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FAITH AND REASON
IN STEPHEN LANGTON († 1228)
AND SOME OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Introduction[*]

A comprehensive companion to the intellectual heritage of a medieval thinker who, like Stephen Langton, devoted hundreds of folios to rational speculation concerning Christian doctrine would likely begin with — or at least include — a chapter about the author's methodology and his views on the value of rational inquiry in general. While there are a number of thorough studies describing Langton's methodological strategies,[1] not much is known about his vision of the relationship between faith and reason. This state of affairs is largely the result of the fact that Langton left no systematic account of his intellectual principles, goals and methods. In order to identify his views on his own discipline, it is necessary to gather and analyse many short remarks scattered throughout his numerous writings. This work has already been advanced by John W. Baldwin,[2] who collected a number of passages from Langton's Bible commentaries. These testimonies reveal Langton's conviction that all the secular disciplines,

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[1] S. Ebbesen, "The Semantics of the Trinity according to Stephen Langton and Andrew Sunesen," in *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains*, ed. J. Jolivet – A. de Libera, Bibliopolis, Napoli 1987, pp. 401–436; L. Valente, *Logique et théologie. Les écoles parisiennes entre 1150 et 1220*, Vrin, Paris 2008; R. Quinto, "Stephen Langton," in *Medieval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, vol. 2, ed. Ph.W. Rosemann, Brill, Leiden 2010, pp. 35–78.

[2] J.W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and His Circle*, 2 vols., Princeton University Press, Princeton 1970, I, pp. 79–103.

and the liberal arts in particular, should be subordinated to theology.[3] They depict Langton's aversion to the abuse of dialectical disputations in theological matters, especially concerning the Trinity and divine properties. Langton describes these disputes as "irreverent" and of "little edification for the soul."[4] At the same time, however, his own extensive and sophisticated discussions on the Trinity, the properties and the names of God, Incarnation, and other dogmatic issues seem to contradict the declared principles.[5] Langton's attitude to rational speculation remains, therefore, ambiguous and in need of further research. The ongoing critical edition of his theological questions may shed light on this problem.

Langton has left several theological questions concerning the virtue of faith. Among them, there is a short text dedicated to the problem of whether it is possible to believe in something evident (*Vtrum fides sit de non apparentibus tantum*, q. 70.1) or, in other words, whether one can simultaneously know and believe the same thing. The difficulty arises in the context of two authoritative quotations: first, the apostolic definition in its Vulgate rendering: "Fides est sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium" (Heb. 11, 1); second, the maxim by Gregory the Great: "Fides non habet meritum cum humana ratio praebet experimentum" ("there is no merit in faith when human reason affords evidence").[6] An analogous question can already be found in Peter Abelard's *Theologia 'Scholarium'*[7] and in most of the theological writings from the turn of the 12th century.[8] In order to assess Langton's views and to disclose what remains implicit, it will be useful to compare his text with some of them. For that purpose, I have chosen the *Summa 'Qui producit ventos'* written by Langton's older colleague Praepositinus of Cremona and the *Summae* of their followers: Geoffrey of Poitiers and William of Auxerre. I will examine all four of these texts.

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[3] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, I, p. 79; II, p. 54, n. 92.

[4] Steph. Lang., *Comment.* in Amos 2, 1, ed. in Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, II, p. 70, n. 81.

[5] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, I, p. 101: "The conclusion emerges that Peter's (the Chanter's) and Stephen's warnings against certain rash questions were considered as counsels of perfection which they themselves violated."

[6] Greg. M., *hom. evang.*, 26, ed. Étaix, *CCL* 141, 218 (*PL* 76, 1197C).

[7] Petr. Abael., *theol. schol.* I, 15, ed. Buytaert – Mews, *CCM* 13, p. 324–325, II, 45–49, *CCM* 13, p. 430–433. Abelard's views on faith and reason have been discussed by John Marenbon in his *Introduction* to Peter Abelard, *Collationes*, ed. and transl. J. Marenbon – G. Orlandi, Oxford 2001, p. lv–lviii.

[8] A list of the paralel texts can be found below, in the first note to the critical edition. For a discussion on faith and reason in Langton's times, see in particular Richard Heinzmann's analysis of the *Summa* by Hubertus de Pirovano, *Die Summe «Colligite fragmenta» des Magister Hubertus (Clm 28799): Ein Beitrag zur theologischen Systembildung in der Scholastik*, Schöningh, München – Paderborn – Wien 1974, pp. 156–170.

At the end of the article, the reader will find an appendix containing a critical edition of Langton's question 70.1.

The problem of the alleged incompatibility between knowledge and religious belief is a serious one. For, if knowledge truly excludes belief, what about philosophy and philosophers who strive to know God? Believing in all the articles of faith is necessary for obtaining the eternal life. Suppose that a philosopher gains what he wants, namely he obtains a certain knowledge regarding God, for example he manages to prove that God exists. If knowledge and belief are incompatible, then the result of this discovery would be his own damnation, since he cannot believe in the existence of God if he already knows about it. Moreover, not only philosophers would be at risk: anybody who reads the Bible might be in trouble, because there are many passages intended to validate the truths of faith. For instance, Saint Paul (1 Thes. 4, 14–18) gives a number of reasons why the resurrection of Christ actually took place. What if someone finds his arguments intellectually satisfying?

There are at least three different aspects of our query that will correspond to the main sections of this paper. (1) First, a philosopher might be interested in assessing the risks. Perhaps philosophical research concerning God can only attain some inconclusive clues that can corroborate one's faith, but are unable to prove anything. Or maybe some articles of faith are almost obvious to anyone moderately capable of reasoning (in which case the risk would be high)? (2) Second, after considering the risk level, we should evaluate the possible gain. Does philosophical knowledge offer more certainty than simple believing? Or perhaps it is true that "nihil est certius fide?" (In section 2, I will present the basic terminological distinctions concerning knowledge and understanding, with a special focus on Stephen Langton.) (3) Finally, is believing really incompatible with knowing? And if so, can someone who knows that God exists gain merit and obtain eternal life?

Before delving into these problems, it is necessary to make some preliminary observations regarding the philosophical science and faith.

First, from the Aristotelian perspective, which was not at all unfamiliar to our thinkers, knowledge was infallible by definition. For instance, Geoffrey of Poitiers uses this basic principle to argue for the infallibility of empirical knowledge.[9] Strictly speaking, only what is true can be known. Our debate, however, primarily concerns a different sense of knowledge. When Stephen Langton and Praepositinus juxtapose knowing and believing, they consider two different kinds of convictions: those acquired by natural reasoning and those acquired

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[9] Gauf. Pict., *sum.* III, Av 94rb, Kl 77va: "Dicimus quod scientia sensitiua certior est quam scientia reuelationis etsi sensus fallax, non tamen ipsa scientia fallax. Non enim fuit scientia si sensus deceptus fuit. Preterea, scientia reuelationis potest non fuisse scientia, set sensitiua non."

without the mediation of natural arguments. There are two main types of natural premises these thinkers seem to have in mind: the basic rational principles, such as the rules of logic, and the empirical data. By contrast, faith primarily stems from God's grace and his revelation. Accordingly, the query whether knowledge and faith are incompatible alludes to the problem of the relationship between two kinds of science: dialectics and theology.

Second, regardless of all the differences of opinion that will be described below, all the authors seem to agree that, when it comes to rational understanding, there are different kinds of articles of faith.[10] It was agreed that not all the truths could be proven by natural reason. Perhaps the most elaborate and famous classifications of the articles were those formulated by the Victorines, but for our purposes it will be best to concentrate on the division proposed by Praepositinus.[11] He formulates the following classification: some articles are (1) above reason (*supra rationem*), e.g. those regarding the Trinity; (2) others are "beside" reason (*praeter rationem*), e.g. those concerning the salvific facts from the life of Jesus of Nazareth (*qua* a human being); (3) finally, some of them conform to reason (*secundum rationem*), e.g. the existence of the one God.[12] (1) A philosopher will not only be unable to prove the truths above reason, but he would also easily find rational arguments against them.[13] (2) The truths that are "beside"

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[10] Various controversies regarding the notion of article of faith in that period have been discussed by K.J. Becker, "Articulus fidei (1150–1230): Von der Einführung des Wortes bis zu den drei Definitionen Philipps des Kanzlers," *Gregorianum*, 54, 3 (1973), pp. 517–569. One well-studied dispute concerned the status of articles — whether they are 'things' or propositional contents (*enuntiabilia*), see e.g. M.-D. Chenu, "Contribution à l'histoire du traité de la foi: Commentaire historique de IIa IIae, q. I, a. 2," in *Mélanges thomistes*, Le Saulchoir, Kain 1923, pp. 123–140; G. Nuchelmans, *Theories of the Proposition: Ancient and Medieval Conceptions of the Bearers of Truth and Falsity*, North-Holland, Amsterdam 1973, pp. 177–185.

[11] Praepositinus's terminology recalls the distinctions used by the Victorines, but there are many important differences in the way they use them — see the subsequent footnotes.

