

In the Wake of Abelard: Nominalisms in the Twelfth Century

Roxane Noël

Wolfson College, University of Cambridge

April 2022

This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted or is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the philosophy Degree Committee, which is of 80 000 words.

Thesis abstract

Since nominalism is among the main positions within one of the most famous debates of the Middle Ages, namely the debate on universals, and given the usual portrayal of Abelard (1079–1142) as the intellectual forefather of nominalism, the scarcity of the literature on twelfth-century nominalism and Abelard’s influence may come as a surprise. This thesis contributes to filling this gap by examining twelfth-century nominalism in the wake of Abelard. It aims (1) to evaluate Abelard’s influence and (2) to explore the consequences of holding a nominalist position on other viewpoints expressed in the texts. This thesis also acknowledges the recent trend of scholars questioning the centrality of the problem of universals in our discussions of medieval philosophy and thus is not focused on examining arguments defending nominalism on metaphysical grounds. Rather, it explores avenues of discussion beyond the rather narrow bounds of the problem of universals itself. Three texts are examined in this thesis. John of Salisbury’s *Metalogicon* proposes to adopt a form of nominalism informed by practical concerns, guided by *phronesis*. The anonymous *Summa dialetice artis* constitutes a valuable illustration of how a form of Abelardian logic was taught, with language at its very core. As for the anonymous “d’Orvillensis” commentary on the *Categories*, it reveals how the boundaries between certain schools of the twelfth century might not have been as clearly defined as was initially thought. What emerges from the study of these diverse texts is that, beyond their metaphysical positions, nominalists propose a different way of practicing and teaching logic, which is in part covered by what Marenbon calls the “language-focused approach” to logic. It also provides insight into the consequences of taking a nominalist position as an assumption on which other views are built, beyond the mere confines of the problem of universals itself.

Table of contents

Declaration.....	I
Thesis abstract.....	II
Table of contents.....	III
Acknowledgements.....	VI
List of abbreviations	VIII
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Historical background and methodological considerations	5
1.1. Introduction	5
1.2. Historical background	6
1.2.1. Nominalism and its history	6
1.2.2. The logical curriculum in the twelfth century	7
1.2.3. Debates on the origins of nominalism and a distinctive approach to logic	9
1.2.4. Abelard	14
1.2.5. The <i>Nominales</i> and other twelfth-century schools	18
1.3. Philosophy of history for the historian of philosophy.....	22
1.3.1. Collingwood's complexes of questions and answers	25
1.3.2. Re-enacting past thoughts.....	27
1.3.3. If the dead could talk: Rorty on reconstruction	29
1.3.4. What it means for the current project	31
Chapter 2: John of Salisbury's Nominalism and the Virtuous Quest for Happiness.....	34
2.1. Introduction	34
2.2. John of Salisbury's Metaphilosophical Views and Practical Philosophy	35
2.2.1. The Value of Studying Logic	35
2.2.2. Dialectic.....	38
2.2.3. Logic as an instrument for reaching happiness and salvation	41
2.3. John of Salisbury's Account of Universals	43
2.3.1. Cognition of universals.....	43
2.3.2. On the non-existence of universals.....	45
2.3.3. Fictionalism about universals	50
2.3.4. Evaluation of the construal	53
2.4 Conclusion.....	55

Chapter 3: The Anonymous Summa Dialectice Artis: An Abelardian Introduction to the Art of Dialectic	57
3.1. Introduction	57
3.2. The Manuscript and its Edition	57
3.3. Dating the text	59
3.4. Genre and Contents	61
3.4.1. Treatise one.....	63
3.4.2. Treatise two	69
3.4.3. Treatise three	74
3.4.4. Treatise four.....	78
3.4.5. Treatise five	79
3.4.6. Treatise six.....	84
3.4.7. Treatise seven	85
3.4.8. Treatise eight	88
3.4.9. Treatise nine	89
3.4.10. Treatise ten	90
3.4.11. Treatise eleven.....	96
3.4.12. Treatise twelve.....	97
3.4.13. Treatise thirteen	102
3.5. Discussion and closing remarks	104
3.5.1. A “psychological shift”?.....	104
3.5.2. A language-focused approach to logic?.....	105
3.5.3. SDA and the <i>Nominales</i>	109
Chapter 4: The Anonymous d’Orvillensis Commentary on the Categories: A Tale of Two Schools.....	111
4.1. Introduction	111
4.2. The <i>d’Orville</i> manuscript	112
4.3. Authorship of <i>d’Orvillensis</i> : Ebbesen’s opinion.....	112
4.3.1. <i>Nihil crescit</i>	113
4.3.2. Mereology.....	116
4.3.3. Predication	119
4.4. Who Wrote d’Orvillensis? Some Other Clues	121
4.4.1. <i>Nulla forma inest formae</i>	121
4.4.2. <i>Sermones</i> : An Abelardian influence?	130
4.5. Some Conclusions	138

Conclusion	140
Summary	140
Orientations for future research.....	142
References.....	145
Primary sources (medieval and ancient)	145
Secondary sources	147
Appendix: Comparative lists of Topics in Boethius, Abelard, and SDA	153

Acknowledgements

As anyone looking at the date at which this thesis was completed can imagine, this has not been easiest time to carry on with the ambitious project of writing a doctoral thesis. This makes the support I have received all the more precious and important to honour. First of all, I want to thank the person most involved with making this thesis a reality, namely my supervisor, John Marenbon. I also wish to express my gratitude for the Gates Trust for their generous financial support (in the form of a Gates Cambridge Scholarship), which allowed me to move to Cambridge and carry on with my research.

Many scholars in my field have been generous enough to provide access to resources invaluable for my research. In this regard, I am indebted to Yukio Iwakuma, Irène Rosier-Catach, and Irene Binini, among others. Similarly, the Facebook group “Medieval Logic”, ran by Sara L. Uckelman, has allowed me to connect with many other medievalists who provided help and feedback with the interpretation of tricky Latin passages.

While the importance of academic support cannot be overstated, I am equally appreciative of those who have supported me on a more personal level. I want to thank my parents, André Noël and Clémence Duchesne, for their unwavering support and strength. There were many challenges in the last few years, but they have always shown a special kind of resilience which does not eschew emotion. This attitude of theirs is an inspiration to me. I am also grateful to them for always teaching me to be curious and independent, two qualities which have helped me immensely on my doctoral journey.

I want to also thank my partner, James Kent, for his love and support. Thank you for still bearing with me in lockdown, for understanding the lack of certainty that unfortunately comes with the prospect of a life after a humanities PhD in 2022. Despite these major challenges, I believe we manage to make each other better people every day. I thank my friends both in Cambridge and across the pond, for remaining at my side, even if only virtually, throughout these challenging times. Your support has been precious, and you have been there to support me through almost all categories of hardships, including health problems, grief, isolation, and many others. I cannot thank you enough for allowing me to stay strong in spite of adversity and complete this thesis.

On a lighter note, these acknowledgements would not be complete if I did not recognize one of the main sources of joy and laughter through the various lockdowns and rainy British

days that punctuated the last two years of my degree. I am grateful for Wiggles (the artist formerly known as Tiger) for adopting us as his second family and making us laugh with his funny (although quite unashamed) mannerisms. For all these moments with Wiggles, I have our neighbours to thank, for being so relaxed about the fact that their cat spent an incredible amount of time with us.

List of abbreviations

AO	Anon. “d’Orvillensis”, <i>Commentarium in Aristotelis Categorias</i> (Ms Oxford, Bodleian Library, D’Orville 207, ff. 1rA–24vB).
CLP	Anon., <i>Compendium logicae Porretanum</i> (Ms Oxford, Corpus Christi College 250, ff. 18rA–24r).
Coll.	Peter Abelard, <i>Collationes</i> .
DTD	Boethius, <i>De Topicis differentiis</i> .
Dial.	Peter Abelard, <i>Dialectica</i> .
HC	Peter Abelard, <i>Historia calamitatum</i> .
LI: Isag.	Peter Abelard, <i>Logica ‘Ingredientibus’</i> : ‘ <i>Glossae super Porphyrium</i> ’
LI: Cat.	Peter Abelard, <i>Logica ‘Ingredientibus’</i> : ‘ <i>Glossae super Praedicamenta</i> ’
LI: PH	Peter Abelard, <i>Logica ‘Ingredientibus’</i> : ‘ <i>Glossae super Peri hermeneias</i> ’.
LNPS	Abelard, P./ Anon., <i>Logica nostrorum petitioni sociorum</i> .
ML	John of Salisbury, <i>Metalogicon</i> .
PN	Anon., <i>Positiones Nominalium</i> (Ms. Vat. lat. 7678, f. 88rA–B).
SDA	Anon./ William of Lucca, <i>Summa dialetice artis</i> (Ms. Biblioteca Feliniana di Lucca 604, ff. 180r–198v).
TI	Peter Abelard, <i>Tractatus de Intellectibus</i> .

Introduction

For any scholar acquainted with the study of medieval philosophy, the expression ‘the problem of universals’ is a familiar one. Indeed, this problem has traditionally been presented as one of the main philosophical issues discussed in the Middle Ages, or even as the core issue of all medieval philosophy.¹ There are already indications of the importance of the debate on universals in the medieval sources themselves: it seems that the famous disagreement between Peter Abelard and his old master William of Champeaux had its roots in their respective positions with regards to the ontological status of universals, more precisely genera and species. While William of Champeaux reportedly accepted the possibility of genera and species existing as universals even outside of the realms of mind and language, Abelard denied them such an existence, arguing instead for their sole mental and linguistic existence.² John of Salisbury, one of Abelard’s students, also reminisces about the prominent place of such discussions in the intellectual scene of the twelfth century.³ In the same vein, sixteenth-century author Aventinus describes medieval philosophy, from the twelfth century onwards, as a “civil war” between the *Nominales*, who take genera and species to be merely names, and *Reales*, who believe that genera and species should be counted among things.⁴ In the nineteenth century, the historian Victor Cousin put forth a reconstruction of the history of medieval philosophy which is almost entirely articulated around the notion of the problem of universals.⁵ Contemporary scholars seem to have inherited, to varying degrees, this focus on the problem of universals, with many books having been written (and still being written) with this problem at their very heart.⁶

However, there has recently been an impetus to challenge this narrative. Although there is no denying that the problem of universals was important to some medieval authors, the high level of attention devoted to it carries the risk of overshadowing other key medieval discussions. As Caterina Tarlazzi points out, this creates specific issues for scholars interested in the twelfth century: the weight granted to the problem of universals in a large span of the scholarship has led us to treat certain issues as subsumed under this problem even when they

¹ As will be seen below, a key proponent of this more radical view on the importance of the problem of universals in the Middle Ages is the French historian Victor Cousin.

² See LI: *Isag.* 16.19–22 & HC chapter II

³ *Metalogicon* II.17

⁴ *Annales ducum Boiariae*, lib. VI, cap. 3, 200.7–201.11.

⁵ Cousin (1836), pp. LVI–LXVI.

⁶ See, for example, Tweedale (1976), Spade (1994), De Libera (1996), Pinzani (2018).

should not be considered as such.⁷ That is not to say that we should refrain from thinking about the problem of universals altogether; rather, we should be more precise as to what the problem encompasses or not, and expand our analyses to go beyond it. In Tarlazzi's words,

In my analysis, [the twelfth-century debate over the nature and existence of genera and species] is not a discussion of how things should be categorized; and whether a certain category is, or is not, valid. In general terms, I would regard it as a discussion assuming, rather than establishing, the truth of the propositions in which genera and species are predicated of their inferiors; and investigating other issues (such as what genera and species are and whether or not they exist) within this assumed setting.

Therefore, what is encompassed in the twelfth-century version of the problem of universals does not perfectly overlap today's discussions of universal entities. For example, a contemporary nominalist might be inclined to reject the existence of natural kinds, although not all contemporary nominalists do. However, a twelfth-century philosopher, no matter their views on the ontological status of genera and species, would likely accept the existence of natural kinds as a basic fact about the world which is not up for discussion.⁸ Thus, it is important to specify how the current research relates or not to the problem of universals. It is an obvious fact that nominalism is one of the positions which is available in the context of the problem of universals, and I do not wish to deny that nominalism is intimately linked to this problem, as it can arise as a response to it. However, I believe that nominalist viewpoints are interesting in their own rights for reasons that go *beyond* the parameters of the medieval problem of universals identified by Tarlazzi. This stance enables me, among other things, to cast new light on some texts which have been associated with nominalism and deemed interesting, but which do not necessarily partake in the *debate* on universals, insofar as they do not argue in favour of their nominalist stance against competing metaphysical views.

More specifically, I am interested in texts which contain nominalist views and which exhibit certain marks of Abelardian influence. My aim is twofold. In order to contribute to the understanding of lesser-known texts of the twelfth century, I wish (1) to assess Abelard's influence on them and (2) to explore the extent to which the nominalist views expressed in each text fit with other views expressed therein, once the text is treated as a unit. I add "once the text is treated as a unit", in contrast to another approach common for historians of philosophy who, especially in the presence of materials which are incomplete or difficult to date and attribute, opt for a problem-based approach, where one problem or issue of interest is identified,

⁷ Tarlazzi (2021), pp. 1014–1015.

⁸ Marenbon (1997) calls this assumption "strong naturalism"; Tarlazzi (2021, p. 1020) discusses this as well.

circumscribed, and then examined by looking at the relevant passages in a wealth of texts.⁹ I see my approach here as one way of providing a complementary perspective. Indeed, most of the texts examined in my thesis have only been partially examined in relation to other texts or viewpoints, at least when it comes to their nominalist inclinations. By drawing attention to dimensions of these texts which might have been obscured by a more partial treatment, I hope to shed new light on them as well as to rekindle the interest for these works. Additionally, my focus will not be on nominalism *qua* answer to the problem of universals *per se*, but rather, more generally, on the teachings and ideas of people who adopted nominalist viewpoints, on what became important to them and what seemed to go without saying. In other words, it is not my intention to give prominence to arguments defending the legitimacy and soundness of a nominalist solution to the problem of universals. Rather, I take a broader viewpoint in order to examine the web of other views which coexist with nominalist views in the selected texts.

In order to fulfil the two goals mentioned above, this thesis is divided in four main chapters which will be followed by a conclusion. As a preliminary for the remainder of the thesis, the first chapter establishes the historical background and establishes some methodological principles for the subsequent chapters. First, I discuss the definition of nominalism which is used in the thesis, and why. Second, so as to provide historical context, I introduce the reader to the ways in which philosophy was practiced in the twelfth century up until Abelard, and to some debates in the scholarly literature about the origins of twelfth-century nominalism. Third, I present the methodological considerations guiding my work. With this foundation laid down, the remainder of the thesis will investigate three texts, with a chapter devoted to each.

The first of these texts, John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon*, is examined in the second chapter. It is the only text in this study for which we have a precise composition date: there is firm evidence that it was completed in the autumn of 1159.¹⁰ Although its main aim is to defend his views on education, the *Metalogicon* also contains discussions relating to some metaphysical topics. In the history of philosophy, John of Salisbury, once Abelard's student, tends to be considered as little more than a witness when it comes to the problem of universals,

⁹ For examples of works carried in accordance with such an approach, see Binini (2021a), Cesalli & De Libera (2017), De Libera (1996 & 2016), Green-Pedersen (1984), Iwakuma & Ebbesen (1992), Marenbon (1993) or Pinzani (2018).

¹⁰ See Haseldine (2013), p. 48.

and he does not pledge allegiance to any of the twelfth-century schools. However, I do believe that he is a nominalist in the usual sense of the term or at least an anti-realist, since he holds in *Metalogicon*, II, 20 that universals are not things (*res*), and I think his solution is far more original and interesting than what he is usually given credit for.

In the third chapter, I turn to the *Summa dialetice artis*, an introductory manual of logic written by someone who clearly held Abelard in high esteem. Although it is attributed to a certain William of Lucca in Pozzi's edition, I concur with other scholars that there are virtually no grounds for this attribution. Thus, the work is better treated as anonymous. As for the dating, I will argue that Pozzi's dating (in the late twelfth century, between 1175 and 1194) is likely also wrong, and that an earlier date is more plausible. The *Summa* was selected to be a part of this research because it is often regarded as a nominalist work, or a work associated with the school of the *Nominales*. For example, Chris Martin regards it as what we could call a *Compendium logicae Nominalium*.¹¹ Yet, although it is commonly mentioned, it is rarely discussed in detail; this is what I am setting out to do.

The third and last text to be examined, in the fourth chapter, is the anonymous commentary on Aristotle's *Categories* found in ms. D'Orville 207. My attention was drawn to it because Ebbesen, its editor, has identified it as a "nominalist" text in the two articles where he introduces it.¹² Just like the *Summa dialetice artis*, however, it is rarely discussed; in fact, the d'Orville commentary on the *Categories* is even less well-known than the *Summa dialetice artis*. Still, this lack of attention should not lead us to discount the D'Orville *Categories* commentary. As I will show, the text bears some clear marks of Abelardian influence, but at times seems to adopt opposing views which bear resemblance to those championed by the Porretans. The ontological views of the school of the Porretans, followers of Gilbert of Poitiers, are still a matter of scholarly debate. I hope my examination of the D'Orville commentary on the *Categories* opens up new avenues for investigating the heritage of twelfth-century schools.

¹¹ Martin (2011), p. 116.

¹² See Ebbesen (1991 & 1999).

Chapter 1: Historical background and methodological considerations

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Since the goal of this thesis is to investigate forms of nominalism in the wake of Abelard, two things need to be done before we can move forward with the research project itself. First, I will set the background for the philosophical discussions to come by examining the historical context which led to twelfth-century nominalism. Second, I will discuss the methodological considerations which have shaped this project.

The first part of this chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the context of twelfth-century discussions of nominalism. Since the project revolves around the historically loaded notion of nominalism, a first step will be to specify what I mean by “nominalism”. A corollary of this is that I will need to discuss a few issues that arise when engaging in writing a history of nominalism, especially with regards to the twelfth century. Then, in order to understand nominalism in the second half of the twelfth century, it will be necessary to say a few words about vocalism, and to describe some important views of Peter Abelard, which will have bearing on the texts presented in the later chapters. Next, I will provide some historical background to flesh out the context of the twelfth-century schools, devoting special attention to that of the *Nominales*.

Then, in the second half of this chapter, I will explore a few methodological questions and how they have guided my approach in working with the source materials. I will begin by discussing my perspective on the role of a historian of philosophy and the various ways of approaching the history of philosophy, in order to situate my project in relation to these approaches. Then, I will explore two ideas of Collingwood’s which informed my research, namely the notion of complexes of questions and answers and the notion of re-enactment. I will then discuss the various forms of reconstruction used in the history of philosophy to further clarify what I am setting out to do. Lastly, I will conclude this chapter with a discussion of how these methodological considerations have informed my research.

1.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1.2.1. NOMINALISM AND ITS HISTORY

Nowadays, it is common practice to distinguish between (at least) two broad types of nominalist positions: nominalism about universals, and nominalism about abstract entities.¹ The latter type of nominalism has garnered much attention in contemporary discussions, but it will be left aside here. Indeed, the kind of nominalism that was especially important to medieval authors such as those contained in this study is nominalism about universals; whenever I use the term “nominalism” in the remainder of this thesis, the reader should understand that the nominalism in question is about universals. Furthermore, it should be noted that I do not aim, in this thesis, to propose a redefinition of nominalism. Rather, the following definition is meant as a starting point, as a common denominator for studying an eclectic ensemble of texts. Nominalism about universals, in its most basic form, can be summarized with what I will call a negative thesis and a positive thesis:

Negative thesis: There are no universals *in re* nor *de se*, at least outside of the mind.

Positive thesis: Every existing thing is a particular in itself.²

Although at first glance both theses might appear to be saying the same thing, it is important to distinguish them, as it is possible for someone to accept one while rejecting the other. For example, an idealist *à la* Berkeley might very well accept that there are no universal things existing outside the mind while also rejecting the positive thesis, claiming that everything, universal or particular, exists only within the mind. Conversely, it is possible to accept that everything is a particular without thereby rejecting the existence of universals; this is what the proponents of the ‘indifference theory’, famously attacked by Abelard in the *Logica ‘Ingredientibus’*, seem to hold. Indeed, according to the indifference theorist, the particular itself is also the universal. For example, Socrates is a particular; but he is also a universal because he is Man, Animal, Body, and so on. Socrates and Plato are both men, not because they share a separate universal essence of ‘Man’, but simply because they do not differ from each other insofar as they are men. The view is too complex to fully analyse here, but it

¹ Rodriguez-Pereyra (2019).

² Rodriguez-Pereyra (2019) aptly points out why the positive thesis is necessary: without it, a nihilist who believe nothing at all exists or someone who is agnostic about particulars would both count as nominalists, which is not in line with the usage of the term.

constitutes an example of how someone could hold one of the two theses above while rejecting the other.³ In some cases, too, one thesis is present in a text but we might not have any indication as to whether the author adopted or rejected the other thesis. Another advantage of distinguishing the two theses is that even among authors who hold both theses as true, some focus on one more than on the other. Besides, the strategies used to defend one thesis or the other can vary significantly. For these reasons, the positive thesis and the negative thesis need to be distinguished in our working definition of nominalism.

1.2.2. THE LOGICAL CURRICULUM IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

In the twelfth century, an important part of the practice of philosophy is to comment on the texts of the *logica vetus*, which is the corpus of logical works that were available in Latin translation prior to the recovery of the rest of the Aristotelian logical corpus in the later twelfth century. It includes Boethius' translations of Aristotle's *Categories* (or *Predicamenta*) and *De Interpretatione*, Boethius' *De Topicis Differentiis*, *De Divisione*, *De Syllogismis Categoricalis* and *De Syllogismis Hypotheticis*, and Porphyry's *Isagoge* (which is intended as an introduction to Aristotle's *Categories*).⁴ In addition to the works of the *logica vetus*, authors of the time could also refer to commentaries by Boethius on some of these works, for example his commentaries on Porphyry's *Isagoge*. Abelard gives a list of these works which provide the basis for logical teaching in the twelfth century in his *Dialectica*, which John Marenbon usefully summarizes as follows:⁵

Textbook	Commentary
Porphyry: <i>Isagoge</i>	Boethius: 1 st commentary (dialogue-form) Boethius: 2 nd commentary
Aristotle: <i>Categories</i>	Boethius: commentary
Aristotle: <i>On Interpretation (peri hermeneias)</i>	Boethius: 1 st commentary (brief) Boethius: 2 nd commentary
Boethius: <i>De syllogismo categorico</i> + <i>Introductio ad syllogismos categoricos</i>	
Boethius: <i>De syllogismo categorico</i>	
Boethius: <i>De syllogismo hypothetico</i>	
Boethius: <i>De topicis differentiis</i>	
Boethius: <i>De divisione</i>	

³ For an in-depth discussion of this theory, see Tarlazzi (2017).

⁴ One of the texts examined in this thesis is one such commentary, on Aristotle's *Categories*. See chapter 4.

⁵ Marenbon (2011), pp. 183–184

Regarding the question of the existence of universal entities, the stage is set for subsequent discussions by this passage at the very beginning of the *Isagoge*, where Porphyry formulates three questions about genera and species, yet immediately sets them aside:

For example, I shall beg off saying anything about (a) whether genera and species are real or are situated in bare thoughts alone, (b) whether as real they are bodies or incorporeals, and (c) whether they are separated or in sensibles and have their reality in connection with them. Such business is profound, and requires another, greater investigation.⁶

Since his goal is to write an introduction,⁷ Porphyry explicitly states that he will attempt to be concise and, therefore, will leave complicated issues like these to other philosophers.

Boethius readily picks up the challenge of addressing these three questions, most notably in his two commentaries on the *Isagoge*, but the second one is probably the most influential in setting the stage for the medieval discussions about universals. One thing that distinguishes the second commentary from the first one, as Marenbon notes, is that it is not centred on answering the three questions left open by Porphyry, but rather departs significantly from them to examine some of the issues that underlie them.⁸ It is in this second commentary that Boethius offers the definition of universals which will be used in twelfth-century discussions on the topic. For him, there are three necessary conditions for something to be properly regarded as a universal. First, a universal has to be common to many things as a *whole*, unlike a cake that is divided in many slices. Second, it has to be common to many things in such a way, but *simultaneously*. In other words, it cannot be passed around successively from one to another as a hand-me-down jumper is passed down from one family member to another. Third, it has to fulfil both of the previous conditions while also being able to “constitute and form the substance of what it is common to”.⁹ Boethius means to exclude cases like for example, a theatre play: the play as a whole is common to the whole crowd watching it at the same time, but it does not shape the substance of the spectators in any way. In the text, because he is specifically discussing genera and species, he argues that, whereas these two enter in the substance of a given thing, a theatre play is not substantially constitutive in such a way. It is

⁶ *Isag.* (trans. Spade), §2

⁷ According to Barnes (2003), Porphyry’s goal was to write an introduction to logic, that is to say, an introduction to matters relating to the theory of predication, to definitions, to division, and to proofs. However, Ammonius and Boethius interpreted Porphyry’s work as an introduction specifically for Aristotle’s *Categories* and treated it as such in their commentaries.

⁸ Marenbon (2019), p. 154

⁹ See Spade (1994) p. 22

not entirely clear, then, which criteria Boethius would apply to universals which are accidents, such as whiteness or baldness, if any.

1.2.3. DEBATES ON THE ORIGINS OF NOMINALISM AND A DISTINCTIVE APPROACH TO LOGIC

Reconstructing the story of the emergence of twelfth-century nominalism is no straightforward matter. The last few decades have seen a few attempts to do so, with scholars building upon previous works and criticism. In order to understand the evolution of nominalist ideas leading up to Abelard's time, it will be useful to begin by a brief summary of a few landmark moments in the study of twelfth-century nominalism.

In 1992, Yukio Iwakuma, in his influential article “‘*Vocales*’, or Early Nominalists”, remarks that the term ‘*nominales*’ is not used until after the middle of the twelfth century, and that it was rather the label ‘*vocales*’ which was initially used to describe those who we would now call nominalists before this latter term gradually came to be replaced by ‘*nominales*’. Furthermore, he showed evidence to support his view that the tradition of the ‘*vocales*’, which he calls vocalism, originated around 1080.¹⁰ Some context is required in order to understand Iwakuma's claim. In the medieval practice of commenting on the texts of the *logica vetus*, such as the *Isagoge*, one question that typically arose was that of the intention of the author. As Iwakuma remarks, while the traditional view was that Porphyry intended to speak of things (*intentio Porphyrius est tractare de quinque rebus, scilicet genere, specie, etc.*), another view seems to emerge sometime in the eleventh century.¹¹ According to this new view, Porphyry's intention was to treat of five vocal sounds (*voces*), rather than five things. Iwakuma held that this controversy about the opposition of *vox* and *res* was in fact an early form of what he then called ‘vocalism’.¹² As examples of masters who were reputed to have taught vocalism, or *sententia vocum* (as their doctrine is often called), Iwakuma mentions Roscelin of Compiègne, famous for being one of Abelard's old masters and for being mocked by Anselm of Canterbury for holding that universals are “*flatus vocis*”, as well as a mysterious ‘John’ mentioned in the

¹⁰ Iwakuma (1992a), p. 37.

¹¹ Iwakuma (1992a), pp. 42–42

¹² Iwakuma (1992a), p. 45

Historia Francica. The latter is deemed to have taught that logic is “of words”, and to have had some notable pupils, among which Roscelin himself.¹³

However, this notion of vocalism is too broad, and muddles an important distinction: there might be a difference between, on the one hand, looking at logical texts as being treatises about language rather than about things, and on the other hand, making the metaphysically substantial claim that the types of entities mentioned in the logical texts cannot exist as universals since there are only particular things. This is what Marenbon holds in his 2004 chapter for the *Cambridge Companion to Abelard*, titled ‘Life, milieu, and intellectual contexts’. There, he draws attention to the fact that some of the texts characterised as vocalist by Iwakuma are not committed to any of the metaphysical theses we associate with nominalists, i.e., what we have called here the positive and the negative theses of nominalism about universals. Some texts, especially those that predate Abelard’s stance against the possibility of the existence of universal entities, merely exemplify a type of exegetical method, which he calls ‘*in voce*’ exegesis, and so he proposes to call the proponents of such an approach ‘*in voce* exegetes’.¹⁴ This method consists in the kind of reading mentioned above, according to which the *Isagoge* and the *Categories* should be treated as treatises about words rather than things. As such, under the view defended by Marenbon at the time, being an *in voce* exegete does not constitute a sufficient condition for counting as a vocalist or a nominalist.

Iwakuma reacted to these ideas of Marenbon in ‘*Vocales revisited*’ (2009), accepting the need for a distinction between vocalism proper (which involves taking a genuine metaphysical stance) and the position of those employing the ‘*in voce*’ approach to logic. From then on, Iwakuma refers to the latter position as ‘proto-vocalism’, in lieu of Marenbon’s ‘*in voce* exegesis’. In revisiting the primary sources, he points out that, therein, the term ‘*vocales*’ is used to refer to Abelard and his followers, and thus, it makes sense to call Abelard’s predecessors ‘proto-vocalists’.¹⁵ The picture that emerges so far from Iwakuma and Marenbon’s views is the following: in the eleventh century, certain masters began teaching the *Isagoge* and the *Categories* as being about words, or *voces*, rather than about things (*res*). This was, allegedly, a matter of exegetical method: the proponents of this approach did not subscribe

¹³ See this passage in Grondeux & Rosier-Catach (2011), pp. 151–152: “*In dialectica quoque hi potentes extiterunt sophistae: Ioannes qui eandem artem sophisticam uocalem esse disseruit, Rotbertus Parisiacensis, Roscelinus Compendiensis, Arnulfus Laudunensis.*”

¹⁴ Marenbon (2004a), pp. 27–34; for more on *in voce* exegesis, see Marenbon (1997), pp. 108–111.

¹⁵ Iwakuma (2009), p. 83.

to a substantive metaphysical view regarding the nature and ontological status of universals. Among these masters was Roscelin of Compiègne, but also Robert of Paris and Arnulf of Laon, to name a few. As for Abelard, he initially practiced *in voce* exegesis (or a form of proto-vocalism, if we use Iwakuma's formulation), but eventually developed a true, full-fledged form of vocalism, as he began holding that nothing existed aside from particulars, hence denying the existence of universal entities. This development is thought to have been prompted by Abelard's dispute with another one of his old masters, William of Champeaux. According to this story, Abelard's views, as well as others similar to it, were described as vocalist, until the term 'nominalist' came to replace 'vocalist'.¹⁶

More recently, Margaret Cameron challenged this view, which at the time she called the "Current Story" about the development of early twelfth-century logic.¹⁷ Her critique, as far as I can see, is two-pronged, (1) relying on new evidence with regards to the attribution of certain key texts and (2) finding fault in the characterization of so-called "*in voce*" commentaries as ontologically neutral. According to her, the "Current Story" cannot be maintained, because it is heavily dependent upon the attribution of the literal glosses (P5, C5 & H4 in Marenbon's catalogue¹⁸) to Abelard, an attribution which has recently been called into question.¹⁹ These glosses were used as proof that Abelard initially was a mere *in voce* exegete, and that he only later evolved into a proper vocalist with an ontological commitment to the non-existence of universals. Because of the serious doubts with regard to attribution, Marenbon accepts that it is better to give up the claim that Abelard began his career as an *in voce* exegete, and what follows from it.²⁰ This, in itself, does not imply that the characterization of *in voce* exegesis is wrong; it merely means that we cannot assume that Abelard was a proponent of the method. However, Cameron does also raise a serious challenge to Marenbon's construal of *in voce* exegesis. According to her, the kind of ontological neutrality which Marenbon ascribes to *in voce* exegesis is "philosophically naïve": it is not the result a substantial philosophical position (for example, the kind of position which would hold that there is a given purpose achieved by this ontological neutrality), but simply a failure to recognize or to care about the

¹⁶ See Marenbon (2004a), pp. 33–34.

¹⁷ Cameron (2011).

¹⁸ Marenbon (1993).

¹⁹ Marenbon (2011) questions the identification of these literal glosses with the *Introductiones parvulorum*; see footnote 59 therein. The attribution of the literal glosses to Abelard can be traced back to their edition, which was published by Dal Pra in 1969 under the title *Introductiones parvulorum*.

²⁰ Marenbon (2011), p. 199.

philosophical implications of the analysed texts.²¹ Cameron proposes an alternate explanation for the lack of philosophical sophistication in the texts branded as examples of the *in voce* approach: these texts are intended as teaching aids for novice students. As Cameron puts it, “their philosophical naïveté reflects not a stage in the logical development of philosophy in the twelfth century, but rather a stage in the logical development *of a student*.”²² In other words, according to her, the impression that there is an embryonic stage of nominalism characterized by *in voce* interpretation in the absence of substantial metaphysical claims is misleading, and due to the fact, quite uninteresting on its own, that said texts are intended for an audience which is not yet knowledgeable enough to engage in intricate philosophical argumentation about universals.

Marenbon accepts part of Cameron’s criticism: as was said above, he abandons the part of the story regarding the evolution of Abelard’s own thought, and he moves away from speaking in terms of *in voce* exegesis, vocalism, or (as Iwakuma would have it) proto-vocalism. However, he does not think that the idea of a distinctive approach to logic emerging in the eleventh and twelfth centuries should be abandoned. As such, he proposes to use the notion of a “language-focused approach to logic” to speak of the distinctive approach to logic which emerged in the middle or late eleventh century. Such an approach fulfils the following criteria:

- (1) The subject-matter of logic is restrained to language;
- (2) The words which are the subject-matter of logical texts are not just any words, they are words about words.²³

Defined as such, a language-focused approach does not imply a given ontological position. Indeed, someone who believes that the subject-matter of logic is limited to linguistic items can very well accept that other types of entities exist, even though they do not constitute the subject-matter of logic. Furthermore, proponents of a language-focused approach do not necessarily deny that words of first imposition, such as “dog” or “human”, ultimately refer to things. What is important in their view is that words of *second* imposition, such as Porphyry’s five predicables, refer not to things, but to other words. This highlights another important feature of a language-focused approach to logic: stressing the fact that predication is a relation between linguistic entities, and that things (*res*) cannot be predicated.²⁴ It is also worth noting that, for

²¹ Cameron (2011), p. 682.

²² Cameron (2011), p. 693.

²³ Marenbon (2011), p. 202.

²⁴ See Marenbon (2011) p. 204.

Marenbon, identifying the presence of this approach in sources is not an “all-or-nothing” matter. Some texts exhibit certain elements of a language-focused approach but not all of them. For example, a commentary on the *Isagoge* can very well be language-focused with regards to this very text, without explicitly stating that the whole of the discipline of logic should be treated as such. This nuanced position, it seems to me, resists Cameron’s criticism, insofar as a text discussing logic can lack ontological commitment without this being the result of a philosophical “naïveté”. In this way, it follows Cameron’s lead by showing a greater sensitivity to the purpose of the texts, while still allowing us to make meaningful observations regarding the development of logic. In other words, this construal addresses the legitimate issues which Cameron found with the “Current Story”, while not throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

Now that a brief summary of the discussions surrounding logic at the turn of the eleventh century has been drawn, it remains to see what impact this should have on an inquiry into the development of medieval nominalism. I believe that the emergence of a language-focused approach to logic (as defined by Marenbon) is a relevant phenomenon to consider for the historian of nominalism. From a historical perspective, this approach to logic is worth considering since it was adopted not only by Abelard, but also by earlier authors who are believed to have had a significant impact on his nominalist positions (for example, Roscelin). It is therefore a historical fact that the proponents of a language-focused approach to logic were some of the same people we know had an important role in shaping nominalist views in the twelfth century. However, this does not mean that this overlap is a mere historical coincidence. Even though it is crucial not to conflate language-focused approaches to logic with nominalism, there are nevertheless some important points of convergence between the two. Indeed, while adopting a language-focused approach to logic is not exclusive to nominalists, a nominalist is very likely to prefer such an approach: if someone rejects the idea that universals (such as genus and species) are things (*res*), then the sensible decision is to treat these universals as merely words when expounding the logical texts which deal with them. In other terms, although a proponent of a language-focused approach to logic need not be a nominalist, it is hard to see how a nominalist could approach logic in another way. Furthermore, someone who adopts a language-focused approach to logic might very well come to develop a nominalist ontology. After all, if the important logical texts can be expounded *in voce* without ever treating the universals contained in them as things, there seems to be little reason to postulate the existence of such universal entities. Thus, although we cannot simply assume, upon encountering a text whose approach to logic is language-focused, that this text is a nominalist text, such an

approach would be the preferred one for a nominalist. Conversely, adopting such a view on logical matters could very well lead someone to nominalist reflections.

1.2.4. ABELARD

Peter Abelard (1079–1142) is one of the figures around whom much of the discussion on the language-focused approach to logic coalesces. This is in part due to his great fame, both in his own time and for current-day historians of philosophy. Indeed, he is renowned for his logical prowess and credited for devising the first truly fleshed out nominalist theory, at least in Western thought. For our current purposes, it will suffice to give a summary of Abelard's complex treatment of the question of universals, as well as some of the key concepts which it is built upon.²⁵

Abelard's most in-depth treatment of universals is found in the glosses on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, in the *Logica 'Ingredientibus'*. The problem of determining the ontological status of universals arises from his endeavour, which is to answer Porphyry's three famous questions on genera and species.²⁶ Abelard starts by exposing each of the possible realist accounts of universals, showing how they fail on grounds of logical inconsistency. At the issue of this process of elimination, he concludes that no thing (*res*) satisfies the three Boethian criteria for universality.²⁷ Therefore, in his words, "it remains to ascribe this kind of universality only to words".²⁸ Then, he proposes the following definition of a universal word:

Now a universal word is one that on the basis of its invention (*ex inventione*) is apt to be predicated of several things one by one. For example the name 'man', which can be conjoined to particular names of men in accordance with the nature of the subject thing it is imposed on.²⁹

From the above passage, it is manifest that the concept of imposition (*impositio*) or invention (*inventio*) is the crux of Abelard's theory of universal words. The idea of imposition is fashioned after the passage of the book of Genesis (2:19) where Adam names the animals: an impositor would, for example, impose the name 'man' on all men as if he was saying: "things

²⁵ For a more in-depth examination of Abelard's treatment of universals, see, for example, Marenbon (2015), Tweedale (1976), Marenbon (1997, esp. chapter 8), King (1982), King (2004), De Libera (1996, pp. 185–198).

²⁶ See section 1.2.2 above.

²⁷ See section 1.2.2 above.

²⁸ LI: *Isag.* 16.21–22, trans. Spade: "[...] *restat ut huiusmodi universalitatem solis vocibus adscribamus.*"

²⁹ LI: *Isag.* 16.25–28, trans. Spade: "*Est autem universale vocabulum quod de pluribus singillatim habile est ex inventione sua praedicari, ut hoc nomen 'homo', quod particularibus nominibus hominum coniungibile est secundum subiectarum rerum naturam quibus est impositum.*"

of that sort are called men”.³⁰ Some scholars, most notably Peter King, have drawn parallels between Abelard’s notion of imposition and Kripke and Putnam’s “new theory of meaning”.³¹ According to the latter theory, a word owes its reference to a dubber’s act of “baptism”, where the dubber says something akin to “the term ‘man’ will be used for objects of this kind (i.e., men)”.³² On the one hand, this analogy is useful, as it highlights an important fact: for Abelard (as is the case for baptism in the new theory of meaning), the felicity of the act of imposition does not require the impositor to have a perfect knowledge of the properties of the objects to which the term is intended to apply; the key thing is the impositor’s intention to refer to things of that kind. On the other hand, the analogy has its limits. First, as Marenbon remarks, Abelard believes that what a word inherits from its imposition is primarily its signification, and only secondarily its reference.³³ In other words, the act of imposition of a name to a thing is the cause for this name’s *signifying* a thing, which, in the Boethian model of signification adopted in Abelard’s time, is identified with this name generating the thought of that thing in the listener’s mind. Secondly, according to the “new theory”, the cause of an act of baptism might be external to the named object(s), such as when a child is baptised with the name of a relative.³⁴ In that case, there is nothing about the child themselves that is the *cause* of the imposition of the name. In contrast, Abelard believes that the cause of the imposition of a name to a thing is internal: the cause is the *nature* of the thing. This is especially important when it comes to explaining the universality of the signification of universal names without needing to appeal to universal *things*. Indeed, all words are imposed, but what distinguishes a singular name from a universal one is that the latter has a *common* cause of imposition. For example, the universal name ‘man’ is imposed on all men from a common cause, namely that they are men.³⁵ This common cause is identified with what Abelard calls the ‘status’:

Single men, who are discrete from one another since they differ both in their own essences and in their own forms [...], nevertheless agree in *that they are men*. I do not say that they agree in *man*, since no thing is a man unless it is discrete. Rather they agree in *being a man*. [...] Now someone’s *being a man*, which is not a thing, we call the *status* of man. We also

³⁰ LI: PH 337.709–713: “*Dicimus itaque non esse necessarium, ut omne nomen aut proprium sit aut appellatium, sed illa tantum quae propriam uocis impositionem habent, ut si impositor diceret: Huiusmodi res uocetur homo uel non-homo / uel alba.*”

³¹ See King (1982).

³² See Kripke (1980).

³³ Marenbon (2013), p. 155.

³⁴ Marenbon (2013), p. 157

³⁵ LI: Isag. 19.9–110: “*Ut haec vox ‘homo’ et singulos nominat ex communi causa, quod scilicet homines sunt [...]*”

called it the “common cause” of the imposition of a name on single men insofar as they agree with one another.³⁶

Much ink has been spilled on this puzzling notion of status, but for our current purposes, it will suffice to remark that Abelard is adamant in insisting that statuses are not essences, and they are not shared in a metaphysical sense. As such, statuses are always expressed in the form of a clause comprised of the verb ‘*esse*’ combined with an accusative, for example ‘*esse hominem*’, which can be translated as ‘being a man’.

With these conceptual tools in hand, Abelard is ready to propose his answers to Porphyry’s three questions. As a result of considering universals as names, however, he reformulates each question, sometimes with a significant alteration of their original meaning. The first question, which originally asked whether genera and species subsist or are posited in the intellect alone, gets reframed as the question whether genera and species (*qua* names) signify real things, or mere “empty opinion”. Abelard’s answer is that they signify real things by *naming* them, but in another sense they also signify universals in the mind, as they give rise to universal understandings. These universal understandings are not empty, although they are a special kind of understanding, which Abelard calls ‘alone’ (*solis*), ‘bare’ (*nudis*) and ‘pure’ (*puris*), since they are abstract and generic in such that they can apply to any member of a given kind indiscriminately. Porphyry’s second question asks whether genera and species, granted that they subsist, do so as corporeal or incorporeal entities. Abelard reformulates it so that it becomes the question, granted that genera and species *signify* real entities, whether they signify corporeal or incorporeal entities. Abelard responds that, with regards to naming, genera- and species-terms signify corporeal entities, where “corporeal” is taken as synonymous with “discrete”. In other words, a term like ‘man’ names individual men, which are discrete, corporeal entities. However, the mode of signifying these individuals is “incorporeal” insofar as the genera- or species-term picks them out irrespective of their individual features, through an understanding which is alone, bare, and pure. As for Porphyry’s third question, it arises from granting that genera and species are incorporeal and asks whether these incorporeals should be posited within sensibles or apart from them. Abelard reformulates this question so as to ask whether genera and species (*qua* words with an “incorporeal” mode of signifying) signify only

³⁶ LI: *Isag.* 19.21–25 & 20.7–9, trans. Spade: “*Singuli homines discreti ab invicem [...] in eo tamen conveniunt, quod homines sunt. Non dico in homine, cum res nulla sit homo nisi discreta, sed in esse hominem. [...] Statum autem hominis ipsum esse hominem, quod non est res, vocamus, quod etiam diximus communem causam impositionis nominis ad singulos, secundum quod ipsi ad invicem conveniunt.*”

the sensibles themselves, or also something else which is apart from sensibles. His reply is then that these words signify, as was established earlier, the sensibles themselves, but they also signify “the divine conception Priscian ascribes to the divine mind”.³⁷ In addition to the three Porphyrian questions, Abelard adds a fourth question, namely whether a universal name remains universal when it does not name any existing thing. His answer is that it does not: the name ‘rose’, if there are no roses in existence anymore, is not predicable of many, and therefore fails to fulfil one of the necessary conditions for being considered universal.

I consider Peter Abelard as a nominalist about universals,³⁸ since he holds a version of the two theses of nominalism as I have defined them in the above:

Negative thesis: “But now that we have shown the reasons why *things* taken neither singly nor collectively can be called “universals” insofar as they are predicated of several, **it remains to ascribe this kind of universality only to words.**”³⁹

Positive thesis: “[...] any thing, wherever it exists, is personally discrete and one in number.”⁴⁰

From the above, we are now in a position to understand how Abelard fleshes out this nominalist position of his. The reason why he denies the existence of universal entities is because he thinks postulating their existence leads to logical inconsistency. As a result, the only way to avoid these inconsistencies is, according to Abelard, denying the real existence of universals and only admitting the existence of individual entities. One key notion which allows him to explain the special character of universal terms is, as was said, the notion of imposition: since universal terms such as ‘man’ are imposed *in order to* signify many individuals of a given kind without regard to any specific, identifiable individual(s), they are truly predicable of many without needing to postulate universal *res* corresponding to them. However, it is worth noting that Abelard is not denying the existence of natural kinds. On the contrary, Abelard adopts a stance which Marenbon describes as “strong naturalism”, whereby the existence of natural kinds is considered as a basic fact about the world, and the human ability to know which kind an object

³⁷ The notion of divine conceptions as well as its use by Abelard are complex topics which will not be discussed here as they are unrelated to the topics discussed in the following chapters. More information on common conceptions can be found in Rosier-Catach (2007), Marenbon (1997) pp. 185–195 and Noël (2018) pp. 42–52.

³⁸ There is disagreement as to how to best characterise Abelard’s thought. Jean Jolivet (1969a) calls him an anti-realist rather than a nominalist. Some others describe him as a conceptualist. I don’t disagree with the latter term, but I would classify it as falling under the nominalist umbrella, so I will be content with calling Abelard a nominalist for my current purposes.

³⁹ LI: *Isag.* 16.19–22, trans. Spade (§63): “*Nunc autem ostensis rationibus quibus neque res singillatim neque collectim acceptae universales dici possunt in eo quod de pluribus praedicantur, restat ut huiusmodi universalitatem solis vocibus adscribamus.*”

⁴⁰ TI §75: “[...] *quelibet res, ubicumque est, personaliter discreta est atque una numero reperitur.*”

belongs to is taken for granted.⁴¹ Belonging to a natural kind is determined by an individual's possession of the corresponding *differentia*, which is understood as a particular form of that individual. For example, a human being belongs to humankind precisely because of the form of rationality it possesses, since rationality is the *differentia* associated with the species 'human'. However, as Marenbon rightly points out, the problem is then to explain how these *differentiae* can be considered as *differentiae* of the same kind, without resorting to real universals.⁴² Whether he successfully does so is a complicated question which would make us stray too far from the current discussions, and as such I will leave the question open, even if it amounts to questioning whether Abelard's nominalism is ultimately successful or not. Indeed, my main goal in this thesis is not to evaluate the philosophical soundness of twelfth-century nominalist theories, but rather to better understand the influence of Abelard's nominalism and the ways in which authors articulate nominalist ideas with the other views they hold. Drawing a sketch of the principal elements of Abelard's nominalism was a key step in order to attain this goal. Now, it remains to examine the institutional context in which these intellectual discussions and the teaching practices that accompany them unfolded.

