The Way of the Rod: the Functions of Beating in Late Medieval Pedagogy

BEN PARSONS

University of Leicester

In 1481, a plea was heard before the Common Bench which shines revealing light on late medieval attitudes towards instruction. A petition was made by a young apprentice against his former master, a hosier at London. The boy complained that he had been forced to abandon his training after a single year, owing to the excessive cruelty he had experienced: he describes frequent “assault and battery against his person, and other trespass,” as well as “imprisonment” and general neglect. While these accusations are not unusual in themselves, as the case is merely one of many brought against masters in the period, what makes it significant is its treatment by the court.¹ In delivering his verdict, the presiding judge, Sir Thomas Littleton, took the opportunity to voice some observations on the role of physical coercion in education. He argued “for one to beat his apprentice if he will not look to or attend to his craft” is simply part of the implicit “covenant” between all educators and pupils, adding that “if a schoolmaster might justify it, then my judgement has it that the student [*scoler*] does not wish to receive his instruction [*erudicione*].”²

What these remarks make clear is that the concepts of school-level instruction and physical discipline had converged by the end of the Middle Ages. The beating of schoolboys is not simply expected, but treated as an integral part of education, holding an unassailable place in elementary teaching; it gains the same level of authority as a legal precedent, standing as an established fact which can be used to interpret other events. Littleton’s statement goes far beyond regarding punishment as an occasional solution to

the disciplinary problems of the classroom. It suggests that teaching at school must inevitably involve an element of physical correction, that flogging is profoundly interwoven with grammar instruction at some fundamental, conceptual level.

This is far from the only source to draw such a connection; the same reasoning is visible throughout late medieval culture. It can be seen in the conventional iconography of education, where discipline is often used to symbolise teaching at school. Images of masters from the period invariably show them with one of the standard instruments of discipline. They appear brandishing either a rod or birch in manuscript illuminations, on the frontispieces of early printed schoolbooks, such as Francesco Niger's *Ars epistolam* (1477), and even in the official seals of schools, such as those founded at Höxter in 1365 and Macclesfield in 1502.³ Along the same lines, whenever Grammar is personified in the late Middle Ages, she is invariably shown with a similar implement. As Suzanne Reynolds writes, this is by far "her most consistent attribute."⁴ She is depicted with a birch on the south portal of Chartres cathedral (ca. 1150); a lash on the reliefs of the Campanile di Giotto at Florence (ca. 1350); and a rod in the Palazzo Trinci frescoes in Foligno (ca. 1420).⁵ Literary portrayals follow the same course. In Langland's *Piers Plowman* (ca. 1363) the figure of Grammer is equipped with "a baleys...to bette hem with...but if thei wolde lerne," while Alan of Lille presents her "wielding a lash [*scutica*] which punishes the abuses that childish age absorbs."⁶ As such sources make plain, chastisement was not merely seen as a useful accompaniment to teaching, but as its most recognisable and salient feature. In these sources, teaching and beating are in fact effectively conflated. When Folcwin of Lobbes portrays study itself as the "ferulae tramitem" (way of the rod), he is merely voicing a common assumption of the period.⁷

However, while the association between education and physical correction is amply attested across medieval culture, what is less immediately obvious is why one should be thought to support the other. As Rebecca Bushnell observes, the belief that “if you spare the rod the results will be disastrous” is pervasive and conspicuous but the question, “what was corporal punishment meant to accomplish” is harder to resolve.⁸ This paper seeks to clarify this issue for the late Middle Ages. It will consider the matter in terms of the functions that were ascribed to beating. Its focus will be the rationales developed by late medieval pedagogues, educational theorists and other commentators. Flogging will be therefore considered less as a purely habitual, unquestioned element in instruction and more as a technique that stimulated debate and rationalisation.

BENEFICIAL TORMENTS: THE CLASSICAL AND EARLY MEDIEVAL BACKGROUND

Like many aspects of medieval intellectual culture, much of the logic supporting corporal punishment in the Middle Ages has its roots in antiquity.⁹ Many of the effects attributed to beating by medieval pedagogy were either directly inherited from classical thinking or built on premises formulated by Greek and Roman authors.¹⁰ This influence is not surprising: the association between physical correction and instruction was firmly established in the Greek *σχολεῖον* and Roman *ludus* alike. While ancient authorities stop short of identifying teaching with mortification, it is clear that many of them saw discipline as a vital component of training.¹¹ The assumption that education must be severe if it is to be effective is evident, for instance, in Tacitus’s *Dialogus* (ca. 100 CE),

where the decline of rhetoric is partly attributed to deserting the “stringency and discipline [*severitate ac disciplina*] of our ancestors in the training and forming of citizens.”¹² In the fourth century, Libanius displays the same idea, devoting a model oratory to the theme “the root of education is bitter but the fruits are sweet,” and describing “verbal abuse, blows, and threats” as intrinsic aspects of instruction.¹³ For authors such as Juvenal and Horace, being beaten even seems to operate as a necessary rite of passage, ensuring membership in the educated elite.¹⁴ Such sentiments apparently reflect a longstanding and widespread acceptance. As early as the fourth century BCE, Xenophon treats the instructive nature of “blows” (πληγὰς) as axiomatic, observing that it is common sense to “punish [κολλάζουσι] a learner for not carrying out properly what he was meant to do.”¹⁵ The pervasiveness of such thinking is further underscored by many standard studies of education in the ancient world, including those of Bonner, Rawson, and Carcopino.¹⁶

While the prevalence of these ideas is noteworthy in its own right, highlighting a broad continuity between classical and medieval culture, these beliefs are rendered all the more significant by the reasoning that underpins them. A range of ancient texts treat the correction of children as a philosophical problem as much as a practical one, placing discipline in a field of considerations that lay the groundwork for the medieval debate. What emerges strongly from these discussions is the view that punishment has a didactic as well as a simply punitive function: it is held to exert clear effects on the developing mind of the child, fostering specific faculties within him.¹⁷ One of the most explicit theorists of this view is Aristotle, whose *Politics* touches on discipline when addressing the education of παῖδας, boys below the age of seven. Aristotle specifically prescribes

“training of the body [σῶμα]” for this group, as a means of anticipating and complementing their eventual “training of the mind [διάνοια],” and awards organised pain a central role in this process.¹⁸ He not only states that children must be corrected with “blows” (πληγαῖς) rather than other “marks of dishonour” (ἀτιμία) owing to their limited comprehension, but also urges that they be deliberately exposed to physical discomfort in order to “accustom” (ἐθίζειν) them to such privation.¹⁹ As Susan Meyer notes, what Aristotle is alluding to here is the development of the child’s ἦθος, his “virtue of character.”²⁰ Physical discipline does more than admonish errors or punish wrongdoing: it is a means of fixing the child’s disposition, contributing directly to one of the central faculties in Aristotle’s system of instruction.²¹

Such thinking is not confined to Aristotle. Plato also argued that the first stages of education should involve deliberate exposure to suffering, on the grounds that “the first childish sensations” of pain (λύπη) and pleasure (ἡδονή) are the means by which awareness of “goodness and badness come to the soul,” providing benchmarks for appraising later experiences.²² Similar convictions were also held under the Romans. In the first century CE, Philo gives a blunt articulation of the same idea, asserting that when tutors and schoolmasters strike (τούτων) their pupils they are acting directly on their “souls” (ψυχάς), working “to perfect” them (ἀμείνους).²³ A variation occurs in Marcus Aurelius’s *Meditations* (ca. 170-80 CE), where the author thanks his tutor for giving him the ability “to tolerate pain” (φερέπονον), claiming that this in turn helped instil ὀλιγοδείης within him, the quality of self-denial or “feeling few needs.”²⁴ In all three cases, the fundamental point is the same as that asserted by Aristotle. Each author agrees that castigation has a profound and positive impact on the interior life of the child.

