

Mediaeval Commentaries on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard

VOLUME 3

Edited by

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Easy-Going Scholars Lecturing *Secundum Alium*? Notes on Some French Franciscan *Sentences* Commentaries of the Fifteenth Century

Ueli Zahnd

1 Introduction

In his pioneering study on fourteenth-century Augustinian theology published in 1956, Damasus Trapp took a particular interest in the models and sources of the scholastic works he was going to present. Trapp focused mainly on commentaries on the Lombard's *Sentences*, and it was due to the fact that many commentators of the late fourteenth century not only cited, but literally copied whole passages from earlier *Sentences* commentaries that Trapp established the famous terminology of a *lectura secundum alium*.¹ These “lectures according to someone else” were said to be mainly composed of excerpts from one or more other works, and they often enough never mentioned their sources. But, in his analysis of late fourteenth-century commentaries Trapp was reluctant to disqualify their way of proceeding. Rather than accusing them of plagiarism, he stressed the fact that such *lecturae secundum alium* preserved the scattered contents of earlier commentaries and thus promoted “the cause of solid science.”² However, regarding the fifteenth century's equivalent of the *lecturae secundum alium*—namely, commentaries giving evidence of certain

1 Damasus Trapp, “Augustinian Theology of the 14th Century: Notes on Editions, Marginalia, Opinions and Book-Lore,” *Augustiniana* 6 (1956): 146–274, at 251–55. I am particularly grateful to Dan R. Foord and John T. Slotemaker for their painstaking efforts to make this paper more readable.

2 *Ibid.*, 254. With regard to John of Mirecourt in particular, this way of proceeding has been considered as plagiarism; see Jean-François Genest and Paul Vignaux, “La bibliothèque anglaise de Jean de Mirecourt. *Subtilitas* ou plagiat?,” in *Die Philosophie im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. In memoriam Konstanty Michalski*, ed. Olaf Pluta (Amsterdam, 1988), 275–301, and Zénon Kaluza, “Late Medieval Philosophy, 1350–1500,” in *Medieval Philosophy*, ed. John Marenbon (London/New York, 1998), 426–51, at 438. For a more balanced account to the problem of plagiarism in late medieval *Sentences* commentaries, see Rosemann, *Great Medieval Book*, 127, and Monica Calma, “Plagium,” in *Mots médiévaux offerst à Ruedi Imbach*, ed. Iñigo Atucha et al. (Turnhout, 2011), 503–12.

theological “schools” and thus being explicitly orientated around earlier scholastics—Trapp was more dismissive. According to him, this later “return to the great masters” not only would have been promoted “by the ‘orthodox’ because they mistrusted the freedom-loving theologians of the 14th century”; what is more, Trapp conceived of their return as an attitude “hailed also by easy-going scholars because it was so much more convenient to study one author than ten or twenty.”³ While the verbatim copying of late fourteenth-century commentators was conceived of as an act of textual preservation, the fifteenth-century authors’ “return to the great masters” was the result of an intellectual phlegm.

Trapp’s accounts did not remain unchallenged. Above all, his use of the term *lectura secundum alium* has been criticized in recent scholarship; a closer look at the fourteenth-century sources revealed not only that none of the known commentaries used the term *lectura secundum alium*—the label thus seems to be a neologism—but also that the phenomenon of copying sections of texts verbatim was to be found in the late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century commentaries as well.⁴ To read the *Sentences* “according to someone else” was not an approach limited to the late fourteenth century; and while Trapp based his observations of the phenomenon on some restricted passages of Books I and II, more detailed and more extensive studies have since uncovered a diversity and variety of methods of handling, copying, and collating sources into new commentaries that make it difficult to subsume all these techniques into one particular genre.⁵ A closer look at the fourteenth-century commentaries gave

3 Trapp, “Augustinian Theology,” 215. On Trapp’s view of the fifteenth century, see John van Dyk, “The Sentence Commentary: A Vehicle in the Intellectual Transition of the Fifteenth Century,” *Fifteenth-Century Studies* 8 (1983): 227–38, at 229–30. See as well Ueli Zahnd, “Zwischen Verteidigung, Vermittlung und Adaption. Sentenzenkommentare des ausgehenden Mittelalters und die Frage nach der Wirksamkeit der Sakramente,” in *Vermitteln – Übersetzen – Begegnen. Transferphänomene im europäischen Mittelalter und der Frühen Neuzeit. Interdisziplinäre Annäherungen*, ed. Balázs Nemesch and Achim Rabus (Göttingen, 2011), 33–86.

4 See, for example, Chris Schabel, “Aufredo Gonteri Brito *secundum* Henry of Harclay on Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents,” in *Constructions of Time in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Carol Poster (Evanston, Ill., 1997), 159–71, and Zénon Kaluza, “Auteur et plagiaire: quelques remarques,” in *Was ist Philosophie des Mittelalters?*, ed. Jan A. Aertsen and Andreas Speer (Berlin/New York, 1998), 312–20.

5 For a criticism of Trapp’s terminology, see in particular Paul J.J.M. Bakker and Chris Schabel, “*Sentences* Commentaries of the Later Fourteenth Century,” in *Mediaeval Commentaries*, vol. 1, 425–64, at 438–40; for an overview of different types of *lecturae secundum alium*, see Chris Schabel, “*Haec Ille*. Citation, Quotation, and Plagiarism in 14th-Century Scholasticism,” in *The Origins of European Scholarship: The Cyprus Millennium International Conference*, ed. Ioannis Taifacos (Stuttgart, 2006), 164–76.

rise to a reevaluation of Trapp's *lecturae secundum alium*, reevaluations that went as far as proposing new labels for the designation of the phenomenon with regard to the late fourteenth century.⁶

But what about Trapp's judgment regarding fifteenth-century commentaries and their reliance on earlier sources? It is true that many *Sentences* commentaries of the fifteenth century seem to be focused, at a first glance, on a single authority from the thirteenth or early fourteenth century. John Capreolus conceived of his commentary as a pure defense of Thomas Aquinas;⁷ the commentary of Gabriel Biel was explicitly labeled as a *collectorium* or *epithoma* of William of Ockham;⁸ and Stephen Brulefer's lectures were centered on the *Sentences* commentary by Bonaventure.⁹ This procedure seems to have been so common that it even influenced humanist writings: in 1509, Giles of Viterbo, the later general of the Augustinian order, published a *Sentences* commentary which he explicitly designed as a *commentarius ad mentem Platonis*.¹⁰ The very titles of these commentaries seem to confirm Trapp's judgment, a judgment that concurs with a general view of the fifteenth century as the age of an uninspired scholasticism in which the genre of the *Sentences* commentaries was in gradual decline.¹¹ Nevertheless, it is true as well that these

6 See Schabel, "Aufredo Gonteri Brito," 160, and idem, "Haec Ille," 172, calls it a "cut and paste method." Calma, "Plagium," 504, suggests the phrase *bricolage textuel*. It remains questionable, however, to what extent these new labels solve the main problem of Trapp's terminology, namely, to treat a variety of procedures as if they were all the same.

7 The *Defensiones theologiae divi Thomae Aquinatis* are available in a modern edition by C. Paban and Th. Pègues (7 vols., Tours, 1900–1906). On Capreolus, see the collected essays in *Jean Capreolus et son temps (1380–1444)*, ed. Guy Bedouelle, Romanus Cessario, and Kevin White (Paris, 1997), and Roseman, *Great Medieval Book*, 139–48.

8 See, for example, the colophon of the Basel 1508 edition of Book I of his commentary: "Explicit epithoma primi scripti Guilhelmi Occam editum et elaboratum ab eximio viro magistro Gabriele biel" (fol. Ss 5vb). Biel's *Collectorium* is available in a critical edition directed by Udo Hofmann and Wilfridus Werbeck (5 vols., Tübingen, 1973–1992).

9 They are available as *Reportata clarissima in quartuor sancti Bonaventure doctoris seraphici sententiarum libros* (Basel, 1501). On this commentary, see below, pp. 299–311.

10 The commentary, which treats only Book I, has recently been edited: Giles of Viterbo, *The Commentary on the Sentences of Petrus Lombardus*, ed. Daniel Nodes (Leiden, 2010). For Giles's biography, see Germana Ernst, "Egidio da Viterbo," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 42 (Rome, 1993): 341–51.

11 Modern histories of medieval philosophy thus tend, in the better case, simply to ignore the developments of the fifteenth century (for example, John Marenbon, *Medieval Philosophy: An Historical and Philosophical Introduction* [London/New York, 2007]), or, in the worse case, to mock its scholastic style (for example, Jos Decorte, *Eine kurze Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Philosophie*, trans. Inigo Bocken and Matthias Laermann

judgments rely only on some superficial impressions, since the commentary tradition of the fifteenth century has yet to be explored. The few studies we have and the few commentaries that are available in modern editions present a somewhat different picture: the aforementioned Capreolus did not focus on Thomas Aquinas alone, but was well acquainted with the writings of Duns Scotus, Durand of Saint-Pourçain, Peter Auriol, Adam Wodeham, or Gregory of Rimini as critics of Thomas, as well as with those of Aristotle, Averroës, Albert the Great, Peter Palude, or Hervaeus Natalis as his partisans.¹² In addition to these authors, Gabriel Biel included important passages from Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Henry Totting of Oyta, or Pierre d'Ailly in his *Ockhamist Collectorium*,¹³ and unsurprisingly Giles of Viterbo, who converted this type of scholastic commentaries into a humanist form, was not stuck *ad mentem Platonis*, but assimilated Homer, Vergil or Cicero as well.¹⁴ Others, such as Denys the Carthusian, never focused on one single authority, but conceived of their commentaries as a compilation of a variety of interesting and important scholastic contributions,¹⁵ referring additionally, as in the case of Denys, to extracts from Peter of Tarantaise, Richard of Middleton, Thomas of Strasbourg, or even Jean Gerson.¹⁶

[Paderborn, 2006]). On the purported decline of the commentary tradition, see below, note 22.

- 12 At the beginning of the first volume the modern edition of Capreolus's *Defensiones* contains an *Index auctorum quorum nomina saepius . . . inveniuntur* (xxiii–xxv). At least in relation to Albert the Great, Capreolus's sources have been studied by Serge-Thomas Bonino, "Albert le Grand dans les *Defensiones* de Jean Cabrol (†1444)," *Revue Thomiste* 99 (1999): 369–25.
- 13 See the excellent *Index auctoritatum* in the fifth volume of the critical edition of Biel's *Collectorium*. For his reception of Thomas Aquinas, see John L. Farthing, *Thomas Aquinas and Gabriel Biel: Interpretations of St. Thomas in German Nominalism on the Eve of Reformation* (Durham, 1988).
- 14 On Giles' sources, see Nodes's introduction to his critical edition of the *Commentarium ad mentem Platonis*, 18.
- 15 On Denys's way of proceeding, see Kent J. Emery, Jr., "Denys the Carthusian and the Doxography of Scholastic Theology," in *Ad Litteram: Authoritative Texts and their Medieval Readers*, ed. Mark D. Jordan and Kent J. Emery, Jr. (Notre Dame, 1992), 327–59, at 332–3, and Rosemann, *Great Medieval Book*, 154–5. A less elaborate case of a commentary consisting mainly of a compilation of earlier sources is the one of Johannes Pfeffer, who was the first commentator of the Lombard's *Sentences* at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau; see Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen, "Philosophie und Theologie im 15. Jahrhundert. Die Universität Freiburg und der Wegestreit," in *550 Jahre Albert-Ludwigs-Universität*, ed. Dieter Mertens and Heribert Smolinsky (Freiburg im Breisgau, 2007), 67–91, at 89–90.
- 16 On Denys's sources, see his famous *Protestatio* in *Dionysii Opera Omnia*, vol. 42 (Tournai, 1890), 625–6. Also see Dirk Wassermann, *Dionysius der Kartäuser. Einführung in Werk*

Thus it appears that a closer look at these commentaries of the fifteenth century discloses a rather vivid and intense use of the broad tradition indebted to the Lombard's *Sentences*, and this seems to be true not only for the philosophical and theological dimension of this tradition's representatives, but also for the genres and styles that were developed as part of this tradition. As some recent, selective studies have shown, the fifteenth century was not only au fait with the usual question-style commentaries that were elaborated as part of the theological *curriculum*,¹⁷ rather there appears to have been a variety and a vivacity within the genre that even seems to surpass earlier stages of the commentary tradition. From "simple" synopses (be it in a tabular form, in a more sophisticated syllogistic style, or as versified adaptations)¹⁸ to literal expositions and even extended theological *compendia* based on the *Sentences* structure,¹⁹ fifteenth-century scholastics were familiar with different kinds of

und Gedankenwelt (Salzburg, 1996); on his knowledge of Gerson, see Kent J. Emery, Jr., "Twofold Wisdom and Contemplation in Denys of Ryckel (Dionysius Cartusienensis, 1402–1471)," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 18 (1988): 99–134.

- 17 For an example of such a conventional commentary as part of the theological curriculum, see Mario Meliàdò and Silvia Negri, "Neues zum Pariser Albertismus (15. Jh). Der Magister Lambertus de Monte und die Handschrift Brüssel, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, ms. 760," *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 53 (2011): 349–84.
- 18 Older tables such as the one attributed to Michael Aiguani of Bologna (Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 539) were still in use, but there seem to be further developments, such as the one written (and conceived?) by Nicholas Friesen from Basel in ms. Colmar, *Bibliothèque municipale*, 111 [348], fol. 155r–175v. For syllogistic commentaries, see, for example, the *Quadripartitus questionum syllogistice supra quatuor libros sententiarum* of Heymericus de Campo that has been edited by Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen, "Academic Theology in the Fifteenth Century: The Sentences Commentary of Heymericus de Campo," in *Chemins de la pensée médiévale. Études offertes à Zénon Kaluza*, ed. Paul J.J.M. Bakker (Turnhout, 2002), 513–59. While Heymericus usually combines several distinctions in one syllogism, Gerhardus de Zutphen, an Albertist from Cologne working at the end of the fifteenth century (hence he is to be distinguished from his famous namesake Gerhard Zerbolt de Zutphen, one of the leading figures of the *devotio moderna*) devised a similar commentary to Book IV that has several syllogism per distinction: *Quaestiones disputabiles super quartum librum sententiarum secundum communes catholicorum doctorum opiniones cum propositionibus syllogistice ordinatis* (Cologne, 1490). On Gerhard, see Hermann Keussen, *Die Matrikel der Universität Köln*, vol. 11: 1476–1559 (Bonn, 1919), 228. For examples of versified adaptations of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, see the *Versus memoriales* by Arnoldus Vesaliensis († 1534), which have been edited together with the commentary by Denys the Carthusian (*Dionysii Opera Omnia*, vol. 19 [Tournai, 1902], 15–27; vol. 21 [1903], 7–22; vol. 23 [1903], 7–19; vol. 24 [1904], 7–22); or the anonymous commentary listed as no. 13 in Stegmüller's *Repertorium*.
- 19 The most famous of those literal expositions is undoubtedly the one by Henry of Gorkum, on which see John Slotemaker's contribution to the present volume. Other examples are

Sentences commentaries. This variety of styles was complemented by a variety of uses. Besides the conventional curricular lecture and its elaborations, in which a scholar would display his magisterial expertise, *Sentences* commentaries were designed, on the one hand, for private purposes as preparation for other written theological works or as notebooks for sermons²⁰ and, on the other hand, for scholarly use as short introductory presentations, as auxiliary manuals for accessing the *Sentences* tradition, or as fully elaborated theological handbooks.²¹ Far from exhibiting any kind of tiredness with the genre, fifteenth-century scholars seem to have relied on commentaries on the Lombard's *Sentences* as an important and highly appreciated tool for their theological work.²²

the *Lectura super quartum* by Jacques Legrand (Jacobus Magni, Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 387.1; there is a further manuscript not listed there from Tarragona, *Biblioteca Pública del Estado*, 103), or the *Puncta sive notata sententiarum* attributed to Hermann of Grevenstein (Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 347). An influential example of a theological compendium is the *Resolutio theologorum* by Nicholas Denyse, which was first edited in Rouen in 1504, but reprinted until 1568 (in Venice). Nicholas reorganized the structure of the Lombard's *Sentences* into one single book with seven tracts; those tracts, however, followed the usual ordering of the content of the Lombard's *Sentences* rather closely. The opposite was the case with Pelbartus Temeswar's *Aureum rosarium* (Haguenau, 1504–1507; Book IV was added by Oswald de Lasko), which superficially kept the structure of the four books of the Lombard's *Sentences*, but alphabetically reorganized their content.

