sup> These two philosophical traditions were complementary to the by-then-established Aristotelianism and its faculty psychology-focused version of Avicennian philosophy. In bringing together all these disparate traditions in the philosophy of perception, Pecham perfectly represents the dynamism and complexity of medieval philosophy, showing that an accomplished theologian can also be an exquisite metaphysician, an opiated philosopher of mind and an original epistemologist.

## Psychological Description of Perception

If perception is a process by means of which we come to know objects and their properties in the external world, the starting point for any theory of perception must be an account of the way information about that sensible object comes to be present in a cognitive subject. Following a tradition inaugurated around his time, Pecham postulates the existence of 'species', likenesses of sensible properties that exist in external corporeal objects,<sup>4</sup> like the color 'white'. The existence of such mediating entities was thought to be required because of the Aristotelian principle according to which no sensation follows from the direct contact of a sensible object on a sense organ; thus, the sensible form must be received from a distant object without matter. But if the species are issued from a material object and are received in a perceiver's senses,<sup>5</sup> the species of the sensible property must have a kind of being appropriate to being transmitted to the medium and to being received in the senses.

One option, common to the period, is to take the species as having a *spiritual* nature, above and beyond the material nature of the property in the external thing. Pecham attributes this spirituality-requirement, which makes the species ap-

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3 On the relation between these perspectivists, see D.C. Lindberg, 'Lines of Influence in Thirteenth-Century Optics: Bacon, Witelo, and Pecham,' *Speculum* 46:1 (1971), pp. 66–83.

4 The essence of the species is to represent that of which they are the likeness. John Pecham, *Quaestiones de anima* (*Quaest. de anima*), ed. H. Spettmann and G. Etzkorn, in *Quaestiones disputatae*, ed. G. Etzkorn, H. Spettmann, L. Oliger (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 2002), II, q. xxiv, p. 175: 'Cuius exemplum est in specie rei visibilis corporalis, quae ostendit id, cuius est species, nec tamen ostendit essentiam suam, nisi ut est alterius similitudo.' *Quaest. de anima* II, q. xxiv, p. 177: 'Certe loquendo de convenientia univocationis similior est species unius coloris similitudini alterius coloris, saltem eiusdem speciei, quam ipsi colori, cuius est similitudo, et tamen non ostendit aliam speciem, sed colorem, cuius est species.' Pecham's point here is that different species of different colors (say, of white and of black) are more alike each other, in an ontological sense, than with respect to the quality they represent. However, they represent the quality of which they are the species (or likeness). The contrast is between the being of species and their epistemological role.

5 Aristotle, *De anima* II.7. Although medieval authors agreed on this principle, they often disagreed on what to call these intermediary entities: Alhacen uses the term 'forma', whereas Pecham and Bacon prefer the term 'species'. The disagreement does not end with their name but as D. Lindberg points out, all these authors make ambiguous statements about the nature of species, namely, whether it represents a point of the object or the whole object. This ambiguity is repeated throughout the medieval period.



propriate and proportional to the nobility of the perceiving soul, to Augustine and his principle that material things cannot bring about an effect that is ontologically superior to them.<sup>6</sup> A corporeal thing is not able to act on the soul causing a cognitive act. The spirituality of the species is intended to solve this problem by claiming that what acts on the soul is not the physical external thing but a spiritual species that the external thing issued forth. But this does not solve the problem; it just moves it one step away: the remaining issue is not how the object acts on the soul but how the material object generates a spiritual species.

In view of this difficulty, Pecham argues against the possibility of a material object issuing a species with a spiritual mode of being.<sup>7</sup> For him, an infinite force is required to transform something material into something spiritual;<sup>8</sup> and material things just lack such infinite power or force. Pecham argues for an alternative view, which denies the spirituality of the object-generated species and claims instead that the species are corporeal. Pecham takes the species to be corporeal in the sense that they have dimensions (*dimensionata*), in accordance with the dimensions of the subject in which they are received: the medium through which they are transmitted and of the organ in which they are received.<sup>9</sup> Pecham does not go as far as to say that the species are material in the sense that by taking them on, the medium and the sense organ come to exhibit the sensible property of which the species are likenesses.

The recipient of the species, the sense organs, also needs to fulfil certain requirements for this reception. It is not enough for them to be corporeal, but they must be composed by certain material dispositions such that they are susceptible to receiving certain *kinds* of species, like color in the case of sight. This means that sense organs are characterized by a neutrality or indifference (*medietas et indifferentia*) to a spe-

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<sup>6</sup> John Pecham, *Quodlibeta quatuor (Quod.)*, ed. Etzkorn and F. Delorme (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1989), I.3, p. 8, referring to Augustine's *De musica* VI: 'Corpus nullos numeros imprimit animae quia "omne agens est nobilius patiente."'

<sup>7</sup> To be more precise, from the form of the external thing. John Pecham, *Quaestiones Tractantes de anima (Quaest. tract. de anima)*, ed. Hieronymus Spettmann (Munster: Verlag der Aschendorffschen, 1918), 9, p. 425: 'Res enim non gignit similitudinem nisi per formam suam.'

<sup>8</sup> *Quod.* I, q. 3.5, p. 8: 'Ergo hoc posito, effectus transcendit genus causae in infinitum. Cum effectus sit spiritualis-intellectualis, species vero gignens corporalis, ista gignitio non potest esse nisi per influentiam virtutis infinitae, hoc est agentis infinita virtute. Hoc etiam improbat per Augustinum, VI *Musicae* ubi probat quod corpus nullos numeros imprimit animae quia 'omne agens est nobilius patiente.'" The 'numeros' in the passage refer to the arithmetic expression of sounds, the perception of which is the focus of the *De Musica*. For a medieval interpretation of this passage, see Roger Marston's *Quodlibeta*. On Marston, please see J.F. Silva, 'Perceptiveness,' *Aristotelian Society Supplementary volume* 91 (2017), pp. 43–61.

<sup>9</sup> *Quod.* I, q. 3.4, p. 8: 'Species corporalis in organo corporali est dimensionata secundum dimensiones organi;' see also *Quod.* III, q. 9.5, p. 151: 'Speciei corporali quae est in organo et dimensionatiter.'

cific range of sensible properties, which in the case of eyes means being diaphanous and watery;<sup>10</sup> or air in the ear, making it conducive of hearing.<sup>11</sup>

Importantly, for Pecham, the corporeality of the species means that these must be received in the sense *organ* only and not in the sense *power*. Although the visual power (*vis visiva*) perfects the eye and has a natural connection (*colligatione*) with it such that together, power and organ constitute the capacity for seeing,<sup>12</sup> perception is not the mere reception of the species in the organ. Drafting his response in Augustinian terms, Pecham claims that perception is not the effect of an affection of the body caused by an external object but the soul actively tending to that affection in the body.<sup>13</sup> The result of this attentiveness is that whenever the eyes are affected by the incoming species, the soul *qua* visual power transforms itself into the likeness of whatever affected the sense organ, in accordance with, but not caused by, that affection.<sup>14</sup> The nature of this production is conveyed in the Augustinian terminology of 'the soul makes in itself and of itself' the image of the object,<sup>15</sup> and in taking the affection of the sense organ as an 'occasion' for self-caused assimilation:

those species are born out of itself [i. e. the soul] from an exciting occasion, not from an impressing cause. Any other way would be contrary to Augustine.<sup>16</sup>

Pecham contrasts a passive causal model of perception, according to which the impression of the species on the senses is the cause of the perceptual act with an active model, which he associates with Augustine, according to which perception consists of a two-stage process: the object issuing *corporeal* species that are received in the

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**10** John Pecham, *Tractatus de perspectiva* (*Tract. de perspect.*), ed. D.C. Lindberg, (Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1972), 5, p. 43. See also John Pecham, *Perspectiva communis* (*Perspect. comm.*), in *John Pecham and the Science of Optics*, ed. and trans. D.C. Lindberg (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), I.31, p. 112.

**11** John Pecham, *Tractatus de anima* (*Tract. de anima*), ed. P. Gaudentius Melani (Florence: Edizioni Studi Franciscani, 1948), II.x.3, p. 34. John of La Rochelle eloquently describes this requirement as 'every power that operates by means of an organ operates only in accordance with the properties and possibilities of the organ.' ('Omnis virtus operans per organum operatur secundum proprietatem organi et possibilitatem tantum.') John of La Rochelle, *Tractatus de divisione multiplici potentiarum animae*, ed. P. Michaud-Quantin (Paris: J. Vrin, 1964), II.xiv, p. 81.

**12** *Tract. de anima* iv, p. 12: 'Est enim vis visiva perfectio oculi, sicut tota anima totius corporis.'

**13** *Tract. de anima* iv.3, p. 13: 'Non pati a corpore, sed in corporis passionibus attentius agerem et hoc eam non latere, sicut haec docet Augustinus, *VI Musicae*.' See also *Quod*. I, q. 3.10, p. 9, where he quotes Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram XII*.

**14** *Tract. de anima* iv, p. 13: 'Necesse est animam advertere omnes mutationes factas in organo et naturali colligatione in illius similitudinem se transformare, et proportionaliter corpori se immutat.'

**15** *Quod*. I.12, p. 10: 'Species immutat organum corporale et organum immutatum excitat animam ad immutationem sibi consimilem suo modo quam anima facit in se ipsa de se ipsa.' The reference here is to Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram XII* and *De Trinitate X*.

**16** *Quod*. I.16, p. 10: 'Species illae nascuntur de se per occasionem excitativam, non per causam impressivam. Aliter enim esset sibi contrarius Augustinus.'

*corporeal sense organ*,<sup>17</sup> which excites the soul to making (*fabricatio*) in itself an internal representation of that which is presented to the organ by the species.<sup>18</sup>

Before continuing, it is worth emphasizing that the adoption of an active model by Pecham does not mean that perception excludes a passive aspect. Passivity refers to the receptivity of the *organ*, whereas the active aspect is the activity of the *soul*.<sup>19</sup> He illustrates this with a comparison between desire and perception: both are motions from the soul (*ab anima*) that require images of sensible things that come to be in the soul are produced by the soul itself; however, insofar as the making of those images depends on the action of external things present to the senses exciting the soul, sense perception is also a motion to the soul (*ad animam*).<sup>20</sup>

Pecham owes us a justification for the soul being the principle of cognitive activity. He offers this by arguing first that no material thing can act on the soul because the transition from corporeal to spiritual requires an infinite power, as seen above. Appealing to three passages from Augustine's works, namely:

1. *De musica* VI: 'The rational soul (...) does not receive anything from the body.'
2. *De Genesi ad litteram* VII: 'The image of a body is not in the spirit [i.e. soul] [due to] the body, but the spirit forms it in itself with wondrous speed.'
3. *De Trinitate* X.5: 'The images of bodies the soul is entangled and carries with are made by the soul in itself or of itself.'<sup>21</sup>

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**17** It is important to note here that nothing Pecham says in these works about the species conflicts with his account in the *perspectiva*-centered works.

**18** *Tract. de anima* iv.7, p. 16: 'Anima transformat se in similitudinem rei cuius species est in organo.' See also *Quod*. III, q. 9, n.9, p. 151 (quoted below). As Pecham explicitly notes (*Quod*. IV, q.28, n.6, p. 238), 'Augustine teaches that neither the sensitive nor the intellective soul receive anything from the body but that it [i.e. either soul] forms in itself the likeness of that which externally presents itself on the occasion of the organ being informed by sensible species.' ('Ex quo Augustinus videtur per doctrinam [docere neque] animam sensitivam neque intellectivam aliquid a corpore recipere, sed ex organo informato speciebus sensibilium habere occasionem formandi in se ipsa similitudinem eius quod exterius nuntiatur.') I have briefly discussed this in J.F. Silva, 'Medieval Theories of Active Perception: An Overview,' in *Active Perception in the History of Philosophy*, ed. J.F. Silva and M. Yrjönsuuri (Dordrecht: Springer, 2014), pp. 126–28 in pp. 117–46.

**19** *Quest. de anima* 11, p. 443: 'Sed in potentia sensitive, quae est minus spiritualis, [est] activa potentia quae est ex parte animae, et passiva quae est ex parte organi. Et ideo quia sensus non est sine actione et passione, ideo dicitur esse coniuncti.' For the passive (Aristotelian) model, it is the sense (organ informed by the power) that constitutes the passive element, whereas the object is the active element, efficiently causing the act of perception by bringing about an actualization of the power's potentiality to perceive. When the soul is in the disembodied state, it must receive knowledge about particular things by means of the intellect precisely because it lacks the material component (the body) through which that kind of cognition is possible, i.e. the senses.

**20** *Quaest. tract. de anima* III.xxxvii, p. 212: 'Et secundum veritatem tam cognitio quam dilectio dicit motum ab anima, dicente Augustino, *Super Gen, ad Litt.* III, quod imagines non corpus in spiritu, sed spiritus in se ipso format celeritate mirabilia. Sed quia ista formatio non fit, nisi praeveniatur in aliqua citatione vel excitatione a rebus sensibilibus per sensum facta, ideo dicitur cognitio motus ad animam.'

**21** *Quod*. IV, q. 17, n. 6, p. 214.

Pecham aims at showing on the basis of Augustine's authority the impossibility of bottom-up causality, that is to say, the impossibility of a transference of information from the material realm of the body to the immaterial realm of the soul as the result of the action of the body.<sup>22</sup> Pecham therefore contrasts the spiritual and active nature of the soul to the material and passive nature of the body, which he uses to show that the subject of perceptual acts is not the body or even the composite, but primarily the soul with the assistance of the body:

Sensation is not of the composite, as if the body were to co-operate [with the soul] in [the act of] apprehension, but [the body] assists the soul with the reception of the corporeal species, which does not enter the soul.<sup>23</sup>

The subject of sensation is the soul, with the body's contribution limited to be the recipient of the incoming species. In that sense, it seems clear that this epistemological model reflects an underlying metaphysical dualism of an agent operating soul and an instrumental body.<sup>24</sup>

The second argument for the soul as the principle of activity comes from the conception of cognition as the most intimate act of the soul, which means that cognitive acts must be efficiently caused by an internal principle.<sup>25</sup> Pecham grounds this principle of internal efficient cognitive activity on the assimilative capacity of the soul, which he describes variously as *transformabilis* and *assimilabilis* to the external (cognized) thing, as being essential to its nature. In a chapter on the substance of the soul, he defines it as

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**22** *Quod*. IV, q. 17, n. 6, p. 214: 'Illa quae est in organo gigneret sui similitudinem in spiritu, et hoc non potest esse quia corpus non agit in spiritum nec res corporalis gignit rem incorpoream, cum infinita sit distantia corporis a spiritu.'

**23** *Tract. de anima* IV.7, p. 16: 'Amplius, sentire non est coniuncti, quasi corpus cooperetur apprehensione, sed quia subservit animae in receptione speciei corporalis, quae in anima non intrat.' In the continuation of the passage, Pecham makes it clear that the soul is the primary agent in the process of perception because it continues to operate even in the absence of its habitual bodily instrument. The sensitive powers remain in the disembodied soul and can perform their operations provided that they receive the species – by whichever alternative ways may be (Pecham is not expansive on the details of alternative ways; in *Quod*. IV, q. 17, n. 7, p. 215 he does seem to suggest that at least angels could assimilate themselves to species of corporeal things in the medium, without the need for corporeal organs): 'Therefore, if the soul, which drags with itself the visual power [even when] separated from the body, having the occasion to transform itself in a given species, would not need the corporeal organ but can cognize by means of its own visual power.' ('Ergo si animae, quae secum trahit vim visivam, a corpore separate potest dari occasionem speciei in se transformandae, non indigent separata organo corporali sed potest cognoscere per suam vim visivam.'). On this, see also *Quod*. IV, q. 28, n. 6, p. 238.

