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Nicholas of Bar's Collection

Sylvain Piron

[in Chris Schabel dir., *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages. The Fourteenth Century*,
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The so-called “Collection of Nicholas of Bar” occupies a prominent place in Palémon Glorieux’s repertory of quodlibetal questions. The 170 questions that it contains were first listed under the name of Nicholas in the 1925 volume, before being redistributed, in the second volume published in 1935, amongst the eighteen different authors involved in it. In the meantime, an article published in the third volume of the *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* in 1928 had justified the respective ascription of the questions to these little known late thirteenth century theologians.¹ Before discussing the interpretation he gave of this collection, one should recall the pioneering role played by Glorieux in the exploration of scholastic sources. Teaching at the time in Lille, Glorieux was connected with the French Dominican school lead by Pierre Mandonnet and Marie-Dominique Chenu, based a few kilometers away, at “Le Saulchoir,” near Tournai,² and whose “Bibliothèque thomiste” hosted the two volumes of *La littérature quodlibétique*. In those years, as the editorial program of the *Archives* made clear, the priority was given to text editions and research based on first hand knowledge of unpublished materials. Taking his part in these efforts to tackle the mass of unexplored documentation pertaining to medieval scholasticism, Glorieux was also pursuing, so to speak, a peculiar hobby-horse, reconstructing the succession of masters occupying the chairs of theology within the University of Paris.³ For that purpose, [334] he was searching to associate all University exercises he could come across – be they sermons or quodlibetal disputes – with precise dates, which would then serve as anchors for the global chronology of the theology faculty he was trying to construct.⁴ With all the due respect one may have for his colossal achievements, it is fair to recall that many of his conclusions were premature.

This eagerness for precise dates is evident in his approach to Nicholas of Bar’s collection.

¹ P. Glorieux, “Notices sur quelques théologiens de Paris de la fin du XIIIe siècle,” *AHDLMA* 3 (1928), pp. 201-38.

² Although a detailed account of the impact of the Saulchoir school on medieval studies is still lacking, a more general picture can be found in the studies accompanying the edition, by G. Alberigo, of M.-D. Chenu, *Une école de théologie: le Saulchoir* (Paris 1985). See also J.-P. Jossua, “Le Saulchoir: une formation théologique replacée dans son histoire,” *Cristianesimo nella storia* 14 (1993), pp. 99-124; A. Duval, “Aux origines de l’Institut historique d’études thomistes au Saulchoir (1920 et sq.),” *RSPT* 75 (1991), pp. 423-48.

³ Glorieux, *Répertoire* I-II; idem, “D’Alexandre de Halès à Pierre Auriol. La suite des maîtres franciscains de Paris au XIIIe siècles,” *AFH* 26 (1933), pp. 257-81.

⁴ On the use of university sermons by Glorieux, see L.-J. Bataillon, “Guillaume de la Mare. Note sur sa régence parisienne et sa prédication,” *AFH* 98 (2005), pp. 367-422 (esp. pp. 368-74).

To quote Glorieux's own words: "The first impression one gets by reading this list [of the various masters' names found in the margins] is that one is confronted with *quodlibeta* that must have followed one another on a regular basis from year to year.⁵ The rest of the demonstration serves only as a confirmation of this first impression, to which no objection is raised in the course of the article. The conclusions reached on the basis of that "first impression" has been generally accepted by scholars dealing with this material and has not been questioned so far.⁶ However, the very statement of this result sounds rather unlikely: fragments of 29 different quodlibetal series would have been reproduced in a strictly chronological order, over a period of twenty years, running from 1285 to 1304. It suffices to add that these texts were copied by the same hand in only one go, for one to understand that a strict chronological ordering of the *quodlibeta* is highly implausible. It would require that the scribe himself would have shared Glorieux's obsession with the chronology of the theology faculty.

During the interwar years, another close associate of the Saulchoir, a Dominican friar himself although not residing at the convent, was Jean Destrez. His masterpiece volume on the diffusion of university manuscripts through the *pecia* system was published in 1935, in the same year [335] as the second volume of Glorieux's *La littérature quodlibétique*.⁷ The line of approach exemplified by Destrez is another crucial feature of the "Saulchoir School, which achieved its most splendid results once a team of scholars educated along such principles was put in charge of reviving the *Commissio Leonina* in the early fifties.⁸ A major lesson that has since then been widely accepted by the academic community as a whole is that at least a minimal level of attention to codicological matters is a necessary preliminary requirement in any study of medieval texts. Following this lesson, a few elements of Glorieux's brilliant treatment of the issue will be slightly amended here.

