Aristotelian Psychology in Fifteenth-Century Padua

The Case of the Soul, Its Powers, and ‘Ockhamism’*

When it comes to Renaissance Italy and the question of Ockhamism, scholars can quickly refer to John Monfasani’s seminal article of 1993, which is entitled «Aristotelians, Platonists, and the Missing Ockhamists».¹ Lorenzo Casini, for instance, in an instructive article on the Renaissance debate on the immortality of the soul and the plurality of substantial forms,² suggested that a position mentioned in Pietro Pomponazzi, which argues for the pluralist view of the soul, could only be that of Scotus, since, as Casini stated with explicit reference to Monfasani, there was no Ockhamist tradition in Italy. However, as I understand Monfasani, he would not deny Ockhamist positions in (Northern) Italy in general, but only an institutional form of Ockhamism. Monfasani shows that there were no Faculties of theology but only collegia of theology in Northern Italy. These collegia were mere organizational bodies where doctoral candidates were institutionally gathered. The teaching function of a regular theology Faculty was missing. In this perspective, there was no regular place for professors of theology,³ and thus an ‘official’ theology was missing too. Since Ockham’s positions found a broad echo in the Faculties of theology in Northern Europe,

¹ I would like to thank Barbara Bartocci, Simon Burton and Andrea Robiglio for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper, and the participants of the Berlin colloquium for theirs. I am also grateful to Lee Klein for the revision of my English.


³ There were, however, sometimes mendicant friars who casually took on the duty of lecturing on theology. The chairs of Thomist and Scotist theology at the University of Padua were institutionally situated in the Faculty of Arts. MONFASANI, Aristotelians, Platonists, and the Missing Ockhamists, p. 256; M.T. GAETANO, Renaissance Thomism at the University of Padua, 1465-1583. A Dissertation in History Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2013, URL: <http://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI3609161/>; cf. P.F. GRENDLER, The Universities of the Italian Renaissance, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London 2002, pp. 372 ff.
Monfasani’s thesis is convincing: there were no positions for professors teaching Ockhamist theology in Northern Italy, and thus Ockhamists(!) were missing there.

In the following, I will hint at the Ockhamist influence at the University of Padua in around the 15th century. Specifically, I will focus on the map of the human soul, more precisely, on the question of the plurality of souls and their different powers. I will concentrate on two issues, namely the ‘double soul’ theory and the ‘double power’ view, which directly go back to William of Ockham. My picture converges with Monfasani insofar as I refer to Ockhamist ‘traces’, i.e., to similarities between two of Ockham’s positions to be found in different Paduan philosophers, who are certainly neither known to be Ockhamists, nor are they theologians at all. It also converges with modern scholarship that explicitly mentions Ockhamist teaching in Padua, or Renaissance Italy.

I will first outline the medieval debates with respect to the different traditions or currents (1). Then, I will sketch some traces of Ockhamist psychology in Padua in the 15th-16th century, namely the two theories mentioned earlier (2). Third, I will say something about sources (3), and lastly close with two historiographical remarks on the reception of Ockham in 15th-century Padua and on the characteristics of the exegesis of Aristotle’s psychology in Padua (4).

1. The Medieval Paradigm

Regarding the soul with respect to the body as well as to itself, Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) is, as often, a turning point in medieval philosophy. Before him, it was almost unquestioned that there is more than one substantial form in man, while for Aquinas there is only one single substantial form,

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4 The focus on Padua is, first of all, due to pragmatic reasons. It would by far exceed the scope of this paper to refer to all Renaissance philosophers of the period. This is why philosophers of Bologna, who had strong ties with Paduan philosophers are left out here (for the connection between Bologna and Padua, especially concerning psychology, cf. P. KÄRKKÄINEN and H. LAGERLUND, Philosophical Psychology in 1500: Erfurt, Padua and Bologna, in S. HEINÄMAA and M. REUTER (eds), Psychology and Philosophy. Inquiries into the Soul from Late Scholasticism to Contemporary Thought, Springer, Dordrecht et al. 2009, pp. 27-45). Secondly, it follows an approach that zooms in on specific places of philosophy and researches into the influences flowing together at these. For the University of Padua, its history and teaching, cf. GRENDLER, The Universities of the Italian Renaissance, passim.

namely the rational soul. He allows for no other form, like a form of corporeity, or another soul, be it vegetative or sensitive. To be sure, Albert the Great is, in this respect, a predecessor of Aquinas. Both Aquinas and Albert argue for a strong unity in man. That is to say, man is not to be split up into different beings – i.e., a vegetative, a sensitive, and a rational one – but he is primarily and essentially rational and one individual. Nevertheless, his rational soul encompasses all the functions that lower souls would have, even on a higher level. Since Aquinas favors just one single soul, he needs to safeguard its different operations. Hence, he claims different powers or faculties of this soul which guarantee that a rational soul can be a principle for such divergent, even contrary acts like thinking, smelling, or digesting. The powers are proper accidents of the soul and responsible for different clusters of operations according to different objects. On a macro-level, Aquinas distinguishes between rational, sensitive, and vegetative powers. On a micro-level, he subdivides these powers, e.g., into intellect and will for the rational soul, tasting, hearing, etc. for the sensitive

\*\*THOMAS AQUINAS, S. Th., I, q. 77, a. 1, corp.: «Respondeo dicendum quod impossibile est dicere quod essentia animae sit eius potentia; licet hoc quidam posuerint. Et hoc dupliciter ostenditur, quantum ad praesens. Primo quia, cum potentia et actus dividant ens et quodlibet genus entis, oportet quod ad idem genus referatur potentia et actus. Et ideo, si actus non est in genere substantiae, potentia quae dicitur ad illum actum, non potest esse in genere substantiae etiam immeadiatam operationis principium, semen habens animam actum haberet opera vitae; sicut semper habens animam actu est semper habens animam actum est vivum. Non enim, inquantum est forma, est actus ordinatus ad ulteriorum actum, sed est ultimus terminus generationis. Unde quod sit in potentia adhuc ad alium actum, hoc non competit ei secundum suam potentiam, inquantum est forma; sed secundum suam potentiam. Unde sit ipsa anima, secundum quod subest suae potentiae, et sic secundum potentiam, inquantum est actus, secundum actum seprumus, ordinatus ad actum secundum. Invenitur autem habens animam non semper esse in actu operum vitae. Unde etiam in definitione animae dicitur quod est actus corporis potentia vitam habentis, quae tamen potentia non abiciit animam. Relinquit ergo quod essentia animae non est eius potentia. Nihil enim est in potentia secundum actum, inquantum est actus.»

