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## Review of "La metodologia del sapere nel sermone di S. Bonaventura `Unus est magister vester Christus'" by Renato Russo, O.F.M.

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## Medieval Academy of America

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La metodologia del sapere nel sermone di S. Bonaventura "Unus est magister vester Christus"  
by Renato Russo

Review by: R. James Long

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the Rialto before being shipped out to other buyers. In years of scarcity, such as 1227–29, the Venetian doge made special purchases abroad. Venice apparently made a profit from the grain trade.

Early-thirteenth-century merchants shipped from Venice vast quantities of oil, figs, cheese, and wine over great distances. For example, in spring, 1224, Italian merchants exported 48,000 liters of oil from the Rialto to cities of northern Italy. This oil came from Greece, Apulia, and the Marches and was used both for light and food. In the same months about 82,800 kilograms of figs were shipped to Verona, Mantua, Cremona, Brescia, and Legnano and around 23,640 kilograms of cheese. These amounts do not include the oil, figs, and cheese consumed in Venice itself. Quantities of wine were also shipped out. Similarly, Rösch outlines the growing Venetian monopoly over the salt supply basing his conclusions openly on J. C. Hocquet, *Le sel et la fortune de Venise* (Lille, 1978–79). Rösch also discusses briefly the evidence for trade in perishable foodstuffs.

In conclusion the author quietly maintains that Venice succeeded in monopolizing the wholesale trade in foodstuffs for all of northern Italy by 1250 by controlling the water routes and the wholesale market on the Rialto. He states that the construction of Fort Marcamò on the Po Delta in 1258 completed this monopoly. With this unexpected conclusion the book ends. If the modern term monopoly were understood in the thirteenth century, the Venetians could be said to have had this end in mind. But, considering events between 1250 and 1400, I question whether such complete control of trade in foodstuffs was achieved by Venice so early.

The author adds three appendices: textual studies of the Venetian pact with Emperor Otto II and of the *Liber plegiorum* and a discussion of wages and capital in Venice, 1220–30. In addition, Rösch prints three hitherto unpublished documents, weights and measures, abbreviations, a fifteen-page bibliography, and an index. A most welcome map of Venice and northern Italy folds into the last page. Regrettably the publisher did not number the chapters or the subsections.

Gerhard Rösch has aimed at describing the medieval commercial relations between the duchy of Venice and the northern Italian lands. The essence of this book is information, based on the sources, and organized into neat categories. This book tells a new tale for both economists and historians.

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RENATO RUSSO, OFM, *La metodologia del sapere nel sermone di S. Bonaventura "Unus est magister vester Christus."* (Spicilegium Bonaventurianum, 22.) Rome: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1982. Paper. Pp. 144.

ONE OF THE MOST trenchant and articulate critics of the Aristotelian theory of knowledge in the thirteenth century was Bonaventure of Bagnoregio. A mode of knowledge which is not grounded in the *ars aeterna*, that is, in God himself, is for the Franciscan master no more than a collection of empty abstractions, unconnected with reality. Any authentic epistemic journey begins with the stability of faith, proceeds via the serenity of reason, in order to arrive ultimately at the sweetness of contemplation; this journey is also Christocentric, the first stage corresponding to Christ as *via*, the second to Christ as *veritas*, the final to Christ as *vita*.

This subtle and compelling gnosiology is the subject of Fr. Renato Russo's study, which began as a dissertation at the University of Perugia and has now been published in the highly regarded Spicilegium Bonaventurianum series. Russo takes as his focus the sermon *Unus est magister vester Christus*, which was assigned the number four in the Quaracchi edition. Delivered according to Jacques Guy Bougerol toward the end of his Parisian professorate, that is, in or about 1257, the year in which Bonaventure was formally admitted as *magister regens in actu*, Sermon 4 possibly represents his inaugural address, prescribed by the university statutes. At any rate, the sermon is not merely an exercise in scholastic rhetoric but also a rich compendium of Bonaventurian doctrine, bearing close affinities to the themes of the *Quaestiones de scientia Christi* and the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*.

Following a most useful introductory chapter on the medieval thematic sermon, the author devotes a chapter to each of the three moments or modes of human knowledge according to Bonaventure's schema: *cognitio fidelis*, *scientialis*, and *contemplativa*. Russo's analysis of the sermon text is both clear and convincing. He is also at pains to anchor his study with parallel passages drawn from the rest of the Bonaventurian corpus as well as authorities ranging from Augustine to the Victorines to Thomas and Siger.

Especially well drawn is Russo's account of Bonaventure's carefully nuanced attitude toward the knowledge that falls under the term *scientia*, the knowledge of the *inferiora*, of which Aristotle is the acknowledged master. Created things possess truth — in the sense of being knowable — to the extent that they imitate and express divine truth. This does not mean, however, that the sense world is thereby reduced to a realm of insignificant and unreal appearances, a view which would lead to skepticism. This is precisely the mistake Plato falls prey to, in the view of Bonaventure, because by abandoning the sensible he destroys in the process the *via scientiae*. Man's attainment of the *rationes aeternae* is for Bonaventure always contingent on the natural ability of the intellect to know through the bodily senses (p. 60).

