**The identity and order of the text of Columbia's Smith fragment 27, followed by a comparison of said manuscript to Ms X88.Ar512, with some implications for thinking about Authority, Antiquity, and Education in the High Middle Ages:**

***or***

**Two Texts in Search of an *Auctor***

By Jacob Archambault

**Abstract: The following text can be divided into four movements: the first movement is from a list of the characteristics of Columbia’s Smith fragment 27 to a consideration of what this list tells us about the orientation of research in manuscript studies as a whole; the second movement is from an identification of the text of Smith 27 to a situating of it within its codex and the curriculum of which it would have formed a part. The third movement is from a consideration of what Smith Fragment 27 tells us about the orientation of education during its time (roughly 1255-1275) to what a manuscript written about 25-60 years later, MS X88.Ar512, tells of about changes in the orientation of education in *its* time. The fourth movement is from the results of this comparison to its implications for the historiography of the educational practices of *our* time.**

1. **What we currently know about Smith 27**

Smith Fragment 27, currently housed at Columbia University’s Rare Book and Manuscript library, has never been studied in any depth prior to this present study. So I intend to begin this paperwith some statistics on the manuscript: first, I will give some information about the manuscript that *prima facie* could be garnered even by a non-expert; second, I will summarize the information about the manuscript which has been handed down to us by experts up to this point.

Smith 27 is a parchment bifolium, each folium of which is approximately 19 X 14.5cm. The manuscript no longer shows any signs of ruling, indicating either a) that the manuscript was originally ruled in a lead ruling that has since faded; or b) that the manuscript was never ruled at all.

The text for each page is written in exactly 24 lines in one column, centered so that the outer and lower margins are noticeably larger than the top and inner margins of the page. The text itself is a small, rapid, heavily abbreviated, northern Gothic *textualis* script. The area of the text block is approximately 10 X 6.5cm, which means that only about 25% of the parchment is devoted to the main text of the document itself.

There are only three marginal glosses in the text: the first is a symbol in the upper left-hand corner of the verso of folium 1; the second, a note written in a bold font on the recto of folium 2 in the upper left-hand margin; the third, on the verso of folium 2 in the bottom margin, is presumably a division of the text. In addition to these, the text contains a scant few interlinear glosses, which are not always easily distinguishable from superscript letters of the main text.

On the second folium, there are a number of C-shaped marks that are presumably an aid for dividing and organizing the text. On the recto, they are all in black; whereas on the verso, they begin in red, then alternate to black, and then back to red.

In terms of decoration, the recto of the first folium contains two initials, while the verso of the same contains one: on the recto, there is a red initial **P** taking up three lines of text, followed by a blue **Q**, with red geometrical decoration both inside and surrounding it; on the verso, there is a red **U** majuscule at the bottom of the page.

As for what prior research on this manuscript has handed down to us, Smith 27 is on record as 1) having been written between 1255 and 1275 in Northern France. and 2) containing philosophical content.

1. **Problematizing the record**

What more can we say about this manuscript? In order to answer this question, it will be useful to 1) reflect on the information that *has* been given above, in order to 2) discern something about what manuscript studies as a discipline attemptsto say; from whence 3) a direction for research on this manuscript can be given, and 4) new results can be achieved.

Some of what I am about to say is fairly obvious. But hopefully, reflection on what is obvious will lead us down a path where that will clarify some things that are not so obvious.

The above list of information of what is known about Smith 27 is determined by certain goals of research: one cares about the number of lines on a page, but not the number of holes in it; one cares about the proportion of the writing space relative to the parchment, but not the proportion of the parchment relative to the total surface area of the sheep from which it came. In other words, there are reasons why we give the information we *do* give in accordance with questions that we try to answer instead of other information that we *could* give in accordance with a different set of questions.

Since the information given in the above list is not arbitrarily drawn up, but in conformity with a series of questions frequently asked about many manuscripts, it follows that this list of information, in both what it provides and what it does not provide, can tell us something about the concerns and aims of manuscript studies as a field.

A first piece of information given above is the genre of the work. This points to a first task: to locate the work within the “intellectual space” provided by the contemporary division of the sciences. This task is most apparent when manuscript research leads to the discovery of unknown or previously lost works that may provide insights into a contemporary problem within a discipline or into the narrative identity of that discipline. The specification of this generic task is the identification of the work and/or its author. The negative corollary of the specific task is the unmasking of pseudonymous works. The negative corollary of the generic task is the present-day attempt to find works that do not fit well into the modern classification of the sciences, and therefore call that classification into question.

