

JOHN OF SALISBURY: COLLEAGUE, CRITIC, AND SOMETIME COUNSELOR TO THOMAS BECKET

By

L. Susan Carter

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

History–Doctor of Philosophy

2021

## ABSTRACT

JOHN OF SALISBURY: COLLEAGUE, CRITIC, AND SOMETIME COUNSELOR TO THOMAS BECKET

By

L. Susan Carter

John of Salisbury was one of the best educated men in the mid-twelfth century. The beneficiary of twelve years of study in Paris under the tutelage of Peter Abelard and other scholars, John flourished alongside Thomas Becket in the Canterbury curia of Archbishop Theobald. There, his skills as a writer were of great value. Having lived through the Anarchy of King Stephen, he was a fierce advocate for the liberty of the English Church. Not surprisingly, John became caught up in the controversy between King Henry II and Thomas Becket, Henry's former chancellor and successor to Theobald as archbishop of Canterbury. Prior to their shared time in exile, from 1164-1170, John had written three treatises with concern for royal court follies, royal pressures on the Church, and the danger of tyrants at the core of the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, and the *Policraticus*. John dedicated these works to Becket. The question emerges: how effective was John through dedicated treatises and his letters to Becket in guiding Becket's attitudes and behavior regarding Church liberty? By means of contemporary communication theory an examination of John's writings and letters directed to Becket creates a new vista on the relationship between John and Becket—and the impact of John on this martyred archbishop.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With this work, I am grateful to stand upon the shoulders of giants and peer into the future.

My deep thanks go to my partner and wife, the Reverend Dr. Linda C. Johnson, who helped prepare the path of this scholarship. As well, I dedicate this to my daughter Amanda Weinstein, MSW, who is following her passion with further studies of her own.

I offer gratitude to my committee members, Dr. Liam Brockey, Dr. Michael (Mickey) Stamm, Dr. Arthur Versluis, and most especially Dr. Emily Tabuteau. Their perseverance, patience, and kindness have been noted and welcomed.

Thanks go also to Tara Reyelts and Katie Carline. To you, I hand the baton.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
RESEARCH METHODS	7
<i>Research Framework</i>	7
<i>Communication Theory Applied</i>	16
<i>Overview of Previous Scholarship on John and Becket</i> – <i>Where this Work Resides</i>	29
CHAPTER 1 – ENGLAND IN THE TIME OF JOHN OF SALISBURY	39
<i>Henry I and the Concern About Succession</i>	46
<i>Stephen and the Record of His Reign</i>	60
CHAPTER 2 – JOHN OF SALISBURY: HIS LIFE	65
<i>John’s Education in France</i>	66
<i>John’s Experience of Education and the Metalogicon</i>	78
<i>Theobald of Bec as Archbishop of Canterbury</i>	81
<i>John at the Canterbury Household</i>	84
<i>The Alleged Disgrace</i>	89
CHAPTER 3 – THOMAS BECKET: HIS LIFE	96
<i>Becket’s Early Life</i>	98
<i>Becket in Archbishop Theobald’s Employ</i>	101
<i>Becket and John – Early Encounters</i>	103
<i>Becket as Henry II’s Chancellor</i>	104
<i>Becket’s Rise to Prominence at Canterbury</i>	108
<i>A Changed Man</i>	111
<i>Becket in Exile</i>	120
<i>Becket and Henry: Reconciliation Attempts</i>	130
<i>The Return to Canterbury</i>	133
<i>Pending Death and Martyrdom</i>	138
CHAPTER 4 – JOHN OF SALISBURY AND THE <i>ENTHETICUS</i>	140
<i>John’s Reasons for Dedicating the Entheticus to Becket</i>	144
<i>The Audience for the Entheticus</i>	149
<i>The Entheticus Compared to John’s Other Works</i>	153
CHAPTER 5 – JOHN OF SALISBURY AND THE <i>METALOGICON</i>	157
<i>Motivation and Purpose for Writing the Metalogicon</i>	159
<i>Thomas Becket and the Metalogicon</i>	167
<i>Writing the Metalogicon – A Matter of Time and Place</i>	174

CHAPTER 6 – JOHN OF SALISBURY AND THE <i>POLICRATICUS</i>	178
<i>The Structure of the Text</i>	180
<i>Motivations for Writing the Policraticus</i>	186
<i>The Question of Intended Audience</i>	195
<i>John's Precautions in Writing the Policraticus</i>	197
CHAPTER 7 – THE CHURCH IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY	209
<i>Brief History of the Church's Power</i>	210
<i>Gratian and the Decretum</i>	219
<i>The Historica Pontificalis Regarding the Church's Power</i>	222
<i>Assessing the Historica Pontificalis</i>	229
CHAPTER 8 – BECKET'S MURDER AND MARTYRDOM RECORDED IN <i>VITAE</i>	231
<i>Becket's Swift Ascension to Sainthood</i>	234
<i>The Many Biographies of Thomas Becket</i>	237
<i>A Close Reading of John's Vita</i>	241
CHAPTER 9 – JOHN OF SALISBURY: HIS CORRESPONDENCE	247
<i>The First Volume of Letters</i>	253
<i>The Second Volume of Letters</i>	261
<i>What John's Letters Tell Us</i>	270
CHAPTER 10 – ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF JOHN'S TREATISE	289
<i>Using Communication Theories to Assess the Impact of</i> <i>John's Writings on Becket</i>	290
<i>The Entheticus Reviewed</i>	298
<i>The Metalogicon Reviewed</i>	302
<i>The Policraticus Reviewed</i>	306
CHAPTER 11 – CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN JOHN AND BECKET REVIEWED	311
<i>Treatises' Quotes and Allusions in Letters to Becket</i>	325
CONCLUSION	331
BIBLIOGRAPHY	337
<i>Primary Sources</i>	338
<i>Secondary Sources</i>	340

## INTRODUCTION

The murder of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, on December 29, 1170 has held a position of fascination and esteem in the lives of the faithful. The charismatic and complicated cleric was famous in life for his contentious relationship with Henry II of England. The former chancellor became the king's fierce adversary. In fact, their once close relationship grew bitter and ultimately led to Becket's death. Their conflicted relationship and Becket's assassination resulted in the archbishop's canonization only three years after his murder. His place of death and entombment then became one of the most visited Christian pilgrimage sites and remained so for more than three hundred years.<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer even celebrated it in *The Canterbury Tales*.<sup>2</sup> Subsequent stage plays and films have continued the obsession with Becket's cathedral murder, long after the dissolution of monasteries and the destruction of Becket's shrine by Henry VIII in 1538.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> David Knowles, *Thomas Becket* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971), 1. Becket's shrine at the Cathedral in Canterbury was one of the top three destinations for pilgrims in the centuries following his death (the other two being Rome and Santiago de Compostela). The actual shrine was established in 1220, when his remains were translated to a finished chapel at the cathedral but was then destroyed in 1538 under orders of Henry VIII. See: "Thomas Becket Shrine," *Canterbury Historical and Archeological Society*, accessed February 5, 2020, <http://www.canterbury-archaeology.org.uk/becket-shrine/4590809614>. Becket's relics were returned from Hungary in 2016 from where they had resided. See also: "Becket's bones return to Canterbury Cathedral," *Anglican Communion News Service*, May 23, 2016, <https://www.anglicannews.org/news/2016/05/beckets-bones-return-to-canterbury-cathedral.aspx>, accessed February 5, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Chaucer's lengthy poem concerns the journey of thirty-one pilgrims, himself included, and the stories they share along the way. All are to tell two stories on the way to Canterbury, and two on return to Southwark. The best storyteller claims a free supper at the Tabard Inn at journey's end. "*The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer," *British Library*, accessed February 5, 2020, <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-canterbury-theses-by-geoffrey-chaucer>.

<sup>3</sup> Stage plays and films include *Becket* (1964) starring Richard Burton as Thomas Becket and Peter O'Toole as Henry II. IMDb, accessed February 5, 2020, [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0057877/?ref=fn\\_al\\_tt\\_1and](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0057877/?ref=fn_al_tt_1and). The stage play *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) by T. S. Eliot is also the basis of a television drama and an opera, *Assassinio nella cattedrale*, Ildebrando Pizzetti, Alberto Castelli, Italo Delle Cese, and T. S. Eliot. *Assassinio nella cattedrale: tragedia musicale in due atti e un intermezzo* (Milano: Ricordi, 1958). The debut performance was at La Scala in 1958.

As a lawyer and a cleric—ordained in the same apostolic tradition as Thomas Becket, no less—it is natural that I should have interest in Becket and his career. The legal struggles and the priestly challenges apparent in Becket’s story are not unfamiliar to me, even more than eight hundred years later. Yet, as a journalist and academic, I am just as fascinated by the communication processes that surrounded and affected Becket. Enter John of Salisbury, a colleague and critic of Becket, who was prodigious in his efforts to mold Becket’s behavior. John also sought to alter the attitudes of those associated with Becket when Becket was chancellor to Henry II, and then archbishop of Canterbury, and Henry’s antagonist.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, John was one of the leaders who pressed for Becket’s canonization with his *Vita Sancti Thomae* and targeted correspondence. Thus, my own attraction to the story of Thomas Becket is less about the man and more about the circle with which he surrounded himself: his advisors and his companions. Certainly, among the most notable of these was John of Salisbury, a secular cleric, one of the most educated men living in the second half of the twelfth century,<sup>5</sup> and a member of the Canterbury household.

John’s acquaintance with Becket began in 1155 when he joined the court of Archbishop Theobald at Canterbury, where Becket, himself a secular cleric—a deacon—was already employed.<sup>6</sup> Through Becket’s initial time at Canterbury, through the years he was chancellor to

---

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed examination of John of Salisbury, see for example: Clement C. J. Webb, *John of Salisbury* (London: Methuen & Co., 1932); Michael Wilks, ed. *The World of John of Salisbury* (Oxford: The Ecclesiastical Historical Society, 1984); Cary J. Nederman, *John of Salisbury* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 1; *Encyclopædia Britannica*, “John of Salisbury, English Scholar,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed February 5, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-of-Salisbury>.

<sup>6</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 13. See also: Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, “John of Salisbury as a Writer,” in *A companion to John of Salisbury*, ed. Ronald E. Pepin (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 147.

Henry, and continuing through the time after Becket was consecrated archbishop, John remained in regular contact with Becket: the former advising, criticizing, cajoling, and pleading with the latter. John was relentless in supporting Becket's cause, if not the man himself. At times, John argued for relief from exile for his own sake. In the six-year exile they endured following Becket's refusal to swear to Henry's increased powers over the Church, John never abandoned Becket's claim of church liberty, though he often disagreed with the archbishop's negotiation strategy to end the discord.<sup>7</sup>

The record of John's efforts to shape Becket's behavior in his roles as Henry's chancellor and later Canterbury's archbishop is noteworthy. John, highly educated by grace of intellect and twelve years of study among the leading masters of mid-twelfth century Paris and Chartres, was a prolific and erudite writer and author of epistles.<sup>8</sup> Throughout the canon of John of Salisbury, his ethics remain firm: the themes of virtue and truth dominate.<sup>9</sup> For him, these two propositions are antidotes to falsehood, flattery, and, ultimately, tyranny—both secular and sacerdotal. John interpreted Becket as a vehicle, a portal through which he could deliver messages of the value of virtue and truth. Three of John's major works, including the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon*, were dedicated to Becket and indeed these two were delivered to Becket while he was on military campaign for Henry in southwestern France.<sup>10</sup> Both treatises provide cautions from John about the dangerous "frivolities" of courtier

---

<sup>7</sup> Anne Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," in *The World of John of Salisbury*, ed. Michael Wilks, 428-431.

<sup>8</sup> Cary Nederman, "Friendship in Public Life During the Twelfth Century: Theory and Practice in the Writings of John of Salisbury," in *The Theory and Practice of Friendship in the Middle Ages* 5, *Viator* 8, no. 2 (2007), 385.

<sup>9</sup> Sigbjørn Sønnesyn, "Qui Recta Quae Docet Sequitur, Uere Philosophus Est: The Ethics of John of Salisbury," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 307-338.

<sup>10</sup> Hans Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury* (London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1950), 13.



behavior; they can be read as thinly veiled efforts to influence Henry through his chancellor. An earlier work, the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, John began when he was a student and later refashioned to incorporate similar, though more muted, messages about the perils of frivolity and flattery. Ever principled, John's memories of the civil disaster created by the civil war between Stephen and Empress Matilda and of the anarchy of Stephen's reign were a strong impetus to press for ethical leadership and for church liberty.<sup>11</sup>

John's collection of correspondence,<sup>12</sup> which he oversaw, also affirms the precepts of virtue and truth as pole stars for right action. At times, he appeared intent on badgering his addressees to adopt his viewpoint. Elsewhere, he used the twelfth-century conventions of friendship in an effort to convince recipients of the rectitude of his positions. The corpus of John's letters is divided into two groups: the first written during his employment with Archbishop Theobald, and the second beginning with his exile in France, almost a year before Becket's departure from England under the obscurity of night.<sup>13</sup> He and Becket had a correspondence of a dozen letters, most of them from John to Becket, and all but one written after Becket became archbishop.

The research question driving this study is this: to what degree did John's writing, both in books and letters, affect Becket and impact Becket's decisions and actions? Further, in the few oral exchanges between the two that were recorded, did John sway Becket at any time?

---

<sup>11</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 19; Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury*, 22.

<sup>12</sup> W. J. Millor, S.J. Butler, and H. E. Butler (revised by C. N. L Brooke), *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986),

<sup>13</sup> Millor, Butler, and Butler, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, vol. 1, ix.

The historical examination of the relationship between John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket is substantial; a revival of interest in John in the middle of the last century spurred a growth in research—yielding a trove of books and articles. Some scholars focus on the two men’s friendship (was it real or imagined?) or on the wisdom and knowledge that the older John presented to the man who was his colleague. Still, further exploration regarding their relationship is necessary. Anne Duggan suggests that a deeper probe is worthwhile, noting, “I don’t think that anyone has made a really close study of JS and TB.”<sup>14</sup>

Typically, historical methodologies have been used to analyze the relationship between Becket and John. Yet, I offer another way to approach the fifteen-year association between these two men that addresses the following key questions: whom was John attempting to influence, what particular means was he using, and are there measures of impact and success? By means of social science communication research, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative analysis, it is possible to measure use of words and phrases in the written record to assess impact on behavior. By examining the extent to which Becket adopted phrases and illustrations that John employed in letters and treatises he sent and dedicated to Becket, it is possible to analyze the degree that Becket paid attention to John. There were times when Becket followed John’s counsel, and others when he eschewed it. The December 1170 night when Becket was confronted and killed by four barons, he ignored John’s advice to avoid confrontation.<sup>15</sup> I seek

---

<sup>14</sup> Anne Duggan, email message to author, February 6, 2020.

<sup>15</sup> John of Salisbury, standing with Becket in the chapel on December 29, 1170, urged Becket to talk with the four knights, including the leader Reginald FitzUrse. From Anonymous I, *MB.*, IV. 74, in Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 144.

to discover the ways in which John's words and writings impacted Becket's principles and behavior.

## RESEARCH METHODS

“Research is an interpretative exercise.”

- Gaye Tuchman<sup>16</sup>

### *Research Framework*

The research design for this dissertation diverges from the course normally followed in historical investigation. This model engages communication theory, employing quantitative as well as qualitative methods, in an effort to understand the impact that John of Salisbury had on Thomas Becket. The analysis particularly centers on John’s dedicated writings—the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, and the *Policraticus*—and his correspondence with Becket while Becket was chancellor to Henry II and archbishop of Canterbury.

The traditional approach to medieval historical research involves plumbing archives, libraries, and other historical collections, seeking to construct narratives of lives and events in context. Archival research is often core to the process.<sup>17</sup> A useful definition of the historical method describes its multiple elements: identifying the categories of evidence; collecting the evidence; analyzing the evidence; and communicating the evidence. Also significant are external criticism, to assess the provenance and authenticity of the subject matter, and internal

---

<sup>16</sup> Gaye Tuchman, “Historical Social Science: Methodologies, Methods, and Meanings,” in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 317.

<sup>17</sup> See: Samuel J. Redman, *Historical Research in Archives: A Practical Guide* (American Historical Association, 2013); Gesa E. Kirsch and Liz Rohan, *Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008). More broadly: Elizabeth Ann Danto, *Historical Research* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); W. H. McDowell, *Historical Research: A Guide* (London: Longman, 2002); Michael J., J. Galgano, Chris Arndt, and Raymond M. Hyser, *Doing History: Research and Writing in the Digital Age* (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2013); John Van Engen, ed., *The Past and Future of Medieval Studies* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

criticism, to analyze the meaning and worth of the material.<sup>18</sup> Evidence is examined *in toto* to render an accurate historical account. Robert Jones Shafer suggests that “operations of internal criticism and synthesis call not only for erudition and synthesis technique, but for intelligence, powers of discrimination, imagination and sophistication.”<sup>19</sup> Among the elements creating difficulties for historians are opinions, personal viewpoints, and subjectivity. For the historian, proof is rare; plausibility and probability are much likelier.<sup>20</sup>

Historical research methods are part of the larger body of qualitative research methodology in the social sciences. The broader perspective of qualitative research places history under the ambit of the social sciences, nestled in with anthropology, ethnography, phenomenology, sociology, and even economics. Qualitative researchers “study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them.”<sup>21</sup> While the empirical materials are varied and include historical documents and data, the processes are multiple, and objective reality can be difficult to capture. Still, qualitative approaches to historical research are the typical, even preferred, means of accessing the past and endeavoring to retrieve and give meaning to prior epochs. A criticism of qualitative methods when studying history is the risk of inaccuracy, precisely because the past is a challenge to capture. The quantitative methodology arguably presents a clearer picture by measuring ascertainable data.

---

<sup>18</sup> Robert Jones Shafer, *A Guide to Historical Method* (Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1980), 41.

<sup>19</sup> Shafer, *A Guide to Historical Method*, 42.

<sup>20</sup> Shafer, *A Guide to Historical Method*, 53.

<sup>21</sup> Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2.

A significant debate in the field of qualitative research surrounds whether human behavior should be studied from a scientific or a humanistic perspective. The argument for a social science, i.e., scientific model is that the theories are substantial tools that can augment understanding about human behavior. Out of this method emerge predictability and broad explanations. Alternatively, the humanist approach more squarely addresses diversity among people.

The beginnings of the divergence of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies date to the Renaissance and the development of the scientific method through empirical studies. The move to place history among the social sciences accelerated in the nineteenth century, fueling a controversy that continues. Among the positivists were the social scientists, who sought to explain the world in scientific and predictable terms. Their goal was “to formulate abstract and universal laws on the operative dynamics of the social universe.”<sup>22</sup> Positivism “is a statement about relationships among forces in the universe. In positivism, laws are to be tested against collected data systematically.”<sup>23</sup> Among the early positivists were John Stuart Mill, Auguste Comte, and Émile Durkheim.

Idealism, or humanism, holds the view that “the mind is the most basic reality and that the physical world exists only as an appearance to or expression of mind, or as somehow mental in its inner essence.”<sup>24</sup> The idealists, the humanists, included Wilhelm Dilthey, Heinrich

---

<sup>22</sup> J. H. Turner, “Positivism: Sociological,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2001, accessed August 25, 2020, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/positivism>.

<sup>23</sup> J.H. Turner, “Positivism: Sociological.”

<sup>24</sup> T. L. S. Sprigge, “Idealism,” In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*., accessed August 25, 2020, <https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/thematic/idealism/v-1>.

Rickert, Edmund Husserl, Christian Gottfried Schutz, and Max Weber.<sup>25</sup> For them, there was no purpose in trying to construct general rules for the ways in which humans act—science was of no real value here. Until the Renaissance, the humanist method was principal for both research and attainment of knowledge.<sup>26</sup> The positivists offered a different path for acquiring knowledge by applying scientific methods to what had been previously only a rationalist method, reflective of humanism.

The case study is one historical research design that relies on qualitative methodology. Jon Creswell presents a model explanation for the case study as a means of qualitative historical research: “The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting.”<sup>27</sup> For Creswell, the preferred method respecting historical research is the case study. He describes the case study as a time-limited examination of history in addition to being descriptive and analytical. In his view, the context of the case remains consequential. The case study can be either unique or can highlight a series of issues to be examined in several related cases.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Some scholars have identified Max Weber as being part of the idealist-historicist tradition in spite of his Marxist positions. Yet the identification is circumscribed. “The methodological significance of values for the social sciences is directly articulated with a third focus, Weber’s insistence on the importance of ‘understanding’ subjectively held meanings and motives (*Verstehen*). This was one of the most important tenets of the idealist-historicist tradition; above all, it contrasts sharply not only with radical positivism as in the early behaviorist movement, but also with the utilitarian version.” However, in separating from the idealist-historicist movement, Weber held that cultural disciplines needed to organize around a “generalized analytical conception” as used in the natural sciences. Hence, there is the distinction between sociological approach and analysis of the results. Quotations in this note are from Talcott Parsons, “Max Weber 1864-1964,” *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 2 (April 1965): 173-174.

<sup>26</sup> W. James Potter, *An Analysis of Thinking and Research about Qualitative Methods* (Mahwah: Lawrence Earlbaum, 1996), 27.

<sup>27</sup> John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1998), 15.

<sup>28</sup> Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*, 61.

The struggle to place historical research in the larger context of social science research—and specifically sociology—is certainly not a recent one. Writing a century ago, Robert Park and Ernest Burgess of the University of Chicago School of Sociology described the distinction between the two methodologies. History, they observed, seeks to reproduce and interpret concrete events as they actually took place in the confines of time and space. Sociology aims for natural laws and generalizations—independent of time and space—respecting human nature and society. History, they wrote, aims to discover what really happened and what caused those happenings. Sociology, however, uses other cases and studies to explicate the “miniature of the process involved.”<sup>29</sup> From various cases and studies, sociologists are able to extrapolate their findings to articulate a worldview.

Sociologists are not the only scholars who have sought to both embrace and yet distinguish themselves from historians. In the past half-century, anthropologists have shared the social science umbrella with historians. Susan Kellogg has written about the changing relationships between the two disciplines, noting, “The past, once considered the domain of historians and antiquarians, has increasingly been embraced by anthropologists.”<sup>30</sup> Kellogg adds that “anthropologists were never indifferent to history,” despite occasional conflicting, even opposite, views.<sup>31</sup> For example, ethnohistory has developed as a subdivision of the field. The interest has expanded to include structural-functional and cultural-symbolic inquiries. Further, anthropologists use history as a counterpoint or a contrast.<sup>32</sup> Kellogg stresses, “*Anthropologists*

---

<sup>29</sup> Robert Ezra Park and E. W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1921).

<sup>30</sup> Susan Kellogg, “The Years of Historical Research and Writing by Anthropologists, 1980-1990,” In *The Uses of History Across the Social Sciences*, ed. Eric. H. Monkkonen (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994), 9.

<sup>31</sup> Kellogg, “The Years of Historical Research and Writing by Anthropologists, 1980-1990.” 9.

<sup>32</sup> Kellogg, “The Years of Historical Research and Writing by Anthropologists, 1980-1990,” 9.



often use history to understand emergent social or cultural formations, while *historians* tend to be preoccupied with the pastness of the past. The difference both distinguishes anthropological histories from historical histories and shapes them.”<sup>33</sup>

Historical evidence can appear to be mute. Written texts and artifacts are silent insofar as they are separated from the present by both time and space. When read in the present they exist outside of the time in which they were created. Consequently, they are subject to an *etic* analysis—viewed from an external or objective standpoint—rather than an *emic* perspective that examines language or culture based on its own internal elements. Ian Hodder believes that it is therefore critical for disciplines peering into the past to apply relevant and ethical theory and method. According to Hodder, chief among the disciplines subject to the challenge of qualitative assessment are history, art history, archaeology, anthropology, sociology, cognitive sociology, technology, and modern cultural studies.<sup>34</sup>

Hodder’s examinations of material culture and society permit him to consider connections both in and to the past. His research demonstrates that material culture matters for qualitative researchers looking to explore “multiple and conflicting voices.”<sup>35</sup> Some of it is designed to be communicative and representational: for example, written text. As Hodder explains, “The material culture may not be able directly to ‘speak back,’ but if appropriate procedures are followed there is room for the data and for different levels of theory to confront interpretations.”<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Emphasis in original. Kellogg, “The Years of Historical Research,” 13.

<sup>34</sup> Ian Hodder, “The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture,” in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 393.

<sup>35</sup> Hodder, “The Interpretation of Documents,” 395.

<sup>36</sup> Hodder, “The Interpretation of Documents,” 395.

Some scholars of history do employ quantitative research methods in an effort to better objectively view and assess the past. They use quantitative standards of measurement in an effort to determine meaning. Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss point out that qualitative data analysis—more typically used in historical research—can be enhanced by engaging the quantitative social science method and pertinent methodologies. Those methodologies can include, for instance, assessments drawn from the field of communication studies.

An example of using quantitative methodology is coding. It examines qualitative data, like John's letters to Becket, at a conceptual level to better understand the meaning of a text. Corbin and Strauss do not propose list-making for that is too simplistic and not particularly useful. The quantitative approach measures data, looking for patterns and similarities among other things. They contend that by "using techniques such as asking questions about the data, making comparisons between data, and so on, and in so doing deriving concepts to stand for those data, then developing those concepts in terms of their properties and dimensions. A researcher can think of coding as 'mining' the data, digging beneath the surface to discover the hidden treasures contained within the data."<sup>37</sup>

Corbin and Strauss' method assumes nothing and advantages inductive reasoning over deductive. The research tool kit includes case studies, coding, "family grouping," and matrices. The latter two examine data in bundles or overlapping sets.<sup>38</sup> This system extends beyond the

---

<sup>37</sup> Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss, *The Basics of Qualitative Research* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008), 66.

<sup>38</sup> Corbin and Strauss, *The Basics of Qualitative Research*, 67. Corbin and Strauss introduced their quantitative research methods in their initial edition of *The Basics of Qualitative Research* in 1990. Strauss was co-author of the Grounded Theory in communication studies. It employs a method by which data is examined through multiple levels, yielding a theory post-evaluation. The Grounded Theory Method is used in the social sciences. See "Grounded Theory," in *Psychological, Behavioral and Social Science*, accessed August 25, 2020, <https://www.communicationtheory.org/grounded-theory/>.

bounds of a single discipline. Context (read: historical setting) does not dominate but helps identify conditions and the manner in which people respond to them. People play an active role in the form of their lives by the manner in which they “handle or fail to handle the events or problems they encounter.”<sup>39</sup>

How might this quantitative approach be applied to historical documents? In the instant case of John of Salisbury’s treatises and letters to Thomas Becket, the researcher seeks patterns in John’s writing that evoke a response in Becket, one that supports John’s understanding of Church liberties.

There are three methodological approaches to assessing historical documents: textual analysis, interactionism, and cultural studies. This research examining John’s writings employs the first of the three methodologies—textual analysis. The approach of textual analysis is to assemble documents and then look for patterns of change.<sup>40</sup>

Potter raises the point that scholars should include in their research design the question of what should be identified and declared as evidence, that is types of evidence, the level of evidence, and the use of numerically generated quantitative evidence. Types of evidence includes document examination, interviewing, and observation. The range of documents is vast, including diaries, letters, memos, notes, books, manuscripts, etc. They are typically a “preserved recording of a person’s thoughts, actions or creations.”<sup>41</sup>

Potter notes there are two levels to understanding a text, or any historical document. The first is how human subjects interpret the meaning of the material. The second is how the

---

<sup>39</sup> Corbin and Strauss, *The Basics of Qualitative Research*, 88.

<sup>40</sup> Potter, *An Analysis of Thinking and Research about Qualitative Methods*, 74.

<sup>41</sup> Potter, *An Analysis of Thinking and Research about Qualitative Methods*, 95.

researcher interprets the meaning.<sup>42</sup> Documents, quite obviously, are invaluable for historians.

For this research, the major works of John of Salisbury that were dedicated and delivered to Thomas Becket and his correspondence with Becket as chancellor and archbishop of Canterbury comprise the body of work to be examined.

With respect to this research, Martin Packer's work introduces several interesting questions. Packer asks, "What does it mean to understand what someone says? What does it mean to understand a text? What is the 'meaning' of a text? What is the relationship between a text and its author's subjective experience?"

Coding<sup>43</sup> assumes that there are answers to these questions, "that to understand it [is] to 'unpack' this content from the form, and that this meaning can be repackaged in language that avoids indexicality. We have seen how unsatisfactory these answers are."<sup>44</sup> Rather than dismiss quantitative research methodologies to address historical questions, Packer finds a use for that approach. He notes that qualification research "is often equated with any kind of investigation that doesn't use numbers, but we will discover that quantification has its place, in the *descriptive* phase of qualitative inquiry."<sup>45</sup> Coding and quantification are tools to analyze and understand the impact of John's writings on Thomas Becket's attitudes and behaviors.

---

<sup>42</sup> Potter, *An Analysis of Thinking and Research about Qualitative Methods*, 84.

<sup>43</sup> In communication research, "Codes are the smallest unit of text that conveys the same meaning... Codes can be a word, a phrase, or a paragraph." The form of the code must be consistent for data accuracy. Erika Yi, "Themes Don't Just Emerge – Coding the Qualitative Data," *Medium*, accessed August 25, 2020, <https://medium.com/@projectux/themes-dont-just-emerge-coding-the-qualitative-data-95aff874fdce>. In the instance of John of Salisbury's letters to Thomas Becket, the biblical quotes and scriptural allusions are carefully matched to demonstrate that they share the same meaning for both men.

<sup>44</sup> Martin Packer, *The Science of Qualitative Research* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 82.

'Indexicality' refers to an expression that assume different meanings in separate contexts. For example, 'you' may designate one person or many people. "Indexicals," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed August 25, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/indexicals/>.

<sup>45</sup> Packer, *The Science of Qualitative Research*, 2. Emphasis in original.

## *Communication Theory Applied*

Communication theories, their methodologies and methods, provide a means for analyzing three of John's major works and his letters to Becket. The objective is to ascertain the impact the writings of this twelfth-century intellectual and cleric had on the chancellor who became archbishop. John was at turns a colleague, a campaigner, and a critic of Becket, but he never abandoned this controversial and complex leader. Because communication research will provide the theoretical foundation for analyzing the writings of John of Salisbury and his correspondence with Thomas Becket, it is worthwhile to understand communication studies' history and the contemporary praxis of communication research.

James Anderson presents a history and development of communication methodology. Writing in 1987, Anderson acknowledged that there was little of qualitative research in the communication field; it was situated in the quantitative section of social science. That has changed in the intervening three decades. Communication research now incorporates both quantitative and qualitative applications. While communication studies used quantitative methodologies for much of the last century, embedded in the field were qualitative elements. Those aspects are traceable to Edmund Husserl and his description of phenomenology in the early twentieth century, along with the works of Max Weber, and Alfred Schutz.<sup>46</sup> Husserl, a mathematician, believed that scientific methodology was insufficient to explain phenomena. His emphasis rested on two principles: lifeworld (*lebenswelt*) and epoch, that describe everyday life and major events and eras respectively. The theory arising from Husserl's perspective is that qualitative research has as its basis "inductive, empirical idealism. Max Weber, a sociologist,

---

<sup>46</sup> James A. Anderson, *Communication Research and Methods* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1987), 238.

was concerned with social policy and sought an “empathetic understanding of social action”<sup>47</sup> (*verstehen*) that took in both objective and subjective postures. Thus, the researcher goes beyond merely describing events to delving into their meanings from the point of view of the actor. With a subjective approach, the causes and consequences of social action become apparent. Meanings, instead of behaviors, are of consequence to this approach. Alfred Schutz drew upon Husserl and Weber to create the basis for phenomenological sociology. He offered a systematic approach by means of well-defined arguments, distinguishing between direct and indirect knowledge. His principal position was that the common lived experience, rather than scientific or philosophical observation, was the most valuable means of attaining knowledge.<sup>48</sup>

Communication scholar Karl Erik Rosengren extended the work of Gibson Burrell’s and Gareth Morgan’s typology of schools of sociology.<sup>49</sup> He identified four paradigms for communication research that expanded their subjective-objective analysis:<sup>50</sup> functionalist, interpretative, radical humanist, and radical structural.<sup>51</sup> This approach provides opportunity

---

<sup>47</sup> James A. Anderson, *Communication Research and Methods*, 239.

<sup>48</sup> Anderson, *Communication Research and Methods*, 239-241. For further reading on Alfred Schutz and phenomenological sociology, see Søren Overgaard and Dan Zahavi, “Phenomenological Sociology: The Subjectivity of Everyday Life,” in *Encountering the Everyday: An Introduction to the Sociologies of the Unnoticed*, ed. Michael Hviid Jacobsen (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 93-115.

<sup>49</sup> Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis* (London: Heinemann, 1979).

The quadrants had labels of ‘radical humanist,’ radical structuralist,’ ‘interpretative,’ and ‘functionalist.’ These constitute the four paradigms for the analysis of social theory. In their words, “We regard our four paradigms being defined by very basic meta-theoretical assumptions which underwrite the frame of reference, mode of theorising and *modus operandi* of the social theorists who operate within them. It is a term which is intended to emphasise the commonality of perspective which binds the work of a group of theorists together in such a way that they can be usefully regarded as approaching social theory within the bounds of the same problematic.” Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis* (London: Heinemann, 1979), p. 22. In creating this matrix, they tweaked and expanded upon the two-dimension subjective-objective analysis for a more nuanced understanding of social structure for purposes of analysis. Their search to better comprehend the nature and functioning of organizations led to a deeper grasp of the “philosophy science and a theory of society.” x.

<sup>51</sup> Karl Erik Rosengren, “Communication Research: One Paradigm or Four?” *Journal of Communication* 33, no. 3 (September 1983): 187. Rosengren, though principally a mass media scholar, appreciated the value of sociology in

for qualitative analysis, observed through the quantitative filter of communication research.

Anders Hansen and David Machin suggest that the interpretative paradigm initially generated by the matrix of Burrell and Morgan and advanced by Rosengren bridges the gap between qualitative and quantitative examination. Hansen and Machin recognize that the interpretative paradigm allows “for describing and investigating cultural issues of meaning and content in relation to communication processes.”<sup>52</sup> Consequently, the research method enriches the quantitative examination of the material.

The breadth of communication theories, with attendant methods and applicable methodologies, is substantial. As an academic field of study, the discipline is little more than a century old in the United States. The research of sociologist Charles Horton Cooley was instrumental in creating a space for communication studies and locating it in the social sciences.<sup>53</sup> During the last one hundred years, communication theories have expanded as scholars strive to explain how humans address and understand one another. This research will determine which communication theories best illuminate the impact of John of Salisbury’s

---

grappling with questions raised in communication research. In great measure, he sought to use the quantitative methods developed in the social sciences to develop greater accuracy in qualitative research. For a fuller examination of Rosengren’s work, see Jay G. Blumier, Jack M. McLeod, and Karl Erik Rosengren, eds., *Comparatively Speaking: Communication and Culture Across Space and Time* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1992).

<sup>52</sup> Anders Hansen and David Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2.

<sup>53</sup> Charles Horton Cooley, *Social Organization: a Study of the Larger Mind* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909). Cooley, son of Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas M. Cooley, was a president and one of the creators of the American Sociological Association. He, along with Walter Lippmann and John Dewey, were instrumental in developing the field of communication studies and encouraging its acceptance. Lippmann’s seminal work in the discipline was *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922). Harold Lasswell, political scientist and communication theoretician, among others, built upon the strength of American scholars’ early works. Lasswell’s work, notably in the area of “power relations and of personality and politics,” is significant for this study. “Harold Lasswell,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed February 3, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Harold-Lasswell>.

writings and correspondence with Thomas Becket on Becket's actions and the actions of those with whom Becket engaged.

A good point of departure in the discussion of message transmission is Harold Lasswell, the mid-century American academic, who created a model of communication that is linear in application. Titled the Lasswell Communication Mode, it has five elements and is deceptively straightforward: *who* says *what* in *which* Channel to *whom* with *what* effect? Lasswell assigned identification to each value, leading to an analysis of the components.<sup>54</sup> Lasswell's model has been criticized for its unidirectional construct, eliminating the possibility of receiving feedback.<sup>55</sup> Nonetheless, for this research, the model presents one means of examining messages from John of Salisbury and the cautions John provided about political immoderation in his major works and letters and in a few reported oral conversations with Becket. Thus, the question addressed in this research is *with what effect?*

In attempting to answer the question of John of Salisbury's effectiveness, several communication theories form the methodological underpinning of this research. The theories, nearly all developed since the middle of the last century, include Classical Rhetorical Theory, Constructivism, the Narrative Paradigm, the Social Exchange Theory, and the Standpoint Theory. Methods for applying these theories include Critical Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis. Assuredly, not every theory or method applies to all aspects of the fifteen-year

---

<sup>54</sup> The communicator sends the message using a medium to an audience with an effect. The analyses then turn on the concept of control, content, media, audience, and effects. Harold D. Lasswell and Bryson, L., eds. "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society," in *The Communication of Ideas* (New York: Institute for Religious and Social Studies, 1948), 117.

<sup>55</sup> George Gerbner advanced Lasswell's Communication Model with development of the Cultivation Theory. It closes the communication loop, though it is most extensively used in research on the impact of television. See: George Gerbner, Larry Gross, et al, "Living with television: The dynamics of the cultivation process," in *Perspectives on Media Effects* [insert journal volume and number] (1986): 17-40.



relationship between John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket, though the theories, sometimes taken individually, help to explain how and why John continually communicated with Becket.

Classical Rhetoric Theory, as the name implies, is rooted in the work of ancient Greek philosophers, notably Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Aristotle established the principal elements of communication for comprehensive communication: the speaker, the speech, and the listener. The proposition was constructed on the foundation of rhetorical education and the five categories of *inventio* (invention), *dispositio* (arrangement), *elocutio* (style), *memoria* (memory), and *actio* (delivery).<sup>56</sup> John of Salisbury was acquainted, on a limited basis, with Aristotle as the philosopher's writings were re-emerging in the twelfth century. John probably gained knowledge about the ancient Greek's works through *Introduction to the Categories of Aristotle* while under the tutelage of Peter Abelard during his course of study in Paris.<sup>57</sup> Aristotle's influence is pervasive in John's major works and his letters. It is especially evident in the *Policraticus*, where John draws upon the ethical consideration known as the Golden Mean.<sup>58</sup> Aristotle's theories regarding communication may also have influenced the design of some of John's writings and correspondence that was intended to impact Thomas Becket and Henry.

The Constructivism Theory of Communication posits that individuals who are "more cognitively complex" have greater success in communicating with others because they can fashion their messages to targeted audiences while at the same time striving to achieve more

---

<sup>56</sup> "Classical Rhetorical Theory," Communication Theory, accessed February 4, 2020, <https://www.communicationtheory.org/classical-rhetorical-theory/>.

<sup>57</sup> Clement C. J. Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 52.

<sup>58</sup> Cary J. Nederman, "The Aristotelian Doctrine of the Mean and John of Salisbury's 'Concept of Liberty,'" *Vivarium* 24, no. 2 (1986): 129.

than one outcome.<sup>59</sup> The four competencies for constructivism are linguistic (proper grammar and syntax); sociolinguistic (comprehension of the rules that are predominate in particular social settings); rhetorical (elucidating message content and modifying messages designed to respond and persuade); and conversational management (interpersonal communication that guides a conversation toward the speaker's desired objectives).<sup>60</sup> John of Salisbury, an erudite scholar, exhibited at least three of these competencies in his writings and frequent correspondence. This research will show that John demonstrated he was cognitively complex in the following ways. He was linguistically competent as the result of a superior intellect and education. He had sociolinguistic competence to the extent that he understood the social order of his time (in both the secular and the sacred world) and appreciated the rules of particular social settings. John was skilled in persuading others with his writings and his letters, consequently demonstrating rhetorical competence. Further, he strove to achieve conversational management in his discussions with Archbishop Theobald and Pope Adrian IV, among others. And he was successful, at times, in his conversations with Becket.

The Narrative Paradigm recognizes that humans tell stories and for millennia have chronicled lived experiences through spoken and written accounts. Walter Fisher expanded upon Kenneth Burke's Dramatism Theory of Communication (a pentad model showing that life

---

<sup>59</sup> Constructivism theory arises from the cognitive developmental work of Jean Piaget nearly a century ago. See: Marie Arsalidou and Juan Pascual- Leone, "Constructivist developmental theory is needed in developmental neuroscience," *npj Science of Learning* (2016), accessed February 4, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1038/npjscilearn.2016.16>. The theoretical communication components of this theory, though centered in child psychology and development, have interesting meaning and application for John of Salisbury's communication style.

<sup>60</sup> "Constructivism," *Communication Studies*, accessed February 4, 2020, <http://www.communicationstudies.com/communication-theories/constructivism>.

is a drama explained through act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose)<sup>61</sup> by means of the Narrative Paradigm. Burke centered his Dramatist Theory on motivation and traced its genealogy to classic Greek rhetoric of act, scene, agent, agency, purpose. Burke noted, “Although, over the centuries, men have shown great enterprise and inventiveness in pondering matters of human motivation, one can simplify the subject by this pentad of key terms, which are understandable almost at a glance. They need never to be abandoned, since all statements that assign motives can be shown to arise out of them and to terminate in them.”<sup>62</sup> Fisher shares the view that the Classic Rhetorical Theory lends much to his Narrative Paradigm. To be an effective communication method, the paradigm requires coherence and fidelity. The receiver must understand the narrative and see that it is logical, and the narrative must be credible and not misleading.<sup>63</sup> A further example of John’s use of the Narrative Paradigm is the *libelle*, the little book to which he gives instruction and advice. The device that ancient Greeks called the *prosopopoeia* creates a consistent means of storytelling to a fictional third party. In John’s case, he employed the *libelle* to shield himself from criticism that he was actually delivering criticism.

Social Exchange Theory can be seen as a *quid pro quo* that benefits both parties in a communication. The premise is that each party to the exchange received a benefit, and that self-interest is not denigrated. The theory arises from work of sociologist George Homans and

---

<sup>61</sup> Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1945).

<sup>62</sup> Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, xv.

<sup>63</sup> “The Narrative Paradigm,” *Communication Theory*, accessed February 4, 2020, <https://www.communicationtheory.org/the-narrative-paradigm/>. In *Policraticus*, John employed *exempla* to build strength for his arguments, conspicuously manufacturing the *Institutio Trajani* among others to create a story and to assert propositions. John was effectively holding a mirror up to the court, militating against wrongdoing and foolishness. Peter Von Moos, “The Use of *Exempla* in the *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 208.

has been extended to the field of communication.<sup>64</sup> The cost-benefit analysis is optimized as participants seek to make their relationship satisfying to each other. The theory is an influential concept in organizational communication and behavior as well.<sup>65</sup> The degree to which John of Salisbury attempted to engage Thomas Becket by means of the Social Exchange Theory is evident, the success less so. However, John, in engagement with others, especially during his exile from England from 1163/64 to 1170, experienced greater rewards in *quid pro quo* exchanges. The following research and discussion will make it clear that John of Salisbury wanted Becket's strong defense of the Church in return for the continual support John provided him. Throughout his exile, Becket asserted the cause of Church liberty.

The Standpoint Theory, initially articulated by German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel in 1807, has been extended to the field of communication studies.<sup>66</sup> Feminist theorist Sandra Harding gave the theory its name and drew from Marxist literature to describe social hierarchies as generally seen from the lower rungs of the ladder. People at the bottom of the hierarchy are much more attuned to the structure and their place in society than those at

---

<sup>64</sup> George C. Homans (1919-1989), sociologist, was unique in that he was also a humanist. The developer of the Social Exchange Theory, he combined his research in social psychology with the humanistic aspects of social behavior. Homan's major works were *The Human Group* (1950) and *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms* (1961). In the latter, he described the social system of rewards, based on his studies of children in the Tribriand islands off the coast of New Guinea. See: A. Javier Treviño, "George C. Homans, the human group and elementary social behaviour," *The encyclopedia of pedagogy and informal education*, Accessed August 26, 2020, [www.infed.org/thinkers/george\\_homans.htm](http://www.infed.org/thinkers/george_homans.htm).

<sup>65</sup> "What is Social Exchange Theory?" Tulane University School of Social Work, April 20, 2018. Accessed February 4, 2020, <https://socialwork.tulane.edu/blog/social-exchange-theory>. For organizational behavior and a critique of the theory see, for example, Russell Cropanzano and Marie S. Mitchell, "Social Exchange Theory: An Interdisciplinary Review," *Journal of Management* 31, no. 6 (2005), 874-875, accessed February 4, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>. In their view, the theory, which dates to the 1920s, remains inchoate and would benefit from further refinement.

<sup>66</sup> "Standpoint Theory," *Communication Studies*, accessed February 4, 2020, <http://www.communicationstudies.com/communication-theories/standpoint-theory>.

the higher levels of society.<sup>67</sup> Broadly applied, this theory helps to explain the status that both John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket occupied in a deeply hierarchical environment and the bearing it had on their epistemological relationship. It also provides insight into John's dedication of his three major works to Becket. John's position in the social structure, below that of members of Henry's court, permitted him a greater understanding of the social scaffold than those who were of higher birth. Standpoint Theory branches across disciplines, currently embracing social work, welfare, and especially feminism—the theory is often applied to those in groups who find themselves marginalized. The notions of social echelons were valid in twelfth century Europe, as they are now. Edward Grim, a Cambridge monk and later biographer of Becket, was present at Becket's murder. Among others, he reported in *Vita Sancti Thomae* Henry's infamous railing at Becket and courtiers at the 1170 Christmas gathering in Normandy. Henry lamented, "What miserable drones and traitors have I nurtured and promoted in my household who let their lord be treated with such shameful contempt by a low-born cleric!"<sup>68</sup> John's efforts to influence Becket, who had been labelled "low-born" by an angry and frustrated Henry, were real. Through letters and dedicated writings, John labored to encourage Becket's appreciation of his vaunted role as Archbishop of Canterbury, and to use it to the benefit of the realm.

Application of the communication theories identified *supra* will be augmented by Content Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, examining the words and phrases used in the exchanges between John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket. In 1952, Bernard Berleson set forth a

---

<sup>67</sup> Elizabeth Borland, "Standpoint theory," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2014, accessed August 26, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/standpoint-theory>.

<sup>68</sup> Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 235.

definition that outlined an innovative academic method, describing content analysis as a tool that would permit not only an objective but also a systematic and quantitative understanding of communication content. For Berleson, the markers for understanding and describing content are objective, systematic, quantitative, and manifest.<sup>69</sup> The concept is to remove the researcher's personal views and opinions from the analysis by means of a set of rules that create categories and establish frequency of incidence. By means of content analysis, the researcher focuses on a specific set of phrases, words, quotes, or allusions in a document. Beyond applying the rules, the results must be observable in the message. The goal of analyzing John of Salisbury's writings dedicated to Thomas Becket and the letters he wrote to him is to discern Becket's use of the same content in his own letters. Unlike John, Becket did not write treatises; however, he wrote more than three hundred letters as archbishop. That body of work is examined for content Becket adopted from John.<sup>70</sup>

Thomas D. Stewart explained content analysis as a research method that began in Sweden in the eighteenth century. There, scholars examined ninety religious hymns to determine their orthodoxy. The scholars developed a scheme to assess the appropriateness of certain words, and then analyzed the hymns to determine if the unorthodox words were used, and how often. More recently, and on a grander scale, the Federal Communications Commission analyzed Nazi broadcasts during World War Two in an effort to understand current events and predict future ones. The research was successful in predicting both the V-2 rocket

---

<sup>69</sup> Bernard Berleson, *Content Analysis in Communication Research* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1952).

<sup>70</sup> Becket's extant correspondence is comprised of 327 letters; 39 are known to be lost. Anne Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 1361, 1404-05.

development and other political and military actions.<sup>71</sup> Content analysis in these two examples revealed Nazi plans for firing the rocket and for military action against the Allies.

Nonetheless, content analysis is more than tallying words. There are rules beyond the mere counting that create a solid platform for analysis and discussion. Although there are limitations with principally working from written documents, there are benefits to the process. Among the advantages of content analysis is the fact that it is not invasive, instead using extant texts. Further, it takes the texts where they are found and does not try to shape them. Also, it is sensitive to context, and can incorporate large amounts of data.

The method proceeds from articulation of a research problem—the Research Questions, the RQs.<sup>72</sup> The next step is establishing the borders or boundaries of the material to be examined—for example, describing the universe. After the universe is set, a sample for coding is drawn. That is followed by “unitizing,” what will be examined in which categories. The measurement scheme follows with a measurement placed on each category, e.g., violent or nonviolent.<sup>73</sup> Coding takes place after that. Finally, there is data analysis to test the hypothesis. For the purposes of this dissertation, the universe consists of John of Salisbury’s major works and his letters to Thomas Becket, and Becket’s collection of known letters. Again, the examination centers on Becket’s embracing of classical and scriptural quotations and allusions that John has previously written to him.

Critical Discourse Analysis, commonly referred to as CDA, is a significant methodological tool for this research, broadly accepted in the social sciences since the early 1990s.

---

<sup>71</sup> Thomas D. Stewart, *Principles of Research in Communication* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002), 122.

<sup>72</sup> Stewart, *Principles of Research in Communication*, 122.

<sup>73</sup> Stewart, *Principles of Research in Communication*, 123-128.

CDA involves text and talk. As a method, it allows for a systematic consideration of both means of communication.<sup>74</sup> By means of CDA, a researcher can examine meaning through grammatical usage and language. The method permits the researcher to carefully study language choices and to determine which forms of language have been used to accomplish desired ends.<sup>75</sup> CDA's methods aspire to elucidate "the ideas, values and opinions in text and speech that may not necessarily be obvious on first reading, or hearing."<sup>76</sup> Indeed, language is not neutral, given the myriad definitions that can be loaded into words. Hansen and Machin state, "It is how language can be used to subtly convey ideas and values that CDA can draw out. And through this we can get a much clearer idea of what is actually being conveyed."<sup>77</sup>

Discourse and ideology are cornerstone concepts in CDA and they extend to comprehensive concepts. CDA entails an examination of word and grammar choices to grasp the subtext or discourse.<sup>78</sup> Language—whether in text or speech—manifests power as well. As Hansen and Machin note, "The aim of CDA is to draw out the ideologies, showing where they might be buried in texts."<sup>79</sup> Social organization is discernible through texts, treatises, documents, and letters. Eight centuries later, it is arguably difficult, but not impossible, to grasp the meaning and structure of meanings as they were understood through the social organizations of their own time rather than how they might be understood today. For example, John expressed great love for Peter of Celle with words what would be associated with a

---

<sup>74</sup> Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 2010). The text outlines the history of Critical Discourse Analysis. The methodology comes out of linguistics, and key scholars include Gunther Kress, Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teun A. Van Dijk, Theo Van Leeuwen, and Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard.

<sup>75</sup> Hansen and Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, 115.

<sup>76</sup> Hansen and Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, 116.

<sup>77</sup> Hansen and Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, 116.

<sup>78</sup> Hansen and Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, 117.

<sup>79</sup> Hansen and Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, 118.



contemporary gay relationship. However, there is no evidence that their relationship went beyond the bounds of a very deep friendship, an *amicitia*.<sup>80</sup> Humans have used written language to express themselves and their ideas for several thousand years. Language permits acknowledgment of common features of a culture.<sup>81</sup>

Ruth Wodak is an advocate for the CDA methodological approach to the study of messages, recognizing at the same time its limitations. Of particular value is the multidisciplinary effort to access the meaning of language and decipher the power and intent of the words used. Her contention is that various methodologies seek to develop solutions and, as a result, must involve more than one discipline, often from an unusual array. A recent example is of bio-anthropologists studying how a mummified ancient Egyptian vocalized.<sup>82</sup> CDA is characterized by the common interest in demystifying ideologies and power through the systematic and retroductable<sup>83</sup> investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken, or visual). CDA researchers also attempt to make their own positions and interests explicit while retaining their respective scientific methodologies and while remaining self-reflective about their research processes.<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> For a fuller understanding of medieval friendship, see Cary Nederman, "Friendship in Public Life During the Twelfth Century: Theory and Practice in the Writings of John of Salisbury," *The Theory and Practice of Friendship in the Middle Ages* 5 Viator Vol. 38, Issue 2 (2007): 385-397.

<sup>81</sup> Hansen and Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, 119.

<sup>82</sup> D.M Howard, J. Schofield, et al., "Synthesis of a Vocal Sound from the 3,000 year old Mummy, Nesyamun 'True of Voice,'" *Nature Research*, accessed February 1, 2020, <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-56316-y>.

<sup>83</sup> Ruth Wodak, "Critical Discourse Analysis," in *Communicative Repertoire*, ed. Ruth Wodak (London: Sage, 2013). In her chapter, Wodak offers the following definition in fn. 2.: "Retroductable" is a translation of the German term *nachvollziehbar* and means that in the humanities and social sciences (and in qualitative research in general) we cannot test hypotheses or prove them as in the quantitative paradigm. In contrast, though, qualitative analyses must be transparent, selections and interpretations justified, and value positions made explicit. In this way, the procedures and meanings of qualitative analyses remain intersubjective and can, of course, also be challenged.

<sup>84</sup> Wodak, "Critical Discourse Analysis," 303.

The criticisms of CDA are as one might expect: it can fail for imprecision and lack of coherent methodology. Despite the myriad but refined tools of lexical analysis, naming and reference, verb use (either active or passive), rhetorical examples, and objectification and personification, among others, the measures can be inexact and even inaccurate. A further critique is that major assumptions arise out of textual analysis alone. Some of the differences CDA points out may be merely “production value” process, that is, how the material was constructed. Further, CDA presents a lack of acknowledgment as to how the individual receiver takes in the message and responds, which is an aim, and a challenge, for this research.<sup>85</sup>

#### *Overview of the Previous Scholarship on John and Becket – Where this Work Resides*

The recent scholarship regarding Becket is substantial, and there has been a renewed interest in John of Salisbury in the last half century. Yet not much scholarship has been devoted to the relationship between Becket and John; even less has centered on writings and correspondence. Because this research examines the lives of two men, it is critical to explore what has been written recently about each, including their lives and their impact on their surroundings. The discussion then focuses on their own relationship—seeking to ascertain the effectiveness of the calculated impressions John directed at Becket through three treatises and by means of written correspondence.

First, as to Becket, the most recent work includes that of Anne Duggan who is arguably preeminent among other contemporary scholars of this twelfth century figure. Her extensive body of work embraces the two volumes of Becket’s correspondence and letters written to

---

<sup>85</sup> Hansen and Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, 148-149.

him, which began with his archiepiscopacy in 1162. Prefatory to the letters she translated and edited is an extensive introduction of one hundred sixty-one pages. The Introduction addresses the correspondence generally, the manuscripts existing or known to have existed, forgeries, previous editions of Becket's correspondence and tables presenting the various orders and missive dates. The Duggan edition of Becket's letters is a scholarship of great depth. In it, one finds letters he received from John of Salisbury and the handful Becket wrote to him.<sup>86</sup> Ratifying her position at the current lead scholar on Becket is Duggan's biography of Thomas Becket.<sup>87</sup> Though not the most recent writing on the archbishop, Duggan's surpasses the biography of Becket written by John Guy—his being an informative reading meant for a broader audience.<sup>88</sup> Duggan's publications on Becket encompass three (in addition to the biography) in the past twenty years, though none focus on the relationship between John and Becket.<sup>89</sup> Her 2007 work, *Thomas Becket: Friends, Networks, Texts and Cult*, includes discussion of John, though he is part of a larger tapestry of Becket's household and professional connections while in exile.<sup>90</sup>

Aside from Duggan's edition of Becket's correspondence, her biography of Becket, and Guy's writing on Becket, the works on the archbishop this century have been highly

---

<sup>86</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*.

<sup>87</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*. In this biography, there are thirty-seven references to John of Salisbury, though most of them are in passing. For example, in discussing Becket's Toulouse campaign, Duggan wrote, "One cannot imagine John of Salisbury taking command of a whole division of the royal army and leading it on the battlefield" (page 20); "Master John of Salisbury was staying with his old friend Peter of Celle, then abbot of Saint-Rémi at Reims" (page 95); or "it is likely that John of Salisbury made contact with Exeter, at least, for he had written to the bishop throughout the exile, and Bartholomew was a friend" (page 219).

<sup>88</sup> John Guy, *Thomas Becket: Warrior, Priest, Rebel: A Nine-Hundred-Year-Old Story Retold* (New York: Random House, 2012).

<sup>89</sup> Anne J. Duggan, "Thomas Becket: His Last Days," *The English Historical Review* 116, no. 465 (2001): 185-185; Anne Duggan, "Thomas Becket's Italian network," *Pope, Church and City*. eds. Frances Andrews, Christoph Egger, and Constance M. Rousseau, (Boston: Brill, 2004), 177-201; Anne J. Duggan, *Thomas Becket: Friends, Networks, Texts and Cult* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

<sup>90</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket: Friends, Networks, Texts and Cult*.

particularized. The scholarship is narrow and does not explore the relationship between John and Becket. The subjects extend to liturgies celebrating Becket, cults, relics, discoveries at Canterbury relating to Becket, his death, the search for his bones, and writings of Becket's contemporary biographers.<sup>91</sup> To be sure, John is frequently referenced in these publications, but the essence of the relationship between the two men—and John's dedication to molding Becket's thinking regarding Church liberties—is not addressed.

Two recently released biographies of Becket, ever the popular target of authors, add little, if anything, to the understanding of the connections between John and Becket; rather, their focus is on Becket as a religious figure (one, in fact, is a reprint of a nineteenth century work).<sup>92</sup> A third has as its central theme the conflict with Henry in a dramatic historical retelling designed for mass audiences.<sup>93</sup> These three are noteworthy only to the extent that they confirm the world's enduring interest in Becket; but, they contribute nothing to the scholarly discussion of the discourse and correspondence of John and Becket.

---

<sup>91</sup> Among the notable scholarly writings regarding Becket since 2000 are the following: Kay Brainerd Slocum, *Liturgies in Honour of Thomas Becket* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10218768>; John S. Hogan, *Devotions to St Thomas Becket* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2018); Paul Webster and Marie-Pierre Gelin, *The Cult of St Thomas Becket in the Plantagenet World, c.1170-C.1220* (Woodbridge: 2016); Kay Brainerd Slocum, *The Cult of Thomas Becket: History and Historiography Through Eight Centuries* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019); Carolyn Marino Malone, *Twelfth-Century Sculptural Finds at Canterbury Cathedral and the Cult of Thomas Becket* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019); Christopher De Hamel, *The Book in the Cathedral: The Last Relic of Thomas Becket* (London: Penguin Books, 2020); H. M. Thomas, "Shame, Masculinity, and the Death of Thomas Becket," *Speculum* 1, no. 87(4) (Oct. 2012): 1050-88; John R. Butler, *The Quest for Becket's Bones: The Mystery of the Relics of St Thomas Becket of Canterbury* (Yale University Press, 1995); Michael Staunton, *Thomas Becket and His Biographers* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006).

<sup>92</sup> John Dobree Dalgairns, *The Life of St. Thomas Becket of Canterbury* (Scotts Valley: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015). This biography is an Amazon reprint. The second biography is directed at a religious audience. Fr. John S. Hogan, *Thomas Becket: Defender of the Church* (Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 2020). On its website, Our Sunday Visitor states: "OSV's mission is to help Catholics fulfill their calling to discipleship, strengthen their relationship with Christ, deepen their commitment to the Church, and contribute to its growth and vitality in the world." It is further described as a "Catholic publisher serving millions of Catholics globally through its publishing, offertory, and communication services," accessed November 29, 2020, <https://www.osv.com/>.

<sup>93</sup> Jemahl Evans, *A Turbulent Priest: The Story of Thomas Becket* (Independently published, 2020).

Becket's profile as one of the chief English individuals of the twelfth century had attracted other scholars as well in the last century. Among the biographies and writings about Becket reflecting deep scholarship are those of David Knowles, Beryl Smalley, and Frank Barlow.<sup>94</sup> Knowles' masterful examination of Becket is now a half-century old, yet the depth of his research continues to inform scholars. As with others who have written serious works on Becket, Knowles acknowledges John of Salisbury—in his instance, twenty-seven times—although once more, John is more of a bit player than a bold partner. The exception is Knowles' description of the events of December 29, 1170 and Becket's murder. There, Knowles shares words exchanged between John and Becket that are drawn principally from the Becket biographies of William of Canterbury, William FitzStephen, and Edward Grim.<sup>95</sup> Otherwise, there lacks an examination of John and Becket as correspondents.

Beryl Smalley's research and writing for her text on intellectuals and politics of the Becket reign manifests a different approach to the archbishop. Her chapters are individually devoted to important characters in Becket's episcopal life, and John is included among them. A substantial portion of the chapter traces John's life, his studies, and his principal theses—the *Entheticus maior*, the *Metalogicon*, and the *Policraticus*. Smalley details the rationale for John's antipathy to Henry's proposals to limit Church liberties. For example, she notes, "John blamed the English government for the sad state of affairs which had arisen. The English Church had suffered from royal tyranny in the past. Now her liberties were reduced to a shadow."<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup> David Knowles, *Thomas Becket* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971); Beryl Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools: A Study of Intellectuals in Politics* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973); Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986).

<sup>95</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 141-144.

<sup>96</sup> Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*, 101.

However, Smalley's efforts to draw the connection between John and Becket are unilateral. In counseling Becket not to seek martyrdom late in their exile, she writes, "John urged his master not to show vindictiveness to his enemies."<sup>97</sup> Smalley approaches solidifying the linkage between the two men, but her connection falls short.

Frank Barlow's biography of Becket is the most recent of the three scholarly writings of the latter part of the last half century. As with the others, John is frequently referenced—seventy-seven times. John's major writings appear twelve times in Barlow's book. The writing certainly acknowledges John's presence in Becket's life, both in Theobald's household at Canterbury and while they were in exile on the continent. Further, Barlow acknowledges John's desire to affect Becket's understanding of the danger Henry posed to the Church, stating, "John of Salisbury in his *Entheticus* (1156-9) and *Policraticus* (1159), both dedicated to Thomas, had drawn attention to the danger to the church from evil ancient customs and to the attacks which tyrants, particularly King Stephen, had made on the jurisdictional privileges of the clergy (*privilegium fori*)."<sup>98</sup> As does Smalley, Barlow includes John at the scene of the murder, though without the dialogue Smalley attributed to John, based on biographers William of Canterbury, William FitzStephen, and Edward Grim. John remains, on the whole, a member of the supporting cast as seen through Barlow's writings. There is little attribution of John's communication and correspondence with Becket aside from the works John dedicated to Becket.

---

<sup>97</sup> Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*, 104. Smalley draws her comments based upon J. C. Robertson and J. B. Shepperd, eds., *Materials for the History of Archbishop Thomas Becket* (Rolls Series 1875-83), 442.

<sup>98</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 91.

John of Salisbury did not have the stature of Thomas Becket for obvious reasons. He was not Henry's chancellor, he was not the archbishop of Canterbury, and he was not murdered in Canterbury Cathedral. Thus, there is substantially less written about this educated man. Still, John has not been neglected as an erudite figure, a contemporary and sometimes colleague of Becket, and a bishop in his own right. Cary J. Nederman is the lead contemporary scholar of John and has written extensively on John, his life, and his major works. Nederman's slender biography of John contains thirty-eight references to Thomas Becket. As with Becket's biographers and their mentions of John, the references to Becket tend to be unidirectional. They describe what John wrote but do not provide any detailed research findings addressing the impact of John's words on Becket, or of John's dread of a return to Stephen's anarchy. For example, in commenting on John's treatise, the *Entheticus maior*, Nederman writes, "John evinces optimism that Thomas can negotiate the snares of Henry's court and return in good moral condition to take his rightful place in Canterbury."<sup>99</sup> At the publication of the *Entheticus maior*, Becket was Henry's chancellor.

Nederman's scholarship on John extends far beyond the biography of the twelfth century intellectual and Becket contemporary. Nederman translated and edited major portions of the *Policraticus* in a volume that includes a brief introduction in which he underscores John's concerns about the rise of a tyrant."<sup>100</sup> Nederman's mention of John's letters (which are not the

---

<sup>99</sup> Cary J. Nederman, *John of Salisbury* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 17.

<sup>100</sup> John of Salisbury and Cary J. Nederman, *Policraticus: Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), xviv.

focus of his text) points to the independent stance John maintained, “which is in marked contrast with Becket’s intransigence.”<sup>101</sup>

Aside from these two texts, Nederman’s other writing and co-authoring of publications on John surpasses other contemporary scholars. Often the focus is on philosophy, ethics, liberty, and notions of tyranny. Those topics are the mainstay of other scholars’ writings on John of Salisbury—a number of them published in the last century.

Clement C. J. Webb’s biography of John is nearing ninety years old but has been a standard text on John. While Webb has more than twenty references to Becket, they do not plumb the reaches of the correspondence John had with Becket. Much of Webb’s text addresses John’s three principal treatises—even here, though, mentions of Becket by Webb are superficial, noting where Becket was at a particular time, and the fact that these three were dedicated to Becket, without much commentary by Webb.<sup>102</sup>

Other principal scholars of John include Richard Rouse and Mary Rouse,<sup>103</sup> Quentin Taylor,<sup>104</sup> John McLoughlin,<sup>105</sup> Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, who together convened a series of writings on John,<sup>106</sup> and Michael Wilks, who similarly brought together researchers thirty years earlier.<sup>107</sup> Grellard and Lachaud, in their compilation of essays, divided John’s life into four sections with overall contributions from twelve scholars. Many of the

---

<sup>101</sup> John and Cary J. Nederman, *Policraticus: Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers*, xvii.

<sup>102</sup> Clement Charles Julian Webb, *John of Salisbury*, (London: Methuen, 1932).

<sup>103</sup> Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, "John of Salisbury and the Doctrine of Tyrannicide," *Speculum* 42, no. 4 (1967): 693-709.

<sup>104</sup> Quentin Taylor, "John of Salisbury, the Policraticus, and Political Thought," *Humanitas* 19, no. 1 (2006): 133-157.

<sup>105</sup> John McLoughlin, "The Language of Persecution: John of Salisbury and the Early Phase of the Becket Dispute (1163–66)," *Studies in Church History* 21 (1984): 73-87, doi:10.1017/S0424208400007543.

<sup>106</sup> Christoph Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, *A Companion to John of Salisbury*.

<sup>107</sup> Michael Wilks, *The World of John of Salisbury*.



writers contributing to Wilks' publication were acquainted with John of Salisbury through their own, separate research. They were able to present scholarship based on John's association with their own fields. Their works certainly touch and concern John, but he tends not to be the core of their scholarship. Examples in Wilks' work are Timothy Reuter's research on medieval Germans and John's general dislike of them, or Gillian Evans' studies of Boethius, which draws John into her scholarship. There were twenty-five papers by international contributors in Wilks' volume of essays, and the essays are not grouped together in thematic order save that John is at the center of all. It is not surprising that a diverse group of scholars presents papers on John—John's breadth of knowledge and his experiences offer him a place in many categories.

Of the substantial body of scholarship on Becket, and a reasonable corpus of work on John, there is surprisingly little about their relationship that is directly on point. There is much about the venues they shared—at the household at Canterbury and various sites in France where together they met with kings and papal emissaries—and their mutual concern about Henry's attacks on the Church and its liberties. However, there is little about John's efforts to direct Becket's thinking and behavior and the corresponding relationship between the two of them. The two leading scholars on Becket and John, Anne Duggan and Cary Nederman in a work co-authored with Karen Bollermann, do address the men's relationship specifically. Duggan, in her paper published in Wilks' series of essay, in fact titles her article "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket." She tracks the simultaneity of their lives and views and John's deep attachment to Becket's cause, if not his personality. Duggan notes, "John clung to two overriding principles: faithfulness to Becket, whom he refused to forswear; and steadfast opposition to the Clarendon constitutions which he regarded as inimical to the rightful freedom

of the English church.”<sup>108</sup> In a more recent article, Duggan examines the classical quotations and allusions in Becket’s letters, citing John’s writing as a likely source.<sup>109</sup> While Duggan makes the case for attribution of these phrases to John, she leaves open the space to assess the impact of Becket’s echoing of John’s usage. In a separate writing, Duggan deftly discusses both the authorship and the authenticity of Becket’s letters. They were not curated as carefully as John’s letters—those he gathered and sent to Peter of Celle, abbot of Saint-Rémi and his closest friend. She acknowledges the commonplace usage of some of Becket’s allusions and the challenge of ascribing authorship; nonetheless, she notes that Becket’s letters, which were the source of internal comment and debate, were transmitted with his knowledge and over Becket’s signature and seal, no less.<sup>110</sup>

Karen Bollermann and Cary Nederman selected the same title for their article in Grellard and Lachaud’s compilation of essays. Their discussion centers on the relationship between Becket and John during Becket’s life, and John’s promotion of Becket’s martyrdom following his murder. Again, the gap here, as with Duggan’s research, is the lack of analysis regarding John’s deep-seated motivations for his writings regarding Church liberties (though Nederman hints at it in his biography of John) and his efforts to impact Becket’s thinking and behavior.<sup>111</sup>

Bollermann and Nederman brush against the edges of John’s incentives and desires, but barely. They write that even following John’s full commitment in 1166 to Becket’s campaign, “He could

---

<sup>108</sup> Anne Duggan, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 435.

<sup>109</sup> Anne Duggan, “Classical Quotations and Allusions in the Correspondence of Thomas Becket: An Investigation of Their Sources,” *Viator* 32 (2001) 1-22.

<sup>110</sup> Anne Duggan, “Authorship and Authenticity in the Becket Correspondence,” in *Thomas Becket: Friends, Networks, Texts and Cult*, Part V, 40.

<sup>111</sup> Karen Bollermann and Cary J. Nederman, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 77.

not resist counseling a moderate course for the archbishop.”<sup>112</sup> They continue: “John, fearing his master’s propensity toward rash behavior, exhorted him to display virtuous moderation in his negotiations with his opponents.”<sup>113</sup> They leave open the door for fuller examination of John’s writings and their effect on Becket.

William Urry has also written about Becket, focusing principally on the end of his life. Considering the archbishop’s last days, Urry gives account of the role that both John and Herbert of Bosham played as Becket prepared to re-enter England. Urry includes the two of them as numbering among the *eruditi* Becket had assembled, acknowledging their competencies.<sup>114</sup> However, Urry’s writing is more a history written for mass consumption, better suited to his position as a former archivist at Canterbury Cathedral.<sup>115</sup> His references are notes and not footnotes, making it difficult to follow his precise sources. As with other scholars, researchers, and writers, there lacks description and analysis of the communication between John and Becket and of John’s continual, urgent desire to affect Becket’s behaviors and actions. Herein lies the lacuna that this research proposes to fill. The communication theories employed augment the historian’s scholarly instruments. The goal is to seek new perspectives that will add to the body of knowledge about the relationship between, as Duggan writes, “JS and TB.”<sup>116</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 77.

<sup>113</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 77.

<sup>114</sup> William Urry and Peter A. Rowe, *Thomas Becket: His Last Days* (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), 8.

<sup>115</sup> Judy Sopronyi, “Book Review: Thomas Becket: His Last Days,” Historynet, accessed December 17, 2020, <http://www.historynet.com/book-review-thomas-becket-his-last-days-by-william-urry-bh.htm>.

<sup>116</sup> See fn. 1405.

## CHAPTER 1 – ENGLAND IN THE TIME OF JOHN OF SALISBURY

The firm rule of King Henry I, son of William the Conqueror, began to dissipate following his death. Henry's son William had died in the White Ship disaster in 1120, leaving his daughter Matilda as his only legitimate heir. Numerous barons who had sworn to support Matilda as Henry's successor turned and instead gave allegiance to Stephen, her cousin and the son of a daughter of the Conqueror. The civil war that ensued affected much of England and made a deep impression on John of Salisbury. John dreaded a return to the Anarchy of Stephen's reign; at the same time he feared Henry's efforts to seize control of freedoms the Church had acquired during Stephen's regency. John's experience of this chaos colored much of his writings.

John of Salisbury is considered by scholars to be "one of the main figures of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance and a major contributor to the political debates that took place between 1150 and 1180."<sup>117</sup> By dint of education, experience, and energy, he was able to combine his responsibilities as ecclesiastical administrator and diplomat to create some of the most significant works of the mid-twelfth century. He was responsible for an important Church history in the *Historia Pontificalis*. Moreover, John presented pioneering philosophical and political thought in the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, and the *Policraticus*. His letters to Archbishop Becket when they were both in exile demonstrate his efforts to persuade Becket regarding deliberations with King Henry, and to support the archbishop's crusade for Church liberty.

---

<sup>117</sup> Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, "Introduction," *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 1.

Much of John's early life remains obscure. His birth occurred sometime between 1115 and 1120. His early schooling took place in Salisbury where there was an *archiscola* from 1078 to 1099. In 1139 there is a record of a *magister scholae*—Bishop Roger of Salisbury re-established grammar school education in the seat of the diocesan see. The experience with a teacher-priest who engaged in the occult (also known as scrying), and who was described as a necromancer, showed John that he had no talent for crystal-gazing. Indeed, he found it off-putting. John had little use for magic. He maintained that stance throughout his life.<sup>118</sup> John's affinity for Salisbury, and for Wiltshire, were strong. As to a name, John occasionally called himself as *parvum nomine*—making him “little” or “short” John.<sup>119</sup>

John's writings, especially the *Metalogicon*, offer an understanding of John of Salisbury's education, including his further studies with the *trivium* and the more advanced *quadrivium*. In 1136, John took up study in Paris, one of the leading centers of higher education in Western Europe at that time. At Mont-Ste. Geneviève, he was taught by Peter Abelard, whom he credited with his foundation in and knowledge of dialectic. John offered praise for Abelard in the *Metalogicon* and called him “the Peripatetic of the Pallet” (*Parepateticus Palatinus*), a title that had been ascribed to Aristotle.<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>118</sup> One source places John at Exeter and in school there before his departure for Paris in 1136, suggesting the family did decamp from Salisbury in the first years of Stephen's reign. See: Cary J. Nederman, *John of Salisbury* (Tempe: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 3.

<sup>119</sup> “*Sed quantum est hoc me totum, id est, hominem Paruum nomine, facultate minorum, minimum merito, vobis deberi profiteor?*” *J. of S. Letters*, ii, no. 212, 243.

<sup>120</sup> John wrote this admiration in *Metalogicon*: “I am amazed that the Peripatetic of Pallet so narrowly laid down the law for hypotheticals that he judged that only those should be accepted the consequent of which is included in the antecedent or with the consequent of which destroyed, the antecedent is also destroyed. Indeed, while he freely accepted *argumenta*, he rejected hypotheticals unless forced by the most manifest necessity.” Clearly, he was in awe of this follower of Aristotle. John of Salisbury, J. A. Giles, ed., *Metalogicus in Opera Omnia* (Oxford, 1848), 138. *N.B.* The appellation “Peripatetic of the Pallet” may also have been a play on words by John as Abelard was a native of the village of Le Pallet. Abelard was initially called Pierre Le Pallet

As he deepened his interest in the emerging texts of Aristotle, John found a connection between the teachings of Abelard and Aristotle. John also wrote with admiration about Gilbert de la Poirée, who taught with Abelard in Paris. Each, at one time, had been charged with heterodoxy by Bernard of Clairvaux. John describes Gilbert's trial in the *Historia Pontificalis*.<sup>121</sup> John also spent time as a student of Alberic of Reims and Robert of Melun, masters whom he found inferior to Abelard and Bernard of Clairvaux.<sup>122</sup>

Scholars dispute whether John of Salisbury studied at Chartres during his twelve years of study on the continent, or merely read from the writings of Bernard of Chartres, who had died before John might have arrived in Chartres. Bernard of Chartres, with a reputation as a humanist and philosopher, led the celebrated school at Chartres. He endeavored to reconcile the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato leading to Platonism and its holding that some objects are completely abstract. Thierry of Chartres, Bernard's brother, also taught there and was one of John's masters in Paris.<sup>123</sup> Earlier scholars of the last century place John there, studying with Richard L'Évêque, who later was anointed bishop of Avranches. Clement C. J. Webb held that John was a student in Chartres not only with Richard L'Évêque but also with Gilbert de la Poirée, later bishop of Poitiers.<sup>124</sup>

---

<sup>121</sup> John and Marjorie Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 15 ff.

<sup>122</sup> Robert was later consecrated Bishop of Hereford and supported Henry II in his dispute with Thomas Becket, effectively also standing in opposition to Becket. Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 7.

<sup>123</sup> "Bernard of Chartres, French philosopher," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed August 27, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Bernard-de-Chartres>.

<sup>124</sup> Clement C. J. Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 7.

Christopher Brooke is among those who question whether John actually studied at Chartres,<sup>125</sup> or whether there was a particular ‘school’ in that city.<sup>126</sup> Evidence is clear that there was a school at Chartres, founded by Bishop Fulbert after his episcopacy began there in 1006. The course of studies included the *trivium* and the *quadrivium* with some instruction in medicine.<sup>127</sup> The more current view of historians is that John was in Chartres and studied there under two of Bernard of Chartres’ students, one of whom was William of Conches, with whom John had lessons until 1141. John refers to Bernard as the foremost advocate of Plato of the time. Further, he quotes the scholar in the *Metalogicon*.<sup>128</sup>

Salisbury was not John’s only town of residence prior to leaving for studies in Paris, even though he was born there and carried the name of his birthplace. John’s birth coincided with the long episcopate of Roger of Salisbury (1101-1139). Some, possibly all, of John’s family moved to Exeter, a city southwest of the diocesan capital of Salisbury, in the 1140s or the 1150s.<sup>129</sup> No matter the precise date of the family’s relocation to Exeter, there is little question that John of Salisbury’s family had extensive and deep ties to the city.

One intriguing question is why members of John’s immediate family moved during Stephen’s reign from Salisbury to Exeter. Further, when did his parents—or at least his mother Gille—relocate nearly 100 miles from Salisbury? Exeter was at least a four-day ride from

---

<sup>125</sup> Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud point to the dispute as to whether John was a resident student in Chartres. Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, “Introduction,” in *A Companion of John of Salisbury*, 5.

<sup>126</sup> Christopher Brooke, “John of Salisbury and his World,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 6.

<sup>127</sup> Ralph McInerny, “The School of Chartres,” *A History of Western Philosophy* v. ii (The Jacques Maritain Center), accessed March 14, 2020, <https://maritain.nd.edu/jmc/etext/hwp212.htm>.

<sup>128</sup> “Non dico esse quod est, gemina quod parte coactum Materiae formam continet implicitam: /Sed dico esse quod est, una quod constat earum: / Hoc vocat Idem illud Acheus et hylen” (*Metal.*, IV; PL, 199, 938).

<sup>129</sup> Christopher Brooke speculated that John’s father may have been a married canon under Bishop Roger’s patronage. Brooke, “John of Salisbury and his World,” 3.

Salisbury on the fastest horse. John's half-brother Richard Peche, also known as *Peccator*, his mother's surname, is listed as a canon of Exeter in 1143, and may have arrived shortly after Robert of Chichester was consecrated Bishop of Exeter in 1138.<sup>130</sup> Another source has the family, including Gille, moving to Salisbury by 1148,<sup>131</sup> though there is evidence that the transplanting from Salisbury may have taken place a decade earlier. John experienced the dislocation and trauma that Stephen's anarchy caused his family to suffer. Gille died in Exeter, according to a letter that John wrote to Peter of Celle, abbot of Saint-Rémi, that contained news of his mother's long illness.<sup>132</sup>

An additional connection between Salisbury and Exeter was Robert Warelwast. Seated as bishop of Exeter, Robert Warelwast had been dean of the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary prior to its move from Sarum to the lower adjacent town of Salisbury in 1138. There can be little doubt that Bishop Robert knew John of Salisbury's family. John had been a student in the cathedral school, and his father is reported to have been a married canon at the cathedral while Roger was Bishop of Salisbury.<sup>133</sup> Bishop Robert Warelwast's move from Salisbury to Exeter occurred during the reign of Stephen, which had begun three years earlier in 1135.

By 1138, the Anglo-Norman state was moving to an unsettled condition. The rivalry between King Stephen and his cousin Matilda, which led to a period of turmoil and civil war usually referred to as "the Anarchy," was well under way. John of Salisbury's immediate family

---

<sup>130</sup> Frank Barlow, "John of Salisbury and His Brothers," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46, no. 1 (January 1995): 96, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022046900012562>.

<sup>131</sup> David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, May 19, 2011, <https://doi-org.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/10.1093/ref:odnb/14849>.

<sup>132</sup> "Festinanter inde ad matrem meam deflexi..." *John of Salisbury Letters*, ii, no. 304, 717. John's last visit to her was less than two weeks after Becket's murder in December 1170.

<sup>133</sup> Brooke, "John of Salisbury and his World," in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 3.



was also in transition. Gille (Egidia) had four sons and perhaps a daughter by two fathers.

Richard Peche (*Peccator*) was the eldest of her four sons by two husbands, and it is feasible that Peche was her own surname, for reasons that are unclear.<sup>134</sup> John and his full brother Richard were children of the second union while Richard Peche and Robert FitzGille were John's older half-brothers. The family's move to Exeter was permanent, placing them away from the civil war's earlier turmoil. The sons generally prospered in Exeter, holding cathedral prebends or local benefices. Bishop Robert of Exeter died before April 1161, by which time a Richard of Salisbury (perhaps the elder of Gille's Richards)<sup>135</sup> and Robert FitzGille are recorded as functioning in Exeter; Richard was one of Bishop Robert's clerks, possibly a canon along with brother Robert. Furthermore, John may have been a canon non-resident as early as 1160 while he was in the Canterbury household of Archbishop Theobald.<sup>136</sup>

The network of colleagues and friends John assembled during his twelve years as a student abroad, and later in his professional life, was remarkably widespread. As an example of John's substantial collection of enduring friends and colleagues, Gilbert de la Porrée remained a supporter of John throughout the latter's exile. During his time in Paris, John was surrounded by a coterie of fine scholars, several of whom were to rise through the ecclesiastical ranks. They included Peter Helias, Adam du Petit Pont (named for a place where he lectured and who later became bishop of St. Asaph), William of Soissons, Gilbert de la Porrée, Robert Pullen (who

---

<sup>134</sup> Perhaps her first son, Richard, was born out of wedlock. The records do not reveal the source of the name she bore.

<sup>135</sup> There is some confusion as to whether there was more than one Richard at Exeter, and apparently both were from Salisbury. Barlow suggests that 'Richard, Canon of Exeter' is properly John of Salisbury's brother. Barlow, "John of Salisbury and His Brothers," 98-103.