**24** When using the instrument-terminology, Pecham refers to his inspiration, Augustine: see e.g. *Tract. de anima* IV.6, p. 15, referring to *De Genesi ad litteram* XII.3: 'Non enim corpus sentit sed anima per corpus, quo velut instrumentum utitur ad formandum in se ipsa quod exterius innitatur.'

**25** *Quest. de anima* 11, p. 444.

an incorporeal substance that is potentially cognizant of all things and whose substance is transformable into a likeness of all things, just like the wax is, due to its own aptitude, transformable into the likeness of all shapes.<sup>26</sup>

This extraordinary passage shows how for Pecham the soul, as spiritual substance is defined by its ability to assimilate itself to whatever comes to be its cognitive object, here compared with the nature of wax. In other places of his work, Pecham further elaborates on this comparison, in the context of interpreting Aristotle's *De anima* passage on the signet-ring and the wax tablet, intended as a description of perception: sense receives the form without matter just like the wax receives the shape of a signet ring without the ring's gold.<sup>27</sup> Pecham understands this analogy idiosyncratically as meaning that the (likeness of the) shape of the seal comes to be in the wax due to the self-caused assimilative action of the wax and not to the impressing action of the seal.<sup>28</sup> Applied to the context of the original analogy, this means that perception is the result of the activity of the soul, rather than the action of the sensible object. The activity of the soul is the result of its capacity to become like this or that on the occasion of an external affection of the body it informs:

I say here that it is impossible for the corporeal species to impress itself unto the rational soul, as Augustine says in *De musica* VI. But excited by sense, it forms in itself and of itself spiritual likenesses of those corporeal likenesses that are in the sense, on account of the eternal light. If you ask, in what way [is this possible]? I say that it is due to the soul's connection to the body as a perfection to its perfectible, naturally turning to the changes in the body and transforming itself into those likenesses. (...) In the same way as the soul naturally attends to all bodily affections also naturally the variation in the angle of refraction follows the variation in the angle of incidence.<sup>29</sup>

**26** *Tract. de anima* III.xiv.2, pp. 46–47: 'Anima enim, sicut supra probatum est, est substantia incorporea, in potentia omnium cognitiva, habens substantiam in omnium similitudinem transformabilem, sicut cera ex sui aptitudine transformabilis est in omnium similitudinem figurarum.'

**27** Aristotle, *De anima* II.12, 424a17–24. On this, see for example J. Owens, 'Aristotle: Cognition as a Way of Being,' *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 6:1 (1976), pp. 1–11.

**28** *Quod*. IV, q. 17, n. 6, p. 214: 'Item, Philosophus comparat receptionem animae receptioni sigilli a cera. Et certum est quod similitudo sigilli in cera non [est] a sigillo originaliter, sed a cera.' *Tract. de anima*, pp. 46–47. On how this analogy is found in Augustinian authors of this period, see Silva, 'The Chameleonic Mind: Medieval Augustinians on the Activity of Perception,' in *Medieval Perceptual Puzzles: Theories of Sense Perception in the 13th and 14th Centuries*, ed. E. Baltuta (Leiden: Brill, 2020), pp. 38–72.

**29** *Quod*. III, q. 9, n. 9, p. 151: 'Dico ad praesens quod impossibile est speciem corporalem imprimere in anima rationalem, sicut Augustinis, VI *Musicae*. Sed excitatur a sensu et format in se de se similitudines spirituales illorum quorum similitudines corporales sunt in sensu, illustrante luce aeterna. Si quaeris qualiter? Dico quia colligatur anima corpori, sicut perfectio perfectibili, et advertit naturaliter immutationes corporis et transformat se in illarum similitudinem. Nec exigitur praecognitio, quia dirigit naturalis colligatio corporis et animae. Sic naturaliter sequitur anima omnes corporis passiones, sicut naturaliter variato angulo incidentiae variatur angulus reflexionis.' I discuss this passage in J.F. Silva, 'The Chameleonic Mind: Activity Versus the Actuality of Perception,' in *Medieval Perceptual Puzzles*, ed. E. Baltuta (Leiden: Brill, 2020), pp. 54–57 in pp. 38–72.

Pecham interestingly combines in this passage a few of the core assumptions in his theory of perception, namely, what he takes to be the core Augustinian thesis of the impossibility of bottom-up epistemic causality, as formulated in *De musica*; and his attempt to connect this with the perspectivist model of visual perception. I think there are three key ideas worth retaining from this passage.

First, that the soul's ability to react to an affection of the body and produce an internal representation of the species present to the sense organ is the result of, on the one hand, the soul's colligation to the body, which it perfects and, on the other, the soul's spiritual nature reflecting the eternal light. I will say something more about the former point but would like to remark about the latter that there are many ways in which the expression 'illustrante luce aeterna' can be understood. I take it that in this context it means that the soul is able to make itself like the incoming sensory information by having been divinely created with such capacity (I don't think Pecham is thinking of divine illumination in this passage because of the 'naturaliter' that follows).<sup>30</sup>

Second, Pecham uses the expression '*naturaliter*', i.e. naturally, to express the way the soul makes the spiritual likeness out of the corporeal likeness in the organ. Elsewhere, Pecham claims that this productive motion of the soul is due to the soul's natural capacity for examination (or 'to roam through': *perlustratione*), that is insofar as the soul is able to reflect on itself, it is capable of 'move itself and make a likeness of an external thing.'<sup>31</sup>

Third, Pecham further notes that this capacity is due to the soul's natural connection with the body,<sup>32</sup> but the delightful clause comparing the angle of incidence and angle of refraction of the visual rays reaching the eye (which will be further explained below) and the way the soul reacts to the affection of the body in producing its internal image, shows that Pecham takes this process as being 'automatic' from the outset. By 'automatic' I simply mean that the explanation why this is so is grounded on the nature of the entities involved – the soul and the visual rays. Rays refract when reaching the convex-shaped surface of the eye just like the soul produces spiritual images when the body it perfects is affected from the outside by corporeal species.

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**30** Pecham does use similar expressions to corroborate the doctrine of divine illumination, but this is so when talking about intellectual cognition. That is the case for instance in *Quod*. III, q. 10, where he shows that certitude about intellectual knowledge requires divine enlightenment. A similar formulation can be found in Roger Marston, *Quaestiones disputate de emanatione aeterna, de statu naturae lapsae et de anima* (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1932), pp. 245–73; see E. Gilson, 'Roger Marston: Un Cas d'Augustinisme Avicennisant,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 8 (1933), pp. 37–42.

**31** *Quod*. IV, q. 17, n. 9, p. 215: 'Et quia potest super se reflecti, potest se movere et facere similitudinem rei exterioris.' On this, see L. Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis: From Perception to Knowledge* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), vol. 1, p. 203.

**32** On this, see Silva, 'Medieval Theories of Active Perception,' p. 127.

## Metaphysical Excursus

Before proceeding to examine the second type of description of perception in Pecham's works, it is necessary to briefly investigate the nature of the colligation that exists between the body and the soul. There are two aspects worthy of closer inspection in the context of understanding Pecham's theory of cognition. One provides the wider metaphysical context in which Pecham writes; in what follows, I discuss this very briefly, as it is the focus of another contribution to this volume. The second aspect concerns the way the soul relates to the body in the execution of its cognitive operations and therefore is of clear consequence to Pecham's theory of perception.

The first aspect of this relation to consider is that the body needs to meet certain requirements of appropriated-ness to receive the soul. For the body to be appropriate (*comportionato*) and in our case noble (*nobilissimo*) is for it to have the right sort of dispositions allowing the soul to perform its functions.<sup>33</sup> This appropriated-ness is partially explained by the level of complexity of its structure prior to the infusion of the rational soul. The soul is not the form of the body (*forma corporis*) *qua* body – that is the form of corporeity (*forma corporeitatis*),<sup>34</sup> which continues to inform matter as constituting the body even after the infusion of the rational soul, i.e. the form of the species.<sup>35</sup> In addition, the human body prior to the infusion of the rational soul is informed by the vegetative and sensitive soul-kinds, but this composite is ordained to completion by the rational soul, which perfect those preceding material forms so that the composite can perform the operations proper to its species.<sup>36</sup> It is also this last complete form, as the form of the human species, that gives unity to the human composite.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> *Tract. de anima* I.vii, pp. 25–27.

<sup>34</sup> The existence of such form of the body independent of its being informed by the soul was essential to addressing key theological problems, namely those of resurrection, veneration of relics, and the status of the dead body of Christ during the *triduum*. Pecham discusses this topic extensively in his *Quod*. IV, q. 11, pp. 196–202, where he opposes Thomas Aquinas' view. On this, see Wilson, 'The Critique of Thomas Aquinas's Unicity Theory of Forms;' and (with reference to Pecham) J.-L. Solère, 'Was the Eye in the Tomb? On the Metaphysical and Historical Interest of Some Strange Quodlibetal Questions,' in *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages: The Thirteenth Century*, ed. C. Schabel (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

<sup>35</sup> *Quod*. IV, q. 259, p. 230: 'Dicendum igitur quod anima rationalis non est forma corporis, secundum corpus est, immo praesupponit corporeitatem, cuius forma non corrumpitur per adventum animae, quia nullam habet cum ipsa corporeitatem.' On the nature of matter and its distinction from form (for Pecham, matter has an essence and therefore is an entity of its own right), see *Quod*. IV, q. 1, pp. 174–76.

<sup>36</sup> *Quod*. IV, q. 374, p. 256: 'Quia licet anima rationalis sit forma immaterialis, tamen complet omnes formas materiales et perficit eas, ut esse et operari possint operationes consonas speciei.'

<sup>37</sup> *Quod*. IV, q. 259, p. 231: 'Unde sunt in homine formae plures gradatim ordinatae ad unam ultimam perfectionem, et ideo formatum est unum.' Just before this passage, Pecham notes that this 'teleological structuring' is down to the mixture of the elements: 'Omnes formae quattuor elementorum



Like the human body also the human soul is constituted by spiritual matter, which explains its individuation,<sup>38</sup> and by a plurality of forms, namely the vegetative, the sensitive, and the intellective.<sup>39</sup> It is unclear what the precise ontological status of these forms is, as Pecham seems to accept a certain level of independence to them while rejecting that they are really distinct from one another.<sup>40</sup> In any case, it is clear that he takes 1. these lower kinds of soul (vegetative – which Pecham also calls *ci-bativa* – and sensitive) to be different from the intellective soul in that they require the body for their operations; and that 2. the individual human being has only one soul, which is completed and perfected by the intellective *potentia*. Following a traditional pluralist strategy, Pecham appeals to a genetic argument to justify this pluralism: the process of human generation is ordained to the completion by the rational soul, which when created (by God) and infused in the composite of body and sensitive soul, perfecting it.<sup>41</sup> The result is one rational soul that is simple in its mode of presence (being whole everywhere in the body) but composite in the sense of integrating vegetative, sensitive, and intellective forms.<sup>42</sup>

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reductae sunt in unam formam mixti; non cuiuscumque mixtionis, sed illius quae est propria complexionis humanae.’

**38** *Quaest. tract. de anima* III.xxv, p. 184; *Quest. de anima* 12, p. 447.

**39** *Quaest. de anima*, q. 4, p. 363: ‘Ergo, secundum hoc dici potest unam esse in homine animam plene eum vivificantem, compositam ex triplici substantia et vita, scilicet vegetativa, sensitiva et intellectiva.’ Pecham is however ambiguous and only comments that this is the most probable (*probabilior*) theory. On the early Franciscans conception of the soul as one *in tribus potentiis*, see Alexander of Hales, *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica* (SH), 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1924–48), II, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, Ti1, C2 (n. 332), p. 404; see also John of La Rochelle, *Summa de anima*, ed. J.G. Bougerol (Paris: Vrin, 1995), chapter 26, pp. 87–89. According to John, if these were three substances, the operations of one would impede the operations of the other; however, we do not experience such impediments. He cites (ed. Bougerol, p. 86) Augustine as an authority for this unicity theory, not aware that the work he cites from (*De ecclesiasticis dogmatibus*) is not by Augustine.

**40** While wanting to remain neutral on this matter, I would suggest that Pecham is close to the pluralist position that Zavalloni describes as ‘dispositional subordination’ of the vegetative and sensitive with respect to the intellective soul, as different determinations within one and the same substance; Roberto Zavalloni, *Richard de Mediavilla et la controverse sur la pluralité des forms* (Louvain: Éditions de l’Institut supérieur de philosophie, 1951), p. 336.

**41** *Quaest. de anima*, q. 1, p. 326: ‘Ideo generat aggregatum essentialiter ordinatum ad animam rationalem. (...) Dicendum quod [compositum] generatur ex corpore et anima sensitiva, quae non corrumpitur adveniente anima rationali, sed completur. Et quod generatum, et anima rationalis quae infunditur, non sunt duae animae sed una; sicut homo est una substantia ex anima composita.’ On this, see Zavalloni, *Richard de Mediavilla*. On a similar reasoning, see John of La Rochelle, *Summa de anima*, c. 26, p. 87.

**42** *Quaest. de anima*, q. 1. p. 327. See also *Quaest. de anima*, q. 4, p. 363: ‘Unam ergo habet homo tantum animam.’ I call them aspects in order to remain neutral about their ontological status. Pecham strongly argues against those who take the soul’s composite nature to be contrary to its simplicity; appealing to Hugh of St Victor, he remarks that the unity of the soul suffices for its simplicity. See *Quaest. tract. de anima* q. 26, pp. 188–89; *Tract. de anima*, p. 29.

Despite being a substance in its own right, the soul is essentially inclined to be united with it as its perfection.<sup>43</sup> This double consideration of the soul – in itself and in relation to the body – corresponds to a position found in Avicenna which the early Franciscans tended to adopt as theirs.<sup>44</sup> The resulting metaphysical picture is that of the human person as composite of two substances, soul and body, each composite of matter and form(s), and united by a principle of mutual inclination (*inclinatio mutua*).<sup>45</sup> This picture makes Pecham aligned with the doctrine of a plurality of forms in the human composite – because he holds that both the body and the soul are matter-form composites, which are substances in their own right, individuated and subsistent by themselves.<sup>46</sup>

The second aspect of considering the soul-body relation is how the body needs to meet certain requirements of appropriated-ness to receive *the acts of the soul*. One of the key functions of the soul is to be the perfection of the body; to be ‘the perfection of’ means that the soul is a spiritual substance that rules the body which is subjected to it, so that an affection of the body – due to their colligation (*colligatio*) – triggers a corresponding action in the soul.<sup>47</sup> This is due to what Pecham calls the attention the soul pays to the body, as the body is the soul’s instrument for epistemic action: the soul is dependent on incoming information from the senses to acquire knowledge about things in the world.<sup>48</sup> But, as we have seen above, Pecham is careful to point out that this action of the object on the body does not cause but rather alerts the soul’s power to perceive.<sup>49</sup> Insofar as this is the nature of their relation,

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**43** *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 26, p. 187: ‘Anima, dependet et inclinatur per essentialia sua ad corporis perfectionem.’ Although this particular passage is about the soul in the disembodied state, it applies to the soul in general, as this essential ‘unibility’ is constitutive of its essence.

**44** On this, see Lydia Schumacher, ‘The *De anima* Tradition in Early Franciscan Thought,’ in *The Summa Halensis: Sources and Context*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), p. 158.

