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Studi

Francis of Marchia against the Unity of the Intellect*

Antonio Petagine

Abstract

The article presents Francis of Marchia's refutation of Averroes' doctrine of the unity of the intellect. Marchia's position is placed in the context of the Franciscan debate of his time. The author examines how Scotus, Auriol, and other early Scotists considered Averroes' doctrine, highlighting the influence of Thomas Wylton's question *On the intellectual soul* in this debate. Presenting Marchia's solution, the author shows that Marchia considers monopsychism as a doctrine that contradicts individual experience and the formal union between the body and the intellectual soul; however, his focus is on the noetic aspects of the debate. Marchia provides a solution aimed at explaining how the order of knowledge achieves a truly universal reference to one intelligible object for all subjects, without denying that individual human beings are the true subjects of their own knowledge.

Introduction

From the mid-13th century, Averroes' name has been consistently associated with the doctrine of the unity of the intellect, that is to say, the existence of a single intellect for the entire human species. Since the attribution to Averroes of such a doctrine appeared a few decades after the beginning of the circulation of his *Long Commentary on the De Anima of Aristotle* in Latin translation, some scholars have questioned whether he really supported this thesis, or whether it was the Latin theologians of

* I would like to thank Davide Riserbato and Sara Petagine for their suggestions, and Michele Stanbury for the linguistic revision of the article.

the mid-13th century who invented the “heresy” they found themselves fighting over¹. Certainly, Averroes argued that the nature of the intellect could in no way be assimilated to that of the sensitive powers. The intellect, in fact, thinks by means of universal concepts, which it abstracts from the phantasms, separating the form from the material and individuating principles. This implies that the intellect cannot be either material or individuated in the manner of a corporeal power². Does asserting this not then coherently lead to the conclusion that the possible intellect must be a substance separate from the body and unique for the entire human species, given that individuation occurs in material substances? Accepting this conclusion, how can we explain the fact that we attribute the act of thinking to the individual man? Averroes solved this problem by arguing that the union between the human intellect and the body is accomplished in the production of the intellectual act (what the Latins will call *continuatio*)³. This is possible, according to Averroes, because the intelligible species has a double subject: the first is the individual soul, in which the sensitive representations (the so-called *intentiones ymaginatae*) are found, the other is the intellect itself, as an incorruptible, immaterial, and universal subject⁴.

The Latin masters of the 13th century thus found in Averroes’ writings a serious philosophical problem: how can one reconcile the

¹ See, on this point, S. Gomez Nogales, *Saint Thomas, Averroès et l’averroïsme*, in *Aquinas and problems of his time*, edited by G. Verbeke and D. Verhelst, Leuven-The Hague 1976, pp. 161-177; R.-A. Gauthier, *Préface a Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Sententia libri de anima*, Roma 1984, pp. 221*-222*; Id., *Notes sur les débuts (1225-1240) du «premier averroïsme»*, «Revue de Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques», 66 (1982), pp. 321-374; O. Leaman, *Is Averroes an Averroist?*, in *Averroismus im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance*, hrsg. von F. Niewöhner und L. Sturlese, Zürich 1994, pp. 9-22; A. De Libera, *Introduction à Averroès, L’intelligence et la pensée. Gran Commentaire du De anima, livre III (429a10-435b25)*, traduction, introduction et notes par A. de Libera, Paris 1998²; A. Petagine, *Aristotelismo difficile. L’intelletto umano nella prospettiva di Alberto Magno, Tommaso d’Aquino e Sigieri di Brabante*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2004; Id., *Averroism. A Paradigm of Psychology in the Thirteenth Century?*, in *Medieval Paradigm. Religious Thought and Philosophy*, edited by G. D’Onofrio, Brepols, Turnhout 2012, pp. 529-558; J.-B. Brenet, *L’Averroïsme aujourd’hui*, in *Dante et l’averroïsme*, edited by A. de Libera, J.-B. Brenet et I. Rosier-Catach, Paris 2019, pp. 47-78.

² Cf. Averroes, *Commentarium magnum in Aristotelis de anima libros (= In De an.)*, III, 5, ed. F. Stuart Crawford, Cambridge (Mass.) 1953, pp. 387-413.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 404-405, ll. 501-536.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 400, ll. 379-393.

universality of thought with the particularity of the thinking subject, since, in the Aristotelian view, universality and particularity are opposed to each other? Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas believed it was possible to assimilate the way Averroes demonstrated the incorporeality and immateriality of the intellect, but without following him where he deduced that it was a separate unique substance. Other masters, however, like Siger of Brabant, held that Averroes' doctrine was philosophically valid, although faith required the opposite⁵. This first "Averroist crisis" led the Bishop of Paris Étienne Tempier to condemn the doctrine of the unity of the intellect in 1270 and 1277⁶. Without directly targeting Averroes, even the Council of Vienne in 1312 took a position antithetical to his doctrine, condemning in the *Catholicae fidei* any denial of the formal relationship between the human soul and body⁷.

These pronouncements did not render obsolete the debate on the existence of only one intellect for all human beings. Several masters of the early 14th century, in various European universities, continued to find Averroes' interpretation of Aristotle's psychology and noetics convincing (or at least plausible)⁸. In 1315-1317, Thomas Wylton

⁵ Cf Siger of Brabant, *Quaestiones in tertium de anima*, q. 9, in Id., *Quaestiones in tertium de anima, De anima intellectiva, De aeternitate mundi*, ed. B.C. Bazán, Louvain-Paris 1972, pp. 25-29. In *De anima intellectiva*, Siger explains that, concerning the separation and unity of the intellect, the truth of faith must be assumed, regardless of any philosophical conclusions. See Id., *De anima intellectiva*, 7, in *Ibid.*, p. 108, ll. 83-87.

⁶ See R. Hissette, *Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 mars 1277*, Louvain-Paris 1977, pp. 191-192; *La Condamnation parisienne de 1277*, ed. D. Piché, C. Lafleur, Paris 1999, pp. 88-89, 114-115, 160-166. Petagine, *Aristotelismo difficile* cit.; E. Coccia, *Intellectus siue intelligentia. Alberto Magno, Averroè e la noetica degli arabi*, «Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie», 53 (2006) 1/2, pp. 133-187; S.R. Odgen, *Averroes on Intellect: From Aristotelian Origins to Aquinas' Critique*, Oxford 2022.

⁷ See *Corpus iuris canonici*, ed. A.L. Richter and A. Friedberg, Graz 1959, pars 2, 1133-1134; W. Duba, *The Souls after Vienne: Franciscan Theologians' Views on the Plurality of Forms and the Plurality of Souls (ca. 1315-1330)*, in *Psychology and the Other Disciplines. A Case of Cross-Disciplinary Interaction (1250-1750)*, edited by P.J.J.M. Bakker, S.W. de Boer, C. Leijenhorst, Leiden-Boston 2012, pp. 171-272: 171-180.

⁸ Cf. Z. Kuksewicz, *De Siger de Brabant à Jacques de Plaisance. La théorie de l'intellect chez les averroïstes latin des XIIIe et XIVe siècles*, Wrocław-Varsovie-Cracovie 1968; J.-B. Brenet, *Transfers du sujet. La noétique d'Averroès selon Jean de Jandun*, Paris 2003; D.N. Hasse, *Averroica secta: Notes on the Formation of Averroist Movements in Fourteenth-Century Bologna and Renaissance Italy*, in *Averroes et les Averroïsmes juif et latin, Actes du Colloque International (Paris, 16-18 juin 2005)*, edited by J.-B. Brenet, Turnhout 2007, pp. 307-331.

discussed a question *On the Intellectual Soul*, in which he showed the impossibility of philosophically refuting Averroes' psychology. According to Wylton, the position contrary to Averroes had to be maintained, but by faith⁹. Shortly before 1320, the Carmelite theologian John Baconthorpe also argued that Averroes' doctrine was less distant from the dictates of faith than was commonly believed¹⁰. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the early decades of the 14th century, Franciscan masters continued to engage with Averroes' doctrine, opposing his conception of the relationship between intellect and body and the doctrine of the unity of the intellect. Francis of Marchia (a.k.a. Francesco d'Appignano, ca 1290-after 1344) fits in this context, dedicating two questions of the second book of his *Commentary on the Sentences*, 39 and 40, to the discussion of monopsychism.

