Introduction

Life and Contexts

The fundamental documentation for establishing the trajectory of the life of Berthold of Moosburg (c. 1290 – c. 1361/1363) has changed little from what is gathered in Loris Sturlese’s introduction to his critical edition of Propositions 184–211 of the *Expositio super Elementationem theologicam Procli*, published in 1974.¹ These documents trace the outlines of the career of a successful teacher and pastor in the Dominican order, who was involved with some of the most active centres of learning and literature in 14th-century Europe. The biography of Berthold of Moosburg that follows attempts to bring this portrait into a slightly higher resolution by making use of more recent scholarly discoveries that shed light on the contexts in which he lived and worked.

The first and most essential documentary addition to our knowledge of Berthold’s life came as a fragment, published by Thomas Kaeppeli in 1978, of the proceedings of a Dominican chapter meeting in Friesach, informing us that in 1315 Berthold was to be sent to Oxford for his studies.² This gives us some clues about the date of Berthold’s birth. Typically, after a two- or three-year novitiate, with teenagers no younger than 15 allowed to enter, Dominican friars in the German-speaking provinces would have progressed through three years of study in the schools of logical arts (*studia logicalia*) and two to three years in the schools of natural philosophy (*studia naturarum*).³ Those selected for advanced studies in the schools of general theology (*studia generalia*) may

---


have been asked first to lecture on logic for two to three years. As Oxford housed one of the Dominican order’s schools of general theology, counting back from 1315 we may infer that Berthold was likely born around or before 1290. Since he was sent to Oxford by a chapter meeting in Friesach, we can be quite certain that his birthplace was the town of Moosburg located on the Isar river before Landshut, northeast of Munich, and that he was educated within that region of the Dominican province of Teutonia. The character of his early education is unknown; the formative influences on his thinking can only be guessed. We shall see that Berthold was more familiar with the works of Dietrich of Freiberg, his elder confrere, than any other medieval author known to date. The last extant record of Dietrich’s activities indicates that he served as provincial vicar to Teutonia in 1310–1311, and scholars surmise that Dietrich may have lived until 1318 or 1320. But whether Berthold had any personal contact with his most esteemed contemporary master remains a matter of speculation.

The impact of the intellectual life in Oxford in the mid-1310s on Berthold’s formation is also a matter of conjecture. The most significant recent development in our understanding of Berthold’s thought came as a result of Fiorella Retucci’s advance on the discovery made by Françoise Hudry, who indicated that Berthold made use of a rare commentary on the Hermetic Liber xxiv philosophorum, which was also known to the English Franciscan, Thomas of York (c. 1220 – d. before 1269). Retucci then went on to demonstrate the enormous extent of the Dominican’s debt to Thomas’ magnum opus, the Sapientiale (written sometime before 1256), which has been called the first summa of metaphysics in the 13th century. Thomas was given a controversial exemption to bypass the standard requirement for a degree in arts before advancing to theological studies, and this is no surprise, for the Sapientiale is an ample demonstration of his staggering command of ancient and medieval philosophical

---

theology. It is natural to suppose that Berthold first encountered the Sapientiale in Oxford.\textsuperscript{8} Certainly, when he began writing the Expositio almost a decade or more later, Thomas of York remained ever near at hand.\textsuperscript{9} Berthold not only used the Sapientiale as his direct source for many of the classical and medieval authorities cited in the Expositio, but looked to it for inspiration when he announced the dignity and goal of philosophical wisdom itself. We will see in more detail how completely Berthold adopted Thomas' maximal endorsement of the attainments of the non-Christian sages of antiquity in their knowledge of God and how he incorporated it into a model relating theology and philosophy that came from his German Dominican predecessors (Albert the Great, Ulrich of Strassburg, and Dietrich of Freiberg).

Further research may reveal the extent to which the Sapientiale circulated in 14th-century England. One factor leading to Berthold's encounter with the text may have been the association of Thomas' name with the political tensions that began in 1303 between the mendicants and secular clergy in Oxford as to whether, among other things, a dispensation from the University was required in every case for a student to proceed directly to the theology doctorate after studying arts outside the University.\textsuperscript{10} This conflict significantly destabilised the Dominican studium in Oxford. Between 1312 and 1320 the fallout between the friars and the University had so escalated that the regular stream of Dominican friars to the studium was often substantially interrupted.\textsuperscript{11} In 1314, the English Dominicans appealed to King Edward II, and again in 1317 to

\footnotesize
Pope John XXII, requesting the repeal of the Statute of 1253 which resolved “the affair of Thomas of York”, whose exceptional case had set the precedent for the contested arrangement. There would be no lasting resolution to the conflict until 1320, by which time Berthold was probably no longer in Oxford.

By the mid-1310s, Oxford witnessed the emergence of thinkers whom scholars have come to identify as “the classicising friars”. Among the precursors of this group was the Dominican Nicholas Trevet (1257/65 – c. 1334), one of the English province’s most distinguished scholars. In 1314 Nicholas was called back to Oxford to preside as master of theology of the Dominican convent. His appointment was likely meant to bring some degree of stability to the troubled situation. By this time, among other writings, Nicholas had composed a commentary on Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy*, using the glosses of William of Conches, and a commentary on Seneca’s tragedies. Between 1317 and 1320 he produced a commentary on the Psalter. Another Dominican member of the “classicising” group was Thomas Waleys, who began lecturing on the *Sentences* in Oxford in 1314, which itself represented a relative return to normality for the Preachers. Waleys later would make use of Proclus’ *Tria opuscula* in his

---

12 See the literature cited in Retucci, Goering, “The *Sapientiale* of Thomas of York, OFM”.
own commentary on the Psalter, written in 1326–1327 in Bologna. Berthold’s arrival to the studium generale in Oxford around or after 1315 would certainly have brought him into contact with these leading figures of the early classicising movement.

The next record of Berthold’s activity indicates that, after Oxford, he was occupied with teaching natural philosophy and was already making use of Dietrich of Freiberg’s works in this domain. A friar tasked with teaching natural philosophy three years after studying theology would be following the typical pattern. Without the expectation that they would obtain a degree, especially in Oxford during these unsettled years for the Dominicans, most friars spent only two years in advanced theological studies before they would begin serving as lector in one of the order’s conventual schools. Berthold’s teaching of natural philosophy is attested in two glosses now preserved in ms Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, F.IV.30, f. 56v-57r, which appear alongside the text of Dietrich’s De iride et radialibus impressionibus, and have been published by Loris Sturlese. They report a commentary given by Berthold in 1318 on Aristotle’s Meteorology III.5, 375b16–377a28, in which the friar provided a geometrical analysis of Aristotle’s discussion of the pole of the rainbow. Sturlese has observed that the geometrical figures that accompany the glosses were probably not the work of Berthold. The explanation of the figures, which is ascribed to Berthold in the glosses, demonstrates a degree of geometrical proficiency to elucidate Aristotle’s argument (although Berthold relied on Dietrich’s calculations). The next chronological witness of Berthold’s activity comes in the form of glosses on the Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis by Macrobius, which can be dated to before 1323. These are studied more closely
in section 2, below, but can be noted here as further confirmation of Berthold’s engagements with natural philosophy at this period.

A document from April 1327 names Berthold as a lector at the Dominican convent in Regensburg, which was one of the larger schools in his native region of Bavaria.\textsuperscript{20} We cannot know for certain which subjects he taught there. In the 1280s, before the Dominicans divided their province of Teutonia in 1303 into Teutonia and Saxony, Regensburg housed one of its nine schools of the logical arts. By the mid-14th century, it served as a school of particular theology (\textit{studium particularis theologiae}), which typically had the \textit{Sentences} of Peter Lombard as its focus, and was subordinate to the more elite \textit{studium generale}, in which the \textit{Sentences} and Scriptural exegesis were taught.\textsuperscript{21} By that time, as David Sheffler has noted, the library holdings of the Dominican convent would have been ill-suited to support the teaching of natural philosophy.\textsuperscript{22} Thus it appears likely that Berthold taught theology in Regensburg, having previously served as a lector in a \textit{studium naturarum}, which would again follow a typical pattern.

At least one of Berthold’s confreres in Regensburg shared his philosophical interests. In the same document that attests to Berthold’s lectorship, we have mention of another Dominican, Henry of Ekkewint, who served as prior of the convent between 1321 and 1326.\textsuperscript{23} The sample of Henry’s preaching preserved in his four (perhaps five) extant sermons shows him appealing to the authorities of Augustine, Dionysius, the \textit{Liber de causis}, Gregory the Great, Origen, Avicebron, and Jerome.\textsuperscript{24} Henry employed the broadly Neoplatonic

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{20} See the references in Sturlese, “Introduzione”, p. xvi–xvii, n. 6-7.
\bibitem{21} Mulchahey, \textit{First the Bow is Bent in Study}, p. 336–340.
doctrines of procession and return and of the soul’s natural yearning for God, which finds satisfaction only by turning inward and looking beyond itself, away from transient goods and its own will. Since like can be known only by like, Henry insisted, so the soul can only know God by being conformed to God. At one point he cited several lines from the *Fons vitae* of Avicebron on the means by which the soul can “avoid death” and reach “the fount of life”, that is, by turning away from the instability of the sensible world and by rising, with its highest part, toward things that are changeless and beyond time. In Henry’s sermons one can also find reflections on the Trinity and the divine essence or groundless abyss (*grundelöse abgründe*) reminiscent of Meister Eckhart. Perhaps most striking, in anticipation of what we will see with Berthold of Moosburg, is Henry’s anthropology. For both Dominicans, the soul is in some sense all things, which corresponds to its location at the middle of the universe. According to Henry, the highest principle in the soul is a tiny spark (*der funke oder der glanster der sêle*), whose activity is experienced as a kind of ethical counsel that implies a metaphysics of human nature: the spark constantly advises a person that “you should let go of each man”, that is, one’s proper will and attachment, “so that you may be free of him, as if all of human nature was enclosed within you and your nature was the essence of all people, and as if you could see yourself in every man and every man in you”. This, Henry continued, amounts to seeing Christ in “his pure humanity”. We will see that Berthold’s synthesis of the Proclean notion of the one of the soul (*unum animae*) and the exemplarist doctrine of human nature transmitted in the Eriugenian *Clavis physicae* would amount to a very similar position.


responsibilities. After 7 April 1335, when he was nominated as a co-executor of the will of Bela Hardevust, a beguine from a prominent family in the city, his name appears sporadically in the city’s records over the subsequent decades (1343, 1353 and 1361) in matters relating to her last will and testament.\textsuperscript{30} There was at least one hiatus in Berthold’s residency in Cologne over these years, when a conflict between the Dominicans and the secular authorities led to the expulsion of the friars from the city from 1346 to 1351 owing to a dispute regarding lands held by the order in perpetuity or “mortmain”. During this time, in 1348, Berthold is identified as vicar in Nuremberg, but the beginning and duration of his post is unknown.\textsuperscript{31} It has been widely assumed by scholars that Berthold served as lector in Cologne for many years in these decades, and perhaps even directed the \textit{studium generale}.\textsuperscript{32} This seems to infer too much from the evidence. The only document associating him with the \textit{domus Coloniensis} is the first mention of his executorship of Hardevust’s will in 1335. His lectorship is attested in the colophon of the Vatican manuscript of the \textit{Expositio}. Without further information, we can only conclude that, at some point between 1335 and 1361, and perhaps nearer to 1335, Berthold served as a lector at the Cologne \textit{studium}.\textsuperscript{33}

It is an altogether separate question whether his commentary on the \textit{Elementatio theologica} was undertaken in Heilig Kreuz while Berthold served there in another capacity. We know very little about the nature of Berthold’s connection with the community after 1335 that is not the result of inference from the pedagogical norms of the order and the fact that, as we shall see, much of his library remained there after his death. His lectorship, whatever its duration, would have certainly followed the standard requirements. At the time, Heilig Kreuz was the major \textit{studium generale} of Teutonia, where as many

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{31} Sturlese, “Introduzione”, p. xviii.
\item \textsuperscript{33} This point was first emphasised by W. Senner, \textit{Johannes von Sterngassen OP und sein Sentenzen-Kommentar}, 2 vols (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995), vol. 1, p. 137–138. See Introduction, section 3, n. 179, below.
\end{itemize}
as 56 students were sent to study theology. The curriculum of these schools throughout the order was highly regulated and under the constant supervision of the general chapter. Daily lessons had the Bible and Peter Lombard’s *Sentences* as their subjects. The lector would give detailed “ordinary” lectures on Scripture, after which the *cursor Sententiarum* would lecture on the whole of Peter Lombard’s text. This pattern would carry on over the course of the year. By the first quarter of the 14th century, the structure and personnel of these *studia* had become codified. The titular lector at the school denoted the friar who gave the ordinary lectures on the Bible and presided over *disputationes*. Thus, if any of the works we find attributed to Berthold in the 16th-century catalogue of Albert de Castello relate to this lectorship, which include the *Expositio* and several other texts, it would be the *Summa theologiae*, whose existence, however, like several others listed in the catalogue entry, has been questioned by scholars.

In any event, it seems unlikely that the *Expositio* was directly related to Berthold’s lectorship in Cologne. Although the *Expositio* touches upon topics that also belong to the domain of Christian theology (i.e., the Trinity, the Resurrection), these are treated in the text because Berthold believed that they fall within the purview of philosophical reason as such. As we see below, the order of “natural providence” presupposes and articulates a form of causality based on the principle that “the good is diffusive of itself and being” (*bonum est diffusivum sui et esse*) – in Berthold’s view this principle necessarily requires a Trinitarian form of causality. Natural providence, moreover, extends so far as to include a notion of a natural, universal Resurrection that Berthold found propounded in the *Clavis physicae*, the 12th-century abridgement of John Scotus Eriugena’s *Periphyseon*. Considerations of the authority of Scripture, the Incarnation, the sacraments, merit and punishment, all belong to a methodologically distinct domain identified as the order of “voluntary providence”. Following Dietrich of Freiberg, in a significant phrase, Berthold stated that the latter was “the completion and consummation” of natural providence. The

---

37 See Introduction, section 2, n. 109–111, below.
Expositio, then, if it fit anywhere into the curriculum of studies, would have been more suited to establish the foundational and preparatory science for the study of Christian theology, insofar as it articulates the divinely-infused nature that voluntary providence would presuppose. If there was a pedagogical purpose and intended audience for Berthold’s Expositio, it would not have been students of general theology, but those progressing in the study of natural philosophy (studium naturarum).39

The four dates (1335, 1343, 1353, and 1361) relating to the executorship of Bela Hardevust’s will introduce us to the pastoral dimension of Berthold’s life and vocation. As Humbert of Romans had put it, the care of souls was understood to be the goal of study itself: study is ordered to preaching, and preaching to the salvation of souls, which is the ultimate end (studium enim est ordinatum ad praedicationem; praedicatio, ad animarum salutem, quae est ultimus finis).40 Berthold certainly remained occupied with these ultimate matters while the Dominicans were expelled from Cologne between 1346 and 1351, as we see in his identification as vicar to Bavaria in Nuremberg in 1348. Appointed by the provincial of Teutonia, a vicar was expected to travel widely and visit the priories and convents of the region.