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soul, and nutrition, generation and augmentation for the vegetative soul. In short, we can say that Aquinas suggests a single substantial form position with an extensive set of powers. Since these powers are proper accidents in Aquinas, he and the subsequent tradition spoke of a «real distinction» between the powers among themselves and with respect to the substance or essence of the soul, in which they inhere.  

This extensive set of accidents in Aquinas’s account was criticized immediately afterwards, e.g., by Henry of Ghent and others. I would like to mention, however, another influential position of the 14th century: John Duns Scotus’s (d. 1308) «real identity» or «formal distinction». Scotus is well known for his parsimonious use of principles. Yet, in this case, he maintains that a human being is constituted not only of prime matter and an intellectual soul, as Aquinas had said, but also of a _forma corporeitatis_. This latter form of corporeity or bodiliness is necessary, according to Scotus, to explain some obvious natural/metaphysical facts (e.g., in generation and corruption), and some theological necessities (e.g., the veneration of relics). Apart from the plurality of substantial forms, Scotus, as I have said, allows only for one soul, namely the rational one. Moreover, he rejects any other entities, namely proper or other accidents in the soul. The intellective soul is the immediate principle for all acts of the human being, for thinking as well as for nutrition. This, it seems to me, is Scotus’s preferred solution; nevertheless, for exegetical motives («to save some authorities»), he

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8JOHN DUNS SCOTUS, Reportata Parisiensia II, d. 16, q. unica, n. 17, in Opera omnia 23, p. 74: «Dico igitur quod intellectus et voluntas non sunt res realiter distinctae, sed potest sustineri, quod sunt omnino idem re et ratione; vel quod essentia animae omnino indistincta re et ratione, est principium plurium operationum, sine diversitate reali potentiarum, quae sint vel partes animae, vel accidentia, vel respectus eius. Unde plura in effectu bene possunt esse ab uno in re, quod est omnino idem illimitatum, et tamen principium per se, et causa plurium, non ut ista includunt respectum, et tunc potentiae secundum se nullam omnino habent distinctionem, sed inquantum includunt respectus, distinguuntur ratione; sed ille respectus non est de ratione principii operationis per se. Nec propter hoc sequitur quod intellectus sit voluntas, quia illa non imponuntur principio absolute, sed ut tali sub respectu. Ista via per rationem improbari non potest, quia sicut prima causa, quae est semper illimitata, est omnino eadem, et est principium diversorum immediate, ita quod est illimitatum suo modo, licet non simpliciter respectu istorum, omnino idem re et ratione potest esse, quamquam producta sint diversa.»

9For this position of Scotus, cf., e.g., DUBA, The Souls After Vienne, esp. pp. 180-188.
proposes a formal distinction between the powers of the soul. Besides the ontological inconsistencies, I think this is Scotus’s position of embarrassment.

As a third thinker, I add William of Ockham, whose position will function as a blueprint for the following. Ockham (d. 1374), who is proverbially the most parsimonious theologian of the 14th century, assumes three substantial forms, which is not very parsimonious indeed. But it shows Ockham’s presuppositions very clearly. These three substantial forms are a ‘must’ and irreducible when it comes to man as the «rational animal»: (i) Scotus’s (or better, the traditional) form of corporeity, (ii) a rational or intellective soul, and (iii), as a third form, another soul, namely a sensitive one. Form (i) is responsible for the shape of the body and solves the above-mentioned

10SCOTUS, Reportata Parisiensia II, d. 16, q. unica, n. 18, pp. 74-75: «Quia tamen ista via [cf. n. 17] non salvat tot auctoritates, sicut potest alia, dico aliter quod potentiae non sunt res alia, sed sunt unitive contentae in essentia animae. De continentia unitiva loquitur Dionysius 5. de divinis nominibus, quia continentia unitiva non est omnino eiusdem, ita quod idem omnino continet se unitive, nec etiam omnino distincti; requirit igitur unitatem et distinctionem. Est igitur continentia unitiva duplex: Uno modo sicut inferius continet superioura essentia animae, et ibi contenta sunt de essentia continentis; sicut eadem est realitas, a qua accipitur differentia in albedine, et a qua genus proximum, ut color, et qualitas sensibilis, et qualitas et quamquam essent res aliae, unitive continenterunt in albedine. Alia est continentia unitiva, quando subjectum unitive continet aliqua, quae sunt quasi passiones, sicut passiones entis non sunt res alia ab ente, quia quandocumque determinatur ipsa res, est ens vera et bona. Igitur vel oportet dicere quod non sint res aliae ab ente, vel quod ens non habet passiones reales, quod est contra Aristotelem 4. Metaph. […] expresse. Nec tamen magis sunt reales passiones de essentia, nec idem quidditati, quam si essent res alia. Similiter non sunt potentiae idem formaliter, vel quidditativo, nec inter se, nec etiam cum essentia animae, nec tamen sunt res aliae, sed idem identitatem. Ideo talia habent talem distinctionem secundum rationes formales, qualem haberebant realiter distinctionem, si essent res aliae realiter distinctae.» Most scholars, however, do not assume this position of Scotus to be one of embarrassment but rather his genuine position; see, e.g., P. KING, The Inner Cathedral: Mental Architecture in High Scholasticism, in D. PERLER (ed.), Transformations of the Soul: Aristotelian Psychology 1250-1650. Special Issue = «Vivarium», 46 (2008), 3, Brill, Leiden 2008, pp. 253-274, at pp. 266-268, J.H.L. VAN DEN BERCKEN, John Duns Scotus in two Minds About the Powers of the Soul, «Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales», 82 (2015), 2, pp. 199-240, at p. 230. Cf. also my Unum antiquum problema: Denys the Carthusian and John Capreolus on the Question Whether the Soul’s Essence Is Distinct from Its Potencies. A Late-Medieval Starting Point, in M. BRİNZEI and Ch. SCHABEL (eds), Late-Medieval Commentaries on Peter Lombard’s Sentences, Brepols, Turnhout 2016 (forthcoming). It is clear that what I call his genuine position, namely the no distinction theory, would collide with Trinitarian theology. Since the soul and its structure is paralleled with the immanent Trinity, it is difficult to assume a single soul without differentiation within it, for it would suggest that in God it is the same; thus, this position equals a denial of the Trinity. Trinitarian considerations, I think, are one motive for why Scotus develops a position of embarrassment. For Trinitarian theology in 13th and 14th centuries, cf. R.L. FRIEDMAN, Intellectual Traditions at the Medieval University: The Use of Philosophical Psychology in Trinitarian Theology among the Franciscans and Dominicans, 1250–1350, 2 vols, Leiden and Boston, Brill 2013; for Scotus in particular, cf. ibid., vol. 1, 341-416.

