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ARNAU DE VILANOVA AND PARIS : ONE EMBASSY OR TWO?

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Abstract

*Historians differ as to whether Arnau de Vilanova had two confrontations with the Paris theologians over his *De adventu antichristi*, in 1299 and 1300, or only one, in 1300. This article argues that there are no documentary witnesses to a 1299 confrontation, which would also be difficult to reconcile with the historical facts, and that the one reference implying such an event has to be mistaken. Only a single such event, in 1300, is consistent with the historical evidence and with Arnau's own later statement.*

Résumé

*Les historiens ne font pas l'accord sur la date de la confrontation d'Arnaud de Villeneuve avec les théologiens de Paris autour de son livre *De adventu antichristi* : a-t-elle eu lieu en 1299 et en 1300, ou seulement en 1300 ? Cet article montre qu'il n'y a point de documents attestant d'une confrontation en 1299, et qu'il n'y a eu que la confrontation de 1300, cette date s'accordant et avec les données historiques et avec le récit qu'Arnaud en a fait quelques années plus tard.*

Resumen

*Los historiadores discrepan si Arnau de Vilanova se enfrentó con los teólogos de París, a propósito de su *De adventu antichristi*, en dos ocasiones (1299 y 1300) o sólo en una (1300). El presente artículo arguye que no hay pruebas documentales para la supuesta confrontación de 1299, la cual es además difícil de conciliar con los hechos históricos; y que la única referencia aparente a tal acontecimiento debe considerarse equivocada. Sólo una única confrontación, en 1300, resulta consistente con las pruebas históricas y con la afirmación ulterior del propio Arnau.*

[Mots-clés : Arnaud de Villeneuve, *De adventu antichristi*]

On 12 October 1300, before a Parisian notary, the medical master Arnau de Vilanova issued an emotional appeal to Pope Boniface VIII, describing his recent arraignment by the faculty of theology at Paris and protesting its unjust condemnation of his work *De adventu antichristi*. So much is documentary fact; but the events that led up to that moment are still a matter of debate. As we will see, most scholars have maintained that they began a year before, in December 1299, when Arnau is supposed to have come to Paris on an embassy for Jaume II of Aragó-Catalunya, and took the opportunity to bring his work to the attention of the Paris theologians. A few, however, are beginning to contend that Arnau's dealings with the faculty all took place after an embassy in 1300¹. Recently, Josep Perarnau has published a particularly detailed description of how he believes Arnau's case must have proceeded. He takes for granted that it fell into two stages corresponding to two embassies, one in 1299 and one in 1300, and he has accompanied his study with the text of Arnau's two most important accounts of his confrontation with the theologians, both preserved in MS Paris, BnF, lat. 17534². One account is the appeal to the pope just referred to from October 1300, beginning « Licet sim »; the other, undated, is addressed to the king of France, and begins « Coram vobis ». They have been printed several times before (the appeal to the pope, indeed, has been translated into English)³, but Perarnau has reedited them carefully under the respective titles of the *Instrumentum* and the *Notificatio*, making it very easy for historians to consult them and to evaluate the evidence for themselves⁴.

A number of issues in the history of medieval thought and learning depend on the determination of which position is correct, what we might call the « 1299 theory » or the « 1300 theory ». Deciding between 1299 and 1300 as the moment when Arnau began aggressively to defend his eschatological beliefs will date, indirectly, the end of his career as a committed medical master at Montpellier; it will establish a benchmark for the dating and sequence of his theological writings; and it will make clearer our understanding of the procedures used by the Paris faculty in examining and censuring theological writing. At the same time, it can affect our understanding of the careers of influential political figures at the court of Philippe IV of France. My own examination of the evidence has confirmed me in my belief that the traditional view repeated over and over by historians is wrong, and that Arnau's encounter with the Paris theologians occupied only a few weeks in September-October 1300.

(1) M. McVAUGH, « Further Documents for the Biography of Arnau de Vilanova », *Dynamis* 2 (1982), p. 368; R. E. LERNER, « Ecstatic Dissent », *Speculum* 67 (1992), p. 36; G. L. POTESTÀ, « Dall'annuncio dell'Anticristo all'attesa del pastore angelico », *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics* [hereafter ATCA] 11 (1995), p. 293-94 and n. 17; J. ZIEGLER, *Medicine and Religion c. 1300: The Case of Arnau de Vilanova*, Oxford, 1998, p. 25-26.

(2) J. PERARNAU I ESPELT, « Sobre la primera crisi entorn el *De adventu antichristi* d'Arnau de Vilanova: Paris 1299-1300 », *ATCA* 20 (2001), p. 349-402.

(3) L. THORNDIKE, *University Records and Life in the Middle Ages*, New York, 1944, p. 128-132.

(4) In the discussion that follows I will refer to these texts as I and N, citing the line numbers that appear in Perarnau's edition.

Let us start by considering the evidence for the supposed trip to Paris in 1299. That supposition is based on the beginning of the *Notificatio* (N 160-87), where Arnau describes how, with his embassy completed, he was lured into the presence of the Official of Paris, detained, and released only when he found people to post a three-thousand-pound bond for him. Two things about this passage bear emphasizing : first, that in it Arnau speaks of himself as having been a *nuncius* from Jaume II of Aragó-Catalunya to Philippe IV of France, charged with a *legacio* to that king (N 162-63, 174); second, that he was about to leave for Toulouse, bearing letters from Philippe concerning the next stage in that *legacio*, at the moment when he was seized and detained (N 165-68).

