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Abstract	15世紀イングランドの神学者レジナルド・ピーコック (Reginald Pecock, c.1392-c.1459) が、ロラード派異端に反駁した俗語著作群において、なぜ理性を極端に強調しているかについては、これまでにも多くの研究がなされてきた。本稿は、カトリック教会が展開したロラード派異端撲滅の文脈の中で論じられることが多いピーコックの俗語神学書の中に、ラテン語文化の痕跡を探し求める試みである。ピーコックが用いた語彙や文体は言うに及ばず、キリスト者たちが自分自身と神に関する深い知に達する際に必要不可欠であると彼がみなした理性の概念も、ラテン語の体系的な知に根本的に支えられている。つまり、異端の道に迷い込んだ一般信徒たちを俗語で真摯に説得しようとしたピーコックは、彼の「俗語の声」の意義を強調する近年の研究成果にもかかわらず、徹頭徹尾ラテン語知に依拠して峻厳に理性の重要性を語る説教者であったのだ。この「ラテン語性」をピーコック理解の中心に据えることで、中世神学と宗教改革神学とをつなぐ結節点の一つとして彼の神学をより深く理解する可能性が開かれるであろう。
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Reginald Pecock's Theology of Reason[1]

Atsushi Iguchi

要旨

　15世紀イングランドの神学者レジナルド・ピーコック（Reginald Pecock, c. 1392-c. 1459）が、ロラード派異端に反駁した俗語著作群において、なぜ理性を極端に強調しているかについては、これまでにも多くの研究がなされてきた。本稿は、カトリック教会が展開したロラード派異端撲滅の文脈の中で論じられることが多いピーコックの俗語神学書の中に、ラテン語文化の痕跡を探し求める試みである。ピーコックが用いた語彙や文体は言うに及ばず、キリスト者たちが自分自身と神に関する深い知に達する際に必要不可欠であると彼がみなした理性の概念も、ラテン語の体系的な知に根本的に支えられている。つまり、異端の道に迷い込んだ一般信徒たちを俗語で真摯に説得しようとしたピーコックは、彼の「俗語の声」の意義を強調する近年の研究成果にもかかわらず、徹頭徹尾ラテン語知に依拠して峻厳に理性の重要性を語る説教者であったのだ。この「ラテン語性」をピーコック理解の中心に据えることで、中世神学と宗教改革神学とをつなぐ結節点の一つとして彼の神学をより深く理解する可能性が開かれるであろう。

I. 'By Strength and Light of Natural Reason'

　　Now, lord, if we myȝt haue natural power in oure resoun to schewe and knowe

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bi likely evidencis, wiþout reuelacioun maad þerupon to vs bi holy scripture, þat þou art fadir and son and holigoost in oon heed of beyng and in ech oþer of þese perfecciouns and nobil dignitees afore rehercid, and þat þe sone is gendrid of þe fadir, and þe holigoost procediþ and takiþ hi beyng of þe fadir and þe sone, þanne myȝte we seie þat bi þi natural ȝifte of liȝt in oure resoun we myȝte stiȝe vp to haue probabili and likeli ynoȝ al þe knowing which is necessarie vs to haue of þee in þy godhede [. . .] And alle þe treuþis now aftir to be rehercid into þe eende of þis present trety schulde be known probabili, þat is to seie likely bi strengþe and liȝt of natural resoun oonly wiþoute feiþ – þat is to seie for proof of likelihode þat þou art fadir, sone and holi goost, can no natural witt vs lede as forto fynde it wiþout þi delyueraunce and informacioun þerof maad to vs afore, telling to vs bi reuelacioun þat it is so [. . .][2]

Thus speaks the theologian Reginald Pecock (c.1392-c.1459), who was at one time Bishop of Chichester, in *The Reule of Cristen Religion*, a vernacular anti-Lollardy treatise composed in the early 1440s. According to Pecock, what we need in order to acquire full understanding of the trinity of God and other important theological matters is reason (or God's 'natural ȝifte of liȝt in oure resoun'), not revelation brought about by the Bible ('reuelacioun maad . . . to vs bi holy scripture').[3] He goes on to imply, slightly after the quoted passage, that human reason's darkness ('þe louȝnes and þe derkenes of oure natural resoun') necessitates illumination by divine revelation, and the limitation of such natural knowledge of the divine is made explicit by the words 'probabili' and 'likely'. However, his unfailing conviction that the power of reason, with which humans are naturally endowed, can be employed to explain difficult theological matters never deserts him throughout the *Reule*, or

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2   Reginald Pecock, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by William Cabell Greet, EETS OS 171 (London: Oxford University Press, 1927; Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint, 1987), p. 71.
3   Although, tellingly, when he has the opportunity to expound on the Trinity in the *Reule*, he reverts to Latin (pp. 88-89).

indeed his entire *oeuvre*, allowing him boldly to assert that natural reason provides us with 'al þe knowing which is necessarie vs to haue of þee in þy godhede'.

