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Caterina Tarlazzi, *Individui universali. Il realismo di Gualtiero di Mortagne nel XII secolo (Textes et Études du Moyen Âge, 85)*, Barcelona – Roma: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, 2018, xl+426 pp., 165 × 240 mm, ISBN 978-2-503-57565-0.

Caterina Tarlazzi's *Individui universali* is an excellent, in-depth study of "the *individuum* theory," one of the early 12th century accounts of universals that cropped up in the wake of the debate between Peter Abelard and William of Champeaux. The proponents of *individuum* theory wanted to have their realist cake and eat it too: on the one hand, they attempted to rescue universal things, as opposed to words or concepts; on the other, they were clearly committed to the principle that every existing thing is individual, which seems to leave no room for generality at ontological level. The only way to resolve this conflict was by reimagining the traditional concepts of "universal," "being predicated of many," "being the same," etc. Indeed, much of the theory's appeal lies in its employing and honing of state-of-the-art dialectical tools such as the notion of being "non-differently the same" (*indifferenter idem*) or special relativizations involving the concept of *status*, used to disarm con-

troversial predications. For instance, we can accept seemingly absurd statements such as "Socrates is a genus" given that we relativize them to an appropriate constitutive layer or *status*, e.g., "Socrates is a genus insofar as he is an animal." This, in turn, is paraphrased in terms of similarity or non-difference: Socrates resembles, or is no different from, any other animal with regard to the animal-layer (*status animalis*). As one of the sources puts it, the animal constituting Socrates and the animal constituting Plato produce "similar effects" in their respective particulars. This allows us to insist that the animal constitutive of Socrates is a universal thing, even though each universal constitutes only one particular thing. In fact, every universal simply *is* a unique particular thing: Socrates and the animal associated with Socrates are the same particular object, the same *essentia*.

Tarlazzi not only collects and explains these strategies (together with 37 objections they are designed to solve) but also

carefully puts them in their historical context.¹ The label “*individuum* theory” is also well chosen (cf. p. 236–244),² since it directly answers the question “which objects are universals?” by analogy to “the *collectio* theory,” “material essence realism,” “vocalism,” etc. As we learn from the introduction, which begins with a useful description of various methodological approaches to the 12th century problem of universals (De Libera, Galluzzo, Erismann, Rosier-Catach), the monograph follows a chiasmic structure. Namely, Part 1 deals with “a master (i.e., Walter of Mortagne) in search of a theory,” while Part 2 is about “a theory (i.e., the *individuum* theory) in search of a master.” Part 3 binds Part 1 and Part 2 together and deepens our philosophical and historical understanding of this “audacious” form of realism. In what follows, I will first summarize Tarlazzi’s book and then make some comments on the *individuum* theory.

I. UNIVERSAL INDIVIDUALS: AN OVERVIEW OF THE MONOGRAPH

In Part 1, Tarlazzi discusses Walter of Mortagne († 1174) and the account attributed to him by John of Salisbury in the *Metalogicon* II, 17. The point is to refrain from identifying that account out of hand with the *individuum* theory discussed in some logical texts revolving around the *Isagoge*. This identification, according to Tarlazzi, should be regarded as a hypothesis in need of justification rather than as an immediate assumption. Furthermore, one of the conclusions of Part 1 is that there are no independent premises for associating Walter with the view described in the

Metalogicon — either in his extant writings or in other sources. All of this builds a double suspense: we start questioning the connection between Walter and the theory reported by John, and then we learn that the theory itself might turn out to be something else than the *individuum* theory discussed in Part 2. While the fact that we are dealing with essentially the same theory turns out to be rather uncontroversial in the end (Part 3, ch. 6, p. 235–236), the link between Walter and the *individuum* theory remains somewhat ambiguous (cf. below, section 2).

Chapter 1 is a meticulous, well-documented reconstruction of Walter’s intellectual biography, with an emphasis on his connections to the schools at Tournai, Reims, and Laon. It also discusses his literary output: one might wonder whether all the details of the history of modern editions of Walter’s letters are necessary, but this approach certainly dovetails with the monograph’s general desire to be exhaustive, with its abundant footnotes and massive bibliography (sixty pages). One question remains implicit: shouldn’t we risk a hypothesis that some works by Walter have been lost or remain unidentified?

