

**MEMORIA, ELOQUENTIA AND SAPIENTIA
IN JOHN OF SALISBURY'S *METALOGICON****

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ABSTRACT

John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon* is a defence of logic and its role as an instrument for philosophy, as well as a commented reading of Aristotle's *Organon*. It presents, therefore, a didactic effort, learnt from masters, to help readers to understand the realities perceived by the senses and to obtain true, intellectual and scientific knowledge. Thus, the influence of William of Conches and Hugh of Saint Victor is revealed: John of Salisbury intends, as do they, to provide a method which will lead to the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom. For this method, memory plays a vital role, acting as a bridge between *sensus* and *ratio*, from sensory perception to rational knowledge.

Keywords: John of Salisbury; rhetoric; memory; knowledge

**1. John of Salisbury and the Renaissance
of the twelfth century**

John of Salisbury was neither a grammarian nor a rhetorician, nor did he write any work on grammar or rhetoric, yet in his works he offers valuable first-hand information on the teaching of the *trivium* in the twelfth-century schools. He was educated in France and attended the Cathedral school of Chartres, where he soaked up its spirit of renewal of learning. His teachers were the most important intellectuals of the time and he was an exceptional witness to the thought and vital transformations of the century; thus it is no surprise that he became an illustrious representative of the Renaissance and humanism of the twelfth century.

Following the so-called "Dark Ages", from the fall of the Western Roman Empire (fifth century) to the start of the economic and cultural revitalisation of the tenth and eleventh centuries, a cultural rebirth was witnessed between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries which transformed the face of Western Europe. This cultural rebirth is known as the Renaissance of the twelfth century.¹

* This research has been made possible by support from the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities and the European Regional Development Fund. Research Project FFI2017-82101-P.

¹ Brooke (1998: 398–400).

This cultural renaissance involved the development and improvement of study methods and programmes within a new scholastic framework where reason stands as the best interpreter of reality. Nature, and in general, reality, was still considered to be visible symbols of God's action, and was at this time seen as a rational structure worthy of study, as a rationally organized according to certain laws which made knowledge of the universe possible. A consequence of this revived school activity is the emergence of different centres for inquire into the *artes*, especially grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic, including the school of Chartres during the first half of the twelfth century, whose particular field of study may be distinguished by naturalism and humanist spirit: these two aspects, taught and practised in schools, define the rebirth of which we speak.²

One of John of Salisbury's great teachers was Bernard of Chartres (died *ca.* 1130), an expert in grammar and logic and a diffuser of Platonism in the West.³ Bernard is famous for his observation, as told by his disciple John, that modern-day authors compared to ancient ones are like dwarves sitting on the shoulders of giants: they can see more and further ahead, but not because of their own qualities or virtues, but because they are guided and elevated by the gigantic stature of the ancient writers:

Dicebat Bernardus Carnotensis nos esse quasi nanos gigantum umeris insidentes, ut possimus plura eis et remotiora videre, non utique proprii visus acumine, aut eminentia corporis, sed quia in altum subvehimur et extollimur magnitudine gigantea.

"Bernard of Chartres used to compare us to [puny] dwarfs perched on the shoulders of giants. He pointed out that we see more and farther than our predecessors, not because we have keener vision or greater height, but because we are lifted up and borne aloft on their gigantic stature."⁴

Other teachers of importance were Gilbert of Poitiers (1070–1154), who taught dialectic and theology for twenty years at Chartres, and later, from 1137 onwards, in Paris; and Thierry, who taught at Chartres and Paris, where John of Salisbury was his student. Thierry was systematic in his teachings, as he methodically compiled the necessary texts for the study of the *trivium* and *quadrivium* in his work entitled *Heptateuchon*, which clearly refers to the seven liberal arts. In his teaching programme he associates the science of words or *sermocinales* with the science of things, that is, letters with science, convinced that all are necessary to philosophise, or in other words, all are necessary to illuminate the spirit and express one's discoveries: the spirit lights up with the arts of the *quadrivium* and correct, reasonable and elegant expression is achieved through the arts of the *trivium*.⁵

Along with other key figures in the humanistic culture of the twelfth century these scholars were, as will be seen, teachers of John of Salisbury. Perhaps also those who encouraged him to fight against the so-called "Cornificians" (college students who wanted a reduction of courses in the curriculum, undervaluing, for example, rhetoric)⁶ inspired his ideal of the totality of knowledge and of the union of sciences, but especially of the arts of speech (grammar, rhetoric and dialectic).

² Raña Dafonte (1999: 13–16).

³ Jeuneau (2009: 37–42).

⁴ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* III, 4 (ed. by Hall 1991: 116; transl. by McGarry 1955: 167).

⁵ Lemoine (1998: 65).

⁶ Delhay (1988: 53–54).

2. John of Salisbury and humanism

In the works of John of Salisbury, although they are of a philosophical character, a spirited defence of the liberal arts and especially the *trivium* may be found, with the idea that grammar, rhetoric and logic or dialectic constitute the instrument and method to facilitate and carry out rational inquiry. Thus, given the importance attached to the unification of philosophy and *eloquentia* to reach *sapientia* and realising that grammar is essential to achieve this objective, it is not uncommon to consider grammar as the science which, teaching us to speak and write correctly, constitutes the source and support of all liberal arts and, particularly, as the “the cradle of philosophy”:

Est enim grammatica scientia recte loquendi scribendique, et origo omnium liberalium disciplinarum. Eadem quoque est totius philosophiae cunabulum, et ut ita dixerim totius litteratorum studii altrix prima, quae omnium nascentium de sinu naturae teneritudinem excipit, nutrit infantiam, cuiusque gradus incrementa in philosophia provehit et sedulitate materna omnem philosophantis producit et custodit aetatem. Vnde a primis tam scribendi quam loquendi principiiis grammatica appellatur.

“[It includes] Grammar [which] is ‘the science of speaking and writing correctly – the starting point of all liberal studies.’ Grammar is the cradle of all philosophy, and in a manner of speaking, the first nurse of the whole study of letters. It takes all of us as tender babes, newly born from nature’s bosom. It nurses us in our infancy, and guides our every forward step in philosophy. With motherly care, it fosters and protects the philosopher from the start to the finish [of his pursuits]. It is called ‘grammar’ from the basic elements of writing and speaking.”⁷

Yet, in order to understand the work of John of Salisbury we must place ourselves in his time and trace the outline of his life. Indeed, belonging to the so-called Renaissance of the twelfth century, he rubbed shoulders with the most powerful men and the foremost intellectuals of the time and this led him to become a famous political thinker and an active witness to the main philosophical currents of his time.

