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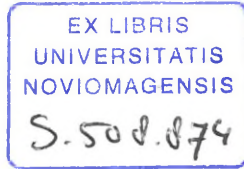
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THE “SEMANTIC” ARTICLES OF AUTRE COURT’S CONDEMNATION. NEW PROPOSALS FOR AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ARTICLES 1, 30, 31, 35, 57 and 58¹

In our current picture of 14th-century philosophy Nicholas of Autrecourt still holds a somewhat uneasy position. Historians of medieval philosophy generally have credited Autrecourt, more than any other medieval thinker, with a critical attitude. Autrecourt is critical of the possibility of knowing causal relations; he is critical of our knowledge of substances through their accidents; he criticizes those people who keep on reading Aristotle and his Commentator until senility sets in, and who attack him, that is Nicholas, the friend of truth, when he blows his trumpet to wake the sleeping from their sleep.² However, historians still widely diverge when it comes to an evaluation and appreciation of this critical attitude. Should Autrecourt be considered a medieval Hume or Kant, an extreme Ockhamist, or a confused eclectic, to mention only a few of the labels that have been used to describe his thought.³

At least one of the dominant factors that account for this situation, is the circumstance that any discussion of Autrecourt’s thought tended to focus on the events at the Arts Faculty at Paris in the years 1340-1347 and consequently on the assumed association of his thought with that of William of Ockham and John Buridan.⁴

(1) I wish to thank Prof. John Murdoch for his helpful suggestions and encouragement. Research for this paper was made possible through a fellowship from the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences.

(2) See THUISSEN (1987) for a recent attempt of a reinterpretation of Autrecourt’s views on causality, and for some of the literature on Autrecourt. A more extensive bibliography is provided in NICOLAUS VON AUTRE COURT (1988), lxxv-lxxviii. For the text paraphrased here cf. NICOLAUS VON AUTRE COURT (1988), 84, article 37. Cf. la liste des ouvrages cités *in fine* (NDLR).

(3) The *Forschungsgeschichte* is neatly outlined in NICOLAUS VON AUTRE COURT (1988), lii-lix.

(4) See for example SCOTT (1971), MOODY (1975) and more recently BOTTIN (1982).

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It was not until quite recently that we have come to see—due to the studies of Courtenay and Tachau—that the several “relevant” documents from this period in reality address a whole series of crises and not just one issue, that is to say, the controversy at Paris over Ockham’s thought.⁵

In the light of the new, and to my opinion correct, interpretation of the events at the Arts Faculty at Paris, the condemnation of Nicholas of Autrecourt in 1346 and 1347 is no longer perceived as the final stage of the battle against Ockhamism.⁶ This does not mean that the relation of the thought of Autrecourt and Ockham, or of Autrecourt and Buridan has now been clarified. It only means that a study of Autrecourt’s thought should not start from any assumptions about the existence of such relations.

To my mind there are still too many aspects of Autrecourt’s thought that need to be clarified, before an attempt can be made to determine his position on the map of 14th-century philosophy. The aspect to which I shall turn concerns the list of articles condemned in 1346, and especially those six articles that have a bearing upon medieval semantic discussions.

Some of the ‘semantic’ articles have received scholarly attention in the recent and not so recent past. Lappe, for example, in the introduction to his edition of Autrecourt’s *Letters* and condemned articles showed himself puzzled to such extent by one of the articles that will be discussed here that he qualified it as *similos* without its proper context.⁷ More recently Tachau ingeniously tried to argue that the very same article reflects London and Oxford debates on certain topics, and that Autrecourt’s condemnation should be seen in connection with the introduction of the “new English theology” to Paris.⁸

In those instances where an article has already received scholarly attention, I will limit myself to a presentation and defence of the interpretation that in my view makes most sense. In other instances I will have to be more elaborate. In any case one should keep in mind that Autrecourt’s own writings are of no particular help in dealing with the ‘semantic’ articles. Perhaps he did cover some of the problems to which these articles refer in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, but, since this work has not yet been identified, or was never even

(5) COURTENAY/TACHAU (1982) and COURTENAY (1984).

(6) COURTENAY/TACHAU (1982), 53. Although Courtenay’s and Tachau’s interpretation of the events at the Arts Faculty seem to have found general acceptance, there still are very recent studies that display the older perception, e.g. in the introduction to the new edition and German translation of Autrecourt’s *Letters*. In this introduction (NICOLAUS VON AUTRECOURT (1988), 1 n. 79) Perler asks himself the question whether the statute of 1340 should be understood as a reproof of the extreme Ockhamist Autrecourt, or as an Ockhamist reproof of the anti-Ockhamist Autrecourt. This *status quaestionis* is the more surprising since Perler elsewhere in his introduction cites with approval the studies of Courtenay and Tachau.

(7) LAPPE (1908), 5. He is referring to the article “quod Deus et creatura non sunt aliquid”.

(8) TACHAU (1988), 352-357. The term “new English theology” has been coined by Courtenay, COURTENAY (1987), esp. 250-307.

written, we will have to find texts of other medieval authors to reconstruct the 14th-century debates on these issues and to give some understanding of their broader significance.⁹

In order to facilitate discussion, I have put the articles in an order different from that which they had in the edition.

Article 1 and the semantic debate on "homo est animal".

(1) "*Dixi et scripsi, quod hec propositio 'Homo est animal' non est necessaria secundum fidem, non attendens pro tunc connexionem necessariam predictorum terminorum.—Falsam et revocandam.*"

"I have said and written that this proposition 'man is an animal' is not necessary according to faith, at that time not paying attention to the necessary connection of the foresaid terms.—This false and should be recanted."

This article is clearly connected with the 13th-century discussion of the sophism "man is an animal" that has attracted considerable attention not only from medieval thinkers, but also from modern scholars.¹⁰ The discussion concentrates on the question whether the proposition "man is an animal" is (necessarily) true, even when no man exists.

This question is, of course, primarily concerned with the relation between language and things: does the truth of a proposition require the actual existence of the things referred to? More specifically, this and related sophisms served to clarify the relation between *significatio* and *suppositio* and the nature of predication by examining the verification of propositions that concern empty classes.¹¹ If the objects referred to by the terms of a proposition are (temporarily) out of existence, is this proposition then true or false? It is not hard to see that the answer to this question to a large extent comes to depend upon the domain of denotation one wishes to admit.

The great diversity of opinion in this matter is reflected by a 13th-century author who exclaimed that there were as many opinions as there were authors: *quot capita tot sentencie*.¹² Here I will only present the two extremes of the whole gamut of positions.

According to one extreme position—represented among others by Roger Bacon and Boethius of Dacia—the proposition "man is an animal" is false when no man exists. A proposition can only be verified for a *suppositum* that is really extant. Verification by means of the essence signified or connoted is,

(9) The fact that none of the articles that will be discussed here stem from one of Autrecourt's texts that are still extant has probably induced Perler to put these articles in the category "Missdeutungen und böswillige Interpretation", NICOLAUS VON AUTRE COURT (1988), xxxiv. Perler neglects, however, to document this qualification.