The name given to the collection derives from the fact that the only manuscript that

⁵ Glorieux, "Notices," p. 203-4: "La première impression que l'on ressent à la lecture de cette liste... est qu'on se trouve en présence... de quodlibets qui durent se succéder assez régulièrement, sans doute d'année en année... La collection aurait été faite au fur et à mesure des soutenances annuelles, et suivant leur succession chronologique... Il semble parfaitement légitime de la considérer comme s'étendant de façon régulière sur une assez longue suite d'années."

⁶ Through confusion caused by the certitude displayed by Glorieux, some of his readers were misled into thinking that the *quodlibeta* were actually dated on the manuscript itself. Such is the case of L. Cova, "Alcune questioni di Simone di Lens sul peccato originale," *AFH* 73 (1980), p. 475, n. 2.

⁷ See J. Destrez, *La Pecia dans les manuscrits universitaires du XIIIe et du XIVe siècle* (Paris 1935), and its application to the case of *quodlibeta* in idem, "Les disputes quodlibétiques de saint Thomas d'après la tradition manuscrite," *Mélanges thomistes* (Kain 1923), pp. 49-108. From 1924 to 1928, Destrez was secretary of the *Bulletin thomiste* for the first four issues, residing near Paris. His research has been continued by distinguished Saulchoir pupils, now members of the *Commissio leonina*; cf. *La Production du livre universitaire au Moyen Age: exemplar et pecia*, L. J. Bataillon, B. G. Guyot, R. H. House, eds. (Paris 1988).

⁸ C. Luna, "L'édition léonine de saint Thomas d'Aquin: vers une méthode de critique textuelle et d'écotique," *RSPT* 98 (2005), pp. 31-110, insists on the continuity between the two "ages" of the Commission. Without diminishing the merits of the first team set up in the late 19th century, I feel it is necessary to stress more the human and cultural continuity between the second team and the Saulchoir school. As an irony of history, the same master general who had removed Chenu from teaching in 1942 then asked his disciples to take over the edition of Aquinas' *opera omnia* less than ten years later.

preserves it, Paris BnF lat. 15850, belonged to Nicholas of Bar-le-Duc, who, at his death in 1310, bequeathed it to the “poor masters of the Sorbonne, students in theology,” as is made clear by two successive notes found on the back of the initial flyleaf.⁹ In his reconstruction of the Sorbonne library, Léopold Delisle identified six Parisian volumes stemming from Nicholas’ bequest to the College where he had once been a student.¹⁰ Bishop of Mâcon since 1286, [336] Nicholas was apparently a rich man and generous towards his College. The Sorbonne obituary recalls that he “left us many books and a lot of money in rents.”¹¹ As a matter of fact, his last will stipulated that all his belongings within the Paris diocese would go to the College, which should, in turn, support one master and two students from his kindred or his native land. The “mitigation” of his will, which reduced that number to only one student, listing all the properties handed over to the College, mentions a total of eighteen volumes.¹²

According to the 1338 Sorbonne library catalogue, cod. lat. 15850 was located within the “Summe questionum” section. The flyleaf note describes it as containing “questions collected out of various *quodlibeta*.” The codex consists of two parts that both fit such a description. The second and much longer part, having a medieval foliation of its own, is made up of a selection from two great masters of the quodlibetal art, Henry of Ghent (ff. 1r-202v) and Godfrey of Fontaines (ff. 205r-320r), followed by an uncomplete thematical index and a list of questions.¹³ The first part of the codex comprises 44 folios. Its medieval foliation has been trimmed off on the occasion of a modern binding, so that it is difficult to make sure whether it had been conceived as a whole before being united together with the second part of the volume. These three blocks are as follows: A, a quire containing three disputed questions from the first Mendicant-Secular polemics by Bonaventura and William of Saint-Amour¹⁴ (ff. 1ra-5vb); B, another quire containing on its two initial pages a selection of five quodlibetal questions by

⁹ Paris, BnF lat. 15850, f. 1r: “Istud liber est magistri N. de barro ducis (cancelled); In hoc volumine continentur questiones collecte de diversis quodlibet, ex legato magistri Nicolai de barro ducis domui pauperum magistrorum de Sorbona in theologia studentium.”