- 20 This is the case with the commentary by Denys the Carthusian, who compiled it as a kind of a source-book for his other theological writings; see Kent J. Emery, Jr., *Dionysii Cartusienſi Opera selecta, Prolegomena*, vol. 1 A: *Studia bibliographica*, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 121 (Turnhout, 1991), 22–5. Another example is Heymericus's commentary conserved in ms. Bernkastel-Kues, *Bibliothek des St. Nikolas-Hospitals*, 24.
- 21 Such a scholarly use is attested, for instance, for the *Quadripartitus* by Heymericus de Campo mentioned above in note 18. For auxiliary manuals, see—in addition to the *Vademecum* by William of Vaurouillon, which is going to be presented in this study (below, pp. 275–9)—the *Quaestiones magistri Johannis Scoti abbreviatae et ordinatae per alphabetum* by a certain Johannes de Colonia (first ed. Venice, 1472); the *Scotus pauperum* by Guillermo Gorriz, an abbreviated and sometimes paraphrased version of Scotus's *Ordinatio*; or the *Thesaurus theologorum* by Johannes Picardus, an uncommented catalog of the main theses of some thirty *Sentences* commentaries that structurally follows the Lombard's text. A fully developed handbook of theology is, for example, Gabriel Biel's *Collectorium*; but see also the commentaries by William of Vaurouillon and Nicholas of Orbellis that are going to be portrayed in this survey.
- 22 The myth of the *Sentences* commentaries as a dying genre in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries has recently been refreshed by Daniel Hobbins, “The Schoolman as Public Intellectual: Jean Gerson and the Late Medieval Tract,” *The American Historical*

This article provides evidence of this late medieval flourishing of the genre from a necessarily selective perspective. It focuses on three Franciscan commentaries of the fifteenth century that are, in one way or the other, linked with the university of Paris. This focus ensures comparability of the presented texts, while the restriction to Franciscan commentaries allows for the presentation of a certain variety in style and content: unlike other schools of thought, and in response to Trapp's judgment, the late medieval Franciscan tradition was not fixated on one single authority, but recognized Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, and Scotus as the order's great masters.²³ Even in a presumably traditional context the conditions seem to have been conducive to a vivid discussion of various positions. What is more, the works of these "great masters" were so extensive that they themselves engendered a kind of commentary literature, generating some of the most interesting examples of the previously mentioned auxiliary manuals. This paper's limitation, finally, to French Franciscan commentaries allows not only a certain continuity with earlier studies that were mainly focused on the Parisian tradition,²⁴ but also seems to suit the taste of the era in question: among the printed *Sentences* literature of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, the works belonging to the Franciscan tradition were mainly written by French scholars. Therefore, this paper aims not to give a complete account of the known late medieval Franciscan commentaries,²⁵ but attempts to present—with a special interest

Review 108 (2003): 1308–37, at 1317–18, and repeated in idem, *Authorship and Publicity Before Print: Jean Gerson and the Transformation of Late Medieval Learning* (Philadelphia, 2009). See as well Rosemann, *Great Medieval Book*, 126.

- 23 A fixation on one single authority was prevalent among the Thomists. Nevertheless, many important Thomists like Silvestro Mazzolini or Paulus Soncino relied less on a direct reading of Thomas's works than on his renowned defender John Capreolus; see Michael Tavuzzi, "Capreolus dans les écrits de Silvestro da Prierio, o.p. (1456–1527)," in *Jean Capreolus et son temps*, ed. Bedouelle/Cessario/White, 239–58. On the varieties in fifteenth-century Scotism, see Stefan Swieżawski, "L'anthropologie philosophique du xv^e siècle sous l'aspect de l'influence du scotisme," in *Studia mediaevalia et mariologica. P. Carolo Balić OFM septuagesimum explenti annum dicata*, ed. Roberto Zavalloni (Rome, 1971), 361–75, at 363–4.
- 24 This is true not only for Trapp, "Augustinian Theology," but also for Bakker/Schabel, "Sentences Commentaries of the Later Fourteenth Century," and for a majority of the authors discussed in Monica Calma, "La définition du *viator* dans les commentaires des *Sentences* au xiv^e siècle," in *Les innovations du vocabulaire latin à la fin du moyen âge. Autour du glossaire du latin philosophique* (*Actes de la journée d'étude du 15 mai 2008*), ed. Olga Weijers (Turnhout, 2010), 45–59.
- 25 For the Franciscan commentaries from Erfurt, see Severin Kitanov's contribution to the present volume. There are some interesting Parisian Franciscan commentaries of

in the background, namely, the sources and style of their commentaries—three of the period’s most important French Franciscan masters: William of Vaurouillon, Nicholas of Orbellis, and Stephen Brulefer.

2 William of Vaurouillon

Without doubt William of Vaurouillon, who would become the provincial of the Touraine, is the most famous of the three scholars discussed in the present chapter. Born sometime around 1390 most probably near Dinan in Brittany,²⁶ he entered the Franciscan order at an early age and passed through the usual education, including his lectures on the four books of the *Sentences* in one of the French *studia*.²⁷ In 1427 William was assigned to Paris to proceed to the doctorate, but it was only in 1429 that he actually enrolled as *sententiarium*.²⁸ Probably due to the political situation in Paris (since 1422, the city was under English control, and in her attempt to reconquer it, Joan of Arc was captured in 1430), William seems to have lectured only on Books I to III before leaving

the early fifteenth century which, however, did not have any detectable influence and hence do not figure in the present survey: Petrus ad Boves (Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 656), Petrus Reginaldetus (Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 685) and Peter of Nogent (Victorin Doucet, *Commentaires sur les Sentences* [Quaracchi, 1954], no. 676b; also see Zénon Kaluza, “Les débuts de l’albertisme tardif (Paris et Cologne),” in *Albertus Magnus und der Albertismus*, ed. Maarten J.M.F. Hoenen and Alain de Libera [Leiden, 1995], 207–302, at 248).

- 26 On his birthplace, see the lengthy discussion in Ignatius C. Brady, “William of Vaurouillon, O. Min. († 1463): A Biographical Essay,” in *Miscellanea Melchior de Pobladura 1. Studia franciscana historica P. Melchiori a Pobladura dedicata*, ed. Isidor Villapadierna (Rome, 1964), 291–315, at 292–4. This discussion is almost literally repeated by Franciszek Tokarski, “Guillaume de Vaurouillon et son commentaire sur les *Sentences* de Pierre Lombard,” *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 29 (1988): 49–119, at 51–5.
- 27 This was suggested by Franz Pelster, “Wilhelm von Vorillon, ein Skotist des 15. Jahrhunderts,” *Franziskanische Studien* 8 (1921): 48–66, at 50, and confined by Erich Wegerich, “Bibliographische Notizen über Franziskanerlehrer des 15. Jahrhunderts,” *Franziskanische Studien* 29 (1942): 150–97, at 193. There is some evidence that William taught in Toulouse; see Brady, “A Biographical Essay,” 297, and Olga Weijers, *Le travail intellectuel à la faculté des arts de Paris. Textes et maîtres (ca. 1200–1500)*, vol. 3 (Turnhout, 1998), 134–5.
- 28 See *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis sub auspiciis consilii generalis facultatum Parisiensium ex diversis bibliothecis tabularisque*, vol. 4, ed. Henri Denifle (Paris, 1897), no. 2330 (p. 485); for the delay, see John Chrysostom Murphy, “A History of the Franciscan *Studium Generale* at the University of Paris in the Fifteenth Century” (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1965), 153–4.

Paris in January 1431; he would not return until 1447 to complete his doctorate. In the meantime he seems to have traveled extensively²⁹ and continued to work as a teacher, since it must have been in these years that he composed the so-called *Vademecum non opinionis Scoti*, a kind of an *apparatus fontium* to Scotus's *Ordinatio*. In 1448 he finally attained his doctorate,³⁰ but he did not stay for long in Paris, for around the same time he composed at Poitiers his final scholarly work, the so-called *Liber the anima*.³¹ In 1450 at the latest, he was elected provincial of the Touraine, a position he seems to have held until 1461, two years before his death in early 1463.³²

Among the three works of Vaurouillon that are known—the *Sentences* commentary, the *Vademecum* and his *Liber de anima*—two belong to the tradition indebted to the Lombard's *Sentences*. They are both worthy of being examined in this brief survey. Even though the *Vademecum* is not occupied with the Lombard's text itself, but concentrates on Scotus's *Ordinatio* and thus belongs to the aforementioned auxiliary literature, its affiliation with the commentary tradition is fundamental and goes beyond a simple focus on Scotus:³³ since it

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- 29 These travels seem to have brought him at least to Genoa and to the Council of Basel; see Thomas Sullivan, *Parisian Licentiates in Theology, A.D. 1373–1500: A Biographical Register*, vol. 1: *The Religious Orders* (Leiden, 2004), 359. At one point, Vaurouillon was also back in Brittany: see Brady, "A Biographical Essay," 299–301. Even though William speaks of his travels only in the late 1440s, Pelster, "Wilhelm von Vorillon," 50–1, and Tokarski, "Guillaume de Vaurouillon," 57, claim that some of them already took place in the early 1420s, before William came to Paris. See however Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 155–6.
- 30 See *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 4, no. 2625 (pp. 677–8). At least up to the end of the academic year 1447/48, William stayed in Paris as *magister regens* (*ibid.*, no. 2634, p. 682), and Pelster, "Wilhelm von Vorillon," 53.
- 31 This *Liber de anima*, which is more of a psychological encyclopedia than a commentary on Aristotle's *De anima*, has been edited by Ignatius C. Brady, "The Liber De Anima of William of Vaurouillon, O.F.M.," *Mediaeval Studies* 10 (1948): 224–97, and 11 (1949): 247–307. No other works by William of Vaurouillon are known to exist; on some inauthentic ones, see Ignatius C. Brady, "William of Vaurouillon, O.F.M.: A Fifteenth-Century Scotist," in *John Duns Scotus, 1265–1965*, ed. John K. Ryan (Washington, 1965), 291–310, at 301–04.
- 32 On this later stage of William's life, see Brady, "A Biographical Essay," 303–15, and Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 159–66.
- 33 This is already evident from the work's title: *Vademecum vel collectarium non opinionis Scoti sed opinionum in Scoto nullatenus signatarum*. There are two known incunabula, one printed in Paris (Simon Doliatoris) in 1483, and one in Padua (Mattheus Cerdonis) in about 1485. The authorship is unquestioned (see below, note 52). Since the Paris edition lacks a foliation, references to the *Vademecum* are given according to the relevant book and distinction of Scotus's *Ordinatio*. For descriptions of the two incunabula, see

was his belief, as William points out in a short prologue to his short work, that “the mind grasps the truth in a more acute way if it knows not only what has been said, but also who said it,”³⁴ the *Vademecum* aims to provide the names of the unnamed scholars Scotus was discussing. For every single question in Scotus’s *Ordinatio* William traces back the master’s references to *quidam doctor*, *aliqui ponunt*, and *opinatur*, informing his readers about name, book title, and question or chapter of the texts where the respective opinions of Scotus’s sources are to be found. But the *Vademecum* is more than a simple *apparatus fontium*. In following closely the setting of Scotus’s *Ordinatio*, William takes the opportunity to cite the questions and subquestions Scotus is dealing with, and for the more sophisticated ones he often outlines the structure of Scotus’s argument, presenting not only a kind of *tabula* to the *Ordinatio*, but also elements of a *divisio textus*.³⁵ What is more, William is fully aware of the complex textual tradition of Scotus’s *Ordinatio*. He is eager to indicate any *vacat* and *extra* he knows of,³⁶ he discusses variants of textual transmission and tries to re-establish a readable text.³⁷ At some points where he is unable to make

Wegerich, “Bio-bibliographische Notizen,” 196–7, and Murphy, “Franciscan *Studium Generale*,” 159–66.

- 34 *Vademecum*, prol.: “Quoniam letius intellectus conquiescit et mens capit acutius veritatem, dum non solum quid dicatur, sed quis dicat intelligit, hac ex re ut in doctore subtili quis proficere et altissimarum contemplacionum rivulos capere valeat, iuxta decursum operis sui principalis in quatuor sententiarum libros quod opus nominatur anglicanum . . . disposui favente altissimo et matre dei unigeniti cuius sum indignus servulus, quamlibet summatim prosequi conclusionem ut opinio et opinans cognoscatur.”
- 35 This is particularly the case in Book III, which is why, unlike the other three books, its explicit not only reads *dicta*, but *dicta seu abbreviata super tercium librum Scoti sententiarum*.
- 36 In *Vademecum*, IV, dist. 12, William even tries to explain the origin of these additions and omissions: “Sed ad questionem veniamus quod alibi doctor noster non efficit per vacat. Hec questio distinguit ut non sit idem vacat et extra. Extra quidem non sunt a doctore, et si in libris reperuntur doctoris ut merito dici queat extra, non sunt a doctore sed bene sunt in doctore nisi forsann communitur vacat sumatur, et dicatur quod illud vacat quod frustra est aut venit preter intentum. . . . Doctor solvendo quantum argumentum principale huius questionis credo addit vacationem seu ocio unde et nomen acceperunt post lecturam completam revisendo que scripserat, et inde est quod quidam libri ea habent et quidam non.” On these additions and omissions in Scotus’s *Ordinatio*, see Charles Balić’s introduction to the first volume of the Vatican edition: Duns Scoti *Opera omnia*, vol. 1: *Ordinatio, Prologus* (Vatican City, 1950), 176*–199*.
- 37 See *Vademecum*, I, dist. 17: “patet quod hic textus est flus quia ista diffinicio non est secundi ethicorum sed primi celi et mundi. Secundo quia inutiliter repetitur. Tertio quia sic non est ad propositum. Alibi tamen textus est incompletus, ideo aut flus super aut

progress with the readings contained in his copies of the *Ordinatio*, he resorts to the *Reportata parisiensa*.³⁸ Finally, William is not afraid to emend Scotus's citations,³⁹ and while he is usually content to give the mere reference to a certain author, he summarizes or even provides full citations of Scotus's sources where he thinks that the Subtle Doctor did not sufficiently cite them in order to make his argument understandable.⁴⁰

William's *Vademecum* is thus driven by a predominantly pedagogical interest in providing the necessary information to read Scotus's main work, and this interest gives proof of an almost modern historico-critical attitude. It has been claimed that such an attitude had already developed in the fourteenth century when scholars such as Peter Auriol, Gregory of Rimini, or John Hiltalingen explicitly stated whom they were citing.⁴¹ But what William does exceeds those earlier attempts by far: his goal is not simply to refer precisely to some of the sources he is himself working with, but to give a full account of the anonymous citations another scholar has made. It is obvious that William, in order to achieve this goal, had to be acquainted with all the sources (or at least with the majority of them) Scotus himself was acquainted with, and there are in fact only a few authors who appear in the *index fontium* of the modern edition

superfluous aut diminutus"; or IV, dist. 25: "in tercia pena que est irregularitas est quidam textus qui aliquando est truncatus seu colobon. Ideo pono sicut debet esse."

38 William's description in his prologue seems more limited than what he actually does: "solumque in secundo suo super Sentencias quem non integravit totaliter in Anglia ex Parisiensibus reportatis a xv distinctione inclusive usque ad xxvi exclusive insertum est." At many other points, he consults the *Reportata* as well; see, in particular, and with a probable allusion to the contemporary political situation the end of Book I, dist. 43: "Super hec requirantur in hac distinctione reportata doctoris nostri parisius ut parisius angliam iuuet et veritas appareat."

39 Normally, William just provides the correct reference (for example, *Vademecum*, II, dist. 39, or IV, dist. 14). At IV, dist. 15, however, where Scotus erroneously attributes a biblical citation to the book of Proverbs instead of Ecclesiastes, William collects four different explanations in order to excuse his master's mistake. See as well I, dist. 9, on the misattribution of a citation from Gregory the Great: "solus Deus memoriam omnia continentem continet."

40 See, for example, *Vademecum*, I, dist. 17: "Hee soluciones que sequuntur ad rationes opinionis Godofredi communiter non sunt in libris"; II, dist. 1: "quia hec opinio in multis deest libris, dignum duxi hic notare"; or IV, dist. 1: "quia hec opinio in doctore communiter non ponitur et Henrici quodlibeta non semper occurrunt, immo disposui brevissime sententiam illius questionis ponere." At the end of Books I and IV, the *Vademecum* even provides short collections of patristic texts to which Scotus refers, but which *communiter in textu non complentur*.

41 See already Trapp, "Augustinian Theology," but now in particular Schabel, "*Haec Ille*."

of Scotus, but who are absent from Vaurouillon's *Vademecum*.⁴² William's references, of course, do not comply with modern standards of literary criticism; some of his attributions are simply erroneous, and at more than one point where he cannot find an opinion in one of Scotus's usual counterparts, he does not hesitate to give references to scholars that postdate Scotus, such as Nicholas Bonetus, Adam Wodeham, and John of Rodington.⁴³ Nevertheless, the more William proceeds in his manual, the more his attitude seems to be not only historico-critical, but also historical as such, since in addition to the references to Scotus's counterparts, Vaurouillon starts to mention discussions and names of which he knew that they postdated Scotus and his *Ordinatio*: which is how Hugh of Newcastle, Landulph Caracciolo, Gerard Odonis, William of Ockham, or even John of Ripa find their way into the manual as well.⁴⁴ With Scotus as the pivot, the *Vademecum* provides thus an overview over more than a century of scholastic discussion.