Such uninhibited confidence in reason, or, 'doom of resoun' to use Pecock's phrase, attracted not a small amount of contemporary ecclesiastical and secular suspicion that eventually resulted in his being censured followed by his recanting in 1457.[4] However, emphasizing reason in framing one's theological discourse was not unprecedented in medieval theology in Pecock's times; indeed, even a cursory look at the history of medieval theology shows that Pecock belonged to that cadre of theologians who optimistically expressed unlimited trust in the power of reason. For instance, as early as the late eleventh century, Anselm of Canterbury had attempted to prove the existence of God by combining reason with faith in his *Proslogion*, in which he summarised his analytic mode of discourse in the well-known phrase that echoes Augustine (and ultimately Isaiah 7.9): 'I do not seek to understand so that I may believe; but I believe so that I may understand'.[5] This rationalizing, speculative tendency in theology was developed further by Peter Abelard, who systematically strove to apply the power of reason not only to the natural, external world, but also to theological matters, thus contributing, along with other twelfth-century theologians, to remoulding the traditional theology founded on liturgy, meditation, and liturgy. The influx of the Greek philosophical, scientific texts — especially the work of Aristotle — gave this theological rationalism further momentum, propelling it to reach its apogee in the thirteenth century, when, as it is often claimed, Thomas Aquinas achieved a harmony between reason and faith.[6]

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4   There are a few biographies of Pecock, but see especially Wendy Scase, 'Reginald Pecock', in *Authors of the Middle Ages, vol. III: English Writers of the Late Middle Ages*, ed. by M. C. Seymour (Aldershot: Variorum, 1998), no. 8 (pp. 70-146); and also her 'Pecock, Reginald', in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

5   Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*, in *The Major Works*, ed. by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 82-104 (at p. 87). Augustine had already presented the idea that one should first believe in order to understand (*On the Free Choice of the Will*, ed. by Peter King (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 2.2.5.16 [p. 34]).

6   Steven P. Marrone, 'Medieval Philosophy in Context', in *The Cambridge Companion to*

Accommodated thus in the sweeping, 'Thomist' narrative of the reception and development of rationalism in medieval theology, Pecock's extensive use of reason in his vernacular exposition of theological matters, radical though it may seem, *does* make sense. However, just as Peter Abelard had a stringent opponent in the celebrated Cistercian abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, who successfully manoeuvred the Council of Sens in 1141 into condemning Abelard's rationalist, philosophical way of thinking and teaching as heretical, so too Pecock had opponents who were ready to pounce on an opportunity to accuse him.[7] Scholars now agree that it was not Pecock's theological views or discursive methods *per se* which led to his downfall; rather, the prosecution of Pecock was not initiated by the church authorities but by the Lancastrian government, which, in order to maintain the already precarious order of society, responded to the complaints made about Pecock by lay councillors and officers of London.[8] It is also true, however, that Pecock's reason-centred theology which had a very low opinion of the teachings of the Church Fathers, combined with his persistent claim that priests need not reside in their parishes to give sermons to their charges, caused an uproar among his ecclesiastical and monastic peers, who strenuously promoted the importance of delivering sermons and the wisdom of the Fathers in their zealous campaign to reform the way the laity were edified in the midst of the Lollard heresy threat.[9] Thomas Gascoigne (1404–1458), the Chancellor of Oxford,

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Medieval Philosophy, ed. by A. S. McGrade (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 10-50.

7   For the details of Abelard's condemnation, see Constant J. Mews, 'The Council of Sens (1141): Abelard, Bernard, and the Fear of Social Upheaval', *Speculum*, 77 (2002), 342-382.

8   *Reule*, xvi-xvii; Jeremy Catto, 'The King's Government and the Fall of Pecock, 1457-58', in *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England. Essays Presented to Gerald Harris*, ed. by R. E. Archer and S. Walker (London: Hambledon, 1995), pp. 201-222 [at p. 202]; Scase, 'Reginald Pecock' p. 104; James Simpson, 'Reginald Pecock and John Fortescue', in *A Companion to Middle English Prose*, ed. by A. S. G. Edwards (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer 2004), pp. 271-87 (at p. 272).

9   See R. M. Ball, 'The Opponents of Bishop Pecok', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 48 (1997), 230-62; and Kirsty Campbell, *The Call to Read: Reginald Pecock's Books and Textual Communities* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), pp. 9-10.

severely criticized Pecock in his anthology of theological excerpts *Loci e Libro Veritatum*, since for him Pecock's arguments derive 'de suis propriis glosis' (from his own interpretations), not from the patristic authors.[10] Pecock's rationalist approach to educating the laity was also taken to task by another contemporary, John Bury (c. 1400–c. 1480), who, in his *Gladius Salomonis*, castigated him for unduly prioritizing reason.[11] In 1458, in the wake of Pecock's trial and recantation, Archbishop Bourcier attempted to suppress the dissemination of Pecock's manuscripts, although none was found. Pecock's infamy did not abate even after his death, and the students who matriculated into Queens' and King's Colleges, Cambridge were required to take an oath not to hold Pecock's and John Wyclif's heretical views.[12] These censorial policies promoted by both the ecclesiastical and intellectual authorities bear witness to the ideological threat that the Church feared Pecock would exacerbate the religious instability of late-fifteenth-century England.

