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From *disputatio* to *predicatio*⸺and back again: Dialectic, Authority and Epistemology between the *Roman de la Rose* and the *Pèlerinage de Vie Humaine*

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Modern critics on the whole have found it rather difficult to account for the success of Guillaume de Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de Vie Humaine* with medieval readers,[1] and the poem is still widely misunderstood whenever it is not overlooked or dismissed out of hand. Things have begun to improve over the last decade, with the appearance of a number of studies on the circulation, translation and reception of Deguileville.[2] This is a welcome development, but it may also have distracted our attention somewhat from the internal workings of this influential, rich and complex allegory, still insufficiently studied in terms of its place within multiple overlapping contexts⸺intellectual, literary, cultural, and political.[3] The survival of two rather different versions of the poem, *PVH1* from

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[1] The *Pèlerinage* is one of the most popular vernacular verse narratives of the later Middle Ages. It exists in around 80 MSS (for details see http://jonas.irht.cnrs.fr s.v. 'guillaume de digulleville'), and was subsequently adapted into French prose, English verse and prose, German, Dutch, Spanish and Latin. It also went through 10 printed editions in French, one in Spanish and several in Dutch.

[2] For an overview of the state of research see two recent volumes, *Mittelalterliche Literatur als Retextualisierung. Das 'Pèlerinage'-Corpus des Guillaume de Deguileville im europäischen Mittelalter*, ed. by Andreas Kablitz and Ursula Peters (Heidelberg, 2014); and *The Pèlerinage Allegories of Guillaume de Deguileville: Tradition, Authority and Influence*, ed. Stephanie A. V. G. Kamath and Marco Nievergelt (Cambridge, 2013). See further *Guillaume de Digulleville: les Pèlerinages allégoriques, actes du Colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle, 5–8 Octobre 2006*, ed. by Frédéric Duval and Fabienne Pomel (Rennes, 2008); Stephanie A. V. G. Kamath, *Authorship and First-Person Allegory in late Medieval France and England.* (Cambridge, 2012); Marco Nievergelt, *Allegorical Quests from Deguileville to Spenser* (Cambridge, 2012); Philippe Maupeu, *Pèlerins de Vie Humaine: Autobiographie et allégorie narrative de Guillaume de Deguileville à Octovien de Saint Gelais* (Paris, 2009).

[3] For such a call to return to *PVH1* itself see Frédéric Duval, 'Interpréter le *Pèlerinage de vie humaine* de Guillaume de Digulleville (vers 1330)', in *La moisson des lettres: l'invention littéraire autour de 1300,* ed. Hélène Bellon-Méquelle et al. (Turnhout, 2011), 233–52.

1331, and *PVH2* from 1355–6, further complicates the picture, but affords us the rare opportunity to trace the internal tensions, shifts and transformations of an author's poetic vision over time.[4]

The *Pèlerinage* presents an account of the poet's ostensible dream-vision, and features a pilgrim-persona who is simultaneously dreamer, first-person narrator, protagonist and expositor of his quest. This complex narrative configuration of the subject develops in the wake of the *Roman de la Rose*,[5] Deguileville's declared model and evoked in the opening lines of his poem (*PVH1*, 7–11). Yet Deguileville's poem also seeks to harness the energies of first-person allegorical narrative to avowedly spiritual and salvific ends. The pilgrimage thus figures a complex pedagogical trajectory, and the reader is invited to identify with the pilgrim and participate actively in the learning process. Deguileville uses the Augustinian motif of the pilgrimage to figure the learning process of the Christian wayfarer,[6] and indeed the poem as a whole develops an unmistakeably Augustinian/Platonist anthropology and epistemology.[7] Augustine had developed the idea of the Christian life as a journey especially in his hugely popular *De Doctrina Christiana*, whose influence on Deguileville has already been suggested by other critics.[8] In the *De Doctrina* the journey traces an itinerary of Christian learning that enables the individual pilgrim's 'return' to his heavenly home (*De Doctrina* 1. 4. 4; 1. 10. 10; 1. 18. 17), and pilgrimage here visualises a transformation that is at once interpretive,

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[4] For *PVH1* see Guillaume de Deguileville, *Le Pèlerinage de Vie Humaine de Guillaume de Deguileville*, edited by J. J. Stürzinger (London, 1893). For *PVH2* I refer to the pre-proof manuscript of the forthcoming edition, kindly shared by the editors; see Guillaume de Deguileville, *Le Livre du pèlerin de vie humaine (1355),* ed. Philippe Maupeu and Graham Robert Edwards. Lettres Gothiques (Paris, 2015).

[5] See especially Kamath, *Authorship and First-Person Allegory*.

[6] On the importance of the idea of pilgrimage in Augustine's thought, see Paul G. Kuntz, 'From *Homo Erro* to *Homo Viator*', *Augustinian Studies* 11 (1980), 79–89; Robert J. O'Connell, *St Augustine's Confessions: The Odyssey of Soul* (Cambridge, MA, 1969); M. A. Claussen '*Peregrinatio* and *Peregrini* in Augustine's *City of God*', *Traditio* 46 (1991), 33–75.

[7] See Sarah Kay, 'The Divided Path in Guillaume de Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de Vie Humaine*: Separation and Identity', in *The Place of Thought: The Complexity of One in late Medieval French Didactic Poetry* (Philadelphia, 2007), 70–94. See also the classic account by Rosemond Tuve, *Allegorical Imagery: Some Medieval Books and their Posterity* (Princeton, 1966), 145–218 (170–5).

[8] Kay, *Place of Thought*, 73 and *passim*.

pedagogical, ethical, cognitive, and ontological.[9] The journey ultimately aims to convert and transform the pilgrim self, seeking to restore his prelapsarian cognitive and intellectual faculties through the recovery of man's divine resemblance obscured by the fall (*De Doctrina* 1. 22. 20; 1. 34. 38; cf. *PVH1* 5945–6158)—an idea echoed by Deguileville by the pilgrim's inaugural vision of the New Jerusalem, and throughout the subsequent journey towards the Heavenly City.

Deguileville transforms the theoretical formulations of Augustine's treatise into a dynamic and experiential first-person narrative. His pilgrimage allegory thus provides an account of how Augustinian ontology, epistemology, and hermeneutics materialise in action, experienced and recounted from the subjective, embodied viewpoint of the clumsy and recalcitrant first-person protagonist. The pilgrim's adventures and misadventures thus allow Deguileville to unpack and explore, bit by bit, the various aspects or building blocks of the poem's Platonist worldview, by correcting the erroneous beliefs of an ill-advised pilgrim-reader persona. In this sense *PVH* is not so much a didactic poem that merely exposes its teaching, but a programmatic allegory that involves its readers, as fellow pilgrims, in the gradual construction of an epistemological system.

Contrary to a widely held assumption, then, the *Pèlerinage* is not primarily a didactic work—at least not in the reductive or narrow sense of a normative, morally prescriptive poem.[10] Instead its central concerns are essentially epistemological, cognitive, and hermeneutical, within a wider theological and soteriological perspective. Indeed the emphasis in *PVH* is not so much on *doing* the right thing, but on *knowing*, specifically on discriminating between the good and the bad, and discerning truth from deception and illusion.[11] 'Discernment' accordingly holds pride of place in the teaching administered by

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[9] For such a hermeneutics of the self understood as an ethics of reading in Augustine's thought, see especially Brian Stock, *Augustine the Reader: Meditation, Self-Knowledge and the Ethics of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA, 1996), especially 207–78.

[10] For an invitation to reconsider didacticism as an intellectually engaging mode or discourse see especially Kay, *The Place of Thought*, especially 1–18; and Catherine Brown, *Contrary Things: Exegesis, Dialectic and the Poetics of Didacticism* (Stanford, 1998), especially 8–11.

[11] A reading in this sense is proposed by Susan K. Hagen, *Allegorical Remembrance: a Study of 'The Pilgrimage of the life of Man' as a Medieval Treatise on Seeing and Remembering* (Athens, GA / London, 1990). Hagen however sees *PVH* as an essentially unproblematic and internally unified allegory, and focuses largely on Lydgate's translation of *PVH2*. This obscures the specificities of Deguileville's poem in its different versions, and glosses over its internal tensions and contradictions. For Lydgate's version see *The Pilgrimage of the Life of*

Sapience, who together with Grace Dieu is the principal figure of authority in the poem. As Sapience states,

> L'entendement [...] enfourmoie
> A arguer et desputer
> Et a jugier et discerner
> Entre le bon et le mauves (*PVH1* 3012–15)[12]

> [I have formed/informed understanding to argue and dispute, to judge and discern between the good and the bad.]

The knowledge envisaged here goes beyond the specifically exegetical, hermeneutic knowledge taught by the *De Doctrina Christiana*, and embraces the art of dialectic, or *arte bene disputandi*, which teaches to argue, judge and discern. And indeed on his journey the pilgrim must engage in debates with a wide range of personifications, assess their arguments, understand their teaching or see through their verbal deception.

By placing the art of dialectic under the aegis of Sapience, Deguileville implies that it is subservient to the poem's larger, essentially sapiential and salvific aims. Yet the arts of debate and dialectic reasoning occupy a far more problematic and unstable place within the poem. *PVH* as a whole is in fact characterised by a deep ambivalence about scholastic and academic learning of all kinds, and in many areas Deguileville appears to adopt strongly anti-Aristotelian positions. This is the case with his rejection of Aristotelian hylomorphism in favour of substance dualism, and his elaboration a clearly illuminationist theory of cognition,[13] or with his humorous remarks on the limitations of

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Man, trans. John Lydgate, ed. F. J. Furnivall and Katharine B. Locock, 3 vols, EETS OS 78, 83 and 92 (London, 1899–1904).

[12] The pilgrim himself is 'discerne des autres bestes' (*PVH1* 856; 'separated from the other animals') by his rational skill. Further teaching about 'discernement' is provided by figures of authority at *PVH1* 1098, 1108, 1680, and the related notion of 'discretion', often applied to the pilgrim's 'jugement' or 'entendement', is invoked at *PVH1* 1085, 1118, 1242, 1260, 1703, 3078. English translations from French are mine throughout. For a translation into modern English prose see Guillaume de Deguileville, *The Pilgrimage of Human Life,* trans. Eugene Clasby (New York, 1992).