¹⁰ L. Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits de la bibliothèque nationale* (Paris, 1874), vol. 2, p. 163. The other codices are lat. 15351 (Thomas Aquinas, Quodlibeta), lat. 15818 (Thomas Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles), lat. 15985 (Thomas of Ireland’s *Manipulus florum*), lat. 16158 (philosophical commentaries by Peter of Auvergne, Giles of Rome and Albert the Great), and lat. 16160 (more philosophical commentaries, mostly by Thomas Aquinas).

¹¹ “Dies 16 maii obiit magister Nicolaus de Barro Ducis, socius hujus domus, anno Domini 1310, qui nobis legavit multos libros et multam pecuniam in redditibus,” in *Le registre de prêt de la bibliothèque du collège de Sorbonne*, ed. J. Vieillard and M.-H. Jullien de Pommerol (Paris 2000), p. 568. This register doesn’t record any borrowing of cod. lat. 15850. The obituary was already edited in P. Glorieux, *Aux origines de la Sorbonne. I. Robert de Sorbon* (Paris 1966), p. 165.

¹² P. Glorieux, *Aux origines de la Sorbonne. II. Le cartulaire* (Paris 1965), pp. 519-23. Surprisingly, Nicholas is presented as *filius Ponceti de Barro, Tullensis dyocesis*. There is, indeed, a city called Bar about fifteen kilometers north of Tulle. But since the students he wanted to support should stem, in order of priority, from his kindred, the city of Bar-le-Duc, Saint-Mihiel, and the diocese of Verdun, a Lorraine origin is beyond doubt.

¹³ See the details of the questions in J. Hoffmans and A. Pelzer, *Etude sur les manuscrits des Quodlibets* (Les philosophes belges, 14) (Louvain 1937), pp. 177-80 and R. Macken, *Bibliotheca Manuscripta Henrici de Gandavo*, (Leuven-Leiden 1979), vol. 1, pp. 634-44.

¹⁴ Bonaventura, *De perfectione evangelica*, q.2 a. 2, *Opera omnia* 5 (Quaracchi 1891), pp. 134-155 ; A. G. Traver, “William of Saint-Amour’s Two Disputed Questiones *De Quantitate eleemosynae* and *De valido mendicante*,” *AHDLMA* 62 (1995), pp. 295-342.

Henry of Ghent (ff. 6ra-7vb, the rest of the quire being blank); and C, the “collection” [337] itself, covering three quires (ff. 10ra-42va, f. 43 being blank). These units all have different page lay-outs, and were copied by different scribes on different occasions, the first one being presumably much older. Despite their distinct foliations, section 1-C was apparently produced in the same circumstances as part 2. The single hand that copied the whole of the collection was also involved in copying Godfrey’s extracts (ff. 205r-233v).¹⁵ The decoration of the initial letters in red and blue ink is similar in both sections, and it is also identical to what is found in cod. lat. 16158, another of Nicholas’ volumes.

More importantly, their contents also point in the same direction. Both selections of quodlibetal questions are almost exclusively concerned with practical moral cases. As is well known, such topics are considerably over-represented in *quodlibeta*.¹⁶ Especially in the Lent session, in the season of the yearly compulsory confession, quodlibetal disputes provided an occasion to raise the most troublesome cases of conscience that a confessor might come across, be it through reporting real situations or making up fictitious ones. Understandably, the same focus could also determine the form under which quodlibetal questions would circulate. The case under consideration is by no means an isolated one. It may be useful to record that the only collection of *quodlibeta* by Servais of Mont-Saint-Eloi belongs to this type, where only a minimal number of questions (5 out of 85) are not directly pertaining to moral issues or to the administration of confession.¹⁷ The formulation of Servais’ questions provided by Glorieux can be misleading. For instance, a question that seemed to Jean-Luc Solère to be of the most speculative type¹⁸ – can someone excommunicate himself? – in reality introduces a very specific case, asking whether an official, promulgating a sentence of excommunication against unnamed wrongdoers, could himself fall prey to his own sentence.¹⁹ The restricted scope of the questions preserved [338] in this manuscript doesn’t mean that Servais was unable to deal with more abstract topics or was not interrogated on such themes. It rather means that, in the absence of a proper “edition” of his *Quodlibeta* made available by the university stationers, his *Quodlibeta* circulated in such a format. In the same guise, at one point, the bishop of Mâcon added to his library a volume containing the “practical” extracts of both the great and the small masters of

¹⁵ A paleographical study of manuscripts produced around or within the Sorbonne in that period could produce interesting results.

