

# JORDAN OF QUEDLINBURG'S *TRACTATUS VIRTUTUM ET VITIORUM* (*OPUS POSTILLARUM*, SERMONS 439-41)

The Augustinian hermit Jordan of Quedlinburg (ca. 1300-1370/80) – also called Jordan of Saxony and hence often confounded with the Dominican friar of that name († 1237) – is known as a prolific author of hagiographical, exegetical, spiritual, and homiletic works. His most important writings date from the last decades of his life: his *Liber Vitasfratrum* appeared in 1357, while he completed his three major collections of sermons (which together comprise some eleven hundred items) only after 1365.<sup>1</sup>

Jordan was particularly successful as a preacher. Despite their huge number, his sermons were widely divulged in Latin as well as in German and Dutch translations. This article focuses on one particular text of Jordan which circulated separately as a *Tractatus virtutum et vitiorum* but which he also incorporated as sermons 439 to 441 into his first homiletic collection, the *Opus postillarum*.<sup>2</sup> Although each of

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<sup>1</sup> For surveys of Jordan's life and works, see Adolar ZUMKELLER, "Jourdain de Saxe", in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité, ascétique et mystique*, 17 vols (Paris: Beauchesne, 1932-95), VIII, 1420-30; ID., "Jordan von Quedlinburg (Jordanus de Saxonia)", in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, 2nd ed., 11 vols (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1977-), IV, 853-61; Eric L. SAAK, *High Way to Heaven: The Augustinian Platform between Reform and Reformaton, 1292-1524* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 243-65 and *passim*. See also Cyril L. SMETANA, *Life of Saint Augustine by John Capgrave, Edited from British Library Additional MS 36704 together with Jordanus of Saxony's Vita s. Augustine* [!] from *Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 251* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2001); Giordano DI QUEDLINBURG, *Opus Ior: Registrum sermonum: Tabula contentorum secundum ordinem alphabeti*, ed. by Nadia Bray and Loris Sturlese (Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore, 2004). For the date of 1365, see Jordan OF SAXONY, *Liber Vitasfratrum*, ed. by Rudolphus Arbesmann and Winfridus Hümpfner (New York: Cosmopolitan Science & Art Service, 1943), xix. For a survey of Augustinian preaching in the Later Middle Ages, concentrating on 15th-century Italy, see Carlo DELCORNO, "La predicazione agostiniana (sec. XIII-XV)", in Mario MATTEI et al., *Gli agostiniani a Venezia e la Chiesa di Santo Stefano* (Venice, 1997), 87-108.

<sup>2</sup> The treatise appears separately in four known manuscripts; see Adolar ZUMKELLER, *Manuskripte von Werken der Autoren des Augustiner-Eremitenordens in mittteleuropäischen Bibliotheken*, Cassiciacum 20 (Würzburg: Augustinus, 1966), no. 654, mentioning MSS Basel, UB A.IV.14, ff. 123<sup>v</sup>-125<sup>r</sup>, and Rome, Angelica 1444, ff. 154-161; Morton W. BLOOMFIELD et al., *Incipits of Latin Works on the Virtues and Vices*,

these three sermons take their point of departure in the Biblical theme *Redde quod debes* (Matt. 18:28), it is clear from Jordan's preface that he did not so much consider his work as a series of sermons in the proper sense, but rather as a treatise composed for the instruction of other preachers. Jordan's explicit intention was to bring the main theological and philosophical teachings about the principal virtues and vices together in a concise and practical survey, so that preachers could easily pick them up and offer elementary moral instruction to their flocks.

Jordan's treatise has thus far been neglected in scholarly literature. It is my aim to present an analysis of the text and to demonstrate how notably in the sections on the virtues, Jordan develops a strategy to reconcile philosophical ethics with moral theology in such a way as to form a coherent set of views suitable for homiletic purposes.

The preface of the *Tractatus virtutum et vitiorum*, which I will quote from the printed *Opus postillarum*, contains a clear statement on the purpose of the work. Introducing the theme *Redde quod debes*, Jordan declares that the fullness of Christian religion consists in giving everyone his due. Justice, which by definition involves *reddere unicuique quod suum est*, therefore comprises every possible good and excludes any possible evil. By giving everyone his due, we actually observe all virtues, avoid all vices, and fulfil all our religious duties.<sup>3</sup> But it is only by knowing all the virtues that we realize what exactly we owe to whom; conversely, only by knowing all the vices can we avoid anything undue. Therefore,

in order to elaborate further on the said theme, I have thought it useful to insert here a small treatise extracted from the moral writings of

1100-1500 AD (Cambridge MA: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1979), no. 5117, add MSS Gdansk, Biblioteka Gdańska Polskiej Akademii Nauk 1965, ff. 9-32, and Pamplona, Cabildo 58 (incomplete). The section on the vices (sermon 441) survives separately in MS Tours, BM 405, f. 141-145; see BLOOMFIELD et al., *Incipits*, no. 5116. The unfoliated *Opus postillarum* (Strasbourg: Georg Husner, 1483) presents the three sermons together under the title *Alia deductio eiusdem thematis* [i.e., *Redde quod debes*] *continens tractatum virtutum et viciorum*; the preceding sermons 436-38 deal with the same theme.