(10) Some of the literature relevant to this issue will be mentioned in the following footnotes.

(11) EBBESEN (1979) and PINBORG (1971).

(12) LEWRY (1984), 423.

according to Bacon, not possible, because the term "man" has lost its signification when no man exists.¹³

According to the opposite position, the proposition "man is an animal" is true, even when no man exists. Actual existence in this world is not required for the truth of a proposition about natural realities. The truth of the proposition is guaranteed by the necessary relation obtaining between subject ("man") and predicate ("animal"), which is assumed to exist somewhere else (for example in the mind). The truth of the proposition can be linked to existence in the conceptual order, to an *esse quidditativum*, to an *esse habituale*, to mention only a few of the possibilities that were put forward in the 13th century.¹⁴

In the background of the two solutions to the sophism "man is an animal" outlined here, there lies a fundamentally different conception of supposition. In particular this sophism is a witness to what De Rijk has coined "the hesitation of medieval logicians between the domains of connotation and denotation."¹⁵ Besides, the different solutions also reflect two different views of the function of the copula "est" in the proposition "man is an animal".

Both approaches to the copula "is" are nicely illustrated by William of Sherwood's distinction between *esse habituale* and *esse actuale*. If we take "is" in the proposition "man is an animal" according to *esse habituale*, the proposition is true, even when no man exists. It is just a case of a superior term ("animal") being predicated of an inferior term ("man"). If, on the other hand, "is" is taken in the sense of *esse actuale*, the proposition "man is an animal" implies the actual existence of a man ("man is").¹⁶

With this background information in mind, let us now return to the first of the condemned articles of Autrecourt. From the text of this article it can be inferred that Autrecourt at one point or another had held the view that the proposition "man is an animal" is not necessarily true according to faith, since he did not pay attention to the necessary connection of the subject- and

(13) Bacon does allow that the term that refers to a non-existent object receives signification anew. This second signification, however, will be equivocal in relation to the first one. For a discussion of Bacon's views and the relevant texts see BRAAKHUIS (1977) and DE LIBERA (1981).

(14) See LEWRY (1981) and PINBORG (1971). Another solution, which does not fit in easily into the classification presented here, grounds the truth of the proposition "man is an animal" on the eternity of the species, whose members always have an existence somewhere in the world (Siger of Brabant; Robert Grosseteste).

(15) It is not the place here to elaborate this point further. See DE RIJK (1970) and (1982), and PINBORG (1971).

(16) Sherwood's views have been discussed in BRAAKHUIS (1977). Other medieval thinkers made a distinction between an atemporal *esse quidditativum* and an *esse existentie* and would say that "man is an animal" is not linked to the existence of a man because both forms of *esse* are external to one another, LEWRY (1981), 246. Note, that by making his distinction, Sherwood in fact represents an intermediary position between those thinkers who claim that the truth of "man is an animal" requires real existence and those authors who claim that it does not.

predicate-term. If the connection of the terms is not considered, the proposition "man is an animal" would be false when no man exists.

The relevance of the condemnation of Autrecourt's stance to the 13th-century debate on "man is an animal" is not a mere product of an historian's imagination. It has also been noticed by Marsilius of Inghen, although without naming Autrecourt explicitly.

Let us turn to Marsilius' text. In Question 29 of Book I of his *Questions on the Prior Analytics*, Marsilius discusses whether the proposition "man is an animal" is necessary.¹⁷ Among the arguments in favor of a positive answer, he there mentions in the same breath the authority of "a cardinal elsewhere" and "the article of Paris that states that it is an error to say that 'man is an animal' is not necessary". Marsilius concludes that "therefore this proposition is simpliciter necessary".¹⁸

From the phrasing of the argument it is quite clear that Marsilius is referring to two separate things: the authority of "a cardinal elsewhere", and an article of Paris.¹⁹ Marsilius' summary of the Parisian article leaves no doubt that he must have had in mind the first article of Autrecourt's condemnation. The *cardinalis alibi* has to be identified with cardinal Robert Kilwardby, who in 1277 (when not yet a cardinal, but an archbishop) condemned thirty theses in the fields of grammar, logic and natural philosophy at Oxford.²⁰

Among the condemned logical theses is one thesis declaring that necessary truth depends upon the persistence of the subject.²¹ From other texts it is clear that this thesis is related to the 13th-century debate over the sophism "man is an animal".²² Kilwardby himself held the view that "man is an animal" is

(17) MARSILIUS OF INGHEN. *Quaestiones super libros Analyticorum Priorum* (1516), I q. 29, f. 15vb: "Utrum hec sit necessaria: 'homo est animal'" It lies beyond the scope of this article to discuss Marsilius' own views on this issue.

(18) MARSILIUS OF INGHEN, *op. cit.* f. 15vb: "Arguitur quod sic... Item, arguitur auctoritate cardinalis alibi. Item, arguitur articulo Parisiensi dicente sic: quod dicere hominem esse animal non est necesse: error; igitur ista (scil. "homo est animal") simpliciter est necessaria."

(19) Additional proof of this contention can be found on f. 46ra of this text, in the section *Ad rationes*: "Ad auctoritatem cardinalis et articulum dicitur quod intellexerunt ultimam conclusionem, puta quod est necessaria secundum suppositionem naturalem."

(20) LEWRY (1981) and see also note 21.

(21) DENIFLE/CHÂTELAIN (1889) I, 558, no. 474: "Item quod veritas cum necessitate tantum est cum constancia subjecti."

(22) See EBBESEN/PINBORG (1970) and LEWRY (1981). The very same cardinal Kilwardby is also quoted by John Buridan in a passage that has been misread as a reference to the condemned article of Autrecourt, JOHN BURIDAN, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum* (1518), IV, q. 8, f. 18vb: "Et forte ille cardinalis erat illius opinionis (scil. quod esse et non esse sunt quidam modi diversi accidentales accidentes essentie), qui misit bullam quod ista propositio "homo est animal" vel etiam ista propositio "equus est animal" est necessaria propter inclusionem terminorum et esset vera, quamvis Deus annihilaret omnes equos." Michael (1985) conjectures that Buridan is citing "die Bulle des 'cardinalis albus', d.h. die den Prozess gegen Autrecourt beschliessende Bulle von Kardinal Curty, Zisterzienser und Bischof von Albi..." However, Buridan's text—also as cited by Michael—reads "cardinalis" and not

necessarily true even when no man exists. Kilwardby's stance may not only be inferred from the condemned thesis; it seems also to be represented in the sophism "Every man necessarily is an animal" (*Omnis homo de necessitate est animal*) that is attributed to him.²³ Kilwardby defends the view that the truth of the proposition is based upon existence in the conceptual order. The term "man" brings to mind the concept of animal.

Finally, something has to be said about the possible background of the condemnation of this particular article. For one thing, the authorities may have felt that Autrecourt's position in the semantic debate over "man is an animal" resembled too much the position that had been condemned at Oxford in 1277. But even so, one can still ask why this position was considered an error.

