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Monica Brinzei

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Monica Brinzei. “ Introduction ”, in Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl and the Sentences at Vienna in the Early XVth century,. Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl and the Sentences at Vienna in the Early XVth century., 2015. ⟨hal-04962704⟩

HAL Id: hal-04962704

<https://hal.science/hal-04962704v1>

Submitted on 23 Feb 2025

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Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl

and the *Sentences* at Vienna
in the Early Fifteenth Century

edited by

Monica BRÎNZEI

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Introduction

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This volume gathers together five studies and editions of unpublished texts stemming from a workshop held in Paris on 14 September 2013 at the *Institute de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes*. The workshop coincided with the ERC-THESIS-2012 project n°313339's¹ acquisition of the fifteenth-century manuscript TM 536, containing Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl's most popular writing, his *Lectura Mellicensis*, a commentary on book IV of the *Sentences*. Even before the Gutenberg invention, in terms of the prolific manuscript distribution of his œuvre Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl had already become a towering figure in the twilight of the scholastic era. As of 1965, more than 2000 manuscripts had been identified containing works attributed to him,² but new identifications are still being made a half century later.³ Manuscript TM 536 is a beautiful codex consisting of 550 folios, most likely written in Germany or Austria ca. 1450-1475 by a skilled scribe.⁴ Now held at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, this exemplar is the only complete manuscript of Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl's *Lectura Mellicensis* accessible in France, despite its popularity elsewhere. This acquisition would not have been possible without financial support of the ERC-THESIS project.

The main purpose of this volume is to provide a clearer perspective on and a better understanding of the University of Vienna's faculty of

¹ See www.thesis-project.ro.

² A. MADRE, *Nikolaus von Dinkelsbühl. Leben und Schriften* (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters, 40.4), Münster 1965.

³ See the list of new attributions in M. BRÎNZEI, C. SCHABEL, "The Past, Present, and Future of Late Medieval Theology: The Commentary on the *Sentences* by Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl", in *Medieval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, ed. P.W. ROSEMANN, Vol. 3, Leiden 2014, pp. 174-266. Ueli Zahnd recently added another three manuscripts to this list.

⁴ A detailed description of this manuscript has been made by Laura Light for the catalogue of Lesenluminures: <http://www.lesenluminures.com/>.

theology after the new institution produced its first students. Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl, our guide to the academic milieu of this young university, represents the perfect case study, offering the contributors to this volume the opportunity to illuminate the university system at Vienna (see William Courtenay's paper), to describe the evolution of doctrine (see Chris Schabel's paper), to identify the network of professors that developed the specific curriculum (see Ueli Zahnd's paper) and to trace the reception of the academic writings outside the university (see Monica Brînzei's and Adinel Dincă's papers).

A summary of each contribution was published recently,⁵ but it is important to highlight here some of the innovative elements that can be observed in reading these studies. When the only source material for an investigation lies in manuscript form, and when the object of study is as complex as the medieval University of Vienna, the first approach is to develop a methodology that is appropriate to the topic. Currently the history of medieval universities is based on statutes, cartularies or other documents relating to the organization of the university as an institution. The authors of this present volume propose to inspect the underside of the iceberg and to penetrate the academic context of Vienna by reading and editing the texts resulting from the practice of teaching. From inside these writings we can shed new light on the main pedagogical protagonists, we can better measure the impact of the transmission of ideas between the Universities of Paris and Vienna, and finally we can gain access to the network of scholars to whom this material was addressed.

The volume opens with Christopher Schabel's study of the *Filioque* at Vienna in the years before the Council of Florence, at which in 1439 the Latin and Greek representatives came to a short-lived doctrinal agreement on the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son. Schabel chooses this particular topic not only because of its historical importance and the availability of a particularly large number of editions of texts by earlier theologians, but also because of the special codicological complexity of his starting point, Wien, Schottenstift 269, the autograph of Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl, the origin of what Schabel and I have dubbed the "Vienna Group Commentary" on the *Sentences*.⁶ Because Dinkelsbühl's treatment of the procession of the Holy Spirit would constitute the core of the common Vienna text in the first decades of the

⁵ See M. BRÎNZEI, "Le commentaire des *Sentences* de Nicolas de Dinkelsbühl", in *Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale* 15 (2013), pp. 59-64.