Chapter 2 is an interesting, systematic analysis of John of Salisbury’s “litany of errors” regarding universals. Although the long discussions of all the theories may perhaps seem somewhat redundant, they offer an excellent opportunity to present the early 12th century debate over universals and thus provide the necessary context for the *individuum* theory. I will return to Tarlazzi’s interpretation of one of the *Metalogicon* passages below in section 2, which will allow me to reflect

¹For a bird’s eye view of the *individuum* theory, cf. also C. TARLAZZI, “Individuals as Universals: Audacious Views in Early Twelfth-Century Realism,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol 55/4 (2017), p. 557–581.

²In what follows, the page numbers refer to Tarlazzi’s book, unless specified otherwise.

on one of the main weaknesses of the *individuum* theory.

Part 2 (chapters 3–5; chapter numbers are continuous throughout the book), which constitutes the bulk of the study, focuses on the *individuum* theory as presented in five sources. The first group comprises texts favoring rival approaches: Abelard's *Isagoge* commentary P10³ from the *Logica "Ingredientibus,"* the Abelardian commentary P12 (*Logica "Nostrorum petitioni sociorum,"* hereafter *LNPS*), and the treatise *De generibus et speciebus*, which advocates the *collectio* theory and might also be an excerpt from an *Isagoge* gloss. The second, "supportive" group includes an anonymous treatise or excerpt with the incipit "*Quoniam de generali*" and commentary P17. It is worth emphasizing that Tarlazzi is the first scholar to have mined P17 for information on the *individuum* theory (she is currently preparing a critical edition of the whole text). As we saw, while Part 1 deals with "a master in search of a theory," Part 2 presents "a

theory in search of a master." The procedure is straightforward: Tarlazzi discusses the characteristics of her sources (ch. 3), the descriptions of the theory (ch. 4), and the numerous objections together with solutions whenever available (ch. 5). Chapter 4 contains two additional sections, one of which is devoted to the so-called material essence realism, the likely predecessor of the *individuum* theory (cf. below).

In chapter 5, in the case of the three "hostile" texts, Tarlazzi sometimes suggests ways to defend the *individuum* theory against the charges (cf. e.g. her convincing defense on p. 178). In other cases, she analyzes, paraphrases, and explains the arguments, but without further evaluation, which may be a signal that she regards them as valid. This would be surprising in the case of objection 5 (cf. p. 187–188), i.e., the argument from "homo ambulat" in *LNPS*, which has always struck me as fallacious.⁴ According to *LNPS*, the *individuum* theorists must contradict Boethius and concede that no man is

³P10, P12, P17 etc. are sigla of commentaries on Porphyry's *Isagoge* according to John Marenbon's catalog; cf. J. MARENBO, "Medieval Latin Commentaries and Glosses on Aristotelian Logical Texts, Before c. 1150 AD," *Glosses and Commentaries on Aristotelian Logical Texts: The Syriac, Arabic and Medieval Latin Traditions*, edited by C. Burnett, London: The Warburg Institute, 1993, p. 77–127; reprinted with a supplement in IDEM, *Aristotelian Logic, Platonism, and the Context of Early Medieval Philosophy in the West*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000, text II.

⁴*Logica "Nostrorum petitioni sociorum,"* edited by B. Geyer, *Peter Abaelards Philosophische Schriften*, Münster in W.: Aschendorff, 1919–1933 (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters, 21), p. 519, l. 27 – p. 520, l. 6: "Amplius quomodo dicit Boethius super Peri ermenias, quod haec propositio 'homo ambulat' de speciali falsa est, de particulari vero vera est? Numquid et de universali similiter vera est, cum idem sit universale et particulare? Sed fortassis inquires, quod ab hoc universali ambulatio prorsus removeri potest, a particulari vero non, hoc modo: nullum universale ex statu universalis ambulat. Sed similiter dici potest quod nullum particulare ex statu particularis ambulationem habeat. Haec quippe enuntiatio: 'in eo quod est universale, non ambulat,' duobus modis potest intelligi, sive interpositum sive praepositum. Interpositum sic: in eo quod universale, non ambulat, ac si diceretur: proprietates universalis non patitur ambulationem, quod omnino falsum est, cum eidem subiecto universalitas et particularitas et ambulatio adiaceant. Quod si praeponitur, intelligitur hoc modo: non in eo quod est universale, ambulat, sicut est illud: non in eo quod animal est, habet caput, hoc est: non exigit proprietates universalis, ut ambulet, sicut non exigit natura animalis, quod habeat caput. Sed eodem modo verum erit de particulari, cum proprietates particularis non exigit ambulationem."