[12] Praep. Crem., *sum.* III, c. *An fides sit de manifestis*, Va 45ra: "… fides in quibusdam est supra rationem, ut in hoc quod una essentia est in tribus personis, ubi si ratio disputet, potius in contrarium conabitur. Quandoque est preter rationem, ut quod homo ille sit passus et crucifixus pro nobis, ubi etsi rationibus ad hoc non perueniamus, de facili tamen ratio conquiescit. Quandoque secundum rationem, ut quod unus sit deus, ad quod ratio naturalibus rationibus perducitur."

[13] This understanding of the truths above reason seems to be similar to that of Hugh of St. Victor, *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith* I, pars 3, c. 33, transl. R.J. Deferrari, Wipf and Stock Publishers, Eugene (Oregon) 2007 (first ed. 1951), p. 58 (*PL* 176, 232A–B): "In those things which are above reason, faith is not aided by any reason; since reason is admonished to respect the faith which it does not comprehend. What was said, therefore, and was according to reason, was probable to reason, and it freely gave assent to them. But what was above reason was made known by divine revelation, and reason did not operate in these, but yet it was restrained lest it contend against them (In iis quae supra rationem sunt, non adiuvatur fides ratione ulla; quoniam non capit ea ratio quae fides credit, et tamen est aliquid quo ratio admonetur venerari fidem quam non comprehendit. Quae dicta sunt ergo, et secundum rationem, fuerunt probabilia rationi, et

reason, i.e. that do not concern reason, cannot be rationally deduced (probably because they are contingent), but the natural reason can easily accept them.[14] (3) Finally, some truths can be derived from natural premises.[15]

For the twelfth-century thinkers, who — like Praepositinus — believed that the third set was not empty, the existence of God was the emblematic case of such an article of faith. Thus, in the following paragraphs, I will concentrate on the late twelfth-century views on the rational knowability of God's existence.

1. *Pauci sunt qui hoc sciant*?

If knowledge and faith are incompatible, and if believing in all the articles of faith is necessary for salvation, then the philosophers who search for rational proofs of God's existence put their eternal life in great danger. But is it actually possible to attain such knowledge by purely natural means? At the turn of the twelfth century there was no unanimity in this matter. Stephen Langton was convinced that some philosophers might have attained knowledge that there was only one God.[16] For them, the existence of God would not be a question of faith: they would be certain of it. Nevertheless, a mediocre philosopher should not be alarmed: such knowledge is available only to few (*set pauci sunt qui hoc sciant*).[17] Nor do the readers of Paul the Apostle have any reason to worry: the argumentations offered by the Holy Scripture offer less certainty than sound

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sponte acquievit eis. Quae vero supra rationem fuerunt ex divina revelatione prodita sunt; et non operata est in eis ratio, sed castigata tamen ne ad illa contenderet)." A wholly different approach to the knowability of the Trinity can be found in the final version of Peter Abelard's *Theologia*. He criticizes those who insist that true apprehension of the Trinity is possible only in the after-life: it is one thing to "be acquainted" with something (*agnoscere*), and another to understand it (*intelligere*). Only the former requires personal contact or "manifestation." The latter is perfectly possible in this life. Those who reject this cognitive optimism are confusing their own failure with objective limitations. Cf. *theol. schol.* II, 49, Buytaert – Mews, *CCM* 13, p. 432–433.

[14] The expression *praeter rationem* was used before by Richard of St. Victor, but he gave it a totally different meaning. For Richard, the truths beyond (*praeter*) the natural reason are the ones that are contrary to it. This sense is very similar to Praepositinus's understanding of the category *supra rationem*. See Rich. S. Vict., *Ben. ma.* I, c. 6, *PL* 196, 70B–72C; R. Palmén, *Richard of St. Victor's Theory of Imagination*, Brill, Leiden 2014, passim, especially on p. 143 and ff.

[15] Hugh of St. Victor's understanding of the truths *secundum rationem* was different: he spoke of truths that the reason finds probable (*PL* 176, 232A, see above, n. 6). Praepositinus classified this kind of articles as the truths *praeter rationem*.

[16] The view that some pagan philosophers came to know the existence of one God by means of rational arguments was not uncommon among the ancient Christian theologians. On this subject, see J. Marenbon, *Pagans and Philosophers: The Problem of Paganism from Augustine to Leibniz*, Princeton University Press, Princeton – Oxford 2015, pp. 19–31.

[17] See below, p. 41, l. 23. A passage added in the margin of MS Ca, f. 211[ra] at the end of q. 73a (*Vtrum antiqui patres crediderint eosdem articulos penitus quos et nos credimus*) suggests that Langton might have doubted whether purely natural cognition of God's existence was even possible: "Set

philosophical demonstrations. The Apostle proves that the resurrection is probable, but nothing more. Consequently, a strong conviction can be built only by supernatural faith, and by believing one gains merit in God's eyes.

Langton's most devoted disciple, Geoffrey of Poitiers, considered the same problem and gave the example of a philosopher who probably did not believe in God's existence, because he knew it; in fact, on the sole basis of his empirical observation of creatures, he came to the infallible conclusion that there was only one God.[18]

It seems that Geoffrey and his master might have had in mind a historical personage, the one who, in the same context, is explicitly mentioned in Praepositinus's *Summa*: Dionysius the Areopagite. According to Praepositinus's interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles (17, 19–34), Dionysius had recognised the existence of the one God before converting to Christian faith. Knowing what he knew, after his conversion he did not gain faith in the one God, because a person having the rational understanding and the scientific certainty about something cannot believe it (*credere*) at the same time. Concerning the natural capacities of human reason, Praepositinus has even more confidence than Langton and Geoffrey. To his mind, intellectual comprehension is the normal way of upholding the existence of God for a philosopher. Only simple, unschooled people merely believe in God. Philosophers are capable of something more.[19]

One might think that more cognitive optimism would be difficult to get. It is sufficient, however, to take a look at the *Summa aurea* by William of Auxerre, which is indebted both to Langton and to Praepositinus, to find an even

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nonne deum esse est articulus? Et philosophi per naturam uenerunt ad cognitionem illius, quia «inuisibilia dei per ea que facta sunt» etc. — Dicimus <quod numquam ad cognitionem dei> peruenissent nisi deus preparasset eis uiam et quasi supra naturam oratus esset." Unfortunately, the annotation is heavily corrupted and its authorship is uncertain.

[18] See Gauf. Pict., *sum*. III, Kl 77[va], quoted below, p. 34, n. 59.

[19] Praep. Crem., *sum*. III, c. cit., Va 44[vb]–45[ra]: "Set ad hoc obicitur. Philosophi humanis rationibus uenerunt ad cognitionem unius dei. Ponamus ergo Dionisium Ariopagitam qui, antequam conuerteretur, humanis rationibus intellexit unum deum esse. Modo conuersus est | ad fidem. Dionisius habet fidem de uno deo, et tamen humanis rationibus ad hoc peruenit, ergo fides eius non habet meritum. — Set ad hoc respondemus quod non fuit in eis fides de uno deo, set potius scientia. Nam quod in rustico est fides qua credit unum deum, set nullis rationibus scit hoc astruere, hoc in philosopho scientia, qui necessariis argumentis hoc comprehendit. Vnde apostolus non dicit «inuisibilia dei per ea que facta sunt intellecta a creatura *creduntur*», set dicit «intellecta conspiciuntur»." The view that most pagan philosophers believed in one God was maintained by Abelard, see for example his *Theologia 'Scholarium'* I, 97, ed. Buytaert – Mews, *CCM* 13, p. 356–357: "Philosophos autem unum tantummodo deum cognoscere unus ex ipsis, Tullius in I Rethoricorum, perhibet dicens: 'Eos qui philosophie dant operam non arbitrari deos esse', ac si aperte dicat: immo deum unum, non deos plures." For a detailed account of Abelard's position, see Marenbon, *Pagans and Philosophers*, pp. 74–81.

bolder statement: the created world is full of evident signs of God's existence,[20] so that even a common man (*ydiota*) can recognize them. Of course, before the original sin our knowledge was clearer and more accessible, because God's presence was evident without any need of rational argumentation. But even in their present state, human beings can easily deduce this simple truth by observing the creatures.[21] Consequently, it seems that for William there is no incompatibility between faith and knowledge. Quite the opposite, in order to have faith, it is first necessary to acknowledge God's existence by means of natural reason.[22]

If we were to create a scale that ran from scepticism to a far-reaching trust in the possibilities of human reason, we would certainly put William towards its latter extremity. Stephen Langton would be somewhere in the middle. Close to the former end, we could place certain "others" mentioned by Praepositinus. According to these anonymous theologians, no natural philosophers know for sure that God exists unless they get help from the divine inspiration. Consequently, even philosophers have nothing more than faith in the present state of humanity.[23] This view is reminiscent of a very influential theory put forward by Hugh of St. Victor.[24] To Hugh's mind, the basic fact about our knowledge is that man's natural forces have been heavily damaged by the original sin. Before the fall, human beings used three kinds of eyes: the corporeal ones, the eye of reason, and the eye of contemplation. Each of these cognitive capacities has its own purpose: the corporeal eyes see the material creatures; the proper subject of reason are spiritual beings, such as the soul and what pertains to it; finally, the eye of contemplation was meant to capture the presence of the Creator. Now, the higher and the nobler is the cognitive potency, the heavier was the damage it suffered because of the sin. While corporeal vision can perform its natural functions despite the fall, the eye of reason is blurred — "the eye of reason as long as its light is cloudy cannot have certain judgment, since what does not see clearly discerns doubtfully" — and the eye of contemplation has been completely extinguished.[25] To recapitulate: first, God is not the proper object of human reason;

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[20] A list of such signs was presented, for example, by Peter Lombard in his *Sententiae* I, dist. 3, c. 1 (I, 68–71).