Alongside direct claims about the functions and results of correction, classical authorities also generate a series of important metaphors for conceptualising punishment. Two particularly recurrent analogies are husbandry and craftsmanship, which are repeatedly evoked to explain the necessity and purpose of physical correction. Plato's discussion of παιδεία includes allusions to both of these fields in the context of discipline. In the *Laws*, Plato states that children need restraint, or "tying up with many bridles [χαλινός]" in the same way that "no sheep or other grazing beast [πρόβατον] ought to exist without a herdsman"; the *Protagoras* compares children to "warped wood" (ξύλον διαστρεφόμενον) that can only be corrected by the judicious administration of "blows" (πληγαῖς).²⁵ The first of these comparisons proved especially durable: Brad Inwood documents its usage by Chrysippus, Seneca, and Origen, amongst others.²⁶ Significantly for the medieval period, it also seeps into Jewish wisdom literature of the Hellenistic age: Jesus ben Sira compares the undisciplined boy to "a horse not broken."²⁷ Although less prevalent, the idea that children resemble raw material that must be processed by force also has later currency. Comparable ideas can be found in Cicero, Martial and Juvenal, who refer to grammarians "casting" (limare) and "moulding" (conformare) their pupils, or flogging them as bronze is beaten on "a ringing anvil," or inspiring them with "tender manners" (mores teneros) like a "thumb shaping a face in wax."²⁸

As several modern commentators have made clear, these analogies are notable not only for their pervasiveness but also for the assumptions that they express.²⁹ Ultimately, they both suggest that there is little distinction between the bodies and minds of children. Equating children with bronze or wood is fairly unambiguous in this regard, implying that the young lack any dimension beyond the material; they are, to all intents and

purposes, inanimate matter to be worked. Likewise, identifying them with animals emphasises their corporeality, suggesting that what consciousness they do have is anchored to the body. As Richard Sorabji has shown, classical thought often differentiates “animal perception” from human subjectivity on precisely these grounds. From Alcmaeon onwards, animals are made to represent a crudely sensory form of awareness, one that is merely “directed to body and to that which is external,” governed by appetites and senses.³⁰ Placing children in the same category assumes that their thoughts operate along the same rudimentary lines. In the words of Catherine Atherton, these images treat rational persuasion as strictly “the reserve of adults alone,” implying that children are incapable of more abstract thought-processes, only being aware of bodily sensations and urges.³¹ This sheds further light on why physical coercion holds such importance when dealing with them. It is the only means of influencing their minds and actions, because their psychologies have not yet fully diverged from their physiologies, and are therefore insusceptible to “rational discourse.”³²

In sum, classical theory regards the beating of learners in two main ways: as a means of constructing the psychology of the young, and as an answer to their supposedly sensualist nature. While these basic assumptions form much of the framework for medieval pedagogy, they also pass through some important refinements before reaching the later period. In particular, punishment undergoes a significant revaluation by the church fathers, one that powerfully affects later conceptions. Although it has been argued that early Christianity saw a softening of attitudes towards the young, Richard Saller and Theodore de Bruyn have shown that patristic authors tend if anything to idealise child discipline.³³ Injunctions in Proverbs 22.15 and Sirach 30.12 evoking the rod as an

antidote for folly or obstinacy seem to have allowed punishment to gain a more spiritual dimension than it had previously held.³⁴ As De Bruyn notes, for such figures as Cyprian, Ambrose and Paulinus, beating becomes a recurrent symbol of the trials by which faith is tested. Not only is God himself depicted as a figurative punisher of his wayward children, “the *pater flagellans*...who makes a test of suffering,” but chastisement is made to represent “the torment whereby one’s service is redirected back to God,” a process reminding Christians of their proper devotion.³⁵ Consequently, the Fathers add a new shade of meaning to discipline, turning it into an allegory of the hardships by which piety is fortified. As the author of Hebrews puts it, in what is probably the earliest expression of this figure, “whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth; and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”³⁶

While the bulk of this material concerns paternal or domestic correction, a number of sources extend these attitudes to beating in the schoolroom. As early as the second century, Clement of Alexandria valorises classroom discipline in the same manner that Hebrews celebrates parental “scourging,” depicting Christ as a stern grammarian who wields rebuke (ἀπειλή) and a rod (ῥάβδος) as a dual check against “the fire” (πῦρ).³⁷ However, the most explicit and influential theorist of this view is Augustine.³⁸ While Augustine uses pedagogic beating in the same rhetorical fashion as Clement, employing it as a recurrent symbol throughout his work, he also addresses its mechanics in more literal terms.³⁹ In the *Confessions* (398 CE), he gives flogging a foundational place in the religious development of children, describing how beating in school can act as a spur for worship. He reports that his younger self first offered prayers to God “not to be beaten in school” before expanding this from a personal to a universal process. He compares the

“rod of the master” to “the trials of martyrs,” seeing both as “beneficial torments calling us back from destructive pleasure.”⁴⁰

This point resurfaces in the *Civitas Dei* (426 CE), and is developed further. Here Augustine identifies the ignorance of children as an aspect of original sin, defining “ignorance of truth, which is manifest already in infancy” as one of “the evils of men, issuing from that root of error and perverted desire, with which all the sons of Adam are born.” As a result, the rod becomes not merely a means of remedying lack of knowledge but a corrective for the inclination towards evil that this represents: Augustine asks, “what else is intended by the pedagogues, masters, rods, straps [*lora*], birch [*virgae*]...but to vanquish ignorance and restrain depraved desire, those evils with which we came into this world?”⁴¹ Clearly Augustine sees punishment during education as a process through which the divine will acts on children. Taken as a whole, then, patristic literature not only reinforces general belief in the efficacy of the rod, but allows its effects to be stretched beyond the purely social or personal virtues envisioned by pagan commentators.⁴² Flogging gains here a spiritual as well as a moral or social dimension, becoming a way “to save sinning children from damnation.”⁴³

While the Fathers expanded the role beating could play in instruction, further developments occurred in the centuries immediately following. The early medieval period seems to have witnessed a renewed emphasis on discipline in formal schooling as beating began to be accepted and even institutionalised to a much greater degree. To understand this shift, it is important to note that antiquity did not always affirm the connection between education and discipline. While belief in the utility of beating is attested across a range of classical sources, albeit with differing views on what it was

meant to achieve, such assurance is only one of several positions. Amongst Roman authors in particular, it is almost as common to find corporal punishment opposed as advocated, seen as working against education rather than supporting it. As Martin Bloomer has most recently emphasised, a series of thinkers, including Quintilian, Plutarch, Seneca and Himerius, hold that beating only results in “the deformation of the boy into a slave,” effectively cancelling the agency schooling should cultivate.⁴⁴ In Quintilian’s iteration of this view, flogging is defined as a “disgraceful form of punishment” which can in fact transform its sufferer from subject to *servus*: “he will, like the worst type of slave, merely become hardened [*durabitur*] to blows.”⁴⁵ This position also colours some early Christian writing. Jerome, for instance, warns that rebuke might in fact impede children from learning, giving rise to “amaritudo” (bitterness) towards study, while John Chrysostom argues that the rod should only be used as a deterrent, again to avoid the dangers of servility.⁴⁶

During the early Middle Ages, however, this range of opinion appears to have contracted. The emergence of the monastery as a key venue for teaching, at least until child-oblation lost its popularity around the twelfth century, seems to have integrated discipline even further into instruction.⁴⁷ In this context, punishment received a new level of definition and systematisation, as ordinaries, codes and other documents show it moving from an object of loose conjecture into a formalised part of schooling. The roots of this shift lie in late antiquity; much of its impetus is provided by the thirtieth chapter of the Benedictine Rule. Here Benedict, like Plato and Aristotle before him, argues that the lack of reason in children demands that correction must target their bodies. They are to be treated like those who cannot “understand how grave a penalty excommunication is”;

once they “commit a great offence, they are to be afflicted with severe fasting or restrained with sharp strokes [*acris verberibus*], so as to be remedied.”⁴⁸ This precept is reiterated and refined throughout the following centuries. In the sixth century, for instance, the Third Council of Toledo reasserts the necessity of subjecting oblates to regular corporal discipline, on the grounds that “all in the age of adolescence are prone to evil [*prona in malum*]”; likewise Chrodegang’s widely disseminated rule for canons, compiled in ca. 755, also stresses that “small boys or adolescents...in whatever place, should have order and discipline.”⁴⁹ But alongside such broad decrees, other sources display a more focused approach towards physical correction. This can be seen in one of the many penitentials attributed to Theodore of Tarsus, archbishop of Canterbury in the late seventh century.⁵⁰ When this text touches on the treatment of boys it not only prescribes beating for them, as opposed to the periods of penance it allocates to adults, but also lists the specific offenses that should invite such measures: “boys who fornicate amongst themselves should be flogged,” while a boy “who pollutes himself [*ipsum coinquinat*]” should receive a milder version of the same penalty.⁵¹ At some institutions, beating was not only codified but symbolically absorbed into daily ritual. According to the customal of the Abbey of Benignus at Dijon, dating from the tenth century, the *Magister infantum* should begin each day by reminding his charges of their subjection to punishment, “touching each child with the rod [*virga*], so as to stir him from sleep.”⁵²

