

ALBERT THE GREAT, ST.

Dominican bishop, Doctor of the Church, patron of scientists, and philosopher; b. Lauingen on the Danube, near Ulm, Germany, c. 1200; d. Cologne, Nov. 15, 1280; variously referred to as Albertus Magnus, Albert of Lauingen, Albert of Cologne, and Albert the German; honored under the scholastic titles of *Doctor universalis* and *Doctor expertus*. Although in his own right Albert was an outstanding figure of the Middle Ages, he is best known as the teacher of St. THOMAS AQUINAS and as a proponent of ARISTOTELIANISM at the University of Paris. He combined interest and skill in natural science with proficiency in all branches of philosophy and theology.

LIFE

Early Life. Albert was the eldest son of a powerful and wealthy German lord of military rank. After his elementary training, he studied the liberal arts at Padua while his father fought in the service of Frederick II in Lombardy. Early in the summer of 1223, JORDAN OF SAXONY, the successor to DOMINIC as master general of the Order of Preachers, came to Padua in the hope of bringing young men into the order by his preaching. At first he found "the students of Padua extremely cold," but ten of them soon sought admission, "among them two sons of two great German lords; one was a provost-marshal, loaded with many honors and possessed of great riches; the other has resigned rich benefices and is truly noble in mind and body" (Jordan, *Epistolae* 20). The latter has always been identified as Albert of Lauingen.

After overcoming fierce opposition from his family, he entered the novitiate and later was sent to Germany to study theology. Shortly after 1233 he was appointed lecturer of theology in the new priory at Hildesheim, then, successively, at Freiburg im Breisgau, at Regensburg for two years, and at Strassburg. During these years he wrote his treatise *De natura boni*, influenced largely by HUGH OF SAINT-VICTOR and WILLIAM OF AUXERRE.

Teaching at Paris. Around 1241 he was sent to the University of Paris to prepare for the mastership in theology. The intellectual climate of Paris, "the city of philosophers," was vastly different from his native Germany, for here he encountered the "new Aristotle," recently translated from Greek and Arabic, and the wealth of Arabic learning introduced from Spain. Albert arrived in Paris just as the commentaries of Averroës on Aristotle were becoming available. At the Dominican convent of St. Jacques, he fulfilled the university requirements for bachelors in theology, lecturing cursorily on the Bible for two years, responding in disputations, and then expounding the *Sentences* of PETER LOMBARD for two years (c. 1243–45), but Albert was more interested in acquiring the

new learning than in lecturing on the *Sentences*. In 1245 he incepted as a master in theology under Guéric of St. Quentin, and continued to lecture as master in the Dominican chair "for foreigners" until the end of the academic year 1248. Albert was, in fact, the first German Dominican to become a master.

Most probably it was at Paris that he began his monumental presentation of the whole of human knowledge to the Latin West, paraphrasing and explaining all the known works of Aristotle and pseudo-Aristotle, adding contributions from the Arabs, and even entirely "new sciences" (*Phys.* 1.1.1). Apparently asked by his younger confreres to explain Aristotle's *Physics* in writing, he undertook to explain systematically all the branches of natural science, logic, rhetoric, mathematics, astronomy, ethics, economics, politics, and metaphysics. "Our intention," he said, "is to make all the aforesaid parts of knowledge intelligible to the Latins" (*ibid.*). This vast project took about 20 years to complete and is one of the marvels of medieval scholarship. While working on it, he probably had among his disciples the young Aquinas, who arrived in Paris in the autumn of 1245.

Years in Germany and Italy. In the summer of 1248 Albert was sent to Cologne to organize and preside over the first *studium generale* in Germany, which had been authorized by the Dominican general chapter in June. At Cologne he devoted his full energies to teaching, preaching, studying, and writing until 1254. Among his disciples at this time were Thomas Aquinas, who studied under Albert (1245–52), and ULRIC OF STRASSBURG. In 1253 Albert was elected provincial of the German Dominicans, a position he faithfully filled for three years. Despite the administrative burdens, the yearly visitation of each priory and nunnery, and lengthy journeys on foot, he continued his prolific writing and scientific research in libraries, fields, ore mines, and industrial localities.

In 1256 he was in the papal curia at Anagni with Aquinas and BONAVENTURE to defend the cause of mendicant orders against the attacks of WILLIAM OF SAINT-AMOUR and other secular masters. Here also he held a disputation against Averroist doctrine on the intellect (*see* INTELLECT, UNITY OF). He lectured to the curia on the whole of St. John's Gospel and on some of the Epistles; for this reason he is listed among the "Masters of the Sacred Palace." Resigning the office of provincial, he resumed teaching in Cologne (1257–60). In 1259 the general chapter requested him and four other masters in theology to draw up a plan of study to be followed throughout the order.

