The ‘English Rule’ in Master Anonymous’ Question 6 on the *Perihermeneias*: *Utrum nomina obliqua sint nomina apud logicum*

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*with the Editors of Vivarium*

Michael Joseph Fitzgerald, a regular contributor to this journal, passed away on 26 January 2016. To honor his memory, we have decided to bring to completion Dr Fitzgerald’s working transcription of question six of the Master Anonymous’ questions on the *Perihermeneias* from ca. 1370, the partial basis of his posthumously published article “Albert of Saxony’s View of Complex Terms in Categorical Propositions and the ‘English Rule’.” The question, *Utrum nomina obliqua sint nomina apud logicum*, is found in manuscript Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 5461 (= W), on ff. 107vb-108va. In Fitzgerald’s words,

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this Master Anonymous explicitly refers to a ‘Rule’ treating oblique terms as subject terms in categorical propositions as ‘the English-Rule’ (Regulam Anglicanam). Master Anonymous, however, does not bother to explain this ‘English-Rule’ in any great detail nor explain why it is so called, but merely says: “But then there is a doubt whether if in a proposition where an oblique-case term precedes a nominative-case term, as in saying ‘[Every] man’s ass runs’, precisely the oblique-case term is the subject according to the ‘English-Rule’ that says this” [§10 below]. Later on in the same question Master Anonymous replies to those who defend the ‘English-Rule’: “To the other, the ‘English-Rule’ etc., when it is said ‘Some’ etc., I say that it is not affirmatively supported by reason or confirmed by any authority” [§22].

Fitzgerald goes on to investigate other evidence for this apparent “difference between the English and non-English semantic analyses for complex subject terms” [21], its historical roots in the twelfth century, and the positions of Walter Burley, Albert of Saxony, and John Buridan vis-à-vis this rule.

In order to encourage scholars to follow Dr Fitzgerald’s lead, we offer the edition below. The scribe of text in the Vienna manuscript was rather sloppy and the question is unpolished, but we have done our best to make it intelligible.

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3 Fitzgerald, “Albert of Saxony’s View of Complex Terms in Categorical Propositions and the ‘English Rule’.”