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Peter Abelard. Bibliography on His Ethics and Moral Philosophy

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Bibliography

1. Abadal, Lily M. 2024. "Peter Abelard is not a Proto-Kantian." *Journal of Religious Ethics* no. 5:8–25.
Abstract: "Though there has been much debate about whether Abelard's ethics are dangerously subjective or surprisingly absolutist, one thing is unanimous: they are intentionalist. The goal of this article is to parse out what should be meant by this claim, distancing his ethical account from the popular Kantian appraisal. Though much of the secondary literature on Abelard likens him to Kant, I argue that this is mistaken. For Abelard, an agent's intentions are informed by their affections—whether carnal or spiritual. This becomes clear when contextualizing Abelard's use of intentio with a view to his Commentary on Romans. Using the account of intention I suggest—one nuanced by Abelard's own theological commitments and biblical exegesis—it will be clear that Abelard's ethics is not a case for the moral neutrality of the passions nor an ethic of pure reason."

2. Adams, Marilyn McCord. 1995. "Introduction." In *Peter Abelard Ethical Writings: His Ethics or "Know Yourself" and His Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew and a Christian*, edited by Spade, Paul Vincent. Indianapolis: Hackett.
"The Semantics of 'Good':
Both Philosopher [DPC (297)+(308)] and Christian [DPC (395)-(424)] conclude that order cannot be brought out of the confusion of this topic without clearly distinguishing different ways in which the term 'good' is used.
'Good' (bonum) can occur as a neuter adjective, in which case it can signify a good thing; or as an adjective modifying a noun (a good F), in which case the criteria for goodness vary with the noun in question; or as modifying the occurrences of things or states of affairs (it is good that p). The Christian offers [D1] and [D3] explicitly, [D2] by implication:
(D1.1) a good thing = that which, while it's fit for some use, mustn't impede the advantage or worthiness of anything [DPC (397)];
(D1.2) an evil thing = that which either is unfit for some use or impedes the advantage or worthiness of something or both [DPC (397)];
(D1.3) an indifferent thing = a thing that's neither good nor evil = a thing such that no good is necessarily delayed or impeded by its existence [DPC (397)].
(D2) a good F = an exemplary member or version of F-kind [DPC (396)].
(D3) it is good that p = it is necessary for filling out some optimal arrangement of God's even if that arrangement is completely hidden from us [DPC (421)]." (p. XV)
References
DPC = Dialogus inter Philosophum, Iudaeum et Christianum.

3. Allen, Julie Anna. 1996. *A Commentary on the Second Collatio of Peter Abailard's "Dialogus": It's the Thought That Counts*, University of Toronto, Toronto. Unpublished Ph.D dissertation.
Abstract: "This dissertation is a critical analysis of Peter Abailard's account of the supreme good. Abailard develops a forceful and innovative account of goodness and evil in the second *collatio* of the *Dialogue of a Philosopher with a Christian and a Jew*. In the Introductory Chapter I discuss the interpretative obstacles which a student of the *Dialogue* must overcome. Chapters one through three follow Abailard's attempt to develop a definitive position on the supreme good of man. The second *collatio* features two transitory positions and a final doctrine which I identify and discuss in detail. These are: the Original Philosophic position, the Pseudo-Christian position and the Christian position. Each transitory position is critically debated by the *Dialogue*'s characters. Abailard levies three criticisms against the original philosophic position. First, he maintains that this view inappropriately locates the supreme good in this life. Second, he rejects the claim that virtue is an end in itself and finally, he rejects the Stoic's absolute conception of "goodness". The "Pseudo-Christian position" is rejected because it identifies the supreme evil as punishment and this claim generates an insurmountable difficulty. These objections direct the plot of the *Dialogue*, they highlight main areas of contention between classical and Christian conceptions of goodness and they inform Abailard's own account. According to Abailard, the supreme good is ever-increasing love of God and this end is attained by loving God. The supreme evil is a degenerative and unrelenting hatred of God and sinners are damned for the fault of contempt. Abailard's ultimate position is not a complete departure from the views of the pagan philosophers. Rather, Abailard imposes a series of modifications and clarifications upon classical positions. This process culminates in a doctrine which is uniquely Abailard's but it is one which, nonetheless, bears a wide variety of family resemblances. In Chapter Four, I subject the final "Christian Position" to both an internal and an external assessment and I conclude by considering the relationship between Abailard's account of the supreme good and evil in the *Dialogue* and his account of sin in the *Ethics*."

4. ———. 1998. "On the Dating of Abailard's *Dialogus*: A Reply to Mews." *Vivarium* no. 36:135–151.
"Abailard's corpus contains only two short works which deal specifically with the subject of ethics.
These primary texts are: *Dialogus inter Philosophum, Judaeum et Christianum*, and *Scito Teipsum*, which is also known and referred to as the *Ethica*. A natural and perhaps fruitful approach to the study of Abailard's moral philosophy would be to assess the development of his thought based upon a clear understanding of the sequence in which he issued these works. Unfortunately, as I will argue, this approach is not available to us in Abailard's case. The mysteries surrounding the overall chronology of his writings are ones which continue to resist solution. As Marilyn McCord Adams notes: 'the precise chronology of [Abailard's] works remains a vexed question for several reasons: their author repeatedly revised them; not many manuscripts remain; and Abailard's own cross referencing is ambiguous.'(2)." (p. 135)
(...)
"An acceptance of Mews' early placement of the *Dialogus* within the general chronology of Abailard's works generates a number of serious problems. Primarily, Mews' timetable fails to acknowledge the extent to which Abailard's conception of sin in the *Dialogus* surpasses the account presented in the *Commentaria*. If Mews is right, then Abailard wrote the *Dialogus* before the *Commentaria* which was also prior to the *Ethica*. If that is right, then we will be forced to conclude that Abailard reverted to defin ing sin as a bad will in the *Commentaria* after clearly arguing against this view in the *Dialogus.* Thus, the text itself provides grounds for rejecting Mews' most recent suggestion.

Only one conclusion clearly emerges from our survey of conflicting evidence. A definitive case has not been made for either side of the traditional debate. There are considerations which corroborate Robert and Thomas' arguments in favour of a date follow ing the council of Sens, just prior to Abailard's death in 1142. On the other hand, the many and varied parallels between the later portions of the *Dialogus* and Abailard's moral positions in the *Ethica* support Buytaert and Luscombe's suggestions that the two works were produced in close proximity." (p. 151)
(2) Marilyn McCord Adams, *Introduction* to *Peter Abelard, Ethical Writings: His Ethics or 'Know Thyself' and His Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew and a Christian*, trans. Paul Spade, Indianapolis 1995, viii.

5. Bejczy, István. 2003. "Deeds Without Value: exploring a Weak Spot in Abelard's Ethics." *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* no. 70:1–21.
Abstract: "In his ethical writings Peter Abelard declared the accomplishment of good deeds irrelevant to a person’s merit. Also, he denied that acts had any moral value in themselves. The article argues that both theses are contradicted by the purport of Abelard’s ethical teaching. If the opportunity to act is present, good intentions must be followed by good deeds in order not to lose their meritorious character. Moreover, the intrinsic morality of intended acts determines the morality of human intentions, whereas the moral evaluation of these acts determines whether consenting to them is sinful. Good acts can become neutral or bad on account of improper intentions, but evil deeds always retain their evil character. In the early-twentieth-century debate on Abelard’s alleged moral subjectivism, both sides appear to have been at fault to a certain degree. Those who charged Abelard with subjectivism mistook his theses on the indifference of human actions for the essence of his ethical teaching. Those who defended Abelard against the said charge have pointed to his use of objective criteria of right and wrong either with regard to intentions or with regard to deeds. In the first case, they did not notice that Abelard’s notion of objectively right or wrong intentions implies a judgment on the intrinsic moral value of material deeds; in the second case, they failed to account for the inconsistency with Abelard’s theses on the moral indifference of human actions."

6. Berges, Sandrine. 2013. "Rethinking Twelfth Century Ethics: the Contribution of Heloise." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* no. 21:667–687.
Abstract: "Twelfth-century ethics is commonly thought of as following a stoic influence rather than an Aristotelian one. It is also assumed that these two schools are widely different, in particular with regards to the social aspect of the virtuous life. In this paper I argue that this picture is misleading and that Heloise of Argenteuil recognized that stoic ethics did not entail isolation but could be played out in a social context. I argue that her philosophical contribution does not end there, but that she departs from both the stoics and her teacher, Abelard, in her defence of the ideal of moderation. By insisting that virtue must strike a mean between two extremes, she shows that Aristotelian virtue ethics were present in the intellectual life of the twelfth century."