[13] I discuss Deguileville's theory of the soul and cognition in a forthcoming piece, 'Can Thought Experiments Backfire? Avicenna's Flying Man, Intellectual Cognition and the Experience of Allegory in Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de Vie Humaine*', in *Medieval Thought Experiments: Poetry and Speculation in Europe, 1100–1450*, ed. Philip Knox, Jonathan Morton and Daniel Reeve (Turnhout, forthcoming 2016). For an

Aristotelian natural science.[14] In what follows I explore one aspect of Deguileville's defensive attitude towards the 'new' Aristotelian sciences, by concentrating on his complex but fundamentally ambivalent attitude towards dialectic and the related practice of scholastic *disputatio*. This ambivalence is fed not only by a well-established tradition of distrust in logic by medieval intellectuals, particularly monastic authors; it is also sustained by Deguileville's problematic, uncomfortably close engagement with the *Roman de la Rose*, *PVH*'s most powerful intertext. Accordingly I begin with a brief discussion of Jean de Meun's complex, ironic and idiosyncratic treatment of *disputatio* and the principles and practices of dialectic in the *Rose*. I suggest that Deguileville read the *Rose* as simultaneously holding two different, related propositions: on the one hand the earlier poem could be understood as satirising the apodictic aspirations of dialectic argumentation understood as a discipline or *science*, especially as practiced in the late thirteenth-century schools. On the other hand, however, the *Rose* could also be read as adopting the *principles* of dialectical reasoning understood as a *method*, taking it to its extreme consequences—what I term the *Rose*'s 'dialecticism'.[15]

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overview of illuminationist doctrines and their developments in the thirteenth century, see Timothy Noone, 'Divine Illumination', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Robert Pasnau and Christina van Dyke, 2 vols (Cambridge, 2010), 1:369–83; for more detailed discussion of the progressive decline of doctrines of divine illumination, see Stephen P. Marrone, *The Light of Thy Countenance: Science and Knowledge of God in the Thirteenth Century*, 2 vols (Leiden, 2001). For a concise overview of the cognitive implications of different models of faculty psychology, see John Haldane, 'Soul and Body', and Dag Nikolaus Hasse, 'The Soul's Faculties', both in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by Pasnau and van Dyke, respectively 1:293–304, and 1:305–19. Further see *Forming the Mind: Essays on the Internal Senses and the Mind/Body Problem from Avicenna to the Enlightenment*, ed. Henrik Lagerlund (Dordrecht, 2007); Magdalena Bieniak, *The Soul–Body Problem at Paris, ca. 1200–1250: Hugh of St-Cher and His Contemporaries* (Leuven, 2010), especially 15–34.

[14] See especially Stephanie A. V. G. Kamath, 'Rewriting Ancient *Auctores* in the *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine*' in *Mittelalterliche Literatur als Retextualisierung*, ed. Kablitz and Peters, 321–42, and discussion below. I warmly thank Stephanie Kamath and the editors of the volume for sharing this with me ahead of publication.

[15] A brief note on terminology and usage in what follows: I use 'dialectic' to refer in a general sense to a tradition of dialectic reasoning, often in the form of debate; this includes but is not limited to Aristotle's codification of dialectic, in the *Topics* for instance, as a systematic use of syllogistic reasoning. When designating dialectic in the more narrow sense as one of the branches of the *trivium*, especially as pursued in the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century schools, I use the term 'logic'. I reserve the term 'dialecticism' exclusively to designate Jean de Meun's idiosyncratic application of the principles of dialectic in the *Roman de la Rose*, as outlined more fully in the following section.

In the second, core section of my analysis I examine *PVH* more closely, arguing that Deguileville's attitude to dialectic is far more complex than we would expect from a Cistercian, monastic author. Writing in the Abbey of Chaalis, Deguileville could observe scholastic developments and controversies in nearby Paris from a safe distance, but could also benefit from access to a well-stocked monastic library that was not impermeable to more recent Aristotle commentaries as well as the usual monastic and patristic authors.[16] Rather than merely dismissing the efforts of Aristotelian scholastic logic out of hand, then, Deguileville sets out to redefine and reclaim dialectic for different, explicitly sapiential and salvific purposes. In the process the poet also realises, however, the risks and difficulties of such a project. His attempts to appropriate Aristotelian logic and scholastic terms and methods more broadly are often merely cosmetic, and he remains finally ambivalent, even anxious concerning the unstable place of dialectic in his allegory. In a third section I argue that Deguileville's ambivalent attitude towards dialectic is inseparable from his paradoxical attitude towards the *Rose*: both create analogous problems for the essentially Platonic or Augustinian grounding of his pilgrimage allegory, yet both exert a powerful, irresistible hold on Deguileville's poetic method. Finally I suggest that Jean de Meun's uncompromising dialecticism disrupts the teleology implicit in *PVH*'s pilgrimage allegory, forestalls narrative and epistemological closure, and thus gradually erodes both Deguileville's confidence in the truth-value of his allegory and in the larger Platonist epistemology that his poem instantiates. This becomes increasingly apparent in the later, longer, more defensive and conflicted version of *PVH*. Despite its far more explicit rejection of the *Rose*, *PVH2* is paradoxically animated by the dialecticism it also seeks to resist and suppress.

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[16] See especially Kamath, 'Rewriting Ancient *Auctores*', who notes the presence of a commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* by Humbert of Preuilly, himself a Cistercian. For the reconstructed contents of Chaalis Library see Anne Bondéelle–Souchier and Patricia Stirnemann, 'Vers une reconstitution de la bibliothèque ancienne de l'abbaye de Chaalis: inventaires et manuscrits retrouvés' in *Parva pro magnis munera - études de littérature tardo-antique et médiévale offertes à François Dolbeau par ses élèves*, ed. by Monique Goullet (Turnhout, 2009), 9–73. A commentary by Humbert on Aristotle's *De Anima*, now lost, was equally held at Chaalis, as pointed out by Monica Brinzei Calma, 'Le commentaire des Sentences d'Humbert de Preuilly', *Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale* 53 (2011), 81–148 (82, nn. 5 and 6), based on Carolus de Visch, *Bibliotheca Scriptorum S. Ordinis Cisterciensis* (Cologne, 1656), 165.

The Rose: *disputatio*, dialectic and dialecticism

The seminal *Roman de la Rose*,[17] *PVH*'s most important intertext, marks a crucial nexus in the interface between academic culture and vernacular literature in the period 1250–1350. In all likelihood Jean de Meun's familiarity with scholastic materials was direct, gained through some form of affiliation with the University of Paris, and the poem is steeped in clerical and academic culture more broadly.[18] Yet the place of vernacular, fictional works in relation to the institutional authority of scholasticism remains extremely difficult to assess, since literary texts often engage but also transform academic ideas and discourses through *translatio*, by transposing and refiguring them in a different, more deregulated vernacular context whose epistemological underpinnings are often implicit, unstable or unclear.[19] Over thirty years ago Badel cautioned readers against any easy and direct alignment of the *Rose* with an 'Averroistic' agenda,[20] and we are only beginning to explore the infinitely rich and intellectually provocative nature of the poem's engagement with scholastic ideas and academic culture.[21] Thus, even if the scholastic character of the

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[17] I use Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Félix Lecoy, 3 vols (Paris, 1965–70).

[18] See especially Ian Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University, ca. 1100–1330* (Cambridge, 2012), 356–74; and Gisela Hilder, *Der scholastische Wortschatz bei Jean de Meun: die artes liberales* (Tübingen, 1972). See further the work of Gérard Paré, *Le Roman de la Rose et la Scolastique Courtoise* (Paris, 1941); ibid., *Les Idées et les Lettres au XIIIème siècle: Le Roman de la Rose* (Montréal, 1947).

[19] Nicolette Zeeman, 'The Schools Give a License to Poets', in *Criticism and Dissent in the Middle Ages*, ed. Rita Copeland (Cambridge, 1996), 151–80; and Adrian Armstrong and Sarah Kay, *Knowing Poetry: Verse in Medieval France from the 'Rose' to the 'Rhétoriqueurs'* (Ithaca, 2011). More specifically on a post-1277 vernacular context, mostly on works in German but with wider implications, see the remarks in Nikolaus Largier, 'Das Glück des Menschen: Diskussionen über *beatitudo* und Vernunft in volkssprachlichen Texten des 14 Jahrhunderts', in *Nach der Verurteilung von 1277. Philosophie und Theologie an der Universität von Paris im letzten Viertel des 13. Jahrhunderts: Studien und Texte*, ed. Jan A. Aertsen, Keith Emery, and Andreas Speer (Berlin, 2001), 827–55 (833–4). On the role of the vernacular in transforming notions of authority in later English works, see Alastair Minnis's 'Introduction: Valuing the Vernacular', in his *Translations of Authority in Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge, 2009), 1–16. For an overview of the clerical literature produced in Paris during the thirteenth century and its relationship to the University world, see Alain Corbellari, *La Voix des Clercs: Littérature et Savoir Universitaire autour des Dits du XIIIe Siècle* (Geneva, 2005).

[20] Pierre-Yves Badel, *Le Roman de la Rose au XIVe siècle: Etude de la Réception de l'Oeuvre* (Genève, 1980), 32–8.

[21] Among recent examples see for instance Mary Franklin-Brown, *Reading the World: Encyclopedic Writing in the Scholastic Age* (Chicago and London, 2012), 183–214; Jonathan Morton, 'The *Roman de la Rose*: Nature,

second *Rose* has long been acknowledged, the exact nature and significance of Jean's attitude to scholasticism continues to elude us.

Jean's *Rose* cultivates a complex, at times subversive relationship to Latin learning more generally: it is peppered with fragments of Latin *auctoritates* (Aristotle, Alan of Lille, Boethius, Cicero, Ovid, etc.), all of which are, however, 'glossed [...] to within an inch of their lives'—decontextualised, distorted, subverted, and further played off against each other.[22] In this way multiple *auctoritates* are subjected to a process of destabilising and de-familiarising *translatio* into the vernacular,[23] which prompts deep and problematic reconsiderations of the notion of *auctoritas* as such. It is therefore not at the level of his sources, but rather in his poetic method that we may find Jean's most intense engagement with scholasticism, in his idiosyncratic adaptation of the principles of dialectic.[24]

Dialectic itself is of course a malleable and slippery concept in the hands of medieval intellectuals[25]—and its slipperiness was not lost on Jean de Meun. While Aristotle provided what was arguably the most influential discussion of the art with the *Topics*, it would be a simplification to label dialectic itself as a strictly 'Aristotelian' discipline. In its broad, primary sense *dialectica* was primarily understood as a codification of the Socratic method, and was thus understood to refer simply to an *arte de bene disputandi*.[26] And dialogic altercation is of course a central means of creating and negotiating meaning in the *Rose*, and similarly determines the complex, dialogic modalities of the *Rose*'s reception as a continued, multi-vocal and conflictual debate as in

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Sex and Language in Thirteenth-Century Poetry and Philosophy' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2013); Earl Jeffrey Richards, 'Introduction', in *Debating the Roman de la Rose: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Christine McWebb (New York, 2007), xxi–xxxvi (xxxi–xxxiii).

