

Routledge History of Philosophy  
Volume III



# Medieval Philosophy



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# Routledge History of Philosophy

## Volume III

Volume III is devoted to the Middle Ages. It considers the rich traditions of Arab, Jewish and Latin philosophy, which began to flourish in the ninth century and continued, in the Latin West, until the early seventeenth century. Among the philosophers treated in detail are Avicenna and Averroes, Maimonides, Eriugena, Anselm, Abelard, Grosseteste, Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, Duns Scotus, Peter Aureoli, William of Ockham, Wyclif and Suárez. An introductory chapter discusses Boethius, the late antique thinker who was enormously influential in the medieval Latin West. Special attention has been given to many lesser-known, but important figures in each period, as well as to medieval logic and to the cultural context of medieval philosophy, both in Islam and the Christian West.

This volume provides a comprehensive analysis of the main areas of medieval philosophy by the experts in each field. It offers fresh perspectives on a complex and rapidly changing area of research, in which Arab and Jewish philosophy are considered in their own right, rather than as sources for Latin thinkers, and the thirteenth century (the time of Aquinas) is not viewed as dominating the earlier and later parts of the period.

**John Marenbon** was educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he is now a fellow. He is the author of numerous books on medieval philosophy, including *From the Circle of Alcuin to the School of Auxerre* (Cambridge 1991) and *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard* (Cambridge 1997).

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# Routledge History of Philosophy

## General Editors—G.H.R.Parkinson and S.G.Shanker

The *Routledge History of Philosophy* provides a chronological survey of the history of Western philosophy, from its beginnings in the sixth century BC to the present time. It discusses all major philosophical developments in depth. Most space is allocated to those individuals who, by common consent, are regarded as great philosophers. But lesser figures have not been neglected, and together the ten volumes of the *History* include basic and critical information about every significant philosopher of the past and present. These philosophers are clearly situated within the cultural and, in particular, the scientific context of their time.

The *History* is intended not only for the specialist, but also for the student and the general reader. Each chapter is by an acknowledged authority in the field. The chapters are written in an accessible style and a glossary of technical terms is provided in each volume.

- |     |   |      |  |
|-----|---|------|--|
| I   | <i>From the Beginning to Plato</i><br>C.C.W.Taylor (published 1997)                     | VI   | <i>The Age of German Idealism</i><br>Robert Solomon and Kathleen Higgins (published 1993)      |
| II  | <i>Hellenistic and Late Antique Philosophy</i><br>David Furley                          | VII  | <i>The Nineteenth Century</i><br>C.L.Ten (published 1994)                                      |
| III | <i>Medieval Philosophy</i><br>John Marenbon (published 1998)                            | VIII | <i>Continental Philosophy in the C20</i><br>Richard Kearney (published 1993)                   |
| IV  | <i>The Renaissance and C17 Rationalism</i><br>G.H.R.Parkinson (published 1993)          | IX   | <i>Philosophy of Science, Logic and Mathematics in the C20</i><br>S.G.Shanker (published 1996) |
| V   | <i>British Philosophy and the Age of Enlightenment</i><br>Stuart Brown (published 1996) | X    | <i>Philosophy of Meaning, Knowledge and Value in the C20</i><br>John Canfield (published 1997) |

Each volume contains 10–20 chapters by different contributors

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Routledge History of Philosophy  
Volume III



# Medieval Philosophy



EDITED BY  
*John Marenbon*



London and New York

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# General editors' preface



The history of philosophy, as its name implies, represents a union of two very different disciplines, each of which imposes severe constraints upon the other. As an exercise in the history of ideas, it demands that one acquire a 'period eye': a thorough understanding of how the thinkers whom it studies viewed the problems which they sought to resolve, the conceptual frameworks in which they addressed these issues, their assumptions and objectives, their blind spots and miscues. But as an exercise in philosophy, we are engaged in much more than simply a descriptive task. There is a crucial critical aspect to our efforts: we are looking for the cogency as much as the development of an argument, for its bearing on questions which continue to preoccupy us as much as the impact which it may have had on the evolution of philosophical thought.

