

## THOMAS OF CANTIMPRÉ'S ANIMAL *MORALITATES*: A CONFLATION OF GENRES

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Of the great Dominican and Franciscan encyclopaediae, only that of Thomas of Cantimpré, the *De Naturis Rerum* in twenty books, completed, after fifteen years of work,<sup>1</sup> in 1240, contains moralizations expressing the symbolism of certain animals, trees and herbs, springs, planets, and elements. As Thomas notes in an elaborate prologue, often he will append to a given entry such moralizations, based on scripture and classical and patristic writers. "Hence I have briefly distinguished the moral meanings and significances of things in certain places from time to time, but not continuously because I would shun prolixity."<sup>2</sup>

Thomas aimed his work largely at an audience of preachers and parish priests, and he believed that the animal history portion of the encyclopaedia could offer them a valuable tool for the preparation of sermons. In this intention Thomas wrote in the tradition of near contemporaries like Robert of Basevorn, whose *forma praedicandi* tells us that the preacher ought always to offer his listeners something subtle and curious, a device particularly efficacious when they begin to sleep.<sup>3</sup>

Though both Albert the Great and Vincent of Beauvais, silently or openly,<sup>4</sup> were heavily indebted to Thomas in their own natural histories, they did not choose to incorporate his *moralitates*. Thus, it is fairly clear that Thomas had a specific idea of the dual role—at once informational and improving—of the encyclopaedia shared neither by his fellow Dominicans nor by the Franciscan, Bartholomaeus Anglicus in his *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, though this author's work was later moralized in a very similar way by his fellow Minorite, Marcus of Orvieto.<sup>5</sup>

In the present paper I should like to examine certain of Thomas of Cantimpré's *moralitates*, and to suggest that he fused in an interesting way in his work two hitherto distinct genres, mixing the traditional encyclopaedia of the Rhabanus Maurus type—which retailed ancient accounts, often fabulous, of animals, their appearances, physical oddities, and breeding habits<sup>6</sup>—with the preacher's handbooks and *distinctiones* collections just coming into fashion in the thirteenth century and intended to aid in the compilation of sermons.<sup>7</sup> Thus, his encyclopaedia adds to the traditional accounts of various creatures, drawn primarily from Pliny,<sup>8</sup> Solinus, and Aristotle's works on animal movement and generation, many brief stories, supplied with moral applications, of interesting or unusual events in the animal kingdom. The result, often fascinating and entertaining in the unusual ways natural history is put to

the service of the preacher, shows a clear development in the meaning and purpose of the medieval encyclopaedia.

Thomas as a schoolboy at Liège from 1206–1216 heard Jacques de Vitry preach (he studied his sermons with animal exempla in order to captivate crowds) and conceived a great admiration for him and for this technique, placing Jacques's name with those of Aristotle, Ambrose, and Pliny in the list of chief authorities in the Prologue to *De Naturis Rerum*.<sup>9</sup> Apparently, Jacques was the main influence behind Thomas's incorporation of moralizing tags or brief narratives into his animal history.<sup>10</sup>

Whatever its precise genesis, *De Naturis Rerum* was quite popular, surviving in 145 manuscripts of various forms of the work,<sup>11</sup> many with elaborate programs of illustration.<sup>12</sup> Thomas's compilation appeared as well in several abridgements intended specifically for the use of preachers rather than for the more mixed audience of the *De Naturis Rerum*. For example, a *Proprietates rerum naturalium adaptatae sermonibus de tempore* survives in seventeen manuscripts, copied chiefly in eastern Europe. It is a collection of sermon themes for the whole liturgical year in some 150 chapters, providing a priest with material for two to three sermons a week. Each chapter develops allegories based on topics from natural history, adapted from Thomas's work.<sup>13</sup>