7. De Siano, Frank. 1971. "Of God and Man: Consequences of Abelard's Ethic." *The Thomist* no. 35:631–660.
"Ethics is a suitable starting-point for investigating the interrelationship between God and man in Peter Abelard. Ethics must attempt to determine man's moral responsibility, and this responsibility must entail a certain autonomy on man's part. Autonomy means that man has an authentic role in determining his actions and the moral quality o£ his actions according to a consistent structure. This raises the question, however, in a Christian context, about the relationship between man's autonomy and God's autonomy.
How does man's activity fit into God's activity in the world? How does man's determination o£ the good relate to God's ultimate determination of the good? Does God's ultimate autonomy leave room for man? Finally, does man's autonomy restrict the autonomy of God?" (p. 631)

8. Decosimo, David. 2018. "Sin, Consent, and Apparent Confusion in Abelard's *Ethica*." *The Journal of Religion* no. 98:29–58.
"Even after decades of renewed interest in Abelard's work, our grasp of *Ethica* and its central concepts remains somewhat imprecise.
Broadly speaking, two approaches dominate. Sometimes explicitly—occasionally without noting their departure—interpreters "place . . . words on [his] lips," offering rational reconstructions that put aside the messiest details of an already messy text. Often these reformulations involve comparison with Kantian ethics. Frequently, they gloss over passages that directly challenge their claims or that suggest that matters are more complicated than they are letting on. While these discussions are important and philosophically interesting, they are of limited help in deciphering what exactly Abelard meant. The primary alternative to such rational reconstruction neglects the same issues for different reasons. Deeply valuable, this culturally sensitive, historically detailed work typically addresses Abelard's ethics in relation to broader social themes—interiority, selfhood, "ethics as poetry." Understandably, parsing the minute details of the *consensus-voluntas* relation is not its interest. Finally, even work like John Marenbon's, which does centrally seek to address the fine-grained details of Abelard's moral thought on its own terms, still tends to neglect some of the most vexing difficulties and ostensible contradictions at the text's core—or so I argue.
This article aims to address these difficulties head on. I elucidate Abelard's conceptions of sin (*peccatum*) and consent (consensus), the central concepts of his principal ethical work and his primary contribution to medieval moral thought, and examine their relations in the *Ethics*. I especially consider formulations related to those conceptions that seem contradictory, confusing, or otherwise problematic. Beyond clarifying these difficulties, I aim to solidify—and in some cases correct—our overall understanding of the notions of sin and consent at the heart of Abelard's moral thought. I begin by sketching those notions before turning to these concepts and the complex passages that relate to them—but first a word on Abelard's context." (p. 31, notes omitted)

9. Duran, Jane. 2011. "Heloise: A Christian View on Ethics and Love." *New Blackfriars* no. 92:35–45.
Abstract: "The writings of Heloise are examined for their philosophical content, with special reference to the notions of friendship and love. The work of Mews, Dronke, Clanchy and others is cited, and it is concluded that Heloise's gifts as a writer and thinker have been overlooked and merit more careful examination."

10. Findley, Brooke Heidenreich. 2005. "Sincere hypocrisy and the authorial persona in the letters of Heloise." *Romance Notes* no. 45:281–292.
"This article will examine Heloise's use of what is for her a particularly crucial opposition, that between hypocrisy and sincerity.(3) In her letters, Heloise repeatedly examines her own sincerity and hypocrisy, ultimately refusing to decide between the two and embracing the identity of the "sincere hypocrite." Heloise's dismantling of the sincerity-hypocrisy pair is an example of the rhetorical strategy that Kamuf has described, but I believe its particular interest lies in the light that it can shed on the construction of Heloise's authorial persona. By simultaneously calling attention to her own sincerity and casting it into doubt, Heloise also privileges and interrogates the link between self and words.
Her discourse of sincere hypocrisy draws readers towards an imagined author even as it suggests that this seductive figure may be unreliable and illusory. In this case, the basilisk facing readers of Heloise's letters turns out to be the paradoxical authorial persona of Heloise herself." (p. 282)
(3) Kamuf does not include this pair in her analysis. However, she does discuss Heloise's hypocrisy claim, stating that it "formalizes [the] instability without reducing it," in other words, that it embodies a contradiction of the type Heloise has been discussing all along, here in the form of an irreducible incongruity between appearance and reality (23). Kamuf's observation is accurate; however, as I believe this essay will show, much more can be said on the subject.

References

Kamuf, Peggy. Fictions of Feminine Desire: Disclosures of Heloise. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982.

11. ———. 2006. "Does the Habit Make the Nun? A Case Study of Heloise's Influence on Abelard's Ethical Philosophy." *Vivarium* no. 44:248–275.
Abstract: "A careful reading of Heloise's letters reveals both her contribution to Abelard's ethical thought and the differences between her ethical concerns and his. In her letters, Heloise focuses on the innate moral qualities of the inner person or animus. Hypocrisy—the misrepresentation of the inner person through false outer appearance, exemplified by the potentially deceitful religious habit or habitus—is a matter of great moral concern to her. When Abelard responds to Heloise's ideas, first in his letters to her and later in his Collationes and Scito te ipsum, he turns the discussion away from her original interests. He transforms her metaphor of the habitus as false appearance into a discussion of another type of habitus, the habitual process of acquiring virtue, and integrates her focus on the animus into his developing ideas about sin as intention. Examining the differences between Heloise's ethical thought and Abelard's allows us to appreciate the distinct contributions of both."

12. Godman, Peter. 2009. *Paradoxes of Conscience in the High Middle Ages: Abelard, Heloise, and the Archpoet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
"Fictio does not mean ‘fiction’. Rather theological than literary, this term signifies feigning and falsification of conscience, particularly in penance.
Penance was given the status of a sacrament during the twelfth century, and confession was regarded as a test of spiritual authenticity and religious sincerity.
A travesty of both, at the moment when sinners were expected to be truest to God and to themselves, fictio challenged the ethical imagination of Latin Europe. That challenge found a response in the works of Abelard, Heloise, and the Archpoet. Usually considered separately from one another, in terms of such harmless but unhelpful anachronisms as ‘individuality’ or ‘renaissance’, all three of them reflected on issues of moral identity posed by feigning and falsification of conscience. Because the morality to which Abelard and Heloise subscribed was, or became, monastic, their reflection also led them to allied problems of lying, dissimulation, and hypocrisy in a religious context. In the very different context of a German schismatic’s court, opposed to Rome and hostile to monks, the Archpoet took fictio to its limit. There the dividing-line between irony and blasphemy blurred. With a refined wit directed against ethical concerns of the previous generation, this feigned penitent, in his ‘confession’, created a new figure of spiritual sophistry,"
(Preface and acknowledgements, pp. IX-X)

13. Griffioen, Amber L. 2007. "“In Accordance with the Law”: Reconciling Divine and Civil Law in Abelard." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* no. 81:307–321.
Abstract: "In the *Ethics*, Abelard discusses the example of a judge who knowingly convicts an innocent defendant. He claims that this judge does rightly when he punishes the innocent man to the full extent of the law. Yet this claim seems counterintuitive, and, at first glance, contrary to Abelard’s own ethical system. Nevertheless, I argue that Abelard’s ethical system cannot be viewed as completely subjective, since the rightness of an individual act of consent is grounded in objective standards established by God. Likewise, any particular civil government must derive its authority objectively from the natural and/or Christian laws, which ground its possibility and function. In this paper, I examine Abelard’s explication of the natural law, discoverable through reason, and the divine laws, knowable only through revelation, in order to explore what form an adequate civil law would have to take under which the judge could be said to have acted rightly."

14. Hamelin, Guy. 2021. "Abelard and the Contemporary Virtue Theory." *Doispontos* no. 18:31–44.
Abstract: "Contemporary ‘Virtue theory’ emphasizes the need to return to the moral formation of the individual, following the ethical model provided by Aristotle.

According to MacIntyre, an important representative of this theory, Stoicism favored the development of modern and contemporary ethics by highlighting notions such as will, consent, and natural or divine law. The development of the moral agent itself was consequently neglected. In the twelfth century Abelard presents a hybrid ethics, which maintains at the same time the Aristotelian theory of virtue and elements of Stoic morality. In the present study, we consider MacIntyre's criticism of Abelardian ethics, estimated to be at the origin of modern and contemporary moral conceptions."

15. Hoffmann, Tobias. 2003. "Moral Action as Human Action: End and Object in Aquinas in Comparison with Abelard, Lombard, Albert, and Scotus." *The Thomist* no. 67:73–94.
"The purpose of this paper is to show how Aquinas develops an ethic that puts the agent at the center of morality, by considering the end as the chief factor in moral actions. Consequently, at its very foundation, Aquinas's moral theory understands moral action as human action. By contrast, if ethics focuses primarily on the object and considers the end an accidental feature of the act, it threatens to limit itself to the question of what is allowed and what is not. Yet each person desires to know primarily why to do things rather than what to do. When I know why to do something, I then become interested in what is the most fitting action to accomplish the end.
In addition to looking at Aquinas, I will consider Abelard, Lombard, Albert, and Duns Scotus-partly in order to put Aquinas's account into its historical context and partly in order to
contrast the differences between them and Aquinas.**"** (p. 74)
(...)
"The true difficulty of Abelard's account is not his alleged subjectivism, but rather the fact that he defines the objective value of actions on the basis of the intention alone. This has two
problematic consequences: first, Abelard says little about what actions are in fact to be done or to be avoided; second, he overcharges the notion of intention by demanding that it not only consist of a good motivation, but that it also contain the right assessment of what is to be done, in accord with God's will.(8)
Abelard clearly focuses on the agent, and secondarily on the action; when he discusses the moral character of actions. The moral value of actions arises from the will. Yet his account of how it extends from the will to the entire spectrum of morally relevant acts (i.e., other mental acts and external acts) is problematic." (p. 77)
(8) Perkams, *Liebe als 'Zentralbegriff der Ethik nach Peter Abaelard*, [Münster: Aschendorff 2001] 326.