<sup>136</sup> David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury," Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, May 19, 2011, <https://doi-org.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/10.1093/ref:odnb/14849>.

attained the rank of cardinal), and Simon de Poissy.<sup>137</sup> At the same time, John's connections to Exeter, through his family and the town's cathedral, remained important. John's links with that city included Bartholomew, archdeacon at Exeter. Bartholomew had been in the court of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, when John was the ecclesiastic's secretary; they were acquainted with one another there as members of the archbishop's retinue. In a letter in 1161 to Bartholomew, John mentioned several men under the archdeacon's care, identifying members of his own family and offering words of peace.<sup>138</sup> John of Salisbury, a consummate correspondent, remained in contact with Bartholomew after the latter became archdeacon of Exeter. The reader is left to wonder if John is referring to two brothers at Exeter or three—was the Master also one of his brothers (Robert) or were only half-brother Richard *Peccator* and younger, full brother Richard in residence?

John was close to and arguably protective of young Richard—also designated 'of Salisbury.' Richard, the younger brother, had gone into exile with John in 1164 but left sometime in the second half of 1165 or the first half of 1166 and returned to Exeter, the town that had become the family's home base. Things did not go well for Richard in Exeter, however. Richard's dependence on his older brother Robert FitzGille wore thin, to the degree that he no longer had Robert's support; therefore, Richard returned to Reims and stayed with John for the remainder of the exile.<sup>139</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 8.

<sup>138</sup> In Letter 133, written in early 1161, he refers to his little brother, as well as to Peccator, and all who are the sons of peace: "Tu et filii pacis ad diem uocationis, sicut uobis praescriptum est, uenietis; ueniant autem cum ceteris aut prae ceteris magister B(aldesinus), filius Reinfridi, Peccator, fraterculus meus, et quicumque nostrorum sunt, immo Dei, prior quoque Plinton(iensis) et abbas Tauistoch(iensis), sit amen sapient pacem." The allusion is to a passage in 2 Corinthians 13:11. *John of Salisbury Letters*, i, no. 133, 244.

<sup>139</sup> Barlow, "John of Salisbury and His Brothers," 103.

Of the two older brothers, Robert FitzGille was better educated than Richard *Peccator*, and John wrote lovingly to him from exile in several letters in 1165 and 1166 that referenced their close kinship. In one letter, John discussed the medicinal plants Robert was cultivating in Exeter,<sup>140</sup> possibly for ministrations as a physician. During his life, Robert FitzGille, who succeeded Bartholomew as archdeacon of Exeter, attained substantial wealth, sufficient to be a benefactor of Plympton Priory, and to foster involvement with the Hospital of St. John the Baptist in Exeter. In his will, Robert left a well-stocked library to the Plympton Priory, including a copy of Gratian's *Decretum*, suggesting Robert maintained a wide range of interests and information.<sup>141</sup> The record of John of Salisbury's eldest brother, Richard *Peccator*, reveals less; after witnessing a charter of Bishop Bartholomew of Exeter in 1168, there is nothing more.<sup>142</sup> It is noteworthy that while John wrote to brothers Robert FitzGille and Richard of Salisbury, no letters to Richard *Peccator* survive, suggesting that John was not close to him.

### *Henry I and the Concern about Succession*

Establishing a productive and profitable realm was a significant challenge in England from 1066 onward. Henry I was determined to have a legitimate son succeed him as ruler to avoid conflicts among potential claimants, and to maintain the realm intact. A direct heir would preserve the Anglo-Norman state and escape a potentially crippling dispute among contenders for the throne. All did not follow Henry's plan, however. On November 25, 1120, the White

---

<sup>140</sup> Of the plants, Robert wrote, "quae species rerum continent perutile ad omnem medicinam." *John of Salisbury Letters*, ii, no. 147, 42.

<sup>141</sup> Barlow, "John of Salisbury and His Brothers," 100.

<sup>142</sup> Barlow, "John of Salisbury and His Brothers," 98.

Ship, bearing Henry's only legitimate son, William, was on a voyage from Normandy to England. It struck submerged rocks off the Norman coast near the town of Barfleur. The ship foundered and sank, killing nearly all on board, including William, along with two of Henry's illegitimate children. A substantial number of notables were among the approximately three hundred who perished.<sup>143</sup> The ship, amply supplied with wine, was effectively a party boat, sailing late season at night under a thin moon but navigating by the Pole Star. Suspicion nevertheless remains as to whether or not the sinking was truly accidental, or the result of sabotage.<sup>144</sup>

No matter the cause of the sinking, it was a serious blow to Henry's hope for a stable succession. His remaining legitimate child, Matilda, was married at the time of the disaster to Henry V of Germany, the Holy Roman Emperor. The death of Henry V in 1125 opened the path for an unwilling Matilda to succeed her father. Notwithstanding her desire to remain in Germany, she returned to England in September 1126, escorted by her father. Matilda's accession to the throne would be problematic given her gender. However, Henry was determined to have a legitimate successor rather than one of the numerous children by his mistresses. He also claimed a better lineage for daughter Matilda. She was his direct descendent; Stephen was his nephew. Henry moved swiftly to address the question of

---

<sup>143</sup> "The Wreck of the White Ship," *Encyclopædia Britannica online*, accessed March 14, 2002, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190224173818/http://www.britannia.com/history/bb1120.html>. Orderic Vitalis reports that the only survivor was a butcher, who clung to a rock and was finally rescued. He was on board the ship to collect money owed to him. Marjorie Chibnall, ed. and trans., *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, 298–299.

<sup>144</sup> By one description, the foundering was the result of several factors. "Much has been made of the crew's drunken state but what really counts is not the state the oarsmen or sailors were in but the capacity of the pilot on the helm and above all FitzStephen the master. At the beginning of the 12th century the stern rudder had not evolved and a side rudder would have been used to steer the ship...The quietness of the night and the calm water would have made it much more difficult to see where an underwater rock was situated." Tony Brett-Jones, "The White Ship Disaster," *London 64* (Winter 1999): 23. See also: Peter Konieczny, "Was the White Ship Disaster a Mass Murder," *Medievalists.net*, <https://www.medievalists.net/2013/05/was-the-white-ship-disaster-mass-murder/> Accessed March 12, 2020.

succession by invoking the assistance of Bishop Roger of Salisbury, a cleric who had served Henry in a variety of capacities.

At the Feast of the Circumcision in London on January 1, 1127, the bishop administered an oath to the barons who were present, carefully explaining to them that they were to support Matilda on Henry's death. Despite apparent reluctance on the part of some, all swore to support Matilda's right to the throne. William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, William of Newburgh, and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* ('E') all report the event, with varying details. For the year 1127, the last reads: "Henry held his court at Christmas in Windsor; There was the Scottish king David, and all the chief men, clerical and lay, that were in England. There he made archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls and all the thanes who were there swear that into his daughter of Athelric's hands – she who was formerly the wife of the emperor of Germany – should come into England and Normandy after his days."<sup>145</sup>

Matilda's subsequent marriage to Geoffrey Plantagenet of Anjou caused some of the magnates to renege on their oaths, refusing to support a marriage with an enemy of their Norman estates. In the wake of Matilda's marriage to Geoffrey and the barons' oaths to support Matilda's right to the crown, Bishop Roger attempted to calm the waters with two missions to Normandy, but by 1130 it was clear that the hostility to Geoffrey and the Angevins had not ceased.<sup>146</sup>

Henry's death in 1135 directly led to conflict between Stephen and Matilda. On news of Henry's death, Bishop Roger went quickly to Winchester, the center of the Henrician

---

<sup>145</sup> Savage, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, 260.

<sup>146</sup> Edward J. Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury, Viceroy of England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 148-151.

government, and took hold of the treasury, assuring royal funds for the next monarch— whoever prevailed. Both Stephen and Matilda were in Normandy when Henry died, but Stephen sped to England and Winchester while Matilda, according to William of Malmesbury, delayed, instead directing her energy at occupying Norman castles. Stephen was well-received on his brief visit to London en route to Winchester, where he was hastily crowned. With Stephen in control of the treasury and the country, Bishop Roger worked to solidify the new king's position, in so doing violating his own oath to support Matilda. It was an action he justified because Henry had married off his daughter to a foreigner without consulting him or other counselors.<sup>147</sup>

Bishop Roger and fellow clerics supported Stephen as king, in some measure out of their hopes that he would uphold the rights and liberties of the Church. To further such aspirations, Archbishop William demanded that Stephen affirm that ecclesiastical liberty. Stephen's brother, Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester, worked to press the claim of Church liberty. Stephen owed much, including his rule, to the Church, and the bishops were able to persuade Pope Innocent II of his entitlement to the throne, in contravention of Matilda's claim. In *Historica Pontificalis*, John of Salisbury reported that the pope acknowledged Stephen's kingship and urged him to institute good government.<sup>148</sup>

The early years of Stephen's tenure as king of England and Normandy were punctuated by battles and skirmishes with Matilda's troops and backers, and more particularly with sieges of castles and, in some instances, fortified towns. Bishop Roger continued in his administrative

---

<sup>147</sup> Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury*, 155.

<sup>148</sup> John of Salisbury, "Memoirs," in *Historia Pontificalis*, 84.

duties at court, along with his nephews, bishops Alexander of Lincoln and Nigel of Ely, and his putative son Roger, who functioned as Stephen's chancellor.

Roger of Salisbury (c. 1065-1139), originally from Caen in Normandy, was a masterful administrator who filled a broad set of roles for the king, and later was in the employ of Stephen for more than four years. His arrest in June 1139 led to his downfall, imprisonment, and death later that year. Bishop Roger's connections to the reign of Stephen, the civil war, and the family of John of Salisbury are significant. They offer insights relating to the family's rise, move to Exeter, and John's distrust of royal motives that led to the writing of his three major works. Bishop Roger's genius for administration led Henry to engage him as chaplain, chancellor, treasurer, creator of the exchequer system, chief royal justiciar, Bishop of Salisbury, and regent. Although Bishop Roger's brilliant reputation was overshadowed by his demise, his skills and service are nonetheless remembered as remarkable.<sup>149</sup> One can suggest that the well-ordered court and governance of Henry, which was organized in great part by Bishop Roger, was an influence on John's political and ethical position and his desire for good government. Henry's government certainly stood in contrast to the chaotic and unpredictable nature of Stephen's.

As with many able administrators in Henry's court, Roger came from western Normandy and reasonably humble beginnings. Henry was criticized by Orderic Vitalis for raising up lowly men to lofty positions; however, they served the king well.<sup>150</sup> Fifty years after the bishop's

---

<sup>149</sup> Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury*, 1.

<sup>150</sup> Orderic Vitalis observed in the *Historia Ecclesiastica* (1136-1137) that Henry I not only pulled down great men, but also raised up the lowly: "The king raised to high rank all these and many others of low birth whom it would be tedious to name individually, lifted them out of insignificance by his royal authority, set them on the summit of power, and made them formidable even to the greatest magnates of the kingdom." *Ecclesiastica Historia*, 6.17. See: H. F. Doherty, "Henry I's New Men," (2009) *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed August 27,

death, William of Newburgh traced Roger's life to what he called its "miserable end." William wrote that while Roger was a "poor parish priest" near Caen, he came to Henry's attention due to his ability to say mass quickly and on time.<sup>151</sup> The certification of Roger's selection as bishop of Salisbury is much more precise in underscoring his gifts that included good character, eloquence, learning, orthodoxy, and virtue.<sup>152</sup> Modern scholars see Roger as a sterling and able administrator for the manner in which he organized Henry's government. At the same time, he has been characterized as a schemer for his placement of nephews Alexander and Nigel in bishoprics and royal administration.

Bishop Roger's life and accomplishments as a court administrator would have been well-known to John of Salisbury and could well have influenced his views in *Policraticus*.

As bishop of Salisbury, elected in 1102 and consecrated in 1107, Roger presided over the Norman cathedral at Old Sarum, formerly a Roman town and, prior to that, an Iron Age hillfort dating to 400 BCE. It had military importance, overseeing the Salisbury Plain, and for centuries was a center of religious worship.<sup>153</sup> Despite its importance to the region, Sarum was a desolate and windy hilltop with little access to water. William of Malmesbury described it as "a fortress rather than a city, situated on a high hill and surrounded by a massive wall."<sup>154</sup> He goes on to

---

2020, <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-95593>.

<sup>151</sup> William of Newburgh, *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, ed. Hans Claude Hamilton (London: Londini, Sumptibus Societatis, 1856).

<sup>152</sup> Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury*, 4.

<sup>153</sup> The ancient worship site of Stonehenge is ten miles to the north of Sarum, where Christians first established a religious center and a cathedral.

<sup>154</sup> Wm. Of Malmesbury, *Hist. Novella*. (Rolls Ser. xc), 547: *Castellum Salesberiae, quod cum regii juris proprium esset, ab Henrico rege impetratum, muro custodiae attreixerat*. Cfr *Annales Wintoniae*, s.a. 1138 (*Ann. Mon.*, Rolls Ser. xxxvi, 51). British History Online, accessed January 2, 2021, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/rehme/salisbury/pp1-24>.



explain that Henry gave Bishop Roger responsibility for the castle in 1130. As bishop, he strengthened the courtyard house, maintained the castle, cathedral, keep, and fortifications.<sup>155</sup> From that fortified position, Roger, the second bishop of Salisbury, extended the diocese to encompass Wiltshire, Berkshire, and Dorset. The former episcopal cathedral in Sherborne, having lost out to Bishop Roger due to his powerful claim to property at Salisbury, lost its standing in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.<sup>156</sup>

The beneficiary of a sound education in Avranches, an intellectual magnet in Normandy, Bishop Roger understood the value of proper schooling. Not long after assuming the episcopacy, he dedicated energy to improving education in the diocese. He was instrumental in the establishment of monastic schools as well as a cathedral school that was overseen by a canon who served as master of the schools, an *archiscola*. These schools had endowments, books, and regular, paid teachers. Certainly, one of the pupils to benefit from Bishop Roger's attention to education was John of Salisbury, whose initial studies were at Sarum.

In the royal court, Bishop Roger's administrative responsibilities for Henry shifted in 1126 from his initial multiple roles to that of regent or viceroy during Henry's absences from England, most frequently in Normandy. Bishop Roger had demonstrated his acumen and had created an efficient and orderly government. At the same time, his attention to the diocese of Salisbury promoted growth and stability there. His methodical and evenhanded style of governance could have been a model of a well-run court for the young, observant John of

---

<sup>155</sup> "History of Old Sarum," English Heritage, accessed March 11, 2020, <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/old-sarum/history/>.

<sup>156</sup> Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury*, 87.

Salisbury. It was a measured contrast to the chaos he witnessed as Stephen pressed to grasp control of England and Normandy.

Until the middle of 1139, Roger of Salisbury and members of his family were effectively in charge of the kingdom.<sup>157</sup> Further, they held several strongholds in southwestern England. It is possible that they had been planning to change sides and align with Empress Matilda, which would have been a blow to Stephen's power and reign. However, arresting the bishops, as Stephen proceeded to do, in mid-1139 was beyond bounds. The consequences of this act were severe. First, Stephen deprived himself of significant administrative leadership, and second, he disaffected the Church, in contravention of his promises in the Oxford charter of liberties to respect Church authority.<sup>158</sup>

Even under Bishop Roger's experienced hand, Stephen made a number of mistakes during the early years of his rule, from 1135 to 1139. First, Stephen refused to accept the homage of Baldwin de Redvers, who initially supported Henry I's daughter Matilda. Baldwin switched loyalties when Matilda's half-brother Robert of Gloucester, who was her chief supporter and strategist, signaled that he might shift to Stephen's side. Baldwin proposed to alter allegiances if Stephen would acknowledge him as the lord of his lands (Devon and Isle of Wight). Stephen refused. Baldwin de Redvers, "castellan of Exeter," subsequently led a three-month siege of Exeter and Stephen's men held Exeter during the siege. Just as the city was about to concede to Baldwin because of starvation, Stephen's own forces inside the city let in

---

<sup>157</sup> B. R. Kemp, "Roger of Salisbury," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed September 16, 2020, <https://doi-org.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/10.1093/ref:odnb/23956>. For further information concerning Bishop Roger's administrative role in King Stephen's government, see: Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury*.

<sup>158</sup> H. A. Cronne, *The Reign of Stephen: 1135-1154* (London: Trinity Press, 1970), 38.

Baldwin's men. Thus, Stephen markedly lost,<sup>159</sup> officially caving and yielding to Baldwin, and to Robert of Gloucester. Interestingly, Stephen chose not to punish the traitors who had yielded to Baldwin. Instead, he let the forces march out of the castle with full honors and align with any lord they chose. Stephen notably refused to punish the traitors in spite of Bishop Henry's counsel to make an example of the radicals.<sup>160</sup> As at other times during his reign, Stephen's actions were inconsistent.

Second, Stephen took fifteen months to arrive in Normandy after Henry I's death, leaving the duchy in a somewhat chaotic state. Stephen ultimately received possession of the duchy from Louis VI, then worked to hold off Geoffrey of Anjou's invasion. Complicating allegiances, Norman barons were upset with Stephen's use of Flemish mercenaries, and fights broke out among Stephen's troops. Stephen was left having to spend time in Normandy, working to reconcile his various supporters.<sup>161</sup>

Finally, Stephen's brother, Henry of Blois, the bishop of Winchester, had substantially assisted Stephen in gaining the throne by guiding the Church's support in his direction. Bishop Henry aspired to be Archbishop of Canterbury, hoping to be rewarded with that position for helping to engineer his brother's accession. However, after a two-year vacancy, the post was filled by Theobald, abbot of Bec. The canonical election had been rigged to eliminate Henry from consideration, apparently with the King Stephen's assent.<sup>162</sup>

---

<sup>159</sup> R. H. C. Davis, *King Stephen – 1135-1154* (Essex: Longman Group UK, 1977), 22-23.

<sup>160</sup> Cronne, *The Reign of Stephen*, 33.

<sup>161</sup> Davis, *King Stephen*, 24-25.

<sup>162</sup> Davis, *King Stephen*, 26-27.

Bishop Roger of Salisbury, the man who had been Henry I's justiciar and effective viceroy stood in the way of Stephen's full control of government. He included members of his family, working along with Nigel, bishop of Ely, to create the chancery and the exchequer. Nigel was the treasurer, and a nephew of Bishop Roger who served the administration along with Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln. The family also maintained a series of castles at Devizes, Malmesbury, Sherborne, and Newark.

Despite the urging of some of the barons, Stephen was at pains to avoid baldly arresting the bishops to rid himself of the quartet of administrators: Bishop Roger, nephews Alexander and Nigel, and son Roger. Instead, Stephen or a close member of his court arranged for a staged fight in June 1139 at Oxford. A *mêlée* over lodgings that was purposefully started by a member of the Count of Brittany's entourage and involving Bishop Roger's men led to at least one fatality. Stephen then required the three bishops and his chancellor Roger to come to his court on the grounds of a breach of the king's peace.

Bishops Roger, Alexander, and Nigel, along with chancellor Roger, were hailed before the king in Oxford, and an ecclesiastical court was convened. Bishop Nigel, who had been lodged outside the walls of Oxford, fled to Devizes and prepared for a pending siege. Stephen launched the siege and threatened to hang Bishop Roger's putative son (also named Roger) outside the castle. Thus, all three bishops capitulated and relinquished their official roles as well as their holdings. The act delineated a hard boundary between secular and sacred functions. It affirmed a principle established by Archbishop Lanfranc in the trials of Odo of Bayeux and

William of St. Calais, bishop of Durham—that bishops would not be molested when acting as religious men. However, they could easily be deposed as government officials.<sup>163</sup>

The scholarly understanding is that the arrest of the bishops was a major error on the part of Stephen, even if they were suspected of plotting against the king. It created a vacuum in the functioning of Stephen's court and the country and put Stephen in direct opposition to the Church. To make matters worse, Stephen had arrested them in his own court, an unprecedented action. In so doing, the king damaged his administration and violated the terms of his own charter of 1136, which had permitted the Church authority over clerical justice. Moreover, he had made promises to the Church that he would defend its liberty, thus gaining the ecclesiastical leaders' support that had helped to make him king. Stephen's action also put his brother, Henry of Blois, the papal legate, in opposition to him, and it helped to create an opening for the Empress Matilda, who landed in England later that year.<sup>164</sup>

As a predicate to the arrests, the power held by Bishop Roger and his family in Stephen's curia had aroused anger and envy on the part of the barons. Led by Waleran, Count of Meulan and Earl of Worcester, the barons conspired to disrupt Bishop Roger and his family's power and to defeat their hold on Stephen. Their actions had the capacity to reduce the Church's strength,

---

<sup>163</sup> Davis, *King Stephen*, 28-30. For details about the Trial of Penenden Heath, see Alan Cooper, "Extraordinary Privilege: The Trial of Penenden Heath and the Domesday Inquest," *The English Historical Review* 116, no. 469 (Nov. 2001): 1167-1192. In the trial of Odo, the Bishop of Bayeux and the Earl of Kent, and William of Calais, Bishop of Durham, for rebellion against William II in 1088, Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, made a clear distinction. Lanfranc held that Odo was being tried as Earl of Kent, and therefore would not be judged under canon law. Henry Mayr-Harting, *Religion, Politics and Society in Britain 1066-1272* (London: Longman, 2011), 35. A half-brother of William the Conqueror, and thus a relative of William, Odo allegedly was planning to assume the throne on William's death. David Bates, "Odo, Earl of Kent," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed Sept. 21, 2020, <https://doi-org.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/10.1093/ref:odnb/20543>. William was reportedly reluctant to move against Bishop Odo, to which Lanfranc is said to have responded, "It is not the Bishop of Bayeux whom you will arrest, but the Earl of Kent." William Hunt, "Lanfranc," *Dictionary of National Biography*, 1885-1900, v. 32 (London: Smith, Elder & Co).

<sup>164</sup> Davis, *King Stephen*, 33.

and Bishop Roger was at the center of much of its power. The barons' overriding demand was that bishops adhere to religious duties and foreswear military roles. Bishop Roger, among other ecclesiastics, held castles and fortifications in disputed lands in the south and the east of England. The barons pressed Stephen to move against Bishop Roger and his family, suggesting that their loyalties were suspect. The pretext for arresting Bishop Roger, his nephews, and son was the fight over quartering in Oxford. The snare was set, and then triggered. Bishop Roger, having been summoned to Oxford by Stephen, was arrested in the royal chamber after the soldiers' deadly brawl; the king's men rushed in to seize him. Alexander was captured as he sought to flee, and Roger the younger was also taken into custody. Nigel had chosen to lodge outside the city, and hastily made for Devizes. Furious at Nigel's escape, Stephen wanted nothing less than the keys to the bishops' fortifications, dismissing offers of money as compensation for their role in the alleged breach of the king's peace. Thus, the barons' plot was sealed and executed. Devizes, which belonged to Bishop Roger, with Nigel ensconced there, was placed under siege. Meanwhile, Bishop Roger was imprisoned in a barn. The prelate was released almost immediately from his cow shed and taken some fifty miles—a several day's journey—to Devizes. The object was an appeal to Nigel to surrender and end the siege, but the bishop instead berated him for not fleeing to his own diocese. Nigel refused to yield. Stephen's rage continued, and he ordered the bishop's son Roger brought out in chains and placed in front of the walls of Devizes with a noose around his neck, ready to be hanged. Young Roger's mother, Matilda of Ramsbury, who held actual control of Devizes, yielded to save her son's life, and in quick order also relinquished control over Bishop Roger's other properties in Sherborne, Malmesbury, and Salisbury. Alexander was forced to travel to Lincoln and negotiate the

surrender of Newark and Sleaford as well. Bishop Roger, the powerful administrator, and his family were roundly defeated, and their holdings and their wealth surrendered.<sup>165</sup>

However, that was not the end of the matter. The trial of Bishop Roger that followed began on August 29, 1139. As a cleric, Bishop Roger faced an ecclesiastical council. The proceedings were led by Bishop Henry of Winchester, Stephen's brother. Bishop Henry was designated by Pope Innocent II as the papal legate in England immediately as the trial began. The role of legate was consolation for not being named archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop Henry took pains to criticize his brother for the arrests during the court in Oxford and further chastised him for seizing the wealth of the churches of Bishop Roger and the others. Still, Bishop Henry claimed that the proceedings would be even-handed, as reported by William of Malmesbury—this was despite the fact that Bishop Henry had received some of the property previously held by Bishop Roger. In addition to allegations that Bishop Roger was party to his soldiers' breach of the king's peace in Oxford, Aubrey de Vere<sup>166</sup> declared that the altercation at Oxford was not the first caused by Bishop Roger's men. Such mêlées by the cleric's men had often taken place at court.<sup>167</sup> The difference at Oxford, de Vere claimed, was that two lords had been injured in the affray. More serious was the charge of treason laid against Bishop Roger. De Vere proffered that Bishop Roger had hidden his support for Stephen's enemies while

---

<sup>165</sup> Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury*, 181-187.

<sup>166</sup> Aubrey de Vere III, Earl of Oxford, belonged to a family with roots in Ver, near Bayeux. His grandfather had followed William the Conqueror from Normandy. "Vere Family," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed August 28, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Vere-family>.

<sup>167</sup> For a discussion of behavior, including rape, at gatherings of the royal Anglo-Norman court, see C. Warren Hollister, "Courtly Culture and Courtly Style in the Anglo-Norman World," *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 1-17.

presenting to be in support of the king.<sup>168</sup> In an apparent ploy to defeat the ecclesiastical protection Bishop Roger claimed, de Vere charged that Roger was not arrested as a bishop, but rather as a “servant” of Stephen, making the act a secular and not an ecclesiastical one.

The charges, particularly that of being a servant, were a substantial affront to the proud Roger, who threatened to appeal to Rome. Through twists of canon and royal law, archbishop Hugh of Rouen, in a veiled argument, declared that under canon law, the arrested bishops were unjust holders of their castles and must therefore submit them to Stephen. If they were to continue possession of the properties (and their treasures), it was only through Stephen’s grace. Under a threat of excommunication, Stephen hastily decided to make his own appeal to Rome. The excommunication never took place, and neither Bishop Roger, the other defendants, nor King Stephen sent delegates to Rome.

The brief trial at Winchester ended on September 1, 1139.<sup>169</sup> Stephen unwisely sought to dispose of Bishop Roger and his relatives, who had been administrators for Henry I. As H. A. Cronne noted, “Things might have gone smoothly if the king had been able to retain their loyalty.”<sup>170</sup> Bishop Roger, with charges unproven, but dispossessed of his estates legally and physically, returned to Sarum. King Stephen, in a seeming effort to placate the Church, spent Christmas 1139 at Salisbury, with a promise that he would dispatch money for roof repair for the cathedral—most likely for the cloister that Bishop Roger had designed. The pledged amount

---

<sup>168</sup> For a detailed examination of Roger’s purported treachery see: Edward J. Kealy. *Roger of Salisbury: Viceroy of England*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2972.

<sup>169</sup> Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury*, 190-197.

<sup>170</sup> Cronne, *The Reign of Stephen*, 168.



of sixty marks never arrived. Two weeks after Christmas, Bishop Roger died, having risen high and then fallen swiftly.<sup>171</sup>

### *Stephen and the Record of his Reign*

Perhaps the most famous—though not the only—account of the reign of Stephen and his conflict with Matilda appears from the *Peterborough Chronicle*, the last version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and an important record of the period. The First Peterborough Continuation contains the years 1122-1131.<sup>172</sup> The *Peterborough Chronicle's* third section encompasses the period of King Stephen's reign, ending with Stephen's own death. Cecily Clark described the chronicle this way: "The total effect is of history written by topic, with social and ecclesiastical matters gathered under 1137 and military and political ones under 1140, rather than annals kept year by year."<sup>173</sup> The narrative includes graphic descriptions of Stephen's oppression of his enemies, seizure of their goods and castles, and their torture.<sup>174</sup>

There are several other records of Stephen's reign and the Anarchy. Arguably more complete in detail are William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, Richard of Hexham's *Historia de Gestis Regis Stephani*, Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*, and Orderic Vitalis' *Historia Ecclesiastica*.<sup>175</sup> Yet, none contain the depictions of the *Peterborough Chronicle's* misery that the civil war inflicted on the affected regions of England or the battle between cousins Stephen and Matilda for the rule of England. The details of the *Peterborough Chronicle*

---

<sup>171</sup> Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury*, 205-206.

<sup>172</sup> Cecily Clark, *The Peterborough Chronicle, 1170-1154* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), vii.

<sup>173</sup> Clark, *The Peterborough Chronicle*, xxvi.

<sup>174</sup> Savage, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, 265.

<sup>175</sup> Clark, *The Peterborough Chronicle*, xxxv.

include sieges and village burnings, forced labor to build castles, imprisonment, and torture.<sup>176</sup>

This work may be exaggerated, but it cannot be discounted. One can imagine that the effect of the civil war was substantial on John of Salisbury. John disdainfully alluded to Stephen's rule in the *Policraticus*.<sup>177</sup>

The assessment of the Anarchy during the reign of King Stephen has been revisited by scholars during the last century. Their analyses distinguish their research regarding the violence and lawlessness of Stephen's reign from assertions of prior historians and the authors of contemporary writings of the time including the *Peterborough Chronicle*. According to Thomas Callahan, Jr., "The traditional picture of anarchy in England during Stephen's reign is that the civil wars wreaked havoc with nearly all aspects of life and inflicted massive and long-lasting material damages. Medieval writers—most memorably the Peterborough chronicler—emotionally depicted scenes of terror and devastation, and the majority of later scholars—most notably H. W. C. Davis—upheld the basic validity of this picture."<sup>178</sup> During the past century, historians have somewhat modified the accepted perspective on the conflict. Whereas most medieval writers described an England embroiled in internal warfare for nearly all of Stephen's nineteen-year reign, modern scholars recognize that the area of active fighting was more limited and that actual warfare lasted less than half of Stephen's reign.<sup>179</sup>

---

<sup>176</sup> Hugh Candidus presented graphic details of torture in the *Peterborough Chronicles*: "One they hung by his feet and filled his lungs with smoke. One was hung up by the thumbs and another by the head and had coats of mail hung on his feet. One they put a knotted cord about his head and twisted it so that it went into the brains...I neither can nor may recount all the atrocities nor all the tortures that they did on the wretched men of this land." Savage, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, 265.

<sup>177</sup> The allusions to Stephen's disastrous government and the performance of courtiers in the royal court will be discussed in detail in the chapter on the *Policraticus*.

<sup>178</sup> Thomas Callahan, Jr., "The Impact of Anarchy on English Monasticism, 1135-1154," *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 6, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 218.

<sup>179</sup> Callahan, "The Impact of Anarchy on English Monasticism, 1135-1154," 218.

Callahan studied the impact of the civil war violence based on monastic records. Chroniclers were usually monks and their reports on the destruction to churches and monasteries were locally descriptive. As he noted, "In their writings most chroniclers of the day portrayed chaotic and destructive scenes as common occurrences but neglected to depict specific details of this violence."<sup>180</sup> The chroniclers were, however, more specific about monastic injuries.<sup>181</sup> Proximity promoted the more dramatic reporting of violence and injury suffered by monks and monasteries. Of the nearly five hundred monasteries in existence during Stephen's reign, Callahan estimates that less than ten percent showed evidence of sanctuary invasion or destruction. Still, some abbeys were completely destroyed, Hyde and Fountains Abbeys among them, while Ramsey and Malmesbury were sacked by opposing forces. Adding to the confusion over the extent of monastic damage are imprecise terms used in the chronicling such as "evils," "damages," or "excesses."<sup>182</sup> Moral outrage aside, Callahan suggested that the better perspective is that "evidence of widespread and severe damage is quite limited and seems to provide insufficient proof for claim that Stephen's reign was a time when destruction and slaughter were common occurrences throughout England."<sup>183</sup>

To be sure, all was not bleak during the reign of Stephen. In fact, Edward J. Kealey concluded that "few eras are ever totally dismal, however, and even in Stephen's reign scholars have discovered surprising highlights, particularly in the vitality of its art, monasticism, and

---

<sup>180</sup> Callahan, "The Impact of Anarchy on English Monasticism, 1135-1154," 218.

<sup>181</sup> Callahan, "The Impact of Anarchy on English Monasticism, 1135-1154," 219.

<sup>182</sup> Callahan, "The Impact of Anarchy on English Monasticism, 1135-1154," 221.

<sup>183</sup> Callahan, "The Impact of Anarchy on English Monasticism, 1135-1154," 222.

town life. Nevertheless, the traditional picture of royal weakness, baronial treason, and intermittent warfare still persists.”<sup>184</sup>

It is noteworthy that some houses continued to prosper during Stephen’s reign. In the entry for the year 1137, the *Peterborough Chronicle* portrays an abbey governed by Abbot Martin that held a commemoration feast and established a new monastery. This depiction came on the heels of the chronicle’s description of “all the horrors they [the authorities] did to the unhappy people in this land that lasted nineteen years while Stephen was king,” which included extortion on high taxes and protection money, plunder, torture, and the burning of towns. The mixture of experiences noted above included failed crops and sumptuous gatherings. Christ and his saints may have slept, but perhaps it was only a nap.

Nonetheless, the damage of the civil war was greatest at major houses rather than smaller monasteries, likely because they were located in the areas of England where the fighting and the sieges were most abundant.<sup>185</sup> C. Warren Hollister agreed that the position held by scholars at the turn of the last century regarding the level of violence during Stephen’s reign was worth revising. He wrote that the word “Anarchy” belongs in quotes. It was not a complete societal collapse. As H. W. C. Davis wrote in 1905, due to the “reign of rapine, cruelty, and wanton violence” of the period, the label of anarchy was an overstatement. The claims of disaster and destruction were, in his view, overblown. Admittedly, violence was committed by both sides during the civil war, but it was less a reign of terror or an anarchy than a fight to the bitter end for the throne. The exaggerations suspected by modern scholars, including Davis—

---

<sup>184</sup> Edward J. Kealey, “King Stephen: Government and Anarchy,” *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 6, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 202.

<sup>185</sup> Callahan, “The Impact of Anarchy on English Monasticism, 1135-1154,” 224-225.

who thought them possible but did not discount suspect depictions of the bloodshed and mayhem—have not been supported by closer research into the areas of fighting or the clearer descriptions of acts of violence.<sup>186</sup>

The revisionist perception of the extent of the Anarchy, or civil war, nevertheless does not diminish the suffering endured by those who were swept up in its path. That included John of Salisbury and his family, as John left for Paris the year after Stephen claimed the throne. The rumors of war, if not the war itself, prevailed in parts of England, including the swath from Bristol south beyond Salisbury,<sup>187</sup> and in the east surrounding Norwich. Even Exeter experienced a siege when Stephen took action against Baldwin de Redvers. A dedicated correspondent with close affection for several of the members of his family, John certainly must have known of the conflict between Stephen and Matilda and its impact. The armed confrontations, sieges of castles and walled cities, and the looting and burning of areas that were adjacent to them occurred in areas that were home to John's *gens nostra*. It was a period that must have conjured despair in him and must have encouraged him to write with concern, as boldly as he could, messages for both Thomas Becket and Henry II, Stephen's successor, warning them of the dire pitfalls of bad governance.

---

<sup>186</sup> C. Warren Hollister, "Stephen's Anarchy," *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 6, no.3, (Autumn 1974): 233-237.

<sup>187</sup> Oliver H. Creighton and Duncan W. Wright, *The Anarchy, War and Status in 12<sup>th</sup>-Century Landscapes of Conflict* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 38.

## CHAPTER 2 – JOHN OF SALISBURY: HIS LIFE

John of Salisbury was the beneficiary of one of the best educations available in the mid-twelfth century. Commencing with early studies in Sarum, the town of his birth, John likely received a basic grammar education under the tutelage of a priest who also dabbled in the magical art of crystal-gazing.<sup>188</sup> Young John was quite taken aback by the practice; he described the priest's actions in the *Policraticus*. The priest who had encouraged John and another student to attempt the practice later rejected his own efforts to prophesy and became either a canon or a monk (conflicting sources suggest both).<sup>189</sup> According to Cary Nederman, John may have continued his studies at the cathedral school in Exeter, which Nederman describes as "larger and more cosmopolitan than Old Sarum in its student body as well as its faculty."<sup>190</sup> In addition to studies in the *trivium*, young scholars at Exeter might also be given instruction in theology and canon law, subjects that John would not necessarily have received at Old Sarum.<sup>191</sup>

---

<sup>188</sup> The process involved gazing, or scrying, into pools of water, or at shiny metal objects, including mirrors or even swords, to make predictions. Those who engaged in the practice, of which John disapproved, were called *specularii*. John offers his arguments against such exercises. *Policraticus*, John of Salisbury, I, xii. The practice called "Iamia" was condemned both at a gathering convened by St. Patrick and St. Auxentius in 450 C.E. and by Thomas Aquinas as derived from the devil. During the Inquisition, scrying was judged to be heresy. See: Northcote W. Thomas, *Crystal Gazing* (New York: Dodge Publishing, 1905), 66-67. One source has suggested that John was actually apprenticed to the priest, with aspirations that John would be a competent necromancer. See: C. N. L. Brooke, ed., *The Letters of John of Salisbury* v. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), xiii.

<sup>189</sup> Cary Nederman also suggests that the priest engaged in darker arts and labelled some of these activities as "necromancy." Cary J. Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 4.

<sup>190</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 3.

<sup>191</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 3.

## *John's Education in France*

John of Salisbury's advanced education began in 1136, the year that he left England.<sup>192</sup> He began his studies at Mont-Ste.-Geneviève in Paris, where he encountered some of the most outstanding intellectuals of the mid-twelfth century. In *Metalogicon*, John detailed the quality of the teaching, including the proficiency and intellect of his masters. In an era when the bare outlines of universities—hosting competing philosophies—were emerging, John was not alone in offering narratives about the school in Paris, particularly in comparison to the School of Chartres.<sup>193</sup> The *Life of St. Goswin* presents an account of a debate between Goswin and Abelard, while Baudri of Bourgueil used poetry to praise methods and scholars there.<sup>194</sup>

Advanced instruction was undergoing a transformation in the mid-twelfth century, evolving from the monastic model into what became the beginnings of the university. As long as the studies were defined by, and limited to, the seven liberal arts, divided into the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*, monasteries and cathedral schools controlled the educational landscape.<sup>195</sup> But, new information and access to Greek and Latin pagan authors were beginning to alter the landscape.

---

<sup>192</sup> Clement C. J. Webb, an early twentieth century translator and biographer of John of Salisbury, suggested that John made the voyage to Paris sometime between Christmas 1135 and Christmas 1136. See Webb, *John of Salisbury* 5. More recent scholarship, including that of Cary Nederman, posits that John's arrival was actually in 1136. See Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 4.

<sup>193</sup> Bernard of Chartres died close in time, but before 1130, at least six years prior to John of Salisbury's arrival in Paris. Bernard's pedagogical method prescribed four elements directed toward the teaching of philosophy and virtue: reading, doctrine, meditation, and good works. As such, reading (*lectio*) is foundational to all. Ralph McInerny, "The School of Chartres," *A History of Western Philosophy* v. ii, The Jacques Maritain Center, accessed March 19, 2020, <https://maritain.nd.edu/jmc/etext/hwp212.htm>.

<sup>194</sup> Ian P. Wei, "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-Century Universities: The Disappearance of Biographical and Autobiographical Representations of Scholars," *Speculum* 86, no. 1 (January 2011): 42-43.

<sup>195</sup> Charles Homer Haskins, *The Rise of Universities* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1923), 4.

The influx of knowledge and the expansion of intellectual life was impelled by forces from the East, along with contributions from Arab scholars in Sicily and Spain.<sup>196</sup> The reclaiming of classical texts that had been lost to the West for centuries commenced nearly one hundred years before Peter Abelard's rise to fame as a leading scholar and teacher in Paris. Pierre Riché writes that around 1050, the West was beginning to undergo "des transformations politiques, sociales, économiques qui ont inévitablement une répercussion sur la culturelle."<sup>197</sup> The dynamic forces were poised to create those substantial cultural transformations that Riché cites, ones that the scholarly world could not avoid. Education was shifting from cloistered monasteries and cathedral closes to expanding cities. Instruction was no longer only for clergy, no longer solely Christ-centered and within the purview of the Church. In the sentiment of Peter of Celle, the *gymnasium* was where divine philosophy was taught and where God loved to walk.<sup>198</sup>

The move to an enlarged and richer base of knowledge began with schools that were not directly connected with traditional centers of teaching, notably in Paris. Cathedral schools were extending their boundaries and incorporating some of the recovered knowledge, separating themselves from monastic instruction that was limited and theologically grounded.

---

<sup>196</sup> Some of the introduction of new knowledge came through Italy and Sicily, though the work of Arab scholars in Spain was more dominant. Their translations included the writings of Aristotle as well as the scientific works of Ptolemy and Euclid, Hippocrates' *Aphorisms*, treatises of Roman law, and an Arabic mathematical system. See: Haskins, *The Rise of Universities*, 5. Friedrich Heer noted, "Although it was much else besides, the intellectual life developed in medieval Europe was a positive response to the broad stream of classical, Arab, Islamic and Jewish influences to which it was exposed, particularly in the south and north-west." Friedrich Heer, *The Medieval World 1100-1350* (London: Phoenix, 1998), 235. On cathedral schooling, Philip of Harvengt, a Praemonstratensian abbot, ecclesiastical writer, and theologian in the mid-twelfth century, depicted his education, classical learning, and friendships at the cathedral school of Cambrai in a letter to a friend years later. See: Jeremy duQuesnay Adams, "Clerical Schooling: Philip of Harvengt: *Thirteen Letters*," in *Patterns of Medieval Society*, ed. Jeremy duQuesnay Adams, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 116-117.

<sup>197</sup> Pierre Riché, "Jean de Salisbury et le Monde Scolaire du XIIe Siècle" in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 39.

<sup>198</sup> Pierre de Celle, ep IV, 12, quoted in Riché, "Jean de Salisbury," 40.



Paris, though the epicenter of transformation, was not singular. Cathedral schools in Chartres and Orleans were also innovators, integrating Latin and Greek classical works into lectures and striving to develop a “real spirit of humanism [that] showed itself in an enthusiastic study of ancient authors and in the production of Latin verse of a really remarkable quality.”<sup>199</sup> As the flood of retrieved writings continued to reach the West instruction was no longer solely the province of monasteries; other schools based at cathedrals were created. New cathedral schools were established in Liège, Reims, and Laon. Around 1130, the more flourishing schools could be found attached to cathedrals north of the Loire River in France, including the cities of Le Mans and Angers, located in regions controlled by Louis VI or neighboring counts.<sup>200</sup>

The school of Chartres, founded by Bishop Fulbert, was advanced further in reputation and reach by Bishop Ivo. It gained a prominence that rivaled Paris by the middle of the twelfth century, and its fame and the acclaim of its approach to philosophy and the classics were furthered by Bernard of Chartres, a devotee of Plato. John of Salisbury’s appreciation for Plato was due to some extent to the teachings of Bernard, whom he labelled *perfectissimus inter Platonicos nostri saeculi*.<sup>201</sup> According to John, Bernard also wrote three commentaries: *De*

---

<sup>199</sup> Haskins, *The Rise of Universities*, p. 29.

<sup>200</sup> Riché, “Jean de Salisbury,” 41.

<sup>201</sup> “Bernard of Chartres,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed March 30, 2020, [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911\\_Encyclop%C3%A6dia\\_Britannica/Bernard\\_of\\_Chartres](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911_Encyclop%C3%A6dia_Britannica/Bernard_of_Chartres). Bernard is credited by John of Salisbury with originating the phrase, “We are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see more than they, and things at a greater distance, not by virtue of any sharpness of sight on our part, or any physical distinction, but because we are carried high and raised up by their giant size.” John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon* (1159) bk. 3, Ch. 4. However, an earlier version of the quote can be found in a slightly different phrasing by first-century poet Lucan: “Pigmies placed on the shoulders of giants see more than the giants themselves.” Lucan’s quote from “Didacus Stella, lb, ll, 10,” in *Bartlett’s Familiar Quotations: A Collection of Passages, Phrases, and Proverbs Traced to Their Sources in Ancient and Modern Literature*, ed. John Bartlett and Justin Kaplan (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980), 118. It is curious that John attributes the metaphor to Bernard of Chartres rather than Lucan, for he was familiar with Lucan, though John’s quotes from Lucan are limited to the *Pharsalia*. John of Salisbury, W. J. Millor, Harold Edgeworth Butler, and Christopher Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 827.

*expositione Porphyrii* ("On the Interpretation of Porphyry," the 4th-century Neoplatonist logician); a verse form of the same tract; and a comparative study of Plato and Aristotle.<sup>202</sup> It is not absolutely established that John studied at Chartres, but it is certain that he learned from some of Bernard's disciples, notably Thierry of Chartres and Gilbert de la Porrée, also known as Gilbert of Poitiers, who later became bishop of that city.

While the educational center of Bologna revolved around the study of law<sup>203</sup> and preceded Paris by seven decades, Paris was evolving into a corporation for pedagogy that imitated guilds.<sup>204</sup> With a broader course of studies and lecturers of renown, Paris assumed a position of intellectual leadership.<sup>205</sup> Among its advantages was the city's preeminence as the capital of France, first under Louis VI and then his son Louis VII. Both kings were committed to ecclesiastical reforms in a desire to assert their own power; consequently, they supported intellectual activity in Paris as a means of enhancing their political influence.<sup>206</sup> With the aid of the Capetian rulers, Paris reigned as a supreme center of learning with an emphasis on theology, though canon law was taught as well, using Gratian's *Decretum* as the core text.<sup>207</sup>

A further allure of the school in Paris was the charismatic and brilliant Peter Abelard, sometimes called the Peripatetic of Le Pallet, a village southeast of Nantes. Students, including John of Salisbury, were drawn in throngs to this radical intellectual who had little regard for

---

<sup>202</sup> "Bernard de Chartres, French Philosopher," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed March 31, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Bernard-de-Chartres>.

<sup>203</sup> Haskins, *The Rise of Universities*, 6.

<sup>204</sup> Haskins writes, "A university in the sense of an organized body of masters existed already in the twelfth century." Haskins, *The Rise of Universities*, 16.

<sup>205</sup> Brian D. FitzGerald, "Medieval Theories of Education: Hugh of St Victor and John of Salisbury," *Oxford Review of Education* 36, no. 5 (2010): 575.

<sup>206</sup> Cédric Giraud and Constant Mews, "John of Salisbury and the Schools of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century," in *A companion to John of Salisbury*, 35.

<sup>207</sup> Haskins, *The Rise of Universities*, 37.

ecclesiastical authority. Though not alone in teaching outside the established centers of learning, Abelard was the most celebrated teacher and scholar of his time.<sup>208</sup> The list of John of Salisbury's teachers at Paris is impressive. In addition to Abelard, they included Gilbert de la Porrée, Adam du Petit Pont, William of Conches, Thierry of Chartres (brother of Bernard of Chartres), and others: an all-star lineup of mid-twelfth century masters. John also studied with Alberic of Reims, who had brought Abelard to trial in 1121 on allegations of heterodoxy,<sup>209</sup> and Robert of Melun (later bishop of Hereford), for whom John held in lower regard.<sup>210</sup> The pair were leaders of the Nominalist School that held less appeal for John. He had developed greater interest in universals.<sup>211</sup> Among his teachers, John held Abelard in the highest esteem. After all, Abelard was an established philosopher and theologian, between thirty-five and forty years older than John when the young Englishman arrived in Paris. John credited Abelard, an incomparable dialectician skilled in logic, with helping to develop a foundation in philosophy and with dialectic in particular. Abelard's impact on John was substantial even though he studied under Abelard only during his first year in Paris.<sup>212</sup> Ethics and virtue, learned from

---

<sup>208</sup> Haskins, *The Rise of Universities*, 14. Peter Abelard's life and career as a brilliant but contentious scholar and theologian is the source of much recent study. Constant J. Mews has created an extensive catalogue of contemporary biographies and commentaries. See: Constant J. Mews. "Peter Abelard," Oxford Bibliographies (2016), accessed Sept. 21, 2020, <https://www-oxfordbibliographies-com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/view/document/obo-9780195396584/obo-9780195396584-0208.xml>. For a detailed examination of Abelard and his school in Paris, see D. E. Luscombe, *The School of Peter Abelard: The Influence of Abelard's Thought in the Early Scholastic Period* (London: Cambridge, 1969). A more recent examination of Abelard's contributions is contained in Babette Hellemans' *Rethinking Abelard: a collection of critical essays*. (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014).

<sup>209</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 7.

<sup>210</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 5.

<sup>211</sup> August Charles Krey, "John of Salisbury's Knowledge of the Classics," (Bachelor's Thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1907), 2.

<sup>212</sup> Abelard left Paris in 1137. It was while teaching at Mont-Ste.-Geneviève that he drew the attention of Bernard of Clairvaux, which led to charges against Abelard. Peter King and Andrew Arlig, "Peter Abelard," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2018 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed Sept. 21, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/abelard/>; Nederman *John of Salisbury*, 5.

Abelard, were consequential to John's writings and life; philosophy was foundational to the *Policraticus*.

The canon of Abelard's works is vast, though sometimes difficult to date, in some measure because he frequently revised original writings. Arguably, Abelard was the most brilliant intellectual of the twelfth century, though he died in 1142, before it was halfway completed. During his life Aristotle's body of work was emerging in the West, embraced by some scholars including Abelard. In his scholarship, Abelard incorporated the retrieved texts as they were made available. Among the concepts Aristotle presented was that of *habitus*, a doctrine of virtue in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. Fundamentally, the 'habit'—or more precisely the 'state'—of moral concepts was at its core. As the word implies, *habitus* is the result of practice, so virtue is not merely a gift of goodness or rectitude; it required practice. Abelard expanded upon the concept of moral practice to include charity in various forms.<sup>213</sup> As Nederman noted, "Appeal to the doctrine of habitus reflected an embryonic confidence in the ability of men to become good (or evil) on their own and by themselves, without either direct divine guidance or unconscious natural impulse."<sup>214</sup> *Habitus* was an inspiring vision for scholars in the twelfth century, and one that John of Salisbury integrated into his own works.

Abelard's master discourses were in the realms of dialectics (specifically logic), ethics, and philosophical theology. Principal among the writings in the area of dialectics are two works: *Logica 'ingredientibus'* (an examination of classical approaches to logic) and *Dialectica*.<sup>215</sup> His

---

<sup>213</sup> Cary J. Nederman, "Nature, Ethics, and the Doctrine of 'Habitus': Aristotelian Moral Psychology in the Twelfth Century," *Traditio* 45 (1989-1990): 87.

<sup>214</sup> Nederman, "Nature, Ethics, and the Doctrine of 'Habitus,'" 89.

<sup>215</sup> King and Arlig, "Peter Abelard."

best-known text is in the category of theology, *Sic et Non*—a theological inquiry into 158 patristic questions with proposed responses. The responses are variable and sometimes situational. The body of the work does not present new theoretical approaches to theology, but instead strives to be practical.<sup>216</sup> The format of *Sic et Non* is reminiscent of Gratian's *Decretum*, written nearly two decades later. The difference is that the *Decretum* and its approach to canon law answered the questions and worked to harmonize the arguments, rather than leaving the matters unresolved.<sup>217</sup>

Cary Nederman speculates that Abelard's reputation as an outstanding teacher and scholar was the predominant reason that John sought to pursue advanced studies abroad.<sup>218</sup> However, John's desire to study in Paris was not limited to his learning from the gifted philosopher. What exactly did John of Salisbury study and learn from 1136 to 1147, during his years in Paris? From the *Metalogicon*, one gains an appreciation of the merits and the deficiencies of twelfth-century Parisian schools. Apparently enthralled by the charismatic and unconventional Abelard, John acquired knowledge of the primary elements of dialectic, knowledge he would later bring to bear in the *Metalogicon* and his mockery of the shallowness of the fictional Cornificians.<sup>219</sup> Following his own advice that a valuable education should expand to multiple subjects and a variety of teachers, John studied under no less than twelve masters, including Hardewin the German. From Hardewin he received instruction in the

---

<sup>216</sup> King and Arlig, "Peter Abelard."

<sup>217</sup> Peter Abelard, "Prologue to Sic et Non," Medieval Sourcebook, accessed March 19, 2020, <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/Abelard-SicetNon-Prologue.asp>.

<sup>218</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 5. Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud are of the same view that Abelard was the principal reason John chose Paris for his advanced studies. Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, "Introduction," 5.

<sup>219</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 5.

*quadrivium*, while from Thierry of Chartres he learned rhetoric. With exhausting effort, five years after he arrived, John advanced his studies of the seven liberal arts. In 1141, he was prepared to pursue more detailed work; he engaged Richard l'Évêque to round out his understanding of the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*. Next, John progressed to theology under Gilbert de la Porrée, whom John awarded the strongest praise of all his teachers. Gilbert stressed the importance of amalgamating knowledge into universals, and not allowing it to be atomized. John conceptualized universals as more than just words; however, he did not figure them to be entities unto themselves.<sup>220</sup> Gilbert also provided John with an understanding of metaphysical and epistemological doctrines, ideas that are embedded in John's later writings. When Alberic left for Bologna and Robert of Melun ceased teaching,<sup>221</sup> John decided to remain in Paris. His studies in theology continued first under Robert Pullen, and later under Simon of Poissy (whom he found to be obtuse).<sup>222</sup> Peter Helias, an outstanding grammarian from the school of Chartres, provided John additional instruction in rhetoric.<sup>223</sup> Not one to withhold criticism, John was of the view that both Robert of Melun and Alberic fell short for their failure to read the classics widely. Showing a brash youthfulness—he identified himself as

---

<sup>220</sup> Giraud and Mews, "John of Salisbury and the Schools of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century," 57.

<sup>221</sup> Grellard and Lachaud, "Introduction," 1.

<sup>222</sup> David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury," Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, accessed June 28, 2019, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-14849?rskey=ADiM15&result=4>. John's comments on his initial studies at Mont-Ste.-Geneviève are recorded in the *Metalogicon*, Book II, chap. 10. John, Daniel D. McGarry, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), 97. John uses an image drawn from Juvenal, *Satires*, 7.231, 232. John Barrie Hall and Julian Haseldine, *Metalogicon* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 199.

<sup>223</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 7-8. Peter Helias was a renowned grammarian in the mid twelfth century. He taught in Paris and in Chartres, where he had been a student of Thierry of Chartres. Helias was also the author of *Summa super Priscianum*, accessed August 31, 2020, [http://www.brepols.net/Pages/ShowProduct.aspx?prod\\_id=IS-9780888441133-1](http://www.brepols.net/Pages/ShowProduct.aspx?prod_id=IS-9780888441133-1).

*adulescens*—John congratulated himself for becoming as familiar with rhetoric as he was with his “own nails and fingers,” since he had delved deeply into dialectic.<sup>224</sup>

The friendships that John of Salisbury formed while a student in Paris were noteworthy, and, indeed, invaluable during his professional career and his exile from England in the years 1164-1170. These friends included Gerard Pucelle, Adam of Evesham, and Bartholomew of Exeter, who later became bishop of Exeter and a patron to two of John’s brothers. One of the students John instructed while in Paris was Peter of Celle. Peter became a monastic and rose through the ranks, eventually becoming abbot at Saint-Rémi in Reims. There, he sheltered John during much of his lengthy exile, lodging him and his brother Richard, and lending them support.<sup>225</sup> In 1159, writing about his time as a student and his early years in the court of the Archbishop of Canterbury, John wrote in the *Metalogicon*, “I passed about twelve years in varied studies.”<sup>226</sup> He completed his thoughts about time spent by further writing in the *Policraticus*, “now for about twelve years I have trifled my time away,” in a reference to his administrative work in Theobald’s court.<sup>227</sup>

As to the location where John received instruction, Olga Weijers has established a chronology and locations of his studies based on the *Metalogicon*. The instructional sites in Paris were Mont-Ste.-Geneviève and Petit Pont, at the entrance to the bridge linking the Île de

---

<sup>224</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

<sup>225</sup> Grellard and Lachaud, “Introduction,” 6.

<sup>226</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, ed. C. C. J. Webb (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1929), 82.

<sup>227</sup> John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, vol. I, ed. C. C. J. Webb (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1909), 14. John was in the service of Archbishop Theobald for twelve years, following what was apparently service for Eugenius III while at Reims. John’s early years in the employ of Theobald were mostly dedicated to missions requiring travel to the papal curia in Rome. Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.” However, Yoko Hirata maintains that John was in Theobald’s service as early as 1147 and that it was for Theobald that he served as a papal courier until assuming residence at Canterbury in 1154. Yoko Hirata, “John of Salisbury and His Correspondents: A Study of the Epistolary Relationships Between John of Salisbury and his Correspondents,” (PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, 1991), 155.

la Cité with the left bank of the River Seine. From 1136 through 1147, John remained in Paris for Weijers rejects Clement Webb's argument that he relocated to Chartres during part of that period. Nonetheless, John was under the influence of the school of Chartres.<sup>228</sup>

Interestingly, one area of study in which John apparently did not have formal instruction was the law, though during periods of his professional life he was required to function as a lawyer in his role as advisor to Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury. Knowledge of law was also a skill he drew upon as a member of Henry II's embassies to the papal *curia* in Rome. It is possible he acquired some knowledge of canon law from Master Vacarius, a jurist from Bologna who spent time at Canterbury, which had one of the best libraries in England. John may also have received some instruction from Bartholomew before he departed Canterbury to be archdeacon and later bishop of Exeter. Bartholomew had been a close friend and colleague of John's in the archbishop's court. Another suggestion is that he gathered his knowledge about Roman law from his reading of Martinus, a glossator and one of the Four Doctors of Bologna.<sup>229</sup> Though he is not recognized as adept at law—more of a functionary—John's skills as both a rhetorician and a dialectician ably served him and his masters.<sup>230</sup>

While they were not particularly wealthy, John of Salisbury's family was reasonably well connected in Salisbury (actually in Old Sarum nearby) and Exeter. John wrote in the *Metalogicon* that he was reduced to teaching the sons of nobility to support himself and to

---

<sup>228</sup> Olga Weijers, "The Chronology of John of Salisbury's Studies in France (*Metalogicon* !!, 10)," in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 109-110.

<sup>229</sup> C. N. L. Brooke, ed., *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, v. I xxiii.

<sup>230</sup> Christopher Brooke, "John of Salisbury and His World," in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 9. Nederman suggests that John evinced a fair knowledge of not only Gratian's *Decretum* but also the *Corpus Juris Civilis* in his function as Theobald's secretary. Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 14.



continue his own studies while in Paris.<sup>231</sup> It was not a worthless experience, however, for his teaching required him to review all that he had learned in order to instruct the sons of aristocrats. John was not alone in his position of a ‘poor student.’ As with many young scholars of his time, he had financial difficulties, finding it hard to pay the masters and to provide for his own food, housing, and access to books. He was left to fend for himself as he received nothing from his parents or friends.<sup>232</sup>

As schooling moved away from monasteries, there were concerns among Church authorities about supervision of the curriculum. The tug-of-war addressing theological orthodoxy between the ecclesiastical authorities and the more radical scholars was played out in a variety of ways in Paris. The masters and their students were prone to cluster around religious buildings, including the cloister of Notre Dame, where the plans for a cathedral on the Île de la Cité was beginning to take shape.<sup>233</sup> In an effort to establish control over the instruction, the resident bishop forbade teaching in an area of the cloister, and prohibited students from residing in canons’ lodges, ostensibly to maintain quiet in the cloisters and to turn away boisterous students. To keep the scholars and their charges from roaming too far though, a compromise was to permit instruction close to a bridge linking the Île de la Cité with the south (left) bank of the Seine.<sup>234</sup> Pierre Riché noted, “It was there, among the orchards and the vineyards, the chapels and the taverns that the masters situated themselves, desiring to

---

<sup>231</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 3.

<sup>232</sup> Riché, “Jean de Salisbury,” 45.

<sup>233</sup> Notre-Dame was built on a space previously occupied by two basilicas. Maurice de Sully, Bishop of Paris, developed the concept. Pope Alexander III set the cornerstone in 1163. Amy Tikkanen, “Notre-Dame de Paris,” Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed August 31, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Notre-Dame-de-Paris..>

<sup>234</sup> Giraud and Mews, “John of Salisbury and the Schools of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century,” 36.

escape the control of the bishop of Paris.”<sup>235</sup> Adam du Petit Pont was so named because he lectured at the foot of the bridge nearest to the west end of what would become the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, situated on the former location of the bishop’s palace. An Anglo-Norman born near Cambridge, Adam was one of John’s more admired instructors. Well read, he had studied under Peter Lombard and Mathieu d’Angers.<sup>236</sup> Another site of learning was Mont-Ste.-Geneviève on a hill south of the River Seine. John took instruction there as well.

The emergence of schools and the evolution from monastic and early cathedral educational *loci* presented challenges for Church teachings as evidenced by the actions of the bishop of Paris. The scholars who populated schools in Paris, for example, operated somewhat independently of the Church. As such, they were vulnerable to attacks that alleged heterodoxy, demonstrated by charges brought against Peter Abelard and Gilbert de la Porrée by Bernard of Clairvaux and William of St.-Thierry.<sup>237</sup> The lecturer-scholars in Paris also wrote about their lives autobiographically as a means of marketing<sup>238</sup>—effectively branding themselves and promoting their approaches to a recovered classical knowledge emanating from Greek and Arabic sources. The introduction of classic texts and the expansion of instruction beyond the seven liberal arts fueled the monastic critique of the emerging schools. The theological purists were led by Bernard of Clairvaux, accompanied by William of St.-Thierry. They were chief among the ideological opponents of Abelard and Gilbert de la Porrée. In the opponents’ orthodox view, the only path to truth was rejection of the material world combined with a

---

<sup>235</sup> “Toujours sur la rive gauche... parmi les vergers et les vignes, les chapelles et les tavernes, se sont installés des maîtres désireux d’échapper au contrôle de l’évêque de Paris.” Pierre Riché, “Jean de Salisbury,” 43.

<sup>236</sup> “Adam du Petit Pont,” accessed August 31, 2020, <https://www.biblicalcyclopedia.com/A/adam-du-petit-pont.html>.

<sup>237</sup> Wei, “From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth Century Universities,” 50.

<sup>238</sup> Wei, “From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth Century Universities,” 43.

virtuous life. From their perspective, the schools' instruction clearly did not lead to that level of understanding. A likelihood is that there was a certain degree of envy in the monastic critique—some of the best and most able students gravitated to the masters teaching outside the ambit of ecclesiastical authority.<sup>239</sup> A further concern was the changing nature of the student as scholar. Unattached to a monastery, or even a cathedral school, they constituted a roaming set of young men who could succumb to the temptation of heterodoxy and become vectors for theologically erroneous tenets. Travel merely for the sake of study placed the student beyond the absolute bounds of the Church and was not acceptable. A wandering set of young men not directly under the Church's supervision posed a threat to the existing order.<sup>240</sup>

That John of Salisbury chose to continue his post-grammarians studies in Paris, and specifically with Peter Abelard, underscores the monumental shift in advanced education that was taking place on the Continent. The increasing availability of ancient and classic texts and the growth of urban centers created excitement for those seeking to learn, as much as it was worrisome for the Church's absolute control over instruction.

### *John's Experience of Education and the Metalogicon*

Much of the *Metalogicon* is devoted to the educational transformations of which John was both an observer and a participant. His sophisticated dissection of pedagogy and the content of the curriculum forms a critique of the schools and the masters. Proceeding from his dozen years' experience as a student and a tutor to the children of wealthy patrons, John

---

<sup>239</sup> Wei, "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth Century Universities," 50-51.

<sup>240</sup> Giraud and Mews, "John of Salisbury and the Schools of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century," 34.

developed views regarding what should be taught, how it should be taught, and who should teach it. For example, he believed that a sound education should be composed of multiple subjects from a range of masters. John employed his experience to fashion a theory of education that grasped the changes that were transpiring.

John of Salisbury had a fellow commentator on education in Hugh of St. Victor. Each was drawn to Paris for education. Hugh arrived sometime in the 1110s, at least fifteen years prior to John. Unlike John, Hugh was an Augustinian canon, who rose to be the master of the school at the Abbey of St. Victor in Paris around the year 1133. Hugh presented his theory of education in the *Didascalicon*, an instruction on how to read and absorb material. He asserted that advancement of knowledge was predicated on reading and meditation, and that reading meant both understanding and learning. Further, its components comprised, in this order, knowing what to read, the sequence in which to read, and how to read. Hugh's overarching consideration was that all knowledge should be unified, and that there was a propinquity between liberal arts and knowledge of the divine. Hugh believed that the quest for wisdom should be a supreme earthly goal. Attainment of such led to the ultimate wisdom, which was Christ.<sup>241</sup>

As distinguished from Hugh's *Didascalicon*, the *Metalogicon* is centered on the primary elements of teaching, and principally on logic. John created Cornificius, an avatar or strawman, as a means of criticizing what he perceived as a current trend in education—that the liberal arts, notably the *trivium*, should not be taught because reason and eloquence are gifts that lie outside of instruction. In Book I, John held a position diametrically opposite to his fictional

---

<sup>241</sup> FitzGerald, "Medieval Theories of Education," 576.

Cornificius: talent and instruction are mutually consequential and should be treated as such.<sup>242</sup>

Where Hugh's aim was the attainment of wisdom, John asserted that human happiness or blessedness (*beatitudo*) was the primary goal of existence. It is a theme that he explored in detail in the *Metalogicon* and in the *Policraticus*.

As John was concluding his dozen years of study in France, a chance meeting at a critical event turned his face back to England. The controversial teachings of Peter Abelard and Gilbert de la Porrée, bishop of Poitiers—both of whom John thought highly—raised concerns among orthodox churchmen including Bernard of Clairvaux. The result was a trial in 1148 in Reims, coinciding with a council convened by Eugenius III. During the council, charges of heterodoxy were levelled against the two scholars. At the meeting in Reims, Gilbert and Bernard debated the question of the essence of God and the Trinity, a matter Gilbert had addressed in *Commentaria in Boethii opuscula sacra*, and also *De Trinitate*.<sup>243</sup> John was present at the sessions, and later wrote about it in both the *Historia Pontificalis* and the *Policraticus*.<sup>244</sup> It is likely that John attended at the behest of Peter of Celle, his former student. John may well have been in search of employment, as by this time his studies were complete. Wisely, John withheld any harsh commentary on Bernard of Clairvaux. Instead, he praised Gilbert, whom he considered to be one of the most learned men of his time. At the Reims Council, John had the opportunity to meet Bernard (possibly through the good offices of Robert Pullen, a former master to John and a favorite of Bernard)<sup>245</sup> and he received a perfunctory letter of

---

<sup>242</sup> FitzGerald, "Medieval Theories of Education," 580.

<sup>243</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 8.

<sup>244</sup> Sister M. Anthony Brown, "John of Salisbury," *Franciscan Studies* 19, no. 3/4 (September-December 1959): 246. See also: Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 8.

<sup>245</sup> Brooke, "John of Salisbury and His World," 8.

introduction from him directed to Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury. In it, Bernard called John a “friend of my friends” as well as “my friend” with “a good reputation among good men.”<sup>246</sup> It was the only communication ever between Bernard and Theobald. The council at Reims marked the only time that the two church leaders met.<sup>247</sup> The letter of reference, though somewhat moderate, worked. Before the end of 1148, John was part of Theobald’s curia, which included a significant cast of future leaders including Thomas Becket, Gilbert Foliot, and John of Canterbury, all destined for episcopacy.<sup>248</sup>

### *Theobald of Bec as Archbishop of Canterbury*

Theobald of Bec was a rather unlikely choice as archbishop of Canterbury, due to politics. He was a Norman who, like his predecessors Lanfranc and Anselm, had served as prior and abbot of the Abbey of Bec,<sup>249</sup> a Benedictine abbey also known as Bec-Hellouin, before being named archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>250</sup> Theobald was nearly fifty years old when King Stephen engineered Theobald’s election with the approval of the papal legate and the pope in an effort to suppress the ambitions of his younger brother, Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester. Out of a desire to claim its rents for the Crown, Stephen had kept the archbishopric

---

<sup>246</sup> Quoted from Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, trans, Bruno S. James (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953), 459 in Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 13. Archbishop Theobald had been inhibited from leaving England by the king but managed to travel under cover. It is unknown if they talked about John of Salisbury’s council in Reims. A letter of support from Bernard to Theobald on John’s behalf would certainly be reasonable.

<sup>247</sup> John of Salisbury, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, xv.

<sup>248</sup> Grellard and Lachaud, “Introduction,” 7.

<sup>249</sup> “Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury,” Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed August 31, 2020, <https://www.brittanica.com/biography/Theobald>. Theobald entered Bec Abbey and became prior around 1127 and abbot in 1136. Anselm was elected prior of Bec in 1063. Maxwell Charlesworth, “Introduction,” in *St. Anselm’s Proslogion with A Reply on Behalf of the Foot by Gaunilo and the Author’s Reply to Gaunilo* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 10.

<sup>250</sup> C. H.D. Grimes, “The Abbey of Bec,” *History* 14, no. 53 (April 1929): 55.

vacant for two years.<sup>251</sup> Installing Theobald in the episcopal cathedral was a substantial blow to Henry. He had campaigned for the Church's support for his brother Stephen's right to the throne over Matilda, his cousin. Henry's deprivation of the pallium understandably worked to undermine ecclesiastical backing for Stephen during the conflict for the crown.<sup>252</sup>

That Theobald was well-educated is acknowledged, but sources are not clear as to where he received his training. He is not listed as having pursued a scholarly course at Bec prior to his entry as a monastic.<sup>253</sup> Avrom Saltman proposes that Theobald may have used his time to study while at Bec Abbey, particularly given the extensive library located there.<sup>254</sup> Theobald assumed the archiepiscopal throne in 1138 during a difficult time in England. The Anarchy of King Stephen and the arrest of Roger, bishop of Salisbury, had strained relations between the Church and the Crown. The appointment as papal legate for Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester, who had lost Canterbury to Theobald complicated matters even further. Twice, Theobald was forced into exile as he fended off both Stephen and the rearguard action from Henry. Theobald was a skilled administrator though not an illustrious spiritual leader,<sup>255</sup> and certainly not charismatic like Bishop Henry. Nonetheless, Theobald's steady hand was effective

---

<sup>251</sup> Frank Barlow, "Theobald," Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, January 2010, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-27168?rskey=zTKp16&result=1/>.

<sup>252</sup> R. H. C. Davis, *King Stephen – 1135-1154* (Essex: Longman Group, 1977), 26-27.

<sup>253</sup> Barlow, "Theobald."

<sup>254</sup> Among the books in Bec's library were numerous legal texts: *Decreta Pontificum*, *Canones*, *Excerpta Decretorum*, *Corpus Canonum*, *Collectiones Burcardi*, *Wormatiensis Episcopi*, and *Abbreviatio Totius Corporis Canonum*. Theological treatises written by Tertullian, Jerome, Origen, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory, Isidore, Bede, Alcuin Rabanus Maurus, and Anselm were also available. Writings from classical authors Macrobius, Martianus, Capella, Cicero, Ovid, Seneca, Suetonius and Quintilian were in the library, in addition to historical works by Josephus and Orosius. Avrom Saltman, *Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: University of London, Athlone Press, 1956), 7.

<sup>255</sup> "Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury," Encyclopædia Britannica.

in brokering a peaceful transition from Stephen to Henry II prior to Stephen's death in October 1154.<sup>256</sup>

As archbishop, Theobald populated his court with an excellent array of talent that included Thomas Becket and later John of Salisbury. Before the Norman conquest, Canterbury had established a reputation as a vibrant intellectual community, one that was sometimes embroiled in controversy, and not necessarily averse to it.<sup>257</sup> Theobald, as archbishop and leader of the curia at Canterbury was able to continue the tradition and draw skilled clerics and strong talent, not only from England but the continent too.<sup>258</sup> It is not surprising that John, seeking to return to England after twelve years abroad, was pleased to receive a recommendation from Bernard of Clairvaux that gave him entrance to the esteemed company.<sup>259</sup> Though not glowing, the famed abbot was generally complimentary of John in his letter, given that he was essentially prompted by Peter of Celle, John's friend, to write it.<sup>260</sup>

There is little question that Theobald had a keen eye for talent. The archbishop's household generated a number of ecclesiastical leaders, including four archbishops and seven bishops. Among the celebrated churchmen who spent time in Theobald's household were

---

<sup>256</sup> Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, xxvii.

<sup>257</sup> Klaus Guth, "Hochmittelalterlicher Humanismus als Lebensform: ein Beitrag zum Standesethos des westeuropäischen Weltklerus nach Johannes von Salisbury," in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 70.

<sup>258</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 14.

<sup>259</sup> In the small world of the twelfth century upper class, it is not surprising to consider that Thomas Becket and Theobald had possibly friendship and even familial connections. Both families hailed from the same region of Normandy, and it is conceivable that Theobald was a distant relative of Gilbert Becket, Thomas' father. Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 23.

<sup>260</sup> 'Ego tamen ab homine gloriam non quaero, sed *regnum Dei et iustitiam eius*. Unde factum est, ut praesentium latorem Ioannem, amicum meum et amicum meorum, mittam ad sublimitatem vestram, ad liberalitatem vestram, quam in vobis et de vobis habere praesumo. Testimonium enim bonum habet a bonis, quod non minus vita quam literature promeruit.' From Bernard's *Epistula*, quoted by Maria Lodovica Arduini, "Contributo alla Ricostruzione Biografica di Giovanni di Salisbury," *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica* 90, No. 1/2 (January - June 1998): 198. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43063381> Accessed April 4, 2020



Roger of Pont l'Évêque, who became archbishop of York; Gilbert Foliot, bishop of Hereford and later London; John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers; Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter; Arnulf, bishop of Lisieux; and Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury. John, late in his life, was named bishop of Chartres. Some of the curial clergy were allies of Thomas and John; others became virtually mortal enemies of Becket.<sup>261</sup> Theobald's influence on the monarchs he served—first Stephen and then Henry II—was considerable as well. W. W. R. Stephens described Theobald as “the last archbishop to wield unquestioned influence as the first adviser of the crown, in virtue of his ecclesiastical position.”<sup>262</sup> That was indeed the case as Theobald urged Thomas Becket on Henry to be his chancellor, also making known his desire that Becket succeed him as archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>263</sup>

#### *John at the Canterbury Household*

Enscornced at Canterbury, John of Salisbury had a varied portfolio that included being a “diplomat, a secretary, a legal expert, and a trusted advisor—a sort of jack of all trades.”<sup>264</sup> His broad-ranging education, which he described in detail in his commentary and critique of pedagogy in the *Metalogicon*, provided him with a vigorous platform for serving Theobald and the Church, both in the archbishop's court and as an emissary for Theobald and King Henry in the papal curia. Seen as brilliant, but never quite fulfilling the expectation of his education that he would assume a lofty position in the Church, John established a valuable role. His service

---

<sup>261</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 30-31.

<sup>262</sup> Quoted by J. R. H. Moorman in *A History of the Church in England* (Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 1963), 75.

<sup>263</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 65.

<sup>264</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 14.

initially was as emissary for the archbishop, then clerk, secretary, and confidant to Theobald. He was later secretary to Thomas. Employed in the office of clerk and confidant to Theobald, his portfolio allowed him to function at the highest levels of mission to royal courts and papal curia. Thus, he travelled widely.<sup>265</sup> In the prologue to Book 3 of the *Metalogicon*, John reflected in 1159 that in the previous twenty years he had crossed the Alps not less than ten times, journeyed to Apulia twice, “and repeatedly handled negotiations with the Roman Church for [his] superiors and friends.”<sup>266</sup>

After joining the household at Canterbury in 1148, John’s first responsibilities were as emissary and diplomat on behalf of Theobald to the court of the pope, Eugenius III, in Rome. With his ability to move in both secular and clerical circles, a consequence of his years of study in Paris and the contacts he made, John was instrumental in 1150 in securing the appointment as papal legate for Theobald, succeeding Henry of Winchester, thereby augmenting Theobald’s status as archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>267</sup> During the next four years, John, a peripatetic himself, travelled to Rome with regularity, marking five voyages to the continent by 1154.<sup>268</sup> His time at the papal curia gave him an opportunity to form a fast friendship with Nicholas Breakspear, an Englishman and cardinal bishop of Albano, who was elected pope in 1154 as Adrian IV. John’s close contact with popes Eugenius III and Adrian IV, in particular, were later to create

---

<sup>265</sup> Frank Barlow, “John of Salisbury and His Brothers,” 101.

<sup>266</sup> John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon*, trans. Daniel D. McGarry (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), 142.

<sup>267</sup> Saltman, *Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury*, 30-32.

<sup>268</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 15. The four Alpine crossings with reliable dates are 1149, early 1154, 1155, and again in 1156. There is evidence that John also traveled to Rome in 1159 prior to Pope Adrian’s death in September 1159. Further, John apparently was in Apulia (the ‘heel’ of Italy’s boot) with Pope Eugenius III in 1150, and then again at Ferentino in late 1150 or early 1151, and at Segni in 1152. He spent three months with Adrian IV at Benevento between November of 1155 and July of 1156. It was on this last visit that he secured a grant for Henry to claim Ireland as a “hereditary fee,”—effectively permitting a conquest of Ireland, similar to the authorization his great-grandfather, William of Normandy, had received to conquer England. See Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

difficulties for him with Henry II, who viewed the associations suspiciously. That mistrust led to John's disgrace in the king's court,<sup>269</sup> despite the fact that John was a known supporter of Henry's cause in the struggle against Stephen. Still, John was abroad during much of the time Theobald labored to secure peace and a transition from Stephen to Henry.<sup>270</sup> Ever the critic though, John was not hesitant to vocalize his opposition to some of Henry's policies, and to the courtiers who surrounded the king.<sup>271</sup> In his defense, John professed in the *Metalogicon* his deep admiration for Henry as he pursued the king's goal of asserting Henry's right to rule Ireland.<sup>272</sup>

Following Nicholas' ascension to the papacy as Adrian IV in 1154, John journeyed three more times to Rome between the autumn of that year and the spring of 1159 on various diplomatic missions, one of which was on behalf of Henry.<sup>273</sup> Much of his early work was not at Canterbury despite Theobald's agreement to bring him into the household; John spent much of his time with the papal court. In 1154, he fully entered the service of the archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>274</sup> As a clerk and secretary for the archbishop, John wrote 135 letters, the majority of them for Theobald. The subject matter ranged from policy descriptions and advice to commentary on legal questions.<sup>275</sup> The earliest letters date from 1153/1154 and they increase

---

<sup>269</sup> Grellard and Lachaud, "Introduction," 10.

<sup>270</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 15.

<sup>271</sup> Karen Bollermann and Cary J. Nederman, "John of Salisbury," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

<sup>272</sup> John provides this information in the *Metalogicon*, Part IV, Chapter 42. John of Salisbury, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 342.

<sup>273</sup> Hans Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury* (The Warburg Institute: University of London, 1950), 11.

<sup>274</sup> Brown, "John of Salisbury," 247.

<sup>275</sup> John of Salisbury's letters are gathered in two collections. The first contains letters written while in the service of Archbishop Theobald; the second holds those letters written while he was in exile and afterward. Luscombe, "John of Salisbury."

in number by 1156, many of them seeking support from chancellor Becket and the cause of Church liberty.<sup>276</sup>

John of Salisbury described his banishment from Henry's royal court from 1156 to 1157 in oblique terms, convinced that it was a "malice of Fortune."<sup>277</sup> Historians were not certain of the dates of the exile until the latter part of last century. The received view among scholars until then was that John was in deep disgrace with a resulting "political inactivity" (exile) by Henry II in 1159.<sup>278</sup> One of the products of this suspected period of quietude was *Policraticus*. Giles Constable's review of John's letters suggests that the relationship between John and Henry broke much earlier, in 1156. The revised timetable allows for the writing and completion of the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon*, the comments from Peter of Celle on the former, and the delivery of both to Thomas Becket in 1159, but not while under royal disgrace. Constable holds that banishment took place three years earlier. Constable's research further alters the understanding of John's writings, his timeline and early correspondence, and Church-State relations early on in Henry II's reign. An earlier disgrace and a later writing gave John the opportunity for increased alarm regarding Henry's policies.

The predicate for the disgrace took place earlier than 1156. In 1155, a year after taking the throne, Henry II sent emissaries to newly elected Adrian IV. The emissaries included three bishops, an abbot, and a dean, all from Henry's continental territories. They were charged with securing a papal blessing for the conquest of Ireland, a plan Henry II had proposed at the great

---

<sup>276</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 15.

<sup>277</sup> Letter 19, addressed to Peter, Abbot of Celle. John of Salisbury, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 31.

<sup>278</sup> Giles Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," *The English Historical Review* 69, no. 270 (1954): 67.

council in Winchester during Michaelmas (the feast celebrating St. Michael on September 29) in 1155. Ten days later, on October 9, the group set off. They reached the pope at his Apulian residence in Benevento, after a long journey, in early December.<sup>279</sup>

As John described in the *Policraticus*, he was already in Apulia, having spent time with Adrian IV with whom he had developed a deep kinship.<sup>280</sup> It is unclear whether he was working for Henry or just there on behalf of Theobald. Possibly he was there as an envoy for Henry—many, including Becket, knew he was a close friend of the new pope. Whatever his initial reason for being in Benevento with Adrian, John was there. Subsequently, Henry understood John to be part of the mission to secure papal blessing for a conquest of Ireland. In the *Metalogicon*, John wrote, “In acquiescence to my petitions Adrian granted and entrusted Ireland to the illustrious king of the English, Henry II, to be possessed by him and his heirs, as the papal letters will give evidence.”<sup>281</sup>

Things became difficult for John in Italy. A complication was that Adrian was making demands that property be returned to the English Church. Adrian threatened at one point to suspend the bishop of Ely unless he acted to recover property alienated from the Church. Certainly, the envoys from England knew of Adrian’s views regarding property the king has seized from the English Church. By April 25, 1156, John probably had left Benevento. However, word of John’s

---

<sup>279</sup> Constable, “The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159,” 67.

<sup>280</sup> In Book VI, Chap. 24, John wrote: “I recall that I had cause to travel to Apulia to visit the pontiff, Lord Adrian IV, who had allowed me into closest friendship with him, and I remained with him at Benevento for nearly three months. And so since, as it is customary to do among friends, we frequently consulted together over many matters.” This is quoted in Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 132. There appears to be a minor confusion regarding the location of Benevento. John referenced being in Apulia (the heel of the Italian boot); however, the province of Benevento is adjacent to Apulia, in south central Italy.

<sup>281</sup> John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon*, 274.

close ties with Adrian, and his possible negotiations on the Irish planned seizure went ahead of him. Arnulf of Lisieux, an influential member of the mission, had preceded John's return to England, perhaps with a version of events that was unflattering and disparaging to John and his close relationship to Adrian. Arnulf incidentally would later emerge as an enemy of John, and of Becket.<sup>282</sup>

### *The Alleged Disgrace*

Constable compares two of John's letters to establish his disgrace in time. He postulates that by placing John's letter 96 to an unidentified "Intimate Friend"<sup>283</sup> in mid-April 1157 rather than in the summer of 1160, it is possible to grasp that John fell into disfavor in 1156, rather than several years later.