1.2.5. THE *NOMINALES* AND OTHER TWELFTH-CENTURY SCHOOLS

One key feature of the intellectual landscape of the twelfth-century Latin world is the omnipresence of logico-theological schools. However, this is not to say that such schools were a twelfth-century invention. Indeed, schools, especially those attached to a cathedral or a monastery, had been in existence for centuries. The particularity of the twelfth century is that, due to increasing social demand, there was a flourishing of the urban schools, which generated rich debate as well as a de-centralization of education: the cathedral school, once the centre of intellectual life and education in an episcopal city, lost its dominance.⁴³ Ebbesen, relying on the occurrence of explicit reference to schools in manuscript sources, situates the golden era of the schools somewhere in the middle of the twelfth century, perhaps slightly later, with the influence of some schools lingering into the thirteenth century.⁴⁴ However, by 1200, most of these schools have already declined or disappeared. Iwakuma hypothesizes that this might be a result of the reorganization of education in Paris following Alexander III's educational

⁴¹ See Marenbon (1997), pp. 117–119

⁴² Marenbon (1992) p. 201

⁴³ See Kouamé (2020)

⁴⁴ Ebbesen (1992), p. 77.

reforms at the Third Lateran Council in 1179.⁴⁵ This is consistent with Thierry Kouamé's interpretation: the consecration of the canonical procedure of the *licentia docendi* rendered the activity of teaching, perhaps paradoxically, less accessible. Such a license allowed someone to teach and was provided at no cost, provided that the person in question was considered qualified by the ecclesiastic authority issuing the license. Intuitively, we might expect that the lack of a cost should have democratized education to some extent, allowing more people to access teaching roles. However, this new procedure meant that teaching in public was virtually impossible without the stamp of approval of the relevant authorities, who therefore had the final say in who gets a *licentia docendi* and who does not.⁴⁶ Last but not least, the thirteenth century is also the century of the creation of universities. It is thus characterized by a movement away from the heterogeneous educational system of the twelfth century and its urban schools, toward a more centralized model. Despite the role these factors must have played, however, the seemingly sudden disappearance of twelfth-century schools remains historically puzzling.

It should be noted that, in the context of the twelfth century, the word 'school', or '*schola*', should not be taken in a material sense.⁴⁷ The logico-theological schools which are of interest to us were not necessarily always situated in a given building or location. Rather, they usually coalesced around a master (*magister*) who would attract students willing to pay him directly to receive his teachings. Schools often presented a series of theses (or *positiones*) they held, often formulated in a shocking or puzzling way, perhaps in order to attract the attention and interest of prospective students far and wide.⁴⁸ The topics addressed in these school *positiones* are varied, but the bulk of them have to do with points of contention regarding interpretation of the texts of the *logica vetus*. For example, the theses can address questions regarding universals, glossing on Porphyry's three questions, with genus being the paradigmatic case of a universal. They can also decide upon what is predicable (terms only, or things as well?) and whether propositions can change truth values. Other theses are related to the *Elenchi* or to grammar, using Priscian's *Institutiones* as the paradigmatic text.

Although they are not the only schools in the twelfth century, those of *Nominales*, the *Porretani*, the *Parvipontani*, the *Melidunenses*, and the *Montani* stand out. Since the *Nominales*

⁴⁵ Iwakuma (1992b), p. 106.

⁴⁶ Kouamé (2020), p. 30 & 43–48.

⁴⁷ See Giraud (2020), p. 5.

⁴⁸ Ebbesen (1992)

have been most associated with nominalist positions, they will come up frequently throughout this thesis. In many sources, the *Nominales* are opposed to the *Reales*.⁴⁹ Whereas ‘*Reales*’ is clearly a blanket term used to refer to many schools, it seems like ‘*Nominales*’ is used to refer to a single school.⁵⁰ As for identifying who the *Nominales* are, there seems to be a broad consensus that they are related to Abelard as their intellectual forefather.⁵¹ Looking at the positions usually ascribed to the *Nominales* provides further insight on this claim.⁵² Among those, we very often find the thesis that genera and species are linguistic items, although the exact wording varies: sometimes genera and species are called *nomina*, sometimes *voces*, sometimes *vocabula*. The other theses that are most often attributed to the *Nominales* are the thesis that nothing grows (*nihil crescit*) and the thesis that whatever is true at one time is true of all time (*quod semel est verum semper est verum*). A recurring theme in theses ascribed to this school is that there is a difference between, say, referring to Socrates or referring to that thing which is Socrates; this is what is captured by the distinction between essence and person which seems characteristic of the *Nominales*.⁵³ On the whole, the theses ascribed to the *Nominales* tend to be consistent with Abelard’s views, even when it comes to controversial views.⁵⁴

If there is widespread agreement that the *Nominales* are related to Abelard, the question of the origin of their name has sparked considerable debate, even leading to an entire conference dedicated to the issue in Madison, Wisconsin in October 1991.⁵⁵ Two broad families of positions are usually discussed: I will call them the “universals are names” view, and the “unity of the name” view. According to the “universals are names” view, the *Nominales* are so-called because they held that universals are names (*nomina*). This is the view that was espoused by the sixteenth-century historian Aventinus.⁵⁶ Among contemporary scholars, Chris Martin has expressed support for this view.⁵⁷ Iwakuma also believes that the formula

⁴⁹ See Iwakuma & Ebbesen (1992), sources 13, 18, 22b, 29, 32, 35, 44a, 44c–d, 45, 52d, 53, & 70.

⁵⁰ Ebbesen (1992).

⁵¹ See Normore (1992) & Iwakuma (1992b).

⁵² See Normore (1992) for a survey of the positions based on the list of sources in Iwakuma & Ebbesen (1992).

⁵³ For more on this distinction, see Martin (1998) and Mews (1992). See also Normore (1992), p. 84 for a treatment of the more general idea behind this distinction.

⁵⁴ See Normore (1992), p. 91, and Iwakuma (1992b) p. 104.

⁵⁵ Interested readers may refer to the conference acts in *Vivarium* 30(1), 1992 for a more complete discussion of the issue. Note that the majority of the articles published in this issue are referenced here and can be found in the bibliography.

⁵⁶ See the discussion in Mews (1992), p. 5.

⁵⁷ See Martin (1992).

“universals are *nomina*” has led to the adoption of the name ‘*Nominales*’, but he believes that the *Nominales* did not come up with this formula; instead, he believes that the *Reales* came up with it as an approximate and inexact way to characterize their opponents’ views.⁵⁸ More recently, Frédéric Goubier and Irène Rosier-Catach have expressed support for the view that the name of the *Nominales* is a result of their position on universals.⁵⁹ As for the proponents of the “unity of the name” view, they believe that the *Nominales* got their name from another position of theirs, namely the thesis that a name is the same regardless of changes in case or gender. Calvin Normore defended this view, relying on a testimony by Bonaventure.⁶⁰ However, Iwakuma raises a good reason to doubt that the unity of the name thesis is the basis for the name ‘*Nominales*’: most other schools also accepted the same thesis in some form, therefore this thesis is not likely to have been what sets the *Nominales* apart from the other schools.⁶¹ Likewise, Martin thinks that the excerpt from Bonaventure is a red herring.⁶² In addition to these two views about the origin of the name of the *Nominales*, Normore raises another possibility: the *Nominales* might be so called because of their views on predication, namely that it is names and not things which are predicated. However, as he notes, this is merely a hypothesis, since we do not currently possess any evidence in favour of this theory.⁶³

The question of the origin of the name ‘*Nominales*’ is distinct from the question whether *Nominales* are nominalists as we understand it. In the current project, I will be less concerned with the origin of the name than with the history of nominalism (be it among the *Nominales* or not) in the later half of the twelfth century. Perhaps the *Nominales* were so called because of their theory of universals, perhaps they were not; but there is a clear relation between our current use of the term ‘nominalism’ and the ideas put forth by the *Nominales*. This relation is also reflected in the historical lineage which is visible through the writings of Aventinus: from Roscelin and Abelard to the “*Nominalistae*” of the fifteenth century, a “new way of philosophizing” developed, insisting on the importance of language.⁶⁴ However, there seems to be a gap in this history. Even if we know much about Abelard’s nominalism, much work remains to be done to understand how he influenced the next generation of students. Besides,

⁵⁸ Iwakuma (1992b), pp. 101–102.

⁵⁹ Goubier, F. & I. Rosier-Catach (2020).

⁶⁰ Normore (1992). The text by Bonaventure is 64a in Iwakuma & Ebbesen (1992).

⁶¹ Iwakuma (1992b), pp. 97–101.

⁶² Martin (1992), p. 110.

⁶³ Normore (1992), p. 94.

⁶⁴ Aventinus, *Annales ducum Boiariae*, lib. VI, cap. 3, 200.7–15

while it is clear that a better understanding of the school of the *Nominales* is an integral part of a history of nominalism in the twelfth century, it is also important to avoid oversimplifying the issue by conflating nominalism and *Nominales*, which is a frequent reflex.⁶⁵ On my view, *Nominales* are nominalists, but the converse is not true: authors who qualify as nominalists in the sense highlighted above are found outside of the school of the *Nominales*, as will appear in the chapters to come. Since it is the history of nominalist ideas which is my primary interest, I will of course pay attention to the *Nominales*, but I will avoid making them my sole focus. Therefore, the discussions in the coming chapters will examine texts from the second half of the twelfth century which contain views falling under the above definition of nominalism about universals. Some of them have been connected to the *Nominales* (rightly or wrongly, as will be seen), whereas one of our authors, John of Salisbury, explicitly does not consider himself a *Nominalis*. Nevertheless, I hope to make it clear how those texts fit into a history of nominalism, and how they highlight a diversity of nominalist views which often goes unrecognized. Before getting into the study of the texts themselves, however, the remainder of this chapter will explore a few methodological considerations guiding my research.

1.3. PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY FOR THE HISTORIAN OF PHILOSOPHY

The goal of this section is to clarify my approach in pursuing a research project in the history of philosophy and to identify some of the methods that will be deployed in so doing. I will start by saying a bit more about the practices of historians of philosophy in general, before moving on to my own project and its features. I will then discuss some of the methods appropriate to this project.

A good starting point to examine the nature of the work of a historian of philosophy is to examine the expression ‘historian of philosophy’ itself. It might seem merely tautological to say that a historian of philosophy is both a historian and a philosopher, but the implications of this statement are important, so it is worth examining them. Indeed, at least *prima facie*, it seems that the role of the philosopher can be at odds with their preoccupations as a historian: either someone prioritizes philosophical interest (at the risk of being anachronistic), or they prioritize historical accuracy (while running the risk of their enquiry having little to do with philosophy). This tension is well captured in this dilemma formulated by Alasdair MacIntyre:

⁶⁵ For instances of “*Nominalis*” and “nominalist” (or “nominalism”) being used interchangeably, see Courtenay (1992a, 1992b), Ebbesen (1991, 1999) and Martin (1998).

It is all too easy to imprison oneself within the following dilemma. Either we read the philosophies of the past so as to make them relevant to our contemporary problems and enterprises, transmuting them as far as possible into what they would have been if they were part of present-day philosophy, and minimizing or ignoring or even on occasion misrepresenting that which refuses such transmutation because it is inextricably bound up with that in the past which makes it radically different from present-day philosophy; or instead we take great care to read them in their own terms, carefully preserving their idiosyncratic and specific character, so that they cannot emerge into the present except as a set of museum pieces.⁶⁶

Even though MacIntyre formulates this as a dilemma, I believe that the real-life practices of historians of philosophy are better captured in a model which sees these two ways of approaching the history of philosophy as the two poles of an axis. Indeed, as Claude Panaccio highlights in *Récit et Reconstruction*, the various practices of historians of philosophy fall somewhere on a continuum going from pure concern for historical accuracy at one end to straightforward application of a past philosopher's views to a contemporary discussion on the other end. They are only rarely situated on one extreme of the spectrum or the other, but they usually tend to lean more towards one side or the other.

Given this plurality of ways in which the history of philosophy can be approached, the question arises as to how the historian should decide on a method. Panaccio rightfully insists on the importance of the historian of philosophy's project for determining all of the parameters for conducting their research, from the selection of relevant sources to the methods that will be employed, and the aspects of a text which will be brought to the forefront, be it through the translation itself or through their treatment of the materials.⁶⁷ As such, before I go forward, I need to say a bit more about the project itself.

My primary aim, then, is to contribute to a better understanding of nominalism in Abelard's wake, by investigating along two lines:

1) Because of Abelard's role as the main figurehead of nominalism in the twelfth century, I am interested in evaluating his intellectual heritage. This seems to be a strategic starting point, because of the relative availability of materials to discuss and the possibility of linking my investigations to existing scholarship. Moreover, this takes on a special importance given the absence of systematized attribution of views in the Middle Ages; because authors do not always clearly cite the sources of the ideas that they use, identifying the influence of authors on one another can require additional work. This is especially interesting in the case of Abelard,

⁶⁶ MacIntyre (1984), p. 31

⁶⁷ See Panaccio (2019), for example p. 58 & pp. 75–76.

because we have still much to learn about his subterranean influence on the development of philosophy following his death.

2) The second avenue I am exploring here, having to do with the relation between nominalist ideas and the rest of the views contained in each text, is fruitfully approached as *metaphilosophical*: among other things, I am interested in the *motivations* for holding nominalist views, whether they have to do with the problem of universals itself or not. I suspect that, given the somewhat eclectic context resulting from the proliferation of independent dialectic schools, twelfth-century nominalist thought is varied in a way that has been underappreciated thus far. This approach also implies that I will focus a bit less on the specific steps of the arguments deployed by each, instead drawing more attention on the way the various positions present in a given text hold together.

By investigating along these two lines, I hope to shed some light on important features of twelfth-century nominalism.

Going back to the continuum presented above, I would characterize the present project as leaning more towards the historical side. One of the reasons motivating this approach is that the literature on nominalism in the second half of the twelfth century is, at the moment, quite scarce. To make matters even more complicated, the source materials available to us are generally difficult to date and to attribute. Besides, since a good quantity of the texts we do possess were meant for teaching, it can be difficult to ascertain which viewpoints are endorsed and which ones are merely presented as stimulus for discussion.⁶⁸ Therefore, even though I ultimately believe in the philosophical relevance of twelfth-century nominalist thought for us contemporary philosophers, given the current state of our knowledge, it is of paramount importance to develop a better understanding of the source materials themselves, which requires a more historical approach.

Given my aims, I will use a broadly Collingwoodian approach, because I believe it allows for a good balance between addressing the historical and philosophical dimensions of my subject matter. Two main ideas of R.G. Collingwood have garnered a fair share of attention from historians of philosophy: the notion of complexes of questions and answers, as well as the notion of re-enactment. I will begin by explaining both ideas before I move on to show how

⁶⁸ This last difficulty is made manifest, for example, in the debate whether Peter of Capua (not examined in this thesis) was sincerely expressing allegiance to the *Nominales*, or doing so only for the purpose of teaching; see Courtenay (1992b).

they will be mobilized in the current project, with slightly stronger emphasis on the latter notion.

1.3.1. COLLINGWOOD'S COMPLEXES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In his *Autobiography*, Collingwood attributes to his work on archaeological digs the insight that the activity of questioning holds a central place in the pursuit of knowledge. Indeed, he holds that “you cannot find out what a man means by simply studying his spoken or written statements [...]. You must also know what the question was (a question in his own mind, and presumed by him to be in yours) to which the thing he has said or written was meant as the answer”.⁶⁹ His own approach is drawn in contrast with the “logic of propositions” put forth by logicians of his time, which treats propositions (a name for assertive acts of thought) as the basic unit of truth and meaning, from which the body of knowledge is built. To this kind of logic, Collingwood opposes what he calls the “logic of question and answer”. In his conception of the logic of question and answer, both the meaning of a proposition (or, more accurately, an answer) and its truth value are relative to the question it is meant to answer. Within this framework, properly speaking, truth belongs only to complexes of questions and answers taken as a whole. However, in ordinary language, we do speak of individual assertions as being true or false. According to Collingwood, what is meant by ordinarily saying that a proposition is true is that this proposition satisfies the following four conditions:⁷⁰

- 1) It belongs to a complex of questions and answers which is true as a whole;
- 2) Within this complex, it answers a given question;
- 3) This question “arises”, i.e., it emerges from a presupposition made as an answer to a question which is logically prior to it in the complex of questions and answers to which it belongs;⁷¹
- 4) The proposition is “the right answer” to that question, i.e., it “enables us to get ahead with the process of questioning and answering.”⁷²

Because, for Collingwood, whether a proposition is “right” depends on identifying the question to which it is an answer, and because doing so is a matter of historical enquiry, some form of historical reconstruction is needed in order to appreciate a proposition put forth by (in this case)

⁶⁹ Collingwood (1939), p. 31

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 38

⁷¹ Collingwood (1940), p. 22 & p. 25

⁷² Collingwood (1939), p. 37

some philosopher.⁷³ When reconstructing an author's way of thinking, then, the historian of philosophy identifies some statement which is of particular interest, and then sets out to find what question it is meant to answer. Collingwood provides a good illustration of this process as applied to archaeology in his *Autobiography*, where he recalls the study of a Roman wall between Tyne and Solway.⁷⁴ He starts by recognizing that the archaeologists who were interested in the site started out by asking the question of what this wall was for, to which, vaguely, it could be answered that the wall's purpose was defence. For Collingwood, this is not the whole story: another question immediately arises from the answer to the first one, namely the question of *how* this wall worked as a defence. Based on his observations of the features of the wall, Collingwood then answers this question by saying that this wall acted as a sort of elevated sentry-walk to protect against raiders. But, again, this raises a further question. Based on his reasoning about the function of the wall and the kinds of threats it was meant to mitigate, he ends up concluding that, if he is right about the wall's function, he could expect to find the remnants of a similar wall stretching down the Cumberland coast, to offer protection against ships.⁷⁵ The next question he asks is therefore "Do such towers exist?", and indeed searching in old publications revealed that such towers had been found where Collingwood expected them.

This of course is an example of Collingwood's method as applied to an archaeological problem, reflecting on physical evidence, but his method has also been fruitfully applied to the history of philosophy, most notably by Alain de Libera. In *L'Archéologie Philosophique*, he devises his own method (the titular "philosophical archeology") based on a combination of, on the one hand, Collingwood's notion of complexes of questions and answers and, on the other hand, of Foucault's notions of archaeology and *episteme*.⁷⁶ By applying this method to the medieval problem of universals, he argues that there is no such thing as a unified, eternal problem of universals, but rather, various complexes of questions and answers. He then investigates the transition from one of these complexes to another. Since a lot of medieval discussions of universals are to some degree in response to Porphyry's *Isagoge*, he sets out to unearth the origins of the questions raised in the *Isagoge*, as well as their transformation throughout the centuries to come, and how they are answered. This method insists on the

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 128–130.

⁷⁵ Collingwood (1939), p. 129.

⁷⁶ De Libera (2016).

importance of contextualization and warns us against cherry-picking ideas of the past to apply them to current issues without much regard for the questions examined by the authors and the answers they propose to them.⁷⁷

Collingwood's take on history is complex and far more radical than the sketch that was just provided, but here it will suffice to highlight some core ideas which have been picked up by historians of medieval philosophy in devising their own methodologies. The key point is that Collingwood does not conceive of the history of philosophy as the history of how some thinkers of the past tackled the "eternal problems" of philosophy, but rather he sees it as constituted of individual agents deploying a chain of thought, moving through a succession of questions and answers, and even moving from a given complex of questions and answers to another one.

1.3.2. RE-ENACTING PAST THOUGHTS

Another important aspect of Collingwood's historiography is his idea of historical re-enactment of past thought, which he mostly discusses most prominently in *The Idea of History*. Despite seeming quite important to the man himself, the notion appears to have received comparatively little attention from historians of philosophy, perhaps because it is at times not entirely clear what he means by it. The idea of re-enactment comes to Collingwood as an answer to the question of how historians can come to *know* the past, given that they have no empirical access to the realities that are the objects of past knowledge. His answer is then to state that the historian can come to know the past by re-enacting it in their own mind.⁷⁸

To do so, the historian must start with the materials they possess, which are, in the case of philosophy, mostly written materials. Re-enactment consists in finding out which thoughts are *behind* the words, in other words what was meant by them, and for the historian to re-think these thoughts in their own mind.⁷⁹ However, this doesn't mean that the historian can somehow intuit the past person's very thoughts. Rather, as Dray puts it, Collingwood is, first and foremost, making a point not about a methodology allowing someone to access the "flow of consciousness" of a past person, but rather about the *goal* of historical thinking: historical thinking aims at reaching an *understanding* of past thought, and to understand a thought means

⁷⁷ For more on that topic, see Marenbon (2018), p. 205

⁷⁸ Collingwood (1946), p. 282

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 283

to have successfully re-enacted it.⁸⁰ In this way, re-enactment is not the same as memory: whereas in memory the past is “a mere spectacle”, what makes re-enactment history is that the past is re-enacted *in present thought*, as an act. Memory is, in a way, passive, whereas re-enactment is active reconstruction.⁸¹

As I see it, Collingwood’s insistence on the importance of re-enactment should be taken as an invitation for the historian to reconstruct the thought of an author in a way that will allow the reader to “walk the steps” of the examined reasoning. I want to combine this idea with John Marenbon’s suggestion that there are two requirements for historical re-enactment of a certain thought process:

- 1) The complex of questions and answers that corresponds to it needs to be *internalized*;
- 2) The thought has to be articulated in the language of the historian’s own time (as was said before, history requires the re-enactment of a past thought *in the present*).⁸²

These two requirements, at least at first sight, seem to be in tension with one another: whereas the first one treats the examined view as deeply rooted within a particular context where certain questions arise while others do not, the second one urges us, in a way, to translate these thoughts back to our own time, so that they can be reconstructed in our own minds, which are situated in their own socio-historical context. This is again reminiscent of the terms of MacIntyre’s dilemma: it seems that, as historians of thought, we are oscillating between concern for historical context, on the one hand, and current-day intelligibility and relevance, on the other hand. As was pointed out before, however, this tension is hardly insurmountable, with most historians striking some kind of balance between the two, and in practice which aspect is emphasized depends on the project at hand. By using the Collingwoodian notion of constructive re-enactment bonified with Marenbon’s considerations, it becomes possible to achieve a form of synthesis of the two approaches to the history of philosophy. Indeed, such an understanding of re-enactment integrates the concern for historical situatedness (through the internalization of complexes of questions and answers) with the necessity of intelligibility for current-day researchers, themselves inextricably embedded in their own historical and cultural contexts.

⁸⁰ See Dray (1996)

⁸¹ Collingwood (1946), p. 293

⁸² Marenbon (2008), p. 101.

Additionally, in the case of this project, I believe that re-enactment is an especially powerful tool in order to uncover the metaphilosophical motivations that authors might have had to hold certain views, and how the plethora of nominalist views held in the twelfth century compare (or not) with each other. Indeed, it is by re-enacting the thoughts of the various authors examined here that we can hope to draw a more complete portrait of the intricate web of ideas which seem to coalesce around Abelard. Beyond actual, verified influence between thinkers, I am also interested in the theoretical relations between their texts even in the absence of explicit references or quotes, which are in any case rare in twelfth-century sources. Given the importance of this process of re-enactment for the current project, I now turn to saying more about the forms it can take, so that I can further clarify my approach.

1.3.3. IF THE DEAD COULD TALK: RORTY ON RECONSTRUCTION

An idea which is common to both the notion of complexes of questions and answers and that of re-enactment is that the views of past authors need to be actively *reconstructed* by the historian, and not just passively witnessed. The active character of reconstruction itself implies that many reconstructions are possible, depending on the historian's approach and aims. Many different reconstructions of a same view could each be valuable for different reasons. As such, I will briefly examine a few possible forms of reconstructions used by historians of philosophy, in order to be clearer about what I will and will not be doing.

Richard Rorty⁸³ identifies two types of reconstruction commonly used in the history of philosophy which, again, seem to mirror the two horns of MacIntyre's so-called dilemma. The first one is historical reconstruction, which is primarily concerned with the acquisition of historical knowledge. In this type of reconstruction, the historian formulates the author's views in the language of the latter's own historical period, in a way that the latter would likely accept as an accurate description of what they set out to do. The interest of such a reconstruction for us contemporary readers, according to Rorty, is that it shows the contingency of certain manners of thinking which might otherwise appear unavoidable, by showing how different people at different times have developed other ways of thinking about similar issues.

⁸³ Rorty (1984)

The second type of reconstruction Rorty mentions is rational reconstruction, which consists in a form of “dialogue” with a “re-educated” past figure. Using Aristotle as an example, he provides some explanation of what he means by “re-educated”:

This means that we are interested not only in what the Aristotle who walked the streets of Athens 'could be brought to accept as a correct description of what he had meant or done' but in what an ideally reasonable and educable Aristotle could be brought to accept as such a description.⁸⁴

As is clear from the quote above, such a reconstruction can beget an anachronistic view on historical matters. However, Rorty believes this ought not to concern us too much, so long as the historian accepts the extent to which their reconstruction is anachronistic. I am inclined to agree with Rorty, on the added condition that the historian must be explicit about what aspects of their view are anachronistic. In Rorty’s opinion, there can even be an added value in using anachronistic terms to describe an author’s view:

When we anachronistically say that he ‘really’ held such doctrines we mean that, in an imagined argument with present-day philosophers about whether he should have held certain other views, he would have been driven back on a premise which he never formulated, dealing with a topic he never considered—a premise which may have to be suggested to him by a friendly rational reconstructor.⁸⁵

Rational reconstruction, in Rorty’s words, rests on a conception of human intellectual history as “a long conversational interchange”.⁸⁶ This is compatible with at least some of Collingwood’s views, especially given his insistence on the process of questioning. In both cases, we are invited to see history as a dialogue of sorts.

According to Rorty, both historical and rational reconstructions have their place, but he believes they need to be done separately, or, more precisely, successively; by combining both approaches in this way, he says, “historical reconstruction operates to keep rational reconstructions honest”⁸⁷ by ensuring that the dialogue we are having is, in his terms, with the actual dead rather than with figures borne out of our own imaginations. In the context of this project, what I am proposing is closer to Rorty’s description of historical reconstruction: I am trying to provide an account, as historically accurate as possible, of what the sources I examine are saying. However, Rorty describes historical reconstructions as expressing past thoughts *in the language of their own time*. This is where my approach differs slightly from his. Given the difficulties inherent to working with twelfth-century philosophical sources, including the

⁸⁴ Rorty (1984), p.51

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* p. 53

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* p. 51

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* p. 71

obscure origin of many texts as well as a terminology which is not entirely consistent and crystallized, I acknowledge the usefulness, and perhaps necessity, of using current-day labels, such as the notion of nominalism I have defined in section 1.2.1. By using these labels, however, I am not trying to “re-educate” past thinkers or to infer what they would have to say if they participated in current philosophical debates. I merely use these labels as a convenient tool to isolate relevant aspects of the studied texts, aspects which are there to begin with, even though they are not described using the very same terms I use to describe them. Thus, it is important to emphasize that I am engaged in the task of unearthing historical facts; I am not proposing a “rational reconstruction” *à la* Rorty.

1.3.4. WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE CURRENT PROJECT

As was highlighted above, it is the project itself, with its own aims and constraints, which should orient the methodology. As a reminder, the project of this thesis is to investigate forms of nominalism which emerge in the twelfth century, both by examining Abelard’s influence on the texts and by unearthing some of the motivations the authors had for holding nominalist views.

Since this thesis ultimately aims to contribute to our knowledge of nominalist thought in the twelfth century as well as of Abelard’s influence, it stands to reason that the historical situatedness of the texts needs to be carefully considered. This is made even more salient by the fact that, as was mentioned before, there is much uncertainty about the origin, attribution, purpose, and interpretation of many twelfth-century texts. Thus, there is still much to be done in terms of situating these materials in the intellectual landscape of their own time. Approaching the texts with Collingwood’s notion of complexes and answers in mind is a way to delve into the specific issues the author likely cared about, and to refrain from superimposing current-day considerations on them. As was mentioned above, someone who is well-known for studying the genealogy of nominalist thought in the Middle Ages is Alain de Libera, who famously uses a method inspired by both R.G. Collingwood (from whom he borrows the notion of complexes of questions and answers) and Michel Foucault. His philosophical archaeology, as he calls it, is inspired by Foucault’s idea of “archaeology of knowledge”, which he develops in *The Order of Things*.⁸⁸ However, my approach needs to be distinguished from De Libera’s. Even though the question of Abelard’s influence could motivate someone to write a work in

⁸⁸ Foucault (1966), pp. xxiii–xxiv.

the style of De Libera's *La querelle des universaux, de Platon à la fin du Moyen-Âge*, this is not what I am setting out to do here, mostly because I reject De Libera and Foucault's brand of historical relativism. Nevertheless, there are some lessons to be taken from De Libera: as Marenbon highlights, his method warns us about cherry picking ideas from the past and ripping them out of their context to apply them to current issues in philosophy.⁸⁹ Additionally, as was mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, I want to heed Tarlazzi's warnings and refrain from uncritically upholding the narrative about the primacy of the problem of universals. Nominalist views arise also in situations not explicitly problematized as the problem of universals. Thus, my analyses aim to remain anchored in the text itself instead of superimposing on it some aspects of the problem of universals which are alien to it, whether these aspects are part of our contemporary understanding of the problem or part of the twelfth-century understanding of it.

However, since there is still much to be uncovered about the various philosophical schools of the twelfth century and their labels, it becomes useful to establish a few reference points to allow for an analysis of the texts which enables comparison. Heeding Collingwood's call, I believe that it is possible and useful to offer reconstructions of past ideas which are firmly rooted in history yet re-enacted in a language which is intelligible in our own day and age. This is why I propose, above, a minimal definition of 'nominalism' which is worded in terms that make sense in contemporary philosophical discussions, but which also applies to texts from the past without distorting them. The use of this definition also allows me to focus on the cluster of ideas which are of interest to me in the present study. The philosophy of Peter Abelard acts as a second anchor point; all of the texts examined in the following chapters bear some clear marks of Abelardian influence, and their identification plays an important role in keeping my reconstructions as honest as possible while preserving the possibility of examining the texts against one another. Moreover, since the lines of influence from Abelard to later thinkers are not always clearly drawn, I believe this approach has the potential to enrich the rather scarce literature on post-Abelardian twelfth-century nominalism as well as to generate fruitful hypotheses for further research. By investigating Abelard's legacy, I am anchoring my research in the current literature, which focuses primarily on this thinker. By looking at the texts holistically and addressing their metaphilosophical dimension, I hope to do justice to the eclecticism of philosophical thought in the period of the independent dialectic schools and suggest new ways of thinking about nominalism by shedding light on materials which are too

⁸⁹ Marenbon (2018), p. 207

often overlooked. To go back to a statement I made earlier, a historian of philosophy is both a historian and a philosopher, and as such they have to navigate between their historical interest for a topic, and their philosophical interest in it. In the current project, I see myself as starting from a period which is undoubtedly historically interesting but often philosophically neglected, in order to show how the particular historical context of the times actually lends itself to interesting developments in the history of philosophy, and more specifically in the history of nominalism.

Chapter 2: John of Salisbury's Nominalism and the Virtuous Quest for Happiness

2.1. INTRODUCTION

When it comes to medieval nominalism, John of Salisbury is not usually among the names that most readily come to mind. He is often recognized for his work on moral and political philosophy, which is largely contained in his *Policraticus*. As an illustration of this, the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry for John of Salisbury has sections about (among others) moderation, practical philosophy, politics, but none on metaphysics or logic.¹ Other parts of his works, most notably the *Metalogicon* as well as his *Entheticus* and his *Historia Pontificalis*, are often valued more for their historiographical value than for the philosophical theses of their author. For example, Chapter 20 of *Metalogicon* contains an account of the views of John's contemporaries including some whose works were lost, like Bernard of Chartres, and both the *Metalogicon* and *Historia Pontificalis* contain temporal information useful in dating the works of other authors. Accordingly, he is often seen as little more than a witness when it comes to the problem of universals.

When they are examined, John of Salisbury's views on universals are usually treated in isolation from his practical philosophy and his metaphilosophical views, that is to say his views about the reasons why we should engage in philosophy and the way we ought to do it. This, I contend, is a mistake. Indeed, this way of proceeding disregards John's own way of thinking about these matters: for him, moral and philosophical education are intertwined, rather than two distinct endeavours. As such, I aim to show (1) that a proper evaluation of John of Salisbury's contribution to the problem of universals is only possible if we examine his views about universals as interwoven with his metaphilosophical and practical commitments, and (2) how he seems to reach a form of fictionalism informed by these views, which constitutes an original contribution to the medieval discussion of universals.

¹ Bollermann & Nederman (2016)

2.2. JOHN OF SALISBURY'S METAPHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS AND PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

2.2.1. THE VALUE OF STUDYING LOGIC

The theme of the value of logic is central to the *Metalogicon*,² which was written as a defence of the arts of the *trivium* (grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric) against “Cornificius”, a personification of the opinion according to which we should abandon the traditional model of education (starting with the *trivium*) to rather aim for a form of education which would focus on training students specifically for certain occupations. It comprises four books: Book I serves as a defence of grammar, Book II is where the value of logic is discussed, and Books III and IV examine how we should interpret some works of the *logica vetus*.³

A fundamental task in explaining the usefulness of logic is to make explicit its relationship with truth and, in John's case, virtue and happiness. Of course, the idea that logic is helpful in attaining truth is not, by itself, particularly ground-breaking, but the way in which John of Salisbury links the two is worthy of interest. At the outset of Book II, John defines logic as “the system of argument whereby the contemplation of wisdom (*prudentia*)⁴ in all its aspects is placed on a firm foundation”.⁵ Furthermore, it is in the inquiry into truth that logic finds its application. Drawing on Cicero, John holds that truth is the subject matter of this virtue of *prudentia* (or *phronesis*), which is in turn described as “entirely bound up in the perception of truth and what one might call an adroitness in evaluating the truth”.⁶ More concretely, this virtue is exercised to prevent us from being led astray by our unreliable sense perceptions:

² All quotes from the *Metalogicon* (also abbreviated here as “ML”) in English are from Hall's translation (2013), Latin is from Hall's edition (1991). Any modifications to the translation are indicated using square brackets. In Latin quotes, I use parentheses and the “=” sign when indicating what a pronoun stands for.

³ The so-called ‘*logica vetus*’ is the corpus of logical works that were available in Latin translation prior to the recovery of the rest of the Aristotelian logical corpus in the later part of the twelfth century. It includes Boethius' translations of Aristotle's *Categories* and *De Interpretatione*, Boethius' *De Topicis Differentiis*, *De Divisione*, *De Syllogismis Categoricalis* and *De Syllogismis Hypotheticis*, and Porphyry's *Isagoge*. In addition to the works of the *logica vetus*, authors of the time could also refer to commentaries of these works, for example Boethius' commentaries on Porphyry's *Isagoge*.

⁴ In this passage, Hall translates the Latin ‘*prudentia*’ as ‘wisdom’. However, in the rest of the text, ‘*prudentia*’ is virtually always rendered as ‘prudence’. This is perhaps meant to reflect a difference between the technical use of ‘*prudentia*’ (in the Ciceronian sense described below), and a more general use of ‘*prudentia*’ which is understood as wisdom. In any case, the reader can assume that the English term ‘prudence’ stands for the Latin *prudentia*. When ‘*prudentia*’ is translated as another English term, it will be indicated in parentheses, as is the case here.

⁵ ML II.1, 3–4: *Vt itaque nominis significatio contrahatur, logica est ratio disserendi, per quam totius prudentiae agitatio solidatur.*

⁶ ML II.1, 12–14: *Prudentia uero tota constitit in perspicientia veri, et quadam sollertia illud examinandi.*

[A rod in the water appears as broken, even to the most keen-sighted.] And because the soul is aware of the deception practised by the senses, it is exercised to grasp something reliable on which it can lean with confidence without going astray. From this exercise is born the virtue which the Greeks call “*fronesis*” and the Latins “*prudentia*”.⁷

Because of its role in the pursuit of truth, prudence has a special place in the order of virtues: it is from prudence that the other virtues stem. Indeed, John uses an analogy with a plant to illustrate the relationship between the different virtues; whereas prudence is akin to the root, the branches include justice (embracing the truth), fortitude (defending the truth), and temperance (moderating the activities of the other virtues). In that way, cultivating prudence acts as a necessary condition for nurturing the other virtues for “if prudence is cut away, the other virtues, like branches deprived of nature’s blessings, grow dry, wither away, and perish. [For who will] embrace or cherish that which he knows not?”⁸ At this point, it bears mentioning that John of Salisbury elaborates his theory within an Aristotelian framework, drawing not only on the discussions of virtue present in the *Topics* and *Categories*, but also on Cicero’s *De Officiis*, which expresses explicitly its debt to Aristotle.⁹ As such, these virtues are *habitus* that need to be developed through relevant actions, which will strengthen a mere disposition until it becomes ingrained in someone and a genuine part of who they are. As such, the study of logic is a core component of a virtuous life: truth should be pursued (through the learning and application of logic) because it nurtures prudence, which pushes us to investigate truth, and the more we cultivate prudence, the more skilled we are in investigating the truth.

Moreover, just as prudence nourishes the other virtues that stem from it, the study of logic provides “compendious processes of reasoning” (*compendii rationes*) to the three branches of philosophy, namely natural, moral, and rational philosophy.¹⁰ In other words, it provides tools that are essential to the pursuit of philosophy, such as ways to distinguish truth from falsity, or proper reasonings from improper ones. When John of Salisbury claims that the role of logic is to inquire into truth, however, he does not mean that we aim to reach unwavering, absolute certainty about matters of nature. Rather, what we should aim for is reasonable belief in probable propositions. Indeed, John adopts a form of the Academic

⁷ ML IV.11, 18–23: *Baculus uero in aqua fractus uidetur, etiam perspicacissimis. Et quia sensuum fallaciam deprehendit, in eo agitur ut et fidele aliquid teneat, cui sine errore fiducialiter possit inniti. Ab hac agitatione nascitur uirtus, quam Graeci fronesin, Latini prudentiam uocant.*

⁸ ML II.1, 16–19 : *Vnde liquet prudentiam uirtutum omnium esse radicem, quae si praecidatur, ceterae uelut rami naturae beneficio destituti marcida quadam ariditate euanescunt. Quis enim amplectetur aut colet quod ignorat?*

⁹ See Nederman (1989).

¹⁰ ML II.13

scepticism advocated by Cicero: when faced with questions that have no definite answer, we should examine different points of view, putting them to the test through dialectical reasoning, and be ready to accept whatever position is most likely while being open to change our minds if further evidence is provided on one side or the other. This scepticism, as Grellard emphasizes, is methodological, since John sees doubt as a motor for inquiry rather than as a desirable outcome.¹¹ Fuelled by moderation, its role is to rein in our judgement, thereby enabling us to examine matters more carefully, which should drive us towards a form of probabilism. He quotes Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* to express this stance: "We who pursue probabilities and can make no advance beyond the likelihood which presents itself to us, are prepared to rebut without passion and to be rebutted without obstinacy."¹² This notion of probability will play an important role in the rest of the *Metalogicon*, and is defined as follows:

A probability is that which, even if only superficially, becomes known to a man possessed of judgement; when, that is, it becomes known in all cases and at all times, or is otherwise only in a very few cases or very infrequently. That which is always or very frequently thus, is either a probability or is thought to be so, even if it may be otherwise. And it is the more probable the more easily and the more certainly it becomes known to the man who has judgement.¹³

Furthermore, we have to be content with probable knowledge: when it comes to the natural world, "because no one, or hardly anyone, investigates to the full the powers of nature, and it is God alone who knows the number of things which are possible, judgement concerning things necessary is for the most part not only uncertain but even presumptuous."¹⁴ As an illustration of this, he uses the following example: we might assume that if a woman gives birth to a child, she has had sexual intercourse at a previous point. However, he points out that this is not so, since Mary, "the spotless Virgin", has given birth. Here, invoking Victorinus, he draws a distinction between absolute necessity (or necessity *simpliciter*) and necessity by determination (*a determinatione*).¹⁵ Whereas something that is absolutely necessary cannot ever be otherwise than it is, something that is only necessary by determination can be otherwise, as an exception. This is what the virgin example illustrates: while it is usually safe to assume that giving birth

¹¹ Grellard (2013) pp. 51–52

¹² ML II.14, 6–8: *Nos qui sequimur probabilia nec ultra quam quod ueri simile occurrit, progredi possumus, et refellere sine iracundia, et refelli sine pertinacia parati sumus.*

¹³ ML II.14, 10–16: *Est autem probabile quod habenti iudicium etiam a superficie innotescit, sic quidem in omnibus et semper, aut in paucissimis et admodum raro aliter existens. Quod enim semper sic aut frequentissime, aut probabile est, aut uidetur probabile, et si aliter esse possit. Tanto autem probabilius, quanto habenti iudicium, facilius et certius innotescit.*

¹⁴ ML II.13, 28–30 : *Ceterum quia uires naturae, aut nullus plene scrutatur, aut rarus, et numerum possibilium solus Deus nouit, de necessariis plerumque non modo incertum sed et temerarium iudicium est.*

¹⁵ ML II.13, 34–36: *Quod enim simpliciter necesse est, nullo modo aliter esse potest. Mutari vero potest, quod a determinatione necesse est.*

to a child implies having had previous sexual intercourse, there could nonetheless be an exception to this rule, as is the case with immaculate conception. Even when something seems necessary, he tells us, we must remain prudent and well aware that we cannot establish certainly that it is, in fact, absolutely necessary. From past experiences of natural regularities, we can only safely infer necessity by determination, which is a form of probability, although it has a very high degree of likelihood.

2.2.2. DIALECTIC

Logic is divided into three fields, namely the disciplines of demonstrative, dialectical, and sophistical reasoning.¹⁶ Demonstrative reasoning aims to reach firm truth, through deduction from unshakable principles. As such, it does not concern itself with mere opinion. By contrast, dialectical reasoning is the domain of probable knowledge, of what is most likely or more certain. It comprises both dialectic and rhetoric. Following the definition provided by Boethius' *De Topicis differentiis*, dialectic examines theses, that is to say questions that are "not involved in circumstance", for example "Is pleasure the greatest good?".¹⁷ On the contrary, rhetoric deals with hypotheses, which are questions involving circumstances, such as "who, what, where, when, why, how, by what means", like the question "Was Cicero rightfully thrust into exile at a time of uncertainty for the republic because he had put to death Roman citizens without the command of the people?".¹⁸ Finally, sophistical reasoning is only concerned with the appearance of truth, disregarding the actual truth value of statements as long as they appear certain to an audience. It might seem strange to even include sophistry among the disciplines of logic, until we recall that he defines logic as "the science of argumentative reasoning"; therefore, even if sophistry is not something for which he advocates, it is nonetheless a type of argumentative reasoning and, thus, it belongs to the field of logic. Additionally, John believes that engaging in sophistical reasoning can provide a good mental exercise, provided people are able to recognize that they are not engaging in genuine, truth-seeking argumentation.¹⁹ Given his focus on probable knowledge, John of Salisbury

¹⁶ ML II.3; John of Salisbury proposes this division to encompass more than what he saw Plato as encompassing within his division of logic into dialectic and rhetoric, because he is trying to give an account of all the types of argumentative reasoning.

¹⁷ DTD I, 1177C, 1–6

¹⁸ DTD I, 1177C, 7–13

¹⁹ ML II.5, 50–54: *Philosophus autem demonstratiua utens negotiatur ad ueritatem, dialecticus ad opinionem.*

emphasizes dialectic, which is the art of making arguments which yield probable conclusions or, as he puts it, “the science of correct debate” (*bene disputandi scientia*).²⁰ It might seem that demonstration should be seen as the most valuable discipline, since it yields certitude. However, it is rarely applicable in real life, except perhaps in the field of mathematics. Since sophistry does not aim for truth, and since “[i]n natural objects [...], the process of demonstration is very commonly found to waver”,²¹ dialectic is the branch of logic relevant to philosophical inquiry, as it starts from probable premises.

Dialectic is therefore distinct from other disciplines of logic in that it deals with probability instead of certitude or mere appearance of truth, and it does so in a way that is somehow abstracted from the circumstances of the discussion, unlike rhetoric. It is distinct from grammar too, since grammar examines the words themselves, whereas dialectic, as does logic more generally, is concerned with their meanings. Nonetheless, the relation between the subject matters of grammar and dialectic is narrow. As John of Salisbury puts it, “the force of a word is in its meaning, and without meaning speech is idle and useless, I might almost say dead: just as the body is given life by the soul, so meaning somehow avails to give a kind of life to a word.”²² This analogy also holds for philosophy as a whole which, without logic as its organizing principle, is comparable to a dead body.²³

Not only does logic breathe life into philosophy, but it also pertains to all areas of study, since its subject matter is questions. Here, ‘question’ has to be taken in a technical sense. Following Boethius’ terminology as set in his *De Topicis differentiis*, a question is a statement which could be true or false and, as such, is brought into doubt.²⁴ For example, as he says, it could be asked whether the heaven can revolve. John also notes that it can be called a thesis, in opposition to a hypothesis, the latter referring to the circumstances involved in the question,

Siquidem probabilitate contentus est. Sophistae autem sufficit, si uel uideatur esse probabile. Vnde non facile dixerim eam esse inutilem scitu, quae non mediocriter exercet ingenia, et ignaris rerum efficacius nocet si sit ignota.

Dolus enim scienti non infertur, sibi que imputet qui casum declinare noluit, quem praeuidit.