<sup>3</sup> *Opus postillarum* sermo 439A: "In hoc igitur quod vniciuique debitum suum reddimus, omnem iusticiam implemus secundum quod iusticia includit in se omne bonum et excludit omne malum secundum Augustinum, vt ex superioribus patet. Que quidem iusticia attenditur in reddendo vniciuique quod suum est, per quod omnis virtus impletur et omne vicium cauetur" (spelling respected, punctuation adapted). See also JORDAN OF SAXONY, *Liber Vitasfratrum*, pp. xxxiv-xxxv, where the preface is quoted in its entirety.

theologians as well as philosophers concerning the virtues and vices, by which we may learn all the better what we should give to everybody in matters of virtue and what we must avoid in matters of vice in order not to incur the debt of punishment, the more so as it often happens in sermons that some virtues or vices, which in such moments cannot be explained in every detail, require a succinct discussion. Seen from this viewpoint, an exposition on these matters is highly useful for interested preachers.<sup>4</sup>

Jordan's argument is noteworthy for a couple of reasons. First, it confirms the view of Eric Saak that Jordan in his homiletic work tends to equate virtue with justice and sin with debt.<sup>5</sup> Giving everyone his due, the central precept of Christian religion, is the essence of justice which thus becomes the central moral virtue; accordingly, sin consists in the failure to give everyone his due, and hence in debt. Significantly, in Jordan's native German the term *Schuld* refers to debt as well as to guilt; in his Latin, the term *debitum* seems to carry a similar double connotation. Second, Jordan's immediate concerns in the preface appear to be intellectual rather than pastoral: he addresses himself to preachers with an interest in study (*studiosi predicantes*) and offers them theoretical instruction in the virtues and vices. Of course, his lessons eventually serve pastoral ends, but what Jordan proposes is primarily an explanation of current moral doctrine, not only from a theological but also from a philosophical perspective. Apparently Jordan thought even philosophical ethics relevant in a homiletic context despite its apparent lack of a religious dimension. His aim of summarizing existent teachings is consistent with the opinion expressed in his preface that nearly everything worthwhile concerning the evangelical truth has already been said, and that it is up to Jordan's generation to bring in the harvest.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.: "pro pleniori deductione thematis prenotati vtile duxi tam de theologorum quam philosophorum moralibus scriptis de virtutibus et viciis tractatulum breuem hic inserere quod [*lege quo*] discamus lucidius quod de virtutibus cuiuslibet sit reddendum et quod de viciis sit cauendum ne pene debita contrahamus, presertim quia in sermonibus sepe occurrit materia de virtutibus vel vitiis aliquibus pro tempore tractanda, que illis in locis non possunt singula explicari. Ex qua etiam consideratione noticia talium studiosis predicantibus est summopere oportuna".

<sup>5</sup> Eric L. SAAK, "Pelagian-Anti-Pelagian Preaching: Predestination, Grace and Good Works in the Sermons of Jordan of Quedlinburg OESA († 1380)", *Augustiniana*, 52 (2002), 311-34, pp. 321-22.

<sup>6</sup> See *Opus postillarum* Prol. 1: "[...] nec a modo superest aliud nisi colligere fructus. Ita enim relucet hodie veritas evangelica vt pene iam nihil noui a modernis doctoribus dicere valeat". Yet, "Nec tamen adhuc diuina sapientia distillare cessat et plueri intellectibus studiosorum" (ibid.).

The main body of Jordan's *Tractatus* seems indeed a traditional product at first sight. Jordan subsequently discusses the seven principal virtues (the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity combined with the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance) and the seven deadly sins according to Gregory the Great's classification, with pride as the mother vice giving birth to vainglory, envy, wrath, sloth, avarice, gluttony, and lust.<sup>7</sup> Expositions on the principal virtues and the capital vices were customary in the Later Middle Ages, especially in popularizing theological genres such as compendia and pastoral handbooks.<sup>8</sup> Jordan's approach is more complicated, however, in that he does not adopt the scheme of seven principal virtues from the outset. Having discussed the three theological virtues, which because of their divine origin prevail over all others,<sup>9</sup> Jordan turns not to the cardinal but to the "human" virtues. By these he understands the intellectual and moral virtues introduced in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* which, following Jordan's own counting, are seventeen in number. In order to reduce this number, Jordan first excludes five intellectual virtues from his discussion in order to concentrate on the eleven moral virtues plus prudence. Then Jordan subsumes these twelve virtues under the scheme of the four cardinal virtues which from that point determine the structure of his exposition.

