

Thomas Bradwardine, *De causa dei contra Pelagium*Thomas Buckingham, *Quaestiones theologicae*

¶ This manuscript combines, uniquely, a famous work by Thomas Bradwardine (c. 1300–1349) with a strongly opposed work by his former student at Merton College, Thomas Buckingham (d. c. 1356). Bradwardine, an Oxford Calculator and, in the last year of his life, archbishop of Canterbury, had composed the compendious *De causa Dei* in 1344 as an investigation of God's nature and creation in respect of grace, free will, action and future contingencies. The *Quaestiones theologicae* of Thomas Buckingham were written in response. He is stated here to be formerly chancellor of Exeter ('nuper ecclesie Exoniensis cancellarium', fol. 324r), a dignity he held until his death in the pestilence, in 1348 or 1349. A group of *quaestiones* in the latter part of Buckingham's work was apparently the basis of a disputation held in the chapter house at Exeter, providing rare later medieval evidence for advanced scholastic debate at an English cathedral school. Buckingham's promotion to the chancellorship owed much to the encouragement of the learned bishop of Exeter, John de Grandisson (*sedit* 1327–69).

fol. 2r. A few cursively written notes on topics with folio references (s. xiv^{med}).

fol. 2v. Inscriptions recording William Reed's ownership and his subsequent gift of the book to New College (see below, *History*).

I

1 (fols. 3ra–322ra) *De causa Dei contra Pelagium et de virtute | causarum Thome de Bradewardina can|cellarii London'* (added by another hand in grey ink:) /et postea Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis\ || Magnorum et multorum petitionibus atque | repeticionibus cumulatis incessanter | sollicitor . vt que nuper de causa dei contra | pelagium et de virtute causarum in cas|tris scolasticis militando . voce tran|seunte deprompteram; scripture man|cipem remanenti. . . . sub inuictissimis | signis tuis militaturus continue accipio causam | tuam || (4v) ¶ Dignantibus autem opusculum istud inspicere . pro quota|cionibus textus Aristotelis aduertendum . quod vbi Auerois commentando | exponit . quotacio sumitur secundum particiones ipsius et particulas | commentorum . alibi autem secundum diuisiones capitulorum apud alios | consuetas. || ¶ Capitula Primi libri. || Primum premitit duas supposiciones . quarum prima est . Deus | est summe perfectus et bonus . . . (6r) ¶ Capitulum .53. contra promptulos accusatores . \faciles/ indices et pre|cipites dampnatores . ¶ et ponit .36. capitula | que sibi videntur erronea . implorans humiliter auctoritatem | ecclesie . quatenus determinet veritatem. || (6v, inc. text:) In primis firmissime supponatur . quod deus est summe | perfectus et bonus . in tantum . quod nihil perfectius vel | melius esse posset. Hec autem suppositio posset euidenter | ostendi . ex magnitudine perfectionis et bonitatis ipsius . | que est simpliciter infinita . sicut rationibus philosophicis et theologicis | posset multipliciter demonstrari. . . . (165v) Spiritus veritatis nos doceat veritatem. || AMEN || *Explicit liber primus* || (four blank lines; 166r) Tractatu siquidem premissorum | huc vsque continuo . progressoque in longius quam putaui . . . (fol. 237v) semper et vbique incessabili voce cordis oris et | operis; gratias agamus domino deo nostro. || *Explicit Liber secundus* || (one blank line; 238r) Pelagiani autem pestiferi . et multiplici gra|cie dei ingrati . nituntur auferre a deo | debitas gracias . . . (322r) aut erronee credidisse resur|rectionem mortuorum diem iudicii aut vitam eternam | futuram . et quod necesse est hec fore . reprobos quoque | habere supplicium . et electos gaudium sempiternum. || *Explicit istud opus de causa dei contra | pelagium . et de virtute causarum . virtute | dei cause causarum . per scriptum London . | Anno Millesimo trecentesimo quadragesimo | quarto domini ihesu cristi.*

