Philosophers and Theologians on Happiness. An analysis of early Latin commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*

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Article abstract

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PHILOSOPHERS AND THEOLOGIANS
ON HAPPINESS

AN ANALYSIS OF EARLY LATIN COMMENTARIES
ON THE NICOMACHEAN ETHICS

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ABSTRACT: Before 1250, even with a statutorily restricted field of research, the Arts masters of Paris included in their teaching a certain number of philosophical disciplines. Courses imposed on Arts masters included ethics, using Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics. Commenting on this text, Arts masters would interpret it and teach their own doctrine of “happiness”, involving concepts not always in agreement with those of the theologians. Taking into account the controversial context of the University of Paris, we focus in this paper on the opinions of Arts masters in both their differences and their agreements with the theologians, regarding the concept of happiness.

I. INTRODUCTION

The examination of a problem that scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have studied passionately is considered here, namely the differentiation between philosophy and theology in the Thirteenth-century University of Paris. This inquiry is far from simple because it includes more than just a conventional classification of sciences. It depends on a supportive institutional framework such as a

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university\textsuperscript{1} and a corpus of literature that includes justifications and discussions. Texts such as the subject of this paper were the product of the activity of masters of Arts. In the case of studies carried out at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Paris in the thirteenth century, constant allusions are made to the division of sciences along with allusions to institutional divisions. This makes the reader think that the boundaries between philosophy and theology are just the boundaries between the matters studied by theologians and the matters studied by philosophers. But there the problem begins. It is not clear what is to be studied by philosophers and what is to be studied by theologians, even in the sphere of the University regulations. What becomes evident is that not only was philosophy sometimes forbidden for masters of Arts, but it was also sometimes not advisable for theologians either. Indeed the masters who wrote these texts discuss the different interpretations of philosophical questions offered by philosophers and theologians. In most cases, when masters distinguish between philosophers’ answers and theologians’ answers to a question, they are discussing philosophical matters. To these questions, theologians have given their answers and philosophers have given their own. The masters, in turn, present both answers, leaving some fundamental issues unsolved.\textsuperscript{2}

The increasing enthusiasm for philosophy in the second half of the thirteenth century has long been an object of study by medievalists. Recently, Claude Lafleur\textsuperscript{3} has shown that this enthusiasm was already present in the early thirteenth-century works of masters of Arts. These masters of Arts differentiated what philosophers do from what theologians do. In several philosophical matters, although they were not allowed to teach natural philosophy they would use forbidden texts in the discussions of the allowed texts. Nevertheless, they were not supposed to give their own solutions to the philosophical problems that they posed. This is why they gave the theologians’ answers and the philosophers’ answers, leaving some questions unsolved.

In discussing the concept of happiness they would introduce several issues connected to ethics. Happiness as the highest good was one of their concerns. This is related to the discussion of whether one can achieve happiness in this life or not. Connected with this is the importance of virtues in attaining such an end as the highest


good and also the framework of the soul responsible for putting the virtues into practice.

The present essay is organized according to different approaches necessary to grasp the texts. First, a historical approach will provide a picture of the complexity of the institutional situation. Then, a philological approach will show the qualities and specificities of the texts available to the masters of Arts and of the texts that they produced. Finally, the philosophical issues that are considered by the masters will be analyzed, including methodological matters and the concept of happiness with its several relevant aspects. Methodological matters, such as the questions with two answers, are closely related to the concept of happiness. However, it will remain unclear which position the masters take, as will be observed, when discussing questions such as ‘whether happiness is possible in this life or not.’ Actually, the methodological resource of leaving questions unsolved will allow the masters to discuss rather freely some delicate issues.

II. HISTORICAL APPROACH

The reception of the Aristotelian works in the thirteenth century is surrounded by controversial circumstances. As early as 1210, Aristotle’s works on natural philosophy and commentaries on them were forbidden to be taught (non legantur) in Paris, privately or in public (publice vel secreto). Moreover, in case of disobedience there would be excommunication. Five years later, the Cardinal Legate Robert de Courçon repeated the prohibition of some of Aristotle’s works together with the prescription of some others. On the one hand, the text of Courçon prescribes the reading of Aristotle’s Logic (together with works of logic by Boethius and Porphyre) and Priscianus’ Grammar, as an ordinary course; on the other hand, it allows teaching the Ethics and other books6 only during holidays. Courses on natural philosophy (Libri naturales)

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6. The first three books of the ethics are referred to as “de forma” (that means that there is a regulation that prescribes their reading) in the compendia of studies of the faculty of Arts. Cf. C. LAFLEUR, avec la collaboration de J. CARRIER, “La réglementation ‘curriculaire’ (‘de forma’) dans les introductions à la philosophie et les guides de l’étudiant de la Faculté des arts de Paris au XIIIe siècle : une mise en contexte”, in L’enseignement de la philosophie au XIIIe siècle. Autour du « Guide de l’étudiant » du ms. Ripoll 109, Actes du colloque international édités, avec un complément d’études et de textes, par C. LAFLEUR avec la collaboration de J. CARRIER, index et bibliographie avec l’assistance de L. GILBERT et D. PICHÉ, Turnhout, Brepols (coll. “Studia Artistarum. Études sur la Faculté des arts dans les Universités médiévales”, V), 1997, p. 521-548. For a mention de forma on the Ethics see C. LAFLEUR, avec la collaboration de J. CARRIER, “Un instrument de révision destiné aux candidats à la licence de la Faculté des arts de Paris, le De communibus artium liberalium (vers 1250 ?)”, Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale, 5, 3 (1994), p. 154-203, see p. 202, § 284. The other books to be taught on holidays are philosophos (that is PLATO’s Timaeus and BOETHIUS’ Consolation of Philosophy), treatises on rhetoric (to which is added the
including the *Metaphysics* and *Summe* of them were not to be taught; nor were the doctrines of David de Dinant, Almaric de Bènes, or Maurice of Spain. Moreover, the text of Courçon repeats explicitly excommunication as a punishment for disobedience.

The range of meanings that the verb *lego* entails permits that the masters interpret it as *teach* but not necessarily as *read*. By 1225, an anonymous master wrote a treatise on the powers of the soul. This means that even if masters did not *teach* courses on Aristotle’s natural philosophy, they did *read* the texts and studied them privately. Thus, even though Aristotle’s works were not *taught* they definitely were *used*. Moreover, masters used not only the works of Aristotle but also the commentaries of Arab philosophers, as argued by Hasse and Gauthier. By 1228, there was also a warning against the use of philosophy in the Faculty of Theology. In 1229, there was a strike at the University of Paris due to some “events.” There had been the “most awful insults” (“atrocissimis injuriis”) to members of the University. For that reason there would be no courses; nor could the students or masters live in Paris or in the diocese during the strike. Unless the offences were satisfied the strike would last for six years. The same year the University of Toulouse was founded by the Treaty of Paris; through this university, the church expected to lead the inhabitants of Tou-

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7. About the identity of this Maurice of Spain, there are different opinions. The editors of the Chartularium consider it might be Averroes, reading *Mauricii hispani*, as *Mauri hispani* (the Spanish Moor). Luca Bianchi considers that this reading is not justified. Cf. L. Bianchi, *Censure et liberté intellectuelle à l’Université de Paris (xii-xiv siècles)*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1999, p. 97-98.

8. CUP, t. I, n° 20, p. 79: “Ut autem ista inviolabitáte observentur,… excommunicationis innodavimus.”


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louse to orthodoxy. Curiously, shortly after, a letter was sent from the University of Toulouse inviting the masters of Paris to move to Toulouse where the *libri naturales* were not forbidden. This may have caused the migration of many masters and students to Toulouse during the strike. The prohibition on the *libri naturales* at Toulouse would not appear until 1245.

By 1231 Pope Gregory IX, not so concerned about the exodus of masters to Toulouse but mostly about the use of the *libri naturales* in the Faculty of Theology, reopened the debate in the bull *Parens Scientiarum*. First, he absolved or allowed the bishops to absolve those excommunicated by the 1210-1215 Regulations. This fact is crucial because without punishment no regulation would have the same strength, since the power of a law accompanies the punitive element. Second, he forbade the masters of Arts to use the *libri naturales* and he advised the masters of Theology, not to use philosophy and not to show themselves as philosophers. He allowed the teaching on natural philosophy once the books had been purged of all doctrinal errors; a Commission would be named to carry out such a task. Third, he allowed the faculty of Arts to rule about the way in which they would have to dress as well as in which way and at what time courses were to be taught and even what books were to be read in class. In addition, he gave to the Faculty the power of punishing all those who did not follow its prescriptions. Finally, a further problem: Gregory IX did not abrogate the previous regulations of 1210-1215. Therefore, there were two contradictory regulations in force at the same time.