Now there is one obvious overwhelming difficulty in supposing that Jaume II charged Arnau with such a formal embassy to the king of France in 1299 : namely, there is simply no independent documentary evidence whatsoever of this trip in the Arxiu de la Corona de Aragó. In the following year, 1300, Jaume II did of course send Arnau on an embassy to Philippe IV, concerned in part with negotiations over control of the Vall d' Aran. There can be no question about that trip : the Arxiu contains Jaume's letter to the king of Mallorca from 8 July 1300 describing plans for the embassy⁵, as well as a series of detailed instructions drawn up for Arnau by the king, part of which is dated 23 July 1300⁶. That is the kind of material, indeed, that one can expect to find routinely preserved in these royal archives : as is well known, they are a uniquely rich resource for all levels of the royal administration, and they have made it possible for scholars to pursue the details of planning and organization for virtually all aspects of government. Yet although three generations of researchers have gone through the registers of those archives page by page, on the alert for Arnaldian material – Heinrich Finke, Antoni Rubió i Lluch, Ramon d' Alós Moner, Father Martí de Barcelona, I myself – no one has ever identified a single document that convincingly establishes the existence of an embassy in 1299. It seems quite incredible that Arnau could have acted as an ambassador between the two kings without any record of the planning, or the actual arrangements, or the aims of this mission existing in the archives. It is far more plausible that when in the undated *Notificatio* Arnau speaks of his role as *nuncius* to the king of France he is speaking, not of a trip in 1299, but of his embassy of 1300, for which there is ample evidence (and indeed in the *Instrumentum* dated 12 October 1300 he refers to himself as a *nuncius* [I 109-10]), and that therefore the *Notificatio* as well as the *Instrumentum* should be understood as entirely concerned with events of 1300.

At one point, to be sure, Father Martí imagined that he had found a letter referring to an embassy by Arnau in 1299, but he soon recognized his mistake. Among the Arnaldian documents he published in his « Nous documents » of 1935 was a letter written to Arnau by Jaume II, dated simply « Calatayud, 18 October »

(5) McVAUGH, « Further Documents », p. 367-68; doc. 39a, of 8 July 1300.

(6) P. MARTÍ DE BARCELONA, « Regesta de documents arnaldians coneguts », *Estudis Franciscans* 42 (1935), p. 269, docs. 40, 41.

with no mention of a year, which Father Martí supplied as « [1299] »⁷. He discovered his error almost immediately, as he acknowledged in the « Regesta de documents arnaldians coneguts » that he published in the same year. In that letter of 18 October, having heard from Arnau that his embassy to Philippe had been successful and that the French king was sending the bishops of Toulouse and Soissons and the archdeacon of Auge to Toulouse to continue negotiations, King Jaume revealed his intent to send the bishop of Tarazona and the sacristan of Lleida to meet Arnau in Toulouse to pursue discussions with the French delegation. Father Martí explained in the « Regesta » that he had now found further letters in the ACA, clearly dated « Calatayud XVI kal. nov. [17 October] 1300 », addressed to these men as the king's commissioners in the affair in question, and he recognized from them that the royal letter to Arnau must also have been composed in October 1300 and must therefore refer to his well-known trip of that year⁸. Two years later, Carl Willemsen published the actual instructions sent to the commissioners, but because he had not read Father Martí's correction he assumed mistakenly that the instructions should be dated 1299⁹. Finally, in 1951, Juan Reglá published more of the documents relating to these commissioners, correctly dating them to 1300; he included one of the letters that Father Martí had discovered so long before and that actually referred specifically to Arnau's role as a *nuncius* in the agreement reached with Philippe IV¹⁰. Thus it is now quite clear that none of this documentation can come from 1299. First Father Martí's researches, and then Reglá's, left the supposed 1299 trip without any documentary support, told us more about the embassy of 1300, and provided additional reason to believe that a genuine embassy is sure to create its own paper trail.

One particular feature of the letter of « 18 October » that Father Martí published needs to be stressed in connection with the contents of the *Notificatio* to which attention was called earlier. In it, on 18 October in a year that must certainly have been 1300, Jaume made it clear that he expected Arnau to travel to Toulouse now that his conversations with the king of France were at an end – but that is exactly what the *Notificatio* tells us Arnau had been planning to do when he was imprisoned by the bishop! This obviously further confirms the conclusion already proposed, that the imprisonment described by Arnau in the *Notificatio* (N 163-87) took place in 1300 and not 1299.

(7) P. MARTÍ DE BARCELONA, « Nous documents per a la biografia d'Arnau de Vilanova », *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia* 11 (1935), p. 93, doc. 8, of 18 October [1299].

(8) MARTÍ, « Regesta », p. 269-70 and n. 9 (doc. 42). He explained: « En CRD, caixa 5, 1187, hi hem vist dues lletres reials, una als tres comissionats per Jaume II (Dat. Calat. XVI kal. nov. 1300); l'altra fou adreçada només al Torrefeta i al bisbe de Tarazona, que constituïren, sembla, la comissió definitiva. S'hi alludeix explícitament l'ambaixada d'A. de V. a Paris. Cal, doncs, avençar en un any la data que proposàvem suara a dita ambaixada... ».