Although the Platonic quartet of the cardinal virtues is in fact alien to Aristotle's system, it should be noted that many theologians active before Jordan's time, and even many commentators of the *Nicomachean Ethics* including the four most influential ones (Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Gerald of Odo, and John Buridan), already tried to bring Aristotle's classification of the virtues in accordance with

<sup>7</sup> For classifications of the virtues and vices in the Middle Ages, see Richard G. NEWHAUSER, *The Treatise on Vices and Virtues in Latin and the Vernacular*, *Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental*, 68 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1993); for the scheme of the seven deadly sins, see Carla CASAGRANDE and Silvana VECCHIO, *I sette vizi capitali: Storia dei peccati nel medioevo* (Turin: Einaudi, 2000); French translation by Pierre-Emmanuel DAUZAT: *Histoire des péchés capitaux au moyen âge* (Paris: Aubier, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Many of these works are listed in Morton W. BLOOMFIELD et al., *Incipits of Latin Works on the Virtues and Vices, 1100-1500 AD* (Cambridge, MA: The Medieval Academy of America, 1979). For an update of this work, see Richard G. NEWHAUSER and István P. BEJCZY, *A Supplement to Morton Bloomfield et al., Incipits of Latin Works on the Virtues and Vices*, *Instrumenta patristica et mediaevalia* (Turnhout: Brepols; in preparation).

<sup>9</sup> See *Opus postillarum* sermo 439B: "inter omnes virtutes supremum locum obtinent virtutes theologice".

the fourfold scheme.<sup>10</sup> In his treatise, Jordan actually takes recourse to the theory which his confrere Giles of Rome († 1316), expanding on the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, developed in his *De regimine principum*. Jordan's treatment of his sources is worth analyzing in detail. Discussing the status of prudence, which Aristotle included among the intellectual virtues, Jordan argues in accordance with Giles and Aquinas (neither of whom he mentions by name) that prudence holds an intermediate position between the intellectual and moral virtues. Prudence may actually be included among the moral virtues, adds Jordan, because of its subject matter, which is human acts, and because it requires the rightness of the appetite (that is, the intention to do good). Jordan borrowed these latter arguments, which are absent from the text of Giles, directly from Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* and moreover interlarded them with a quotation from the *Auctoritates Aristotelis*.<sup>11</sup> After that, Jordan cites with approval the view of Aristotle that one cannot be prudent without being good;<sup>12</sup> the same citation appears in *De regimine principum*, which is doubtless Jordan's source. Jordan concludes that prudence pertains to the moral virtues, because it is their directive principle and guarantees their interconnection. This conclusion has no parallel in either *De regimine principum* or the *Summa theologiae*, although it is compatible with the views of Aquinas. I suspect that Jordan adapted it from John Buridan's commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics*; Buridan was not only the most influential commentator of this work, but also the one most inclined to interpret prudence as a moral virtue.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See István P. BEJCY, "The Cardinal Virtues in Medieval Commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1250-1350", in *Virtue Ethics in the Middle Ages: Commentaries on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, 1200-1500*, ed. by István P. BEJCY (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

<sup>11</sup> The quotation appears in *Les Auctoritates Aristotelis: Un florilège médiéval* ii.91, ed. by Jacqueline Hamesse (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, Paris: Bêatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1974), where it is referred to Aristotle, *Physica* ii.9 (200a); however, Aristotle's text offers no literal parallel. Hamesse points to Thomas AQUINAS, *In octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis expositio* 2.15 (273), ed. by M. Maggìolo (Turin: Marietti, 1954), p. 135, as the probable source of inspiration; see also Thomas AQUINAS, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* vi.4, *Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII edita* (Rome: S. C. de Propaganda Fide, 1882-), XLVII, p. 346: "Manifestum est enim quod principia operabilium sunt fines cuius gratia fiunt operabilia, qui ita se habent in operabilibus sicut principia in demonstrabilibus, ut habetur in II Physicorum".

<sup>12</sup> Cf. ARISTOTLE, *Ethica nicomachea* vi.13, trans. by Robert GROSSETESTE (recensio recognita), ed. by René A. Gauthier, *Aristoteles Latinus*, XXVI.i.3.4 (Leiden: Brill; Brussels: Desclée de Brouwer, 1972), p. 491: "impossibile prudentem esse non entem bonum".

<sup>13</sup> See BEJCY, "The Cardinal Virtues in Medieval Commentaries". The text I used is John BURIDAN, *[Questiones] super decem libros Ethicorum* (Paris: Ponset le Preux, 1513; reprint Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1968).

A detailed comparison of Jordan's text with his probable sources can make the parallels apparent:

| Jordan of Saxony, <i>Opus postillarum</i> , sermo 439F                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Jordan's probable sources                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Virtutes autem medie inter intellectuales et morales sunt que existunt in intellectu pratico, vt prudentia et alie virtutes sibi annexe, de quibus infra patebit. Prudentia enim secundum commentatorem media est inter virtutes intellectuales et morales. Anumerari tamen potest cum moralibus, | Virtutes autem mediae inter intellectuales et morales sunt virtutes existentes in intellectu pratico, ut prudentia et aliae virtutes sibi annexae. Prudentia autem, secundum commentatorem super libris Ethicorum, media est inter virtutes morales et intellectuales. Computari tamen potest cum virtutibus moralibus, (Giles of Rome, <i>De regimine principum</i> I.ii.2, pp. 46-47) |
| quia licet secundum essentiam suam sit virtus intellectualis, conuenit tamen cum virtutibus moralibus secundum materiam suam que sunt ipsa agibilia, puta actus humani,                                                                                                                           | prudentia, secundum essentiam suam, est intellectualis virtus. Sed secundum materiam, convenit cum virtutibus moralibus (Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa theologiae</i> I.II.lviii.3 ad 1)                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| in quibus ita se habet finis sicut principia in speculabilibus, vt dicitur.vij. Ethicorum.                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Finis in operabilibus est sicut principium in speculabilibus.<br>( <i>Auctoritates Aristotelis</i> ii.91)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Vnde ad prudentiam requiritur quod homo sit bene dispositus circa fines, quod quidem est per appetitum rectum. Appetitus autem sit rectus per virtutem moralem.                                                                                                                                   | Et ideo ad prudentiam... requiritur quod homo sit bene dispositus circa fines, quod quidem est per appetitum rectum. Et ideo ad prudentiam requiritur moralis virtus, per quam fit appetitus rectus.<br>(Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa theologiae</i> I.II.lvii.4)                                                                                                                           |
| Ideo dicitur .vj. Ethicorum quod impossibile est prudentem esse non entem bonum.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Inde est ergo quod dicitur 6 Ethic. quod impossibile est prudentem esse non existentem bonum.<br>(Giles of Rome, <i>De regimine principum</i> I.ii.2, p. 47)                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Ex quo patet quod prudentia ad virtutes morales pertinet, imo ipsa est directiua omnium virtutum moralium et in ipsa omnes morales virtutes sibi inuicem connectuntur.                                                                                                                            | [prudentia] concedi potest moralis secundum connexionem, quia moralibus necessario connexa; potest etiam concedi moralis directiue, quia dirigit omnes virtutes morales in suis operationibus.<br>(John Buridan, <i>Super libros Ethicorum</i> 6 q. 9, f. 125va)                                                                                                                        |

From this analysis it becomes clear that Jordan is anything but a naive compiler of contemporary moral theories. Just in order to present prudence as a moral virtue, he selects passages from four different theological and philosophical sources and combines them to form a unified, cogent argument. His plea for a moral understanding of prudence is definitely stronger than what is found in Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum* and more convincing in its compactness than the arguments shattered throughout the *Summa* of Aquinas. Moreover, he makes his basically anti-Aristotelian plea under constant use of Aristotle's own authority in a way no scholastic author could improve. What Jordan offers to his audience of preachers is hence no elementary instruction in moral thought but, in this case at least, a personal rearrangement of current doctrine.

Having added prudence to Aristotle's list of moral virtues, Jordan sets out to subsume these virtues under the scheme of the four cardinal virtues, taking again his point of departure in Giles of Rome. Following Aquinas, Giles taught that prudence resides in the intellect, justice in the will or the intellectual appetite, and Aristotle's ten remaining moral virtues in the two sensual appetites: emotion (*irascibilitas*) and desire (*concupiscibilitas*). The irascible appetite is the seat of *fortitudo*, *mansuetudo*, *magnanimitas*, and *magnificentia*, the concupiscent appetite of *temperantia*, *liberalitas*, *philotimia* or *honoris amativa* (the term coined by Giles for Aristotle's unnamed virtue of aspiring after moderate honour), *veritas*, *affabilitas*, and *eutrapelia*.<sup>14</sup> Jordan accepts this division, but ignores Giles's claim that fortitude and temperance are the main virtues of the irascible and concupiscent appetites to which the remaining moral virtues are affiliated as *virtutes annexae*. Instead, Jordan gives four reasons as to why the cardinal virtues are the principal moral virtues. We can verify that Jordan adapted these reasons from the widely diffused *Summa de virtutibus* of the Dominican friar William Peraldus, again without naming his source.<sup>15</sup> Although he presents the reasons in a different order and introduces double names for each of them, his dependence on Peraldus is too obvious to ignore:

<sup>14</sup> Giles OF ROME, *De regimine principum* I.ii.2-3 (Rome: Luigi Zanetti, 1607; repr. Aalen: Scientia, 1967), pp. 50-56.

<sup>15</sup> For the vast diffusion of this work, see Michiel VERWEIJ, "The Manuscript Transmission of the *Summa de virtutibus* by Guilielmus Peraldus: A Preliminary Survey of the Manuscripts", *Medioevo* 31 (2006), 103-297. I quote the work from the *Summae virtutum ac vitiorum*, 2 vols. (Lyon: Beringer, 1554).