Pecock's preoccupation with reason also attracted critical attention from a number of scholars, who have endeavoured to explicate what lies beneath Pecock's assiduous application of reason to theological discourse. In oppositon to those critics who asserted that Pecock failed to unify faith and reason,[13] E. H. Emerson discussed Pecock's writing in a more positive vein, claiming that Pecock's attitude towards reason is very unique among his contemporary theologians, pursuing the benefit of reason much more further and radically than did his scholastic predecessors such as Thomas Aquinas.[14] James H. Landman compared Pecock's 'doom of resoun' with the

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10   Thomas Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum*, intro. by James E. Thorold Rogers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881), p. 15; see also Christina von Nolcken, 'Gascoigne [Gascoygne], Thomas', in *ODNB*.

11   Printed in Reginald Pecock, *The Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy*, 2 vols, ed. by Churchill Babington (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1860; repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), II, pp. 567-613.

12   See Ball, 253, and Catto, 'Theology after Wycliffism', 278.

13   See Green, p. 129, and Peter Munz, *The Place of Hooker in the History of Thought* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952), p. 45.

14   E. H. Emerson, 'Reginald Pecock: Christian Rationalist', *Speculum*, 31 (1956), 235-42.

contemporary legal theorist John Fortescue's '*dispositio ad discernendum*' (disposition to understand), pointing out that while Pecock encouraged the lay people to participate in reading, discussing the Bible and mulling over theological matters by using the power of reason with which everyone is equipped, he was also concerned with the danger posed by such inclusive accommodation, and, as a result, attempted to safeguard the authority of the Church by restricting lay interpretation of the Bible.[15] Mishtooni Bose has cogently argued that Pecock's rationalist move was a response to the existent method of persuasion employed by the contemporary Church, which he deemed insufficient to bring the Lollard heretics back to the fold of orthodoxy.[16] The consensus seems to have emerged that we would do better than to simply regard Pecock's reason 'the only large-scale attempt [in England] in the fifteenth century to harmonize reason and faith'.[17]

Despite these important studies, however, there is one aspect of Pecock's rationalist theology which still needs to be explored in any future studies of his theological achievements. Quite ineluctably, his vernacular rhetoric based on the 'doom of resoun' has been primarily discussed in the context of his strenuous, yet ultimately abortive, attempt to combat Lollardy.[18] Consequently, any rhetorical and ideological

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15   James H. Landman, '"The Doom of Resoun": Accommodating Lay Interpretation in Late Medieval England', in *Medieval Crime and Social Control*, ed. by Barbara Hanawalt and David Wallace (University of Minnesota Press, 1988), pp. 90-123. James Simpson also discusses these two contemporaries in his 'Reginald Pecock and John Fortescue'. Norman Doe contends that Pecock and Fortescue are precursors of the modern legal notion that human law was created by the consent and will of the people; see his *Fundamental Authority in Late Medieval English Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

16   Mishtooni Bose, 'Reginald Pecock's Vernacular Voice', in *Lollards and Their Influence in Late Medieval England*, ed. by Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pittard (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), pp. 217-36.

17   A. R. Myers, *England in the Late Middle Ages* (London: Harmondsworth, 1952), p. 152.

18   Some of the notable examples include: Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Bose, 'Vernacular Voice'; *idem*, 'Vernacular Philosophy and the Making of Orthodoxy in the Fifteenth Century', *New Medieval Literatures*, 7 (2005), 73-99; Kantik Ghosh, 'Bishop Reginald Pecock and the Idea of 'Lollardy'', in *Text and Controversy from Wyclif to Bale: Essays in Honour of Anne*

moves that he is believed to have made in his writing have been contrasted with those employed by his Lollard opponents. As Pecock declares repeatedly in his vernacular treatises, he has chosen to write in English in order to refute and correct the folly of heretics amongst the laity.[19] Considering such an explicitly stated anti-Lollard motive, it seems not only understandable but also imperative to approach his works from the heresy-orthodoxy dichotomous perspective. However, it leaves in its wake the unfortunate result that, with a few exceptions, his indebtedness to Latin literary and theological culture remains largely unexplored.[20] Pecock's notion of reason, I contend, is better understood in light of the traces of Latin prose discernible in his vernacular texts, and those Scholastic predecessors who deeply influenced him — namely, theologians such as Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas. In this sense, this essay will attempt to present his 'Latin voice' which is faintly yet nevertheless unmistakably audible in his vernacular writing.[21]

II. Pecock's vernacularised Latin

That the linguistic vehicle through which he strived to instruct the laity happened to be the vernacular English should not prevent us from properly evaluating where he theologically and linguistically stood. Pecock's choice of English as a pedagogical tool is undoubtedly an important fact to be noted, and V. H. H. Green was certainly right when he said that 'the fact that [Pecock] wrote in English was probably even

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Hudson, ed. by Helen Barr and Ann M. Hutchison, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 251-65.

