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Philosophy – Wisdom – Theology

A Note on Gerard of Abbeville’s *Principium* and Its Reception During the Thirteenth Century*

Abstract

Gerard of Abbeville’s inception speech, which he delivered during the 1250s as a graduating master in theology at the University of Paris, stands out among the extant *principia*. While many thirteenth-century inception speeches drew clear distinctions between philosophy and theology, and metaphysics and revealed theology in particular, Gerard – who was the foremost secular master of his day – adopted a different strategy in order to establish the preeminence of theology with regard to all other sciences. Consciously avoiding to pit theology against philosophy, he proposed to redefine the relations between both within the conceptual frame of sapiential knowledge. The article analyses how Gerard argues in favor of a supreme wisdom, capable of accommodating Aristotle’s first philosophy and Christian theology. Showing that Gerard’s approach did not remain uncontested, it traces the remarkable influence of his *principium*.

Key-words: Metaphysics, Christian theology, Division of philosophy, Sapiential knowledge, Biblical canon, *principia*

In recent years, the study of the so-called *principia*, that is, inception speeches at the University of Paris by graduating theologians, has received increasing attention by historians both of theology and philosophy.¹ The thirteenth-century inception speeches which have been edited so far usually consist of two parts, namely the *principium in aula*, which was delivered on the inception day itself, and, second, the resumption *principium*, with which the masters began their lectures. While the *principia in aula* function as very concise introductions to theology and the Holy Scripture, the resumption *principia* focus

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¹ For a *status quaestionis*, with references to the relevant editions and scholarly literature, see Andrew (Athanasius) Sulavik, “*Principia* and *introitus* in Thirteenth-Century Christian Biblical Exegesis, with Related Texts,” in *La Bibbia del XIII secolo. Storia del testo, storia dell’esegesi*, ed. Giuseppe Cremascoli and Francesco Santi (Florence, 2004), 269-321.

on the biblical canon and its division.² As Thomas Prügl has expressed matters, “the *principium* offered an opportunity to the new master to map out his understanding of *Sacra scriptura* as theology,” a fact which turns this genre into a privileged “source for examining the epistemological status of medieval theology”.³

This is particularly true of those *principia* which include references to and discussions of contemporary philosophy in their commendation of theology; thus, with the aim to prove the superiority of their discipline, some theologians offered their own accounts of what they believed to be the philosophical business of their counterparts in the Faculty of Arts. A very prominent example of such a “comparative” type of *principium* is Bonaventure’s *De reductione artium ad theologiam* (1254), which has recently been identified as the second part of Bonaventure’s inception discourse, that is, his *principium resumptum*.⁴ Based on a neat distinction between philosophy and theology, Franciscan, Dominican, Cistercian and Benedictine theologians established in their *principia* a hierarchy among both disciplines, which enabled them to affirm the preeminence of the latter.⁵

A significant exception in this context is the *principium* by Gerard of Abbeville, who was the most prestigious secular theologian at the University of Paris during the third quarter of the thirteenth century. While Gerard also praises theology and strives to prove its preeminence, he follows a different strategy in that he avoids pitting theology against philosophy. Instead, and much in line with his overall thought, which has been studied in depth in a recent monograph by Stephen M. Metzger,⁶ Gerard advocates an integrated

² See the detailed study of the genre, along with representative editions, in Nancy Spatz, *A Study and Edition of Inception Speeches Delivered before the Faculty of Theology at the University of Paris, ca. 1180-1286*, unpublished PhD. diss. (Cornell University, 1992).

³ Thomas Prügl, “Medieval Biblical *Principia* as Reflections on the Nature of Theology,” in *What is ‘Theology’ in the Middle Ages? Religious Cultures of Europe (11th-15th Centuries) as Reflected in their Self-Understanding*, ed. Mikołaj Olszewski (Münster i. W., 2007), 253-75, at 255.

⁴ Joshua C. Benson has been able to identify Bonaventure’s hitherto unknown *principium in aula*, namely, the sermon *Omnium artifex docuit me sapientia*, and to show how this speech was followed, at the resumption, by an early version of the *De reductione*. See Joshua C. Benson, “Identifying the Literary Genre of the *De reductione artium ad theologiam*: Bonaventure’s Inaugural Lecture at Paris,” *Franciscan Studies* 67 (2009): 149-78, and id., “Bonaventure’s Inaugural Sermon at Paris: *Omnium artifex docuit me sapientia*. Introduction and Text,” *Collectanea Franciscana* 82/3-4 (2012): 517-62.

⁵ Cf., for instance, the comparative *principia* by Guy de l’Aumône (1256), who was the first Cistercian regent master of theology at the University of Paris; Galdericus (1258-59), who, for his part, became the first Benedictine regent master; or Stephen of Besançon (1286), Master General of the Dominican Order from 1292-1294. On these masters and their *principia*, see, respectively, Jacques Guy Bougerol, “Le Commentaire des *Sentences* de Guy de l’Aumône et son ‘Introitus’,” *Antonianum* 51/4 (1976): 495-519; Alexander Fidora, “The Inception Speech of Galdericus as an Introduction to Thirteenth-Century Theology and Philosophy,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 87 (2020): 43-58; and id., “Stephen of Besançon’s *principium in aula* (1286): An Epistemological Approach to the Relation between Philosophy and Theology,” *Traditio* 76 (2021), in press.

⁶ See Stephen M. Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville, Secular Master, on Knowledge, Wisdom and Contemplation*, 2 vols (Leiden/Boston, 2017).

concept of philosophy and theology, redefining both in terms of wisdom, i.e. sapiential knowledge. In this regard, Gerard's *principium* turns out to be rather different from, if not even opposed to, those of his religious fellow theologians, who established hard dividing lines between philosophical and theological knowledge, and in particular between metaphysics and Christian theology. It is not impossible, however, that Gerard's sapiential approach represents, to some extent, the secular masters' views during the second half of the thirteenth century, a group which is still in need of further study. In either case, whether a *rara avis* or, on the contrary, the mouthpiece of a larger scholarly community, his *principium* deserves further attention. In what follows, I shall first analyze how Gerard's *principium* describes the philosophical disciplines and theology in relation to wisdom; secondly I shall show how his approach is retracted a few years later in a *principium* which has been attributed to the Dominican Peter of Scala; eventually, I shall provide further evidence for the influence that Gerard's *principium* exercised in the thirteenth century.