The first letter actually mentioning the disgrace appears to be Letter 111<sup>284</sup> written to Peter of Celle, though parts of it echo what was in the earlier letter 96.<sup>285</sup> John returned to England from Italy in the spring of 1156, and word of his ostracism spread following his arrival. Before the end of 1156, the pope apparently received news of John's troubles.<sup>286</sup> John fell into deep despair believing his innocence of any disloyal action he was alleged to have taken. The only pathway for him seemed to be a self-imposed exile from his native country. Adrian, on learning of John's plans, persuaded him not to leave England as an exile, but to stay in anticipation of a positive decision regarding his case. The decision to stay in England came in

---

<sup>282</sup> Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 69.

<sup>283</sup> John of Salisbury, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 148.

<sup>284</sup> John of Salisbury, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 180.

<sup>285</sup> Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 70.

<sup>286</sup> Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 72.

the autumn of 1156. Adrian sent both advice and letters of encouragement to John during this period.<sup>287</sup> At the same time, John sent a letter to his former Canterbury colleague, Thomas Becket, now Henry's chancellor, pleading for Becket to intercede with the king on his behalf. "If the devotion of my insignificant self has any power with your excellency," the letter implored, "...then do what you can to assuage the indignation which our most serene lord the king has conceived against me without a cause." The letter went unanswered.<sup>288</sup>

In hopes of attracting Becket's attention, John also wrote Becket's secretary, Ernulf, sometime during December 1156 or January 1157. The succinct letter to Ernulf presented a similar plea: "Presuming on your friendship, therefore, I beg you, after looking at the letters which I send for him, to stir him up to recover the king's favor toward me, and to give me your own advice by replying without delay."<sup>289</sup>

Constable then lays out a timetable of letters from before July 1156 to July or August 1157. He speculates that the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus* were not written in a time of bitterness or exile, as that period had already come and gone. As to the reasons for John's disgrace, Constable offers two. First, Henry was angered by the objections John made regarding the scutage that the king levied on the Church in the spring of 1156. John spared no criticism

---

<sup>287</sup> Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 72.

<sup>288</sup> John of Salisbury, Millor, Butler, and Brooke. *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 148. In the letter to Becket, John wrote plaintively, "Si quid ergo potest apud excellentiam uestram paruitatis meae deuotio, si qua est antiquae familiaritatis memoria, si spectate amicitiae fidem fortunae impetus non subuertit, id agite quo serenissimi domini nostri regis gratis in me concepta indignatio mitigetur, ut pro arbitrio eius excuseam innocentiam meam, aut si in aliquo gratiam eius demerui, satisfactione congrua eandem michi liceat promereri."

<sup>289</sup> Ernulf was a trusted companion of Becket, serving as clerk when Becket was chancellor, and later chancellor to Becket when he assumed the episcopate at Canterbury. John of Salisbury, Millor, Butler, and Brooke. *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 44. "De uestra itaque familiaritate praesumens precor ut, inspectis litteris quas ei mitto, ipsum ad reformandam michi domini regis gratiam animetis et recurrente scriptio uestrum michi consilium significetis." Though John suggests that he wrote more than one letter to Becket on his alleged disgrace, only one epistle to Becket on the topic is in the collection of John of Salisbury's letters.

when he wrote of Henry, “his [John’s] crimes are the support of freedom and the defence [sic] of truth, and that he—just as if he told the English bishops what to do—is blamed when any ecclesiastical liberty is asserted.”<sup>290</sup> Second, and more plausibly, is that the king’s reaction was to the statements that John made when he was one of the envoys to the papal curia. Constable speculates that John’s, and Adrian’s, positions of Church liberty grated Henry, noting that “the assertions of ecclesiastical independence and expansion of papal influence, carried out under the very noses and as it were with the consent of the royal ambassadors, constituted a clear victory for Adrian.”<sup>291</sup>

John was not clear himself as to why he had incurred King Henry’s wrath. Indeed, John thought that he had done the king’s bidding well. John wrote to Peter of Celle in the autumn of 1156, stating “perhaps I favoured him more than was proper and worked for his advantage more than was fitting; for I longed with all my heart . . . to see him reigning by God’s mercy on the throne of his fathers and giving laws to peoples and to nations.”<sup>292</sup> This work was the grant of Ireland as a hereditary fee that he had obtained from Adrian IV.<sup>293</sup> Perhaps, though, Henry II was looking for permission to attack Ireland in the same way he believed that his great-grandfather had done when he launched the Norman Conquest. Though Adrian withheld approval of a military conquest of Ireland, Alexander III, Adrian’s successor, later approved it.<sup>294</sup> John’s disgrace, whether in defense of ecclesiastical liberty or promotion of papal supremacy,

---

<sup>290</sup> Constable, “The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159,” 74.

<sup>291</sup> Constable, “The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159,” 75.

<sup>292</sup> Letter 19, John of Salisbury, Millor, Butler, and Brooke. *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 31.

<sup>293</sup> For details on the hereditary fee of Ireland that Adrian IV granted to Henry II see Colin Veach, “Henry II and the ideological foundations of Angevin rule in Ireland,” *Irish Historical Studies*, Volume 42, Issue 161, May 2018, pp. 1 - 25 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/ihs.2018.6>

<sup>294</sup> Constable, “The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159,” 75.



had some impact on his writing in the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*.<sup>295</sup> His opinion of Henry soured and John grew fearful of Henry's expansionist efforts vis-à-vis the Church.

What, then, was John of Salisbury's motivation for writing both the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon*—works he dedicated to Becket and had delivered to him in Toulouse? It is fair to say that both of the works were written after he was embroiled in the quarrel with the king. Just as he gathered material for the *Historia Pontificalis* while he was in Rome, so too must he have collected impressions while he was at Canterbury, working for the archbishop. Hans Liebeschütz proposes that the treatises were written more out of concern for the treatment of the Church—and a return to an anarchical rule—than out of acrimony toward Henry for the way he had treated John. Liebeschütz noted, "John did not express his theories because he had fallen into royal disgrace. It was rather because John had silently always been a representative of the Church's criticism that the King's anger fell on him."<sup>296</sup> As to the dedications, John was deeply concerned that Thomas was trying to serve two masters—the Crown and the Church. In John's view, such dual allegiances were incompatible.<sup>297</sup>

It was during his in-country exile in 1156-1157 (for reasons that still invite speculation) that he wrote much of his two major works: the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*. Only later, after 1164 while on the continent, did he write the *Historia Pontificalis*. The last text reflected his experiences at the papal curia and was both somewhat satirical and serious. John's other corpus of writings consist of two chief bodies of letters: those written while a member of

---

<sup>295</sup> Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 76.

<sup>296</sup> Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury*, 15.

<sup>297</sup> Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury*, 16. John undoubtedly was familiar with Matthew's warning in the gospels against serving two masters: "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." Matthew 6:24.

Theobald's Canterbury administration; and appeals and please for assistance during their shared exile on the continent addressing the battle between Henry II and Becket.<sup>298</sup> One can add to those major works the *Vita Sancti Thome* and to the major and minor poems *Entheticus*, both *maior* and *minor*. The *Entheticus minor* was appended to the beginning of *Policraticus* but was not an introduction to the content of the treatise.

John of Salisbury was part of a vaunted curia at Canterbury under Archbishop Theobald, rising to be an intimate and dependable member of the court. Though he held no specific title, he performed an array of duties for Theobald including important clerical functions. Julie Barrau writes that Theobald and John had an enduring and well-recorded relationship that included light touches and even private jokes. He was a "valuable and trustworthy subordinate."<sup>299</sup> As secretary to Theobald, and to the archbishop's envoy to the papal curia, John encountered some of the "leading ecclesiastical and political officials of the day."<sup>300</sup> John was also called upon to assist with appointments in England. In 1160 and 1161, in all likelihood he was helpful in securing the bishopric of Exeter for Bartholomew, another member of Theobald's court at Canterbury through his network of family and professional contacts.<sup>301</sup> John's connections to Exeter (members of his family were there) were probably instrumental in gaining the seat. When Thomas Becket, who had also maintained a privileged relationship with Theobald, left Canterbury for Henry's court and the chancellorship John acquired some of

---

<sup>298</sup> Wilks, *The World of John of Salisbury*, 9. Karen Bollermann and Cary Nederman have proposed that John wrote the *Historia Pontificalis* in the period between 1164 and early 1166 (while he was a Saint-Rémi). Karen Bollermann and Cary Nederman, "John of Salisbury."

<sup>299</sup> Julie Barrau, "John of Salisbury as Ecclesiastical Administrator," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 112.

<sup>300</sup> Ronald E. Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," in *A companion to John of Salisbury*, 147. Among the leaders was Louis VII of France with whom John met several times.

<sup>301</sup> Barlow, "John of Salisbury and His Brothers," 97.

Becket's responsibilities. However, he was not given the title of archdeacon.<sup>302</sup> He may not have assumed all of Archbishop Theobald's responsibilities when he had an extended illness prior to his death, but John did manage many of the routine functions at Canterbury.<sup>303</sup> He also wrote Theobald's will, and was the archbishop's executor.<sup>304</sup>

John's multiple trips to the papal curia, including the time in Benevento that led to his banishment from Henry's court, were part of an all-encompassing brief he held under Theobald. On his return from Benevento in the spring of 1156, John resumed his role as Theobald's secretary. It was only later that year that he felt Henry's ire and considered departing for the continent. Just as the reasons for Henry's anger were obscure, so too was the lifting of the punishment. After a year of shunning, John was back at court, maneuvering for the increasingly ill Theobald on behalf of the Church.<sup>305</sup>

It is not entirely clear what John of Salisbury did administratively at Canterbury after Theobald's death in April 1161. Minimally, he may have been editing correspondence during his time with Theobald. He was, after all, a superb writer. John was still at Canterbury when Henry II urged Becket on the monastic chapter. Despite knowing Thomas and having functioned as secretary to an archbishop, John was considerably less involved with Archbishop Becket than he had been with his predecessor Theobald. Still, Herbert of Bosham viewed John as one of Becket's close advisors. There was yet a role for John to play in Becket's court; he was part of a

---

<sup>302</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 15. The general view is that Theobald got Becket appointed as Henry II's chancellor in an effort to keep the young king under control, and to "ensure renewed real respect for the liberties of the church and the archiepiscopacy." Here, Nederman is quoting Saltman, *Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury*, 168.

<sup>303</sup> John of Salisbury, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, xxix.

<sup>304</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 22.

<sup>305</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 22-23.

group that went to Montpellier and Pope Alexander III to collect the *pallium* of the archbishop. On return to England with Becket's symbols of office, including the *pallium*, John was honored as *emeritus*, a recognition that he had been in the employ of the previous archbishop and was an institutional link to the prior administration.<sup>306</sup>

---

<sup>306</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 28.

### CHAPTER 3 – THOMAS BECKET: HIS LIFE

Nine hundred years after of his birth, Thomas Becket remains one of the best known and most controversial clerics of the Middle Ages. His service as chancellor to King Henry II of England, his election as archbishop of Canterbury following Henry's wishes, and his subsequent opposition to the king that led to his murder in Canterbury Cathedral were dramatic. The murder of the archbishop in the sanctuary, four days after Christmas in 1170, was the headline news of the day, reverberating throughout Western Christendom with remarkable speed.

As evidence of the impact of the homicide, ten *Vitae* of Thomas were quickly written and circulated. The first, by John of Salisbury, expanded upon a letter he sent to John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers, early in 1171.<sup>307</sup> In the lengthy epistle, he described the slaughter, with this sentence recounting the soldiers' entry into the cathedral when Becket was positioned near the altar of St. Benedict: "The martyr stood in the cathedral, before Christ's altar, as we have said, ready to suffer; the hour of the slaughter was at hand."<sup>308</sup>

Henry was distressed by the news of Becket's assassination, despite his frustration with Becket, whom history has known as "that troublesome priest,"<sup>309</sup> as testified by Henry de Beaumont, bishop of Bayeux. The news that Becket had again quickly issued sentences against York archbishop Roger, Bishop Jocelin of Salisbury, and Bishop Gilbert of London sparked the

---

<sup>307</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* 724-739.

<sup>308</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 730.

<sup>309</sup> Scholars dispute Henry's exact words on learning of Becket's series of inhibitions directed at his ecclesiastical foes. The quote is often stated as, "Will no one rid me of this troublesome priest?" It is incorrect. On learning that Becket, back in England, had issued widespread excommunications, Henry, who was holding his Christmas court in Bures, Normandy, reportedly said, "What miserable drones and traitors have I nurtured and promoted in my household who let their lord be treated with such shameful contempt by a lowborn clerk!" Dan Jones, *The Plantagenets* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012), 73. The origin of the quote is Edward Grim, according to Frank Barlow.

chain of events that led to Becket's murder.<sup>310</sup> The report of Becket's action had been presented to Henry in Normandy, where he was lodged for the Christmas holiday in 1170.<sup>311</sup> On receiving account of Becket's murder on Maundy Thursday of 1171, Pope Alexander III excommunicated the killers and leveled an interdict on Henry. A year-long process of reconciliation led to Henry's penitence and absolution.<sup>312</sup> Henry's final act of penance took place in July of 1174 in Canterbury. Two miles from the cathedral, he put on a monk's woolen smock—underneath was a hair shirt—and just outside the city walls, he removed his shoes and headed to the cathedral to kneel at Becket's new tomb. En route and at the site of Becket's tomb, he was scourged by bishops and monks who were present. Henry remained in vigil at the shrine overnight to Saturday morning when he took part in a mass,<sup>313</sup> thus completing his public reconciliation.

An indication of the speed of the news and the depth of the horror at the sanctuary attack was Becket's swift canonization, announced by Alexander III on February 21, 1173, a little more than two years after Becket's assassination. This campaign was led by Becket's hagiographers, including John of Salisbury, and supported by reported miracles at his shrine that swiftly propelled the archbishop to sainthood.<sup>314</sup>

---

<sup>310</sup> Anne Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 205.

<sup>311</sup> Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 254.

<sup>312</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 256-57; See also Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 220-21.

<sup>313</sup> John Guy, *Thomas Becket* (New York: Random House, 2012), 333.

<sup>314</sup> Michael Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 207-210.

### *Becket's Early Life*

Born to Norman parents who were part of the migration to London early in the twelfth century, Thomas Becket was not an aristocrat. However, he was not the “lowborn clerk” of King Henry’s final rage against him, the outburst that spurred four knights to race from Normandy to Canterbury to dispatch Becket. Thomas was the only surviving son of Gilbert and Matilda Beket,<sup>315</sup> originally of Thierville in the region of Eure in Normandy, near the Abbey of Bec and less than twenty-five miles southwest of Rouen. It is likely that Gilbert knew Theobald, abbot of Bec, before he was installed as archbishop of Canterbury. Possibly, they were related. Some sources have Thomas with four sisters living beyond childhood, while others list only three—and a mother who was likely a burgess’ daughter.<sup>316</sup> Thomas’ birthplace was in London, north of Cheapside between Ironmonger Lane and Old Jewry, a fairly prosperous area of the city.<sup>317</sup> Gilbert was sheriff of London, a position similar to that of a mayor, but as Frank Barlow writes, “The office of mayor had not yet appeared” at that time.<sup>318</sup> The family’s income came from rentals, in a market where property could be freely bought and sold given the city’s rights, privileges, and laws that had existed since the rule of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066).<sup>319</sup>

---

<sup>315</sup> Spellings were not standardized in early Middle English in the twelfth century, hence a difference in the spelling of the surname. See for example, Thorlac Turville-Petre and J. A. Burrow. *A Book of Middle English*. (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2020); Christopher Upward and George Davidson. *The History of English Spelling* Vol. 26 (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2011).

<sup>316</sup> Frank Barlow, “Thomas Becket,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed June 28, 2019, <https://www.oxforddnb>. Barlow suggests that Becket’s mother may well have been more educated than his father. Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 16. In *Thomas Becket*, John Guy names three sisters: Agnes, Rose, and Mary. The two elder sisters married and between them later had sons, three of whom became priests. Mary became religious and Henry II, apparently grudgingly, had her installed as abbess of Barking in Essex. Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 12.

<sup>317</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 10.

<sup>318</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 15. Under Norman kings, sheriffs held royal appointments, and when a sworn inquest was instituted, the court they oversaw became a royal court. Bryce Lyon, *A Constitutional and Legal History of Medieval England* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1980), 192.

<sup>319</sup> “The City’s Government,” City of London Law and Historic Governance, accessed May 1, 2020, <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-the-city/history/Pages/city-government.aspx>.

Thomas, studying at an Augustinian abbey in Merton, initially as a day student and then as a boarder, received his primary education there. He returned to finish at one of the three grammar schools in London.<sup>320</sup> When Becket was about nineteen or twenty years old, he travelled to Paris and furthered his education for a year or slightly longer.<sup>321</sup>

Thomas Becket's initial years upon leaving school were spent with Richer de l'Aigle,<sup>322</sup> a member of the Norman aristocracy with business in London, for whom he was a protégé, confidant, and sometimes clerk.<sup>323</sup> Becket became acquainted with de l'Aigle as the Norman frequently stayed with Gilbert Beket on crossings to England, supervising his own affairs. De l'Aigle was connected with the royal court. The connections that linked de l'Aigle to the court ran deep: his great-grandfather Engenulf had died at Hastings in 1066.<sup>324</sup> Seeing promise in an engaging young man, de l'Aigle took Becket under his wing shortly after Becket returned from Paris. The timing was propitious. Becket's mother had died, which sent him back to London and in need of employment. De l'Aigle, as a baron of some means, and lord of Pevensey castle in East Sussex<sup>325</sup> had access to the upper echelons of aristocratic life in England. That entry into the noble ranks included hunting, hawking, and riding—skills that Becket learned and delighted

---

<sup>320</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 15.

<sup>321</sup> The sources are unclear as to Becket's age when he went to Paris for studies, how long he was a student there, and his reasons for return. Those reasons vary from his general lack of interest in scholarship to his mother's illness and death. It is certain that his Latin, though orally acceptable, was limited. It may have impeded his ability to learn in what was a highly learned *academic* environment, led by Peter Abelard among others. Beryl Smalley was even more dismissive of Becket's scholarship, suggesting that John of Salisbury found Becket to be a "clever and receptive amateur." Beryl Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973), 112. See also Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 11 and Barlow, "Thomas Becket."

<sup>322</sup> Richer de l'Aigle is alternately known as Richer of Laigle, Michael Staunton quoting Edward Grim. Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 45. Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 19.

<sup>323</sup> David Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 8.

<sup>324</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 19.

<sup>325</sup> "Pevensey Castle," English Heritage, accessed April 14, 2020, <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/pevensey-castle/>.



in.<sup>326</sup> Under the guidance of de l'Aigle, Becket also was introduced to courtly manners. The blood sports and the affected manners at the royal court were the very same behaviors that John of Salisbury criticized as frivolous in *Policraticus*.

Thomas Becket's life and prospects underwent a rapid change following his mother's death, and while he was under the guidance of de l'Aigle. Gilbert Beket sustained dramatic property losses in a series of fires in Cheapside that spread from the Tower of London west to St. Paul's. As a consequence, Gilbert was no longer able to financially support his son, Thomas.<sup>327</sup> The younger Becket found it necessary in early 1143 to take a position with his father's friend (and perhaps relative), Osbert Huitdeniers, who appears to have been a moneylender in addition to a justiciar in London. For three years, Becket worked as an accountant for Osbert, at the same time functioning as a secretary and accountant for London sheriffs.<sup>328</sup> In those positions, Becket acquired proficiency in accounting and taxation, at the same time developing contacts with the higher officers of London.

In 1145, after nearly three years with Huitdeniers,<sup>329</sup> Becket was introduced to the household of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, who was in the sixth year of his episcopacy. Always seeking talented young men for his court, Theobald was open to the introduction of Becket, presented by two clerks from Boulogne, Archdeacon Baldwin and Master Eustace.<sup>330</sup> With good looks, a keen memory, knowledge of finances, and family links to Archbishop

---

<sup>326</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 7.

<sup>327</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 42.

<sup>328</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 8; Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 12.

<sup>329</sup> The translation from French of "Huitdeniers" meaning "Eightpence" is a fitting name for a financier or a moneylender. Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 45, fn. 12.

<sup>330</sup> This is according to William FitzStephen, one of Becket's biographers. Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 45, fn. 45.

Theobald, Becket was an appealing candidate, around the age of twenty-five, to join the clerks at Canterbury.<sup>331</sup> Still, with a slight stammer and less education than others in the household, Becket initially struggled for acceptance in the group that included such accomplished clerics as Gilbert Foliot, later bishop of Hereford and London, John of Canterbury, later bishop of Poitiers, and Roger de Pont l'Évêque, archbishop of York, among them. Thomas and Roger in particular had tense relations, and Roger was not pleased when, on his appointment as archbishop of York, the younger Thomas succeeded him as archdeacon of Canterbury in 1154. Until his appointment as archdeacon, Becket had merely been presented with only minor orders conferred upon him.<sup>332</sup>

#### *Becket in Archbishop Theobald's Employ*

Becket had captured Theobald's attention and the archbishop had sent him to Bologna and to Auxerre for further studies in theology, principally in law. In Bologna, Becket studied under Bulgarus, one of the four masters who had revived Justinian's *Corpus Civilis*. While in Bologna, he also would have absorbed Gratian's *Decretum*. Given the Italian city's prominence as a center for the study of law, Becket would have encountered some of the leading legal minds of the mid-twelfth century; the connections he garnered during his year in Italy were even more valuable than the knowledge he acquired.<sup>333</sup>

---

<sup>331</sup> The archbishop also had a residence on the south bank of the Thames (Lambeth) in London. He may have seen Becket while in London or heard of him while Becket was employed by Osbert Huitdeniers. See Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 23.

<sup>332</sup> In the Middle Ages, minor orders in the Church were lectors, porters, acolytes, and exorcists—any position below the diaconate. Men holding minor orders were free to marry. "Minor Orders," *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 12 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), accessed April 14, 2020, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10332b.htm>.

<sup>333</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 14-15.

Though Thomas' duties in the curia at Canterbury on his return were not specified, he was rewarded with a number of benefices and prebends, several of which he retained even upon his departure for Henry's court and his appointment as chancellor.<sup>334</sup> Along with the archdeaconery vacated by Roger de Pont l'Évêque, his benefices included Branfield in Hertfordshire, St. Mary-le-Strand in London, and Otford in Kent, along with prebends in London and Lincoln cathedrals and the provostship of Beverley Minster in Yorkshire. The duties and the income they provided combined to make Becket a wealthy man.

During the ten years that he spent in Theobald's household, Becket increasingly gained the archbishop's confidence. Theobald tasked him with at least three missions to the papal curia—in 1149-50, again in 1150, and in 1151—and Becket was at the Council in Reims in 1148 that was convened by Eugenius III<sup>335</sup> (it was there that John of Salisbury received his letter from Bernard of Clairvaux, recommending him to Theobald). Otherwise, Becket's years in the employ of Theobald were filled with collecting rents, managing property, writing letters for the archbishop, witnessing documents, and generally learning how the archbishop's curia was administered, quite possibly traveling with the archbishop's ambulatory court.<sup>336</sup> Becket brought an added set of skills to the household: hunting and hawking. There were ecclesiastics—bishops and archdeacons—who enjoyed the "blood sports" at which Becket was adept. Becket was available to entertain and enjoy the activities with those who chose to engage.<sup>337</sup>

---

<sup>334</sup> John of Salisbury was highly critical of Becket for keeping the income from these ecclesiastical benefices when he assumed the chancellorship in 1155. Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 14.

<sup>335</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 16.

<sup>336</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 8; Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 25-26.

<sup>337</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 56.

### *Becket and John – Early Encounters*

John of Salisbury was a longtime companion and critic of Thomas Becket, even present the night of his murder in Canterbury Cathedral. John was the older of the pair, and quite different in style, scholarship, and physique. Where Becket could bluster and act without thoughtful consideration, John was deliberate and calculating. Thomas, by all accounts, was hardly a student of any depth, while John was one of the most educated men of his time. Thomas was tall, athletic and handsome; John was small and tended to poor health, though Becket had his own health concerns. He was described as having a “cold stomach”—perhaps colitis.<sup>338</sup>

It is possible that they encountered each other in Paris where they were both students; John arrived in 1136 and Thomas sometime between 1138 and 1141, staying for roughly a year.<sup>339</sup> John, who was a prolific author and correspondent, does not mention meeting Becket in Paris. Rather, his reference to initially meeting Becket is in *Historia Pontificalis*: it was at the council at Reims, when Becket was present as a member of Theobald’s staff. The first opportunity for Becket and John to routinely spend time together was in 1148. Beryl Smalley’s speculation that John joined other clerks at Canterbury on January 24, 1148 is too early a dating. The Council of Reims was not convoked until March 22, 1148. It was after that date that

---

<sup>338</sup> John, in a letter to John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers, written in January 1167, described himself as “hominem Paruum nomine” (Letter 212), John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 342. This has alternately been interpreted as small in name, in stature, or in (poor) health. See also Cary J. Nederman *John of Salisbury*, 3. William of Newburgh lauded Thomas Becket for his handsome body, smiling face, and quick mind. Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 13.

<sup>339</sup> Anne Duggan suggests that Becket arrived in Paris around 1138, though Frank Barlow suggests a broader time frame that has Becket returning to England on December 21, 1141, his birthday. Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 11; Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 21.

Bernard of Clairvaux must have written his letter to Theobald on John's behalf.<sup>340</sup> Even then, during John's first years in service to Theobald, he was dispatched on missions to the papal court. His and Becket's time as members of the Canterbury household overlapped for no more than six years, and for at least half of that period they were functioning separately, and distantly. Still, it was an opportunity for John to share the Canterbury environment with Becket and to gain some understanding of his character before Becket was installed as Henry's chancellor.

#### *Becket as Henry II's Chancellor*

It was Theobald who pushed for Becket's appointment as chancellor in Henry's court after Henry assumed the throne in 1154. The archbishop had been instrumental in establishing peace following the turbulent years of the Anarchy and wished to guide the young ruler in his handling of the Church. Becket was the key, as he had strong credentials for the position: a respected member of the archbishop's household who had experience working with accounts and had been an occasional emissary to the papal curia. While at Canterbury, Becket had gained status as a secretary and diplomat. His year studying law under masters in Bologna had given him knowledge and proficiency in that realm.<sup>341</sup> Indeed, he had met Eugenius III there. Becket had interacted with cardinals and other men of power, and he had extracurricular activities on his résumé as well. Theobald had cultivated a cleric he could recommend and hope to place in Henry's milieu. His motives were two-fold. Henry was scarcely twenty-one years old

---

<sup>340</sup> Georges Goyau, "Reims," *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 12 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), accessed April 15, 2020, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12725a.htm>.

<sup>341</sup> Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*, 111.

and could benefit from the steadying hand of a close advisor more than ten years older. Also, Theobald was loath to lose some of the strength, independence, and power the Church had gained during the chaos of Stephen's reign. Inserting a trusted cleric into the royal court would offer some assurance that the Church's interests would be maintained.<sup>342</sup> Theobald had the support of Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester, in his nomination of Becket. After all, Henry had witnessed the damage that Stephen, his brother, did to the Church. A prominent example of the injury was the arrest of Roger, bishop of Salisbury.<sup>343</sup> Becket's nomination to the position of chancellor came at Henry's Christmas court at Bermondsey Abbey in Southwark, less than three months after Stephen's death and Henry's accession to the throne.<sup>344</sup>

Matching Becket with Henry made a satisfactory pairing. Extroverts both, their mutual joys in hunting, riding, and hawking created yet another bond beyond their duties at court. They were boon companions in all manner save sexual, for Becket remained chaste throughout his life.<sup>345</sup> In the role of royal chancellor, Becket was second only to the king. As a mark of his position as chancellor, he retained part of the king's seal for sealing orders from his own office (it was a device he later rejected with a bold gesture, when he renounced his role as chancellor).<sup>346</sup> Clever, connected, and filled with social graces, Becket was selected by Henry to lead an embassy to Paris and Louis VII of France in 1158. William FitzStephen, clerk to Becket when he was archbishop, described the convoy from London to Paris as an embarrassment of

---

<sup>342</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 16.

<sup>343</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 48.

<sup>344</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 77.

<sup>345</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket." *Studies, An Irish Quarterly Review*

<sup>346</sup> For a detailed examination of the relationship of Becket and Henry with notice of the royal seal, see: Patrick Murray, "Thomas Becket of Canterbury: 800 years on," *Studies, An Irish Quarterly Review* Vol. 59, No. 233 (Spring 1970): 68-80.

riches that included, among other things, two hundred horsemen, knights and clerks, twenty-four changes of splendid clothing for Becket, hounds and hawks, food and drink, a traveling chapel, and eight chests filled with gold, silver, and table plates.<sup>347</sup> When in England, Becket's household and table as chancellor were sumptuous—second only to Henry's. Becket kept six vessels at the ready for channel crossings (roughly one-quarter of those the king maintained) and had a retinue of roughly one hundred fifty knights and their servants. As was the fashion for the wealthy, Becket assembled a zoo that included monkeys and other exotic animals and birds from Africa. His own wardrobe as chancellor announced his status; it was replete with furs and silks.<sup>348</sup> There is no doubt that all of this ostentation was fodder for John of Salisbury's criticisms of courtly behavior, especially central in the *Policraticus*. Becket, as archdeacon, entered Henry's service a wealthy man, retaining his benefices and prebends and functioning as a *curialis*, a secular cleric who was a courtier.<sup>349</sup> His financial status as chancellor expanded substantially with properties that included prebends at Hastings, along with revenues from the Tower of London, the Castlery of Eye, the Castle of Berkhamstead, and vacancies of various bishoprics, abbeys, and fiefs that escheated to the chancery.<sup>350</sup> Further, Becket was responsible for royal revenues as chancellor. John took close notice of the augmented personal treasury the chancellor maintained. He wrote to Becket, several years after he had left Canterbury to become chancellor, chastising him for reportedly seizing the revenues of three unfilled

---

<sup>347</sup> Detailed in J. C. Robertson, ed., *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, Rolls Series 67 (London, 1875-1885), iii, 29-33, and included in Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 34.

<sup>348</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 79-80.

<sup>349</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 59.

<sup>350</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 39.

bishoprics: Exeter, Worcester, and Chester-Coventry.<sup>351</sup> At Northampton, in 1154, Henry called Archbishop Becket to account for royal revenues worth £30,000. He demanded repayment, claiming that Becket had embezzled the money.<sup>352</sup>

A year after the embassy to Louis VII, in the spring of 1159, Becket led one hundred knights, a portion of the army in Henry's campaign, against Raymond V, the Count of Toulouse who was an ally of Louis and an enemy of Henry. The purpose was to affirm the claim of Henry's wife, and Louis' former wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, to the county of Toulouse. Becket was an effective leader managing the rear guard.<sup>353</sup> He sought Toulouse and Raymond V's capitulation and urged Henry to press his advantage, but the king demurred.<sup>354</sup> The siege of Toulouse was one of the major military efforts of Henry's reign, one of the least successful, and one of the most expensive.<sup>355</sup> The tax for the war—the scutage of Toulouse—was heavy and fell inordinately on the Church. Though Canterbury escaped the tax, which was a fee in lieu of knights for military service, Theobald's complaints on behalf of the other bishops and abbots were ignored. Becket was blamed for the levy and English ecclesiastics, including John of Salisbury, held him accountable for it.<sup>356</sup> John was concerned about the manner in which royal affairs were being conducted, about the excesses and frivolities of the court, and about a return to the chaos that he, his family, the country, and the Church had experienced under Stephen. This led John to dedicate two of his major works, the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*, to

---

<sup>351</sup> "Fama est apud nos quod trium uacantium episcopatum redditus ad liberationem uestram uobis dominus rex concesserit..." Letter 128, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 223.

<sup>352</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 110-111.

<sup>353</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 19.

<sup>354</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 47.

<sup>355</sup> W. L. Warren, *Henry II*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 86-87.

<sup>356</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket."



Becket and to arrange for both works to be delivered to Becket while he was on campaign against Raymond at Toulouse. This was no gesture of friendship for a colleague far from home. John, especially through the *Policraticus*, was offering the strongest warning he believed he could for Thomas, and by derivation Henry, to alter their actions and avoid the disasters of the previous royal administration.<sup>357</sup> However, the fighting and lavish enterprises continued. Two years later, in 1161, Henry continued his armed action against Louis, this time in the Vexin, a county in northwestern France that was a buffer between Normandy and the kingdom of France. Becket joined in the conflict, delaying a return to Canterbury and a visit to the dying Archbishop Theobald.<sup>358</sup>

### *Becket's Rise to Prominence at Canterbury*

Prior to his death, Theobald had promoted Becket as his successor, despite profound reservations about his former clerk's behavior as a courtier and chancellor. Added to that, Becket was an unlikely choice, for all archbishops of Canterbury since 1066 had been monks, save one. Becket was neither a monk nor even priested. Henry, though, was readily persuaded that his companion at court was suitable for the archiepiscopacy. Becket had distinguished

---

<sup>357</sup> Hans Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury*, 13. John had previously dedicated his *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* (*Entheticus maior*) to Becket having finished it around January 1155. See David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed June 28, 2019, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-14849?rskey=ADiM15&result=4>.

<sup>358</sup> On matters of war, John of Salisbury was knowledgeable about military strategy, despite his life as a scholar rather than a soldier. In *Henry II: A Medieval Soldier at War, 1147-1189*, John Hosler writes that John of Salisbury was classically trained and well-versed on military strategy. He gained that knowledge by "reading and owning copies of the military manuals *De re militari* by Flavius Vegetius Renatus and *Strategemata* by Julius Frontinus." John references both in *Metalogicon* and *Policraticus* but only included sections about oath-taking, military training, and battle valor. See John D. Hosler, *Henry II: A Medieval Soldier at War, 1147-1189* (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Kelly DeVries, ed., *History of Warfare* Vol. 44, 55.

himself as chancellor with his organizational abilities—he had modified and improved official procedures and elevated the role—and he was a close confidant of Henry. Becket was also a skilled diplomat. With his chancellor installed at Canterbury, Henry felt confident that he could curtail the liberties the Church had acquired during Stephen’s reign. A further motivation for the king was the desired coronation of young Henry, who would reign over a “subordinate government” in England under a regency. Such ecclesiastical action would firmly establish the succession. For the coronation, Henry needed a compliant archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>359</sup> His loyal chancellor, Becket, was a favored contender.

Herbert of Bosham wrote that Becket, however, was less certain that he should acquiesce to Henry’s demand for him to be archbishop of Canterbury. Herbert, who later was Archbishop Becket’s closest associate at Canterbury, reported that Becket said his “florid clothes” would hardly make him acceptable to the monks of the cathedral chapter. It was they who would elect the next archbishop. Becket wisely anticipated the impact of his election to the archiepiscopacy on his relationship with Henry, stating, “Very quickly you [Henry] would turn your heart and favor away from me, which is now great between us, and replace it with the most savage hatred.”<sup>360</sup> Because of their intimacy, Becket was quite aware of Henry’s plans to bring the Church to heel and likewise understood what his resistance to the king’s design would be. That they would be in deep opposition was apparent to Becket, and his was a prophetic statement.

---

<sup>359</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 68.

<sup>360</sup> Herbert of Bosham in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, J.C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard eds., (London: Longman, 1875- 1885). In *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, Michael Staunton noted, “Henry informs Thomas of his design.” Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 60.

Theobald died on April 18, 1161. Becket had been chancellor and away from Canterbury's household since January 1155, failing to return from the Vexin campaign to be with the archbishop at the time of his death. Now came the challenge of election. There were other, more qualified candidates, including the highly educated theologian Gilbert Foliot, bishop of Hereford and a monk. Henry, desirous of the revenues that flowed to Canterbury, was willing to keep the see vacant for a while. Admittedly, there were Canterbury monks who needed to be brought around to the idea of "freely electing" Becket; in the meantime, the fees reaching the royal coffers were welcome.<sup>361</sup> Henry pressured the chapter and the council of bishops to support Becket.<sup>362</sup> Although neither group favored Becket, they relented, and the council of bishops, abbots, and members of the aristocracy at the meeting at Westminster on May 23, 1162 ratified the monks' election of Becket as archbishop. Within two weeks, on June 3, 1162, Becket was installed as Canterbury's primate, having been ordained a priest only the day before.<sup>363</sup> Henry II was in Normandy, so Prince Henry presided at the installation.

It was Henry's intent to retain Becket as chancellor and still have him be seated as archbishop. Though unusual and forbidden under canon law, it was not without precedent;<sup>364</sup> his contemporary and opponent Frederick Barbarossa had just such an arrangement. His

---

<sup>361</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 23.

<sup>362</sup> The process for electing the Archbishop of Canterbury was fluid at the time. Previously, the "elections" by the monks were held at meeting of the king's council, comprised of Church and lay leaders. Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 66.

<sup>363</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket."

<sup>364</sup> Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury during the reign of William I, was a trusted advisor to the king. "Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed September 9, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Lanfranc>; Henry Mayr-Harting, *Religion, Politics and Society in Britain 1066-1272* (London: Longman, 2011), 30. Roger of Salisbury was given great responsibilities by Henry I, serving as chancellor and subsequently as Bishop of Salisbury, but remaining an important minister in Henry's government. B. R. Kemp, "Roger of Salisbury," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed September 9, 2020, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-23956?rskey=2vfLua&result=2>.

chancellor, Rainald of Dassel, was concurrently the archbishop of Cologne.<sup>365</sup> Rainald, as archbishop, was Frederick's chief representative at the curia in Rome.<sup>366</sup> Likewise, Alexander III gave permission for Louis VII's chancellor, Hugh of Champfleury, to be seated as bishop of Soissons while retaining his chancery post.<sup>367</sup> Before the middle of August 1162, Becket was archbishop, chancellor and the holder of a number of royal and ecclesiastical preferments. He received his pallium on August 10 after walking barefoot into the cathedral (the pallium had been brought from Rome through Montpellier where it was awarded by Alexander III).<sup>368</sup> There Becket lay prostrate on the cathedral floor.<sup>369</sup> Henry's design had been completed.

### *A Changed Man*

The success of Henry's arrangement was not long in surviving. Chroniclers who compiled the multiple *Vitae* of Thomas' life following his assassination wrote that his installation as archbishop left him a changed man. Likely, however, the transformation was not that swift. Grim indicated that he assumed the monastic habit and set aside his lighter-colored clothing only after being chastened by the monks at Canterbury.<sup>370</sup> William of Canterbury reported that he believed Becket's acquiring a hairshirt and monk's habit worked to change the man. In his *Vita*. William quoted passages from Ephesians and Colossians about the rebirth of an old man

---

<sup>365</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 32. See also Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 53.

<sup>366</sup> "Rainald of Dassel," Britannica, accessed April 17, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Rainald-of-Dassel>.

<sup>367</sup> Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*, 118.

<sup>368</sup> John of Salisbury was a member of a small group that traveled to Montpellier to receive Becket's pallium from the pope. Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 28.

<sup>369</sup> Herbert Thurston, "St. Thomas Becket," *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 14. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912) accessed April 17, 2020, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14676a.htm>.

<sup>370</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 25. Edward Grim, in his *Vita S. Thomae Cantuariensis archiepiscopi et martyris, auctore Edwardo Grim*: in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, reported by Duggan in *Thomas Becket*, 25.

into a new.<sup>371</sup> Before the year was out, Becket resigned as chancellor; he had performed dual functions for less than six months.

Becket's transformation and newly found expression of faith set up the conflict that Becket had anticipated and, in all probability, knew he would not be able to elude. Henry returned from the continent in early 1163. In April, Becket, accompanied by a host of English ecclesiastics, departed for Tours and Alexander III's General Council, set against the backdrop of the conflict with Frederick Barbarossa and his promotion of Victor IV, an anti-pope. According to Alexander's biographer, Boso, the principal action at the council was the promulgation of a series of canons, though it is noteworthy that Alexander chose Arnulf of Lisieux, a favorite of King Henry, to preach the opening sermon and not the newly installed archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket, who was Arnulf's adversary.<sup>372</sup> Because Becket, as archbishop, held an ecclesiastical position higher than Arnulf among the English clergy present, Becket should have been selected for this honor. At the Council at Tours, Becket was attacked for not grasping the dedication of his predecessors to Church liberty. Becket also came to understand the extent to which Archbishop Anselm had protected the Church from the actions of secular leaders seeking to limit Church liberty, including Henry I. Becket returned from Tours alerted to the cause of Church liberty, that it be free from lay leaders.<sup>373</sup> Having set aside his position as

---

<sup>371</sup> See Ephesians 4:20-24 and Colossians 3:9. Both address putting away the former life and taking on the new one in a rebirth. See Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 66-67. Beryl Smalley described the conversion as "predictable, given [Becket's] temperament and circumstances." Insofar as he was no longer a secular cleric but a sacred minister, the transformation, in her view, was not theatrical. See Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*, 115.

<sup>372</sup> Keith Sisson and Atria A. Larson, eds., *A Companion to the Medieval Papacy* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 184 -186. For details about Arnulf's relationship with Henry II and the antipathy he held for Becket, See: David Knowles, *The Episcopal Colleagues of Archbishop Thomas Becket* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 58. See also Carolyn Poling Schriber, *The Dilemma of Arnulf of Lisieux* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 8.

<sup>373</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 86-87.

chancellor, he was unencumbered in his determination to defend against royal intrusion into ecclesiastical privileges.

The first official opportunity came in October at Westminster, at a general gathering of Church officials to translate the relics of St. Edward the Confessor, recently canonized, to a new chapel in the abbey that Edward had founded. It was at that assembly that Henry's grievances were articulated. They were three: Church protection for criminous clerics; excessive Church persecution of laity for immorality; and disregard for customs that had existed during the rule of Henry I. The particular complaint at the Westminster assembly—beyond Henry's anger at Becket's ingratitude and what Henry perceived to be betrayal—concerned several instances where Becket had prevented a cleric who had been convicted in a lay court from being punished by that court. Becket claimed that the cleric, who was the subject of an accusation of blackmail, could not be judged in a royal and secular court by fact of his ordination. The jurisdiction over the cleric and his offense belonged to the Church.<sup>374</sup> Becket, had his own complaints against Henry. For his part, was frustrated that the general land tax was to be diverted from local sheriffs to the royal treasury under Henry's proposed scheme to draw more revenue from the Church.<sup>375</sup>

At the conclusion of the gathering at Westminster, the bishops and the two archbishops in attendance were queried as to their support of the alleged Ancient Customs: the rights and entitlements of the Crown that Henry claimed should be reinstated. In Henry's view, these were

---

<sup>374</sup> A local burgess claimed he had been blackmailed into paying the resident dean and archdeacon to set aside charges of adultery that had been laid against the burgess' wife. The case was set for the ecclesiastical court because of the nature of the allegation. Henry wanted the dean prosecuted in royal court, but John of Canterbury, York's treasurer, asserted clerical immunity for the dean. Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 91-94.

<sup>375</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket."

the ones that Henry I had exercised prior to the disastrous kingship of Stephen. The clergy assented to the demands, “saving their order,” that is to say, where there was a conflict between the Ancient Customs and canon law representing the law of God, they would honor the latter.<sup>376</sup> Roger of Pontigny wrote that Henry was angry with the stipulation and immediately demanded that Becket return the castles he had been granted while chancellor. He further ordered Becket to meet with him at Northampton. There, on horses in a field, Henry challenged Becket, claiming he had raised him up, only to be treated so poorly. Becket responded that he was grateful for what Henry had done for him but was following God’s will. Henry shot back, “I do not want a sermon from you. Were you not the son of one of my villeins?”<sup>377</sup>

Several *Vitae* of Becket, including those of Edward Grim and William of Canterbury, relate that at Woodstock during the Christmas 1163 celebrations, Becket acceded to Henry’s demands that the Ancient Customs be upheld and orally agreed to the “customs of the realm”—apparently with the understanding that nothing further would be required of him. Becket perhaps was hoping that the Ancient Customs would not be enforced to their full effect and that his assent had allowed Henry to save face.<sup>378</sup> For Henry, though, the matter was not

---

<sup>376</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 95. The phrase uttered by Becket and repeated by the other clergy, “salvo ordine nostro,” echoed through their discussions and negotiations with Henry, and was repeated in two letters Becket sent to Henry while Becket was in exile, Letters 74 and 186. Becket was unswerving in position that the law of God was superior to the rule of man. Thomas Becket, *The Correspondence of Thomas Becket: Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162-1170* (Oxford University Press: 2000), 299, 827.

<sup>377</sup> Roger of Pontigny in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, reported in Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 83-84.

<sup>378</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 45. David Knowles, basing his knowledge on the writing of William of Canterbury, wrote that Becket requested and had a meeting with Henry instead at Oxford, about twelve miles southwest of Woodstock. Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 87.

settled. He was intent on reducing the Church's power in his realm, most especially England, to the highest extent possible.

The acid test for clergy came at Clarendon, a royal hunting lodge not quite three miles east of Salisbury. On January 13, 1164, a great council of bishops and barons was brought together. Henry's intention was for the clergy to swear to the promise Becket had given him at Woodstock: to formally ratify the customs of the realm. A document outlining the royal rights and Ancient Customs (*avitae consuetudines*)—the customs of his grandfather, Henry I, vis-à-vis the Church—soon bore the name Constitutions of Clarendon.<sup>379</sup> Sixteen of the ordinances in the Constitutions were not objectionable to the Church and could obtain agreement from the bishop.<sup>380</sup> There were, nonetheless, several 'customs' that presented conflicts for the ecclesiastics.

Substantively viewed, there were three major topics in the Constitutions of Clarendon: the establishment of a machinery of royal control over communication between the English Church and Rome; limitations on ecclesiastic censures; and boundaries of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in litigation. The third segment was particularly odious to the Church for it transferred jurisdiction over clerics accused in ecclesiastical courts to royal courts and created a division in authority where there had been none. Clause 3 read, "Clerks charged and accused of anything, being summoned by the Justice of the king, shall come into his court, to respond there for what it seems to the king's court that he should respond there; and in the

---

<sup>379</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 87; Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 44.

<sup>380</sup> Becket ultimately had strong reservations about two of the clauses that addressed clerical immunity. Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 104. Pope Alexander III did not consider all of the clauses odious. Six of the sixteen were acceptable to him (clauses 2, 6, 11, 13, 14, 16). Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 46.



ecclesiastical court for what it seems he should respond there; so that the Justice of the king shall send to the court of the holy church to see in what manner the affair will there be carried on. And if the clerk shall be convicted, or shall confess, the church ought not to protect him further.”<sup>381</sup> Clause 3 further gave the justice of the king the right to send a representative or a letter to hearings in the ecclesiastical court. Should the crime and subsequent conviction fall under royal jurisdiction, then the clerk would be defrocked and subject to secular punishment that was harsher than that he would otherwise face under Church jurisdiction. The criminous clerk would no longer have the Church’s protection or be subject to its more lenient punishment. John of Salisbury, five years earlier, had presaged this royal assault on clerical privilege in the *Policraticus*. In Book VIII Chapter 18, he wrote that even if a priest is “engaged in tyranny,” he cannot be subject to material, i.e., secular, punishment, unless he has been defrocked and subsequently “extends a bloodstained hand against the Church of God.... It always obtains that one is not to withstand two punishments on account of the same case.”<sup>382</sup> Becket saw a trial or a sentence in a second (royal) court as a double punishment, effectively placing the defendant in double jeopardy. He believed that unfrocking alone was ample punishment.<sup>383</sup>

---

<sup>381</sup> Ernest F. Henderson, *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896). The Avalon Project, Yale Law School, Lillian Goldman Law Library, accessed April 20, 2020, <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/medieval/constcla.asp>.

<sup>382</sup> John, *Policraticus*, ed. Cary J. Nederman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 205. Beryl Smalley presented the Latin text, quoting Anne Duggan: “in sacerdotem tamen, esti tirannum induat, propter reuerentiam sacramenti gladium materiale exercere non licet, nisi forte, cum exautoratus fueri, in Ecclesiam Dei cruentam manum extendat; eo quidem perpetuo optinente ut ob causam non cinsurgat in cum duplex tribulation.” Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*, 124.

<sup>383</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 104.

In all, the bishops held that six of the sixteen headings in the Constitutions of Clarendon trammelled upon Church rights; Becket objected to two of the clauses. Aside from the jurisdictional effrontery they saw in Clause 3, there was also objection to Clause 1 (clerical-lay disputes over advowsons were to be settled in the king's court); Clause 4 (forbidding quitting the realm without the king's consent), Clause 7 (requiring the king's approval for excommunication); Clause 8 (channeling appeals through the chain of leadership from the archdeacon to the king, and not to the pope); and Clause 12 (insisting on royal control of vacant episcopate elections).<sup>384</sup>

The effort to get clerical approval of all sixteen of the clauses created a shambolic back-and-forth. Becket's belief that an earlier complaisance would appease Henry and keep him from striving to assert full control was clearly wrong. The Church liberties that had commenced under Gregorian reforms a century earlier were being cast aside.<sup>385</sup> Becket initially recanted his earlier affirmation at Woodstock. The assembled bishops were apparently unanimous in supporting Becket's contention that he had erred in accepting the constitutions. In fact, W.L. Warren labelled the bishops' response "remarkable."<sup>386</sup> Henry II then demanded to know their views on the "customs" of England. To their surprise, the bishops were required to acknowledge (*recognoscere*) an explicit statement of the customs—ones that should be kept and observed in good faith and without evil intent. Each bishop was to set his seal on the document, affirming the sixteen elements of the Constitutions of Clarendon. Becket apparently felt deceived by the formulaic approach and hesitated to make the promise, which infuriated

---

<sup>384</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 89-90.

<sup>385</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 93.

<sup>386</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, 468.

Henry II. The bishops backed Becket, only to have him reverse himself three days later. He instructed the bishops to do likewise, but Becket's reversal let Henry conclude that it was only his opposition, and not that of the bishops, that had blocked adoption.<sup>387</sup> The bishops went into conference. They came out and Becket spoke, saying they would abide by them, saving their order.<sup>388</sup> Henry countered that there should be no reservation. Becket pointed out that bishops, on taking office, swore fealty to the king in life and limb and earthly honor, saving their order, and that in the term "earthly honor," royal customs were taken into account.<sup>389</sup>

At first, the bishops in attendance at the Great Council appeared willing to go along with Becket's retracted position, except possibly Roger of York and William of Norwich. Henry was infuriated, the ministers and barons in attendance began threatening talk, and Becket capitulated. However, harboring reservations, he withheld his seal, subsequently petitioning Alexander III for absolution for his earlier willingness to affirm all of the constitutions. Henry, at the same time, sought the pope's approval of the constitutions, but was rebuffed. Becket, absolved for his initial acceptance of the constitutions and then his cancellation of his approval, subsequently refused to adhere to the Ancient Customs prescribed by the document.<sup>390</sup>

The ensuing confrontation in Northampton commenced on Tuesday, October 6, 1164. The principal issue was a claim by John FitzGilbert the Marshal, baron and part of the exchequer

---

<sup>387</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, 474.

<sup>388</sup> "Saving their order" – "salvo ordine" – is the phrase Becket and other clerics used to indicate they would obey the king in all manner, except as it violated their vows to God.

<sup>389</sup> Warren, unsympathetic to the archbishop, described Becket as giving an "unnecessarily provocative proclamation of the untouchability of the clergy." Warren, *Henry II*, 468-469. Anne Duggan presents a different view of Becket's actions at Clarendon: "It was not Becket's aim to protect the violent and recalcitrant forever, but there were issues, both about the nature of secular penalties to which the Church was opposed, and the application of those physically deforming penalties to men who had been ordained and consecrated to God." Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 57

<sup>390</sup> Marshall W. Baldwin, *Alexander III and the Twelfth Century* (New York: Newman Press, 1968), 91-93.

household.<sup>391</sup> He asserted a denial of justice in the archbishop's court arising from a land arrangement. At the Great Council, Becket was additionally charged with contempt and with complaints going back to his tenure as chancellor, especially money supposedly owed that he insisted had been forgiven. At first, he had demurred attending on grounds of illness and faced another charge of contempt. The bishops who congregated along with the barons were concerned by Becket's reluctance to address the charges; Becket conceded, agreeing to appear but determined to stand firm against the claims. Finally, a week into the trial, preceded by an acolyte carrying his archiepiscopal cross, Becket met with the council, whereupon the Earl of Leicester began to lay the charges against the bishop. Becket hastily left the council hall for the monastery of St. Andrew, then departed in darkness for a night crossing of the channel on All Soul's Day, November 2, 1164. He arrived in France the following morning near Gravelines, roughly ten miles distant from Calais and Dunkirk.<sup>392</sup> From there he made his way to Soissons and connected with Herbert of Bosham.<sup>393</sup> Later that month, Louis VII came to personally greet him, rebuffing Henry's plea to reject Becket.<sup>394</sup> The French king's support was crucial to Becket as Henry had seized all of his property following the trial at Northampton.<sup>395</sup> At the moment, he was a man without a country or an income.

---

<sup>391</sup> FitzStephen, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, in Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 100. See also Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 94.

<sup>392</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 100.

<sup>393</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 87.

<sup>394</sup> Baldwin, *Alexander III and the Twelfth Century*, 94.

<sup>395</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed June 28, 2019, <https://www-oxforddnb>.

## *Becket in Exile*

Becket's escape from England was as a fugitive, a virtual outlaw. He earlier had failed twice to leave without royal permission and had been stopped twice.<sup>396</sup> Henry, doubtless, believed that Becket would be denied escape a third time, and as a consequence, no chase occurred after Becket abandoned the proceedings at Northampton. After all, he was nearly a giant at more than six feet tall, an appearance not easy to hide. Had he relinquished his role as archbishop, he could have quit England without threat to his life. He chose, instead, to retain his position and persist in his claim of the Church's liberty.<sup>397</sup>

John preceded Becket to France, landing in early 1164. Though they had known each other since at least 1148 and the Council of Reims, John was not Becket's closest associate. In Theobald's court, John was counselor, secretary, and emissary. Under Becket's regime, that role fell to Herbert of Bosham. Still, John filled a particular position in the archbishop's circle, and he was one of four whom Becket had retained from his predecessor's company of clerics.<sup>398</sup>

John's first letter to Becket arrived in early 1164, near the time of the Great Council at Clarendon and prior to the debacle at Northampton in October of that year. Sources are divided as to why John had departed England for France.<sup>399</sup> One theory is that he was on a reconnoitering expedition for Becket. Predicated on his writings—particularly *Policraticus*—and on his knowledge of Becket's temperament and his own experience of Henry's anger, he anticipated the archbishop's need to flee to safety. Indeed, previous archbishops Anselm and

---

<sup>396</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 85,

<sup>397</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 95.

<sup>398</sup> Luscombe, "John of Salisbury."

<sup>399</sup> Karen Bollermann and Cary J. Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, eds. Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud. (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 75.

Theobald had found it necessary to seek safety in a continental exile. Anselm, an earlier archbishop of Canterbury (1093 – 1109) had departed for France twice. Theobald was also forced to flee on two occasions under Stephen's reign. Lynsey Robertson holds that John's early departure was designed to pave the way for Becket. In John's letter to Becket, one can read that John was acting quietly to gather information for a possible Becket flight from England. John identified locations and support on the continent. Further confirmation in the letter came when John advised Becket to pose as a student while in Paris to "avoid rousing suspicions."<sup>400</sup> Notably, John wrote of the exile using the terms *exilium* and *proscriptio*. The terms represent two understandings of his time away from England. The first, *exilium*, has a happy and voluntary sense to it, as in Letter 136. The second period, *proscription*, after Christmas 1164, suggests a forced exile—a banishment.<sup>401</sup> Karen Bollermann and Cary J. Nederman also assert that John was on a dedicated surveillance mission, especially given his visits to French nobles and the king of France. They note, "From the perspective of the letter, then, John appears to be serving as Becket's advance herald, utilizing his extensive network of political connections to offer a pro-Canterbury account of the deteriorating conditions of Church-State relations in England."<sup>402</sup>

The second theory asserts that John had concerns for his personal safety. He had been rehabilitated once in 1156/57 due to Henry's wrath following the mission to seek papal approval for acquiring Ireland as a royal fee. Quite possibly, Henry wanted John out of the

---

<sup>400</sup> Letter 136, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* Vol II, 3-15.

<sup>401</sup> Lynsey Robertson, "Exile in the Life and Correspondence of John of Salisbury," in *Exile in the Middle Ages: Selected Proceedings from the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 8-11 July 2002*, eds. Laura Napran and Elisabeth M. C. Van Houts (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 186.

<sup>402</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 75.

picture, so he would be unable to support and counsel Becket.<sup>403</sup> In his letter to Becket prior to the archbishop's conflicts with Henry at Clarendon and Northampton, John is ambiguous as to the reason for his departure from England and presence in France.<sup>404</sup>

The letter John wrote to Becket following his arrival in France is lengthy and included a combination of advice regarding safe way-posts, reports of John's successful effort to meet with Louis and press Becket's case, admonitions to behave cautiously, and a subtle plea for financial support. Overall, John was quite pleased with the reception he—and by derivation, Becket and his cause—received. It is patently clear that there was no admiration of Henry on the part of the French, only fear and a desire to make trouble.<sup>405</sup>

Though John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket were unrelenting in their demand that the Church's liberties not be fettered, their approach to their exile differed substantially. John was not part of Becket's household in exile, but he did continue as an ambassador for the archbishop, writing and meeting with numerous people who could be drawn to Becket's cause.<sup>406</sup> Indeed, John was skilled at building and maintaining friendships,<sup>407</sup> an ability that was quite useful during the exile that he and Becket endured. Nederman describes John as being among the friendliest and most befriended men of the twelfth century, adding that John was

---

<sup>403</sup> "Praeterea regis indignationem gratis, conscientia teste, sustineo, et si mi nuntiis eius opposuero grauius sustinebo..." Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 29. Anne Duggan shares the view that John, having previously been a *persona non grata* in the eyes of Henry, was concerned about further royal disfavor. Anne Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," in *The World of John of Salisbury*, ed. Michael Wilks (Oxford: Ecclesiastical History Society, 1984), 430.

<sup>404</sup> John's letter to Archbishop Thomas Becket was sent after he landed in the county of Guînes, somewhere near Calais. Upon arriving, he traveled to St-Omer, and then on to Ypres and Paris. These were locations he visited with Becket's continental arrival in mind. Letter 136, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, Vol II, 3-15.

<sup>405</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* Vol II, 8.

<sup>406</sup> Yoko Hirata, "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents: A Study of the Epistolary Relationships Between John of Salisbury and his Correspondents" (PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1991), 562.

<sup>407</sup> Hirate, "John of Salisbury, Gerard Pucelle and *Amicitia*," in *Friendship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Julian Haseldine (Phoenix Mill: Sutton Publishing, 1999), 153.

neither the ineffective personage of Beryl Smalley's assessment nor the superior manipulator of John McLoughlin's perspective, but rather a valuable ally to Becket's cause.<sup>408</sup>

At times, he was encouraging, as when he wrote to Becket in January 1165 to give news of a correspondence between the pope and Empress Matilda, Henry's mother. According to Alexander, she expressed hope that Henry would follow papal wishes for a reconciliation among Henry, Louis, and Becket. Notwithstanding that element of good news, John also reported that Louis' warmth for Becket was cooling.<sup>409</sup> While John was an advocate for Becket's cause, he was not enamored of Becket's approach to the conflict. He chose to billet with his dear friend from Paris Peter of Celle, now abbot of Saint-Rémi in Reims. With exceptions, John and his small entourage that sometimes included his younger brother Richard, stayed there until November 1170. On the occasions when John left the shelter of Saint-Rémi, it was for a pilgrimage or peace mission.<sup>410</sup>

Becket, on the other hand, took up residence first at the Abbey of Pontigny, a noted Cistercian abbey, more than one hundred miles southeast of Paris. He was directed there at the encouragement of Alexander, having met with the pontiff on November 23, 1164, at Sens and offered to surrender his see as archbishop, an offer that was declined. Within a week of first

---

<sup>408</sup> Nederman draws upon Beryl Smalley in *The Becket Conflict and the Schools* and John McLoughlin, "Amicitia in Practice: John of Salisbury (c. 1120-1180) and His Circle," in *England in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Daniel William (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1990). Cary Nederman, "Friendship in Public Life During the Twelfth Century: Theory and Practice in the Middle Ages," *Viator* 38, no. 2 (2007): 387.

<sup>409</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* Vol II, 31.

<sup>410</sup> Twice John of Salisbury left Saint-Rémi on pilgrimage; in 1167, he travelled to Saint-Gilles in southern France, near Montpellier (he may have come to know it when he was part of a group that accepted Becket's pallium from the pope in 1162). John's second pilgrimage was to Vézelay, nearly 150 miles from Saint-Rémi, in 1169. Previously, in June 1166, Becket had preached at Vézelay, condemning the Constitutions of Clarendon and excommunicating a number of English bishops who had opposed him, including John of Oxford and Richard of Ilchester along with Richard de Lucy and Jocelin de Balliol among others. See Warren, *Henry II*, 494.



meeting with the pope, he and his retinue were installed at the abbey.<sup>411</sup> It was while at Pontigny that Becket adopted an even more austere manner of life. Having worn a hairshirt since his consecration, Becket assumed the habit of a monk at Pontigny.<sup>412</sup> He resided later at nearby Sens, which was closer to Paris. The abbeys at Sens and Pontigny both were distant from Reims, where John was situated. The physical distance underscored John's loyalties. He was a fierce defendant of the Church and "a servant of Canterbury, not a personal aide to Becket."<sup>413</sup>

Of a restless nature and character, though he had two principal bases of operation, Becket was hardly stationary. During his six-year exile in France, aside from Pontigny and Sens, he visited or stayed at Château-Thierry, Clairvaux, Rigny, Vézelay, Bourges, Angers, Orléans, Saint-Benoît, Trie, Meaux, and Rouen—shuttling back and forth between the Angevin territory of Henry II and the Capetian lands of Louis VII.<sup>414</sup> Further, peace conferences were held in at least nine locations, some in the cities in which Becket lodged. The conferences were designed to create accommodation for Becket to return to England and the see of Canterbury.<sup>415</sup>

---

<sup>411</sup> Herbert Thurston, "St. Thomas Becket," *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 14. Among the clerks accompanying Becket in what was a substantial entourage were Herbert of Bosham, his most trusted aide; Alexander Llywelyn; Lombardo di Piacenza; John Cantor; Henry of Houghton; and Gunter of Winchester. This core of clerks was principally responsible for Becket's considerable correspondence and support during exile. Their responsibilities were three-fold: gathering information, physically carrying the epistles, and providing him a deeper understanding of the law. Barlow, "Thomas Becket."

<sup>412</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 108. Becket biographer Edward Grim detailed the archbishop's deepening asceticism that included fasting and physical mortification: "He would lower himself into the stream which ran between the workshops of the monastery where he would remain for longer than human frailty can take." Edward Grim, in his *Vita S. Thomae Cantuariensis archiepiscopi et martyris, auctore Edwardo Grim*, in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury*, 2, 412-13, in Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 138.

<sup>413</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 76.

<sup>414</sup> Rosamond McKitterick, *Atlas of the Medieval World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 125; Hermann Kinder and Werner Hilgemann, *The Anchor Atlas of World History* v. I, trans. Ernest Menze (New York: Anchor Books, 1964), 160.

<sup>415</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 18.

In the spring of 1166, Becket chose to mount a campaign designed to influence Alexander III and Louis VII into full support of his cause of Church liberty and against Henry II. Efforts to mediate his grievances through Henry's mother Matilda were unsuccessful and the previous year, in April 1165, Henry had withdrawn from an anticipated meeting with Becket at Pontoise,<sup>416</sup> nearly twenty-five miles from Paris and more than one hundred thirty miles from Pontigny. At the behest of Louis, three of Thomas' counselors and confidants—Herbert of Bosham, Philip of Calne, and John of Salisbury—met with Henry at Angers in Anjou,<sup>417</sup> this time one hundred and eighty miles from Paris. John in particular had entered the meeting anticipating a personal reconciliation with Henry, as well as relief for and a resolution of the king's conflict with the archbishop. It is noteworthy that early in the exile John was conflicted, trying to remain principled and supporting Becket's cause of liberty for the Church yet striving to save his career. On one side John, Archbishop Theobald's closest associate and confidant, was supremely loyal to the Church. On the other side, John maintained a deep desire to get back into the graces of the king who earlier had ejected him from his court. Accordingly, the way he dealt with Becket was affected by the conflict; it was ever changing as there developed the possibility of reconciliation with Henry II.<sup>418</sup>

John had hoped for an opportunity for a personal accord with Henry and thus a return to England, but he was profoundly disappointed. In his encounter with the king at Angers Henry refused to retreat from his demand that Becket and his clerks swear to the Constitutions of

---

<sup>416</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 233.

<sup>417</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 139-142. Staunton quotes from Edward Grim's biography of Thomas Becket.

<sup>418</sup> Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 429.

Clarendon. Moreover, John was to abjure Becket, swearing to forego obedience to the archbishop.<sup>419</sup> John had desired a reconciliation of his own with Henry, having endured humiliation nearly a decade before. However, it was not forthcoming. Nederman posits that Henry's adamance was a shock to John. Given that John had been away from England when the disasters of Clarendon and Northampton occurred, it was understandable that Henry's vehement insistence stunned him. John had not truly grasped the magnitude of the events of 1163-1164, including the trial at Northampton.<sup>420</sup>

It was now quite clear to John that Henry's recalcitrance had hardened; this was not a personal grudge against Becket, but a royal desire to regain control over the Church. The possibility of a rapprochement seemed unattainable. John's perspective consequently shifted, and he now dedicated his energies and his considerable network to promoting the Church's liberties.<sup>421</sup> In the clash of *regnum* against *sacerdotium*, his side was clear. With his extraordinary base of knowledge and a deep reservoir of colleagues, John began a campaign on behalf of Church liberty. He employed his considerable education, literary talents, and network of friends and allies in an offensive on behalf of Becket. He also attempted to counsel Becket. In a letter in late July 1166, he pressed the archbishop to use his episcopal authority to convene the English bishops, on a matter to be determined, in a display of power against the king. In that same letter, he remonstrated against the subset of bishops who had sought to overturn Becket's disciplinary action against them. John concurrently launched a series of requests to other ecclesiastics, including John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers, asking them to write Henry

---

<sup>419</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 32.

<sup>420</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 31.

<sup>421</sup> Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 431.

to in support of Becket's appeal for Church liberty.<sup>422</sup> From the meeting at Angers in 1166 until his return to England in November 1170, John crafted more than one hundred and forty letters to friends and potential allies, virtually all of them promoting Becket's cause. He also wrote to the archbishop seven times, combining encouragement and caution in his epistles.<sup>423</sup>

In a provocative action following Henry's brusque dismissal of Becket's agents and their pleas, Becket mounted the pulpit of the abbey at Vézelay. There he condemned the Constitutions of Clarendon and excommunicated several bishops and suspended another. The reasons for the harsh strokes ranged from misappropriation of Canterbury possessions to communication with "German schismatics."<sup>424</sup> Though John was in full accord with Becket's position and no longer seeking a side-agreement for his own return to England, he persisted in chastising Becket with respect to the archbishop's rash moves. In a lengthy missive to Becket in July 1166, a month after the Vézelay ecclesiastical actions, John urged greater restraint.<sup>425</sup> John was sympathetic to the affrontery Becket had endured, writing, "Let your moderation, as is particularly expedient, be known to all."<sup>426</sup> However, he expressed his frustration with the archbishop in a letter to Osbert of Faversham sometime later in 1166 or possibly in 1167. John began the letter stating, "The lunatic and not the lover takes care of himself and his own

---

<sup>422</sup> Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 432.

<sup>423</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 79. An example of this is in John's lengthy letter of July 1166, after his eventful meeting with Henry at Angers: "...inde enim oportebit cautelam consilii informari, ut iuxta parabolam euangelicam...et cum rege congressurus copias suas domi recenseat, ne magni conaminis aut ostentationis subita et inconsiderata praesumptio risui aut ruinae turpiter exponatur." John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*. v. ii, 166. These letters will be discussed in depth in Chapter 11.

<sup>424</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 144.

<sup>425</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 77.

<sup>426</sup> "...non uidetur michi quod uos in verbi illo nimis scrupulosos esse expexiat..." Letter 176, *Domino Cantuariensi*, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* v. ii, 168.

property and reckons with other folks foreign to his interest."<sup>427</sup> In their complicated relationship, John had admiration for Becket, whose approach to life was much different from his own. Still, he was clear in his willingness to criticize Becket when the latter was stubborn and unreasonable.<sup>428</sup>

King Henry was incensed with Becket's intransigence. In response to the archbishop's alienations of clergy, Henry intensified his operation against Becket, pressuring the abbey at Pontigny to evict the archbishop and his entourage under the threat of dispatching the entire Cistercian order from his lands.<sup>429</sup> Henry resorted to that demand after Louis refused to acquiesce to the demand for Becket's banishment.<sup>430</sup>

For the next three years, from late 1167 through much of 1170, there were conferences and peace meetings, diplomacy and discord. Alexander III lessened some of Becket's ecclesiastical rebukes and punishments while at the same time fleeing to Benevento as Frederick Barbarossa advanced toward Rome with the intention of installing anti-pope Paschal III.<sup>431</sup> Before quitting Rome, Alexander dispatched two cardinals, Otto and William of Pavia, to Gisors in northern France, between Paris and Rouen, to meet with King Henry and Archbishop Becket on November 18, 1167. Their aspiration was to find common ground and to create peace between the Crown and the Church. It was the initial attempt of several that took place

---

<sup>427</sup>"Amentis est, non amantis, se et sua curare duntaxat et quae aliorum sunt ducere alienum." The editors suggest that Osbert is a doctor from Kent, one of John's many acquaintances and correspondents. Letter 195, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* v. ii, 274-275.

<sup>428</sup> Clement C. J. Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 141.

<sup>429</sup> Herbert Thurston, "St. Thomas Becket."

<sup>430</sup> Edward Grim detailed the requirement levied on the Cistercians in his *Vita* of Becket, in Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 148.

<sup>431</sup> Barbarossa succeeded, and the putative pontiff crowned Frederick emperor on the first of August 1167. Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 154.

before November 1170. Accompanying Becket were Herbert of Bosham, John of Salisbury, Lombardo of Piacenza, and several other members of Becket's exiled curia. Again, the demand was to swear to uphold the Constitutions of Clarendon. The answer from Becket remained the same, "yes," with the stipulation of "saving our honor." An ensuing meeting involving the same parties yielded an identical result. The papal emissaries, having failed, departed.<sup>432</sup>

John was party to a meeting on the first and second of July 1168 at La Ferté-Bernard, a little more than twenty-five miles northeast of Le Mans. As with several of the previous gatherings, it was a high-level meeting with Henry, Louis, and Becket present.<sup>433</sup> The conference was both to settle the dispute between Becket and Henry and to hear the complaint of the count of Flanders, whose daughter had been given as hostage to the English king and then, Count Eudo alleged, been made pregnant by Henry. A further disagreement concerned territory in Poitou. There was little, if anything, about a mediation between the king and the archbishop. In John's letter to Becket's aide, Lombardo di Piacenza, who was also Becket's tutor in canon law, John concluded that Becket's presence at the meeting was to provide Henry yet another opportunity to upbraid and publicly embarrass the pope for siding with Louis on the numerous grievances Henry claimed against the king of France. John wrote to Lombardo, quoting Henry, "I wish the cardinals could listen to what the French are saying; for this tale has given them a new proverb: 'the princes of the Church are the faithless allies of thieves.'"<sup>434</sup>

---

<sup>432</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 120.

<sup>433</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket."

<sup>434</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* v. ii, 609.

### *Becket and Henry: Reconciliation Attempts*

A subsequent effort to reconcile and create a path forward was set for 1169 at Montmirail, halfway between Reims and Paris, on January 6, 1169. There was once more a papal mission aimed at resolution of the conflict between Becket and Henry; this time the mediators were three monks, all priors.<sup>435</sup> Unfortunately, the opportunity for peace between Henry and Becket was blown. At Montmirail, both the king of England and the archbishop of Canterbury needed to save face. However, after begging forgiveness from Henry, Becket still would not withdraw the proviso, “saving the honor of my God,” from any testamentary statement respecting the Constitutions of Clarendon. Henry was indignant and turned to Louis VII, who had agreed to be present for the discussions, to decry Becket. In the face of condemnation from all those gathered, Becket remained steadfast. Thereafter, Louis VII lost interest in reconciliation efforts and proceeded to use Becket as a thorn in Henry’s side. Following the Montmirail meeting, papal legates approached Henry separately regarding reconciliation and he entertained the possibility. Problematically for Henry, Becket was unyielding in the matter of Church liberty. Becket reminded the emissaries that Alexander had told him at Sens in December 1164 that “not even to save his life should a bishop bind himself, saving God’s honor and his order.”<sup>436</sup>

In the spring of 1169, Becket imposed new excommunications, following a subsequent abortive attempt at a peace conference at Saint-Leger-en-Yvelines, thirty miles southwest of Paris.<sup>437</sup> Attending the February 7, 1169 meeting were Becket, Henry, Louis, and papal

---

<sup>435</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 154.

<sup>436</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, 497-498.

<sup>437</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 164.

representatives and aides including John of Salisbury, who found Henry to be agitated and inconsistent in his statements about Becket's exile.<sup>438</sup> This time, the ecclesiastical punishments were laid against the bishops of London and Salisbury and several members of the king's household. Henry retaliated with a series of extreme measures: locking down the ports, forbidding any communication with Becket or the pope, calling for imprisonment for anyone caught bearing a mandate, threatening anyone who obeyed an interdict, ordering all clergy overseas to return home or face the loss of revenues, and seizing the property of anyone favoring Becket, including members of Becket's extended family and household who had also been exiled. In a further action, all men older than fifteen-years of age had to take an oath to observe these decrees. This was not without difficulties, for the bishops summoned to London to accept the decrees chose not to appear, including Roger de Pont l'Évêque, archbishop of York. In the king's favor was the decision by Alexander not to confirm Becket's excommunications.<sup>439</sup>

Still another attempt at resolving the conflict was scheduled for November 1169. At this meeting, Becket and Henry encountered one another face-to-face at Montmartre, but Henry declined the kiss of peace sought by Becket as a seal of Henry's good intentions.<sup>440</sup> Henry's level of anxiety was increasing as he was also eager for his heir, fifteen-year-old Henry the Younger, to be crowned. In contravention of tradition that the archbishop of Canterbury perform the investiture, Henry instead turned to the archbishop of York, an inferior to Canterbury in English

---

<sup>438</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 271. In his letter to Bartholomew, Bishop of Exeter, John wrote about the failed meeting again between both kings, with Becket present. John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* Vol. II, 645-647.

<sup>439</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, 499.

<sup>440</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket."



Church hierarchy. With Becket still away from England, Young Henry was crowned on June 14, 1170 by the lesser archbishop of York. Previously, Alexander had granted permission for the archbishop of York to consecrate a monarch— but for a different reason. At the time the see of Canterbury was vacant following Theobald's death. The papal authority for the archbishop of York to act as a substitute had not been retracted once the episcopal throne had been filled; Henry used that prior approval to have his heir's installation conducted by Roger, the archbishop of York. The prince's coronation was one defiance too many for Alexander and, sensing an opening, John urged Becket to act immediately by imposing an interdict on England.<sup>441</sup> The pontiff allowed Becket to go forward with the previous censures, including the interdict. Henry had forced the issue with young Henry's investiture and expected the punitive gestures from Becket. Having gotten what he had long desired, the investiture of his heir, Henry signaled he was now willing, however, to make peace with Becket.

A conference next was designated for Fréteval, ninety miles southwest of Paris. The terms were essentially the same at those at Montmartre—that the sentences would remain if peace had not been achieved by Michaelmas on September 29, 1170. Becket accepted them at Fréteval on 22 July 1170, following a couple of days of negotiations, less than two months after the coronation.<sup>442</sup> It was on October 12 and 13, 1170, at a location between Blois and Amboise that Becket met for the final time with Henry and Louis. The meeting secured the archbishop's date of departure for England, and Canterbury: All Saints' Day, November 1. On that day he set out for Sens and return to his cathedral seat.<sup>443</sup> The financial drain of the extended exile and

---

<sup>441</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 130.

<sup>442</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, 502-505.

<sup>443</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* Vol. II, xliii.

the alienation of income from the cathedral properties stalled Becket's departure, however. Further, there was a delay in Alexander's epistle confirming Becket's censures and excommunications; the pope, at the same time, urged compassion on Becket's part, a plea that was disregarded. On the eve of his November crossing near Boulogne-sur-Mer, Becket dispatched an aide to precede him and deliver excommunications of Roger archbishop of York, Gilbert bishop of London, and Jocelin bishop of Salisbury, for their roles in the coronation of Young King Henry.<sup>444</sup>

### *The Return to Canterbury*

The way forward for Becket's return was set in motion. With the agreement in place, and the departure confirmed, John, who was still in France, sent a dispatch straight away to the community at Canterbury, advising them of Becket's return. In the letter addressed to sub-prior Brito, Robert the sacrist, and the obedientiaries of Christ Church Canterbury (the cathedral), John instructed them to "make wise provision for the future" for God has heard their prayers and wishes and restored "peace to the English Church [bringing] home from exile your father!"<sup>445</sup>

Although some scholars hold that John did not play a central role in the "prolonged set of negotiations" that facilitated Becket's return to England, and to Canterbury,<sup>446</sup> his campaign of letters to clergy and men (and women, including Matilda) of influence were valuable in

---

<sup>444</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket." Knowles, quoting Anonymous I in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, names the boy as Osbern. See Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 134.

<sup>445</sup> Letter 303, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* Vol. II, 713.

<sup>446</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 80.

raising the profile of Becket's cause and the liberty of the Church. During the taxing time in exile, John sustained his significant network of friends through correspondence, often careful to shield identities about the personages he described in his letters.<sup>447</sup> John did assume a critical role in scouting Becket's trip home as a member of the advance group. On his arrival at Canterbury in mid-November, John discovered property that had been seized, exploited, and plundered since he had left six years earlier. In a letter to Peter of Celle, John outlined the situation he encountered and the lengths the king's "devout and filial officials" had taken to strip him of real and personal property. Those returning from exile "should find nothing or almost nothing save empty houses largely in ruin, barns destroyed, [and] threshing floors bare,"<sup>448</sup> all in contravention of Henry's agreement to restore Becket and his entourage to the *status quo ante* that had been made at Fréteval on July 22, 1170.<sup>449</sup> Despite the fact that John was designated as the archbishop's agent and was serving in that official capacity, he was rebuffed by the barons and royal representatives. The deception of earlier negotiations was once again in evidence.<sup>450</sup>

News of Becket's arrival in England came in advance of the archbishop. He and his party landed at Sandwich, some ten miles north of Dover on the eastern coast. He had been warned by the count of Boulogne that a company of the king's men awaited him at several ports, including Dover; they were seeking to arrest him. John of Salisbury and Herbert of Bosham,

---

<sup>447</sup> Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 438.

<sup>448</sup> Letter 304, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* Vol. II, 715.

<sup>449</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket."

<sup>450</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 80.

having crossed the Channel earlier in November, were also wary and in danger themselves.<sup>451</sup>

Ranulf de Broc, whose family had appropriated Canterbury's Saltwood Castle and other Canterbury "temporalities,"<sup>452</sup> was the leader of the king's posse. The men did intercept Becket but found no contraband in the form of orders of excommunication from Becket's hand—only those he was to impose on Roger of York, Gilbert Foliot, and Jocelin of Salisbury if they would not accept the pope's final judgment regarding their role in young Henry's coronation. Becket was the papal legate, having been appointed to the position in 1166, and had the authority to deliver the papal message.<sup>453</sup>

The route through Kent to Canterbury and the cathedral was lined with people eager to acclaim Becket's return and prostrating themselves for his blessings.<sup>454</sup> Herbert of Bosham later wrote that some of the people—paupers—were "tearing off their garments and spreading them on the road," imitating Christ's triumphal ride into Jerusalem.<sup>455</sup> Bells were rung, and the procession was accompanied by "organs, hymns and spiritual songs."<sup>456</sup> When the cavalcade arrived at the cathedral, they discovered it festively decorated; the monastic community had heeded John's admonition to prepare for the archbishop's return.<sup>457</sup> The company of knights, including de Broc, agreed to meet the archbishop the next day in Canterbury, to press for absolution of the three clerics who had been excommunicated.<sup>458</sup>

---

<sup>451</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 223. Earl Reginald de Warenne urged Becket to send an alarm to John of Salisbury, John of Canterbury, Gunther and Alexander of Wales that "if they were caught, they would be put to the sword." See also Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 204.

<sup>452</sup> Barlow, "Thomas Becket."

<sup>453</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 305.

<sup>454</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 224.

<sup>455</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 305.

<sup>456</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 305.

<sup>457</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 305.

<sup>458</sup> Herbert of Bosham, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, 476-480 in Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 184.

As John of Salisbury had reported from his mid-November survey, the properties of Canterbury were in fair ruin. Those that were not despoiled remained under de Broc's control, yet to be returned to the diocese for the archbishop's use. John was still at risk for he and the others were seen as interlopers, even traitors.<sup>459</sup> But his sense of the dangerous environment and his desire for a cautious path forward were not shared by the archbishop. The following day, Becket again refused to remove the sentences for the three clerics. Consequently, Roger of York, Gilbert Foliot, and Jocelin of Salisbury, informed young Henry that Becket, his former tutor, was seeking to have him removed, and then they set sail for Normandy and Henry's Christmas Court at Bur-le-Roi.<sup>460</sup> William FitzStephen, in his *Vita* of Becket, wrote that when the archbishop travelled to Winchester eight days later with three destriers as a gift, young Henry refused to give him audience.<sup>461</sup> On his return to Canterbury, FitzStephen continued, Becket learned that de Broc has seized a ship with goods bound for Becket's household, killed some of the sailors, and imprisoned others at nearby Pevensey Castle.<sup>462</sup>

Rebuffed by Henry, young king Henry, their officials, and several of the bishops who had allied themselves with the king during his exile, Becket returned to Canterbury, arriving from the fruitless trip to Winchester on December 18, or possibly December 19, the last of three

---

<sup>459</sup> Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 204.

<sup>460</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 306.

<sup>461</sup> FitzStephen, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, in Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 185.

<sup>462</sup> FitzStephen, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, in Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 186.

Ember days.<sup>463</sup> During the week leading up to Christmas, Becket proceeded with clerical ordinations but momentarily delayed the ordination of monks who had joined the Canterbury chapter during his absence. He ordained the monks immediately before Christmas.