¹⁶ See Elsa Marmursztejn’s chapter in the first volume of this book.

¹⁷ P. Glorieux, “Les Quodlibets de Gervais du Mont-Saint-Eloi,” *RTAM* 20 (1953), pp. 129-34, argues in favour of a division of the 85 questions by Servais found in Paris, BnF lat. 15350, ff. 269r-291, into eight different *Quodlibeta*, on the basis of some marginal signs and of the recurrence of these rare speculative questions that would mark the beginning of a new *Quodlibet*. This division is supported by even more marginal signs.

¹⁸ See Solère’s chapter in the previous volume.

¹⁹ Servatius de Monte Sancti Eligii, *Quodlibet* V, q. 7, Paris, BnF lat. 15350, f. 281v: *Utrum aliquis possit excommunicare seipsum et ponitur talis casus, laicus perdidit uxorem suam, officialis autem loci tenet eam clausam, laicus petit ab officiali ut excommunicet omnes qui detinent eam, officialis autem auctoritate episcopi excommunicat omnes qui detinent eam, modo queritur utrum officialis sit excommunicatus.*

theology of the time.

Some more observations can be made based on external criteria. The questions extracted from Godfrey, copied from the university stationary *peciae*, do not follow a chronological order. Excerpts from *Quodlibeta* VII and VIII are placed before extracts of V and VI. The final items stem from *Quodlibet* XIII, which was disputed during the academic year 1297-98.²⁰ The absence of any question from *Quodlibet* XV, produced in 1303-04 at the earliest, suggests that the collection of excerpts had been created before that date. Another interesting fact is that the initial note of possession conveyed by the flyleaf is identical to the one found in cod. lat. 15985, containing the original manuscript of Thomas of Ireland's *Manipulus florum*.²¹ This volume itself can be firmly dated to 1306, when Thomas, previously a Sorbonne member, provided the College with one copy and Nicholas with another. As Richard and Mary Rouse hypothesize, in doing so, he may well have been searching for a beneficial reward from the bishop of Mâcon.²² At any rate, this incident shows the position Nicholas occupied in the first decade of the fourteenth century, as an informal patron of the Sorbonne circles. It may be in that connection, rather than for his own pastoral use, that he commissioned the quodlibetal miscellany we are dealing with.

The collection of minor masters was copied continuously by only one scribe, with no change of ink or size of writing that would suggest an interruption in the course of his work. This implies that any notion of a collection composed over a long period of time has to be ruled out from the start. Nevertheless, a few elements of discontinuity can be pointed out. At the beginning of the first quire, there is no rubric announcing [339] the general contents of what follows. Nor is there any ascription of the initial fourteen questions. Such ascriptions, starting with the fifteenth question, are, at first, noted by the copyist in the margin. For some time, he also reproduces the titles of the questions in the lower margin of the page, a fact that is acknowledged on the flyleaf.²³ In that respect, a change can be noticed on folio 35v. Henceforth, ascriptions are no longer located in the margins but within the page, as a rubric.

From that point on, an even more significant change regards the status of the questions themselves. On the previous pages, questions were rarely very long and elaborate. Some of them probably belong to the genre of *reportationes*, jotted down by listeners during the event. The ten final *quodlibeta* (ff. 35v-42v) are unambiguously of that nature since the master's response is always introduced by verbal forms such as "dicebatur," "dictum fuit," "dixit" ("it

²⁰ See John Wippel's chapter in volume I.

²¹ The "r" with a long descender in the word *Barro* is very characteristic.

²² R.H. Rouse and M.A. Rouse, *Preachers, florilegia and Sermons. Studies on the Manipulus florum of Thomas of Ireland* (Toronto 1979), pp. 94-5, 164-5.

