

Tatiana Krapivina

**EXEGESIS ACCORDING TO THE RULES OF PHILOSOPHY
OR THE RULE OF FAITH?
METHODOLOGICAL CONFLICT IN THE NINTH-CENTURY
PREDESTINATION CONTROVERSY**

MA Thesis in Medieval Studies

Central European University

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Tatiana Krapivina
(Russia)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfilment of the requirements
of the Master of Arts degree in Medieval Studies
Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU

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Supervisor

I, the undersigned, **Tatiana Krapivina**, candidate for the MA degree in Medieval Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on the copyright of any person or institution. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

Budapest, 25 May 2010

Signature

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Aduersus JoSco *Flori diaconi sub nomine Ecclesiae Lugdunensis aduersus Johannis Scoti Eriгенаe erroneas definitiones liber.* In PL 119, cols. 101B-250A.
- Contra JoSco *De praedestinatione contra Iohannem Scotum cognomento Erigenam seu liber Johannis Scoti correctus a Prudentio, siue a caeteris Patribus, uidelicet a Gregorio, Hieronymo, Fulgentio atque Augustino.* In PL 115, cols. 1009C-1366A.
- DP Johannes Scottus Eriugena. *De diuina predestinatione liber.* Ed. Goulven Madec. Turnhout: Brepols, 1978.
- PL Patrologia cursus completus, series latina. Ed. J.-P. Migne. Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1844- Facsimile reprint, Turnhout: Brepols, 1956-.
- SPES Society for the Promotion of Eriugenian Studies
- ESQ *Eriugena. Studien zu seinen Quellen.* Vorträge des III Internationalen Eriugena-Colloquiums, Freiburg/Br. 27-30 August 1979, ed. Werner Beierwaltes (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1980).
- GSE *Giovanni Scoto Eriugena. Dialettica e teologia all'apogeo della rinascenza carolingia.* Ed. and tr. Ernesto S. Mainoldi. Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2003.
- HEJSE *History and Eschatology in John Scottus Eriugena and his Time.* Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the SPES, Maynooth and Dublin, August 16-20, 2000. Ed. J. McEvoy and M. Dunne. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002.
- ISEBH *Iohannes Scottus Eriugena: The Bible and Hermeneutics.* Proceedings of the 9th Colloquium of the SPES, Leuven and Louvain-La-Neuve, June 7-10, 1995. Edd. Gerd Van Riel, Carlos Steel, James McEvoy. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996.
- JSE *Jean Scot Écrivain.* Actes du IV Colloque international. Montréal 28 août – 2 septembre 1983), ed. Guy-H. Allard. Paris: Vrin, 1986.

INTRODUCTION

Alcuin in the *Epistola de litteris colendis* – one of the most famous and influential educational documents written in the Carolingian revival – exhorts the addressee¹

For this reason, we advise you not only not to neglect the study of the letters, but rather to acquire the proper knowledge of these in order that with an intention humble and pleasing to God you can penetrate easier and properly the mysteries of the Holy Scriptures.²

That was one of the documents from which from which the program of ubiquitous and mandatory education of the Frankish clergy was officially launched.³ Besides regulating ecclesiastical life, one of the main goals of the reforms was not only to amend existing copies of the Bible and produce the new ones, but also to make the clergy “understand what they read in the Bible.”⁴

The development of biblical exegesis, as Contreni shows,⁵ was rapid, but not homogeneous. On the one hand, one of the main ways to acquire biblical wisdom was to rely on the interpretations and teaching of the Holy Fathers, whose texts were studied, assimilated, simplified, collected, and taught. On the other hand, Alcuin’s revival of the liberal arts⁶ paved the way for the rise of another method of biblical exegesis. Studying the texts on logic and philosophy⁷ and training in grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic at school laid a foundation for

¹ The letter is addressed to abbot Baudulf of Fulda.

² *Quamobrem hortamus litterarum studia non solum non neglegere, uerum etiam humillima et Deo placita intentione ad hoc certam discere, ut facilius et rectius diuinarum scripturarum mysteria ualeatis penetrare* The text of the letter is quoted from the edition by Luitpold Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne: Studies in Carolingian History and Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1959), 203. Wallach also discusses the problem of the authorship of the letter and argues that Alcuin was its author.

³ Another document important for establishing educational reforms was *Admonitio Generalis*. See John Contreni, “Carolingian Biblical Culture” in *ISEBH*, 1-20.

⁴ Contreni, *Carolingian Biblical Culture*, 3.

⁵ Contreni, *Carolingian Biblical Culture*. Idem., “Inharmonious Harmony: Education in the Carolingian World,” in *Carolingian Learning, Masters and Manuscripts* (Hampshire: Variorum, 1992), 81-96.

⁶ For the role of Alcuin in the revival of learning see Andrew F. West, *Alcuin. The Rise of the Christian Schools* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Son, 1912). Although the book is somewhat dated, it is still useful.

⁷ Among these texts were *Categoriae Decem* (a paraphrase of Aristotle’s *Categories* by an anonymous author), Aristotle’s *De Interpretatione*, Porphyry’s *Isagoge*, Boethius’ *De Consolatione Philosophiae* and *Opuscula Sacra*, Augustine’s *De Trinitate* as well as Martianus Capella’s *De Nuptiis Philologiae at Mercurii*, Cassiodore’s *Institutiones* etc. See footnote 8.

the formation of a philosophical approach towards interpreting the sacred texts. Thus, in a few decades the reforms already brought results: Hrabanus Maurus' compilations of the Fathers' commentaries on the Bible were widely used,⁸ and the logical tools and vocabulary had already been applied creatively to theological issues.⁹

Early and mid-ninth century Carolingian society, however, witnessed not only the success of the educational reforms, but also problems and contradictions that they caused. The extreme complexity of the Bible and the Fathers' works and attempts to deal with them with the help of different exegetical practices inevitably revealed theological problems and led to disagreements on questions of methodology.

The mid-ninth century polemical exchanges on predestination were one of the examples of such intellectual conflicts,¹⁰ caused by an active and rapid assimilation of the Christian and Antique sources at this early date. It was one of the most prolonged and complicated events in the intellectual life of mid-ninth century Carolingian society. It lasted almost twenty years and involved the most prominent theologians, politicians, and scholars of the time. To these polemics I will devote the present research.

In this work, I focus on the problems of the methodology of dealing with theological problems raised in the treatises by John Scot Eriugena and his opponents – Prudentius of Troyes and Florus of Lyon – during the predestination debates. I will investigate the principles of their approaches, their differences and similarities, applications of these approaches to the biblical texts, and the problems that these methods implied. Thus, on the example of the predestination debate I will try to show the complexity and variety of exegetic practices during the Carolingian revival.

⁸ See Contreni, *Carolingian Biblical Culture*.

⁹ John Marenbon, *From the Circle of Alcuin to the School of Auxerre: Logic, Theology and Philosophy in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

¹⁰ The other controversies of the ninth century included the Trinity, Eucharist, etc.

In the first chapter I give the historical background of the predestination debate and try to highlight its methodological significance. The second chapter is devoted to a discussion of Eriugena's own formulation of his method and its application in the treatise *De divina Praedestinatione*. In the third chapter, I discuss the critiques of John Scot's approach in the works of his contemporaries – Prudentius' *De praedestinatione contra Iohannem Scotum* and Florus' *Aduersus Iohannis Scoti Eriugae erroneas definitiones liber* – and their methods of solving theological problems.

John Scot Eriugena is an eminent figure in the history of philosophy, and generally his works and philosophy are well-researched. Although an active interest to Eriugena's philosophy was shown as early as the turn of the twentieth century, the international conferences organized by the Society for the Promotion of Eriugenian Studies, which started in 1970s, attracted the attention of scholars to Eriugena's philosophy and stimulated further studies in this field. John Scot's philosophical method received particular attention, studied mainly on the basis of the philosopher's major work *Periphyseon*. Grabmann¹¹ shows the role of John Scot's philosophy and method in the context of the development of scholasticism; the works by Jauneau,¹² Beierwaltes,¹³ O'Loughlin,¹⁴ Allard,¹⁵ Marenbon,¹⁶ Moran,¹⁷ Carabine¹⁸ and others are devoted to the discussion of the particularity of Eriugena's method, its sources and influence on the development of philosophical thought and method in the further generation.

¹¹ Martin Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der Scholastischen Methode*. Vol. 1 (Freiburg/Br.: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1909).

¹² Édouard Jauneau, *Études érigéniennes* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1987).

¹³ Werner Beierwaltes, "Language and its object. Reflexions on Eriugena's valuation of the function and capacities of language," in *JSE*, 209-228.

¹⁴ Thomas O'Loughlin, "Biblical Contradiction in the Periphyseon and the Development of Eriugena's Method," in *ISEBH*, 103-120.

¹⁵ Guy-H. Allard, "Jean Scot et la logique des propositions contraires," in *From Athens to Chartres. Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought. Studies in Honour of Edouard Jauneau*, ed. Jan Westra Haijo, (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 181-194.

¹⁶ John Marenbon, "John Scottus and the *Categoriae Decem*," in *ESQ*, 117-134.

¹⁷ Dermot Moran, *The Philosophy of John Scotus Eriugena. A Study of Idealism in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

¹⁸ Deidre Carabine, *The Unknown God. Negative Theology in the Platonic Tradition: Plato to Eriugena* (Louvain: Peeters W.B.Eerdmans, 1995).

Predestination polemics have been discussed either as a part of a history of the development of John Scot Eriugena's philosophical views (Cappuyns,¹⁹ J. J. O'Meara,²⁰ Marenbon,²¹ Brilliantov,²² etc.) or in connection to Gottschalk's life and teachings (Devisse,²³ Amann,²⁴ Aegerter,²⁵ etc.). Works by Ganz,²⁶ Mainoldi²⁷ and Stanciu²⁸ are devoted to the predestination debate itself and also show the roles of other participants in the controversy. Nevertheless, so far there has not been a complete analysis of the history of predestination polemics, the roles of the other participants and their ideas.

The *DP* has been also studied from various perspectives. Thus, Mainoldi provides a translation and comprehensive, although brief, analysis of the treatise in a new edition. The Latin sources that influenced Eriugena's treatise were studied by Madec,²⁹ Mathon,³⁰ and Stock,³¹ while Mainoldi³² traces the influence of the Greek philosophical and theological

¹⁹ Maïeul Cappuyns, *Jean Scot Erigène sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensée* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1933).

²⁰ John J. O'Meara, *Eriugena* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

²¹ John Marenbon, *Early Medieval Philosophy (480-1150). An Introduction*, 2d ed. (London: Routledge&Kegan Paul, 1991).

²² [Alexandr Brilliantov] Александр Бриллиантов, *Влияние восточного богословия на западное в произведениях Иоанна Скота Эригены* (The influence of Eastern theology on the Western in the works by John Scot Eriugena) (Moscow: Martis, 1998).

²³ Jean Devisse, *Hincmar archevêque de Reims 845-882*. 3 vols. (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1975-1976).

²⁴ Émile Amann, "La controverse prédestinienne," in *Histoire de l'église depuis les origines jusqu' à nos jours, L'époque carolingienne* (Paris, 1947), 320-44.

²⁵ Emmanuel Aegerter. "Gottschalk et le problème de la prédestination au IXe siècle" in *Revue d l'histoire des religions*, 116 (1937): 187-233.

²⁶ David Ganz, "The Debate on Predestination" in *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, ed. Margaret T. Gibson and Janet L. Nelson, 2d ed. (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1990), 283-302.

²⁷ Ernesto S. Mainoldi, "Introduzione," in *GSE*, IX-XLI.

²⁸ Diana Stanciu, "The Ninth-Century Debate on Predestination," MA Thesis. Budapest: Central European University, 1998.

²⁹ Goulven Madec, "L'augustinisme de Jean Scot dans le *De predestinatione*," in *Jean Scot Érigène et l'histoire de la philosophie*, Colloques internationaux du CNRS, 561, ed. René Roques (Paris : Editions du CNRS, 1977), 183-90.

³⁰ Gerard Mathon, "L'utilisation des textes de Saint Augustine par Jean Scot Erigène dans son *De predestinatione*" in *Augustinus Magister*, Actes du Congrès international augustinien, Paris, 21-24 septembre 1954 (Paris, 1955), 519-28.