Autrecourt's own writings do not provide an answer to this question, but from the texts of his near and not-so-near contemporaries we can infer that the semantic debate over "man is an animal" clearly had a theological connection: the doctrine of the incarnation, more specifically the Christological problem connected with this doctrine: whether Christ in the three days after his death and before his resurrection may still be called a man.²⁴

Already in the 13th-century Roger Bacon had written that, precisely because of ignorance in regard to the semantic problem we have outlined here "the multitude holds that dead Caesar is a man, that a dead man is an animal, and that Christ was a man during the three days in the tomb...".²⁵

For the 14th-century we have to turn again to a text of Marsilius of Inghen. Question 13 of Book III of Marsilius' *Commentary on the Sentences* is devoted

"cardinalis albi"! Besides, we do not know anything about cardinal Curty's views, whereas we do know Kilwardby's views on this issue.

(23) The text has been partially edited in EBBESEN/PINBORG (1970), 37-40. See esp. p. 39: "Unde dico (f. 9vb) quod hec est vera 'omnis homo de necessitate est animal' et illa 'homo est animal' nullo homine existente, sicut ostendebat quedam ratio, quoniam ad veritatem propositionis in naturali materia non exigitur existentia extremorum actu. Cum igitur intellectus hominis et animalis naturaliter sint coherentes, manifestum quod sive homo sit sive non sit, dummodo hec vox 'homo' hominem significet, simpliciter in ipso intelligitur animal. Et ideo nullo homine existente hec est vera 'homo est animal' et 'omnis homo de necessitate est animal'..." See LEWRY (1981), 246 and (1984), 422-423 and DE LIBERA (1981), 216-220 for a discussion of Kilwardby's views. It is still uncertain who have been the targets of Kilwardby's condemnation. Roger Bacon seems to be a likely candidate. In any case he represents an opinion that is very similar to the one considered erroneous at Oxford. But see BRAAKHUIS (1985), esp. 120-121. Thomas Aquinas may have been another target. The matter has been more fully investigated and documented in a paper by Prof. Braakhuis. I hope he will soon publish his interesting results.

(24) The 12th-century developments in the doctrine of the incarnation have been neatly outlined in NIELSEN (1982). From this study one gains the impression that Christ's death had not yet been a major problem in the 12th century.

(25) ROGER BACON (1988), 87.

to the problem whether Christ in the three days was truly man, as he had been during his life.²⁶

The Question is divided into two main sections (*articuli*). The first treats the assumption made in the Question, namely that in the three days of Christ's death the flesh and the soul remain united to the Word.²⁷ The second section, which will concern us here, is devoted to the problem itself, that is to say, the problem whether Christ in the three-day period of his death was truly man.²⁸

Marsilius opens this section with a review of the three major positions dealing with this problem: the position of Hugh of St. Victor, according to whom Christ remains a man even in the three days after his crucifixion; the position of Peter the Lombard, who, although for different reasons, also maintains that Christ remains a man; and finally the position common to the School of Paris (*communis schole Parisiensis*), namely that Christ during the three days was not a man.²⁹ Already in the course of the 13th-century this opinion was referred to as the received view.³⁰

The Parisian opinion was based upon the assumption that Christ's humanity needs two requirements, and that if Christ fails to meet only one of

(26) The full title of Question 13 reads as follows: "Tertiodecimo queritur circa distinctiones XXI et XXII et ultimo circa passionem, utrum sicut in triduo utraque pars essentialis Christi hominis Verbo mansit unita, sic in eodem Christus fuerit vere homo sicut fuit in vita." MARSILIUS OF INGHEM, *In. Sent.* (1501), III q. 13, f. 438rb.

(27) MARSILIUS OF INGHEM, *op. cit.*, f. 438rb: "Que questio supponit quod in triduo tam caro quam anima mansit unita Verbo .../f. 439rb/ ... In hac questione sunt duo articuli. Primus erit de supposito". The text of this first section runs till f. 442rb.

(28) MARSILIUS OF INGHEM, *op. cit.*, f. 442rb: "Quantum ad secundum articulum restat videre de quesito, scilicet utrum in eodem triduo Christus fuerit vere homo sicut fuit in vita". This section covers ff. 442rb-445vb.

(29) MARSILIUS OF INGHEM, *op. cit.*, f. 442rb-va: "Pro quo sciendum est primo quod de hoc proposito sunt tres modi dicendi. Primus est venerabilis Hugonis .../f. 442va/ ... Hec ergo opinio ... concedit quod Christus post mortem mansit homo ... Secundus modus dicendi est Magistri ... Consequenter dicit Magister quod fuerit homo in triduo ... Tertius modus est communis schole Parisiensis, dicens quod Christus in triduo non fuit homo."

(30) See BONAVENTURE, *In Sent.* (1934-1964), II d. 44 dub. 3: "Aliter est, quod Christus fuit homo in triduo". This was one of the eight theses of Peter the Lombard that were not followed by the Parisian masters: "In his octo positionibus communiter doctores Parisienses non sequuntur Magistrum ..." (Cited in DE LIBERA (1981), 231 n. 46). See also THOMAS AQUINAS, *Scriptum super Sententiis magistri Petri Lombardi* (1929-1947), III d. 21 q. 1 art. 1, who presents the same outline of positions as Marsilius and remarks: "Et ideo omnes moderni tenent, quod Christus in triduo non fuerit homo." And finally RICHARD FISHACRE, although an opponent of the "Parisian school", *In. Sent.* III d. 22, edited in PELSTER (1949), 272: "Hic queritur an in illo tempore fuit hec vera: Deus est homo. Et patet quod Magister sentit quod sic. Multi autem modernorum sentiunt quod non fuerit homo in tempore illo." Dissenters from the "Parisian view" were Richard Fishacre and Richard Rufus of Cornwall, PELSTER (1949). The authorship of Cornwall's *Commentary on the Sentences* is discussed in RAEDTS (1987). He has also made it plausible that Richard Rufus of Cornwall is only one of the authors attacked by BACON precisely because of his stance with regard to the question of Christ's death; EBBESSEN/PINBORG (1970), 40-44. For the relevant passages in BACON'S *Compendium studii theologiae* and their English translation, see now ROGER BACON (1988), 87 l. 14-31 and 106, l. 33-108.

them, he should not be considered man in the three days of his death. The two prerequisites for Christ's humanity are the union of body and soul, which is common to all human beings, *and* the union of humanity (*humanitas*) and divinity (*divinitas/deitas*), which is specific to Christ. Now, all medieval thinkers agreed that the unity of God and the human body and soul of Christ was never dissolved. The union of body and soul, however, was dissolved by Christ's death, and for this reason the "Parisian School" maintained that Christ cannot be called man in the three days between his death and resurrection.³¹

Marsilius himself also subscribes to the view of the "Parisian School". The connection between the issue of Christ's humanity and the semantic debate of "man is an animal" comes into the open when he deals with one of the arguments against the "Parisian School". According to this counterargument Christ can be called man in the three days. It relies partly on what we find in the condemned article of Autrecourt.