Within this area was the famous community of Dominican nuns in Engelthal, which was a prolific centre of spiritual literature in its day.41 Traces
of Berthold’s pastoral activities can be found, even if the historical details cannot be so easily discerned, in three writings from this monastery that appear to describe related, or even the same, pastoral visit(s). First, there is the Engelthal sister-book attributed Christina Ebner (b. 1277 – d. 1356), which relates, through the lens of “the overburden of grace”, the history of the monastery and the exemplary lives and deaths of many holy women and men who belonged to the community, and which was written sometime between 1328 and 1346.  

Next are the so-called Revelations (Offenbarungen) of Adelheid Langmann (c. 1305 – 1375), which were written approximately between 1330 and 1350, and likely underwent further redaction. Finally, there is the hagiographical biography or so-called Gnadenvita of Christina Ebner, a work that is still unpublished and whose intricate layers of composition and authorship are objects of ongoing research.

Philipp Strauch was the first to note the resemblance between the sister-book and Offenbarungen regarding the episode in question. Amid a series of events datable to 1344 in the narrative, Adelheid recounted a mass celebrated by “brother Berthold of Moosburg”, during which she had a vision “with her bodily eye” of Christ standing “above the altar in his person” while the celebrant received the sacrament, but Christ did not see him and gave the final blessing himself. In the Engelthal sister-book, Strauch observed, there is

---


Adelheid Langmann, Die Offenbarungen der Adelheid Langmann, Klosterfrau zu Engelthal, ed. P. Strauch (Strassburg: Trübner, 1878).


Adelheid Langmann, Die Offenbarungen, p. 73, l. 13–17: Ains mols do sprach ein prister mess, der hiez prueder Perhtolt von Mosburk. do sah si mit leiplichen augen do er undern herren enfpink, daz under herre stunt ob dem altar in seiner person, und sah des pristers niht und er gab dem convent den segen. Bürkle, Literatur im Kloster, p. 119, interprets the text to say that Adelheid saw Christ standing before the altar, and that it was the celebrant himself who appeared to her in persona Christi.
also mention of a mass celebrated by one from Moosburg (dez Mosburgers messe), but here it was recorded as an event in the life of Anna of Weitersdorf, who has a vision of Christ as a 30-year-old man as she went on her way to the liturgy, for at that time “there was such abundant grace here”.\textsuperscript{47} Siegfried Ringler then noticed striking similarities between this passage in the sister-book with another from the Gnadenvita of Christina Ebner and, most recently, Susanne Bürkle has made a thorough comparison of all three passages.\textsuperscript{48} The Gnadenvita narrative recounts a mass celebrated by an anonymous master of learning (lesmeyster) in the octave after Epiphany, which was assisted by a large crowd, which included Anna of Weiterstorf. Several details in the narrative resemble those found in the Engelthal sister-book’s account of Anna’s life, but in the Gnadenvita her vision of the 30-year-old Christ was received during the liturgy, where he appeared standing at or upon the altar, and not while she made her way to the chapel. The account of the mass itself in the Gnadenvita is also more elaborate: the lesmeyster was so overcome that, during the Confiteor, instead of asking for the prayers of “you, sisters”, he referred to the sisters as “you, innocents”, implying that he presumed the efficacy of their prayers. Grace abounded, the narrator recalled, for everyone who heard that mass. The celebrant’s admiration for the sanctity he encountered in Engelthal carried over into a sermon preached in the early hours of the following morning, in which he announced that all sins had been forgiven, that all those present were regenerated as children of God, and that all lost time had been restored. Several months later, the same lesmeyster would visit Engelthal once again, this time for ten days during Ascensiontide. This stay brought such joy to the convent that the sisters composed a song in remembrance of the occasion that, when recited, brought its singers into an ecstasy.

The relationship between these three narratives is difficult to establish. Following the internal chronologies of the narratives themselves, Adelheid’s vision of Christ during the mass celebrated by Berthold would have occurred in the year 1344. Susanne Bürkle has indicated that, in terms of the sister-book’s account of events, the narrative context of dez Mosburgers messe would date it either to 1313/1318 or shortly before 1340. Bürkle has argued that the latter is the more likely.\textsuperscript{49} The remarkable events recounted in the Gnadenvita, however, again according to Bürkle, must recall a much earlier time, probably in 1325.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[47] Christina Ebner, Büchlein von der Gnaden Überlast, ed. K. Schröder, p. 28, l. 17–18.
\item[49] For what follows, see Bürkle, Literatur im Kloster, p. 123–127.
\end{footnotes}
for they are recounted amid a series of episodes that can be dated between 1324 and 1328. As historical evidence these internal chronologies cannot count for much, since one must yet take into account complicated questions concerning the literary character of these works: the order in which the narratives themselves were written, their interdependence, and the presence of later embellishments (Legendarisierung) that are typically found in such literature. Siegfried Ringler, following the narrative chronology more closely, maintained the priority of the Gnadenvita relative to the other two texts, with the sister-book and Adelheid’s Offenbarungen following each other in close succession. In this view, the later texts would have distilled the Gnadenvita’s lengthier narrative of the events to focus on their impact on individual sisters in the convent and to name the lesmeyster. According to Susanne Bürkle, this is “not implausible” as far as the variants surrounding dez Mosburgers messe are concerned. However, having taken a broader and comparative approach to other passages from the prologue of the Gnadenvita, where she observes that the prologue used materials already circulating in Engelthal as its foils, Bürkle argues that the sister-book narrative was likely the earliest composition. If so, the lesmeyster episode could be regarded as an elaboration of this earlier event, and as such would exhibit literary techniques typical of the writings from Engelthal and other communities of religious women in the 14th century, in which a historical figure (such as Berthold of Moosburg) is reduced to his office (lesmeyster) as the event is creatively transformed into legend. Despite their divergent views about the ordering of these narratives, Ringler and Bürkle concur that all three passages stem from a single historical event: sometime in the 1320s or 1340s, Berthold of Moosburg visited Engelthal, celebrated mass, and preached.

For our purposes, it is enough to include these narratives and the questions raised by them without deciding in favour of one scholarly hypothesis or another. Even if these narratives relate to separate visits, which has not been ruled out, what they tell us is that Berthold’s pastoral responsibilities associated him with this important centre of mystical literature in his native region, and that his relationship with the convent made a remarkable impression in the communal memory of Engelthal and finally was assimilated to an extraordinary period treasured from its history. The dating of these events also suggests that Berthold’s association with the monastery preceded the mention of his vicariate in 1348. Perhaps his relations with the community began around the time of his lectorship in Regensburg attested in 1327, or even earlier. We may note in passing that Henry of Ekkewint, the prior of the Regensburg convent

---

50 Thali, Beten – Schreiben – Lesen, p. 83.
from 1321 to 1326, was also known to the community at Engelthal, where his sermons were being read.\footnote{Bürkle, \textit{Literatur im Kloster}, p. 105–118; Thali, \textit{Beten – Schreiben – Lesen}, p. 43. Henry of Ekkewint is named in the \textit{Gnadenvita} of Christina Ebner and a document from Engelthal in 1323.}

After Berthold's resignation of his executorship of Hardevust's will in 1361 in Cologne, likely due to his age, we have no further documentation about his activity. Not long after this, in 1363, some of his library, which seems to have been bequeathed to Heilig Kreuz, began to disperse. And so, from the formation and the pedagogical and pastoral activities of this son of Dominic, we turn now to reconstruct what we can of Berthold's library, following, as far as we are able, the chronology of his life and career.

2 Toward a Reconstruction of Berthold's Library

A manuscript used by Berthold early in his career, as can be established with a high degree of certainty, was his copy of Macrobius' \textit{Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis}, preserved now in ms Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, F.IV.31 (henceforth B), f. 1r-44r.\footnote{This section presupposes what remains the indispensable study of Berthold's library in Sturlese, "Introduzione", p. xxiii-lix. It will provide more details about some of Berthold's marginalia, take into account more recent scholarship, and propose different conclusions about what Berthold's library tells us about the dating of the \textit{Expositio}. On ms Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, F.IV.31, see Sturlese, "Introduzione", p. xxiv-xlii; id., \textit{Dokumente und Forschungen}, p. 73–76; Boese, \textit{Wilhelm von Moerbeke}, p. 76–77. The \textit{ex libris} of Berthold, whose name is visible after erasure, appears on the final folio of Macrobius' \textit{In Somnium Scipionis} (f. 44r): \textit{Iste liber est fratis Bertholdi de Mosburgch ordinis Praedicatorum provinciae Theutoniae}.}

The text of Macrobius is accompanied by numerous glosses written in different inks. Among the vast majority that was written in a darker ink is a gloss that refers to \textit{frater} Thomas Aquinas, which would date the glosses prior to 1323, the year of Aquinas' canonisation.\footnote{In Somn. Scip., I,21,6, f. 23V: \textit{Constat enim nulloam inter eas celerivs ceteris tardivsqve procedere. Nota omnes planetas esse eiusdem velocitatis, secundum auctorem. Idem videtur sentire Boethius in Musica, libro I, cap. 2, ubi dicit: ‘Namque alii excelliores, alii inferiores feruntur atque in omnes aequali incitatione volvuntur, ut per dispersae inaequalitates ratus cursuum ordo ducatur.’ Sed frater Thomas super II De caelo et mundo arguit oppositum. Quod expresse concluditur de sole, Venere et Mercurio, quorum idem est tempus medium.} We will see that several other manuscripts used by Berthold can be dated to the same period, insofar as they either seem to have been used for the composition of these glosses or were...
copied by the same scribe responsible for the text of Macrobius. As for the content of glosses, Irene Caiazzo has shown that many of them are copied from a commentary on Macrobius that circulated anonymously, but which scholars have attributed to William of Conches. Berthold sometimes modified these glosses, as in the case of the *accessus* (see table, below), and added many more of his own.

After the *Elementatio theologica*, which was cited ten times in the glosses, the text cited most frequently was the *De musica* of Boethius, in glosses clustered at beginning of Book II of Macrobius’ *Commentary* (27v, 28r, 28v, 29r, 30v, 31r, 31v, 32v). Other authorities mentioned include Albert the Great (*De caelo*: 22r; *De natura loci*: 32r, 32r; *Meteorae*: 35r), Al-Farghani (19v, 25r, 32r), Apuleius (12v), Aquinas (*De caelo*: 25v), Aristotle (22r, 39r, 40v, 41r), Averroes (13v), Avicenna (17r), Boethius (5r, 6v, 13r, 17v), Cicero (3r, 4r, 18r, 32r), Geber (32r), “Gregory of Nyssa” or Nemesius (40v), Homer (5v), Isidore (30v), the *Liber de causis* (17r), Moses Maimonides (27v), Ovid (15r), Plato (3r, 4v, 18r), Plotinus (38r), Porphyry (5v), Ptolemy (25r, 32r), Pythagoras (6r, 6v, 9r), Robert Grosseteste (*De sphaera*: 32r), Thabit ibn Qurra (19v, 25r, 30v, 32r), Valerius Maximus (3v), and Virgil (5v, 6r, 11v, 13v, 32r). Berthold also referred to Dietrich of Freiberg’s *De entium universitate*, a treatise that is no longer extant but is attested in the early catalogues.

The following table contains all of Berthold’s glosses that mention Proclus or the *Elementatio theologica*. Its columns indicate the text from Macrobius being commented upon, then Berthold’s gloss, and finally any passages in the *Expositio* where the same passage from Macrobius was cited.

Most of these glosses cluster around *In Somn. Scip.*, i.14.6–9, where Macrobius explained what Cicero meant when he wrote that “minds [*animi*] have been given to human beings from those eternal fires”, and thus in what sense human beings have mind in common with the stars. To do this, Macrobius set out an

---

54 See I. Caiazzo, “Mains célèbres dans les marges des *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* de Macrobe”, in D. Jacquart, C. Burnett (eds), *Scientia in margine. Études sur les marginaux dans les manuscrits scientifiques du Moyen Âge à la Renaissance* (Genève: Librarie Droz, 2005), p. 171–189, who observes (p. 179) that Berthold used what is known today as the *versio longior* of the glosses, and either had access to a better witness of it than any extant copy or corrected the text himself. A partial edition of the glosses can be found in H. Rodnite, *The Doctrine of the Trinity in William of Conches’ Glosses on Macrobius. Texts and Studies*, PhD diss. (Columbia University, 1972).

55 In *Somn. Scip.*, i.17-5, f. 20r: *qvod qvidem to pan, id est omne, dixervnt. Pan enim non est aliuqu quam mundus ipse; nota de ratione universitatis ex tractatu magistri Theoderici qui intitulatur De entium universitate*. For the catalogues, see Sturlese, *Dokumente und Forschungen*, p. 130–134. For this gloss, see figure 2, below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macrobius, <em>In Somnium Scipionis</em></th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Expositio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Accessus                        | (f. 3r) Titulus talis est: Macrobius Ambrosii oriniocensis *In Somnium Scipionis* commentum incipit. Macrobius dictus est quasi longa via [sic], utpote quia a celo incipiens usque ad terram extendit, et de ea etiam tractavit; sic vocatus est a macros, quod est longum, et bios, quod est via. Ambrosius autem nuncupatus est quasi deorum cibus, quia ambrosia est quedam herba, que in sacrificiis deorum apponi solebat, quasi cibus deorum sic appellata. Contraxit autem hoc nomen ab eventu, quia de immortalitate deorum et animarum, quod est quasi cibus eorumdem tractavit; quilibet enim spiritus ab antiquis, et maxime causalia entium principia, ut patet in *Elementatione theologica*, appellati sunt dii. [...]
<p>| (1.9.1) Animarum originem manare de celo | (f. 13r) Prorus in <em>Elementatione theologica</em> 206 propositione et usque ad finem prosequitur istam materiam. (f. 15v) Quia secundum 190 elementum <em>Elementationis theologice</em> omnis anima media est impartibilium et specierum circa corpus partitarum. | Cf. 176C, p. 163, l. 206 – p. 164, l. 218a |
| (1.12.6) Et hec est essentialia quam individuam eandem que dividuam Plato in <em>Thimeo</em> | (f. 17r) Per 11 Procli. | 206F, p. 223, l. 245 |
| (1.14.6) Deus, qui primus causa est et vocatur | | 193E, p. 103, l. 121–123 |
| | | Cf. 22C, p. 103, l. 190–193; 157B, p. 178, l. 41–47 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macrobius, <em>In Somnium Scipionis</em></th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Expositio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1.14.6) Qua parte Patrem inspicit, plenam similitudinem* servat auctoris, animam vero de se creat posteriora respiciens</td>
<td>(f. 17r) Nota processum celorum et orbium ex Avicenna, que posito tamen rudis est in comparatione dictis Procli in sua <em>Elementatione theologica.</em></td>
<td>Cf. 20A, p. 67, l. 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.14.7) Habet ergo et purissimam ex mente, de qua nata est, rationem</td>
<td>(f. 17r) Omnis enim, secundum Proclum, anima ab intellectu proxime subsistit.</td>
<td>207E, p. 229, l. 151 – p. 230, l. 188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.14.7) Quod logycon vocatur</td>
<td>(f. 17r) Quia anima est divina, intellectualis et animalis ex Proclo et 3 propositione <em>De causis.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.14.7) Sed ex his primum [...] sunt caducis</td>
<td>(f. 17r) Nota ex Proclo et <em>De causis</em> tria esse genera animarum: quedam enim sunt divine et intellectualues, quedam intellectualues non divine, quedam animales tantum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.14.8) Sapientes de Deo HWYH nominant ex illo mero ac purissimo fonte mentis</td>
<td>(f. 17v) Nota de hoc Proclum 180 propositione.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.14.9) Immo partem eius vix solis humanis corporibus convenire</td>
<td>(f. 17v) Et ideo anima humana in Proclou vocatur partialis (partialia <em>cod.</em>) circa finem libri.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

account of procession, describing how the hypostases of Intellect, Soul, and Body arise sequentially from God.\textsuperscript{56}

