Master Guido and his View on Government:  
On Twelfth Century Linguistic Thought

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O. Introduction

In his Studies on Priscian in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries, Dr R. W. Hunt outlines the development of linguistic thought of that era. Starting with the late eleventh century Glosule, the Note Dunelmenses and Peter Helias' Summa super Priscianum, Dr Hunt finishes with the rediscovery of the School of Ralph of Beauvais. Of course, many details of this development still remain uninvestigated. So in the course of my current research into the life and works of Ralph of Beauvais, I find that twelfth century theories on syntax in particular have still been only superficially examined, although, according to Dr Hunt "it is generally recognized that the principal achievement of mediaeval grammarians was the organization of syntax; and it was in this field that the grammarians of the second half of the twelfth century worked most fruitfully".

One of the key notions of mediaeval syntax, and particularly in the grammar of the pre-modistic type, was regimen, as has recently again been stressed by Professor Jan Pinborg in his study Some Syntactical Concepts in Medieval Grammar. Up till now our acquaintance with the reception of this notion in early twelfth century grammar has been restricted to the texts printed by Charles Thurot in his Notices et extraits more than a hundred years ago.

Thurot noticed an isolated use of the term regere as an equivalent

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2 Hunt II, pp. 35-6.


of the usual term *exigere* in grammatical writings from the seventh century onwards.\(^5\) At the end of the eleventh century the situation altered drastically: e.g. Peter Abailard and Hugh of St. Victor made frequent use of it. But the first grammarian whose reflections on this topic were available in print for further research, was Peter Helias (fl. 1150).\(^7\) Yet it is obvious from Peter’s own words that he was certainly not the first grammarian to speculate about *regere* and *regimen*, for he argues against the opinions held by grammarians of the previous period: the *antiqui*.\(^8\)

Karin Fredborg has recently demonstrated the dependence of Peter Helias on William of Conches’ *Glose super Priscianum*, and stresses the debt of both of them to the works of their predecessors.\(^9\) Among these was, as Dr Hunt has pointed out, a certain Master G.\(^10\) He must have been one of the authorities of his time, for his views are frequently referred to in the fifth section of the *Note Dunelmenses*,\(^11\) and William of Conches quoted him together with the famous Master Anselm in the second and revised edition of his *Glose*.\(^12\) This paper focusses on this Master G. and on his view of government. But first, it will be necessary to restore to this master his gloss on the *Priscianus minor*, the authorship of which had not been established up till now.

I. **MASTER GUIDO AND HIS GLOSS**

I.i. **The Manuscripts**

The gloss in question has come down to us spread over three manuscripts:

I.i.i. *The MS London, BM Burney 238 (Sigl. B)* \(^13\)

I.i.i.i. Parchm.; 37ff.; s. XIII (1840 catalogue)

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\(^5\) Thurot, p. 523 (and p. 82).

\(^6\) Thurot, p. 239.

\(^7\) Thurot, pp. 240-246.


\(^11\) Ibid.