Thomas Bradwardine, *De causa Dei contra Pelagium*: ed. H. Savile (London 1618, repr. Frankfurt/Main 1964); Sharpe, *Latin Writers*, 643. This copy lacks the opening and closing epistles to the warden and scholars of Merton College. See further G. Leff, *Bradwardine and the Pelagians* (Cambridge 1957); B. Fleming, *Thomas of Bradwardine. Oxford Scholar, Royal Servant, and Archbishop of Canterbury* (Leuven 1964); J.-F. Genest, *Prédétermination et liberté créée à Oxford au XIV^e siècle. Buckingham contre Bradwardine* (Paris 1992).

fols. 322r–323v. The rest of col. a, col. b and the following three pages are blank.

II

2 (fols. 324r–438v) Qvestiones tractate per | thomam de Bukyngham | nuper ecclesie exoniensis | Cancellarium . ostendentes | inter errores pelagii | Cicheronis et scoti catholicum medium | inuenire . ac predestinacionem . preordinacionem | preuolucionem eternam concursumque dei stare | cum libera voluntate et merito creature et | ideo ab effectu ostensio meriti libere accionis | sequens opusculum nominatur . et iuxta modum | Oxonie actenus obseruatum in sua incepcione | sue principio questionem materias quas tractare | disposuit continentem proposuit sub hac forma. || (*inc. text.*) Utrum credere prophecie de aliquo | contingenter futuro sit meritorium cre|ature . Primo tractauit de contingencia | futurorum et arbitrii libertate — (437ra) Utrum omne peccatum sit magis fulgibile quam eligibile sit aliquid circa deum . . . quia etiam aggregatum ex peccato et alio quamcumque bono | sit fugibile ostenditur per anselmum libro primo — (438rb) non materiam | subditos suos post curare. (*misplaced from after 390v*) Utrum in cuiuslibet conuersione vera | ad fidem Christi sit remissio pec|catorum plena . . . cum in id | tantum commorimur et consepelimur Christo.

Thomas Buckingham, *Quaestiones theologiae: quaest. 1, De contingentia futurorum et arbitrii libertate*, ed. B. R. de la Torre, *Thomas Buckingham and the Contingency of Futures* (Notre Dame, IN, 1987); also ed. J.-F. Genest, *Prédétermination et liberté créée à Oxford au XIV^e siècle. Buckingham contre Bradwardine* (Paris 1992), 184–290; *quaest. 24, Utrum sit necesse ponere Deum esse extra mundum in situ seu uacuo imaginario infinito*, ed. A. Lukács, ‘Bradwardine and Buckingham on the extramundane void’, *Bochumer Philosophisches Jahrbuch für Antike und Mittelalter* 17 (2014) 123–49, at 145–9; headings of *quaestiones* from all six series were printed by M.-D. Chenu, ‘Les *Quaestiones* de Thomas de Buckingham’, in *Studia mediaevalia in honorem Raymundi Josephi Martin* (Bruges 1948), 229–41; see also J. A. Robson, *Wyclif and the Oxford Schools: The Relation of the ‘Summa de ente’ to Scholastic Debates at Oxford in the Later Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge 1961), 40–69, 247–52; Stegmüller *Sent.* 901; Sharpe, *Latin Writers*, 646. The only other known copy is Oxford, Merton College, MS 143, fols. 1r–84v. Both derive from a common exemplar, which must stand close to the author’s original. Genest, *Prédétermination et liberté*, 179–82, demonstrates that our manuscript is the better witness. The text that ends the work is misplaced from the third series, after the eighth *dubium* (which ends on fol. 390vb, the scribe writing ‘hic deficit quare in fine libri’).

A group of *quaestiones* in the latter part of the work, on limbo before the advent of Christ (fols. 395v–409v), were apparently disputed before the chapter at Exeter cathedral. It provides unusually good evidence for technically advanced scholastic activity in an English cathedral school of the fourteenth century. As such, it was noted and discussed by W. A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge 1955), 113–16, 263–6.

fols. 438v–439v. The rest of col. a, col. b and the following two pages are blank.