²⁰ ML II.4, 1–2

²¹ ML II.13, 48–50: *Vacillat itaque in naturalibus plerumque corporalibus et mutabilibus dico ratio demonstrandi, sed in mathematicis efficacissime conualescit.*

²² ML II.4, 26–27: *Quo si destituatur, sermo cassus et inutilis est, et ut sic dixerim mortuus, ut quodam modo sicut corpus ad uitam uegetatur ab anima, sic ad uitam quandam uerbi sensus proficiat.*

²³ ML II.6, 1–6: *Quod omnes logicam appetunt sed non omnes assequuntur. Ex praemissis itaque magnum aliquid uidetur logica polliceri, quae inuentionis et iudicii copiam praestat, diuidendi, definiendi, et conuincendi ministrat facultatem, et sic philosophiae pars insignis est, ut per omnia membra eius quodam spiritus uice discurrat. Iners enim est omnis philosophia, quae ad logicam non disponitur.*

²⁴ Boethius, DTD I, 12–15

such as who, what, where, by what means, why, how, and when.²⁵ In addition to theses and hypotheses, logic involves propositions and problems. As per the technical twelfth-century use of the term, John uses ‘proposition’ to speak of what we would call a premise, defining ‘proposition’ as “that against which no instance, that is, no argument against the position, may be given since it is so in the majority of cases.”²⁶ This is narrower than Boethius’ definition in *De Topicis differentiis*, where a proposition is simply defined as an expression (*oratio*) which is true or false.²⁷ For its part, a dialectical problem, according to John, is defined in the following way:

A dialectical problem is a speculation which aims either at choice and avoidance, or at truth and knowledge, either on its own or in support of something else of this kind; concerning which either no opinion is held either way, or an opinion is indeed held, by the majority or within each of these groups by individuals against their fellows.²⁸

Therefore, dialectical problems involve genuinely puzzling questions, not trivial quibbles. In addition, dialectic concerns itself with reasoning at a general level, instead of reflecting on particular instances. In other words, it must consider a thesis (or question, as defined above) apart from the hypothesis, that is, the specific context in which it arises; it is reasoning on a more abstract level.

By working through these dialectical problems, someone develops an instrument, speech (*oratio*), that will allow them to convince an opponent. However, the force (*vis*) of speech comes from the reasoning that it conveys and, as such, the ultimate goal of dialectic, but also of logic as a whole, is to refine reasoning skills.²⁹ Because of this role, John considers logic to be the most valuable discipline of philosophy. Indeed, logical proficiency is a necessary condition for making sound judgements in all areas of philosophy, but also in all other areas of human knowledge. The next sections will examine in more details this instrumental role of logic.

²⁵ ML II.12, 6–8

²⁶ ML II.15, 2–4: *Est autem dialectica propositio contra quam sic in pluribus se habentem, non est instantia, id est argumentum ad positionem.*

²⁷ DTD 1173D, 8–10

²⁸ ML II.15, 9–13: *Est autem problema dialecticum, speculation contendens uel ad electionem et fugam, uel ad ueritatem, et scientiam, aut ipsum, aut ut adminiculans ad aliquid aliud huiusmodi, de quo aut neutro modo opiniatur aut contrarie plurimi sapientibus, aut sapientes plurimis, aut utrique idem eisdem.*

²⁹ ML II.12, 22–25: *Virtus enim orationis est, mens atque sententia, sine qua nec uigere, nec mouere potest oratio. Cum itaque quaestio sit materia, ratio uel oratio instrumentum, artis opera singulariter in eo uersatur ut instrumenti copiam faciat, et doceat usum eius.*

2.2.3. LOGIC AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR REACHING HAPPINESS AND SALVATION

As has been seen so far, John of Salisbury conceives of logic as an instrument for the inquiry into truth and, as a result, it constitutes the basis for the activity of prudence. We can therefore plainly see that logic has instrumental value, but he goes further, claiming that logic has value *insofar as* it is a tool conducive to a good life, rather than having value in and of itself.³⁰ This point is made manifest in John's depiction of the people who pursue the study of logic for its own sake: these logicians are described as puerile, obsessed with the concerns of boyhood. Indeed, logic should be taught early and is suitable for younger audiences, but it should be transcended later when the student applies the principles they have learned to other fields of inquiry. The study of logic beyond the level at which it is appropriate shows a lack of moderation, an essential virtue for anyone who aims to live a happy life. The importance of moderation in logical studies also comes into play in the discussion of the role of disputation. While it is true that engaging in disputation is a necessary component of proper logical training, it can only fulfil its function when it is practiced in moderation, in a qualitative as well as a quantitative sense. Indeed, not all topics are suitable for it: there is no point in arguing about questions that are trivial or obvious, nor about impossible ones. Moreover, although disputation has the advantage of enriching vocabulary, memory, and mental subtlety, spending too much time engaging in debates dulls the mind instead of sharpening it. As John puts it, in the absence of moderation, "all these qualities turn to their opposites. Subtlety is reft of its utility."³¹

Therefore, John of Salisbury, quoting Cicero's *Orationes*, believes that "eloquence is of no value without wisdom",³² but he goes further: he also believes that "if divorced from wisdom, eloquence is positively harmful".³³ However, he does not explain just in what way eloquence without wisdom can be harmful. Presumably, an issue is that such unguided eloquence can lead people to embrace false claims, instead of helping people attain the truth. This is consistent with John's main motive for writing the *Metalogicon*: to defend the teaching of the arts of the trivium against the so-called Cornificius and his kind, who would forgo this teaching in favour of jumping directly to more profitable pursuits. According to John's portrayal, indeed, Cornificius is teaching his pupils all about convincing other people,

³⁰ See ML II.7 & II.8.

³¹ ML II.8, 7–9: *Si autem moderatio desit, omnia haec in contrarium cedunt. Subtrahitur namque subtilitati utilitas.*

³² ML II.9, 1–2: *Eloquentiam sine sapientia, non prodesse celebre est et uerum.*

³³ ML II.9, 5: *Nocet enim haec (= eloquentia) si dissocietur ab illa (= sapientia).*

especially in order to accumulate wealth, but he does not labour toward finding the truth. John's remark is therefore likely aimed at Cornificius and like-minded people, who, in other words, do not believe that the study of logic is a necessary enterprise. However, investigation of the truth is only possible through a moderate practice of disputation. As was said before, such a practice forges a student's skill in logic, which is a necessary instrument in the quest for truth. But logic should not be pursued merely for its own sake: taken in isolation, it can solve questions relative to itself, but it ultimately has to be applied to other areas of knowledge. By emphasizing this point, John expresses his disapproval of certain unnamed dialecticians of his time:

For it is no great achievement if, in the mouths of our contemporaries, [dialectic] should revolve continuously about itself, turn about itself, explore its own hidden secrets, and involve itself simply with things which are of no value either at home or abroad, in the market-place or in the cloister, in court or in church, indeed anywhere except the schoolroom.³⁴

These dialecticians' mistake, in other words, is a reversal of the Cornifician position: they consider the study of logic as a sufficient aim. John rejects both these positions. For him, although it is not sufficient for solving the practical moral questions that will help us attain happiness and salvation, logic, and especially dialectic, is a necessary tool to do so, if it is pursued in moderation.

Thus, practical concerns guide John of Salisbury's metaphilosophical views: studying logic is, ultimately, instrumental to the attainment of happiness, and this should be done in accordance with the key virtues of prudence and moderation. John's focus on practicality can also be seen in the care with which he explains how logic should be taught in order to nurture those virtues. Given the foundational nature of logical knowledge, it makes sense to teach this discipline at the beginning of the curriculum. A young age is suitable for such studies but, as was said before, being overly preoccupied with logic even in old age is characterized as puerile by John. Additionally, logic should be taught in a progressive way, starting with easier notions and moving on to more complex ones later. Since the goal is not merely to learn the truth but also to forge reasoning skills, it is acceptable to teach simplified notions first, even if it means teaching things that are not fully accurate, only to correct them later when the student is skilled enough to understand the notion fully and adequately.³⁵ Accordingly, John criticizes the

³⁴ ML II.9, 16–19: *Neque enim magnum est si in ore nostrorum iugiter in se rotetur, se circueat, sua rimetur arcana, et in illis dumtaxat uersetur, quae nec domi nec militiae, nec in foro, nec in claustro, nec in curia, nec in ecclesia, immo nusquam nisi in scola prosunt.*

³⁵ See ML II.17.

teachers of his time who skip more basic notions in order to directly jump to the problem of universals, which is a very advanced and technical issue that would be suitable only for more advanced students. However, it is one of the only specific logical issues that John of Salisbury substantially discusses in the *Metalogicon*; the next section will examine his own views on the matter.

2.3. JOHN OF SALISBURY’S ACCOUNT OF UNIVERSALS

2.3.1. COGNITION OF UNIVERSALS

As Cary Nederman points out, John of Salisbury believes that knowledge, just like virtue, is a *habitus* that needs to be acquired through relevant actions.³⁶ Given that wisdom, the ultimate goal of philosophical enquiry, depends upon the prudent acquisition of knowledge through dialectic, and given how dialectic (as defined by Boethius) deals with questions of universals rather than particulars situated in their own circumstances, it becomes clear why John needs to provide some account of what universals are and how they come to be known. Although John’s views on universals are expressed as early as in Book II, most of the discussion on cognition is to be found later, in Book IV. He defends a form of Aristotelian³⁷ empiricism, holding that all human knowledge (except perhaps in some rare, exceptional cases) ultimately comes from sensory perception of the individual entities that populate the extramental world. Moreover, he states that sensation “is rather a power of the soul than an affection of the body”,³⁸ a view he attributes to Aristotle but which is also reminiscent of the way his old master, Abelard, writes about sensation in *De Intellectibus*.³⁹ The things that are perceived give rise to images in the soul which can then be stored in memory. Imagination is the power which allows us to picture these images stored in memory, images of things that we have never seen, or even images of things that do not exist, such as centaurs and goat-stags. In John of Salisbury’s words, “[i]magination thus arises from the root of the senses through the kindling of memory”.⁴⁰ Therefore, all knowledge ultimately comes from sense perception, and

³⁶ See Nederman (1989).

³⁷ cf. Aristotle, Posterior Analytics, II, 19, 99b, 35

³⁸ ML IV.9, 20–22: *Aristotiles autem sensum potius uim animae assertit, quam corporis passionem, sed haec eadem uis ut iudicium suum de rebus format, passionibus excitatur.*

³⁹ Abelard uses the verb “*ago*” when speaking of the senses; sensation is described as an active function of the soul, which exerts itself on bodies through bodily instruments. See TI §§2–7

⁴⁰ ML IV.10, 3–4: *Imaginatio itaque a radice sensuum per memoriae fomitem oritur, et non modo praesentia sed et absentia loco quidem uel tempore per quandam simplasim, quam nos conformationem possumus dicere, intuetur.*

here too John highlights the role of prudence: “From this it is clear that, because imagination is the product of sensation, and opinion the product of both sensation and imagination, while from opinion derives prudence which grows strong and becomes knowledge, knowledge takes its origin in sensation.”⁴¹

In addition to these basic powers of sensation and imagination, the human mind possesses the power of abstraction, which allows it to examine forms without examining the matter, even though in reality they always exist as combined (*permixta*). Just as Abelard and Boethius before him, he is aware that this creates a problem: ideas resulting from the process of abstraction seem doomed to be inaccurate, since they represent things in a way in which they are never found in reality. John solves this issue by appealing to the natural character of abstraction:

This procedure [i.e., contemplating the form without considering the matter] does not impair the simplicity of the understanding, which is the more simple to the extent that it contemplates simpler things on their own without the admixture of others. There is no opposition here to nature, who, to make it possible for herself to be examined, has conferred on the understanding the capacity to separate things which are combined and to combine things which are separated. The understanding, however, which combines things which are separated is a futile one, whereas the understanding which separates is reliable, serving indeed as what one might almost call the workshop of all the arts.⁴²

Abstraction, therefore, is accurate because it does not add anything which is not there in reality, but also because it is a natural faculty, granted to human beings by God, who would not have given us a power that systematically yields defective understandings. Like sense-perception, it can lead us astray, but it does not automatically do so.

The process by which we cognize universals, then, is the following: through our senses, we are acquainted with the individual things that populate the world. Our imagination allows us to form and store mental images of these things, and abstraction enables us to examine only certain aspects of these, leaving aside others. The result is an understanding of a genus or species on the basis of resemblances between individuals:

Accordingly, for the signification of uncombined things, the separating intellect may conceive of genera and species, although it would be a useless and futile labour to search diligently in the natural order for them apart from what is perceptible. For nothing such has

⁴¹ ML IV.12, 12–14: *Ex his patet quod cum de sensu imaginatio, et ex his duobus opinio, et ex opinione prudentia nascatur, quae in scientiam conualescit, [quod] scientia de sensu trahit originem.*

⁴² ML II.20, 31–40: *Non tamen formam sine materia esse abstrahens hic concipit intellectus, compositus enim esset, sed simpliciter, alterum sine altero, cum tamen sine altero esse non possit, intuetur. Nec hoc quidem simplicitati eius praeiudicat, se deo simplicior est, quo simpliciora sine aliorum admixtione perspicit singulatim. Hoc autem naturae rerum non aduerstatur, quae ad sui inuestigationem hanc potestatem contulit intellectui, ut possit coniuncta disiungere, et disiuncta coniungere. Ceterum componens qui disiuncta coniungit, inanis, est. Abstrahens uero fidelis, et quasi quaedam officina omnium artium.*

been engendered by nature. But reason discovers them when it ponders in itself the likeness of substance which is found in different things, and, as Boethius observes, defines the general concept which it forms on the basis of careful examination of the similarity between men in the terms of an animal both rational and mortal.⁴³

Two things must be observed in this passage. First, there is the question of the ontological status of these likenesses, as Roberto Pinzani rightly notes.⁴⁴ Second, John here only denies that universals exist apart from sensible, individual things. This is a stance he repeatedly takes in II.20, but at times he seems to go further, denying any type of extramental existence for universals. As for the first point, about likeness, John unfortunately has very little to say, if anything at all. This could prove to be an important flaw in John's theory, but given that he seems to favour a rather lean ontology, it is probably safest to assume that he believes likeness between particulars to be a basic fact about the world.⁴⁵ The second point, however, will require a more in-depth treatment, which is provided in the next section.

2.3.2. ON THE NON-EXISTENCE OF UNIVERSALS

When it comes determining whether universals exist outside the mind, John's position is, at first glance, ambiguous, for he seems to waver between two different views. On the one hand, there are several passages where he takes great care to deny specifically the existence of universals *apart from sensibles*. On the other hand, in some passages, he seems to be going further, denying any kind of extramental existence for universals. I believe that this apparent inconsistency can be explained by John's exemplifying prudence in own inquiry. Indeed, he seems to believe that universals are nothing at all outside of the mind and that this is the best way to interpret Aristotle's authoritative texts but, given how the exact nature of universals is one of those useless, purely metaphysical quibbles, it seems that he is not overly attached to this view and that he does not want to exclude the possibility of universals existing within sensibles. As we have seen, prudence dictates that we should follow authoritative texts since they are the most probable, but be ready to change our minds if they turn out to be wrong. Since Aristotle states that universals do not exist, John follows him, while remaining open to other

⁴³ ML II.20, 46–52: *Ergo ad significationem incomplexorum per abstrahendum intellectuum genera concipiantur et species, quae tamen siquis in rerum natura diligentius a sensibilibus remota quaerat, nihil aget et frustra laborabit. Nihil enim tale natura peperit. Ratio autem ea deprehendit, substantialem similitudinem rerum differentium pertractans apud se, definit que sicut Boetius ait generale conceptum suum, quod de hominum conformitate perpendit, sic, animal rationale mortale.*

⁴⁴ Pinzani (2018), p. 284

⁴⁵ This is a move that is made by some proponents of contemporary trope theory, for example D.C. Williams and Keith Campbell.

options in case new evidence suggests they are more likely than the Aristotelian opinion; the only thing he firmly denies is that universals exist on their own, outside the mind and apart from singular things.

John's treatment of universals is motivated by his wanting to provide an accurate interpretation of Aristotle's position. Indeed, he opens II.20 by presenting the Philosopher's view, namely that genera and species do not exist but are only understood.⁴⁶ He then goes on to discredit the views of his predecessors on the grounds that they identify universals with entities (be it vocal sounds, *sermones*, native forms, or else) which exist, and "the man who determines that universals exist is opposed to Aristotle".⁴⁷ He then proposes the first of several definitions of universals:

Thus, genera and species are not things alien from particular things in their actuality and their nature, but are what one might term mental images (*phantasiae*) of things natural and actual reflected in the understanding, after the likeness of things actual, as though in the mirror of the native purity of the mind itself, mental images which the Greeks call notions (*ennoiae*) or visions (*yconoyphanae*), that is to say, images of things which appear in the mind.⁴⁸

Here, John identifies genera and species with mental entities, *phantasiae*. The mirror analogy, which is reminiscent of Abelard's comparison of mental representations with mirror images in *Logica 'Ingredientibus'*,⁴⁹ suggests that John considers mental images as having an ontological status akin to that of the image on a mirror. In a certain sense, they exist, but in another sense they are nothing. And these are not "unrelated to individual things", since they are formed following sensory contact with these very things, through the process of abstraction, as was highlighted above. However, he does not want to close the door to universals being somehow existent in individual things; in fact he shows he is open to some form of compromise when he writes that "[g]ranted, therefore, that universals exist, or even, if this is what the persistent wish, that they are things, nevertheless, it will not for this reason be true that the number of things is increased or diminished according as universals are or are not in the number of things".⁵⁰ As

⁴⁶ ML II.20, 1–2: *Porro hic genera et species, non esse, sed intelligi tantum asseruit.*

⁴⁷ ML II.20, 16–17: *Qui autem ea (= universalia) esse statuit, Aristotili adversatur.*

⁴⁸ ML II.20, 54–59: *Sunt itaque genera et species, non quidem res a singularibus actu, et naturaliter alienae, sed quaedam naturalium et actualium phantasiae renidentes in intellectu, de similitudine actualium, tanquam in speculo natiuae puritatis ipsius animae, quas Graeci ennoias, siue yconoyphanas appellant, hoc est rerum imagines in mente apparentes.*

⁴⁹ Abelard, *Logica 'Ingredientibus' Glossae super Porphyrium*, ed. Geyer (1919–1927), p. 21, 14–17

⁵⁰ ML II.20, 98–101: *Itaque detur ut sint universalia, aut etiam ut res sint, si hoc pertinacibus placet, non tamen ob hoc uerum erit rerum numerum augeri uel minui, pro eo quod ista non sunt <vel sunt> in numero rerum.*

long as universals do not count as things above and beyond individuals, John leaves some latitude as to the language we use to talk about them.

He then proposes another definition of what he means by ‘universal’: “Therefore, that which the mind understands in a general sense and which appertains equally to many particular things, and that which the voice signifies in a general sense and which is equally true of many things, is without doubt a universal.”⁵¹ Interestingly enough, he adds that “the thing [...] which is understood and signified, must be interpreted without rigidity”.⁵² To explain what he means, he proposes an analogy with promises:

Consequently, if a horse should be promised generally, and the one who contracts for the promise should say that the horse which has been promised is either healthy or sick, since every horse is either healthy or sick, he is accused of talking nonsense, because that is not the horse which was promised him. I do not say is not because it does not exist, for even that which does not exist, the offspring of Arethusa, for instance, is brought into the most binding of obligations, but because a species, that is, a distinct thing, does not touch the obligation of genus.⁵³

This passage is confusing, as it uses the terminology of genus and species, but not in the technical sense in which these terms are used in discussions on universals. Here, ‘species’ refers to distinct things (individuals), and thus ‘genus’ refers to the type of thing. Thus, John is saying that, by promising a horse, someone has an obligation with regards to a genus, which means that they have an obligation to provide a horse, whichever one it might be. However, the existence of this obligation does not imply that there is a particular, identifiable horse which is itself the object of the obligation. The example of Arethusa’s offspring reinforces this distinction by showing that there can be a promise even for a thing which does not yet exist, and that the obligation nevertheless holds. Therefore, the fact that something is promised, signified, or understood does not imply the extra-mental existence of a definite, given thing which is the object of the relation of promising, signifying, or understanding.⁵⁴

⁵¹ ML II.20, 116–119: *Ergo quod mens communiter intelligit et ad singularia multa aequae pertinent, quod uox communiter significat, et aequae de multis verum est, indubitanter uniuersale est.*

⁵² ML II.20, 120, emphasis mine: *Sed et hoc ipsum, scilicet quod intelligitur, quod significatur, **benignius interpretandum est**, ut nequaquam ad disputandi decurratur angustias, et artis grammaticae subtilitatem, quae ex sui natura, nisi uenia licentiae impetrata, demonstratiuas dictiones infinitas esse non patitur.*

⁵³ ML 133–140: *Vnde si equus promittatur in genere, et dicat stipulator, equus qui mihi promissus est, sanus aut aeger est, cum omnis equus sit aut sanus, aut aeger, arguitur nugari, eo quod non est equus qui sit ei promissus. Non dico non est eo quod non existat, nam et illud quod non existit ut partus Arethusae in certissimam deducitur obligationem, sed quia species, id est res discreta obligationem generis non attingit.*

⁵⁴ ML II.20, 143–147: *Fiunt tamen relationes in genere, quae saluo intellectu ueri, nequeunt reuocari ad speciem. Vt cum dicitur, mulier quae saluauit damnavit, lignum quod mortis et uitae causam dedit, et quas Boreas aufert reuehit mitis Zephrus frondes. Sic et in his quae praedixi relatiuas dictiones accipiendas arbitror, ut non decurrant ad speciem, id est ad definitum aliquid quod discernant, sed subsistant in genere.*

Thus, just like in the case of “the horse that was promised”, “that which is understood and signified” cannot be understood as relating to any given, definite particular. But John also states that it cannot be the case that the signification or understanding of a universal encompasses all of the individuals that are subsumed under it. Indeed, “he who hears this word man does not run through all men, since this is an infinite labour and exceeds his strength, nor does he stop at one man, since this is an imperfect procedure and has little to do with learning.”⁵⁵ The theme of moderation can be discerned here again: the meaning of a universal term cannot be a single individual (which is insufficient), nor the whole collection of individuals to which it refers (which would be too much to ask). Rather, he states that “the singular of these words [i.e., names of genera and species] does not simply signify or define something (*quid*), but rather the kind of thing (*quale quid*). For it is not simply this, but rather something of this kind.”⁵⁶

In this definition, just as was the case with the passage above which equates universals with mental representations, universals are not assumed to exist outside of the mind. Moreover, the meaning of a universal is a *quale quid*; not an individual *per se*, but an individual *qua* member of a certain genus or species. As Roberto Pinzani notes, this is reminiscent of Abelard’s theory of universals as being *sermones* (words as units of meaning) that signify *status*, but John believes that the notion of a *status* which is no thing yet unites many things is too obscure, which explains why he tries to replace it with something he believes to be simpler.⁵⁷ As such, Pinzani contends that John of Salisbury tries to defend a “strict nominalism (in the modern sense)”,⁵⁸ getting rid of any potentially spurious entity, as he aims for an ontology populated only by particulars.

Moreover, Pinzani believes that John of Salisbury is inspired by Bernard of Chartres’ exemplarism, but overturns it.⁵⁹ Whereas Bernard, in a Neoplatonist fashion, saw the things in

⁵⁵ ML II.20, 155–156: *Itaque qui audit hanc uocem homo, nec omnes percurrit homines, quoniam hoc infinitum et uires excedit, nec tenetur in uno, quoniam hoc imperfectum et ad doctrinam parum.*

⁵⁶ ML II.20, 160–162: *Singulum enim horum non simpliciter quid significat aut definit, sed potius quale quid. Non enim simpliciter hoc, sed potius quid tale.*

⁵⁷ Pinzani (2018), pp. 292–294; see ML II.20, 236–242: *Sed esto ut statum aliquem generalem, appellatiua significant, non enim contentione delector, qui me in his quae sunt dubitabilia sapienti Academicum esse pridem professus sum, status ille quid sit in quo singula uniuntur, et nihil singulorum est, et si aliquo modo somnare possim, tamen quomodo sententiae Aristotilis coaptetur qui uniuersalia non esse contendit, non perspicuum habeo.*

⁵⁸ Pinzani (2018), p. 297

⁵⁹ Pinzani (2018), p. 285

the world as akin to shadows of eternal Ideas, John reverses this model by comparing our ideas to shadows of the things they denote:

Just as when in grammar we say nouns which end thus are feminine or neuter, we lay down a sort of general rule which is, as it were, the exemplar of many declinable words, while the copies (*exempla*) are manifest in all words with that termination, so the mind conceives certain exemplars of which nature has fashioned copies which she presents to the senses. Those exemplars are thus thinkable indeed, being so to say the images (*phantasiae*) and the outlines (*umbrae*) of things which exist, as Aristotle puts it; but should anyone attempt to apprehend them in an existence enjoyed separately from particular things, they slip away like dreams. For they are wonders (*monstra*), and accessible to the understanding alone.⁶⁰

The distinction between mental exemplars and extramental examples is modelled after grammar. In this analogy, a grammar rule (for example a declension pattern) acts as an exemplar (i.e., a model or pattern), while the cases to which it applies (words following that pattern) are examples of the rule. We learn a grammar rule (the exemplar) by being exposed to examples of its application. Likewise, the understanding of a universal concept, like that of the species lion, is an exemplar, and its examples are the individuals to which it applies, for example all of the existing individual lions; we form a mental representation (the exemplar) after being exposed to the examples. However, this analogy is somewhat flawed: lions are natural entities, whereas words are established by convention. Thus, words can be introduced intentionally so as to follow the exemplar-rule. This is, of course, not true of the natural objects that exemplify mental representations, which come into existence independently from our understandings of them.

In summary, we form universal concepts by first being exposed to things through our senses, then forming representations of them, and finally abstracting their forms, which allows for the formation of a general concept based on resemblances between these individual forms. This idea then applies to all of the individuals that it denotes in much the same way as a grammatical rule applies to its particular cases.⁶¹ I follow Pinzani in characterizing John of Salisbury as a nominalist, for the latter identifies universals with mental representations, which he does not believe fully exist, as things. Yet, Pinzani pinpoints a difficulty with John's

⁶⁰ ML II.20, 62–72: *Sicut cum in grammatica dicitur nomina quae sic desinunt feminina uel neutra sunt generalis quaedam praescribitur ratio, quae quasi multorum declinabilium exemplar est, exempla uero in omnibus illius terminationis dictionibus manifesta sunt, sic quaedam exemplaria concipiuntur in mente, quorum exempla natura formauit, et sensibus obicit. Illa itaque exemplaria cogitabilia quidem sunt, et sunt quasi phantasiae et umbrae existentium secundum Aristotilem, quas si quis apprehendere nititur per existentiam quam habeant a singularibus separatam, uelut somnia elabuntur. Monstra enim sunt, et soli intellectui patent.*

⁶¹ ML II.20, 62–68: *Sicut cum in grammatica dicitur nomina quae sic desinunt feminina uel neutra sunt generalis quaedam praescribitur ratio, quae quasi multorum declinabilium exemplar est, exempla uero in omnibus illius terminationis dictionibus manifesta sunt, sic quaedam exemplaria concipiuntur in mente, quorum exempla natura formauit, et sensibus obicit.*

account: the great diversity in the vocabulary he uses to talk about mental representations seems to indicate he has trouble explaining just what universals are, considering that they are nothing.⁶² Indeed, John goes freely from talking about *notiones*, to talking about *monstra*, *phantasiae*, *similitudines*, *cogitabilia*, *figmenta*, *cicadationes*, or *imagines*, with no explanation for the variation in terminology. In the end, following Pinzani's critique, it seems unclear whether John proposes a successful nominalist position. I propose that treating John's theory as a form of fictionalism provides a way to better understand his position regarding mental representations, and his own approach to nominalism.

2.3.3. FICTIONALISM ABOUT UNIVERSALS

The claim that John of Salisbury's view on universals can be construed as a kind of fictionalism needs further clarification. We can usefully distinguish between two broad types of fictionalism, following Eklund. On the one hand, linguistic fictionalism holds that utterances within a certain area of discourse (here, discourse on universals) are not meant to be true *simpliciter*, but rather are a form of fictional discourse, for example an allegory or a story. On the other hand, ontological fictionalism is the claim that the entities characteristic of a certain domain of speech do not exist, or have a special ontological status, namely that of a fiction.⁶³ Of course, not all nominalists are fictionalists, since some nominalists hold that discourse about universals can be literally true in a way that does not require the existence of universal entities. However, other nominalists might opt for fictionalism as a way to deny the existence of universal entities, by saying that statements about universals such as genera and species are not literally true, but only metaphorically so. I believe that John of Salisbury can be construed as adhering to a form of ontological fictionalism and, perhaps more interestingly, that there are also hints that suggest he may lean towards adherence to the linguistic thesis as well. The next paragraphs will review the evidence for John's characterization as a proponent of both of these theses.

From the discussion contained in the previous section, it was seen that John believes that genera and species belong to a kind of fictional entities, that is, mental representations fashioned by each individual mind. At times, he calls them exemplars, but at other times he calls them *notiones*, which Hall translates as "mental images", or *figuralia*, which he translates

⁶² Pinzani (2018), p. 298

⁶³ Eklund (2017)

as “figurative words”⁶⁴ but which Pinzani translates as “metaphorical representations”. They are images of the mutual likenesses of things, as was said before, but they *signify* real, individual things. One way to make sense of this position is to distinguish between mental content (the image brought to mind, which is a likeness) and semantics (the idea is linked to individuals by a relation of representation). However, the entities characteristic of the discourse on universals, namely genera and species, do not exist as things, and have a special ontological status, that of figments constructed by our minds. In this way, they are much like other cases of fictional entities, such as characters in a story: we can talk about them, we can learn from them (in the same way I may learn moral lessons from the actions of a heroic character), yet they have no existence beyond the realm of fiction. In that sense John can be considered an ontological fictionalist about universals.

When it comes to linguistic fictionalism, some clues can be found toward the end of II.20. There, John of Salisbury writes in a way that suggest a certain degree of adherence to the idea that discourse about universals is, if taken at face value, false. When he is discussing the meaning of relative and demonstrative expressions (such as “that which is signified” or “that which was promised”), John writes that “[u]surpation (*usurpatio*) however is frequent, and there is regularly much use of impermissibles in the interests of convenience.”⁶⁵ However, he does not raise this point in order to discredit such uses of language. On the contrary, he believes that these utterances, while not straightforwardly true, can serve “to fix an understanding of the truth in listeners of good faith.”⁶⁶ The example that he uses is the sentence “every man loves himself [*omnis homo diligit se*]” which, he argues, can seem false if the relative pronoun (*se*) is analysed “in accordance with the correct employment of relative words”⁶⁷, as it is not the case that all men love all men, nor is it the case that all men love any given man. Accordingly, one has to analyse the relative pronoun “in a less restrictive way”.⁶⁸ John then returns to the case of universals and contends that, if we think that common names (*appellatiua*) refer to statuses in which various things are united, there is a problem of consistency with Aristotle,

⁶⁴ Despite Hall’s translation, there is no obvious term in the Latin text that suggests *figuralia* are words. John of Salisbury could be speaking of either figurative words or figurative mental representations.

⁶⁵ ML II.20, 199–200: *Frequens tamen est usurpatio, et illicitorum ex causa commoditatis plerumque multus est usus.*

⁶⁶ ML II.20, 200–203: *Admittitur itaque non modo ad cauillationem eorum quibus de quauis materia satis est oggarrire, sed etiam ad statuendam in auditoribus bonae fidei ueri intelligentiam, quia omnis homo diligit se.*

⁶⁷ ML II.20, 204, emphasis mine: *Quod si ex relatiuae dictionis **proprietate** discutias, incongrue dictum forte causaberis et falsum.*

⁶⁸ ML II.20, 214–215: *Benignius quidem accepta relatione quam ut ex angustia grammaticae, uel uniuersitatem colligat, uel aliquid singulorum, ab uniuersitate singulatim excerptat.*

who believes in the non-existence of universals.⁶⁹ What exists, however, is the plethora of individual substantial and accidental forms brought about by God. These forms never exist on their own; they are always united (*permixta*) with the matter. Forms are the reason why things are the kind of things that they are, but they nonetheless remain individual.

John never really comes back to the discussion on pronouns, and as such it can appear disconnected from his discussion on universals. Nonetheless, I believe that the underlying idea is the following. The discussion on relative pronouns happens in the context of his attempt to expound his definition of universals by clarifying what is meant by “that which is signified and understood”. It seems that the implicit goal of the discussion is to show that such expressions have to be analysed in the “less restrictive” (*benignius*) sense discussed by John; taken at face value, statements about universals are false, since there are no things that are universal outside of the mind. However, they can convey truths if we see them in the less restrictive sense, as being a shorthand to talk about individual forms, which exist as individual and united with matter, and can be examined and gathered according to resemblance by the abstracting power of the intellect, the result of which is genera and species as mental representations. In that sense, John seems to be adhering to a form of linguistic fictionalism, since the discourse about universals is, strictly speaking, false, but needs to be analysed in a special way in order to be true. Nevertheless, such discourse is important because it serves as a tool; we impose common names for groups of things in accordance with their forms and the resemblance they bear to one another, but genera and species are “what one might call figments of reason (*figmenta rationis*) as it exercises itself with considerable subtlety in the investigation and science of things.”⁷⁰ John even points out that such *figmenta* are also used in other domains, like civil law.⁷¹ He does not explain what he means nor does he give an example of what he considers useful figments in that field, but he might be thinking of laws as conventions, useful in regulating social interactions even though they are the made-up product of human minds. Later, he clearly states that genera and species are “the exemplars of particulars, but they are so more

⁶⁹ See ML II.20, 236–242: *Sed esto ut statum aliquem generalem, appellatiua significant, non enim contentiōibus delector, qui me in his quae sunt dubitabilia sapienti Academicum esse pridem professus sum, status ille quid sit in quo singula uniuntur, et nihil singulorum est, et si aliquo modo somnare possim, tamen quomodo sententiae Aristotilis coaptetur qui uniuersalia non esse contendit, non perspicuum habeo.*

⁷⁰ ML II.20, 389–392: *Ergo ex sententia Aristotilis genera et species non omnino quid sunt, sed quale quid quodam modo concipiuntur, et quasi quaedam sunt figmenta rationis se ipsam in rerum inquisitione et doctrina subtilius exercentis.*

⁷¹ ML II.20, 394–397: *Sic et ius ciuile sua figmenta nouit, et disciplina quaelibet ea per quae ipsius procedat usus excogitare non erubescit, sed propriis quodam modo figmentis gaudet.*

in the interests of teaching (*ad rationem doctrinae*), if Aristotle is correct, than as a cause of existence”.⁷² Indeed, even though the sense-perception of particular substances has to be the starting point for knowledge about the world, and even though we build universal concepts from these, from a pedagogical perspective it is often useful to use universal concepts in order to better know individuals. For example, we can define a surface as the side of a solid, even though a surface is more basic than a solid and prior to it. Therefore, universals (construed as mental representations) are in fact posterior to individual things, but can nonetheless be used to facilitate their investigation.

I believe this reconstruction of John of Salisbury’s views is plausible for several reasons. For one, the idea that sentences which are strictly speaking false should be interpreted liberally yet can nevertheless be instrumental in attaining knowledge of the truth is present in other passages. For example, when John of Salisbury discusses predication, he claims that “[t]his very thing, therefore, which is termed being predicated, derives from its adjuncts a number of modes of significations”,⁷³ and, later, that he does “not think that one should go against the letter, but make terms with it, and oblige it in admitting the indifference of the less restricted word; nor ought the reader or listener to snarl and snap at every metaphor or use of what is believed to be an inapposite word.”⁷⁴ In other words, he urges us to recognise that some authors use metaphors, or allegorical language, to convey something true that might seem false to someone who is intent on analysing their sayings too literally, and that an accurate understanding of these authors might require us to interpret their words in a more liberal way.

2.3.4. EVALUATION OF THE CONSTRUAL

Portraying John of Salisbury as a fictionalist is useful in understanding his motivations for holding a nominalist view about universals and in appreciating the merits and implications of his position. Whereas other medieval authors such as Abelard or Ockham tend to gravitate towards nominalism for properly logical or metaphysical reasons, John of Salisbury seems to have reached a similar position from very different motives. For example, in the *Logica*

⁷² ML II.20, 431–433: *Sunt itaque genera et species exemplaria singulorum, sed hoc quidem magis ad rationem doctrinae, si Aristotiles uerus est, quam ad causam essentiae.*

⁷³ ML II.20, 488–489: *Hoc ipsum ergo quod dicitur praedicari ab adiunctis, plures significandi contrahit modos.*

⁷⁴ ML II.20, 500–504: *Itaque non aduersandum litterae arbitror sed amicandum, eique mos gerendus est in admittenda licentioris uerbi indifferentia, nec ad omnem translationem aut usurpationem discolae ut creditur dictionis, lectorem uel auditorem decet dentem caninum exerere.*

'Ingredientibus', Abelard presents his nominalist view after having shown the incoherence of rival, realist views. He argues that nominalism must be the correct view, given that realist theories are untenable since they lead to contradictions. In John of Salisbury's case, however, it is for practical reasons that a form of nominalism should be embraced. Indeed, a prudent mind, which acts in accordance with *phronesis*, sees clearly that there is no point in quibbling about what we cannot know, or what is pointless. Considering this, we have to talk about universals, since they are so useful in our learning process. However, prudence dictates that we rely on reputable opinions, such as Aristotle's claim that universal things do not exist, and the holy scriptures, which do not mention the creation of universals in the account of the creation of all things. In all cases, John is not interested in doing metaphysics for the sake of doing metaphysics; he just needs universal concepts to play their educational role, which they can accomplish even if they are mere figments of the mind.

Another benefit of this construal is that it allows for a charitable reading of John's views, which highlights his originality and relevance. Commentators often deplore the fact that he does not give a satisfactory discussion of the problem of universals. For example, Pinzani remarks that John's thinking about universal seems convoluted, that he seems to examine many possible entities that could "count" as universals (such as *figmenta rationis*, *monstra*, *cicadationes*, etc.), without ever settling on one.⁷⁵ Gilson, for his part, contends that John's solution to the problem of universals is nothing more than a common sense solution.⁷⁶ Even the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*'s entry for John of Salisbury contains no discussion of this topic.⁷⁷ In general, John's contribution to the problem of universals tends to be seen as lacking substance or detail. But once this discussion is taken in the broader perspective of his philosophical project as a whole, the fact that he does not discuss the metaphysical details of his view makes sense, and his aim appears more clearly. Indeed, such a detailed treatment of matters that go beyond what we can know would be foolish; the goal of pursuing logic, as was said before, is to develop an instrument for sound reasoning. Our concepts of universals allow for sound reasoning by functioning as representational aids for classes of individuals whose forms resemble each other. They fulfil this role despite the absence of universal entities in the extramental world. In fact, postulating the existence of real universal entities shows a lack of

⁷⁵ Pinzani (2018), p. 297

⁷⁶ Gilson (1955), p. 152.

⁷⁷ Bollermann & Nederman (2016)

prudence, for prudence dictates that we should believe what is most probable, and doing so means trusting reputable sources, here Aristotle and the Genesis which both support the view that there are no universals in the extramental world. On the other hand, it is manifest that we have concepts of universals, and those are figments, useful in the process of learning which is essential for leading a virtuous, happy life. Thus, John reaches a nominalist solution to the problem of universals, not for metaphysical or logical reasons, but as the result of moral preoccupations, namely by displaying prudence in moderation in addressing the question of universals, and concern for the preservation of conceptual tools useful in the project of attaining happiness through education.

2.4 CONCLUSION

At first glance, John of Salisbury's solution to the problem of universals might look simplistic or uninteresting: the idea that there are no universals in nature, but only universal concepts or mental contents, is also found in his predecessors, especially in Abelard, and defended in much more detail there. However, if we pay attention to how John's nominalism meshes with his metaphilosophical claims, we can begin to see the originality of his stance. Indeed, what matters most to John is the attainment of happiness, which is the very goal of the pursuit of knowledge. The latter requires the virtue of prudence, which is exercised and consolidated through inquiry into the truth. In addition, logic needs to be cultivated as an instrument for this purpose. However, another instrument that is helpful in learning is the concepts of universals, which can facilitate learning about the things that populate the world. This is the role that John ascribes to them, but it seems that they are not merely helpful, but necessary, insofar as knowledge, in an Aristotelian framework, makes universal claims and not particular ones. Therefore, it seems that the whole project of attaining happiness, which is dependent on our knowledge, requires a certain theory of universals.

Yet, John rejects realist positions about the nature of universals due to his moral commitments, rather than for reasons that are of a purely logical nature. Indeed, he exemplifies prudent behaviour in rejecting realist accounts, for, as was seen, prudence involves adherence to views that are the most likely, based on reliable authorities. He therefore follows Aristotle and the account of creation found in Genesis to reject the existence of extramental, real universal entities, especially given that mere mental figments are sufficient to play the pedagogical role John ascribes to universals in the *Metalogicon*. He also exhibits moderation in not spending too much time delving into the topic of the problem of universals, only saying

what is relevant to following the path to virtue. This constitutes the originality of John's approach: while it may have surface resemblance to the view of his old master Abelard, it is essentially different insofar as it prioritises the quest for a good life and thereby incorporates logical concerns to a broader moral project. This constitutes a radically different way of thinking about ontological issues and sheds light on an uncommon motivation for holding a nominalist view.

Chapter 3: The Anonymous Summa Dialectice Artis: An Abelardian Introduction to the Art of Dialectic

3.1. INTRODUCTION

For anyone seeking to understand the history of early nominalists, the *Summa dialectice artis* (henceforth referred to as ‘SDA’) comes to mind as a relevant source. Indeed, this treatise was written by an enthusiastic follower of Abelard, and is regarded by some as an example of a treatise which came, directly or not, from the school of the *Nominales*.¹ There is therefore no doubt that this treatise needs to be examined for the present project.

A few texts in the secondary literature discuss the SDA, but usually they mention it in passing, or treat it partially, in relation to another topic.² Given that I have yet to see a full survey of the contents of the SDA, I have taken it upon myself to provide a more thorough examination of the text as a whole. I therefore start by commenting on the edition of the manuscript, then say a few words on dating and authorship. I then devote the rest of the chapter to a discussion of the genre and contents of the work, and close it with a general discussion looking at the text as a whole.

3.2. THE MANUSCRIPT AND ITS EDITION

The SDA can be found in Lucca, Biblioteca Capitolare Feliniana, 614, ff. 180r–198v. It consists in two volumes:³ one of them includes treatises one to seven, which covers the topics of single terms, phrases, and propositions, whereas the other one contains treatises eight to thirteen, which are about arguments.⁴ These two volumes are written in a continuous fashion, without a page break. Although there is no evidence they ever existed as separate physical volumes in another version, it is clear that the author intended them as two distinct parts of the

¹ See Martin (2001)

² For examples of texts addressing some of the contents of the SDA, see Stump (1989), Martin (2001). It is also briefly mentioned in Erismann (2012) and occasionally in Green-Pedersen (1984), where it is referred to as the compendium “*Quantas saepe*”.

³ My use of the term ‘volume’ is motivated by the author’s own use of the Latin ‘*volumen, -inis*’ in the prologue to the second volume, when he states that he intends to build upon what was exposed in the first volume; see SDA 8.01: “*Que in superioris voluminis serie diligenter continentur tractata fortasse imperitis et minus in hac propectis dicta obscure et tamquam fore aride conscripta videbuntur.*”

⁴ It is worth noting that it is the editor, Lorenzo Pozzi, who has chosen to present the text in the form of thirteen treatises; the manuscript bears no mark of this division, but as it proves useful, I will refer to these treatises when speaking of the contents of the SDA.

same work, as each of them starts with its own prologue, easily discerned by its large red decorated initial. The body of the text is disposed in three columns and written in a clear hand, with brown ink. It is well-preserved, which is fortunate as it is the only extant manuscript witness.

The text of the SDA was fully edited by Lorenzo Pozzi in 1975. He attributes the work to a certain William who was Bishop of Lucca from 1170 to 1194. Yet, he offers no justification for believing this. Feruccio Gastaldelli rejects this attribution, since there is no sound textual evidence for it.⁵ Indeed, William, Bishop of Lucca, is mentioned in the *explicit* as the person who has donated the manuscript to the Cathedral, but there is no reason to believe that he himself is the author of the SDA. Therefore, in the absence of a solid basis for attribution, this text is better treated as anonymous, and I will treat it as such throughout the rest of my work.⁶ This is not to say that this *explicit* provides no useful information, however: despite not revealing who authored the text and when, it suggests that the SDA may have been used for teaching at the cathedral school in Lucca around the time of its donation, around the later half of the twelfth century.

While we do not know the identity of the author, the text itself provides some limited information about his background. One thing that clearly appears is that he was a follower of Peter Abelard. Indeed, while he does not quote any of the other Masters of the twelfth century, Abelard appears as one of his main sources, along with the names of Aristotle, Boethius, and Cicero. More interestingly, he even consistently refers to Abelard as “The Philosopher”. The expression may be familiar to mediaevalists working on later periods, where it is reserved for Aristotle. In a twelfth-century context, however, the term is sometimes encountered as referring to Abelard, and in such cases, it expresses a respect and deference which would plausibly be found in a follower. In addition to using this term, the author often expresses great praise for Abelard, describing the latter as “*philosophorum eximius* (illustrious among philosophers)”.⁷ In terms of doctrine, the author seems to mostly adhere to Abelard’s views, even though he

⁵ Gastaldelli (1977), pp. 697–698.

⁶ It is also worth noting that, in general, we should not presume that an anonymous medieval text has only one author. It is entirely possible that the text in its current form could be the result of successive modifications by various hands. However, for the sake of simplicity, I will speak of “the author” in the singular, not as a means to refer to a definite albeit unknown individual, but rather as a theoretical construct which corresponds to whoever contributed significantly enough to shaping the text in its current form, be it the work of an individual or of many people.

⁷ SDA 3.06

puzzlingly rejects some of them, for example Abelard’s account of modal propositions, as some commentators have noted.⁸ Nevertheless, the discussion bears the mark of Abelard’s influence, which is perceptible, *inter alia*, in the terminology employed: for example, in the seventh treatise of the SDA, the author defines necessity and possibility in terms of “what is required by nature” and “what is not repugnant to nature”, respectively, which is strikingly Abelardian.⁹

3.3. DATING THE TEXT

According to Pozzi, the manuscript was drafted between 1175 (when William became bishop of Lucca) and 1194 (when William died); these dates are given because there is a note at the beginning of the Codex stating that it was a gift from William, bishop of Lucca, to the Church of San Martino.¹⁰ As was said before, he does not explain his reasons for believing that William is the author of the text anywhere, but presumably this is also the passage on which he bases his attribution of authorship. Based on Pozzi’s dating, then, the SDA is usually treated as a work from the last quarter of the twelfth century.¹¹

However, the reasons provided by Pozzi for an end-of-the-century date of composition are unsatisfactory. Just as we have no reason to believe that William is the author solely because he is the one who donated the codex, we have no reason to believe that the texts it contains must have been written during the period in which he was the bishop of Lucca. The *terminus ante quem* for the text can easily be inferred from the *explicit* of the manuscript, and placed at 1194, when the William who donated the manuscript died. However, I believe that some features of the text, for example the treatment of *loci* in treatise 10, point to an earlier date of origin, in the middle of the twelfth century at most.¹² These features will be examined in more detail later in this chapter.

As for identifying a potential *terminus post quem*, we can still use Abelard as our point of reference. The author does not mention by name any of Abelard’s works, but it seems that a

⁸ See Stump (1989) and Martin (2001).

