“Nisi Deus Decipiat”:
Adam Wodeham on Evident Knowledge

by

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Abstract

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The following focuses on the Lectura Secunda, the only critically-edited Sentences commentary we have from the late-medieval Franciscan, Adam Wodeham (c. 1295-1358), and the only of Wodeham’s works with a secondary literature sufficient to support a dissertation. I argue in accord with Rega Wood that Wodeham’s epistemology as given in the Lectura Secunda avoids the threat of skepticism posed by natural threats to the reliability of knowledge. I build on her work by claiming that his position also successfully avoids the threat to knowledge posed by divine deception. Against the emerging consensus that Wodeham was a skeptic, I agree with Wood that Wodeham’s epistemology is reliabilist. Wodeham’s claim that sensory intuition is the source of all naturally acquired mental content opens him to the charge of skepticism on two fronts: natural deception, by which all would be doubtable owing to sense-deception; and divine deception, by which all would be doubtable owing to God’s ability to deceive by directly creating a false intuition. To the first, Wodeham claims that although sensation alone is naturally unreliable, deliberation can sort veridical from deceptive sensory intuitions, ensuring the reliability of sensation. Regarding divine deception, Wodeham
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accepts it as an irreducible possibility, for which he has been branded a skeptic. But, I claim, this reading overlooks the fact that Wodeham argues in favour of divine deception to make science, thought of as demonstrative knowledge, possible, and that he posits a hypothetical form of proposition regarding facts of the world capable of causing conviction in the mind that what it expresses is reliably but not infallibly the case. His hypothetical contingent propositions, “Unless God deceives, this whiteness exists and is present” (pointing to a swath of whiteness), cause invincible conviction, but make explicit a condition that reliabilists tacitly accept: we have beliefs that constitute knowledge despite the possibility that all such may be false. Wodeham’s position, I further claim, is indistinguishable from that of a clearly recognized reliabilist of a subsequent generation, John Buridan (c. 1300-1361). In a nutshell, Buridan and Wodeham both claim that although deception is always possible, doubt is never justified.
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## Abbreviations

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**NB**: Where possible, line numbers have been provided. It should be noted, however, that rather than maintain numbering throughout a question the editors of the *Lectura Secunda*, the main source cited in this dissertation, numbered according to section. This means that there are instances of two of the same line numbers on the same cited page. Accordingly, when needed section numbers are provided prior to line numbers for citations from the *LS*. 
Introduction

The topic of this dissertation is the philosophy of mind and epistemology of Adam Wodeham (c. 1295-1358). Wodeham was considered by some to be an authority in philosophy and theology on par with the likes of Ockham from the mid-fourteenth century into the Renaissance, until a fall into obscurity and a reading of him in the modern period as little more than a “slavish” follower of the Venerable

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1 For sections of text in Latin provided in the footnotes, and there are over fifty pages of such in this dissertation, I’ve ignored the usual convention of italicizing, to make the text readable. In the absence of firm citation rules for primary sources, I cite work, volume number, page number, and then, following a comma, line numbers. So, a citation from the Lectura Secunda would look like this: LS I 23, 23-24. For sequential citations from the same work for the same page, I use the usual “Ibid.” but always provide line numbers when possible. The line numbers always immediately follow a comma. So, for a citation from the same page of the Lectura Secunda cited above, with only line numbers differing, here is how it would look: Ibid. 23, 45-89.

2 Simo Knuuttila, “Review: The Critical Edition of Adam Wodeham’s ‘Lectura Secunda’”, Synthese 96.1 (Jul., 1993): 155-159, 156. Little is known about Wodeham’s life apart from what we are told in a very short “De Vita Ade” provided by John Major in his early-modern publication of Henry Totting of Oyta’s abbreviatio of Wodeham’s Oxford Lectures, published as Super Quattuor Libros Sententiarum: Abbreviatio, Henry Totting de Oyta & John Major, eds. (Paris: P. le Preux, 1512), and by Wadding in the Annales Minorum. Major claims that in his day Wodeham was considered an authority on par with Ockham, but that because of Ockham’s “bellicose” nature his work gradually came to eclipse that of his student. The scope of Ockham’s work argues otherwise, but the lesser point, that Wodeham was an authority in his time period and beyond, stands. It should also be noted that William J. Courtenay has tried to piece together a rough narrative of Wodeham’s academic career from clues left in his and his contemporaries’ extant writings in Adam Wodeham: An Introduction to His Life and Writing (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978).
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Inceptor. He is thought to have given three lectures on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, named after their locations of delivery as the London, Norwich and Oxford Lectures, of which two may be extant, an ordinatio from his Oxford Lectures and a reportatio called the Lectura Secunda. The Lectura Secunda was published as a critical edition in the 1990s and has received some attention from scholars, while the Oxford Lectures remains all but unavailable to modern readers. We also have a shorter work attributed to him on the composition of continua, called the Treatise on Indivisibles, which may be a section from one of his lost lectures. It has been published as a critical edition with a running English translation.

Our current understanding of Wodeham’s work and its position in the history of philosophy is fragmented. There remains only one monograph dealing with Wodeham published in English, William J.

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4 Amongst scholars there is disagreement about whether the Lectura Secunda postdates Wodeham’s three known Sentences lectures or whether it is the Norwich lecture. Courtenay argues the former, and that the Lectura Secunda therefore represents Wodeham’s mature views (Adam Wodeham: An Introduction to his Life and Writings, 129). The editors of the critical edition, Gedeon Gál and Rega Wood, argue the latter, and that the yet to be critically edited Ordinatio Oxoniensis is the authoritative expression of Wodeham’s thought (LS I 36*).
5 There is the mentioned early-modern publication of Henry Totting of Oyta’s abbreviatio of the Oxford Lectures, but it is, unfortunately, all but unreadable but for those who can read scholastic shorthand.
7 It is also thought that Wodeham wrote a question and a Prologue to the Summa Logicae under the name “Adam de Anglia” (OPh I, 1). The Prologue is available in English on Paul V. Spade’s website, Medieval Logic and Philosophy @ http://pvspade.com /Logic/docs/ockham.pdf. Courtenay believes that ch. 51 of Part I of the Summa should also be attributed to Wodeham (Adam Wodeham: An Introduction to His Life and Writings, 34). The style of writing exhibited in the question seems to confirm Courtenay’s view. The chapter along with the Latin Prologue can be found in OPh I.
Courtenay’s *Adam Wodeham: An Introduction to His Life and Writing*, and it is more a work of paleography than an exposition of the content of his writings. And apart from a few, scattered articles that treat the question of skepticism and his theory of the emotions, papers on Wodeham’s thought almost exclusively focus on the ontological status of the *complexe significabile*, the entity he posited as the immediate and total object of belief.

There is, it should be noted, a monograph in Italian by Onorato Grassi, *Intuizione e significato: Adam Wodeham ed il Problema della Conoscenza nel XIV Secolo*. Grassi’s work is highly competent but slightly dated. Specific to the dissertation, Grassi suggests a reading similar to the one given by Rega Wood in “Adam Wodeham on Sensory Illusions with and Edition of ‘Lectura Secunda’ Prologus, Quaestio 3”, but Grassi simply does not address divine deception, assuming instead that Wodeham’s focus was entirely in grounding natural scientific knowledge regardless of the skeptical consequences of divine deception.

It is past time for a more comprehensive reading of his work, and Wodeham himself tells us where to begin. He claims in its *Collatio* that the Prologue and first three questions of the first distinction of the *Lectura Secunda* give a complete account of knowledge from the ground up. He starts with simple apprehensions in the first four questions,

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9 Please see ch. III for details.
11 Wodeham, *LS I* 3, 3-7: “Hic est liber generationis Adam, Gen. 5. Intellectualis oculi naturale desideritum, licet ignorantiae tenebris obumbrati, licet impotentiae legibus obligati, caligantis aciei circumfert obtuitus, ut nunc incomplexa rerum formetur notitia intuendo et abstrahendo, nunc complexa et scientifica arguendo et discurrendo, ut in deliciis sapientiae, prout suppetit, delectetur.”
moves to the formation of evident mental complexes and judicative acts in
the remaining two questions of the Prologue, and on to full-blown
discursive knowledge in the first three questions of the first distinction.\textsuperscript{12} What I argue is that Wodeham sequentially develops a reliabilist position
in the Prologue and first distinction of the \textit{Lectura Secunda} that fends off
threats to knowledge posed first by natural causality and second by
supernatural causality. Regarding threats to knowledge posed by natural
causality, I claim that Rega Wood’s reading is correct.\textsuperscript{13} While sensory
intuition taken alone is unreliable, it plus the corrective of deliberation is.
Her account sufficiently addresses Wodeham’s approach to natural
threats to certainty, but it does not adequately address the threats posed by
supernatural causality.

Wodeham and his contemporaries faced a dilemma that resulted
from the principle of God’s absolute power. One could either make

\textsuperscript{12} Again, Grassi’s \textit{Adam Wodeham ed il Problema della Conoscenza} gives a
comprehensive reading of the same sections of text, and his reading is correct regarding
natural science, but is inadequate regarding divine deception. What his reading specifically
overlooks is D.3, Q.4 of the \textit{LS} where Wodeham supplies divine deception with an irreplaceable
function \textit{in natural knowledge}. As mentioned, Grassi has Wodeham’s theory of science for the
most part correct, but the account doesn’t work without divine deception.

\textsuperscript{13} Wood writes the following in her Blackwell \textit{Companion to Philosophy in the Middle
Ages} entry, “Adam of Wodeham”, Jorge J.E. Gracia and Timothy B. Noone, eds. (Oxford:
Blackwell, 2002), 77-85, 78: “Despite his preoccupation with the possible natural and
supernatural obstructions in the perceptual process and the concessions he made to them,
Wodeham was a reliabilist, who believed that cognition is reliably though not infallibly caused
by its object. His basic reply to the sensory illusions adduced by Auriol was that reason and
experience allow us to recognize illusions and not to be systematically misled by them.
Illusions will continue to incline us to make false judgments, but we can correct our judgments
by reference to reason and experience.” Her full assessment, given in “Adam Wodeham on
Sensory Illusions”, is correct, but based solely on Q.3 of the Prologue, a question entirely
devoted to natural deception, with reference to Wodeham’s three-fold classification of evident
propositions given in Q.6 of the Prologue. She has defended one front, but her reading is
vulnerable on the other front, divine deception, which is exactly where Adams’ and Karger’s
arguments for a reading of him as a skeptic take place. What I add to Wood’s reading are
arguments that he is also not susceptible to the charge of skepticism owing to his endorsement
of divine deception.
apprehension infallible in such a way that not even an omnipotent being with the power to create a vision in the mind without a corresponding object could deceive the mind, or one could accept that divine deception is possible and concede the seemingly unavoidable consequence of skepticism regarding the facts of the extra-mental world. Most of Wodeham’s immediate predecessors opted to make intuition, in some way, infallible.¹⁴ Wodeham, however, accepted that divine deception is possible,¹⁵ which has led to the false reading of him in the secondary literature as a skeptic.

Marilyn Adams claims in William Ockham that while Wodeham may not argue directly in favour of skepticism regarding extra-mental reality, through his acceptance of divine deception he tends in a skeptical direction to a far greater degree than his contemporaries.¹⁶ Elizabeth Karger goes further than Adams by claiming that Wodeham deliberately endorses the skepticism that Ockham sought to avoid.¹⁷ As Karger sees it, Wodeham held a “theory which entails the skeptical concession that we do not know that things other than our own mind exist.”¹⁸

¹⁴ This is discussed in detail in chapters II and IV, but let it be said for now that both of Wodeham’s teachers, Ockham and Chatton, took this path.
¹⁵ Wodeham, *LS I* 164, 53-58: “...concedo quod omnen evidentiam complexam apprehensivam tantum quolibet istorum trium modum quam Deus potest causare posita visione, potest Deus causare illa circumscripta tam in essendo quam in causando, et hoc tam respectu rei extra animam quam respectu rei in anima, cuius evidentiae complexae visio ipsa non est pars. Probatur per principium saepe allegatum: quidquid potest Deus mediante efficiene secundo etc.”
¹⁸ Karger, “Ockham and Wodeham on Divine Deception”, 236.
What I contend is that a more comprehensive reading of the *Lectura Secunda* reveals that Rega Wood is correct, and that Wodeham argued for divine deception to counter the larger problem to scientific knowledge posed by infallibilism. He accepted divine deception; but he did not therefore succumb to skepticism. Rather, he maintained that a degree of certainty appropriate for knowledge of extra-mental contingents remains unaffected even with the possibility that all we believe about the world may be false. Because divine deception can never be ruled out, infallible types of propositions expressing belief regarding the extra-mental world are only hypothetical and have the form “unless God deceives me, this whiteness [or some other immediate object of intuition] is.” But this condition, that such and such is the case, *only if God is not deceiving*, is implicit in reliabilism; hypotheticals are a type of proposition that legitimately express knowledge of the extra-mental world. The dilemma between infallibilism and skepticism is false, according to Wodeham, and his epistemology should be read as a form of what the contemporary philosopher Alvin Goldman has called process reliabilism, a third option between the extremes of infallibilism and skepticism.

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19 Wodeham, *LS I* 170, 11-13: “…aliquod iudicium est evidens posita intuitiva, puta iudicatur quod haec albedo est nisi Deus decipiat me, demonstrata albedine visa.”

20 Ibid., 51-57: “Intuitiva non est [talis notitia] virtute cuius possit haberi iudicium evidens primo modo dictum nisi simul sit evidens quod Deus non miraculose conservat visionem, adnihilando vel absentando subiectum eius—quod utrum possit vel non, non curo modo. Sed aliter non excluditur dubitatio respectu categoricae veritatis. Sed bene intuitiva, formata propositione, cuius visio sit pars, significante albedinem esse, ponit evidens iudicium secundo modo dictum.”

21 Alvin Goldman, “What is Justified Belief?”, *Reliabilism and Contemporary Epistemology* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 29-49. The idea is that natural causal processes that give rise to knowledge of the world could possibly be compromised in certain highly unlikely occurrences, such as are posited in the brain-in-a-vat scenario or in Descartes’ evil genius argument. Because of such possible instances, the processes that give rise to belief are not infallible. They are, however, reliable. This is discussed in more detail in ch. V.
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The layout of the dissertation roughly follows the sequence of the Prologue and first distinction of the Lectura Secunda. There are two reasons for this: First, as mentioned, Wodeham himself develops his epistemology in this way, a way which is perfectly suited to an exposition of his position. It is just the obvious and logical way to proceed. And second, with the current absence of monographs in English on Wodeham, a reading of his arguments as he presents them might be useful to scholars unfamiliar with his work.

Accordingly, the first chapter covers the main arguments given in the first two questions of the Prologue, where Wodeham provides his theory of apprehension. Apprehensions are basic acts of awareness. They are distinguished into two classes: simple and complex. Simple apprehensions are single acts of apprehending a simple substance or accident (whiteness, horseness, etc.). They are further distinguished into intuitive and abstractive modes. Intuitive apprehension is that by which existential inference is made, and its paradigm case is vision, while abstractive apprehension does not make reference to existence, and its paradigm case is imagination. Complex apprehensions are required to either compose or divide simple apprehensions into propositional form, which can be true or false.

In addition to simple and complex apprehensions is the judicative act. It was a matter of debate whether judgments were simple, complex, a mix of the two, or a third sort of act. They were that by which the mind takes an epistemic disposition of assent, dissent, or, in Wodeham’s case, hesitation to the truth or falsity of a suitable complex.22

In terms of the general contours of the theory of apprehension, Wodeham accepts it as handed down to him by his predecessors, notably John Duns Scotus (c. 1265-1308) and Ockham. But he alters several key features. Scotus and Ockham felt for various reasons that apprehension has intellectual and sensory modes that correspond to distinct intellectual and sensory souls in a human being. Wodeham denies this, claiming instead that sensory intuition is sufficient and necessary to explain how the mind is furnished with content, and that a single substantial form can account for all acts of a single living being. Furthermore, he alters Ockham’s definition of intuition. Ockham held intuition to be that by which existent things are known and also not-existent things, a position known as the “the intuition of non-existents.” Wodeham claims against this that intuition “uniformly” causes judgments of existence and presence, and can never cause a judgment of non-existence of the object of a vision.

Because Wodeham claims that a simple sensory intuition invariably causes existential inference, he could be taken to mean that intuitive acts

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23 Wodeham, *LS I* 9-10, 10-14: “...teneo per oppositum ad duos scribentes tenentes oppositum, scilicet Scotus, in IV libro, distinctione 45, quaestione 3 et Ockham, in I, quaestione 1, quorum uterque ponit duas intuitivas de re sensibilis et similiter duas abstractivas distinctas realiter, scilicet sensitivam et intellectivam, quod mihi non videtur verum.”

24 Ibid. 11, 49-55: “...omnes actus vitales in nobis recipiuntur immediate in forma viva; sed omnes sensationes, tam interiores quam exteriores, et omnes intellectiones in nobis sunt actus vitales; igitur. Sed tantum est in nobis unica forma viva, igitur omnes [actus vitales] recipiuntur immediate in unica forma viva. Et sic probata est minor, [scilicet] quod illud quod immediate recipit evidentem assensu, quo iudicatur hanc albedinem esse, recipit immediate visionem sensitivam huius albedinis.”


26 Wodeham, *LS I* 169-170, 42-46: “...ipse [scilicet Ockham] ponit quod per intuitivam albedinis scitur evidenter ipsam esse quando est et non esse quando non est. Et ideo habet circa talia ponere iudicium infallibile. Sed non ego, qui pono quod sive albedo sive non, visio eius semper inclinat ad uniforme iudicium vel propositio formata ex eius vision.”
just are a primitive type of belief, and several interpretations of him on this issue lean in this direction.\textsuperscript{27} However, Wodeham holds intuitions to be pre-judicative. Belief presupposes a judicative act, which in turn presupposes the formation of a complex which can incline the mind to various degrees to assent or dissent. It is, however, only following an act of judgment that a belief can be said to be had.\textsuperscript{28}

The obvious problem with an epistemology that relies as heavily on sensory intuition as Wodeham’s does is that the senses can be deceptive. Wodeham uses the third and fourth questions of the Prologue to address natural sense deception, which the second chapter of this dissertation examines. In dealing with sense deception he does not use the usual strategy of making sensation in some way infallible, instead claiming that there are numerous, natural instances in which sense deception can occur.\textsuperscript{29} This spares him from having to deal with the equally difficult problem infallibilists face, namely of having to explain how deceptive sensory experiences can occur despite the infallibility of intuition.\textsuperscript{30} But he still needs to explain how knowledge of the world can be had through a seemingly faulty instrument. He says that in normal operating conditions sensation accurately conveys the contents of the extra-mental world.


\textsuperscript{28} Brower-Toland, "Facts vs. Things", 8.

\textsuperscript{29} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 35, 15-20: "...puta unam [notitia] virtute cuius potest cognoscere evidenter quod Sortes est vel quod Sortes est albus et huiusmodi—nisi Deus miraculose operetur hic, vel nisi sit impedimentum propter imperfectionem illius notitiae vel propter aliquam indispositionem ex parte obiecti vel medi et potentiae vel organi—et aliam virtute cuius non potest cognoscere naturaliter utrum existat vel non, sicut per experimentiam."

When something is amiss in the causal process that gives rise to vision, deliberation on past experience and the nature of vision acts as a corrective. “Rectifying judgment” can separate veridical from deceptive visions. Sensation itself is unreliable. However, sensation co-operating with deliberation and proper reasoning is reliable, if not naturally infallible.\(^\text{31}\)

In treating the natural threats to knowledge Wodeham has a secondary goal. He needs to show how false visions can arise without positing what one of his Franciscan predecessors, Peter Aureol (c. 1280-1322), called the “esse apparens” or “apparent being”, a type of purely objective being.\(^\text{32}\) Aureol posited such entities to explain how there could be a vision without a corresponding object in re, as appear in optical illusions, but Wodeham, amongst others, considered the postulated entity to be an insurmountable obstacle to knowledge of the extra-mental world.\(^\text{33}\) Wodeham explains optical illusions without appeal to the esse apparens by claiming that with a particularly intense vision the impression made in the tissue of the eye can remain for some time after the object that initially gave rise to the vision had ceased actively making the impression.\(^\text{34}\) The lingering impression continues to cause the vision, 

\(^{31}\) Wodeham, *LS I* 100-101, 78-84: “Ideo est multum evidens apprehensio, in tantum quod ipsa posita appareat homini, velit nolit, sicut ipsa significat, licet non competat eum assentire aut dissentire. Licet ipsa quantum est ex parte illius nata sit causare assensum quod sic sit, tamen per aliud rectificatur [judicium], puta per experientiam aliunde vel aliunde, vel ratione quod non sit ita sicut apparet esse. Sic patet ad argumentum, nam concedendum est illam apparaitionem non esse iudicium nisi equivocando de iudicio.”

\(^{32}\) Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham*, 90.

\(^{33}\) Wodeham, *LS I* 66, 3-7: “...non potest visio naturaliter causari sine existentia et praesentia rei visibilis. Probatio: quia tum, etiam circumscripto omni miraculo, nunquam posset haberi certitudo aliquam naturaliter de existentia vel quacumque condicione contingenti rei sensibilis per viam sensus nec per consequens per viam intellectus.”

\(^{34}\) Ibid. 76, 32-35: “Verbi gratia: figura sigilli in aqua continue requirit prasentiam sigilli, non sic in cera. Sic haec complexio oculi est subiectum receptivum—pro eo quod
which judgment, when not properly guided by right reason, falsely takes to be of the visible object that first caused the impression.

Although Wodeham does succeed in explaining false visions without appeal to the esse apparens, his position ultimately fails. He himself realized the threat that the problem of representation poses to knowledge of the extra-mental world, and even uses it to repudiate an opponent’s views,\textsuperscript{35} but he doesn’t go far enough in avoiding it in his own account. If all vision is given rise to by impressions made in the tissue of the eye, and visions that are given rise to by such impressions are unreliable, then there is no reason to think any vision to be accurate.

The third chapter treats of Wodeham’s signature thesis given in D.1, Q.1: the complexe significabile as the total object of judicative acts. The theory has a back story provided in the chapter, but let it be said for now that the view that matters of fact or states of affairs are the objects of knowledge was thought to have originated in the medieval period with the Parisian Augustinian, Gregory of Rimini (d. 1358). In the late 1970s Fr. Gedeon Gál, OFM, published a critical edition of D.1, Q.1 of the Lectura Secunda\textsuperscript{36} conclusively demonstrating that the progenitor of the theory was Wodeham, and that Rimini’s version was a “mutilated presentation,”\textsuperscript{37} easily refutable by subsequent philosophers on the basis of aliquantulum appropinquat ad complexionem organi phantasiae—luminis et aliqualiter conservatum, licet pro brevi tempore.”

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid. 71, 3-18. He levels it at Aureol and, more specifically, Chatton (For a full discussion, please see ch. II): “Primum illorum argumentorum non probat quod visio possit naturaliter causari, obiecto non existente vel absente, sed quod prius causata possit naturaliter conservari aliquamdiu. Et hoc propter istud argumentum condeditur a quodam, scilicet Chatton. Propter quod pono secundam conclusionem contrariam sibi, scilicet quod visio prius causata a visibili non potest naturaliter conservari, visibili destructo vel absente. ...[For Chatton’s position] tollit omnem certitudinem de existentia cuiuscumque visibilis.”


\textsuperscript{37} Ibid. 70.
of ontological parsimony. The publication of D.1, Q.1 caused a brief period of interest in his work, and a flurry of papers appeared trying to sort out exactly what Wodeham felt the ontological status of the *complexe significabile* to be. Two general interpretations have emerged from the secondary literature. First, the *complexe significabile* is a type of entity distinct from simple substances and accidents. Second, it is not a novel type of entity at all, but, rather, something like a mode of a substance or a quality that supervenes on substances and accidents.

While ultimately the question of the ontological status of the total object will remain a matter of debate owing to Wodeham’s near incomprehensible description of it, the reading given by Susan Brower-Toland seems to be what Wodeham had in mind. She claims that it is a *sui generis* type of entity that is composed of but does not reduce to simple substances and accidents. Her claim is supported by Wodeham’s mereology, and from arguments given in the *Tractatus de Indivisibilibus*. Wholes, he says, are entities different in kind from parts. A whole is atomic, and does not divide into parts, at least not without destroying the whole. Because Wodeham conceived of the total object and the substances and accidents of which it is composed as having a part/whole
relation, *mutatis mutandis* his arguments for “macro indivisibilism” apply to the total object.

With the problems posed to his epistemology by natural deception solved, as inadequate as his solution may be, Wodeham’s work is only half done. There are still the problems posed by supernatural causality to deal with, treated in the dissertation’s fourth and fifth chapters. As mentioned, Wodeham claims divine deception to be an irreducible possibility that places all knowledge of the extra-mental world into doubt. But his arguments for the possibility of divine deception are not tantamount to arguments for skepticism. Rather, he uses divine deception as a way to argue against infallibilism. He claims in D.1, Q.3 that scientific knowledge is of knowable truths, and that the defining characteristic of knowable truth is that it is doubtable. If all propositions regarding the extra-mental world were self-evident on the basis of intuitive apprehension, as infallibilists would have it, then science, defined as demonstrative knowledge distinguishable from intellectual intuition, would not, properly speaking, be possible. Unless propositions regarding the extra-mental world are doubtable, they are not capable of being demonstrated to be true by either syllogism or experience. But propositions formed from intuitive apprehensions alone are self-evident.

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44 Wodeham, *LS I* 227, 10: “...dico quod omnis veritatis scibilis est dubitabilis.” Of course, as Adams notes, this is Ockham’s position (*William Ockham*, 446). Wodeham is, in essence, defending Ockham from Chatton, but in doing so needs to argue against Ockham’s infallibilism. If intuition is infallible, then contingent propositions formed from them would be necessary and self-evident. They would not, as Ockham supposed, be doubtable and thus suitable to function as knowable truths. Wodeham argues that it is only insofar as contingent propositions are open to doubt that they can be properly speaking scientific truths.
Introduction

and naturally undoubtable.\textsuperscript{45} So, divine deception, which is capable of providing a small degree of doubt to any and all propositions about the extra-mental world, is not a problem for scientific knowledge, as some suppose. Rather, it is that which makes demonstrative knowledge of the extra-mental world possible for Wodeham, insofar as without it science would be without function and could be eliminated on the basis of parsimony.

But the irreducibility of divine deception Wodeham posits to counter infallibilism, in spite of what Wodeham intends, could slide into skepticism, and the fifth chapter addresses this possibility. For Wodeham defines evident knowledge as that which is infallibly true and is held in a way that completely excludes doubt.\textsuperscript{46} If scientific knowledge is of the extra-mental world, and because of divine deception no scientific truth is completely free from doubt, then it would seem that evident knowledge of anything other than the mind and its states is impossible. Wodeham claims that evident scientific knowledge is possible, but in hypothetical form, never in categorical form.\textsuperscript{47} But because the antecedent condition,

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid. 230, 46-48: “Talis [propositio] non est dubitabilis per naturam—et sic loquor modo. Sed per potentiam absolutam Dei non nego quin permitteret dubitationem de sic essendo sicut per eam significatur.”

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid. 164, 40-43. Following a lengthy outline of three degrees of evident proposition, the third being \textit{per se nota}, a degree which is necessarily true and excludes all doubt, Wodeham writes the following: “Correspondenter posset distingui de iudicio evident—si huiusmodi haberetur—sequente scilicet vel nato sequi propositionem evendentem sic vel sic vel sic. Non vocatur, tamen, ut communiter, evidens assensus vel iudicium nisi quod natur est sequi evidentiam apprehensivam tertio modo dictam.”

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid. 170, 51-60: “Intuitiva non est [talis notitia] virtute cuius possit haberi iudicium evidens primo modo dictum, nisi simul sit evidens quod Deus non mir culo se conservat visionem, adnihilando vel absentando subjectum eius—quod utrum possit vel non, non curo modo. Sed aliter non excluditur dubitatio respectu categorice veritatis. Sed bene intuitiva, formata propositione, cuius visio sit pars, significante albedinem esse, ponit evidens iudicium secundo modo dictum. Et hoc sufficeret ad differentiam intuitivae ab abstractiva. Virtute tamen intuitivae, formata propositione ex ea, potest evidenter iudicare albedinem esse nisi Deus decipiat nos. Et sic dixi semper in illa materia.”
whether God is deceiving, can never be confirmed or denied, Wodeham could be seen as proposing a form of skepticism similar to the variety Nicolaus of Autrecourt (fl. 1347) outlines in his *Letters to Bernard of Arezzo*.  

Modern commentators have seen the epistemology of the Parisian Secular Arts Master, John Buridan (c. 1300-1358), as a repudiation of Wodeham’s, and as a form of reliabilism that was innovative in its time. Buridan accepts divine deception in the same manner as Wodeham, but distinguishes between two degrees of evidence: “absolute evidentness”, which, regarding the extra-mental, we can never naturally have; and “natural evidentness”, which supplies justification to a belief of a degree sufficient for scientific knowledge, with the tacit concession that divine deception allows instances in which scientific knowledge can be false.

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48 Wodeham assumes this, but Nicolaus of Autrecourt states it clearly: “Item. Ex quo ex illo antecedente mediante notitia intuitiva non potest inferri evident ‘igitur albedo est’, tunc oportet aliquid addere ad antecedens, scilicet illud quod supra innuistis, scilicet quod albedo non est supernaturaliter in esse posita aut conservata. Sed ex hoc manifeste habetur propositum. Nam: Quando aliquis non est certus de aliquo consequente nisi mediante aliquo antecedente de quo an ita sit sicut significat, non est certus evidenter—quia nec illud est notum ex terminis nec experientia nec ex talibus deductum sed tantum est creditum—talis non est evidenter certus de consequente. Sic est, si consideretur illud antecedens cum sua modificatione, ut clarum est cuilibet. Igitur etc.” (Nicholas of Autrecourt, His Correspondence with Master Giles and Bernard of Arezzo, A critical edition from the two Parisian manuscripts with an introduction. English Translation. Explanatory Notes and Indexes, L. M. De Rijk, trans. [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994], 50.) See also: Gyula Klima, “The Anti-Skepticism of John Buridan and Thomas Aquinas: Putting Skeptics in Their Place Versus Stopping Them in Their Tracks”, *Rethinking the History of Skepticism: The Missing Medieval Background*, Henrik Lagerlund, ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 155-156. Buridan also states it clearly in SD 708: “...God can create in your eye an image [species] entirely similar to the one you have now from the object; and thus you would make the same judgment as you do now, namely, that there is a white stone here. And the judgment would be false, whence it would not be certain and evident to you whether God wills it so or not.”

49 Elizabeth Karger, “A Buridanian Response to a Fourteenth Century Skeptical Argument”, 220.

But, I claim, this reading of the situation is not quite correct. Buridan’s position is indistinguishable from Wodeham’s. Or, more accurately stated, their positions are identical in terms of the degree of evidence and conviction required for natural science, but the form propositions that express scientific knowledge take differ in their accounts. Buridan’s naturally evident propositions are, one can assume, expressed in categorical form, while Wodeham’s are hypothetical. However, presupposed in Buridan’s naturally evident propositions is the concession they constitute knowledge on condition that God is not deceiving. What is implicit in Buridan’s natural evidentness is merely made explicit with Wodeham’s hypotheticals. In other words, Buridan did not repudiate Wodeham’s position, at least in the way commentators assume; Buridan instead argued against those who saw skepticism inherent in Wodeham’s hypotheticals. While it would be difficult if not impossible to conclusively establish a link between Wodeham and Buridan, there is some textual evidence to make the claim that Buridan adopted Wodeham’s strategy for dealing with the natural and divine threats to knowledge plausible. In other words, it is possible to read Buridan as a defender of Wodeham.

propositiones evidentes intellectus potest decipi per causam supernaturalem, quia Deus posset facere ignem sine calidate, et posset facere in sensu meo et conservare speciem sensitivam sine objecto, et ita per istam evidentiam tu iudicares ac si objectum esset praesens, et non potest homo decipi stante communi cursu naturae, licet deciperetur per causam supernaturalem, et haec evidentia sufficit ad naturalem scientiam.”

51 Buridan, SD 709: “Accordingly, it seems to me to be possible to conclude as a corollary that supernaturally it is possible for my [act of] knowledge, while it remains the same, to be converted into non-knowledge.”