The argument runs as follows. In the three days Christ was Christ, and therefore he was a man. The conclusion holds because you are arguing from a lower-level term ("Christ") to a higher-level term ("man"). The antecedent "Christ is Christ" holds true for two reasons. Firstly, the same is predicated of itself. Secondly, *according to the Parisian article*, the proposition "man is an animal" is necessarily true; so, the more so the proposition "Christ is Christ".³² The purport of this argument is to prove that the truth of these two propositions does not require the existence of a man or of Christ respectively.

(31) Peter the Lombard and his School, on the other hand, maintained that Christ is unlike any other human being. So, although the union of body and soul is dissolved, Christ would still be called a man because of the union of God and the body and soul of Christ remain intact, even during Christ's death. A very acute and early formulation of the "Parisian School" is given by Praepositinus, LANDGRAF (1947), 147, n. 159 (the punctuation is mine): "Alii sunt, qui dicunt quod non fuit homo, dicentes quod ad hoc, quod purus homo sit homo, unum tantum exigitur, scilicet unio anime ad carnem. Sed ad hoc quod Christus sit homo, duo exiguntur, scilicet unio humanitatis ad Deum et unio anime ad carnem. Et quia facilius est destruere quam construere, dicunt quod <quando> una illarum fuit soluta, scilicet unio anime ad carnem, tunc non fuit homo. Ad hoc enim ut sit homo albus, duo exiguntur: ut sit homo et ut sit albus. Sed ad hoc ut non sit homo albus, sufficit ut unum removeatur. Et hoc nobis placet". Marsilius' summary of the views of the "Parisian School" seems to be accurate, *op. cit.*, f. 443ra: "Correlarie (scil. correlarium tertie conclusionis) sequitur quod Christus non debet dici fuisse homo, eo quod anima sua fuit ei unita, que erat homo ... Correlarium (scil. quarte conclusionis): Christus non ex eo in triduo dicitur fuisse homo, quia partes que fuerunt humanitatis, divise ab invicem, manserunt unitate deitate. Patet, quia per conclusionem hoc non sufficit ad hoc quod Christus dicatur vel sit homo. Ex his inferitur conclusio responsalis cum communi schola Parisiensis quod Christus in triduo non fuit homo. Probatur, quia si fuisset homo, hoc vel esset ex eo quod anima, que est proprie homo, mansit ei unita—et hoc non per correlarium tertie conclusionis—vel ex eo quod ambe partes humanitatem nate constituere manserunt assumpte. Et hoc non per correlarium quarte conclusionis."

(32) MARSILIUS OF INGHEN, *op. cit.*, f. 439ra: "Octavo: Christus in triduo fuit Christus; ergo homo. Consequentia tenet, quia arguitur ab inferiori ad superius. Antecedens patet: primo,

Another, even earlier reference that clearly connects this condemned article to the theological debate of Christ's death, is given in the *Commentary on the Sentences* of Andreas de Novo Castro (Neufchâteau).³³

From Marsilius' and Andreas' references we may conclude that medieval thinkers saw a connection between the semantic debate of "man is an animal" and the doctrine of Christ's death. Theological considerations with respect to the doctrine of Christ's death may well have played a role in the condemnation of Autrecourt's first article, but we can in no way yet determine exactly which considerations.

Articles 30, 31, 35, 57 and 58.

The remaining five "semantic" articles have by far attracted most scholarly attention. The direction of the research has been set by Elie's pioneer-study on the *complexe significabile*.³⁴ He had tried to argue that Autrecourt's position with regard to the *complexe significabile*, as reflected in these articles, resembles the position of Gregory of Rimini on this issue, and that consequently Autrecourt had been serving as a kind of scapegoat for the opinions of his "master".³⁵ Although Elie's thesis has come under attack, the net result of it has been, that in all subsequent studies these five articles were considered to address one issue: the *complexe significabile*.³⁶ In my opinion, however, only articles 31, 57 and 58 are directly connected with the debate on the *complexe significabile*, and then in a way that has not been perceived earlier. Articles 30 and 35 address another issue. I will first propose an interpretation of these articles.

Articles 30 and 35: the significate of contradictories.

(30) "Item dixi in quadam disputatione, quod contradictoria ad invicem idem significant.—Falsam"³⁷

quia in ea predicatur idem de se, qua nulla est verior, ut dicit Boethius; secundo, quia articulus Parisiensis dicit quod hec est necessaria: 'homo est animal', multo fortius ista: 'Christus est Christus'. We need not go into Marsilius' answer to this counterargument. It has been transcribed and translated in Bos (1981), 250-251 in connection with a discussion of Marsilius' theory of *suppositio naturalis*. In Marsilius' solution of this counterargument, there occurs yet another reference to the "articulus Parisiensis". Bos (1981), 252 n. 69 wrongly assumed that Marsilius was referring to Tempier's list of condemned articles of 1277, and consequently was not able to identify Marsilius' reference.

(33) ANDREAS DE NOVO CASTRO, *In. Sent.* prol. q. 3, f. 14rb: "Ad probationem dicitur quod articulus quod condemnat quod hec non sit necessaria secundum fidem 'homo est animal', est enim necessaria, quia Christus resurgens ex mortuis, iam non moritur..." I am most grateful to Prof. Katherine Tachau for providing me with this transcription.

(34) ELIE (1937), esp. 37-40.

(35) ELIE (1937), 37-38. In NICOLAUS VON AUTRECOURT (1988), xli Perler still considers this interpretation as a serious possibility.

(36) See for example PAQUÉ (1970), 198-232 and TACHAU (1988), 353-357.

(37) NICOLAUS VON AUTRECOURT (1988), 82.

“Again, I have said in some disputation that contradictories signify the same thing.—This is false.”

(35) “*Item quod propositiones ‘Deus est’, ‘Deus non est’ penitus idem significant, licet alio modo.—Falsam.*”³⁸

“Again, that the propositions ‘God exists’, ‘God does not exist’ signify entirely the same thing, albeit in a different way.—This is false.”

With regard to an understanding of the theses 30 and 35 Elie briefly alluded to the signification of syncategorematic terms.³⁹ And indeed, it is within the context of the theory of syncategorematic terms that both articles should be interpreted. In general syncategorematic words are all those words that are not categorematic, i.e. all those words that cannot be used alone as a subject- or predicate-term, such as conjunctions, adverbs, quantifiers, modal terms and prepositions.⁴⁰

Although it may vary from author to author what notion of *syncategorematia* is employed and which non-categorematic words were expressly treated among their *syncategoremata*, two persistent themes are important for our account.⁴¹ First, *syncategoremata* are generally characterized as words whose signification is incomplete or as words that do not signify anything at all.⁴² Secondly, the adverb “*non*” from the very beginning in the 13th-century became a prominent member of the *syncategoremata*.⁴³

In the light of the foregoing, it is not difficult to reconstruct the reasoning behind thesis 35. The term “*non*” in the proposition “*Deus non est*” does not have a signification of its own, and for this reason “*Deus non est*” and “*Deus est*” signify the same, that is *Deus*. Although “*non*” is not significative (*significative*), it does, of course, affect the meaning of the proposition, and this fact is exactly expressed in the clue “... , *licet alio modo*”.