According to Macrobius, God, the first cause (here Berthold noted Proposition 11 of the \textit{Elementatio}), produces Intellect from himself with the overflowing fecundity of his power. This Intellect retains a perfect likeness of its cause or father as long as it contemplates him (here Berthold compared Avicenna and Proclus) but produces Soul when it turns to what comes after it. Soul in turn is filled by its own father as long as it contemplates him (Berthold commented [f. 17r]: as long as “it is noble”), but degenerates to produce bodies when it turns away. Therefore, the rational part of Soul (\textit{logikon}) derives from Intellect (here Berthold noted Proposition 193 of the \textit{Elementatio}), but its sensitive (\textit{aisthetikon}) and nutritive (\textit{phytikon}) parts come from itself (Berthold noted Proposition 201 of Proclus and Proposition 3 of the \textit{Liber de causis}). The rational part of the soul is joined with the divine, but the lower parts are bound to mortality (here Berthold noted Proposition 184 of the \textit{Elementatio} and the \textit{Liber de causis} on the three kinds of soul, perhaps thinking again of Proposition 3). When Soul creates bodies, it begins from the purest contemplation of Intellect it had from its birth, and thus produces the heavenly bodies and endows them with mind (here Berthold cited Proposition 180, where Proclus explained how every intellect is a whole but each in a different way: the unparticipated Intellect is an unqualified whole, while every partial intellect is a whole-in-parts). For Macrobius, Soul’s power degenerates as it inclines further toward the earth and finds that the mortal realm is incapable of bearing the pure divinity of Intellect. Ultimately, only the human body can receive the rational power. Here Berthold focused on the word “part” and associated it with the propositions “around the end of the book” of the \textit{Elementatio}, where Proclus called the human soul a “partial” soul.

These glosses offer some precious hints about Berthold’s attitude toward the relation between Christianity and pagan philosophy at this stage of his career. He scorned the attempts of certain interpreters to identify the hypostases of God, Intellect, and Soul with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, when he felt it was clear that the philosophers – not just Macrobius – were referring to God and a plurality of separate intelligences and heavenly souls.\textsuperscript{57} In this he was almost

\textsuperscript{56} For a translation and analysis of this passage, see S. Gersh, \textit{Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism. The Latin Tradition}, 2 vols (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), vol. 2, p. 526–527. For some of the marginalia, see figure 1, below.

\textsuperscript{57} See \textit{In Somn. Scip.}, i.14.6, f. 17r: \textit{hec mens quod noys vocatvr. Nota quidam (quosdam cod.) mentem apud philosophas a Deo creatam dicunt esse Filium seu Verbum Dei a Patre genitum, et anima\textless m\textgreater ab utroque manantem esse omne \textdagger}\textit{Spiritum Sanctum, quod tamen derisorium est, sicut ex intentione eorum in libris suis theologicis patet, loquebantur enim de Deo, de intelligentiis, de animabus celorum.}
certainly inspired by William of Conches’ criticism, found in the Chartrian’s glosses on the same passage (*In Somn. Scip. 1.14.6*), of those interpreters who draw the parallel so directly that they endorse the heresy of subordinationism. Berthold’s judgement, however, made no exception even for William’s own proposal, which was to substitute *genuit* and *mittit* for Macrobius’ *creavit* and *creat* to make the analogy more acceptable.\(^{58}\) Now, it is true that in the *Expositio* Berthold will appeal to the Hermetica (*Asclepius*, the *Liber xxiv philosophorum*) and to Patristic testimony (Augustine, ps.-Augustine or Quodvultdeus) for evidence of Trinitarian doctrine among the ancient pagan theologians and Platonists.\(^{59}\) But such intimations and achievements were not his concern here. His criticism in the glosses was not intended to define the boundaries of paganism and Christianity, but to safeguard the existence of the plurality of intelligences and heavenly souls as they were posited by the philosophers (*loquebantur enim de Deo, de intelligentiis, de animabus celorum*) and, thus, the integrity of what he will come to call natural providence (*providentia naturalis*). The assimilation of the three hypostases of the philosophers to the persons of the Trinity would undermine the entire edifice of mediation that Berthold regarded as essential to philosophical cosmology. Berthold’s Trinitarianism in the *Expositio* was guided by precisely the same concern: God, the gods (or primordial causes), the intelligences, and heavenly souls must be Trinitarian principles, because this interior dynamism (of persons in God and of activities in the separate substances) is what accounts both for their causal fecundity and, accordingly, the continuity of procession. Rather than resolving all ranks of creatures into their Trinitarian principle, Berthold would identify each separate substance as an expressed image of the Trinity. These principles,

---


in his view, can be most accurately understood only once one has read “the theological books” of the philosophers and interpreted them on their own terms.

These glosses on Macrobius exhibit Berthold’s facility with the *Elementatio theologica* and the *Liber de causis*. They also display a certain concordism in his approach to philosophical cosmology, as when he noted basic agreements between the philosophers – Macrobius, Avicenna, Proclus, and the *Liber de causis* – concerning the four major genera of the universe (God, Intellect, Soul, Body). By the time we reach the *Expositio*, however, we will see a very different account of the history of philosophy that would have us separate this group into two camps. We may note that this outlook is anticipated here in one gloss, where Berthold unfavourably compared Avicenna’s account of procession with that of Proclus (*rudis est in comparatione dictis Procli*).  

The content of these glosses exerted a limited influence on the Proclus commentary. Looking to the right column of the table we find only one reference to the *Elementatio theologica* in the glosses (1.9.1-3) that matches a citation of the same passage of Macrobius in the *Expositio* (206F). Three additional non-Proclean parallels may be noted: (1) a citation of the *In Somn. Scip.*, 1.12.6, in 193E that is followed by a reference to Proposition 190 of the *Elementatio*, which was also cited in the gloss to that passage in Macrobius (15v); (2) a quotation from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* is included in 206E as part of a lengthy series of citations from Macrobius (1.12.1-8) and appears next to the same passage in the manuscript (f. 15r), but in the *Expositio* the quotation is longer; (3) a description of *mundus* attributed to Apuleius in a gloss on *In Somn. Scip.*, 1.8.4 (the world is “the ordered collection of elements with their adornment”), which does not correspond precisely to any passage from that writer, matches a citation of Apuleius in 164D of the *Expositio*, included in a list of various

---

60 This remark looks ahead to Berthold’s comparison of “Peripatetic” and “Platonic” accounts of procession in his commentary on Proposition 5 of the *Elementatio theologica*. On this, see 4.2, below. Berthold may also have had in mind Proclus’ elaborate account of mediation between cosmic series in Propositions 108-112 of the *Elements*.


meanings of the word *mundus*; in this case, the definition and attribution in fact derived from William of Conches’ glosses on Macrobius.

It is nevertheless reasonable to suppose that Berthold continued to use this copy of Macrobius or one very similar to it while writing the *Expositio*, though this does not mean that every citation of Macrobius in the commentary must be corrected against the text of the Basel manuscript, as it has been in the critical edition, since many of Berthold’s citations in fact depended on Thomas of York’s *Sapientiale*. After we set aside the citations deriving from Thomas, those that remain reflect the corrections or interlinear glosses we find in Berthold’s hand in the manuscript. Sometimes the text of Macrobius quoted in the *Expositio* differs from Basel, with no changes indicated in the manuscript, but none of these instances is so drastic that it could not reflect an ad hoc correction, elaboration, or scribal error. This suggests either that the

---


65 Berthold of Moosburg, *Expositio*, 6B (*Sapientiale*, lib. vii, c. 3 and lib. vii, c. 2); 9B (1.6); 10A (v.21); 12C (v.21); 18A (1.6); 23E (1.29); 23l (v.16); 136A (1.6); 146L (v.21); 151A (1.14); 166G (vii.12); 176B (1.27); 176C (1.28); 184A (vii.15); 190B (vii.18); 199B (vii.6).

66 Corrections in B match citations in the *Expositio*: Berthold of Moosburg, *Expositio*, 141 (p. 12, l. 340=41r: *nisi* in B); 17A (p. 33, l. 17=38v: *nec* ne B); 17A (p. 34, l. 55=43v: *occasunque* *occasuque* B); 17B (p. 35, l. 71=40r: *non* nec B); 17B (p. 35, l. 94=40r: *exercet* *exiret* B); 17B (p. 36, l. 108=40v: *audere* *audire* B); 179A / 190A (p. 201, l. 61 / p. 79, l. 93=9v: *deinde* *modo* B); 206E (p. 221, l. 193=15v: *enim*). One exception: the correction at f. 42r (actore *auctore* corr. sup. lin. manu Bertholdi) was not carried over in 17B (p. 36, l. 124).

Interlinear glosses in B also found in *Expositio*: 100I (p. 208, l. 169=171=41v: *togathon*, *id est summus*. *protopanton*, *id est primus sive princeps omnium*); in 151A, where Berthold used the *Sapientiale* for the same passage from Macrobius, he did not include this gloss. A gloss added by Berthold in the manuscript (f. 17r: *estheticon*, *id est sensualitas*) is found in his citation of Macrobius at 207E; however, just two words later, the *Expositio* has *phyticon*, *id est generatio*, which differs from the gloss (*vegetatio*).

Transliterations of Greek words in B also found in *Expositio*: 141 (p. 12, l. 31=49v: *antokineton*); 141 (p. 12, l. 325=41r: *antokineti*); 190A (p. 78, l. 61=9r: *thetrasim*); 236E (p. 221, l. 187=15r: *tirocinia*).

67 Berthold of Moosburg, *Expositio*, 17A (p. 33, l. 23=24: *moveant* *moveat* B); 17A (p. 34, l. 29: *de* *ex* B); 179A (p. 201, l. 56: *sequitur* *sequeretur* B); 190A (p. 78, l. 63: *etiam* et B); 190A
Basel manuscript was Berthold’s personal copy of Macrobius, which he corrected when a better text was at hand, or that he eventually stopped using the Basel copy when a better text came into his possession. Evidence in favour of the first possibility includes the parallels in Basel and the Expositio that diverge from variants in the apparatus of James Willis’ edition. Furthermore, some citations of Macrobius in the Expositio were introduced with a remark resembling a corresponding marginal note in the Basel manuscript. Finally, there are Berthold’s other interventions in the manuscript, such as the enumerations of arguments in the margins, trefoils, and interlinear divisions of the text, which sometimes correspond to citations in the Expositio.

The same Basel manuscript also contains Berthold’s copies of Proclus’ Tria opuscula (f. 46r-59r: De decem dubitationibus circa providentiam; f. 59v-68v: De providentia et fato; f. 70r-82va: De malorum subsistentia) and Proclus’

(p. 78, l. 66: epyneticon; epymeticon B); 190A (p. 78, l. 80: hoc; hos B); 206D (p. 220, l. 155: rationem; rationicionem B). In 206E, the critical edition follows B, although the Oxford and Vatican manuscripts share the same readings (p. 221, l. 173: dirigitur; digeritur B); (p. 221, l. 195: materiae; modo B); (p. 221, l. 198: vocavit; notavit B). The citation at 207E differs from B (p. 230, l. 185: credique; crescendique B), but Berthold then paraphrases the passage with crescendi instead of credi (p. 230, l. 193).

Macrobius, Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis, ed. J. Willis (Leipzig: Teubner, 1970). Cf. Berthold of Moosburg, Expositio, 132E (p. 203, l. 115–119: ad unum meando; ad inum meandi Willis), however (expressius; pressius B); 190A (p. 78, l. 71: creatae; generata Willis); 190A (p. 79, l. 93–94: competentiam; concordiam Willis), but cf. 179A (p. 202, l. 63: concordiam; 190A (p. 79, l. 97: hoc; quo Willis); 190A (p. 79, l. 98: quem; hoc quod Willis); 190D (p. 220, l. 156: theoricon; theoreticon Willis); 206D (p. 220, l. 163: animal; animalis Willis); 206D (p. 220, l. 165: arcae sita; arcessita Willis); 206D (p. 223, l. 166: hoc; haec Willis). When the word order in B varies from the manuscripts considered by Willis, the Expositio follows B: e.g., 17B (p. 35, l. 100), 179A (p. 201, l. 48; p. 203, l. 124); 190A (p. 79, l. 100); 206D (p. 220, l. 162–163); 206E (p. 221, l. 185). Some variants are identical in both manuscripts of the Expositio and in B, but do not appear in the critical edition: 179A (p. 203, l. 120–121: Diocles; et add. O V B); 179A (p. 203, l. 121: septem; septimos O V B); 179A (p. 203, l. 124: quiddam; quoddam O V B).

Beside the passage quoted at 132E (see n. 68, above), Berthold wrote in B (In Somn. Scip., i.1.14, f. 17v): Nota de chathena aurea. Similarly, he cited Macrobius on the world soul at 190A (p. 78, l. 68–78), and in B (In Somn. Scip., i.6.45, f. 9v): Nota de anima mundi.
Elementatio physica (f. 82vb-84ra). The corrections and glosses to the Opuscula were made by Berthold, as was the copy of the Elementatio physica, at least up to Proposition 5. Even though Berthold’s ex libris appears only after Macrobius (44r), and we know that that manuscript itself was probably bound in its current form only in the late 14th century, it has been argued convincingly by Loris Sturlese that the texts of Macrobius and the Opuscula were in fact copied at approximately the same time: a fragment of the beginning of De decem dubitationibus, found at the end of the manuscript (85r-v), which is part of the same quire beginning at 80r, appears to have been copied by the same scribe responsible for the Macrobius text and for the anonymous fragment on optics at 45r-v.

There are some clues about the chronology of Berthold’s use of these texts. Throughout this copy of the Tria opuscula, we find Berthold using sequences of dots and Arabic numerals, written above the line, that clarify the word order and sense of William of Moerbeke’s *verbum de verbo* translation from the Greek. One would hardly expect this of a reader already familiar with its contents. When Berthold was reading these texts, he was studying them seriously for the first time. These interventions therefore offer us a precious window onto Berthold’s process of discovery as he made his way through this new Proclean material. Given the importance of Proclus’ *De malorum subsistentia* for Berthold’s Expositio on Proposition 206 (on the doctrine of the soul’s cyclical descent and re-ascent), where he will combine Proclus’ doctrine with passages from Macrobius on several points, it is intriguing that the Tria opuscula were never mentioned in the glosses on the *In Somnium Scipionis*, even though the Elementatio and Proposition 206 are. This suggests that Berthold studied the Tria opuscula sometime after completing the glosses on Macrobius.