52 Please see ch. V. Henrik Lagerlund has also noted that Buridan seems to assume some of Wodeham’s idiosyncratic theses, in a way pertinent to intuition, and, by extension, skepticism in “John Buridan and the Problems of Dualism in the Early Fourteenth Century”, 387.
CHAPTER I: APPREHENSION

What I establish in this chapter is that Wodeham’s epistemology depends on the reliability of sensory intuition. All mental content is naturally obtained by sensory intuition, and it is sufficient and necessary for knowledge of the extra-mental world.¹ This makes his position vulnerable to skeptical arguments stemming from sense deception owing to the nature of natural and supernatural causality. His defence against the threat of skepticism from those sources is then explored in subsequent chapters.²


² The natural threats to knowledge are treated in the second chapter, and the supernatural threats are treated in the fourth and fifth chapters.
Chapter I: Apprehension

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first, some background assumptions of Wodeham’s work are given. He assumes a naturalized epistemology with the evaluative criterion of evident knowledge. Evident knowledge presupposes evident cognitions as cause, and contingent evident knowledge requires evident cognitions had from intuitive apprehension. In this context Wodeham will repudiate his predecessors’ view that intellectual and sensory modes of apprehension are needed to explain contingent knowledge. He claims instead that sensory intuitive apprehensions alone are required. Moreover, sensory intuitions are the source of all mental cognitions. He is an empiricist, and while not entirely composed of sensations, all experience in some way traces back to sense perception.

His arguments supporting the claim that only sensory intuition is required depend on arguments for the view that there is only one substantial form—read soul here—in a human person, and the second section deals with these. The assumption that different types of souls are needed to account for the formal differences between sensory and intellectual intuitions is denied by Wodeham, and replaced with the theory of vital acts, a broader genus of act that encompasses sensory and intellectual acts.

It could be supposed that because Wodeham holds acts of sensory intuition to be sufficient and necessary for contingent knowledge that intuition alone constitutes a belief-act. The third section briefly examines this possibility, but confirms the dominant view: in Wodeham’s account, belief presupposes a judicative act of assent or dissent to a mental proposition. Evident cognitions had through intuition are needed to
supply mental propositions with terms and to cause a judicative act, but they themselves do not constitute a type of belief.

§ 1.1: Apprehension

[Diotima:] “[Haven’t] you found out yet that there’s something in between wisdom and ignorance?”

[Socrates:] “What’s that?”

[Diotima:] “It’s judging things correctly without being able to give a reason. Surely you see that this is not the same as knowing—for how could knowledge be unreasoning? And it’s not ignorance either—for how could what hits the truth be ignorance? Correct judgment, of course, has this character: it is in between understanding and ignorance.”

[Socrates:] “True”, said I, “as you say.”

Epistemology is the study of knowledge, and the definition of knowledge assumed from the time of Plato into the twentieth century is that it is justified true belief. According to the justified true belief theory, for a belief to be knowledge it must (1) be held, (2) be true, and (3) there must be an available account of why the belief is true.4

Let’s say that you were to inquire of me how many chairs there are in an adjacent room. I could say that I have no idea, in which case we would obviously agree that I don’t know. If, on the other hand, I replied without hesitation that there were eight, when in reality there were seven, we would continue to say that I don’t know. But were I to answer

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without hesitation that there were eight, and there actually were eight, then we would still not be at a point where we could say that I know. You would further ask how I knew that there were eight. If I were to say that I looked, you would probably agree that I know. If, on the other hand, I were to say that I guessed, but that I was nevertheless certain that there were eight chairs, then you would probably say that I didn’t really know. I just got lucky. It’s only when all three conditions are met that we would agree that I know. I must not only hold a true belief with certainty, I must also have an account of how I know that my belief is true for it to be considered knowledge.

The account of knowledge in Wodeham’s day, and this is particularly true regarding the Franciscans, was naturalized. Natural epistemologies hold knowledge to be the effect of a natural causal process with reference to assumptions about standard human beings. Knowledge is a naturally occurring phenomenon that was taken for granted; the task was explaining the causal processes involved. Posit a set of conditions, and the effect is a state of knowing. If, for instance, we had a visual object in front of us optimally lit, at an optimal distance, and assuming our eyes were unobstructed and functioning properly, then what would

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5 Dominik Perler, “Scepticism and Metaphysics”, *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 547-568, 547: “Medieval philosophers committed to the Aristotelian tradition do not seem to have asked the fundamental question whether or not we can have knowledge of an external world. Their main concern was not to establish that we can have knowledge but to explain how we acquire it. They entered into lengthy discussions about the following problems: What kind of cognitive processes are required for the acquisition of knowledge? What kind of knowledge do we gain by means of these processes? And what are the objects of knowledge? In all these debates, they seem to have taken for granted that we are able to have knowledge and even a solid theory of knowledge.” See also: Perler, “Can We Trust Our Senses: Fourteenth-Century Debates on Sensory Illusions”, *Uncertain Knowledge: Scepticism, Relativism, and Doubt in the Middle Ages*, Dennery, Ghosh and Zeeman eds. (Brepols, 2014): 63-90, 85; Christophe Grellard, “How is it Possible to Believe Falsely? John Buridan, the Vetula, and the Psychology of Error”, *Uncertain Knowledge: Scepticism, Relativism, and Doubt in the Middle Ages*, Dennery, Ghosh and Zeeman eds. (Brepols, 2014): 91-113, 91.
arise in conjunction with the mind’s receptive power of vision would be a belief that the object is present and exists. We would hold the belief and we would say that it is true by reference to a natural causal sequence. Clearly, we would say that we know the object is there because we can see it.\textsuperscript{6}

This is not to say that epistemology was devoid of evaluative criteria. In Wodeham’s account the standard of justified true belief is present in the notion of evident knowledge.\textsuperscript{7} Evident knowledge was

\textsuperscript{6} Since one of the central questions of naturalist epistemology seems to be exactly what constitutes naturalized epistemology, I should clarify my use of the expression. By “natural epistemology” I simply mean that the study of knowledge was mainly a study of the natural causal processes involved in belief formation. As W.V.O. Quine wrote, “Epistemology, or something like it, simply falls into place as a chapter of psychology and hence of natural science. It studies a natural phenomenon, viz., a physical human subject. This human subject is accorded a certain experimentally controlled input — certain patterns of irradiation in assorted frequencies, for instance — and in the fullness of time the subject delivers as output a description of the three-dimensional external world and its history. The relation between the meager input and the torrential output is a relation that we are prompted to study for somewhat the same reasons that always prompted epistemology: namely, in order to see how evidence relates to theory, and in what ways one’s theory of nature transcends any available evidence...But a conspicuous difference between old epistemology and the epistemological enterprise in this new psychological setting is that we can now make free use of empirical psychology” (\textit{Ontological Relativity and Other Essays} [New York: Columbia University Press, 1969], 75; Qtd. in the following: Richard Feldman, “Naturalized Epistemology”, \textit{The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy} [Summer 2012], Edward N. Zalta, ed. Accessed online: http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2012/entries/epistemology-naturalized). However, it should be made clear that Wodeham’s brand of epistemological naturalism was not devoid of evaluative criteria, and hence his is not a “replacement naturalism” but what Feldman calls a “cooperative naturalism” (Ibid.). That justification regarding judgments of existence and presence reduces to sensation, and primarily vision for Wodeham, is argued below. But for now, see n. 1.

\textsuperscript{7} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 206, 3-10: “modo restat quid dicendum sit ad istum articulum. Imprimis autem distinguo de actu scienti: quod vel actus scienti potest sumi pro iudicio evidente, quo posito in anima, quocumque realiter distincto circumsripto, contradictio est quin anima evidenter assentiat sic esse sicut per conclusionem significatur. — Alio modo [potest sumi] pro omni actu quo anima assenti firmiter et absque haesitatione sic esse sicut significatur per conclusionem, ita tamen quod vel ille [assensus] sit evidens vel habeat actum evidenti respectu eiusdem sibi annexum.” Wodeham earlier claims that only what he calls a “third-mode” judicative act, one which excludes all doubt and falsity, is properly called an evident judgment. Ibid. 164, 31-44: “Et ideo illa [tertio] propositio evidentior est quam prima vel secunda quae cum hoc quod per eam necessario appareat sic esse sicut ipsa significat et
thought to be knowledge proper, and for a belief to be counted as such it must meet the following criteria: First, for a belief to count as evident knowledge it must not only be held, but it must also be held with certainty to a degree that excludes all doubt. Second, the belief must exclude all falsity. If a belief is open in the least to falsity, then it is not evident knowledge. Finally, the cause of the belief must in some way involve an evident cognition. The evident cognition causes invincible conviction in a belief, confirms its truth, and thus serves as justification for the belief. No evident cognition, no evident knowledge.8

Explanations of how the mind initially acquires content were formed in the context of empiricism. Aristotle’s famous dictum from book III, chapter 4 of De Anima, that the mind is a tabula rasa or “blank slate”,9 meaning that there is no innate content in the mind, was assumed

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8 Ibid. 66, 3-13: “Quoad primum teneo duas conclusiones. Prima est quod non potest visio naturaliter causari sine existentia et praesentia rei visibilis. Probatio: quia tunc, etiam circumscripto omni miraculo, nunquam posset haberi certitudo aliqua naturaliter de existentia vel quaecumque condicione contingenti rei sensibilis per viam sensus nec per consequens per viam intellectus. Non enim est maior ratio quod una sensatio intuitiva posset per aliam causas causari quam ab objecto quod sentitur tali actu, et eodem modo de intuitiva intellectiva quam [de] quacumque alia. Quaelibet igitur posset naturaliter causari sine existentia vel praesentia objecti sui. Et si sic, igitur nulla certitudo [esset] in huismodi, et tunc periret omnis scientia accepta per viam experimenta, quia omnia scientia est notitia certa.”

9 Aristotle, A 591; De Anima, 429b29-430a2: “Have we not already disposed of the difficulty about interaction involving a common element, when we said that the mind is in a sense potentially whatever is thinkable, though actually it is nothing until it has thought? What it thinks must be in it just as characters may be said to be on a writing-tablet on which as yet nothing actually stands written: this is exactly what happens with mind.”
by Wodeham and his predecessors.\textsuperscript{10} All naturally acquired mental content was thus given rise to through experience, and the foundation of experience was thought to be extra-mental. Mental content was naturally obtained from the extra-mental world through “apprehensions”, basic acts of awareness, and thus the theory of apprehension is crucial in Wodeham’s work.\textsuperscript{11} Unless there is some way to ensure that what the mind acquires by way of exterior apprehension is reliable, then all mental content is questionable.

It was thought that there were ultimately two sources of evident cognitions. Reason was the first. Reason divided into deliberation and self-evident propositions. Propositions \textit{per se nota} were thought to contain evidence of their own truth.\textsuperscript{12} Experience, on the other hand, was also thought to be capable of supplying evident cognitions, and this is particularly true of evident cognitions of contingent belief.\textsuperscript{13} In the case of a proposition such as “Socrates is white”, no appeal to the logical structure of the proposition or the nature of Socrates would give us a cognition that this proposition is true. It need not be the case that Socrates is white, 

\textsuperscript{10} Adams, \textit{William Ockham}, 495; cf. n. 1.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid. 498: “...acts of apprehension are not primarily or merely objects of thought, but rather mental acts of awareness by which the mind apprehends such objects.”

\textsuperscript{12} It may be tempting to confuse \textit{per se nota} propositions with something like analytic \textit{a priori} propositions, and many were thought to be so, but what defines a \textit{per se nota} proposition is the natural inability of a human being to doubt its validity. This, of course, is the flaw Aquinas and those who followed in his wake saw in the ontological argument, namely that analytic \textit{a priori} propositions are not always enough to cause assent. They consequently denied that analytic \textit{a priori} proposition are \textit{per se nota} or distinguished between those that are \textit{quoad nos} and \textit{per se}, or, as Scotus would do, distinguished between how the proposition would be read by those in the \textit{viator} state and those in \textit{partria}. Apart from the ontological argument, it was readily agreed that all principles of demonstration were \textit{per se nota}, and had to be in order to avoid the regress Aristotle pointed out in the \textit{Organon}. See also: Aquinas, \textit{ST}, P.1, Q.2 (http://www. corpusthomisticum.org/sth1002.html). Wodeham devotes an entire question to \textit{per se nota} propositions: \textit{LS II} 175-206; D.3, Q.4.

\textsuperscript{13} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 246, 31-33: “...ex illis sequitur quod eadem conclusio, id est mediante conclusione eadem, est scibilis sicut conclusio significat, tam a priori quam a posteriori, demonstrative et per experientiam.”; Adams, \textit{William Ockham}, 446.
black or any other colour, but we can get cognitions that are authoritative regarding contingents from intuition, and vision was particularly focussed on as the sufficient and necessary source of evident cognitions of contingents.\textsuperscript{14} The only way to cause either assent or dissent to the proposition that “Socrates is white” is to take a look; hence access to extra-mental states of the world had in some way to be involved in the causal process of contingent evident knowledge.\textsuperscript{15}

It should be noted that several of Wodeham’s predecessors considered faith a third source of evident cognitions, and the debate between two of them, Henry of Ghent (d. 1293) and John Duns Scotus (c. 1265-1308), regarding this issue led to the development of one of the main tenets of Wodeham’s philosophy of mind, namely the distinction between intuitive and abstractive modes of apprehension.

Henry posited three modes of evidence that could provide the cognitions required for knowledge: faith (\textit{fides}), intellect (\textit{intellectio}) and vision (\textit{visio}).\textsuperscript{16} Faith is evidence provided through authoritative

\textsuperscript{14} This is especially true of Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 13-14, 3-10: “Secundo probo principaliter eandem conclusionem, siclicet quod ad hoc quod intellectus evidenter iudicet hanc albidinem esse, non requirat aliam intuitivam quam visionem sensitivam. Certum [est] enim per experientiam quod visa hac albedine visione sensitiva, potest evidenter cognosciri hanc albedinem esse. Quando autem non videtur sensibiliter, sed tantum cognoscitur per actum imaginandi vel quocumque actu intellectus quem in nobis experimur, non potest hoc evidenter cognosciri. Nec aliam visionem eiusdem experimur nec ratione convicimus, sed magis oppositum, ut prius deductum est. Igitur.” Also see Tachau’s \textit{Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham}. Adams notes that the situation is more complicated with Ockham, such that what I assert in this paragraph may not entirely hold for him (\textit{William Ockham}, 452-455). I discuss this more in ch. IV.

\textsuperscript{15} While the need for vision is true of Wodeham, Walter Chatton and many others in Wodeham’s time period, it was not universal. Ockham, for instance, held that direct intellectual intuition of contingents \textit{without sensation} was theoretically possible for humans and actually is the case for angels.

testimony, and refers not only to faith in the religious sense, but also to everyday facts about which we may not have directly seen or heard, but that we take for granted that we know, such as the identity of my parents or about Rome being a large city. Evidence from the intellect is indirect and discursive. It is not had from an object directly, but by way of a species of the object or through discursive reasoning. Finally, vision is evidence of an object that is immediately present and clear to the intellect.17

The stress in Henry’s account of knowledge was not on vision, but on intellect, which he saw as a mean between faith and vision. What he was seeking was a way to make theology a science of the same degree of evidence as the a priori sciences, such as geometry or astronomy, both of which arrive at evident knowledge without recourse to vision.18

Scotus rejected aspects of Ghent’s account, particularly the theory of divine illumination that went along with it,19 but he did agree that theology is an evidence based science, not merely a matter of faith. Scotus distinguished between two human states: the viator state and the in patria state.20 The viator is a non-beatified human being. The beatified human being has had a vision of God, and therefore has evident cognitions of the truths of theology, making possible a science of theology. But, it remained questionable whether a viator could have theological knowledge or only faith. Knowledge presupposed a proper cognition of God. If every human could have this from experience or through reason,

17 Ibid.
18 Ibid. 586-587.
20 Dumont, “Theology as a Science”, 586. The viator/in patria distinction was common; Scotus certainly didn’t invent it. It is important to describe it here and note that it informs his approach to apprehension.
then there would be no distinction between the *viator* and the beatified, and disbelief in God would not be possible. But, clearly, there are non-believers who have heard the Gospel and been exposed to demonstrations of God's existence; so, faith must not supply cognitions sufficient for evident knowledge.

Scotus argued that the *viator* can have a science of theology, but that the cognitions required to make this possible are not naturally acquirable. God, however, could implant suitable cognitions in the human mind through a supernatural act, which would allow for there to be a genuine science of theology distinguishable from mere faith. But, cognitions so planted by God could not be visual. For if it were the case that a *viator* came to have visual apprehensions of God, then the distinction between the *viator* state and the beatified state would collapse. Scotus therefore posited a distinction between apprehensions that are had naturally and require the presence and existence of their objects, such as vision, and those that are proper to their objects even in the object’s absence, calling them abstractive cognitions.

First I distinguish two intellections. For there can be a type of cognition of an object insofar as the cognition according to which it is abstracted from any actual existence, and there can be another type of cognition of the object insofar as it exists and insofar as it is present in some actual existence.

21 Ibid. 592.
22 Ibid. 590-592.
“Nisi Deus Decipiat”: Adam Wodeham on Evident Knowledge

It should be noted that although the focus in Scotus’ account of intuitive and abstractive apprehension is on abstraction,24 Scotus identifies vision with intuition. Stephen Dumont has claimed that later in his career Scotus returned to his early Oxford Lectures and replaced instances of the word “vision” where it appeared in the text with “intuitive cognition.”25 Intuitive cognitions thus provided evidence of things present and clear and its paradigm case was vision, while abstractive cognition provided evidence of those things that were absent.

Scotus not only posited two intuitive and abstractive modes of apprehension, but also sensory and intellectual forms of apprehension. The sensory and intellective powers of the soul were distinct, and Scotus gave each its corresponding type of object:

Now sense is a cognitive power, and it belongs to sense in its fully actualized state to cognize a thing insofar as it is present according to its own existence; therefore, this is possible in the intellect, which is the highest cognitive power. Therefore, the intellect can have this sort of intellection of a thing as present.26

While Scotus may be responsible for initially distinguishing between intuitive and abstractive apprehensions, focus on abstraction’s role in obtaining evident cognitions used in theology would not last. Rather, there was a gradual shift of attention from abstraction’s function of

24 Dumont, “Theology as a Science”, 584: Scotus was, according to Dumont, looking for a way to provide a type of cognition of God that is proper to God but that is distinct from that of beatitude.

25 Ibid. 581: “The doctrine, however, of a type of cognition of God that is proper to God but that is distinct from that of beatitude. The proof of this is that in revising the Lectura for publication as the Ordinatio Scotus glossed several of these earlier occurrences of visio with cognitio intuitiva.”

26 Scotus, Ordinatio II, 553: “...in sensu autem - qui est potentia cognitiva - perfectionis est quod est cognitiva rei secundum quod est in se existens et secundum quod est praesens secundum existentiam suam; igitur hoc est possibile in intellectu, qui est suprema vis cognitiva. Igitur potest habere talem intellectionem rei, secundum quod est praesens.” Translation by Thomas Williams, taken from Hyman and Walsh, Philosophy in the Middle Ages (3rd ed.) (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010), 581.
Chapter I: Apprehension

providing evident cognitions of God to the *viator* to make a science of theology possible to intuitive apprehension’s function of supplying evident cognitions for contingent knowledge and its role in supplying the mind with content.27 This shift of focus is most noticeable in Ockham’s work.

Ockham’s theory of apprehension is part of his broader theory of mental language. The idea is that thought has a linguistic structure analogous to spoken or written language,28 and that it is accordingly mental claims or propositions that are the objects of belief. So, the belief that “a body is white” presupposes the formation of the corresponding mental proposition by the believer. In the same way that a spoken or written proposition presupposes the single words for the subject and predicate terms, the formation of the mental complex, in turn, presupposes the acquisition of simple terms for the extremes. Each step in the formation of a mental complex, and the epistemic disposition one has towards the belief, further presuppose their own mental acts, and in the *Ordinatio* Ockham clearly distinguishes between two types of act that are required for the formation of beliefs: apprehensive and judicative acts.29

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27 Dumont, “Theology as a Science”, 579.
28 Susan Brower-Toland, “How Chatton Changed Ockham’s Mind” (Forthcoming in *Intentionality, Cognition and Mental Representation in Medieval Philosophy*, Gyula Klima, ed. [Springer]), 3. The paper is available on Dr. Brower-Toland’s website: https://sites.google.com/site/susancbrowertoland/online-papers-1.
29 Ockham, *OTh I* 16, 6-18: “Est igitur prima distinctio ista quod inter actus intellectus sunt duo actus quorum unus est apprehensivus, et est respectu cuiuslibet quod potest terminare actum potentiae intellectivae, sive sit complexum sive incomplextum; quia apprehendimus non tantum incomplexa sed etiam propositiones et demonstrationes et impossibilita et necessaria et universaliter omnia quae respiicitur a potentia intellectiva. Alius actus potest dici iudicativus, quo intellectus non tantum apprehendit objectum sed etiam illi assentit vel dissentit. Et iste actus est tantum respectu complexi, quia nulla assentimus per intellectum nisi quod verum reputans, nec dissentiemus nisi quod falsum aestimamus.”
Apprehensions are acts of basic awareness required to supply terms that compose mental propositions.\textsuperscript{30} Judicative acts, on the other hand, could also be called complex apprehensions, because they are single mental acts of awareness that comprehend complexes. Hence, a judicative act is a type of apprehension, but a single complex apprehension that takes an attitude of either assent or dissent to a mental proposition and has the additional function of producing belief to further distinguish it from simple apprehension.\textsuperscript{31}

In accord with Aristotle’s dictum from the \textit{Categories}, that “every assertion must, as is admitted, be either true or false, whereas expressions which are not in any way composite such as [the simple terms] ‘man’, ‘white’, ‘runs’, ‘wins’, cannot be either true or false,”\textsuperscript{32} Ockham holds that belief must therefore be of mental complexes that assert something to either be the case or not be the case, since only such things can be “true or false.” Hence, belief to Ockham involves the assertion or denial that a mental proposition is either true or false. What this further means is that knowledge is the result of a judicative act that takes the correct epistemic stance towards a mental proposition, one of either assent or dissent. Apprehensions of simples (‘white’, ‘man’, ‘runs’) do not constitute a type of belief. They are, however, required to supply

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid. 21, 6-10: “[Sequitur] quod omnis actus iudicativus praesupponit in eadem potentia notitiam incomplexam terminorum, quia praesupponit actum apprehensivum. Et actus apprehensivus respectu alicuius complexi preasupponit notitiam incomplexam terminorum.”
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid. 16-17, 19-2: “Hoc probatur: quia aliquis potest apprehendere aliquam propositionem et tamen illi nec assentire nec dissentire, sicut patet de propositionibus neutriss quibus intellectus nec assentit nec dissentit, quia aliter non essent sibi neutrae. Similiter laicus nesciens latinum potest audire multas propositiones in latino quibus nec assentit nec dissentit. [§ Et certum est quod intellectus potest assentire alicui propositioni et dissentire alteri; igitur etc. §]”
\end{flushright}

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\textsuperscript{32} Aristotle, \textit{A 8; Categories 2a4-2a10}.
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the mind with the simple terms used in complexes, and so knowledge presupposes them and the acts of apprehension by which they are had.\textsuperscript{33}

In the \textit{Reportatio} Ockham clearly defines intuitive apprehensions as “the medium by which a thing is cognized to be when it is, and not to be when it is not.”\textsuperscript{34} He also states that intuitive apprehensions are referents of the extremes alone, claiming that “no formation of a complex or act of assenting to a complex is an intuitive cognition. Because either cognition is a complex cognition, and an intuitive cognition is incomplex.”\textsuperscript{35} Hence, the main difference Ockham sees between intuitive and abstractive cognition is that the intuitive variety is existential, while the abstractive can take place even in the absence of their proper objects.

Because Wodeham will argue against the view, it should be said that Scotus’ insistence that both sensory and purely intellectual forms of intuition are required was maintained by Ockham. In the \textit{Reportatio} Ockham noted two objections to his position. First, Aristotle claimed that “sensation is of singulars, reason [read intellect here] is of universals.”\textsuperscript{36} If the mind has access to singular contingents by way of the sensory

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{33} See n. 30.
\textsuperscript{34} Ockham, \textit{OTh V} 256-257, ii-1: “Ideo circa istam quaestionem primo praemitto quasdam distinctiones. Una est quod quaedam est cognitione intuitive, et quaedam abstractiva. Intuitiva est illa mediante qua cognoscitur res esse quando est, et non esse quando non est. Quia quando perfecte apprehendo aliqua extrema intuitive, statim possum formare complexum quod ipsa extrema uniuntur vel non uniuntur; et assentire vel dissentire.”
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid. 257, 9-20: “Sciendum tamen quod licet stante cognitione intuitiva tam sensus quam intellectus respectu aliquorum incomplexorum possit intellectus complexum ex illis incomplexis intuitive cognitio formare modo praedicto et tali complexo assentire, tamen nec forantio complexi nec actus assentiendi complexo est cognition intuitiva. Quia utraque cognition et cognitione complexa, et cognition intuitiva est cognitione incomplexa. Et tunc, si ista duo, abstractivum et intuitivum, dividant omnem cognitionem tam complexam quam incompleam, tunc istae cognitiones dicerentur cognitiones abstractas; et omnis cognition complexa [diceretur] abstractiva, sive sit in praesentia rei stante cognitione intuitiva extremorum sive in absentia rei, et non stante cognitione intuitiva.”
\textsuperscript{36} Aristotle, \textit{A 150}; \textit{Posterior Analytics} 86a29-86a30: “...universal demonstration is through and through intelligible; particular demonstration issues in sense perception.”
\end{footnotes}
intuition alone, as Aristotle assumes to be the case, then “the intellect would not be able to have an intuitive cognition respecting singulars, because the intellect abstracts from material conditions, or from the here and now.”

The second is that the complete identification of intuition and sensation would have disastrous consequences for the reliability of contingent knowledge. The senses deceive. “[That] which places the intellect in error should not be placed in the intellect; but the intuitive cognition is of this type. It is clear, because if the thing is destroyed and the intuitive cognition remains, then through it the thing would be judged to exist when it does not, therefore.”

To solve both problems Ockham posits intellectual intuition of singular things that operates parallel to sensory intuition. He writes of the first problem: “I say that the intellect first cognizes [intelligit] the singular intuitively. Then because the intellect cognizes [intelligit] that which is in things [in re] intuitively; but there is no such except the singular.” Of the second, he claims that the intellect must primarily cognize singulars and present states of affairs, because the intellect is a superior power to the senses:

If therefore the senses thus cognize and the intellect does not, the intellect would be inferior to the senses. To this I say that the intellect cognizes singulars intuitively as here and now and

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37 Ockham, *OTh V* 281, 15-19: “Contra ista sunt multa dubia. Primo videtur quod intellectus non potest habere notitiam intuitivam respectu singularis, quia intellectus abstrahit a conditionibus materialibus, puta ab esse hic et nunc. Sed nec singulare nec cognitio intuitiva abstrahunt a conditionibus praedictis, igitur etc.”

38 Ibid. 281, 20-23: “Item, illud quod ponit intellectum in errore non debet poni in intellectu; sed notitia intuitiva est huiusmodi. Patet [quia] si destruatur res et maneat cognitio intuitiva, tunc per illam iudico rem esse quando non est, igitur etc.”

39 Ibid. 284, 2-6: “…dico quod intellectus primo intelligit singulare intuitive. Tum quia intellectus intelligit illud quod est in re intuitive; sed nihil est tale nisi singulare. Tum quia hoc convenit potentiae inferiori, puta sensui, et est perfectionis; igitur etc.”

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according to all conditions and according to what the senses cognize and even more. Whence an angel and a man know more perfectly where and when this body is moved, and thus of other material conditions, than some sensitive power.\(^{40}\)

Roughly, then, the process of acquiring contingent beliefs outlined by Ockham runs as follows: Through a direct intellectual intuitive apprehension of simples that exist in re, the mind obtains simple terms ('white', 'wall', 'running'), which are then, through a complex apprehension, placed into the form of a mental proposition. The mind then either assents or dissents to the proposition, and such acts are conditioned by the evident cognitions that are inherent in the proposition. Only with these acts complete, namely apprehension, composition or division, and the judicative act, can it be said that there is belief.\(^{41}\)

It is well known that Wodeham was a close associate, student and friend of Ockham. However, Wodeham was also a student to Walter Chatton (c.1290-1343), Ockham’s great intellectual rival and personal enemy.\(^{42}\) Chatton was of Ockham’s generation, and generally argued

\(^{40}\) Ibid. 284, 10-16: "Si igitur sensus sic cognoscat et intellectus non, intellectus esset imperfectior sensu. Ideo dico quod intellectus cognoscit intuitive singulare ut hic et nunc et secundum omnes condiciones secundum quas cognoscit sensus et etiam secundum plures. Unde angelus et homo sciunt perfectius ubi et quando hoc corpus movetur, et sic de alis condicionibus materialibus, quam aliqua potentia sentivia."

\(^{41}\) See n. 30; OTh V 286-287, 16-7: "Ideo dico quod cognitio intuitiva est illa qua existente iudico rem esse quando est et non est, modo supra dicto, et hoc sive causetur naturaliter sive supernaturaliter. Quia habita notitia intuitiva qualitercumque, statim possum formare hoc complexum 'haec res est' vel 'non est', et virtute cognitionis intuitivae assentire completo si res sit vel dissentire si non sint, sicut supra dictum est. Et sic nullo modo ponit intellectum in errore."

\(^{42}\) There seems to have been something personal between Ockham, Chatton and Wodeham. In the Introduction to the critical edition of the Lectura Secunda, Rega Wood and Gedeon Gál sum up how Wodeham related to each of his teachers. LS I 12*: “Wodeham quotes William of Ockham and Walter Chatton in every question of the Lectura Secunda. Wodeham praises Ockham even when he disagrees with him. [...] In contrast to his respectful treatment of Ockham, Wodeham’s criticism of Chatton is relentless and mocking. Wodeham’s feud with Chatton was longstanding. Wodeham attended Chatton’s 1323-1324 lectures, the lectures on which Chatton’s Reportatio is based. Wodeham raised objections publicly during these
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against Ockham’s ontological reductionist tendencies in favour of more realist leaning positions.\(^{43}\)

The most relevant disagreement between Ockham and Chatton was over the need for sensible species in vision. As will be discussed in detail in chapter III, Ockham rejected the perspectivist theory of vision and the positing of the species in medio in favour of direct realism.\(^{44}\) Because he thought action-at-a-distance to be naturally possible on the basis of analogy to other natural phenomena that truly seem to act at a distance, Ockham felt that the intellect has immediate access to contingent things in re.\(^{45}\) If this is the case, then the principle of parsimony allows for the reduction of species from the account. They are, Ockham reasoned, posited in order to explain how a visual object at a distance can physically affect the eye, giving rise to a vision. But if an uninterrupted line of contact between the visible object and the eye is not required to explain lectures, and he complained that Chatton had never replied to them.” Despite his seeming need to defend Ockham and repudiate Chatton, Wodeham ultimately sided with Chatton against Ockham in many controversies, including that regarding the need for only a sensory mode of intuition and the unity of the soul. Moreover, although there are salient differences between the positions the two will ultimately adopt, several of Wodeham’s arguments against Ockham are identical to those given by Chatton in the Reportatio. If, as Gál and Wood claim, Wodeham was present when Chatton delivered the Reportatio, then it is reasonable to assume that Wodeham outright adopted many of Chatton’s arguments. Chatton’s arguments for the unity of the soul and the reduction of intuition to sensation can be found here: RP I 105-117; Prologus, Q.2, A.4.


\(^{44}\) Tachau, Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham, 134-135.

\(^{45}\) Ockham, OTh VI 48, 16-18: "...probo quod non semper movens immediatum est simul cum moto, sed quod potest distare." Ibid. 53, 3-10: "Tertia experientia est de magnete, qui secundum Commentatorem, commento 9, trahit ferrum distans ab eo localiter; trahit, dico, immediate et non virtute aliqua in medio vel in ferro. Igitur lapsis ille agit immediate in distans, non agendo in medium. Assumptum probatur, quia si virtus aliqua causata in ferro a magnete moveret ferrum effective, tunc sic: ubi agens unum et idem, et passum similitur, sequitur semper idem effectus ceteris paribus." See also: Tachau, Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham, 134-135.
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how vision arises, then the *species* is not needed and should be eliminated.\(^{46}\)

Chatton, on the other hand, agreed with the common and authoritative view that action-at-a-distance is not naturally possible. There must be an uninterrupted line of contact between the visible object and the eye to account for how vision arises naturally, and the *species in medio* must therefore remain in order to explain vision.\(^{47}\)

The more relevant epistemological issue was the infallibility of intuitive apprehension that the intuition of non-existents together with direct intellectual intuition implied. If the intellect has direct access to extra-mentals and operates infallibly, even in cases where God has destroyed an object and is maintaining the intuition of it by way of supernatural causality, then it is difficult to see how optical illusions and other problems with the reliability of sensory intuition can be explained. If intuition is infallible, then there should be no instance in which an intuition can be erroneous or lead to anything other than an accurate belief, which, Chatton is correct to point out, experience clearly shows to be false:

Against this [Ockham’s] opinion I prove that a perfect intuitive cognition in a creature, if conserved by God, would not represent a thing to not be.

