In this paper I want to give an impression of the sort of issues that interested, united and divided philosophical schools (sectae) in the second half of the twelfth century. Insider- and outsider-testimonies combine to suggest that membership of a secta was defined by adherence to a "creed" (professio) constituted by a number of theorems (positiones), virtually all connected with the Old Logic. I shall argue that Nominales formed a school in this sense, named after the trademark slogan genus est nomen, whereas Reales did not: any non-nominalist\(^1\) group could be thus called. I shall produce new evidence suggesting that Nominales were the spiritual children of master Peter (Abelard?).

Several outsider sources ascribe certain theses to Nominalists, Porretans etc. In three texts insiders list theorems of their respective school and then provide a rationale for each item on the list.

The biggest of the three is the Compendium Logicum Porretanum\(^2\) (henceforward Comp. Porr.) with some 116 theorems listed and proved. The first person plural is used in a way that clearly identifies the author's group as followers of Gilbert of Poitiers, and the theorems confirm that he represents what outsiders called Porretani. He occasionally admits dissent in the group, saying that "some of our people" have another opinion than the rest.

Secta Meludina (henceforward S.Mel.) lists 53 theorems. In our sole copy (Ms London, B.L., Royal 2.D.XXX) the ensuing discussion only covers theorems 1-3 and partly 4.\(^3\) The author explicitly identifies his secta as that of Melun. Like his Porretan colleague he admits occasional dissent in the group:

\(^1\) I use 'nominalist' and 'realist' as translations of the sources' nominalis, realis; no modern connotations are intended to follow the two words as used in this paper.
\(^2\) Ebbesen, Fredborg & Nielsen, 1983. I quote by theorem number. When quoting this and other medieval texts I do not respect the orthography of either manuscripts or editors, but classicize all way through.
\(^3\) See De Rijk 1967, at II.1:283-286. I refer to the theses by the numbers assigned to them by De Rijk.
S. Mel. discusses each theorem at length with digressions on matters of similar interest, instead of focussing sharply the reason for the theorem as does Comp. Porr..

Finally, we have a Positiones Nominalium (henceforward Pos. Nom.). The title is my invention, inspired by the incipit: Positiones nostrae. This work lists some 17 theorems; the subsequent proofs, for no apparent reason, stop after N° 4. The first person plural is used in a way that could be pluralis maiestatis but probably indicates that the author speaks on behalf of a group which he contrasts with that of the realists (Text 60).

Many school theorems are at first blush as outrageous as the Stoic paradoxes ("Only the sage is rich etc.''); they were meant to attract attention. In the competition for pupils a list of a school’s paradoxical opinions may have had an advertising function similar to that of a restaurant menu displayed in the window. The Porretans claimed that Omne nomen significat duo (Comp. Porr. 1.8); yet Omne nomen aequivocum una sui prolactione unum solum significat (1.10). The Melun people held that Nullum nomen est aequivocum (S. Mel. 13); and Nulla species praedicatur (S. Mel. 8). The nominalists insisted that nothing grows (Texts 26, 37, 40b, 53), and Pos. Nom. enhances the provocation by loudly advertising that "we" hold that opinion in the teeth of no less an authority than Aristotle. The paradoxical nature of school theses is expressly mentioned in Text 26 (they are inopinabilia to outsiders; cf. Text 37), and another contemporary notices the surprising fact that obviously false propositions have reputable thinkers for their proponents:

multa sunt manifeste falsa quae tamen non dicuntur inopinabilia, quia a viris authenticis sunt posita, ut nullum nomen esse aequivocum <thus Meludinenses, cf. above>, nomen esse genus <thus Nominales>.

What, then, must one have an opinion about? First and foremost, controversial points relating to Logica Vetus. Some texts attribute

5 References of the type "Text 8", "Text 60" etc. are to the list of texts published by Y. Iwakuma and myself in this issue of Vivarium.
6 Cf. the extracts from Ars Meliduna in De Rijk 1967 II.1, 297.
7 S. Ebbesen, Anonymi Aurelianensis I Commentarium in Sophisticos Elenchos, in: CIMAGL 34 (1979), 68.