19   For example, see *Reule*, pp. 17-18; Reginald Pecock, *The Book of Faith: A Fifteenth Century Theological Tractate*, ed. by J. L. Morrison (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1909), pp. 203-205.

20   See, as an example of these exceptions, Mishtooni Bose, 'Two Phases of Scholastic Self-Consciousness: Reflections on Method in Aquinas and Pecock', in *Aquinas as Authority: A Collection of Studies Presented at the Second Conference of the Thomas Insituut te Utrecht, December 14-16, 2000*, ed. By Paul Van Geest, Harm Goris, and Carlo Lege (Leuven: Peeters, 2002) pp. 87-107.

21   *Pace*, that is, Bose's 'Vernacular Voice'.

more irritating to his accusers than the views which his books contained'.[22] However, it would hardly do justice to the complexity of Pecock's writerly enterprise to portray him as a hapless theologian who recklessly foregrounded the role of reason in English and thereby incurred the wrath of the ecclesiastical and temporal authorities. In associating his vernacularity and stress on reason with the contemporary anti-heresy campaign and his eventual downfall, we tend to lose sight of how Latinate Pecock was both linguistically and theologically.

The linguistic Latinity of Pecock's prose manifests itself both syntactically and lexically, to such an extent that one can observe the vestiges of Latin grammar and vocabulary that he must have had in mind before translating and materialising them into the vernacular on the manuscript pages in front of him. As any casual reader will be well aware of, his vernacular treatises are replete with tortuously long, complicated, and hypotactic (as opposed to paratactic) sentences, in which the main clauses are endlessly modified by a number of subordinate clauses and phrases.[23] A case in point is the passage quoted at the beginning of this essay, which is but one example out of innumerable instances of parataxes. Here, the sentence starts with a long hypothetical subordinate clause ('if we myȝt haue . . .'), in which are further embedded two subordinate clauses ('þat þou art fadir and son and holigoost . . .', 'þat þe sone is gendrid of þe fadir . . .') that denote the content of the two preceding infinite verbs 'shewe and knowe'. This if-clause looks as if it would be brought to a conclusion when we see the long-awaited main clause a few lines down ('þanne myte we seie . . .'), which, however, forces us, with its explanatory exhaustiveness, precision and meticulousness, to carry on reading for a good while, until the sentence finally ends more than half a dozen lines down.[24] Pecock must have brought this

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22   V. H. H. Green, *Bishop Reginald Pecock: A Study in Ecclesiastical History and Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945), p. 188

23   On Pecock's 'complex' sentences, see Reginald Pecock, *The Folewer to the Donet*, ed. by Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock, EETS OS 164 (London: Oxford University Press,1924), p. lxiii.

24   Greet's emendation, whose 'intention has been to reproduce the manuscript as nearly as possible' (*Reule*, p. xii), does not make clear where the sentence in question really ends,

tireless, syntactical verbosity from Latin theological treatises that he may have earlier read and relied upon in writing his own vernacular treatise, in which the hierarchical or equal relationships between phrases, clauses and sentences are much clearer than in the European vernaculars.

Pecock also vernacularises Latin when he imports Latin grammatical constructions into his English prose. Such constructions are too numerous to list here, but the following examples should be sufficient to support my case here: 'with her special in hym conteyned trouthis', in which 'in hym conteyned' modifies the noun 'trouthis'; 'it is hard to mesure of al hem in þe layfe whiche schulen reede my writingis, þe capacite', in which the object of the verb 'mesure' is 'þe capacite' placed at the end, which is in turn modified by the long propositional phrase that preceds it; and 'eny straunge supportyng of eny oþer to hym outward þing', in which 'to hym outward' would not have seemed so outlandish had it been placed after 'þing', perhaps with an addition of 'which is'.[25] In all of these examples, the word order that looks unnatural and forced in English would be much more idiomatic in Latin — a highly inflectional language in which the function of a word in the sentence is clearly indicated by its number, gender, and case; therefore, word order is much less important than in other 'analytic' vernacular languages including English, which by this time had lost most of the inflections that it used to have in the pre-Conquest days.

Regarding Pecock's vocabulary, it suffices to randomly quote the following words: 'grace afore comyng, or grace afore goyng and helpyng', which is a literal translation of *gratia preveniens* (prevenient grace), 'incomprehensible', and 'perteynyng'.[26] By incorporating these words of Latin origin, Pecock confers theological and logical

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putting a comma where the sentence seems to mark the end of a semantic unit ('. . . ech oþere persoone in godhede,'), although he capitalizes the next word ('And alle þe treuþis now aftir to be rehercid . . .'), probably just as he saw in the manuscript. Greet himself admits that '[t]he punctuation of the manuscript is exceedingly erratic', and that '[p]erhaps the punctuation, like the capitalization, was to some degree a matter of decoration' (ibid. p. xi).

25 *Reule*, pp. 13, 20, 59 respectively.