First, because according to this God would not be able to cause in us a single act cognizing a thing through which the thing would

\(^{46}\) Ockham, *OTH VI* 59-60, 11-2: “...nulla apparent necessitas ponendi tales species productas in medio alterius rationis ab objectis a quibus causantur, quia cum istae species non possint sentiri ab aliquo sensu, non debent poni nisi propter rationem deductam ex principiis per se notis vel experimento. Sed si esset aliquo ratio ad hoc, videretur esse haec, quod movens et motum sunt simul secundum contactum, quia haec est ratio Commentatoris ubique ad probandum speciem esse. Sed probatum est supra quod aliquid potest agere in etremum distans, nihil agendo in medio.” See also: Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham*, 134-135.

appear to us to be present when it were absent. And this is false, because nothing is to be denied from Him of which cannot be concluded to imply a contradiction. I prove the consequence, because either the cognition of the thing would be intuitive, which is false according to you [Ockham], because you posit that the intuitive is that through which a thing appears not to be when it is not; or, abstractive, which cannot be, because according to you and truth a thing does not appear present through the abstractive.48

The only way to explain optical illusions and other deceptive sensory experiences is to allow instances in which an object is judged to be present and exist when it does not. Ockham’s account does not allow for this, and must therefore be incorrect.49

While Wodeham’s theory of apprehension no doubt falls in with the Franciscan tradition, he alters it as handed down to him from Scotus and Ockham in significant ways. The greatest of these alterations, dealt with in the very first question of the Prologue to the Lectura Secunda, is the effacement of the distinction between sensory and intellectual modes of apprehension. His argument runs, basically, as follows: Distinct sensory and intellectual apprehensions should only be posited if they are needed

48 Chatton, RP 98-99, 19-28: “Contra istam opinionem probo quod notitia intuitiva perfecta in creaturis, si a Deo conservatur, non repraesentet rem non esse. Primo, quia secundum istud Deus non posset causare in nobis unum actum cognoscendi aliquam rem per quem ipsa appareret nobis esse praesens quando esset absens. Et hoc falsum, quia nihil negandum ab eo de quo non concluditur ipsum inferre contradictionem. Consequentiam probo, quia aut illa cognitione rei esset intuitiva, quod falsum est per te, quia ponis quod intuitiva est illa per quam appareret rem non esse quando non est; aut abstractiva, quod non, quia per te et secundum veritatem per abstractivam non appareret rem esse praesens.”

49 Ibid. 100, 76-84: Chatton implies in a later passage that the only way for optical illusions to be explained is to allow instances of deceptive intuitions, visions of non-existent objects that trick the mind into falsely assenting to presence and existence: “Quinto [contra Ockham]..., aliquis actus intuitivus, silicet illo quo videtur intensum visibile, potest naturaliter manere per aliquod tempus post corruptionem visibilis; et tamen tunc non est illus virtute cuius scitur illud visibile non esse, sicut patet per experientiam. Assumptum probatum est supra, quia recedente sole remanet una visio qua appareret sol esse in eodem situ in quo prius. Aut igitur illa est visio solis, et habetur propositum. Aut non, igitur terminatur ad alium visibile praesens, quod falsum est, quia aequae virtute eius indicatur sol esse in illo situ sicut prius. Hoc non esset si haberet alium pro objecto.”
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to explain how the mind obtains evident cognitions required for acts of knowledge, and both are needed only if there are two souls in us. But any and all acts of a living being can be explained by appeal to one form, the substantial form of life or the soul, and the view that there is a plurality of souls in us is heretical. So, because distinct intellectual and sensory apprehensions are not needed and positing both leads to heresy, only one mode of apprehension should be posited.

The principle of parsimony—nature abhors superfluity, entities should not be multiplied beyond necessity, or in any of the various formulations given to it—is, basically, the idea that what is presupposed to be sufficient for explanation and nothing besides should be posited. The way to test for sufficiency regarding causes is to circumscribe all else from a cause or set of partial causes that together constitute a single cause and see if the effect could be posited. If the effect is not in some manner present in the posited causes, then more is required. If elements can be subtracted from the group of causes without affecting the result, then these elements are superfluous and should be eliminated from the account.

50 Chatton, RP 35, 525-526: "...dico quod non est pluritas sine necessitate..."; Ibid. 77, 36-37: "...pluritas non est ponenda sine necessitate..."; Adams gives a good list of various formulations used by Ockham in William Ockham, 156-157: “It is futile to do with more what can be done with fewer”; “When a proposition comes out true for things, if two things suffice for its truth, it is superfluous to assume a third”; “plurality should not be assumed without necessity”; “no plurality should be assumed unless it can be proved by reason, by experience, or by some infallible authority.”

51 The use was fairly standard; here is an example from Chatton, which seems to demonstrate this common methodical use of parsimony, insofar as he was known as a realist who generally resisted reductionist tendencies. In this passage he is reducing Aureol’s “esse apparens” with the principle. RP 87, 28-30: “[Primo,] quia posita albedine prae sente et posita substantia actus videndi in potentia, omni alio ente circumscripto, adhuc ipsa albedo esset visa; igitur superfluit ponere illud ens distinctum.”
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In this case, Scotus and Ockham posited separate sensory and intellectual types of apprehensions because they felt both to be required to explain acts of evident knowledge, a fact that Wodeham notes. Wodeham writes that intellectual intuition apart from sensory intuition is posited for the most part so that “the intellect can have evident judgement of sensible existents and their contingent conditions”, which implies that the intellect needs direct access to the extra-mental world to obtain the evident cognitions that mental propositions expressing evident knowledge presuppose.

Wodeham claims that Scotus and Ockham are wrong. Experience flatly contradicts the claim that another mode of apprehension distinct from sensation is required to obtain evident cognitions; sensation alone is enough to immediately lead to a claim of existence and presence:

We get evident and certain assent by which the intellect judges that to be, demonstrated by a vision of something white. I prove that a judgment does not require another simple intuitive cognition than the sensitive vision itself, because that which immediately receives the intuition of that whiteness needs nothing other to be received in order to judge this white to be unless perhaps that this, if it [namely the white thing] be obscure or imperfect, might be more closely inspected.

Wodeham is saying that seeing is believing; or, more accurately, that seeing is enough to explain contingent belief. A vision alone, without appeal to a distinct mode of intellection, is enough to give rise to an evident assent that an immediate object of vision, a swath of whiteness or

53 Ibid. 10, 20-25: “...accipiamus assensum evidentem et certum quo intellectus iudicat hoc esse, demonstrata aliqua albedine visa. Probo quod illud iudicium non requirit aliam notitiam simplicem intuitivam quam ipsam visionem sensitivam, quia illud quod immediate recipit illam intuitionem huius albedinis nullam aliam indiget recipere ad hoc quod iudicet hanc albidinem esse nise forte quod illa, si sit obscura vel imperfecta, intendatur.”
some other colour, exists and is present. What’s more, a sensitive intuitive apprehension is the *sine qua non* of evident knowledge of the extra-mental world:

For it is certain through experience that having seen that whiteness with a sensitive vision, that whiteness can be cognized evidently to be. When, however, it does not appear sensibly, but is only cognized through an act of imagination or by some other intellectual act which we experience in us, it is not possible for it to be evidently cognized.54

Sensation is sufficient and necessary for existential inferences. Positing a distinct intellectual intuition apart from sensation violates the principle of parsimony.

But one might respond that despite what Wodeham has said it could still be that another type of intuition apart from sensation needs to be posited. The form of the object of an act of vision is sensible, while the form of an act of the intellect is purely intelligible. If we did not maintain the distinction between the two, then we would have to say that sensory and intellectual acts are the same type, which is clearly false. We should therefore do what Scotus and Ockham did, and posit distinct sensitive and intellectual modes of apprehension.

Once again using the principle of parsimony to its fullest, Wodeham responds that “one soul in us is enough [to explain] all acts we experience in us.”55

If we make sensation and intellection two distinct acts with their own forms, then we need to posit two distinct subjects of those acts, namely sensitive and intellecutive souls. But all acts of whatever kind that

54 Ibid. 13-14, 5-9: “Certum [est] enim per experientem quod visa hac albedine visione sensitiva, potest evidenter cognosci hanc albedinem esse. Quando autem non videtur sensibiliter, sed tantum cognoscitur per actum imaginandi vel quocumque actu intellectus quem in nobis experimur, non potest hoc evidenter cognosci.”

55 Ibid. 10, 35-36: “...ad salvandum omnes actus quos in nobis experimur, sufficit una anima in nobis.”
belong to a living being that is numerically one can be explained by appealing to one subject. In other words, rather than posit distinct sensory and mental acts, Wodeham sidesteps the problem altogether by claiming that both reduce to a broader genus of act—the vital act—which is received immediately by one subject, namely the indivisible soul.\textsuperscript{56}

\section*{§ 1.2: The Unity of the Soul}

There was nothing all that controversial in Wodeham’s day about claiming that the soul is an indivisible unity. But identifying the human soul with acts of sensation had the potential to land him in trouble with Church authorities. The issue had to do with Aristotle’s well-known threefold division of the soul.

Aristotle claimed that the soul can be divided according to function into three parts: the nutritive, the appetitive and the rational. The nutritive soul is responsible for nourishment and growth. The appetitive or sensory soul is responsible for bodily desire and locomotion. The rational soul is responsible for thought and reasoning. Plant species, whose vital functions are limited to reproduction, continued existence, and growth from the nourishment of the sun and soil, have the nutritive soul alone. Non-human animals or brutes, which can sense and are capable of locomotion determined by appetite, have the functions of both the nutritive soul and the appetitive soul, but lack the rational or intellectual soul required for thought, knowledge and cognition. Finally, only human

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid. 11, 48-51: “Omnis enim forma viva in nobis est anima. Ex his arguo: omnes actus vitales in nobis recipiuntur immediate in forma viva; sed omnes sensationes, tam interiores quam exteriores, et omnes intellactiones in nobis sunt actus vitales; igitur.”
beings have the functions associated with the nutritive and appetitive souls plus those of the rational soul.\textsuperscript{57}

It was unanimously agreed that humans are capable of nourishment, locomotion, and thought, and so all three functions of the soul must in some way be operating in a human animal. However, it was a matter of debate whether human beings have one soul with different capabilities, or whether there are multiple souls with their own functions aggregated in the person.\textsuperscript{58}

In 1277, Robert Kilwardby (c. 1215-1279), at that time Archbishop of Canterbury, included a judgement on the matter in a list of condemned conclusions stemming from the Paris Articles. Identification of the nutritive and appetitive souls in the human animal with the person, or holding the view that a human being has one soul with three distinct sets of functions—or any opinion that led to that conclusion—was prohibited at Oxford.\textsuperscript{59} The human person was to be identified with the rational soul exclusive of the other functions of the human animal.

Despite the prohibition of the view at Oxford, Wodeham claimed that it was nevertheless permissible to argue that a human being has only one soul. In the time since Kilwardby had banned the view, John Peckham (c. 1230-1292) had become the head of the Church in England. When first appointed, Peckham had renewed the list of prohibited doctrines, and this new list did not include the identification of the

\textsuperscript{57} Aristotle, \textit{A 559-560; De Anima} 413a 28-415a 15.

\textsuperscript{58} Lagerlund, "John Buridan and the Problem of Dualism", 370. Lagerlund claims that the controversy over the unity of the soul was due to Avicenna, whom claimed in his \textit{De Anima} commentary that the soul could be studied in itself as an object of metaphysics or as the principle of animation of bodies in physics (369). This led to a dualistic view of the soul akin to Cartesian dualism (370-371).

\textsuperscript{59} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 15, 22-24: "Item, contra illud quod acceptum est de unitate receptivi est articulus condemnatus per Kilwardby, videlicet quod vegetativa et sensitiva et intellectiva sunt una forma simplex." See also: Lagerlund, "John Buridan and the Problem of Dualism", 373.
rational soul with the other functions of the soul. Wodeham reasoned that its exclusion from Peckham’s list was tantamount to a removal of the prohibition against it. He was therefore allowed to argue in favour of the conclusion, and teach doctrine that assumed and led to it.\(^{60}\)

He further argued that even if the prohibition had not lapsed, that it was nevertheless wrong, and that the opposite view, that there is an aggregate of souls in the human being, was determined to be heretical by a higher authority than either Kilwardby or Peckham. Wodeham points out that St. Augustine had explicitly condemned the view that a human has a plurality of souls in book 15 of the *Dogma of the Church*, in the *Spirit and Soul* and “in many other places.”\(^{61}\)

Ockham too had realized that positing both sensory and intellectual modes of apprehensions could lead to the view that St. Augustine deemed heretical. But he argued that Augustine was not saying that there could not be distinct appetitive and rational souls in a human, merely that there was a single, indivisible *rational* soul in a human.\(^{62}\)

But Wodeham rejected his teacher’s claim, saying that if distinct sensory and intellectual forms of intuitions were to be accepted, then the

\(^{60}\) Wodeham, *LS I* 17, 89-91: “Peckham, qui rediit super articulos ab illo condemnatos, istum articulum et alios in idem sonantes non condemnavit, videtur mihi quod satis secure potest teneri oppositum illius articuli, quia omnes glossae [Chattoni] sunt extortae.” It should also be noted that Chatton, who argues for the unity of the soul in a manner similar if not identical to Wodeham, notes that the doctrine could be considered an error, and provided arguments to the contrary to defend his position, including those provided by St. Augustine: *RP* 105-117; Prologus, Q.2, A.4.


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consequence that there are two distinct souls in a human being was unavoidable. If sensation and intellection are different forms of acts but are nevertheless acts attributable to living beings, then they must belong to different types of life forms, and hence distinct souls, which would necessitate positing two souls in a human being—precisely the view Augustine has determined to be heretical. He writes that “if they [sensation and intellect] are distinguished, and they are nevertheless forms of life [acts attributable to a living being], then we have a plurality of souls in us. For all forms of life in us are soul.”

The only way to avoid positing an aggregate of souls is to hold the position that sensations and intellections have the same form, which can be received immediately into a single soul. Because both types of acts would have the same form—the form of a vital act—the object of the act would not just be received simultaneously in the senses and intellect; it could even be said *per accidens* that the “intellect senses”, since ultimately sensation and intellection are the same sort of act.

All vital acts in us are received immediately in the form of life; but all sensations, as much interior as exterior, and all intellections in us are vital acts; therefore. But there is in us only one form of life, therefore all vital acts are received immediately in a single life.

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65 Let’s say John is a ship builder. Insofar as he is a ship builder, he builds ships, and the phrase “the ship builder builds ships” would be said *simpliciter per se*, because the skill of building ships stems directly from John qua his being a ship builder. But when John trains dogs it would not be inaccurate to say that “the ship builder trains dogs” because both the ship builder and the trainer are the same subject, namely John. However, it would be *per accidens* that this is true, because there is nothing about being a ship builder that leads to the skill of dog training. Hence, it is accidental that a ship builder trains dogs, but it is still accurate, because both qualities refer to one subject, namely John.
form. And so the minor is proved, [clearly] that what immediately receives an evident assent, by which this whiteness is judged to be, receives immediately the sensitive vision of this whiteness.\(^{66}\)

While there is no disagreement amongst commentators that Wodeham holds the position that all acts of a living being are reducible to one form, there may be an incoherence with the theory of vital acts that Wodeham seems to have overlooked. Death is the separation of the soul and the body. But the body continues to maintain its form and continue with nutritive functions after this separation. The body retains its shape, hair and nails continue to grow, and digestion and evacuation of the bowels continues after death. Because the soul has departed, it must either be the case that post-mortem vital functions are attributable to another soul apart from that of the appetitive and nutritive souls, or that there are acts of a living thing not attributable to soul. If we say that the nutritive functions are not attributable to soul, then there are vital acts for non-living beings, which seems absurd. The only other option is for the nutritive soul to remain after death and thus be really distinct from the appetitive/rational soul, which would mean that there are two souls in a human being. If Wodeham holds that there is a nutritive soul distinct from the appetitive/rational soul, then Wodeham is guilty of heresy according to his own arguments.

Martin Pickavé has argued that Wodeham took his version of the theory of vital acts from another of his Franciscan predecessors, Peter

Aureol (c. 1280-1322). Aureol understood the characteristic feature of vital acts to be intentionality:

Vital acts are called those acts through which a power is united with its object in an intentional way, which is a special mode of union. For example, if understanding were a non-vital quality through which the power would merely be assimilated to its object, then understanding would certainly not be a vital act. But because understanding is said to consist in an object having cognitive being and the object being united, understanding is called vital, because vital is a special and singular mode of similitude. And the same is true of love...But in an act of the sensitive appetite the object is united to the power in a vital mode and intentionally.67

Pickavé uses Wodeham’s view of the intentionality of vital acts to support arguments in favour of reading Wodeham as something of a cognitivist regarding the emotions.68 Because Wodeham claims that the emotions must have an object and are therefore intentional, they are types of cognitions, according to how Wodeham defines cognition.69 But regarding the standing of the nutritive soul, if Pickavé is correct, then Wodeham’s arguments in favour of the unity of the soul could apply to the

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67 Peter Aureol, *Commentariorum in Tertium Librum Sententiarum* (Rome: 1605), 441a: “Item actus vitales dicuntur, quibus potentia intetionalis obiecto unitur, qui est proprius modus unionis: verbi gratia, si intelligere esset qualitas mortua, per quam solum potentia assimilaretur obiecto, certe non esset vitalis; sed quia ponitur obiectum uniri in esse cognito, ideo vocatur vitalis, quia specialis modus similitudinis, & singularis: ita de amore...sed actui appetitus sensitivi unitur obiectum potentiae modo vitali, & intentionaliter: ergo.” (Trans. by Martin Pickavé, “Emotion and Cognition in Later Medieval Philosophy: The Case of Adam Wodeham”, *Emotion and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*, Eds. Martin Pickavé and Lisa Shapiro [Oxford: OUP, 2012]: 94-115, 107.) I should note that Pickavé holds Wodeham to be a cognitivist, insofar as Wodeham identified all intentional acts, and emotions are intentional to Wodeham, as cognitions. This is quite different, Pickavé claims, from how the Stoics and moderns hold the emotions to be cognitive. The Stoics and moderns, basically, claim that the emotions have their own cognitive content distinct from purely intellectual cognitions. Wodeham, on the other hand, claims emotions to be cognitions insofar as they are secondary acts that sort of piggy back on emotionally neutral acts of cognition. Wodeham’s only point in claiming the emotions to be cognitive is that they must have an object, but this object is no different from an initial, emotionally neutral intellectual cognition.

68 Pickavé 94-115.

69 Ibid. Wodeham addresses the emotions in *LS*, D.1, Q.4-Q.6.
functions of the appetitive and rational souls distinct from the nutritive functions, which would further allow him to maintain that vital acts cease when the soul, read now as the rational and appetitive functions distinct from the nutritive, separate from the body, even if nutritive functions continue.70

But this reading would leave the second horn of the dilemma, the need to posit a second soul in the human being to account for nutritive functions, standing, which would further entail that he is guilty by his own reasoning of supporting a condemned thesis. Moreover, it is difficult to see how Wodeham can avoid saying either that every act of a living being is a vital act, in which case he has failed to account for post-mortem nutritive functions, or that nutritive functions are non-vital acts, which would seem to lead to heterodoxy.71 Wodeham himself does not explicitly address this issue, and, unfortunately, passes over it without recognizing the problem.

70 This does seem to be what Wodeham has in mind. He never includes acts associated with the nutritive soul, only those of the appetitive and rational souls. LS I ii, 46-47: “...reciperent immediate actus vitales cuuismodi sunt omnes actus apprehensivi et appetitivi.” And a few lines later, 50-51: “...sed omnes sensationes, tam interiores quam exteriores, et omnes intellectiones in nobis sunt actus vitales; igitur.”

71 There is also what Pickavé calls the “traditional” understanding of vital acts: “Traditionally vital acts are acts of vital powers. A vital power is characterized by spontaneity and by the fact that its acts are caused from principles intrinsic to the power of the subject of the power, whereas a non-vital power is simply the potency to undergo a certain kind of change as induced from the outside” (“The Case of Adam Wodeham”, 106). He continues that cognition is the “paradigm” case of vital acts, while the power of a surface to receive colour would be exemplary of non-vital acts. It could be that Wodeham holds nutritive functions to be non-vital but sensory and intellectual acts to be vital, which would make sense, given that Wodeham holds all intentional acts, intellectual and appetitive, to be cognitive. The vital/non-vital distinction would perhaps find a sympathetic reception in a medieval context, but we must still ask about the principle of the nutritive functions of the body, and it is difficult to see how this could be anything but soul. And if it is soul, then it’s difficult to see how to avoid positing an aggregate of souls in a human person in Wodeham’s account, which would make him a victim of his own arguments.
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But back to the main argument: Wodeham has so far argued against positing separate intellectual and sensitive forms of apprehensions through his theory of the unity of the soul. However, apart from the need to explain evident cognitions for knowledge of contingents and for the purposes of avoiding heresy, Ockham cited other reasons to avoid identifying the sensory and intellectual powers in the way Wodeham proposed that stem from the principle of the uniformity of nature.\textsuperscript{72}

The principle of the uniformity of nature, which Ockham, Chatton and Wodeham all accepted,\textsuperscript{73} basically states that for any given cause or set of partial causes that when combined are sufficient to serve as a cause, one and only one effect will arise automatically and only one is possible: “The same natural causes altogether in similar passivity and uniformly disposed uniformly cause an effect.”\textsuperscript{74} Circumscribing all else, if we were to take tea leaves and place them in hot water, given those circumstances,

\textsuperscript{72} In case you are already wondering how, if at all, Wodeham deals with the problem of induction, it should be said that he distinguishes between principles that are “immediately” \textit{per se nota} and those that are “remotely” \textit{per se nota}, a distinction that roughly coincides with the deductive/inductive distinction. What defines a principle is that it is enough to necessitate assent, which allows for principles had through repetition of demonstration and multiple, consistent experiences. These sorts of propositions are those of natural science, such as the uniformity of nature. They are naturally indubitable, but are not infallible, owing to divine deception. This is treated in more detail in chapters III, IV and V of the dissertation.

\textsuperscript{73} Wodeham: \textit{LS I} 38, 19-23: “Causa naturalis eadem omnino in passivo eodem et uniformiter disposito uniformem causat effectum. Sed visio illa si sit causa judicii evidenter quod res existit seu primi assensus, est causa non libera sed mere naturalis; et potentia iudicativa est eadem et uniformiter disposita. Igitur causabat semper huiusmodi assensus et nunquam dissensum.” Ockham: \textit{OTh I} 56, 14-21: “…illa manet invariata sive res sit sive non sit. Igitur cum sit cuasa naturalis, in eodem passo non habebit effectus oppositos etiam in diversis temporibus, sed quando res est tunc iudicat rem esse; ergo sive res sit sive non, non erit causa totalis actus oppositi.” Chatton: \textit{RP 101}, 101-102: “…actus uniformaliter se habet in entitate, igitur uniformem assensum natus est causare, quantum est ex parte sui”; Qtd. in Tachau, \textit{Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham,} 182: “…agens uniformiter manens et aequae prae sens passo uniformiter disposito natum est causare uniformem effectum.”

\textsuperscript{74} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 38, 19-20: “Causa naturalis eadem omnino in passivo eodem et uniformiter disposito uniformem causat effectum.”
the effect, or the third entity that arises automatically from the combination of those two with nothing else added and everything else excluded, would be tea. The effect, the tea, would arise invariably with the presence of the conditions in each and every instance. One implication of the principle is that contrary effects cannot arise from a single cause. If, for instance, we were to take tea leaves and add them to hot water, then we could not get coffee, and we could not get tea and coffee. In the first case, the effect would not be uniform to the cause, which would violate the principle. In the second, we would have contrary effects arising from the same cause. And a single cause cannot give rise to contrary effects.

From the principle of the uniformity of nature, Ockham argues against identifying intellectual and sensory acts. If there were only one type of act, then contrary effects could not arise. However, there often are contrary effects that are given rise to in the soul on the basis of the same intentional object.\(^{75}\) When I see cake, for instance, I usually want to eat it. But at the same time, I know cake has a lot of calories, and is generally not part of a healthy diet, so I hate or avoid it. Thus, there are contrary effects—attraction and aversion—had from the very same intuition, which violates the principle of the uniformity of nature:

It is impossible that contraries should exist simultaneously in the same subject. But an act of desiring something and an act of spurning that same thing are contraries in the same subject.

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\(^{75}\) Ibid. 17, 3-6: “Sed contra dicetur: semper videtur magnum inconveniens quod idem receptivum immediatum indivisibile simul appetat a seu desideret, et tamen odiat seu detestetur a.” Ibid. 15, 25-31: “...intellectiva et sensitiva distinguuntur realiter in nobis probatur ratione. Nam contraria non sunt simul per naturam in eodem subiecto indivisibilis; sed actus voluntatis et actus appetitus sensitivi qui simul insunt nobis, in casu contrariantur; igitur non recipiuntur in eodem subiecto indivisibili. Minor patet, quia simul quando appetitus sensitivus appetit prosequi aliquid, voluntas habet actum nolendi illam processionem, sicut experimur in nobis, et Apostolus etiam videtur hoc dicere: *Caro concupiscit adversus spiritum.*”
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Therefore, if they exist simultaneously in reality, they do not exist in the same subject. But it is manifest that they exist simultaneously in a human being, since a human being spurns by his intellective appetite the very same thing he desires by his sensitive appetite.\textsuperscript{76}

It is perhaps for this reason that Aristotle would not identify sensation and intellection when he looked at the problem of contrary inclinations in the \textit{Nicomachean Ethics}, saying that “what is in the mind affirmation and negation, that in the appetite is prosecution and flight.”\textsuperscript{77}

If, however, there are two distinct souls in the human animal, the appetitive and rational, then contrary inclinations regarding a single object can be explained. The sensory intuition operating together with the appetitive soul would give rise to desire for the object, while intellectual intuition operating together with the rational soul would give a contrary effect, namely avoidance of and aversion for the object. But if there is only one intuition of the object received immediately into one soul, then it is difficult to see how to avoid saying that the same cause, the single intuition of the object, gives rise to contrary effects, namely an inclination

\textsuperscript{76} Ockham, \textit{OTh IX} 157, 13-19: “...impossibile est quod in eodem subiecto sint simul contraria; sed actus apppetendi aliquid et actus renuendi idem in eodem sunt contraria; igitur si sint simul in rerum natura, non sunt in eodem subiecto; sed manifestum est quod sunt simul in homine quia illud idem quod homo appetit per appetitum sensitivum, renuit per appetitum intellectivum.” Ibid. 158, 32-40: “...eadem forma substantialis non potest simul et semel habere duos actus appetendi respectu eiusdem objecti; sed in homine frequenter sunt simul actus volendi aliquod objectum et actus appetendi idem appetitu sensitivo; igitur isti actus non sunt in edoem subiecto. Praeterea eadem forma numero non elicet simul et semel unum actum appetendi aliquid naturaliter et alium libere; sed homo libere vult aliquid et appetitus sensitivus naturaliter appetit illud; igitur etc.” (Trans. by Henrik Lagerlund, “John Buridan and the Problems of Dualism”, 374.)

\textsuperscript{77} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 17, 7-10: “VI Ethicorum: ‘Quod in mente affirmatio et negatio, hoc in appetitu prosecutio et fuga.’ In appetitu autem non est alia prosecutio vel fuga nisi desiderare et detestari. Sed in mente contrariantur quicumque assensus et dissensus eidem objecto.”
towards an object and an aversion away from it. For this reason Ockham opted for positing two souls with their own modes of apprehension.\textsuperscript{78}

Wodeham, however, defends his position by arguing that although attraction and aversion for a single object can occur simultaneously in a single soul, additional causes contribute to each. Contrary effects are therefore possible in the same soul on the basis of different causes:

[One] of these acts is received purely naturally by medium of sensation of such objects and the real transmutation of the body of some organ of the body. The other, however, is freely caused in itself, had at least by previous deliberation, so that it can be free to cause this or its contrary.\textsuperscript{79}

The desire for the object is naturally caused by an extra-mental object acting on the organ of sensation. I see the cake and the object in conjunction with the organ, the eye, gives rise to an inclination to eat it. The opposite inclination, the aversion for the object, is given rise to by the intuition together with deliberation. I recall that cake is not healthy, leads to tooth decay, makes me fat, etc., and realize that I should not eat it. Hence, the two opposite inclinations are compossible in one soul on the basis of two distinct sets of causes.

Wodeham further speculates that this is what Aristotle meant in the \textit{Nicomachean Ethics}: “It is to be said that the Philosopher did not mean an act of attraction or aversion through his use of prosecution and flight, but the execution in which they incline.”\textsuperscript{80} The idea is that contrary inclinations, attraction and aversion, are compossible in a single

\textsuperscript{78} Ockham, \textit{OTH IX} 156, 1-3: “Quaestio 10: Utrum anima sensitiva et intellectiva in homine distinguantur realiter.” Ibid. 157, 11: “Ad istam quaestionem dico quod sic.”

\textsuperscript{79} Wodham, \textit{LS I} 18, 13-16: “…alterum illorum actuum recipit mere naturaliter mediante sensatione talis objecti et transmutatione reali corporea alcius organi corporealis. Alterum autem causat in se libere, habita saltem deliberatione praevia, ita quod libere potest causare illum vel contrarium.”

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid. 18, 28-30: “[Dicendum] quod Philosophus per prosecutionem et fugam in appetitu non intelligit actus apetendi et detestandi, sed executiones in quas inclinant.”
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subject, but that the execution of the act, in this case either prosecution or flight, are incompossible. I can have competing inclinations towards the cake. I cannot, however, have my cake and eat it too.

Just as someone in danger at sea, having his eyes on his merchandise only absolutely desires to save it, but because he deliberates that he cannot save it with his life which is dearer than his merchandise, he accordingly detests it, not absolutely, but because the saving of this [his merchandise] is against [the saving of his] life.81

Thus far Wodeham has shown that in order to have contingent knowledge no other apprehension need be posited besides sensory intuition. However, he does not take this to mean that all knowledge of sensible things requires only sensible intuition. There are, he claims, some types of purely intellectual acts about sensible things that do not require a sensory intuition and are distinct from them.82 With a judgment asserting that dispersed or distinct patches of whiteness are the same colour, it cannot be that the cognition of whiteness used is taken from a sensory intuition alone, because the whiteness in such a general judgment signifies the whiteness of the various swathes of white indifferently.

81 Ibid. 18-19, 40-43: “Sicut qui periculatur in mari, habendo oculos ad merces tantum absolute appetit eas salvare, sed quia deliberat quod non potest eas salvare cum vita sua quae est carior illis mercibus, ideo detestatur eas, non absolute, sed quia earum salvatio repugnat vitae.” Wodeham also uses the example of a dog who first desires some food he sees, but hesitates to act and snatch it, remembering a punishment previously inflicted for such an act, to make his point. He claims this example to be decisive because no one would deny that a dog has but one soul. Ibid. 19, 45-50: “Exemplum ad hoc est de cane, de quo certum est non esse in eo duas animas, cui cum porrigitur panis in ferro cultelli quem absolute appetit, tamen cum timet percuti manubrio, ex memoria consimilis percussionis, retrahit se. Et nec prosequitur nec fugit, absolute desiderans, nolens tamen prosequi nisi posset evadere quod timet, ita quod obiectum secundi actus non est tantum panis sed panis cum ictu.” Again, in such a case, the causes of the opposing inclinations are distinct. The desire, on the one hand, is had from the sensation alone. The fear, on the other hand, comes from the sensation plus the memory of the previous punishment (“bread and the blow”).

82 Ibid. 21, 3-5: “Tertia conclusio est quod aliquod iudicium intellectus de re sensibili per se praesupponit apprehensionem aliquam, scilicet abstractivam simplicem distinctam realiter ab omni sensatione.”
“Nisi Deus Decipiat”: Adam Wodeham on Evident Knowledge

Seeing as it would be determined singularly of any spatially isolated instance of whiteness, sensory intuition would not be enough to provide a cognition of the common whiteness.\textsuperscript{83}

The type of apprehension needed to supply the mind with cognitions that signify any and all instances must therefore be purely intellectual, and because there can be judgments regarding sensible objects such as whiteness and redness in the absence of the presence and existence of whiteness, it cannot be that it is intuitive. Wodeham therefore posits abstractive apprehension as a purely intellectual act needed to supply the mind with cognitions that signify indifferently, saying “that some intellectual judgments of sensible things presuppose in themselves some apprehension, clearly simple abstractive [apprehension], really distinct from all sensation.”\textsuperscript{84}

He further claims that apprehensions of this sort, because it is required that they signify any and all instances indifferently, are universal cognitions open to the intellect alone.\textsuperscript{85} He claims this view to be supported by “innumerable authorities”\textsuperscript{86} including Aristotle, who

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid. 21, 8-9: “Sed nulla notitia sensitiva est indifferenter cuiuslibet albedinis sed tantum singularis determinati.” Ibid., 16-18: “Assumptum, scilicet quod sensatio exterior tantum sit singularis determinati patet, quia dependet a sensibili determinato, ita quod ponitur ad eius praesentiam et destruitur ad eius absentiam.”