Gerard of Abbeville: (Re-)Negotiating the Boundaries of Philosophy and Theology

Gerard of Abbeville's *principium*, whose two parts have been edited by Stephen M. Metzger, was written during the 1250s.⁷ As is customary in the genre, his *principium in aula* builds on a biblical theme, namely Proverbs 22:20-21: "Today I will show wisdom to you; behold, I have described her thrice." Accordingly, Gerard starts his inquiry into the nature of theology by unfolding the notion of wisdom, which he does resorting to the authority of Hugh of St. Victor. The latter's *Didascalicon* – which is quoted under the title *De magistro* –, is fundamental for Gerard's approach, as it allows him to introduce a distinction between "sapientia divina sive theologica," on the one hand, and "sapientia humana sive saecularis," on the other.⁸ Elaborating upon this distinction, Gerard

⁷ See Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 2: 449-53 (*principium in aula*) and 454-65 (*principium resumptum*).

⁸ See Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 2: 449. It should be noted that this distinction is only implicit in Hugh's *Didascalicon*. While Stephen M. Metzger suggests *Didascalicon* I,9 as its source, it appears to me that Gerard's development of the subject is more akin to *Didascalicon* I,8: "Duo vero sunt quae divinam in homine similitudinem reparant, id est, speculatio veritatis et virtutis exercitium. Quia in hoc homo Deo similis est, quod sapiens et iustus est, sed iste mutabiliter, ille immutabiliter et sapiens et iustus est. Illarum vero actionum quae huius vitae necessitati deserviunt, trimodum genus est, primum, quod naturae nutrimentum administrat, secundum, quod contra molesta, quae extrinsecus accidere possunt, munit, tertium, quod contra iam illata praestat remedium. Cum igitur ad reparandam naturam nostram intendimus,

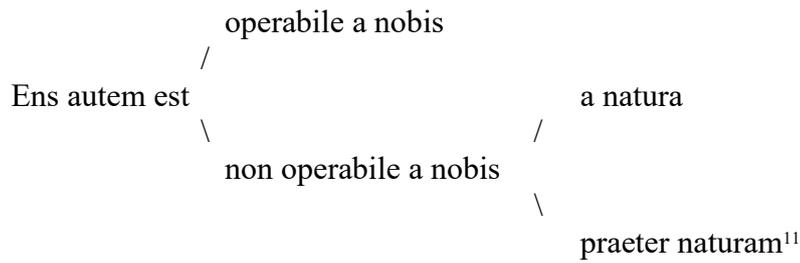
establishes a hierarchy between both kinds of wisdom, human and divine; yet he does not argue for the ensuing primacy of divine wisdom by means of an epistemological analysis, as other comparative *principia* did. Instead, Gerard emphasizes the perils of the pursuit of human wisdom in terms of the moral pitfalls associated to it, such as deceit and pride. In itself, striving for human wisdom is not objectionable, rather it is the concomitants of such enterprise that pose dangers. Divine wisdom, for its part, is never subject to deceit, nor does it give rise to pride. Interestingly, throughout his *principium in aula*, Gerard consistently speaks of human or secular wisdom, avoiding the expression “philosophical wisdom,” while for divine wisdom he does use the expression “theological wisdom”. This deliberate omission elicits the question of Gerard’s understanding of philosophy and its place within his architecture of sapiential knowledge.

Key to answering this question is his *principium resumptum*, which opens with an expanded quotation from Proverbs 22:19-20: “Behold, I have described her to you thrice in thoughts and knowledge to show to you [wisdom’s] firmness, and so that you may respond with the eloquence of truth.” While in the *principium in aula* the verses from Proverbs gave way to a twofold division of wisdom into secular and divine, the *principium resumptum* submits a more nuanced account. Quoting Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* VI,1 and Augustine’s *De civitate Dei* XI,25, Gerard now claims that there are three kinds of wisdom or science.⁹ The content of these three kinds, he adds, is determined by their objects, for which Gerard again quotes two authoritative texts, namely Hugh of St. Victor’s *Didascalicon* and Aristotle’s *De anima*. First, Gerard cites Hugh saying that “there are as many wisdoms or sciences as there are kinds of being or of diverse things,” which he then ties together with Aristotle’s “the sciences must follow [the division] of the things”.¹⁰ Hence, to account for the division of wisdom or science Gerard draws the following sketch of an ontology, presented in diagrammatic form in the manuscript:

divina actio est, cum vero illi quod infirmum in nobis est necessaria providemus, humana. Omnis igitur actio vel divina est vel humana. Possumus autem non incongrue illam, eo quod de superioribus habeatur, intelligentiam appellare, hanc vero, quia de inferioribus habetur, et quasi quodam consilio indiget, scientiam vocare. Si igitur sapientia, ut supra dictum est, cunctas quae ratione fiunt moderatur actiones, consequens est iam ut sapientiam has duas partes continere, id est, intelligentiam et scientiam, dicamus” (Hugh of St. Victor, *Didascalicon de studio legendi*, ed. Charles Henry Buttmer [Washington D.C., 1939], 15).

⁹ See Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 2: 454. Gerard does not note that Aristotle’s division of speculative or theoretical philosophy from the *Metaphysics* (physics, mathematics, metaphysics) is different from the Platonic-Stoic schema in *De civitate Dei* (physics, logic, ethics).

¹⁰ See Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 2: 454: “[...] cuius ratio [*scil.* tripartitionis sapientiae] est quia secundum Hugonem *De magistro*, ‘tot sunt sapientiae vel scientiae partes quot sunt entium vel rerum diversitates,’ et 3° *De anima*, ‘sequantur scientiae in res.’” For the quotation from Hugh, see Hugh of St. Victor, *Didascalicon de studio legendi*, ed. Buttmer, p. 11: “Vides iam qua ratione cogimur philosophiam in omnes actus hominum diffundere, ut iam necesse sit tot esse philosophiae partes quot sunt rerum



Accordingly, being is first divided into that which is the result of human work or activity (*operabile a nobis*) and that which is not (*non operabile a nobis*). The first kind of wisdom therefore refers to being which results from human work, which is the object of the mechanical arts (*scientiae mechanicae*), the discursive or speech-related disciplines (*sermocinales*), and practical philosophy (*morales*).¹²

The ontological division schema that Gerard adopts was, in fact, introduced and popularized by Dominicus Gundissalinus’s *De divisione philosophiae*, which must be considered – along with Hugh’s *Didascalicon* – the epistemological *chef d’œuvre* of the twelfth century. In the prologue of this work, one encounters the following classification:

But of all things that are, some are from our own work and will – our human works, such as laws, constitutions, religious exercises, wars and other things of this kind. Others are not from our own work or will – such as God, angels, heaven, earth, vegetables, animals, metals, spirits and all natural things. (Sed omnium, quae sunt, alia sunt ex nostro opere et nostra voluntate, ut nostra humana opera sicut leges, constitutiones, Dei cultus exercitia, bella et alia huiusmodi; alia sunt non ex nostro

diversitates, ad quas ipsam pertinere constiterit.” For the quotation from Aristotle, see *De anima* III,8, 431b 24-25: “Secatur autem scientia et sensus in res,” according to James of Venice’s translation printed in Albertus Magnus, *De anima*, Ed. Coloniensis VII/1, 223.