³¹ Brian Stock, "In Search of Eriugena's Augustine" in *ESQ*, 85-104.

³² Ernesto S. Mainoldi, "Su alcune fonti ispiratrici della theologia e dell'escatologia del *De divina predestinatione liber* di Giovanni Scoto Eriugena," in *HEJSE*, 313-329.

tradition on the *DP*. D’Onofrio analyzes the role of dialectic³³ and the structure of arguments³⁴ in the *DP*; Luthala³⁵ devotes her research to the use of grammar in the treatise.

Compared to the quite developed studies on Eriugena’s philosophy, the roles of other participants in the predestination polemics (including Prudentius and Florus), as well as particularities of their theological views and exegesis in general, have not enjoyed proper attention. Marenbon³⁶ argues that the development of John Scot’s thought cannot be considered in isolation. He points out how some critical remarks made by Florus and Prudentius on the *DP* influenced the major work of Eriugena in *Periphyseon*. The works and exegesis of Prudentius and Florus themselves require further research.

The predestination debate requires attention for several reasons. On the one hand, Eriugena’s treatise written during the polemics serves as a source for studying the development of his thought in its early stages and reveals the origin of his philosophical system that he elaborated in the *Periphyseon*. On the other hand, (and I agree with Marenbon), Eriugena’s philosophical thought cannot be considered in isolation; the intellectual achievements of his milieu also deserve attention and they should be taken into account in the discussion of the philosophical and theological development of the Carolingian revival. In my opinion, the predestination debate in general – and the “methodological” conflict within this debate – is a particular example that illustrates such a development. An analysis of the different answers to an important methodological question – how to read the Bible? – which was raised during the debate can show the process of formulating various exegetic strategies. Moreover, as I will try to show, this debate also led to the necessity for theology and philosophy themselves to define their possible limits – a task which inevitably

³³ Giulio d’Onofrio, “*Disputandi disciplina*. Procédés dialectiques et *logica vetus* dans le langage philosophique de Jean Scot,” in *JSE*, 229-263.

³⁴ Giulio d’Onofrio, *Fons scientiae. La dialettica nell’Occidente tardo-antico* (Naples: Liguori Editore, 1986).

³⁵ Anneli Luthala, “Time and the Substantial Verb in Eriugena” in *HEJSE*, 77-87.

³⁶ John Marenbon, “John Scottus and Carolingian Theology: From the *De praedestinatione*, Its Background and Its Critiques, to the *Periphyseon*,” in *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom* edd. Margaret T. Gibson and Janet L. Nelson, 2d ed. (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1990), 303-325.

implies difficulties. Thus, in my discussion of the methodological conflict during the predestination polemics I see a contribution in the field of studies of ninth-century philosophy.

Dealing with theological as well as philosophical and methodological issues of the Carolingian revival one should bear in mind the complexity of the intellectual situation of that time. The ninth century was a period when the principles of Latin medieval exegesis and medieval philosophy were in the process of active formation. That is why one does not find firm and mature doctrines, but rather unstable tendencies, radical ideas, and contradictions not only between different teachings, but also within these teachings themselves.

In the work, I will use the English translation of the *DP* by Mary Brennan,³⁷ although sometimes I will give my own translations of the passages from the *DP*. The quotations from the texts by Florus and Prudentius are given in my translation.

³⁷ John Scotus Eriugena, *Treatise On Divine Predestination*, tr. Mary Brennan (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998).

CHAPTER 1

THE PREDESTINATION DEBATE: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

A comprehensive history of the ninth-century predestination controversy – the reasons and implications, questions and contradictions, participants and their positions, its results and significance – remains to be written. My goal in this chapter, however, is not to give a complete account of the predestination polemics. Here, I will briefly present the history of the debate focusing on the key points and problem, and at the end I will highlight its importance from the methodological perspective.

For the sake of convenience and order, I will roughly divide the predestination debate into three stages of development. The principle of the division is simple. Taking Eriugena's intervention in the debate as a crucial event, remarkable in many respects, I will consider John Scot's participation and the polemics that followed it as a phase in the history of the debate requiring particular attention. Thus, the beginning of the controversy, provoked by Gottschalk before John Scot had written a refutation, and discussions of the problems of predestination at the councils that followed the critique of Eriugena's treatise by Prudentius and Florus, will be considered as the first and the last phases of the polemics, respectively.

1.1. Gottschalk's theory and the beginning of the controversy

The debate was initiated by Gottschalk, a monk from Fulda and then from Orbais,³⁸ who proposed the theory of double predestination based on the teaching of later Augustine.

³⁸ For the life, works and theology of Gottschalk and his participation in the predestination polemics, Jean Jolivet, *Godescalc d'Orbais et la Trinité: La Méthode de la théologie à l'époque carolingienne*, (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1958); Emmanuel Aegerter, "Gottschalk et le problème de la prédestination au IXe siècle," *Revue d'histoire des religions*, 116 (1937): 187-233. Émile Amann, "La controverse prédestinienne," in *Histoire de l'église depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours*. Vol. 6. *L'époque carolingienne*, (Paris, 1947), 320–44. Cyrille Lambot, "Opuscules grammaticaux de Gottschalk," *Revue bénédictine* 44 (1932): 120-4.

According to this theory, God predestined the elected to eternal life and the wicked to eternal damnation. During a pilgrimage to Rome, Gottschalk presented his theory on predestination in the diocese of Verona (840) and a few years later at the court of Count Eberhard of Friuli (846). Hrabanus Maurus, who was Gottschalk's teacher in Fulda, sent to Noting – the bishop of Verona – a letter and a treatise in which he rejected Gottschalk's teaching on predestination.³⁹ In this letter, he states that dual predestination by God would mean that he is a creator of evil, which is impossible,⁴⁰ and he also makes an important distinction between God's foreknowledge and predestination and states that God only foreknew those who committed sins and predestined those who conducted their lives according to the Christian faith.⁴¹ Later, Hrabanus wrote a letter to Eberhard with a refutation of Gottschalk's doctrine of the same contents as the previous one.⁴² In this letter, Hrabanus also defends the salvific will of God and states that God does not force a man to sin, but through his grace he supports a movement of the free will of man towards salvation.⁴³

Upon his return to Fulda, Gottschalk continued preaching on double predestination. At the Council of Mainz (848), however, his doctrine was condemned and Gottschalk himself was proclaimed a heretic. One year later, in the presence of Charles the Bald at the Council of Quierzy (849), he was again accused in heresy and sent to Hautvilliers monastery. In seclusion, Gottschalk formulated his thesis in a short treatise and supported it with the quotations from the Scripture and the Fathers.⁴⁴

Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, who had become an especially active figure in the predestination controversy since the council of Quierzy, wrote in turn a letter to

³⁹ Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistola ad Notingum cum libro de Praedestinatione Dei*, PL 112, cols. 1530D-1553C.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, col. 1531BC.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, col. 1532CD. Here, Hrabanus makes a distinction between foreknowledge and predestination by God based on the difference between God's essence (foreknowledge) and accident (predestination).

⁴² Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistola ad Heberardum comitem*, PL 112, cols. 1553D-1562C.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, cols. 1555B-1557C.

⁴⁴ Gotteschalculus, *Confessio*, PL 121, cols. 147D-150B.

parishioners,⁴⁵ encouraging them and explaining the inconsistency of Gottschalk's teaching on the basis of the excerpts from the patristic sources. Gottschalk answered this letter with a more detailed treatise,⁴⁶ in which he bases his argumentation on the authority of the Church Fathers and elaborates Isidore's treatment of predestination,⁴⁷ which he already referred to in the previous writing. Gottschalk claims that predestination is one (*una*) and good (*bona*),⁴⁸ but at the same time it is double (*gemina*) or twofold (*bipartita*), that is, being one, it has a double "effect" or action – it saves the elected with the grace and punishes the wicked with justice.⁴⁹ In this work, Gottschalk also underlines the importance of Priscianus' art and this *usitatissimum genus locutionum* in biblical exegesis.⁵⁰

Meanwhile, Hincmar and his companion, Pardulus of Laon, looking for support in the refutation of Gottschalk's doctrine, asked the most influential theologians to express their opinions on the subject. Among these theologians who took part in the discussion on predestination were Prudentius of Troyes, Hrabanus Maurus, Lupus of Ferrières and Ratramnus of Corbie.

Against their expectations, however, Hincmar and Pardulus were confronted with opinions which lent more support to Gottschalk's theory than their own teachings. Prudentius wrote a letter to Hincmar and Pardulus,⁵¹ in which he points out Gottschalk's mistakes in the interpretations of the Fathers, but he does not agree with Hincmar on the main matters.⁵² In

⁴⁵ Hincmar, *Ad reclusos et siplices*, ed. W. Gundlach, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 10 (1899): 93–144, 258–309.

⁴⁶ Gotteschalculus, *Confessio prolixior*, PL 121, cols. 349C–366A.

⁴⁷ Isidorus Hispalensis, *Senteniae*, II 6, 1. *Gemina est praedestinatio, siue electorum ad requiem, siue reproborum ad mortem.*

⁴⁸ Gotteschalculus, *Confessio prolixior*, cols. 349D–350C. *Credo sequidem atque confiteor praescisse te ante saecula quaecunque erant futura siue bona siue mala, praedestinasse uero tantummodo bona. Bona autem a te praedestinata bifariam sunt...*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, cols. 357C–358C.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 358A. For the role of grammar in Gottschalk's biblical exegesis and in the predestination debate, see Jean Joviet "L'enjeu de la grammaire pour Godescalc" in *Jean Scot Érigène et l'histoire de la philosophie*, Colloques Internationaux du CNRS, No. 561 (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1977), 79–87; Gillian R. Evans, "The Grammar of Predestination in the Ninth Century," *Journal of Theological Studies* 33 (1982): 134–45.

⁵¹ Prudentius, *Epistola ad Hincmarum et Pardulum*, PL 115, cols. 971D–1010B.

⁵² Prudentius, quoting the Gospels, claims that Christ died *non pro omnibus, sed pro multis; non pro aliis, sed pro uobis* (*Ibid.*, col. 276CD).

the letter, Prudentius specifies that God predestined the wicked not to sin or death, but to punishments for their sins (*non ad culpam sed ad poenam*).⁵³ The works of Lupus of Ferrières (who was, moreover, a friend of Gottschalk)⁵⁴ and Ratramnus of Corbie⁵⁵ also reflected agreement with Gottschalk's theory of twofold predestination. Hrabanus Maurus answered Hincmar's request in a short letter where he repeated what he had already said in his letters to Noting and Eberhard, that is, that God predestined only to good.⁵⁶ This letter, however, was apparently not considered by Hincmar and Pardulus as a strong support of their views.

The predestination controversy was also momentous as a political event. The interest of Charles the Bald in the debate was shown as early as 849, when he presented a condemnation of Gottschalk's theses at the Council of Quierzy, and it was also Charles the Bald who drew Lupus and Ratramnus into the discussion on predestination. The involvement of such eminent political figure as Charles the Bald into the debate can be explained by the split in the ecclesiastical authority, which would have influenced the political order and power.⁵⁷ It is no wonder, then, that in such a situation the involvement of the person who had one of the best reputations in the intellectual milieu and was close to the king at the same time became involved in the polemics. The next step that Hincmar and Pardulus took was an appeal to John Scot, the master of the liberal arts at the palace school, to help them solve the problems of predestination.

⁵³ Ibid., 976AB.

⁵⁴ Lupus Ferrariensis, *Liber de tribus questionibus*, PL 119, cols. 621D-648B. *Nos autem, salua fide, hoc est, quod suo sanguine Deus redemerit omnes quos uoluerit, et nulli sunt redempti nisi quos redemerit...* Ibid., col. 646D.

⁵⁵ Ratramnus Corbeiensis, *De predestinatione Dei*, PL 121, cols. 11C-80. Ratramnus specifies Gottschalk's thesis on predestination which is *una, sed bipartita*: ...*Sequitur ut opera Dei uniuersa sint praedestinata. Quapropter cum dicitur de malis, quia ad poenas praedestinati sunt*, col. 79A.