11WILLIAM OF OCKHAM, Quodlibet II, q. 10, ed. J.C. WEY, St. Bonaventure University, St Bonaventure, NY 1980, p. 157.11-19: «Ad istam quaestionem [sc. Utrum anima sensitiva et intellectiva in homine distinguantur realiter] dico quod sic. Sed difficile est hoc probare, quia ex propositionibus per se notis probari non potest. Probo tamen quod distinguintur realiter primo sic:
problems in a coherent way (generation/corruption, veneration of relics, etc.). Unlike Scotus, Ockham believes that sensitive and intellectual acts are ontologically irreducible to one principle, since they can be – and often are – contrary acts, which cannot exist in the same subject. Thus, we have to assume another two substantial forms, (ii) and (iii), as subjects or means of these different kinds of acts. Unlike Aquinas and like Scotus, Ockham does not argue for a plurality of powers within these two souls, namely sensitive and intellectual, but believes each soul to be the immediate principle for all its proper acts. In this perspective, Ockham rigidly adopts his principle of parsimony.¹²

There is another feature in Ockham’s theory which results from the view just mentioned and which is important for the following discussion, namely Ockham’s distinction between two kinds of powers.¹³ He understands powers of the soul (potentiae animae) to be either (a) partial causes (causae partiales) or (b) partial principles (principia partialia). Powers as partial causes (a) are necessary for the vital acts of the composite, and thus they are really distinct, since they go back to distinct dispositions. The act of hearing is based on the organ ear, the act of seeing is based on the eye, etc. Since the organs are distinct, the corresponding powers have to be really distinct, too. Powers as principles, however, are not distinct, since they just go back to the soul as such, or better as the eliciting agent (anima eliciens).¹⁴

Ockham’s theory thus is a kind of middle position in many ways; it is, moreover, in some sense disproportionate to the ones mentioned before. Ockham is not as parsimonious as Scotus, since he has one more substantial form and one more soul. He is even less parsimonious than Aquinas, who assumes just a single substantial form. When it comes to powers, Ockham is more parsimonious than Aquinas, who has an extensive set of powers (i.e., proper accidents). Ockham, moreover,
introduces the explicit distinction between powers based on organs or dispositions, which have to be really distinct (see Aquinas) and powers, in general, which must be identical with the correspondent soul (see Scotus). This seems to have been an interesting blueprint for Paduan teaching, which was highly occupied with an Averroistic exegesis of Aristotle’s psychology.

2. «Traces» of Ockhamist Psychology in Padua

Although there were no professed Ockhamists and no institutionalized teaching in via moderna – and hence no Wegestreit – in Padua or elsewhere in Italy, as Monfasani has shown,15 we nevertheless find many traces of Ockhamist positions in Padua.16 It seems that Ockham’s mapping of the soul especially fits the Averroist teaching of the unicity and separability of the intellect. In this perspective, Paduan philosophy picks up traditional views and sets them into a new context. One could even speak of an eclecticism as, for instance, Kärkkäinen and Lagerlund do;17 or we could speak of the continuity and discontinuity of the medieval tradition.18 In the following, this will become quite clear. Even where one detects a rather Ockhamist approach to the map of the soul, as we will below, one at the same time finds distinct features of the Thomist or even Scotist tradition. While this would have been unthinkable in Northern Europe, in Italy, or especially in Padua, it was quite common – both before and after the introduction of the school chairs.19 I will present two

15See above with nt. 1.
16For «school traditions» in Padua, esp. Thomism, cf. GAETANO, Renaissance Thomism at the University of Padua.
19Mahoney has already investigated the Thomist and Scotist traditions in Padua. On the one hand, he has identified an «important, though not dominant, influence» of Aquinas’s works in Padua; cf. E.P. MAHONEY, Saint Thomas and the School of Padua at the End of the Fifteenth Century, in G.F. MCLEAN (ed.), Thomas and Bonaventure. A Septicentenary Commemoration, American Catholic Philosophical Association, Washington, DC 1974, pp. 277-294, at p. 283. On the other hand, he has noticed interest in Scotist positions, e.g., in Nicoletto Vernia, Pietro Pomponazzi, Agostino Nifo, and Marcantonio Zimara, while there were strong defenders of Scotus (Antonio Trombetta and Maurice O’Fihely) and anti-Scotists (Cajetan); cf. E.P. MAHONEY, Duns Scotus and the School of Padua around 1500, in C. BÉRUBÉ (ed.), Regnum Hominis et Regnum Dei. Acta Quarti Congressus Scotisticci Internationalis, Patavii, 24-29 septembris 1976, vol. 2: Sectio specialis. La tradizione scotistica veneto-padovana, Societas Internationalis Scotistica, Roma 1978, pp. 215-
issues: first, double soul positions and second, double power theories. I will refer to some prominent natural philosophers, who were no ‘school heads’ in the Thomist or Scotist tradition and who shared a teacher-student relationship, namely Paul of Venice, Gaetano da Thiene, Nicoletto Vernia, and Agostino Nifo.

2.1 Double Soul Positions

The first striking similarity between Ockham and these Paduan philosophers is the double soul theory. Paul of Venice (d. 1429), for example, supposes two total souls (animae totales) in man, namely the sensitive soul – which he calls, with Averroes, the cogitative soul and which contains both vegetative and sensitive powers – and the intellective soul. The sensitive soul is the term of generation and is corruptible. It is present in the individual human body and educed from matter. The intellective soul is immaterial and common to all individuals. How do they relate to each other? They are both characterized as first perfection – the intellect, however, as a passive one; they are both complete or full-fledged forms, as the concept of anima totalis suggests. But how can one subject have two forms, one could ask with Averroes? Paul draws a distinction between the substantial and the accidental form: the sensitive soul is the substantial form; it informs the body and inheres in it. The intellective soul is an accidental form, only informing the body and not inhering in it and thus constituting a specific and essential being. Paul, hence, differs both from Aquinas, who assumes just one soul, and from Ockham, who assumes two souls but both as substantial forms. Ockham’s position could therefore be questioned with respect to ontology, the question being: how can there be two separate forms in a substance? Moreover, Ockham also has a problem regarding interaction, namely: how can the operations of one soul be in relation with the other and vice versa? On the other hand, one must ask Paul: how can we define man as a rational animal when he is rational only by accident and not essentially? But this is exactly the Averroist...