¹¹ Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 2: 454. This representation is followed by an alternative diagram which confirms the former: “Secundum Anselmum et Hugonem,” “ens” is either “voluntarium,” “naturale,” or “mirabile”. As Metzger points out (1: 156), this division goes back to Anselm of Canterbury (rather than to Hugh of St. Victor). See Anselm of Canterbury, *De conceptu virginali et de originali peccato*, c. 11: “Cum igitur omnia quae fiunt, si diligenter considerentur, fiant aut sola voluntate dei, aut natura secundum vim illi a deo inditam, aut voluntate creaturae; et ea quae nec natura creata nec voluntas creaturae sed solus deus facit, semper miranda sint: apparet quia tres sunt cursus rerum, scilicet mirabilis, naturalis, voluntarius” (Anselm of Canterbury. *Opera omnia* 2, ed. Franciscus Salesius Schmitt [Rome, 1940], 154).

¹² See Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 2: 454-55: “Ens operabile a nobis est de quo scientiae mechanicae, sermocinales, morales. Secundum mechanicas operamur ad conservationem corporis; secundum sermocinales ad conceptionem animi; secundum morales ad totius hominis informationem interioris quoad virtutes adquisitas, manifestationem exterioris quoad mores.”

opere nec ex nostra voluntate, ut Deus, angeli, caelum, terra, vegetabilia, animalia, metalla, spiritus et omnia naturalia.)¹³

This division, which Gundissalinus inherited from Avicenna's *Logica* – a text translated by himself and Avendauth in Toledo –,¹⁴ became very influential. It can be found, for instance, in the introductions to philosophy, that is, brief outlines of philosophy and its parts that the thirteenth-century arts masters composed as propaedeutic works for their students. Many of these texts, such as the anonymous *Accessus philosophorum* (1230) or Arnulf of Provence's *Divisio scientiarum* (1250), distinguished between what is the result of human work and what is not in order to account for the Platonic-Stoic division of philosophy.¹⁵ Consequently, they describe physics as the science which is about objects that are not from our work, whereas logic and ethics are said to deal with objects that are from our work, namely objects of our reason and our will, respectively.¹⁶

Gerard, however, moves on different lines, putting aside the objects which are from our work (*operabile a nobis*). Instead, he focuses his attention on those objects which are not from our work (*non operabile a nobis*), among which he establishes an additional subdivision, namely between work-independent objects which fall into the natural realm (*a natura*), on the one hand, and work-independent objects which are beyond nature (*praeter naturam*), on the other. Also for this subdivision, Gundissalinus's *De divisione philosophiae* seems to have been Gerard's source of inspiration. Thus, further exploring the above division of work-related and work-independent being, Gundissalinus eventually arrived at the following conclusion:

¹³ Dominicus Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae – Über die Einteilung der Philosophie*, ed. and German trans. Alexander Fidora and Dorothee Werner (Freiburg i. Br., 2007), 60/62; English translation from Edward Grant, *A Source Book in Medieval Science* (Cambridge, MA, 1974), 60.

¹⁴ See Avicenna, *Logica* (Venice, 1508, reprinted Frankfurt a. M., 1961), fol. 2ra.

¹⁵ Both texts are edited in Claude Lafleur, *Quatre Introductions à la philosophie au XIII^e siècle. Textes critiques et étude historique* (Montréal/Paris, 1988); for the passages in question, see 182 and 321, respectively.

¹⁶ The same division is still present in Aquinas; see Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, prolog., Ed. Leonina XLVII/1, 4: "Et quia consideratio rationis per habitum scientiae perficitur, secundum hos diversos ordines quos proprie ratio considerat sunt diversae scientiae: nam ad philosophiam naturalem pertinet considerare ordinem rerum quem humana considerat sed non facit, ita quod sub naturali philosophia comprehendamus et mathematicam et metaphysicam; ordo autem quem ratio considerando facit in proprio actu pertinet ad rationalem philosophiam, cuius est considerare ordinem partium orationis ad invicem et ordinem principiorum in conclusiones; ordo autem actionum voluntariarum pertinet ad considerationem moralis philosophiae."

Out of these [remarks], then, it has become evident that everything that exists is either from our [human] work and our will or is not from our work, but from that of God or nature. (Ex his igitur manifestum est, quia omne, quod est, aut est ex nostro opere et nostra voluntate aut non est ex nostro opere, sed Dei vel naturae).¹⁷

The subdivision of work-independent beings into those which are the work of nature and those which are God's work is characteristic of Gundissalinus and Gerard; it does not occur in the thirteenth-century introductions to philosophy. While Gerard's classification of work-independent beings into *a natura* and *praeter naturam* clearly depends on the passage from the *De divisione philosophiae*, his terminological choices call for attention, particularly the expression *praeter naturam*. Stephen M. Metzger has suggested that this phrase could be "a literal, if clumsy translation of μετα. φύσιν,"¹⁸ echoing its common Latin rendering as *post/trans physicam/naturam*.¹⁹ Yet, it seems much more plausible that by means of this phrase Gerard was referring to the technical definition of miracles as phenomena "praeter naturam,"²⁰ a hypothesis which is confirmed by his use of "ens mirabile" as a synonymous expression.²¹

Understanding this semantic turns out to be pivotal as Gerard moves from the ontological to the epistemological level. Rather than outlining a Platonic-Stoic division of philosophy, as the contemporary arts masters did, Gerard takes the occasion to establish a correspondence between the two domains of work-independent being and the Aristotelian description of theoretical philosophy, and of metaphysics in particular:

Being which is not related to our work is either being by nature or beyond nature. If it is by nature, it is dealt with in physics and mathematics. Some beings which are natural or by nature precede motion, e.g. quantity, because they underlie motion

¹⁷ Dominicus Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae*, ed. Fidora and Werner, 62; English translation from Grant, *A Source Book in Medieval Science*, 61 (slightly modified).

¹⁸ Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 1: 158.

¹⁹ See, for instance, Dominicus Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae*, ed. Fidora and Werner, 102, which is based on Avicenna's *Prima philosophia*, translated by Gundissalinus: Avicenna, *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina*, ed. Simone Van Riet (Louvain/Leiden, 1977-80), 1: 24.