[22] Sylvia Huot, *Dreams of Lovers and Lies of Poets: Poetry, Knowledge and Desire in the Roman de la Rose* (London, 2010), 24, see also 3–7.

[23] See David F. Hult, 'Poetry and the Translation of Knowledge in Jean de Meun', in *Poetry, Knowledge and Community in Late Medieval France*, ed. Rebecca Dixon and Finn E. Sinclair (Cambridge, 2008), 19–41.

[24] A concise and influential analysis in this sense is provided by Daniel Poirion, 'De la signification selon Jean de Meun', in *L'Archéologie du Signe*, ed. Lucie Brind'Amour and Eugene Vance (Toronto, 1983), 165–85, especially 181–2. For the early impact of dialectic on French courtly literature see Tony Hunt, 'Aristotle, Dialectic and Courtly Literature', *Viator* 10 (1979), 95–129; and Sarah Kay, *Courtly Contradictions: The Emergence of the Literary Object in the Twelfth Century* (Stanford, 2001), especially 11–19.

[25] On terminology see also above, n.15.

[26] On this and the ulterior developments of dialectic in the medieval discipline of logic see especially the articles collected in Eleonore Stump, *Dialectic and its Place in the Development of Medieval Logic* (Ithaca, 1989).

the famous fifteenth-century *Querelle*,[27] or Deguileville's own *Pèlerinage de vie Humaine* in its two versions, frequently presented as an 'exposé sur le *Roman de la Rose*' in manuscripts.[28]

Yet more often than not debate in the *Rose* degenerates into a sequence of extended, learned yet apparently digressive monologues whose argumentative rigour is far from impeccable, and whose purpose is often unclear or merely contingent upon immediate context; in short, such speeches invariably fail to produce the kind of syllogistic conclusions envisaged by the medieval art of dialectic as defined by Aristotle. In composing such pseudo-*disputationes*, Jean is clearly indulging in his characteristic satirical vein,[29] but it remains extremely difficult to identify the ultimate object of his satire. Of course he satirises the exploitation of faulty syllogistic reasoning for deceptive ends, as in the case of Faus Semblant[30]—but what does this imply about his broader attitude to dialectic? Is he merely denouncing the misuse of dialectic for deceptive purposes, or is he warning his readers about dialectic itself because of its inherently deceptive potential? Is he satirising the discrepancy between the principles of dialectic and its practice in the form of scholastic *disputationes* by cunning logicians? Or is he satirising the rise of logic and its exalted claims to be the leading branch of the *trivium*, and the consequent elevation of dialectic from instrument or method to a discipline or science in its own right, possibly an end in itself? Or does he point out the confusion of the combative, impassionate dialectic *disputatio* with the more formalised and rigorous scholastic *disputatio*?[31] Or the confusion of the merely probable arguments produced by the dialectic syllogism, as described in the *Topics*, with the necessary arguments produced by the demonstrative syllogism outlined in the *Posterior Analytics*—a tension already hard-wired into Aristotle's own philosophy?[32] Or is Jean merely targeting the dialectical

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[27] See especially *Debating the Roman de la Rose*, ed. McWebb; Badel, *Le Roman de la Rose au XIVᵉ siècle*; *Le Débat sur le 'Roman de la Rose'*, ed. Eric Hicks (Paris, 1977).

[28] Maupeu, *Pèlerins de Vie Humaine*, 275–7.

[29] For which see mainly Alastair Minnis, *Magister Amoris: The 'Roman de la Rose' and Vernacular Hermeneutics* (Oxford, 2001), especially ch. 2.

[30] See especially Fabienne Pomel, 'L'art du faux-semblant chez Jean de Meun ou "la langue doublée en diverses plications"', *Bien dire et bien aprandre* 23 (2005), 295–313 (302–4).

[31] On the important distinction between dialectical *disputatio* and the scholastic *disputatio*, their separate origins and their relations, see Olga Weijers, 'De la joute dialectique à la dispute scolastique', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 143.2 (1999), 509–18.

[32] The difference between the demonstrative and dialectical mode was being reiterated by a number of mid-thirteenth century terminist logicians, for which see Eleonore Stump, 'Terminist Logicians on the *Topics*', in her *Dialectic and its Place*, 135–56. On the problematic epistemic status of notions of Aristotelian

posturing, or even imposture, by the rather undisciplined demotic voices of an unnatural Nature, an unreasonable Raison, or a deceptively self-revealing Faus Semblant?

I shall not attempt to answer such questions here, and I merely want to suggest that the *Rose*'s own evasiveness about the merits and dangers of dialectic, debate, and *disputatio*, plays a crucial role in shaping the later reception of the poem by readers such as Deguileville ot the authors involved in the *Querelle*. Ultimately it is extremely difficult to determine whether the *Rose* embraces the positive, exploratory possibilities of dialectic—and if so, under what terms exactly—or whether it satirises the apodictic claims of scholastic logic, or even parodies scholastic philosophy more broadly. It may indeed be doing all of these things, finally forcing its readers to rethink the very principles of dialectic reasoning and argumentation outside the box, through their own interpretive engagement with the lack of resolution in the *Rose* as a poem. Jean's choice of vernacular poetry in this sense is far from innocent:[33] writing an allegorical verse narrative allows him to explore the possibilities of dialectic in genuinely provocative ways that already refuse to conform to the formalised discursive paradigms of the academic *disputatio* and the scholastic episteme of Aristotelian logic. The *Rose* thus may be inviting its readers to reconsider the relationship between the *principles* of dialectic and its institutional *forms* taken in the thirteenth century: this finally interrogates scholasticism's prerogative to be the sole, institutionally sanctioned depositary of an ostensibly apodictic Aristotelian 'science' of dialectic reasoning.

In what follows I will refer to this relentless commitment to interrogate the epistemological authority of any discourse, including that of dialectic itself as a discipline, as Jean de Meun's 'dialecticism'. This dialecticism is clearly differentiated from Aristotelian dialectic in the narrow sense, which is given much the same treatment as all other discourses ventriloquised by the *Rose*—Boethian, Ovidian, Neoplatonic, etc.: none of these can finally carry any greater authority than the others. Still further, by frustrating any sense of precedence among these multiple, competing yet mutually contaminating discursive forms, the *Rose* also draws attention to its own composite, derivative and

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'science' in the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century, see Robert Pasnau, 'Science and Certainty', in *Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Pasnau and van Dyke, 1:357–68. Further, on tensions in Aristotle's own philosophy, see Robin Smith, 'Aristotle's Logic', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2012 Edition), ed. by Edward N. Zalta, URL = http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2012/entries/aristotle-logic/ , especially sections 5–8.

[33] On Jean's use of the vernacular see especially Hult, 'Poetry and the Translation of Knowledge'; and Minnis, *Magister Amoris*, 158–63.

materially contingent nature, its multiple, indirect, and elusive signifying processes. This highlights the *Rose*'s relentlessly shifting epistemology, or indeed its conspicuous *lack* of any solid, integrated epistemological grounding.[34] In Sarah Kay's words 'the *Rose* is not just dialectical but infinitely slippery',[35] and Jean finally frustrates *all* attempts to locate firm authority within *any* intra- or extra-diegetic discourse, literary or philosophical—*a fortiori* within the capacious and voracious allegorical meta-discourse of the *Rose* itself.

Disputatio to *predicatio*

Deguileville evokes the *Rose* as the source of inspiration for his own poem (*PVH* 7–13), and critics have referred to *PVH* as a 'contrepartie édifiante' of the *Rose*, with recent work emphasising a still deeper, more conflicted but also more productive relationship between the two poems.[36] Yet Deguileville's ambivalent attitude towards the *Rose*, I suggest, is not merely due to the erotic tenor of the earlier poem, but is also determined precisely by the *Rose*'s radical dialecticism and its epistemological slipperiness—or, to put it differently, by the *Rose*'s ability to interrogate and undermine any discourse it is brought in contact with. Pierre-Yves Badel and Sylvia Huot in particular have shown how later readers or *remanieurs* often sought to resolve the internal *aporia* of the poem by attempting

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[34] See also Nicolette Zeeman, 'Philosophy in Parts: Jean de Meun, Chaucer, Lydgate', in *Uncertain Knowledge: Scepticism, Relativism and Doubt in the Middle Ages*, ed. Dallas G. Denery II, Kantik Ghosh, and Nicolette Zeeman. Disputatio 14 (Turnhout, 2014), 213–34; I would like to thank the author and the editors for graciously sharing this piece ahead of publication. Further see also David F. Hult, 'Language and Dismemberment: Abelard, Origen, and the Romance of the Rose', in *Rethinking the Romance of the Rose: Text, Image and Reception*, ed. Kevin Brownlee and Sylvia Huot (Philadelphia, 1992), 101–130; Sarah Kay, 'Women's body of Knowledge: Epistemology and Misogyny in the *Roman de la Rose*', in *Framing Medieval Bodies*, ed. Miri Rubin and Sarah Kay (Manchester, 1994), 211–35.

[35] Kay, *Place of Thought*, 179.