| Jordan of Saxony, <i>Opus postillarum</i> , sermo 439F                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | William Peraldus, <i>Summa de virtutibus</i> III.i.1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inter omnes autem virtutes morales sunt quattuor principales que dicuntur cardinales. Tum propter earum primitatem et preeminentiam quam habent respectu aliarum virtutum moralium; cardines enim dicuntur prime celi et terre vel maris. Celi quidem unde Deut. .xxx. dicitur: <i>Si ad cardines celi fueris dissipatus</i> ; terre vero .j. Regum .ij.: <i>Domini enim sunt cardines terre</i> ; maris etiam, unde Iob .xxxvi.: <i>Cardines quoque maris operiet</i> . Sic etiam he quattuor virtutes sunt prime omnium aliarum. | quatuor de causis possumus intelligere eas dici cardinales... (p. 281a). Tertio, propter preeminentiam quam habent respectu caeterarum virtutum. Cardines enim dicuntur primae partes caeli uel terrae uel maris. Deuteron. 30: <i>Si ad cardines caeli fueris dissipatus, inde retrahet te Deus</i> . 1 Regum 2: <i>Domini enim sunt cardines terre</i> . Iob 36: <i>Cardines quoque maris operiet</i> . Sic uirtutes istae primae sunt respectu aliarum uirtutum (p. 281b). |
| Tum propter sustentationem et innitentiam: sicut enim hostium cardini innititur, sic tota conuersatio bona circa has quattuor virtutes principaliter versatur.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Secundo, quia sicut ostium cardini innititur, sic tota conuersatio bona his quattuor uirtutibus innititur (p. 281b).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Tum propter stabilitatem et permanentiam: licet enim hostium versatur in cardine, cardo tamen super stabilis manet. Sic licet ea circa que huiusmodi virtutes versantur sint mutabilia, scilicet ea quibus vtendum est, vel etiam variabilia, vt actus humani; ipse tamen virtutes stabiles sunt.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Primo, propter stabilitatem. Cardo stabilis manet, licet ostium in eo uertatur... Sic he quattuor uirtutes stabiles sunt, licet ea quae uersantur, scilicet ea quibus utendum est, sunt mutabilia (p. 281a).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Tum propter principalitatem et sufficientiam, nam omnes alie virtutes morales ad has aliquo modo reducuntur et sufficientissime sub eis, vt sequitur, collocantur.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Quarto, propter principalitatem. Ceterae enim uirtutes ad has aliquo modo reuocantur (pp. 281b-282a).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

After asserting the pre-eminence of the cardinal virtues, Jordan does not immediately explain how the other moral virtues are comprised under them; his remaining observations on the human virtues in general (for which Giles of Rome serves again as his principal source) concern their relation with the passions and with good dispositions which are no virtues. Jordan's classification of the human virtues is only apparent from the chapters on the individual cardinal virtues which fill the remainder of his treatise up to the section on the

vices. Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum* no longer plays a role in these chapters. Each of them starts with various definitions of the virtue in question copied in majority from Peraldus and continues with the subdivisions of the same virtue according to the *Summa theologiae* of Aquinas (in the chapters on the theological virtues, Jordan likewise uses Peraldus and Aquinas, though much more sparingly).<sup>16</sup> In the *Summa*, Aquinas not only subsumed all Aristotelian virtues under the cardinal quartet, but also a great variety of other virtues hailed by Christian tradition, which all recur in Jordan's text. Eventually, then, the *Summa theologiae* determines Jordan's perspective; starting his treatise with Aristotle's division of the human virtues, he gradually subdues these virtues under Aquinas's moral theology.

I have discussed Jordan's dealings with the Aristotelian virtues at length because these virtues put a challenge to the arrangement of his treatise as well as to its contents. The significance of the theological virtues and the deadly sins in the context of preaching and religion is obvious, since these are concepts of Christian origin with a direct relevance for the economy of salvation. The significance of what Jordan calls the "human" virtues is less obvious, especially since he accentuates their non-Christian, Aristotelian provenance. Although Jordan does not make specific doctrinal statements, I take it that he viewed the human virtues as being naturally acquirable, without the intervention of grace. Nowhere in his treatise does Jordan subscribe to the view that the moral virtues can be directly infused by God, a view which anyhow was far from universally accepted in fourteenth-century theology.<sup>17</sup> What, then, was the relevance of the human virtues for the final destination of man, which constituted the principal frame of reference for Jordan's intended audience? Many theologians contemporary to Jordan believed that virtues, or virtuous actions, which originated in human nature could be ordered to the final destination of man through the influence of charity and grace. But Jordan's main authorities, William Peraldus and Thomas Aquinas, left the problem

<sup>16</sup> The chapters on faith and hope start with definitions that go back in majority to Peraldus; there is no detectible influence from Aquinas. The beginning of the chapter on charity is based on Thomas AQUINAS, *Summa theologiae* I.II.xxvi.3. The chapter on the theological virtues in general has no direct parallels in either Peraldus or Aquinas.

