

Notes on the Tübingen Edition of Gregory of Rimini

The first of a new seven-volume edition of Gregory of Rimini (†1358) which the SFB 8 at the University of Tübingen had been preparing for some years, is on the desk of the reviewers and readers¹).

A new edition had become necessary because the literary heredity of Gregory of Rimini, partly left in handwritten Codices of the 14th-15th century, partly in early prints, was inaccessible on account of the irrevocable step taken by the learned world, about 1550, to write or print henceforth only in longhand script, thereby putting seven seals on all older publications done only in shorthand i.e. in medieval paleography. The new edition gives Gregory a legibility he never had before.

A new typographical dress may also be helpful in overcoming all those psychological handicaps which, as a rule, endanger the enjoyment of scholastic literature as such, even of the best. There is first of all their style, so different from ours; already at Gregory's own time the question of bookish style did assume an importance as rarely before or afterwards. Gregory himself did write a Latin style of prefabricated scholastic terminologies, while a good number of his contemporaries, protohumanists you may call them, hankered for a sweeter style of latinity, though the consummation of their good intentions, at least initially, had to content itself with the resurrection of equally prefabricated Latin clauses, which only humanistic fervor might be willing to proclaim as classical.

¹) Gregorii Arimensis OESA Lectura super Primum et Secundum Sententiarum edidit A. Trapp O.S.A. Tomus IV Super Secundum (Dist. 1-5), *elaboraverunt* A. Damasus Trapp, Manuel Santos-Noya, Manfred Schulze, in: Spätmittelalter und Reformation Texte und Untersuchungen *herausgegeben* von Heiko A. Oberman Bd 9 (Walter De Gruyter Berlin New York 1979) pages I-LXI, pp. 388, DM 198; Vorwort by Oberman, pages V-IX, interesting on account of several personal studies, and welcome on account of his merit of having made, and making, the edition possible; Einleitung (pages XI-XXXIX) signed by Trapp and Schulze, followed by Schulze, 'Themen und Probleme' (pages XLI-LXI, see footnote 3 below); Text pp. 1-388.

There remains the important fact, though, that in Gregory's day two languages were cultivated, not necessarily by two different groups, but certainly by two different idealities, which little by little, first just linguistically, but later also emotionally, became incomprehensible to one another. At the end, the humanist did, and had to indulge in facile contempt of the scholastic, because down in his very heart he knew only too well that with the new language, unfit for severer speculation, he could never rival the intellectual depth of philosophical, theological, and mathematical speculation done in the other language; viceversa scholastics in general, the Augustinian School may be excepted, did hardly share the feeling of urgency and indispensability of historical and patristic studies, as the humanists were promoting them, nor could they be expected to admire the first humanistic conquests just as whole-heartedly.

One little illustration: A reader may wonder why the Tübingen editors have printed only arabic numbers in their texts; the reason is a simple one: most Augustinian manuscripts, and many others of the 14th century, knew only the arabic number, and despised the clumsy Roman numeral (the Roman XI, when used, seems to be a concession to an older generation). If the humanists had not rediscovered the 'majesty' of the Roman number, modern mathematics might have started its triumphant march a whole century earlier.

There are other examples showing precisely that the mutual contempt of humanist and scholastic, and their opposite superiority complexes, too, psychologically speaking, were often nothing but fig-leaves covering up plain ignorance of the rival's achievement²).

In the bitter struggle between the humanist and scholastic the former won out, and being destined to write the history of the struggle, he penned it with all his linguistic charm, but with sarcastic disdain for the rival.

By a tragic coincidence of history, not only the new protestants needed condemnations of theological scholasticism for their own propaganda, the official church, too, was looking about to find some scapegoats, liable and ready to furnish explanations and assume

²) E. Renan, *Averroes et l'Averroïsme* (Paris 1861), page 374, repeats such a little sarcastic story of how the admiration for the hardworking Averroist Zimara, to whom we owe so many precious tools for the study of Averroes, turned from one day to the next into a chorus of derisive laughter. — Platonism could thrive on the sweet new language, Aristotelianism could not.

responsibilities for certain unpleasant developments of the then recent past, like the triple Roman Schism; and so it came about that the old and the new church made a united effort to propagandize the humanistic slanders against late medieval theology and theologians.