20PAUL OF VENICE, Summa philosophie naturalis. Liber de anima, c. 5, concl. 4, Venetiis 1503 (repr. Hildesheim / New York 1974), f. 68vb: «Sed in hominibus praeter formas partiales vegetativas sunt duae totales, scilicet sensitiva multiplicata ad partes heterogeneas et intellectiva non multiplicata ad aliquam partem eius individui, scilicet bene ad omnia individua speciei humanae, eo quod intellectus est unus in omnibus hominibus iuxta intentionem Aristotelis et determinationem Commentatoris, III° De anima.»

21PAUL OF VENICE, Liber de anima, c. 5, f. 69ra and c. 36, f. 88ra (concl. 3), f. 88rb (ad 1). See also Z. KUKSEWICZ, La teoria dell’anima in Paolo Veneto, in L. OLIVIERI (ed.), Aristotelismo veneto e scienza moderna, Antenore, Padua 1983, pp. 325-347, esp. p. 335. Here, Kuksewicz explains the double soul position in Venetus as going back to a logical rather than physical perspective, since the features of the two souls display exactly the two notions given in the definition of man (animal – rationale). Yet, if we recall the argument that the cogitative soul is the term of generation, we should be careful not to underrate the physical explanation.
problem: man is a thinking being only by accident and thus his perfection is accidental not only by execution (2\textsuperscript{nd} perfection) but even ontologically (1\textsuperscript{st} perfection).

His disciple and successor Gaetano da Thiene (d. 1465) knows Paul’s position and refers to it as the third possible answer to the question of how many souls we have.\textsuperscript{22} The first one reminds us of Scotus, as Gaetano says that this position posits a separate soul for each level of being: a soul for being animate, for being sensitive, for being a man, and an \textit{anima individualis} by which man is individualized into Socrates or Plato. Although Scotus’s \textit{haecceitas} guarantees the individualization of man, he did not accept more than one soul in the composite.\textsuperscript{23} The second position will later be adopted by Giacomo Zabarella (d. 1589), who says that there are exactly three souls corresponding

\textsuperscript{22}GAETANO DA THIENE, De anima, II, c. 32, Venetiis 1505, f. 21va-b: «In hac materia plures inveniuntur positiones. Prima fuit quorumdam qui posuerunt in codem composito substantiali tot esse formas substantialiaes quot sunt praedicatae de eo quiditative praedicabilia, quorum quasdam generales esse dixerunt, ut forma per quam est substantia vel corpus, aliam vero specificam vel individualem, ut forma per quam est in tali specie vel tale individuum, et sic in homine essent animae plures magis communes et minus, ut anima per quam est corpus animatum, et anima per quam est corpus sensitivum sive animal, et anima per quam est homo, istis superadditur anima individualis, per quam est hic homo, ut Sortes vel Plato etc.

Secunda positio fuit aliorum qui dixerunt in plantis unicam esse animam, scilicet vegetativam, in brutis autem duas, scilicet vegetativam et sensitivam, et in hominibus tres, videlicet vegetativam, sensitivam et intellectivam, sic quod in mortalibus anima sensitiva praesupponit vegetativam et intellectiva[m] sensitiuam et non econtra<rio>, sicut tetragonos praesupponit trigonum et quaternarius ternarium et non conuer titur.

Tertia positio tenet quod in plantis est solum una anima, scilicet vegetativa et in brutis imperfectis est solum una anima quae est vegetativa et sensitiva, propter eius imperfectionem; sed in brutis perfectis est solum una anima quae est forma totius et illa est sensitiva et non vegetativa, et praeter illam in eis sunt animae plures vegetativae specie differentes, quorum quaelibet est forma partis sicut anima carnis, anima ossis, anima nervi etc. Et ex hoc apparat quomodo caro, os, nervus etc. ab invicem specifica essentialiter distinguuntur, in homine autem praeter tales formas partium ponit alias duas formas que sunt formaes totius, scilicet sensitivam eductam de potentia materiae et intellectivam in qua plures diversificati sunt, quia quidam ponunt eam creari de novo et numeraliter multiplicari. Alii autem insequentes Averroem III De anima ponunt eam unicam in omnibus hominibus ingenerabilem et incorruptibilem.


\textsuperscript{23}Cf. DUBA, The Souls After Vienne, esp. p. 183.
to the specific grades of living being: vegetative, sensitive, and intellective souls.\(^{24}\) Paul’s position is twofold in Gaetano. The first one (3.1) is Paul’s, as described above, but with the Christian turn that the intellective soul is created and multiplied according to the number of individuals. The second one (3.2) is Averroes’s proper position, claiming that there is only one uncreated and incorruptible intellect for all men. Gaetano opts, however, for the fourth position, which is explicitly connected to Albert and several other theologians. It assumes a hierarchy of souls in which the higher one always has the powers (\textit{virtutes}) of the lower one at its disposal. There is only one soul to a composite, with powers really distinct in regard to both the essence of the soul and the powers among themselves.

One might doubt, however, how much Gaetano really differs from Paul’s position. First, he seems to somehow stick to the view of a double soul when he says elsewhere that before the created human soul can be united with the human body, matter has to be predisposed by a special agent (\textit{agens particulari}).\(^{25}\) One can interpret this in the sense that there is a natural goal of generation before the arriving of the soul. Paul called it a «cognitive soul», Gaetano does not name it at all.

Second, although Gaetano gives arguments to reject the Averroist position in his \textit{De anima} commentary, III, c. 5, it is curious that the rejected position seems to be stronger and its arguments better defended than most of what is adduced against it.\(^{26}\) So maybe Gaetano was in fact a «hidden Averroist» or at least a «hidden Ockhamist».