As the masters wrote between 1230 and 1246, they were within the frame provided by the bull *Parens Scientiarum*, because there would not be a new syllabus un-

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14. CUP, t. I, n° 72, p. 131: “Libros naturales, qui fuerant Parisius prohibiti, poterant illic audire qui volunt nature simum medullitus perscrutari.”
16. A rigorous analysis of this bull, by which this one is inspired, can be found in Bianchi, *Censure et liberté intellectuelle*, p. 103-116.
17. CUP, t. I, n° 79.
18. CUP, t. I, n° 79, p. 138: “Ad hec jubemus, ut magistri artium […] libris illis naturalibus, qui in Concilio provinciali ex certa causa prohibiti fuerer, Parisius non usurantur, quousque examinati fuerint et ab omni erro- rum suspicione purgati. Magistri vero et scholares theologae in facultate quam profitteretur se studente lau- dabiliter exercere, nec philosophos se ostentent, sed satagent fieri theodocti, […] sed de illis tantum in sco- lis questionibus disputent, que per libros theologios et sanctorum patrum tractatus valeant terminar.” My emphasis.
19. CUP, t. I, n° 87, p. 143. On April 23, the members were named: William of Auxerre, Symon of Alteis and Steven of Provins.
20. CUP, t. I, n° 79, p. 137: “Cancellarius quoque jurabit, quod consilia magistrorum in malum eorum nullate- nus revelabit, Parisiensibus canonics libertate ac jure in incipiendo habitis in sua manentibus firmitate. […] Ceterum qua ubi non est ordo, facile repit horror, constitutiones seu ordinationes providam de modis et hora legendi et disputandi, de habitu ordinate, de mortuorum exequiis necnon de bachellariis, qui et qua hora et quid legere debant, ac hospitiorum taxatone seu utiam interdicto, et rebelles ipsis constitutionibus vel ordinationibus per subtractionem societatis congregae castigandi, vobis concedimus facultatem.”
til 1252 (for the English nation) and 1255 (for the entire Faculty of Arts). Since the frame itself is controversial, the works of the commentators may have carried the same controversy. Actually, they had been using but not teaching Aristotle’s natural philosophy. How was this possible? Masters did not teach courses on Aristotle’s natural philosophy, but they included their readings on Aristotle in the courses they gave, as will be observed. With this new regulation, Gregory IX allowed them to teach whatever they wanted; but they could not use the works until the latter had been purged or corrected. How did they assimilate this Regulation, if at all? To find out in the texts what was used along with the books of *Ethics* to organize the knowledge of Aristotle in a systematic, coherent framework is one of the aims of the present paper. Masters were not just repeating theories while they taught; that is why they presented several “theoretical constructions” of their own, as will be discussed below. As for the facts, they kept studying the books (since there was no sanction against studying them) in order to be ready to teach them when they were allowed. They eventually became familiar with the books, and the books eventually were prescribed in 1252-1255.

### The reception of Aristotle

The arrival of Aristotle’s texts in the West during the Middle Ages involves three stages. First, Boethius translated some works of logic and rhetoric in the sixth century. Then in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, almost all the works of Aristotle were gradually translated, and they were systematically organized between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A third stage, which mainly involved work on texts, began toward the end of the fifteenth century. The second stage, which is of importance here, took place within universities of developing cities. Masters of Arts realized that they knew only the names of some entire areas of knowledge. A new interest in studying these disciplines then emerged. The Aristotelian system of sciences was therefore an instrument toward recovering and organizing Aristotle’s works as well as translations from Arabic sources. The *Nicomachean Ethics* in particular was studied in the west before 1250 following two partial translations: the *Ethica Nova* and *Vetus*. The *Ethica Vetus* (dated near the end of the twelfth century) included books II and III. Around 1220 another incomplete translation appeared; it was perhaps made by Michael Scot. It was the *Ethica Nova*, which includes Book I and


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therefore, the first definition of happiness (félicitas).27 These translations would be used until Robert Grosseteste made a complete translation in 1246-1248.28

The arrival of Aristotle’s works to the West opened a wide range of possibilities for the masters of Arts. Thus, their interest in them made their field of knowledge become wider and therefore overlapped with the theologians’ field, since only theologians were allowed to teach them. According to Claude Lafleur, “the consequence of the growth of their domain of studies made the masters of Arts realize the specificity and the value of their intellectual task: to study and to teach the whole human knowledge”.29 The theologians of Paris began using philosophy and reaching their own conclusions sometimes different from those of philosophers. The case of Ethics and the concept of happiness may be an example of this. Some authors consider that the seeds of the later conflict between the Faculties of Arts and Theology were sown when commentators on the Ethics started distinguishing between concepts that could be interpreted from what they called: “a theological point of view”, and those from “a philosophical point of view”.30

III. PHILOLOGICAL APPROACH

The reading of these texts includes several levels. A picture of these levels is important for understanding the reception of the Nicomachean Ethics in general, and the commentaries analyzed here in particular. The first level is that of the Nicomachean Ethics with which none of the authors here studied have worked. At the second level are situated the fragmentary Latin translations of the Nicomachean Ethics, which will be considered briefly. At the third level, finally, are the texts that will be discussed below. What is called “Aristotle” in the present paper is actually one of the “standard” interpretations of Aristotle. Today’s interpretations could involve a fourth level of analysis, but the presentation of the research will be simpler if “the present interpretation of Aristotle” is considered as “Aristotle.” It should be recalled also that this interpretation is of the same epistemological value as the thirteenth-century interpretations.

27. There are 40 extant codices of the Ethica Nova. They are listed in ARISTOTELES LATINUS, Ethica Nicomachea, XXVI 1–3, fasciculus primus, Praefatio, by R.A. GAUTHIER, Leiden, Brill, 1973, p. LVIII-LXII.
28. AL, Ethica Nicomachea, fasciculus quartus.
30. Cf. LOHR, “The Medieval Interpretation”, p. 87. Lohr gives Manuscript Ripoll 109 as an example. See also F. BERTELLONI, “Loquendo philosophice-loquendo theologice: Implicaciones ético-políticas en la Guía del Estudiante de Barcelona. A propósito de una reciente publicación de C. Lafleur”, Patristica et Mediaevalia, 14 (1993), p. 21-40. This distinction has already been pointed out by some authors of the twelfth century such as Gilbert of Poitiers. N. M. HÄRING, The Commentaries on Boethius by Gilbert of Poitiers, Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1996, p. 194, 78-85. However, one may say that there is a distinction between the philosopher and the theologian but their viewpoints are finally reconciled. In masters of Arts of the thirteenth century, as will be shown, the difference remains. Nevertheless, the distinction among these earlier authors can become an interesting topic of further research.
1. The source

The masters comment on the first book of *Nicomachean Ethics*, i.e. the *Ethica Noua*, which deals with happiness in general.\(^{31}\) There, Aristotle defines political science as a practical science. The political science is developed in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and in the *Politics*.\(^{32}\) In chapter 1 of the *Ethics*, Aristotle establishes the subject and method of this discipline. Ethics is a practical science; it searches for the universal concerning our actions. Aristotle then defines the concept of happiness (*eudaimonia*). There is a highest good which is the end that all things seek. Happiness is the end in the case of human actions. Happiness is not a means to achieve something else, because we all seek happiness for its own sake. It is a final end because whatever we seek is sought for the sake of achieving happiness. Happiness will reside in actions, in operations according to human virtue (*aretè-excellence*). We can reach this virtue through performance of good actions. Performing good actions will give us excellence; therefore we will be happy, because whoever reaches excellence, and enjoys and sustains this state, also reaches happiness. Happiness then is an end and is moreover the highest good for which we wish. Happiness also involves self-sufficiency. A virtuous man then will be self-sufficient (*autarchès*), and in this will reside his happiness.