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid. 21, 3-5: “Tertia conclusio est quod aliquod iudicium intellectus de re sensibili per se praesupponit apprehensionem aliquam, scilicet abstractivam simplicem distinctam realiter ab omni sensatione.”

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid. 21, 30-33: “Et quas recipit sensus [sunt] tantum istae, in repraesentando scilicet, quia quaelibet repraesentat determinatum singulare. De rebus autem quae non cadunt sub sensu secus est, quia a solo intellectu sunt cognoscibles, tam in universali quam in particulari....”

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid. 21, 19-28: “I Posteriorum dicit Philosophus: ‘Universale quidem secundum rationem est, singularae vero secundam sensum.’ Et assignat causam, dicens: ‘Ratio quidem enim universalium est, sensus autem singularium.’ Item, Commentator, III De Anima, commento 5: ‘intentiones quas recipit intellectus...sunt universales,’ quas recipit sensus exterior sunt tantum istae. Aliae sunt auctoritates ad istud quasi innumerables, sed istae sufficiant, quia illas intelligo sicut sonant, quod scilicet intentiones quas recipit intellectus, hoc
wrote that “the universal is according to reason, the singular in truth according to sense”, and Averroes, who wrote that “the intentions which the intellect receives...are universal.”

But there are possible counter-arguments to Wodeham’s position that there are purely intellectual apprehensions about sensible things distinct from sensation. They have to do with acts of imagination. The first is that when some quality like whiteness or a thing like a rose is imagined, it is either the case that something common to all whiteness or roses is imagined or that all singular instances are imagined together. In both cases, it would have to be that abstractive apprehensions refer to all actual instances in the world, or that sensation is capable of directly being about universals, either option being contrary to Wodeham’s thesis. Wodeham’s claim is that nothing can be imagined that has not been apprehended by the external senses, and that the external senses are singularly determined. Does that not therefore mean either that acts of imagination refer to individual instances or that sensations can be universal and hence not singularly determined?

[est] intellectiones—et hoc respectu sensibilium, quia sic loquitur comparando sensum ad intellectum—sunt universales.”

See n. 86.

87 Wodeham, LS I 22, 3-13: “Homo experimur se imaginari albedinem vel rosam, non plus imaginando istam quam illam, sed vel aliquid commune ad omnem vel immediate omnip. Et illud confirmatur, quia Commentator in dicta auctoritate loquitur tantum de sensu exteriori, quia tantum dicit quod intentiones quas recipit sensus exterior sunt tantum istae, quasi diceret quod non sic sit de sensu interiori. Tertio, quia ex quo per te idem principium indivisibile in nobis immediate recipit omnem sensationem et omnem intellectionem, immo omnem actum vitalem, ita intentiones quas recipit sensus sunt universales et quas recipit intellectus sunt tantum isate sicut econtra. Quidquid enim reipitur in sensu recipitur in intellectu et econtra.”

88 Ibid. 21, 9-13: “Nihil enim imaginamur nisi quod sensu exteriori apprehendimus vel aliquod compositum ex talibus, quia phantasia est motus factus a sensu, nec differunt circa idem nisi sicut actus intuitivus et abstractivus. Sensus autem exterior tantum est singularis determinati.”
He counters the first horn of the dilemma by making a distinction between general and determinate acts of imagination.\textsuperscript{90} I can, for instance, envision whiteness in general without thinking about any whiteness in particular, or imagine a rose without thinking about any rose in particular. General acts of imagination (\textit{imaginatio}) such as these are distinct from external sensation, while those that are of singulars are the result of “sensitive imagination” (\textit{imaginatio sensitiva}). Wodeham states that if this were not the case, then there would be no freedom, because all mental content and acts would be externally determined, “which is contrary to all philosophy and also against everything holy to even say.”\textsuperscript{91}

But, if it is the case that there are general acts of imagination distinct from determinate acts of imagination, and it is also the case that anything imaginable must first have been the object of an exterior sensation, then how is it that we can imagine things that we’ve never seen or heard? I can, for instance, imagine “a golden mountain and three suns, and much else which has never fallen under the exterior senses”,\textsuperscript{92} all of which being singular and hence determined.

Wodeham responds that it is either the case that an indeterminate golden mountain or other imaginary object is not of something singularly

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid. 22, 15-17: “Ad primum dicendum quod ille actus quo ille homo experitur se imaginari vel cogitari de albedine vel rosa, de nulla singularia cogitando, non est actus sensitivus nec imaginatio aut cognitio sensitiva sed intellectio quaedam.”

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid. 22, 17-21: “Nisi enim illa sit intellectio, nullam penitus experimur in nobis simplicem intellectionem rei sensibilis, quod est contra omnem philosophiam et contra omnes Sanctos etiam de hoc loquentes. Sed ille actus imaginandi vel cogitandi simplex quo apprehendimus determinatum singulare sensibile est imaginatio sensitiva.”

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid. 22-23, 28-34: “...possum imaginari montem aureum et tres soles, et multa quae nunquam cadebant sub sensu exteriori. Igitur imaginatio differt a sensatione exteriori sicut actus abstractives ab intuitivo circa idem, cuius oppositum praedictum est. Et praeter hoc, imaginando montem aureum non imaginor aliquod determinatum singulare. Saltem ego possum imaginari montem aureum, nullum determinatum montem aureum imaginando.”

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determined, in which case it is purely intellectual,\textsuperscript{93} or, if it is singularly determined, then the object has been composed by the mind from what has been the object of external sensation. Abstractive apprehension takes cognitions from the objects that fall under the senses, and the imaginative power (\textit{potentiae imaginatiae}) is then capable of composing, dividing, extending, diminishing, multiplying, etc., these cognitions as it wishes:

\begin{quote}
[Imagination] has many capabilities regarding quanta, as much continuous [qua\textit{nta}] as discreet, in as much as it can imaginarily situate the one sun that it knows in whatever place, and also, if it wants, at the same time, it can imagine many suns, although there is only one. Nor does it stand in the way that this being so includes a repugnance, for the very reason that imagination is of impossibles. In the same way, because it has seen a mountain, it can multiply a small amount of previously seen gold seen all the way to the quantity of a mountain.... This, however, I always say, that we can imagine nothing sensitively except for that which we have already had an external sensation or was a part of one. But to otherwise compose, figure, extend and other such things which are done quantitatively fall under the imaginative power.\textsuperscript{94}
\end{quote}

Regarding the second horn of the dilemma, Wodeham concedes that universal intentions are received by the intellect through sensation, and

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid. 23, 35-43: “Respondeo ad utrumque quod imaginando montem aureum, aut nullam singulare determinatum imaginor, et tunc illa imaginatio est intellectiva; aut aliquod determinatum singulare, et tunc dico quod illud imaginatum prius cadebat sub sensu particulari. Nam cum, ut praedictum est, actus imaginationis sensitivae sit actus abstractivus rei singularis, et notitia abstractiva alicuius singulari determinati naturaliter praesupponat intuitivam eiusdem, oportet quod illud idem singulare quod imaginor prius fuerit sensatum. Nec est hoc tantum verum de imaginatione sensitiva, immo et omnis intellectio abstractiva alicuius singularis, intelligibilis naturaliter, praesupponit intuitivam intellecctionem eiusdem.”

\end{quote}
this just is what abstractive apprehension is.\textsuperscript{95} Hence, he concedes that sensation gives both determinate concepts of singulars used in contingent knowledge through intuitive apprehensions and at the same time abstractive apprehension for universal cognitions used in pure intellection. The organ is determined by its object, and intuition is entirely of determinate singulars, which is precisely what allows for existential inferences on their basis. Abstractive apprehension, on the other hand, works alongside intuition to obtain universal or common cognitions and can operate without an existing and present visible object as efficient cause.

\textbf{§ 1.3: Intuition and Judgment}

So far we have seen that Wodeham considers intuitive apprehensions to be in some manner required for contingent knowledge. The very idea of what an intuitive apprehension is contains the cognition that such and such object is present and exists. When we do not have an intuitive apprehension, or when we have an abstraction without an intuition, then we cannot have an evident cognition regarding presence and existence.\textsuperscript{96} But exactly what is the relationship between intuition, judgement and knowledge? Is an intuitive apprehension a condition of contingent knowledge, but not itself a type of knowing? Or could it be

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid. 30, 83-87: "...concedo quod [intellectus] causaretur partialiter a sensatione, et hoc effective. Et ultra non valet consequentia quod 'si sensatio sit causa partialis actus primi intellectus, quod eodem ratione postremi.' Quia primus actus habet causam, et non intellectionem, quia nihil causat se. Illud quod additur de phantasmatisbus ita concludit contra abstractivam quamcumque sicut contra intuitivam." Also see n. 94.

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid. 37, 69-72: "Tertia conclusion sit quod ille actus incomplexxus qui natus est causare evidentem assensum de veritate contingenti de praesenti, et quae naturaliter requirit existentiam et praesentiam, est intuitiva notitia. Et quaelibet alia simplex apprehensio propria vel etiam communis est abstractiva."
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that intuition stands as a type of knowing distinct from that produced by judicative acts?

Given Wodeham’s claim that the intellect can obtain evident cognitions required for contingent belief directly from sensation, which is immediately of the extra-mental world, it might seem as though he is claiming that an intuitive act just is a belief-act. If intuitions function to present facts of the world directly to the intellect, then are they not acts that assert something immediately, namely that their objects are present and exist?

Moreover, Wodeham adopts many arguments from Chatton’s Reportatio, specifically those Chatton employed against Ockham’s two-souls view. Chatton does indeed claim it to be theoretically possible for a sensory intuition in absence of additional mental acts to immediately cause a judicative act, such that the distinction between belief and apprehension would be blurred if not altogether disposed of; positing the vision is positing the belief. If Wodeham adopts Chatton’s arguments, perhaps he adopts Chatton’s position too?

Dominik Perler has provided a reading a reading of Wodeham’s theory of apprehension that tends in this direction. He claims that


98 Chatton, RP 29, 359-361: “Sexto arguo ad idem: propositio in mente et res extra significata per eam distinguuntur, igitur possunt cognosci diversis cognitionibus, et per consequens alio et alio assensu contingit assentire isti et illi.” Chatton’s point here is the the mental proposition and the visions from which the proposition is composed are distinguishable, such that an assent can be caused immediately by the vision. This entails that a vision can immediately, in conjunction with the principle of the uniformity of nature, at least theoretically cause a belief. Ibid. 38, 600-603: “Tunc arguo: apprehensio rei extra animam non minus potest causare assensum respectu sui objecti quam apprehensio propositionis respectu sui objecti, quia apprehensio rei extra aeque repraesentat illam propositionem.”
because Wodeham views sensory and intellectual apprehensions as one
and the same, the act of intuitive awareness immediately asserts
something of things in re:

Wodeham denies that sense and intellect are really distinct
faculties. In fact, he explicitly says that they are merely two forms
of one and the same soul. (LS 46) If the senses perform an act, it
immediately triggers the intellect – there is no need for some kind
of bridge within the one soul. One could even say that the sensory
act is immediately intellectualized, because it is immediately
followed by and transformed into an intellectual act. For this
reason, every sensory act is in some sense an intellectual act, as
Wodeham says. This clearly shows that he does not accept the
thesis that there is (at least in the case of human beings) pre-
conceptual cognition that can, but need not be conceptualized.
According to him, every sensory cognition is conceptualized. Thus,
when I see an apple, this very act of seeing is “received in the
intell...
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But, clearly Perler and Lagerlund in these passages are not talking about fully formed assertions, but merely about how the intellect obtains evident cognitions used in mental propositions by way of the senses. That the intellect can obtain concepts directly from sensation is not incompatible with the view that a further act of judgment is required for belief. Wodeham merely alters Scotus’ and Ockham’s accounts of the process by which the intellect obtains terms for mental propositions.

But even if Perler and Lagerlund are making this more modest point about how the intellect obtains concepts, there is additional textual evidence that argues for the view that Wodeham held intuitive apprehensions to, on their own, constitute a form of belief and perhaps even knowledge.

The first piece of evidence comes from the principle question of the first question of the Prologue to the Lectura Secunda: “Whether acts of knowledge of things presuppose a simple apprehension distinct from all sensation.”¹⁰¹ Wodeham ultimately concludes that “it is clear what is to be said to this question, sometimes yes, sometimes no.”¹⁰² And it is only the case that some acts of knowledge do not require an intuition distinct from sensation because, as shown earlier in this chapter, general knowledge of sensible things presupposes abstractive cognition. Regarding singulars, however, a sensible intuition is sufficient and necessary to inform the mind of the facts of the extra-mental world.

However, what he meant in the first and second questions of the Prologue was that intuitions are sufficient and necessary for contingent

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¹⁰¹ Wodeham, LS I 8, 6-7: “Utrum actui scientiae in nobis necessario praesupponit aliqua simplex apprehensio realiter distincta ab omni sensatione.” Ibid. 33, 3: “Ex dictis patet quid dicendum ad quaestionem, quia est ut sic, est ut non.”

¹⁰² See n. 101.
knowledge, but only because they supply evident cognitions about the world. This is the view taken by John Slotemaker and Jeffrey Witt in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry on Wodeham, and it is based on what Wodeham says at the beginning of the first question:

Because all naturally caused acts of knowledge presuppose evidence of some proposition or things signified through the proposition, by way of which knowledge is caused, accordingly it is first to be seen whether all evident intellectual assent presupposes simple apprehension, distinct from sensation.¹⁰³

The evident cognitions that serve as parts of a mental proposition and that are supplied by intuition are sufficient and necessary for contingent knowledge, not the simple intuitions themselves.

Wodeham explicitly states that a judgment is required to produce knowledge, and when he claims that intuition is “pre-judicative” and therefore insufficient to infer belief. In question 6, § 18 of the *Lectura Secunda*, he writes the following:

[A judgment] is altogether a sort of nod by which the mind nods such to be just as a proposition or propositions signify, different from that which the nod might be an [immediate] apprehension of something being so. And it is a certain concession or negation of the mind, by nature always to a previously apprehended or co-apprehended complex apprehension, to which when posited it can nod or not nod, like mentally saying “yes” or “no” or hesitating.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Wodeham, *LS* I 9, 44-48: “...quia omnis actus scientiae naturaliter causatus praesupponit evidentiam alicuius propositionis vel rei significatae per propositionem, mediante qua causatur scientia, ideo primum videndum est an omnis evidens assensus intellectus praesupponat apprehensionem simplicem, distinctam a sensatione.”

¹⁰⁴ Wodeham, *LS* I 173, 14-19: “[Iudicium] est tantum adnuitio quaedam qua mens adnuit sic esse sicut propositio vel propositiones significant, absque hoc quod illa adnuitio sit apprehensio aliqua de sic essendo. Et est quaedam mentalis concessio vel nagatio semper per naturam praexigens et etiam coexigens apprehensionem complexam, quo posita adnuere vel non adnuere, quasi mentaliter dicendo ‘sic’ vel ‘non’ vel haesitando.” He also provides arguments against the view that a judgment just is a proposition formed from intuitive apprehensions. This is a key argument for Wodeham, because the strategy he uses to combat natural deception depends on judgment being distinct from an apprehension. This is discussed in detail in further chapters, but the textual source is here: Ibid. 176, 3-21.
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Wodeham holds judgment itself to be an adnuition confirming that a mental proposition accurately signifies some state of affairs or fact. To illustrate, imagine you see someone approaching from a distance. Perhaps it resembles a friend, in which case you would form the mental proposition that “this is my friend” from simple intuitive cognitions, which are required to provide the terms for the mental proposition. The act of judgment would be a mental nod that the proposition “this is my friend” signifies accurately, or signifies inaccurately, or, in any situation where you can’t quite make out if it’s your friend or not owing to the obscurity of the intuition—perhaps it’s foggy and you can’t quite get a clear image—your mind will hesitate to confirm or deny and you will look more closely. In any case, it cannot be said that there is belief one way or the other prior to the formation of the proposition and the subsequent judicative act.

Wodeham confirms this view while discussing evident judgments. He claims explicitly that an intuitive apprehension is not a judicative act, but is that which “inclines” the mind through habit to judge one way or the other. Only after a judicative act can a belief be said to be present.

The implicit point of this reading is that Wodeham takes not only the distinction between apprehension and judgment from Ockham, but that he also takes their functions and ordering. Simple and even complex apprehensions are insufficient for belief. If they were sufficient, then, as Ockham argues, we would have to take a doxastic attitude to any thought

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105 Ibid. 172-173, 3-10: “...non minus unum iudicium causabile mediante intuitiva requirit intuitivam existere ad hoc quod ipsum sit evidens [quam alium], igitur et quodlibet causabile mediante intuitiva requirit illam, nisi ipsummet iudicium sit apprehensio intuitiva, quod negatum est secundum tertiam conclusionem. Minor patet per experientiam. Nullus enim habitus natus est inclinare in tale iudicium circumscripta visione albedinis. Tantum enim habemus aestimationem de praesentia talium dum non actu intuemur talia et non certitudinem, quo modo omne iudicium evidens est certum, licet non econtra.”
we might have, which is clearly not the case. I can think about unicorns or anything without therefore supposing my thoughts to be true or false. Apprehensions therefore only function to provide the mind with content in an epistemically neutral way. Only with the formation of the mental proposition, a separate cognition of it, and a further judicative act by which an agent, the holder of the belief, takes an epistemic disposition of assent or dissent can a belief be said to be posited.

§ 1.4: Concluding Remarks

At the beginning of this chapter it was explained that in one sense knowledge was taken for granted in the context in which Wodeham was writing, but that evaluative criteria were nevertheless adhered to. On the one hand, the task of epistemology to Wodeham was to explain the naturally occurring phenomenon of knowledge. On the other hand, however, an account had to demonstrate that belief could be evident knowledge, a standard of knowledge akin to justified true belief.

The background to the basis of Wodeham’s psychology, namely the theory of apprehensions, was then given. The theory was originally formed by Scotus in debate with Henry of Ghent, in the attempt to demonstrate that non-beatified human beings can have a cognition proper to God sufficient to allow the a genuine science of theology. Scotus thus

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107 Brower-Toland, “Facts vs. Things”, 9; Pickavé, “The Case of Adam Wodeham”, 102: Brower-Toland claims that this is a principle for Wodeham: “Wodeham’s Rule: the object of a given act of judgment is the same as the object of the [neutral] mental sentence that precedes (and causes) that judgment.” It’s a bit misleading to associate the rule so closely with Wodeham, since he clearly took it straight from Ockham (see n. 106). Pickavé calls it “Wodeham’s copy principle”, which, again, is misleading insofar as the principle and the reason for it are taken from the Venerable Inceptor.
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distinguished between intuitive apprehensions which require the presence and existence of their objects, and vision is the paradigm case of these, from abstractive apprehensions which do not require their objects' presence and existence.

The original function of the distinction, to show how cognitions proper to God were possible without collapsing the *viator*/*in patria* distinction, gave way to the function of intuition in supplying evident cognitions for contingent belief in Ockham. Ockham sought to make contingent knowledge infallible though the thesis of the intuition of non-existents, a position that was vehemently opposed by Chatton as leading to contradiction.

This is the context in which Wodeham worked. While he accepted the distinction between intuition and abstraction as handed down from his Franciscan predecessors, he denied that two modes, one intellectual and one sensory, were required. Rather, the intellect could obtain evident cognitions needed for the terms of contingent propositions directly from sensory intuition. On the principle of parsimony distinct modes could therefore be eliminated. Rather than posit distinct sensory and intellectual forms of acts, a position that would require distinct intellectual and sensory souls, Wodeham claimed that all acts attributable to a living thing reduced to one form, the vital act.

If, however, the mind can obtain existential evident cognitions directly from sensory intuition, then it could be the case that Wodeham holds intuitive apprehensions to alone constitute a sort of belief-act. Intuitive apprehensions just are graspings of the facts of the world, namely that the object of a vision or other intuition is present and exists.
Perhaps then intuition just is belief, although distinguishable from scientific knowledge?

This, however, cannot be the case. As Ockham before him, Wodeham claims that a proposition in every case must first be apprehended by an epistemically neutral act, which inclines the mind to varying degrees to a judicative act. This is not only demonstrated by experience, but, as will be seen in the next chapter, is presupposed by his solution to instances of natural deception.

But, although Wodeham does not make sensation itself a type of belief, all belief in some way refers back to sensation in a way that in Ockham’s and Scotus’ accounts it does not. This dependence exposes an obvious weakness: the senses are notoriously unreliable. If sensation is the gateway for all content of the mind, and it is prone to error, then it could be that while we think we have knowledge, we do not. The next chapter looks at Wodeham’s solution to the natural threats to the reliability of sensation.

108 Accounts stress, as Wood notes (“Adam of Wodeham”, 78), that Wodeham’s definition of intuition is that which “inclines us to belief that its object exists.” This is true, but it overlooks its other, equally important function—that of supplying the mind with all content.
CHAPTER II: NATURAL DECEPTION

I argue in this chapter that Wodeham’s reliance on sensory intuition leaves him vulnerable to skeptical arguments due to the natural unreliability of the senses. He recognizes the threat, and responds to it. However, I claim that his response does not successfully solve the problem of representation.

This chapter is split into three parts. The first is brief, and lays out Wodeham’s strategy for dealing with natural sense deception. Because of his reliance on sensory intuition as the source of all content of the mind and as the sufficient and necessary cause of existential inferences, he needs to account for sense deception in a way that leaves sensation reliable. To do so, he does not argue that the senses alone are enough to provide the reliability sufficient for evident knowledge. Rather sensory intuition with the corrective provided by deliberation and right reasoning makes intuition reliable to a sufficient degree for such knowledge.

The second, rather lengthy section, gives Wodeham’s account of natural sense deception and his response to Peter Aureol’s theory of
Chapter II: Natural Deception

“apparent being.” Wodeham’s position is that vision presupposes an initial and maintaining extra-mental cause, which renders the need for apparent being or something like it superfluous. He eliminates it on the basis of parsimony.

The final, brief section examines his account of sense deception in relation to the problem of representation. Although Wodeham manages to explain sense deception without positing apparent being, he fails to avoid the problem of representation. In the final analysis, his account doesn’t work.

§ 2.1: The Senses Deceive

Do men find any truth in sight or hearing, or are not even the poets forever telling us that we do not see or hear anything accurately, and surely if those two physical senses are not clear or precise, our other senses can hardly be accurate, because they are all inferior to these. Do you not agree?1

In the previous chapter it was seen that Wodeham’s epistemology relies heavily on intuitive apprehensions, and it was also seen that intuition for him reduces to sensory intuition. But there are some obvious problems that go along with a strong reliance on sensation as the source of content of the mind and the foundation of knowledge. Since at least the time of Plato it has been widely acknowledged that the senses are unreliable. As Descartes would later put it, “the senses are deceptive, and it is wiser not to trust entirely to any thing by which we have once been deceived.”2

Other late-medieval thinkers took steps to ensure their accounts of apprehension were safeguarded from natural threats to the reliability of intuition. Ockham, the most obvious case, had, as Wodeham noted,

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1 Plato, Complete Works, 56; Phaedo, 65a9-65b5.
2 Descartes, Philosophical Works (vol. I), 145.
neutralized the threat through the theory of the intuition of non-existents, which made intuitive apprehension “infallible.”

But the protections Ockham placed in his philosophy to avoid natural deception were not available to Wodeham. He held Ockham’s theory of the intuition of non-existents to be an *ad hoc* dodge that was demonstrated by neither reason nor experience. Moreover, he did not opt for positing separate sensory and intellectual intuitive powers, which would have theoretically made contingent knowledge of the extra-mental world available to the intellect in a way that possibly bypassed sensation.

Perhaps surprisingly, Wodeham often repeats in the first two questions of the Prologue, where he argues amongst other things that intuition is sensory and singularly determined, that deception is not only possible but routine because of the causal processes involved in vision. He writes the following at the beginning of Q. 2 of the Prologue:

But the mind has two such cognitions in respect of the same singular, one [intuitive] by virtue of which it can be evidently cognized that Socrates is or that Socrates is white and others things of the same sort—unless God is here working a miracle, or unless there may be an impediment because of the imperfection of this cognition or because of some indisposition on the part of the object or the medium or the power or the organ....

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3 Wodeham, *LS I* 169, 42-44: “Ockham habeat aliud dicere [quam mihi]. Nec mirum, quia ipse ponit quod per intuitivam albedinis scitur evidenter ipsum esse quando est et non esse quando non est. Et ideo habet circa talia ponere iudicium infallibile.” The intuition of non-existents is, perhaps, not as crazy as it first seems. It is, after all, by the appearance of the break in the stick partially submerged in water that I know that the break doesn’t exist. Maybe illusions such as this are precisely what the theory was based on? But, there is simply no textual evidence that Ockham thought of it as a way to account for illusions. Rather, he seems to have posited it only to counter-act the threats to knowledge posed by supernatural causality.

4 Ibid. 39,14-19: “Licet, inquam, ita sit, nullo tamen modo notitia intuitiva, quae est virtute cuius scirem [rem] non existere quando non existit. Primo, propter argumentum iam factum, cuius responsio non est nisi evasion, quia nec per experientiam nec per rationem scitur.”

5 Ibid. 35, 14-20: “Sed anima potest habere tales duas notitias respectu eiusdem singularis, puta unam virtute cuius potest cognoscere evidenter quod Sortes est vel quod Sortes est albus et huiusmodi—nisi Deus miraculose operetur hic, vel nisi sit impedimentum propter imperfectionem illius notitiae vel propter aliquam indispositionem ex parte obieti vel medi
Chapter II: Natural Deception

It could be that on the basis of an imperfect intuition—perhaps what we think is a person but in reality is a cardboard cut-out—that we falsely believe that our friend is approaching. Perhaps a physical problem with the eye is giving rise to visual images which we falsely judge to be of really existing things. Perhaps we mistake a painting or statue for what it represents. The list could go on.

And apart from precluding natural deception, Wodeham’s psychology makes the natural unreliability of sensation an acute problem. For he takes it as a principle that the mind is a blank slate, and that anything naturally placed in it has been the object of an intuitive apprehension of an extra-mental singular or of a singular mental act—and all intuitive apprehensions of extra-mental singulars are determinate sensory intuitions. In other words, all natural knowledge of things in re and all contents of the intellect are derived from sensation: “For the intellect can never acquire a first simple and proper abstractive cognition of an object except by way of an intuitive apprehension of the same. ...Otherwise one born blind could have knowledge of colour.”

If it is the case that sensory intuitions are unreliable, and Wodeham himself posits a host of examples in which the senses can be deceived, then all natural knowledge becomes questionable. As Descartes also said, “the destruction

vel potentiae vel organi—et aliam virtute cuius non potest cognoscere naturaliter utrum existat vel non, sicut patet per experientiam.”


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of the foundations of necessity brings with it the downfall of the rest of the edifice.”

It could be said that skepticism, at least in its most extreme Pyrrhonic form, is not the necessary consequence of the unreliability of sensation. St. Augustine’s arguments were held in Wodeham’s day to be a conclusive refutation of the Academic position. While we may not be sure that a vision we are having of a horse is of a present and existing horse, we can be sure that we are experiencing the appearance of a horse; the states of our own mind cannot be doubted, and the skeptics must be wrong. Wodeham too notes and endorses St. Augustine’s arguments.

But Augustine’s arguments do not help Wodeham much. Regarding the content and object of scientific knowledge, he agrees with Chatton that it is presupposed to be of the extra-mental world, not simply of the contents of the mind. And, as shown in the first chapter of this dissertation, Wodeham claims that the only way to have evident cognitions of the extra-mental world that would make for evident knowledge would be through sensory intuitive apprehensions.

Given the situation it is easy to see why some commentators have concluded that he should be read as a skeptic. Elizabeth Karger notes that Wodeham “granted, therefore, that we cannot know of any external

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7 Descartes, *Philosophical Works* (vol. I), 145.

8 Wodeham, *LS I* 52, 85-89: “Sed veritates contingentes de actibus animae inter omnes veritates contingentes certius et evidentius cognoscuntur a nobis, sicut patet per experientiam et per beatum Augustinimum, IV *De Trinitate*, cap. 1, ubi declarat quod quamvis possimus dubitare de istis sensibilibus, non tamen de talibus ‘scio me vivere’, ‘scio quod volo esse beatus’, ‘scio quod nolo errare’, igitur.”

9 Ibid. 193-194, 17-23: “...dicendum quod objectum totale propositione est eius significatum. Eius autem significatum est sic esse vel sic non esse sicut per propositionem denotatur. Puta, objectum huius ‘Deus est Deus’ est ‘Deum esse Deum’; et huius ‘homo est albus’ vel ‘hominem inest albedo’ significatum est ‘hominem esse album’. Nec hae sunt propositiones, quia si nulla propositione esset in rerum naturam, nihilominus Deus esset Deus, et homo esset albus vel homini inesset albedo.”
thing—more precisely, of any thing other than our own minds—that it exists.”¹⁰ But, this would mean that there is no “proof that this world of ours is not a vast phantasmagoria behind which there is no reality to be found.”¹¹

However, the view that Wodeham’s admission that the senses can be deceptive is tantamount to an admission of skepticism is a rush to judgment. In the first two questions of the Prologue of the *Lectura Secunda* Wodeham establishes that sensory intuitions are sufficient and necessary for evident belief of singular extra-mental contingents. If sensation were the only power operative in the formation of contingent belief, then perhaps it would follow that intuition is unreliable. But, intuition is not the only power involved.

The same causal process that gives rise to contrary effects in terms of prosecution and flight discussed in the first chapter also occurs in terms of belief or disbelief. A sensory intuition alone gives rise to the mental proposition that its object exists and is present *in re*. However, in cases where there may be an impediment to vision or where an optical illusion may be at work, the contrary belief can arise from the intuitive apprehension plus deliberation. I see a bend in a stick half submerged in water, which inclines me to believe that there really is a bend in the stick. But I’ve experienced something like this before, and I know that when something is submerged in water it can give the false appearance of being bent, which inclines me to believe that the bend is not really there. Through such deliberation my mind forms the contrary belief, that the stick is not there but merely appears to be there, and the intellect

discards the initial proposition in light of the superior evidence had through reason:

It is a very evident apprehension, in as much as when it [the deceptive experience] is posited it would appear to a man, whether he likes it or not, just as is signified, although he would not be competent to either assent or dissent to it. Although it would be as much a part of its [the vision’s] nature to cause an assent that it is so, however through something else the judgment is rectified, for example through one or another [previous] experience, or by argument that it may not be just as it appears to be. This is clear, for it is to be conceded that this [deceptive] apparition is not a judgment except by an equivocation of judgment.\footnote{Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 100-101, 72-84: In the following passage Wodeham is talking about the false appearance of the movement of trees seen from the perspective of a person on a ship moving down a river. Clearly, the trees are not in motion, but the trees nevertheless appear to be moving. The translated portion is italicized: 

"...concedendum est quod illa apparitio non est formaliter iudicium quod est assensus vel dissensus vel dubitatio etiam. Quia licet nec dubitarem an moveantur nec assentiam quod moveantur, sed certitudinaliter dissentiam, velim tamen nolim semper apparat mihi quod moveantur. Sed est ista apprehensio quaedam complexa, habens pro subiecto vel praedicato vel utroque visionem ipsam arboris, et hoc vel eandem semper numero vel aequivalentem, quae composita [est] ex cognitionibus ita evidentibus. \textit{Ideo est multum evidens apprehensio, in tantum quod ipsa posita appareat homini, velit nolit, sicut ipsa significat, licet non competat eum assentire aut dissentire. Licet ipsa quantum est ex parte illius nata sit causare assensum quod sic sit, tamen per aliud rectificatur [iudicium], puta per experientiam aliunde vel aliunde, vel ratione quod non sit ita sicut apparet esse. Sic patet ad argumentum, nam concedendum est illam apparaitionem non esse iudicium nisi equivocando de iudicio.}\"}

What deliberation supplies, then, is a corrective to sensory intuitions. Only beliefs had through intuition and tested through deliberation on past experience and argument have the certainty required for knowledge.\footnote{Rega Wood offers an identical reading of Wodeham in “Adam Wodeham on Sensory Illusions”, 232-233. I would point out in passing that this is the identical strategy used to deal with natural threats to the reliability of sensory intuition employed by John Buridan, as Jack Zupko notes in \textit{John Buridan: Portrait of a Fourteenth-Century Arts Master} (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 197: “Buridan replies to the skeptical arguments about sensory delusion and the possibility of divine interference by first reminding his audience that the intellect has the power to correct illusory sensory judgments, provided the source of error is also part of the natural order.”}
Also significant in relation to Wodeham’s position regarding the reliability of sensation is his positing of hesitation as a viable epistemic disposition to a mental proposition. To explain, Ockham held a judgment to be a mental act of either assent, dissent or doubt to a mental proposition. Wodeham adds another option, that of hesitation (haesitando).\textsuperscript{14} If more evidence is required to cause an act of judgment—for instance, when we need to look at something closer to make up our minds about it—then the mind can hesitate rather than assent, dissent or doubt. Added to his argument that contraries are possible in the same subject, Wodeham seems to have three scenarios in mind subsequent to an exterior intuitive apprehension:

First, sensory intuition and deliberation could be in disagreement, in which case the target belief is dissented to through deliberation. Using the example of the deceptive appearance of a break that appears in a stick partially submerged in water, it cannot be denied that the stick in the water appears to be bent. But there is no rush to judgment to assent to a break existing \textit{in re}. Rather, deliberation ensues: I’ve seen illusions like this before, and I know that there really is no break in the stick. Deliberation would thus give rise to a second, superior belief, that “there (merely) appears to be a break in the stick.”