⁵⁶ Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistola ad Hincmarum Rhemensem*, PL 112, cols. 1518D-1530C.

⁵⁷ For more on the political implications of the controversy see David Ganz, "The Debate on Predestination," in *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, 2d ed., ed. Margaret T. Gibson and Janet L. Nelson (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1990), 283-302.

1.2. John Scot's *De Praedestinatione* and its critics

In 851, John Scot wrote the *De divina praedestinatione liber*, where he proposed his own solutions to the predestination problems. Not all of the ideas that he defended in the work were novel; the main points coincided with ones that Hincmar and Hrabanus had asserted. Thus, the core idea that he aimed to prove was that God is responsible neither for sin and death nor for punishment. This idea also implies that responsibility for sin lies with the free human will. What was novel in the work indeed was the scope with which he applied the liberal arts to refute Gottschalk's thesis and to prove his own statements. The novelty of the treatise can be explained by the very perspective, that is, the philosophical one, from which Eriugena discusses the theological problems. Although he considered the philosophical approach as the most appropriate for the current purpose, in the eyes of contemporary theologians it looked quite ambitious.

The whole system of the arguments in Eriugena's treatise is built on the single theological principle that God's substance is one, simple and good.⁵⁸ This means that God could not predestine anyone to damnation and that he is not responsible for death and sin, because otherwise he would not be good.⁵⁹ Moreover, to predestine and even to foreknow evil is impossible for God, because, according to John Scot, evil is the absence of good; it is nothing, and by its nature in cannot be foreseen.⁶⁰ If this is the case then, the double predestination of God cannot be accepted, because "double" already implies "multiple," which is again impossible because of the unity of the divine substance.⁶¹ Responsibility for evil (in the notion of which Eriugena includes sin, death, suffering, and punishment)⁶² lies in

⁵⁸ *DP*, II, 3. *Cum igitur diuina substantia uel essentia uel natura uel quomodo dici potest, in se ipsa unum, indiuiduum, inseparabileque sit, - unitas enim simplex est atque incommutabilis...*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, see, for example, the syllogism in XVI, 4: "omne bonum aut deus est aut ex deo factum est; omne quod ex deo factum est nullum uitium boni efficit..." etc.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, X, 2-5.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, II, 6; III, 5.

⁶² *Ibid.*, X, 3.

the nature of a man, which is a free rational will through which he can conduct his life either in accordance with or against God's commandments.⁶³ Through the grace of God, however, man can find support on his way towards salvation.⁶⁴

Besides theological and anthropological issues, Eriugena was also concerned with exegetical difficulties. Dealing with the Scripture and the texts of the Fathers requires an application of the tools (which can be provided by the *trivium*) that are guides to the most trustworthy interpretation.⁶⁵ The problem with the interpretation of a text is that it is based on the human language, which does not have power to express the divine reality in the proper way.⁶⁶ That is why the Scripture and the Fathers used obscure or seemingly contradictory statements which just need to be deciphered.

In each particular exegetical situation, one should apply the most appropriate *genus locutionum*. Thus, in one case God's foreknowledge and predestination should be distinguished as correspondingly a *genus* and a *forma*: through foreknowledge God foresees good and evil deeds while through his predestination he determines only good.⁶⁷ In another case, if the Scripture says "predestination" it should be understood as "foreknowledge"⁶⁸ or if it is said "he predestined," the proper understanding would be "he did not predestine."⁶⁹ Dealing with any exegetical difficulty, however, one should bear in mind the main principle, that is, that God is one and simple, which means that even the distinction between foreknowledge and predestination is made only for the better understanding of particular places in the Bible or the Fathers, but with respect to the unity of the divine substance predestination and foreknowledge are one and the same in God.⁷⁰

⁶³ Ibid., VI;VII; XV, 8; XVI.

⁶⁴ Ibid., II, 3;

⁶⁵ Ibid., I; IX.

⁶⁶ Ibid., IX, 1-2.

⁶⁷ Ibid., II, 5.

⁶⁸ Ibid., XV, 6.

⁶⁹ Ibid., X. For the more detailed analysis of Eriugena's methods see chapter 2.

⁷⁰ Ibid., XVII, 1.

Critiques of John Scot's treatise followed immediately – one by Prudentius of Troyes⁷¹ and soon after another by Florus of Lyon,⁷² probably written in the same year. The targets of the critiques were as much Eriugena's theological and anthropological assertions as his methodological stand. Both critical works blame John Scot for using dialectics as a means to solve the problems of theology instead of relying on “the clear explanations of the Scripture and the Church Fathers.”⁷³ They also disagreed with John Scot's point of view on predestination, not accepting his assignment of “predestination” to the substance of God⁷⁴ and also the very idea that God does not determine a punishment because it belongs to the manifestation of God's justice.⁷⁵ The other aspects of their critiques concern the nature of man (which, according to both theologians, is not constituted by free will)⁷⁶ and the roles of human will and divine grace in salvation. Prudentius and Florus accused Eriugena of Pelagianism⁷⁷ and stressed that on its own and without divine grace the human will is not able to make any movement towards salvation.⁷⁸

1.3. The end of the debate

After Florus had written his treatise, the tendency to defend Gottschalk's teaching and criticize Hincmar's assertions and attitude towards Gottschalk and the theory of double predestination became more distinct. The letter to Gottschalk by Amulo, bishop of Lyon,⁷⁹ and the treatise *De tribus epistolis*,⁸⁰ which followed Florus' refutation of Eriugena's treatise,

⁷¹ Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, PL 115, cols. 1009C-1366A.

⁷² Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, PL 119, cols. 101B-250A.

⁷³ See, for example, Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, cols. 1011D-1024B; Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, cols. 104A-107D.

⁷⁴ Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, cols. 1037A-1039A; Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, cols. 108B-120A.

⁷⁵ Florus, *Adversus JoSco*, col. 104C.

⁷⁶ Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, cols. 1051A-1054A; Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, cols. 129A-130B, 135B-136D.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, col. 132BC.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, col. 115A “*nullo bono opere, nullo bono merito praecedente, solo gratiae diuinae beneficio hominem saluari et uenire ad Deum.*” cols. 136D-137A.

⁷⁹ Amulo Lugdonensis, *Epistola ad Godescalcum*, PL 116, cols. 84C-96.

⁸⁰ Remigius Lugdonensis, PL 121, cols. 985B-1068. The authorship of this treatise was ascribed to Remigius of Lyon, but scholars argue that it could have been by Florus.

clearly express disagreements with Hincmar's and Pardulus' positions in many respects. Thus, the critique of the author of the *De tribus epistolis* is concerned with Hincmar's "inhumane" treatment of Gottschalk,⁸¹ his involvement of Eriugena in the debate,⁸² and Hincmar's own theological stand.⁸³

Realizing that his prestige and authority were at stake, Hincmar tried to find support for his point of view on predestination at the council of Quierzy (853). At this council, Hincmar's four *capitula*, in which he presents his views on predestination, were confirmed and subscribed to by Charles the Bald. At the council of Valence (855), however, Hincmar's *capitula* as well as Eriugena's *DP* were again refuted by Florus and condemned. Then the question was touched on again in the episcopate meeting at Langres and at the council of Savonnières (859). In response to the attack at the council of Valence and at the request of Charles the Bald, Hincmar wrote the treatise *De praedestinatione*, in which he defends his theological position on God's predestination, one of the main claims of which was the same, that is, that God predestined neither for sin nor punishment.⁸⁴

The next council where the question on predestination was again raised gathered in Tusey (860). In the letter which Hincmar wrote for the council he does not express his point of view on predestination in the same decisive manner as before.⁸⁵ Moreover, as Mainoldi notes, in this letter Hincmar tries to avoid sharp formulations concerning predestination and discusses the problem in the most neutral and diplomatic way.⁸⁶ Although Gottschalk still seemed to be willing to continue the polemics on predestination and proposed further discussion in the council of Metz (863), the council of 860 in Tusey can be considered as the closure of the predestination debates.

⁸¹ Ibid., cols. 1027C-1030D.

⁸² Ibid., cols. 1054C-1055A.

⁸³ For example, *ibid.*, cols. 1034A-1035D.

⁸⁴ *PL* 125, cols. 55B-474B.

⁸⁵ Hincmar, *Epistola consilii Tusiensis ad rerum ecclesiasticarum peruasores et ad pauperum praedatoris*, *PL* 126, cols. 122A-132C.

⁸⁶ Ernesto S. Mainoldi, "Introduzione," in *GSE*, XL-XLI.

One of the reasons for the polemics was the confusion on the question of predestination and the free will that can be found in Augustine's texts themselves, on which the participants of the debate based their opinions and arguments. Augustine wrote the texts where he expressed his views on predestination and the role of human will in different periods of his life – as a philosopher in the early works and as a more conservative theologian in the later years – and for various purposes – as against Manichaean teaching, as against Pelagianism. That is why the authority of the same Augustine could serve for contradictory points of view.⁸⁷ Thus, for example, Gottschalk relied more on the doctrine of the late Augustine⁸⁸ while John Scot used the works with strong philosophical implications or which reflect the role of the free will of man.⁸⁹

Thus, Gottschalk's particular interpretation of Augustine and the Scripture on the problem of predestination provoked ardent and intensive polemics which lasted for approximately twenty years and became an important event in the ecclesiastical and political life of Carolingian society. The cornerstone of the polemics was the question of whether God predestines to damnation, death and punishment or only to eternal bliss, which could not avoid the discussion of the role of human will and divine grace in salvation. The development of the polemics was rather chaotic than predictable. In the first few years the critique aimed at Gottschalk's theological presumptions, but by the 850s those who had attacked the monk of Orbais – Hincmar, Pardulus and Eriugena – became targets of the critique. The complexity of the polemics can be explained by the complexity of the problem itself as well as the ambiguous and contradictory statements found in the Fathers and the Bible, which became a

⁸⁷ As Diana Stanciu claims, the lack of the availability of the writings by Augustine in the centers, where the debates evolved, was also one of the factors that caused the debates. Thus, for example, Florus could use the sources which were not available in the library used by Hincmar of Rheims, etc. Diana Stanciu, "The Ninth-century Debate on Predestination," MA Thesis. Budapest: Central European University, 1998.

⁸⁸ Gottschalk, for example, quotes *De Civitate Dei* (liber XXII), *Enchiridon*, *In Joannis evangelium tractatus* etc.

⁸⁹ For example, *Confessiones*, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, *De trinitate*, *De uera religione*, *Soliloquia* etc.

subject for more scrupulous attention and more elaborated interpretations during the polemics.

1.4. The Methodological significance of the controversy

Besides the theological and political importance of the debate, its methodological implications were also remarkable. The necessity of finding a proper answer to the question of God's predestination or of finding stronger proof and supports by the participants of the controversy can be considered as one of the stimuli for the development of Biblical exegesis in the mid-ninth century. All of the participants in the polemics had one problem to solve – whether God predestined only the elect to salvation or he also determined death and punishment. All of them had the same sources to prove their solutions – the Bible and the Fathers (especially Augustine).⁹⁰ The problems caused by the ambiguity and inconsistency of the texts that they used to support their opinions, however, led them to another task to fulfill, that is, to work out *how* to interpret the texts and *by what means*. In my opinion, their concerns to find the proper, that is, the strongest and most persuasive, arguments were among the forces that stimulated the predestination polemics. Eventually, one of the results of the controversy was the development of exegetic techniques by the mid-ninth century.⁹¹

The development of the methods applied by early medieval theologians can be seen from the very beginning of the debate. Initially, the main principle of their argumentation consisted in compiling excerpts from the authoritative texts. These compilations should not be disregarded or underestimated; they are evidence of an active elaboration of exegesis

⁹⁰ Although Eriugena might have been already used the Greek sources. See Mainoldi, “Su alcune fonti ispiratrici della theologia e dell’escatologia del *De divina praedestinatione liber* di Giovanni Scoto Eriugena,” in *HEJSE*, 313-329.