(9) The document itself – CRD Jaume II 4601 – is undated: C. A. WILLEMSSEN, « Der Kampf um das Val d'Aran », *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kulturgeschichte Spaniens* 6 (1937), p. 196-97, doc. 1.

(10) J. REGLÁ CAMPISTOL, *Francia, la Corona de Aragón y la frontera pirenaica*, Madrid, 1951, vol. 2, app. I, p. 24-28, 30-35, docs. 16-17, 20-24. It is doc. 16, of 17 October 1300, that refers to the agreement reached « inter ipsum regem [Francie] et magistrum A[rnaldum], dilectum fisicum et fam[iliarem] nostrum, nuntium specialem super hoc eidem specialiter destinatum » (p. 25).

If it is admitted that the first part of the *Notificatio*, like the second, is referring to a single confrontation in 1300, not to two confrontations separated by ten months, other aspects of this document become easier to understand. To posit two confrontations requires treating a first passage (N 160-87) as referring to an episode in December 1299, and the passage immediately following (N 188-99) as leaping ahead to describe a confrontation of October 1300, one that is also described in the *Instrumentum*¹¹. Yet Arnau gives no sign in the *Notificatio* that a significant period of time has elapsed between the two passages, that he has moved on to talk about a period almost a year later and a different series of events – his word of transition is merely « postmodum » (N 188), which suggests that the two passages refer to stages in one continuous episode. Furthermore, in the first, Arnau says that the archbishop of Narbonne was active in his behalf on the night he was imprisoned (N 175-76), and that the next day three other specified men – Amaury, viscount of Narbonne, the knight C. de Nogaret, and the cleric Alphinus de Narma – acted as his pledges (N 179-81). But in the second passage, the same four men are named as present in a subsequent meeting before the bishop and masters (N 188-99). It would be a remarkable coincidence if these four individuals, having been at court to support Arnau in December 1299, should all have happened to be present again to support him when they were needed in October 1300; it is much more reasonable to believe that their actions described in N 175-81 are part of the same episode as that described in N 188-99.

To sum up: the lack of independent evidence for a trip by Arnau to Paris in 1299, and the coherence of the details of the *Notificatio* with what is independently known about his trip there in 1300, must lead to the conclusion that Arnau made only one embassy to Paris for Jaume II, and therefore had only one extended confrontation with the bishop and theological masters there, referred to in both the *Notificatio* and the *Instrumentum*: in October 1300.

On what possible evidence, then, can the case for a 1299 embassy rest? It rests entirely on Arnau's statement in the *Notificatio* that he was arraigned before the Official « die sabbati mane post festum beati Thome » (N 164-65), having been invited to meet with him the previous night and then detained. It has been assumed that the « blessed Thomas » is the apostle, whose feast day is 21 December. Consequently the date of this arraignment cannot have been October 1300, the argument runs, and it must therefore have taken place in late December in a different year – by default, 1299; and since in 1299 the 21st fell on a Monday, Arnau's hearing must have occurred on Saturday 26 December. In the end, this is the sole piece of evidence that can be adduced for an embassy in 1299 – or, more accurately, for an embassy in some year other than 1300. How did the idea of that embassy come to be so widely accepted in the historical literature?

Modern Arnaldian scholarship might be said to date from 1881, when Barthélemy Hauréau published his study « Arnaud de Villeneuve, médecin et

(11) PERARNAU, « Sobre la primera crisi », apartats II-III, esp. notes 10-13; apartat V, esp. notes 18-20.

chimiste» in the *Histoire littéraire de la France*¹². Here, in reconstructing Arnau's condemnation, Hauréau made use of the *Notificatio* and *Instrumentum* and implicitly dated them according to the reasoning outlined above: the internal dating of the *Notificatio* with reference to the feast of St. Thomas meant that it was speaking about events in December, and, since the *Instrumentum* was explicitly dated to October 1300, the December had to have fallen in the previous year¹³. These conclusions went unquestioned by subsequent generations of historians. When Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo published his account of Arnau's life and thought in the *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, he acknowledged that he was simply taking over from Hauréau the conclusion that « en 1299 Arnaldo fué de embajador a la corte de Francia »¹⁴.

It was natural, therefore, that when in 1909 Paul Diepgen published his influential study of Arnau's political career¹⁵, his attempt at a detailed reconstruction of Arnau's ambassadorial role to Paris should also have begun from this theory, which seemed to impose a date of 1299 on a number of undated documents. Of King Jaume's instructions to Arnau concerning the Vall d' Aran, which Heinrich Finke had published the year before in *Acta Aragonensia* and dated « Um 1300? »¹⁶, Diepgen wrote: « Das Wann? dürfte sich eher bestimmen lassen. Finke nimmt 1300 (?) an, hat dabei aber übersehen, dass Arnald bereits im Dezember 1299 in Paris verhaftet wurde »¹⁷. The same assumption led Diepgen to assign the king's commissioning of the bishop of Tarazona and the sacristan of Lleida to the earlier year¹⁸. Of course he read the *Notificatio* as fixing Arnau's arraignment before the Official in December 1299, and he concluded that his subsequent hearing before the theological faculty had taken place « nach längerer Zeit », but in any case before July 1300, since he believed that the *Notificatio* had been written by then¹⁹. Diepgen acknowledged that the *Instrumentum* was composed at Paris in October 1300, so he was forced to argue that the king must

(12) B. HAURÉAU, « Arnald de Villeneuve, médecin et chimiste », *Histoire littéraire de la France* 28, Paris, 1881, p. 26-126, 487-90.