Not surprisingly, this valuable manual was rather successful. Besides two incunabula editions, an abbreviated version of the *Vademecum* has survived in manuscript,⁴⁵ excerpts of Book IV were appended to one of the earliest

42 This is the case with, Matthew of Aquasparta, Robert Kilwardby, and William of Militona, for example.

43 They all figure at least three times in different books. Only once or twice, William also refers to Alexander of Alexandria, Durand of Saint-Pourçain, Peter Auriol, and Robert Holcot. Finally there is (in *Vademecum*, I, dist. 8) a very unspecific reference to Albert of Saxony, who never wrote a theological work.

44 For Gerard Odonis, see Brady, "A Fifteenth-Century Scotist," 299 n. 27, who reads *Vademecum*, III, dist. 38 ("Dicit tercio Bonaventura in presenti dis. q. 2 et Girardus Odonis primo Ethicorum impugnans opinionem Platonis de felicitate q. 1") as though William conceived of Odonis as one of Scotus's sources. Better examples are, for Hugh of Newcastle, *Vademecum*, IV, dist. 11 ("sic respondet frater Hugo de Novocastro non doctor sed bachalarius doctor[is?] Francisci patris alumpnus quarti sui presenti dist. q. 2 in solutione ad secundum argumentum"); for Caracciolo, *Vademecum*, IV, dist. 1 ("hinc sequitur in virtute Landulphus seu Radulphus ordinis minorum in quarto distinctione prima questione prima respondendo quarto argumento Petri Aureoli"); for Ockham, *Vademecum*, IV, dist. 10 ("Hac opinione improbata accedit Guilelmus Okam quem florem dicunt modern[or]um in quarto q. 1 huius materie in solutione secunde difficultatis"); and for John of Ripa, *Vademecum*, I, dist. 26 ("Ponitur opinio dicens divinas personas constitui per absoluta quam insequitur frater Iohannes de Rippis in primo suo et quodlibeto xxv et xxvi, et ibi roboratur ne nova vidiatur auctoritate eiusdem antiqui doctoris, scilicet fratris Iohannis Bonaventure ut Iohannes iuветur Iohanne in primo suo dis. xxv q. prima").

45 For information about these manuscripts, see Brady, "A Fifteenth-Century Scotist," 298 n. 23.

printed editions of *Ordinatio*, Book IV,⁴⁶ and in imitation of the *Vademecum*, a similar manual was designed—probably by one of Vaurouillon’s students—for Scotus’s *Quodlibeta*.⁴⁷ A prevalent use of William’s *Vademecum* can also be observed in various texts from the Franciscan *Sentences* literature of the later fifteenth century—be it through verbatim citations⁴⁸ or through obvious parallels between references.⁴⁹ Finally, the 1497 Venice edition of Scotus’s *Ordinatio* simply reproduced in its margins the references collected by Vaurouillon.⁵⁰ If the “solid science” of some late fourteenth-century scholars consisted in the preservation of other texts, with its density of information, its critical attitude, and its facilitation of accessing the complex structure of Scotus’ *Ordinatio*, the scientific solidity of Vaurouillon’s manual is undeniable.

Even more important than the *Vademecum*, however, is Vaurouillon’s own commentary on the Lombard’s *Sentences*. The commentary survives in only one manuscript, but there are four early modern printed editions;⁵¹ its authorship is unquestioned.⁵² Besides the commentary itself, the printed editions

46 See Scotus, *Quaestiones in quartum librum Sententiarum* (Paris, 1473), fols. 325–58.

47 In both incunabula printings of William’s *Vademecum*, this manual on the *Quodlibeta* follows immediately. That William is not its author is evidenced by the fact that *ad q. 10* of Scotus’s *Quodlibeta*, an explicit reference to the *Vademecum* appears with the words, *ut patet in collectorio magistri Guilelmi*. See Pelster, “Wilhelm von Vorillon,” 60.

48 See, for example, the *Scotus pauperum*, an abbreviated version of Scotus’s *Ordinatio* composed around 1473 in Saragossa by a certain Guillermo Gorriz (on whom see Gonzalo Díaz Díaz, *Hombres y documentos de la filosofía española. E–G* [Madrid, 1988], 589b). This abbreviation, however, relies not only on Scotus’s *Ordinatio*, but also reproduces passages from William’s *Vademecum* at length.

49 This is the case with Nicholas of Orbellis, who will be discussed later on in this chapter.

50 For some examples, see Brady, “A Fifteenth-Century Scotist,” 298–9 n. 26. At some point, even the editors of the modern Vatican edition seem to have relied on the *Vademecum*: see Duns Scoti *Opera omnia*, vol. 1: *Ordinatio, Prologus*, pars 2, q. un., p. 77 n. 3.

51 The manuscript is Rennes, *Bibliothèque municipale*, 41 (Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 305). The manuscripts listed in Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 304 do not contain Vaurouillon’s commentary, but the commentary by John Findling based on Vaurouillon’s lectures (on Findling see below, note 81). The four existing printed editions are Lyons 1489, Venice 1496 and 1502, and Basel 1510 (descriptions in Wegerich, “Bio-bibliographische Notizen,” 196, and Brady, “A Fifteenth-Century Scotist,” 294; however, note that the Lyons 1499 edition which they both mention does not exist).

52 The coherent structure of the four books and the similar tone of the four *principia* exclude all doubt that the work has a single author. In Book IV, dist. 11, this author refers to a tract *quem composui de opinionibus que sunt in doctore subtili* (see below, note 56). He is thus identical with the author of the *Vademecum* who indicates rather explicitly that he is from Brittany (see *Vademecum*, IV, dist. 10: “ad idem commentator occurrit Brito noster

contain parts of the *principia* William gave as *sententiaris* at Paris, while the manuscript begins with a *declaratio seu retractatio*, a rather short list of amendments that Vaurouillon himself composed when reviewing his commentary.⁵³ Although most of these amendments have been included in the printed editions, it becomes clear that William's commentary is not an *ordinatio*, but the result of his Parisian lectures: in his *declaratio seu retractatio*, Vaurouillon describes his commentary as a *lectura*.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the *Sentences* commentary seems to be more than a momentary impression of William's theology at a certain point of his career. As already mentioned, it is usually assumed that William was working on Books I to III of this commentary during his first period at Paris around 1430, and that he lectured on the fourth book only in the late 1440s on the occasion of his second sojourn in the city. This assumption is mainly due to the fact that the differences between his commentary on Books I to III and the commentary on Book IV are significant. William's Book IV is more elaborate than the earlier three books: it is longer, and William not only introduces new sources, but also proves more careful in handling the sources he already referred to in Books I through III.⁵⁵ Book IV of William's commentary, therefore, bears the manifest imprint of his work for the *Vademecum*—an imprint lacking in the earlier books. Indeed, in his commentary to distinction 11 of Book IV he even cites his own manual explicitly.⁵⁶ The relative chronology between Books I–III, the *Vademecum*, and Book IV thus seems to be given, and since the university's *Chartularium* records that William matriculated at two different periods to achieve his doctorate, it stands to reason that it was only during the second period that William lectured on Book IV.

This dating is, however, challenged by two biographical remarks from William's own pen. The first is located in a concluding sermon that is now

Alanus . . . , et normannus Godofredo de Fontibus in idem se coniungit cum Britone ut sicut patria sint mente propinqui"). The most obvious indication that William authored both works lies, however, once more in the leading verse of the four *principia* to his commentary: it is from Judith 13: 12 and begins with the phrase *gyrantes vallem*, which literally means "wheeling through the valley." In Old French this is *valle rouillonis* or "Vaurouillon."

53 This list has been edited by Ignatius C. Brady, "The 'Declaratio seu Retractatio' of William of Vaurouillon," *AFH* 58 (1965): 394–416. It contains 37 amendments; however, there are no fundamental doctrinal changes.

54 *Ibid.*, I.11, 407, and Epilogue, 416. At the beginning of this list, where Vaurouillon refers to a friend speaking of his work, he has him calling it a *scriptum* (399).

55 See Brady, "A Biographical Essay," 295–6.

56 See William of Vaurouillon, *Super quattuor libros Sententiarum* (Basel, 1510), IV, dist. 11, art. 2, concl. 2, fol. 362vb: "Unde motus doctor solemniter dicit quodlibeto 3 q. 6, 8, 15, 20 et in multis aliis locis que notavi in tractatu quem composui de opinionibus que sunt in doctore subtili, quod . . ." (cf. Pelster, "Wilhelm von Vorillon," 59–60).

attached to the end of his commentary to Book IV, but originally was part of its *principium*:⁵⁷ William gratefully refers there to *magistro Luce de Assisio*, who is said to have supervised his first three *principia*, and to *magistro Girardo Suleti*, under the regency of whom he “began” his *principium* on Book IV and is “now” continuing to give his lectures.⁵⁸ The sermon was thus delivered at a point when the *quaestio principalis* of Book IV had already been disputed but the commentary was not yet finished. While we know that Luke of Assisi was regent master in 1428 and 1429,⁵⁹ we do not know anything about the regency of a Gerard in the late 1440s. There is, however, a Girardus de Salinis directly replacing Luke in his regency in September 1430, and it is highly probable that this Girardus de Salinis and Vaurouillon’s Girardo Suleti are one and the same person, otherwise known as Girardus Fuleti de Salinis.⁶⁰ If this is correct, William would also have given his *principium* and possibly parts of his commentary to Book IV during his first stay at Paris in late 1430.⁶¹

57 In all four *principia* such a *sermo gratiatus* seems to have been intended, but it only survived for Book IV. At the end of the first part of the fourth *principium*, the early modern editors explicitly state: “residuum huius principij super quarto sententiarum require in fine tabularum quod sic incipit: Expeditus per domini gratiam etc.” (fol. 330v), which is nothing else than the incipit of this *sermo gratiatus*. For the *sermones gratiati* of the other three books see below, note 68.

58 *Super quattuor libros Sententiarum*, IV, epilogue, fol. 460r: “Specialiter hinc regrator nostris reverendis magistris. . . Maxime nostro reverendo magistro magistro Luce de Assisio, sub cuius sedentis pedibus primum, secundum et tertium feci principium. Consequenter nostro reverendo magistro magistro Girardo Suleti nunc in scholis hijs regenti de Burgundiae provincia oriundo, cuius sub pedibus nunc meas continuo lectiones, et quartum sententiarum incoepi principium.”

59 See *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 4, no. 2315 (p. 478) and no. 2331 (p. 486). There are three more names that William mentions in this epilogue: Richardus de Chambanae (probably Champagne), Ioannes Gileti, and Ioannes Nico. Unfortunately, none of these names appears in the university registers.

60 This was already suggested by Denifle, *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 4, 828 (index entry to “Salinis”) and Murphy, “Franciscan *Studium Generale*,” 240 (on Gerard’s regency, see *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 4, no. 2351, p. 500). Sullivan, *Parisian Licentiates in Theology*, I, 25, speaks of “Gerardus Feuleti de Salinis.” Other spellings of Gerard’s second name are *Feuillet*, *Fuleti*, and *Suleti*. Unfortunately, we do not have much information about Gerard’s later career: he was involved in the trial of Joan of Arc, but after 1431 he does not reappear in the university registers (which, of course, are far from being complete for that period).

61 Pelster, “Wilhelm von Vorillon,” 59, assumed that William wrote the complete commentary during his first sojourn at Paris, but that is rather improbable due to the differences between the first three books and the fourth. On the other hand, Brady, “A Biographical Essay,” 298, suggests a somewhat different reading of the passage cited in note 58: according to him, the second *nunc* is an “anticipation of his license,” so that the whole Book IV

The second remark challenging the usual dating stems from the *declaratio seu retractatio*. At one point in his list vaurouillon attempts to excuse some of his faults with a reference to the political situation that characterized his first sojourn at paris. His words are:

The reason, however, of this and similar [cases of] inadvertence was, I believe, the Parisian tribulation which was so great that there was hardly ever sufficient time to write a lesson; and once the *lectura* was finally completed (*tandem lectura completa*) and I departed from Paris for fear, it was snatched from [my] hands and transcribed before it was corrected: it is therefore no wonder that some flaws occur in it.⁶²

William explicitly states that he completed his *lectura* before he fled from Paris. According to his own indications, there is thus no need to suppose a two-step redaction of the commentary. But what about the differences between Books I through III and Book IV? And what about the relative chronology? We simply cannot say. However, just as we know little about William's first stay in Paris, we also do not know what exactly he did in the late 1440s. There is the possibility that he revised passages of his commentary during his second sojourn, and if we believe him that at the end of his first stay he almost could not wait to finish and leave the city, it is not too much to suppose that it was particularly Book IV that would have been in need of revision. At least for Book IV, William's commentary could thus be something between a *lectura* and a revised *ordinatio*.

Even though the commentary on Book IV is more elaborate than the other three books, the whole work nevertheless possesses a homogeneous structure. Unlike the Parisian commentaries of the later fourteenth century,⁶³ William provides a full commentary, taking into account not only all four books, but each distinction of the Lombard's *Sentences*. He thus seems to be following

would have been written in 1447/48 under Gerard. There is, however, no external evidence to substantiate such a reading.

- 62 Brady, "The 'Declaratio seu Retractatio' of William of Vaurouillon," I.11, p. 407: "Causa autem inadvertencie in hoc et similibus credo fuit tribulacio parisina que fuit tanta ut vix aliquando tempus sufficeret ad scribendum lectionem; et tandem lectura completa pre timore me egresso de Parisius, que de manibus erepta est et transcripta antequam corrigeretur: ideo non mirum si in ea aliqui occurrunt defectus."
- 63 On the structure of those commentaries, see Zahnd, "Sentenzenkommentare," 74–5. However, William is not the first to revive the tradition of full commentaries in Paris; see, for instance, the commentaries by Giles Charlier (Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 42) or Peter Reginaldetus (Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 685—even though we no longer have Book III from Reginaldetus's commentary anymore; see note 25 above).

the Lombardian base text rather closely, but this is not the only feature the structure of his commentary reveals. It appears that throughout his four books William adheres to a peculiar division of his questions: while he normally asks one question per distinction, he formulates three questions for the third distinction and only one question for distinctions 14 to 16, 23 to 25, and 38 to 40 of each book:⁶⁴

Book I	Book II	Book III	Book IV	
princ.	princ.	princ.	[princ.]	one question
prol.				one question
dist. 1	dist. 1	dist. 1	dist. 1	one question
dist. 2	dist. 2	dist. 2	dist. 2	one question
dist. 3	dist. 3	dist. 3	dist. 3	three questions
dist. 4	dist. 4	dist. 4	dist. 4	one question
...
dist. 13	dist. 13	dist. 13	dist. 13	one question
dist. 14–16	dist. 14–16	dist. 14–16	dist. 14–16	subsumed in one question
dist. 17	dist. 17	dist. 17	dist. 17	one question
...
dist. 22	dist. 22	dist. 22	dist. 22	one question
dist. 23–25	dist. 23–25	dist. 23–25	dist. 23–25	subsumed in one question
dist. 26	dist. 26	dist. 26	dist. 26	one question
...
d. 37	d. 37	d. 37	d. 37	one question
d. 38–40	d. 38–40	d. 38–40	d. 38–40	subsumed in one question
d. 41	d. 41		d. 41	one question
...
d. 48	d. 44		d. 50	one question

Since there is, with regard to the content of the Lombard's *Sentences*, no particular reason for such a division of the questions, this structure must be motivated by an external scheme. And indeed, the structure reveals a kind of a play on numbers: the three questions to distinction 3 providing, so to speak, a numerical basis of $3 - 3$, the middle numbers of the summarized triples of

64 Without any further explanations and without recognizing the repetition of the structure throughout the four books, Tokarski, "Guillaum de Vaurouillon," 89 n. 152 already pointed to this peculiar division of questions.

distinctions in William's commentary are nothing but the subsequent members of a Fibonacci sequence based on 3:⁶⁵

Fibonacci sequence based on 3: (0 –) 3 – 3 – 6 – 9 – 15 – 24 – 39 – 63 – 102 – ...

This use of a mathematical sequence is more than simple fooling about. Fibonacci sequences are directly linked with the golden ratio: the higher one gets in a sequence, the more the result of the division of two subsequent members approximates the golden section. It appears, then, that Vaurouillon tried to build his commentary in accordance with the predominant proportion used in Renaissance architecture.⁶⁶

The fact that William chose a Fibonacci sequence based on the number 3 might well have a theological background as well. For William had an almost obsessive predilection for this number, a predilection that surpasses normal Trinitarian speculation.⁶⁷ His *principia* are subdivided into three parts,⁶⁸ and throughout his commentary every single question contains three articles.