[21] Guill. Alt., *sum. aur.* III, tr. 12, q. 1, ed. Ribaillier, III.1, p. 218, ll. 112–121.

[22] Ibidem, ll. 107–111.

[23] Praep. Crem., *sum.* III, c. cit., Va 45ʳᵃ: "Aliis tamen uidetur esse dicendum quod sit fides de uno deo in philosopho et non scientia, quia solis humanis rationibus non potuerunt peruenire ad hoc, set aliqua inspiratione adiuuante, unde apostolus dicit «Deus enim illis reuelauit» (Rom. 1, 19). Et tamen exteriora plurimum contulerunt ad hoc."

[24] On Hugh's ideas on knowledge and faith, see for example P. Dillard, *Foundation and Restoration in Hugh of St. Victor's De Sacramentis*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2014, pp. 4–7.

[25] Hugh of St. Victor, *On the Sacraments* I, pars 10, c. 2, transl. Deferrari, p. 167 (*PL* 176, 329C–D).

second, our rational abilities have been severely weakened; third, the cognitive power directed towards God is gone. There can only be one conclusion: in his present state, man is unable to recognize God's existence by natural means. The supernatural faith is the only means to acknowledge God.[26]

As we have seen above, the late twelfth-century authors were not eager to share Hugh's sceptical vision. When compared with the Victorine perspective, the views of Praepositinus, Stephen Langton, and of their followers are clearly imbued with a kind of rationalism.

2. *Nihil est certius fide*?

The second aspect of the faith-knowledge problem is the degree of certainty that accompanies faith, especially in comparison with knowledge. At the turn of the twelfth century, theologians had two basic principles at hand that can be regarded as contradictory. On the one hand, there was the famous definition of faith conceived by Hugh of Saint Victor: "Faith is certainty in things absent, established beyond opinion and short of knowledge."[27] On the other hand, a pseudo-Augustinian *auctoritas* proclaimed: "Nothing is more certain than faith" (*nihil est certius fide*).[28] Does faith offer more certainty than rational convictions?

The question might appear simple at first glance, but it is far from it. Before interpreting the two propositions, it is necessary to establish the relevant meaning of "faith" (*fides*) and "knowledge" (*scientia*). Each of our authors understands these terms in his own way and introduces his particular distinctions, so that their views are not easy to compare. The most complex and difficult to interpret is Stephen Langton's account of knowledge, which is scattered across his various writings. I will try to reconstruct it below. First, however, it will be useful to take a quick look at the basic understanding of *scientia* in Hugh of St. Victor.

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[26] Ibidem.

[27] Ibidem, *PL* 176, 330C: "Sed quia in hac descriptione non quid sit fides, sed quid faciat fides ostenditur; nec ea quae de praeteritis vel de praesentibus habetur fides diffinitur, si quis plenam ac generalem diffinitionem fidei signare voluerit dicere potest: «Fidem esse certitudinem quamdam animi de rebus absentibus, supra opinionem et infra scientiam constitutam»." On Hugh's definition, see M. Colish, "Discipline and Science in Peter Lombard," in R. Berndt – M. Lutz-Bachmann – R.M.W. Stammberger (eds.), „*Scientia" und „Disciplina": Wissenstheorie und Wissenschaftspraxis im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2002, p. 183.

[28] The origin of this maxim remains uncertain. I have not found it earlier than in Peter the Chanter, who quotes it a couple of times; see Petr. Cant., *verb. ab.* II, c. 93, *PL* 205, 268C. Peter of Poitiers ascribes the sentence to Augustine, but this attribution is almost certainly wrong; see Petr. Pict., *sent*. III, c. 21, *PL* 211, 1092B.

2.1. Hugh of St. Victor

For Hugh, "knowledge" refers above all to the beatific vision, i.e. to seeing God face to face. This kind of knowledge can be called "comprehension."[29] Such knowledge is certainly superior to faith, which concerns what is absent and unobvious. A believer considers true something that, from the point of view of a non-believer, would seem merely probable. Comprehension is therefore more certain than faith.[30]

2.2. Stephen Langton

Some hints as to Langton's use of the term "comprehension" can be found in one of his theological questions (q. 70.1) and in his *Postille* on the Romans (10, 17). In q. 70.1, Langton distinguishes four types of knowledge: the sense experience (*scientia sensitiva*), the knowledge based on rational deduction (*scientia demonstrativa*), knowing what has been revealed (*scientia revelationis*) and the comprehension (*scientia comprehensiva*). Since Langton distinguishes accepting revelation from comprehension (and, as it will be shown below, comprehension eliminates faith), it is probable that he would agree to ascribe the latter type of knowledge to the *beati* in heaven. However, on other occasions Langton uses the term "comprehension" in a slightly different manner. "Comprehension follows faith," declares Langton in his *Postille*. In fact, only the believers comprehend that the articles of faith are true.[31] Although it is not stated explicitly, Langton seems to admit that comprehension might be possible even here, on earth, provided that one receives the grace of faith from God. Furthermore, the way in which Langton justifies his position suggests that, for him, comprehension means something different than for Hugh. Rather than being a direct vision, it boils down to understanding that the articles of faith are true.

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[29] Hugh of St. Victor, *On the Sacraments* I, pars 10, c. 2, transl. Deferrari, p. 168 (*PL* 176, 330D): "For more perfectly do they know who comprehend the thing itself as it is in their presence. These are the knowers (Perfectius enim agnoscunt qui ipsam rem ut est in sua praesentia comprehendunt, hi sunt scientes)."

[30] Ibidem.

[31] Steph. Lang., *Postille* in Rom. 10, 17, H[1] 23[rb] and T[1] 30[vb]: "Dicimus quod duplex est intellectus, scilicet intellectus conceptionis siue notitie et intellectus comprehensionis siue ueritatis. Intellectus conceptionis precedit fidem: prius enim aliquo modo concipitur res per intellectum, postea uero creditur. Intellectus uero comprehensionis siue ueritatis sequitur fidem. Nullus enim comprehendit ueritatem articuli (articuli H[1]: articulariter T[1]) nisi per fidem. Vnde cum logicus dicat 'intellige et credes', theologus dicit 'crede et intelliges'." A transciption of this passage can also be found in A.M. Landgraf, "Einleitung" in *Der Sentenzenkommentar des Kardinals Stephan Langton*, Aschendorff, Münster 1952, pp. xxxii–xxiii.

This account is confirmed by another passage of *Postille* (in 2 Cor. 3, 4–5), where Langton distinguishes between two kinds of understanding or intellection (*intellectus*), the one that precedes faith and the one that follows it:

> *Quis enim non uideat prius cogitare quam credere? Nullus quippe credit aliquid nisi prius cogitauerit esse credendum*, ergo intellectus est prior fide. Contra, dicit Ysaias 7, 9 «Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis», unde cum dyaleticus dicat "intellige et credes," theologus "crede et intelliges." Set dicimus quod est intellectus discernens et est intellectus consentiens. Discernens est quo discernimus et intelligimus quod nobis proponitur prius, siue sit falsum siue sit uerum. Intellectus consentiens est ille quo consentimus ei quod prius discreuimus. Intellectus discernens est prior fide, sed intellectus consentiens est posterior fide. Vnde bene sequitur in glossa *quamquam et ipsum credere nichil aliud est quam cum assensione* — idest intellectu assentiente — *cogitare*.[32]

Let us first consider the intellection that precedes faith. In order to believe in something, it is first necessary to understand it. In other words, in order to assert that some proposition is true, one needs to have the basic understanding of it.[33] Langton calls this kind of understanding *intellectus discernens* or *intellectus conceptionis sive notitiae*. This kind of intellection is characteristic of logicians or dialecticians. When a logician examines a sentence, he abstracts from its truth value and concentrates on its formal and semantic properties in order to determine its correctness and meaning. For a dialectician, it is impossible to believe in something meaningless, i.e. grammatically incorrect, semantically incongruous or hopelessly ambiguous; determining the meaning of premises

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[32] Steph. Lang., *Postille* in 2 Cor. 3, 4–5, H¹ 57ra. Langton comments on Peter Lombard's *Collectanea* in 2 Cor. 3, 4–5, *PL* 192, 23B–C: "Attendant hoc, et verba ista perpendant qui putant ex nobis esse fidei coeptum, et ex Deo esse fidei supplementum. Commendans enim istam gratiam quae non datur secundum aliqua merita, sed efficit omnia bona merita, inquit, nunquam sufficientes simus cogitare aliquid, etc. Quis enim non videat prius esse cogitare quam credere? Nullus quippe credit aliquid nisi prius cogitaverit esse credendum, quanquam et ipsum credere nihil est aliud quam cum assensione cogitare. Si ergo cogitare bonum non est ex nobis, nec credere, sed sufficientia, qua credere incipimus, ex Deo est;" cf. Augustinus Hipponensis, *De praedestinatione sanctorum* II, 5, *PL* 44, 963.