For some idea of the range and scale of Thomas's encyclopaedia, we may note that in all there are 190 moralizations, often with several on the same creature, drawn from the 400 animals discussed, breaking down into sixty from land animals both general and specific, forty-five from birds, thirty-two from fish, ten from "worms" or crawling things, and twenty from among insects. Additionally, three come from trees and herbs, six from springs, five, all very long, from planets, and one, also lengthy, from the book on the four elements.<sup>14</sup>

Though Thomas does not display his moral preoccupations in categorical or diagrammatic ways<sup>15</sup> as often do the typical preacher's aids of the period, a clear doctrinal plan can be seen in his *moralitates* on natural history. First, as we might expect, the seven deadly sins occupy a primary position in the book. A reading of all the *moralitates* indicates that each sin, in characteristic *Psychomachia* fashion, is balanced—though not always in a particular entry—with its appropriate virtue. Thus, improving illustrations of pride and humility can be seen in certain examples from nature, along with similar pairings of envy and piety, wrath and mildness, sloth and "exercitatio virtutes" or the practical exercise of virtues in daily living, avarice and generosity, gluttony and sobriety, and finally lust and continence.

The compiler looks to certain special social groups or estates for

the application of his *moralitates* rather than to the general run of mankind, concentrating on the clergy, especially monks and preachers of the mendicant orders, potential sceptics and heretics among intellectuals and university students, women as inherently of a weaker moral fiber than men, and young people because of their lack of experience of life. Two estates are mentioned more frequently than the others: princes and magnates. This somewhat limited social range of moral application suggests that the work was intended not so much for general parish use but rather to create sermons for aristocratic, clerical, monastic, or mendicant audiences. For example, one estates satire *moralitas* is developed from a discussion in the general prologue to Book IV on animals, where among many ideas drawn from Aristotle's *Generation of Animals* is the claim that large animals have low birthrates and small ones produce many young, because the vital essence is thinned overmuch when spread throughout a large body. Thomas's treatment of this notion is typical of his technique elsewhere for drawing *moralitates* with a social edge from animal lore, for Aristotle's claim quickly becomes a lament on the low birthrate of the contemporary great: "Alas, the reason, as the poet says, is that when something is stretched overmuch everywhere, it is small in the particular instance." This comment is buttressed by supportive quotations from *auctoritates* of several kinds: Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, "Philosophus," probably a pseudo-Aristotelian text, and Matthew on how a man cannot serve two masters at once.<sup>16</sup>

Other *moralitates* more generally praise God, Christ, the Virgin, and the Holy Spirit, and warn against the devil's work. Though most vices are condemned, hypocrisy, speaking or listening to scandal, stubbornness of heart, lack of obedience to the Church, secret grumbling, and backbiting are of special interest to Thomas. He typically balances these against remedial opposite virtues like prayer, contemplation, fasting, good works in practice as well as intention, conscience, study, wise uses of adversity and of the examples of evil men, charity, perseverance, patience, and bearing one another's burdens.

We recall that it was common for preaching handbooks and collections of *distinctiones* or words arranged alphabetically for the development of sermon themes to offer contrasting pairs of examples, a thing, place, creature, situation, and the like understood in both morally good and morally bad senses, so that the sermon writer could have—if he felt compelled for some reason to use the word in question—examples to fit his case, whether he preached of vice or of virtue.<sup>17</sup> Thomas as well employs this technique of using a word *in bono* or *in malo*, with the imaginative difference that he often gives two or sometimes more exempla for a very popular or interesting animal, one in a positive and one in a

negative sense, usually supported by several direct quotations from scripture or from the works of the Fathers. Thus, in the entry on this bird in Book V, chapter 96, Thomas adds a pair of contrastive allegories, one offering the pelican in its familiar role as an example of Christ's passion,<sup>18</sup> and the other—from the bird's habit of storing several meals in its neck pouch and in its stomach at once—as an allegory of misers and avarice, to the scientific information about pelican bills and neck pouches drawn from ancient and modern authors like Pliny and Jacques de Vitry (Boese, ed., *Thomas* 219–20).