**45** *Quest. de anima* 12, p. 447. Lydia Schumacher pointed out to me (in personal communication) that this principle of ‘mutual inclination’ seems to correspond to what John of La Rochelle calls ‘unibilitas substantialis’ of body and soul.

**46** *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 27, p. 187: ‘Concedendum est igitur per a<u>ctoritates [sic] et rationes praedictas animam esse compositam ex materia et forma.’ On the soul having matter and being individuated by it, see the whole section: *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 25–27. On the sources, including the early Franciscans, see C.G. Colley, ‘The Plurality of Substantial Forms in John Pecham,’ *Franciscan Studies* 73 (2015), pp. 59–80.

**47** *Tract. de anima* iv.3; see also *Quod*. IV, q. 30.8, p. 243: ‘Anima unitur corpori ut motor et perfectio.’ In this context, very important is the reference Pecham makes to Augustine’s *De quantitate animae* and the definition of the soul as ‘substantia quaedam rationis particeps regendo corpori accomodata’ (*Quaestiones de anima*, q. IV, Responsio, p. 50). See also *Tract. de anima* II.71, p. 28 on the spiritual nature of the soul.

**48** According to Pecham, the human soul knows in two ways: by means of the senses and by means of revelation from a superior source; see *Quod*. IV, q. 35.4, p. 254.

**49** *Tract. de anima* II.x.3, p. 34. See also *Quod*. III, q. 9, n. 9, p. 151: ‘Dico quod quia colligatur anima corpori, sicut perfectio perfectibili, et advertit naturaliter immutationes corporis et transformat se in illarum similitudinem. Nec exigitur praecognitio, quia dirigit naturalis colligatio corporis et animae.’

soul and body stand to one another like the sailor stands to the ship: the soul uses the body as the means to reach to a safe harbor.<sup>50</sup> But this mode of describing their relation is general, in that it corresponds to the essence of the soul: the soul is the perfection of the body by being essentially present as a whole in the whole of the body and in each of its parts (*tota in toto corpore et in parte*), which is an Augustinian trope.<sup>51</sup> The soul is present intentionally (*intensive*) as a whole in every part of the body rather than in extension (*extensive*),<sup>52</sup> and this mode of presence can be described as the soul being the perfection of different bodily parts as different powers. So, even though the essence of the soul is the perfection of the eye as a human eye, the soul is also the perfection of the eye as the power of sight.<sup>53</sup> The same principle applies not only to the other sense modalities, but also to all other functions it performs by means of (*mediante*) the body,<sup>54</sup> for instance those related to the preservation and propagation of life that belong to the vegetative part.

Pecham makes in addition one general and one specific claim about this. First, the soul is the efficient cause of the different operations of its powers directed to their proper objects. In that sense, the powers of the soul should not be thought of as accidents but as instruments through which the activity of the soul is exercised.<sup>55</sup> In other words, powers correspond to the soul's different modes of operation, with respect to specific objects, and in the case of sensory ones, by means of appropriate bodily organs as instruments of its action. In what concerns the sensitive soul, Pe-

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50 *Tract. de anima* I.vii, p. 25. The reference to this notion here presents an interesting case study of the intricate network of influences authors of this period operate with. While Pecham uses Avicenna as his authority to defend this idea, the editor of the *Tractatus* (Gaudentius Melani) notes that the citation probably comes from John of La Rochelle's *Summa de anima* (I.45, p. 146). But John in fact quotes Augustine's *Enarrationes in Ps.* (99.10) as his source of this view. What this shows above all is, as noted by Gilson almost a century ago, the recognized doctrinal similarities found in the Platonists Augustine and Avicenna. See E. Gilson, 'Les sources Greco-arabes de l'augustinisme avicennisant,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 4 (1929), pp. 5–107. See also Lydia Schumacher, 'The *Summa Halensis*: Sources and Context,' in *The Summa Halensis: Sources and Context*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), p. 5 in pp. 1–7.

51 *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 27, p. 188: 'Anima est in qualibet parte corporis tota per essentiam.'

52 *Tract. de anima* II.viii.4, p. 29. On the soul as the principle of life, see *Tract. de anima* I.1–3. On its dependency on Alfred of Sareshel's *De motu cordis*, see C.G. Colley, *John Pecham on Life and Mind* (University of South Carolina, PhD diss., 2014).

53 *Tract. de anima* I.viii.5, p. 30. On this, see *SH* II, In4, Tr1, S1, Q2, Ti1, M1, C1 (n. 354), p. 431: 'Dicendum ergo est quod diversae sunt vires quae sunt perfectiones diversorum organorum.'

54 *Quod*, IV, q. 30.8, p. 243; *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 26.2, p. 189: 'Sicut anima per essentiam perficit totum corpus, ita per potentias partes corporis organizatas ad operationes determinat.' These correspond to the vegetative and sensitive functions.

55 *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 33, p. 207: 'Necessaria ergo sibi fuit potentiarum et virium diversitas secundum differentiam obiectorum.' For Pecham, the soul is predicated essentially of its powers because the powers are that without which (*sine quo*) the soul could not be perfect(ed); see *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 32, p. 205. A similar statement is found at *SH* II, In4, Tr1, S1, Q2, Ti1, M1, C1 (n. 354), p. 431: 'Dicendum ergo est quod diversae sunt vires quae sunt perfectiones diversorum organorum.'

cham distinguishes between cognitive and motive powers; and the cognitive powers are further divided into the external senses (*vires apprehensivae extra*), i.e. the five sense modalities of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste; the internal senses (*vires apprehensivae interiores*). Pecham argues for the existence of five such powers: the *phantasia* or common sense, which is at the root of all sense modalities and is able to discriminate between their objects, such as sweet and white; the imagination, which retains that which the common sense receives; the imaginative power, which combines (or divides) apprehended sensory images into other images that may or not bear any correspondence to anything in extra-mental reality, like the image of (Pecham's own example) a man with two heads (in human beings, the imaginative power is also called cogitative); the estimative power, which apprehends intentions (*intentiones non sensitivas*) such as enmity and friendliness, which despite not being sensed by the external senses are received together with the sensible species; the final power is the memory, which retains the intentions apprehended by the estimative power.<sup>56</sup> Pecham is not particularly expansive on these faculties and for the most part it reproduces the model of faculty psychology found in Avicenna.

What matters for our purposes here however is the way Pecham insists that all the powers are one with the soul in substance (even if not one in essence) and that the diversity of powers expresses the ways in which the soul is directed to (i.e. operates with) different kinds of objects.<sup>57</sup> It is important to note that the diversity of powers and operations is not an obstacle to the soul's unity; rather, their multiplicity is grounded on the unity of being. The essential point for Pecham is that together they constitute one total causal efficient principle, with the soul as the principle of action and the powers as instruments of that action, without which the soul is not perfect.<sup>58</sup> The soul is perfected precisely by performing the operations that are proper to it.

## Optical Description of Perception

In the previous section, I have focused on examining the psychological level of description of perception according to Pecham, which included a few digressions about the nature of the soul as the primary agent of perception, its relation to the body, and the relation to its cognitive powers and among the cognitive powers themselves. In this section, I will examine a second kind of description (introduced at the beginning of this paper), which focuses on the mode of transmission of the sensible species from that object to the perceiver's sense organs. The transmission aspect is barely

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<sup>56</sup> *Tract. de anima* II.x.5–8, pp. 35–37.

<sup>57</sup> *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 32, p. 202. This view is aligned with the early Franciscans views on the matter; see *SH* II, In4, Tr1, S2, Q1, Ti1, C1 (n. 349), p. 425: 'Potentia est id per quod anima ad aliud est efficiendum vel recipiendum.'

<sup>58</sup> *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 32, pp. 202–4.

considered in the 'psychological' works. Probably the most significant connection between the two sets of works and the two approaches is that in both Pecham emphasizes the causality of the external corporeal object as the starting point the perceptual process but at the same time emphasizing that what the object causes is the diffusion of the species, not the perceptual act. Also, in this second type of description the activity of the soul is emphasized, even if it occurs at a later stage of visual processing. In both cases, it is clear that for Pecham, the reception of the visual rays/species is not sufficient for perception.

This aspect allows us to introduce a first major feature of Pecham's general account of visual perceptual experience, which is that it has an intromissive nature. Species are issued forth by external objects and travel through a medium until being received in a perceiver's sense organs. Pecham objects (like Alhacen had done extensively in his *De aspectibus* before him) to the view according to which visual rays exit from the eyes and travel across the medium to the object and from there back to the eyes, bringing back data about that object at a distance because he doubts any animal power would be capable of such a far-reaching action. Pecham's objection is qualified, though: while he objects to the postulation of these outgoing visual rays as conveyors (*nuntiantes*) of sensory information, he does allow for some sort of extramission of visual rays playing a supporting role in the perception of the external thing. According to Pecham, these outgoing rays do not travel all the way to the object but are issued to the medium immediately surrounding the eyes in order to prepare the reception of the incoming species. Pecham gives two reasons for the existence of these emitted rays: the first is that they follow from the principle that all corporeal things generate species – and eyes are bodily entities.<sup>59</sup> The second reason is that these visual rays are found in certain animal species,<sup>60</sup> like felines (whose emitted rays are visible at night). But if that is the case with some animal species, Pecham goes on arguing, it must be the case in all because 'vision is of the same kind in all animals.'<sup>61</sup>

Assisted by those outgoing rays, then, the species arrive at the perceiver's eyes from the object. According to Pecham, species are issued forth from all points at

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59 *Tract. de perspect.* 4, p. 37. The influence of Bacon seems clear: see Bacon, *De multiplicatione specierum* I, d. 7, c. 4; Bacon, *Perspectiva*, pt. I, d. 7, c. 2–3, pp. 100–2. Bacon objects to the full-extramission model, according to which the species from the eye would travel all the way to the object and back; he takes most authors (Alhacen, Avicenna, Averroes) to object to this idea, not his theory of the species spreading close to the eye. For Pecham, see *Pers. Comm.* I.46, pp. 128–29. A certain ambiguity in the Latin text of Alhacen (translated by an anonymous author in the late 12th or early 13th century) may be to blame for this account; see D.C. Lindberg, 'Alhazen's Theory of Vision and Its Reception in the West,' *Isis* 58:3 (1967), pp. 325–26 in pp. 321–41. At the same time, one of the most interesting arguments Alhacen presents against the extramission theory is that visual perception is not limited to brute sensation, i.e. the perception of what immediately is present to the visual power.

60 *Tract. de perspect.* 4, pp. 37–38; *Pers. Comm.* I.45, p. 129; see also *Quod.* III, q. 10, n. 9, p. 154, where he lists the cat, serpent, and lion as such examples.

61 *Tract. de perspect.* I.46, p. 129.

the surface of the object and propagate, if unimpeded, in a continuous straight line. The rectilinear mode of propagation is justified by it constituting the path of least resistance and the strongest mode of influence that any natural body is capable of exercising.<sup>62</sup> In order to guarantee that the species are transmitted and received in a way that is conducive to perception (i.e. that there was no distortion and thus that the ensuing perception is veridical and accurate), the model of perspectivist optics Pecham adopts postulates eight necessary conditions: 1. *lux*: the existence of light in the medium; 2. *distantia*: that the object perceived is at an appropriate distance; 3. *oppositio*: that the object stands opposite the perceiver; 4. *magnitudo*: that the object has an appropriate size; 5. *raritas*: the existence of a transparent medium between object and sense organ; 6. *soliditas*: that the object is solid and denser than the medium; 7. *tempus*: that perception takes time; and 8. *sanitas*: that the eye is healthy.<sup>63</sup>

The attentive reader will have noticed that in this section I have been alternating between ray and species. In doing so, I am following a variation found in Pecham's works, from the species in the psychological treatises giving rise to the conflated terminology of rays and species in the optical works (which should be understood as an attempt to merge the species doctrine of Grosseteste with the geometrical optics of Alhacen).<sup>64</sup> In fact, according to Pecham, a ray is nothing but the rectilinear way the species propagates.<sup>65</sup> We can therefore use rays and species synonymously in this context. But if the issue of terminology is not problematic, the issue of the mode of reception of these species/rays is. The problem is that if rays/species are issued from each point at the surface of any object in the visual field – radiating in all directions (radiantly: *radiose*) – how is it possible that these species be received in a way that does not lead to a confused perception of overlapping objects and parts of objects?

Pecham's answer is to claim that the species/rays received in the eye are arranged in accordance to the way they exist in the external thing perceived to the tune of one-to-one correspondence.<sup>66</sup> This is guaranteed by two very simple principles of geometrical optics: first, only one incoming ray from each point of the object received in the eye is perpendicular to the convex spherical surface of the eye.<sup>67</sup> All other rays are refracted (*franguntur*), lose intensity and proceed in a different way, namely, some of these are used to fill in the gaps (*cooperantur*), rather than being

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<sup>62</sup> *Perspect. comm.* I.27, p. 109. On the concept of the ray as following a straight path, see Euclid's *Optics* – although Euclid holds an extramission account of visual rays. The length and angle of the ray are fundamental to adjudicating all other properties, such as size and distance.

<sup>63</sup> *Perspect. comm.* I.47–54, pp. 130–35. See also *Tract. de perspect.* 7, pp. 48–49, which lists nine conditions because he adds *situ*: the place an object occupies; on a reduced (to three conditions) version, see *Tract. de anima* I.v.2, pp. 17–18.

<sup>64</sup> As proposed by Lindberg, 'Lines of Influence in Thirteenth-Century Optics,' p. 75.

<sup>65</sup> *Perspect. comm.* I.27, p. 108: 'Radius enim nichil aliud est nisi species rei visibilis in directum facta porrectione.'

<sup>66</sup> *Perspect. comm.* I.37, p. 120.

<sup>67</sup> *Tract. de perspect.* 6, p. 47.



the primary conveyors of information. Second, the perpendicular rays form a (visual) pyramid that has its apex at the center of the eye and the base on the visible surface of the object.<sup>68</sup> That pyramid of incoming rays delimits the visible surface of the object seen (*sub qua res videtur*) – i.e. the surface of the object that is visible falls within the limits of that pyramid. But of course, this gives the perceiver direct access only to the surface of the object facing them; so, for the object to be completely processed (in a certified way), as Pecham puts it, the eye needs to move in order to properly scan the object.<sup>69</sup>

The existence of a mechanism by means of which that scanning is urged and executed, as well as the process whereby incoming information (the visual rays) is arranged so as to reproduce in a punctiform way the external object, show that visual perception cannot be the result of the mere reception in the glacial humor (the crystalline lens) of incoming sensible forms from the object.<sup>70</sup> Instead, perception requires the action of other cognitive powers beyond the power of sight. But importantly, the nature of that action can only be determined when it has become clear what the content of our visual perceptual experience is, that is to say, only when we are clear about which properties of external things are acquired (and thus represented) in visual perception.

The tradition of perspectivist optics, including Pecham, argues that there are twenty-two particular visual intentions that can be perceived by sight: light, color, distance, position, corporeity, shape, size, continuity, separation, number, motion, rest, roughness, smoothness, transparency, density, shadow, darkness, beauty, ugliness, similarity, and diversity.<sup>71</sup> Taken together, these intentions constitute the form of the sensible object; in other words, these twenty-two visual intentions define the perceptibility of an object.<sup>72</sup> Pecham notes, however, that these are not *all* the properties that can be perceived by sight, but those additional properties are parasitical as it were on the twenty-two just indicated, i.e. they can be reduced to one of those

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<sup>68</sup> *Tract. de perspect.* 6, p. 45: 'Visus sit per pyramidem radiosam, cuius conus in oculo, basis res visa.'