[33] See also Steph. Lang., *Postille* in Rom. 10, 17, H¹ 23rb and T¹ 30vb: "*Nisi enim dicatur aliquid, nec audiri potest*: hoc quantum ad exteriorem auditum; *nec credi*: hoc quantum ad interiorem. Set nonne deo inspirante potest quis credere licet ei nichil dicatur? Vtique. Quomodo ergo dicit "nisi dicatur" etc.? Dicimus quod 'dicatur' hic ponitur pro reuelatione interiori uel exteriori, ac si diceretur "nisi intelligatur." Nullus enim potest aliquid credere nisi intelligat illud, ergo est sensus: nisi intelligatur aliquid, nec audiri potest cum effectu, nec credi, ergo intellectus precedit fidem. Contra, auctoritas dicit «Fides audax et improba penetrat quo non attingit intellectus» (Petr. Cant., *verb. ab.*, *PL* 205, 267A) et Ysaia ait «Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis» (Is. 7, 9 *secundum LXX*), et ita fides precedit intellectum."

and conclusions is a prerequisite of assessing the validity of a given argument (which involves being aware of potential equivocation). This is why a logician or a dialectician will say *intellige et credes*: before accepting a premise or a conclusion, you should get a firm grasp of their structure and meaning. Moreover, on a different occasion Langton suggests that the intellection that precedes faith consists also in recognizing the plausibility of a statement.[34] Nevertheless, the act of faith is something more: it consists not only in establishing the signification, but also in granting that the proposition is true. Langton agrees with Augustine and Peter Lombard that believing is a type of cognition, namely an act of understanding combined with assent (*cum assensione cogitare*).[35] He calls this kind of intellection *intellectus consentiens*: it is the second kind of intellection, the one that follows faith. This kind of cognition seems very similar to the kind of comprehension described above, in the *Postille* on the Romans (10, 17), where Langton asserted that to comprehend something is to recognize that it is true.

Consent follows faith and *is not* faith, because faith is a gratuitous gift of God, namely a supernatural virtue. This is why a theologian will say "crede et intelliges:"[36] in order to grasp something by believing, one first has to receive the grace of faith. It is likely that Langton identified the intellectual consent or comprehension with an act of faith (*motus fidei*). As can be seen from his other *quaestiones*, Langton insists that believing involves the natural cognitive power of man.[37] Consequently, believing — *intellectus consentiens* — is a combination of grace and of the natural intellectual power of man.[38]

The notion of *intellectus consentiens* helps us to understand a distinction made in q. 70.1. Langton divides the articles of faith into two classes: (1) some truths require understanding before believing in them, (2) in other cases faith precedes understanding (it is not clear whether this categorization was meant to

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[34] See also Steph. Lang., *in* III *Sent.*, d. 23, ed. Landgraf, p. 131: "Omnem enim fidem precedit aliquis intellectus. Quomodo enim possem credere aliquid, nisi, etsi non plene, intelligerem ita debere esse, ut credo? Intellectus ergo suasorius semper ipsam fidem inducit."

[35] See above, n. 32.

[36] Cf. Aug., *in Io.* 7, 17, tr. 29, 6, ed. Willems, *CCL* 36, 287: "Si non intellexisti, inquam, crede. Intellectus enim merces est fidei. Ergo noli quaerere intelligere ut credas, sed crede ut intellegas; quoniam nisi credideritis, non intellegetis."

[37] On this subject, see M. Bieniak, "Stephen Langton and Geoffrey of Poitiers on the Natural Power to Believe," *Przegląd Tomistyczny*, 23 (2017), pp. 65–93.

[38] This theory has become standard in Christian tradition; see Thom. de Aq., II^a–II^ae, q. 2, a. 9, co.: "Ipsum autem credere est actus intellectus assentientis veritati divinae ex imperio voluntatis a Deo motae per gratiam;" *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 155, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 1997 (2d ed.), p. 42.

be exhaustive).[39] Given that the second class includes articles concerning the Trinity and God's passion, one may wonder to what extent believing confers the comprehension of these truths on the believer. Langton's conception of *intellectus consentiens* suggests that the basic sense of *crede et intelliges* is that the believer gains the understanding that these articles are true. Langton's interpretation does not imply that faith brings a thorough and complete understanding of a given article of faith.

Now that some of Langton's terminological distinctions have been explained, we can return to the problem of the degree of certainty offered by faith and knowledge. Undoubtedly, Langton would agree with Hugh of Saint Victor that comprehension, intended as the beatific vision, is superior to faith. The comprehension intended as *intellectus consentiens* amounts to believing. But what about the natural knowledge? If we set aside the *intellectus discernens*, which does not judge whether something is true or false, we are left with two kinds of natural knowledge: rational deduction and sense experience. Langton affirms very clearly that *scientia sensitiva* is not infallible, nonetheless it offers more certainty than faith. He suggests the same thing in the case of rational deduction.[40]

This claim may seem audacious, since it implies that faith is fallible. And, indeed, Langton admits that sometimes a belief can be false. First of all, he distinguishes between the formless faith, which is neither a virtue nor a gratuitous gift, and the *fides virtus*. The formless faith has no guarantee of truth whatsoever.[41] The case of the virtue of faith is more complicated. If faith concerns an article of faith, confirmed by the authority of the Church, then no error is possible.[42] By contrast, if faith involves some personal revelation or something that is subject to individual discernment, then the believer can be mistaken. Langton

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[39] See Steph. Lang., q. 70.1, see below, p. 41, ll. 31–32: "Item, notandum: quedam non creduntur nisi prius intelligantur, ut est deum esse; quedam non intelliguntur nisi prius credantur, ut deum esse passum."

[40] Steph. Lang., q. 70.1, see below, p. 41, ll. 33–41.

[41] Steph. Lang., *in* III *Sent.*, d. 23, ed. Landgraf, pp. 130–131 (changed punctuation): "«Notandum», «certissima scientia». Hic opponitur, ut supra capitulo accipitur. — Responsio: Si accipiatur 'fides' pro fide informi, verum est quod hic dicitur, quia, quicumque credit aliquid, certissima scientia scit se credere istud, ita quod hoc verbum 'credere' copulet motum fidei informem. Et secundum hoc non valet: scit se credere hoc, ergo hoc est verum. Et secundum hoc falsum subest fidei." As for the relationship between *fides informis* and *fides formata*, see Steph. Lang., *sum.*, c. *Vtrum naturalia fiant gratuita*, ed. Ebbesen-Mortensen, pp. 159–164. See also M. Bieniak, "Faith and the Interconnection of the Virtues," in *Fides Virtus: The Virtue of Faith from the Twelfth to the Early Sixteenth Century*, ed. M. Forlivesi – R. Quinto – S. Vecchio, Aschendorff, Münster 2014, pp. 215–261.

[42] Steph. Lang., q. 71, Ce 325va–[vb] (ed. in progress by W. Wciórka): "Item, nota quod licet fides ita large sumatur quod comprehendat etiam falsum (ut dictum est), quandoque tamen ad articulos fidei tantum sumatur, ergo ita quod nichil dicatur credi nisi uerum sit."

quotes the example of David, who erroneously believed that God wanted him to build a temple, and the case of Abraham, who was convinced that God wanted him to sacrifice his son. Both figures gained merit through their beliefs, i.e. their faith pleased God, despite the fact that both of them were wrong.[43] To Langton, these cases prove that *fides virtus* is fallible. Moreover, the risk of an erroneous belief is high enough to place the certainty of faith below the natural modes of cognition.

Some other psychological aspects of the certainty associated with faith are worth mentioning. First, Langton tackles the difficult problem of how to distinguish the virtue of faith from a formless belief. After all, it might be useful to know whether one is acting by divine inspiration. Unfortunately, Langton's position in this matter is ambiguous. In the *Sentences* commentary he affirms without hesitation that one can always tell whether he has the gift of faith, because it is evident whether he is constant and persistent in being good.[44] His theological questions offer a different solution. Being aware of the fact that one believes does not necessarily mean knowing that one has the divine grace. In order to be sure, a special revelation is needed.[45] A simple deduction based on one's state of mind and/or behaviour is not enough.

Second, Langton draws an interesting comparison between faith and rational deduction. The conviction generated in the human mind by an article of faith resembles the persuasive force of a syllogism. Their similarity does not

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[43] Ibidem, Ce 325va: "In libro Regum legit<ur> quod Dauid uoluit edificare domum domini, et dictum est ei «Non edificabis michi domum in eternum». Sic ergo Dauid uoluit aliquid quod nec deus nec spiritus sanctus uoluit, et tamen illud uelle fuit meritorium, quia subiungitur statim: «Verumtamen benefecisti hoc tecum mente pertractans». Item, Abraham credidit deum uelle ipsum immolare filium suum, et quia(?) credidit, uoluit immolare; set uolendo meruerit; ergo credendo deum uelle immolare … — Solutio. Bene concedimus quod fidei subest falsum, ita tamen quod hoc falsum non uersetur contra articulos fidei."

