

Introduction

Alan of Lille's *Liber Parabolarum*, often known as *Doctrinale minus* or *Parvum Doctrinale*, was no doubt an early work, though there have been no credible attempts at a precise dating. It is a collection of sententious comparisons (which in chapter 1 are presented in an initial hexameter) which generate moral maxims (in chapter 1 they are expressed in a following pentameter), grouped according to subject, amounting to 321 distichs in all. These are presented in a quite distinctive arrangement. The collection has six chapters, each of which groups the distichs in sections of predetermined length, whilst the overall allocation of distichs per chapter remains remarkably consistent: the verses are in pairs (distichs) in chapter 1 (56), in fours in chapter 2 (52), in sixes in chapter 3 (51), in eights in chapter 4 (52), in tens in chapter 5 (50), and in sections of a dozen lines in chapter 6 (60). This is not apparent from the text printed in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* 210, cols.579–94, but is clearly indicated in the commentary which is found at the head of each chapter in the French translation which we edit below. Free use is made of classical and Scriptural sources and despite Raynaud de Lage's low estimate of the work,¹ it has to be recognized that it was remarkably popular as a school text, being incorporated into the enlargement of the 'Liber Catonianus' known as the 'Auctores octo morales' where it kept company with the *Disticha Catonis*, *Ecloga Theodoli*, *Facetus*, *Cartula*, the *Tobias* of Matthew of Vendôme, the *Aesop* of Gualterus Anglicus (Anonymus Neveleti) and the *Floretus*.² This important corpus of educational texts remained a standard collection in the humanistic

¹G. Raynaud de Lage, *Alain de Lille: poète du XIII^e siècle* (Montréal / Paris, 1951), pp.15–17.

² See Tony Hunt, *Teaching and Learning Latin in Thirteenth-Century England*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1991), vol. 1, pp. 59–79.

learning of the Renaissance, but by that time several of the individual works had been translated in the vernacular.

The first example of translation of the *Parabola*e is found in a late-thirteenth century compilation from Reading Abbey, now MS London, Lambeth Palace Library 371,³ the later part of which contains a text of the *Disticha Catonis* accompanied by Everard's Anglo-Norman translation, the 'Novus Cato' and the 'Cartula'. Among these, on ff.130va–134ra, is a text of the *Parabola*e up to and including V,3, written in a brown ink.⁴ From the beginning up to and including II,7 the Latin distichs or groups of distichs are followed (with a few exceptions) by an Anglo-Norman prose paraphrase (rather than strict translation) written in red. The content of the distichs has been resumed in Latin marginal summaries which have unfortunately been damaged by cropping of the pages. It is clear that sometimes the Anglo-Norman paraphrase is based on, or influenced by, the Latin summary rather than the text itself. In addition, there are some interlinear variants to the Latin text. It seems fair to say that the vernacular is provided less as an aid to construing the Latin of the *Parabola*e than as a device to ensure adequate comprehension of each distich's moral sense.

Over a century later another French translation, or adaptation, of the *Parabola*e was made and survives in a fifteenth-century manuscript, Paris, BNF f.fr.12478, a paper MS of 291 folios, measuring 290 x 215mm. The MS begins with an anonymous and incomplete translation of Ovid's *Remedia Amoris*, which is followed by the version of the *Ars amatoria* produced by Jacques d'Amiens (fl. late thirteenth century), succeeded by *La Puissance d'amour* of pseudo-Richard de Fournival. The second half of the

³ See A. Coates, *English Medieval Books: the Reading Abbey Collections from Foundation to Dispersal* (Oxford, 1999), p.69 and Appendix F no.65 (p.156).

⁴ See T. Hunt, "Une traduction partielle des *Parabola*e d'Alain de Lille", *Le Moyen Age* 87 (1981), 45–56 and *id.*, "Les Paraboles maistre Alain", *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 21 (1985), [362–75] 363–66.