(38) NICOLAUS VON AUTRECOURT (1988), 84. It should be mentioned, perhaps superfluously, that article 59 (*Item quod est transitus de contradictorio in contradictorium sine mutatione reali cuiuscunque intrinsece*) does not belong to this group, but is connected with discussions that relate to Book V of Aristotle’s *Physics*. See also WILLIAM OF OCKHAM, *Expositio in librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis* (1978), 300.

(39) ELIE (1937), 39. Unfortunately his remarks passed unnoticed.

(40) KRETZMANN (1982), esp. 211-213.

(41) The different approaches to syncategorematic words have extensively been analysed in BRAAKHUIS (1979) and (1981).

(42) See for example the formulation of William of Ockham, *Summa logicae* (1974), pars I cap. 4, 15: “Termini categorematici finitam et certam habent significationem ... syncategorema proprie loquendo nihil significat, sed magis additum alteri facit ipsum aliquid significare sive facit ipsum pro aliquo vel aliquibus modo determinato supponere vel aliud officium circa categorema exercet.” And again in the *Expositio in librum Perihermeneias Aristotelis* (1978), 378: “Immo etiam isto modo signa universalialia et particularialia, et universaliter omnia syncategoremata—sive sint nomina large accipiendo nomina, sive verba, si quae sint talia, sive adverbialia, sive quaecumque aliae partes orationis—non sunt significativae; et hoc, quia nullius rei determinatae intellectum faciunt nisi coniunctae cum aliis.”

(43) See BRAAKHUIS (1979), 141, 222, 265, 311, 317, 357 for the treatment of “*non*” as a syncategorematic word by Roger Bacon, Johannes Pagus, Petrus Hispanus, William of Sherwood, Nicholas of Paris and Henry of Ghent respectively. Cf. now also SPRUYT (1989).

The interpretation finds support in the following passage, quoted from the *Sophismata* of John Buridan, where he discusses the signification of the copula *est*.⁴⁴

According to Buridan *est* is a syncategorematic term. What makes this passage interesting for us, however, is that the examples given by Buridan all contain syncategorematic terms, like *omnis*, *nullus*, and ...*non*.

*“Unde non sunt aliae res quae capiuntur conceptu correspondente isti orationi ‘Deus est Deus’ et isti ‘Deus non est Deus’ et isti ‘Omnis Deus est Deus’ et isti ‘Nullus Deus est Deus’ et isti termino simplici ‘Deus’. Sed aliter et aliter illa res concipitur, scilicet complexe vel incomplexo, affirmative vel negative.”*⁴⁵

Article 30 should, in my view, be read as a generalization of the point that has been made in article 35 with the help of the example “*Deus est*”. For one way to create contradictories is with the help of the sign of negation *non*. Or, as Aristotle puts it, a contradiction is the affirmation and the negation of the same thing.⁴⁶ I suspect that it is exactly this contention, that made some medieval thinkers maintain that contradictories do refer to the same substrate and even have to refer to the same substrate, for otherwise there would not be a contradiction.⁴⁷

According to one recent interpretation, advanced by Tachau, the articles 30 and 35 are somehow connected with Wodeham’s views on the *complexe significabile*.⁴⁸ I think, however, that the views proposed in the two articles and the *complexe significabile* are mutually exclusive. According to adherents of the *complexe significabile*, the significate of “*Deus est*” would be “*Deum esse*”, whereas the significate of “*Deus non est*” would be “*Deum non esse*”. One of the reasons for introducing an entity like the *complexe significabile* is exactly that, according to its adherents, other thinkers do not know how to distinguish between propositions like “*homo est animal*” and “*homo non est animal*”, or, for that matter, between “*Deus est*” and “*Deus non est*”.

This clearly comes to the open in a *Question* of Adam of Wodeham that is devoted to the *complexe significabile*.⁴⁹ As is well known, Adam Wodeham was an adherent of the theory of the *complexe significabile* before Gregory of Rimini.⁵⁰ In one of the sections Wodeham deals with arguments of Walter

(44) This passage has also been quoted by PAQUÉ (1970), 199, although in a different context.

(45) JOHANNES BURIDANUS, *Sophismata* (1977), cap. 1, 33.

(46) ARISTOTLE, *De Interpretatione*, 17a 32-36.

(47) See again WILLIAM OF OCKHAM, *Summa logicae* (1974), 103 l. 127-104 l. 1: “Incomplexa autem contradictoria sunt illa quorum unum significat aliquid vel aliqua affirmative et aliud significat *precise illud vel illa* negativa, nihil affirmative significando. Sicut ‘homo’ significat omnes homines affirmative et ‘non-homo’ significat *eosdem* homines negative, nihil terminate vel finite affirmative significando.”

(48) TACHAU (1988), 355.

(49) The question has been edited by GÁL (1977) and is part of Wodeham’s *Commentary on the Sentences. Lectura secunda*; GÁL (1977), 71 and also COURTENAY (1978), 210-214.

(50) Wodeham’s theory is discussed in TACHAU (1987) and (1988), 303-310.

Chatton, who had argued against the *complexe significabile*. Wodeham replies Chatton that, by denying the *complexe significabile*, one is no longer able to distinguish the proposition “*Deus est Deus*” from “*Deus non est Deus*”:

“... Volo igitur quod in anima istius simul sint istae duae propositiones ‘*Deus est Deus*’, ‘*Deus non est Deus*’. Ad formationem unius causabitur assensus, ad formationem alterius causabitur dissensus; et si non ipsis complexis—quod esset propositum principale—igitur eidem penitus, scilicet Deo. Et confirmatur: quia contradictoria—etiam per istum (scil. Chatton)—significant omnino idem, aliter non essent, ut dicit, contradictoria.”⁵¹

Note that the last sentence seems to imply that the view on the signification of contradictories expressed here, was a commonly accepted one; it was even employed by Chatton!⁵²

The passage cited above perhaps also provides us with a key to an understanding of the condemnation of articles 30 and 35. Theologians may have picked up the idea—which we have seen Wodeham employ against adversaries of the *complexe significabile*—that Autrecourt at least gives the impression of not distinguishing the proposition “God exists” from “God does not exist”. I do not believe that the Church authorities went so far as to misconstrue Autrecourt’s position as stating that God does not exist, for then, his thesis 35 would undoubtedly have been qualified as *hereticum*, instead of merely *falsum*.

The articles 31, 57 and 58 and the discussion of the complexe significabile.

(31) “*Item dixi in quadam disputatione, quod Deus et creatura non sunt aliquid.—Falsam et scandalosam prout verba sonant.*”⁵³

“Again, I have said in a certain disputation that God and creature are not something.—This is false and scandalous as far as the words are taken at face value.”

(57) “*Item quod Deus et creatura non sunt aliquid.—Falsum et scandalosum prout iacet.*”⁵⁴

“Again, that God and creature are not something.—This is false and scandalous as it stands.”