<sup>69</sup> On *visione certitudinali certificata*, see also *Quaest. tract. de anima*, q. 34, p. 209.

<sup>70</sup> Another issue that arises from this is how to account for a single image – and thus act of seeing – from binocular vision. Pecham, following Alhacen, posits the place of the actual judgment of sight at the (hollow of the) common optic nerve connecting the two eyes, where the *ultimum sentiens* is located (*Perspect. comm.* I.32, pp. 117–18; *Tract. de perspect.* 6, p. 48: 'Patet igitur quod visus qui in oculo incipitur in nervo communi consummator.') See Alhacen, *De aspectibus*, ed. A.M. Smith, I.6.68–69, pp. 52–53.

<sup>71</sup> *Perspect. comm.* I.55, p. 134.

<sup>72</sup> Alhazen, *De aspectibus*, bk. II, c. 3. On this, see A.M. Smith, 'The Big Picture in Perspectivist Optics.' I have reservations about Smith's suggestion that these twenty visual intentions are somehow inchoate in the forms of color and light. The only way this is right is if it means that these other properties are said of the thing which is colored. It is also worth pointing out that Bacon (*Perspectiva*, pt. I, d. 10, c. 3, p. 158) calls the twenty intentions common sensibles (*sensibilia communia*), whereas light and color are the *per se* sensibles of sight.



twenty-two. A few examples include curvature, which is reducible to shape; multitude, which is subordinate to number; increase, which is reducible to diversity.<sup>73</sup> Now that we know which properties the perceptible form of the object encompasses, we must inquire into how these are perceived.

According to Pecham, only the first two – light and color – are perceived by the power of sight alone. The remaining twenty (and those that can be reduced to these) require the intervention of other cognitive powers, in a model of visual perception that includes three different levels or stages of processing. Before moving on to describe these stages, it is important to note that this model does not originate with Pecham, who adopts it from the *De aspectibus* of Alhacen,<sup>74</sup> as well as in other perspectivists such as Roger Bacon and Witelo.<sup>75</sup>

The first level of visual perception is that by ‘naked sense’ (*sensu spoliator* or *solo sensu*), which means by sight alone, without the interference or assistance of any other power. At this first level, as mentioned before, only color and light are perceived. Even if there are other visual properties beyond light and color, these can be perceived only insofar as they are conjoined in that which is colored.

Among the other sensible properties that we perceive by sight are those properties things have by being related to other things in certain ways. One such property is that of similarity (or dissimilarity). However, to perceive the similarity or dissimilarity between things depends on the capacity to compare forms and to discriminate or distinguish between them. For instance, we can differentiate between letters that com-

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<sup>73</sup> *Perspect. comm.* I.55, p. 134. It is important to point out that perceptual error can happen with respect to the twenty visual forms, other than light and color, by means of less-than-perfect environmental conditions (the eight conditions stipulated at the beginning of the work). One of the advantages of the perspectivist model of perception is precisely the detailed way it can account for visual perceptual error, in contrast with other perceptual theories which tend to be sparse in how to account for it. An example of this can be found in John of La Rochelle, *Summa de anima* (c. 65, p. 193), where he lists a number of visual illusions – such as seeing movement in stationary objects in land or a stick seen as broken when partially immersed in water – without providing any explanation of why this is so beyond stating that the soul fails because it attributes to the external things what it finds in the bodily senses: ‘In uisione autem corporali sepe fallitur anima, cum in ipsis corporibus fieri putat quod sit in corporeis sensibus.’ On the issue of medieval perceptual errors, see J.F. Silva and J. Toivanen, ‘Perceptual Errors in Late Medieval Philosophy,’ in *The Senses and the History of Philosophy*, ed. B. Glenney and J.F. Silva (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 106–30.

<sup>74</sup> Alhacen, *De aspectibus*, bk. II, c. 3. On this, see Sabra, ‘Sensation and Inference.’ Alhacen describes the three levels of visual perception as *per solo sensu*, *per cognitionem* or *per distinctionem*, and *per argumentationem*. Only the latter entails sequential ordering of conceptual parts, i.e. inference proper. For the same interpretation, see also G. Federici Vescovini, *Le teorie della luce e della visione ottica dal IX al XV secolo* (Perugia: Morlacchi Editore, 2003), pp. 164–65.

<sup>75</sup> Roger Bacon, *Perspectiva*, pt. I, d. 10, c. 3, pp. 154–59. On Bacon’s account, see Katherine H. Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham: Optics, Epistemology, and the Foundations of Semantics, 1250–1345* (Leiden: Brill, 1988); see also A.M. Smith, ‘Saving the Appearances of the Appearances: The Foundations of Classical Geometrical Optics,’ *Archive for History of Exact Sciences* 24:2 (1981), pp. 73–99; and Silva, ‘Perceptual Judgment in Late Medieval Perspectivist Psychology,’ *Filosoficky Casopis: Special Issue on Perception in Scholastics and Their Interlocutors* 2 (2017), pp. 29–60.

pose a word in a written text or perceive the dissimilarity between this shade of green and that shade of blue.<sup>76</sup> According to Pecham, this mode of visual perception is not the result of the power of sight only, but it requires the intervention of a different cognitive faculty, which he calls the 'distinctive power' (*virtus distinctiva*). As the result, this second level of visual perception is called *per distinctionem*. In addition to perceiving similarity, the distinctive power is able to make use of previously acquired knowledge retained in memory and apply it to the species currently received in the sense organ. This comparative process allows for the phenomena of identification and recognition, as we can only know that this is such and such if we know what it is for something to be such and such, which requires having prior knowledge of it.<sup>77</sup> Pecham calls this mode of visual perception whereby the distinctive power makes use of previously acquired knowledge perception *per cognitionem vel scientiam*, and it comes in two 'flavors': the first consists in the comparison between the species of a particular received in the sense *organ* and the universal in memory (which the particular instantiates), which allows for the identification of this perceptual object as 'a human being' or this object as 'a stone'.<sup>78</sup> The second consists in the comparison between the particular thing currently present to the sense *organ* and its species stored in memory and so that we recognize John as 'John' (*Iohannem esse Iohannem*).<sup>79</sup> What becomes clear is that the comparison between forms performed by the distinctive power at this level of visual perception allows for a more detailed determination of the perceived object, if one already possesses knowledge about that object. Pecham illustrates the contrasts between the first and second levels of visual perception in relation to the difference between seeing light and color and apprehending the essence of light and color (*quidditas lucis et coloris*), which cannot be known *sine scientia et distinctione*.<sup>80</sup> What this means is that what sight alone per-

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<sup>76</sup> *Perspect. comm.* I.56, p. 136.

<sup>77</sup> *Tract. de perspect.* 9, pp. 53–54. My interpretation here tries to make sense of a discrepancy between the account Pecham presents in *Tract. de perspect.* 9 where he deals with veridical perception and in *Tract. de perspect.* 10 where he deals with perceptual error. In the former, he distinguishes between *solo sensu*, *per distinctionem*, and *per cognitionem vel scientiam*, whereas in chapter 10 he refers to them as 'per sensum, per scientiam, per syllogismum'. As the first account does not include the perception of key features such as distance and size that are apprehended *per syllogismum* mode and that it would be odd for Pecham to have changed his mind from one chapter to the next, I take it that the first list is incomplete and that the *per distinctionem* and the *per scientiam* are aspects of the second level of visual perception. They both proceed by applying background knowledge (be that particular or universal) to incoming particular sensory information.

<sup>78</sup> *Perspect. comm.* I.57, p. 136: 'Nullum enim visibile cognoscitur sine distinctione intentionum visibilium vel sine collatione aut relatione ad universalia cognitorum prius a sensibilibus abstracta, que fieri non possunt absque ratiocinatione.'

<sup>79</sup> *Tract. de perspect.* 9, p. 53: 'Alius modus est per cognitionem vel scientiam, in quo enim aspectu cognosco hominem esse hominem et lapidem esse lapidem et Iohannem esse Iohannem et huiusmodi, et hoc per relationem specie moventis organum ad speciem in memoria latentem. Quod patet quia res cuius non memoramur, etiam si prius viderimus, videndo non cognoscimus.'

<sup>80</sup> *Tract. de perspect.* 9, p. 54.

ceives is only color and light, but not the species of color, that is to say, the exact color or hue; that kind of perception requires a comparison with existing and previously apprehended knowledge – so that one can perceive this as blue or this as yellow.

The third level of visual perception is called *per syllogismum* and consists in the collation of the different particular intentions that allows for an absolute consideration of the thing present to the visual field. This third level or stage requires a process akin to reasoning (*quaedam ratiocinatio*) and is best illustrated by the way we perceive distance and size. The magnitude of distance is apprehended on the basis of the continuous distribution of the intervening objects in the visual field that lay between the perceiver and the object (the distance from/to which is being measured), which in turn depends on previous knowledge about the (expected) sizes of the intervening objects. The size of an object, on the other hand, cannot be perceived solely on the basis of size of the angle at the vertex of the visual pyramid (which corresponds to the center of the eye),<sup>81</sup> but requires in addition the apprehension of the length of the pyramid's sides – which means apprehending the distance from the vertex to the base of the pyramid.<sup>82</sup> Although the process seems complicated and time-consuming, Pecham (like Alhacen, Bacon, and Witelo) remarks that the perceiver is not aware of performing such a 'reasoning-like' process (*non percipit se arguere*) because this takes place *swiftly*, in rational human beings, accustomed to performing it.<sup>83</sup>

What this shows is that the visual perception of a material object entails more than meets the eye, literally; it requires a sequence of steps of which the perceiver is not aware due to the velocity and easiness of the operation, so that in the end all the twenty-two visual intentions that constitute a thing's sensible form are perceived.<sup>84</sup> A question arises as to the nature of the power and/or of these operations. Whereas some are clearly sensitive, others seem to entail rational or at least rational-like abilities. Some perspectivists like Bacon would certainly disagree with the 'rational' clause. Bacon makes it clear in several passages that he takes these three levels or kinds of visual perception to be of a sensitive nature, despite some processes looking rational-like. Bacon explicitly blames this situation on a faulty Latin trans-

<sup>81</sup> *Perspect. comm.* 1.73, p. 144. See also *Tract. de perspect.* 6, p. 47.

<sup>82</sup> *Tract. de perspect.* 9, p. 55. On Pecham's perception of distance, see also J.F. Silva, 'Perceptual Judgment in Late Medieval Perspectivist Psychology,' *Filosoficky Casopis* 2 (2017), pp. 51–53 in pp. 29–60.

<sup>83</sup> *Tract. de perspect.* 9, pp. 53–54: 'Quam tamen ratiocinationem non advertimus propter velocitatem rationis in arguendo (...) Et quia homo ad arguendum natus est, non percipit se arguere.'

<sup>84</sup> On this, see Alhacen, *De aspect.* II.4.1, pp. 216–18: 'Et visus non comprehendit veram formam rei vise nisi per comprehensionem omnium intentionum particularium que sunt in forma rei vise.' Visual perception encompasses the form of the visible object, which is constituted by the particular visual intentions (*intentiones*), perceived by means of the different perceptual powers and their operations: from *aspectus* to *intuitionem*.

lation of Alhacen's work.<sup>85</sup> Pecham offers a subtler reading, especially in the *Perspectiva communis*, where he systematically refers to the distinctive power as operating 'as if by reasoning' (*quasi per ratiocinationem*), for instance in the case of perceiving two things as similar.<sup>86</sup> Perhaps this quasi-reasoning is there to signify that it is not a-rational but simply the operation of a sensitive power somehow resembling the way a rational power works. However, when he refers to the process of recognizing the object by means of the application of a general notion to that individual intention – so that one can identify this individual as a horse – Pecham concludes that this 'cannot be done without reasoning' (*absque ratiocinatione*) and goes on to say that the distinctive power reasons (*arguit*) with ease because it is born to do this, by a sort of 'natural aptitude' or inclination.<sup>87</sup> If the rational-like qualification seems to accurately describe the distinctive power as sensitive, some of its operations, like the certified perception of distance, entail a process of rational determination (*ratiōne colligitur*).<sup>88</sup>

The difficulty in dealing with this issue is that we are not used, in medieval faculty psychology, to hybrid powers that are both sensitive *and* rational or that cannot be clearly classified as either sensitive or rational. Instead of suggesting a break with tradition on very thin evidence, it is best for now to consider the distinctive power as being sensitive in nature – i.e. as belonging to the sensitive soul – but also as being such a power that under certain circumstances it functions in a rational way, capable of performing inferences. I take it that to function in a rational way means that in some operations and in human beings, the distinctive power is commanded or governed by reason.<sup>89</sup> (To make such a claim would not be unique, even in this period – think of among others, Thomas Aquinas and his conception of the cogitative power,

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**85** See *Perspectiva*, pt. I, d. 10, c. 3, p. 158, where he criticizes the 'intellectualization' of these terms in the Latin translation of Alhacen's work: 'Sed hec nomina non sunt propria, quia virtutes anime sensitive habent has cognitiones, quibus non debetur scientia nec sillogismus, *ut communiter accipiuntur*' (emphasis added). Bacon does accept that even animals have a grasp of 'vague universals' or 'generic universals'; on this see J. Hackett, 'Roger Bacon's Concept of Experience: A New Beginning in Medieval Philosophy?' *The Modern Schoolman* 86:1 (2008), p. 130 in pp. 123–46; and 'Animal and Human Knowledge in the *Perspectiva: (Opus maius, Part Five)* of Roger Bacon,' in *Philosophical Psychology in Arabic Thought and the Latin Aristotelianism of the 13th Century*, ed. L.X. López-Farjeat and J.A. Tellkamp (Paris: Vrin, 2013), pp. 222–41. It is important to keep in mind that Bacon (like Albert the Great) identifies the distinctive power with the cogitative power.

**86** *Perspect. comm.* I.56, p. 136.

**87** *Perspect. comm.* I.57, p. 136: 'Vis distinctive nata est arguer sine difficultate, que etiam aptitudo naturaliter exeritur.'

**88** *Perspect. comm.* I.63, p. 140.

**89** One could of course object to this by saying that also non-rational animals perform some of those complex rational-like operations. Pecham does not go into detail about non-rational animals, but a similar line of reasoning is found in Roger Bacon. The way out is to say that even though these operations seem similar in one case and the other, they are very different in nature: they are rational-like in non-rational animals due to a certain 'natural instinct' (as Bacon claims) and rational due to the presence and proximity to reason in rational beings.

which is able to grasp a singular under a common nature.) The question I would like to ask, in the remaining of this paper, is whether the possibility of this rational interference in the sensory realm of the soul is out of sync with respect to Pecham's Franciscan background; or whether the fault (if one can call it that) lies in the influence of Alhacen's perspectivist model.

## Pecham and the Early Franciscans

In this last section, I would like to consider whether the suggestion we find in Pecham about the rational interference in normal perceptual experiences of rational beings via the distinctive power finds any echo in the works of early Franciscans. The suggestion is not that the human functioning of the distinctive power arises from the Franciscan tradition; rather, the question is whether there is any aspect of this tradition when analyzing cognitive processes and/or the faculties responsible for those cognitive processes that bears any resemblance to a rational influence of perceptual processes. In what follows, I briefly examine a few passages from the *Summa Halensis* and the *Summa de anima* of John of La Rochelle, two works with which John Pecham was certainly familiar. I am not yet sure what to make of these passages, if much can be made, so I will proceed tentatively.