3 (fols. 440r–441v) ¶ Questio prima verum aliqua res secundum suam | essenciam — Questio 85 . vtrum in cuiuslibet conuersione ad fidem | Christi sit remissio peccatorum plena.

A table of contents to the preceding work, ordered by *quaestio*, done by the scribe of the previous item.

Construction: Parchment. i + (modern paper) + 443 [*recte* 445] leaves (fols. 2–3 and 442–443 are flyleaves of medieval parchment). The modern foliation skips one after fol. 88 and one after 139. Medieval foliation in arabic numerals in the outer corner at the foot, giving up at fol. 121. Early twentieth-century foliation in Bodleian pencil in the upper outer corner. The medieval foliation is more accurate: the two sequences fall out of step after fol. 88. *Dimensions:* 347 × 225 mm. *Collation:* a⁴ (fols. 1–2, one, two are stubs) 1–7¹² (fols. 3–85) 8¹² (fols. 86–98, foliation skipping one after three) 9–11¹² (fols. 99–134) 12¹² (fols. 135–145, foliation skipping one after five) 13¹² (fols. 146–157) 14⁸ (fols. 158–165) 15–26¹² (fols. 166–309) 27¹⁴ (fols. 310–323) || pt II: collation impracticable.

(I) Catchwords are given by each scribe at normal text size, horizontally next to the gutter; Scribe 1 boxed them in an informal penwork cartouche but other scribes left theirs simple. In the same brown ink, it was apparently Scribe 1 who also wrote quire signatures during his stints: an arabic numeral on the first recto of a quire, centred at the foot between the two columns. The alphanumeric mark that sometimes survives nearby, in red ink at the lower outer corner of the rectos, was applied to the first half of each quire, and was done when the book was rebound in the late seventeenth century. Parchment is of Oxford manufacture, showing a marked difference between the whiter flesh-side and the yellow/green hair-side, usually with display of many follicles. It is crisp and stiff, rather cockled, and with differences in thickness: Quires 11 and 12 are noticeably thicker and stiffer than other quires. Processing errors throughout. Arranged like to like, flesh-side outermost. *Layout:* Written space of 265–75 × 170–85 mm, with an intercolumnar space of between 10 and 14 mm. Ruled in plummet for between 46 and 60 lines. Rules are single and bounding lines are extended to the edges of the page in both directions; horizontals cross the intercolumnar space. Prickings done with an awl are sometimes visible at the outer edge of the page. *Secundo folio:* *congnoscere causas rerum*.

(II) No catchwords or quire signatures. Parchment, also of Oxford manufacture, is rather better than that of pt I, better prepared, smoother, with fewer scraps and with brighter flesh-sides and less of a yellow tinge to the hair-side, although some hair-sides such as fol. 403 are dark with follicles. Arranged like to like, flesh-side outermost. *Layout:* Written space of 285–90 × 155–60 mm, with an intercolumnar space of between 12 and 15 mm. Ruled very lightly in plummet for between 50 and 53 lines. Rules are single and bounding lines are extended to the edges of the page in both directions; horizontals cross the intercolumnar space. No visible prickings. *Secundo folio:* in creatura sit.

Script: Part I was written by a number of cooperating scribes in registers of Anglicana influenced by university script. Anglicana letter-forms at all points; split *r*, *f* and tall *s* go below the line. Differences in the script and aspect may belong in part to different pen cuts, but the following stints do appear distinctive: Scribe 1, from fols. 3ra to 132vb, l. 8, and fol. 238ra (start of Bk III) to the end; Scribe 2, from fols. 132vb, l. 9 to 165vb (end of Bk I); Scribe 3, from fols. 166ra to 237vb (Bk II). Colophons are given in a larger, display version of the same script. Ink is a pale brown. Punctuation in all cases is by medial point and occasional *punctus versus* for major pauses, with sections signalled by blue- and red-ink paraps. ‘L’ for *Liber* is given in red as a running-head at the centre of the verso page and a capital roman numeral for Bks I to III in blue on the recto.

