OXFORD *QUODLIBETA* FROM OCKHAM TO HOLCOT

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As is often the case with important intellectual trends, the quodlibetal genre in early fourteenth-century England strongly flourished at the same time that it was beginning a steep decline in importance. The reasons for this shift of intellectual energy away from publishing and circulating *quodlibeta* seem to have been primarily internal to the universities themselves. Here we shall survey the flourishing and to a lesser extent the decline, by looking at the quodlibetal collections of three of the most influential Oxford theologians in the 1320s and 1330s, William Ockham, Walter Chatton, and Robert Holcot. After a brief account of the lives and careers of these men, and a more careful accounting of the latest data regarding the dating, organization, and manuscript traditions for their respective quodlibetal collections, we will consider some philosophical issues raised by the content of their work. I shall treat my three subjects differently depending on how widely disseminated are the previous studies of their collections. For Ockham, the textual history of whose *Quodlibeta* is already well studied in print, I shall focus primarily and in great detail on content; for Chatton, about whose *Quodlibet* almost nothing is in print, and who is himself not well known, I shall discuss biography, manuscript, dating, and general content equally; and for Holcot, who has received more attention than Chatton but less than Ockham, I adopt an intermediate strategy concerning manuscripts versus content, and detail versus general overview. In addition, I will briefly discuss the *Quodlibet* of an important theologian, John of Rodington, who runs in this same Oxford tradition but whose *Quodlibet de conscientia* is still largely unedited. I conclude by considering what the contents of these works reveal about the status of the quodlibetal form in this period, and its connection to some larger trends in English philosophical theology.

General Observations

The time period under consideration here is roughly 1322 to 1334. It was in this period that the *quodlibeta* of Ockham, Chatton, and Holcot were recorded and made available for circulation. Several factors make *quodlibeta* of this era both fascinating and challenging. I want to preface my detailed discussion of individual thinkers and their manuscript traditions by bringing some of these characteristics to the foreground. I will not argue for these claims here, but will instead invite the reader to see how my points are exemplified in the subsequent discussion of my three primary subjects.

Topical Range

Reading a long quodlibetal question list for a prolific author, such as Ockham or Holcot, can give a slightly misleading impression about topic range. These lists suggest a kind of openness in subject matter that might not seem possible, for example, in a commentary on a set piece such as the *Sentences*. The initial expectation we might have looking at a question list for Ockham's *Quodlibeta*, say, is that we are about to be treated to an exquisite intellectual buffet, with delicacies both rare and strange; we may develop the expectation as readers that we are facing a grand survey of Ockhamist thought applied to surprising and recondite issues. Although the impression is not entirely false, this sense of relative openness can be exaggerated. In fact, by this point *Sentences* commentaries themselves had become increasingly loosely based on the original text, often containing long digressions into philosophical topics that had little bearing on Lombard's original theological masterpiece.[1] Similarly, even though the question sets in a *quodlibet* were suggested by others (*a quolibet*) and were about anything (*de quolibet*), in practice masters often used the questions they received, whatever the ostensible subject matter, as an occasion to expound on favorite concerns and issues, often twisting exotic-sounding queries toward the advancement of time-worn debates. Hence, while quodlibetal questions often sound recondite in the extreme, the *quodlibeta* of the 1320s and 1330s at Oxford

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[1] Chris Schabel documents this change for *Sentences* commentaries in this period in "Oxford Franciscans after Ockham: Walter Chatton and Adam Wodeham," *Mediaeval Commentaries on the* Sentences *of Peter Lombard*, vol. I, G.R. Evans, ed. (Leiden 2002), pp. 359–77. More general remarks of a similar nature are found in W.J. Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England* (Princeton 1987), pp. 252–5.

are not exceptional for the period, but are very much continuous in method, tone, and difficulty with comparable, contemporary theological literature.

Chronology

All else aside, it is often difficult to give an exact absolute date to *quodlibeta* of this period. Because fourteenth-century *quodlibeta* do not always correspond to a uniquely identifying stage or stages in a scholar's career the way a *Sentences* lecture would,[2] they are not as useful as other literary forms for establishing chronologies. There are exceptions, of course, but in general when external evidence is lacking it can be difficult to say what the canonical ordering of questions should be within a quodlibetal collection, or what the absolute date of a *quodlibet* is, or indeed where exactly a set of quodlibetal questions fits in the author's overall career. Most of the arguments for establishing such facts will rely on internal evidence that is weak to some substantial degree. Moreover, since *quodlibeta* were sometimes revised by their authors, e.g., rewritten, extended, or given a more logical ordering, there is often little certainty regarding the date of any particular version of a *quodlibet*.

Intense Intellectual Exchange and Interdependence

Oxford *quodlibeta* of this era are characterized by extremely pointed, detailed, directed, charge and counter-charge between contemporary intellectual opponents. Of course, as records of disputational encounters, all *quodlibeta* might be expected to exemplify this characteristic to some extent. However, the *quodlibeta* we will here consider (especially those of Chatton and Ockham) reflect extremely lively and occasionally personal attacks and rebuttals, and it seems that this feature of *quodlibeta* may even have increased from the late thirteenth to the fourteenth century.[3] Since the *Sentences* commentaries at this time had themselves become platforms for presenting individual philosophical theories and for opposing contemporaries by name,[4] and since a person normally undertook quodlibetal disputation at a later career stage than he undertook a *Sentences* commentary, the *quodlibeta* of this time tend to represent the second or even third stages of highly contended controversies. This

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[2] Glorieux II, pp. 33–6, and W.J. Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham: An Introduction to His Life and Writings* (Leiden 1978), p. 99, n. 220.

[3] Glorieux I, pp. 55–6.

[4] Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars*, p. 254.

makes them very difficult to understand in isolation; they are not very self-contained writings.

William of Ockham

Ockham had a full and controversial life, and a long and fruitful writing career in philosophy and theology, even if his academic and Church careers were dramatically truncated. His peak output of non-political work came between 1317 and 1324. Several readable and reasonably complete short accounts of his life have been written, and there seems little new data to add.[5] Born around 1288 in the village of Ockham, not far from London, William entered the Franciscan Order at a young age. Having received his basic education in language and philosophy at London, he began to study theology at Oxford in the first few years after the death of Scotus. He read the *Sentences* at Oxford during the 1317–19 biennium, and by 1321 was lecturing in theology, perhaps at the Franciscan *studium* in London, where Walter Chatton and Adam Wodeham were as well.[6] While waiting for his turn at an Oxford regency in 1324, he was summoned to Avignon to answer questions that had arisen about the orthodoxy of his ideas on God's power. While resident there he famously became entangled in a controversy between Pope John XXII and the Franciscan Order over their divergent approaches to apostolic poverty and the ownership of property. The encounter ended disastrously for Ockham, who, after declaring the pope a heretic, escaped through Italy to German lands in the spring of 1328, where he finally settled under the protection of the Emperor Louis of Bavaria. He remained there until his death in 1347, producing a large body of work on political theory during these two decades.

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[5] The clearest, most complete short account of Ockham's life, writings, and intellectual background are P.V. Spade's "Introduction" and W.J. Courtenay's "The Academic and Intellectual Worlds of Ockham," which form the first two chapters of *The Cambridge Companion to Ockham*, P.V. Spade, ed. (Cambridge 1999), pp. 1–29. This has been my main source for the biographical details I give here.

[6] This is controversial. See below for further discussion.

Ockham's Quodlibeta

Manuscript Tradition, Attribution, Dating, and Arrangement of Questions
The textual situation for Ockham's *Quodlibeta* is excellent all around.
Several manuscript witnesses exist, a careful critical edition has been
prepared from them, and there is even a translation of the entire work
into English by Alfred Freddoso and Francis Kelley.[7] The work contains
170 questions in all, filling one 782-page volume of the critical edition.
Four full and nine partial manuscripts attest to his *Quodlibeta*, as well
as three printed editions.[8] There is no occasion to doubt that these
are quodlibetal disputations, since every manuscript witness agrees in
denominating the work as such, and since the many internal cross-
references use this same designation in referring the reader to other
questions.[9] Similar remarks apply to authorial attribution.[10]

Unlike the *Quodlibeta* of Robert Holcot, to be examined below, there
are no serious difficulties concerning the ordering and grouping of the
questions in the collection: the majority of all manuscript witnesses and
printed editions contain the order of questions that is followed in the
modern critical edition. A second tradition of ordering does exist, but it
does not square with the internal and external evidence from Ockham's
own cross-references, and at any rate the witnesses containing this sec-
ond ordering show signs of some later editorial rearrangement.[11]

If these issues are moot for Ockham's quodlibetal collection, the
issue of *fontes* and of the occasion for its composition and redaction
are quite fertile and important for Ockham scholarship. For Ockham
was never a master, at Oxford or elsewhere, but quodlibetal disputa-
tions were customarily recorded and circulated only for the magisterial
participants who finally determined the questions *de quolibet*. Why then
this rather large collection, widely circulated and copied as though of
quodlibetal *determinationes*? Where and why were these questions dis-
puted, recorded, and edited?

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[7] *William of Ockham: Quodlibetal Questions*, 2 vols. bound as one, trans. A. Freddoso
and F.E. Kelley (New Haven 1998).

[8] The primary manuscript witnesses are, using Wey's sigla: (1) A = Paris, BnF
lat. 16398; (2) B = BAV, Vat. lat. 3075; (3) C = BAV, Vat. lat. 956; (4) D = Giessen,
Universitätsbibliothek, 733. See the introduction to Guillelmus de Ockham, *Quodlibeta
Septem*, ed. J.C. Wey, *Opera Theologica* IX (St Bonaventure, NY 1980), pp. 1*–22*.

[9] Wey, introduction to Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, p. 26*.

[10] Wey, introduction to Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, pp. 32*–4*.

[11] Wey, introduction to Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, p. 23*.

The standard answer to these questions has its roots in Gedeon G**al**'s discussion of Ockham's *Summa Logicae*.[12] G**al** suggested that Ockham composed his *Summa* in London, not Oxford, because Walter Chatton and Adam Wodeham were in the same physical location as Ockham during its composition, and Chatton was definitely in London. Add to this "London hypothesis" the fact that Ockham's *Quodlibeta* were disputed in this same time period (see below), and that Chatton's influence is similarly evident in the *Quodlibeta*, and we reach the conclusion that Ockham disputed his *Quodlibeta* and wrote at least some of them down in London. But the persuasive power of the London hypothesis itself has recently been criticized by Courtenay as exceeding the strength of the evidence.[13] Since it bears on our understanding of the *Quodlibeta*, some discussion of this controversy is in order here.

Before turning to the controversy, we should say what seems fairly firm and clear about the place and time of Ockham's *Quodlibeta*. Although he is named only once, in *Quodlibet* I, q. 2, Walter Chatton and his arguments are without doubt the overwhelming target of Ockham's attacks in an enormous number of questions. Wey finds Ockham quoting or paraphrasing passages from Chatton's *Reportatio* in no less than sixty-eight of the 170 questions therein, and admits that there are probably others that he missed.[14] Nor are Chatton's ideas always selected for criticism; sometimes they are agreed with or even used to solve problems.[15] Wey presents several reasons to believe that Chatton may have presented *viva voce* some of the arguments to which Ockham responds.[16] Moreover, careful attention to the details of mutual quotation between Ockham and Chatton, as well as external evidence, suggests that all these *Quodlibeta*, or at least the later ones, may have been written down in Avignon, and that almost certainly Ockham completed some of the redactions there.[17]

So much seems clear. But Wey combined these observations on the *Quodlibeta* with G**al**'s London hypothesis on the *Summa logicae* to yield

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[12] From the introduction to Guillelmus de Ockham, *Summa Logicae*, ed. G. G**al**, *Opera Philosophica* I (St Bonaventure, NY 1967), pp. 53*–6*.