In which kind of life, then, does happiness dwell?\(^{33}\) Aristotle builds a framework considering three kinds of life: the life of pleasures, the political life and the contemplative life. The fact that happiness cannot be encountered in the life of pleasure is clear, because it is related to corporeal life, and that is not what men specifically are. There are two remaining ways of life, political life and contemplative life.\(^{34}\) As man’s happiness is related to his nature (to what is proper to man), and what is proper to man (what defines him) is rationality, then his happiness is not related to pleasure or political life in the end,\(^{35}\) but rather to contemplative life. In addition, if happiness is

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33. NE, 1095b13-19.

34. Even if Aristotle considers the political life very important it is mostly considered in the books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* that had not yet arrived to the West or in the *Politics*, which was not available either. Nevertheless, consideration is made of the *felicitas civilis*, for example, in the Commentary of Paris.

35. NE, 1095b19-1096a4.
an activity, it depends on man. One can be happy as a man. But happiness as well as virtue must last one’s whole life, for it to be a perfect life.

2. The translation used by the masters

The authors, as noted earlier, worked with translations. Since the texts are based on a translation called *Ethica Nova*, some peculiarities of this translation should be noted. For example, the word “blessedness” (*beatitudo* translating *makaria*) appears three times in the *Ethica Nova*, seemingly reflecting the difference between it and happiness (*felicitas* translating *eudaimonia*). In addition, there is a gloss at the end of chapter 10 that suggests that men can be blessed like angels (“beatos homines ut angelos”). The text should say “beatos autem ut homines”; with the addition, “ut angelos”, it can be interpreted as meaning that there is something else that man can reach, such as “angelic blessedness.” The source of this gloss is perhaps in the Gospels. This gloss could be also related to the fact that in these texts there is a close relationship between the powers of the separated soul and those of angels. It can be said because of this that separated souls can be similar to angels (at least in the fact that they are separated from matter).

36. NE, 1101a14-21.
37. NE, I, 10, 1100a10-1101a21. Aristotle distinguishes between happiness (*eudaimonia*) and blessedness (*makaria*). Aristotle wonders if a man can only call himself happy at the end of his life. He answers this question with a distinction: “Happy” differs from “blessed” in that happiness depends only on the state of self-sufficiency (*autarcheia*) of the virtuous man, whereas blessedness comes from outside man, from fortune, and does not depend on man’s behaviour. “Blessed” is here more like “fortunate,” the one whose life has provided him with all desirable things. “Happy” is the man “sufficiently” virtuous to face unfortunate events while remaining happy (*eudaimon*), because “happiness” is within him in his virtuous actions and does not depend on external events. Therefore, one can say about a man that he is happy through his own efforts; but one only can call “blessed” a man who has been given all things desirable for a man; he is blessed in his whole life, but it does not depend on him. Aristotle says that he will focus here on the happy one, but our masters will not make that difference. In the discussion about how fortune might influence happiness, they do not distinguish sometimes between “happiness” and “blessedness,” and sometimes they would consider the importance of fortune for the concept of happiness when discussing perfect life.

38. AL, *Ethica Nicomachea*, fasciculus secundus; *Ethica Nova*, 99b2, p. 82; 00b29, p. 87; 01b5, p. 89.
39. AL, *Ethica Noua*, p. 88, 01a14-21: “Quid igitur prohibet felicem dicere eum qui secundum virtutem perfectum operatur et exterioribus sufficienter habundat, non quolibet tempore, set perfecta vita? Aut apponendum et victurum ita et finiturum secundum rationem, quoniam futurum inmanifestum nobis, felicitatem autem finem et perfectum ponimus ubiique et omnino. Si autem ita, beatos dicemus vivencium quibus existunt que dicta sunt, beatos autem homines [ut angelos].”

40. This gloss might have been inspired by some passages of the Gospels, such as Lk. 20.36: “Neque enim ultra mori possum: aequales enim angelis sunt et fili sunt Dei, cum sint finis resurrectionis.” And Mk. 12.25: “Cum enim a mortuis resurrerint, neque nubent neque nubentur, sed sunt sicut angeli in caelis.” And Mt. 22.30: “[... ] in resurrectione enim neque nubent neque nubentur, sed sunt sicut angeli in caelo.” Cf. *Nova Vulgata. Bibliorum Sacrorum editio, sacramentii oecumenici Concilii Vaticanii II ratione habita iussu Pauli PP VI recognita Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP II promulgata, Città del Vaticano, Libreria editrice Vaticana, 1998.

3. The interpretations

Among the texts that are the subject of this paper, there are three different kinds of literature; however, they all have the same subject. They all study the *Ethica Noua*, and interpreters have dated all of them before 1246-1248. The first is a commentary with questions, the second is an examination-compendium and the third is an exposition. Two of these texts are written by anonymous masters of Arts of the University of Paris. The first has been called the *Commentary of Paris*, and the second, because of the city where the manuscript is situated, is usually called the *Compendium of Barcelona* or *Guide for students*. Both texts have been edited; the former partially edited by René A. Gauthier and the latter by Claude Lafleur. The third text, *Expositio super libros Ethicorum*, contained in two manuscripts, is the only one whose authorship is known (Robert Kilwardby).

The *Commentary of Paris* is a commentary with questions. Gauthier has dated it between 1235 and 1240. Its method is the following: first a fragment of the source is cited literally, is commented on and a *sentencia* is fixed as the interpretation. Then, one or more questions are raised on this fragment and the commentator gives his solution or sometimes leaves several alternative solutions. In addition, the author tends to discuss several topics not included in the *Ethica Noua*, but that can be derived from the discussion: for example, the structure of the soul.

The *Compendium of Barcelona* is a guide for the students who want to pass the final examination of the Faculty of Arts of Paris. Lafleur has dated it between 1230 and 1240. It is found in a single manuscript, since the production in series by the *pecia* system was only available for works written by theologians. The author of the guide has a plan divided in three parts: Logic, Ethics and Natural Philosophy. The


44. Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, ff. 285r-307v, and Prague, Czech State Library 513 III. F. 10, ff. 1-11 (this second manuscript contains only the commentary on Book I). The Cambridge manuscript is the only one used for this analysis.

45. Cf. GAUTHIER, “Le cours sur l’*Ethica Noua*”, p. 71. This commentary is part of a longer commentary that includes the *Ethica Vetus* that is described by O. LOTTIN, “Un commentaire sur l’*Ethica Vetus* des environs de 1230-1240”, *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 6 (1934), p. 84-88, and is also studied by O. LOTTIN in “Psychologie et morale à la Faculté des arts de Paris, aux approches de 1250”, *Revue néoscolastique de philosophie*, 42, 2e série, 62 (mai 1939), p. 182-212.

part devoted to Ethics is divided in three: first the questions devoted to the subject and division of moral philosophy; second the questions devoted to the Ethica; and finally some questions on Plato’s Timaeus and on Boethius’ De Consolatione Philosophiae. The part on the Ethica Nova and Vetus is developed according to several questions established for the examinations. In addition, there is a pronounced interest on methodological issues within Ethics.

The Expositio super libros Ethicorum of Robert Kilwardby has been dated by P.O. Lewry between 1240 and 1245. Lewry also argues for the authorship of Kilwardby, based on style and contents. Kilwardby quotes excerpts from the source, explaining the sense and clarifying some terms. This way of commenting was very common and was also used by Albert the Great.

New literary genres that discuss philosophical subjects were organized according to methodological needs. In addition, these new ways of writing entailed the need to explain the new philosophy. The philosophical issues that spring from these texts are many. Some of them such as the concept of happiness are of interest here, because the interpretations would be different according to theologians and according to philosophers.

**IV. PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES**

Since the Faculty of Arts was very strong in its teaching of logic, it is not surprising that all these authors are very interested in method. Method was then their first concern, because the strictness of the sciences depends on the correctness of the reasoning. They spent considerable time analyzing how Aristotle organizes this new discipline. The Guide devotes five paragraphs defining and dividing moral science. After that, it describes the division of the books in five further paragraphs. Only then does it start to consider the subject of this science, which is its proper subject, and how should one approach it. The authors were concerned about whether Ethica is a science. As a practical discipline, it must be considered in a different way from the speculative sciences. The Guide for students considers that science must proceed in a demonstrative, universal way; and if Ethica talks about operationes, which are...
singular, it is an art rather than a science. Also Kilwardby considers arguments and
reasons in detail when he reports on Aristotle. He establishes how many arguments
are stated for each thesis, and he analyzes each argument in itself, considering some-
times even each part of a syllogism when an argument is more complicated.