Christmas day fell on a Friday in 1170. A large congregation was gathered in Christ Church Cathedral in Canterbury to take part in mass and to hear the returned archbishop preach.<sup>464</sup> Becket did not hold back. Unable or unwilling to refrain from censuring those who had militated against him, Becket excommunicated—from the pulpit—"all violators of the rights of his church and the fomenters of discord in general" and singled out Robert and Ranulf de Broc along with vicars who had assumed several churches. He then pronounced clerical inhibitions against the ecclesiastics who had participated in the June coronation of the young king, preventing them from exercising their priestly functions. To explain and to justify his censures and disciplines, Becket deployed a cadre of his clerks on missions to the king of France, the pope, and other allies in France.<sup>465</sup> John of Salisbury and William FitzStephen remained with him in the cathedral chapter, while others in his circle, including Herbert of Bosham, Alexander Llewelyn, Gilbert Glanville, John Planeta and his chaplain Richard left with their orders. In a letter to Peter of Celle, John's close friend at Saint-Rémi, John wrote longingly

---

<sup>463</sup> Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 307; Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 205. Ember days are days of prayer, fast, and abstinence, created by Pope Gregory VII as part of his reforms. In December, they are the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday following December 13, and they mark the beginning of liturgical seasons. See Francis Mershman, "Ember Days." *The Catholic Encyclopedia* vol. 5. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1909), accessed April 29, 2020, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05399b.htm>.

<sup>464</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 138.

<sup>465</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 233.

of being at the French abbey, and asked for prayers for those who “by our own merits are in peril.”<sup>466</sup>

### *Pending Death and Martyrdom*

Word of the excommunications reached Henry, and the three bishops affected by Becket’s orders arrived as well to lay out their grievances. Even before the Christmas Day pronouncements, Henry was in a sufficient rage to declare that Becket needed to be suppressed. Henry’s outburst is variously reported, though the *Vita* of Becket attributed to Anonymous I is generally accepted: “What set of idle cowards I keep in my kingdom who allow me to be mocked so shamefully by a low-born clerk.”<sup>467</sup> At those words, four knights—William de Tracy, Reginald FitzUrse, Hugh de Morville, and Richard Brito (le Breton)—set out secretly and separately for England to silence the meddlesome priest. In a rendezvous at Saltwood Castle, still in the grip of Ranulf de Broc, the quartet planned their assault for the following day, December 29. That same day, Becket made his rounds of the altars in the cathedral, later sharing the midday meal with companions including John of Salisbury.<sup>468</sup>

The knights arrived at the cathedral in mid-afternoon and were offered a meal, which they declined. Subsequently they were guided to Becket’s chambers, where the archbishop had been resting. William FitzStephen later wrote that the four were accompanied by twelve others

---

<sup>466</sup> “qui periclitamur ex nostris.” Letter 304, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* v. ii, 724-725.

<sup>467</sup> *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, iv, 69. Edward Grim reported that Henry used the words ‘drones and traitors’ in lieu of ‘cowards.’ See Edward Grim, in his *Vita S. Thomae Cantuariensis archiepiscopi et martyris, auctore Edwardo Grim*, in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*.

<sup>468</sup> Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 140-141.

who had joined from local castles and the neighborhood to take part in the planned arrest of Becket. A heated argument ensued and Becket's clerks who were at hand hustled him off. John, sensing Becket's willingness for martyrdom, and anticipating the knights return, challenged Becket. Anonymous I details their conversation: John said to Becket, "You are doing what you always do. You act and think just as you think best, without asking anyone's advice," to which Becket replied, "Well, Master John, what would you have done?" John in turn said, "You ought to have called a meeting of your council. Those knights want nothing more than a good reason for killing you." Becket stood his ground, saying, "We have all got to die, and we must not swerve from justice for fear of death. I am more ready to meet death for justice sake for the Church of God than they are to inflict it on me." John pressed Becket, stating, "We're sinners, the rest of us and not yet ready to die. I cannot think of anyone except yourself who is asking for death at the moment." Becket rejoined, "May God's will be done."<sup>469</sup>

In Becket's final hours before the fatal blows from Richard Brito and others, John continued to advise, chastise, and counsel Becket, as he had done since they were both clerks in Archbishop Theobald's court. John watched from behind an altar as Becket was struck down and martyred.

---

<sup>469</sup> Anonymous I in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, iv, 74, in Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 143-144.



## CHAPTER 4 – JOHN OF SALISBURY AND THE *ENTHETICUS*

John of Salisbury is regarded as one of the most educated men in England of his time. His knowledge of scholarship ranging from theology of the Church Fathers to the classical writings of Greek and Roman authors was virtually without parallel in his milieu. John's *Policraticus* is acknowledged as a leading political treatise of the Middle Ages, presaging the Italian Marsilius of Padua (1280-1343).<sup>470</sup> Before his other writings—the *Policraticus*, the *Metalogicon*, the *Historia Pontificalis*, his substantial canon of correspondence, and his two lives of saints, Anselm and Thomas—he wrote two other works. They bear similar names, each beginning with the *Entheticus* and each crafted in poetic form rather than prosaic. The longer of the two, the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* (also known as the *Entheticus maior*)<sup>471</sup> is a work in four parts and is free-standing. The shorter *Entheticus* serves as a prologue to *Policraticus*. The general agreement is that *Entheticus* means “Introduction” and was a neologism created by John. Both poems are in Latin, as was all of John's writing.

---

<sup>470</sup> Gloria Lotha, “Marsilius of Padua,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed May 12, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Marsilius-of-Padua>.

<sup>471</sup> While the translation is not exact, Cary Nederman suggests that the rendering is “Introduction to the Teachings of the Philosophers.” Cary J. Nederman, *John of Salisbury* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 44. Ronald E. Pepin labels ‘*Entheticus*’ as “a puzzling neologism” that has inspired a number of “interpretations, solutions and confusions” including, but not limited to “Summary” and “Indicator.” Ronald E. Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, eds. Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 150. Daniel Joseph Sheerin quotes Carl Schärschmidt, *Johannes Saresberiensis nach Leben und Studien, Schriften und Philosophie* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1862) as offering that *Entheticus* was possibly a distortion of “Nutheticus” or possibly “Eutheticus,” the result of a scrivener's error. Daniel Joseph Sheerin, “John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*, Critical Text and Introduction” (PhD Thesis, University of North Carolina, 1969), 28.

The *Entheticus maior* is a poem of 1,852 lines whose style was, according to Jan van Laarhoven, “quite traditional in the twelfth century.”<sup>472</sup> More precisely, the form is a distich, a hexameter plus pentameter with metrical caesura, always in the middle of the pentameter, and two dactyls after the caesura. The composition was reflective of the accepted meter of the period.<sup>473</sup> Van Laarhoven found it quite noteworthy that John selected poetry over prose, postulating that the scholar wanted to use the stipulated form of the period to pen a critique of schools and society, Church and State, the Bible and classics, and philosophy and ethics.<sup>474</sup>

One can detect a number of purposes in the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*. Among the aims are didactic and satirical commentary. John sought to enlighten the reader regarding philosophical wisdom and its relationship to one of his most highly esteemed values: virtue. Further, as a humanist, he desired to link human reason and divine truth. At a practical level, he strove for “the good order of the school and the court.”<sup>475</sup> These themes were central to the *Entheticus maior* in particular. C. R. Elrington points to the strong tensions John creates between the liberal arts and theology, with the former embracing the “pagan philosophy” that was foundational to the trivium and the quadrivium, promoted by Cicero; it was not Christian in source.<sup>476</sup>

---

<sup>472</sup> Jan van Laarhoven and John, *John of Salisbury's Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 17-18.

<sup>473</sup> John used a familiar style of meter in the *Entheticus*. An example of the hexameter is in the *Disticha Catonis* of Theodulus, a widely used primary school textbook. C. R. Elrington, “John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*: The Light it Throws on the Educational Background of the Twelfth Century,” (PhD Thesis, University of London, 1954), 133. In the *Entheticus*, John also adopts a design that was practiced in the twelfth century, that of combining poetry and philosophy. See Richard McKeon, “Poetry and Philosophy in the Twelfth Century: The Renaissance of Rhetoric,” *Modern Philology* 43, no. 4 (May 1946): 225. Another notable style of the period was rhythmical alliteration. It was not, however, part of John's construction of the *Entheticus*. See N. F. Blake, “Rhythmical Alliteration,” *Modern Philology* 67, no. 2 (Nov. 1967): 118-124.

<sup>474</sup> Van Laarhoven and John, *John of Salisbury's Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1.

<sup>475</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 65.

<sup>476</sup> Elrington, “John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 31-32.

To provide himself some cover from the recriminations that would result from directly attacking particular individuals and institutions that were the objects of his satire (and scorn), John of Salisbury used an ancient literary device, the *prosopopoeia*. It was designed to hide identities by using an inanimate object to stand for a living entity. Among others, Ovid in *Tristia* employed it. John favored the Latin poet and did likewise in *Entheticus*.<sup>477</sup> The abstract object in the *Entheticus* is a little book, "*libelle*," to which, or whom, John proffers counsel and criticism. Van Laarhoven recognized John's use of the stratagem as "a good way for an author to shield himself behind such a conversation with his brain-child" while at the same time keeping identities hidden except from those astute enough to recognize the insightful allusions.<sup>478</sup> Thus, in the opening verses, John wrote:

*Quis venias, que causa uie, quo tendis et unde.*

*Forsitan inquiret; pauca libelle refer.*<sup>479</sup>

The *prosopopoeia* method is a bit uneven in the *Entheticus maior* for, at times, the little book fails to be the addressee; John is more successful in employing this device in the shorter *Entheticus in Policraticum* that is attached to and precedes the *Policraticus*. John refined the technique before his final edit of the political treatise. In the second treatment of the *Entheticus*—the *minor*—the dialogue with the *libelle* is more compact and coherent; it has a clearer focus.<sup>480</sup>

---

<sup>477</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 151.

<sup>478</sup> Van Laarhoven and John, *John of Salisbury's Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1, 48.

<sup>479</sup> "[Perhaps the court will ask who you are that come] what is the reason for your journey, whither you are going and from where: reply briefly, little book." Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 143; 239. Elrington notes that there are only two complete medieval copies of the *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum* known to exist. This text is from the British Museum, MS Royal 13. D. iv. Vellum, ff. 219. Twelfth century (1167-1183).

<sup>480</sup> Sheerin, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 50.

The *Entheticus maior*, of particular interest here, is divided into four sections, preceded by an introduction and ended with concluding verses of a farewell. Part I is a long monologue presented by an opponent of liberal arts, followed by a rebuttal regarding the consequences of such a view. The segment further contains discussions of word, reason, and grace. Part I also includes an encomium of true philosophy followed by returning to study of the Holy Scripture as the principal priority, as John undoubtedly viewed scripture as superior to philosophy. Part II addresses ancient philosophers, noting three schools in particular: Stoic, Epicurean, and Peripatetic. A series of individuals are then named: the Greek Pythagoras, Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato, along with the Roman Cicero, Varro, and Seneca. The second part ends with a brief statement “on the superiority of genuine Christian ‘philosophy.’”<sup>481</sup> Part III features a renewed encounter with adversaries. *Libelle’s* protectors in the *Entheticus maior* enunciate three elements to be aware of: the Court, hospices (inns), and Canterbury. Here the Court is excoriated, hospices can be either good or bad, and Canterbury is a safe place. Finally, Part IV is a discussion of fear and freedom that embraces a description of the functions of love and grace for the one who is a true philosopher.<sup>482</sup> At times there is a lack of coherence, a deviation from the thematic approach. The transitions from one part to another lack fluidity, suggesting interruptions in John’s writing. This brusque nature of the shifts affects the flow of concepts John is imparting to *libelle*.<sup>483</sup> However, the form and style remain constant, if not the substance. The *prosopopoeia* scheme of anthropomorphizing the little book is unchanged. An additional “connecting thread” as Cary Nederman views it, is the constant reference to a

---

<sup>481</sup> Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 300.

<sup>482</sup> Van Laarhoven and John, *John of Salisbury’s Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1, 22.

<sup>483</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 154.

journey. John has the *libelle* travelling and exposed or potentially experiencing a variety of circumstances that challenge values and ethical positions.<sup>484</sup>

The *Entheticus in Policraticum (minor)* is but one-fifth the length of the *Entheticus maior* and was designed to be an introduction to the *Policraticus*, though it does not actually create a seamless lead-in to the treatise. As with the *Entheticus maior*, it is divided into two parts and anticipates a journey. In Part I, the journey is divided into three stages: the journey of the addressee (again *libelle*) to the chancellor; contacts and discussions with the chancellor after having completed the journey; a return journey to Canterbury, a homecoming. Part II is set in Canterbury upon return from the royal court. Here, again, there are three segments, all of which function as admonishments: how to act, talk, and behave at Canterbury; those people and behaviors to avoid; and at last a short farewell.<sup>485</sup> This shorter *Entheticus in Policraticum*, only 306 lines in length, suggests that it was commended to a patron. If one dissects the pun, “*Hic est qui regni leges cancellate iniquas*,” it is apparent that the ‘chancellor’ who has the opportunity to ‘cancel’ laws is Becket, the dedicatee.<sup>486</sup>

#### *John’s Reasons for Dedicating the Entheticus to Becket*

John of Salisbury had abundant motivation for crafting the *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*, the *Entheticus maior*. He had reason to be concerned about a return to the regime of anarchy that he and his family experienced during the reign of Stephen from 1135 to 1153. Further, the new King Henry’s young age, his dedication to the privileges of his

---

<sup>484</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 45.

<sup>485</sup> Van Laarhoven and John, *John of Salisbury’s Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1, 68.

<sup>486</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 159.

grandfather, Henry I, and his own temperament served to raise the specter of reducing the Church liberties that John held dear. Because the *Entheticus maior* has multiple and disjointed parts, it is essential to place the poem in time and to examine the chronological imperatives that compelled him to write it.

John of Salisbury experienced a well-reported disgrace and banishment from Henry II's court in 1156.<sup>487</sup> It was a severe estrangement that puzzled and wounded John. Recalling that experience, and placing it on a continuum, it is possible to establish that *de minimis* the latter portions of the poem were written during his exile, at a time when Becket was still Chancellor. But what of the first portions of the poem? A number of historians, including Ronald Pepin, hold that *Entheticus maior* was at least begun while John was a student in Paris—sometime before 1148—and then completed in the 1150s.<sup>488</sup> Van Laarhoven has suggested that John's three months at Benevento with Adrian IV, beginning in November 1156, constituted a productive writing period for John and that much of the poem was drafted then, with a final *Entheticus minor* in September 1159. After all, the *Entheticus minor* was the prologue to the *Policraticus*, a substantial political writing and court critique that was delivered to Becket during the Toulouse campaign.<sup>489</sup> Nederman concurs that John likely constructed Parts I and II of *Entheticus maior* while studying in France. He suggests that the sections containing a rebuke of some of the pedagogy he experienced in Paris help to explain the "temporal disjuncture in the

---

<sup>487</sup> Giles Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 71. Constable refuted earlier views that John of Salisbury had suffered humiliation in 1159, by placing John's Letter 96 to "An Intimate Friend," perhaps Peter of Celle, Abbot of Saint-Rémi, in mid-April 1157 rather than the summer of 1160. "Interdum sibi laesit nasum uel eruit oculum, qui salutifero signo faciem munire disponit." John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, Vol 1, 148.

<sup>488</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 149.

<sup>489</sup> Van Laarhoven and John, *John of Salisbury's Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1, 6.

composition of the poem.”<sup>490</sup> David Luscombe advocates an earlier date for completion of the *Entheticus maior*, arguing, “In his early years at Canterbury he [John] wrote an *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* which he dedicated to Becket as chancellor (and therefore finished in or after January 1155).”<sup>491</sup> Whether or not the poem was dedicated to Becket, or whether Becket actually sought its composition, remains a subject of debate; scholars are divided on the matter.<sup>492</sup>

John’s motivations are more apparent when one looks at the time frame for his writing of the *Entheticus maior*. If we accept that it was written in two segments, first Parts I and II followed by Parts III and IV, and that it was completed by 1159, the forces driving John become clear. Because Part I of the *Entheticus maior* centers on academics, one can readily imagine that John desired to offer a rather harsh critique of those, as Pepin describes them, “who denigrate the liberal arts and disparage wide reading of classical *auctores* in favor of a facile, utilitarian course based on ‘natural eloquence.’”<sup>493</sup> John was a student and scholar who read widely, making a low-brow approach to education deeply offensive to him. In a broader reflection, Pepin sees the entire work as “an outspoken exhortation and courageous censure of societal ills composed by an author of impressive learning and ample wit.”<sup>494</sup> John was demonstrably

---

<sup>490</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 10; Bollermann and Nederman, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 65. Nederman contradicts his own earlier perspective regarding the completion date of the *Entheticus maior*. Previously, he had held that John finished the poem between December 1154 and Easter 1155. Cary J. Nederman and Arlene Feldwick, “To the Court and Back Again: The Origins and Nature of the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* of John of Salisbury,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 21 (1991): 130.

<sup>491</sup> David Luscombe, “John of Salisbury,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed June 28, 2019, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-14849?rskey=ADiM15&result=4>.

<sup>492</sup> Rodney Thomson wrote that the *Entheticus maior* was written at the request of Becket. Rodney Thomson, “What is the *Entheticus*?” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 295.

<sup>493</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 151.

<sup>494</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 156.

unhappy with large segments of his world and employed a conversation with *libelle* to vent his feelings. His wit in the dialogue with the little book was instructive and hardened in the crucible of satire. John mocked those who were intellectually slovenly and fabricated characters who were surrogates for his real targets.

The first two parts are more a reflection on John's time as a student in Paris, generally accepted as 1136-1148. Those portions may have been completed as early as 1156, before his "alleged disgrace" of late 1156-1157. The beginning of Henry's reign, in late 1154, must have appeared as a balm. After all, the Church had supported the Angevins in the conflict with Stephen, and Archbishop Theobald had taken part in negotiations to seat Henry on the throne.<sup>495</sup> The circumstances soon changed, however, as Henry pressed for greater control of the Church and a recognition of the "Ancient Customs" enjoyed by his grandfather, Henry I.<sup>496</sup> As such, there is reason to believe that the longer poem (and its shorter companion that served as an introduction to the *Policraticus*), was not completed until after the banishment John suffered. Because the dating of *Entheticus maior* relies principally on internal evidence in the document, the time period ranges from January 1155 to Archbishop Theobald's death more than five years later, in April 1161. The reasonable period is from early 1155 to September 1159

---

<sup>495</sup> "Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Theobald>.

<sup>496</sup> Again, there is considerable disagreement among scholars as to the date by which the *Entheticus maior* was completed. Indeed, Cary Nederman suggests that the poem was finalized before Becket left Canterbury to assume the role of Chancellor in late 1154. Nederman, writing with Karen Bollermann, posits that the work was a farewell present to Becket—and a guidebook as well. Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 67. He made a similar argument along with Arlene Feldwick in "To the Court and Back Again: The Origins and Nature of the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* of John of Salisbury," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 21 (1991): 130.



when the *Entheticus minor*—reminiscent of *Entheticus maior*—was used as an introduction to the *Policraticus* that was delivered to Becket in southern France.<sup>497</sup>

However, the *Entheticus maior* is more than a stringent commentary on mid-twelfth century educational inclinations. If we understand that Parts I and II are distinct and separate in time and motif from Parts III and IV, then we arrive at a more acute understanding of John's experiences and worries about the nature of Henry's reign. Motivation for the final two parts, with comments more pointedly directed at the royal court and the dangers therein, rises to the surface. Rodney Thomson's perspective is that the shift in tone from Part II to Part III reflects John's own involvement with the court and his banishment. Thomson notes, "As a consequence, the *Entheticus*, which was begun as an exhortation to public men to regulate their actions according to the precepts of the ancient philosophers, ended as a semi-private statement of John's own philosophic principles and of his bitterness at his—and their—rejection by the court."<sup>498</sup> The condemnation is direct and sustained. Elrington's schematic of the *Entheticus maior* yields more than 230 lines in the poem that form an attack on the rule of the Norman kings, the depravity of the court, and the tyranny of royal officials' suggestions for a means of correcting abuses (that include Becket's behavior at court), and lack of fairness in royal law courts.<sup>499</sup>

---

<sup>497</sup> A number of arguments for various dates are offered by Sheerin in "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*, Critical Text and Introduction," 31-36. Johan Huizinga, writing in the middle of the last century, also proposed a later date for the completion of the *Entheticus maior*—by 1159. Johan Huizinga, "John of Salisbury: A Pre-Gothic Mind," in *Men and Ideas: History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 18. The later date of 1159 is generally rejected by contemporary scholarship. See Nederman, *supra*.

<sup>498</sup> Rodney Thomson, "What is the *Entheticus*?" 295.

<sup>499</sup> Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 85-86. *E. g.* "Illa tyrannorum pax es ut nemo reclamet, quicquid agant possint omnia, iura nichil." "The peace of tyrants is such that whatever they do, no one should protest against it." 214–303.

## *The Audience for the Entheticus*

If John's motivation was to challenge the educational establishment in the earlier parts of the *Entheticus maior* and to raise a cry against the excesses and injustices of the court in the latter parts, then who was his audience for this work? Pepin proposes a wide audience, well beyond Becket, the purported dedicatee.<sup>500</sup> Van Laarhoven submits that the lack of clarity regarding poem's audience is one of the problems of *Entheticus maior*. Unlike the *Policraticus* or the *Metalogicon*, no specific recipient is named. Those writings are designated for Thomas Becket, Chancellor of England. It could be, offers van Laarhoven, that Becket was the intended recipient based on the phrase "who orders to write."<sup>501</sup> That phrase appears as a closing for the manuscript.<sup>502</sup> Criticism of Becket in the poem is also veiled, though the pun on "chancellor" appears intended.

*Hic est, carnificum qui ius cancellat iniquum,*

*Quos habuit reges Anglia capta diu,*

*Esse putans, quos est perpessa tyrannos;*

*Plus venerator eos, qui nocuere magis.*<sup>503</sup>

John of Salisbury's profound knowledge of the classical and ancient writings that were available at the time was the result of a sharp intellect and an excellent education. His

---

<sup>500</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 148.

<sup>501</sup> Van Laarhoven and John, *John of Salisbury's Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1, 47-49. That the text was dedicated to and delivered to Becket in France supports the position that Becket was the one who urged John to write it.

<sup>502</sup> "Editus ad Thomam cancellarium postea Cantuariensem archiepiscopum." Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 91.

<sup>503</sup> English translation: "This is he who abolishes (cancels) the unjust laws/Of brutes who long held England captive as its kings/Considering as kings those it endured as tyrants/It honors most those who have wrought most harm." *Entheticus maior*, lines 1297-1300. Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 212.

inquisitive nature and his access to one of the superior libraries of northwestern Europe, the one he frequented at Canterbury when he was in the court of Archbishop Theobald, provided the opportunity to extend his knowledge beyond his twelve years of formal education in Paris. His outstanding education and access to retrieved Greek and Latin writings, texts, and treatises furthered his appreciation of the ancients that also exacerbated his frustration with the growing trend to turn from classical studies to “practical studies” with inadequate theoretical grounding.<sup>504</sup> That sentiment comes through in the *Entheticus maior* in John’s harsh critique of the court. He had little patience for those who disdained knowledge of the classics and instead preferred a “facile, utilitarian course” grounded in one’s presumed natural gifts of eloquence.<sup>505</sup> John drew upon his readings of Juvenal, Horace, Persius, Martial, Macrobius, Chalcidius, Ovid, Virgil, and Petronius, among others,<sup>506</sup> to develop a cast of characters representing actual figures at court.<sup>507</sup> Among the Latin writers, Ovid and Virgil were among those John quoted most frequently.<sup>508</sup> John’s knowledge of the Greek philosophers was as extensive as it could be in that age, deriving mainly from the writing of Latin authors, both pagan and Christian.<sup>509</sup> As to the Greek philosophers, John developed a refined regard for Aristotle while under the tutelage of Abelard in Paris; his understanding and appreciation of Plato came later when he studied

---

<sup>504</sup> August Charles Krey, *John of Salisbury’s Knowledge of the Classics* (BA Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1907), 1.

<sup>505</sup> Ronald E. Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*. (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 151, 155.

<sup>506</sup> Janet Martin, “Uses of Tradition: Gellius, Petronius and John of Salisbury,” *Viator* 10 (1979): 57-76.

<sup>507</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 151, 155.

<sup>508</sup> Krey, *John of Salisbury’s Knowledge of the Classics*, 33.

<sup>509</sup> Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 103. There is question as to whether John read the entire works of all the authors he quoted. According to Janet Martin, at times he did have access to classical works and read them. Frequently, however, he drew upon a *florilegium*, a synopsis, compilation, or anthology of another’s writings. Janet Martin, “John of Salisbury as a Classical Scholar,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 184.

under the influence of the School of Chartres.<sup>510</sup> Thomson notes that the majority of Part II is infused with Greek and Latin thought, though John did propound “the superiority of christian [sic] philosophy and the aridity of logic unenlightened by grace.”<sup>511</sup> Even in the light of his sincere appreciation for classical *auctores*, John was ever the Christian apologist and unfailing supporter of the Church.

In addition to the *prosopopoeia* of *libelle*, John of Salisbury employed a number of devices in *Entheticus maior* to obscure the actual targets of his satire and critique. A chief concoction is the utilization of Hyrcanus,<sup>512</sup> the evil prince who used his wickedness to foster corruption in his court. Hyrcanus is a favored villain of John’s; the character also appears in the *Metalogicon*. There is some scholarly dispute as to whom Hyrcanus represented. Van Laarhoven and Nederman implicate King Stephen as the creator of immoral royal action,<sup>513</sup> while Luscombe suggests that John was referring possibly to King Henry.<sup>514</sup> Other names in *Entheticus maior* that function as aliases are Mandrogerus, Antipater, and Sporus.<sup>515</sup> Elrington is

---

<sup>510</sup> Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 27.

<sup>511</sup> Thomson, “What is the *Entheticus*?” 294.

<sup>512</sup> John selected the name ‘Hyrcanus’ from biblical history. John Hyrcanus I was a priest and ruler in the second century BCE in Judea’s Hasmonean kingdom. Following palace intrigue that led to the assassination of his father and two brothers, Hyrcanus assumed the throne and endeavored to punish his enemies. “John Hyrcanus I, King of Judea,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Hyrcanus-I>.

<sup>513</sup> Van Laarhoven and John, *John of Salisbury’s Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1, 190; Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 49.

<sup>514</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed June 28, 2019, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-14849?rskey=ADiM15&result=4>.

<sup>515</sup> Luscombe also argues that Hyrcanus is Stephen, and Mandrogerus, Antipater, and Sporus are Stephen’s close advisors and magnates Robert of Leicester, Richard of Lucy, and Richard du Hommet. David Luscombe, “John of Salisbury in Recent Scholarship,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 29. Mandrogerus is a character in *Querolus*, one of the few Latin comedies outside of those of Plautus and Terence to survive. Antipater was one of the Herods, a family name of rulers in Palestine before and after Christ. Elrington is quite emphatic that Hyrcanus is not Henry, for John calls Henry in *Metalogicon* “the lion of justice.” Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 108.

of the opinion that they may be members of the court or even royal justiciars.<sup>516</sup> Others have suggested that Antipater is the antipope, Victor IV, elected after the death of Adrian IV in 1159.

It is helpful to remember that John used the mask of the *prosopopoeia*, particularly in the third and fourth parts of the *Entheticus maior*; there he addressed *libelle* and offered counsel and advice about the traps that can ensnare one in the court. For the audience of the *Entheticus maior*—unnamed but surely intended to be Becket, Henry, and the court—John continually stressed the themes of virtue and truth.<sup>517</sup>

Though the envisioned recipient or recipients remain cloaked, some of the advice John gives to *libelle* pulls back the curtain. Consider that the poem begins on an advisory note, extolling the virtues of studying philosophy; we are mindful that the early parts of the *Entheticus* were drafted either when John was a student in Paris or shortly after his time there. At the same time, as an astute follower of court politics, he was cognizant of the court's and the courtiers' vacillation and fickleness. At the beginning of the poem, setting the overall stage for his complaints and criticisms, John wrote, "The court rejoices in novelties and despises old friends: opportunities for luxury and profit alone give it pleasure."<sup>518</sup> In addition to warnings about the dangers of the court, and of those who populate it, the advice in Part IV sharpens. To avoid danger, it is important to moderate engagement: "Either be utterly silent to speak little at court or find out in what faraway land you can hide...for if you do not spare your words, no one

---

<sup>516</sup> Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 108.

<sup>517</sup> 'Virtue' appears more than 40 times in the *Entheticus*; 'truth' more than 55 times. Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 239 ff.

<sup>518</sup> "Aula nouis gaudet, ueteres fastidit amicos /Sola uoluptatis causa lucrique placent." Lines 6-8, Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 149, 240.

will spare you, and the impious crowd will overtake your days.”<sup>519</sup> These are seemingly prophetic words in light of Becket’s flight from England in 1164 and his murder in Canterbury on December 29, 1170. As there is a travel motif in Parts III and IV in the *Entheticus maior*, John charges the little book to be wise, deliver the counsel to the designated recipient at court, and return home to Canterbury immediately.

### *The Entheticus Compared to John’s Other Works*

It is important to remember that the *Entheticus maior* is John of Salisbury’s first known work. It has hints and flavors of his later writings: the *Metalogicon*, the *Policraticus*, the *Historia Pontificalis*, two *Vitae* and his substantial canon of correspondence. In placing the *Entheticus maior* into the catalogue of John’s writings, what are some of the comparisons and common themes? Pepin’s observation about the collection of John’s works presents a suitable description. He suggests that John’s treatises and correspondence are of the greatest significance in establishing his prominence as an educated writer. “John of Salisbury’s enduring reputation depends chiefly on his writings on his status as a man of letters.”<sup>520</sup> John’s writings and letters circulated through the community of learned men in Western Europe, including England, during the twelfth century. His audience embraced a wide range of ecclesiastics, including many he had met and befriended while a student in Paris. Through his knowledge of

---

<sup>519</sup> “Aut taceas prorsus, aut pauca loquarius in aula/ aut quaeras, in quo rure latere queas,’ nam si non parcis uerbis, nemo tibi parcat, preuenietque dies impia turba tuos.” Lines 1509-1512. Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 310-311, 221-222.

<sup>520</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 148.

“pagan” writings—Greek and Latin—and scripture, John garnered a substantial readership beyond the intended chancellor and archbishop Thomas Becket.<sup>521</sup>

John’s writing and views evolved in the years following his studies in Paris. Daniel Joseph Sheerin points to Hans Liebeschütz’s belief that John reframed Aristotle from a metaphysician in *Entheticus maior* to a logician in *Metalogicon*.<sup>522</sup> Elrington succinctly opines that “the *Entheticus* is a considerably less mature work than the *Metalogicon* or the *Policraticus*.”<sup>523</sup> In so declaring, he underscores that fact that “the *Policraticus* contains a coherent treatment of political philosophy whereas the *Entheticus* merely complains about the abuses and injustices of the civil government.”<sup>524</sup> He adds, “The *Metalogicon* is the reasoned argument of original ideas on education; the *Entheticus* merely implies a theory of education and rehearses the teaching of ancient philosophers.”<sup>525</sup> Having expressed that, Elrington notes there is a “close

---

<sup>521</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 148. John of Salisbury’s knowledge of authors, classical and current to his own period, was extraordinary. Daniel McGarry developed the following list of those whose writings appear in the *Metalogicon*: “Among the authors used are Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Porphyry, Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite, Terence, Cicero, Catullus, Julius Caesar, Publilius Syrus, Vergil, Horace, Seneca the Elder, Ovid, Valerius Maximus, Statius, Seneca the Younger, Lucan, Persius, Pliny, Quintilian, Martial, Juvenal, Suetonius, Aulus Gellius, Apuleius, Chalcidius, Marius Victorinus, Donatus, Palladius, Hilary of Poitiers, Plautus, Servius, Vegetius, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Macrobius, Martianus Capella, Sidonius Apollinaris, Claudianus Mamertus, Boethius, Fulgentius, Priscian, Cassiodorus, Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville, Benedict, Bede, Theodulus, Nemesius the Bishop, Alcuin, John Scotus, Angelomus of Luxeuil, Remigius, Anselm of Canterbury, Bernard of Chartres, Roscelin, Abelard, Hugh of St Victor, Theodoric (Thierry) of Chartres, Gilbert de la Porrée, William of Conches, Adam du Petit Pont, Tenred of Dover, and finally, the writers of the Bible.” Daniel D. McGarry, “Educational Theory in the *Metalogicon* of John of Salisbury,” *Speculum* 23, no. 4 (Oct. 1948): 661-662. Interestingly, John was attracted to Plato more than Aristotle as his studies progressed. Bernard, who “was clearly in close touch with major developments in the Platonizing science and theology of the mid-12th century,” may have influenced John’s views regarding the Greek philosopher. Winthrop Wetherbee, “Bernardus Silvestris,” *Oxford Bibliographies*, accessed May 18, 2020, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195396584/obo-9780195396584-0223.xml>.

<sup>522</sup> Sheerin, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” Critical Text and Introduction,” 37, quoting Hans Liebeschütz, “Chartres und Bologna Naturbegriff und Statsidee bei Johannes von Salisbury,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, L. (1968), 7.

<sup>523</sup> Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 81.

<sup>524</sup> Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 81.

<sup>525</sup> Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 81.

relationship between the *Entheticus* and John of Salisbury's two major works."<sup>526</sup> The *Metalogicon* mirrors some of John's view on education while John's grievances concerning royal court injustices foretell Books VII and VIII in the *Policraticus*. Further, the *Entheticus minor* restates, with greater clarity, some of the themes of the *maior*, including echoes of Ovid's *Tristia*.<sup>527</sup> Still the *Entheticus maior*, Elrington asserts, does not present a political theory; it is principally caution, warning, and complaint: "it merely passes moral judgements on the country's rules and the depravity of the royal court."<sup>528</sup>

Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud find a closer relationship between the *Entheticus maior* and the *Policraticus*. In their view, the two writings "share the same themes...but in different proportions," including criticisms of a particular pedagogy, a belief in the superiority of Christian theology over ancient philosophy, and a condemnation of courtly life and royal tyranny.<sup>529</sup> Nederman concurs that there is a tighter connection between the *Entheticus maior* and the *Policraticus*. He suggests that the *Policraticus* "extends and embellishes upon the intellectual enterprise commenced in the *Entheticus Maior*."<sup>530</sup> At the same time in the *Policraticus*, John attempted to "identify and defend the salient principles of a well-ordered and virtue-inducing political life."<sup>531</sup> With respect to the *Entheticus minor*, to be examined in greater depth in conjunction with the *Policraticus*, that shorter poem draws much

---

<sup>526</sup> Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 95.

<sup>527</sup> Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 95-96.

<sup>528</sup> Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 132.

<sup>529</sup> Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, "Introduction," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 15.

<sup>530</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 51.

<sup>531</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 51.



of its material from its longer sibling but, as Sheerin explains, “is more elaborately and more successfully worked out.”<sup>532</sup>

Van Laarhoven offers an interesting comparison of the *Entheticus maior* with John’s other works. By his calculations, there are 131 editions of the *Policraticus*, 14 editions of the *Metalogicon*, 12 of Volume 1 of *Letters*, 43 of Volume 2 of *Letters*, eight of the *Entheticus maior*, five of the *Historia Pontificalis*, five of the *Vita Sancti Anselmi*, and 51 of *Vita Sancti Thomae*, totaling 269 editions and or translations of the works of John of Salisbury.<sup>533</sup>

In summation, as Thomson explains, the *Entheticus maior* directly reflects John’s views on scholarship, laxity of court values, and care regarding study. In this work, especially in the latter parts, he started his transition from admonitions that were, at times, satirical, to the deeper political philosophies that hold center court in the *Policraticus*.<sup>534</sup>

---

<sup>532</sup> Sheerin, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*, Critical Text and Introduction,” 42.

<sup>533</sup> Van Laarhoven and John, *John of Salisbury’s Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1, 11.

<sup>534</sup> Thomson, “What is the *Entheticus*?” 301.

## CHAPTER 5 – JOHN OF SALISBURY AND THE *METALOGICON*

John of Salisbury favored neologisms to the degree that three of his major writings, including the *Policraticus*, have fabricated Greek titles. The *Metalogicon*, generally viewed as his most focused work, shared that naming attribute, along with the *Policraticus* and the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*. John was not alone, however, in drawing upon Greek for naming creativity. Contemporaries with admiration for the ancient philosophers also employed Greek to describe their treatises. Anselm adopted *Monologium* and *Proslogion* for two of his writings; both Bernardus Silvestris, a poet and admirer of Plato,<sup>535</sup> and William of Conches, John's most admired tutor, also used neologisms to designate their works. Bernardus' title *Cosmographia*, was further divided into *Megacosmus* and *Microcosmus*; William chose *Dragmaticon* for his purposes. John selected *Metalogicon* as an expression of the subject of his work: effectively, *A Defense of Logic*.<sup>536</sup>

The *Metalogicon*, by way of introductory description, is a work in four parts that spans multiple topics. In all, the four books total slightly more than 50,000 words.<sup>537</sup> The central theme is a justification of the *trivium* as central to knowledge, and ultimately truth, which reveals to mankind divine philosophy and God. Despite its broad sweep, the treatise arrives at a final discussion of the relationship between reason and knowledge: the former leading to truth,

---

<sup>535</sup> Bernardus Silvestris certainly was known to John of Salisbury as they contemporaneously lived in France—Bernardus in Tours, where he was part of the schools in that city, and John in Paris at that time, from 1145 through 1148. Bernardus dedicated the *Cosmographia* to Thierry of Chartres, another of John's admired masters. Mark Kauntze, *Authority and Imitation: A Study of the Cosmographia of Bernard Silvestris*, (Online publication: Brill, 2014), 16, accessed May 18, 2020, [https://brill.com/view/book/9789004268357/B9789004268357\\_003.xml](https://brill.com/view/book/9789004268357/B9789004268357_003.xml).

<sup>536</sup> The *Cosmographia* also had a Latin name: *De mundi universitate*. Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 22. Ronald E. Pepin suggests a different translation of "*Metalogicon*" suggesting it means "An apology for logical knowledge." Ronald E. Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 150.

<sup>537</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 63.

the latter being followed by wisdom. Book One establishes that defense in the face of the slack and slothful master, Cornificius (a fabrication), and his followers. They are the Cornificians. Pepin reminds us that we have seen Cornificius before. The character appears in the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the major *Entheticus* that John began when he was a student in Paris, notably in Parts I and III.<sup>538</sup> In the first book of the *Metalogicon* John holds liberal arts to be core to the knowledge of truth; in the second and third books, grammar and logic are explored; and the fourth book augments the discussion of truth. The path of truth leads to virtue and virtue in turn leads to salvation, the ultimate goal. J.B. Hall reasons that John's view is that knowledge comes from exploring the nature of things, that inquiry requires logic, which depends on grammar. Hall notes, "The treatise thus moves from grammar, to logic, to knowledge, and culminates with the nature of truth."<sup>539</sup> Building the arguments from the base up, the treatise is remarkable on several levels. Not only is it coherent with a reasonable progression through narrative and arguments to proofs, it is a *tour de force* exhibition of John's command of classical and contemporary authors and the content of the *trivium* curriculum. C. H. Kneepkens opines that the *Metalogicon* "shows John's thorough knowledge and love of logic when this is understood broadly."<sup>540</sup> This work also demonstrates John's own remarkable education.<sup>541</sup>

---

<sup>538</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 157. C. R. Elrington disagrees that Cornificius appears in the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*. In his view, Cornificius is not the Sertorius described in that treatise. C. R. Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 111. Liebeschütz, commenting on Cornificius in the *Metalogicon*, agrees that Cornificius is alone in that text and is a combination of several personalities rather than one individual. Hans Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury*. (London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1950), 118.

<sup>538</sup> Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism*, 118.

<sup>539</sup> John of Salisbury, John Barrie Hall, and Julian Haseldine, *Metalogicon* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 64.

<sup>540</sup> C. H. Kneepkens, "John of Salisbury," in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jorge J. E. Garcia and Timothy N. Noone (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 394.

<sup>541</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 124-127.

## *Motivation and Purpose for Writing the Metalogicon*

There is some disagreement among scholars as to the purpose of the *Metalogicon*.

Julian Haseldine suggests that the text presents two chief goals. The first, in his understanding, is John's defense of the *trivium*—grammar, rhetoric, and logic—which is the foundation of a proper education.<sup>542</sup> John argued that logic in particular was essential for a learned life. His second aim, according to Haseldine, was to present the case for Aristotle's works on logic that were gathered in the *Organon*, several of which had been available to Western scholars since the sixth century.<sup>543</sup> To John, this compendium represented the chief, and perhaps sole, source necessary for the study of logic.<sup>544</sup> Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud probe deeper and more expansively regarding the goals of the *Metalogicon*. They stress that not only does John militate in favor of logic, but he assails the exclusive use of dialectic, a subset of logic, as an artificial and even lazy substitute for education.<sup>545</sup> Sigbjørn Sønnesyn interprets John as

---

<sup>542</sup> The *trivium*, as propounded by John of Salisbury, comprised the first three courses of a seven-part education. It was derived from the Roman liberal arts curriculum. In addition to grammar, rhetoric, and logic, the separate *quadrivium* comprised arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. Together, they constituted the seven liberal arts. John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 52. "Liberal Arts," Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed May 19, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/liberal-arts>. For greater detail on the development of the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*, see Andrew Fleming West, "The Seven Liberal Arts," in *Alciun and the Rise of the Christian Schools* ed. Christopher A. Perrin (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1912; Classical Academic Press, 2010).

<sup>543</sup> In Aristotle's Greek, "organon" meant a tool or an instrument, or even an organ. The grouping—titled *Organon*—of six of Aristotle's treatises was the effort of later commentators, and not the ancient philosopher. They represent Aristotle's works on logic: *Categories*; *On Interpretation*; *Prior Analytics*; *Posterior Analytics*; *Topics*; and *On Sophistical Refutations*. The divisions are artificial and do not necessarily follow Aristotle's interpretations of logic. The clustering, however, was a means by which subsequent academics understood Aristotle's works. "Aristotle's Logic," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed May 19, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-logic/#AriLogWorOrg>.

<sup>544</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 52.

<sup>545</sup> Grellard and Lachaud, "Introduction," 4-5. As an interesting and ancillary benefit, we learn of John's life as a student and his evaluation of the merits of his masters and their pedagogy while he was a student in Paris in Book 2; in Book 4, John writes of his life at Canterbury and his duties, as the Archbishop Theobald was increasingly frail. 9.

meaning that humans need their own labors *and* the benefit of God's grace to achieve their highest potential.<sup>546</sup>

John of Salisbury was concerned not only about elevating the study and practice of logic; he was equally concerned about the devaluation of education to the extent of near extinction of quality. John's creation of a laughable and self-inflated master, Cornificius, underscores his account of the slothful status of education.<sup>547</sup> Daniel McGarry writes that John's well-developed philosophy of life is the underpinning for his writing in the *Metalogicon*. In fact, McGarry asserts that John "was an Eclectic, acknowledging truth wherever he found it, refusing to concede it as the exclusive monopoly of any school or age. Furthermore, while praising reason, he remained, withal, a 'Scholastic,' not oblivious of revelation."<sup>548</sup> Hans Liebeschütz also perceives strains of early scholasticism in John's presentation of the dialectical debates in the *Metalogicon*; John strove to bridge ancient philosophies and classical knowledge with his medieval outlook.<sup>549</sup> Liebeschütz wrote, "It is the unquestioned result of modern research that John's position, both as an author and as a politician, was firmly rooted in practical problems which dominated the life of his time."

Ronald Pepin is succinct, if a bit superficial, when he offers an opening analysis of the *Metalogicon*, calling it "a blend of biological and educational information" representing John's

---

<sup>546</sup> Sigbjørn Sønnesyn, "Qui Recta Quae Docet Sequitur, Uere Philosophus Est: The Ethics of John of Salisbury," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 315.

<sup>547</sup> Daniel D. McGarry, "Educational Theory in the *Metalogicon* of John of Salisbury," 660. The Cornificians, writes David Luscombe, "promoted a utilitarian or vocational approach to teaching and learning which led to a devaluation of the arts and to the invention of shortcuts through them." David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed June 28, 2019, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-14849?rskey=ADiM15&result=4>.

<sup>548</sup> McGarry, "Educational Theory in the *Metalogicon* of John of Salisbury," 664.

<sup>549</sup> Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism*, 1.

personal life history melded with his attitude toward learning.<sup>550</sup> Johan Huizinga envisions the *Metalogicon* through yet another lens; he places the treatise's content in the context of John's other major works, stating, "If the *Policraticus* is the storehouse of his comprehensive and lively knowledge, and the *Metalogicon* of his insight, the richest sources for the understanding of his personality and his mind are his letters, which he himself collected."<sup>551</sup> Ian P. Wei weighs in with another perspective on John's central aims for the *Metalogicon*: "His description of his own teachers was frequently critical, and the *Metalogicon* was chiefly written to lambaste contemporary masters in general for their various failings. It is therefore a narrative of conflict and competition as well."<sup>552</sup>

Bernard of Chartres and the School of Chartres, among the numerous individuals and elements in this treatise, take pride of place in the *Metalogicon*. Recent scholarship, that is within the last half century, demonstrates that John did not leave Paris to study at Chartres—nor did he study with Bernard, as the philosopher-scholar had died by 1130, six years before John arrived in France. Still, Bernard's impact on John was substantial. John was deeply impressed by the masters who had been taught by Bernard, and whose knowledge they passed on to their students. Winthrop Wetherbee highlights what he detects as John's profound admiration for Bernard in the *Metalogicon*. Wetherbee offers John's views, as well his own, extolling Bernard, "the first great master of twelfth-century Chartres," and identifying three of John's favorite masters who were connected with Bernard: Gilbert de la Porrée, William of

---

<sup>550</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 149.

<sup>551</sup> Johan Huizinga, "John of Salisbury: A Pre-Gothic Mind," in *Men and Ideas: History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 162.

<sup>552</sup> Ian P. Wei, "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-Century Universities," 56.

Conches, and Thierry of Chartres.<sup>553</sup> William and Gilbert were pupils of Bernard, and the writings of William and Thierry bear similarities to those of Bernard.<sup>554</sup> Wetherbee lavishes on Bernard further praise he has plucked out of the *Metalogicon*, going so far as to call him a hero of the *Metalogicon*. John, Wetherbee explains, exalts Bernard as a counter to the substandard education surrounding him.<sup>555</sup> John proclaimed that education, represented by the pedagogical practices of Bernard, was “the most abundant fount of literary knowledge in France in modern times.”<sup>556</sup> It is clear that John admired the Chartres master’s teaching style.<sup>557</sup> In Book One, John commends Bernard’s approach to grammar, titling Chapter 24 of Book One “Concerning the practice of reading and lecturing and the customary manner of Bernard of Chartres and his followers.”<sup>558</sup> John wrote that Bernard appreciated the capacity of his students and taught so that they would learn.<sup>559</sup> Not only did John praise Bernard by name and use him as a the antithesis of slovenly and self-important pedagogy, but he also drew upon Bernard’s own writing, including him in the *Metalogicon*’s extensive list of classical and contemporary philosophers.

In a display of his knowledge, John cited an impressive array of ancient authors, and engaged their works to demonstrate effective means to repudiate false arguments.<sup>560</sup> John also liberally quoted Aristotle (extensively from the *Organon*). From his use of the Greek philosopher’s works it is apparent that all of Aristotle’s writings on logic had been retrieved and

---

<sup>553</sup> Winthrop Wetherbee, “The School of Chartres,” in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, 36.

<sup>554</sup> Wetherbee, “The School of Chartres,” 36.

<sup>555</sup> Wetherbee, “The School of Chartres,” 37.

<sup>556</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 175.

<sup>557</sup> Wei, “From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-Century Universities,” 59.

<sup>558</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 173.

<sup>559</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 175.

<sup>560</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

were available for study in Western Europe. There is some debate as to whether John had to settle for the translations from the Greek language. C. R. Elrington writes that John endeavored to learn Greek while in Apulia with Adrian IV and to read the works in their original language,<sup>561</sup> though that assertion has been contradicted by Pepin and Grellard and Lachaud. Pepin maintains that there is no evidence that John had any sophisticated knowledge of Greek or had even studied it at more than an elementary level.<sup>562</sup> As with most scholars of his time, John read the Greek philosophers in Latin translation.<sup>563</sup> Grellard and Lachaud write that John did not study Greek in Apulia but rather engaged a translator when he was there to enable him to read some of the texts he encountered.<sup>564</sup>

Of note, what is not in the *Metalogicon* is an open discussion of theology. This omission is despite the fact that many of John's quotations and references were biblical, that he had an overwhelming impulse to defend the Church, and that he studied theology for more than half a decade in Paris with Gilbert de la Porrée and others. Religion and theology were topics he had studied and explored, yet he left no treatises on them. They are not central in the *Entheticus*, the *Policraticus*, the *Historia Pontificalis*, or in the *Metalogicon*. Nevertheless, in the course of describing his education abroad, he clearly referred to his theological training. In Book Two, Chapter 10, John wrote that following Gilbert of Poitiers, he studied with Robert Pullen and Simon of Poissy (for whom he had lesser regard as a master). John noted, "These two men I had as my teachers in theology alone."<sup>565</sup> That John did not write specifically concerning theology in

---

<sup>561</sup> Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 59.

<sup>562</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 150.

<sup>563</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 150.

<sup>564</sup> Grellard and Lachaud, "Introduction," 9.

<sup>565</sup> Christophe Grellard, "John of Salisbury and Theology," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 340. It was Gilbert de la Porrée's *De trinitate* that led to charges of heterodoxy levelled by Bernard of Clairvaux against him at the



the *Metalogicon* puts a brighter light on the *Policraticus*. The *Policraticus* is assuredly a significant political document with a defense of Church liberty; the *Metalogicon* is easier to dismiss as a treatise on medieval education and logic and nothing grander. Nonetheless, John revealed his skepticisms about and opinions of education in both the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon*. Grellard posits that John's admiration for ancient philosophers, including Cicero, influenced his perspectives on the subject. He is writing around the edges of theology in the *Metalogicon*. As Grellard notes "John presents the sceptical [sic] attitude both as a prudential reaction in the face of the fallibility of human reason, and as implementation of the key concept of moderation."<sup>566</sup> He writes that John reassessed theology in the *Metalogicon*, engaging both Neoplatonism and Augustinism in service of his principal view: without God, humanity is blind.<sup>567</sup> This perspective reflects John's ultimate holding that divine philosophy is superior to all others. While John may not have penned a theological treatise, his views of a rightly ordered universe are manifest in the *Metalogicon*.

The *Metalogicon*, described as John of Salisbury's most coherent work,<sup>568</sup> is quite complex: it may appear relatively straightforward, but it is actually layered in its themes. The motivation for this work is somewhat obscure as well. The various arguments hinge on the date when the *Metalogicon* was written. Recall that Giles Constable shifted the timeline for John's banishment from court.<sup>569</sup> As a consequence, John's motivation for writing of the *Metalogicon*

---

Council of Reims in 1148. John commented on this in the third chapter of the work in *Historia Pontificalis*. For further details, see Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 8.

<sup>566</sup> Grellard, "John of Salisbury and Theology," 352.

<sup>567</sup> Grellard, "John of Salisbury and Theology," 363.

<sup>568</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 63. See also John Hosler's review of a recent book by Irene O'Daly on the coherence of the *Metalogicon* in *H-Net Reviews* (November 2018). Irene O'Daly, *John of Salisbury and the Medieval Roman Renaissance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 244.

<sup>569</sup> Giles Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 67.

and the *Policraticus* is altered. Constable's careful reading of the letters, John's time with Adrian IV, and his participation in the negotiations on the Irish question make it clear that John did not write the two treatises in 1156; rather, he wrote them later. Because John was exiled from court earlier, Constable contends, he had resolved his anger and the embarrassment over expulsion. As a result, those feelings were not necessarily the driving force behind the *Metalogicon*. Constable's position is in opposition to Clement C. J. Webb's view that John was exiled at a later date. Webb had proposed an expulsion in 1158/59 and held that it was during that time of disgrace that John wrote both the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon*.<sup>570</sup> Constable, for his part, was still open to the possibility that John was resentful about the forced exile but maintained that the writing took place after the banishment, not during it. According to Constable, "Any personal bitterness felt by John towards the royal government stemmed not from his condition at the time of writing but from the events of 1156-7."<sup>571</sup> Cary J. Nederman presents a different case for John's impetus to craft the *Metalogicon*; he finds intratextual indications regarding John's motivation. To state his proof, Nederman directs attention to the prologue and John's reference to an "opponent" who is a contrarian concerning the liberal arts in general and the study of logic, as part of the *trivium*, in particular.<sup>572</sup> As previously noted, defense of a classical education is a theme in much of the *Metalogicon*. David Luscombe furthers the notion that praise for an education grounded in the seven liberal arts of the *trivium* and the *quadrivium* was a principal motivation for writing the *Metalogicon*. Aside from the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*, Luscombe underscores that John wanted to share his admiration of

---

<sup>570</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 19.

<sup>571</sup> Giles Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 74.

<sup>572</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 25.

the classics and invites his readers in Book Three, Chapter 10 to “reverence the words of the great authors,” that “these words possess a certain majesty or prestige from the great names of antiquity with whom they are associated.”<sup>573</sup> Luscombe additionally focuses on John’s deep admiration for William of Conches, whom John honored in both Books One and Three. John acknowledged William as “the most accomplished grammarian since Bernard of Chartres.”<sup>574</sup>

John’s motivation for writing the *Metalogicon* and his appeal to an audience overlap in Yoko Hirata’s 1991 thesis, “John of Salisbury and His Correspondents.” Her research suggests that Becket “encouraged John to write them [the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon*] and he may have been interested in what John had to say. John may have expected to find an audience at King Henry’s court through Becket.”<sup>575</sup> Hirata also believes that John had moved beyond anger concerning his banishment. She observes that there is internal evidence in John’s letter to his friend and former student Peter of Celle that, at the time of writing the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*, he no longer harbored anger regarding his treatment.<sup>576</sup> John had accepted his fate and moved beyond the shame of exile: “By the grace of God and yourself, I am what I am,” John stated in 1157.<sup>577</sup> John’s resentment over his removal from the royal court had diminished; he had been rehabilitated. Bitterness was no longer a motivation for his works.

Ronald E. Pepin highlights the *Metalogicon*’s prologue to provide an explanation for motivation. Calling the introductory remarks “vitally important,” Pepin declares that they offer

---

<sup>573</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

<sup>574</sup> David Luscombe, “John of Salisbury in Recent Scholarship,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 23.

<sup>575</sup> Yoko Hirata, “John of Salisbury and His Correspondents: A Study of the Epistolary Relationships Between John of Salisbury and his Correspondents” (PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1991), 558.

<sup>576</sup> Hirata, “John of Salisbury and His Correspondents,” 558.

<sup>577</sup> Letter 31, “Gratia siquidem Dei et uestra sum quiquid sum....” John, Millor, EButler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury* V. 1, 49.

matter “not only for its author’s clear expression of purpose and stated rationale for writing, but also for excellent examples.”<sup>578</sup> John was determined to identify educationally lazy courtiers, and embarrass those who dawdled and entertained themselves “in dicing and hunting and the other idle pastimes of courtiers.”<sup>579</sup> Concurrently, John chose to honor those who deserved academic acclaim: John wrote, “since the noble intelligence, exact investigations, diligent study, wonderful memory, fruitful thought, commend of expression and abundance of words....is a source of wonder to me.”<sup>580</sup>

### *Thomas Becket and the Metalogicon*

The themes of and motivation for John of Salisbury’s *Metalogicon* lead directly to the work’s dedication. Along with the *Policraticus*, John had it copied, inscribed to Thomas Becket, Henry’s chancellor, and delivered to him at the siege of Toulouse in southern France, more than 650 miles from Canterbury.<sup>581</sup> The physical evidence that John intended the *Metalogicon* to be read by Becket is clear.<sup>582</sup> Surely, though, John did not intend the two treatises—quite

---

<sup>578</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 156.

<sup>579</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 69.

<sup>580</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 119 ff.

<sup>581</sup> A modern computation of the distance between Canterbury, in Kent, England and Toulouse in the south of France is 652 miles.

Google Maps, accessed May 21, 2020,

[https://www.google.com/search?source=hp&ei=INPGXqm9EpCO9PwPpluXsAg&q=distanc+between+Caterbury+England+and+Toulouse+france&oq=distanc+between+Caterbury+England+and+Toulouse+france&gs\\_lcp=CgZwc3ktYWIQAziFCCEQqwlyBQghEKsCOgUIABCDAToCCAA6BAGAEAo6BAGAEAO6BggAEBYQHjoICCEQFhAdEB46BggAEAOQHjoICAAQCBANE46CggAEAgQDRAKEB46BwghEAOQoAFQ3QhYpldgnVloAHAAeACAAYMBiAGvIJIBBDQ1LjiYACgAQGgAQdnd3Mtd2l6&scient=psy-ab&ved=0ahUKEwipzZ6Y1cXpAhUQB5QJHaTFBYQ4dUDCAg&uact=5](https://www.google.com/search?source=hp&ei=INPGXqm9EpCO9PwPpluXsAg&q=distanc+between+Caterbury+England+and+Toulouse+france&oq=distanc+between+Caterbury+England+and+Toulouse+france&gs_lcp=CgZwc3ktYWIQAziFCCEQqwlyBQghEKsCOgUIABCDAToCCAA6BAGAEAo6BAGAEAO6BggAEBYQHjoICCEQFhAdEB46BggAEAOQHjoICAAQCBANE46CggAEAgQDRAKEB46BwghEAOQoAFQ3QhYpldgnVloAHAAeACAAYMBiAGvIJIBBDQ1LjiYACgAQGgAQdnd3Mtd2l6&scient=psy-ab&ved=0ahUKEwipzZ6Y1cXpAhUQB5QJHaTFBYQ4dUDCAg&uact=5). Though estimates and records vary, based on conditions and season, a thirteenth-century traveler could cover as many as thirty miles in a day. Reports from the twelfth century place the average number of daily miles closer to twenty. “How Far, How Fast?” Writemedieval, accessed May 21, 2020, <https://writemedieval.livejournal.com/4706.html>. A reasonable approximation is that, barring any conflicts or barriers encountered, the two tomes were delivered within twenty days.

<sup>582</sup> There are three existing copies of the *Metalogicon* and each follows the *Policraticus* in a single binding. The *Cantuariensis* volume is in the Parker Library, Corpus Christi Cambridge. One of the outer leaves of the text

extensive in volume—to be read solely by Becket, even if Becket indeed had urged John to write. There was a premeditated larger audience for the two works. At the same time, John was transmitting a set of warnings to Becket. Karen Bollermann and Cary Nederman, in an article on the relationship between Thomas Becket and John of Salisbury, submit that the dedications to Becket did not purport to be an endorsement of Becket or his actions as Henry’s chancellor. They write, “Scholars have come to realize that the dedication of advice works to powerful and well-placed people does not necessarily indicate endorsement of their behavior—indeed quite often the opposite.”<sup>583</sup> Rather, they submit that the writing was meant as a criticism.<sup>584</sup> Hirata echoes that perspective, extending the comment to all three works that John had inscribed for Becket: the *Entheticus*, the *Policraticus*, and the *Metalogicon*. She noted that the trilogy of works “at times express what appears to have been John’s personal message to Becket.”<sup>585</sup> That the latter two works were shared with and known to others has led to speculation that Henry read them and did not want John at any of the councils addressing the Ancient Customs. It is evident that John’s biting criticisms were known to more than Becket. Anne Duggan notes

---

contains an inscription with the names of the two writings and John of Salisbury’s above what must have been Becket’s. According to Daniel McGarry, there is little doubt that the Parker Library copy is the original one that was delivered to Becket. John of Salisbury and Daniel D. McGarry, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), xix. The title page of the *Cantuariensis* has been somewhat defaced. It is clear, though, that the last line starts with a ‘B’ and is presumably Becket’s name. “Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 046: John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, *Metalogicon*,” Parker Library on the Web, accessed May 22, 2020, <https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/fs743fm9703>. Erasure or defacement can be achieved using a blend of milk and oat bran; however, in the aging process, faint writing can reemerge. For further reading on erasures and palimpsests, see Felix Albrecht, “Between Boon and Bane: The Use of Chemical Reagents in Palimpsest Research in the Nineteenth Century,” *Care and Conservation of Manuscripts 13: Proceedings of the thirteenth international seminar held at the University of Copenhagen*, ed. M. J. Driscoll (Museum Tusculanum Press, 2012), 147-165, accessed May 22, 2020, [https://scholar.google.com/scholar?cluster=6728354018999873799&hl=en&as\\_sdt=0,23&scioldt=0,23](https://scholar.google.com/scholar?cluster=6728354018999873799&hl=en&as_sdt=0,23&scioldt=0,23). As to the dedication, see also Huizinga, “John of Salisbury,” 161-162.

<sup>583</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 70.

<sup>584</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 70.

<sup>585</sup> Hirata, “John of Salisbury and His Correspondents,” 559.

that John, though no longer banished from court, continued to be held in low regard by Henry while Becket was chancellor.<sup>586</sup>

In addition to promoting his views on the *trivium* and logic, John leveled a scathing censure of his opponents. In the first of Book One's twenty-five chapters, he named the opponent he concocted—Cornificius—and began his attack on him and his defense of a sound education. John was not loath to fabricate (the *Institutes of Trajan* in *Policraticus* are a prime example); however, he asserted that Cornificius and his fellow Cornificians were genuine, though the names had been changed to protect the guilty.<sup>587</sup> Nederman points out that while John was unwilling to pull away the veil in order to keep Cornificius' true identity obscured, there was no trepidation about attacking both the attitude and personality of the character.<sup>588</sup> John was brutal in his description of Cornificius, as Pepin quotes: "including bloatedness of belly, shamelessness of speech, rapacity of hands, deformity of body, baseness of life, obscene lust, and many more disgusting physical and mental attributes."<sup>589</sup> Such an abrasive commentary reflects the tradition of the Roman authors with whom John was so well acquainted. John created and then deeply disparaged Cornificius to better attack those who denigrated the liberal arts. John was demonstrably concerned that the flowering of education, notably the *trivium* and to some extent the *quadrivium*, was starting to wilt. In the work, the opponents of the liberal arts are led by Cornificius who is promoting "a skeleton liberal arts

---

<sup>586</sup> Anne Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 430.

<sup>587</sup> Hall does assert, however, that according to ancient commentators, the real Cornificius was an enemy of Virgil. John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 124. Daniel McGarry cites Donatus as the source for Virgil's nemesis, Cornificius, in *Vita Vergilii interpolata*. McGarry, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury*, xxi. The name 'Cornificius' was not unknown in the late Roman Republic. See Elizabeth Rawson, "The Identity Problems of Q. Cornificius," *The Classical Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (1978): 188-201.

<sup>588</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 68.

<sup>589</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 158.

curriculum wherein grammar and logic, trimmed to the vanishing point, were skimmed through in hasty survey fashion.”<sup>590</sup> The thrust and parry of Book One demonstrates that Cornificius and his ilk are not without eloquence, but they lack logic to support their fine articulation. John then built his arguments that eventually led to unassailable truth; they began with grammar, in chapters 13 through 25, concluding Book One.<sup>591</sup>

In Book Two, John expounded on his appreciation, even love, for logic. He also was not sparing of Cornificius but instead set out to further harm his adversary whom he deemed “mutilated and yet to be further mutilated” in the cause of exposing indolent education.<sup>592</sup> He offered praise to Aristotle for establishing the rules of logic that permit the separation of truth from falsehood.<sup>593</sup> In this book’s twenty chapters, with topics and titles ranging from “That logic is beneficial to the whole of philosophy because it pursues the truth” to “In what respect teachers of this kind deserve no indulgence,” John continued to ascribe high value to logic and to scorn the dumbing down of the *trivium*. Concurrently, there is recognition of the significance of dialectic (rhetoric), the third leg of the *trivium* that complements grammar and logic. As the thorough pedagogue he probably was, John urged students to be led thoughtfully through the curriculum so that they develop a solid grasp of the building blocks that are essential for a proper liberal arts education.

In Book Three, John continued his role of master with his teachings on logic. He was careful not to move too quickly through the subject, instead establishing building blocks for

---

<sup>590</sup> McGarry, “Educational Theory in the *Metalogicon* of John of Salisbury,” 659.

<sup>591</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 65-68.

<sup>592</sup> “Et si mutilis sit, sed amplius mutilandus Cornificius.” *Metalogicon*, Book Two, Prologue, 56.

<sup>593</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 69.

students to learn. As with the other books in the *Metalogicon*, John demonstrated his vast knowledge of classical and biblical literature and sacred texts. In the prologue to the third book, John referred to two works of Virgil in addition to Aristotle, Martianus Capella, Pliny, and John's contemporary, Abelard. In the body of Book Three, he further established his appreciation for logic, claiming that he had not even looked at any writings by dialecticians—for whom he held little regard—since he concluded his studies of the subject twenty years prior, while in Paris.<sup>594</sup> John's comment is a thinly veiled acerbic attack on the Cornificians, who value their golden-tongued arguments above all else. He then proceeded in Chapter 1, the first of ten in Book Three, to explain that learning should be incremental. That was the method of the Peripatetic of the Pallet (Abelard), from whom John learned as a young scholar in Paris. By way of example, he suggested that the *Isagoge* of Porphyry<sup>595</sup> "should be taught in such a way that the author's meaning is always reserved, and his words accepted at face value."<sup>596</sup> Instruction in this manner was meant to allow the student to fully absorb the material. John was again, and not so subtly, attacking his opponents who in his mind degraded education and the *trivium* and looked for expedient ways to advance without effort. Considering this as a study manual, John subsequently led the reader, and by inference the student, through Aristotle's *Organon*. He commenced with the *Categoriae*, followed by *De interpretatione* and the *Topica*. John believed *De interpretatione* had been eclipsed by better instructional materials, stating, "I do not,

---

<sup>594</sup> John and McGarry, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury*, 142.

<sup>595</sup> Porphyry was a third century Neoplatonist and an influential academic of his era. The *Isagoge* is his introduction to Aristotle's writings on logic that enhanced his own reputation as a superb logician. "Porphyry," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, accessed May 26, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/porphyry/>. With John's predilection for logic, it is understandable why he chose to engage Porphyry as an example for learning.

<sup>596</sup> John and McGarry, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury*, 146. Kneepkens, "John of Salisbury," 394.



however, rate this work so highly as to regard as superfluous the work of moderns.”<sup>597</sup> His praise for *Topica* was much greater, holding that it contained a rational sequencing for the study of logic. John acknowledged that Aristotle had less tolerance for hypotheticals than for arguments. Noting that John had little tolerance for endless argument, Pepin writes, “It may be for the reason that all men, as Boethius observes, wish to hold a necessary consequence.”<sup>598</sup> This posture suggests that neither Aristotle nor John had time for baseless discussions with no result.

Indeed, all of Book Three and slightly more than half of Book Four present an instruction on studying Aristotle’s *Organon*, with the continuing underlying denunciation of sloppy scholarship. Pepin, in his analysis of John’s criticism of Cornificius and his followers writes, “Their own inferior education, the notable teachers whom they defame, and their baseless contentions” allow John to offer “an encomium for eloquence and an extended definition of logic and liberal arts.”<sup>599</sup> Edouard Jeuneau wrote appreciatively of the *Metalogicon*, but saw nothing particularly groundbreaking: “Il n’y a rien d’étonnant à cela, puisque le *Metalogicon* est, pour une bonne part, un résumé commenté de l’*Organon* aristotélicien.”<sup>600</sup>

Book Four, in the final eighteen chapters, moves to a different plane. John had drawn the reader through a course of study of logic, beginning with Porphyry’s introduction followed by a step-by-step examination of the logic displayed (and instructed) in the *Organon*. He turned his hand next to the uses as well as the limitations of logic. The attacks on Cornificius continued.

---

<sup>597</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 265.

<sup>598</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 265.

<sup>599</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 158.

<sup>600</sup> “There is nothing astonishing in this because, for the better part, the *Metalogicon* is a brief commentary on Aristotle’s *Organon*.” Edouard Jeuneau, “Jean de Salisbury et la Lecture des Philosophes,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 103.

The title of Chapter 25 is a caustic jab at John's opponent: "That Cornificius is cheaper than the gods' clown Bromius<sup>601</sup> and what Augustine and other philosophers have said in praise of logic."<sup>602</sup> This is certainly an acerbic assessment, an example of John's assaults on his opponent throughout the *Metalogicon*.

The core of the final chapters in Book Four took the tools John had laid out and employed them in a discussion of the "nature of truth and reason."<sup>603</sup> John presented an argument that Aristotle's exposition of logic was not the terminus in the search for truth and reason that leads to virtue. In Chapters 28 and 29, John demonstrated how logic was to be used. Indeed, that is the title of Chapter 28: "How Logic Should be Employed." John stresses that "young minds especially, like young bodies, must be developed and not allowed to waste away," to the end that they must be taught that logic for its own sake is "practically useless"; the "license of verbosity" needs to be reined in and the "misbehavior of sophistry...brought to a halt."<sup>604</sup> John declared that logic, properly applied, could help lead to goodness, truth and reason— understanding that humans do not have perfect reasoning. Still, it is divine reasoning that humans seek, John noted. However, John continued to explain that God adheres to original reason and truth but humans come up short. Approaching the end of the *Metalogicon*, in Chapter 38, John declared that in God reason and truth are perfect, but that that is not the case for humans: "it is altogether or generally imperfect, although it may in some individual be

---

<sup>601</sup> Bromius is the Roman god of wine, and consequently a sobriquet for one who is loud and noisy, having overly imbibed. "Bromius," Hellenicaworld.com, accessed May 26, 2020, <http://www.hellenicaworld.com/Greece/Mythology/en/Bromius.html>.

<sup>602</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 315.

<sup>603</sup> Kneepkens, "John of Salisbury," 394.

<sup>604</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 318.

temporarily perfect or perfect by comparison with things less perfect.”<sup>605</sup> John, it appears, was appealing to Becket’s higher instincts—asking him to strive for that temporary condition of perfection.

The final entreaty came in Chapter 42 of Book Four, the last in the *Metalogicon*. There John gathered together multiple threads to present his summation. John had countered the shallowness of his opponents, the Cornificians, treating them as surrogates for a frivolous and thoughtless royal court. He had exalted the *trivium* as a model for instruction that stands in the face of shallow and facile efforts to appear educated by using only dialectic. He had praised the logic of Aristotle and demonstrated how it could be best taught to young minds. Thus, in the final chapter, he directly addressed the martial violence of the assault on Toulouse; it had broken the peace between the French and English “on all sides.” In a conclusion, he invoked his beloved late Pope Adrian IV, who would be profoundly disturbed by the “turmoil and tempest.”<sup>606</sup>

#### *Writing the Metalogicon – A Matter of Time and Place*

Where and when was the *Metalogicon* composed? Nederman addresses a portion of that question—the when—in his biography of John of Salisbury. He constructs a timeline for both the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*. First, though, he directs us to John’s prologue to the *Metalogicon* in which John acknowledged he had steeled himself “to bear with patience the darts of detractors,” yet he, goaded by his opponents, “took up his challenge and determined

---

<sup>605</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 3, 35.

<sup>606</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 41.

to strike down his calumnies even as they issued from his mouth.”<sup>607</sup> Otherwise said, John was willing to take on the antagonist “who was constantly chastising him about the worthlessness of a liberal arts curriculum, especially an education in logic.”<sup>608</sup> Internally, the *Metalogicon* presents two references to the *Policraticus* that give dating evidence: one mentions the frivolities of the courtiers, and the second discusses the black arts. Those allusions place the writing of the *Metalogicon* later than the bulk of the more famous *Policraticus*. Nederman proposes a chronology that begins prior to 1157 and extends through late 1159, when the single volume containing the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon* was dispatched to Toulouse. His proposed sequence weaves together the creation of the two works, starting with *Metalogicon*’s Book Three and portions of Book Four and concluding with the *Policraticus*’ prologue and the end of its Book Eight.<sup>609</sup> Grellard and Lachaud have a somewhat different view of the relationship between the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*. They contend that the *Metalogicon* serves as an introduction to the *Policraticus* for “the choice of a liberal or humanistic education is the precondition for a philosophical life, as opposed to a courtly life,”<sup>610</sup> which John found not only embarrassingly inadequate but also dangerous. They further speculate that the *Metalogicon*, written in 1158 or 1159, drew substantially upon material in the *Entheticus maior*.<sup>611</sup>

Where was John when he wrote the two treatises? If the period during which John wrote both the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus* was sometime between 1157 and 1159

---

<sup>607</sup> McGarry, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury*, 5.

<sup>608</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 25.

<sup>609</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 27.

<sup>610</sup> Grellard and Lachaud, “Introduction,” 17.

<sup>611</sup> Grellard and Lachaud, “Introduction,” 17.

(except for some pre-1157 parts of the *Metalogicon*, according to Nederman's calculations) then we can imagine that John composed the works while in residence at Canterbury. Elrington places him there with the ailing archbishop, though he misstates the reason why John was in residence.<sup>612</sup> Elrington does indicate that there are familiar strains throughout all of John's major works, noting that "lines 1-450 of the *Entheticus*, which express some of John's views on education and generally satirise the pseudo learning of the time, correspond approximately to the subject matter of the *Metalogicon*."<sup>613</sup> Nederman concurs that there are shared characteristics between the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*, particularly as the *Metalogicon* echoes some of the themes carried out in the *Policraticus*. At the same time, he is not persuaded by the argument that Grellard and Lachaud propose—that the *Metalogicon* serves as an introduction to the *Policraticus*. Such a position, Nederman writes, is a disservice to both works, for "attempts to treat the two works as parts of a larger whole, perhaps in the manner of a philosophical encyclopedia envisaged but unrealized by John, deny the intellectual integrity in each treatise."<sup>614</sup> Each work its own merits and goals.

If, indeed, Becket encouraged John to write the *Metalogicon*, his request seems rather curious. For instance, if John began writing the treatise—at least Book Three—while a student in Paris, it is unlikely that they were acquainted with each other at that time. Further, given that Becket was not a particularly strong student or at least one interested in a deeper understanding of the subject matter of the *trivium* or the *quadrivium*, it appears odd that

---

<sup>612</sup> Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 19. Elrington mistakenly identified that time as the period of John's disgrace and banishment from court. Constable has established adequately that the exile took place much earlier, in 1156. See: Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 67.

<sup>613</sup> Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 95.

<sup>614</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 62.

Becket would direct his former Canterbury colleague to write a text on the defense of logic.

Finally, given that the work is an unvarnished criticism of behavior at court, such as hunting (an activity Becket enjoyed and excelled at), one wonders why Becket would countenance an assault on the environment and life he enjoyed.

Instead, it is most plausible that John of Salisbury created the *Metalogicon* unprompted and that he dedicated the treatise to Becket in an attempt to draw attention to the superficial and mock-worthy environment to which he was attached. The dedication is not necessarily one offered in friendship but rather out of caution about the dangers of a vacuous lifestyle.

## CHAPTER 6 – JOHN OF SALISBURY AND THE *POLICRATICUS*

“Wise moderation.” If there is an overarching tone of John of Salisbury’s *magnum opus*, the *Policraticus*, that may well be it. Quentin Taylor notes John’s use of the phrase “wise moderation” in Book VI, Chapter 19 on the need for soldiers to show modesty. Throughout the work, and indeed in John’s life, moderation is a key theme.<sup>615</sup> A subtext in the *Policraticus* was John’s his grievances against Henry as failure to appoint to open episcopacies so as to seize the revenue, jurisdictional disagreements, the complaints about criminous clerks, and clerical and lay roles in governing.<sup>616</sup>

The massive treatise carries a subtitle: *De nugis curialium et vestigiis philisophorum*. The translation generally accepted is *The Statesmen’s Book, Concerning the Trifles and the Traditions of the Philosophers*.<sup>617</sup> The *Policraticus* is approximately 250,000 words in length<sup>618</sup> and covers a range of topics, which scholars have grouped according to subject matter. Jan van Laarhoven proposes some: “Officials and their Ado,” “Falsehood and Flattery,” “The Body According to Plutarch,” and “Ethics, Tyranny, and Felicity.”<sup>619</sup> The work is considered by some to be a rambling farrago;<sup>620</sup> at the same time, it is understood to be “one of the most influential political works for the remainder of the Middle Ages.”<sup>621</sup> In the view of R. L. Poole, John was not a radical for his era but a moderate who carried forward the threads of Gregorianism and its

---

<sup>615</sup> Quentin Taylor, “John of Salisbury, the *Policraticus*, and Political Thought,” *Humanitas*, xix, no. 1/2 (2006): 156.

<sup>616</sup> John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket: two Canterbury saints' lives*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2009, 5.

<sup>617</sup> Brown, “John of Salisbury,” 284, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41974691>.

<sup>618</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 51.

<sup>619</sup> Jan Van Laarhoven, “Titles and Subtitles of the ‘Policraticus’: A Proposal,” *Vivarium* 32, no. 2 (1994): 141 ff.

<sup>620</sup> Taylor, “John of Salisbury, the *Policraticus*, and Political Thought,” 139.

<sup>621</sup> Joseph Canning, *A History of Medieval Political Thought, 300-1450* (London: Routledge, 1996), 114.

program of reform.<sup>622</sup> Nonetheless, John's perspective on tyrants—and methods of dealing with them—marked a substantial departure from previous medieval writings. Poole saw John balancing this radical approach with a moderation in manner that he urged on Henry's chancellor, Thomas Becket.<sup>623</sup> Cary J. Nederman explains that the lack of classical models for practical political difficulties was problematic for John; he was reticent to build a novel doctrine out of whole cloth. To solve the difficulty of having no apparent precedent for his political theories in *Policraticus*, John employed a conventional medieval device—he created a fictitious treatise to serve as a model or authority for his propositions, notably on tyranny.<sup>624</sup>

Hans Liebeschütz posits that the *Policraticus* is more complicated than John's other principal works, the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* and the *Metalogicon*. In his view, some of the substance in the *Policraticus* resulted from his years as a student in Paris. As evidence, the shorter *Entheticus ad Policraticum* that precedes the *Policraticus* strongly resembles its longer namesake, including instructions to the *prosopopoeia libelle*.<sup>625</sup> Also, the work's form is poetic and not prosaic like the *Policraticus*. While John may have wanted to build on a writing he started as a student, there were other reasons for crafting the *Policraticus*. One of several immediate drivers for the *Policraticus* was an additional tax on clerical properties to

---

<sup>622</sup> The reforms promulgated by Pope Gregory VII in the last quarter of the eleventh century addressed clerical morals and integrity and the maintenance of a clergy independent of external pressures. The crux of the program was the nature of Church-State relations. Uta-Renate Blumenthal, "Gregorian Reform," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed June 3, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Gregorian-Reform>.

<sup>623</sup> R. L. Poole's views as presented by Hans Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury* (London: the Warburg Institute, University of London, 1950), 4.

<sup>624</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus: of the frivolities of courtiers and the footprints of philosophers*, xxi.

<sup>625</sup> The *prosopopoeia libelle* is a literary device. It represents the notion of a little book to which the author gives instructions, in lieu of directly issuing orders to the intended subject. In this instance, the desired target for instruction was Becket.



fund the campaign against the French and the siege of Toulouse.<sup>626</sup> It was to Becket, while in southern France, that John dispatched dedicated copies of both the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*, which he clearly wanted Becket to read. For John, the military operation was an act of human vanity that had brought confusion and discord into the world.<sup>627</sup>

### *The Structure of the Text*

To grasp the importance of the *Policraticus*, it is helpful to address the structure that encompasses the quarter of a million words.<sup>628</sup> The *Policraticus* is preceded by the 306-line poem, *Entheticus ad Policraticum*, also referred to as *Entheticus in Policraticum* or *Entheticus minor*. The collapsed version of the *Entheticus* replicates some of the verses in the original, longer *Entheticus maior*; both offer warnings for travelers and urge the reader to return home (to Canterbury). Both highlight known persons and places, though the *Entheticus minor* presents clearer identities, ones that are hidden more carefully in the *Entheticus maior*.<sup>629</sup>

Although it attaches to the beginning of the *Policraticus*, the *Entheticus minor* is not a prologue. Rather, it is a vehicle that serves in part as a guide for the reader and a shield for John—as such, *he* is not directing his views and criticisms at anyone. Instead, John is advising the

---

<sup>626</sup> Bollermann and Nederman quoting Saltman, *Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury*, in “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, eds. Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud. (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 69.

<sup>627</sup> John made a direct, critical reference to the Toulouse campaign in the *Metalogicon*, at the very end of the treatise: Book 4, Chapter 42. Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 4.

<sup>628</sup> I have had the honor of viewing and leafing through the combined *Policraticus* and *Metalogicon* in the Parker Library, housed in Corpus Christi College Cambridge. It is a substantial volume, and its provenance suggests that it was the volume containing both the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon* that John sent to southern France. The volume, identified as CCCC MS 46 is described as the copy belonging to John that was presented to Becket. <https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/fs743fm9703>

<sup>629</sup> Brown, “John of Salisbury,” 295.

*libelle*, the little book, on how to act. The *Entheticus minor*, though patterned after the *maior*, the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, is a fraction of the *maior* in length. Ronald E. Pepin describes the *Entheticus minor* as “a more compact, more focused, more refined work than its longer counterpart, yet it exhibits all the tricks and knacks of the professional ‘classical’ poet.”<sup>630</sup> The substance of the shorter *Entheticus* has a different cast, centered more on politics and social concerns, emblematic of the work it precedes. There is little concerning the Church and nothing regarding education and philosophy. What is central to the *Entheticus minor* is frivolity (*nugae*) that is a core concern in the *Policraticus*.<sup>631</sup> In the main, the *Entheticus minor* is drawn from the third section of its more extensive counterpart. A close reading of the *Policraticus* suggests that the addressee is Thomas Becket.<sup>632</sup> The *libelle* then is a subterfuge that John hoped would protect him and deflect any anger of those who read the treatise.

The main text of the *Policraticus* consists of eight books in what David Luscombe describes as “at once a work of political theory, a manual of government, a mirror of princes, a moralizing critique of life at court; and also an encyclopædia of letters and learning.”<sup>633</sup> The first two books raise cautions concerning “success and fame,” for embracing them can destroy what John held in greatest esteem: virtue.<sup>634</sup> Book I specifically discusses success, fortune, and the harm that can result from the slippery slope of following a life according to the teachings of Epicurus. John wrote, “Again we are not able to devote our energies to wisdom if our minds

---

<sup>630</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 160.

<sup>631</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 160.

<sup>632</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 51.

<sup>633</sup> David Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

<sup>634</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

always dwell upon the table which exacts excessive labor and worry.”<sup>635</sup> John subsequently outlines particular activities for criticism including hunting and games of chance as well as music, theatre, and magic.<sup>636</sup> Book II continues the lament about courtiers’ frivolities; John extended his cautions with a warning of the fate of Jerusalem in 70 C.E.—its fall to the Romans—and admonitions about false signs obscuring the truth.