[13] W.J. Courtenay, "Ockham, Chatton, and the London *Studium*: Observation on Recent Changes to Ockham's Biography," *Gegenwart Ockhams*, W. Vossenkuhl and R. Schönberger, eds. (Weinheim 1990), pp. 327–37.

[14] Wey, introduction to Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, p. 27*.

[15] Wey, introduction to Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, p. 27*.

[16] Wey, introduction to Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, p. 39*.

[17] Wey, introduction to Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, p. 41*.

the conclusion that, though they may have been composed in Avignon, Ockham's *Quodlibeta* are all the fruit of disputations held in London between 1322 and 1324.[18] On this version of events, Chatton, Ockham, and their confrere Adam Wodeham were all living in a Franciscan house in London during the opening years of the 1320s, engaging in a rapid-fire exchange of views, with Ockham involved in quodlibetal disputations later written down.

Wey explains how there came to be seven *Quodlibeta* in just two years by postulating a system of three academic terms in the *studia*, including London, with disputations occurring each term, rather than on the university schedule of twice per year at Lent and Advent. This allows for three disputations to take place in a given academic cycle. Then, observing the tight connections between Ockham's *Quodlibet* I and Chatton's *Reportatio* book II, dated late in 1322, Wey distributes the remainder of Ockham's disputations very sensibly as follows:

1322 Autumn: *Quodlibet* I
1323 Winter: *Quodlibet* II
1323 Spring: *Quodlibet* III
1323 Autumn: *Quodlibet* IV
1324 Winter and Spring: *Quodlibeta* V–VII

But even if the "Chatton connection" on which this is based is quite clear, why believe the London hypothesis? The evidence rests fundamentally on two lines of argument. (1) **Gal**'s introduction to *Summa logicae* famously argues that Ockham, Wodeham, and Chatton were together in whatever time and place Chatton's *Reportatio* was composed.[19] This claim has received nothing but support from subsequent examinations of texts.[20] (2) **Gal** argued in that same place that Chatton's *Reportatio*

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[18] Wey argues that the leisurely style of the writing reflects only the mode of composition, when he had so little to do his first year in Avignon, but this style belies the deeper intensity of the actual exchanges that form the basis of the work. Wey, introduction to Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, pp. 38* and 41*.

[19] G**a**l's introduction to Ockham, *Summa logicae*, p. 54*. His memorable phrasing is *ubi Chatton, ibi Wodeham; ubi Wodeham, ibi Ockham*.

[20] For example, we know that before Ockham left for Avignon, Wodeham showed him a *reportatio* of Chatton's *Sentences* lectures, taken in Wodeham's own hand, and that Ockham scribbled at least one response to Chatton's arguments in the margins of Wodeham's own book ("manu sua in margine reportationis meae"); Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, p. 71n., and p. 162. This manuscript is lost, sadly. The intensity seems to have carried over to Chatton's later works as well. Stephen F. Brown argued from

was composed in London in 1321–23. The temporal portion of this second claim rings true; there is good evidence that Chatton's *Reportatio* lectures occurred across the biennium 1321–23 or at the very least the lectures on book III occurred in 1323.[21] But the argument that the *Reportatio* was composed in London is much weaker. The argument is just this: Chatton refers to the *villa* of Oxford in his *Reportatio* in a way that suggests he was outside its walls as he wrote it; but if not Oxford, then London Greyfriars is the next most likely *studium* to host such a lecture. Now London is a good guess, of course, and no better guesses have suggested themselves, but it must be admitted that the case is weak. Courtenay has even constructed an alternative hypothesis in which Chatton's reference to the *villa* of Oxford as if he were outside might simply reflect the fact that the Franciscan *studium* at Oxford is literally outside (although not far outside) the *villa* itself, as defined by the town walls.[22]

The consequences of this weakness for our understanding of Ockham's *Quodlibeta* are just these. If we set the London hypothesis aside as conjecture, the only other evidence for London as the site of disputation for Ockham's *Quodlibeta* is also weak: the ABC family of codices twice mention London in philosophical examples. Moreover, a recent paper by Girard Etzkorn has given two arguments for the idea that *Quodlibeta* VI and VII must have been composed in Avignon itself, rendering any

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textual evidence in Chatton's *Prologus* and *Lectura* and in Ockham's *Quodlibeta septem* and *Quaestiones in Libros Physicorum Aristotelis* that these two men were exchanging written copies of their arguments and rebuttals with such rapidity that we see mutual verbatim quoting between parallel passages of text. S.F. Brown, "Walter Chatton's *Lectura* and William of Ockham's *Quaestiones in libros Physicorum Aristotelis*," in *Essays Honoring Allan B. Wolter*, W.A. Frank and G.J. Etzkorn, eds. (St Bonaventure, NY 1985), pp. 82–115.

[21] The evidence can be summarized as follows. Chatton's *Reportatio* III mentions the constitution *Ad conditionem canonum*, dated December 1322, as a recent document; thus we have a *terminus post quem*. Chatton did not mention the constitution *Cum inter nonnullos*, dated November 1323, and, to bolster this argument from silence, we know that Wodeham audited these lectures and passed his copies along to Ockham, who had left England for good by summer 1324; thus we have a firm *terminus ante quem* of 1324. This all suggests that Chatton began lecturing on book III early in 1323, and so possibly on books I and II in the calendar year 1322, and his prologue in 1321. See Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, p. 38*, and Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, pp. 69–71. For an alternative view see R. Wood, "Introduction," in Adam de Wodeham, *Lectura secunda in librum primum Sententiarum*, eds. R. Wood and G. Gal (St. Bonaventure, NY 1990), pp. 12–13.

[22] Courtenay, "Ockham, Chatton, and the London *Studium*," pp. 333–4.

"London versus Oxford" discussion moot.[23] (1) Although *Quodlibeta* I–V were plausibly debated in England, *Quodlibeta* VI and VII contain verbatim quotations from some of the Avignon commission's objections to Ockham's ideas on absolute power, suggesting these debates both *postdate* his May 1324 departure for Avignon; Wey's chronology has these debates finished and in England by spring of 1324. (2) Ockham was called to defend his views on relations at a Franciscan provincial chapter held in Cambridge, possibly in the spring of 1323, and so the material on relations in *Quodlibeta* VI and VII could be construed as a response to this commission, rather than as records of actual quodlibetal disputations in London. This too suggests dating later than May 1324, and so a debate-location entirely outside England, and it certainly conflicts with the London hypothesis.[24] Moreover, Etzkorn's alternative suggestion relieves the pressure of Wey's somewhat cramped arrangement of seven *Quodlibeta* being debated in just two years.

It seems we must admit that we cannot be very certain about where these debates took place, especially the later ones. However, even if the evidence for the standard picture is thereby seriously flawed, we know that the majority of the disputations were held in England, that they show intense influence by Chatton, and that they were not likely overlong in composition as a written work, despite their sheer range and size. As such they provide us only a snapshot of Ockham's thought, although a useful one; these are his mature views on important issues, as refined through intense debate with Franciscan colleagues.[25]

Content

Ockham's seven *Quodlibeta*, collected today under the title *Quodlibeta septem*, cover a great deal of intellectual ground. One does get the impression from the frequency of certain topics that Ockham was pressed in his disputations on just those issues where he was especially innovative and provocative, for example, on the unreality of respective entities in creatures and his reduction of the other accidental categories besides quality (I.18; IV.11, 18–28; V.21–23; VI.8–30; VII.1–8, 19), his idiosyncratic development and applications of termist logic (II.19;

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[23] G. Etzkorn, "Ockham at Avignon: His Response to Critics," *Franciscan Studies* 59 (2001), pp. 9–19.

[24] Wey did not know about this Cambridge provincial chapter. See Etzkorn, "Ockham at Avignon," p. 16, n. 30.

[25] Ockham, *Quodlibeta Septem*, pp. 27*–8* and 32*.

III.12–13; IV.12, 35; V.8–9, 14–20, 24–25; VII.10), his ideas on the soul and cognition, especially intuitive cognition (I.6–7, 10–16; II.10–13, 15, 17–18; III.8, 17, 20–22; IV.9, 13–16; V.5; VI.6), and to a lesser degree, on the interior act alone being sin and right reason as a partial object of moral acts (I.20; III.14–16).

Ockham's *Quodlibeta* provide several exceptional examples of the intricacy of argumentation and the intensity of exchange in fourteenth-century English quodlibetal literature, in this case between Ockham and Walter Chatton. To illustrate this point I wish to discuss *Quodlibet* I, q. 5, in some detail. There Ockham develops a counter-example to Chatton's favorite semantic principle, which is sometimes dubbed the "anti-razor," but which I shall refer to as "the Chatton Principle."[26] In I.5 Ockham contends that the Chatton Principle (explained below) is inapplicable to propositions that contain negation virtually, or that have a negative exponent when exposited. If true, this would mean that Chatton's favorite argument in favor of a realist account of motion, and his favorite proof of *respective entities* (roughly, *relations*), could not work. After a brief description the Chatton Principle, we can see concretely the near impossibility of understanding Ockham's *Quodlibeta* aright without having Chatton's texts in hand.

Here is one general formulation of the Chatton Principle from his *Reportatio* I, d. 30, q. 1, a. 4:

> Consider an affirmative proposition, which, when it is verified, is verified only for things; if three things do not suffice for verifying it, one has to posit a fourth, and so on in turn [for four things, or five, etc.].[27]

Chatton gives other versions in several places. However, the basic idea is the same in each case: we must admit that there are as many things as are required to make a certain proposition true. Some have for this reason called the principle an "anti-razor." Chatton eventually[28] makes it clear that *contradiction* is the standard by which we judge

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[26] For some general scholarly discussion of the anti-razor, see A. Maurer, "Method in Ockham's Nominalism," *The Monist* 61,3 (1978), pp. 426–443; A. Maurer, "Ockham's Razor and Chatton's Anti-Razor," *Mediaeval Studies* 46 (1984), pp. 426–43; and R. Keele, *Formal Ontology in the Fourteenth Century: The Chatton Principle and Ockham's Razor* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 2002).

[27] Walter Chatton, *Reportatio* I, d. 30, q. 1, in *Reportatio super Sententias: Liber I, distinctiones 10–48*, eds. J.C. Wey and G.J. Etzkorn (Toronto 2002), p. 237, par. 57: "Propositio affirmativa, quae quando verificatur, solum verificatur pro rebus; si tres non sufficiunt ad verificandum eam, oportet ponere quartam, et sic deinceps."

[28] Viz., in *Lectura* I, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1.

what is required to make a proposition true: *n* things are enough to make a (true) proposition true when it is a contradiction that these *n* things exist as indicated by the proposition, and yet the proposition is false. In a sense, we must "add" to our ontology enough entities of the appropriate types so that it is impossible that propositions that are in fact true would be false, if those entities existed. The underlying assumption here is that if an existent makes a difference to truth then it must be a *thing* (= *res*). The basis of this assumption can be found in Aristotle[29] and Scotus,[30] who claim that a transition from contradictory to contradictory is a change. But since according to Aristotle all change takes place in a real subject, the previous claim about change seems to have been interpreted by Chatton to mean that there can be no passage from contradictory state to contradictory state without the generation or corruption of some thing (*res*). In this form the assumption might usefully be called the "Principle of Contradictories." Ockham, of course, would vigorously oppose this very semantic assumption and offer various alternatives to replace or supplement it, for example, his connotation theory.

Chatton applied his Principle, clearly related in some way to the razor, to prove that certain respective accidents exist, in particular those associated with causality, for example, production, and also that certain successive accidents exist, such as motion. Chatton's account of motion says that, in the instant a thing begins to move, it acquires a real thing (*res*), which we could call *motion*, which thing is a successive accident inhering in the permanent moving object. When the object ceases to move it loses this accident.[31] The need to posit such an entity follows from the Chatton Principle: without positing such an entity no true sentence of the form 'X is in motion' could be true, and, when *motion* is posited in a permanent substance X, it is indeed a contradiction that 'X is in motion' is false.