Part II is the work of a single scribe, writing an Anglicana Formata, in which the Anglicana basis, with a lower centre of gravity and more spread-out appearance, is more visible than in the specimens in pt I. Ink is brown, punctuation is by medial point and paraph. There are no running-heads.

Decoration: Part I. The major initial *M* on fol. 3r is a seven-line blue lombard flourished in red touched with blue; twelve red buttons run down the shaft and the two arches are filled with white vine spray coming from the mouths of a wyvern on one side and a griffin on the other. A bird sits atop the external foliage above the letter; the marginal extension in both colours runs down to a sketchy border bar in red. Similar initials feature for the start of each book, fols. 166r and 238r. Initial *I* for the start of the text on fol. 6v is less impressive, blocked colour extending eleven lines with some desultory red-ink finishing. Paragraph initials are two- or three-line lombards in blue ink with red penwork infill and flourishing. Paraps for major pauses alternate red and blue ink.

Part II. The major initial on fol. 324r is filled with two budding vines crossing in an arabesque, pink and blue, the buds in blue and orange, with white modelling on a ground of shell gold; a gold box-frame with either a blue or pink ground and delicate white patterning in the spandrels. The border extension is of red and blue bars with white geometric modelling and budding vines continuing. A grotesque crouches above the box, with leonine hind quarters, painted red and blue with white

modelling, and whose chemised upper half seems to be canine, long ears falling from inside a red biggin, with a white, male human face from whose mouth sprouts a vine with curling tendrils, pink and blue, some buds in orange, white modelling over all, extending the width of the written area. Gold bezants are scattered along its length. A similar bar is provided at the foot of the page, partly cropped away. The decoration was added a little time after the book was copied, for marginal annotation by the first owner is overpainted (see below). Decoration otherwise is restricted to the initial to each new *quaestio*, a two- or three-line lombard in blue with red penwork flourishing. Paraphs alternate in red and blue ink.

The unusual form of the initial I (seen for example at fol. 6r), very wide across the top and with a pronounced triangular taper on the text side, vertical at the margin, was anticipated by the scribe, who left a tapered space for it. The form has been found in contemporary manuscripts from Oxford, such as Oriel College, MS 15. (See A. Hudson, 'Trial and error: Wyclif's works in Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.16.2', in *New Science out of Old Books: Studies in Manuscripts and Early Printed Books in Honour of A. I. Doyle* (Aldershot 1995), 53–80, at 74 n. 58.)

Annotations: Part I is much annotated in the margins, but these are by the main hand, naming the authorities and biblical chapters cited in adjacent text. In the preliminary pages a different hand in a blacker ink also adds names: 'Aueroy's', for example, 'Augustinus', and 'phs' for 'Philosophus' (i.e. Aristotle). Given that the manuscript was made for William Reed and given by him to the College, these annotations are probably his. They recur in part II on the first page, where they supply in the margins the numbering of the *quaestiones* mentioned in the summary of the text on this page; this was done before the limner got to work since the marks have been partially covered by the border bar in the left-hand margin. It increases the likelihood that these were Reed's marks, since the decoration would probably have been commissioned before presentation to New College. Otherwise part II is not so heavily annotated; as in part I, what there is was done by the main scribe, doubtless copying the notes in his exemplar. A rare sign of use once the volume was at New College is on fol. 339r, a note of s. xv^{2/4} on human will and divine grace. At the foot of fol. 176r is a table (s. xiv²) of days, hours, minutes and seconds in a month, according to the reckoning of Maimonides ('Moisen'), Abraham Ibn Ezra ('Abraham'), Ptolemy, Arzachel, and the Alphonsine Tables ('Alfonsum').