In some cases, a single animal like the owl provides exempla of several types of specific bad behavior—or, like the dove, of good behavior. While Thomas rarely goes against the traditional moral status of creatures as established in the *Physiologus* and bestiary, he often adapts an animal's moralization to several different points of view to allow the preacher a wide latitude of application. For example, again in Book V, chapter 18, we learn that the owl seizes other birds and thus "signifies those who sin openly and in public and so lead their neighbors to sin by their bad example." The owl also symbolizes denigration of the church and the ingratitude of monks and clerics. Owls living in churches drink the oil from the lamps and befoul the lamps by their droppings. These birds signify the monks who, living on the fat of monasteries, denigrate the "best color," that is the good reputation of holy church, by their depraved examples. Also when attacked, according to Gregory the Great, "by birds that live in the light, owls lie on their backs and defend themselves with their claws. In this they signify insolent and dissolute clerics, who live on the fat of ecclesiastical benefices but are given over to foul and scandalous behavior, savagely attacking anyone who chastises them."<sup>19</sup>

Such stories would have been most suitable to employ in a parenthetical way in the course of a sermon theme's development. But in the very long thirty-third chapter of Book IV retailing virtually every bit of lore collected about elephants from Aristotle, Pliny, and Solinus onward to Jacques de Vitry, two anecdotes relating to methods of hunting them, one signifying Christ's Passion and the other signifying gratitude and obedience to Christ, stand apart as little narratives in their own right. They show the techniques for developing exempla which could be inserted in a text and used in the dilation of a sermon theme.

In the first of these little tales inserted into the elephant chapter we learn from "certain writings containing old stories"<sup>20</sup> which is what Thomas calls his source, the *Gesta Romanorum*, how two virgins go naked into areas inhabited by elephants.<sup>21</sup> Though Thomas does not say so directly at this point in the entry, he draws on a long tradition in which

elephants, who were believed to copulate very infrequently, were figures of chastity and continence.<sup>22</sup> One of the virgins carries an urn, the other a sword. They sing in a high voice, and soon an elephant approaches. By his natural affinity with chastity and his instinct, he recognizes their virginity. He caresses them and then, overcome by love of the sweetness of their chastity and their song, falls asleep on their laps. One virgin then stabs him in the belly, the other catches his blood in her urn. The blood is used like royal purple, to dye the robes of kings.

The *moralitas* Thomas draws from this odd tale is much different from and more elaborate than the moralization which accompanies it in the *Gesta Romanorum*. Thomas says that the blood signifies that coming from Christ's side, which one of the virgins, that is Synagoga or the Old Law, caused to flow, while the other virgin, Ecclesia or the New Law, received it in her chalice. The story of the elephant and virgins figures how the impious are judged and the pious are redeemed.

Another tale of hunting and domesticating the elephant is offered in the same chapter, this time ostensibly drawn from the *Glossa Ordinaria*, where the elephant is purposely beaten and abused by his captors.<sup>23</sup> Then the prospective owner comes and releases the elephant from the hands of his tormentors. The elephant, grateful to his deliverer, thereafter always loves and obeys him. "And thou truly, you men who are wiser than the elephant, ought you not to worship your liberator Christ and always obey his mandates?" says Thomas.<sup>24</sup> This idea is supported by passages from Colossians (1:13) and Psalms (17:2-4).

Certain animals are given a more direct and personal relation to a mendicant audience, illustrating failings of specific contemporary kinds. For example, the great horned toad of Book IX, chapter 5 has a specific application, one presumes, to Thomas's fellow Dominicans or perhaps to the Franciscans. In parts of Gaul says Thomas, using an odd etymology in the style of Isidore of Seville,<sup>25</sup> there are large toads said to be "horned" because they make trumpet-like cries. They make this sound only in Gaul however; if taken away, they lose their voices and become mute. "And they signify preachers who except among familiar people and in their own land do not wish to preach, and thus they follow the example and fate of the prophet Jonah, judged by God for his disobedience and given to the whale to be devoured."<sup>26</sup>