Ockham, of course, did not accept such an account of motion, because he did not accept the existence of a special class of successive entities.[32] Hence, for him, motion is simply a term, and a connotative

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[29] For example, in *Physics* V.1 (225a 1–20).

[30] For example, in *Ordinatio* 1, d. 30, qq. 1–2, ed. C. Balic, *Opera Omnia* VI (Vatican City 1963), p. 186, l. 20–1.

[31] For example in Chatton, *Reportatio* I, d. 30, q. 1, a. 4, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, p. 235, parr. 45–6.

[32] He argues this point in many places, for example, *Quaestiones in Libros Physicorum Aristotelis*, ed. S.F. Brown, *Opera Philosophica* VI (St Bonaventure, NY 1984) qq. 13 and 17.

one, primarily signifying a moving object and secondarily signifying that this object exists in the following manner: (1) successively in different places, (2) without intervening rest, and (3) continuously.[33] Hence 'X is in motion' simply means that 'X successively coexists in different places without intervening rest, continuously'.

The primary issue in Ockham's *Quodlibet* I, q. 5, is whether an angel can move locally. To answer the question, Ockham gives the account of motion mentioned above, but then considers an objection based on a Chattonian realist account of motion supported by the Chatton Principle, which he quotes explicitly. Ockham raises this Chattonian objection and engages in imaginary debate with it along these lines: the Chatton Principle claims that we need to posit, in the case of angelic motion, the acquisition of a successive accident that the angel previously lacked, while Ockham says that such an accident is not needed, but that we need only posit an angel as a movable thing that will be in a different place than he is in now (successively, continuously, without intervening rest). To settle the issue Ockham goes after the Chatton Principle directly with a counter-example. Ockham explains it this way:

> To the first of these arguments I reply that the principle on which this argument is founded [viz., the Chatton Principle] is false unless it is more adequately interpreted, since with respect to the truth of a given proposition, in some cases two things are sufficient at one time, and in some cases two things are not sufficient, say, at another time. An example: suppose that God creates an angel in the absence of all motion and time, and that the proposition 'This angel is being created' is written down in a book. In that case, in the beginning, when the angel is being created, three things are sufficient to make the proposition 'This angel is being created by God' true—viz., God, the angel, and the book inscribed with such a proposition. But afterwards, if exactly the same things exist, neither those things nor any other things are sufficient to make that proposition true.[34]

It is not at all obvious exactly what Ockham has in mind unless one understands Chatton's views, and indeed the shift to talk of creating angels in a question about the motion of angels would otherwise be baffling. But if we recall that the substantive issue overall is whether or

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[33] This kind of account occurs, for example, in *Quodlibet* I, q. 5, but in other places as well. Ockham adds the third clause to account for a case where God would destroy X, then create it again in another place; this would fit (1) and (2), but no one would call it local motion.

[34] Ockham, *Quodlibetal Questions*, trans. Freddoso-Kelley, p. 30. I have added the material in brackets.

not the Principle of Contradictories needs to be expanded to include a variety of ways for sentences to change truth value, it becomes easier to see his basic strategy. This counter-example tries to show that there is a proposition p, such that p changes from contradictory to contradictory (in this case it goes from being true to being false), and that this change occurs even though exactly the same number n of things a, b, c, … exist when it is true and when it is false. If this were the case, Chatton would have to admit that there was a change in truth value without a change in the number of *res* in the world, and hence that the Principle of Contradictories would need to be expanded to include other ways for propositions to become true or false.

To prove his case Ockham simply claims to exhibit a p that fits the description above. To see how the example works, let p = 'This angel is being created by God', let a = God, b = an angel, c = the book inscribed with the proposition. (The book itself plays no integral role here; it is just that according to Ockham, only proposition tokens exist, and in order to be actually true or false a proposition must be actual; hence, we need the thing written down somewhere.) The problem then seems to be as follows. Let nothing exist save for God, then imagine that God creates an angel at time t_1. In this case, according to the Chatton Principle, 'This angel is being created by God' would be made true at t_1 by the existence of three distinct *res*, viz., God, the angel, and the proposition in the book. But notice that at any time subsequent to t_1, say, t_2, the proposition 'This angel is being created by God' will be false, even if the same three *res*, God, the angel, and the proposition in the book, still exist. Why will 'This angel is being created by God' be false at t_2? The idea seems to be that any created being has a first instant of existence, and it is *only* in that first instant of existence that a thing can be said to be "being created." Therefore, since the instant in which the angel is being created was posited to be t_1, and since t_2 is distinct from t_1, it must be the case that the angel is not being created at t_2; rather, at t_2 the angel already *is*. But then 'This angel is being created by God' is clearly false at t_2, even though the very same three items (viz., God, the angel, and the proposition in the book) exist at t_2 as did at t_1 when 'This angel is being created by God' was true.

To put the matter succinctly, if Chatton were correct, something would have to have gone out of existence at t_2 in order for 'This angel is being created by God' to be false then when it was true before, but apparently the same three things exist at t_2 as existed before. In general, according to this kind of example, something else besides a *res*

must account for p's passage from truth to falsity, i.e., p's passage from contradictory to contradictory, and so the Principle of Contradictories must be expanded.

Another way to see the problem Ockham is raising in I.5 is to consider how he would exposit a proposition like 'This angel is being created by God'. For him, analogously with the case of motion discussed above, the proposition means something like 'The angel now exists and before this he did not exist, and God brought this situation about'. In essence this is simply to deny necessary being to the created thing, which is after all what 'being created' means. But by this analysis obviously 'This angel is being created by God' is false at t_2, since at t_2 it is not the case that before t_2 the angel did not exist; *ex hypothesi* the angel existed at t_1, the first moment of its existence, and t_1 is before t_2.

Ockham considers two Chatton-style objections to his counter-example in turn and then attempts to modify the same basic strategy to handle each of the objections. Notice that, given Ockham's example and Chatton's Principle, any useful Chattonian objection must either (1) deny that p goes from being true to being false, or else (2) it must hold that not three things a, b, and c but rather, say, four things a, b, c, and d are required to make p true in the first place, and that in fact it is the non-existence of d at t_2 that makes p false at that time. Both the Chatton-style objections that Ockham attempts to rebut take the second approach. The first such objection I will pass over, and I will instead look only at the second objection, and then explain Ockham's rebuttal to it.

Ockham describes the Chattonian objection thus: "You might object further that a passive creation is required for the truth of this proposition."[35] By itself, this is quite cryptic, and would be almost impossible to understand if one did not know that the "you" addressed but not named is Walter Chatton, and what the Chatton Principle is about. Because we know this we can make sense of the passage: Chatton could say that God, the angel, and the book are not sufficient to make 'This angel is being created by God' true in the first place, and that a fourth

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[35] Ockham, *Quodlibetal Questions*, trans. Freddoso-Kelley, p. 31. Unfortunately, I know of no passage where Chatton makes this actual objection, so I cannot say whether it is real or imagined. That the objection is Chattonian in style is indubitable. If Ockham and Chatton were living and working at the Franciscan *studium* in London (see above), it is possible that the objection was raised by Chatton himself in person at this disputation.

thing is also needed, namely, a passive respective entity of *creation*, which thing is a respective accident inhering in the angel as a foundation.[36] This passive accident would inhere in the angel while God created him, i.e., at the first moment of his existence (= t_1), but not afterward, e.g., not at t_2. Hence, the Chattonian response would go, the reason why 'This angel is being created by God' is true at t_1 but false at t_2 is that at t_1 these four things exist—viz., God, the angel, the book, and the passive respective of creation in the angel—but at t_2 only three things exist—viz., God, the angel, and the book. But then it is in fact the generation or corruption of some thing, namely, the passive respective accident, which causes the proposition 'This angel is being created by God' to be at first true and then later false.

Ockham's reply to this Chatton-style objection is essentially to say that we do not evade the difficulty even if the passive respective of creation be granted, since God by his absolute power could miraculously conserve that passive respective accident of creation in the angel at t_2, in which case, again, the same four things exist now that the proposition is false as existed when it was true, viz., at t_1. Ockham explains his reply as follows:

> This [Chattonian objection] does not help, since God can conserve that passive creation, and the argument stands as before: The proposition will first be true, since it was true to say that the angel now exists and before this did not exist; and afterwards it will be false, since... the proposition 'The angel now exists and before this he did not exist' will be false, despite the fact that the passive creation remains in existence. Therefore I claim that if [the Chatton Principle] has truth, then it has truth only when the relevant proposition is such that, like 'A human being is an animal', 'A human being is white', etc., it is not negative and does not include any negative proposition as an exponent.[37]

And indeed, Ockham can generalize this strategy to account for any other entities Chatton would posit to try to evade the problem; for any proposition p, and number of entities n, Ockham's strategy would seem to show that even if Chatton posits an $n + 1$th entity whose non-existence at t_2 would explain why p is false at t_2, it remains that God can

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[36] There is no corresponding accident in God, of course, who has no accidental properties at all. But this has no bearing on the issue at hand.

[37] Ockham, *Quodlibetal Questions*, trans. Freddoso-Kelley, p. 31. I have modified the translation slightly and added the material in brackets.

conserve that $n + 1$th entity through his absolute power into instant t_2, so that this entity's absence cannot explain the falsehood of p at t_2.

I pass over a discussion of whether or not Ockham's response is adequate.[38] The point is that this material is nearly unintelligible in much of its argumentative detail without an adequate knowledge of the work of Walter Chatton.

Walter Chatton

Walter Chatton's name is well known to many specialists on fourteenth-century theology and philosophy and especially to specialists on Ockham. However, even to most of them, the details of his views are only now emerging, as his *Sentences* commentaries begin to be published in full in critical editions. Although Chatton's career was described two decades ago in respectable detail by William Courtenay, there is some new information and evidence to add. I begin with a sketch of Chatton's career based on those few hard facts and dates we do possess.

It seems best to break up Chatton's life and career into four stages.[39]

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[38] I think it is demonstrably inadequate in fact. Chatton did also, raising an interesting line of against it in his *Lectura* 1, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, and I think a still more conclusive refutation is possible. See R. Keele, *Formal Ontology in the Fourteenth Century*, Chapter 8.

[39] To yield a more readable account of Chatton's life, I shall save for the footnotes my discussions of the controversial elements of this biography. Little corroborated evidence exists for many of these claims, and in general, the more detailed any particular claim is the more agnosticism is warranted. My primary source for this initial sketch, and still the best overall discussion of Chatton's life, is Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, pp. 66–74. Other sources consulted, in descending order of their useful biographical content, include: Keele, *Formal Ontology in the Fourteenth Century*, pp. 9–15; A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500* I (Oxford 1957), pp. 395–6; H.G. Gelber, *Logic and the Trinity: A Clash of Values in Scholastic Thought 1300–1335* (Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1974), pp. 185–205; Brown, "Walter Chatton's *Lectura*," pp. 82–115; L. Baudry, "Gauthier de Chatton et son commentaire des Sentences," *AHDLMA* 14 (1943–45), pp. 337–69; C.K. Brampton, "Gauthier de Chatton et la provenance des mss. lat. Paris Bibl. Nat. 15886 et 15887," *Études Franciscaines* 14 (1964), pp. 200–5; P.E. Longpré, "Gualtiero di Catton: Un Maestro Francescano D'Oxford," *Studi Francescani* 9 (1923), pp. 101–14; and D.L. Douie, "Three treatises on Evangelical Poverty," *AFH* 24 (1931), pp. 341–69, continued in 25 (1932), pp. 36–58, 210–40.