[36] Badel, *Le Roman de la Rose au XIV siècle*, 362–76; Steven Wright, 'Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de vie humaine* as "Contrepartie édifiante" of the *Roman de la Rose*', *Philological quarterly* 68.4 (1989), 399–422; Sylvia Huot, *The Roman de la Rose and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge, 1993), 207–38; Fabienne Pomel, '*Le Roman de la Rose* comme voie de paradis: transposition, parodie et moralisation de Guillaume de Lorris à Jean Molinet', in *De la Rose: Texte, image, fortune*, ed. Catherine Bel and Herman Braet (Leuven, 2006), 355–75'; Philippe Maupeu, '*Bivium*: l'écrivain nattier et le *Roman de la Rose*', in *Les Pèlerinages Allégoriques*, ed. Duval and Pomel, 21–41; Kamath, *Authorship and First-Person Allegory*, 19–58.

to 'close down' the allegory, to resolve it in favour of a single, dominant discourse.[37] This is also the case of Deguileville, who tries to restore an authoritative moral *senefiance* in line with Raison's speech in the *Rose*, where she pressures the lover to abandon the pursuit of sensuality and embark on a quest for higher knowledge.[38]

Deguileville does this by appropriating a number of personified abstractions that are already found in the *Rose*—Nature, Raison, Huiseuse/Oiseuse—and by redefining their legitimate place, function, and authority within a much more tightly regulated allegorical cosmos. Although the speeches and clashes of such personifications are at times every bit as chaotic as in the *Rose*, the many debates in *PVH* primarily provide the opportunity for Grace Dieu or Sapience to remind such personification of their proper, legitimate place in a hierarchically structured allegorical universe. This strategy helps to establish the authority of Sapience's and Grace Dieu's dominant discourse, and allows Deguileville to expose, bit by bit, the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of his allegory for the benefit of the pilgrim-reader. Here Nature, Grace, Raison, Sapience—and Aristotle—all return to occupy their legitimate place in a hierarchically structured, functional system. In this sense the dialogic, or horizontal, is geared towards resolving itself into the monologic, or vertical. In the process, *PVH* seeks to reconstruct a functional epistemology from the scattered debris of the *Rose*.

This commitment to restoring a single, unified authoritative discourse is encapsulated in the poem's opening vignette: here Deguileville crafts his own authorial persona by presenting himself as a monk from the Cistercian abbey of Chaalis preaching to an audience of laypeople (*PVH1* 15–34). Clearly *predicatio* here provides both the structural framework and the master-discourse of *PVH*,[39] within which all subsequent misadventures, disputes and backslidings are rhetorically subsumed and contained. By presenting his narrator-persona as a source of authoritative instruction, Deguileville assimilates his own role with that of the authority figures of the poem, Grace Dieu and Sapience. He also signals that he himself, as *auctor*, has transcended the argumentative level altogether, and can now engage with his audience or readership at the higher level of an authoritative, monologic *predicatio*.

Deguileville's desire to exorcise the indeterminacies of debate and *disputatio*, and to subject argumentative dynamics to a higher, authoritative discourse, is exemplified by

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[37] Badel, *Le Roman de la Rose au XIVe siècle*; Huot, *Readers*.

[38] Huot, *Readers*, 211 and *passim*.

[39] On *predicatio* as master-discourse in *PVH* see especially Maupeu, *Pèlerins*, 98, 107–18.

an extended discussion of Eucharistic matters in *PVH1*—one of the core moments of the debate-section in the first half of the poem (*PVH1* 1431–3306). Lady Reason is baffled after witnessing the transubstantiation (*PVH1* 1488–90), retires to her tower to sulk (*PVH1* 1502), and determines to go and inform Lady Nature of such 'unnatural' practices as soon as possible: 'Et vraiement je le dirai / A Nature quant la verrai' (*PVH1* 1491–2) ['And I will certainly tell Nature, as soon as I see her']. When Nature arrives on the scene she defends her own sphere of influence against the trespasses of Grace: 'a vous je vien / Tencier pour deffendre le mien' (*PVH1* 1519–20) ['I come to you to argue and defend what is mine']. Nature thus seeks to relegate Grace to the heavenly sphere, claiming for herself the sovereign mastery of the sublunary world, and drawing a clear boundary ('bonne') between their respective jurisdictions:

> Entre moi et vous assise
> Fu bonne qui nous devise
> ...
> Celle roe si nous depart
> A chascune donne sa part
> De hors est la vostre partie
> ...
> Mais par dedens trestout est mien.
> Maistresse sui des elemens (*PVH1* 1541–59)

[Between you and me was erected a barrier that divides us [...] This wheel here separates us, gives each of us her part. Yours is on the outside [...] but within everything is mine. I am mistress of the elements]

Rather than resolving this dispute in favour of Grace Dieu, Deguileville tries to show that the argument itself is pointless since it is based on mistaken premises. The point here is not so much that Grace Dieu wins the argument, but that there is no argument to be had. So it emerges that Nature misunderstands the metaphor she herself adopts to stake her claim: she understands the heavenly spheres as separating horizontally two mutually exclusive areas or territories of competence, whereas in fact they define a vertical and hierarchical system of concentric circles. Here the authority of Nature is necessarily, always and already subsumed within, and dependent on, the

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workings of Grace. Accordingly Grace Dieu reminds her: '[le] bonnage / Qui est mis entre vous et moy / [...] il vous bonne, non pas moy' (*PVH1* 1720-22) ['the barrier that is between us prevents you from trespassing, but not me'].

The episode essentially ridicules Nature's and Reason's very desire to engage in argumentation at all, hinting at the sterility of academic debates on such issues. The allusion to academic *disputatio* is clear from the terms used to describe Nature's aggressive, antagonistic attitude. Throughout the passage variations of the term 'tencier' (*PVH1* 1515; 1520; 1649; 1702; 1780; 1818; 1832; 'to argue, to quarrel, to dispute') are used to characterise her attitude. Her combative disposition, the pilgrim observes, marks her out immediately as a scholastic disputant rather than a preacher and theologian: 'Preste me sembla de *tencier* / Mont plus assez que de *preschier*' (*PVH1* 1515–16, emphases mine) ['she seemed more inclined to quarrel and dispute than to preach'].[40] Deguileville here again subordinates the irresolutions of *disputatio* to the authoritative, monologic speech of *predicatio*, echoing the opening scene of the poem where the primacy and authority of clerical preaching was established.

The confrontational and territorial overtones of Nature's claim also resonate with late thirteenth-century debates over the respective spheres of competence of theology and philosophy. This notably crystallised in the condemnations at the University of Paris during the 1270s, and more broadly in the general hostility against the trespassing *philosophi theologizantes* by members of the Theology Faculty.[41] By deliberately casting Nature as an irascible and aggressive disputant, Deguileville assimilates her to the claims for emancipation—real or supposed—of a 'secular' philosophy by the Arts Faculty.[42] So Nature proudly identifies herself as a 'Maistresse' (*PVH1* 1559), possibly a parodic and feminised *magister in artibus* who must be reminded that she is Grace's chambermaid—much like philosophy needed to be reminded by Tempier, Bonaventure

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[40] Compare also Henri d'Andeli's characterisation of 'Logique' as a 'science ... qui toz jors tence', *Bataille des VII ars*, line 6, in les *Dits d'Henri d'Andeli*, ed. Alain Corbellari (Paris, 2003).

[41] See *La Condamnation Parisienne de 1277: Texte latin, traduction, introduction*, ed. David Piché with Claude Lafleur (Paris, 1999), especially 163, 168–76.

[42] Such claims for an independence of philosophical thought may have been more imagined than real, as suggested by recent work. Also the long-term consequences of the conflict are now considered to have been less fractious and traumatic than formerly believed. See *Nach der Verurteilung*, ed. Aertsen, Emery and Speer, particularly Andreas Speer, '*Sapientia nostra*: zum Verhältnis von philosophischer und theologischer Weisheit in den Pariser Debatten am Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts', 249–75.

and others involved in the condemnations, that she was *ancilla theologiae*.[43] 'Moi maistresse et vous chambriere' (*PVH1* 1706) ['I am mistress and you chambermaid'] according to Grace Dieu, who reduces Nature to her 'oustil ou instrument' (1796; 'tool or instrument').

By implicating her in a debate she can never win, Deguileville thus highlights the helplessness of an emancipated 'terrestrial' philosophy, and her need to be subordinated to the higher aims and methods of a 'celestial' theology. This tension between grace and reason, Theology and Philosophy in *PVH*, was clearly appreciated by readers, and was used as a larger framework to explain the intertextual relationship between *PVH* and *Rose*, as suggested by Arras, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 845. The manuscript contains both *Rose* and *PVH*, and describes the latter as 'fais par poeterie, comme li Livres de le Roze, qui est en grant partie de philozofie, mes cilz pelerinages est de theologie' (fol. 103r) ['made of poetry, like the book of the rose, which is in large part of philosophy, but this pilgrimage is of theology'].[44] Sapience's condescending dismissal of Nature, then, acts for Deguileville as a miniature version of his larger refutation of profane philosophy.

By thus 'resolving' a horizontal debate into a vertical, hierarchical relationship, Deguileville is also casting serious doubt on the dialectic method, or at least on its manifestation in the form of a *disputatio* involving a 'Maistresse Nature' effectively blinded by her anger, as Grace Dieu points out:

> Quar gens ires a deporter
> Sont, pour ce que voir discerner
> Ne peuent pas bien clerement
> Pour leur trouble entendement (*PVH1* 1679–82)

> [And angry folk are to be avoided, since they cannot discern the truth clearly because of their troubled understanding]

But it would be a mistake to read Deguileville's humorous and condescending treatment of 'Maistresse Nature' as an outright dismissal of the dialectic method. Nature's passionate, angry investment in the debate instead becomes for Deguileville an extreme example of *disputatio* spinning out of control, and provides him with the opportunity to

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[43] Piché, *La Condamnation*, 183–225.

[44] See Kamath, *Authorship*, 31 n.27, and discussion of this manuscript in Huot, *Readers*, 231–8.