Book III commences John’s caveat with respect to flattery and the falsehood it generates. Beginning with the prologue and continuing through the chapters, John pointed out that that his assaults on courtly frivolities earned him foes, a refrain that is repeated in Book VIII of the *Policraticus*.<sup>637</sup> John underscored the need to promote public welfare in Chapter 1, asserting that “there is nothing worthwhile in human life which is not advantageous for a secure life.”<sup>638</sup> John urged not only truth but care for one another with a reminder of the great commandment “the Celestial Master teaches that a human being should love his fellow human beings just as he loves himself.”<sup>639</sup> John continued, “The disciple who does not rejoice with the truth and does not burn with anger against the enemies of public welfare is unworthy of so great a master.”<sup>640</sup> For John, the great master was God. In Chapter 4 of Book III, John decried flattery, calling it “inimical to all virtue.”<sup>641</sup>

---

<sup>635</sup> Book VIII, Chapter 8 in John of Salisbury and Joseph B. Pike, *Frivolities of courtiers and footprints of philosophers: being a translation of the first, second, and third books and selections from the seventh and eighth books of the Policraticus of John of Salisbury* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1938), 338.

<sup>636</sup> While a schoolboy in school in Salisbury, John had an unpleasant experience with a teacher who attempted to engage him in crystal-gazing. See discussion in Chapter 1.

<sup>637</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

<sup>638</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 14.

<sup>639</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 13.

<sup>640</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 13.

<sup>641</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 18.

Book IV initiates the discussion of public functions and establishes what subsequent scholars have recognized as John's development of a political theory. In Chapter 2, John declared that a prince is "absolutely being law unto himself" but only because he "loves justice, cherishes equity, procures the utility of the republic" and puts public interests above his own will.<sup>642</sup> Taken together, Books IV, V, and VI form the core of what is considered the *Statesman's Book*. These three books present John's understanding of political principles; they have had "the greatest influence on later writers and have most interested modern scholars."<sup>643</sup> John Dickinson describes the *Statesman's Book* as the "first elaborate medieval treatise on politics."<sup>644</sup> Here John directs attention to rulers, and he distinguishes between the good ruler—the prince—and the tyrant. The experiences John had with the royal court, Henry, and the royal courtiers were an impetus for this portion of the *Policraticus*. In these books, John articulates his vision and "theory of government and society," which would constitute a healthy and spiritually correct environment for the prince and his people.<sup>645</sup>

The prince serves the public. He values justice and the law and, in the duel of the two scriptural swords, he is subservient to the Church.<sup>646</sup> John highlighted the importance of justice and virtue for the common welfare. In making his case, he held up the mirror of the Old Testament as yielding cautionary stories.<sup>647</sup> Sister M. Anthony Brown confirms the view of John's expectations of a good prince, stating, "A noble ruler is one who has no will of his own

---

<sup>642</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 30.

<sup>643</sup> Taylor, "John of Salisbury," 138.

<sup>644</sup> John Dickinson, "Introduction," in *The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury; Being the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Books, and Selections from the Seventh and Eighth Books, of the Policraticus*, John of Salisbury and John Dickinson (New York: Knopf, 1927), xvii.

<sup>645</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, xix.

<sup>646</sup> Luscombe, "John of Salisbury."

<sup>647</sup> Van Laarhoven, "Titles and Subtitles of the 'Policraticus,'" 147.

but is a servant of his subjects. Since he is the image of Divine authority, equity rests with him.”<sup>648</sup>

Lacking much material precedent for his theories, John stretches to find sources of affirmation. Few are to be found, and so he apparently manufactures his own. In Book V, John introduces the *Institutio Trajani*, the *Institutes of Trajan* also called *On the Instruction of Trajan*.<sup>649</sup> The creative fiction serves to buttress John’s authority for his propositions on what constitutes a good prince. He selected Trajan, who was regarded as the superior Roman emperor, as worthy of imitation.<sup>650</sup> John also utilized Plutarch’s paradigm of the body politic as an actual body, with each portion of the corpus playing a meaningful role, and all interdependent.<sup>651</sup>

The organic body simile discussed by John Dickinson in the introduction to Book IV<sup>652</sup> continues in Book VI. The body politic is related to the physical body, literally from head to feet.<sup>653</sup> Book VI also discusses the hands and arms of the military and the necessity for discipline for that part of the body, which he fears the English lack.<sup>654</sup> In Book VI, chapter 24, John shared a deeply personal conversation he had with Adrian IV, his close friend, while he

---

<sup>648</sup> Brown, “John of Salisbury,” 285.

<sup>649</sup> John attributes his knowledge of the *Institutio Trajani* to Plutarch; however, it is not extant, and Janet Martin expresses skepticism that it ever existed. She writes that John had a habit of manufacturing “pseudo-antiques.” Janet Martin, “John of Salisbury as a Classical Scholar,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, ed. Michael Wilks (Oxford: Ecclesiastical History Society, 1984), 194.

<sup>650</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

<sup>651</sup> Van Laarhoven, “Titles and Subtitles of the ‘Policraticus,’” 149. Interestingly, John correctly attributed the imagery of the body to Plutarch, though he failed to mention that the Apostle Paul employed a similar description in 1 Corinthians 12:12, 14-20. Paul was born sometime in the latter half of the first decade of the Common Era; Plutarch was born ca. 46 C. E.

<sup>652</sup> John and Dickinson. *The Statesman’s Book*, lix.

<sup>653</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 103 ff.

<sup>654</sup> John of Salisbury was extraordinarily well read, so it should not be surprising that he has also been recognized as an expert on twelfth-century military tactics and comportment. See John D. Hosler, *John of Salisbury: Military Authority of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

was at Benevento. Having been asked by the pontiff for the honest opinion that the fellow clergy had of the papal court, John demurred at first, but finally gave a candid response. He admitted that to lower-level clergy the curia was like a rapacious stomach. He elaborated: “They pick clean the spoils of the provinces as if they wanted to recover the treasures of Croesus.”<sup>655</sup> John reports that the pontiff laughed “and congratulated such great candor,”<sup>656</sup> further encouraging John to always feel at liberty to report unfavorable comments about him and his court rapidly and thoroughly.<sup>657</sup>

Van Laarhoven describes the final two books of the *Policraticus* as “Philosophical Reflections” in which John examined philosophy and ethics in Book VII and ethics, tyranny, and felicity in Book VIII.<sup>658</sup> In Book VII, John also presented an insight into his administrative life at Canterbury. At that time, Theobald was still alive, though ill, and John managed the archbishop’s affairs in an *ex officio* capacity. John declared that he sought some relief from other duties so he could complete the treatise that, presumably, Becket was expecting. John had an urgency to complete and relay the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon* to Becket while the latter was leading troops against the Toulousians in southern France.

In Book VIII, John set forth his strong views on the tyrant, juxtaposing his rule and behavior to that of the good prince. He was quite expressive about the bad end that all tyrants ultimately face. He was clear that there existed authority to kill tyrants, though the permission

---

<sup>655</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 135.

<sup>656</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 133.

<sup>657</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 135.

<sup>658</sup> Van Laarhoven, “Titles and Subtitles of the ‘Policraticus,’” 153-156.

carried with it a host of stipulations and limitations. John was less clear about how precisely those terminations were to be carried out—leaving much in the hands of God.<sup>659</sup>

### *Motivations for Writing the Policraticus*

The themes presented in the *Policraticus* are broad and seemingly scattered and unlinked over the quarter-million words. A close reading, however, allows one to understand John's concerns, his particular motivations for writing the *Policraticus* and, as important, the audience he sought to influence. Liebeschütz identifies what he believes is John's growing wariness over Henry's military expeditions, Becket's participation in them, and the heavy burden of taxation placed on the Church and clergy to support them. Liebeschütz proffers that the Toulouse campaign was "the turning point on his judgment on Henry's government."<sup>660</sup> John's distress at the efforts to assert control over Gascony and the nearby city of Toulouse appears to have exacerbated his worries about a revisiting of the chaos and unjust government of Stephen under Henry's rule. Liebeschütz believes that John viewed the Church and State events in England—the *sacerdotium* and the *saeculum*—through the lens of a humanist, while Becket was the jurist and the dialectician. The nuances in the changing relationship of the two institutions and Henry's effort to bring the Church to heel were not lost on John; John's positions were predicated on his love for the Church. From John's perspective, Becket was driven, even ham-fisted, in his dedication and loyalty to his king.<sup>661</sup> Still, in his dedication of the *Policraticus* to Becket—a treatise Becket allegedly requested—John hoped that the chancellor

---

<sup>659</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 206.

<sup>660</sup> Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 13.

<sup>661</sup> Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 19.

could set himself apart from Henry. It would be even better if Becket would relay John's concerns about the court and the dangerous policies to Henry. To reinforce his point, Book VIII revisits the theme John first presented in Book III: "Thus the end of the book returns to its beginnings: the danger of the self-abandonment of the human soul in a courtier's existence."<sup>662</sup> Liebeschütz concludes, "For John, the problem of the State is the problem of the rulers."<sup>663</sup>

Cary J. Nederman has written more extensively than any modern scholar on John of Salisbury, his life, writings, and notably his political theories. With respect to theme, Nederman acknowledges that there is no modern framework in the *Policraticus* and that John's understanding of politics was markedly different about eight-hundred-fifty years ago from our present awareness. Nevertheless, the work has substantial value, even for the present. It offers a porthole into the roots of our own contemporary political and social values.<sup>664</sup> The modern reader, Nederman suggests, does not find a particular organization to the writing, though anyone who has studied John's other works appreciates that he had addressed similar themes in the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the earlier, lengthier poem. There, John offered "a new code of conduct for the intellectual Christian man of affairs," a theme restated in the *Policraticus*.<sup>665</sup> The subtle argument that emerges from both works is that the court is corrupt, and part of that corruption stems from an inadequate and facile education that disregards the value of the *trivium*. The ultimate danger here is a tyrannical government. Nederman suggests that John was explaining that the public tyrant, as opposed to the good prince, has the capacity

---

<sup>662</sup> Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 33.

<sup>663</sup> Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 46.

<sup>664</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, xv.

<sup>665</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, xviii.



to destroy not only himself but the larger community as well. It is, therefore, the responsibility of other members of the polity to criticize, correct, and, even if necessary, to kill the tyrant who is established as ruler.

John also acknowledged that there were private tyrants and ecclesiastical ones.<sup>666</sup> It is, though, the public tyrant who can do the most harm. In offering these assessments of John's views, Nederman suggests that the core elements of the *Policraticus* address the issues and concerns of twelfth-century Europe: political, intellectual, and ecclesiastical. John was equally firm, according to Nederman, that there should not be a separation between the theoretical and the practical. John brought together "the practical demands of politics in relation to the requirements of living well in a moral and religious sense."<sup>667</sup> In a separate writing, Nederman points out the tensions that exist in the *Policraticus*: the balance is between patience and tolerance.<sup>668</sup> Further themes in the *Policraticus* that Nederman believes merit attention are John's continual stress on liberty,<sup>669</sup> his insistence that money intrinsically has no worth and devalues people, and his assertion that justice and money cannot coexist.<sup>670</sup>

---

<sup>666</sup> John acknowledged that barons and lords of the manor and bishops could be tyrants along. Cary J. Nederman and Catherine Campbell, "Priests, Kings, and Tyrants: Spiritual and Temporal Power in John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*," *Speculum* 66, no. 3 (1991): 572-590.

<sup>667</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, xxv, xxvi. Note that England was not alone in the challenges presented by political "strongmen." Frederick Barbarossa, the Holy Roman Emperor, was tyrannical in his rule, presenting additional worries about the independence of the Church with Frederick's advocacy and military support for an anti-pope. See, for example, K. Leyser, "Frederick Barbarossa, Henry II and the Hand of St. James," *The English Historical Review* 90, no. 356 (Jul. 1975); Björn Weiler, "The king as Judge: Henry II and Frederick Barbarossa as Seen by their Contemporaries," in *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter*, ed. Patricia Skinner (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 115-140.

<sup>668</sup> Cary J. Nederman presents the comparison in *Lineages of European Political Thought* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 67. The theme is developed by John of Salisbury in Book VII, Chapter 25: "Things which are done or spoken freely avoid the fault of timidity on the one hand and of rashness on the other, and so as long as the straight and narrow path is followed merit praise and win affection." John and Dickinson, *The Statesman's Book*, 324.

<sup>669</sup> Nederman, *Lineages of European Political Thought*, 72.

<sup>670</sup> Nederman, *Lineages of European Political Thought*, 207-209.

John of Salisbury's primary loyalty was to the Church, and this loyalty was an essential focus in his writings and core to his being. He maintained that the Church was the central force for moral and spiritual education and correction; it guided people from vice to virtue.<sup>671</sup> Factored into his calculus was the Aristotelean Doctrine of Mean; it carried substantial weight with John and he employed it in the *Policraticus* to support his overarching expression of moderation. Citing Cicero's application of the doctrine in *De officiis*, John followed the argument that it is not better to display an excess than it is to present a deficit. Going to extremes in either case is a vice.<sup>672</sup> A further core premise in the *Policraticus*, in Nederman's assessment, is liberty that is both political and moral in character. Each person is to be at liberty to make a circumstantial determination with respect to the mean in a given situation; the prince is responsible for ensuring a subject's liberty, choosing a midpoint between license and slavery (not actual bondage; instead, a metaphorical slavery). A virtuous community encourages the "continued liberty of the virtuous individuals within the community."<sup>673</sup> There is

---

<sup>671</sup> Cary J. Nederman, "The Liberty of the Church and the Road to Runnymede: John of Salisbury and the Intellectual Foundations of the Magna Carta," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 43, no. 3 (2010): 459. John of Salisbury opens Book IV, Chapter 3 by writing, "The sword then, the prince receives from the hand of the Church, although she herself has no sword of blood at all. Nevertheless, she has this sword, but she uses it by the hand of the prince, upon whom she confers the power of bodily coercion retaining to herself authority over spiritual things in the person of the pontiffs." John and Dickinson, *The Statesman's Book*, 9. Note that the reference to two swords comes from the New Testament: "And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough," Luke 22:38. The medieval understanding was that the Church held both swords, and granted one, the secular sword, while holding onto the superior sacred sword. For further reading, see, for example, John A. Watt, "Spiritual and Temporal Powers," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, ed. J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 397-410, and Christopher P. Hill, "Gilbert Foliot and the Two Swords: Law and Political Theory in Twelfth-century England," (PhD Dissertation. The University of Texas at Austin, 2008), 174 ff. There was not a unified view regarding the validity of the Doctrine of the Two Swords. For further discussion see "The Doctrine of Two Swords," *Oxford Reference*, accessed March 23, 2021, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803110403409>.

<sup>672</sup> In *De officiis*, the prime value is moderation, the virtue of tolerance. Quoted in Cary J. Nederman, "The Aristotelian Doctrine of the Mean and John of Salisbury's Concept of Liberty," *Vivarium* 24, no. 2 (1986): 132.

<sup>673</sup> Nederman, "The Aristotelian Doctrine of the Mean," 138.

tension here as well: “So long as they have peace and practice justice and abstain from falsehood and perjury”—behavior John found in the corrupt court—then the king’s subjects “enjoy liberty and peace in such fulness that there is nought that can in the least degree disturb their repose.”<sup>674</sup> Again, moderation is key as chaos and disorder can emerge in two forms: a rule based on license that is too lax or a rule based on tyranny.<sup>675</sup> This twinned theme was paramount for John. It reflected his experience during the reign of Stephen coupled with his fear of an excess of royal power under Henry. Nederman and his co-author, Catherine Campbell, find a more complicated sacred-secular relationship in the *Policraticus* than most scholars have found. John, they write, envisioned a “fourfold scheme of interrelationships between the two realms. Simply stated, he presumed that the church and the temporal government are independently ordained institutions, each with its own special purpose and tools.”<sup>676</sup> Though independent, they are still connected; actions by one affect the other. The co-authors perceive that John declares that the “ruler’s relation to the law” is the foundation for a good prince. As such, the manner by which the king controls himself accords with how the governed are treated. As God rules the universe, so must the king rule his realm.<sup>677</sup>

John of Salisbury’s fear about restraint of Church liberties is a prevailing theme in much of his writing. The concern about restriction of liberties is one of the predominant aspects of the *Policraticus* and it surfaces later in John’s *Lives* of both Anselm and Becket, two men he was promoting for sainthood. Pepin underscores that in the *Policraticus*, particularly Books IV

---

<sup>674</sup> The quote from John of Salisbury appears in Book IV, Chapter 2 of the *Policraticus*. John and Dickinson, *The Statesman’s Book*, 54; Nederman, “The Aristotelian Doctrine of the Mean,” 141.

<sup>675</sup> Nederman, “The Aristotelian Doctrine of the Mean,” 141.

<sup>676</sup> Nederman and Campbell, “Priests, Kings, and Tyrants,” 576.

<sup>677</sup> Nederman and Campbell, “Priests, Kings, and Tyrants,” 577.

through VI, John displayed his disdain for and fear of royal infringement on the Church. His opposition to the king's actions of restraint were both philosophical and practical. John articulated his grievances as failure to appoint anyone to open episcopacies so the king could seize the revenue, failure to resolve jurisdictional disagreements and the complaints about criminous clerks, and failure to resolve clerical and lay roles in governance. Imbedded in this list of infringements was the nearly century-old dispute regarding lay investiture, forbidden by a papal decree that Gregory VII issued in his argument with Henry IV, the Holy Roman Emperor.<sup>678</sup>

Sigbjørn Sønnesyn explores John of Salisbury's understanding of the Doctrine of Mean in relation to liberty as a major thread in his treatises. In Sønnesyn's analysis, John understood that there should be a balance involving liberty as well as any other value. Sønnesyn noted, "If we accept that the doctrine of the mean in some way or other plays a significant role within John's ethical system—as we must—then the exercise of liberty, too, must be moderated to strike a balance between the excessive and the deficient."<sup>679</sup> Sønnesyn holds that John found true happiness to be attainable through virtue, and John wrote in Book VII that equilibrium was key: "This way is virtue; for no one may proceed towards happiness unless by way of virtue."<sup>680</sup> Clement C. J. Webb highlights the four cardinal virtues upon which John relied in developing his notion of happiness: justice, temperance or self-restraint, prudence or wisdom, and fortitude.

---

<sup>678</sup> John of Salisbury and Ronald E. Pepin, *Anselm & Becket: Two Canterbury Saints' Lives* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2009), 5. See also Uta-Renate Blumenthal, "Investiture Controversy," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed June 5, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Investiture-Controversy>; James Pounder Whitney, "Gregory VII," *The English Historical Review* 34, no. 134 (1919): 129-151.

<sup>679</sup> Sigbjørn Sønnesyn, "Qui Recta Quae Docet Sequitur, Uere Philosophus Est: The Ethics of John of Salisbury," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 311.

<sup>680</sup> "Haec autem uirtus est; nam nisi per uirtutem nemo ad beatitudinem pergit." *Policraticus* 7.8, ed. Clement C. J. Webb, vol. 2, 118.

Application—and moderation—of these four virtues are pivotal to fulfilment of true happiness.<sup>681</sup> In a more recent consideration of John of Salisbury, Janet Martin reflects on Chapter 25 of Book VIII and notes John’s comments on the Epicureans. In essence, John said, what they sought they could not achieve with their methods. Because of Adam’s fall, they chased transitory goods and were consequently unhappy. He argued that some of his generation were following the way of the Epicureans and they too would never find perfect tranquility. John wrote that the true path to happiness—the one that the Epicureans sought—was virtue, which was the knowledge and practice of goodness. And how to find it? “Return to the tree of knowledge and gain truth in learning, virtue in works and life in joy.”<sup>682</sup> John declared that one must go back to the beginning of human life and discover anew the path to virtue. He likened it to Aeneas returning to infancy in Book 6 of the *Aeneid* to review the errors of his life.<sup>683</sup> Aeneas must descend to the lower world before returning to the Elysian fields. In the final analysis, the ultimate recipe for the creation of happiness is grounded in virtue.

John was not alone in his apprehensions regarding Henry’s efforts to abridge Church liberties in the twelfth century. Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, had gone into exile twice, in 1148 and in 1152, stemming from attacks against the Church by the Crown;<sup>684</sup> Archbishop

---

<sup>681</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 39.

<sup>682</sup> John presents this wisdom in Book VIII, Chapter 25, the final chapter in the *Policraticus*. John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 227.

<sup>683</sup> Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. John Dryden, accessed September 3, 2020, <http://classics.mit.edu/Virgil/aeneid.6.vi.html>. Bernard Silvestris wrote about the similarity of human return to the Garden of Eden and Aeneas’ descent to the lower world in *Commentum* as noted by Martin, “John of Salisbury as a Classical Scholar,” 198-200. Here, Martin quotes from Book VIII, chapter 25: “In arbore ergo scientiae quasi quidam uirtutis ramus nascitur, ex quo tota uita proficientis hominis consecratur. Neque enim ad genitorem uitae, Deum scilicet, alter redit, nisi qui uirtutis ramum excisum de ligno scientiae praetendit.”

<sup>684</sup> Edwin Burton, “Theobald,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton, 1912), accessed September 3, 2020, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14567c.htm>.

Anselm earlier had done the same.<sup>685</sup> The Church-State peace arrived at over investitures was a frail one and, from churchmen's point of view, there were continued and aggressive encroachments by the Crown on ecclesiastical privileges and properties. Among the forces arrayed against the Church, what were the precipitating factors motivating John to write and to relay the *Policraticus* to Becket?

As discussed previously, the experience of John and his immediate family with King Stephen during the anarchy was disturbing and frightful. Although the conflicts and the sieges were limited in scope and region, the places where John and his parents and brothers resided and worked were among those most heavily affected. The chaos caused by the military competition for the crown between Stephen and Matilda was disruptive and contrary to peaceful governance in England. John was loath to have it return. He appeared initially willing to read Henry in a good light as he began his reign. After all, his fabrication of Hircanus in the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* is generally accepted by scholars as a portrayal of Stephen and not Henry. Nederman, for example, points to Book VI, Chapter 18 and John's description of recent violence and disturbances under King Stephen. Warily hopeful that Henry would set things right, John wrote, "Henry's grandson [Henry II], if the merits of his virtue remain in harmony... will for all times be the best King of Britain... if I may say so."<sup>686</sup> John looked to Henry to be a virtuous ruler, a good prince. Through the dedication of the *Policraticus* to Becket, John was appealing to the chancellor, with as much force as was wise, to provide good guidance to the young king. However, by 1158, four years into the young King Henry's

---

<sup>685</sup> Z. N. Brooke, *The English Church and the Papacy: From the Conquest to the Reign of John* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1931), 153-54.

<sup>686</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 119.

reign, John's unease regarding Henry's encroachments on Church liberties began to rise. The final Chapter, number 42, of the *Metalogicon* in Book IV—written after the *Policraticus* was complete—reveals John's growing skepticism: "The present day is more suited to weeping than to writing. What I see about me convinces me that the world is subject to vanity. We had hoped for peace, but what has befallen us?"<sup>687</sup> Nederman and Karen Bollermann underscore that both the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon*, which were delivered together expressly to Becket in Toulouse, lamented that "thunderbolts in the vicinity of the Garonne [River]" were being lanced with the advice and support of the chancellor.<sup>688</sup>

Quentin Taylor perceives a realist's motivation in the *Policraticus* and suggests that it is a forward-leaning realism, not one wedded to the patterns of the past. He notes, "John's 'pessimism' regarding the human condition is not the *theological* pessimism of Augustine, but more akin to the *humanist* pessimism of Machiavelli and his realist successors."<sup>689</sup> That is, the cloak of the medieval cleric was falling away. Thus, John's appraisal of the situation was not driven solely by scripture. His extensive knowledge of classical authors infused his understanding of their philosophies and allowed him to create the beginnings of a humanist approach.

---

<sup>687</sup> John and McGarry, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury*, 273.

<sup>688</sup> *Policraticus* 7.8, ed. Clement C. J. Webb, vol. 2, 424; John and McGarry, *The Metalogicon*, 183. Quoted in Karen Bollermann and Cary J. Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 70.

<sup>689</sup> Taylor, "John of Salisbury," 141.

### *The Question of Intended Audience*

This all leads to the principal question: to whom was John of Salisbury directing the *Policraticus*? The immediate and obvious answer is Thomas Becket, John's former Canterbury colleague and the current chancellor of King Henry II. After all, the dedication written at the beginning of the volume containing the dual treatises of the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon* is to Becket and some sources assert that Becket requested these writings from John. However, John certainly anticipated that the works would not remain solely in Becket's possession. For that reason, in part, the criticisms of courtiers, of slothful masters and teachers, and even public leaders remain covert. They are not too veiled, though.

Yoko Hirata maintains that "Becket encouraged John to write them [the *Policraticus* and the *Metalogicon*] and he may have been interested in what John had to say. John may have expected to find an audience at King Henry's court through Becket."<sup>690</sup> Luscombe theorizes that "John is gloomy about the state of his country, the royal court, indeed all courts and corrupt individuals, including the archbishop's household." He adds that Becket is portrayed well but that John "delivers warnings concerning Becket's ambiguous place on the royal scene."<sup>691</sup> Becket was John's patron and also part of his target audience. Bollermann and Nederman stress that John is affirmatively directing warnings to Becket, urging that one not be seduced by the "high life" in order to gain the pleasures of life. They point to the beginning of the last chapter in Book VIII, where John writes, "although there are many Epicureans, that is, adherents to futile pleasures, few profess this name....They endeavor to conceal their own private

---

<sup>690</sup> Yoko Hirata, "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents," 558.

<sup>691</sup> Luscombe, "John of Salisbury."



wickedness with another name.”<sup>692</sup> Taylor agrees that John was urging Becket not to accede to the Epicurean behaviors at court. His writing was designed “to inspire the chancellor with a vision of the higher moral purpose of his office. It is also likely that John intended indirectly to influence the king himself, whom he believes was fast becoming the Church’s most dangerous foe.”<sup>693</sup>

Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse find that John was despairing that Henry would fall below his expectations of a good ruler. John still nursed hopes “that Henry, with proper guidance, would prove to be the true prince that Stephen had so miserably failed to be.”<sup>694</sup> The Rouses are confident that John did not intend for any potential audience to read his words about slaying a tyrant and act upon them. Rather, in dedicating the works to Becket, “he hoped that his book would influence the king as well.”<sup>695</sup> The Rouses strengthen their claims that John wanted to impact Henry’s reign by pointing to the *Entheticus minor* that accompanies the *Policraticus*. John, they believe, employed the literary device of the *prosopopoeia* of the *libelle*, instructing it to behave properly in the presence of the king. John is holding the king out to be virtuous and the *libelle* (read Becket) should act accordingly. The Rouses quote Clement C. J. Webb’s statement that by means of the dedication of the treatise to Becket, John appointed Becket “as the book’s ‘guardian’ against critics at court,” i.e., the the one who should see that

---

<sup>692</sup> “...cum Epicurei sint plurimi, id est uani sectatores uoluptatis, nomen hoc pauci profiteantur. Erubescunt enim dici quod sunt et propriam turpitudinem occultare nituntur nomine alieno, dum nom tam boni esse cupiunt quam uideri.” Bollermann Nederman, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 74.

<sup>693</sup> Taylor, “John of Salisbury,” 137.

<sup>694</sup> Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, “John of Salisbury and the Doctrine of Tyrannicide,” *Speculum* 42, no. 4 (October 1967), 704.

<sup>695</sup> Rouse and Rouse, “John of Salisbury and the Doctrine of Tyrannicide,” 704.

the *Policraticus* was “well received.”<sup>696</sup> Michael Wilks envisions John fostering a more pessimistic view of the current state of affairs and says that John believed that Henry had ceased to respect Church liberties. As Wilks notes, “In *Policraticus* V and VI John assumes that Henry has already become a tyrant, a non-prince who has unprinced himself, and [John] is counseling true philosophers to follow his own example of flight from such a court.”<sup>697</sup>

Anne Duggan suggests that the *Policraticus* was a bit *too* well received by Henry’s court, including by the king himself. In commenting on John’s exit from England in late 1163 or early 1164, she writes, “It is also likely that the opinions expressed in the *Policraticus*, with its defence of clerical immunity and attack on royal ecclesiastical policies, had already made him *persona non grata* to the king.”<sup>698</sup> If Duggan is correct, then the book in fact circulated widely; there was something in it to offend any who gave it a close read.

#### *John’s Precautions in Writing the Policraticus*

John of Salisbury was also a cautious man, especially given his earlier “disgrace.” His passions to see a good ruler on the throne were strong though. As a consequence of his concerns about stating his beliefs too strongly, he shared a draft of the *Policraticus* with his close friend, Peter of Celle, desiring to engage a calm editor’s eye. John was hoping to find an audience at Henry’s court but needed to be vigilant in his approach; careless criticism could lead to charges of treason. With those reservations in mind, he approached Peter to read and

---

<sup>696</sup> Rouse and Rouse, “John of Salisbury and the Doctrine of Tyrannicide,” 705; Clement C. J. Webb, *Policratici sive de nugis curialium et vestigiis philosophorum libri I*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1909), lines 1-6.

<sup>697</sup> Michael Wilks, “John of Salisbury and the Tyranny of Nonsense,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 282.

<sup>698</sup> Anne Duggan, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 430.

correct the manuscript.<sup>699</sup> In a letter to Peter from the autumn of 1159, John wrote that he had “published a book about the trifles of courtiers and the footsteps of the philosophers,” noting it was “unpolished” and needed to be corrected by his friend.<sup>700</sup> John further stated, “It is a garrulous piece of work, and as such will scarce find a single friend at court.”<sup>701</sup> He concluded his letter of appeal to Peter by writing that he did not want to be made an enemy at court and requested the manuscript’s “improvement without delay.”<sup>702</sup> Taylor notes that John was correct in two regards: “the *Policraticus* made no initial impact on Beckett [sic], and did nothing for John’s strained relations with court and king.”<sup>703</sup>

The principal reason that the *Policraticus* has attracted substantial notice from scholars and political theoreticians during the course of centuries is its discussion of tyrannicide—the killing of a wicked ruler. Opinions on how serious John was about tyrannicide are divided.<sup>704</sup> A number of more recent students of the treatise acknowledge that, while John did propound the doctrine of tyrannicide, killing the king was not the end of the story. As Richard and Mary Rouse posit, “John’s exposition of tyrannicide contains many reservations, qualifications, and outright contradictions, including his reiteration of the traditional view that a Christian owes submission to the powers that be.”<sup>705</sup> Nederman takes an opposing position, suggesting that “John not only proposes a theory of tyrannicide, but also roots it in a strong positive obligation to raise the

---

<sup>699</sup> Hirata, “John of Salisbury and His Correspondents,” 589.

<sup>700</sup> Letter 111, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 182.

<sup>701</sup> Letter 111, John of Salisbury, W. J. Millor, Harold Edgeworth Butler, and Christopher Brooke, 182.

<sup>702</sup> Letter 111, John of Salisbury, W. J. Millor, Harold Edgeworth Butler, and Christopher Brooke, 182.

<sup>703</sup> Taylor, “John of Salisbury,” 137.

<sup>704</sup> Among previous scholars who saw John of Salisbury as dedicated to the literal notion of tyrannicide, as opposed to a more theoretical and nuanced approach, were Carl Schaarschmidt, *Johannes Saresberiensis: nach Leben und Studien, Schriften und Philosophie* (Teubner, 1862) and Johan Huizinga, “John of Salisbury: A Pre-Gothic Mind,” in *Men and Ideas: History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 172 ff.

<sup>705</sup> Rouse and Rouse, “John of Salisbury and the Doctrine of Tyrannicide,” 693.

sword against tyrannical rulers in the name of public benefit and justice.”<sup>706</sup> Nederman admits that John’s theory is not clearly declared in the final books of the *Policraticus*, but he contends that there are two elements that prove John’s intent. The first arises in the discussion of court flattery, where John declared that it was “lawful right, and just to take the life of the tyrant.”<sup>707</sup> The second element points to biblical and historical instances where evil rulers died violently.<sup>708</sup> Nederman contends that, with these two examples, John moved from the theoretical to the practical,<sup>709</sup> or—as van Laarhoven labels it—a *praxis*.<sup>710</sup>

The initial reference to tyrannicide is in Book III of the *Policraticus*, where John begins his critique of flattery in the royal court. Van Laarhoven cites a sentence in Chapter 15 that appears to be quite unambiguous: “It is not merely lawful to slay a tyrant but even right and just.”<sup>711</sup> Richard and Mary Rouse acknowledge that John is firm in his view of the rectitude of tyrannicide *if* it follows both secular and divine law. With that proviso, the killing is acceptable. They state, “Not only is tyrannicide legal and logical, but [it] has a long-standing precedent in both secular and sacred history.”<sup>712</sup> That narrative includes ancient Roman history and the Old Testament.

---

<sup>706</sup> Cary J. Nederman, “A Duty to Kill: John of Salisbury’s Theory of Tyrannicide,” *Review of Politics* 50, no. 3 (2002): 365.

<sup>707</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 119.

<sup>708</sup> Nederman, “A Duty to Kill,” 365.

<sup>709</sup> Nederman, “A Duty to Kill,” 365.

<sup>710</sup> Jan van Laarhoven, “Thou Shall *Not* Slay a Tyrant! The So-Called Theory of John of Salisbury,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 328.

<sup>711</sup> Van Laarhoven presents the full quote from Book III, Chapter 15: “in saecularibus litteris cautum est quia aliter cum amico, aliter vivendum est cum tiranno. Amico utique adulari non licet, sed aures tiranni mulcere licitum est. Ei namque licet adulari, quem licet occidere. Porro tyrannum occidere non modo licitum est sed aequum et iustum. Qui enim gladium accipit gladio dignus est interire.” Van Laarhoven adds that ‘Porro’ is a flatterer. Van Laarhoven, “Thou Shall *Not* Slay a Tyrant!” 328.

<sup>712</sup> Rouse and Rouse, “John of Salisbury and the Doctrine of Tyrannicide,” 696.

John did not dwell at length on the proposition of tyrannicide that he raised in Book III until much later, in Book VIII; however, the introduction of the concept of regicide of an evil king was an early trumpet for what would follow. Interestingly, in the prologues to both Book III and Book VIII, John voiced concern that his blunt criticism of foolish court behavior had gained him no friends. Irrespective of that, his concern for his own reputation at court was overridden by his growing distrust of Henry's rule, particularly the efforts to wrest liberty from the Church. To a certain degree, John had an unrealistic hope that kings and clerics would all behave in ethical and virtuous ways. According to Nederman and Campbell, John believed that "harmonious and voluntary submission of secular rulers to rightful priests was the best assurance...of both the earthly goodness of the members of the political body and the eternal happiness of personal salvation."<sup>713</sup> Ruption of that vision by the tyrant was the trigger for tyrannicide. Note that John's definition of tyrant was a broad one. In Chapter 17 of Book VII and again in Chapter 18 of Book VIII, John described the tyrant as "he who oppresses the people by violent domination," noting that kings are not the only ones capable of tyranny, "but that everyone is a tyrant who abuses any power over those subject to him which has been conceded from above."<sup>714</sup> Dickinson concurs with the description of John's view that there can be tyranny "wherever there is rulership."<sup>715</sup>

Van Laarhoven, reflecting on John's writing in Book VIII, points out that it opens with the question: "Wherein consists the difference between a tyrant and a prince?" Answer: the tyrant is the opposite of the good, law-loving prince. Thus, Van Laarhoven concluded that in John's

---

<sup>713</sup> Nederman and Campbell, "Priests, Kings, and Tyrants," 581.

<sup>714</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 163; 202.

<sup>715</sup> Dickinson, "Introduction," lxvi.

view, “as a being of divinity, the prince is to be loved, worshipped, and cherished; as being an image of wickedness the tyrant is generally to be even killed.”<sup>716</sup> John, though, did recede from the call for outright slaying of the tyrant later in Book VIII, proposing conditions on any such action. We find the restraints in the title to Chapter 20: “That by the authority of the divine book it is lawful and glorious to kill public tyrants so long as the murderer is not obligated to the tyrant by fealty nor otherwise lets justice or honor slip.”<sup>717</sup> This is quite an asterisk. John was operating not from a position of politics, according to van Laarhoven, but rather from a moral perspective, quite in line with his deeply entrenched sense of ethics. Van Laarhoven declares that John was developing his theory of proper governance, and tyrannicide, from the perspective of a Christian humanist.<sup>718</sup>

Taylor presents another interesting assessment of John of Salisbury’s doctrine of tyrannicide. He acknowledges that while the violent dispatch of an evil ruler is a cornerstone of John’s theory, there is another, less appreciated aspect to the principle. Taylor directs attention to John’s use of scriptural passages, e.g., Psalm 89:29-32.<sup>719</sup> To Taylor, this is “a clear doctrine of impeachment and removal, which stopped short of tyrannicide.”<sup>720</sup> But Taylor also notes that though the grounds and the process for killing a tyrant are not specified, John “did suggest that under certain circumstances it was necessary, even divinely sanctioned to do so.”<sup>721</sup>

---

<sup>716</sup> Van Laarhoven, “Thou Shall *Not* Slay a Tyrant!” 322.

<sup>717</sup> “Quod auctoritate divinae paginate licitum et gloriosum, est publicos tyrannos occidere, si tamen fidelitate non sit tyranno obnoxius interfector aut alias iustitiam aut honestatem non amittat.” Van Laarhoven, “Thou Shall *Not* Slay a Tyrant!” 326.

<sup>718</sup> Van Laarhoven, “Thou Shall *Not* Slay a Tyrant!” 331-333.

<sup>719</sup> In Book IV, Chapter 11, John quoted from Psalm 89:29-32: “His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law and walk not in my judgements; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.” (King James Version).

<sup>720</sup> Taylor, “John of Salisbury,” 153.

<sup>721</sup> Taylor, “John of Salisbury,” 153.

On noting John's incorporation of Aristotle in his writings, Nederman declares, "It would be a difficult and perhaps futile task to identify all of the documents from which John of Salisbury could have extracted the equation of virtue with a mean between excess and deficiency."<sup>722</sup> Certainly, given John's formidable intellect and education, the statement remains challenged. In support of his political theories, which were aligned with the doctrine of the mean, John relied greatly on classical and scriptural authority. Nederman writes that John was in the company of other medieval philosophers in engaging the ancients to underpin his works and to help assert the validity of his positions. This was true with both the *Entheticus maior* and *minor* and the *Metalogicon* as well as the *Policraticus*. In the *Policraticus*, John's most frequent references were from sacred texts. For example, the Old Testament provides the greatest defense for his doctrine of tyrannicide. Nederman notes that particular support comes from the books of the prophets and of Wisdom, which describe wicked leaders being restrained or killed. It is not surprising that John draws upon a wide field of authorities for support. At the same time, John was attracted to early Church fathers, notably Augustine and Jerome. As to contemporaries, John included only Bernard of Clairvaux in the *Policraticus*.<sup>723</sup> The voices of classical authors, both Greek and Roman, were additionally brought to bear. As previously noted, John incorporated Aristotle and the doctrine of the mean. He drew too on the works of Cicero, though he was acquainted with the Roman's major writings, *De re publica* and *De legibus* only derivatively and not in original form.<sup>724</sup> Sønnesyn believes that John certainly was familiar with Augustine's *De ciuitate Dei* and garnered some knowledge of Cicero's *De finibus*

---

<sup>722</sup> Nederman, "The Aristotelian Doctrine of the Mean," 130.

<sup>723</sup> John Nederman, *Policraticus*, xix.

<sup>724</sup> John Nederman, *Policraticus*, xx.

*bonorum et malorum* from the saint's work.<sup>725</sup> That awareness laid the foundation for Book VII, Chapter 8, titled "Virtue the Sole Way to Philosophy and Beatitude."<sup>726</sup>

In the *Policraticus*, John of Salisbury returns to a previous device found also in *Metalogicon*—the creation of a character, Cornificius and his followers, the Cornificians. They are, as Wilks names them using John's description in the *Metalogicon*, "those verbal jugglers with their jiggling nonsense."<sup>727</sup> The imaginative fabrication is more expansive in the *Policraticus* than in the *Metalogicon*.

John's discussion of tyrannicide relied in part on a fabricated document. To authenticate his propositions for killing tyrants and his promotion of royal court reform, John turned to an "ancient" document, the "Institute of Trajan," the *Institutio Traiani*.<sup>728</sup> In an earlier description, it was noted that Trajan was perceived by medievalists to be the best pagan Roman emperor.<sup>729</sup> The "Institute" or "Instruction" was supposedly crafted for Trajan by Plutarch to illuminate the emperor on proper leadership. Nederman postulates that John used the *Institutio Traiani*—generally believed to be a falsified letter or document to Trajan—because there was a general

---

<sup>725</sup> Sørensen, "Qui Recta Quae Docet Sequitur, Uere Philosophus Est," 317.

<sup>726</sup> John and Pike, *Frivolities of Courtiers and Footprints of Philosophers*, 239.

<sup>727</sup> Wilks, "John of Salisbury and the Tyranny of Nonsense," 276. See John in the *Metalogicon*, Book II, Chapter 7, the "*nugiloquos uentilatores*." John and McGarry, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury*, 88.

<sup>728</sup> John did not construct the *Institutio Traiani* out of whole cloth. David Luscombe writes that "the 'strategems' of Plutarch which John claimed are found in the *Institutio* were taken from the very same manuscripts of Frontinus' *Strategemata* and of Heiric that John used elsewhere." Luscombe, "John of Salisbury: A bibliography 1953-82," in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 32. Heiric of Auxerre was a Benedictine and Carolingian scholar who was dedicated to reviving scholarship at cathedral schools in the ninth century. "Heiric of Auxerre," Encyclopedia.com, accessed June 10, 2020, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/heiric-auxerre>. On the topic of a previous version of the *Institutio Traiani*, some scholars, including Max Kerner and Tilman Struve, propose that evidence for a writing similar to the *Institutio Traiani* exists in the early Middle Ages in a commentary on Justinian's *Institutes*. See Tilman Struve, "The Importance of Organism," in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 306.

<sup>729</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 40.



paucity of political treatises available to reinforce John's political doctrine.<sup>730</sup> In his observation about the *Policraticus*, Liebeschütz notes that it is interesting John neither quoted nor credited Robert Pullus, one of his Paris masters, given that the material in Books V and VI was drawn from Pullus' lectures. Instead, John created a fictional pamphlet that Plutarch purportedly wrote for Trajan's instruction, effectively creating a source of greater authority.<sup>731</sup> The document is indeed a fiction that John created as a foil and a protection from excoriation of his political theories, in the same manner that he constructed Cornificius and the *libelle*.<sup>732</sup> All three devices were designed to be shields against potential slings and arrows that John might expect from Henry and his courtiers.

The *Institutio Traiani*, as described by John, employs an organic model to underscore the integration of an entire society, insisting that all the members must cooperate to function fully in order to attain justice. Simply stated, the human body, from head to toe, is likened to society, from top to bottom. The simile is explained in detail in Book V, Chapter 2, after an introduction in Chapter 1 of the same book.<sup>733</sup> The substance of the *Institutio Traiani* is an illustrative means of comparing the human body to a social organization. John aligned the body with the republic: "the head is the prince subject only to God, but nevertheless ruled by the soul (which remains superior to all); the heart is the senate; the eyes, ears, and mouth are the judges and governors of the provinces."<sup>734</sup> Plutarch continues: the hands are the officials and the soldiers; treasurers and record keepers are the stomach and the intestines; the feet are the

---

<sup>730</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 54.

<sup>731</sup> Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 23-24.

<sup>732</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 176.

<sup>733</sup> John and Dickinson, *The Statesman's Book*, 63 ff; John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 65 ff.

<sup>734</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 67.

peasants “perpetually bound to the soil, for whom it is all the more necessary that the head take precautions.”<sup>735</sup> After all, “Remove from the fittest body the aid of the feet; it does not proceed under its own power....”<sup>736</sup> The analogy of the social order to the body, sometimes called the “second authority” was not uncommon in ancient times;<sup>737</sup> Paul employed similar imagery in his first epistle to the Corinthians.<sup>738</sup>

The *Policraticus* was novel in its use of literary device as well. Nederman remarks on an interesting—he calls it peculiar—feature of the *Policraticus*. It is the use of *exempla*, i.e., “stories told to illustrate or amplify a lesson or doctrine.”<sup>739</sup> The chapters of the treatise’s books are replete with them. Van Laarhoven, quoting John in Book III, Chapter 3 of the *Policraticus*, declares that it is easier to find more examples than to count them.<sup>740</sup> Like the narrative in the *Policraticus*, the *exempla* are scriptural as well as classical. Sometimes they are strung together like pop beads, one following the other. Peter von Moos presents this explanation of *exempla*: “The concept of the *exemplum* should be understood in the widest possible sense, as both event and as account of an event, as both a model and a warning, as both an exemplary moral figure and as evidence of a thought.”<sup>741</sup> Von Moos writes that the tendency has been to categorize the *exempla* in two ways—either as historical or scriptural examples or as narratives

---

<sup>735</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 67.

<sup>736</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 66-67; John and Dickinson, *The Statesman’s Book*, 64-65.

<sup>737</sup> Rouse and Rouse, “John of Salisbury and the Doctrine of Tyrannicide,” 699.

<sup>738</sup> See n. 35 *supra*.

<sup>739</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, xxi.

<sup>740</sup> Van Laarhoven, “Titles and Subtitles of the ‘Policraticus,’” 135; “... facilius est invenire quam dinumerare.” John, and Pike, *Frivolities of Courtiers and Footprints of Philosophers*, 158-159.

<sup>741</sup> Peter von Moos, “The Use of *Exempla* in the *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 211.

that are “entertaining and edifying” but more fabulous in nature. He notes that in the *Policraticus* John employs them in both ways.<sup>742</sup>

John frequently employs many *exempla* to substantiate his arguments, often that evil rulers come to violent ends. Book VIII, Chapter 18 includes Saul who oppressed “the whole people under the yoke of slavery” and ultimately fell on his own sword.<sup>743</sup> Van Laarhoven highlights other examples John used—Cyrus, Caligula, and Nero among them. He tabulates the array of *exempla*, writing that in the *Policraticus* they include sixteen Roman emperors, ten biblical kings in addition to Jezebel, the Pharaoh, nine English barons, and various “robber knights.”<sup>744</sup> Liebeschütz declares that John had a model for the *exempla*, with St. Jerome being an archetype for “the literary method of using parallel series of Biblical and classical illustrations to impress his views.”<sup>745</sup>

Martin is puzzled about John’s use of hypothetical exemplars, or *exempla*, that are distinct from historical or biblical examples. She wonders if they were fabrications or instead sourced. Martin says that, having read what she describes as several hundred manuscripts that were part of the Canterbury Cathedral and St. Augustine’s Abbey libraries in Kent during John’s time, the use of hypothetical examples is “rather meagre.”<sup>746</sup> Adding to the challenge, many of the books John might have accessed no longer exist, making Martin’s search problematic and incomplete. However, she discovered one solid source: Orosius’ *Seven Books of History Against*

---

<sup>742</sup> Von Moos, “The Use of *Exempla*,” 212-114.

<sup>743</sup> John and Dickinson, *The Statesman’s Book*, 351.

<sup>744</sup> Van Laarhoven, “Thou Shall Not Slay a Tyrant!” 323-324 (somehow Laarhoven left out the partridge in the pear tree). See Book VIII, Chapter 21, John and Dickinson, *The Statesman’s Book*, 375.

<sup>745</sup> Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 67.

<sup>746</sup> Martin, “John of Salisbury as a Classical Scholar,” 180.

*the Pagans*, which John quoted from in the *Policraticus*.<sup>747</sup> Nederman confirms John's use of Orosius' in Book VIII, Chapter 18.<sup>748</sup> In that book, John proclaimed that Nero, who came after Caligula, outdid his uncle "in material possessions and vices, and he exercised lewdness, lustfulness, extravagance, avarice and cruelty to any extremity of wickedness."<sup>749</sup> John described Orosius as the basis of his knowledge.<sup>750</sup>

Earlier in this text, there was discussion comparing John of Salisbury's three major works: the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, and the *Policraticus*. It is worthwhile to establish once more that the *Policraticus* is, and historically has been, received as John's *magnum opus*. Its subject matter reach extends beyond the other two; it also presents new perspectives on political science, seen through a more modern lens.

During the course of more than eight-and-a-half centuries, what is the measure of the impact of John's *Policraticus*? Nederman begins by proffering that the work is reflective of its time. John concerns respecting political matters, pedagogical standards (and achievement), and Church liberty were expressed in the treatise. John aimed to demonstrate that philosophy has value in the attainment of the ultimate goal of divine happiness.<sup>751</sup> Nederman stipulates that John made "the philosophical analysis of politics more intellectually respectable to a medieval

---

<sup>747</sup> Martin, "John of Salisbury as a Classical Scholar," 186.

<sup>748</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 203-204.

<sup>749</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 203.

<sup>750</sup> Nederman points out that "John's presentation of the story of Caligula is heavily dependent upon Orosius, *Historiae adversus paganos*. John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 203-204. See also fn. 30, p 204. Orosius was a Christian writing in the fifth century, and the first author to postulate that the fall of Rome was not due to Christianity. Joshua J. Mark, "Orosius," *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, accessed June 10, 2020, <https://www.ancient.eu/Orosius/>.

<sup>751</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, xxv-xxvi.

audience.”<sup>752</sup> As such, John set the table for the expansion of political theories that developed as more of Aristotle’s works were recovered in the thirteenth century.<sup>753</sup>

Taylor maintains that John of Salisbury was an “insightful political thinker for his time” and also a “remarkably *progressive* one,” making John particularly relevant to students of political science today.<sup>754</sup> David Luscombe articulates the multiple ways that the *Policraticus* has been employed, including as “a work of political theory, a manual of government and a mirror of princes. It has been read as a moralist’s criticism of the courtly life or as a *livre du courtisan*. It has been considered to be an encyclopedia of letters and learning and also a didactic philosophical treatise.”<sup>755</sup>

Nederman finds a traceable line from the *Policraticus* to the *Magna Carta* a half-century later. Archbishop Stephen Langton, who was instrumental in negotiations that led to the latter document, was most likely aware of the *Policraticus* and its defense of Church liberties. The assertion of Church liberties is set forth in the Magna Carta’s Article 1 pronouncement on ecclesiastical liberty.<sup>756</sup>

---

<sup>752</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, xxvi.

<sup>753</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, xxvi.

<sup>754</sup> Emphasis in original. Taylor, “John of Salisbury,” 136.

<sup>755</sup> David Luscombe, “John of Salisbury in Recent Scholarship,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 29-30. Luscombe draws upon Max Kerner’s work in *Johannes von Salisbury un die logische Struktur seines Policraticus* (Wiesbaden, 1977).

<sup>756</sup> “First, that we have granted to God, and by this present charter have confirmed for us and our heirs in perpetuity, that the English Church shall be free, and shall have its rights undiminished, and its liberties unimpaired.” The English translation of the Magna Carta, 1215 edition, the British Library, accessed September 3, 2020, <https://www.bl.uk/magna-carta/articles/magna-carta-english-translation>; Nederman, “The Liberty of the Church and the Road to Runnymede,” 458.

## CHAPTER 7 – THE CHURCH IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

From modest beginnings in the first century, the Christian Church expanded in scope during the initial millennium in Western Europe. A significant aspect of the growth in power of the Church was what Robert Swanson labels “the evolution of the papal system.”<sup>757</sup> In 1050, he points out, there was no papal monarchy; by 1500, the papacy was highly centralized with an adept organization that strove to preserve its power.<sup>758</sup> In the first third of the period from 1050 to 1500, John lived, wrote, and militated arduously in favor of Church liberty. The thesis was evident and sometimes predominated his treatises and writings. The *Historia Pontificalis* is one of John’s four major works and it carries subtle elements of his arguments for the freedom of the Church. The *Historia Pontificalis* can be measured against John’s other three major works: the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, and the *Policraticus*. The *Historia Pontificalis* is John’s sole recording of history and was the last of the four major writings to be published. The work arose out of his years of experience as an emissary for Archbishop Theobald to the Roman pontiff’s court, “seen from the angle of an Englishman in the Papal Curia.”<sup>759</sup> The *Historia Pontificalis* was intended to be a continuation of Sigebert’s *Chronicle*;<sup>760</sup> the *Historia* recorded the history of the Church to 1148 and included the Council of Reims.

---

<sup>757</sup> R. N. Swanson, “Introduction,” in *The Routledge History of Medieval Christianity 1050-1500*, ed. R. N. Swanson (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), xxiv.

<sup>758</sup> Swanson, “Introduction,” xxiv.

<sup>759</sup> John of Salisbury and Marjorie Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), xvii; “John of Salisbury,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed June 16, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-of-Salisbury#ref245847>.

<sup>760</sup> Sigebert was an eleventh century Benedictine monastic in the Lowlands who wrote “three Latin historical works *Gesta abbatum Gemblacensium*, *Chronica*, and *Libellus de viris illustribus* and of numerous hagiographical texts which some display a strong historical character.” Jeroen Deploige, “Sigebert of Gembloux,” *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. R. G. Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 2.

Completed in 1163, it was revised and set in final form in 1164 while John was in exile and living at Saint-Rémi as a guest of his friend, Abbot Peter of Celle.<sup>761</sup>

### *A Brief History of the Church's Power*

The Church, unquestioningly, was a major medieval force. What were some of the factors that propelled the growth of the Church and the papacy? Further, what were the aspects of the sacred-secular, *saeculorum-sacerdotium* contentions that so concerned John about the jeopardy of Church rights and entitlements? A brief reflection on the growth of the Church in Western Europe, and in England in particular, provides some context for John of Salisbury's perspectives and unwavering promotion of the Church, its rights, and entitlements.

Margaret Deanesly reminds us that the founder of the Anglo-Saxon Church was Gregory I, and Augustine was his agent. However, there was already a Roman structure situated in England—a relic of earlier centuries of occupation.<sup>762</sup> The British Church was organized like others in the empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, with bishops attending continental church councils in Arles (314) and Sardica (347) and Rimini (359) prior to Rome's departure from England. In the century-and-a-half after the empire's legions left Britain, change had occurred. The educated Britons, unsurprisingly, were more at ease with the Romans than with the Picts of the northern regions and their Celtic practices and traditions surrounding Christianity.<sup>763</sup> Pope

---

<sup>761</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 127. There is some dispute as to the precise date of completion of the *Historia Pontificalis*. Marjorie Chibnall suggests that certain sections of the history were completed by 1164 and that date was for the writing of the document, though the revisions were not complete. See: John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, xxx.

<sup>762</sup> Margaret Deanesly, "The Anglo-Saxon Church and the Papacy," in *The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages*, ed. C. H. Lawrence (New York: Fordham University Press, 1965), 29.

<sup>763</sup> Kathleen Hughes, "The Celtic Church and the Papacy," in *The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages*, 4.

Gregory chose forty monks to go to England, led by Augustine, who tried to decline and even returned mid-journey but was sent back on the road. In England, Augustine and the monks settled in at a *mansio* given to him by King Æthelbert in 597; Augustine was later central in Æthelbert's conversion to Christianity. Gregory maintained a close watch on England all the while. He created several dioceses and instructed Augustine to live with clergy and to use some local customs as part of the liturgy in an effort to create unity.<sup>764</sup>

The Whitby synod of 664, overseen by Abbess Hilda,<sup>765</sup> focused on the dating of Easter. The date was a chief contention between the Celtic and the Roman factions. At Whitby, the Celts relented and accepted the Roman calculation for Easter: the first Sunday after the first full moon following the Spring equinox. After the Whitby settlement, Canterbury assumed the education and direction of Celtic Christians and accepted the majority of the Celtic saints.<sup>766</sup> Among the monasteries in England, documentation of the papal *privilegia* was highly valued as it granted an independence that diocesan clergy did not have.<sup>767</sup> On occasion, the charter documentation was forged. The Viking raids from the end of the eighth century through the

---

<sup>764</sup> Deanesly, "The Anglo-Saxon Church and the Papacy," 35-38.

<sup>765</sup> Hilda of Whitby was the grandniece of Northumbria's King Edwin. In her lifetime, she was called "Hild." She is venerated in the Roman Catholic and the Anglican Church as St. Hilda. Her feast day is alternately November 17 or November 18. H. Thurston, "St. Hilda," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), retrieved October 26, 2020 from New Advent, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07350a.htm>; *Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints* (New York: Church Publishing Incorporated, 2010), 686. See also: Benedictine monks of St Augustine's Abbey, *The Book of Saints*, Ramsgate Abbey (Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 1989), 270. For original writing on the life of Hild, Abbess of Whitby, and her role in mediating the Roman-Celtic Christianity dispute see Bede, ed. Judith McClure and Roger Collins, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 210-214

<sup>766</sup> Deanesly, "The Anglo-Saxon Church and the Papacy," 43.

<sup>767</sup> See, for example: Kriston Rennie, *Freedom and Protection: Monastic Exemption in France, c. 590 – c. 1100* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018).



middle of the ninth required the rewriting of *privilegia* documents destroyed in the invasions. The rewriting led to assumptions about the rights that had been contained in those documents. The English church suffered considerably with destruction of abbeys and bishoprics during the Danish raids of the later ninth century, though the door opened for some reforms under St. Dunstan who held abbacies, bishoprics, and was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury (960 - 988). Danish raids in the tenth and eleventh centuries stalled some of those reforms. The structure Gregory had instituted remained mostly intact, but the raids depleted much of the Church's energy and resources.<sup>768</sup>

The last Anglo-Saxon king, excepting Harold's scant months as king, was Edward the Confessor. He was as much Norman as English, having lived on the continent for thirty years, since age ten. When he was a child he fled England with family to escape the raids of Swein [or Sweyn] Forkbeard and his son, Cnut. While some sources described Edward as a "crowned monk" for his religious practices, Frank Barlow holds that "the ecclesiastical legend of a vow of celibacy is obviously absurd."<sup>769</sup> He also notes that a lack of children may be due to a late marriage to Edith, Earl Godwine's daughter, or "an ambiguous sexual orientation."<sup>770</sup> As king, Edward sought to have Norman clergy fill vacancies during his rule and was often successful, following the Capetian practice. His appointment of loyal clergy to abbeys and bishoprics was a countervailing force against English earls.<sup>771</sup> Despite his purported personal holiness, however, Edward's oversight of the English Church was anemic and, according to J. H. R. Moorman,

---

<sup>768</sup> Deanesly, "The Anglo-Saxon Church and the Papacy" 51-53.

<sup>769</sup> Frank Barlow, "Edward [St. Edward; known as Edward the Confessor]," May 25, 2006, <https://doi-org.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/10.1093/ref:odnb/8516>

<sup>770</sup> Barlow, "Edward."

<sup>771</sup> Barlow, "Edward."

“Edward the Confessor allowed the Church to deteriorate during his reign.”<sup>772</sup> Moorman adds that “the one positive monument to Edward’s reign was the building of the abbey at Westminster, a magnificent church.”<sup>773</sup> Henry III, who oversaw reconstruction of Westminster Abbey, was a strong advocate for the cult of Edward. Henry went so far as to name his first son Edward.<sup>774</sup>

The military arrival of William of Normandy inaugurated a new direction for the English Church. Charles Duggan posits that this was “a decisive turning point in the history of Anglo-papal relations.”<sup>775</sup> The English Church and the Western Church, centered in Rome, consequently were deeply entwined. Part of William’s claim of authority for an invasion of England was a papal blessing from Alexander II to reform the English Church.<sup>776</sup> Duggan notes that the eleventh century reforms, including those addressing investiture, did not leave England unaffected. Interestingly, William I was in accord with paying Peter’s Pence,<sup>777</sup> but not with submission to papal fealty. As to the expansion of Church influence and power in England during the reign of Stephen, Duggan credits it more to the amplification of papal power than to

---

<sup>772</sup> Moorman, *A History of the Church in England*, 55.

<sup>773</sup> Moorman, 55. For more recent examinations on the life and reign of Edward the Confessor see: Frank Barlow, *Edward the Confessor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997). See also the series of essays edited by Richard Mortimer examining both Edward’s rule and the cult that sprang up following his death. Stephen Baxter’s essay probes the issue of Edward’s successor; Warwick Rodwell writes about a star in Edward’s crown: Westminster. Edina Bozoky discusses Edward’s elevation to sainthood in 1061. Richard Mortimer, *Edward the Confessor: The Man and the Legend* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009).

<sup>774</sup> D. A. Carpenter, “King Henry III and Saint Edward the Confessor: The Origins of the Cult,” *The English Historical Review* 122, no. 498 (September 2007): 865–891, 872, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/cem214>.

<sup>775</sup> Charles Duggan, “From the Conquest to the Death of John,” in *The Routledge History of Medieval Christianity*, ed. R. N. Swanson (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 65.

<sup>776</sup> Moorman, *A History of the Church in England*, 55; Henry Mayr-Harting, *Religion, Politics and Society in Britain, 1066-1272* (Harlow: Longman, 2011), 28.

<sup>777</sup> Peter’s Pence, also called *Denarii Sancti*, or “Romescot” by the Anglo-Saxons, was an annual payment to the pope, typically a penny per household (hearth) of a certain wealth or status. The English first paid it in 1031. “Peterspence,” *Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed June 17, 2020, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11774a.htm>.

Stephen's weakness.<sup>778</sup> It is this augmentation of the power of the English Church that Henry II so desperately sought to curtail.

Despite the disjunction created by Stephen's Anarchy, the period between the conquest in 1066 and the *Magna Carta* was a relatively prosperous time in England, and the Church unsurprisingly benefitted from a stronger economy. In 1086, a number of wealthy churches were recorded in the Domesday Book, some with valuable assets that were several centuries old. In England, the powerful Church was in a symbiotic relationship with the secular state; the Church was both a recipient and creator of wealth. A further indicator of economic advancement was specialized production, and the Church had a role in this as well. At Chichester, for example, there was payment to a glazier to tend the cathedral glass; at Westminster, professional scribes were employed. The Church was engaged in the full range of life in England. Henry I and his physician, the Spanish Jew Petrus Alphonsi, planted numerous hospitals that were not only for the sick, but also for charitable purposes. The Church partnered with the secular institutions too; its clergy were instrumental in managing government affairs, a fact attributable to the general strength of their education that facilitated advancement in an assortment of professional arenas. As such, the Church exceeded the bounds of religious life and pastoral care. The Church was home to careerism and the accumulation of wealth, a circumstance that did not escape John's sharp wit in the *Policraticus* and in his other works.<sup>779</sup>

John also benefitted from the careerism that he mocked. The secular clergy were quite important to English society in the twelfth century. By definition, the secular cleric was one

---

<sup>778</sup> Duggan, "From the Conquest to the Death of John," 65-67.

<sup>779</sup> Mayr-Harting, *Religion, Politics and Society*, 8 ff.

whose ordination was performed and recognized by the Church. The degrees of secular clerics spanned seven levels, with the lower three orders of lesser significance—acolyte, lector, and porter or doorkeeper. Occasionally an exorcist was included on the list of those in minor orders. The ranks then increased from sub-deacon, to deacon, and to priest. Even the minor order clerics had special privileges—a source of conflict in the battle over criminous clerks. They were set apart by a tonsure and particular attire. Later, more monks were ordained. Indeed, most of the archbishops of Canterbury up to John's time were monastics.<sup>780</sup>

The secular clergy's responsibilities went beyond pastoral care to the formation of ecclesiastical institutions as well as "to the rise of schools and institutions which were then primarily religious in purpose. Even the economic growth and innovation of the period owed something to the secular clergy."<sup>781</sup> Further, the recovery and preservation of information owes much to their energies as society moved from an oral to a written culture. Secular clergy, for example Becket, had a hand in the increasing sophistication of royal government in addition to advances in canon and common law. Unquestionably, secular clergy played substantial roles in all facets of English life in the twelfth century.<sup>782</sup>

From Gregory's dispatch of Augustine to England in 595 through Becket's death in 1170, the English Church was known by several names. Z. N. Brooke notes that the various names by which the English Church was called underscored its separation from the continental

---

<sup>780</sup> Hugh M. Thomas, *The Secular Clergy in England, 1066-1216* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 11. Note that secular clergy were diocesan clergy—from bishops on down to parish priests. They were distinguished from regular clergy who were monastics, following a *regula*—as, for example, the Rule of St. Benedict. "Secular Clergy," *Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed June 18, 2020, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13675a.htm>. From Augustine forward, the majority of archbishops of Canterbury were monastics.

<sup>781</sup> Thomas, *The Secular Clergy in England*, 5.

<sup>782</sup> Thomas, *The Secular Clergy in England*, 5.

establishment. For example, John employed the term *ecclesia Anglicana*—one that is found in the Magna Carta. The phrase had been used earlier by Gregory in writing to Augustine. In the twelfth century Archbishop Anselm utilized *ecclesia Angliae* and referred to the king as *rex Anglorum*.<sup>783</sup> Alexander III additionally used the term *ecclesia Anglicana* later in that century. Brooke suggests that the terms *ecclesia Anglicana* and *ecclesia Angliae* mean the same thing, stating that the usage is “a change of terminology and not of meaning”—they equate to the same notion of the church in England.<sup>784</sup> Brooke concluded, “the new phrase [*ecclesia Anglicana*] was adopted as being more in keeping with the normal terminology of the Roman Church to use the adjectival form.”<sup>785</sup> The difference, in modern English, is between the “English Church” (*ecclesia Anglicana*) and the “Church of England” (*ecclesia Angliae*). It may seem like verbal quibbling; however, the label for the English Church did make a difference once Becket was archbishop and in a contentious relationship with Henry. At that point, the terminology was of real consequence. As Brooke notes, “Becket insists that the liberty of the *ecclesia Anglicana* is at stake, and by liberty he makes it clear freedom from royal control, and at the same time freedom to obey the Pope, to be governed by papal authority as was the rest of the Church.”<sup>786</sup> Becket wanted the same freedoms that the Church had elsewhere in Christendom and not merely an English Church serving the ruler.<sup>787</sup>

---

<sup>783</sup> Brooke, *The English Church and the Papacy: From the Conquest to the Reign of John*, 3-5.

<sup>784</sup> Brooke, *The English Church and the Papacy*, 6.

<sup>785</sup> Brooke, *The English Church and the Papacy*, 7.

<sup>786</sup> Brooke, *The English Church and the Papacy*, 8.

<sup>787</sup> Brooke, *The English Church and the Papacy*, 8-10.

R. W. Southern asserts that there were other factors that contributed to the increased power of the Western Church following the schism with the Eastern Church in 1054.<sup>788</sup> One element that influenced the separation was the “Donation of Constantine,” a document reputedly assigning property and authority to the pope dated March 30, 315. It was a forgery, a fabrication of the eighth century.<sup>789</sup> The donation was nonetheless confirmed in 962 by Otto I, acknowledging papal control of all lands in Italy.<sup>790</sup> In Southern’s view, Pope Leo IX, who preceded the reform-minded Gregory VII by nineteen years, was the “quiet expansionist.”<sup>791</sup> In reality Leo initiated some of the early reforms. The growth in the Church’s power and influence continued. In the mid-twelfth century, the pope became the Vicar of Christ, a title for the pope alone. The change in title designated a shift in power, placing more of it in the hands of the Church. Previously, kings and priests called themselves the Vicars of Christ. By claiming sole usage of the title Vicar of Christ, the pope declared universal authority and superiority over secular princes.<sup>792</sup>

The dismantling of the partnership between secular and sacred forces followed the struggle over investiture. It centered on whether the Church or the Prince held the superior sword.<sup>793</sup> An accord regarding the investiture controversy was ultimately reached between Henry V and the Church in 1122, manifested in the Concordat of Worms – an agreement that

---

<sup>788</sup> Adam Augustyn, “Schism of 1054,” *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed June 24, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/event/East-West-Schism-1054>.

<sup>789</sup> R.W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), 91.

<sup>790</sup> Southern, *Western Society and the Church*, 99. See, for example, Ronald K. Delph, “Valla Grammaticus, Agostino Steuco, and the Donation of Constantine,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 57, no. 1 (Jan. 1996): 55-77.

<sup>791</sup> Southern, *Western Society and the Church*, 100.

<sup>792</sup> Southern, *Western Society and the Church*, 104.

<sup>793</sup> Walter Ullmann, *A Short History of the Papacy in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1972), 128. For elaboration on the Two Swords see n. 672.

led to reconciliation between the Holy Roman Empire and the Church. Written pledges were exchanged, and the meeting produced two documents that were brief in nature and that represented a compromise. The emperor renounced conducting the investiture of bishops with ring and crozier, opening the path for free canonical election and consecration. In return, elections would take place before the king or his representatives. The emperor could involve himself in disputed elections and could invest candidates for German sees before consecration with *regalia*, using a scepter rather than ring and crozier.<sup>794</sup> John, as author of a *Vita* of Archbishop Anselm, was aware of the investiture quarrel that began with William Rufus, was revived under Henry I and was finally resolved between Anselm and Henry in 1107. It resulted in a compromise with several points. First, the symbols of episcopal investiture—the ring and the staff—were not to be conferred by a layman. Second, bishops were to be elected in Henry’s court or chapel. Third, homage by the bishop-elect would occur at consecration, and not before. Fourth, investiture was a spiritual matter and not a secular one. The negotiated agreement was similar to that achieved at the Concordat of Worms of 1122.<sup>795</sup>

Brett Edward Whalen asserts that, prior to the eleventh century, the popes were often limited to regional jurisdiction, irrespective of their claims of universal preeminence. Their power was primarily by the grace of noble families or in relation to the German kings who exercised power over the Italian peninsula. It was the reform papal movement starting with Leo IX and continuing through Gregory VII that elevated the Church’s status. Control of elections, clerical reforms, and reduction of royal power to invest clergy in their offices were significant

---

<sup>794</sup> Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 172.

<sup>795</sup> Duggan, “From the Conquest to the Death of John,” 82.

actions that worked to shift the balance, further empowering the papacy.<sup>796</sup> Southern adds that, at the same time, the secular ruler lost some supernatural attributes.<sup>797</sup> The ideal Church of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was a society of organized and disciplined clergy directing the thoughts and activities of “an obedient and receptive laity—kings, magnates and peasants alike,” a view expressed in the statement *Rex Illiteratus est Asinus Coronatus*.<sup>798</sup> In essence, an illiterate king was a donkey wearing a crown. More colloquially, one might suggest an illiterate king was a dumb ass.

### *Gratian and the Decretum*

An extraordinary development just before the middle of the twelfth century, in 1140, was Gratian’s *Concordia discordantium canonum*—the *Decretum*. Gratian’s was the first successful compendium of canon law, and its underpinning was scholastic methodology. It offered definitions and concrete solutions to problems posed. The early reach of the *Decretum* extended beyond the Church to multiple aspects of medieval life—those facets regulated by canon law including business, warfare, and even marriage. Roman law and canon law combined to form a coherent legal system, *ius commune*, the only law studied at universities.<sup>799</sup>

---

<sup>796</sup> Brett Edward Whalen, “The Papacy,” in *The Routledge History of Medieval Christianity*, 8.

<sup>797</sup> Nevertheless, kings in the high middle ages promoted their healing powers in an exercise of royal thaumaturgy. See Elizabeth Hasseler, “‘Do You Not Know I am a Healer?’ Royal Authority and Miracles of Healing in High Medieval Lives of Kings,” 2016 International Medieval Congress, accessed September 4, 2020, <https://www.medievalists.net/2016/08/do-you-not-know-i-am-a-healer-royal-authority-and-miracles-of-healing-in-high-medieval-lives-of-kings/>.

<sup>798</sup> Southern, *Western Society and the Church*, 38. The phrase “Rex Illiteratus est Asinus Coronatus” was a favorite of Henry I, who reportedly said it frequently. Francis Palgrave, *The History of Normandy and of England* vol. iv, ed. R. H. Inglis Palgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921), 126.

<sup>799</sup> Anders Winroth, *The Making of Gratian’s Decretum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 2-3.



There are two books that make up the *Decretum*, which is a relatively new discovery. The first “recension” (version) is shorter and more succinct, containing little Roman law and technical language, while the second recension is less legalistic in phrasing. The second book is the one traditionally considered to be the *Decretum* and, according to Anders Winroth, it was widely used to teach law in the Middle Ages. Some scholars believe that Gratian wrote the complete work while others hold that there was more than one author.<sup>800</sup>

The actual title of the *Decretum* was *Concordia discordantium canonum* (“The Harmony of Discordant Canons”). The legislative texts ranged from the pre-Constantine Church to the 1139 Council of Innocent II, and the work also features biblical quotations. Contained within are papal decretals, conciliar canons, fragments from early Church fathers, and bits of secular legislation (Gratian offers *dicta Gratiani* by way of some commentary). There are three discrete segments to the *Decretum*. The first contains 101 *distinctiones* that addresses sources of law, ecclesiastical hierarchy, and clergy discipline. The second section presents thirty-six *causae* divided into *questiones* on items like simony, judicial procedure, religious orders, heretics, and marriage. The final portion holds five comments on the remaining sacraments.<sup>801</sup>

The *Decretum* was a systematic exposition of the huge body of ancient law—an immense and successful codification effort. Gratian’s work was a pivotal development in canon law that had as its central theme the justification and necessity of papal sovereignty. Previous canonists focused on necessary law (scriptural and immutable) and convenient law (in the interests of the cure of souls and discipline, it could be adjusted). This demanded a solid

---

<sup>800</sup> Winroth, *The Making of Gratian’s Decretum*, 4.

<sup>801</sup> Winroth, *The Making of Gratian’s Decretum*, 5.

framework and the papacy could provide this stability. Gratian's work helped the clergy realize that they were part of a larger institution—*societas*—with defined constitutional rules and that the local customs were relics of a difficult past. At the end of the day, the prevailing view was that canon superseded custom.<sup>802</sup> The Church in general, and the papacy in particular, benefitted from the *Decretum* of Gratian and its creation of a corpus of canon law that served to buttress the emerging papal bureaucracy. As a result, by the time that Henry II secured power, there was some clarity in papal policy and canon law.<sup>803</sup> In the estimation of Walter Ullman, medieval canonists were instrumental in the proclamation of papal supremacy that established the pontifical government.<sup>804</sup> Brian Tierney recognizes the power of the medieval canonists, the Decretists and the Decretalists.<sup>805</sup> They lived in a time Tierney describes as “a ‘renaissance’ of brilliant pioneering in many spheres of life and thought, and they were eager to press into service all the newest and boldest ideas of their age.”<sup>806</sup> Julie Barrau notes that

---

<sup>802</sup> W. L. Warren, *Henry II*, 418.

<sup>803</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, 420.

<sup>804</sup> Walter Ullmann, *Medieval Papalism: The Political Theories of the Medieval Canonists* (London, 1949), 11. Quoted in Brian Tierney, *Church Law and Constitutional Thought in the Middle Ages* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1979), 596. Its ultimate expression was *Unam Sanctum* promulgated by Boniface VIII in the fourteenth century. *Unam Sanctum* was a papal bull issued by Boniface VIII in 1302. Proclaiming One God, One Faith, One Spiritual Authority, accessed June 16, 2020, <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/bon08/b8unam.htm>. The encyclical was published by Boniface during a quarrel with the French King Philip the Fair. Among other claims, it sets the spiritual above the secular.

<sup>805</sup> Decretists were canonists who offered commentary on Gratian's *Decretum*. The decretalists were canonists who commented on the aggregation of Decretals that increased forty years after Gratian's original publication in 1140. “Decretalists, Decretists,” Oxford Reference, accessed June 24, 2020, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095705595>. See also: “Liber Extra and Decretum, Decretists,” The Medieval Canon Law Virtual Library, accessed June 24, 2020, <http://web.colby.edu/canonlaw/tag/glossa-ordinaria/>.

<sup>806</sup> Brian Tierney, “Medieval Canon Law and Western Constitutionalism,” in *Church Law and Constitutional Thought in the Middle Ages*, 2. In a separate writing, Tierney posits that the *Decretum* is “the foundation of the whole subsequent structure of Western canon law.” Quoting Gratian's opening of the *Decretum*, “The human race is ruled by two means, namely by natural law and usages. The law of nature is what is contained in the Law and the Gospel, by which each is ordered to do to another what he wants done to himself and is forbidden to do to another what he does not want done to himself.” Tierney adds, “Or in modern language, one might say, ‘Show concern and respect.’” Brian Tierney, “Religion and Rights: A Medieval Perspective,” *Journal of Law and Religion* 5, no. 1 (1987): 163. Note that this is Aristotle's Doctrine of Mean that John of Salisbury hews to in the *Policraticus*.

John's frequent letters to the papacy in the form of appeals to Rome, written on behalf of Theobald, give evidence of the early adoption of Gratian's *Decretum* in England. Canon law was rapidly gaining significance from the middle of the twelfth century forward.<sup>807</sup> Becket spent a year in Bologna studying canon law; he later tried to use it to his advantage in his dispute with Henry and with his discordant ecclesiastical colleagues.<sup>808</sup> Gratian's *Decretum* gained marked traction in legal disputes in less than a quarter of a century. Brooke writes, "When we come to the great Becket controversy, ecclesiastical law is freely quoted by both sides...and the source seems usually to be Gratian."<sup>809</sup> It was against this tableau of Church history and canon law development that John wrote *Historia Pontificalis* in 1164.<sup>810</sup> Aside from recording and extending the chronicle begun by Sigebert of Gembloux, John's omnipresent subtext was Church liberty.

#### *The Historia Pontificalis Regarding the Church's Power*

The *Historia Pontificalis* begins with a description of the Council of Reims in 1148 at which John was present. John dedicated the work to his close friend and former student, Peter of Celle, the abbot of Saint-Rémi.<sup>811</sup> The Reims council was called by Eugenius III on October 6, 1147, purposefully beyond the ambit of Abbot Suger, and while Louis VII was away on crusade so as to keep Suger and the king from interfering.<sup>812</sup> Among those attending the council was the

---

<sup>807</sup> Julie Barrau, "John of Salisbury as Ecclesiastical Administrator," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 163, fn. 31.

<sup>808</sup> Anne Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 14.

<sup>809</sup> Brooke, *The English Church and the Papacy*, 110.

<sup>810</sup> For discussion as to the actual date of completion of the *Historia Pontificalis*, see n. 5.

<sup>811</sup> David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury."

<sup>812</sup> Nicholas M. Haring, "Notes on the Council and Consistory of Rheims (1148)" *Mediaeval Studies* 28, no. 1 (Jan. 1966): 39.

archbishop of Canterbury, Theobald, who had managed to slip out of England in a fishing boat in contravention of Stephen's prohibition.<sup>813</sup> John wrote that Theobald was dismayed that Henry, archbishop of York, was given a seat "as though he were of equal dignity."<sup>814</sup> Eugenius replied that Bishop Henry could not supersede Theobald, as Stephen had deprived Henry of the archbishopric of York, notwithstanding Henry's presence at Reims.<sup>815</sup>

Attendance at the Council of Reims was mandated for all bishops and archbishops; only papal permission permitted absences. John witnessed to that fact in the *Historia Pontificalis*, writing, "The pope suspended the bishop of Winchester and the archbishops of Mainz and Cologne by name and all those who failed to obey the summons to the council in general."<sup>816</sup> Theobald absolved the English bishops whom King Stephen had forbidden leave to travel.<sup>817</sup> The lone exception was Henry, bishop of Winchester (Stephen's younger brother), who travelled to Rome and received a papal dispensation from taking part in the Reims council. Given the severe constraints demanding clerical presence, the council was well attended. Nicholas Haring quotes numbers of churchmen in Reims ranging from four hundred to more

---

<sup>813</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 128.

<sup>814</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 5.

<sup>815</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 5

<sup>816</sup> "Nominatim suspendit episcopum Wintoniensem et archiepiscopos Maguntinum et Coloniensem, et preterea omnes qui ad concilium uocati non uenerant." John, ed. Reg. L. Poole, *Historia Pontificalis* (Oxford 1927) 4, 11; John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 10.

<sup>817</sup> Robert de Bethune, the Bishop of Hereford, was one of the ecclesiastics who attended the Council. He was among many of the bishops who became ill at the Council. Robert died several days after Eugenius convened the body on April 16, 1148. E. B. Fryde, D. E. Greenway, S. Porter, and I. Roy, *Handbook of British Chronology* (Third revised ed) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 250. Stephen also allowed William of Norwich and Hilary of Chichester to attend the council. John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 6. Among those suspended for failure to attend were the incumbent bishops of St. Asaph, Bangor, Bath, St. David, Ely, Exeter, Lichfield, Lincoln, Llandaf, London, Rochester, Salisbury, Winchester, and Worcester. In a later action, Theobald lifted the suspensions of the following bishops: Simon of Worcester, Robert of Bath, Robert of Exeter, and Hilary of Chichester. Haring, "Notes on the Council and Consistory of Rheims (1148)," 42. See also John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 78.

than a thousand.<sup>818</sup> That Bernard of Clairvaux was a major figure at the council helped to increase the numbers participating. The Cistercian abbeys, along with other orders, sent a number of delegates.<sup>819</sup>

In bringing together the Church's ecclesiastical leaders, Eugenius had a robust agenda for the aggregation that included laying charges against King Stephen for prohibitions he had set against clergy. The king had forbidden clerics from travelling from the continent through England to Ireland, and the reverse as well. Consequently, a much longer journey, by sea, was required. There was also discussion of degrees of consanguinity for marriage, of marital separation, and divorce in the absence of consummation. Of greatest interest to John were the arguments involving Bernard of Clairvaux and his opposition to the teachings of Peter Abelard and Gilbert de la Porrée, bishop of Poitiers. The precise subject matter was articulation of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; it was a clash between Bernard's orthodoxy and the presumed heterodoxy of Gilbert. Abelard had faced similar charges from Bernard in 1140.<sup>820</sup> John, present as an observer, maintained neutrality during the debate. Still, Gilbert and Abelard had instructed John while he was a student in Paris, and John particularly admired Gilbert. At the

---

<sup>818</sup> Haring, "Notes on the Council and Consistory of Rheims (1148)," 42.

<sup>819</sup> Haring, "Notes on the Council and Consistory of Rheims (1148)," 43.

<sup>820</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 130. Nearly a decade before, Bernard of Clairvaux had strenuously objected to Abelard's presentation of matters of faith. William of Thierry had alerted Bernard to perceived heterodoxy by Abelard and encouraged a reprimand. Alex J. Novikoff, "Peter Abelard and Disputation: A Reexamination," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 32, no. 4 (Autumn 2014): 335, ff. A planned debate between Abelard and Bernard for June 1140 that had been arranged by the archbishop of Sens fell apart when Abelard realized that there would be no debate but rather a trial. Abelard left, announcing his decision to appeal to Innocent II and departed for Rome. Bernard managed to have the Council of Soissons condemn more than a dozen elements of his writings, a decision supported by Innocent. Abelard died in 1142. "Peter Abelard," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, accessed September 5, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/abelard/>.

beginning of chapter 8 of the *Historia Pontificalis*, John offered an encomium for Gilbert, addressing him as “the most learned man of our day.”<sup>821</sup>

The Council of Reims was brought to session on March 21, 1148, with the business of Stephen’s travel restrictions, the case of a heretic, and a series of canons at the top of the list. Though the council lasted for eleven days, Eugenius directed a number of clergy to remain to address the questions posed by Gilbert de la Porrée’s interpretation of the Trinity, a view opposed by the stringent and powerful Bernard of Clairvaux. The subsequent trial that focused on Gilbert lasted two days. Webb describes Gilbert as an “obscure opponent,” though he was a celebrated master in Paris before assuming the bishopric in Poitiers.<sup>822</sup> In his defense, Gilbert relied on scripture, not the writings of the Church’s doctors, to demonstrate the orthodoxy of his writings and teaching on the Trinity.<sup>823</sup> The denouement of the trial was somewhat anticlimactic: Bishop Gilbert adroitly defended himself to the satisfaction (and cheers) of the cardinals gathered.<sup>824</sup> John was witness to the thrust and parry of the two imposing spiritual leaders, recording notes and impressions that formed a significant portion of his *Historia Pontificalis*.