²⁰ See the *locus classicus* in Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, 2,18,6, ed. Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 2 vols (Grottaferrata, 1971-81), 1: 419: "Et illa quidem quae secundum causam seminalem fiunt, dicuntur naturaliter fieri, quia ita cursus naturae hominibus innotuit; alia vero praeter naturam, quorum causae tantum sunt in Deo." For the development of the notion of "praeter naturam" in Aquinas's theology of miracles, see Liam S. O'Bréartúin, "The Theology of Miracles," *Ephemerides Carmeliticae* 20/1 (1961): 3-51.

²¹ See the passage above, note 11, where Gerard divides being into "ens voluntarium," "ens naturale," and "ens mirabile".

only in no far as they are quantifiable instances, and these beings can be separated from motion by abstraction; they are dealt with in mathematics. Some beings, however, follow motion and are present in matter due to motion, and these cannot be separated from motion by abstraction; they are dealt with in physics. Being which is beyond nature is the subject of theology, which deals with God and His wonders. Altogether, these sciences are called speculative, because they deal with beings that are the object of speculation or thought. (Ens non operabile a nobis dicitur vel a natura aut praeter naturam; a natura de hoc physicae, mathematicae. Ens a natura sive naturale quoddam praecedit motum sicut quantitas, quia non est motum nisi quantum, et tale abstractibile est a motu; de tali ente est mathematica. Quoddam sequitur motum et per motum acquiritur in materia, et istud non est abstractibile a motu; de tali est physica. De ente praeter naturam est theologica, quae est de Deo et eius mirabilibus. Istae dicuntur ‘speculativae’ quia de ente speculabili vel cogibili.)²²

This passage clearly resonates with Boethius’s treatise *De Trinitate*, in which the three parts of speculative philosophy are described, namely the “pars naturalis,” “mathematica,” and “theologica,”²³ which, in turn, reflect Aristotle’s physics, mathematics, and metaphysics (see *Metaphysics* VI,1). Gerard combines Boethius’s outline with the ontological sketch from Gundissalinus, as a result of which physics and mathematics are said to deal both with objects that pertain to the realm of nature. Physics, however, is defined as the science of the natural realm which is related to motion and matter in such a way that it cannot abstract from them, whereas mathematics, although its objects are related to motion, can consider them independently. Boethius’s “theologica,” for its parts, is described as categorically different from the other two speculative sciences, because its objects, that is, God and His wonders, are beyond nature (*praeter naturam*), and this implies: completely unrelated to motion and matter.

According to Metzger’s interpretation of *praeter naturam* as a translation of μετα. φύσιν, one might have expected Gerard to flesh out a genuinely philosophical account of onto-

²² Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 2: 455. My translation.

²³ See Boethius, *Tractates. The Consolation of Philosophy*, ed. and trans. Hugh Fraser Stewart, Edward Kennard Rand, and S. Jim Tester (Cambridge, MA, 1973), 8: “Nam cum tres sint speculativae partes, *naturalis*, in motu inabstracta, avnupeχai,retoj (considerat enim corporum formas cum materia, quae a corporibus actu separari non possunt [...]), *mathematica*, sine motu inabstracta (haec enim formas corporum speculatur sine materia ac per hoc sine motu, quae formae cum in materia sint, ab his separari non possunt), *theologica*, sine motu abstracta atque separabilis (nam Dei substantia et materia et motu caret) [...]”

theology in the Aristotelian tradition. This was indeed how many of Gerard's contemporaries understood matters, and most prominently Aquinas in his Commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate*, in which he famously established that metaphysics as a philosophical divine science "secundum modum nostrum," while Christian theology is divine science "secundum modum ipsorum divinorum".²⁴ Yet, Gerard goes a different way: Not only does he define the object of the highest of the speculative sciences as God and His wonders, which clearly resonates with *praeter naturam* as a key definition of Christian theology of miracles. On top of this, he concludes his presentation of the threefold wisdom by identifying Boethius's "theological" straightforward with Christian theology:

As a result, the division of wisdom and science into three parts in general has become evident, and likewise the division between the sacred science and all others, because the latter deal with being that is the result either of our work or of nature, while the former deals with what is beyond our work and that of nature. (Sic patet divisio generalis totius sapientiae vel scientiae in tres partes et divisio sacrae scientiae ab aliis scientiis, quia aliae sunt de ente quod est ab opere nostro vel naturae, ista de ente quod est praeter opus nostrum vel naturae.)²⁵

In summary, the mechanical arts, the discursive disciplines, and practical philosophy are considered the first kind of wisdom; the two speculative disciplines physics and mathematics, in turn, constitute the second kind of wisdom. The third kind of wisdom is reserved to the supreme part of speculative philosophy, whose objects are *praeter naturam* and which is identified with sacred science, in other words Christian theology. From the perspective of his Boethian *Vorlage*, this identification is possible, and maybe even plausible, for Boethius did not draw a hard distinction between Aristotle's ontology and Christian theology.²⁶ Yet, in light of the development of philosophy and

²⁴ See, in particular, Thomas Aquinas, *Super Boethium De Trinitate*, q. 2, a. 2, Ed. Leonina L, 95: "Et secundum hoc de divinis duplex scientia habetur: una secundum modum nostrum, qui sensibilibus principia accipit ad notificandum divina, et sic de divinis philosophi scientiam tradiderunt, philosophiam primam scientiam divinam dicentes; alia secundum modum ipsorum divinorum, ut ipsa divina secundum se ipsa capiantur, quae quidem perfecte in statu viae nobis est impossibilis, sed fit nobis in statu viae quaedam illius cognitionis participatio et assimilatio ad cognitionem divinam, in quantum per fidem nobis infusam inhaeremus ipsi primae veritati propter se ipsam."

²⁵ Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 2: 455. My translation.