In his youth, as he recounts in the second book of the *Metalogicon*, he was educated in France by the best teachers; in 1136 he was already learning logic with Abelard, dialectic with Alberic, grammar with William of Conches, rhetoric with Thierry of Chartres and Peter Helias, and theology with Gilbert of Poitiers:

Cum primum adulescens admodum studiorum causa migrassem in Gallias, anno altero postquam illustris rex Anglorum Henricus, leo iustitiae, rebus excessit humanis, contuli me ad Peripateticum Palatinum, qui tunc in Monte Sanctae Genovefae clarus doctor, et admirabilis omnibus praesidebat... Deinde... adhaesi magistro Alberico qui inter caeteros opinatissimus dialecticus enitebat, et erat revera nominalis sectae acerrimus impugnator. Sic ferme toto bienio conversatus in Monte, artis huius praeceptoribus usus sum, Alberico, et magistro Roberto Meludensi... Interim legi plura, nec me unquam paenitebit temporis eius. Postmodum vero Ricardum, cognomento episcopum... secutus sum, et quae ab aliis audieram, ab eo cuncta relegi, et inaudita quaedam ad quadrivium pertinentia, in quo aliquatenus Teutonicum praeaudieram Hardewinum. Relegi quoque rhetoricam, quam prius cum quibusdam aliis a mag-

⁷ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* I, 13 (ed. by Hall 1991: 32; transl. by McGarry 1955: 37).

istro Theodorico tenuiter auditis paululum intelligebam. Sed eam postmodum a Petro Helia plenius accepi... Reversus itaque in fine triennii reperi magistrum Gilbertum, ipsumque audiui in logicis et divinis, sed nimis cito subtractus est. Successit Rodbertus Pullus, quem vita pariter et scientia commendabant. Deinde me excepit Simon Pexiacensis, fidus lector, sed obtusior disputator. Sed hos duos in solis theologicis habui praeceptores. Sic fere duodennium mihi elapsus est, diversis studiis occupato.

“When, still but a youth, I first journeyed to Gaul for the sake of study, in the year following the death of the illustrious King of the English, Henry [I], ‘the Lion of Justice,’ I betook myself to the Peripatetic of Pallet, who was then teaching at Mont Ste. Genevieve... After his departure... I became the disciple of Master Alberic, who had a very high reputation as the best of the other dialecticians. Alberic was in fact a most bitter opponent of the Nominalist sect. After thus passing almost two full years at the Mont, I had, as instructors in this art, Alberic and also Master Robert of Melun... I studied under the latter for three years, during which I learned much. Nor will I ever regret the time thus spent. Following this I became a disciple of Richard, known as ‘the Bishop’... With Richard, I reviewed all that I had studied under the others, as well as learned certain additional points concerning the Quadrivium, to which I had been previously introduced by Hardewin the German. I also reviewed rhetoric, of which, together with certain other subjects, I had already learned a little in previous studies under Master Theodoric, but of which, as of these, I did not understand a great deal. Later, however, I learned more rhetoric from Peter Helias.... At the end of three years I returned and sought out Master Gilbert, whose disciple I became in dialectical and theological subjects. But all too soon Gilbert was transferred. His successor was Robert Pullen, a man commendable alike for his virtue and his knowledge. Next, Simon of Poissy, a dependable lecturer, but rather dull in disputes, took me as his student. The last-mentioned two [Robert and Simon] only instructed me in theology. I [had] thus spent almost twelve years engaged in various studies.”⁸

His mature years were dedicated to administrative labour in the Roman Curia and as secretary, first to Archbishop Theobald and then to his successor Thomas Becket, until the latter was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170. These were years of extended travel and diplomatic missions, although also of exile due to the strong differences of opinion regarding the state of the Church vis-à-vis the monarchy in England between the Archbishop and Henry II. During his final years he dedicated himself to pastoral activity as Bishop of Chartres, where he had once studied.⁹

Thus, a solid humanistic and theological education and his political and courtesan experiences of great intensity and drama supplied him with endless material with which he could reflect, from an intellectual and political perspective, upon scholastic and curial matters.¹⁰ The written result was three works, which apart from reporting his reflections about his own life also represented an authentic philosophical vision of man and his destiny. It would seem that his first work was *Entheticus sive de dogmate philosophorum* (1155), a summary in verse of ancient philosophy and a defence of the *trivium*. And published practically at the same time (1159–1160), composed for many years and with various interruptions, were his two great works: *Policraticus* (The governor), a work of political theory where doctrine is elaborated upon the basis and limits of political power

⁸ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* II, 10 (ed. by Hall 1991: 70–72; transl. by McGarry 1955: 95–98).

⁹ Jeaneau (2009: 77–80).

¹⁰ O’Daly (2018: 1–24).

and ecclesiastical rights are defended; and *Metalogicon*, a defence of logic and its role as an irreplaceable instrument for philosophy.

It has long been noted that John of Salisbury was a real humanist, a scholar trained at the School of Chartres who, rhetorising philosophy, professed the probabilism of the New Academy.¹¹ He was seen, therefore, as an eclectic who, without being a true philosopher, contributed, as did Cicero, to the spreading of philosophical thought. From this perspective, it is argued that in his *Metalogicon* there was indeed a defence of logic, but subordinate to *eloquentia*, thus appearing to misinterpret this discipline and somewhat underestimate the role it plays in the field of science by giving it a simple prerequisite value and considering it, along with grammar and rhetoric, as one of the three necessary tools (*trivium*) for science. It is therefore concluded that he had also misread Aristotelian logic itself.

Yet it was a myopic view of John that has now been overcome, thanks to studies carried out by Dal Pra, Luscombe and Wilks, among others, who have argued that the language of the *Metalogicon* displays an eminently philosophical character, and that John of Salisbury, despite having a complex personality, follows a non-systematic line of thought, yet one which is coherent; coherence that could be perceived by the unitary character that he tries to portray in his three main works, taking the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus* as two parts of one single work and the *Entheticus* as a poetic appendix.¹² In fact, John wanted to offer his methodological contribution, which in the twelfth century, in light of the great work of Anselm of Aosta, was seen as an unavoidable necessity: to define the method with which to acquire wisdom. For this he could appeal to tools of reason, as he had received in-depth theological training thanks to the teaching of Gilbert of Poitiers; or he could appeal solely to faith, like his friend Bernard of Clairvaux, who distrusted any attempt at fathoming the mysterious divines with reason. The position that John of Salisbury took was different, and highly original: to assign to logic the method, the purpose and the limits of philosophy. And therefore he understands philosophy as *stadium sapientiae*, as the search for wisdom, which is its ultimate aim, but wisdom that will lead to the realisation of human nature, finite or imperfect, that aspires to naturalise the infinite and the perfect:¹³

... *Philosophia sit studium sapientiae... Nam philosophiae finis, sapientia est.*

"... Philosophy is 'devotion to wisdom'... For the end of philosophy is wisdom."¹⁴

3. The defence of logic and the enemy to fight: Cornificius

The *Metalogicon* was created as a defence of logic advocating for the role of logic as an irreplaceable tool for philosophy; and with an enemy to fight against: Cornificius, who,

¹¹ Lejeune (2009: 61 and 84).

¹² Cf. Dal Pra (1951); Luscombe (1984); Wilks (1984b).

¹³ Finaldi (2010–2011: 3–6).