Childhood, Ordination, and Philosophical Training (Birth to 1315)
Passing over the question of the exact year, we can say with some
confidence that Walter Chatton was born between 1285 and 1290 in
the small village of Chatton, just west of Durham.[40] He entered the
Franciscan Order as a *puer*, i.e., before the age of fourteen, and was
ordained a subdeacon on 20 May 1307. He very likely received his
philosophical training in the North and professed there as well, perhaps
at the convent in Carlisle.

Early Bachelor of Theology Studies (1315 to 1321)
Ample evidence suggests that during this period Chatton was training
in theology and interacting with Ockham and Wodeham. We know
that he was outspoken even from this stage against Ockham on many
issues, and against the views of Campsall, especially on the logic of
the Trinity.[41]

Advanced Bachelor Studies and Regency (1321 to 1333)
We have the least amount of hard biographical data for this period,
although it is clearly the most interesting and intense intellectual period
of his life. Textual evidence allows us to argue with varying degrees of
certainty that four of his five extant works—*Reportatio, Lectura* (which
includes the separately edited *Collatio et Prologus*), *Quodlibet, De paupertate
evangelica*, and *Sermo de visione beatifica*—were written during this period.[42]
We have long possessed reasonable dates (although they are wide, in
one case) for the first two of these works: he probably delivered his
Reportatio during the biennium 1321–23,[43] and his *Lectura* must have

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[40] The date we give to Chatton's birth depends upon to which stage of his career
his *Reportatio* corresponds.

[41] Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, pp. 60 and 69.

[42] The exception is *Sermo de visione beatifica*, which was likely written in Avignon
in 1333, and so belongs to the next stage; see M. Dykmans, "Les Frères Mineurs
d'Avignon au début de 1333 et le sermon de Gautier de Chatton sur la vision béati-
fique," *AHDLMA* 78 (1971), pp. 105–48. For the dating of *De paupertate evangelica* see
Douie, "Three treatises on Evangelical Poverty," p. 345. The list of Chatton's works
was compiled from R. Sharpe, *A Handlist of Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland Before
1540* (2nd edition, Turnout 2001), pp. 730–1; N.A. Fitzpatrick, "Walter Chatton on
the Univocity of Being: A Reaction to Peter Aureoli and William Ockham," *Franciscan
Studies* 31 (1971), pp. 88–177; and Walter Chatton, *Reportatio et Lectura super Sententias:
Collatio ad Librum Primum et Prologus*, ed. J.C. Wey (Toronto 1989), pp. 1–2. The *Reportatio
in Sententias*, eds. J.C. Wey and G.J. Etzkorn, 4 vols. (Toronto 2002–2005), has appeared,
and the *Lectura* will be published shortly.

[43] See p. 000 above for some qualifications.

been written between 1324 and 1330.[44] The first three works listed above are of primary philosophical importance in his corpus. During this period Chatton also incepted as a regent master, probably in the academic year 1329–30.[45]

Later career in Avignon and death (1333 to 1343/44)

Chatton is known to have been in Avignon on 17 January 1333. He was summoned there in order to participate in hearings against Thomas Waleys, and eventually served as an advisor to Pope Benedict XII, a post he held for several years. After this we know little of him save for two events, one uncommon, the other most common: first, in a career-halting accident in 1343, he was appointed bishop of the Welsh see of Asaph although the position was not really vacant, and second, he died the next winter at Avignon, in late 1343 or perhaps early 1344.[46]

Chatton's Quodlibet

The positive identification of Chatton's *Quodlibet* was announced in 1987 by Girard Etzkorn, but it turns out that the lone manuscript containing it was recognized as Chattonian by two previous scholars, Antonius Samaritani, who edited question 3, on the immaculate conception, and earlier still by Carlo Balic.[47] However, Etzkorn went further than the

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[44] The *Lectura* dates are based on the mention of Ockham's *Summa logicae*, which gives a *terminus post quem* of 1324; Wodeham's citation in 1330 of *Lectura* material gives a *terminus ante quem* of 1330. Below I give reasons to suppose that the relative date of Chatton's *Lectura* is earlier than his *Quodlibet*. All my arguments about the date of the *Quodlibet* itself are consistent with the wide dating of the *Lectura* just mentioned.

[45] Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, p. 67. Courtenay cites the Oxford Historical Society's *Munimenta Civitatis Oxonie* as his source. Emden cites this same source as evidence that Chatton was in Oxford in the spring of 1330, involved on the side of the Franciscan Order in a court case.

[46] Three areas in which scholars have attempted to determine his life and career in more detail have been more controversial, viz., (1) his exact birth year, (2) to which career stage his *Reportatio* belongs—bachelor lectures or preparation for bachelor lectures, and (3) the location of the *Reportatio*'s composition. Clearly answers to (2) and (3) bear on each other, but also will bear on the answer to (1), since answers to (2) and (3) suggest to us how old Chatton might have been around 1321–23, the firm dates of the *Reportatio*.

[47] G.J. Etzkorn, "The Codex Paris Nat. Lat. 15.805," *AFH* 80 (1987), pp. 321–33; A. Samaritani, "De beatae Mariae Virginis immaculata conceptione *quodlibet* XIII–XIV saec. primum edita," *Marian Library Studies* 5 (1973) (pp. 729–835), pp. 792–8; and C. Balic, *Ioannis de Polliaco et Ioannis de Neapoli Quaestiones disputatae de Immaculata Conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis*, (Sibenici, Yugoslavia 1931), p. xlvii, n. 62.

others in giving arguments (to be discussed below) which support the identification of the work in question as a *quodlibet*, and which strongly corroborate the claim that the author of the *Quodlibet* was Walter Chatton. Etzkorn eventually undertook a critical edition of the entire work, but because the full edition is not yet published, there is no account in print of the complete case for attribution of this work to Chatton, its dating, importance, philosophical content or connection to other Chattonian works. Therefore all these tasks must be undertaken in some detail here.

The Manuscript, Authenticity and Nature of the Work

Chatton's *Quodlibet* is known through a single manuscript, bound with a miscellany of texts, including other *quodlibeta*, in Codex Paris, BnF lat. 15805.[48] Chatton's text is in the fourth of six sections of the codex, and runs across ff. 54ra–60rb. The manuscript yields a fairly coherent text, requiring relatively little emendation to achieve consistency and intelligibility. In the absence of another witness, little more can currently be said about the accuracy of the manuscript. Twenty-nine questions are presented, although the 29th question, the last of four on future contingents, ends abruptly and incompletely after a few hundred words; however, it is unlikely that this represents a large loss of material. The list of questions, a rough translation, and their manuscript locations, are as follows:

1. Utrum causalitas causae finalis sit realis (f. 54ra) [Whether the causality of final causes is real].
2. Utrum circumstantia aggravans peccatum aggravet illud contra aliquod praeceptorum (54rb) [Whether a circumstance increasing the gravity of a sin does so in opposition to any of the precepts].
3. Utrum beata Virgo potuit fuisse concepta in originali peccato (54rb) [Whether the Blessed Virgin could have been conceived in original sin].
4. Utrum ignorantia invincibilis excuset peccatum (54va) [Whether invincible ignorance excuses sin].
5. Utrum fortitudo politica sit moderativa timoris et audaciae in sensitiva (55ra) [Whether political courage is a quality capable of moderating fear and recklessness in the sensitive appetite].
6. Utrum in moralibus ex circumstantia excusetur culpa (55ra) [Whether in moral matters fault is excused on account of circumstances].

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[48] The manuscript details and the question list below are taken from Etzkorn, "The Codex Paris Nat. Lat. 15.805."

7. Utrum ignorantia invincibilis totaliter excuset (55rb) [Whether invincible ignorance totally excuses sin].

8. Utrum gratia creata in anima Christi sit infinita intensive sic quod improportionaliter excedat quamcumque gratiam purae creaturae (55vb) [Whether the created grace in the soul of Christ is intensively infinite in such a way that it exceeds by all proportion any grace existing in a mere creature].

9. Quattuor sunt tacta a quodam doctore contra quem volo arguere (55vb) [Four points, touched on by a certain doctor, against whom I want to argue here. *The issues are conceptually unrelated, and occur in four different articles*].

10. Utrum de naturis diversis in Christo debeat concedi communicatio in abstractis (55vb) [Whether it ought to be conceded that, in Christ, there was some communication between the diverse natures, considered abstractly].

11. Utrum lex praecipiens hominem occidi sit licita in quocumque casu (56ra) [Whether a law commanding that a man be killed is licit in any circumstances whatsoever].

12. Utrum finis sit obiectum actus moralis (56ra) [Whether an end is an object of a moral action].

13. Utrum aliquis habitus pertinens ad prudentiam possit generari ex actibus, voluntate contrarium eligente (56rb) [Whether some habit pertaining to prudence can be generated by acts of the will when the will itself wills contrary to prudence].

14. Utrum omnis aggravatio culpae sit nata contrariare rectae conscientiae (56vb) [Whether every aggravation of fault is brought about contrary to good conscience].

15. Utrum omnis circumstantia aggravans peccatum aggravet illud mortaliter vel venialiter (57ra) [Whether every circumstance increasing the gravity of a sin does so either mortally or venially].

16. Utrum solus malus actus interior sit peccatum (57rb) [Whether only an interior wicked action counts as sin].

17. Utrum sit magis meritorium diligere amicum quam inimicum (57va) [Whether it is more meritorious to love a friend than an enemy].

18. Utrum purus homo magis teneatur diligere humanitatem Christi quam se ipsum (57va) [Whether a mere human being can be held to love the humanity of Christ more than Christ himself].

19. Utrum Abraham credidit illud praeceptum esse iustum quo praecipiebatur immolare filium suum (57va) [Whether Abraham believed that percept to be just by which he was commanded to sacrifice his own son].

20. Utrum praecipiens alicui percutere clericum et non intendens praecipere nisi de levi percussione et alius excedat et graviter percutiat, utrum talis praecipiens possit absolvi a suo episcopo diocesano (57vb) [Suppose that someone orders a clerk to be beaten, and intends that he be struck only lightly, but that the man doing the beating exceeds this intent and hits him much harder. Can the man giving the order be absolved of fault by the bishop of his own diocese?].

21. Utrum ad salvandum fidem de Trinitate sit necessarium recurrere ad terminos reduplicativos (58ra) [Whether it is necessary to have recourse to reduplicative terms for the sake of saving our faith in the Trinity].
22. Utrum quantitas de genere quantitatis sit res distincta realiter a substantia et qualitatibus (58ra) [Whether a quantity in the category of quantity is a thing really distinct from substance and quality].
23. Utrum Deus possit facere aliquam creaturam cui repugnet exsistere sine omni creatura a se totaliter distincta (58va) [Whether God can make a creature whose nature opposes its existence in the absence of all other creatures totally distinct from it].
24. Utrum angelus sit visibilis in propria forma (59ra) [Whether an angel is visible in its proper form].
25. Utrum angelus potuit peccare in primo instanti sui esse (59rb) [Whether an angel could have sinned in the first instant of its existence].
26. Utrum angeli superiores possunt revelare inferioribus futura contingentia (59rb) [Whether higher angels can reveal future contingents to lower angels].
27. Utrum aliqua creatura possit certificare de futuro contingenti (59va) [Whether a creature can be made certain concerning a future contingent].
28. Utrum certitudo revelationis de futuris contingentibus stet cum contingentia eorum (60ra) [Whether the certainty of the revelation of future contingents is consistent with their contingency].
29. Utrum omnes formae argumentorum quae solent fieri in ista materia possint solvi (60rb) *incomplete* [Whether every form of argument which is usually made concerning these matters, i.e., the issue of future contingents, can be solved].

Old Evidence for the Authenticity and the Classification of the Work

What reasons do we have to think that these are properly quodlibetal disputations? In his initial analysis of the manuscript, Etzkorn points out that the length and structure of the questions support this classification.[49] In my examination of the text I have found nothing to contradict Etzkorn's characterization or judgment on this matter.