Similarly, the food of animals, discussed in chapter 1 of Book IV on the natures of animals in general, is also the occasion for a *moralitas* on the need for preachers—presumably both mendicant and secular—to shape their material appropriately to the audience. The food of animals is diverse according to their species, in as much as they differ among themselves in that certain ones walk, and certain ones swim, Thomas

says, and the food that pleases one does not delight another. And thus some preaching should be suited to religious, and some to seculars, and some to lay, and some to learned audiences. This idea is aptly supported with a tag from Matthew 24:45 about how the faithful servant is praised for giving his lord a meal at the proper time (Boese, ed., *Thomas* 104).

A small group of Thomas's *moralitates*, including several on contemporary themes of sexual licence, were obviously intended specifically for pastoral use, rather than for monastic or mendicant sermons. In these, a dumb animal offers a lesson or has more exalted moral behavior than does man. For instance, Thomas adduces the example of the shad in Book VII, chapter 20, who bites baited hooks from the rear and thus steals the bait without getting hooked. This fish, he says "signifies those who flee the vice of open fornication, but are polluted by its attendant circumstances, such as kisses, illicit chatting, and most impudent and abominable embraces."<sup>27</sup>

The bird Gracocenderon in Book V, chapter 53, figures "chastity and temperance in marriage. Said to be the most chaste of all living things, it has intercourse only once a year, and strictly for the purpose of producing young. Blush therefore O men, capable of reason, who couple indifferently at all times, not in the chaste way of this bird, but weakening the body and not fearing to shorten your days through lust."<sup>28</sup>

Thomas even alludes to the most unmentionable of medieval pastoral vices, homosexuality and bestiality, in his general account of fish. "You will never see a fish have intercourse with fish of another species, but they preserve the ordinance of nature both as to sex and as to species. Blush therefore O unhappy men who transgress the boundaries established between beasts by nature's law when they copulate with unclean animals . . . whence rightly Wisdom complains about how men tore her robe in Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*."<sup>29</sup> Though Thomas refers explicitly to Boethius's Wisdom, whose robe was torn by contending philosophical sects (Prose 1.22–24), it is clear from the context that he actually is reflecting Alan of Lille's condemnation of homosexuality and the tearing of Nature's robe by the men who practice it in the *De Planctu Naturae*.<sup>30</sup>

The Prologue to the *De Naturis Rerum* is probably our surest guide to the compiler's intentions for such *moralitates*, and we may do no better than to close with Thomas's statement of his hopes for the work. There, Thomas dignifies and justifies the preacher's use of animal tales:

It may seem that the *De Naturis Rerum* concerns a goodly number of creatures reputed to be ignoble who could, how

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ever, be a source of great delight to those who would know them. And on this account we ought to consider and study the forms that the different creatures have taken and to delight in the artistry of the creator because the skill of the workman is shown in his work. Thus the forms that these creatures have taken (and not just with respect to how beneficial they may be to us) should be studied because there is something miraculous in all of nature. No form in the creation is careless or fortuitous; they all possess something noble and admirable. The preacher who devotes himself to the study of the writings gathered in my book will find there a sufficiency of *moralitates (integumentis)* with which to fortify faith and correct morals. He will know how, moreover, from time to time aptly to digress from holy scripture in order to cite in witness the beings of the creation. As a result, he will reawaken the attention of even those brutish men to whom holy writ too often repeated and inculcated says nothing new, by the means of the novelties which he tells them.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Useful general studies of Thomas are G. J. J. Walstra, "Thomas de Cantimpré, *De naturis rerum*—Etat de la question," *Vivarium* 5 (1967): 146–71, 6 (1968): 46–61, and more recently Christian Hünemörder, "Antike und mittelalterliche Enzyklopädien und die Popularisierung naturkundlichen Wissens," *Sudhoffs Archiv* 65 (1981): 339–67 and "Die Bedeutung und Arbeitsweise des Thomas von Cantimpre und sein Beitrag zur Naturkunde des Mittelalters," *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 3 (1968): 345–357. The only complete modern text of the work is that of Helmut Boese, ed., *Thomas Cantimpratensis Liber de natura rerum* (Berlin and New York: Walter De Gruyter, 1973), from which (except as noted) the quotations from Thomas in this paper are drawn. This edition was the subject of an excellent review article by J. Engels, "Thomas Cantimpratensis redivivus," *Vivarium* 12.2 (1974): 124–32. For Thomas's biography, the study by A. Deboutte, "Thomas van Cantimpré als auditor van Albertus Magnus," *Ons geestelijk erf* 58 (1984): 192–209, is helpful.