Second, we can consider the most characteristic piece of information given above: the location and date of the manuscript itself. It is no surprise to us that manuscript studies as a field has long been devoted to the cataloging of texts according to their place and time of origin. Furthermore, this essential function of codicological research largely or entirely explains the presence of several other items on our list of Smith 27's *notabilia*. For instance, differences in the form of the script, in ruling, and in the number and kinds of abbreviations in a text garner their importance because of their reliability as indicators of the time and/or date when a manuscript was written. This also explains the prominence that paleography has been accorded in the study of the manuscript: the study of the script gives us what is *prima facie* the best evidence for dating and localizing the manuscript.

Lastly, we have above mentioned the gloss, the marks of division of the text, the decoration, and the relation of the parts of the manuscript to each other as well as to manuscript as a whole. What do these have in common? My answer is that they all provide us information about the cultural milieu of which the manuscript is a product: the glosses and textual division give us information about the hermeneutic assumptions with which a work may have been approached; the *amount* of decoration can indicate the economic affluence of a culture, while *what* is produced can indicate its artistic tastes; and the relation, for instance, of text to decoration may provide information about the literacy of the culture, or about the way that that culture viewed the relation between words and pictures more generally.

What, then, do these three tasks have in common? They are all attempts to *situate the text*. From this, I think the following thesis can be induced: *the task of the manuscript researcher is to situate the text.*

How do the above, attempts at situating the text differ from each other? My suggestion is that they differ in the precise meaning that they assign to the verb “to situate”: in the first case, to situate is to determine the field within which the manuscript was written; in the second, to situate is to locate within a spatiotemporal coordinate plane; in the third, to situate is to locate within a culture-world. The first endeavor corresponds to the ancient paradigm of situating provided by Aristotelian science, namely, the situating of individual entities under a genus; the second corresponds to the modern mathematical paradigm of research into material beings first made possible by the Cartesian discovery of analytic geometry; the third corresponds to the extension of the notion of situating to the pneumatic realm. Each of these forms of scientific enquiry remain limited by a) the notion of matter which they presuppose, b) the metaphysics within which they are ensconced, and c) the notion of science which they advance: the first, by a') the Aristotelian notion of material substratum as a locus for form, b') by the determination of all beings in terms of the form/matter distinction, and c') by the restriction of the intelligible to the formal realm; the second, by a'') the notion of body as *res extensa*, by b'') the division of being into thinking subject and extended object, and by c'') the restriction of the study of material beings to what is mathematically decidable; the third, by a''') the notion of body as outer limit point of a spontaneous, spiritual-creative-vital force, by b'''.i) the characterization of the division of beings into matter and form as a merely conceptual distinction between passivity and activity and b'''.ii) by the characterization of beings as signs of the cultural milieu from which they came—or, more poetically put, as “mirrors of a universe,” and c''') by the transformation of the object of study into a world, conceived of as a product of thought *qua* spontaneous-creative-harmonious-activity, i.e. conceived of as intersubjectivity. I will refer to the first research model as the Aristotelian, the second as the Cartesian, the third as the monadological (after Leibniz), though it could just as easily be called sociological (after Comte) or semiotic model. This third model includes, for instance, more recent attempts to bring the study of the various parts of the codex together into a unified whole; to situate the codex itself in its broader socio-economic context; and to make the study of the manuscript relevant to *our* world-historical situation. Research in manuscript studies at present tends to lie on the cusp between the Cartesian and monadological types.

What is perhaps somewhat surprising upon reflection is that none of the above models of research *actually* allows for the study of the manuscript itself as an object of research. This is because in every case, the manuscript is defined as bare materiality[[1]](#footnote-1), and matter is identified with the realm of non-intelligibility. Hence, the manuscript is in each case studied for its ability to tell us something about something *other* than itself: its content, its provenance, the cultural forces which produced it, etc. In other words, *the “manuscript” is constituted in its essence as a sign*, i.e. as a non-essence.[[2]](#footnote-2) Thus, the phrase “manuscript culture” for instance, names, in sequence, the medium and *telos* of the third research model.

1. **Applications of the Above results**

Given this delimitation of the successive models of research given, we can now say what can be done with Smith Fragment 27.

In accordance with the Aristotelian directive, we may determine the specific work contained in the fragment and its author.