16. Holopainen, Taina M. 2014. "Intentions and Conscious Moral Choices in Peter Abelard's *Know Yourself*." In *Rethinking Abelard: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Hellemans, Babette, 213–229. Leiden: Brill.
"Peter Abelard was a remarkable twelfth-century promoter of ethical thought. Two of his works are dedicated to ethics. The earlier one is the Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian, also known as the Collationes, and composed some time between 1123 and 1135. The work consists of an imaginary dialogue, one in which none of the characters directly represents Abelard's own position but through which it becomes clear that Abelard had a high appreciation of philosophical ethics.(1) The later of Abelard's works on ethics is the treatise Scito te ipsum or Know Yourself, also called the Ethica or Ethics.(2) The book is undoubtedly one of the most important early medieval works in theological or philosophical ethics. In the following article my discussion on Abelard's idea of moral action will be based on this work. Abelard wrote his Ethics around the year 1138, only a few years before his death in 1142. The treatise was meant to consist of two books, of which the first was to discuss morally bad acts, or sin, and the second morally good acts. Only the first book has come down to us in full; we have just the very beginning of the second. Therefore the examples available mainly deal with

morally bad acts. My topic, however, focuses on the role of intention in morally relevant action and therefore takes into account both morally good and morally bad acts." (p. 213, a note omitted)
(1) Coll., ed. and trans. Orlandi and Marenbon.
(2) Sc., ed. Ilgner (2001); and Sc., ed., trans., and notes Luscombe (1971). The references are to Ilgner's edition of the Sc., unless otherwise indicated. Both Sc. and Coll. are available in P. V. Spade, trans., Ethical Writings: His "Ethics" or "Know Yourself" and His "Dialogue Between a Philosopher, a Jew and a Christian," intro. Marilyn McCord Adams (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1995).

17. Kemeny, Paul C. 1991. "Peter Abelard: An Examination of His Doctrine of Original Sin." *The Journal of Religious History* no. 16:374–386.
"Peter Abelard's *Scito te ipsum* (*Know Thyself*) or *Ethics* is a significant contribution to the development of ethics in the twelfth-century renaissance. The most widely noted aspect of the treatise is his definition of actual sin. For Abelard, sin is consent to evil or contempt of God. Often overlooked, however, is Abelard's conception of original sin. Abelard departed from the traditional Augustinian conception by denying that the guilt (*culpa*) of the foreparents is transmitted to their posterity. He also held that this inherited original sin lacked concupiscence and ignorance. Moreover, his moralistic emphasis on human responsibility echoes a similar one in Augustine's famous adversary, Pelagius. The question arises: is Abelard's doctine of original sin Pelagian?(1) This examination will answer the question by first determining Abelard's exact doctrine, comparing it with that of Pelagianism and Augustinianism and then determining the reason(s) why Abelard held this position." (p. 374)
(1) Abelard had indirect access to Pelagius' writings through Augustine's anti-Pelagian writings.

18. King, Peter. 1995. "Abelard's Intentionalist Ethics." *The Modern Schoolman* no. 72:213–231.
"Abelard's ethical theory, as presented in his Ethics, is a version of what I'll call 'intentionalism': the view that the agent's intention determines the moral worth of an action.
Now even in Abelard's day, the common understanding of morality(2) seemed to endorse the following principle:
(P) An agent should intend to ' only if bringing about ' would be good.
But Abelard replaces (P) with its obverse, a principle he identifies as the rational core imbedded in traditional Christian moral teaching:
(P*) An agent should bring about ' only if intending to ' would be good.
Abelard's arguments against (P) and in support of (P*) are remarkably similar to those given by the most famous exponent of intentionalism: Kant.
For Kant's ethical theory, especially as he presents in the first section of the Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, identifies (P*) as the philosophical conception corresponding to the "common rational knowledge of morals." Abelard and Kant locate moral worth in features of the way the agent conceptualizes her performances, and each thinks that goodness is characterizable in terms of the form such conceptualization takes. Both are deeply indebted to Stoic ethics, familiar to each largely through Seneca's letters, and they share a common project: 'christianizing' Stoic metaethics so that the classical equation of virtue with happiness is revised to leave room for God and the Afterlife.
I'll proceed as follows. In §1, Abelard's arguments against (P) will be canvassed. In §2, I'll look at his arguments in favor of (P*) and a 'mediæval categorical imperative'. In §3, a comparison with Kant's intentionalism should make the virtues of Abelard's theory apparent. In §4, I'll discuss Abelard's failed attempt to baptize Stoicism. Finally, by way of conclusion, I'll offer a suggestion about why intentionalism, in any of its versions, is an ethical theory to take seriously." (pp. 213-214, two notes omitted)
(2) Despite widespread agreement on particular normative principles in Abelard's time, derived from the Bible, and despite the then-current view that education dealt

with the formation of the moral character of the student, there was no systematic treatise on ethics. The Church Fathers wrote about theological virtues and their role with regard to grace and salvation, but not about systematic ethics; Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* would not be translated for another century; the epistles of Seneca, who in the twelfth century was mistakenly believed to be a correspondent of St. Paul (and so a crypto-christian), offered a full range of moral advice with only the sketchiest of hints about their underlying theoretical structure. Abelard's accomplishment is all the more impressive in this light.

19. Luscombe, David Edward. 1965. "Towards a new edition of Peter Abelard's Ethica or "Scito te ipsum": An introduction to the manuscripts." *Vivarium* no. 3:115–127.
"The purpose of the present article is to introduce the known MSS of Abelard's Ethica. Five copies made before içoo are known at present." (p. 118)
(...)
"This is not the place to dwell on the significance of Abelard *Ethica* in the history of ethics. But if, as all now agree, it represents a great moment in the development of medieval ethical thought, then the lack of a larger number of surviving MSS may seem disappointing. From the twelfth century itself only two copies survive and nowhere in modern France can a copy from any medieval century be found today. The survival or loss of MSS is, however, largely a matter of hazard. The *Ethica,* moreover, did not belong to the class of work which became indispensable in the schools, in the manner of the Sentences of the Lombard or the Decretum of Gratian. It was a personal and provocative treatise, which contained uncommon theological opinions and in which ethics was considered as a subject set apart from other kinds of theological enquiry. It neither sought to compile systematically all the materials needed for ethical discussion nor to integrate moral theology with the other branches of contemporary theological enquiry." (p. 126)
(...)
"Nonetheless, the scarcity of surviving twelfth century copies is a fact. No less remarkable, however, is the fact of survivals from later centuries. The three copies of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries testify to the appeal made by the work some two or three hundred years after the impulses which had promoted the early scholastic theological movement had changed." (p. 127)

20. ———. 1971. "Peter Abelard and Twelfth-Century Ethics." In *Peter Abelard' Ethics*, edited by Luscombe, David Edward, XIII–XXXVII. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
"Ethics had found no place among the seven liberal arts as they were described in the programmes of Boethius, Cassiodore, and Isidore. In the twelfth century attempts were made to find a place for it in systems of teaching. Some writers, such as Honorius of Autun, Stephen of Tournai, and Godfrey of Saint-Victor, freely appended ethics to the end of the list of the seven arts.(1) Hugh of Saint-Victor sandwiched it, as a part of practical philosophy, between logic (grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric) and theoretical philosophy (theology, physics, and mathematics).(2) William of Conches advised that after a student had studied eloquence (grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric) and before he approached theoretical philosophy (the study of corporeal beings in mathematics and physics and of incorporeal beings in theology) he should be instructed in practical philosophy, in ethics, economics, and politics.(3)" (p. XVIII)
(1) Cf. P. Delhaye, '"Grammatica" et "Ethica" au XII• siècle', Recherches de théologie ancienne et médIévale, xxv (1958), 59-110 here pp. 61-7.
(2) Didascalicon, vi. 14.(PL 176. 809-10). Cf. P. Delhaye, 'L'enseignement de la philosophie morale au XII siècle', Medieval Studies, xi (1949), 77-99, here p. 77.
(3) 'Des commentaires inedits de Guillaume de Conches et de Nicolas Triveth sur la Consolation de Boèce', ed. C. Jourdain in Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque imperiale, xx. 2 (1862), 74. Cf. P. Delhaye, 'L'enseignement de la philosophie morale', p. 77, and id., 'La place de l'éthique parmi !es disciplines scientifiques au XII siècle' in Méelanges E. D. Arthur Janssen, Bibliotheca

Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, series i, vol. 2 (Louvain, 1948), pp. 29-44, here p. 37.