The history of philosophy thus requires a delicate balancing act from its practitioners. We read these writings with the full benefit of historical hindsight. We can see why the minor contributions remained minor and where the grand systems broke down: sometimes as a result of internal pressures, sometimes because of a failure to overcome an insuperable obstacle, sometimes because of a dramatic technological or sociological change and, quite often, because of nothing more than a shift in intellectual fashion or interests. Yet, because of our continuing philosophical concern with many of the same problems, we cannot afford to look dispassionately at these works. We want to know what lessons are to be learnt from the inconsequential or the glorious failures; many times we want to plead for a contemporary relevance in the overlooked theory or to reconsider whether the 'glorious failure' was indeed such or simply ahead of its time: perhaps even ahead of its author.

We find ourselves, therefore, much like the mythical 'radical translator' who has so fascinated modern philosophers, trying to understand an author's ideas in his and his culture's eyes, and at the



same time, in our own. It can be a formidable task. Many times we fail in the historical undertaking because our philosophical interests are so strong, or lose sight of the latter because we are so enthralled by the former. But the nature of philosophy is such that we are compelled to master both techniques. For learning about the history of philosophy is not just a challenging and engaging pastime: it is an essential element in learning about the nature of philosophy—in grasping how philosophy is intimately connected with and yet distinct from both history and science.

The *Routledge History of Philosophy* provides a chronological survey of the history of Western philosophy, from its beginnings up to the present time. Its aim is to discuss all major philosophical developments in depth, and with this in mind, most space has been allocated to those individuals who, by common consent, are regarded as great philosophers. But lesser figures have not been neglected, and it is hoped that the reader will be able to find, in the ten volumes of the *History*, at least basic information about any significant philosopher of the past or present.

Philosophical thinking does not occur in isolation from other human activities, and this *History* tries to situate philosophers within the cultural, and in particular the scientific, context or their time. Some philosophers, indeed, would regard philosophy as merely ancillary to the natural sciences; but even if this view is rejected, it can hardly be denied that the sciences have had a great influence on what is now regarded as philosophy, and it is important that this influence should be set forth clearly. Not that these volumes are intended to provide a mere record of the factors that influenced philosophical thinking; philosophy is a discipline with its own standards of argument, and the presentation of the ways in which these arguments have developed is the main concern of this *History*.

In speaking of 'what is now regarded as philosophy', we may have given the impression that there now exists a single view of what philosophy is. This is certainly not the case; on the contrary, there exist serious differences of opinion, among those who call themselves philosophers, about the nature of their subject. These differences are reflected in the existence at the present time of two main schools of thought, usually described as 'analytic' and 'continental' philosophy. It is not our intention, as general editors of this *History*, to take sides in this dispute. Our attitude is one of tolerance, and our hope is that these volumes will contribute to an understanding of how philosophers have reached the positions which they now occupy.

One final comment. Philosophy has long been a highly technical subject, with its own specialized vocabulary. This *History* is intended not

only for the specialist but also for the general reader. To this end, we have tried to ensure that each chapter is written in an accessible style; and since technicalities are unavoidable, a glossary of technical terms is provided in each volume. In this way these volumes will, we hope, contribute to a wider understanding of a subject which is of the highest importance to all thinking people.

G.H.R.Parkinson  
S.G.Shanker

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# Notes on contributors



**Stephen Brown** (Boston College, Mass.) works mainly on the history of philosophy and theology in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. His many publications include studies and editions of William of Ockham and Walter Burley.

**Brian Davies OP** (Fordham University, New York) works mainly on the philosophy of religion and medieval philosophy. His books include *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (1992) and *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* (2nd edn, 1993).