⁹¹ Predestination polemics, of course, cannot be considered as the only factor that influenced the development of biblical exegesis in the first half of the ninth century. For more on the development of Carolingian exegesis, see John Contreni, “Carolingian Biblical Culture,” in *ISEBH*, 1-20. Contreni especially underlines the role of Hrabanus Maurus, Eriugena, Angelomus of Luxeuil, and Haimo of Auxerre in “pushing the development of Carolingian exegesis in various directions,” p. 7.

which is based on the specific logic of a particular author, and they were the outcome of scrupulous and selective work with the texts. Thus, all the works written during the controversy demonstrate the mastery of their authors in exegesis based on compilations of the Bible and the Fathers.⁹²

The application of the tools taken from the liberal arts also made a significant contribution to the evolution of ninth-century exegesis. Carolingian theologians tried various exegetic strategies. Thus, Gottschalk and Eriugena found useful tools for their interpretations in grammar.⁹³ Next, an introduction of dialectics and rhetoric as a means of biblical interpretations was a crucial step that led to an enrichment of the ninth-century exegetic practices. For John Scot, using dialectic was essential in theological inquiry. Moreover, as I will try to show in the following chapters, although Eriugena was blamed for applying dialectic to matters of theology, his opponents could not avoid using the same logical terminology and – to a certain extent – logical techniques in their exegeses and critiques.

It is also interesting to note that with time the debate took on a “scholarly” character, which is reflected in the formal structure of letters and treatises and in the formulation of arguments. Thus, the tendency – spontaneous or conscious – to structure a critique to the previous work or to prove a particular statement in an organized and scholarly way became quite pronounced. Structures such as – 1) a statement of an opponent (a quotation or a paraphrase); 2) its correction or refutation based more or less on argument; 3) patristic and biblical testimonies – became visible especially after Eriugena’s work.⁹⁴

⁹² To my knowledge, so far an analysis of the exegetic approaches of the ninth-century theologians (especially in the first half of the century) has not been elaborated. Thus, the works by the theologians mentioned in the present chapter, except Gottschalk and Eriugena, who have been studied to a greater extent, still have not been analyzed from the perspective of their exegesis and theological ideas.

⁹³ The role of grammar in the *DP* see in the chapter 2. For the importance and application of grammar in Eriugena’s exegesis in general see Catherine Kavanagh, “The Philosophical Importance of Grammar for Eriugena” and Anneli Luthala “Time and the Substantival Verb in Eriugena,” in *HEJSE*, 61-76; 77-87.

⁹⁴ Besides Eriugena, Prudentius and Florus can be acknowledged as masters of an “academic” critique. Almost the same structure also can be found in such works as *De tribus epistolis liber*, which authorship is questioned, etc.

Eriugena's participation in the polemics had particular significance for the development of Carolingian exegesis not only because he introduced and consistently applied techniques of the *triuium* to the interpretation of sacred texts, but also because, at this stage of the debate, the formulation and recognition of these methodological principles by Eriugena himself and by his opponents reached a climax. In John Scot's treatise, the principles of biblical exegesis were formulated with absolute awareness of their indispensability for the proper interpretation of the obscure places in the Bible and received conscious application. Confronted with John Scot's methodology, Prudentius and Florus in turn also arrived at the necessity of formulating and defending their own views on the principles of exegesis. Thus, these two conflicting, but compatible (as I will try to show further), methodological strategies, on one side, by Eriugena and by Prudentius and Florus, on the other, will be discussed in the chapters below.

CHAPTER 2

ERIGENA'S *DE PRAEDESTINATIONE*: EXEGESIS ACCORDING TO THE *TRIVIUM*

In the preface to the treatise, Eriugena thanks Hincmar and Pardulus, who commissioned him to write a refutation of the doctrine of dual predestination, for choosing him as one who has “some ability to defend the salvation of all of us, namely the Catholic faith.”⁹⁵ Later in the same preface, he specifies his task, expressing his gratitude, for “you have not scorned to strengthen your perfect definition of the faith of predestination by the affirmation of our reasoning.”⁹⁶ It is uncertain whether Hincmar and Pardulus expected their positions on the predestination questions to be “strengthened” precisely “by the affirmations of our reasoning.” What is already clear from the preface to the treatise, however, is that to “defend the faith” according to Eriugena’s formulation means, in fact, to *prove* the faith with the *ratiocinationibus* – by means of reasoning.

The aim of John Scot in the *DP* is to proclaim and defend the truth of faith, which according to Hincmar, Pardulus, and Eriugena himself is that God’s predestination is not dual; God predestines only the elect to salvation and he is not responsible for the sins and deaths of those who will be punished. By the end of the treatise, developing his argument and criticizing his opponents – Gottschalk and, probably, Lupus and Ratramnus⁹⁷ – Eriugena stresses “that the error of those who understand predestination in a different way that the Holy Fathers do has grown from the ignorance of the liberal arts.”⁹⁸ Thus, John Scot’s method, based on *liberarum disciplinarum*, which he implies in the preface and follows

⁹⁵ *DP*, Praefatio, 355A ... *quid ualentem in defendenda omnium nostrum salute, quae est professio chatholica...*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 356A ... *nostrae tamen ratiocinationis astipulationibus uestram perfectissimam de fide praedestinationis diffinitionem roborare non spreuistis....*

⁹⁷ Although Eriugena does not name Lupus and Ratramnus in the treatise, his critique also aims at their points of view on predestination since they support Gottschalk’s doctrine.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, XVIII, the title of the chapter: *Quod error eorum qui aliter quam patres sancti sentient de preadestinatione ex liberarum disciplinarum ignorantia inoleuit*. Translation is mine.

constantly in the treatise, will be the focus of this chapter. Here, I will discuss applications of the liberal arts to the predestination problem and discuss their significance in Eriugena's exegesis. The question to be answered here is what the presentation, role, and justification of his method in the *DP* is. The more general question addressed to Eriugena by the end of this chapter is how, according to him, the presence of a philosopher in religion can be explained, or, in other words, what can logic (and the liberal arts all together) do in theology?

2.1. The “theory of language”

Before speaking about the Eriugena's method, one should clarify his understanding of nature and role of language, which to a certain extent was elaborated in the *DP*.

The motion of the human mind (*humani animi*) by which it returns to its beginning strives to ascend gradually, and thus, according to the means of its ascent, it finds verbal symbols (*signa uocis*) by which, in obedience to charity, it imparts its inner understanding to the senses of those who are ascending or desire to ascend with it.⁹⁹

What is worth noting in this passage is that, for John Scot, the way the human mind can achieve understanding in theological matters is by ascending and returning to the beginning of all things – God. In the light of this fragment, the role that language plays in this process becomes crucial; the human mind, in order to achieve this principle, avails itself of words, which, according to Eriugena, are powerful means that make it possible to the gradually ascend to God.

As John Scot says, God “is named by various significations of words (*uerborum significationibus*) according to the dispositions of the human mind (*affectum humanae mentis*) by which the mind strives to return to the knowledge of its creator.”¹⁰⁰ Although

⁹⁹ Ibid., III, 1. *Motus etenim humani animi quo principium sui repetit, gradatim ascendere nititur, ideoque iuxta modos ascensionis suae signa uocis inuenit quibus ea quae intus intelligit sensum secum secundum conscendentium uel conscendere uolentium, caritati oboediens erudit.*

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., II, 3. *...uariis tamen uerborum significationibus nominatur secundum affectum humanae mentis quibus ad notitiam creatoris suis redire nititur.*

language is considered an indispensable means for the human mind to return to “the knowledge of its creator,” the names that the human mind uses cannot be said of God in such a way they would be able express the full notion of the divine nature (*digne*).¹⁰¹ The human mind which imposes the meanings onto the words, influenced by its own inner affections and according to “the modes of its own understanding” (*secundum modos suae intelligentiae*).¹⁰² This means that the epistemological capabilities of language, which depends on conditions of the human mind and various ways of understanding, are restricted within the limits of the human mind itself.

Eriugena, being absolutely aware of the limits and imperfectness of language, does not consider this fact an obstacle for proceeding effectively in the proper interpretation of theological questions. On the contrary, he regards language and the richness of expressions that it contains as the only powerful opportunity to do this task. Language opens an immense field of interpretations where the human mind, *duce ueritate* and the liberal arts, can exercise itself and where the human mind can allow freedom, which is especially noticeable in Eriugena’s exegesis.

2.2. *Ars grammatica and rhetorica in biblical exegesis*

In the first chapter of the *DP*, explaining his methodology, Eriugena emphasizes the importance of rhetoric as one of the major means (together with dialectic)¹⁰³ of defending the truth of the Catholic faith. Complaining about the contemporary situation, Eriugena gives a vivid picture that shows that, compared to the *assertoribus falsitatis*, the *defensores ueritatis* are apparently in a disadvantageous position, because while

¹⁰¹ Ibid., IX, 1. *Ubi primo notandum, quoniam nihil digne de deo dicitur, omnia poene siue nominum siue uerborum aliarumque orationis partium signa proprie de deo dici non posse.*

¹⁰² Ibid., II, 4. *Proinde humana ratio, duce ueritate deum suum multipliciter intellegis, ipsum secundum modos suae intelligentiae diuersis uocationum signis appellat.*

¹⁰³ Analysis of the role of dialectic is discussed in chapter 2.3. *Ars dialectica*, below.

the former set forth the false briefly, clearly and in a verisimilar way, the others set forth the truth in such a way that they are tedious to listen to, not clearly understandable, and eventually not willingly believed. The former attack the truth with false arguments and assert falsehoods; the others can neither defend the truth nor refute falsehood. The former, misleading and urging the souls of their audience to an error, with their speech ardently terrify, sadden, delight, and exhort them; the others – slow and feeble – fall asleep for the truth.¹⁰⁴

This picture, in spite of its somewhat comical character, shows that the results of the truth defenders' ignorance of rhetoric are quite serious. The truth – eternal and stable in itself – can easily be shaken in the hearts of believers just because those who want to strengthen the truth lack the proper training in rhetoric (and, eventually, in all the liberal arts).¹⁰⁵ What Eriugena underlines in this passage is that rhetoric helps in various ways. First, it helps to articulate thought and make a speech organized; second, by providing good knowledge of rhetorical techniques, it aids one to be strong in argumentation while defending the truth and disproving the falsity, and it allows one to persuade believers by manipulating their emotions.

The *DP*, however, is far from being a rhetorical text; logic prevails in it. Nevertheless, that does not mean that Eriugena disregards rhetoric or that he is inconsistent. On the contrary, instead of persuasion Eriugena uses rhetorical techniques mainly as a means for exegesis and constructing his arguments against Gottschalk's theory. What is interesting to note is that generally Eriugena applies only *one* rhetorical figure throughout the whole treatise. In spite of this seemingly poor usage of rhetoric, one notes that this rhetorical device, which Eriugena uses constantly, is pivotal for the whole treatise.

John Scot introduces and explains this important rhetorical element in the ninth and tenth chapters (although he uses it occasionally from the very beginning of the treatise). It "is

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., I, 3...*illi falsa breuiter, aperte, uerisimiliter, et esti uera sic narrent ut audire tedeat, intelligere non pateat, credere postremo non libeat; illi fallacibus argumentis ueritatem oppugnent, asserant falsitatem, isti nec uera defendere, nec falsa ualeant refutare; illi animos audientium in errorem mouentes impellentesque dicendo terreat, contristent, exhilarent, exhortentur ardentem, isti pro ueritate lenti frigidique dormitent...* Translation is mine.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., XVIII, 1. *Errorem itaque seuissimus eorum qui uenerabilium patrum... ac per hoc mortifere, ad suum prauissimum sensum redigunt, ex utilium disciplinarum ignorantia, quas ipsa sapientia suas comites inuestigatricesque fieri uoluit...*

called *entimema* by dialecticians and rhetoricians, but by grammarians *kat'ont...frasin*, which is the noblest of all modes of reasoning and verbal signs.”¹⁰⁶ What does this rhetorical/dialectical tool imply and why it should play a supreme role in exegesis?

In the ninth chapter of the *DP*, Eriugena claims that there is no word that could be said of God in the proper sense, only from a similarity to temporal things.¹⁰⁷ Some of the words and expressions can be said of God in the quasi-proper sense (*quasi propria*), for example, *sum, est, erat, esse* – “I am,” “he is,” “he was,” “to be” (among the verbs); *essentia, ueritas, uirtus, sapientia, scientia, destinatio* – “essence,” “truth,” “virtue,” “wisdom,” “knowledge,” “destination” (among the nouns). They are applied to God in a quasi-proper sense because they signify the first and the best which is present in human nature, the very substance and all its best qualities (*ipsam substantiam et eius optima*).