⁶ See BRÎNZEI-SCHABEL "The Past, Present, and Future of Late Medieval Theology", pp. 198-218

fifteenth century, it is one of the most important documents on the subject in the prelude to the Council of Florence. In his autograph, Wien, Schottenstift 269, dating to ca. 1398, Dinkelsbühl began by more or less copying the main trinitarian question of one of his masters, Henry of Langenstein (ca. 1325-1397), who, along with Henry Totting of Oyta (ca. 1330-1397), had been the main founder of the Viennese faculty of theology in the 1380s, when Duke Albert III invited the two Parisian masters of theology to his Austrian capital. Langenstein's question, generally inspired by the Augustinian Gregory of Rimini, is known to survive in only one manuscript, Alençon, Bibliothèque municipale 144, such that, as demonstrated in this study, Dinkelsbühl's text became the most important conduit for Langenstein's doctrine. Langenstein's huge question on the Trinity included a "special difficulty concerning the Holy Spirit," dealing with two problems involving the *Filioque*, the focus of Schabel's investigation. Not satisfied with the two issues on the *Filioque* in Langenstein, however, Dinkelsbühl decided to add a third topic by copying extensive passages in the margins, on bits of paper, and on folios inserted into the codex. Although this new material comes from a variety of sources, sometimes from Henry Totting of Oyta, often it stems from the *Sentences* commentary of the Cistercian James of Eltville, who may have taught the two Henry's at Paris. This illustrates Eltville's direct impact at Vienna. Afterwards, in the common commentary of the Vienna Group, probably initiated by Dinkelsbühl himself, the material was rearranged. The whole subject of the procession of the Holy Spirit was removed from the huge trinitarian question to create two smaller questions: a question that combined one of the issues from Langenstein with the added material from Eltville and others, and another question in which the second issue from Langenstein was replaced with material taken mainly from Oyta.

After tracing the codicological history of this section of text in Wien, Schottenstift 269 and the later Vienna tradition, Schabel then describes how the doctrine contained therein was continually nuanced as it went from Rimini to Langenstein to Dinkelsbühl to the Vienna Group, represented by manuscripts linked to John Berward of Villingen (Klosterneuburg 41), Peter of Pulkau (Wien, ÖNB 4668), George Wetzels of Horaw (Wien, ÖNB 4820), Thomas Ebendorfer of Hasselbach (Wien, ÖNB 4369 and 4387), John Angrer of Müldorf (Wien, ÖNB 5067), and perhaps Andrew of Waytra, Urban of Melk, or John Nider (Wien, Schotten 254). By editing probably the most difficult section, codicologically and

palaeographically speaking, of the entire commentary in Dinkelsbühl's Schotten 269, while describing the contents of the above manuscripts in that context, Schabel illustrates how doctrine evolved in Vienna in ca. 1400-1425.

In his study, Ueli Zahnd picks up where Schabel left off, developing an innovative methodology that harmonizes various approaches that are at the same time codicological and palaeographical, historical and doctrinal, and statistical (see the results in the annex, pp. 167-189), permitting him to establish new and more accurate attributions of texts and manuscripts. His paper focuses on first question of book IV of the Vienna Group *Sentences* commentary, which deals with the problem of the efficacy of the sacraments. Editing and collating the most important witnesses for this question, Zahnd comes to the surprising conclusion that he can demonstrate five distinct levels of text in the transmission of this question. The hierarchical structure of the text is due to the process of teaching. Taking as a point of departure the autograph manuscript Wien, Schottenstift 269, of Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl himself, which Zahnd also calls "la lectura curriculaire," other masters from Vienna insert into various sections of this text fragments that modified Dinkelsbühl's original perspective. From a doctrinal point of view, two features come to light: first, the strong influence of Scotistic ideas that Dinkelsbühl introduced in Vienna and the endurance of this doctrine, as is further highlighted by the weak impact of the Thomist model of instrumental causality; second, the important presence of Henry Totting of Oyta, discernable because Oyta himself proposed, based on Hugh of St Victor, an alternative view to the Scotist and Thomist positions on the efficacy of the sacraments.