Nicoletto Vernia (d. 1499), disciple and successor of Gaetano draws the same distinction. He speaks of a double man, a corruptible one (\textit{homo corruptibilis}), which is perishable and cannot be beatified, and a man, which is an aggregate of the corruptible one and an intellect, and which can be beatified.\(^{27}\) Although the \textit{aggregatum} unity is weaker than the unity between matter and extended

\(^{24}\)GIACOMO ZABARELLA, De facultatibus animae liber, cc. 9-13, in De rebus naturalibus libri XXX, Coloniae 1590, cols 640-658. PASNAU, Metaphysical Themes 1274-1671, p. 590; MICHAEL, Nature and Influence, pp. 73-74.

\(^{25}\)GAETANO DA THIENE, De anima, III, c. 5, op. 3, f. 58ra: «Fuit et tertia positio ceteris tutior et magis credenda, non solum, quia fides catholica Christianorum eam tenet, sed etiam ex seipsa, quia ponit animam humanam non generari ab agente particulari educente eam de potentia materiae, sed ab agente supernaturali, videlicet deo ipso creari ex nihilo et materiae ab agente particulari praedispositae infundi et corpori humano uniiri secundum esse.»

\(^{26}\)Cf. GAETANO DA THIENE, De anima, III, c. 5, ff. 55rb-59ra.

\(^{27}\)KESSLER, The Intellecutive Soul, p. 491, for instance, emphasizes Gaetano’s tendency towards Averroistic teaching in natural philosophy. In psychology, however, he believes Gaetano to have a conciliatory view between the Latin-scholastic and the Averroistic interpretation of Aristotle. This is why I have used the attribute «hidden».

\(^{28}\)NICOLETTO VERNIA, Quaestio utrum anima intellectiva humano corpori unita tanquam vera forma substantialis dans ei esse specificum substantiale, aesterna atque unica sit in omnibus hominibus, MS Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. VI, 105 (=2656), f. 156r, quoted from: E. DE BELLIS, Nicoletto Vernia. Studi sull’aristotelismo del XV secolo, Leo S. Olschki, Firenze 2012, pp. 34-35, fn. 74 and 75: «Ad quod argumentum respondet Gandunus et bene, quod per hominem possumus duo intelligere: aut enim intelligimus per ipsum solum hominem corruptibilem, aut aggregatum ex homine corruptibili et ipso intellectu. Si loquamur de homine primo modo, concedamus vero omnia ad quae deducit argumentum, scilicet quod ille non est intellectivus nec felicitabilis. [...] Tale aggregatum non sit unum tanta unitate quanta unitate est
form in the composite «corruptible man», it still suffices to constitute a unified operation of the composite. The term «aggregate» itself reminds us of Ockham’s description of how the accident is one with its subject, and hence Vernia, like Paul of Venice, seems to understand the intellect to be an accident of the corruptible man.

The early Agostino Nifo (d. 1538/1545) also picks up Paul of Venice’s idea of a double soul – and develops it further. According to Nifo, the anima cogitativa and anima intellectiva are not total but partial souls. Together they form one total soul, namely the rational one. The cogitative soul is the form of matter, from which an imperfect man is generated (called a medium). The intellect then is the form of the cogitative soul, from which the rational soul is generated. So, there is one part of the rational soul educated from matter, another one immaterial and the substantial form of the composite. The later Nifo turns to a Neo-Platonic cosmology to overcome the problem of how a rational soul can be material as well as immaterial. The rational soul, he then claims, is a middle form between the two extremes materiality and immateriality.

2.2 Double Power Positions


Cf., e.g., OCKHAM, Summula philosophiae naturalis, I, 16, p. 198.38-42: «Sciendum quod ‘generari’ et ‘corrumpi’ non solum inveniuntur in compositis ex materia et forma substantiali, sed etiam in aggregatione ex subjecto et accidente inhaerente, sicut quando homo fit albus ibi est unum aggregatum ex homine et albedine, quod nec est homo nec albedo.»

AGOSTINO NIFO, In tres libros Aristotelis De anima, Venetiis 1559, col. 720: «Debes scire […] quod hic est ordo intellectuum quod anima cogitativa hominis est forma materiae, ex qua et materia resultat quoddam non perfecte homo, sed medium. Intellectus est forma cogitativae, e qua et cogitativa constituitur anima rationalis essentialiter et per se, quae anima rationalis habet duas partes, unam per quam est educta de potentia materiae, scilicet cogitativam, quae est ultimus gradus partium sensitivarum, alteram per quam hoc perficitur, et reponitur in specie completa, et est intellectus potentiæ, ex quibus tota rationalis anima consurgit, quae est forma substantialis hominis in eo quod homo. Et sic patet quo pacto cogitativa est forma hominis; est enim dimidium formae et non tota forma.» For Nifo, cf., e.g., E. DE BELLIS, Nifo, Agostino, in SGARBI (ed.), Encyclopedia of Renaissance Philosophy, URL = <http://link.springer.com/referencework/10.1007/978-3-319-02848-4/page/n/1>.

This generic difference between both souls, i.e., the vegetative/sensitive and intellective one, accounts for the split-up of psychology into two disciplines, namely natural philosophy and metaphysics. Cf. P.J.M. BAKKER, Natural Philosophy, Metaphysics, or something in between? Agostino Nifo, Pietro Pomponazzi, and Marcantonio Genua on the Nature and Place of the Science of the Soul, in P.J.M. BAKKER and J. THIJSSEN (eds), Mind, Cognition and Representation. The Tradition of Commentaries on Aristotle’s De anima, Ashgate, Aldershot 2007, pp. 151-177, at p. 158.

As said above, a second distinction is characteristic of Ockham and post-Ockham psychology, namely the distinction between two understandings of the term power. While Ockham calls the powers *principium partiale* and *causa partialis*, John Buridan (d. after 1358), a central figure in the reception of Ockham in Paris, names them *potentia principalis* and *potentia instrumentalis*. In both cases, the former power is rooted in the essence of the soul, whereas the latter one originates in the organs. Hence, Ockham and Buridan argue for a real identity between both the soul and powers and the powers among themselves in the first case, as well as a real distinction in the second case.