Late that same year irregularities in the Diocese of Regensburg led to the appointment of Albert to succeed the removed bishop. His own reluctance and the plead-

ings of Humbert of Romans, general of the order, were of no avail. On Jan. 5, 1260, Alexander IV ordered his installation as bishop of Regensburg. With the settling of conditions in this diocese and the election of a new pope, he was able to resign in 1262; he then chose the house of studies at Cologne for his residence. Albert voluntarily resumed teaching, but in the following year he was ordered by Urban IV to preach the crusade throughout Germany and Bohemia (1263–64). From 1264 to 1266 he lived in the Dominican house in Würzburg. In 1268 he was in Strassburg, and from 1269 until his death he resided in Cologne, writing new works and revising earlier ones.

Only two more times, as far as is known, did he undertake long journeys from Cologne. He took part in the Council of Lyons in 1274, and in 1277 he traveled to Paris, at the height of the Averroist controversy, to forestall the hasty condemnation of certain Aristotelian doctrines that both he and Thomas (d. 1274) held to be true (see AVERROISM, LATIN; FORMS, UNICITY AND PLURALITY OF). This last journey was apparently a failure. Some time after he drew up his last will and testament in January 1279, his health and memory began to fail him. Weakened by manifold labors, austerities, and vigils, he died at the age of “eighty years or more,” to quote BARTHOLOMEW OF LUCCA and BERNARD GUI. His body was laid to rest in the Dominican church at Cologne where it remains today.

Cult and Canonization. Not only was Albert the only man of the High Middle Ages to be called “the Great,” but this title was used even before his death (*Annal. Basil., Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores* 17:202). Long before the canonization of Thomas in 1323, Albert’s prestige was well established. SIGER OF BRABANT, a contemporary, considered Albert and Thomas “the principal men in philosophy” (*De anim. intel.* 3). In the words of Ulric of Strassburg, Albert was “a man so superior in every science, that he can fittingly be called the wonder and the miracle of our time” (*Sum. de bono* 4.3.9).

In Germany there has always existed a deep devotion to the venerable bishop. He was beatified by Gregory XV in 1622. By the decree *In Thesauris Sapientiae* (Dec. 16, 1931) Pius XI declared him a saint of the universal Church with the additional title of doctor. In the solemn decree *Ad Deum* (Dec. 16, 1941) Pius XII constituted him the heavenly patron of all who cultivate the natural sciences.

DOCTRINE

Aristotelianism. The Christian centuries preceding Albert were fundamentally Augustinian in philosophy

and theology, transmitting the Christian Platonism of the Fathers through the monasteries and the schools (see PLATONISM). The 12th-century Latin translations of AVICENNA, Avicbron, COSTA BEN LUCA, ISAAC ISRAELI, and the *LIBER DE CAUSIS*, together with the paraphrases of DOMINIC GUNDISALVI, could easily be accommodated to Christian philosophy, since Platonic thought was a common element. When the new Aristotle reached the schools, the obscure Latin versions of the Stagirite from Arabic and Greek were studied and taught with every aid at hand, including JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA, Avicenna, Avicbron and AUGUSTINE. The earliest teachers of the Aristotelian books at Paris, AMALRIC OF BÈNE and DAVID OF DINANT, made a pantheist of Aristotle, and incurred a deserved censure until the new Aristotle could be examined more carefully. Later masters in the faculty of arts, such as ROBERT GROSSETESTE, JOHN BLUND, ADAM OF BUCKFIELD, Geoffrey of Aspall, ROBERT KILWARDBY and ROGER BACON, were more orthodox, although they interpreted Aristotle through the teaching of Avicenna and in Platonist fashion.

However, there is a fundamental divergence between Platonic and Aristotelian views, particularly concerning scientific thought and the nature of man. For PLATO, the study of nature is not strictly scientific, but only problematic, a “likely story”; for certainty one must go to mathematics, and thence to the contemplation of pure forms in metaphysics. Further, Plato conceived man as a soul imprisoned in a body, rather than a unique composite of body and soul. Aristotle, on the other hand, considered the study of nature to be autonomous in its own domain, independent of mathematics and metaphysics, worthy of pursuit in its own right, and truly “scientific” in the technical sense employed by the Greeks. Moreover, Aristotle was the first to elaborate fully the doctrine of potency and act, using this to explain how the body and soul of man constitute an absolute unity in nature. The arrival of Averroës’s commentaries in the schools after 1230 helped to bring out the difference between the two Greeks, for Averroës was the most Aristotelian of the Arabic commentators.