walking *qua* a particular (*in eo quod est particulare* or *ex statu particularis*). However, *LNPS* fails to identify a charitable reading of statements such as “Socrates is walking insofar as he is a particular.” The realist can insist that walking, pace *LPNS*, is not supposed to follow from the very property of being a particular, but from the specific bundle of properties that belong to Socrates at a given time. This bundle is located at the “lowest,” most concrete ontological level of Socrates and thus can be equated with the layer of particularity.⁵ Given that walking is one of those properties at a given time, the bundle entails that Socrates is walking at that time. In this sense, we could admit that *proprietas particularis exigit ambulationem*. Anyway, Tarlazzi’s commentary is always intelligent and helpful. I also agree that a recent emendation to the text of *LNPS* in objection 2 is unnecessary (cf. p. 184 and p. 183, n. 27; p. 230, n. 120).

Tarlazzi’s catalog contains thirty-seven objections, and crossing this *mare magnum* may be challenging, since at some point the arguments become slightly repetitive. Thankfully, all the chapters, sections, and subsections of the book are neatly summarized, and useful tables are provided. Furthermore, Tarlazzi tries to subsume the thirty-seven objections under three main categories in the conclusion of chapter 5, or at least to identify three key problems recurring in many of the difficulties. It is worth noting that the numbered list of objections can be found at the beginning of the book (p. xvii–xviii). The list is organized according to the order of sources and the order of appearance within a given text. An equally useful list of the theses of the *individuum* theory can be found in chapter 6.2 (Part 3).

Part 3 starts with a tentative diagnosis that the theory briefly mentioned by John of Salisbury and associated with Walter of Mortagne is indeed a version of the *individuum* theory. Potential differences in presentation can be explained away by the difference in genre (literary vs logical) or by the temporal distance (John finished his treatise in the late 1150s). Tarlazzi goes on to wrap up all the available material and “synthesize” the theory’s main tenets. She also examines some modern interpretations as well as the link to Boethius’s (or ultimately Alexander of Aphrodisias’) notion of a “unique subject” that is individual on the ontological level but general in virtue of the mental act of abstraction. Section 6.3 draws attention to analogies with Abelard’s conceptual strategies.

Chapter 7 is an attempt to find a master for the theory. Section 7.1 tackles the question of attributing the treatise *Quoniam de generali* to Walter of Mortagne. The main problem is that both John of Salisbury and other sources (especially *LNPS*) associate the *individuum* theory with a rather large group of thinkers, without revealing any names except for Walter, who is just a celebrity picked out by John (p. 289). One should keep in mind that the number of active scholars was considerably greater than the list of names known to us (p. 289–90). Tarlazzi also points out that the *Quoniam de generali* uses geographical examples other than the places in which Walter spent most of his career; she also makes one stylistic point about the usage of *quippe* (p. 290). The conclusion is that the attribution “remains possible,” but “does not seem currently preferable to anonymity” (p. 290). It is

⁵ Nonetheless, we need not assume that the set of accidental properties constitutes a principle of individuation.

one thing, however, to have qualms about authorship and quite another to undermine the connection between Walter and the *individuum* theory.

Sections 7.2–7.4 examine links between the *individuum* theory and the views of William of Champeaux, Adalard of Bath, and Gilbert of Poitiers. I find the comparison with Gilbert particularly illuminating: it throws light on the nature of the *individuum* theory and allows the reader to see its crucial drawbacks at the backdrop of Gilbert's construction, which has no pretensions to "realism." I regard such pretensions as the *proton pseudos* of the *individuum* theory. Furthermore, Tarlazzi discovers intriguing conceptual parallels between Gilbert and commentary P17. For instance, both the non-difference of particularized species-tokens in P17 and the conformity of Gilbert's singular subsistences were explained in terms of producing similar effects in the corresponding individuals (p. 341).