26 Ibid. pp. 7, 100, 450.

precision and authority on his English prose. Indeed, as James Simpson remarked, 'Pecock's vocabulary throughout his *oeuvre* is fundamentally Latinate; he does translate many Latin terms into English, but in such a way as to insist on their technical force'.[27]

These syntactical and lexical examples eloquently testify to how deeply Pecock was implicated in the intellectual sophistication of Latin literary and theological discourse, as well as to his straightforward attempt to transfer that discourse into the vernacular sphere. No wonder Pecock, in various passages, exhorts his readers to reread his treatises many times so that they might be better understood.[28] Pecock's awareness of the difficulty of his prose becomes clear when he says that it does not matter much if his lay readers cannot understand all he has written, for they can take enough for them depending on their own ability. Just as 'god is þe feest fro which men risen wiþ relefis, after hem leeving of more þan þei mowe take', so too men can feast on Pecock's preaching on the page, eating as much as their digestive capacity allows them, and, after satiated, leave what remains to others.[29]

III: The 'Doom of Reason' That Never Fails

Pecock's linguistic Latinity is inextricably bound up with his theological and philosophical Latinity. As noted above, a number of critics have discussed what Pecock might have meant by 'resoun', and it is now clear that his rationalism is much more than the logical device that he embraces in all of his writing: syllogism.[30]

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27   Simpson, p. 277.

28   For instance, see *Reule*, p. 13; and *Book of Faith*, p. 205.

29   *Reule*, p. 20.

30   For instance, see 'Doom of reason is for him primarily the syllogism [. . .] Pecock was engaged in the medieval exercise of interpreting faith by doom of reason' (*Reule*, p. xvi); and 'What spurs Pecock to the writing of prose is not deep conviction about the sacrosanct character of the Bible, but rather his total commitment to what he calls the "doom of reson": judgment on the basis of formal argument.' (Janel M. Mueller, *The Native Tongue and the Word: Developments in English Prose Style 1380-1580* (Chicago and London: The University

Pecock, to be sure, frequently bases his argument on the deductive power of syllogism, and in one passage in *The Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy* (c. 1449) he goes to great lengths to expound on the mechanism of syllogism in close detail, championing its logical clarity and efficiency attained by the fact that the conclusion derived from two well-established premises is true beyond doubt.[31] In voicing such confidence in syllogism, Pecock aligns himself with theological predecessors such as Peter Abelard, who claimed that syllogisms are perfect inferences.[32] However, as we see below, Pecock's use of syllogism serves an ulterior purpose that allowed him to proceed craftily from those matters pertaining to created beings to those spiritual matters conventionally associated with faith and revelation. Pecock's frequent, passionate avowal of the importance of syllogism in his works, therefore, should not mislead the reader into neglecting the fact that for Pecock syllogism is the indispensable tool which unlocks everything that there is to know about matters concerning God and the created world. Reason, Pecock boldly claims in the *Repressor*, is indeed infallible: 'thilke doom of resoun which is a formal complete argument clepid a syllogism [. . .] failith nevere'.[33]

As we will see below, however, Pecock's championing of reason almost always has scholastic sources, on which he plays variation, standing on the shoulders of his predecessors. There are several features to be noted about Pecock's rationalist theology, which will be examined one by one below.

(i) Humans as reasoning animals

For Pecock, as for many other medieval theologians, reason is the defining essence of

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of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 141). For the contrary view, see, for instance, Munz, p. 44, n. 2.

31   *Repressor*, I, p. 8.

32   Eleonore Stump, 'Topics: Their Development and Absorption into Consequences', in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism*, ed. by Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982; repr. 1984), pp. 273-399 (at p. 280).

33   *Repressor*, I, pp. 51-52.

humankind that distinguishes it from the other creatures. The *Reule* is loosely structured as a series of theological 'trouþes', and the first truth that he establishes at the beginning of his treatise is that 'Eche creature in mankynde is maad of a body and of a resonable soule'.[34] When he returns to this thesis later in the *Reule*, Pecock employs a memorable analogy to explain how human beings are endowed with the ability to reason: reason is the eye of the soul. Just as the human eye cannot prevent itself from seeing its surroundings, so too it cannot help but perceive various aspects of the outside world just by using his own natural reason. And in doing so, they notice, by paying attention to how life is given to stones, herbs, beasts and birds, that men are endowed with natural reason.[35] Pecock demonstrates that men are blessed with the power of reason by shifting his observation from the simplest life forms to the more and more complex creatures, thus creating a hierarchy of creatures based on reason. This 'ladder of beings' *topos* and the 'stones and plants' analogy are commonplace in medieval theology, as can be seen in Thomas Aquinas's explication of natural reason.[36]

(ii) Knowledge of oneself as knowledge of God

Pecock's chain of being, however, does not terminate at the summit of the creatures, namely human beings: it ultimately extends to God, whose existence, goodness, majesty and omnipotence can be grasped by the use of reason, a theological and philosophical theme that engaged a number of notable late-medieval academics.[37]

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34   *Reule*, p. 37. In another treatise written roughly around the same period as the *Ruele*, i.e. *The Donet* (c. 1443-9), Pecock claims that reason and free will distinguish humans from beasts (Reginald Pecock, *The Donet, ed. by Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock*, EETS OS 156 (London: Oxford University Press, 1921; repr. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1971), p. 12).