Later secular and church historians took over the verdict of the humanists with the almost natural effect that researchers shied away from the later Middle Ages, and printers could not afford to print unpopular texts. Clichés were, and are in circulation about the later Middle Ages; they are still so often repeated that the very repetition takes the place of scientific conviction. Examination of the sources proper is rather discouraged as extravagant, and as upsetting the serene peace of academy.

Now, with Gregory of Rimini's texts in pleasant typographical vest upon the researcher's desk, anyone having the courage to read and to read and to read, will discover an intellectual world which is surprisingly vigorous, and challenging, and silencing the cliché mongers³).

The Tübingen team has dared to print Gregory on the assumption that Gregory is one of the greatest theologians of the 14th century.

³) The editor-in-chief would have preferred that the critical edition of Gregory of Rimini appear without interpretative attempts like Dr. Schulze's *Themen und Probleme*, ed. Tübingen, 1979, pages XLI-LXI. To say the least, it looks strange to those who know, and very confusing to those who don't, when a co-editor, personally, invites a pretendedly known Ockham to make the presentations of a supposedly unknown Gregory. — Besides faux pas of bad taste and strategy, some inaccuracies slipped into the 'Themen'. I mention a few. The Latin *ipsam* in Gregory's sentence: "Unde sola fide et auctoritate sacrae scripturae *ipsam* tenemus", Schulze reads: "Unde sola fide et auctoritate sacrae scripturae *ipsam creationem* tenemus" (ed. Tübingen, page XLIX and P 69, 21-24) while Gregory himself means: *ipsam conclusionem tenemus*. Creationism is not under discussion at all, but rather its probability or rather its provability. Schulze overlooks a very remarkable development in Gregory's quest for truth. Gregory does not believe in two truths — the old cliché — but he admits gladly the examination of two proceedings of proof. — In several other contexts of his commentary we observe a similar attitude; at times Gregory admits candidly that he does not know which one of two given contradictory conclusions is arrived at *conclusively* but Schulze seems to know what Gregory doesn't. We have one instance in Gregory 2 Sent ed 1522, fol. 116K, where he says plainly: "Idcirco neutri parti alteram praefereus diiudicationem earum lectori relinquo", and Schulze (for the sake of the old cliché of the tortor infantium?) ignores it (ed. Tübingen, page LVI, n. 5). — We have another case in the question whether God can undo the past, where Gregory states that he treats the question *per se et per non* (Gregory 1 Sent ed. 1522, fol. 164A) and at the end leaves the question wide open (ed. cit. fol. 165B): "Ecce posui utriusque partis probationes et defensiones, quarum quae cui praeferenda sit, doctorum iudicio relinquo"; Schulze again knows more than Gregory. Gregory never accepted the so-called double truth but was most willing to examine two proceedings of proof, and find them both ... wanting.

Capreolus, too, when he wanted to incorporate the best of the 14th century into the last medieval commentary on the *Scriptum* of St. Thomas, almost never let anyone else but Gregory have the final say in the theological concert of the 14th century 'opiniones'.

The undeniable fact that Gregory, though supposedly a genius, left no enthusiastic school in his wake, cannot be considered as the indisputable argument that settles all questions as to Gregory's stature. It ought not to be forgotten that the Black Death tore physical gaps into the continuity after Gregory, and so did the Oxford-Paris schism in the scholastic field, and the triple Roman Schism in the ecclesiastical field, the tidal wave of humanism, of Reformation and Counter-Reformation. The black cloud of Ockhamism thwarted an appearance of the *editio princeps* before 1482. Instead of a schola, an anti-Gregorian emotion prevailed for a long time. A reexamination of Gregory by catholics, and by protestants, is thereby not foreclosed at all.

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