In the *Summa Halensis*, the authors start with an investigation into the nature and number of the so-called internal senses, and in order to do that, they discuss in some detail the views of Augustine, John Damascene and Avicenna (in this order). Augustine's list of powers includes sense, imagination, reason, intellect, and intelligence. John's list includes imagination, excogitation, and memory. Finally, Avicenna's list includes the powers of common sense, fantasy, imagination, estimative power, and memory. I will not go into the details of the *Summa's* analysis but mention two key ideas, relevant for my purpose here. The first is that the authors of the *Summa* proceed by asking four questions about these different lists of powers: 1. Are all the powers subsumed under Augustine's imagination? 2. Which of the powers listed by Damascene belong to the sensitive part of the soul? 3. Do all these powers of the soul have bodily organs and if so, where are these located? 4. On the basis of what principle or criterion (*ratio*) should the internal senses be distinguished? These questions provide the framework for the ensuing analysis.

The second idea to consider is the key faculty of the (ex)cogitative power proposed by John Damascene. The *Summa* dwells on considerations about its nature and suggests that one way of understanding it is to relate it to two powers from Avicenna's list: the imaginative and the cogitative power. According to Avicenna, in the *Summa's* reading, what properly characterizes the cogitative power is that it produces acts of judgment, that is combination or division of forms received from the senses (objects and properties). It is important to keep in mind that what is being suggested is not judgment in propositional form, but rather (and simply) a complex perceptual

form.<sup>90</sup> Even so, the problem with this Avicennian account, the authors of the *Summa* remark, is that such a judging capacity cannot be sensitive because to make such judgments goes beyond what a sensory power can do. The only way this can be done is, they suggest, if the cognitive capacity is understood as performing those operations of combination and division under the ruling action of reason. In other words, the idea is that the cogitative can remain a judging sensitive power without that entailing it being rational, if influenced in its operation by reason.<sup>91</sup>

The *Summa's* suggestion is thus that insofar as a sensitive power operates exclusively on sensory contents, its operations can be rational-like, as judging, because they are so due to being *functionally* directed by reason. Such a power remains *non-rational*, from an ontological point of view, as it does not belong to the rational *part* of the soul.<sup>92</sup> The text does not examine this matter further and the only somehow related matter I was able to find is a remark in the context of the estimative power of a distinction between the judgments of the rational estimative and the non-rational estimative power: whereas the former is said to apprehend intentions

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**90** SH II, In4, Tr1, S2, Q1, Ti1, C1 (n. 357), contra 2, p. 435: 'Praeterea, dicit Avicenna, qui explanat amplius, quod haec est componens et dividens secundum imperium rationis, et dicitur cogitative.' On this, see Jean Rohmer, 'La théorie de l'abstraction dans l'école franciscaine de Alexandre de Halès a Jean Peckam,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 3 (1928), p. 129 in pp. 105–184. Rohmer reads this as meaning that 'l'imaginative obéit ainsi à la raison qui affirme ou nie la ressemblance avec le reel.' The same applies to Pecham, I claim: when examining the way familiar objects are recognized, on the basis of previously acquired knowledge, for instance, Pecham notes that the distinctive power does so *without* 'a comparison and the ordering of propositions' ('nec arguit per comparationem et ordinationem propositionum'): *Perspect. comm.* 1.57, pp. 136–37. The distinctive power trades on forms and intentions, not linguistic units.

**91** SH II, In4, Tr1, S2, Q1, Ti1, C1 (n. 357), Solutio, p. 435: 'Ad secundum dicendum quod, licet fiat secundum imperium rationis, non tamen in parte intellective, sed in parte sensitive, quae suadetur ratione; et licet "cogitare", secundum appropriationem dictum, sit parte rationalis, nihilominus per extensionem illius partis quae rationi copulatur.' In the *Tractatus de divisione*, John of La Rochelle notes that the intellect performs the operation of discrimination about sensible things when it operates in conjunction with the imaginative power: see *Tractatus* II.xiii, p. 97. It is unclear to me whether at least in the case of La Rochelle refers specifically to the material intellect qua *ratio* – an intellective power that results from the soul-body union; probably he does, but my interpretation does not rest on it being the case. What matters for my reading is that a higher order (rational/intellective) power operationally influences a sensitive power, i.e. my focus here is on the nature of this rational influence rather than the nature of the rational power doing the influencing. On the material intellect as 'rationalité' (*rationalitas aut ratio*), see Rohmer, 'La théorie de l'abstraction,' p. 135; and Lydia Schumacher, *Human Nature in Early Franciscan Thought* (Habilitation, Humboldt University of Berlin, 2020).

**92** Of course, we could argue that there is a minimal or weak sense in which it is rational, by being a power of a soul which is rational; but this minimal rationality is not very interesting in the sense that applies to all powers of rational beings, which in the case of human beings, would mean that even vegetative functions of digestion would be rational. This, I want to point out, is not suggested in the *Summa*. On the very complicated issue of the material intellect, reason, imagination, estimative and cogitative in the early Franciscan tradition at the intersection of Aristotle, Augustine, Avicenna and Averroes, see Rohmer; and Schumacher, *Human Nature*.



abstracted from matter, i. e. independent from its individuating conditions, the latter always apprehends particular intentions in colligation with the particular sensible forms.<sup>93</sup> I don't think we can make much out of this, but I do have a suggestion to make; however, as it is very close to a passage we find in another work, I will make my suggestion in the context of analyzing that work, remarking at this point that what applies to that passage applies to this one here.

The other text I want to consider is a brief passage in John of La Rochelle's *Summa de anima*. In chapter 85 (p. 228), John presents Avicenna's division of sensitive powers into cognitive and motive powers. According to Avicenna, as John presents him, the sensitive cognitive powers are further divided into those proceeding by animal apprehension and those by natural apprehension. Natural apprehension is done in accordance to nature (*per modum naturae*), meaning that it is not ruled by reason (*ratione non regitur*) and is always done in the same way (*semper uno modo est*). As a power operating in this natural reason-free mode John mentions *fantasia*, which in this respect is just like the vegetative powers.<sup>94</sup> His claim is that the soul does not always attend (*non attendit*) to the continuous operation of the *fantasia*, for instance when attending to incoming sensory information – just like it fails to do when sleeping.<sup>95</sup> In contrast, *animal* apprehension characterizes those powers subject to and influenced by reason – *virtutis subiectibilis et obtemperantis rationi*. John lists both the external and the internal senses as being the type of sensitive powers that operate *in obediencia rationis*.<sup>96</sup> Later on (*Summa*, c. 103; *Tractatus*

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93 *SH* II, In4, Tr1, S2, Q1, Ti1, C3 (n. 359), Ad obiecta 2, p. 436: 'Ad secundum dicendum est quod aliud est de iudicio aestimationis rationalis et aestimationis sensibiliis, sicut dicit idem Philosophus. Nam aestimativa rationalis apprehendit etiam intentiones abstractas a materia, aestimatio autem sensibilis apprehendit eas cum colligatione formae sensibilis, quae non est praeter materiam.' On a very similar point with respect to the *phantasia* in Alexander of Hales, see Rohmer, 'La théorie de l'abstraction,' pp. 111–12. On the principle of a double aspect of powers of the soul in Franciscan authors, in particular John of La Rochelle, see P. Michaud-Quantin, 'Une division "augustinienne" des puissances de l'âme au moyen âge,' *Revue des Études Augustiniennes et Patristiques* 3 (1957), p. 238 in pp. 235–48.

94 *Summa de anima*, c. 103, p. 252: 'Virtus autem motiua sensibilis est duobus modis: nam quedam est motiua modo naturali, quedam uero modo animali; et motiuam sensibilem modo naturali dico que nec mouet secundum apprehensionem, nec est subiecta imperio rationis, qualis est uirtus uitalis siue pulsatiua.' In the *Tractatus de divisione*, however, John does include however the *fantasia* among the *animal* powers, according to the *medicos* (II.xxix, p. 105). This is also muddled when he (*Summa de anima*, c. 86, p. 229) distinguishes between fantasy consider *ut natura* and *ut sensus*: whereas in the former consideration it is outside the purview of reason, in the latter it is subjected to the command of reason as any other internal sense.

95 *Summa de anima*, c. 86, pp. 228–29: 'Fantasia igitur cum sit apprehensiua est apprehensiua per modum nature, quia eius operatio potissima non est subiecta rationi, sicut patet in sompniis, ubi maxima patet eius operatio;' see also *Tractatus de divisione* II.ii-iii, pp. 72–73. Strikingly, in *Tractatus de divisione* II.viii, p. 76, these same operations are assigned to the *ymaginativa* in animals and *cogitativa* in humans; again, in *Tractatus de divisione* II.xii, p. 79, it is *fantasia* that appears as the power responsible for motion together with the estimative power.

96 'Cognitiua uero siue apprehensiua modo animali, hoc est in obediencia rationis. Nam quedam est apprehensiua exterior, quedam apprehensiua interior.' *Summa de anima*, c. 87, p. 229. See also John of



II.xi – xii), John applies the same natural-animal distinction to the powers related to motion: the *natural* mode of motive powers are not subjected to control by reason (*nec est subiecta imperio rationis*); that is the case with breathing, about which we have no voluntary control. The *animal* mode of a motive power on the other hand when it belongs to a rational being, is subject to reason (*habet ordinem ad rationem*) in deciding to act in one way or the other (or even not to act).<sup>97</sup> It is unclear what exactly John understands Avicenna to mean by this 'obeying' or 'being subjected to reason' in the case of both cognitive and motive powers beyond the perhaps trivial claim that the operations of these powers are under our control.

I would like to suggest understanding this 'being subjected to reason' in two ways, which have opposite directions of fit (as it were). On the one hand, from the world to mind direction, it simply means that whatever we perceive by means of the senses, first external and then internal, it is designed to find its way into the intellectual realm, so that knowledge of essences of things can be grasped at the end of the intellectual process of abstraction. That is the traditional way, which constitutes the basis for the Aristotelian conception of science. On the other hand, from the mind to world direction of fit, these two passages (from the *Summa Halensis* and from La Rochelle's *Summa de anima*) seem to indicate that their authors were willing to consider that under certain conditions – which remain unspecified – higher order cognitive powers, namely reason, influence the way lower cognitive powers operate. It is difficult to understand what exactly this means because neither text elaborates on the issue. Maybe two examples – my own – can help making sense of this: first, about the rational influence on the operations of the external senses, which John explicitly stated (*virtutis subiectibilis et obtemperantis rationi, sicut est virtus visiva, auditiva*): if I so wish, I can voluntarily close my eyes and stop the array of visual information impinging my eyes (whether I can completely stop the flow of all perceptual information coming my way is a different story). That is an easy enough experiential fact to be accepted without much dispute. On the contrary, not to be subject to reason's commands, like *fantasia*, simply means that when the senses take on the incoming sensory stimuli, no voluntary control can be exercised over that information reaching *fantasia* – even if the soul would not attend and thus failed to further process that received information. I believe that is precisely the point John is making when comparing *fantasia* to the vegetative powers. A second example concerns the distinction between a rational and non-rational estimative power: a rational perceiver may receive an intention of harmfulness from a dangerous animal in front of her

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La Rochelle, *Tractatus de divisione multiplici potentiarum animae*, ed. P. Michaud-Quantin (Paris: Vrin, 1964), II.viii, p. 76; II.xxxiv, p. 109. In both these texts, the idea that reason or the intellect commands (*imperat*) this power is never fully spelled out. Interestingly, whereas *Summa* (c. 85) divides the cognitive powers into natural and animal operation – i. e. not subjected and subject to reason, respectively – the *Tractatus* (II.xi – xii) applies this division to the motive powers.

<sup>97</sup> *Summa de anima*, c. 104, p. 253: 'Sed sensualitatem proprie dicunt appetituum sensibilem secundum quod in homine est, et habet ordinem ad rationem.'

and yet not restrict her options as to what behavior to adopt to the reaction of running away: there are more than one way to escape a grizzly bear (*ursus arctos horribilis*), quite a few of which do not include running away (actually, in case of wild bears it is better *not* to run away!).<sup>98</sup> The fact that John identifies estimation and imagination with the material intellect in human beings strengthens this reading because it guarantees that humans have direct and immediate access to the pool of intellectual resources.<sup>99</sup> This ultimately entails grasping harmfulness in isolation from this particular dangerous animal because only the understanding of such intention at a level of generality allows one to envisage the full array of possible behaviors. Animals on the other hand do not have, according to this model, the type of abstract intellectual apprehension that would allow them to do so and therefore the estimation of such an intentional of harmfulness triggers the only possible reaction, which is to run away. The behavior is fixed by nature and there is no choice to be made about how to react.

If we turn to Avicenna for a brief moment, it is clear that the aim of his advocacy for a rational influence on the cogitative power has a practical motivation, namely, to allow reason to rein in the compositions (freely) produced by the imaginative faculty functioning as cogitative in human beings, so that we need not take something to be in a way that bears no correspondence to the way it exists (if it exists) in the extramental world. There are obvious practical consequences of the failure to do so.<sup>100</sup> Pecham does reflect on the nature of the cogitative power, namely, by considering whether it is a sensitive or intellectual power. Ultimately, he argues for it as being a sensitive power because its function is to combine sensible images from imagination with the intentions received by the estimative power,<sup>101</sup> which he takes to be responsible for the operations of pursuit or avoidance what is beneficial or harmful for the perceiving animal. This combination of imagined forms and estimated intentions does not take a propositional structure, but a complex representation.<sup>102</sup> Pecham does admit the existence of a different operation of cogitation (*cogitatio*), which is intellectual; this type of cogitation is that whereby the intellect combines abstracted phantasms coming from the outside (from the senses) and/or coming from above

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**98** This reading is supported by Avicenna's text: see Avicenna Latinus, *Liber de anima seu sextus de naturalibus*, ed. S. Van Riet (Louvain-Leiden: Éditions Orientalistes-Brill, 1968), IV.1, p. 8. In Thomas Aquinas, the cogitative – a sensitive power – plays exactly this role, under the influence of reason, which interferes with the sensory level in a process described as *refluentia* (see *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 78, a. 4, ad 5).

**99** I am greatly indebted to Lydia Schumacher for pressing me on this point and in general for advising (and correcting) me on the early Franciscans' material. All interpretations and mistakes are of course my own.

**100** Avicenna, *Liber de anima*, IV.1, p. 6. On this, see D. Black, 'Imagination and Estimation: Arabic Paradigms and Western Transformations,' *Topoi* 19 (2000), pp. 59–75.

**101** In *Tract. de anima*, p. 36, Pecham calls *phantasia* the power responsible for the operations traditionally associated with the three powers of the common sense, imagination and memory.

**102** *Quest. de anima* 8, p. 420.

and/or existing innately in the cognitive subject.<sup>103</sup> In different functions, the cognitive expresses elements from both sensibility and rationality.

It seems clear that this mode of influence is far-fetched with respect to the kind of operations Pecham assigns to the distinctive power in the process of perception. There, following the tradition of perspectivist visual perception theory, the way we apprehend the world is dependent on our capacity, rational-like, to organize and process sensory information. The perspectivist punctiform analysis of visual perception, whereby each point of the object generates a representation of itself, puts great strain to the processing faculties of collating the received information in a way that maps onto the external thing; the existence of a *virtus distinctiva* seems to be justified (required, even) by the need to certify (by means of prior knowledge) that the information received from all points of the visual field conform to how we know objects as being. In other words, perspectivist punctiform analysis of radiation of sensory information *demand*s the existence of a perceptual capacity that operates in a rational-like manner in order to offer a realist epistemology of perceptual experience.