Second, it could be the case that neither sensory intuition nor deliberation provide enough evidence for either assent or dissent, and there would then be hesitation pending further evidence. The stick in the water appears bent, and I’ve heard of something like this happening before. But I’ve never experienced it myself. I’d better verify before

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{14} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 173, 17-19: “[judicium] est quaedam mentalis concessio vel negatio semper per naturam praeexigens et etiam coexigens apprehensionem complexam, qua posita potest adnuere vel non adnuere, quasi mentaliter dicendo ‘sic’ vel ‘non’ vel haesitando.”
\end{footnotesize}
making up my mind one way or the other, perhaps by raising the stick out of the water or running my hand down its length.\textsuperscript{15}

Third, sensory intuition and deliberation could be in agreement, in which case a mere belief is transformed into something more akin to knowledge with reference to another proposition formed through intuition and deliberation: “[It] is manifest...that such [an evident] judgment is not had without such or a consimilar deduction: ‘I have my eyes open and nothing is impeding; I would therefore see it if it were present’.”\textsuperscript{16} I see a tree, and it is at optimal distance. Nothing is wrong with my eyes. Unless God is deceiving me, the tree must be present and exist.

Significantly, Wodeham, as has been pointed out by commentators, thought that no categorical contingent judgment evident in the third degree, a degree that completely rules out falsity and causes invincible certainty, was possible for the \textit{viator}, because of the problem of divine deception.\textsuperscript{17} He did, however, note that it was conditionally possible. He claimed that “by virtue of intuitive apprehensions, by a proposition

\textsuperscript{15} It is tempting to confuse Wodeham’s “hesitation” with Sextus Empiricus and Descartes’ “suspension of judgement”, the famous \textit{epoché}. Identifying the two would, I think, be to misread Wodeham. Wodeham restricts hesitation to existential inferences had from sensory intuition and his account of it is descriptive. To him, hesitation is something that happens naturally, as when one sees someone else approaching but is too far for an intuition to naturally cause a judgment that the person is a friend. The suspension of judgment, on the other hand, is methodical and normative. Proponents of the suspension of judgment advise its deliberate use on all beliefs, with the exception of those that are apodictic, demonstrated to be incapable of being false. The advice that all belief should be tested in some way and suspended if not absolutely certain to safeguard from falsity is simply not present in Wodeham’s account. He is more interested in the necessary and sufficient natural causes of belief, and hesitation occurs when there is insufficient cause for a judgment.

\textsuperscript{16} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 40, 62-65: “De intuitiva alterius patet etiam per hoc quod tale iudicium non haberetur sine tali vel consimili deductione: ‘habeo oculos apertos et nihil impedit, igitur viderem hoc si esset praesens’.”

\textsuperscript{17} Wood, “Adam Wodeham on Sensory Illusions”, 233; McCord Adams, \textit{William Ockham}, 604; Karger, “Ockham and Wodeham on Divine Deception”, 236: The problem of divine deception is treated in chapters IV and V. It does, however, need to be mentioned at this point that Wodeham was aware of the problem.
formed form them, whiteness [seen] can [be] evidently judged to be, unless God deceives us.” 18  If he can rule out divine deception as a serious obstruction to knowledge, then there is nothing threatening contingent knowledge of the extra-mental world.  And even if he cannot, the threat posed by natural causes can be ruled out.  Our very knowledge of optical illusions presupposes that deliberation can spot deception and any other problem with vision and adjust belief accordingly to a degree to make it reliable, but for supernatural causality.  19  Hence, while intuition is not infallible, sensation plus deliberation, and hesitation in cases in which the evidence is insufficient to supply an evident cognition, allow for inferences reliable to a degree that makes knowledge of contingents possible.

Because Wodeham holds that deliberation is ancillary to sensory intuition and is a corrective to it, he does not need to deal with the problem of sense deception in the same way as others.  The usual approach to sense deception, taken by Ockham and Descartes amongst others, is to show that intuition is in some manner infallible, so that inferences based on them are secure from error.  But, when this tactic is


19 Ibid. 169, 24-32: “Concedo illud quod infectur de iudicio correspondenti veritati contingenti, significanti rem extra.  Nullum enim tale iudicium est simpliciter evidens evidentia excludente omnem dubitationem possibilem.  Quia cum hoc quod Deus vel natura causaret in mente omnem notitiam et iudicium possibile, staret quod de potentia Dei absoluta non sic esset in re sicut per talem notitiam apprehensam significaretur.  Et concedo quod omni intellectus creabilis est ita diminuatae naturae quod decipi potest circa quamcumque veritatem contingentem de re extra si sic assentiat categorice esse vel non esse.  Et in isto casu intelligo quod dictum est supra.”  Ibid. 164, 53-62: “...concedo quod omnem evidentiam complexam apprehensivam tantum quolibet istorum trium modorum quam Deus potest causare posita visione, potest Deus causare illa circumscripta tam in essendo quam in causando, et hoc tam respectu rei quam respectu rei in anima, cuius evidentialae complexae visio ipsa non est pars.  Probatur per principium saepe allegatum: quidquid potest Deus mediante efficiente secundo etc.  Tertio dico quod omne iudicium complexum objective—quod addo, quia adversarii frequenter vocant etiam apprehensiones simplices ‘iudicare evidens’—quod potest Deus causare mediante intuitiva potest per se causare sine ea, propter idem.”
used the even larger issue that Descartes faced in the Fourth Meditation, explaining how deception can take place despite infallibility, must also be addressed. If intuition is infallible, then deception should not be possible, for the very reason that an infallible instrument should not produce errors. But, as Descartes noted, “experience shows me that I am subject to an infinitude of errors.”

If sensation is infallible, then how is sense deception even possible? Wodeham shrewdly circumvents the problem by making sensation reliable but not infallible.

But in order to simultaneously maintain the seemingly contrary claims that the senses are reliable and yet can deceive, Wodeham needs an explanation of the mechanism of vision that can account for illusion without lapsing into unreliability. In other words, he needs the right account of vision.

§ 2.2: Seeing Nothing

The dominant theory of vision in Wodeham’s time, perspectivism, was developed by Islamic natural philosophers, notably Alhazen (c. 965-1041) in *De Aspectibus,* and entered the context of Western European theology through various sources, the most important being yet another of Wodeham’s Franciscan predecessors, Roger Bacon (c. 1214-1292). A central tenet of the theory was the multiplication of *species in medio.* It was thought that in order for anything to physically affect anything else,
such as the eye being physically affected by a visible object, that there had to be a continuous and uninterrupted line of contact between the thing doing the causing and the effect. In the same way that no pool ball causes another to move without contact between the two, so too nothing can naturally cause an effect in the eye without contact. Hence, it must be the case that what makes the impression in the eye is multiplied in the air between the object and the eye to form a direct and uninterrupted line of physical contact between the eye and object in order to explain how vision could naturally take place.\textsuperscript{23}

Problems inherent in the theory were debated hotly, the most relevant one being that of representation. If what contacts the eye is a species that makes an impression in the eye, then it would seem to follow that the species and not the thing itself is seen in vision. And if the species is not the visible thing itself, then it must be a visual representation of the thing, and it would be impossible to access the representandum apart from the species to verify the species’ accuracy. It therefore always remains possible that any and every vision is not accurate to the items of the world they function to convey to the intellect.\textsuperscript{24} Moreover, if the species must travel through the air or another medium to the eye in order to make an impression, then an amount of time, however short, must be posited between the emission of the species from the object and the generation of the vision in the mind. So, even if the species is accurate to its object when emitted from the object, it is

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid. 8 & 16: Tachau uses the predominance of the perspectivist theory in medieval philosophy before and after Ockham to argue that Ockham was not as epoch making as had previously been supposed. Adherence to the species in medio account of vision over action-at-a-distance demonstrates continuity between thirteenth and fourteenth century thought, and a clear rejection of the Venerable Inceptor’s reductionist tendencies by his “Occamist” followers.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid. 23.
always possible during the travel time for the object to have changed or to have even been destroyed, in which case the vision would not be an accurate representation of the extra-mental world and every existential inference could be false. Until recently it was assumed that the problem of representation was peculiar to the early-modern period. But Wodeham amongst others in his time period was well aware of the threats it posed to natural knowledge.

Ockham, for instance, famously rejected perspectivism and the species in medio account of vision, thus avoiding the problem altogether. As Robert Pasnau has noted, Ockham wrote that “if species were posited for the sake of representation, this is only because one distant object cannot act on another.” So, to refute the species account of vision, Ockham simply denied that physical contact between a cause and effect is a requirement for natural efficient causality. And if contact is not required, then the species is redundant and should be eliminated on the basis of the principle of parsimony. All that is required, according to Ockham, is a visible object at a sufficient distance from a passively disposed eye to explain sight.

Chatton, as mentioned, objected to Ockham’s theory of “action-at-a-distance.” It is, Chatton claimed, the commonly held and correct view

26 See Robert Pasnau’s excellent discussion of the epistemological problems of representation as they arose from the theory of the multiplication of species in medio in the late-medieval period in chapter 7, “The Veil of Species” (220-253), of Theories of Cognition in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, CUP, 1997). The section that deals with Crathorn (229-235) makes it clear that the problems of representation were well-known in Wodeham’s time, and the solutions to those problems thought to have originated in the early-modern period were present in scholastic thought.
27 Pasnau, Theories of Cognition, 161-162.
28 Ibid. 162.
29 Tachau, Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham, 199.
that it is naturally impossible to have a physical effect without contact
between an efficient cause and effect, and so the *species* or something like
it is required. But Ockham countered that it is just factually false to hold
that all natural causal relations require contact:

It is commonly said that *species* are to be posited *in medio*. And it
is proved through reason, through experience and through
authority. First through reason: Nothing causes at a distance
unless it first acts in a medium; but something sensible distant
from the sense acts on the sense, therefore it first acts in the
medium. That, however, caused in the medium [*in medio*] is the
*species*, therefore.\(^\text{30}\)

Against...first, because the sun causes light here close to the earth
and does not illuminate the medium that is between the sun and
light caused here closer to the earth. Therefore the sun can act
through a medium at a distance immediately from the sun, and
by consequence can act in the same way immediately in my vision.\(^\text{31}\)

The third experience is of a magnet, which according to the
Commentator, comment 9, drags iron at a distance from its
location; drags, I say, immediately, and not by virtue of something
*in medio* or in the iron.\(^\text{32}\)

The natural occurrences of the sun illuminating an object but not the
intervening space and magnetism provide Ockham with the examples he
needs to argue that is indeed naturally possible for physical causes and
effects to take place without a continuous line of contact between them.
So, it is quite possible for a visual object to act on the eye at a distance

\(^{30}\) Ockham, *OTh VI* 44, 2-8: "Hic dicuntur communiter quod species sunt ponendae in medio. Et hoc probatur per rationem, per experientiam et per auctoritatem. Per rationem. Primo sic: nihil agit in distans nisi prius agat in medium; sed sensibile distans a sensu agit in sensum, igitur prius agit in medium. Illud autem causatum in medio est species, igitur etc."

\(^{31}\) Ibid. 48, 16-22: "Contra primam rationem probo quod non semper movens immediatum est simul cum moto, sed quod potest distare. Primo, quia sol causat lumen hic inferius iuxta terram et non medium illuminatum quod est inter solem et lumen causatum hic inferius prope terram. Igitur sol potest agere in medium distans immediate ex parte solis, et per consequens potest agere eodem modo in visum meum immediate."

\(^{32}\) Ibid. 53, 3-6: "Tertia experientia est de magnete, qui secundum Commentatorem, commento 9, trahit ferrum distans ab eo localiter; trahit, dico, immediate et non virtute aliqua in medio vel in ferro."
thus fully explaining vision without the need to posit *species*. Owing to his rejection of the *species in medio* and its replacement with action-at-a-distance Ockham did not have to face the notorious problem of representation that arose from the perspectivist theory of vision. For it made him a direct realist.\(^{33}\)

While the theory of action-at-a-distance did provide a way to avoid the problem of representation, so far as has been discovered none of Ockham’s contemporaries and no one from the subsequent generation of philosophers accepted it. They agreed with Chatton; the theory is simply incredible.

Another of Wodeham’s Franciscan predecessors, the Bishop of Paris, Peter Aureol (c. 1280-1322), formed a theory of vision that used the *species in medio*, but differed from perspectivism in at least one significant respect: the *esse apparens*. Aureol argued that what appears in vision is neither the *species* as the perspectivists would have it, nor the thing itself as Ockham would have it.\(^ {34}\) Rather, it is a type of purely intentional and objective being produced by the mind.

Here’s how it works: A *species* or some sort of information is transferred to the passively receiving eye from a thing *in re*, which then causes an impression, as the perspectivists suppose.\(^ {35}\) The *species* then travels from the eye to the brain, where, in conjunction with the *species* as a cooperating efficient cause, a vision or appearance of the thing would be generated by the mind. But in Aureol’s account the appearance is


\(^{34}\) Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham*, 90.

numerically identical with neither the species, nor with the thing *in re*.\(^{36}\) It must, Aureol supposes, have a type of being distinct from both. So, what appears in vision exists nowhere but in vision in the manner of an object. Aureol refers to the being of a visual object in various ways—esse apparens (apparent being), esse visum (seen being), esse intentionale (intentional being), esse obiectivum (objective being), esse conspicuum, etc.\(^{37}\)—but one thing common to them all is that he infers a separate sort of being for them, distinct from the thing *in re* and the species.

This does not mean that Aureol thought the thing *in re* to be required only as a cooperating efficient cause in standard cases. It is also required as a terminating cause in veridical vision. A vision (and every cognition) to Aureol is essentially intentional—an intention is always of something, sort of like an arrow pointing towards a representandum like a target. Aureol distinguished between veridical and deceptive visions precisely on the grounds that a veridical vision has its intentional object in persona as a required termination for a perfect intention. A deceptive vision, an illusion for instance, is created by vision alone and lacks a termination in an existing and present extra-mental object.\(^{38}\)

Apparent being might be deniable as a required element for veridical vision. If the presence and existence of its object is defining of veridical vision, then why bother with a third entity besides the object *in re* or the species? But Aureol argued for apparent being not only because


\(^{37}\) Ibid. 90.

\(^{38}\) Ibid. 101. Tachau writes the following: “So it is obvious for Aureol that ‘true’ or veridical vision requires such a mental terminus of cognitive acts, but unlike false visions, however, in true vision ‘the image or res in apparent being is not distinguished [by the viewer] from the real thing, since they coincide at the same time.’ That is, in true visions both the external thing itself and the corresponding ‘apparent being’ are seen.”
it is most evident in false visions, but because it is required to explain them:

Universally, he who denies that many things have solely an intentional and apparent being, and who thinks that everything that is seen has being externally in the nature of things, [thereby] denies any illusion (ludificatio), and falls into the error of saying that all things exist which appear.\(^{39}\)

In cases in which vision occurs without an intentional object existing in re, what else could the vision be but a pure appearance that exists nowhere but to the mind? It could not be the thing itself nor could it be a species, otherwise the vision would be veridical. And a pure phenomenon such as occurs in false visions can exist as nothing besides a purely intentional object in vision, without a subject or extra-mental referent that the appearance could be attributed to.

From the claim that all external sensation utilizes apparent being, and the claim that knowledge of the extra-mental world is only possible by placing an object in intentional being according to Aureol, intuitive apprehension would have apparent being in the mind as its primary object. Aureol thus claims that an intuition is that by which “things appear as present, actual and existent in the nature of things, whether they are or are not” [my italics].\(^{40}\) Only in this way, according to him, can optical illusions and similar phenomena deceive the intellect and cause the false belief that their objects exist and are present.


\(^{40}\) Aureol, *Scriptum Super Primum Sententiarum*, 205, 77-79: “...sed una apparitione apparent res præsentialiter et actualiter et existenter in rerum natura, sive sit sive non sit; et hoc est intuitio.”
Chapter II: Natural Deception

To argue for apparent being, Aureol compiled lists of commonly experienced illusions, which by Wodeham's time had become standard. Wodeham provides two lists of optical illusions cited by Aureol, a five-item list in Q. 3 of the Prologue of the Lectura Secunda and an eight-item list in Q. 4.

The first experience of optical illusion from Q. 3 is of after-images. When you stare at a light source for too long, and then close your eyes, images of the previously seen thing often appear. Or, if you were to vigorously rub your closed eyes, images and dazzling patterns appear. Although it is never presupposed that these things are in re, nevertheless something appears, and the realization that the images are not real does not make the images go away. You must be seeing something, and that something, according to Aureol, is apparent being.41

The second is of vivid dreams, in which sounds and visions really appear to be there. The special feature of this class of illusions is that they issue from the powers of the five senses, not the common sense. Sounds occur in hearing, and visions appear in vision, which are taken to be extra-mentally caused, but in reality are not.42

The third is of terrible things such as disasters and monsters that really do appear, as in hallucinations that occur to those with mental problems or because of the use of hallucinogenic drugs. The salient features of this class is also that they truly appear, seem to be caused by

41 Wodeham, LS I 68, 4-10: “Primo per viam experientiae a qua oritur omnis scientia: Nisi notitia intuitiva fieri posset re absente nec acualiter existente, aliter non derelinquereetur in nobis visio causata ex forti visibili illo absente vel clauso oculo, quod est contra experientiam et contra beatum Augustinium, XI De Trinitate, cap. [2], qui vult ibi sentientaliter quod cum clauiserimus oculos, postquam diu inspexerimus luminaria vel aliqua visibilia omnino intensa.”
42 Ibid. 68, 16-19: “Item, secunda experientia 'est in somno et somniis quam ponit Commentator tractatu suo De somno et vigilia, fere circa medium, dicens "quod in somno videt homo et sentit per quinque sensus absque eo quod ibi sit aliquod sensibile extrinsecum".”
something outside of the mind, and do not disappear even when it is realized that they are in some manner deceptive.\textsuperscript{43}

The fourth is when a representation is taken for what it represents. Pictures on a wall of animals, and images on television that could be mistaken for the things they represent may be included in this class.\textsuperscript{44}

The fifth is of colour transfer. St. Augustine first described the experience, saying that when you look at red semi-transparent glass, with the light passing through it to illuminate the red, and then look at another object of a different colour, the second object will either appear to be red or will blend with red to give a third colour. The redness or third colour is not really there. But, again, it nevertheless appears and does not cease to do so even with the realization that it does not really exist.\textsuperscript{45}

The first experience from the list given in Q. 4 has to do with the false appearance of motion. Here is the scenario: You are standing on a boat sailing down a river while watching a stand of trees on a nearby shore. It appears from your perspective that the trees are moving, when in reality they are not.\textsuperscript{46} Most people who have ever driven or been a passenger in a car at a busy intersection have experienced a similar illusion. Your foot is on the brake and your car is not moving, but the car

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\item[43] Ibid. 69, 43-44: “Tertia experientia est illa quam iam posui de Algazele de timentibus, quibus apparat quod audiant et videant terribilia.”
\item[44] Ibid. 69, 47-48: [Quoting Aureol] “Quarta est de ludificatis in quibus constat et notum est omnibus quod videant quae non sunt, [ut] castra, canes et lepores et similia.”
\item[45] Ibid. 69, 49-50: [Quoting Aureol] “Ultima vero est in habentibus oculos molles, in quibus cum viderint rubeum derelinquitur visio rubei, ita quod rubeum appareat eis omnne quod vident.”
\item[46] Ibid. 97, 9-14: “Prima quidem, quia cum quis portatur in aqua, arbores existentes in ripa viertur moveri. Ille autem motus qui est in oculo objective non est ipsa visio, quia tunc visio esset objectum visus et videtur, et [ita] esset visus potentia reflexiva. Nec ille motus est realiter in arbores vel ripa, quia tunc realiter moverentur. Nec etiam in aere, quia aeri non tribuitur sed arbori. Igitur est tantum intentionaliter non realiter in esso viso et in esse iudicato.”
\end{itemize}
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beside you starts to slowly pull ahead, giving the false appearance that your car is rolling backwards.

The second experience is familiar to anyone who has ever played with a sparkler. If you twirl a stick with its end lit, a circle of fire appears. With a sparkler, because of the steady intensity of the light it emits, all sorts of shapes on top of circles can be made, and in all cases the shapes are not really there, but nevertheless appear to be.\footnote{Ibid. 103, 3-9: “Secunda est experientia in motu subito circulari baculi igne igniti [in] extremitate. Apparet enim quidam circulus in aere fieri ex baculo sic moto. Iste circulus qui apparat aut est realis, existens in baculo, et hoc non, quia ille rectus est. Nec in aere, quia circulus coloratus et terminatus in aere esse non potest. Nec ipsa visio, quia tunc [visio] videtur. Et iterum, circulus non est in aere ubi circulus ille apparat. Nec alicubi intra oculum esse potest, propter easdem rationes. Igitur relinquitur quod sit in aere in esse apparenti et iudicato.”}

The third experience has already been mentioned. A stick partially submerged in water will appear to have a break in it. Again, you may not believe the break is really there, but it nevertheless appears, and no amount of reasoning and deliberation could make the appearance go away.\footnote{Ibid. 106, 1-2: “Tertia experientia est de apparentiis fracturae baculi cuius pars est in aqua. Non enim fractura habet esse verum sed tantium apparens.”}

The fourth experience is of double-images. Sometimes vision gives the appearance of two candles, when in reality there is only one. It may be known that there is truly only one candle, but the realization does not make the double-image vanish.\footnote{Ibid. 107, 19-20: “Quarta experientia est quod aliquando una candela in esse reali apparat esse dueae, et illa dualitas est tantium in esse apparenti.”}

The fifth experience will be far less familiar to many than the other experiences. It involves the colour of a dove’s wings. Apparently, when a
dove flies through a shaft of light its wings appear to be coloured in various ways. The colours are not in the wing, but nevertheless appear.\textsuperscript{50}

The sixth is of mirrors. We could quite easily take the image in a mirror falsely as the thing itself. This experience in particular has potentially devastating consequences for knowledge based on the senses. Ockham, for instance, claimed that the whole world available through vision could be a deception, because it is possible for demons or even humans with ill intent and perfect knowledge of how optics work to set up mirrors that entirely reverse the world, so that the sun on one side is doubled by the other, and where everything appears opposite of where it truly is. This could be done in such a way that vision itself would never pick out the deception, and has the potential to make all knowledge of the extra-mental world doubtful.\textsuperscript{51}

The seventh repeats the first item from the list in Q. 3. It is of afterimages of the sun and of the images that appear after the eyes are strenuously rubbed.\textsuperscript{52}

The eighth is just a repeat of item 5 from the list given in Q. 3. It is of the transfer of redness that stays with the eye for some duration after staring through red glass, thus tingeing everything else seen with red.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid. 107, 44-45: “Quinta experientia est de coloribus colli columbae, qui non habent esse verum sed esse apparens tantum.”

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid. 108, 50-54: “Sexta experientia est de imaginibus quae videntur in speculo, quia probat quod species realis ibi non videtur, et bene. Nec aliquid ibi habens esse subjectivum; nec illud apparens est visio in oculo vel aliquid alius existens in eo. Igitur videtur aliquid quod tantum habet esse apparens in speculo et esse visum et iudicatum.”

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid. 108, 59-61: “Septima experientia est de illo qui vidit solem. Postquam enim avertit obtuitum, apparent quaedam rotunditates lucidae ante oculos etc.”

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid. 108, 63-66: “Octava experientia est de illis qui aspexerunt aliqua multum rubea, vel cancellata intense et post aspiciunt aliqua alia. Apparent enim eis rubea licet non sint [rubea], quae rubedo vel cancellatura non dubium quo aliquid non habent nisi esse intentional.”
Again, Aureol’s main claim is that apparent being is required to explain these illusions, and the game for subsequent philosophers who sought to contradict Aureol was to account for the examples without recourse to apparent being.

An early critic of Aureol and his esse apparens was Ockham. He responded by claiming that positing apparent being leads to a regress:

[In vision] either whiteness itself truly appears to the sense or it does not. If it does not, then it does not appear, which is manifestly false. If it appears, and beyond this the esse apparens appears, then there are here two appearances and prospects. From this I argue thus: whenever there are two appearances of something to a power, by reason of which one will be in apparent being to the other. Therefore, if white is in apparent being in some way distinct from whiteness, by the same reason the apparent being will be in apparent being in a distinct way, and in consequence there will be an infinite process in such things, which is manifestly inconvenient.\(^5^4\)

If what is seen in a vision is not the thing itself but an appearance distinct from the thing, then in order for the appearance to appear, a third sort of thing apart from the thing and what appears must be posited, and if a third, a fourth, and so on ad infinitum. Of course, if the process were infinite, then a vision would never arise. But visions do arise. So, Aureol must be wrong.

But Ockham’s refutation of Aureol doesn’t work. Wodeham notes that the regress argument betrays a misunderstanding of the esse

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\(^5^4\) Ockham, OTh IV 240, 11-20: “...aut ipsa albedo vere apparet sensui aut non. Si non, igitur non videtur, quod est manifeste falsum. Si apparet, et praeter hoc esse apparens apparet, igitur sunt hic duo apparentia et prospecta. Ex quo arguo sic: quandocumque sunt duo apparentia aliqui potentiae, qua ratione unum istorum fit in esse apparenti et reliquum. Igitur si albedo sit in esse apparenti aliquo modo distincto ab albedine, eadem ratione illud esse apparens fiet in esse apparenti aliquo modo distincto, et per consequens erit processus in infinitum in talibus, quod est manifeste inconveniens.”
apparens on Ockham’s part. If what was produced by the species affecting the eye were another species, then the regress would truly ensue. But the numerically identical apparent being can be successively true and false, which means that it must be different in kind from the species. And so the regress never ensues. While he felt that Ockham’s argument is in some manner applicable, because of the confusion he finds it unable to conclusively repudiate Aureol.

While neither accept Ockham’s arguments, Chatton and Wodeham held that the esse apparens and Aureol’s definition of intuitive apprehension posed insurmountable obstacles to knowledge and must therefore be rejected. Unless what is seen in a vision depends in every case on the existence and presence of its object as immediate efficient cause, then the insurmountable problem of representation will arise. If a vision can exist even without the existence and presence of its object, then, because the esse apparens itself would be the only means available to the intellect to either verify or falsify a vision, vision could not supply the evident cognitions presupposed by contingent knowledge. Chatton writes the following:

I prove that a vision of a thing cannot naturally be caused by an absent thing. ...I prove first, because otherwise all of our certitude would perish. ...If therefore sensation is caused naturally by an absent thing and also conserved for some time without it, therefore this way is not certain.

Wodeham, LS I 86, 57-58: “Sed hoc [Ockham] non cogit, quia idem esse apparens penitus est quod primo est verum et post falsum.”

Chatton, RP 89, 88-95: “...probo quod visio rei non potest naturaliter causari re absente. ...Probo primo, quia aliter periret omnis nostra certitudo, quia maxima certitudo nostra de sensibilibus contingit nobis per hoc quod experimur nostra sensationes, per quas sensibilia nobis apparent praesentia; si igitur sensatio causatur naturaliter re absente et etiam diu conservetur sine ea, igitur illa via non est certa.” It should be noted that in this passage Chatton mentions that a vision cannot be conserved without its object being present and existing in re. Later in the question he changes his mind. The only recourse available to
And Wodeham agrees:

I hold these two conclusions. The first is that it is not possible for a vision to be caused naturally without the existence and presence of visible things. Proof: because then, even with all miracles circumscribed, it would never naturally be possible to have certainty of existents or of whatever contingent conditions of sensible things by way of a sense nor, by consequence, by way of the intellect. ...And if it is so [that an intuitive apprehension could arise naturally without an efficient cause in re], therefore there could be no certainty in this way, and then all knowledge [omnis scientia] had by way of experience will perish, because all knowledge [omnis scientia] is certain cognition.57

Hence, Chatton and Wodeham argued against apparent being, but they did so through the necessary natural dependency of intuitive apprehensions on an existent and present thing in re as efficient cause. No existing and present thing in re causing the vision, then, naturally, no vision.

But in doing so they faced a dilemma: On the one hand, they had to give an account of how false and deceptive sensory experiences can arise. And, on the other hand, they had to show how this is possible while at the same time asserting that sensory experiences cannot arise without their

explain deceptive experiences is to grudgingly accept that vision can naturally be maintained for some time after the destruction of its object. See n. 58.

57 Wodeham, LS I 66, 3-13: “Quoad primum teneo duas conclusiones. Prima est quod non potest visio naturaliter causari sine existentia et praesentia rei visibilis. Probatio: quia tunc, etiam circumscripto omni miraculo, nunquam posset haberi certitudo aliquaque naturaliter de existentia vel quacumque condicione contingenti rei sensibilis per viam sensus nec per consequens per viam intellectus. ...Et si sic, igitur nulla certitudo [esse] in huiusmodi, et tunc periret omnis scientia accepta per viam experientiae, quia omnis scientia est notitia certa.” Ibid. 66-67, 24-32: “...si non [causetur a tali re], perit omnis via certificans de existentia et condicionibus contingentibus visibilium et quoruncumque cognoscibilium intuitive, dato quod naturaliter possit visio quaelibet causari ab aliis causis quam a visibili. Per quem actum dirigemur vel superesset nobis possibilitas certitudinis? Aut per notitiam incomplexa aut complexam. Neque sic neque sic, quia nulla alia [ab] intuitiva requirit existentiam et praesentiam objecti, saltem non plus quam intuitiva. Nec omnes etiam simul ad hoc sufficiunt sine intuitiva; [nec] possunt aliunde naturaliter causari obiecto eius non existente et aliis praexsistentiis; [nec] posset illis addi visio rei, re non existente.”
corresponding objects as efficient causes. If a vision cannot arise but from a thing \textit{in re}, then how could vision be false? If a vision could be false, would that not mean that the thing seen is a pure phenomenon in the mind that corresponds to nothing \textit{in re}, something like the \textit{esse apparens}?

Chatton attempted to solve the dilemma by arguing that a vision must be initially caused by an extra-mental object, but that it could be conserved without its object: “sometimes a vision earlier caused might remain for some time with the seen thing passing away, by that intense \textit{species} through which the vision was immediately caused.”\textsuperscript{58} In the case of the circle produced by the twirling stick with lit ends, he claimed it possible for a particularly intense \textit{species} emanating from the end of the stick to cause a vision to be conserved beyond the instant moment of causation. Successive instances of visions of the end of the stick would then overlap to generate the vision of the circle of fire.\textsuperscript{59} In this way, then, Chatton could simultaneously hold that vision could not arise without the presence and existence of its object, but also that false visions can be explained without appeal to apparent being. He further notes that the lack of certainty caused by a lingering vision is no objection to the idea. He suggests it precisely to explain deceptive visions.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{58} Chatton, \textit{RP} 91, 150-155: “...aliquando visio prius causata nata sit manere per aliquod tempus re visa recedente, eo quod species intensa per quam immediate visio causatur, remanete per aliquod tempus, re ipsa recedente, propter intensionem specei, tamen numquam nata est visio aliqua naturaliter causari vel diu conservari sine praesentia rei visae, sicut probatum est....”

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid. 95, 255-261: “Ideo dico quod istud experimentum de visione intensi visibilis, et etiam illud aliquus experimentum supra positum de circulo igneo, bene probant quod visio prius causata per praesentiam rei in esse reali, potest per aliquod tempus conservari recedente visibili, quia species vel lumen eius remanet; sic igitur similiter potest illa visio, quia quantum experimur, apparat nobis quod etiam lumen dependet a corpore lucido; igitur tale lumen vel talis species potest conservare illam visionem per aliquod tempus.”