In the manuscript of the Opuscula, compared to *In Somnium Scipionis*, one finds more corrections and interventions in the text but far fewer marginal glosses or references to other authorities. Apart from the Elementatio

---


theologica, which Berthold cited 17 times and with the same proficiency we find in the Macrobius glosses, only Plato (52v), Pythagoras (58r), Aristotle (60r), and the Manichaeans (78v) are mentioned in the Opuscula manuscript. Berthold’s glosses that mention the Elementatio are listed in the following table (asterisks indicate interlinear references to the text in Berthold’s hand). The third column does not list all citations of the relevant passage from the Opuscula in the Expositio, which are often numerous, but only those cases where the specific proposition noted in the gloss and the proposition containing the citation of the Opuscula in the later commentary correspond.

Four of these 17 references to the Elementatio theologica directly correspond to citations in the Expositio, with one additional, though more distant, parallel (120H). Apart from these, there are many trefoils, manicules, and other notabilia corresponding to passages cited in the Expositio. These correspondences range throughout the Expositio but are, of course, clustered around the propositions where one would expect to find them, on the gods and their providence. They cannot, therefore, readily provide clues as to the order in which Berthold wrote his Expositio. They do, however, suggest that he continued to use this copy when composing his commentary. The variants in the manuscript, as well as Berthold’s corrections, match what we find in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Proclus, <em>Tria opuscula</em></strong></th>
<th><strong>Gloss</strong></th>
<th><strong>Expositio</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(De decem dub., 1.3)</em> Hec quidem simul omnium et simpliciter</td>
<td>(f. 46rb) De hoc habemus in <em>Elementatione theologica</em> propositione.</td>
<td>170M, p. 105, l. 363-374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De decem dub., 3.9)</em> Quomodo discerneret in cognitione</td>
<td>(f. 47va) <em>Eodem</em> propositione in commento.</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De decem dub., 3.11)</em> Que ante ipsum* finitum</td>
<td>(f. 47vb) <em>Per 93</em></td>
<td>93D, p. 169, l. 98-102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De decem dub., 5.27)</em> Que enim ex his que ab ipsa, et ab ipsa</td>
<td>(f. 51ra) <em>Per 56.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De decem dub., 10.62)</em> Quod utique diis existentiam characterizare dicimus*</td>
<td>(f. 58va) <em>Per 120</em></td>
<td>Cf. 120H, p. 102, l. 374-381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De decem dub., 10.63)</em> Omnis equidem deus, ut dictum est a me etiam prius,* secundum le unum habet** esse deus, quod utique ante intellectum*** dicimus existere</td>
<td>(f. 58va-b) <em>114</em> <strong>114</strong><em>Per 115</em></td>
<td>64F, p. 197, l. 155-161.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De decem dub., 10.63)</em> Duplicibus autem unitatibus* entibus sive etiam bonitatibus</td>
<td>(f. 58vb) <em>Per 64</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De mal. subs., 1.2)</em> Quia* omnia [...] bonum appetunt.*</td>
<td>(f. 70rb) <em>Per 7</em></td>
<td>6F, p. 135, l. 294–303; cf. 21F, p. 87, l. 417-420; 64C, p. 194, l. 66 – p. 195, l. 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De mal. subs., 1.5)</em> Propter quod et appetitus boni omnibus</td>
<td>(f. 70vb) <em>Per 8.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De mal. subs., 2.13)</em> Omnibus procedentibus [...] per similitudinem est</td>
<td>(f. 72va) Hoc valet ad intellectioem <em>theologicis</em> Procli.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2  Berthold of Moosburg’s Proclean Glosses on Proclus, *Tria opuscula* (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proclus, <em>Tria opuscula</em></th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th><em>Expositio</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(De mal. subs., 10.31)</em> Neque enim duo* prima: unde enim totaliter, monade** non ente?</td>
<td>(f. 76va) *Per 22**Per 21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De mal. subs., 10.31)</em> Ubique gentium assimilari amat ad* generans</td>
<td>(f. 76va) *Per 28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(De mal. subs., 11.37)</em> Quid enim ultra naturam boni?*</td>
<td>(f. 77vb) *Per 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the *Expositio*. What readings differ between Basel and the extant copies of the *Expositio* could be explained either as an editorial decision on Berthold’s part or a scribal error. In light of the foregoing, we may conclude that Berthold began using this copy of the *Tria opuscula* around 1323, probably after he had annotated Macrobius, and continued to use it throughout the period in which he wrote the *Expositio*.  

Two, perhaps three, other manuscripts used by Berthold could be associated with this period of his career, since they may have been the source of certain citations found in the Macrobius glosses that are securely datable to 1323. The strongest connection of the three relates to the autographs of Albert the Great now in MS Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. Vindob. 273. As Loris Sturlese first observed, a citation of Albert’s *De natura loci* in the Macrobius glosses (32r) matches a trefoil and manicule next to the same

---

76 As Helmut Boese observed, Berthold corrected this copy against an exemplar related to the best extant witness of the *Tria opuscula* (MS Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, lat. 473), which belonged to the library of the Augustinians in Paris. This is not, however, sufficient evidence to assert that Berthold made these corrections during an otherwise unattested “stay in Paris”. See C. Steel, “William of Moerbeke, translator of Proclus”, in S. Gersh (ed.), *Interpreting Proclus. From Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 247–263, at p. 252.

77 On the manuscript, see Sturlese, *Dokumente und Forschungen*, p. 120–126, and on its transmission, see n. 112, below.
passage in the Vienna manuscript (145v). As Berthold would have known it, the manuscript contained the autographs of Albert’s commentaries on the Physics (from lib. vii, tr. 3, c. 1 to the end), on the De caelo, and his De natura loci, and De causis proprietatum elementorum (ending at lib. xi, tr. 2, c. 6), which the younger Dominican annotated sparingly. These texts probably belonged to the Dominican library in Cologne, where Albert originally wrote them in close succession, approximately between 1251 and 1254, as he began his commentaries on the entire Aristotelian corpus.

Another manuscript used by Berthold (though leaving no trace in the Expositio) and linked to the library in Cologne is now Ms Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Db. 87. On its final folio we find an ex libris and a table of contents in Berthold’s hand (268v), and in three places (1r, 103r, 268v) the ex libris of the Dominican convent in Cologne. This suggests that the works originally belonged to the library and were only bound together after they came into Berthold’s possession. The manuscript contains the only extant witness of Ptolemy’s Almagest in the translation of ‘Abd al-Masīḥ of Winchester (1r-71r);81 the Liber introductorius Ptolomaei of Geminus of Rhodes (listed in the table of contents as Introductiones Ptholomaei in Almagesti), which is Gerard of Cremona’s translation of Geminus’ Elementa astronomiae (72r-102v);82 an anonymous fragment on geometry (102v-103r; not listed in the table of contents); the Almagesti minor, which is a summary of Books 1-vi of the Almagest but reorganised on a Euclidean model, which is attributed to Campanus of Novara in the table of contents but in fact it is by Walter of Lille.
and, finally, the *Liber super Almagesti* of Geber (Jābir ibn Aflāḥ) in Gerard of Cremona’s translation, which is listed in the table of contents as *Flores ex Almagesto* (162r-268r). Berthold’s hand is discernible clearly in one gloss (184r) and possibly in another (196v), both accompanying the text of Geber. Berthold’s two references to Ptolemy in the Macrobius glosses (*ms* Basel, UB, F. IV. 31, f. 25r, 32r) or his single reference to Geber (32r) might reflect his study of these texts. We cannot, however, be certain of this, since he may have relied on other direct sources, such as Albert the Great’s and Thomas Aquinas’ commentaries on the *De caelo*, which are cited elsewhere in the Macrobius glosses. At any rate, this manuscript is further evidence of Berthold’s interest in astronomy, even if his expertise in the subject cannot be gleaned from the sparse traces of his reading left in these rare and technical works.

In the same Macrobius gloss that mentions Albert’s *De natura loci* (32r), we find Berthold’s sole reference to the *De sphaera* of Robert Grosseteste in the Basel manuscript. Loris Sturlesse has made the interesting proposal that *ms* München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14448, shows signs of Berthold’s use, particularly in its table of contents (100r), whose hand seems to match the *ex libris* and table of contents from the Dresden manuscript, and in two notes indicating prices of sale (28v, 50r), and in at least one interlinear gloss (70r). In the table of contents, we find listed the *De sphaera* of Robert Grosseteste, the *Compotus* of Grosseteste, and the *Elements* of Euclid, while the prices of sale are found at the end of the commentary on Ludolphus of Luco’s *Flores grammaticae* (2r-28v) and the beginning of the *De sphaera* (50r). Sometime before 1347, the manuscript eventually was bound in its current form in Regensburg, where it was conserved at the Benedictine abbey of St. Emmeram. It could therefore shed more light on Berthold’s activity in Regensburg. However, on the basis of the handwriting alone, without the *ex libris* we find in Dresden or

---

85 The first gloss is transcribed in Sturlese, “Note su Bertoldo di Moosburg O.P.”, p. 254, n. 31. Sturlese, “Introduzione”, p. xlix, also attributed the second gloss to Berthold, but the resemblance is not as clear.
the parallel gloss and marginalia found in the Vienna autographs, I am hesitant to affirm that the interventions mentioned by Sturlese are Berthold’s without further analysis. Be that as it may, all the evidence of Berthold’s activity at this stage – the glosses on Dietrich’s *De iride* from 1318, the glosses on Macrobius with the authors cited in them before 1323, the autographs of Albert’s works on natural philosophy, and possibly the treatises in the Dresden and Munich manuscripts – suggests that he was engaged in teaching natural philosophy after his theological studies in Oxford, and had procured manuscripts to this end, probably in Cologne, and possibly in Regensburg.

Another text of Albert the Great that certainly came from Cologne and was used by Berthold, although we do not know when, is *ms Köln, Historisches Archiv, W 258a*, which is entirely made up of Albert’s autograph of the *De animalibus* that he wrote between 1258 and 1262/1263, and included the treatises *De natura et origine animae* and *De principiis motus processivi*. In it we find Berthold’s *ex libris* (f. <I>r) and numerous interventions (*notabilia*, trefoils, and crosses) that have been convincingly attributed to him, which demonstrate the friar’s extensive and careful study of the text. This reading of *De animalibus* was clearly undertaken independently of the commentary on Proclus, although a trefoil does appear beside the only unambiguous citation of the *De animalibus* in the *Expositio*. Of course, the subject matter of *De animalibus* is quite remote from “the invisible things of God” considered in the *Elementatio theologica*. Even so, for a more relevant treatise like the *De natura et origine animae*, which was cited slightly more often in the *Expositio* in clusters around Propositions 17–18, 41, and 205–206, we find that only one of these citations corresponds to the marginalia in the Cologne manuscript.

A far more important text for Berthold’s *Expositio* was the *Clavis physicae* of Honorius Augustodunens. Scholars have tended to assume that Berthold

91 Berthold of Moosburg, *Expositio*, 41C, p. 49, l. 103 – p. 50, l. 109 = f. 310r-v. No markings correspond to the series of citations at 17E (f. 314v-315v) or the citation at 206B (f. 322v). There are trefoils beside the passages from *De natura et origine animae, tr. 1, c. 2–6*, which are paraphrased at 205A-C (f. 308v-313r), but they do not correspond to the precise expressions that Berthold copied from Albert.

Another manuscript of Albert (not an autograph) that Berthold may have used is *ms Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, F.1.21*, which contains Albert the Great’s *Ethica* (his second commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, from around 1262–1263) and his *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa*, and was copied in the 14th century. Two trefoils align with the only citations of Albert’s *Ethica* in the *Expositio*: 13B (p. 210, l. 48 – p. 212, l. 109 = f. 57r) and 13B (p. 212, l. 119 – p. 213, l. 143 = f. 8va).
discovered the *Clavis* sometime around 1327, when his lectorship was attested in Regensburg, since we know that the text circulated in two manuscripts in the city by 1347. This view was largely influenced by Marie-Thérèse d’Alverny’s study of the manuscript used and lightly annotated by Berthold (Ms Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 6734), which traced its origins to the abbey of St. Emmeram on the outskirts of the city, where Honorius may have once resided. From this it seemed natural to conclude that one of these two manuscripts was in fact the text used by Berthold, which would account for his consequential misattribution of the *Clavis* to a Greek abbot, Theodorus (even though the *Clavis* is listed anonymously in the library catalogues in question). However, in a review of Paolo Lucentini’s *Platonismo medievale* published nearly 30 years later, d’Alverny announced that, after more a careful inspection of the manuscript and in consultation with other experts, she had revised her hypothesis about the manuscript’s Bavarian origins: the scribal hand would rather locate the text in the region around Cologne, while the extraordinary frontispieces and illustrations adorning the manuscript that provoked Berthold’s misattribution follow a style more characteristic of the Mosel valley.

This has important consequences for the dating of the *Expositio*, since the most convincing *terminus post quem* had been proposed by Loris Sturlese in 1974 on the assumption that Berthold’s *Clavis* came from Regensburg. If this were the case, and by 1327 Berthold already had at his disposal the texts that would become the foundations of his commentary (*Elementatio theologica*, the *Tria opuscula*, at least some of Dietrich’s works, and the *Clavis physicae* and, we would now add, the *Sapientiale* of Thomas of York), then all the conditions would be in place to begin the *Expositio* as we know it. Now, however, we must share d’Alverny’s reservations, and ask with her why Berthold could not have found the *Clavis* in “Cologne or its environs”. This in turn revises the dating of the *Expositio*, since we have seen that by 1323 Berthold probably already had access to at least one very valuable manuscript from Cologne (the autograph treatises on natural philosophy by Albert the Great) and possibly

---

93 M.-Th. D’Alverny, “Le cosmos symbolique du XIIe siècle”, in *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 23(1953), p. 31-81, at p. 34, n. 1 and 36, n. 1.
the astronomical works now in Dresden. It is conceivable that he had also encountered the *Clavis* at that time.