Among the Latin schoolmen, Albert was the first to make the Aristotelian approach to the physical world his own and to defend its autonomy against “the error of Plato” (*Meta.* 1.1.1, *et passim*) maintained by his contemporaries. Strictly speaking, Albert’s expositions of Aristotle are neither commentaries nor paraphrases; they are really original works in which “the true view of Peripatetic philosophers” is rewritten, erroneous views refuted, new solutions proposed, and personal observations (*experimenta*) incorporated. This, at least, was the opinion of Roger Bacon’s contemporaries at Paris, who thought that “now a complete philosophy has been given

to the Latins, and composed in the Latin tongue” (*Opus tertium* 9). For this reason, as Bacon tells us, Albert’s views had as much authority in the schools as those of Aristotle, Avicenna, or Averroës, “and he is still alive and he has had in his own lifetime authority, which man has never had in doctrine” (*ibid.*).

Scientific Method. Yet Albert did not blindly follow the authority of Aristotle. In his philosophical as well as theological works, he does not hesitate to reject certain views, such as the eternity of the world and the animation of the spheres, and observational errors. “Whoever believes that Aristotle was a god, must also believe that he never erred; but if one believes that Aristotle was a man, then doubtless he was liable to error just as we are” (*Phys.* 8.1.14). In matters of experimental science, he frequently rejects a supposed observation of the Stagirite, saying that it is contrary to his own observations (*Meteor.* 3.4.11, *Animal.* 23.1.1. 104, etc.). In his treatise on plants he insists, “Experiment is the only safe guide in such investigations” (*Veg.* 6.2.1). In practice as well as in theory, he realized that “the aim of natural science is not simply to accept the statements of others, but to investigate the causes that are at work in nature” (*Mineral.* 2.2.1).

Albert was an indefatigable student of nature, and applied himself so sedulously that he was accused of neglecting the sacred sciences (HENRY OF GHENT, *De script. eccles.* 2.10). Even in his own lifetime incredible legends were circulated, attributing to him the power of a magician or sorcerer. In later generations such legends were multiplied and spurious treatises were circulated under his name. The real influence of Albert, felt throughout the Renaissance, comes from his establishing the study of nature as a legitimate science in the Christian tradition. See SCIENCE (IN THE MIDDLE AGES).

Sacred Theology. In theology he was not as successful as his illustrious disciple in presenting a new synthesis. Aquinas’s famous *Summa* is a perfect application of Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics* to the deposit of faith, employing from the very beginning the profound implications of Aristotelian metaphysical principles. This cannot be said of Albert’s theological works. Nonetheless these are outstanding in medieval literature for their sound scholarship, breadth of inquiry, and clarity of presentation. Considering the milieu in which he wrote, it is most significant that he strongly defended the distinction between the realm of revelation and that of human reason (see FAITH AND REASON).

Unlike many of his contemporaries, he defended the autonomy of philosophical investigation, insisting that no truth of reason could contradict revelation. At the same time, he maintained the superiority of revelation and the

right of theologians to use all of human knowledge to search the divine mysteries. This view was continued by Aquinas and others so that today it is an integral part of Catholic theology.

Albertists. Among the immediate students of Albert, apart from Aquinas and Ulrich of Strassburg, should also be enumerated Hugh of Strassburg, JOHN OF FREIBURG, JOHN OF LICHTENBERG, and GILES OF LESSINES. Other German Dominicans favorably disposed toward Neoplatonic thought developed mystical elements in Albert’s teaching. These were transmitted through THEODORIC OF FREIBERG and Berthold of Mosburg to Meister ECKHART and other 14th-century mystics, namely, Johannes TAULER, HENRY SUSO, and Jan van RUYSBROECK. In the 15th century, small groups of thinkers at Paris and Cologne, identifying themselves as “Albertists,” set up a philosophical school in opposition to Thomism. Founded by Heymericus de Campo (Van de Velde), they opposed the traditional Thomistic teaching on the real distinction between essence and existence, as well as that on universals. In so doing they actually returned to the teaching of Avicenna, and made extensive use of Albert’s commentaries on the *Liber de Causis* and the works of PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS.

That Albert’s teaching is not to be completely identified with that of his famous student is clear from his response to the 43 questions of JOHN OF VERCELLI (*43 Problemata determinata*), one of his last writings. Some have even held that an occasional *quidam* in the works of Albert is a disparaging reference to Thomas, but on the whole there is broad doctrinal agreement between master and student. This has led to a gradual assimilation of the Albertist tradition within the Dominican Order into the mainstream of Thomism, with the result that Albertism and Thomism have become practically indistinguishable.