A detailed analysis of the structure and content of these questions has already been offered, quite recently, by Tiziana Suarez-Nani and those who worked on the critical edition of *Reportatio A* of the second book of Francis of Marchia's *Commentary on the Sentences*¹¹. However, little is still known about the immediate Franciscan context of his stance on the unity of the intellect. This lack is undoubtedly due to the fact that the works of several Franciscan masters of the first decades of the 14th century are only available in manuscript form. Indeed, studies on this subject by Anneliese Maier, Antonino Poppi, and Jean-Baptiste Brenet have focused only on certain masters, namely William of Alnwick, Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, and Peter Auriol¹². Based on these studies,

⁹ Cf. Thomas Wylton, *Quaestio de anima intellectiva*, p. 2, a. 2, 87-94, in Id., *On the Intellectual Soul*, edited by L.O. Nielsen and C. Trifogli, English translation by G. Trimble, Oxford-New York 2010, J.-B. Brenet, *Les possibilités de jonction. Averroès-Thomas Wylton*, Berlin-Boston 2013, especially pp. 4-199.

¹⁰ See John Baconthorpe, *Commentarium in Libros Sententiarum*, II, d. 19, q. 1, a. 1, Venetiis 1526, ff. 172rb-174rb; J. Etzwiler, *John Baconthorpe, "Prince of the Averroists"?*, «Franciscan Studies», 36 (1976), pp. 148-176: 151-153.

¹¹ Francis of Marchia, *Rep. II A*, qq. 39-40, in *Reportatio A in II Sententiarum*, qq. 28-49, ed. T. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, Leuven 2012, pp. 139-153; T. Suarez-Nani, *La matière et l'esprit. Études sur François de la Marche*, Paris-Fribourg 2015, pp. 347-362.

¹² A. Maier, *Wilhelm von Alnwicks Bologneser Quaestionen gegen den Averroismus (1323)*, «Gregorianum», 30 (1949), pp. 265-308; A. Poppi, *L'antropologia averroistica nel pensiero di Pietro Auriol*, «Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica», 70 (1978), pp. 179-192; Id., *L'averroismo nella filosofia francescana*, in *L'averroismo in Italia*, Atti dei Convegni Lincei (Roma, 18-20 aprile

Tiziana Suarez-Nani recognized in Marchia's teaching a common «*émergence de l'individu*» shared with the above-mentioned masters that led them, in their opposition to Averroes, to emphasize the anthropological dimension of the problem and the importance of reflective experience¹³.

In this article, we will attempt to show further elements, in virtue of which placing Francis di Marchia's opinion on the unity of the intellect within the framework of the Franciscan environment of his time. To achieve this goal, we will reconstruct the fundamental arguments against Averroes of various Franciscan masters who presumably taught in Paris after the death of Duns Scotus and before 1319-20, the year to which Marchia's *Commentary on the Sentences* is dated¹⁴. Thus, in addition to Duns Scotus (1265/66-1308), we will refer to Alexander Bonini of Alexandria (ca1270-1314), Hugh of Novocastro (ca 1280-after 1322), Peter Auriol (1275-1322), John of Bassolis (d. 1333), Landolfo Caracciolo (d. 1355), and William of Alnwick (1270-1333). Naturally, within the space of this work, we cannot conduct an exhaustive and detailed analysis of the anti-Averroist doctrine of all these authors. However, we will try to outline an overarching picture that, by focusing on some fundamental lines of opposition to Averroes, will allow us to bring into clearer focus the position of Francis of Marchia within the Franciscan context of his time.

1977), Roma 1979, pp. 175-220; J.-B. Brenet, *Moi qui pense, moi qui souffre. Le problème de l'identité du composé humain dans la riposte anti-averroïste de Pierre d'Auriol et Grégoire de Rimini*, in *Généalogie du sujet. De Saint Anselme à Malebranche*, ed. by O. Boulnois, Paris 2007, pp. 151-169.

¹³ Suarez-Nani, *La matière et l'esprit* cit., p. 353: « L'accent ainsi mis sur la dimension anthropologique du questionnement suscité par la thèse monopsychiste ne caractérise pas seulement la position de François, mais, d'une manière générale, l'anti-averroïsme du début du XIV^e siècle. En effet, conformément à " l'émergence de l'individu " qui marque de manière significative la pensée de cette période, la critique du monopsychisme n'est plus axée principalement sur la revendication de l'individualité de la pensée – c'est-à-dire sur la réappropriation par l'individu de son activité d'être pensant, ce dont Thomas d'Aquin s'était fait le porte-parole –, mais sur l'affirmation de l'identité totale, première et irréductible de l'individu qui pense».

¹⁴ On Marchia's *Commentary on the Sentences* dating, see T. Suarez-Nani, W. Duba, *Introduction to Franciscus de Marchia, Reportatio IIA (Quaestiones in secundum librum Sententiarum)*, qq. 1-12, ed. T. Suarez-Nani et alii, Leuven 2008, pp. XIII-XIX.

1. *With Scotus, Beyond Scotus: Understanding, Discussing, and Refuting Averroes*

In the *Ordinatio*, John Duns Scotus dedicated a brief and scathing treatment to Averroes, firmly rejecting the doctrine of such a cursed (*maledictus*) philosopher¹⁵. A more extensive argument is found in the fourth book of the *Reportatio Parisiensis*, where Scotus opposes the way Averroes posits the relationship between intellect and body¹⁶. On this point, Scotus declares that he largely agrees with the critique of Thomas Aquinas, who argued that the operation proper to man cannot be separated from the substantial form of man himself. However, Scotus wants to reformulate this argument, emphasizing the concrete and singular experience of our thinking. Indeed, Scotus claims, we have a direct experience of the presence in us of an activity that cannot be produced by any organ¹⁷. Neither the acts of thought nor our aspiration

¹⁵ «Licet secundum fictionem illius maledicti Averrois, de unitate intellectus in omnibus, possit sic fingere de corporibus tuo et meo, sicut de lapidibus isto et illo, tamen, non tantum secundum fidem sed secundum philosophiam necessariam tenendo aliam et aliam animam intellectivam, non potest natura humana esse de se atoma et tamen alia et alia per quantitatem, quia in hoc et in illo homine est alia et alia forma substantialis, alietate praecedente naturaliter quantitatem» (John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio*, II, d. 3, a. 5, 164-166, in *Opera Omnia*, v. 3, ed. Commissio Scotistica (= ed. Vaticana), Vatican City 1954, pp. 472-473). Cf. Id., *Ordinatio*, IV, d. 43, q. 2, 59, *Opera Omnia*, v. 14, ed. Commissio Scotistica, Vatican City 2013, pp. 18-19.

¹⁶ Scotus calls here Averroes *maxime philosophus* (John Duns Scotus, *Rep. Par.*, IV, d. 43, q. 2, 6, ed. Wadding-Vivès, p. 490a). Such an appellation appears sarcastic, given that Scotus, after a few paragraphs, accuses Averroes of having committed the vilest and the most irrational among the errors of philosophers. Furthermore, he concludes his critique by stating that no philosopher has ever doubted that man is a rational animal, meaning “rational” is an intrinsic and not extrinsic appellation to the individual human being. See *Ibid.*, pp. 490b-491a.

¹⁷ «Probabant aliqui propositum sic: a propria forma est propria operatio, 1. *Ethic.*, quia forma est principium operationis. Sed intelligere est propria operatio hominis secundum quod homo, 10. *Ethic.* c. 10. et 2. *de Anima*, text. 24. Igitur hæc est a propria forma hominis, sed non est nisi ab intellectiva; igitur anima intellectiva est propria forma hominis. Hæc ratio non videtur sufficiens, secundum opinionem eorum ipsorum [...]. Formo igitur aliter rationem de operatione propria hominis, ut homo est, sic: *Intelligere* convenit homini formaliter, quia homo formaliter intelligit; hæc enim est ita manifesta, quod qui negat eam, non est homo. Quilibet enim experitur in se intelligere, et experitur in se quando intelligit quamdam operationem quæ non est alicujus organi». (*Ibid.*, 7, ed. Wadding-Vivès, pp. 490b-491a).

to happiness could be understood if the intellect did not formally belong to us¹⁸. Averroes, as well as «some of his followers» who consider it possible to conceive of the intellect as a separate substance united with us through phantasms, deny this formal relationship and come to conceive of the human being as a mere irrational animal, albeit endowed with a nobler soul than that of other animals¹⁹.

As we will see, the emphasis on self-experience and the individuality of intellection will be clearly present in the refutations produced by Franciscan masters following Scotus, although many of them will strive to analyze in a more detailed and detached manner the motivations that led Averroes to defend the thesis of the unity of the intellect. Alexander Bonini of Alexandria, when addressing the issue in the second book of the *Commentary on the Sentences*, started from the assumption that Averroes was driven to defend such a doctrine by Aristotle's words, which stated that the intellect is unmixed, impassible, and does not identify with any of the natures it knows²⁰. According to Alexander Bonini, Averroes' doctrine of *continuatio* stems from the attempt to attribute thought to individuals, while preserving the separateness and immateriality of the

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 9, p. 492a.