Etzkorn offered both internal and external evidence that this *quodlibet* belongs to Walter Chatton. His external evidence is as good as we might hope for. First, there is a marginal attribution to *Chaton*, in the same hand as the scribe of the main text. Second, Adam Wodeham cites Chatton by name and then transcribes very closely a portion of the text contained in question 16. Moreover, the internal evidence that

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[49] Etzkorn, "The Codex Paris Nat. Lat. 15.805," p. 325.

can be adduced from philosophical content is compelling. Etzkorn notes that the author of this *quodlibet* attacks prominent Ockhamist theses, for example "about quantity not being distinct from quality, about circumstances being the partial object of moral acts, about the use of reduplicative terms in explaining the trinity, etc."[50]

A closer examination of content of the text continues to bear this out. To the above evidence we can also add the following incidents of corroboration: (1) in question 16, the author inveighs against the Ockhamist view that only an interior act of bad will is properly called sin, arguing instead that while the interior act is immediately sinful, the consequent exterior act is also properly called sinful as well; (2) in question 5, the author rebuts the Ockhamist view that there are two souls in man, one sensitive, one rational; (3) in question 24 the author supports the species *in medio*, a favorite Chattonian theme, and again criticizes both the Ockhamist rejection of the species *in medio* and Ockham's own account of action at a distance; (4) stylistic considerations are broadly consistent with the attribution to Chatton.

The final piece of internal evidence for attribution to Chatton is extremely strong. This concerns Chatton's anti-razor, which Etzkorn dubbed the *propositio Chattonis*, and which I discussed above under the name "the Chatton Principle." Question 23 contains an extended defense of the Chatton Principle, and Etzkorn believed that this was the most "telling evidence" for Chatton's authorship, so important a role does this principle play in Chatton's argument in his *Reportatio* and *Lectura* for the need to posit *res respectivae*.[51]

New Evidence for Authenticity and Dating

Unfortunately, to determine the date of this work we cannot simply argue that the *Quodlibet* must correspond with a *quodlibet* Chatton determined during his regency (which began in 1329), on the ground that all and only regent masters determined *quodlibeta* and recorded these *determinationes*; we now believe that by the fourteenth century, formed bachelors sometimes did this as well.[52] Fortunately, however, we can fix the date using more texts from Adam Wodeham, specifically books III and IV of his Oxford commentary on the *Sentences*. Therein Wodeham

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[50] Etzkorn, "The Codex Paris Nat. Lat. 15.805," p. 325.
[51] Etzkorn, "The Codex Paris Nat. Lat. 15.805," pp. 325–6.
[52] Although this is controversial; see the discussion about dating Holcot's *Quodlibeta*, below.

not only confirms that Chatton determined questions during the time of his regency,[53] just as we would expect, but he also gives us a glimpse into the content of this *determinatio*, allowing us clearly to show that the text identified by Etzkorn in Paris 15805 is in fact Walter Chatton's magisterial Oxford *determinatio*.

In book III, d. 14, q. 11, Wodeham takes issue with Chatton's indivisibilism as expressed in a *determinatio*, in particular with the opinion "that the continuum is not composed from divisible [but rather *in*divisible] parts."[54] This opinion occurred, Wodeham tells us, in a question attacking Ockham on the issue of quantity.[55] Although none of the question titles in Chatton's *Quodlibet* mentions the continuum directly, indivisibles are mentioned in the text of question 22, which question deals with the issue of quantity, taking Ockham as the principal opponent. Moreover, Chatton apparently responded to Wodeham's arguments in III.14.11, coming back with arguments that Wodeham felt bound to respond to again in book IV, q. 5, of his Oxford commentary, mentioning that Chatton's *determinatio* occurred during the time of his regency.[56] Specifically, Wodeham says this:

> You should note what [Chatton] himself posited afterwards, in the period of his magistracy, in a *determinatio* (which *determinatio* I myself heard—and he said these same things previously as well, when he read the *Sentences*). We have from him that one indivisible is naturally able to be together in the same place as another indivisible, for otherwise, according to him, it would not be possible to save condensation and rarefaction…[57]

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[53] Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, p. 70, n. 112.

[54] Wodeham, *Lectura Oxoniensis* III, d. 14, q. 11 (Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, lat. 915, f. 193va), from the transcription in Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, p. 72, n. 127. "Chatton in quadam determinatione Oxon. quod continuum non componitur ex partibus divisibilibus… audivi postquam illam materiam Londoniae pertractavi."

[55] Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, p. 72.

[56] Robert Holcot, *Seeing the Future Clearly: Questions on Future Contingents by Robert Holcot*, eds. P.A. Streveler and K.H. Tachau, with H.G. Gelber and W.J. Courtenay (Toronto 1995), p. 24, n. 63. Hereafter the introduction to this critical edition will be cited thus: Tachau, *Seeing the Future*. See also Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, p. 73, but only in conjunction with the note immediately succeeding this one.

[57] Wodeham, *Lectura Oxoniensis* IV, q. 5, a. 2 (Paris, Mazarine 915, f. 216ra, ll. 39–45). The text is slightly corrupt. Here is an exact transcription, which I have emended in obvious ways for my translation: "Nota quod ipse post, tempore magisterii sui posuit in determinatione et quam et ego ipse tunc et sicut priora alias audivi dum legit sententias ab eo indivisibile naturaliter esse compossibile alteri indivisibili secundum situm quia aliter secundum eum non posset salvari condensatio et rareficatio…" Note that Courtenay transcribes this same text as "Nota quod ipse <u>post tempus</u> magisterii…" The difference in the underlined phrase would importantly change the meaning to say that

Indeed, in question 22 of the Chattonian text in Paris 15805, we find
Chatton making this very claim in the context of an exchange with an
Ockhamist interlocutor, very possibly Wodeham himself:

> We should say that this proposition is not true for really existing things
> without such an accident [i.e., a quantity]: 'This substance is naturally
> unable to exist at the same time in the same place with a second sub-
> stance'.
>
> But it could be argued [against me] as follows: "The parts of quantity
> can exist naturally [in the same place] at the same time, because [accord-
> ing to you, Chatton], indivisibles compose the parts of substance, and
> indivisibles *can* exist naturally [in the same place] at the same time through
> natural causes. Otherwise, according to you something that is dispersed
> could not be condensed."
>
> It should be said in response: it is true that the [indivisible] parts of
> quantity can be [in the same place] at the same time. Nevertheless the
> extended parts of quantity cannot…
>
> I say that while one part of a quantum [which is composed of indi-
> visibles] remains extended, it cannot naturally be [in the same place] at
> the same time with another part of that substance, while that other part
> also remains extended. Nevertheless, the indivisible, condensable parts
> themselves can be in the same place [at the same time].[58]

So the text in Paris 15805 has Chatton arguing that indivisibles can be
in the same place at the same time, precisely to save the phenomenon of
condensation and rarefaction, just as Wodeham reports events occurred
in Chatton's magisterial *determinatio*. This, together with Etzkorn's ear-
lier arguments, settles the issue of the authorship of these questions
in Paris 15805 beyond doubt, and it also helps us fix their date quite
firmly. The text must date to either 1329–30, since this is known to
be the first year of his regency, or possibly to the year after, 1330–31,
since he would likely have also been master, although *non regens*, for a
second consecutive year.

Chatton's determination came *after* the period of his regency, not during it. Neverthe-
less, Tachau reads the text as I do, with *post* as an adverb, not a preposition, and with
tempore instead of *tempus*, thereby agreeing with me that the determination was during
his regency. Careful examination of Mazarine 915, f. 216ra, l. 42, reveals the crucial
abbreviation is t^e = tempore; so Tachau and I are correct. It should be noted that the
raised "e" of the abbreviation here is of such a form that it could easily be mistaken
for t^9 = tempus. This typographical fact, and the relative infrequency of "post" as an
adverb, are the likely sources of Courtenay's misreading.

[58] Chatton, *Quodlibet*, q. 22, nn. 46–9, from the transcription by Etzkorn.

Unfortunately, this new evidence for attribution raises some question about whether the Chattonian *determinatio* in Paris 15805 is in fact a *quodlibet*, as Etzkorn had argued, since a *determinatio* could be given by a master to a question that was not asked as part of a quodlibetal exercise. Wodeham's use of the term *determinatio*, when he might have used the more precise *quodlibet* (and actually does in other cases) leaves us some doubt about whether this text belongs in the genre at all. Up to this point we have had only Wodeham's use of the ambiguous term *determinatio*, and his non-use of *quodlibet*, on the one side of the issue, and Etzkorn's observations of form and length on the other. However, some new evidence can add a little weight to the case for this text being a *quodlibet*. Etzkorn originally found a title for these questions, partly obscured by the gutter margin, the visible letters of which were "-libet." Recent re-examination of the manuscript shows that this title does indeed say "Quodlibet," and confirms Etzkorn's judgment that the label is in the same hand as the main text and the bulk of the organizational marginalia.[59] This evidence is certainly not decisive, but it increases the reasonableness of our presumption that Chatton's magisterial *determinatio* cited by Wodeham is correctly called his *Quodlibet*.

Content

Although one can obtain some sense of the content of Chatton's *Quodlibet* through the question list and the discussion above, some more comprehensive information about the opponents, issues, and doctrines in the text will serve to round out and complete the picture.

The twenty-nine questions of the *Quodlibet* can be usefully divided into six subject categories. The chart below shows which questions address these topics:

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[59] The marginalia for these folia in Paris 15805 are in two distinct hands. Nearly all are in the same hand as the main scribe, and consist primarily of such organizational labels as "contra," "prima ratio," "secundum dubium," and the like. In addition, all 29 questions, save only two, have a brief (usually one- or two-word) description of the question's subject matter. These latter remarks occur in a different hand, and would seem to be later additions.

Categories	Questions	Opponents, if known
(1) Contingency and necessity		
(1a) Future contingents	**9 a. 2**—the causes of contingency **26**—revelation of future contingents **27, 28**—future contingents and certitude **29**—solving puzzles on future contingents	All articles in **9** seem directed against Aquinas or a follower; Scotus and Aquinas are targets in **28**.
(1b) Freedom, necessity and merit	**25**—the necessary conditions for the will to sin	Possibly Aquinas.
(1c) Contingency of creation	**9 a. 3**—necessity of a *consequentia* about God's actions	Aquinas or a follower.
(2) *Res respectivae* and other accidental beings	**1**—causality of final causes **22**—the category of quantity **23**—*res respectivae*; Chatton Principle	All are against Ockham.
(3) Damnation, Biblical law, cannon law, and sin	**2**—sin and aggravating circumstances **4**—ignorance as an excuse for sin **6**—sin and mitigating circumstances **7**—invincible ignorance and sin **11**—moral acceptability of homicide **15**—mortal vs. venial sin **20**—ordering a clerk to be beaten	By and large the opponents here are unknown or else there is no real opponent. Authorities include Augustine, Anselm, and canon law.
(4) Moral science, right reason and sin	**5**—political strength as a virtue **12**—ends as objects of moral acts **13**—prudence and the will **14**—fault and human conscience **16**—sin as an interior act only **17**—merit of loving enemies vs. friends **19**—Abraham and Isaac	**5, 12, 16** are aimed against Ockham; **14** against Alexander of Hales; **19** against Aquinas, Bonaventure, et al.

Table (*cont.*)

Categories	Questions	Opponents, if known
(5) Christology and the Trinity	**8, 9 a. 4**—grace in Christ's soul **10**—how Christ's natures connect **18**—loving Christ's humanity **21**—the Trinity and reduplicative terms	**21** is Ockham.
(6) Miscellany	**3**—the immaculate conception **9 a. 1**—creatures being present to eternity **24**—the species *in medio*	**3** surveys an enormous number of opinions: Lombard, Augustine, Anselm, Richard of St Victor, Grosseteste, etc.; **24** is against Ockham, and possibly Auriol.