The early Middle Ages therefore bear witness to a deeper entrenchment of physical castigation into schooling. In the monasteries corporal punishment passes from having a fluid and debatable relationship to education into something firmly anchored therein, occupying a clearly defined place in its structures. Its role in training gains a new

level of formalisation as it is not merely advocated but specifically ritualised and codified. This derives not merely out of the general asceticism and regulation of the monastery, but out of the priorities peculiar to the monastic schools. It can be linked to the broader emphasis on physicality that characterised education in this context. As Isabella Cochelin has noted, drawing on the work of Peter Brown and Jean Leclercq, there is a clear tendency within monastic schools to focus on “the flesh...as an avenue to reach and inform the inner self,” something that can be seen in the emphasis on “performance of the correct bodily gestures” and general programme of “passivity, surveillance and imitation.”⁵³ A source such as Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* shows how readily this approach could cross from coercion to mortification: Bede’s account of John of Beverley teaching a dumb man to speak, for instance, portrays John initiating his pupil into literacy by “seizing hold of him by the chin” and “stamping [*inpressit*] the sign of the holy cross on his tongue” before successfully directing him to speak.⁵⁴ On the other hand, the new emphasis on discipline might also be connected with monastic attitudes towards children and their problematic sexuality. Mayke de Jong notes a prevailing sense that oblates were a site of particular waywardness, whose education should concern itself with ensuring submission to authority above all.⁵⁵ Especially emphatic on this point is the *Forma Institutionis Canoniorum* (ca. 817), from the community of Saint-Stephen at Metz, which states that boys should feel “their sides regularly bruised by the birch...in order that their age, wanton and greatly inclined to vice, can find no place in which the outrage of sin might corrupt.”⁵⁶ On the whole, then, the central, bodily preoccupations of the monastic schools tightened the connection between physical discipline and instruction. While classical authorities sketch out the didactic uses of punishment, and the church

fathers extend the range of virtues it can transmit, the early monastery schools make these ideas more focused, fixing physical discipline among the fundamental objectives of the school.

LORE AND CHASTISING: PUNISHMENT AND PEDAGOGY IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

As classical and early medieval sources make clear, punishment in the service of education already had a long history in practice and speculation by the later Middle Ages. The period inherited a culture in which beating was firmly embedded as both a practical measure and an object of philosophical inquiry. Classical authorities not only passed on a general view that schooling should serve as “a period of obligatory scolding,” a position further augmented by the ascetic climate of the early monastery schools, but also offered a range of theorisations to support such a view, attaching numerous benign effects to flogging.⁵⁷ In short, the earlier periods put a broad range of ideas at the disposal of later medieval educators, lending punishment the sanction of rationalisation as well as custom; beating had to be specifically discussed and plotted even as it was allocated an increasingly central and formalised place in education.

The transmission of these attitudes from ancient and patristic sources had a complex and variable impact on late medieval ideas of school punishment. On the one hand, many writers in the period draw on these views in a straightforward, even deferential manner, simply treating them as self-evidently valid. Typical in this respect is a late dialogue on childcare written by Bartholomaeus Baten in the first decades of the

sixteenth century. Here even specific logistical questions such as “with which instrument should children be beaten?” and “which part of the body do you recommend to be beaten and struck?” are resolved by referring to Aristotle, Cicero and Ben Sira, often without expansion.⁵⁸ Baten even foregrounds his reliance on such sources, declaring “I myself teach nothing here, nor do I wish that you should follow in this matter my own opinion.”⁵⁹ Baten is not alone in taking this approach. Many other texts explained the necessity of beating simply by echoing ancient authorities, with some quotations developing into stock phrases for the purpose. Especially pervasive is the line from Juvenal’s first satire “we have all flinched a hand beneath the rod.”⁶⁰ This appears in several medieval works, including a twelfth-century gloss on Ruth 2.2 and a tenth-century letter written by Eraclus of Liege to his teacher Ratherius; presumably it gained such prominence for its dual appeal to literary authority and established precedent.⁶¹ Sometimes these sources appear in teaching materials themselves. Thus when Hermann von dem Busche compiled a collection of translation exercises for use at Wesel in 1516, he included several patristic statements on the importance of beating, apparently to “encourage correct behaviour and even docility amongst his students.”⁶²

Nevertheless, commentary on the role of correction in schooling was not purely retrospective, despite its routine appeals to ancient sources. Indeed, a number of important studies on medieval education and childcare, including landmark works by Albrecht Pieper and Nicholas Orme, have tended to see classroom discipline in the period less as an inheritance from earlier modes of thinking and more as an extension of specifically medieval norms, arising primarily out of “contemporary standards” and ideals that were “socially established” rather than historically engrained.⁶³ This is also

true of theoretical discussions of beating. Even when such work is securely situated within classical frameworks, new concerns invariably intrude, as later authors often exceed older formulas in the very act of evoking them. However, rather than moving entirely beyond ancient paradigms, much of this discontinuity seems to stem from the classical sources themselves. While authors such as Baten might use ancient texts to stabilize their discourse, grounding their assertions in an accepted canon of statements, for other writers the same works only open up further questions. A key reason for this is the highly varied nature of classical commentary on punishment, its incorporation of several competing attitudes and standpoints. These divisions, which do not merely concern the necessity of discipline but its overall objectives, provoked similar fractures in medieval responses, and were exacerbated as individual writers elaborated them further.

This process can be seen in miniature in the medieval reception of patristic views of beating. To some extent, the idea that correction serves to shape the moral sensibilities of students and bring them towards proper devotion is part of the received wisdom of the late Middle Ages. Figures as diverse as the Cistercian hymnist Christian of Lillienfeld, the mystic John Ruysbroeck, and the abbot Absalon of Springiersbach, regard the *ferula* as “the bearer of virtue” or depict God as a schoolmaster wielding the “rod of correction.”⁶⁴ But the salutary effects of discipline were not just an accepted truism; other texts produced more complex interrogations, expanding on the premises they inherited. One example is the treatise “Pro pueris ecclesiae parisiensis,” written in ca. 1410 by Jean Gerson while chancellor of the University of Paris. As its name suggests, this was principally intended as a code of practice for masters at Paris’ cathedral school; however, as D. Catherine Brown notes, it passes far beyond baldly listing regulations as Gerson

spells out a much broader set of pedagogic ideals.⁶⁵ In the course of his tract Gerson makes frequent and extensive reference to beating. When outlining the principal duties of teachers, for instance, he asks that each master “prevent undue intimacies from developing at his house” by “compelling the boys with blows [*verberibus*].” As well as demanding corporal punishment, Gerson also suggests how these measures might stimulate the piety of pupils, attempting to establish how the birch brings students to salvation. He argues that when boys are beaten, “they are induced to beware of sins, that is, of those acts for which they know that they will be beaten, if a Master saw or knew of them; this is because God sees all things, and because they have a good guardian angel...and they will expect correction [*correctionem*].”⁶⁶ Gerson’s point here is comparable to Clement’s. Both regard the chastising teacher as representative of God, but Gerson’s argument is not purely allegorical: he argues that the *magister* serves as a prototype in the child’s mind of the observation and punishment that God also enacts, serving to condition children to such circumstances. For Gerson punishment puts the fear of God into boys, leading pupils to recognise the constant and corrective power of the Lord by subjecting them to an earthly equivalent.