¹⁹ «Nec, brevier, invenitur aliquis philosophus notabilis qui hoc neget, licet ille maledictus Averroes in fictione sua III *De anima*, quae tamen non est intelligibilis nec sibi nec alii, ponat intellectivam quamdam substantiam separatam mediantibus phantasmatis coniunctam, quam coniunctionem nec ipse, nec aliquid sequax potuit explicare, nec per illam coniunctionem salvare 'hominem intelligere'. Nam secundum ipsum homo formaliter non esset nisi quoddam animal irrationale excellens per quamdam tamen animam irrationalem et sensitivam excellentiorem aliis animabus» (John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio*, IV, d. 43, q. 2, 59, ed. Vaticana, v. 14, pp. 18-19).

²⁰ «Circa istam quaestionem fuit error Commentatoris quod intellectus materialis est unus in omnibus ut patet 3. *De anima*. Potuit moveri ex dictis Philosophi ad hoc opinandum, et primo ex verbo illo intellectus est inpermixtus corpori et impassibilis, 3. *De anima*. Sed omnis forma corporis individuatur per corpus et per consequens admixta ei. Ergo intellectus non est forma individua huius vel illius, sed est comune omnibus» (Alexander Bonini of Alexandria, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, a. 2, ms. Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plutei 24, dext. 07, f. 23vb). We refer here to the *Redactio posterior*, likely produced between 1307 and 1308. See D. Riserbato, *Possibilità e limiti dell'intelletto umano in Alessandro di Alessandria. Studio e edizione critica delle qq. 1-2 del Prologo del suo Commento alle Sentenze*, «Rivista di Filosofia Neo-scolastica» 112 (2020), pp. 839-878: 839-843, with Bibliography.

human intellect²¹. Having clarified these points, Alexander observes that Averroes' position is mistaken because nothing can operate by virtue of a principle that is separate from it according to being. If the intellect is the formal principle by which man thinks, then it is not separate from him²². Therefore, *continuatio* is not sufficient to guarantee the union between the intellect and the individuals: it would not allow us to say, in the strict sense, that man thinks. In fact, *operari sequitur esse*, the conjunction between the intellect and the individual man can occur in intellectual operation only because it is already present according to being²³. Finally, Alexander notes that if the human intellect were unique to all, the attribution of any reward or punishment to individuals would no longer make sense²⁴. By virtue of these elements, he recognizes that the human intellect is certainly a power capable of participating in some way in infinity, without entailing that it be unique and separate from the being of the individuals, as composites of soul and body²⁵.

²¹ «Si autem obiciatur Commentatori quod si intellectus est unus in omnibus non est forma alicuius et sic non est forma tua et per consequens per ipsum non intelligit homo, respondet Commentator quod ex intellectu et intelligibili fit unum in actu. Cuiuscumque ergo continuatur intelligibile, continuatur intellectus. Sed intelligibile continuatur nobis mediante fantasmate ut dictum est in questione precedenti et per consequens intellectus continuatur nobis. Et sicut fantasma est nostrum, ita intelligere dicitur esse nostrum, ita quod sicut visio perficitur per duo, scilicet per sensibile et sensum, ita per sensibile accipit visio quod sit vera, per visum autem accipit quod sit de numero entium» (Alexander Bonini of Alexandria, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, a. 2, f. 23vb).

²² «Illud quo homo intelligit non debet esse separatum ab eo, sed intellectu homo intelligit, ergo etc. Unde est quod id quo mediante fit aliquid, potest esse dupliciter: uno modo sicut instrumento et hoc potest esse separatum realiter ab operante. Alio modo sicut principio formali, et hoc non potest esse separatum ab eo. Cum ergo intellectus sit quo homo intelligit sicut principio formali, non potest esse separatus ab eo realiter. (Alexander Bonini of Alexandria, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, a. 2, f. 24ra).

²³ «Illa continuatio qua fantasmati coniugitur intellectus, et per ipsam coniunctionem intellectus dicitur continuari nobis, non plus facit nisi quod ipsum fantasma fit intellectus, sicut si lux continuaretur colori et non oculi: non faceret nisi quod color esset visibilis. Ergo per ipsam continuationem non potest dici quod homo intelligat. Praeterea, operatio sequitur esse respectu eiusdem, ergo numquam intellectus continuatur nobis secundum operationem, nisi prius continetur [*ms.*: continetur] secundum esse» (*Ibid.*)

²⁴ «Si idem intellectus esse in omnibus, idem intelligere poterit esse in omnibus. Cum hoc perit premium multorum et supplicium (*Ibid.*).

²⁵ Cf. Alexander Bonini of Alexandria, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, a. 2, f. 24ra-b

Hugh of Novocastro dealt with the unicity of the intellect in an even more detailed way²⁶. He also notes that Averroes relied on some aspects of Aristotle's teaching and produced six main arguments in favor of the uniqueness of the intellect. These arguments revolve around the idea that the intellect is capable of universal cognition which transcends materiality and individuality. Therefore, if the intellect were individuated in each single man, it would not be able to produce universal cognition but would behave as a *virtus in corpore*. Moreover, we should have experience of the cognition of the agent intellect by the possible intellect, which is not the case at all²⁷. We can observe that, during the same years, Thomas Wylton, in his *Quaestio de anima intellectiva*, shared the intention of presenting Averroes' position through six arguments, although he organized this list quite differently²⁸. While Novocastro focused on the arguments through which Averroes deemed the plurality of human intellects incompatible with the idea that the intellect is not a bodily

²⁶ L. Amorós, *Hugh von Novocastro O.F.M. und sein Kommentar zum ersten Buch der Sentenzen*, «Franziskanische Studien», 20 (1933), pp. 177-222; V. Heynck, *Der Skotist Hugo de Novo Castro OFM*, «Franziskanische Studien», 43 (1961), pp. 244-70.

²⁷ «[Averroes] fundabat se super rationes Aristotelis inter quas sunt sex potiores praeter alias quas omittimus quam contra ponuntur. Prima talis quod recipit aliquid oportet idem esse denudatum ab illo. Sed obiectum intellectus possibilis est forma materialis, ergo ipse intellectus non est forma materialis. [...] Secunda ratio, omnis virtus unita corpori et materiae ut forma necessario materialiter et modo materiali hoc recipit. Si igitur intellectus esset unicus nobis secundum esse recipit materialiter et per consequens eius comprehensio esset sensus. Item tertio, virtus cognitiva unita ut forma unitur organo. Si ergo intellectus uniretur materiae secundum esse uniretur organo, et sic esset virtus organica, quod falsum est. Item quarto, omnis actus materiae virtualiter loquendo corrumpitur ad corruptionem materiae. Ergo intellectus corrumpitur ad corruptionem corporis [...] Item quinto, si intellectus uniretur nobis per informationem secundum esse, omnis operatio quae est ipsius naturaliter esset percepta a nobis sic, cum intellectus possibilis naturaliter intelligat intellectum agentem. Tunc istam eius operationem perciperemus, quod non est verum. Item, sexta ratio fuit quia tunc numeraretur numeratione corpori, quod est impossibile» [Hugh of Novocastro, *Sent.*, II, d. 16, q. 1, a. 1, ms. Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 984 (= *Vat.*), ff. 88vb]. I will follow ms. Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale centrale, A III 641 (= F) for some better readings of the text. Cf. Averroes, *In De an.* III, 5, pp. 387, ll. 11-16; 388, ll. 32-56; 397, ll. 299-311; 402-403, ll. 432-472; 405, ll. 528-543; *Ibid.*, 20, p. 450, ll. 188-198.