The distinction between categories (3) and (4) may seem a little artificial, but the basic idea is that controversies raised in questions of type (3) are treated by Chatton as matters to be settled by canon law or biblical interpretation (he frequently cites the Bible and the *Decretales Gregorii IX* in these questions), while issues of type (4) are treated as philosophical topics, with Ockham as the most common opponent. If we consider the number of questions under headings (3) and (4), as well as the drift of most of the topics in (1), we can easily convince ourselves that the bulk of Chatton's *Quodlibet*, both theologically and philosophically, is focused on issues of moral responsibility, sin, and merit.

What explains this focus? There may not be much to explain here, since Chatton had always discussed moral questions in his philosophy and theology. Many old, favorite Chattonian themes do at least make an appearance in this work dominated by moral issues: we see the debate over *res respectivae* (qq. 1, 23), *res* in other accidental categories besides quantity (q. 22), and future contingents (qq. 9, a. 2, and 26–29). And yet there really does seem to be a pattern here, which reflects something about either Chatton or the climate at Oxford or perhaps both. Two explanations suggest themselves.

It might be that this work simply reflects a natural shift in interests for Chatton, or more generally for theologians at Oxford. This shift may

have been positive (increased interest in ethics),[60] or negative (decreased interest in epistemology). Or, it is possible that Ockham's departure for Avignon, and his radical shift toward political theory after 1324, had left Chatton without his worthy opponent as a target.

I favor a combination of these explanations. Ockham was Chatton's strongest center of gravity, and by the earliest possible date for the *Quodlibet* Ockham had completely ceased to involve himself in subjects at the heart of all their old disputes. It then seems reasonable to conclude that Chatton was thereafter inclined to shift toward a different pole of his thought, always present but previously overawed by considerations of epistemology and metaphysics, which was now able to shine forth as the well of his previous critical philosophy ran dry. To state the matter most succinctly, it seems that Ockham's *Quodlibeta* strongly reflect Chatton's presence, while Chatton's *Quodlibet* strongly reflects Ockham's absence.

Robert Holcot

The Oxford-trained Dominican Robert Holcot was born around 1300 near Northampton, read the *Sentences* at Oxford in the opening years of the 1330s, was regent in the middle 1330s, and rose to some prominence in ecclesiastical and literary affairs before his death in 1349. The customary sketch of his intellectual life associates his philosophy both with Ockhamism and Thomism. Recent research allows us to flesh out the picture of his life and character beyond these few basic facts, and to consider possible dates for his *Sentences* commentary, which in turn yield possible dates for his *Quodlibeta*.

In one aspect, his intellectual personality is quite similar to Chatton's and Ockham's: as we would expect, we see great reliance on the tools of the new English theology, such as logic and conceptual analysis stemming from supposition theory, or the theory of exponables.[61] Thus, in one way Holcot is quite representative of the tradition thriving at Oxford during this period.

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[60] A point often made in H.G. Gelber, *It Could Have Been Otherwise. Contingency and Necessity in Dominican Theology at Oxford, 1300–1350* (Leiden-Boston 2004), passim.

[61] Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars*, p. 269.

A somewhat unusual feature of Holcot's biography is his connection with the London court of Richard de Bury, bishop of Durham. While there is nothing unexpected about a mendicant theologian having a patron of this sort, Bury's court itself was unusually receptive to and productive of literature that showed an awareness of the classical tradition. Holcot flourished in this environment, filled with people whom Tachau refers to as "'proto'-humanist *literati*."[62] From this support, with the aid of his logically rigorous Oxford training, Holcot crafted several extremely well-loved texts. His popular commentaries enjoyed vast circulation in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; indeed, it is plausible to suggest that Holcot had a wider intellectual influence in the century after his death than even Ockham.[63] In particular, it is for his biblical commentaries, composed after 1334, that he was most well known; his commentary on the Book of Wisdom survives in at least 175 fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscript copies, and was cited into the beginning of the seventeenth century.[64] This text seems to have been one of Chaucer's sources for the Nun's Priest's Tale.[65] Moreover, this fame seems to have attached to his more academic writing as well; his *Sentences* commentary, surviving in whole or part in forty-eight known witnesses, was among the most notable of the later Middle Ages. Also popular were his *Sex articuli* and *Quodlibeta*, composed not long after his *Sentences* commentary.

But when was his *Sentences* commentary written? Here we find some disagreement and some new evidence to consider. Since the relative dating of his *Quodlibeta* to his *Sentences* commentary brings up larger issues about who could determine *quodlibeta* in this period, and since a brief discussion of the absolute dating of his *Sentences* commentary will help us fix his *Quodlibeta*, it is a highly relevant place to begin the discussion.

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[62] Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 2.

[63] An enormous bibliography for Holcot can be found in Gelber, *It Could Have Been Otherwise*, p. 92, n. 105. For a list of studies on Holcot before 1970, see p. 480, n. 1, of R.E. Gillespie, "Robert Holcot's Quodlibeta," *Traditio* 27 (1971), pp. 480–90. For studies up until 1983, see the footnotes of H.G. Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason: Three Questions on the Nature of God, by Robert Holcot, OP* (Toronto 1983), passim.

[64] Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, pp. 2–3.

[65] Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 2.

Holcot's Quodlibeta

Dating, Manuscript Tradition, Attribution, and Arrangement of Questions
There seem to be two views on when Holcot lectured on the *Sentences*:
either in the biennium 1330–32, a view favored by Schepers and
Courtenay,[66] or else in 1331–33, a view favored by Tachau.[67] Both
Courtenay and Tachau seem to agree that, at any rate, his *Quodlibeta*
must have come after this period, likely in 1333–34. Moreover, both
Tachau and Courtenay rely on certain remarks by Holcot in his *Sex
articuli* to a William Crathorn in order to establish their chronologies;
the difference comes from the fact that that Courtenay also accepts,
while Tachau rejects, an additional (apparent) assertion by Holcot that
Crathorn lectured on the *Sentences* for only one year. Since Crathorn's
Sentences commentary was clearly delivered in 1330, Courtenay must
hold that Holcot too began his lectures in 1330, while Tachau, who
thinks that Holcot refers in this crucial text to a Crafton/Grafton rather
than Crathorn, is free to adopt the other view, which better fits some
other pieces of evidence.

   The consequences of this disagreement for Holcot's *Quodlibeta* are as
follows. While on either chronology the disputations were likely held
around 1333–34, on Tachau's view Holcot would still be giving Bible
lectures at that same time (or would just have finished doing so), cer-
tainly not yet having attained the regency, and so we would not only
have to accept the idea of a bachelor determining *quodlibeta*, we would
also have to face an extremely compressed view of Holcot's overall
career trajectory, with a tremendous bottleneck occurring in 1333–34.
Courtenay's view avoids this bottleneck. To complicate matters, Gelber
has recently come out in favor of Tachau's crucial assertion that Holcot
refers to Crafton/Grafton rather than Crathorn, while at the same time
disagreeing with her conclusions about the date of the *Quodlibeta*, and
in particular with the compression implied by Tachau's view, as well as
the pre-magisterial timing it assumes.[68] On Gelber's latest view, these
Quodlibeta should be dated to the time of his regency, perhaps even
exclusively, an event which she places in 1336–37.

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   [66] Although Courtenay entertains hypotheses of even earlier readings, and of his
reading for a single year only, this is the view he explicitly endorses, following Schepers.
See Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham*, pp. 96–100, especially p. 97.
   [67] A table on Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 27 nicely summarizes her views.
   [68] Gelber, *It Could Have Been Otherwise*, pp. 90–1 and 94–5.

Since it is difficult at this stage to see who has the better total case, the prudent conclusion is perhaps that Holcot's *Quodlibeta* can be safely dated to around 1333–37, although the question of precisely where the work fits in his overall career path is not simple and remains hotly contested in the details.

Whenever it may have been compiled, Holcot's quodlibetal collection, containing roughly one hundred questions overall, is far closer in size to Ockham's than to Chatton's collection. The questions are divided into three *Quodlibeta*, two of roughly equal size, the other about twice as large. Unfortunately, the manuscript tradition for Holcot's *Quodlibeta* is quite difficult.[69] This is not to say that there are no reasonable editions of individual questions, but rather that the amount of confusion and conflicting evidence facing an editor of Holcot's *Quodlibeta* is sufficient to block many conclusions that we would hope to draw firmly about the ordering, relative dating, and hence preferred readings of Holcot's intended text. Nevertheless, some scholars[70] have made heroic efforts at managing the many detailed difficulties. I will not attempt to recount here all the details of these labors, but will instead acquaint the reader with what seems uncontroversial, with one or two fundamental points of difficulty, and with the status of current research.

Editors of his *Quodlibet* rely on three manuscripts:[71]

(R) Royal = London, British Library, Royal 10.C.vi
(P) Pembroke = Cambridge, Pembroke College 236
(B) Balliol = Oxford, Balliol College Library 246

In addition there is some related disputational material in a 1497 Lyons edition, which Gelber calls the *Determinationes*, as well as a fourth manuscript, Düsseldorf, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, F.5, which has not been used thus far and which apparently includes *Determinationes* on ff. 239v–325r.[72]

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[69] Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, p. 3.

[70] Notably Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, pp. 1–28, and Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, pp. 1–56. See also the less extensive but foundational work in Gillespie, "Holcot's Quodlibeta."

[71] Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, p. 3; Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 28. For a summary of the main physical characteristics of the manuscripts, and also references to longer detailed descriptions, see Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, pp. 28–9.

[72] See Sharpe, *Handlist*, p. 557 (revised 2001 edition) and the on-line catalogue of the Düsseldorf, Universitäts-und Landesbibliothek. Manuscript F 5 is paper, 330 + i

The three manuscripts that editors have employed differ enormously in the questions that they contain and in the order, arrangement, and hence implied interrelation of those questions; clearly they represent three distinct lines of transmission.[73] P contains some ninety-nine questions, B has ninety-one, while R contains only thirty-eight. (Despite appearances, the total number of questions exceeds 100, since B and R contain some questions not in P.) On the basis of this disparity, one early scholarly examination[74] ascribes Holcot's personal touch to Royal. The view is that, compared to P and B, the more logical arrangement of R, together with its shorter length, is evidence of authorial pruning, and hence an indication that R's readings ought to be preferred.[75] Gillespie, and to a much greater degree Gelber, dispute the orderliness of R, and hence reject this reading of R's importance, emphasizing that consideration of Holcot's quodlibetal collection must be based more on the other two witnesses, and must not rely on this assumed status of R.[76] A second tradition, developed by Shepers,[77] instead elevates P on the ground that it represents a later stage of treatment of the disputed questions and so has preference over B. On this view, R represents, not an authorial redaction, but a mutilated version of even later developments made previously in P. As the sole non-mutilated (i.e., relatively complete) early version of a relatively late stage (and so authoritative) redaction, P deserves more attention than R and B.[78] Gelber tends to discount this view also, and adduces other reasons (in terms of the details of the *pecia* system) to explain the variations existing among the manuscripts; it is due to the piecemeal availability of portions of long texts that we see disorder and incompleteness in, for example, the Royal

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folios, and contains Holcot's complete *Sentences* commentary (ff. 4r–194v) as well. Gelber and Tachau completed their work earlier and thus were not able to examine this witness, although Tachau lists it for the *Sentences* commentary (*Seeing the Future*, p. 36). Nevertheless, Gelber and Tachau remain the most recent in-depth studies.

[73] Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, p. 3; Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 28. For a table comparing the three manuscripts, question-title for question-title, see Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, pp. 113–17.

[74] K. Michalski, "La physique nouvelle et les différents courants philosophiques au XIVᵉ siècle," *Bulletin international de l'Académie Polonaise de Sciences et Des Lettres* (Krakow 1928), pp. 125–33.