[44] Steph. Lang., *in* III *Sent.*, d. 23, ed. Landgraf, pp. 130–131: "Si uero hic fiat sermo de fide formata, sic exponitur: «certissima scientia», idest certissimo experimento. Omnis enim, qui fidem habet, certissima habet experimenta per que potest convincere quod habet fidem virtutem, ut si firmus sit in bono et constans et huiusmodi. Simile ad Romanos: «Ipse Spiritus facit spiritum nostrum recognoscere quod filii Dei sumus», id est facit nos experimento convincere quod sic est."

[45] Steph. Lang., q. 71, Ce 325vb (ed. in progress by W. Wciórka): "Ait enim Augustinus «Fidem uidet unusquisque esse in corde suo si credit uel non esse si non credit». Ergo si credit, scit se credere; et non credit nisi hoc; ergo scit se credere hoc. — Set et auctoritas Augustini sic est intelligenda: fidem, idest motum fidei. Motum enim potest quis scire, set non potest scire ipsum esse motum fidei, et appellat fidem ipsum motum. Non enim sequitur: scit illum motum, ergo scit fidem in eo, sicut non sequitur: scit se moueri sic, ergo scit se credere, quia hoc uerbum importat quoddam accidens, scilicet formam fidei. Si enim sciret se credere, exigeretur quod sciret se habere caritatem. … Bene concedimus quod si reuelatum est sibi quod habeat fidem, per consequens reuelatum est sibi hoc, circumscripto quod nichil aliud sit articulus nisi istud, nec fides excludit scientiam reuelationis, sicut dictum est supra."

depend on the same degree of reliability, but rather on their effectiveness: both the rational deduction and faith have the power to convince somebody to accept a conclusion that he would not endorse otherwise.[46]

Finally, although a believer cannot be sure whether all his beliefs are true, faith engages one's mind and spirit more than any other kind of cognition. This is why the reverend theologians sometimes say that nothing is more certain than faith.[47] The objects of sense perception may be obvious, but — as Geoffrey of Poitiers would put it later — human beings would rather give their lives for something they believe in than for something they see with their own eyes.[48]

2.3. Praepositinus of Cremona

As has been shown above, Praepositinus was convinced that some articles of faith could be rationally proven. Now, the question is whether such philosophical knowledge offers something more than faith. Also in this matter, Praepositinus shows notable trust in human reason. Those who hold strong rational arguments in support of a determinate truth (e.g. of God's existence) should feel more confident about their convictions than the simple, unschooled believers.

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[46] Steph. Lang., *in III Sent.*, d. 23, ed. Landgraf, p. 131: "Hic dicitur fides argumentum non apparentium, quia ipsa fides arguit nos ad credendum, sicut probatio sillogistica;" id., *Postille* in Heb. 11, 1, ed. in G. Englhardt, *Die Entwicklung der dogmatischen Glaubenspsychologie in der Mittelalterlichen Scholastik*, Aschendorff, Münster 1933, p. 424: "Fides est argumentum non apparentium i.e. si de aliquo habetur fides, ipsum non apparet, inquantum de eo habetur fides. Sic exponebat Senonensis. Secundum magistrum Petrum de Corbulio sic exponitur: Fides est argumentum non apparentium, i.e. probat non apparentia. Sicut enim syllogismus inducit aliquem et quodammodo cogit ad concedendam conclusionem, quam prius negabat, sic si aliquis articulus videbatur alicui incredibilis ante fidem, habita fide statim concedebat, quod prius negabat, et liquebit ei esse verum. Et ita dicitur fides argumentum per simile, quia probat." Langton attributes this particular interpretation of the expression "argumentum non apparentium" (Heb. 11, 1) to Peter of Corbeil, but the same account (*quia probat*) can be also found in *De sacramentis* of Hugh of St. Victor (*PL* 176, 329D) and in Robert of Melun, qq. in Heb. 11, 1, ed. Martin, II, p. 311.

[47] Steph. Lang., q. 70.1, see below, p. 41, ll. 39–41: "Dicitur tamen nichil esse certius fide, quia firmius adheret animus ei quod credimus quam ei de quo aliquid scimus per sensum."

[48] Gauf. Pict., *sum.* III, Av. 94rb-va and Kl 77vb: "Ad hoc dico quod ideo dicitur «nichil certius fide» quod nichil facit ita certum et constantem sicut fides, quia pro nullius rei certitudine homo se exponeret morti sicut pro certitudine fidei." Geoffrey's position may depend in part on the solution offered by Peter of Poitiers, *sum.* III, c. 21, *PL* 211, 1092D: "Cum ergo dicit: «Nil est certius fide» sic intelligendum est, id est nulla certitudo praeponenda est certitudini fidei, id est si pro aliquo esset moriendum, potius pro fide quam pro alio, et licet tanta sit certitudo, tamen licet nobis dubitare de articulis fidei, et inquirere et disputare. Non dico quod dubitemus an veri sint articuli fidei; sed de modo nativitatis, de modo passionis et resurrectionis dubitare et disputare nobis licet."

Indeed, rational knowledge is better than a belief.[49] In this respect, the attitudes of Praepositinus and Langton appear to be very similar.

2.4. William of Auxerre

Despite the fact that William shared Praepositinus's cognitive optimism regarding the possibility of knowing God's existence by natural means, his opinion on the degree of certainty offered by faith and reason is completely different from the one held by Langton and Praepositinus. The human intellect is less convinced by its own reasonings than by faith. No syllogism can offer the certainty that the supernatural light of faith gives. Accordingly, believing is better than knowing through natural reason.[50] It should be noted, however, that William makes no clear distinction between the psychological certainty and reliability.

Despite this undeniable flaw, William's discussion of faith and reason is particularly elaborate and interesting.[51] While commenting on the Apostle's formula — *fides est argumentum non apparentium* — he draws a double comparison. On the one hand, he follows the path that Langton had taken earlier and compares the articles of faith to a proof or a syllogism (*argumentum*). Just as a set of premises makes a conclusion evident, so an article of faith enlightens the intellect and reveals to the human mind what was veiled and hidden.[52] On the other hand, William regards the articles of faith — or at least some of them — as the basic principles of theology. This means that the articles are self-evident, i.e. they need no proof. Just as a dialectician immediately recognizes the correctness of the principle "Every whole is greater than its part," so a believer

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[49] Praep. Crem., *sum*. III, c. cit., Va 45ra: "Respondetur quod habet quod melius, uidelicet in hoc quod est supra fidem. — Item. Queritur utrum dicendum sit "iste scit deum esse trinum." Quod uidetur, quia auctoritas dicit «Nichil certius homini fide sua»; ergo homo scit ea que fidei subsunt. — Respondetur. Auctoritas sic est intelligenda: nichil certius, idest nichil firmius debet asserere homo fide sua."

[50] Guill. Alt., *sum. aur*. III, tr. 12, c. 1, ed. Ribaillier, III.1, p. 201: "Ad tertio obiectum dicimus quod fides est supra, non tantum supra opinionem, sed etiam supra scientiam, et supra etiam demonstrativam scientiam. Magis enim credit intellectus per fidem illuminatus prime veritati quam sillogismo demonstrativo. Cum ergo dicitur: «Fides est media inter opinionem et scientiam», intelligitur de opinione fidei informis et de scientia manifesta qua videbimus Deum in futuro facie ad faciem."

[51] A detailed account of William's theory of faith and knowledge, as it is presented in the prologue and Book III, tr. 12 of William's *Summa aurea*, can be found in Christian Trottmann, *Théologie et noétique au XIIIe siècle: à la recherche d'un statut*, Vrin, Paris 1999, p. 18–26.

[52] Guill. Alt., *sum. aur*. III, tr. 12, c. 1, ed. Ribaillier, III.1, pp. 198–199: "Tertio enim modo intelligitur, ut dicatur fides argumentum per similitudinem, quoniam sicut per argumentum pervenitur in notitiam conclusionis, ita per fidem magis et magis illuminantem intellectum venitur paulatim in perfectam notitiam eternorum bonorum non apparentium; quod soli fidei convenit, quoniam sola fides est que prima et per se illuminat intellectum."

instantly knows that the article expressed by the sentence "God rewards the good" is true. Accordingly, the articles of faith make theology a science: they are the true foundation on which each believer builds.[53]

The analogy between the articles and the scientific principles explains why William considered beliefs more trustworthy than the rational convictions. The conclusions obtained by means of dialectics are not known immediately. They are fruits of syllogistic reasonings, acquired through a process starting from basic rational principles or some premises of other kind. Consequently, someone who proves the existence of God by natural reasoning does not obtain direct or simple knowledge. By contrast, according to William, the articles of faith are themselves "the light of the intellect," they are infused with grace and directly recognized by the human mind. This is why faith is more certain than reason. There is only one kind of knowledge to which faith is inferior: the beatific vision.

3. Can a philosopher be saved?

Finally, it is time to consider the problem of the incompatibility of faith and reason and its consequences. For each one of our authors, I will try to determine the answer to the following questions: first, whether knowing something renders believing in the same thing impossible; second, whether someone who knows can gain merit.