²⁸ Since we do not have exact information on when Hugh of Novocastro and Thomas Wylton commented the *Sentences* in Paris, it is difficult to determine whether Hugh might have been aware of Wylton's position or vice versa.

power, Wylton offered more specific noetic arguments. According to Wylton, Averroes argued that if the intellect were singular and individuated, it would be impossible for the universal to exist in it in actuality, for multiple individuals to judge an infinite number of things, and to share the same concept simultaneously, as in the relationship between disciple and master²⁹. Moreover, some absurdities would arise if human intellects were individuated. First, since the material intellect is receptive to the cognition of every material form, it would imply that it also receives itself when receiving its own cognition. Second, if you and I receive individual species, we would end up abstracting a species from a species, leading to an infinite regress.³⁰

Hugh of Novocastro articulates his refutation in two stages. In the first, he opposes the idea of the separateness of the intellect, and in the second, he addresses more specifically the question of the unity or plurality of human intellects. Regarding the first point, he first appeals to the notion of form. Then, he highlights the insufficiency of *continuatio* to account for intellection belonging to the individual human being; finally, he recognizes the necessity of explaining in what sense it can be correctly said that the intellect is not a *virtus in corpore*³¹. When he discusses the unity or multiplicity of human intellects, Hugh not only presents the reasons that may have moved Averroes to adopt the doctrine of unity, but he also observes that some masters believed it could be salvaged based on the fact that the intellect possesses a spiritual nature: to carry out the act of thought in union with the sensitive powers, the intellect, due to its spiritual nature, does not necessarily have to follow the same principles as material natures³².

Hugh of Novocastro observes that Averroes' opinion is totally erroneous and that not even this way of presenting it saves it from contradiction. The truly weak point of the doctrine of the unity of the intellect is its inability to explain the production of different acts of

²⁹ Cf. Thomas Wylton, *Quaestio de anima intellectiva*, p. 2, a. 2, 87-89, 93-94, ed. Nielsen-Trifogli, pp. 58-60; Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, p. 402, ll. 432-438; *Ibid.*, p. 411, ll. 717-721; *Ibid.*, 19, p. 441, ll. 37-42.

³⁰ Thomas Wylton, *Quaestio de anima intellectiva*, p. 2, a. 2, 90-92, ed. Nielsen-Trifogli, pp. 58-60; Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, p. 402, ll. 438-440; *Ibid.*, p. 411, ll. 713-717.

³¹ Cf. Hugh of Novocastro, *Sent.*, II, d. 16, q. 1, a. 2, *Vat.*, f. 89ra-va.

³² Cf. *Ibid.*, d. 16, q. 2, a. 2, f. 90ra-b.

intellection regarding the same object. If the intellect were unique, it would be impossible to explain the simultaneous presence among humans of contradictory opinions, as well as the coexistence of knowledge and ignorance. The unity of the intellect does not even allow us to explain the fact that when you and I see the same object, we both grasp it adequately with distinct acts of intellection. Hugh notes that this remark is valid not only for acts of cognition, but also for acts of will³³.

Although the intellect should be considered as a formal principle, Hugh observes that even those who would defend the thesis of a union only *ut motor* between the intellect and the individual human being, as Averroes does, will necessarily have to affirm that human intellects are multiplied according to different human beings. In fact, different individuals simultaneously perform different and opposing operations and volitions, an aspect that cannot be explained by positing a single mover for all³⁴.

³³ «Impossibile est quod idem intellectus idem affirmet et neget, quia affirmatio et negatio de eodem sunt contradictio, sed si idem esset intellectus in me et in te, hoc accideret, quia quod aliquando ego affirmo intellectu et ratione tu negas intellectu et ratione, ergo est impossibile quod sit idem intellectus et <eadem> intellectio in me et in te, aliter enim eadem intellectio esset affirmativa et negativa. Idem patet ex parte voluntatis, quia impossibile est quod eadem voluntas simul et semel habeat volitiones contrariorum et simul velit contraddictionem. Sed aliquando tu vis oppositum contraddictorium eius quod volo, ergo etc. Eadem enim esset volitio formaliter contradictorium quod est primum impossibile. [...] Tertio sequeretur necessario quod quando tu intelligis, ego intelligerem, quia [quod *Vat*] intellectio reciperetur in intellectu mihi coniuncto. Nec [*om. Vat.*] videtur quod plus uniretur mihi quando [quam *Vat.*] intellectio causaretur ab intentione ymaginata in me, quam causaretur ab intentione ymaginata in te. Si ergo secundum istum modum ego intelligo quando intellectio causatur ab intentione ymaginata in me, ita vero intelligerem quando causaretur ab intentione ymaginata in te» (*Ibid.*, f. 90rb). See on this point Thomas Aquinas, *De unitate intellectus*, 4, in *Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita* (= ed. Leonina), ed. Fratres Praedicatorum, Roma 1976, p. 308, ll. 76-127.

³⁴ «Diversis mobilibus que moventur diversis motibus oppositis in eadem hora oportet dare diversa moventia appropriata. Sed certum est quod duo homines vel plures sunt [secundum *Vat*] diversa mobilia, et moventur diversis motibus et oppositis. Ergo habent diversos motores. Sed movetur per intellectum et voluntatem, non solum per ymaginationem et appetitum sensitivum. Ergo illa oportet distingui in homine.» (Hugh of Novocastro, *Sent.*, II, d. 16, q. 2, a. 2, f. 90rb).

2. *The Refutation of the Unity of the Intellect in Peter Auriol, John of Bassolis, Landolfo Caracciolo, William of Alnwick*

Compared to the refutations offered by Alexander of Alexandria and Hugh of Novocastro, Peter Auriol clearly aims to present himself as a master who engages with the doctrines of Greek and Arab philosophers, reconstructing Averroes' position through a firsthand reading of his *Long Commentary*. He thus conducts a thorough analysis of Averroes' text, organized into three stages. First, he clarifies that Averroes used six terms to define the intellect and the stages in which intellectual perfection is accomplished: *potentialis*, *agens*, *speculativus*, *adeptus*, *materialis*, *in habitu*³⁵. This clarification of Averroes' vocabulary finds a clear correspondence in Thomas Wylton's exposition of Averroes' doctrine in the *Quaestio de anima intellectiva*³⁶. Second, he establishes his own list of six arguments with which Averroes supported the thesis of the unity of the intellect: the homogeneity between the receptor and the received³⁷; the universal nature of the concept³⁸; the common genus of agent and patient³⁹; the intellectual sharing that occurs in the relationship between learner and master⁴⁰; the impossibility that an intellect *signatus* can produce a universal knowledge in actuality⁴¹; the impossibility of the

³⁵ Peter Auriol, *Commentaria in secundum librum Sententiarium* (= *Sent.*), d. 17, q. unica, a. 1, Roma 1605, p. 232aC.

³⁶ Thomas Wylton, *Quaestio de anima intellectiva*, p. 1, a. 2, n. 8, ed. Nielsen-Trifogli, p. 10: «Circa primum sciendum quod Commentator, 3 *De anima*, in diversis commentis, utitur nomine 'intellectus' secundum diversas acceptiones, quas exponit determinando ipsum per diversas determinationes. Loquitur enim de intellectu materiali, de intellectu agente, de intellectu speculativo, de intellectu in habitu, de intellectu adepto et de intellectu passibili seu passivo». In *Ibid.*, p. 2. a. 2, nn. 87-95, pp. 58-62, *Ibid.*, p. 3. a. 2, nn. 96-103, pp. 62-64, Wylton presents Averroes' position on the unity of the material intellect.

³⁷ Peter Auriol, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. unica, a. 1, Roma 1605, pp. 232bD-E; Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, p. 402, ll. 432-438.

³⁸ Cf. Peter Auriol, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. unica, a. 1, ed. Roma 1605, pp. 233aD; Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, p. 402, ll. 441-446; *Ibid.*, 13, p. 428, ll. 21-26.

³⁹ Cf. Peter Auriol, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. unica, a. 1, ed. Roma 1605, pp. 233bF-234aA-B; Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, pp. 397-398, ll. 312-318.

⁴⁰ Cf. Peter Auriol, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. unica, a. 1, ed. Roma 1605, pp. 234aB-C, Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, pp. 411-412, ll. 717-721.

⁴¹ Cf. Peter Auriol, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. unica, a. 1, ed. Roma 1605, pp. 234aD; Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, p. 402, ll. 435-440.

infinite in actuality, assuming the eternity of the world⁴². We might observe that, while Novocastro's presentation of Averroes' doctrine focuses on arguments related to the incorporeality of the intellect, and Wylton's on certain noetic issues, Auriol offers an interpretation that takes both aspects into account. Third, Auriol notices that Averroes directed some relevant objections to his own solution, asking his *fratres* for help in resolving them⁴³. These objections particularly concern the relationship between first and second perfection and the strange relationship that arises, in his doctrine, between the eternity of the substance of the intellect - agent and possible - and the imagined intentions, which come from subjects which in contrast are generated and corrupted. In attempting to resolve these doubts, Averroes formulated the doctrine of the double subject of the intelligible, clarifying that the intelligible species has as its subject the unique intellect and, in another respect, the souls of individual men⁴⁴.