That organization, which brings order to the chaos of sensory stimuli, is done for a purpose: our successful interaction with and integration in the world. Perception has an inherent practical purpose, our survival as living beings. Not to use the resources available to us as rational beings would be a waste; and medieval thinkers believed that nature does nothing in vain. Although these last few sentences are rather vague and general, they intend to show that there is a relation – indelible, perhaps, but there nevertheless – between the rational influence found in Pecham the perspectivist and those early Franciscans to whom Pecham succeeds. My suggestion is simply that the possibility of this kind of rational-like operations by sensitive powers or even downright rational commandeering would not be seen by Pecham as being without precedent and out of character.

I would like to conclude by suggesting that there is an underlying motivation for asserting the role of higher order powers in all cognitive functions of human life in the tradition to which the *Summa Halensis*, John of La Rochelle and John Pecham belong and that is the role of the will in human (mental) life. But to say how that story plays out is the subject of a different article.

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**103** Innate species are those inserted there by God from the outset, i. e. the creation of the individual rational soul; see *Quest. de anima* 10, p. 430.



Riccardo Saccenti

# The Form of the Body: John Pecham's Critique of Aquinas' Doctrine of the Soul and the *Summa Halensis*

**Abstract:** During the 1270s and 1280s, John Pecham developed an analysis on psychological issues, such as body/soul dualism, the unicity of powers of the soul, and the medium between body and soul. The master elaborated his own position by replying mainly to Thomas Aquinas' account concerning the body/soul relation. While Aquinas affirmed that the soul is the form of the body, suggesting that the two comprise one substance and the soul does not just make the body live but also makes it a body, Pecham thought that the soul is the perfection of the body, so that soul and body comprise two separate substances, and the soul does not make the body a body but only makes it live. The aim of this contribution is to show that in Pecham's polemical debating of the position of Aquinas, the three issues (i.e. body/soul dualism, unicity of powers, and medium between body and soul) are part of one and the same doctrinal perspective which the Franciscan master develops, making use of the tradition on 'psychology' to which also the *Summa Halensis* belongs.

The Franciscan John Pecham is seen as one of the major rivals of Thomas Aquinas in the 13th-century debate concerning the body/soul relation in the human being. The bone of contention between the two theologians was the notion of the soul as the form of the body, that is, the Aristotelian idea that the soul is the principle that organizes and moves the human body and thus forms one substance with it. In following Aristotle on this point, Aquinas aimed to avoid the risk of conceiving the intellect as separate from the body. In contrast to this thesis, Pecham appears concerned with defending the tradition which emphasizes the substantial difference between the soul and the body, which represent two different forms. This position, upheld in the *Summa Halensis*, represents for the Franciscan master the expression of a common doctrine held by Franciscan theologians, which he saw as the correct interpretation of the orthodox faith and tried to affirm even through the instrument of ecclesiastical censorship following his ascension to the post of archbishop of Canterbury.

The present essay intends to re-read Pecham's position, both in his writings as a master of theology and in the text of his censure of the doctrine of the unity of the substantial form, in the light of his relationship with the doctrinal tradition crystallized in the *Summa*. In doing this, the essay will first of all examine the different historiographical interpretations of the position of the Franciscan master, before moving on to examine the cornerstones of Aquinas' doctrine and the development of Pecham's response to it. In this way, the paper will underline the influence exerted

by the tradition of the *Summa Halensis* on the construction of Pecham's position. It will also show how the relationship with this great Franciscan theological synthesis represents an element of continuity between Pecham's activity as a theologian and his ministry as 'Primate of All England'.

## Against the Unity of the Substantial Form: A Survey of the Historiography of the 1286 Condemnation

The condemnation of eight doctrinal propositions that John Pecham, archbishop of Canterbury, issued on 30 April 1286 has been the subject of various historical evaluations by scholars of medieval philosophy and theology.<sup>1</sup> In the decades between the two World Wars, which witnessed the development of a new stage of Neo-Thomism, Pecham's act began to be qualified as plainly belonging to the Anti-Thomism that emerged in the decades after Aquinas' death and which undermined the doctrinal value of the Dominican master's achievements. Palémon Glorieux describes the reaction of the Franciscan primate of the English Church to Aquinas' doctrine of the unity of the substantial form as part of the radical contest between the two mendicant orders which resulted in a net distinction between Thomists and Anti-Thomists or, more properly speaking, between Thomism and the peculiar form of Augustinianism that was developed by the Franciscan school, initially at least, mostly on the basis of pseudo-Augustinian writings interpreted through the lens of the highly original Islamic reader of Aristotle named Avicenna.<sup>2</sup>

With respect to this 'anti-Thomistic' understanding of Pecham's position, recent research on the 13th-century censures and condemnations of doctrines that were taught in the university has provided a different point of view. For instance, the studies of Luca Bianchi suggest interpreting the theological and philosophical debates among the masters in the context of a larger struggle for political and religious control over the university, and more specifically, over education and learning. Such a

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<sup>1</sup> The edition of the text of the condemnation is published in *Registrum epistolarum fratris Ioannis Peckham*, 3 vols, ed. T. Martin (London: Longman, 1882–85), vol. 3, pp. 921–23. A slightly different version of the text is recorded in the annals of the priory of Dunstable, edited in *Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia*, ed. G. Laurd, in *Annales monastici*, vol. 3 (London: Longman, 1866), pp. 323–26.

<sup>2</sup> P. Glorieux, *Les premières polémiques thomistes I: Le correctorium corruptorii "Quare"* (Paris: Vrin, 1927), p. viii. Glorieux edited the largest part of the literature of the *correctoria corruptorii*. See P. Glorieux, *Les premières polémiques thomistes II: Le Correctorium Corruptorii "Sciendum"* (Paris: Vrin, 1956). See also, of the same scholar, 'Les Correctoires: Essai de mise au point,' *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 14 (1947), pp. 287–304; 'Pro et contra Thomam: Un survol de cinquante années,' in *Sapientiae procerum amore: Mélanges médiévistes offerts à dom J.P. Müller, à l'occasion de son 70<sup>e</sup> anniversaire*, ed. T.W. Köhler (Rome: Editore Anselmiana, 1974), pp. 255–87. On the Neo-Thomist approach see also P. Mandonnet, 'Premiers travaux de plémique thomiste,' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 7 (1913), pp. 46–70, 245–61.

historical reading situates the 1286 condemnation in relation to the ecclesiastical authority to survey and control the orthodox faith with respect to the teaching provided in the *studia* of the religious orders or in the universities themselves.<sup>3</sup>

A quite different understanding of Pecham's initiative can be found in Alain Boureau's work, which presents the archbishop's doctrinal concern as plainly coherent with his own theological outlook.<sup>4</sup> In particular, Boureau suggests that Pecham's engagement firstly in the debates and later in the condemnations was part of a larger opposition to Aquinas' doctrinal heritage and more specifically to the theological heirs of the Dominican master, such as Richard Knapwell, who defended the doctrine of the unity of the substantial form, despite its puzzling implications with respect to the status of Christ's dead body after his crucifixion and that of the Eucharistic sacrament.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the French historian stresses the strong biographical continuity between the teaching of the Franciscan master in Paris, Oxford, and the Papal curia, describing the 1286 condemnation issued during his time as archbishop of Canterbury as the logical result of a strong doctrinal conviction that he developed over his long career. Caleb Colley's recent focus on the contents of Pecham's writings on the unity or plurality of substantial forms stresses the crucial relevance of the Franciscan's intellectual biography to his thinking, highlighting his deepening engagement in the major debates in the university from 1270 concerning the status of the mendicants within the guild of masters, the eternity of the world, the unicity of the intellect, and the meaning of poverty.<sup>6</sup>

All these interpretations of Pecham's censure of 1286 assume a basic agreement between the masters and the ecclesiastical authorities who determined the orthodox faith and forbade the teaching of doctrines such as that regarding the unity of substantial form, which was seen by many as heterodox or heretical. It is certainly clear that the great censures of the 13th century concerning certain university teachings result from a complex connection between doctrinal discussions among the masters and the intervention of ecclesiastical authorities. The acts of 1241,<sup>7</sup> 1270,<sup>8</sup> and the no-

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3 L. Bianchi, *Censures et liberté intellectuelle à l'Université de Paris* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1999).

4 A. Boureau, *Théologie, science et censure aux XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: Le cas de Jean Peckham* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2008).

5 Boureau, *Théologie, science et censure aux XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, pp. 7–38.

6 C.G. Colley, 'The Plurality of Substantial Forms in John Peckham,' *Franciscan Studies* 73 (2015), pp. 59–80.

7 See W.J. Courtenay, 'Dominicans and Suspect Opinion in the Thirteenth Century: The Case of Stephen of Venizy, Peter of Tarentasia, and the Articles of 1270 and 1271,' *Vivarium* 32 (1994), pp. 186–95; H.F. Dondaine, 'Hugues de S. Cher et la condamnation du 1241,' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 33 (1949), pp. 170–74; Dondaine, 'Guerric de Saint-Quentin et la condamnation de 1241,' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 44 (1960), pp. 225–42; L. Bianchi, 'Gli articoli censurati nel 1241/1244 e la loro influenza da Bonaventura a Gerson,' in *Autour de Guillaume d'Auvergne († 1249): Etudes réunies*, ed. F. Morenzoni, and J.-Y. Tilliette (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 155–73; D. Grice, *Church, Society and University: The Paris Condemnation of 1241/4* (London; New York: Routledge, 2020).



torious condemnations of 1277 issued by Etienne Tempier in Paris and Robert Kilwardby in Oxford, depend on both the exercise of the ecclesiastical *magisterium* of a bishop and the theological support of the masters.<sup>9</sup> However, scholars have clarified how the censure of certain statements or doctrines within the 13th-century university entailed a legal act which involved a process similar to a synod and produced a document which had certain specific literary features. This state of things places the censures and condemnations, including that of 1286 concerning the unity of the substantial form, at the crossroads between two different kinds of *magisterium*: that of the masters, who debated the solidity of certain doctrines amongst themselves, and that of the bishops, whose jurisdiction extended to the advocacy of what they considered the orthodox faith.<sup>10</sup>

In the light of these remarks, it will be useful to reconsider the supposed continuity between Pecham's teaching as a master and his governance of the English church which includes the 1286 condemnation. Certainly, the archbishop of Canterbury did not abandon his doctrinal convictions, but his exercise of the bishop's authority was driven by needs and concerns different from those of a *magister*. This historiographic assumption can help in dealing more closely with Pecham's position on the issue of substantial form. What emerges from his theological writings, especially the *Tractatus de anima*, the *Quaestiones quodlibetales* and the *Quaestiones de anima*, must be situated within the framework of the doctrinal confrontation of the 1270s on this issue, which was instigated by Thomas Aquinas' careful presentation of the unity of the substantial form in the first part of the *Summa Theologiae*.<sup>11</sup> Pecham's

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8 See J.M.M.H. Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy at the University of Paris: 1200–1400* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

9 See R. Hissette, *Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 mars 1277* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1977); Aegidius Romanus, *Apologia*, ed. R. Wielockx (Florence: L. Olschki, 1985); R. Wielockx, 'Autour du procès de Thomas d'Aquin,' in *Thomas von Aquin: Werk und Wirkung im Licht neuerer Forschungen*, ed. A. Zimmermann (Berlin; New York: Walter De Gruyter, 1988), pp. 413–38; J.F. Wippel, 'Thomas Aquinas and the Condemnation of 1277,' *The Modern Schoolman* 72 (1995), pp. 233–72; R. Wielockx, 'Procédures contre Gilles de Rome et Thomas d'Aquin,' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 83 (1999), pp. 293–313; S. Piron, 'Pour une critique interne de la condamnation du 7 mars 1277,' *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 78:2 (2011), pp. 383–415. On Kilwardby's condemnation see D.E. Sharp, 'The 1277 Condemnation of Kilwardby,' *The New Scholasticism* 8 (1934), pp. 306–18; A.E. Larsen, *The School of Heretics: Academic Condemnation at the University of Oxford, 1277–1409* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 25–41.

10 See D. Piché, *La condamnation parisienne de 1277* (Paris: Vrin, 1999). On the multiple meanings of the term *magisterium* see Y. Congar, 'Bref historique des formes du "Magistère" et de ses relations avec les docteurs,' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 60 (1976), pp. 99–112; Congar, 'Pour une histoire sémantique du terme Magisterium,' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 60 (1976), pp. 85–99.

11 For the edition of these texts of Pecham see Iohannes Pecham, *Tractatus de anima*, ed. G. Melani (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1948); Pecham, *Quodlibeta quatuor*, ed. G.J. Eitzkorn, F. Delorme (Grottaferrata: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1989); Pecham, *Quaestiones de anima*, in *Quaes-*

theological production reflects the felt need to address the Dominican's philosophical innovation on the understanding of the body/soul relation, inspired by Aristotle.<sup>12</sup> In the process, however, the master recovered a well-established tradition rooted in the intellectual engagement of the early Franciscan masters and fixed in the *Summa Halensis*.<sup>13</sup> A survey of Pecham's position which assumes this point of view will clarify the place of the Franciscan master in the 1270s discussion concerning the nature and role of the soul in the human composite, and will help to rethink the way such an academic matter became an issue in establishing the orthodox faith.

## The Soul as 'Pure Form': Aquinas and the Unity of the Substantial Form

The introduction of the major Aristotelian philosophical works in 13th-century Latin Europe offered the possibility to directly deal with a new understanding of nature. More specifically, the metaphysical principle of the inseparability of matter and form was seen as the key to offering an explanation of substances based not on the simple combination of the four elements but rather on a universal structure according to which a body, and mainly a living body, is the result of the action of a form that organizes and properly structures the relevant matter. When this principle is applied to the human composite, the soul is understood as the form that gives order and life to matter: this approach agrees with Aristotle's definition of the soul in the *De anima*, according to which: 'the soul is the form of a natural body' and it

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*tiones disputatae*, ed. G.J. Etzkorn, H. Spettmann, L. Oligier (Grottaferrata: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 2002).

**12** See on this D. Hasse, *Avicenna's De anima in the Latin West: The Formation of a Peripatetic Philosophy of the Soul 1160–1300* (London: The Warburg Institute, 2000). On the developments of psychology between 1220 and the 1270s see R.A. Gauthier, 'Le Traité *De anima et de potentiis eius* d'un maître ès arts (vers 1225),' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 66 (1982), pp. 27–55; Gauthier, 'Notes sur les débuts (1225–1240) du premier 'averroïsme',' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 66 (1982), pp. 321–75. Gauthier, 'Notes sur Siger de Brabant I: Siger en 1265,' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 67 (1983), pp. 201–33; Gauthier, 'Notes sur Siger de Brabant II: Aubry de Reims et la scission des Normands,' *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 68 (1984), pp. 3–39; *Lectura in Librum De Anima a quodam discipulo reportata*, ed. R.A. Gauthier (Grottaferrata: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1985). For a complete survey on the first half of the 13th century see M. Bieniak, *The Soul-Body Problem at Paris, ca 1200–1250: Hugh of St-Cher and His Contemporaries* (Leuven: Peeters, 2010).