In his famous autobiographical letter, Abelard credits William of Champeaux with a view that replaced William's previous position (the material essence realism) and might well be a version of *individuum* theory: "Sic autem istam tunc suam correxerat sententiam, ut deinceps rem eandem non essentialiter sed indifferenter diceret" ("But he corrected this view

of his so as to say that the thing is not the same in essence but in non-difference").⁶ In chapter 7.2 (p. 302) Tarlazzi admits that this passage entitles us to associate William with the principle of non-difference, but she is rather skeptical about marrying him with the mature *individuum* theory (in this she is more cautious than some scholars). She begins by looking for traces of the material essence realism and the two senses of sameness (*essentialiter* and *indifferenter*) in the writings from William's circle (p. 303–322). In doing so, she gathers further evidence for associating William with the idea of non-difference, which is doubtless one of the seminal notions in the development of the *individuum* theory (cf. e.g. p. 314–315, 321–323). Admittedly, the material is rather scarce and problematic. Tarlazzi concedes that "the new sense of identity in virtue of non-difference seems to constitute the departure point from which the *individuum* theory originates" (p. 323); she also points out that in the *De generibus et speciebus* the *individuum* theory is labelled *sententia de indifferentia*. Then she goes on to ask a series of questions some of which sound like tentative hypotheses, e.g., "Was William's view a previous version of Walter's theory?," "Is the *individuum* theory a theory taught in Laon?" (both William and Walter had

⁶ PETER ABELARD, *Epistola* I, in: *The Letter Collection of Peter Abelard and Heloise*, edited with a revised translation by D. Luscombe after the translation by B. Radice, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013, p. 8–9.

⁷ Cf. p. 324: "Si deve però riconoscere che i rapporti tra la seconda teoria di Guglielmo di Champeaux e la teoria dell'*individuum* collegabile a Gualtiero di Mortagne non sembrano al momento potersi determinare con maggior precisione. Guglielmo sostenne esattamente la stessa teoria di Gualtiero? O una prima versione di essa? O una teoria differente, ma ugualmente basata sul principio di identità per non-differenza? Si trattava forse di una teoria sugli universali insegnata a Laon, un centro con cui entrambi gli autori ebbero un legame? Si deve forse intendere che l'uso del concetto di *status* costituisca l'apporto particolare di Gualtiero, mentre a Guglielmo si debba piuttosto l'introduzione del concetto di *idem indifferenter* nel dibattito sugli universali

connections with this center). She concludes that definitive answers would be premature.⁷

2. INDIVIDUAL UNIVERSALS?

At this point, I would like to suggest a rather far-fetched possibility that haunted me throughout the book, even before the historical chapter 7. In contrast to the case of William of Champeaux, the *Metalogicon* seems to be the only known source confirming Walter of Mortagne's part in the development of the *individuum* theory. Thus, the suspicion that something might be wrong with John's account is at least a logical possibility, given that, as he himself admits, the theory was long dead when he wrote the passage: "Habuit haec opinio aliquos assertores; sed pridem nullus hanc profiteatur."⁸ What if John did not know the *individuum* theory first-hand? What if he learnt about it from some logical handbooks (as opposed to his classes in Paris, personal acquaintance with its supporters, or hearsay)? What if he found an attribution to magister G. (or W.) and just assumed that it referred to Walter? What if his source was corrupted in the first place? My point is that we are clearly in need of independent confirmation of John's report. Imagine that Walter's name

disappeared from the *Metalogicon*, leaving something like: "Partiuntur itaque status duce G." I suppose that in such a scenario William of Champeaux would be the default candidate for the *dux* in question — the leader of the "second realism."

Another related point is that William's previous theory, material essence realism, is not *obviously* incompatible with the part of John of Salisbury's report (M4-i) that directly precedes his mention of Walter (M4-ii):

(M4-i) Siquidem hic ideo quod omne quod est, unum numero est,⁹ rem uniuersalem aut unam numero esse aut omnino non esse concludit. Sed quia impossibile est, substantialia non esse existentibus his quorum sunt substantialia, denuo colligunt uniuersalia singularibus quod ad essentiam unienda (*Met.* II, 17, ed. Hall, p. 81, l. 38–42; ed. Webb, p. 93, l. 3–8).

(M4-ii) Partiuntur itaque status duce Gautero de Mauritania, et Platonem in eo quod Plato est, dicunt indiuiduum; in eo quod homo, speciem; in eo quod animal, genus, sed subalternum; in eo quod substantia, generalissimum. Habuit haec opinio aliquos assertores; sed pridem nullus hanc profiteatur (*Met.* II, 17, ed. Hall, p. 81, l. 42 – p. 82, l. 47).