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redefine the real nature and purpose of dialectic. The target of Grace's criticism is not dialectic itself, but Nature's aggressive, self-promoting investment in the *disputatio*, which of course precludes any fruitful, lucid, rational and truly dialectic inquiry. Such an attitude fits remarkably well with Augustine's observations in the *Soliloquies*, where he identifies the emotionally charged, confrontational atmosphere of public debate as fundamentally antithetical to genuine dialectical reasoning—views that in Deguileville's eyes may have applied only too well to certain arcane and self-promoting exercises of *disputatio* in the late medieval schools:

> 'Cum enim neque melius quaeri veritas possit quam interrogando et respondendo et vix quisquam inveniatur, quem non pudeat convinci disputantem, eoque paene semper eveniat, ut rem bene inductam ad discutiendum inconditus pervicaciae clamor explodat, etiam cum laceratione animarum plerumque dissimulata, interdum et aperta, pacatissime, ut opinor, et comodissime placuit a meipso interrogatum mihique respondentem deo adiuvante verum quaerere' (*Soliloquiorum libri duo,* 2. 7. 14)

> [There is no better way of seeking the truth than the question and answer method. It is, however, hard to find anyone who would not be ashamed to be beaten in an argument. The almost inevitable result is that a babble of dissent caused by wilful obstinacy will destroy a topic which up to this has been carefully canvassed in the discussion. People are cut to the quick, and even if they generally conceal their feelings, on occasion, too, they show them openly] [45]

Augustine's observations are telling, since they point to an alternative definition of dialectic: interior, silent, contemplative, and especially solitary—this is after all a soliloquy. Echoes of such ideas can be heard elsewhere in Augustine's works, even in the *De Doctrina*, with its warning about the unspeakability of the divine realities, and the associated devaluation of the arts of debate: 'Quae pugna uerborum silentio cauenda potius quam uoce pacanda est' (*De Doctrina* 1. 6. 6) ['It is better to evade this verbal

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[45] *Soliloquiorum libri duo ; De inmortalitate animae ; De quantitate animae* ed. by Wolfgang Hörmann, Sancti Aureli Augustini opera 14 (Vienna, 1986); English translation in Saint Augustine, *Soliloquies and Immortality of the soul*, ed. with an introduction, translation and commentary by Gerard Watson (Warminster, 1990).

conflict silently than to quell it disputatiously'].[46] This hesitancy to debate spiritual realities by means of ordinary language is endemic in Augustine's writings on language and semiotics, characterised by the fundamental split in between linguistic *signa* and supra-linguistic, spiritual *res*.[47] The *De Magistro* in particular stresses how inner truths ultimately elude the grasp of language altogether, and how language can at best point to knowledge already gained elsewhere and otherwise:

> cum verba proferuntur, aut scire nos quid significent, aut nescire: si scimus, commemorari potius quam discere; si autem nescimus, ne commemorari quidem, sed fortasse ad quaerendum admoneri (*De Magistro* 11.36).

> ['when words are spoken we either know what they signify, or we don't: if we know, it's reminding rather than learning; if we don't know, it isn't even reminding, though perhaps we recollect that we should enquire'].[48]

Knowledge itself is thus not produced by outwardly spoken words, but either by experience in the case of ordinary realities, or inner revelation in case of higher truths. The latter, crucially, are communicated by a different form of language altogether, the living *logos* of Christ dwelling in the inner man:

> De universis autem quae intellegimus non loquentem qui personat foris, sed intus ipsi menti praesidentem consulimus veritatem, verbis fortasse ut consulamus admoniti. Ille autem qui consulitur, docet, qui in interiore homine habitare dictus

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[46] See Sancti Aurelii Augustini, *De doctrina christiana*, ed. Joseph Martin, CCSL 32 (Turnhout, 1962); English translation from Saint Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, ed. R.P.H. Green (Oxford, 1997).

[47] See especially B. Darrell Jackson, 'The Theory of Signs in St. Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 15 (1969), 9–49; Roland J. Teske 'Criteria for Figurative Interpretation in St. Augustine', and David Dawson, 'Sign Theory, Allegorical Reading, and the Motions of the Soul in *De doctrina christiana*', both in '*De Doctrina Christiana': A Classic of Western Culture*, ed. Duane W. H. Arnold and Pamela Bright (Notre Dame and London, 1995), respectively 109–22 and 123–41. On the role of silence within such a semiotics, see Stock, *Augustine the Reader*, 7–9.

[48] See Augustinus, *Contra academicos; De beata vita; De ordine; De magistro; De libero arbitrio*, ed. W.M. Green and K.D. Daur, CCSL 29 (Turnhout, 1970). Translation from Augustine, *Against Academicians; The Teacher*, ed. and trans. Peter King (Indianapolis, 1995).

est Christus, *id est incommutabilis Dei Virtus atque sempiterna Sapientia* (*De Magistro* 11.38).

[Regarding each of the things we understand, however, we don't consult a speaker who makes sounds outside us, but the truth that presides within over the mind itself, though perhaps words prompt us to consult Him. What is more, He who is consulted, He who is said to dwell in the inner man, does teach: Christ— that is, the *unchangeable power and everlasting wisdom of God*.]

Later authors with a contemplative bias often built on Augustine's semiotics and the associated epistemology to articulate their own reservations about loquacious dialecticians. This included ferocious opponents like Peter Damian[49] and Walter of St Victor,[50] but also more moderate figures such as John of Salisbury, who in his influential *Metalogicon* argues for a cautious use of dialectic that betrays his own ambivalence.[51]

Deguileville would doubtless have been familiar with such reservations about the role of dialectic by contemplative and monastic authors. Yet since his poem is an account of a dynamic, experiential learning process in the world, written for a lay audience, the bulk of his efforts is dedicated to explaining far more ordinary forms of knowledge acquired through reasoning, debate and empirical observation. With the appearance of the figure of Aristotle in the poem, Deguileville's anxiety about the arts of debate becomes more focused. He now seeks to differentiate the excessive argumentative probing of strictly Aristotelian logic from a rather different form of dialectic, more compatible with the poem's Augustinian, sapiential aims. Initially Aristotle is introduced as a representative of natural science, Nature's own clerk (*PVH1* 2918), and is like Nature unable to explain the miracle of the transubstantiation.[52] Aristotle here is not so much dismissed as literally put in his place, like Nature before him. Yet the actual terms of the debate are particularly revealing, since they immediately evoke the practice of scholastic *disputatio*. Initially it is Aristotle himself who begins by accusing Sapience of

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[49] André Cantin, *Les sciences séculières et la foi: Les deux voies de la science au jugement de Saint Pierre Damien, 1007– 1072* (Spoleto, 1972).

[50] Pierre Glorieux, 'Le *Contra quatuor labyrinthos Franciae* de Gauthier de Saint-Victor', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 27 (1952), 187–335.

[51] Brown, *Contrary Things*, 36–52.

[52] On Aristotle in *PVH* see especially Kamath, 'Rewriting Ancient *Auctores*', whose observations I develop here.

fallacious reasoning, and points out that he, unlike Sapience, does not use 'argumens' (*PVH1* 2936) like a 'sophiste' (*PVH1* 2942). Sapience first pointedly rejects all accusations of 'sophisterie, / De fraude et de deception / Par faute de discretion' (*PVH1* 3076–8) ['Sophistical reasoning, fraud and deception for lack of discretion/discernment'], and then turns the argument around by claiming ownership of the art of dialectic.

Indeed dialectic is not so much dismissed as redefined, transformed to serve the higher aims of theology. Sapience claims the school of dialectic as *her* school, where *she* teaches

> A arguer et desputer
> Et a jugier et discerner
> Entre le bon et le mauves (*PVH1* 3013–15)

[to argue and dispute, to judge and discern between the good and the bad.]

It is in this second school that Sapience's daughter 'Science' was trained and offered in marriage to Aristotle, yet Sapience also stresses that she withheld some of her secrets from Aristotle (*PVH1* 3067–71). This is a cheap but effective trick, since it manipulates the situation to make Aristotle himself appear as a flawed practitioner of the 'Aristotelian' dialectic method. Aristotelian dialectic itself is no longer under the aegis of Aristotle, but under the rule of Sapience, which makes the art of dialectic literally 'sapiential'.

While Deguileville initially exposes the inability of Aristotelian dialectic to illuminate weighty theological matters, then, his principal figures of authority finally appropriate the terms and techniques of dialectic argumentation to lend credibility to their own authority and to further their sapiential agenda. Such a strategy leaves us with a rather peculiar brand of dialectic, which authorises Sapience to state that the real presence in the Eucharist must be 'crëu fermement / Sans faire en adevinement (*PVH1* 3117–8) ['firmly believed, rather than speculated about']. Grace Dieu's invocation of Aristotle as an authority to support her own claims of precedence against Nature during the earlier debate is similarly dubious and rhetorically manipulative given these later developments:

> Aristote qui fu paiens,

> Qui verite par argumens
>
> Bien connut, fas mon advocat
>
> Encontre vous dans ce debat.
>
> Il dit et preuve par raison
>
> Que faite est generation
>
> Par mon soleil dont j'ai parle (*PVH1* 1757–63)

> [Aristotle who was a pagan, who knew the truth through argument, is my advocate against you in this debate. He says and proves through reason that generation is achieved through my sun of which I have spoken]

Grace here seeks to counter the threat that Arisototelian dialectic might pose to sapiential theology by co-opting it for her own ends⸺but we are never told by what 'argumens' Aristotle supposedly demonstrated the authority of Grace's position on the matter. Grace merely evokes the familiar Aristotelian idea of generation through the sun (cf. e.g. Aristotle, *Physics* 2. 2, 194b13), an image that is immediately twisted, however, to serve as a further element in Grace's distinctly symbolic evocation of cosmic hierarchies. Grace's 'conclusion' derived from Aristotle's 'argumens', is highly dubious by the standards of dialecetic, however defined, and smacks of playground tactics rather than the schoolroom:

> Et pour ce, se l'avoie oste,
>
> Vostre pouoir vous perdrïez
>
> Et rien faire ne pourrïes (*PVH1* 1764–6)

> [And therefore, if I removed it (i.e. the sun), you would loose your power and could do nothing about it.]

Grace's appropriation of Aristotle's authority is almost exclusively rhetorical, and employed to buttress a claims for precedence that in reality rest on authority rather than argumentation.

Aristotle's request for clarifications concerning the real presence in the poem leads to similar rhetorical manipulations. Aristotle is initially perplexed by the affirmation of the real presence of the body of Christ in the sacrament:

> Entendez vous que locaument
>
> vertuaument ou autrement
>
> Soient mises celles choses
>
> Es lieus qu'avez dit et encloses [?] (*PVH1* 3221–4)

> [How exactly are these things enclosed in the place you have named? Do you mean this *localiter*, *virtualiter* or otherwise?][53]

But Sapience's decision to respond to Aristotle by using these same terms, with their ostensibly scholastic and technical overtones, is essentially designed to convey the impression that she is truly engaging Aristotle on what are, supposedly, his own terms. In reality they conceal what is ultimately an evasive reply, losing itself in inconclusive digressions. Finally Sapience can do little more than restate a theological truth that cannot but appear dogmatic:

> ... dedens ce pain
>
> Est vraiement mis le bien souvrain,
>
> Non pas voir imaginaument,
>
> Non representativement,
>
> Non vertuablement sans plus,
>
> Ainsi i est mis et contenus
>
> Corporelment et reaument,
>
> Presentement et vraiement, (*PVH1* 3243–50)

> [In this bread is truly placed the sovereign good, neither *ymaginativae*, nor *representativae*, nor *virtualiter*, but *corporaliter* and *realiter*, *presencialiter* and also *veraciter*].