Gerson is not alone in attempting to specify exactly how flogging might possess moral utility. Other authors engage in similar contemplation, but the conclusions they produce often move in radically different directions, especially when they gravitate towards Augustinian material. A particularly important discussion is that of Robert of Melun, Bishop of Hereford in the middle decades of the twelfth century. Like Gerson, Robert regards punishment as bound up with moral development, although he draws this assumption down an altogether different path. As Marcia Colish writes, Robert’s basic

view of education is grounded in the *Civitas Dei*, albeit mediated through the readings of Porretans and Hugh of St Victor. He follows Augustine in emphasising that “original sin afflicts the soul and body equally” and that “the chief spiritual weakness borne by fallen man is ignorance”; however, he also takes up Hugh’s point that the role of education is to remedy this situation, arguing that the trivium and quadrivium serve to restore the corrupted reason of humanity.⁶⁷ Thus Robert writes in the *Sententie* (ca. 1160), consciously echoing Hugh’s *Didascalion*: “the study of learning and training is called coming upon truth...it is the greatest and highest thing to be recognised, as through it we may be perfected.”⁶⁸ Nonetheless, Robert does not only echo earlier work, but also introduces some significant new ideas. One of his key innovations is allocating a place to suffering within this gradual rectification. In an important passage he comments on the human condition before and after the Fall, comparing Adam’s physical and mental perfection against man’s later state:

And so man, whose restoration we now discuss, had integrity before sinning in both of his substances, that is, in mind and body. For integrity in mind consists of two things, that is, in learning the truth and in love for the good. Of course, before sinning he was able to know truth without error, and to love the good without difficulty. Likewise the integrity of corporeal substance is constituted of two things, that is, the ability to work without suffering from weariness and the power of protection against the violence of injuries [*violentia lesionis*]. Indeed, if he had not sinned, man would work with gladness, without weariness, protected from all violence of injuries. Yet that

which he can retain through obedience is fittingly suffered as a penalty for disobedience. Hence ignorance followed in the place of knowledge of truth; lust for evil claimed the place of love for the good; in place of the protection which repelled the violence of injury he is beaten [*percussus est*], and is vulnerable to suffering [*infirmirate*].⁶⁹

In essence, this passage offers an emphatic statement of the connection between education and pain. In Robert's system, suffering and the need for learning both spring from a common root, and are consequently intertwined. Just as human reason lost its original awareness of truth after the Fall, so the human body was left vulnerable to suffering at the same point: as mind and body lost their initial perfection, the first was made ignorant while the second became susceptible to "the violence of injuries." In this model, therefore, pain and learning are kindred: both are conditions of the postlapsarian world, emerging together from the moment of Adam's disobedience. Schooling is required by the effects of sin on the mind in the same way that suffering and especially beating derive from its effects on the body; each one implies the other, since both are means of paying the penalty for transgression. Education and pain are, in short, direct corollaries of one another. The Augustinian view is stretched further here as Robert sees punishment not merely as a solution to the damage caused by the Fall but a logical outgrowth of such corruption.

What makes this all the more significant is that it allows a sharp distinction within medieval thinking on pedagogic discipline to be identified. Although Robert also sees punishment in light of human moral growth, the value he awards it is wholly negative.

Subjection to injury and vulnerability to pain are themselves defined in terms of corruption, since they are the result of sin, emerging as a consequence of humanity's fallen nature. They are therefore conditions which are to be transcended, badges of disgrace rather than productive forces in their own right. Far from being allied with improvement and virtue, as Gerson stresses, Robert makes punishment symbolise all that the medieval Christian should aspire to move beyond. It is not necessarily a route to improvement but a mark of the evil inherent in human beings, signifying both the absence of original perfection and the general stain of human guilt. Ultimately, therefore, the work of the Fathers leads late medieval pedagogy in two distinct directions. It causes some authors to see the rod in ameliorative terms, directly shaping the moral sensibilities of the pupil, and others to regard it merely as an obligation to be carried out, with little constructive effect.

These differences are in fact merely the first of a whole series of divisions. Other commentators choose to emphasise further elements in classical authors, and generate quite distinct rationales for correcting children. A case in point is the idea that correction is demanded by childhood itself, and especially by its peculiarly biological nature. Again, such thinking pervades medieval culture, as its signature metaphors are widely attested. Thus in the twelfth century Anselm of Canterbury refers to discipline as a form of craftsmanship, much like Martial or Juvenal before him, seeing the teacher as an "goldsmith" (*aurifex*) who "with his instrument tenderly moulds and strikes."⁷⁰ His older contemporary Goswin of Mainz also sees children in similar terms, as "soft clay on the wheel of discipline."⁷¹ In fact, these images are sufficiently commonplace to make their way into some surprising sources: hence at his trial in 1440, the notorious child-killer

Gilles de Rais evokes the Platonic image of the child as beast to defend his adult excesses, citing “the bad governance he received in childhood, in which, with slackened bridle [*laxato freno*], he strove to do whatever pleased him.”⁷² Such statements seem to follow classical thinking fairly closely, defining children as a breed apart from adults and implying that they function in a more material, even brutish fashion, and require physical coercion as a result. However, other medieval treatments of these ideas progress along different lines.

One such piece is the famous encyclopaedia *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (ca. 1245), compiled by Bartholomaeus Anglicus while teacher at the Franciscan school in Madgeburg. In his discussion of *pueritia*, the period in the life-cycle between seven and thirteen years of age, Bartholomaeus introduces several comments on the rod while outlining the anatomical conditions of boyhood:

The boy [*puer*] is so named from purity, as Isidore says. Indeed the boy is properly called such when he is weaned from milk and separated from the breast...then he is found to be susceptible to discipline, and is placed under tutors, compelled to be beneath their discipline [*disciplina*]. Also the childish age is hot and moist, on account of the narrow blood-vessels, which do not strengthen until the time of puberty is reached.... Boys are soft in body [*carne molles*], pliant in flesh, elegant and nimble of motion, with easily-taught mind [*animo dociles*], without any concern or anxiety or thought for a prudent life, only valuing amusing things, and dreading no danger more greatly than beating with a rod.⁷³

For Bartholomaeus, discipline is evidently necessitated by the physiology of boys. It is not the mind of the boy that renders him “susceptible to discipline” but the physical condition of boyhood itself, with its changeable humours, weak “blood-vessels,” and the general malleability of boyish flesh. But what is interesting here is that Bartholomaeus sees the effects of correction as well as its motivation in bodily terms. By concentrating on the physical pliability of boys, his suggestion is that beating is a physical counterpart to teaching, training and moulding the “soft body” just as education informs the “easily taught” mind. This is reinforced by his conflation of correction and education into the single term *disciplina*, which John Trevisa tellingly divides into two terms, “lore and chastisinge,” in his fourteenth-century translation.⁷⁴ Again, the implication is that the two processes are parallel, one helping to give shape to the body, the other to the mind. Beating is a process that strengthens the body or gives it proper shape while the body’s form and humours are unstable and erratic.

Rather different conclusions are advanced in the work of the radical theologian Peter John Olivi. Writing in the 1260s, Olivi touches on the role of punishment when delivering a general attack on the role of pagan philosophy in education.⁷⁵ He contends that the principles of truth cannot be accessed by the study of such material but may only be grasped after “mortifying [*mortificando*] the senses of this life,” since “natural man is not able to perceive these principles, because the consideration or experience of them is not sensual.” He then identifies the rod as a means by which such mortification might be achieved: “for this reason in Proverbs 22.15 it is very aptly said, Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, and the rod of correction [*virga disciplinae*] shall drive it away;

for they are children indeed who idle in the senses alone.”⁷⁶ The point seems to be that the senses themselves are reoriented by beating. According to Olivi’s logic, it is only through the rod that human perception is able to move beyond the immediate data of “this life” towards “truth most spiritual and abstract.” The role of punishment is to castigate the bodily senses and turn learners toward concerns “higher than the senses.” Olivi’s remarks therefore follow a different course from those of Bartholomaeus. Both assume that the rod works physical effects on the learner, “mortifying” or shaping the body in order to drive it toward correct forms, but for Olivi the ultimate objective of beating is to lead away from the corporeal rather than to perfect it. For Olivi the body is not a resource to be trained but an obstacle to be overcome, although beating remains the accepted method of achieving this. So we see that while remaining grounded in the pedagogic theory of antiquity, even to the extent of revisiting its metaphors, individual medieval thinkers arrive at radically different conclusions.