It is undeniable that the Eriugenian contents of the *Clavis physicae* would play a pivotal role in the execution of Berthold’s commentary on the *Elementatio theologica*. Eriugena’s thought came to Berthold from four sources: (1) the *Clavis physicae*, which was by far its most important conduit, which Berthold attributed to a Theodorus, “the abbot of Constantinople”;97 (2) the glosses appended to the famous Parisian *Corpus Dionysiacum* (ms Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 17341) which derived from Eriugena but, by the mid-13th century, were indiscriminately attributed to Maximus – all of which Berthold knew only second-hand through Albert the Great, Ulrich of Strassburg, and Thomas of York;98 (3) the *Liber de causis primis et secundis et fluxu quod ad ea consequitur*, which Berthold called *De causa causarum* and attributed to Al-Farabi;99 and (4) Eriugena’s *Homily on the Gospel of John*, which like many other medieval authors Berthold attributed to Origen.100 The doctrinal and verbal correspondences between these texts did not escape Berthold’s notice. In a more detailed analysis of Berthold’s use of these sources, I have argued that he proceeded as if texts 1 and 2, written by Theodorus the abbot and “Maximus the monk”, as he was named in the *Clavis*, belonged to the same Greek tradition of commentary on Dionysius the Areopagite.101

It was under the banner of Dionysius, then, that Berthold received two crucial doctrines that enabled him to navigate the most difficult passages of the *Elementatio theologica* for a Christian to accept. The notion of the primordial causes (*causae primordiales*) made by God the Father in the Word became the key to Berthold’s interpretation of the gods, unities, or goodnesses (*unitates, bonitates*) located between the One and beings, which could be assimilated to the divine processions of Dionysius and the divine ideas of Augustine. Similarly, the Eriugenian doctrine of the spiritual body, which belongs to the human as the image of God (*imago Dei*) in Paradise, along with Eriugena’s concomitant teaching about the resurrected body, became Berthold’s only Christian guides for interpreting Proclus’ notion in Proposition 196 of the indestructible spiritual body or “vehicle” (*ὄχημα, susceptaculum*) that is always united to the soul. Notwithstanding his initial hesitations, as we will see, Berthold included the doctrine of the spiritual body transmitted in the *Clavis* partly because it came to him with the Patristic authority of Dionysius, Gregory (=Gregory of Nyssa), and Maximus,102 and also because it could be explained using the ontology of individuation he inherited from Dietrich of Freiberg.

In the *Expositio*, Berthold cited passages from 93 different chapters of the *Clavis* (out of 529) for a total of 132 citations.103 In his lengthier citations, he identified the speakers in the dialogue, the *Magister* or *Discipulus*, who were depicted on one of his manuscript’s frontispieces as Theodorus the abbot of Constantinople and John the Monk. As was his custom with older sources, Berthold’s citations of the *Clavis* were almost always explicit, although he sometimes copied the text without attribution for teachings from even earlier authorities like Dionysius or Maximus (e.g. 119E).

In light of the distribution of citations in the *Expositio*, one can note that Berthold looked to the *Clavis physicæ* principally in relation to the two challenging topics just mentioned: the gods and the spiritual body. The most extensive and sustained concentration of citations (25) falls between Propositions 120–129, on the gods and their providence. The most intensive concentrations

---

102 See 5.1, n. 30, below.

103 I follow the enumeration of the chapters of the *Clavis* in the critical editions of Paolo Lucentini and Pasquale Arfé, but it must be noted that the subject headings in the margins of the manuscript used by Berthold do not always correspond to them. Berthold referred to the *Clavis physicæ* as a continuous whole. He used the same relative references for citations that are clustered close together (e.g., 2A: *parum supra, aliqualiter infra*), and passages which were far apart (in 196F, *bene infra* signals a leap from chapters 105 to 272, but in 3A only from 137 to 142). Sometimes (e.g., 80G) he referred both to the approximate location in the manuscript (*circa medium*) and gives a vague reference to the subject heading in the margin.
are found in Propositions 196 (seven) and 210 (12), with other citations clustered nearby, which are the central passages in the *Elementatio* on the doctrine of the soul’s imperishable, immaterial body or vehicle.

The following table, in the first column, indicates the marginal crosses and *notabilia* written by Berthold in his manuscript (with any brief glosses in his hand). The second column includes references to the critical editions of Paolo Lucentini and Pasquale Arfé. Finally, in the third column are any passages in the *Expositio* where these texts from the *Clavis* were used.\(^{104}\)

Unlike the Macrobius and Proclus glosses in the Basel manuscript, here there are only the briefest of *notabilia* and no references to any other authorities. Nevertheless, there is a clear correspondence between roughly half of the marginal trefoils and the citations from the *Clavis* in the *Expositio*. As Berthold studied the *Clavis*, it seems from his marginalia that certain ideas especially caught his attention, all of which would feature later in his commentary on Proclus: the theory of the invisible “universal” elements mediating between what is entirely spiritual and what is entirely corporeal (*Clavis*, c. 43, 76, 83, 221, 273, 440, 442); the doctrine of the spiritual body (*Clavis*, c. 102, 103, 105, 272, 273, 486, 487); the primordial causes (*Clavis*, c. 16, 86, 91, 170); the return of all things to their causes (*Clavis*, c. 308, 441, 459); human nature as *imago Dei* (*Clavis*, c. 94, 242); the goodness of creation and its substantiality (*Clavis*, c. 361, 451); and theophany (*Clavis*, c. 13). Now, it is true that the Eriugenian doctrine of the primordial causes also came to Berthold in the glosses on Dionysius and the *De causis primis et secundis*. But what the *Clavis* had that these texts lacked were its considerations of bodies that are invisible (the pure elements) and spiritual (the Paradisal body). The *Clavis* thus provided doctrines that could relate the highest (primordial causes) and lowest (invisible and spiritual bodies) cosmological realities studied in the *Elementatio theologica* to other disciplines, whether to Christian theology or to the disciplines of natural philosophy that seem to have especially interested Berthold (optics, astronomy, the theory of the four elements, meteorology).

The *Expositio*, it must be said, represents the most extensive reception of Eriugena’s thought known to date. Nevertheless, it is worth bearing in mind that, unlike most of the medieval authors influenced by the Irishman,\(^{105}\) Berthold

---

\(^{104}\) *A conferre* indicates that a citation occurs in the *Expositio* that is closely related to, but not identical with, the text marked in the manuscript. This table omits the corrections to the text and the transliterations written in the margins by Berthold, which are listed by Sturlese, “*Introduzione*”, p. xlv-xlvi.

### Table 3: Berthold of Moosburg’s marginalia to the *Clavis physicae*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paris, BnF, lat. 6734</th>
<th><em>Clavis physicae</em></th>
<th>Expositio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f. 7v</td>
<td>13 (p. 10, l. 4-7)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 9r</td>
<td>16 (p. 12, l. 6-10)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 16v</td>
<td>43 (p. 27, l. 14-17)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 31r</td>
<td>76 (p. 54, l. 8)</td>
<td>129A, 210E, 210I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 35r</td>
<td>83 (p. 60, l. 18)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 35v</td>
<td>86 (p. 61, l. 1-2)</td>
<td>Cf. Prol. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 38v</td>
<td>91 (p. 66, l. 30-31)</td>
<td>126B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 38v</td>
<td>91 (p. 66, l. 39-40)</td>
<td>126B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 39v</td>
<td>94 (p. 68, l. 21-22)</td>
<td>196F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 42v</td>
<td>102 (p. 74, l. 28-29)</td>
<td>196F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 42v-43r</td>
<td>102 (p. 74, l. 37)</td>
<td>196F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 43r</td>
<td>103 (p. 75, l. 10-11)</td>
<td>196F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 43v</td>
<td>105 (p. 76, l. 4-6)</td>
<td>196F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 78r</td>
<td>170 (p. 135, l. 9-10)</td>
<td>Cf. 140D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 77v</td>
<td>221 (p. 172, l. 2-3)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 106v</td>
<td>242 (p. 191, l. 8-9)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 120v</td>
<td>272 (p. 219, l. 2-4)</td>
<td>196F, 210E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[de corpore spirituali]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 121r</td>
<td>273 (p. 221, l. 18-19)</td>
<td>Cf. 196F, 210C, 210M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 140v</td>
<td>308 (p. 261, l. 17-18)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 158v</td>
<td>360 (p. 94, l. 1000-1002)</td>
<td>18C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 159r</td>
<td>361 (p. 95, l. 1039-1040)</td>
<td>18C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 200v</td>
<td>440 (p. 168, l. 3597-3599)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[catholica elementa]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 200v</td>
<td>441 (p. 168, l. 3522-3528)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 201v</td>
<td>442 (p. 170, l. 3591-3598)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[prima materies]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 202r</td>
<td>442 (p. 170, l. 3599-3601)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[secunda materies]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 208v</td>
<td>451 (p. 181, l. 3991-3993)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 212r</td>
<td>459 (p. 188, l. 4206-4207)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 228v</td>
<td>486 (p. 215, l. 5162-5163)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 229v</td>
<td>487 (p. 216, l. 5223-5224)</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
seemed to be unaware that these ideas we would classify as Eriugian derived from one author. To this rule there is only one exception, and it is related to the fact that the name *Ioannes Scotus* appears in the list of Doctors of the Church, “from whose books and teachings the commentary of the *Elementatio theologicai* that follows was compiled”.\(^{106}\) In fact, the name *Ioannes Scotus* is found in the table of only one of the two extant manuscripts of the *Expositio*, having been inadvertently or deliberately omitted from MS Vaticano (Città del), Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 2192. Whatever the reasons for this omission may have been, it is very unlikely that Berthold regarded John Scotus as the author behind the doctrines transmitted in the *Clavis physicae* or as the source behind his other three Eriugian texts. The only explicit mention of *Ioannes Scotus* in the *Expositio* appears in a passage taken from Albert the Great's *Summa theologiae* on God’s condescension to the created intellect in veils and theophanies that are required at the beginning of the intellect’s ascent. Here, John the Scot is mentioned alongside John the Saracen (*Ioannes Saracenus*) as commentators on the Areopagite.\(^{107}\) Since both figures are mentioned together in the table of Doctors of the Church, it could be that Berthold included them in that list simply because he believed they belonged to a tradition of commentary on Dionysius; since for Berthold the authority of Dionysius was upheld by “infallible reason”, this fact alone could make both commentators worthy of membership.\(^{108}\)

In the 16th-century chronicle of Albert de Castello, the *Brevis et compendiosa cronica de magistris generalibus et viris illustribus ordinis praedicatorum*, at least five works are attributed to Berthold of Moosburg:

Father Berthold of Moosburg wrote a large volume on the philosophy of Plato, a commentary on the *Elements* of Proclus, another on the pole of the rainbow that explains Aristotle’s obscure meaning in the third

---

106 See Berthold of Moosburg, *Expositio super Elementationem theologiam Procli*. Prologus, *Propositiones 1-13*, p. 3, l. 21. Since there is no evidence to the contrary, I assume two tables of authors were written by Berthold himself and appended to the *Expositio*.


108 Berthold of Moosburg, *Expositio*, 159C, p. 193, l. 142–143: *cum secundum Dionysium, cuius auctoritas praevalet, cum ininitatur infallibili rationi, angeli sint immateriales*. A notable exception to this, however, would be Thomas Gallus, who was cited at *Expositio*, *Prol*. 4 (secundum Vercellensem), but was not included among the Doctors of the Church.
book of the *Meteorology*, a *Summa theologiae*, and many things on astronomy.\textsuperscript{109}

Apart from the *Expositio*, the other four works are otherwise unattested. It is interesting to observe, with Helmut Boese, that the works listed by Albert de Castello correspond quite closely to the materials we know independently to have been related to Berthold’s library and teaching.\textsuperscript{110} It is indeed difficult to imagine that Albert de Castello was writing with direct knowledge of Berthold’s works, and that there existed a “large volume” on Platonic philosophy greater than the Dominican’s vast commentary on the *Elementatio theologica*. The “large volume on the philosophy of Plato” might, therefore, refer to a collection of Neoplatonic works that could have included Macrobius, the *Tria opuscula*, and the *Elementatio physica*, that are now bound in MS Basel, UB, F.IV.31. The commentary on the pole of the rainbow could be a conjecture based on the glosses to Dietrich of Freiberg’s *De iride* in MS Basel, UB, F.IV.30. The existence of Berthold’s *Summa theologiae*, which if anything would have been the product of his undated lectorship at Heilig Kreuz, has been questioned by Boese. Loris Sturlese has shown that Berthold had access to a manuscript of the *Summa theologiae* of Albert the Great superior to any other known witness and made use of both of its major parts.\textsuperscript{111} Since, of all the works of Albert used in the *Expositio*, the *Summa theologiae* was cited most, we might assume that this lost manuscript of the *Summa* also bore Berthold’s *ex libris*. Finally, the “many works on astronomy” could refer to the treatises in the Dresden manuscript bearing Berthold’s *ex libris*.

\textsuperscript{109} Albert’s chronicle appeared in three editions (1504, 1506, 1516), the last of which is published in R. Creytens, “Les écrivains dominicains dans la chronique d’Albert de Castello (1516)”, in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 30(1960), p. 227–313, at p. 283, and Keappeli, *Scriptores*, vol. 1, p. 240: Fr. Bertoldus de Moysborch scrispit magnum volumen in philosophia Platonis. Item super librum elementationem Procli. Item de polo yridis, exponens intentionem Aristotelis obscuram in tertia methaurorum. Item summam theologie. Item in astronomia plura. Berthold’s name, listed among other German friars under the year 1355, was added in the edition of 1516, when the number of authors included by Albert increased from 75 to 275.

\textsuperscript{110} Boese, *Wilhelm von Moerbeke*, p. 73–74.

\textsuperscript{111} L. Sturlese, “*Super Dionysii Mysticae theologiam et Epistulas*, ed. P. Simon (Alberti Magni Opera omnia, t. XXXIV, pars 2) and *Summa theologicae sive de mirabilia scintia Dei, Libri I pars 1*, Quaestiones 1-50A, ed. D. Siedler (Alberti Magni Opera omnia, t. XXXIV, 1)”, in *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, Series III, 10/4(1980), p. 1691–1698, at p. 1692–1697. On this evidence, we can only surmise that it is possible that the *Summa* attributed to Berthold was in fact Albert’s, but not “certain” as Boese (*Wilhelm von Moerbeke*, p. 74) claims.
Sometime around the end of Berthold's life, or perhaps following his death, his library began to disperse from Heilig Kreuz in Cologne. In 1363, a Dominican from the Viennese convent, Jodocus of Gorizia, copied Dietrich of Freiberg's *De origine rerum praedicamentalium* and Proclus' *De decem dubitationibus circa providentiam* (the text ends abruptly before the treatise's tenth and final question) and took these from Cologne, along with the Albert autographs now in ms Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. Vindob. 273. Jodocus brought the texts either directly to Vienna or to the convent in Krems, whence they made their way to Vienna in 1395. Helmut Boese has indicated that this copy of Proclus, clearly written by Jodocus himself, appears to depend directly on Berthold's personal text of the *Opuscula* that later came to Basel. He also surmises that the inexplicably abrupt ending of the *De decem dubitationibus* and Jodocus' premature departure from Cologne (assuming he had intended to copy all the *Opuscula*) may have been related to the disturbance caused by Berthold's death. According to Boese, then, since the colophon dates the copy of Dietrich's *De origine* to the eve of Pentecost 1363 (20 May), and since there would not have been much scribal work undertaken in Whitsuntide, Berthold's passing might have occurred sometime in late May or early June 1363. What is clear, in any case, is that Berthold’s copy of the *Tria opuscula* remained in Cologne until the turn of the 15th century, perhaps as late as 1407, approximately when a copy of it was made there for the library of Amplonius Rating in Erfurt, and when the treatises were finally bound in their current form and made their way from Cologne to Basel.

The two extant manuscripts of the *Expositio*, both made roughly a century after its composition, were copied in Cologne. The Vatican manuscript (ms Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 2192) was made in 1437 by the Dominican Conrad Keller, who served as prior of the Rottweil convent.