(13) *Ibid.*, p. 35-38.

(14) M. MENÉNDEZ Y PELAYO, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, 2nd ed. rev., in idem, *Obras completas*, Madrid, 1917, vol. 8, p. 188. Menéndez added in a footnote on p. 204, « Esta fecha ha sido fijada por Hauréau con presencia de dos documentos, que citaré mas adelante », citing the *Notificatio* and the *Instrumentum*, but without further examining the question of their date. As an appendix, he presented these documents in a transcription made by ALFRED MOREL-FATIO (*ibid.*, p. LXXIV-LXXXII), again without any comment as to their date. When a few years later the *Instrumentum* was republished, together with a précis of the *Notificatio*, in the *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis* (ed. H. DENIFLE and E. CHATELAIN, Paris, 1891, vol. 2, p. 86-90), the editors repeated « 25 December » as the date of Arnau's detention, citing Menéndez y Pelayo and Hauréau as their authorities. Until Perarnau's recent study, these have been the only sources in which one or the other text can be read, and the fact that both fix the beginning of Arnau's tribulations in 1299 has contributed to the entrenchment of that date in scholarship.

(15) P. DIEPGEN, *Arnald von Villanova als Politiker and Laientheologe* (Abhandlungen zur mittleren and neueren Geschichte, no. 9), Berlin and Leipzig, 1909.

(16) H. FINKE, *Acta Aragonensia*, Berlin, 1908, vol. 1, p. 452.

(17) DIEPGEN, *Arnald*, p. 14.

(18) *Ibid.*, p. 13.

(19) *Ibid.*, p. 18, 20.

have sent Arnau back to Paris in that year on a new embassy, concerning not the Vall d'Aran but support for Alfonso de la Cerda, and that while there Arnau had written the *Instrumentum* describing, not a new trial, but that of the previous year²⁰. After this, 1299 became the central event for Arnaldian scholarship, and 1300 merely an afterthought²¹.

This interpretation was not at all unreasonable at the time, since these early historians were still unaware of the archival evidence that contradicted it. The first attempt at a collection of that evidence, by Ramon d'Alós in 1909-10, did not yet include any of the royal correspondence directly datable to the embassy of 1300, and thus there was no reason to doubt that two trips had taken place. At that moment, the only piece of evidence that spoke of an embassy by Arnau to Philippe IV was the undated list of instructions drawn up for Arnau by Jaume II, which d'Alós decided to date « 1299-1300 », following it with the text of the *Notificatio*, which he dated « principis de 1300 ». Explaining his reasoning, he noted :

Ens inclinem a l'opinió den Diepgen que admet la primera d'aquestes dïes dates [1299-1300] més que no pas a la den Finke que dona la de 1300 (?). Arnau se trobava pres a Paris en desembre de 1299, segons ens *diu ell meteix* [my emphasis] en la protesta devant del rey de França contra'l colegi de teòlechs d'aquella ciutat²².

The date of 1299 had come to seem so secure, through reiteration, that it could be assumed to spring directly from Arnau's own authority.

A quarter-century later Father Martí began to publish the results of his search for new Arnaldian documents, and for the first time it became possible to appreciate that the archival evidence for the embassy over the Vall d'Aran put it in 1300 rather than 1299; but historians could not easily break with the previous scenario. At this same time Carl Willemsen was carrying on his own investigations in the ACA and independently encountered many of the letters that Father Martí published in « Nous documents », yet as we have seen Willemsen dated them all to 1299; he accepted Diepgen's reconstruction completely and was never able to recognize that the embassy in question had occurred a year later. Reglá actually published one of the decisive documents (CRD Jaume II 1187) – the letter dated « 17 October 1300 » in which Jaume II appointed the bishop of Tarazona and the sacristan of Lleida to go to Toulouse to pursue with the king of France's

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 20-22. Jaume's instructions for Arnau had included both a series of headings concerning the Vall d'Aran (undated) and, perhaps as an afterthought, a separate letter of 23 July concerning the matter of Alfonso de la Cerda and the succession to the Castilian throne; MARTÍ, « Regesta », p. 269, docs. 40-41.

(21) This continues to be the case. Recently Manfred Gerwing has appealed to Diepgen's study to justify his own account of the affair, which seems to suggest that both stages in the episode (Arnau's imprisonment and his subsequent hearing) occurred close together in December 1299; M. GERWING, *Vom Ende der Zeit : Der Traktat des Arnald von Villanova über die Ankunft des Antichrist (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie and Theologie des Mittelalters, n. s., vol. 45)*, Munster, 1996, p. XVII-XVIII and n. 12.

(22) R. D'ALÓS, « Colecció de documents relatius a Arnau de Vilanova », *Estudis Universitaris Catalans* 4 (1910), p. 110.

envoys the negotiations that, as he explained, Arnau de Vilanova had already begun²³ – yet Reglá also accepted the assumption that the set of instructions given by the king to those appointees had to be dated 1299, without reflecting on the inconsistency involved²⁴. Thus, because the illusion of a 1299 embassy has been repeated over and over again without ever having been tested or examined systematically, it has continued to exercise great power over the imagination of historians even after attention had been called to the documentation that should have dispelled it²⁵.

