IDEAS AND ART
To begin there are two preliminary remarks. First, any comparison of Polish and English (British) philosophy has to take into account that on the one hand we have a philosophical superpower and on the other hand, the thought of the nation which rarely played a main role in world philosophical development. In fact, Britain contributed extensively to philosophy from the thirteenth century. Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, John Burridan, Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, George Berkeley, David Hume and Thomas Reid were leading and influential philosophers of their times and beyond. No serious textbook of philosophy can omit these names. The second remark concerns the possibility of mutual influences according to geography. The distance between Poland and the British Isles made direct contacts difficult, at least until the real development of effective printing techniques. It is obvious that Poland was more subjected to influences coming from her neighbours, like Germany or Bohemia, and from Italy and France. Not only cultural facts were important in this respect, but also political events, for example, the marriage of Sigismund I the Old to Bona Sforza who brought many Italian humanists to Poland in the first half of sixteenth century or the election of Henry Valois as the Polish king in the second half of the same century.

Liberal arts, that is, the trivium and quadrivium, were taught in Polish cathedral schools from the eleventh century. Vitelo (c. 1230–c. 1314) was the first Polish philosopher and scientist or more precisely philosopher and scientist of German-Polish origin or filius Thuringorum et Polonorum as he defined himself. His Perspective became a very influential treatise on optics, used until seventeenth century in many universities and also in England. He probably learned philosophy in Poland. The first testimony of knowledge of Aristotle in Poland goes back to the turn of twelfth and thirteenth centuries, to the chronicle of Wincenty