65 A Fibonacci sequence is an infinite series of numbers starting with two identical numbers $x - x$ (or $0 - x$, which comes to the same), each subsequent number being the sum of the previous two. Leonardo of Pisa alias Fibonacci introduced this sequence in the early thirteenth century into western mathematics in order to describe the growth of a rabbit population. The standard Fibonacci sequence begins with $1 - 1$ (or $0 - 1$).

66 For a long time only Johannes Kepler was credited for having recognized the correlation between the Fibonacci sequence and the golden ratio—a position still held by Albert van der Schoot, *Die Geschichte des goldenen Schnitts. Aufstieg und Fall der göttlichen Proportion* (Stuttgart, 2005), 154. There is strong evidence, however, that the correlation was already known at the end of the Middle Ages; see Leonard Curchin and Roger Herz-Fischer, “De quand date le premier rapprochement entre la suite de Fibonacci et la division en extrême et moyenne raison?,” *Centaurus* 28 (1985): 129–38.

67 A Trinitarian dimension is sometimes explicitly present, as, for example, when he first explains the tripartite structure of his questions (*Super quattuor libros Sententiarum*, prologue, fol. 6vb): “In ista quaestione et in sequentibus divino favente auxilio qui deus unus extat et trinus, tres erunt articuli declarandi. Quorum primus est terminorum declarativus, secundus quaestionis responsivus, tertius est dubiorum motivus.” The last sentence is going to be repeated throughout his commentary at the beginning of the *pes* of each question.

68 The introductory lines of each of the four *principia* indicate that William always designed an *oratio recommendativa*, a *dubietas disputabilis* (that is, the principal question), and a *loquela gratiativa* (see *Super quattuor libros Sententiarum*, fols. 1r, 120v, 236v, and 330r). The third part for the *principia* of Books I through III and the disputed question for Book IV have not been preserved.

This is in itself nothing special, since there are many commentaries from the fourteenth century that present a similar choice for a certain stereotypically applied number of articles and arguments.⁶⁹ But William goes further: each first article of his questions is devoted to the clarification of exactly three terms; each second article discusses exactly three conclusions; and each third article deals with exactly three *dubia* or *difficultates*. At the end of each question and after having resolved the usually three principal arguments William formulates exactly three conclusions *de mente magistri*, and it is needless to say that he tries to offer, whenever he can, a threefold division of a problem, three reasons to solve it, three authorities, or three examples. This fixation on the number 3 goes to the point where he even criticizes Francis of Meyronnes, a scholar he normally holds in high esteem, for having applied a fourfold structure to his arguments: *melius est habere bonum ternarium quam malum quaternarium*.⁷⁰

As rigid as William's application of this ternary structure may be, its effects are nonetheless surprisingly positive. It is true that, at one point or another, William has to shorten a discussion or to stretch out a not so complicated matter in order to make it compliant with his overall structure.⁷¹ Yet this regularity bestows upon his commentary an even elegance which, again, is best compared with Renaissance architecture. In William's commentary things are clear. There is no Gothic excess of corollaries, sub-problems, and interposed doubts, but a harmonious simplicity that never leaves it up to doubt which

69 For some examples, see Trapp, "Augustinian Theology," esp. 242, where he calls this way of proceeding *more geometrico*. A fixed number of articles or arguments is, however, not sufficient to justify this terminology since there are some Parisian commentators of the late fourteenth century (like James of Eltville, Henry of Oyta, Peter of Candia, and to some extent Marsilius of Inghen as well) who used a threefold "geometrical" structure in a real Euclidean sense: in addition to the *quaesitum* itself, their questions have two presuppositions, each of which one of the three principal arguments challenges and consequently one of the three articles has to resolve. Hence, their questions receive a "geometrical" internal logical structure that is completed by *notanda* (providing definitions), conclusions (corresponding to the *axiomata* and *theoremata*), and *correlaria* (to draw further conclusions). On the origins of these mathematical methods in western scholasticism, see Mechthild Dreyer, *More mathematicorum. Rezeption und Transformation der antiken Gestalten wissenschaftlichen Wissens im 12. Jahrhundert* (Münster, 1996).

70 *Super quattuor libros Sententiarum* IV, dist. 14–16, art. 2, concl. 1, fol. 371rb. See already Pelster, "Wilhelm von Vorillon," 63–4, and Brady, "A Fifteenth-Century Scotist," 297. Vaurouillon's reactions to Francis of Meyronnes have been collected by Bartholomäus Roth, *Franz von Mayronis O.F.M. Sein Leben, seine Werke, seine Lehre vom Formalunterschied in Gott* (Werl, 1936), 90–1.

71 As it is deplored by Pelster, "Wilhelm von Vorillon," 64.

part of a question a paragraph belongs to, and whether William is giving his own opinion or reporting someone else's. As is the case with the new aesthetics his contemporaries were about to develop, form mattered for William just as much as content, and this formal emphasis turns out to be extremely helpful to anyone reading his commentary. The commentary thus seems to have been designed to be read, hence its objective proves to be again a didactic one: similar to the *Vademecum*, William's main work aims to facilitate access to the *Sentences* tradition.

This didactic purpose is emphasized by other structural elements that are worthy of note. Even though the division of his questions into three articles is the same throughout his commentary, William always provides a short *divisio quaestionis* after the principal arguments. Such "signposting language" runs through the other parts of his questions as well: at the beginning of each first article, he always lists the three terms that he is going to explain; at the beginning of the second article, he previews the three conclusions that he is going to draw; and at the end of each third article, he repeats his current response in the form of another conclusion. More important with regard to the didactic preparation of his material is the fact that, as already mentioned, at the end of each question William presents three *conclusiones de mente magistri*, which summarize and throw into relief the content of the current distinction of the Lombard's text.⁷² William does not just use the Lombard's *Sentences* as a rough framework for solving theological problems—as was the wont of many earlier commentators—but he also demonstrates a real interest in presenting the Lombard's text itself (as has already become apparent from the fact that he has no selective approach, but develops a full commentary). Thus it is no surprise that, at the beginning of each question, William provides an elaborate *divisio textus* of the distinction his question is going to address—an element that had disappeared during the fourteenth century, at least in the published versions of most *Sentences* commentaries.⁷³ As a result, William's standard exposition of a Lombardian distinction has the following structure:

72 For the three questions of each third distinction, William formulates only one such conclusion per question; for the summarized triples of distinctions, William still provides only three conclusions *de mente magistri*, namely, one per distinction.

73 See Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen, "The Commentary on the *Sentences* of Marsilius of Inghen", in *Mediaeval Commentaries*, vol. 2, 464–506, at 496, and William J. Courtenay, "Postscript: The Demise of Quodlibetal Literature," in *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages*, vol. 2: *The Fourteenth Century*, ed. Chris Schabel (Leiden, 2007), 693–9, at 695.

1. *divisio textus*
2. *quaestio*
 argumenta principalia in oppositum (usually three arguments)
3. *divisio quaestionis*
4. *articuli*
 art. 1: *declaratio terminorum* (always three terms)
 art. 2: *responsio quaestionis* (always by three conclusions)
 art. 3: *tractatio dubiorum* (always three difficulties)
5. *solutio quaestionis*
6. *ad argumenta principalia*
7. *conclusiones ad mentem magistri* (always three conclusions)

The *Sentences* commentary of William of Vaurouillon presents at the same time a literal exposition of the Lombard's *Sentences* (comprising the *divisio textus* and the *conclusiones ad mentem magistri*), and a classical question commentary which, however, consists not only of the usual discussions and solutions, but also provides, by means of the *declarationes* of the first articles, a kind of thesaurus of scholastic terms. As an exposition, commentary, and dictionary all at once, Vaurouillon's main work on the *Sentences* is a compendium, not unlike his *Vademecum*.

With regard to contents, this manual-like character is more than obvious. William is not so much interested in developing an independent—or even an original—theological position, but rather in answering his questions by providing the most appropriate solution he collects from the former scholastic tradition. In the majority of cases, he chooses a purely expository approach: he is not interested in earlier debates and polemics or in lengthy pros and cons, but in a concise presentation of what he thinks is the best theological or philosophical position. More often than not, this is the position of Duns Scotus: it is Scotus whom he follows in most of his doctrinal choices, and with regard to his predilection for triples, he unsurprisingly contradicts Scotus only three times in an explicit way throughout his commentary.⁷⁴ Nevertheless he does not content himself with a simple reproduction or abbreviation of the Subtle Doctor's opinions: even though he favors Scotus, he does not hesitate

74 The first *dissensio* occurs in Book II, dist. 17, art. 2, concl. 1 (fol. 174va) on the subject of the localization of Paradise; the second in Book IV, dist. 14–16, art. 2, concl. 3 (fol. 372ra) on a question regarding the death penalty; and the third in the same Book, dist. 27, art. 2, concl. 2 (fol. 394rb) in the context of the institution of marriage. In this third place, William declares: "hic est tertius passus, in quo tantum gigantem nanus dimitto, forte quia non capio . . . , ut sit completus ternarius, et amplius non excedat."

to refer to an impressive diversity of other scholastic authors where he thinks that their opinions are preferable. From obvious resources like Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, and Richard of Middleton up to more surprising names like Godfrey of Poitiers or Roger Bacon, the collection of texts to which William refers is as substantial as in the *Vademecum*.⁷⁵ William strives to reproduce their positions in his own words; indeed, the majority of these sources are used in a way that makes it clear that Vaurouillon really knew the texts he was referring to. Needless to say, he also exhibited a historico-critical accuracy in indicating from where he was citing.

Admittedly, the result of this method is a rather eclectic amalgam of scholastic positions dominated by the doctrinal principles of Scotist theology. But the work should not be prematurely dismissed for its eclecticism.⁷⁶ First of all, even though his commentary at points resembles a mere sequence of quotations, it is evident that, for each question, William had to survey the majority of his sources in order to be able to make his choices. His knowledge of the preceding scholastic tradition is impressive; there is no doubt that the design of such a compendium was anything but the product of intellectual phlegm. If it is true, in addition, that William conceived of his commentary with a predominantly didactical purpose, he is to be blamed for a lack of speculative outpourings as much as any modern author of a philosophical or theological compendium. William wanted to present a schoolbook; thus, if we miss in his commentary any original thoughts, then this corresponds exactly to William's own intention.

Finally, of particular historical value is the fact that William goes beyond citing the standard scholastic sources. For his clarifications of terms, in particular, William also refers to Cicero, Seneca, Lucian, Cato, Ovid, or Juvenal.⁷⁷ If the overall structure of his commentary already gives us cause to suppose that he had a sense for renaissance aesthetics, these references confirm that he was

75 For an almost comprehensive list of authors cited, see Brady, "A Fifteenth-Century Scotist," 296. In his concluding sermon, William especially mentions (besides Thomas, Bonaventure, and Scotus) the *sequentes tres alij quorum suffragijs multum saepe indigni*—that is, Francis of Meyronnes, Henry of Ghent, and Giles of Rome (*Super quattuor libros Sententiarum*, epilogue, fol. 46or).

76 For an evaluation of late medieval eclecticism, see Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen, "Marsilius von Inghen in der Geistesgeschichte des ausgehenden Mittelalters," in *Philosophie und Theologie des ausgehenden Mittelalters. Marsilius von Inghen und das Denken seiner Zeit*, ed. Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen and Paul J.J.M. Bakker (Leiden, 2000), 21–45, at 45.

77 See, for example, *Super quattuor libros Sententiarum* IV, dist. 49, art. 1, fol. 452r, where, in order to explain the term *dos*, William refers to Cato's *Disticha* 111.12 and Ovid's *Remedia amoris* 325. For other examples, see the *Declaratio seu retractatio* (ed. Brady), *passim*.

not ignorant of early French humanism. To a certain extent, his commentary is evidence of a felicitous conjunction of scholastic and humanist approaches, which is particularly evident in William's *principia*: while his *quaestiones* follow the standard grammatical structure of contemporary scholastic Latin, the *principia* not only abound with references to classical authors, but are written in a clearly humanist style, presenting thus an amalgam of scholastic content and humanist Latin.⁷⁸

Similar to William's *Vademecum*, the density of information and the clarity of his approach to the Lombard's *Sentences* were jointly responsible for the success of his commentary. Because of this work, William was soon to be called the *doctor brevis*, and the four early modern editions testify to the appreciation his contemporaries had of him. It was used and cited in sermons of the late fifteenth century.⁷⁹ Moreover, Johannes Picardus, a Franciscan author of a *Thesaurus theologorum*, a collection of the main propositions of some thirty scholastic authors of *Sentences* commentaries, regularly referred to William's position even before his mandatory references to Scotus.⁸⁰ In the early sixteenth century, the use of Vaurillon's commentary as a real schoolbook is attested to by the fact that Johannes Findling, also known as Apobolymaeus,

78 Beyond the aforementioned classical authors, William also refers in the *principia* to Homer and Valerius Maximus and mentions, among others, Euripides, Sophocles, Aristippus, and Xenocrates. On the influence of humanist Latin on William, see already Pelster, "Wilhelm von Vorillon," 66; an impressive example is William's appraisal of Scotus: "Nunc nunc ad te amor meus o doctorum subtilior Ioannes dictus de dunis se convertit lingua mea. Non autumo haud suspicor quenquam in terris viventem tuas laudes dignis celebrare sermonibus, quem mater universitatum parrhysius suo in flore et precio tot inter doctorum turmas subtilis nomine insignivit, cuius postmodum coloniae clerus adventum sentiens, universus tibi obviasse refertur. . . . Mirum unum comperio quod tot subtilia scribens in errore non es comprehensus aut aliquo. Hic est o patres aptissimi huius honor studij, mentes suspensas faciens prae stupore, cuius dicta communem transcendunt facultatem, inquisitor maximus veritatis, redargutor falsitatis, veri archa, legum summa, rerum comparata sanctio, in philosophicis strenuus, in magicis praecipuus, in theologis arduus, in cognitione circumconspicuus" (*Super quattuor libros Sententiarum*, epilogue, fol. 46or). See as well the *collatio recommendativa* of the *principium* to Book II, fol. 122r: "ad te venio, ad te vertitur meus sermonis curriculum, nunc noster o amor praecordialissime, qui tanta in universitate tantum scientia plenus eras, ut doctoris subtilis nomen retineres, cuius error nullus tuam doctrinam, tuum opus maculavit, devotione consopitus praecipua."

79 See Brady, "The 'Declaratio seu Retractatio,'" 394 n. 3.

80 See Johannes Picardus, *Thesaurus theologorum quatuor libris Sententiarum correspondens, doctorum et magistrorum in sacra pagina professorum decisiones complectens resolute et in pluribus probative* (Milan, 1506). On Picardus, see Wegerich, "Bio-bibliographische Notizen," 178–80, and Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 220–3.

relied on Vaurouillon's compendium; at the Franciscan *studium* of Ingolstadt he presented a lecture on Book IV of the *Sentences* entitled, "Collecta circa quartum sententiarum iuxta lecturam doctoris brevis Guilhelmi Vorillon."⁸¹

3 Nicholas of Orbellis

Although he was held in high esteem by his contemporaries and early successors, Nicholas of Orbellis is even less known to modern research than William of Vaurouillon.⁸² Born around 1400 in the neighborhood of Angers, Nicholas joined the Conventuals of the province of Tours at an early age and was sent to Paris, where he obtained his doctorate in about 1435.⁸³ He then left Paris and may have taught for a time, as Vaurouillon and many other Frenchman did, at the University of Poitiers, where (in the tumultuous events of the Hundred Years War) Charles VII tried to establish the new French capital; without any doubt he was teaching as well at the convent of Angers.⁸⁴ Unlike William of Vaurouillon, it was only during this later part of his career that Nicholas composed the theological and philosophical works that we know, even though their content might well go back to notes he took during his own studies at Paris. Nicholas wrote commentaries in the main fields of scholastic philosophical and theological teaching of his time: he is the author of an *Expositio*

81 This is the title Findling offers at the beginning of his proper commentary on fol. 14r of the autograph, ms. Munich, *Universitätsbibliothek*, 8° Cod. ms. 28. On Findling († 1538), see Michael Bihl, *Der Katalog des P. Johannes Findling vom Jahre 1533, dessen Schriften und Leben, sowie der Katalog des P. Johannes Nasus vom Jahre 1564. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Ingolstädter Franziskaner-Bibliothek* (Ingolstadt, 1921).

82 The only modern scholar to have shown any substantial interest in Nicholas of Orbellis is Pierre M. Duhem, *Le système du monde. Histoire des doctrines cosmologiques de Platon a Copernic*, vol. 10: *La cosmologie du xv^e siècle. Écoles et universités au xv^e siècle* (Paris, 1959), 46–58 and *passim*; see also his *Études sur Léonard da Vinci III. Les précurseurs parisiens de Galilée* (Paris, 1913), 99. For a short, but almost exhaustive bibliography, see Stephan Meier-Oeser, art. "Nicolas d'Orbelles," in *Biographisch-bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, vol. 6 (Nordhausen, 1993), 683–4; to be completed with Barnabas Hughes, "Franciscans and Mathematics," *AFH* 77 (1984): 3–66.