In accordance with the Cartesian directive, we may be able to more precisely date and locate the manuscript.

In contrast with the precisely limited possibilities of these research paradigms (though calling them such does not deny them their importance), the possibilities opened up by the monadological-semiotic directive, are practically limitless, since almost any aspect of any manuscript can be assigned a near limitless number of semiotic functions pointing to different aspects of the cultural milieu within which it was produced, or even to aspects of a cultural milieu within which it wasn't, such as our own.[[3]](#footnote-3) The specific direction that we will take in *this* model will be mentioned after answering the questions within the first two, more traditional models, since the direction that we will *in fact* take will depend on information provided there.

1. **Answering the questions of the old guard**

In the following section, I will answer the questions about Smith 27 provided by the Aristotelian and Cartesian directives for research.

First, to answer the Aristotelian questions. The Smith 27 bifolium actually contains two separate texts. The recto and verso of folium 1 contain a passage from the *liber sex principiorum*, a pseudo-Aristotelian work written in the 12th century; the recto and verso of folium 2 contain a passage from Aristotle's *de interpretatione* in the translation of Boethius. More specifically, folium 1 begins at chapter II, verse 27, of the *liber* and ends at chapter V, verse 48 according to the numbering of the modern critical edition.[[4]](#footnote-4) Folium 2 begins at chapter VIII, verse 61, of the *de interpretatione* and runs to the end of chapter IX.[[5]](#footnote-5) The *liber sex principiorum* survives in whole or in part in about 231 manuscripts,[[6]](#footnote-6) about 104 of which are of comparable or greater antiquity than Smith 27 itself.[[7]](#footnote-7) The Boethian translation of the *de interpretatione* survives in 297 manuscripts stretching from the 9th c. to the end of the middle ages.[[8]](#footnote-8)

In the form in which it has been handed down to us, the *liber sex principiorum* is a supplement to Aristotle's *categories*. At the beginning of his work, Aristotle enumerates 10 categories of being and states his intention to treat of all of them. But in fact, the *categories* expressly treats the first four in detail—substance, quantity, quality, and relation—and only provides a cursory summary of the remaining six in chapter nine of the work. The main body of the *Liber sex principiorum*, then, supplements Aristotle's categories by providing in-depth discussions of the six categories that Aristotle himself said little about—action, passion, time, place, position, and habit. These expositions are preceded by a short treatise on form, and followed by a treatise on *magis et minus*, and by some excerpts from Aristotle's *de generatione et corruptione.* Smith 27 folium 1 contains the end of the treatise on action, the treatments of passion and time in full, and the beginning of the treatise on place.

The *de interpretatione* is the second work in Aristotle's organon (after the categories), and gives us Aristotle's treatment of propositions—i.e. sentences which are capable of being true or false. Chapter 8 further clarifies the distinction between simple and complex propositions in relation to contradictories, while ch. 9 provides what is probably the work's most famous section: a discussion of the truth value of propositions about contingent future states of affairs.

As regards the Cartesian directive, not much more can be said than what already has been said. Given the genre of the works as well as the abundant abbreviations in the manuscript, Smith 27 likely came out of an explicitly educational setting. The haste with which the text was produced speaks against it having been produced in a more traditional monastic setting. On the other hand, the presence of decoration, the single as opposed to double-column setup, and the squareness of the page speak against it being a university script.[[9]](#footnote-9) So it seems most likely that the text was produced for either a cathedral school or a Franciscan or Dominican house of studies.

1. **Moving to a semiotic directive**

In accordance with our third directive, we will establish four relations: first that of Smith 27 to its former codex; second, of Smith's former codex to the course of studies of which it would have formed a part; third, we shall move to consider a codex only slightly later than Smith and, in parallel fashion, determine the curriculum that this second codex suggests; fourth, we will determine what the relation between these two manuscripts in terms of 1) their respective curricula, and 2) their quality, suggests about shifts in a global perspective on education in the meantime.

1. **Situating Smith 27 in its codex and curriculum**
   1. **Situating Smith 27 in its codex**

In the following section, we shall establish the first two of the above mentioned relations

Let us presume the following: 1) that the gap between chapter 5 of the *Liber Sex Principiorum* at the end of folium 1 and the 8th chapter of the *De interpretatione* on folium 2 is filled by missing pages; 2) that there are no additional works in the codex adjoined between the *Liber Sex Principiorum* and the *de interpretatione*; and 3) that the amount of main text on each page is relatively uniform for each page.