⁹ As Martin (2016) points out, it seems that defining possibility in terms of non-repugnance to nature was a standard view in the twelfth century. However, as Binini (2021b) points out, defining necessity and impossibility also with reference to nature is something that is not observed at the time except in Abelard and a handful of texts closely associated with his teaching.

¹⁰ Pozzi p. 6

¹¹ For example, see Stump (1987)

¹² Green-Pedersen (1984) also considers that the SDA was written earlier than when Pozzi assumes; he dates the text (which he calls the *compendium* “*Quantas saepe*”) to around 1150. Unfortunately, I have not found any justification for this date within the monograph or its references.

large proportion of the views that are discussed are taken from the *Logica 'Ingredientibus'* and from the *Dialectica*. Looking at the evidence for dating both these works should therefore be helpful. With regards to the *Dialectica*, chronology has long been the matter of scholarly debate. According to Marenbon, it was plausibly written before Abelard became a monk at St. Denis, which happens around 1117.¹³ This is against the later date of 1133–1137 originally proposed by Geyer, but I believe that the evidence proposed for the earlier date is more solid, and the current consensus seems to have settled on this date. Therefore, I will hypothesize that the *Dialectica* was written before 1117. In addition to references to views expressed in the *Dialectica*, it seems that the author of the SDA refers to some views held by Abelard especially in his Glosses on the *Peri hermeneias* (*Logica 'Ingredientibus'*).¹⁴ Again, there is no clear date for the Glosses on the *Peri hermeneias*, but, as the rest of the *Logica 'Ingredientibus'*, they must have been written later than the *Dialectica*. A clue is to be found in the glosses on the *Isagoge* from the *Logica 'Ingredientibus'*: since their treatment of differences is not as elaborate as what is presented in the *Theologia 'Summi boni'*, they must predate this latter work. The *Theologia 'Summi boni'* was condemned at the Council of Soissons in 1121, therefore it was already written at that time. Based on these considerations, Marenbon concludes that the Glosses on the *Isagoge* must be from 1120 or earlier.¹⁵ If, as Marenbon suggests, *Logica 'Ingredientibus'* is composed of texts written roughly at the same time, it would mean that the Glosses on the *Peri hermeneias* can also be dated to 1120 or earlier. Mews believed that the various glosses were written at different times, but also argued that they have been written before the *Theologia 'Summi boni'*.¹⁶ In both cases, we can safely assume that the Glosses on the *Peri hermeneias* (as well as those on the *Isagoge*) were written some time between the writing of the *Dialectica* (no later than 1117) and 1121.

Taking all of the above into account, it seems that a likely date for the SDA would be posterior to Abelard's writing of the *Dialectica* and the Glosses on the *Peri hermeneias*. As for the *terminus ante quem*, even though the SDA must have been written before 1194 (date it was donated) at the very latest, I am inclined to believe that the text must be earlier than that. Marenbon, citing the fact that Abelard is referred to in the present tense throughout the SDA,

¹³ Marenbon (2013), p. 41

¹⁴ For example, see SDA 5.19.

¹⁵ Marenbon (2013), p. 40

¹⁶ Mews (1985), p. 75

believes that the text was written during Abelard's lifetime (and, therefore, before 1142).¹⁷ While it is true that Abelard is only referred to in the present tense, the author of the SDA also, at times, uses present-tense verbs when speaking of long dead authorities such as Boethius or Aristotle. Unfortunately, since there are no other references to medieval masters, it is not possible to determine whether he would have also used the present tense to speak of a deceased master of his time. Moreover, it is not uncommon for medieval authors to refer to past people or events in the present tense, much in the same way as we do in English when we use the historical present. This calls for caution in using the verb tenses as definite evidence that the SDA was written while Abelard was still alive, although the fact that no past tenses are used when speaking of Abelard (in contrast with the ancient authorities) should not be overlooked.

Furthermore, a contextualized look at the SDA provides reasons to believe that it was written during Abelard's lifetime or, at least, not much longer after his death. Indeed, it is very rare that texts from the later half of the twelfth century refer to Abelard in an explicit manner. Despite the fame that Abelard enjoyed at the apex of his career, we have reason to believe that his reputation suffered toward the end of his life, not only because of his many feuds with powerful men (one of which, incidentally, resulted in Abelard's castration), but also because of the two condemnations he faced, one in Soissons (1121) and one in Sens (1141). As such, it would make more sense for someone to wish to explicitly associate their work with Abelard while the latter was still very much acclaimed, rather than at a time where his name does not convey the prestige it once did. Moreover, the contents of the SDA, as will be made manifest in the remainder of this chapter, have much more in common with works from the first half of the century than those of the second half. Thus, I believe that the SDA was most likely written in Abelard's lifetime, or not long after; given the *terminus post quem* established above, c. 1120–c. 1150 seems like the most likely range. This is, of course, conjecture, but it seems like the best estimate based on the information we currently have.

3.4. GENRE AND CONTENTS

The SDA, as its title indicates, belongs to the genre of the *summa*: it is a systematic, yet summary treatment of its subject-matter, dialectic. It also has much in common with twelfth-

¹⁷ Marenbon presents this view about the dating of the SDA briefly in a currently unpublished work titled "The Twelfth-Century Logical Schools: two research projects"; we have also discussed this view *viva voce*.

century textbooks, often called *compendia* or *introductiones*, for example *Introductiones Montane Minores*.¹⁸ These textbooks cover the basic notions of logic (including the topics), and are intended to be used in teaching.¹⁹ The SDA clearly has such a didactic aim: it introduces students to the very basic notions they need for the study of dialectic (what we would nowadays call “logic”), without getting into too much detail. Rather, the author is content with citing the views of those he considers as the main authorities, here Aristotle, Boethius, Cicero and Abelard, sometimes also relying on definitions offered by Priscian. Sometimes, he exposes conflicting views and decides in favour of one of them, but this is the closest that he gets to expounding his own views. Philosophical literary genres in the twelfth century are not as codified as they will become in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, therefore it can be hard to pinpoint the specific genre to which a given work belongs; the SDA seems to be both classifiable as a *summa* and as an *introductio*.

Now that this general overview of the contents of the SDA has been given, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to an exploration of the contents of each of its thirteen treatises. For quick reference, the topics covered in each treatise are as follows:

Treatise one: Introduction. Nature and purpose of dialectic.

Treatise two: Vocal sounds. Names, verbs, and phrases.

Treatise three: Types of complete phrases. Types of propositions.

Treatise four: Tense of propositions. Quantity of propositions.

Treatise five: Relations between propositions.

Treatise six: Relations between propositions (continued). Equipollence. Conversion.

Treatise seven: Modal propositions.

Treatise eight: Questions, arguments, conclusions.

Treatise nine: Argumentations. Syllogism, induction, enthymeme, example.

Treatise ten: Topical argumentations.

Treatise eleven: Categorical syllogisms.

Treatise twelve: Hypothetical syllogisms.

Treatise thirteen: Divisions and definitions.

¹⁸ See De Rijk (1967) vol. 2.1, p. 146 and vol. 2.2, pp. 7–71

¹⁹ See Weijers (2020), pp. 107–108.

3.4.1. TREATISE ONE

The first treatise of the SDA opens with a prologue paragraph, which closely resembles the opening of the fourth book of Boethius' *Commentarii in Ciceronis Topica*:

<i>In Ciceronis Topica, lib. IV</i>	<i>Summa dialectice artis, 1.01</i>
[1107C] <i>Explicare non possum, mi Patrici, quantas saepe in difficillimi operis cursu vires afferat amicitiae contemplatio, cum et iis studiosius componamus, quos reposito penitus amore diligimus, et placare cupientibus multa sese rerum copia subministret. Huc accedit quod ut quaeque in mentem uenerint iniudicata atque etiam incastigata promuntur, quando quidem apud cari pectoris secretum nihil est periculi proferre quod sentias. Est igitur mihi, cum tuam benevolentiam specto, primum omne atque, ut ita dicam, uoluptarium, quod in tuae praescriptum iucunditatis impenditur.</i>	<i>Quantas sepe in difficillimi operis transitu vires afferat amicitiae contemplatio explicare non possum, mi soci, cum his nobis conscribentibus, quos reposito penitus amore diligimus, ac placere cupientibus, multa sese rerum copia subministret, hinc nimirum frequenter accidit quod ut quaeque in mente venerint incorrecta atque etiam incastigata promuntur. Quamquam apud cari pectoris secretum nichil est periculi proferre quod <sentias>,²⁰ est itaque mihi vestram cum benevolentiam specto primum atque iocundum quod vestre praescriptum <iocunditati>²¹ impenditur.</i>

This suggests that the author was exposed to Boethius' commentary on Cicero's topics, although, interestingly, when he discusses the topics later on, as will be seen, he primarily relies on *De topicis differentiis* and not on *In Ciceronis topica*. In this way, despite showing awareness of other texts, our author remains within the twelfth-century tradition of teaching the Topics insofar as he bases his discussion almost entirely on Boethius' *De topicis differentiis*. The intricacies of the author's treatment of topics will be treated more fully in section 3.4.10.

The rest of the first treatise acts as an introduction to the SDA. The author begins by associating the three arts of the *trivium* to the three effects of words (*sermones*).²² They can be used to generate understanding—for which the corresponding art is grammar, to establish belief (*fides*)—through the art of dialectic, or to persuade listeners—which is the domain of the art of rhetoric. The main interest of the author of the SDA is the art of dialectic (which he also calls

²⁰ Corrected from "*scientias*" by Gastaldelli (1977), p. 699.

²¹ Corrected from "*iocundati*" by Gastaldelli (1977), p. 699.

²² The presence of the term '*sermones*' in this context is worth noticing. Even though '*sermo*' is a common Latin word, in the SDA it seems to be used in the technical sense introduced by Abelard. This point is explored in more detail in the next chapter, section 4.4.2, as it is fruitful to explore the presence of '*sermo*' in the SDA in relation to the presence of the same word in the anonymous 'D'Orvillensis' commentary on the *Categories*.

logic), so he only examines the other arts in passing, explaining their relation to dialectic and how they are distinct from it. But in order to elucidate the “proper features of logic”, he says, eleven matters must be resolved:²³

1. What is dialectic?
2. Why is it so called?
3. What is the genus under which dialectic is subsumed?
4. What are the parts of dialectic?
5. What is its subject matter?
6. What is the function (*officium*) of dialectic?
7. What is its goal (*finis*)?
8. What is its instrument?
9. Who is a practitioner (*artifex*)²⁴ of dialectic?
10. For what reason was it invented?
11. In what order should it be treated?

3.4.1.1. What is dialectic?

One key aspect of dialectic, for the author of the SDA, is that it consists in the ability to discern (*discretio*) between good arguments and bad ones, to distinguish truth from falsity. In 1.08–1.09, he examines the definitions of dialectic provided by Cicero, Augustine, and Boethius. While he does not explicitly adjudicate in favour of any one of these, he seems to have a marked preference for the following definition, which he explicitly associates with Boethian views:

dialectic is the science of discovering or judging true and verisimilar arguments that come together (*convenientia*) in order to prove the thesis at issue.²⁵

It is therefore distinguished from sophistry, rhetoric, and demonstration. Indeed, because it deals with true and plausible (*verisimilia*) arguments, it excludes sophistry (which involves

²³ SDA 1.07

²⁴ The Latin word ‘*artifex*’ is routinely used to describe the master of a liberal art, or of a craft, or art (understood in the medieval sense of ‘*ars*’). It can also have the sense of ‘practitioner of a craft’. However, in this context, the term ‘master’ is, on its own, misleading, as it is usually reserved to translate the Latin ‘*magister*’. I have therefore settled on the term ‘practitioner’ which, although perhaps not entirely intuitive, seems to best capture what the author has in mind, that is, the mere practice of dialectical activities; see section 3.4.1.9 below.

²⁵ SDA 1.09: “*dialectica est scientia inveniendi ac iudicandi vera et verisimilia argumenta convenientia ad thesyn questionem probandam.*” As far as I can tell, this specific formulation is not found in Boethius’ works, but it does summarise certain ideas expressed at various points in *De Topicis differentiis* and *In Ciceronis Topica*.

false arguments) and demonstration (which deals with necessary, not merely plausible) arguments. Furthermore, it excludes rhetoric based on the fact that it deals with theses, that is to say questions examined as abstracted from particular circumstances, whereas rhetoric involves hypotheses, which, in Boethius' terminology, are questions involving particular circumstances such as space, time, and such. For example, the question whether human faith must be completed by reason would be a proper question for dialectic, whereas the question whether Professor Plum killed Dr. Black in the study with the candlestick on 13th January 1965 would belong to the field of rhetoric.

3.4.1.2. Why is dialectic so called?

In 1.10, the author of the SDA looks at the name 'dialectic' (*dialectica*), and states that it is, for all intents and purposes, synonymous with 'logic' (*loica*), since they are used to speak of a 'skilfulness in disputing' (*disputandi peritiam*):

Now we indifferently call the skill of disputation (*disputandi peritiam*) dialectic or logic: just as the appellation of both these names is in common, so too their interpretation also seems to be the same in sense. "Dialectic", of course, is understood as a science about utterances (*dictis*), while "logic" <is understood as a science> about *sermones*: for, just as the utterance (*dictio*) "*lecton*" or "*logos*" is translated (*interpretatur*) as "*sermo*", for this reason "dialectic" or "logic" is properly said, because it is held <as being> about utterances (*dictis*) or *sermones*, that is, expressions (*locutionibus*).²⁶

At this point, the author slips from the more technical sense of 'dialectic' he has just defined (a form of knowledge which consists in the ability to discover and judge true arguments when it comes to probable and general matters) to a more general use of the term. This ambiguity of the term 'dialectic' persists throughout the text, as the author uses the term in both senses without distinction. In its general sense, then, dialectic is regarded as knowledge about *dicta*, whereas logic seems to denote knowledge about *sermones*, which is presented as the Latin translation of 'logos', but in practice, the author says, both denote the same type of knowledge, a knowledge about *locutiones*, i.e. what is said.

3.4.1.3. What is the genus under which dialectic is subsumed?

Dialectic is subsumed under philosophy, which is itself subsumed under the genus of knowledge (*scientia*). Knowledge can be of doing (*agendi*) or of discerning (*discernendi*).²⁷

²⁶ SDA 1.10: "*Dialecticam nunc seu loicam indifferenter disputandi peritiam nominamus: utriusque duo nominis sicut est communis appellatio ita et eadem in sensu videtur interpretatio. "Dialectica" quippe de dictis, "loica" autem de sermonibus scientia interpretatur: nam sicut "lecton" dictio seu dictum ita "logos" sermo interpretatur; unde bene dialectica seu loica dicta est, quia ipsa de dictis sive sermonibus idest locutionibus habetur.*"

²⁷ SDA 1.11

Philosophy belongs to the second category. Since dialectic is a species of philosophy, it is also ultimately subsumed under the science of discerning. Additionally, following Boethius, philosophy is divided in three parts, namely speculative, moral, and rational (or logical).²⁸ Against those who believe that logic is not a part of philosophy but merely its instrument, the author of the SDA sides with Boethius in holding that logic (here, used a synonym of ‘dialectic’) is both a part of philosophy and a tool for it, much like a human hand is both part of a human body and a tool. Rather than clarifying the place of dialectic in the order of knowledge, this discussion seems to introduce some confusion, which is due in no small part to the author’s conflation of the two senses of the term ‘dialectic’.

3.4.1.4. *What are the parts of dialectic?*

According to the author of the SDA, the art of dialectic is divided into three parts. The first one is the science of defining (*scientia diffiniendi*), whose business is to formulate or evaluate definitions. The second one is the science of dividing (*scientia dividendi*), which draws distinctions or evaluates them. The third and final one is the science of arguing (*scientia argumentandi*), which is concerned with building arguments or evaluating arguments.²⁹

After drawing this threefold division, the author also examines a view he attributes to Boethius.³⁰ According to this view, there are two parts to the art of dialectic: the science of inventing (*scientia inveniendi*), which teaches how to assemble arguments, and the science of judging (*scientia iudicandi*), which teaches how to judge of these arguments.³¹ This division can also be found both in Abelard and in Abelard’s old master and rival, William of Champeaux.³² The author of the SDA explicitly examines Abelard’s interpretation of this division, but he does not argue in favour of using any of the proposed divisions over the others.

3.4.1.5. *What is the subject matter of dialectic?*

In order to answer this question, the author of the SDA first expounds Boethius’ claim that the subject matter of dialectic is a thesis question (*thesys questio*), that is to say a question which is devoid of particular circumstances, as was mentioned in his definition of dialectic in

²⁸ SDA 1.13

²⁹ SDA 1.14; note that this scheme is not found in Boethius, Aristotle, Abelard, or any other source I consulted.

³⁰ SDA 1.15

³¹ See ICT 1044C & DTD 1173B

³² See Fredborg (2003), pp. 59–60, for passages containing the distinction.

1.09. As a reminder, a question which involves particular circumstances is called an “hypothesis” and is the subject matter of rhetoric.³³

He also proposes another answer, stating that there are three subject matters of dialectic, namely definition, division, and ratiocination (or argumentation); those correspond to the first proposed division of the parts of dialectic. Otherwise, it could be said that dialectic has two subject matters, namely finding and judging; this corresponds to the two parts of dialectic according to Boethius and Abelard. He seems to admit that all of these are valid answers.

3.4.1.6. *What is the function (officium) of dialectic?*

By function (*officium*), the author means the type of task which is suited to the person who is practicing the art.³⁴ He then promptly adds that the work of a dialectician is to define, divine, and argue appropriately, which does seem to indicate that he has a preference for the threefold division of the parts of dialectic which he has proposed earlier, despite not revealing this preference at the time. Another way to portray the work of a dialectician is to say that the latter seeks to argue in order to attain a discernment of what is true, and what is false, or in order to prove a thesis (in the Boethian sense mentioned above), or to induce belief in someone.

3.4.1.7. *What is the goal of dialectic?*

In parallel to what he believes is the function of dialectic, the author believes that the goal of dialectic is to define, divide, and argue appropriately (*convenienter*). Other possible answers to the question are that the goal is to attain the discernment of truth, or to prove a thesis.³⁵

3.4.1.8. *What is the instrument of dialectic?*

Disputatio, or perhaps more accurately, the dialectical utterances (*orationes*) which constitute *disputationes*, are the instruments of dialectic. These utterances are also called “arguments”.

³³ SDA 1.17

³⁴ SDA 1.19

³⁵ SDA 1.19

3.4.1.9. *Who is a practitioner (artifex) of dialectic?*

According to the author, the practitioner of dialectic is, properly speaking, whoever (1) discusses the types of questions involved in dialectic (*theses*), (2) in *disputatio*. The person who teaches the art is called a logician (*loycus*).³⁶

3.4.1.10. *For what reason was dialectic invented?*

According to the author of the SDA, the use of sophisms is what motivated ancient philosophers to develop dialectic. It is by developing this latter art that we can hope to reduce the risk of mistaking what is false for what is true.³⁷

3.4.1.11. *In what order should the notions of dialectic be treated?*

In line with the didactic tone of the SDA, the notions are treated in an order which is deemed necessary for learning and mastering logic:

In writing logic, this order is necessary. Since logic is the discretion (*discretio*) of arguments or of argumentations, and <since> argumentations are fashioned from propositions, but propositions from words (*dictiones*), it is necessary for he who writes logic perfectly that he first investigates the nature of simple *sermones*, then of composite <ones>, and finally to fulfil the goal of logic in argumentations.³⁸

Logic should therefore be approached first from its most simple elements, building towards increasingly complex constructions. The author will therefore start by talking about simple words (*sermones*), then expressions (*orationes*), then propositions, and finally, arguments. Categorical propositions are dealt with before hypothetical ones, and the treatise on *loci* comes before those on syllogisms. This is a fairly standard order for a twelfth-century logic textbook: there are many texts which are organized in a similar way, including the *Introductiones Montane Minores*, the *Abbreviatio Montana*, and *Tractatus Anagnini*.³⁹ In doing so, the author of the SDA establishes an explicit parallelism between what he is doing, and the order in which he believes Aristotle treats these topics in the works of the *Organon*: the *Categories* deal with “incomplex elements (*incomplexis*)”, then the *Periermeneias* looks at simple propositions, the *Topics* deal with topical arguments, before the *Analytics* turn to syllogisms, and the *Sophistici Elenchi*, to types of fallacies.

³⁶ SDA 1.21

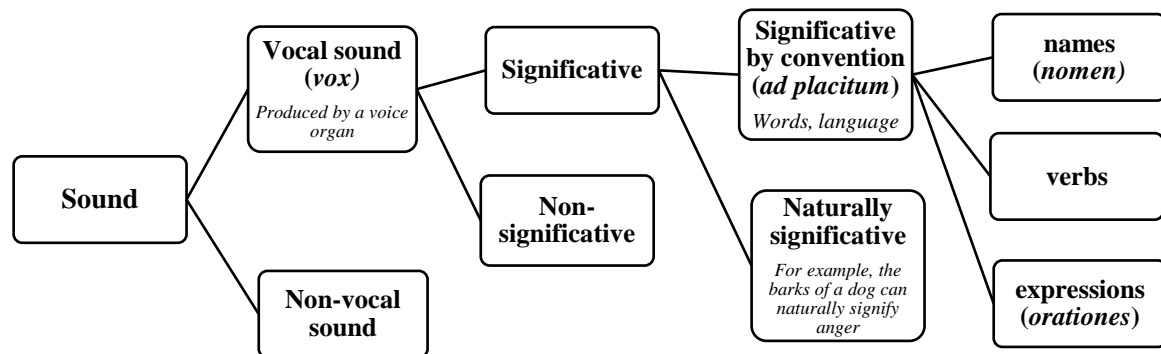
³⁷ SDA 1.22

³⁸ SDA 1.23: “*In scribendo loycam hic ordo est necessarius. Cum loyca sit discretio argumentorum sive argumentationum, argumentationes autem ex propositionibus contexantur, propositiones vero ex dictionibus, eum qui perfecte scribit loycam, primum naturam simplicium sermonum, deinde compositorum necesse est investigare et tandem in argumentationibus finem loyce consumere.*”

³⁹ see Stump (1989), p. 112

3.4.2. TREATISE TWO

In line with this program, the second treatise starts by looking at the most basic elements of dialectic, that is, words. In order to get there, the author of the SDA draws various distinctions, which I have schematized as follows:



This scheme is not found in Abelard nor in Boethius but can be found in other introductory logical works of the same century, such as the *Introductiones montanes maiores*⁴⁰ and the *Introductiones montanes minores*.⁴¹ Of course, dialectic is concerned with sounds that are 1) vocal, 2) significative, and 3) significative by convention (*ad placitum*). The author of the SDA starts with nouns, as he believes that they are “first in construction and in invention”.⁴² What he means by “first in construction” is that, in constructing a proposition, a noun is put first as the foundation, so to speak, and then a verb is added to it. They are “first in invention” in the sense that they were invented first when Adam, in Genesis, names the animals which God leads to him.

The author distinguishes the way the term “name (*nomen*)” is understood in dialectic from the way it is understood in grammar. The grammatical definition of a name is the traditional one given by Priscian in the *Institutiones*:

Indeed, according to grammarians, only the vocal sounds (*voces*) signifying substance with quality are included under ‘name’, through which pronouns, which signify bare substance, are excluded, as well as adverbs and interjections.⁴³

⁴⁰ See Spruyt (2015).

⁴¹ See De Rijk (1967), vol. 2.1 p. 146 & vol. 2.2. pp. 71–77.

⁴² SDA 2.03

⁴³ SDA 2.04: “A gramaticis enim sub nomine comprehenduntur sole voces significantes substantiam cum qualitate per quod excluduntur pronomina, que meram significant substantiam, et adverbia et interiectiones.”

However, in dialectic, ‘*nomen*’ is used more broadly, so as to include pronouns, finite adverbs, and non-natural interjections.⁴⁴ Drawing on Aristotle’s *Peri hermeneias*, it is defined in this way: “a name is a vocal sound which signifies by convention, without tense, whose part signifies nothing if taken out of it, which is finite, and which is direct (*rectum*).”⁴⁵ The last two words are there to exclude infinite names (names preceded by a negation, such as ‘*non-animal*’) as well as oblique names (names which are in a case other than the nominative).

Names are separated into two main categories: names of things (*nomina rerum*), and names of names (*nomina nominum*). Names of names, like ‘species’, ‘genus’, ‘appellative’, and the like, were created in order to speak of other names, and to provide instruction (*doctrinam facere*) about them.⁴⁶ In contrast, names of things signify not only existing things, such as ‘dog’, ‘man’, or ‘whiteness’, but even things that are made up (*figurentur*), like ‘chimera’ and ‘goat-stag’.⁴⁷ The author of the SDA explains his inclusion of names of fictional things among names of things by referring to his own take on the etymology of the term. According to him, ‘*res*’ comes from the Latin verb ‘*reor, reris, ratus*’, which is a deponent verb signifying ‘to think, to believe’, although here it seems to be used in a genuinely passive sense.⁴⁸ Therefore, in a broad sense, a thing (*res*) is “whatever can be thought of” (*omne id quod reri potest*), or what we “can have a discussion about” (*id de quo sermo haberi potest*).⁴⁹ This definition of a thing is uncommon and I have not been able to trace it elsewhere. With that said, the author of the SDA also recognizes that, sometimes, ‘*res*’ can be used in a narrower, more proper sense, which covers only existing things.

In turn, names of things are divided between those which are universal (if their signification includes many things, like ‘man’), those which are singular (if they signify a given individual thing, like ‘Socrates’), or those which are neither (names of fictional entities, like

⁴⁴ The author does not explain what he means by ‘non-natural interjection’. Presumably, a “natural” interjection could be an exclamation from someone who is in pain, such as someone grunting after stubbing their toe. This type of interjection would not count as a name under the dialectic definition, simply because it has its signification naturally, and not by convention; thus, it does not satisfy one of the conditions for being a name. In contrast, a non-natural interjection could be any kind of exclamation which is expressed using language and thus, has its meaning by convention. An example of a non-natural interjection would be when someone stubs their toe and cusses.

⁴⁵ SDA 2.07: “*nomen est vox significativa ad placitum sine tempore cuius pars nichil extra significat finitum rectum.*”

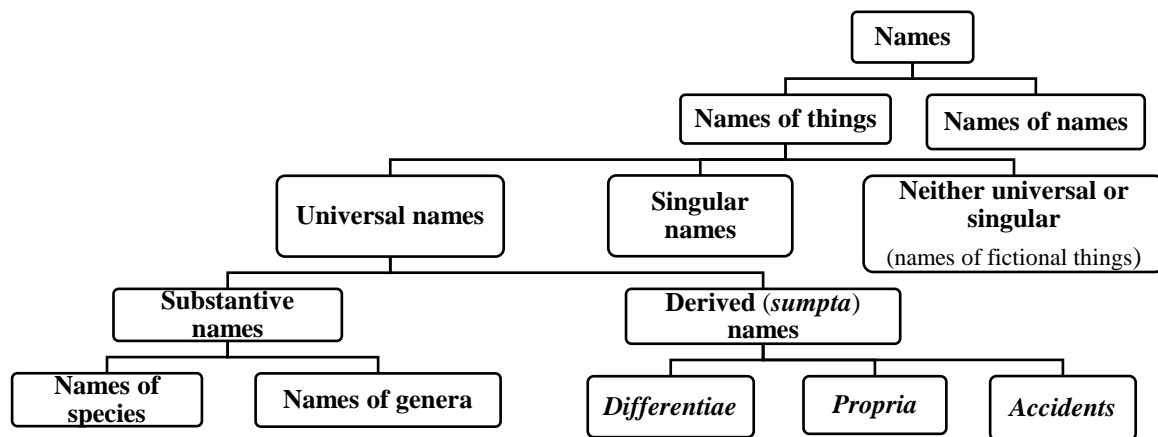
⁴⁶ SDA 2.10

⁴⁷ SDA 2.08

⁴⁸ SDA 2.09

⁴⁹ SDA 2.09; it is not clear how this second formulation of the definition of ‘*res*’ fails to apply to the *significata* of names of names, but I will leave this issue aside for now.

‘chimera’). The reason the author gives for believing that names of fictional entities are neither singular nor universal is that, while these names can be put as subject in a proposition, they cannot be truthfully predicated of anything. Besides, he writes, fictional entities are not things properly speaking (in the narrow sense of ‘*res*’ introduced above), as they do not exist. As such, based on their signification, their names cannot be called either universal or singular.⁵⁰ Among universal names, some are substantial (the names of genera and species), whereas others are derived (*sumpta*), like the names of accidents, *propriae* and *differentiae*. I summarize the different types of names in the SDA in this diagram:



As for the verbs, just like nouns, they are said to be vocal sounds which are significative by convention, but unlike nouns, they signify with tense. Again, like nouns, they can be finite or infinite, and direct (*recta*) or oblique. All verbs in tenses other than the present are considered oblique. As such, this definition is given, based on Aristotle’s *Peri hermeneias*: a verb is “a *vox* signifying by convention (*ad placitum*) with tense, that is, with distinction of present, past, or future time, of which no part signifies outside <of the word>.”⁵¹ Shortly after, he adds that it must also be “present, and finite”.⁵²

The last topic examined by the author in the second treatise is that of expressions (*orationes*). This term is defined as a collection of words which, taken together, strive for a

⁵⁰ SDA 2.11: “*Illa autem nec universalia nec singularia appellantur que rebus fictis conveniunt et de nominibus aliquarum veraciter predicari non habent, ut hoc nomen ‘cimera’ et ‘yrcocervus’ que, quamvis rerum fictarum dicantur esse nomina, non tamen proprie rerum dicenda videntur nomina, cum res ficta non sit res proprie. Unde hec quidem subici possunt, predicari tamen nullatenus valent.*”

⁵¹ SDA 2.26: “*vox significativa ad placitum cum tempore hoc est cum discrezione presentis, preteriti aut futurs temporis, cuius nulla pars extra significativa est.*”

⁵² SDA 2.28

single effect.⁵³ This effect can be one of the three effects of *sermone*s invoked at the beginning of the first treatise, namely (1) to create an understanding (grammar), (2) to induce belief (dialectic), or (3) to persuade a listener (rhetoric). He also provides Aristotle's definition: "an *oratio* is a vocal sound which signifies by convention and whose part signifies nothing if taken out of it".⁵⁴ Both of these definitions are deemed adequate. Furthermore, there are two kinds of expressions: perfect ones, and imperfect ones. The criterion to distinguish between the two is psychological: while a perfect expression generates a complete understanding which leaves the mind of the listener satisfied, so to speak, an imperfect expression lacks a verb and leaves the mind of the listener suspended, waiting for more. For example, while "*homo currit*" is a perfect expression, "*homo currens*" is an imperfect one. The suspension criterion is commonplace in the period in which the SDA was written, as it is taken from Boethius' commentary on the *Peri hermeneias*. However, the author does not limit himself to the Boethian criterion:

An incomplete expression is one which, lacking a verb (*verbum*), renders the mind of the hearer suspended rather than fully understanding, or an expression is called imperfect for the reason that, although it constitutes an understanding when uttered on its own (*per se prolata*), nevertheless it was not instituted so as to do this on its own, for example 'a running man', but like terms they can be added to other words in speaking, as in 'a running man walks'. A perfect <expression> is, of course, one which generates a perfect sense or was instituted not only in order that an understanding be constituted, but also so as to do this when it is said on its own (*per se dicta*), for example 'Socrates disputes'.⁵⁵

Thus, whether an expression is perfect or not depends not only on the mental state of the hearer, but also on socio-linguistic conventions, so to speak: the perfection of an expression depends on the aim according to which it was established in the first place. This idea is also found in Abelard's *Logica 'Ingredientibus'* commentary on the *Peri hermeneias*, with the difference that Abelard is more precise as to the relation between institution and the Boethian criterion of suspension:

Therefore, we take the perfection of an expression according to its force and its institution, because, although all *voces* imposed in order to signify are instituted (*institutae*), and some of them also have a signification when pronounced on their own (*per se prolatae*) (such as names, verbs and also imperfect expressions), even if they are invented in such a way that they also signify on their own, nevertheless they are not invented *for this purpose* but rather, in order that they complete their construction by being added to others. But it is one thing for *voces* to be invented in such a way that they have something in themselves, and another

⁵³ SDA 2.30

⁵⁴ SDA 2.31: "*oratio est vox significativa ad placitum, partes cuius aliquid extra significant*"

⁵⁵ SDA 2.32: "*Inperfecta oratio est que carens verbo animum audientis potius suspensum reddit quam satis intelligentem vel idcirco imperfecta dicitur oratio que, licet per se prolata intellectum constituit, non tamen ita instituta est ut per se hoc facere, ut 'homo currens', sed more dictionum aliis sermonibus in locutione apponuntur, ut 'homo currens ambulat'. Perfecta quidem est que perfectum sensum generat vel que instituta fuit ut non solum intellectum constitueret, sed etiam per se dicta id faceret ut 'Socrates disputat'.*"

thing for them to be invented *for the purpose* of something. Therefore, with regards to the cause of invention, the expression ‘running Socrates’ is imperfect because, although it also constitutes an understanding when pronounced on its own, it was instituted not for the purpose of doing this on its own, but rather, <for the purpose of doing this when> joined with other *voces*. From where someone who both hears <an *oratio*> being pronounced and knows that this <*oratio*> was not invented for the purpose of being pronounced on its own (*simpliciter*), expects another *vox* with which it must be combined from the cause of its invention, like ‘walks’ or ‘is’ and the like.⁵⁶ Hence, we call ‘perfect’ an expression which has a complete (*integram*) constitution according to the cause of the institution of the *orationes*, for example: ‘Socrates runs’. Indeed, this <*oratio*> was instituted not only in such a way that it generates an understanding, but also in order to do so this when said on its own; but other <*orationes*> – all of those which are called imperfect – do not.⁵⁷

Abelard develops this view in order to overcome a difficulty: according to him, the expressions ‘running man’ and ‘a man runs’ signify the same understanding, yet ‘running man’ is imperfect and, ‘a man runs’, perfect. Signification, therefore, cannot be what sets perfect expressions apart from imperfect ones. To explain how the two can be distinguished from one another, Abelard not only invokes Boethius’ criterion of suspension, but also proposes an explanation for it: the hearer’s mind is left ‘hanging’ upon hearing an imperfect expression because such an expression was not instituted for the purpose of expressing a full meaning when pronounced on its own; rather, its function (established through the intention behind its institution) is to be combined with other words in order to compose a full expression which is only then meaningful on its own. Because of this, Abelard argues, someone who hears an imperfect expression will expect to hear more, because there are certain social conventions (so to speak) regarding the use of such an expression. This makes Boethius’ criterion a mere effect of the actual mechanism at play, which is that of institution and the intention behind it. The views of the author of the SDA, although unattributed, closely mirror Abelard’s. However, whereas Abelard introduces the notion of imposition to explain the suspension criterion, the author of the SDA introduces

⁵⁶ Translation note: it is difficult to render this accurately in English, but the idea is as follows. An incomplete expression such as ‘*Socrates currens*’ (‘running Socrates’) can be combined to other words to form the following complete expressions: ‘*Socrates currens ambulat*’ (‘Socrates, running, walks’) or ‘*Socrates currens est*’ (‘Socrates is running’, or ‘Socrates is a running thing’, or ‘Running-Socrates exists’).

⁵⁷ LI: PH, 148.38–56: “*Accipimus itaque perfectionem orationis secundum uim et institutionem ipsius, quia, cum omnes uoces [etiam] impositae ad significandum sint institutae, et quaedam ex eis per se etiam prolatae significationem habent, sicut nomina et uerba nec non etiam orationes imperfectae, licet ita sint inuentae, ut per se quoque significant, non tamen propter hoc, sed magis, ut appositae aliis constructionem implerent. Aliud est autem ita inuentas esse uoces, ut in se hoc habeant, aliud propter hoc inuentas esse.*

Quantum ergo ad causam inuentionis imperfecta est oratio: Socrates currens, quia, licet et intellectum constituat per se etiam prolata, non propter hoc, ut per se hoc faceret, instituta fuit sed cum aliis uocibus iuncta. Vnde et ille qui audit eam proferri et scit eam non esse inuentam propter hoc, ut simpliciter proferretur, aliam expectat uocem, cum qua ex causa inuentionis suae habeat poni, ut 'ambulat' uel 'est' et similia. Vnde perfectam orationem dicimus, quae integram constitutionem habet secundum causam institutionis orationum, sicut ista: Socrates currit.

Haec enim instituta fuit non solum ut intellectum generaret sed propter hoc etiam, ut per se dicta id faceret; aliae uero non, quaecumque imperfectae dicuntur.”

the two notions disjunctively, which makes it difficult to understand how he conceives of the relation between the two. He might believe that the two criteria are two distinct (albeit equally valid) options, or that they are two formulations of a single criterion. It could very well be that the author simply re-states Abelard's view without his explanation, which would explain the unclarity of the view as it is presented in the SDA.

3.4.3. TREATISE THREE

The third treatise of the SDA moves on to examine perfect expressions, noting that they can come in many different varieties. While propositions (or enunciative expressions) are the most important ones for logic and the focus of the rest of the treatise, other types of perfect expressions include imperative ones (*"accipe codicem"*), permissive ones (*"de ligno paradisi commedes"*), vocative ones (*"adesto Deus unum"*), questions, and many others.⁵⁸

A proposition is defined as "an expression signifying something true or false, that is, an expression proposing (*proponens*) as it is in reality or as it is not in reality".⁵⁹ Therefore, the author goes on to say, the genus of a proposition is 'expression' (*oratio*), and its *differentia* is that it has to signify something true or false. This definition thus excludes expressions like 'that Socrates is a man' (*Socratem esse hominem*) or 'that Plato disputes' (*disputare Platonem*), which do not *propose* something true or false. An important distinction comes up at this point: while these expressions can constitute an understanding which is true or false, they do not *propose* something true or false. True and false understandings, the author says, can be constituted even without an expression being uttered. For example, the blood on a sword indicates that a murder took place, and a circle (presumably on some kind of sign) shows that there is wine for sale in a building.⁶⁰ Yet, the blood on a sword and the circle on a sign are not propositions, because they do not satisfy the condition of being an expression.

⁵⁸ On this point, the author of the SDA diverges from Abelardian doctrine. Indeed, Abelard does not count vocative expressions among the types of perfect expressions. This is because, according to him, any other type of expression can be rendered vocative. For example, "Peter, Socrates is coming" (enunciative and vocative) or "Peter, is Socrates coming?" (interrogative and vocative). For Abelard's position, see *Dial.* p. 151.

⁵⁹ SDA 3.02: "*Diffinitur sic quoque: propositio est oratio verum falsumve significans idest oratio proponens ut in re est vel ut in re non est.*"

⁶⁰ SDA 3.02: "*Constat autem diffinitio <hec> tamquam ex genere et ex una sola differentia: premittitur enim 'oratio' tamquam genus, sed, quia hoc habet commune cum ceteris speciebus orationis, supponitur 'verum falsumve significans' tamquam una differentia, per quam differentiam separantur in partem et alie huiusmodi orationes que non habent verum vel falsum proponere ut huiusmodi 'Socratem esse hominem', 'disputare Platonem', que omnes, quamvis verum vel falsum intellectum constituent sicut circulus qui vinum venale esse in*

Among propositions, the author of the SDA also identifies different varieties. Indeed, a proposition can be single (*una*) or multiple (*multiplex*). The criterion here is psychological: a proposition which signifies one thing about one thing, thereby constituting a single understanding, is a single proposition, whereas one that signifies many things which cannot be covered by a single understanding is a multiple proposition.⁶¹ For example, ‘*Socrates est albus*’ is a single proposition, whereas ‘*Socrates est albus musicus crispus*’ is a multiple proposition. However, ‘*Socrates est albus et musicus*’ would not count as a multiple proposition; indeed, single propositions include both the case of propositions by conjunction and disjunction, and the case of single propositions not containing conjunctions and disjunctions.⁶² In this way, ‘*quando homo est, animal est*’ and similar propositions count as single, and not multiple. Again, this is where the psychological criterion comes in: an uninterrupted uttering of many words (*dictiones*) in a predicate or a subject, such as in ‘*Socrates est animal rationale mortale*’, still yields a single understanding, whereas if the uttering is interrupted by a pause, it yields a multiple expression (*oratio*) by virtue of the fact that it produces more than one understanding. Multiplicity can be produced by a pause in an utterance, as was mentioned, or naturally⁶³ (by virtue of the terms), as is the case in ‘*Socrates est albus musicus crispus*’. In 3.06, this position of his is explicitly linked to Abelard’s own distinction between single and multiple propositions. As Pozzi notes, the examples given by the author of the SDA in this passage are very close to a passage from the glosses on the *Peri hermeneias* found in the *Logica Ingredientibus*.⁶⁴ As a whole, the views expressed in this segment of the SDA also closely resemble passages from Abelard’s *Dialectica* as well as his *Tractatus de Intellectibus*. Indeed, in both works, just as in his glosses on the *Peri hermeneias*, Abelard insists that, to be single, a proposition (or understanding) must be uttered (or thought) without a pause; a failure to do so would render the proposition (or understanding) multiple.⁶⁵ This is also something that the author of the SDA finds important enough to highlight in his rather short discussion of the matter. However, it is worth noting that the SDA does not exhibit any adherence to the idea

domo demonstrat et cruor in ense qui homicidium notat, non solum per premissum ‘orationis’ vocabulum, verumetiam per suppositam differentiam a propositionibus sunt seiuncta.”

⁶¹ SDA 3.03

⁶² SDA 3.04

⁶³ The author uses this terminology, but it may be more accurate to speak of expressions that are grammatically multiple, since it seems like grammatical rules determine which terms can be combined in a single expression and which ones automatically yield a multiple expression.

⁶⁴ LI: PH, p. 172.601–173.624

⁶⁵ See *Dial.* p. 227.18–228.8, TI §46–47 & §54

expressed in the *Dialectica* (and, to a lesser extent, in the glosses on the *Peri hermeneias*) that a proposition (or understanding) is ultimately considered to be single if it is about one subject thing, and multiple if it is about many.⁶⁶ In this way, it seems closer to the *De Intellectibus*, in which Abelard seems to have let go of the idea that the single or multiple character of an understanding is a function of the nature of its subject thing.

Another important distinction is that between affirmative and negative propositions, and then between two different types of negation. Separative negation separates the terms of a proposition by inserting an adverb of negation between them, such as in ‘*quidam homo non est lapis*’ (a certain man is not a stone).⁶⁷ Extinctive negation happens when a negation appears at the beginning of a proposition, thus negating it entirely, as in ‘*non omnis homo est animal*’ (it is not the case that every man is an animal). In more contemporary terms, the difference between separative and extinctive negation is a difference of scope: in the case of separative negation, either the subject- or the predicate-term falls within the scope of the operator, whereas in the case of extinctive negation, the whole proposition falls within its scope. According to the author, extinctive negation is negation proper, and that is what he has in mind when he talks about negative propositions for the remainder of the third treatise.⁶⁸

While he is on the topic of negations, the author also discusses contradiction: the respective truth values of a proposition and its negation are always opposite. However, there are six cases where this opposition is “impeded”, which he takes from Boethius and Aristotle: equivocation, univocation, difference of part, difference of relation, difference of mode, and difference of time.⁶⁹ He doesn’t define the notion of equivocality he is using, but he gives the following example: ‘*Cato se Utice occidit*’ (Cato killed himself in Utica) and ‘*Non Cato se Utice occidit*’ (it is not the case that Cato killed himself in Utica) can be true at the same time if they are about different entities, namely Cato the Younger and Cato the Elder, respectively. Univocation, on the other hand, happens when a name has many significations, one by imposition, and the others by *translatio*:

⁶⁶ *Dial.* p. 227.20–25.

⁶⁷ SDA 3.16

⁶⁸ SDA 3.20

⁶⁹ SDA 3.26

Therefore, a vocal sound is to be taken univocally whenever a name is received in diverse significations, among which one is obtained from the proper institution of invention, and the other from accidental misuse (*accidentali usurpatione*).⁷⁰

For example, '*homo ambulat*' can be true if it is about a particular man, while '*non homo ambulat*' is true if it is about the species. The term '*homo*' is imposed to talk about individual men, but by *translatio* it is applied to itself, as the name of the species 'man'. As for a failure by a difference of part, he gives the example of '*oculus est albus*' and '*oculus non est albus*'. These statements might look contradictory, but there is a way in which they could both be true or both be false, depending on whether they are considered with regards to the whole or only to a part. For example, '*oculus est albus*' is true if taken about a part of the eye (i.e., the sclera) while '*oculus non est albus*' is true if taken about the whole eye, or about a different part of the eye (e.g., the iris). Difference of relation occurs in the case of '*iste qui est pater illius, filius eius est*': from his brief explanation, it seems that by "relative" he means relative pronouns or articles. When those are used, the truth value of a statement can change according to context, depending to who they refer to. For example, in the proposition above, there is an ambiguity in the reference of '*eius*', such that I could say both that '*iste qui est pater illius, filius eius est*' and '*non iste qui est pater illius, filius eius est*', depending on the *relatum* to which '*eius*' refers.⁷¹ Difference of mode allows propositions like '*catulus videt*' (a kitten sees) and '*non videt catulus*' (it is not the case that a kitten sees) to be true at the same time, because the first one is true according to potentiality, but the second, according to act. Indeed, when a kitten is born, it possesses the power of sight, although it cannot currently see, at least until its eyes properly open once it is old enough. Finally, a proposition and its negation can both be true at the same time if they are of different tenses, like '*Socrates legit*' and '*Socrates non legit*', if one is in the present tense and the other, in the past tense.

A third and final division of propositions is established by the author in this treatise when he distinguishes between categorical and hypothetical propositions. A categorical proposition copulates the terms by the sole "force of the verb", as in '*Callias iustus est*' (Callias is just). By contrast, a hypothetical proposition connects its terms "by the force of a conjunction", for example '*Si Socrates est homo, Socrates est animal*' (if Socrates is a man,

⁷⁰ SDA 3.28: "*Est ergo vocem univoce sumi quotiens nomen in diversis significationibus accipitur quarum unam habet ex propria inventionis institutione, altera vero ex accidentali usurpatione*"

⁷¹ See SDA 3.30: "*Eodem quoque modo diversa relatio inedit dividendum, utpote cum dicitur 'iste qui est pater illius, filius eius est', relativa enim dictio ad diversa relata diversas in sensu efficit propositiones. Sicut et in negativa 'non iste qui est pater illius, filius eius est'.*"

Socrates is an animal).⁷² The terms of a categorical propositions are simple terms: a subject, and a predicate. The terms of a hypothetical proposition are composite terms: they are the antecedent and the consequent.