²⁶ See Andreas Speer, "The Vocabulary of Wisdom and the Understanding of Philosophy," in *L'Élaboration du Vocabulaire Philosophique au Moyen Âge*, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse and Carlos Steel (Louvain, 2000), 257-80.

theology in the thirteenth century, both doctrinally and institutionally, Gerard's claim turns out to be momentous. As a matter of fact, it undermines the intellectual efforts undertaken by his contemporaries to delimit metaphysics and theology as two distinct sciences – efforts which, as it were, fueled the discussions of the above mentioned *principia*, which all try to show how theology is distinct from and superior to philosophy, viz. to metaphysics.²⁷

For Gerard, Christian theology, which finally takes the place of Aristotle's metaphysics in Boethius's division of speculative philosophy, is the highest of the three kinds of wisdom he describes, since it exceeds the wisdom of work-related disciplines as well as that of work-independent disciplines in the realm of nature. Against the background of this threefold division of wisdom in Gerard's *principium resumptum*, it is clear that the twofold schema of divine and secular wisdom in his *principium in aula* cannot be considered a distinction between philosophy and theology – a dividing line between which seems hard to draw, if at all possible, from Gerard's point of view. Rather, Gerard's distinction of secular and divine wisdom cuts across the traditional philosophical corpus, identifying, as he does, the superior part of speculative philosophy, that is, metaphysics, with Christian theology and divine wisdom. As the term "philosophy" is consciously avoided in the reconstruction of the various forms of wisdom, and as none of the latter is congruent with the traditional domains of philosophy, little room, if any, is left for an open confrontation between philosophy and theology. As a result, Gerard's *principium* succeeds in establishing the preeminence of theology with regard to all other disciplines without even mentioning philosophy. However, this approach, which is completely different from what is found in other *principia*, has its price, namely the vagueness as to how and where, institutionally speaking, the superior part of the speculative sciences should be taught? Did Gerard concede that arts masters could teach (parts of) the highest

²⁷ Guy de l'Aumône's *principium*, for instance, reads like a genuine counter-program to Gerard's: Theology is the highest science and the only one that deserves to be called wisdom in an absolute manner, as it is an affective science; it must be distinguished from metaphysics, which is the theology of the philosophers that cannot be called wisdom in the same sense, as it is purely speculative; the rest of the sciences do not deserve to be called wisdom at all: "Ex his patet quod haec scientia [*scil.* theologia] altissima sit, eo quod altissimo modo tradatur et per principia fidei, quae sunt supra rationem et elevant intellectum ad assentiendum primae veritati propter se, quae se prout vult indicat animis cognituris et ideo propriissime dicitur sapientia [...], quia perficit animam non solum secundum intellectum, sed etiam secundum affectum [...]. Prima vero philosophia quae est theologia philosophorum et est de causa causarum sed ut perficiens cognitionem secundum viam ratiocinationis et artis, minus proprie dicitur sapientia. Ceterae vero philosophiae quae sunt de causis consequentibus et creatis non debent dici sapientiae sed scientiae" (Bougerol, "Le Commentaire des *Sentences* de Guy de l'Aumône," 503).

of the speculative sciences? If not, did he claim that this should be the exclusive competence of the theologians?

A look onto the other side, that is, into the arts masters' writings, may shed some light on this question. It is certainly true that most thirteenth-century introductions to philosophy contained references to metaphysics as a discipline, thereby confirming that the arts masters considered it a constitutive part of the philosophical curriculum.²⁸ However, while in their opening remarks almost all introductions mentioned metaphysics or theology as the third of the speculative disciplines, it is worthwhile noting that not all of them included a dedicated chapter. This is, for instance, the case of the anonymous *Accessus philosophorum* (1230) and *Philosophica disciplina* (1245), which in their introductions address physics, mathematics and metaphysics or divine science, the latter of which, however, does not reappear in the remainder of the text.²⁹ Even a few decades later, in the 1260s, Oliverus Brito still refrained from outlining the contents of metaphysics, arguing that this science was reserved to God.³⁰ Faced with the surprisingly irregular treatment of metaphysics in these texts, one may surmise that some arts masters still felt uneasy detailing the contents of the highest of the speculative sciences because of the prohibitions of Aristotle's books, and in particular the *Metaphysics*.³¹

Whatever the reasons for these philosophers' caution, there was definitively room for thirteenth-century theologians – both doctrinally and institutionally – to explore more fluid concepts of the relation between philosophy and theology. And, in effect, some theologians, such as Gerard of Abbeville, but also Henry of Ghent and Meister Eckhart,³² seized the chance to (re-)negotiate the boundaries of philosophy and theology.

²⁸ See, for instance, the so-called “Guide de l'étudiant” form 1230–40, which includes a (relatively short) chapter on metaphysics. See Claude Lafleur (in collaboration with Joanne Carrier), *Le 'Guide de l'étudiant' d'un maître anonyme de la Faculté des Arts de Paris au XIII^e siècle* (Québec, 1992), 33–34.

²⁹ See Lafleur, *Quatre Introductions*, 184 (*Accessus philosophorum*) and 261–62 (*Philosophica disciplina*).

³⁰ See Claude Lafleur (in collaboration with Joanne Carrier), “L'introduction à la philosophie de maître Olivier le Breton,” in *L'enseignement de la philosophie au XIII^e siècle. Autour du 'Guide de l'étudiant' du ms. Ripoll 109*, ed. Claude Lafleur (in collaboration with Joanne Carrier) (Turnhout, 1997), 467–87, at 485: “Et ‘solus Deus scit hoc senium,’ ut dicit Aristoteles in *Veteri metaphysica*; et ob hoc eius divisio dimittatur.”

³¹ See Alain de Libera, “Structure du corpus scolaire de la métaphysique dans la première moitié du XIII^e siècle,” in *L'enseignement de la philosophie au XIII^e siècle. Autour du 'Guide de l'étudiant' du ms. Ripoll 109*, ed. Claude Lafleur (in collaboration with Joanne Carrier) (Turnhout, 1997), 61–88, at 86–87.

³² Andreas Speer has shown how Henry of Ghent and Meister Eckhart explored similar paths. See Andreas Speer, “Das ‘Erwachen der Metaphysik’. Anmerkungen zu einem Paradigma für das Verständnis des 12. Jahrhunderts,” in *Metaphysics in the 12th Century – On the Relationship Among Philosophy, Science and Theology*, ed. Matthias Lutz-Bachmann, Alexander Fidora, and Andreas Niederberger (Turnhout, 2004), 17–40.

Peter of Scala (?): a Critique and Follower of Gerard

In 2002, Andrew Sulavik edited an anonymous *principium* which can possibly be attributed to the Dominican Peter of Scala (d. 1295).³³ Its first part, the *principium in aula*, adopts Iob 28:1 as its *thema*: “There is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold where they refine it.” Developing this verse, its author underscores the precious qualities of Holy Scripture and theology, namely, the silver of eloquence, the gold of wisdom and the furnace of grace, which refines the precious metals. As Sulavik remarks, this exegesis shows interesting parallels with a sermon by Ranulph of la Houblonnière, a secular theologian from the second half of the thirteenth century.³⁴

That Peter – or whoever the author of the *principium* was – took inspiration from his secular fellow theologians is confirmed by his *principium resumptum*. This text starts in paragraph 1 with a division of the sciences, which, in turn, is said to flow from the general division of being. The argument for this runs as follows:

According to Hugh’s *De magistro*: ‘There are as many wisdoms or sciences as there are kinds of being or of diverse things.’ And according to the Philosopher, in *De anima* III: ‘The sciences are cut along the things.’ (Secundum Hugonem, *De magistro*: ‘Tot spientiae vel scientiae partes quot sunt entium vel rerum diversitates.’ Et secundum Philosophum, III^o *De anima*: ‘Scientiae secantur in res.’)³⁵

The combination of Hugh of St. Victor and Aristotle at this place is not incidental, but betrays Gerard’s *principium* as its source, even more so as the anonymous author here refers to Hugh’s *Didascalicon* under the title *De magistro*, used by Gerard. In contrast, in those parts of the *principium* which are not dependent on Gerard, he calls the work *De origine artium*, which was common since it is the title of its first book.³⁶

³³ See Andrew (Athanasius) Sulavik, “An Unedited *Principium Biblicum* Attributed to Petrus de Scala, O.P.,” *Angelicum* 79 (2002): 87-126, edition at 105-26.