3.1. Praepositinus

Praepositinus formulates these problems while examining the case of Dionysius. Like other theologians, he is well acquainted with Gregory the Great's maxim "there is no merit in faith when human reason affords evidence."[54] Although he does not offer clear answers, some remarks reveal his point of view at least to a certain extent.

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[53] Ibidem, p. 199: "Quarto modo dicitur fides argumentum non apparentium propter articulos fidei, qui sunt principia fidei per se nota. Unde fides sive fidelis respuit eorum probationes. Fides enim, quia soli veritati innititur, in ipsis articulis invenit causam quare credat eis, scilicet Deum, sicut in alia facultate intellectus in hoc principio: «Omne totum est maius sua parte», causam invenit per quam cognoscit illud, quoniam si in theologia non essent principia, non esset ars vel scientia. Habet ergo principia, scilicet articulos, qui tamen solis fidelibus sunt principia; quibus fidelibus sunt principia per se nota, non extrinsecus aliqua probatione indigentia. Sicut enim hoc principium: «Omne totum est maius sua parte», habet aliquantam illuminationem per modum nature illuminantis intellectum, ita hoc principium «Deus est remunerator omnium bonorum», et alii articuli habent in se illuminationem per modum gratie, qua Deus illuminat intellectum. Unde Ysaias: *Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis*."

[54] See above, n. 6.

Knowledge built on rational proofs does not eliminate faith, but rather absorbs it. A philosopher who has this kind of knowledge about God's existence has something better than faith.[55] This statement suggests that Praepositinus was not eager at all to admit that philosophers cannot gain merit by their rational theories. On the contrary, he seems to imply that their convictions are even more meritorious than the acts of faith of the simple people. But what about Gregory's principle? Praepositinus suggests an interpretation which completely reverses the sense of the well-known dictum. Someone who knows does not gain his merit through believing, because his belief is knowledge. In other words, there is no faith in him: his faith is replaced by something higher, i.e. by knowledge. It seems to follow that he gains merit by knowing. Unfortunately, this conclusion remains implicit.[56]

3.2. Stephen Langton

Langton's position is utterly different. He agrees in principle with Gregory the Great: there is no merit when there is proof. Apparently, to Langton's mind, knowledge does not impede belief, but it makes it worthless in God's eyes. Gregory's rule, however, concerns only the strongest rational proofs, namely the ones that remove all sorts of doubt. As we saw above, Langton holds that only few can attain such certainty. Perhaps this is the reason why he does not seem to worry much about their eternal life? In any case, he does not determine whether the fact that a philosopher is rationally certain of God's existence (or of other articles) constitutes an impediment to his salvation.

3.3. Geoffrey of Poitiers

Langton's position threatened the most capable philosophers to such an extent that his disciple, Geoffrey, felt compelled to resolve the problem in a different manner. Knowing excludes belief, because knowledge is stronger and more certain than faith. Nevertheless, someone who proves the existence of God by natural means may gain merit in the same way as the simple believers do, provided that his conviction does not depend entirely on the rational proof.[57] In

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[55] Praep. Crem., *sum.* III, Va 45ra: "Respondetur quod habet quod melius, uidelicet in hoc quod est supra fidem."

[56] Praep. Crem., *sum.* III, c. cit., Va 44vb-45ra, see above, n. 19.

[57] A similar position was held earlier by Peter of Poitiers, *sent.* III, c. 21, *PL* 211, 1092B: "Quod dicitur «Fides non habet meritum cui humana ratio praebet experimentum» sic intellige, idest non meretur homo qui non vult credere nisi quod ei ab homine probatur." Peter of Capua ascribes this view to Peter Comestor, see Petr. Cap., *sum.* II, M, f. 38va: "…sicut exponebat Manducator, «fides non habet meritum cum humana ratio prebet experimentum», idest qui non uult credere

other words, one has to know as if he did not know, embracing the truth not because of the rational arguments, but because of something else: perhaps it is the love of God that Geoffrey has in mind.[58] Accordingly, the philosophical knowledge concerning the articles of faith does not preclude the possibility of salvation.[59] It is worth noting that a similar solution to the problem of knowledge, faith, and merit was already proposed by Peter Abelard. In the *Theologia 'Scholarium'* he suggests that even if knowledge prevents someone from gaining merit by faith, it is still possible to obtain salvation through charity. Furthermore, Abelard seems to imply that there is some kind of connection between the knowledge and the subsequent charity, which makes the knowledge (and the corresponding non-meritorious faith) not entirely useless (*inutilis*). It is unclear, however, what is the precise nature of this connection.[60]

3.4. William of Auxerre

It is sufficient to take a look at the relevant chapters of *Summa aurea* (the prologue and III, tr. 12, c. 2–4) to notice immediately that William brings the discussion about faith and reason to a new level. His considerations are far more extensive, thorough and exhaustive than the ones offered by his predecessors. First, in one of the first sections of the prologue he discusses Gregory's principle, which seems so unfavourable to philosophy. Second, he dedicates a long chapter (c. 4) to the question whether it is possible to know and to believe one and the same thing at the same time (*utrum idem sit scitum et creditum*). The position and the extent of the discussion suggest that William treated the prob-

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nisi quod ei probatur humana ratione non meretur fide." Nevertheless, a very similar view can be already found in Abelard's *Theologia 'Scholarium'* II, 46, ed. Buytaert – Mews, *CCM* 13, p. 431: "Qui nec etiam dixit non esse ratiocinandum de fide, nec humana ratione ipsam discuti uel inuestigari debere, sed non ipsam apud deum habere meritum, ad quam non tam diuine auctoritatis inducit testimonium quam humane rationis cogit argumentum. Nec quia deus id dixerat creditur, sed quia homo sic esse conuincerit recipitur." Cf. Marenbon, *Introduction* in Peter Abelard, *Collationes*, p. lv–lviii.

[58] On a different occasion, while discussing the problem of Abraham's justification, Geoffrey gives priority to love over the cognitive aspects of faith. See W. Wciórka, "Necessity and Future-Dependence: 'Ockhamist' Accounts of Abraham's Faith at Paris around 1200," *Vivarium* 56 (2018), pp. 41–45 and the passages of Geoffrey's *Summa* quoted there.

[59] Gauf. Pict., *sum.* III, Kl 77ᵛᵃ: "Set contra, opponitur de philosopho (*scripsi*: philosophico Kl) qui per creaturas cognouit creatorem, et ita per sensitiuam scientiam cognouit unum deum esse, ergo si ueniat ad fidem non credet unum deum esse, cum sciat. — Solutio. Dicimus quod bene potest esse quod non credat, et tamen nichilominus merebatur acquiescendo illi articulo si ita acquiescat quod nichilominus acquiesceret licet nesciret."

[60] Petr. Abael., *theol. schol.* II, 47, Buytaert – Mews, *CCM* 13, p. 431: "At numquid si fidei nostre primordia statim meritum non habent, ideo ipsa prorsus inutilis est iudicanda quam postmodum caritas subsecuta obtinet quod illi defuerat?".

lem of the alleged incompatibility of faith and reason very seriously and was determined to find a satisfying answer.

In all the chapters that concern our problem, William offers the same solution. The only foundation of the virtue of faith is the divine grace. The only necessary reason why a virtuous person believes in the articles of faith is the first truth. As mentioned above, the first truth is known immediately to the believer, it is the light given to the intellect by God's grace. Accordingly, even if a believer finds numerous rational arguments in favour of his creed, he does not build his conviction on them, but only uses them as a confirmation of what is obvious. To those who have the divine grace, the articles of faith are self-evident.[61]

Faith offers a direct vision of truth and more certainty than the rational knowledge. Accordingly, any natural evidence in favour of God's existence fades and becomes almost superfluous when the light of faith illuminates the intellect. This is why no rational proof, however strong, can impede faith. Concerning God, the only cognitive acts produced by a virtuous believer are acts of faith. All the other cognitive movements are silenced by the strongest of them.[62]

A philosopher who, like Dionysius, learned through rational arguments that there was one God, does not forget his reasonings when he receives grace and becomes a Christian. The rational proofs corroborate and enhance his movements of faith.[63] This is why dialectics are not utterly useless when it comes to knowing God. William is convinced that someone who has the rational understanding of an article of faith believes more strongly than a simple, unschooled believer. He also gives some additional reasons in favour of the intellectual pursuit: proselytizing and the defence of the articles against heretics.[64] Philosophy has a positive role to play.

In essence, the path taken by William is exactly opposite to the one taken by Praepositinus. While the latter maintains that rational knowledge absorbs faith, the former considers faith superior and stronger than reason. Accordingly, from William's standpoint rational proofs hardly constitute a threat to the virtue

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[61] Guill. Alt., *sum. aur.* III, tr. 12, c. 3, ed. Ribaillier, III.1, pp. 202–203: "… omnes articuli sunt de Deo, ut post patebit, et eandem habent rationem, quoniam unica est ratio credendi omnes articulos, quoniam si queritur quare ita credis hoc vel illud, non est nisi unica responsio, scilicet quia ita docet prima veritas. Fides enim soli prime veritati innititur, nec querit aliud medium ad probandum aliquem articulum, quoniam «fides est argumentum, non conclusio», sicut dicit Apostolus (cf. Hebr. 11, 1), quoniam licet fides haberet plura media ad probandum aliquem articulum, non tamen principaliter illis inniteretur, sed tantum prime veritati."