3.4.4. TREATISE FOUR

The fourth treatise, in continuity with the third, discusses yet more features of propositions, such as tense and quantity. The tense of a proposition does not merely depend on the tense of the verb it contains. It is rather determined by the events (*eventus*) which make the proposition true or false. Therefore, a proposition which describes past events, such as '*heri disputavit Socrates*' (yesterday, Socrates was disputing), is in the past tense, whereas one which describes current events is present, and similarly for future events, which correspond to future-tense propositions.

As for the quantity of a proposition, there are four possibilities. A universal proposition is said about something in a general manner of speaking and is recognizable because it bears a mark of universality (*signum universalitatis*), such as '*omnis*' or '*nullus*'.⁷³ For example, '*omnis homo ambulat*' (every man walks) is a universal, affirmative proposition. Similarly, particular propositions, like '*quidam homo ambulat*' (a certain man walks), speak of a single individual and feature a mark of particularity, like '*quidam*' or '*non omnis*'.⁷⁴ As a sort of middle ground between universal and particular propositions, there are also indefinite propositions, namely those that do not have any mark of quantity, such as '*homo ambulat*' (man walks) or '*bos est utilis aratro*' ([an] ox is useful for ploughing).⁷⁵ A fourth possibility is that a proposition is singular, when its subject is a proper noun (for example, 'Socrates is a man'). In addition, it is important to note that the author seems to mean that the quantity of a proposition is determined by its formal features, and not the extension of the subject-term, since he adds that even propositions about fictional entities can be deemed universal or particular, as long as they bear the appropriate mark, despite the fact (mentioned earlier) that the name of a fictional entity is itself neither universal nor singular:

⁷² SDA 3.35

⁷³ SDA 4.12

⁷⁴ SDA 4.15

⁷⁵ SDA 4.13

The term ‘chimera’, although it is not universal, can nevertheless make propositions universal or particular through marks of quantity being added to it, like ‘every chimera runs’, ‘not every chimera runs’, ‘a certain chimera runs’, ‘no chimera runs’.⁷⁶

The marks of quantity have a signification when used on their own, but when they are added to a term within an utterance, they acquire a different co-signification with the term to which they are joined. For example, the term ‘*omnis*’ on its own signifies the collection of all existing things, but in ‘*omnis homo*’, it co-signifies (*cumsignificet*), along with ‘*homo*’, only the collection of all men.⁷⁷

3.4.5. TREATISE FIVE

After looking at propositions, the author of the SDA moves on to the next level of complexity to examine relations of “participation” between different categorical propositions. Depending on which terms two propositions have in common (same subject, same predicate, or the subject of one being the predicate of the other and vice-versa), the author presents various schemas of the corresponding squares of oppositions. He also gives the rules of inference and the rules of conversion for contraries, subcontraries, subalterns, and contradictories. As these rules are the standard ones accepted in the twelfth century, taken from Aristotle’s *Peri hermeneias*, it is not necessary to go over them here.

As a preliminary to his treatment of inferences, he discusses the notions of truth and falsity. He starts by looking at the names ‘true’ and ‘false’, and then moves on to the properties of truth and falsity:

Moreover, these words (*vocabula*), namely ‘true’ and ‘false’, are properly names of understandings or of events (*eventuum*) of propositions, hence their role is to name (*nominare*) understandings from the truth and falsity which they posit for themselves. Because, when we say “this understanding is true or false”, by ‘true’ and ‘false’, we attribute to an understanding truth or falsity, which are proper accidents of the understandings themselves, for the proper foundation of truth and falsity is the understanding (*intellectus*).⁷⁸

Therefore, ‘true’ and ‘false’ are the names of the understandings or of the *eventus* of propositions, while truth and falsity *per se* are properties of understandings, rather than of the

⁷⁶ SDA 4.12: “‘Cimera’ enim terminus hic licet non sit universale, additis tamen sibi signis quantitatis, propositiones universales sive particulares habent reddere, ut ‘omnis cimera currit’, ‘non omnis cimera currit’, ‘quidam cimera currit’, ‘nulla cimera currit’.”

⁷⁷ SDA 4.26–4.27

⁷⁸ SDA 5.22: “Sunt autem hec vocabula ‘verum’ scilicet et ‘falsum’ intellectuum sive eventuum propositionum proprie nomina, quare intellectus habent nominare ex veritate et falsitate quam sibi ponunt. Quoniam cum dicimus ‘hic intellectus est verus vel falsus’, intellectui veritatem vel falsitatem, que propria ipsius sunt accidentia, per ‘verum’ et ‘falsum’ attribuimus, proprium enim fundamentum veritatis et falsitatis est intellectus.”

propositions themselves. The author adds that the support of the properties of truth and falsity is the soul (*anima*), through understandings as a medium, because “[the soul] sustains [understandings] by means of the intellect”.⁷⁹ Presumably, the author of the SDA adopts a viewpoint similar to Abelard, who considers that truth and falsity are qualities of thoughts.⁸⁰ When we say that a proposition is true or false, then, we speak “metaphorically”, by *translatio*. What is actually meant is that this proposition signifies an understanding which is itself true or false, that is, which proposes what is in fact, or what is not in fact. However, a careful observer will notice that, even though he then moves on to only discuss true and false *understandings*, the author of the SDA initially proposes another possibility: that ‘true’ and ‘false’ can name the events expressed in a proposition (*eventus propositionis*). Unfortunately, not much else is said about the *eventus propositionum*; the notion only comes up in two places in the entire work, namely in the discussion of present-tensed verbs in 4.11 and here, in the discussion of the meaning of ‘true’ and ‘false’.

Here, again, it is useful to turn our gaze to Abelard. A similar use of the word ‘*eventus*’ is to be found in the *Collationes*, when the character of the Christian is trying to explain that it is possible to apply the term ‘good’ not only to things (such as a good person), but also to what is said about things:

When, however, we apply the word ‘good’ to the happening of things (*eventus rerum*), and to what are said by statements and are stated by them to take place as, for instance, we might say ‘it is good that this is, or is not’, it is as if it were to be said that it is necessary for the

⁷⁹ SDA 5.22: “*Sustentamentum vero earundem proprietatum est anima, cum scilicet eas intellectu mediante sustineat.*”

⁸⁰ See Abelard’s *Super topica glossae*, p. 225.36–39: “*In caeteris vero duabus significationibus opposita sunt verum et falsum et quando sunt nomina intellectuum sumpta sunt a veritate et falsitate contrariis qualitatibus intellectus.*”

Note that Jacobi, Straub & King (1996) have argued that, although Abelard initially believed that understandings could be called true or false, he later abandoned the idea, saying instead that it is the *dictum propositionis* (see below) which has a truth value. Furthermore, they remark that the SDA, strangely enough, does not mention *dicta* despite its close relation to Abelardian thought. However, their puzzlement is generated by Pozzi’s dating of the SDA, which, as I have explained, I believe is wrong: granted Pozzi’s late twelfth-century dating, it would be curious for a close follower of Abelard to show no knowledge of Abelard’s *dictum* theory, if this theory was his most mature view on the matter. The earlier dating of the SDA proposed earlier in this chapter means that it is possible, if Jacobi, Straub & King are correct, that the SDA was written during the stage of Abelard’s career before he had moved on to the *dicta* theory. As it stands, however, I am not fully convinced by Jacobi, Straub & King’s argument, *inter alia* because there are known later works of Abelard where the notion of *dictum* is absent, for example the *Theologia Scholarium* and the *Collationes*. Moreover, Marenbon (2004b) convincingly argues against Jacobi, Straub & King’s view, showing that the notion of the *dictum* likely emerged earlier than the latter had thought, at the latest around 1120 or so. However, it is not my purpose here to offer a detailed discussion of their argument and its rebuttal.

For the purposes of this chapter, what matters is that Abelard is known to have held the view that understandings can be true or false at least at some point, and that the author of the SDA seems to follow him in spelling out his own views on the same matter.

fulfilment of one of God's best plans even if his ordering of things is entirely hidden from us.⁸¹

This comes not long after the same character claims the following:

We sometimes apply the word 'good' not just to things but also to what are said about things (*ea que de rebus dicuntur*) – that is, to the *dicta* of statements. So we even say that it is good that there is evil, although we by no means allow that evil is good. It is one thing to say that 'Evil is good' – which is altogether false – and another thing to say that 'It is good that there is evil', which should not in the least be denied.⁸²

From these passages, Marenbon infers that Abelard, by the time of the *Collationes*, was using the technical term '*eventus*' to cover roughly the same idea as what the term '*dictum*' covered in the earlier *Logica 'Ingredientibus'*.⁸³ An important aspect of Abelard's theory of the *dictum* (and later, *eventus*) is that a *dictum* (or *eventus*) is not a thing (*res*). As Marenbon explains it, "[a] *dictum* – as the Latin word indicates – is what is said by a *propositio* (propositional sentence). The *dictum* of the propositional sentence 'It is snowing' is *that it is snowing*."⁸⁴ However, as he underlines, it is not clear whether *dicta* are describable, in current-day terms, as states-of-affairs, truth-makers, truth-bearers, or something else; the difficulty of understanding what a *dictum* is, given that it is no thing, might have motivated Abelard to move away from the notion. Marenbon also remarks that the term '*dictum*' (in its technical sense) does not figure in the texts attributed to the *Nominales*, although it can be found in writings associated with other schools and masters, such as Robert de Melun or the *Porretani*.⁸⁵ The use of *eventus* in SDA, coupled with the absence of the term '*dictum*', gives credence to Marenbon's theory that Abelard, despite using the term *dictum* at a certain stage of his career, later changes his terminology. If this is correct, this would also likely mean that the SDA was written after c. 1132, since Abelard's writings from this period onwards lack the term '*dictum*' and contain the term '*eventus*' used in this technical sense. It is likely, then, that the author of the SDA is using *eventus* in much the same way as Abelard spoke of *dicta* or *eventus* himself. For example, the proposition 'Socrates is reading' would correspond to the *eventus* in which

⁸¹ Coll. §225, trans. Marenbon & Orlandi: "Cum uero ad euentus rerum, uel ad ea que a propositionibus dicuntur et per eas euenire proponuntur, boni uocabulum applicamus, ut uidelicet hoc esse uel non esse bonum dicamus, tale est ac si diceretur ad aliquam Dei optimam dispositionem complendam illud necessarium esse, etsi nos omnino illa lateat dispositio."

⁸² Coll. §202, trans. Marenbon & Orlandi: "Nec solum ad res ipsas, uerum etiam ad ea que de rebus dicuntur, hoc est ad ipsa propositionum dicta, sic nonnumquam boni uocabulum applicamus, ut etiam dicamus quia bonum est malum esse, quamuis minime concedamus bonum malum esse."

⁸³ Marenbon (2004b), pp. 76–78; it is important to note (as Marenbon also does) that the term '*eventus*' is also present in earlier Abelardian works such as the *Dialectica* and the *Logica 'Ingredientibus'*; what is worthy of note, here, is the evolution of the technical use of the term '*dictum*'. It is absent from the *Dialectica*, appears in the *Logica 'Ingredientibus'*, and then disappears again in the *Collationes* and *Theologia Scholarium*.

⁸⁴ Marenbon (2004b), p. 59.

⁸⁵ Marenbon (2004b), pp. 77–78.

Socrates is reading. In any case, from the discussion of treatise four, it is clear that what is meant by ‘*eventus*’ is not something which belongs to an individual’s mind. In fact, there is no indication that the *eventus* is reified in any way; it is simply meant to pick out something that is the case, something that occurs at a given time.

Moreover, for Abelard, all *orationes*, be they complete or incomplete, signify an understanding, but only complete *orationes* which are declarative sentences can express (*enuntiant*) a *dictum*.⁸⁶ In this way, a *dictum* is related to the same proposition as a given understanding, but while the understanding is said to be signified by the proposition, the *dictum* is expressed by it. A similar distinction seems to be captured in the SDA by the verb ‘to propose (*proponere*)’:

But although <‘true’ and ‘false’> are thus taken to designate understandings, they are nevertheless received in the signification of propositions by *translatio*,⁸⁷ according to which sense they establish (*ponunt*) in propositions the signification of a true or false understanding, or the proposition <of> what is in fact or what is not in fact, from where we say that a proposition is true or false, that is, that it constitutes a true or false understanding or it proposes what is in fact or what is not in fact.⁸⁸

In the above passage, the author is explaining just what is meant when we say that a proposition is true or false: we can mean that it gives rise to a true or false understanding, or that it proposes an *eventus*, that is to say, what is or is not the case. The verb ‘to propose’ is also used in this sense earlier, in the definition of propositions found in 3.02: “a proposition is an *oratio* signifying <something> true or false, that is, an *oratio* proposing what is in fact or what is not in fact”.⁸⁹ Again, ‘proposing’ is not reducible to ‘signifying’: *orationes* which fall short of being propositions, such as ‘walking man’ or ‘that Socrates is a man’, do indeed have a signification as they give rise to an understanding, but they do not propose anything insofar as

⁸⁶ LI: PH, p. 55.706–714: “*Ad quod respondemus quod in diffinitione propositionis significare uerum uel falsum non secundum intellectum accipiendum est, sed secundum dicta propositionum, id est enuntiando proponere id quod est in re uel non est in re. Enuntiare autem non possumus nisi affirmando uel negando, nulla autem imperfecta oratio affirmat uel negat atque ideo nil enuntiando proponit. Similiter et cum dicimus Verum est Socratem sedere, oratio subiecta, quae est Socratem sedere, eundem intellectum constituit, quem Socrates sedet, nec tamen modum enuntiandi habet affirmando uel negando, ut propositio dici possit.*”

⁸⁷ The manuscript has ‘*propositionum translatum*’ but this seems to be a scribal mistake; the sense is almost certainly ‘of propositions by *translatio*’.

⁸⁸ SDA 5.22: “*At cum ita proprie in designatione intellectuum accipiantur, in significatione tamen propositionum translatum accipiuntur quam acceptionem veri vel falsi intellectus significationem seu propositionem quod est in re uel quod non est in re in propositionibus ponunt, unde propositionem veram vel falsam dicimus esse idest verum vel falsum intellectum constituere sive id quod est in re (uel quod non est in re) proponere.*”

⁸⁹ SDA 3.02: “*propositio est oratio verum falsumve significans idest oratio proponens ut in re est vel ut in re non est.*”

they do not express that something is or is not the case; in other words, they do not express an *eventus propositionis*.

The notion of ‘proposing’ something true or false, then, is used by both Abelard and the author of the SDA to distinguish propositions from other types of *orationes*. We thus know that propositions are the kind of *orationes* which can be called true or false, but as the author of the SDA believes that propositions are only true or false in a derived sense, we still need to know which *understandings* have a truth value and which ones do not. Since the author does not directly address this question, turning to Abelard might be useful. In an article on the distinction between perfect and imperfect *orationes* in Abelard, Martin Lenz argues that Abelard considers that the perfection of an *oratio* or an understanding is not only due to its content, but also to the propositional attitude of the speaker towards this content (or, in Abelard’s terms, the *affectus animi* of the speaker).⁹⁰ Indeed, the understandings of ‘walking man’ and ‘a man walks’ have the same contents, but the understanding of ‘walking man’ is imperfect whereas the understanding of ‘a man walks’ is perfect. The difference between the two understandings, according to Lenz’s reading, is therefore not to be found in their representational content, but rather in the fact that the understanding of ‘a man walks’ adopts the attitude of ‘stating’ towards its representational content: “The thought qua content cannot be completed by adding more content, but only by **stating** it, and thus by expressing the mental state or propositional attitude towards the content [...]”⁹¹ Although the SDA does not expand on such topics, the use of the verb ‘to propose’ in the above passages from the SDA are at least consistent with Lenz’s reading of Abelard, insofar as there is a similar contrast drawn between signifying something and proposing it (or, in Lenz’s terms, stating it). As can be recalled from the above, another similarity between the SDA’s treatment of perfection and Abelard’s is that both are concerned with psychological criteria, such as the suspension of the hearer’s mind as well as the intentions of those who have instituted words for given functions. If Lenz is correct, it may be the case that the understandings which are true or false are those which are perfect, in other words those which ‘propose’ their contents, just as is the case with the *orationes* that signify them.

⁹⁰ Lenz (2005), pp. 383–384.

⁹¹ Lenz (2005), p. 383, emphasis mine.

The fifth treatise ends with a discussion of the subject-matter (*materia*) of propositions, in accordance with the terms from which they are made.⁹² In the case of contingent matters, a term can be both predicated or removed from the other, as is the case with ‘*homo*’ and ‘*albus*’. In remote (*remota*) matters, the terms are opposite, and can never be predicated of each other, as is the case with ‘*homo*’ and ‘*lapis*’. Finally, in the case of natural matters, the terms can never be separated, like ‘*homo*’ and ‘*animal*’. The conditions of truth or falsity ultimately depend on the subject-matter.

3.4.6. TREATISE SIX

Whereas the fifth treatise looked at the rules of inference between affirmative categorical propositions, the sixth treatise incorporates propositions containing negative terms. It also integrates the notion of equipollence (*equipollentia*): “equipollence is the agreement (*consonantia*) of propositions participating in the same subject but in predicates differing in this that one is finite and the other, infinite (*variatis per finitum et infinitum*)”.⁹³ He then gives four rules, which are made to hold between two propositions of the same quantity.⁹⁴ According to the first one, every affirmation composed of two finite terms is equipollent to a negation made from a finite subject-term and an infinite predicate-term, for example “*omnis homo est animal*” is equipollent to “*nullus homo est non animal*”.⁹⁵ Following the second rule, every affirmation with a finite subject-term and an infinite predicate-term is equipollent to a negation composed of two finite terms, as in “*omnis homo est non animal*” and “*nullus homo est animal*”.⁹⁶ A third rule states that an affirmation from an infinite subject-term and a finite predicate-term is equipollent to a negation assembled from two infinite terms. As such, “*omnis non-homo est lapis*” is equipollent to “*nullus non homo est non lapis*”.⁹⁷ The fourth and final rule holds that an affirmation made from two infinite terms is equipollent to a negation made from an infinite subject-term and a finite predicate-term, like “*omnis non homo est non lapis*” and “*nullus non homo est lapis*”.⁹⁸

⁹² SDA 5.24

⁹³ SDA 6.07: “*equipollentia est propositionum consonantia eodem subiecto predicatis variatis per finitum et infinitum participantium*”.

⁹⁴ SDA 6.12

⁹⁵ SDA 6.08

⁹⁶ SDA 6.09

⁹⁷ SDA 6.10

⁹⁸ SDA 6.11

After discussing equipollence, where terms occur in the same order, he turns to propositions in which the terms are used in a different order. This happens in the case of conversions, which can be of two types: conversion *simpliciter*, and conversion by contraposition. Conversion *simpliciter* involves switching the predicate-term with the subject-term and vice-versa, without adding or removing marks of negation.⁹⁹ There are two sub-types of conversion *simpliciter*, namely conversion to the very same terms (*sibi ipsis*) or through an accident. Conversion to the very same terms happens when the same quantity is maintained in the original and the converted proposition, such as in ‘*quidam homo est animal*’ and ‘*quoddam animal est homo*’. On the contrary, when there is a change in quantity, we are dealing with conversion through an accident. An example of this would be the conversion of ‘*quoddam animal est homo*’ in ‘*omnis homo est animal*’. Conversion by contraposition also switches the term from subject to predicate or from predicate to subject, but unlike conversion *simpliciter*, it then negates both of the terms. For example, ‘*omne non animal est non homo*’ can be converted by contraposition into ‘*omnis homo animal est*’. However, the author remarks that conversions by contraposition are shown to be weak (*ostendendam deficere*).

3.4.7. TREATISE SEVEN

The seventh treatise of the SDA is about modal propositions, and the discussions in it run parallel to those of the previous two treatises: the author provides rules of inference, squares of oppositions, and equipollences for such propositions. While non-modal propositions show the inherence of something in something “purely” (that is, without a mode), like ‘*Socrates currit*’ (Socrates run), modal propositions do so with a mode, like ‘*Socrates currit celeriter*’ (Socrates runs fast). A mode is usually an adverb and answers the question “how?” or “in what way?”. The author of the SDA recognizes two types of modes: adverbial modes, and casual (*casuales*) modes.¹⁰⁰ The division between adverbial and casual modes is taken from Aristotle, and common at the time the SDA was written. It is found, among others, in Abelard, but there it is not drawn in the same way as it is drawn in the SDA. Indeed, in other texts, the distinction is understood in the following way: an adverbial mode, like ‘*possibiliter*’, modifies a verb,

⁹⁹ Pozzi’s edition (SDA 6.14) has “*Simpliciter autem converti est de predicato fieri subiectum et econverso, nullo illorum variato parti (?)*”. However, the manuscript (f. 187r) clearly has “*per n...*” instead of “*parti...*”. Based on context, I believe that it should be read as “*per negationem*”.

¹⁰⁰ I chose to translate ‘*casuales*’ as ‘casual’, even though the usual translation of the term as it appears in Abelard is ‘nominal’. In the context of Abelard’s thought, I believe that it is correct to translate ‘*casuales*’ as ‘nominal’; however, as will be explained further, the author of the SDA does not use the term ‘*casuales*’ in quite the same way as most authors do. For this reason, I have chosen to use a different English word, ‘casual’.

whereas a casual mode like *'possibile'* is used, at least grammatically, as a predicate. For example, *'Socrates est episcopum possibiliter'* would be an adverbial modal proposition, whereas *'possibile est Socratem esse episcopum'* would be a casual modal proposition. In the SDA, however, both *'possibile'* and *'possibiliter'* count as casual modes:

Adverbial modes are those which we have said above, <namely 'rightly', 'wrongly', 'rapidly', and the like>; but casual modes are like these: 'possible', 'impossible', 'necessary', and the like. However, these are not properly modes as they were said to be in the above, since they do not modify the inherence of a verb as <proper modes do>; for when we say "it is possible that Socrates read" or "Socrates possibly reads" or "Socrates falsely reads", we do not show in what way he reads or he lacks reading.¹⁰¹

This is an odd way of understanding the distinction between adverbial and casual modals, but then the author's choice to focus on the latter (since, he says, they are the ones which tend to lead to error in the context of syllogisms) makes complete sense.

With regards to casual modal propositions, the author states that *'possibile'*, *'impossibile'* and *'necesse'* are co-significative (i.e., syncategorematic) terms, and can be interpreted as follows:

'Possible' signifies what is joined <to it> insofar as it is not repugnant to the nature of the thing; 'impossible', insofar as it is repugnant to the nature of the thing; 'necessary', insofar as the nature requires it. And the sense is such: "It is possible that Socrates is a man", that is, it is not repugnant to the nature of the thing, but it allows that Socrates be a man; "It is impossible that Socrates is a donkey", that is, it is repugnant to nature that Socrates be a donkey; "It is necessary that Socrates is a man", that is, nature requires that Socrates be a man.¹⁰²

As was mentioned before, the vocabulary employed by the author is remarkably similar to what is found in Abelard's own treatment of modality. However, this surface similarity is somewhat deceptive: the treatment of modal propositions that figures in the SDA is, in fact, radically different from the position which Abelard himself defends. Indeed, whereas Abelard adopts what he calls a *de re* interpretation of modal statements, the author of the SDA opts for a *de sensu* treatment. For example, the proposition *'Socratem possibile est esse episcopum'*, on the *de re* reading, is about Socrates, and says something about what is possible for him, given his nature. However, on the *de sensu* reading, this proposition is about what we would call a state

¹⁰¹ SDA 7.02: "Adverbiales quidem sunt illi quos supradiximus <i.e., 'bene', 'male', 'celeriter' et similia>; casuales vero sunt ut isti: 'possibile', 'impossibile', 'necesse' et similes. Hii tamen non ita proprie modi ut predicti esse dicuntur, cum inherentiam verbi non modificent sicut illi; cum enim dicimus 'Socratem legere est possibile' vel 'Socrates legit possibiliter' seu 'Socrates legit falso' non ostendimus ipsum aliquo modo legere vel ipsum carere lectione."

¹⁰² SDA 7.09: "'Possibile' iniunctam significat tantum quantum natura rei non repugnat; 'impossibile' quod natura rei repugnabat; 'necesse' vero quod natura exigit. Et est sensus talis: 'possibile est Socratem esse hominem' idest natura rei non repugnat, sed patitur quod Socrates sit homo; 'impossibile est Socratem esse asinum' idest natura repugnat quod Socrates sit asinus; 'necesse est Socratem esse hominem' idest natura exigit quod Socrates sit homo."

of affairs, and says that it is possible for the state of affairs in which Socrates is a bishop to obtain. As Chris Martin notes, this is somewhat puzzling: Abelard goes to great lengths to argue against a *de sensu* reading of modal propositions, and the SDA's heavy reliance on Abelard suggests that the author would have been aware of this.¹⁰³ Although the author of the SDA does not invoke by name the distinction between Abelard's *de sensu* and *de re* readings, he does link his view to the Aristotelian distinction between the conjunctive and the divided reading of modal propositions.¹⁰⁴ For example, "*possibile est stantem sedere*" can be read in two ways, and its truth-value will depend on the reading. In the conjunctive sense, the proposition is taken to mean that it is possible for someone who is sitting to be standing simultaneously, or, in other terms, that something can be both sitting and standing at the same time, which is of course false. However, the proposition is true in a divided sense, namely if it is taken to mean that it is possible for someone who is currently sitting to be standing up, say, at another time.¹⁰⁵

Once these basic notions have been set up, the author of the SDA turns to the question of the quantity of modals. Whereas Boethius assigns quantities to modal propositions according to the marks of quantity they bear, just as he would with non-modal propositions, the author of the SDA takes it to be Abelard's view that, strictly speaking, all modal propositions are singular, but that some of them are equipollent to universals, particulars, or indefinites. For example, from this perspective, '*possibile est omnem hominem legere*' is singular, because the subject, '*omnem hominem legere*', is a singular utterance. However, it is equipollent to a universal proposition, namely '*omnis homo potest legere*'.¹⁰⁶ It is curious that the author of the SDA attributes this view to Abelard, since it seems to clash with the latter's preference for a *de re* reading of modal statements. The sentence '*omnem hominem legere est possibile*', read *de re*, is about all men, and thus, it is universal in terms of quantification. It can only count as particular if the subject of the proposition is the expression '*omnem hominem legere*', which corresponds to the *de sensu* reading of the modal claim. As far as I can see, there are no passages

¹⁰³ Martin (2001)

¹⁰⁴ This distinction is found in Aristotle's *De Sophisticis Elenchis*. Sources from the early or mid-twelfth century tend to discuss the distinction between *de re* and *de sensu* (or *de dicto*) modal statements along with this Aristotelian distinction; in this way, the SDA is, again, consistent with texts from this period. For more on these other texts and the way in which the distinction is used in them, see Binini (2018).

¹⁰⁵ SDA 7.10

¹⁰⁶ SDA 7.12

where Abelard claims that all modal statements are singular; on the contrary, he seems to deny this claim, which only holds if a modal statement is (wrongly) expounded *de sensu*.¹⁰⁷

The author of the SDA, then, not only adopts a *de sensu* reading of modal propositions (which is at odds with Abelard's preferred *de re* reading), but also seems to ascribe a similar (or at least compatible) view to Abelard, stating that all modal propositions are singular. This puzzling stance could be explained in one of two ways. Either the author of the SDA misrepresents Abelard's views, or he is aware of some teachings of his which have not made their way to us. If the author of the SDA misrepresented Abelard's views, it could have been unknowingly (by being mistaken), or knowingly (for a yet unknown motive, such as making it appear as if someone who he regards as an authority agrees with him). Otherwise, it may be the case that he is referring to views expressed by Abelard in *viva voce* teaching or in writings which we do not possess in any extant form. If that is the case, it would be interesting to know whether this opinion would have been held by Abelard in an earlier stage of his career, or in a later stage. In any event, it is not currently possible to know whether the author of the SDA faithfully reports an Abelardian opinion or if he is misrepresenting the latter's views.

3.4.8. TREATISE EIGHT

The eighth treatise, as was mentioned before, marks the beginning of a second "volume" in the manuscript. Whereas the first seven treatises were about propositions and the elements that constitute them, the remaining treatises are about argumentations (*argumentationes*), which are complexes assembled from many propositions. It makes sense, then, that the author starts by defining the notion of argumentation, explaining what its parts are, and what types of argumentations there are.

Argumentations, writes the author, are introduced in order to provide an answer for a question. The process of disputation, which employs argumentations, has the function of investigating the truth of a proposition. There are many types of questions: some can be answered by a simple "yes" or "no", whereas other ones require more elaborate answers. As we have seen before, too, some questions are thesis questions (general and abstracted from particular circumstances), whereas others are hypothesis questions (involved in particular

¹⁰⁷ In his edition of the SDA, Pozzi only gives a reference to a passage where Abelard actually denies the view that quantified modals are to be expounded as singular, namely in LI:PH (In Geyer's edition) 487.5–25. Martin (2001, p. 118) similarly observes that Abelard denies this view, although he offers no passages in support.

circumstances). Moreover, since all questions are derived from declarative propositions, they inherit their properties of quantity and quality from those.

After dealing with questions, the author of the SDA turns to the main topic of this treatise, namely, argumentations. The parts of an argumentation are the argument (*argumentum*), and the conclusion.¹⁰⁸ What the author calls the “argument” is a set of premises which, taken together, lead to the conclusion. It is defined as “an account producing faith in a thing which is in doubt”, based on Cicero and then Boethius.¹⁰⁹ This doubt can come from many sources, including words of unknown signification, uncertain events, or a doubtful demonstration.¹¹⁰ Arguments can be necessary or non-necessary, as well as probable or non-probable, yielding four types of arguments corresponding to all of the possible combinations of these.¹¹¹ Probable arguments make it easy for the listener to accept the conclusion, whether they are always true or not, whereas necessary arguments lead to a conclusion necessarily, although it might not appear to the listener in an obvious fashion. Whereas necessary arguments are identified on the basis of a formal criterion, probable ones seem to be determined in function of a psychological criterion, namely whether they actually tend to give rise to belief in the mind of listeners.

The other part of an argumentation, the conclusion, is then examined. The author of the SDA relies on Boethius’ definition of conclusion as “a proposition proved by arguments” (*propositio adprobata argumentis*).¹¹² A conclusion is both the *extrema pars* of an argumentation and that which “gathers” the major term and the minor term from the argument (premises) while getting rid of the middle term. Conclusions have the same properties as the propositions that make them up: they can be multiple or single, affirmative or negative, and so on.

3.4.9. TREATISE NINE

After defining the parts of argumentations, the author of the SDA offers a definition for argumentations themselves:

¹⁰⁸ SDA 8.29

¹⁰⁹ SDA 8.34: “*argumentum est ratio dubie rei faciens fidem*”

¹¹⁰ SDA 8.35

¹¹¹ Namely: necessary and probable, necessary and non-probable, non-necessary and probable, non-necessary and non-probable.

¹¹² SDA 8.44

An argumentation is an expression (*oratio*) in which something is introduced in order to prove something else, as doubtful things (*dubia*) are <confirmed>¹¹³ from what is conceded, in this way: ‘every man is an animal, therefore every man is a substance’.¹¹⁴

There are various types of argumentations, among them syllogisms, enthymemes, and inductions. The “noblest (*dignior*)” is the syllogism, since it the type most efficient in establishing belief, which is the function of any argumentation.¹¹⁵ In syllogisms, the conclusion is reached necessarily, by the strength of what is conceded in the premises. An enthymeme, however, is an imperfect syllogism, since it only has one premise leading to a conclusion; as such, making an implicit assumption is needed in order to reach the conclusion.¹¹⁶ Induction, for its part, happens when we use individual cases to infer something universally, or about another particular of the same kind as those observed.¹¹⁷ But there is also another important way to classify argumentations, according to the author: they can be either complexional, or topical (*locales*). In complexional argumentations, it is the logical form of the argument that allows us to reach the conclusion, since it confers solidity (*firmitatem*) to the argumentation; syllogisms belong to this kind of argumentations exclusively.¹¹⁸ However, topical argumentations receive their force come from “some property of the terms (*ex aliqua terminorum proprietate*)”.¹¹⁹ The latter category covers what we call the *loci*. In the coming treatises, the author will address the *loci* first, and only then will he turn to syllogisms.

3.4.10. TREATISE TEN

The tenth treatise of the SDA is devoted to a discussion of topical argumentation. In large part, this discussion is what one would expect to find in a twelfth-century work, but some of its features are worth pointing out. I will thus provide an overview of the twelfth-century tradition of the topics to better assess how the SDA fits in.

In the twelfth century, texts discussing the topics are found in two main literary forms: textbooks, and commentaries. As was said before, textbooks, such as the SDA, are usually fairly elementary and, as such, do not tend to contain particularly elaborate discussions of

¹¹³ The original text has “*conformantur*”, but I believe this is a scribal mistake and that it should read “*confirmantur*”.

¹¹⁴ SDA 9.01: “*Argumentatio est oratio in qua aliquid ad aliud comprobandum inducitur tamquam ex concessis dubia conformantur hoc modo: ‘omnis homo est animal, ergo omnis homo est substantia’.*”

¹¹⁵ SDA 9.06

¹¹⁶ SDA 9.13

¹¹⁷ SDA 9.11

¹¹⁸ SDA 9.24 & 9.26

¹¹⁹ SDA 9.25

whatever authorities they cite. In contrast, commentaries, in the twelfth century, usually consist in a series of glosses on a given text, often reproducing a quote from the examined text before expounding its meaning. In this period, the commentaries which touch upon the topics are almost exclusively commentaries on Boethius' *De Topicis differentiis*, although his *In Ciceronis Topica* was also read and was indeed mentioned in textbooks. As was said earlier, there is some evidence that the author of the SDA was acquainted with *In Ciceronis Topica*, but in accordance with the custom of his time, he relies on *De topicis differentiis* for his discussion of the topics. Although Aristotle's *Topics* became available in the Latin world around 1150, not all schools taught it, and there are no extant twelfth-century commentaries on the work.¹²⁰ Thus, whether in textbooks or commentaries, twelfth-century conceptions of the topics were primarily Boethian, and the SDA is no exception.

Boethius' theory of the topics is, in turn, heavily influenced by Cicero and Themistius, himself a commentator of Aristotle. Boethius follows Cicero in defining a topic, or *locus*, as the "seat of an argument", but adds an alternative definition of a *locus* as "that from which one draws an argument appropriate to the question under consideration".¹²¹ He then adds that the seat of the argument can be understood in two ways, namely as a maxim (*maxima propositio*) or as a *differentia*.¹²² A maxim (also called a principal proposition) acts as a rule which is fundamental, known *per se*, and thus cannot be proved by something else, for example: "what belongs to the genus, also belongs to the species". A topical *differentia*, on the other hand, is drawn from the terms of the question, and it is by virtue of its *differentiae* that a maxim differs from other maxims. In our above example, the *differentia* is "from the genus". Thus, when speaking of the *loci* and of their taxonomy, Boethius refers both to their maxims and their *differentiae*.

Yet, Boethius does not merely name the *loci* according to their *differentiae* and their maxims: he classifies them according to two lists, one he attributes to Themistius, and the other, to Cicero. Both lists are organised according to three broad categories: intrinsic *loci*, extrinsic

¹²⁰ Green-Pedersen (1984), pp. 87–93.

¹²¹ Trans. Stump, p. 30. Boethius, DTD, in PL64 1174C: "*Locus autem sedes est argumenti, vel id unde ad propositam quaestionem conveniens trahitur argumentum.*" Cf. Cic. Top. 2.8: "*itaque licet definire locum esse argumenti sedem, argumentum autem rationem, quae rei dubiae faciat fidem.*" (M. Tullius Cicero. M. Tulli Ciceronis Rhetorica, Tomus II. A. S. Wilkins. Oxonii. e Typographeo Clarendoniano. 1911. Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis.)

¹²² Eleonore Stump, in her translations of Boethius' works, renders the Latin "*differentia*" by "differentia", reserving the word "*differentia*" in italics for substantial *differentiae*. In order to avoid confusion, I will follow her method here.

ones, and intermediate ones. Boethius is very brief in his explanation of each category, but he mentions that some *loci* are taken from the very terms of the question (intrinsic *loci*), whereas others are taken from outside these terms (extrinsic *loci*), and some other *loci* somehow fall in-between extrinsic and intrinsic ones (intermediate *loci*). When they use one of Boethius' lists, authors of the twelfth century use the Themistius list from Book II of *De topicis differentiis*. However, certain textbooks, especially in the first half of the century, use a peculiar, short list of *loci* which is not found in Boethius. These commentaries are also stand out because they associate the *loci* either principally or exclusively to simple hypothetical propositions, and thus they are often found along a discussion of Boethius' *De Hypotheticis syllogismis*.¹²³ Even though the exact contents of the list vary from one text to the other, Niels Jørgen Green-Pedersen identifies a few consistencies. Some *loci* are always mentioned, such as the *loci* 'from a part' and 'from a whole, although some authors speak of whole as genus and part as species, other of integral wholes and parts, and others still to both kinds of wholes and parts. The *locus* 'from an equal' (*a pari*) is almost always covered too, and many texts speak of the *loci* 'from opposites' as well as 'from immediates' (*ab immediatis*). Towards the middle of the twelfth century, however, there is a shift away from the 'short list' tradition towards the use of Boethius' Themistius list.

As Green-Pedersen remarks, some texts bear the mark of the transition from one tradition to the other, usually by relying on a version of the latter list which includes references to some of the *loci* typical of the short lists, like the *locus* 'from an equal'. Abelard's *Dialectica* is one of those texts, and I believe the SDA also falls within this category. To illustrate this, let us look at the list of *loci* presented in the SDA and examine its overlap with Boethius' and Abelard's lists.¹²⁴

Such an examination reveals that the list of *loci* found in the SDA is closer to the Themistius list found in Boethius' *De topicis differentiis* than to that of Abelard's *Dialectica*, although it does discuss ideas which are foreign to Boethius but found in Abelard as well as within works of the earlier 'short list' tradition. Under the intrinsic *loci* 'from substance', it has the *loci* 'from the definition', 'from the description', and 'from the interpretation of the name'. However, the author of the SDA also adds that the *locus* 'from an equal' (*a pari*) can be found

¹²³ Green-Pedersen (1984), p. 203.

¹²⁴ Tables with the complete lists of topics can be found in the appendix.

under the *loci* ‘from definition’ and ‘from description’.¹²⁵ The *locus* ‘from an equal’ is found both in Abelard and in texts with the ‘short list’ of *loci* but not in Boethius, although Abelard conceives of it as one of the *loci* found under the intrinsic *loci* ‘from what accompanies the substance’. Moreover, under the intrinsic *loci* ‘from what accompanies the substance’, the author of the SDA adds more types of wholes, parts, and causes than what Boethius had originally covered.¹²⁶

As for the extrinsic *loci*, the list presented in the SDA covers all of the *loci* discussed by Boethius, but some differences can be found in their treatment. For example, it does not cover the *locus* ‘from proportion’ on its own, but rather states that the *locus* ‘from what is similar’ consists in proportion. The example given is the same as Boethius’ example for his *locus* ‘from proportion’, which indicates that the author is aware of the *locus* and indeed intends for it to be subsumed under the *locus* ‘from what is similar’: “In a ship, the captain (*gubernator*) should be chosen not by lot, but by art, therefore, in ruling a state, the leader (*rector*) should be put forth not by lot, but by art.”¹²⁷ Similarly, in addition of the types of *loci* ‘from opposites’ recognized by Boethius, the author of the SDA discusses one of the types of opposites which can be found in Abelard’s *Dialectica* as well as in the ‘short list’, the *locus* ‘from immediates’. Immediate contraries (or opposites) are defined in opposition with mediated (*mediata*) ones: mediated contraries, like ‘black’ and ‘white’, are properties which are mutually exclusive but not jointly exhaustive. For example, if something is not black, it could be white, but it could also be red, or any other colour. Immediate contraries, on the other hand, are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive, like ‘healthy’ and ‘sick’: if something is not sick, it is healthy, and vice-versa. This distinction is not found in Boethius. Furthermore, the author of the SDA acknowledges Boethius’ *locus* ‘from transumption’, but states that it is not a *locus* properly speaking; rather, it is a way of proving something (*modus probationis*).¹²⁸ Similarly, while the author of the SDA agrees with Boethius in considering the *loci* ‘from inflections (*a casibus*)’ and ‘from coordinates (*a coniugatis*)’ as intermediary *loci*, he states that Boethius’ *locus* ‘from

¹²⁵ See SDA 10.76

¹²⁶ Wholes: Boethius recognizes wholes as genera as well as integral wholes. SDA adds quantitative wholes, modal wholes, temporal wholes, and wholes in location.
Parts: see wholes.

Causes: in addition to the four Aristotelian causes covered by Boethius (efficient, material, formal, final), the author of the SDA considers other types of causes and proposes a maxim for causes in general.

¹²⁷ SDA 10.68: “*in navibus non sorte, sed arte gubernator est eligendus, ergo in civitate regenda rector non sorte, sed arte est promovendus.*”

¹²⁸ SDA 10.71

division' is not an actual *locus*, but merely a way of proving something. The fact that the list of topics contained in the SDA resembles the list Boethius attributes to Themistius in his *De topicis differentiis* more than the 'short list' while still bearing marks of the latter suggests that the SDA would fit within the 'period of transition' described by Green-Pedersen. This, in turn, suggests that a date around the middle of the twelfth century rather than at the end of it is likely, as traces of the 'short list' of topics tend to disappear the later we advance in the century.¹²⁹

In addition to those in the list presented above, the SDA also discusses another type of *loci* which, instead of describing a relation (*habitus*) between terms, deal with a relation between entire propositions. Among these, the authors lists the *loci* 'from contraries', 'from subcontraries', 'from subalterns', 'from contradictories', 'from equipollents', and 'from conversion' (either *simpliciter*, by an accident, by contraposition). This is surprising for two reasons. First, neither Abelard nor Boethius discusses this kind of *loci*, and except for some rare cases, twelfth-century works dealing with the topics only cover topics as *habitudines* between terms.¹³⁰ Second, and perhaps more importantly, it is unclear how this list of *loci* meshes with the author's distinction between topical and complexional argumentations. Indeed, in 9.24, the author of the SDA follows Abelard in establishing a distinction between complexional argumentations, which are valid in virtue of their mere form, and topical argumentations, which owe their inferential force to the relation or relations that hold between their terms. Syllogisms are complexional, whereas incomplete argumentations such as enthymemes, induction, or example are said to be topical, since they need to be completed by the introduction of a suitable maxim. Given this definition, it appears odd to include the *loci* dealing with entire propositions among the topics. Rather than highlighting a relation existing between terms, they rather provide rules of inference for certain logical forms and thus do not depend on terms at all. As such, it would make more sense to conceive of them as rules for the well-formedness of arguments, which would make them belong to the domain of complexional, and not topical, argumentation.

Before moving on from the *loci*, another point needs to be discussed. In the twelfth century, commentaries on *De topicis differentiis* as well as logic textbooks discuss many issues related to the *loci*, but an especially important discussion has to do with the function of a *locus*

¹²⁹ Green-Pedersen (1984), pp. 207–208.

¹³⁰ See Green-Pedersen (1984), pp. 192–193

in argumentation. According to the standard twelfth-century view, a *locus* provides the middle term for an incomplete argument, often an enthymeme. The author of the SDA seems to adhere to this view, based on his contention that *loci* apply to incomplete argumentations rather than to complexional ones, or syllogisms. However, it adds something which is, to my knowledge, not found in other treatises of the time nor in earlier works: the distinction between maxims of confirmation (*maximae confirmationis*) and maxims of discovery (*maximae inventionis*).¹³¹ Maxims of confirmation “contain necessity” (*necessitatem continent*); by being inserted into an incomplete argumentation, they make it so that the conclusion follows necessarily from the premisses. For example, the *loci* ‘from definition’, ‘from the genus’ and ‘from formal cause’ have maxims of confirmation. Maxims of discovery, however, “only consider probability” (*probabilitatem tantum considerant*), which means that their insertion into a previously incomplete argumentation makes the latter’s conclusion probable. The maxims of the *loci* ‘from contraries’ and ‘from final cause’ are examples of maxims of discovery. The two concepts, however, are not meant to be mutually exclusive. According to the author of the SDA, although all maxims of confirmation are also maxims of discovery, the converse is not true.

This distinction is evidently based upon Boethius’ notions of necessary and plausible arguments; in *De topicis differentiis*, Boethius states that one purpose of the topics is to reveal plausible arguments, but since some of these are necessary, studying the topics can also lead someone to truth.¹³² This echoes with the above distinction from the SDA, with the difference that the role of confirming a necessary argument and the role of helping someone discover a plausible argument are attributed to the maxims rather than the arguments themselves. This is worth mentioning since, although many twelfth-century discussions of the topics discuss whether topical arguments yield necessary or probable conclusions, just as is the case in Boethius, it is not always clear whether they do so in virtue of their premises, of their form, or of both. Accordingly, the author of the SDA thinks that all *loci* yield probable conclusions, but only some of them yield conclusions that are also necessary, and that these necessary *loci* have their necessity in virtue of the nature of the maxim associated to them rather than in virtue of their form, thus differing from syllogisms.

¹³¹ SDA 10.05

¹³² Boethius, DTD 1182A–1182D

Overall, the treatment of *loci* in the SDA exhibits clear signs of Abelardian influence, although the ideas the author inherits from Abelard are not always smoothly integrated with the rest of his teachings. Indeed, the author of the SDA unequivocally adopts the distinction between categorical syllogisms and topical inferences, a distinction which he likely inherits from Abelard. Although the view will later become dominant, it seems like it remained associated with Abelard and somewhat controversial until towards the end of the century.¹³³ One text even characterises the view as an “error of the *Nominales* (*error nominalium*)”,¹³⁴ although this should be taken with a grain of salt: while it appears that the *Nominales* indeed embraced the view, they were not the only ones to do so.¹³⁵ The author of the SDA also discusses, in addition to the *loci* recognized by Boethius, some of the *loci* taken up by Abelard. However, as was mentioned above, it is not clear how our anonymous author can both hold the view that syllogisms are distinct from topical arguments based on the fact that they are valid in virtue of their logical form and not because of the relations holding between their terms, and the view that there are *loci* holding between entire propositions (i.e., the *loci* corresponding to the laws of contraposition and the relations described within the Apuleian–Aristotelian square of oppositions). Even though the author of the SDA seems ready to contradict Abelard on certain points (for example in his account of modal propositions, as was seen above), in this case, it seems that he candidly follows Abelard’s views without fully considering why he needs this distinction at all.

