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Branching Diagrams and the Medieval Mind,
Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press, 2022**

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qui est auto-représentée dans ces discours, mais l'identité individuelle du professeur.

Ces actes de colloque fournissent donc une base de travail nécessaire en histoire sociale, culturelle et institutionnelle. Malgré le caractère très varié de toutes ces contributions, une cohérence d'ensemble est permise par le choix d'une période particulière. En outre, les chercheurs ont en commun plusieurs problématiques, comme la mise en scène de l'institution et des individus dans les discours, et ils se complètent également sur l'observation de plusieurs processus liés à l'intégration de la culture humaniste dans la rhétorique universitaire.

Nadège Corbière

AYELET EVEN-EZRA

Lines of Thought: Branching Diagrams and the Medieval Mind,
Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press, 2021, 250 p.

This book identifies the use of diagrams in medieval manuscripts, more precisely the practice of *horizontal tree diagrams* (HTs, p. 15), as a specific tool for interaction with the written texts. Employing an innovative methodology, the author investigates material that enchants the eye and the mind and opens up new perspectives on medieval textual production. She focuses on a specific type of diagram, in which the material is divided into branches of ink trees, a device used in medieval manuscripts for organizing knowledge visually, guiding the reader inside the structure of texts, navigating seas of ideas, connecting units of texts, providing mnemonic assistance, and simplifying contents. This intellectual practice reveals to the modern eye the wealth and complexity of the interaction between text and audience, with the medieval beneficiary hypothesized as a text-user who then further promotes knowledge.

The book concerns the production of manuscripts from the twelve to the fifteenth century, thus demonstrating to some apparently uninformed early modernists that the use of diagrams is not the result of the invention of movable type, but a widespread phenomenon developed and promoted in manuscripts. The author has three tasks in the volume: she first traces the chronology of this common practice; second, she identifies the codes of this intellectual habit; and third, she explains the cognitive approach implied by the use of diagrams. Put together, the execution of these three aims illustrates how these diagrams and their context are original objects of study. The book is split into two branches (part I and II), each subdivided into chapters. The two chapters of the first part introduce the modern reader to the horizontal

tree diagram in general, how they evolved over time, and their function (p. 15-50). Chapter 2 (p. 50-83) highlights how this practice is particular to the medieval scholarly community in that the sometimes ample margins above, below, and to the sides of the columns of complicated texts inspired a practical and intelligent use of the writing space.

The goal of the second part of the volume is not only to depict the practice of making diagrams, but also to attempt to explain the mechanism from inside the manuscripts: how does it work? The author shows that the diagrams, more than just organizing tools, facilitate the comprehension of the texts being read. The author analyzes works from different disciplines and discerns how varying contents further elucidate the practice of creating and using diagrams. Natural philosophy, metaphysics, and ethics are explored via Aristotelian texts or pseudo-Aristotelian treatises (see the analysis of the *Physiognomia*, p. 95), and the author reaches the interesting conclusion that diagrams in these philosophical texts “have never enjoyed the systematization, creativity, organization, and wide distribution of their biblical sisters” (p. 97). The same remark applies to medical texts. Indeed, the queen discipline of diagrams is theology: biblical commentaries, sermons, the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, *distinctiones*, disputations, etc. abound in their use of such diagrams, which “offered the reader of the text a key to a labyrinth of intertextuality and conceptual interrelationship” (p. 106). Besides theological texts, those stemming from the law faculty also share the same mania for diagrams, making creative use of such tools in their reading strategies for legal texts. Chapter four explores the domain of literature, as well as the texts of grammarians and their tradition of *ars dictaminis*, to show how diagrams were used in linguistics (p. 119-144). The fifth and final chapter investigates the complex relationship between the structure of the texts themselves and the parallel use of diagrams. Diagrams of the architecture of scholastic writings, announced in their *divisiones textus*, especially in the case of *quaestiones*, demonstrate medieval academics’ fascination with authority or authorship. The detailed graphical illustration of the structure of a work reflects the intimate connection of the diagram-maker to the text and his high regard for its author.

The book also includes a guided tour of manuscripts of authors such as Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Richard de Mores, Gerard d’Abbeville, and Nicole Oresme, and of commentaries on canonical texts, such as the works of Aristoteles or the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. These rich case studies advance our current understanding of the material dissemination of these authors and shed light on how these authors and writings were read.

In support of the author’s hypotheses, the book is generously illustrated with images as well as translations and explanations of diagrams from numerous manuscripts (from Paris, Oxford, the Vatican, Vienna, etc.), enabling the reader to discover not only the beauty of the lush virtual vegetation of branching

diagrams, but also the complexity of the topic treated in this volume. This is both a thought-provoking and stimulating book to read and an elegant publication to explore, since a wide variety of horizontal tree-diagrams are explained, transcribed from manuscript, or translated from Latin. The author herself witnesses that in the “jungle of manuscripts, which I have traversed by way of narrow trails” (p. 95), the presence of these diagrams intrigues by their frequency as well as by their significance. Her monograph succeeds in raising awareness and stimulating interest in the understudied topic of the use of branching diagrams on scholastic texts.

Monica Brînzei

ARBOGAST SCHMITT

Denken ist Unterscheiden. Eine Kritik an der Gleichsetzung von Denken und Bewusstsein,

Heidelberg, Universitätsverlag Winter

(«Studien zu Literatur und Erkenntnis» 18), 2020, 239 p.

Le livre d'Arbogast Schmitt paru en 2020 se compose d'articles déjà publiés, qui ont été retravaillés et réunis dans un nouvel ensemble, sous le signe de la critique de l'identification de la pensée (*Denken*) avec la conscience (*Bewusstsein*). L'enjeu est de resituer la problématique de la pensée dans le paradigme de Platon et d'Aristote, pour prouver que la pensée consiste dans l'acte de distinguer (*Unterscheiden, krinein*, p. 17). L'auteur nous propose un plaidoyer pour la finesse de l'épistémologie antique: il défend cette épistémologie de l'accusation de réalisme naïf par manque de réflexivité sur les facultés de connaissance ou par l'absence du concept de conscience – accusation qui s'est répandue depuis la philosophie moderne et qui jette aujourd'hui encore son ombre sur la réception du concept de la pensée dans la philosophie antique. Avec une nouvelle investigation de l'épistémologie platonicienne et aristotélicienne, Arbogast Schmitt parvient à configurer un concept de la pensée (*Denken*) qui est plus compréhensif que le concept étroit de conscience (*Bewusstsein*). Il ouvre ainsi une nouvelle perspective non seulement pour revoir les apories de la délimitation entre le conscient et l'inconscient, mais aussi pour repenser la position de la pensée par rapport au fonctionnement de la perception, des sentiments, des jugements esthétiques, de la volonté.

L'ouvrage est d'abord une incursion dans l'histoire des idées philosophiques, un survol diachronique remarquable. Platon, Aristote, Plotin, Duns Scot, Ockham, Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, Dilthey, Wittgenstein ou Carnap font entendre leurs voix en ce qui concerne la relation entre la pensée et le