21. ———. 1974. "The Ethics of Abelard: Some Further Considerations." In *Peter Abelard: Proceedings of the International Conference: Louvain, May 10-12, 1971*, edited by Buytaert, Eligius M., 65–84. Leuven: University Press.
"My purpose in this paper is to offer some considerations of the *Ethics* which both amplify and modify what I wrote in the introduction to my published edition of this work(1)." (p. 65)
(...)
"The *Ethics* presents therefore an apparent paradox. On the one hand Abelard seems to curtail ecclesiastical power by arguing that sins are remitted at the moment of contrition and not in confession, and by arguing that the power of the keys cannot be used by all bishops to remit sins but merely to declare with uncertaio accuracy who has been bound in sin and who loosed from it by God.
Throughout the Ethics Abelard always emphasises the role of a man·sself-conscious decisions either to hold God in contempt by consenting to evil or to obey him and thereby to win merit, and he always emphasises God's unique capacity to judge certainly the minds of men. Yet Abelard retains an important role for human authority whether ecclesiastical or Jay. The sacerdotal function is to uphold and to teach divine Law, and to impose, with discernment and with knowledge of canon law, works of satisfaction upon those thought to have been in sin. Human judges may err but even their mistakes must be upheld. Abelard writes with scant respect in his *Ethics* of the prelates and nobles of France. But his hope is that they be made less corrupt, Jess ignorant and more discerning.
Abelard writes in his Ethics both as philosopher and as social reformer. Know thyself is also an appeal to know others.
As a book. however, the *Ethics* does not seem to have become much known. lt was not replete with that wealth of practical detail and of engaging anecdote which was later to enable the writings of Peter the Chanter to enjoy great popularity. lt seems to have been unfinished and was certainly felt to be unorthodox. Jt could not serve as a text-book in the schools because it was too polemical and untraditional. Yet it made a mark, for the discussions of the masters who were prominent in Paris after its publication reflect the sharpness of its impact." (p. 84)
(1) *Peter Abelard's Ethics. An edition with introduction, English translatiion and notes*. Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, Clarendon Press. 1971).

22. Lutz-Bachmann, Matthias. 1995. "Modern Aspects of Peter Abelard's Philosophical Ethics." *The European Legacy* no. 72:201–211.
"My purpose in this paper is to show some aspects of Peter Abelard's ethics which are still relevant for ethical debate today. Therefore I have titled my paper: "Modern Aspects of Peter Abelard's Philosophical Ethics." I want to carry out my intention in three steps. First I have to answer the question of whether or not we are allowed to speak of a philosophical ethics in the original meaning of the word "philosophy." In asking this question I know that I presuppose a way of looking at a problem which would not have been true for the twelfth century. Nevertheless I suppose that we can find clues about Abelard's position in that question. Secondly I shall give you a short summary of the philosophical elements in Peter Abelard's ethics. Doing this I refer to one of the last texts of Abelard, i.e., his *Dialogus inter Philosophum, Judaeum et Christianum*.(1) Thirdly I want to present the modern aspects of Abelard's philosophical ethics. In comparison with Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason,* we are able to demonstrate the relevance of Peter Abelard, who with good reason has been called by Marie Dominique Chenu "le premier homme moderne"." (p. 201)
(1) Petrus Abaelardus, *Dialogus inter Philosophum, ludaeum et Christianum*, ed. R. Thomas, Stuttgart — Bad Cannstatt 1970.

23. Mann, William E. 2003. "Happiness, Reason, and Sin in Abelard’s Ethics." In *Rationality and Happiness: From the Ancients to the Early Medievals*, edited by

Liu, Jiyuan and Gracia, Jorge J. E., 217–237. Rochester NY: University of Rochester Press.

"According to that eminent Victorian moralist, Henry Sidgwick, "A man's future good on the whole is what he would now desire and seek on the whole if all the consequences of all the different lines of conduct open to him were accurately foreseen and adequately realized in imagination at the present point of time."(2) Sidgwick's definition is a classic expression of the desire-satisfaction theory of a person's good. The theory supposes that there is nothing to the conception of a person's good apart from what would satisfy that person's desires. But not just any actual desire or suite of actual desires will count. A person's desires must be subjected to the test of vivid foreknowledge of alternative possibilities: without this requirement, a person might come to regret the fulfillment of impulsive or incapacitating desires." (p. 217)

(...)

"Summing up. I began by pointing to a limitation, from the point of view of Christian eschatology, of the desire-satisfaction theory of a person's good. We are not now cognitively equipped to assess "all the consequences of all the different lines of conduct" open to us, as Sidgwick's definition requires. The limitation is not due simply to the combinatorial explosion involved in computing all the consequences. It is rather that the outcome of one line of conduct open to us is a state—indeed, the best state, according to the likes of Abelard—that only beings holding a cognitive advantage over us can appreciate. We can become those beings, not by disciplining our intellect, however, but by conforming our will, through love, to God's will. In the process, Abelard claims that we can manage, although only with great difficulty, to avoid all sins, as long as "sin" is understood properly, as contempt of God (Ethics 68:19-21; Ethics133). But we see all of this in a glass, darkly. A partisan of Christian eschatology might say that even if Sidgwick's definition is correct, it can only be appreciated sub specie aeternitatis. Exactly so." (p. 235)

(2) . H. Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, 7th ed. (1907; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1966), 111-12. Sidgwick's theory is adopted in modified form by J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), chap. 7. For criticisms of the theory see R. M. Adams, *Finite and Infinite Goods* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 84-93.

24. ———. 2004. "Ethics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Abelard*, edited by Brower, Jeffrey E. and Guilfoy, Kevin, 279–304. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

"Peter Abelard's contributions to ethics are concentrated in two works, his *Ethics* (or *Scito te Ipsum*) and his *Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian* (or Collationes). There are ethical insights to be found scattered elsewhere in his works, but for the sustained presentation of an ethical theory, one can only turn to these two works. The *Dialogue* is actually two dialogues, one between a philosopher and a Jew, the other between the philosopher and a Christian, debating the relative merits of pagan philosophy, Judaism, and Christianity. The *Ethics* concentrates on the development of a distinctively Christian ethical theory. It was to have consisted of two books.

The unfinished second book of the *Ethics* begins with a description of what Abelard takes himself to have accomplished in the first book, namely, the provision of an understanding of what sins are, how they are rectified, and how they differ from vices (*Sc*. 128.1–4; Spade 1995, 226). The second book was supposed to have taken up the topic of what it is to do good, or, as he prefers to put it in his more careful moments, what it is to do well (Coll. 163.3229–3230; Spade 1995, 404). The text was abandoned after one page." (p. 279, a note omitted)

References

Spade, P. V., 1995. Peter Abelard, *Ethical Writings: His Ethics or "Know Yourself" and his Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian.* Indianapolis: Hackett.

25. Marenbon, John. 1992. "Abelard's ethical theory: two definitions from the *Collationes*." In *From Athens to Chartres: Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought: Studies in Honour of Edouard Jeauneau*, edited by Westra, Haijo Jan, 301–314. Leiden: Brill.
Reprinted as Essay XI in: John Marenbon, *Aristotelian Logic, Platonism, and the Context of Early Medieval Philosophy in the West*, Aldershot: Ashgate 2000.
"Although the best modern discussions of his ethics examine a much wider range of Abelard's writings, they do so in order to throw light on the ideas about sin, intention and consent which are treated in greatest detail in *Scito teipsum*. Is this emphasis justified? *Scito teipsum* is (at least in surviving manuscripts) an unfinished work: the first book, dealing with sin, is complete, but only the opening paragraphs of the second, about virtue, are extant. Abelard's writings as a whole present a different, more complex picture of his ethics, in which the notions of sin, intention and consent no longer dominate, but are seen within a broader structure of moral concepts. The aim of the following pages is to give a glimpse of this wider and richer ethical theory by looking in detail at just two passages defining fundamental moral terms which are not treated in *Scito teipsum*. In the first passage, the individual virtues and their subdivisions are identified; in the second, the various uses of the word "good" are distinguished and a general definition of "a good thing" is proposed.
Both are taken from the second of the two dialogues which make up Abelard's *Collationes*." (pp. 301-302)

26. ———. 1997. *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Paperback edition, with corrections and bibliographical note, 1999.
"The plan is simple. Part I gives a general account of Abelard as a whole: his life, his writings and teaching and the overall shape and growth of his thought. Part II looks at the mainly coherent, but unsystematic philosophy which he developed in close connection with his study of logic. Part III examines the ethical system which binds together his theology. (pp. 2-3)
"Alongside the characteristically Abelardian doctrines there appear, though usually with less prominence, passages which propose or imply the traditional ideas which they replace. For instance, talking of babies who are damned because they die unbaptized, Abelard explains that it is no wonder that they should be punished whilst their parents are pardoned since the sin is transferred to them through the wicked carnal desire in their conception;(16) and he seems to consider that it was only after Christ descended to Hell that good pagans were freed and allowed to enter heaven.(17) Most strikingly, a large dossier can be assembled of references to Christ's passion, not merely as providing the supreme and necessary example of love, but as objectively redeeming mankind.(18) From the point of view of Abelard's theology, these inconsistencies are evidence either of a strange carelessness or hesitancy, or perhaps of an anxiety to qualify a line of thinking which might be judged heretical - even a vain attempt by Abelard to safeguard himself against the consequences of his doctrinal radicalism. From the point of view of Abelard's ethics, however, they are of little relevance, because they do not imply any positions incompatible with his moral theory. What would make Abelard's ethical theories untenable would be an admission that God allows moral arbitrariness: that a man can except through his own free choice be morally blameworthy. Abelard's theology is entirely consistent in excluding this possibility." (pp. 330-331)
(16) Comm. Rom. 173: 664-6, cited by Peppermüller, Abaelards Auslegung, p. 117.
(17) Comm. Rom. 250: 72-7; cf. 130: 251-4 and the other references assembled by Peppermüller, Abaelards Auslegung, p. 112, n. 611.
(18) See above, p. 323, n. 46 and cf. Peppermüller's judicious summary {Abaelards Auslegung, pp. 118-21).
References