83 The fullest biographical account on Nicholas of Orbelles is provided by Amédée Teetaert, art. "Nicolas d'Orbelles," in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, vol. 11 (Paris, 1931), 625–8; a few points being corrected by Émile Pasquier, "Deux auteurs angevins du xv^e siècle," *Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts d'Angers* 7 (1953): 85–98. See also Wegerich, "Bio-bibliographische Notizen," 174–8.

84 Up to the eighteenth century, the convent remembered its famous teacher in a portrait painted on its outer walls; see Pasquier, "Deux auteurs angevins," 90.

logice on Peter of Spain; he produced a *Compendium mathematice, physice et metaphysice* and a *Compendium ethice* mainly based on Aristotle,⁸⁵ and he composed a detailed commentary on the Lombard's *Sentences*. For reasons unknown, Nicholas joined the Observants at the end of his career; he died in Rome between 1472 and 1475.⁸⁶

A closer look at the different works by Nicholas reveals that they are all part of one single, steadily evolving project. It is thus worth looking in more detail at Nicholas's oeuvre prior to focusing on his *Sentences* commentary. The internal coherence of his works is illustrated by their prologues, which are never longer than ten or fifteen lines: the beginning paragraphs of the *Expositio logice*, an epitome of Scotist logic designed "for the young," explicitly refers to and builds upon a "compendium" that Nicholas says he "compiled on Scotus's philosophy."⁸⁷ This is undoubtedly a reference to one of his commentaries on Aristotle, since the *Compendium mathematicae, physice et metaphysice* as well as the *Compendium ethice* claim in their prologues to be *secundum mentem doctoris subtilis*.⁸⁸ But, while the former does not mention in its introductory

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- 85 As was usual for such compendia of the fifteenth century, the *Compendium mathematicae, physice et metaphysice* also contains, in the section on natural philosophy, a commentary on the *Parva naturalia* and the *De anima*. The authenticity of an independent commentary on the *De anima* (purported editions Basel 1503 and 1542) is doubtful (see below, note 95, for other doubtful and spurious works). On Nicholas's philosophical commentaries, see Charles H. Lohr, "Medieval Latin Aristotle Commentaries. Authors N–R," *Traditio* 28 (1972): 281–396, at 288–90, and Olga Weijers, *Le travail intellectuel à la faculté des arts de Paris. Textes et maîtres (ca. 1200–1500)*, vol. 6: *L–O* (Turnhout, 2005), 166–8, which update the partially outdated information provided by Wegerich, "Bio-bibliographische Notizen," 177–8.
- 86 The general chapter of 1475 held at Saint-Omer mentions Nicholas among the recently defunct members of the order; see Clément Schmitt, art. "Nicolas d'Orbelles," *Catholicisme*, vol. 9 (Paris, 1982), 1258–9, at 1258.
- 87 Nicholas of Orbelles, *Expositio logice*, prologue (Venice, 1500), fol. a2ra: "Utile est volentibus studere doctrinam doctoris subtilis Scoti... in eius principijs a iuventute introduci... Igitur iuxta ipsius mentem aliqua logicalia pro iuuenibus super summulas Petri Hispani Christo duce breviter enodabo. Et quia multe materie que tractantur in logica peramplius reperiuntur in philosophia, remitto aliunde ad quoddam compendium quod super philosophiam eiusdem doctoris dictis compilavi, sepeque noto ea que hic dicuntur in quibus locis ab eodem doctore habentur, ut ea ibidem diffusius valeas intueri."
- 88 *Compendium mathematice, physice et metaphysice*, prol. (Basel, 1503), fol. Ira (corrected against ms. Munich, *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek*, Clm 28671, fol. 70ra): "Sicut dicit philosophus sexto metaphysice: 'Theorica sive speculativa dividitur in mathematicam, phisicam et metaphisicam,' de his tribus inquantum arbitror fore necessarium ut in pluribus pro doctoribus theologis <intelligendum> [om ed. Basel], in presenti compendio duce

paragraphs any further writings by Nicholas, the *Compendium ethice* is said to complement his “two [already] treated parts of speculative philosophy, that is, the rational and the real.”⁸⁹ Finally, the first lines of the *Sentences* commentary state that “after a short compilation of logics, physics, and ethics according to the Subtle Doctor’s opinion as an introduction for the young,” Nicholas was now about “to treat briefly and brightly” Scotus’s thoughts on the Lombard.⁹⁰ It is thus possible to provide a relative chronology of these works which all refer to each other:⁹¹ the first seems to have been the *Compendium mathematice, physice et metaphysice*, which was designed as the comprehensive manual of a Scotist *philosophia speculativa realis*.⁹² It was completed later on by a *philosophia speculativa rationalis*, the *Expositio logice*.⁹³ Only then, this bipartite spec-

alitissimo tractabo, sequendo doctoris subtilissimi magistri Iohannis de Donis qui fuit natione Scotius dictis.”

- 89 *Compendium ethice*, prol. (Basel, 1503), fol. p5va: “Pertractis compendiose secundum mentem doctoris subtilis Scoti duabus partibus scientie speculative scilicet rationali et reali, divina gratia opilante de scientia practica libet breviter aliquid fari.”
- 90 *Compendium super Sententias* (Haguenau, 1503), fol. a2ra: “Post brevem compilationem logice, physice et ethice secundum opinionem doctoris subtilis ad iuvenum introductionem intentionis presentis est ipsius mentem super librum sententiarum Christo duce compendiose lucideque tractare.”
- 91 An absolute chronology is difficult to establish, however. There is a *terminus post quem* only for the *Sentences* commentary (see below, note 107); and the explicit of the commentary on metaphysics (in the *Compendium mathematice, physice et metaphysice*) in the edition of Bologna 1485 claims that it has been “compiled” by Nicholas *tempore quo erat regens in conventu Parisiensi* (fol. M5vb). There is, however, no external evidence for this information provided by its editor.
- 92 Even though Nicholas usually speaks of mathematics, physics, and metaphysics as the three parts of the *philosophia speculativa* (without the further adjective *realis*), it is evident from his commentary to *Metaphysics* VI, where this division stems from, that his first *Compendium* is limited to the *scientiae reales*; see *Compendium mathematice . . . on Met.* VI, fol. o4va: “loquitur ibi de scientia speculativa reali scilicet quod considerat intentiones primas abstractas a singularibus rebus et dictas de illis in quid. Per hoc excluditur logica que est de secundis intentionibus que de nulla re prime intentionis predicatur in quid.” See, as well, Nicholas’s *Expositio logice*, vol. 1 (Venice, 1500), fol. a4vb–a5ra, where he explicitly presents the division of *Metaphysics* VI as concerning the *scientia speculativa realis*.
- 93 For Nicholas, as a follower of Scotus, there is no doubt that logic is a rational (and not a practical) science: “patet quod logica non est scientia practica cum non sit directiva praxis. Est igitur speculativa, quia ordinatur ad scire” (*Expositio logice*, vol. 1, fol. a5rb). On the late medieval problem of placing logic among the sciences, see Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen, “*Ars artium* und *scientia scientiarum*. Logik an den mittelalterlichen Universitäten von Paris

ulative philosophy found its practical counterpart, the *Compendium ethice*, all three together eventually complemented by Nicholas's *Sentences* commentary.

This division and organization of the sciences is, of course, nothing special for a medieval author; there are plenty of other scholars who commented extensively upon the different parts of Aristotle's work as well as on the Lombard's *Sentences*.⁹⁴ The peculiarity of Nicholas's oeuvre lies in the fact that he systematically works through the different fields of scholastic science and that his writings seem to be intended to form a whole. This internal coherence is also apparent from the similar composition and style of his works, guided as they are by brevity and clarity: each of the four commentaries mentioned above⁹⁵ is conceived of as a compendium; the respective topics are unpretentiously presented following closely the texts on which they are based, and the individual comments limit themselves to explaining a particular topic without debating it. What is more, the four works are designed for the same audience: the phrase *pro iuuenibus* in the opening paragraph of the *Expositio logice* is repeated at the beginning of the *Sentences* commentary,⁹⁶ and the *Compendium mathematice, physice et metaphysice* specifies who these young people are: Nicholas intends to treat the three sciences mentioned in the title of this first compendium only inasmuch as he considers them to be useful for future *doctoribus theologis*.⁹⁷ A few lines later on he defends his dealing with such voluminous philosophical sciences in one compendium by stating that he limits himself to topics that, on the one hand, are of a certain necessity for theology, but that, on the other, would not normally be treated in

und im Alten Reich," in *Artisten und Philosophen. Wissenschafts- und Wirkungsgeschichte einer Fakultät vom 13. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Rainer C. Schwinges (Basel, 1999), 63–82.

94 Other late medieval examples are Henry of Oyta, Marsilius of Inghen, Pierre d'Ailly, Peter Tartaret, and John Mair (on whom see the contribution by Severin Kitanov, John Slotemaker, and Jeffrey Witt in the present volume).

95 Nicholas is said to have composed as well a *Tractatus de successione* and a *Liber de casibus conscientie* (see Wegerich, "Bio-bibliographische Notizen," 178), but there do not seem to be any extant copies. The treatise *De terminis theologis* (or *Declarationes quorundam terminorum theologicalium*, or *De divinis nominibus*) that usually follows the editions of his *Sentences* commentary is by Francis of Meyronnes; see Clément Schmitt, "Manuscripts de la Bibliothèque municipale de Metz," *AFH* 67 (1974): 471–555, at 543–5; the *Sermones in omnes epistolas quadragesimae* are by his probable nephew Peter of Orbellis; see Pasquier, "Deux auteurs angevins," 94–5.

96 See above, notes 87 and 90.

97 See above, note 88.

theological works and especially not within a *Sentences* commentary.⁹⁸ Hence, the focus of Nicholas's philosophical compendia—and, therefore, the focus of his entire project—is a theological one: culminating in the *Sentences* commentary, the philosophical compendia do not exhibit an interest in philosophy as such, but are designed for the preparation of future theologians. The *iuvenes* mentioned in the prologues are, above all, young friars.⁹⁹ In this sense, Nicholas's works are not purely “academic” writings, but probably stem from his teaching at the convent of Angers.

The most distinctive peculiarity of Nicholas's works, and at the same time the guiding theme that further substantiates their internal coherence, is their focus on Scotus. The Subtle Doctor's doctrine figures as the prominent guideline in the very first lines of each compendium cited above, and unsurprisingly this concentration on Scotus reappears in the explicits and titles early modern editors chose for Nicholas's works.¹⁰⁰ Once more, the prologue to the first of these compendia, the *Compendium mathematice, physice et metaphysice*, is the most telling one. Having declared that he plans to follow the teachings of the Subtle Doctor, Nicholas first states that he does not intend to assert anything that is not in accord with those teachings; secondly, that he will expose them in a plain and intelligible language; and thirdly, that he is going to specify “the books and distinctions” from which they come lest the reader

98 See *Compendium mathematice, physice et metaphysice*, prolog. fol. 1ra: “Nec mirum videatur alicui si ea que in tot et tantis libris philosophie diffuse habentur hic compendiose tractantur. Hoc enim peragere satis est facile, quod patet triplice ratione. Primo, quia multe materie que tractantur in philosophia non sunt magne necessitatis pro theologia. Secundo, quia quamplures materie philosophie eque bene, immo melius tractantur in theologia quam in philosophia ut patet intuenti doctorum opera super libros sententiarum. Ideo circa tales materias non est diutius immorandum. Tertio hoc idem patet, quia eadem materia tractatur in pluribus libris philosophie ut patet intuentibus philosophi textum cum commentis et questionibus super illum editis.”

99 With Pasquier, “Deux auteurs angevins,” 87. Duhem, *Système du monde*, vol. 10, 47, reads the *iuvenes* in a more general sense to be any “commençants adonnés encore aux études du *Trivium*.”

100 For example, the printed edition of the *Sentences* commentary from Hagenau 1503 has the title: *Eximii doctoris magistri Nicolai de Orbellis super Sententias Compendium perutile, elegantiora doctoris subtilis dicta summatim complectens*, and its explicit reads: “Compendium perutile quattuor librorum sententiarum Magistri Nicolai dorbelli sacre theologie professoris Ordinis Minorum fratrum de observantia secundum doctrinam doctoris subtilis.” Also see the Basel 1503 edition of the three philosophical compendia (with the phrase *secundum doctrinam doctoris subtilis Scoti* in the title and *secundum viam scoti* in the explicit).

take them as Nicholas's own thoughts.¹⁰¹ As was the case with Vaurouillon, Nicholas displays of a historico-critical attitude, but here this attitude is combined with an exclusive focus: Nicholas is interested in Scotus, and in Scotus alone. It is the prologue to the *Expositio logice*—the compendium that precedes the others from a curricular perspective—which explains why Nicholas thinks this focus is worth the trouble: according to him, Scotus's doctrine “excels among the others in force and truth.”¹⁰² That, however, is not the main reason he indicates for having written his introductory compendia: the utility of introducing young people to Scotus's thought lies in the fact that “once they have acquired [Scotus], they can easily acquire the others, but not the other way around.”¹⁰³ In order to be able to understand Scotus properly, one has to grow up with him, and Nicholas conceives of his different compendia as one big project devised to facilitate this growth. It is no wonder that Nicholas's successors appreciated this holistic approach, combining at least his philosophical commentaries into one large Scotist compendium.¹⁰⁴

It was worth dwelling on these points since the four compendia are part of a single project, such that the features of Nicholas's philosophical commentaries apply as well to his commentary on the *Sentences*. Now, even though this commentary is usually described as a compendium,¹⁰⁵ it is a full commentary treating every distinction of all four books and presenting, for most of them, more than one question. It is thus a question-based commentary; there is no evidence that Nicholas might also have provided *divisiones textus* or literal expositions that have been lost in the process of textual transmission.

101 *Compendium mathematice, physice et metaphysice*, prolog., fol. 11ra: “Nihil dissonum hic determinate asserere intendo. Tractanda autem in hoc compendio sub verbis planis ut satis intelligibilius referabo. Et ne a meipso loqui videar, signabo ut sepius in quibus libris seu librorum distinctionibus doctor prefatus tractat materias in hoc compendio positas.”

102 *Expositio logice*, prolog., fol. 42ra: “Utile est volentibus studere doctrinam doctoris subtilis Scoti que inter ceteras maxime extat roboris et veritatis in eius principijs a iuventute introduci.”

103 Ibid.: “Ipsa enim habita, alie de facili haberi possunt, sed non econtra.”

104 This is already the case in some manuscripts (for example, MSS. Colmar, *Fonds du consistoire*, 27, Munich, *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek*, Clm 28671, and Vatican City, *Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana*, Ottob. lat. 1442), but see as well the printed editions of Basel 1494 and 1503. For detailed information on editions and manuscripts of Nicholas's philosophical compendia see, Weijers, *Travail intellectuel*, vol. 6, 167–8.

105 This is the case already in the first known printed edition (Rouen, 1494), in which the commentary is entitled, *Eximii doctoris magistri Nicholai de orbellis super sentencias compendium perutile*. On other editions of Nicholas's *Sentences* commentary see below, note 114; there are two known manuscripts, on which see Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 591.

Unsurprisingly, Nicholas's interest is not so much in Lombard as in Scotus, and his consideration of the whole Lombardian text is most probably due only to the fact that Scotus's different commentaries on the *Sentences* also take most of the Lombard's distinctions into account. Thus, while Nicholas does not literally repeat Scotus's questions—as we will see, he is not just providing an abbreviation of Scotus—the number of questions he poses matches those of the Subtle Doctor in most cases.¹⁰⁶ The fact that Nicholas's *Sentences* commentary is called a “compendium” thus reflects his approach to Scotus rather than to Peter Lombard.

Parts of this *Sentences* compendium date from after 1465. In his commentary to distinction 45 of Book IV, Nicholas refers to a *privilegium Pauli pape moderni* who is said to “have confirmed in the year 1465” earlier privileges for the Franciscans.¹⁰⁷ Since this “modern” (meaning “contemporary”) Pope Paul II reigned until 1471, we have at least a rough point of reference to date not only the *Sentences* commentary, but to anchor the relative chronology concerning Nicholas's other works as well. In regard to these philosophical compendia, the *Sentences* commentary plays the already described role of the culminating point of the whole project. Therefore, it has some distinctive features in which it differs from the philosophical commentaries: first of all, the *Sentences* commentary is more extensive. It is about as long as the three other compendia taken together, which is to be expected when one considers the fact that Nicholas intended to limit the philosophical commentaries to theologically relevant topics while postponing the philosophical subjects that he could treat as well in the *Sentences* commentary. In order to handle this amount of material, the *Sentences* commentary also differs from the philosophical compendia in its approach to the base text, since the commentaries are, as already mentioned, organized into questions. These questions do not have a very strict structure. Apart from the usual “head” with the *quaestio* itself and the principal arguments pro and con, most of his questions feature a short *divisio quaestionis* at the beginning of the *responsio*, while they usually end

106 Where the number of questions differs, it is usually Nicholas who poses fewer questions than Scotus. There are, of course, some exceptions: whereas, regarding the problem of the *potestas clavium*, Scotus treats distinction 18 of Book IV in his *Ordinatio* as well as in the *Reportata parisiensa* (which even merge distinctions 18 and 19) in a single question, Nicholas asks no fewer than nine different questions.