What then are we to do with the original conclusion that Arnau's statement in the *Notificatio*, that he was arraigned before the bishop of Paris « die sabbati mane post festum beati Thome », must refer to December 1299? If there was only one trip in September-October 1300, as the documentary evidence indicates, the statement itself has to be wrong. And in fact there is excellent independent reason to believe that it is wrong. Attention has recently been called to a discrepancy that makes it incredible that this date should be an accurate one. If we ask on what day of the month these events would have taken place, we find that Arnau would have been inveigled into the Official's power on 25 December 1299! It would seem to be an extraordinary day for the Official to have chosen to act – but if he had done so, surely Arnau would have dated his hearing on the following day, not with reference to St. Thomas on the 21st, but to Christmas on the 25th²⁶. It has been proposed, no doubt correctly, that the date as given is mistaken, and that the scribe wrote « post » in error for « ante », so that Arnau would have had his arraignment on the Saturday *before* the feast of St. Thomas, or 19 December²⁷. This proposed emendation eliminates one difficulty with the date as written (its apparent overlooking of Christmas Day), but it does not eliminate the contradictions that we have seen to be inherent in a date of *any* sort in December 1299.

(23) REGLÁ, *Francia*, vol. 2, p. 24-26; app. I, doc. 16.

(24) WILLEMSSEN, « Kampf », p. 196-97; Reglá's reconstruction is in *Francia*, vol. 1, p. 92-95.

(25) The power of the « 1299 theory » to mislead can be seen, for example, in PERARNAU, « Sobre la primera crisi », where a crucial document (CRD Jaume II 1187) is assumed to date from 1299 and is used to argue that the commissioners were named in that year, so that Jaume II's missive of « 18 October » to Arnau, mentioning them, can also be placed in 1299 (p. 365); a few pages later the same letter is assigned correctly to the year 1300, this time with the implication that it is, not a letter creating a new commission, but one informing a preexisting commission of the accord reached with the king of France, and of Arnau's involvement (p. 367).

(26) Just so, the bishop of Paris, closing a letter on 29 December 1293, dated it « die martis post Nativitatem Domini », referring it back to Christmas rather than to the saint whose feast was being observed that very day – Thomas of Canterbury – or, for that matter, to St. John (27 December) or St. Stephen (26 December); *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 2, p. 62-63.

(27) « Sobre la primera crisi », p. 356-57, n. 10. Diepgen may have recognized this problem, and solved it in the same way, but if so he chose to conceal his reasoning. He referred to the *Notificatio* in the form edited by Menéndez Pelayo, who had correctly printed « post festum beati Thome »; but Diepgen translated « Am Vorabend des Samstags vor dem Fest des heiligen Thomas » (my emphases), which allowed him to date Arnau's invitation to the bishop as having taken place on 18 December rather than Christmas Day (Diepgen, *Arnald*, p. 17 and n.4). Perhaps Diepgen too recognized that the latter date would seem incredible to other historians.

All the contradictions, however, concerning Christmas Day and the rest, will disappear if it is supposed that the scribe erred, not in absentmindedly writing « post », but in absentmindedly writing « Thome ». After all, to refer simply to « beati Thome », as the document does, is strangely equivocal : if « Thomas » was really meant, why would Arnau not have specified the « festum beati Thome apostoli », especially since the feast of another « beatus Thomas » falls only eight days later (St. Thomas of Canterbury, martyr)? Let us assume that Arnau originally dated his experiences by reference, not to Thomas, but to a « beatus So-and-So », some saint whose feast day falls, not in December, but in early October; St. Francis of Assisi, for example, whose feast is 4 October, might have come naturally to Arnau's mind as a point of reference, but it does not have to be he. It is then perfectly possible that at some point a copyist wrote « Thomas » for some reason instead of « So-and-So »; this is a slip no more unimaginable than writing « post » for « ante ». Since the reference to « die sabbati mane post festum beati Thome » has to be emended in any case, emending it in this way would cause all the difficulties in dating to disappear : there would have been one trip to Paris in the summer and fall of 1300, rather than two, ten months apart, and there would no longer be a need to explain why there is no independent evidence for an earlier embassy in 1299²⁸.

There is another difficulty in the evidence that will be avoided once the idea of a December 1299 imprisonment is abandoned. According to the « 1299 theory », Arnau deposited a financial pledge and left Paris shortly after 19 December 1299 (that is, if the scribe wrote « post » in error; if « post » is correct, he left shortly after 26 December); then he traveled to Toulouse, carried on negotiations with the bishop and gave him his letters from Philippe IV, and finally returned to Barcelona in time to be given a payment by the king recorded on 28 January 1300 (n.s.)²⁹. What this outline does not take into consideration is the reason specified for that payment : Arnau was paid 544 sous of Barcelona « pro quitacione sua de tempore quo nobiscum fuit usque per totum presentem mensem januarii »³⁰ – that is, at the moment when he was paid, he had already been with the king in Barcelona *for four weeks*, since the very beginning of the year! It is not easy to