Elaborating his refutation of Averroes's position, Auriol insists, like the other masters we have seen so far, that the *continuatio* between intellect and individuals does not account for the unity between intellect and human soul: the arguments devised by Averroes to resolve the doubts he had raised for himself are not truly conclusive. In fact, it is possible to demonstrate that the unity of the known object does not imply the unity of the knowing intellect; moreover, the doctrine of *continuatio* does not account for the attribution of thinking to us⁴⁵. As Scotus had already done, Auriol also highlights the incompatibility between the doctrine of the unity of the intellect and the experience of our self, which unequivocally shows the radical individuality of our thinking, just as that of our feeling and suffering⁴⁶. Auriol also proposes

⁴² Cf. Peter Auriol, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. unica, a. 1, ed. Roma 1605, pp. 234aF-bA; Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, pp. 406-407, ll. 575-580.

⁴³ See Peter Auriol, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. unica, a. 1, ed. Roma 1605, pp. 234bB-C; Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, p. 399, ll. 365-366.

⁴⁴ Cf. Peter Auriol, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. unica, a. 1, ed. Roma 1605, pp. 234bF-236aD. See Averroes, *In De an.*, III, 5, ed. Crawford, p. 400, ll. 376-390.

⁴⁵ Cf. Peter Auriol, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. unica, a. 2, ed. 1605, pp. 238aD-E and 240aD-E.

⁴⁶ «Arguo ergo primo per experientiam. Secundum enim eundem magis est credendum experientiae quam rationi, quae non est demonstratio, unde ille arguit contra Avicennam [...] Arguo ergo per experientiam sic: quando animus experitur in se diversas operationes ita quod experitur, quod ille idem est qui habet utramque et quod una non est

an additional argument: if Averroes were right, it would not be enough to say that there is one intellect for the entire human species, but it would be necessary to conclude that there is one intellect in an absolute sense, eliminating any distinction between separate substances and the human soul⁴⁷.

In sum, Auriol presented a precise summary of Averroes' text, his method, and the terminology Averroes adopted. The portrait of Averroes that emerges from Auriol's exposition is that of an honest philosopher who subjects his doctrine to objections worthy of consideration. In his consideration of the arguments used against the unity of the intellect, Auriol consolidated the reference to experience and emphasized the inability of monopsychism to account for the internal unity of man and the plurality of intellects. Moreover, as we shall see, he also influenced Francis of Marchia with his consideration that if Averroes were right, there would have to be a single intellect in an absolute sense, not just for all men.

Another author who likely discussed this theme before Marchia in Paris was John of Bassolis⁴⁸. He closely follows the way Wylton presented Averroes' thesis in the *Quaestio de anima intellectiva*⁴⁹. He firmly states that Averroes' thesis on the unity of the intellect is false, absurd,

alia, ille experitur idem principium, ita quod si debent reduci ad unum principium oportet, quod illud principium sit idem non solum per contactum virtualem, sed aliqua maiori unitate [...] et exterior ego quod idem sum, qui patior dolores, et tristitias et experior me tristari, et dolere et intelligo, quod ego sum principium utriusque operationis; ergo oportet, quod ego, et quilibet, qui sic experitur in me principia harum opinionum concurrentia ad maiorem unitatem, quam solius operationis vel contactus virtualis» (*Ibid.*, p. 238aE-bB).

⁴⁷ «Eadem rationes, quae probant tantum unum intellectum, probant in omni natura intellectuali, maxime circa primum, et quia propositio consequens falsa est, quia sic non essent motores principales, sequitur quod rationes Commentatoris non concludunt» (*Ibid.*, p. 236bA). Peter of Aquila highlighted Auriol's merit for having brought up this argument. Cf. Peter of Aquila, *Commentaria in quatuor libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi*, II, d. 18, q. 2, a. 4, ed. C. Paolini, Levanto 1907, p. 299.

⁴⁸ Biographical information on John of Bassolis is scarce. For some hypotheses regarding the dating of his *Commentary on the Sentences*, see W. Courtenay, *Early Scotists at Paris: A Reconsideration*, «Franciscan Studies», 69 (2011), pp. 175-229.

⁴⁹ There is a perfect correspondence between the six arguments chosen by Bassolis to present Averroes' opinion (See John of Bassolis, *In secundum Sententiarum Quaestiones ingeniosissime...*, II, d. 17, q. 2, Parisiis 1516, ff. 106vb-107ra) and the six chosen by Thomas Wylton (*Quaestio de anima intellectiva* p. 3. a. 2, nn. 96-103, ed. Nielsen-Trifogli, pp. 62-64).

and not even a correct interpretation of Aristotelian doctrine. In fact, the thesis of the double subject of the intelligible species which he devised is insufficient to explain the unity between intellect and individual, because it cannot explain the existence of a plurality of conflicting opinions or the coexistence within humanity of ignorance and knowledge. Opinion, Bassolis emphasizes, cannot be reduced to the plane of imagined intentions, but is properly something intellectual⁵⁰. Like Scotus and Auriol, he also argues that Averroes's position goes against experience: indeed, experience attests that we, as single individuals, think with a proper singular intellect. This is why we must conclude that the intellect inheres in us formally⁵¹. Like Hugh of Novocastro, Bassolis observes that even those who do not accept the formal unity between intellect and body and opt, as Averroes does, for a mover-moved relationship must still recognize that the number of motors must be appropriate to the mobiles and the different movements corresponding to them⁵².

Bassolis concludes, much like Francis of Marchia in *Sent.*, II, q. 39 (as we shall see in the next paragraph), that while the plurality of human intellects is easy to acknowledge from the perspective of faith, it is difficult to demonstrate philosophically. Bassolis, while attributing to Averroes an incorrect interpretation of Aristotle's doctrine on the intellect, emphasizes that this issue arises, in all its difficulty, from adopting Aristotle's philosophical principles. In fact, the difficulty of establishing the plurality of human intellects using reason arises from Aristotle's contradictory doctrine about the immortality of the soul. Individual immortality, in fact, is difficult to reconcile with the eternity of the world and thus with the impossibility of the infinite in actuality⁵³.

⁵⁰ John of Bassolis, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. 2, Parisiis 1516, f. 107rb.

⁵¹ «Sed videtur mihi sicut etiam dicit unus doctor quod hoc est sufficienter demonstratum ex apparentibus et his que experimur certitudinaliter sic quod nullus bene dispositus potest ea mente negare. Homo enim certitudinaliter experitur se intelligere et quod intelligit formaliter» (*Ibid.*, f. 109ra).

⁵² Cf. *Ibid.*, f. 107va.

⁵³ «Aristoteles fuit totus perplexus et dubius de incorruptibilitate anime vel substantie intellectus, licet iactavit aliquando verba quibus videtur dicere quod est corruptibilis et passibilis. Diceret ergo Aristoteles quod intellectus est corruptibilis si voluisset vitasse infinitatem actualem stante eternitate mundi [...] et si posuisset cum hoc intellectum incorruptibilem. Dico quod contradixisset sibi implicite affirmando et negando infinitatem actualem. Nec est inconueniens hoc sentire de Aristotele. Puto enim quod in multis

Another master who read the *Sentences* in Paris before Francis of Marchia is Landolfo Caracciolo⁵⁴. Caracciolo shares with Auriol both the presentation of Averroes' position and the idea that, had Averroes been consistent with his principles, he would have affirmed the existence of a single intellectual substance in an absolute sense, not merely one shared by all humans⁵⁵.

Caracciolo also defends the thesis that the intellect formally inheres in us⁵⁶ and emphasizes that if Averroes were right, the intellect would be an infinite and eternal substance, in relation to which the plurality of intellects, as well as the presence of differing, even opposing, opinions among men, would make no sense. Similarly, the coexistence of ignorance and knowledge could not be explained⁵⁷. Only if the acts of intellection are numerable to correspond with individual human subjects can it be cogently argued that human beings think⁵⁸. Repeating a specific aspect of Scotus' criticism, Caracciolo also claims that if Averroes were right, the noblest part of man would be the sensitive soul, given that the intellect is separate⁵⁹.

William of Alnwick considered the Averroist doctrine of the unicity of the intellect in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, likely discussed in 1313-1314⁶⁰, and his *Determinationes*, debated in the early 1320s in Bologna. In distinction 17 of Book II of the *Commentary on the Sentences*, he addresses

contradicit sibi ipsi implicite, sicut et multo maiores ipso contradixerunt sibi ipsis. Sic patet quod excellentibus doctoribus imponitur contradictio tota die» (*Ibid.*, f. 108ra-b).

⁵⁴ See C. D. Schabel, *The Commentary on the Sentences by Landolphus Caracciolus, OFM*, «*Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale*», 51 (2009), pp. 145-219.