Peppermüller, R., Abaelards Auslegung des Römerbriefes (Miinster, 1972) (BGPMA n.f. 10)

27. ———. 2011. "Peter Abelard's Theory of Virtues and its Context." In *Knowledge, Discipline and Power in the Middle Ages. Essays in honour of David Luscombe*, edited by Canning, Joseph, King, Edmund and Staub, Martial, 231–242. Leiden: Brill.
"Peter Abelard seems to be a thinker who fully accepted natural virtues. Virtues, he thought, were acquired. Basing himself on Aristotle's *Categories*, he classifies them among settled states (*habitus*), and a settled state is acquired "by care and deliberation" (*studio ac deliberatione conquisita*).(12) In Book II of the *Theologia Christiana* (c. 1125–7), Abelard eulogizes the ancient pagan philosophers as both the theoreticians and the practitioners of virtues, and they are praised especially for some of the virtues like chastity and abstinence that are often considered exclusively Christian.(13) And, in his *Collationes*—a dreamvision dialogue between a Philosopher, a Christian and a Jew—the Philosopher, who is presented as a Gentile, someone without any written law, is allowed to present the virtues and their classification, which are accepted by the Christian without demur. Abelard believes, indeed, that it is normal practice for Christians to accept the philosophers' account of the virtues: "It should be noted", he says in the *Sententiae*, "that the Church Fathers (*sancti*) did not change either the definitions of the virtues stated by the philosophers or their divisions into species. Rather, they took them from the philosophers, kept them and expounded them carefully."(14)" (p. 235)
(12) Peter Abelard, *Collationes* 111; ed. and trans. John Marenbon and Giovanni Orlandi, OMT (Oxford, 2001), p. 128. In the *Sententiae* 252, ed, Luscombe, p. 133, line 2997), he explains how a virtue is a good quality of the mind that becomes a settled state through 'the attachment of our mind; cf. 256 (ed. Luscombe, p. 135, line 3036): *qualitatem ex applicatione uenientem*). In *Scito teipsum* (ed. Luscombe, p. 128), he also describes virtues as coming through *per applicacionem nostrum*—by 'our attaching them to ourselves'. See also the commentary on the *Categories* (c. 1118), *Peter Abaelards philosophische Schriften,* ed. Bernhard Geyer, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters* 21 (Freiburg, 1919–33), p. 227.
(13) T*heologia Christiana* 2.27–115; ed. Eligius Buytaert, *Petri Abaelardi opera theologica* 2, *CCCM* 12 (Turnhout, 1969), pp. 143–84.
(14) *Sententiae* 252; ed. Luscombe, p. 132, lines 2992–5; cf. *Theologia Christiana* 2.27, ed. Buytaert, p. 143, lines 384–8.

28. ———. 2017. "Boethius, Abelard and Anselm." In *The Cambridge History of Moral Philosophy*, edited by Golob, Sacha and Timmermann, Jens, 125–137. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Chapter 10: Boethius 125-128; Anselm: 129-132; Abelard: 132-135; Bibliography 136-137.
"The subjects of this chapter, Boethius (476–524/525), Anselm (1033–1109) and Abelard (1079–1142) span six centuries, as long as the whole period between Ockham in Chapter 14 and Wittgenstein in Chapter 50. These pages can, therefore, offer no more than three isolated flash photographs of figures in a landscape which, because it lies in darkness, should not be considered unpopulated. These pictures, moreover, will not be portrait but detail mode, focusing in each case on a single, philosophically interesting discussion. Their purpose, it might seem, is to show that, contrary to the impression given by most histories, moral philosophy was flourishing in the period from Boethius to Abelard.(1) But that, as the closing remark will explain, would be the wrong conclusion." (p. 125, a note omitted)
(1) I use the term 'moral philosophy' – in line with the title of this whole volume – to refer in general to philosophical thinking about values in connection with the actions of rational (and super-rational) beings. Were the distinction to be made, as by Williams 2010, between ethics in general and morality as a 'peculiar institution', then 'moral' would need to be replaced throughout by 'ethical', but this substitution would yield some odd results (e.g. 'ethical psychology') and so it has been avoided.
References

Williams, Bernard ([1985] 2010) Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy, London and New York: Routledge (new edition).

29. McAleer, G. J. 1995. "Reason, the Ethical Subject and Sin in the Thought of Peter Abelard." *Mediaevalia. Textos e Estudos* no. 7-8:177–198.
"Abelard has a lot to say about reason and its relation to subjectivity.(8) Through an examination of what Abelard says about the ethical subject and sin I hope to approach Abelard's concept of reason.
ln Section I we shall see that Abelard has a very particular notion of reason: while reason is the core of the ethical subject, the role of belief, revelation, and affectivity in the exercise of reason ensures that reason in the thought of Abelard has a richer character than that which is presented in the Modem tradition. During this discussion it will become clear that the ontology and epistemology of the ethical subject in Abelard is characterized by finitude. We shall see in Section II that Abelard consistently argues that sin is not as pervasive as it might seem - bis position is especially clear with respect to original sin - and this precisely because of human finitude." (p. 179)
(8) Verbeke has commented that Abelard, «represents an important stage in the progressive disclosure of subjectivity.» («Peter Abelard and the Concept of Subjectivity» p. 2, in *Peter Abelard*, Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, ed. E. M. Buytaert, Leuven University Press, 1974.

30. McMahon, Kevin A. 2009. "Penance and Peter Abelard's Move Within." *Saint Anselm Journal* no. 6.2:1–7.
Abstract: "Peter Abelard is perhaps best known for having taken the role of master in the schools to celebrity status. Yet dramatically public as his life was, the analyses he develops in his commentary on the letter to the Romans (c. 1134) and in the *Ethica* (c. 1138) of moral action, sacramental efficacy, even the atonement, center on interior subjectivity. The rightness of an act is determined in the first instance by the agent's intention, and ultimately by God's. The sacraments, such as baptism and penance, represent what God is accomplishing through his relation to the recipient, independently of the actions themselves or the work of the priest. Further, just as sin involves a turning away from God, so our redemption consists in the love aroused in us by the sacrifice of his Son. All of this displays Abelard's capacity for analytic nuance; but it foreshadows, too, the shift that will divide Christian theology in the sixteenth century."

31. Murphy, Sean Eisen. 2007. "'The Law was Given for the Sake of Life': Peter Abelard on the Law of Moses." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* no. 81:271–306.
Abstract: "Abelard's most famous spokesman for the ancient and abiding moral and religious worth of the Law of Moses is probably the character of the Jew, invented for one of two fictional dialogues in the *Collationes*. The equally fictive Philosopher, a rationalist theist who gets the last word in his exchange with the Jew, condemns the Law as a useless addition to the natural law, a threat to genuine morality with a highly dubious claim to divine origin. The Philosopher's condemnation, however, does not go unanswered. Abelard himself, writing in his own voice in two major treatments of the Law, defends the ancient worth of the Law as a revolution in moral understanding and a potential guarantor of salvation. The Law is just and rational, he argues, in every one of its precepts, even when interpreted according to the letter. As such, the letter of the Law has been and ought to be retained in Christianity: its moral precepts are binding everywhere and always; its non-moral precepts are binding, when, in the changing circumstances of the Church, they are found to be useful and not conducive to scandal."

32. Normore, Calvin. 2004. "Abelard's Stoicism and its Consequences." In *Stoicism: Traditions and Transformations*, edited by Strange, Steven K. and Zupko, Jack, 132–147. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
"In this chapter I want to make one piece of what would have to be a much more complex argument to be complete. My larger thesis is that Peter Abelard is as close

to Stoicism as a Christian could be and that in his case this is not some independent rediscovery of Stoic ideas but a self-conscious taking up of them with profound consequences for later medieval philosophy. I stake this claim as a claim about Abelard's positions in a variety of areas, including logic – hence my ambiguous title. Here and now I want to focus just on one theme in Abelard's ethics, to discuss Abelard's views on it, to argue that it is a Stoic theme in a Stoic context, and to trace part of its fortuna into the fourteenth century.

That there is some connection between Peter Abelard's ethical views and Stoicism is widely accepted. In his 1983 monograph, *The Presence of Stoicism in Medieval Thought,* Gerard Verbeke devotes a couple of pages to the comparison of Abelard's views with those of the Stoics. He finds that they agree on emphasizing the role of internal factors in moral responsibility and he finds that the Philosopher in Abelard's *Collationes* holds a largely Stoic brief, emphasizing the role of natural law, the view that virtue is happiness, and the strict unity of the virtues. Verbeke concludes, "Like so many other positions which he develops, these views show that the Philosopher's main inspiration is Stoic."(1) I want to take up Verbeke's claim and to make more precise the sense in which Abelard's ethics is Stoic by focusing on one central theme in it. First, then, one part of Abelard's ethics." (pp. 132-133)

(1) Verbeke 1983: 53.