3.4.11. TREATISE ELEVEN

With the *loci* out of the way, the author of the SDA turns to syllogisms for the next few treatises, starting with categorical syllogisms in treatise eleven. Following Boethius’ *De Syllogismo categorico*, he divides them between the usual three figures, in accordance with the disposition of the middle term. In the first figure, the middle term is the subject of the first premise, and the predicate in the second one, as in “*omnis homo est animal, sed omne risibile est homo, ergo omne risibile est animal*”.¹³⁶ In the second figure, however, the middle term is the predicate of the first premise and the subject of the second one, for example “*omnis homo est animal, sed omne animal est corpus, ergo omnis homo est corpus*”.¹³⁷ In the case of the

¹³³ Stump (1988), pp. 127–128

¹³⁴ Anonymous, 12th century, Ms. Paris, B. Arsenal, 910, ff.58ra–82vb

¹³⁵ Green-Pedersen (1984), pp. 199–200

¹³⁶ SDA 11.02

¹³⁷ SDA 11.03

third figure, however, the middle term is the predicate in both premises, as is the case in “*omnis homo est animal sed quoddam corpus non est animal, quoddam igitur corpus non est homo*”.¹³⁸

These three figures are then subdivided in various modes, which themselves vary in function of the quality and quantity of the propositions that are put as premises. For each of the modes of each figure, the author spells out the rule allowing us to infer the conclusion from the premises. And for all modes of all figures except the four evident modes of the first figure, he shows how they are obtained from the evident modes. The last few paragraphs of the treatise are devoted to a short discussion of common fallacies, including the mixing of different tenses or modal propositions. In short, in the eleventh treatise, the author of the SDA is content with mostly reiterating what Boethius says about categorical syllogisms in his *De Syllogismo categorico*.

3.4.12. TREATISE TWELVE

Even though the author of the SDA had introduced the notion of hypothetical propositions in the third treatise, so far, his focus has been on categorical propositions and complexes built from them. In the twelfth treatise, however, he finally turns to hypothetical syllogisms. Since those are made by inserting hypothetical proposition as part of the premises, he starts by defining a hypothetical proposition:

A hypothetical proposition is that which combines (*coniungit*) many propositions or many expressions (*orationes*) having the force of a proposition in a single meaning (*sensum*) through the force of a conjunction, just like this: ‘If Socrates is a man, Socrates is an animal’, ‘Either Socrates is healthy or he is sick’.¹³⁹

He adds that hypothetical propositions are also called “conditionals” or “consequences” by some, but he prefers to use “hypothetical”.

Just like categorical propositions, hypothetical ones have a truth-value, but it is determined differently. Explicitly linking his ideas to Abelard, the author of the SDA states that hypothetical propositions are properly said to be true “in a conditional sense” only if the consequent is contained in the antecedent “by the force of the expression (*ex vi enuntiationis*)”.¹⁴⁰ For example, ‘*si est homo, est animal*’ is true, since the consequent,

¹³⁸ SDA 11.04

¹³⁹ SDA 12.01: “*Est autem ypothetica propositio que vi coniunctionis vel adverbii plures propositiones vel plures orationes vim propositionum habentes in unum sensum coniungit, velut iste: ‘Si Socrates est homo, Socrates est animal’, ‘aut Socrates est sanus aut est eger’.*”

¹⁴⁰ SDA 12.04

‘animal’, is included in ‘homo’, the antecedent (by definition). The author adds that hypotheticals of this kind are called “necessary”, but that there are also some which may be called probable, like ‘*si est homo, est risibilis*’. Indeed, the latter is not true in the conditional sense highlighted above, since the consequent is not properly included in the antecedent, but the author seems to believe it is true in the categorical sense, as if it was saying ‘*quicumque est homo, est risibilis*’ (whoever is a man, has the ability to laugh).¹⁴¹ Whereas the idea that a proper hypothetical proposition is true if and only if the antecedent contains the consequent is familiar to any reader of Abelard, the use of the phrase “*ex vi enuntiationis*” is puzzling. It is not found anywhere in Abelard’s *Dialectica* but does appear in several passages of the *Logica Ingredientibus*, most notably in the glosses on the *Isagoge* and on the *Peri hermeneias*. Abelard’s use of the expression is not always transparent, but it seems like he uses it when he wants to distinguish between matters that can be settled by looking at the syntactical or formal features of a proposition, by opposition to cases where it is necessary to examine the nature of things (*natura rerum*). For example, when Abelard discusses the two senses in which we can ask whether ‘stone’ (*lapis*) is predicable of ‘man’ (*homo*),¹⁴² he claims that ‘stone’ is predicable of man “with regards to the force of the expression (*quantum ad vim enuntiationis*), since it is properly joined to it in accordance with the rules of grammar. However, in another sense, ‘stone’ is not predicable of ‘man’, since there are no items in existence which are both a stone and a man. This latter sense of ‘predicable of’ “pertains to the nature of things (*ad rerum naturam pertinet*)” and it is with this sense that Abelard believes dialecticians (such as himself) should be concerned.

This use of “*vis enuntiationis*” to refer to the syntactical or formal features of an expression is consistent with a passage in the seventh treatise of the SDA where the quantity of modal propositions is discussed.¹⁴³ The author of the SDA writes that, according to the Boethian view, we can tell whether a modal proposition is universal, singular, indefinite, or particular “according to the mode of expressing (*secundum modum enuntiandi*)”, by looking for marks (*signa*) of quantity, just as we would for any categorical proposition. For example, “*omnem hominem esse album est possibile*” would be universal, since it contains the mark of universality ‘*omnem*’. Whether the author of the SDA agrees with this view is not clear, but

¹⁴¹ SDA 12.05

¹⁴² See LI: *Isag.* 17.12–28

¹⁴³ SDA 7.11

not important for our current purposes: what is worthy of note, here, is that the term ‘*modus enuntiandi*’ is used to refer to the formal features of an expression, just like the expression ‘*vis enuntiationis*’ in Abelard’s discussion of predication discussed above. This terminological consistency, however, should not obscure the fact that there seems to be a more substantial discrepancy of opinions between Abelard and the author of the SDA on these matters. Indeed, as we have seen from the treatment of the notion of predication in *Logica ‘Ingredientibus*’, Abelard believes that a dialectician ought to look at the nature of things (*natura rerum*) in determining whether or not something can be predicated of a subject. This concern is also perceptible in his preferred reading of modal propositions as *de re* rather than *de sensu*: as it may be recalled from the above, Abelard interprets a modal proposition such as ‘*Socratem possibile est esse episcopum*’ as making a claim about Socrates himself, and what is possible for him given his nature. He recognizes that, syntactically speaking, the grammatical subject of the sentence is ‘*esse episcopum*’, the predicate, ‘*possibile*’, and ‘*Socratem*’, a sort of determination of the subject, but he believes that, logically speaking, the genuine subject of the proposition is ‘*Socratem*’ and that ‘*esse episcopum*’ is what is predicated of him, with ‘*possibile*’ as a determination.¹⁴⁴ However, the author of the SDA adopts a *de sensu* reading of modal propositions, such that ‘*Socratem possibile est esse episcopum*’ is taken as saying that the meaning of the phrase ‘*Socratem esse episcopum*’, i.e. the state of affairs in which Socrates is a bishop, is possible. As such, the *de sensu* reading is closer to the actual syntax of modal claims.

We are now in a position to investigate what the author of the SDA has in mind when he states that genuine hypothetical propositions are true if and only if the antecedent contains the consequent “*ex vi enuntiationis*”. It seems as if this expression is meant to refer to formal or syntactical features of propositions (such as their quality or quantity), by opposition to the things in the world that they signify. However, at first glance, it is not obvious that “*ex vi enuntiationis*” should be taken in this way in the present case. Indeed, we are told that the proposition ‘*si est homo, est animal*’ has an antecedent (i.e., ‘*est homo*’) which contains the consequent (i.e., ‘*est animal*’) ‘*ex vi enuntiationis*’, whereas ‘*si est homo, est risibilitas*’ does not. One obvious difference between both cases is that ‘*animal*’ is included in ‘*homo*’ as its genus, whereas ‘*risibilitas*’ is not related to ‘*homo*’ either as its genus or its species. As the author of the SDA puts it:

¹⁴⁴ See a discussion of this in Martin (2001).

Among hypothetical propositions, although some are called true or false just as is the case among categorical propositions, some people, and especially the Philosopher,¹⁴⁵ call “true” in the conditional sense only those hypotheticals whose consequent has to be included in the antecedent specifically from the force of the expression (*ex vi proprie enuntiationis*). For example the proposition ‘*homo est*’, when it is the antecedent to ‘*animal est*’, not only because the latter follows necessarily from the former, **but also because the latter is understood in the former**, from where the hypothetical ‘*si est homo, est animal*’ is valid and true in the conditional sense.¹⁴⁶

From the passage in bold, it is manifest that one of the necessary conditions for the obtaining of a genuine hypothetical is that the consequent has to be *understood* in the antecedent. In other words, someone who understands ‘*homo*’ has no choice but to also have an understanding of ‘*animal*’, since the very definition of ‘*homo*’ is ‘rational mortal animal’; thus it is not possible for someone to understand ‘*homo*’ without also understanding ‘*animal*’. This is in some way similar to, say, the case of ‘if Peter is a bachelor, Peter is unmarried’; this would also be a conditional which is true in the conditional sense, since if anyone who understands ‘bachelor’ understands ‘unmarried’, as a bachelor is defined as a man who is unmarried yet eligible for marriage.

As well as being true or false, hypothetical propositions can be disjunctive, like “*aut est dies aut est nox*”, or connected (*connexae*), like “*si Socrates est homo, Socrates est animal*”. In the SDA, the author focuses almost only on connected hypotheticals, as they are the ones used most commonly in logic textbooks. Besides, drawing on Abelard, he brushes disjunctive propositions aside, claiming that they are not hypothetical, but that they are, instead, single (*unas*) propositions where a single subject (such as ‘*Socrates*’) is copulated to a single predicate containing a disjunction (such as ‘*rationale vel irrationale*’). Connected hypotheticals, for their part, are classified as negative or affirmative depending on the presence or absence (respectively) of a negation particle in the consequent, no matter whether the antecedent has one or not. They can also be natural (or substantial), or accidental. Natural hypotheticals show the necessary concomitance of things and are the true hypothetical statements, whereas accidental hypotheticals, which are improperly called “hypothetical”, and include all hypothetical propositions with adverbs of place, time, and other accidents, for example ‘*quando*

¹⁴⁵ Here (as in other passages of the SDA), ‘the Philosopher’ (*Philosophus*) refers to Peter Abelard.

¹⁴⁶ SDA 12.04, emphasis mine: *Harum ypotheticarum propositionum sicut et cathegoricarum, cum alie vere, alie false dicantur, quidam tamen [dicunt] et potissime Philosophus, illas solas veras ypotheticas in conditionali sensu iudicant in quarum antecedentibus consequentia ex vi proprie enuntiationis includi habent. Veluti hec propositio “homo est” ita quando antecedit ad istam “animal est” quod non solum ista ad illam necessario sequitur, sed etiam in illa intelligitur, unde hec ypothetica bona et in conditionali sensu vera est “si est homo, est animal”.*

iste est, ille est'. Hypotheticals can also be simple or composite, depending on how many categorical propositions enter their composition. A simple hypothetical contains only two categorical propositions, while a composite one is made from a hypothetical proposition and a categorical one, or from two hypotheticals.

As for the syllogisms formed from hypothetical propositions, the author of the SDA proposes an account which has elements in common with both Boethius and Abelard. As in Boethius' *De Hypotheticis syllogismis*, the various kinds of syllogisms obtained from using simple as well as complex hypotheticals as premises are exposed one by one, in a lengthy series of lists presented first with general placeholders for terms (such as 'a', 'b', or 'c'), and then with concrete examples of terms (like 'animal', 'man', 'rational'). However, rather than defining *modus ponens* and *modus tollens* separately for each possible syllogism (as Boethius does), the author of the SDA defines each rule in a general manner applicable regardless of the complexity of the hypotheticals used in the premises, as Abelard also does.¹⁴⁷ He then simply states which rule, or maxim (*maxima*), applies in each case. A further resemblance with Boethius' treatment of hypothetical syllogisms is to be found in the author's recognition that, when an antecedent and a consequent have immediate contraries as their terms, it is valid to make an argument from the affirmation of the consequent or from the negation of the antecedent. Abelard, on the other hand, does not believe that the relation of opposition between immediate contraries (or any opposition, for that matter) can warrant the truth of a conditional.¹⁴⁸ The author of the SDA agrees on this point, and proposes instead that hypotheticals containing opposites as their terms, as they are not genuine (necessary) hypotheticals, need to be expounded as categorical in order to be true. For example, '*si Socrates est sanus, non est eger*' (If Socrates is healthy, he is not sick) becomes 'Socrates is always either healthy or sick, inasmuch as there is a Socrates'.¹⁴⁹ This idea is not found in Abelard, but a similar claim is made in *Dialectica* when it is proposed that temporal hypotheticals be expounded as having a categorical sense, such that '*cum caelum rotundum est, ignis calidus est*' (when the sky is circular, fire is hot) is treated as meaning that fire is hot in the same time as the sky is circular.¹⁵⁰ In both texts, statements which appear hypothetical

¹⁴⁷ *Dial.* pp. 500–502.

¹⁴⁸ For more on this point, see Martin (2007), p. 162.

¹⁴⁹ SDA 12.06

¹⁵⁰ *Dial.* p. 485

but do not satisfy the requirements for being genuine hypotheticals are not true *qua* hypotheticals, but need to be expounded in their categorical form in order to be true.

In the end, the treatise on hypothetical propositions and syllogisms contained in the SDA remains very close to Boethius' *De Hypotheticis syllogismis*, while displaying many signs of Abelardian influence, for example the idea that, in true conditionals, the meaning of the antecedent must contain the meaning of the consequent. However, the author of the SDA, in this instance as well as many others, is perhaps not the most careful student of Abelard. Abelard's treatment of hypothetical syllogisms leads him to develop something like a notion of propositional content, reflected in the distinction between separative negation (in which the scope of the negation operator is the predicate term) and destructive negation (in which the scope of the negation operator is the whole proposition). However, the author of the SDA makes no use of this distinction in his own discussion of hypothetical syllogisms, despite using it in the third treatise which confirms not only that he is familiar with it, but also that he endorses it. However, like Abelard, the author of the SDA rejects the Boethian view that immediate contraries can warrant the truth of certain conditionals, a view Abelard rejects as a result of adopting what Chris Martin describes as a connexive logic.¹⁵¹ The result is a curious blend of Abelardian and Boethian elements which does not show much awareness of how Abelard's views supersede parts of Boethius' treatment of hypotheticals.

3.4.13. TREATISE THIRTEEN

The last treatise moves away from the topic of syllogisms and deals with division and definition. This allows the author of the SDA to treat of the three parts of dialectic he presented in 1.14, namely the science of defining, the science of dividing, and the science of argumentation, the latter of which having been his main focus so far.

On the topic of division, the author counts three philosophical uses of the term '*divisio*'.¹⁵² Real (or actual) division occurs when we separate something from something in reality, such as when we divide a loaf of bread in two parts. However, intellectual division occurs when something is separated from something else mentally or conceptually, even though it remains mixed in reality. For example, if we mix wine and water, we can't separate

¹⁵¹ Martin (2007), p. 162 & Martin (1987), pp. 432–433.

¹⁵² SDA 13.01

one from another once they have been mixed, but it is still possible to think about each liquid separately. Linguistic (*sermocinalis*) division amounts to dividing a *sermo* (a word as a unit of signification) in its different sub-categories; this is what happens when we say ‘*animal aliud est rationale, aliud irrationale*’ (among animals, some are rational, others are irrational).

Since the SDA is concerned with the teaching of dialectic, which was defined earlier as a discipline concerning *sermones*, linguistic division is bound to be the most important in this treatise. There are many types of such divisions that are treated, including the division of genus in species, of integral whole in parts, of an equivocal vox in its many meanings, of a subject in accidents, of an accident among subjects, and of an accident among other accidents that can occur concomitantly with it. All of these linguistic divisions are considered by the author to be single accidental hypothetical propositions.¹⁵³

As for definitions, the author distinguishes a definition properly speaking from a definition in an improper sense.¹⁵⁴ In the proper sense, a definition is composed of a genus and one or more *differentiae*. Improper definitions, on the other hand, can be descriptions, or a single word. A definition in the proper sense is also called a substantial definition, whereas a description can be called an accidental definition.¹⁵⁵ He then enumerates various kinds of accidental definitions, before closing the SDA. He states that, with this final treatise, he has covered the three parts of dialectic, namely defining, arguing, and dividing. The position of this treatise at the end of the SDA strikes me as odd. The author somewhat justifies it by invoking the need to look at the three aforementioned arts of dialectic, but it seems strange to leave this part until the end. Indeed, he makes a point of treating other topics in order of complexity, starting from vocal sounds to go all the way to complex hypothetical argumentations. Divisions and definitions seem like they would belong at an earlier stage of the discussion, since they are less complex than argumentations, and can be used in inferences. Moreover, the author already brings up definitions in 10.22 when discussing the *loci* from definition, showing that it would have indeed been more coherent to address this topic earlier. However, there are no clues that this last treatise was added or not originally planned as part of the SDA, so this might well be just an oversight from the author. It is also possible that he was following an order similar to that of Abelard’s *Dialectica*, which also has as its last section

¹⁵³ SDA 13.16

¹⁵⁴ SDA 13.18

¹⁵⁵ SDA 13.21

the discussion of definitions and divisions. However, that is not to say that the order of topics presented in the SDA is identical to that of the *Dialectica*: one important difference between the two is that Abelard, in the *Dialectica*, deals with categorical syllogisms before getting to the discussion on the topics, whereas the reverse order is found in the SDA.

3.5. DISCUSSION AND CLOSING REMARKS

Taken on its own, the SDA does what it sets out to do, which is to provide a basic teaching of the arts of dialectic, namely the art of argumentation, the art of division, and the art of definition. As such, it does not present any new, ground-breaking ideas. The focus is on grammar and logic, leaving any metaphysical discussions aside. However, the simplicity of its teachings does not mean that the text is devoid of interest. Indeed, it is useful to us as historians of philosophy, to understand what ideas of Abelard were picked up by his followers, and what a twelfth-century “Abelardian” approach to teaching logic could look like. As Abelard did, the SDA expounds logical notions with as little reference to *res* as possible, preferring explanations which emphasize psychological or linguistic elements. The SDA’s focus on psychology and language will be discussed below.

3.5.1. A “PSYCHOLOGICAL SHIFT”?

During the question period of a recent colloquium talk by Irène Rosier-Catach, Dominik Perler suggested that the importance and originality of Abelard’s thought may lie, in part, in the fact that he operated a “psychological shift” in his way of thinking about semantics and logic, to which Irène Rosier-Catach agreed, highlighting the role of the notion of *attentio*.¹⁵⁶ Rosier-Catach and Perler held that Abelard’s originality may lie less with his metaphysical positions and more with his elaboration of complex psychological notions which are then used as part of metaphysical discussions.¹⁵⁷

While the notion of *attentio* itself is conspicuously absent from the SDA, the latter work nevertheless shows an affinity for Abelard-like psychological explanations in other ways, especially in its discussion of the properties of expressions (*orationes*). According to the author

¹⁵⁶ Rosier-Catach (2020)

¹⁵⁷ The idea of a “psychological shift”, it seems to me, should not be taken to mean that authors anterior to Abelard did not incorporate psychological elements in their discussions of logic and metaphysics. However, it captures the way in which Abelard defined and used elaborate psychological explanations in discussions on matters of ontology and semantics, for example through his theory of understandings.

of the SDA, an expression, to be considered perfect (or complete), needs to give rise to a complete, uninterrupted understanding in the mind of the hearer. As we saw, if the mind of the hearer is left “suspended”, expecting more, then the expression is incomplete. As this is a criterion taken from Boethius and quite commonly used at the time, its presence, on its own, does not tell us much. However, the author of the SDA invokes a notion which is novel and peculiar to Abelard: the idea of institution (*institutio*), which is closely linked with the intention of the speakers of a language. On its own, the suspension criterion might only describe a way to recognize which expressions are perfect and which ones are imperfect, but it does not explain *why* certain expressions are perfect while others are not. The notion of institution allows us to fill this gap: the reason why certain expressions, uttered on their own, feel complete to the ears of a hearer and some feel incomplete is to be found in the intention behind their institution. Only an expression which was meant to be used on its own to express a full meaning will leave the mind of a hearer satisfied. The author of the SDA uses this notion, although in a less detailed way than Abelard. However, its sole presence suggests a focus on the psychology not only of the hearer of an expression, but also of the speakers of the language in which this expression is formulated. Most importantly, it shows that the author of the SDA has gone beyond what was found in Boethius by picking up Abelard’s innovative notion of imposition, a key part of the elaborate psychological framework which warrants speaking of a “psychological shift”.

In a similar manner, the criterion for determining whether an expression is single or multiple is a psychological one. If an expression is said without interruption in such a way that it produces a full understanding in the mind of the hearer, it is single. However, if it produces more than one full understanding, whether it is because there was an interruption in the utterance or not, the expression is multiple. As was highlighted above, Abelard is known to have held, in the *Dialectica* and the *Logica ‘Ingredientibus’*, the position that the unicity or multiplicity of a proposition is to be determined by the unity or multiplicity of the thing or things it is about; however, by the time of *De intellectibus*, he operates a “psychological shift” and opts for criteria that only pertain to the understanding of the hearer. It seems like the author of the SDA, at least with regards to the perfection/imperfection and multiplicity/unicity of expressions, has followed Abelard in taking this turn.

3.5.2. A LANGUAGE-FOCUSED APPROACH TO LOGIC?

As was discussed in the first chapter, Marenbon defines a language-focused approach to logic as characterised not only by the treatment of the *Categories* and the *Isagoge* as being

about words, but also by the claim that the subject-matter of logic is words rather than things, but not just any kind of words: the kind of words which are about other words (which some would say belong to a “second-order language”).¹⁵⁸ The SDA seems to fit this description quite well. First, it states in many places that the subject-matter of logic is words, or *sermones*. Recall that, in 1.10, when he examines the question of the origin of the name “dialectic” (*dialectica*) and how it relates to “logic” (*loica* or *loyca*), he states that both are one and the same art, which is defined through the fact that it deals specifically with linguistic entities (in 1.10, he mentions *dicta*, *sermones*, and *locutiones*).¹⁵⁹ Here as in other places, the author is clear about the fact that, for him, logic (or dialectic) is about words. However, this, on its own, is not especially telling. Indeed, in treatise one, the author heavily draws upon sources like Boethius’ *De Syllogismis categoricis* to explain the nature, subject-matter, and aim of dialectic. Since logic is the science of argumentation, and argumentation is conducted by using words, it is not especially noteworthy that the author of the SDA defines logic as dealing with words. However, what is noteworthy is the way he speaks of Porphyry’s five predicables in the second treatise, where he states that genera, species, *differentia*, *propria* and accidents are *sermones*, i.e., words.

When considering the traditional question whether Porphyry’s five predicables are names of things or names of names, the author of the SDA expounds the words of “the philosophers” in a way which allows him to conclude that they, as he does himself, consider them as names of names rather than as names of things. The expression “the philosophers”, in this context, seems to refer to Porphyry, Priscian, and Boethius, as they are brought up earlier in the same discussion. The issue, it seems, is that the way these authorities write seem to indicate that they consider the predicables as names of things. Indeed, as the author of the SDA reports, Porphyry as well as Priscian and Boethius seem to consider that ‘species’ is the name of the kind (*maneria*) itself; for example, ‘beauty’ (*pulchretudine*) names beauty, and ‘ox’ in “an ox is useful for ploughing” refers to the ox-kind.¹⁶⁰ In contrast, the author of the SDA believes that the predicables are names of names, but instead of going against the authorities, he rather finds a way to reconcile the authoritative texts with his own views:

However, although the aforementioned names (*i.e.*, the five predicables) are thus used by philosophers in the description of things, nevertheless, because they are said to be predicated, they should be transferred (*translata*) to *sermones* themselves, since to be predicated is proper to *sermones*, certainly not to things. Wherefor rules have been given by

¹⁵⁸ Marenbon (2011)

¹⁵⁹ See above, section 3.4.1.2.

¹⁶⁰ SDA 2.19

philosophers for the predication of terms which are *sermones*, for example this one: if something is predicated of something universally and something else is made the subject to a subject universally, the major term is predicated of the minor universally, and similarly for the others. Therefore, according to philosophers, it is terms, properly speaking, which have to be predicated and put as subjects, since the rules of predication have been given by them not in things, but, above all, in terms. Therefore, we affirm that genera, species, *differentiae*, *propria* or accidents are, without a doubt, *sermones*.¹⁶¹

The author's reasoning is not entirely transparent here, which is in large part due to his use of the term '*translata*'. Although this term has a technical use in Boethius as well as Abelard,¹⁶² the author seems to use it here in the more general sense of "transferred" or "carried over". According to our author, then, the old authorities speak of the five predicables as if they were in the domain of things, but truly they belong to the domain of language, and should be spoken of as belonging to the domain of *sermones* in keeping consistent with their teachings about predication. To support this reading, he provides examples from Aristotle and Boethius' writings where they explicitly hold that only words can be predicated (and thus, predicable),¹⁶³ and that the five predicables are names of names (*nomina nominum*).¹⁶⁴ In both cases (Porphyry's predicables and Aristotle's notion of substance), the argument given by the author for his interpretation is that something which is said to signify something else has to be a *sermo* rather than a thing, since it is only *sermones* which have the power to signify, whereas things can only be signified. Besides, since these terms can be used in definitions and definitions are made of *sermones*, it follows that they must be *sermones*.¹⁶⁵ From this evidence, he concludes that "it is made very clear by this and the testimonies of other philosophers that genera, species, individuals, *differentiae* and properties are said to be *sermones*."¹⁶⁶

In addition to the fulfilment of the two criteria proposed by Marenbon, another feature of the SDA seems to indicate that the author adopts a language-focused approach to logic: when discussing certain types of propositions, the author (just like Abelard did) opts for

¹⁶¹ SDA 2.20: "*Verumtamen cum ita predicta nomina in rerum designatione accipiantur a philosophis, tamen iuxta illud quod predicari dicuntur, ad ipsos sermones translata fuerint, cum sermonum sit proprie predicari non equidem rerum. Quare regule predicationum in terminis qui sunt sermones a philosophis date fuerunt ut ista: si aliquid predicatur de aliquo universaliter et aliud subicitur subiecto universaliter, maior terminus predicatur de minori universaliter, sic et relique similes. Habent ergo termini predicari et subici iuxta philosophos proprie, cum non in rebus sed imprimis terminis predicationum regule ab ipsis sint date. Itaque sermones indubitanter esse genera vel species seu individua vel differentia, propria, vel accidentia affirmamus.*"

¹⁶² For a discussion of the technical notion of *translatio* as it appears in Boethius and Abelard, see Martin (2011).

¹⁶³ Various passages from Aristotle's discussion of substance in the *Categories*; see SDA 2.21.

¹⁶⁴ DTD 1186B–C; see SDA 2.14 & 2.22 for genus and species, and 2.17 for *differentia*, *proprium*, and accident.

¹⁶⁵ SDA 2.23

¹⁶⁶ SDA 2.23: "*His igitur et aliorum philosophorum testimoniis sermones dici genera et species seu individua, differentie, propria vel accidentia patentissime liquet.*"

explanations on the level of language, and he seems to go to great lengths to keep things (*res*) out of the discussion, preferring to focus on syntax and grammatical form. For example, the author of the SDA teaches that the quantity of a proposition is determined not in function of the *res* which constitute the extension of the subject, but in function of the marks of quantity (*signa quantitatis*) contained in the proposition. For this reason, as was shown above, propositions about fictional entities have a quantity in the same way as any other proposition: ‘every chimera is an animal’ is a universal proposition just as ‘every man is an animal’, because of the presence of the mark of universality ‘every’.¹⁶⁷

Moreover, when considering modal statements, the author of the SDA opts for a *de sensu* reading without even considering the *de re* reading. As was mentioned before, this is a rare instance in which the author of the SDA goes against Abelardian teachings as Abelard prefers that modal claims be expounded *de re*, at least based on what we know from the *Dialectica* and the *Logica ‘Ingredientibus’*. As was mentioned before, the SDA’s reliance on a *de sensu* interpretation of modal propositions is puzzling, given that its author is otherwise very intent on deferring to Abelard. To add to this, it seems like the author of the SDA is aware of the problems of the *de sensu* reading identified by Abelard, namely that the usual rules of conversion do not seem to hold if modal statements are expounded *de sensu* whereas they work as intended under the *de re* interpretation.¹⁶⁸ The SDA contains no attempt to directly answer Abelard’s objections to the *de re* reading of modal propositions. Rather, the author’s move is simply to state that even though these rules apply in general, they do not apply in all cases.¹⁶⁹ As Chris Martin points out, there are no signs indicating that the *Nominales* adopted Abelard’s view (or rejected it, for that matter) on the proper interpretation of modal claims.¹⁷⁰ If my dating is correct, the SDA would be too early to be the product of the school of the *Nominales*. However, it may indicate that followers of Abelard could have rejected Abelard’s account of modal propositions, at least in part. In any case, even though the *de sensu* interpretation of modal propositions is subject to significant logical difficulties which are circumvented by adopting a *de re* reading, it looks like at least one follower of Abelard stuck with it. It is hard to see what the benefit of such an approach is. However, it does look as if the *de sensu* interpretation is useful for someone who treats logic in a language-focused way, as it allows

¹⁶⁷ See SDA 4.12

¹⁶⁸ For more on this topic, see Martin (2001), especially pp. 118–121.

¹⁶⁹ See SDA 7.44, for example.

¹⁷⁰ Martin (2001), p. 116.

the author to expound modal statements in accordance with their syntactic form rather than the things they are about. Yet again, the student can understand logical notions and manipulate them without needing to turn their gaze to the world of things. What emerges is that the author of the SDA prefers to explain logical notions without referring to things whenever possible, instead preferring explanations on the linguistic or psychological level.

3.5.3. SDA AND THE *NOMINALES*

Although a language-focused approach to logic can often be found without elaborate metaphysical arguments invalidating the possibility of the existence of universals, it nevertheless usually carries some metaphysical implications. As John Marenbon puts it, “[i]f one can explain everything that is said about genera and species (and accidents and parts) without supposing that there are any such things in reality, why would one suppose that they really existed?”¹⁷¹ In the case of the SDA, it indeed seems as if the author adopted a language-focused approach to logic which is loaded with certain metaphysical positions, including the claim that genera and species are *sermones*. This is likely what led Chris Martin to regard the SDA as a work from the school of the *Nominales*.¹⁷² Despite the fact that the SDA contains no expression of allegiance to a given school, there are a few passages which indicate that its author was committed to at least a few theses associated with the *Nominales*, most notably the theses that universals such as genus and species are names,¹⁷³ and that the argumentative *loci* play no role in syllogisms. The latter thesis, discussed in the ninth and tenth treatises, is referred to as an “error of the *Nominales* (*error nominalium*)” in a commentary on Boethius’ *De topicis differentiis*.¹⁷⁴ The thesis about universals being names, however, is not defended explicitly in the SDA, for example by proving that there cannot be actual, existing universal things outside of the mind. In any case, such a demonstration would go beyond what the SDA is trying to accomplish as a simple introductory logic manual. However, the discussions from the second treatise (see above) where he argues that Porphyry’s predicables are names of names point in this direction, as it is opposed to theses ascribed to the *Reales*—adversaries of the *Nominales*—

¹⁷¹ Marenbon (2011), p. 213.

¹⁷² Martin (2001), p. 116.

¹⁷³ Cf. thesis 1 in PN.

¹⁷⁴ Ms Paris, B. Arsenal, 910, ff. 58ra–82vb. Often referred to as the “*Haec est*” commentary on *De topicis differentiis*. Appears as B.13 in Green-Pedersen (1984).

such as the thesis that genera and species are things rather than names, and that in predication it is things which are predicated of other things.¹⁷⁵

Despite these parallels, however, the conclusion that the SDA is a work from the school of the *Nominales* seems premature. There are no mentions or signs indicating that the author belonged to a school, let alone that of the *Nominales*. The author of the SDA is, of course, a nominalist in the sense defined in Chapter 1 as well as a follower of Abelard, but these do not constitute sufficient conditions for being a *Nominales*. Moreover, there are no signs that the author adhered to some of the theses most often associated with the *Nominales*, for example the thesis that nothing grows (*nihil crescit*)¹⁷⁶ and that what is true once will always be true (*Semel est verum semper erit verum*).¹⁷⁷ The SDA could be a product of the school of the *Nominales*, but there is no compelling reason to assume that it is. On the contrary, if my dating is correct and the SDA indeed was written before Abelard's death (or just shortly after), it is implausible that the SDA is a work of the *Nominales*, as the term "*Nominales*" seems to refer to a group of people active in the third quarter of the twelfth century up until an undetermined point of the fourth quarter, but surely not before 1140.¹⁷⁸ Again, this highlights the importance of being precise in distinguishing between *Nominales* and nominalists.

¹⁷⁵ See Ebbesen (1992) p. 65.

¹⁷⁶ Iwakuma & Ebbesen (1992). See sources 27, 37, 48c, 53, and 70.

¹⁷⁷ Iwakuma & Ebbesen (1992). See sources 44a, 46, 50a–b, 51a, 52d, 62d, 64a, 64c, and 70.

¹⁷⁸ Courtenay (1992), p. 3

Chapter 4: The Anonymous d'Orvillensis Commentary on the Categories: A Tale of Two Schools¹

4.1. INTRODUCTION

While the *Summa dialetice artis* (SDA) constitutes a fairly elementary introduction to twelfth-century logic, the later *Anonymus d'Orvillensis* represents another type of logical work commonly encountered at the time: a commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*. Although it contains no explicit reference to any master or school, it is traditionally regarded as a text closely linked to the school of the *Nominales*.² Besides, it shares some important similarities with other texts associated with twelfth-century nominalism, such a language-focused reading of Aristotle's *Categories*.³ As such, the study of this text constitutes an appropriate follow-up to our study of the SDA.

The idea that the anonymous *D'Orvillensis* commentary on the Categories was written by an author attached to the school of the *Nominales* has been defended by Sten Ebbesen in his edition of the text.⁴ While I do agree that there are elements of the commentary which align with the views of the *Nominales*, I believe that there are also passages which cast legitimate doubt on the attribution. The aim of the current study is therefore to examine the evidence for and against Ebbesen's attribution. In doing so, I will be led to explore the resemblance of the views expressed in *D'Orvillensis* with those of another school, namely the *Porretani*. The link between *D'Orvillensis* and Abelardian texts will also be examined, as Abelard is now largely considered to be the *Princeps Nominalium*, a sort of philosophical forefather for the *Nominales*, even though the intricacies of this relationship still need to be fleshed out.⁵ It is worth noting that my objective is not to argue *against* Ebbesen's position; to a certain extent, I am building upon his work and strengthening some of his arguments, while also casting doubts on other parts of his treatment of *D'Orvillensis*.

Before looking into the contents of *D'Orvillensis* in more detail, I will offer a basic overview of the main features of the text as well as its dating. I will then go over the main

¹ All translations contained in this chapter are mine unless stated otherwise.

² See Ebbesen (1991).

³ See chapter 1, section 1.2.3.

⁴ See Ebbesen (1999).

⁵ For a discussion of the textual evidence linking the *Nominales* with Abelard, see Normore (1992) pp. 81–82.

arguments presented by Ebbesen for his conclusion that the author of the text is a *Nominalis*: these arguments look at the mereological views expressed in *D'Orvillensis*, at the thesis that nothing grows, and at the author's views on predication. I then add a few more considerations regarding two aspects of the text: the Porretan-like thesis that no form inheres in a form (which is highlighted by Ebbesen but not pursued further), and the presence of a vocabulary which bears some resemblance to SDA and Abelardian works. I conclude by assessing what this means for the authorship of the text, and by drawing some general conclusions about what this case tells us about some broader issues regarding the study of twelfth-century nominalism.

4.2. THE *D'ORVILLE* MANUSCRIPT

According to Ebbesen, the most likely date for the manuscript would be around 1200; moreover, the presence of substantial changes to the text which cannot be mere copy mistakes, as well as marks of reorganization of the text, suggest that the manuscript has been revised by the author himself and, thus, that the manuscript itself is roughly contemporary to its date of composition.⁶ Ebbesen notes that the text looks like lecture materials, most notably because it contains several passages where the author announces that he will leave a certain question for *disputatio*, which suggests separate sessions were reserved to *lectio* and *disputatio*. Moreover, there are several instances in which the author uses the second person plural, as if he was addressing a group of students. In terms of the intellectual milieu of the author, Ebbesen concludes that the manner of teaching suggested by the text points towards a twelfth-century Parisian context.

4.3. AUTHORSHIP OF *D'ORVILLENSIS*: EBBESEN'S OPINION

The view put forward by Ebbesen as to the authorship of the manuscript has two components: (1) that the author of *d'Orvillensis* belongs to a twelfth-century school, and (2) that this school is that of the *Nominales*. His main reason for believing (1) is that the author routinely uses the first-person plural in a way that seems to indicate belonging to a school. For example, he regularly uses "*dicimus*" or "*nos dicimus*" when introducing a preferred view, and he uses formulations like "*nostra positione*".⁷ I believe Ebbesen is correct. What is more contentious is his defence of (2). He proposes three main reasons to support this view: (2.1) the

⁶ Ebbesen (1999), pp. 233–237.

⁷ See Ebbesen (1999), pp. 237–238 for examples of such occurrences.

presence of the *Nihil crescit* thesis, (2.2) the reliance on a seemingly nominalist mereology, and (2.3) the view of predication as a relation between linguistic entities and not things. Each of these deserves to be examined on its own.

4.3.1. *NIHIL CRESCIT*

Ebbesen's first and perhaps strongest reason for believing that the author of *d'Orvillensis* is a *Nominalis* is that, in a few passages, he adopts views that are extremely close to the (in)famous *nominalis* thesis that nothing grows ("*nihil crescit*"). This thesis is ascribed to the *Nominales* in several texts from the mid-twelfth century to the thirteenth century.⁸ Along with the thesis "What is true once will always be true (*Semel est verum semper erit verum*)",⁹ it is the thesis which most commonly comes up in association with the *Nominales*, at least given the sources we currently possess. Notably, the thesis that nothing grows is also found in the text Ebbesen has baptised "*Positiones Nominalium*". He takes the presence of this thesis, among others, as a sign that the latter text was a nominalist work.¹⁰

The passages of *D'Orvillensis* that Ebbesen associates with the *nihil crescit* thesis are as follows:

(3rA) Also, it is objected to us, who say that Socrates will be nothing which he currently is if a certain part is added to him or subtracted, in this way: [...] ¹¹

(21rB) It seems to be possible to introduce an *instantia* to this rule, according to us, who say that every removal of a part and every addition and every rearranging of a part changes the essence of the whole. ¹²

To understand the link between these passages and the *nihil crescit* thesis, it is useful to examine in what form the thesis occurs in another important work, namely the aforementioned *Positiones Nominalium*. In the latter work, the thesis appears in these words: "Thirdly, we disagree with what is proposed by Aristotle in the book On Generation, that something is

⁸ Iwakuma & Ebbesen (1992). See sources 27, 37, 48c, 53, and 70.

⁹ Iwakuma & Ebbesen (1992). See sources 44a, 46, 50a–b, 51a, 52d, 62d, 64a, 64c, and 70.

¹⁰ *Positiones Nominalium* (PN) is a short text edited by Ebbesen in CIMAGL 61, from MS Vat. Lat. 7678, ff. 88rA–B (see bibliography). It is thought to be from the early thirteenth century, which would likely make it either contemporary or slightly posterior to the anonymous *D'Orvillensis* commentary. It lists seventeen theses held by a school unnamed in the manuscript, but which Ebbesen identifies to that of the *Nominales*, since the author contrasts the views of his school to those of the *reales* (see thesis 1), and holds some views which are known for being commonly attributed to the *Nominales*. The text is unfortunately incomplete: the list of theses seems to be present in its entirety, but the text only lists the *rationes* for the first four theses.

¹¹ AO, p. 267: "*Item nobis, qui dicimus quod nihil erit Socrates quod modo sit si aliqua pars ei addatur vel subtrahatur, sic obicitur: [...]*"

¹² AO, p. 397: "*Huic regulae videtur posse induci instantia possibilis secundum nos, qui dicimus quod omnis demptio partis et omnis additio et omnis partium transpositio variat essentiam totius.*"

increased.”¹³ It is then explained in the following way: “With regards to the third reason, in this way: in the book *On Generation*, increase is described such that an increase is an addition to a pre-existing magnitude; but there is no <addition to> a pre-existing magnitude in a compound item (*complexionato*) etc.”¹⁴ The idea of growth is, in both cases, expressed in terms of an addition of parts.

Other passages beyond those identified by Ebbesen seem to further support his view. For example, it is worth looking at what comes after the quoted passage from 3rA:

(3rA) Also, it is objected to us, who say that Socrates will be nothing which he currently is if a certain part is added to it or subtracted, in this way: risibility is in this man, nothing is this man which will be this man tomorrow, and this risibility will be tomorrow, therefore [this risibility] will be in nothing in the way that it is [now], therefore it is not in man as in the subject.

To this, it can be replied that **this risibility is in man as in the subject, not in the essence of man but in the person**, although the person is the same as the essence, nevertheless one thing agrees with the person and another one with the essence. But it is said, more accurately, that **risibility is in man as in the subject in a confused way (*confuse*)**, not this risibility, but a certain one, and tomorrow a certain one will be in this man as in the subject.¹⁵

There are two things worth noting in this passage: the use of the distinction between essence and person, and the idea that the ability to laugh (*risibilitas*) is in a human being as in the subject, but “in a confused way”.

The distinction between essence and person is explicitly associated with the *Nominales*, for example in Peter the Chanter’s *Summa de sacramentis et animae consiliis* and in Godfrey of Poitiers’ *Summa*.¹⁶ The distinction is used, among other things, as a way to explain the seemingly implausible thesis that nothing grows, since it allows the *Nominales* to claim that, although Socrates-*qua*-person can be said to grow, it is nevertheless not the case that Socrates-*qua*-essence (or substance) grows.¹⁷ Thus, in our ordinary way of speaking, it is correct for us to say that a person grows, but it is still not true that a substance can grow: rather, any change from a state *x* to a state *y* means that the substance in *x* was destroyed, and that a new substance

¹³ PN, p. 431: “Tertio dissentimus Aristoteli proponenti in libro *De Generatione* aliquid augmentari.”

¹⁴ PN, p. 432: “Ad tertiam rationem sic: Augmentum in libro *de Generatione* sic describitur quod augmentum est praeexistentis magnitudinis additamentum; sed in nullo complexionato est praeexistentis magnitudinis etc.”

¹⁵ AO, p. 267, emphasis mine: “Item nobis, qui dicimus quod nihil erit Socrates quod modo sit si aliqua pars ei addatur vel subtrahatur, sic obicitur: Risibilitas est in hoc homine, nihil est hic homo quod cras erit hic homo, et haec risibilitas cras erit, ergo in nullo erit in quo modo sit, ergo non est in homine ut in subiecto.

Ad hoc dici potest quod **haec risibilitas est in homine ut in subiecto, non in essentia hominis sed in persona**, licet idem sit persona quod essentia, tamen aliud convenit personae et aliud essentiae. Vel dicatur melius quod **risibilitas confuse est in homine ut in subiecto**, non haec risibilitas, sed quaedam, et cras quaedam erit in hoc homine ut in subiecto.”

¹⁶ See 33a–b and 48d (respectively) in Iwakuma & Ebbesen (1992).

¹⁷ See Martin (1998).

was generated in *y*. Similarly, this distinction allows the author of *D'Orvillensis* to claim that the ability to laugh is found in a given man as in the subject, even though this man's essence (or substance) is not the same as the essence of the man that will be tomorrow; rather, the ability to laugh is in him as a person.

The author of *D'Orvillensis* seems to accept this view, although it is not the one he finds most accurate. Instead, he expresses preference for the view that the ability to laugh is in a man as in the subject, but “in a confused way”. This way of speaking is reminiscent of the way Abelard speaks of the mental images associated with universal terms as “confused” (by opposition to personal or discrete) in several passages of *Logica 'Ingredientibus'*. Take this passage as an example:

Now that we have seen the nature of understandings in general, let us distinguish the understandings for universals and singulars. They are divided from one another insofar as **the understanding that goes with a universal name conceives a common and confused image of many things**. But the understanding a singular word generates comprises the proper and so to speak “singular” form of one thing – that is, a form related to one “person” only. Thus when I hear ‘man’, a kind of model rises up in my mind that is related to single men in such a way that it is common to all of them and proper to none. But when I hear ‘Socrates’, a certain form rises up in my mind that expresses the likeness of a certain person. Hence by the word ‘Socrates’, which produces in the mind the proper form of one person, a certain thing is picked out and determined. **But with the word ‘man’, the understanding of which depends on the common form of all men, that very community produces a “confusion” so that we do not understand any one form among them all.**¹⁸

Later in the same text, Abelard uses the term ‘bare’ (*nudis*) to describe this special feature of the understandings associated with universal names, i.e. that they do not pick out any single thing.¹⁹ Similarly, in the *Logica 'Nostrorum petitioni sociorum'*, a text which was likely not written by Abelard himself but certainly by a close follower and based on Abelard's lectures, understandings are described as ‘bare’ if they lack “personal discretion” (*a personali discretionem*), in other words if they are “not attending to a thing as discrete” (*non attendentes rem ut discretam*).²⁰ It therefore seems like, in the Abelardian tradition, an understanding which

¹⁸ LI: *Isag.* 21.27–22.1, trans. Spade, emphasis mine: “Nunc autem natura intellectuum generaliter inspecta universalium et singularium intellectus distinguamus. Qui quidem in eo dividuntur, quod **ille qui universalis nominis est, communem et confusam imaginem multorum concipit**, ille uero quem vox singularis generat, propriam unius et quasi singularem formam tenet, hoc est ad unam tantum personam se habentem. Unde cum audio 'homo', quoddam instar in animo surgit, quod ad singulos homines sic se habet ut omnium sit commune et nullius proprium. Cum autem audio 'Socrates' forma quaedam in animo surgit quae certae personae similitudinem exprimit. Unde per hoc vocabulum quod est 'Socrates' quod propriam unius formam ingerit in animo, res quaedam certificatur et determinatur, **per 'homo' uero cuius intelligentia in communi forma omnium nititur, ipsa communitas confusioni est ne quem ex omnibus intelligamus.**”

¹⁹ LI: *Isag.* 27.29–34

²⁰ LNPS, p. 526.

does not pick out a specific thing, but merely a thing of a certain sort, would be called either confused or bare.

In a similar way, the author of *D'Orvillensis* uses the adverb ‘*confuse*’ to explain that it is possible to say that *risibilitas* is in man as in the subject, with the proviso that this is only true if we take *risibilitas* “in a confused way”, that is to say, if we speak not of one given particular *risibilitas* (with “personal discretion”), but rather of a *risibilitas* in the general sense, without distinction of any individual. Whereas Abelard used this term to indicate a special feature of mental images associated with universals, the author of *D'Orvillensis* seems to have the same basic idea, i.e., the idea of referring to a thing of a certain type without marking any given individual, but he applies it to a way of speaking about forms as they occur in things. In other words, when it is said that *risibilitas* is in Socrates as in the subject, it means that Socrates possesses a *risibilitas* today and will possess a different one at a later time, and nevertheless it is true that, speaking in a “confused way”, he has a *risibilitas* all along. The author of *D'Orvillensis* seems to simply accept that, every time the substance changes, it becomes informed by new forms, albeit forms of the same kind. This use of ‘*confuse*’, along with the use of the distinction between essence and person, further reinforces the impression that the author of *D'Orvillensis* has strong ties to the *Nominales*, at least intellectually.