A very important aspect related to methodology is the way the masters present
the answers to a question. They use the formulas secundum philosophos/secundum
theologos and loquendo theologice/loquendo philosophice, to distinguish the points
of view from which they consider a question, and many times they leave questions
unsolved.56 According to Lottin, the practice of differentiation, already spread
by 1230-1240, tended to be characteristic of the masters of Arts.57 Even if one finds
the same formulas in texts of theologians of the same period, such as John of La Ro-
celle, these theologians do not posit the formulas as the two answers of an unsolved
question.58 In the texts of the masters of Arts, sometimes the theologians’ answer is
discussed and refuted in the philosophers’ answer, but the masters do not solve the
questions when the solution comes from philosophers. In other words, the masters do
not explicitly claim their agreement with philosophers’ solutions. Rather, they leave
the question with two alternative answers. They are alternative answers because they
do not add any weight (perhaps only because it was obvious) to the answer of theolo-
gians. The two alternative answers are then equal from a methodological (logical)
point of view. In addition, as will be proved below, the answers are sometimes op-
posed, and masters identify themselves with philosophers.59

1. Concept of happiness as highest good

In the Commentary of Paris happiness is an end which is the highest good that
“everything seeks” (Omnia appetunt summum bonum).60 This highest good, i.e.
happiness, is also identified with the First (Primum) or the First Cause (Prima
Causa).61 This identification may lead to the reification of happiness: although
according to Aristotle happiness consists in living well and acting well (that is pro-
duced and maintained by virtuous actions), if happiness is identified with something
like the First or the First Cause, the concept of happiness as an operation would be
changed. One may indeed finish by identifying happiness with God. According to the
commentator of Paris, there are traces or images of the highest good in the world, but

54. Ibid., § 86.
56. See below in this paper.
58. JEAN DE LA ROCHELLE, Tractatus de divisione multiplici potentiarum animae, edited by P. MICHAUD-
devoted to happiness, p. 137-190.
appetunt summum bonum, et nominabant illud nomine felicitatis…” (Ethica Nova, p. 65, 1094a2-3).
the highest good itself cannot be found on earth. These traces or images come from a spiritual light that is the highest good itself, i.e. the First. Here, the highest good receives other specificity, this time with the light of the First, whose traces or images are in all things. He is talking in this passage about Augustine, whose theory of illumination will be used later to analyze the knowledge implied for an earthly happiness. Finally, the First is identified with God.

In relation to this, the Commentary of Paris introduces the discussion of God’s attributes along with the concept of the highest good. The first question is, in what manner is everything that exists good just because it exists. The commentator argues that things are good because they exist because of the will of the First. What God wants is good. Then everything would be wise, because of his wisdom, and powerful because of his power. Therefore, he answers that first is power, then wisdom, and finally goodness. Whatever exists is one, is true, and is good. The unity of everything comes from the power of the First; the truth comes from the wisdom of the First; and the wisdom in the First is related to forms that are like examples of things. With respect to these examples things are true; so the truth of things comes from the wisdom of the First. Finally, the goodness of things comes from the will of the First. Therefore, everything is good just because it exists; and the one precedes the true; and the true precedes the good, but not absolutely, because in that case...
there would be composition, which would be a violation of God’s simplicity. This text is a good example to illustrate Lafleur’s opinion that masters felt they were meant to investigate the whole domain of knowledge. The master researches in a theological field and his remarks are not at all superficial.

Something different can be found in the Guide for students. As the master identifies happiness with the First, he concludes that it is uncaused. In that case it could not be participable to humans because “the first is not participable in its essence”. He then concludes that Aristotle talks here about a caused happiness. This kind of classification is analyzed and deeply developed all through the thirteenth century. There will be different kinds of classification: felicitas createa/increata, or causata/inausata, or perfecta/imperfecta. The reason for this proliferation of felicitates might be in the identification of happiness with God. To achieve that kind of happiness seems not possible here below (apud nos). If the masters themselves want to build a human science, then they have to establish a happiness that is possible here below. Nevertheless, the commentator of Paris considers that according to philosophers even the happiness as he has stated is possible to achieve in this life.

The Guide for students goes on to consider that happiness is a certain act or perfection of the soul. Then, it regards happiness as something to be acquired through virtue. Moreover, at the end of the same paragraph it defines intellectual virtues as “performed through the admiration of the forms that come from the First and of the

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69. The fact that “everything is good because it exists” is evidence of the readings on Boethius De Hebdomadi-"bus (PL, 64, p. 1311a-1313c).
70. The consideration of Potentia, Sapiencia et Bonitas comes from Hugues of Saint Victor and Richard of Saint Victor that influenced Peter Lombard (Sententiae I, 1, d. 34, c. 3-4). Gauthier himself considers this (p. 121). These three concepts are closely related to the Trinity, as it is evident in the text of Peter Lombard, so the master refers clearly to the revealed Theology and not to a “mere” theology of the philosophers. This last distinction is actually advanced some years after the texts analyzed here by Thomas Aquinas, in the Expositio super Boetium De Trinitate, q. 5 (ed. B. Decker). Even if there is a vivid discussion on the division of speculative science in Thomas as well as in Aristotle, this paper does not intend to be included in this discussion.
72. Ibid.
76. LAFLEUR, Le “Guide de l’étudiant”, § 79 : “quia uirtus est medium per quod acquiritur huiusmodi felicitas.”
contemplation of It”.77 Here intellectual virtues are like happiness, both are related to the knowledge and contemplation of the First. In the value that they grant to the intellectual virtues, the text is reminiscent of the tenth book of Nicomachean Ethics. The stress is on the knowledge of the First or of the First Cause. Moreover, the Guide for students states that happiness “is a caused good through which the soul can have enjoyment in the home of the First Cause”.78 At the same time, “there is another life in which the soul lives in itself knowing and feeling the First, and in such life there is happiness”.79 Out of all this a coherent concept may be outlined; happiness is given with the performance of intellectual virtues that belong to the soul alone. Because of this, the soul is happy in this life through the contemplation of forms in the First, but it is better that the soul be separated from the body. In general, the fact of knowing and enjoying the First can be considered as a contemplative life, a contemplative life of the separated soul. However, as will be discussed below, there is the possibility of contemplation on earth.

The identification that two of our masters make of happiness with the First shows their effort to build a coherent system (with or without Aristotle’s system). In any event, this identification with the First probably makes happiness something more difficult to achieve in this life, although in the same respect not impossible, as will be noted by the masters.80

According to Kilwardby, happiness is as in the Ethica Nova the act of the virtuous soul during a complete life.81 Master Kilwardby also explains that happiness consists in living well and acting well, bene vivere is the first act of the soul and bene operare is the second act of the soul.82 This teaching comes from the De Anima which was by then very popular.83 Then he considers which acts are proper to man, i.e. the