²³ Paris, BnF lat. 15850, f. 1v: *Intitulationes quorundam questionum quere fol. xi. et .xii.* These titles are found on ff. 10v-13v, 14v. This implies a continuous foliation of the first part of the codex, but doesn't reveal whether this was achieved after or before the first binding.

was said,” or “he said”). These questions are deprived of any set of initial arguments, and the magistral determination can be remarkably laconic, such as Eustache of Grandcourt in his *Quodlibet* II, q. 10: “Utrum sit licitum celebrare festum conceptionis Virginis Marie? Dictum est quod sic.”²⁴ When the question is a complex moral case, it can even happen that the interrogation itself is longer than the answer, such as with the same Eustache in his *Quodlibet* III, q. 10.²⁵ This stylistic change is all the more obvious when one compares the slightly more elaborate style of Eustache’s first *Quodlibet*, found earlier in the collection, with the later ones. Even in the case of a very brief question, so short that it passed under Glorieux’s eyes unnoticed, we still find a *pro* and *contra* structure before the determination of the question.²⁶ Answering the following [340] question, in a most spectacular fashion, Eustache begins discussing the ability to marry of a monster (a female with two head, four breasts, and one sexual organ) by recalling in the first person a memory of his own father having witnessed such an extraordinary birth – although it is not clear whether he was talking about a human being or another type of animal.²⁷ As absurd as it may sound, the use of the first person (“ego intellexi”, “dico”) would signify that a venerable master of theology did mention such personal memories at a public university event, and gave his stamp to its written circulation.

The likelier explanation for the stylistic change witnessed within the collection is the following. Among the various materials the copyist had at his disposal, the final ten *quodlibeta* would have originated from the notes taken in a very summary way by someone who attended these events. It may be surmised that these *quodlibeta*, where the same names often recur, were not spread over a long period of time – a duration of three years being a reasonable guess. On such an hypothesis, Eustache of Grandcourt’s *Quodlibet* II and Peter of Saint-Omer’s *Quodlibet* II would belong to the first year, while the second would be filled by Eustache’s *Quodlibet* III

24 Paris, BnF lat. 15850, fol. 36rb. The same question is tackled by Matthew of Aquasparta in 1279 (Quodl. II, q. 8), Henry of Ghent in 1291 (Quodl. XV, q. 13) and John Baconthorpe in 1330 (Quodl. III, q. 18), a sign of continuous interest in the issue. All these, and many more, are edited by A. Samaritani, “De beatae virginis immaculata conceptione Quodlibet XIII-XIV saec. primum edita,” *Marian Library Studies*, 5 (1973) pp. 729-835.

25 Eustacius de Grandicuria, *Quodlibet* III, q. 10, Paris, BnF lat. 15850, f. 39va: “Talis casus est: iste cognovit istam puellam affectu fornicatorio, et habet inde puerum; postea accipit eam in uxorem, et habent alium filium; modo queritur quis istorum, mortuo patre, debeat habere progenituram. Dictum fuit quod primo natus quia factus est legitimus per matrimonium, et ad hoc adducebat multa decreta.”

26 Paris, BnF lat. 15850, f. 29ra: “Sacerdos dicit nonam ante terciam ex ignoranciam et oblivione, postea recolit, queritur postquam talis dixerit terciam debeat iterare nonam. Videtur quod sic quia ordo ecclesie requiritur ut nona dicatur post terciam, ideo etc. Contra, qui semel solvit debitum non amplius tenetur ad solum eius quia solutione eius quod debetur tollitur obligacio, ideo etc. Dicendum quod tenetur redicere nonam quia dicendo nonam ante tertiam corrumpit ordinem ecclesie et ideo non solvit sicut debet, ideo etc.”

