

**Anne Grondeux, Irène Rosier-Catach (éd.), Priscien lu par Guillaume de Champeaux et son école. Les Notae Dunelmenses (Durham, D.C.L., C.IV.29), I. Introduction; 2. Édition critique, Turnhout (Brepols) 2017, 516 et 589 p., 7 b/w ill. (Studia Artistarum. Études sur la faculté des arts dans les universités médiévales, 43,1), ISBN 978-2-503-57442-4, EUR 120,00.**

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This imposing publication marks the completion of a project whose roots go back many decades. The »Notae Dunelmenses«, preserved in a mid 12<sup>th</sup> century manuscript of the Dean and Chapter Library at Durham Cathedral (C.IV.29), is of great importance because it reports the teaching of William of Champeaux on Priscian's »Institutiones grammaticae«. The »Notae« thus give insight into the intensity of discussion about language at exactly the same time as his student, Peter Abelard, was challenging so many of his teacher's arguments within his »Dialectica« and then his »Logica ›Ingredientibus«. From the outset it should be affirmed that as an edition with a major introduction, these two volumes are a triumph of scholarship, completing a project already announced in another volume in the »Artistarum« series, »Arts du langage et théologie aux confins des XI<sup>e</sup>–XII<sup>e</sup> siècles«, edited by Irène Rosier-Catach (2011).

The Introduction begins with descriptions, not just of the manuscript in which the »Notae« occur (on f. 2<sup>ra</sup>–193<sup>va</sup>), but of two other Durham manuscripts with similar contents. One (C.IV.7), contains the commentaries of William of Champeaux on Cicero's »De inventione« and the »Rhetorica ad Herennium«, a treatise on Macrobius, glosses on Plato's »Timaeus« attributed by Paul Dutton to Bernard of Chartres, and a commentary on the »De arithmetica«, whose authorship still has to be determined. The other (A.IV.15) contains theological texts from the early decades of the 12<sup>th</sup> century: glosses of Anselm of Laon on John and the first book only of Abelard's »Theologia christiana«, followed by four anonymous theological discussions (one of which reflects the teaching of Roscelin of Compiègne, although this is not mentioned in the introduction).

The editors (1, p. 45–47) acknowledge the common background of these manuscripts, all apparently from northern France, but raise the hypothesis that these »Notae« may have been sent to Durham from Châlons by Bernard of Clairvaux, who was close to William of Champeaux in 1115–1121 and was a friend of Lawrence, prior of Durham 1149–1154. There may be a small confusion here, as Bernard's contact was with another Lawrence (d. 1173), subsequently abbot of Westminster, who became involved in a dispute at Durham, but who also recorded the »Sententie de divinitate« delivered by Hugh of St Victor in the early 1130s. (The editors were unable to draw on my own discussion of memories



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of William of Champeaux in the north of England <sup>1</sup>). They suggest that the »Notae« could have been preserved by two masters (Stephen of Vitry and Rainier) attested prior to 1121 as at Châlons, where William became bishop. This hypothesis is fragile. The absence of any explicit identification of William as bishop suggests it was more likely taken down in Paris (perhaps at Saint-Victor?) before his elevation to the bishopric of Châlons. Given the close interconnections between early scholastic manuscripts at Durham, it seems hard to believe that Bernard of Clairvaux was also responsible for sending to Durham writings of William's contentious pupil. More likely all these texts were taken to Durham by a student keen to collect texts by various masters active in northern France before the mid-1120s.

Much more important, however, than the question about how the »Notae« might have reached Durham, is the confirmation that M. G. (once M. *Guill.*) is definitely William of Champeaux and that he regularly refers to the »Glosulae« on Priscian's »Grammatical Institutes« I–XVI on the parts of speech as well as to on its final books (Priscian Minor) on the construction of phrases. They also argue persuasively that William is the author of two of its five sections, namely »Notae Dulmenenses« II and V, as they share the same perspectives but do not contain references to M. G. The »Notae« also contain a few brief references to opinions of Manegold and Anselm (of Laon), with one to M. *Ber.* (Berengar?) and of certain *Langobardi* (perhaps alluding to Lotulf of Novara, a disciple of Anselm?).

All could be explained as reminiscences by the dominant voice in these »Notae«, that of William of Champeaux. In all its sections it emerges that William was committed (as Abelard observed), to understanding the meaning of words not just as a dialectician, but through their grammatical function, as outlined by Priscian. The »Glosulae« famously glossed Priscian's definition that a noun signified substance with quality by explaining that it referred to a substance, while signifying something about its quality. William interprets the »Glosulae« in a strictly realist fashion, emphasising the reality of those qualities signified by *nomina*, particularly when they were universal names.

Not the least intriguing of his many discussions are a couple of references to how one explains declension in one's mother tongue without the capacity offered by Latin. Such moments are an exception, however, as William's major focus is not to teach grammar, but to show how grammar is fundamental to understanding the process of signification. Priscian thus provides a complement to understanding Aristotle's »Categories« and »Periermeneias«.

Abelard's critique of the views of his teacher was as much as anything based on what he considered his teacher's excessive attention to grammatical authority. This edition has great significance for resolving debates about William's authorship or inspiration of glosses on the »Categories«, raised by the research of Yukio Iwakuma into these largely anonymous texts. The rich analysis of semantic issues raised in the introduction to the »Notae« raises a broader question, about the extent



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<sup>1</sup> Constant Mews, *Memories of William of Champeaux: The Necrology and the Early Years of Saint-Victor*, in: Anette Löffler, Björn Geberd (ed.), »Legitur in necrologio victorino«. Studien zum Nekrolog von Sankt Viktor, Münster 2015 (*Instrumenta Historica*, 7) p. 71–98.

to which William was aware of the very different attitude to language put forward by St Anselm in his »De grammatico«. The two thinkers responded in very different ways to the »Glosulae« on Priscian, one by avoiding arguments from authority, the other by analyzing what the authority on Latin grammar had to say.

A review such as this cannot do justice either to the richness of the introductory volume or to the quality of the edition itself, rich in summary references to Priscian and the various versions of the »Glosulae«. The first of the five »Notae« explain how grammar is related to »Logica«, which embraces both dialectical and rhetorical argument, and how the same phrase, like *homo est albus*, might have different meanings in grammar and dialectic. William explains it through myriad examples how this might happen. The »Notae« are not a summary of Priscian or the »Glosulae«, but a selective analysis of what William considers to be key issues in language, namely the proper meanings of nouns, adjectives and verbs, and their correct use in grammar. They enable the reader to imagine being in William's classroom and hearing his comments, as he goes through the core elements of the grammatical discourse, as covered in both Priscian major and Priscian minor.

Unfortunately there is no thematic index provided to the text of the »Notae« in the printed edition, such as would be available if this edition were made available in an e-book version – something greatly to be desired. This does not detract, however, from the importance of two volumes that will surely promote further research into the vibrancy of discussion about language in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century.



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