<sup>2</sup> The passage translated here from the Prologue appears in my edition, "Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*. (Prologue, Book III, Book XIX)," *Cahiers d'Etudes médiévales II. La science de la nature: théories et pratiques* (Paris and Montreal: Vrin, 1974) 120: "Proinde moralitates et significantias rerum breuiter in quibusdam per intervalla distinximus et ideo non continue, quia uitauimus prolixitatem." On the question of moralizations in medieval encyclopaediae generally, see H. Meyer, "Zum Verhältnis von Enzyklopädie und Allegorese im Mittelalter," *Frümittelalterliche Studien* 24 (1990): 290–313. On its revision history and the various adaptations of the *De Naturis Rerum*, see Boese, ed., *Thomas Cantimpratensis*, viii, and Christian Hünemörder, "Probleme der Intention und Quellenerschliessung der sogenannten 3. Fassung des *Liber de natura rerum* des Thomas von Cantimpré," in Ewald Konngen et al., eds., *Arbor amoena comis: 25 Jahre Mittelalterliches Seminar in Bonn, 1965–1990* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1970) 241–49.

<sup>3</sup> Th.-M. Charland, ed., *Artes Praedicandi* (Paris: Vrin; Ottawa: Inst. d'études médiévales, 1936) 260–61, 320. For evidence of and discussion of preachers having recourse to various mirabilia and natural history collections for sermon material, see G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (1933; Oxford: Blackwell, 1966) 149–209.

<sup>4</sup> The scholarly controversy at issue here is well summarized by Pauline



Aiken, "The Animal History of Albertus Magnus and Thomas of Cantimpré," *Speculum* 22 (1947): 205–25. Not mentioned by Aiken is Heinrich Balss, *Albertus Magnus als Biologie* (Stuttgart: Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1947) 5, where Albert's debt to Thomas is discussed generally. See also my study "Experimentator and *Liber Rerum*: Lost Encyclopedists," in Peter Binkley, ed., *Pre-Modern Encyclopedic Texts: Proceedings of the Second COMERS Congress, Groningen, 1–4 July 1996* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 379–392.

<sup>5</sup> See John B. Friedman, "Peacocks and Preachers: Analytic Technique in Marcus of Orvieto's *Liber de moralitatibus*, Vatican lat. MS 5935," in Willene B. Clark and Meradith T. McMunn, eds., *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages: The Bestiary and Its Legacy* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1989) 179–96. An edition of Marcus's work based on all known manuscripts is being prepared by Girard Etzkorn.

<sup>6</sup> See, on medieval encyclopaediae generally, C. Meier, "Grundzüge der mittelalterlichen Enzyklopädie: Zu Inhalten, Formen und Funktionen einer problematischen Gattung," in L. Grenzmann and K. Stackmann, eds., *Literatur und Laienbildung im Spätmittelalter und in der Reformationzeit: Symposium Wolfenbüttel, 1981* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1984) 467–500. On Rhabanus, see Adolph Goldschmidt, "Frümittelalterliche illustrierte Enzyklopäiden," *Vorträge Bibliothek Warburg [1923–1924]* (1926): 215–26, who treats early medieval encyclopaediae generally, and Diane O. le Berrurier, *The Pictorial Sources of Mythological and Scientific Illustration in Hrabanus Maurus' De Rerum Naturis* (New York: Garland Dissertations in Fine Arts, 1978), who examines the pictorial tradition for the five extant illustrated copies of Rhabanus's work.