If this is the case, then we can surmise the following: three missing bifolia must be laid on top of our fragment in order to supply the missing text. The next innermost fragment after our own would contain *Liber Sex Principiorum* V. 49-VII. 70 on its left and *De Interpretatione* VI.39-VIII.60 on its right panel. The third bifolium would contain *Liber* VII. 71-VIII.92 on its left and *De Interpretatione* III.17-VI.38 on its right, and the innermost fourth bifolium would contain *Liber* VIII. 93 and its explicit, while the right side would contain the incipit for the *de interpretatione* and the text up to II. 16. This is represented in the following chart.

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| --- | --- |
| Smith 27 folium i: Contains *Liber Sex Principiorum* II.27-5.48 | Smith 27 Folium ii: contains *De Interpretatione* VIII.61-IX |
| Missing folium i: Contains *Liber Sex Principiorum* V. 49-VII. 70 | missing folium vi: contains *De Interpretatione* VI.39-VIII.60 |
| Missing folium ii: contains *Liber Sex Principiorum* VII. 71-VIII.92 | Missing folium v: contains *De Interpretatione* III.17-VI.38 |
| Missing folium iii: contains *Liber Sex Principiorum* VIII. 93 & explicit | Missing folium iv: *De Interpretatione* incipit*,* I.1-II.16 |

Something like this setup is also suggested by the gloss in the upper left margin of the folium 2 recto. The gloss in part reads, ““semper hanc quidem veram, illam vero falsam.” This is a variant reading of a passage from *De interpretatione* VIII. 52. Thus, the passage may be a catchword referring to a passage that would have been right around the top of the verso of the folium immediately preceding it in quire.

Since the standard Medieval Latin *divisio* of the *de interpretatione* divided the text into two books (as opposed to the Greek text, which counts the whole work as one book), and since the end of chapter nine—i.e. where Smith fragment 27 ends—marks the end of book 1 of the work, it seems likely that our bifolium was the outermost bifolium of a quire of four bifolia.

* 1. **Situating Smith 27 in its curriculum**

Next, we can situate our fragment within a standard medieval curriculum. Both the *Liber* and the *de interpretatione* are works of logic. They would likely have been studied along with other works of Aristotle's *organon*, such as the *categories* and perhaps Porphyry's *Isagoge.* Since the order in which the texts of our fragment is given was likely also the order in which they were read, we can suggest the following: in the course of studies for which the codex from which our manuscript came was originally designed, the *Liber Sex Principiorum* was studied immediately before the *de interpretatione*. And since the *Liber* is, by its very intention, a supplement to Aristotle's *categories*, it seems likely that the study of the *Liber* would have been preceded by the study of the *categories* itself, which itself implies that the *categories* would have immediately preceded the *liber* in the codex of which our fragment originally formed a part.

So in sum, our fragment came from a codex that probably contained at least Aristotle's *categories*, and may have additionally contained other logical works in Aristotle's *organon*, or works that normally accompany parts of it, such as Porphyry's *Isagoge* or Boethius' *de divisione.*

1. **Introduction to Columbia's Ms X88.Ar512**

The only other manuscript in the US to contain both of these works is Ms X88.Ar512, also from Columbia's rare book and manuscript library. The manuscript contains the following works in the order listed: Porphyry's *Isagoge*; Aristotle's *Categories*; The *de interpretatione,* here listed under its Greek title, *Perihermeneias;* The *Liber Sex Principiorum*; Boethius' *De divisione*; Boethius' *de differentiis topicis*; Aristotle's *Prior analytics;* Aristotle's *topics*; Aristotle's *On Sophistical Refutations*; and lastly, Aristotle's *Posterior analytics*.

This manuscript, which is much more complete and intact than Smith 27, is in a French gothic script written between 1300 and 1315, and consists of 235 folia. The page is larger (32 x 22 cm) and taller. The script is of a higher quality and contains less abbreviations. The number of lines per page has increased to 28 compared to Smith's 24. Where Smith only included some minor decoration in its initials, Ms X88.Ar512 has historiated initials with vines, animals and human figures. Even the marks for textual division have taken on a more aesthetic character. In other words, this is no longer a merely functional manuscript within an educational setting: within the 25-60 year period between the transcription of Smith 27 and that of Ms X88.Ar512, Aristotle has moved out of the priory, the cathedral school, the University, and found his way back to the *agora*.