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[53] Here and in the quotation that follows my use of Latin terms to translate the French follows Lydgate, in order to stress the learned, academic resonance of such terms. As Kamath observes, Lydgate's translation 'increases the resemblance of the debate to medieval scholastic exchanges'; see Kamath, 'Rewriting Ancient *Auctores*'. Lydgate translates *PVH2*, but the passage is largely identical in *PVH1*. For the corresponding lines see *PVH2* 3377–408, and *The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man* 6013–60.

This, while it is presented as an answer formulated in technical terms, is actually pseudo-scholastic babble, and amounts to evading the issue altogether. Aristotle accordingly leaves the scene—and exits the poem—more exasperated than persuaded, observing that debate under such terms is impossible:

> j'apercoif bien
> qu'a vous je ne gaignerai rien.
> Miex vaut assez moi en aler
> Que contre vous plus arguer. (*PVH1* 3295–8).

The episode is of course intended to present Sapience as a genuinely proficient practitioner and indeed founder of the art of dialectic—but for an attentive reader the effect is almost invariably the reverse. Paradoxically Sapience first dismisses the art of dialectic argumentation and debate—yet then cannot resist appropriating them to further her own claims based on faith and authority. If anything the scene exposes Sapience's failure to engage Aristotle on his own terms, and her fraudulent attempt to dress up her doctrinaire arguments in the rhetorical garb of a dialectical argument and a scholastic *disputatio*. Rather than supporting or buttressing the poem's certitudes by supporting it with a genuinely dialectical demonstration, Sapience's sleight of hand ultimately feeds doubt and uncertainty.

Despite the rather dubious nature of Sapience's claims, it is worth insisting on Deguileville's *desire* to reclaim Aristotelian dialectic: the quarrel here is not so much over Augustine vs. Aristotle—as the older, binary model of a conflict among 'Aristotelians' and 'Augustinitns' would have it[54]—but it is a quarrel over the 'right use' of Aristotle within an allegory whose fundamental epistemological assumptions are, *a priori*, deeply

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[54] Among the most influential formulations, see Martin Grabmann, *Der göttliche Grund menschlicher Wahrheitserkenntnis nach Augustinus und Thomas von Aquin* (Münster, 1924); and Etienne Gilson, 'Pourquoi Saint Thomas a critiqué Saint Augustin', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen Âge* 1 (1926–27), 5–127; and ibid., 'Les sources gréco-arabes de l'augustinisme avicennisant', in *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen Âge* 4 (1929–1930), 5–149. For a recent constructive critique of the simplistic binary model that opposed 'Augustinians' to 'Aristotelians' see especially Marrone, *The Light of Thy Countenance*, 1:1–25. This questions also touches on the still larger problem of the clashes and overlaps between the disciplines of philosophy and theology, and their actual existence as separate disciplines or domains of intellectual inquiry, for which see M. W. F. Stone and Robert Wisnovsky, 'Philosophy and Theology', in *Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Pasnau and van Dyke, 2:689–706.

Platonist and Augustinian. *PVH*'s appropriation of Aristotle and Aristotelianism is all the more arresting for being essentially rhetorical, defensive and rather superficial. Debates between personifications are essentially designed to validate positions of authority already entrenched, and not to conduct a genuinely dialectic and heuristic inquiry into the issues raised: the objections of Nature, Raison and Aristotle are not so much resolved or effectively countered, but eventually brushed aside by the forceful interventions of Grace Dieu and Sapience.[55] Aristotle leaves the scene exasperated rather than enlightened by Sapience's arguments (*PVH1* 3293–306), just like Rude Entendement—personification of stubborn literalism—is not persuaded or converted through argument, but curtly and awkwardly dismissed (*PVH1* 5621–32).[56]

While this may have been enough for many readers—bowing to the authority of Grace Dieu, Sapience and the monk from Chaalis himself—it appears not to have been quite enough for the author himself. Despite the rather self-confident and dismissive attitude of Sapience and Grace Dieu in the poem, Deguileville remains finally unconvinced by his own attempt to appropriate dialectic for sapiential ends. Part of the problem may lie in the inherently doctrinaire, often unsophisticated, evasive or vague nature of many arguments mustered by Grace Dieu and Sapience, dressed up in a thin garb of scholastic terminology. Deguileville is caught in a paradox, simultaneously rejecting the possibility of proving theological truths by argument, yet trying to appropriate dialectic methods to do exactly that, and thus buttress the supremacy of his authority figures. Yet such inconclusive, finally abortive debates have the undesirable side-effect of making a number of the poem's certitudes appear 'debatable'—subjecting them to demonstrations, objections and counterarguments, increasingly sprawling and defensive as the poem advances. Deguileville thus finds himself forced to resolve, or rather escape and short-circuit a number of problematic, insoluble questions he has opened up for himself within his own poem.

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[55] Parts of my argument have been inspired by Nicolette Zeeman's considerations on Deguileville in a paper on 'Debate and its Contradictions', given at the Medieval English Seminar in Oxford on 22 May 2013. I would like to thank Dr. Zeeman warmly for generously sharing her typescript and for stimulating subsequent conversation.

[56] See Fabienne Pomel, 'L'épisode de Rude Entendement: Mots et choses, bons et mauvais lecteurs, du *Roman de la Rose* au *Pèlerinage de Vie Humaine* et d'une version à l'autre', in *Mittelalterliche Literatur als Retextualisierung*, ed. Kablitz and Peters, 265–86. I would like to thank the author and the editors for kindly sharing this essay ahead of publication.

Debating with the *Rose*

Deguileville remains deeply uncomfortable with the questions and possibilities opened up by his engagement with dialectic reasoning and argumentation. His fears about the intractable nature of dialectic are exacerbated by his sustained, deep interest in the 'biau roumans de la Rose' (*PVH1* 11)—a poem that already takes the heuristic principles of dialectic to their extreme consequences and conclusions.

This connection appears most clearly during a later episode in the pilgrim's quest. Once the pilgrim finally sets out on his journey, he arrives at a parting of the ways (*PVH1* 6503–20 ff.): on the one side Labour, and on the other side Huiseuse, a figure already familiar from the *Rose*, where she had invited the lover into the garden of 'deduit', or delight. Yet Deguileville's Huiseuse has added to her many other fruitless pursuits also an interest in logic—on Sundays and Church holidays only:

> Festes songë et dimenches
> Pour lire unes foiz elenches,
> Pour menconges enmanteler
> Et faire les voir ressembler,
> Pour raconter trufes et fables,
> Roumans et choses mencongables. (*PVH1* 6851–6)

> [I dream up (or 'long for') feast days and Sundays, to read elenchus, so as to wrap up lies and make them look like the truth, to tell trifles and fables, romances and mendacious things][57]

This striking passage combines reference to 'fables, trufes et romans' and to the 'elenches'—Aristotle's *Sophistici elenchi*, and by extension to the *logica nova*. Given the context and the identity of Huiseuse as a character from the *Rose*, the evocation of 'romauns' can be taken to allude specifically to the *Roman de la Rose* itself as well as courtly romances more broadly.[58] Indeed the *Roman de la Rose* is literally Huiseuse's book,

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[57] The passage is syntactically unclear and difficult to translate and interpret; I would like to thank Graham Robert Edwards for clarifying its meaning in discussions.

[58] Maupeu and Edwards similarly read the passage as a direct allusion to the *Rose*, see the forthcoming edition of *PVH2*, note to l. 7898.

a book of fruitless, aristocratic leisure, and this dismissive remark on Deguileville's part points forward to his much more hostile attitude towards the *Rose* in *PVH2*, where the wholly unsavoury Lady Venus claims ownership of the poem.[59]

But what is Huiseuse doing with Aristotle's *Sophistici elenchi*? Like Nature she clearly enjoys sterile argumentative quibbling instead of the *predicatio* she should be listening to in church, but that is not all. Deguileville here provides a pointedly negative characterisation of the 'elenches' as a text that enables Huiseuse to 'menconges enmanteler', to pack up lies under the veil of truth. Such accusations are remarkably similar to those voiced by Deschamps in his translation of Vitalis of Blois' *Geta*, which points to the wider currency of this idea:

> Car logique sert de cette oeuvre
> et fait par argumens sembler
> ce qui n'est pas et ressembler
> une chose a l'autre opposite
>
> [For logic performs this work, and by its arguments makes the inexistent appear, and makes one thing seem like its opposite][60]

Deguileville's similar point here may have less to do with the actual nature of the *Sophistici elenchi* than with their use: the *elenchi* were in theory designed to enable the recognition of fallacious reasoning in a dialectical argumentation, and were thus in principle conducive to greater 'discernment'—yet clearly such a skill could also be employed for the obverse purpose of dissimulating the truth, in the manner of Faus Semblant in the *Rose*.[61] Again, dialectic was felt to be a two-edged sword.

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[59] See especially Huot, *Readers*, 225–30, and references given in my concluding observations below.

[60] Eustache Deschamps, *Un Traictié de Geta et d'Amphitrion*, lines 338–41, in *Oeuvres Complètes*, ed. Gaston Raynaud, 9 vols (Paris: Champion, 1893), 8:222. Discussed also in Brown, *Contrary Things*, 61–2.

[61] Scott G. Schreiber, *Aristotle on False Reasoning: Language and the World in the Sophistical Refutations* (New York, 2003), 1–7. This appears to be also Jean de Meun's point in a complex and frequently misunderstood passage spoken by Faus Semblant (*RR* 11026–34): he asserts that not even someone armed with the sharp razor of 'elanches' may see through his acts of dissimulation. The passage may have provided the immediate inspiration for Deguileville in this passage and for *PVH1* 679–81, discussed below, but contrary to what is sometimes claimed, the passage in the *Rose* does not offer a negative characterisation of the *elenchi* as such, although the work is invoked by the sinister character of Faus Semblant.