Where medieval theories become most complex and various is in their attempts to see punishment in psychological terms. This heterogeneity is not surprising, since the classical foundation is also at its most diverse when considering the mental effects of correction. The principle that schoolmaster’s blows act upon the internal qualities of the child had already led ancient authorities to assign a range of different effects to beating, from Plato’s judgment of “goodness and badness” to Aristotle’s “virtue of character,” to the self-denial proposed by Marcus Aurelius. Foremost among the medieval theorisations, at least in terms of its pervasiveness, is the idea that beating fortifies the memory. One witness to this idea is the *Rhetorica novissima* (1235) of Boncompagno da Signa, teacher of rhetoric at Bologna and Padua. Boncompagno ranks chastisement

among the mechanisms that can strengthen the student's ability to recall information: he specifically lists "timor improprii" (fear of rebuke) amongst his "twelve principal techniques by which memory is reinforced."⁷⁷ Later on he speaks more extensively about how this result is achieved: "Because the senses of human beings are mainly prone to evil rather than good...in general it appears beyond question that he who is struck [*offenditur*], if he has attained the age of reason, does not forget the blow [*offensarum*] to himself...indeed a place in which one falls or is hurt is committed to memory, but that place is easily forgotten in which one received good service." The implications of this for the schoolroom are spelled out clearly when Boncompagno adds that people will most readily "remember those who beat and mistreat them."⁷⁸ While Boncampagno is fairly idiosyncratic in such baldness, his association between memory and correction is echoed elsewhere. It appears in the work of William of Montibus at the turn of the thirteenth century; in his *Versarius*, a "summa of mnemonic and didactic verses" designed for students at Lincoln cathedral school, William's entry for *memorialia* reads "the word of God and the whip of the Lord stand in the mind."⁷⁹ Likewise, Dante recognises a connection between beating and recall when he portrays the penalty of Babel as God "rearing up, not with the lash of an enemy, but of a father...chastising his mutinous son with affectionate, not to mention memorable [*memorabili*], reproof."⁸⁰

This link between memory and the controlled infliction of pain is widely recognised in modern scholarship. The awareness of such a position has been helped in no small part by the work of Mary Carruthers. Alongside her general comments on the medieval tendency to conceive of memory as "a physiological, bodily phenomenon," Carruthers has also addressed the practice of classroom punishment at some length,

noting the rod's perceived ability to "engrave the memory" of students.⁸¹ Her work has been echoed and developed by Robert Mills and Jody Enders amongst others, who also accept that "the 'rule of the rod'" served to produce "virtual equivalence between the hammering home of knowledge in the mind and the production of painful impressions in the body."⁸² Nevertheless, while the rod's relation to *memoria* is insistent in medieval culture, it is not the only psychological effect assigned to punishment. As with medieval conjectures on the moral or bodily results of beating, a number of different views surface. One view appears in the *Glosae in Iuvenalem* (ca. 1130), attributed to William of Conches by its most recent editor, although this has subsequently been challenged.⁸³ The *Glosae* itself is clearly rooted in the medieval schoolroom: it consists of long explanatory glosses for one of the key texts on the medieval curriculum, the satires of Juvenal, and is preceded by a brief *accessus* referring to its author as "magister." What makes the text especially notable is its occasional tendency to interpret its source as an allegory of the learning process itself. For example, references in the first satire to "convulsa marmora" (trembling statues) and "platani" (plane-trees) are read as figures for "obdurate pupils" and "schoolmasters vexed by densely-pressed inquiries" respectively.⁸⁴ This approach eventually turns to beating, for which the text gives the following account:

The master therefore, seeing the sluggishness of intellect [*ingenium*] proceeding from the blood congealing around the heart, strikes the boys on the left hand, which is closest to the heart, with the instrument made from wood for this purpose. And thus the blood from the hand travels and is driven elsewhere...and in this way the intellect is excited.⁸⁵

The terminology used here is extremely significant; the *Glosae* refers to *ingenium* as the facility which beating serves to stimulate. This term has a variable meaning in medieval psychology, as Kathryn Lynch has shown, but it is a process clearly distinct from *memoria*.⁸⁶ Broadly speaking, it describes something like “the rational faculty” or “the ruminative, digesting process,” the ability to comprehend and assimilate information rather than the simple power to recall facts. John the Scot calls it “a natural disposition for universal reason that is by nature common to all in this world from birth.”⁸⁷ In another gloss attributed to William, this time on Boethius, *ingenium*, *ratio*, and *memoria* are named as separate aspects of “perfect wisdom.”⁸⁸ The *Glosae* therefore sees the rod not as an instrument which helps to commit ideas to memory but as a stimulus for a higher faculty, one close to reason itself. Beating is a means by which the natural “sluggishness” of this facility may be prevented.

The remarks of the *Glosae* and of Boncampagno do not exhaust the repertoire of medieval psychological conceptions of pedagogical beating. A particularly complex theory appears in the work John of Salisbury, one of the key educational thinkers of the twelfth century. In his *Metalogicon* (1159), a vehement defence of the trivium and the general effectiveness of teaching, John delivers some significant observations on punishment and its effects on mental operation:

Fear itself, which is the origin of wisdom, emerges from the sensation or the conception of pain. When one is tempted he avoids offending in order not to be beaten, having a memory of punishment [*punientis*]. Likewise, the sensation or conception of reward inspires obedience [*obsequium*] to the

power which can punish or delight. Piety therefore is exercised by he that avoids offending, and experiential knowledge [*experientiam scientiam*] follows obedience.... When reasoned obedience to that which is most pleasing prevails, there arises deliberative judgement [*consilium deliberationis*] over action or conduct. Intuition follows deliberation, drawing the good part to her bosom; indeed it is concerned with the divine, for its savour, and its love and adherence, becomes at length true wisdom [*sapientia*].⁸⁹

Although John does not refer explicitly to classroom discipline here, it is difficult not to see allusions to formal study in his references to punishment and pain, occurring as they do in the context of developing “knowledge” and “wisdom.”⁹⁰ Such remarks also chime with John’s explicit advocacy of flogging as a teaching technique: he describes, for instance, his own teacher Bernard of Chartres managing his pupils with “whips and penalties” (*flagellis et poenis*) as part of a lengthy tribute to this “most effusive font of literacy.”⁹¹ At any rate, John’s point here resembles that of Plato, as he also argues that discipline teaches the student how to appraise phenomena, although John’s model is more strictly analytic than ethical. For John, it is the “sensation of pain” (*sensu poenae*), especially when inflicted in the course of punishment, that creates both the memory and expectation of pain in the human mind. This in turn causes not only obedience to authority but also “deliberative judgement,” as one is compelled to assess one’s actions critically, in order to deduce how these sensations are to be avoided in future. Such reflection is in turn the route to *intellectus*, definable as “faculty of intuition or intelligence through which we comprehend,” which in turn leads naturally to “true

wisdom.”⁹² In effect, pain and punishment lead the human being through the “three distinguishing stages...in man’s knowledge of the truth” that Daniel McGarry detects in John’s work, first imprinting itself on “the senses and imagination,” then sparking “our reason,” and finally leading to the “wisdom begotten by understanding.”⁹³ In the work of John, punishment, like reward, can trigger a whole string of further results, terminating in *sapientia* itself.

What is remarkable about these ideas is that they differ considerably from the processes that the *Glosae* and Boncompagno associate with pain. Indeed, John’s comments directly conflict with these other two writers at a number of points. For him pain does not stimulate *memoria* as it does for Boncompagno. Boncompagno’s connection between pain and recollection is reversed here, as pain depends on memory for its effects rather than serving to supplement it. Nor does the concept of *ingenium* occur in John’s discussion, even though he makes use of it elsewhere. He is in fact clear that *scientia* and *consilium deliberationis* relate to actions not to the assimilation of information, explicitly stating that “for the Fathers, *scientia* belongs to action and wisdom to contemplation” and stressing that “deliberative judgement arises over action or conduct.”⁹⁴ The faculty that beating helps to stir is therefore quite distinct from memory and *ingenium*. In effect, John’s description of *sapientia* constitutes a third psychological model of education, as he associates beating with an entirely new mental faculty. Once again, even when founded on a common assumption grounded in the commentary of antiquity, medieval work on the function of flogging produces a range of profoundly different conclusions.