77. Ibid., § 79 : “Et notandum quod uirtus intellectualis est per admirationem formarum a Primo et Eius contemplacionem.”
78. Ibid., § 77 : “Huiusmodi autem scientie uirtus dicitur esse subjectum a quibusdam, quia principaliter est intentio de uirtute – sicut dicunt –, per quam felicitas acquiritur. Potest tamen felicitas melius subjectum dici eo quod est finis propter quem omnes operationes fiunt et uirtutes. In moribus enim finis principalis moutet et propter finem omnia intenduntur. Est autem felicitas causata et est quidam actus animae ut perfectio, ut habetur in primo Ethicorum, deducens ipsam in Esse Optimum (est enim felicitas bonum perfectissimum inter bona participabilia ; est enim primum bonum quod participari non potest pro essentiam suam). Est illud bonum causatum mediante quo potest anima frui loco Prime Cause.”
79. Ibid., § 95 : “est autem alia uita qua uiuit anima in se intelligendo et affectando Primum, et in tali est felici-
tas.”
81. Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, f. 291va : “ergo quod cum in precedenti parte narraverit Aristoteles felicitatem esse aliqua operacionem anime studiose practice in uita perfecta iam in subsequenti parte idem demonstratio-
tis. Sub alio tamen modo declarauit enim quod circa operaciones sit ipsius anime optimas et delectabi-
liissimas et talis etiam operacio practica studiosa durans in uita perfecta.” (NE 1101a10-19).
82. Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, f. 287ra : “alia est ex parte rei scilicet quod existimant bene uiuere et bene operari esse idem felicitati et intelligent per uiuere actum anime primum, per operari actum anime secun-
dum.” The Commentator of Paris makes a similar consideration see GAUTHIER, “Le cours sur l’Ethica
Nova”, p. 114.
83. This has been shown by GAUTHIER, “Le traité ‘De Anima et de potenciis eius’.” In a recent publication B. BAZÁN, Anonymi Magistri Artium “Sententia super II et III ‘De anima’” (Ms. Oxford, Bodleian Li-
kritique et doctrinale par B.C. BAZÁN. Texte du De anima uetus par K. WHITE, Louvain-la-Neuve, Institut
operations that men do, because they are men, not because they are physicians or architects. The act proper to man is the act of the soul as a rational soul. Virtue is performed as an act or operation of the rational soul. Then happiness consists of the operation of the zealous soul during the whole life. In any case, Kilwardby considers that happiness within the purview of practical science is not related or compared with a gift of God. He does not include God in his analysis. The question whether happiness is given by God does not pertain to political science but rather to metaphysics or to theology. Considering the boundaries between sciences allows Kilwardby to follow the text of Aristotle even if he has to oppose other opinions.

Apart from Kilwardby, the other masters add several components to the concept of happiness. The most important perhaps is the identification of happiness with the First. This identification permits the building of a different link between ethics and natural philosophy and also between ethics and metaphysics. In this way the masters are impelled to study metaphysics and natural philosophy to explain, first, the nature of the First, and then the structure of the soul that makes possible the knowledge of the First. Also, because the goal is getting far from man’s possibilities, a problem arises related to man’s sufficiency to achieve happiness through virtue.

2. The place of virtue in the concept of happiness

As the subject of a practical science, happiness is considered an operation. The masters read in Aristotle and agree that happiness consists in living well and operating well (bene vivere et bene operare). However, the identification of the highest good with the First creates a number of interpretations. The commentator of Paris considers happiness as an operation, but in the following sense: the soul united with the First knows it and loves it. If happiness is an operation, this operation consists in loving and knowing the First. The commentator considers happiness more a union with the First than an action, because only in the union with the First (which is happiness itself) is there happiness. Happiness is the operation of knowing and loving the First, which the commentator identifies with God. In any case, to consider happiness
as the act of knowing the First is remarkable since, without having the tenth book of the Ethics, the masters were already considering that the highest good involves the knowledge of the highest things.

However, if happiness consists in knowing and loving the First, achieving happiness becomes more complicated. Achieving happiness through the performance of virtues is not so easy to link with this concept. The commentator of Paris considers that the exercise of virtue remains only a means to approach happiness, not to achieve happiness. ("quia uirtus secundum quam attenditur uita contemplatia est medium quo nobis unitur felicitas") Happiness is united to us, not vice versa. Virtue then is reduced to a means through which one does not achieve but only merits happiness. Thus, virtue is a necessary condition but not sufficient to achieve happiness. The decisive movement is only performed by the highest good itself. When the union (coniunctio) happens, then an operation (operatio) occurs watching and knowing the First ("in aspiciendo et cognoscendo Primum") according to the commentator of Paris.

Indeed, if virtue is not enough to achieve happiness, men are not sufficient or competent (sufficiens) to achieve happiness. The problem of sufficiency in achieving happiness is not trivial, because according to the Paris commentator only a perfect life will be sufficient to achieve happiness. He analyzes the various kinds of life according to the classification of Aristotle in two ways. In one way he links each kind of life according to each kind of soul, and in another way he considers each kind of life as a face of the soul; it looks above it, below it and to its equals. The latter analysis can be considered an allusion to the theory of the two faces of the soul.

87. Ibid., p. 115.
88. Cf. Ibid., p. 107: “tamen errabant in hoc quod dicebant quod nos sumus principium sufficiens uniendi illud sumnum bonum nobis.”
89. Ibid., p. 115: “Item queritur de enumeratione istius triplicis uite et penes que accipientur ? Ad hoc duplex solutio. Et est prima hec. Vita uoluptuosa sumitur secundum animam vegetabilem, quia uita uoluptuosa est in corpore per comparationem ad potenciam generativam et nutritivam. Vita ciiuisi sumitur penes animam sensibilum, quia uana gloria et honor et huiusmodi sunt in anima sensibili, aud si sunt in rationali, hoc est in comparatione ad animam sensibilum ; item, illi ciues qui faciunt quecunque faciunt propter honores et uamam gloriariu, uiiunt sicet bestie, et ideo sumitur uita ciiuisis penes animam sensibilum. Vita autem contemplatia sumitur penes animam intellectuam ; in anima enim intellectueda sunt uirtus et scientia circa que consistit uita contemplatia ; […] Aliter dicendum est quod iste sumuntur penes animam intellectuam. Set notandum quod anima intellectuia siue humana habet triplicem comparationem ; comparatur enim ad corpus quod sub ipsa est, et comparatur ad ea que supra ipsam sunt, et comparatur ad ea que in equili se habent cum ipsa. Et uita uoluptuosa attenditur <in comparatione> anime humane ad corpus quod sub ipsa est ; uita enim uoluptuosa, sicut iam dictum est, est circa corpus in illa parte in qua uirtus generativae et nutritivae. Vita autem ciiuisi attenditur in comparatione unius anime humane ad aliam, uel unius hominis ad alium hominem ; uita enim ciuisis est qua unus homo uiiit honeste cum aliiis hominibus ; et sic patet quod uita ciiuisi sumitur in comparatione anime humane ad equalia sibi. Vita autem contemplatia sumitur in comparatione anime humane ad superiora siue ad felicitatem, qua uirtus secundum quam attenditur uita contemplatia est medium quo nobis unitur felicitas.”
90. LOTTON, “Psychologie et morale à la Faculté des arts de Paris”, p. 190 (ms. 3804a, f. 152va) : “Aliter dicendum est quod, sicut anima secundum partem speculatiauam habet duplicem naturam secundum quam comparatur ad superiorea et hec uocatur intellectus agens, aliam habet secundum quam comparatur ad inferiora et hec uocatur intellectus possibilis, et secundum intellectum agentem semper est in anima ueritas, secundum possibilum non, similiter ex parte intellectus practici sunt iste diverse nature ; una que respondet intellectui agenti et hec uocatur superior semper est ad bonum, inferior non ; et ad hane ultiam partem per-
Although humans are not sufficient (sufficiens) to achieve happiness in any of these lives, there are two opinions on whether humans are sufficient to do the good, i.e. to perform virtue. First, the opinion of theologians as well as the master’s is that we (humans) are a complete principle of the bad but not a complete principle of the good. Following this, the author gives two accounts of the source of good actions. On one hand, the philosophers’ opinion is that we are the principle of virtue, which is good; we are then sufficient or competent to do the good, because we produce the good habit of virtue out of good behaviour. On the other hand, according to theologians, God infuses virtue in us; the condition of possibility of our good behaviour comes from outside and because of that we would not be sufficient to do good. In this part, the answers are clearly opposite, because the habitus of virtue is infused by God’s illumination according to theologians, and the same habitus is the result of several operations according to philosophers. One must say also that in this part the

ficiendam et rectificandam indigemus scientia morali.” About the two faces of the soul see J. ROHMER, “Sur la doctrine franciscaine des deux faces de l’âme”, Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge, 2 (1927), p. 73-77. He relates this doctrine to Jean de la Rochelle and to Gundissalinus. This theory can be also found in ARNVLFI PROVINCIALIS, MAGISTRI ARTIVM PARISIENSIS (c. 1250), Divisio scientiarum, in LAFLUR, Quatre introductions, p. 335-336, l. 540-560. There is in this text also a peculiar theory of the rise of the soul to the Creator through intellectual virtues, which is studied by R.A. GAUTHIER, “Arnoul de Provence et la doctrine de la fronesis vertu mystique suprême”, Revue du Moyen Âge Latin, 19 (1963), p. 129-170.