1. **A change in the curriculum, and what it tells us about shifts in medieval educated life**

Now let us draw attention to a factual difference between the manuscripts: the order of the *Liber* and the *De interpretatione* has been switched from the earlier manuscript to the later one. In Smith 27, the *Liber* comes first, while in X88.Ar512, the *De interpretatione* comes first. Furthermore, the *De interpretatione* is listed immediately after the *categories*, so that the *de interpretatione* comesbetween the *categories* and its supplement. What does this mean?

Let us turn back to our “Smith 27 codex” to analyze its content a bit further. Restricting our speculation only to what is most likely, our codex contained the following texts in the following order: the *categories*, the *Liber sex Principiorum*, and the *de interpretatione.* The principle behind this ordering is rational. The *categories* is the first work in Aristotle's organon, because it treats of the most basic element of logical thinking: apprehension of simple concepts, categorized according to their most general genera.[[10]](#footnote-10) The *Liber sex principiorum* treats of this exact same topic, and therefore comes next in the codex. From here, the study moves to the composition and division of concepts, or *judgment,* which is expressed in the proposition. This is studied in the *de interpretatione*, which comes next. Perhaps the student would have studied the *Isagoge* before the *categories*, since that work was read as an introduction to the whole *Organon*, and maybe the student would have gone on to study the *prior analytics* afterwards, since this work treats of the syllogism, i.e. how to combine propositions to generate new knowledge. But, again, these additions need not be the case in order to validate our thesis: *the organization of the curriculum suggested by Smith 27 is essentially determined by the logical relationship of the subject matter of the different treatises to each other.*

The organization of X88.Ar512, by contrast, while it retains the principle of organization of Smith 27, is complicated by two other factors, which are only noticeable in the light of each other: 1) the distinction between *logica vetus* and *logica nova*; and 2) the issue of the authenticity of the work.

The works of the *logica vetus* are those works of or related to Aristotle's *Organon* that never ceased to exist in some fashion or another in medieval Latin education. These works were: the *Isagoge*, the *categories*, and the *de interpretatione*, all known through the translations of Boethius. The *logica nova,* on the other hand, are those works of Aristotle's Organon that only came to be known with the new wave of translations of scientific treatises from Greek and Arabic in the course of the 12th century. The works of the *Logica Nova* are, in the order found in Ms X88.Ar512: the *Prior Analytics*, *Topics*, *On Sophistical Refutations*, and the *Posterior Analytics*.

We can recognize that this distinction is at work in the organization of Ms X88.Ar512 because the Aristotelian works of the *Logica Vetus* are separated from the *Aristotelian* works of the *logica nova* by the addition of the *non-Aristotelian* works that were usually studied with the *logica vetus*: The *Liber Sex Principiorum,* Boethius' *De divisione,* and Boethius' *de differentiis topicis.* So the thematic organization of Ms X88.Ar512's *organon* can be charted as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Porphyry's *Isagoge* | Authentic Aristotelian works of the *logica vetus* | Non- or Pseudo-Aristotelian works of the *logica vetus* | Authentic Aristotelian works of the *logica nova* |

In short, it seems that the non-Aristotelian works of the *logica vetus* have been relegated to an appendix. What does this suggest about the role that the notion of the “authenticity of the work” plays in medieval education in logic?

One answer is as follows. The inversion of the order of the *liber sex principiorum* and the *de interpretatione* from Smith Frag. 27 to Ms X88.Ar512 suggests nothing at all about the importance of authenticity. The issue of authenticity was always a factor in the organization of medieval curricula. Instead, what explains the difference between Smith Frag. 27 and Ms X88.Ar512 is that by the time that Ms X88.Ar512 was written, the *liber* was known to be spurious, whereas in the mid 13th century it was not. In short, our earlier scribe simply took the *liber* to be authentic on faith, while our later scribe, coming out of a more critical age, was furnished with the knowledge that the *liber* was a spurious work. So the shift in the place of the *liber* in our two manuscripts is explicable in light of the move from dogmatic to critical thinking that marks not only the shift from the 13th to the 14th century, but also the move from the Middle Ages to modernity in general.

I will reply to the above in two parts: first, by showing that this narrative does not explain the shift in the ordering of the texts of the two manuscripts; second, by showing that the ordering of the texts of these two manuscripts actually calls into question the general veracity of the above narrative.