LEARNING WELL THE LESSON: CONCLUSIONS

In the late fifteenth century, the author of an English deportment book, identified only as “Symon,” summarised the standard medieval view of beating in school: “a 3erde may make a chyld/ To lerne welle hys lesson.”⁹⁵ In its glib way this statement neatly encapsulates much of the commentary on flogging over the previous few centuries. As this author indicates, correction was not merely considered a punitive or oppressive measure but a means of actively conditioning pupils’ minds. Symon voices a pervasive view that, in the words of Jeffrey Dolven, writing on the Renaissance, “punishment is not just an instrument of order in the classroom, but is itself a mode of instruction.”⁹⁶ Nevertheless this pithy statement also conceals a great deal of complexity. When approached collectively, more sustained work on the function and nature of punishment highlights how fraught an issue it was. While medieval commentators are broadly in agreement that beating is beneficial for students, it is difficult to establish what precisely they thought it achieved. Indeed the most conspicuous feature of their discussions is the sheer profusion of ideas and objectives they put forward; a whole host of different effects are attached to punishment. The comments scattered throughout the classical authors seem to have provided multiple bases for contemplation, which medieval authors developed and elaborated still further, generating theories that do not only vary in terms of their substance, but even cut across different categories of knowledge. At least three distinct theories can be identified in their work: the moralised understanding of Gerson and Robert of Melun; the psychological explanations offered by Boncompagno, John of Salisbury, and others, which hold that beating develops or supports the mental faculties

of students; and the physiological conceptions of Peter John Olivi and Bartholomaeus, which argue that the rod chiefly works on the malleable bodies of *pueri*. Even within these general headings there are important discrepancies; theorists often differ on specific details while agreeing on the overall purpose. For instance, there is clear incongruity regarding the exact mental faculty beating affects, whether it stimulates memory, *ingenium* or judgement; likewise, when it is agreed that beating brings about the physical improvement of pupils, there is disagreement on how it serves to strengthen the body, whether it shapes and perfects it or causes it to be transcended altogether. Writers even vary on the underlying conditions that necessitate discipline in the first place, with observations ranging from the immaturity of children's bodies to the effects of sluggish blood on students' attentiveness to the flawed nature of human reason. There is, in short, little sense of a cohesive tradition of thinking about classroom punishment beyond a broad consensus on its general usefulness.

The multiplicity of this engagement carries a number of important implications, relating not only to the immediate field of education but also to the wider experience of physical discipline in the Middle Ages. First, and perhaps most obviously, what emerges from these sources is a powerful conviction that beating in the course of instruction is indeed efficacious, regardless of its specific ends. The fact that validation is drawn from several fields, from psychology to physiology, and from morality to philosophy, reveals a clear desire to legitimise beating as a teaching methodology. The authors cited here are clearly bringing to bear the full range of intellectual justification their culture puts at their disposal: every available basis on which flogging can be supported is utilised in some way in these discussions. What makes this point doubly significant is that so many fields

of knowledge can in fact be marshalled in support of physical correction. This exposes the depth at which the practice is accepted in medieval thinking. Rather like misogyny in the period, as Vern Bullough has described it, belief in the salutary effects of punishment seems to permeate the intellectual culture, suffusing it to such an extent that corroboration can be derived from most of its constituent discourses.⁹⁷ Wherever these authors choose to look, they find their central convictions reflected and reinforced.

Nevertheless, while confidence in the effectiveness of beating runs through these sources, their comments allow other, contradictory meanings to emerge. Alongside the assured and unquestioning way in which they approach flogging, a note of ambivalence, even anxiety, is also detectible. In the first place, the lack of overlap between these explanations suggests that, despite appearances, medieval culture at large may have had some difficulty reconciling beating with education. The fact that each of these authors constructs his own account, that there is no shared view of punishment for them to fall back on, indicates that no such overriding view existed. The work of these commentators suggests instead that punishment was more of a free-floating element in teaching, one that was not anchored firmly to an end result and could as a consequence be claimed for various meanings and objectives. This in turn suggests that the concepts of education and punishment were not quite as tightly aligned as first glances might imply. Despite its evident popularity, and the copious references to the rod within the classroom across medieval culture, beating does not seem to have become fully integrated within teaching. These authors succeed in projecting so many contradictory values onto flogging because it lacks a clear place within the overall methods of instruction.

But beyond this, a further point also emerges. The very desire among these authors to fix discipline to a stated objective highlights a sense that beating must be carefully managed and regulated, given a definite purpose and outcome rather than allowed to operate in an arbitrary and makeshift manner. This approach is also perceptible in more practical works, such as the teaching manuals compiled by Vincent of Beauvais in the thirteenth century and William Whetyly in the fourteenth. When these touch on discipline, they also recommend its exercise within strict limits, arguing that “three things are required in the practice of coercion, rigour, gentleness and discernment”, or advising that masters “avoid punishing a pupil to the utmost extent, or making him despair.”⁹⁸ Furthermore, as Nicholas Orme has shown, the impulse “to modify the use of corporal punishment on moral and rational grounds” stretches far beyond these witnesses, permeating not only pedagogic discourse but medieval culture in general.⁹⁹ The various engagements with discipline considered in this paper show that these concerns existed at a theoretical as well as practical level. Speculation on the nature of punishment strives to place punishment in firm boundaries, defining why it should be exercised, in what particular circumstances and for what specific ends. What makes this important is that it implies a sense of danger around the issue of beating, a perception that its value is neither intrinsic nor absolute. The very fact that such limits and checks are deemed necessary shows that discipline is understood as mixed in its effects. Flogging only has the potential to produce useful results if implemented in the correct manner and for appropriate reasons: without such curbing, if left to follow its own course, it can only prove disruptive and detrimental. In short, medieval faith in corporal discipline does not

seem to be total. Punishment requires careful control to be effective, needing rigorous containment at the level of both practice and theory.

In summary, medieval engagement with physical discipline is more complex, varied, and uncertain than the standard iconography of the classroom would suggest. Although there seems to be consensus on the necessity for beating, this unanimity in fact conceals a surprising variety, even hesitance towards it. The routine practice of punishment in the medieval classroom, it would seem, did not lead to the full or unproblematic integration of beating into teaching methodologies; questions clearly hung over its exact application, the extent of its importance, and whether it was in fact helpful at all. This is not to say that the theoretical discussions examined here necessarily had any effect on the actual practice of teaching. There is no reason to suppose that masters were influenced by the ideas of Robert of Melun or Bartholomaeus, let alone that discrepancies in their thinking led to confusion in real classrooms. Indeed, these philosophical accounts are best seen as rationalizations of existing habits rather than programs for teachers to follow, as their authors are attempting to justify the presence of the rod in rational terms, not recommend its implementation in the first place. Nevertheless, these sources clearly show that medieval culture as a whole did not arrive at a cohesive understanding of what punishment was meant to accomplish in pedagogy any more than did classical culture before it. Despite the longstanding scholarly tendency to see the period as “imbued...from top to bottom with the taste for violence,”¹⁰⁰ habitually using castigation to shore up its social institutions, in the field of education at least insecurities and questions seem to predominate. While “a 3erde may make a chylde/ To lerne welle hys

lesson,” what exactly that lesson might be, or why such a methodology was necessary in the first place, was evidently a matter of some debate.

The author would like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council for funding the research on which this paper is based.

¹ See E.D. Spindler, “Youth and Age in Medieval London,” *London Journal* 36 (2011): 1-22.

² *De termino Pasche anno xxi Edwardi iiii* (London, n.d.), sig.Bi (STC 9883).

³ Wilhelm Ludwig Schreiber, *Die deutschen “Accipies-” und Magister cum Discipulis-Holzschnitte als Hilfsmittel zur Inkunabel-Bestimmung* (Strasbourg: Heitz, 1908), 148; Albrecht Pieper, *Chronik der Kinderheilkunde* (Leipzig: Georg Thieme, 1958), 235; Nicholas Carlisle, *The Concise Description of the Endowed Grammar Schools in England*, 2 vols. (London: Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, 1818), 1:117.

⁴ Suzanne Reynolds, *Medieval Reading* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 18.

⁵ Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959), 20-25; Cristina Acidini, *Il Battistero e il Duomo di Firenze* (Milan: Electa, 1994), 104-7; Laura Laureati and Lorenza Mochi Onori, *Gentile da Fabriano and the Other Renaissance* (Milan: Electa, 2006), 118.