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MS consists of vernacular versions of certain school texts from the 'Auctores octo', in particular a long translation into octosyllabic couplets, attributed to the minorite Jacquemon Bochet, of the *Ecloga* of 'Theodulus', which occupies ff.90v-248r.⁵ This is followed (ff.249r-68r) by the 'Proverbez d'Alain',⁶ which seems to be the work of a Thomas Maillet (late fourteenth century ?) who was also responsible for the translation of the two *Facetus* texts which complete the manuscript.⁷ The Latin of the *Parabola*e is not transmitted and the translation, running to 1268 lines, matches each line of the original with an octosyllabic couplet, so that in Chapter 6 the 12-line sections of the original are expanded to 24 lines of French. There is no evidence that the translator made use of a gloss or commentary, his main purpose evidently being to replace the Latin and provide a more accessible, vernacular version, perhaps in the process of educating the young.

All of this is quite different from the circumstances of the third translation, which we present below. It is anonymous and dedicated to Charles VIII,⁸ as was Henri Baude's *Eloge de Charles VII* c.1484 (?) and the *Donnet baillé au feu roy Charles huitiesme de ce nom* (1491?) which appeared in the *Jardin de Plaisance* (Vérard: 1501)⁹

⁵ See the excerpts printed by A. Parducci, "Le *Tiaudelet*: traduction française en vers de Theodulus", *Romania* 44 (1915–17), 37–54.

⁶ See my edition forthcoming.

⁷ See J. Morawski, *Le Facet en François. Edition critique des cinq traductions des deux Facetus latins avec introduction, notes et glossaire*, Poznanskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, Prace Komisji Filologicznej tom.II, zeszyt 1 / Société Scientifique de Poznan, Travaux de la commission philologique t.II, fasc.1 (Poznań, 1923).

⁸ On Charles VIII see the studies of Y. Labande-Mailfert, *Charles VIII et son milieu, 1470–98: la jeunesse au pouvoir* (Paris, c.1975) and *Charles VIII: le vouloir et la destinée* (Paris, c.1986). See also A. Denis, *Charles VIII et les Italiens: histoire et mythe* (Genève, 1979).

⁹ See E. Droz & A. Piaget (éd.), *Le Jardin de Plaisance et Fleur de Rhétorique* SATF t.1–2. (Paris, 1925), t.2, pp. 87–90.

and is quite possibly by Molinet. Charles VIII had received a somewhat rudimentary education and was later reputed to have delved into 'livres moraulx et hystoriaulx en langue vulgaire'.¹⁰ The *Paraboles maistre Alain* would have made an appropriate moral guide to the young king. It was published by Antoine Vérard in Paris on March 20, 1492 (1493 new style),¹¹ one of fourteen works published by him that were dedicated to Charles before he addressed his own prologue to the monarch in the *Legende doree* of 1493.¹² The *Paraboles* bears the title *Les Paraboles maistre Alain en Francoys* (f.1), which is followed on f.2 (a ii) with a cut, occupying three quarters of the page, showing the translator presenting his work to his monarch.¹³ Fewer than a dozen copies are known to survive. There are 100 folios and 252 cuts, many of which recur at short intervals and a large number of which (perhaps as many as 197), including the frontispiece, had already been used

¹⁰ The *Donnet* simply takes elementary grammatical concepts as a framework on which to hang a work of regrets for past disorders and frivolities. The work ends 'Ainsi fina le penitent / des accidens du temps passé / ainsi qu'il met en se patent / par les poins qu'il a confessé / lesquelz je me suis appensé / d'escrire en ce livre present / pour en faire ung petit present'.

¹¹ See *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* 1 (Leipzig, 1925), col. 232 (no.509). The colophon is reproduced in A. Claudin, *Histoire de l'imprimerie en France au XVe et au XVIe siècle* t.2 (Paris, 1901; repr. Nendeln, 1976), p.460.

¹² See M.B. Winn, *Anthoine Vérard, Parisian Publisher 1485–1512: Prologues, Poems, and Presentations*, *Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance* CCCXIII (Genève, 1997), pp.46f.