WRITINGS

The reputation of Albert was so widespread that not only were his authentic works frequently copied in manuscript and abundantly reproduced in print, but an incredible number of spurious works, some even fantastic, have been attributed to him. On the other hand many works known to have been written by him have not yet been discovered. Two editions of “complete works” have been published: one at Lyons in 1651, in 21 folio volumes edited by Peter Jammy, OP; the other at Paris (Vivès), 1890–99, in 38 quarto volumes edited by the Abbé Auguste Borgnet, of the Diocese of Reims. The first volume of a new and critical edition that will comprise 40 volumes, under the direction of Bernhard Geyer, President of the Albertus Magnus Institute of Cologne, appeared in 1951. The following list gives the volume of the Borgnet edition (B), and the actual or projected vol-

ume of the Cologne edition (C). The dates in brackets are the certain or probable dates of composition.

Logic. *Super Porphyrium de 5 universalibus*, B.1, C.1; *De praedicamentis*, B.1, C.1; *De sex principiis*, B.1, C.1; *De divisione*, C.1; *Peri hermeneias*, B.1, C.1; *Analytica priora*, B.1, C.2; *Analytica posteriora*, B.2, C.2; *Topica*, B.2, C.3; *De sophisticis elenchis*, B.2, C.3 [all between 1248–1264].

Natural Science. *Physica*, B.3, C.4 [between 1245–48]; *De caelo et mundo*, B.4, C.5 [between 1248–60]; *De natura locorum*, B.9, C.5 [before 1259]; *De causis proprietatum elementorum*, B.9, C.5 [between 1248–59]; *De generatione et corruptione*, B.4, C.5 [before 1260]; *Meteora*, B.4, C.6 [before 1259]; *Mineralia*, B.5, C.6 [before 1263]; *De anima*, B.5, C.7 [c. 1256]; *De nutrimento*, B.9, C.7 [before 1263]; *De intellectu et intelligibili*, B.9, C.7 [before 1259]; *De sensu et sensato*, B.9, C.7 [before 1260]; *De memoria*, B.9, C.7 [before 1263]; *De somno et vigilia*, B.9, C.7 [before 1259]; *De spiritu et respiratione*, B.9, C.7 [before 1259]; *De motibus animalium*, B.9, C.7 [before 1259]; *De aetate*, B.9, C.7 [before 1259]; *De morte et vita*, B.9, C.7 [before 1259]; *De vegetabilibus et plantis*, B.10, C.8 [before 1259]; *De animalibus*, B.11–12, C.9–1 [1258–62]; *De natura et origine animae*, B.9, C.12 [c. 1263]; *De principiis motus processivi*, B.10, C.12 [c. 1261]; *QQ. super de animalibus*, C.12 [c. 1258]

Moral Sciences. *Ethica*, B.7, C.13 [before 1261]; *Super Ethica commentum et quaestiones*, C.14 [between 1248–52]; *Politica*, B.8, C.15 [between 1265–75].

Metaphysics. *Metaphysica*, B.6, C.16 [between 1261–66]; *De causis*, B.10, C.17 [between 1266–71]; *De unitate intellectus*, B.9, C.17 [c. 1270]; *De 15 problematibus*, C.17 [c. 1270]; *43 Problemata determinata*, C.17 [April 1271].

Sacred Scripture. *Super Iob*, C.18 [1272 or 1274]; *Super Isaiam*, C.19; *Super Ieremiam* (frag.), C.20; *Super Threnos*, B.18, C.20; *Super Baruch*, B.18, C.20; *Super Ezechielem* (frag.), C.20; *Super Danielelem*, B.18, C.20; *Super Prophetas minores*, B.19, C.20; *Super Mattheum*, B.20–21, C.21 [definitive version after 1270]; *Super Marcum*, B.21, C.22 [definitive version between 1272–5]; *Super Lucam*, B.22–23, C.23 [1261–62; rev. 1270–75]; *Super Ioannem*, B.24, C.24 [1256; rev. 1272–75]. Albert's commentaries on St. Paul and on Apocalypse have not yet been found; the printed Apocalypse is spurious.