**Stephen Dumont** (University of Toronto) works especially on Duns Scotus and has published many articles on him.

**Sten Ebbesen** (Institute for Greek and Latin, Copenhagen University) works on a wide area of medieval Latin and Greek philosophy, with a special interest in logic and the Parisian arts masters. His publications include *Commentators and Commentaries on Aristotle's 'Sophistici Elenchi'* (1981) and many editions of logical texts.

**Stephen Gersh** (Medieval Institute, University of Notre Dame) works especially on the Platonic tradition in late ancient and early medieval philosophy. His books include *From Iamblichus to Eriugena* (1978) and *Concord in Discourse: Harmony and Semiotics in Late Classical and Early Mediaeval Platonism* (1996).

**Arthur Gibson** (Roehampton Institute) has interests stretching over a wide area of modern philosophy and the history of philosophy and logic. His publications include *Biblical Semantic Logic: A Preliminary Analysis* (1981).

**Jorge Gracia** (Fordham University, New York) has worked especially on the theory of individuation and its history in the early and late

Middle Ages, Suárez and also on modern Latin American philosophy. His publications include *Introduction to the Problem of Individuation in the Early Middle Ages* (1984) and, as editor, *Individuation in Scholasticism: The Later Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation (1150–1650)* (1994).

**Alfred Ivry** (New York University) specializes in medieval Jewish and Islamic philosophy. His publications include an edition of Moses Narboni's *Treatise on the Perfection of the Soul* and of Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *On the Soul*.

**Jean Jolivet** (Ecole pratique des hautes études, Paris) writes both on Latin philosophy from the ninth to twelfth centuries, and on Islamic philosophy. Among his many books are *Arts du langage et théologie chez Abélard* (1969), *L'Intellect selon Kindi* (1975) and, as editor, *Multiple Averroes* (1978).

**Zénon Kaluza** (Ecole pratique des hautes études, Paris) specializes in late medieval philosophy in the Latin West. His publications include *Les querelles doctrinales à Paris: Nominalistes et réalistes aux confins du XIVe et XVe siècles* (1988), 'Nicolas d'Autrécourt' and numerous articles.

**John Marenbon** (Trinity College, Cambridge) works on medieval philosophy. His most recent publication is *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard* (1997).

**Steven Marrone** (Tufts University) works especially on thirteenth-century philosophers and theologians and their attitudes to scientific method. His books include *William of Auvergne and Robert Grosseteste: New Ideas of Truth in the Early Thirteenth Century* (1983) and *Truth and Scientific Knowledge in the Thought of Henry of Ghent* (1985).

**Rosamond McKitterick** (University of Cambridge) specializes in the history of culture, manuscripts and literacy in early medieval Europe. Her many publications include *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (1989) and, as editor, *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (1993).

**Chris Schabel** (University of Cyprus) specializes in philosophical theology of the later Middle Ages. His publications include a study, with texts, of the quarrel over future contingents involving Peter de Rivo in fifteenth-century Louvain (1995–6).

**Colette Sirat** (Paris, Ecole pratique des hautes études) is a specialist in medieval Jewish philosophy as well as a leading palaeographer. Her publications included *A History of Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (1985).

**Paul Vincent Spade** (Indiana University) has worked extensively on later medieval logic. Besides many articles and editions of logical texts, he has published translations of William Heytesbury on insolubles (1979), of texts on the problem of universals (1994) and a catalogue of *Insolubilia* literature (1975).

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I am most grateful for the patience of the contributors, many of whom had to wait for far longer than they would have expected for the whole volume to be ready. Chris Schabel and Arthur Gibson rescued the whole enterprise when they agreed to step in at very short notice to provide a replacement for two chapters promised by a scholar who eventually was unable to supply them. Richard Stoneman has been a tolerant and encouraging editor throughout the whole project, and Harry Parkinson, one of the general editors of the *Routledge History of Philosophy*, provided a draft on which I based the Chronological chart. Laura Pieters Cordy has helped throughout with scanning and setting out complex material, and I have been most fortunate to have in Mary Dortch a scrupulously intelligent copy editor, undaunted by the challenge of so many different authors, styles and even languages.