**13** See Lydia Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology: Between Authority and Innovation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019). For the edition of the *Summa* see Alexander of Hales, *Doctoris Irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica (SH)*, 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1924–48).

is also ‘the act of the body,’ so that ‘the soul is the prime act of a natural body which has life in potency.’<sup>14</sup>

In question 75 of the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae* Aquinas incorporates these elements within an account of the relation of the human soul to the body. Here, he starts by explaining that the soul is the first principle of life in the sense that it is not a body but the act which enlivens the body and makes it what it is.<sup>15</sup> In elaborating a corollary of this view, Aquinas stresses that since the soul is the form of a body, it is impossible to attribute to the soul any kind of matter or material elements, because matter is pure potentiality, while the soul is the act of a body. In affirming this, he roundly rejects the universal hylomorphism that Franciscans adopted from Avicbron, according to which all substances, including the body and the soul, are individually comprised of their own kind of form and matter, even if it is only a spiritual matter in the case of the soul. Focusing on the human or rational soul, Aquinas notes that the form/matter relation remains unaltered:

It is clear that whatever is received into something is received according to the condition of the recipient. Now a thing is known in as far as its form is in the knower. But the intellectual soul knows a thing in its nature absolutely: for instance, it knows a stone absolutely as a stone; and therefore, the form of a stone, as to its proper formal idea, is in the intellectual soul absolutely. Therefore, the intellectual soul itself is an absolute form, and not something composed of matter and form. For if the intellectual soul were composed of matter and form, the forms of things could be received into it as individuals, and so it would only know the individual. As in the case of the sensitive powers which receive forms in a corporeal organ, matter is the principle by which forms are individualized. It follows, therefore, that the intellectual soul, and every intellectual substance which has knowledge of forms absolutely, is exempt from the composition of matter and form.<sup>16</sup>

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**14** Aristotle, *De anima* II, 1, 412a 19–21.

**15** See Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I<sup>a</sup>, q. 75, a. 1. See on this B.C. Bazán, ‘La corporalité selon saint Thomas,’ *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 51 (1983), pp. 369–409.

**16** Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I<sup>a</sup>, q. 75, a. 5., co.: ‘Manifestum est enim quod omne quod recipitur in aliquo, recipitur in eo per modum recipientis. Sic autem cognoscitur unumquodque, sicut forma eius est in cognoscente anima autem intellectiva cognoscit rem aliquam in sua natura absolute, puta lapidem in quantum est lapis absolute. Est igitur forma lapidis absolute, secundum propriam rationem formalem, in anima intellectiva. Anima igitur intellectiva est forma absoluta, non autem aliquid compositum ex materia et forma. Si enim anima intellectiva esset composita ex materia et forma, formae rerum reciperentur in ea ut individuales, et sic non cognosceret nisi singulare, sicut accidit in potentiis sensitivis, quae recipiunt formas rerum in organo corporali, materia enim est principium individuationis formarum. Relinquitur ergo quod anima intellectiva, et omnis intellectualis substantia cognoscens formas absolute, caret compositione formae et materiae.’ The English translation of Aquinas’ *Summa* is taken from the New Advent translation, available online at <https://www.newadvent.org/summa/>.

Aquinas argues that in the case of human beings, the form of the body is the rational soul, because the human soul is rational.<sup>17</sup> As the form of the body, the rational soul is the principle that gives life to the human body, qua human, that is proper to a being whose specific act is understanding. In doing so, the Dominican master stresses the close relation between human soul and the human body, and thus defines a perspective which is contrary to other solutions on the body/soul relation. That is to say, he clearly argues against the idea of a separation between the potential intellect and the body, which is the one that derives from Averroes, and the Avicennian solution that the soul is related with the body as the mover to the moved.

The Dominican master concludes:

There remains, therefore, no other explanation than that given by Aristotle – namely, that this particular man understands, because of the intellectual principle in his form. Thus, from the very operation of the intellect, it is made clear that the intellectual principle is the form. Thus, from the very operation of the intellect, it is made clear that the intellectual principle is united to the body as its form. The same can be clearly shown from the nature of the human species. For the nature of each thing is shown by its operation. Now the proper operation of the human being as human being is to understand; because the human thereby surpasses all other animals. Thus, also Aristotle concludes (*Ethics* X, 7) that the ultimate happiness of the human being must consist in this operation as properly belonging to it. The human being must therefore derive its species from that which is the principle of this operation. But the species of anything is derived from its form. It follows therefore that the intellectual principle is the proper form of the human being.<sup>18</sup>

Aquinas here distinguishes between two essential components of the human being as a substance, that is, the soul and the body. He does this by qualifying the soul as the form of the body and arguing that in the case of the human being, it is precisely the human soul, that is, the rational soul, which is the form of the body, giving life to it and making possible to do what is proper to human beings: perform the functions that characterize human life. Certainly, this allows the Dominican to present an alternative to an idea that the body and soul are two different substances and makes the intellect a sort of separate substance which would be unique for

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<sup>17</sup> See R.A. Velde, *Participation and Substantiality in Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1995); J.F. Wippel, 'Thomas Aquinas and the Unity of Substantial Form,' in *Philosophy and Theology in the Long Middle Ages: A Tribute to Stephen F. Brown*, ed. K. Emery Jr., R. Friedmann, and A. Speer (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 117–54.

<sup>18</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I<sup>a</sup>, q. 76, a. 1, co.: 'Relinquitur ergo solus modus quem Aristoteles ponit, quod hic homo intelligit, quia principium intellectivum est forma ipsius. Sic ergo ex ipsa operatione intellectus apparet quod intellectivum principium unitur corpori ut forma. Potest etiam idem manifestari ex ratione speciei humanae. Natura enim uniuscuiusque rei ex eius operatione ostenditur. Propria autem operatio hominis, in quantum est homo, est intelligere, per hanc enim omnia animalia transcendit. Unde et Aristoteles, in libro Ethic., in hac operatione, sicut in propria hominis, ultimam felicitatem constituit. Oportet ergo quod homo secundum illud speciem sortiatur, quod est huius operationis principium. Sortitur autem unumquodque speciem per propriam formam. Relinquitur ergo quod intellectivum principium sit propria hominis forma.'

all mankind. However, it marks a real novelty with respect to the way the notion of substantial form was commonly advocated in the 1230s and 1240s, during the early reception of the philosophical sources concerning the doctrine of the soul. Such an approach gave rise to a series of problems concerning the consequences that an understanding of the human soul as pure form has on the processes of generation of the human being and of its corruption and death.<sup>19</sup> In specific, the idea that the body represents its own substance was perceived as needed to explain how a dead body is still that of the person who died.

Throughout the 1270s, university masters discussed these issues concerning the doctrine of the unity of the substantial form, thus considering how the human soul can be described as the form of the body, and developed different arguments in response to which John Pecham offered his own contribution.<sup>20</sup> Between 1270 and his election to the see of Canterbury in 1279, the Franciscan master's scholarly career brought him to Paris, Oxford, and the *studium* linked to the papal curia. Pecham developed his own position in light of two points of reference: hylomorphism or matter-form composition as the basic structure of all substances, and the substantial difference between the soul and body. In line with these two ideas, the master addressed three major issues: the plurality of forms, the relation between body and soul, and the role of the *rationes seminales*. In dealing with each of these three issues, Pecham constantly invoked these concepts, which he found in the *Summa Halensis*.

## Unity Versus Plurality

In the *Tractatus de anima* as well as in the *Quaestiones quodlibetales* and the *Quaestiones de anima*, Pecham fully affirms the so-called doctrine of 'universal hylomorphism', or the idea of Avicenna that all substances including the soul itself are comprised of matter and form. This entails that both the body and the soul presuppose a plurality of forms, or one substantial form which has different degrees.<sup>21</sup> To clarify his position, Pecham distinguishes between two kinds of form. On the one hand there is a *forma prima substantialis*, which is the cause of the unity of a being. On

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<sup>19</sup> For a critical analysis of the doctrinal consequences of Aquinas' doctrines see the works of B.C. Bazán, 'The Human Soul: Form and Substance? Thomas Aquinas' Critique of Eclectic Aristotelianism,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 64 (1997), pp. 515–69; 'The Creation of the Soul According to Thomas Aquinas,' in *Philosophy and Theology in the Long Middle Ages*, pp. 515–69; 'Can It be Proved, Following Thomas's Philosophical Principles, That the Human Soul is Naturally Incorruptible?,' in *Contemplation and Philosophy: Scholastic and Mystical Modes of Medieval Philosophical Thought: A Tribute to Kent Emery, Jr.*, ed. R. Hofmeister Pich and A. Speer (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2018), pp. 232–75.

<sup>20</sup> For an account of the biography of Pecham see D. Douie, *Archbishop Pecham* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952).

<sup>21</sup> See G.A. Wilson, 'The Critique to Thomas Aquinas's Unicity Theory of Forms on John Peckham's *Quodlibet IV (Romanum)*,' *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998), pp. 423–31.

the other hand, there are other forms, namely the *formae naturales*, which are the cause of physical mutability of a being but do not affect its unity as a substance.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the unity of being, depending on the *forma prima substantialis*, can be combined with the presence of a plurality forms, and this allows Pecham to argue differently from Aquinas on the nature of the intellectual or rational soul in its relation with the body. According to the Franciscan master, the rational soul is not the only form of the human body, because the distinction between the rational soul and the body entails that the latter possesses its own form which is comprised through the mixture of the four elements according to the features proper to the human being.<sup>23</sup> This approach allows Pecham to explain more easily how the rational soul of each human being is able to exist also outside the union with the body. For Pecham, the status of the rational soul as the form of the body makes it the giver of life to the body, but this does not imply that it needs to be united with the body to exist: on the contrary, as John notes, the body exists in its corporeality before the infusion of the human soul, which is the ‘formal cause’ in the sense of being the cause of life for the body. However, it is not the unique form which operates in a body and causes its existence.

Pecham notes:

Some of the forms are those that do not need to be kept in existence, as is the case with human souls, or those forms that are the principles of life as they also live separate from the body. Others, on the other hand, are those forms which, in the matter they vivify, receive the foundation of existence and complementarily give back life to those substances ‘in which living and giving life and other things clearly coincide,’ because they die together with the body and arise from the principles of the body.<sup>24</sup>

The idea that the rational soul’s life does not depend on simply being the giver of life to the human being, or on being its unique substantial form, is a development of an argument that the master may have found in the *Summa Halensis* concerning the way a living being can give life to another being, and therefore serve in a certain sense as its formal cause. In addressing this question, the *Summa* explains, following Avicenna, that the reason for the conjunction of a soul with a body is the desire of the former to bring the latter to life and to perfect it, that is, to bring the latter into act. On this basis, the text notes that this conjunction has multiple forms and that in certain beings the capability to create the conjunction is stronger and more effective than in others.

<sup>22</sup> Pecham, *Quodlibet*, ed. Etzkorn and Delorme, pp. 198–99.

<sup>23</sup> Pecham, *Quodlibet*, ed. Etzkorn and Delorme, pp. 230–31.

<sup>24</sup> Pecham, *Tractatus de anima*, ed. Melani, p. 7: ‘Sed formarum quaedam sunt quae substantiae in esse non indigent alio, sicut animae humanae, vel ita sunt principia vitae ut etiam vivant a corpore separatae; aliae autem sunt quae, in materia quam vivificant, recipiunt fundamentum existendi et ipsis rependunt complementum vivendi, “in quibus pro certo idem est vivere et vitam tribuere alteri,” quia simul cum corpore moriuntur et oriuntur a principiis corporis.’

The *Summa* continues with words that Pecham echoed in the passage quoted above:

In some beings, living and giving life to others coincide. Therefore, as regards some souls and bodies there is a sort of single life or single fulfilment of life, as in the case of the vegetative and sensitive souls: these, in fact, do not have of themselves some distinctive traits as regards life other than what they draw from the body. Therefore, also for their own life, they depend on the body, and their life cannot be separated from this. In other entities, however, like the rational soul, living and giving life to the body do not coincide, although they derive from the same thing, that is, from the same appetite. Indeed, the rational soul has a life of its own which is not that of the body; rather it is from the soul that life is ascribed to the body and therefore the soul alone, by reason of the life that is proper to it, is separable from the body.<sup>25</sup>

The different kinds of conjunction between the soul and the body and the different kinds of relation between living and giving life that the *Summa Halensis* presents are the background against which Pecham develops his idea of the plurality of forms. The rational soul, to act as the form of the body, does not need to be inseparable from matter and to be pure form. In such a case, in fact, the life of the rational soul and the life of the body coincide, since the proper act of the human soul is not to understand but rather to give life to the human body, so that its life is in act only by giving life to the body and once this latter action ends, the life of the human soul lacks its final cause.

## The Soul and the Body: The *praesuppositum* and the *rationes seminales*

The use of the *Summa* in Pecham's argument emerges also in discussing the meaning of the term *substantia* and the possibility of defining the powers of the soul through it. The master notes that, with respect to the human soul, the term *anima* designates the intellect, that is, the soul that gives life to human beings, and this soul is not a perfect unity but rather it is composed of three substances, which correspond to three dimensions of life. Such a discussion is present both in the *Tractatus* and in the *Quaestiones de anima*. In the latter text, reacting against the hypothesis that there are a plurality of souls in the human being, Pecham argues in favor of the idea ac-

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25 *SH* II, In4, Tr3, Q1, Ti2, C2, Ar2 (n. 483), Solutio, p. 669: 'In quibusdam enim quodam modo idem est vivere et vitam alii tribuere. Unde quarundam animarum et corporum est quasi vita una et unum vitae complementum, ut in vegetabili et sensibili: hae enim de se non habent aliquam differentiam vitae nisi quam contrahunt a corpore; unde et secundum vitam suam dependent a corpore, et ideo vita eorum non est separabilis. In aliis vero, ut in rationali, non est idem vivere et vitam corpori tribuere, quamvis ab eodem sit ut ab appetitu, modo quo tactum est. Haec enim habet vitam propriam quae non est corporis; ab ipsa tamen derivatur unde tribuitur vita corpori, et ideo haec sola secundum vitam suam a corpore est separabilis.'



ording to which, if it is impossible that the human being has more than one single soul, there is evidence nonetheless of the presence of multiple substances or spiritual natures in it. Therefore, as the body is ordered to the soul, so one kind of life is ordered to the other: the vegetative, to the sensitive, and these two to the rational.

In outlining a distinction between the notions of soul as the cause of life and therefore as the giver of form, and the soul as a substance, the theologian explains:

Intellect is only meant by the name of soul. Therefore, by reason of this consideration it can be said that in the human being there is only one soul that gives it life, which is made up of a triple substance and a triple kind of life, that is, the vegetative, the sensitive and the intellectual. The vegetative soul and the sensitive soul are distinctive of the species as regards matter, because just as the vegetative soul of the human being differs from that of brutes as regards its species, so it also happens for the sensitive; from the point of view of the form, the species is characterized instead by the intellectual soul, about which it can be said that it has sensation according to a certain similarity.<sup>26</sup>

Such a theory that considers the soul as a unit but makes use of the notion of substance to designate the capabilities and the kind of life which depends on each capability, could be found in the *Summa Halensis*, in a passage which grounds the doctrinal position on the nature of the embryo.

Here the text of the *Summa* states:

Some thinkers argue, relying on Aristotle's statement cited above, that the embryo lives before being organized and that it has a vegetative and sensitive soul before the infusion of the rational soul. And they claim that the human being has three souls or at least three substances, as if they were three lives, that is, the vegetative, the sensitive and the intellectual. In fact, they affirm that the human being has an incorporeal substance thanks to which it lives, grows and is nourished, and this derives from generation, which the soul has in common with plants. It also has an incorporeal substance thanks to which it feels, which depends on the heavens and stars, which is transferred to it without mediation from God through creation. Therefore, they claim that there are three souls in the human being. Others affirm that although there are three substances in the human being, nevertheless there are not three souls, because the term 'soul' refers to a perfection: therefore, the vegetative substance is not a soul except in plants, of which it is the perfection, while the sensitive one is not a soul except in animals; but in the human being these substances are material principles with respect to reason, and the rational substance is the fulfilment of them, and therefore this alone is the soul in the human being while the others exist as material dispositions with respect to it.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Pecham, *Quaestiones de anima*, ed. Etkorn, Spettmann, and Olinger, pp. 362, 26–363, 6: 'Nomen animae solum significat intellectum. Ergo, secundum hoc dici potest unam esse in homine animam plene eum vivificantem, compositam ex triplici substantia et vita, scilicet vegetativa, sensitiva et intellectiva. Et per vegetativam et sensitivam poni in specie materialiter, quia [sicut] vegetativa humana specie differt a brutali, sic et sensitiva; sed formaliter per anima intellectivam, que in se potest dici habere sensum per quamdam similitudinem.'