Binding: The normal New College binding of pasteboard, but covered in this instance with dark, varnished calf rather than the usual reversed calf. The leather is considerably scuffed front and back. Sewn on five split, whittawed thongs, raised at the spine. Three-line blind fillets to the edges of the covers, front and back, crossing unmitred. The stubs of blue cord ties are visible on the inside faces of the two boards, in the usual places at the fore-edge. No pastedowns.

Labels and marks: The mark '134' is in pencil on the inside front board; again, in Thomas Man's red crayon, fol. 2r. The fore-edge label is attached not to the board but to the first medieval flyleaf; it is mostly torn away. The New College Library stamp is used only sparingly.

History: Only shortly after their composition, both works were copied for William Reed (d. 1385) while he was fellow of Merton College in Oxford, with funds provided by the patron of all his largesse in books, Nicholas of Sandwich: 'Liber M' Willelmi Reed Socii Domus scholarium de Merton' in Oxon' quem ibidem scribi fecit | de sumptibus sibi datus per Reuerendum dominum suum M' Nicholaum de Sandwyco. Oretis igitur | pro eisdem et pro benefactoribus eorundem ac fidelium animabus a purgatorio liberandis' (fol. 2v). The inscription is in Reed's hand, continuing with a note of contents: 'Summa Doctoris profundi de causa dei contra Pelagium et de virtute causarum .3. libros continens'. Reed, bishop of Chichester from 1368, was a fellow of Merton from 1344, and was still a fellow in 1357. As such, it can be assumed that he had ready access to a good exemplar, composed by a recent alumnus of the same place. Bradwardine's *De causa Dei* was written in 1344 (see fol. 322r). The date of writing for this manuscript must be between then and the end of Reed's career as fellow of Merton, c. 1357.

Bishop Reed was a remarkably generous early donor of books to New College: one hundred were bequeathed, from which there also survive MSS 55, 70, 92, 96, 97, 106, 120, 121, 124, 171, 264, 306. Fifty had been diverted to the College from an original intended bequest to the chapter library of his cathedral; the erasure of four lines beneath the contents list doubtless related to this intended gift, as in MS 120. As with other books diverted from the cathedral, a bold roman numeral was added by the notary Master Robert Walter, Reed's executor, here 'XX volumen'. He wrote below it the longer form of the common *ex dono* inscription, also found in MSS 120, 264 and 306, that the book was to be kept chained and students from the diocese of Chichester were to have priority in its use: 'Liber Collegii

beate Marie Wynton' in Oxon' in communi libraria et ad vsum communem scolarium eiusdem et maxime de | diocesi Cicestr' de benignitate Episcopi Wynton' in posterum assumendorum cathenandis. Ex dono venerabilis patris domini W. | tercii Episcopi Cicestr'. Oretis igitur pro eodem et benefactoribus eiusdem ac fidelium animabus a purgatorio liberandis.'

Although part II is not mentioned in the note of gift on the flyleaf, it does seem, as discussed above, that Reed's annotating hand is in both parts, on which basis it is likely that the volume received by the College was the one as presently constituted. The volume is listed as part of Reed's donation in the earliest part of the library inventory in the Liber Albus (fol. 3v, 'Item doctor profundus de causa dei contra Pelagium 2° fo. *cognoscere causas*' (UO70. 26)).

In 1600, Henry Savile (1549–1622)—another Mertonian, like Bradwardine—used this manuscript as a chief witness for his edition of *De causa Dei* (London: John Bill, 1617). Bradwardine had considerable influence on the debate around free will and future contingencies in the English- and Dutch-speaking churches of the seventeenth century (as outlined by Mandelbrote, 'Calculators in Divinity', with discussion of our manuscript).

Booklists: Liber Albus, fol. 3v; James, *Ecloga*, 22.

Bibliography: Coxe, 49; J.-F. Genest, *Prédétermination et liberté créée à Oxford au XIV^e siècle. Buckingham contre Bradwardine* (Paris 1992), 179–82; S. Mandelbrote, 'Calculators in Divinity: Henry Savile and Thomas Bradwardine', *Erudition and the Republic of Letters* 6 (2021) 116–137.