¹⁴ Ioh. Saresber. *Policrat.* V, 9 (ed. by Webb 1909: I, 319; transl. by Nederman 1990: 82). There is a new partial edition by Keats-Rohan (1993).

far from being a real adversary must be treated as a mere fictitious and symbolic name. Indeed, Cornificius symbolises the enemies of classical studies, who oppose the efforts required by this literary study and education, especially eloquence, and who are hostile towards any cultural and educational value that the liberal arts may have. This sect of “Cornificians”, as defined by John, argues that the study of the arts of *trivium* is useless, as eloquence is given or denied directly by nature. In their mind it is nature itself that equips us with all that is necessary and, in this way, gives us enough reason and capacity to speak, and thus to become eloquent. What is more, these Cornificians argue that the arts of *Trivium*, dealing only with words and language, have very little or even nothing to do with philosophy, whose aim is to investigate not words but realities. This is all clearly explained by Cornificius:

Non est ergo ex eius sententia si tamen falsa opinio sententia dicenda est, studendum praeceptis eloquentiae, quoniam eam cunctis natura ministrat aut negat. Si ultro ministrat aut sponte, opera superfluit et diligentia. Si vero negat, inefficax est et inanis... Postremo quid est eloquentiae cum philosophia? Altera enim consistit in verbo, altera sapientiae vias affectat, investigat et circuit, et interdum pro studio efficaciter apprehendit. Plane eloquentiae praecepta sapientiam non conferunt sed nec amorem eius, et saepissime quidem ei obtinendae non conferunt. Res enim philosophia, aut finis eius quae est sapientia quaerit non verba. Ex his itaque liquet, quia praecepta eloquentiae ab operis suis philosophia eliminat.

“In the judgment of Cornificius (if a false opinion may be called a judgment), there is no point in studying the rules of eloquence, which is a gift that is either conceded or denied to each individual by nature. Work and diligence are superfluous where nature has spontaneously and gratuitously bestowed eloquence, whereas they are futile and silly where she has refused to grant it... Finally [Cornificius argues], what can eloquence and philosophy possibly have in common? The former relates to language, but the latter seeks after, investigates, and applies itself to learning the ways of wisdom, which it sometimes efficaciously apprehends by its study. Clearly the rules of eloquence confer neither wisdom nor love of wisdom. More often than otherwise, they are not even helpful for the acquisition of wisdom. Philosophy (or wisdom, its object) is concerned not with words, but with facts. From what has been said [if we are to believe Cornificius], it is evident that philosophy eliminates the rules of eloquence from its activities.”¹⁵

Cornificius embodies all of those individuals who exclusively cultivate formal logic and are always faced with dilemmas or disputes of this kind: “if the pig which is taken to the market is led by the man or the rope; or if he who has bought the cape has also bought the hood.”¹⁶ Cornificius is the product of teachings by those bad teachers who profess formal and deterministic logic and think that eloquence actually hinders the study of reality. And the worst of all is that Cornificius elected himself to be the master of a group of gullible and ignorant students who, paraphrasing Juvenal, intend on suddenly becoming eminent philosophers, without any effort to study the liberal arts, to become philosophers in a day and, furthermore, to spread around the world the words of their teacher. Indeed, John tells us that any illiterate individual would only need to remain in

¹⁵ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* I, 6 (ed. by Hall 1991: 22–23; transl. by McGarry 1955: 24–25).

¹⁶ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* I, 3 (ed. by Hall 1991: 16; transl. by the author).

the school for as long as a chick takes to shed its feathers, or the time in which the chick takes to fly from the nest:

Fiebant ergo summi repente philosophi. Nam qui illitteratus accesserat, fere non morabatur in scholis ulterius quam eo curriculo temporis quo avium pulli plumescunt. Itaque recentes magistri e scholis, et pulli volucrum e nidis sicut pari tempore morabantur, sic pariter avolabant.

“Of a sudden, they blossomed forth as great philosophers. Those newly arrived in school, unable to read or write, hardly stayed there any longer than it takes a baby bird to sprout its feathers. Then the new masters, fresh from the schools, and fledglings, just leaving their nests, flew off together, after having stayed about the same length of time in school and nest.”¹⁷

Actually, they are only worried about appearing to be philosophers, and thus, making money and having a comfortable life with their fake wisdom; some entered into convents, but even there they continued to conceal their arrogance beneath the habits of humility; and others, at the height of madness, left for Salerno and Montpellier, and after becoming apprentices with doctors somehow quickly became doctors themselves, in the same way as they had previously become philosophers with one stroke of the pen.¹⁸

In light of this falsehood, John of Salisbury brings up an indisputable fact: nature has endowed man with reason and language, and this feature is what distinguishes man from other animals.¹⁹ Man, in fact, is a rational animal and this is what allows him to examine reality, to distinguish the regular order that is hidden beneath the reality arranged by nature and, thus, to take action in order to reach happiness and to measure the efficiency of one’s actions. But nature also flatters man with the gift of language, of *usus eloquii*, as man needs to express and reveal the results of his rational practice. Hence, reason and language are the genuine human abilities that allow man to carry out his mission for knowledge of reality, ethical actions and, finally, social cooperation, passing on the fruits of his knowledge and actions to other men. For this, as is sustained by the Cornificians, the language and reason that we have acquired as men from nature is not enough, as in fact *eloquence* is needed in order to obtain a fruitful encounter between *ratio* and *verbum*. Indeed, eloquence is highly useful to perfect what nature brings, as it provides us with a simple path, a method. Eloquence, as John says in accordance with Cicero, is the ability to adequately express what the spirit wishes to exhibit, but to be true eloquence it has to be preceded by a study of reality carried out through *ratio*, and then, the correct terms must be found for its expression. The *ordo loquendi*, so as not to fall into vain eloquence, must follow the *ordo legendi* provided by grammar and then adjust to the *ordo rerum*:

Est enim eloquentia facultas dicendi commode quod sibi vult animus expediri. Quod enim in abdito cordis est, hoc quodam modo in lucem profert et producit in publicum. Siquidem non est eloquens quisquis loquitur, aut qui quod voluerit utcunque loquitur, sed ille duntaxat qui animi sui arbitrium commode profert.

¹⁷ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* I, 3 (ed. by Hall 1991: 16–17; transl. by McGarry 1955: 15).

¹⁸ Raña Dafonte (1999: 20–22).

¹⁹ Finaldi (2010–2011: 9–13).

“What is eloquence but the faculty of appropriate and effective verbal expression? As such, it brings to light and in a way publishes what would otherwise be hidden in the inner recesses of man’s consciousness. Not everyone who speaks, nor even one who says what he wants to in some fashion, is eloquent. He alone is eloquent who fittingly and efficaciously expresses himself as he intends.”²⁰

Following the ancient philosophers John estimates that the study of reality cannot be separated from eloquence, as eloquence helps us to learn and to communicate knowledge learnt through *ratio*. Eloquence is part of human culture and removing it from philosophical studies, as the “Cornificians” did, is a mistake. Eloquence is essential in the training of a true philosopher, the key that opens the way to all knowledge, as he who dominates eloquence is able to dominate any discipline, to be able to correlate perfectly words and realities and to achieve a logical articulation of the speech that provides credibility, argumentative strength and, finally, persuasion.