107 *Compendium super Sententias*, fol. G1rb–va: “Manet in vigore suo per privilegium Pauli pape moderni qui ex certa scientia Anno domini millesimo quadringentesimo sexagesimo quinto confirmavit omnia privilegia per quoscunque rhomanos pontifices ipsius fratribus sub quacunque forma verborum concessa.” See Teetaert, “Nicolas d’Orbelles,” 626, and Pasquier, “Deux auteurs angevins,” 90.

with a refutation of the principal arguments. But that is as much as one can say about their general structure: Nicholas's *quaestiones* differ greatly in length as well; moreover, some are divided into articles, others are not, and there is no kind of *conclusio* or *propositio* reappearing in each question to summarize Nicholas's main thesis on the current topic.

Thirdly and most importantly, Nicholas's *Sentences* commentary differs from his philosophical compendia in the sources and opinions to which it refers. Of course, Nicholas is still preoccupied with Scotus as he prominently declares in the first lines of his commentary—but in the prologue he also notes that he is going to “insert the moral topics that are more extensively treated by other doctors.”¹⁰⁸ Apparently, Nicholas aims to present in his *Sentences* commentary a broader view of the scholastic tradition, which accords well with what he said at the beginning of the *Expositio logice*: the *iuvenes* having been formed within a Scotist philosophy, it is now possible to introduce them to the thinking of other scholars without running the risk of obfuscating their understanding of Scotus.¹⁰⁹ Throughout the commentary, Nicholas thus refers—besides, of course, his omnipresent citations of Scotus—to Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, and Richard of Middletown; an important role is assigned to John of Roddington, Henry of Ghent, and Giles of Rome; and to a lesser extent he also refers to William of Auxerre, Alexander of Hales, William of Ware, and Godfrey of Fontaines, or to even more “modern,” predominantly Franciscan scholars such as Peter Auriol, Nicholas of Lyra, Francis of Meyronnes, and Peter of Candia.¹¹⁰ In the fourth book, with its more practical problems of sacramental theology, he also relies on a certain number of commentators of canon law, including Henry of Segusio (Hostiensis), Bernardus Papiensis, and Raymond of Peñafort.¹¹¹ It is however difficult to say to what extent Nicholas really knew those other scholars. While he most probably read Thomas's *Summa theologiae* and the *Sentences* commentaries of Richard of Middletown and John of

108 *Compendium super sententias*, fol. azra: “morales materias ab alijs doctoribus diffusius tractatas inserendo.” For the context of this citation, see above, note 90.

109 See above, note 103.

110 See, for example, the discussion of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, *Compendium super Sententias* III, dist. 3, q. un., fol. m7ra: “Scotus vero dicit quod deus potuit facere quod nunquam esset in peccato originali. . . Hoc etiam tenent Petrus de Candia, Petrus Aureoli et Franciscus de Maronis et plures moderni doctores. Fuitque pluribus miraculis celitus revelatum ac in consilio Basilensi roboratum.”

111 For example, they all appear together with a fourth canonist, Geoffrey of Trani, in a question on homicide as an obstacle to ordination: *Compendium super Sententias* IV, dist. 25, qu. 8, fol. C8vb.

Roddington, he almost certainly derived some of his other references from intermediary sources.¹¹²

In spite of his recourse to other sources, there is no doubt about Nicholas's preference for Scotus. As far as it was possible to verify for this survey, Nicholas abides by his principle of not asserting anything that departs from Scotus, and where he refers to other scholars, he conceives of such references as a complement or, at best, as an alternative to the Subtle Doctor's teachings. However—and this is a fundamental feature of Nicholas's commentary—these other authors do not appear as a challenge to Scotus. If Nicholas ever cites an opposing opinion, Scotus bears the palm of course;¹¹³ but generally speaking, Nicholas is not interested in polemics at all: his goal is not to defend Scotus against his opponents, but to provide a positive account of the Subtle Doctor's doctrine. Consequently, he silently passes over many debates to which Scotus was responding, or which were caused by his teachings. Even if Nicholas composed his compendium for advanced students he believed to be capable of handling a variety of opinions, he nevertheless remained within the parameters of a schoolbook that was not intended to present and discuss different scholastic positions, but to disseminate Scotism.

In a way, Trapp's description of a scholar who contents himself with the study of one author instead of ten or twenty applies to Nicholas of Orbellis, even though he obviously knew more authors than Scotus alone: it was his students who had to make do with Scotus alone. But again it is obvious that this limitation was not the result of intellectual phlegm, but represented the consistent application of a pedagogical program. And this program seems to have been very successful: Nicholas's *Sentences* commentary was printed at least fourteen times between 1494 and 1537, in France as well as in Germany and northern Italy.¹¹⁴ Likewise, his philosophical compendia saw at least three

112 Rather obviously, one of these sources is no other than William of Vaurouillon and his *Vademecum*: in the fifth question of Nicholas's prologue, where he treats—as Scotus had done—the problem of knowing whether theology is a practical or a speculative science, he cites exactly the same sources that William's *Vademecum* had noted as the opinions Scotus refers to; see *Compendium super Sententias*, prol., qu. 5, fol. a7ra–va, and *Vademecum*, prol., qu. 4, fol. azv–a3r.

113 As this is the case in the prologue's question about the speculative character of theology, see preceding note.

114 Since there are some inconsistencies among the indications provided by Wegerich, "Bibliographische Notizen," 177, here is a list of the editions whose existence can still be verified today (based on Andrew Pettegree, Malcolm Walsby, and Alexander Wilkinson, *French Vernacular Books: Books Published in the French Language before 1601* [Leiden, 2007]): Rouen 1494, 1495, 1500; Paris 1498, 1506, 1511, 1515, 1517, 1520, 1521, 1537; Haguenuau 1503; Lyons 1503; Venice 1507—this last edition combines Nicholas's commentary with

editions each between 1482 and 1516.¹¹⁵ Johann Eck presented Nicholas in his *Chrysopassus praedestinationis*, a collection of opinions on the problems of predestination, as one “who, with comprehensive success, wrote laconically and succinctly, but who, by his fruit and juice, excelled the height of giants.”¹¹⁶ John Trithemius, in his *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, praised Nicholas’s erudition and clarity.¹¹⁷ His philosophical compendia soon became a mandatory part of the philosophical curriculum of the University of Angers, while his theological positions were regarded as outstanding enough to be inserted into the already mentioned *Thesaurus theologorum* by Johannes Picardus.¹¹⁸

4 Stephen Brulefer

Things are slightly different with the third Franciscan author covered by this survey: Stephen Brulefer. At the end of the fifteenth century, he was as renowned a Scotist as his two predecessors, but the commentary on the *Sentences* we have from his hand is not primarily focused on Scotus, but on Bonaventure. Moreover, even though the commentary stems from a particular educational situation, Brulefer did not intend to compose a well-balanced compendium, but was interested in a real defense, and thus in a polemical justification, of the positions he held. What is more, Brulefer has gained some attention in recent research, although not among medievalists, but among historians of the Swiss reformation: in the same way in which marginal notes from

an edition of the Lombard’s *Sentences* and bears the telling title: *Petri Lombardi quattuor Sententiarum volumina cum doctissimis Nicolai de Orbellis theologi acutissimi interpretationibus in quibus Scoti dicta que obscuriora vulgo videbantur faciliter enarrantur: Ex quorum cognitione brevi omnes in Scoti dogmatibus sunt peritissimi evasuri.*

- 115 The *philosophia realis* was published three times (Bologna 1485; Basel 1494, 1503), and the *Compendium logice* at least six times (Parma 1482; Venice 1489, 1500, 1516; Basel 1494, 1503).
- 116 Johann Eck, *Chrysopassus praedestinationis* (Augsburg, 1514), fol. Q2v: “Audiamus nunc quid nobis dicat Nicolaus de Orbellis, qui ubique profecto succincte et laconice scripsit; sed fructu suo et succo etiam proceritatem gigantum superat; accedit enim fertilitati suae quod optime et magistraliter tradit, ac rem quasi ante oculos ponit.”
- 117 See John Trithemius, *Catalogum scriptorum ecclesiasticorum* (Cologne, 1531), fols. 146r–v: “Nicolaus Dorbellus, ordinis fratrum minorum S. Francisci provinciae Thuronensis, vir in divinis scripturis eruditissimus, et in philosophia scholastica nulli secundus, ingenio clarus, et ad disputandas enodandasque quaestiones scripturarum satis idoneus. . . . Fuit autem dictorum Iohannis Scoti profundus interpretes et acerrimus defensor.” For Nicholas’s reception among the Spanish Franciscans, see Pasquier, “Deux auteurs angevins,” 88.
- 118 For Picardus, see above, note 80; for Angers, see Wegerich, “Bio-bibliographische Notizen,” 176.

Luther's hand have survived in a copy of the *Sentences* commentary by Gabriel Biel, Brulefer's commentary was read and glossed by Huldrych Zwingli.¹¹⁹

We do not have much information regarding Brulefer's biography. He was born in Saint-Malo (Brittany) as Étienne Pillet, and since we know that he received his license and doctorate in Paris in 1482, we can assume that he was born between 1450 and 1455.¹²⁰ There is thus no reason to claim that he was among the students of William of Vaurouillon (who died in 1463), as has often been done, although it is obvious that he was, in many points, William's intellectual heir.¹²¹ Soon after his doctorate, Brulefer joined the Observants and went to Mainz (Germany),¹²² where he started to give lectures based on Bonaventure's *Sentences* commentary. In about 1490, he moved to Metz, where he continued these lectures; in the meantime, he committed himself to the propagation of the Observant reform. It was in order to accomplish this task that he was sent, in about 1495, to his native Brittany, where he died between 1496 and 1499.¹²³

During his career, Stephen Brulefer produced several works that have survived. A collection of *opuscula* printed in Paris in 1500 contains sermons and short theological tracts that Brulefer probably composed in the 1480s during his sojourn in Germany.¹²⁴ Most of them are occasional writings, such as the

119 See Martin Sallmann, *Zwischen Gott und Mensch. Huldrych Zwinglis theologischer Denkweg im de Vera et Falsa Religione Commentarius (1525)* (Tübingen, 1999), 183–97; Zwingli's marginal glosses have been studied and edited by Daniel Bolliger, *Infiniti Contemplatio. Grundzüge der Scotus- und Scotismuszereption im Werk Huldrych Zwinglis* (Leiden, 2003).

120 For the most complete biographical account, see Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 172–85; the important dates have been confirmed by Sullivan, *Parisian Licentiates in Theology*, vol. 1, 101–03.

121 Unaware of Murphy, Tanja Thanner, art. "Brulefer, Stephanus," *Biographisch-bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, vol. 33 (Nordhausen, 2012), 188–91, still assumes that Brulefer was taught by Vorillon. Also see Wegerich, "Bio-bibliographische Notizen," 158, and Sullivan, *Parisian Licentiates in Theology*, vol. 1, 101.

122 In search for predecessors of the Reformation, Matthias Flacius Illyricus purported that Brulefer had to escape from Paris due to his unorthodox teachings on justification; see his *Catalogus testium veritatis* (Basel, 1556), 984. There is, however, no evidence of a flight or any heterodox opinions in Brulefer's writings; see at length Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 181–5, and already Nikolaus Paulus, "Paul Scriptoris. Ein angeblicher Reformator vor der Reformation," *Theologische Quartalsschrift* 75 (1893): 289–311, at 291–9.

123 Most probably in 1496 or 1497; see Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 178, and Wegerich, "Bio-bibliographische Notizen," 161. It is the general chapter of 1499 at Mechelen that remembered his death.

124 Contrary to Wegerich, "Bio-bibliographische Notizen," 161, there is no evidence of a 1499 Parisian edition of these *opuscula*; see Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 194–5. The most complete transcription of the eight titles contained in these *opuscula* is provided by

ten propositions *An personae in divinis sint, ut usus habet, depingendae*, or the *Quaestio de symonia . . . in sinodo quadam Maguntinensi edita*,¹²⁵ some exhibit typically Franciscan concerns, as is obvious in the *Sermo de conceptione purissima . . . dei genitricis Marie*. More importantly, there are two logical works by Brulefer's hand, the *Formalitates in doctrinam Scoti* and the *Identitatum et distinctionum contractio*, both centered on a specific understanding of the formal distinction which Brulefer pertinaciously defends, witnessing his deep solidarity with late medieval Scotism.¹²⁶ It is above all the *Formalitates* that corroborated Brulefer's reputation as a Scotist throughout the sixteenth century (at least eighteen editions appeared between 1480 and 1591), but unlike Nicholas of Orbellis, Brulefer endeavored not simply to present Scotus's logical approach, but to prove its truth in explicit distinction from other approaches. He did not refrain from ardent polemics that combined logical, theological, and legal aspects of a problem: in the *Contractio*, for example, he even accused his opponents of being possible heretics,¹²⁷ an accusation he also made to substantiate his arguments in the theological *opuscula*.¹²⁸

A. van den Wyngaert, art. "Brulefer (Étienne)," in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, vol. 10 (Paris, 1938), 916–17.

- 125 The synod of Mainz mentioned in this title took place in 1487; see Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 175. In other writings included among the *opuscula*, Bonaventure is called a saint (he was canonized in 1482); see, for example, ed. Paris 1500, fol. 28r: "doctor seraphicus et devotus sanctissimus scilicet Bonaventura qui antonomatice merito dicitur doctor noster et omnium fratrum minorum."
- 126 The *Formalitates in doctrinam Scoti* were printed in Paris as early as 1480 (further editions: Paris 1485, 1490, 1516, 1517, 1541, 1560, 1582, 1586; Toulouse 1490; Poitiers 1493; Milan 1496; Basel 1501, 1507; Venice 1504, 1526, 1588, 1591). They originate in Brulefer's teaching as a logician in Paris. The *Identitatum et distinctionum traditarum compendiosa contractio* was, however, printed only in 1501 in Basel (together with the *Formalitates*; re-editions: Basel 1507; Venice 1504, 1588; and Paris 1560, 1582, 1586); hence it is difficult to say when exactly Brulefer composed the *Contractio*. It is possible that the two writings were conceived to form a whole, as van den Wyngaert, "Brulefer (Étienne)," 916, suggests.
- 127 See *Contractio* (Basel, 1501), fol. 16vb: "omnia correlaria istius opinionis sunt simpliciter falsa . . . et sunt multum periculosa et ex eis possunt inferri multa heretica." In the *Formalitates*, Brulefer substantiates his argument with excerpts from canon law, without however explicitly concluding that those who do not share his opinion are heretics; see, for example, *Formalitates in doctrinam Scoti* (Basel, 1501), fol. 5ra. For these legal aspects of the *Wegestreit*, see Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen, "Jean Wyclif et les *universalia realia*. Le débat sur la notion de *virtus sermonis* au moyen âge tardif et les rapports entre la théologie et la philosophie," in *La servante et la consolatrice. La philosophie dans ses rapports avec la théologie au moyen âge*, ed. Jean-Luc Solère and Zénon Kaluza (Paris, 2002), 173–92.
- 128 See, for example, *Opuscula*, fol. 37r or fol. 51r; cf. Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 186.

The same polemical trait marked Brulefer's most important work, his commentary on the Lombard's *Sentences*. In its present state, which is the one that found its way into the early modern printed editions,¹²⁹ this commentary does not stem from the magisterial lectures Brulefer delivered at Paris around 1480, but from his teachings at Mainz and Metz about ten years later: according to the explicits of the single books of his commentary, Book I was finished in 1490 at Mainz, whereas Books II to IV were composed afterwards at Metz.¹³⁰ There is, however, no reason to assume that, in this surviving version, Brulefer did not rely on material he had collected during his own studies in Paris, although there is a particularity of that later version which most probably reflects the beatification of Bonaventure in 1482: Brulefer's surviving commentary is centered on the *Sentences* commentary of the Seraphic Doctor, whereas he is known to have read, whilst in Paris, according to Scotus.¹³¹

From a formal point of view, this shift to Bonaventure is fundamental: Brulefer does not simply present a commentary that is doctrinally inspired by the *doctor seraphicus*, but he in fact comments upon Bonaventure's

129 To my knowledge, there are no manuscripts of Brulefer's *Sentences* commentary. Among the printed editions listed in Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, no. 823, the existence of only the following three can be confirmed: Basel 1501, 1507; and Venice 1504. The Nuremberg editions mentioned by Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 193, are editions of Bonaventure, not Brulefer—in the explicit, they only claim to be based on a version that had been reviewed by Brulefer: "Primum scriptum beati Bonaventure doctoris seraphici ordinis minorum super sententias, quod veluti et trium subsequentium librorum scripta ab innumeris quibus hactenus statuit erroribus atque defectibus accuratissime limatum fuit sive detersum diligenti atque pervigili cura reverendissimi magistri nostri sacre theologie doctoris parisiensis fratris Stephani Bruliferi dudum eadem scripta Maguntie partim, partimque Methis dilucidantis" (*Disputata in quatuor libros Sententiarum* I [Nuremberg, 1510], fol. s3vb).