<sup>7</sup> See Olga Weijers, *Dictionnaires et répertoires au Moyen Age: Une étude du vocabulaire*, *Civcima: Etudes sur le vocabulaire intellectuel du Moyen Age*, no. 4. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991), who covers some preaching repertoria.

<sup>8</sup> See Marjorie Chibnall, "Pliny's *Natural History* in the Middle Ages," in T. A. Dorey, ed., *Empire and Aftermath: Silver Latin II* (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975) 57–78, who discusses the popularity of this ancient encyclopaedia and how it interested medieval readers and scholars.

<sup>9</sup> "Sexto loco magistrum Iacobum de Vitriaco, quondam Aquonensem

episcopum, nunc uero Tusculanum presulem et Romane curie cardinalem, licet meritis potioem in quasi etate ultimum ponimus; qui de naturis rerum et historiis que in transmarinis partibus modernis temporibus euenerunt eleganti sermone conscripsit, et hunc librum uoluit Orientalem Hystoriam appellari” (Friedman, ed., “Thomas” 119).

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Frederick Crane, ed., *The Exempla or Illustrative Stories from the Sermones Vulgares of Jacques de Vitry* (1890; New York: Burt Franklin, 1980), provides a critical edition of the exempla contained in these sermons. On the topic generally, see Louis-Jacques Bataillon, “Similitudines et exempla dans les sermons du XIIe siècle,” in *The Bible in the Medieval World: Essays in Memory of Beryl Smalley*, Katherine Walsh and Diana Wood, eds. (Oxford and New York: Blackwell, 1985) 191–205; Jacques Berlioz, and Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, eds., *Les exempla médiévaux. Introduction à la recherche. Suivie des tables critiques de l’index exemplorum de Frederic C. Tubach* (Carcassonne: GARAE/Hesiode, 1992); and Claude Bremond, et al., *L’Exemplum, Typologie des sources du Moyen Age occidental*, no. 40 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982). Somewhat dated but still useful is Homer G. Pfander, *The Popular Sermon of the Medieval Friar in England* (New York: New York UP, 1937).

<sup>11</sup> A new manuscript of the work has recently appeared in a private collection in Florida. I am grateful to Peter Binkley for this information.

<sup>12</sup> Valenciennes Bibliothèque Municipale MS 320 has a full program of illustrations, for example. See my edition of portions of this MS, cited in note 2, for discussion.

<sup>13</sup> Baudouin van den Abeele, “Bestiaires encyclopédiques moralisés: Quelques succédanés de Thomas de Cantimpré et de Barthelemy l’Anglais,” *Reinardus* 7 (1994): 208–28. I am grateful to Professor van den Abeele for suggestions concerning this matter.

<sup>14</sup> See pages 150–52 of my edition of Thomas’s book XIX for a string of exempla developed from the element of air.

<sup>15</sup> Though Michael Evans, “The Geometry of the Mind,” *Architectural Association Quarterly* 12 (1980): 33–55, chiefly examines diagrammatic illustration in medieval manuscripts, he nonetheless offers much of use on medieval diagrammatic techniques.

<sup>16</sup> In Boese, ed., *Thomas* 106, the reference to the poet is lacking: “Et heu, quam verum hoc hodie esse videmus, ut illi qui maiores dignitate esse videntur parum fructificant; et hec ratio, quia ‘pluribus intentus minor est ad singula sensus.’” This “poet” remains unidentified. The reference to Gregory is to *Regula Pastoralis*, I, cap. 4, *PL* 77, 17 and to Matthew 6:24.