³⁴ Sulavik, “An Unedited *Principium Biblicum*,” 91.

³⁵ Sulavik, “An Unedited *Principium Biblicum*,” 112. My translation.

³⁶ On the title “De origine artium,” see Jerome Taylor in his introduction to Hugh of St. Victor, *The Didascalicon*, trans. Jerome Taylor (New York/London, 1961), 7-8

That the anonymous author was using Gerard's text is also evident from the division of the biblical books that follows in both their *principia* upon the division of the sciences. Thus, paragraphs 7 to 46 of Sulavik's edition are taken from Gerard's text, with very few additions. In order to illustrate this dependence, the following table gathers the opening lines of paragraphs 7 to 11 of the anonymous *principium* together with their corresponding texts in Gerard's *principium*:

Peter of Scala (?), ed. Sulavik	Gerard of Abbeville, ed. Metzger
7. Vetus igitur Testamentum, cum sit de figuris et signis in quibus Christus significatur, dividitur in tres ...	Vetus ergo testamentum, cum sit de figuris et signis in quibus Christus figurabatur, dividitur in tres partes... (2: 457, ll. 23-24)
8. Ista divisio Veteris Testamenti in tres partes, scilicet legem, prophetas et psalmos, et praefiguratio Christi in eis tangitur Lucae ultimo...	Ista divisio veteris testamenti in tres partes, scilicet legem, prophetas, psalmos, et praefiguratio Christi in eis tangitur in Lucae ultimo... (2: 458, ll. 10-11)
9. Et nota quod lex, ut hic sumitur, continet quinque libros Moysi...	Et nota quod lex ut hic sumitur continet V libros Moysi... (2: 458, ll. 16-17)
10. Et nota quod lex sumitur multis modis. Aliquando enim sumitur pro toto Veteri Testamento...	Lex sumitur multis modis. Aliquando sumitur pro toto veteri testamento... (2: 458, ll. 23-24)
11. Doctrina mandatorum, id est lex Moysi, proprie dicta dividitur in tres partes. Scilicet in prooemium vel prologum, tractatum et epilogum, sicut dividitur <i>Liber praedicamentorum</i> in antepaedicamenta, praedicamenta, postpaedicamenta...	– One of the anonymous author's very few additions: not in Gerard –
All remaining paragraphs, until the end of the text, are identical	

The faithfulness with which the anonymous author reproduces Gerard's text in these and the remaining paragraphs, which make up 11 pages in Sulavik's edition of the anonymous *principium* and 9 in Metzger's edition of Gerard's text, is extraordinary. Except for very few additions, such as paragraph 11 (see the table), all other paragraphs coincide almost literally with Gerard's texts. This is all the more remarkable, as the anonymous author

wrote at a time when Gerard was considered the major opponent among the secular theologians in the conflict with the mendicants at the University of Paris.³⁷

In contrast, paragraphs 1 to 4 of the anonymous *principium*, which outline the division of the sciences, offer a different picture. The author initially follows Gerard for his division of the sciences, in the course of the argument, however, he introduces a series of systematic changes into the latter's account. Thus, after quoting Hugh and Aristotle, he starts by recalling the fundamental division of work-related and work-independent objects and sciences:

Of the things, some are not from our work, and these are the object of the speculative sciences. Others are from our work: either they relate to the perfection of the soul, and then they are the object of the practical sciences, or they refer to the perfection of the body, and then they fall under the mechanical arts. Signs, in turn, are dealt with in logic, that is, in the rational science. (Rerum autem quaedam sunt non ex opere nostro, de quibus speculativa. Quaedam sunt ex opere nostro: aut ergo pertinent ad perfectionem animae, de quibus practica, aut ad perfectionem corporis, de quibus mechanica. De signis vero est logica, id est rationalis scientia.)³⁸

This is still quite in line with Gerard's division, even though the discursive disciplines are established as a category in their own right, following Augustine's famous distinction of *res* and *signa*. Likewise, the ensuing presentation of the mechanical arts, of the discursive disciplines, and of practical philosophy remains very close to Gerard's text. With regard to the mechanical arts, for instance, the anonymous author reproduces Gerard's account verbatim:

Peter of Scala (?), ed. Sulavik	Gerard of Abbeville, ed. Metzger
2. Dicuntur autem mechanicae, id est adulterinae, vel quia faciendo opus simile operi naturae non faciunt opus verum, sed adulterum, sicut ars fusoria non facit verum hominem, sed eius similitudinem; vel quia pertinent ministrum quoad actionem, licet ad sapientem sive philosophum quoad rationem.	Dicuntur autem mechanicae, id est adulterinae, vel quia faciendo opus simile operi naturae non faciunt opus verum sed adulterum, sicut ars fusoria non facit verum hominem sed eius similitudinem, vel quia pertinent ad rusticum quoad actionem licet ad

³⁷ On Gerard's attack on the mendicants, see, among others, Tiziana Suarez-Nani, "Gerhard von Abbeville," in *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie. 4/1: Die Philosophie des Mittelalters*, ed. Alexander Brungs, Vilem Mudroch, and Peter Schulthess (Basel, 2017), 471-75, with the relevant references.

³⁸ Sulavik, "An Unedited *Principium Biblicum*," 112. My translation.

	sapientem sive philosophum quoad rationem (2: 455, ll. 4-7).
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Regarding the discursive and the practical disciplines, Gerard's account is very brief in that it only mentions them as parts of the work-related disciplines. Here, the anonymous author adds a few lines, offering the standard divisions of the discursive disciplines into grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and of practical philosophy into ethics, economics, and politics.