Marjorie Chibnall, in the introduction to her English translation of *Historia Pontificalis*, states an obvious but noteworthy point: “Like his [John’s] other major works, it falls into no

---

<sup>821</sup> “Uir etate nostra litteratissimus...” John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 15.

<sup>822</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 131.

<sup>823</sup> Haring, “Notes on the Council and Consistory of Rheims (1148),” 48. At issue was Gilbert’s commentary on Boethius’ writings, particularly *De Trinitate*. Christophe Grellard, “John of Salisbury and Theology,” in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 342. A century later, Thomas Aquinas produced commentaries on two tracts of Boethius, *De trinitate* and *De hebdomadibus*. In *De trinitate*, Boethius attempted to explain how to grasp God Three-in-One, accessed June 23, 2020, <https://maritain.nd.edu/jmc/etext/tag03.htm>.

<sup>824</sup> Brown, “John of Salisbury,” 269.

clearly defined category of writing.”<sup>825</sup> One might argue that the work truly reflects the interest and range of John of Salisbury; no two of his works are alike in focus. Chibnall argues that even the *Life of St. Anselm* and the *Life of St. Thomas of Canterbury* are not histories in the sense of the *Historia Pontificalis*. Rather, they are hagiographies, penned to promote the candidacies of each man for sainthood.<sup>826</sup>

Sister M. Anthony Brown writes that John chose to direct the opening sentences of the *Historia Pontificalis* to Peter of Celle: John wrote, “And now my Peter—named like the apostle from the strength of your faith a presage of future virtue,” and then continued to detail his proposal for the chronicle.<sup>827</sup> Though seven of the forty-six chapters in the *Historia Pontificalis* concern the trial and the events of the Council of Reims,<sup>828</sup> the somewhat rambling writing offers much about the pontifical court and the events of slightly more than five years from 1148 to 1152. At the time, John had completed his studies and had ties with the papal court, in principle through Theobald. Chibnall suggests that he was employed in some fashion by the Papal Curia as he had access to curial documents and had full admittance to the Council of Reims.<sup>829</sup>

The *Historia Pontificalis* has much more to present than a recitation of the events at the Council of Reims. C. H. Kneepkens offers this synopsis of the work: “It deals mainly with the

---

<sup>825</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, xix.

<sup>826</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, xxxiv. Anselm was canonized in 1163, and later made a Doctor of the Church in 1720. W. Kent, “St. Anselm,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), accessed June 23, 2020, New Advent, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01546a.htm>. Becket was elevated to sainthood in 1173. H. Thurston, “St. Thomas Becket,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912), accessed June 23, 2020, New Advent, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14676a.htm>.

<sup>827</sup> Brown, “John of Salisbury,” 263. “Ut itaque, mi Petre cui sicut apostolo future uirtutis presagio quodam a fidei solidate nomen inditum est....” John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 4.

<sup>828</sup> Webb, *John of Salisbury*, 130.

<sup>829</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, xxiii.

Second Crusade, and the confused political situation of Europe as a result of its disastrous outcome. Although this work has a restricted scope and is not comprehensive, it presents often a fresh and valuable insight into contemporary events. For the trial of Gilbert de la Porrée in 1148, for example, John appears to be our only objective source.”<sup>830</sup> Chibnall concurs that the *Historia Pontificalis* was about more than the Council of Reims in 1148, stating, “The other outstanding topics for which John’s history is a source of first importance are the affairs of England during the civil wars, the Second Crusade, and the character and policy of Eugenius III.”<sup>831</sup> John described Stephen’s antipathy toward Theobald and his entitlement to function as the archbishop of Canterbury. Theobald was forced to flee England in a fishing smack in order to attend the Council of Reims in 1148.<sup>832</sup> On return, he was met by two of Stephen’s messengers who alerted him that Stephen had seized his property because “he had dared to attend the council in defiance of the king’s prohibition.”<sup>833</sup> In Chapter XLII of the *Historia Pontificalis*, John described efforts by the meddling Henry, archbishop of York, to encourage Pope Alexander III to assent to the coronation of Stephen’s son, Eustace. John wrote that without the pope’s blessing, the coronation was not possible. He added, “For the king has frequently been charged with the usurpation of the kingdom, which everyone knew he had seized regardless of his oath to king Henry.”<sup>834</sup> Of the Second Crusade, John says that Conrad III, the Holy Roman Emperor, and King Louis VII of France were fortunate to escape annihilation by

---

<sup>830</sup> C. H. Kneepkens, “John of Salisbury,” 394.

<sup>831</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, xlii.

<sup>832</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 7. N. B. A ‘smack’ is a fishing vessel that has a well to hold fish that have been caught.

<sup>833</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 42.

<sup>834</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 83.



“Saracens in the east,” and indeed only the French forces were able to reach Antioch.<sup>835</sup>

Beginning with Chapter XXII, John wrote in great detail about the Second Crusade and an expedition army that, aside from the chicanery of the Byzantine Emperor and the Turks, “was weakened by the jealousy of princes and the wrangling of priests.”<sup>836</sup> He noted that a further complication was the Germans’ declining “to have anything to do with the Franks in shipping their baggage across the Hellespont.”<sup>837</sup>

Karen Bollermann and Cary Nederman indicate that John knew the value of the work he was writing, even though it has received far less attention than his other writings. They point to his prologue, proposing that he had “a philosophy of history firmly rooted in the practical.”<sup>838</sup> In John’s words, “My aim, like that of other chroniclers, before me, shall be to profit my contemporaries and future generations.”<sup>839</sup> His was not a speedily constructed chronicle, however. John wrote the *Historia Pontificalis* some fifteen years after the Council of Reims, while he was in exile and in residence at Saint-Rémi.<sup>840</sup> John endeavored to make his work a seamless extension of the chronicle by the monk Sigebert of Gembloux.<sup>841</sup> Sigebert was a historian and author of *Chronicon ab anno 381 ad 1113*, a wide-ranging chronicle that others, including John, relied upon. Sigebert was not without his bias, as he was an imperialist who took the side of Henry IV, the Holy Roman Emperor, in the investiture controversy.<sup>842</sup>

---

<sup>835</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 11.

<sup>836</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 54.

<sup>837</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 54.

<sup>838</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, “John of Salisbury,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

<sup>839</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 3.

<sup>840</sup> Brown, “John of Salisbury,” 262.

<sup>841</sup> Brown, “John of Salisbury,” 263.

<sup>842</sup> “Sigebert of Gembloux,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, October 01, 2020, accessed October 26, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Sigebert-of-Gembloux>.

As with all of John of Salisbury's writings, including his substantial volumes of correspondence, he quotes extensively from both classical sources and scripture. Indeed, the first sentence in the prologue leads with a quotation from St. Jerome on the importance of the Book of Chronicles: "Jerome...had so high an opinion of the Book of Chronicles as to assert that anyone who claimed to know holy scripture without it would make himself a laughing-stock."<sup>843</sup> Beyond the recounting of the Council of Reims and the trial of Gilbert are the stories of the papal court, the unsuccessful Second Crusade that Louis VII and his wife Eleanor had embarked upon, and the impact of the civil war in England. John also included asides that comprised small character sketches. He referred to one Arnold, a master, as "straightface"—another Arnold, this one of Brescia, and a thorn in the pope's side, was lambasted for being a man of the cloth, but barely, because of his coarse dress and his gluttony.<sup>844</sup> Interspersed throughout the text are the quotations and references that are characteristic of John's writing and hallmarks of his extraordinary education and intellect.

### *Assessing the Historia Pontificalis*

What, then, to make of the *Historia Pontificalis*, this unusual writing of John of Salisbury's that is so different from his earlier works: the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, and the *Policraticus*? One can speculate that John, in exile from England as of late 1163, needed a project. He had notes and a memory of the Council of Reims, and could share them with Peter of Celle, who also had attended the gathering. He

---

<sup>843</sup> "Ieronimus...librum Paralipomenon talem dicet et tantum us asserat illum seipsum irridere, qui sine eo diuinarum scientiam uendicat scripturarum." John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 1.

<sup>844</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 16, 65.

perceived a gap in the pontifical history—or certainly an opportunity to extend the chronicle of papal history initiated by Sigebert. John probably was frustrated, concerned, and perhaps even bored. He was effectively banished from England and intentionally separated from Becket, who crossed the English Channel under cover of night almost a year after John. He was frustrated with Becket’s impulsive actions that jeopardized a rapprochement with Henry and affected the probability of John’s return to his home country and to Canterbury. John, at Saint-Rémi, turned to one of the skills he best exhibited: writing. His canon of letters crafted during those six years in France is remarkable. Interesting as well is his *Historia Pontificalis*. As Chibnall relates, “Many of the facts recorded in the *Historia Pontificalis* would have passed into oblivion but for him; and often he has corrected the misstatements of other twelfth-century writers.”<sup>845</sup>

---

<sup>845</sup> John and Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, 16, xl.

## CHAPTER 8 – BECKET’S MURDER AND MARTYRDOM RECORDED IN *VITAE*

While John of Salisbury was not in the room where it happened, he was still nearby when Archbishop Thomas Becket was cut down by four knights on December 29, 1170. Becket, who had returned only the month before to Canterbury after six years in exile in France, wasted no time in issuing a series of excommunications against ecclesiastical foes. The action inflamed Henry II at his Christmas court in Normandy. On hearing the king’s rage, a quartet of high-ranking knights (Hugh de Morville, Reginald fitzUrse, Richard le Breton, and William de Tracy) rapidly set off to silence Becket—figuratively through arrest, or perhaps permanently through death. John, along with other clerks and companions, had been present with Becket most of the day. When it became apparent that the knights, led by Reginald fitzUrse, were intent on capturing or even harming Becket, John and several others fled from the Lady Chapel, a side altar where they were preparing for mass, into the recesses of the Cathedral.<sup>846</sup>

---

<sup>846</sup> Frank Barlow offers a detailed narrative of Becket’s murder. He names the four knights—William de Tracy, Reginald fitzUrse, Hugh de Morville, and Richard le Bret as the leaders of the assault. Reginald fitzUrse was the leader. On December 29, in route to Canterbury from Saltwood Castle, they collected other knights. The chief steward invited the men to a meal when they reached the archiepiscopal palace, which they declined. Becket was with close advisers in an inner chamber. There, the four met Becket and argued about the charges the archbishop faced, demanding he grant absolution to those he had recently excommunicated. Late afternoon, the knights left Becket, gathered the other knights and king’s and returned to the cathedral, entering through the Great Hall. They banged on the door to the Lady Chapel where Becket was with members of his council, set to say evening mass. They urged Becket to bar the door and to flee, but he refused. There, in the twilight before the Altar of St. Benedict, Reginald fitzUrse struck first, shearing off the top of Becket’s head. With a second sword strike Becket fell to his knees. The third spread his brains on the chapel floor. Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), 239 ff. David Knowles writes that the knights were outfitted in battle armor and they rushed to the door of the Great Hall and found it locked. They accessed the building by an outside stair and used axes to break in. Townspeople who had seen the knights in the streets had hustled to the cathedral for shelter, fearing trouble. Consequently, the church was “full of people at the hour of vespers.” Knowles writes that they bumped into worshippers in their rush to find Becket. In his narrative, Knowles incorporates dialogue he has drawn from several of Becket’s *Vitae*. Knowles, *Thomas Becket* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971), 144 ff. Anne Duggan’s account of the murder is more recent. She suggests that William FitzStephen’s description of the murder is superior to the others adding, however, that the details of the murder “are all well known, but their implications for the interpretation both of the barons’ motivation and Becket’s reaction are not generally explored.” In her view, the four knights who initiated the assault on Becket “were not working alone.” See also Anne Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 211 ff.

The murder quickly evolved into a martyrdom. John was the first to report the death to the larger community, and he did so in a lengthy, detailed letter to John of Canterbury, Bishop of Poitiers.<sup>847</sup> The letter also formed the basis of John's *Vita et Passio Sancti Thome*, making him the first of twelve authors of *Lives* or *Vitae* of Thomas. John's letter to the bishop of Poitiers, written in early 1171 and titled *Ex insperato*,<sup>848</sup> is consequential to scholars' assessments of John's view of his own impact on Becket. Among the biographers, John had been the closest to Becket, and knew him well. He was arguably the best candidate to author a biography of the archbishop. John was an accomplished writer, superb scholar, colleague, and sometimes critic of the late archbishop. It was to Becket that he had dedicated his most significant works, the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*; John knew Thomas well.<sup>849</sup> With regard to John's *Life* of Becket, Frank Barlow suggests several reasons for the hastily written biography that lessened its quality compared to his other works. It may have been a cathartic exercise, in part, to ease John's conscience of the pain or the embarrassment he felt "over his [own] behavior at the martyrdom."<sup>850</sup> John, unlike Edward Grim, ran and hid as Becket was murdered. Alternatively, it could have been because John planned the writing to be only an introduction to the collection of Becket's correspondence.<sup>851</sup>

---

<sup>847</sup> Letter 305 to John of Canterbury, Bishop of Poitiers. John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 725. Historian David Knowles remarks how quickly the news of Becket's murder spread, and the impact it had: "We may compare the reaction with that of the world of our own day to the assassination of President Kennedy." Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 150.

<sup>848</sup> Kay Brainerd Slocum, *The Cult of Thomas Becket: History and Historiography Through Eight Centuries* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 20.

<sup>849</sup> Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers*, 19.

<sup>850</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 3.

<sup>851</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 3.

The *Life and Passion of St. Thomas* was not John's first work of hagiography. He had written one previously. Interestingly, Becket had commissioned John to write a *vita* celebrating the life of Anselm, a celebrated previous archbishop of Canterbury. The *Life of Anselm* represents twelfth-century hagiography in form and style—the emphasis was less on the person's life and more on sanctity and holiness.<sup>852</sup> Alexander III received the petition to raise Anselm to sainthood in 1163, shortly after Becket was enthroned.

Biography (and hagiography) were not John's natural form of writing. He had demonstrated through his earlier works that he was much more a philosopher, political writer, and observer than a biographer. One of the principal topics addressed in the *Lives* was the liberty of the Church. It is clear throughout his writings that John held a deep concern about an expansionist monarchy. Recall that in *Policraticus* John displayed his disdain for, and fear of, royal infringement on Church liberties. His opposition was philosophical as well as practical, and his enumeration of grievances consistent and continuous.<sup>853</sup> Becket as archbishop delivered a petition with John of Salisbury's biography of Anselm to bolster the claim.<sup>854</sup> As Nederman admits, John's *vitae* of these two men who attained sainthood, Anselm and Becket, do not represent John's best prose. Regarding Becket's biography, Nederman writes, "Why John failed to bring his substantial literary talents to bear on a story so dramatic and with which he was

---

<sup>852</sup> John of Salisbury and Ronald E. Pepin, *Anselm & Becket: Two Canterbury Saints' Lives* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2009), 7.

<sup>853</sup> John articulated his grievances against Henry as failure to appoint to open episcopacies so as to seize the revenue, jurisdictional disagreements, the complaints about criminous clerks, and clerical and lay roles in governing. Imbedded in this was the nearly century-old dispute regarding lay investiture, ultimately forbidden by papal decree, issued by Gregory VII in his argument with Henry IV, the Holy Roman Emperor. John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 5.

<sup>854</sup> John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 11.

closely associated remains a mystery.”<sup>855</sup> The *Life of Anselm*, which John patterned after Eadmer’s more noteworthy praise of Anselm, possibly was not successful in the initial attempt in 1163 to secure canonization for Anselm. The record is uncertain.<sup>856</sup> John, in the view of Nederman, elaborated some aspects of Anselm’s life not emphasized in Eadmer’s work, but John’s hagiographic document was “a relatively straightforward narrative of its subject’s career.”<sup>857</sup> Sister M. Anthony Brown sees, however, a usefulness in the work on Anselm. “It is characterized by a nicety of style and well-turned phrases. The work accomplished its purpose and it was most influential in the cause for promoting Anselm to Sainthood [sic].”<sup>858</sup>

### *Becket’s Swift Ascension to Sainthood*

Arguably there were twin motives for the many and rapidly produced lives of Thomas. The first was to quickly install Becket in the muster of saints,<sup>859</sup> and the second was to hold up Henry as a villain, using the murder to diminish his efforts to seize rights from the Church. With

---

<sup>855</sup> Cary J. Nederman, *John of Salisbury* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 81.

<sup>856</sup> Eadmer, clerk to Archbishop Anselm, published his *Vita Anselmi* in 1124, fifteen years after Anselm’s death. A superior historian to John of Salisbury, Eadmer’s writings include *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, a record of English history from the conquest to 1022. George Gresley Perry, “Eadmer,” *Dictionary of National Biography 1885-1900*, v. 16, accessed June 27, 2020, [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Eadmer\\_\(DNB00\)](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Eadmer_(DNB00)). Note that there is discrepancy in the date of Anselm’s canonization. He may have been recognized as a saint in 1163 under the newly established canons at the time for sainthood, though there is no formal record of such action. However, he was recorded as a saint shortly after and his shrine at Canterbury Cathedral hosted numerous pilgrims. Some scholars hold that Anselm was canonized by Alexander VI in 1494. Clement XI proclaimed him a Doctor of the Church in 1720. John Arthur Kemp, “Saint Anselm of Canterbury,” *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, April 2020, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Anselm-of-Canterbury>.

<sup>857</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 80.

<sup>858</sup> Brown, “John of Salisbury,” 259.

<sup>859</sup> “In the twelfth century martyrdom was based on three factors: the miracles (*signa*), the penalty (*poena*) and the cause (*causa*).” Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers*, 21. For a more articulated examination of the medieval canonization process see Gabor Klaniczay, ed., *Medieval Canonization Processes: Legal and Religious Aspects* (Series: Collection de l’Ecole Française de Rome, vol. 340) (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 2004), reviewed in *The Medieval Review* (July 2012) accessed July 1, 2020, <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/tmr/article/view/16325>.

such incentives, it is hardly surprising that a dozen biographies were written within the first sixteen years after the archbishop's assassination, a rapidly produced narrative from some who were there and others who desired to press Becket's cause. As Michael Staunton points out that Thomas Becket's name remains familiar more than 800 years after his death because his story is a fascinating one recorded well.<sup>860</sup> He continues to explain that the *Lives* produced by Becket's contemporaries account for four volumes in the Rolls Series. Added to that are three volumes of Becket's letters also located there, the Icelandic Saga, French poetry centering on Becket,<sup>861</sup> and mentions in various histories of the era.<sup>862</sup> In Staunton's view, the alacrity with which they were produced underscores the near-spontaneous growth of the cult surrounding Becket, and the desire to have him quickly honored as a saint. Beryl Smalley notes that, in the eyes of English writers Becket's martyrdom was distinguished from many of those who preceded him: "St. Thomas suffered for the liberties of the Church and it was a worthy cause."<sup>863</sup> Smalley adds, "The martyrdom had universal significance; it belonged to the divine plan of salvation."<sup>864</sup> In other words, the perception was that Becket died for the larger cause

---

<sup>860</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 2.

<sup>861</sup> An example of French poetry is the writing of Garnier de Pont-Ste-Maxence, a twelfth-century poet, scribe, and biographer who wrote in verse about Becket's life and martyrdom. See Timothy Peters, "An Ecclesiastical Epic: Garnier de Pont-Ste-Maxence's 'Vie de Saint Thomas le Martyr,'" *Mediævistik* 7 (1994). See also Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 9.

<sup>862</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 1. N.B. The Rolls Series (The Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland) is a compilation of the history of Britain from the Roman period to the time of Henry VIII. "Rolls Series," Oxford Reference, accessed June 28, 2020, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100427237>. An edition of *the Materials for the History of Thomas Becket* was edited by James Craigie Robertson in 1885. Accessed March 24, 2021 <https://www.cambridge.org/fr/academic/subjects/history/british-history-1066-1450/series/cambridge-library-collection-rolls>

<sup>863</sup> Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*, 193.

<sup>864</sup> Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*: 193.



and not simply for his personal beliefs. As such, the cult that developed “held something for everyone.”<sup>865</sup>

An interesting subtext to Becket’s promotion and his growing cult was the biographers’ need to address—and justify—his actions at Clarendon. There, Becket had waffled on accepting the constitutions as Henry sought to reinstitute his grandfather’s Ancient Customs. Further, there was Becket’s clandestine flight from Northampton to France in 1164. Hugh M. Thomas submits that neither Becket nor any of his biographers “explicitly depicted him as being shamed in these contexts.”<sup>866</sup> Any shame that Becket either experienced or the biographers noted amounted to an unfair label laid by his adversaries. Still, it was not an easy undertaking to brush off the charges that Becket acted in a craven manner—the shepherd forsaking his flock.<sup>867</sup> Staunton points out the difficulties that biographers had in burnishing Becket to suit a saint’s image, given some of his actions.<sup>868</sup>

As to the second motive for swift canonization of Becket, Pope Alexander III realized he had been presented with an opportunity to rein in secular encroachment on Church liberties and to embarrass Henry, if not bring him to heel. Alexander quickly put two cardinals to the task of verifying the miracles attributed to Becket, and in less than three years—at lightning speed—Becket was designated a saint. Henry suffered a personal interdict and penance at Canterbury as a consequence of his role in the continued conflict that had been staged against Becket. He ceased the inhibition of appeals to the papal curia and he relinquished his demand

---

<sup>865</sup> Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*, 191.

<sup>866</sup> Hugh M. Thomas, “Shame, Masculinity and the Death of Thomas Becket,” *Speculum* 87, no. 4 (October 2012): 1080.

<sup>867</sup> The image is from John 10:12: “The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.”

<sup>868</sup> Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers*, 48.

that clerics accused of crimes be judged in royal courts. As to the four knights who attacked and killed Becket, they were ordered on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, apparently never to return.<sup>869</sup> Alexander was not alone in seizing on the archbishop's murder as an opportunity to advance his interests.<sup>870</sup> French King Louis VII, along with French bishops, joined in applying pressure on the pontiff to canonize the martyred Becket. There was substantial public support for the action, too. Both the Crown and the Church in France had supported Becket in exile.<sup>871</sup>

### *The Many Biographies of Thomas Becket*

Before delving into John's *Vita et Passio Sancti Thome*, it is important to sketch the other eleven biographers—Anonymous II was revealed to be William of Canterbury—who crafted their stories of Thomas' existence and murder. Staunton provides a close examination of Becket's biographers,<sup>872</sup> organizing them into three categories: those who knew Becket best;

---

<sup>869</sup> Charles Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 6. Scholars debate the fate of the four knights. It remains unclear whether they died in the Holy Land. R. M. Franklin, "Reginald FitzUrse," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed September 10, 2020, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-9647?rskey=eKRefr&result=1>.

<sup>870</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 268.

<sup>871</sup> Louis VII had been a force in aiding Becket and the cause of the English Church. Frank Barlow suggests that the changes would have come in time, but with Louis' aid they were accelerated. Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 274. On the shrine for Becket, see Peter Draper, "Interpretations of the Rebuilding of Canterbury Cathedral, 1174-1186: Archaeological and Historical Evidence," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 56, no. 2 (Jun. 1997): 196. On the Canterbury fire of 1174, see Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*, 6-7. See also research by Dr. Emma Wells on the 1174 fire at Canterbury Cathedral that led to rebuilding, and a new shrine for Becket. Her research proposes the fire was arson, set by a monk envious of Durham's beauty. Helena Horton, "Canterbury Cathedral Fire in 12th Century was Arson Committed by Monks 'Jealous' of Durham's Beautiful Architecture, Historian Claims in New Book," *The Telegraph*, December 30, 2018, accessed June 28, 2020, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/12/30/canterbury-cathedral-fire-12th-century-arson-committed-monks/>.

<sup>872</sup> In his book, Staunton surveys the biographers and provides sketches of the *Vitae* authors and select material from their works. Staunton *The Lives of Thomas Becket*.

those who were present at the killing; and those whose works, though derivative of others, offer insight into the life—and the death—of Thomas Becket.

John's biography was the first, but it was quickly followed by that of Edward Grim, sometime in 1171-1172.<sup>873</sup> Staunton avers that Edward Grim's "is neither the most informative nor the most sophisticated of the Lives; [however it] is one of the most important."<sup>874</sup> Grim, a clerk from the local shire, was Becket's attendant. He stood his ground in the Canterbury chapel alongside the archbishop when the four knights swept in for Becket.<sup>875</sup> Grim tried to shield Becket and sustained a serious defensive wound to his arm. Appropriately named, Grim offers a description of the murder by the first attacker, explaining, "he leapt upon him [Becket] suddenly and wounded the lamb...cutting the top of the crown."<sup>876</sup> Grim wrote about his own injury: "by the same blow he wounded the arm of him who tells this."<sup>877</sup> As with other biographers, Grim presented a hagiographical account, concentrating more on the period from 1162 forward when Becket assumed the archiepiscopal throne. Roger of Pontigny (designated Anonymous I until his identity was revealed) drew from Grim's writing for his biography. His writing came slightly later.<sup>878</sup> While Anonymous I (Roger of Pontigny) maintains he was present at the killing, the narrative lacks much information. The author was initially named Anonymous I because the manuscript was untitled when discovered in the Lambeth Palace Library; it is

---

<sup>873</sup> Slocum, *The Cult of Thomas Becket*, 20.

<sup>874</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 7.

<sup>875</sup> John Lewis-Stempel, *England: The Autobiography* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 43.

<sup>876</sup> Lewis-Stempel, *England*, 45.

<sup>877</sup> Lewis-Stempel, *England*, 43.

<sup>878</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 7. Anonymous II (The Lambeth Anonymous) followed in 1172-1173. The "Anonymous" designations reflect the dates when they were published. Anonymous II and Anonymous III preceded and followed Anonymous I but were discovered after Anonymous I came to light. Hence, the sequence disorder.

more a statement of the conflict between Henry and Becket that brought about Becket's assassination than a description of the event.<sup>879</sup>

In fairly quick succession arrived five biographies, all completed by 1174. They were the product of Benedict of Peterborough, a monk present at the murder; William of Canterbury, a Canterbury monk who had been exiled with Becket and who was on scene the night of the murder; William FitzStephen, the archbishop's chaplain also present, whose service to Becket and Henry made for a compelling biography; Garnier or Guernes de Pont-Ste-Maxence the French poet; and Robert of Cricklade, prior of an Augustinian abbey in Oxford who centered his work on the healing power of Becket's shrine.<sup>880</sup>

The *Life* of Becket written by the remaining five authors encompassed the years 1176-1186. The biographies were written by the following: Alan of Tewkesbury, a monk at Canterbury who later became prior; Anonymous I (variously known as Roger of Pontigny) a Becket clerk, whose biography is appreciated for its clarity; Lansdowne Anonymous III, a truncated biography unearthed in the British Museum with comments regarding Becket's murder not found elsewhere; Benet of St. Albans, whose writing was commissioned by a nobleman for his wife; and Herbert of Bosham. In 1186, Bosham completed his work, which is regarded as the superlative biography due to its depth of writing and its length. Bosham was Becket's closest ally and companion and a clerk to Becket as chancellor. He was not at Canterbury when the murder took place, as he had been dispatched to France on a mission prior to the murder.<sup>881</sup>

---

<sup>879</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 8; Slocum, *The Cult of Thomas Becket*, 23.

<sup>880</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 8-9; Slocum, *The Cult of Thomas Becket*, 23-27.

<sup>881</sup> Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 9-10; Slocum, *The Cult of Thomas Becket*, 27-30.

Herbert of Bosham and John of Salisbury, the two men closest to Becket, though in different ways, wrote Becket's most impactful biographies. Bosham's, arriving in 1186, more than a decade and a half after the murder, was detailed and lengthy. It was built on the memory and stories of others who were present at the event. Slocum notes that Bosham added theological viewpoints that reflected his own perspectives.<sup>882</sup> John's *Life* was manifestly different from that of Bosham. Beryl Smalley, perhaps tongue-in-cheek, says that John compared Becket's passion with that of Christ, giving Becket a slight edge as he was struck down "within his church instead of outside on unconsecrated ground, and so on."<sup>883</sup> While John's *Life* certainly is not the best, it is nonetheless significant for the lead it accomplished in spreading the news and developing the brief for Becket's canonization. The *Vita et Passio Sancti Thome*, sometimes identified as *Vita S. Thomae Martyris*, is relatively short, only 28 chapters. It did, however, augment the information and amplify the themes of Letter 305, *Ex inspirato*, that John of Salisbury wrote to John of Canterbury, the bishop of Poitiers.<sup>884</sup> Anne Duggan writes, "Both in its original form as a letter, and in an expanded form as a pious *Vita et Passio Sancti Thomae Martyris*, the record was widely circulated in continental Europe and created an enduring image of the martyr *pro defensione libertatis ecclesiae*."<sup>885</sup>

---

<sup>882</sup> Slocum, *The Cult of Thomas Becket*, 27-30.

<sup>883</sup> Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*, 196.

<sup>884</sup> The *Vita* was later amplified and developed as an introduction to John of Salisbury's collection of Becket's letters that was assembled by Alan of Tewkesbury in 1176. John also had worked to compile the letters. John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 12; David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*,

<sup>885</sup> Anne Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 427.

### *A Close Reading of John's Vita*

Aside from John of Salisbury's speed in disseminating the news of Becket's death, it is valuable to examine the salient elements of the *Vita et Passio Sancti Thome* that describe Becket's life and John's personal views. Having acknowledged that this writing is not a superlative work and that it arrived when John no longer could influence the "live" Becket, there is still an important place for it in the canon of John's compositions. First, it is quite obviously devoted to Becket in a mode different from the dedications of the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, and the *Policraticus*. But the *Life* is dedicated notwithstanding for it is "of and concerning" the late archbishop. Second, it offers insights into Becket after John's six years in exile on behalf of Becket and the Church. Recall that the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, and the *Policraticus* were all written before Becket was enthroned as archbishop, while he was still in Henry's employ. Third, the *Life* allows a comparison to the writing style of John's other works, including his use of classical literature and scriptural passages. Fourth, it is meaningful because John wrote it.

Pepin points out that John weaves his "favorite themes" into the *Life* of Becket (and that of Anselm, too), including Church liberty and the competing "aggrandizement of royal power."<sup>886</sup> Further, John was "an unflinching foe of tyranny in all forms," as witnessed even in his first major writing, the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*.<sup>887</sup> Through his writing of Becket's *Life*, John continued his close ties with the archbishop. Duggan notes, "John was therefore closely associated with the promotion of Becket's cult, with the dissemination of

---

<sup>886</sup> John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 5.

<sup>887</sup> John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 5-6.

accounts of the martyrdom, and the creation of an epistolary memorial to the recent martyr.”<sup>888</sup>

In the prologue, John inaugurated the discussion of “the dominant themes of his *Life of Becket*: Holy Church; blood; freedom,” and, according to Pepin, throughout the work, he branded Becket a “guardian of the Church who is willing to shed his blood in defense of ecclesiastical liberty.”<sup>889</sup> In John’s words, “The Ancient Enemy fights continually against the most holy Church, but the Son of God, who redeemed it with His own blood, defends it by the blood of His members and carries it forward to true freedom.”<sup>890</sup> The Prologue notably echoes John’s sentences in his letter to Poitiers’ bishop: “Every circumstance in the archbishop’s death agony conspired to glorify the dying man for ever, to reveal the depravity of the assailants and brand them eternally with shame.”<sup>891</sup> John quickly adds that Becket was an “advocate of the Church’s liberty.”<sup>892</sup>

In Chapter 4 of the *Life*, John admitted to the brevity of the biography and outlined his principal motivation for its conciseness, explaining, “It is in no way easy to tell [the story of Becket’s life], especially in a short account that does not describe individual acts, but assembles the sum of events and strives to set forth a reason for his martyrdom.”<sup>893</sup> Then, following a series of brief biographical chapters that included a narrative of Henry’s rise to the throne

---

<sup>888</sup> Duggan, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 428.

<sup>889</sup> John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 12.

<sup>890</sup> John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 73.

<sup>891</sup> “Sic omnes circumstantiae concurrerunt in agone pontificis, ut patientis titulum perpetuo illustrarent et persequentium reuelarent impietatem et nomen sempiterno macularent obprobrio.” Letter 305 to John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers. John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 727.

<sup>892</sup> “Hoc tamen in tanto diuinae dispensationis munere silendum esse non credidi, quod ad Dei et martyris sui gloriam uniuersi mirantur”; “assertor ecclesiasticae libertatis.” Letter 305 to John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers. John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 725.

<sup>893</sup> John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 76.

following Stephen's reign, John detailed the adversities Becket experienced as a chancellor: "he endured so many and such great scarcities of various necessities; he was worn down by so many afflictions, threatened with so many ambushes...that often from day to day he grew weary of living."<sup>894</sup> Still, John noted, Becket soldiered on as chancellor.

John followed the thread of Becket's life as he was aggressively pursued by Henry to become archbishop of Canterbury, initially against his own desire to take on the pallium. John wrote, "So for some time he struggled against the king and others who wanted him to be promoted, but the divine election prevailed."<sup>895</sup> In Chapter 12, he addressed some of the evils that the "Ancient Enemy" hurled at Becket, acting with malice and interfering with his ability to repress discord so "the land should enjoy a hoped-for peace."<sup>896</sup>

The comparisons to Christ continued in Chapters 17 through 26—with resonances of "Crucify him"—as John proceeded to describe the attackers and the cause for which Becket was prepared to die.<sup>897</sup> John concluded by describing the despicable act of the killing and the miracles that were rapidly accumulating as pilgrims swarmed to Becket's shrine: "People flock there in crowds to see in others and sense in themselves the power and mercy of Him Who is always wondrous and glorious in His saints."<sup>898</sup>

With Becket's biography, John was building the case for the slain archbishop's swift canonization, propounding Becket's sanctity and his own case for Church liberty. Slocum emphasizes that in depicting the assassination as a martyrdom, John wrote in the service of

---

<sup>894</sup> Chapter 7, John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 77.

<sup>895</sup> Chapter 9, John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 78.

<sup>896</sup> Chapter 12, John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 81.

<sup>897</sup> Chapter 12, John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 85 ff.

<sup>898</sup> Chapter 12, John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 95.



that view. He likened Becket's death to that of Christ. The portrayal of Becket as a sacrificial lamb deserving of sainthood probably was for the benefit of the papal curia's support of Becket's canonization. It was a body that John understood well because of his time spent there after his years as a student in Paris.<sup>899</sup> Staunton agrees that, while canonization may not initially have been top of mind for him along with Church liberty, John—beginning with *Ex insperato*—appreciated that a papal grant of sainthood would be of value to his cause of ecclesiastical independence from Henry. After all, with the multiple miracles backing up the claim of Becket's holiness, the voice of the people should be heard.<sup>900</sup>

John captured the voice of the people indeed. The actions that briskly fostered a cult both offered support and were spurred on by the spread of news about Becket's murder. To some degree, it was a symbiotic relationship. Staunton writes, "The success of the cult is reflected in the number of Lives [sic] and the speed with which they were written. It provided a ready subject and a willing audience."<sup>901</sup> The initial stories about miracles and cures came less than a month after Becket's murder, nearly the same time as John of Salisbury's letter to John of Canterbury. The first reported miracle occurred on January 4, 1171 and was attributed to Becket's blood. Among the other miracles recounted, one sprang from the night of the murder. Here was the story of a man, present that night, who dipped his shirt in Becket's blood and took it home to his paralyzed wife. She mixed the blood in water, washed herself with it and was

---

<sup>899</sup> Slocum, *The Cult of Thomas Becket*, 23.

<sup>900</sup> Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers*, 21. John Guy speculates, however without much evidence, that John would not have considered Becket a worthy or appropriate candidate for such an honor. John continually supported Becket's cause but was frequently frustrated with the person: "Thomas was far from an obvious candidate for sainthood; in fact, John would have considered utterly absurd the whole idea of Becket's future canonization by the pope." John Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 172.

<sup>901</sup> Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers*, 11.

immediately cured. Soon, vials with the blood thinned with water were spread and cures were attributed to the liquid.<sup>902</sup> Becket's blood, as much of it as possible, was gathered up by John from the floor of the Lady Chapel immediately after the murder. Benedict, in his biography of Becket, wrote that on hearing the news of the archbishop's death, people brought bottles and vials to the cathedral collect the brains and blood of the archbishop.<sup>903</sup> Barlow explains that "by Whitsun the miracles were proliferating."<sup>904</sup> When John died in 1180 in Chartres where he was bishop, among the many items listed in the cartulary he had created was his donation to the cathedral of a vial of Becket's blood.<sup>905</sup>

Consistent with his earlier efforts, John reinforced his writing in the *Vita et Passio Sancti Thome* with quotations from classical authors, the Bible, and Church doctors. In the prologue alone, John incorporated six biblical references—two from the Old Testament and four from the New Testament, including one from the gospels. Interspersed through the twenty-eight chapters of the *Life* are direct references from the classical authors Horace (*Satires*), Livy, Seneca (*Moral Epistles to Lucilius*), and Vergil (*Aeneid*). Scriptural references include Job, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Numbers, and Psalms from the Old Testament. New Testament citations and allusions are to Colossians, Galatians, 2 Timothy, Philippians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans, in addition to the Gospels of John,

---

<sup>902</sup> Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*, 5.

<sup>903</sup> For details on the immediate aftermath of Becket's murder and the rush to collect his physical remains see Michael Staunton, "The View from Canterbury: Benedict of Peterborough and William of Canterbury," *Thomas Becket and His Biographers*, 49–55.

<sup>904</sup> Numerous miracles centering on Becket's blood were reported during the first year. Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 265–67.

<sup>905</sup> Karen Bollermann and Cary J. Nederman, "A Special Collection of John of Salisbury's Relics of Saint Thomas Becket and other Holy Martyrs," *Mediävistik* 26 (2013): 163.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Church Fathers cited in the *Life* are Augustine of Hippo and Bernard of Clairvaux.<sup>906</sup>

The consensus among those who have studied John's works—and his relationship with Becket—is that the *Vita et Passio Sancti Thome* holds a relatively minor place in his record of treatises and writings. At the same time, it is a valuable contribution insofar as it provides further insight into John's sense of Becket and his desire to remain very engaged with the archbishop, even after his murder.

---

<sup>906</sup> John and Pepin, *Anselm & Becket*, 73 ff.

## CHAPTER 9 – JOHN OF SALISBURY: HIS CORRESPONDENCE

John of Salisbury, bishop of Chartres, died eight hundred and forty years ago. We recognize him not for his episcopacy nor particularly for his relationship of more than two decades with Thomas Becket. Rather, John holds a distinctive position as one of the most learned men of the twelfth century, author of several major works, including the monumental treatise, the *Policraticus*. As Ronald E. Pepin notes, John's "enduring reputation depends chiefly on his writings, on his status as a man of letters."<sup>907</sup> John was deeply versed in the classical literature of Greeks and Romans as well as the Bible.<sup>908</sup> Pepin adds that, as such, John was able "to establish an intellectual link between himself and his audience, for he wrote not only for literate men, but for literary men."<sup>909</sup> His impressive record of writing includes the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, the *Policraticus*, the *Historia Pontificalis*, and two *Vitae*—one of St. Anselm and another of St. Thomas (though admittedly these were below the standard of his earlier works). What must also be included in his remarkable canon are his letters.<sup>910</sup> Beyond offering significant historical witness of the mid-twelfth century's powerful

---

<sup>907</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 148.

<sup>908</sup> Krey conservatively estimates that John utilized more than one thousand classical quotations. The challenge is that many of them were not contained in "the grammars and other standard books of that time." The question, then, is the source of his quotations: original classical writings or *florilegia*. Krey, *John of Salisbury's Knowledge of the Classics*, iii.

<sup>909</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 148.

<sup>910</sup> Of the 135 letters John wrote while in the household of Archbishop Theobald in Canterbury, thirty-five were sent with John's name. Adrian IV received nine; Pete, abbot of Celle, eight; and Thomas Becket, chancellor, two. The majority of those he wrote for Theobald went to Adrian IV, Henry II, and Alexander III. In all, there were fifty appeals to Rome from Theobald. John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, xxxii.

men and their dealings,<sup>911</sup> John's letters also provide information about his own life.<sup>912</sup> Through them we are able to glimpse John's brilliance and occasional humor,<sup>913</sup> his facile command of Latin and his occasional self-effacing posture.<sup>914</sup> Taken together, the letters form a reflection of a complex man. Sydney Evans offered this observation: "What emerges from these letters is the scholar, the diplomat and the man [...and...] the characteristics of the man that emerge are sanity and moderation, tolerance and readiness to reach a compromise; but in the last record inflexibility of principle."<sup>915</sup> Pepin agrees, asserting that the letters, beyond their support for Archbishop Becket, "are also testaments to his forthright candor and courage in the defense of cherished principles."<sup>916</sup>

John of Salisbury's collection of letters, as they have come to us, number 325 and they are divided into two groups. The first set of letters comes from John's time in Canterbury where he often functioned as Theobald's secretary. The second set begins with his exile in France in late 1163 or early 1164. The letters are not dated, a common practice of the period. Occasionally, the sequence in the collections is chronological (sometimes, two or more of a series of letters were originally spaced apart with no particular logic).<sup>917</sup> The chronological

---

<sup>911</sup> John wrote to King Henry numerous times on behalf of Archbishop Theobald. See, for example, Letter 88 in which Theobald expressed regret to Henry for his support of Roger to be appointed Archbishop of York. John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 137.

<sup>912</sup> For example, in Letter 19 to Peter, Abbot of Celle, John referred to his (half) brother, Richard, and thanked Peter for "the honor and generosity you have shown my brother." Letter 19, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 32.

<sup>913</sup> In Letter 111 to Peter, Abbot of Celle, in which John indicated that he was sending the *Policraticus* for Peter's comment and review, John gently roasted Brito, a monk and subprior at Canterbury and one of his favorite targets for teasing. He asked Peter for a quick response, "not like that thief at Canterbury, names Brito: it could scarcely be torn from his hands until it was copied in full, perhaps to thrust it before the eyes of our enemies." Letter 111, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 182.

<sup>914</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 171.

<sup>915</sup> Sydney Evans, "John of Salisbury: A Man of Letters," *The Hatcher Review* 7 (Spring/Summer 1979): 18.

<sup>916</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 172.

<sup>917</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, liii.

order is due in great measure to the careful editing of C. N. L. Brooke, D. E. Greenway, and M. Winterbottom, editors of Volume One of *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, and W. J. Millor and C. N. L. Brooke, editors of Volume Two of *The Letters of John of Salisbury*. They used the content of the letters to arrive at a chronological sequence.

Volume One comprises 135 letters that span the years 1153-1161, the period when John was secretary to Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>918</sup> John's earliest epistles are traceable to 1153-1154. Nederman notes that output grew substantially by 1156, when there was a transition of rulership from Stephen to Henry.<sup>919</sup> Most of the letters in this first set of epistles were official in nature and addressed issues facing the Church.<sup>920</sup> Anne Duggan believes that John's early letters, which coincided with his three major works, reveal a man in conflict with himself. That is, the letters show "the dilemma of a man of principle trying to save his career and his conscience in a period of acute crisis."<sup>921</sup> Sister M. Anthony Brown reminds us that the letters John crafted for Theobald reflect his prominent status with the archbishop. She writes that many of them "are of a very confidential nature and only one close to the Archbishop would have been entrusted with the information contained therein."<sup>922</sup> Included are all manner of legal cases and petitions to the papal curia and missives to the king. Not all of these letters

---

<sup>918</sup> David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed June 28, 2019, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-14849?rskey=ADiM15&result=4>.

<sup>919</sup> Cary J. Nederman, *John of Salisbury* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 15.

<sup>920</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 171. For example, in Letter 16, John wrote to Pope Adrian IV on behalf of Archbishop Theobald regarding a legal matter. Theobald had claimed authority of a case involving a clerk, an archdeacon who was facing trial in a royal court (the issue of a criminous clerk). Letter 16, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 27.

<sup>921</sup> Anne Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 429.

<sup>922</sup> Brown, "John of Salisbury," 249.

were “Official Business—Eyes Only,” however. Of the first corpus of letters, Pepin records “there are 37 pieces directed to John’s friends and associates in his own name.”<sup>923</sup>

The second collection tracks the years from 1163 to his death in 1180 and includes the years when Becket was archbishop<sup>924</sup>—from 1163 to his murder on December 29, 1170. This group contains 190 epistles, the majority dedicated to the dispute with Henry that resulted in exile for both men.<sup>925</sup> Of the total letters, 213 (nearly 66 percent) were personal and sent to identified addressees. They ranged widely, as some were to clerics and others to secular leaders in England and on the continent. John’s broad reach of friends and colleagues—clerical and lay—provided him and Becket a substantial pool of information about dealings in England and negotiations on the continent. In exile, they “enjoyed an effective intelligence system.”<sup>926</sup> In consort with John’s other writings, the Church’s freedom from royal control, the *libertas ecclesiae*, remained a paramount theme and consistent thread in his correspondence.<sup>927</sup> In the personal correspondence, John occasionally used the language of *amicitia*—deep and enduring friendship.<sup>928</sup> John McLoughlin divides John’s letters into two categories: *amicitia* and non-*amicitia* (the *amicitia* group typically was addressed to monks and secular clergy).<sup>929</sup>

Aside from his desire to sway others to agree with his viewpoint, John was a fair reporter of events. Christopher Brooke admits that John was not necessarily an “objective

---

<sup>923</sup> Pepin, “John of Salisbury as Writer,” 171.

<sup>924</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, ix.

<sup>925</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

<sup>926</sup> William Urry, “Some Thoughts on the Second Volume of John of Salisbury’s Letters,” *The Hatcher Review* 10 (Summer 1980): 33.

<sup>927</sup> Hans Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury*, 95.

<sup>928</sup> Cary J. Nederman, “Friendship in Public Life During the Twelfth Century: Theory and Practice in the Writings of John of Salisbury,” *The Theory and Practice of Friendship in the Middle Ages* 5, *Viator* 38, no. 2 (2007): 385.

<sup>929</sup> John McLoughlin, “*Amicitia* in Practice: John of Salisbury (c. 1120-1180) and His Circle,” in *England in the Twelfth Century: Proceedings of the 1988 Harlaxton Symposium*, vol. 99 (1990), 169.

witness to his world; yet he is a vivid, unusual, important witness.”<sup>930</sup> In examining John’s letters alongside the *Policraticus*, for example, the steadfast authenticity of his tenets remains clear: loyalty to the Pope, the primacy of Canterbury above York, and Church liberty.<sup>931</sup> Still, given the distance of more than eight centuries, analyses of the letters are challenging. Perforce it should be no surprise that the dating is occasionally imprecise. There are missives whose recipients are unclear or whose contexts are not fully established; thus, the official occasionally gets blended in with the personal.<sup>932</sup>

Mention has been made of John of Salisbury’s use of classical and scriptural quotations throughout his writings, and the letters are no exceptions. As August Charles Krey suggests, a thousand quotations is a cautious total estimate. At times, it feels as though there are more quotations than stars in the heavens or grains of sand on the beach. The editors of Volume One of *The Letters of John of Salisbury* offer no indication as to the number of references, allusions, or quotations in John’s letters, nor do they provide anything else to indicate that they attempted to identify as many of these references as possible. They wrote, “His memory was so well stored, and the Bible, the fathers, and the pagan classics tripped so easily off his tongue that we cannot hope to have identified them all. Still less to have detected every distant

---

<sup>930</sup> Christopher Brooke, “John of Salisbury and His World,” 14.

<sup>931</sup> Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism*, 110.

<sup>932</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, xxx. An example of a letter that leaves questions is Letter 136 to Archbishop Thomas Becket, written in early 1164. In the letter, John announced that he had crossed the Channel and was now in France, but he was vague as to his reasons for making the journey, and what—if anything—his mission might be. John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 3.



echo.”<sup>933</sup> John was well versed in other authors’ uses of quotations and was guided by them.<sup>934</sup> He was well acquainted with the epistemological tradition of quoting others and employing their comments to reflect on third parties. John further knew how to write for his audience, frequently achieving his desired end. David Luscombe suggests that John had quite the talent of fitting “his style to the person and the topic.”<sup>935</sup>

Avrom Saltman details several of John’s more significant Old Testament *exempla* and quotations in his letters. For example, John pays homage to Louis VII as *rex Christianissimus*, a title given to the French king by Alexander III, in Letter 288 to Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter. Bartholomew had been a longstanding friend of John’s at Canterbury<sup>936</sup> (the inference probably was to stick a thumb in rival Henry II’s eye). Among the Old Testament references in Letter 187 is an allusion to Saul and Doeg the Edomite and to Saul’s tyranny—with a strong inference that Henry’s actions were tyrannical.<sup>937</sup> John’s usage of scriptural *exempla* permeates his letters; virtually every book of the Bible is plumbed for quotations. The Old Testament quotations and allusions range from Genesis to 3 Esdra (Ezra). All of the Pentateuch appears in his letters.<sup>938</sup> John’s principles were grounded in the Church, yet he was also a scholar. Despite his extensive

---

<sup>933</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, lv. They do note (on p. lvi) that the biblical references are to passages in the Vulgate, with citations to more recent versions when necessary because of great variance in translation and notation.

<sup>934</sup> For example: the pagan Seneca and the Doctor of the Church, Jerome, who, in their own writings penned “letters of reproof to their intimate friends, in which such reproof is really directed against the excesses of others.” Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism*, 16.

<sup>935</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

<sup>936</sup> Letter 288, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 638. In making the statement about Louis, John suggested comparison, according to Saltman, to the Christian standard of the “ideal king.” Avrom Saltman, “John of Salisbury and the World of the Old Testament,” in *The World of John of Salisbury*, 344.

<sup>937</sup> Saltman, “John of Salisbury and the World of the Old Testament,” 346.

<sup>938</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 813-819. Only five of the thirty-nine books of the currently accepted Old Testament are not included: Tobit, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. All of the books of the New Testament are referenced in John’s letters. John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 820-823.

knowledge of biblical material, and his considerable use of it, John was not a theologian.

Christophe Grellard posits that John instead was a biblical scholar, utilizing—and at times proof texting—sacred scriptures to validate his dedication to Church liberty, ethics, and moderation.<sup>939</sup> Throughout the letters in Volume I, John’s voice and knowledge of the scriptures, and especially the classics, is evident. Certainly, Theobald was educated but he was not Anselm, one of the archbishops of Canterbury who preceded him. Theobald was not John with respect to a depth of education. The massive volume of citations from classical, patristic, and medieval sources alone in these letters reveal John’s ‘fine Italian hand.’

With whom did John of Salisbury correspond most frequently while an administrator at Canterbury and secretary to Theobald, based on the letters in the first collection? These letters date from September 1153 or early 1154 to April 1161. Who were his correspondents while he was in exile? Those letters range from early 1164 through October 1170.

### *The First Volume of Letters*

The majority of the correspondence in the first volume of John’s edited letters were drafted in the name of Archbishop Theobald. Of the 135 letters in this group, 57 (42 percent) were either directed to the Pope or named Adrian IV specifically.<sup>940</sup> As befits the secretary writing for the archbishop, many of the letters concern administrative issues and the business

---

<sup>939</sup> Christophe Grellard, “John of Salisbury and Theology,” 351. *N.B.* Proof texting is the practice of lifting an isolated quotation (often from the Bible) and using it out of context.

<sup>940</sup> Because the letters lack dates, those affixed are after only centuries of analysis and cataloguing. Thus, it is not clear if the letters addressed to the pope were designated for Adrian IV or Alexander III. The content of the letters did not always confirm the recipient nor the date. Adrian, an Englishman and friend and benefactor of John, died in September 1159, approximately six years after John’s first authorship on behalf of Theobald. The first collection of letters, Volume I, contains those dating from late 1153 or early 1154 to April 1161.

of the Church. For example, the first one is a letter from Theobald to the monks of Christ Church, Canterbury regarding ownership and oversight of the physical plant. The letter reminds the somewhat rebellious monks that Theobald, as archbishop, had Walter de Meri (Walter Parvus), the prior and one-time chaplain to the archbishop, deposed and barred from holding any further office for dereliction of duty; he was willing to exercise his power as archbishop to discipline insubordinate actors. Theobald (with John writing) cautioned the monks that any who might surreptitiously help Walter regain his former post would be placed “under our anathema.”<sup>941</sup> Of the nearly five dozen letters to Rome written while John was in Theobald’s employ, many of them share common themes and are effectively part of a thread in the view of C. N. L. Brooke.<sup>942</sup> By way of example, letters 7 through 11 are linked—they all concern Canterbury’s challenges to the Roman curia concerning the outcome of appeals disfavoring Theobald’s rulings against St. Augustine’s Canterbury.

John had no identifiable legal training. However, his deep intellect and exposure to legal scholars, including Master Vacarius (who had previously been a prominent teacher in Bologna), provided him with a respectable knowledge of the law.<sup>943</sup> His years in and around the papal court also offered John valuable insights into civil and canon procedural law.<sup>944</sup> That was

---

<sup>941</sup> Letter 1, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 2.

<sup>942</sup> “The Cases of St Bertin, St Augustine’s Canterbury and Archdeacon Osbert,” John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 258-262.

<sup>943</sup> Master Vacarius was a twelfth-century Roman legal scholar, living at the same time as John of Salisbury. Vacarius received his education in civil law at Bologna as Gratian’s *Decretum* was gaining popularity. He was a member of Theobald’s household where he was instrumental in negotiating Church-Crown disputes involving Stephen. He was later one of the first lecturers at the embryonic Oxford, and his text *Liber Pauperum* was a basic legal book for law students there. “Vacarius,” *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed July 9, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Vacarius>. For further information on Master Vacarius, see Kenneth Pennington and Jason Taliadoros, “Law and Theology in Twelfth-Century England: The Works of Master Vacarius (c. 1115/20-c. 1200),” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 60, no. 4 (2009): 795-6. ProQuest. Web. 9 July 2020.

<sup>944</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

evident in the letter he crafted for Archbishop Theobald to Alexander III in October or November 1160 concerning the notorious case of the validity of the marriage of William of Sackville and his wife Adelicia. Letter 131 was a lengthy exploration of the legitimacy of Mabel de Francheville, their daughter. The case turned on the issues of consummation and consent, of betrothal without consummation, and the question of whether consent was valid only if made in public. In the jumbled set of facts were two other parties: Richard of Anstey and Albereda de Tresgoz, William of Sackville's first wife. It all made for a complicated scenario. Not surprisingly, the bottom line was money, essentially an inheritance, and whether Mabel could inherit based on the questions surrounding her legitimacy. John, ghostwriting for Theobald, skillfully wove his way through the facts of the case at hand, presenting the arguments offered from both Mabel and William, the latter of which was contesting the former's right to an inheritance. William claimed that her parents were not legally married and, hence, she was illegitimate and without further legal recourse.<sup>945</sup>

Julie Barrau writes, "It is likely that John was given more autonomy and more work as Theobald's health declined: a high proportion of the letters written in the archbishop's name date from those final years."<sup>946</sup> As early as 1156, Theobald acknowledged the state of his ill health to Adrian IV in Letter 8, calling it "a grievous malady."<sup>947</sup> Theobald's illness and growing incapacity created possibilities for John to act with greater agency. His power to correspond in the archbishop's stead increased.<sup>948</sup>

---

<sup>945</sup> Letter 131, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 227-237, 267-271, and Appendix VI: "Marriage Law and the Anstey Case." The holding: Mable lost.

<sup>946</sup> Julie Barrau, "John of Salisbury as Ecclesiastical Administrator," 114.

<sup>947</sup> "Meus grauis languor," Letter 8, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 14.

<sup>948</sup> Julie Barrau, "John of Salisbury as Ecclesiastical Administrator," 114; Letter 8, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 14.

Considerable correspondence was directed at King Henry during the period when John of Salisbury performed secretarial duties for Theobald. Letter 88, the initial epistle to Henry in the first volume of letters, concerns Roger, archbishop of York, who was a former clerk of Theobald. It contains protestations about untruthful missives that Roger was promoting: “I neither wrote those letters nor desired them to be written nor were they written, to my knowledge, by any man of mine.”<sup>949</sup> However, the issue at the center of the defamatory or false letters is not clear. In Letter 101, Theobald praised Henry for a recent victory (perhaps over his brother Geoffrey in France in 1156), but longed for Henry’s return to England, having been “too long deprived of your [Henry’s] bodily presence.”<sup>950</sup> Letters 116 and 120-123, all to Henry, addressed the looming prospect of a false pope and the chaos that such a schism could bring. Theobald, in an epistle crafted by John, wrote in Letter 116, “For the division in the Roman Church is exciting the lovers of novelty and has made them very bold in their ambitions.”<sup>951</sup> Theobald was looking for a unified stance regarding attacks on Alexander III’s legitimacy, particularly in light of Frederick Barbarossa’s efforts to secure Henry for his side and support of Victor IV as pope. Such a move, uniting Henry and Barbarossa, would bracket Louis VII. The concerns in Letter 116 parallel those held by John as an individual, namely the right of the Church to be free from royal interference. In Letter 123, Theobald gave thanks to Henry for a peace that had been achieved and the avoidance of a rift in the Church. He stated gratefully,

---

<sup>949</sup> “Litteras istas nec scripsi nec scribi uolui nec aliquo meorum scriptas noui.” Letter 88, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 137.

<sup>950</sup> “diutius destituimur corporali praesentia uestra.” Letter 101, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 161.

<sup>951</sup> “Scissura enim ecclesiae Romanae nouitatis excitat amatores, et praesumptionibus multam dedit audaciam.” Letter 116, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 190.

“when their majesty [Henry] brings peace to the people, quiet to the Church and to religion increase that is pleasing unto God.”<sup>952</sup>

Henry, having given permission for the Church to meet in council in London to discuss the elimination of the schismatic threat, received a report of the meeting in Letter 125. In that letter to Henry, John penned for the ailing Theobald a heartfelt request for a visit from the prince: “My desire will never receive its satisfaction in the flesh, unless I have the good fortune once more to see your face for which I long so much.”<sup>953</sup> After that, John continued on Theobald’s behalf, “shall Christ let his humble servant depart in peace.”<sup>954</sup> The final letter to Henry in this first collection, Letter 135, is the last extant in this volume. Theobald reminded Henry that the archbishop had served him well, that his flesh was weary and worn, and he commended “the church of Canterbury, from whose hand by my ministration you received the governance of the realm” (for he had anointed Henry as king).<sup>955</sup> He further urged Henry not to let the English Church be troubled before a new archbishop was appointed. He effectively presented his “last will and testament” in this letter and sought Henry’s efforts to execute it properly, admitting that he had little to disburse: “For I have no gold or silver left.”<sup>956</sup> The letter to Henry closed with a poignant, “Farewell, your Serenity, for ever.”<sup>957</sup>

---

<sup>952</sup> “Virtus principum nullo clarius elucet indicio quam si maiestate eius pacem populus, ecclesia quietem et religio gratum. Letter 123, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 203.

<sup>953</sup> “Numquam satisfiet in carne desiderio meo nisi desideratissimam faciem uestram michi in carne uidere contigerit.” Letter 127, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 219.

<sup>954</sup> “Dimittet tunc in pace seruulum sum Christus.” Letter 127, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 219. Note that John wrote a similar appeal to Becket in Letter 128. Letter 128, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 221.

<sup>955</sup> Letter 135, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 250.

<sup>956</sup> “Neque enim quicquam auri superset uel argenti.” Letter 135, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 251.

<sup>957</sup> “Ualaet in aeuum serenitas uestra.” Letter 135, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 251.

Enveloped in this collection that extends for eight years from 1153 is the writing about the apparent disgrace that John suffered in the fall of 1156. Historians have disputed the date of John's exile from the friendly confines of Canterbury and Henry's court for many years. However, Giles Constable has made the strong case for 1156 rather than an earlier date. John, in Letter 31 to Abbot Peter of Celle, claimed he was unaware of the specific reason for his disgrace. John cited, instead, "the zeal of jealous folk," adding, "If you ask the cause, my crimes are, that I profess freedom and defend the truth."<sup>958</sup> Constable points to the three months between November 1155 and 1156 that John spent at the Roman curia and in the company of his friend, Adrian IV, as the cause. John was there as an emissary, either for Henry or for Theobald, and was involved in negotiations to secure permission for Henry to mount an assault on Ireland to bring an errant Church to heel. At the same time, Henry sought to obtain a hereditary grant to Ireland from the pope that would allow him to collect fees among other things. Perhaps John was perceived by Henry as too close to Church authority, or maybe the pope's permission to proceed against Ireland did not come in the form Henry desired. Whatever the exact cause, John was banished.<sup>959</sup>

Scattered among the first letters is correspondence that one might expect of a growing episcopal bureaucracy with religious and political responsibilities. One finds a letter, possibly in 1155 or 1157, in which Theobald chided Hilary, bishop of Chichester, for absences and being incommunicado, with a complaint to him about his "prolonged silence" and apparent

---

<sup>958</sup> "Si causam quaeritis, professio libertatis, ueritatis defensio criminal mea sunt." Letter 31, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 50.

<sup>959</sup> Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 71. The editors of the first collection of John of Salisbury's letters are in accord. See Appendix II, "The Great Disgrace," in John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 257. See also Constable, "The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159," 74.

unwillingness to be friends, “since habitual silence does not wear the appearance of love.”<sup>960</sup> In a series of three letters to Henry, bishop of Winchester (the late King Stephen’s younger brother), Theobald decried Henry’s absence of two years. Bishop Henry fled England and took up residence at Cluny and the monastic community in eastern France. He possibly was concerned about fallout from the regime change and the fact that he had alternated support between his brother Stephen and Matilda and her son, Henry. In Letter 36, Theobald described ‘famine’ in Bishop Henry’s see—not one for lack of food, but instead “a famine of the word of God.”<sup>961</sup> Theobald continued with the chastisement in the following letter, sent several months later, during the winter of 1157-1158, suggesting that Henry had a choice. Theobald proffered that Henry had to choose between two paths: either run the risk of a fight or peace.<sup>962</sup> He continued, noting that King Henry was upset that the bishop believed he needed a guarantee of a safe conduct in order to return to England and his cathedral in Winchester. Theobald concluded this letter with the expectation that Bishop Henry would make his way back to England, promising to greet him and arrange a meeting with King Henry. Theobald explained that he would do so as soon as word came that the bishop was in Boulogne and ready to cross the Channel.<sup>963</sup> In the concluding letter of the trilogy, Theobald wrote that he had learned Bishop Henry’s possessions were safe. He further assured him that “the king himself is longing for your return and promises peace and security of every kind.”<sup>964</sup> Additionally, Theobald

---

<sup>960</sup> “Accusauimus moram silentii...quod taciturnitas non amantis specia uidetur induta.” Letter 31, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 79.

<sup>961</sup> “Sed fames audiendi uerbum Dei.” Letter 36, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 65.

<sup>962</sup> Letter 37, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 67-68.

<sup>963</sup> Letter 37, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 68.

<sup>964</sup> “Cum ipse rex auduentum uestrum desideret, et pacem et securitatem omnimodam repromittat.” Letter 38, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 70.



provided his own assurance of safe conduct. However, he warned that Bishop Henry should act quickly, as the king might respond with “indignation...if he senses that the favour he has offered has been scorned.”<sup>965</sup> Recall that Henry of Blois was deeply disappointed that Theobald, abbot of Bec, had been elected archbishop of Canterbury, with Stephen’s full cooperation, rather than he himself. To the younger brother, it was eminently unfair, as he had served as the dominant church leader during much of Stephen’s reign.<sup>966</sup> It is understandable that Henry of Blois, who had lost both the archiepiscopacy and his position as the papal legate, was of little mind to follow Theobald’s instructions and return to England. Henry returned to England sometime in the winter of 1157-1158.<sup>967</sup>

In the first volume of John’s correspondence, there are four letters to Thomas Becket, royal chancellor and archdeacon of Canterbury—an ecclesiastical position he had declined to relinquish as he was receiving considerable fees from multiple benefices. Two of the letters John wrote on behalf of Archbishop Theobald, two he wrote for his own cause. These letters, along with the ten others in the second collection that were addressed to Becket, will receive a closer examination shortly.

---

<sup>965</sup> “Si porrectam gratiam contempni praesenserit.” Letter 38, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 70.

<sup>966</sup> Douglas John Senette, “A Cluniac Prelate: Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester (1129-1171),” (PhD, Thesis Tulane University, 1991), 193. *ProQuest*. Web. 11 July 2020.

<sup>967</sup> He was listed on the Michaelmas pipe roll of 1158, indicating his presence in England. Edmund King, “Henry de Blois,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://doi-org.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/10.1093/ref:odnb/12968>.

## *The Second Volume of Letters*

The second volume of John of Salisbury's letters begins with a detailed missive from John to Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, after John had made his base in France, sometime in late 1163 or early 1164.<sup>968</sup> The remaining 188 letters in this set end with a letter from John (at that time the bishop of Chartres) to Richard, Archbishop of Canterbury, along with clergy in residence and the monks of the cathedral chapter. The suggested date for the writing is between 1177 and 1179, not long before John died on October 25, 1180.<sup>969</sup> The intervening span of sixteen years includes his correspondence during the six years of exile in France—time which he shared with Becket, though they were seldom in the same location.<sup>970</sup> One of the more poignant letters is number 305, addressed to John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers, detailing Becket's murder in the cathedral. The letter, subsequently titled *Ex insperato*, was the basis for John of Salisbury's *Life of Becket*, the first of many to be published after Becket's death.<sup>971</sup>

The letters in the second collection are, to a large extent, what John O'Conner calls "'business letters' in which he pleads for assistance of men in authority, instructs and lashes out at the timid—letters, in a word, which by their very nature and urgency would not seem to lend themselves to a lofty style."<sup>972</sup> Nonetheless, they demonstrate John of Salisbury's rich mind and education. The backdrop for the letters beginning in 1164 was the clash between Becket and

---

<sup>968</sup> Luscombe, "John of Salisbury."

<sup>969</sup> Letter 325, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 742.

<sup>970</sup> Nederman writes that nothing indicates that John and Becket were in each other's company very often during the exile, "which is perhaps fortunate, since their communications were instead recorded as a body of correspondence that was eventually collected by John." Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 30.

<sup>971</sup> See chapter 8 for more on the various *vitae* of Becket.

<sup>972</sup> John Francis O'Connor, "An Annotated Translation of the Letters of John of Salisbury" (Master's Thesis, Loyola University, Chicago, 1947) 672, 16, [https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_theses/672](https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/672).

Henry at the Council of Northampton and Becket's hurried escape for fear of arrest or worse; the conflict's roots were in the dispute over the Constitutions of Clarendon. John, having preceded Becket to the continent—either to establish a route and contacts for the archbishop's flight or to save himself from further excoriation by Henry—advocated for moderation. His correspondence in the early years is justifiably noted for temperance; John sought calm and urged Becket to work toward a resolution of his struggle with Henry. John experienced his own epiphany in 1166, as he came to better understand Becket's adamant intention to secure the liberty of the Church.<sup>973</sup> The recipients of John's twenty letters dating from his arrival in France to the summer of 1166 were principally other churchman, his brother Robert, and Archbishop Becket. The letters were written from his residence at Saint-Rémi, where his close friend, Peter of Celle, was the abbot. This was John's principal base of operations, and much of his correspondence stemmed from there.<sup>974</sup>

Early on John was not sanguine about Becket's prospects of winning his case against Henry. This sentiment emerged, for example, in the missive to Henry de Beaumont, bishop-elect of Bayeux and a long-time friend. In it, John expressed his pleasure at Henry's pending episcopacy, but added, "I have sorrow for my misfortune and irreparable loss, and not mine only, but the whole of our church's loss."<sup>975</sup> In a brief letter to Milo, bishop of Thérouanne, John thanked him for his loyalty and support for Becket after his arrival in France. At the same time, John sounded slightly defeated, commenting that "faith is proved by trial."<sup>976</sup> In a series of four

---

<sup>973</sup> A detailed examination of the entire correspondence between John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket contained within *The Letters of John of Salisbury* follows this discussion of the second collection.

<sup>974</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 30.

<sup>975</sup> "Licet meo immo totius ecclesiae nostrae infortunio et irreparabili iacturae compatiar." Letter 138, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 18.

<sup>976</sup> "Temptatio fidem probat," Letter 142, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 27.

letters (numbers 145-148), John wrote to his half-brother, Robert, identifying him as “son of Egidia” who was also John’s own mother. In one, he thanked Robert for the gift of a sapphire gold ring with an inscription (*Christus uincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat*, a proclamation given at the installation of kings and emperors). In the course of these letters, John also thanked Robert, a canon at Exeter, for assisting their younger brother, Richard, in emerging from a scrape he had found himself in. Frank Barlow notes John’s assertion that Richard was fully innocent, though the specific allegations of the alleged wrongdoing were never clear.<sup>977</sup> Of the nearly two dozen letters written before 1166, three were addressed to Archbishop Becket. They are the lengthiest in the group.

Regarding his perspective following the meetings at Angers that involved Henry, Louis, and several of Becket’s clerks (including John), what precipitated John’s shift in his attitude toward Henry and hope for how own return from exile? It became abundantly clear that there was no real possibility of an accord that would allow the archbishop to return to Canterbury. Henry was unbending in his intent to restore the Ancient Customs of his grandfather, Henry I. The scales fell from John’s eyes. He witnessed no lessening of Henry’s hostility toward Becket. It was Henry’s intractability that pushed John completely into Becket’s camp.<sup>978</sup> In Nederman’s assessment, “The initial missives directed to Becket urge on him a policy of moderation and patience.”<sup>979</sup> However, John’s letters after April 1166 took a hardline position. Nederman notes that John began “promoting a program aimed at defeating the king and his supporters...by

---

<sup>977</sup> Barlow, “John of Salisbury and His Brothers,” 102.

<sup>978</sup> Hirata, “John of Salisbury and His Correspondents,” 567.

<sup>979</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 32.

adopting whatever measures are available.”<sup>980</sup> John’s view of his own, Becket’s, and the Church’s prospects quickly darkened.<sup>981</sup> His letters reflect not only despair but anger. The tenor had shifted. Notably, John wrote of his exile using the terms *exilium* and *proscriptio*, which represent two conflicting understandings of his time away from England. The first, *exilium*, has a happy and voluntary sense to it, as in Letter 136. The second period, *proscriptio*, after Christmas 1164, suggests a forced exile rather than a voluntary one—a banishment rather than personal leave-taking.<sup>982</sup> In Letter 187 to Baldwin, Archdeacon of Totnes (a market town in Devon), John leveled his fury. Writing in late 1166, he condemned Henry and his behavior in the letter: “For he says there is no need to fight for the Church’s liberty. Lying and deceitful hypocrisy!”<sup>983</sup> John spared no one, going so far as to suggest that King Henry was a tyrant whose wicked judges would do his bidding.<sup>984</sup> From mid-1166 forward, the ‘business letters’ assumed a more caustic tone toward King Henry. Any notion of a peaceful reconciliation seemed distant at that point.

In the ensuing years, until John of Salisbury’s return to England in November 1170, he was a fierce correspondent with friends and allies —soliciting support, railing against Henry (who had seized his property in 1165),<sup>985</sup> and sharing his philosophical insights regarding

---

<sup>980</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 32.

<sup>981</sup> Lynsey Robertson, “Exile in the Life and Correspondence of John of Salisbury,” in *Exile in the Middle Ages: selected proceedings from the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 8-11 July 2002*, ed. Laura Napran and Elisabeth M. C. Van Houts (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 189.

<sup>982</sup> Robertson, “Exile in the Life and Correspondence of John of Salisbury,” 186.

<sup>983</sup> “Dicit enim quia non est pro libertate ecclesiae decertandum. Sed fallax et falsa hypocrisis.” Letter 187, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 233.

<sup>984</sup> Letter 187, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 237.

<sup>985</sup> Luscombe, “John of Salisbury.”

Church liberty and justice.<sup>986</sup> John's letters are consistent with the values expressed in his earlier writings, particularly the *Policraticus*. He and Becket were aligned in this manner, as Liebeschütz defines it, "namely to fight for a just order for society."<sup>987</sup> John was no longer constrained to the neutrality with which he penned letters on behalf of Theobald. He became far more a partisan for Church liberty than when he was a member of Theobald's curia at Canterbury. Increasingly, his letters took on the tone of a philosopher passionate for a Church free of secular bonds.<sup>988</sup> John was consistent in his passion for Church liberty when he was enthroned as bishop of Chartres. He brought with him relics of the struggle, including some from Becket's murder. They were symbols of the battle that had been waged against royal attempts to limit Church liberties—and the cost that conflict had extracted.<sup>989</sup>

The far-reaching network of correspondents that John had developed during his years as secretary to Theobald formed the basis of many of his contacts. Grellard and Lachaud remind us that the connections became quite important during John's exile.<sup>990</sup> John wrote most frequently to John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers, after his major disappointment at Angers in April 1166 and the collapsed talks with Henry and Louis addressing Becket's return. It was

---

<sup>986</sup> Writing to Master Gerard Pucelle, a fellow Englishman who was a noted academic and canon law scholar, John described his love, as a philosopher, for truth and justice (however, nothing about the American Way). Letter 158, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 69. Interestingly, though, their backgrounds and careers were quite parallel—English students in Paris studying similar subjects, episcopal clerks, and finally bishops—they were never particularly close, despite John's attempts at *amicitia*. Both had their careers stalled by Becket's fight with Henry. Each ended up in exile. Hirata, "John of Salisbury, Gerard Pucelle and *Amicitia*," 154. See also Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 30.

<sup>987</sup> Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism*, 108.

<sup>988</sup> Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism*, 108.

<sup>989</sup> Not surprisingly, John's consistent call for Church liberty was evident even in the sacred relics that he collected and carried with him to Chartres, where he was installed as bishop. A prime driver in his life was his opposition to "the threats to the church and the faith posed by tyrants, both historical and contemporary." Karen Bollermann and Cary J. Nederman, "John of Salisbury's Relics of Saint Thomas Becket and Other Holy Martyrs," *Mediävistik* 26 (2013): 174.

<sup>990</sup> Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, "Introduction," 8.

also in a letter to this bishop that John first his detailed news of Becket's murder. John of Salisbury had become friends with John of Canterbury while the two of them were in the service of Archbishop Theobald. Some of the early letters were warm, expressing concern for the bishop's health (there had been rumors of his poisoning). Other missives, including Letter 212, asked for information from the bishop about a meeting of royal emissaries in February 1167 at Tours. John of Canterbury attended the gathering and John of Salisbury was eager to learn what occurred, and how he should proceed. John of Salisbury stated, "So please, my worthy lord, let me know in reply how you have progressed with the king in discussion of peace."<sup>991</sup> Later in 1167, John of Salisbury wrote to the bishop of Poitiers, sharing his fears for Becket's safety in Reims as there was a burgher rebellion underway against Henry of France, the archbishop of Reims, concerning town governance and rights. The fighting consequently disrupted communication. Added to the conflict was the arrival of two cardinals from Rome and Becket's assertion that he would not submit to any judgment they imposed upon him in an effort to end the crisis with Henry. John again pleaded for John of Canterbury's help in managing through the situation, begging for a letter "telling me how I ought to act now to preserve my conscience and reputation."<sup>992</sup> This letter again demonstrated that John of Salisbury, while supporting Becket's cause, continued to be frustrated with Becket's stubborn behavior.

---

<sup>991</sup> "Proinde placea uestrae dignationi rescribere quatenus cum domino rege processeritis in uerbo pacis." John of Canterbury had encountered the envoys at Tours during Candlemas; he also was present at Christmas court at Poitiers two months before. Letter 212, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 344-345.

<sup>992</sup> "Ego quid mihi uera ut modo agere debemus tueri mihi conscientia et fama," Letter 223, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 386-387.

Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter, was another regular recipient of John's correspondence—as a sounding board and of particular assistance to his brothers, who sometimes lived in Exeter and were employed by Bartholomew.<sup>993</sup> As with John of Canterbury, John reached out to Bartholomew for consolation and advice after the Eastertide 1166 disillusionment. Bartholomew had clerked for Theobald, and he and John developed fast friendships during their time as members of the archbishop's curia. In June of 1166, John wrote an exceptionally long letter to Bartholomew. In it he presented a full description of recent conferences at Chinon and Becket's pilgrimage to Vézelay, where the archbishop censured a number of his enemies in England, stopping just short of excommunicating Henry on word of his serious illness.<sup>994</sup> John despaired of the wickedness surrounding him, going so far as to suggest that it might not be secure to write: "It is said that snares are set everywhere so that it is not safe for good men to have speech with one another or exchange letters."<sup>995</sup> Nonetheless, John had been public about his cause favoring Church liberty, with the apparent intention to continue. Later, in February 1169, John again sent a letter to Bartholomew describing yet another failure, this time at Montmirail. Typical of his epistles to Bartholomew, the letter was considerably longer than those to other correspondents. His spirits and hopes for a resolution were uncertain as he wrote, "Fortune weighs now to one side, not to another, and so now sinks, now lifts men's

---

<sup>993</sup> See Barlow, "John of Salisbury and His Brothers," 95-109. John of Salisbury was named the treasurer of Exeter in 1173, serving there for two years until he was elected bishop of Chartres in 1176.

<sup>994</sup> At Vézelay on Whitsunday, June 12, Becket preached and celebrated mass, and then after enunciating the evils that had been heaped upon him and the Church, proceeded to issue a set of anathemas against his antagonists, condemning the Constitutions of Clarendon, and excommunicating "all the royal servants who had been involved in various measures against him." Barlow, "Thomas Becket," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>995</sup> "Nam insidiis dicuntur omnia plena esse, ut bonis inuicem colloquendi aut scribendi tutum non possit esse commercium." Letter 168, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 102-103.



state.”<sup>996</sup> Bartholomew and John of Canterbury were significant colleagues as John processed all that was happening, with fortunes rising and falling.

Others receiving more than one or two letters from John from early 1166 through 1170 included Pope Alexander III, Master Raymond, chancellor of Poitiers, William Brito, sub-prior of Christ Church Canterbury, and the monks of the Canterbury community; previously mentioned as recipients were Baldwin, archdeacon of Totnes, and Master Gerard Pucelle. John’s two letters to Alexander written during the exile were muted but still plaintive. In Letter 213 of early 1167, he hoped that exiles’ grief and pain over the debacle between Henry and Becket could be forgiven and that their prayers be heard by the pope, prayers from “exiles who are well known to be outlaws for the defence of the Church’s liberty and for sustaining the privileges of the Holy See.”<sup>997</sup> In an equally lengthy letter to Alexander in the autumn of 1167, John again referred to the bitterness the exiles were experiencing, noting that they remained outlaws for their principles.

Letter 305 is one of the most remarkable. John was again in England, at Canterbury for only two months. Becket had returned a month later than John, and he was dead—struck down in the cathedral. John’s missive to John of Canterbury, Bishop of Poitiers and former fellow clerk under Theobald, presented in great detail the events leading up to the murder and the aftermath. The letter had come to be known as *Ex insperato*, drawn from its first two words.

---

<sup>996</sup> “Alternat fortuna rerum uices mortalimque conditionem nunc deicit, nunc extollit.” Letter 288, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 636-637.

<sup>997</sup> “quorum querela patentius audienda est, quorum gentibus magis compatiendum, quorum preces benignius audiendae tuenda libertate ecclesiae, pro astruendis priuilegiis apostolicae sedis proscripti esse noscuntur.” Letter 213, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 348-349. Note the reference to the exiles as ‘*proscripti*,’ outlaws, harshening the understanding of their status in the view of Henry.

John's next words read, "Where shall I begin?"<sup>998</sup> and the sentiment foreshadowed John Donne's famous words: "Is it for public disasters or for private and intimate that I shall weep?"<sup>999</sup>

John began to construct the case for Becket's martyrdom and elevation to sainthood. The writing would form the basis of his *Vita et Passio Sancti Thome* and would "preface the definitive collection of Thomas' correspondence" that Alan of Tewkesbury later assembled.<sup>1000</sup> Alan was a monk who joined the community at Canterbury three years after Becket died.<sup>1001</sup> He undertook the project of amassing Becket's letters after John was elected bishop of Chartres in 1176 and proceeded to sort and edit Becket's correspondence.<sup>1002</sup> In *Ex insperato*, John proclaimed, "If the case makes the martyr, no wise man could doubt this. What could be juster or more holy than his?"<sup>1003</sup> To support the claims of Becket's martyrdom and holiness there were inklings of the miracles for which Becket would soon be well-known, helping to secure his canonization. John reported to the Bishop of Poitiers that, even before Becket was buried, "the palsied are cured, the blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, the lame walk," among the many healings.<sup>1004</sup> John's letter to John of Canterbury was circulated rapidly and widely.<sup>1005</sup>

---

<sup>998</sup> "Sed unde sumetur eoidium?" Letter 305, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 724-725.

<sup>999</sup> John Donne, a seventeenth century English cleric, is best known for his poem, "For Whom the Bell Tolls." Donne wrote, "Therefore, send not to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee." John Donne, All Poetry, accessed July 15, 2020, <https://allpoetry.com/For-whom-the-Bell-Tolls>.

<sup>1000</sup> Michael Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers*, 27.

<sup>1001</sup> Margaret Harris, "Alan of Tewkesbury and St. Thomas of Canterbury," *Reading Medieval Studies* 16 (1990): 39-53.

<sup>1002</sup> Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers*, 44.

<sup>1003</sup> "Et si causa martirem facit, quod nulli rectum sapienti uenit in dubium, quid iustius, quid sanctius causa eius?" Letter 305, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 726-727.

<sup>1004</sup> "Paralitci curantur, caeci uident, surdi audiunt, loquuntur muti, claudi ambulant." Letter 305, 736-737.