Other verbal expressions are used improperly or in the figurative sense (*translata*). Eriugena names three types of such expressions: a) from likeness (*a similitudine*), b) from contrariness (*a contrario*) and c) from difference (*a differentia*). An example of the first rhetorical figure is *manus tuae fecerunt me* – “your hands have made me”¹⁰⁸ or *Oculi domini super justos et aures eius in preces eorum* – “the eyes of the Lord are upon the just and his ears are directed to their prayers.”¹⁰⁹ In both cases, the words such “hands,” “eyes,” and “ears” can be used to express God’s actions – operation, vision and attention, respectively. With the mode of difference one can ascribe to God the conditions of the human soul, such as *ira, indignatio, tristitia* etc. – “anger,” “indignation,” “sadness.” Eriugena explains that such

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., X, 1...*locum, qui ut praediximus, a dialecticis ac retoricis entimema uocatur, a grammaticis uero KATANTIΦPACIN, et est omnium argumentorum signorumque uerbalium nobilissimus.*

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., IX, 1...*Nihil digne de deo dicitur, omnia poene siue nominum siue uerborum aliarumque orationis partium signa proprie de deo dici non posse.*

¹⁰⁸ Job. 10:8

¹⁰⁹ Ps. 33:16.

words, although their meanings are not similar to the divinity, can be used to express remote meanings.¹¹⁰

The most proper way of interpreting sayings about God, however, is to apply the mode of contrariness, which Eriugena also calls *entimema*.¹¹¹ This figure of speech implies that one has to interpret the words by taking their opposite meanings. For example, if it is written “I shall destroy the wisdom of the wise and shall reject the prudence of the prudent,”¹¹² the right way to read this would be “I shall destroy the folly of the foolish and I shall reject the imprudence of the imprudent.” This will be the case of a figure of contrariness taken in the absolute sense.¹¹³

Another way to apply the same figure is to take it together with the figure of likeness (*ex similitudine atque contrarietate*). Examples of such combinations referring to God are *praescientia* and *praedestinatio*. On the one hand, these terms can be applied to him from contrariness. The words “predestination” and “foreknowledge” referring to God would mean that he had to foresee and predestine something that would happen in the future, but for God, who is eternal, there is no future; therefore, these words can be said of him only from contrariness. On the other hand, one can apply these words to God taking their meaning from similarity. To say of God that he “foreknows” things means that in his eternity he knows all the things that exist in him.¹¹⁴

Going back to the main task of Eriugena’s treatise – to prove that God does not predestine death – one notes that *entimema* can be the perfect instrument to support Eriugena’s arguments, for it allows understanding a saying, for example, “those whom he

¹¹⁰ *DP*, IX, 2.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, IX, 3. *Restat ea quae contrarietatis loco sumuntur, quibus tanta vis inest significandi, ut quodam privilegio excellentiae suae merito a graecis entimemata dicantur, hoc est conceptionis mentis.*

¹¹² I Cor. 1:19.

¹¹³ *DP*, IX, 3.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, IX, 5; X, 1.

predestined to destruction”¹¹⁵ as “those whom he did not predestine to destruction.”

Moreover, such phrases as

“Predestination and foreknowledge are not one and the same,”¹¹⁶

“God abandoned sinners,”¹¹⁷

“God foreknows evil things”¹¹⁸ and so on,

taken from the opposite, mean, in fact, that

“Predestination and foreknowledge are one and the same,”¹¹⁹

“God did not abandon sinners,”¹²⁰

“God does not foreknow evil things,”¹²¹

which is absolutely suitable not only for John Scot’s theory of predestination, but also for his theological views in general. However, the phrases in the Scripture or the Holy Fathers that literally say that God predestined death or punishment should not be automatically “translated” into their negation. Even though the final meanings will be absolutely contrary, in each particular case an exegete should, bearing in mind its “real” opposite meaning, understand reasons why it was said in such a way, and what its meaning would be if also taken from similarity.

Thus, *entimema*, as Eriugena explains, is a figure of speech which allows understanding of a saying by taking its opposite meaning. Furthermore, he explains, this is the most advantageous figure of speech “for although everything that is produced by the

¹¹⁵ Ibid., XVIII, 6.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., II, 2. *Recte ergo dicitur omnis praedestinatio praescientia, non omnis praescientia praedestinatio...*

¹¹⁷ Ibid., III, 7. *...quosdam reliquit...*

¹¹⁸ Ibid., V, 1. *Praescientia sua deus malefacta hominum futura praeuidit.*

¹¹⁹ Ibid., II, 2. *...quod est praescire, hoc est praedestinare, et quod est praedestinare, hoc est praescire; unius enim eiusdemque substantiae sunt, diuinae uidelicet, et naturae.* For more on the “logic of the contrary propositions” see Guy-H. Allard, “Jean Scot et la logique des propositions contraires,” in *From Athens to Chartres. Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought. Studies in Honour of Edouard Jeauneau*, ed. Westra Haijo Jan (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 181-194. Although he discussed them mainly in the text of *Periphyseon*, the same idea can be applied to the *DP*. For a more elaborate table of the contrary propositions in the *DP* see Mainoldi, *Introduzione*, in *GSE*, LXXVII.

¹²⁰ *DP* XVIII, 5. *Non quod in eis ipse fecit relinquet uel deserit, aliquin eorum natura ad nihilum rediret...* Ibid., III, 7. *...qui a semet ipsis inuenturi peccata sua quibus essent perituri.*

¹²¹ Ibid., XV, 9. *Peccatum, ni fallor, et peccata et poenas nec a deo fieri nec ab eo praesciri uel praedestinari.*

voice is first conceived by the mind, nevertheless not everything that is conceived by the mind is seen to have the same power of signification when it is influenced by the disturbances of the senses.”¹²²

In order to prove his point of view on predestination, John Scot applies all the methods that were available to him. Besides interpretations of God’s predestination with the help of grammar and rhetoric, Eriugena was also able to resort to linguistic explanations due to his knowledge of Greek. In the eighteenth chapter, he claims that the mistake of those who interpret the Scripture and Church Fathers wrongly consists of ignorance not only of the liberal arts, but also of the Greek language and the texts written in Greek,¹²³ including the Bible.¹²⁴ For, Eriugena explains, in the Greek the word ὁρῶ has a rich meaning. It can be translated into Latin with three words – *uideo*, *deffinio* and *destino* – “I see,” “I determine,” and “I destine.” In the same way the word προορῶ, composed of the same root and the prefix, means *praeuideo*, *praedifinio* and *praedestino* – “I foresee,” “I predetermine” and “I predestine.”

In the letter to Romans, Eriugena continues, it is written a) τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει – “of the son of God destined for power;”¹²⁵ in the letter to Ephesians b) ἐν ἀγάπῃ προορίσας ἡμᾶς – “in charity predestining us;”¹²⁶ and c) προορισθέντες κατὰ πρόθησιν θεοῦ – “predestined according to God’s plan.”¹²⁷ In all these cases, John Scot explains, it can be noted that the words with the same root, such as the verb ὁρῶ, are used: ὀρισθέντος, προορίσας and προορισθέντες. In translations into Latin, as he further points out, in all three cases the

¹²² Ibid., IX, 3. *Quamuis enim omne quod uoce profertur prius mente concipiatur, non tamen omne quod mente concipitur eandem uim significationis, dum sensibus feruore infunditur, habere uidetur.*

¹²³ For the Eastern Greek influence on John Scot’s *DP* see Ernesto S. Mainoldi, “Su alcune fonti ispiratrici della teologia e dell’escatologia del *De divina praedestinatione liber* di Giovanni Scoto Eriugena,” in *HEJSE*, 313-329.

¹²⁴ Ibid., XVIII, 1. *Errorem itaq̄e seuissimum eorum qui uenerabilium patrum maximeque sancti Augustini sententias confuse ... ex utilium disciplinarum ignorantia, quas ipsa sapientia suas comites inuestigatricesque fieri uoluit, crediderim sumpsisse primordia insuper etiam grecarum litterarum incitia in quibus praedestinationis interpretatio nullam ambiguitatis calligio gignit.*

¹²⁵ Rom. 1:4.

¹²⁶ Eph. 1:5.

¹²⁷ Eph. 1:11.

word *destino* and its compositions with the prefix are used: a) *destinati filii dei in uirtute*; b) *in caritate praedestinans nos*; c) *praedestinati secundum propositum dei* (emphasis mine). These Greek words, however, due to the richness of their meanings, could be translated with other Latin words such as *praeuideo* and *prediffinio* without losing or changing the meanings of the originals. When it comes to a noun derived from the verb ὀρῶ, that is, *προωρόσια*,¹²⁸ the same translation possibilities should also be taken into account. Thus, *προωρόσια* can also be translated in three ways, that is, *praeuisio*, *praediffinio* and *praedestinatio*.¹²⁹

This linguistic and etymological perspective strengthens John Scot's position. It allows him to treat a phrase, say, "God predestined to destruction" as only "God foresaw destruction," since he can refer to the Greek word, which compared to the Latin implies a far richer spectrum of meaning, including "to foresee" as well as "to predestine." The variety of meanings of the Greek words with the same root as the word ὀρῶ also allows Eriugena to interpret predestination by God as one and the same as his foreknowledge, that is, to identify foreknowledge and predestination and refer both of them to the substance of God, which is also one of Eriugena's main arguments for his own theological views.

All in all, the role of grammar and rhetoric is crucial in Eriugena's exegesis. Although the method that Eriugena proposes – to take the opposite meaning of a phrase or a word – might seem radical, for him it is the most proper way to interpret texts. Only with the guidance of *entimema* can the hidden meaning of the Scripture and the Fathers' interpretations can be revealed.

¹²⁸ This word is probably Eriugena's neologism.

¹²⁹ *DP XVIII, 2.*

2.3. *Ars dialectica*

John Scot takes advantage of rhetoric because it provides necessary instruments for an exegesis of the passages on predestination from the texts of the Fathers and the Scripture. Dialectic is also of a crucial significance for Eriugena for it served as a powerful tool for the development of the arguments against Gottschalk's doctrine and for support of his own theological views.

In the treatise one can find only a few passages where Eriugena mentions or gives some characteristics of his methodological guide – *dialectica*. The brevity of these passages, however, is counterbalanced by the complexity and depth of their meanings. I will outline the most important aspects of his understanding of dialectic according to the scarce definitions that appear in the text.¹³⁰ I will examine them one by one and also provide some examples of John Scot's application of logic.

2.3.1. Dialectic and philosophical truth

Encapsulating his views, Eriugena uses the term *dialectica* in connection to its functions and structure:

Someone skilled, for example, in the art of disputation [*disciplina disputandi*] that is called dialectic [*dialectica*], which, as no one doubts, was bestowed by God on man, can if he would like use it for a good cause – because certainly it was given for that purpose – while teaching those who are ignorant of it, *discern the true from the false, divide what is confused, reunify what is separated, and search for the truth in all things* [*italics mine*].¹³¹

¹³⁰ This does not mean, however, that John Scot's application of the tools of the *trivium*, logic in particular, is also scarce. On the contrary, the variety and Eriugena's constancy in their application is a remarkable feature of the treatise. In the present research, however, I will not analyze the tools of dialectic in all its variety. For a detailed analysis of the arguments in the *DP* see Giulio d'Onofrio, "*Disputandi disciplina, quae est ueritas*. Un esempio altomedievale di applicazione degli insegnamenti dialettici: il *De diuina praedestinatione liber* di Giovanni Scoto Eriugena" in *Fons scientiae. La dialettica nell'Occidente tardo-antico* (Naples: Liguori Editore, 1986), 277-320.

¹³¹ *DP VII, 1. Potest enim in disciplina uerbi causa disputandi quae dicitur dialectica peritus, quae nullo dubitante a deo homini donatur, si uoluerit bene uti, quoniam ad hoc certissime data est, dum ea ignorantes eam erudit, uera falsaue discernit, confusa diuidit, separata colligit, in omnibus ueritatem inquirat*. Translation is mine.