Paul of Venice speaks of «potentia universalis» and of «potentia particularis», but their description is the same. The first one is rooted in the essence of the soul, whereas the second one originates in the organs. Paul then says that the soul is really and essentially different from its powers and that some powers only differ formally (*ratione et diffinitione*). Alessandro Conti claims that Paul is close to Aquinas and Giles of Rome in assuming a real distinction between the soul’s essence and its powers, while he (Paul) adopts a formal distinction between the powers among themselves, which could be characterized as a Scotist understanding. Yet, I would rather suggest another reading of Paul’s text: the real distinction refers to the powers in the particular understanding, namely those which originate in the organs, while the formal distinction refers to the universal powers. This interpretation seems to be closer to the text in which Paul first speaks of the differences between vegetative, sensitive, and motive powers and then says that they differ «in ratione et diffinitione».

The reference to definition also seems to indicate that we speak about different genera of things. Examples for the particular powers are then vision and audition, which originate in organs. Here, it

33OCKHAM, Quaestiones in librum tertium Sententiarum (Reportatio), q. 4, ed. F.E. KELLEY–G.I. ETZKORN, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, NY 1982, pp. 135.2-136.18: «Ad quaestionem dico quod potentia animae potest dupliciter accipi: uno modo pro omni necessario requisito ad quemcumque actum vitalem tanquam causa partialis; alio modo pro illo praecise quod se tenet a parte animae elicientis tanquam principium partiale. Primo modo, dico quod potentiae sensitivae distinguuntur ab anima et inter se. […] Secundo modo non distinguuntur realiter, sicut res et essentiae distinctae, nec inter se nec ab anima sensitiva. Quod probatur, quia frustra fit per plura quod potest fieri per pauciora.» Cf. also DE BOER, The Science of the Soul, p. 250.


35PAUL OF VENICE, Liber de anima, c. 4, f. 68ra: «Secundo est notandum iuxta intentionem Aristotelis I° et II° De anima quod potentiarum animae quedam sunt universales, quaedam particulares. Potentia universalis est illa quae immediate fundatur in anima, ut vegetativa, sensitiva, secundum locum motiva, intellectiva et appetitiva, eo quod propriamente passio immediate fundatur in suo subiecto; potentia vero particularum est illa quae immediate fundatur in organo, ut visiva, auditiva, gustativa et olfactiva et tactiva ac omnes potentiae sensitivae interiores; corrupto enim organo corporali necessario corrupuntur istae potentiae [...]»

would be quite odd to simply claim a formal distinction, as Paul himself says, since vision would then be audition, the eye would be an ear, or the eye would hear. Moreover, to posit a real distinction in this context is to claim that powers are accidents (proper accidents in Aquinas’s terms). To posit that powers are accidents with regard to the soul and not among themselves seems strange. The claim, however, that powers originating in organs are accidents, while powers directly originating in the soul are not, although they are formally distinguishable, seems coherent. The same distinction is found in Nifo’s early commentary. He calls the universal powers aptitudines and the particular or instrumental ones complexiones. The first ones are convertible with the soul’s essence, the other ones are qualities of the second species. In his later corrections, he questions this view by explicitly referring to Aquinas’s and Giles of Rome’s position that intellect and will are really distinct powers, which they were not in the earlier view. As far as I can see, Gaetano da Thiene, and Vernia do not use this distinction at all. Though Gaetano uses the distinction between absolute and respective powers, by this he simply claims that powers are accidents; powers hence are instruments for the soul and they are in potency towards their acts. But Nifo’s disciple Marcantonio Zimara and later on Giacomo Zabarella will refer to the distinction between powers and aptitudines. Zimara uses the term potentia to denote a power that is equally directed towards contrary alternatives, while aptitudo denotes a power that is only directed towards one of the alternatives. Potentia is the more general inclination to acts, while aptitudo is more specific, namely according to the material circumstances. Zabarella also uses the concept of aptitudo to explicitly

37If Conti’s interpretation was correct, then Paul’s position would be curious. Paul would then claim that the soul’s essence is really different from the powers. Since the powers among themselves differ only formally, they would be really one power, distinct from the soul’s essence. Compared to Scotus’s solution of embarrassment, it would be much more eclectic. Scotus assumes one soul, which is in se formally distinct, while Paul would assume one power, distinct from the soul which as a power is in se formally distinct.

38NIFO, In tres libros Aristotelis De anima, cols 293-294.

39NIFO, In tres libros Aristotelis De anima, col. 295: «In collectaneis diximus quod potentiae possunt accipi aut pro aptitudinibus, quibus anima est apta in corpore exercere diversas operationes, aut pro potentiiis, quae resultant in diversis partibus corporis per hoc quod anima unitur illis mediumtibus diversis complexionibus, et sic potentiae sunt aut ipsae complexiones mediumtibus quibus anima exercet diversas operationes, aut sunt qualitates consequentes unionem animae ad diversas partes diversimode commixtas, et hoc factum eniere concordare auctores. Nunc vero considerans melius quaestionem iterum revoco in dubium, quia sunt nonnullae potentiae animae, quae non resultant in corpore ex unione animae ad diversas partes corporis, quales sunt intellectus et voluntas; hae enim cum insint animae et non resultant in diversis partibus corporis ex unione animae ad illas, magna quaestio est an differant ab anima, an anima sit hae suae potentiae. Et sic in collectaneis non videmur satisfacisse in omnibus. Divus ergo Thomas et Aegidius dixerunt animam ab eius potentiiis differre realiter. Tum quia nulla res creat aigit per suam essentiam, sed per potentiam realiter distinctam ab essentia. Tum secundo, quia actus harum potentiarum est accidentes, ergo et potentiae; actus enim et potentia sunt eisdem generis […].»

40MARCO ANTONIO ZIMARA, Theoremata, prop. 105, Venetiis 1547, p. 167b: «[Potentia differt ab aptitudine:] Et adverte etiam quod apud sapientes arabes potentia differt ab aptitudine, quia
correct both positions, that of Aquinas and that of Scotus. He criticizes Scotus for the real identity thesis, since, according to Zabarella, substance and faculties or powers of the soul are really distinct. For the soul is a substance and the faculties are qualities, i.e., accidents. Against Aquinas, he supposes that these faculties do not play an active or instrumental role, but exist solely as conditions or inclinations that direct the soul towards its operations.  

He seems to understand them as emanations of the soul’s essence.