The above narrative does not explain the ordering of Smith 27 for a rather simple reason: the *Liber Sex Principiorum* was widely known not to have been written by Aristotle, even in the 13th century. Hence, Dodd writes that the *liber* “became a regular part of the logical corpus, and it was often commented on and accepted as containing genuine Aristotelian doctrine, although most medieval authors recognized that it was not by Aristotle;”[[11]](#footnote-11) and, as Minio-Paluello tells us[[12]](#footnote-12), Iohannes Blundus, Nicolas of Paris, Roland of Cremona, Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon, Bonaventure, Alexander of Hales, Thomas Aquinas, Lambertus Autissodoriensis, Aegidius of Lessines, and Siger of Brabant all either explicitly or implicitly[[13]](#footnote-13) acknowledge that the work was not written by Aristotle. The idea of an awakening of critical consciousness simply does not apply to this case, since the pseudonymous character of the *liber* was widely known from early on.

And nevertheless, this does not prevent the above-mentioned authors from citing the *Liber* approvingly. So then, it seems to me that between the time of the ordering of the Smith fragment's curriculum and the writing of the more recent manuscript, authenticity, conceived of as the trustworthiness of an author, has indeed become an issue. And if the inauthenticity of the *liber* is more widely known at the start of the 14th c. than in the middle of the 13th, this itself may also be because authenticity has begun to be regarded as more important in the meantime.

More broadly, the fact thatauthenticity has become a factor in the ordering of the later manuscript actually suggests just the opposite of the standard narrative that I have summarized above. the openness to truth wherever it may be found—whether from Aristotle's mouth or elsewhere—is there supplemented by (and therefore partly supplanted by) the quest for reliable authority. The orientation towards experienceis made to uneasily coexist with an orientation towards the expert.[[14]](#footnote-14) That the shift in the order of the texts signifies an increased importance accorded to the idea of authority is also supported by the gloss of MS X88.Ar512. The gloss on the *de interpretatione* in the latter manuscript is fairly heavy at places, and seems to be in at least two different hands; while the gloss on the *liber sex principiorum* is scant. In short, the authenticity of the one work and the inauthenticity of the other entailed that one was read regularly, while the other was not.

Here, we will bring forth a second objection: the claim that authenticity of the works seems to be a more important factor for ordering the works of the later manuscript seems to be compromised by the presence of Porphyry *Isagoge* prior to the Aristotelian works of the *logica vetus*. If the genuine or spurious character of the works were that important for the organization of the codex, Porphyry's *Isagoge* would come after Aristotle's works along with the other non-Aristotelian works of the *logica vetus*.

This would be the case if the distinction between “authentic” and “inauthentic” which the manuscript points to were merely a distinction between Aristotle, on the one hand, and his commentators and expositors on the other. But our codex does not draw the boundary line “authentic/inauthentic” in exactly this way. Remember the whole issue of authority and authenticity, as it shows up in this manuscript, seems to be a matter of *trustworthiness*: certain authorities are put ahead of others—in this case, literally, by virtue of their organization in the codex. But if this is the case, then how can Porphyry's presence at the beginning of the codex be explained?

Answer: the borderline drawn by Ms X88.Ar512 between the authentic and inauthentic is a national border. The distinction between authentic and inauthentic works is, in this codex, a distinction between the Greeks and the Latins. So the organization of Ms X88.Ar512 can be simplified even further as follows:

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| Greek authors of the *logica vetus* | Latin appendix to the *logica vetus* | *Logica nova:* exclusively Aristotle's works. |

This schema should be familiar, since an exact parallel arrangement is at work in the organization of Scripture 300 years later in the King James bible, also along national lines: first, the authoritative, Hebrew works of the Old testament; next the non-authoritative Greek works of the old testament; third, the Greek new Testament. As the Latin texts are to Greek texts in the *logica vetus*, so are Greek texts to Hebrew texts in the canon of the Old Testament.

Given this parallel, we cannot take the shift in order, and the emphasis on authority that it signifies, as an anomaly: the shift in the order of reading from Smith 27 to Ms X88.Ar512 signifies not a decreasing, but an *increasing* reliance on the status of the *auctor* in Latin logical pedagogy*—*in other words, it signifies the exact opposite of what the standard narrative of the movement from the 13th to the 14th century, and more broadly, from the middle ages to modernity, suggests to us.