Therefore, eloquence must be intimately linked to *ratio*. Philosophy and eloquence are closely connected and whoever disregards eloquence also disrupts the order of studies and gives up their chance to obtain knowledge, separates the two key principles that God gave to man in mutual connection, breaks the marriage between Mercury and Philology in clear allusion to the work of Martianus Capella, and finally, becomes a kind of public enemy who undermines the foundations of the human community. Because, as John states:

Nam ratio scientiae virtutumque parens, altrix et custos, quae de verbo frequentius concipit, et per verbum numerosius et fructuosius parit, aut omnino sterilis permaneret, aut quidem infecunda, si non conceptionis eius fructum in lucem ederet usus eloquii, et invicem quod sentit prudens agitatio mentis hominibus publicaret. Haec autem est illa dulcis et fructuosa coniugatio rationis et verbi, quae tot egregias genuit urbes, tot conciliavit et foederavit regna, tot univit populos et charitate devinxit, ut hostis omnium publicus merito censeatur quisquis hoc quod ad utilitatem omnium Deus coniunxit, nititur separare. Mercurio philologiam invidet, et ab amplexu Philologiae Mercurium avellit qui eloquentiae praeceptionem a studiis philosophiae eliminate. Et quamvis solam videatur eloquentiam persequi, omnia liberalia studia convellit, omnem totius philosophiae impugnat operam, societatis humanae foedus distrahit, et nullum caritati aut vicissitudini officiorum relinquit locum.

“Reason would remain utterly barren, or at least would fail to yield a plenteous harvest, if the faculty of speech did not bring to light its feeble conceptions, and communicate the perceptions of the prudent exercise of the human mind. Indeed, it is this delightful and fruitful copulation of reason and speech which has given birth to so many outstanding cities, has made friends and allies of so many kingdoms, and has unified and knit together in bonds of love so many peoples. Whoever tries to ‘thrust asunder what God has joined together’ for the common good, should rightly be adjudged a public enemy. One who would eliminate the teaching of eloquence from philosophical studies, begrudges Mercury [Eloquence] his possession of Philology, and wrests from Philology’s arms her beloved Mercury. Although he may seem to attack eloquence alone, he undermines and uproots all liberal studies, assails the whole structure of philosophy, tears to shreds humanity’s social contract, and destroys the means of brotherly charity and reciprocal interchange of services.”²¹

²⁰ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* I, 7 (ed. by Hall 1991: 24; transl. by McGarry 1955: 26).

²¹ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* I, 1 (ed. by Hall 1991: 13; transl. by McGarry 1955: 11).

4. John of Salisbury: *ingenium, sensus, memoria, ratio and ars*

The sermocinal arts or *trivium* are therefore essential for all further study. If reason has the natural ability to examine reality with a firm and sincere judgement,²² the inspection of reality must be carried out using an effective method. And it is precisely the liberal arts, especially those of the *trivium*, issued or created by human reason itself, which enable us to facilitate and implement rational inquiry. Thus, John of Salisbury, employing an epistemology of Aristotelian roots, delimits the steps on the scale of knowledge: we all have innate and vigorous capabilities, introduced by nature into our souls, to investigate reality and this force is *ingenium*; nature stimulates the human *ingenium* through sense perceptions; and then providing and consolidating reason through memory, with the necessary elements to develop a safer and more diligent judgement through the examination of the realities drawn from memories:

Excitat [natura] enim primo ingenium ad res aliquas percipiendas, et cum eas perceperit, deponit quasi in custodia et thesauro memoriae; ratio quae percepta et commendanda vel commendata sunt studio diligenti examinat, et ex natura singulorum de singulis nisi forte labatur in aliquo, verum profert incorruptumque iudicium. Haec tria quidem quasi omnium artium fundamenta et instrumenta natura praemittit. Est autem ingenium ut Isidoro placet vis quaedam animo naturaliter insita, per se valens.

“Nature first evokes our natural capacity to perceive things, and then, as it were, deposits these perceptions in the secure treasury of our memory. Reason then examines, with its careful study, those things which have been perceived, and which are to be, or have been, commended to memory’s custody. After its scrutiny of their nature, reason pronounces true and accurate judgment concerning each of these (unless, perchance, it slips up in some regard). Nature has provided beforehand these three factors [natural capacity, memory, and reason] as both the foundations and the instruments of all the arts. Natural ability (according to Isidore) is ‘an immanent power infused into one’s soul by nature.’”²³

Nature, indeed, provides us with wit, senses, memory and reason. With all this we can have a human experience. But it is reason, with the special help of memory, that stores perceptions and experiences, familiarising itself with them, strengthening those which are profitable and ending up with a method to find out about reality. Human *ratio* devises resources and procedures, choosing those that, from experience, may be considered to be profitable, and stores them in the memory in accordance with their effectiveness: the repeated application of the same procedure in such cases makes reason stronger and leads to the systematising of a set of rules, a method, in short, that gives unity to the multiple experiences and provides us with a shortcut that gives us, “by saving time, the ability to do things that are naturally possible”; this method “shows us a path that will save us time and gives us the ability to do difficult things.” In other words, based on innate qualities, uniting reason and memory, exercise and personal activity, we acquire quality or artistic ability.²⁴ This set of rules that deals with the same single activity produces an “art” or

²² Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* III, 15.

²³ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* I, 11 (ed. by Hall 1991: 29; transl. by McGarry 1955: 34).

²⁴ Raña Dafonte (1999: 23).

“rational system” that enables or makes a skill available to man. The arts, therefore, with their starting point being sense perceptions captured by reason, as has been said, have a natural origin:

Nam ut dictum est, multi sensus aut etiam unus memoriam unam, multae memoriae experimentum, multa experimenta regulam, multae regulae unam reddiderint artem, ars vero facultatem.

“Or, as we put it above, many sensations, or sometimes even only one, result in a memory, many memories in an experimental proof, many experimental proofs in a rule, and many rules in an art, which provides scientific skill.”²⁵

Man therefore created arts to serve as an aid to the *ingenium* of anyone who wish to dedicate themselves to philosophy and to supply them with the tools needed to use language correctly and to carry out successful research on nature. The arts act as a guide so that, after a full training curriculum that tradition has established and perfected, we may attain wisdom.²⁶ And within this curriculum, the study of the sermocinal arts (*trivium*) or eloquence constitutes the first state, in a sort of science that is clearly designed in the *Entheticus*: one must first study all of the arts of speech, which will provide students with *eloquentia*: grammar, declamation, composition, *elocutio* and speech; then the focus of study would move to philosophy, in three elements:

*Sed nec apud veteres confunditur ordo legendi,
Namque gradum proprium quaeque decenter habent:
Grammaticam sequitur diasyrctica, synthesis illam,
Lexis eam, rhesis posteriore gradu. 360
His gradibus crescens facundia possidet arcem,
Et varias artes absque labore docet.
Eloquii si quis perfecte noverit artem,
Quodlibet apponas dogma, peritus erit.
Transit ab his tandem studiis operosa iuventus, 365
Pergit et in varias philosophando vias,
Quae tamen ad finem tendunt concorditer unum;
Unum namque caput philosophia gerit.
Rerum naturas scrutantur, quid sit honestum,
Undique proveniat vita beata sibi; 370
Inspiciunt vires et stricti iuris et aequi,
Sanis aut aegris quid medicina valet.
Cum cunctas artes, cum dogmata cuncta peritus
Noverit, imperium pagina sacra tenet.*

“But with the ancients the order of reading is not confused,
for everything has its own proper stage:
diasyrctica follows grammatical, then synthesis,
then lexis, and in the last stage rhesis.
By these stages fluency increases until it possesses the citadel,

²⁵ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 12 (ed. by Hall 1991: 151; transl. by McGarry 1955: 222).