4.3.2. MEREOLGY

In the commentary to his edition of *D'Orvillensis*, Ebbesen highlights two passages which, in his words, may indicate the author’s reliance on “nominalist mereology”:

(7vA) [W]e say that a number is a collection of units, i.e. a number is something put together from collected units. And that it should be expounded in this way is made clear by this authority (*auctoritas*), because if we were to say in this way “A number is a collection of units”, therefore this collection of units one of which one inheres in Socrates, the other in the foot of Socrates, is a number; but every number is in something or in some things; but it will not be assigned in which [one] or in which [ones] this number inheres according to us, who **do not concede the counting-together (*connumeratio*) between part and whole except in *voces*.**²¹

(8rB) Some say that a line is made from infinite points. **Others that it is made from finite points, and to this meaning we ourselves provide our assent.** But here we refrain [from

²¹ AO p. 304: “[...] *dicimus quod numerus est collectio unitatum, i.e. numerus est quiddam constans ex unitatibus collectis. Et quod ita exponenda sit illa auctoritas patet, quia si sic dicamus “Numerus est collectio unitatum”, ergo ista collectio unitatum quarum una inest Socrati, alia pedi Socratis, est numerus; sed omnis numerus est in aliquo vel in aliquibus; cui autem vel quibus ille numerus insit non erit assignare secundum nos, qui non concedimus connumerationem inter partem et totum nisi in vocibus.*”

providing] the reasons (*rationes*) which are against us and which are made in our favour [...].²²

However, Ebbesen provides no further explanation of how he reads these passages. I will propose an interpretation of what he could have meant by this claim, before I offer an evaluation of the evidence he provides in its favour.

4.3.2.1. What does Ebbesen mean by “nominalist mereology”?

Since Ebbesen gives no indication as to what makes a mereology “nominalist”, a natural reflex, given that *Nominales* are often seen as Abelard’s intellectual successors, is to look at the latter’s theory of wholes and parts. Abelard’s position, developed in several passages throughout the *Dialectica*, is that wholes are nothing above and beyond their parts. Given that William of Ockham, often regarded as the standard bearer of medieval nominalism, holds a similar view,²³ it is reasonable to take this thesis as expressing a form of nominalist mereology. Another key aspect of Abelard’s theory of wholes and parts is what Arlig calls “mereological rigidity”, namely the idea that a whole cannot survive the destruction or removal of a part.²⁴ As he points out, the *nihil crescit* thesis constitutes a strong form of this view, since it rests on the idea that any change in a part entails a change in identity or, perhaps more accurately, the corruption of the previous whole followed by the generation of a new whole in its stead.²⁵

However, to better evaluate whether the passages Ebbesen has identified corroborate the thesis that the D’Orville manuscript was composed by a *Nominalis*, another point of view should be examined. In some passages, as Ebbesen notes – but more on that later – the author of *D’Orvillensis* expresses ideas that are reminiscent of some theses contained in the *Compendium logicae Porretanum* (henceforth ‘CLP’), a manual of logic of the latter half of the twelfth century which is attached to the school of the *Porretani*, the followers of Gilbert de Poitiers.²⁶ Therefore, it makes sense to look at what is said in the CLP regarding wholes and parts, to see whether it better matches the views expressed in the *D’Orvillensis*. Two theses from CLP are especially useful for this purpose, namely III.10 (*Omne totum est aliud a sua*

²² AO, p. 309, emphasis mine: “*Alii dicunt quod linea constat ex infinitis punctis. Alii quod **constat ex finitis punctis, et huic sententiae nos preferemus assensum. Sed rationibus quae contra nos sunt et quae nobiscum faciunt hic supersedemus [...].***”

²³ See Arlig (2012), p. 453.

²⁴ Arlig (2012), pp. 453–455.

²⁵ Arlig (2012), p. 454.

²⁶ An edition of the CLP can be found in Ebbesen, Fredborg & Nielsen (1983).

parte) and III.11 (*Nulla pars est aliud a suo toto*). These theses are explained in the following way:

But since something is a substantial <form> of some whole which <is substantial> to none of its parts and since to make [something] other is [a feature] of substantial <forms> (*cumque substantialium est efficere aliud*), every whole is other than its part and no <part> other than its whole, because no <part> has something substantial which its whole does not have.²⁷

Therefore, the CLP's account of parts and wholes cannot be counted as a form of mereological nominalism, as it presents the whole as having something above and beyond its parts (namely a substantial form) and it states that the very presence of that substantial form is responsible for making the whole what it is (instead of the mere grouping of all of its parts).

4.3.2.2. Evaluation of Ebbesen's claim

It now remains to see whether the passages identified by Ebbesen reflect a view that could indeed be characterized as a form of nominalist mereology, or if they are closer to the Porretan theses found in CLP. In the passage about numbers in 7vA, the view expressed seems more Abelardian than Porretan. For one, the definition of a number as a collection of units is found in LI 169.33,²⁸ as well as *Dial.* 64.11.²⁹ This is seen most clearly from the fact that the author of *D'Orvillensis* is rejecting the view that number must be plural, as it is a collection of units. He then rejects this view by appealing to a view apparently held by his school ("we"), that there cannot be *connumeratio* among parts; here, he seems to be saying that, if we have one collection of units such that one is Socrates and the other is Socrates' foot, then we have one number (i.e. "two"), but it cannot be decided whether this number inheres in Socrates or in the foot of Socrates since they cannot be counted together "except in *voces*". This remark on *connumeratio* is likely a way to express that even though we can count things together on the level of language, for example by making statements about how many apples there are in a basket or how many stars there are in the sky, it is nevertheless not the case that these numbers correspond to some real entity in the extramental world which would be located in one thing or many things. Numbers (and collections in general, it seems) are to be found not among things, but among words, or language. Moreover, for a nominalist, when parts are composed

²⁷ CLP 38.67–70: "*Sed cum cuilibet toti aliquid sit substantiale quod nulli sue parti cumque substantialium est efficere aliud, omne totum est aliud a sua parte ac nulla <pars> aliud a suo toto, quoniam nulla habet aliquod substantiale quod non totum suum habeat.*"

²⁸ "*Numerus autem est collectio unitatum.*"

²⁹ "*Numerus autem ex unitate principium sumit*"

into a whole, there is nothing above and beyond that whole. By opposition, a realist could say that the whole “counts” as something in addition to the parts that enter its composition.

The 8rB passage on lines and points allows for a more direct association with Abelard’s thought, since it is consistent with what is said about lines in the LI: “a line or a surface or a quantitative body is nothing other (*aliud*) than all [its] points taken simultaneously”.³⁰ However, the *D’Orvillensis* passage is more frugal with words, and merely states that the author believes a line is made from “finite points”. This does not completely exclude the possibility that lines are more than the combination of their points, although it does suggest the author thinks that a line is nothing more than a series of points. Unfortunately, as the end of the quoted 8rB passage shows, the author does not provide any explanation of why he holds this position. Therefore, like the other passage quoted by Ebbesen, it does not seem strong enough to constitute satisfactory evidence of the author adopting a “nominalist mereology”.

4.3.3. PREDICATION

The third reason provided by Ebbesen for thinking that the author of *D’Orvillensis* is a *Nominalis* is that he treats predication not as a relation between things, but as a relation between linguistic entities. The passages he gives in support of his argument are the following:

(2vA) [A]ccording to us, nothing is predicated about something, except a predicable.³¹

(4rB) An objection is raised against us from this that Aristotle says “the name of these which are said of the subject is predicated etc.”: therefore those which are said of the subject have names, therefore they are signified by names; but nothing is signified by names aside from things, for it is for *voces* to signify and for things to be signified; therefore these which are said of the subject are things, but only terms are said of the subject; therefore terms are things.³²

(5vB) Truly, primary substance signifies this something (*hoc aliquid*), <3b12> for an individual is what is signified through primary substance.

But an objection is raised against us: therefore, an individual is signified, therefore an individual is a thing. For this reason, the ancients read the quote decisively in this way: Primary substance signifies this something (*hoc aliquid*), for an individual is primary substance, and that which is signified by primary substance is one in number.

We ourselves say otherwise, that this name ‘individual’ has four significations. For (1) ‘individual’ is said [for] that which cannot be divided on account of its smallness, like an

³⁰ LI: *Isag.* 107.1–3 “...*nil aliud est linea vel superficies vel corpus quantitativum quam omnia puncta simul accepta...*”

³¹ AO p. 264: “*nihil praedicatur de aliquo secundum nos nisi praedicabile*”

³² AO p. 279: “*Obicitur nobis ex eo quod dicit Aristoteles ‘nomen eorum quae dicuntur de subiecto praedicatur etc.’: ergo ea quae dicuntur de subiecto habent nomina, ergo significantur nominibus; sed nulla significantur nominibus nisi res, vocum enim est significare, rerum autem significari; ergo ea quae dicuntur de subiecto sunt res; sed tantum termini dicuntur de subiecto; ergo termini sunt res.*”

atom; (2) ‘individual’ is said [for] that which cannot be divided on account of its hardness, like a diamond (*adamas*); (3) ‘individual’ is said [for] a *sermo* signifying discretely; (4) ‘individual’ is said [for] any thing discrete in number, and here (i.e. in the context of this objection) it is taken in this sense.³³

Again, Ebbesen does not provide much in the way of an explanation, but he does tie this issue with the question of exegesis *de re* and *in voce*.³⁴ As Ebbesen remarks, the author of *D’Orvillensis* has a strong tendency to adopt a *de voce* reading of Aristotle’s *Categories*, but is willing to adopt a *de re* reading when it is necessary in order to meet an objection, as long as it does not carry too much ontological weight. However, it can be seen from the passage in 4rB that the author clearly sees people who hold that terms are things and that things can be predicated as his adversaries. As was seen in section 1.2.3 of this thesis, a language-focused approach to logic, which can involve a reading of Aristotle’s *Categories* as being a treatise about words rather than things, is correlated with the Abelardian logical tradition and, thus, the *Nominales*.

Moreover, as Ebbesen mentions, the author of *D’Orvillensis* lists four possible meanings of the word ‘*individuum*’. I would add the following observation: for most of the treatise, the anonymous author seems to prefer using ‘*individuum*’ in the third sense, as a *sermo* signifying a discrete (i.e. singular) thing, be it explicitly³⁵ or implicitly.³⁶ This indicates that he is more inclined towards an *in voce* reading of the *Categories*, especially when taken along his claim that a species is a *vox* rather than a thing.³⁷ This supports Ebbesen’s argument that the

³³ AO p. 291: “Vere prima substantia significat hoc aliquid, <3b12> *individuum enim est quod significatur per primam substantiam. Sed nobis obicitur: ergo individuum significatur, ergo individuum est res. Ideo antiqui litteram decise legebant, hoc modo: Prima substantia significat hoc aliquid, individuum est enim sc. prima substantia, et id quod significatur per primam substantiam est unum numero. Nos aliter dicimus hoc nomen ‘individuum’ quattuor habere significationes. Dicitur enim individuum quod propter sui parvitatem dividi non potest, ut atomus; dicitur individuum quod propter sui duritiam dividi non potest, ut *adamas*; dicitur individuum *sermo* discrete significans; dicitur individuum quaelibet res numero discrete, et sic accipitur hic.”*

³⁴ In the medieval tradition of commentaries on the texts of the *logica vetus*, an important point of contention is whether a text should be read *de re* or *de voce*. *De voce* exegesis treats the text as being about words, whereas *de re* exegesis treats it as being about things. In the context of a commentary on the *Categories*, this would amount to asking whether Aristotle’s fourfold and tenfold divisions are describing types of things, or describing the concepts or words we use to talk about things.

³⁵ AO p. 291: “*individua sunt sermones, et ita non sunt res.*”

³⁶ He often speaks of things being signified by *individua*, after clearly and repeatedly stating that to signify is a property of *sermones* and not things. For example, see AO p. 281: “*Rursus color in corpore est i.e. hoc accidens ‘color’ est in corpore ut in subiecto ergo in aliquo corpore i.e. in re significata per aliquod individuum huius speciei ‘homo’.*” (emphasis mine)

³⁷ AO p. 283: “*Notandum quod dicit Auctor ‘proferens speciem’, ergo species proferitur, sed tantum vocum est proferri et non rerum, ergo species est vox et non res; res enim non proferuntur.*” (emphasis mine)

author of *D'Orvillensis* is a *Nominalis*, since they were especially known for holding that genera and species are linguistic entities, in this case names.³⁸

4.4. WHO WROTE D'ORVILLENSIS? SOME OTHER CLUES

Now that Ebbesen's arguments in favour of attributing the text to the school of the *Nominales* have been examined and, in some cases, strengthened, it remains to discuss other important aspects of the text. In addition to presenting arguments in favour of identifying the author of *D'Orvillensis* as a member of the school of the *Nominales*, Ebbesen points to another possible link with another twelfth-century school. Indeed, he remarks that the author of *D'Orvillensis* gives prominence to the thesis that no form inheres in a form, and that this thesis is found in the Porretan CLP, although the latter work employs a terminology specific to the Porretans and absent from *D'Orvillensis*, namely the distinction between subsistents (*subsistentia*) and subsistences (*subsistentiae*).³⁹ Ebbesen does not expand on this point, perhaps because the difference in vocabulary is considered as reason enough against associating the author of *D'Orvillensis* with the Porretan school. Therefore, I will first turn my attention to the presence in *D'Orvillensis* of the thesis that no form inheres in a form, and what this means for the authorship of the text. I will then examine a few other aspects of *D'Orvillensis* and see how well they mesh with what we know about the views held within the schools of the *Nominales* and of the *Porretani*. The aspects of the text I will focus on are the thesis that no form inheres in a form, and the use of the terms '*sermo*' and *vox*.

4.4.1. NULLA FORMA INEST FORMAE

When Ebbesen discusses the recurring presence of the thesis that no form inheres in a form within *D'Orvillensis*, he does so mainly to examine the use of the first-person plural in the relevant passages, in order to use it as an indication that the author belongs to a school. However, curiously, aside from mentioning the presence of the thesis in the CLP, he does not elaborate much on what the presence of this specific thesis means for attribution:

As the quotations show, the thesis was important to Anonymus D'Orvillensis, although he was willing occasionally to consider what might be said if one did not accept it. The text does not exclude an interpretation of the first person plural as *pluralis maiestatis*, but the fact that the thesis is known to have been on the programmatic list of at least one twelfth-century school makes this rather improbable. In the form *In nulla proprietate est proprietas*

³⁸ PN p. 431, Thesis 1: "*Primo consentimus quod universalia sicut genera et species sunt nomina.*"

³⁹ For more on this distinction in the CLP, see Martin (1983) p. XVIII & p. XXV

the thesis occurs at N° III.14 in *Compendium logicae Porretanum* [CIMAGL 46 (1983)]. Our author does not, however, use the characteristic Porretanean terminology.⁴⁰

This is the only place where Ebbesen mentions the Porretans or their possible relation to the author of *D'Orvillensis*. The recurrence of the thesis and its importance for our anonymous author warrants a more thorough examination of the relevant passages. For this reason, I will first draw attention to the ways in which the author uses the thesis to better understand what role it plays. Then, I will compare what is said in *D'Orvillensis* with the contents of CLP and with the views held by Peter Abelard, in order to draw some conclusions concerning the authorship of the text.

4.4.1.1. *Nulla forma inest formae in D'Orvillensis*

The peculiar importance of the thesis that no form inheres in a form for the author of *D'Orvillensis* appears clearly from the fact that he brings it up more often and more explicitly than any other thesis he holds. He invokes it for the first time when discussing possible solutions to the problem whether it is possible for two different genera (e.g. 'spirit' and 'animal') to have the same *differentia* (e.g. 'rationality'):

Aristotle solves this in the book of Topics by adding something in this way: "[*differentiae* which are] of diverse genera, of items not subordinated to one another (*subalternatim positorum*), and not contained under the same most general genus, are diverse etc.", and then the whole objection fails, because animal and spirit are contained under this most general genus 'substance'. But because we say that **a form does not inhere in a form**, and for this reason no genus and no species have a *differentia* except genera and species of the first predicament, we thus expound [the quote] in this way: "the *differentiae* are diverse", i.e., not the same, because this genus 'quality' does not have a *differentia*.⁴¹

In other words, the author of *D'Orvillensis* claims that Aristotle proposes three necessary conditions for *differentiae* to be considered diverse (i.e., different from each other): (1) they have to belong to different genera; (2) are not be subordinated to one another (i.e., one genera cannot be contained under the other as, say, substance and body); and (3) they are not contained under the same most general genus (i.e., the same category). However, the author of *D'Orvillensis*, because he accepts the thesis "no form inheres in a form", needs to modify the wording of (3). Indeed, in accordance with this thesis, the only most general genus which has *differentiae* is substance. The other most general genera, like that of quality, are of forms.

⁴⁰ Ebbesen (1999), p. 238.

⁴¹ AO, p. 271: "Hanc enim solvit Aristoteles in libro Topicorum per suppletionem quandam hoc modo "diversorum generum et non subalternatim positorum et non contentorum sub eodem generalissimo diversae sunt etc.", et tunc omnis cessat obiectio, quia animal et spiritus continentur sub hoc generalissimo 'substantia'. Sed quia dicimus quod forma non inest formae, et ideo nullum genus et nulla species habet differentiam nisi genera et species primi predicamenti, ideo sic exponimus: "diversa sunt differentiae" i.e. non eaedem, quia hoc genus 'qualitas' non habet differentiam."

Hence, their members cannot have *differentiae*, as this would amount to a form inhering in a form. The author of *D'Orvillensis* reads “the *differentiae* are diverse” as meaning “the *differentiae* are not the same”, because, as he writes earlier, the term “diverse”, in this context, should “not posit diversity, but remove identity”.⁴² This formulation, he thinks, avoids speaking as if forms (here, that of diversity) could inhere in forms (here, a quality).

There are other instances where the author explicitly uses the thesis in order to derive another position from it. For example, when he discusses whether derived terms (*sumpta*) such as ‘*album*’ belong to the category of quality, he starts by writing that a term can be said to be contained in a category in two ways, namely by signification or by subjection (*subiectione*). By signification, he tells us, a derived term is contained under the category of quality, because that which it signifies is a thing of the predicament of quality (*predicamenti qualitatis res*), just like the principal term (*principalis*) from which it derives. For example, both the principal term ‘*albedo*’ (whiteness, as in the colour white) and the derived term ‘*album*’ (the adjective ‘white’; better rendered as ‘white <thing>’ when used on its own) are contained in the category of quality by signification since they signify whiteness (*albedinem*). In contrast, a term is contained under a given category by subjection when the said category can be predicated universally about the term. For example, a principal term such as ‘*albedo*’ is contained under quality, since we can say “every whiteness is a quality (*omnis albedo est qualitas*)”. However, derived terms like ‘*album*’ are not subsumed under the predicament of quality, because we cannot say that “every white <thing> is a quality (*omne album est qualitas*)”. Instead, derived terms are contained under substance by subjection, according to this rule: “Every derived term is contained in the category of substance [...] by subjection [...], substantively,⁴³ and in singular number.”⁴⁴ He holds this rule directly as a result of the thesis that no form inheres in a form:

And it should be known that the aforementioned rule emerges from a certain position of ours, namely from this that we say that a form inheres in no form, because if this *sumptum* ‘white (album)’ were contained by subjection in the predicament of quality, it would happen that a property inheres in a quality. But we expose reasons by which the aforementioned position (i.e., that no form inheres in a form) is proved elsewhere.⁴⁵

⁴² See AO p. 270: “*Igitur diversorum generum et non subalternatim positorum diversae sunt species et differentiae, i.e. non eadem, ita quod haec vox ‘diversae’ non ponat diversitatem sed removeat identitatem.*”

⁴³ i.e., not as an adjective applied to another noun

⁴⁴ AO, p. 365: “*Omne sumptum continetur in praedicamento substantiae [...] subiectione [...] substantivatum et in singulari numero.*”

⁴⁵ AO, p. 366: “*Et sciendum quod praedicta regula surgit ex quadam nostra positione, ex eo scilicet quod dicimus quod nulli formae inest forma, quia si hoc sumptum ‘album’ contineatur subiectione in praedicamento qualitatis accideret proprietatem inesse qualitati. Rationes autem quibus praedictam positionem probamus alibi exposuimus.*”

The passage above is puzzling, but the author seems to mean the following. If a derived term (like ‘*album*’) was contained by subjection in the category of quality, then it would be true that “every white <thing> is a quality”. This, in turn, would imply that the property of being white would inhere in a quality, i.e., the white <thing> (*album*). In other words, a form would inhere in a form, which is considered unacceptable by the author. As for the reason why this is unacceptable, the author then goes on to say that he (or rather, he and his school) shows the reasons by which the thesis “no form inheres in a form” is proved “elsewhere”; as far as I can discern, however, there is no such passage in the *D’Orvillensis*, which would indicate that the author refers to another work from the same school, a work his students would have likely known. At any rate, the editor has no more indication to give as to where we could find this discussion. Furthermore, the author characterizes the thesis “*nulla forma inest formae*” as an authoritative opinion (*auctoritatem*), but again, neither the author nor the editor gives any indication as to whose authority this might allude to.

The thesis “*nulla forma inest formae*” is not only used when it comes to discussing the contents of the category of substance; one clear illustration of how the author uses the thesis is to be found in his discussion of the category of quantity, more specifically in his discussion of lines. Based on Aristotle, the author recognizes two types of quantities, namely discrete quantities and continuous quantities.⁴⁶ While a discrete quantity, such as a number, has parts which do not cohere (*cohaerent*) with each other, a continuous quantity has parts that cohere with each other, such as points making up a line. Furthermore, a line is defined as length without width (*longitudo sine latitudine*).⁴⁷ This description could be problematic, and as such it needs to be properly interpreted. Indeed, taken at face value, it seems to be false since, according to the author, length is a relation (the correlative of “length” being “shortness”), yet a line is a quantity, but a quantity cannot also be a relation.⁴⁸ The author raises another possible interpretation, which he is prompt to reject: some would say that a line is the subject of length. This cannot be accepted by someone, like the author, who believes that no form can inhere in a form. Indeed, line is a quantity, and length, as was established before, a relation. Thus, if a

⁴⁶ See AO p. 300.

⁴⁷ AO p. 308

⁴⁸ AO p. 308: “*Linea sic describitur: linea est longitudo sine latitudine. Superficies est longitudo et latitudo sine spissitudine. Soliditas est longitudo, latitudo et spissitudo. Patet quod hae descriptiones indigent expositione, proprie enim intellectae erit hoc falsum quia longitudo est relatio et habet correlationem brevitate, latitudo relatio est et habet correlationem proprietatem copulatam per hoc nomen ‘artum’, spissitudo relatio est et habet correlationem tenuitatem. Sed quaelibet istarum est quantitas et nulla quantitas est relatio, ergo nulla est longitudo, latitudo, spissitudo.*”

line were the subject of length, a relation (which is a property, or form) would inhere in a quantity, which is itself a property. This result is not acceptable to the author, thus this reading of the definition of a line is rejected. Instead, the author proposes to expound “a line is length without width” as “a line is a property such that, in the first place, it makes (*efficit*) its subject long, and not wide”, in the same way that we can use the expression “death is pale” to mean that death makes its subject pale.⁴⁹ In this sense, just as “death is pale”, understood in this way, does not imply the attribution of paleness to death itself, “a line is length without width” does not require the attribution of the property of length to a line, itself already a property as it is a quantity. In other words, what is long is not the line itself, but the subject or substance in which this line inheres, although this subject is made long on account of the line. The author thus seems to allow that properties bring about other properties in the same subject, as long as any property inheres in a substance and not in another property.

From the above examples, it has been shown how the author of *D’Orvillensis* uses the thesis that no form inheres in another form in order to derive other positions, especially with regard to the proper contents of the categories. This is an indication of the importance of the thesis for him. However, it is unfortunate that we currently do not have access to the author’s reasoning in favour of holding the thesis, which he alludes to in his discussion of derived (*sumpta*) terms. For this reason, it is all the more important to examine what others had to say on that topic, before coming back to *D’Orvillensis* in order to situate it in relation to these other sources.

4.4.1.2. Abelard on forms inhering in forms

On the topic of forms inhering in other forms, the author of *D’Orvillensis* is completely at odds with the Abelardian position. Indeed, there are several passages in the *Logica Ingredientibus* where Abelard clearly states that it is possible for a form to inhere in another form. The example he uses is recurring: certain forms, such as clearness (*claritas*), inhere not in substances, but in other forms, such as whiteness (*albedo*). An important aspect of his position is the distinction between the support of a form and what it informs, found in the glosses on Porphyry’s *Isagoge*:

Besides, we wish that no accidental *vocabulum* be predicated according to supporting (*sustentationem*) but only [according to] informing (*informationem*), just as we will

⁴⁹ AO p. 309: “*Nos aliter dicimus ‘linea est longitudo sine latitudine’ i.e. ‘est talis proprietas quae efficit primum subiectum suum longum et non latum’, sicut ‘mors est pallida’ i.e. efficit subiectum suum pallidum [...].*”

demonstrate in the Category of substance. From where the name of clearness, which is only a form of whiteness, is suitable to [whiteness] only, and not to body.⁵⁰

One difference between supporting and being informed is that while only a substance can have the role of supporting (*sustentationem*), both substance and forms can be informed by a form. As such, a substance can support and be informed, whereas a form can be informed, but it cannot support. Take, for example, a body which supports a form of whiteness. It both supports and is informed by it. If this same form of whiteness is informed by a form of clearness, however, the whiteness is not the support of the clearness. Instead, it is the body which ultimately supports the form of clearness, albeit through its form of whiteness as a medium. Nevertheless, it is not the case that this body is *informed* by clearness: only the form of whiteness is informed by clearness. In other words, the relation of supporting is transitive, but the relation of informing (or being informed) is not. More details on this view can be found in the LI's gloss on Aristotle's *Categories*, in a discussion about the predication of derived (*sumpta*) names:

And this can be accepted about derived terms (*sumpta*) as much as about subsistent substances. For sometimes derived names of accidents are predicated of substances, sometimes not. For if an accident is such that it inheres in a substance *per se*, like whiteness in a man, by which not only [this accident] is supported, but also it inheres in it *per se* yet it properly (*proprie*) informs it, the derived term 'whiteness' will be predicated of man. But if it is such that it inheres through (*mediante*) another accident, like clearness or perhaps contrariety (*contrarietas*) which inhere through (*mediante*) whiteness, it is not necessary for their derived name to be predicated about the substance by sustenance (*sustentatione*), for a derived *vocabulum* is predicated of the thing *simpliciter* according to informing (= being informed), not according to sustenance. And so whiteness is called a contrary because it is informed by contrariety, [but] a body is not called a contrary, because it is not informed by contrariety, although it supports (*sustentet*) it along with whiteness. But the subjected matter cannot be informed by a certain accident, unless it has it *per se*, not through (*mediante*) another accident.⁵¹

For Abelard, then, a derived term is predicated according to that which it informs, and not according to its material support. For example, he says, a certain whiteness is called a contrary because it is informed by a form of contrariety (*contrarietate*); however, a body which supports

⁵⁰ LI: *Isag.* 36.37–37.2: “*Praeterea nullum accidentale vocabulum secundum sustentationem, sed tantum informationem praedicari volumus, sicut in Praedicamento substantiae demonstrabimus. Unde claritatis nomen, quae tantum forma est albedinis, ei soli convenit, non etiam corpori.*”

⁵¹ LI: *Cat.* 145.10–24: “*Potest etiam de sumptis accipi quantum ad subsistentes substantias. Nam aliquando sumpta nomina accidentium de substantiis praedicantur, aliquando non. Si enim tale est accidens quod substantiae per se insit, ut albedo homini, a quo non solum sustentatur, verum etiam per se ei inest atque ipsum proprie informat, sumptum albedine de homine praedicabitur. Si vero tale est, ut alio accidenti mediante insit sicut claritas vel fortasse contrarietas quae mediante albedine insunt, eorum sumpta non necesse est praedicari de substantia, sustentatione enim sumptum uocabulum secundum informationem rei simpliciter praedicatur, non secundum sustentationem. Unde albedo contraria dicitur secundum hoc quod informatur contrarietate, non corpus contrarium vocatur, quod contrarietate non informatur, licet eam quoque una cum albedine sustentet. Informari autem aliquo accidente subiecta materia non potest, nisi ipsum per se habeat non alio accidenti mediante.*”

this same form of whiteness is not informed *per se* by this form of contrariety, only through the medium (*per mediantem*) of the whiteness it supports. As such, said body is not informed by contrariety, and thus contrariety cannot be predicated about this body, although it can be predicated about the whiteness which inheres in this body. Thus, we can say “*album est corpus*”, but not “*contrarium est corpus*” nor “*clarum est corpus*”. In this Abelardian framework, in other words, substances act as supports for forms, whereas forms can inform either other forms or a substance directly. Furthermore, the relation of supporting is, in a way, transitive: if this body supports this whiteness, which is in turn informed by a form of contrariety, then ultimately the body also supports the contrariety, although it only does so through the medium of the form of whiteness. In contrast, the relation of informing is not transitive: while the whiteness, in the example, is informed by the form of contrariety, the body itself is not.

This is a claim which the author of *D’Orvillensis* would certainly reject: recall that, in his own discussion of derived (*sumpta*) terms, he says that they are contained by subjection in the predicament of substance, which means that they can only be predicated of substance. Indeed, he is very clear that he wants to avoid a quality’s being predicated of a derived term, since this would result in a form inhering in a form. Abelard, on the other hand, explicitly accepts that certain forms inhere in other forms, and in those cases, they cannot be predicated of substances. In contrast with Abelard, then, the author of *D’Orvillensis* would presumably deny “*clarum est albedo*” and accept “*clarum est corpus*”. Moreover, there is a passage in *D’Orvillensis* where the author flatly denies that clearness can inhere in whiteness, which is precisely the example that Abelard reuses throughout the glosses included in *Logica Ingredientibus*:

By what he says, the Author (Aristotle) gives to understand that universals of the primary substance either are in the primary substance or are said of the primary substance, because no form inheres in a form; for if clearness were to inhere in whiteness, therefore whiteness would be a primary substance, which is false.⁵²

His reasoning for rejecting the idea that clearness might inhere in whiteness is very reminiscent of the Porretans’ reasoning for holding their own version of the thesis that forms cannot inhere in other forms; the next section examines this reasoning as it is found in the CLP.

⁵² AO, p. 280: “*Per hoc quod dicit Auctor omnia universalis quae sunt praedicamentalia vel esse in primis substantiis vel dici de primis substantiis datur intelligi quod nulla forma inest formae; si enim claritas inest albedini, ergo albedo esset prima substantia, quod falsum est.*”

4.4.1.3. Porretan reasons for endorsing the thesis

As Ebbesen himself indicates, the thesis “*in nulla proprietate est proprietas*” appears in CLP. This work is especially interesting for our purposes since it emanates from another twelfth-century school which rejects the idea that universals are existing, extramental things, namely the school of the *Porretani*.⁵³ The members of this school as characterized as followers of Gilbert of Poitiers, also called Gilbert Porreta (or Porretanus). The writings of Gilbert that we currently possess are theological works, the most notable one being his commentary on Boethius’ *De Trinitate*; in a similar way, most *Porretani* works we are aware of are of a theological nature. However, the CLP stands out as the first properly logical *Porretani* text of which we know,⁵⁴ and to the best of my knowledge, the only one. The *Compendium* comprises four sections:

- I. Terms
- II. Propositions
- III. What terms signify
- IV. What propositions signify

The thesis we are interested in is thesis 14 of section III, since it has to do with the referents of terms designating forms (or properties, following the author’s terminology). It is accompanied by the reasoning provided by the author in order to support the idea that no property can be in another property. First, it is worth mentioning that the terminology the author uses is characteristic of the Porretan school: he distinguishes between substance as *subsistentia* and substance as *subsistens*. According to Porretan ontology, a *subsistens* is an independent object which is the support of accidents, whereas a *subsistentia* is that which is supported, in this case a property or form.⁵⁵ These concepts are seen as jointly exhaustive and mutually exclusive. They are jointly exhaustive, because everything that exists is either a *subsistens* or a *subsistentia*. They are mutually exclusive, because the same item cannot be both a *subsistens* and a *subsistentia*. This distinction is at the heart of the reasoning presented in CLP in favour of thesis III.14:

[I]f another form were to inhere in the form of something, therefore it would be a subject to accidents and thus, it would fall in the genus of subsistences (*subsistentiae*) and it would cease to be a subsistence. And it happens that, if some form were to have been accidental to a most general genus, so too a certain substantial (*substantialis*) <form would be accidental>

⁵³ CLP I.12, p. 6.84–85 : “*Nullum enim universale aliquid est.*” For a detailed discussion of anti-realism in the CLP, see Martin (1983), pp. XXII–XXVI.

⁵⁴ Martin (1983), p. XVIII.

⁵⁵ For more on this distinction, refer to Martin (1983), p. XXXVIII.

to the same <most general genus> and conversely: therefore, it would not be a most general genus; – therefore, no form receives in itself another form.⁵⁶

Forms cannot inhere in other forms, then, because a form is a *subsistentia*, but if it supports another form, then it is also a *subsistens*. According to Porretan ontology, this cannot happen.

In contrast to the Porretans, Abelard, as we have seen, seems unbothered by the idea that something could be a support in one regard, and supported in another regard. This is presumably due to him relying on the distinction between supporting and being informed by. This distinction, in contrast with that between *subsistens* and *subsistentia*, is not mutually exclusive: Abelard thinks that we can speak of a substance as being both the support of a form and informed by it. Moreover, as was mentioned above, a form can inform a substance, but also another form. The support will always be, ultimately, the substance, and the relation of “supporting” admits intermediaries. The relation of being informed, however, does not admit intermediaries. This is what allows Abelard to accept that forms can inhere in other forms: for him, on account of this distinction, it is not too strange to say that a form can both be supported by a substance and inform another form. Those are two different relations with different terms. For the author of the CLP, however, this is not acceptable, given the mutually exclusive character of *subsistens* and *subsistentiae*.

4.4.1.4. Returning to D’Orvillensis

When it comes to the thesis that no form inheres in a form, despite the absence of the characteristic Porretan terminology, the text of *D’Orvillensis* is strikingly close to the position defended in the CLP, and at odds with the Abelardian position. In this regard, then, the author of *D’Orvillensis* seems closer to the *Porretani* than to the *Nominales*. Further support for this idea can be found when comparing what is said by the author of *D’Orvillensis* with the ninth thesis found in *Positiones Nominalium*, namely the thesis that all universals are contained under ‘accident’.⁵⁷ Note that, earlier in the *Positiones*, it is written that genera and species are universals (theses 1 and 7) and that universals are names (thesis 1). Therefore, from thesis 9 (all universals are contained under ‘accident’) and theses 1 and 7 (which clearly state that genera and species are universals, not universal res, indeed, but universal names), it can be

⁵⁶ CLP p. 40.36–41: “[S]i forme cuilibet alia forma inesset itaque subiectum accidentibus esset et ita in genere subsistentium caderet et esse subsistentie exueret; accedit et hoc quod si generalissimo aliqua forma esset accidentalis, et eidem aliqua substantialis et econverso: non ergo generalissimum esset; – igitur nulla forma in se recipit aliam formam.”

⁵⁷ PN p. 431, thesis 9: “[Ponimus] quod accidens sub se omnia universalalia continet.”

deduced that genera and species, as they are universals, must be contained under accident.⁵⁸ This seems to be in opposition with the way the author of *D'Orvillensis* speaks of the *Categories*. Indeed, as was seen above, he takes genera and species as belonging to the first category, as secondary substances. Presumably, he would think that accidents, since they are forms, belong to other categories. Besides, the position presented in *Positiones Nominalium* is incompatible with the thesis that no form inheres in a form, since *differentiae* must inhere in their respective species, and if the species itself is a form, it follows that a form inheres in a form. However, it is worth noting that the *Positiones Nominalium* do not contain any discussion of the ninth thesis, and as such the motivation for holding that position remains unknown. As a result, it cannot be used in a decisive proof that the authors of *D'Orvillensis* and of *Positiones Nominalium* are at odds with each other, but it does suggest that they have a different way of thinking about the relations between universals and the categories. In summary, when it comes to the thesis that no form inheres in a form, *D'Orvillensis* has more resemblance to Porretan works than to works associated with the *Nominales*.

4.4.2. *SERMONES*: AN ABELARDIAN INFLUENCE?

Despite this stronger link with the *Porretani*, there remains some aspects of *D'Orvillensis* which are indicative of an Abelardian influence and, therefore, suggest that the author has the kind of background we would expect from a *Nominalis*. One such aspect is the ubiquitous use of the technical term ‘*sermo*’ in *D'Orvillensis*. Indeed, the author of *D'Orvillensis* regularly uses ‘*sermo*’ to speak of words as units of signification. Although ‘*sermo*’ is, by itself, a regular Latin word whose use is not especially surprising, the term is known for having been introduced in a technical sense by Peter Abelard, probably around 1120. It appears most clearly in the *Logica Nostrorum Petitioni Sociorum*, a work that is now considered most likely to be a recounting of Abelard’s teaching or the work of a close follower of Abelard, rather than a work authored by Abelard himself. In this work, it is clearly stated that universals are *sermones*, and not *voces*:

There is another opinion about universals which is closer to reason, [namely the opinion] which attributes community (*communitatem*) to neither things nor *voces*, but asserts that it is *sermones* which are singular or universal. Which indeed Aristotle, First of the Peripatetics, insinuates through his definition of universals which he puts openly when he says:

A universal is that which is made (*natum*) to be predicated of many.

⁵⁸ From PN 1, 7, & 9. Demonstration: Genera and species are universals

That is, it accomplishes this by its origin (*nativitas*), namely from institution (*ex institutione*). **For what is the origin of *sermones* or names, aside from their institution by men?** For that which is a name or a *sermo* assembles from its institution by men. **But what is the origin of *voces* or things, aside from a creation of nature, since the proper being of a thing or a *vox* is established by the sole work of nature?** Therefore, the origin of *voces* and *sermones* differs, even though they are exactly identical in essence (*in essentia*).⁵⁹

This introduces an important distinction. To better appreciate it, it is useful to look at earlier works from Abelard; here, I will use the *Logica 'Ingredientibus'* as an example. In this latter work, Abelard uses terms like *sermo*, *vox*, and *vocabulum* somewhat interchangeably:

But now that we have shown the reasons why *things* taken neither singly nor collectively can be called “universals” insofar as they are predicated of several, it remains to ascribe this kind of universality only to words. Thus just as some names are called “appellative” by grammarians and some are called “proper”, so too some simple expressions are called “universal” by dialecticians and some are called “particular” – that is, “singular”. Now a universal word is one that one the basis of its invention is apt to be predicated of several things one by one. For example the name ‘man’, which can be conjoined to particular names of men in accordance with the nature of the subject things it is imposed on. But a singular word is one that is predicable of one thing only. For example, ‘Socrates’, when it is taken as the name of one person only.⁶⁰

In the above passage, Abelard starts by claiming that it is *voces* which can be called universal. Then, he goes on to say that dialecticians call *sermones* either particular or universal, but in the next sentence, he speaks of universal *vocabula*. This is an indication that, at least at this earlier stage of his thought, Abelard did not draw a clear distinction between *vox* and *sermo*. This is consistent with the usual way of speaking at the time. Indeed, in the twelfth century, the traditional vocabulary for discussions about words, concepts, and things tends to mirror Boethius’ own terminology as established in his commentary on Aristotle’s *Peri Hermeneias*, where he speaks of *voces*, *intellectus*, and *res*. ‘*Vox*’ is then the default term for referring to (spoken) words, although ‘*sermo*’ is sometimes used indiscriminately to refer to the same

⁵⁹ LNPS 522.10–23: “*Est alia de universalibus sententia rationi vicinior, quae nec rebus nec vocibus communitatem attribuit, sed sermones sive singulares sive universales esse disserunt. Quod etiam Aristoteles, princeps peripateticorum, per diffinitionem universalis quam ponit, aperte insinuat, cum ait:*

Universale est quod est natum praedicari de pluribus id est a nativitate sua hoc contrahit, ex institutione scilicet. Quid enim aliud est nativitas sermonum sive nominum quam hominum institutio? Hoc enim quod est nomen sive sermo, ex hominum institutione contrahit. Vocis vero sive rei nativitas quid aliud est, quam naturae creatio, cum proprium esse rei sive vocis sola operatione naturae consistat? Itaque nativitas vocis et sermonis diversitas, etsi penitus in essentia identitas.”

⁶⁰ LI: Isag. 16.19–30 (trans. Spade p. 37): “*Nunc autem ostensis rationibus quibus neque res singillatim neque collectim acceptae universales dici possunt in eo quod de pluribus praedicantur, restat ut huiusmodi universalitatem solis vocibus adscribamus. Sicut igitur nominum quaedam appellativa a grammaticis, quaedam propria dicuntur, ita a dialecticis simplicium sermonum quidam universales, quidam particulares, scilicet singulares, appellantur. Est autem universale vocabulum quod de pluribus singillatim habile est ex inventionem sua praedicari, ut hoc nomen 'homo', quod particularibus nominibus hominum coniungibile est secundum subiectarum rerum naturam quibus est impositum. Singulare vero est quod de uno solo praedicabile est, ut Socrates, cum unius tantum nomen accipitur.”*

items. In contrast, the above passage of the LNPS clearly indicates that it is *sermones*, and not *voces*, which can be called universal. This difference has to do with the origin (*nativitas*) of *voces* and *sermones*: while the two are “identical in essence”, a *vox* has its origin from natural processes, whereas a *sermo* comes into being as a result of an act of institution (*institutio*). For example, if I utter the word ‘Socrates’, the *vox* is the vocal sound I am producing, and its origin is natural: it is caused by vibrations in my vocal cords, which then produce an acoustic wave which, under the right conditions, is audible to others. However, the *sermo* corresponding to that *vox* has a different origin: we take the word ‘Socrates’ as meaningful, because there was an act of institution (in this case, presumably by Socrates’ parents) by which it was established that ‘Socrates’ would signify Socrates (the person). The reasoning in the LNPS is not entirely transparent on this point, but presumably, one of the reasons why universality should be ascribed to *sermones* rather than *voces* is that Abelard would want to absolutely exclude the possibility that a universal is any kind of thing (*res*). However, a *vox* is in a way a thing, since it is described as a naturally produced air wave. A *sermo*, on the other hand, is not. This notion of institution, or imposition, is in many ways the cornerstone of Abelardian semantics.⁶¹ It allows him to do many things, from explaining equivocation (equivocal terms are not one term but two distinct ones owing to the different acts of impositions by which they were established) to fleshing out a nominalist semantics of universal terms and concepts. Indeed, by using the notion of imposition, Abelard is able to explain the general character of the signification of universal terms without having to postulate the existence of universals in reality: universal terms have a “common cause of imposition”, which means that they were intended to signify things of a given kind.⁶² Thus, in LNPS, the technical notion of *sermo* is intimately connected with the idea of imposition, which is of paramount importance to Abelard. However, as will be seen below, in *D’Orvillensis*, the presence of the technical notion of *sermo* seems to be divorced from imposition.

4.4.2.1. *Sermones* in *D’Orvillensis*

In *D’Orvillensis*, while the author never explicitly establishes a distinction between *vox* and *sermo*, *vox* is used regularly when speaking of a linguistic item as a proffered sound, although, much like in Abelard’s LI, there are cases where the terms seem to be used interchangeably, which can generate confusion. For example, take the discussion of the

⁶¹ See *supra*, Chapter 1, section 1.2.4.

⁶² See LI: *Isag.* 19.14–20.14.

distinction between incomplex *sermones* (also called *dictiones*) and complex ones (also called *orationes*) in 2vA:

And this division is not by opposites: for a certain *sermo* is [both] complex and incomplex, like ‘*mecum*’. Why? Because this *vox* ‘*mecum*’ is a *dictio* of the accusative case of this name ‘*mecus*, -i’ and it is an *oratio* composed of a preposition and a pronoun.⁶³

When discussing the equivocal term ‘*mecum*’, which could be either the accusative case of ‘*mecus*, -i’⁶⁴ or a composite expression combining the pronoun ‘*me*’ and the conjunction ‘*cum*’, the author of *D’Orvillensis* claims that it is one *sermo*, which is both complex and incomplex; indeed, he takes this as proof that the division between complex and incomplex *sermones* is not “by opposites”, meaning that it is possible for one and the same *sermo* can belong to both members of the division. This is in opposition to the Abelardian view found in the LNPS. Indeed, a corollary of the discussion on the different origins of *sermones* and *voces* is that an equivocal term such as the above ‘*mecum*’ should be analysed as corresponding to one *vox*, yet two *sermones*. Indeed, even if the same uttered sound could be taken as expressing either of the two possible meanings, each of these has come about by a different act of institution, and thus each meaning corresponds to a distinct *sermo*. In contrast, the author of *D’Orvillensis* clearly thinks the same *sermo* can have two meanings, and thus the view he holds diverges from the Abelardian view expressed in LNPS since, in the above passage, the author of *D’Orvillensis* describes ‘*mecum*’ as being one *sermo*, both complex and incomplex. Yet, in the very next sentence, he seems to be mobilizing the distinction between, on the one hand, *vox* as a proffered linguistic item and, on the other hand, *sermones* as differentiated by their signification. Indeed, the author goes on to say that one *vox*, ‘*mecum*’, corresponds to one *dictio* (the accusative noun ‘*mecum*’) and one complex *oratio* (the combination of ‘*me*’ and ‘*cum*’). Given his earlier statement that *dictiones* and *orationes* are types of *sermones*, this then implies that there is one *vox* yet two *sermones* (i.e., the *dictio* and the *oratio*), while previous sentence had described ‘*mecum*’ as a *sermo* (singular) which is both complex and incomplex. This indicates that the terminology of *sermones* and *voces*, although established by the author, is not followed consistently, introducing such confusions.

⁶³ AO, p. 262: “Et divisio illa non est per opposita: aliquis enim sermo est complexus et incomplexus, ut ‘*mecum*’. Quamobrem? Quia haec vox ‘*mecum*’ est dictio accusativi casus huius nominis ‘*mecus*, -chi’ et est oratio composita ex propositione et pronomine.”

⁶⁴ Ebbesen interprets this word as a form of *moechus*, -chi(adulterer).