130 Only the explicit of Book I provides a date: "Anno domini millesimo quadringentesimononagesimo, in beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum vigilia . . . in Moguntia nobilis alemanie aurea (*Reportata clarissima in quattuor sancti Bonaventure doctoris seraphici Sententiarum libros* [Basel, 1501], fol. [est]7vb). The other three explicits only mention the location: *Metis gallie comportata*.

131 This is at least what the cover letters to his *Opuscula* and to the *Reportata* suggest: "Suis nempe laudatissimis enucleationibus in quattuor sententiarum libros doctoris subtilis necnon diversi generis disputationibus tam disquisite tam cumulate sui ingenii flumen audientibus effudit, ac tali decore Parisiorum gymnasia illustravit" (*Opuscula*, fol. 2r); and "frater Stephanus Brulefer theologus illustris . . . subtilissimi Scoti in sententias scripta luculentissima interpretatione in parisiorum universitate elucidaverit. . . in Moguntinorum gymnasio sancti Bonaventure doctoris seraphici scripta resolvendo dilucide aperuerit (*Reportata*, fol. a2r). See Wegerich, "Bio-bibliographische Notizen," 158.

text itself. His method reveals that he assumes his students and readers have Bonaventure's text at hand: he passes through every question Bonaventure poses, citing only the question itself without the *argumenta principalia* Bonaventure provided. But he nevertheless relies on these *argumenta* in his reasoning and even explicitly refers to their number and order, which he obviously could not do if Bonaventure's text was not available.¹³² Like Bonaventure, Brulefer provides a full commentary respecting the single distinctions with a varying number of *quaestiones*, and there are only slight structural differences: as is customary in early modern editions of the Seraphic Doctor's commentary, Brulefer does not adopt Bonaventure's arrangement of questions into parts and articles, but numbers them consecutively per distinction.¹³³ What is more, Brulefer usually ignores the *dubia circa litteram Magistri* that were placed at the end of each distinction of Bonaventure's commentary and that dealt with problems in the Lombard's text itself: obviously, Brulefer is more interested in Bonaventure than in Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. Hence it appears that, from a formal perspective, Brulefer's commentary was presented in a classroom situation where Bonaventure's text was present and Brulefer gave his interpretation of it, with the result that the commentary of the *doctor seraphicus* replaced the actual base text by Peter Lombard.¹³⁴ Accordingly, the Venice edition of Brulefer's commentary simply presents it as an *interpretatio subtilissima* of Bonaventure.¹³⁵

Regarding the specific classroom situation that is detectable in the commentary's structure, this surviving version of Brulefer's text has to be considered as a kind of a *reportatio*. This is, at least, what the commentary is called in contemporary sources: the two Basel editions present it as *Reportata clarissima in*

132 See, for example, *Reportata* IV, dist. 1, qu. 4, fol. MM4vb–5ra, where Brulefer mentions, “pro ista questione sunt argumenta sex ibi post oppositum, vide in textu.” See as well below, notes 139 and 142.

133 There are exceptions, of course, as for instance in *Reportata* I, dist. 3.

134 This is not completely unusual at the end of the Middle Ages, but Brulefer seems to have been one of the first to do so. Another example is the aforementioned Johannes Findling, who relied on Vaurouillon instead of Peter Lombard (see above, note 81). Far more interesting is Peter Tartaretus, who, in 1506, commented at the Parisian Franciscan studium on Scotus's *Opus oxoniense*. One year later (and only one year later!) the Dominican Peter Crockaert would be the first at the rue Saint-Jacques in Paris to comment on Thomas's *Summa theologiae*.

135 The full title of the Venice 1504 edition is: *Clarissimi sacre pagine doctoris fratris Stephani Brulefer ordinis minorum in quatuor divi seraphicique Bonaventure sententiarum libros interpretatio subtilissima*.

quattuor sancti Bonaventure doctoris seraphici Sententiarum libros,¹³⁶ while the cover letter to the Paris edition of Brulefer's *Opuscula* suggests that the notes on his interpretations of Bonaventure were brought together "under" Brulefer himself: *reportatos sub illo*.¹³⁷ Since this is also what the explicits of the different printed editions suggest,¹³⁸ Brulefer seems to have overseen and probably approved this compilation of student notes of his lectures. Nevertheless, his commentary is not a pure *reportatio approbata* reflecting Brulefer's classes as they were taught: even though there are expressions that seem to stem directly from the classroom,¹³⁹ Brulefer himself is referred to more than once as *magister Stephanus*, who, for example, is said to share a certain opinion with Robert Grosseteste, Alexander of Hales, and Scotus—an expression that Brulefer certainly would not have used himself.¹⁴⁰ In its present state, the commentary should be considered as a compilation of notes taken during Brulefer's lectures that have been slightly reworked by one of his students—or, as the explicits say: they have to be considered as *reportata compertata et conscripta*.

In the case of William of Vaurouillon, the specific classroom situation and his didactic purposes led to an emphasis on clarity; in the case of Nicholas of

136 The full title of the two Basel editions is: *Excellentissimi atque profundissimi humanarum divinarumque litterarum doctoris fratris Stephani Brulefer ordinis minorum charitate igniti reportata clarissima in quattuor sancti Bonaventure doctoris seraphici sententiarum libros Scoti subtilis secundi incipiunt feliciter*.

137 *Opuscula*, fols. 2v–3r: "... ac seraphici doctoris beati Bonaventure super Sententias quattuor librorum pro sui ingenii magnitudine ita acute copioseque exercuit, ut reportatos sub illo codices dudum michi Parisius a quodam suo discipulo exhibitos, pro magno crederem erecenseri."

138 These explicits are very similar in the two Basel and the Venice editions; see particularly the explicit to Book I: "reportata clarissima in sancti Bonaventure doctoris seraphici primum Sententiarum ... in beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum vigilia fini quam felicissime data sunt ad pedes quoque reverendi magistri fratris Stephani Brulefer ... lectoris ac studij directoris dignissimi compertata et conscripta"; and the one to Book III: "expliciuunt nonnulla reportata super tertium sententiarum doctoris seraphici sancti Bonaventure ordinis sacri minorum de observantia sub prefidentia reverendissimi magistri fratris Stephani Brulefer eiusdem ordinis ..."

139 In the prologue to Book I, for example, Brulefer speaks of the first book of Bonaventure's commentary *quem prae manibus habemus* (*Reportata*, prol., fol. a3ra). Similarly, in the prologue to Book II Brulefer mentions the *sanctissimus Bonaventura cuius secundum habemus prae manibus* (ibid., fol. A1ra). See as well above, note 132.

140 *Reportata* III, dist. 1, qu. 6 [q. 10], fol. AA4vb: "Nota hanc opinionem tenent Lyconiensis, Alexander de ales et Scotus cum quibus magister Stephanus; beatus sanctus Thomas remanet dubius et solvit rationes pro et contra." See as well *Reportata* I, dist. 46, qu. 8, fol. [est]2va: "Hec magister Stephanus Brulefer."

Orbellis his pedagogical aims favored an approach aimed at simplicity. Neither of this is the case in Brulefer's commentary. His questions do not follow a general scheme, and there is no limitation to a mere presentation of positions. It is true that, in a *notandum* in his prologue, Brulefer alludes to the basic structure of "a real scholastic question," namely, a tripartition into a *caput* with arguments pro and con, a *corpus* with the decisions regarding the question, and a *pes* with solutions to the heading arguments;¹⁴¹ but since he does not recite Bonaventure's *argumenta*, Brulefer's own commentary normally consists only of the *corpora*.¹⁴² These *corpora* usually, but not necessarily, start with a clarification of terms, proceeding to summarize the question's solution in conclusions or propositions. The length of these parts varies considerably, however, and Brulefer inserts *ad libitum* further discussions and arguments between the exposition and the solution to a question. What is more, his orientation toward Bonaventure is not the same throughout his commentary. Sometimes, particularly in Book I, Brulefer sticks to Bonaventure's text, presenting arguments and solutions of the Seraphic Doctor, trying to explicate the notions and arguments of the text he has at hand.¹⁴³ In other passages, particularly in Books II to IV, Bonaventure seems to function only as the provider of questions to which Brulefer responds without any explicit concern for the *doctor seraphicus*.¹⁴⁴ Since these different approaches to Bonaventure's text coincide with Brulefer's move from Mainz (where Book I was compiled) to Metz (where the other three books were written), it is possible that this shift is due to the different demands of the respective convents. That Brulefer himself did not want to present an approach in Metz completely different from what he did in

141 *Reportata*, prolog., qu. 1, fol. a6ra: "Notandum quod omnis questio vere scolastica dividitur in tres partes, scilicet in caput et sunt argumenta pro et contra (et illa non debent accipi pro auctoritate: aliquando enim procedunt ex suppositione falsi quod tamen reputatur verum ab illo contra quem arguitur). Secunda pars est corpus quod continet questionis decisiones; tertia pars sunt pedes qui sunt argumentorum solutiones."

142 It sometimes happens that Brulefer appends a *pes*, as in *Reportata* I, dist. 46, qu. 2 and 3, fol. [#]7rb–8ra.

143 See, for example, the questions to the second article of Book I, dist. 17, where most paragraphs are introduced by expressions such as *conclusio responsiva Bonaventure stat in una conclusione; opinio sancti Bonaventure stat in quattuor propositionibus; sanctus Bonaventura resolvendo ponit duas opiniones* (fols. m1–n3).

144 In the first two questions to Book IV, for example, there is not a single reference to Bonaventure, while Scotus is mentioned four times, and William of Vaurouillon once (as *Warlion* in ed. Basel 1501, fol. MM3ra, and as *Vuarlion* in ed. Venice 1504, fol. AAAA3rb).

Mainz is indicated by the fact that he repeated parts of his prologue to Book I at the beginning of Book II.¹⁴⁵

This prologue is telling with regard to the polemical character of Brulefer's commentary. As was usual in the preambles of the first editions of Bonaventure, Brulefer refers to a letter written by Jean Gerson and transmitted under the title, *Laus doctrinae Bonaventurae*.¹⁴⁶ Gerson, the sedulous opponent of the formal distinction whom the late fifteenth century, for that reason, counted among the members of the nominalist school,¹⁴⁷ wrote this letter to a young Franciscan in order to recommend Bonaventure and Alexander of Hales as preferable alternatives to the "formalizing" Scotus. One of Gerson's arguments in favor of these old-school Franciscans was the impartiality that qualified them as common doctors: while he himself, Gerson admits, would have chosen Bonaventure, no other than Thomas Aquinas was said to have opted for Alexander of Hales when asked once which master was worthy of being imitated—a fact that could be verified, according to Gerson, in the *Secunda Secundae*, in which Thomas often displayed his familiarity and accordance with the old Franciscan master.¹⁴⁸ However, when Brulefer refers to this famous passage, he does it in a very specific way: cutting out any criticism of Scotus,

145 The prologue to Book II, which consists of only one column, is an abridged version of the prologue to Book I, which consists of roughly four columns. Brulefer defends Bonaventure's "curiosity" in view of the subjects of Book II, citing none other than the fifteenth century's most famous opponent of curiosity, Jean Gerson. See my "Gerson on Utility," forthcoming in *Pleasures of Knowledge. Proceedings of the SIEPM's International Congress of Medieval Philosophy in Freising*.

146 See Jean Gerson, "Lettre à un Frère Mineur," in *Œuvres complètes* II 58, ed. Palémon Glorieux (Paris, 1960), 276–80. From its earliest editions (see, for instance, *Operum Johannis Gerson*, vol. 1 [Strasbourg, 1488], fol. ff6ra) to the Du Pin edition (vol. 1 [Antwerp, 1721], 117), this letter was entitled, *Laus doctrinae Bonaventurae*.

147 This is true for the nominalist self-perception at the end of the fifteenth century as well as for judgments from representatives of other schools; see the documents assembled in Franz Ehrle, *Der Sentenzenkommentar Peters von Candia, des Pisaner Papstes Alexanders V. Ein Beitrag zur Scheidung der Schulen in der Scholastik des 14. Jahrhunderts und zur Geschichte des Wegesteites* (Münster, 1925), esp. 322 and 324.

148 See Gerson, "Lettre à un Frère Mineur," 277: "Secutus est doctor iste [Bonaventura], se testante, doctrinam communem et solidam quae Parisius vigeat maxime tempore suo; unde et allegat ad confirmationem doctrinae suae parisienses articulos quos per Guillelmum Parisiensem de consilio et assensu magistrorum omnium dicit fuisse damnatos et excommunicatos, vivente tunc et consentiente fratre Alexandro de Ales cujus doctrina quantae sit ubertatis dici satis nequit; de qua fertur respondisse sanctus Thomas dum inquireretur ab eo quis esset optimus modus studendi theologiam, respondit talis exercere se in uno doctore praecipue; dum ultra peterent quis esset talis doctor, Alexander inquit

Brulefer limits himself to documenting Thomas's and Gerson's appreciation of Bonaventure and Alexander of Hales.¹⁴⁹ In the case of Thomas, he additionally modifies the account given by Gerson:

There are two kind of doctors, since some are *textuales*, such as the four doctors of the Church and the master of the *Sentences*, who was the last one. Others are *questionarii*, the first of whom among the mendicants was master Alexander of Hales, from whom Thomas received many things, for he received almost everything he wrote in the *Secunda Secundae* from Alexander of Hales, as is obvious to anyone who looks closely.¹⁵⁰

While Gerson referred to Thomas's familiarity with Alexander of Hales, Brulefer explicitly states that there was barely anything in the *Secunda Secundae* that Thomas did not receive from the Franciscan, thus making Thomas a disciple of Alexander. The intention behind these modifications is obvious: Brulefer tries to show that even Thomas Aquinas, the head of the Thomists, and Jean Gerson, a protagonist of nominalism, admired and depended on the Franciscan masters—which suggests that the Franciscan tradition must be superior to Thomism and nominalism. Brulefer transposes the philosophical *Wegestreit* onto theological terrain.

This late in the fifteenth century, such theological saber-rattling in the context of the *Wegestreit* is nothing special.¹⁵¹ It is typical, as well, that Brulefer does not focus on Bonaventure (or Scotus) alone: similar to Nicholas

de Ales. . . . Testantur scripta ejusdem sancti Thomae, maxime secunda secundae, quam intimum sibi fecerat et familiarem illum quem laudabat doctorem Alexandrum.”

149 See *Reportata*, prol., fol. a3rb: “Quidam discipulus interrogavit sanctum Thomam de Aquino quis esset modus proficiendi in theologia. Respondit, quod est exercere se in doctore perito et experto. Discipulo querente ‘quis est talis?’, cui ille: ‘Alexander de Ales.’ Sed doctor consolatorius Johannes Gerson de laudibus sancti Bonaventure ait: ‘Ego vero eligo sanctum Bonaventuram.’”

150 Ibid., fols. a3rb–va: “Doctores sunt in duplici differentia. Quia alij textuales, ut quatuor doctores ecclesie et magister sententiarum qui fuit ultimus. Alij sunt questionarii. Quorum primus in religionibus mendicantium fuit magister Alexander de Ales, a quo sanctus Thomas multa | recepit. Unde fere quicquid scripsit in Secunda secundae recepit ab Alexandro de Ales ut patet intuiti.”