What is considerably different in this account is the presentation of speculative philosophy. Deliberately omitting Gerard's interpretation of Gundissalinus's subdivision of work-independent being, namely the distinction of being *a natura* and *praeter naturam*, the anonymous author turns directly to the Aristotelian division of theoretical philosophy into three parts, a "pars naturalis," a "pars mathematica," and a "pars theologica vel metaphysica".³⁹ In analogy to what we found in Gerard, these are characterized by means of Boethius's explanations in *De Trinitate*, which the anonymous author quotes explicitly, discussing the motion- and matter-relatedness of the various objects of these sciences. Significantly, Peter he avoids from the very beginning the ambiguity of the Boethian notion "theology," glossing "theologica" with "metaphysica". Consequently, at the end of his discussion of the speculative sciences, he does not place sacred science at their top, as Gerard did. On the contrary, as a clear response to Gerard, he draws the following conclusion:

One must know that according to Hugh's *De origine artium* theology is twofold: one is mundane, the other ecclesiastical. The theology which is contained in the books of the *Old* and *New Metaphysics* is the first part of philosophy and hence is called first philosophy. For its origin is human reason, and it only deals with God in relation to being in general; therefore it is the science of truth, not of piety; it is purely speculative, not practical. Ecclesiastical theology deals with God as the highest good that beatifies, because it moves our appetite towards the good; the Apostle in 1 Tim. 6:3 calls it the science of piety. (Sed sciendum quod secundum

³⁹ Sulavik, "An Unedited *Principium Biblicum*," 113: "Speculativa similiter dividitur in tres partes, scilicet naturalem, mathematicam, theologiam seu metaphysicam."

Hugonem, *De origine artium*, duplex est theologia: una mundana, alia ecclesiastica. Theologia, quae continetur in libris *Veteris et Novae metaphysicae*, haec est prima pars philosophiae, unde et prima philosophia vocatur. Habet enim ortum a humana ratione, et est de Deo in ratione generalis entis: unde est scientia veritatis, non pietatis; pure speculativa, non practica. Theologia ecclesiastica est de Deo in ratione summi boni beatificantis, quia in bonum movet appetitum, et appellatur ab Apostolo scientia pietatis, I Thi. VI,3.)⁴⁰

Targeting Gerard, who relies heavily on Hugh of St. Victor for his division of the sciences, the anonymous author recalls that already in the latter's work, namely in his *Commentary on the Celestial Hierarchy*, one comes across a distinction between revealed and philosophical theology.⁴¹ Accordingly, he advocates a strict separation of metaphysics as the superior part of the speculative disciplines, on the one hand, and Christian theology, on the other, the latter of which he calls a pious or, as Albert the Great puts it, an affective science, in contrast to the speculative ones.⁴² Wisdom plays no role in the anonymous author's critical response to Gerard's approach, instead, philosophy, a term that Gerard quite consistently avoids, is used to describe onto-theology, which is called, along with the Aristotelian tradition, first philosophy.

On the whole, the *principium*, whose author might have been Peter of Scala, cannot conceal being in debt with Gerard of Abbeville, and particularly with his division of the biblical canon, which it copies extensively. This notwithstanding, from a more systematic point of view, its author launches a forceful response to Gerard's sapiential approach, contributing his share to the ongoing discussion concerning the nature of metaphysics and theology.

Nicholas of Gorran: Gerard and Aquinas into One

⁴⁰ Sulavik, "An Unedited *Principium Biblicum*," 113-14. My translation.

⁴¹ See Hugh of St. Victor, *Commentarii in Hierarchiam coelestem S. Dionysii Areopagitae*, PL 175, 923-1154, at 926. The anonymous author erroneously refers to this work as *De origine artium*, which is the title he uses for Hugh's *Didascalicon*. On Hugh's distinction of "theologia mundana" and "theologia divina," see Filipe Silva, "Teologia e teoria das ciências em Hugo de S. Victor," *Mediaevalia. Textos e Estudos* 21 (2002): 21-36.

⁴² In this regard, the author's notion of theology reveals the influence of Albert the Great. On the latter's theology, see Henryk Anzulewicz, "The Systematic Theology of Albert the Great," in *A Companion to Albert the Great. Philosophy, Theology, and the Sciences*, ed. Irven M. Resnick (Leiden/Boston, 2013), 16-67.

In the introduction to his edition of the *principium* tentatively attributed to Peter of Scala, Andrew Sulavik compared the text to some other works. In particular, he noted important parallels between the *principium resumptum* and a text by the famous Dominican preacher and exegete Nicholas of Gorran (d. 1295). Sulavik could, in fact, show that Nicholas’s *Introitus in totam bibliam* contains not only large fragments from Thomas Aquinas’s *principium Hic est liber* (1256),⁴³ but that it also shares passages with the anonymous *principium resumptum*. It seemed natural, therefore, to assume that Nicholas took inspiration from both his fellow Dominican Thomas Aquinas and the anonymous author, possibly also a Dominican.⁴⁴

After analyzing the relation between the anonymous *principium* and Gerard of Abbeville’s *principium*, however, this picture needs to be redressed, as Nicholas alleged quotations from the former coincide with that works quotations from Gerard. Both, the anonymous author and Nicholas include in their works the complete division of the biblical canon as it is presented by Gerard. Notably, however, Nicholas does not include in his text the anonymous author’s very few additions to Gerard’s division of the canon, e.g. paragraph 11 (see the table above).⁴⁵ This is already a strong, if not a cogent, argument in favor of a direct influence of Gerard on Nicholas.

In addition, different textual arrangements in the three works corroborate the direct connection between Gerard’s and Nicholas’s *principia*. The following table compares the textual arrangement of a particular passage in all three authors, which allows to observe how the anonymous author and Nicholas processed Gerard’s texts differently:

Nicholas’s <i>Introitus</i> ⁴⁶	Peter of Scala (?), ed. Sulavik	Gerard of Abbeville, ed. Metzger
Epistolae vero canonicae quae informant ecclesiam tempore adversitatis dividuntur sic: quia vel adversarii persequuntur in fidelibus constantiam fidei	39. Epistolae canonicae quae informant ecclesiam tempore adversitatis sic dividuntur: quatuor enim erant quae adversarii fidei in fidelibus	Epistolae canonicae, quae informant ecclesia tempore adversitatis, sic dividuntur. Adversarii in fidelibus quattuor persequabantur, scilicet

⁴³ See the recent edition in Michael Estler, “*Rigans montes*” (*Ps 104,13*). *Die Antrittsvorlesung des Thomas von Aquin in Paris 1256* (Stuttgart, 2015).

⁴⁴ See Sulavik, “An Unedited *Principium Biblicum*,” 94-96 and 100, and id., “*Principia and introitus*,” 274.