⁶ William Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman: B-text*, ed. A.V.C. Schmidt (London: Dent, 1978), 10.177-78; Alanus de Insulis, *Anticlaudianus: texte critique*, ed. Robert Bossuat, *Textes philosophiques du Moyen âge* 1 (Paris: J. Vrin, 1955), 2.399-400. All translations, unless otherwise specified, are my own.

⁷ Folcuinus Lobiensis, *Miracula Ursmari Lobiensis*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, Monumenta Germaniae Historica 15 (Hanover, 1888), 832.

⁸ Rebecca Bushnell, *A Culture of Teaching* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 23-24.

⁹ See for instance Marcia L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 5-7.

¹⁰ Among the writers who have stressed this inheritance, see A.F. Leach, *The Schools of Medieval England* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1915), 15; J.E.G. de Montmorency and Isaac Kandel, "Punishment, Corporal," in *Cyclopedia of Education*, ed. Paul Monroe, 5 vols. (New York: MacMillan, 1911-13), 5:85; Lloyd deMause, "The Evolution of Childhood," in *History of Childhood*, ed. Lloyd deMause (New York: Condor, 1974), 1-73.

¹¹ See Adolf Katzenellenbogen, "The Representation of the Seven Liberal Arts," in *Twelfth Century Europe and the Foundations of Modern Society*, ed. M. Clagett, G. Post and R. Reynolds (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 39-55.

¹² Tacitus, *Dialogus de oratibus*, ed. H. Heubner, Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1983), 28.

¹³ Craig A. Gibson, *Libanius's Progymnasmata* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 65-67.

¹⁴ See Susanna Morton Braund, "Declamation and Contestation in Satire," in *Roman Eloquence*, ed. William J. Dominik (London: Routledge, 1997), 147-48.

¹⁵ Xenophon, *Spartan Constitution*, trans. and ed. Michael Lipka (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002), 2.8.

¹⁶ Beryl Rawson, *Children and Childhood in Roman Italy* (Oxford University Press, 2003), 175-77; Stanley F. Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome* (London: Routledge, 1977), 143-44; Jérôme Carcopino, *La vie quotidienne à Rome à l'apogée de l'empire* (Paris: Hachette, 1940), 120; Robert A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 15-17.

¹⁷ Compare, however, the position of Quintilian, Seneca and other authorities, whose views will be discussed later in this paper.

¹⁸ On physicality in Aristotle's system more generally, see Jonathan A. Jacobs, *Aristotle's Virtues* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 163.

¹⁹ Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. and ed. H. Rackham (London: Heinemann, 1932), 1338b, 1336a19, 1336a38.

²⁰ Susan Sauve Meyer, *Ancient Ethics* (London: Routledge, 2008), 81-84.

²¹ See also Otto Willman, *Aristoteles als pädagog und didaktiker* (Berlin: Reuther and Reichard, 1909), 89-91, 123.

²² Plato, *Laws*, trans. R.G. Bury, 2 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1952), 653a. See Werner Jaeger, *Paideia* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1989), 390-91.

²³ Philo, *Migration of Abraham*, in *Philo*, trans. and ed. F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, 11 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1932), 4:198.

²⁴ Marcus Aurelius, *Ad se ipsum*, ed. J. Dalfin, *Bibliotheca Scriptorum et Romanorum Teubneriana* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner Verlagsgesellschaft, 1987), 1.5. The rendering of these terms is Hammond's: see Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, trans. Martin Hammond (London: Penguin, 2006), 3.

²⁵ Plato, *Laws*, 808d; Plato, *Protagoras*, in *Laches, Protagoras, Meno, Euthydemus*, trans. and ed. W.R.M. Lamb (London: Heinemann, 1967), 325d.

²⁶ Brad Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism* (Oxford University Press, 1985), 72-73. See also Aristotle, *Parts of Animals*, in *Parts of Animals, Movement of Animals, Progression of Animals*, trans. and ed. A.L. Peck and E.S. Forster (London: Heinemann, 1937), 4.10.686b.23-29.

²⁷ Sirach 30.8. All biblical texts are quoted from the Douay-Rheims translation of Jerome's Vulgate. On the possible connections between Greek thought and that of Ben Sira, see John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1998), 39-41.

²⁸ M. Tulli Ciceronis, *Rhetorica*, ed. A.N. Wilkins, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 3.35; Martial, *Epigrams*, trans. and ed. Walter C.A. Ker, 2 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1919-20), 9.68; Juvenal, *Satires, Persi et Juvenalis satirae*, ed. W.V. Clausen (London: Oxford University Press, 1992), 7.237-40. See Elaine Fantham, *Roman Readings* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 248.

²⁹ In addition to the sources already cited, see Marc Kleijwegt, "Kind," in *Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum*, ed. Theodor Klauser, Ernst Dassmann and Georg Schöllgen, 24 vols. (Stuttgart: Anton Hierseemann Verlag, 2004), 20:872-73.

³⁰ Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 49.

³¹ Catherine Atherton, "Children, Animals, Slaves and Grammar," in *Pedagogy and Power*, ed. Yun Lee Too and Niall Livingstone (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 244.

³² Christian Laes, *Children in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 144.

³³ See Cornelia B. Horn and John W. Martens, *Let the Little Children Come to Me: Childhood and Children in Early Christianity* (Washington DC: Catholic University Press of America, 2009), 213-51; Richard P. Saller, *Patriarchy, Property and Death in the Roman Family* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 145-46; Theodore de Bruyn, “Flogging a Son: The Emergence of the *Pater Flagellans* in Latin Christian Discourse,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 7 (1999): 249-90; David Herlihy, *Medieval Households* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 26-28

³⁴ Compare also Pro. 13.24, 19.18, 23.13, and 23.14, and Sirach 30.1-13.

³⁵ De Bruyn, “Flogging a Son,” 259.

³⁶ Hebrews 12.6.

³⁷ Clementis Alexandrini, *Paedagogi*, in *Opera*, ed. J.-P. Migne, 2 vols., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus series Graeca* 8 (Paris, 1891), 2.7.A.

³⁸ Eugene Kevane, *Augustine the Educator* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1964), 340.

³⁹ Leo C. Ferrari, “The Boyhood Beatings of Augustine,” *Augustine Studies* 5 (1974): 1-14; Suzanne Poque, *Le langage symbolique dans la prédication d’Augustin d’Hippone: images héroïques* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1984), 1:193-224.

⁴⁰ Augustine, *Confessions*, ed. James J. O’Donnell, 2 vols. (Oxford University Press, 2012), 1.9, 1.14.

⁴¹ Augustine, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini de civitate dei*, ed. Bernard Dombart and Alphonse Kalb, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 47-48, Aurelii Augustini Opera 14.1-2, 2 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1954-55), 2:843.

⁴² See W.K.C. Guthrie, *The Sophists* (Cambridge University Press, 1971), 255-56; Sarah B. Pomeroy *et al*, *Ancient Greece: A Political, Social and Cultural History* (Oxford University Press, 1999), 269-70.

⁴³ Saller, *Patriarchy, Property and Death*, 146.

⁴⁴ Martin Bloomer, *The School of Rome* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 77; Robert J. Penella, *Man and the Word: the Orations of Himerius* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 71.

⁴⁵ Quintillian, *Institutio oratoria*, trans. and ed. H.E. Butler, 2 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1920-22), 1.3.14.

⁴⁶ Jerome, “Epistola CVII: Ad Laetam de institutione filiae,” in *Select Letters of Jerome*, ed. F.A. Wright (London: Heinemann, 1933), 346; John Chrysostom, *An Address on Vainglory*, in Max L.W. Laistner, *Christianity and Pagan Culture in the Later Roman Empire* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1951), 99-100.

⁴⁷ See C.H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, 3rd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 2001), 34-36, 179.

⁴⁸ *Benedicti regula*, ed. Rudolf Hanslik, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum LXXV (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1977), 86.

⁴⁹ *De concilio Toletano tertio*, José Sáenz de Aguirre, *Collectio maxima conciliorum Hispaniae* (Madrid, 1734), 109; Chrodegang, *Regula canonicorum*, ed. Wilhelm Schmitz (Hanover, 1889), 4.