⁵⁵ «Si verum est quod philosophi posuerunt intellectum numerum non entitatem signatam, sed quidditatem quamdam totaliter subsistentem, sequitur quod posuerunt eum esse substantiam infinitam et Platonis ydeam. [...] Ille intellectus est quidditas totalis omnium particularium intellectum, qui possunt intelligi a quocumque et patet in exemplo eorum, si esset una sola simpliciter totalis subsistens conveniens omnes totas esset sola infinita, sic est in proposito» (Landolfo Caracciolo, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. 1, 88vb-89ra).

⁵⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, 89rb

⁵⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, 88vb.

⁵⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, 89rb.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ For Alnwick's updated biographical information, see F. Fiorentino, *Introduction to William of Alnwick, Questions on Science and Theology*, Introduction and Critical Edition by F. Fiorentino, English Translation by J. Scott, Münster 2020, pp. 1-2; D. Riserbato, *Nella mente di Dio. Guglielmo di Alnwick e le idee divine*, Roma 2024, pp. 11-14.

the question of the formal union between the intellective soul and the body. Elaborating on the solution, Alnwick briefly discusses the Averroist doctrine of the existence of only one intellect for all human beings. He states that if Averroes is right, we should conclude that only one human soul exists for all human bodies⁶¹. The anti-Averroist questions contained in his *Determinationes* show a deeper analysis and refutation of Averroes' position⁶². Discussing the question *Utrum ratione naturali possit evidenter ostendi quod anima umana sit forma corporis humani*, Alnwick opposed the doctrine according to which the intellect is ontologically separate from the body, stressing the idea that the ontological separation of the intellect is not compatible with the fact that we are also endowed with will. Indeed, in willing we experience ourselves as masters of our acts. This would not be possible if the will were separate from the single and concrete human being⁶³. Furthermore, William of Alnwick explains that if the intellect were unique, the possible and agent intellects would be eternal substances. Consequently, Plato would be right in saying that knowing is remembering. The function of the possible intellect, the agent intellect, and the sensible species, as Aristotle conceives them, would no longer make sense⁶⁴. Also in Alnwick's analysis, the experience of the plurality of human acts of intellection proves to be a real thorn in the side of the Averroist

⁶¹ Cf. William of Alnwick, *Sent.* II, d. 17, ms. Padova, Pontificia Biblioteca Antoniana, 291, f. 121vb.

⁶² Cf. Id., [q. 1] *Utrum ratione naturali possit evidenter ostendi quod anima intellectiva sit forma corporis humani*, a. 2, in Z. Kuksewicz, *Wilhelma Alnwicka trzy kwestie antyaverroistyczne o duszy intelektualnej*, «*Studia Mediewistyczne*» 7 (1966), pp. 3-76: 9-25; [q. 3] *Utrum ratione naturali potest evidenter ostendi quod anima intellectiva multiplicetur ad multiplicationem corporum humanorum*, in *Ibid.*, pp. 58-76.

⁶³ «Homo est dominus suarum actionum, sed non propter appetitum sensitivum tantum, qui, quantum est ex se, ad unum determinatur, potentie enim sensitive magis ducuntur quam ducunt, et magis aguntur quam agunt, quia sunt cum passione operantes. Ergo homo dominatur suis actionibus per voluntatem. Sed homo non dominatur nisi per potentiam in ipso formaliter existentem et non per potentiam existentem in substantia separata secundum esse, quia non est in potestate agentis inferioris actio agentis superioris» (William of Alnwick, *Utrum ratione naturali possit evidenter ostendi quod anima intellectiva sit forma corporis humani*, a. 2, ed. Kuksewicz, p. 14, ll. 18-27).

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15, ll. 30-44.

position⁶⁵. To this, he adds the absurd implications of Averroes' doctrine at the ethical and political level⁶⁶. Regarding the separateness and unity of the intellect, Averroes was wrong not only as a philosopher but also as an interpreter of Aristotle's thought. This leads William to repeat the well-known judgment reported by Thomas Aquinas in *De unitate intellectus*: Averroes is more a corrupter of Aristotle than an interpreter⁶⁷.

William of Alnwick then dedicates a specific question to demonstrating the multiplication of intellects according to the number of bodies. Here he addresses the issue by proposing a careful reading of Averroes' text⁶⁸. He wonders if we can affirm the multiplication of intellects only by faith. To answer, he first presents Thomas Wylton's way of posing the question⁶⁹. While Wylton concludes that we can be sure of the individuality of our intellect only by faith, Alnwick claims that the plurality of intellects finds support in reasons evident to natural reason alone. Indeed, being, living - and thus thinking - are particular

⁶⁵ «Si esset unus intellectus numero in Petro et Paulo, esset unum intelligere numero in eis. Consequens est impossibile, quia diversorum individuorum numero non potest esse una operatio numero. [...] Si igitur intellectus sit unus numero in me et in te respectus eiusdem obiecti intelligibilis, non erunt in nobis plures actus intelligendi, sed unus quamvis fantasmata sint plura» (*Ibid.*, p. 15, ll. 12-14, 30-31) «Omne recipiens oportet esse denudatum a natura recepti secundum speciem, quia nichil recipit quod habet. Sed intellectus possibilis recipit speciem obiecti materialis; ergo, si intellectus habeat speciem illius obiecti, non potest idem intellectus recipere aliam eiusdem obiecti. Si intellectus igitur sit unus in me et in te, et intellectus meus intelligit lapidem per speciem lapidis, sequitur, quod intellectus tuus non possit recipere speciem lapidis ad intelligendum ipsum et ita, si ego intelligat lapidem, tu non poteris lapidem intelligere, quia non eadem specie, quia eadem species intelligibilis non est diversorum hominum, sicut nec idem intelligere» (*Ibid.*, p. 16, ll. 10-17).

⁶⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 17, ll. 23-39.

⁶⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 20, ll. 11-14.

⁶⁸ This is particularly true for the development of article 3, in which Alnwick aims to demonstrate that neither Aristotle nor Averroes asserted that there is one intellectual soul formally united to different human bodies. See William of Alnwick, *Utrum ratione naturali potest evidenter ostendi quod anima intellectiva multiplicetur ad multiplicationem corporum humanorum*, a. 3, ed. Kuksewicz, pp. 69-76.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, a. 1, pp. 59-62. Concerning Alnwick's knowledge and discussion of Thomas Wylton's view, see Maier, *Wilhelm von Alnwicks Bologneser Quaestionen gegen den Averroismus (1323)* cit., esp. pp. 281-308.

acts of particular entities. Therefore, the principle underlying such perfections can only be particular⁷⁰.

The brief survey of anti-Averroist refutations we have presented allows us to draw two conclusions. The first concerns two elements that have appeared central in developing the refutation. The first of these two elements is the appeal to self-experience as a decisive criterion for highlighting the individual presence of the intellect in us. On this point, it was certainly Scotus who initiated a shift that Auriol and other masters also embraced. The second fundamental element concerns the inability of Averroes' doctrine to justify the coexistence of distinct intellectual acts, multiple and possibly conflicting opinions, as well as multiple acts of will. Regarding these and their strictly intellectual nature, the Averroist reference to imagined intentions was considered completely inadequate.

The second conclusion pertains to the relationship between Thomas Wylton's *Quaestio de anima intellectiva* and the refutation of the doctrine of the unity of the intellect produced by Hugh of Novocastro, Peter Auriol, John of Bassolis, Landolfo Caracciolo, William of Alnwick. Wylton's *Quaestio* was not only the crucial polemical target, against which it was reiterated that Averroes's doctrine should be rejected not only on grounds of faith, but also on grounds of natural reason; it was also a useful basis upon which Franciscan masters like Bassolis built their presentation of Averroes's doctrine and vocabulary.

We will now examine how Francis of Marchia, in elaborating his own refutation of the doctrine of the unity of the intellect, engaged with such a complexity of elements and argumentative strategies.

3. The Question of the Unity of the Intellect in Francis of Marchia's Commentary on the Sentences

Francis of Marchia addresses the issue of the unity of the intellect in two questions of his *Commentary on the second book of the Sentences*. In question 39, he asks whether there is one intellect for all humans, and in

⁷⁰ Cf. William of Alnwick, *Utrum ratione naturali potest evidenter ostendi quod anima intellectiva multiplicetur ad multiplicationem corporum humanorum*, a. 2, ed. Kuksewicz, p. 69.

question 40, whether the multiplication of intellects is philosophically demonstrable.