Deguileville may well have been aware of the contested, problematic status of the *elenchi* in the Aristotelian corpus,[62] but he may also be subsuming the *elenchi* within a wider, mostly unrelated category of medieval *sophismata* literature produced within Arts Faculties.[63] These consisted of logical puzzles, often insoluble, employed as exercises in *disputatio*, a pursuit that to colleagues from the Theology Faculty appeared as largely fruitless and futile.[64] But also Deguileville's implicit association of the term 'sophistical' with purely rhetorical, ornamental verbal performance of 'fables' and 'romans' was not new, and is already found in Augustine's *De doctrina*, certainly an important touchstone text for the *PVH* as a whole: 'Quamquam etiam sermo non captiosus, sed tamen abundantius quam grauitatem decet, uerborum ornamenta consectans, sophisticus dicitur' (*DDC* 2.31.48) ['But the word "sophistical" is also applied to a style which is not captious, but goes in for verbal ornament on a scale that does not suit a serious writer'].[65] Other pejorative connotations of the terms 'sophisma' or 'sophisticus' are not foreign to the *Rose*,[66] and may simply have rubbed off on Deguileville's perception of what the *sophistici elenchi* actually were and the purpose they could be made to serve. This appears to have exacerbated an already ambivalent attitude towards the *elenchi* in late-medieval discussions of the virtues and dangers of dialectic.

What really matters for my present argument is that the *Rose* and the *elenchi* are characterised in analogous fashion as providing perverted *integumenta*, used not for veiling/revealing higher realities as in twelfth-century Neoplatonic allegory, but as empty shells, unsubstantial *involucra* used for dissimulating falsehood under the semblance of truth. This idea of the *elenchi* as a means of dissimulation occurs elsewhere in *PVH*, in a

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[62] See particularly Sten Ebbesen, *Commentators and Commentaries on Aristotle's Sophistici Elenchi*, 3 vols (Leiden, 1981), who comments on the persistently ambivalent attitude towards the *elenchi* throughout its reception history, since it did often 'appear morally suspect to study the art of deception', 1:88, and *passim*. See also Brown, *Contrary Things*, 46, who comments on John of Salisbury's condemnation of Alberic of Rheims in the *Metalogicon* (2.10) for his excessively radical and potentially agnostic dialecticism, determined precisely by the latter's immersion in the *elenchi*.

[63] A similar suggestion is also made by Maupeu and Edwards in their forthcoming edition of *PVH2*, see notes to line 7694.

[64] Paul Vincent Spade, 'Sophismata', in *Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Pasnau and van Dyke, 1:185–95, who notes the disapproval of theologians, and their invariably pejorative use of the term 'sophisma', 189–90.

[65] Ed. Martin; English translation by Green, *On Christian Teaching*.

[66] Susanne Stekel, *False Roses: Structures of Duality and Deceit in Jean de Meun's 'Roman de la rose'* (Saratoga, CA, 1991), 86–7; Hilder, *Der Scholastische Wortschatz*, 148–55.

complex passage where Raison lectures Moses, a bishop figure, exhorting him to be merciful despite his appearance of severity:

> Dedens soies misericors,
> Quel que tu soies par dehors!
> Fallace d'elenche puez faire
> cy endroit sans toy meffaire (*PVH1* 679–82)

> [Be merciful on the inside, whatever your outward appearance! In this case you may practice the fallacy of *elenchus* without doing amiss.]

The passage thus exhorts a balancing act between Old Testament Justice and New Testament Mercy in terms of a *coincidentia oppositorum* of outward appearance, or the 'letter', and inner substance, or the 'spirit'. While in this specific case the 'fallace d'elenche' is tolerated and even encouraged, it is clearly presented as an act of dissimulation where outward appearance is antithetical to the inner substance,[67] and points forward to Huiseuse's use of 'elenches' to wrap up mendacious fictions in analogous ways to the *Rose*.

Deguileville's notion of the *Rose* as a deceptive *integumentum* is certainly a defensible characterisation of the poem, with its repeatedly frustrated promises to unveil a 'diffinitive sentance' (*RR* 19474), an ultimate truth that is endlessly deferred and concealed under the *Rose*'s luxuriant foliage[68]—even if Deguileville's understanding of the *Rose* in such purely duplicitous terms is, like any reading of the elusive *Rose*, necessarily subjective, partial and reductive. For Deguileville the problem with both the *Rose* and Aristotelian dialectic is their slipperiness, their avoidance of closure and their status as heuristic instruments of exploration that do not *affirm* or even *imply* any clearly identifiable epistemology.[69] They are not closed discourses but open methods, tools that may be employed for genuinely exploratory purposes—and this makes them extremely

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[67] The passage may indeed rely on a misreading of *RR* 11026–34—see n.61 above. It is discussed in some detail, together with its interesting expansions in Lydgate's fifteenth-century English verse translation, by Kamath, 'Rewriting Ancient *Auctores*'.

[68] See for instance Stekel, *False Roses*; and Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, '*Overt* and *Covert*: Amorous and Interpretive Strategies in the *Roman de la Rose*', *Romania* 111 (1990), 432–53.

[69] On the perceived risks and dangers of dialectic in this sense see Brown, *Contrary Things*, 36–62. On the *Rose*'s 'scepticism', in its technical sense, see Zeeman, 'Philosophy in Parts'.

difficult to regulate in an allegorical narrative that pursues specifically sapiential objectives and is committed to an Augustinian ideal of knowledge through divine illumination. Finally it is not so much the *Rose*'s erotic theme as its uncompromisingly dialectical method that is intractable for Deguileville, since it leads to a sceptical deferral of epistemological certitudes and deflates the possibility of establishing a firm authoritative discourse within the narrative.

But in trying to hold the *Rose* at arm's length, Deguileville paradoxically also flags up the inextricable implication of his own poetics with those of Jean de Meun. I observed that he characterises Huiseuse's reading practices⸺and implicitly the *Rose* itself⸺as being made up of 'fables, trufes' and 'choses mencongables'. Yet in characterising the *Rose* in such terms, Deguileville reveals that he has already interiorised the *Rose*'s own warnings about the dangers of mendacious fiction. The terms are recurrent throughout the *Rose*, and the cluster employed here by Deguileville appears to be lifted *en bloc* from a passage where Nature condemns the self-deluding operation of dream visions and allegorical fictions:

> et ce n'est for *trufle* et *mançonge*,
> ainsinc con de l'ome qui *songe*,
> qui voit, ce cuide, en leur presances
> les esperituex sustances,
> si con fist Scipion jadis; (*RR* 18333–7; my emphases)

> [and this is nothing but lies and deceptions, just like those of the man who dreams and sees⸺or so he thinks⸺spiritual substances in actual presence, like Scipio did in his day]

In Jean's poem of course the passage is intended to trigger the reader's scepticism towards the truth-content of the *Rose* itself, specifically Guillaume de Lorris's earlier 'authorising' invocation of Macrobius (*RR* 7)⸺itself possibly ironic.[70] It is precisely in such passages that the *Rose* takes dialecticism to extremes, interrogating its own epistemological status as an allegorical dream-narrative in the midst of a discussion of the distorting and deforming properties of mirrors. But the passage also has the effect of undermining the truth-claims of *all*, earlier and subsequent allegorical dream

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[70] See also Huot, *Dreams of Lovers*, 20.

narratives[71]—including of course *PVH*. Indeed within the same section of Nature's speech, Jean de Meun already dismantles, proleptically and uncannily, exactly the kind of narrative we find in *PVH*:

> maint an sunt si deceü
>
> que de leur liz s'en sunt meü,
>
> et se chaucent neïs et vestent
>
> et de tout leur hernois s'aprestent
>
> [...]
>
> prannent bourdons, prannent escharpes,
>
> [...]
>
> et vont cheminant longues voies,
>
> et ne sevent ou toutevoies (*RR* 18275–84)

> [many are so deceived by this (i.e. visions), that they have risen from their beds, put their shoes on, get dressed, and put on their whole armour; they pick up their scrip and staff and wander far and wide, without however knowing where they are going']

Nature, furthermore, specifically identifies contemplative excess as one of the reasons behind such self-deluding visions:

> Ou qui, par grant devocion,
>
> en trop grant contemplacion,
>
> font apparair en leur pansees
>
> les choses qu'il ont porpansees,
>
> et les cuident tout proprement
>
> voair defors apertement (*RR* 18327–32)

> [Or those who, through great devotion and excessive contemplation, generate in their thoughts the things they have pondered upon, and think that they can properly, openly see them on the outside]

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[71] Kay, 'Women's Body of Knowledge', 231.

Deguileville—who presents his dream of a pilgrimage as a distinctively contemplative vision experienced within a monastic setting (*PVH1* 31–44)—could hardly avoid recognising his own pilgrim-dreamer persona in such a portrait upon rereading the *Rose*.[72] He appears to have internalised such reflections on the epistemologically dubious value of visions and allegorical fictions only too well, finding himself forced to question the self-authorising strategy of his own vernacular allegorical poetics at the same time as he tries to cut himself off from the *Rose*.

Debate without end

Deguileville's reservations about the authority and truth-value of his own vision, much exacerbated in *PVH2*, already emerge in the defensive remarks at the end of the original version:

> Se ce songe n'ai bien songie,
> Je pri qu'a droit soit corrigie
> De ceuz qui songier miex saront
> Ou qui miex faire le pourront.
> Tant di aussi que, se menconge
> I a aucune, que a songe
> Soit repute, quar par songier
> Ne se fait pas tout voir noncier.
> Nulle erreur je ne vourroie
> Maintenir par nulle voie, (*PVH1* 13517–26)

> [If I have not dreamt this dream well, I pray that it may be amended and corrected by those who will be able to dream more successfully, or those who can improve upon it. I equally say: if there were to be any lies, let the blame be placed upon the dream, since dreaming can never declare (or 'announce') the whole truth. I would never wish to assert any error, in no manner whatsoever.]

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[72] This raises the (insoluble) question of Deguileville's degree and depth of knowledge of the *Rose* at different moments of his writing career. Sylvia Huot has suggested that initially he may have known the *Rose* only in an 'expurgated' and abridged B-manuscript, encountering a complete, uncensored version only after completing *PVH1*, see *Readers*, 211, 228 and *passim*.

Despite Deguileville's desire to resolve dialogism into monologism, then, his confidence in the authority of Grace Dieu's master-discourse finally appears to be fragile, always potentially eroded by the internalised, barely suppressed objections of Jean de Meun's Nature. Her sceptical remarks pre-empt the possibility of writing an internally self-validating spiritual dream-vision, facing Deguileville with the impossibility of ever concluding his sustained intertextual *disputatio* with the *Rose* with any authoritative refutation or demonstration. Even if he rejects the poetics of Huiseuse, exposes the limitations of Nature and ridicules the clumsiness of Aristotle, he seems finally unable to defuse the *Rose*'s formidable, all-pervasive ability to interrogate itself and all the discourses it comes into contact with—including that of Grace Dieu. Deguileville seems to have internalised the *Rose*'s dialecticism rather too deeply to be able to manipulate it effectively and keep it at bay.