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid. 92, 175-178: “...concede quod pro illo tempore pro quo visio potest remanere recedente visible, non habetur certitudo. Tamen quia illa visio non durat diu post recessum
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One key feature of his solution, key because it distinguishes it from Wodeham’s, is that the conserved vision remains a vision of the cause, the thing in re. Chatton argued that all vision involves a time-lapse between cause and effect, because the species in medio presupposes, no matter how short, a period of time in which the species travels from the object to the eye and into the mind. Hence, the vision is of an object in re, but the vision is conserved without the object remaining in existence and presence in every vision, and he takes the experience of luminous bodies as evidence.

While Wodeham does, on the one hand, accept Chatton’s claim that a vision cannot arise without the existence and presence of its object, a visible thing in re, Wodeham rejects, for some obvious reasons, the idea that a vision could be naturally conserved. Chatton’s account leaves open the possibility that there could be a vision without a corresponding extra-mental object. And if there could be a vision with its object no longer existing, then the intuitive apprehension of a contingent state of affairs would be equally open to truth and falsity, and therefore unreliable. So, Wodeham argues, Chatton’s solution isn’t much of a solution at all. His explanation for optical illusions differs from Aureol’s, but the problems the esse apparens poses to knowledge remain.

Wodeham opts to retain Chatton’s conclusion that a vision cannot arise but from a thing in re as efficient cause, but he further holds that a vision cannot remain without such a cause:

The first of these arguments [Aureol’s] does not prove that vision could be naturally caused, with a non-existing or absent object, but

61 Ibid. 91-92, 159-164. See n. 64.
62 Ibid. 95. Cf. n. 59.
that [a vision] earlier caused could naturally be conserved for some time. And because of this, the argument is conceded by someone, clearly Chatton.

Because of this [Chatton’s position] I posit a second conclusion contrary to him, clearly that a vision earlier caused by something visible cannot be conserved naturally, with that which is visible destroyed or absent.63

But Chatton has a counter-argument. Often with sensations the cause and its effect are separated by time and space without affecting the sensation’s veracity:

I confirm this, because an audition of a sound remains when the sound has been corrupted, because it is an audition of a distant sound; otherwise one would not be able to judge oneself to hear such a distant sound. And the sound is multiplied successively; therefore it is not when the audition is, and, however, it is not naturally caused, unless caused by that sound, not however, by causation which requires the cause and caused to exist simultaneously, but such which is sufficient to be caused succeeding preceding causes.64

Wodeham rejects this counter-argument for purely epistemological reasons, saying that if Chatton is correct, then “all certitude of the existence of whatever visible [things] would be carried away”, because “it would be possible to certify that a visible thing exists when it does not exist.”65

63 Wodeham, LS I 71, 3-9: “Primum illorum argumentorum non probat quod visio possit naturaliter causari, obiecto non existente vel absentе, sed quod prius causata possit naturaliter conservari aliquamdiu. Et hoc propter istud argumentum conceditur a quodam, scilicet Chatton. Propter quod pono secundam conclusionem contrariam sibi, scilicet quod visio prius causata a visibili non potest naturaliter conservari, visibili destructo vel absentе.”

64 Chatton, RP 91-92, 159-164: “Confirmо, quia auditо soni remanet sonо corruptо, quia est auditо soni distans; aliter non iudicaret se audire sonum ita distantem. Et ille sonus multiplicatur successиве; igitur non est quando auditо est, et tamen non causatur naturaliter, nisi ab illo sonо causatur, non tamen causatione quae requirat causam et causatum simul existere, sed tali quа sufficit causatum succedere causae praeecessenti.”

65 Wodeham, LS I 71-72, 17-25: "...ista via tollit omnem certitudinem de existentia cuiuscumque visibilis, licet sit cauta evasio. Probatio consequentiae: quia pro nulla mensura est possibilis certitudo de existentia visibilis per ipsam visionem pro qua mensura staret cum ipsa visione non-existentia visibilis. Nec potest de opposito constare. Sed si quis per centum
Wodeham’s own position, the one that informs his explanations of most of Aureol’s eight optical illusions, is that the impression left in the eye can remain and continue to effect vision after the visible object that initially caused the impression has ceased to so function, or, generally, when the object no longer exists and is no longer present. To explain afterimages, for instance, he claims that an intense *species*, such as we receive from staring at the sun, can leave an impression in the eye, which, even with the eyes closed, continues to cause the appearance of the sun.

But doesn’t this sound like Chatton’s position? Chatton claims that while a vision cannot be caused without the existence and presence of its object *in re*, it can, however, be conserved in vision for some time after the object has been destroyed. Wodeham too seems to be claiming that vision can remain after its object *in re* has ceased to exist. If they are the same, then doesn’t it follow that Wodeham is openly advocating skepticism, insofar as he himself launched an attack against Chatton on just these grounds?

In response it should be said that Chatton’s and Wodeham’s positions are very similar, but that they differ in one significant respect. The vision that can be conserved in Chatton’s account is of the object *in re* alone through light or a *species* remaining in vision, while in Wodeham’s estimation it is the impression—an extra-mental thing—left in the eye by the *species* that acts as the maintaining cause of the vision. Different media are capable of retaining *species* to differing degrees. Wodeham uses St. Augustine’s illustration of this fact: “The figure of a ring in water

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*annos videret solem, pro quocumque instanti vel parte temporis in que adaequate posset elici actus iudicandi de existentia, staret naturaliter cum ipsa visione quod visibile non existeret. Igitur. Minor patet, quia aliter posset certificari quod visibile existeret quando non existeret.*


See n. 65.
requires the continuous presence of the ring, but not so in wax.” When a signet ring is placed in water, it creates an impression only while the ring is directly in the water. There is no trace of the impression once the ring is removed. But when a signet ring is impressed on wax, the medium retains the species intact, indefinitely. Similarly, the organ of vision, the tissue of the eye, retains the impression made by the species for some time after the visible object has stopped making the impression. What is seen is the remaining impression in the eye, which gradually fades.

According to Wodeham, the deception happens insofar as the mind takes the vision caused by the lingering impression in the eye for the cause of the impression. This position allows him to posit his second conclusion, that vision cannot be conserved without the presence and existence of its object.

And so Wodeham repudiates Aureol’s apparent being on the basis of his two conclusions: a vision can only be initiated by an extra-mental visible thing as cause, and can only be conserved by one. The esse apparens is only needed in case a vision has no extra-mental foundation, and such a case cannot be. Because it is not needed, it should be eliminated from the account.

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68 Wodeham, *LS I* 76, 28-35: “Ad probationem argumenti: verum est quod aliquid est subiectum in quo lumen non potest manere etiam per momentum nisi ad praesentiam luminaris cuius subiectum est aer, et ideo verum est, quantum apparat nobis, quod lumen in aer dependet a luminari. Sed non oportet quod in omni subiecto sic dependeat. Verbi gratia: figura sigilli in aqua continue requirit praesentiam sigilli, non sic in cera. Sic haec complexio oculi est subiectum receptivum—pro eo quod aliQuantum appropinquit ad complectionem organi phantasiae—luminis et aliiqualiter conservativum, licet brevi tempore.”

69 Ibid. 71, 3-9: “Primum illorum argumentorum non probat quod visio possit naturaliter causari, obiecto non existente vel absentе, sed quod prius causata possit naturaliter conservari aliquamdiu. Et hoc propter istud argumentum conceditur a quodam, scilicet Chatton. Propter quod pono secundam conclusionem contrarium sibi, scilicet quod visio prius causata a visibili non potest naturaliter conservari, visibili destructo vel absente.”
Chapter II: Natural Deception

In solving Aureol’s deceptive experiences Wodeham could not entirely transpose Ockham’s solutions, but he did use Ockham’s general strategy. Most, according to Ockham, were explainable as errors of judgment.  

There are commonly held to be five particular senses, which give direct access to the extra-mental world: vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. But it was thought in Wodeham’s time that there was a sixth sense that is common to and combines the others. The common sense is an internal sense of the mental acts of simple apprehension. This must be the case, because we know that smells, sounds, and information had from various senses are of a single object, which could not be conveyed to the intellect through the particular senses left to themselves. It is, therefore, the common sense in which is formed the total sensory world that we experience. The particular senses are faultless in perceptual errors, but the common sense is not so reliable. For the most part the deception in natural deception does not lie in the intuitive apprehensions had from the particular senses, but from their combination in the internal common sense.

So, to the first experience of afterimages Wodeham claims that “Augustine did not say nor want [to say] nor even show by experience that...”

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70 This is a standard medieval strategy in dealing with natural sense deception. Chatton used the same strategy: RP 93, 205-206: “Ideo errat iudicando baculum esse fractum”; Ibid., 212-213: “Ideo errat iudicando ibi esse circulum igneum.” And long before Ockham and Chatton, Anselm used it in Chapter VI of De Veritate, J. Hopkins & H. Richardson, trans. (Minneapolis: Arthur J. Bannin, 2000), 173: “The fault is not with the senses, which report what they are able to, since they have received thus to be able; rather, [the fault] must be attributed to the soul’s judgment [iudicium], which does not clearly discern what the senses can and ought to do.”

71 Wodeham, LS I 70, 4-7: “Secundo quod ‘[non sunt visiones, sed] iudicium sensus communis est per quem iudicamus nos videre, ut patet in II De anima. Unde tales ludificati non vident, licet videatur eis quod vident, sensu communi hoc iudicante’.”
the same luminous body first seen, still appears with the visible thing absent, but that certain of its forms remained which were made in the sense, that is in the organ used as the instrument of sense, when the extra-mental illuminated body was seen.”

These forms made in the sense are the impression in the eye itself, which would gradually fade as time passes. He further writes the following of this first experience:

It is therefore to be said to this experience that in the ocular organ [the eye] remain certain qualities caused by an intense visible body which are seen after withdrawal of the visible [thing], which are called by certain people *species*, and perhaps they are of the same *species* when the quality itself was caused by the visible body in the sense.

To the second experience, Wodeham claims in similar fashion to the first that what appears in vivid dreams are “altogether intrinsic [sensations] derived from the conservation of *species* to the eyes and ears and other senses by the instruments of the senses.”

He stresses that what is seen in dreams are real, insofar as the form itself is seen and is the cause of the vision—they do not arise from nothing. The mind errs in taking what is an internal and reflexive sensation for an external sensation of something extra-mental. He further claims that the visions themselves would never be able to correct the error, because the error

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72 Ibid. 75, 20-24: “Dico igitur quod beautus Augustinus non dicit nec vult nec experientia etiam [ostendit] quod ipsummet corpus lucidum quod prius videbatur, adhuc videatur absente visibili, sed quaedam reliquiae istius formae quae facta erat in sensu, id est in organo seu instrumento sensus, quando videbatur corpus lucidum extra.”

73 Ibid. 75, 34-38: “Dicendum est igitur ad istud experimentum quod in organo oculi remanent quaedam qualitates causatae a corpore visibili intensae quae videntur post amotionem visibilis, quae vocantur a quibusdam species, et forte sunt eiusdem speciei cum qualitate ipsa a qua causantur in sensu corpore visible.”

74 Ibid. 80, 5-7: “...dico quod homo non sentit in isto casu sensibile extrinsecum, sed tantum intrinsecum derivatum a conservativa specierem ad oculos et aures et ceteros sensus seu instrumenta sunsuum.”
comes from the vision, but he implies that “by use of right reason” (*usu rectae rationis*) the mind can, unless disabled, correct itself.

But, one might respond, what about monsters and other things seen in dreams that have never been in the world? How could *species* of these be had? Here he claims that imagination itself is capable of combining species into whatever objects which are then, through a visual reflexive act, erroneously taken to be external sensations. “For the imaginative [power] can create whatever it pleases in its acts.” Right reason can often spot the error, but in an impaired or deranged mind, the reflexive vision, which is real but of conserved *species* alone, is mistaken for a direct act of external sensation. In such instances the apprehension is altogether abstractive, but is falsely judged to be had from sensory intuition of the extra-mental world.

The solution to the third experience is implied by his response to the first two. To the third, that of horrible things like monsters that have never existed, these are reflexive acts of vision that are abstractive but are falsely judged to be intuitive and to have been caused by an extra-mental object.

To the fourth, that of optical illusions of things that do not exist that are taken to exist, he claims that the ways to make things appear in certain ways that are deceptive can be known. He cites Ockham’s

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75 Ibid. 80, 20-24: “Apparent tamen homini erranti indubia, illis visis; quem errorem non sufficit rectificare anima, sopito tunc usu rectae rationis. Et similiter in forti infirmitate, puta phrensi vel in violenta passione sensuali, puta timore vel huiusmodi, appareat, inquam, tunc homini non quod videat speciem ibi praesentem, sed rem extra.”

76 Ibid. 80, 27-31: “Nam imaginativa potest in actus suos quoscumque cum placuerit, praehibito primo actu. Propter quem actum imaginandi, concurrente ista visione praesentis quae visio erat forte occasio imaginationis illius fortis, decipitur homo et credit se videre non illud quod videt, sed illud quod imaginatur.”
example of demons who have knowledge of mirrors to explain his point.\textsuperscript{77} Again, it is an error of judgment that can deceive, but that reason can counter-act.

To the fifth, that of the false appearance of red after having stared at an illuminated red piece of glass, his explanation is clear. The \textit{species} of redness had from the first vision retains an impression in the eye for some time which combines with other impressions in the eye. He writes, “it is to be said that of such a pile [of \textit{impressions}] of the eye it does not see then the red that was first seen, but a redness affecting the eye, although through an error in judgment it believes itself to see an extra-mental red, or at least it so appears to it.”\textsuperscript{78}

To the first of Aureol’s eight, the false appearance of the motion of trees from the perspective of someone on a passing boat in a river, Wodeham refers to Ockham’s explanation of motion, and claims that judgment falsely holds the trees to be moving. What occurs in situations in which motion is judged to be or something is judged to be in motion, and this goes for any motion, is that successive singular visions are synthesized together in the common sense, and, from the changing positions of the objects in a vision, motion is judged to be. In the case of the motion of the trees on the shore, the judgment is false. “And this is true, not because of some intentional being [\textit{esse intentionale}] of motion, but on account of this alone—whatever else circumscribed—because

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid. 81, 60-63: “Dico quod ‘ludificatio potest fieri multis modis. Aliquando enim fit per naturam specularum. Daemon enim sciens naturam rerum, potest diversa specula diversimode sibi opponere propter quod res multum distantes videbuntur’.”

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid. 82, 83-85: “[De habentibus oculos molles] dicendum quod talis mollium oculorum non videt tunc rubeum quod prius vidit, sed ruborem afficientem oculum, licet per errorem iudicativae credat se videre rubeum extra, vel saltem sic sibi appareat.”
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judgment itself erroneously informs the mind."\textsuperscript{79} Wodeham notes that this sort of erroneous cognition of motion had from false judgment owing to successive visions is common:

The reason why the trees are continuously seen at further and further distances is explained through the motion of another [the boat] continually more and more taking the man away from the trees. And this was the reason why some ancients [\textit{antiqui}] said the earth revolved, and thus not through the motion of the sky but through the circumvolution of the earth [there] appeared to us continually other and other parts of the heavens, just as is clear in \textit{II De Caelo}.\textsuperscript{80}

To the second optical illusion, that of the circle that appears in the air when a stick with the ends lit is spun, he claims that the \textit{species} successively impressed on the eye remain for an amount of time, which combined make a circular impression in the eye, such that an entire circle can be impressed in the eye to which attention can be paid.\textsuperscript{81}

The third illusion, already discussed in some detail, is of the break that appears in a stick that has been partially submerged in the water. Wodeham’s solution to this particular illusion has received some attention, insofar as he wholly relies on the perspectivist theory of vision in order to explain it, and the theory of the multiplication of \textit{species} as

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid. 98, 29-32: “Et hoc verum est, non propter aliquod esse intentionale motus, sed propter hoc solum—quocumque alio circumscripto—quia ipsum iudicium erroneum informat animam.”

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid. 98, 36-40: “Causa autem quare arbores continue in alia et alia distantia [videntur] est quia per motum alium continue plus et plus elongatur homo ab arboribus. Et haec fuit causa quare aliqui antiqui dicebant terram circumvolvi, et sic non per motum caeli sed per circumvolutionem terrae apparat nobis continue alia et alia pars caeli, sicut patet \textit{II De Caelo}, et per consequens.”

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid. 104, 22-26: “...illud visibile intensum circulariter motum colorat per species aliquam partem oculi circulariter. Quo circulo viso, propter attentionem animi qua figt aspectum in situ ignis moti circulariter et semper prosequitur ignem ipsum in illo situ circulari, apparat homini quod ibi sit circulus ille quem videt, licet secundum veritatem non ibi sit sed intra oculum.”
Up until this point, the only species that we could be certain Wodeham endorsed were synonymous with impressions in the eye itself. It seemed as though he wholly endorsed the theory of the multiplication of species, but we do not get firm textual evidence until his response to this illusion. He claims that various media affect the species in transit from the visible object to the eye in various ways. The species passes freely with little to no affect through air, while water affects the species, causing it to hit the eye at a different angle, the break between the two media giving the appearance of a break in the stick:

[The] cause of how it [the break in the stick] appears to be, although it is not so, pertains altogether to the perspectivist [account of vision]. And the cause is in variation of the images by the media through which the species of the stick is multiplied in the water all the way to the eye. For if there would be a hundred media through which it [the stick] deviated, there would be just as many broken lines through which the species would be multiplied, so that the earlier lines would not directly head forth [to the eye]. That is, a deviation will immediately begin to develop through the line in one exterior or interior position than in the prior medium. However, one medium is water, the other air.

The fourth illusion is double vision, in this case of a candle, to which Wodeham claims there to be a simple explanation. The organ of vision is the eye, and we have two of these. When there is an impediment to one of the eyes, or some other sort of malfunction, or a problem with the species travelling to one of the eyes or both of them, the light from the candle can appear in two places making it appear as though there are two candles. According to Wodeham there is no need to posit one or both of

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83 Wodeham, *LS I* 106, 10-17: “Reddere autem causam quare ita apparent esse, licet non sit, pertinet tantum ad perspectivum. Et causa est in proposito variatio medi per quod multiplicatur species baculi in aqua usque ad oculum. Si enim essent centum media per quae deviareter, toties frangeretur linea per quam species multiplicaretur, ita quod prior linea non in directum protendetur. Id est statim incipiet fieri deviatio per lineam in alio situ exteriori vel interiori quam in medio priori. Aliud autem medium est aqua, alius aer. Igitur.”
the appearances of the candle in esse apparens, because both visions are of the same visible object; it is simply a malfunction of the organ that causes two to appear.\textsuperscript{84} For verification that this is the case, in an instance of double vision simply close an eye and one of the appearances will vanish.\textsuperscript{85} We can spot the error, and have the means to correct it.

The fifth illusion is of the colour that can appear on the neck of a dove in a certain type of lighting, and Wodeham doesn’t really treat it, but simply seconds Ockham’s response for a solution. Ockham writes of it that “I say that whenever there will have been these colours, in truth, there the colours are really existing. Whether, however, they will have been subjectively in the neck of the dove or in the nearby air is of greater doubt, and both could be held as probable (probabiliter).”\textsuperscript{86} So, the colour is truly there, but, because it is a quality it must exist in a subject. And either in the dove or in the air near the dove works well enough for Ockham and Wodeham.

The sixth is mirror images. The appearance is not the object itself, nor is it the mirror itself, so, reasons Aureol, it must be the esse apparens. Wodeham responds, “It is to be said about this that it is a true thing seen through a reflected line (per lineam reflexam).”\textsuperscript{87} The visible thing itself is seen, but its species is reflected off the mirror to the eye. He admits that it is possible to confuse an image in a mirror with a visible thing itself, but

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid. 107, 40-42: “Responsio igitur stat in hoc quod quia per aliquem modum impeditur consursus aspectum ubi concurrere deberent inter oculos et rem visam, ideo apparet homini illud quod unum est esse duo.”

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid. 107, 32-33: “Et ideo dicit consequenter quod ‘si unum oculum clauiserimus, non geminum ignem sed unum, sicuti est, videbimus’.”

\textsuperscript{86} Ockham, \textit{OTh IV}, 248, 5-8: “Ad quintam dico quod ubicumque fuerint illi colores, vere sunt ibi colores realiter existentes. Utrum autem fuerint in collo columbae subjective vel in aere propinquo est magis dubium, et utrumque potest teneri probabiliter.”

\textsuperscript{87} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 108, 54-55: “Dicendum ad illud quod ipsamet res vera videtur per lineam reflexam.”
that this is, again, an error in judgment. “And although it is judged or appears to be in the mirror which then appears, however it has no being there, neither diminished nor true, truly speaking. If, however, someone might like to speak metaphorically [in this way], then it is consequently to be said.”

The seventh is of afterimages of the sun or a similar luminous body. Of course, he has already dealt with afterimages. An impression from an intense visible body, such as the sun, can stay for a time in the the eye, which continues to directly cause vision even after the original visible body has been destroyed or passed. Something real (in re) is still seen, namely the impression in the eye, but it is falsely taken for the extra-mental thing which initially caused the impression.

The eighth and final optical illusion, also already dealt with, is of redness transposed from one visible body to another. Again, the redness seen truly exists, but as an impression in the eye that continues to affect vision.

Wodeham has explained Aureol’s illusions without appeal to apparent being, and can thus eliminate it from the account, but he is not done with Aureol. A further objection Wodeham raises against apparent being is that in positing it Aureol is simply confusing a “metaphorical and improper” way of speaking about cognitions as absolute beings with the dependent and subjective being that they actually have in the mind. Aureol is a victim of language.

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88 Ibid. 108, 55-56: “Et licet iudicetur vel appareat esse in speculo illud quod tunc videtur, nullum tamen esse habet ibi, nec diminutum nec verum, veraciter loquendo. Si autem velit quis metaphoricò loqui, consequenter est dicendum.”

89 Ibid. 88-89, 36-51. See n. 91.
In a first-order intuitive apprehension, such as is had directly by the intellect from a vision of a visible thing \textit{in re}, the object itself is present to the intellect. In such cases an \textit{esse apparens} is not required.\footnote{Ibid. 87, 13-15: "...quidquid sufficit ad hoc quod potentia videat a sufficit ad hoc quod a videatur. Sed omni alio circumscrippto, hoc solo posito quod visio a recipiatur in potentia visiva, ipsa potentia videbit a."} However, Aureol, according to Wodeham, is assuming that something like a second-order intention, an intuitive apprehension of the first-order intention (the vision of the thing itself) is required by the mind to conceptualize the visible thing. The second-order intention sets the vision into purely intentional being which then has its object \textit{in re} as a terminus. The first-order vision, if this were the case, would be a relation or medium between the intellect and the visible thing.\footnote{Ibid. 88-89, 36-69: "...dicendum quod illa experientia, quando intelligens vel cognoscens experitur rem sibi praesentem, non est nisi ipsa cognitio recepta in potentia cognitiva qua apparat et cognoscitur res sive sit praesens sive non. Et ex hoc non sequitur quod habeat aliquod esse dum actu intelligitur quod non habet dum non intelligitur nisi vocando 'esse cognitionis' in anima 'esse ipsius cogniti' per extrinsecam denominationem, et hoc [per] metaphoricam [locutionem], modo praeexposito. Quia ut praeditum est sola positio intentionis vel cognitionis sufficit ad verificandum istas res actu cognosci vel habere esse intentum, modo exposito. Hoc addo, quia secundum veritatemnullum esse habet, et ideo non esse intellectum, vere tamen intelligitur, sicut nec faciat ad hoc quod intentio recipiatur in anima. Sed hoc dico quod ista denominatio extrinsec a objecti ab intentione, et hoc vere et proprie dicta, non tamen intrinsec a; et similiter qua dicimus obiectum esse intellectum vel esse visum. Et sunt verae denominationes ex sola positione cognitionis. Omnes tamen tales negandae sunt 'obiectum habet esse-visum', nisi in re habeat esse, 'ibi est aliquod esse visum' et omnes huiusmodi. In omnibus enim talibus est falsa implicatio, nisi quod cognoscitur habeat esse."}

And while Aureol, if Wodeham is correct, would hold that all visual cognition would operate in this manner, in instances of optical illusions it is required, because otherwise there would be no way for the mind to be deceived. A first-order apprehension, a vision of the thing itself, could not arise otherwise than as the causes allow, which would rule out the possibility of there being a vision of a non-existent thing or state of affairs. Only if the second-order apprehension is distinct from the first-order
apprehension would something be capable of being visually cognized that does not exist. In cases of optical illusion what is cognized does not have subjective being founded in things in the world, but is purely objective; it is nothing besides pure vision.

Confirmation that he reads Aureol in this way comes from Wodeham’s discussion of the parallel view of purely intellectual and representative cognitions, which he also claims require purely objective being, and which he attributes to Aureol. When I see a painting of Caesar my mind cognizes and makes Caesar himself in a sense “present” to the intellect. The cognition of Caesar may lack an external foundation, insofar as the representation of Caesar is not Caesar himself, but the cognition is nevertheless an intention of Caesar which terminates in Caesar himself, making Caesar present (praesentialiter). Moreover, the sort of being that a representational intention has makes its terminus present to the mind even in case a foundation for the intention or a terminus in re, the singular extra-mental substance or Caesar himself, need not exist and be present. In this way an intuitive apprehension can be had which causes judgments of existence and presence but does not require the existence and presence of things.

In response to this Wodeham writes the following:

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92 Ibid. 89-90, 70-81: “Et ideo secundum veritatem nullum omnino esse habet res extra animam, sive sit sive non sit, propter hoc quod cognoscitur. Nec in anima nec extra animam, nec simpliciter nec secundum quid, sicut nec Caesar quodcumque esse habet propter hoc quod depingitur. Quia cognosci non est quodcumque esse habere illud quod cognoscitur, licet sit cognitionem habere esse. Sed utroque, et Caesar a pictura et cognitum a cognitione, extrinsece denominantur cum dicitur Caesar esse depingi est Caesarem extrinsece nec intrinsece deonominari, sed est picturam esse quae ficebat ut Caesaris memoriam faceret. Et similiter rem cognosci vel esse cognitam non [est] rem denominari, sed est cognitionem esse a qua res vere denominatur cognosci. Et ideo argumentum processit ex falsa imaginatione.”

93 Ibid. 67, 39-40: “...intuitiva est per quam apparet res esse praesens, sive sit praesens sive non; per abstractivam non vel apparet ‘praesentialiter,’ ut verbis eius utar.”
Chapter II: Natural Deception

It is to be said that the way of speaking of the authors [Aristotle and Avicenna], when they say things have being in the mind, is truer through extrinsic denomination, taking ‘to be in the mind’ for ‘to be cognized by the mind’. And this is not anything but the cognition being in the mind, because that alone [a cognition] posited with everything else circumscribed, the thing is cognized, whether it itself may be nothing or something.\footnote{Ibid. 88, 36-40: “...dicendum quod modus loquendi auctorum, cum dicunt res habere esse in anima, est verius per extrinsecam denominationem, sumendo ‘esse in anima’ pro ‘cognosci ab anima’. Et hoc non est aliud nisi cognitionem esse in anima, quia hoc solo posito circumscripto omni alio, res cognoscitur, sive ipsa sit nihil sive aliquid.”}

When something that may or may not exist is apprehended by the mind, such as would be the case in the experience of the picture of Caesar which gives rise to the thought of Caesar himself, Wodeham claims that “this is nothing except a cognition received into the cognitive power by which a thing appears and is cognized whether it is present or not.”\footnote{Ibid. 89, 53-54: “...non est nisi ipsa cognitio recepta in potentia cognitiva qua apparat et cognoscitur res sive sit praesens sive non.”} There is no distinction between the vital act of cognition, a simple act of cognitive awareness, and that of placing something into objective being. There does not, therefore, need to be a separate type of entity for the cognition in the mind.

He further writes, “And from this it does not follow that something would have some sort of being while in an act of understanding which it does not have while it is not understood unless it is to be called ‘cognitive being’ in the mind ‘to be of the cognition itself’ through extrinsic denomination.” According to Wodeham this is “altogether a metaphorical
way of speaking”, and that the only things that can properly be said to have being are mind-independent things.

In the case of a picture of Caesar that gives rise to a cognition of Caesar himself, whether he exists or not, Wodeham claims that an esse apparens need not be posited. What does in fact occur in such an instance is that the picture is simply cognized as Caesar, which can either give rise to imagination of what Caesar must have been like or it can bring forth a memory of Caesar. However, Wodeham makes it clear that the object of the cognition does not have being beyond the real being of the vital act of cognition.

§ 2.3: The Veil of Impressions

Despite the successes of Wodeham’s account of optical illusions, there are some glaring oversights in his account of vision that make his position untenable. Katherine Tachau has noted the importance of Wodeham’s adoption of the perspectivist account of vision, and she used it to argue that Ockham did not recast medieval philosophy. Wodeham, Ockham’s closest follower, had repudiated Ockham’s direct realist position in favour of an older theory of vision, supporting Tachau’s view of continuity in philosophy between the thirteenth and fourteenth

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96 Ibid. 89, 54-58: “Et ex hoc non sequitur quod habeat aliquod esse dum actu intelligitur quod non habet dum non intelligitur nisi vocando ‘esse cognitionis’ in anima ‘esse ipsius cogniti’ per extrinsecam denominationem, et hoc [per] metaphoricam [locutionem] tantum, modo praeexposito.”


98 Ibid. 89, 73-74: “Quia cognosci non est quodumque esse habere illud quod cognoscitur, licet sit cognitionem habere esse.”

99 Tachau, Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham, 298.
What Tachau failed to dwell on, however, was the fact that Wodeham's adoption of the theory of the *species in medio* made Wodeham a representationalist. All of the problems associated with representationalism are applicable to his account, and Wodeham seems to have nothing to offer to avoid these problems.

It could be said in Wodeham's defence that although he clearly endorses perspectivism, his account is in fact not representationalist. In the case of veridical vision, what is seen is directly caused by the visible body, and in cases of false vision what is seen is also directly caused by the extra-mental impression in the organ. Vision always has an immediate, extra-mental cause.

But that's not much of a solution. If what is seen in a false vision is an impression in the eye and not the thing itself, it seems to follow that what is seen in every case of vision is the impression in the eye and only the impression in the eye, never the thing itself. And because Wodeham admits that these do not require the existence and presence of their causes, but can be retained in the material of the eye, the impression need not be true to its cause. Hence, there may not be visions that can arise without an extra-mental cause, but there can be impressions without an existent cause. So he doesn't really solve the problem; he merely transfers it from the mind to the eye, and all of the criticisms Wodeham raises against Chatton apply equally to his own position.

While Wodeham does attain a measure of success in his account of optical illusions, it can only be said that there are lingering issues with his overall position. He seems to have realized the problems that a

100 Ibid. XV.
representationalist account of vision posed to knowledge and seems to have taken inadequate steps to overcome them.

§ 2.4: Concluding Remarks

It was explained at the beginning of the chapter that Wodeham’s reliance on sensory intuition posed some obvious problems. If the senses are open equally to truth and falsity, then, because all contents of the mind are derived from sensation in his estimation, all knowledge would be unreliable.

However, in solving the problem of natural deception Wodeham did not face the difficult task infallibilists did of explaining how the senses can deceive despite their infallibility. It is precisely because he didn’t suppose sensation to be infallible that he had an easier go in explaining how natural deception could be both explained and avoided. All he had to do was demonstrate that instances of optical illusion and other deceptive experiences could be spotted. With accounts of deceptive experience, the mind through deliberation could form a counter-proposition to the false belief based on deception, such that natural sense deception could be ruled out.

Instrumental in explaining how deceptive sensory experiences arise was optics, and the dominant theory of the day was perspectivism and its central tenet, the multiplication of the sensible species in medio. It was thought that an uninterrupted line of physical contact between visible object and affected eye was required to explain how vision arises. Inherent in the perspectivist theory, however, was the problem of representation. If it is a species of the object and not the object itself, then
how could it be surmised in a non-question-begging way that the species is an accurate representation of its object?

Ockham avoided the problem by claiming that action-at-a-distance is possible. In the same way that a magnet can attract an object without a line of continuous physical contact, so too a visible object can act at a distance on the eye to give rise to vision without the need to posit the *species in medio*. Ockham's was thus a direct-realist position.

But neither Wodeham nor Chatton sided with Ockham, arguing instead that action-at-a-distance is not possible. They opted, rather, to account for natural deception in a way that avoided making sensation unreliable while retaining its capability to explain sense deception.