¹³ Reproduced as frontispiece here and in J. MacFarlane, *Antoine Vérard*, London Bibliographical Society Illustrated Monographs VII, Sept. 1900 for 1899 and in H.W. Davies, *Catalogue of a Collection of Early French Books in the Library of C. Fairfax Murray*, pt.1 (London, 1961), p.444 (drawn from the 1506 ed. of the *Lucidaire*). See also M. Munsterberg, "The Parables of Alain de Lille", *The Boston Public Library Quarterly* 7 (1955), 34–42 who mistakenly believes "it is the first French translation of the work" (p.34). Winn, *op. cit.*, p.112 reproduces the frontispiece of the royal copy in Chantilly painted by the Master of Jacques de Besançon.

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in the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* of 1486.¹⁴ Some of the cuts that had already been used are refined in *Les Paraboles* by the addition of background detail missing from earlier prints (compare, for example, ciiii of the *Paraboles* with aa iii [tale 69] of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*).¹⁵

The *mise en page* of Alan's text is of particular significance. The translator's conception of his source is as the work of a theologian rather than of a schoolmaster and he is anxious that the accuracy of his rendering into French should be constantly open to verification:

Et s'il est aucun theologue
Ou autre qui die que je voys
Contre droit de mettre en François
Le livre, honneur sauf il arrogue,
Puis que le François ne desroge
En rien la parole latine,
Ainsi que premier au prologue
Du commentateur je le signe.

Le latin est fort familier,
Mais touteffois se je devie,
General et particulier,
De moy excuser je supplie.

...

¹⁴ The frontispiece was also used in the *Ethiques* and *Politiques* of Aristotle (1488 and 1489), the *Vengeance Notre Seigneur* (1491), *Orose* (1491), *Senèque des motz dorez* (1491), *Josephus de la bataille judaïque* (1492) and a number of later publications, making a total of 18. Cf. Davies, *op. cit.*, p.71 (no.73) and pt.2, pp.898–9 (a selection of cuts).

¹⁵ There are 34 cuts from the *Crescens* (1486) and 2 from *La Marche* (1488).

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Pour servir de texte et de glose,
Affin qu'on ne die que je mens,
Le texte rigmeray; la prose
Je feray selon les commens,
Affin que tous les elemens
De la lettre puisse expliquer
A ceulx qui leurs entendemens
A mes ditz voudront appliquer.
(ll.26–37, 42–9)

After his rather mannered and apologetic verse prologue the translator provides 'le prologue du commentateur' beginning '[C]e livre selon la coustume des clerics peut estre appellé en deux manieres', which is a prose translation of a Latin *accessus*, as we shall see. The work proper begins (a v) with two cuts, side by side, and then the prose commentary to I,1 in French, which is in turn succeeded by *Le texte*,¹⁶ that is, the vernacular rendering of the distich, with the Latin original printed alongside. This pattern is adhered to throughout. The layout¹⁷ seems to serve a number of functions. First, the authority of Alan of Lille is safeguarded by the provision of the Latin original. The fidelity of the vernacular rendering may thus be easily tested, an important desideratum, given the translator's delight in a profusion of metrical patterns which transport us far away from the laconic style of the original.

¹⁶ See for an example the *Catalogue of Books Printed in the XVth Century now in the British Museum* pt.VIII (London, 1949), pp.70-2 (Vérard's type) and illustrations of 'Le texte' in the facsimile edition (XF 117B = the French, and XIIF 90B = the Latin marginal text).

¹⁷ On the classification of layout in German manuscripts involving text and translation cf. N.F. Palmer, "Zum Nebeneinander von Volkssprache und Latein in spätmittelalterlichen Texten" in L. Grenzmann & K. Stackmann (eds.), *Literatur und Laienbildung im Spätmittelalter und in der Reformationszeit: Symposium Wolfenbüttel 1981* (Stuttgart, 1984), pp.579–600.

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Equally important, our reading of the translated distichs is preceded by the commentary which ensures that the didactic import of the distich is well understood first. The versifier's virtuosity may only be safely admired when the moral significance of the text has already been digested. That virtuosity can be appreciated all the more through comparison with the shorter Latin text. This sequence of cuts, commentary, and vernacular text accompanied by the Latin original, thus serves the interests of all three participants: Alan, his translator, and the reader. The correct understanding of the content is assured by the prose commentary in French, whilst the translator's formal achievements are given prominence by easy comparison with the adjoining, more prosaic, Latin. There remains one significant uncertainty and that is the source of the French commentary. Certainly, material is freely borrowed from a known Latin commentary, but there are times when the commentary seems to follow the French verse rendering, which is often considerably amplified compared with the Latin original, whilst at other times it seems to go against the French and adhere closely to the Latin. The author / translator of the French prose commentary is hence not the author of the verse translation.