27 Eustacius de Grandicuria, *Quodlibet* I, Paris, BnF lat. 15850, f. 29rb: “Quoddam monstrum fuit, habens a dyaphragmo superius duo capita, quatuor brachia et quatuor mamillas et duo corda; inferius unum instrumentum generationis et duos pedes, queritur utrum tale monstrum possit contrahere matrimonium... Dicendum quod ego intellexi a patre meo quod ipse vidit tale monstrum habens duo capita et quatuor mamillas et quod una illorum mulierum mortua fuit ante aliam per tres dies et altera fuit mortua per nimio fetore quam non potuit sustinere. Nunc dico quod possunt contrahere matrimonium et cum diversis, quia habent omnia per quem matrimonium potest esse perfectum quoniam habent consensum per quem matrimonium perficitur, habent etiam instrumentum per quid potest consumari...”

and Peter's *Quodlibet* III. Simon of Guiberville's *Quodlibet* I and Rénier of Clairmarais' *Quodlibet* II could belong to the second or third year. The latter one would comprise Eustache's *Quodlibet* IV and V, Guy of Cluny's *Quodlibet* II and Andrew of Mont-Saint-Eloi's *Quodlibet* I. Glorieux understands the mention "a magistro extacio" found in the margin as marking the beginning of a fifth *Quodlibet*, distinct from the fourth. This distinction is not necessary in my view, since all the questions, before and after the note, display strong stylistic [341] similarities. The marginal note could be understood as a mere reminder of authorship.

It is now time to turn back to the list of masters found in the margins or the rubrics of the collection. Once the "chronological" hypothesis has been discarded, the elements of certainty are rather limited.²⁸ A few names, given in full, are identified beyond doubt. They are those of masters who remained regents for a long period of time. Nicholas du Pressoir held his first *Quodlibet* in 1272 and was active in 1286, but nothing is known of his later career. Eustache of Grandcourt, regent master in 1272, had stopped teaching by 1303. Peter of Saint-Omer was already a master in 1289, chancellor in 1296, and active until 1302. Two other names offer no difficulty in identification, but do not shed any further light on the collection either, since nothing else is known about their university career: Renier of Clairmarais' name is given in full, while "Guido de Cluniaco" can hardly be other than the Benedictine theologian Guy of Pernes, master in theology, and abbot of Beaulieu in 1303, but the notion that his activity as a regent master would have started as early as 1287 is nothing but an effect of Glorieux's fantasy. More precise dates are provided by the two Dominican masters explicitly named, who taught in Paris for briefer periods. *Oliverus predicator* is necessarily Olivier of Tréguier, regent in 1291-92.²⁹ The *Quodlibet raimondi predicatorum* can securely be attributed to Raimond Guilha and dated in 1293-95.³⁰

The Franciscans are not so easily identified. The most likely candidate for the *Quodlibet fratris iohannis de ordine minorum* is John of Murrovalle, regent in 1289-90, and later Minister General of the Order and then cardinal. The time of his regency happened to fit perfectly with Glorieux's global chronological scheme. Yet this identification is by no means certain, since many other Friars Minor named John were around in those years. For instance, one can point to the case of the almost forgotten John of Pershore.³¹ Vital du Four [342] produced, as a reminder (memorialia), an abbreviated version of eighteen of his questions, now preserved in Todi, Biblioteca Comunale 95, a volume that contains most of the literary output of the Gascon

²⁸ Except when noted, all these elements were already gathered by Glorieux, "Notice sur quelques théologiens."

²⁹ T. Kaeppli, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum medii aevi* III (Rome 1980), pp. 199-200.

³⁰ Kaeppli, *Scriptores* III, p. 280.

³¹ Vitalis de Furno, *Quodlibeta tria*, ed. F. Delorme (Spicilegium Pontificii Athenaei Antoniani, 5) (Rome 1947), pp. 221-9. John of Pershore ought to have been mentioned in my chapter in the first volume of this book. I am most grateful to Alain Boureau for reminding me of him. The abbreviation ends with the words *Hic nihil deficit*, a sign marking the end of a complete series of questions.

theologian. These questions deal mostly with metaphysical and trinitarian issues, often directed against Peter John Olivi's positions. The miscellaneous nature of the final four, touching upon practical moral cases or problems of cognition and grace, gives weight to the notion that we are facing a quodlibetal dispute. Pershore is known to have been active in Oxford around 1290, but the anti-Olivian orientation of this Quodlibet and its relation to Vital render a continental origine of these questions more plausible. The Quodlibet could have been disputed in Paris, while Vital was a student there (1288-92). Its contents display no obvious resemblance to the Franciscan John present in Nicholas of Bar's collection, however. If the "S. minor" has to be identified with Simon of Lens, his *Quodlibet* should be associated with his regency in 1282, which sounds at odds with the dates obtained so far that rather point towards the first half of the 1290s. Therefore, the hypothesis that this initial S could represent a "Stephanus" or a "Simon" that we know nothing about cannot be totally discarded.