They tackled Aureol's eight canonical examples of deceptive sensory experiences by positing against Aureol that a vision cannot arise without an extra-mental cause. But where Chatton allowed that after the initial cause the vision could be conserved for a brief time after the destruction of the visible object, Wodeham argued that this could not be. Rather, a vision must arise and be maintained by an extra-mental efficient cause. He claimed that in instances of optical illusion the impression in the eye made by the sensible species was falsely judged to be the visible object represented by the image.

Wodeham's solution may have achieved its primary goal of accounting for deceptive sensory experiences to allow deliberation and right reason to counter-act false belief, but it is less than adequate to face the problem of representation. Not only does he not have a solution to this problem, but Wodeham outright recognizes the threat when arguing against Chatton and yet does nothing to avoid it. His approach to
deceptive experiences works, but only if the senses are reliable in the first place. Unfortunately, he fails to demonstrate that this is so.
CHAPTER III: THE OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE

This chapter is an aside from the dissertation’s main thesis, but its inclusion is required for the secondary goal of providing a comprehensive reading of Wodeham’s epistemology. If it is being argued that Wodeham is a reliabilist, then providing an overview of his theory of science’s central tenets is required. And his views on the objects of knowledge and belief are central to his theory of science. Perhaps an entire chapter on the theory seems too much, but the *complexe significabile* has proven to be the most opaque and controversial aspect of his work as a whole.

The chapter is split into three sections. The first gives an historical sketch of the theory of the *complexe significabile* as the object of judgment. The fact that Wodeham was the first to propose a theory of “facts” as the objects of knowledge in the late-medieval period is a relatively recent discovery. The history of theories of fact in the middle ages and since highlights Wodeham’s importance in the history of philosophy, and explains the focus on this aspect of his work to the neglect of others when the critical edition of the *Lectura Secunda* was published in the 1990s.
The second section is an exposition of D.1, Q.1 of the *Lectura Secunda*, the question in which Wodeham provides his theory of the total and immediate object of belief, the *sic esse* or *complexe significabile*. It is a notoriously dense and difficult read, and the account given below simply follows the arguments as they appear in the question.¹

The third section examines interpretations of Wodeham’s version of the *complexe significabile*. His writing on the matter is cryptic. Exactly how Wodeham should be read remains debatable. At the close of the chapter it is suggested that Susan Brower-Toland’s reading seems the most accurate, but that the issue ultimately remains open.

§ 3.1: Historiography of the *Complexe Significabile*

While much of his work waits to be examined by historians of philosophy, the same cannot be said of Wodeham’s signature thesis: the theory of the *complexe significabile* as the total, immediate object of scientific judgment. Of the few dozen academic papers that deal specifically with Wodeham’s work, almost all of them are directly about or refer to the *complexe significabile* and the question of its ontological status. The reason for the focus on this aspect of his philosophy has to do with its backstory.

It was long thought that the origins of the late-medieval theory of states of affairs and matters of fact lie with a Parisian Augustinian named Gregory of Rimini (c. 1300-1358),² one of those first exposed to what at the

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time was the “new English theology” that had its origin in the dialogue between Ockham, Chatton and Wodeham and became popular in Paris in the mid-fourteenth century. Rimini argued that a class of entities, *complexe significabile*—that which can be signified by a complex—must be posited in addition to the traditional Aristotelian categories of substance and accident to fully account for the way language and logic operate. He positioned this class in a three-tiered ontology.

The first tier corresponds to simple entities that exist, either accidents or substances, such as “man”, “whiteness”, “angel”, etc. This tier fits into the traditional framework of medieval logic and the theory of mental language, and these are “somethings” in the strictest sense.

The second tier, that which positively exists and is significiable through a complex, is the object of a belief about the world, or a fact. As mentioned, simple entities such as “whiteness” or “dog” on their own cannot be either true or false. Only a complex can be either true or false. But if extra-mentally there are only simple entities, then what sort of object is a complex? To this question, Rimini answered with the *complexe significabile*, a direct object for judicative acts, expressible in the form of a *dictum*.

The *dictum* is a type of phrase in Latin, composed of two nouns in the object case (the accusative case in Latin) and a verb in the infinitive used as a copula. In the proposition “John to be tall is true”, “John to be tall” is in *dictum* form. The key feature of *dicta*, and what makes them

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3 Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham*, 357.
semantically interesting, is that it is not entirely clear which noun is subject and which predicate in an assertive proposition. Take the proposition “Socrates is white”, which in Latin would be “Sortes album est.” It’s clear that “Socrates” stands for a singular substance and functions as the subject term, while “white” is an accident being predicated in him. But in the proposition’s dictum, which is “Socrates being white” (Sortes album esse), it is unclear which of “Socrates” or “white” is subject and which predicate.⁶

According to Rimini the dictum is isomorphic with a state of affairs or fact that is the object of a judicative act. Hence, the mind, through composition and division, constructs mental propositions, which are then judged to be true or false according to representations of a state of affairs that the dictum supposits for. What is judged or what makes a proposition such as “John is tall” true is a vision, intuition or some other cognition of “John being tall.”⁷

The third tier is similar to the second, but incorporates a broader range of entities, specifically non-existent or negative entities. In the proposition “Socrates does not exist”, there must, reasoned Rimini, be a class of non-existent entities to refer Socrates to, in this case “non-existent Socrates.” If this class were not posited, then it would be impossible to

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⁶ dictum propositionis dicitur quando termini propositionis accipiuntur in accusativo casu et verbum infinitivo modo.

⁶ It has become standard to translate the infinitive “esse” in the dictum into English as the present participle “being” rather than the infinitive “to be.” Simply put, the construction in English using the infinitive has become archaic. But there are some warnings that should be made. “Being” could be falsely taken to mean “essence” in some cases. For instance when Wodeham discusses “angel-being” he does not mean the essence of an angel, but the fact that an angel exists. Moreover, using the present participle doesn’t work in every instance in which the infinitive could be used. The dictum for “Socrates is running” using the present participle would translate as “Socrates being running”, which doesn’t make much sense. But using the infinitive—“Socrates to be running”—does work, as awkward as it admittedly is in that form.

explain how such propositions as “the devil is not God” could be either true or false. We would have to posit both the devil and God in order to make the proposition true. But we cannot posit the devil as existing, so it was thought, and so we must posit a class of entities that have being but do not exist.\(^8\)

Rimini’s version of the theory of the *complexe significabile* as part of a three-tiered ontology and subsequent versions of it had a fatal flaw. Rimini maintained the categories of substance and accident as the primary constituents of the world into which the other two tiers reduce. If everything ultimately reduces to simple substances and accidents, then why bother positing the other types of beings? Complex states of the world and matters of fact could just as well be different configurations or modes of substances and accidents.\(^9\) Either way, the complexly signifiable was easily dismissible to those who liked their ontologies neat and tidy. John Buridan, amongst others, rejected the *complexe significabile* for such reasons.\(^10\)

The theory lay dormant for most of the history of modern philosophy until it reappeared in the work of the late-nineteenth century philosopher, Alexius Meinong (1853-1920). He proposed a tiered ontology so similar to Rimini’s that the principle of charity must be invoked to save Meinong from the charge of plagiarism. Meinong’s theory was famously rejected by the British founder of logical positivism, Bertrand Russell. Russell argued in correspondence with Meinong that his three tiered ontology led to clear contradictions and absurdities.\(^11\) It has to be

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\(^8\) Ibid. 154-155.

\(^9\) Ibid. 156.


\(^11\) Much has been published on Meinong and Russell's debate over non-existent objects. The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* article, “Alexius Meinong”, by Johann Marek ([Fall
admitted that an ontology which posits the existence of non-existent objects is at least *prima facie* incoherent.

Russell’s debate with Meinong is relevant insofar as both were unaware that a similar if not identical debate had taken place centuries earlier. Hubert Elie, in *Le Complexe Significabile*, demonstrated that their controversy was medieval in origins, and sought to set the historical record straight by explaining the fourteenth-century context of the debate regarding the total object of judgment. Elie’s goal in the work was to establish that the situation between Rimini and opponents of his ontology in the middle ages, and Meinong and Russell at the beginning of the twentieth century were analogous if not identical. There is, however, some irony to Elie’s work, since, of course, the origin of the theory of the *complexe significabile* is not creditable to Rimini, but to Wodeham.

In 1977, Gedeon Gál of the Franciscan Institute published the notoriously dense D.1, Q.1 of the *Lectura Secunda*. The question deals exclusively with objects of judgment, and it makes one thing clear: Wodeham, not Rimini was responsible for proposing the theory of the

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12 Hubert Elie, *Le Complexe Significabile* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1936). Gál included a brief excerpt from a review of Elie’s work written by A. Teetaert along with his translation of Q.1 D.1; Qtd. in Gál, “Adam of Wodeham’s Question on the ‘Complexe Significabile’”, 66: “Hoc in opera A. intendit sortem et fortunam explanare, quam habuit decursu saeculorum doctrina de ‘significabili’ in complexum seu de ‘complexo significabili’ a Gregorio ab Arimino, O. Erem S. Aug., († 1358), prima medietate saec. XIV excogitata ac ab eius discipulis sparsa, necnon secunda medietate iusdem saeculi ab Andrea de Novo Castro (Neufchateau) O.F.M., retractata et, sub nova hac sua forma, a non paucis philosophis propugnata usque ad initium saeculi XVI, huius dissertationis eruitur ex eo quod illa doctrina hactenus fere omnino ignota fuit et omnes philosophiae historiographos fugit, necnon ex eo quod illius explanatio maxime collatura est ad novam theoriam de objecto cognitionis recte intelligendam, quam A. Meinong ultimis annis saeculi XIX excogitavit quaque summam similitudinem cum doctrina Gregorii Arimensis habet.”


14 Ibid. 66-102.
Chapter III: The Objects of Knowledge

complexe significabile.\textsuperscript{15} Gál further claimed that Rimini’s version of the theory was a “mutilated presentation”\textsuperscript{16} of Wodeham’s; many of the problems with Rimini’s account were not applicable to his predecessor’s. Wodeham’s version was the product of an in-house debate amongst Ockham, Chatton, and Wodeham. It was, as he put it, a “via media”\textsuperscript{17} between Ockham’s complex theory and Chatton’s res theory. In Gál’s words, Wodeham was “attempting to steer a course between Ockham, who held that the immediate object of scientific knowledge is the conclusion of the demonstration, and the realistic view of Chatton, who insisted that the immediate object is the reality signified by the terms (subject and predicate) of the conclusion.”\textsuperscript{18}

Gál headed the team working out of St. Bonaventure responsible for the publication of the critical edition of the Lectura Secunda. No doubt the fact that the origin of such an important theory lies with a Franciscan affected the decision to publish this particular work over Wodeham’s longer, more polished, and yet to be published ordinatio, the Oxford Lectures.\textsuperscript{19}

But while Gál may be correct that the complexe significabile originated with his Franciscan predecessor in the early-fourteenth

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid. 70.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid. 70.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid. 67-68.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid. 68.
\textsuperscript{19} When I began this dissertation a few years ago I came across an attempt by a small international group of scholars to publish a critical edition of the Oxford Ordinatio under the name “The Adam Wodeham Critical Edition Project.” The group’s work seems to have stalled. There are two websites available for the group. Here is the address for the original site, available as of December 2, 2013: http://www.bc.edu/sites/adamwodehamcritical edition/awbiography.html. Here’s the second, updated face of the presumably reinvigorated group: http://loyolanotredamelib.org/adamwodeham/. As of this date, there is nothing in the way of text available on the newer site. The older site did have a few questions from the Ordinatio posted. They have since been taken down.
century, his conclusion that Wodeham’s version is resistant to the critique that led to the abandonment of Rimini’s may have been premature. The sections of D.1, Q.1 pertaining to the ontological status of the object of judgment lack clarity to a degree that make them all but invulnerable to conclusive interpretation. It may be that Rimini’s version is a “mutilated presentation” as Gál supposed; but perhaps it is simply a clearer exposition of what Wodeham had intended.

Publication of D.1, Q1 caused interest in Wodeham’s work unseen for centuries and has led to numerous interpretations. Before turning to those interpretations, however, an examination of the question is called for.

§ 3.2: D. 1, Q. 1

§ A: The Res Theory and the Mental-Complex Theory:

What are beliefs about? For Ockham, Chatton and Wodeham it would not be inaccurate to say that a state of belief is an act of apprehending or grasping a certain content, be it mental or extra-mental, in a certain way, by assent, dissent or, in Wodeham’s case, hesitation. Belief is a transitive act, requiring an object as content. In the sentence “I believe that my coffee is hot”, the object of the belief would be expressed in the object phrase “that my coffee is hot”, but whether that phrase expressing the content was mentally dependent, referred to extra-mental items signified by the terms “coffee” and “hot”, or to some third option was a matter hotly debated between the three.

In D. 1, Q. 1 of the Lectura Secunda Wodeham asks “Whether the act of knowledge has for its immediate object things or signs”, and he quotes Augustine’s saying that “all doctrine is either of things or of
Chapter III: The Objects of Knowledge

signs” as a segue into a discussion of his teachers’ views. For Chatton argued that belief is about things, while Ockham argued that it is about signs. Wodeham places both views into debate to form his own view that, he claims, solves the problems insurmountable to both.

Ockham’s view is that the immediate object of a judicative act is the mental proposition, a position nowadays called the “mental-complex theory.” His arguments in favour of the complex theory were taken straight from Aristotle. In the Categories Aristotle claimed that truth and falsity could only be applicable to a complex, because incomplex terms, such as “man” or “whiteness” can be neither true nor false:

None of these [incomplex] terms, in and by itself, involves an affirmation; it is by the combination of such terms that positive or negative statements arise. For every assertion must, as is admitted, be either true or false, whereas expressions which are not in any way composite, such as ‘man’, ‘white’, ‘runs’, ‘wins’, cannot be either true or false.

A statement such as “I believe that white” would not make much sense. Only a complex of terms that asserts something, such as “the man is white”, can be held as a belief, “I believe that the man is white.”
Aristotle further wrote in the *Metaphysics* that “truth and falsity are not in things but in the mind”, and so that which can be true and false must be in the mind. What exist exterior to the mind are simple substances and accidents, which can be neither true nor false. Hence, only a mental complex can be an object of belief and knowledge, because the object must be something that can be true or false, and thus composite, and composites exist nowhere but in the mind.

This is not to say that Ockham thought exterior apprehension of simple things to be altogether unnecessary, at least for contingent knowledge. Rather, the mental proposition has as its partial cause apprehensions of the *significata* of its extreme terms that incline the mind to either assent or dissent to the proposition to varying degrees. For instance, if I did not know English, and either saw in writing or sounded out “Socrates is white”, then the terms in the mental proposition would lack the supposition needed to cause a judicative act. If, however, I did know the meaning of the terms, then an act of either assent or dissent to the complex could ensue. Hence, while the mental proposition is the immediate and total object of a judicative act making knowledge, additional previous mental acts that supply the terms and incline the

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25 Ockham, *OTh I* 16-17, 19-2: “…quia aliquis potest apprehendere aliquam propositionem et tamen illi nec assentire nec dissentire, sicut patet de propositionibus neutris quibus intellectus nec assentit nec dissentit, quia aliter non essent sibi neutrae. Similiter laicus nesciens latinum potest audire multas propositiones in latino quibus nec assentit nec dissentit. [§ Et certum est quod intellectus potest assentire alicui propositioni et dissentire alteri; igitur etc. §]”
mind through habit to an act of judgment are required as partial objects.\textsuperscript{26} But to stress the point, the proposition remains the total and immediate object, because the previous acts are contained in the mental proposition, and because simple terms can be neither true nor false on their own. What this implies, however, is that all knowledge is relegated to the mind. Although previous mental acts of apprehension are presupposed to supply the mind with terms, the act of composing terms into mental complexes and the additional judicative act require no reference beyond the mind and its acts.

In Chatton’s estimation, on the other hand, it was ridiculous to posit the mental complex as the object of belief, because the very notion of natural scientific knowledge implied that it was of the extra-mental world.\textsuperscript{27} Chatton held that “God is good” is the case whether I form a mental proposition signifying it or not. The validity of the belief flows

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid. 21, 6-10: “...sequitur secunda conclusio, quod omnis actus iudicativus praesupponit in eadem potentia notitiam incomplexam terminorum, quia praesupponit actum apprehensivum. Et actus apprehensivus respectu alicuius complexi praeuspponit notitiam incomplexam terminorum.”

\textsuperscript{27} Chatton, \textit{RP} 20-21, 100-111: “Contra istam conclusionem istarum opinionum probo quod tam actus credendi quam actus sciendi et opinandi, et quilibet actus assentiendi quem habet intellectus per hoc quod format complexum significans rem extra, habeat rem extra pro objecto et non illud complexum. Primo arguo sic: omni apprehensione complexi circumscripta, posito ipso complexo in intellectu, natus est intellectus assentire; sed omni apprehensione complexi circumscripta, non assentit complexo; igitur assentit rei vel rebus significatis per complex; et per consequens complexum non est objectum illius assensus, sed res significatae per complexum, vel res significatae, si plures sint.” Several aspects of Chatton’s discussion of the object of judgment are worthy of note. First, his discussion of the question of the objects of judgment are the first article of the first question of the Prologue of the \textit{Reportatio}, which indicates the importance he placed on the matter. Second, many of his arguments are against Ockham and Peter Aureol. Their theories are similar in one respect: to both the objects of knowledge are mental objects (\textit{RP} 19-20). So far as this is the case, Chatton seems to have held them both to be idealists, a position Chatton assumes to be wrong, assuming, rather, that if judgment is not ultimately about extra-mental things then it’s not really knowledge.
from the state of the extra-mental thing that the belief is about, namely what is signified by the proposition’s subject term, in this case “God.”

Hence, Ockham’s view, which would judge only the contents of the mind to be either true or false, would make knowledge impossible, since the nature of knowledge presupposes that it is “of reality” (realis). And only mind-independent things are real. A simple extra-mental thing can be signified either simply or complexly, and the proposition is only a mode of signification of what is signified.

In D.1, Q.1 Wodeham further supplies two main arguments in favour of Chatton’s res theory. First, because the function of signs is representation, what a belief ultimately refers to must be things that are represented by signs. Otherwise, there would be an infinite regress. A judicative act cannot directly have a sign as its object, because the sign is only meant to represent something else. If what is represented by the sign is another sign, then another something that the sign represents must be posited. And this would be either a sign or a thing. At some point, to end the regress, a thing must be posited, and this would be what the judgment is ultimately about.

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28 Chatton, RP 38-39, 620-627: “…cum intellectus formando istam ‘Deus est trinus et unus’ assentit per actum credendi, ille actus non prae supponit apprehensionem illius complexi ‘Deus est trinus et unus,’ sicut est probatum in principali, quia ille assensus solum requirit a parte intellectus quod ista propositio formetur et sit in intellectu. Sed ad hoc quod illa propositio sit in intellectu, non requiritur quod aliqua propositio apprehendatur, eo quod omnes partes illius propositiones sunt cognitiones Dei et non alicuius accidentis in anima.”

29 Wodeham, LS I 180, 21.

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The second is simply to assert that a presupposition of science is that it is about the extra-mental world. If the object of scientific judgment is anything besides that, then science is not of reality. A science of non-reality would be absurd, so scientific knowledge presupposes that it is about extra-mental reality.31

It should be noted, in order to differentiate the res theory from Wodeham’s *complexe significabile* theory that Chatton held to the view that the contents of the extra-mental world are simple substances and accidents. Hence, the judgment asserting “Socrates is white” has for its object either the simple substance that stands for the subject term, “Socrates”, or the predicate, “whiteness.” The copula “to be” (esse) adds nothing to a proposition beyond what is contained in the simple entities the extremes of the proposition act as *supposita* for. The copula simply joins the subject and predicate terms.

§ B (Arguments for the Res Theory and against the Complex Theory)

Following the principal arguments for and against each theory, Wodeham begins a critique of each in order, beginning with several arguments in favour of the res theory and against the complex theory. For the sake of clarity, they are enumerated:

1. The conclusion of a demonstration, a single mental complex, is insufficient to cause an evident judgment that would make scientific knowledge, at least not without “respect to things signified through it.”32 If the proposition were enough, then it would not be a scientific judgment, because scientific knowledge is “the effect of a demonstration.” Moreover, even if the mind does not form the concluding proposition of a syllogism, if

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31 Ibid. 180.
32 Ibid., 182, 13-14.
the demonstration is posited, either through syllogistic reasoning or experience, the assent will still be caused. So, either the proposition is not enough, or, if it is, the knowledge is not demonstrative and therefore not scientific.\textsuperscript{33}

2. It seems possible to posit any mental complex which, circumscribing out additional mental acts, including those required to give meaning to the extremes, could be assented to through a “command of the will.”\textsuperscript{34} In such an instance, the object of the assent could be the mental complex alone. However, if the complex is something like “God is triune”, and the terms do not refer to the things themselves, God in this case, then the judgment would not be an assent to the actual doctrine or belief.\textsuperscript{35}

3. If it is possible for a simple cognition of a proposition to cause an assent, then it is equally possible for a cognition of a proposition that includes cognitions of extra-mental things as extreme terms to cause an assent to extra-mental things. “Therefore, if here [in the mind] is caused an assent in respect of the proposition, therefore there in respect of the things signified through it.”\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid. 182, 11-17: “Primo, quia si anima formet demonstrationem sine omni alia cognitione praevia, adhuc causabitur actus sciendi. Sed si formet eam sine omni alia cognitione praevia, non causabitur actus assentiendi illi complexo; igitur respectu rei significate per ipsum. Assumptum primum patet, nam demonstratio est syllogismus faciens scire, et scientia est effectus demonstrationis. Igitur omni alio circumscripto, posita demonstratione ponitur actus sciendi.”

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid. 182, 30-31: “Igitur si hic causetur assensus respectu propositionis, igitur ibi respectu rei significatae per eam.”

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid. 182, 21-25: “Minor patet, quia anima non assentit nisi cognitio, igitur si complexum illud non significat, anima non assentiet ei. Igitur si ponatur demonstratio ipsa vel articulus fidei, et non cognoscatur ille articulus nec ista demonstratio nec eius conclusio, tunc assensus causatus nec habet pro obiecto articulum fidei nec conclusionem demonstrationis.”

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid. 182, 26-31: “Item, non plus ipsa cognitio propositionem sufficit ad causandum assensum ipsi propositioni quam ipsa propositio composita ex cognitionibus rei [extra] sufficit ad causandum assensum illi rei [extra], ex quo ita evidenter et ita perfecte cognoscitur res [extra] per cognitiones ex quibus componitur propositio sicut propositio per cognitionem qua
4. Propositions have different values (rationis) according to tense. A proposition that is at one time false could at another time be true. But if the same proposition can be true in the past but false in the present, then the same would be so with reference to different belief systems altogether. Thus the Old Testament, which held “God will be incarnated” is not capable of being merged into one system of belief with the New Testament, which held that “God is incarnated”:

Some articles will be of other conceptual contents (ratio) in the Old Law and the New, because there were then propositions of the future, such as ‘God is to be incarnated’, now present or past. These complexes are of different conceptual contents (ratio), because one then was true and the other false. If, therefore, an act of belief corresponding to these would have such a complex for its object, the act of belief would therefore have had different conceptual content (ratio) now and then, and through consequence acquired and also infused faith would be of different concepts then and now, when both are in respect of the same object.37

The idea here is that if the proposition alone is the object of judgment, and not the things themselves, then propositions that become true from having been false or that change from true to false would not be possible, which would mean that the Old and New Testaments, because the propositions were different according to tense, would be completely different belief systems, not capable of changing over time, at least not without reference to the thing that the proposition represents. You could have one or the other, but not Christianity, which accepts both Testaments as true.

ipsa cognoscitur. Igitur si hic causetur assensus respectu propositionis, igitur ibi respectu rei significate per eam.”

If it is the case that a habit causes cognition of the of extra-mental thing of which it is a habit, then in the same way the proposition, which represents things more perfectly than a simple cognition, represents extra-mental things and terminates with them.\textsuperscript{38}

It is possible to separate the mental proposition from the things themselves, and to cognize each through numerically distinct acts, such that there could be an assent to one and assent to the other. Because this is possible, there can be an assent directly to the things themselves without a corresponding proposition. Moreover, assent to a proposition presupposes assent to things being so as it signifies:

“The mental proposition and extra-mental things signified through it should be distinguished. Therefore they can be cognized by diverse cognitions, and by consequence through one and another assent” the mind assents to the things themselves signified and the proposition itself, and by consequence the assent to the things themselves do not have the proposition for object.\textsuperscript{39}

The assent to the proposition presupposes assent to the things signified through the proposition, because assent to the proposition is nothing other than assent to “things being so in reality as denoted by a proposition” (\textit{sic esse in re sicut denotatur per propositionem}).\textsuperscript{40} So, the

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid. 183, 44-47: “Quarto, quia habitus causat cognitionem rei cuius est habitus, et similiter species. Similiter actus sciendi et imaginandi causant cognitiones respectu suorum obieectorum. Igitur multo fortius propositio composita ex re perfectius repraesentat rem extra quam habitus vel species.”

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid. 183, 48-51: “...propositio in mente et res extra significata per eam distinguuntur. Igitur possunt cognoscis diversis cognitionibus, et per consequens alio et alio assensu’ anima assentit ipsi rei significatae et ipsi propositioni, et per consequens assensus ipsi rei non habet propositionem pro obiecto.”

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid. 183, 52-56: “Sexto sic: assensus propositioni praesupponit assensum ipsi rei significatae per propositionem, quia prius assentitur sic esse in re sicut denotatur per propositionem quam [assentiam] quod propostitio sit vera. Igitur assensus causatus per
judgment that renders a proposition true does not have the proposition itself as object, but “the thing signified through it.”

8. While the conclusion and the premises of a demonstration reciprocally signify one another, in a scientific demonstration making knowledge, in which the conclusion follows after the premises alone, the conclusion is not a given but is implicit in the premises. Hence, what the premises signify prior to the conclusion must be the things themselves; and because the conclusion comes from these, the conclusion must also signify the extra-mental things that they represent. “Therefore the act of scientific knowledge which they cause is in respect of things signified and not in respect of the conclusion.”

Following the general arguments against the complex theory, Wodeham concludes with what he considers to be the decisive reasons for rejecting Ockham’s theory. He claims that if the mental proposition is the total and immediate object of scientific judgment, then cognition of things would not cause knowledge. And, in keeping with his conclusion that sensory intuition is necessary for contingent knowledge, if cognition of things does not cause knowledge, then it would be impossible to have it. The complex is not the cause of things, nor is cognition of a complex precisely cognition of its causes, and there is no other way to have cognition of things.

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propositionem quae significat rem aliquam non habet propositionem illam pro obiecto sed rem significatam per eam.”

41 Ibid. 183.

42 Ibid. 183, 63-67: “Item, non apparet qualiter praemissae demonstrationis causarent actum assentiendi conclusioni, quia non plus significant vel repraesentant quam e converso. Sed non causant congetionem nisi respectu istius quod repraesentatur per ead vel respectu ipsarummet. Igitur actus sciendi quem causant est respectu rei significatiae et non respectu conclusionis.”

43 Ibid. 185-186, 3-8: “...non videtur mihi quod complexum sit obiectum totale actus sciendi. Tum quia tunc scire non esset causam rei cognoscere et [cognoscere] quoniam illius
“Nisi Deus Decipiat”: Adam Wodeham on Evident Knowledge

Second, experience simply informs us that assent falls on “things being so on the part of things” (*sic esse a parte rei*). “[The] assent that you are sitting there, and it seems not to fall on the complex but most powerfully and directly to ‘being so in reality’ (*sic esse in re*).”

Third, a judgment cannot be a proposition. The proposition is not distinct from the apprehension of the complex, and apprehensions of complexes can be epistemically neutral. Nor can the act of judgment be separated from the complex, because then judgment would be blind, and not a form of cognition, which contradicts the definition of an assent as a type of cognition. If the proposition and assent are neither separable nor inseparable, then the complex theory is just incoherent.

Wodeham does, as is usual, go on to show how it would be possible to hold Ockham’s thesis despite his arguments against. First, the things themselves are included in the cognition of the complex as partial objects. The subject and predicate terms are nothing besides intellections of simple things (*ficta*), which means that a judgment has things themselves as immediate partial objects, but the total complex as the total object. A similar theory, with the intentions of simple things or *ficta* as partial objects, would work in a similar way, such that the complex would cause

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44 Ibid. 186, 9-11: “Item, experientia dat quod frequenter assensus cadit supra ‘sic esse a parte rei’, puta assensio quod vos sedetis ibi, et quasi non fertur super complexum sed potissime [et] directe ad ‘sic esse in re’.”

45 Ibid. 186, 12-17: “Item nec assensus est solum ipsa propositio, sicut probatum erat quaestione praecedenti. Et si esset, haberetur propositio, quia propositio non est distincta apprehensio sui ipsius. Nec est caeca mentis adnuitio, quia tunc nullus assensus esset cognitio, nec evidens nisi denominatione extrinseca. Igitur est apprehensio vel istorum quae apprehenduntur praeviis, ut ibi tenui, vel istorum et simul complexi. Et ita non est praecise respectu complexi.”
an assent to it, but would also be of things, insofar as they are elements of the proposition. The first, Wodeham claims, is advocated by Ockham and the second by Scotus.\textsuperscript{46}

But, an objector might say, could a judicative act of assent then be said to be reflexive? If it is reflexive, as Ockham holds, then it cannot be that it is of anything but contents of the mind, which would seem to exclude it being of extra-mental things, even as the terms of mental propositions. In response, Wodeham claims for Ockham that the terms are not composed of the things themselves, but \textit{ficta}, or “things as understood”,\textsuperscript{47} which in turn have things as objects. Hence, the proposition itself is entirely mental, and the reflexive act falls on the proposition.

He finally claims that the question of the complex theory entirely depends on how the complex is understood and how it is thought to be composed by the mind. Wodeham floats some of the considerations, and finally claims that the process for Ockham goes as follows:

First is apprehended simple things; second a composite evident in the third mode is formed; third the composition in its complexity is apprehended through a simple apprehension; and finally the complex is assented to, so that although the assent may be a type of apprehension (not that certain one by which medium it is caused), not, however, an apprehension that thus it may be just as is signified through the proposition—because for this the proposition sufficiently serves evident—but altogether of this

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid. 186, 19-28: “Via tamen ista, quam hic improbavi, posset defendi secundum duplicem modum intelligendi, quorum uterque poneret praecise complexum esse objectum actus assensus: Quorum primus poneret sebiectum vel praedicatum [esse] illud quod intelligitur, sive illud sit res sive fictum. Et tunc habet consequenter dicere, ut tactum est praecedenti quaestione, quod assensus habet rem ipsam pro immediato objecto partiali, sed totum complexum cuius res est pars pro obiecto totali.—Secundus poneret intentiones ipsas subjectum et praedicatum, et non illud quod intelligitur, sive sit res sive conceptus fictus vel formatius. Et secundum istum modum assensus immediate caderet super illud complexum praecise, ita quod non super rem.”

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid. 187, 52: “...res ut intelligitur’...."
complex, by which is apprehended its conformity to that which through it (clearly the proposition) is apprehended, and through a simple cognition, a medium between the proposition which is taken and the assent.\textsuperscript{48}

He finishes his brief defence of Ockham’s res theory by noting that it is incompatible with the correct view that judgment is of “things being so in reality” (\textit{sic esse a parte re}).\textsuperscript{49}

\textbf{§ C (Arguments against the Res Theory and for the Complex Theory)}

He then moves on to counter-arguments to Chatton’s \textit{res} theory.

1. Many beliefs are about non-existent or impossible things. But if Chatton is correct and the objects of belief are things \textit{in re}, then to account for beliefs such as these we would have to posit the existence \textit{in re} of non-existent and impossible things, which is absurd.\textsuperscript{50}

2. If things are the total objects, then we would have to admit through the formation of “the devil is the devil” and “God is three and one” that we believe in the devil as firmly as we believe in God. What’s more, it would have to be admitted that we believe in the devil more firmly than in God, because it is more evident by the principle of identity that the devil exists.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid. 188, 76-87: “...primo apprehenditur res simplici intelligentia; secundo formatur compositio evidens terto modo; terto apprehenditur apprehensione simplici illa compositio seu complexum; et ultimo assentitur complexo, ita quod licet assensus sit quaedam apprehensio (non illa quidem qua mediante causatur), non tamen apprehension quod ita sit sicut per propositionem significatur—quia ad hoc sufficienter servit evidens ista propositionio—sed tantum ipsius complexi, quo apprehenditur conformitas eius ad illud quod per eam (propositionem scilicet) apprehenditur, et per notitiam simplicem, mediantem inter propositionem quae concipitur et assensum. Et ideo quoad experientiam in oppositum allegatam, quod assentiendo experior me ferri super ‘sic esse a parte rei’, non est utique hoc per actum assentiendi sed per actum evidentor apprehendendi ‘sic esse’, qui actus est ipsam compositio.”