⁵⁰ See Thomas Charles-Edwards, “The Penitential of Theodore and the *Iudicia Theodori*,” in *Archbishop Theodore: Commemorative Studies of his Life and Influence*, ed. Michael Lapidge, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 11 (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 141-74.

⁵¹ Theodore of Tarsus, *Poenitentie Theodori*, in *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. Arthur West Haddan and William Stubbs, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1869-71), 3:178, 184.

⁵² Edmond Martène, *De antiquis ecclesiæ*, 4 vols. (Antwerp, 1808), 4: col. 661. The dating of the custom is Martène’s.

⁵³ Isabelle Cochelin, “Besides the Book: Using the Body to Mould the Mind – Cluny in the tenth and eleventh centuries,” in *Medieval Monastic Education*, ed. George Ferzoco and Carolyn Muessig (New York: Continuum, 2000), 30. Compare Peter Brown, *The Body and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 222-23; Jean Leclercq, *Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, trans. Catherine Misrahi (New York: Fordham, 1961), 17.

⁵⁴ Baedae, *Historiam ecclesiasticam gentis Anglorum*, ed. Charles Plummer, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1896), 5.2.

⁵⁵ Mayke de Jong, *In Samuel’s Image: Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 134-35.

⁵⁶ *Forma institutionis canonicorum et sanctimonialium*, Patrologiae cursus completus, series secunda 105 (Paris, 1831), cols. 926-28.

⁵⁷ Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, “A Flower of Evil: Young Men in Medieval Italy,” in *A History of Young People*, ed. Giovanni Levi and Jean-Claude Schmitt, trans. Camille Naish, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1997), 1:173.

⁵⁸ Bartholomeo Batto Alostensi, *De oeconomia Christiana* (Antwerp, 1558), ff.43-43v.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, f.44.

⁶⁰ Juvenal, *Satires*, 1.15.

⁶¹ H. Silvestre, “Comment on rédigeait une lettre au X^e siècle. L’épître d’Eracle de Liège à Rathier de Vérone,” *Le Moyen-Âge* 58 (1952): 8; *Commentaria in Rvth*, ed. Gerard Martel (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990), 137.

⁶² James V. Mehl, ‘Hermanus Buschius’ *Dictata utilissima*: A Textbook of Commonplaces for the Latin School’, *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 42 (1993): 116.

⁶³ Pieper, *Chronik der Kinderheilkunde*, 234; Nicholas Orme, *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1973), 128; Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Schools: from Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 146.

⁶⁴ Christanus Campililiensis, *Opera poetica*, CCCL 72, ed. Walter Zechmeister, 2 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 2:11; Jan Van Ruusbroec, *Dat boec van den gheestelyken tabernacule*, 2 vols. (Ghent, 1858), 2:93; Absalon Sprinckirsbacensis, *Sermones*, *Patrologiae cursus completus*, series secunda 211 (Paris, 1855), col.20.

⁶⁵ D. Catherine Brown, *Pastor and Laity in the Theology of Jean Gerson* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), 245-47.

⁶⁶ Jean Gerson, “Pro pueris ecclesiae parisiensis,” in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Palémon Glorieux, 10 vols. (Paris: Desclée, 1960-73), 9:689.

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- ⁶⁷ Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 2:382.
- ⁶⁸ Robert de Melun, *Oeuvres*, ed. Raymond N. Martin and R.M. Gallet, 3 vols. (Louvain: Peeters, 1932-52), 3:168.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 3:208.
- ⁷⁰ Eadmer, *The Life of Anselm Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. and trans. R.W. Southern (London: Thomas Nelson, 1962), 37-38.
- ⁷¹ Goswinus Moguntinensis, *Epistula ad Walcherum, apologia duae*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, Corpus Christianorum Corpus Medievals 62 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985), 30-31.
- ⁷² Eugène Bossard, *Gilles de Rais maréchal de France dit Barbe-Bleue* (Paris, 1886), xlviii.
- ⁷³ Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*, ed. Baudouin van den Abeele and Heinz Meyer (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 134.
- ⁷⁴ Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *On the Properties of Things*, trans. John Trevisa, ed. M.C. Seymour, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975-88), 1:300.
- ⁷⁵ See Anne Ashley Davenport, *Measure of a Different Greatness* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 185-86.
- ⁷⁶ F. Delorme, “Fr. Petri Joannis Olivi tractatus De perlegendis philosophorum libris,” *Antonianum* 16 (1941): 38-39.
- ⁷⁷ Boncompagno da Signa, *Boncompagni rhetorica novissima*, in *Bibliotheca iuridica medii aevi, scripta anecdota glossatorum*, ed. Augustus Gaudenzi, 3 vols. (Bologna, 1888-1901), 2:277.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:282.

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- ⁸⁰ Dante Alighieri, *De vulgari eloquentia*, in *Opere di Dante Alighieri*, ed. Fredi Chiapelli (Milan: U. Mursia, 1980), 1.7.
- ⁸¹ Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 8, 106-8.
- ⁸² Robert Mills, *Suspended Animation: Pain, Pleasure and Punishment in Medieval Culture* (London: Reaktion, 2005), 155; Jody Enders, *The Medieval Theater of Cruelty* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 130. See also Jody Enders, “Rhetoric, Coercion and the Memory of Violence,” in *Criticism and Dissent*, ed. Rita Copeland (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 24-55; Eva Frojmovic, “Taking Little Jesus to School in Two Thirteenth-Century Latin Psalters from South Germany,” in *Beyond the Yellow Badge*, ed. Mitchell B. Merback (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 95.
- ⁸³ H.J. Westra, “Review of Wilson, *Glosae in Iuvenalem*”, *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 18 (1983): 368-69.
- ⁸⁴ Guillaume de Conches, *Glosae in Iuvenalem*, ed. Bradford Wilson, Textes philosophiques du Moyen Age 18 (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1980), 101-2.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid, 102.
- ⁸⁶ Kathryn L. Lynch, *The High Medieval Dream Vision* (Stanford University Press, 1988), 35-42. I have followed Lynch in rendering *ingenium* as “intellect” here.
- ⁸⁷ Dag Nikolaus Hasse, *Avicenna’s De anima in the Latin West* (Turin: Warburg Institute, 2000), 39; Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 238; Iohannis Scotti, *Annotationes in*

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(Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1939), 13.

⁸⁸ See Jane Chance, *Medieval Mythography* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1994), 408.

⁸⁹ Ioannis Saresberiensis, *Metalogicon*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991), 156-57.

⁹⁰ In McGarry's translation, *scientia* is rendered as 'scientific knowledge'. See John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon*, trans. Daniel McGarry (Cambridge University Press, 1955), 231.

⁹¹ Ioannis Saresberiensis, *Metalogicon*, 52-53.

⁹² George Mora, "Mental Disturbances, Unusual Mental States, and their Interpretation During the Middle Ages," *History of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology*, ed. Edwin R. Wallace and John Gach (New York: Springer, 2008), 221.

⁹³ Daniel D. McGarry, "Educational Theory in the Metalogicon of John of Salisbury," *Speculum* 23 (1948): 666.

⁹⁴ Ioannis Saresberiensis, *Metalogicon*, 156. See James Simpson, *Sciences and the Self in Medieval Poetry* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 185-88.

⁹⁵ "Symon's Lesson of Wysdome," *The Babees Book*, ed. Frederick J. Furnivall, EETS o.s. 32 (London, 1869), 401-2. On the text, see Barbara A. Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London* (Oxford University Press, 1993), 69-88.

⁹⁶ Jeffrey Andrew Dolven, *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (University of Chicago Press, 2007), 207.

⁹⁷ Vern L. Bullough, "Medieval Medical and Scientific Views of Women," *Viator* 4 (1972): 487-93.

⁹⁸ Vincent of Beauvais, *De eruditione filiorum nobilium*, ed. Arpad Steiner (New York: Kraus, 1970), 95; Michael Johnson, 'A Critical Edition of the Commentary by William of Wheteley on the Pseudo-Boethian Treatise De Disciplina Scolari' (PhD diss., State University of New York at Buffalo, 1982), 767.

⁹⁹ Nicholas Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry* (London: Methuen, 1984), 34-35; Orme, *Medieval Schools*, 146; Orme, *Education and Society*, 234-36.

¹⁰⁰ Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L.A. Manyon, 2 vols. (London: Routledge, 1989) 2:8.