<sup>17</sup> See Odon LOTTIN, *Psychologie et morale aux XII<sup>e</sup> et XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, 6 vols (Gembloux: Duculot, Louvain: Abbaye du Mont César, 1942-60), III, 459-535, and IV, 739-807; Bonnie KENT, *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1995).

untouched; actually, scholars do not even agree as to whether the cardinal virtues appear in Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* as natural or supernatural virtues.<sup>18</sup>

Even if Jordan does not explain in so many words how human virtues relate to religious ends, I think it possible to infer his view from the chapter on justice, which for Jordan is the central concept of his treatise. Not only is justice one of the cardinal virtues, but it also stands for morality in general, as we have seen. Not for nothing is the chapter on justice the largest chapter on any individual virtue or vice in Jordan's treatise. Moreover, it forms the beginning of a new sermon in the *Opus postillarum*: sermon 439 comprises the preface of the treatise and the chapters on the theological virtues, the human virtues in general, and prudence, while sermon 440 includes the chapters on justice, fortitude, and temperance. One might rather have expected Jordan to have devoted one sermon to the theological and another to the human virtues. Starting a new sermon with justice, however, permitted him to reassume the Biblical theme *Redde quod debes* and to explain in detail its relation to the virtue of justice.

Jordan begins his exposition with the observation that although the theme *Redde quod debes* refers to all virtues, it antonomastically applies to justice in particular, since justice precisely consists in giving everyone his due; the biblical theme therefore offers a suitable starting-point for a discussion of justice.<sup>19</sup> Thereupon, Jordan explains that justice can be understood in several ways. He distinguishes three meanings of justice which all derive from Peraldus's *Summa de virtutibus*. Peraldus distinguished the same three meanings, but the second and third ones have changed places in Jordan's text:

<sup>18</sup> See KENT, *Virtues of the Will*, 32.

<sup>19</sup> *Opus postillarum* sermo 440A: "*Redde quod debes*. Quamuis hoc thema omnes virtutes complectatur, specialiter autem antonomasice iusticie ascribitur, ad quam pertinet proprie reddere unicuique quod suum est. Quapropter de iusticia tractari volenti optime conuenit proponere idem verbum, *Redde quod debes*. Hoc enim faciendo omnis iusticia adimpletur".

| Jordan of Saxony, <i>Opus postillarum</i> , sermo 440A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | William Peraldus, <i>Summa de virtutibus</i> III.v.1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| <p>Quandoque enim sumitur valde large quasi pro bonitate, sicut ad Heb. j.: <i>Dilexisti iusticiam</i>, Glossa: <i>id est omne bonum</i>. Et secundum hoc dicit Augustinus duas esse partes iusticie, scilicet declinare a malo et facere bonum. Et sic iusticia distinguitur contra peccatum. Sicut amplius dicit Ro.: <i>Aliquando nos fuissete seruos peccati, nunc vero seruos iusticie</i>. Sic etiam sumitur cum dicimus impium iustificari. Et quod dicitur <i>Fulgebunt iusti</i> etc. Et ita in similibus locis Scripture. <b>Et sic accipitur hic in proposito nostro.</b></p> | <p>Iusticia quandoque ualde large sumitur, scilicet pro bonitate. Secundum hoc dicit Augustinus duas partes esse iustitiae, scilicet declinare a malo et facere bonum. Et super illud Heb. 1: <i>Dilexisti iustitiam</i>, dicit Glossa: <i>omne bonum</i>. Sic sumitur Mat. 13: <i>Fulgebunt iusti sicut sol in regno patris eorum</i>. Sic etiam sumitur quum dicimus impium iustificari.</p> |
| <p>Quandoque vero sumitur pro inflictione penarum, sicut dicimus iudicem facere iusticiam malefactori. Et sic uidetur esse opposita pietati et misericordie. Et sic intelligitur cum dicit Bernardus: <i>Nullum nomen Dei est quod non sonet aut iusticiam aut pietatem</i>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p>Quandoque autem sumitur strictius, prout attenditur in inflictione poenarum. Sic uidetur iustitia esse opposita pietati uel misericordie. Sic sumit hoc nomen iustitia[e] Bernardus dicens: <i>Nullum nomen Dei est quod non sonet aut iustitiam aut pietatem</i>.</p>                                                                                                                      |
| <p>Quandoque autem sumitur pro virtute reddente vnicuique quod suum est. Et sic continet sub se pietatem et alias virtutes que hic sub ea collocantur. <b>Et sic est virtus cardinalis.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Quandoque etiam sumitur nomen iustitiae minus large, scilicet pro uirtute reddente unicuique quod suum est, et sic sub iustitia pietas uidetur contineri.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

Jordan declares justice in the first, biblical sense – in which it coincides more or less with goodness and moral probity – to be his proper subject. When speaking of justice in a large sense, as including every good and excluding every evil, Jordan therefore apparently means biblical justice. This type of justice differs from justice as a cardinal virtue, which is defined as giving everyone his due.<sup>20</sup> Justice

<sup>20</sup> For a parallel for this double understanding of justice see the Dominican preacher Hugh OF PRATO († 1322), *Sermo 2 in Dominica 5 post Pentecosten*, in *Concionum de tempore*, ed. Guillaume van Oonsel, 2 vols (Antwerp: Bellerus, 1617), pars aestivalis, p. 191: justice exists as “virtus specialis, per quam vnicuique redditur quod suum est, et hic non accipitur sic”, and as “virtus generalis, ad quam omnes virtutes reduci possunt, quia omnia opera virtutum sunt iusta. Cuius ratio est, quia in omni opere virtutum homo subijcitur Deo, quod est valde iustum... Et ideo omne bonum ad iustitiam reducitur, et omne malum ad iniustitiam, et sic accipitur iustitia hic”.