3. Why an Ockhamist rather than an Averroist Interpretation?

Looking back to the first theory mentioned, namely the one of two distinct souls (2.1), one might question its Ockhamist origin. Instead, we might rather situate the solution within a more or less genuine Averroistic exegesis of Aristotle. This is certainly the right background, yet with qualifications. I cautiously spoke of similarities, not of causal relationships. We observed structural analogies, which stand in different contexts but show similar features. However, I would suggest that the structural similarities indeed go back to Ockham’s view being applied to an exegesis of Aristotle in the broader context of an Averroistic reading of the Stagirite. The most striking argument against this would be that the two souls theory is already to be found in Jean de Jandun. As Jean-Baptiste Brenet makes clear, Jandun’s view can indirectly be traced back to Aquinas and Siger of Brabant, and directly to Thomas Wylton and Averroes himself.

41 GIACOMO ZABARELLA, De facultatibus animae liber, c. 4, cols 625-626: «Ego in hac controversia, licet magis ad Thomae et aliorum praedictorum opinionem accedam, eam tamen penitus recipere non possum, sed adhibendam ei esse puto quandam correctionem; arbitror enim totam huiusce rei veritatem in duobus dictis esse constitutam: alterum adversus Scotum tale est: facultates animae sunt re distinctae ab ipsa animae substantia et sunt qualitates secundae speciei; alterum vero adversus Thomam et alios est: facultates animae non sunt agentia media inter animam et operationem, ut Thomas et Aegidius existimaram, sed sunt solummodo conditio quaedam et aptitudines animae ad operandum.»

42 GIACOMO ZABARELLA, De facultatibus animae liber, c. 4, cols 626F-627A; cf. also D. DESCHENE, Life’s Form. Late Aristotelian Conceptions of the Soul, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London 2000, p. 146, fn. 7.

his *De anima* commentary dates back to 1317-19,\(^{44}\) while Ockham’s texts originated simultaneously or even later.\(^{45}\) Since Jandun is known to have been read in Renaissance Padua, for instance by Vernia, who explicitly criticizes Jandun’s plurality of souls position,\(^{46}\) it would be, on the one hand, quite an obvious relation. On the other hand, Paul of Venice studied at Oxford from 1390 to 1393.\(^{47}\) He must have come across Ockham’s teachings, and he indeed criticizes him. But did he also know Jandun? In fact, he did, and he precisely knew Jandun’s two souls theory. Yet, he criticizes Jandun for saying that the intellect is just a moving force or the captain of the ‘ship’ and not the form that gives being to the soul.\(^{48}\) This may be a misreading of Jandun on the part of Paul, as Brenet suggests.\(^{49}\) But it shows that Paul did not adopt Jandun’s position, at least not in the way he understood it. What about the second position, namely the double power theory? According to Sander de Boer, it is a distinctive feature of Ockhamist psychology. De Boer presents Ockham as the starting point of this new understanding of power. He looked at Jean de Jandun as well, but found only rather traditional interpretations of *potentia* in Jandun.\(^{50}\) I take this argument *ex silentio*, together with the hints mentioned earlier, namely Paul’s being acquainted with Ockhamist positions and his refutation of Jandun, to mean that both positions, the double soul as well as the double power theory (and especially their affiliation), go back to Ockham’s teachings. There might be another candidate of transmission, namely John Buridan, who holds the double power position, as mentioned earlier. But apart from the fact that this position can be traced back to Ockham as well,\(^{51}\) he neither holds the two *souls* theory, nor does he argue for any plurality of substantial forms.\(^{52}\)


\(^{48}\)Quoted in B. NARDI, *Sigieri di Brabante nel pensiero del rinascimento italiano*, Edizioni italiane, Roma 1945, p. 123 [Tertia opinio].

\(^{49}\)BRENET, *Ame intellective, âme cogitative*, p. 336; also NARDI, *Sigieri di Brabante*, p. 123.

\(^{50}\)DE BOER, *The Science of the Soul*, pp. 229-230. They are similar to the ones in Gaetano, which have been mentioned above.


Although it cannot be ruled out that the two souls theory goes back to a reception of Jandun and the two powers theory to another reception of Buridan, it is more probable that both were brought to Padua by Paul of Venice.\textsuperscript{53} Anyway, beyond possible causal relationships, the resemblance of Paduan teaching to Ockham’s teachings, at least considering the combination of these two important features of Ockhamist psychology, is striking.\textsuperscript{54} This being so, it is not precluded that the positions are closely connected to an Averroistic exegesis of Aristotle’s psychology. On the contrary, Ockham’s map of the soul seems to have been apt for Paduan teaching, especially where it – whether hidden or not – sympathized with the Averroist intellect theory. Ockham was concerned with the different statuses of acts of the sensitive and the intellective souls, especially in cases in which acts of the one were opposed to acts of the other; a single subject, i.e., a single soul, cannot have a sensitive appetite for something and perform a rational act of rejection. In the Averroist camp, the dichotomy was much stronger: the universal intellect had to be separable, while the human being had to subsist without it or, to put it differently, the intellectual soul had to persist, while the cogitative one had to perish with the body. In Ockham, the dichotomy concerned contrary acts or accidents, while in Averroist Padua the dichotomy was between modes of subsistence or substances. The intellect was purely immaterial and the body-soul composite was clearly material – material in the sense of extended, not just in the sense of being dependent on a substantial form. The concept of two total or partial souls was intended to give a solution here, and it was, moreover, a development of post-Ockham Parisian psychology. However, this came at a high cost. The essential unity of man, as introduced and defended by Albert and Aquinas, was lost again. With respect to his being and his (final) perfection, man was just an accidental composite or aggregate. The other

LAGERLUND, John Buridan, p. 379.


\textsuperscript{54}See also cf. E. MICHAEL, Renaissance Theories of Soul, in J.P. WRIGHT and P. POTTER (eds.), Psyche and Soma: Physicians and Metaphysicians on the Mind-body Problem from Antiquity to Enlightenment, Clarendon Press, Oxford 2000, pp. 147-172, esp. 159-60, who links Ockham’s theory to Zabarella’s and Piccolomini’s. She also hints at the scholastic pluralism of Franciscan origin as the possible source for Ockham’s view.
concept discussed here, the double power concept, was in its proper sense adopted from Ockham—
aside from some terminological differences. I have not discussed this here, but it is obvious that the
distinction of powers with respect to the organs genuinely fit Paduan teaching. Here, philosophy,
especially natural philosophy, stood in exchange with the medical faculty where autopsy became a
more and more important feature. Text book knowledge gave way to anatomical insight. In this
perspective, it is obvious that powers as instruments, located in the organs, had to be distinguished
from powers as mere principles, induced from their acts. One might speak of a phenomenological
turn, or a breaking up of natural philosophy, as Sander de Boer has. Where natural philosophy
concentrates on the phainomena, there is no place left for the intellective soul in the narration. It is
to be outsourced. Here, Ockham’s theoretical considerations converged with practical observations
in the field of medicine.