(58) “*Item quod significabile complexe per istud complexum ‘Deus et creatura distinguuntur’ nihil est.—Falsum et scandalosum.*”⁵⁵

“Again, that the *complexe significabile* of this proposition ‘God and creature are distinct’ is nothing.—This is false and scandalous.”

(51) ADAM WODEHAM (1977), 76.

(52) This point seems to have been missed by TACHAU (1988), 355, who gives the impression that Chatton’s (and Autrecourt’s) view on the signification of contradictories is peculiar.

(53) NICOLAUS VON AUTRECOURT (1988), 82.

(54) NICOLAUS VON AUTRECOURT (1988), 94.

(55) NICOLAUS VON AUTRECOURT (1988), 94.

The theory of the *complexe significabile* was one of the views put forth in connection with the question of the nature of the object of knowledge that is acquired in *scientia demonstrativa*. Alternative answers to this question, were that the object of knowledge is a proposition (*complexum*) or that it is a *res* in the outside world.⁵⁶

A fundamental problem with which the theory of the *complexe significabile* had to cope was the ontological status of the *complexe significabile*: is it a thing (*aliquid*) or nothing (*nihil*)? It is within the context of this discussion that an interpretation of articles 31, 57 and 58 will prove to be most fruitful.

According to article 58, Autrecourt had held the view that the *complexe significabile* of the proposition "*Deus et creatura distinguntur*" is nothing (*nihil*). To my mind, this article should be read as a straightforward rejection of *complexe significabilia*. From the two options—whether a *complexe significabile* is something (*aliquid*) or nothing (*nihil*)—Autrecourt has chosen the second one.⁵⁷

There are several medieval texts on the *complexe significabile* that clearly present this *aliquid-nihil* dilemma. Here I will draw particular attention to the *Sophismata* of John Buridan, a notorious adversary of the *complexe significabile*. In the fifth sophism of the first chapter Buridan puts forward a number of arguments that eventually lead him to the conclusion that *complexe significabilia* are *nihil*:

"Item omne quod est, Deus est vel creatura dependens a Deo. Et tamen illa *complexe significabilia* non erant creatura, quia erant antequam aliquid Deus crearet. Nec erant Deus ut illi dicunt. Et verum est, quia talia sunt multa ut decem aut multo plura. Deus autem est unus; ergo **omnino nihil** erant huiusmodi *complexe significabilia*."⁵⁸

(56) See NUCHELMANS (1982), esp. 204-207 and the literature there cited and TACHAU (1987) on the Wodeham-Chatton debate over the *complexe significabile*.

(57) PAQUÉ (1970), 221 has also thought along these lines, but became confused by the fact that not the *complexe significabile* as such, but only the *complexe significabile* of a particular proposition—i.e. "*Deus et creatura distinguntur*"—was rejected by Autrecourt. See, however, below for an interpretation of the function of this proposition.

(58) JOHN BURIDAN, *Sophismata* (1977), 24. In the beginning of this Sophism it is explained why there have been *complexe significabilia* before creation: (p. 23) "Probatur conclusio quod *complexe significabilia* sunt, quia antequam aliquid esset praeter Deum, multa *complexe significabilia* erant. Hoc probatur, quia homo non currebat tunc, ergo ita erat quod homo non currebat..." Other texts that present the *aliquid-nihil* dilemma, are ADAM WODEHAM (1978), 87 par. 54: "Item, quidquid tu posueris eius obiectum totale, illud aut est *aliquid* aut *nihil*". The *obiectum totale* of a proposition, according to Wodeham, is: (p. 87) "eius significatum; eius autem significatum est sic esse vel sic non esse sicut per propositionem denotatur." GREGORY OF RIMINI, *Lectura super primum et secundum Sententiarum* (1979-1984), I prol. q. 1, 9: "Nunc ad argumentum, cum quaeritur, utrum illud totale significatum sit *aliquid* vel *nihil*, dico quod si 'aliquid' sumatur primo vel secundo modo, est aliquid; si vero tertio modo sumatur, non est aliquid." The interpretation of article 58 has also been the subject of medieval discussion, for example in the *Commentaries on the Sentences* of Andreas de Novo Castro and of Bonsembiante. Their remarks, however, are not very helpful to an understanding of the historical background of Autrecourt's condemnation. They skillfully employ the article in order to bring home their own philosophical point. See ELIE (1937), 86, 97-98 and 144-145 for a translation of the relevant passages.

The proposition "*Deus et creatura distinguntur*" serves as a provocative example. Provocative, because, as can be gathered from the passage quoted above, Buridan exactly reproaches adherents to the *complexe significabile* with not distinguishing between God and creature. Autrecourt could have made the same point with any other proposition, and then this article probably would not have been condemned. The "scandalous" aspect for the *careless* reader seems to have been that the article creates the impression that the proposition "*Deus et creatura distinguntur*" does not signify anything. Even a term like "chimera", however, does have a signification, let alone terms like "God" or "creature".⁵⁹

For the sake of completeness I have to point out that the condemnation of this particular article also allows another, though somewhat perverse, interpretation. *Secundum imaginationem*, so to speak, one could assume that the reason why Autrecourt was castigated for qualifying the *complexe significabile* as a non-entity was that the persons who were responsible for Autrecourt's condemnation were all adherents of the theory of the *complexe significabile*. But, as I already remarked, this interpretation may be a bit farfetched. For in the literature it is generally assumed that the people who were behind Autrecourt's condemnation, intentionally or unintentionally misunderstood most of the theses that were condemned.⁶⁰ Besides, we do not know anything about the views of the commission that was responsible for Autrecourt's condemnation.

For an interpretation of articles 31 and 57, which are almost exactly the same, we have to turn again to Wodeham's Question on the *complexe significabile*. Here Wodeham discusses certain *dubia* against his own position, one of which reads as follows:

*"Item, quidquid tu posueris eius obiectum totale, illud aut est aliquid aut nihil. Si nihil, igitur nihil est obiectum actus assentiendi. Certum est quod falsum est. Si aliquid: vel Deus vel creatura."*⁶¹

This last sentence presents an exhaustive enumeration: everything that exists, is either God or a creature. Or, in the words of John Buridan: "*Item, omne quod est, Deus est vel creatura dependens a Deo ...*"⁶²

Against this background the theses 31 and 57 may be read as an answer to the *dubium* raised in Wodeham's text. The argumentation would run as

(59) See for example this conclusion of BURIDAN, *Sophismata* (1977), cap. 1 Sophisma 6, 26: "Quarta conclusio est quod etiam omni voce significativa et actu significante aliquid significatur". The fifth conclusion deals with the signification of terms like "chimera" and "vacuum".

(60) See for example TACHAU (1988), 354 and 356 and also NICOLAUS VON ATRECOURT (1988), xxxiv ("Missdeutungen und böswillige Interpretation von Sätzen, die Nicolaus geäussert haben soll".)

(61) ADAM WODEHAM (1977), 87 par. 54.

(62) See footnote 58.

follows: A *complexe significabile* is a *nihil* or an *aliquid*. If it is an *aliquid*, it is either God or a creature. Whereupon Autrecourt replies: "God and creature are not *aliquid*" (*Deus et creatura non sunt aliquid*).