35   *Reule*, p. 225; see also ibid. pp. 37-8.

36   See Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestio Disputata de Anima*, in Thomas Aquinas, *Selected Philosophical Writings*, trans. by Timothy McDermott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 129f; and Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 2. 47-48, in ibid. p. 170.

37   Mary Beth Ingham and Mechthild Dreyer, *The Philosophical Vision of John Duns Scotus: An Introduction* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004),

Pecock addresses the accessibility of divine, revelatory knowledge when he quips that 'þorouȝ þe siȝt and knowing of oure owne body and of oþere creturis we mowe bi oure kindeli resoun come to þe knowing herof þat þer is a maker vnmaad'.[38] In doing so, he is effectively voicing the *a posteriori* theory of the knowability of God's existence, propounded by such theologians as Duns Scotus, in which God can be known using one's sensory experiences.[39] But how can we actually achieve this? Pecock proves God's existence by employing *reductio ad absurdum*: if we do not postulate the first cause, or end, of all creatures, we would have to trace the chain of existence for ever, from one created being to its maker, to its maker, to its maker . . . *ad infinitum*. It follows, therefore, that there must be a creator of all things, which created this world and all the creatures *ex nihilo*. In other words, it is a logical 'contradiccioun' to suppose that there is no God. *Q. E. D.*[40] Needless to say, Pecock proves, in this instance, to be as good an Aristotelian as other eminent scholastic theologians such as Thomas Aquinas, who similarly employed the same logic to prove the existence of God when he said 'everything that can change or cease to exist must be traced back to a first cause which cannot change and of itself must be'.[41] This method is continued when he proceeds to demonstrate the nature of God: he always moves from the most evident and undeniable set of assumptions to more highly abstract notions such as infinity and omnipotence.[42]

By claiming that humans can climb the ladder of knowledge that begins with themselves and culminates in God, Pecock intimates that reason and faith or revelatory knowledge brought about by Scripture or revelations are neither separate from nor incommensurable with each other. On the contrary, the reader is exhorted to

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pp. 73-86.

38   *Reule*, p. 55.

39   Ingham and Dreyer, p. 74.

40   *Reule*, p. 55.

41   Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a 2ae, 1-3, in Aquinas, *Selected Philosophical Writings*, p. 202.

42   *Reule*, pp. 55-71.

utilise the former in order to arrive at the latter, for, as Pecock avers, the knowledge of ourselves elevates us to the knowledge of God: 'And so in þis wise we arise from þe knowyng of vs silf in our soulis side into knowing of oure god'.[43] Pecock's rationalism, then, distances himself from the kind of scepticism espoused by certain nominalists, who held that human reason, or philosophy that employs it, does not have the capacity to arrive at or demonstrate revealed truth, thus severing the tie of reason and faith.[44]

If Pecock's reason enables him to rise to divine knowledge, it would be unsurprising if he also claims that even Scripture should be read in the light of reason. Pecock seems to sense the danger of asserting this claim when he says that the Bible should be read for the purpose of 'denouncing, teching, reueling and schewing to vs þo trouþis and articlis into whos knowing men mowe not come bi laboure of natural resonyng, whiche trouþis and articles ben þerfore knowun of vs bi feiþ oonly'.[45] He clearly states that there are some areas of knowledge that the exercise of 'natural resonyng' cannot reach, and which should therefore be left to the domain of 'feiþ oonly'. Therefore, reading these passages might encourage us to conclude, along with E. M. Blackie, that 'reason for him was synonymous with divine guidance, and when it summoned him, he obeyed, no matter how far he was bidden to stray from the recognized paths'.[46] Pecock's use of Latin, when he expounds on the Trinity, seems to confirm this view.[47] However, Pecock also states in the *Repressor* that

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43   Ibid. p. 46.

44   See William Courtenay, 'Nominalism and Late Medieval Religion', in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference*, ed. by Charles Trinkhaus and Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden: Brill , 1974), pp. 26-66 (at pp. 43-44); and Gordon Leff, *The Dissolution of the Medieval Outlook: An Essay on Intellectual and Spiritual Change in the Fourteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1976), p. 16.

45   *Reule*, p. 10.