<sup>27</sup> *SH* II, In4, Tr3, Q1, Ti2, C5 (n. 489), Solutio, p. 682: 'Quidam enim dicunt quod embrio vivit ante organizationem et habet animam vegetativam et sensitivam ante infusionem animae rationalis, innitentes verbo Philosophi supra dicto; et isti ponunt hominem habere tres animas vel saltem tres sub-

The *Summa* notes that, strictly speaking, it is contrary to Augustine's authority to affirm that the human being has a plurality of souls, but doing so does not deny the value of the idea of three distinct principles, that is, the vegetative, the sensitive, and the rational, in the human soul. On the contrary, this text from the *Summa* affirms this possibility by tracing a clear conceptual distinction between the notion of soul and that of a substance. The same passage, with the detailed description of this doctrinal position, is quoted by Bonaventure, for whom the crucial point is how one understands a 'substance' and what it means to say that the soul is a substance. In his *Commentary on the Sentences*, Bonaventure more radically condemns as heretical the doctrine of the three souls in the human being, and then judges as erroneous and contrary to Augustine the doctrine of the three substances, which he attributes to philosophy. With reference to Augustine, Bonaventure develops the argument of the *Summa Halensis* to support the 'theological solution' according to which the human soul is one substance with different capabilities or faculties.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, the human soul is one individual substance that perfects the human being by giving it life, sensation and intelligence.

Pecham's position, which describes the human soul as one and as responsible for the three degrees of life, because it has the faculties corresponding to each of these degrees, clearly stands in the doctrinal tradition which starts with the *Summa Halensis* and continues with Bonaventure. More in detail, Pecham was quite aware of the need to reshape the basic lexicon concerning the soul and its features and therefore he decided to make use of the Latin term *substantia* to signify not a permanent being, but rather a property or capability of beings. On his account, when the sources call the vegetative, sensitive and intellectual souls 'substances', they do not signify three distinct beings, but three capabilities of the same subject, the human soul, which defines the species of the human being as regards its matter (vegetative and sensitive) and as regards its form (rational). In doing so, Pecham offers a new understanding of the Aristotelian definition of the soul as the form of the body: the fact that the human being has one individual soul does not mean that this coincides with the intellect and that

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stantias animae. Notandum ergo quod quidam dixerunt tres substantias incorporeas in homine, sicut tres vitas, scilicet vegetativam, sensitivam et intellectivam. Dicunt enim quod homo habet substantiam incorpoream, qua vivit, crescit et nutritur, et hoc ex traduce in generaitone, in qua convenit cum plantis; habet substantiam incorpoream, qua sentit, ex caelo et stellis, secundum quam convenit cum brutis; habet et substantiam, qua vivit et intelligit, immediate a Deo per creationem; unde ponunt tres anima in homine. Alii dicunt quod, quamvis sint tres substantiae, non tamen tres animae in homine, quia anima nomen est perfectionis; ideo substantia vegetabilis non est anima nisi in plantis, quarum est perfectio; sensibilis vero nisi in brutis; in homine autem sunt quasi materiales ad rationalem et rationalis est completio, et ideo ipsa sola est anima in homine, aliis existentibus ut dispositionibus materialibus ad ipsam.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>28</sup> On the role of Bonaventure in the 13th-century theological discussions of the nature of human being see E.-H. Wéber, *L'homme en discussion à l'université de Paris en 1270* (Paris: Vrin, 1970); Wéber, *Dialogue et dissensions entre saint Bonaventure et saint Thomas à Paris* (Paris: Vrin, 1974); Wéber, *La personne humaine au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1991).

the soul is the only substantial form of the body. Rather, the three capabilities or ‘substances’ which are proper to this soul define the human being in terms of its matter as well as its form, that is, the very nature of the human being qua ‘human’, or rational being.

## ***Rationes seminales: The Existence of the Body***

Pecham here introduces a clear distinction: on the one hand, the life of the human being qua human, that is, as a rational being whose proper form is the one that allows it to think and understand, is that which is caused by the intellect. In this sense, the human soul is the form of the body not because it organizes the matter of the body according to a certain structure and proportion. In other words, the human soul is not the cause of corporeality. Rather the human soul perfects and completes the human body because it causes it to lead the life of a rational being. This distinction between the life of the human soul qua human and its role of giver of life to the body leads Pecham to note that the death of an individual body does not involve the corruption and annihilation of its form, namely, the human soul, because the ‘form’ of the human body does not concern the physical organization of this body but only its actual enlivenment.

Following again an argument already stated in the *Summa Halensis*, Pecham notes that the human soul is connected to the body as the principle of its organization, but only in terms the desire (*appetitus*) to perfect it. In the *Quaestiones de anima* the master notes:

The soul wishes to be united with the body so that it can perform in some sense difficult acts: either because of fragility, as in the state of innocence, or because of danger, as in the state of misery. Trained by its actions, the soul acquires a noble disposition so that what is the least in the order of nature can achieve by merit a condition superior to that of the angels.<sup>29</sup>

The corporeality of the human being, by contrast, depends on other causes, namely, on the action of other formal principles which are responsible for the organization of corporeal matter according to a certain order and structure. In introducing this point of view, Pecham makes use of the Augustinian notion of *rationes seminales*, which is found already in the *Summa Halensis* in the context of drawing a distinction between causal reasons and seminal reasons. While the first concern the form, that is, the rea-

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<sup>29</sup> Pecham, *Quaestiones de anima*, ed. Etzkorn, Spettmann, and Oligier, p. 451, 18–23: ‘Anima est substantia incorporea intelligibilis illuminationum quae sunt a primo ultima relatione precepta. Et ideo appetit uniri corpori ut exercentur in actibus quodammodo difficilibus: vel ratione fragilitatis ut in statu innocentiae, vel ratione calamitatis [ut] in statu miseriae. In his autem exercita proficit ad habitus nobiles acquirendos, ut quae ultima est ordine naturae, posset supremum pertingere per meritum angelorum.’

son a thing is that thing, the latter concern matter and its organization into a specific type of corporeal being.<sup>30</sup> The text of the *Summa* explicitly stresses that these seminal reasons are the equivalent of the ‘virtue of the soul’ which Aristotle mentions as the cause of the corporeal organization of plants and animals:

So, from these parts of the world, which according to Aristotle are full of the power of the soul and which according to Augustine are full of the seminal reasons with which the world is pregnant, the opportunity presents itself, so that when the power of the first heaven and the inferior heaven concur with the generative power in the plant and in the animal and the simple capacity possessed by the same elements, the body is organized and there is a production of the sensitive and vegetative souls.<sup>31</sup>

The doctrine of the seminal reasons thus grounds the distinction of corporeality from the effects of the action of the human soul as a form of the body: this role of the soul does not concern matter but rather the perfection of the action of the body. The structure and order of matter in the human body, and its ability to exercise the vegetative and sensitive functions, depend on the seminal reasons, while the life of such a body as a human body depends on the action of the intellect.

Pecham’s doctrinal perspective is therefore deeply marked by the idea of the plurality of forms: in the human being the soul is the form of the human body, while the seminal reasons, which are inherent in matter, are its formal cause qua body. This point of view highlights the clear distinction between the soul and the body, but in offering it, Pecham aims to include the hylomorphic principle in this understanding of the nature of the human being.

## From the Doctrinal Debate to the Condemnation of 1286: A Change of Framework

In view of Aquinas’ doctrine of the unicity of the substantial form, John Pecham assumes a position deeply rooted in a tradition that goes back to the *Summa Halensis*, which offers a reading of the Aristotelian ideas on the soul/body problem heavily influenced by Avicenna and interpreted in the light of the pseudo-Augustinian doctrinal inheritance. The Franciscan master shares with other contemporaries a series of theological doubts about the consequences of Aquinas’ position, mainly with respect

<sup>30</sup> SH II, In2, Tr3, S2, Q3, Ti3, C5, Ar2 (n. 236), Solutio, p. 291. On Augustine’s role in Pecham’s discourse see A. Collebant, ‘Jean Peckham O.F.M. et l’augustinisme. Aperçus historique (1263–1285),’ *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 18 (1925), pp. 441–72.

<sup>31</sup> SH II, In4, Tr3, Q1, Ti2, C1, Ar2 (n. 481), Solutio, p. 663: ‘Ex iis ergo mundi partibus, quae sunt plenae virtute animae, secundum Philosophum, sive rationibus seminalibus, quibus mundus est gravidus, secundum Augustinum, opportunitate accepta, ut quando confluent virtus primi orbis et orbium inferiorum et virtus generativa in planta et in animali et virtus simplex indita ipsis elementis, sit corporis organizatio et productio animae sensibilis in esse et animae vegetabilis.’

to the resurrection of Christ and the Eucharist. What William de La Mare affirms in his notorious *Correctorium* in 1277 can be seen as the synthesis of a critical discussion of Aquinas' heritage, offered from the point of view of theology.<sup>32</sup>

This discussion began probably when Aquinas was still alive, in the early 1270s, among the masters of the Parisian university, but it did not change in light of the view of the critics of the doctrine of the unity of the substantial form nor of Aquinas himself. Therefore, the discussion started and developed within the university, as part of the complex cultural process of rethinking theology in light of philosophical innovations, especially in the fields of metaphysics and the philosophy of nature, which were enhanced through the study of Aristotle and his Greek and Arabic commentary tradition. The year 1277 is certainly a turning point, since the debates regarding certain doctrines of Aquinas was seen as a matter of not only theological consistency, but also of orthodoxy. Étienne Tempier's intervention and above all Robert Kilwardby's list of condemned statements are the witnesses to a qualitative leap in the discussion: the university masters, in fact, were called to give their doctrinal support to the ecclesiastical authority by advising it on which specific theories appeared contrary to the faith, including that of the unity of the substantial form. In other words, it was an act that had a legal and political value, which had a series of theological reasons in its background, and by defining the limits of orthodoxy, intended to underline the role of ecclesiastical authorities in overseeing the university and its *libertas*.<sup>33</sup> From the point of view of a bishop, in fact, the *magisterium* of those who taught in Paris and Oxford needed to be consistent with the *magisterium* of the successors to the apostles.

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**32** See R. Hissette, 'Albert le Grand et Thomas d'Aquin dans la censure parisienne du 7 mars 1277,' in *Studien zur mittelalterlichen Geistesgeschichte und ihren Quellen*, ed. A. Zimmermann (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 1982), pp. 226–46; Hissette, 'Trois articles de la seconde rédaction du *Correctorium* de Guillaume de La Mare,' *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 51 (1984), pp. 230–41; Hissette, 'L'implication de Thomas d'Aquin dans les censures parisiennes de 1277,' *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 64 (1997), pp. 3–31; Hissette, 'Thomas d'Aquin compromis avec Gilles de Rome en mars 1277?,' *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 93 (1998), pp. 5–26; L. Hödl, 'Neue Nachrichten über die Pariser Verurteilungen des thomasischen Formlehre,' *Scholastik* 39 (1964), pp. 178–96; Hödl, 'Anima forma coporis: Philosophisch-theologische Erhebungen zur Grundformel der scholastischen Anthropologie im Korrektorienstreit (1277–1287),' *Theologie und Philosophie* 41 (1966), pp. 536–56; M.J.F.M. Hoenen, 'Being and Thinking in the *Correctorium fratris Thomae* and the *Correctorium corruptorii Quare*: Schools of Thought and Philosophical Methodology,' in *Nach der Verurteilung von 1277: Philosophie und Theologie and der Universität von Paris im letzten Viertel des 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. J.A. Aertsen, K. Emery Jr., and A. Speer (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 2001), pp. 417–35.

**33** S.L. Uckelman, 'Logic and the Condemnation of 1277,' *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 39 (2010), pp. 201–27; L.E. Wilshire, 'Were the Oxford Condemnations of 1277 Directed Against Aquinas?,' *New Scholasticism* 48 (1964), pp. 125–32; O. Lewry, 'The Oxford Condemnation of 1277 in Grammar and Logic,' in *English Logic and Semantics from the 12th Century to the Times of Ockham and Burley*, ed. H.A.G. Braakhuis, L.M. De Rijk (Nijmegen: Ingenium Publishers, 1981), pp. 235–77. For a detailed survey on Kilwardby's intellectual life see, *A Companion to the Philosophy of Robert Kilwardby*, ed. H. Lagerlund and P. Thorn (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013).

This evident shift from a strictly academic and cultural field to a juridical and ecclesiastical one is what emerges from Pecham's own biography, specifically from his involvement in the discussion of the unity or plurality of substantial forms. The 1286 act, in fact, represents the will to reaffirm the archbishop of Canterbury's magisterial authority and that of the English Church in overseeing teaching of the university masters. The condemnation issued in London was not so much against Thomas Aquinas, but against the violation of Kilwardby's censorship of 1277, and therefore counteracted the teaching of the doctrine of the unity of the substantial form that the Thomists present in Oxford, such as Richard Knapwell, continued to promulgate.<sup>34</sup> Quite remarkable, on this point, is the opposition that emerges in the letters and documents of the archbishop between the image of a pious and humble Aquinas and that of the arrogant Oxford Thomists.

Therefore, Pecham's choice to detail the reasons for the condemnation also on theological grounds must be situated within this context, which involves ecclesiastical and religious motivations and shows the archbishop in his capacity as primate of the English church rather than as a theologian who supported the plurality of substantial forms against the unity professed by Aquinas.

Certainly, Pecham's theological context provides an essential basis for understanding the modalities and contents of the censure of 1286, which in fact echoes the theological discussions of fifteen years before, when in Paris, in the presence of Aquinas himself, the unity of the substantial form had been discussed and criticized by the masters of theology. It is in that context that the Franciscan master developed his mature position, learning from Aquinas the importance of doing so in relation to the texts of Aristotle and his interpreters. However, he also tried to remain faithful to a certain theological orientation, which he saw as codified in the *Summa Halensis*. This text, in fact, was for Pecham a sort of herald of the *opinio communis* of the Franciscan masters of theology.

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<sup>34</sup> See Larsen, *The School of Heretics*, pp. 42–63; F. Pelster, 'Die Sätze der Londoner Verurteilung von 1286 und die Schriften des Magisters Richard Knapwell O.P.,' *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 16 (1946), pp. 83–106; Richard Knapwell, *Quaestio disputata de unitate formae*, ed. F.E. Kelly (Paris: Vrin, 1982); D.A. Callus, *The Condemnation of St Thomas at Oxford* (Oxford: Blackfriars, 1946). An evaluation of Pecham's archbishopric in terms of 'reform', that is of restoration of the authority of the English church is available in M. Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century, 1216–1307* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), pp. 445–509. For Pecham's attitude against Aristotelianism during his ruling of the English Church see, T. Crowley, 'John Peckham, O.F.M., Archbishop of Canterbury, versus the New Aristotelianism,' *Bulletin of the John Riland Library* 33 (1951), pp. 242–55.

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