as a cardinal virtue is, however, Jordan's specific subject at this point in his treatise; it is, after all, the cardinal virtues on which his exposition focusses (in the preceding chapter, Jordan introduces three meanings of prudence in order to accept the one which corresponds, in his view, to the notion of prudence as a cardinal virtue).<sup>21</sup>

In fact, Jordan's understanding of the cardinal virtue of justice has a remarkably secular ring about it. First, he quotes the well-known definitions of justice introduced in Cicero's *De inventione* (a habit of the mind which attributes to everyone his dignity, preserving a regard to the general welfare) and in Roman law (a fixed will to give everyone his right). Thereupon, Jordan presents a definition derived, so he claims, from Book Five of Aristotle's *Ethics* and which may be translated as follows: "Justice is a habit which makes those who have it choose and act in accordance with equality in distributions and in directions, that is, in exchanges". In reality, this last definition stems from an anonymous Greek commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* which Robert Grosseteste translated into Latin together with the Aristotelian text itself. According to Jordan, all other definitions of justice as a cardinal virtue can be reduced to it.<sup>22</sup> Hence, in case of justice as a cardinal virtue, giving everyone his due apparently means fulfilling one's earthly obligations to one's fellow human beings. But how does this secular conception of justice relate to its biblical understanding, which for Jordan comes first?

<sup>21</sup> See *Opus postillarum* sermo 439H: "Prudentia dicitur multipliciter. Quandoque enim sumitur pro apparenti prudentia... Quandoque vero sumitur large... Quandoque vero sumitur stricte pro virtute perficiente intellectum practicum. Et sic accipiamus eam hic prout videlicet ponitur virtus cardinalis." Cf. William PERALDUS, *Summa de virtutibus* III.ii.1, pp. 284b-286a.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.: "Iusticia autem vt est virtus cardinalis describitur a Tullio primo Rhetorice sue sic: *Iusticia est habitus animi communi vtilitate conseruata suam cuique tribuens dignitatem*. Describitur etiam secundum iurisperitos et etiam secundum Tullium sic: *Iusticia est constans et perpetua voluntas ius suum vnique tribuens*. Secundum Arestotilem autem, sicut colligitur ex quinto Ethycorum, sic diffinitur: *Iusticia est habitus a quo habentes ipsum fiunt et electiui et operatiui eius quod est equale in distributionibus et directionibus, id est commutationibus*. Ad hanc autem ultimam diffinitionem, si bene attendatur, omnes alie reduci possunt". Thomas AQUINAS, *Summa theologiae* II.II.lxviii.1, *Opera*, IX, pp. 9-10, approaches the juridical definition to Aristotle: "Et quasi est eadem definitio cum ea quam Philosophus ponit, in V. *Ethic.*, dicens quod iustitia est habitus secundum quem aliquis dicitur operativus secundum electionem iusti". For the Greek commentary, see *Eustratii et Michaelis et anonyma in Ethica nicomachea commentaria*, ed. by Gustav HEYLBUT, *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, 20 (Berlin: Reimer, 1892), p. 228. Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* v.8 (409), ed. by Wilhelm Kübel, 2 vols, *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1952-), XIV, p. 347, quoted the definition as "Iustitia est habitus, a quo operativi et electivi fiunt eius quod in distributionibus et directionibus, aequalis".

In order to provide an answer, it should be noted that Jordan subsumes all three understandings of justice distinguished in his treatise under justice of the divine law (*iusticia iuris diuini*), a concept to which the theme *Redde quod debes* refers. By justice of the divine law Jordan cannot mean divine justice, for he leaves no doubt that the subject of all three types of justice is the human being rather than God.<sup>23</sup> Justice of the divine law comprises three forms of *human* justice, including justice as a cardinal virtue which in Jordan's view is concerned with the distribution and exchange of earthly goods. It seems fair to interpret *iusticia iuris diuini* as justice to be observed by human beings in spiritual as well as temporal affairs on the basis of God's precepts. This interpretation accords with the usual emphasis in Jordan's preaching on justice as following the divine law and doing good works, both of which are ways for Jordan to conform gradually to Christ and to earn heaven.<sup>24</sup> This would suggest, however, that even in its Aristotelian understanding the cardinal virtue of justice can only be properly observed by Christians. It would moreover suggest that the cardinal virtue of justice has a salvific effect, which is only possible through grace. To what extent are Jordan's "human" virtues really human, then?