In question 39, Marchia observes that adopting Aristotelian philosophical principles generates three difficulties. Like John of Bassolis, Marchia points out that these difficulties mainly stem from the ambiguities regarding the immortality of the intellectual soul. Indeed, Marchia observes that if the intellect were immortal, the death of the body would perpetually deprive it of what gives it its perfection, which is impossible. Moreover, the immortality of the individual soul is difficult to reconcile with the doctrine of the eternity of the world, as it would imply the existence of the infinite in act⁷¹. To these two difficulties related to immortality, Marchia recalls a third one, which concerns the multiplication of substances within the same species. In Aristotelianism, this specifically pertains to material substances. So, the plurality of intellects seems incompatible with the belief that the intellect is an immaterial form⁷².

Marchia notes that these problems are easily resolved by adopting the position of faith, while finding a solution consistent with Aristotle's principles appears challenging. Within the philosophical tradition, Marchia observes, we can find four possible solutions: that the intellect is corruptible, that the world is not eternal (eliminating the difficulty of accounting for the infinite in actuality), that the intellects are determinate in number and infused into different individuals at different times, or that there exists one intellectual substance for all humans⁷³.

It is worth noting that Marchia states that *all* these solutions are false, absurd, and inconsistent. By contrast, Bassolis had stated that to escape this difficulty, it would be necessary to deny the eternity of the world and the principles that Aristotle posited in the eighth book of *Physics*. Bassolis notices that Aristotle himself had renounced them when he posited the multiplication of intellects according to individuals in other texts⁷⁴. Marchia remains consistent with what he asserted in *Sent.*, II, 12, where

⁷¹ Francis of Marchia, *Rep. IIA*, q. 39, 3-4, in Id., *Reportatio IIA*, qq. 28-49, ed. T. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, Leuven 2012, pp. 139-140.

⁷² Cf. *Ibid.*, 5, p. 140.

⁷³ Cf. *Ibid.*, 6, pp. 140-141.

⁷⁴ Cf. John of Bassolis, *Sent.*, II, d. 17, q. 2, f. 108rb.

he stated that the eternity of the world is not a philosophical absurdity and that God, without contradiction, could make the world exist from eternity, thus also making it infinite in actuality⁷⁵.

Therefore, to solve the question, other strategies must be employed. In any case, it is clear to Francis of Marchia that among all possible solutions, the unity of the intellect is the most absurd. To prove this absurdity, he observes that it is impossible to conceive that you and I possess the same intellect, because if you hate me, I would then have to hate myself, which is patently impossible. If those who support the unity of the intellect deny this argument because they do not believe the intellect is related to the individual as its form, then one must respond that we experience thinking and, in thinking, we experience being a single individual who is thinking, not two people. A human cannot be a single entity unless as a composite of soul and body, where the soul is the form of the body⁷⁶.

It is interesting to note that Marchia bases this argument not on an act of cognition but on experiencing a certain feeling, which is provoked by an act of will. One could deduce that he considers the singularity of acts of will more impactful than those related to the simultaneity of distinct or contrasting opinions, which Francis of Marchia also addresses in the subsequent question. He closes question 39 with a striking statement: “I, who understand, am primarily what I am through understanding, not

⁷⁵ Cf. Francis of Marchia, *Rep. IIA*, q. 12, a. 2, 78, ed. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, p. 225. See R. Friedman, *Francesco d'Appignano on the Eternity of the World and the Actual Infinite*, in *Atti del I° Convegno Internazionale su Francesco d'Appignano*, a cura di D. Priori, Appignano del Tronto 2002, pp. 83-99.

⁷⁶ «Et ideo dico quod non est idem intellectus in me et in te, immo alius et alius. Hoc probo sic: vel ego sum tu et e converso, vel non. Non primum, quia, cum tu odias me, sequeretur quod ego odirem me, quod est falsum; ergo sum alius a te. Tunc arguo: vel ego sum intellectus tantum, aut sum aliquid praeter intellectum. Non tantum intellectus, quia tunc idem essem tecum, cum intellectus in me et in te sit idem, ut dicis. Nec potes tu dicere quod sum aliquid praeter intellectum, quia tu non ponis intellectum esse formam. Sed constat quod ego, cum intelligam me intelligere, sum essentialiter unum ens intelligens, non duo intelligentes. Ex anima autem et corpore quae includit, homo non potest fieri aliquid per se unum, nisi anima sit forma corporis» (Francis of Marchia, *Rep. IIA*, q. 39, 8, ed. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, p. 141).

through the body; if I am distinct from another understanding being, I am distinct primarily through understanding, not through the body»⁷⁷.

In question 40, Francis of Marchia explicitly directs his attention to the fifth comment of Averroes' *Long Commentary on De Anima*. He finds in the text three main arguments, dealing with the homogeneity between the recipient and the received form and the unity of the intelligible object. The intellect is the subject of universal notions and produces logical principles that apply to all humans: the multiplicity of intellects would contradict such universality. If the intelligible object is abstract and one for all humans, its subject cannot possess a unity inferior to what it can produce⁷⁸.

Marchia notes that some, against Averroes, argue using a parallel with the object of sense. Just as perceiving the same sensible object does not make us the same sensing subject, perceiving the same intelligible object does not make us the same thinking subject. Marchia observes that this argument could be objected to by noting that the identity of the intelligible object implies universality, a feature not found in the sensible object. Therefore, we should argue differently: according to him, it is better to find reasons that derive from the specificity of the intelligible object. Furthermore, he seeks arguments showing internal contradictions between the unity of the intellect and other statements made by Averroes. Thus, if it is true that Averroes distinguishes between the human intellect and separate intelligences, then it could be noted that if the intellect were one by virtue of the unity of the intelligible object, this would mean that the same intelligible object exists in both me and a separate substance, a thesis that Averroes himself would have rejected⁷⁹. This argument seems very similar to that developed by Auriol, who argued that if Averroes were right, he should assert that there exists one

⁷⁷ «Ego, qui intelligo, sum principaliter id quod sum per intellectum, non per corpus; ego, si sum ab alio intelligente distinctus, sum distinctus per intellectum principaliter, non per corpus» (*Ibid.*, 9, ed. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, p. 142).

⁷⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, q. 40, a. 1, 4-7, pp. 143-145.

⁷⁹ «Ideo arguo aliter. Primo sic: non magis obiectum intellectum a me et a te est idem quam obiectum intellectum a me et ab intelligentia separata. Ergo, si propter identitatem sive unitatem obiecti intelligibilis concludis unitatem intellectus in te et in me, ita debes concludere unum intellectum esse in me et in intelligentia separata; hoc autem est falsum et etiam contra te» (*Ibid.*, 10, ed. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, pp. 145-146).

intellect in an absolute sense and not just one for all humans⁸⁰. Moreover, continues Francis of Marchia, Averroes considered the acts of intellection attributed to individual subjects as distinct. Therefore, he would also have maintained that the act of intellection in me and in you are distinct. The unity of the intellect cannot explain this difference⁸¹. This difficulty also extends to another case: not only are the intellections of two distinct subjects with respect to the same object distinct, but also the intellections of the same subject at different times⁸².

Having shown Averroes' position and the difficulties it encounters, Francis of Marchia presents his own arguments to demonstrate in a pure philosophical way that each person possesses their own intellect. He mentions a doctor who started from the thesis that the intellect does not use any bodily organ during intellection, observing that this activity is at the same time inorganic and distinct in both me and you. However, Marchia observes that this argument is not valid because we cannot rationally demonstrate that the intellect, when thinking, does not use any organ⁸³. The editors of the critical edition of the text identified this doctor with Thomas Aquinas⁸⁴. However, if what we have previously seen is true, the mentioned *doctor* could be Duns Scotus, who intended to overcome Aquinas's argument precisely by asserting that we experience within ourselves intellectual activities that do not depend on an organ⁸⁵. If this is the case, Francis of Marchia would have rejected an aspect of Scotus's argumentation while agreeing with him in considering that our

⁸⁰ See *Supra*, note 47.

⁸¹ Francis of Marchia, *Rep. IIA*, q. 39, 11-12, ed. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, p. 146.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 13, p. 147.

⁸³ Cf. *Ibid.*, a. 2, 15-16, p. 147. See also Francis of Marchia, *Reportatio IIA (Quaestiones in secundum librum Sententiarum)*, qq. 13-27, q. 18, 25, ed. T. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, Leuven 2010, p. 127; *Id.*, *Sent.*, IV, q. 61b, 24-25, in E. Katsoura, C. Papamarkou, C. Schabel, *Francis of Marchia's Commentary on Book IV of the Sentences. Traditions and Redactions, with Questions on Projectile Motion, Polygamy, and the Immortality of the Soul*, «Picenum Seraphicum», 25-26 (2006-2008), pp. 101-166: 160-161.