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# Abbreviations



|         |   |
|---------|---|
| AL      | <i>Aristoteles Latinus</i> (various publishers), 1939–  |
| BGPTMA  | Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters  |
| CC c.m. | Corpus Christianorum continuatio medievalis   |
| CHLMP   | <i>The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy</i> , ed. A.Kenny, N.Kretzmann and J.Pinborg, Cambridge, 1982 |
| CHRP    | <i>The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy</i> , ed. C. B.Schmitt <i>et al.</i> , Cambridge, 1988           |
| CIMAGL  | <i>Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen Âge grec et latin</i> (a journal printing a large number of relevant texts)       |
| MPL     | J.-P.Migne, <i>Patrologia Latina</i>  |
| PIMSST  | Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Studies and Texts  |
| SIEPM   | Société Internationale pour l'étude de la philosophie médiévale   |

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# Chronology



This chronology runs from the birth of Boethius, the first author treated in the volume, to shortly after the death of Suárez, in the early seventeenth century. No attempt, however, has been made to treat the fifteenth, sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries in any detail (a more detailed chronology for this period will be found in Volume IV), but merely to indicate the chronological position of the latest writers in the medieval tradition and their relation to some of the most important writers in other, contemporaneous traditions. A (?) indicates that a date is approximate.



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CHRONOLOGY

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| Politics and society   | Religion  |
|--|---|
|  | 496      Baptism of Clovis  |
|  | 519      Acacian schism resolved  |
| 526      Theoderic d.  |   |
|  | 570      Muhammad b.  |
|  | 590–604      Gregory the Great Pope   |
|  | 596      Gregory sends Augustine to England   |
|  | 610      Muhammad's first visions   |
| 711–12      Muslim conquest of Spain                           |   |
| 750      Overthrow of Umayyad caliphate; first 'Abassīd caliph | 735      Venerable Bede d.  |
| 762      Baghdad capital of 'Abassīd caliphate                 |   |
| 778      Charlemagne defeated at Roncevaux                     |   |
|  | 786      Iconoclasm condemned at Council of Nicaea  |
| 800      Charlemagne crowned Emperor in Rome                   | 793      Vikings raid Lindisfarne   |
| 814      Charlemagne d.  | 817      Systematization of Benedictine rule by St Benedict of Aniane officially approved |
| 840      Charles the Bald becomes king                         |   |

CHRONOLOGY

| Education and the arts |   | Philosophy and theology |  |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|
|                        |   | 480                     | Boethius b.  |
|                        |   | 500 (?)                 | fl. pseudo-Dionysius                                 |
|                        |   | 523 (?)                 | Boethius, <i>Consolation of Philosophy</i>           |
|                        |   | 525 (?)                 | Boethius d.  |
| 529                    | Justinian closes Platonic School at Athens      | 529                     | John Philoponus, <i>On the Eternity of the World</i> |
| 532 (?)                | Athenian Neoplatonists set up school at Harrān; |                         |  |
| 532–7                  | Hagia Sophia built, Constantinople              |                         |  |
|                        |   | 538 (?)                 | Simplicius writing commentaries at Harrān            |
| 546–8                  | San Vitale built, Ravenna                       | 562                     | Cassiodorus, <i>Institutiones</i>                    |
|                        |   | 575 (?)                 | John Philoponus d.                                   |
|                        |   | 633                     | Isidore of Seville d.                                |
|                        |   | 662                     | Maximus the Confessor d.                             |
|                        |   | 709/10                  | Aldhelm d.   |
|                        |   | 754 (?)                 | John Damascene d.                                    |
| 781                    | Alcuin meets Charlemagne                        |                         |  |
|                        |   | 791 (?)                 | <i>Libri Carolini</i>                                |
| 800 (?)                | The Book of Kells                               | 804 (?)                 | Alcuin d.  |
|                        |   | 808                     | Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq b.                                  |
| 830–3                  | Einhard, <i>Life of Charlemagne</i>             |                         |  |