This internalised dialecticism finally contaminates Deguileville's own poetic method, pushing him to simultaneously embrace and suppress a sceptical stance towards the workings of his own allegory. *PVH* is forced to adopt a defensive, reactive posture in relation to the *Rose*, and Deguileville unpacks argumentatively the Augustinian principles of *PVH*'s sapiential allegorical poetics—even if such principles are by definition logically indemonstrable, being postulated on an illuminationist epistemology rather than a structured use of dialectical reasoning. This defensive urge to demonstrate the indemonstrable takes the form of the clumsy, finally doctrinaire responses to the insistent, nagging objections of the many hostile personifications that inhibit the pilgrim's progress with their demands for explanation in *PVH*: Rude Entendement, Nature, the Pilgrim's own body. These are of course ventriloquised 'Others', represented in the poem only in order to be proven wrong, overcome, or dismissed—and yet their often powerful arguments finally originate within the poet's own imagination, fill the pages of *PVH*, make up the bulk of the poem itself, and finally reveal an internal fracture that can never be definitively healed or exorcised.[73] The poem's univocal master-discourse of *predicatio* is thus constantly threatened by an internal, fractious *disputatio*, embroiling Deguileville in insoluble counterarguments with himself, and forcing him to assert indemonstrable propositions dressed up as the pseudo-scholastic argumentations of Grace Dieu and Sapience. Trying to counter the threat of dialectic with its own tools,

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[73] See also Kay, *The Place of Thought*, 92–3.

Deguileville becomes a mouthpiece for his own self-doubt, and eventually writes himself into an argumentative deadlock.

Such tendencies are exacerbated in his later, revised and longer version of the poem, *PVH2* (1355–6). Deguileville here is increasingly doubtful of the ability of his own allegory to transmit any form of stable truth under the veil of fables and fictions.[74] This leads to a more hostile attitude towards the slipperiness of the *Rose* and a still more problematic denial of *PVH1*'s 'romanesque' affinities and digressive tendencies.[75] Here Deguileville labours desperately hard to guide and control the interpretation of his allegory more firmly, in the hope of restoring the possibility of an authoritative, univocal hermeneutics. Throughout *PVH2* he systematically seeks to suppress ambiguity, mobilising a host of internal glosses and intradiegetic documents, often in Latin, in order to lend greater learning and authority to his vision, suppress potential misinterpretation, and anticipate hypothetical counterarguments.[76] Yet such reiterated self-authorising efforts are counterproductive, and lend the allegory a more apologetic, defensive, and often verbose quality that threatens to spin out of control—and indeed Deguileville supplements *PVH2* with two further pilgrimage allegories, the *Pèlerinage de l'Âme* and the *Pèlerinage Jhesucrist*, and a cycle of Latin poems under the heading of the *Eveil du Pèlerin* ('The Awakening of the Pilgrim').[77] As Fabienne Pomel has shown, the desire for totalising closure and resolution that animates this renewed allegorising has become anxious and obsessive, and self-justification and auto-exegesis threaten to degenerate into 'narrative cancer'.[78]

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[74] See especially Philippe Maupeu, 'statut de l'image rhétorique et de l'image peinte dans le *Pèlerinage de Vie Humaine* de Guillaume de Deguileville', *Le Moyen Âge* 114 (2008), 509–30.

[75] Fabienne Pomel, 'L'allégorie: une voie de déni du romanesque ? Le cas de quelques réécritures du *Roman de la Rose*', in *Le Romanesque aux XIVe et XVe siècles*, ed. Daniel Bohler, *Eidôlon* 83 (2009), 41–54; and Pomel, 'L'épisode de Rude Entendement'.

[76] On Deguileville's use of Latin and Macaronic intradiegetic documents as a self-authorising strategy, see especially Fabienne Pomel, 'Les écrits pérégrins ou les voies de l'autorité chez Guillaume de Deguileville: Le modèle épistolaire et juridique', in *The Pèlerinage Allegories*, ed. Kamath and Nievergelt, 91–111.

[77] On the *Eveil du Pèlerin*, and on Deguileville's Latin poetry more broadly, see especially Graham Robert Edwards, 'Making Sense of Deguileville's Autobiographical Project: The Evidence of Paris, BnF MS Latin 14845', in *The Pèlerinage Allegories*, ed. Kamath and Nievergelt, 129–50; on the role of Latin see also Frédéric Duval, 'Deux prières latines de Guillaume de Digulleville: Prière à Saint Michel et prière à l'ange gardien', in *Pèlerinages Allégoriques*, ed. by Duval and Pomel, 185–211.

[78] See Fabienne Pomel, *Les Voies de l'au-delà et l'essor de l'allégorie au Moyen age* (Paris, 2001), 513–36.

Such efforts are finally self-defeating, exacerbating the digressive and argumentative qualities that Deguileville seeks to control. Aware of this dilemma, in the closing section of his revised poem he can do no more than relinquish his allegory's self-authorising and auto-exegetical claims, placing the burden of the quest for truth squarely on his readers, inviting them to sift the wheat from the chaff:

> [...] mon aventureux songe,
>
> Ouquel s'aucune mençonge
>
> Est meslee ou contenue
>
> Ou qui ait pou de value,
>
> Nul merveillier ne [s'en] devroit,
>
> Car onques forment on ne voit
>
> Croistre qui entour paille n'ait
>
> Jusqu'a tant que hors on l'en trait.
>
> Si que s'en mon songë a grain
>
> Et avec a paille et estrain,
>
> Ce qui est bon soit reserve
>
> Et qui bon n'est soit hors venne. (*PVH2* 17732–43)

> [... my adventurous dream, if it were to contain or be mixed with lies, or anything of little worth, let nobody be surprised; no wheat can grow without there being hay around it, until the wheat is taken out. So if there is any grain in my dream, together with hay and straw, let the good be kept and that which is no good winnowed out.]

The image is of course conventional, but in the aftermath of the *Rose*—with its endlessly playful and subversive deconstruction of hermeneutic binaries that make up the 'integumanz aus poetes' (*RR* 7138)—this invitation to unpack the allegory's 'grain' sounds like a last resort bred by hermeneutic despair. Ultimately it reveals the failure of the narrator-preacher figure to convey a univocal lesson, and the failure of the allegory to resolve itself into monologic discourse through self-exegesis. Symptomatically, Deguileville no longer introduces his narrative by claiming the authoritative role of the preacher, reading to a group of assembled laypeople: the confidence in his own ability to

contain the digressive energies of the poem within the framework of an internally unified *predicatio* has disappeared.

PVH2, moreover, no longer claims to represent the impersonal, transcendental authority of Grace Dieu in unproblematic and direct fashion. In *PVH1* the figure of Labour/Occcupant—the counterpart of Huiseuse and one of the principal avatars of Deguileville's authorial persona[79]—was still presented as a divinely inspired mouthpiece for Grace Dieu's teaching:

> 'Garce Dieu, dist il, non pas moy,
> Que pas ne vois, si parle a toy.
> Elle me met tout en l'oreille
> Quanque je dy et me conseille.' (*PVH1* 6663–6)

> [It is not I but Grace Dieu, who you can't see, who speaks to you thus. She whispers into my ear all that I tell and advise you to do]

Yet in *PVH2* Labour relinquishes his didactic role as a reliable guide and figure of authority, and declares himself unable to advise the pilgrim effectively on the choice of the right path:

> 'Si ne t'en çay plus que dire,
> Lequel que veulx pues eslire.' (*PVH2* 7535–6)

> ['So I can't tell you any more, chose whatever path you wish']

The central activity of Labour, as a net-maker, remains the same in both versions, as the pilgrim notes: '[je] voy que souvent tu deffaiz / Ce qu'as bien fait et le refaiz (*PVH1* 6569–70; cf. *PVH2* 7537–8) ['I see that you often unmake, what you have already well made and then remake it']. Yet the task of constant weaving and unweaving, as a figure of textual labour, interpretation and commentary, has lost its meditative, monastic appeal, and increasingly appears as a futile, endlessly protracted, solipsistic activity—like

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[79] The arguments here closely follow the reading presented in Maupeu, '*Bivium*'. The movement away from the impersonal authority of *PVH1* to the more contingent, 'autobiographical' status of *PVH2* provides the main argument of Maupeu's *Pèlerins de Vie Humaine*.

the rewriting of *PVH2* itself. The revised poem finally foregrounds the limitations of a kind of dialectic allegory that is seen as the product of human, contingent, and potentially endless textual and hermeneutic labour, condemned to unmake and remake itself constantly in the attempt to achieve some sort of closure.

Finally, then, if on the surface *PVH2* clearly displays a more hostile attitude to the *Rose*, on another level it also reveals Deguileville's ever deeper internalisation of Jean de Meun's sceptical dialecticism. In the very act of seeking to dissociate himself from the sophistical 'menconges' and the perversely hollow *integumenta* of the *Rose*, Deguileville finally shows that he has also learnt the *Rose*'s lessons, and begins to view the self-authorising claims of his own allegory through the lens of Jean de Meun's poetics of suspicion and irresolution. Ultimately it is the *Rose* itself, with its relentless drive towards questioning 'given truths' that paradoxically pushes Deguileville to reject his own *PVH1* as an unfinished, rough draft (*PVH2* 19–94). It is again the ever elusive and stubbornly talkative *Rose* that forces him to reopen the debate, pushing him to write a second, 'improved', more argumentatively convoluted, defensive, conflicted and self-divided version in the desperate hope of patching up a leaking vessel. But every layer of revision and rewriting provides still further arguments, clauses and qualification in an increasingly unwieldy, cancerous *disputatio* that now opposes Deguileville's poem both to the *Rose* and to itself, exacerbating the internal divisions of a supposedly monologic pilgrimage allegory, and deferring closure still further. What may have begun as a didactic undertaking seems to have mutated over time into an ever more heuristic experiment. Deguileville's allegory finally ends up interrogating the very epistemological assumptions it originally set out to affirm, and reveals him as a far more receptive reader of the *Rose* than he would have liked to be.