⁸⁴ Cf. Francis of Marchia, *Rep. IIA*, q. 40, a. 2, ed. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, p. 147, note 93. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 76, a. 2, ed. Leonina, t. 5, Roma 1889, pp. 216-217; *Id.* *Quaestiones de anima*, q. 14, ed. Leonina, t. 24/1, Roma 1996, p. 126; *Id.*, *De unitate intellectus*, 4, ed. Leonina, t. 43, Roma 1976, pp. 307-310.

⁸⁵ Cf. *Supra*, note 17.

experience attests to the presence of the intellect within us as the formal principle of thinking.

Marchia adds another argument concerning the order within a form between the first actuality and the second actuality. Just as the form communicates its actuality primarily to matter and then to the composite, so in the second actuality, which is virtually contained in the first one, the soul communicates primarily with its body and then with the whole person. To express this same idea, Marchia reverses a typically Averroist argument, namely that the potency cannot be nobler than the essence. Siger of Brabant used it to assert that if the intellect operates immaterially, it cannot exist materially according to its being⁸⁶. Francis of Marchia uses the same argument to affirm the opposite: since the potency cannot be more abstract than the essence, and it cannot be denied that the soul is the form of the body, the intellect cannot be only one, while there are a plurality of bodies. Instead, Marchia specifies, it will be necessary to clarify that the human soul, being endowed with intellect, is connected to the body differently than the other souls. According to him, it must be recognized that the intellect is connected to the body not *coexigitive* but *communicative*. Through this distinction it can be admitted that the intellect is immaterial without concluding that it is separate. Such a clarification is also important for correctly addressing the question of the soul's immortality: although it cannot be fully demonstrated, it remains a plausible doctrine precisely because the intellectual soul shows a certain capacity to transcend the body and aim at ends which are not purely material⁸⁷.

⁸⁶ Cf. Siger of Brabant, *De anima intellectiva*, 3, ed. Bazán, p. 82, ll. 100-106.

⁸⁷ «Quia potentia non est abstractior quam essentia; sed essentia animae communicat corpori formaliter suum actum primum; ergo et potentia intellectiva. Ergo et communicat sibi consequenter actum secundum. Sic ergo dico quod intellectus exercet actum intelligendi per corpus sive instrumentum corporale non coexigitive ut exercet sensus, sed communicative, ut in IV^o dictum fuit» (Francis of Marchia, *Rep. IIA*, q. 40, a. 2, 18, ed. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, p. 148). Cf. *Ibid.*, q. 19, 28, pp. 127-128; *Id.*, *Sent.*, IV, q. 61b, 27, ed. Katsoura, Papamarkou, Schabel, p. 161. On this point, see A. Petagine, *Immortalità dell'anima: la posizione di Francesco d'Appignano all'interno del dibattito francescano tra il XIII e il XIV secolo*, «Picenum Seraphicum» 34 (2020), pp. 123-139.

Having clarified these points, Marchia's demonstration proceeds to deal with the issue of the coexistence of different intellections⁸⁸. Francis of Marchia encourages us not to confuse the plane of universality, which concerns the representational capacity of our concepts, with the reception of the intelligible form in my intellect and yours, which is certainly singular. He invites us to draw a parallel between things as they are found in the intellect and as they are found *extra intellectum*. Marchia gives this example: in the reality outside the intellect, "man" is a species under which distinct individuals exist; in the conceptual realm, something similar happens, in that the common concept of man is declined into different intelligible forms that are actualized as a multiplicity in you and me. Despite its specificity, the intentional order has a certain structural similarity to the real order, because even in the order of mental objects, it is possible to recognize a certain singularization that legitimizes the fact that different acts of intellection generate, in distinct intellectual subjects, singular intentions of the same intended object⁸⁹. This also allows us to understand, according to Marchia, why it is always possible to abstract from what is singular according to the representation in me and you, without falling into an infinite regress⁹⁰.

Conclusion

In this contribution, we have examined Francis of Marchia's view on monopsychism and compared it to the positions taken on the same issue by some Franciscan masters who preceded him in Paris after the death of Scotus. This comparison allows us to make some concluding remarks. The first concerns the clear difference between Marchia and authors like Auriol, Bassolis, and Caracciolo in examining Averroes' position. As we have seen, they have articulated their presentation of Averroes' doctrine very similarly to the way Thomas Wylton did in his *Quaestio de anima*

⁸⁸ Cf. Francis of Marchia, *Rep. IIA*, q. 40, a. 2, 19-22, ed. Suarez-Nani *et alii*, pp. 148-150.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 24, pp. 151-152.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 25, pp. 152-153.

intellectiva. Indeed, they clarified the vocabulary that Averroes forged and structured a three-step presentation of his position: six arguments in favor of unity, objections Averroes raised against himself, and his attempts to resolve these doubts. Marchia did not follow this scheme; rather, he focused his attention on a few decisive arguments. On this specific point, Gerardus Odonis and Peter of Aquila, a few years later, followed the way of presenting Averroes' position that we encountered in Auriol, Bassolis, and Caracciolo, rather than that of Francis of Marchia.

As for the philosophical reasons adopted by Marchia against monopsychism, we confirm what Tiziana Suarez-Nani had already observed, namely that the reference to individual experience is a clear sign of continuity with the positions expressed by other masters of the time. However, we can specify that Marchia refers to such an experience in a more implicit way than Scotus and Auriol did. In fact, the solution to question 39 certainly implies experience, but Marchia does not give the same emphasis to experience as Scotus and Auriol. This will be done much more clearly by William of Ockham, who recounts in *Quodlibet* I the same argument used by Francis of Marchia in *Sent.*, II, q. 39.

Francis of Marchia, <i>Rep. IIA</i> , q. 39, 8	William of Ockham, <i>Quodlibet</i> I, q. 11, a. 1 ⁹¹
Hoc probo sic: vel ego sum tu et e converso, vel non. Non primum, quia, cum tu odias me, sequeretur quod ego odirem me, quod est falsum; ergo sum alius a te. Tunc arguo: vel ego sum intellectus tantum, aut sum aliquid praeter intellectum. Non tantum intellectus, quia tunc idem essem tecum, cum intellectus in me et in te sit idem, ut dicis. Nec potes tu dicere quod sum aliquid praeter	Circa primam difficultatem dico quod potest evidenter probari quod non est unus intellectus numero in omnibus, quia impossibile est quod idem simul et semel sit sciens et ignorans idem, diligens et odiens idem, gaudens et dolens de eodem, assentiens et dissentiens respectu eiusdem, et sic de aliis. Sed intellectus in uno homine est sciens aliquid et intellectus in

⁹¹ See William of Ockham, *Quodlibet* I, q. 11, a. 1, in Id., *Quodlibeta Septem*, ed. J.C. Wey, S. Bonaventure (N.Y.) 1980, p. 67, ll. 23-31 (Emphasis mine in the text).

<p>intellectum, quia tu non ponis intellectum esse formam. Sed <i>constat</i> quod ego, cum intelligam me intelligere, sum essentialiter unum ens intelligens, non duo intelligentes. Ex anima autem et corpore quae includit, homo non potest fieri aliquid per se unum, nisi anima sit forma corporis.</p>	<p>alio est ignorans illud ignorantia dispositionis. Voluntas in uno diligit aliquid et voluntas alterius odit illud, etc., <i>sicut omnia ista per experientiam patent</i>. Igitur impossibile est quod sit idem intellectus in duobus illis.</p>
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Furthermore, Francis of Marchia's demonstration of the plurality of human intellects focuses on noetic aspects, emphasizing two points. The first concerns the weakness of monopsychism in explaining the simultaneity of multiple acts of cognition, as well as the coexistence of opposing opinions and judgments within human beings. The second involves the need to indicate how the order of knowledge achieves an authentically universal reference to one intelligible object for all subjects, without denying that individual human beings are the true subjects of their own knowledge. Thus, Francis of Marchia's solution is to identify a hierarchy in the order of intelligible forms that analogically reflects the one occurring for the species *extra intellectum*. He attempts to show that such a solution does not cross the 'red line' that the debate on monopsychism struggles with: the fact that the same intelligible object exists in both you and me through distinct intelligible forms cannot be trivially equated with the real order to the point of saying that the intelligible forms in you and me are 'individualized'.

Francis of Marchia appears aware that only by articulating an answer to this problem, beyond a simple reference to individual experience, is it possible to find a solution to the challenge contained in the Averroist position.