1. **On the quality of the manuscripts, and what they suggest about their social provenance.**

In this section, I would like to more closely consider the other major way in which the two manuscripts differ: their aesthetic quality. Smith 27 is sparsely decorated, while Ms X88.Ar512 is decorated with miniatures; Smith 27 is heavily abbreviated, while Ms X88.Ar512 would be readable by the average layperson who understood Latin. This suggests the following about the two manuscripts.

Smith 27 likely came out of a closed community of scholars. For such a group, the abbreviation of the text itself has the character of a specialized language—i.e. a linguistic practice into which one is initiated by virtue of belonging to a certain sub-group of a larger linguistic community. We see parallels to this in modern English in the way that people associated either freely or by occupation with the world of computers tend to have words in their vocabulary that the average English speaker doesn't. Furthermore, as in the world of computers, the smith 27 manuscript’s functional nature guarantees its low quality *because* it probably was expected to be replaced rather quickly—not because the parchment would have worn out, but because of advancements in the organization of the codex that could have been expected by the scribe of the manuscript himself, on account of the community in which he wrote. It would have been expected that, for instance, the specifics of the linguistic practice of abbreviations might change within a generation, and/or that the organization of the writing on the page itself would become more efficient in a writing culture oriented towards the efficient use—but also the constant updating—of the materials involved in the practice itself (both of these things actually happened in manuscripts during the time period to which Smith is assigned). As a result, many of Smith 27’s confreres would have likely been recycled as pastedowns, or perhaps recycled in some other way. Perhaps this is explains the fact that the folia between Smith's 1st and 2nd folium are missing: perhaps they were recycled as usual, and it is Smith's survival which is the anomaly.

In short, Smith seems to have been written 1) for the utility of immediate study, 2) for a specialized group, 3) and was not written to be a durable manuscript. This hypothesis is also in accord with the lack of gloss on the manuscript, which likely lacks gloss simply because it fell out of use before it *could* be extensively glossed.

By contrast, the initials of MS X88.Ar512 suggest a less technical, more general provenance for that manuscript. The manuscript was likely made for a member of the educated, wealthy, lay public. The abbreviations, being few both in number and in kind, and being those which a generally educated Latin reader would be aware of, also suggest this. And the quality of the codex as a whole suggests that it was made for durability. The presence of at least two different gloss hands (one which loops its ascenders and uses a lighter ink, and one which does not, in a darker ink) suggests that this manuscript may have been actively studied for at least two generations in the family to which it belonged.

In short, the movement of Aristotle's organon from a specialized readership to a general readership—or more broadly, the extension of education to the broader public—is contemporaneous with an increase in the importance of authority for the organization of the texts of the manuscripts themselves. Does the contemporaneity of these two movements suggest a rational connection between them?

Where have we seen this before? Again, an exact parallel may be found in the case of scripture during the time of the Reformation: the widespread translation of the bible into the various vernacular languages coincides with the development of the catechism as a genre of religious writing, i.e. with the development of a genre devoted to analyzing, extracting, and organizing the doctrinal content of the bible beforehand, serving as both authority and *organon* through which the primary text itself could be be approached (or supplanted). Again, the searching of the text itself for its truth in an order determined by the matter of thinking has been supplemented by the search for an *auctor*.

1. **Conclusions**

Our manuscripts suggest that the introduction of the organon to a wider readership coincides with a shift in the importance of authority for the order in which the works would be read. The older manuscript, Smith Fragment 27, suggests a small community of scholars reading the different texts in an order determined by the order of the subject matter which those texts treat of; the newer manuscript, X88.Ar512, suggests a broader public reading the texts (or a non-reading of them) in an order determined 1) by the distinction between *logica vetus* and *logica nova;* and 2) within the *logica vetus* curriculum, by a distinction in the status of the *auctores* read, drawn along national/ethnic/linguistic lines. Broader questions about the relationship between authority and universality unfortunately cannot be broached here. But we can summarize the results of our study as follows.

First, the notion that the movement from the 13th to the 14th century is a move away from dogmatic thinking towards more critical thinking is false. The question of the authority of an author, of the reliability of a text, becomes *more* important, not less, as we move from the 13th to the 14th century, and as we move from the middle ages to modernity more generally.