[62] Guill. Alt., *sum. aur.* III, tr. 12, c. 4, ed. Ribaillier, III.1, pp. 208–209.

[63] Ibidem, p. 209: "Tamen non obliviscitur, adveniente fide, rationes quas prius habebat, sed ille rationes non in eo generant fidem, sed fidem gratuitam confirmant et augmentant, sicut beneficia temporalia non faciunt caritatem in homine, sed confirmant eam et augmentant quantum ad suum motum."

[64] Guill. Alt., *sum. aur.*, Prol., ed. Ribaillier, I, pp. 15–16.

of faith or to salvation. Any acts of natural cognitive powers are subordinate to the movements of faith, through which a faithful philosopher gains merit. Nevertheless, there is a sense in which Gregory's principle might be correct: if someone gave priority to the rational proofs rather than to the light of grace, he would not gain any merit in God's eyes. To William's mind, however, this remains a somewhat remote possibility, because someone who has the virtue of faith naturally turns towards the light of grace.[65]

Conclusion

Judging by the quality and the extent of Langton's speculative production, by his assiduous efforts to prove the logical coherence of such dogmas as the Trinity and the Incarnation, one would expect him to be a rather enthusiastic supporter of rational speculation concerning the divine matters. It is one thing, however, to build a theological system on the fundament of revelation and quite another to deduce the same claims from natural causes and principles. In the latter domain, Langton presents himself as a moderate rationalist at best. He does not deny that some philosophers might have rationally proven the existence of God, but he is far from the cognitive optimism of William of Auxerre, who would later claim that such knowledge is available to almost everyone. Unlike William, Langton seems to support the view that knowledge, both empirical and deductive, is more reliable than faith; yet the practical outcome of this superiority is potentially disastrous to anyone who manages to prove an article of faith, because knowledge excludes merit. It is quite surprising that he did not attempt to solve this dilemma, as his student Geoffrey would.

In any case, the analysis of Langton's texts confirms that, despite certain remarks in his Bible commentaries,[66] he had a very high opinion of rational speculation, especially of logic. In order to believe in an article of faith, one has to acquire a firm understanding of it. Thus, for Langton as well as for his colleagues, natural reason had an important role to play in theology.

Appendix: the critical edition of Stephen Langton's Q. 70.1

The catalogue of Langton's *Quaestiones theologiae* prepared by Riccardo Quinto presents a list of five different texts under no. CAMB070, which corresponds

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[65] Ibidem, p. 16: "Si autem fides inniteretur solum rationibus humanis, non haberet meritum, quia tunc habet locum quod dicit beatus Gregorius: «Fides non habet meritum» etc. Sed quia vere fidelis innititur prime veritati super omnia, ideo fides non est ei conclusio, sed argumentum, sicut dicit Apostolus."

[66] See above, p. 18.

to the Index title *Vtrum fides sit de non apparentibus tantum*. However, only one of them truly covers the discussion announced by the title. The other texts are only vaguely related to the problems of the virtue of faith. As a result, they will not be published here.

Q. 70.1 is transmitted by two branches of the manuscript tradition:

K — f. 91^{ra-va}

α — L, f. 50^{va-vb} and V, f. 221vb–222rb.

As has been already proven on other occasions,[67] L and V descend from one antigraph, from which all the other known MSS are independent. This common source was heavily corrupted, because L and V present many common errors. By contrast, K is a very trustworthy witness. Accordingly, given that the question is transmitted only by two independent manuscript branches, this edition privileges the readings of K.

The critical apparatus omits most of the individual readings of L and V, but it presents all the variants of K.

The history of transmission of q. 70.1 can be, therefore, graphically represented in the following manner:

$$\omega$$
$$\diagup \quad \diagdown$$
$$K \qquad \alpha$$
$$\diagup \quad \diagdown$$
$$L \quad V$$
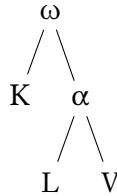
Abbreviations

add.	—	*addidit*
CCL	—	*Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*
hom.	—	*homoeoteleuton*
marg.	—	*in margine*
om.	—	*omisit*
PL	—	*Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne
pV/sV	—	*lectio codicis* V *ante correcturam / lectio codicis* V *post correcturam*
praem.	—	*praemisit*
sup. lin.	—	*supra lineam*
< >	—	*supplevi*

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[67] See above all R. Quinto – M. Bieniak, "Introduction" in Stephanus Langton, *Quaestiones theologiae* I, British Academy – Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014, pp. 56–62.

Manuscripts

Av	—	Avranches, Bibl. Mun., 121
Ba	—	München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14508
C	—	Cambridge, St. John's College Libr., C.7 (57)
Ca	—	C, ff. 171–218
Ce	—	C, ff. 323–346
H[1]	—	Hildesheim, Dombibliothek, 658
Index	—	Index primus codicis C (ff. 345vb–346rb)
Kl	—	Klosterneuburg, Augustiner-Chorherrenstift, Cod. 299
L	—	Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Lyell 42
M	—	München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14508, f. 1r–63v
T[1]	—	Tours, Bibliothèque Municipale 118
V	—	Paris, BnF, lat. 14556
Va	—	Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 1174
α	—	*consensus* LV

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Petr. Cant., *verb. ab.*

    Petrus Cantor, *Verbum abbreviatum*, PL 205, 22–528A.

Petr. Cap., *sum.*

    Petr. Cap., *Summa in libros Sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi*, MS M, f. 1^r–63^v.

Petr. Lomb. — Petrus Lombardus

  sent.

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<div style="text-align:center">

Sᴛᴇᴘʜᴀɴᴠs Lᴀɴɢᴛᴏɴ

Qᴠᴀᴇsᴛɪᴏɴᴇs Tʜᴇᴏʟᴏɢɪᴀᴇ, Lɪʙᴇʀ III

Q. 70

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Vtrum fides sit de non apparentibus tantum

«Fides est substantia rerum sperandarum, argumentum non apparentium». 'Substantia' dicitur id per quod subsistunt in nobis res sperande; 'argumentum non apparentium' quia arguit mentem ad credendum non apparentia. 'Substantia' inquam, idest fundamentum, per quod patet quod distinguitur a spe, quia spes non est fundamentum.

Patet ergo quod fides est de non apparentibus.

1. Cᴏɴᴛʀᴀ.

1.1. Paulus raptus usque ad tertium celum uidit archana dei, ergo sciuit aliquid de eis; et habuit fidem de eisdem, quia uiator erat; ergo habuit fidem de | apparentibus.   V 222ʳᵃ

Sᴏʟᴠᴛɪᴏ. Notandum quod triplex est scientia quam excludit fides, scilicet sensitiua, comprehensiua, demonstratiua, que fit ex causis rerum. Est alia etiam scientia — scientia reuelationis — quam non exludit fides. Et ita nulla est obiectio, quia Paulus habuit fidem reuelationis tantum.

1.2. Iᴛᴇᴍ. Philosophus scit unum deum tantum; quod probatur: quia scit hanc creaturam esse et per effectum agnoscit causam huius creature, ita quod ductu rationis per causas intermedias peruenit usque ad agnitionem supre-

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K 91ʳᵃ; L 50ᵛᵃ; V 221�vb (LV = α)

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1 Cf. Petr. Abael., *theol. schol.* I, 15, ed. Buytaert – Mews, *CCM* 13, p. 324–325, II, 45–49, *CCM* 13, p. 430–433; Hugo de S. Vict., *de sacr.* I, pars 10, c. 2, *PL* 176, 327C-331A; Petr. Lomb., *sent.* III, dist. 23, c. 7–8 (II, 145–146); id., *collect.* in Heb. 11, 1–2, *PL* 192, 487D-489A; Petr. Pict., *sent.* III, c. 21, *PL* 211, 1090D-1093A; Praep. Crem., *sum.* III, c. Vtrum fides sit de manifestis, Va, f. 44ᵛᵃ–45ʳᵃ; Hub. de Pir., *sum.*, c. Si fides sit de scitis, Ba, f. 170va–vb (ed. Grabmann, 236–237); Petr. Cap., *sum.* II, M, f. 38ʳᵇ–ᵛᵃ; Steph. Lang., *post. in* Heb. 11, 1, ed. Englhardt, 423–424; id., *in* III *Sent.*, dist. 23, ed. Landgraf, 130–132.   **2** Heb. 11, 1.

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1 utrum fides sit de non apparentibus tantum *Index*] *deest* KLV   **9** uidit] uidet K   **9** archana] archangelum K   **13** fit ex L] fit est V sint est ex K   **14** scientia²] *om.* K   **14** reuelationis] relationis *p*K   **15** obiectio] subiectio *s*K   **15** quia] quam (quoniam?) α   **16** philosophus] iste *praem.* K   **16** tantum] esse *s*K *om. p*K   **17** hanc] homo L omnem V   **17** ita] uel *praem.* *p*KL   **18** agnitionem] cognitionem α

me cause; ergo scit deum esse. Et constat quod credit. Ergo fides est de
apparentibus.   20

Ergo si ita contingeret quod aliquis ita per causas intermedias perueniret ad
cognitionem supreme cause, talis philosophus non diceretur credere, set scire
deum esse. Set pauci sunt qui hoc sciant.