91. LOTTIN, “Psychologie et morale à la Faculté des arts de Paris”, p. 198 quoting the Commentary of Paris on the Ethica Vetus: “Dicendum quod nos sumus omnino principium mali; sed nos non sumus omnino principium boni; immo, sicut dictum est prius, bonitas datur nobis a primo qui illuminat intellectum nostrum, et postea facimus bonum; et hoc modo intelligiunt theologi dicentes <quod> quia boni sumus, ideo bonum facimus, inteligentes de bonitate ista; quia autem operatio bona, cuius fundamentum est ratio recta data a prima intelligencia, facit habitum qui est uirtus consecutivum, ideo dicimus quod operatio bona facit habitum bonum; sed nos omnino sumus principium <mali> et apud nos et apud theologos, et ideo malum non diversificatur sicut bonum.” Nevertheless, he adds the philosophical point of view about this issue and he considers that in this case he and the theologians agree.

92. LOTTIN, “Psychologie et morale à la Faculté des arts de Paris”, p. 199: “Aliter potest dici et ista solutio est secundum philosophos et non secundum theologos; et tune dicendum est quod nos sumus principium ur-tutum tantum; unde uoluntas que est in nobis existens et determinata est causa operationis; quoque operatio causat uirtutem; et secundum istum modum dicendum est quod operatio de necessitate antecedunt et nullus habitus antecedit operationes in moralius; et hoc modo dicendo, dicendum est quod illud quod di-citur quod omnis causa nobilior est causato, intelligendum est de causa determinata et non de causa inde-terminata; uoluntas enim est causa indeterminata et non causa determinata; et propter hoc, cum operatio-nes que causant uirtutem sint a uoluntate que est causa indeterminata, non oportet quod sint digniores et perfectiores habitu qui est uirtus.”

93. Ibid: “Dicendum est quod loquendo theologice oportet dicere quod habitus bonus de necessitate precedit omnem operationem bonam, quia ratio recta est data a prima intelligentia et illuminet intellectum huma-num; que quidem ratio recta est fundamentum cuuslibet operationis bonae; et hoc est quod dicunt theologoi quod bonus est insusum a Deo quo dirigente bene operamus. Et sic non sumus solum principium boni; et hoc modo intelligiendo dicendum est quod habitus est ante omnem operationem bonam, et secundum hoc concedimus omma argumenta, que sunt ad hoc ostendendum; unde non est incommensu quod operationes causantes habitum qui est derelictus in intellectu a prima intelligentia illuminante ipsum practicum intellec-tum.”

94. GAUTHIER considers that the commentator never opposes but only distinguishes the two opinions, see “Le cours sur l’Ethica Nova”, p. 79: “s’il n’oppose jamais théologie et philosophie, il s’est montré plus d’une fois soucieux de les distinguer.” He considers also the Commentary on the Ethica Vetus that he quotes from the same source as here. However, if the commentator says just the opposite thing according to theologians from that according to philosophers, he is opposing and not only distinguishing them. The fact that he does not say “they are opposite” is not making it “less” opposite.
key is found to affirm that the author identifies himself as a philosopher. The reason for this is that he is always using this double opinion: when the opinions agree he says “among us and among theologians”; and when the opinions disagree he talks about “philosophers” and “theologians” (he replaces “us” by “philosophers”, perhaps in order not to get involved in the discussion).

Kilwardby considers two important elements on the matter of virtue and habitus; first, that there must be pleasure in a virtuous action, and second that the action itself is more important than habitus. The reason is that repeated action (ab assuetudine) makes habitus and habitus does not exist without having action before. In addition, Kilwardby will consider sufficiency as a property of happiness. If men can be happy (and they can, according to Kilwardby), then they will be sufficient to achieve happiness in this life, because they can perform virtue by habit (ab assuetudine).

In the Guide for students, men’s sufficiency to do good and bad is also discussed. There, the difference between the human science of philosophers and the discipline of theologians is also stressed. The question asked is whether we are the entire cause of good and the entire cause of bad. There are two answers: from a philosophical point of view, we are the entire cause of good and bad; but from a theological point of view we are not a sufficient cause of good, it is necessary that God infuse his grace in us; this is called “sinderesis” by theologians. The answer according to theologians agrees with the answer of the Commentary of Paris according to theologians. However the answer according to theologians is more developed in the Commentary of Paris as observed earlier.

Since happiness consists in love and knowledge of the First there are only two substances that can do that: men and angels according to the author of the Guide for students. There was a discussion among the masters of Arts as well as theologians

95. See, supra, n. 91: “Apud nos et apud theologos.”
96. Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, f. 295va-b.
97. Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, f. 289vb, l. 14-22: “primo dicit quod eadem conclusio ostendendi potest ex autharchia (sec. cum fonte [eucharistia cod.]) id est ex parte sufficiencia felicitatis et dicitur ab eu quod est bonum et archos quod est princeps siue custos sufficiente et hoc est: uidetur autem. Primo ponit racionem suam talem bonum per se sufficiens est perfectum et propter se tantum eligibile. Set bonum quod facit effectum eligibilem et nullo modo indigentem est per se sufficienti ergo huiusmodi bonum est perfectum et propter se tantum eligibile. Set felicitas est huiusmodi bonum ergo felicitas est bonum perfectum et propter se tantum eligibile.” In the Ethica Nova, p. 75-76, 97b6-7 one reads: “Videtur autem et ex autharchia <id est per se sufficiencia> idem contingere ; perfectum enim bonum per se sufficienti esse videtur. Per se sufficienti enim dicimus non se solo vivente vitam solitarem, set et parentibus et filiis et uxore et universis amicis et civibus, quoniam natura civilis homo.” (My emphasis.)
98. See, infra, n. 118. Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, f. 295va: “virtus tum non perfectit in nobis a natura set ab assuetudine.”
100. LAFLEUR, Le “Guide de l’étudiant”, § 93: “Ad hoc dicendum quod in uiutate inquantum est a parte Primi unumquoque est natum participare Ipsam, sed ex parte recipientium potest esse defectus. Nam nata est
on the differences and resemblances between human soul and angels. Of course the author is speaking here of the separated soul, he is then implying that man is mostly his soul. This can be due to the controversial gloss in the *Ethica noua*: “beatos homines ut angelos.” In any case, rational activity is what differentiates men from other creatures on earth and intellect is what we have similar to angels.

Angels as well as the separated soul have special virtues: “some virtues are characteristic of the separated soul and of the intelligences or angels (which is the same)”.

In this reference the hierarchies among virtues are taken from Macrobius in his *Commentary on the dream of Scipio*. The theory comes from Plotinus, and through Porphyry is known by Macrobius. There are four levels of virtues: political virtues, purgative virtues, virtues of the purged soul and exemplar virtues. The author of the *Guide for students* asks why Aristotle does not consider the last two. Then our author assimilates what he calls *virtutes consuetudinales* with Macrobius’ political virtues, and the *virtutes intellectuales* with Macrobius’ purgative virtues.
According to the master, as Aristotle only talks about moral and intellectual virtues, he will not talk about virtues of the purged soul and exemplar virtues which are both by definition, predicable only on the separated soul or angels. Again, the master is including the new theory within a scientific framework trying to incorporate all knowledge in a coherent system.

The commentator of Paris also discusses this division of virtues. He concludes that Aristotle talks about human virtues, and that not all the virtues of which Macrobius talks are human. The exemplar virtues are not human, nor are the virtues of the purged soul because they belong to the soul that is already separated from the body. There is a different concept of human for the commentator of Paris and for the author of the Guide for students. The former considers man as a composite of soul and body, but the latter considers in this part that man is only or mostly the soul, because it compares (resembles) men and angels.

Kilwardby does not consider Macrobius’ division of virtues. According to him, Aristotle’s division is sufficient because “with the intellectual virtues one perfects the speculative intellect, and with the moral virtues one perfects the practical intellect”. Evidently, he knew about the discussion found in the other texts because his claims can often be linked as a response to the other two masters.

The discussion on virtues includes again the bipolar answer according to theologians and according to philosophers. It also includes the implication that the theory of happiness consisting in knowing the First can lead to the Aristotelian value of the intellectual virtues. Knowing is the operation of the intellect as well as an intellectual virtue. Nevertheless there is the opinion of theologians that virtues are infused in us by God. However, the most important fact is that philosophers in this case have the opposite opinion. The three texts considered here mention that virtue is a habitus that is originated in repeated actions, so it depends on man only.