⁴⁵ A reminiscence of paragraph 11, along with other fragments from the anonymous *principium resumptum*, appears in another text, that is, the *Lectura ordinaria super sacram scripturam Henrico de Gandavo adscripta*; see Sulavik, “An Unedited *Principium Biblicum*,” 89. However, the parallel passages are rather general, which makes it difficult to assess the exact relation between these texts.

⁴⁶ Andrew Sulavik kindly shared with me his preliminary edition of Nicholas’s *Introitus*, from which I take the quotations.

<p>quoad Deum, et sic informantur fideles in epistola Iacobi; vel persequuntur oboedientiam quoad praelatum, et sic informantur ad oboedientiam in canonicis Petri; vel persequuntur caritatem et concordiam quoad proximum, et sic hortatur ad caritatem in canonicis Iohannis; vel persequuntur perseverantiam in bono quoad seipsum, et sic in canonicae Iudae.</p>	<p>persequantur, scilicet constantiam fidei quoad Deum, oboedientiam quoad praelatum, concordiam quoad proximum, perseverantia in bono quoad seipsum.</p> <p>40. Primo persequantur constantiam fidei quoad Deum, et ideo intentio Iacobi in sua epistola est animare fideles ad constantiam fidei contra adversitates, unde Iacobi I^o, 1: ‘Omne gaudium existimate’ etc. Et V^o, 10: ‘Exemplum accipite, longanimitates, et patientiae, prophetas’ etc.</p> <p>41. Secundo persequantur oboedientiam quoad praelatos, ideo intentio Petri in suis epistolis fuit hortari ad oboedientiam, unde prima Petri II^o, 18: ‘Servi, subditi estote in omni timore dominis.’ Et III^o, 18: ‘Mulieres subditae sint viris suis’ etc.</p> <p>42. Tertio persequantur caritatem et concordiam quoad proximum, ideo intentio beati Iohannis in suis epistolis per totum est hortari ad caritatem, ut patet de se.</p> <p>43. Quarto persequantur perseverantiam in bono quoad seipsum, ideo Iudae intentio est informare fideles in perseverantia per hoc quod eos revocat ab imitatio pseudo, unde dicit: ‘Subintroierunt quidam impii, Dei gratiam in luxuriam transferentes.’</p>	<p>constantiam fidei quoad Deum; ideo Iacobi est animare fideles ad constantiam fidei contra adversitates, unde Iacobi I^o, ‘omne gaudium existimate,’ etc., et V^o, ‘exemplum accipite longanimitatis et patientiae prophetias,’ etc.; oboedientiam quoad praelatum, ideo intentio Petri est hortari oboedientiam, I^o Petri II^o ‘servi subditi estote in omni timore dominis vestris,’ et III^o, ‘mulieres subditae sint viris suis;’ caritatem et concordiam quoad proximum, ideo intentio Iohannis per totum est hortari ad caritatem, ut patet de se; perseverantiam in bono quoad se ipsum, ideo intentio Iudae est informare fideles in perseverantia per hoc quod eos revocat ab imitatione pseudo, unde dicit ‘subintroierunt quidam impii Dei gratiam in luxuriam transferentes’ (2: 463, l. 29 – 464, l. 6).</p>
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This passage explains how the Canonical Epistles prepare the faithful against the enemies of the Church by exhorting them to preserve their “constantia fidei,” their “oboedientia,” “concordia,” and “perseverantia”. In Gerard’s *principium*, the argument is difficult to follow, as he develops the four items together with their respective biblical proof-texts, thus obtaining a long and complex sentence. The author of the *principium* attributed to Peter of Scala clearly wanted to improve the structure of the argument by changing the textual arrangement. Instead of presenting the list of items together with their proof-texts, he first briefly presents the four items, and only then turns to discussing each of them with the relevant proof-texts. The resulting structure is far more transparent than Gerard’s

original. Now, while Nicholas's account abbreviates very much, it follows Gerard's compact structure in that it juxtaposes the four items together with their respective biblical references. These and other positive coincidences between Nicholas and Gerard, along with the absence in Nicholas's text of the anonymous author's insertions, make it safe to conclude that the latter was directly dependent on Gerard.

Consequently, Nicholas's *Introitus* is made up entirely of fragments from Aquinas's *Hic est liber* and Gerard's *principium*, combining two authors who were antipodes not only regarding their views on metaphysics and theology, but even more so in the conflict between secular and mendicant theologians.⁴⁷ Significantly, Nicholas omits Gerard's division of the sciences, in all likelihood because he was writing an *Introitus*, that is, an introduction to the Bible, and not a (comparative) inception speech. But Nicholas may also have ignored Gerard's ideas on theology and metaphysics for strictly systematic reasons. At any rate, it is remarkable that, in spite of their outspoken opposition, Nicholas used both Aquinas and Gerard side by side.⁴⁸

Concluding Remarks

The foregoing analysis has shown that Gerard of Abbeville's *principium* is highly original with a view to other comparative inception speeches. Its way of conceiving the relation between philosophy and theology, and more specifically of metaphysics and Christian theology, leads to a completely different account of theology's preeminence, which proposes to accommodate the traditional body of metaphysical knowledge in the frame of theological wisdom, rather than drawing a hard line between philosophical and theological approaches. Of course, this concept must have elicited controversial reactions, not only from the philosophers who claimed metaphysics as part of their curriculum, but also among theologians, as the case of the *principium* attributed to Peter of Scala reveals. However, it must be noted that there were theologians who developed similar trains of thought to that of Gerard; and also among contemporary arts masters the place of

⁴⁷ In fact, Aquinas replied to Gerard's criticism of the mendicants in his *De perfectione vitae spiritualis* and *Contra doctrinam retrahentium*; see Suarez-Nani, "Gerhard von Abbeville," 474.

⁴⁸ This is how they would also appear in William of Nangis's *Chronicon* (1300), to wit, side by side as two of the most distinguished theologians of their day. Quoted in Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville*, 1: 14: "Florebant hoc tempore Parisius insignes theologi, frater Thomas de Aquino ordinis Praedicatorum, et frater Bonaventura ordinis Minorum, atque de saecularibus clericis magister Guerodus de Abbatis villa et magister Robertus de Sorbona, qui scholares primus constituit Sorbonenses."

metaphysics was not always neatly defined. Gerard's *principium* can therefore be key to our understanding of how thirteenth-century philosophers and theologians struggled with determining the scope of their discipline. While Gerard's approach would not prevail, the influence of his *principium* extended well beyond, as is evidenced by the anonymous author (Peter of Scala?) and Nicholas of Gorran who, even though they strongly disagreed with some of Gerard's tenets, continued to copy his text.