2. Item. Gregorius dicit «Fides non habet meritum cum humana ratio prebet
experimentum». Set apostolus in epistula ad Thessalonicenses$_{I, 4, 14-18}$ rationes   25

K 91rb notat, que uere sunt, | per quas probat resurrectionem mortuorum. Ergo fides
habita de resurrectione non fuit ei meritoria.

Solvtio. Concedimus bene quod si tales rationes prebuissent experimentum
certitudinis, non fuisset meritoria. Set quamdam probabilitatem prebuerunt, et
ideo meritoria fuit illa fides.   30

Item, notandum: quedam non creduntur nisi prius intelligantur, ut est deum
esse; quedam non intelliguntur nisi prius credantur, ut deum esse passum.

3. Item. Maior est illa scientia que est per rationem quam illa que est per
sensum; et fides non excludit illam que est per rationem; ergo multo magis non
excludit illam que est per sensum.   35

Solvtio. Meritum excludit eo modo quo superius dictum est de philosopho.

4. Item. Cum scientia sensitiua sit fallibilis, et nichil certius fide, sicut dicit
auctoritas, uidetur quod fides non excludit scientiam sensitiuam.

Responsio. Sensitiua scientia certior est. Dicitur tamen nichil esse certius fi-
de, quia firmius adheret animus ei quod credimus quam ei de quo aliquid scimus   40
per sensum.

5. Item. Ad sequentium intelligentiam notandum est quod quamcumque
significationem habuit hoc pronomen 'iste' ante incarnationem, habuit in incar-
natione et post. Item, tantum ualet hoc pronomen 'iste' quantum iste terminus
'hec persona'. Item, notandum quod filius dei non est factus persona licet fac-   45
tus sit homo. Non enim est persona secundum quod homo, set secundum quod
deus.

Queritur ergo sic. Simus in tempore passionis. Petrus scit *istum hominem* esse.
De dicto probatur: scit Iesum esse; set si Iesus est, iste homo est; ergo scit istum
hominem esse. Preterea, uidet istum hominem, ergo scientia sensitiua scit de   50
isto homine istum hominem esse. Contra, si iste homo est, iste est homo, ergo

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24–25 Greg. M., *hom. evang.*, 26, ed. Étaix, *CCL* 141, 218 (*PL* 76, 1197C).   **32** Cf. Is. 7, 9
(secundum LXX): «Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis».   **37–38** Petr. Cant., *verb. ab.* II, c. 93,
PL 205, 268C; Petr. Pict., *sent.* III, c. 21, *PL* 211, 1092B.

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21 ita] *om.* α   **22** supreme] *om.* α   **22** philosophus *scripsi*] philosofeus(!) K philosofus L
philosopuhus(!) V   **22** scire] sciret K   **23** sunt *scripsi cum* V] *om.* KL   **25** rationes] per
probationes K   **26** que uere sunt L] que(*sup. lin.*) uera sunt K *om.* V   **26** per quas] per
quas *om.* K   **36** meritum *scripsi*] merito α*p*K immo *s*K   **36** quo] quod K   **43–44** habuit in
incarnatione] *om.* K   **48** queritur] argumentatur α   **49** set *p*K] *del. s*K quia α   **50** hominem]
ergo scit *add.* α

scit istum esse hominem. Set istum esse hominem est filium dei esse hominem, quod constat esse falsum.

Responsio. Si hoc pronomen 'istum' teneatur adiectiue et hoc uerbum 'esse' copulet proprietatem creatam, uera est ista "scit istum hominem esse". Set si hoc pronomen 'istum' teneatur substantiue, falsa est, quod patet in opponendo. Hec autem est uera "scit Iesum esse", nec sequitur "scit Iesum esse, ergo scit istum hominem esse" si hoc pronomen 'istum' teneatur substantiue.

6. Secundum quod tenetur substantiue dicat "si Iesus est, iste homo est". Set scit Iesum esse, ergo scit istum hominem esse.

Dicimvs quod non sequitur, quia omittit uerbum sciendi. Deberet enim dicere quod scit quod si Iesus est, iste homo est. Et hoc nescit, quia nescit consequentiam, immo credit. Set hec consequentia est falsa "si iste homo est, Iesus est". Potuit enim assumere aliud corpus et aliam animam, et ita uerum esset istum hominem esse, nec tamen Iesus esset, idest huic humanitati subiectus esset.

Item, notandum quod hec est uera "iste scitur et creditur": scitur in eo quod est iste homo, et creditur in eo quod est iste.

7. Item. Augustinus dicit super illum locum psalmi₁₀₁,₂₄ «Respondit ei in uia uirtutis sue»: «Non est laus fidei credere istum | hominem esse mortuum,   L 50ᵛᵇ
quod et paganus credit», ergo Petrus non credebat hoc — istum hominem pati — ergo sciebat istum hominem pati. Set iste homo patiebatur, ergo iste erat ille qui patiebatur, ergo credebat istum esse hominem qui patiebatur, demonstrato filio dei.

Solvtio. Hec iudicanda est ut prima: si hoc pronomen 'istum' teneatur sub-   V 222ʳᵇ
stantiue, falsa; | si adiectiue, uera. Et secundum hoc | non ualet processus.   K 91ᵛᵃ
Non enim sciebat quod si iste patiebatur, iste erat homo qui patiebatur, immo credebat.

8. Item. Sit quod huic sit predicatum filium dei esse hominem incarnatum, et sit hic filius dei. Iste tenetur credere istum hominem esse filium dei. Probatio: tenetur credere aliquem istorum esse filium dei — sint hic duo homines cum eo — et tenetur non credere de utroque istorum ipsum esse filium dei, ergo tenetur credere istum hominem, demonstrato filio dei, esse filium dei.

69–70 *Gl. ord.* marg. in Ps. 101, 24–25, ed. Rusch, II, 292ᵛᵃ; cf. Aug., *en. Ps.* 101, 24, sermo 2, n. 7, ed. Dekkers – Fraipont, *CCL* 40, 1442 (*PL* 37, 1308).

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57 scit Iesum esse nec sequitur] *om. hom.* V   57 nec sequitur scit Iesum esse] *om. hom.* L
59 secundum] si *praem.* α   59–60 set] si α   61 dicimus] *om.* α   62 quod scit] et
scis K   62 Iesus] homo α   62–63 consequentiam *scripsi*] consequens *mss.*   65 esset] est α
65 huic] homo α   65 esset item] esse α   66 item] *om.* α   67 iste] *om.* α   67 et creditur in
eo quod est iste] *om.* α   71 patiebatur ergo iste] patiebatur iste *p*K *om. s*K   72 esse hominem]
hominem esse α   74 si] set si L set V   76 patiebatur] patietur α   81 et tenetur non credere
de utroque istorum ipsum esse filium dei *scripsi*] et tenetur credere de utroque istorum ipsum
non esse filium dei *mss.*

Item, ipse tenetur credere istum hominem esse filium dei, quia tenetur credere istam personam esse filium dei. Et tenetur credere istum esse hominem, ergo tenetur credere istum hominem esse filium dei.   85

Set contra, si quereretur ab eo "estne iste filius dei?", diceret "nescio". Quomodo ergo credit?

Solvtio. Constante positione — quod scilicet predicatum sit sibi — tenetur credere istum hominem esse filium dei, quia tenetur credere istum esse hominem et esse filium dei. Non tamen adquiesceret si proponeretur ei "estne iste   90 homo filius dei?", non quia non credat significatum, set quia ignorat quid significet uel quid demonstret hoc pronomen 'iste'. Sicut si aliquis homo diceret huic "estne iste Marcus?" demonstrato Sorte, responderet "nescio", non quia dubitet istum esse Marcum, set quia nescit utrum hoc nomen 'Marcus' conueniat ei — esto quod Sorti conueniat in rei ueritate hoc nomen 'Marcus', set nesciat.   95

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87 ergo] *om.* α   **88** quod scilicet predicatum sit sibi] quia scilicet predsicatur sit ita quod α
92 huic] *om.* K   **93** responderet nescio] *om.* K   **93** dubitet] dubitetur K   **94** Marcum]
set quia istum esse Marcum est istum esse Sortem *add.* K

FAITH AND REASON
IN STEPHEN LANGTON († 1228)
AND SOME OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Summary

This article discusses an early scholastic question whether knowing something is compatible with believing it. The main authors taken into consideration are Stephen Langton, Praepositinus of Cremona, Geoffrey of Poitiers, and William of Auxerre. They assess the possiblity of proving the existence of God by natural means, evaluate the certainty and reliability of faith in comparison to philosophical knowledge, and speculate whether finding rational evidence for an article of faith would hinder one's salvation. These controversies help to determine the degree of cognitive optimism of each of the authors and reveal their attitude to natural reason. The study includes an analysis of Langton's basic terminological distinctions concerning faith, knowledge, and understanding. It concludes with a critical edition of his theological question *Vtrum fides sit de non apparentibus tantum*.