Jordan does not give a direct answer, but inserts in his chapter a revealing comparison between the Aristotelian concept of legal justice and his own concept of justice of the divine law. In Aristotle's *Ethics*, legal justice stands for all virtue, as Jordan points out correctly. Explaining the name of the concept, Jordan argues that legal justice "orders everything to the common good, which is the end and aim of the human law, in the same way as justice of the divine law, which I mentioned before, orders everything to God, who is the end and aim of our law".<sup>25</sup> Apparently morality exists on two levels for Jordan,

<sup>23</sup> *Opus postillarum* sermo 440A: "Et omnes has acceptiones in se complectitur iusticia thematis nostri que potest dici iusticia iuris diuini. Nam hec iusticia facit homines declinare a malo et facere bonum quantum ad primam acceptionem. Item facit homines infligere penam, tam sibi pro peccatis suis quam aliis pro eorum forefactis quantum sui interest, ita quod nullum malum remaneat impunitum. Et hoc quantum ad secundam acceptionem. Item facit hominem reddere unicuique quod suum est quantum ad tertiam acceptionem. Quid autem sit illud quod unicuique debetur sufficienter patet ex diccis et dicendis".

<sup>24</sup> See Eric L. SAAK, "Quilibet christianus: Saints in Society in the Sermons of Jordan of Quedlinburg, OESA", in *Models of Holiness in Medieval Sermons: Proceedings of the International Symposium (Kalamazoo, 4-7 May 1995)*, ed. by Beverly M. Kienzle et al. (Louvain-la-Neuve: FIDEM, 1995), 317-38, esp. p. 336; id., "Pelagian-Anti-Pelagian Preaching", esp. p. 332.

<sup>25</sup> *Opus postillarum* sermo 440A: "[iusticia legalis] omnia refert in bonum commune, quod est finis et intentio legis humane, sicut iusticia iuris diuini, de qua supra

one natural, the other supernatural. On both levels justice exists as an overarching virtue: legal justice comprises all virtues on a natural level and directs their operations to the natural end of the common good, while justice of the divine law comprises all virtues on a supernatural level and directs their operations to the supernatural good which is God himself. It would seem, then, that Jordan assigns to *iusticia iuris diuini* the role which many contemporary theologians reserved for charity: the capacity to order the actions of the moral virtues which are human in origin to the celestial destination of man. In fact, Jordan already approaches justice and charity at the very beginning of his preface. He corroborates his opening statement that giving everyone his due makes up the fullness of Christian religion with quotations from Paul, who in Rom. 13 not only said: "Render to all men their dues", but added: "Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another; for the one who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law" (Rom 13: 7-8).<sup>26</sup> At the highest level of morality, justice and charity coincide.

Saving the four cardinal virtues and relating these virtues to religious morality were two of the main problems of virtue ethics in the Later Middle Ages. The *Nicomachean Ethics*, which enjoyed an undisputed authority in academic moral discourse, defied both the scheme of the cardinal virtues, which it simply ignores, and the religious conception of morality, since virtues appear in Aristotle's work as naturally acquirable qualities which guide the human being in the practical concerns of the active life. In his *Tractatus virtutum et vitiorum*, which pretends merely to summarize current moral theories, Jordan proposed solutions for both problems. Taking up the Aristotelian challenge, which as a pastoral author he was under no obligation to do, Jordan started his discussion of the human virtues with Aristotle's classification of six intellectual and eleven moral virtues. The first thing he did was leave the intellectual virtues aside but retain prudence as a moral instead of an intellectual virtue, a step justified by a careful combination of passages from several authorities (Giles of Rome, Thomas

memorauit, omnia refert in Deum qui est finis et intentio legis nostre". Cf. Thomas AQUINAS, *Summa theologiae* II.II.lxviii.6, *Opera*, IX, p. 14: "Sicut enim caritas potest dici virtus generalis inquantum ordinat actus omnium virtutum ad bonum divinum, ita etiam iustitia legalis inquantum ordinat actus omnium virtutum ad bonum commune".

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. sermo 439A: "*Redde quod debes*, quia complementum christiane religionis consistit in reddendo debitum unicuique, dicente apostolo Ro. xiiij.: *Reddite omnibus debita*. Et subdit: *Nemini quicquam debeatis nisi ut inuicem diligans*. Qui enim diligit proximum, legem impleuit".

Aquinas, the *Auctoritates Aristotelis*, and probably John Buridan). Next, he subsumed Aristotle's list of moral virtues, extended with prudence, under the scheme of the cardinal virtues, following Giles of Rome and William Peraldus, and modeled his analysis of the individual cardinal virtues on Peraldus and Aquinas, the most important authorities in the fields of pastoral and theological moral thought, respectively. But Jordan's most original contribution lies in his conception of justice. Following his treatise, Aristotle's legal justice orders all virtues to the common good on a natural level, but is herself guided by justice of the divine law, which orders all virtues to the supernatural good and in this sense not only resembles to, but actually coincides with, charity. In the course of his exposition, Jordan thus reshapes Aristotle's classification of the virtues in such a way as to subdue it under the scheme of the cardinal virtues as well as under Christian religion. The philosophical perspective gradually gives way to religion; the Aristotelian element remains recognizable as such, but does not present a challenge any longer thanks to its subjugation to biblical justice.

Taken at face value, the *Tractatus virtutum et vitiorum* seems little more than a relatively simple compilation of moral theory; naturally, the text had to make such an impression in order to serve its purpose. But behind Jordan's compilation is much creative rearrangement. The theory of the human virtues which he made fit for divulgation from the pulpit was in important respects his own.

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