46   E. M. Blackie, 'Reginald Pecock', *English Historical Review*, 26 (1911), 448-68 (at p. 468).

47   *Reule*, pp. 88-89.

whenever the reader of the Bible finds anything that contradicts her reasoning, these contradictory passages should be interpreted in such a way that it accords her reason:

> whanne evere and where evere in Holi Scripture be writen eny point or eny governaunce of the saide lawe of kinde it is more verrili writen in the book of mannis soule than in the outward book of parchemyn or of velym; and if eny semyng discorde be bitwixe the wordis writen in the outward book of Holi Scripture and the doom of resoun writen in mannis soule and herte, the wordis so writen withoutforth ouȝten be expowned and be interpretid and brouȝt forto accorde with the doom of resoun in thilk mater.[48]

In the *Donet*, Pecock comments on specific biblical passages as if they are not autonomous themselves, and thus need to be supplemented by human understanding which has the power to fill the lacunae left by God's words. This hermeneutic gesture is most typically shown when he claims that the Ten Commandments do not contain all of God's laws, and the reader would do better by learning his 'Four Tables' when they wish to know the moral virtues prescribed by God.[49]

(iii) The limits of reason

After witnessing the supreme authority Pecock grants to reason, it is curious to use how he relates it to the other cognitive faculties. Early on in the *Reule*, Pecock regards reason and the will as the two worthiest faculties.[50] The reader can see the collaboration of these two faculties in the following passage, where Pecock identifies 'þe doom of oure resoun' with 'þe vse of oure wil', which, in turn, commands all the other faculties in performing our deeds:

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48 *Repressor*, I, pp. 25-26; see also ibid. pp. 120-121.
49 *Donet*, pp. 135-148.
50 'oure resoun or oure vndirstondyng, and oure affecte and wil be oure moost worþi powers' (*Reule*, p. 44).

þe service whiche þou sechist of vs to be doon to þee and þerfore whiche we ouȝte paie to þee, schulde be to live aftir þe doom of oure resoun, þat is to seie þe vse of oure wil and þe vse of alle oure oþere powers vndir wil in alle þe deedis whiche we schulde do or suffre in hem or wiþ hem [. . .]⁵¹

However, just when we begin to think that the will is synonymous with reason, we realize that reason and the will are in fact not accorded equal standing in Pecock's map of human cognitive faculties; on the contrary, he unmistakably prioritizes reason over the will, having the latter operate at the behest of the former, as is clear when he states the will is supposed to 'obeie' reason:

oure wil conformeþ him to resoun and forto obeie to his doom, And þis conformyng and obeiyng is not ellis but a natural riȝtwisnes kept betwene þese ij powers, stonding in þis þat resoun knowe and schewe trouþe, and þat þe wil obeie in louyng, chesing and accepting it, and aftirward þat wil comaunde oþere powers to obeie and fulfille and wirche and execute for þe same trouþe so knowun bi resoun and chosun bi þe wil, — it folewiþ as for þe fourþe trouþe þat euery vertuose deede and euery vertuose suffring in oure conuersacioun is a deede of riȝtwisnes comyng forþ out of þe original riȝtwisnes bitwene oure wil and oure resoun.⁵²

The balance (*natural riȝtwisnes*) between reason and the will is the foundation of all the virtuous deeds: reason instructs the will by recognizing and showing the truth,

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51   *Reule*, p. 227.

52   Ibid. pp. 232-233; see also 'riȝtwisnes bitwene oure wil and resoun is in maner as it were þe first moral vertu or as an open welle of alle oure moral vertues, and riȝtwisnes bitwene hem and þi wil and ordinaunce, lord god, is þe privey quyk spring and veyne of þe same welle and of alle oþere moral vertues' (ibid. 233).

and the will obeys reason by 'louyng, chesing and accepting it', with the other cognitive faculties following the will's choice in actually performing it. Pecock goes on to assert that neither reason nor the will is able to independently strike a harmonious balance between them on their own, because it is God who ordained that there be an 'ordre' between these two powers. In other words, the balance is produced by God, and we need to conform our will and reason to God's will and reason.

> þe privey cheef hid, veyne and springe out of whom comeþ þis seid welle of natural riȝtwisnes is the conformyng and þe ojeiyng of vs in oure wil and in oure resoun to þi wil and þin ordinaunce, lord god, bi which þou hast ordeyned bi þi resoun and woldist bi þi wil þat þer schulde be such an ordre and a natural riȝtwisnes kept bitwene þese seid powers in resonable creaturis . . . [53]

Since earlier in the *Reule* Pecock establishes that God is the maker of all things,[54] the attribution to God as the source of the balance between reason and the will in the above passage is not in the least surprising; what other solution would be available to Pecock the theologian after all? What we should not miss here, however, is that this rather hasty attribution neither negates nor affects the fact that Pecock foregrounds the power of reason and intellect, while the will is given an ancillary role of following its lead. In other words, Pecock is espousing what is commonly called 'intellectualism'.[55] As long as he allows reason to dictate the will, he follows theologians such as Bonaventure, who contends that the will first needs to know what is good before starting to act, or Thomas Aquinas, who stressed the dependence of the will upon reason when he claims 'it is reason that commands'.[56] Pecock's

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53 Ibid. p. 233.

54 Ibid. p. 48

55 See Tobias Hoffmann, 'Intellectualism and Voluntarism', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by Robert Pasnau, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), I, pp. 414-427.

56 Bonaventure, *Commentaria in quattuor libros sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi*, II,

intellectualist theology stands as a stark contrast with the more 'voluntarist' strand of vernacular theology, in which human free will is given prominence in gaining salvation.[57] Was Pecock's rationalist mode of discourse a response to this group of fifteenth-century English devotional texts? Further investigation is in order.