---


114 Boese, *Wilhelm von Moerbeke*, p. 76–79. Loris Sturlese’s suggestion (“Introduzione”, p. lix, n. 54) that Berthold’s interventions can be detected in a manuscript of Dietrich of Freiberg’s works now in ms Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, Dep. Erf, ca. F 72, is stated more cautiously in Sturlese, *Dokumente und Forschungen*, p. 94: “ob diese Korrekturen von der Hand Bertholds von Moosburg stammen, läßt sich nicht mit Sicherheit entscheiden”.

Oxford manuscript (MS Balliol College Library, Cod. 224B) was written by order of William Gray in Cologne in 1444, before he embarked to Padua on the next stage of his European tour.\footnote{116 R.M. Haines, “Grey, William (c.1414–1478)”, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition, May 2011.} Having served as chancellor of the University of Oxford from 1440–1442, William had matriculated at the University of Cologne on 1 December 1442 along with his two assistants, masters Richard Bole and Nicholas Saxton.\footnote{117 H. Keussen, Die Matrikel der Universität Köln. Erster Band: 1389–1475 (Bonn: Hanstein, 1928), p. 457.} These two witnesses, and the obscure but significant reference to the Expositio in Nicholas of Cusa’s Apologia doctae ignorantiae, written in 1449, suggest that Berthold’s work was receiving greater attention in the second quarter of the 15th century.\footnote{118 See Conclusion, section 1, below.}

Surveying the traces of Berthold’s library, we may conclude that the only manuscripts whose use can be dated with any certainty are those of Macrobius and Proclus (MS Basel, UB, F.IV.31), with their glosses and annotations, and the Vienna autographs of Albert (MS öNB, Cod. Vindob. 273). These, and probably the astronomical works in the Dresden manuscript (MS SLB, Db. 87) and possibly the scientific treatises in Munich (MS BSB, Clm 14448), were known to Berthold around 1323. The Vienna autographs, the Dresden astronomical treatises, and the Cologne autograph of Albert’s De animalibus (MS HA, W 258a), show that much of Berthold’s extant library, which seems to have been particularly focused on natural philosophy, was closely related to and dependent upon the convent of Heilig Kreuz in Cologne. With the date of 1323 as our only anchor, we may suppose that Berthold’s connection with Heilig Kreuz preceded his appearances in the city’s records that began in 1335. As we can no longer associate his manuscript of the Clavis physicae directly with Regensburg and his lectorship there in 1327, and since we do not know whether Berthold discovered it in the region of Cologne, where it seems to have originated, or elsewhere, we must revise the most convincing terminus post quem for the Expositio in 1327 – not to mention the terminus post quem of 1335, which has been asserted on the assumption that Berthold’s lectorship in Cologne would have had something to do with the commentary and the internal politics of the order as it responded to the trial of Meister Eckhart (d. 1328). In our study of the Expositio, we will indeed find some striking echoes of Eckhart’s thought at crucial junctures of the commentary, but our survey of Berthold’s career and library gives us no reason to connect his lectorship, whose character was probably traditional and whose dating is unknown, with the Expositio. While we
may more strongly affirm that the commentary project was likely undertaken while Berthold made use of the resources of the Dominican library in Cologne, but we must admit now that it could have begun any time after 1323.

If the content of Berthold’s marginal annotations reveals anything about the formation of his commentary project, it suggests that the *Tria opuscula* was, so to speak, the major and perhaps last piece of the puzzle to fall into place. If the texts of Macrobius and the *Opuscula* were copied roughly at the same time, and if the glosses on Macrobius were mostly written before 1323, and if we find that Berthold was only beginning to master the contents of the *Opuscula* at that time (as his system of dots and numerals to parse the translation would suggest), then it is conceivable that it was with the latter that a new perspective on Proclus and his achievements came into full view. In the Macrobius glosses, we find the *Elementatio theologica*, the *Liber de causis*, and Avicenna cited as if Berthold held them to be basically in agreement on central doctrines of cosmology, even if Proclus was the most sophisticated of the group. No special emphasis there was placed on the Good or any principles “beyond being” in Proclus or Dionysius. In the *Expositio* it was very much otherwise. We will see that Berthold’s subordination of the *Liber de causis* and the entire Aristotelian tradition of the metaphysics to the Platonic science of the One and Good was only possible on the basis of the *Tria opuscula*, which showed Berthold a Proclus whose anthropology and account of the modes of knowledge and ignorance was in a deeper agreement with the *De mystica theologia* of Dionysius than his predecessors and contemporaries had realised. This gave an entirely new significance and even urgency to the correct understanding of the principles or “thearchy” that the best of the pagan and Christian Platonists located beyond thought and being. For this Proclean and Dionysian anthropology implied a fundamentally different approach to the divine that seeks union with God through supra-intellectual ignorance and through the awareness of a principle in the soul that is prior to intellect. In the Macrobius glosses, we see a Proclus of the *Elementatio theologica* whose doctrinal authority, even if Berthold cited it more than any other text, was approximately level with the Peripatetic metaphysical tradition; in the *Expositio*, we have a Proclus of a soteriological science of the Good, who has left us the *Elementatio theologica* as the rational and discursive ladder to the non-discursive apprehension of the divine and, within and beyond even that contemplative beatitude, to deification.119 As Proclus had described it in two of passages of the *Opuscula*, such was the goal of Platonic philosophy: a state of cooperative union with the

---

divine providence in generative silence, in which the soul “lives the divine life” to the extent it is able. Berthold drew attention to both passages in his manuscript of Proclus with manicules (see figures 3 and 4, below). It is perhaps in Berthold’s first encounter with these ideas that we discern the dawn of the *Expositio*.

3 The Commentary on Proclus: Background, Purpose, and Exegetical Methods

The features of the *Expositio super Elementationem theologicam Procli* that first strike the reader are its length (amounting to eight volumes and approximately 1,900 pages in the critical edition of commentary on a text of less than 100 pages in length), its methodical composition and repetitive style of exegesis, and its critical attitude toward the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle and, especially, the *Liber de causis*. These characteristics suggest that the *Expositio* was intended to serve a pedagogical purpose within the Dominican order. In terms of its content, at the very least, Berthold leaves his reader with the impression that Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* has value exclusively as a logical consideration of being and its properties. This unusual but consistent portrayal of the *Metaphysics* would entail that, while its importance would be reassessed and relativised by the divine science of the Platonists, it would not be abolished or supplanted. Berthold’s attitude in the *Expositio* toward the *Liber de causis*, however, was entirely negative: he presented it both as an incomparably inferior realisation of the propositional or theorematic method in theology and as a baleful extrapolation of the logical consideration of being into the domain of the separate substances, as when it stated in Proposition 4 that the first of

---

120 Proclus, *De decem dubitationibus circa providentiam*, q. 10, §64, p. 106, l. 9-12; id. *De providentia et fato*, c. 8, §32, p. 140, l. 1-9.

121 The other passages marked in this way in ms Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, F.IV.31, are: f. 60rb (*De providentia*, c. 3, §5, p. 112, l. 11-12: “the demonic Aristotle”, *demonius Aristotiles*); f. 63rb (*De providentia*, c. 7, §24, p. 134, l. 10-11: Plato on virtue as a “voluntary slavery” to the gods that is the greatest freedom); f. 65rb (*De providentia*, c. 10, §38, p. 146, l. 3-5: the futility of prayer if human freedom is denied); f. 67rb (*De providentia*, c. 13, §52, p. 162, l. 12-15: souls desire to leave the body in order to enjoy deifying intelligence, *deificam intelligentiam*, superior to intellect, and hope to gain a supernatural and divine comprehension of all things, *supernaturali hac et divinali entium comprehensione*); f. 70va-b (*De malorum subsistentia*, c. 1, §4, p. 178, l. 23-25: the oppositions of good and evil found in the world first take root hiddenly in the soul when the higher and rational part of the soul is overcome by passions); f. 73ra (*De malorum subsistentia*, c. 3, §14, p. 194, l. 8-18: angels are revealers of the divine silence).
figure 1  Glosses on Macrobius, In
Somnium Scipionis (1.14.6-7). MS
Basel, Universitätsbibliothek,
F.IV.31, f. 17r

figure 2  Gloss on Macrobius, In
Somnium Scipionis (1.17.5). MS
Basel, Universitätsbibliothek,
F.IV.31, f. 20r

figure 3  Marginalia on Proclus, De decem dubitationibus circa providentiam (q. 10, §64). MS
Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, F.IV.31, f. 59ra

figure 4  Marginalia on Proclus, De providentia et fato (c. 8, §32). MS Basel,
Universitätsbibliothek, F.IV.31, f. 64rb
created things is “being” rather than “good”. If the Liber de causis was still being taught in the schools – and even this must remain hypothetical given our lack of documentation from the German provinces of this period – then we would assume that Berthold set out to enshrine the Elementatio theologica in its place. Since the Expositio is, however, silent about its pedagogical motives or intended audience, we can only surmise the ends this commentary could have served by looking to some thematically comparable projects among Berthold’s Dominican predecessors from the point of view, first, of content (exegeses of the Liber de causis) and then of form (philosophical compilations). Since the most striking parallels in both instances appear mostly, though not exclusively, among his German Dominican contemporaries and precursors, we must say a word about developments in the scholarly understanding of this context.

Following the path opened by Martin Grabmann in his studies on Ulrich of Strassburg in the 1920s, scholars have elaborated, criticised, and refined the historiographical notion of a “German Dominican school” that is thought to have spanned from the founding of the studium generale in Cologne in 1245 to the mid-14th century. When these paths were being charted, historians focused on the common authorities, questions, and debates that engaged many of the philosophers whose texts, for the most part, are now critically edited in the Corpus Philosophorum Teutonicorum Medii Aevi (Ulrich of Strassburg, Dietrich of Freiberg, John Picardi of Lichtenberg, Henry of Lübeck, Nicholas of Strassburg, and Berthold of Moosburg), with other figures like Meister Eckhart, John and Gerard of Sterngassen, Henry Suso, and John Tauler emerging out of this intellectual culture. When Albert the Great was held to be the founding figure in this current, “the German Dominican school” at times became synonymous with the notion of an Albertschule. Gradually, the closer scrutiny of the texts


gave way to a sense of greater diversity among these figures, as Ruedi Imbach
spoke of “three models of mystical theology” in the Dominican school associ-
ated with Henry Suso, Dietrich of Freiberg, and Berthold of Moosburg. The
opposed attitudes of these German authors to the thought of Thomas Aquinas
has sometimes been used as a standard of further classification. But even
Dietrich of Freiberg, one of the most outspoken critics of Thomism in the late
13th century, differed from Albert on major doctrinal questions, as Kurt Flasch
has shown. Niklaus Largier has gone furthest to question the utility of the
notion of a German Dominican “school” altogether, given that we often lack
solid evidence of any direct institutional links between these generations of
thinkers and, as had become increasingly clear, such a term can obscure impor-
tant divergences among those authors. If the notion of a “school” implies
too much uniformity, it seems that some heuristic tool is still needed that is
flexible enough to underline the similarities between these authors. Perhaps
the more pliable “regional” approach, proposed by Loris Sturlese in another
context, with its attentiveness to common sources, questions, and debates, can
retain the heuristic value of a “school” without assuming or imposing doctrinal
continuities.

---


127 N. Largier, “Die ‘deutsche Dominikanerschule’. Zur Problematik eines historiographi-

example, Dietrich of Freiberg was deeply influenced by his lengthy sojourns at the University of Paris, just as Berthold was by his more limited exposure to texts and ideas in Oxford.

We will see that the philosophical motivations for Berthold’s valorisation of Proclus arose within the thematics and debates of his German Dominican milieu, above all in his inheritance of the thought of Dietrich of Freiberg, and that this reception also led Berthold to look outside his immediate context for resources and inspiration. His use of Thomas of York’s *Sapientiale*, likely acquired in Oxford, is the most important in this regard. Another example is Berthold’s acknowledged debt to Thomas Aquinas, whom he placed before Albert, Ulrich, and Dietrich in the list of Doctors of the Church affixed to the *Expositio* (*sanctus Thomas de Aquino*). We should not underestimate Aquinas’ importance for any later medieval commentator on the *Liber de causis* or the *Elementatio theologica*, let alone a Dominican. Aquinas’ erudite comparison of the *Liber de causis* with the *Elementatio theologica* and the writings of Dionysius, and his identification of the *Liber de causis* as in some sense a Platonic text because of its reliance on the *Elementatio*, was a watershed in this history.\(^{129}\) The most comprehensive survey of the medieval commentary traditions on the *Elementatio* and *Liber de causis*, which are still being uncovered, tells us that “the Latin legacy of the *Elements of Theology* is bound up with Thomas Aquinas’ commentary on the *Book of Causes*”.\(^ {130}\) Berthold was undoubtedly a witness to this trend.\(^ {131}\) Aquinas’ methodical discussions of the *Elementatio* in the course of his commentary on the *Liber de causis* would have been one of the very few precedents Berthold could look to for insights into Proclus’ text, apart from some scattered citations in Albert’s *Summa theologiae* and Dietrich of Freiberg. To appreciate the novelty of Berthold’s project when viewed from this angle, it is important that we have in the background the complex and ambiguous position Aquinas adopted throughout his career.

---


concerning the interrelation of the authorities of Plato, Aristotle, Dionysius, Proclus, and the *Liber de causis*.

Central to that question was the status of the separate substances. When he read Proclus, Aquinas re-enacted Aristotle's critique of Plato's doctrine of ideas in the *Metaphysics*, directing it against Proclus' notion of "gods" beneath the One by interpreting these gods as "intelligibles" subsisting outside the separate intellects. According to Aquinas, the *Liber de causis* avoided this error, which brought it closer to Dionysius, Aristotle, and the truth of things.\(^\text{132}\) Albert the Great had underscored the importance of the *Liber de causis* as the completion of the science pursued in the *Metaphysics*.\(^\text{133}\) As Thomas stated in the prologue to his own commentary, citing Aristotle and John's Gospel, the *Liber de causis* complements the *Metaphysics* with a philosophical science of God and the separate substances. The contemplation of these realities amounts to the attainment of felicity in this life.\(^\text{134}\) Thus the *Liber de causis* was understood to play no small role in mediating between the divine science of the philosophers and sacred doctrine.