A similar difficulty is encountered when the author of *D'Orvillensis* examines other problematic cases, asking whether the phrases '*diligit se*' and '*de domo*' are complex or incomplex *sermones*:

There is doubt about this *vox* '*diligit se*' and about this one '*de domo*', whether they are complex or incomplex *sermones*. Regarding this, we say briefly that **this *vox* '*diligit se*' is not a *sermo***, and thus it is neither complex nor incomplex. For this is the rule: "Whenever some syncategoreme is posited in the constitution of a *vox* which is not reduced to certitude from something posited here, the whole *vox* is a syncategoreme", i.e., co-significative. **For which reason, since in the aforementioned locution the relative '*se*' is put, whose referent is not determined from something else, it makes the whole *vox* co-significative.** Also, if it is a *sermo*, therefore it is a complex or an incomplex *sermo*. If it is complex, it is an *oratio*; therefore, it would be possible to break it into two intelligible parts. If it is incomplex, therefore a *dictio*, then it does not have a *dictio* as a part. About this *vox* '*de domo*', it can be said that it is a complex *sermo*, and 'de' is here either memorial (*memoriale*), sermocinal (*sermocinale*)⁶⁵ or material.⁶⁶

In this passage, it is not clear whether the author considers that a single equivocal *vox* corresponds to one *sermo* with many senses, or if there is one *sermo* per signification. For example, the author states that the *vox* '*diligit se*' is not a *sermo*, and thus it is of course neither a complex nor an incomplex *sermo*. His reasoning is interesting: he considers that pronouns for which the reference hasn't been provided are syncategoremes, and as such they cannot be *sermones*. Then, he states that, since the sense of this syncategoreme is still incomplete in the context of the phrase, then the whole phrase is a syncategoreme. Implicitly, the argument drawn above relies on the idea that syncategoremes are not *sermones*, presumably because they do not have a complete sense and only acquire a signification if they are joined to categoremes in the grammatically appropriate way. This is an important sign that the notion of *sermo* is intimately tied to signification, especially given that *voces*, in contrast to *sermones*, can be syncategoremes as well as categoremes.⁶⁷ In this context, then, the author does not consider

⁶⁵ In Chapter 3, I render another usage of '*sermocinalis*' (from the SDA) as 'linguistic' and while this translation is accurate in the context of the SDA, it would not be accurate in this passage. In fact, what the author of *D'Orvillensis* meant here is not entirely transparent, so I will leave '*sermocinale*' as is for the sake of accuracy.

⁶⁶ AO, pp. 262–263, emphasis mine: "*Dubitatur de hac voce 'diligit se' et de hac 'de domo' utrum sit \sermo/complexus vel incomplexus. Ad hoc breviter dicimus quod haec vox 'diligit se' non est sermo, et ita nec complexus nec incomplexus. Est enim regula: "Quotiens aliquod syncategoreuma ponitur in constitutione vocis quod non reducitur ad certitudinem ex aliquo ibi posito, totalis vox est syncategoreuma", i.e. consignificans. Quare, cum in praedicta locutione ponatur hoc relativum 'se', cuius respectus non determinatur ex aliquo, facit totalem vocem consignificativam. Si item esset sermo, ergo sermo complexus vel incomplexus. Si complexus, ergo oratio; ergo posset resolvi in duas intelligibiles partes. Si incomplexus, ergo dictio, ergo non habet dictionem partem sui. De hac voce 'de domo' potest dici quod est sermo complexus, et 'de' est ibi vel memoriale \sermocinale/ vel materiale."*

⁶⁷ It is also interesting to note that the author of *D'Orvillensis* strongly implies that the preposition '*de*' should be treated as a categoreme. However, I am content with merely pointing this out for the time being, as it has no bearing on the argument I am making here.

sermones to be the same as *voces*, even though he is not using the technical distinction as it appears in the LNPS.

Additionally, *sermones* are of special importance for the author of *D'Orvillensis* since he considers that Aristotle's *Categories* should be read as a work that is primarily about *sermones* rather than things:

(2rB) After ending these preliminaries, the Author divides *sermones* in order to move through the steps of the divisions towards what is proposed principally.⁶⁸

(4vB) <1b25> Of those which are said according to no composition (*complexionem*) i.e. of incomplex *sermones* a single one i.e. any either signifies substance i.e. either it is a *sermo* signifying a thing existing by itself, or a quality, or a quantity, or *ad aliquid* i.e. a relation, or where i.e. existence in a place, or when i.e. relevant to the predicament of when, or being in a position, i.e. relevant to the predicament of position, or having (*habere*) i.e. relevant to the predicament of *habitus*, or doing i.e. an action, or undergoing i.e. a passion.⁶⁹

(5vB) Note that he says “primary substance signifies *hoc aliquid*”, therefore primary substance signifies, but to signify [is a feature] of *sermones*, [while] to be signified [is a feature] of things; therefore **primary substance is a *sermo***. But there is no such thing [i.e. primary substance], unless [there is] an individual of the first predicament; **therefore, individuals are *sermones*, and in this way they are not *res***.⁷⁰

In the three above passages, the author glosses on Aristotle's text by taking its subject matter, the ten categories as well as the preliminary conceptual distinctions (for example, between univocal and equivocal), as being about *sermones*. For example, primary substance (one type of substance, which is the first category), is explicitly interpreted as a *sermo*, since Aristotle states that a primary substance signifies something, and that to signify something is characteristic of *sermones* rather than things (5vB). The underlying reasoning is the same for all categories, and warrants the claim that Aristotle's *Categories* is to be read as a treatise primarily concerned with words.⁷¹

Thus, despite the fact that the *sermo*-terminology in *D'Orvillensis* bears a surface resemblance to Abelardian terminology, one key element, namely the relation of *sermones* with

⁶⁸ AO, p. 262: “*Finitis prooemialibus \dividit Auctor sermonem ut ita per gradus divisionis accedat ad principale propositum.*”

⁶⁹ AO, p. 274: “<1b25> *Eorum quae secundum nullam complexionem dicuntur i.e. sermonum incomplexorum singulum i.e. quodlibet aut significat substantiam i.e. aut est sermo significans rem per se existentem, aut qualitatem, aut quantitatem, aut ad aliquid i.e. relationem, aut ubi i.e. existentiam in loco, aut quando i.e. pertinet ad predicamentum quando, aut situm esse i.e. pertinet ad praedicamentum positionis, aut habere i.e. pertinet ad praedicamentum habitus, aut facere i.e. actionem, aut pati i.e. passionem.*”

⁷⁰ AO, p. 291, emphasis mine: “*Nota quod ait 'prima substantia significat hoc aliquid', ergo prima substantia significat, sed sermonum est significare, rerum significari; ergo prima substantia est sermo. Sed ipsa non est nisi individuum primi praedicamenti; ergo individua sunt sermones, et ita non sunt res.*”

⁷¹ For an explicit statement, see for example AO p. 258: “*Item quaeritur, cum Auctor \non intendat/ nisi de terminis [...]*”

institution, is not used to mark a difference between *voces* and *sermones*. It seems like the author of *D'Orvillensis* loosely distinguishes the notions, albeit not in any systematic way. However, what emerges clearly is that he uses *sermo* when he is concerned with the meaningfulness of linguistic items.

4.4.2.2. Comparison with the SDA

In order to better understand the history of the *sermo/vox* distinction in Abelard's wake, it is useful to look at the earlier SDA. The latter contains the claim that "genera, species, individuals, *differentiae*, *propria* or accidents are, without a doubt, *sermones*",⁷² and this claim relies on a reasoning similar to that which is deployed in *D'Orvillensis*:

Which [i.e. the idea that Porphyry's predicables are *sermones*] Aristotle, First of the Peripateticians, claims, saying openly: it seems that every substance signifies something, and in primary [substance] indeed it is undoubtable and true that it signifies something. [...] Therefore, since it is [characteristic] of *sermones* to signify, but of things to be signified, **it is clear that primary substances**, which are individuals of the first Category, **and secondary substances**, which are said to be genera and species of the same Category, **are sermones, since they are said by Aristotle to signify**.⁷³

The term *vox* is also used throughout SDA, but just like in *D'Orvillensis*, the author of SDA seems to use the term '*sermo*' when he wants to speak of words as meaningful, and to use '*vox*' more broadly for any striking of the air by the tongue of an animal, producing sound.⁷⁴ In a very Abelardian fashion and contrary to what is found in *D'Orvillensis*, the author of SDA differentiates between a *sermo* and a *vox* using the notion of institution:

However, although we say that genera, species, *differentiae*, *propria* and accidents are *sermones*, nevertheless we deny this entirely about *voces*, **because no institution (*institutio*) is made in the *voces* of genera and species and the rest**; for, if a genus or a species or another universal were to be a certain *vox*, it would have to be suitable to many by the very same [*vox*] being pronounced (*assumpta*) many times. We deny that this is [the case], for a pronounced *vox* cannot be assumed (*assumi*) again. Whence Aristotle [says]: "the pronounced *vox* perishes." And elsewhere: "and once the word (*verbum*) has been uttered, it flies away irrevocably."⁷⁵

⁷² SDA 2.20: "*Itaque sermones indubitanter esse genera vel species seu individua vel differentia, propria vel accidentia affirmamus.*"

⁷³ SDA 2.21, emphasis mine: "*Quod Aristotiles, princeps peripateticorum, clamat dicens aperte: videtur omnis substantia aliquid significare et in primis quidem indubitabile et verum est quoniam hoc aliquid significat. [...] Cum ergo sermonum sit significare, rerum vero significari, **palam est primas substantias**, que sunt primi predicamenti individua, **et secundas substantias**, que eiusdem predicamenti genera et species esse dicuntur, esse sermones, cum ab Aristotile significare dicantur.*"

⁷⁴ SDA 2.01

⁷⁵ SDA 2.24, emphasis mine: "*Verumtamen, cum sermones genera vel species, differentias seu propria vel accidentia sive individua esse dicamus, hec tamen a vocibus penitus denegamus, **cum in vocibus generum et specierum atque aliorum non sit institutio facta**; si enim vox aliqua genus vel species vel aliud universale esset, eadem equidem ipsa pluribus assumpta vicibus pluribus convenire haberet. Quod esse negamus, nam vox prolata iterum assumi non potest. Unde Aristotiles: vox prolata perit. Et alius: et semel emissum volat inrevocabile verbum.*"

In this passage, the author of the SDA makes it clear that, for him, *voces* are quite literally the puffs of air that come out of a speaker's mouth when they utter words, and, as such, they disappear and cannot come into existence again once they are gone; two events of uttering the word 'horse', for example, involve two different *voces*. In contrast, *sermones* are words taken as meaningful, and continue to exist in some sense even if they are not currently being uttered, in virtue of them having been established to convey a certain meaning. This reliance on the role of institution is very reminiscent of Abelard.⁷⁶ In *D'Orvillensis*, however, there is no such clear attempt at distinguishing *voces* from *sermones*, and the notion of imposition does not have the important role which it had in Abelard's thought. Nevertheless, the two treatises come together (1) in using the *sermo*-terminology to refer more precisely to words as units of signification, and (2) in assimilating universals, such as genera and species, to *sermones* rather than *voces*.

Examining *D'Orvillensis* along with SDA shows that the terminology established in Abelardian works survived Abelard, and influences authors which also share other views typical of the *Nominales*. However, this influence seems to get more and more diluted with time. Indeed, the mid-century SDA is very close to the wording of LNPS, which is probably more or less contemporary with it. In contrast, in *D'Orvillensis*, which is from the very end of the twelfth century, while the vocabulary remains, it seems to have lost its technical meaning. The use of *sermo* to refer specifically to words as meaningful remains, but the link with *institutio* is severed. In fact, the distinction between the two terms is so blurry that it begs the question why the author of *D'Orvillensis* needs it at all. It appears as though this terminology was passed down by masters, and the author of *D'Orvillensis* might be using it more by habit than out of a conscious decision to use a technical distinction based on its theoretical virtues. This impression is strengthened when considering the CLP, the Porretan text which bears some resemblance with *D'Orvillensis* in other regards: there, the term '*sermo*' is used exclusively in the sense of 'discourse' in general. For example, in the context of a proposition, a subject is defined as "*id de quo fit sermo*",⁷⁷ or that about which discourse is made. There is no instance using *sermo* to talk of units of signification, as was the case in both SDA and *D'Orvillensis*. All in all, as important as the notions of *institutio* and *sermo* were for Abelard, especially given

⁷⁶ For a discussion on the importance of imposition in Abelard's philosophy, see Marenbon (2013), pp. 149–166.

⁷⁷ See CLP p. 5.35–37

his heavy use of semantics to address the problem of universals, it seems that, over time, this aspect of his thought did not survive him for very long, and that being a *Nominalis* had more to do with holding the other theses mentioned in the current chapter.

4.5. SOME CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the question of who wrote the anonymous *D'Orvillensis* Categories commentary is more complicated than Ebbesen suggests in the introduction to his edition of the text. While the author likely belonged to a school and was not speaking in his own name only, we cannot safely conclude that he was a *Nominalis*. Nor is it my intent to suggest that our author is Porretan; rather, at this stage, I am remarking that there seem to be important similarities between our author and both of the aforementioned schools, such that it is not currently possible to clearly identify the school he belonged to.

This study might leave us even more puzzled as to who may be the author of *D'Orvillensis*, but it provides a good occasion to think about some important issues for anyone who is interested in the history of nominalism, and the history of the *Nominales*. Indeed, historians interested in the history of nominalism (taken as the combination of the theses that there are no universal things and that everything that exists is singular), when it comes to the twelfth century, tend to focus on the school of the *Nominales*. This approach certainly is sound in many ways, especially as the *Nominales* are known for rejecting the existence of universal things, since they consider that universals are only names. Sometimes, however, the history of twelfth-century nominalism ends up being conflated with the study of the *Nominales*. Ebbesen himself tends to use the terms “nominalist” and “*nominalis*” somewhat interchangeably.⁷⁸ Such an approach risks obscuring important facts, for example that the *Porretani*, even though they are a school distinct from the *Nominales* and described as a school of *Reales* by John of Salisbury, might have been anti-realists about universals, and would perhaps count as nominalists in our current-day understanding of the term. Indeed, the CLP rejects the existence of universals as *res*.⁷⁹ The ontology presented in the CLP only admits two types of entities, which are singular: (1) subsistents (*subsistentia*), which are the individual substances, and (2)

⁷⁸ See, for example, Ebbesen (1999) p. 241. Ebbesen writes that he takes the text to be a work “written by a confessed nominalist”. A few lines later, he sums up his view on the matter in these words: “In short: Anonymous d’Orvillensis remains within the 12th-century universe of philosophical debate, and probably considered himself a *nominalis* [...]”. Such uses of the two terms are spread across the entire introduction to the edition of the text, as well as in Ebbesen (1991).

⁷⁹ See, for example, CLP I.12.

subsistences (*subsistentiae*), the forms that make the individuals what they are. This leaves no room for universal entities; instead, universal terms are understood as being about a plurality of individuals.⁸⁰ This is what drove Martin to describe the CLP as putting forth a form of “collective anti-realism”.⁸¹ The fact that *D’Orvillensis* shares such important key features with both schools shows that by the end of the twelfth century, they are perhaps not as strongly opposed as was traditionally assumed. In fact, it seems that these schools are less distinguished by their views on universals than by their other theses, some of them mentioned here. In any case, this study provides good reasons for a careful disentanglement of the history of nominalism from the history of the *Nominales*: while there is significant overlap between the two, it seems that a better understanding of the logical theses of the *Porretani* is an important component in our understanding of the twelfth-century portion of the history of nominalism and might help us to better assess the relation between nominalism and the *Nominales*.

⁸⁰ See CLP III.28.

⁸¹ Martin (1983), pp. XVIII–XIX, XXIII–XXIV, XXXVII–XLIII.

Conclusion

SUMMARY

Throughout this thesis, I have examined a few texts which were associated, in one way or another, with twelfth-century nominalism. I have conducted my research in accordance with two over-arching aims, defined in Chapter 1:

- 1) To evaluate Abelard's influence on these texts;
- 2) To investigate how the nominalist views expressed in the texts mesh with other views and positions adopted by their authors, thinking about the possible motivations for holding such views.

Three texts have been studied. In Chapter 2, I have drawn attention to John of Salisbury's original approach to nominalism in the *Metalogicon*. In this work, a nominalist position was not adopted for logical or metaphysical reasons, but rather for reasons having to do with the philosophy of education as well as moral considerations. As was seen, John of Salisbury is led by the virtue of prudence (*phronesis*) to the conclusion that it is safest to accept that there are no universal things in existence. However, even if the discourse on universals is false strictly speaking, as it speaks of non-existent entities, it still has a value in the domain of education. Indeed, speaking of universals is a way to facilitate learning. The originality of John of Salisbury only comes into focus, I argue, when his views are examined holistically, that is, when his metaphysical views are examined in tandem with his views on virtue and education.

In Chapter 3, I have proposed the first detailed study of the whole of the *Summa dialetice artis*. As a text which expresses a clear debt to Abelard, it provides valuable insight on which notions of his get picked up by followers and taught even at an introductory level. An important observation is that the author of the SDA seems very intent on teaching all of the basic notions of logic while avoiding, as much as possible, any talk about things. For him, logic is an art not only deployed in language, but which has language as its subject matter as well. The notion of imposition, inherited from Abelard, is invoked several times as a way to provide explanations of logical notions which remain on the level of language and thought. The author of the SDA also borrows the Abelardian terminology of *sermones* to speak of vocal sounds with a linguistic signification. However, he diverges significantly from Abelardian thought in his analysis of modal claims. Yet, as was explained, it seems that the resulting exposé of modal claims is more language-focused than Abelard's own. This indicates that, beyond allegiance to

Abelardian thought, the author is mainly concerned with proposing a language-focused approach to the teaching of logic.

In Chapter 4, I show that the anonymous *D'Orvillensis* commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*, once firmly thought by its editor to be a work by a member of the school of the *Nominales*, might be harder to categorize than it initially appeared. On the one hand, it is manifest that the author of the commentary adopts a language-focused approach to logic. He repeatedly describes the *Categories* as “*sermones*”, a term whose technical use, as was seen before, is inherited from Abelard. He also believes that predication is a relation between linguistic entities only, and as such considers that the predicables, such as genera and species, are *sermones*. On the other hand, there are some views expressed in the commentary which are reminiscent of positions taken by Porretans, in the *Compendium logicae Porretanum*, most notably the thesis that no form inheres in a form. This is all the more important as Abelard rejects this thesis. Driven by these findings, I highlight the importance of looking beyond the *Nominales* when investigating nominalism.

Despite the heterogeneity of the examined texts, some common conclusions can be reached. Firstly, it is becoming clearer that the traditional portrait of twelfth-century nominalists as *Nominales* and followers of Abelard needs to be nuanced. Indeed, it seems that certain nominalist views existed outside of the school of the *Nominales*, and that even the most ardent followers of Abelard did not adopt his views without some significant caveats. In all three texts studied above, nominalist views come into relief in discussions relating to the activity of teaching logic: what it should be about, how it should be done, and for what aims. Aside from John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon*, the two other texts seem to take a nominalist position as granted, rather than something needing to be defended. This corroborates the idea that there were nominalist teaching environments, and that at least within these circles, it was possible to take such views as uncontentious. For this reason, a full picture of twelfth-century nominalism must not be limited to texts which discuss the problem of universals head-on; it is equally important to look at instances where it is *not* discussed, at what happens when a nominalist position is taken for granted.

Secondly, the research contained above generally supports Marenbon's construal of a language-focused approach to logic which emerged in the late eleventh century. As was discussed in Chapter 1, Cameron had expressed doubt with regards to Marenbon's original

construal of the so-called *in voce* approach to logic.¹ Marenbon developed a refined version of his account of logic from the late eleventh-century as a response to Cameron’s criticisms, which involved speaking of a language-focused approach to logic rather than of the *in voce* method of exegesis.² As a reminder, Marenbon suggested that a logic-focused approach to logic is characterized by treating logic (especially the *Categories* and the *Isagoge*) as being about words, more specifically words about other words. Furthermore, language-focused texts, although not philosophically naïve with regards to questions of ontology, do not always engage in metaphysical argumentation. The texts covered in this study, especially the SDA and AO, fit within this description, and attest to the fact that such an approach existed, was historically relevant, and had some relation to Abelard and nominalism, at least from Abelard’s own time onwards. The historical relevance of this approach to logic can be further appreciated in the light of what Tarlazzi has called the “assumption of realism”: before the late eleventh century, it was tacitly assumed that genera and species were things, and that they entered in the constitution of individual things.³ Tarlazzi hypothesizes that the development of what Marenbon calls the language-focused approach to logic spurred a more attentive and thorough study of Priscian’s *Institutiones* and led to an increased interest for grammar, dialectics, and rhetoric, a development which may have played a key role in calling the assumption of realism into question.⁴ This is significant, as a nominalist position can only be articulated once realism is called into question. My research is consistent with this hypothesis and shows in more detail how concerns for approaching logic as being about language rather than things is articulated with Abelardian positions, including but not limited to nominalism about universals.

ORIENTATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Because most of what we know about medieval metaphysics comes from the study of materials that were used in teaching, such as manuals, lecture notes, and the like, it is crucial that we continue developing a better understanding of the peculiar educational environment of the twelfth century. Serious progress in that area has been done recently,⁵ but much remains to be uncovered. It is equally important to look at nominalism beyond the *Nominales*. One important avenue highlighted in this thesis is the investigation of the *Compendium logicae*

¹ See *supra*, section 1.2.3.

² See *supra*, section 1.2.3.

³ Tarlazzi (2021), p. 1022.

⁴ Tarlazzi (2021), pp. 1022–1023.

⁵ For example, see *A companion to twelfth-century schools*, edited by Cédric Giraud (2020).

Porretanum. If, as Martin claims, they truly are anti-realist about universals, given that there are views of theirs coexisting with views of the *Nominales* in at least one text (the anonymous *D'Orvillensis* commentary on the *Categories*), this would constitute a serious challenge for the view, going back at least to Aventinus, that the opposition between *Nominales* and *Reales* was at the core of twelfth-century philosophy and that it centred around their opposing viewpoints on universals. In complement to this, another text which would be interesting to investigate in more detail is the anonymous *Glossae doctrinae sermonum*. The author of this text defers to Abelard on many matters, and although he sometimes disagrees with him on important points, it is nevertheless clear that he is heavily indebted to him. However, contrary to the texts examined in this thesis, the *Glossae doctrinae sermonum* adopts an explicitly realist stance when it comes to universals, stating that “universal” and “singular” are not names of names but names of things.⁶ Delving deeper into this text could contribute yet again to a more complete and nuanced portrait of Abelard’s influence on twelfth-century metaphysics. While we are on the topic of other relevant works, it is also worth drawing attention to a late eleventh-century work which has been associated with a language-focused approach to logic, namely Garlandus’ *Dialectica*. In this thesis, I have focused in part on nominalism *after* Abelard, hence the *Dialectica* was excluded because of its dating, which precedes Abelard. However, there would certainly be much to gain by looking at how the texts we covered here relate (or not) to the discussions found in the *Dialectica*. Finally, another dimension of the portrait of twelfth-century nominalism which remains to be fleshed out is its relation to theology. Courtenay has already drawn attention to some passages of Peter of Capua’s *Summa*, a theological work in which Peter of Capua seems to express allegiance to the school of the *Nominales*.⁷ I had initially planned to research this work as part of this thesis; however the sole existing edition of Peter of Capua’s *Summa* is only partial and the bulk of the relevant discussions for the study of nominalism remain unedited to this day. Given the timeline for this research project as well as my novice palaeography skills, it would not have been realistic to undertake the edition of the rest of the work, which could have taken years on its own. Nevertheless, if it was made more accessible, this text would likely constitute a good entry point for examining the relation between logical schools and their theological positions, along with a study of the *Compendium logicae Porretanum* in relation to Porretan theology.

⁶ Anon. *Glossae ‘Doctrinae sermonum’*, pp. 90–91.

⁷ See Courtenay (1992b).

References

PRIMARY SOURCES (MEDIEVAL AND ANCIENT)

Abelard, P., *Collationes*. (= **Coll.**)

Edited and translated by J. Marenbon & G. Orlandi (2001) in *Peter Abelard Collationes*. Oxford University Press.

Abelard, P., *Dialectica*. (= **Dial.**)

Edited by L.M. De Rijk (1970) in *Dialectica: First complete edition of the Parisian manuscript, with an introduction by L. M. de Rijk* (second edition). Assen, Van Gorcum.

Abelard, P., *Logica 'Ingredientibus': 'Glossae super Porphyrium'* (= **LI: Isag.**)

Edited by B. Geyer (1919–1921) in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters* 21, Aschendorff: Munster, pp. 1–109.

Translated (excerpt) by P. V. Spade (1994) in *Five Texts on the Mediaeval Problem of Universals: Porphyry, Boethius, Abelard, Duns Scotus, Ockham*. Hackett, pp. 26–56.

Abelard, P., *Logica 'Ingredientibus': 'Glossae super Praedicamenta'* (= **LI: Cat.**)

Edited by B. Geyer (1919–1921) in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters* 21, Aschendorff: Munster, pp. 111–305.

Abelard, *Logica 'Ingredientibus': 'Glossae super Peri Hermeneias'*. (= **LI: PH**)

Edited by K. Jacobi & C. Strub (2010) in *Petri Abaelardi Glossae super 'Peri hermeneias'* (vol. 1). Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis, 206. Brepols.

Abelard, P./ Anon., *Logica nostrorum petitioni sociorum*. (= **LNPS**)

Edited by B. Geyer (1919–1927) in *Peter Abaelards Philosophische Schriften. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters* 21. Munster, pp. 505–580.

Abelard, P., *Historia calamitatum*. (= **HC**)

Edited by J. Monfrin (1974) in *Abélard, Historia calamitatum: texte et commentaires* (fourth edition, pp. 62–109). Vrin.

Abelard, P., *Tractatus de Intellectibus*. (= **TI**)

Edited and translated into French by P. Morin (1994) in *Abélard: Des Intellections*. Vrin.

Abelard, P., *Super topica glossae*.

Edited by M. Dal Pra (1969), in *Scritti Di Logica* (pp. 205–330). La Nuova Italia.

Anon., *Compendium logicae Porretanum*. (= **CLP**)

Edited by S. Ebbesen, K. M. Fredborg & L. Nielsen (1983) in *Compendium logicae Porretanum ex codice Oxoniensi Collegii Corporis Christi 250: A Manual of Porretan*

Doctrine by a Pupil of Gilbert's, *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin*, 46, 1–113. <https://cimagl.saxo.ku.dk/download/46/46EbbesenIII-113.pdf>

Anon., *Introductiones montanes maiores*.

Edited by E. P. Bos & J. Spruyt (2017) in *Anonymi introductiones montanes maiores*, Peeters.

Anon., *Introductiones montanes minores*.

Edited by L. M. De Rijk (1967) in *Logica Modernorum* (vol. 2, tome 2, pp. 7–71). Van Gorcum.

Anon., *Glossae 'Doctrinae sermonum'*.

Edited by K. Jacobi, C. Strub & P. King (2010) in *Petri Abaelardi Glossae super 'Peri hermeneias'*. (vol. 2). Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis, 206A. Brepols, pp. 1–224.

Anon., *Positiones Nominalium*. (= **PN**)

Edited by S. Ebbesen (1991) in Two Nominalist Texts, *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin* (61), 431–432. <https://cimagl.saxo.ku.dk/download/61/61Ebbesen429-440.pdf>

Anon. "d'Orvillensis", *Commentarium in Aristotelis Categorias*. (= **AO**)

Edited by S. Ebbesen (1999) in Anonymus D'Orvillensis' Commentary on Aristotle's Categories, *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin* (70), 251–423. <https://cimagl.saxo.ku.dk/download/70/70Ebbesen229-423.pdf>

Anon./ William of Lucca, *Summa dialetice artis*. (= **SDA**)

Edited by L. Pozzi (1975) in *Summa dialetice artis. Dal Codice 614 (sec. XII) della Biblioteca Feliana di Lucca*. Liviana Editrice.

Boethius, *De Topicis differentiis*. (= **DTD**)

Edited and translated by E. Stump (2004) in *Boethius's "De topicis differentiis"*, Cornell University Press.

Also edited in J.-P Migne (1847). *Patrologia Latina* 64, 1173B–1216D.

Boethius, *In Ciceronis topica*. (= **ICT**)

Edited in J.-P. Migne (1847). *Patrologia Latina* 64, 1039D–1169D.

Boethius, Second commentary on the *Isagoge*.

Translated (excerpt) by P.V. Spade (1994) in *Five Texts on the Medieval Problem of Universals* (pp. 20–25), Hackett.

Aventinus, J., *Annales ducum Boiariae* (Books V & VI).

Edited by S. Riezler (1883) in *Johannes Turmair's genannt Aventinus sammtliche werke Auf veranlassung Sr. Majestat des Königs von Bayern* (vol. 2). Christian Kaiser. https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_zOu0n_GGIxEC/mode/2up

John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*. (= **ML**)

Edited by J. B. Hall & K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (1991) in *Ioannis Saresberiensis Metalogicon*. Brepols.

Translated by J. B. Hall (2013) in *Metalogicon*. Brepols.

Porphyry, *Isagoge*. (= *Isag.*)

Translated by P.V. Spade (1994) in *Five Texts on the Medieval Problem of Universals* (pp. 1–19). Hackett.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Arlig, A. (2012). Parts, wholes, and identity. In J. Marenbon (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Philosophy* (pp. 445–462). Oxford University Press.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195379488.013.0020>

Arlig, A. (2019). Medieval mereology. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (Fall 2019 ed.). Stanford University.

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/mereology-medieval/>

Bollermann, K. & C. Nederman (2016). John of Salisbury. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (Fall 2016 ed.). Stanford University.

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2016/entries/john-salisbury/>

Binini, I. (2021a). *Possibility and necessity in the time of Peter Abelard*. Brill.

Binini, I. (2021b). Some further remarks on Abelard's notion of nature. In I. Chouinard, Z. McConaughy, A. Medeiros Ramos & R. Noel (Eds.), *Women's perspectives on ancient and medieval philosophy* (pp. 239–251). Springer.

Binini, I. (2018). The de re/de dicto distinction: a twelfth century logical discovery [Unpublished manuscript, due to be published in a special number of *Vivarium*]. University of Parma.

Cameron, M. (2011). The development of early twelfth-century logic: A reconsideration. In I. Rosier-Catach (Ed.), *Arts du langage et théologie aux confins des XIe/XIIe siècles* (pp. 677–694). Brepols.

Cesalli, L. & A. De Libera (Eds.) (2017). *Formal Approaches and Natural Language in Medieval Logic*. Brepols.

Collingwood, R.G. (1939). *An autobiography*, Oxford University Press.

Collingwood, R. G. (1940). *An essay on metaphysics*, Clarendon Press.

Collingwood, R. G. (1946). *The idea of history*, Clarendon Press.

Courtenay, W. (1992a). Introduction. *Vivarium*, 30(1), 1–3.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/42569947>

Courtenay, W. (1992b). Peter of Capua as a nominalist. *Vivarium*, 30(1), 157–172.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/42569957>

Cousin, V. (1836). *Ouvrages inédits d'Abelard pour servir à l'histoire de la philosophie scolastique en France*. Imprimerie Royale.

<https://archive.org/details/ouvragesindits00abel/page/n5/mode/2up>

De Libera, A. (1996). *La querelle des universaux: de Platon à la fin du Moyen-Âge*. Seuil.

- De Libera, A. (2016). *L'archéologie philosophique: Séminaire du Collège de France, 2013-2014*. Vrin.
- De Rijk, L. M. (1962). *Logica modernorum. Vol. I: On the twelfth century theories of fallacy*. Van Gorcum.
- De Rijk, L. M. (1967). *Logica modernorum. Vol. II: The origin and early development of the theory of supposition* (tomes 1–2). Van Gorcum.
- Dray, W. (1996). *History as re-enactment: R. G. Collingwood's Idea of History*. Oxford University Press.
- Ebbesen, S. (1991). Two nominalist texts. *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin*, 61, 429–440. <https://cimagl.saxo.ku.dk/download/61/61Ebbesen429-440.pdf>
- Ebbesen, S. (1992). What must one have an opinion about. *Vivarium*, 30(1), 62–79. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42569951>
- Ebbesen, S. (1999). Anonymus D'Orvillensis' Commentary on Aristotle's Categories. *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin*, 70, 229–423. <https://cimagl.saxo.ku.dk/download/70/70Ebbesen229-423.pdf>
- Eklund, M. (2017). Fictionalism. *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (Winter 2017 ed.). Stanford University. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/fictionalism/>
- Erismann, C. (2011). Schools in the twelfth century. In H. Lagerlund (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of medieval philosophy* (pp. 1176–1182). Springer.
- Erismann, C. (2012). Latin Philosophy to 1200. In J. Marenbon (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of medieval philosophy* (pp. 166–191). Oxford University Press.
- Foucault, M. (1966). *Les mots et les choses*. Gallimard.
- Fredborg, K. M. (2003). Abelard on rhetoric. In C. J. Mews, C. J. Nederman & R. M. Thomson (Eds.), *Rhetoric and renewal in the latin west 1100–1540. Essays in honour of John O. Ward* (pp. 54–80). Brepols.
- Gastaldelli, F. (1977). Note sul codice 614 della Biblioteca Capitolare di Lucca e sulla edizione del *De arithmetica compendiose tractata* e della *Summa dialetice artis*. *Salesianum*, 39(4), 693–702.
- Gilson, E. (1955). *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*. Random House.
- Giraud, C. (Ed.) (2020). *A companion to twelfth-century schools*. Brill.
- Giraud, C. (2020). Schools and the 'renaissance of the twelfth century'. In C. Giraud (Ed.), *A companion to twelfth-century schools* (pp. 1–9). Brill.
- Goubier, F. & I. Rosier-Catach (2020). The trivium in the twelfth century. In C. Giraud (Ed.), *A companion to twelfth-century schools* (pp. 141–179). Brill.
- Green-Pedersen, N. J. (1984). *The tradition of the Topics in the Middle Ages: The commentaries on Aristotle's and Boethius' Topics*. Philosophia Verlag.
- Green-Pedersen, N. J. (1987). The topics in medieval logic. *Argumentation*, 1(4), 407–417.
- Grellard, C. (2013). *Jean de Salisbury et la renaissance médiévale du scepticisme*. Les belles lettres.

- Grondeux, A. & I. Rosier-Catach (2011). Les Glosulae super Priscianum et leur tradition. In I. Rosier-Catach (Ed.), *Arts du langage et théologie aux confins des XIe/XIIe siècles* (pp. 107–179). Brepols.
- Hendley, B. P. (1970). John of Salisbury and the problem of universals. *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 8(3), 289–302.
- Haseldine, J. P. (2013). Introduction. In John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon* (trans. J.B. Hall). Brepols.
- Iwakuma, Y. (1992a). ‘Vocales’, or early nominalists. *Traditio*, 47, 37–111. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0362152900007200>
- Iwakuma, Y. (1992b). Twelfth-century Nominales: The posthumous school of Peter Abelard. *Vivarium*, 30(1), 97–109. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42569953>
- Iwakuma, Y. (2009) Vocales revisited. In T. Shimizu & C. Burnett (Eds.), *The word in medieval logic, theology and psychology: Acts of the XIIIth international colloquium of the Société Internationale pour l’Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale, Kyoto, 27 September-1 October 2005* (pp. 81–171). Brepols.
- Iwakuma, Y. & Ebbesen, S. (1992). Logico-theological schools from the second half of the 12th century: A list of sources. *Vivarium*, 30(1), 173–210. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42569958>
- Jacobi, K., C. Straub & King, P. (1996). From intellectus verus/falsus to the dictum propositionis: The semantics of Peter Abelard and his circle. *Vivarium*, 34(1), 15–40. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41963568>
- Jolivet, J. (1969a). *Arts du langage et théologie chez Abélard*. Vrin.
- Jolivet, J. (1969b). La Philosophie médiévale en occident. In B. Parain (Ed.), *Histoire de la Philosophie* (vol. 1, pp. 1198–1563). Gallimard.
- King, P. (1982). *Peter Abailard and the Problem of Universals* [Unpublished PhD thesis]. University Microfilms International (No. 8220415). Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States.
- King, P. (2004). Metaphysics. In J. Brower & K. Guilfooy (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Abelard* (pp. 65–125). Cambridge University Press.
- King, P. (2007). Abelard's answers to Porphyry. *Documenti E Studi Sulla Tradizione Filosofica Medievale*, 18, 249–270.
- Kouamé, T. (2020). The institutional organization of the schools. In Giraud, C. (Ed.), *A companion to twelfth-century schools* (pp. 30–48). Brill.
- Kripke, S. (1980). *Naming and necessity*. Harvard University Press.
- Lenz, M. (2005). Peculiar perfection: Peter Abelard on propositional attitudes. *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 43(4), 377–386.
- Macintyre, A. (1984). The relationship of philosophy to its past. In R. Rorty, J. Schneewind, & Q. Skinner (Eds.), *Philosophy in History: Essays in the Historiography of Philosophy* (pp. 31–48). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511625534.005>
- Marenbon, J. (1992). Vocalism, nominalism and the commentaries on the Categories from the earlier twelfth century. *Vivarium*, 30(1), 51–61. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42569950>

- Marenbon, J. (1993). Medieval Latin glosses and commentaries on Aristotelian logical texts, before c. 1150 AD. In C. Burnett (Ed.), *Glosses and Commentaries on Aristotelian Logical Texts: The Syriac, Arabic and Medieval Latin Traditions* (pp. 77–128). The Warburg Institute.
- Marenbon, J. (1997). *The philosophy of Peter Abelard*. Cambridge University Press.
- Marenbon, J. (2004a). Life, milieu and intellectual context. In J. Brower & K. Guilfooy (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Abelard* (pp. 13–44). Cambridge University Press.
- Marenbon, J. (2004b). Dicta, assertions and speech acts: Abelard and some modern interpreters. In A. Maierù, & L. Valente (Eds.), *Medieval theories on assertive and non-assertive language: acts of the 14th European Symposium on Medieval Logic and Semantics, Rome, June 11-15, 2002* (pp. 59–80). Leo S. Olschki.
- Marenbon, J. (2008). Was Abelard a trope theorist?. In C. Erismann & A. Schneewind (Eds.), *Compléments de substance: Études sur les propriétés accidentelles offertes à Alain de Libera* (pp. 85–101). Vrin.
- Marenbon, J. (2011). Logic at the turn of the twelfth century: A synthesis. In I. Rosier-Catach (Ed.), *Arts du langage et théologie aux confins des XIe/XIIe siècles* (pp. 181–217). Brepols.
- Marenbon, J. (2013). *Abelard in four dimensions*. University of Notre Dame Press.
- Marenbon, J. (2015). Abelard's theory of universals. In G. Guigon & G. Rodriguez-Pereyra (Eds.), *Nominalism about Properties: New essays* (pp. 38–62). Routledge.
- Marenbon, J. (2018). Alain de Libera's philosophical archeology. In J.B. Brenet & L. Cesalli (Eds.), *Sujet libre: Pour Alain de Libera* (pp. 203–207). Vrin.
- Marenbon, J. (2020). The Isagoge in the Latin tradition until c. 1200. *Medioevo*, 43, 151–189. <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.35289>
- Martin, C. (1983). The Compendium logicae Porretanum: A survey of philosophical logic from the school of Gilbert of Poitiers. *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin*, 46, XVIII–XLVI. <https://cimagl.saxo.ku.dk/download/46/46EbbesenIII-113.pdf>.
- Martin, C. (1987). Something amazing about the Peripatetic of Pallet: Abaelard's development of Boethius' account of conditional propositions. *Argumentation*, 1, 419–436.
- Martin, C. (1992). The logic of the *Nominales*, or, the rise and fall of impossible positio. *Vivarium*, 30(1), 110–126. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853411X590426>
- Martin, C. (1998). The logic of growth: Twelfth-century nominalists and the development of theories of the incarnation. *Medieval Philosophy and Theology*, 7(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.5840/medievalpt1998711>
- Martin, C. (2001). Abaelard on modality: Some possibilities and some puzzles. In T. Buchheim, C. H. Kneepkens, K. Lorenz (Eds.), *Potentialität und Possibilität: Modalaussagen in der Geschichte der Metaphysik* (pp. 97–124). Frommann-Holzboog.
- Martin, C. (2007). Denying conditionals: Abaelard and the failure of Boethius' account of the hypothetical syllogism. *Vivarium*, 45(2), 153–168. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853407X217696>

- Martin, C. (2011). 'What an ugly child': Abaelard on translation, figurative language, and logic. *Vivarium*, 49(1–3), 26–49. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853411X590426>
- Martin, C. (2016). Modality without the Prior Analytics: Early twelfth century accounts of modal propositions. In M. Creswell, E. Mares, & A. Rini (Eds.), *Logical modalities from Aristotle to Carnap* (pp. 113–132). Cambridge University Press.
- Mews, C. J. (1985). On dating the works of Peter Abailard. *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen-Âge*, 52, 73–134. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44403778>
- Mews, C. J. (1992). Nominalism and theology before Abaelard: New light on Roscelin de Compiègne. *Vivarium*, 30(1), 4–33. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42569948>
- Nederman, C. (1989). Knowledge, virtue and the path to wisdom: The unexamined Aristotelianism of John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon*. *Mediaeval Studies*, 51(1), 268–286. <https://doi.org/10.1484/J.MS.2.306852>
- Noël, R. (2018). *Understanding universals in Abelard's Tractatus de Intellectibus: The notion of "nature"* [M.A. thesis, University of Alberta]. ERA: Education and research archive. <https://doi.org/10.7939/R3XS5JZ83>.
- Normore, C. G. (1992). Abelard and the school of the Nominales. *Vivarium*, 30(1), 80–96. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42569952>
- Panaccio, C. (2019). *Récit et reconstruction*. Vrin.
- Pinzani, R. (2018). *The problem of universals from Boethius to John of Salisbury*. Brill.
- Rodriguez-Pereyra, G. (2019). Nominalism in metaphysics. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2019 ed.). Stanford University. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/nominalism-metaphysics/>
- Rorty, R. (1984). The historiography of philosophy: Four genres. In R. Rorty, J. Schneewind, & Q. Skinner (Eds.), *Philosophy in History: Essays in the Historiography of Philosophy* (pp. 49–76). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511625534.006>
- Rosier-Catach, I. (2007). Priscian on Divine Ideas and Mental Conceptions: The Discussions in the *Glosulae* in Priscianum, the *Notae Dunelmenses*, William of Champeaux and Abelard. *Vivarium*, 45(2), 219–237.
- Rosier-Catach, I. (2020, April 16). The 'linguistic turn' of medieval logic in the early 12th century [online presentation]. *Medieval Philosophy Virtual Colloquium* (4). Online via Zoom. <https://inmediasphil.wordpress.com/2020/04/10/virtual-colloquium-4-featuring-irene-rosier-catach/>
- Spade, P. V. (1994). *Five texts on the medieval problem of universals*. Hackett.
- Spruyt, J. (2015) The *Introductiones Montanae Maiores*: A student's guide to logic. *Vivarium*, 53(2/4), 249–68. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685349-12341299>
- Stump E. (1988). Logic in the early twelfth century. In N. Kretzmann (Ed.), *Meaning and Inference in Medieval Philosophy* (pp. 31–55). Springer.
- Stump E. (1989). *Dialectic and its Place in the Development of Medieval Logic*. Cornell University Press.

Tarlazzi, C. (2017). Individuals as universals: audacious views in early twelfth-century realism. *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 55(4), 557–581.
<https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.6306>

Tarlazzi, C. (2021). The debate over universals in the time of Peter Abelard: What it is, and is not, about. *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 29(6), 1012–1033.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2021.1960480>

Tweedale, M. M. (1976). *Abailard on Universals*. Elsevier/North.

Weijers, O. (2020). Methods and tools of learning. In C. Giraud (Ed.), *A Companion to Twelfth-Century Schools* (pp. 95–112). Brill.

Appendix: Comparative lists of Topics in Boethius, Abelard, and SDA

Boethius-Themistius list from *De Topicis differentiis*

Intrinsic <i>loci</i>		Extrinsic <i>loci</i>	Intermediate <i>loci</i>
<i>Loci</i> ‘from the substance’	<i>Loci</i> ‘from what accompanies the substance’		
‘from the definition’	‘from the whole (genus, integral whole)’	‘from judgement about a thing’ (from authority)	‘from inflections (<i>casibus</i>)’
‘from the description’	‘from a part (species, part of an integral whole)’	‘from similars’	‘from coordinates (<i>coniugatis</i>)’
‘from the interpretation of the name’	‘from the efficient cause’	‘from what is more’	‘from division’
	‘from the matter’	‘from what is less’	
	‘from the end’ (final cause)	‘from proportion’	
	‘from the form’	‘from opposites as contraries’ (= ‘from contraries’)	
	‘from generation/ from the effects’	‘from opposites according to privation and possession (<i>habitus</i>)’	
	‘from corruption’	‘from relative opposites ’	
	‘from uses’	‘from opposites according to affirmation and negation’	
	‘from associated accidents’	‘from transumption’	

Abelard's list from *Dialectica*

Intrinsic <i>loci</i>		Extrinsic <i>loci</i>	Intermediate <i>loci</i>
<i>Loci</i> 'from the substance'	<i>Loci</i> 'from what accompanies the substance'		
'from the definition'	'from the whole (genus, integral whole)'	'from opposites (as affirmation and negation, complex, incomplex)'	'from relatives'
'from the description'	'from parts (species, constitutive parts)'	'from immediates' (complex, incomplex)	'from contingents'
'from interpretation of the name'	'from an equal (<i>a pari</i>)' (in predication or in inference)	'from constants' (<i>a constantiis</i>)	
	'from the predicate or the subject'		
	'from the antecedent or the consequent'		

Loci in Summa dialectice artis

Intrinsic loci		Extrinsic loci	Intermediate loci
<i>Loci</i> ‘from the substance’	<i>Loci</i> ‘from what accompanies the substance’		
‘from the definition’ (includes <i>a pari</i>)	‘from the whole’ (universal, integral, in quantity, modal, temporal, local)	‘from opposites (contraries (mediate or immediate), relatives, privation and habitus, affirmation and negation)’	‘from inflections (<i>casibus</i>)’
‘from the description’ (includes <i>a pari</i>)	‘from a part’ (same sub-types as wholes)	‘from what is similar* (in quantity, in substance, quality)’ (<i>a simili</i>)	‘from coordinates (<i>coniugatis</i>)’
‘from the interpretation of the name’	‘from the cause (efficient*, material, formal, final*, other causes)	‘from what is more’	‘from division’ *Not considered as a <i>locus</i> strictly speaking; it merely ‘assigns a mode of proving’ (<i>modum probandi assignat</i> ; SDA 10.75)
	‘from generation’	‘from what is less’	
	‘from corruption’	‘from authority*’	
	‘from uses’	‘from contraries’	
	‘from associated accidents’	‘from transumption’ *Not considered as a <i>locus</i> strictly speaking; it merely ‘assigns a mode of proving’ (<i>modum probandi assignat</i> ; SDA 10.71)	