References

Verbeke, Gerard. 1983. *The Presence of Stoicism in Medieval Thought*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press.

33. Otten, Willemien. 2005. "In Conscience's Court: Abelard's Ethics as a Science of the Self." In *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, edited by Bejczy, István and Newhauser, Richard G. Leiden: Brill.

"Building on Clanchy's and Marenbon's analyses, I want to undertake in this essay a further probing of the ethical nature of Abelard's thought situated not just against the broad background of his own rational views, but also against the backdrop of twelfth-century intellectual culture. More specifically, I want to see how Abelard's ethical interest fits in with his reputation as *moine manqué,* or rather, I want to see what provoked his choice to perceive himself as such.(7) That he does so is crystal clear to me, even if the "why" is as yet undetermined. One only needs to look at his final letter to Heloise, in which he not only urges her to win the crown of glory, to be the perfect nun and virgin, but also seems convinced that she is fully capable of doing so.(8) The very point of her monastic work (in the sense of *opus dei*) seems at least in part to be that she thereby enhances his personal chance of salvation. Even if her only deed were to accomplish the setting free of his soul, the soul of her one and only soul-mate, so the subtext of his exhortation reads, she will have fulfilled her monastic duties uccessfully.(9) But what about his monastic life, then? More concretely, what is the impact of monastic life on his ethical thinking?" (p. 55)

(7) One could argue that in addition to a moine manqué, Abelard is an abbé manqué as well, as was suggested to me during the conference by Prof. Marcia Colish. In reference to the analysis which my article "The Bible and the Self " unfolds, it is relevant to highlight that it analyzes Otloh's and Abelard's autobiography by treating them as an "autohagiography" and an "automartyrology," respectively. In my "Autobiography and the Dialectic of the Self," *Proceedings of the Patristic Mediaeval and Renaissance Conference*, Villanova University 19–20 (1994–96): 177–87, I have nuanced my position by arguing that Abelard's position oscillates in fact between adopting an automartyrological and an autohagiographical tone of voice.

(8) See Otten, "The Bible and the Self," 142–46.

References

Willemien Otten, "The Bible and the Self in Medieval Autobiography: Otloh of St. Emmeram (1010–1070) and Peter Abelard (1079–1142)," in *The Whole and Divided Self: The Bible and Theological Anthropology,* ed. David E. Aune and John McCarthy (New York, 1997), 130–57.

34. Perkams, Matthias. 2001. *Liebe als Zentralbegriff der Ethik nach Peter Abaelard*. Münster: Aschendorff.

35. Porter, Jean. 2000. "Responsibility, Passion, and Sin: A Reassessment of Abelard's Ethics." *Journal of Religious Ethics* no. 28:367–394.
Abstract: "This article reassesses Peter Abelard's account of moral intention, or, better, consent, in light of recent work on his own thought and on the twelfth-century background of that thought. The author argues (1) that Abelard's focus on consent as the determining factor for morality does not rule out, but, on the contrary, presupposes objective criteria for moral judgment and (2) that Abelard's real innovation does not lie in his doctrine of consent as the sole source of merit or guilt, but, rather, in his exploration of the ways in which this doctrine affects our understanding of the objective criteria for moral judgment. In particular, Abelard is led by his doctrine of consent to a thoroughgoing reassessment of the moral significance of the passions, which, in turn, leads him to reject the view that actions should be evaluated in terms of the praiseworthy or vicious character of the passions they express."

36. Pranger, M. B. 2005. "Medieval Ethics and the Illusion of Interiority: Augustine, Anselm, Abelard." In *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, edited by Bejczy, István and Newhauser, Richard G., 13–32. Leiden: Brill.
"In conclusion I want to discuss briefly Abelard's notion of intentionality which seems to do away with the entire Augustinian, and certainly with the Anselmian, setting.
On the face of it there is not so much cause for worry since Abelard follows a long, patristic tradition which links sustained acting (*perseverantia*) to willing: *non incoepisse sed perfecisse virtutis est*. For Abelard, too, endorsing Hugh of Saint Victor, action was part and parcel of a good will: *perficere donum est bonae voluntati factum adiungere*, paraphrased by David Luscombe as: "when the opportunity to act is present, there can be no meritorious will which does not proceed to act."(25)
There is one big stumbling block, however, and that is the notion of intention as neutralising the objective good- or badness of an act and making it dependent on a particular point of view. Recently István Bejczy has pointed out the inconsistencies in Abelard's use of intention, in particular the amorality of acts resulting from it on the one hand, and the bad or good nature of acts on the other, thus making the morality of the agent's intention "depend on the morality of his act rather than the reverse."(26) This is a contradiction in terms that, as Bejczy demonstrates with relentless logic, has been insufficiently noticed, or smoothed over by many a respectable scholar.
As far as intentionality is concerned, one cannot have one's cake and eat it too. Thus, it would seem inconsistent to maintain that sin is a consent to evil without "presupposing a notion of evil which is independent from consent itself and hence from human intentions."(27)
"Deeds cannot," as some interpreters of Abelard have it, "be objectively right or wrong but virtuous or sinful on account of the agent's intention since Abelard made no such distinction."(28)" (pp. 28-29)
(25) David E. Luscombe, *The School of Peter Abelard* (Cambridge, 1969), 194; see also István P. Bejczy, "Deeds Without Value: Exploring a Weak Spot in Abelard's Ethics," *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 70 (2003): 11.
(26) Bejczy, "Deeds Without Value," 16.
(27) Ibid., 13.
(28) Ibid., 17.

37. Rijk, Lambertus Marie de. 1986. "Abelard and moral philosophy." *Medioevo* no. 12:1–27.
"When speaking of ethics in this connection, we are not referring to a 'doctrine on human behaviour'; rather it is to be understood as the philosophical (or theological) pursuit concerning the justification of such a theory. Beforehand it must be said that

Abelard's *Ethica seu Scito te ipsum* can be regarded as a theological work in being part of the curriculum presented in theological training. The central question this work deals with can be expressed as follows: what are the exact standards by which human behaviour is judged good or evil?
One should not ask whether Abelard's *Ethics is* a theological or philosophical work, for that is not the point. As we have already mentioned, ethics was part of theological enquiry and teaching. This answer is not a final one, however. For Abelard's conception of theology was such that philosophy, as an ultimate *rational* justification, was certainly admitted to theology, but, moreover, it even implied that philosophy was an essential constituent of fundamental theological enquiry. We must examine his *Ethics* in detail in order to see how Abelard in fact discusses the issue." (p. 1)

38. Ruys, Juanita Feros. 2008. "Heloise, Monastic Temptation, and Memoria: Rethinking Autobiography, Sexual Experience, and Ethics." In *Sexuality in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: New Approaches to a Fundamental Cultural-Historical and Literary-Anthropological Theme*, edited by Classen, Albrecht, 383–404. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
"Monastic temptation is discussed in a range of early patristic writings (Paul, Augustine, Jerome, the Life of Antony, Gregory the Great), but I believe Cassian is Heloise's prime source. Cassian was the medieval authority with regard to nocturnal emissions,(9) and would have been entirely familiar to Heloise since, according to the Benedictine Rule, nuns would hear a daily reading from the Conferences prior to Compline.(10) Moreover, as will be discussed in greater detail below, Heloise's statement of her temptation clearly parallels Cassian's confession of his own hankering after worldly stories, her arguments on hypocrisy are drawn from his discussion in Conference XII. XI "Quod multum intersit inter continentiam et castitatem" (That there is a great difference between chastity and continence), and when Abelard replies to Heloise's claims of sexual temptation and hypocrisy in his Ep. V, he takes precisely the line articulated by Cassian in Conference XII. V, thus indicating that both their arguments are founded in this common monastic source." (p. 385)
(9) Kenneth C. Russell notes the statistic that around "ten percent of Cassian's total production" in the Institutes and Conferences deals with issues of monastic sexual temptation, "John Cassian on a Delicate Subject," Cistercian Studies Quarterly 27 (1992): 1–12; here 1, n. 1.
(10) RB 1980: The Rule of St Benedict, ed. Timothy Fry (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1981), XLII, 242: "si tempus fuerit prandii, mox surrexerint a cena, sedeant omnes in unum et legat unus Collationes vel Vitas Patrum aut certe aliud quod aedificet audientes . . . . Si autem ieiunii dies fuerit, dicta vespera parvo intervallo mox accedant ad lectionem Collationum, ut diximus."

39. ———. 2014. *The Repentant Abelard: Family, Gender, and Ethics in Peter Abelard's Carmen ad Astralabium and Planctus*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
"The Structure of This Book
This book offers a complete study of Abelard's *Carmen ad Astralabium* and *Planctus.* It begins with a literary and conceptual analysis of these texts, taking into account how they reflect Abelard's thought as evidenced elsewhere in his writings, as well as how they extend, question, and complicate his earlier ideas.
For the *Carmen* I explore issues of theme and style in order to counter the popular perception that this poem is merely a meandering collection of unremarkable sentential advice. On the contrary, I argue that it constitutes a compact summary of the ethical thought of an original and innovative thinker, its ideas woven intimately together, flowing through and more often over the traditional elegiac hexameter form of its verse. To this end, I indicate how it differs in significant ways from other didactic compositions and compilations circulating in late eleventh- and early twelfth-century Europe.
(...)