<sup>1005</sup> According to Frank Barlow, most other biographers were aware of John of Salisbury's letter to John of Canterbury. Further, among the biographers who were present that night were Edward Grim (who stayed with

Anne Duggan suggests that the letter went to others in addition to John of Canterbury (though he was the sole addressee) and that it offered the “first circumstantial account of the murder in the cathedral.”<sup>1006</sup> Irrespective of the initial recipient(s), Duggan allows that the letter was quickly spread throughout continental Europe and created an enduring image of the martyr *pro defensione libertatus ecclesiae*.<sup>1007</sup>

John quoted Becket directly in the letter to John of Canterbury, the bishop of Poitiers; however, John was not on scene when the assassins drew their swords. He and several others fled, perhaps hiding behind a nearby altar. If so, they might have heard Becket’s last words. John did not reveal where he was when the blows struck, but Nederman believes that John and most of the handful of monks and clerks, including William of Canterbury, took cover elsewhere in the cathedral, which was a massive building.<sup>1008</sup> What is missing from the letter to John of Canterbury is John of Salisbury’s final comment to Becket: “You are doing what you always do. You act and think just as you think best, without asking anyone’s advice.”<sup>1009</sup>

### *What John’s Letters Tell Us*

For the purpose of this inquiry, John’s letters present evidence of his relations with Thomas Becket, chancellor, and later archbishop. The letters are yet another instrument to

---

Becket and received a sword cut that nearly sliced off his arm), William of Canterbury, William FitzStephen, and Benedict of Peterborough. Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), 2.

<sup>1006</sup> Duggan, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 427.

<sup>1007</sup> Duggan, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 427.

<sup>1008</sup> Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, 35. Elsewhere, David Knowles suggests that John of Salisbury and other clerks “left [Becket] and took refuge in dark corners or under altars.” David Knowles, *Thomas Becket* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971), 147. Frank Barlow includes William of Canterbury among those who sheltered to avoid the killing. Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 2.

<sup>1009</sup> Anonymous I in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. J.C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard (London: Longman & Co. 1875-1885), iv, 74, cited in Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 143.

measure the impact of John's advice, counsel, and criticism regarding Becket.<sup>1010</sup> The letters, while also part of John's impressive portfolio, differ from his other writings for and dedicated to Becket in this foremost aspect: they are part of a communication that most clearly demonstrates the opportunity for impact on Becket's own words and actions. Hans Liebeschütz holds that "John's letters form an essential part of the corpus of the Becket correspondence. We are therefore able to compare his political theory and his political practice."<sup>1011</sup> Becket paid attention to what John wrote to him in correspondence as will be demonstrated in Chapter 11.

The correspondence in the two collections of John of Salisbury's letters—the first when he was in Theobald's Canterbury household and the second during exile in France—contains fifteen letters written by John to Becket. The first set, composed when John was secretary to Archbishop Theobald, comprises four letters. Two were written to Thomas Becket, chancellor and archdeacon of Canterbury on behalf of Theobald and two were sent from John himself. The second collection, beginning with John's exile in France in late 1163 or early 1164, includes eleven letters from John to Becket. In addition, they co-authored a letter. The editors of Volume II note that, but for John's extensive correspondence generally and with Becket in particular, significant details about their mutual exile would not be known.<sup>1012</sup> Even though the letters addressed to Becket form less than seven percent of the second collection, most other

---

<sup>1010</sup> In Letter 144 dated January 1165, John advised Becket not to be so hasty in seeking a legal remedy for his grievances against Henry. John acknowledged that canon and civil law had their place in the dispute but that "the time is not ripe for such displays" (Nunc hoc ista sibi tempus spectacula poscuit). It is better, John suggested, to turn to the Lord and to pray. Letter 144, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 33.

<sup>1011</sup> Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism*, 95.

<sup>1012</sup> "Introduction," John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, xx. Liebeschütz is somewhat less complementary of John's role, suggesting that "his correspondence is mostly concerned with reports and reflections directed to friends and partisans; their form and contents are often determined by the endeavor to help those to whom they are addressed to choose the right path." Liebeschütz, *Mediaeval Humanism*, 95.

letters in this volume concern Becket's exile and dedication to Church liberty,<sup>1013</sup> a value John shared, though he was at odds with Becket's tactics at times. Once the disappointment of Angers pierced John, close to Easter 1166, he assumed a greater role in Becket's battle, frequently using his considerable array of contacts to manage what was effectively a public relations campaign.

The first letter of record from John of Salisbury to Thomas Becket was on behalf of Archbishop Theobald. Letter 22, written in late 1156 to Becket as "royal chancellor and archdeacon of Canterbury," asked for tax relief from the custom of 'second aids'<sup>1014</sup> that Becket was imposing on churches in his official capacity. Theobald, in the letter crafted by John, was pointed in his comment that the tax was "imposed upon the churches by our brother an archdeacon,"<sup>1015</sup> a reference to the fact that Becket had not renounced his clerical role and consequently was profiting from multiple benefices. Theobald issued a reproach and ordered Becket to begin "releasing and liberating the churches" from this levy or run the risk of an anathema. The threat was rather vicious—hanging over the chancellor's head was "the cost of sin and damnation."<sup>1016</sup> It is not clear if the 'second aids' tax was lifted. It is certain, though, that Becket did not abjure his position as archdeacon, and equally apparent was that John of

---

<sup>1013</sup> Hirata, "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents," 552.

<sup>1014</sup> Originating in the Anjou, and brought to England later with the Normans, the 'second aid' allowed for an additional collection of taxes. The kings tended to manipulate the system in order to extract as much revenues as possible. Forfeiture, escheats, and the occasion of marriage were fertile grounds for a second tax. Bryce Dale Lyon, *A Constitutional and Legal History of Medieval England* (Second ed.) (New York: Norton, 1980), 161.

<sup>1015</sup> Letter 22, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 35.

<sup>1016</sup> Letter 22, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 35-36. The Angevins were masters at taxation; through efficiency and innovation they added to the treasury in substantial ways. Becket had background and experience as a young man working for Osbert Huitdeniers, his relative and a London moneylender. See Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket*, 45, fn. 12. See also Lyon, *A Constitutional and Legal History of Medieval England*, 267; Karen Bollermann and Cary J. Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, 69.

Salisbury was willing to author criticisms of the chancellor, even if at the direction of the archbishop.

The next letter, Number 28, written in December 1156 or January 1157 from John of Salisbury to Chancellor Becket, was a more personal one; John sought help from his former Canterbury colleague. For reasons about which he claimed ignorance, John was ostracized and subsequently banished by Henry from the royal court.<sup>1017</sup> John lamented, “I find no partner in my sorrows or sharer of my thoughts.”<sup>1018</sup> He continued by drawing upon their friendship to ask Becket to do what he could “to assuage the indignation which our most serene lord the king has conceived against me without cause,”<sup>1019</sup> either to assert John’s innocence or to regain Henry’s favor. John even offered up a (sole) copy of a letter from Pope Adrian in support of his innocence of wrongdoing: “Relying on your love, I send a letter from the Pope on my behalf.”<sup>1020</sup> Perhaps, to sweeten the request, John added that he had been at work to represent Becket’s interests respecting the chancellor-archdeacon’s benefices legitimately owed to Becket, though he had not had much luck. At the same time, the aid erroneously paid to Becket from the Archbishop Theobald’s churches (or possibly those belonging to Nigel, the Bishop of Ely) was to be returned.<sup>1021</sup> In a letter written to Master Ernulf, a former clerk at

---

<sup>1017</sup> As discussed *supra*, Henry apparently was angered about John’s role in securing permission to invade Ireland and eliminate alleged apostacy there. See Constable, “The Alleged Disgrace of John of Salisbury in 1159,” 67-76.

<sup>1018</sup> “In quo calculo sors mea uersetur, citra meae conquestionis indicium.” Letter 28, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 45.

<sup>1019</sup> “Indignatione plaga magna, et usque ad serenissimum dominum nostrum regem quod conceperit, impugnabant me gratis,” Letter 28, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 46.

<sup>1020</sup> “Litteras domini papae pro me facientes dilectioni uestrae transmittito.” Letter 28, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 46.

<sup>1021</sup> Letter 28, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 45-46. There appears to be an interesting irony here. In Letter 22, ghosted by John for Theobald, there was a hard line against Becket for his role in the ‘second aid’; yet John seemed to be allying himself with Becket’s cause promoting the tax—or perhaps alienation of property. John was the supplicant when asking for Becket’s help in restoring him to Henry’s good graces.

Canterbury who was now Chancellor Becket's clerk, prior to John's letter to Becket, John entreated Ernulf to watch for letters he has sent Becket, aimed at encouraging the chancellor to "recover the king's favour toward me."<sup>1022</sup> It is possible that Becket intervened on his behalf; sometime during the first week of April 1157, John wrote his closest friend, Peter of Celle, that he had received some advice from "the king's friends" about how to deal with Henry so that he might "be restored to favour."<sup>1023</sup> Yoko Hirata contends that Becket asserted influence in returning John to Henry's favor.<sup>1024</sup> By 1157, the royal pall had lifted from John.

The final two letters to Becket in the first collection probably were written in September 1160. Both were addressed to Becket in his role as chancellor; one, Letter 128, bore John's signature while Letter 129 was penned on behalf of Archbishop Theobald. Becket remained in France following the campaign in southern France and the siege of Toulouse. In the first letter, John acknowledged Becket's importance to Henry as chancellor and counselor: "the king and all his court are so dependent on your counsel that there is not a hope of peace in the near future, unless your wisdom pave the way for it."<sup>1025</sup> John further urged action on a promotion for his good friend, Master Bartholomew, the archdeacon at Exeter, who was subsequently elected and consecrated bishop of Exeter in April 1161. Bartholomew had served at Canterbury at the same time as Becket. John was advancing Bartholomew's cause above that of Robert fitzHarding, a favorite of a prominent Gloucestershire family with connections to the royal

---

<sup>1022</sup> "Ipsum ad refoandam michi domini regis gratiam animetis." Letter 27, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 44.

<sup>1023</sup> "Mediante michi posse gratiam reformari." Letter 31, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 50.

<sup>1024</sup> Hirata, "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents," 555. In Hirata's view, only Letter 28 and Letter 128 demonstrate a friendship between John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket (p. 558).

<sup>1025</sup> "Rex et tota curia adeo pendent de consilio uestro ut nec spes pacis immineat, nisi eam uestra prudentia praefiguret." Letter 128, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 221.

court. John was worried that Henry had already made his decision in favor of fitzHarding, whom John called “an illiterate and worthless man.”<sup>1026</sup> The letter suggests that the canons of Exeter and “other God-fearing men” had weighed in against fitzHarding. John was aware of Becket’s increasing portfolio that, in his understanding, now included the revenues from the vacant bishoprics of Exeter, Worcester, and Chester-Coventry; John did not favor Becket’s acquisitions of the revenues. The core entreaty of the letter, however, was that Becket return as speedily to Canterbury as possible “even if you have to cross the sea at once,” as Theobald was on his death-bed and wanted to see his former clerk once again.<sup>1027</sup>

The final letter in the quartet written by John to Becket in this collection came at the direction of Theobald. Becket was chastised for not returning to England and Canterbury. The archbishop upbraided Becket, saying, “You ought to have returned in answer to a single summons of your father, now old and ill.”<sup>1028</sup> Theobald added that God may punish Becket for ignoring multiple summonses.<sup>1029</sup> The business of Exeter, incidentally, was still not complete—the bishopric was vacant and Theobald pressed Becket to intercede in order to draw Henry’s attention to the matter.<sup>1030</sup> Becket may have brought the matter to Henry’s attention, and Bartholomew was subsequently elected. Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, died in his palace on April 18, 1161, not having seen Becket, who would become his successor.<sup>1031</sup>

---

<sup>1026</sup> “Quod sine litteris, et iniquus de uiris, ” Letter 128, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 222.

<sup>1027</sup> “Si statim ad mare,” Letter 128, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 223.

<sup>1028</sup> “Saepe iam reuocatus es qui ad unam patris senis et languentis uocationem rediisse deburas.” Letter 129, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 224.

<sup>1029</sup> Apparently, there were other epistles calling for Becket to return, though there are only two documented in this collection. Letter 129, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 224.

<sup>1030</sup> Letter 129, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 225.

<sup>1031</sup> Frank Barlow, “Theobald,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed July 20, 2020, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-27168?rskey=Y8uj0L&result=1>.



More than three years passed before the next letter from John of Salisbury to Becket appeared. It was early 1164 and Becket had left Henry's court and the position of chancellor. Becket was now the archbishop of Canterbury and embroiled in a dispute with King Henry concerning the rights and entitlements of the Church. John had departed from England under circumstances that are not certain—either to reconnoiter continental options for Becket's departure and exile or to avoid another "disgrace" at the hands of Henry who did not want John giving Becket guidance and support. As with a number of John-to-Becket epistles in this collection, this letter, Number 136, is longer than average letters.

There is substantial ambiguity in this first letter from France to the embattled archbishop. On one side of the ledger, John reported that he had met with Count Philip of Amiens, following Becket's request, and that the count, upon learning of Becket's troubles, had offered a promise of help. John stated, "He will provide ships if you are forced to leave the country; be sure he has due warning of the event."<sup>1032</sup> John then proceeded to arrange a meeting with Louis VII in nearby Laon on his own accord. The French king likely welcomed John as a guest with news of Henry's difficulties. After all, John wrote, "The French fear our King, and hate him."<sup>1033</sup> There is a further hint that he was preparing a way for Becket: "So when I had left you, I had instructions to fix my abode in Paris."<sup>1034</sup> John, as he often did, complained of penury—when he departed he had not even twelve pence in the whole world. As a bit of a prompt for Becket to send money, John suggested that he would "fulfil your commands as far

---

<sup>1032</sup> "Si hoc necessitas uestra exegerit, et ipse ante, ut oportet, praemuniatur." Letter 136, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 4-5.

<sup>1033</sup> "Regem nostrum Franci timent et oderunt." Letter 136, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 8-9.

<sup>1034</sup> "Sic ergo discessi instructus a uobis ut Parisius sedem figerem." Letter 136, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 12-13.

as funds permit.”<sup>1035</sup> At the same time, by way of explaining his voyage to France, John lamented that, once again, he was suffering the king’s disfavor through no fault of his own.<sup>1036</sup> The letter ends with yet another plea for funds, this time for Becket’s nephew, the son of one of Becket’s sisters, a student residing with John in Paris.<sup>1037</sup>

In Letter 144, presumed to be from January 1165, less than three months after Becket’s arrival, John opened with his desire for reconciliation and his role as peacemaker, first between Becket and the Alexander III, then between Becket and Henry. John reported that King Louis was somewhat sympathetic to Becket’s claims of abuse, yet Louis feared that pressing Becket’s cause too eagerly would push Henry into the camp of Frederick Barbarossa.<sup>1038</sup> John continued with mild criticism of Becket, signaling that the recalcitrant archbishop could do more to bring about compromise with Henry; his time would better be spent on his knees than on his bottom, building legal arguments: “Whoever rises contrite from the study of civil or even canon law?”<sup>1039</sup> In spite of this criticism, the general tone of the letter is moderate. However, John described the support for Becket’s cause as not being widespread. In Letter Number 152, perhaps six months later, John focused on details of the current events involving Frederick

---

<sup>1035</sup> “Et tamen quantum expensae permiserint,” Letter 136, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 13.

<sup>1036</sup> Letter 136, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 12-13. Anne Duggan proposes that John was forced to leave England and was not volitionally in exile. His views on clerical immunity and Church liberties were abundantly apparent in the *Policraticus*, published only four years before, no doubt putting him in royal disfavor. Duggan, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 430.

<sup>1037</sup> Letter 136, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 15. John’s first three letters to Becket were written from Paris.

<sup>1038</sup> “Si ipso suadente aliquid faceret dominus papa unde regem Anglorum amitteret, ei de cetero imputaret ecclesia Romana, quod propter eum tantum amicum amisisset.” Letter 144, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 31-32.

<sup>1039</sup> “Quis a lectione legum aut etiam canonum compunctus surgit?” Letter 144, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 32.

Barbarossa and his campaign into Tuscany and Campagna, vilifying the emperor and the archbishop of Mainz, Conrad, labelling him “not Christian but Anti-Christ.”<sup>1040</sup>

Letter 157 in the second collection is a collaboration between Becket and John of Salisbury addressed to Nicholas of Mont-Saint Jacques, Rouen. Nicholas was an Augustinian monk affiliated with a priory and leper hospital in Rouen. Becket reached out to Nicholas to be a mediator with Empress Matilda in Normandy in the hope that she might be able to influence her son Henry II; evidently, the empress held Nicholas in high esteem. In the letter, the co-authors noted that their “patience is perilous for the Church of God.”<sup>1041</sup> They were hoping that Henry’s mother’s voice would help her son exercise more favorable judgment toward them. The wording of the letter presents a threat of anathema should Henry continue pressing his claims against the Church.<sup>1042</sup> While the letter did not bring about the desired result of successful intercessions by Matilda, it is noteworthy in one aspect—the letter is the sole one in John’s collection reflecting a collaboration between him and Becket, despite living in different locations. It further suggests that they were of one accord and, though living in separate locations, were occasionally meeting to propound their mutual desire for Church liberty.<sup>1043</sup>

John of Salisbury’s perspective changed as the years of expatriation dragged on. The letters he wrote early in his exile were critical of Becket and expressed concern and reservations about his temperament. He knew Becket well and understood, frustratingly so,

---

<sup>1040</sup> “Non autem Christianis Antichristi.” In the dispute over the papacy, the former Archbishop of Mainz, Conrad of Wittelsbach, had been deposed by the emperor, and he left to join the curia of Alexander III. The depth of information John offered in this letter demonstrates his extensive information and intelligence network, this while at Saint-Rémi. Letter 152, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 54-55.

<sup>1041</sup> “Quia ergo haec patientia nostra ecclesiae Dei perniciosa est.” Letter 157, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 66-67.

<sup>1042</sup> Letter 157, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 65-67.

<sup>1043</sup> Hirata, “John of Salisbury and His Correspondents,” 566.mi

Becket's excesses.<sup>1044</sup> It was during the month of July 1166, two months after the Eastertide debacle at Angers, that John was began to understand that Henry would not compromise on Church liberties. John presented a different tone in Letter 173 to Becket; this was one of four letters he wrote to Becket in rapid succession that summer. John was obviously agitated by the revelation of Henry's obduracy and was, therefore, inspired to advance the case *against* Henry and *for* the Church. These letters were replete with advice and opinion. The chief notion was to bring the bishops together for a meeting, and to seek Empress Matilda's assistance in brokering a deal between Becket and her son Henry.<sup>1045</sup> John had come fully to support Becket's crusade, if not his approach. John was in full public-relations mode at this point and impressed on Becket that he must continue to assert his authority as archbishop of Canterbury, even in exile. One approach would be to reestablish control. John likened the wayward bishops to shepherds taking care of themselves alone—not wanting to lose the pleasures of temporal life."<sup>1046</sup> John continued excoriating the English clergy for their support of Henry and for not holding a mirror up to his face to expose his wicked treatment of the Church.<sup>1047</sup> John's advice, that Becket apparently had sought, was accepted. In the lengthy Letter 174 to Bartholomew, who had been the bishop of Exeter for five years now, John responded to news that the bishops were to gather at St. Paul's in London and receive Becket's letter responding to their appeals. The bishops were guided by Bishop Gilbert Foliot, *de facto* leader of the Church in England during Becket's exile. Gilbert, formerly bishop of Hereford and now bishop of London, was a fierce critic

---

<sup>1044</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 76.

<sup>1045</sup> Hirata, "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents," 570.

<sup>1046</sup> Letter 173, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 135.

<sup>1047</sup> Letter 173, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 135. In counseling Becket to summon his suffragans (bishops), John was pushing Becket to have a "come to Jesus" meeting of the bishops with witnesses there, to cease their appeals of his actions to the pope.

of Becket and had unrequited designs on the Canterbury archiepiscopacy for himself. It is logical that the legation would have met at St. Paul's, his diocesan seat.<sup>1048</sup>

Despite his passion and, as Pepin describes, "his forthright candor and courage in the defense of cherished principles, such as loyalty to the pope, the primacy of Canterbury [above York] and Church liberty,"<sup>1049</sup> John advocated a posture of moderation for Becket. Quoting Paul's letter to the Philippians, he appealed to Becket: "Let your moderation, as is particularly expedient, be known to all."<sup>1050</sup> John's letter to Becket was in response to one he had received from the archbishop in which John's views were sought. John wrote, "I lately had a letter from you, father, in which you commanded me to write back my views."<sup>1051</sup> Becket had inquired regarding John's opinions about letters from several dissident bishops in England. Though they were not residing in the same location and met only occasionally, Becket actively solicited John's thoughts and ideas and did act on some of John's advice. As a demonstration, the call for bishops to gather to hear Becket's letter is an example of Becket's intentional outreach to John for counsel and his willingness to accept it. In Letter 175, presumably written in mid-July 1166, John amplified his criticism of the errant bishops in England, especially Gilbert Foliot. He was echoing Becket's anger and distaste for Gilbert, likening him to Doag the Edomite, in 1 Samuel

---

<sup>1048</sup> It is logical that the legation would have met at St. Paul's, the bishop's seat in the diocese of London. "Introduction," John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, xxx. In John's letter to Bartholomew, he wrote, "Et credo quod Londoniensis et uobis omnibus ostendendas." Letter 174, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 148. For more on Becket's attitude toward Foliot at this moment, see Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 153-154.

<sup>1049</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 172.

<sup>1050</sup> Philippians 4:5. "Et modestia uestra, quod plurimum expedit, omnibus innotescat." Letter 176, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 168-169.

<sup>1051</sup> "Recepi nuper litteras paternitatis uestrae quibus praecipitis ut uobis rescribam quod michi uisum fecerit." Letter 176, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 164-165.

22, a traitor akin to Judas, “still thirsting for the blood of priests, and insatiably searching out and persecuting the spirit of Christ.”<sup>1052</sup>

Letter 179, the last of four from John to Becket in the summer of 1166, reveals the ongoing communication and the heightened level of activity that had occurred since the disappointment at Angers and Becket’s flurry of sentences handed down at Vézelay. John acknowledged a letter he had received from Becket on the state of affairs in English churches, fearing a crisis in the English kingdom. His counsel was for temperance and for Becket to “enter into discussion with the persecutors.”<sup>1053</sup> Indeed, John suggested that some of the persecutors might be falling out of Henry’s good graces, adding that, if Empress Matilda invited Becket to Rouen, he should go there. That city’s archbishop would give him a safe conduct, John suggested. If there is a meeting, take only a handful of clerks, John advised. John was willing to do the work of taking part in the gathering but certainly desired that it be productive.<sup>1054</sup> There is no indication, though, that the meeting took place.

More than a year passed before the next letter from John to Becket was recorded. The epistle is dated September or October 1167. Becket had shared with John—inviting his advice—a letter he had drafted for Cardinal William of Pavia, a papal legate sent along with Cardinal Otto of Brescia to spur negotiations between Henry and Becket. Consistent with his willingness to comment critically, John wrote, “I would not presume to judge the author’s [Becket’s] mind;

---

<sup>1052</sup> “Sitientis adhuc sanguinem sacerdotium et quaerentis et insatiabiliter persequentis animam Christi.” Letter 175, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 153-153.

<sup>1053</sup> “Intrare in disputationem cum ardentibus effecit,” Letter 179, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 191.

<sup>1054</sup> “Ego autem me ad hoc opus non ingero, sed nec refugio quidem se me decreueritis.” Letter 179, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 190-191.

but I cannot approve the manner and style.”<sup>1055</sup> John continued, stating that the letter lacked the humility of one who has been reminded of the direction Paul gave to the Philippians on moderation. He further reproached Becket, questioning whether a letter to a papal emissary should begin with a confrontation and disparaging insults.<sup>1056</sup> In the draft letter, Becket had threatened also to excommunicate his nemesis, Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London. John withheld the draft of the letter imposing the excommunication that Becket shared with him in addition to a second letter on the subject that Becket proposed. John subsequently wrote to Becket that he would draw up a letter to send to William of Pavia. William and his companion, Cardinal Otto, were still in Aquitaine, making their way north for a meeting with Becket in November.<sup>1057</sup>

John did draft a letter to William of Pavia and send it in October 1167.<sup>1058</sup> Becket also sent a letter to William, presumptively in the same month. While Becket did not wait for John to send the first epistle to William, his letter was more moderate in language than what John first read. Becket wrote that, in the past, “we have striven to obtain your kind favour, we now certainly implore it.”<sup>1059</sup> He continued by urging mutual devotion with better hopes for peace

---

<sup>1055</sup> “Ego judico non sum dignum arbitratus ut auctor est mentis; modo probare sed non turpis,”

Letter 227, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 397.

<sup>1056</sup> “Etsi mentem scribentis iudicare non audeam, stili tamen formam probare non possum.” Letter 227, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 396-397. In Letter 223 to John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers, John of Salisbury wrote that Becket had already written to the “cardinal of St. Peter ad Vincula,” that is William of Pavia, declaring that he would neither accept any decision from William nor allow any restraints William might try to impose. Letter 223, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 387. The presumed date of the letter is October 1167.

<sup>1057</sup> In Letter 228, quite on the heels of Letter 227, John proposed that he draft a letter to William of Pavia, and that Becket and a third party, the Bishop of Poitiers, approve it. The letter to William of Pavia would then go out over John’s signature, bearing a much more respectful tone. Letter 228, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 401. John wisely militated for a more deferential approach. See also Clement C. J. Webb, *John of Salisbury* (London: Methuen & Co., 1932), 143. As noted in Letter 223, from John to the bishop of Poitiers, Becket has rejected John’s advice and written directly to William of Pavia.

<sup>1058</sup> Letter 229, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 403-407.

<sup>1059</sup> “Adipisci fauorem nos studuisse jam profecto implorent,” Letter 142, Thomas Becket and Anne Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162-1170* Vol. 1 (New York: Clarendon Press, 2000), 655.

“as long as it is to the Church’s advantage and to ours.”<sup>1060</sup> Becket did not back down from his well-honed call for Church protection, but, following John’s counsel, the “manner and style” were not harsh or polemical.<sup>1061</sup> Also in October 1167, Becket penned a letter to Cardinal Otto, leading up to the November 18 meeting scheduled between Becket and Henry. Becket was less gentle in his comments, suggesting that Otto ought not to be surprised that attaining peace had taken this long. Becket stated that the cardinals had given him no new information or even a rationale for their presence.<sup>1062</sup> While a series of sidebar meetings with the cardinals took place, as well as one between Becket and Louis VII, there was no accord.<sup>1063</sup> The cardinals delivered news of the unsuccessful meetings with Becket and his delegation to Henry on November 27 at Argentan in central Normandy. Henry angrily dismissed the papal legates, saying he never wanted to see a cardinal again.<sup>1064</sup>

The collapse of peace conversations near Gisors coupled with dimmed prospects for an immediate reconciliation conspired to put distance between Becket and John. There remained

---

<sup>1060</sup> “Quia quamdiu est in Ecclesia et commodum nostrum,” Letter 142, Thomas Becket and Anne Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162-1170* Vol. 1, 657.

<sup>1061</sup> Letter 142, Thomas Becket and Anne Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162-1170* Vol. 1, 655-656.

<sup>1062</sup> Letter 143 a/b, Thomas, and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 661. William of Pavia and Otto were selected by Alexander III because they favored Henry; but, as Miss Smalley writes, “he expected them to keep up an appearance of impartiality.” Beryl Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973), 149. As there were preconditions for the meeting at the hamlet of Planches, between Gisors and Trie, Henry would quietly implement the Ancient Customs and Becket would look the other way; the archbishop was understandably suspicious. John Guy, *Thomas Becket* (New York: Random House, 2012), 248.

<sup>1063</sup> Anne Duggan, *Thomas Becket* (London: Arnold, 2004), 135-137. Also in attendance were Becket’s clerks: Herbert of Bosham; Alexander Llewelyn; Lombardus of Piacenza; Geoffrey; Prior of Pentney; Warin, the canon; Robert and Gilbert [both] canons; chaplains of the archbishop of Canterbury; John the precentor; Alan; Richard; Henry; John of Salisbury; and many others. Richard is presumably Richard Peccator, John’s half-brother. These were all men in exile along with Becket. Letter 144, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 665. See also: Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 248.

<sup>1064</sup> Gilbert Foliot and several other bishops were in attendance at Argentan and reviewed all of their grievances concerning Becket with Henry, no doubt stimulating the king’s famous temper. Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, 119.



only two letters of record by John to Becket, one written sometime in the spring or summer of 1168, the other a full year later, in June or July of 1170, the year that Becket returned to Canterbury. From 1168 through 1170, Becket turned less frequently to John for advice.<sup>1065</sup>

Becket, instead, focused on his negotiations with Alexander, who waffled at times, not wanting to lose the support of Henry II or Louis VII. During the next eighteen months, there were four meetings between Becket and both kings.<sup>1066</sup> For his part, John returned to Saint-Rémi, where he concentrated on writing the *Historia Pontificalis*, with an intervening pilgrimage to Vézelay.

<sup>1067</sup> Arriving at Reims, he was once again with his closest friend, Peter of Celle.

Though John effectively had been replaced by Herbert of Bosham as Becket's chief advisor, John nonetheless continued his active correspondence for the cause he supported and shared with the archbishop: the Church's liberty. From the failed negotiations at Gisors and Trie in November 1167 until Becket's murder in December 1170, John wrote seventy-four letters; only two were directed to Becket. The bulk of the letters were written to garner support for Becket's cause. John continued writing to correspondents in his network, gathering information "from Germany and Italy as well as from France and England, about the machinations of the English crown and its allies," including—at that juncture—Frederick Barbarossa.<sup>1068</sup> News and intelligence John gathered from his extensive set of correspondents allowed him to operate a

---

<sup>1065</sup> Hirata, "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents," 589.

<sup>1066</sup> The meetings were referenced in John's epistles: Letter 279 to Master Lombardus, who attended the aborted conference at Gisors and Trie (meeting at La Ferté-Bernard, July 1 & 2, 1168); Letters 285-287 to John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers (meeting at Montmirail, January 6, 1169); Letter 288 to Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter (meeting at Montmirail, January 6, 1169); and Letter 303 to William Brito, sub-prior, Robert, sacrist, and the obedientiaries of Christ Church, Canterbury (meeting at Fréteval, July 22, 1170). Barlow also writes about a meeting at Montmartre, in Paris, on November 18. Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 193-194. See also Hirata, "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents," 582, including fn. 110.

<sup>1067</sup> Luscombe, "John of Salisbury."

<sup>1068</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 79.

“clearinghouse’ for propaganda favoring Becket” in addition to tracking propaganda from both sides of the dispute.<sup>1069</sup> One of John’s frequent correspondents was John of Canterbury, the good friend to whom John wrote at least nine times after the failed negotiations at Gisors and Trie. At one point, however, John chastened his friend for a meeting that the bishop *sua sponte* had tried to establish between Henry and Becket, without Becket’s approval, in late 1168. John, in Letter 285, explained to John of Canterbury that too often Becket had arrived at a scheduled conference, only to be exposed to scorn and shame, and that he was unwilling to be wantonly drawn into another such session. John was further critical, writing that, once more “a trick was being played on you and him.”<sup>1070</sup> It appears that John of Canterbury had oversold the meeting—perhaps believing that Henry was softening his stance regarding the Ancient Customs. The bishop’s action drew the mutual rebuke of Becket and John of Salisbury.<sup>1071</sup>

In his penultimate letter of record to Becket, John of Salisbury addressed no grand principles—essentially, he shared thoughts about a request from Rome that Becket retract the sentence imposed on Jocelin, bishop of Salisbury. It is clear that John had no love for the bishop

---

<sup>1069</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, “John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket,” 79.

<sup>1070</sup> “Praesertim sum patenter agnosceret quod uobiscum et cum ipso prorsus agebatur in dolo.” Letter 285, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 626-627.

<sup>1071</sup> “Introduction,” John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, xli; Jean Dunbabin, “Canterbury, John of [John Bellesmains],” accessed July 24, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2062>. There seems to be some confusion among scholars regarding Archbishop Becket’s letter rebuking John of Canterbury. The editors of John of Salisbury’s letters identify the recipient of John’s letter criticizing the attempt to secure a meeting as John of Canterbury, the bishop of Poitiers. The compiler of Becket’s letters, Anne Duggan, indicates the letter from Becket was directed to “his Clerks Alexander and John.” Letter 244, Thomas Becket and Anne Duggan, *The Correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162-1170* Vol. 2, 1055. Alexander Llewelyn was indeed one of Becket’s clerks and in exile with the archbishop. However, addressee ‘John’ in Becket’s letter is identified as John Planeta, a lesser member of Becket’s curia, who was with him at the Council of Northampton in 1164. John Morris, *The Life and Martyrdom of Saint Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: Burns and Oates, 1885), 170. Though John of Canterbury was a consistent supporter of Becket and his cause, he was not a clerk of Becket. John of Canterbury was consecrated Bishop of Poitiers by Alexander III in September 1162 at Déols. Becket was consecrated archbishop in June 1162.

of his native town, and Jocelin had long been a thorn in Becket's side along with Gilbert Foliot and others. Despite his personal feelings, John urged, once more, moderation in Becket's dealings with Jocelin: "have mercy on him, so far as you can saving your own and your church's honour."<sup>1072</sup> As if knowingly closing a chapter, or perhaps the whole book, John presciently added, "Nor will you ever hear any other counsel from me."<sup>1073</sup> John's statement about never again offering counsel was not totally correct. In his final letter in June or July 1170, and again in person on the afternoon of Becket's murder, John could not resist offering advice.

The subsequent letter, John's final one to Becket, actually began with advice. John was not direct in his criticism though, declaring that he concurred with the advice given by the bishop of Sens regarding the speedy transmission of a letter to the archbishops of Rouen and Tours. The proposed letter to the archbishops, designed so that "the sojourner may hear and be terrified," would announce Becket's intention to place England under interdict.<sup>1074</sup> The 'sojourner' was Henry, in Normandy. The letter also chastised Becket for turning to false omens and prophecies that were not of true spiritual nature for they had "deceived your wits."<sup>1075</sup> John persisted in his reproach, warning Becket that such action was surely offensive to God.<sup>1076</sup> The editors of John's second volume of letters proclaim in a footnote regarding the auguries, "This is a remarkable indication of how Becket's mind worked in a crisis, [resorting to oracles]

---

<sup>1072</sup> "Quantum salua honestate ecclesiae et uestra poteritis." "Nec a me unquam aliud consilium audietis." Letter 278, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 601.

<sup>1073</sup> "Nec alia ulla umquam audierit a me consilium." Letter 278, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 600-601.

<sup>1074</sup> "Saltem ut audiat hospes et terreatur." Letter 301, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 708-711. See fn. 2.

<sup>1075</sup> "Decepti tua infatuatus." Letter 301, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 709.

<sup>1076</sup> Letter 301, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 709.

and of the firm nature of John's counsel in 1169-70."<sup>1077</sup> John's counsel apparently was received and understood by Becket—there is no indication that he continued studying auguries between the letter's dating and his assassination six months later. John closed his letter urging an end to conjecture and vain fantasies: "From now on let us renounce prophecies since on this account misfortunates have fallen on us more heavily."<sup>1078</sup> John then drew upon Psalm 32 (33):15: "Let He who made men's hearts search them out; let *us* investigate what lies within our own threshold."<sup>1079</sup>

Though he was not Becket's intimate, John of Salisbury was again given an important role, this time preparing for Becket's crossing and return to England. Anticipating the return to the archiepiscopal seat, John wrote to the monks at Canterbury in the middle of 1170. Among other things, he criticized the community for lack of generosity toward those who had spent the past six years in exile: "Where has your charity been, I ask you?"<sup>1080</sup> Then, closer to his return to England from France, in mid-October, John wrote to William Brito, sub-prior, Robert sacrist, and the obedientiaries of Christ Church, Canterbury, alerting them to prepare for Becket's arrival and directing them to "prepare to meet your father," Archbishop Becket.<sup>1081</sup> John was giving the community at Canterbury fair warning that it was time to get all in order, but the scene on his arrival provided a different perspective. In a letter to Abbot Peter at Saint-Rémi, which John dispatched following his arrival in England, he detailed the barren estate he had encountered.

---

<sup>1077</sup> Letter 301, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 708-709.

<sup>1078</sup> "Posthac renuntiemus prophetiae ex hac causa grauius misfortunates ceciderunt super nos." Letter 301, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 711.

<sup>1079</sup> *The Holy Bible*, New Revised Standard Version (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 560.

<sup>1080</sup> "Ubi est caritas uestra est: Interrogabo uos et ego?" Letter 300, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 702-703.

<sup>1081</sup> "Patri uestro occurrite." Letter 303, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 712-713.

With characteristic sarcasm, he reported that Henry's "devout and filial officials" had left, contrary to promises and assertions, property in shambles with goods and grain gone.<sup>1082</sup>

The next letter in the second collection was sent to John of Canterbury, the bishop of Poitiers, perhaps a week into January 1171. The opening words, *Ex insperato*, heralded the news of Becket's murder.<sup>1083</sup> The letter, a detailed description of Becket's killing, was the foundation of John of Salisbury's *Vitae Sancti Thome*.

Pepin offers a poignant tribute to John of Salisbury. He acknowledges the philosopher and scholar's honesty and bravery in persisting in the pursuit of his principles, most notably Church liberty, adding that John "renews his devotion to these ideals again and again in his letters."<sup>1084</sup> John, it must be noted, stood by Becket, counseled Becket, and criticized Becket, not because he admired the man so much as because they were dedicated to shared principles. Becket frequently heard John—and sometimes he listened.

---

<sup>1082</sup> John refers to the "religiosus et ministris filial" in decrying the condition of Canterbury's estates. The plundered real and personal property was in contradiction to the promised return of chattels and estate. Henry, according to John's letter to Peter, had ordered that all the possessions Becket and his entourage had three months prior to their departure be restored. Letter 304, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 715, 717. religiosus et ministris filial

<sup>1083</sup> Though the letter to John of Canterbury is often referred to as *Ex insperato*, the suddenness refers not directly to Becket's murder, but rather to the fact that there was a messenger about to cross the channel on his way to the bishop.

<sup>1084</sup> Pepin, "John of Salisbury as Writer," 172.

## CHAPTER 10 – ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF JOHN’S TREATISES

The non-traditional approach this thesis presents regarding the questions concerning John of Salisbury’s treatises and letters to Thomas Becket and their impact on Becket’s behavior and actions, may give historians pause. Though the research engages qualitative methodology—and specifically historical methodology—the inquiry more broadly uses communication theories to help answer the question of the impact of John’s writings. This research fundamentally seeks to examine John’s motivation for his consistent pressure on Becket to change his behavior and labor to alter Henry II’s efforts to limit Church liberties. Ultimately the research strives to measure the effect that John had on Becket.

The theories developed by communication scholars are sound. The tools the theories afford are constructive in expanding the boundaries of our contemporary perception of the relationship John and Becket had for nearly two decades. This multi-disciplinary examination permits a deeper understanding of their connection. Predicated upon her research and publications, Anne J. Duggan is considered the leading scholar of Thomas Becket at present.<sup>1085</sup> In an email correspondence with her, I described the proposal to use communication theory to study John’s writings that he directed to Becket,<sup>1086</sup> to which Duggan responded immediately,

---

<sup>1085</sup> Anne J. Duggan is Emeritus Professor of Medieval History, King’s College London. <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/people/professor-anne-josephine-duggan>. Her works include a two-volume set of the letters of Thomas Becket from 1162-1170. She both edited and translated the 329 letters they contain. Thomas Becket and Anne Duggan, *The Correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162-1170*. Additionally, she authored one of the more recent biographies of Becket based on her scholarship: Anne Duggan, *Thomas Becket* (London: Arnold, 2004).

<sup>1086</sup> The email to Professor Duggan briefly described the research proposal: “I write because of my interest in the correspondence between John and Becket—admittedly principally unidirectional—and John’s three major works dedicated to Becket. For this doctoral dissertation, my examination centers on the writings as seen through the lens of communication theory. The hope is to add in some small measure to the substantial body of work that you and other scholars have created.” Email correspondence from Sue Carter to Anne Duggan, [anne.duggan@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:anne.duggan@kcl.ac.uk) February 5, 2020.

“Your research sounds very interesting. I don’t think that anyone has made a really close study of JS and TB.”<sup>1087</sup>

The intersection of disciplines offers scholars the opportunity to survey and study centuries-old material in a different manner with the anticipation of fresh, sometimes compelling, results. This dissertation and the following discussion is not meant to set aside traditional historical research methods. Indeed, they are a relevant and integral aspect of this investigation. The gap that this research fills is interstitial—it is the mortar between the bricks of John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket.

#### *Using Communication Theories to Assess the Impact of John’s Writings on Becket*

A vital element in assessing John of Salisbury’s three writings dedicated to Thomas Becket and the fifteen letters he wrote to Becket as chancellor and as archbishop is maintaining the historian’s distance. Given the nature of the relationship between Henry II and Becket and the conflict that resulted in Becket’s death, it is not surprising that popular histories about the men exist. Such a drama begs to be told, and re-told, in a variety of ways. However, researchers cannot presume to know John’s and Becket’s thinking or their life patterns and experiences in any real, intimate sense. That is left for authors of fiction. The conflict between Becket and Henry has attracted authors, playwrights, and filmmakers, among them T. S. Elliot and Jean Anouilh.<sup>1088</sup> Such is the fascination surrounding Becket and his clash with the king of England.

---

<sup>1087</sup> Email correspondence with Sue Carter, February 6, 2020.

<sup>1088</sup> T. S. Eliot’s “Murder in the Cathedral” by the American-born English poet is described as a “poetic drama in two parts with a prose sermon interlude.” It was first performed in Canterbury Cathedral in 1935. “Murder in the Cathedral,” *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, 29 May 2012, accessed October 28, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Murder-in-the-Cathedral>. The 1964 film “Becket” starring Richard Burton and Peter O’Toole was based on the play “Becket or the Honour of God” written by Jean Anouilh. “Becket.” IMDb,

Separating truth from fanciful revision of Becket's life and those who influenced him is imperative. Instruments are available to the historian who is dedicated to teasing out and discerning cause and effect, intent and action, in an objective manner (or at least as objective as plausible). Central to the research are historical, qualitative, and even quantitative research methods.

Though this dissertation is grounded in communication theory, it does not ignore qualitative historical research methods, which are invaluable in assessing individuals and events in their natural settings. Such methods make it possible to then employ communication theory to assess the impact of words and actions. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln stress the importance of historical research methods in accessing and understanding documents.<sup>1089</sup> The approach emphasizes the identification of the categories of evidence to be examined, the gathering of the evidence, and finally descriptions of the evidence.<sup>1090</sup> This dissertation has addressed two elements in the preceding chapters: identifying the evidence (the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, the *Metalogicon*, the *Policraticus*, the letters of John of Salisbury, the *Historia Pontificalis*, and the *Vitae de Sancti Thome*) and then describing the evidence. The final stage is to analyze the evidence, seeking to support the principal thesis: that John's major writings, dedicated to Becket, and his correspondence with Becket did have some impact on the archbishop's behavior.

---

accessed October 28, 2020, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0057877/>. Other contemporary works about Becket include Shelley Mydan, *Thomas* (1965); E. M. Powell, *The Murder of Thomas Becket* and *Thomas Becket: The Blood of a Martyr* (2014); and Barbara Willard, *If all the Swords in England: A Story of Thomas Becket* (2000). Of course, one of the earlier dramatic creations was by Alfred Lord Tennyson in 1884, simply titled "Becket." While not a dispositive list, this reflects the continued interest in the life of Thomas Becket and his conflict with Henry II.

<sup>1089</sup> Denzin and Lincoln, "Introduction," *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2.

<sup>1090</sup> Shafer, *A Guide to Historical Method*, 41.



The case study, another type of qualitative research design, permits the examination of an encapsulated circumstance or event. It is one of five strategies suggested by John Creswell. Once again, the researcher uses the environment in which the action occurred as the platform for analysis.<sup>1091</sup> Because the historical evidence in the current instance is circumscribed by a defined time and place, the process of examination is etic and not emic.<sup>1092</sup> What John of Salisbury wrote in 1159, for example, was unique to his environment. Our understanding of what constitutes a tyrant as he described it in the *Policraticus* reflects the twelfth century.<sup>1093</sup> The view of a tyrant in the twenty-first century is not necessarily his.

The letters and treatises John of Salisbury wrote to and for Thomas Becket offer the contemporary researcher a clear, direct pathway for discussion and analysis. Still, limitations exist. With nearly nine centuries of distance from the creation of that correspondence, the researcher must respect the limitations created by time and space. John's words and his world are obviously different from the contemporary era. The challenge is to surgically approach the task of discovering the meaning of the records examined.

This research analyzes the categories of evidence identified and reviewed. While the researcher should not read a modern-day understanding into the documents, there is precedent for scrutiny. The tradition of literary criticism is a respected research instrument. Literary criticism validates the process of examining historical documents and interpreting them. Although literary criticism typically is focused on literature rather than historical

---

<sup>1091</sup> Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*, 15.

<sup>1092</sup> For a fuller explanation of the distinctions between "etic" and "emic" see p. 12 and fn. 34 Ian Hodder's presentation on the topic.

<sup>1093</sup> John defines a tyrant as "one who oppresses the people by violent domination, just as a prince is the one who rules by the laws." John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 190.

documents, the accepted academic approach to literary criticism is translatable to history as a category. Literary criticism confirms the legitimacy of a methodology that seeks to engage in inquiry, analysis, and interpretation of documents that are not contemporary—often centuries old.

Writing more than a half-century ago, Durante Waite Robertson offered his definition of historical criticism, stating, “By ‘Historical Criticism’ I understand that kind of literary analysis which seeks to reconstruct the intellectual attitudes and cultural ideals of a period in order to reach a fuller understanding of its literature.”<sup>1094</sup> Robertson’s approach to delving into the past is somewhat useful, though it has undergone challenge. More recent scholars suggest that texts, both literary and philosophical (or in the case of John of Salisbury, political), are to be read in their own place and era. J. A. Burrow asserts that each document perforce is to be viewed “within the social system that produced it (and, which it, in turn, produced).”<sup>1095</sup> Derek Pearsall challenges Robertson’s sense of the path to understanding medieval literature, which is to read it as the medieval readers had engaged and read it. Pearsall points out that the notion of construing texts—in this case, medieval literature—was flawed as there was no climbing into the mind of one in the Middle Ages to discern the special meaning.<sup>1096</sup>

Thirty years after Robertson’s statements about reading medieval texts as a medieval being, Stephen Greenblatt, one of the founders of new historicism, provided an innovative alternative. His central tenet steered away from literary texts as “reflectionism” of their eras,

---

<sup>1094</sup> Durante Waite Robertson, “Historical Criticism,” in *Essays in Medieval Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), 2.

<sup>1095</sup> J. A. Burrow, “Should We Leave Medieval Literature to the Medievalists?” *Essays in Criticism* 53, no. 2 (2003): 278-283.

<sup>1096</sup> Derek Pearsall, “Medieval Literature and Historical Inquiry,” *The Modern Language Review* 99, No. 4 (Oct. 2004): xxxv.

positing instead that the texts are part of the times they are immersed in and help to make history.<sup>1097</sup> The reading of the text and the recognition of its cultural, social, and historical milieu are key to a more meaningful understanding of the documents—the co-texts—and their meanings. Not to be denied, Michel Foucault exerted substantial influence on new historicism. Foucault's theories turn on power-knowledge dynamics and discourse, with power and knowledge moving in a continual cycle: one informs and energizes the other. The French historian and philosopher wrote that "the discourse of an era brings into being concepts, oppositions and hierarchies, which are products and propagators of power, and these determine what is 'knowledge,' 'truth' and 'normal' at a given time."<sup>1098</sup>

Franco Moretti presents an interesting methodology for accessing the development of modern European literature by means of intense data assessment, a method that has application for this research. His graphing technique, among other quantitative procedures, speaks to the notion that a cross-pollination of methods that employ communication theories as well as traditional historical research methods for textual analysis is fully acceptable.<sup>1099</sup> One approach of this research includes employing historical literary criticism methods— methods that apply literary criticism tools—to assist in the analysis of John of Salisbury's writings and correspondence. The evidence offered here is that John was striving not so much to 'reflect'

---

<sup>1097</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1.

<sup>1098</sup> Nasrullah Mambrol, "Foucault's Influence on New Historicism," *Literary Theory and Criticism*, October 2016, accessed August 3, 2020, <https://literariness.org/2016/10/21/foucaults-influence-on-new-historicism/>. For Foucault's extended discussion in discourse see Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* (1969) (trans. AM Sheridan Smith, 1972), 135-140 and 49. See also M Foucault "The Order of Discourse." in R. Young (ed) *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader* (1981).

<sup>1099</sup> Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading* (New York: Verso, 2013). See especially "Planet Hollywood," pp. 91-105 and "Style Inc.: Reflections on 7,000 Titles," pp. 179-210.

history but rather to shape it. By examining John's entire body of work, one can observe and understand his intent and motivation. There is scholarly legitimacy, as demonstrated by the discipline of literary criticism, to reading historical documents with great attention to interpretative care.

Supported by qualitative historical research methods, this examination of the interactions and correspondence between John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket is grounded in communication theory. It follows two lines of research. The first probes their relationship through the lens of a set of communication methodologies described earlier, in the section on research methods. This dissertation will evaluate the degree to which John's words and counsel impacted Becket's behavior and decisions. The second methodology uses coding to study the extent of Becket's usage of classical quotations, illustrations, and scriptural passages drawn from letters John wrote to him. By employing communication theory and methodology, the case will be made that John labored to influence Becket and that Becket listened and occasionally followed John's counsel and advice.

Communication theories, inclusive of methodologies and methods, help to examine, interpret, and communicate the meanings and messages of John of Salisbury's three major works and his epistles to Becket. The goal is to assess their impact on Becket. Was John in any way an influence on Becket, the chancellor, and Becket, the archbishop? The precision tools of the communication scholar work to answer the question of the significance of these texts to Becket.

Communication scholars have ranged in viewpoints from Max Weber's *verstehen* (a subjective and objective analysis of events) to Alfred Schutz's phenomenological sociology with

a systematic approach, distinguishing between direct and indirect knowledge of the messages, events, and individuals.<sup>1100</sup> Karl Erik Rosengren employed the subjective-objective method to filter qualitative analysis through a quantitative sieve to create a four-element approach to communication research.<sup>1101</sup> Anders Hansen and David Machin offer an interpretative paradigm model that closes the gap between qualitative and quantitative assessments and allows for “description and investigation of cultural issues’ meanings and contents in relation to communication processes.”<sup>1102</sup>

Communication theories engage both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. They are engaged here to analyze John’s treatises and letters both dedicated to and written to Becket. The theories permit examination of John’s effectiveness in attaining his goals of affecting Becket’s personal attitudes and behavior, e.g., encouraging restraint on Henry through Becket, promoting Church liberties in the face of royal pressure to yield rights, and elevating the values of trust, truthfulness, virtue, and moderation. This discussion examines texts and letters by means of the Constructivism Theory of Communication,<sup>1103</sup> the Social Exchange Theory,<sup>1104</sup> the Standpoint Theory,<sup>1105</sup> and Content Analysis.<sup>1106</sup> The Constructivism Theory of Communication

---

<sup>1100</sup> Anderson, *Communication Research and Methods*, 238, 239-241.

<sup>1101</sup> Rosengren, “Communication Research: One Paradigm or Four?” 187.

<sup>1102</sup> Hansen and Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, 2.

<sup>1103</sup> Constructivism theory arises from the cognitive developmental work of Jean Piaget nearly a century ago. See: Marie Arsalidou and Juan Pascual-Leone, “Constructivist Developmental Theory is Needed in Developmental Neuroscience,” *npj Science of Learning*, 2016, accessed February 4, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1038/npscilearn.2016.16>.

<sup>1104</sup> “What is Social Exchange Theory?” Tulane University School of Social Work, April 20, 2018, accessed February 4, 2020, <https://socialwork.tulane.edu/blog/social-exchange-theory>. For organizational behavior and a critique of the theory see, for example, Russell Cropanzano and Marie S. Mitchell, “Social Exchange Theory: An Interdisciplinary Review,” *Journal of Management* 31, no. 6 (2005), 874-875, accessed February 4, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>.

<sup>1105</sup> “Standpoint Theory,” *Communication Studies*, accessed February 4, 2020, <http://www.communicationstudies.com/communication-theories/standpoint-theory>.

<sup>1106</sup> Berleson, *Content Analysis in Communication Research*.

offers insights on how individuals differ in their communication styles in diverse social environments. This theory takes into account four competencies: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, rhetorical competence, and conversational management.<sup>1107</sup> The Social Exchange Theory suggests that people tailor their social behavior predicated on giving what they receive in return for value. The theory was created by George Homans, who was assisted in his studies by John Thibaut, Harold Kelley, and Peter Blau.<sup>1108</sup> Standpoint Theory was developed more than two centuries ago. It was updated for use in communication by feminists who have used it to articulate where an individual or group is positioned relative to others. The theory posits that viewpoints are molded by perspectives and experiences.<sup>1109</sup>

The first three theories enable us to probe aspects of the relationship between Becket and John. Additionally, Content Analysis allows a more precise quantitative review of the texts to measure both impact of words and phrases and joint usage of them. Content Analysis is an instrument that allows for objective, systematic, and quantitative assessment of material.<sup>1110</sup> Assisting in this evaluation will be Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). By means of CDA, the researcher is able to examine grammatical usage and language. An assiduous review reveals which language has been employed to achieve desired results. An example of CDA application is

---

<sup>1107</sup> Katherine Miller, *Communication Theories, Perspectives, Processes and Contexts* Second Edition (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005), 105-110.

<sup>1108</sup> Richard M. Emerson, "Social Exchange Theory," *Annual Review of Sociology* 2 (1976): 335-362, accessed November 2, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2946096>.

<sup>1109</sup> Kristina Rolin, "Standpoint Theory as a Methodology for the Study of Power Relations," *Hypatia* 24, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 218-226, accessed November 2, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20618192>.

<sup>1110</sup> Content analysis is at the core of much contemporary communication research. See: Stephen Lacy, Brendan R. Watson, Daniel Riffe, and Jennette Lovejoy, "Issues and Best Practices in Content Analysis" *Communication Studies Faculty Publications and Presentations* (2015): 8, accessed November 2, 2020, [http://pilotscholars.up.edu/cst\\_facpubs/8](http://pilotscholars.up.edu/cst_facpubs/8).

the language of *amicitia*.<sup>1111</sup> CDA highlights which usages—including words, grammar, and images—of John’s were copied by Becket, thereby demonstrating the probability that Becket was paying attention to what John was writing.

### *The Entheticus Reviewed*

A point of departure to determine John of Salisbury’s intent to make an impression on Becket is the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* (*Entheticus maior*), a work begun when John was a student in Paris but not completed until he was a member of Archbishop Theobald’s household at Canterbury. John had experience with the royal curia and was concerned about the behavior he witnessed there; he was fretful about the possibility of Henry’s reign repeating the chaos of his predecessor, Stephen. Becket, a former colleague at Canterbury, was installed as Henry’s chancellor—even a boon companion. In completing the work, John envisioned Becket as a vehicle to warn Henry about the iniquities at the royal court that enveloped him—and consequently Henry.

That John was an extraordinarily well-educated man is evident in the *Entheticus maior*. John used his deep knowledge of the classics and scripture to construct and buttress his arguments favoring virtue. From a communications theory perspective, the Constructivism Theory highlights John’s competencies: linguistic competence; sociolinguistic competence;

---

<sup>1111</sup> Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*. The text outlines the history of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The methodology comes out of linguistics, and key scholars include Gunther Kress, Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teun A. Van Dijk, Theo Van Leeuwen, and Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard. See: John McLoughlin, “*Amicitia* in Practice: John of Salisbury (c. 1120-1180) and His Circle,” *England in the Twelfth Century*; Hirata, “John of Salisbury, Gerard Pucelle and *Amicitia*,” in *Friendship in Medieval Europe*.

rhetorical competence; and conversational management.<sup>1112</sup> John displayed several competencies under this theory as he strove to attain his goals. He was simultaneously didactic and satirical; in so doing, he demonstrated sociolinguistic competency (comprehension of the rules that are predominant in particular social settings) and rhetorical competency (elucidating message content and modifying messages designed to respond and persuade). John's experience with Henry's court exposed him to the frivolities of courtiers and the dangers that they presented to a stable regime. Further, his use of the ancient literary device, the *prosopopoeia*, demonstrates his capacity—as a cognitively complex individual (one who is both learned and intelligent)—to create a mechanism for messages that endeavor to persuade and elucidate a response. His target was Chancellor Becket. As a communicator, John demonstrated a *tour de force* in his ability to create a message intended for a specific audience (Becket), while concurrently seeking to achieve another outcome, i.e., a warning to Henry to avoid the pitfalls of Stephen's anarchy.

The Standpoint Theory of Communication is helpful in revealing John of Salisbury's intentions to convey what is effectively a series of warnings in the *Entheticus maior*.<sup>1113</sup> John was keenly aware of the hierarchical environment in which he and Becket existed. After all, Becket was of modest heritage (Henry, according to one source, later called him “low born”),<sup>1114</sup> and John's own banishment at Henry's hands as well as his family's difficulties during Stephen's reign implanted in him the knowledge that there was a social order and that both he

---

<sup>1112</sup> “Constructivism,” Communication Studies, accessed February 4, 2020, <http://www.communicationstudies.com/communication-theories/constructivism>.

<sup>1113</sup> Rodney Thomson, “What is the *Entheticus*?” 301.

<sup>1114</sup> Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 235.



and Becket were of lesser status. At the end of the day, they knew their positions on the social ladder. Despite his understanding of his own place in the social milieu, John was not above criticizing those who shunned a classical education, opting instead for facile displays of rhetoric, and yet who were seen as his social superiors. They were the lazy elite that he disdained in much of his writing. Examined through the lens of the Standpoint Theory, John was careful to mask his criticism of the king and the court. He delivered his criticism through his *libelle*, the little book. By means of the literary device of the *prosopopoeia*, John dispensed his disdain for lazy, frivolous acts, deflecting authorship from himself. With knowledge of his position in the social order and the memory of his exile from court in 1156-1157, John was careful not to name the envisioned recipients of his satirical comments and warnings—he used *libelle* for that purpose. Still, through his writings and communication in *Entheticus maior*, John sought a response, a *quid pro quo*, that could be appreciated in light of the Social Exchange Theory. In this poem dedicated to Becket, John was prodding “public men to regulate their actions according to the precepts of the ancient philosophers,” an expression of John’s own philosophical perspectives.<sup>1115</sup> John devoted more than 200 lines to attacking kingship, royal officials’ tyranny, and a depraved court, at the same time making suggestions for improvement.<sup>1116</sup> The Social Exchange Theory presents a fairly direct connection to Becket in the final verses of the *Entheticus maior* with the words “who orders to write.” The indication is that Becket urged John to finish the *Entheticus*. The presumption, according to van Laarhoven,

---

<sup>1115</sup> Thomson, “What is the *Entheticus*?” 295.

<sup>1116</sup> Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 85-86. *E. g.*, “Illa tyrannorum pax es ut nemo reclamet, quicquid agant possint omnia, iura nichil.” “The peace of tyrants is such that whatever they do, no one should protest against it,” 214– 303.

is that Becket wanted the criticisms contained in the treatise made public.<sup>1117</sup> The exchange is rather obvious—it is a *quid pro quo*. Becket had encouraged John to finish the poem he began as a student in Paris, and John was willing to do so, even dedicating the *Entheticus maior* to Becket. In return, John signaled to Becket that he should work to address the failings of the royal court from his position as chancellor and that, in exchange, John would write about them and provide Becket information and arguments for the cause. As if to offer a further nudge, John presented a veiled spur to Becket to engage. He inserted a pun on the title of chancellor—principally as ‘cancellor.’<sup>1118</sup> That is to say “I, John, want you to cancel the culture that permeates the court and has the capacity to affect the king.”<sup>1119</sup>

Critical Discourse Analysis is a valuable tool to apply to the *Entheticus maior*, as it allows us to examine grammatical usage and language as a determinant for success in achieving the communicator’s desired results.<sup>1120</sup> In this instance, John was the communicator with a series of goals: change the court culture; keep Henry from following Stephen’s path of anarchy; preserve Church liberty. One might argue that John was not immediately successful in drawing Becket away from the seduction of the royal court, his position as chancellor, or his close relationship with Henry; achieving that understanding required Becket to assume the pallium.<sup>1121</sup> The delayed response from Becket does not diminish John’s contribution to

---

<sup>1117</sup> van Laarhoven and John of Salisbury, *John of Salisbury's Entheticus Maior and Minor* Vol. 1, 47-49.

<sup>1118</sup> “Hic est, carnificum qui ius cancellat iniquum.” Line 1297. Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 212.

<sup>1119</sup> This is not a direct quotation from any source. Quotation marks are used by the dissertation’s author in this instance as a literary device to illustrate John’s point of view.

<sup>1120</sup> Hansen and Machin, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, 115.

<sup>1121</sup> Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury*, 19. The pallium is a vestment bestowed by the pope on an archbishop. Circular, it is draped on the shoulders of the archbishop with a tab descending in the front to mid-chest. It is worn over the chasuble, the priest’s Eucharistic vestment. “Pallium,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed November 2, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/pallium-ecclesiastical-vestment>.

Becket's changed attitude toward Henry, and in support of the Church's liberties. John's constant press on Becket through treatises and letters, played a role in attaining his goals. The Church's liberties were left fairly intact and Henry was chastened following Becket's murder.

Obviously, John could not appreciate that his actions would be evaluated centuries later by a contemporary communication theory. Yet what John was attempting to do—employ words and grammar to motivate Becket to desired goals—can be examined through Communication Discourse Analysis. John's word and grammar choices during the course of more than a dozen years—in writings dedicated to Becket and letters written to him—were not without effect. At the end of the day, Becket died for one of the principles that John held so dearly: the liberty of the Church. Literary criticism validates the communication scholar's ability to peer into the past and assess effect.

### *The Metalogicon Reviewed*

The *Metalogicon*, a more focused work than either the *Entheticus maior* or the *Policraticus*, also can be analyzed through the filter of communication theories. As with the *Entheticus maior*, multiple examples reflect the Constructivism Theory of Communication. Once more, John of Salisbury's excellent training is on display. Indeed, it is one of the bases of this work. To accentuate his concern about the decline in the study of the trivium (and to a certain extent the quadrivium) John created a fictional character, Cornificius, to underscore his concern and irritation and to offer a mockery. John's display of competencies is masterful: he demonstrated linguistic competence through his superior use of grammar and syntax; he displayed sociolinguistic competency in understanding the rules of his social setting (and then

scoffing at them); and he revealed rhetorical competence insofar as he used satire (the foolishness of Cornificius and his followers) to persuade others to adopt a different course.<sup>1122</sup> John was unrelenting in his disparagement of Cornificius when he wrote of his fictional opponent, “Cornificius is worth less than the gods’ clown Bromius,” (the ancient Roman god of wine despised for vilifying logic).<sup>1123</sup> Contrary to Cornificius, John was absolutely certain that knowledge arose from inquiry, which required logic and grammar. For him, the unassailable progression was from grammar to logic to knowledge to truth.<sup>1124</sup> Truth remained one of his most prized values. As one who was, according to the Constructivism Theory, “cognitively complex,” John was the patient teacher who led the reader through his arguments regarding logic, constructing the level pathway for learning. As support, he relied on ancient authors and scriptural passages to establish his case, a tactic he employed in other writings also.

With respect to the Standpoint Theory of Communication, John demonstrated an astute understanding of his place in the greater social order. In a letter to his close friend, Peter of Celle, regarding his writings and the treatment he believed that he received unfairly from Henry, John wrote, “By the grace of God and yourself, I am what I am.”<sup>1125</sup> He was ever constant in the self-examination of his own social status, even when criticizing those of higher social ranking. For an illustration, he caustically chastened supposed superiors who chose to gamble and engage in the case and indulge in worthless activities, distinguishing them from those deserving of praise

---

<sup>1122</sup> McGarry, “Educational Theory in the *Metalogicon* of John of Salisbury,” 660.

<sup>1123</sup> “Bromius,” *Hellenica World*, accessed January 9, 2021. The reference to Bromius is in Book 4, Chapter 25, “Quod Cornificius, Bromio scurra deorum, villor est.” [www.hellenicaworld.com/Greece/Mythology/en/Bromius.html](http://www.hellenicaworld.com/Greece/Mythology/en/Bromius.html).

<sup>1124</sup> John O. Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 64.

<sup>1125</sup> Letter 31, “Gratia siquidem Dei et uestra sum quicquid sum.” John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, V. 1, 49.

for their academic accomplishments.<sup>1126</sup> At the very end of the *Metalogicon*, in the final chapter of Book Four, John once more sank his teeth into those who were socially superior but intellectually inferior.<sup>1127</sup>

The *Metalogicon* was dedicated to Thomas Becket. The treatise, along with the *Policraticus*, was delivered to Becket in 1159 while he was on a military expedition in southern France, besieging the city of Toulouse. Was there an expectation for a *quid pro quo* rising to the level of a social exchange in the writing and dedication of the *Metalogicon*? Becket did not stop warring, and by all indications he did not seek to rein in Henry. In fact, he promoted the Toulouse attack and led a force of 700 himself. However, John's assault on the court and especially its frivolities may well have been noticed. One can postulate that the ridiculing truth of John's works eventually hit home. It is curious that Becket appears to have encouraged John to author the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*, perhaps inquisitive about what John might write, as leaders sometimes engage researchers seeking their views. If, indeed, Becket asked John to write the treatises, then John was looking for action in return—support for his view that Henry's reign was acquiring an authoritarian posture antithetical to Church liberty. John was anticipating that his caveats then would be received by the king and provide a path for correction of the ills he witnessed.<sup>1128</sup> John desired a larger audience than merely Becket.<sup>1129</sup>

---

<sup>1126</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 119 ff.

<sup>1127</sup> John of Salisbury's opinion of the courtiers reminds one of an early scene in the film *Broadcast News* in which young Aaron Altman is roughed up by several toughs following their high school graduation. In his speech as class valedictorian Altman rather overtly disrespects them. Once outside, they bloody his nose, and he retorts, "You'll never leave South Boston and I'm going to see the whole damn world. You'll never know the pleasure of writing a graceful sentence or having an original thought. Think about it." James L. Brooks, *Broadcast News*, accessed August 5, 2020, [http://dailyscript.com/scripts/broadc\\_news.html](http://dailyscript.com/scripts/broadc_news.html).

<sup>1128</sup> Hirata, "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents," 558.

<sup>1129</sup> Bollermann and Nederman, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 70.

His concerns were avoidance of a return to the Anarchy that arguably traumatized him and his family, of moderation in all, of the virtue of truth, and of the protection of Church liberties. In line with the other two major writings that John inscribed to Becket (the *Entheticus maior*, and the *Policraticus*), no action immediately resulted. Becket's fierce defense of Church liberty came only after his enthronement as archbishop.

In considering the *Metalogicon* from the perspective of the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis, the work affirms the means—careful language choices in words and grammar—but the text does not fulfil the ends, at least in the short term. It is noteworthy that many of the messages in the *Metalogicon* are not apparent on initial reading. At first blush, this text concerns education, with the twin goals of promoting the *trivium* and extoling the magnificence of Aristotle's works regarding logic, notably the *Organon*.<sup>1130</sup> However, following the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis, there is a deeper meaning. The method enables the analyst to tease out the ideologies that may not be immediately apparent in the text. John's more profound intent was to discredit the superficialities of the court and to encourage Becket to help change the climate. As with the other two major writings John dedicated to Becket, there was no immediate cause and effect. Rather, John's desired results of security of Church liberties and a humbled Henry—even if temporary—were set into motion on December 29, 1170.

---

<sup>1130</sup> John, Hall, and Haseldine, *Metalogicon*, 52; "Liberal Arts," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed May 19, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/liberal-arts>; "Aristotle's Logic," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, accessed May 19, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-logic/#AriLogWorOrg>.

### *The Policraticus Reviewed*

John of Salisbury's most noted and recopied work is the *Policraticus*, the third of three he dedicated to Becket. He expressly arranged that it be delivered to Becket along with the *Metalogicon* while Henry's chancellor was on the Toulouse campaign in southern France. As discussed earlier, scholars generally see it as the first political treatise of the Middle Ages.<sup>1131</sup> Jan van Laarhoven rightly posits that politics was not John's chief consideration, though it was a means to achieve his purpose: a moral stance quite in line with his deeply entrenched sense of ethics.<sup>1132</sup> Given its significance—the dedication to Becket and John's unwavering set of concerns about the royal court, the future of the country, and the rights and liberties of the Church—this text yields valuable insights when analyzed through the lens of communication theories. What, precisely, was John striving to communicate, to whom were the messages addressed, and what level of effectiveness resulted?

John was an extraordinarily well-read individual and keenly intelligent. The *Policraticus*, though a bit scattered at times, reflects his impressive knowledge of ancient authors and biblical texts. One might argue that it is lacking in a certain organization because he was under self-imposed pressure to dispatch it to Becket along with the *Metalogicon* while he understood the combat was still ongoing. Though John had supported Henry in his bid to succeed Stephen, he feared a return to the anarchy of Stephen's reign. He was eager to have the warfare stop, and Becket was a connection he had to Henry to make the argument. Indeed, when he sought Peter of Celle's critical review before transmitting the *Policraticus*, John asked for a speedy

---

<sup>1131</sup> Canning, *A History of Medieval Political Thought*, 114.

<sup>1132</sup> van Laarhoven, "Thou Shall Not Slay a Tyrant! The So-Called Theory of John of Salisbury," 331-333.

assessment. The *Policraticus* is replete with examples reflecting the work of a cognitively complex author, one who fashioned specific messages for targeted audiences.<sup>1133</sup> For purposes of the Constructivism Theory of Communication, that immediate audience was Becket, to whom the document is dedicated. John was fully aware that Becket would not be the only reader and he intended that to be the case; his request for Peter of Celle's evaluation is a strong indication of that knowledge, as John was sufficiently aware of his social position and wise enough to seek another's counsel. John was walking the tightrope between a desire to raise the alarm about the direction of the royal court and Henry's reign and the remembered sting of his banishment. It is no surprise that a guiding principle for John was moderation.<sup>1134</sup> There can be little doubt that he displayed the competencies required by the Constructivism, Theory. Stipulating to his linguistic competency with proper grammar and syntax (even though somewhat hurried and disjointed, the *Policraticus* is a masterful writing), John demonstrated both sociolinguistic and rhetorical competencies, as the attributes are previously discussed.

Application of the Standpoint Theory to the text of the *Policraticus* demonstrates that John was acutely aware of his place in the dominant hierarchy of the royal court. Once more, he engaged the literary device of the *libelle* in the *Entheticus ad Policraticum*, the *Entheticus minor* that preceded, though not necessarily introduced, the *Policraticus*. The *Entheticus minor* has some of the aspects of the *Entheticus maior* but is much shorter. Arguably, John has raised a shield through the use of the *libelle* in hopes of sparing himself further grief from Henry. That

---

<sup>1133</sup> In Book V of the *Policraticus*, John created what appeared to be a believable document, *Institutio Trajani*, the *Institutes of Trajan*. He was quite cognizant that Trajan was highly regarded as a Roman emperor. By connecting the fabricated work to an esteemed ruler, it was made all the more plausible. David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury"

<sup>1134</sup> R. L. Poole's views as presented by Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 4.



John further directed the writing to Becket, and not to Henry, is further indication of John's comprehension of his position in the social order. It would be unthinkable to address the treatise directly to the king. Still, there is less timidity in identifying subjects when the *Entheticus minor* is compared to the *Entheticus maior*. John may have been emboldened in crafting the *Entheticus minor* in several ways. To begin, it is shorter than the *Entheticus maior*. In the *Entheticus maior*, John constructed several protections for himself by means of the *libelle* and by dedicating the work to Chancellor Becket. Further, the *Entheticus minor* was published after the *Entheticus maior* for which he was not punished. Additionally, at the writing of the *Entheticus minor*, John was increasingly disquieted by the turn that Henry's rule had taken, to the degree that he even raised the concept of tyrannicide in the *Policraticus*. While John certainly understood his position in the social order, he was pushing the bounds of that position as he became more public in denouncing greater iniquity in the royal court and possible disaster for the realm. Though he also noted that tyrants, as well as princes, could be ecclesiastical or lay leaders, John was generally deferential to the Church and the papacy.<sup>1135</sup> His acute grasp of the medieval power structure permeates the *Policraticus* as well as his other principal writings; it dictated how he designed his messages.

The Social Exchange Theory permits us to emphasize what John was seeking through his writing. It is patently clear that he wanted his apprehensions to be understood and he hoped that his concerns would alert Becket and encourage the chancellor to restrain others in the royal court, including the king. If, truly, Becket encouraged John to write the *Policraticus* or at

---

<sup>1135</sup> When queried by Adrian IV regarding regular clergy view of the papal court, John attempted to sidestep the question, believing it was not within his (social) position to answer. Ultimately, however, John provided a truthful response. John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 133, 135.

least a treatise that would address the frivolities of the court,<sup>1136</sup> then John was justified in expecting a return on his writing: the *quid pro quo* bargain of John's admonitory treatise in return for Becket's action reigning in a wanton curia. Because John was pessimistic, even despairing, regarding the courtiers' behavior and the country's direction under Henry, engaging Becket in a *quid pro quo* must have been appealing to him.<sup>1137</sup> At whatever level Becket was involved in the planning of the treatise, or even if the chancellor had no direct involvement, John knew he could at least reach Becket and draw the chancellor's attention to his fears.

Anne Duggan holds that at one level John's plan worked—the *Policraticus* had a wide audience. John did get the attention of the royal court, and Henry as well.<sup>1138</sup> However, he did not attain, at least in the short term, his desired results. Seen through the lens of communication theories, John *did* succeed in getting his message across, posting notice of his concerns, but it would take a measure of time before the goals he sought—above all protection for the Church—were attained. Admittedly, therefore, the *Policraticus* was not immediately effective or successful. Even as Theobald was dying, Thomas was still in Henry's camp. However, Hans Liebeschütz suggests that "it remains possible that the sudden change in the chancellor's behaviour after he was created archbishop was partially due to the effect of the *Policraticus*."<sup>1139</sup> Once he was consecrated archbishop, Becket "realized that his future task was incompatible with the tendencies of the royal administration which he had served with all his

---

<sup>1136</sup> Hirata, "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents," 558.

<sup>1137</sup> Luscombe, "John of Salisbury."

<sup>1138</sup> Duggan, "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket," 430.

<sup>1139</sup> Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 18.

powers.”<sup>1140</sup> Liebeschütz also notes that Becket suggested some of the critical writings; John admitted that he could write the *Policraticus* only because Becket protected him.<sup>1141</sup>

Henry made some concessions after Becket’s death, but John did not live to see the full results of his treatises advocating for the liberty of the Church. However, they were embodied in the Magna Carta of 1215, thirty-five years after his death, incorporated in a document crafted under the guidance of Archbishop Stephen Langton. John’s strong arguments for liberty of the Church, particularly in the *Policraticus*, find their place in the charter, beginning with the articulation of ecclesiastical liberties in Article One.<sup>1142</sup> Its embedding in the Magna Carta offers evidence of John’s effectiveness as a skilled communicator. Several communication theories—Constructivism, Standpoint, Social Exchange, and Critical Discourse Analysis—provide evidence that John’s writings had effect in the longer term.

---

<sup>1140</sup> Liebeschütz contends that Becket suggested some of the critical writings. He holds that John admitted he could write the *Policraticus* only because Becket protected him. Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 19.

<sup>1141</sup> Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 18.

<sup>1142</sup> Cary J. Nederman, “The Liberty of the Church and the Road to Runnymede: John of Salisbury and the Intellectual Foundations of the Magna Carta,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 43, no. 3 (July 2010): 459.

## CHAPTER 11 – CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN JOHN AND BECKET REVIEWED

Examination of John's fifteen letters to Becket, both as chancellor and archbishop, demonstrates the direct and immediate influence John had on Becket.<sup>1143</sup> The sources tell us that John of Salisbury was superior in education to Thomas Becket. John studied for twelve years, by his own account, under the tutelage of some of the best intellects of Western Europe while in Paris. Becket spent a year as a student in Paris. We may add to that a year Becket spent studying law in Bologna at the behest of Archbishop Theobald while he was a member of the archbishop's household, prior to assuming the role of chancellor for King Henry. He was not, by any measure, a scholar; his oral Latin, for example, was acceptable though his writing of the *lingua franca* of the period was of a lesser standard. Becket was more clever than he was erudite. His usage of scriptural passages and quotations from classical authors is common in his letters and mimics John's writing. Becket's incorporation of the same material implies he received guidance and knowledge from another source, and not from his studies. Becket's education did not approach the depth of John's. By examining his letters alongside the major works that John dedicated to Becket and the letters John wrote to him a pattern emerges. Becket read what John wrote and, on multiple occasions, inserted the classical quotations and scripture that John used in his own letters. Notwithstanding the possibility that Becket's clerks—and occasionally John himself—drafted the letters and Becket directed the writing,

---

<sup>1143</sup> The dating of John's correspondence as well as that of Becket relies on the close reading of Millor, Burler and Brooks in *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, and of Duggan in *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*. Letters of this period were neither dated nor signed as such; they were however transmitted under the author's seal. The authors of both collections of letters have striven diligently to assign as correct a transmittal date to each letter as possible. For a detailed examination of letter writing in the Middle ages see Les Perelman, "The Medieval art of letter writing: Rhetoric as institutional expression," in *Textual dynamics of the Professions*, ed. Charles Bazerman and James Paradis (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988). Accessed April 4, 2021. [https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/textual\\_dynamics/chapter4.pdf](https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/textual_dynamics/chapter4.pdf)

approved them as the epistles were transmitted over his signature. The following examples describe the flow of quotations and illustrations from John to Becket.

The shared classical quotations and allusions support the proposition that Becket heard what John was saying and he, or his clerks, incorporated John's words and lessons in messages that Becket acknowledged and sent out in his own name.

### Letter 22

On behalf of Archbishop Theobald, John wrote Letter 22 to Chancellor Becket in late 1156. In it, he referred to Matthew 16:26 ("We ask you therefore to approve what we have done, since it would profit us but little, if we gain the whole world and lose our own soul").<sup>1144</sup> Becket, as archbishop of Canterbury, subsequently used that same reference from Matthew in Letter 82 to King Henry, dated after June 12, 1166.<sup>1145</sup> Becket afterward used the allusion in a letter to all English clergy of early July 1166<sup>1146</sup> and once more in a letter to Owain, Prince of the Welsh, possibly written in April or May 1169.<sup>1147</sup>

### Letter 128

In a letter John sent to Becket as chancellor in September 1160, he alluded to Acts 4:32: "that you are so strongly of one heart and mind, that in view of such intimate friendship your hearts and desires must coincide."<sup>1148</sup> John was seeking Becket's assistance to get back in Henry's good graces after his banishment from the royal court (there is no record of Becket responding to John's request; however, the inhibition against John soon disappeared). Becket

---

<sup>1144</sup> John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 36.

<sup>1145</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 343.

<sup>1146</sup> Letter 95, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 409.

<sup>1147</sup> Letter 202, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 877.

<sup>1148</sup> Letter 128 John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 221.

employed the same passage in three letters he wrote following John's missive to him. The first was a letter to Bishop Gilbert of London in early July 1166, the second was in a letter to Master Fulk, Dean of Reims, in early 1168, and the third reference to the passage in Acts was in a letter to Sub-Prior William and the Chapter of Canterbury in mid-June 1169.<sup>1149</sup> Further, in the letter of September 1160, John referenced a quotation from Terence ("*Dictum sapienti satus est*" – "It is wise to start") from *Phormio*, iii, 3, 1, 541.<sup>1150</sup> Becket was apparently enamored of the quotation as he used it in five epistles he wrote as archbishop of Canterbury, beginning in mid-1166. The letters went to Robert, Provost of Aire; the Cardinal Priest, Lord Henry of Pisa; William of Pavia; Master Vivian;<sup>1151</sup> and, rather boldly, Henry II himself.<sup>1152</sup>

### Letter 129

Writing for Archbishop Theobald as his clerk and secretary in September 1160, John crafted a letter to Becket, chancellor for Henry, calling for the grace of the Holy Spirit and for love ("*caritate per Spiritum Sanctum in cordibus amocorum nostrorum*").<sup>1153</sup> Nearly nine years later, in 1169, Becket used the same phrase in a letter to Bishop Henry of Winchester, younger brother of the late King Stephen and a former rival for the position of archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>1154</sup>

---

<sup>1149</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*. The letters are #96, #163, and #209, pp. 441, 757, 919.

<sup>1150</sup> Letter 128, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 223.

<sup>1151</sup> Master Vivian was Archdeacon of Orvieto. He was the jurisconsult in the papal curia at the time Becket wrote this letter. Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 889, fn. 3.

<sup>1152</sup> The common understand of the phrase is "A word to the wise is sufficient." Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*. The letters are #103, #117, #142, #240, #214, pp. 487, 565, 657, 1029, 1041.

<sup>1153</sup> Letter 129, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 225.

<sup>1154</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*. The reference appears in Letter 211, pp. 925.

### Letter 136

Upon his arrival in France in late 1163, or more likely 1164, John wrote a lengthy letter to Becket, filled with information about his passage, places to stay, friends and allies, and people he had visited, including King Louis VII of France. In the letter, John made a reference traceable to John 20:17 (“I have not yet gone up”).<sup>1155</sup> Becket used the same verse in a letter of May 1170 to Idonea, who may have been the aunt of Galeran de Gallardon, in the diocese of Chartres.<sup>1156</sup> In both instances, the allusion is obscure to the more modern reader; however, it alludes to Mary Magdalene’s discovery of Jesus’ empty tomb.

### Letter 37 (from Becket’s Collection)

In a draft of the claim that Becket made to Pope Alexander, sometime close to November 29, 1164, the archbishop strove to make his case that Henry was overstepping his authority, not distinguishing between just and unjust use of power. Consequently, Becket was resisting the king’s attempts to exert control over the Church. Becket acknowledged that things that belonged to Caesar should be delivered to him, quoting from the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. At the same time, the king was not to be obeyed nor followed in things that were not ascribed to him. Becket was following a line of argument that flowed from Horace through Isadore of Seville.<sup>1157</sup> John had already written expansively on the theme of the prince

---

<sup>1155</sup> Letter 136, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 9.

<sup>1156</sup> Becket used the phrase to express the apostles’ despair at the crucifixion that changed when Mary (and the other women) “announced the Glory of the Redeemer and the grace of the Gospel.” Becket appears to have been foreshadowing his future. Letter 289, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 1233; Letter 211, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 925.

<sup>1157</sup> Becket’s line of reasoning extended from Horace: “Rex eris [aiunt] si recte facies,” *Epistolae*, I, I, 59. It was received in the West through Isadore of Seville: “Rex eris si recte facias, si non facias, non eris.” *Etymologiarum sive Originum*. In his letter to Alexander, Becket adapted the phrase for his own purposes: “Sed etse in pluribus obtemperandum regi, in illis tamen obtemperandum non est in quibus efficitur ne rex sit.” The quote from Horace’s *Epistolae*, according to Duggan, was a schoolyard chant possibly offered as a taunt. The sense is do well and you too can be king. Letter 37, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 431, 144-145.

as tyrant in the *Policraticus*, Book VIII, chapters 17-18. The king was to be obeyed when he rightly acted as king, but otherwise not.