4. Concluding Remarks

I would like to conclude with two historiographical remarks. (1) It has been said that Aquinas’s
view of the soul and its powers became ‘mainstream’ from Aquinas up to Descartes. It has also
been said that everything changed with Ockham and that his view became ‘mainstream’. Elsewhere, I have argued that these two contrasting accounts are too confined. I suggest that we
take 15th-century Padua as another example of the fact that Aquinas’s view was not ‘mainstream’. I
concentrated on Ockhamist features here, but there would have been many occasions to present
Thomistic and Scotistic features as well as other features of school teachings in Paduan philosophers. In this regard, Casini’s reasoning, mentioned at the beginning, that the plurality

55We might think of the tradition inaugurated by Mondino de Luzzi (d. 1326) to illustrate anatomical
lectures by dissecting human cadavers and his handbook Anathomia corporis humani from 1316;
C.U.M. SMITH, E. FRIXIONE, S. FINGER, and W. CLOWER, The Animal Spirit Doctrine and
the Origins of Neurophysiology, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2012, p. 80; DE BELLIS, Nicoletto Vernia, p. 171. See also, e.g., A. CUNNIGHAM, The Anatomical Renaissance: the
Sixteenth Century, in C. WEBSTER (ed.), Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century,
SIRASI, History, Medicine, and the Tradition of Renaissance Learning, University of Michigan
MICHAEL, Nature and Influence, pp. 80-83.
57KING, The Inner Cathedral, esp. p. 272.
58DE BOER, The Science of the Soul, e.g., p. 251.
59Cf. my Unum antiquum problema.
60James Hankins, in summarizing Averroes’s influence on Paduan philosophers, thus gives a precise picture of the
different traditions flowing together in Padua. He says: «Some figures like Nicoletto Vernia and Agostino Nifo, both
thesis has to go back to Scotus because there were no Ockhamists, is – without further qualification – a knee-jerk syllogism. All the more because Casini himself points to the similarity with Ockham. It is Ockham’s two souls theory in particular that is alluded to by Pomponazzi.\textsuperscript{61} This is also made clear by Pomponazzi’s refutation itself, which aims at the intimate connection between the acts of sensation and reason. He refers to the sensitive act of pain which must stand in a close connection to the rational act of considering which medicine would cure the pain.\textsuperscript{62} If the sensitive act of pain pertains to another substance than the rational one does, our deliberation would not grasp the specific identity of the act, insofar as it is perceived in the sensitive faculty. This refutation is rather another striking argument for the view that Ockham’s position was present in Northern Italy, than an argument for the view that it must have been Scotus’s opinion, as Monfasani has said there were no Ockhamists.

(2) What does this amalgamation of teachings add up to? I think that it is meant to give a coherent account of the problem in question, raised by the Aristotelian text. Aristotle’s texts from \textit{De anima} onwards left much room for interpretation.\textsuperscript{63} The status of the intellects (agent and possible) was not very clear, neither was the status of the souls (vegetative, sensitive and rational). The mind-body problem lingered on, and so forth. A ‘coherent’ account, then, did not mean an account according to ‘school’ traditions, but according to reason and hence truth, or according to the best interpretations available.\textsuperscript{64} The blueprint for interpreting Aristotle’s psychology was certainly an Averroistic exegesis. This meant reading Aristotle’s intellect as a single, supra-individual entity, and such a

\textsuperscript{61}PIETRO POMPONAZZI, Abhandlung über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele. Übersetzt und mit einer Einleitung herausgegeben von B. MOJSISCH. Lateinisch-deutsch, Felix Meiner, Hamburg 1990, c. 5, 40/41-42/43.
\textsuperscript{62}Ibid., c. 6, 42: «Ego namque, qui haec scribo, multis cruciatibus corporis angustior, quod opus est sensitivae; idemque ego, qui crucior, discurro per causas medicinales, ut refellam hos cruciatus; quod nisi per intellectum fieri non potest. Si igitur altera esset essentia, qua sentio et qua intelligo, quo igitur modo fieri posset, ut idem, qui sentio, sim ille, qui intelligo?»
\textsuperscript{64}GAETANO, Renaissance Thomism, p. 266: «The students demanded that lectures on the texts of Aristotle offer the best interpretation possible.»
reading threatened orthodoxy. However, with the recourse to Ockham’s theory of the soul, there was another blueprint, more orthodox and fitting the Averroistic exegesis, which enabled its adherents to hold positions similar to the Averroistic one, yet with a more ‘traditional’ or less heretical notion. Whether orthodoxy was a primary motive cannot be determined anymore. In any case, Ockhamist psychology was meant as a psychology of the individual, which left room for a super-individual interpretation. In Ockham, the different souls or substantial forms respectively belong to the individual: both inform an individual rational being. According to the Averroist interpretation, (even) the (possible) intellect comes from outside and is not substantially part of the human being. Thus, Ockham’s map fits well, since it assumes two souls of which one is interpreted as the individual form, guaranteeing life’s function etc. The other soul is the ‘container’, as it were, of the super-individual capacities of men, which are universal and thus cannot be possessed individually. Since the latter is described in terms of ‘soul’, it is open to be understood as individual.

In the end, Paduan philosophers indeed favored an Aristotelian map of the soul. But it was neither the map that medieval school traditions had designed nor that of the Averroistic heresy. It was a map which brought together all the interesting features which were available ‘on the market’, so to speak, and which had the most challenging flavor. In this perspective, Paduan philosophy is a paradigm of Renaissance philosophy, in which we not only have one particular Aristotelianism, but many Aristotelianisms.65 One of these was an Ockhamist Aristotelianism, though not one ‘of profession’ but one intrinsically motivated. Even if Ockhamists were missing in Padua or Northern Italy, Ockhamist, or better Ockham’s, positions were there. And interestingly, important Paduan philosophers – with respect to an important topic of Renaissance philosophy – followed Ockham and used his teachings in order to better interpret Aristotle.