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108. Commentary on Ethica Vetus, Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 3804a, f. 154ra : “Primo dubitatur de ista diuisione uirtutis. Et uidetur quod sunt insufficientes : quia Macrobius dividit uirtutes in uirtutes exemplares, et in uirtutes que sunt purgati animi, et in uirtutes purgatorias et in uirtutes politicis. Et appellant uirtutes politicis uirtutes consuetudinales. Cum ergo auctor non tangat hic nisi duas species uirtutis ut dictas, uidetur quod insufficient diuidat uirtutem per intellectualem et consuetudinalem. Ad hoc dicendum est quod ista scientia intendit Aristoteles solum de uirtute humana et non de alis uirtutibus que non sunt humane. Et ideo cum omnis ille uirtutes quare nominat Macrobius non sint humane. Ideo non omnes tanggal hic. Uirtutes enim exemplares sunt uirtutes quibus cognoscitur primi essentia, et iste non sunt humane. Iterum uirtus que dicitur purgati animi non est humana : quia ista uirtus que postquam anima separata est a corpore. Set uirtutes politicis sunt humane et uirtus purgatoria est humana, quia uirtus purgatoria acceditur in comparatione intellectus uel rationis ad superiorea sicut uirtus intellectualis quare illam non oportuit hic determinare quia apprehenditur sub uirtute intellectuali.” (The orthography of the manuscript is kept.)

109. In any case, our compiler will further compare men and angels. Later, it is asked whether it is necessary that the intelligences merit happiness through virtue like men. He will introduce then a theory of a twofold intellect for angels. (LAFLEUR, Le “Guide de l’étudiant”, § 105.)

110. Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, f. 295ra : “et patet <quod> sufficient habitus diuisionis considerando diuisionem intellectus per practicum et speculativum intellectuales enim pericient speculativum, morales (scr.) mortales cod.) uero practicum.”

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VALERIA BUFFON

3. Happiness in Life

The concept of happiness and its relationship with virtue has already been discussed. Related to this is the possibility of achieving happiness in this life or only after death. The author of the *Guide for students* asks whether happiness is achieved in this life or in the other life. He does not consider Aristotle’s classification of lives, namely life of pleasures, political life and contemplative life. He asks whether there is happiness before death. It might seem that there is; since Aristotle says that there is happiness in life and life is before death, therefore there is happiness before death. However, the master claims that life can be considered in two ways: one is life of the soul with the body, it is temporal and inconstant, and related to it there is no happiness. There is also another life, in which soul lives knowing and loving the *First* and in this life there is happiness. Soul is most alive in itself after death, when it is separated from body. Therefore, happiness is after death. The master considers that this is what Aristotle himself meant. According to him, Aristotle *says* that there is happiness *in life*, but he *means* in the life of the separated soul.

The master also asks whether the body can receive happiness like the soul. He answers that according to theologians the body can receive happiness because they establish that the soul and the body reunite after death. Philosophers do not establish this because it is a miracle, i.e. an unnatural event. Clearly, this question stresses the difference between philosophers and theologians. The master wants to define a kind of science possible *here below* (*apud nos*). Happiness can be investigated in a “human way”, i.e. in a philosophical way. Then according to philosophers, happi-

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112. The fact that this life is subject to fortune is also considered in the *Commentary of Paris*. This is solved by Aristotle with the distinction between [*eudaimon*] happy and [*makarios*] blessed. (See above p. 457, n. 37) Nevertheless, the masters (except for Kilwardby) have not seen this difference. Hence they consider fortune as part or constituent of happiness.


114. Ibid., § 94 : “Item queritur utrum corpus sit natum recipere felicitatem sicut anima. Et uideetur quod sic, cum sit instrumentum per quod anima operatur bonum. Et ita uideetur corpus mereri sicut anima. — Ad hoc dicitur quod secundum theologos hoc habet ururien, quia ponunt animam reiungi corpori post mortem. Sed hoc est plus per miraculum quam per naturam. Simpliciter enim hoc est innaturale, et ideo non ponitur a philosophis. Et propter hoc cum felicitas sit post mortem, sicut probat hic auctor, et non ponunt philosopher animam post mortem coniungi corpori, ideo prope felicitas per naturam debetur solum anime et non corpori.”

115. Ibid., § 84 : “Primum est utrum de felicitate potest esse scientia, et uideetur quod non. Felicitas enim est bonum spirituale, et de tali non potest esse certa cognitio apud nos, quia sicut uiiit Aristotiles in secundo Phisicorum, intellectus nostri obscurus est et ebes ad nature manifestissima. Et dicit Commentator ibi quod per “manifestissima” dat intelligit spirituale, que omnino separata sunt a motu et materia. Cum ifitur felici-itas sit bonum spirituale, uideetur quod de ipsa apud nos non est certa cognitio, quare nec firma scientia. — Ad hoc intelligendum quod illud bonum dupliciter potest considerari : uno modo in relatione ad suam cau- sam, et hoc modo de ipso non est scientia apud nos nec certa cognitio (uel si est, magis pertinet ad astro-
ness pertains only to the soul, and not to the soul re-united with the body after death as is the opinion of theologians. Kilwardby states a different interpretation of the same question. The happiness of the soul with the body after death is not to be studied by philosophy, because it does not pertain to this science whether after death it is the soul or the whole man that is happy, he keeps Aristotle and Ethics out of the question. This is in contrast with the claim of the Guide for students that philosophers should not establish that kind of happiness because it is something unnatural (innatuname). Kilwardby only establishes boundaries to the object of the moral science, while the author of the Guide for students shows an opposition between opinions of philosophers and opinions of theologians. Lafleur has noted that a similar proposition of Boethius of Dacia in De Aeternitate Mundi was condemned in 1277.

Kilwardby defends the interpretation of Aristotle according to which we can be absolutely happy in this life. “It is to be noted that Aristotle calls living persons truly good, because if they are not truly good they cannot be absolutely happy, and according to him some living persons can be truly good and therefore absolutely happy.” Kilwardby is aware that there are other interpretations, and because of that, he considers that this is “against those who say that Aristotle means to attribute only an incomplete happiness for the living.” He may here refer to the “theologians” of the Commentary of Paris as will be seen. Happiness is possible in this life, according to Aristotle, Kilwardby claims. Moreover, he calls attention to the theologians' opinion that the philosopher only considered perfect or complete happiness after death. Kilwardby says “against” (contra), he is conscious that these theories are opposite. While he limits the field of philosophy to what occurs in this life, he will not consent to an “incorrect” interpretation of Aristotle.

In the case of the Commentary of Paris, the discussion on the possibility of happiness in this life begins when the author discusses the classification of lives of Aristotle: life of pleasure, political life and contemplative life. The commentator of Paris introduces a new kind of life: the life of the separated soul. This brings him to the

nomiam) ; alio modo potest considerari felicitas ratione finis, et ita possunt cognosci eius proprietates per quas mouet ad operandum, et sic facit scientiam apud nos.”

116. Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, f. 293va : “utrum enim post mortem felicitetur anima uel totus homo forte non pertinet ad ipsum <doctrinam civilem> nec hoc determinat Aristoteles.”


118. Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, f. 293ra : “Et notandum diligentem quod uocat hic Aristotiles uiuetes uere bonos, quia si non est uere bonus nisi simpliciter felix, et secundum ipsum aliquid uiuetes sunt uere boni, secundum ipsum aliquid uiuetes sunt felices simpliciter : quod est contra eos qui dicunt Aristotelium uelle uiuentem feliciari nisi incomplete.”
discussion whether there can be happiness before death or only after death. Again, there are two answers, one according to theologians and one according to philosophers.