Second: for this reason, the characterization of the 13th century as a time of dogmatic thinking compared to the 14th century and modernity is not merely false—it is nonsensical. Dogmatic thinking can only come into existence *after* the question of truth begins to be asked as a question about who or what is reliable and trustworthy—i.e. as a question of authority. If this orientation towards the text was not apparent in the 13th century, neither could that orientation be “dogmatic.” *Dogmatism and Critical thinking are not opposites, but identical in their orientation towards the question of truth as a question of authority, and hence are contemporaneous in their genesis*.

Third, the tendency to prejudge what is true in terms of a pre-given, easier to determine sign of authenticity—for instance, the unconditional preference for Greek works over Latin works in philosophy, or Hebrew works over Greek works in the canon of the Old Testament—is the necessary precondition for the possibility of every kind of “-ism”: in other words, the dogmatic-critical orientation towards truth mentioned above and determining the structure of our later manuscript is the precondition for the possibility of racism, nationalism, sectarianism, sexism, etc. As such, much research into the early and high middle ages which characterizes itself as focused the presence of these “isms” in medieval society—at the margins of medieval society, as it were—is fundamentally misguided. The genesis of the minority *qua* minority is contemporaneous with the thinking of the appearance of beings as an unfailing sign of their *essentia,* i.e. as a trustworthy authority*.* Since the thinking of truth as authority which arises in the late 13th early 14th century is the precondition for these prejudices as they show up in the late medieval and modern world, any semblance of them which appears prior to this point must be regarded as fundamentally different in kind.

Lastly, we may notice an unsettling fact: that this orientation towards truth as authority, as trustworthy premonition of unfailingness, is present in the very structure of the monadological research project as a function from a sign to a world. So the research method used in this study has here redounded on its own head: its own characteristic way of thinking of truth has shown us the impossibility of thinking about truth, authority, and universality in accordance with the way that would have been common for the time in which Smith 27 was written, so long as research is characterized by the modern quest for truth as a pre-given certitude. So even if we have found out much about Smith 27 in this study, the culture of which it is a “sign” remains, in fact, lost to us, unthinkable, so long as our own orientation towards truth continues—much more than we ourselves are often conscious of—along the way of Ms X88.Ar512.

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1. In other words, not only do these research paradigms provide a directive for the study of the text, but they also redouble themselves *within* the codex, thus defining what counts both *in* and *as* a manuscript: for instance, by the distinction between the “philosophical content”—i.e. the meaning of the text—and material considerations such as the orthography, rubrication, and the kind of paper on which a text was written, the study of the meaning of the text is abrogated from manuscript studies and relegated to the field within which that text is to be situated e.g. English, philosophy, theology, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This remains the case even in a Marxist inversion of the monadological model, where the manuscript and the production processes associated therewith are thought of not as a product, but as the cause of a higher spiritual reality. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Thus, the sheer *power* of this model itself accounts for the precarious character of much of the research produced within it; while the *object* of the research in this model—i.e. a *world*, conceived of as an intricate nexus of individuals—accounts for the tentative character of its results. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Aristoteles Latinus 1966, pp. 40-48 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The verse numbering is taken from Aquinas, 1955. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. cf. Dod 1982, p. 79 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. cf. Aristoteles Latinus 1966, pp. LV-LVIII [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. cf. Dod 1982, p. 74; Aristoteles Latinus 1965, pp. XII-XXVIII [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Bischoff states that “The 'pecia' comprised (with certain local exceptions) [1] two twin-columned double leaves in-folio [2] (c. 31 x 21 cm)” (p. 43). Neither of these descriptions fits our manuscript. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. It seems unlikely to me that Aristotle actually intends the term “category” to be coextensive with either “highest genus” or “most basic concept.” But since he was read as doing so both in late antiquity and in the middle ages, Aristotle's actual intention is not directly relevant to the organization of the organon in medieval education. Furthermore, the “most basic genus” reading is already implicitly present in the title of the *liber* as the “book of the six *principles.*” [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Dodd 1982, p. 48 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Aristoteles Latinus 1966, p. LXIV-XLVIII [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. i.e. by ascribing quotes from the *liber* either to the book simply (e.g. “*ut dicit Liber sex principiorum*”), or to the author of the *liber* (e.g. “*dicit auctor Sex Principiorum”*) but never to “Aristotle” or “the Philosopher.” cf. ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. This orientation remains with us even today in such phenomena within the world of education as 1) specialization of research, and 2) the peculiar forms of communication associated with specialized research—the conference and the research journal—as places where different researchers can share their results with each other (i.e. mutually regard each other as authorities in regionally distinct intellectual spheres). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)