Not surprisingly, it is Augustine whom Bonaventure acknowledges as his master, for while Plato speaks the language of wisdom (*sapientia*) and Aristotle that of knowledge (*scientia*), the ability to discourse on both has been given by the Holy Spirit to the sainted bishop of Hippo. To his indebtedness to Augustine add the influence of that other interpreter of Plotinus, Dionysius, as well as the deeply imbibed spirituality of Francis of Assisi and one has the ingredients of that unique achievement that is the thought of Bonaventure.

If there is a weakness in Russo's study, it is his apparent unawareness of the recent work in English and German on the Seraphic Doctor. Relying closely on the interpretation of Gilson and Bougerol, Russo makes no reference to the enriching insights of Ratzinger, Gerken, Scheltens, Hayes, Cousins, Quinn, and others who write in languages other than Italian or French.

As an appendix Russo includes a new critical edition of Sermon 4, incorporating a second copy discovered by Bougerol in the municipal library of St.-Omer. The new copy (MS 289) is identical — but for a handful of mostly insignificant variants — with that of the Munich manuscript upon which the Quaracchi edition is based.

I wish I could say unequivocally that the Russo text is an improvement on the Quaracchi edition, but the number of errors — both transcriptional and typographical — gives me pause. In the following list I employ these sigla: M = Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm 7776; O = Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque municipale MS 289; Q = Quaracchi edition. (P. 100/9) *add.* [after *Sacramentis*] in prima parte X<sup>o</sup> libro

MO; (102/25–26) debemus rationi: debemus ratione M; demonstrationi O; (108/102) *add.* [after *Trinitate*] cap. XIII M; (108/111–12) De musica: musice M; muscise (*sic*) O; (108/114) readings reversed: hoc M; haec O; (110/134) *add.* [after *terra*] non M; (110/140) Platonica: Platoniam MOQ; (114/177) Padre: Patre MOQ; (116/203) readings reversed: hoc M; hic O; (118/230) fundates: fundantes MOQ; (118/235) enim: etiam MO; (120/246) quod: quo MO; (120/262) differet: differret MOQ; (126/351) non: nos MOQ; (128/357) *add.* [after *ideo*] omnis MOQ; (128/362–63) enim doctas: indoctas MO; (130/386) 4: 3 M; (130/393) sententiarum: scientiarum M.

Although these textual errors, some of which are obviously the result of careless proofreading, do not militate against Russo's commendable study of Bonaventure's cognitional theory, neither do they inspire confidence in his new critical edition. The definitive edition of *Unus est magister Christus* awaits the necessary corrections to Russo's text.

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SVEN SANDQVIST, ed., *Trois contes français du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle tirés du recueil intitulé "Le Tombel de Chartrose."* (Acta Universitatis Lundensis, Sectio 1, Theologica, Juridica, Humaniora, 37.) Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1982. Paper. Pp. 187; 2 black-and-white facsimile pages. SKr 80.

THE *Tombel de Chartrose* is a collection of thirty-one pious tales and saints' lives which has been dated in the late 1340s. It exists in two manuscripts (*A*, Bibliothèque municipale d'Avranches 244; *P*, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouv. acq. fr. 6835) and has been edited eleven times, from an 1846 edition of tale 19 through the present edition of tales 1, 2, and 3. Curiously enough, no edition has been done of the full work, and only two of the editions present more than three tales. Kooiman (Amsterdam, 1975) published eighteen, and Walberg (Lund, 1946) edited nine.

Sandqvist indicates immediately (p. 13) that his work and that of Kooiman overlap, but justifies his reedition of the first three tales in the collection by referring to the paucity of notes in the slightly earlier volume as well as to the sketchy language study and the insufficient glossary. I believe he was justified in seeing his project through to publication (he was rather far along when the 1975 edition came to his attention), because of the great care he obviously expended in his work. It is, in some ways, a model of Old French editing practice, especially in regard to the fuller apparatus.

In fact, the principal objection that can be raised about this edition has to do with this very care: it is never clearly stated for whom the edition is prepared, but the notes in particular are at times suitable for the novice in reading Old French. There are statements, notably about the syntax of the poems, that are unnecessary for the experienced reader and that treat constructions discussed routinely in any standard manual. It is not necessary to point out, for example, confusions of subject and oblique case which do not hamper comprehension or the fact that *qui* can mean "si quelqu'un, si l'on." This is particularly the case given the relative obscurity and late date of the *Tombel de Chartrose*: it will in all likelihood not be used for an introductory course in Old French, though, in fact, this edition could be assigned in the classroom.

It should be emphasized, however, that the above objection is not a major one. Erring on the side of too much detail is far less serious than giving too little, in