I. Henry as Eyewitness and Actor of the Events

Henry is an authorised witness and important actor of the four main events of the university life of Paris in March 1277: the drafting of the famous decree which was promulgated 7 March and which prohibited the teaching of 219 appended propositions, the process of Giles of Rome which ended with a refusal of the “licentia docendi”, Henry’s own summons to the papal legate, and the first step of an eventually miscarried process against the memory of Thomas Aquinas.

A. The Decree of 7 March 1277

Henry himself writes that he was present at the meeting in which the masters of the Faculty of Theology were drafting the list of propositions of the decree of 7 March 1277.1 His information regarding this event is, therefore, that of an eyewitness. His presence, besides, was not exactly a passive one, since, as R.-A. Gauthier observed long since, the formulation of at least one of the articles of the decree (208; Mandonnet: 157) bears

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1 Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet II*, q. 9, ed. Robert Wielockx (Leuven, 1983), pp. 66–67, ll. 6–24, especially ll. 21–24: “In hoc enim concordabant omnes magistri theologiae congregati super hoc, quorum ego eram unus, unanimiter concedentes quod substantia angeli non est ratio angelum esse in loco secundum substantiam”.
the stamp of Henry’s personal phraseology. The insertion of article 217 (Mandonnet: 187) has been suggested by R. Macken and after him by R. Hissette.

B. The Process of Giles of Rome

As E. Hocedez pointed out long ago, the masters of theology had to meet twice to examine Giles’s positions: once under Stephen Tempier († 3 September 1279), when Giles was to be refused the “licentia docendi”, and another time under Tempier’s successor Ranulphe de la Houblonnière, when Giles, on the order of Honorius IV, was to be promoted a master of theology (1285).

Thanks to Henry’s accurately formulated information (public discussion of Quodlibet X, q. 5, Advent 1286) we are able to establish a “terminus ad quem” of Giles of Rome’s process under Tempier. Henry states that at the moment of his summons to the papal legate, certain persons (“quidam”) had been censured in Paris because they seemed to hold Thomas Aquinas’s thesis of the unicity of the substantial form in the human being. Henry specifies, furthermore, that those “quidam” were more precisely those who had advanced their thesis at the moment

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2 René-Antoine Gauthier, “Trois commentaires ‘averroïstes’ sur l’Éthique à Nicomaque”, Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge, 16 (1947/1948), pp. 187–336, especially p. 220, where the remarkable correspondence in wording between art. 208 (Mandonnet 157) and Henry’s Quodlibet I was noticed.