(28) I originally toyed with the idea that « beate Thome » might not have been a mistake at all, and that it referred to St. Thomas Cantilupe or Thomas of Hereford (d. 1282). Thomas was not canonized until 1320, but his relics were translated in 1287 and appeals to Rome for his canonization had begun at least as early as 1290. It is not at all unusual for the epithet « beatus » to be applied to someone whose relics have worked miracles, even in advance of formal canonization, and I wondered whether, because of Thomas's connections with the University of Paris (he had studied arts there in the 1240s and returned to study theology at the end of the 1260s), his feast day – eventually established as 2 October – might already have made its way into the university calendar by the end of the thirteenth century. In that case, 7 October 1300 would accurately have been referred to as « die sabbati post festum beati Thome ». However, the most recent study of Thomas's canonization does not suggest that the Paris faculty took an early active interest in the proceedings : see P. H. DALY, « The Process of Canonization in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries », in *St. Thomas Cantilupe, Bishop of Hereford: Essays in His Honour*, ed. M. JANCEY, Hereford, 1982, p. 125-35. It seems more plausible that the phrase « beatus Thome » simply originated in a slip of the scribal pen.

(29) PERARNAU, « Sobre la primera crisi », p. 367.

(30) MARTÍ, « Nous documents », p. 94, doc. 9.

imagine Arnau traveling to Toulouse, meeting the royal commissioners there, taking part in the planned negotiations with the bishop and the other French delegates, and then, with his business concluded, traveling on to Barcelona – his choice lay between passing through the Vall d’Aran in the depths of winter, or going overland to Perpignan and then reaching Catalunya by sea³¹ – all in the eleven days from 20 December to 1 January (or even less, if « post » is supposed to be correct). Once the idea of a second embassy is abandoned, however, there is no need to imagine that Arnau was in Paris at all in late 1299.

To summarize : the absence of independent evidence for an embassy by Arnau to Paris in 1299, coupled with the inconsistencies and contradictions to which the assumption of such an embassy gives rise, is good reason for believing that the *Notificatio* and *Instrumentum* both refer to a single historical episode covering a few weeks in October 1300. What would a conflation of their stories look like? Arnau was obviously in a fury when he wrote them, and one should not necessarily expect a carefully connected account of events from them, but it still seems possible to read them as giving, between them, a single, generally consistent narrative with only minor discrepancies. In broad outline, there are three important stages in the story they would tell :

1) While at Paris for the negotiations with Philippe IV in the late summer of 1300, Arnau had a number of discussions of his *De adventu antichristi* with members of the theology faculty ; he even loaned a copy to the chancellor (I 108-16; N 233-40). The masters found some of his ideas rash, and he expressed a willingness to temper some of his views, if they would give him a list of the points that disturbed them (I 26-34).

2) However, a few of the masters (four or five) went further and privately denounced his ideas to the Paris Official (N 182-87). The Official therefore invited Arnau to come speak with him on a Friday evening, as Arnau was preparing to leave Paris for Toulouse, and when Arnau arrived unsuspectingly, the Official detained him, despite his protests and those of the archbishop of Narbonne (I 22-25; N 164-77); he was allowed his freedom only the next day, after his friends —including Amaury, viscount of Narbonne; the knight C. de Nogaret; and the cleric Alphinus de Narma – had posted a three-thousand-pound bond for him (N 177-81). The names of these men are significant. «C. de Nogaret » is presumably Guillaume de Nogaret, who had entered Philippe IV ’s service by 1295 and became one of his most trusted agents³². But the archbishop of Narbonne, Gilles Aycelin, was a powerful political figure as well. No doubt Arnau was, in a certain sense, the archbishop’s ecclesiastical responsibility³³, but, perhaps more importantly, Aycelin was one of the king’s chief councillors, and his actions on Arnau’s behalf should also be understood as looking out for his

(31) The difficulties involved are made vividly clear in PERARNAU, « Sobre la primera crisi », p. 367.

(32) *Ibid.*, p. 350 n. 1.

(33) *Ibid.*, p. 358.

royal master's interests, not simply as an expression of charitable concern for a sheep of his own flock³⁴. The king's men were evidently on Arnau's side from the very beginning.

3) Although Arnau had been released, the faculty of theology now moved to delay his departure to Toulouse by citing him formally before the Official and subsequently the bishop of Paris (N 245-49). He appeared before the bishop supported by his allies – the viscount, Nogaret, Alphinus, and others. Other allies, king's men, including the archbishop and the archdeacon of Auge (who had just been appointed by Philippe IV as his commissioner to negotiate over the Vall d' Aran at Toulouse), tried unsuccessfully to mediate the controversy (I 49-60; N 188-95). The faculty prepared a list of statements in his work to which they objected and read them out before the bishop, who condemned them as *temerarie assertos* (N 195-99)³⁵. The chancellor thrust the list (*cedula*) into Arnau's hands and demanded that he read and assent to them, and, fearing that he would be imprisoned unless he did so, Arnau agreed (I 76-81, 116-21; N 249-56). Once he was free from this pressure, however, very soon after the arraignment, he composed the *Instrumentum*, which in part formally revoked that assent given under compulsion.

It is not difficult to believe that all this could have taken place in a relatively short period of time. The *Instrumentum*, as we know, is dated 12 October (a Wednesday); in it, Arnau speaks of the meeting before the bishop as having taken place « nuper » (I 77), and certainly both it and the *Notificatio* read as if they were composed heatedly in the immediate aftermath of a terrible experience, not after reflecting and calming down for a number of days. We also know that the imprisonment and release took place on a Friday and Saturday. It would not be implausible to date these events to 7-8 October, and to imagine the formal hearing as having taken place on the 10th or the 11th, so that the events were all compressed into a few days. Much had happened since Arnau wrote to King Jaume, explaining his planned departure for Toulouse; naturally, when the king replied to the letter on the 18th, he would still have been entirely unaware of Arnau's difficulties. As for the first stages in the controversy: in the *Instrumentum*, Arnau accuses the theologians of having taken only a month to study ideas that should have required a year (I 97-99); if this is taken at face value, it suggests that he had first discussed his work with them in mid-September, probably shortly after arriving in Paris.