[75] Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, p. 4.

[76] Gillespie, "Holcot's Quodlibeta," pp. 485–6; Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, pp. 3–8.

[77] H. Schepers, "Holcot contra dicta Crathorn," *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 77 (1970), pp. 320–54, and 79 (1972), pp. 106–36.

[78] Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, p. 8.

manuscript.[79] Rather than arguing for any one of these manuscripts being authoritative, Gelber ends up using external and internal evidence to argue through question by question, constructing a plausible partial arrangement for the questions in the three *quodlibeta*.[80] Tachau proceeds in largely the same fashion, taking Gelber's discussion as her starting point.[81]

While all these authors make reasonable points and adduce plausible and relevant evidence for their views, it is clear that in the end each one approaches the text in part by feel, taking readings and manuscript relations on a case-by-case basis. Moreover, it is clear that this less grand approach is the right one, given the situation. The level of detail, the dependencies and many assumptions involved in their competing appraisals and explanations at the larger level eventually become so ponderous that it is difficult to see who has more traction in the debate. If we add to this that some of Holcot's questions might not have been originally part of any public *determinatio*, and hence not even quodlibetal, since Holcot seems to have composed some of them for inclusion in his *Sentences* commentary, we are faced with a bleak outlook indeed.[82] From these very skilled editors we have received as good a version of Holcot's text as we are likely to get in each case, but very little weight can be rationally given to any general arguments about the development of Holcot's thought or career if they rely solely on the overarching theories of manuscript relations discussed in the sources noted above.

The attribution of these one hundred or so quodlibetal questions to Robert Holcot is not seriously disputed. The tradition of attribution is quite old; a handful of questions in the 1497 Lyons *Determinationes* attributed (mostly correctly) to Holcot is taken in part from a manuscript version of these very questions.[83] I shall not take up space listing the question titles; for details the reader can consult Gillespie's helpful enumeration of all the question titles for this material,[84] and Gelber's

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[79] Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, pp. 9–11.

[80] Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, pp. 11–23. Tables 2 and 3 on pp. 116–17 collect these results for *Quodlibeta* I and III.

[81] Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, pp. 31–5.

[82] Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 21.

[83] Gillespie, "Holcot's Quodlibeta," p. 482.

[84] Gillespie, "Holcot's Quodlibeta," pp. 487–90.

tables comparing question titles across manuscripts and offering partial reconstructions of *Quodlibeta* I and III.[85]

Content

The one hundred or so questions Holcot determines reflect much the same proportion of topics as Chatton's *Quodlibet*. Most questions involve moral issues that were important at the time: sin, merit, grace, etc., for example: "Whether Socrates should sin mortally if eternal life were to follow from that sin," "Whether souls leaving purgatory are grateful for the penalty they paid there," "Whether any venial sin diminishes the habit of charity," and "Whether the law of uncreated wisdom obliges the wayfarer to impossibilities."[86] There are also the questions on future contingents, one of which I discuss in detail below. Of course, Holcot discussed other paradoxes of God's knowledge that are linked to the problem of foreknowledge and future contingents, for example "Whether God can know more than he knows."[87]

We also see in these question titles Holcot's greater interest in biblical exegesis compared to either Ockham or Chatton. For example, he asks "Whether the blessed Matthew correctly narrated the genealogy of Christ" and "Whether the history of the conception of Christ is in all respects true."[88] Similarly, the number of questions in one way or another concerning the beatific vision reflects an increased interest in that topic compared to when Chatton and Ockham were at Oxford. Questions on Christology and the Trinity are absolutely more numerous than, but in proportion with, those in Chatton.

Not enough of Holcot's *Quodlibeta* are edited for them to be useful in pinning down his thought in any comprehensive way. However, an interesting set of questions concerning future contingents has been published, and I will discuss one or two issues in connection with those questions, to highlight certain features of his treatment and to give a glimpse of some of the philosophical substance therein.

Holcot's treatment of future contingents shows close kinship with that of FitzRalph, for example, in arguing that the contingent future

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[85] Gelber, *Exploring the Boundaries of Reason*, pp. 113–17.
[86] These are questions 32, 45, 66, and 75, respectively, from Gillespie's enumeration, "Holcot's Quodlibeta," pp. 487–90.
[87] This is question 96 in Gillespie.
[88] These are questions 3 and 4, respectively, in Gillespie.

remains contingent even after revelation.[89] In general, Holcot tries to solve the dilemmas of future contingents by working the contingency side of the equation; he is not, in general terms, a compatibilist, and rather seems to accept that claims of necessity for revealed truths would in fact destroy freedom, human or divine. His approach to these questions exhibits the logical and semantic devices of the new English theology, which was in full bloom during his time at Oxford.[90]

An example of this application comes in *Quodlibet* III, q. 3, which asks "Whether this consequence is necessary: 'God knows that *a* will be, therefore *a* will be,' where '*a*' signifies a future contingent."[91] Holcot thinks that the consequence is indeed necessary, but he attempts to forestall the argument that might follow from it as a premise: for, letting *a* stand for a future contingent, it seems that:

(i)   if 'God knows that *a* will be, therefore *a* will be', is in fact necessary, then

(ii) since the antecedent, 'God knows that *a* will be', is also necessary, it follows that

(iii) the consequent, '*a* will be', must be necessary as well.

But if every statement of the form '*a* will be' is necessary, then the contingency of the future seems lost.[92]

Wisely, Holcot does not dispute the first premise. Rather, he focuses his attention on (ii). The trick is to do this in way that does not compromise divine knowledge, for example, by making it look as though God is somehow hazy about the future. Holcot's overall strategy is common; he tries to say that although God himself is necessary, He knows *a* in a contingent way: "We should say that this is contingent: 'God knows that *a* will be', because He knows that *a* will be in such a way that He might never have known that *a* will be."[93] Nevertheless

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[89] A weaker position than, for example, Bradwardine. Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 49.

[90] Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars*, p. 269.

[91] Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 73.

[92] In terms of modern modal logic, this is simply an application of the K axiom and modus ponens, i.e., by the K axiom we can go from the necessity of the consequence, $\Box (p \rightarrow q)$, to the necessity of both parts, $(\Box p \rightarrow \Box q)$. If the antecedent is also necessary, $\Box p$, we immediately have $\Box q$. All normal modal logics, and hence most plausible accounts of alethic modality, include the K axiom.

[93] "Dicendum quod haec est contingens: 'Deus scit *a* fore,' quia sic scit *a* fore quod potuit numquam scivisse *a* fore," Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 73.

the execution of this common strategy is interesting: essentially, he argues that the antecedent, 'God knows that *a* will be', when properly exposited, is seen to have two exponents: one necessary and one contingent. This contingency, which is built-in to the antecedent, but hidden within it, corrupts its overall necessity, and the argument above is blocked at step (ii).

Does this gambit work? Holcot asserts that the proper exposition of 'God knows that *a* will be' is:

(a) God assents to this proposition: '*a* will be', and
(b) it will turn out that *a* will be.[94]

Clearly (b), considered by itself, is contingent. This strategy appears to work because it splits the necessity and the contingency that seem bundled together in the claim that *God knows (necessarily) what will (contingently) happen*, since, the division having been made, we see that the contingency of the one pole spoils the apparent necessity of the entire bundle.[95]

But it seems to me that we can easily raise the problem of future contingents all over again using (a) and (b). Precisely what we need to explain now, given (a) and (b) as an exposition of 'God knows that *a* will be', is how it could be that God would assent to a proposition and yet it would only be contingent that what that proposition says will come true. If God assents to *a*, then, since He cannot be mistaken, it seems *a* must be true. The problem is that God's assent, on whatever ground it is given, *once given* makes *a*'s falsehood entail a contradiction ('God is mistaken' is a contradiction); which means that *a* cannot be false without contradiction; which means *a*'s falsehood is impossible; which means *a* is necessary.

The original strategy is somewhat more successful if we consider instead the general modal claim he makes, viz., that when a proposition has multiple exponents, if one of them is contingent the original proposition is as well. With certain important qualifications this claim seems correct, and can be defended. Suppose that Holcot is saying:

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[94] "'Deus scit *a* fore' aequivalet isti copulative: 'Deus assentit huic complexo: "*a* erit," et ita erit quod *a* erit…" Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, p. 74.

[95] This approach may have been pioneered by Chatton. See C. Schabel, *Theology at Paris, 1316–1345. Peter Auriol and the Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents* (Aldershot 2000), pp. 231–40, and 249.

(i) $p \leftrightarrow (q \wedge r)$
(ii) $\sim \Box\, q \vee \sim \Box\, r$
(iii) therefore, $\sim \Box\, p$

Here p stands for the proposition to be exposited, and q and r for two exponents. Then, the argument is that if q and r together form the exposition of p, and if either q or r is non-necessary, then p is non-necessary as well. The argument will be valid, but only provided that premise (i), the exposition, is itself necessary, i.e., provided we replace (i) with the stronger claim $\Box\,[p \leftrightarrow (q \wedge r)]$. To see this, let us take it that one of the exponents, say q, is non-necessary. So we have that $\sim \Box\, q$. But this means that there is a possible world in which q is false. Call this world α. Now, since q is false in α, we *could* reason by virtue of (i), $p \leftrightarrow (q \wedge r)$, that p is false in α as well, in which case we would have the desired conclusion, $\sim \Box\, p$. But this will only work if $p \leftrightarrow (q \wedge r)$ is also true in α. But since α is otherwise arbitrary, the truth of $p \leftrightarrow (q \wedge r)$ cannot be established in α except generally, and not generally unless $p \leftrightarrow (q \wedge r)$ is true in every possible world and so is necessary; i.e., $\sim \Box\, p$ cannot be established unless we have that $\Box\,[p \leftrightarrow (q \wedge r)]$. Similar reasoning will work if we take the other alternative in (ii), $\sim \Box\, r$.[96] Thus Holcot's strategy is committed to the view that expositions hold necessarily, or at least that *this* exposition holds necessarily. This might be plausible, given certain views of language and truth. But notice that the *specific* claim he needs here is very strong; it must be true not only that he has given a plausible or proper exposition of 'God knows that a will be', rather, it must also be true that this particular exposition *necessarily* exposits 'God knows that a will be'. For so strong a claim as this we get no evidence from Holcot.

John of Rodington

Who else determined *quodlibeta* around this period? What we know of fourteenth-century English theology suggests that every Oxford master

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[96] This argument for the invalidity of Holcot's original argument is very informal, and is so expressed for ease of reading; however, a formal counter-model can easily be given to show the argument as written is invalid. Similarly, the formal validity of my amended argument is easily shown in any normal modal logic, and indeed for some weaker modal logics as well, so long as they contain the schema $\Box\,[(A \wedge B) \to (\Box\, A \wedge \Box\, B)]$.

would have determined some quodlibetal questions, but the survival of written Oxford *quodlibeta* from 1322–34 is less than we might expect. In addition to the three theologians discussed above there is only one other major figure who requires some discussion, John of Rodington. However, for the sake of completeness, before discussing Rodington, a few figures whose *quodlibeta* came a little before Ockham deserve brief mention. Only two very small quodlibetal collections are currently known for John of Reading OFM (master in 1320, died after 1323 in Avignon); *Quodlibet* I, q. 4, has been edited.[97] William of Alnwick OFM (d. 1333) has an edited *Quodlibet*, probably delivered at Oxford in 1315–16.[98] In roughly this same period, the Augustinian friar Richard Wetwang gave a *quodlibet* that was recorded but does not now survive, although it is not certain this was delivered at Oxford.[99] Moreover, Carmelite Godfrey of Cornwall (died after 1347) had a *quodlibet* of unknown date, which we no longer possess, but which was cited by fellow Carmelite John Baconthorpe.[100]

One final, difficult case should be noted. Adam Wodeham refers to a Grafton, who was once thought to be Edmund Grafton OFM (died after 1336).[101] But Wodeham's reference is possibly rather to a John Grafton (or Crafton) OP. John Grafton/Crafton is known only for his currently unedited *Quodlibet* in Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, lat. 5460, ff. 32rff. Two clear attributions testify that the question "Utrum ex puris naturalibus homo possit habere certam cognitionem de aliqua veritate" (f. 32ra) is quodlibetal and authored by "Iohannis Crafton." There follows another question, "Utrum Deus cognoscat distincte omnia quae potest producere" (f. 32vb), which makes a reference back to the first. Hence these two quodlibetal questions at least

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[97] Sharpe, *Handlist*, p. 300; Glorieux II, p. 184; Emden, *A Biographical Register*, p. 1554; E. Longpré, "Jean de Reading et le B. Jean Duns Scot," *La France Franciscaine* 7 (1924), pp. 99–109. *Quodlibet* I, q. 4, is edited in M. Schmaus, *Der Liber propugnatorius des Thomas Anglicus* II (Münster 1930), pp. 286*–307*. C. Balic has a transcription of a passage from *Quodlibet* I, q. 3, in *Ratio criticae editionis operum omnium I.D. Scoti* (Rome 1941), pp. 106–8. For some biography see especially Longpré, "Jean de Reading," pp. 101–4.