In other words, by denying that God and creature are an *aliquid*, Autrecourt rules out one option and is left with the other one: that is to say, the option that a *complexe significabile* is *nihil*. This interpretation is consistent with article 58, which, as we have seen, in a more explicit way states that a *complexe significabile* is nothing.⁶³

Given Autrecourt's stance with regard to the *complexe significabile*, one may still wonder how he came to maintain the thesis "*Deus et creatura non sunt aliquid*"? The reason is, I think, purely grammatical. Apart from the content of this thesis, and apart from the stance one takes with regard to the debate on the *complexe significabile*, the thesis "*Deus et creatura non sunt aliquid*" is false on purely grammatical grounds: "*aliquid*" is singular, whereas "*Deus et creatura*" are plural. They are *alique*, so to speak.

That these grammatical considerations could indeed play a role in 14th-century argumentations is nicely illustrated by the following two passages. The first one is taken from Buridan, the second one from Ockham.

"...*Sed tunc manifestum est quod ita non est vera 'Deus et multa alia est melius quam Deus', quia oratio est incongrua; ideo neque vera neque falsa. Et si dicatur non quod 'est' sed quod 'sunt', dico quod 'Deus et multa alia sunt melius quam Deus' adhuc propositio est falsa, quia non sunt aliquid: ideo non sunt melius. Et si dicatur 'sunt meliora', adhuc possit dici quod comparatio esset abusiva, quia Deus non est plura bona sed unicum bonum.*"⁶⁴

The quotation from Ockham makes it clear that this "merely grammatical" argument has a deeper background. The passage I am quoting occurs in the context of Ockham's discussion of whether all the grammatical properties (*accidentia grammaticalia*) that are common to spoken and written nouns are also common to mental nouns. Ockham believes that only case and number are proper to both vocal and mental terms:

(63) TACHAU (1988), 354-355 has been the first to link Autrecourt's articles to Wodeham's *Question* and she is right in maintaining that Autrecourt's position is not Wodeham's. Nevertheless, I think that she has partly misunderstood Autrecourt's position. Like Buridan, Autrecourt is straightforwardly rejecting *complexe significabilia* as reified logical constructions. They are nothing (*nihil*). Furthermore I do not think that articles 31 and 57 can be read as a modification of Wodeham's position on the *complexe significabile* to the extent that these articles show that Autrecourt "allows signification by the constituents of propositions (in this case, their subject, even if compound), rather than reserving it to the propositions themselves" (p. 355). When it is a quest of *complexe significabilia* the main point is exactly—*nomen est omen*—that something can only be signified by a *proposition* which has affirmative or negative force, NUCHELMANS (1982), 204. So, it makes no sense to talk about the *complexe significabile* of "*Deus et creatura*" in the proposition "*Deus et creatura distinguntur*" as TACHAU (1988), 354 suggests.

(64) JOHN BURIDAN, *Quaestiones super libros Physicorum* (1509), VIII q. 3, f. 112rb. The passage has also been cited by PAQUÉ (1970), 230-231, although there in connection with his interpretation of the Statute of the Arts Faculty of Paris of December 1340.

*"Sicut enim istae propositiones vocales 'homo est animal', 'homo non est animalia' distincta habent predicata quorum unum est numeri singularis et aliud pluralis, ita propositiones mentales quarum una mens ante omnem vocem dicit quod homo est animal et alia dicit quod homo non est animalia distincta habent predicata quorum unum potest dici numeri singularis et aliud pluralis... Sed certe, cuius numeri vel casus sit subiectum vel predicatum, ad sciendum an propositio sit vera vel falsa oportet aspicere. Haec enim est vera 'homo est animal' et haec falsa 'homo est animalia' et sic de aliis."*⁶⁵

Thus, in sum, grammatically unsound sentences are false. If one links this view to the *dubium* in Wodeham's text cited above—*si aliquid vel Deus vel creatura*—the purport of Autrecourt's thesis seems to be that one cannot even state the question of the ontological status of the *complexe significabile* in this way on the grammatical ground that *Deus et creatura non sunt aliquid*.

Finally, one has to ask how articles 31 and 57 came to be qualified, or perhaps better disqualified, as "*falsam et scandalosam prout verba sonant*" and "*falsum et scandalosum prout iacet*" respectively?⁶⁶

It is my guess that the Statute of December 1340 of the Arts-faculty of Paris was at the base of the condemnation of these two articles. The following section of the Statute has a bearing upon Autrecourt's articles:

*"Item quod nullus asserat absque distinctione vel expositione, quod Socrates et Plato, vel Deus et creatura nichil sunt, quoniam verba prima facie male sonant, et quia talis propositio sensum unum habet falsum, videlicet si negatio in hac dictione 'nichil' implicita intelligeret cadere non solum super ens singulariter, sed et super entia pluraliter."*⁶⁷

If one conjectures that Autrecourt's thesis "*Deus et creatura non sunt aliquid*" has been misconstrued by his judges as "*Deus et creatura sunt nihil*" then the articles and the Statute run strikingly parallel. The Statute gives two reasons why one should not maintain a proposition like "*Deus et creatura sunt nihil*": 1) the proposition sounds somehow wrong; and 2) it is false. These two reasons are exactly captured in the qualifications of the articles as *scandalosam prout verba sonant*/*scandalosum prout iacet* and *falsum* respectively.

The Statute explains why the proposition "*Deus et creatura nihil sunt*" is false. This thesis is false on grammatical grounds! Without further explanation of this thesis it would seem as if the term *nihil* not only refers to *ens singulariter* (in which case the proposition would be true), but also to *entia pluraliter* (in which case the proposition would be false). The reading according to which *nihil* is understood to imply *ens singulariter* can be reconstructed as follows: "*Deus et creatura non sunt ens*". This proposition is true, because "*Deus et creatura*" is plural, whereas *ens* is singular. If, however, *nihil* is understood to imply *entia pluraliter*, the proposition "*Deus et creatura*

(65) WILLIAM OF OCKHAM, *Summa logicae* (1974), pars I cap. 3, esp. 12-13.

(66) The German translation of "prout iacet" as "wie klar ist" in NICOLAUS VON AUTRECOURT (1988), 57 is not correct.

(67) DENIFLE/CHÂTELAIN (1889), II n. 1042, 505-507.

non sunt entia" is false for the obvious reason that God and creature are beings (*entia*).⁶⁸

The statute also explains why the articles 31 and 57 deserve the qualification "*scandalosam prout verba sonant*" and "*scandalosum prout iacet*". Although the proposition "*Deus et creatura non sunt aliquid*" is ill-sounding, when taken at its face-value, Autrecourt nevertheless omitted a proper explanation of it.

In sum, it is very likely that the condemnation of articles 31 and 57 in 1346 was induced by the Statute of the Faculty of Arts of December 1340: both articles were condemned because of the existence of the 1340 Statute. This is perhaps an unusual presentation of the events, for it is generally assumed—without sufficient proof—that the articles 31 and 57 identify Nicholas as one of those condemned by the 1340 Statute.⁶⁹ In any case, articles 30, 31, 35, 57 and 58 take on—in the interpretation that I have proposed here—a coherent and consistent stance with regard to the theory of the *complexe significabile*.