The anonymous vernacularisation of Alan's *Parabola*e and of the accompanying commentary was reprinted some forty years after V  rard by Denis Janot, with a title page as follows:

LESPARA

*boles de Maistre Alain estudiant
en luniversite de Paris ausquelles
sont comprins plusieurs bons en=
seignem  s prouffitables a ung
chasc le quel Alain conf  =
dit les hereticqs w estoie  t
a Romme qui souste=
noient une erreur c  =
tre la tresacree uni  *

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*de la sainte tri=
nite de para=
dis Nou=
uelle=
mēt*

Imprimees a *Paris*,

* On les vend au premier pilier de
la grand sale du palays en la bou
tique de Denys Janot¹⁸

From 1535 Janot used exclusively the address 'a l'enseigne Saint Jean Baptiste, pres Sainte Geneviefve des Ardents'. His collaboration with J. Longis and P. Sergent, attested in the colophon to *Les Paraboles*,¹⁹ started in 1534, and further evidence concerning initials in the text all point in the same direction, namely that *Les Paraboles* appeared in 1534 or early 1535.²⁰ The text of the translation is identical except for minor orthographical variants. I have listed all variants at the end of my edition. They fall into three categories.

First, Janot has corrected a number of typographical errors in Vérard's edition, the commonest of which is inverted *u* (I,54 *plenrs*,

¹⁸ The italicized words appear in red in the original.

¹⁹ The colophon reads 'Cy finist les paraboles maistre Alain / nouvellement Imprimez par De/nys Janot pour Pierre Ser/gent et Jehan Longis / demourant a / Paris'.

²⁰ On Janot see H. Omont, "Catalogue des éditions françaises de Denys Janot libraire parisien (1529–1545)", *Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France* 25 (1898), 271–96 (prints the catalogue which Janot put out in 1544); Ph. Renouard, *Répertoire des imprimeurs parisiens ...* (Paris, 1965), pp.216–7; S.P.J. Rawles, *Denis Janot, Parisian Printer and Bookseller (fl.1529–1544)*, PhD. diss. Warwick, 1976, 2 vols. I have used the copy of Janot in the British Library (C.97 a.23) which formerly belonged to the author, bibliophile and publisher Edouard Rahir. It is the only complete copy of the three known to exist. The others are Paris, B.N. Rés. Ye 1251 (lacks gathering A) and Beaux-Arts, Masson 268 (lacks G3).

II,8 *gouverner*, II,10 *sonstenir*, III,14 *lorgneil*, IV,11 *sonstenir*; note the converse IV,3 *maius*). In I,53 *semblance*, which does not rhyme, has been corrected to *semblable* and in I,54 *merancolie* has been changed to *melencolie*. *Cer* (III,8) has been corrected to *Car* and the dittography in III,14 (*termes et termes et querele*) has been cleared. In IV,13 *my* has been replaced by *mie* for the sake of the rhyme. In turn, and inevitably, Janot's text exhibits a few typographical errors of its own e.g. *infecnude* for *infecunde* (V,1), *le juste* for *les justes* (I,23), *rour* for *pour* (I,27), *donne* for *donner* (I,28), *querant* for *querent* (I,43), *nuise* for *nuire* (I,45), *fleuuues* for *fleuves* (III,3), *fort* for *soit* (III,4), *tirer* for *tiree* (IV,1).

The second category of errors in Janot results from incorrect expansion of Latin abbreviations in Vêrard e.g. I,24 *iacent munda* > *iacentū muda*; IV,2 *ipē* > *ipem*; V,8 *Syque* (= *semperque*) > *sperv*; V,8 *pr s* (= *patris*) > *prins*; V,10 *Neō* (= *Nemo*) > *Neon*. At III,5 in Vêrard *lucro* is printed with what looks like a *de* monogram, with the result that Janot prints *luced*.