²⁶ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* I, 21.

and it teaches without difficulty the various arts.
 If anyone should have had a perfect knowledge of the art of eloquence,
 he will be skilled in whatever doctrine you may set before him.
 The industrious youth passes at last from these studies
 and proceeds philosophizing into various paths,
 which, however, tend unanimously to one goal:
 for Philosophy bears but a single head.
 They examine the nature of things, what may be virtuous,
 and whence the blessed life will come to them;
 they inspect the strength of strict and equitable law
 and what medicine can do for the healthy or the sick.
 If one should be skilled in all arts and in all doctrines,
 the sacred page holds the highest authority.”²⁷

John here is reformulating and developing the traditional teaching that the arts of the *trivium* are first and grammar is at the head of all elements, followed by rhetoric and dialectic. This union between grammar and dialectic, both belonging to the same discipline, logic, although coinciding in a broader sense with the whole *trivium*, had been taught to John of Salisbury by his teacher William of Conches, yet the approach that both disciplines have in the *Didascalicon* by Hugh of Saint Victor should not be ignored.²⁸

5. William of Conches: *intellectus*, *ratio* and *memoria*

Indeed, in his work *Philosophia*,²⁹ William of Conches analyses, from an anatomical-physiological point of view, the process of knowledge operated by the brain, where experiences perceived by the senses occur successively through three brain cells, or in other words, first through *intellectus*, then *ratio* and finally *memoria*.

Under the skull, William tells us, there are two layers known as *meninges*: the outer layer is harder and is called *dura mater* and the other, closer to the brain, is softer, in order not to cause any damage to it and is called *pia mater*. Beneath these layers we find the brain, defined by Constantine (eleventh):³⁰ “The brain is a white liquid substance, without blood”. Therefore the question arises as to whether it is cold or hot and we claim that it is cold by nature, in such a way that continual movement does not dry it out. On its surface it has three cells: one on the bow, one in the middle and one at the stern. The first is hot and dry and is *visual*, because in it resides the faculty of sight and understanding. It is hot and dry to attract the shapes and colours of things. The middle cell is called *logic*, meaning *rational*, because in it resides the faculty of judgement. What is attracted by the *visual* part is passed on to the middle cell where it is then discerned by the soul. It is warm and wet to conform to the properties of visuals, to distinguish better. The third cell is called *memorial*, because in it the power to retain memory resides. And, what has been discerned in the *logic* cell passes to the *memory* cell through a kind of hole, which

²⁷ Ioh. Saresber. *Enth. mai.* 357–374 (ed. and transl. by Laarhoven 1987: 127–128).

²⁸ Jaeger (2012).

²⁹ Guil. de Conch. *Phil.* IV, 21, 37–38.

³⁰ Const. Afric. *Pantechni decem libri theorices* I, 10.

is closed by a small cloth and opens when we wish to memorise something. It is cold and dry to retain information better, as constriction is typical of the cold and the dry.

William of Conches therefore raises the question of how all of this can be proved. The answer, for him, is easy: from injuries sustained in those parts of the brain. Indeed, when examining the reason and memory of an individual of great intelligence the doctors saw that after receiving a wound in one of these three cells the brain lost the strength of that cell but retained the strength of the other two. Therefore, Solinus claims in his *Polyhistor*³¹ that a man, after receiving a wound in the *occiput*, became so ignorant of everything that he did not even know his own name.

Ergo merito antiqui dixerunt in capite esse sedem sapientiae. In capite enim habent sedem quae faciunt sapientem: intellectus scilicet, ratio et memoria.

“They were right to say that wisdom was indeed found in the head. Inside the head, in fact, resides what makes a man wise, namely intellect, reason and memory.”³²

6. Hugh of Saint Victor: *ratio*, *ingenium* and *memoria*

In the Middle Ages the primary means for gaining wisdom was reading the texts written by men, pagans and Christians, and the Holy Scriptures. And one cannot fully understand or assimilate these texts if one does not possess knowledge of the liberal arts, especially the sermocinal arts, and if the hermeneutical keys to unveil the mysteries contained in the Scriptures are not mastered. Therefore, Hugh of Saint Victor composed, in the second decade of the twelfth century, his work named *Didascalicon*, devoting the first three books to the seven liberal arts and the last three to reading sacred texts. It is, indeed, a work that should have been known and used by John of Salisbury, since, as we shall see, many of his ideas can be found in the *Metalogicon*, which incidentally, we should not forget, is a praise of logic and a reader's guide to the Aristotelian *Organon*.

At the beginning of his career Hugh had spoken from a philosophical and metaphysical perspective about the three powers of the soul and had exalted man as the only living being endowed with reason. Indeed, the first human power is purely vegetative, which gives life to the body and then causes it to grow and survive, with food, and this it shares with other living beings; the second is sensitive, which gives the judgement of sensory perception that is shared with other animals endowed with senses; and the third rests on the strength of mind and reason, exclusive of man. It is with the second power, sensitivity, with which animals endowed with sense can capture the shapes of sensual bodies and retain, for more or less time depending on the ability of the animal in question, images of the perceived sensual shapes. These images are confusing and obscure and, in principle, by combining them in any way, cannot provide any clear meaning; in fact, they cannot even retain in memory all of the images recorded and, if they are forgotten, they cannot be recovered. Reason (*ratio*) is required in order to receive and retain the sensations and images of reality in a clear and orderly manner and to combine them properly and take from them a sense or meaning, both if those things are present or absent as well as if we

³¹ Sol. 1, 110.

³² Guil. de Conch. *Phil.* IV, 21, 38 (ed. by Albertazzi 2010: 288–289).

are dealing with sensitive or just intelligible things; reason, therefore, which Hugh calls the “soul of divine nature”, is essential to interpret memories and to remember rationally; and is what empowers man with knowledge of the real and known, but also the imagined and unknown:

Itaque... huic divinae naturae non ea tantum in cognitione sufficiunt, quae subiecta sensibus comprehendit, verum etiam ex sensibilibus imaginatione concepta, et absentibus rebus nomina indere potest, et quod intelligentiae ratione comprehendit, vocabulorum quoque positionibus aperit.

“And... this divine nature is not content with the knowledge of those things alone which it perceives spread before its senses, but, in addition, it is able to provide even for things removed from it names which imagination has conceived from the sensible world, and it makes known, by arrangements of words, what it has grasped by reason of its understanding.”³³

Hence, without *ratio* knowledge of what we have perceived and memorised is not possible. In order for there to be pure and accurate knowledge of the principles of things there must first be understanding, which is the *intellectibile*; these principles must be perceived (God, ideas, materials and the incorporeal), retained in memory and then understood in order to learn and know about them. On the other hand, memorising what is purely sensory, from the sensations that the exterior prints on the soul from the outside, is a simple process of intellection (*intelligibile*), but not of precise knowledge, as the *intelligibile* is imagination and, in contrast with *intellectibile*, does not lead to pure knowledge:

Est igitur, ut apertius dicam, intellectibile in nobis id quod est intelligentia, intelligibile vero id quod est imaginatio. Intelligentia vero est de solis rerum principiis, id est, Deo, ideis, et hyle, et de incorporeis substantiis, pura certaue cognitio. Imaginatio est memoria sensuum ex corporum reliquiis inhaerentibus animo, principium cognitionis per se nihil certum habens. Sensus est passio animae in corpore ex qualitatibus extra accidentibus.