(concetto che viene utilizzato da Gualtiero ma che, come si è visto, è adottato anche da altri autori)? A mio avviso, al momento non si possono apportare risposte definitive a questi quesiti. Si riscontrano dei legami sulle posizioni sugli universali di questi due autori (conosciute partendo da *HC* [*Historia calamitatum*] da un lato, e dal *Metalogicon* dall'altro), così come dei legami biografici nella comune attività a Laon (anche se in periodi, sembra, diversi), ma i dettagli di questi rapporti, per il momento, ci sfuggono." (Then follows a discussion of Peter King's hypothesis regarding the difference between William's and Walter's views.)

⁸JOHN OF SALISBURY, *Metalogicon* II, 17, edited by J.B. Hall, K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, (Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis, 98), Turnhout: Brepols, 1991, p. 82; the context is quoted below.

⁹This reading follows Webb's edition (*Ioannis Saresberiensis episcopi Carnotensis Metalogicon Libri IIII*, edited by C. Webb, Oxford 1929, p. 93). The labels "M4-i" and "M4-ii" are taken from Tarlazzi, p. 48.

On p. 53, Tarlazzi detects a circularity in the rationale in (M4-i). After a careful analysis of the meaning of *essentia* in that milieu, she concludes that “according to this theory, a universal would be united with a singular thing with regard to the existence of the *universal* [...] So there is a certain circularity: on the one hand, the universal is necessary for the existence of the individual; on the other, it is united with the individual for the sake of its own existence (*per la propria esistenza*).” If I understand this reading correctly, we are dealing here with mutual existential dependence, which is perhaps problematic in itself, but hardly “circular” if the notion of circularity refers to explanation or justification. In any case, more importantly, one could challenge Tarlazzi’s assumption that the term “essentia” in “colligunt uniuersalia singularibus quod ad essentiam unienda” refers to the existence of *universals*. Rather, the sentence encompasses both relevant senses of *essentia* (existence and entity) and simply states that universals should be united with relevant particulars *in being*, i.e., universals should “share” the individualized existence with the particulars. My point is that we could understand the phrase “quod ad [*or quoad*] essentiam unienda” as an absolute expression that is in no need of relativization to universals or singulars. “Being united with *x* with regard to *essentia*” boils down to “being *x*” or “being the same thing as *x*.”

If this is so, one might ask whether John’s intention in paragraph (M4-i) can be captured by the following paraphrase:

- (1) If *y* is a substantial constituent (*substantiale*) of *x*, then *x* exists only if *y* exists.
- (2) At least some universals are substantial constituents of existing particulars. Take such a universal and call it *U*.

(3) Therefore, *U* exists.

(4) But everything that exists is numerically one (*numero unum*).

(5) The only way for *U* to be numerically one is to be united with a unique particular thing with regard to *essentia*. Call this particular object *O*.

(6) So *U* is united with *O* with regard to *essentia*, i.e., *U* is the same thing as *O*, and *U* is no other thing.

The sameness in (6) is to be interpreted, roughly, in terms of numerical sameness. In other words, *U* is united with *O* with regard to *essentia* just in case *U* constitutes *O* in such a way that *U* is “enclosed” or “trapped” within *O*, i.e., *U* cannot constitute other, numerically distinct objects.

On closer inspection, however, premises (5)–(6) appear problematic as a reading of (M4-i). The uniqueness requirement in (5) might be too strong, i.e., the class of realist theories introduced by the *Metalogicon* at this stage need not assume that a given universal is limited to only one particular thing. Rather, the contrast seems to be with more Platonist versions of realism, so that the account in (M4-i) may also encompass the straightforward forms of immanent realism, like the material essence realism (MER), and not just its ontologically more parsimonious successors like the *individuum* theory and the *collectio* theory. It is unclear whether MER is really incompatible with premise (4), as its critics maintained. After all, the proponents of MER insisted that the universal matter is one and the same thing, *essentialiter idem*, in many singular instantiations, so one needs additional arguments to prove them wrong. Abelard’s objections are objectionable themselves. Note that premise (4) is weaker than the principle upheld by the *individuum* theory, according to which whatever exists is individual. There is conceptual room for being

“numerically one” without being an individual in the sense of being an ordinary concrete object (like this donkey) or a particular form (like this whiteness or this rationality).