There is a third category of apparent inadvertences. Janot's *estaindre* at l.91 instead of *reffraindre* destroys the repetition of the line from ll.85 and 88. In the commentary to I,20 *monumens du corps* is mistakenly printed for *mouvements du corps*. At III,15 Janot has failed to observe a necessary stanza division, because in Vêrard the second stanza begins on a new page and it was hence not necessary to mark the division by a space. III,16 is printed as a single stanza. At II,20 all the stanzas are run into one, but their identity is preserved by paragraph marks.

Naturally, it is valuable to have Janot's edition as an aid in editing Vêrard. There are some modest differences in the commentary as well as the correction or introduction of misprints as outlined above. At I,18 Janot offers a versified form of the proverb quoted in Vêrard, 'Que coup de langue vault pis / Que coup de lance au pis'. In I,33 Janot replaces 'la verge qui est baston accut denoté par l'esperon' with 'la verge qui est le vray esperon de jeunesse puerille'. The commentary to I,46 has 'le Lacteur'.

Completely changed, however, is the layout. There are only 46 cuts, representing 30 designs. They are often simpler than they are in V  rard. Sometimes they are obviously related to the text e.g. a pig for I,3; a fisherman for I,12 (repeated for I,29); a dog for I,15; a satyr with bow and arrow for I,18; a ship for I,19 (repeated for I,56). After the translator's prologue and the 'prologue du commentateur', the treatment of each distich or group of distichs is arranged as follows: first comes the Latin text, which thus gains in primacy; then, fairly regularly, a single cut (not paired as so often in V  rard); next, *Le texte* i.e. the vernacular translation; finally, the commentary headed 'sens moral'. The latter always begins with a boxed, decorated initial (in V  rard the initials were not entered and only a guide letter remains). The interpretative process promoted by Janot's layout is significantly different, therefore, from that of V  rard's. First, the primacy of the Latin text is restored by its position at the beginning of the textual sequence and by its central placing on the page. The French translation is then taken as an embellishment, both formally and thematically, of the Latin, rather than as a substitute for it. The significance of the *sententiae* is then thoroughly worked out in the prose commentary. As we saw, in V  rard it is the latter which is digested first, even before the original verse text has been read, and the Latin, in smaller type alongside the French translation, remains secondary. Janot's arrangement is the more logical one and perhaps the original one, too, when note is taken of the commentary to I,1, which begins: '[A]insi doncques par les dessusdits vers est monstr   qu'il n'est si scient en tout le monde qui ne soit subject a la mort'. It seems that Janot's work was destined for readers with a greater competence in Latin. In V  rard the cramped position of the Latin text makes it less prominent and accessible, reducing it, perhaps, to a mere guide to the reader's place in the *Parabola*.

The French commentary contains a long prologue based on a Latin model ('Iste liber duobus modis solet nominari ...') which is

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found in many early printed editions of the *Parabola*,²¹ first explaining in the standard scholastic manner the title of the work and the name of the author:

[C]e livre selon la coustume des clerics²² peut estre appellé en deux manieres: l'une *Doctrinal* par la bonne doctrine qui y est contenue, ainsi que en toutes sciences tout livre qui donne ou traicte aucune doctrine prouffitabile aux auditeurs d'icelui peut estre appellé doctrinal, mais cestui nom est commun;²³ l'autre maniere, plus propre et plus speciale, c'est *Alain des Paraboles*; 'Alain' a cause de celui qui le fist, 'des Paraboles' a cause de la matiere qu'il y mist.

The commentary continues with two anecdotes concerning Alan. The first runs as follows:

Et est leu de celui Alain, acteur de ce present livre, que ce fut ung clerc estudiant a Paris, lequel par grace de Dieu, vivacité d'esperit et bonne estude en la science des sept ars liberaulx, avecques ce congneut les lois et les decrets et de la sainte theologie plus que homme qui fust adonc estudiant en ladict

²¹ I have used the texts printed by Wynkyn de Worde: *Parabole Alani cum commento* (1508 [incomplete]) and *Alanus de parabolis, alias Doctrinale altum, cum luculenta glosarum expositione, Londoniis noviter impressus per Wynandum de Worde in parrochia sancte Brigide in vico anglice nuncupato the fletestrete ad signum solis aurei commorantem* (1510). I have occasionally made use of Melchior Lotter's 1512 Leipzig edition, *Alani Proverbia cum exponilibus sentiis diligenter correctis*.