“Thus, that I may speak more openly, the *intellectibile* in us is what understanding is, whereas the *intelligibile* is what imagination is. But understanding is pure and certain knowledge of the sole principles of things – namely, of God, of ideas, and of prime matter, and of incorporeal substances. Imagination, however, is sensuous memory made up of the traces of corporeal objects inhering in the mind; it possesses in itself nothing certain as a source of knowledge. Sensation is what the soul undergoes in the body as a result of qualities which come to it from without.”³⁴

In this sense, as the good pedagogue that he is, Hugh wants his students to acquire an adequate study method that will lead them to knowledge and wisdom. However, he feels unsatisfied with the students of his time, as the majority of them study, but few are wise. The problem, therefore, lies within the study method and not the application of the students. It is something, as Hugh tells us, that contrasts sharply with what used to happen in antiquity, when some of the disciples of Pythagoras had eagerly studied the liberal arts

³³ Hugo de St. Vict. *Didasc.* I, 3 (ed. by Buttimer 1939: 9; transl. by Taylor 1961: 50), taken from Boeth. *In Porph. comm. sec.* I, 1.

³⁴ Hugo de St. Vict. *Didasc.* II, 5 (ed. by Buttimer 1939: 29; transl. by Taylor 1961: 65–66).

that they conserved in their memory and, without the need to consult books, had all the principles and reasons stored in their memory that would allow them to resolve doubts and respond to each specific case that was presented to them. Hugh looks for students like these and, therefore, the training of memory for him is a pre-condition, essential for reading texts and gaining knowledge.³⁵

Thus, in *Didascalicon* III, 7 Hugh warns that those who dedicate themselves to this study must be equipped with two basic qualities that are intimately linked together in any study and discipline. On the one hand, they must have *ingenium*, natural talent, which comes from nature, but improves with practice and balanced training, as excessive exercise can be exhausting and weaken this talent; and to improve this *ingenium* there is nothing better than *lectio*, which provides us with the rules and regulations we get from books, and *meditatio*. The second skill that must be possessed by those dedicated to this study is *memoria*, the receptacle to store learning. These two qualities are complementary and if either of them is missing the other cannot reach perfection. Indeed, if we have knowledge but do not know where or how to store it, it is as useless as if we have memory but lack knowledge. *Ingenium* finally finds wisdom, but it is memory which holds on to it:

Ingenium invenit et memoria custodit sapientiam.
“Aptitude gathers wisdom, memory preserves it.”³⁶

And so, as Hugh puts forward in the *Didascalicon* III, 11, entitled *On memory*, that the function of *ingenium* or natural talent is to investigate and discover through division, while *memoria* has to conserve information through recollection. In the learning process first it is necessary to *dividere*, then to *colligere* and entrust memory with what has been divided and collected. And this *colligere* implies a selection process, of synthesis and analysis; which really means reducing to a brief and substantial summary, synthesising what has been presented or discussed, finding and analysing the principles or foundations which the issue in question is based upon:

Colligere est ea de quibus prolixius vel scriptum vel disputatum est ad brevem quandam et compendiosam summam redigere, quae a maioribus epilogus, id est, brevis recapitulatio supradictorum appellata est. Habet namque omnis tractatio aliquod principium, cui tota rei veritas et vis sententiae innititur, et ad ipsum cuncta alia referuntur. Hoc quaerere et considerare colligere est.

“Now ‘gathering’ is reducing to a brief and compendious outline things which have been written or discussed at some length. The ancients called such an outline an ‘epilogue’, that is, a short restatement, by headings, of things already said. Now every exposition has some principle upon which the entire truth of the matter and the force of its thought rest, and to this principle everything else is traced back. To look for and consider this principle is to ‘gather.’”³⁷

In the same way, during the learning process, man’s memory, which is weak, must try to keep hold of the essential sources of accurate and safe data, having always passed the selection process, synthesis and analysis. This is what man has to store in his “memory

³⁵ Illich (2002: 49–50).

³⁶ Hugo de St. Vict. *Didasc.* III, 7 (ed. by Buttner 1939: 57; transl. by Taylor 1961: 91).

³⁷ Hugo de St. Vict. *Didasc.* III, 11 (ed. by Buttner 1939: 60; transl. by Taylor 1961: 93).

chest”, in order to always have this data at hand and to obtain from it, when circumstance requires, the correct conclusions. But we must not just simply store it; as if it is not constantly revised it will disappear and be forgotten. Therefore, Hugh suggests to his disciples that it is not enough to have simply read a lot and to have understood what has been read, yet what is really important is to know how to retain in one’s memory what has been read and understood.

Debemus ergo in omni doctrina breve aliquid et certum colligere, quod in arcula memoriae recondatur, unde postmodum, cum res exigit, reliqua deriventur... Rogo te, o lector, ne nimium laeteris si multa legeris, sed si multa intellexeris nec tantum intellexeris sed retinere potueris. “We ought, therefore, in all that we learn, to gather brief and dependable abstracts to be stored in the little chest of the memory, so that later on, when need arises, we can derive everything else from them. ... I charge you, then, my student, not to rejoice a great deal because you may have read many things, but because you have been able to retain them.”³⁸

Being completely convinced of this, Hugh, in one of his works, the *De tribus maximis circumstantiis gestorum*,³⁹ composed ca. 1130, encourages his disciples to strengthen and perfect their mnemonic skills through the mental construction of a “treasure chest”. Thus, Hugh asks his students to envisage a long journey during which they should mentally place numbers in a staggered, continual manner. For each number a concept or symbol is assigned that will label each number. On one of these numbers or “steps” the rivers of the Bible may be placed; on another, the virtues, or the angels, or the apostles, etc. This exercise consists in mentally visiting these numbers randomly, memorising the *locus* and its content and repeating the process over and over again, after which these visits will become usual. Therefore, when the young student perfectly dominates these places marked by Roman numbers he/she will place the facts of the biblical history within its frame, assigning everything to a time and a place within the series. And, for more advanced readers, Hugh proposed a three-dimensional ark; a space-time matrix made up in the student’s mind and modelled on Noah’s ark.⁴⁰ We are therefore faced with an authentic *artificiosa memoria*, memory training aimed at facilitating the student learning process at different levels of reading and education, and especially at the contemplative penetration of the Scripture, but also creating a spoken or written speech. Hermeneutics and rhetoric, deconstruction and construction shake hands.

Indeed, in the *Didascalicon* he developed a mnemonic method that enabled the discovery of discursive matter; but this method is now refined in *De tribus maximis circumstantiis gestorum* and finally perfected in his *De Archa Noe morali*. In this method memory is seen as a *modus imaginandi domesticus* (an imaginary or mental interior space) whose visual image is the ark and its various compartments, where the speaker or writer may find arguments to develop their subject.⁴¹ In the *Didascalicon* there are a total of four *loci* where arguments are stored: *persona*, *negotium*, *tempus* and *locus*. In *De tribus maximis circumstantiis gestorum* such *loci* are reduced to three: *personae*, *loca* and *tempora*.