From the point of view that I want to emphasize here, this passage corresponds with another one at the beginning of the first chapter of the *DP* where John Scot lists and defines four main rules that he asserts he will use further in the treatise: “the first by dividing one into many, separates; the second, by determining one from among many, concludes; the third, by indicating what is hidden through what is manifest, reveals; the fourth, by separating compound into simple, resolves.”¹³² What I wish to underline in connection to these passages is the fact that dialectic is, first of all, a set of logical rules. This may seem obvious but it requires further discussion.

With these rules, dialectic provides the necessary grounds and conditions for thought to be formulated, for, being a framework of thought, these fundamental logical operations – division, separation, definition, and demonstration – constitute thoughts and make them possible. That is why the main task of dialectic or the art of disputation is, first of all, to structure and organize thought and, consequently, speech, since a thought exists in close connection with its outer and perceptible equivalent.¹³³

It should not be forgotten that dialectic deals with the truth – *ueritas*. As is defined in almost every introduction to a medieval textbook on logic, *dialectica est disputatio acuta verum distinguens a falso*,¹³⁴ and as Eriugena repeats, with its help one can “discern the true from the false, divide what is confused, reunify what is separated and search for the truth in

¹³² Ibid., I, 1. *Quarum enim prima unum in multa diuidendo segregat, secunda unum de multis diffiniendo, colligit, tertia per manifesta occulta demonstrando aperit, quarta composita in simplicia separando resoluit.* According to Giulio d’Onofrio, this particular four-fold division of the logical rules of philosophy is rooted in the ancient history of philosophy. Traces of it can be found in the four “dialectic ways,” proposed by the Alexandrian commentators on Porphyry’s *Isgoge*. As he shows further, the same structure of dialectic can also be seen in Augustine’s and Boethius’ definitions of dialectic as *ars diffiniendi, distribuendi et colligendi*. Op.cit., 287-288.

¹³³ On the problems of medieval logic, see Alexander Broadie, *Introduction to Medieval Logic*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). For the development of early medieval logic see John Marenbon, *From The Circle of Alcuin to The School of Auxerre: Logic, Theology and Philosophy in The Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

¹³⁴ Alcuin, *Dialogus de rhetorica et uirtutibus*, PL 101, 947-948, 332 IX. See also Isidorus *docet enim in pluribus generibus quaestionem quemadmodum disputando uera at falsa dijudicentur, Etymologiae, Liber II, caput XXII, PL 82, 140A.*

all things.”¹³⁵ Dialectic incorporates various rules for structuring thoughts and making correct definitions, so that at the end of reasoning conclusions, which bring the truth, can be achieved. The correct logical forms of statements serve as bases for their validity, and those statements that are made according to one or another logical rule can be regarded as truthful. John Scotus expresses this connection of dialectic to the truth in a vivid and expressive way – dialectic for him *is* the truth itself.

No man instructed in the art of disputation has any doubt that it is indeed by means of those four parts, as by some useful and honourable fourfold method of human reasoning, that the very art of disputation, which is *truth* [italics mine], is arrived at.¹³⁶

On the other hand, dialectic does not serve for the truth of propositions and arguments themselves, but rather for the truth that these propositions and arguments state about reality.

As Eriugena says,

Since every method of the true and complete doctrine, by which the principle [*ratio*] of all things is most diligently investigated and most clearly elucidated, is established within that discipline which the Greeks usually call *philosophia*...¹³⁷

Dialectic searches for the *rationes* of things – the principles of their *esse*, which is why John Scot identifies dialectic with philosophy.

The task of dialectic is manifold. It contains logical rules that provide a formal basis for thought to be articulated in a correct way. The art of disputation, however, is not only a pure technique of thinking. It deals with things and restores and reflects in speech their *rationes*, the truth of things, with the utmost clarity. For John Scot, dialectic, being an art of disputation is, in fact, nothing but a constant “exercising of philosophy.”

¹³⁵ See footnote 131.

¹³⁶ *DP I, 2. His enim, tanquam utili quodam honestoque humanae rationationis quadriuo, ad ipsam disputandi disciplinam, quae est ueritas, omnis in ea eruditus perueniri non dubitat.* This strong formulation of the identity between the art of disputation and the truth is quite curious one. Further in the present chapter I will discuss another possible meaning of this identification.

¹³⁷ *Ibid., I, 4 Cum omnis piae perfectaque doctrinae modus, quo omnium rerum ratio et studiosissime quaeritur et apertissime inuenitur, in ea discipline, quae a graecis philosophia solet uocari, sit constitutus...* Translation is mine.

2.3.2. Dialectic and theological truth: A means of salvation

In the phrase that opens the treatise, John Scot claims that:

...What else is the exercise of philosophy but the exposition of the rules of true religion by which the supreme and principal cause of all things, God, is worshipped with humility and rationally sought? It follows then that true philosophy is true religion and conversely that true religion is true philosophy. While philosophy may in many and various ways be divided up, it is seen, however, to have twice two principal parts necessary for the solution of every question.¹³⁸

This passage reveals a new dimension of Eriugena's views on the task of dialectic. What is striking in this formulation is that, following Augustine's phrasing,¹³⁹ Eriugena identifies philosophy with religion and claims that religion and philosophy are one and the same. What does this mean for Eriugena? According to him, philosophy and religion coincide in having one goal which both of them strive for and seek, that is, "the origin and primary cause of all things – God" (*summa et principalis omnium rerum causa, deus*). Their confluence goes further: the means to achieve this goal is not only faith; the logical rules that philosophy contains with necessity should be applied to questions of religion. As Eriugena claims, God is sought *rationally* (*rationabiliter inuestigatur*), which is the same as worshipping God (*humiliter colitur*). What Eriugena also stresses in this phrase is that religion can only be genuine if it is philosophy, that is, if it is based on logical rules, and vice-versa – philosophy is true only if it coincides with religion, that is, if it searches for God. For John Scot, faith is the same as rational reasoning on theological matters, and, consequently, the truth of reason and the Truth of faith (revelation) are one and the same. In the light of this discussion, John Scot's expressive definition of the art of disputation as the truth (*...ad ipsam disputandi*

¹³⁸ Ibid., DP I, 1. *...quid est aliud de philosophia tractare, nisi uerae religionis, qua summa et principalis omnium rerum causa, deus, et humiliter colitur et rationabiliter inuestigatur, regulas exponere? Conficitur inde ueram esse philosophiam ueram religionem conuersumque ueram religionem esse ueram philosophiam. Quae, dum multifariam diuersisque modis diuidatur, bis binas tamen partes principales ad omnem questionem soluendam necessarias habere dinoscitur.*

¹³⁹ Augustine, *De uera religione*, 5, 8. *Sic enim creditur et docetur, quod est humanae salutis caput, non aliam esse philosophiam, id est sapientiae studium, et aliam religionem, cum hi, quorum doctrinam non approbamus, nec sacramenta nobis cum communicant.* Eriugena quotes it in the DP I, 1.

disciplinam, quae est ueritas...)¹⁴⁰ can be also explained in the way that dialectic is the discipline that can achieve divine Truth.

Being indispensable in theological questions, dialectic automatically becomes a powerful means of salvation (*humanae salutis caput*).¹⁴¹ Moreover, this discipline was bestowed on a man by God himself.¹⁴² It belongs to the same category of God's gifts as the free choice of the will, that is, to one that can be used for both intentions – good as well as bad.¹⁴³ Dialectic, being God's gift, not belongs to the nature of man in the sense of constituting his nature; nevertheless, it is rooted in his nature, and should not be forgotten, disregarded or neglected by man. According to John Scot, this faculty needs training and strengthening because it is essential for the fulfillment of the primary goal of mankind, that is, salvation.

The scope in which John Scot applies logic in the treatise – the variety of types of arguments and syllogisms and the frequency of their application – is impressive. As Mainoldi points out, the *DP* itself can be considered as “un grande sillogismo.”¹⁴⁴ To illustrate John Scot's application of logic to theological questions, I will take his proof that God's predestination belongs to the substance of God. John Scot uses an argument “from definition.”¹⁴⁵ First, he gives a definition according to Augustine: divine predestination is preparation and disposition of all things before the creation.¹⁴⁶ Before the creation there was nothing except God, but the predestination of God was before creation; therefore, the

¹⁴⁰ See footnote 136.

¹⁴¹ This is Augustine's formulation. See footnote 139.

¹⁴² *DP VII, 1. ...disputandi quae dicitur dialectica peritus, quae nullo dubitante a deo homini donatur, si uoluerit bene uti, quoniam ad hoc certissime data est...*

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, Eriugena follows Augustine's theory of God's gifts, according to which there are three types of God's gift, that is, great (*magna bona*), middle (*media*), and inferior (*minima*) good. Justice, prudence, temperance, etc. belong to the first type of God's gift; the free choice of a man and dialectic belong to the second; and the beauty of the worldly things belongs to the last group.

¹⁴⁴ Mainoldi, *Introduzione*, XLI.

¹⁴⁵ *DP, II, 2. Est enim diuina praedestinatio, ut ait Augustinus, omnium quae deus facturus est ante saecula preparatio atque dispositio. Si ergo ante saecula nihil creditur et intelligitur praeter solum deum fuisse, praedestinationem autem dei ante omnem creaturam esse nullus sanus ambiguit, colligitur praedestinationem dei ipsum deum esse atque ad naturam eum pertinere.*

¹⁴⁶ According to Madec, this definition is taken from Augustine's *De dono perseuerantiae*, *PL*, 45, Cap. XVII, 1018-1019.

predestination of God is God himself and belongs to his nature. This proof and statement on the unity of predestination and God's substance is crucial for Eriugena's theology, and as I will show below, it was criticized by John Scot's opponents.

Thus, one of the most outstanding (his rivals would say "monstrous") phrases: "what else is the exercise of philosophy but the exposition of the rules of true religion" is not the result of using words carelessly. For Eriugena, dialectic as a technique of correct reasoning cannot be used without searching for the divine Truth; in the same way, philosophical reasoning does not stand alone without faith and seeking redemption. Eriugena refers to his method in various ways, but in this apparent diversity there is a stable unity – the unity of intellectual endeavor and religious experience.

2.4. Justification of the method

In the discussion above, I wanted to give a picture of the methodological richness and diversity of the treatise. As I also aimed to show, rhetoric, grammar, and dialectic play fundamental roles in Eriugena's exegesis, in his formulation of arguments against Gottschalk's doctrine, and in support of the theological position of the philosopher. This methodological diversity, however, can raise questions. As one can note, John Scot's claim of the leading role of the *trivium* in theological questions is quite ambitious. Despite Eriugena's firm conviction of the supremacy of the liberal arts in biblical exegesis, one can question the very applicability of these disciplines to matters of theology. Thus, the questions that I want to address to John Scot are how he justifies his methods and why he thinks the *trivium* contains the most proper means for biblical exegesis.

As John Scot himself explains, logic and rhetoric are indispensable because they can help, first, find the proper solution to any exegetical difficulty and, second, they can reveal incoherencies in heresies. Thus, Gottschalk is wrong in his theological presumptions because

he does not follow reason and the rules of logic, which means that the proper application of logic can show exactly at what points he was mistaken.

This answer, however, leads to another question. Why it is logic and human reasoning that are able to reveal the truth of religion? What are Eriugena's grounds for identifying philosophical and theological truth? In my opinion, the answer to these questions can be found in the second chapter of the *DP*, where John Scot says

The divine notion by which God understands [*intelligit*] himself is properly called wisdom [*sapientia*]. But when the same reason is joined to eternal intelligence [*aeterno intellectu copulatur*] so that reason sees in it an incomprehensible notion of all the natures that have been created by that intelligence, reason thereupon calls it knowledge [*scientia*].¹⁴⁷

This passage has strong theological and philosophical implications. According to John Scot, God has a rational nature; God is the highest intellect, which *intelligit* himself. Although one line above John Scot claims that “divine intelligence itself possesses a very complete and perfect notion of its own eternal and immutable substance, which is beyond the understanding of any creature,”¹⁴⁸ which means that no ambition of the human mind to reach the knowledge of God can ever be realized, it is still possible for human reason to approach the divine notion. Eriugena formulates this conviction in quite a direct and precise way: *autem eadem ratio aeterno intellectui copulatur* – “the same reason is joined to the eternal intellect.” As he says in another place, one “should return into oneself, look at what is above, and consult the Truth itself,”¹⁴⁹ for there is a connection between human and divine intellect.