To show the answer of the theologians, first he presents the three kinds of life; then he relates each of them to a kind of soul; finally he considers which kind of life qualifies for achieving happiness. As happiness is perfect, the life to achieve it must also be perfect. However, he says that during life man is susceptible to bad fortune, so happiness is not in any kind of life as stated by Aristotle. Here it is evident that the author confuses “happiness” and “blessedness”; because of that he considers this life imperfect. He relates perfection to fortune rather than to virtue. When he resumes the classification of lives, he concludes that in none of them can there be happiness, because none of them are perfect. Considering that none of those lives can achieve happiness, there has to be another kind of life in which perfect happiness is possible. This new kind of life is stated as the only one where we can be united with happiness. The only perfect life is that of the separated soul. Therefore, theologians say that only in the life of the separated soul can there be happiness:

Ad hec est duplex responio, et est prima hec. Auctor non sumit in ista divisione omnes differencias uite et sic patet <quod> insufficienter procedunt predicta argumenta ; et sic patet quod non diuidit uiam inconuenienter. Posset enim de facili responderi ad predictas oppositiones quod de uita que est cum anima separata potest predicari felicitas et sic patet quod non sumit hic sufficientier modos ipsius uite. Et ista responio est penes theologos.

The perfection that theologians are seeking cannot be found in earthly life. They are seeking the highest good, the First. The object of pursuit is much more important than the pursuer itself, man. So, as the commentator says, according to theologians, perfect happiness is given only in the life of the separated soul. In this way, another item is added to the previous configuration of lives. The Aristotelian division of lives appears incomplete in the eyes of theologians: contemplative life is not enough
to bring happiness to man, therefore a new classification of lives will be necessary, where the life of the separated soul will be added. Perfect life enjoying felicitas would only be possible then after death.124

Philosophers have another answer, and the Commentary of Paris states the alternative: a possibility of felicitas in this life (in ista uita). Philosophers do consider the possibility of predicating happiness on contemplative life. Contemplative life is defined as a combination of virtue and knowledge that occurs following the structure of the soul. There are two intellects: speculative intellect and practical intellect. On one hand the speculative intellect125 constitutes two parts, a superior part, called agent intellect, that has no contact with inferior things (it knows in summa) and an inferior part, called possible intellect, which is fallible because it knows particulars and singulars (singullatim) using images provided by sense and imagination (phantasia). On the other hand, practical intellect126 implies a superior part that tends naturally to superior good, and an inferior part that tends to created goods. In the latter, failure can occur.127 One must determine, in accordance with this soul structure, how philosophers conceive the contemplative life where happiness occurs:

Est autem alia respontio secundum philosophos et hec est respon dio. Dicendum est quod uita in quam ponendo felicitatem non errabant philosophi predicatur de uita contemplativa; set dicendum est quod uita contemplativa est secundum uirtutem et scieienciam siue cognitionem; set notandum quod duplex est cognitio: est enim quedam cognitio sine fantasmate et est quedam cognitio mediante fantasmate; et illa uita contemplativa est quae at tenditur penes scienciam et cognitionem que est sine fantasmate est de qua predicatur uita quam ponendo esse felicitatem non errabat philosophi. Similiter dicendum est quod uir-
Contemplative life must be developed according to virtue as it derives from the superior part of practical intellect (desiderative), and according to science that comes from the superior part of speculative intellect (the agent intellect). The concept of knowledge of the superior part of the speculative intellect implies a kind of knowledge without images (cognitio sine fantasmate). Phantasms form the images (phantasmata) from the data that senses provide. Being the possible intellect related to phantasms and so to the senses, it can be right or wrong. Only the knowledge of the agent intellect not involving images (phantasmata) will be always right. This kind of knowledge is provided by illumination. Then this cognitio sine fantasmate can be interpreted as an illumination. The agent intellect (i.e. the superior part of the speculative intellect) can receive illumination from the First. As it receives the knowledge from the First, it would be knowledge that does not come from abstraction of the forms from the senses through the images (phantasmata).

The possibility of knowledge without images (phantasmata) is given in De anima et de potentiis eius, but its structure of the soul is not the same as in the Commentary of Paris."
storing knowledge is only a task of the possible intellect. A very similar structure of
the soul can be found in another commentary of the same period, known as the
pseudo-Peckham commentary. Here the knowledge “not always right” is also
linked with the fact that it knows through phantasia. The “pure” knowledge is not
contaminated or does not come from images (phantasmata). The concept of happi-
ness implies then a whole theory of the soul and of knowledge.

Happiness, according to philosophers, resides in knowledge of the agent intellect
(as a part of human soul) ; and in virtue emerging from practical (desiderative) intel-
lect in its superior part, which is the general (in summa) desire for good. There is a
possibility of human happiness. According to philosophers, happiness is possible in
this life (in contemplative life). The contemplative life is described as a compound
of knowledge (from speculative intellect) and virtue (from practical intellect).

Summarizing, there are two answers, which make clear the difference between
philosophers and theologians. Some scholars have neglected the second answer, i.e.
the answer according to philosophers. At first glance one might think that it was only
an answer with which the author would not agree. However, he is holding the same
structure of the soul and explaining it carefully in several places in the text. In addi-
tion, he bases his theory of virtues on the same framework. Then one must consider
that this is part of his thought, and that philosophers’ thought is actually his own.
Perhaps he would even consider himself a philosopher.

As has been noted, also in the question about when happiness is to be achieved, it
is not clear what the position of the masters is. This is probably due to the readings
that the masters used to interpret the Ethica Noua and Vetus and to the way in which
they thought deeply, trying to make philosophy a coherent system of knowledge.

V. CONCLUSION
HAPPINESS ACCORDING TO PHILOSOPHERS AND THEOLOGIANS

The study of early commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics is not only a phi-
losophical inquiry. The commentaries depended on and influenced in different ways
the historical environment from which they sprang. As any historical event they re-
produce a number of practices. This reproduction is seldom perfect ; so there is some
originality within this imperfection of the reproduction that may produce new prac-

132. Cf. LOTLIN, Psychologie et morale aux xie et xiiie siècles, t. I, p. 514, the manuscript quoted is Florence,
eu superior : superior qua contemplatur superiora, inferior qua contemplatur et considerat inferiores.
Cum ergo dicitur quod intellectus semper est rectus, hoc est quantum ad superiorem partem ; non hoc modo
ratio est motor phantasie, sed solum quantum ad partem inferiorem est motor phantasie, et hoc modo
non semper est rectus et propter hoc non procedit ratio. Aliter potest dici, sicut dicetur, quod intellectus
agens cognoscat omnia, sed indistincte, cum autem illuminatur a phantasibus, tunc facit cognitionem dis-
inctam in intellectu possibili ; similiter dico quod, cum dicitur quod intellectus est semper rectus, hoc est
prout indistincte se habet circa omnia, set tunc non mouet phantasiam ; cum autem est circa singularia dis-
incte se habens, tunc mouet phantasiam et tunc non est semper rectus ; et propter hoc mouet quandoque
recte, quandoque non recte.”
tices. Indeed, the masters of Arts failed to restrict their own field of research to what
the syllabus said. They chose instead to investigate the whole domain of knowledge.

The masters of the Faculty of Arts produced a new philosophical field, when they
reproduced imperfectly the boundaries fixed in the syllabus of what was allowed to
be taught or used in the Faculty of Arts. The reason is that the texts they were sup-
posed to teach involved the knowledge of other banned texts, which were related to
them. In any case, they tried to explain the texts and make of them a coherent theory.
They considered the philosophical field as their own field; consequently they would
try to study as much philosophy as possible. In addition, they dared to study it be-
cause the danger of excommunication was no longer valid after 1231. In any case, the
ecclesiastical authorities were against the use of philosophy not only by masters of
Arts but also by masters of Theology.

For some of the problems, philosophers and theologians had different answers.
Secundum philosophos or secundum theologos, whatever the masters described, they
always managed to get to the soul, to the intelligences, to the Prima Causa. Even if
they could not teach natural philosophy itself, it was included in the courses on Ethics
because it was necessary to grasp the text of the Nicomachean Ethics. What the texts
show is that masters of Arts were studying philosophy and producing their own sys-
tem of knowledge before 1250 and that they were committed to their research.

As for the concept of happiness before 1250, they sometimes disagreed with
theologians, even if both were discussing philosophical issues, which were not al-
lowed for masters of Arts, and not advised for theologians. The masters discussed
with theologians because they considered that they had the conceptual tools for this
and, in the domain of knowledge, they did not accept the hierarchy imposed by the
ecclesiastical authorities on the University. The masters were thinking, and they con-
sidered all possible answers to a question. If the answer of theologians did not satisfy
them, they would keep searching for a more accurate answer. This has always been
the task of philosophers.