Systematic Theology. *De natura boni*, C.25 [before 1240]; *Super 4 sententiarum*, B.25–30, C.29–32 [rev. version completed in 1249]; *QQ. theologicae*, C.25 [1245–48]; *De sacramentis*, *De incarnatione*, *De resur-*

rectione, C.26 [1245–50]; *De 4 coaequaevis*, B.34, C.26 [1245–50]; *De homine*, B.35, C.27 [1244–48]; *De bono*, C.28 [1244–48]; *In corpus Dionysium*, B.14, C.36–37 [1248–60]; *Summa theologiae*, B.31–33, C.34–35 [after 1270]; *De mysterio missae*, B.38, C.38 [after 1270]; *De corpore domini*, B.38, C.38 [after 1270].

Sermons and Letters. C.39 (see J. P. Schneyer).

Spurious and Dubious Works. C.40. It is certain that Albert wrote on mathematics, astronomy, and rhetoric, but these writings have not yet been found. Among the definitely spurious works, the best known are the *Compendium theologiae veritatis*, B.34, which is by Hugh of Strassburg; *De laudibus B. Mariae Virginis*, B.36; *Mariale*, B.37; *Biblia Mariana*, B.37; the *De secretis naturae*, *De secretis mulierum*, and other occult works. The authenticity of many other works is still disputed among scholars, principally that of the *Speculum astronomiae*.

Feast: Nov. 15.

See Also: THOMISM; SCHOLASTICISM; NEOPLATONISM.

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[J. A. WEISHEIPL]

ALBERTARIO, DAVIDE

Priest, editor; b. Filighera (Pavia), Italy, Feb. 16, 1846; d. Carenno (Bergamo), Italy, Sept. 21, 1902. Albertario became a journalist the year he was ordained (1868), after earning his doctorate in theology at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University. In 1872, he became part owner and associate editor, then editor, of the daily *Osservatore Cattolico*, of Milan and of the weekly *Il Popolo Cattolico*. He defended zealously, if not always temperately, the principles of the SYLLABUS OF ERRORS and of VATICAN COUNCIL I, and opposed not only liberal intolerance and "irreligious tyranny" but also the "liberal Catholicism" of some priests and bishops. This position set him against men of outstanding reputation such as Bishop BONOMELLI of Cremona and Bishop SCALABRINI of Piacenza, and well-known priests such as the noted geologist, Antonio Stoppani.

In 1894, at a time when relations between Church and State had become less stormy, Albertario invited to the OSSERVATORE CATTOLICO Filippo Meda, who was to succeed him as editor and give a new impetus to public action by Catholics. During this period the paper continually advised its readers to prepare for the time when the Holy See might permit Italian Catholics to reenter political life (see MARGOTTI, GIACOMO).

In 1898, during a disproportionate reaction of the government to certain social movements which led to the temporary dissolution of Catholic organizations, Albertario, who had bravely defended the poorer classes, was arrested. Together with certain Syndicalist Socialists, he was tried and condemned to three years in prison, a sentence generally regarded as unjust. After one year he was released following the lively agitation that the sentence had aroused among Italian Catholics. He told the story of his imprisonment in two volumes titled *Un anno di carcere* (1900).

[E. LUCATELLO]

ALBERTI, LEANDRO

Italian Dominican, historian and inquisitor; b. Bologna, 1479; d. Bologna, 1552? As a young religious at Forlì and then at Bologna, he studied under the humanist G. Garzoni and the theologian S. Mazzolini of Priero. In 1514–15 and in 1525 as socius to two masters general, the celebrated Cajetan and the noted theologian Francesco Silvestri of Ferrara, called "Ferrariensis," he traveled through Italy, France, and Germany. After 1532, apart from a brief period as vicar of Santa Sabina in Rome, he was involved almost exclusively with duties of the office of the Inquisition at Bologna. Among Alberti's literary productions, several works have merited distinction: *De viris illustribus Ordinis Praedicatorum* (Bologna 1517), still profitably consulted; *Descrittione di tutta Italia* (Bologna 1550), his principal work, published in 12 editions; and the *Historie di Bologna* (Bologna and Vicenza 1541–91).

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[A. L. REDIGONDA]

ALBERTINUS OF FONTE AVELLANA, ST.

Abbot; d. April 13, 1294. He became a BENEDICTINE monk c. 1250 and was an outstanding prior general of the congregation of Fonte Avellana in the Marches from 1275 until his death. He was buried in the monastery church at Fonte Avellana and was soon honored as a saint. His cult was approved by Pope Pius VI on Aug. 21, 1782. He is regarded as a holy protector against hernia.

Feast: Aug. 31.

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[K. NOLAN]

ALBERTO CASTELLANI

Historian and editor; b. c. 1459; d. 1552. He entered the Dominican priory of Saints John and Paul in Venice,