According to John Scot, one should search for the knowledge of God because obtaining knowledge is the process of “joining eternal intelligence,” an ascent to the divinity. In my opinion, this passage gives grounds for saying that Eriugena's conviction of supreme

¹⁴⁷ *DP* II, 4 ...*ipsa diuina notio qua semet ipsum deus intelligit sapientia proprie uocatur. Cum autem eadem ratio aeterno intellectui copulatur, ut in eo uideat esse omnium naturarum, quae ab eo creatae sunt, incomprehensibilem notionem, ipsa mox appellat scientiam.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 4 ...*ipse diuinus intellectus aeternae suae immutabilisque substantiae plenissimam perfectissimamque habeat notionem, qua omnem exsuperat intellectum creaturae.*

¹⁴⁹ *DP*, XV, 5. ...*in se ipsum redeat, altius intendant, ipsam ueritatem consultat.*

role of logic and the *triuium* is based on the very rational nature of God, although in the *DP* Eriugena himself does not elaborate his views on this connection. I think that the intellectual nature of God legitimates Eriugena's method – dialectic. That is why one can say that for the philosopher the realms of religion and faith, on one side, are not separate from those of philosophy and knowledge, on the other.

CHAPTER 3

PRUDENTIUS' AND FLORUS' CRITIQUES: EXEGESIS ACCORDING TO THE *REGULA FIDEI*

Prudentius' work *De Praedestinatione Contra Johannem Scotum cognomento Eriugenam* and Florus' composition, *Aduersus Joannis Scoti Eriigenae Erroneas Definitiones*, although somewhat different in temperament, style, exegetical decisions, and extent, have many common features. Prudentius and Florus discuss the *DP* in detail, chapter-by-chapter and paragraph-by-paragraph, analyzing and refuting John Scot's theses, paying attention to minor contradictions as well as correcting the "gravest errors." In their structures, these works precisely follow Eriugena's treatise; they are divided into nineteen chapters, and in each chapter they comment on the corresponding one from the *DP*. The refutations of Eriugena's assertions in these critical works are structured somewhat differently. Prudentius quotes the whole passage from the *DP* and writes detailed *correctiones* afterwards. Florus uses paraphrases of the main ideas of Eriugena's nineteenth chapters, probably formulated from Prudentius, and makes critical comments on each of them.¹⁵⁰

Prudentius and Florus criticize the *DP* from various aspects. As I mentioned above, besides the theological and anthropological views, Eriugena's methodological position was also the target of sharp critiques by his contemporaries. Not only was the problem of *what* to think about the God's actions, the nature of man, free will, punishment, and the Last judgment in the proper and correct ways and terms important, but also the question of *how* to deal with theological questions had great significance for early medieval theologians.

I will examine, in terms of methodology, the main points for which John Scot's treatise was criticized by the Carolingian theologians Prudentius and Florus. In light of this critique I

¹⁵⁰ John Marenbon assumes that Prudentius read the *DP* in toto, while Florus might have read only extracts from the treatise besides Prudentius' summaries. See Marenbon, *John Scottus and Carolingian Theology*, 311. The fact that Eriugena's theses that Florus uses in the treatise coincide with the formulations in Prudentius' *Recapitulatio* (PL 115, 1351D-1366A) supports this point of view.

will discuss what their own exegetical approaches were, as they articulated them, and what exegetical methods they applied.

I will consider the works by Prudentius and Florus together because, in my opinion, these theologians are proponents of one and the same exegetical approach. Although their works are different in some respects, I will focus only on their convictions concerning methodology not stress the particularity of their exegeses.

3.1. Critiques of Eriugena's approach

As I have discussed in the previous chapter, John Scot was convinced of the necessity to solve any question of theology with the tools of the liberal arts. As a guide for exegesis, rhetoric and grammar were to help in the proper interpretation of the sayings in the Scripture and the Fathers, while dialectic was to be used to search for and defend the Truth hidden in the sacred texts. Remarks concerning Eriugena's methodology are found throughout Prudentius' and Florus' compositions. The first and second chapters of the both texts, however, are especially devoted to the critique of Eriugena's approach. Two passages from these chapters demonstrate Prudentius' and Florus' attitudes towards Eriugena's methodological ambitions as well as their own methodological views.

Florus disputes Eriugena's statement that "every question can be solved with four rules of the whole philosophy:"¹⁵¹

The faith of the Church answers from the contrary statement that the truth of eternal judgment and God's regulation, which are expressed by the word 'predestination,' does not need philosophy, but the apostles and the prophets of God, and it is not in four rules of the mundane doctrine, but in one and the true way who said about himself: "I am the way and truth and life" (John, 14:6).¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ *DP*, I.

¹⁵² Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, I, 104A. *Cui fides ecclesiae e contrario respondet, ueritatem aeterni iudicii et ordinationis dei, quae uocabulo praedestinationis exprimitur, non esse requirendam philosophis, sed apostolis et prophetis dei: nec in mundanae doctrina quadruuiis, sed in una et uera uia, quae dicit de semetipsa: Ego sum uia, ueritas et uita.*

And as Prudentius formulates:

For if it would be free to debate on the human opinions, there would be no lacking of those who would dare to struggle against the Truth and who would rely on the loquacity of mundane wisdom. One could learn about this pernicious vanity, which the Christian faith should avoid as far as it can, from the instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, intending to call all nations to the light, has chosen his followers not from among the philosophers and orators in the preaching of the gospels, but he has selected them from among the humble and fishermen, by whom he manifested himself, so that the heavenly doctrine, which was full of virtues, should not be seen as to require the help of words.¹⁵³

Leaving rhetoric aside, in these fragments one finds sound grounds for John Scot's opponents to disagree with his application of the liberal arts to theological issues.

First, both theologians stressed the separation and principal difference between *doctrina coelestis* (or *doctrina ueritatis*)¹⁵⁴ and *doctrina mundana* – the heavenly doctrine, the doctrine of the Truth, and the mundane doctrine. The first doctrine contains the mysteries of the divine realm, while the second one comprises the laws of the created world. The natures of these doctrines, as is implied in the passages, are different: if the first holds the divine Truth, the second stands on human wisdom.

Second, particular approaches are required to penetrate the spheres of both doctrines. These approaches, since the doctrines have different roots, are specific for each of them. Thus, everything that belongs to the created world is the field of exercise of the human mind (which is the part of the created world), and the proper tools to be applied for its study are those of the liberal arts.¹⁵⁵ The “tools” that are applicable to the celestial doctrine should be

¹⁵³ Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, I, 1014CD. *Nam si humanis persuasionibus semper disceptare sit liberum, nunquam deesse poterunt qui ueritati audeant reluctari, et de mundanae sapientiae loquacitate confidere: cum hanc nocentissimam uanitatem, quantum debeat fides christiana uitare, ex ipsa domini nostri Jesu Christi institutione cognoscat, qui omnes nationes ad illuminationem fidei uocaturus, non de philosophis aut oratoribus, qui praedicando Euangelio famularentur, elegit, sed de humilibus et piscatoribus, per quos se manifestaret, assumpsit, ne doctrina coelestis, quae erat plena uirtutum, auxilio uideretur indigere uerborum.*

¹⁵⁴ Florus' formulation.

¹⁵⁵ Prudentius' and Florus' sharp attacks on dialectic do not reflect their rejection of the liberal arts in general. The negative rhetoric of the fragments, in my opinion, should be understood only towards an application of the liberal arts to the *doctrina coelestis*.

taken from the *disciplinae ecclesiasticae*¹⁵⁶ – “the ecclesiastical discipline.” In other places, Florus defines it as *regula fidei* – “the rule of faith,” which, according to him, is “the testimony of the divine Scriptures and attestation of the teaching of the Fathers.”¹⁵⁷ As Prudentius emphasizes, to penetrate the mysteries of the celestial teaching one should use “the fourfold way” of the Gospels, and keep to four traditional methods of biblical exegesis – historical, ethical, allegorical, and anagogic.¹⁵⁸

Third, an important implication of the separation between mundane and heavenly doctrines is that an application of the tools of one of them to the issues of another is impossible. Thus, according to Prudentius and Florus, the divine Truth by nature cannot be an object of human wisdom (*mundana sapientia*). It is not a field for the exercise of human opinions and persuasions (*humanis persuasionibus*), but of faith, and solid and immutable, although hidden, knowledge, which can only be found in the testimonies of the Bible and the Holy Fathers.

Fourth, John Scot made a mistake, the theologians point out, by confusing methodologies that are mutually exclusive. One discipline searches for the divine Truth, while other explores things in the created world. Eriugena, as his opponents accuse him, applied the liberal arts – the worldly discipline – to divine matters to which they are not applicable.

Thus, as Prudentius and Florus claim, the human world is the field of competence of the liberal arts. The world of divine wisdom, on the contrary, is not the place for human

¹⁵⁶ Florus’ formulation. Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, II, 110A.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 108B. *Ecce quanta proposuit, imo uelut omnibus sequenda et nemini dijudicanda, absque ullo testimonio scripturae diuinae, absque ulla attestazione paternae doctrinae, tam multipliciter definiuit. Sed nos, domino adiuuante, uigilanter singula discutentes, quid de eis iuxta fidei regulam sentiendum sit discernamus.*

¹⁵⁸ Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, Epilogus, 1352AB. *Relinque quadriuum uanitatis, quod sequens extorris uiae factus es ueritatis. Quanto melius, quantoque salubrius ageres, si uni uerae sempiternae uiae innitens, quadriga illius humilis uehi, quam quadriui tui inflatus typho raptum ire in diuersa diligeres! Quadriga huius uiae sunt quatuor euangelia, uno paradisi fonte manantia, quibus nobis uia panditur salutaris. Quadriga huius uiae quatuor sunt uirtutes prudentia, temperantia, fortitudo, iustitia, quibus omnis morum probitas uenustatur. Quadriga huius uiae sunt quatuor diuinorum eloquiorum species historica, ethica, allegorica, anagogica, quibus ad omnem sacrarum litterarum intellectum, illuminante gratia eius, inducimur.*

reasoning, but only for *doctrina ueritatis* or *ecclesiascticae disciplina* that dwell in it. As Prudentius says, “one thing is to speculate on the human world and another is to treat divine matters.”¹⁵⁹

3.2. Inconsistency of the method? Application of dialectic

One of the major points on which Florus and Prudentius disagree with John Scot is his assertion that God does not predestine to damnation and that there is only the predestination of the elect to eternal bliss. Eriugena, as I stated above, based his arguments on the principle of the unity of the divine substance, which allows him to attribute predestination to the substance of God and identify predestination with foreknowledge.¹⁶⁰ The arguments that the theologians proposed against Eriugena’s positions, in my opinion, are worth discussing in detail.

If the usual methods of refuting John Scot’s theses were references to the Church Fathers and the Bible and comments on them or pointing out inconsistencies in Eriugena’s statements,¹⁶¹ the issue of whether God predestined to death and punishment was discussed and solved by both theologians with the help of the categories. I will follow Prudentius’ argumentation. Prudentius starts his refutation from the reference to the categories.¹⁶² As he notes, there are ten categories, among which one is the primary – *usia* – while the other nine are accidents (*accidentia, id est quae accident in substantia*). The category of relation, as Prudentius underlines, belongs to accidents, but not to the substance. One can say of a man, for example, that he is “a man” (*homo*), which means that he refers to man’s substance which is permanent and does not change with time. On the other hand, if one says of a man that he

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., IX, 1120A. ...*aliud est enim diuina, aliud humana tractari.*

¹⁶⁰ See *DP*, II, III.

¹⁶¹ Thus, for example, Florus points out the contradiction between assertion that predestination is said of God substantially and the statement that predestination can be referred to God only from the similitude to the temporal things. Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, IX, 157BC.