---

\(^{132}\) Thomas Aquinas, *Super Librum de causis Expositio*, lect. 3, p. 19, l. 28 – p. 20, l. 8: *Et, quia deos appellabant primas formas separatas in quantum sunt secundum se universales, consequenter et intellectus divinos et animas divinas et corpora divina dicebant secundum quod habent quamdam univisalem influentiam et causalitatem super consequentiam sui generis et inferiorum generum. Hanc autem positionem corrigit Dionysius quantum ad hoc quod ponebant ordinatim diversas formas separatas quas deos dicebant, ut sicut quidam alius esset per se bonitas et alius per se esse et alius per se vita et sic de aliis*. See also Thomas Aquinas, *De substantiis separatis*, ed. Leonina, vol. 40/D (Roma: Santa Sabina, 1968), c. 1, p. 42, l. 112 – p. 43, l. 133: *Id autem quod primo est in intellectu, est unum et bonum: nihil enim intellect qui non intelligit unum; unum autem et bonum se consequuntur: unde ipsam primam ideam unius, quod nominabat secundum se unum et secundum se bonum, primum rerum principium esse ponebat, et hunc summum Deum esse dicebat. Sub hoc autem uno diversos ordines participantium et participatorum instituebat in substantiis a materia separatis: quos quidem ordinis deos secundos esse dicebat, quasi quasdam unitates secundas post primam simplicem unitatem. Rursus, quia sicut omnes aliae species participant uno, ita etiam oportet quod intellectus, ad hoc quod intelligat, participet entium speciebus. Ideo sicut sub summo Deo, qui est unitas prima, simplex et imparticipata, sunt aliae rerum species quasi unitates secundae et dii secundi; ita sub ordine harum specierum sive unitatum ponebat ordinem intellectuum separatorum, qui participari supradictas species ad hoc quod sint intelligentes in actu.*  

\(^{133}\) Cf. Albert the Great, *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa*, ed. W. Fauser (Münster i.W.: Aschendorff, 1993), lib. 11, tr. 1, c. 1, p. 60, l. 3-5: *Propter quod et ister Philosophiae primae coniungendus est, ut finale ex isto recipiat perfectionem; lib. 11, tr. 5, c. 24, p. 191, l. 17–23: In hoc ergo libro ad finem intentionis pervenimus. Ostendimus enim causam primam et causarum secundarum ordinem et qualiter primum universi esse est principium et qualiter omnium esse fluit a primo secundum opiniones Peripateticorum. Et haec quidem quando adiuncta fuerint xi Primae philosophiae, tunc primo opus perfection est.*  

The development in Aquinas’ thinking that culminated in the perspective adopted in his late commentary on the *Liber de causis* has been charted by Wayne Hankey. Central to this development was Aquinas’ understanding of the authority of Dionysius, which was second only to Scripture, and the character of his agreement with Aristotle. This concord became for Thomas the authoritative basis for his doctrine of God as *ipsum esse subsistens* and his anthropology of the rational soul as the substantial form of the body. In this respect, Aquinas was profoundly influenced by the reconciliation of Dionysius and Aristotle that he encountered as a student of Albert the Great at the *studium generale* in Cologne between 1248 and 1252. But a significant difference between the two authors appears when we consider how they understood the writings of Dionysius, whom Aquinas gradually identified more and more as a Platonist. In his prologue to his *De divinis nominibus Expositio*, written after 1266, Aquinas acknowledged that one of the major difficulties for interpreters of Dionysius is that his “way of speaking” follows the Platonists, insofar as he seems to speak of the divine names (e.g., *per se bonum*) as if they were separate from God, who is *superbonum*, which is not consonant with the faith. Ultimately, however, Aquinas insisted, Dionysius held that they are not diverse and separate principles. For Thomas this meant that Dionysius shared the Aristotelian position that the intelligibles are not outside the intellect. Nevertheless, Aquinas also came to believe that the Platonic approach to the first principles contributed something essential that corrected a shortcoming in Aristotle. In the *Quaestiones disputatae de malo*, written in 1272, Aquinas explicitly stated that Dionysius “was in many respects a follower of Platonic doctrine”, which took a correct view about the existence and number of demons. The Platonic tendency to proliferate separate principles received a positive interpretation in Aquinas insofar as their approach to the invisible world, when it is balanced by the Aristotelian corrective, makes this domain of reality more intelligible because the Platonists do not subject it to the strictures of the sublunary realm. In the final reckoning, in the late treatise *De substantiis*
separatis, which in many respects resembles the commentary on the *Liber de causis*, Aquinas presented Dionysius as the Christian correlative and consummation of the authoritative and comprehensive philosophical agreement achieved through the mutual corrections of Plato and Aristotle precisely on this question of the status and number of separate substances.

Albert’s “Dionysian Peripateticism” also exerted a profound influence on Ulrich of Strassburg (b. 1220/1225 – d. 1277), who studied alongside Aquinas at Heilig Kreuz from approximately 1248 to 1254. It is intriguing to see that, almost exactly in step with Aquinas, Ulrich wrote a *summa* of theology (the *De summo bono*), that was also structured on explicitly Dionysian principles, and which also may have been intended for the nascent *studia particularis theologiae* in the Dominican order. It seems there were movements afoot to develop pedagogical alternatives to the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard for theological study, which may have been inspired by Albert’s focus on the Areopagite in his lectures in Cologne. Like Aquinas, Ulrich had an innovative understanding of the relation between Plato and Aristotle on the question

141 Thomas Aquinas, *De substantiis separatis*, c. 18, l. 3-12: *Quia igitur ostensum est quid de substantiis spiritualibus praecepit philosophi Plato et Aristotiles senserunt quantum ad earum originem, conditionem naturae, distinctionem et gubernationis ordinem, et in quo ab eis aliis errantes dissenserunt: restat ostendere quid de singulis habeat christianae religionis assertio. Ad quod utemur praecipue Dionysii documentis, qui super alios ea quae ad spiritualias substantias pertinent excellenterius tradidit.*
of first principles that was inspired by Albert, according to whom Aristotle reasoned about the separate substances using necessary arguments, while the Platonists proceeded by probabilities and conjecture.145 However, as Alessandra Beccarisi has shown, Ulrich reversed the connotations of Albert’s judgement: whereas Albert immediately followed this remark by delimiting the procedurally distinct domains of theology and philosophy for the student of natural philosophy, Ulrich maintained that, on the question of the separate substances, reasoning by conjecture must begin where necessary arguments end.146 This resembles Aquinas’ own departure from Albert, as well as the harmony of Plato and Aristotle expounded in his De substantiis separatis.

In the commentary tradition on the Liber de causis, then, it seems that Albert (via Ulrich) and Thomas Aquinas would have been Berthold’s two major interlocutors. Their influence on Berthold has only begun to be adequately recognised. Ulrich’s De summo bono has been established as a major source for Berthold’s doctrine of providence.147 We may also note that Ulrich was often, but not always, the direct source for the many references to Albert’s commentary on the Liber de causis that populate the apparatus fontium of the critical edition of the Expositio. And if, by the time we get to Berthold, it was simply taken for granted that Dionysius was a Platonist (Dionysius Platonicus), then this is because Berthold followed in the footsteps of Aquinas and, in light of new ideas available to him in Proclus’ Tria opuscula that William of Moerbeke translated in 1280 (six years after Aquinas’ death), took them to a radical conclusion.148 Chief among these new ideas was the anthropology of the one of the soul (unum animae). Proclus introduced this principle by passing beyond Aristotle’s doctrine of intellectus to a Platonic and pre-Platonic tradition that was aware of a more hidden union or divine frenzy (divina mania) beyond intellectual reflexivity.149 A connection between the pagan Platonist tradition

148 See, for example, Berthold of Moosburg, Expositio, 40C, p. 42, l. 214–223, where Proclus’ gods are described as images of the Trinity.
149 Proclus, De providentia et fato, c. 8, §31–32, p. 139, l. 1 – p. 140, l. 9.
and the *De mystica theologia* of Dionysius, not to mention other passages in *De divinis nominibus* concerning the cognition “above the nature of the mind”, was thus revealed. This new accord lay at the basis of Berthold’s reassessment of Dionysius’ supposed agreement with the Peripatetic tradition and especially the *Liber de causis*, which called into question its status as the treatise devoted to the science whose study leads to philosophical felicity. Nowhere is this clearer than when he used the *De mystica theologia* to single out the *Liber de causis* for criticism, along with all the other “unlearned” who are “sealed off in beings”, having made the mistaken assumption that, since being is the first thing made by God, being must also be God’s primary name.\(^{150}\)

The problem these successors of Albert faced was to explicate the single truth that they assumed must exist beyond the apparent discord of natural philosophy and theology, and thus to secure the deeper continuity between the study of nature and the beatifying contemplation of the divine. Berthold took a stand in this lineage of interpreting Dionysius and the *Liber de causis* when he moved the *Elementatio theologica* and Dionysius on one side, and the *Metaphysics* and the *Liber de causis* on the other. In the divine science of the Platonists, Berthold found a conception of nature that is not “sealed off in beings” but grounded by and forever open to the *exstasis* of self-communicative Goodness. This was motivated at once by Berthold’s diagnosis of the human condition (“we who sit, as it were, in darkness and the shadow of death”) and by his philosophy of nature: God, for Berthold, was chiefly to be invoked by the name of Light, most blessed and most simple (*beatissima* [...] *simplicissima lux*).\(^{151}\) His analysis of the nature and laws of physical light, as scholars have noted, was the centrepiece of his understanding of the entire process of procession and conversion. In the *Expositio*’s metaphysics of light, as it is fair to call it, we have a new basis for the meditation of the microcosm, the macrocosm, and the divine, and thus for establishing the bridge between natural philosophy and revealed theology.\(^{152}\) Once this Platonic anthropology and philosophy of nature had been retrieved (for Berthold, by going all the way back to Hermes Trismegistus), whatever differences remained between pagan and Christian Platonists had only secondary importance. From the standpoint of

---


152 See 4.5, below.
its content, then, the *Expositio* is best viewed as part of a Dominican exegetical tradition on the *Liber de causis* that held Dionysius in the highest authority, which Berthold emerged out of and attempted to reform.\(^{153}\)

The broader commentary tradition on the *Liber de causis* antedated Albert and Thomas, and continued well beyond the 14th century in the universities and in the *studia* of the mendicant orders.\(^{154}\) Unfortunately, we know nothing about its use among Dominicans in 14th-century Germany since all relevant documentation from provincial chapter meetings has been lost.\(^{155}\) Little information even survives from the other provinces of the order. In 1305, the Dominican general chapter in Genoa decreed that schools of natural philosophy (*studia naturarum*), the first of which was attested in the province of Provence in 1262, were to be instated in all provinces throughout the order.\(^{156}\) The rationale behind the establishment and development of these schools in Provence at that time is not clear. Since Albert’s commentaries on Aristotle were largely completed by 1262 and certainly all finished by 1271, the same year Provence ratified the program in natural philosophy for the province, it is tempting to ponder whether there was any link between the emergence of these schools and the progress of Albert’s project “to make all these parts [of philosophy] intelligible to the Latins”.\(^{157}\) Outside of Provence, the establishment of these schools happened more gradually. The Roman province, for instance, after their initial hostility and then indifference to the teaching natural philosophy, only created its first eleven schools of natural philosophy in 1288.

According to the decree of the central authority in 1305, the *studia naturarum* had a two-year curriculum. By 1307 in the Roman province and by 1327 in

---

\(^{153}\) Berthold of Moosburg, *Expositio*, *Expos. tit. K*, p. 48, l. 401 – p. 49, l. 407: *Ex praemissis summamit colligietur et forma seu modus procedendi in hoc libro et ratio nominis ipsius, quod a forma imponitur, scilicet elementationis theologicae, et quare non vocatur ‘prima philosophia’ seu ‘metaphysica’ aut ‘de pura bonitate’ aut ‘de lumine luminum’ vel ‘de causis causarum’ aut ‘de floribus divinorum’, sicut quidam alii consimilem tractantes materiam, sed in excelsum dissimiliter a praesenti auctore suas editiones vocare curarunt. This list of titles derives from Albert the Great, *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa*, lib. 11, tr. 1, c. 1, p. 39, l. 19 – p. 61, l. 68.


\(^{155}\) Palazzo, “Philosophy and Theology”, p. 75–79.

\(^{156}\) For what follows in this paragraph and the next, see Mulchahey, *First the Bow is Bent in Study*, p. 252–277; Calma, “Du néoplatonisme au réalisme et retour”, p. 229–233.

the province of Toulouse (which the province of Provence became after 1303),
it had been expanded to three years. In the Italian schools, one year was spent
with the Metaphysics, the De anima, “and related texts”, perhaps the Parva
naturalia, and another year with the Physics, On Generation and Corruption,
“and certain works following these”, perhaps the De caelo and the Meteorology.
Marian Michèle Mulchahey conjectures that, following the loose correlation
that can be discerned between the Dominican curricula and the more exten-
sive programme in arts at the University of Paris, the Liber de causis might have
been taught alongside Aristotle’s biological treatises in the third year of study,
but we have no direct evidence for this.158 In Toulouse, we know that the Liber
de causis was taught by William of Leus, but this occurred in its school of the-
ology sometime between 1290/1291 and 1308.159 As for its schools of natural
philosophy, later records from Toulouse in 1327 placed Aristotle’s Ethics at the
centre of their annual curriculum with a three-year rotation of his works on
natural philosophy. This seems not to have included the Liber de causis, which
was mentioned only as part of the curriculum of two newly founded studia
moralis philosophiae in 1330, where it appeared alongside Aristotle’s Ethics,
Economica, and the Magna moralia. So while we can be quite certain that the
studia naturarum were established in Teutonia in the early 14th century, and
definitely by the time Berthold began teaching there in the late 1310s, we can-
not know whether the Liber de causis was part of the standard curriculum.

The Summa of Nicholas of Strassburg, written between 1315 and 1321 and pre-
served in only one manuscript (ms Vaticano [Città del], Biblioteca Apostolica
Vaticana, Vat. lat. 3091), offers some clues about the situation in the German
Dominican schools of natural philosophy.160 This encyclopaedic compilation
was to be divided into four books, corresponding to the four causes (Book
I: efficient cause; II: material cause; III: formal cause; IV: final cause), but it
ends partway through the third book.161 In its prologue, Nicholas stated that

---

158 Mulchahey, First the Bow is Bent in Study, p. 271–272.
159 D. Carron, “A Theological Reading of the Liber de causis at the Turn of the Fourteenth
Century. The Example of William of Leus”, in D. Calma (ed.), Neoplatonism in the Middle
Ages, 1, p. 467–550.
160 See Nicholas of Strassburg, Summa. Liber 2, tract. 1–2, ed. G. Pellegrino (Hamburg: Meiner,
2009); id., Summa. Liber 2, tract. 3–7, ed. G. Pellegrino (Hamburg: Meiner, 2009); id.,
Summa. Liber 2, tract. 8–14, ed. T. Suarez-Nani (Hamburg: Meiner, 1993). The critical edi-
tions of Books I and III are in preparation.
161 For an edition of the prologue of the Summa and a detailed table of contents, see Imbach,
Strassburg OP und seiner Summa”, in Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie
one of his aims was to assist students who had been hindered by the lack of books (defectus librorum) in the conventual libraries of the provinces. As Ruedi Imbach and Ulrika Lindblad have observed, this resonated with concerns raised at Dominican general chapter meetings in 1308, 1315, and 1323 about the state of the friars’ education in the provinces.\(^\text{162}\) Nicholas explained that his intention was to compile a work from the resources of the Dominican tradition, singling out Albert and Aquinas (doctorum ordinis et specialiter venerabilium doctorum fratris Thomae de Aquino et domini Alberti), though the Summa also demonstrates his familiarity with the writings of Dietrich of Freiberg, John Picardi of Lichtenberg, and Hervaeus Natalis.\(^\text{163}\) In light of these declarations, and Nicholas’ self-deprecating characterisation of the Summa as “an unskilled and childish compilation” (compilatio rudis ac puerilis), Imbach and Lindblad have insisted that the work should not be judged according to its innovations, but as “an encyclopaedic manual of philosophy”.\(^\text{164}\)

Gianfranco Pellegrino has made an important qualification of this verdict by pointing out that the Summa was intended to be much more than a florilegium of juxtaposed sources: Nicholas sought to produce a coherent argument about the nature of wisdom itself.\(^\text{165}\) Pellegrino draws attention to Nicholas’ use of the commentary of William of Conches on Boethius’ Consolatio philosophiae and, specifically, to his interpretation of the allegorical meaning of the garment worn by Lady Philosophy. The prisoner in the Consolatio learns that Philosophy sewed this garment for herself after it was torn apart in the sectarian divides that arose after the time of Plato. Pellegrino argues that this image must have resonated with the Dominican friar, who was confronted not only with the lack of books in the provincial studia, but also with the disaggregation of philosophical wisdom in the abundance of compendia, florilegia, tables, abbreviations, and concordances. What was needed for the reunification of wisdom was not another work in the style of pro et contra

---

\(^{162}\) See Imbach, Lindblad, “Compilatio rudis ac puerilis”, p. 177–180, who argue that Nicholas likely had the studia naturarum in mind.