³⁸ Hugo de St. Vict. *Didasc.* III, 11 (ed. by Buttimer 1939: 60; transl. by Taylor 1961: 94).

³⁹ Green (1943); Zinn (1974).

⁴⁰ Illich (2002: 49–53).

⁴¹ Weiss (2002).

Clearly we are faced with artificial memory, with the invention of a set of mnemonic processes for making a speech, but we are also experiencing a rhetorical evolution of inventive logic of Ciceronian tradition, the *Topica inventionis*.⁴²

7. John of Salisbury: memory and knowledge

John, as he states in the seventh book of his *Policraticus*, is convinced that certainty is the starting point and the central pillar of philosophy, and therefore, moving away from scepticism and towards Academic probabilism defends the certainty of knowledge, at least in certain issues, while stating that in doubtful matters we must show caution and issue only provisional, probable and credible allegations.⁴³ Thus, once the possibility of knowledge has been accepted what remains is to expose it to this theory. Earlier, in the first book of his *Metalogicon*, in the texts previously discussed, John had said that nature provides us with wit, senses, memory and reason to get to know the sensitive and supersensitive reality. Now, in his fourth book, which analyses the logical works of Aristotle, he delves deeper into the question of human knowledge and outlines his theory of degrees of knowledge, where, as will be seen, we catch a glimpse of influences from the lessons learnt from his teachers and, in particular, the doctrines of William of Conches and Hugh of Saint Victor.

Indeed, John of Salisbury insists on the idea that human knowledge stems from the experience of the realities perceived by the senses, but, thanks to the proper intellectual activity of man, this sensitive knowledge can climb a higher step and become intellectual knowledge, that is, go beyond the knowledge of sensitive realities to reach super-sensitive knowledge. In this process various agents play a role, such as sensation, imagination, reason and intellect, as the ultimate goal of knowledge is none other than the acquisition of wisdom and truth.

Therefore, the first step to knowledge is sense (*sensus*), sensitive perception, which, according to Aristotle,⁴⁴ is an innate ability to distinguish and evaluate realities; if this *sensus* is missing there is almost no possibility of knowledge. This sensitive perception is a physical shock resulting from certain realities that are on the outside and that shake the body, carrying that sensation to the soul. And, once again following in the footsteps of Aristotle and Chalcidius, John believes that sensitive perception (*sensus*) is more a power of the soul than a sense of the body, despite this power of the soul to form judgement about realities being stimulated by bodily sensations. As perceived by realities, the soul deposits and keeps inside images of these realities.⁴⁵ And this is how, by retaining these images and reviewing them repeatedly, the *sensus* creates for itself the kind of treasure that is memory:

Nam cum sensus secundum Aristotilem sit naturalis potentia indicativa rerum, aut omnino non est, aut vix est cognitio, deficiente sensu... Est autem sensus ut Chalcidio placet passio corporis ex quibusdam extra positis et varie pulsantibus corpus, usque ad animam com-

⁴² Domínguez (2004: 40–41).

⁴³ Raña Dafonte (1999: 32–33).

⁴⁴ Arist. *An. post.* II, 19, 99b35.

⁴⁵ Carruthers (2008: 142–143).

means... Aristotiles autem sensum potius vim animae asserit, quam corporis passionem, sed haec eadem vis ut iudicium suum de rebus formet, passionibus excitatur. Et quia res percipit, earundem apud se deponit imagines, quarum retentione et frequenti revolutione quasi thesaurum memoriae sibi format.

“As sensation is, according to Aristotle, ‘an innate power that discriminates things’, no or very little knowledge can exist independently of it... According to Chalcidius, sensation is ‘a bodily state of being affected by action, a state which is induced by things that are extrinsic and that make an impression on the body in various ways, a state which makes its way even to the conscious soul’... But Aristotle asserts that sensation is a power of the soul, rather than a [mere] bodily state of passive receptivity. However, Aristotle admits that in order for this power to form an estimation of things, ‘it must be excited by a [bodily] state of being affected by action’. As it perceives things, our soul stores up their images within itself, and in the process of retaining and often recalling them [to mind], builds up for itself a sort of treasury of the memory.”⁴⁶

The second stage of sensitive knowledge would be imagination (*imaginatio*), which comes to life from the repetition in the mind of images received from realities. And this imagination is not only able to remember those things observed, but also, thanks to its liveliness, its cognitive process progresses and it forms original models of the observed:

Dum vero rerum volvit imagines, nascitur imaginatio, quae non modo perceptorum recordatur, sed ad eorum exempla conformanda sui vivacitate progreditur.

“And as it mentally revolves the images of [these] things, there arises imagination, which proceeds beyond the [mere] recollection of previous perceptions, to fashion, by its own [creative] activity, other representations similar to these.”⁴⁷

Hence, it is proven that for John of Salisbury imagination is one step higher than sensation, as while sense (*sensus*) only captures images from realities and stores them in the “memory deposit”, imagination does not need to have these realities present, but can directly access them from the *thesaurus memoriae*. Imagination, therefore, is not restricted to things which are present, but can also recall the absent, through evoking memories stored from realities. Imagination is born through the sensations that have rooted themselves in the brain thanks to encouragement from memory.

Imaginatio itaque a radice sensuum per memoriae fomitem oritur.

“Imagination, accordingly, is the offspring of sensation. And it is nourished and fostered by memory.”⁴⁸

So if sense (*sensus*) first represents a sensitive judgment, perceiving in the here and now a certain colour, a temperature or a body, at a higher level there is also a second sensitive judgement, which is the imagination, like when something perceived and stored in the memory is declared to be of one or another quality, thus carrying out a judgement about the future or the distant. These first and second judgements are called opinions,

⁴⁶ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 9 (ed. by Hall 1991: 147–148; transl. by McGarry 1955: 216–217).

⁴⁷ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 9 (ed. by Hall 1991: 148; transl. by McGarry 1955: 217).

⁴⁸ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 10 (ed. by Hall 1991: 148–149; transl. by McGarry 1955: 218).

which can be true or false; but in order for these views to reach the category of truth prudence must play a role, which ultimately is that which gets stronger and becomes science. For John, it is clear that from sensitive perception comes the imagination; and that from the two of them opinion emerges; and from opinion comes prudence, which develops and makes itself a science; therefore, science, after all, takes its origin from sensitive perception. In fact, many sensitive perceptions, or even just one, as has been explained by John, produce a memory; many memories, a fact proven by experience; numerous facts proven by experience, a rule; many rules, an art; and an art, a faculty or science.⁴⁹

Ex his patet quod cum de sensu imaginatio, et ex his duobus opinio, et ex opinione prudentia nascatur, quae in scientiam convalescit, [quod] scientia de sensu trahit originem. Nam ut dictum est, multi sensus aut etiam unus memoriam unam, multae memoriae experimentum, multa experimenta regulam, multae regulae unam reddiderunt artem, ars vero facultatem.