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CHRONOLOGY

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Politics and society

Religion

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|        |  |     |  |
|--------|--|-----|--|
|        |  | 863 | Cyril and Methodius begin their mission to the Slavs                         |
|        |  | 867 | Photian schism   |
| 875    | Charles the Bald d.  |     |  |
| 908–10 | Fātimid dynasty founded  | 909 | Monastery of Cluny founded   |
|        |  | 962 | Great Lavra (monastic community) on Mt Athos founded                         |
| 987    | Louis V, last Carolingian King of France, d. Accession of Hugh Capet | 988 | Vladimir, ruler of Russia, establishes Christianity as the official religion |
|        |  | 999 | Gerbert of Aurillac becomes Pope Sylvester II                                |

CHRONOLOGY

| Education and the arts  | Philosophy and theology  |
|---|--|
|   | 849 Gottschalk's views on predestination condemned at Synod of Quiercy   |
|   | 850–1 Eriugena, <i>On predestination</i>                                 |
|   | 855 Council of Valence condemns Eriugena's <i>On predestination</i>      |
|   | 859 Council of Langres condemns Eriugena's <i>On predestination</i>      |
|   | 860 (?) Ratramnus of Corbie, <i>De anima ad Odonem</i>                   |
|   | 861–6 Eriugena, <i>Periphyseon</i>                                       |
|   | 865 al-Rāzī b.   |
|   | 866(?) Gottschalk d.   |
|   | 868 Ratramnus of Corbie d.   |
|   | 870 (?) al-Kindī d.  |
| 871–99 Alfred the Great, King of Wessex, promotes ecclesiastical reform and the revival of learning | 871 (?) Eriugena d.  |
|   | 873 Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq d.  |
| 884 (?) Notker, <i>Liber hymnorum</i>   | 882 Saadiah b.   |
|   | 893–908 (?) Remigius of Auxerre expounds Martianus Capella and Boethius  |
| 908 (?) Remigius of Auxerre d.  |  |
|   | 925 al-Rāzī d.   |
|   | 942 Saadiah d.   |
|   | 950 al-Fārābī d.   |
|   | 972–83 Gerbert at the School of Rheims; expounds the <i>logica vetus</i> |
|   | 980 (?) Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā) b.   |
| 1001–3 (?) Hrotsvitha d.  |  |
|   | 1003 Gerbert d.  |
|   | 1018 Michael Psellos b.  |

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CHRONOLOGY

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**Politics and society**

**Religion**

|      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| 1066 | Battle of Hastings; William of Normandy becomes King of England | 1054 | Patriarch of Constantinople anathematizes Roman Church          |
| 1071 | Turks defeat Byzantines at battle of Manzikert                  | 1076 | Pope Gregory VII deposes and excommunicates Emperor Henry IV    |
|      |   | 1077 | Henry IV submits to Pope at Canossa                             |
|      |   | 1084 | Carthusian order founded  |
| 1086 | England: Domesday survey  | 1085 | Pope Gregory VII, driven from Rome by Henry IV, dies at Salerno |
| 1087 | William the Conqueror d.  | 1088 | Work begins on great church at Cluny                            |
|      |   | 1093 | Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury; Durham Cathedral begun        |
|      |   | 1095 | Pope Urban II proclaims First Crusade                           |
|      |   | 1098 | Foundation of Abbey of Cîteaux                                  |
|      |   | 1099 | Crusaders capture Jerusalem                                     |

