One of the most important documents for early fourteenth-century thought is the Sentences commentary and “notebook” of the Augustinian Hermit Prosper of Reggio Emilia, Vatican City, BAV, Vat. lat. 1086. The manuscript contains a remarkable amount of information on and material from theologians active at Paris in the 1310s, including a great many personal reportationes of quodlibetal questions, which have been dated largely on the basis of their being reported by Prosper. Since several of the chapters in this volume deal with this collection, a few words about its dating and the nature of its contents are in order.1

Prosper was born in the 1270s and studied at Paris, probably in the lectorate program of his order, where he is thought to have heard Henry of Ghent before 1291.2 Subsequently he was lector at Milan3 and then returned to Paris to lecture on the Sentences. He incepted as master of

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2 Vat. lat. 1086, f. 304ra: “sed ista positio, licet sicut declaretur a doctore sollemnii a quo multa profeci, tamen ego non bene intelligi eam.” However, Prosper may have “profited” from arguments in the writings of Henry without having heard him personally.

theology at Paris early in March 1316 and apparently remained there until his appointment in 1318 as examiner for the studia of his order in Italy.4 While in Italy he edited the prologue and questions on the first distinction of his commentary contained in the first part of Vat. lat. 1086, ff. 14r–87v.5 He was appointed regent at the convent of his order at Bologna by 1321 and taught there until his death in 1332 or early 1333.6

Vat. lat. 1086 is a combination of two manuscripts that belonged to Prosper, along with some other additions.7 The first main part, folios 13r–87v, contains a tabula questionum (ff. 13r–v) and what remains of Prosper’s commentary on the Sentences (ff. 14r–87v): forty-three questions on the prologue—also entitled “de quattuor causis theologic,” divided into twenty questions related to its formal cause, six questions concerning its efficient cause, seven questions on its material cause, and ten questions on its final cause—followed by questions on the first distinction. This section of the manuscript breaks off incomplete (f. 87rb), and at many points in the prologue the text also seems unfinished. The second part was once a second manuscript, originally numbered ff. 1–226, but renumbered 101–3258 (plus a partial index, ff. 326r–327v) when it was joined to the first manuscript, which reveals that there is a missing quire (ff. 88r–99v) that was part of Prosper’s commentary, presumably containing questions on distinction two. The tabula questionum on ff. 13r–v contains the titles of the beginning questions on distinction two. Throughout both sections of the manuscript, in the margins and on

4 His responses “in Aula” (the final stage of inception) took place on 1 March 1316; Vat. lat. 1086, f. 294v; BAV Codices, p. 677: “Utrum Verbum sit principium creaturarum fuit questio magistrorum in aula anno domini 1315 die lune post brandones (1 Mart. an. 1316), ad quam respondit frater Prosper ordinis her<emitarum> sancti augustini.” He was appointed examiner at the General Chapter of the order at Rimini in 1318. There is the possibility that before licensing he held a brief appointment as vicar general of his order in 1311 and was away from Paris during that period; Glorieux, “A propos,” p. 39.

5 The commentary is dedicated to Hugolino, bishop of Faenza (1311–36); Vat. lat. 1086, f. 14r; BAV Codices, p. 634: “domino fratri Hugolino…episcopo Faventino…” The Prologus to his commentary is being edited by Stephen F. Brown.

6 He was described as master of theology and regent at Bologna in 1321 when he received a payment of 50 florins from Pope John XXII (CUP II, p. 404, n. 4, based on papal records of payment, Introt. et exit. n. 41, f. 155); a papal letter of 19 March 1333 mentions that the position of “magister actu legens in theologa” in the Augustinian convent at Bologna had recently become vacant (CUP II, no. 952, p. 404).

7 This was the judgment of Pelzer, accepted by Glorieux and subsequent scholars. For a full description of the manuscript, see BAV Codices cited above.

8 The discrepancy is caused by two folios numbered 164.