¹⁶² Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, II, 1037A-1039A.

is “one who determines” (*destinator*), he uses a predication which belongs to accidents. a) It does not say anything about the substance of a man, because the substance of a man does not change throughout his life, but it might be the case that a man is “one who determines” not all the time, but only during some periods of his life. b) The predication “one who determines” belongs rather to the category of a relation, because “one who determines” exists only in relation to something which he determines and vice-versa – a thing which is determined, of necessity, is determined by someone. Thus, a man can be called “a man” all the time, while “one who determines” only when there is something determined by him, which is why “determination” is said of a man not substantially, but accidentally.

Everything, as Prudentius continues, that can be said of God, is said of him either according to substance or according to relation (*secundum substantiam, aut secundum relationem*); either properly or figuratively (*uel proprie, uel translate*). In the same way as with the predications of a man, the word “predestination” said of God implies, on one hand, God, who predestines, and, on the other, the world and creatures that God predestines, and since “this relation in God refers partly to God himself and partly to created things,”¹⁶³ the predications “one who predestines,” as well as “creator,” “maker,” “regulator,” “judge” etc. (*creator, factor, ordinator, iudex...*) belong to the category of relation and they are said of God relatively. On the contrary, the predications “wisdom,” “knowledge,” “goodness,” etc. (*sapientia, scientia, bonitas...*) refer to God substantially because they are said of him without reference to something else, but only to the substance of God. Therefore, Prudentius concludes, predestination is not said of God substantially.¹⁶⁴

Since “predestination” does refer not to the substance itself of God, but to things that he arranges, regulates, and wills to happen, it is not a mistake to say that the predestination of God is multiple. For, to say “God’s predestinations” does not imply a multiplicity of God’s

¹⁶³ Ibid., II, 1037D. ... *quae tamen relatio in deo partim ad se, partim ad creaturas refertur...*

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., II, 138A. ...*conficitur ergo nullatenus destinationem de deo essentialiter praedicari...*

substance, but only the multiplicity of his ordinations and operations in the created world, which can be as manifold as the things created.¹⁶⁵ Therefore, Prudentius concludes, Eriugena commits a mistake in referring predestination to the substance of God and claiming that there is the only predestination of elected to salvation.

Furthermore, the problem of language and its applicability to the divinity was solved by Prudentius in a different way than John Scot proposes.¹⁶⁶ Prudentius agrees with Eriugena that any signs and words taken from the similarity to corporal things and applied to the “ineffable divine nature” do not have enough power of signification. Nevertheless, Prudentius, a theologian, argues that when it comes to interpretation of divine actions revealed in the Scriptures, God wants and ordains man to predicate the words in the proper sense.¹⁶⁷ Therefore, the predications “foreknowledge” and “predestination” refer to God properly, and they should be understood as literally signifying, on one hand, knowledge, and, on the other hand, the establishment and determination of things and events that are going to be. Thus, the solid “authority of the divine eloquence,” according to Prudentius, does not allow the interpretation of the Scriptures from contrariety as Eriugena declares. Moreover, as Florus claims, Eriugena’s method of direct negation of biblical affirmations is not only dangerous, but it makes no sense. Since the Scriptures’ formulations contain the utmost truth, to claim that the truth is not a truth is insane.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Florus’ argument is similar to that of Prudentius. Florus also states that to predicate “predestination” to the substance of God is impossible; “predestination” can be said of God only relatively since it refers to the created world. See Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, II, 108C-112A.

¹⁶⁶ *DP*, IX, 1. *Ubi primo notandum, quoniam nihil digne de deo dicitur, omnia poene siue nominum siue uerborum aliarumque orationis partium signa proprie de deo dici non posse*

¹⁶⁷ Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, IX, 1118D-1119A. *Uerum est quidem illam ineffabilem, incorpoream immutabilemque naturam quae est trinitas, unus et uerus deus, nullis corporalium rerum signis ac uocibus proferre ualere: quantum tamen ipso uniuersitates auctore datur atque conceditur ipsis quibus humanam naturam uti dedit, uerborum significationibus, pro munere distribuentis, et capacitate sumentis, digne quae sua sunt uoluit institut praedicari.*

¹⁶⁸ Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, X, 158CD.

Another interesting passage in Prudentius' critical work which I think is worth attention is devoted to a discussion of the nature of man.¹⁶⁹ John Scot claims that the substance of a man, who was created according to the image of God, is rational free will (*uoluntas libera rationalis*),¹⁷⁰ and that the nature of man has three attributes – *esse*, *uolle* and *scire* – “to be,” “to will,” and “to know.”¹⁷¹ Prudentius, on the contrary, argues that the will and knowledge do not constitute the nature of man, but they rather belong to God's gifts, serving as “ornaments” (*ornamenta*) of the substance of man.¹⁷² The nature of man, he continues, was created according to the image of God, is not as *uolle* and *scire*, but as a rational soul (*rationalis mens*).¹⁷³

In order to prove his point of view, Prudentius resorts to reasoning based on syllogisms, which can be recapitulated in the following way:

Everything created is established by God as a source.

Whatever is established by a supremely good source is good.

Therefore, everything created is good.

Then, taking the conclusion of this syllogism as a minor premise, Prudentius continues:

Not every human volition is good, since there are evil volitions

(Everything created by God is good)

Therefore, human volition is not a creature of God.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, IV, 1050D-1052C.

¹⁷⁰ *DP*, IX, 1. *Ubi primo notandum, quoniam nihil digne de deo dicitur, omnia poene siue nominum siue uerborum aliarumque orationis partium signa proprie de deo dici non posse.*

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, IV, 6. *Quamuis enim beatam uitam peccando perdidit, substantiam suam non amisit quae est esse, uelle et scire. Est enim et uult et scit, uult se esse et scire, scit se esse et uelle.*

¹⁷² Prudentius, *Contra JoSco*, IV, 1051A. *Sed esse est eius natura atque substantia; uelle et scire non sunt eius substantia atque natura, sed ornamenta substantiae, dono conditoris attributa.*

¹⁷³ Florus, however, is of a different opinion. He argues that the substance of man is not to be, to will and to know, but a body and soul in inseparable connection. He stresses that these three attributes belong to the human soul, but the substance of man is a soul and a body together. Florus, *Aduersus JoSco*, IV, 129A-130B.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, IV, 1052BC. *Cum enim constet quod omnia quae creata sunt, deo auctore sint condita, nimirum liquet quia omnia quae auctor summe bonus condidit bona sunt, attestante scriptura: Et uidit deus cuncta quae fecerat, et erant ualde bona (Gen. 1:33) Patet ergo quod omnis creatura dei, sicut apostolus ait, bona est. Nulla creatura dei non est bona (I Tim. 4:4); omnis autem uoluntas hominis non est bona, quaedam enim uoluntas mala: non est igitur uoluntas hominis creatura dei; nulla enim creatura dei mala, nonnulla autem hominis uoluntas mala.*

The general conclusion that Prudentius draws from these syllogisms is that “the will and knowledge of man do not belong to his substance, but they are God’s gifts imposed on the substance of man,”¹⁷⁵ which is quite important for Prudentius’ argumentation against the role of the free will of man stressed in Eriugena’s treatise.

The difference of views between Eriugena and Prudentius on the nature of man also implies an important theological and anthropological issue, the concept of the image and likeness of God. As I have shown above, Eriugena claims that the substance of man is a three-fold unity – *esse*, *uelle* and *scire* – which means that these three modalities are parts of God’s image. Prudentius, however, stating that will and knowledge do not belong to the substance of man, implies that the image of God according to which man was created, includes only one modality – *esse* – while *uelle* and *scire* were granted by God only after the creation.

These discussions on the predications of God and the nature of man reveal interesting issues. They show not only the mastery and maturity of the theologians in applying philosophical terminology to theological questions, but also in formulating their theological and anthropological ideas philosophically, which moves this debate onto a philosophical level.

The presence of these arguments in the whole system of Prudentius’ and Florus’ critique of Eriugena’s methodological position and his theological claims is quite remarkable. How, one might ask, can the application of logic be explained in the context of Prudentius’ and Florus’ rejection of the interference of the liberal arts into theology?

On the one hand, to my knowledge these are the only cases where both theologians apply the tools and the terminology of dialectic in this way in their critical texts.¹⁷⁶ The application of logical tools and language does not change the main principle of Florus’ and

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., IV, 1052B. *Unde luce clarius colligitur quod uoluntas hominis atque scientia non sunt eius substantia, sed dona dei indita humanae substantiae, id est animae rationali.*

¹⁷⁶ Florus, however, does not use syllogistic reasoning.

Prudentius' critique of Eriugena's treatise and their biblical exegeses – to stay loyal to the formulations found in the sacred texts and build their own arguments around them. Thus, throughout their works these theologians base their critiques predominantly on quotations from the Bible and extensive relevant excerpts from the Fathers (especially Prudentius). Taking into consideration the general character of their exegesis based on the compilation of authoritative texts, the significance of these isolated samples of logical (and philosophical) reasoning can be questioned.

On the other hand, these arguments cannot be neglected. It seems that for Prudentius and Florus, who were well educated in the liberal arts, to resort to philosophical terminology was a powerful way to prove that Eriugena's philosophical speculations on theological and anthropological matters were groundless, and that he committed not only a doctrinal but also a logical mistake. This situation might seem paradoxical. Nevertheless, Prudentius' and Florus' ways of thinking had taken shape in the same logical framework in which Eriugena's thought had been formed, although their theological and anthropological ideas did not achieve such philosophical elaboration as Eriugena's views.

CONCLUSION

The predestination controversy, as I have tried to show, had a particular significance for the development of Carolingian exegesis. An uncertainty in received theological tradition and a necessity to establish the proper interpretation of the biblical passages and the testimonies of the Holy Fathers on the predestination question led to the problem of methodology. How can one read the Scriptures? An answer to this question was given in more or less elaborated form by all the participants of the predestination polemics.

One of the exegetic strategies was formulated and used during the debate by John Scot Eriugena. He consistently applied techniques of the liberal arts to the interpretation of sacred texts and solving theological difficulties, which gave him intellectual freedom in interpreting these texts. According to him, grammar, rhetoric, and logic can provide the proper tools to find the most reliable solution to any theological problem as well as defend the biblical Truth against heresies and false interpretations. For Eriugena, philosophy and theology formed an inseparable unity, and, consequently, the truth that philosophy is seeking for is the Truth of religion. In my opinion, Eriugena's conviction of the supreme role of logic and the *trium* was based on theologico-philosophical ideas of John Scot. The supreme role that he gives to logic might be explained by his views on the very nature of God, which, as John Scot defines it in the DP, is intellectual, although in this text he does not fully elaborate this idea.

Another methodology for dealing with the Scriptural Truth was proposed by Eriugena's opponents Florus and Prudentius, who came to the necessity of its formulation in confronting Eriugena's method. Prudentius and Florus claim that one should distinguish the principles of theology and the principles of philosophy, which John Scot had confused. If the human world is the field of competence of the liberal arts, the divine wisdom, according to these theologians, is not a place for exercising human reasoning and "insane" arguments.

Solid knowledge found in the testimonies of the Scriptures and the Holy Fathers is the only source where the divine Truth is revealed. Furthermore, the very language of the self-revelation of God in the holy texts, according to these theologians, is superior to the language of the arts of the *trivium*, which was invented by human reason alone.

In order to *prove* the groundlessness of Eriugena's theological and anthropological ideas, however, Prudentius and Florus themselves could not avoid applying the tools of logic, indispensable tools for any refutation. Although their application of categories and even syllogisms had a rather random and inconsistent character, this very case is curious in that it shows the complicity of the intellectual situation in the mid-ninth century.

On the one hand, as this theological and methodological conflict reveals, both theology and philosophy were in the active process of establishing their independent "territories." If philosophy tried to expand the limits of its application to the scope of theology, theology took an active position of defending its independence and showing philosophy the limits it is not allowed to step over. This rejection created an opposition (which, however, was formulated only by theology) between philosophical and theological approaches. That is why it is possible to say that the autonomy of each field began to be established.

On the other hand, the language of the polemics – of authority and logical reasoning – was common among all of the participants, although it was applied to different extents, with different nuances and stresses. Thus, one can say that by the mid-ninth century, the liberal arts had already created a general conceptual framework where the autonomous development of philosophical as well as theological reasoning and argumentations could take place.

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