CHRONOLOGY

| Education and the arts                              | Philosophy and theology  |
|---|--|
| 1025–33 (?) Guido d'Arezzo reforms musical notation |  |
|   | 1033 Anselm b.   |
|   | 1037 Avicenna d.   |
|   | 1050 Synod of Vercelli condemns Ratramnus' views on the Eucharist                        |
|   | 1054–8 Solomon ibn Gabirol d.  |
| 1071 William IX of Aquitaine, Provençal poet, b.    |  |
|   | 1072 Peter Damian d.   |
|   | 1076 Anselm, <i>Monologion</i>   |
|   | 1077–8 Anselm, <i>Proslogion</i>   |
|   | 1079 Peter Abelard b.  |
|   | 1080 (?) Gilbert of Poitiers b.<br>(?) William of Conches b.                             |
|   | 1088 Berengar of Tours d.  |
|   | 1090 Bernard of Clairvaux b.   |
|   | 1092 Roscelin accused of tritheism   |
|   | 1093 (?) al-Ghazālī, <i>Incoherence of the Philosophers</i>                              |
|   | 1094–8 Anselm, <i>Cur Deus Homo</i>  |
|   | 1109 Anselm d.   |
|   | 1116 (?) Abelard of Bath, <i>De eodem et diverso</i> ;<br>(?) Abelard, <i>Dialectica</i> |
|   | 1120 Abelard, <i>Theologia summi boni</i> , discusses Trinity                            |
|   | 1121 Council of Soissons condemns Abelard's views on the Trinity                         |

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CHRONOLOGY

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| Politics and society                          | Religion  |
|---|---|
|   | 1122     Suger elected Abbot of Saint-Denis                       |
|   | 1140 (?)     Gratian, <i>Decretum</i> (collection of Canon law)   |
|   | 1143     Translation of Qur'ān into Latin                         |
|   | 1144     Suger's choir, St Denis, consecrated                     |
|   | 1146     Bernard of Clairvaux preaches; Second Crusade            |
|   | 1147–8     Second Crusade   |
| 1152     Frederick Barbarossa becomes Emperor |   |
|   | 1163     Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris, begun                    |
|   | 1170     Murder of Archbishop Becket, Canterbury<br>St Dominic b. |
|   | 1181     St Francis of Assisi b.                                  |
| 1187     Saladin captures Jerusalem           | 1189–92     Third Crusade   |

CHRONOLOGY

| Education and the arts                          | Philosophy and theology  |
|---|--|
|   | 1122 William of Champeaux d.   |
|   | 1125 (?) Roscelin d.   |
|   | 1126 Averroes (Ibn Rushd) b.;<br>(?) Abelard, <i>Theologia Christiana</i> ;<br>(?) William of Conches comments<br>on <i>Timaeus</i>            |
| 1127 William IX d.                              | 1133 (?) Abelard, <i>Theologia scholarium</i>  |
|   | 1138 Maimonides (Moses ben<br>Maimon) b.;<br>Abelard, <i>Ethics</i>  |
|   | 1140 Council of Sens condemns<br>Abelard's views on the Trinity  |
|   | 1142 Hugh of St Victor d.<br>(?) Abelard d.  |
| 1145–55 Winchester Psalter                      | 1144 (?) William of Conches,<br><i>Dragmaticon</i>   |
|   | 1148 Council of Rheims examines<br>Gilbert of Poitiers' views on the<br>Trinity in his commentary on<br>Boethius' <i>Theological Treatises</i> |
|   | 1153 Bernard of Clairvaux d.   |
|   | 1154 Gilbert of Poitiers d.<br>(?) William of Conches d.   |
|   | 1155–7 Peter Lombard, <i>Sentences</i>   |
|   | 1159 (?) John of Salisbury, <i>Policraticus</i>  |
|   | 1160 Peter Lombard d.<br>(?) John of Salisbury, <i>Metalogicon</i>   |
| 1170 (?) musical school of Notre Dame           |  |
| 1177–81 Chrétien de Troyes, <i>Lancelot</i>     | 1173 Richard of St Victor d.   |
| 1178–82 Walter of Châtillon, <i>Alexandreis</i> | 1180 John of Salisbury d.;<br>Maimonides, <i>Mishneh Torah</i>   |
| 1182–3 Alan of Lille, <i>Anticlaudianus</i>     |  |



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