“Since sensation gives birth to imagination, and these two to opinion, and opinion to prudence, which grows to the maturity of scientific knowledge, it is evident that sensation is the progenitor of science. Or, as we put it above, many sensations, or sometimes even only one, result in a memory, many memories in an experimental proof, many experimental proofs in a rule, and many rules in an art, which provides scientific skill.”⁵⁰

The next level on the scale of knowledge is reason (*ratio*), a spiritual power, aware of corporal and spiritual realities, which strive to set aside the deceptions of the senses and opinions and, thanks to its own energy, can see reality more clearly, understand it more firmly and examine it with a safer judgement.⁵¹ *Ratio* progresses from the known to the unknown and even sees the mysteries of truth.⁵² Reason is a mental power and activity that does not occur in other animals, only in men, reflecting therefore the divine spirit in humans, as it is an exclusive heritage of man, not the other living beings, to be able to overcome all sensitive perceptions and judgement with reason, and thus, to examine incorporeal and spiritual realities. Reason, therefore, is at a higher level than sense (*sensus*) and imagination (*imaginatio*), because it is this that, located at the top of the head (as William of Conches already said) between the imagination and memory cells, examines and controls from a kind of watchtower, the judgements of the senses and the imagination:

Et quia sensuum examinatrix est qui ob fallendi consuetudinem possunt esse suspecti, natura optima parens omnium universos sensus locans in capite, velut quemdam senatum in Capitolio animae rationem quasi dominam in arce capitis statuit, mediam quidem sedem tribuens inter cellam phantasticam et memorialem, ut velut e specula sensuum et imaginationum possit examinare iudicia.

“Since reason examines our sensations, which, because they are wont to deceive us, are subject to suspicion, mother nature, the very considerate parent of all [that exists], has made our head the seat of all sensation, in which citadel she has enthroned reason as queen. In other words, reason serves as a sort of supreme senate in the soul’s Capitoline Hill, where

⁴⁹ Bloch (2015).

⁵⁰ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 12 (ed. by Hall 1991: 150–151; transl. by McGarry 1955: 222).

⁵¹ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 15.

⁵² Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 16.

it is centrally situated between the chambers of imagination and memory, so that from its watchtower, it may pass upon the judgments of sensation and imagination.”⁵³

Above reason itself is where *intellectus* can be found, “the supreme power of the soul that not only sees the humane but also has in its power the divine causes of all reasons that it can perceive according to their nature.”⁵⁴ Hence, what reason has investigated and discovered intellect understands, leading, finally, to *sapientia*.

And following this distinction between sensation and thought, between sensory knowledge and intellectual knowledge, in his *Metalogicon*, John of Salisbury concludes by addressing the real goal of rational and intellectual knowledge: The truth. And the means of getting to this truth are basically judgement or *vera opinio* and true statement (*vera locutio*). In other words, if we understand a reality for how it really is then the opinion which we have of it is true; and if what we say about that reality accurately corresponds to it and represents it with precision, then the expression or statement is true:

Si enim res ut se habet comprehenditur vera opinio est, si sic verbo exponitur, est vera locutio.
“An opinion is true if it perceives things as they actually are. Speech is true if it presents things as they really are.”⁵⁵

In effect, we must avoid false realities, those which do not represent how they really should be, as these realities will lead us to false opinions and false statements. Therefore, he who wishes to know everything and to always know the truth must abide by true realities, opinions and statements. Only God is capable of knowing everything in its truth, as man, despite his efforts to reach this true knowledge, is prone to error and is not always correct.⁵⁶ In fact, there is a real correspondence and interaction between reason and the light of the mind. If reason were to be removed then the truth would be unattainable, in the same way that if truth were eliminated then reason would not be of any use to us.⁵⁷

8. Conclusions

We must not forget that the *Metalogicon* is a defence of logic and its role as an indispensable instrument for philosophy, but also a reader’s guide to the Aristotelian *Organon*. It is well written with a didactic eagerness, learnt from teachers, to help readers understand the realities perceived by the senses and reach intellectual, scientific and true knowledge. The influence, therefore, of William of Conches and Hugh of St. Victor is revealed: John of Salisbury aims, as do they, to provide a method that can be used to acquire knowledge and wisdom. In that method memory plays a crucial role, working as a bridge to connect *sensus* to *ratio*, to go from sensory perception to rational knowledge.

⁵³ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 17 (ed. by Hall 1991: 155; transl. by McGarry 1955: 229).

⁵⁴ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 19 (ed. by Hall 1991: 156; transl. by the author): *Est itaque intellectus suprema vis spiritualis naturae, quae humana contuens et divina penes se causas habet omnium rationum, naturaliter sibi perceptibilium.*

⁵⁵ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 33 (ed. by Hall 1991: 170; transl. by McGarry 1955: 254).

⁵⁶ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 36.

⁵⁷ Ioh. Saresber. *Met.* IV, 39; Raña Dafonte (1999: 36–39).

We must also remember that the fourth book of the *Metalogicon* is a real commentary of the *Prior Analytics* and *Posterior Analytics* by Aristotle. Hence, Salisbury's entire knowledge theory, in which the *sensus*, *memoria*, *imaginatio*, *ratio* and *intellectus* are involved in order to reach *sapientia* and *veritas*, is nothing more than a commentary; expanded, broadened and deepened, of a particular passage from the *Posterior Analytics* (II, 19) by Aristotle, in which Aristotle analyses the apprehension of principles. He establishes that principles are not given at birth but must be acquired; and to acquire them one must possess a faculty or power (*δύναμις*), but this power must not be superior in accuracy to those principles. This authority or power, says Aristotle, seems to occur in all living beings, which all have an innate ability to distinguish, and this power is called sense or sensation (*sensus*). All animals have sense, but only some are able to make the sensation persist. Consequently, the animals which do not possess this sensory persistence do not possess any kind of knowledge apart from sense. On the contrary, those animals which are able to keep a sensation, after sense, will conserve that sensation in the soul. And when many sensations of this kind arise there may be distinction or difference (*διαφορά*), in such a way that for some sensations a concept appears (*λόγος*), from the persistence of these things. And this is how, according to Aristotle, memory comes from sense/sensation (*sensus*); and from the repeated memory of the same thing, experience.⁵⁸

We note, therefore, that John of Salisbury's doctrine stems from Aristotle's thesis, although enriched by his experience of the contributions of William of Conches and Hugh of Saint Victor.

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⁵⁸ Arist. *An. post.* II, 19, 99b–100a.

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**MEMORIA, ELOQUENTIA A SAPIENTIA
V METALOGICU JANA ZE SALISBURY**

Metalogicon Jana ze Salisbry je obhajobou logiky a její role jako filosofického nástroje a také komentovanou četbou Aristotelova *Organa*. Vyznačuje se tedy didaktickou snahou, s níž se Jan seznámil u starších autorit, pomoci čtenářům pochopit skutečnosti vnímané smysly a získat pravdivé, rozumové a vědecké poznání. To prozrazuje vliv Viléma z Conches a Huga ze Svatého Viktora: stejně jako oni Jan ze Salisbry zamýšlí poskytnout metodu, která povede k získání poznání a moudrosti. Zásadní roli pro tuto metodu hraje paměť, protože má úlohu mostu mezi *sensus* a *ratio*, od smyslového vnímání k rozumovému poznání.

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