For the *Planctus*, I concentrate on how the laments function as a series of six in the Vatican manuscript in which they are transmitted. As with the *Carmen,* my intention is to indicate how Abelard modifies an existing genre to imbue it with new thematic and stylistic possibilities. This necessitates a consideration of what function these poems may have been intended to have for Heloise—whether primarily personal or liturgical—and indeed, whether their composition had any particular meaning for Abelard himself in terms of consolation for his own sorrows. Defending the order of the laments as they appear in the sole existing manuscript of the series, I trace the thematic developments that run through them, particularly in terms of Abelard's exploration of gender and the question of vice and virtue. With regard to Abelard's stylistic innovations in the planctus genre, I consider the way he multiplies and manipulates the speaking voices in his laments to convey his difficult and complex messages. In conclusion, I suggest that the Planctus as a whole express Abelard's view that earthly lamentation is ultimately futile and that consolation will be found only in the next life.
(...)
In addition, I provide a line-by-line commentary for both the *Carmen* and *Planctus*. My aims here are to explain concepts or constructions whose meaning might not be readily apparent and to highlight how these reflect, or perhaps refract, Abelard's thought as expressed elsewhere in his writings." (pp. 5-6)

40. Schultz, Janice L. 1996. "An Abelardian Reconstruction Reconsidered." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* no. 70:275–286.
"In an article in the ACPA Quarterly, "Abelardian Ethics Reconstructed," Lance Simmons argues that the moral quality of consent is determined by intention exclusively insofar as intention consists in an
attitude of charity or cupidity.(4)That is, since works or deeds are indifferent, they can morally specify neither consent nor intention; since intention establishes the moral value of consent yet cannot itself depend
upon the goodness or badness of actions, its moral quality must be determined by whether or not one acts out of an attitude of charity or cupidity." (pp. 275-276)
(...)
"Although such a position appears to conform to the spirit of the claim that acts as such are indifferent, it not only falls prey to the standard arguments against relativism; it also militates against other claims proffered by Abelard." (pp, 276-277)

41. Simmons, Lance. 1993. "Abelardian Ethics Reconstructed." *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* no. 67:231–240.
"In this paper, I propose to set forth as clearly as possible Abelard's moral theory, and in the process show that the most common objection against the theory fails. I will argue that to the extent that the negative modern consensus about Abelardian ethics rests on this common objection, that consensus is ill-founded. Any decisive rejoinder to Abelard must go beyond the common objection.
In what follows, I will offer a sympathetic rational reconstruction of Abelard's moral theory, rather than a straightforward explication of the texts. My own exposition thus remains grounded in but reorders and in some ways goes beyond Abelard's own formulations. While this may give Abelardian ethics the feel of something like an axiomatized formal system, it will avoid many of the interpretive problems that the original texts pose." (p. 231)

42. ———. 1996. "An Abelardian Reconsideration Rebutted." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* no. 70:287–289.
"Janice Schultz [*] criticizes my reconstruction of Abelardian ethics on two counts: She claims that it is unduly subjectivist in its own right, and that in any case it distorts the moral theory actually held by Abelard (who was not as subjectivist as I suppose). In this brief reply, I will show that Schultz offers inadequate support for these two criticisms. I will show that the first criticism misstates my views and that the second criticism is based upon Schultz's own interpretation of the *Scito te ipsum*

rather than upon the text itself. Perhaps Schultz's two criticisms can be justified in other ways, but as things stand they are not justified." (p. 287)
[*] *An Abelardian Reconstruction Reconsidered*, same volume.

43. Sweeney, Eileeen C. 2016. "Abelard's Christian Socratism." In *A Companion to Medieval Christian Humanism: Essays on Principal Thinkers*, edited by Bequette, John P., 101–121. Leiden: Brill.
"It was Etienne Gilson who coined the term “Christian Socratism.” He did so not to apply it to Abelard but rather to patristic and 12th century figures like Hugh of St. Victor.(1) Hugh explicitly makes the Socratic maxim “Know Thyself” his own at the opening of the Didascalicon, connecting self-knowledge to knowledge of nature and God. On this view, the vocation of the Christian is not to forsake self or nature for God but rather to find God in self and nature. In this way, the works of the pre-Christian world are integrated into the program of Christian education and even Christian theology. Thus “Christian Socratism” leads fairly directly to “Christian humanism,” the subject of this volume.
Showing that Abelard is a humanist and Socratist might seem an easy task. Abelard takes as the title of his ethics, “Know Thyself,” and constructs an ethics that in an extreme way focuses not on the external standards for moral action but on the individual’s internal act as the core of moral value.
He clearly places great emphasis on the individual’s free consent as conferring morality on the act and, indeed, moral dignity on the person." (p. 101)
(1) Etienne Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, trans. A.H.C. Downes (New York: 1936), 209.
I have also argued that, though in a different way, the term could also be applied to Anselm.
See Eileen C. Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury and the Desire for the Word* (Washington, D.C.: 2012), 35–36.

44. Tomasic, Thomas M. . 1972. "William of St. Thierry against Peter Abelard: A dispute on the meaning of being a person." *Analecta Cistercensia* no. 28:3–76.
"In 1138, William of Saint -Thierry interrupted the writing of his *Expositio super Cantica canticorum* to pen one of the most scathing and effective critiques in the Middle Ages, namely, the *Disputatio adversus Petrum Abaelardum ad Gaufridum Carnotensem et Bernardum*, which successfully initiated the condemnation of Abelard's *Theologia* (in (William's words , the « nova novi theologi theologia ») at the Council of Sens in 1140 (1). The central concern of this paper is to discover why William, who only three years earlier withdrew from the abbacy of Saint-Thierry to become a secluded Cistercian at Signy, should have been to terribly disturbed by the « new » theological paths blazed by Abelard. Taken by itself, the *Disputatio* does not provide the solution, the sufficient explanation or motivation for its having been written; nor does a careful reading of Abelard's Theologia, faithful to the Western tradition in its treatment of faith and the Trinity, suggest any solution.
There is nothing per se heretical in Abelard's teaching, yet the divergence in theological positions is presented by William as one of radical and irreconcilable opposition. What, then, is the justification for William's writing the *Disputatio* ? Is it sufficient an explanation to propose that the *Disputatio* is simply another instance of monastic theology fighting a losing battle for its life against scholastic theology ? Perhaps it may not be altogether presumptuous to suggest that the *Disputatio* does not occur in a vacuum, that it reflect, with great impatience, some eighteen years of ascetical thought on William's part and is meant, therefore, to defend negatively a distinct theological frame of mind against an adverse mentality. William's works, from beginning to end, form a consistent, coherent program; thus, placed within the total context of William's thinking, the *Disputatio* must be understood as a defense, without explicit development in itself, of some fundamental motif that underlies all his works. Hence, the reason why William felt compelled to write the *Disputatio* cannot be properly grasped without comprehending the rationale of the *De contemplando Deo*, the *De natura et dignitate amoris* (c . 1120), the *Meditativae orationes* (c . 1130), the *Expositio in Epistolam ad Romanos* (c . 1133), and the

Expositio super Cantica canticorum (1138) . And since William did not intend the *Disputatio* to be his last word on the nature of the controversy, it must be understood not only in the light of these preceding works, but also in full view of the *Speculum fidei* and the *Aenigma fidei* (1139), in which William provides positive and extended articulation of his position against Abelard." (pp. 3-4)
(1) Migne, *PL* 182, 531-533 and 180, 249-282.

45. Valente, Luisa. 2015. "Happiness, Contemplative Life, and the *tria genera hominum* in Twelfth-Century Philosophy: Peter Abelard and John of Salisbury." *Quaestio. Journal of the History of Metaphysics* no. 15:73–98.
"In the first section of this article I will provide an outline of the substantial discussion about true happiness as beatific vision as is found in Peter Abelard's *Collationes* or *Dialogus inter philosophum, iudaeum et christianum*. In the following sections, I will present some twelfth-century triads of *genera hominum*, in which the ideal of the philosophical life plays a significant role." (p. 74)
(...)
"The Abelardian thesis that the most speculative philosophical life is the best and the happiest life is, as we can see, part of a wider anthropology which grows from many different roots: Platonic (*Timaeus* and *Republic*), Neoplatonist (Porphyrius and Macrobius), roman-Stoic (Seneca), and Patristic (Augustine *in primis*), to be more precise. Its basic intention seems to reside not in a comparison or distinction between Christian and pagan, i.e. religious and rational ideals of life and happiness, but in an amalgamation of them through a demonstration of their basic correspondence. The Christian contemplative ideal is, according to Peter Abelard, the same as that of the best amongst the ancient philosophers." (p. 82)

46. Verbeke, Gerard. 1974. "Peter Abelard and the Concept of Subjectivity." In *Peter Abelard. Proceedings of the International Conference: Louvain, May 10-12, 1971*, edited by Buytaert, Eligius Marie, 1–11. Leuven: Leuven University Press.
"ln the framework of Abelard's ethics, self-knowledge certainly becomes a basic rule of moral behaviour. Opposing the merely external judgment of a moral act as it was usual in the *Libri poenitentiales*; Abelard advocates the importance of the internal disposition of the subject. lnstead of looking at a behaving in its external perceptible structure, our author points to the subjectivity of the acting individual; what matters in our moral activity is essentially whether or not there was free consent and whether our intention was right or wrong(5).
A mere tendency or inclination couldn't be really sinful, nor could the moral character of a deed depend upon the result taken its materiality(6) According to Abelard, moral responsibility always involves free consent to what we are doing: it is incompatible with compulsion or ignorance concerning the real nature of our act. The question arises whether it is possible to do something wrong with right intention and whether this intention modifies the moral character of our act to the extent that as a whole it becomes good.
The answer obviously depends upon the meaning given to the expression "a good intention": according to Abelard a good intention is incompatible with a wrong act as far as it is known to wrong; except the case of ignorance or mistake, a right intention always refers to an act that is really valuable(7)" (pp. 4-5)
(5) *Ethics* (ed. D. E. Luscombe). p. 22,33-24. I.(...)
(6) *O.c*., p. 24, 1-2(...)
(7) *O.c*. p. 54, 20-21(...)