(34) Brief sketches of Aycelin and Nogaret are given by F. J. PEGUES, *The Lawyers of the Last Capetians*, Princeton, 1962, p.90-102. A fuller biographical study of Aycelin is provided by J. A. McNAMARA, *Gilles Aycelin: The Servant of Two Masters*, Syracuse, 1973, who refers to his involvement in Arnald's hearing on p. 15, 76, 130; inevitably, she has followed the dates in the earlier literature and puts Nogaret and Aycelin with Arnau in 1299, without providing any independent support for this date.

(35) In one letter, Arnau insists that the propositions were only found *temerarius*; in the other, he says that he was forced not just to modify (*temperare*) but to retract (*revocare*) his ideas, and the latter demand implies that the theologians found them not just rash but erroneous – but he does not actually say outright that they were formally declared erroneous.

Not quite four years after his confrontation with the Paris theologians, Arnau summarized the experience in the *Protestatio facta Perusii* (of 18 July 1304) :

At a time when Boniface was governing the Roman church, I presented the Parisian theologians with a certain book I had written, entitled *Super tempore adventus antichristi...* and after it had been kept by them for a number of days, finally, before having any discussion with me of its contents, they caused me treacherously to be seized by trickery and held by the Paris Official. And while I was detained, the said theologians hastened to compel me to repudiate the aforesaid work. By their order, which I confirmed for fear of imprisonment, they caused the work to be reprovved and condemned as containing *temeraria*; finally, after I had regained my freedom and gained the protection of the king, I protested in the hall of the bishop in Paris, as appears in two documents drawn up by master Geoffrey of Chartres, called «Ligatoris», a cleric of the lord king and notary public by apostolic authority³⁶.

The affair was obviously still fresh in his mind, and he may even have had a copy of the *Instrumentum* at hand to remind him of the nickname of the very notary who had drawn it up in October 1300. He begins his narrative with the examination of *De adventu* by the theologians, moves on to his imprisonment by the Paris Official, and concludes with the public condemnation of the work as *temeraria continens*. All this is familiar to us. But notice the language with which Arnau moves from the imprisonment to the condemnation: *dicti theologi festinaverunt, cum detinerer, compellere me ad revocandum opus predictum* («while I was detained, the said theologians hastened to compel me to repudiate the aforesaid work»). It is difficult, if not impossible, to interpret these words as referring to a period of ten months between a detention in December 1299 and a forced repudiation in October 1300, a period during which we know Arnau was free, out of Paris and living between Barcelona and Montpellier; but it is very easy indeed to understand them, according to the «1300 theory», as referring to the brief period in October 1300, perhaps only a day or two, that intervened between Arnau's imprisonment by the Official and his arraignment before the theologians.

With this recognition that December 1299 is deeply suspect as a date for Arnau's imprisonment by the Paris Official, there will be many opportunities for future scholars to look for evidence to disprove it conclusively. For example: was Philippe IV really available in Paris to meet with Arnau in early December? We know that on 6-8 December 1299 Philippe was at Quatrevaux near Tours for a

(36) « Propono... quod cum olim, sedente domino Bonifacio in Ecclesia Romana, presentaverim theologis Parisiensibus quoddam opus, quod fuerat per me scriptum Super tempore adventus antichristi... et, opere presentato atque multis diebus ab eis retento, tandem, priusquam mecum super contentis ibidem habuissent ullam collationem, me fecerunt prodicionaliter et dolose capi et incarcerari per officialem Parisiensem... Dictique theologi festinaverunt, cum detinerer, compellere me ad revocandum opus predictum. Quorum iussioni, cum metu carceris annuissem, fecerunt opus reprobari et condemnari ut temeraria continens; deinde, postmodum recuperata libertate et optenta securitate per dominum regem, protestatus fuero Parisius in aula episcopali, sicut apparent per duo instrumenta facta per magistrum Gaufridum de Carnoto, dictum Ligatoris, clericum domini regis et notarium publicum auctoritate apostolica » (J. PERARNAU I ESPELT, « L' Ars Catholicae Philosophiae... d' Arnau de Vilanova », *ATCA* 10 (1991), p. 215).

meeting with the Emperor Albert³⁷; can it be determined that he returned to Paris immediately, so as to keep alive the possibility – however unlikely – that by 18 December Arnau had had enough time to meet with the king, to carry out the negotiations supposedly entrusted to him by Jaume II, and to organize his departure for Toulouse? Again, we know that the archbishop of Narbonne, Gilles Aycelin, was presiding over a council at Béziers on 30 October 1299³⁸; can it be established that he came back to Paris in time to give a hypothetical support to Arnau six weeks later? If it can be demonstrated that Aycelin, or Nogaret, or any of the other figures mentioned by Arnau in the *Notificatio*, was not in Paris on 18–19 December 1299, it will be the final proof that the story of Arnau’s embassy in that year is merely a myth. But even if direct evidence of this sort is never forthcoming, the indirect evidence presented here seems fully conclusive: Arnau de Vilanova made one embassy to Philippe IV, and one embassy only – in late 1300.