If passage (M4-i) is indeed compatible with MER, then we should reconsider Tarlazzi’s statement that (M4-i) refers specifically to the *individuum* theory: “Section M4, in which John presents the fourth theory from the list (which can be called the *singulare* theory or the theory of *res sensibiles*, or, as we shall see in chapter 6, the *individuum* theory), can be divided into two parts, labelled M4-i and M4-ii” (p. 48; see also the table on p. 70). Note that, according to Tarlazzi, MER accepts a form of mutual existential dependence between universals and particulars characteristic of immanent realism (p. 130–131), which further confirms MER’s compatibility with (M4-i) if we drop the uniqueness requirement introduced in (5).

Let me now reflect, in this context, on the plausibility of the *individuum* theory. It seems that it was indeed committed to the uniqueness requirement in (5). This is explicitly stated, for instance, in the *De generibus et speciebus* (*Individui universalis*, p. 147, cf. also p. 198, n. 59)¹⁰: “aeque enim homo qui est Socratis in nullo alio est nisi in Socrate sicut ipse Socrates” and in commentary P17 (p. 161–164): “nullum uniuersale materiam esse diuersorum” etc. Such formulations make the theory vulnerable to the common-sense objection that *homo* fails to satisfy any intelligible notion of universal. Could *homo* — the item exclusively bound to Socrates — be a genuine universal, something supposed to account for the gen-

erality over and above the plurality of men? The difficulty feels insurmountable regardless of the amount of legerdemain deployed to defend the view.

The usual answer, associated by Abelard with William of Champeaux and accepted by the subsequent realists, is that the *homo* united with Socrates and the *homo* exemplified and monopolized by Plato are the same in the sense that as such they are qualitatively indistinguishable (*indifferenter idem* as opposed to *essentialiter idem*). If both of those items are to be labelled “universals,” then the theory blatantly stretches the notion of universality: after all, we are dealing with two distinct albeit exactly similar instances of *homo*, each failing to constitute many things or to be predicated of many in any intuitive sense. And so neither of those particularized species satisfies the traditional definitions and — more importantly — the intuitive notion of universal. This failure is salient in the claim repeated in the commentaries: the theory concedes right away that genera and species are as numerous as the corresponding individuals (cf. p. 139–141, 161, 163), and this is not even supposed to be a problem (although cf. p. 197, 218–219).

Of course, the theory can invoke a figurative sense in which sentences like “Socrates is predicable of many” are true. Namely, the sentence boils down to something like “There is a certain *status P* such that Socrates agrees with many other things in being *P*.” One can make such paraphrases more and more sophisticated, but ultimately it is still difficult to get used to the idea that something is predicable of many but — on the ontological level — privately assigned to only one thing. Take

¹⁰ Cf. *De generibus et speciebus*, § 50, edited by P. KING, “Pseudo-Joscelin: Treatise on Genera and Species,” *Oxford Studies in Medieval Philosophy*, edited by R. Pasnau, vol. 2, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 144.

one example of the *individuum* theorists' inventiveness:

Sed et hi dicunt: Socrates in nullo statu alicui inhaeret nisi sibi essentialiter, sed in statu hominis pluribus dicitur inhaerere quia alii sibi indifferentes inhaerent; eodem modo in statu animalis (*De generibus et speciebus*, ed. King, § 57, p. 146).

Thus, we are even allowed to concede that "Socrates inheres in many," if we relativize the assertion to the *status* of being human and paraphrase it properly. This is a striking example of the overall light-hearted attitude to semantics taken by these thinkers (even if the *De generibus et speciebus* is not entirely accurate in this case). I quote this particular passage also because Tarlazzi's construal of "alii sibi indifferentes inhaerent" seems problematic. She assumes (p. 198, n. 56) that the pronoun "sibi" depends on "inhaerent," so that the sense is: "other non-different [things] inhere in themselves." But the word order seems odd on this reading. Given that in medieval Latin "sibi" can function as the equivalent of "ei," it is possible that "sibi" refers to Socrates (or "the man that is Socrates"), so the sentence would mean: "Socrates [...] is said to inhere in many according to the state of man because others, not different from him, inhere." They inhere, that is, in themselves, which collectively accounts for "inhering in many." Alternatively, a scribe might have made an inversion or omitted the second "sibi," assuming that it was redundant: "alii sibi indifferentes <sibi> inhaerent." One could also conjecture that "indifferentes" (both MSS unambiguously have it) must be emended into "indifferent": "others inhere in themselves in

a non-different way," i.e., *homo*-Plato inheres in Plato just as *homo*-Socrates inheres in Socrates. In other words, there is no qualitative difference between the fact that *homo* inheres in Plato and the fact that *homo* inheres in Socrates. Both inferences produce similar effects (as commentary P17 puts it), and so we are entitled to say, figuratively, that *homo* inheres in many and that Socrates inheres in many (in the latter case with the qualification "due to the human-layer," *in statu hominis*).