<sup>17</sup> Jean-Pierre Laurant, *Symbolisme et écriture: Le cardinal Pitra et la ‘Clef’ de Méliton de Sardes* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1988), treats an early form of the *distinctio* genre, the *Clavis* of Melito of Sardis. Long accessible only in a rather rare edition by Pitra, much of it is now available in Laurant’s study, which gives Pitra’s Latin text and a French translation.

<sup>18</sup> See George Claridge Druce, “The Pelican in the Black Prince’s Chantry,” *Canterbury Cathedral Chronicle* 18 (1934): 10–14, for a discussion of the bird’s iconography in sculpture and bestiaries made between the tenth and the fourteenth centuries. See also Cristoph Gerhardt, *Die Metamorphosen des Pelikans: Exempel und Auslegung in Mittelalterlicher Literatur: Mit Beispielen aus der Bildenden Kunst und einem Bildenhang* (Frankfurt and Bern: Peter Lang, 1979), who studies the allegory of the pelican in its piety, feeding its young with flesh from its own breast as a symbol of Christ. Victor E. Graham, “The Pelican as Image and Symbol,” *Revue de littérature comparée* 36 (1962): 235–43, is general but useful.

<sup>19</sup> “Hec ave capiuntur cetera volucres, et significat peccatores qui palam in scandalo hominum peccant et peccare faciunt proximum exemplo malo. . . . In ecclesiis habitans, oleum de lampadibus bibit et insuper ea fedat stercoreibus. Sic quidam in monasterio habitantes que pingua sunt consumunt, insuper et sacre religionis colorem optimum—id est, famam bonam—suis pravis exemplis denigrant. . . . Nota Gregorii super hec: Quando impugnatur bubo ab hiis avibus que in luce habitant, resupina pedum unguibus se defendit. Hii aves in ecclesia significant insolentes et dissolutos clericos, qui, etsi vivant de pingui beneficio ecclesie, eam tamen luxurie spurciciis et scandalis fedant. Et cum arguuntur a bonis, in eos animi crudelitate grassantur” (Boese, ed., *Thomas* 187).

<sup>20</sup> “Narrat scriptura libri, que continet veterum relationes” (Boese, ed., *Thomas* 127).

<sup>21</sup> See *Gesta Romanorum: or, Entertaining Moral Stories*, ed. and trans.

Charles Swan and Wynnard Hooper (New York: Dover, 1959) CLV, 205–07.

<sup>22</sup> George Claridge Druce, “The Elephant in Medieval Legend and Art,” *Archaeological Journal* 76 (1919): 1–73, covers all aspects of medieval thought about the elephant, with a wealth of illustrations. More up to date is Nona C. Flores, “The Mirror of Nature Distorted: The Medieval Artist’s Dilemma in Depicting Animals,” in Joyce Salisbury, ed., *The Medieval World of Nature: A Book of Essays* (New York and London: Garland, 1993) 3–45, who treats the elephant at length, and A. T. Hatto, “The Elephant in the Strassburg *Alexander*,” *London Medieval Studies* 1 (1937–39): 399–429, who studies the elephant chiefly in Alexander romances but offers much traditional lore, as does James Romm, “Aristotle’s Elephant and the Myth of Alexander’s Scientific Patronage,” *American Journal of Philology* 110 (1983): 566–75. More fanciful is Frederick Cameron Sillar and Ruth M. Meyler, *Elephants, Ancient and Modern* (New York: Viking, 1968).

<sup>23</sup> See Margaret Gibson and Karlfrid Froehlich, eds., *Glossa ordinaria*. 4 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), whose edition is more convenient to use than that printed in the *Patrologia Latina*. I was unable to find such a story of elephant hunting there.

<sup>24</sup> “Tu ergo, homo, quis es tu, qui insipientior elephante liberatori tuo Christo non refert gratias et eius semper mandatis obtemperas” (Boese, ed., *Thomas* 128).

