FIVE PARISIAN SETS OF QUESTIONS ON THE *METAPHYSICS* FROM
THE 1270s TO THE 1290s

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1. The Texts and Their Authors

We still possess several sizeable collections of questions on the *Metaphysics* produced at the University of Paris between ca. 1270 and ca. 1300. This chapter will deal with five of them, viz., (in an approximately chronological order): Anonymus Lipsiensis (I–VII),2 Siger of Brabant (on Books II–VII), Anonymus Zimmermanni (I–IX), Peter of Auvergne (I–IX, XII), and Radulphus Brito (I–X).3 Out of the great number of topics dealt with in these commentaries I have selected a few which I consider to be of particular interest at the present juncture in research, and the treatment of which by the several authors sheds light both on the general situation for the artists at the time and on the particular philosophical physiognomy of each of them. Some of these topics are closely linked, others not, and so the reader should not expect one clear line of argumentation from the beginning of the present chapter till the end.

Of the five authors, the two *anonymi* seem to have had little impact on other commentators (though one of them possibly influenced the other), whereas Siger certainly influenced Anonymus Zimmermanni, Peter, and Radulphus. Radulphus also made extensive use of Peter’s work. His own

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2 It is uncertain whether the questions on Book VII have the same author as those on I–VI. See Gianfranco Fioravanti, “Introduction” to Anonymus Lipsiensis *Qu. Met.*, pp. 176–77 (see the Appendix for the abbreviations used in the notes).

3 Only Siger and Anonymus Lipsiensis have been edited. For editions of those works and manuscripts of the remaining ones, see the Appendix.
possible influence on later commentators on the *Metaphysics* remains to be studied.

There is probably little reason to bemoan the loss of several other question commentaries from the period, except for one. The exception is Boethius of Dacia’s, which—judging by his preserved works—must have been of a higher philosophical quality than any of the others. Anonymus Lipsiensis has been shown to have used it in a few instances, and there may well be traces of it in some of the other preserved commentaries, but unless new evidence turns up there is no way to reconstruct any significant part of this lost work.

Siger’s questions can be safely dated to the 1270s, and before 1277. At least one of the four preserved versions can be no earlier than 1274, as it refers to Thomas Aquinas as a man of the past. The *C* and *M* versions share the slightly unusual trait of containing summaries of the Aristotelian text sandwiched between groups of questions.

Anonymus Lipsiensis’s date is less certain. His work seems to belong to the 1270s, and the editor has argued for a date shortly before Siger’s. A reference to Proclus rules out any date before 1269. The author probably used not only Boethius’s lost questions (date unknown) but also Giles of Rome’s (ca. 1270).

Anonymus Zimmermanni, who shares much material with Anonymus Lipsiensis and contains extensive loans from Siger in at least one question (IV, q. 3), must have composed his questions after 1277, as III, q. 10 almost certainly alludes to one or more of the articles condemned by Stephen Tempier in that year. In I, q. 21 the author tells us that he used to hold that there are three types of analogy, one of which is a subtype of univocation, another a subtype of equivocation, and a third

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7 *Ibid.*, pp. 175–77, discusses the evidence without reaching a clear conclusion, but I think probability favors the view that Giles was used. Silvia Donati (“Studi per una cronologia delle opere di Egidio Romano. I: Le opere prima del 1285—I commenti aristotelici,” *Documenti et studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 1 [1990], 1–111) has convincingly dated Giles’s *Quaestiones Metaphysicales* ca. 1268–73, and probably before 1271.
9 See § 6.2, below. The veiled reference to the *articuli Parisini* was recognized by Fioravanti, “Introduction,” p. 170, who (*ibid.*, p. 171) suggests a date as late as ca. 1287 because, he claims, IV.3 shows acquaintance with a debate between Giles of Rome and Henry of Ghent. Cf. note 42, below.