\(^{164}\) Imbach, Lindblad, “Compilatio rudis ac puerilis”, p. 182.

**Introduction**

*Thomam*, but a new book (*novum libellum*) that looked to the past as a source of renewal.  

Berthold was educated within the order as it acknowledged and responded to the need for a reform of studies. In 1315, when Nicholas began composing his *Summa*, Berthold was dispatched to Oxford. Like Nicholas, Berthold would aim to consolidate a Dominican tradition of philosophical theology. Nicholas was engaged, sometimes critically, with the thought of Dietrich of Freiberg, but generally he opted for more concordist attitude. Berthold, who was more influenced by Dietrich than any other contemporary author, shared more of Dietrich’s combative spirit, and in fact redoubled and redirected Dietrich’s criticisms beyond their original scope. Both Nicholas and Berthold endeavoured to follow Albert’s methodological principle that philosophy should proceed in the light of its own principles without theological intervention.

---

166 Pellegrino, “La *Summa* di Nicola di Strasburgo”, p. 205: “Secondo Nicola il rinnovamento culturale è possibile solo in continuità con il passato perché gli *aurea tempora* sono passati, ma non per sempre”.


169 Berthold effectively refers to his text as a *compilatio* in the two *tabulae auctorum* (*compilata est*). For Nicholas and Albert’s methodology, see Imbach, Lindblad, “*Compilatio rudis ac puerilis*”, p. 189: “Nikolaus bedient sich bei der Redaktion seiner *compilatio rudis ac puerilis* des albertschen Methodenprinzips einer scharfen Trennung von Philosophie und Theologie, um mit Hilfe von Texten aus dem Umkreis des Pariser Schulthomismus die Autonomie und Eigenart der deutschen Philosophie zu unterwandern und sie mit alternativen Denkmodellen zu konfrontieren.”

170 With the *Expositio* Berthold included a table of authorities (*tabula auctorum*) comprised of two lists, “the doctors of the Church” and “the renown philosophers”. Each list is prefixed with the heading, “from whose books and teachings the following *Exposition of the Theological Elementation* is compiled” (*de quorum libris et sententiis infra scripta expositio Elementationis theologicae compilata est*). In both extant manuscripts, the lists appear after the index. However, both lists in the Vatican manuscript read “*infra scripta*”, while the Oxford manuscript has “*infra*” for the *doctores*, and “*supra*” for the *philosophi*. See the “Prolegomena” to Berthold of Moosburg, *Expositio super Elementationem theologicae Procli*. *Prolegos, Propositiones 1–15*, p. xlii.
Of Berthold it has been said that his “originality [...] often consists in the cutting and mixing of his sources so as to make them say what they originally did not”.\textsuperscript{171} In one sense, this is a profoundly accurate judgement that underscores the need to read Berthold intertextually, by making constant comparisons with his sources. Leaving things there, however, one would miss the forest for the trees. To discover the deeper coherence of Berthold’s philosophical vision, one must attend to the patterns of his modifications and juxtapositions in his commentary-as-compilation, for there was in his view a point where all these lines must converge. Like Nicholas, Berthold used Boethius’ \textit{ekphrasis} of Lady Philosophy’s garment to describe the character of his project. Berthold, however, did not opt for a model derived from Aristotle (the four causes) to preserve it intact. The most important detail in the \textit{ekphrasis}, in his view, was the image of the ladder emblazoned on her robe, which he used as a simile for the individual propositions of the \textit{Elementatio theologica}, which, he believed, revived the pristine philosophy that Plato had once articulated in theorems (\textit{theoremata}), and which would lead not only to bliss in this life, but even deification (\textit{omnis beatus deus}).\textsuperscript{172} This was a Boethian amplification of the praises that Aquinas and others had bestowed upon the \textit{Liber de causis}, as a science of the realities whose contemplation leads to felicity in this life. In terms of its form, practical utility, and its audience, the \textit{Summa} of Nicholas of Strassburg is probably the closest parallel we have to the \textit{Expositio}. For Berthold, however, the integrity and intricacy of Lady Philosophy’s garment was appreciated only by looking much further back than the \textit{aurea tempora} of 13th-century achievements, but to the accord of her most ancient devotees.

After the loftier and exhortative prefaces to the \textit{Expositio}, which are freer and more creative in their execution of traditional medieval literary forms, a reader of the commentary cannot help but notice, if not suffer, the repetitive style of Berthold’s exegesis of the \textit{Elementatio} itself. He commented on each proposition using a basic and uniform structure. First, he always began by copying the proposition from the \textit{Elementatio}, without Proclus’ proof. If the proposition in question is the first of what Berthold regarded as a thematic group, he would signal the subsequent stages of the argument (e.g., Proposition 1; Proposition 14). Most of the time, however, Berthold would briefly state how the proposition in question logically followed the preceding one. He would


then announce the division of his own commentary, which almost always fell in two parts, which he called the *suppositum* and the *propositum*, “what is supposed” and “what is proposed”. The *suppositum* and *propositum* almost always have tripartite subdivisions corresponding to distinct arguments. These two principal parts are comprised mostly of tacit and explicit citations, and they take up most of the *Expositio*. Finally, Berthold copied Proclus’ own *commentum* or demonstration, which he analysed by distilling the argument to syllogisms, with frequent cross-references to earlier propositions, and rarely made any appeal to external authority.

Berthold’s procedure in these three parts (*suppositum*, *propositum*, *commentum*) thus wove together two exegetical methods. Both can be said to reflect specifically on the literal sense of the *Elementatio theologica* and, accordingly, of the entire philosophical tradition that Berthold compiled upon its frame.¹⁷³ The first tendency was based more on tradition and authority. Berthold evidently wrote the *suppositum* with the individual terms and concepts of the proposition itself in view and sought to introduce the reader to the broader philosophical history presupposed by these terms and by Proclus’ argument in the proposition. Whether those sources were later than the *Elementatio* was of no significance. A typical example is the *suppositum* of Proposition 2 (“Everything, that participates one, is one and not one”).¹⁷⁴ First, Berthold offered one or more general definitions or descriptions of the notion of “participation” (*in generali*), which he synthesised explicitly from older sources (*Clavis physicae*, Augustine, Boethius, and Gilbert of Poitiers) and tacitly from contemporary ones (Dietrich of Freiberg); secondly, he enumerated the possible modalities of “participation” in particular (*in speciali*), which amounted to a kind of index of the orders of invisible substances; thirdly, he presented a synthesis of the general and particular that applied the background directly to the subject of proposition, by relating the particular modalities of participation to their common source in the One. The reader thus would be brought to see how succinctly this rich doctrinal background is presupposed and recapitulated in Proclus’ proposition. The second principal part or *propositum* often proceeded in a similar fashion but looked ahead to the terms and arguments

---


found in Proclus’ own demonstration of the proposition in the *commentum*. Finally, in the *commentum*, we find a second exegetical method, which was based on syllogistic analysis. Here, Berthold examined Proclus’ demonstration, line by line, in order to elucidate its argumentative rigour and its conformity to the requirements of scientific procedure. Thus, with the *propositum* acting as a bridge, these three parts comprised a seamless process of commentary whose emphasis shifted from authority to reason, but never indulged in any flights of speculation or allegorisation that could not be immediately justified by the specificity of Proclus’ technical language. Berthold’s attitude here was clearly one of subordination and fidelity to the *Elementatio* and the tradition it allowed him to recapitulate: his task was to bring the reader to share in his vision of its luminosity.

As we know it today from the two extant manuscripts, the *Expositio* is a work that can be easily consulted and mined for arguments and authorities, without needing to be read from cover to cover. Even if its assumptions and conclusions would rarely satisfy contemporary scholars who have many more texts from Proclus and his contemporaries at their disposal, its literalism and attentiveness to philosophical terminology means that the *Expositio* can still serve quite well as a reference work for the entire Latin medieval Platonic tradition. Berthold noticed connections between authors that modern scholarship only gradually came to acknowledge (e.g., Boethius and Proclus on providence; Bernard of Clairvaux and the Eriugenan *Clavis physicae* on deification). The functionalisation of the commentary as a reference work is facilitated to a large extent by an alphabetical index of subjects and authors that amounts to over 160 pages in the critical edition.175 This index presupposes a system of marginal pagination that divides the commentary on each proposition into sections that are designated with letters. For example, under the lengthy index entry for *Anima*, one finds a list of theses (e.g., “the soul is immortal because it is self-moved”) with references to a particular proposition and, sometimes, to a particular section (e.g., 17A) of the *suppositum* or *propositum*.

The index as we have it is incomplete. There are several empty entries, which appear more frequently beginning with the letter “I”.176 Sometimes two entries for an identical term are separated by several other entries, with one left redundant and empty (e.g., *Operatio*; *Principium*). Most references do not take the alphabetical subdivisions of each commentary into account and

---


176 Empty entries by letter: C (1); I (7); M (2); N (2); O (6); P (7); Q (2); R (1); S (9); T (2); V (2); Y (1); Z (1).
refer only to the proposition number or to the title of the relevant preface (in prologo; in titulo; in praebambulo). The more precise references that do provide both the proposition number and the subsection letter are distributed evenly throughout the index.

We should therefore entertain the possibility that the index and this system of subdivisions, with the functionalisation of the commentary that it would reflect, was either a later addition by Berthold, and was left unfinished at his death, or was the result of a later intervention. One indication that it was not part of the original plan is the fact that the internal references in the Expositio never make use of the alphanumeric system and are either vague (ut supra / infra ostensum est) or mention only the proposition number, where it would have been possible to give more precise information. The first known explicit reference to the Expositio (from mid- to late 14th-century Regensburg) would seem to suggest that the commentary circulated at one stage without its index and the subdivisions of the text it presupposed. This anonymous Dominican writer from Regensburg, commenting on Peter Lombard, referred to “theorem 8, the second principal article” (theoremate 8, articulo secundo principali), which, as is clear from the context, was a citation of 8D. The suppositum, from 8A-C, was regarded as a first principal article, and the proposittum from 8D-F the second. What this suggests is that these “articles” – the suppositum, proposittum, and possibly the commentum – were conceived as the primary building-blocks of the commentary, with their distinctive scholarly methods, and that the text was only eventually adapted to its use as a reference work. At any rate, by the time the extant manuscripts of the Expositio were copied, both the Expositio and the index were attributed to Berthold. With these basic elements (its repetitive method, its ordering of knowledge on the frame of the Elementatio, its comprehensive treatment of the separate substances, its utility), the Expositio came to imitate the genre of medieval philosophical “encyclopaediaism.”

---

177 See, for example, Berthold of Moosburg, Expositio, 3D, p. 97, l. 197–198: in principio supra praemissa; 11A, p. 187, l. 67: ut supra 8 circa finem signatum est.
178 See Conclusion, section 1, below.
179 ms Vaticano (Città del), Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 2192, f. 362vb: Explicit expositio cum tabula fratris Bertholdi de Mosburch ordinis fratrum predicatorum quondam lectoris Coloniensis province Theotonie super Elementatione theologica Procli completa etc.
Throughout the commentary, by far the most frequently occurring first-person verb is *declarabo*, which is found in Berthold’s introductory remarks to each proposition, usually with the direct objects *suppositum* and *propositum*. *Declarare* and *exponere* are practically synonymous terms in medieval pedagogical vocabulary.\(^\text{181}\) Inasmuch as *declarare* connotes the active intervention and understanding of the interpreter, it can be contrasted with *recitare*, the retention or rehearsal of opinions.\(^\text{182}\) This reflects precisely the kind of *compilatio* that Berthold undertook. For him, this intervention in the philosophical tradition amounted to demonstrating (*ostendam*) and positing (*ponam*) certain theses in triadic patterns – not to doctrinal innovation or novelty or, in almost every case except the doctrine of reincarnation, to sitting in judgement over Proclus.

As with Nicholas’ *Summa*, one need not regard the compilation as a literary form as inherently antithetical to a coherent, if unwittingly original, philosophical vision. This is certainly the case for Berthold of Moosburg. For Berthold, it was clear that this scholarly and exegetical activity, which sought to reconstruct and revive the ancient wisdom of Plato and his predecessors, was intrinsically related to the fulfilment of human desire. Apart from his use technical pedagogical vocabulary, the only moment we glimpse something more of Berthold’s self-understanding is at the conclusion of his *Prologus*, in his description of himself as a lowly contemplator (*humilis theoricus*), who “with Plato and Boethius”, and Lady Philosophy, acknowledges that, since the

---


divided cannot unify itself, when seeking to know things above itself, it is most appropriate to supplicate the most divine light with prayer if the seeker is to attain unto the paternal fount of light that is at once “the principle, conveyance, guide, path, and boundary”:

And therefore, with Plato and Boethius, I deem it good that the lowly contemplator should resolutely implore the most divine light with suppliant prayers, saying: O most blessed, most excellent, most revered, most honourable, most complete, most omnipotent, most free, most sovereign, most virtuous, most simple Light; remove from those who seek you the innate restriction of nature, the crooked habitual ways, the indolent discipline, the ignorance of the measure of intellectual capacity, the aversion to the light of intelligible lucidity, the dread of such subtlety, the degree of remoteness, the presumption of familiar intelligibility, the search for too much provability and demonstrability!

‘And grant, Father, that our minds may climb to your august throne, Grant the sight of the Fount of good, and grant light to fix upon you the mind’s unblinded eye! Disperse the clouds and weight of this earthly concretion; shine in the splendour that is yours! For you are serenity, you are untroubled rest for worshippers, to see you is the end, you, the principle, conveyance, guide, path, and boundary – the same.’

It was not with innovations that Berthold intended to dazzle his reader but by redirecting their vision to the same light that Plato and Boethius had once implored and beheld by its condescension. For the *humilis theoreticus*, then, the philosophical apprehension of that light, and the exegetical search for the truth of the luminous ancient tradition that was its familiar, had to proceed by the only method that awakens the one of the soul (*unum animae*): by coming to know divine things “not according to ourselves”.

---