The examination of the critical apparatus of the editions, combined with the analysis of the doctrinal approaches and existing historical data, lead Zahnd to propose an author for each different level of this sedimentary text: Dinkelsbühl himself, John Berwart of Villingen, Peter of Pulkau, Conrad of Rothenburg, George Wetzel of Horaw (although Zahnd discusses a number of other Viennese authors). These five scholastics seem to share in the collective intellectual adventure of updating an approved manual, thus revealing general trends of doing theology in Vienna. On the basis of these attributions, Zahnd concludes that at that time Vienna was creating an academic identity by inventing its own manual for teaching theology. The scholarly need for a standard workbook or manual explains the phenomenon that within a common text

(i.e., the *Sentences* commentary of Vienna group) authors were trying to create a strategy of individuation by using a copy-paste method or combining different fragments borrowed from other texts. Of course this provokes the question of plagiarism, a term that again displays its limitations when it comes to describing an intellectual practice in the Middle Ages. Employing this characterization is simply inappropriate and confines the investigation to a simple identification of common fragments. On the contrary, these common texts provide a powerful scenario of intrigue, and Zahnd succeeds in showing why and how these common texts are combined. Deciphering the different levels of text also offers Zahnd the opportunity to open a new path of approaching the silent core of the medieval University of Vienna.

The contribution of William Courtenay to this volume brings together some reflections about how the practice of reading the *Sentences* was adopted and adapted at the new University of Vienna. The transfer of knowledge was also a transfer of intellectual practice, and we can see clearly with this case-study that, once the model had been established, the pattern was not always followed consistently. Therefore, to expand our understanding of the specific characteristics of the University of Vienna in the Middle Ages, it is important to chart the differences between Paris and Vienna. Courtenay demonstrates how a reexamination of the surviving documentation allows us to trace differences in the sequence of the lectures on the four books of the *Sentences*, the amount of time devoted to reading the *Sentences*, the choice of themes for biblical *principia*, and the number of bachelors of theology lecturing during a given year (a dozen or more in Paris, but a maximum of three or four in Vienna).

In particular, Courtenay emphasizes how the principal debates held during the decade 1415-1425 constitute a rich source of information. Attention to the details presented in the bachelors' *principia* produced in Vienna while Dinkelsbühl was master illuminates the network of scholars and offers a unique chance to identify the *cursors* and the *sententiarii* of this period and their contribution to the Vienna Group Commentary. The identification of John Angrer of Müldorf as the author of the *principia* transmitted in manuscript Wien, ÖNB 5067, usually attributed to John Wuel of Pruck or to Urban of Melk, is a notable result of this study. New information concerning Thomas Ebendorfer of Haselbach, Peter Reicher of Pirchenwart, Narcissus Hertz, John Himmel of Weiz, Andrew of Waytra, Frederick Wagner, and George Apfentaler

contributes not only to augmenting our prosopographical database for Vienna, but also to giving due recognition to other theologians from Vienna covered by the shadow of Dinkelsbühl.