### Letter 152

John wrote to Becket late in the summer of 1165, while he was still endeavoring to arrange a separate peace with Henry and at the same time supporting Becket's passion for Church liberty if not his methods. In the letter, he outlined his efforts to secure help in negotiations with Henry from several English bishops, including Becket's archenemy, Gilbert Foliot, Bishop of London. John made an explicit mention of Moab, the citation being Isaiah 16:6. He wrote, "But assuredly God is able to bruise the pride of Moab, boasting loudly against the Lord, and their arrogance is greater than their courage."<sup>1158</sup> Becket, in two letters that followed John's, used the very same text. In Letter 200 to Pope Alexander, written after 13 April 1169, Becket was scornful of John of Oxford and others, asserting their impiety to Alexander. He also reminded the pope that he had excommunicated the bishops of London and Salisbury (Gilbert and Jocelin)—this, four years after John's letter to Becket. Becket declared, "the arrogance of the proud man who terrorizes the little army of Moab is greater than his courage."<sup>1159</sup> Two months later, in a letter to Sub-Prior William and the Chapter of Canterbury, Becket invoked the same imagery that appeared initially in John's letter of 1165. Becket was at the same time both chastening the community for not offering greater support to the body in exile and also attempting to give them moral support during what were troubling times. Becket wrote,

---

<sup>1158</sup> In this instance, desiring an evil target, John assailed the Germans, for whom he had little regard, as the prideful ones. Letter 152, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 55.

<sup>1159</sup> Becket was threatening anathema for England (a serious clerical punishment that can be interpreted as a threat for interdict). Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 869.



“Therefore brethren, be consoled in the knowledge that Moab’s pride is greater than its strength, and the time is near when he [the Lord] will make tumult by day so that by night Moab will be laid waste and lie still.”<sup>1160</sup>

In his letter of 1165, John used a passage from Haggai 1:7 to explain that he was willing to extend an olive branch to disaffected bishops if it helped their cause of Church liberty: “I do not despair of having them on our side, if we have set our minds on our paths.”<sup>1161</sup> Becket employed the same phrase John had written in two letters that followed four years later; however, he presented the verse in a different light. Sometime before 13 April 1169, Becket wrote Bishop Gilbert of London with a thinly concealed warning: “As we summon you to penance with paternal affection, we advise and exhort you in the Lord to examine closely the paths you tread, and in the future act in a manner becoming to a bishop.”<sup>1162</sup> Probably in May 1169, Becket sent an epistle to Bishop Roger of Worcester. It was a letter offering encouragement to Roger, unlike the letter to Gilbert. Again, the reference was to Haggai and the passage John had written to Becket in Letter 152. The exhortation was to “examine our paths with our hearts.”<sup>1163</sup>

### Letter 157

John and Becket apparently co-wrote one letter during the period of continental exile, that to Nicholas of Mont-Saint-Jacques in Rouen. It is given the date of early 1166 in John’s canon, and after June 1166 in Becket’s collection of letters.<sup>1164</sup> Nicholas, an Augustinian brother

---

<sup>1160</sup> Letter 209, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 917.

<sup>1161</sup> Letter 152, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 57.

<sup>1162</sup> Letter 191, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 843.

<sup>1163</sup> Letter 203, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 885.

<sup>1164</sup> Letter 157, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 65; Letter 83, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 343.

who administered a priory and a leper hospital, was respected by Matilda, mother of Henry II. Becket perceived Nicholas to be a possible mediator and a means to secure Matilda's favor in negotiations between Becket and Henry. Given the importance of this letter, it is not surprising that Becket engaged John's assistance in crafting it before issuing it under his seal. The letter to Nicholas contained twelve identified references to writings of the ancients or to scripture, many that Becket used later in letters he dispatched.<sup>1165</sup> In the letter to Nicholas, Becket complained that he and his entourage had patiently endured the "losses, wrongs and insults laid on us and ours by our very dear lord the illustrious English king."<sup>1166</sup> The allusion was to Cicero and his own complaint, lodged in *Against Catiline*: "When, O Catiline, do you mean to cease abusing our patience?"<sup>1167</sup> Becket, more impulsive than patient, nevertheless chose to use the Ciceronian image in six letters that followed his jointly written epistle with John. Becket's first use of the allusion was in a letter to Pope Alexander, written after January 7, 1169, in which he suggested that if Becket's enemies had not poisoned his cause, "we believe certainly that the king of England would not have abused your patience."<sup>1168</sup> Becket next utilized the phrase in a letter of April 13, 1169 to Bishop Gilbert of London,<sup>1169</sup> and he returned to the sentiment regarding patience in a letter to Pope Alexander sometime after that.<sup>1170</sup> Becket continued his

---

<sup>1165</sup> Becket used scriptural references from his joint letter with John to Nicholas forty-two times in subsequent letters. Many of the passages were repeated multiple times.

<sup>1166</sup> "Damnorum et iniuriarum contumeliarumque perferre imponentes Anglorum illustris dominus noster charissimus." Letter 157, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 65; Letter 83, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 343.

<sup>1167</sup> "Ubi tecum, Catilina, patientia nostra tandem abutere, ut facitis?" M. Tullius Cicero, *Against Catiline*, ed. C. D. Yonge, accessed August 12, 2020, <https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.02.0019:text=Catil.:speech=1:chapter=1>.

<sup>1168</sup> "Certissime credimus, quia patientia tua regem Anglia non contumeliis affecerunt." Letter 183, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 821.

<sup>1169</sup> Letter 196b, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 857.

<sup>1170</sup> Letter 200, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 867.

citations of Cicero; the reference appeared in letters to Bishop Roger of Worcester in May 1169, and Bishop Gilbert of London and all deans of the archdiocese of Canterbury in two separate letters dispatched in May 1170.<sup>1171</sup>

In a letter written to Henry at the same time as those to Gilbert and the deans in Canterbury's archdiocese, Becket drew upon a scriptural verse from Luke saying, "Whoever hates you, hates me; whoever spurns you, spurns me."<sup>1172</sup> The admonition from Luke appeared in a letter from Becket in early July 1166, this time to Bishop Robert of Hereford. Becket extended the verse, adding, "who touches you touches the apple of my eye."<sup>1173</sup> In the same letter to Henry, written seemingly simultaneously with the one to Nicholas that he and John co-authored, Becket once more drew upon a quotation from the Nicholas missive, from Zechariah 2:8.<sup>1174</sup> Letter 97 to Bishop Robert contained the same reference.<sup>1175</sup>

Becket's letters frequently favored quotations in those written to him by John of Salisbury or one that he had co-authored. That was the case with 2 Peter 2:20-23. The reference appeared initially in their joint letter to Nicholas. The core of the verse notes that situations are becoming even more perilous and the last state is more ruinous than the first.<sup>1176</sup> Becket seized upon that scriptural reference and used it in nine additional letters that bore his seal.<sup>1177</sup>

---

<sup>1171</sup> Letters 203, 290, 293, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 881, 1237, 1241.

<sup>1172</sup> Letter 82, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 335.

<sup>1173</sup> "Quia haec dicit Dominus exercituum post gloriam misit me ad gentes quae spoliauerunt uos qui enim tetigerit uos tangit pupillam oculi eius." Letter 97, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 449.

<sup>1174</sup> Letter 82, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 335.

<sup>1175</sup> Letter 97, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 449.

<sup>1176</sup> Letter 82, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 345.

<sup>1177</sup> The recipients of Becket's nine additional letters, aside from the letter jointly authored with John of Salisbury, were Pope Alexander (#157, after December 14, 1167). Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 733. The remaining eight letters are in volume 2 of Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*. In chronological order, they are to the following: Letter 187, Pope Alexander (after 7 February 1169), p.

To continue with Becket's adaptations from this joint letter, the archbishop used a passage from Lamentations 1:12 in several of his letters following the joint missive to Nicholas. The passage appeared in Letter 95 that was sent in July 1166.<sup>1178</sup> The archbishop repeated the same lament in two other letters, both sent after November 18, 1169.<sup>1179</sup>

### Letter 173

Several months after their collaboration on the letter to Nicholas, John wrote to Becket offering his view of the bishops' appeal of the sanctions they had received. He also shared news about Henry's activities in Brittany. The fairly brief epistle contained two references from Ezekiel 3:18 prophesying doom and death for the wicked.<sup>1180</sup> Becket seized on the passage and integrated it into fifteen letters from his exile in France.<sup>1181</sup>

---

289; Letter 194, Bishop Gilbert of London (13 April 1169), p. 851; Letter 235, Bishop Hubald of Ostia (29 September 1169), p. 1017; Letter 257, Clarembald, Abbot-elect and the Brethren of St Augustine's (after 18 November 1169), p. 1107; Letter 290, Bishop Gilbert of London (c. May 1170), p. 1237; Letter 291, Bishop Henry of Winchester (May 1170), p. 1239; Letter 292, William the Sub-prior and the Convent of Canterbury (May 1170), p. 1239. Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*.

<sup>1178</sup> The quote in their joint letter, as it appears in the second collection of John of Salisbury's Letters, is "There is no sorrow like this sorrow: but God's love and the interests and honour of him, who is the subject of our cares, drives us [to bear this sorrow with a firm heart]." The Latin reads: "Lamed o uos omnes qui transitis per uiam adtendite et uidete si est dolor sicut dolor meus quoniam uindemiauit me ut locutus est Dominus in die irae furoris sui." Letter 157, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 67; Letter 95, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 395.

<sup>1179</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 1111, 1117.

<sup>1180</sup> "That they refuse to proclaim to the wicked his wickedness, and say at every perversion of justice and wrong done to the churches 'bravo!'" Letter 173, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 135. The full verse in Ezekiel 3:18: "If I say to the wicked 'You shall surely die,' and you give them no warning, or speak to warn the wicked from their wicked way, in order to save their life, those wicked persons shall die for their iniquity; but their blood I will require at your hand." *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 859.

<sup>1181</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 268. In succession, Becket used the passage, Ezekiel 3:18, directly or in allusion in letters to Bishop Gilbert of London, Letter 90; All the English Clergy, Letter 95; Pope Alexander, Letter 115; All the Cardinals, Letter 125; Pope Alexander, Letter 160. Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 365, 405, 559, 201, 783. The reference to Ezekiel 3:18 also appears in letters to William, Bishop of Norwich, Letter 197; Bishop Roger of Worcester, Letter 203; Pope Alexander, Letter 234; Bishop Hubald of Ostia, Letter 235; William the Sub-Prior and the Convent of Canterbury, Letter 254; Bishop Gilbert of London, Letter 290; Bishop Henry of Winchester, Letter 291; William the Sub-Prior and the Convent of Canterbury, Letter 292; Archbishop Roger of York, Letter 295. Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 859, 885, 1009, 1017, 1093, 1237, 1239, 1241, 1245.

## Letter 175

John's letter, written by the end of July 1166, was one of his best. It presented a detailed analysis of a missive the bishops in England had sent to Becket. It is lengthy and, while still encouraging Becket to moderation, it was clear that John was disabused of the notion that Henry would act in good faith. The text is replete with numerous scriptural passages and allusions; more than a dozen can be found in Becket's subsequent letters including one written to Pope Alexander after April 13, 1169.<sup>1182</sup> With material from that same letter from John, Becket earlier had upbraided King Henry in June 1166, repeating the admonition from 1 Samuel 22:18 concerning Doeg the Edomite's attacks on the priests as King Saul's urging.<sup>1183</sup> Becket plumbed the letter further for material for his own letters engaging Isaiah 5:20 and the warning to Bishop Gilbert of London, before June 30, 1166, to tell the truth and not to call evil good.<sup>1184</sup> The verse from John 19:12 that John of Salisbury drew upon was replayed in Becket's letter to Bishop Robert of Hereford, in early July 1166. The passage refers to the danger of speaking against Caesar and the resulting death of one who deigns to do so. Becket was indicating the danger to his own life for challenging Henry.<sup>1185</sup> The mimicry continued. In his letter, John directly quoted Ezekiel 13:4: "Thy prophets are like foxes in the desert, O Israel."<sup>1186</sup> The passage, or the sense of it, was replicated and expanded by Becket across a swath of letters.

---

<sup>1182</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 867. Other letters in the second collection of Becket's letters include #209 to Sub-Prior William and the Chapter of Canterbury and #212 to Bishop Roger of Worcester. Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 915, 931.

<sup>1183</sup> Letter 82, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 335.

<sup>1184</sup> Letter 90, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 365. "Ah, you who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 2006, 703.

<sup>1185</sup> Letter 97, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 447.

<sup>1186</sup> Letter 175, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 159.

The biblical reference appeared first in his July 1166 letter to “All English Clergy,” written nearly simultaneously with John’s letter to Becket.<sup>1187</sup>

John continued with his scriptural references, the majority of them from the Old Testament. Citing 2 Samuel chapters 15-17, he pointed to the story of Absalom. It was echoed in three of Becket’s epistles: to Pope Alexander; to Bishop Roger of Worcester; and to John of Naples, the Cardinal Priest of S. Anastasia.<sup>1188</sup> John expanded on the story of David and Absalom in 3 Kings (1 Kings) 18, and Becket eagerly added it to three letters, the first to Pope Alexander, written near 29 September 1169, followed by a letter to Bishop Henry of Winchester in March or April in 1170, and finally to “Pope Alexander on behalf of the Brethren of Newburgh,” sent perhaps in October 1170.<sup>1189</sup>

Becket was still not finished mining John’s letter. There was much Becket gathered for his own use. Displaying his substantial storehouse of knowledge, John paraphrased a verse from Luke’s gospel suggesting that the breach that divided the archbishop from his English clergy was not so firm that it could not be fixed.<sup>1190</sup> Becket, in his extraordinarily long missive to all the English Clergy, adapted the quotation to suggest that any clerics who wanted to could

---

<sup>1187</sup> Letter 95, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 391. It also appears in two other letters in the first collection: Letter 150 to Pope Alexander and Letter 151 to Albert and Theodwin. Albert was Cardinal Priest of S. Lorenzo and was later elected as Pope Gregory VIII. Theodwin was Cardinal Priest of S. Vitale, pp. 703, 713. The reference appears six times in the second collection of Becket’s letters. They are addressed to Pope Alexander, Letter 234; Bishop Hubald of Ostia, Letter 235; Cardinal William of Pavia, Letter 247; Cardinal John of the Title of SS Giovanni e Paolo, Letter 248; Bishop Henry of Winchester, Letter 283, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 1007, 1015, 1075, 1077, 1213. In full, Ezekiel 13:3-5, “Thus says the Lord God, Alas for the senseless prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! Your prophets have been like jackals among ruins, O Israel. You have not gone up into the breaches, or repaired a wall for the house of Israel, so that it might stand in battle on the day of the Lord.” *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 867.

<sup>1188</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 867, 931 1135.

<sup>1189</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 1007, 1213, 1331.

<sup>1190</sup> The complete quote of Luke 16:26 is “Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.” *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 81.

bridge the gap and cross over and join Becket in exile.<sup>1191</sup> In that same letter to the English clergy, Becket gathered up another allusion from Isaiah, this to verse 46:8. The reference was to a reminder to transgressors that they would be held accountable for their actions.<sup>1192</sup> John picked up the verbal threat and used it both against the English clergy and again in an epistle to Bishop Robert of Hereford.<sup>1193</sup> Continuing, John attributed a Christlike nature to Becket, applying a verse from Luke 24:21: “For it was hoped that he would free Israel.”<sup>1194</sup> The sense of the quote clearly appealed to Becket, who wrote to Bishop Robert of Hereford and used the quote to refer to his own notion of persecution. Becket wrote, “With what consistency of conscience can you neglect these things [injuries Becket has suffered], you whom [sic] we hoped would be the redeemer of Israel?”<sup>1195</sup> Becket adopted one additional reference from John’s letter and used it to embellish his epistle to Archbishop Conrad of Mainz after July 2, 1168. The allusion comes from Isaiah 1:23, and in John’s letter to Becket it reads, “Our enemies are determined—ours or rather the enemies of Christ and the Church—to wound us and pierce us with weapons stolen from us.”<sup>1196</sup> In his letter to Conrad, Becket referred to oppositional cardinals, warning that their dishonesty and tricks would lead to their damnation. Becket continued, “On the other hand, he may recall the others that they may feel the same in the

---

<sup>1191</sup> Letter 95, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 419.

<sup>1192</sup> The passage in Isaiah 46:8 reads, “Remember this and consider, recall it to mind, you transgressors.” *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 750.

<sup>1193</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 423, 449.

<sup>1194</sup> Letter 175, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 163.

<sup>1195</sup> Letter 97, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 444.

<sup>1196</sup> Letter 175, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 165. The verse from Isaiah is “Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not defend the orphan, and the widow’s cause does not come before them.” It is a subtle linkage of texts that suggests that there are enemies and evil all around. *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 699.

Lord, and not take gifts for the subversion of justice, the disgrace of the Apostolic See, and their rewards.”<sup>1197</sup>

### Letter 176

Shortly after sending Letter 175 to Becket, John wrote Letter 176. He sent it perhaps two weeks later. John shared further opinions in the writing about a raft of letters from Becket’s opponents among the English bishops and again counseled moderation to Becket. To buttress his advice and admonition, John embellished his epistle with a host of scriptural quotations and allusions. Becket embraced three of them, which he used in subsequent letters. A fourth, Haggai 1:5, 7, John had employed earlier and Becket had already adopted. The initial quote Becket chose from the letter was from 1 Kings 19:10, 14. John, in giving advice to Becket, underscored the prophet’s call for moderation, stating, “What you write will profit you in the measure that it bears witness against the bishops who have maligned you; let your moderation, as is particularly expedient, be known to all.”<sup>1198</sup> As one beleaguered and in exile, Becket found great use for the verses, imbedding them seven times in his missives, several of them to Pope Alexander.<sup>1199</sup> With the exception of the common salutation noted earlier, Becket’s use of a quotation followed its appearance in a letter from John to Becket. Further, in his letter, John made reference to the (former) Bishop of Hereford, Gilbert Foliot, a fierce rival who had deeply

---

<sup>1197</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 791.

<sup>1198</sup> Letter 176, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 169. The verses from Isaiah read, in relevant part, “I have been very zealous for the Lord...for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away” (Isaiah 19:10, 14). Here, again, John is leading Becket to moderation, though Becket prefers to stress that he has been a loyal servant and is being harmed for his actions. *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 362.

<sup>1199</sup> In the first collection of Becket’s letters, the epistles are #115 to Pope Alexander; #150, again to Alexander; #153 to Cardinal Boso; #170 to Alexander Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 557, 695, 721, 785. In the second collection of letters, the epistles are #200 to Pope Alexander; #212 to Bishop Roger of Worcester; #286, again to Bishop Roger of Worcester. Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 873, 929, 1223.



desired the archiepiscopacy of Canterbury. Gilbert was translated from Hereford to the more important bishopric of London in consolation for the loss of Canterbury. In a passage from Luke 24:21, John slyly attacked Foliot: "The bishop of Hereford was thought by most people to be the man which should have redeemed Israel"; however, John continued to criticize Foliot, though in the same breath urging Becket "to moderate language."<sup>1200</sup> Becket, using the same verse in a letter to Gilbert Foliot's successor at Hereford, Bishop Robert, mockingly grieved over Foliot, writing "you whom [sic] we hoped would be the redeemer of Israel."<sup>1201</sup> Later in the same letter, Becket used another quote from John's letter. John, in employing a verse from 2 Timothy, wrote, "But you, who remember the Lord, shall not be silent or grant silence to him, but follow the Apostle's saying: reprove, rebuke, exhort, in season, out of season."<sup>1202</sup> In the epistle to Bishop Robert, Becket mimicked, "With me withstand the attack to defend the patrimony if the Crucified and repel and expel the enemies of the Church, instill in my ears and inspire my spirit to beg more instantly, *reprove more sharply, rebuke more severely*."<sup>1203</sup>

Scriptural passages and quotations and allusions from classical authors that are found in John of Salisbury's letters to Becket are copied, replicated, and peppered throughout Becket's own epistles. Each usage by Becket was preceded by John's incorporation of the material in his letters. It was never the reverse.

---

<sup>1200</sup> Letter 176, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 173.

<sup>1201</sup> Letter 97, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 445.

<sup>1202</sup> Letter 176, John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 175. The verse in 2 Timothy 4:2 reads, "I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message: be persistent whether the time is favorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage with the utmost patience in teaching." *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 230.

<sup>1203</sup> Emphasis in original. Letter 97, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 443.

### *Treatises' Quotes and Allusions in Letters to Becket*

Beyond drawing from John's letters, Becket also inserted verses from two of the three major works that John had dedicated to Becket: the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* and the *Policraticus*. It is not surprising that Becket did not quote from the *Metalogicon*. Though it also was dedicated to Becket, it concerned education and the *trivium*, material in which Becket probably had less interest, despite the work's urging to cease warfare and return to England.

In a letter to William of Pavia in December 1167, Becket referred to "the sudden changes of fate," a refrain from Boethius' *De consolazione Philosophiae* that John referred to in the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, vv. 255-8.<sup>1204</sup> It is possible that Becket had read or knew about Boethius, though it is more plausible that he encountered the verses in the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*. Writing to the Cardinal Priest, Lord Henry of Pisa, in late November 1166, Becket added an allusion from Valerius Maximus about spiders' webs catching only the little flies while the larger flying creatures ripped through.<sup>1205</sup> It is not possible to discount that Becket had read the Latin author, yet it is more probable that he acquired the words from John of Salisbury; it appears in both the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* and the *Policraticus*.<sup>1206</sup> In a letter to Pope Alexander in early December 1167, Becket offered up an allusion to slaves that appeared in several comedies of Terence, notably *Davos* (also known as

---

<sup>1204</sup> Letter 154, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 5 fn. The verses, 255-8 from *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, read, "Her [philosophy's] wheel of fortune, like an empty trick, misleads the weak, whom she could have taught. She shows false aspects, and makes minor things seem important and important things seem of little account. She assigns wrong meanings to things, and gives them false names on her own authority." Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 250.

<sup>1205</sup> Letter 117, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 567.

<sup>1206</sup> *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*. "The nets which the spider weaves are easily loosed, but she makes the threads cling together with wonderful skill. They catch the small bodies of flies, but if greater bodies come up against them, they allow them to go wherever they wish." Elrington, "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*," 250, 311; *Policraticus*, vii. 20, John and Webb, *Policraticus*.

Davus) in *Andria* and Dorus in *Eunuchus*.<sup>1207</sup> In the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, John rejected the character of Davus, given his deceptions: “With glibness in his deceits, disturbing everything, Davus mocks everyone, and the house itself is ridiculed.”<sup>1208</sup> John further condemned the vainglory of Traso in *Eunuchus* in the *Policraticus*.<sup>1209</sup>

In his letter to William of Pavia, cardinal priest of S. Pietro in Vincoli, dated October 1167, Becket repeated a medical joke John had incorporated into the *Policraticus* more than eight years earlier: “And the physician says, ‘While the patient suffers, collect the money.’”<sup>1210</sup> The phrase originated in *Regimen Sanitatis Salernitanum* from the School of Salerno, written in the twelfth century.<sup>1211</sup>

Becket’s letter to Bishop Gilbert in London in early July 1166 drew upon an image from Horace’s *Epistolae*,<sup>1212</sup> one that John used loosely in the *Policraticus*.<sup>1213</sup> Becket wrote to his arch enemy, Gilbert, who had been nonetheless unctuous in his remarks about the Archbishop of Canterbury: “The wise man indeed does not neglect his reputation, but the prudent man

---

<sup>1207</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 704, fn. 24. P. Terentius Afer (Terence), *Andria*, the Fair Andrian, accessed August 14, 2020, [https://www.gutenberg.org/files/22188/22188-h/files/terence1\\_2.html](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/22188/22188-h/files/terence1_2.html); P. Terentius Afer (Terence), *Eunuchus*, “Introduction,” accessed August 14, 2020, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0088>.

<sup>1208</sup> Elrington, “John of Salisbury’s *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*,” 322.

<sup>1209</sup> Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 704, fn. 24. In the *Policraticus*, the references are found in Book iii, 4, and again in Book viii, 1. John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 19. See also John and Webb, *Policraticus*, 227.

<sup>1210</sup> “Sed proverbialiter dicitur, ‘Dum expectatur, tempus fugit, labitur e manibus, nec redit ad votum.’ Et medicus, ‘Dum dolet, accipe.’” Letter 142, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 657.

<sup>1211</sup> *Regimen Sanitatis Salernitanum: A Salernitan Regimen of Health*. A popular poem that incorporated information on medicine and health, likely derived from the Arabic text *Sirr al-asrar*. Tradition further associates it with a treatise on medicine written by Aristotle for Alexander the Great. Patricia Willet Cummins, *A Critical Edition of Le Regime Tresutile et Tresproufitable pour Conserver et Garder la Santé du Corps Humain* Cummins (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures, 1976), accessed August 15, 2020, <http://www.godecookery.com/regimen/regimen.htm>.

<sup>1212</sup> Horace, *Epistolae*, I, 16, 19, accessed August 15, 2020, [https://www.gutenberg.org/files/14020/14020-h/14020-h.htm#THE\\_FIRST\\_BOOK\\_OF\\_THE\\_EPISTLES\\_OF\\_HORACE](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/14020/14020-h/14020-h.htm#THE_FIRST_BOOK_OF_THE_EPISTLES_OF_HORACE).

<sup>1213</sup> John and Webb, *Policraticus*, I, 183; iii, 5,

believes no one more than himself about himself.”<sup>1214</sup> The phrase was commonly published in a grammar school text, the *Liber Catonianus*.<sup>1215</sup> John, the superior student, no doubt had learned and retained the proverb. Becket, the less diligent student, was perhaps exposed to the sentiment as well—but he may have needed the prompting of John and the *Policraticus* to recall it.

After June 12, 1166, Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Becket wrote to King Henry an extended and chastening letter that could not have been well received.<sup>1216</sup> In a lengthy passage, Becket reminded Henry of the biblical story of King Uzziah of Judah. Though Uzziah reigned during prosperity, he was struck down with leprosy, believed to be a consequence of his “prideful attempt to usurp the priestly prerogative of offering incense to the Temple.”<sup>1217</sup> It was a cautionary tale for a king. Uzziah’s fate is also recounted in the *Policraticus* in the final book, written well before Becket’s letter to Henry.<sup>1218</sup> In his letter to the king, Becket continued to describe how rulers and their courts who ran afoul of God were struck down. Uzziah, Becket noted, was not alone in suffering consequences for his actions. King Ahaz was another usurper of priestly rights. Uzzah, a driver of the cart carrying the ark of the covenant on the king’s order, attempted to steady it while on a journey to David’s city of Jerusalem. This was a holy function that did not belong to the king. On touching it, the cart driver died immediately.<sup>1219</sup> Once more,

---

<sup>1214</sup> Letter 96, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 431.

<sup>1215</sup> Chaucer and contemporary authors including Deschamps, Langland, and Gower frequently cited the *Liber Catonianus*. “Caton, Catoun (Cato),” Jacqueline De Weever, *Chaucer Name Dictionary*, 1988, accessed August 15, 2020, <http://www.columbia.edu/dlc/garland/deweever/C/caton1.htm>.

<sup>1216</sup> Letter 82, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 329.

<sup>1217</sup> “Uzzia(h), Christ Church,” *Holman Bible Dictionary*, ed. Trent Butler (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), 1387; 2 Chronicles 26:18-21, *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 450.

<sup>1218</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 215.

<sup>1219</sup> “Uzzah,” *Holman Bible Dictionary*, 1387; 2 Samuel 6:6-7, *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 311.

though Becket may have known the story of Uzzah and his death after touching the ark of the covenant, as well as the failures of Ahaz, he was conveniently reminded of it in the *Policraticus*.<sup>1220</sup>

Fully two years later, in June 1168, Becket wrote again to Pope Alexander.<sup>1221</sup> In his epistle, Becket inserted a passage from Claudian's text on the fourth consulship of the Emperor Honorius. In reference to the pope's own difficult political position, Becket urged him to be strong, adding, "For they are placed in a difficult position, and 'he who terrifies others is himself even more fearful.'"<sup>1222</sup> Nine years earlier, John had inserted the same words from the panegyric in the *Policraticus*: "He who terrorizes is more afraid himself; this destiny of tyrants is settled."<sup>1223</sup>

Writing to Hubald, bishop of Ostia, in a letter dated September 29, 1169, Becket likened King Henry II to Proteus, a shapeshifting Roman god of the sea. The quotation is from Horace's *Sermones* and also appears in *Florilegium Gallicum*, a medieval sort of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*.<sup>1224</sup> John included the imagery in the *Policraticus* as well as in his letter to Bartholomew of Exeter in February 1169, preceding Becket's by seven months.<sup>1225</sup>

---

<sup>1220</sup> John and Webb, *Policraticus*, viii 22, PP. 398-399.

<sup>1221</sup> Letter 169, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 771.

<sup>1222</sup> Letter 169, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 775. Claudian's phrase is from a panegyric recorded in *de quarto consulate Honorii*, viii, 290, Accessed August 15, 2020, [https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Claudian/De\\_IV\\_Consulatu\\_Honorii\\*.html#1](https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Claudian/De_IV_Consulatu_Honorii*.html#1).

<sup>1223</sup> John extended the quote in the *Policraticus*: "They live protected by swords and walled off from poisons; they endure the restrictions of uncertainty and are threatened by disturbances. Conduct yourself as a citizen or a father, take advice from everyone. And do not guide yourself according to your own wishes, but to the public will." John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 223.

<sup>1224</sup> An example of works in a *Florilegium* can be found in the text by Rosemary Burton, *Classical Poets in Florilegium Gallicum*, (Pieterlen and Bern: Peter Lang GmbH, 1982); See also John Bartlett, *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, ed. Emily Morison Beck, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980).

<sup>1225</sup> Letter 235, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, fn. 15. In John's letter to Bartholomew, Bishop of Exeter, he again went into great detail about the vicissitudes of the negotiations to return to England. In reference to Henry's participation in the discussion, John observed, again, that the king "qui

Sometime during 1170 Becket penned a letter to Giles, bishop-elect of Évreux, formerly the archdeacon of Rouen. In the epistle, Becket appreciatively acknowledged Giles' letter of encouragement. He also declared that he would be loyal to Henry, more so than to those who anoint with the oil of sinners,<sup>1226</sup> a reference to the irregular, uncanonical ordination of young King Henry by Archbishop Roger of York, among others. The phrase from Psalm 140 (141), verse 5 to which Becket alluded was "Never let the oil of the wicked anoint my head."<sup>1227</sup> More than a decade earlier, and well before the anointing of Young Henry, John used the same verse in the *Policraticus*, Book VI, Chapter 24. John, considering the prince whose vices were to be tolerated, used the same quotation to a slightly different end. Of "the ruler," meaning Henry without naming him, John wrote, "All applaud you, you are called Father and Lord of everyone, and upon your head is poured all the oil of the sinner."<sup>1228</sup>

Throughout his letters, Becket drew regularly on classical and scriptural passages that had appeared previously in John's letters to Becket and treatises dedicated to him. In all, John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket employed the same scriptural passage or reference to a biblical text more than thirty times in their letters. Becket's usage preceded that of John with regard to only one passage, one that was a traditional salutation. In each and every other instance, Becket's invocation of scripture followed exposure to usage by John in one of John's letters to Becket as chancellor or, later, as archbishop.

---

uersibilitate merito uidetur ipsum Prothea superare." That is, "he seemed truly to outdo Proteus himself in his versatility." Letter 288 John, Millor, Butler, and Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, 646-647.

<sup>1226</sup> Here Becket quoted Psalm 140 (141). Letter 287, Thomas and Duggan, *The correspondence of Thomas Becket*, 1227.

<sup>1227</sup> Psalm 140 (141), *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*, 641.

<sup>1228</sup> John and Nederman, *Policraticus*, 135.

Beyond scriptural quotes or allusions, Becket drew upon references from the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* four times, and the *Policraticus* seven times. Both texts were ones that Becket had encouraged John to write (or finish, in the case of the *Entheticus*) and were dedicated to Becket. In Becket's letters are a half-dozen quotes or references to classical authors, most of them from the *Policraticus* that was published while Becket was still in Henry's court and before he was elected archbishop of Canterbury. Becket did not always—or even frequently—follow John's urging, but the evidence is clear that Becket was listening.

## CONCLUSION

In assessing the considerable material that constitutes the entire canon of John of Salisbury, among them his treatises and his epistles, notably to Thomas Becket as chancellor and archbishop of Canterbury, we arrive at observations on the original questions presented. To what degree did John's writing, both manuscripts and letters, impact Becket's decisions and actions? In the few oral exchanges between the two that were recorded, did John sway Becket at any time? Whom, in addition to Becket, was John attempting to influence? What particular means was John using to achieve that influence? What do the measures of impact yield?

There can be no doubt that the immediate and intended target for John's messages was Becket. As a result of his extraordinary education that included the study of writings by classical authors, most especially Aristotle and Cicero, John developed a deep understanding of ethics and the Doctrine of the Mean. He engaged that knowledge to augment his comprehension of the necessity of Church liberty. The trauma of King Stephen's reign of anarchy and the chaos caused by the battle Stephen waged with Matilda for the throne affected John and his family, his brothers in particular. John feared a return to such disorder. Moreover, John lost confidence in Henry II's ability to resist being seduced by power in his desire to return to the ancient privileges of his grandfather, Henry I. John's grasp of Henry's desire for greater power and a return to the Ancient Customs presaged historian John Emerich Edward Dalberg, the first Lord Acton, who famously noted, "Absolute power corrupts absolutely."<sup>1229</sup>

---

<sup>1229</sup> The Phrase Finder, accessed August 20, 2020, <https://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/absolute-power-corrupts-absolutely.html>.



John's writings had an impact on Becket. The evidence is clear in myriad ways. John and Becket were acquainted for sixteen years, from the time that they served together in Archbishop Theobald's court in Canterbury until Becket's death in December 1170. Becket encouraged John to write both the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*. The texts both were delivered with some urgency to Becket in southern France during military combat. These two treatises, along with the lengthy poem, the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum*, were expressly dedicated to Becket. The copy containing *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus* dispatched to Becket contains a dedication to the chancellor.

John's fifteen letters to Becket—one jointly written by Becket and John—are replete with advice and counsel. Four were written to Becket as chancellor, and two of those John wrote on behalf of Theobald. The other two were personal in information and request to Becket. In several of John's letters that were written after he and Becket were in exile, John replied to a request for guidance that Becket has made. There can be little question that Becket read John's letters. Becket incorporated quotations and allusions, biblical and classical, in the letters that he then wrote to a wide range of correspondents including King Henry, Pope Alexander, and a catalogue of clerical supporters and detractors. The analysis demonstrates that Becket mimicked, echoed, and copied references from letters John wrote to him and the texts of the *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* and the *Policraticus* more than three dozen times.

Becket was a proud, even stubborn, man. In one of the few reported oral exchanges between John and him, hours before his murder, he refused to take John's advice and stand down or submit to the four barons and the armed men they brought to Canterbury Cathedral.

He rebuffed John in his final hour. And yet—and this is critical—he was willing to die for the principle of Church liberty, the very same principle that John had repeatedly pressed upon him for more than a decade. In the final measure, through his persistent advocacy, John succeeded in having an impact on Becket. Neither, though, could have imagined the effect of Becket's resistance and death. Henry had no choice but to relent in his attempts to reduce Church liberties, forswearing the Constitutions of Clarendon; he suffered humiliation at the hands of Canterbury monks and was forced to repent. Principles of John's treatise, the *Policraticus*, made more prominent because of its attachment to Becket, were incorporated into the Magna Carta beginning with the first article of the charter.<sup>1230</sup>

John knew that Becket alone could not bring about the reforms he desired for Henry's court, but chancellor Becket was the best vehicle he had to achieve those ends. John was keenly aware of his own status and his previous vulnerability, so offering up his concerns directly to Henry was impossible. However, it was necessary to get Henry's attention, and John employed Becket for that purpose. The initial scheme for court reform was not successful in the manner John calculated; nevertheless, his desire to protect Church liberties from royal overreach and to restrain aspects of royal behavior ultimately prevailed. There was a reprieve for the Church, and there was no repeat chaos of the Anarchy that he had witnessed as a young man. Through texts, treatises, and epistles, John of Salisbury was successful in the end—Church liberty was able to withstand some of Henry's most egregious efforts to return to the previous

---

<sup>1230</sup> "English Translation of the Magna Carta," British Library, accessed January 9, 2021, <https://www.bl.uk/magna-carta/articles/magna-carta-english-translation#>.

status of the Ancient Customs. John's chief goals were attained. Becket's death underscored them.

Admittedly, the trend in historical studies during the past two decades has moved from a proto-nationalism posture to globalization. Alice Walker, for example, examines medieval art from a globalist perspective. She is careful to note that "From the outset the medieval world did not witness a truly global network, with all continents of the earth linked through economic, political, and cultural relations." However, she points out that globalism need not be all encompassing or universal to evince shared aspects across territories or countries.<sup>1231</sup> Frits van Oostrom acknowledges that medieval studies "is in a process of being continuously scratched and varnished; and the more medieval studies ages and grows, the more our work is written on palimpsest."<sup>1232</sup> Interestingly, he credits American scholar of the Middle Ages with setting aside the notion of national medieval boundaries and presenting a broader assessment: "European scholars of the period, he contends, are too tightly bound to their present views of nation statehood."<sup>1233</sup> There are even centers and conferences dedicated to the concept of medieval globalization. A symposium in 2016 at Indiana University, Bloomington by the university's Medieval Studies Institute hosted research papers on a range of topics from "Trade Networks" and "Medieval Conceptions of Geography" to "Linguistic Interactions" and "Religion and Religious Minorities."<sup>1234</sup>

---

<sup>1231</sup> Alice Walker, "Globalism." *Studies in Iconography*. 33 (2012): 183, accessed March 12, 2021.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23924282>

<sup>1232</sup> Frits van Oostrom. "Spatial Struggles: Medieval Studies Between Nationalism and Globalization." *The Journal of English and German Philology*. 105 no. 1 (2006): 5, accessed March 11, 2021.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/27712564>

<sup>1233</sup> Van Oostrom, "Spatial Struggles: Medieval Studies Between Nationalism and Globalization," 9

<sup>1234</sup> "Medieval Globalism: Movement in the Global Middle Ages." The Twenty-Eighth Annual Spring Symposium of the Medieval Studies Institute of Indiana University, accessed March 12, 2021.

At the same time, we must give fair respect to what John and Becket referred to when they discussed Church liberties, for they were express in their language. Other contemporary leaders acknowledged the separate nature of the English Church as well. Archbishop Anselm described the church over which he presided as the *ecclesia Angliae* and Alexander III employed a similar term, *ecclesia Anglicana* later in the twelfth century. The emic examination—analyzing the texts in their historical and cultural environment—encourages us to appreciate controversy was centered on the Church in England; the concerns were not truly global in nature despite the fact that John and Becket spent considerable time on the continent.

As the research framework for this dissertation is based in major part on communication theories, it raises the question regarding the usefulness of such a method on a larger scale. What can the quantitative process of this research model reveal about documents—in the case of John letters and treatises—reveal beyond current knowledge? Van Oostrom noted that we are constantly writing on the palimpsest of the Middle Ages, adding layers. Perhaps we are also revealing concealed layers of the palimpsest as well. I submit that engaging communication theories can serve to enrich our enquiry and broaden our knowledge. These are useful tools to place in our toolbox.

Every set of research questions yields further propositions to be explored. While this dissertation has presented a new portal for viewing the relationship between John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket, there remains a deeper consideration that Professor Anne Duggan suggested in her email: what was the level of friendship between John and Becket? There is a

---

<https://www.medievalart.org/icmacommunitynews/2016/1/10/medieval-globalisms-movement-in-the-global-middle-ages>

second line of inquiry to investigate: what was the impact of the *Policraticus* on the U.S.

Constitution's First Amendment's prohibitions—"respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof"?<sup>1235</sup> I suspect that a dusting of powder will reveal John of Salisbury's fingerprints on the First Amendment.

---

<sup>1235</sup> This would appear to be an uninvestigated field. One scholarly article that tangentially makes a connection presents a link between the *Policraticus* and the American Revolution. David B. Kopel, "The Catholic Second Amendment," *Hamline Law Review* 29, no. 3 (2006): 519-564.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## REFERENCES

### *Primary Sources*

Abelard, Peter. "Prologue to Sic et Non." *Medieval Sourcebook*. Accessed March 19, 2020.  
<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/Abelard-SicetNon-Prologue.asp>.

Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Edited by Judith McClure and Roger Collins. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Bernard of Clairvaux. *The Letters of St. Bernard*. Translated by Bruno S. James. Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953.

Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 046: John of Salisbury, Policraticus, Metalogicon. Parker Library On the Web. Accessed May 22, 2020.  
<https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/fs743fm9703>.

Claudian. *On the Fourth Consulship of the Emperor Honorius*. Loeb, 1922.  
[https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Claudian/De\\_IV\\_Consulatu\\_Honorii\\*.html#1](https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Claudian/De_IV_Consulatu_Honorii*.html#1).

Chibnall, Marjorie, ed. *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*. Translated by Marjorie Chibnall. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.

Cummins, Patricia Willet. *A Critical Edition of Le Regime Tresutile et Tresproufitable pour Conserver et Garder la Santé du Corps Humain*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures, 1976.  
<http://www.godecookery.com/regimen/regimen.htm>.

"English translation of Magna Carta." The British Library. 28 July 2014.  
<https://www.bl.uk/magna-carta/articles/magna-carta-english-translation#>.

Henderson, Ernest F. *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*. London: George Bell and Sons, 1896. <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/medieval/constcla.asp>.

John of Salisbury. "Memoirs." in *Historia Pontificalis*. Edited and translated by Marjorie Chibnall. London: Nelson, 1956.

John of Salisbury. *Historia Pontificalis*. Edited by Reg. L. Poole. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927.

- John of Salisbury. *John of Salisbury's Entheticus Maior and Minor*. Edited by Jan van Laarhoven. 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1987.
- John of Salisbury. *Metalogicon*. Edited by C. C. J. Webb. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1929.
- John of Salisbury. *Metalogicon*. Translated by John Barrie Hall. Turnhout: Brepols, 2013.
- John of Salisbury. *Metalogicus in Opera Omnia*. Edited by J.A. Giles. Oxford, 1848.
- John of Salisbury. *Policraticus: of the frivolities of courtiers and the footprints of philosophers*. Edited and translated by Cary J. Nederman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- John of Salisbury. *Policraticus*. Edited by C. C. J. Webb. 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1909.
- John of Salisbury. *The Letters of John of Salisbury*. Edited by W. J. Millor, Harold Edgeworth Butler, and Christopher Brooke. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986.
- John of Salisbury. *The Metalogicon*. Translated by Daniel D. McGarry. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962.
- M. Tullius Cicero. *Against Catiline*. Perseus Digital Library. Accessed August 12, 2020.  
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Cic.%20Catil.%201.32&lang=original>.
- Haseldine, Julian, ed. *Oxford Medieval Texts: The Letters of Peter of Celle*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. Pierre de Celle, ep IV, 12.
- Horace, *Epistolae*. Project Gutenberg. Accessed August 15, 2020.  
[https://www.gutenberg.org/files/14020/14020-h/14020-h.htm#THE\\_FIRST\\_BOOK\\_OF\\_THE\\_EPISTLES\\_OF\\_HORACE](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/14020/14020-h/14020-h.htm#THE_FIRST_BOOK_OF_THE_EPISTLES_OF_HORACE).
- Pike, Joseph B. *Frivolities of courtiers and footprints of philosophers: being a translation of the first, second, and third books and selections from the seventh and eighth books of the Policraticus of John of Salisbury*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1938.
- Robertson, J.C. and J. B. Shepperd. *Materials for the History of Archbishop Thomas Becket*. 7 vols. London: Longman, 1875-85.
- Robertson, J.C., ed. *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, Rolls Series 67. London, 1875-1885.
- Savage, Anne, ed. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*. Translated by Anne Savage. London: Salamander Books, 2002.



Terence. *Andria, the Fair Andrian*. Project Gutenberg. Accessed August 14, 2020.  
[https://www.gutenberg.org/files/22188/22188-h/files/terence1\\_2.html](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/22188/22188-h/files/terence1_2.html).

Terence. *Eunuchus*. Perseus Digital Library. Accessed August 14, 2020.  
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0088>.

*The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Thomas Becket. *The Correspondence of Thomas Becket: Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162-1170*. Edited by Anne Duggan. 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2000.

Virgil. *The Aeneid*. Translated by John Dryden. Accessed September 3, 2020.  
<http://classics.mit.edu/Virgil/aeneid.6.vi.html>.

Webb, Clement C. J. *Policratici sive de nugis curialium et vestigiis philosophorum libri I*. vol. 2. Oxford, 1909.

William of Newburgh. *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*. Edited by Hans Claude Hamilton. London: Sumptibus Societatis, 1856.

### *Secondary Sources*

“Adam du Petit Pont.” In *The Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*. Edited by James Strong and John McClintock. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1880.  
<https://www.biblicalcyclopedia.com/A/adam-du-petit-pont.html>.

Albrecht, Felix. “Between Boon and Bane: The Use of Chemical Reagents in Palimpsest Research in the Nineteenth Century.” In *Proceedings of the Thirteenth International Seminar Held at the University of Copenhagen*, edited by J. Driscoll, 147–65. Museum Tusculanum Press, 2012.

Anderson, James A. *Communication Research and Methods*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1987.

Anglican Communion News Service. “Becket’s bones return to Canterbury Cathedral.” Accessed May 23, 2016. <https://www.anglicannews.org/news/2016/05/beckets-bones-return-to-canterbury-cathedral.aspx>.

Arduini, Maria Lodovica. “Contributo alla Ricostruzione Biografica di Giovanni di Salisbury.” *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica* 90, No. 1/2 (January - June 1998): 198-214.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43063381>.

Arlig, Andrew, “Peter Abelard.” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, August 8, 2018.  
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/abelard/>.

- Arsalidou, Marie and Juan Pascual- Leone. "Constructivist developmental theory is needed in developmental neuroscience." *npj Science of Learning* (2016).  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/npjscilearn.2016.16>.
- Baldwin, Marshall W. *Alexander III and the Twelfth Century*. New York: Newman Press, 1968.
- Barlow, Frank. "Edward [St. Edward; known as Edward the Confessor.]" *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, May 25, 2006. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8516>.
- Barlow, Frank. "John of Salisbury and His Brothers." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46, no. 1 (January 1995): 95-109. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022046900012562>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Theobald." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, January 2010.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/27168>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thomas Becket." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Accessed June 28, 2019.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/27201>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Edward the Confessor*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Thomas Becket*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
- Barrau, Julie. "John of Salisbury as Ecclesiastical Administrator." In *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, edited by Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, 105-144. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Bartlett, John and Justin Kaplan, eds. *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations: A Collection of Passages, Phrases, and Proverbs Traced to Their Sources in Ancient and Modern Literature*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1980.
- Bates, David. "Odo, Earl of Kent." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Accessed September 23, 2004. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/20543>.
- "Becket." IMDb. Accessed 28 October 2020. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0057877/>.
- Benedictine monks of St Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate. *The Book of Saints*. Harrisburg, Pa.: Morehouse Publishing, 1989.
- Berleson, Bernard. *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. Glencoe: Free Press, 1952.
- "Bernard of Chartres, French philosopher." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed August 27, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Bernard-de-Chartres>.
- Blake, N.F. "Rhythmical Alliteration." *Modern Philology* 67, no. 2 (Nov. 1967): 118-124.
- Blumenthal, Uta-Renate. "Gregorian Reform." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed September 23, 2011. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Gregorian-Reform>.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Investiture Controversy." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, June 13, 2016.  
<https://www.britannica.com/event/Investiture-Controversy>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988.
- Blumier, Jay G., Jack M. McLeod, and Karl Erik Rosengren eds. *Comparatively Speaking: Communication and Culture Across Space and Time*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1992.
- Bollermann, Karen and Cary J. Nederman. "A Special Collection of John of Salisbury's Relics of Saint Thomas Becket and other Holy Martyrs." *Mediävistik*, 26, (2013): 163-181.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "John of Salisbury." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2016 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2016/entries/john-salisbury/>.
- Borland, Elizabeth. "Standpoint theory." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2014.  
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/standpoint-theory>.
- Boudinhon, Auguste. "Minor Orders." In *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 12. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10332b.htm>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Secular Clergy." In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912. <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13675a.htm>.
- Braun, David. "Indexicals." In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Last modified January 16, 2015. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/indexicals/>.
- Brett Edward Whalen, "The Papacy." In *The Routledge History of Medieval Christianity 1050-1500*, edited by R.N. Swanson. London; New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Brett-Jones, Tony. "The White Ship Disaster." *London* 64 (Winter 1999): 23-26.
- British Library. "The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer." Accessed February 5, 2020.  
<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-canterbury-tales-by-geoffrey-chaucer>.
- "Bromius." In Hellenica World. Accessed May 26, 2020.  
<http://www.hellenicaworld.com/Greece/Mythology/en/Bromius.html>.
- Brooke, Christopher. "John of Salisbury and his World." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- Brooke, Z.N. *The English Church and the Papacy: From the Conquest to the Reign of John*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1931.

- Brooks, James L. *Broadcast News*. Accessed August 5, 2020.  
[http://dailyscript.com/scripts/broadc\\_news.html](http://dailyscript.com/scripts/broadc_news.html).
- Brown, Sister M. Anthony. "John of Salisbury." *Franciscan Studies* 19, no. 3/4 (September-December 1959): 241-297.
- Burke, Kenneth. *A Grammar of Motives*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1945.
- Burrell, Gibson and Gareth Morgan. *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis*. London: Heinemann, 1979.
- Burrow, J.A. "Should We Leave Medieval Literature to the Medievalists?" *Essays in Criticism* 53, no. 2 (2003): 278-283.
- Burton, Edwin. "Theobald." In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912. <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14567c.htm>.
- Butler, John R. *The quest for Becket's bones: the mystery of the relics of St Thomas Becket of Canterbury*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.
- Callahan, Thomas Jr. "The Impact of Anarchy on English Monasticism, 1135-1154." *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 6, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 218-232.
- Canning, Joseph. *A History of Medieval Political Thought, 300-1450*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- Canterbury Historical and Archaeological Society. "Thomas Becket Shrine." Accessed February 5, 2020. <http://www.canterbury-archaeology.org.uk/becket-shrine/4590809614>.
- Carpenter, D.A. King Henry III and Saint Edward the Confessor: The Origins of the Cult, *The English Historical Review*, 122, no. 498, (September 2007): 865–891.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/cem214>.
- Carter, Sue. email message to Anne Duggan, February 5, 2020.
- Charlesworth, Maxwell. "Introduction." In *St. Anselm's Proslogion with A Reply on Behalf of the Foot by Gaunilo and the Author's Reply to Gaunilo*. South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003.
- Chibnall, John and Marjorie Chibnall. *The Historia pontificalis of John of Salisbury*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986.
- Clark, Cecily. *The Peterborough Chronicle, 1170-1154*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.
- Communicationstudies.com. "Constructivism." Accessed February 4, 2020.  
<http://www.communicationstudies.com/communication-theories/constructivism>.

- Communicationstudies.com. "Standpoint Theory." Accessed February 4, 2020.  
<http://www.communicationstudies.com/communication-theories/standpoint-theory>.
- Communicationtheory.org. "Classical Rhetorical Theory." Accessed February 4, 2020.  
<https://www.communicationtheory.org/classical-rhetorical-theory/>.
- Communicationtheory.org. "Grounded Theory." Accessed August 25, 2020.  
<https://www.communicationtheory.org/grounded-theory/>.
- Communicationtheory.org. "The Narrative Paradigm." Accessed February 4, 2020,  
<https://www.communicationtheory.org/the-narrative-paradigm/>.
- Cooley, Charles Horton. *Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.
- Cooper, Alan. "Extraordinary Privilege: The Trial of Penenden Heath and the Domesday Inquest." *The English Historical Review* 116, no. 469 (Nov. 2001): 1167-1192.
- Corbin, Juliet and Anselm Strauss. *The Basics of Qualitative Research*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008.
- Creighton, Oliver H. and Duncan W. Wright. *The Anarchy, War and Status in 12<sup>th</sup>-Century Landscapes of Conflict*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016.
- Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1998.
- Cronne, H.A. *The Reign of Stephen: 1135-1154*. London: Trinity Press, 1970.
- Cropanzano, Russell and Marie S. Mitchell. "Social Exchange Theory: An Interdisciplinary Review." *Journal of Management* 31, no. 6 (2005): 874-875.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>.
- Dalgairns, John Dobree. *The Life of St. Thomas Becket of Canterbury*. Scotts Valley, Ca.: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015.
- Danto, Elizabeth Ann. *Historical Research*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Davis, R.H.C. *King Stephen – 1135-1154*. Essex: Longman Group UK, 1977.
- De Hamel, Christopher. *The Book in the Cathedral: The Last Relic of Thomas Becket*. London: Allen Lane, 2020.
- De Weever, Jacqueline. "Caton, Catoun (Cato)." In *Chaucer Name Dictionary*. New York: Garland, 1988. <http://www.columbia.edu/dlc/garland/deweever/C/caton1.htm>.

- Deanesly, Margaret. "The Anglo-Saxon Church and the Papacy." In *The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages*, edited by C.H. Lawrence, 29-62. New York: Fordham University Press, 1965.
- "Decretalists, Decretists." In Oxford Reference. Accessed June 24, 2020.  
<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095705595>.
- Delph, Ronald K. "Valla Grammaticus, Agostino Steuco, and the Donation of Constantine." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 57, no. 1 (Jan. 1996): 55-77.
- Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994.
- Deploige, Jeroen. "Sigebert of Gembloux." In *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, edited by R. G. Dunphy, 1358-1361. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
- Dickinson, John. "Introduction." In *The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury; Being the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Books, and Selections from the Seventh and Eighth Books, of the Policraticus*. New York: Knopf, 1927.
- Doherty, H.F. "Henry I's New Men." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Accessed May 21, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95593>.
- Donne, John. "For Whom the Bell Tolls." allpoetry.com. Accessed July 15, 2020.  
<https://allpoetry.com/For-whom-the-Bell-Tolls>.
- Draper, Peter. "Interpretations of the Rebuilding of Canterbury Cathedral. 1174-1186: Archaeological and Historical Evidence." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 56, no. 2, (Jun. 1997): 184-203.
- Duggan, Anne. "Authorship and Authenticity in the Becket Correspondence." In *Thomas Becket: Friends, Networks, Texts and Cult*, edited by Anne Duggan, 25-44. Abingdon: Ashgate. 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Classical Quotations and Allusions in the Correspondence of Thomas Becket: An investigation of Their Sources." *Viator* 32 (2001): 1-22.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 427-438. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thomas Becket: His Last Days." *The English Historical Review* 116, no 465 (2001): 185-185.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thomas Becket's Italian network." In *Pope, Church and City*, edited by Frances Andrews, Christoph Egger and Constance Rousseau, 177-201. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Thomas Becket: Friends, Networks, Texts and Cult*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Thomas Becket*. London: Arnold, 2004.

Anne Duggan, email message to author, February 6, 2020.

Duggan, Charles. "From the Conquest to the Death of John." In *The Routledge History of Medieval Christianity 1050-1500*, edited by R.N. Swanson. London; New York: Routledge, 2015.

Dunbabin, Jean. "Canterbury, John of [John Bellesmains]." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Accessed July 24, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2062>.

DuQuesnay Adams, Jeremy. "Clerical Schooling: Philip of Harvengt: *Thirteen Letters*." In *Patterns of Medieval Society*, edited by Jeremy duQuesnay Adams. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969.

Eliot, T.S. *Murder in the Cathedral*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1935.

Elrington, C.R. "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*: The Light it Throws on the Educational Background of the Twelfth Century." PhD Thesis, University of London, 1954.

Emerson, Richard M. "Social Exchange Theory." *Annual Review of Sociology*. 2 (1976): 335-362. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2946096>.

Emilsson, Eyjólfur. "Porphyry." In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. Accessed June 10, 2015. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/porphyry/>.

English Heritage. "Pevensey Castle." Accessed April 14, 2020. <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/pevensey-castle/>.

Evans, Jemahl. *A Turbulent Priest: The Story of Thomas Becket*. Independently published. 2020.

Evans, Sydney. "John of Salisbury: A Man of Letters." *The Hatcher Review*, 7 (Spring/Summer 1979): 3-18.

Fairclough, Norman. *Critical Discourse Analysis*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

FitzGerald, Brian D. "Medieval Theories of Education: Hugh of St Victor and John of Salisbury." *Oxford Review of Education* 36, no. 5 (2010): 575-588.

Franklin, R.M. "Reginald FitzUrse," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Accessed September 10, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9647>.

Freeman, Charles. *Holy Bones, Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.

- Fryde, E. B.; Greenway, D. E.; Porter, S.; Roy, I., eds. *Handbook of British Chronology* Third revised ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Galgano, Michael J., Chris Arndt, and Raymond M. Hyser. *Doing History: Research and Writing in the Digital Age*. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2013.
- Gerbner, George, Larry Gross, et al. "Living with television: The dynamics of the cultivation process," in *Perspectives on Media Effects*, edited by Jennings Bryant and Dolf Zillman, 17-40. New Jersey: Lawrence Earlbaum Association Inc, 1986.
- Giraud, Cédric and Constant Mews. "John of Salisbury and the Schools of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century." In *A companion to John of Salisbury*, edited by Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, 29-62. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Goyau, Georges. "Reims." In *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 12. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12725a.htm>.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- Grellard, Christophe and Frédérique Lachaud. "Introduction." In *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, edited by Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, 1-28. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Grellard, Christophe. "John of Salisbury and Theology." In *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, edited by Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, 339-373. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Guth, Klaus. "Hochmittelalterlicher Humanismus als Lebensform: ein Beitrag zum Standesethos des westeuropäischen Weltklerus nach Johannes von Salisbury." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 63-76. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- Guy, John. *Thomas Becket*. New York: Random House, 2012.
- Hansen, Anders and David Machin. *Media and Communication Research Methods*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Harin, Nicholas M. "Notes on the Council and Consistory of Rheims (1148)." *Mediaeval Studies* 28, no. 1 (Jan. 1966): 39-59.
- "Harold Lasswell." In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Last modified December 14, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Harold-Lasswell>.
- Harris, Margaret. "Alan of Tewkesbury and St. Thomas of Canterbury." *Reading Medieval Studies*, 16 (1990): 39-53.
- Haskins, Charles Homer. *The Rise of Universities*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1923.



- Hasseler, Elizabeth. "‘Do You Not Know I am a Healer?’ Royal Authority and Miracles of Healing in High Medieval Lives of Kings." 2016 International Medieval Congress.  
<https://www.medievalists.net/2016/08/do-you-not-know-i-am-a-healer-royal-authority-and-miracles-of-healing-in-high-medieval-lives-of-kings/> Accessed September 4, 2020.
- Heer, Friedrich. *The Medieval World 1100-1350*. London: Phoenix, 1998.
- "Heiric of Auxerre." *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. Encyclopedia.com. Accessed December 23, 2020. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/heiric-auxerre>.
- Hellemans, Babette. *Rethinking Abelard: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Leiden: Brill, 2014.
- Hill, Christopher P. "Gilbert Foliot and the two swords: law and political theory in twelfth-century England." PhD Thesis, University of Texas, 2008.
- Hirata, Yoko. "John of Salisbury and His Correspondents: A Study of the Epistolary Relationships Between John of Salisbury and his Correspondents." PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "John of Salisbury, Gerard Pucelle and *Amicitia*." In *Friendship in Medieval Europe*, edited by Julian Haseldine, 153-165. Phoenix Mill: Sutton Publishing, 1999.
- Hodder, Ian. "The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture." In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 393-402. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994.
- Hogan, Fr. John S. *Thomas Becket: Defender of the Church*. Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor, 2020.
- Hogan, John S. *Devotions to St Thomas Becket*. Leominster, Herefordshire, U.K.: Gracewing, 2018.
- Hollister, C. Warren. "Courtly Culture and Courtly Style in the Anglo-Norman World." *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 1-17.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Stephen's Anarchy." *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 6, no.3, (Autumn 1974): 233-237.
- Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints*. New York: Church Publishing Incorporated, 2010.

- Horton, Helena. "Canterbury Cathedral Fire in 12th Century Was Arson Committed by Monks 'jealous' of Durham's Beautiful Architecture, Historian Claims in New Book." *The Telegraph*. December 30, 2018.  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/12/30/canterbury-cathedral-fire-12th-century-arson-committed-monks/>.
- Hosler, John D. *Henry II: A Medieval Soldier at War, 1147-1189*. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *John of Salisbury: Military Authority of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Howard, D.M., J. Schofield, et al., "Synthesis of a Vocal Sound from the 3,000 year old Mummy, Nesyamun 'True of Voice.'" *Sci Rep* 10, 45000 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-56316-y>.
- Huizinga, Johan. "John of Salisbury: A Pre-Gothic Mind." In *Men and Ideas: History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance*, 159-177. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959.
- Hunt, William. "Lanfranc." In *Dictionary of National Biography*. Vol. 32. London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1885-1900.
- Ildebrando Pizzetti, Alberto Castelli, Italo Delle Cese, and T. S. Eliot. *Assassinio nella cattedrale: tragedia musicale in due atti e un intermezzo*. Milano: Ricordi, 1958.
- Jeauneau, Edouard. "Jean de Salisbury et la lecture des philosophes." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 77-108. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- "John Hyrcanus I, King of Judea." In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed December 19, 2014.  
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Hyrcanus-I>.
- "John of Salisbury, English Scholar." In *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Accessed February 5, 2020.  
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-of-Salisbury>.
- Jones, Dan. *The Plantagenets*. New York: Penguin Books, 2012.
- Kathleen Hughes, "The Celtic Church and the Papacy." In *The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages*, edited by C.H. Lawrence, 3-28. New York: Fordham University Press, 1965.
- Kauntze, Mark. *Authority and Imitation: A Study of the Cosmographia of Bernard Silvestris*. Leiden: Brill, 2014.  
[https://brill.com/view/book/9789004268357/B9789004268357\\_003.xml](https://brill.com/view/book/9789004268357/B9789004268357_003.xml).
- Kealey, Edward J. "King Stephen: Government and Anarchy." *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 6, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 201-217.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Roger of Salisbury, Viceroy of England*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.
- Kellogg, Susan. "The Years of Historical Research and Writing by Anthropologists, 1980-1990." In *The Uses of History Across the Social Sciences*, edited by Eric. H. Monkkonen, 9-47. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994.
- Kemp, B. R. "Roger of Salisbury administrator and bishop of Salisbury." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Accessed September 23, 2004. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/23956>.
- Kemp, John Arthur. "Saint Anselm of Canterbury." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed April 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Anselm-of-Canterbury>.
- Kent, W. "St. Anselm In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01546a.htm>.
- Kerner, Max. *Johannes von Salisbury un die logische Struktur seines Policraticus*. Wiesbaden, 1977.
- Kinder, Herman and Werner Hilgemann. *The Anchor Atlas of World History*. Vol. I. Translated by Ernest Menze. New York: Anchor Books, 1964.
- King, Edmund. "Henry de Blois." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Accessed October 7, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12968>.
- King, Peter and Andrew Arlig, "Peter Abelard." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2018 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/abelard/>.
- Kirsch, Gesa E. and Liz Rohan. *Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008.
- Klaniczay, Gabor, ed. *Medieval Canonization Processes: Legal and Religious Aspects*. Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 2004.
- Kneepkens, C.H. "John of Salisbury." In *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, edited by Jorge J. E. Garcia and Timothy N. Noone, 392-296. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.
- Knowles, David. *The Episcopal Colleagues of Archbishop Thomas Becket*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Thomas Becket*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971.
- Konieczny, Peter. "Was the White Ship Disaster Mass Murder?" *Medievalists.net*. Accessed May 2013. <https://www.medievalists.net/2013/05/was-the-white-ship-disaster-mass-murder/>.

- Krey, August Charles. "John of Salisbury's Knowledge of the Classics." BA Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1907.
- Lacy, Stephen, Brendan R. Watson, Daniel Riffe, Daniel, and Jennette Lovejoy. "Issues and Best Practices in Content Analysis." *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 92, 4 (2015): 1-21.
- "Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed May 24, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Lanfranc>.
- Lasswell, Harold D. and L. Bryson. "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society." In *The Communication of Ideas*, edited by Harold D. Lasswell and L. Bryson, 37-51. New York: Institute for Religious and Social Studies, 1948.
- Lewis-Stempel, John. *England: The Autobiography*. London: Penguin Books, 2005.
- Leyser, K. "Frederick Barbarossa, Henry II and the Hand of St. James," *The English Historical Review* 90, no. 356 (Jul. 1975): 481-506.
- "Liber Extra and Decretum, Decretists," The Medieval Canon Law Virtual Library. Accessed September 24, 2009. <http://web.colby.edu/canonlaw/tag/glossa-ordinaria/>.
- "Liberal Arts." In *Encyclopedia Britannica* August 10, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/liberal-arts>.
- Liebeschütz, Hans. "Chartres und Bologna Naturbegriff und Statsidee bei Johannes von Salisbury." *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 1968.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Mediaeval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury*. London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1950.
- Lippmann, Walter. *Public Opinion*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922.
- Lotha, Gloria. "Marsilius of Padua." In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed January 29, 2007. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Marsilius-of-Padua>.
- Luscombe, D.E. *The School of Peter Abelard: The Influence of Abelard's Thought in the Early Scholastic Period*. London: Cambridge, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "John of Salisbury in Recent Scholarship." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 21-37. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "John of Salisbury." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Accessed May 19, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/14849>.

- Lynsey, Robertson. "Exile in the Life and Correspondence of John of Salisbury." In *Exile in the Middle Ages: Selected Proceedings from the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 8-11 July 2002*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2004.
- Lyon, Bryce Dale. *A Constitutional and Legal History of Medieval England*. Second edition. New York: Norton, 1980.
- Malone, Carolyn Marino. *Twelfth-Century Sculptural Finds at Canterbury Cathedral and the Cult of Thomas Becket*. Oxford; Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2019.
- Mambrol, Nasrullah. "Foucault's Influence on New Historicism." *Literary Theory and Criticism*. Accessed October 2016. <https://literariness.org/2016/10/21/foucaults-influence-on-new-historicism/>.
- Mark, Joshua J. "Orosius." *Ancient History Encyclopedia*. Accessed June 10, 2020. <https://www.ancient.eu/Orosius/>.
- Martin, Janet. "John of Salisbury as a Classical Scholar." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 179-201. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- "Master Vacarius." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed July 20, 1998. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Vacarius>.
- Mayr-Harting, Henry. *Religion, Politics and Society in Britain 1066-1272*. London: Longman, 2011.
- McDowell, W.H. *Historical Research: A Guide*. London: Longman, 2002.
- McGarry, Daniel D. "Educational Theory in the *Metalogicon* of John of Salisbury." *Speculum* 23, no. 4 (Oct. 1948): 659-675.
- McInerny, Ralph. "The School of Chartres." In *A History of Western Philosophy*. <https://maritain.nd.edu/jmc/etext/hwp212.htm>.
- McKeon, Richard. "Poetry and Philosophy in the Twelfth Century: The Renaissance of Rhetoric." *Modern Philology* 43, no. 4 (May 1946): 217-234.
- McKitterick, Rosamund. *Atlas of the Medieval World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- McLoughlin, John. "Amicitia in Practice: John of Salisbury (c. 1120-1180) and His Circle." In *England in the Twelfth Century*, Daniel William, ed. 165-180. Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Language of Persecution: John of Salisbury and the Early Phase of the Becket Dispute (1163-66)." *Studies in Church History* 21 (1984): 73-87. doi:10.1017/S0424208400007543.

- McNeill, John. "History of Old Sarum." English Heritage. Accessed March 11, 2020, <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/old-sarum/history/>.
- Medieval Studies Institute of Indiana University. "Medieval Globalism: Movement in the Global Middle Ages." The Twenty-Eighth Annual Spring Symposium of the Medieval Studies Institute of Indiana University, Bloomington. Accessed April 21, 2021. <https://www.medievalart.org/icmacommunitynews/2016/1/10/medieval-globalisms-movement-in-the-global-middle-ages>.
- Mews, Constant J. "Peter Abelard." In *Oxford Bibliographies*. Accessed July 27, 2016. DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780195396584-0208.
- Miller, Katherine. *Communication Theories, Perspectives. Processes and Contexts*. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005.
- Millor, W.J., S.J. Butler, and H. E. Butler (revised by C. N. L Brooke). *The Letters of John of Salisbury*. Vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986.
- Moorman, John R.H. *A History of the Church in England*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 1980.
- Moretti, Franco. *Distant Reading*. New York: Verso, 2013.
- Morris, John. *The Life and Martyrdom of Saint Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*. London: Burns and Oates, 1885.
- Mortimer, Richard, ed. *Edward the Confessor: The Man and the Legend*. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2009.
- "Murder in the Cathedral." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed May 29, 2012. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Murder-in-the-Cathedral>.
- Murray, Patrick. "Thomas Becket of Canterbury: 800 years on," *Studies, An Irish Quarterly Review* 59, no. 233 (Spring 1970): 68-80.
- Mydan, Shelley. *Thomas: A Novel of the Life, Passion, and Miracles of Becket*. New York: Doubleday, 1965.
- Nederman, Cary J. "A Duty to Kill: John of Salisbury's Theory of Tyrannicide." *Review of Politics* 50, no. 3 (2002): 365-389.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Nature, Ethics, and the Doctrine of 'Habitus': Aristotelian Moral Psychology in the Twelfth Century." *Traditio* 45 (1989-1990): 87-110.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Aristotelian Doctrine of the Mean and John of Salisbury's 'Concept of Liberty.'" *Vivarium* 24, no. 2 (1986): 128-142.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Liberty of the Church and the Road to Runnymede: John of Salisbury and the Intellectual Foundations of the Magna Carta." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 43, no. 3 (2010): 457-461.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *John of Salisbury*. Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Lineages of European Political Thought*. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Friendship in Public Life During the Twelfth Century: Theory and Practice in the Writings of John of Salisbury." *Viator* vol. 38, no. 2 (2007): 385-397.
- Nederman, Cary J. and Arlene Feldwick. "To the Court and Back Again: The Origins and Nature of the Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum of John of Salisbury." *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 21 (1991): 129-145.
- Nederman, Cary J. and Catherine Campbell. "Priests, Kings, and Tyrants: Spiritual and Temporal Power in John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*." *Speculum* 66, no. 3 (1991): 572-590.
- "Notre-Dame de Paris." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed May 24, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Notre-Dame-de-Paris>.
- Novikoff, Alex J. "Peter Abelard and Disputation: A Reexamination." *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 32 no. 4 (Autumn 2014): 323-347.
- O'Daly, Irene. 2018. *John of Salisbury and the Medieval Roman Renaissance*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018.
- O'Connor, John Francis. "An Annotated Translation of the Letters of John of Salisbury." MA Thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 1947. [https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_theses/672](https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/672).
- Orme, Nicholas. *Education in the West of England, 1066-1548: Cornwall, Devon, Dorset. Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1976.
- Our Sunday Visitor. "Home Page." Accessed November 29, 2020. <https://www.osv.com/>.
- Overgaard, Søren and Dan Zahavi. "Phenomenological Sociology: The Subjectivity of Everyday Life." In *Encountering the Everyday: An Introduction to the Sociologies of the Unnoticed*, edited by Michael Hviid Jacobsen, 93-115. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009.
- Packer, Martin. *The Science of Qualitative Research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Palgrave, Francis. *The History of Normandy and of England*. Vol. iv. Edited by R. H. Inglis Palgrave. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921.

- "Pallium." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed August 20, 2020.  
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/pallium-ecclesiastical-vestment>.
- Park, Robert Ezra and E. W. Burgess. *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1921.
- Parsons, Talcott. "Max Weber 1864-1964." *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 2 (April 1965): 171-175.
- Pearsall, Derek. "Medieval Literature and Historical Inquiry." *The Modern Language Review* 99, No. 4 (Oct. 2004): xxxi-xlii.
- Pennington, Kenneth, and Jason Taliadoros. "Law and Theology in Twelfth-Century England. the Works of Master Vacarius (c. 1115/20-c. 1200)." *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 60.4 (2009): 795-6. ProQuest.
- Pepin, Ronald E. "John of Salisbury as a Writer." In *A companion to John of Salisbury*, edited by Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, 145-179. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Anselm & Becket: two Canterbury saints' lives*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2009.
- Perelman, Les. "The Medieval Art of Letter Writing: Rhetoric as Institutional Expression." In *Textual Dynamics of the Professions*, edited by Charles Bazerman and James Paradis, 97-119. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991.
- Perry, George Gresley. "Eadmer." In *Dictionary of National Biography 1885-1900*, v. 16.  
[https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Eadmer\\_\(DNB00\)](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Eadmer_(DNB00)). Accessed June 27, 2020.
- Peters, Timothy. "An Ecclesiastical Epic: Garnier de Pont-Ste-Maxence's 'Vie de Saint Thomas le Martyr.'" *Mediævistik* 7 (1994): 181-202.
- Potter, W. James. *An Analysis of Thinking and Research about Qualitative Methods*. Mahwah: Lawrence Earlbaum, 1996.
- R. N. Swanson, ed. *The Routledge History of Medieval Christianity 1050-1500*. London; New York: Routledge, 2015.
- "Rainald of Dassel." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed August 10, 2020.  
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Rainald-of-Dassel>.
- Rawson, Elizabeth. "The Identity Problems of Q. Cornificius." *The Classical Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (1978): 188-201.
- Redman, Samuel J. *Historical Research in Archives: A Practical Guide*. American Historical Association, 2013.



- Rennie, Kriston. *Freedom and protection: Monastic exemption in France, c. 590 – c. 1100*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018.
- Riché, Pierre. "Jean de Salisbury et le Monde Scolaire du XIIe Siècle." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 39-61. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- Robertson, Durante Waite. "Historical Criticism." In *Essays in Medieval Culture*, 3-31. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1950.
- Robertson, Lynsey. "Exile in the Life and Correspondence of John of Salisbury." In *Exile in the Middle Ages: Selected Proceedings from the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 8-11 July 2002*, edited by Laura Napran and Elisabeth M. C. Van Houts, 181-197. Turnhout: Brepols, 2004.
- Rolin, Kristina. "Standpoint Theory as a Methodology for the Study of Power Relations." *Hypatia* 24. No.4 (Fall 2009): 218-226. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20618192>.
- Rosengren, Karl Erik. "Communication Research: One Paradigm or Four?" *Journal of Communication* 33, no. 3 (September 1983): 185-207.
- Rouse, Richard H. and Mary A. Rouse. "John of Salisbury and the Doctrine of Tyrannicide." *Speculum* 42, no. 4 (October 1967): 693-709.
- Saltman, Avrom. "John of Salisbury and the World of the Old Testament." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 343-359. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury*. London: University of London, Athlone Press, 1956.
- "Schism of 1054." In *The Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed December 2, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/event/East-West-Schism-1054>.
- Schriber, Carolyn Poling. *The Dilemma of Arnulf of Lisieux*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Senette, Douglas John. "A Cluniac Prelate: Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester (1129-1171)." PhD Thesis, Tulane University, 1991.
- Shafer, Robert Jones, ed. *A Guide to Historical Method*. Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1980.
- Sheerin, Daniel Joseph. "John of Salisbury's *Entheticus de Dogmate Philosophorum*, Critical Text and Introduction." PhD Thesis, University of North Carolina, 1969.
- Sisson, Keith and Atria A. Larson, eds., *A Companion to the Medieval Papacy*. Leiden: Brill, 2016.

- Slocum, Kay Brainerd. *The Cult of Thomas Becket: History and Historiography Through Eight Centuries*. London: Routledge, 2018.
- Smalley, Beryl. *The Becket Conflict and the Schools*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973.
- Smith, Robin. "Aristotle's Logic." In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. Fall 2020 edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-logic/#AriLogWorOrg>.
- Sønnesyn, Sigbjørn. "Qui Recta Quae Docet Sequitur, Uere Philosophus Est: The Ethics of John of Salisbury." In *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, edited by Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud, 307-338. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Sopronyi, Judy. "Book Review: Thomas Becket: His Last Days." Review of *Thomas Becket: His Last Days*, by William Urry and Peter A. Rowe. *HISTORYNET*. Accessed December 17, 2020. <https://www.historynet.com/book-review-thomas-becket-his-last-days-by-william-urry-bh.htm>.
- Southern, R.W. *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1970.
- Sprigge, T.L.S. "Idealism." In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 1998. doi: 10.4324/9780415249126-N027-1.
- Staunton, Michael. *The Lives of Thomas Becket*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Thomas Becket and his Biographers*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 2006.
- Stewart, Thomas D. *Principles of Research in Communication*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002.
- Struve, Tilman. "The Importance of Organism." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 303-317. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- Taylor, Quentin. "John of Salisbury, the *Policraticus*, and Political Thought." *Humanitas*, xix, nos. 1 and 2, (2006): 133-157.
- The City of London. "The City's Government." Accessed May 1, 2020. <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-the-city/history/Pages/city-government.aspx>.
- "Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, April 28, 2020, <https://www.brittanica.com/biography/Theobald>.
- Thomas, Hugh M. "Shame, Masculinity and the Death of Thomas Becket." *Speculum* 87, no. 4 (October 2012): 1050-1088.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Secular Clergy in England, 1066-1216*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Thomas, Northcote W. *Crystal Gazing*. New York: Dodge Publishing, 1905.
- Thomson, Rodney. "What is the *Entheticus*?" In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 287-301. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- Thurston, H. "St. Hilda." In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07350a.htm>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Peterspence." In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911. <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11774a.htm>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "St. Thomas Becket." In *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 14. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912) accessed April 17, 2020, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14676a.htm>.
- Tierney, Brian. "Religion and Rights: A Medieval Perspective." *Journal of Law and Religion* 5, no. 1 (1987): 163-175.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Church Law and Constitutional Thought in the Middle Ages*. London: Variorum Reprints, 1979.
- Treviño, A. Javier. "George C. Homans, the human group and elementary social behaviour." In *The encyclopedia of pedagogy and informal education*. Last modified 4 April 2013. [www.infed.org/thinkers/george\\_homans.htm](http://www.infed.org/thinkers/george_homans.htm).
- Tuchman, Gaye. "Historical Social Science: Methodologies, Methods, and Meanings." In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. 306-323. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994.
- Tulane University School of Social Work. "What is Social Exchange Theory?" April 20, 2018. <https://socialwork.tulane.edu/blog/social-exchange-theory>.
- Turner, J.H. "Positivism: Sociological." In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2001. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/positivism>.
- Turville-Petre, Thorlac and J. A. Burrow. *A Book of Middle English*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2020.
- Ullmann, Walter. *A Short History of the Papacy in the Middle Ages*. London: Methuen, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Medieval Papalism: The Political Theories of the Medieval Canonists*. London: Methuen, 1949.
- Upward, Christopher and George Davidson. *The History of English Spelling* Vol. 26. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

- Urry, William, and Peter A. Rowe. *Thomas Becket: His Last Days*. Stroud: Sutton, 1999.
- Urry, William. "Some Thoughts on the Second Volume of John of Salisbury's Letters." *The Hatcher Review*, 10 (Summer 1980).
- "Uzzia(h)." In *Holman Bible Dictionary*, edited by Trent Butler. Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991.
- Van Engen, John ed. *The Past and Future of Medieval Studies*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994.
- Van Laarhoven, Jan. "Thou Shall Not Slay a Tyrant! The So-Called Theory of John of Salisbury." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 319-341. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Titles and Subtitles of the 'Policraticus': A Proposal." *Vivarium*, 32, no. 2 (1994): 131-160.
- Van Oostrom, Frits. "Spatial Struggles: Medieval Studies between Nationalism and Globalization." *The Journal of English and German Philology*, 105, no. 1 (January 2006): 5-24.
- Veach, Colin. "Henry II and the ideological foundations of Angevin rule in Ireland." *Irish Historical Studies*, 42, no. 161 (May 2018): 1-25.
- "Vere Family." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, October 17, 2019.  
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Vere-family>.
- Von Moos, Peter. "The Use of *Exempla* in the *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 207-261. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1984.
- Warren, W.L. *Henry II*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973.
- Walker, Alice. "Globalism." *Studies in Iconography*, 33 (2012): 183-196.
- Watt, John A. "Spiritual and Temporal Powers." In *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, edited by J.H. Burns, 397-410. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Webb, Clement C. J. *John of Salisbury*. London: Methuen & Co., 1932.
- Webster, Paul and Marie-Pierre Gelin, eds. *The Cult of St Thomas Becket in the Plantagenet World, C.1170-C.1220*. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2016.
- Wei, Ian P. "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-Century Universities: The Disappearance of Biographical and Autobiographical Representations of Scholars." *Speculum* 86, no. 1 (January 2011): 42-78.

- Weijers, Olga. "The Chronology of John of Salisbury's Studies in France (Metalogicon 11, 10)." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks, 109-116. Basil Blackwell, 1994.
- Weiler, Björn, "The king as judge: Henry II and Frederick Barbarossa as seen by their contemporaries." In *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter*, edited by P. Skinner, 115-140. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009.
- West, Andrew Fleming "The Seven Liberal Arts," In *Alciun and the Rise of the Christian Schools*, edited by Christopher A. Perrin. Classical Academic Press, 2010.
- Wetherbee, Winthrop. "Bernardus Silvestris." In *Oxford Bibliographies*. Accessed February 28, 2017. <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195396584/obo-9780195396584-0223.xml>.
- Whitney, James Pounder. "Gregory VII." *The English Historical Review* 34, no. 134 (1919): 129-151.
- Wilks, Michael, ed. *The World of John of Salisbury*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "John of Salisbury and the Tyranny of Nonsense." In *The World of John of Salisbury*, edited by Michael Wilks. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- Willard, Barbara. *If all the Swords in England: A Story of Thomas Becket*. New York: Doubleday, 1961.
- Winroth, Anders. *The Making of Gratian's Decretum*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Wodak, Ruth. "Critical Discourse Analysis." In *Communicative Repertoire I*, edited by Ruth Wodak, 302-316. London: Sage, 2013.
- "The Wreck of the White Ship." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed March 14, 2002. <https://web.archive.org/web/20190224173818/http://www.britannia.com/history/bb1120.html>.
- writemedieval. "How Far, How Fast?" *Medieval Worldbuilding Information* (blog), October 13, 2009. <https://writemedieval.livejournal.com/4706.html>.
- Yi, Erika. "Themes Don't Just Emerge – Coding the Qualitative Data." *Medium*, 23 July 2018. <https://medium.com/@projectux/themes-dont-just-emerge-coding-the-qualitative-data-95aff874fdce>.