<sup>25</sup> See Mark Amsler, *Etymology and Grammatical Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages from 200–1000 A.D.* Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science, 3 ser. (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1989) vol. 44; Ernst Robert Curtius, “Etymology as a Category of Thought,” in *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask, Bollingen ser.no.36 (Princeton UP, 1953) 495–500; Joseph Engles, “La portée de l’etymologie isidorienne,” *Studi Medievali*, 3rd ser., 3, no. 1 (1962): 99–128; and Roswitha Klinck, *Die lateinische Etymologie des Mittelalters*, Medium Ævum, no. 17 (Berlin: Wilhelm Fink, 1970).

<sup>26</sup> “Bufonum genus est in partibus Gallie quod nomen habet ‘cornuti,’ et hoc a sono vocis, eo quod cornizare videntur. . . . In sola Gallia vivunt vocifere; elate perdunt voces et mute fiunt. Et hii significant predicatorum qui nisi inter cognitos et in terra sua predicare nolunt, non attendentes

Ione prophete iudicium, qui per hoc quod inobediens Deo factus est ceto datus est ad devorandum” (Boese, ed., *Thomas* 299).

<sup>27</sup> “Clautius . . . aversus mordet inescatos hamos nec devorat eos, sed despoliando grassatur. Hic piscis signat eos, qui et si aperte fornicationis vitium fugiunt, ne forte proventure prolis indicio capiantur, tamen ipsi circumstantiis fornicationum, sicut sunt oscula, confabulationes illicite et sceleratissime contrectationes, impudentissime polluuntur” (Boese, ed., *Thomas* 257–58).

<sup>28</sup> “Gracodenderon . . . quam mira castitate et temperantia preditam dicunt. Hec quidem avis inter omnia animantia terre generationem suam perficit minimo coitu. Nam semel tantum in anno coit et hoc gratia prolis; et propter hoc expers est totius libidinis. Erubescat ergo homo capax rationis, qui indifferenter coit omni tempore nec modum habet illius temperantie, sed debile corpus exhaurit luxuria et nimietate dies suos accelerare non timet” (Boese, ed., *Thomas* 202).

<sup>29</sup> “Nunquam videbitur piscis coire cum alterius generis piscibus, sed suum servant nature ordinem et in sexu et in genere. Erubescat infelix homo qui et nature metas transgreditur et irrationabilior bestiis universis fasque nefas ducit equaliter et sexum suum ordinem contempnit impudens violator . . . Unde in Libro Consolacionis Boecii non immerito figura Sapiencia plangere visa est in ea parte scissam vestem que hominum species pictam habebat” (Boese, ed., *Thomas* 251–52).

<sup>30</sup> See James J. Sheridan, trans., *Alan of Lille The Plaint of Nature: Translation and Commentary* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1980) Metre 1, 67–72; Prose 1, 98.

<sup>31</sup> “siue ignobile sicut est creatura animalium, erit tamen causa magne dilectacionis illis qui id possunt cognoscere. Propter hoc igitur debemus considerare formas creaturarum et delectatari in artifice qui fecit illas, quoniam artificium operantis manifestatur in operatione, et propter hoc ait: intendamus in naturis animalium uilium, et non graue sit nobis, quoniam in omnibus rebus naturalibus est mirabile, et res naturalis nobilis quoniam non fuit ullum naturatum ociose creatum neque casualiter, sed propter aliquod complementum, et ideo habet aliquod eciam reputatu uilissimum locum et ordinem nobilem. . . . Hijs ergo scriptis si quis studium adhibuerit, ad argumenta fidei et correctiones morum integumentis medijs sufficientiam reperiet, ut interduo predicatore quasi e uestigio scripturarum apte digresso, cessantibus eloquijs prophetarum,

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ad euigilacionum beatarum mencium oculata fide creaturarum adducat testes, ut si quem sepius audita de scripturis et inculcata non movent, saltem nova more suo homine inicium nobis sumendum est. . . ." (Friedman, ed., "Thomas" 120–22).

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