Epilogue.

Taking for granted the interpretation of the "semantic" articles presented above, one is finally left with the difficult task of at least attempting to explain why Autrecourt's opinions have evoked the scorn of Church-authorities to such an extent that he had to recant them in public.

The list of condemned articles does not furnish us with the grounds on which Autrecourt's theses were attacked. Perhaps the censuring of heresy was of some concern to the papal commission that was responsible for reviewing Autrecourt's opinions, but in general Autrecourt's list rather gives the impression that the condemnation was inspired by a zeal to ban teachings that were regarded philosophically or theologically offensive.⁷⁰ This seems to be especially true for the "semantic" theses that have been discussed here. None of these theses was condemned as "*hereticum*", and in only one case—article 1—there are really strong indications for a theological connection.

The motivations behind Autrecourt's condemnation are neither explained in the letter that Pope Clement VI sent to the masters and scholars of the

(68) A "grammatical" interpretation of this section of the Statute has also been advanced by PAQUÉ (1970), 227. His interpretation is not correct, however. Paqué seems to think that the Statute refers to a kind of *divisio/compositio* distinction: without further explanation it would seem as if the term *nihil* not only refers to each part separately (i.e. the singular "God" or the singular "creature"), but also to the compound as a whole (i.e. the plural "God and creature"). Tachau's reading of the Statute, quoted above, is also wrong. She assumes that the false sense arises when *nihil* refers to each part of the proposition separately (i.e. in *sensus divisus* so to speak), TACHAU (1988), 355.

(69) MOODY (1975), 138-139, PAQUÉ (1970), 196 and 242-243, BOTTIN (1982), 192-193 and perhaps also TACHAU (1988), 351.

(70) Twenty-five out of the sixty-three articles received the predicate "hereticum" (9, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 38, 39, 43 till 54). The other articles were qualified as "falsum", "erroneum", "revocandum", "scandalosum" or a combination of these.

university of Paris shortly after Autrecourt's condemnation in 1346. By remaining silent on this point, in a way the letter confirms the impression that Autrecourt was not attacked for any specific heresy. The letter is phrased in rather general terms. Clement complains that the theologians are spending their time on philosophical questions, peculiar disputations, suspect opinions and strange doctrines, instead of on the Bible, the Saints and the expositions of the doctors.⁷¹

A very stimulating and attractive hypothesis as to the broader historical context of Autrecourt's condemnation has recently been put forward by Tachau. She has suggested that Autrecourt's condemnation was induced by the misunderstanding of and the resistance against the "new English theology" that was introduced at Paris.⁷²

Tachau has been able to adduce a wealth of material in support of her thesis, especially with regard to the doctrine of the *complexe significabile* and Autrecourt's intellectual debt on this point to Adam Wodeham.

Against this background it sounds plausible that part of Autrecourt's difficulties indeed did stem from his preoccupation with "strange doctrines" like the *complexe significabile*. And it is also not to be ruled out that Autrecourt's thought on the *complexe significabile* reveals an intellectual debt to Wodeham. My own use of Wodeham's text in attempting to reconstruct Autrecourt's views, may even seem to corroborate this last point.

On the other hand, one should pay attention to the fact that Autrecourt himself—if my interpretations are right—had been a determined adversary of the theory of the *complexe significabile*.⁷³ This complicates an account of Autrecourt's condemnation, unless one assumes that the judges had misunderstood Autrecourt.

(71) DENIFLE/CHÂTELAIN (1889), I, no. 1125, 588: "...Plerique quoque theologi, quod defendendum est amarius, de textu Bible, originalibus et dictis sanctorum ac doctorum expositionibus (...) non curantes, philosophicis questionibus et aliis curiosis disputationibus et suspectis opinionibus doctrinisque peregrinis et variis se involvunt, non verentes in illis expendere dies suos, que nec domi nec milite nec alicubi prosunt, et omissis necessariis supervacua docere et dicere satagunt in tanta temporis egestate, sic quod, unde deberent prodire fructus uberes sicut antiquitus reficientes fideles delectabiliter ad salutem, pestifera pululant quandoque semina, et in perniciosam segetem, de quo profecto dolendum est, coalescunt..." TACHAU (1988), 379 also thinks that Clement's letter allows us to infer something of the nature of Autrecourt's difficulties. Note, however, that Clement's complaint with regard to the "philosophical disputations", "sophistications" and "the new doctrines that are reportedly taught at other universities" (Tachau's paraphrases) are taken from that section of Clement's letter that deals with the arts-faculty! So, it is a bit difficult to see how this relates to the theologian Autrecourt.

(72) TACHAU (1988), esp. 353-357 and 377-383. In spite of my few critical remarks with regard to Tachau's hypothesis, she should be credited for being one of the very few who has attempted to put Autrecourt's condemnation into its broader historical intellectual framework.

(73) My interpretation on this point differs from the one proposed by TACHAU (1988), 355, who presents Autrecourt's position as a modification of Wodeham's.

Further, one should be careful not to get entangled in a *post quem, propter quem* argumentation. More than fifty years ago Elie uncovered the Parisian theologian Gregory of Rimini as the first thinker to hold the doctrine of the *complexe significabile*, and on this ground assumed that Autrecourt's condemnation on this point was linked to Gregory of Rimini's views.⁷⁴ In the seventies, Gál uncovered the English theologian Adam Wodeham as an even earlier proponent of the theory of the *complexe significabile*.⁷⁵ We should not make the same mistake again by assuming, without further proof, that Autrecourt's recanted positions show the influence of Wodeham.⁷⁶ Perhaps other adherents of the theory of the *complexe significabile*—French or English?—before Wodeham might be discovered. The *dubia* that Wodeham deals with in his text could be an indication of an ongoing discussion.⁷⁷ Also the availability of Wodeham's works in Paris and the dating of Autrecourt's works have still not been settled.⁷⁸ Perhaps it will turn out that Elie had been right after all and that Autrecourt's articles reflect discussions of the opinions of Gregory of Rimini, rather than of those of Wodeham.⁷⁹

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(74) ELIE (1937), 37-40.

(75) GÁL (1977).

(76) The purport of chapter 12 of TACHAU (1988) seems to be that Autrecourt has been one of the first Parisian readers of the work of Wodeham. To give Tachau credit, however, I must mention that on p. 54 she has worded her suggestion more carefully: "Thus, Autrecourt's use of the notion of 'what is complexly signifiable' reveals an intellectual debt, however indirect and partial it may have been, to Wodeham."

(77) WODEHAM (1977), 87.

(78) As things are now, TACHAU (1988), 353-354 takes Autrecourt's recanted position as an indication of the availability of Wodeham's works at Paris.

(79) Although, in this case one could still maintain that, due to Rimini's references to Wodeham, Autrecourt's articles reveal a very indirect debt to Wodeham.

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