Some other names remain little more than shadows. Who was Gonterus or Ganterus? What was the exact christian name of "R. of Arras"? Here, as with the case of the anonymous Friar Minor to whom are attributed the questions 15-20 of the collection, the disappearance of Glorieux's chronology brushes away the little knowledge available about them. Two other characters, whose identity was reconstructed by Glorieux, are still in a uncomfortable situation. Twice, the marginal notes refer to a Cistercian master, clearly labeled as "abbatis sancti bernardi" the second time. Out of his chronological calculations, Glorieux concluded that he should be identified, "with no hesitation," with John of Waarde, a Cistercian master who died, still active, in 1293. The difficulty here is that the first reference to a theologian of Saint-Bernard in the collection, a few pages above, describes him with a problematic abbreviation that can be developed in various ways – the most litteral reading would imply a name such as "Rilus" or "Nilus" – but which certainly doesn't fit with "Johannes." While discussing the identity of the character described as "M. de Walle Scolarium," Glorieux decides in favour of John of Châtillon only on the basis that, at the time in which this *Quodlibet* would fit within his chronology, another possible candidate, Lawrence of Poulangy, was then away from Paris. More recent research on the Val-des-Ecoliers would suggest that John of Bray [343] was actually a master regent in Paris for a longer period than Châtillon, who apparently taught as regent master for a very brief period, in 1297-98, between the regencies of Poulangy and Bray.³²

Two masters appearing only in the final seventy-six briefer questions limit the time span of that section: Simon of Guiberville was active as a master from 1296 on, and became chancellor in 1302, while Andrew of Mont-Saint-Éloi's regency didn't begin before 1303-04. That Peter of Saint-Omer is described as chancellor in the same section, a fact strongly emphasized by

32 C. Guyon, *Les écoliers du Christ. L'ordre canonial du Val des Écoliers (1201-1539)* (St Etienne 1998), pp. 231-233.

Glorieux, would confirm a date posterior to 1296. Taking into consideration the presence of Andrew, the hypothesis of a three-year overall duration may have to be slightly extended, for Andrew's inception might have taken place after Eustache's withdrawal from teaching. In such a case, these quodlibetal cases could represent the state of debate on moral issues during the years 1300-04.

Before closing this chapter, the initial fifteen questions, which convey no trace of identification at all, have to be dealt with. Glorieux had proposed Bernard of Trilia OP as a candidate for the questions 7-14, on the basis of a complex reasoning. In the first place, it relied on the ascription to Bernard of a justificatory memoir that was later recognised as being penned by John Quidort.³³ Although nothing connects Bernard to Nicholas' collection anymore, some scholars have nevertheless been misled by Glorieux's certainties.³⁴ By removing this mistaken ascription, nothing links the early parts of the collection to the 1280s. There is apparently no reason to conceive that the initial fourteen questions were produced by more than one author. In order to shed more light on his profile, a detailed study of his positions on various issues would be required. All in all, the safer conclusion that can be expressed for the time being is that the initial parts of Nicholas of Bar's collection would represent a selection of cases discussed in quodlibetal disputes during the 1290s, and probably for most of them during the first part of that decade., while the final section contains *reportationes* of questions from the early 1300s.

³³ P. Glorieux, "Un mémoire justificatif de Bernard de Trilia. Sa carrière à l'université de Paris (1279-1287)," *RSPT* 17 (1928) 404-425, 18 (1929) 24-58. The history of the debate is synthesised by P. Künzle, "Prolegomena," in Bernardus de Trilia, *Quaestiones disputatae de cognitione animae separatae* (Bern 1969), 16*-17*. On the Bernard's authentic first three quodlibet, see P. Künzle, "Neu aufgefundene Quaestiones quodlibetales Bernhards von Trilia," *FZPT* IV (1957), 52-56,

³⁴ Such is the case of F. Veraja, *Le origini della controversia teologica sul contratto di censo nel XIII secolo* (Rome : 1960), and myself in the the first volume of this book.