My own contribution to this volume deals with Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl's *Lectura Mellicensis*, a second version of his commentary on book IV of the *Sentences*, which Dinkelsbühl initially composed for the Benedictine monks of Melk in the early 1420s. The hundreds of surviving manuscripts of this text, perhaps the most popular of the era, chart the amazing reception of Dinkelsbühl outside the university. Conceived to cultivate a young public outside the academic milieu, this new version of Dinkelsbühl's commentary on book IV of *Sentences* adopts a monastic style rather than an academic style within the same genre of commentary. Dinkelsbühl seems to have been inspired by the reforming ideas of Jean Gerson. In support of this perspective, we can point to many stylistic details, such as the deliberate simplicity of the text, the return to the sources of the thirteenth and very early fourteenth century, and the preference for certain topics and the abandonment of others. Regarding the focus on earlier masters, we not only have the evidence of explicit quotations, but also the fact that the text is composed like a patchwork, integrating passages from these authors. We can therefore easily see that Dinkelsbühl had before him on his desk the commentaries of Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, Bonaventure, and Alexander of Hales, as well as the original *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, in contrast to the sources prominent, for example, in the *Filioque* material in the first commentary, discussed above.

As examples of Dinkelsbühl's new approach, my paper includes a transcription of three questions, two on marriage and one on scandal. These questions have been chosen for a reason: first, the subject of scandal is rare in the *Sentences* commentaries of the fourteenth century, and Dinkelsbühl probably proposed this question to the monks under the influence of Thomas Aquinas. Second, the two questions on marriage demonstrate how an academic text that initially contained fifteen questions on the sacrament of matrimony (in manuscript Wien, Schottenstift 269) had to be modified when its public was composed of monks who were not confronted with the implications of this topic, in contrast to the priests and mendicants who constituted the majority of students in theology at the University of Vienna. The reflection on marriage in the *Lectura Mellicensis* is purely theological, without any discussion of juridical, moral or practical issues.

A separate chapter in the volume contains my edition of the extensive *tabula* found at the end of the manuscript TM 536 of the *Lectura Mellicensis*. This *tabula* provides a general view of the commentary, listing the titles of all questions and presenting brief summaries of their contents and the solutions that are adopted in the different theological contexts. Besides presenting an overview of the commentary, the *tabula* also indicates how seriously the *Lectura Mellicensis* was regarded in the decades following its composition.

More evidence for the reception of Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl outside the university context is traced in Adinel Dincă's study, which concludes the volume. In this case the reception of Dinkelsbühl east of Vienna is explained by the general context of later medieval Europe, since in Eastern Europe the university proper is more or less a modern development. In the absence of any medieval academic institution comparable to a university in Hungary or in Transylvania, many youths were sent to Vienna for their higher education. The phenomenon of returning students partly explains the geographical distribution in Transylvania of books produced in Vienna, among them the works of Dinkelsbühl. Lists of books from medieval libraries in Transylvania and some manuscripts still conserved in Romania offer unique proof for material aspect in the transfer of knowledge from Paris to Vienna and then further to the East.

It is my pleasure here to acknowledge my gratitude to those who supported me at various stages for the purchase of the manuscript and for the organization and hosting of the workshop. My thanks go to Nicole Bériou (former Directrice de l'IRHT), Gaëlle Bouin (Chargé d'Affaire du Service du Partenariat et de Valorisation du CNRS), Charlotte Denoël (Responsable du département des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale de France), Pierre Regnier (ERC, Project Officer), Caterina Visany (ERC, Financial Officer), Alexandra Vrecq (Secrétaire Générale de l'IRHT) Sandra Hindman (Les Enluminures) and all my colleagues from the Section latine of the IRHT. Alexandra and Bryan Schabel graciously hosted me in Chicago, where I first saw manuscript TM 536. Finally, I thank Dominique Poirel, Claire Angotti and Ana Irimescu for their interest in discussing the Vienna Group. Michael Shank from University of Wisconsin-Madison for sending me useful materials on this topic, and Julie Dietman and the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library of St John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, where a Hickman Stipend allowed me to examine Austrian manuscripts in 2012. Paul Brînzei and Ueli Zahnd for their permanent help in the formatting of

the volume. Christopher Lebbe, Loes Diercken and Michael Auwers for their support in opening the new collection *Studia Sententiarum*.

Cezara, born from a common interest for Dinkelsbühl, kept us company during the preparation of this book.

Boon, June 12, 2015