Admitting so much room for the doom of reason leaves Pecock in a very awkward position, and he sheepishly concedes that there are certain matters that cannot be approached by reason unless it is helped by faith or revelation. For instance, he argues that some truths cannot be proved without the help of 'a pure article of feiþ aboue al resoun, þerfore þe ix laste trouþis ben pure articlis of feiþ and not conclusiouns of natural resoun'.[58] It is to be noted, however, Pecock's occasional concession of some space to faith is at best beguiling, for the perfunctory half-heartedness of such throwaway concessions can hardly masque his real motive for promoting reason over faith. Towards the end of the *Reule*, Pecock argues that even in matters concerning faith, there must be room for reason, for if we could believe without the assistance of reason, even beasts that 'lacken resoun' would be able to attain to faith.

> Also how schulde or myȝte we wite þat þis article or þilk article is of vs to be taken and to be allowid for feiþ, and þis oþere or þilk oþere article is not worþi to be taken for feiþ, no but if þe doom of oure resoun hadde place to juge in sum maner aboute þe maters of oure feiþ, wheþer þei ben trewe or no, and þerfore wheþer þei ouȝte be take for feiþ or no, siþen we knowen wel þat vpon noon

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d. 25, p. I, a. un., q. 3, in *S.Bonaventurae Opera omnia*, 10 vols (Quaracchi, 1882-1902), II, pp. 597-8; and Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (Turin: Marietti, 1952), *Pars Prima et Pars Secundae*, Ia IIae, q. 90 a. 1 (pp. 410-411).

57   What I have in mind is those English texts in which is stressed the importance of 'doing what is in them' (*facere quod se est*), such as *A Ladder of Foure Ronges* (15C), and *The Prickynge of Love* (1380s).

58   *Reule*, p. 84.

maters ouȝte be bisett feiþ saue upon hem whiche ben trewe.[59]

In Pecock's theological universe, then, even 'þe maters of oure feiþ' should be judged properly by our 'resoun', for unless we know what is true in the first place, we would not be able to know which articles of faith we should believe in. For Pecock, that would be the equivalent of a spiritual wasteland in which we have no idea where to start. Pecock's vernacular rationalizing project, which, in many ways, is heavily influenced by Latin scholasticism, is also a dogged attempt to forestall this imminent catastrophe, a crisis of faith which would be unleashed once human beings abandon reason and blindly believe what is instructed to them.

IV: Conclusion

We have explored, albeit in a very tentative fashion, the way in which Pecock advances the cause of reason, for the purpose of bringing to light how indebted Pecock is to the preceding theological tradition in terms of both Latin prose style as well as Latin scholasticism. Despite the recent scholarly contributions that probe into his role as a self-styled guardian of orthodoxy who passionately strove to educate Lollard lay people in the vernacular, Pecock, nonetheless, remains an obdurately Latinate, scholastic theologian; his pedagogical ideal aside, his readers would have struggled to fully comprehend a sizable chunk of his vernacular.[60] Obviously, this is not to deny the significance of Pecock's choice of English as the language of edification; rather, it purports to highlight the simultaneously self-effacing and self-assertive Latinate tendency inherent in his vernacular project. His Latinity is plainly

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59   Ibid. p. 425.

60   Bose, 'Vernacular Voice'; Sarah James, 'Revaluing Vernacular Theology: The Case of Reginald Pecock', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s. 33 (2002), 135-169; idem, '"Langagis, whose reules ben not writen": Pecock and the Uses of the Vernacular', in *Vernacularity in England and Wales c.1300-1550*, ed. by E. Salter and H. Wicker (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 101-117.

showing in every sentence he wrote, and that may well have been part of the reason why his reformist project failed spectacularly.

The brief, foregoing survey of Pecock's Latinity suggests further lines of inquiry which the present paper has not been able to address. Since his reason-centred theology necessarily entails what his contemporary called 'semi-Pelagianism', or an emphasis on the importance of human effort in attaining salvation, it will be necessary to explore the way in which Pecock's rationalism is related to his soteriology.[61] In this connection, it would also be fruitful to compare his at once intellectualist and semi-Pelagian theology with those devotional treatises of a voluntarist cast that stress human free will, as has been briefly touched upon above.

Furthermore, his legacy to posterity will also requires further investigation; even though he did not have any discernible successors because of the ecclesiastical suppression, it is still necessary to inquire whether he truly was a maverick in fifteenth-century theological and devotional culture. If Pecock was not a dead end, then could his thought be regarded as a connecting node that links late-medieval theology with Reformation theology? Or, should we regard Pecock as the last flowering of medieval rationalism before the triumph of fideism in Reformation theology?

Last but not least, Pecock's style also deserves greater scrutiny: what are we talking about when we talk about the 'difficulty' of his prose? Only through detailed examination of his entire works would we be able to begin to address these questions, thereby situating his theology in the volatile intellectual climate of fifteenth-century Europe.

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61   See, for example, *Reule*, pp. 104, 200, 206, 214-19.