²² The Latin prologue has simply 'secundum quosdam'.

²³ This comment is replaced in the Latin by the observation 'Tamen istud nomen doctrinale appropriatum est isti libro quem composuit magister Alexander de Villa Dei, qui incipit Scribere clericulis etc.'

université de Paris.²⁴ Et bien le monstra, car ung temps fut que celui Alain preschoit ordinairement a Paris et avoit en ses predications tant de gens continuellement que c'estoit une chose merveilleuse. Si advint que une fois ledit Alain en ung de ses sermons promist qu'il prescheroit de la sainte Trinité et monstreroit au peuple comme la distinction des personnes en une mesme deité se devoit entendre, a l'occasion de quoy le peuple de Paris, considerant la haute science de Alain et l'ineestimable matiere dont il leur promettoit preschier, fut plus esmeu et inclin de venir au lieu ou devoit estre fait ce sermon, lequel Dieu ne parmist pas estre faict, car, le jour precedent que maistre Alain deust preschier, il s'en alla pour recreer son entendement et passer temps hors la ville de Paris, tournoient²⁵ le long de la riviere de Sainne,²⁶ et là trouva ung jeune enfant vestu de blanc qui en une cuillier prenoit de l'eau de Sainne et la portoit en une petite fosse qu'il avoit faicte assés loing de là. Et pour ce que le lieu estoit areneux, autant de eau comme le jeune enfant mettoit en la fosse entroit dedens et se depuroit ailleurs sans y arrester, laquelle chose Alain, passant par là, regarda moult admirativement et demanda a l'enfant qu'il avoit en pensee de faire. Et il respondit que son intention estoit de mettre toute l'eau de Sainne et la porter avecques sa cuillier en celle petite fosse. Adonc fut Alain moult esbahy et de rechief demanda comme ce seroit possible. A quoy respondit le jouvenceau et dist: 'Alain, tu me demandes comme il est possible que je mette ceste grande et inestimable riviere dedens la petite fosse que j'ay faicte. Et je te respons qu'il est autant ou mieulx possible a moy de le faire que a toy de acomplir la chose que tu as commencee, c'est assavoir que tu

²⁴ The translator has omitted, perhaps inadvertently, the statement in the Latin that Alan's learning 'proposuit exponere et in aliquem fructum redigere seu explicare'.

²⁵ = tournoiant.

²⁶ The Latin lacks most of the details of Alan's proposed sermon and describes Alan at this stage, 'ipso pergente ad spacium prope quandam ripariam cogitans qualiter opus propositum complere posset'.

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exposes et desclares que c'est de la sainte Trinité qui mesmes a tous saints est incomprehensible'. Adonc Alain, considerant les dits de l'enfant (et) sceut bien que c'estoit une mission de Dieu²⁷ qui lui estoit envoyee, signifieant qu'il ne voullist pas entreprendre si grande euvre comme il avoit encommencee. Et de fait par la grant admiration qu'il eut fut si espouanté, que des lors la fantaisie lui commença troubler. Nonobstant, au jour qu'il avoit assigné au peuple il comparut au lieu dit, entra en chayere, et, comme en maniere de sermon, pour son thesme dist seulement: 'Sufficiat vobis vidisse Alanum', c'est a dire: 'Suffise vous d'avoir veu Alain'. Et adonc il partit de Paris comme tout esperdu, ebeté d'entendement et s'en alla en la haulte Bourgogne en une abbaye nommee de Cistiaux, la ou il fut serviteur pasteur de ouailles²⁸ par l'espace de long temps. Puis par succession, ainsi que Dieu le parmist que les religieux aussi de ladicte abbaye veirent le bon go(n)vernement de lui treshonneste, il fut receu por ung des serviteurs familiers de la maison nommé convers a cause qu'il n'estoit pas droiturierement religieux, mais avoit ung veu seulement, c'est assavoir de obedience.