[98] Sharpe, *Handlist*, pp. 745–7; Emden, *A Biographical Register*, p. 27. Alnwick's *Quodlibet* is in *Quaestiones disputatae De esse intelligibili et De quodlibet*, ed. A. Ledoux (Bibliotheca Franciscana scholastica medii aevi, 10) (Quaracchi 1937), pp. 179–605. See also W.O. Duba's chapter in this volume.

[99] Sharpe, *Handlist*, p. 519; Emden, *A Biographical Register*, p. 2027.

[100] Sharpe, *Handlist*, p. 150; Emden, *A Biographical Register*, p. 489.

[101] Sharpe, *Handlist*, p. 107.

are plausibly attributable to Grafton/Crafton. But following these two questions are eight more, before the text switches to a *Sentences* commentary by William Crathorn.[102] The authorship of these eight is still in doubt, and at least one of them might belong to Crathorn himself; indeed, it seems possible that all ten of these questions really just belong to Crathorn, i.e., it may be that Crafton = Crathorn, and there is no John Grafton/Crafton at all.[103] The problems here bear an obvious connection to those surrounding the dates for Holcot's *Sentences* commentary, as discussed above, and are yet to be fully solved. The difficulties of this case are further compounded by the fact that John Grafton does not seem to have an independent biography; he does not even appear in Emden.

It is important and remarkable to note that there really are no surviving fourteenth-century Oxford *quodlibeta* after those of Holcot.[104]

The textual situation for the *Quodlibet* of John of Rodington (or Rodyngton, ca. 1290–1348) is somewhat better.[105] His *Quodlibet* is not extensive, nor is the modern scholarship on it; it remains mostly unedited, as does much of his *Sentences* commentary.[106] We have from him a few questions which circulated as the *Quodlibet de conscientia*, a work with only one partial critical edition, despite the existence of six manuscript witnesses:[107]

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[102] Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, pp. 15–17.

[103] Richter, who described the manuscript, seems to believe this, *contra* Tachau. But Tachau gives convincing content-based arguments against the thesis. See V. Richter, "Handschriftliches zu Crathorn," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 94 (1972), pp. 445–9; Tachau, *Seeing the Future*, pp. 15–17; Sharpe, *Handlist*, pp. 107 and 259.

[104] Courtenay mentions Thomas Claxton (c. 1413) and Geoffrey Herdeby (c. 1358) as two later examples of Oxford authors of *quodlibeta*. But Herdeby's *Quodlibet* is only attested, and Claxton's collection of seven disputed questions may or may not be quodlibetal. Even if they are, their singularity underlines, rather than undermines, the overall point being made here. See Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars*, p. 45 n. 54; Sharpe, *Handlist*, pp. 125 and 650; W.J. Courtenay's "Postscript" below.

[105] Sharpe, *Handlist*, pp. 303–4; Emden, *A Biographical Register*, pp. 1583–4.

[106] However, this is changing. For example, C. Schabel and R.L. Friedman, "Trinitarian Theology and Philosophical Issues III. Oxford 1312–1329: Walsingham, Graystanes, Fitzralph, and Rodington," *CIMAGL* 74 (2003) (pp. 39–88), pp. 80–8 (edition of *I Sent.*, d. 11).

[107] The discussion in Glorieux II, p. 185, is brief. In this same place he mentions that, in addition to the *Quodlibet de conscientia*, the Paris manuscript follows with a list of five further quodlibetal questions on faith, also attributed to Rodington. But Sharpe makes no mention of this; see *Handlist*, p. 304. A longer discussion of the manuscripts and content, as well as a partial edition, is found in J. Lechner, "Johannes von Rodington OFM und sein *Quodlibet de conscientia*," *Aus der Geisteswelt des Mittelalters. Studien und Texte;*

    (1) Assisi, Biblioteca del Sacro Convento di S. Francesco 106 (129r–146v) [Lechner's A]
    (2) Brugge, Grootseminarie (Bisschoppelijke Bibliotheek) 41/133 (145r–164r) [Lechner's BS]
    (3) Brugge, Stadsbibliotheek 503 (1r–20v) [Lechner's BSt]
    (4) München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 22023 (1r–17) [Lechner's Clm]
    (5) Paris, BnF lat. 15561 (230r–243r, 244v–245v) [Lechner's P]
    (6) BAV, Ottob. lat. 179 (1r–24v) [Lechner's O]

A note following the *tabula quaestionum* in A (f. 146vb) relates that Rodington himself organized the *Quodlibet* into six main questions, but that there were many subquestions: "Nota quod in istis 6 quaestionibus principalibus de quolibet quaeruntur multae aliae quaestiones secundariae, quas aliqui intitulant ut principales, sed hic ponuntur ut magister Iohannes de Rodinghton Anglicus ordinavit. Sed non est cura, quia totum quod est ibi et hic et e converso. Valete." The questions concern human free will, sin, grace, God's relationship to human evil, predestination, reprobation, and conscience. The question titles are as follows:[108]

1. Utrum aliquis necessario vel involuntarie possit offendere Christum.
2. Utrum omnis peccans offendat Christum.
3. Utrum Christum semper offendat, qui conscientie sue erronee se conformat.
4. Utrum existens in gratia possit esse perplexus inter duo peccata.
5. Utrum omne peccatum sit malum.
6. Utrum gubernator humani generis juste gubernat genus humanum.[109]

Rodington is recorded as the 56th Lector of the Oxford Franciscan convent, 1333–34, the same year he incepted,[110] and the explicit in A has "Explicit Quodlibet fratris Iohannis de Rodingthon, doctoris

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Martin Grabmann zur Vollendung des 60. Lebensjahres von Freunden und Schülern gewidmet, A. Lang, ed. (Münster 1935), pp. 1125–68.

  [108] Lechner, "Johannes von Rodington OFM und sein *Quodlibet de conscientia*," pp. 1139–40.

  [109] The wording of this question title is slightly different in some manuscripts, but the meaning is the same in each case, and the manuscripts substantially agree on the text of the question.

  [110] Emden, *A Biographical Register*, p. 1583.

in theologia, Ordinis Fratrum Minorum," so we can assume that the *Quodlibet* was magisterial and held at Oxford.

Relying on A, BS, BSt, and O, Lechner attempted a partial edition of question 6. In the edited portion, one finds Rodington citing Anselm to solve the question of how predestination relates to divine acceptation, and citing Ockham's ("per Magistrum") discussion of *voluntas beneplaciti*, particularly *antecedens* versus *consequens*,[111] to explain how an omnipotent will may in some sense be frustrated. Ockham himself says his view is just the common opinion, so it is not clear why Rodington cites Ockham in particular here, without also calling it the *opinio communis*. Indeed, the edited portion of the work shows in several places a reliance on connotation theory and Ockham-style semantic solutions to theological puzzles. It is difficult to make any firm judgments from the meager amount of edited material, but it seems that one possible explanation for the popularity of this work might lie in its clear, brief treatment of gripping questions, and its tendency to summarize popular authorities.

Transition and Decline

To conclude this study, some discussion of the shift away from recording *quodlibeta* is in order.[112] It should be clear from the preceding survey that in Ockham's, Chatton's, and Holcot's *quodlibeta* we see vital and interesting source material, recording important stages of debates on seminal topics. But they are also the last such collections we possess for Oxford theologians; no Oxford *quodlibeta* after Holcot survive. Why this abrupt decline?

Glorieux points out that this form of disputation had fallen into some disfavor with Pope John XXII, who criticized the empty subtleties of vain philosophy therein, which drew the masters' minds away from useful and edifying considerations of canon law and sacred doctrine.[113] Thus it could have been in part external pressure that led

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[111] See his commentary on the *Sentences* I, d. 46, q. 1. William Ockham, *Scriptum*, eds. G. Etzkorn and F. Kelley, *Opera Theologica* IV (St Bonaventure, NY 1979), pp. 670–6.

[112] See also W.J. Courtenay's "Postscript" in this volume.

[113] Thus he quotes a letter from Avignon dated 8 May 1317: "…alii quoque <magistri> solemnium disputationum et determinationum frequentiam consuetam ab olim in Parisiensi studio praetermittunt; quidam actu regentes, qui tenerentur insistere exercitio lectionum, litigiorum anfractibus et advocationum strepitibus, et forensibus

to the abandonment of the genre. But it seems more likely that John XXII was reflecting on dissatisfaction that existed in the *studia* themselves. The strong reasons for the decline are more likely internal to the university itself.

Regarding internal factors, Glorieux conjectures that in Paris at least this form of disputation became so competitive for the masters that it simply burned itself out from intensity.[114] Certainly this explanation may also apply to Oxford. The evolution of the genre at Oxford parallels in relevant particulars the evolution and demise on the continent.

Courtenay mentions a trend for including the results of disputations and determinations into *Sentences* commentaries themselves, which would make it unnecessary to publish and circulate them separately.[115] Hence it is possible that the rise of *Sentences* commentaries is a partial cause eclipsing the motivation for circulating *quodlibeta*. But why the shift to *Sentences* commentaries in the first place? One hypothesis, based on this study and so well illustrated in Ockham's *quodlibeta*, is that the interdependence of particular personalities in quodlibetal disputes made them difficult to understand in isolation from larger debates, which debates were initiated early in a scholar's career in his *Sentences* commentary. Since *quodlibeta* of this complexity and interdependence made less and less sense outside the larger context of the *Sentences* commentaries upon which they depended and which appeared first in the career path, perhaps it made less and less sense to publish and to circulate them independently.

Whatever the causes of the decline, it is clear that, with the exception of Rodington's small set from 1333–34, Ockham's collection was the last to be widely circulated; in contrast to Holcot's popular *Sentences* commentary, the Dominican's quodlibetal questions seem not to have circulated or even to have been cited in his time; and Chatton's collection, while important for our modern understanding of him and of Ockham, may not to have been all that important when it was written.[116] The written quodlibetal genre never reconstituted itself in England in the form it had in the golden days.

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occupationibus se involvunt; quidam etiam theologi, postpositis vel neglectis canonicis necessariis, utilibus et aedificativis doctrinis, curiosis, inutilibus et supervacuis philosophiae quaestionibus et subtilitatibus se immiscent, ex quibus ipsius studii disciplina dissolvitur, luminis eius splendor offenditur, et postsequens studentium utilitas multipliciter impeditur…"; Glorieux I, p. 57.
    [114] Glorieux I, pp. 56–7.
    [115] Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars*, p. 252.
    [116] Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars*, pp. 251–2.