47. Vess, Deborah. 2000. "Abelard on Meaning and Usage: Some Implications for the *Ethics*." *The Modern Schoolman* no. 77:217–234.
"Peter Abelard's brilliant critique of the realism of William of Champeaux was so devastating that few indeed have dared defend any of the versions then in circulation. Nevertheless. William of Champeaux himself must have derived some comfort from the tension between Abelard's thorough-going logical nominalism, with respect to the signification of universals, and his modified realism, with respect to their initial cause of imposition. This tension is present throughout Abelard's

work; yet as his thought on meaning evolved, the role of context and communal usage became increasingly prominent. An examination of Abelard's development of context and usage in the logical treatises helps to resolve some of the more puzzling aspects not only of his logical treatises, but also of his ethical and theological theories." (p. 217)

48. Wilks, Ian. 1997. "The Role of Virtue Theory and Natural Law in Abelard's Ethical Writings." *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* no. 71:137–149.
"If we completely reject the intuitive way of formulating moral rules in terms of good actions and bad, where are we left? This intuitive way affords at least a very objective starting point for moral theory (since acts can be physically described, and so good acts can be physically distinguished from bad), and it is not immediately clear that an ethics of intention alone can do the same. Say we accept that good and bad reside only in intention; "What then," asks Gilson, "makes the intention itself good? Is it our conviction that we do well, that in acting as we do act we please God? These are certainly excellent and even necessary dispositions, but ... we shall see that they do not suffice."(10) If what matters for Abelard is not what we do, but, as it were, the frame of mind in which we do it, there seems a great danger that his theory may collapse into moral subjectivism.
As it happens, there is much to be said against this line of criticism. It seems to derive largely from an overly piecemeal approach to Abelard's ethical writings, which arises from excessive, if not exclusive, focus on the *Ethica*, and from corresponding failure to afford proper consideration to the *Dialogus inter philosophum, Iudaeum et Christianum.* In the latter we find, among other things, an extended discussion of virtue theory which fills some of the gaps that undoubtedly do present themselves in the Ethica; it is only by studying these two works side by side that we have a chance of extracting a full and satisfying account of ethical theory from Abelard. (11)" (p. 138)
(10) Etienne Gilson, *L'esprit de la philosophie médiévale*, 2nd ed. (Paris: 1. Vrin, 1944), 330; the translation is from A. H. C. Downes, trans., *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), 349.
(11) At first sight this may seem a rather unpromising approach; Alisdair MacIntyre considers what he rightly calls "Abelard's retreat into interiority" to be unfertile ground for the development of virtue theory (*After Virtue*, 2nd ed., Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984], 168, 170-71). As I hope will become evident, Abelard's virtue theory is relevant to his deontological ethics because of the significant role attributed in the latter to human vice.

49. ———. 2012. "Moral Intention." In *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Philosophy*, edited by Marenbon, John, 588–604. New York Oxford University Press.
"Two figures of that era achieve centrality in the history of this matter: Peter Abelard and William of Ockham, who alike adopt the strong position of claiming that only moral intention, not ensuing action, is a suitable basis for moral judgement. This shared thesis is pivotal in their respective moral theories and produces between them what deserves to be considered a fairly distinctive strand of moral theory within the larger setting of medieval thought. When centuries later Immanuel Kant famously claims that ‘a good will is not good because of what it effects or accomplishes, because of its fitness to attain some proposed end, but only because of its volition’ (Kant 1996 50), he is revisiting this kind of Abelardian and Ockhamist outlook. This outlook seems to belong neither to virtue theory nor natural law theory—the two staples of medieval moral speculation—and, in a Kantian setting, is not necessarily associated with either. It will be the business of this chapter to consider the early evidence of this strand of moral theory in the writings of St Augustine and St Anselm, and then too bserve it as it achieves full expression in the writings of Abelard and Ockham." (p. 588)
References
Kant, Immanuel. 1996. ‘Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals,’ trans. and ed. Mary J. Gregor. In *Practical Philosophy*, ed. Allan Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press.

50. Williams, Paul. 1980. *The Moral Philosophy of Peter Abelard*. Lanham: University Press of America.
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"It is the intended purpose of this study to approach Abelard's doctrine of Christ's work on its own terms and in context with the general direction of his thought. But one can only accomplish this by subterranean means, by probing beneath the surface in order to uncover the motivating reason behind his rejection of extreme realism and the doctrine of original sin, as well as the fundamental intentionality behind his vindication of pagan philosophy and the utilization of the dialectic. It is in such acts of intention and meaning that the stance and selfhood of a person are revealed. Selfhood, Robinson writes, is constituted by a commitment to a context. (7) And Abelard reveals himself as one committed to a strict following of all the injunctions of the most uncompromising interpretation of the Christian calling.
(...)
Abelard proceeds to the next stage of his thought which is an elaboration of a rigorist system of ethics with its sharp emphasis upon man's complete accountability for the character of his life. Virtue, he argues in line with his logical conclusions, is a natural quality acquired by human effort. It is not, as the realists maintain, something synonymous with grace. A man becomes virtuous by struggling to attain virtue, not by a passive participation in this quality. Without the struggle, he maintained, there can be no crown.
Abelard's charted course never alters. It is anchored in his rigid commitment. Thus, he leads one step-by-step to the foot of the cross and his "subjective" view of the Atonement which is the final station of his thought." (pp. 4-5)
(...)
"And yet, his celebrated theory which has prompted pages upon pages of exposition consists of only a few meager paragraphs in his Commentary on Romans. Abelard never set out to fully elaborate this doctrine, and, for this reason, it remained a brief excursus on the question of redemption. And yet — as St. Bernard rightly perceived — this is the very heart of Abelardianism. His view of the *Summum Bonum*, his Logos theology, his ethics, and even his logical views are knotted together in these three terse paragraphs.[*] Abelard simply could not mouth the Pauline view of Christ's work. And so, he struggled to equate God's justice (*iustitia*) with His love (*charitatis*) by a bizarre twisting of the apostle's words. He writes: "*Ad ostensionem suae iustitiae, id est charitatis, quae nos, ut dictum est, apud eum iustificat, id est ad exhibendam nobis suam dilectionem, vel ad insinuandum nobis quantum eum diligere debeamus, qui proprio Filio suo non pepercit pro nobis*."(9) Christ died, he asserts, not to meet the demands of God's justice, but to fulfill the demands of His love. His intransigent moral sense necessitated his manipulation of the apostle's meaning. His moral perspective challenged the faith which he cherished, and eventually caused his condemnation." (p. 6)
(7) James M. Robinson, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1971), p. 46.
(9) *Epist. ad Romanos*, II, 833B.
[* See in particular the *Question* at 3.26, English translation: Peter Abelard, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, translated by Steven R. Cartwright, Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University Press of America 2011, Book II, pp. 164-168)

51. Zimmerman, Elizabeth. 2006. ""It is Not the Deed but the Intention of the Doer". The Ethic of Intention and Consent in the First Two Letters of Heloise." *Forum for Modern Language Studies* no. 42:249–267.

"At a young age, Heloise's supreme intellect ''made her most renowned throughout the realm'',(99) while ''as prioress of Argenteuil, an ancient and royal convent, and then as abbess of the successful new foundation of the Paraclete, Heloise had reached the pinnacle of independence for a woman.''(100) Her letters demonstrate that Heloise did not leave off the philosophical life even after the calamitous events which followed her affair with Abelard. Rather, she closely examined her life's events through the lens of an ethic that she considered and developed in her first two letters to Abelard. Through her analysis and application of the ethic of intention, she contrasts her intentions and inner truths with her actions and outward appearance. While she concludes that the discrepancy between these two leaves her a hypocrite, she also believes that she is fundamentally innocent due to the purity of her intention. Her experience and her understanding of it provide significant insight into both the thoughts of a twelfth-century abbess struggling with contemporary philosophical and theological issues, as well as a woman attempting to make peace with a life to which she did not fully consent." (p. 264)
(99) *Historia Calamitatum*, ed. Hicks, p. 10; trans. Radice & Clanchy, p. 10.
(100) Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life*, p. 156.