This anecdote about his sermon on the Trinity is further alluded to in the commentary on IV,10.

There now follows the second anecdote:

Si advint que a Romme fut ung cisme de aucuns heretiques qui voulurent proposer erreur touchant l'union de la sainte Trenité, par quoy le pape qui adoncques estoit manda par toute l'universele chrestienté que les clerics allassent vers lui pour confondre celle heresie. Ainsi le prelat et abbé de ladicte abbaye de Cistiaux, qui ung grant cleric estoit, fut appellé comme les autres, fist ses aprestes

²⁷ This detail is not in the Latin which reports that Alan 'multumque dolens et tristis suam presumptionem sive arrogantiam recognovit'.

²⁸ Latin 'nomine pastor ovium fuit'.

pour partir lors Alain vint devant lui disant: 'Pere abbé, s'il vous plaist, je vous prie que je voise avecques vous a Romme. Longtemps y a que je ne party ceste maison. Par quoy, si c'estoit vostre plaisir, volontiers avecques vous yroye et bien vous y serviroye au mains pour penser [de] voz chevaux'.²⁹ Adonc, l'abbé, voyant que le sens estoit ja aucunement revenu a Alain, consentit que pour ung de ses serviteurs il allast avecques lui. Ainsi, quant ilz vindrent a Romme, là ou fut la congregation des disputateurs faicte en lieu determiné, Alain suivit son maistre jusques au lieu de la porte suppliant que avecques lui le feist entrer, et l'abbé lui respondit qu'il s'en retournast penser des chevaux et que les huissiers et gardes des portes ne le laisseroient pas entrer dedens le lieu de la convention, car il n'y entroit que les prelas. Adonc Alain, inflammé du Saint Esperit, dist que bien vouloit endurer estre batu por entrer et ouyr les disputations. Pour quoy, ainsi que Dieu le voulut, son maistre en entrant l'absconsa de son manteau et entra sans aucun contredit jusques au lieu ou estoient les heretiques soutenans³⁰ erreur contre nostre foy catholique. Et tant avoient probablement disputé contre les chrestiens qu'ilz les avoient confondus quant Alain vint devant son maistre, a genoux demandant licence de disputer et disant: 'Jube domine benedicere', laquelle chose lui refusa son pere abbé jusques a la troisieme fois, que le pape, qui estoit assistent³¹, voiant la perseverance de Alain, luy donna congïé. Adonc Alain en breves paroles commença epilloguer et reduire a memoire toutes les propositions que les heretiques avoient faictes et puis arguer le contraire et le monstrier manifestement, tant que le principal heretique, qui se trouva confondu, commença dire: 'O, tu qui nous as convaincu, il fault que tu soyes Alain ou que tu soyes le diable'. Respondit Alain: 'Je ne suis pas diable, mais Alain'. Lors son maistre abbé voulut deposer

²⁹ Latin 'et bene servam vobis optimeque pensabo de equis'.

³⁰ MS sonstenans.

³¹ = assistant (J).

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sa cappe et dignité pour lui donner, laquelle chose il refusa, mais seulement obtint par la concession du pape qu'il auroit deux escoliers tant seulement qui soubz lui escrioient tous les livres qu'il feroit et la en fist plusieurs, desquelz le premier fut cestui qui commence *A Phebo Phebe* etc. Après par succession de temps il mourut et fut ensevely en la dicte abbaye honnorablement par gens clerks qui bouterent sus sa fosse les mettres ensuivans:

Alanum brevis hora brevi tumulo sepelivit,
Qui duo, qui septem, [qui] totum [scibile scivit],³²
Scire suum mores dare vel retinere nequivit.

Ceux sont les mettres qui pour epitaphe furent mis sus la fosse maistre Alain qui valent autant a dire en François que ceulx cy:

Une breve heure dedans ung bref tumbeau
Ensevelit Alain, lequel conceut
Tous les sept ars et mist en son cerveau
Tout scibile, mais en la fin ne peut
Donner [ou] garder la science qu'il sceut,
Mais touteffois de lui eu nous avons
Plusieurs traictés que bien louer devons.