This resolution of the dating problem leads to a historically and psychologically consistent reconstruction of Arnau’s career in the 1290s. In the first years of the decade, as he was launching his teaching in the faculty of medicine at Montpellier, he was composing theological writings – the *Introductio in Librum de semine scripturarum* and the *Allocutio super tetragrammaton* – at the same time that he was beginning to compose a series of treatises on medical theory, and he kept the two interests compartmentalized. His *De intentione medicorum* was written at about the same time as the *Introductio*, ca. 1291, and there is a slight hint of the former work’s defense of a « medical instrumentalism » in the latter, but nothing of the *Introductio*’s Joachimitism is to be seen in his medical writings³⁹. During the remainder of the decade, Arnau composed a number of theoretical medical works – *De dosi tyriacalium medicinarum*, *De consideratione operis medicine*, and *Aphorismi de gradibus* – yet none of these works gives any sign of his theological preoccupations either, not even of the *De adventu antichristi*, which he had certainly finished by 1297⁴⁰.

(37) F. KERN, *Die Anfänge der französischen Ausdehnungspolitik bis zum Jahr 1308*, Tübingen, 1910, p. 205.

(38) The canons of that council, dated 3 kal. Nov. 1299, are printed as « Concilium Provinciale anno M CC XCIX Biterris celebratum sub Aegidio Narbonensi archiepiscopo », in E. MARTÈNE and U. DURAND, *Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum*, Paris, 1717, vol. 4, cols. 225–28.

(39) See M. R. McVAUGH, « Moments of Inflection: The Careers of Arnau de Vilanova », in *Religion and Medicine in the Middle Ages*, ed. P. BILLER and J. ZIEGLER, York, 2001, p. 47–67.

(40) This date is mentioned in an early section of the revised version that Arnau gave to Boniface VIII, and it presumably survives from the earlier redaction; the date 1300 is also given in this work, in material that was subsequently added to reply to the Paris theologians. On this, see ARNALDI DE VILANOVA, *Introductio in Librum de semine scripturarum...*, ed. J. PERARNAU, *Arnaldi de Villanova Opera Theologica Omnia*, Barcelona, 2004, vol. 3, p. 38 n. 47; the text itself has been edited by PERARNAU as an appendix to « El text primitiu del *De mysterio cymbalorum ecclesiae* d’Arnau de Vilanova », *ATCA* 7/8 (1988–89), p. 7–222. In another work, the so-called *Tractatus quidam* that has sometimes been ascribed to Arnau, a different scenario is presented: this text says that, after keeping *De adventu* virtually to himself for seven years, Arnau had circulated it (« divulgavi [et] communicavi ») for roughly four years (« fere per quadrennium ») before showing it to the Parisians; for the passage in question, see J. PERARNAU I ESPELT, « *L’Apologia de versutiis...* d’Arnau de

During these years King Jaume summoned Arnau from Montpellier from time to time to care for the royal household – once in 1293, and then a second time between March and October 1297, when he tended to the health of Queen Blanca before returning to Montpellier⁴¹. I have suggested elsewhere that when the king once more brought Arnau to court, at the end of 1299, it was again to oversee the health of the queen, who was six months pregnant at the time and gave birth to the infanta Constança at the beginning of April 1300⁴². By May of that same year Arnau seems to have been back in Montpellier, putting the finishing touches on a summary of Galen's *De interioribus* that he hoped would make the work more accessible to his students⁴³, but the king had come to appreciate that his physician had talents that went beyond the merely medical and wanted to make wider use of them. Two months later Arnau would receive the king's command to travel to Paris to negotiate with Philippe IV over control of the Vall d'Aran; he would take *De adventu* with him, innocently and unsuspectingly, to show to the theologians there.

Vilanova », *ATCA* 20 (2001), p. 243, lines 1783-1787. We need not believe in Arnau's authorship of the *Tractatus quidam* to wonder whether, even at second hand, it might preserve an accurate picture of the course of events. And indeed, now that we know that the Parisian encounter actually took place in October 1300, the implicit dating of the *Tractatus quidam* proves to be not at all inconsistent with Arnau's own dating to 1297 in *De adventu*: a moment early in 1297 could easily be said to be «roughly four years» before October 1300. The genesis of *De adventu*, according to the *Tractatus quidam*, would then have occurred seven years earlier, in 1290, at about the time that Arnau's other early theological works were being composed; see LERNER, «Ecstatic Dissent», p. 36 and n. 37. However, my point is not to argue for or against the authenticity of the *Tractatus quidam*, but to show that in either case *De adventu* had been finished by 1297.

(41) MARTÍ, « Regesta », docs. 14, 19, 24, 25.

(42) M. McVAUGH, « The Births of the Children of Jaime II », *Medievalia* 6 (1986), p. 10.

(43) This is the inference of Luis García Ballester, which seems to me entirely plausible: see ARNALDI DE VILLANOVA, *Commentum supra tractatum Galieni De malicia complexionis diversi*, ed. L. GARCÍA BALLESTER and E. SÁNCHEZ SALOR, *Arnaldi de Villanova Opera Medica Omnia*, Barcelona, 1985, vol. 15, p. 32.