Given that the notion of being the same due to lack of difference (*indifferenter idem*) is problematic, one might think that a better strategy for the *individuum* theorists would have been to endorse the concept of relative sameness (or "identity"). On this account, vaguely implicit in some Abelardian texts,¹¹ the relation of being the same must be relativized to a relevant term supplied by the context or intended by the speaker. Let us apply it to the *individuum* theory: the claim that the *Donkey* in Brunellus and the *Donkey* in Eeyore are "the same," says nothing until we specify the relevant aspect of sameness, the intended *status*. Some of those aspects or *status* will make the statement false. For instance, it is not the case that Brunellus's *Donkey* and Eeyore's *Donkey* are the same individual or the same *essentia*, but we can grant that they are the same universal or the same species. This strategy resembles, to a certain extent, the account in terms of "Abelardian predicates" discussed by Tarlazzi in chapter 6, but it is unclear whether one can make a case for systematic application of the notion of relative sameness in that period. Still, even this way out cannot fully absolve the *individuum* theory of

¹¹ Cf. *Positio vocum sententiae*, edited by Y. IWAKUMA, "Vocales' or Early Nominalists," *Traditio*, vol. 47 (1992), p. 47–111 (edition on p. 66–73), see especially p. 72; *LNPS*, ed. Geyer, p. 579.

unintuitiveness. After all, it commits one to the claim that *Donkey*-Brunellus and the *Donkey*-Eeyore are not the same *essentia*, so there is no returning to the intuitive notion of universal as “one-over-many.”

Interestingly, this fundamental problem does not affect the *collectio* theory. Is this fact connected with the silence surrounding that view in the *Logica “Nostrorum petitioni sociorum”* (in contrast to the earlier *Logica “Ingredientibus”*)? The Abelardian *Positio vocum sententiae* and *LNPS* are willing to accept the claim that a part of Socrates (e.g. Socrates-minus-legs) is Socrates, while blocking the inference to “Socrates is predicated of many.”¹² This is based on the postulate that “many” can only refer to things that are numerically distinct whereas Socrates-sans-legs and the whole Socrates overlap, and so they are not numerically distinct (in Abelardian terminology). This account arguably disarms Abelard’s objection from the *Logica “Ingredientibus”* to the effect that according to the *collectio* theory Socrates would be predicated of many via his parts.¹³ Perhaps Abelardians realized that they had no real quar-

rel with the mereological account. Incidentally, I doubt, in spite of Tarlazzi’s reading of Abelard’s report, that the *collectio* theory is committed to the principle of non-difference (although I agree, of course, that we should distinguish the principle from a putative *theory* of non-difference).

Tarlazzi suggests that the *individuum* theory’s goal was to blur or undermine the distinction between individuals and universals (cf. p. 172). Perhaps the theory would be more “audacious” and fair if it conceded that the talk of universals is purely figurative and, strictly speaking, there are no real universals apart from words and concepts. This would acknowledge the salient fact that, just like in the case of the *collectio* theory, there is no substantial difference in terms of ontological views between the Abelardian nominalists and the *individuum* theorists.

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¹² *Positio vocum sententiae*, ed. Iwakuma, p. 68, 72–73; *LNPS*, ed. Geyer, p. 579, l. 23 – p. 580, l. 3.

¹³ PETER ABELARD, *Logica “Ingredientibus,”* edited by B. Geyer, *Peter Abaelards Philosophische Schriften*, Münster in W.: Aschendorff, 1919–1933, p. 14, l. 40 – p. 15, l. 1: “Preterea et Socrates similiter de pluribus per partes diversas diceretur, ut ipse universalis esset.” It is unclear, however, what kind of parts Abelard has in mind here. If he is speaking of any division into non-overlapping parts, then the argument seems to hold water, since these “diverse” parts of Socrates would be numerically distinct from one another. On the other hand, one might insist that “Socrates” can only be predicated of parts that are capable of constituting a human being on their own (like Socrates-minus-legs, Socrates-minus-hair, etc.). All such parts probably overlap, so the inference to “Socrates is predicated of many” can be prevented.