151 For the *Wegestreit* as a primarily philosophical debate of the fifteenth century, see Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen, “*Via Antiqua* and *Via Moderna* in the Fifteenth Century: Doctrinal, Institutional, and Church Political Factors in the *Wegestreit*,” in *The Medieval Heritage in Early Modern Metaphysics and Modal Theory, 1400–1700*, ed. Russel L. Friedman and Lauge O. Nielsen (Dordrecht, 2003), 9–26.

of Orbellis—who complemented his Scotist compendium with extracts from other, predominantly Franciscan authors—and similar to William of Vaurouillon, who, in spite of his almost unquestioned approval of Scotus, incorporates the whole scholastic tradition into his commentary, Brulefer also presents himself not as partisan to one single scholar's school, but as a follower of a broader Franciscan tradition.¹⁵² Accordingly, even though Brulefer formally centers his commentary on Bonaventure, there are many other scholastics who appear in his expositions: Alexander of Hales, Thomas Aquinas, Peter of Tarantaise, or Richard of Middletown are present, as well as later scholastics, such as Francis of Meyronnes, William of Ockham, or Gregory of Rimini. Brulefer even cites Peter of Ailly or, as we have just seen, Jean Gerson, and he relies on his two contemporaries William of Vaurouillon and Nicholas of Orbellis.¹⁵³ The majority of these sources are Franciscans again and, unsurprisingly, Scotus is almost as important as Bonaventure. The Subtle Doctor appears throughout the commentary, and while, at certain points, Brulefer tries to reconcile him with Bonaventure,¹⁵⁴ he simply opts for Scotus elsewhere without showing any further interest in the differences between the two Franciscan masters.¹⁵⁵

152 See notes 75 and 110 above. The Thomists and Albertists were usually more focused on their respective leaders, but even John Capreolus relied on Albert the Great or Peter of Palude to substantiate his defense of Thomas Aquinas (see Bonino, “Albert le Grand”). For the generally broader perspective of the Franciscan tradition, see Jacob Schmutz, “L’héritage des subtils. Cartographie du scotisme du XVII^e siècle,” *Études philosophiques* 1 (2002): 51–81, at 55–8.

153 For Vaurouillon, see above, note 144, but see as well Brulefer's usual *declarationes terminorum* at the beginning of a question, where he often implicitly relies on the relevant first article from Vaurouillon's *Super quattuor libros Sententiarum*. For Nicholas of Orbellis, see *Reportata*, prol., qu. 1, fols. a4rb–va.

154 See, for example, the first question of the prologue, where Brulefer denies any contradiction between Bonaventure's and Scotus's different conceptions of theology: “Notandum quod ista opinio doctoris seraphici non contradicit doctori subtili simpliciter, nec econtra doctor subtilis contradicit simpliciter dictis Bonaventure” (*Reportata*, prol., qu. 1, fol. a6vb).

155 Concerning the question of sacramental efficacy, for example, Bonaventure and Scotus defend slightly different approaches (even though they both reject any physical efficiency of the sacraments): for Bonaventure, sacraments are mere *causae sine quibus none*, while for Scotus they still are real causes; see Irène Rosier-Catach, *La parole efficace. Signe, rituel, sacré* (Paris, 2004), 125–6 and 140–1. Brulefer treats the problem in six *dicta*, the first four of which seem to follow Bonaventure until the last two reinterpret everything in a typically Scotist perspective: see *Reportata* IV, dist. 1, qu. 4, fol. MM5rb–va. See as well below, note 161.

Thomas Aquinas and the Thomists, on the other hand, are Brulefer's preferred opponents. Already in his prologue, Brulefer accuses the Thomists not only of endorsing, through their rejection of the formal distinction, a doctrine condemned by a Parisian article, but also of destroying all demonstration and accordingly any form of science.¹⁵⁶ Although he does not explicitly say so, the followers of Thomas are from the very beginning treated as suspected heretics, and this suspicion extends, of course, to Thomas Aquinas as well. Brulefer is more diffident, however, with regard to Aquinas himself, since the Angelic Doctor had been canonized in 1323—a fact that the Thomists liked to underline.¹⁵⁷ Brulefer even relies on Thomas in certain passages to substantiate a point or to justify the existence of more than one possible solution to a problem;¹⁵⁸ sometimes he just mentions Thomas's disagreement with a solution without any further discussion of the dissent.¹⁵⁹ Far more often, however, Brulefer opposes Thomas's position, attempting to find inconsistencies and implicit contradictions in his doctrines;¹⁶⁰ he eagerly underscores differences

156 See *Reportata*, prolog., qu. 1, fols. a5rb–va: “Omne subiectum continet identica continentia suas proprias passiones. Probat. Nam si essent quedam qualitates distincte re|aliter a subiecto (ut Thomiste dicunt) in secunda specie qualitatis, tunc unum posset separari ab alio; patet. Quia per divinam potentiam absque contradictione omne prius potest separari a posteriore, per articulum parisiensem. Quandocumque sunt duo entia absoluta realiter et essentialiter distincta quorum unum est prius alio, absque contradictione deus potest facere unum sine alio. Ergo homo potest separari a risibili quo concesso omnis demonstratio et omnis scientia destruitur.” I was unable to find the Parisian article to which Brulefer refers; see, however, Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* 1, dist. 28, qu. 3, no. 94, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 6 (Vatican City, 1963), 155–6, and Francis of Meyronnes, *In secundum Sententiarum*, princ., concl. 3 (Venice, 1505), fol. A2rb.

157 On Thomas's canonization as an argument for the truth of his doctrine, see Sigrid Müller, “Pierre d'Ailly und die ‘richtige’ Thomas-Interpretation. Theologisch-hermeneutische Prinzipien als Grundlage des Wegestreits,” *Traditio* 60 (2005): 339–68, and Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen, “Categories of Medieval Doxography: Reflections on Use of ‘Doctrina’ and ‘Via’ in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Philosophical and Theological Sources,” in *Vera doctrina. Zur Begriffsgeschichte der Lehre von Augustinus bis Descartes—L'idée de doctrine d'Augustin à Descartes*, ed. Philippe Büttgen et al. (Wiesbaden, 2009), 63–84, at 75–8.

158 See, for example, *Reportata* 1, dist. 44, qu. 4, fol. [#]1vb: “Quia tamen alterius opinionis sunt aliqui theologi ut sanctus Thomas et aliqui alij forte moderni, et doctor subtilis in secundo solvit rationes pro utraque opinione, ideo teneat unusquisque quod placet.”

159 See *Reportata* 1v, dist. 6, qu. 3, fol. 003ra: “Nota quod sanctus Thomas ponit caracterem [baptismalem] in intellectu, Scotus autem in voluntate, doctor autem iste [i.e., Bonaventura] et Alexander de Hales ponunt eum in tota imagine, ut patet.”

160 See particularly the question regarding the reality of the dove that represents the Holy Spirit in Mt 3:16 in *Reportata* 1, dist. 16, qu. 3, fol. m1vb, where Brulefer presents a whole

between Thomas and the Thomists; and he is happy to demonstrate that, to a certain extent, Thomas can be used to corroborate typically Scotist positions.¹⁶¹

It is this undeniably polemical approach that distinguishes Brulefer's commentary from those of William of Vaurouillon and Nicholas of Orbellis. It might be due to his skills not so much as a mediator of scholastic positions, but as an ardent defender of the Franciscan tradition that he achieved renown during his lifetime, but did not have, in theology, the same posthumous fame as the other two Franciscans. Even though Brulefer's commentary saw two re-editions and he figured among the theologians cited by Johannes Picardus and John of Eck,¹⁶² sixteenth-century theologians seem to have preferred the rather inoffensive expositions of William of Vaurouillon and of Nicholas of Orbellis; if ever they knew of Brulefer, it was because of his logical works, and particularly because of his *Formalitates*.¹⁶³ That Zwingli studied Brulefer's *Sentences* commentary in the second decade of the sixteenth century did not further the Scotist's renown: Zwingli, who was mainly interested in Scotus, consulted Brulefer as the great master's expositor, and as soon as he began to develop a reformed position, he also adopted the prevalent humanist anti-scholasticism.¹⁶⁴ During Brulefer's

list of contradictions between Thomas's *Sentences* commentary and his *Summa theologiae*: "Thomas tertia parte summe questione 39 articulo tertio ex intentione movet istam questionem et dicit quod erat vera columba. Sed argumentum et rationes eius solvuntur a sancto Bonaventura. . . . Thomas in distinctione presenti, questione tertia in solutione terci argumenti dicit quod non fuerit vera columba. Unde patet quod sibi contradicit, sicut et de conceptione beate virginis super sententias et in summa. Item in quarto dicit quod papa possit dispensare in voto continentie seu castitatis, in prima parte summe dicit quod non."

- 161 See, for example, *Reportata* 1, dist. 20, art. 2, qu. 1, fol. 05ra; or consider the problem of knowing whether Christ achieved his merits in the first instant of his conception, treated in *Reportata* III, dist. 18, qu. 1, FF77b: "In ista questione diversificati sunt doctores scilicet scotizantes contra doctores communes et antiquos. . . . Doctor seraphicus videtur approbare utramque opinionem, tamen magis videtur declinare ad [an]tiquos dicendo quod est planior et communior. Beatus Thomas etiam dicit in tertio quod placet sibi scilicet opinio scotistarum." Brulefer, by the way, will adopt this Scotist position.
- 162 For Picardus, see above, note 80; for Eck, see the *Chrysopassus praedestinationis*, for example fol. A5r: "Sic de duplici misericordia pulchre loquitur Stephanus Brulifer, quem secundum Scotum nominant."
- 163 This is true as well for some humanist writers; see Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 180. At least one of his short theological *opuscula*, however—the *Decem propositiones an personae in divinis sint, ut usus habet, depingendae* (see above, note 125)—had an after-life in the eighteenth century, since it was reedited from a Wolfenbüttel codex in 1718 in Helmstad (by a certain Hermann von der Hardt).
- 164 It is true that Zwingli's reformed theology perpetuates Scotist ideas, such as the concept of the univocity of being, which fundamentally distinguish his approach from Martin

lifetime, however, his fame as an outstanding theologian was unquestioned: in 1488, he was chosen to preside over the inaugural disputation held at the provincial chapter of the Observants at Nuremberg, and in 1495 he was invited to move to Toledo in order to found and lead a Scotist academy there.¹⁶⁵

5 Conclusion

Among the wide variety of works that belong to the *Sentences* tradition of the fifteenth century, this chapter has focused on the *Sentences* commentaries by three Franciscan theologians linked to the University of Paris. Unsurprisingly, there are some obvious similarities among these writings: all three commentaries are complete commentaries that are based on questions, and even though they all seem to rely on material collected for the lectures delivered by their authors in order to obtain the doctorate, they all constitute at least partial revisions of this material. In addition, they are nevertheless all designed for pedagogical purposes, and they promote in a more or less forthright manner the doctrines of Duns Scotus without, however, exclusively focusing on him. Despite these fundamental similarities, the three commentaries turn out to differ from each other to such an extent that the differences serve to underline how vivid the genre still was at the end of the Middle Ages: the clear structure of William of Vaurouillon's commentary, the compendious approach of Nicholas of Orbellis, and the orientation toward Bonaventure's commentary in Brulefer's *Reportata* unmistakably distinguish the three commentaries from a formal perspective, just as Vaurouillon's brief presentations, Orbellis' simplifying recapitulations, and Brulefer's ardent polemics characterize the commentaries with regard to content.

It seems, then, that some of the distinctive features of these commentaries are typical of the genre's overall development in the fifteenth century: particularly in contrast with the commentaries of the late fourteenth century, it is apparent that, at least structurally, the text of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* is taken into account once again, with all three commentaries providing questions on almost every one of Lombard's distinctions. Although this turn back to the *Sentences* may, in two of the three present cases, have been induced by thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century commentaries—those of Bonaventure and Scotus, respectively—the basic structure of the Lombard's *Sentences* with its four books and different distinctions is again the standard

Luther's (see Bolliger, *Infiniti contemplatio*). These ideas, however, are not specifically "Bruleferian," but characterize Scotism in general.

165 See Murphy, "Franciscan *Studium Generale*," 176–7.

framework, and it appears that the majority of the *Sentences* commentators of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries share this approach, providing full commentaries.¹⁶⁶ As a consequence of this more comprehensive approach, the questions of the three commentaries analyzed in this chapter are rather short and centered on the *quaesitum*. This, too, seems to be a general trait of fifteenth-century question commentaries: most of them are far more concise than the essay-style commentaries or the geometrical approaches of the later fourteenth century.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, these brief questions might well be due to an orientation toward thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century commentaries with their traditionally shorter questions. Yet it is striking that among the three commentaries studied here, not one resorted to a *lectura secundum alium* in the sense of an extensive verbatim copying of earlier texts. To our knowledge, this, too, is true for most other commentaries of their age: even though their authors may tend to repeat only what others have said, they do it in their own words.¹⁶⁸

A closer look at the motifs and goals of the three commentaries studied here suggests that these features depend on a common background that may be distinctive of the fifteenth century in an even more general way: it is their pedagogical focus. It is true that the Lombard himself already conceived of the *Sentences* as a pedagogical tool, and that the vast majority of commentaries that arose in the following centuries were designed to serve a pedagogical purpose. Nevertheless, there is an undeniable difference between these fifteenth-century commentaries and the commentaries preceding them:

166 At some universities, the *sententiarum* even had to vow in the late fourteenth century already that they would lecture on the whole *Sentences*; see, for example, *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 2, no. 1189 (p. 700), or *Urkundenbuch der Universität Heidelberg. Zur fünfhunderthährigen Stiftungsfeier der Universität im Auftrage derselben*, ed. E. Winkelmann (Heidelberg 1886), 21. Also see Hoenen, "The Commentary of Marsilius of Inghen," 496, and Bakker/Schabel, "*Sentences* Commentaries of the Later Fourteenth Century," 426–7.

167 For the geometrical approaches, see above, note 69; for the "essay style," see in addition to Trapp, "Augustinian Theology," 231, William J. Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham: An Introduction to His Life and Writings* (Leiden, 1978), 178, and now Rosemann, *Great Medieval Book*, 116. One of the most striking examples of such an essay style is the commentary by Thomas of Buckingham, which consists of only six questions, but in an early modern edition extends to more than 120 folios (ed. Paris 1505).

168 There are, of course, exceptions, as for instance the already mentioned commentary by Johannes Pfeffer (see above, note 15), or the *Aureum rosarium* by Oswald de Lasko (who continued the work begun by Pelbartus Temeswar [see above, note 19]), which copies whole passages from the *Lectura Mellicensis* of Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl. On the latter, see Brinzei/Schabel's chapter in this volume, esp. pp. 250–62.

although in those earlier commentaries the authors were theologizing in the context of a university or a *studium*, the fifteenth-century authors aimed not so much to theologize in a pedagogical environment, as to prepare theological content pedagogically. This is why they focused on Scotus, Bonaventure, or Thomas Aquinas, and why they relied on the classic, well-proven structure of the Lombard's *Sentences*, which asked concise questions that better fit the demands of fifteenth-century teaching. It is probably also for this reason that they did not just copy what others had said: in designing their commentaries for a specific audience, they had to adjust their formulations to the capacities and needs of their students.

This didactic focus is corroborated by the fact that a new virtue seems to guide these commentaries: the one of brevity. While Nicholas of Orbellis explicitly relies on this principle, it is this virtue for which William of Vaurouillon was honored with the honorific title *doctor brevis*; there are other examples in the *Sentences* tradition of the close of the Middle Ages where brevity was hailed as a methodological guideline.¹⁶⁹ With regard to their sources, finally, it is undoubtedly in view of their pedagogical preoccupation that the fifteenth-century commentators follow a much more historico-critical attitude than their predecessors. Since they were interested, above all, in presenting and transmitting the theological doctrines of the great masters, questions of accurateness and authenticity gained a new importance. But the downside of that interest in past theologians is evident too: among the authors cited, there are almost no contemporaries. Obviously, then, there is no interest in a contemporary theological debate. Even if it is true that Orbellis probably used Vaurouillon's *Vademecum*, and Brulefer explicitly refers to his two Franciscan predecessors, there is—besides some very general asides against the Thomists—no open debate with exponents of other theological schools. This seems to be a final distinctive feature of these fifteenth-century commentaries: since they are preoccupied with authors from the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, they are rather ignorant of their own contemporaries.¹⁷⁰

169 See, for example, the prologues to the *Resolutio theologorum* by Nicholas Denyse, written in about 1500 (Venice, 1568), fol. 1r, or to the *Aureum rosarium* of Pelbartus Temeswar (Haguenau, 1503), fol. a2ra.

170 It will distinguish the theological literature of the early sixteenth century that their authors overcome the boundaries of their schools, and this even with regard to their contemporaries; see the aforementioned *Thesaurus theologorum* of Johannes Picardus (see above, note 21), the *Chrysopassus* of John Eck (see above, note 116), or even Johannes Findling's *lectura secundum Vaurouillon*, which abounds with citations from Gabriel Biel (see above, note 81).

In this sense—but only in this sense—it is true that fifteenth-century *Sentences* commentators had a somewhat limited view of the *Sentences* tradition: they were so preoccupied with recovering traditional accounts that they did not generate much original theological debate. But while it is debatable to what extent the criterion of originality is applicable to medieval texts at all, it is beyond all question that the approaches of these fifteenth-century commentators responded well to the demands of their time: predominantly interested in a modernization and recovery of traditional positions, the amount of texts they studied and prepared for these compendious approaches is impressive and more than equals the number of sources that were normally used in a commentary of the later fourteenth century. To reread these sources, to select the most appropriate passages, and to recompile them into understandable, concise language was anything but an easy task—the last thing we can thus hold against these fifteenth-century authors is intellectual phlegm.