After these verses on Alan the Latin prologue in the early printed editions concludes with a traditional *accessus*:

Iste liber solet vocari apud literatos De parabolis. Et dicitur parabola a para, quod est iuxta, et bole, sententia, quasi iuxta sententiam. In principio huius libri tria sunt inquirenda: primo, que et quot sunt cause huius libri; secundo, quis est eius titulus; tertio, cui parti philosophie supponit. Quoad primum sciendum est quod

³² The Latin has 'Qui duo, qui septem, totum sibi subdicat orbem'.

quatuor sunt cause huius libri, scilicet efficiens, materialis, formalis et finalis. Causa efficiens fuit magister Alanus de quo superius dictum est. Causa materialis est bona doctrina et parabolarum sive exemplorum positio ut in ipso continetur. Causa formalis est modus procedendi metricus. Causa finalis est duplex .s. grammaticalis et moralis. Causa finalis grammaticalis est ut, perlecto isto libro, multorum significatorum noticiam ac delectationes [var. declinationes] seu modos significandi habeamus. [var. add. Causa finalis moralis est ut, isto libro perlecto, bonis moribus atque virtutibus adhereamus]. Et titulus presentis operis est 'Incipit liber magistri Alani de parabolis' vel sic secundum alios, 'Incipit Doctrinale magistri Alani de parabolis', vel sic, 'Incipiunt parabole magistri Alani'. Cui parti philosophie supponitur distinguendum est quia vel legitur grammaticaliter tamen et sic supponitur philosophie rationali, vel legitur realiter et causa doctrine et sic supponitur philosophie morali. His visis sciendum est quod iste liber dividitur in sex partes sive capitula secundum quod diversimode proceditur. Primum capitulum procedit per versus binos et incipit in principio et durat usque ad illam partem *luctatur*. Secundum capitulum procedit per versus quaternos et incipit ibi *luctatur* et finitur ibi, *non teneas aurum*. Tercium procedit per versus sexternos et incipit ibi *non teneas aurum* et durat usque ibi *non bene pedibus*. Quartum capitulum procedit per octo versus et incipit ibi *non bene* et durat usque ibi *non sunt digna coli*. Quintum [procedit] per versus denos et incipit ibi *non sunt digna* et durat usque ibi *si quis arare*. Sextum capitulum procedit per duodenos versus et incipit ibi *si quis arare* et durat usque ad finem. Quodlibet autem capitulum dividitur in tot partes quot in eodem sunt parabole, ut patebit legendo.

Some of this material is contained in the prose commentary introducing the first quatrain of text (see below).

Les Paraboles begins with a section of translated text ('Le texte') and the original alongside, that is, with a French quatrain and a Latin distich, but these are preceded by prose commentary.

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For each section of text I have sought to record the gist of the commentary in the notes. It will be appreciated from the following example, which precedes the first quatrain, that the style is not economical and does not lend itself to reproduction in full:

[A]insi doncques par les dessusdits vers est monstré qu'il n'est si scient en tout le monde qui ne soit subject a la mort et qu'en la fin l'omme ne peut donner a son successeur la science qu'il a ou la retenir plus que Alain qui sceut toute chose scibile, ainsi que par ses euvres bien appert, desquelles est l'une ceste cy qui commence *A Phebo Phebe*, laquelle se intitule 'Le Livres des Paraboles maistre Alain'. Pourtant que la matiere de cestui livre est reduire sens moral a sens parabolique et figuratif. Et y a six chapitres procedans en diverses manieres de metre. Le premier procede par deux lignes metriques ensemble, le second par quatre, le tiers par six, le quart par huit, le quint par dix, le .vi. par douze. Le premier chapitre qui procede par deux vers commence *A Phebo Phebe* etc., là ou le commentateur dit que l'acteur de cestui livre poursuit son intention disant par similitude que, tout ainsi que la lune prent clarté du soleil, le ignorant doit prendre science du sage. Et ce nous enseigne le poete moral Chaton disant: *Disce sed a doctis indoctos ipse doceto*: Apren et retien la science des sages et enseigne les nonsçavans [*Dist.IV,23a*].