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid. 188.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid. 183, 4-6: “Primo, quia nullus, ut videtur, credit vel assentit nihil. Sed frequenter illud quod significatur per complexum causans assensus credendi est pure nihil, sicut est causabilis per hoc complexum ‘anima Antichristi erit’.”
and less evident that there could be a being that is essentially three and one.\footnote{Ibid. 184, 7-10: “...non minus assentit [homo] et credit, formato isto complexo 'diabolus est diabolus' quam formato isto 'Deus est trinus et unus'. Igitur si non assentit complexo set tantum rei significat per complexum, ipse assentit et credit diabolo ita firmiter sicut Deo, et firmius et clarius, quia evidentius.” Wodeham’s argument may seem to take the terms “believe” and “assent” equivocally. But if any belief requires positing an extra-mental entity \textit{in re}, then to believe in God presupposes, if the theory is correct, that He exist; likewise for the devil. And if the fundamental act of Christian belief is that God exists and the devil does not, then it follows from the \textit{res} theory that Christianity would be incoherent. To believe in the non-existence of the devil we would have to posit the existence of the devil.}

3. If things are the total object, then God would be discredited. For a proposition such as “God is not God” or “God is not great” to be judged false, it would either be the case that the simple extra-mental item, that to which dissent is being given, would be God Himself, or the complex. If the first, then we would be dissenting to God. If the second, then the complex theory must be true.\footnote{Ibid. 184, 11-16: “Item, non tantum sequitur quod ipse credit et assentit diabolo, sed quod ipse simul cum hoc dissentit et discredit Deo. Probatio: quia quero, quid est illud cui dissentit et discredit, formato hoc complexum 'Deus non est Deus'? Quod enim in ipso causetur dissensus, ipse experitur. Si illud cui dissentit et discredit est Deus ipse, habeo propositum. Si illud cui dissentit et discredit non est Deus sed complexum illud, tunc habetur propositum principale.”}

4. If the \textit{res} theory is true, then assent and dissent would simultaneously be given to the numerically identical object, which is impossible:

[It] follows that at the same time and in the same way the same thing would be assented and dissented to...because...contradictory propositions can be in the mind at the same time. I grant, therefore, that in his mind be these two propositions simultaneously: ‘God is God’, ‘God is not God’. The formation of one will cause an assent [to God], and the formation of the other will cause a dissent [also to God]. And if not these complexes—which is the principle proposition—therefore entirely on one and the same thing, clearly God. And it is confirmed: because contradictories—also according to him [Chatton]—altogether
signify the same thing, otherwise they would not be, as he [Chatton] says, contradictories.\footnote{Ibid. 184, 19-27: "Item, non tantum sequitur hoc, sed etiam sequitur quod simul et semel assentit et dissentit eidem, quia sicut heri accepi, et patet per Philosophum et Commentatorem, VI Metaphysicae, commento ultimo, propositiones contradictoriae possunt simul esse in anima. Volo igitur quod in anima istius simul sunt duae propositiones 'Deus est Deus', 'Deus non est Deus'. Ad formationem unius causabitur assensus, ad formationem alierius causabitur dissensus. Et si non ipsis complexis—quod esset propositum principale—igitur eidem penitus, scilicet Deo. Et confirmatur: quia contradictoria—etiam per istum—significant omnino idem, aliter non essent, ut dicit, contradictoria."}

While Wodeham admits contradictory propositions can exist in the same mind simultaneously—in fact, his epistemology depends on it—it is impossible to act on both at the same time. The res theory, which denies that the complex is the total object of judgment, only leaves the option that the thing in re could simultaneously be the object of assent and dissent. So, for contradictory propositions that exist simultaneously in the mind, such as “God is God” and “God is not God”, assent would be given to one and dissent to the other. But the object is the same in both cases, which cannot be.

5. The res theory holds that something extra-mental like God is either the total object or the partial object of a complex composed of cognitions proper to God. If the latter, then the complex and res theories are compatible. If the former, then the formation of the mental proposition, which the res theory still requires for scientific knowledge, would be superfluous.\footnote{Ibid. 184, 28-35: "...aut intendit ista via quod Deus sit obiectum totale, aut tantum partiale assensus causati per propositionem compositam ex propriis conitionibus Dei. Si partiale, hoc non excluderet quin simul esset eius obiectum ipsum complexum mediante quo causatur. Si totale, contra: tum quia superflueret formare complexum, habita simplici apprehensione evidenti, quia evidens notitia totalis obiecti assensus est nata, ut videtur, causare assensum respectu ipsius. Tum quia quod non est totale obiectum alicuius propositionis nec propositio, non est obiectum totale assensus."}

Moreover, if it is only the objects of the subject or predicate terms that could be the objects of assent or dissent, then propositions regarding
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the same items in different tenses could be both true and false at the same time. There must, claims Wodeham here, be something signified in the complex that is more than either the subject, predicate or both together provides—“actual or possible time”\textsuperscript{55}—that allows the same proposition to be true in one tense and false in another. The res theory does not take this into account, and absurd consequences arise because of it.

6. The sixth, which should be singled out as being particularly important, is that the term of composition in a proposition, “to be” (esse), signifies either “something or nothing.” If nothing, then “there’s no point in using it in speech” \textit{(frustra ponitur in oratione)}.\textsuperscript{56} Unless the copula adds content in addition to what subject and predicate terms supply, it could be eliminated without altering meaning or belief, which, as shown above, is clearly false. It therefore has an irreducible function in language and thought. Wodeham notes that the copula is capable of joining any two entities, and so it itself cannot be one, because it is compatible with every entity and thus has no contrary. It may, however, have several functions:

And whether it signifies inherence or composition in things \textit{a parte rei}, or unity and identity between extremes or what is signified through the extremes of a proposition, it will always be that the proposition signifies some thing or some things not signified through the subject or predicate.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid. 185, 40-42: “In tantum autem istae significant aliud vel consignificant, scilicet tempus actuale vel possibile, quod quaelibet trium propositionem posset esse vera, reliquis de eodem subiecto et praedicato existentibus falsis.”

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid. 185.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid. 185, 43-49: “...aut ly ‘esse’, quod est nota compositionis, aliquid significat aut nihil. Si nihil significat nec consignificat, frustra ponitur in oratione. Si aliquid, et non magis unum quam aliud, quia indifferenter respicit quidlibet entium, et quodlibet potest copulare cum quolibet. Et sive significat inhaerentiam sive compositionem a parte rei, sive unitatem et identitatem inter extrema vel significata per extrema propositionis, semper habebitur quod propositio significat aliquid vel aliqua quod non significatur per subiectum vel praedicatum.”
So, the res theory cannot be true, which means either that Ockham’s complex theory must be the case, or that the total object must be what is signified by the whole proposition, subject, predicate and copula together.\textsuperscript{58}

7. From no two acts regarding the numerically identical subject and predicate could it be the case that one would be heresy and the other true faith. But “God to be incarnated” and “God is incarnated” is of the same subject and predicate, but one is false and heretical, while the other is true faith. So, these acts of belief differ in more than number, meaning that the proposition has content over and above that of its terms.\textsuperscript{59}

8. Lastly, if the res theory is true, then “no proposition would be known \textit{per se}”,\textsuperscript{60} because what defines a \textit{per se nota} proposition is that its circumscribed formation in the mind, apart from additional apprehensions of extra-mental entities, is enough to cause assent to it. But there are \textit{per se nota} propositions, and there must be for \textit{a priori} demonstrative science to be possible, so the res theory must be false.\textsuperscript{61}

\textbf{§ D (Against the Res Theory and the Complex Theory)}

Wodeham then gives four conclusive arguments against both positions:

1. It seems possible for God to destroy a proposition \textit{in mente} without affecting the cognition of the elements of the proposition. In such a case

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid. 185, 50-51: “Et tunc ut prius: [causa] totalis assensus vel est complexum ipsum, [et] tunc propositum; vel totale significatum complexi.”

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid. 185, 62-65: “...nulli duo actus solo numero differentes respectu eiusdem obiecti numero sic se habent quod unus sit fides et alter haeresis. Sed credere quod Filius Dei incarnabitur, est haeresis; credere quod est incarnatus, vera fides, igitur isti actus non differunt solo numero.”

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid. 185, 66-67: “Item, octavo: tunc nulla propositio esset per se nota nisi propositio sit obiectum assensus.”

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid. 185.
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one would not, however, be able to apprehend things being-so or not-being-so, which negates Ockham’s position that being-so or not-being-so could be included in a proposition through simple apprehension of things as extremes, and the one that holds judgments to be about simple things alone. The implication of this is that being so is a distinct comprehension of something extra-mental apart from the simple cognition of either the proposition alone or simple extra-mental things.\footnote{Ibid. 189, §5, 5-8: "...si Deus adnihilaret propositionem, licet apprehendum rem incomplexe, quatenus assensus supplet vicem notitiae absolutae simplicis quae erat suo modo pars propositionis secundum illam viam, non tamen apprehenderem sic esse vel non [sic] esse."}

2. Wodeham claims directly against Chatton that simple cognitions are never enough to cause an assent unless composed into a proposition. An assent requires a simple cognition of a proposition as object, in the same way that a house or any substance or accident would be an object of cognition. This would be required for the formation of the further proposition “this proposition is in conformity with things”,\footnote{Ibid. 189, 12-16.} with the judicative act of assent having the total complex apprehension as the medium that gives rise to it. In this way, immediately through the assent to the proposition there is an apprehension of “things being so in reality.”\footnote{Ibid. 189, 9-17: "...tertio ad hoc movet me quod nunquam simplex notitia sufficit ad causandum assunsum nisi ex ea formetur complexum, quia aliter non poneret propositionem ut ‘quid’ si simplex apprehesio sufficiat ad causandum assensum. \[ita\] modo ita est quod illa simplex intelligentia est actus cognoscendi propositionem ut objectum, sicut et domum vel abledinem ut objectum, [ita] quod si ex illa prius formetur complexum, puta istud ‘ista propositio est conformis rei’, et assensus habet pro objecto objectum totale complexae apprehensionis mediante qua causatur—quia quare magis unam partem quam aliam?—igitur immediate per assensum apprehenditur sic esse a parte rei."}

3. It is simply impossible to say that a proposition is in conformity to how things are without apprehending “being so in reality.”\footnote{Ibid. 189.}
apprehend something to conform to something else is to apprehend something relative to something else. But, the apprehension of a relation between two items presupposes apprehension of the two items. But even if the proposition did not exist, it would still be possible to assent to being so in reality, because God can apprehend things without the formation of a proposition, from things themselves.\(^{66}\)

4. By the same reason the second proposition asserting the conformity of the proposition to things being so in reality would be true by the apprehension of the object of the first proposition that asserts something to be so in reality. So, the apprehension of things being so as the first proposition signifies alone is enough to cause an assent to “being so in reality.”\(^{67}\)

\textit{§ E ("Being-so" [sic esse] as the object of a judicative act)}

So, Wodeham has surveyed, thoroughly critiqued, and found both the res and complex theories lacking. He then begins to form his own theory by positing six conclusions. The first two are rejections of his teachers’ theories,\(^{68}\) so we can begin with the third:

3. The complex is not even a partial object of an act of assent, because the assent could only be of things previously cognized, and it can be taken

\(^{66}\) Ibid. 189, 18-24: “...impossibile est apprehendere propositionem esse conformem rei quin apprehendatur sic esse a parte rei. Quia apprehendere aliquid esse conforme, est apprehendere illud relative, et hoc non contingit sine apprehensione termini. Terminus hic est ‘sic esse’. Sed propositione ipsa non existente, potest apprehendi ipsam esse conformem per assensum ‘sic esse’, quia ponamus quod Deus teneat assensum sine omni propositione; igitur per assensum.”

\(^{67}\) Ibid. 189, 25-27: “Item, qua ratione illa proposicio secunda posset causare assensum quod prima esset conformis rei extra, eadem ratione prima, cum sit aeque evidens, posset causare assensum ‘sic esse a parte rei’.”

\(^{68}\) Ibid. 189-190, §6, 4-7: “Concedo igitur, ut prius, quod complexum non est obiectum adaequatum assensus. Secundo dico quod obiectum adaequatum assensus non est Deus ipse, nec aliqua res simplex.”
as a principle that “the mind does not assent except to what is cognized.”69 He clarifies that this does not mean that the mind assents to whatever has been cognized, but that anything that can be assented to must be cognized by an act of apprehension distinct from an assent: “[The] complex that necessitates [the mind] to assent as precognized by the assent.”70 If this were not the case, then neither the complex nor the simple apprehensions would be required prior to the assent, insofar as the assent would posit these elements simultaneously. Moreover, in the other direction, in order to necessitate the mind to assent, a proposition must be seen to be necessary, but there is no necessary reflexive act that may not be blocked by an act of the will.71

Furthermore, the cognition presupposed by judgment must be either simple or complex. Not simple, because no simple cognition such as “white” can cause an assent that has not be placed into a complex. And not complex, because what would then make the complex true would be had from the simple apprehensions from which it is composed. If a posteriori demonstration is required, then there would be an infinite regress, such that any act of assent would require infinite propositions

69 Ibid. 190, 9-12: “...complexum non est obiectum partiale actus assentiendi ad quem necessitat tale complexum, posita generali Dei influentia, quia omne quod est obiectum actus assentiendi partiale vel totale prius natura comprehenditur.”

70 Ibid. 190, 15-18: “Sed volo dicere quod nihil est obiectum actus assentiendi—nec totale nec partiale—quin praecognoscitur distincta cognitione quae sit tantum apprehensio et non assensus. Sed complexum necessitat ad assensum ut praecognoscitur assensui. Igitur etc.”

71 Ibid. 190, 22-26: “Minorem probo: quia assensus ad quem necessitat complexum est necessario, nisi Deus impediat existente complexo quod est necessitans. Aliter non necessitaret. Sed ad nullum actum relexum apprehensivum tantum necessitat interelectus quin posito actu recto possit adhuc per imperium voluntatis non haberi reflexus.”
supporting each other. But, Wodeham claims, a direct, non-reflexive act of the sign of the complex can so necessitate.\textsuperscript{72}

He then makes two sub-conclusions. First, the significatum of a reflexive proposition is a direct proposition that conforms to \textit{its} significatum. Second, if this is true, then there would be an infinite regress, because the proposition that signifies directly would also need another proposition that it signifies, ad infinitum. This argument is directed against the view that demonstrative reason is all that makes knowledge. As Wodeham claims, if there is no \textit{per se nota} proposition which is of a nature to necessitate an assent to another proposition, then there could be no knowledge. And \textit{per se nota} propositions are open directly to intellectual intuition, and do not, and could not be given, a demonstration.\textsuperscript{73}

Wodeham then gives the remaining three conclusions:

4. A complex can be the partial object of a reflexive assent, but it does not necessitate such an assent. In judicative acts of assent, which require two propositions, the one that makes an assertion and the other to renders the assertion true, the first proposition can be a partial object of a reflexive complex that necessitates the mind to assent.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid. 191, 44-47: “Sed ista formata, dummodo propositio recta fuerit evidens—modo frequenter praeexposito—necessitat ad alium assensum, scilicet ad assentendum quod primum signum complexum fuit conforme significato suo.”

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid. 191, 48-54: Wodeham takes this straight from Aristotle. Science is demonstrated knowledge, or is of the conclusion of a syllogism. But, the premises of the syllogism have the same form as the conclusion, and should also be demonstrated if what we want is scientific knowledge. But this would lead to a regress. So, there must be propositions that are true and certain, but non-demonstrative. Otherwise, demonstrative knowledge, science, would not arise. Because the self-evident propositions are non-demonstrative, they are non-scientific, but are had by intellectual intuition.

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid. 192, 3-9: “Quarta conclusion est quod bene est complexum partiale obiectum alicuius assensus reflexi ad quem tamen non necessitat, sicut verbi gratia illius assensus quo assentitur illud complexum esse verum vel esse conforme rei significatae ‘sic se habere’ et huius
5. No proposition is the total object of any possible assent, because what is signified through the proposition is the object of the judgment. This is not to say that the proposition is superfluous, but that an assent requires a proposition and what it signifies. The proposition is the medium that gives rise to the assent, but the assent ultimately is of what causes the proposition, and causes the mind to assent to the proposition being so, as it signifies.

6. The sixth conclusion is where Wodeham most clearly posits the “sic esse” or the *complexe significabile* as the total object. He writes the following:

   The immediate object of an act of assent is the total object of a complex by which the assent is necessitated, speaking of simple evident assent. Or, more generally speaking, its total immediate object is the total object of what is signified by the whole proposition immediately conforming to it, concausing it and presupposed to be necessary by it, or the total object of many such propositions [as with a syllogism].

He offers a disjunctive syllogism as proof. The total object, he claims, must be either the proposition, as Ockham had supposed, or things signified through the subject of the proposition, as Chatton had supposed, or both at the same time, or the total significatum of a proposition or propositions. “But none of the first three. So the fourth.” Moreover, the

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modi, quia quidquid apprehenditur per complexum necessitans ad assensum aliquem, est paritale objectum illius assensus, [ut patet] ex praecedentibus. Sed prima propositio apprehenditur per complexum necessitans ad assensum quo assentitur propositionem esse veram, ligitur."

75 Ibid. 192, 19-24: “Sexta conclusion est quod immediatum objectum actus assentiendi est objectum totale complexi necessitantis ad assensum, loquendo de assensu simpliciter evidenti. Vel generaliter loquendo, eius objectum immediatum totale est objectum totale seu significatum totale propositionis immedite sibi conformis, concaussantis illum et necessario sibi praesuppositae, vel objecta totalia multarum propositionum talium.”

76 Ibid. 192-193, 25-29: “Istud probo. Primo, quia vel eius objectum est propositio; vel res significata per subiectum propositionis, quando componitur ex propriis cognitionibus rei praecise; vel ambo simul; vel significatum totale propositionis vel propositionum;—quia hoc
relation of conformity between the proposition and what it signifies cannot itself be the object of assent, because then were the mental proposition to be annihilated by God with the assent remaining, the assent would be false, because it would no longer conform to any proposition. This consequence, he claims, would be false. The assent in such a case would still be true even with the mental proposition annihilated.\textsuperscript{77}

Finally, if and only if the total object of an assent is the total significatum of the complex necessitating assent, all of the problems are avoided. We should posit the total object to be the \textit{sic esse} because it works.\textsuperscript{78}

\textbf{§ F (Doubts about the sic esse)}

So, Wodeham posits the total object of a judicative act to be the \textit{sic esse}, which is neither a mental proposition nor simple extra-mental things signified through the extremes of a proposition. Wodeham himself realizes that the ontological status of the \textit{sic esse} is unclear, and the \textit{dubia} that he himself provides all pertain to the sort of something the \textit{sic esse} could be.

He first asks “what are you calling the total object of a proposition?”\textsuperscript{79} The total object must be something or nothing, and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item\textit{Ibid.}, 193, 31-35: “Item, inter omnia alia quae possent poni eius objectum totale praeceps, videretur quod conformitas complexi ad eius totale significatum esset objectum. Sed hoc falsum est, quia tunc circumscripta propositione de potentia Dei et manente assensu causato per complexum, falsus esset assensus, cum iam non sit illa conformitas, fundamento sublato. Consequens falsum.”
\item\textit{Ibid.}, 193, 36-38: “Item, ponendo objectum totale assensus [esse] totale significatum complexi necessitantis ad assensum, vitantur omnia inconvenientia illata in argumentis utriusque partis prius positis, igitur.”
\item\textit{Ibid.} 193, 3-4: “Sed contra istam responsonem, primo: quia quid vocas tu objectum totale propositionis?”
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
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Wodeham admits that it is certainly not nothing. So, it must be “something”, and if it is something then it must be either God or creature. And if either God or creature, what exists is exhausted by the categories of substance and accident. And substances and accidents are signified through the subject and predicate terms of a proposition, as the res theory supposes.\(^8\)

Second, whatever the total object is can be the object of assent or dissent. But, again, as Chatton would have it, a simple thing is such to be assented or dissented to. Any simple thing can be signified simply or complexly; it is not required that there be a difference in what is signified. There can be identity in what is signified but difference in the mode of signification, such as in a proposition that signifies a simple thing in a complex way.\(^8\)

His response to the first dubium is that “the total object of a proposition is its significatum” and that “the significatum is either being so or not being so just as the proposition denotes.”\(^8\) Without further explanation, Wodeham provides several illustrations, saying that the significatum for “God is God” would be “God being God”, and that for “the man is white” it would be “the man being white.” The obvious thing to note about his response is that he places the significatum of a proposition in dictum form, which has both terms in object form and the verb in

\(^8\) Ibid. 193, 5-9: “Item quidquid tu posueris eius obiectum totale, illud aut est aliquid aut nihil. Si nihil, igitur nihil est obiectum actus assentiendi. Certum est quod falsum est. Si aliquid: vel Deus vel creatura. Et sive sic sive sic. Igitur est substantia vel accidens. Et omne tale potest significari per subiectum alicuius propositionis.”

\(^8\) Ibid. 193, 10-14: “Item, quidquid potest esse obiectum totale propositionis, potest esse obiectum assensus vel dissensus, per te. Sed simplex res est huiusmodi, Igitur. Probatio minoris: quia quaelibet res, quantumcumque simplex, videtur posse significari complexe et incomplexe. Igitur non oportet quod sit ibi differentia in significato sed in modo significandi tantum.”

\(^8\) Ibid. 193-194, 18-19. See n. 84.
infinitive, making it difficult to, on its own, decide which term is subject and which predicate. Wodeham himself notes that what the significata *dicta* supposit for are not themselves propositions, “because if there were no proposition in the nature of things, nevertheless God would be God.”

He seems also to be implying that no mental proposition would be needed for things to be so, making it clear that the *sic esse* is not dependent on any mind. It would have to be extra-mental and neither a simple substance nor accident signified by a *dictum* which is neither isormorphic nor reducible to a proposition.

It is easy to see how this could be the case with affirmations, because they refer to things that have positive existence, but what about negations? Wodeham claims the same to be the case, saying that for “the man is not an ass”, its significatum, “man not being an ass”, would still be the case. Proposition or no proposition, mind or no mind, man would “still not be an ass.”

From this he argues that “being so in reality’ or ‘not being so’ does not depend on an act of the mind or on any sign.” Such things are therefore not made so by an act of the mind nor could they be signified by

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83 Ibid. 193-194, 21-23. See n. 84.
84 Ibid. 193-194, 17-23: “...dicendum quod objectum totale propositionis est eius significatum. Eius autem significatum est sic esse vel sic non esse sicut per propositionem denotatur. Puta objectum huius ‘Deus est Deus’ est ‘Deum esse Deum’; et huius ‘homo est albus’ vel ‘hominio inest albedo’ significatum est ‘hominem esse album’ vel ‘hominio inesse abledinem’. Nec haec sunt propositiones, quia si nulla propositio esset in rerum natura, nihilominus Deus esset Deus, et homo esset albus vel homino ineset albedo.”
85 Ibid. 194, 23-28: “Et sicut dixi de affirmativis, ita dico de negativis. Huius ‘homo non est asinus’ objectum est ‘hominem non esse asinum’. Nec ‘hominem non esse asinum’ est propositio...quia si nulla propositio esset, adhuc homo non esset asinus. Nec plus dependet a propositione quod homo non sit asinus quam dependeat homo vel asinus.”
86 Ibid. 194, 29-33: “...sic esse a parte rei vel ‘sic non esse’ non dependet ab actu animae vel ab aliquo signo. Et omne huiusmodi est significabile, et non per incomplexum mentale, id est non per simplicem intelligentiam, igitur per signum compositum vel divisum, id per est propositionem affirmativam vel negativam.”
a simple term, but only through a sign of composition or division, that is by an affirmative or negative proposition. Hence, the *sic esse* is what is complexly signifiable—thus the moniker “*complexe significabile*”—but exists independently of signification.

But, Wodeham admits, the same question persists regarding what is complexly signifiable. What, for instance, is “God being God” in reality (*a parte rei*)? The *sic esse* must be either complex or incomplex. Wodeham denies that it is complex, but is that which is complexly signifiable. If, however, it is incomplex, then either substance or accident. And in “God being God” the only substance possible is God. And if this is the case, then the *res* theory would be true.

In response to this, Wodeham cryptically expands the definition, writing that “‘God being God’ is ‘first being, being God’ or ‘infinite being, being God’.” The expansion, he claims, could be continued until the entire definition is exhausted. He further claims that something like “man being animal” needs to be distinguished in terms of what is signified qua *dictum* and what is signified qua the proposition, and in this way it could well be complex or incomplex. And because the *dictum* is neither complex nor incomplex, because neither simple nor a composite of simples but something else, it is “something signifiable through a complex.”

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88 Ibid. 194, 50-55: “Illae igitur distinguendae sunt, eo quod ‘hominem esse animal’ potest supponere et sumi pro isto dicto propositionis, et isto modo bene complexum vel incomplexum; vel pro eo quod per huiusmodi dictum significatur. Et sic nec est complexum nec incomplexum, sed est quoddam significabile per complexum, puta per illud ‘homo est animal’.”
opaque as this is, Wodeham feels it to be an adequate response to the first *dubium.*

To the second *dubium*, Wodeham claims that something like “man being animal” is neither a thing nor a substance, but is “man being something and man being substance or accident.” This response, Wodeham claims, is totally in keeping with Aristotle, whom said that an incomplext singular term signifies either a substance or accident, but whom did not say that every singular term signifies a substance. “For some sign does not adequately signify a substance but signifies something being substance, and so of the others.”

“Me being sitting” signifies neither me nor sitting, but signifies being so, in the same way that if I were to stand up out of the chair, “me not being sitting” would signify it to be so. The “being so” is what is primarily signified, not me or sitting.

But, Wodeham persists, perhaps realizing that no entirely adequate response is available, saying that it is not to be granted that it is either something or nothing. He writes, “I ask you: is a population either a man or not man? Neither is to be granted, but that it is not man but men.” Moreover, “What is it?” is just the wrong question to ask:

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89 I should remind the reader at this point that I’m not arguing that Wodeham is at all clear on the total object. Rather, I’m arguing that what he says about it is resistent if not invulnerable to conclusive reading.

90 Ibid. 195, 3-5: “Ad secundum dicendum quod ‘hominem esse animal’ non est aliquid aut substantia, sed est hominem esse aliquid et hominem esse substantiam aut accidens.”

91 Ibid. 195, 7-10. See n. 92.

92 Ibid. 195, 7-11: “Aliquod enim signum non significat adaequate substantiam sed significat aliquid esse substantiam, et ita de alis; et aliquid significat aliquid non esse substantiam, et ita de alis. Item, alibi in Praedicamentorum: ‘Eo quod res est vel non est, oratio vera vel falsa [dicitur esse], et non dicit ‘eo quod res vel non res’.”

93 Ibid. 195, 15-18: “Dices: ‘hominem esse animal’ aut est aliquid aut nihil. Dico quod neutrum est dandum, sed quod non est aliquid; sed [dandum] est hominem esse aliquid, ut dictum [est]. Ita quieram a te: populus aut est homo aut non homo? Neutrum est dandum, sed quod non est homo sed homines.”
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‘Man being animal’ is not a ‘what’, but is a ‘being what’. Hence the question is inept, just as the incongruent and quibbling question ‘what is: man is an animal?’ For man is an animal in reality all propositions circumscribed. And it is not to be granted that ‘man is animal’ is a substance, nor that it is an accident, nor that it is something, nor that it is nothing, because none of these responses is intelligible or says something. Such questions suppose something that is not true.94

He does, however, concede that the *sic esse* can be signified through the subject of a proposition, but it is not decomposable into subject and predicate terms. Rather, it itself can serve as the subject term in a proposition such as “man being animal (*hominem esse animal*) is true”, clearly with “true” predicated of the subject term, in this case the *dictum* of “man is an animal.”

Wodeham agrees that whatever thing is signifiable complexly or simply, but that it is not signifiable by a sign adequate to its complex signification, “because the note of composition of whatever (and every sign is equivalent in its mode of signification) consignifies a time present, past or future.”95 In a complex mode of signification, through a proposition, more is signified than simply the subject and predicate, and so whatever it is that is signified through a proposition is more than the sum of the subject and predicate.

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95 Ibid. 196, 42-45: “...dico quod non est significabilis signo sibi aadequato complexo, quia nota compositionis cuiuscumque (et omne signum aequivalent in modo significandi) consignificat tempus praesens, praeteritum vel furturum....”
His opponent, however, could respond that if everything were circumscribed with the exception of God, “God is God” would be true, which would mean “God being God” could not be anything other than God. Because no other thing would need to be, “God is God” would require nothing to be true other than the formation of the mental proposition which would have as its object “God.”

Wodeham replies that if everything and all time were circumscribed and an angel alone were posited, an angel would be created and conserved. He notes, however, that an angel alone would not be “an angel being created or conserved’ nor is an angel ‘an angel being’, because then ‘an angel not being’ would include an open repugnance.” He claims that it is one thing to ask what it is that when posited God is God and another to ask what is God being God. To the first the response is God, but to the second it is not so, “but it is to be replied through another dictum, composed from a prior description.”

He further claims that while God alone could make “God is God” true, however God is not “God being”:

But because with an angel alone posited an angel is, an angel is an angel-being or an angel-and-God-being, because then by the same cause an angel would be an angel to have been and will be, because then no other thing would need to be posited to say that an angel was or will be. And because whichever one thing would be identical with the same, between them would also be the same,

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96 Ibid. 196. 47-48: “Tu dices: circumscripta omni re imaginabili, posito solo Deo, Deus est Deus, igitur Deum esse Deum non est nisi Deus.”

97 Ibid. 196. 51-54: “…dico quod circumscripto omni tempore et posito angelo, angelus creatur vel conservatur, et tamen angelus non est ‘angelum creari aut conservari’ nec angelus est ‘angelum esse’, quia tunc ‘angelum non esse’ includeret repugnantiam aperte, et tamen solo angelo posito angelus est.”

98 Ibid. 196. 54-59: “Dico igitur quod alid [est] quaerere quid est illud quo posito Deus est Deus vel angelus est [angelus], et quaerere quid est Deum esse Deum aut angelum esse [angelum], quia ad primam respondendum est quod ‘Deus’ vel ‘angelus’; ad secundam non sic, sed repondendum est per unum alid dictum, compositum ex descriptione prioris.”
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an angel to be would be an angel to have been and an angel that will be. This consequence is false.\textsuperscript{99}

Simply put, if it were the case that “angel” alone were idempotent with “angel being”, and nothing besides an angel existed in the universe, then “angel” would be identical to “angel to have been” and “angel will be.” But it cannot be so, because from the simple term “angel” it does not follow that an angel has been or will be.

Moreover, he claims, if it were the case that “angel” and “angel being” were idempotent, then it would be the same to understand one and the other, which would result in a contradiction. It would mean that “to understand an angel being is to understand an angel. Therefore, to understand an angel not being would be to understand an angel being.”\textsuperscript{100}

Moreover, if it were the case that with God alone posited God is God, it would also follow that if God alone were posited, then God alone is an angel not being. It does not, however, follow that God alone is an angel not being. The reverse would illustrate this more clearly. If we posited an angel alone, and circumscribed all else, it would have to be the case that an angel would be equivalent to God not being, which is clearly false.

Finally, if Socrates were the only person posited, then it would be the case that all men would be Socrates, but it would not follow that Socrates is mankind being Socrates.\textsuperscript{101} The point is that while a single entity alone would allow for an assertion of identity, but it would not

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid. 197, 63-68: “Sed propter hoc quod solo angelo posito angelus est, angelus est angelum esse vel angelum et Deum esse, quia tunc propter eandem causam angleus esset angelum fuisse et fore, quia nullam aliam rem oportet ponere ad hoc quod angelus fuit vel erit. Et quia quaecumque [uni et] eidem sunt eadem, inter se etiam sunt eadem, angelum esse esset angelum fuisse et angelum fore. Consequens falsum.”

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid. 197, 69-71: “Praeterea, si idem esset angelus et angelum esse, tunc idem esset intelligere unum et reliquum. Sed intelligere angelum esse, est intelligere angelum. Igitur intelligere angelum non [esse] esset intelligere angelum esse.”

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid. 197, 12-15. See n. 102.
follow that the thing alone posited could allow for an inference to that thing being that thing.

Wodeham finishes his account of the *complexe significabile* as the immediate total object of judgment by responding to Chatton’s arguments in favour of the *res* theory. First, that the mental complex is not the total object, Ockham’s position, is conceded. To the second, he reiterates that the total object is neither being nor non-being, nor something, nor nothing.

It could, however, be responded that the devil would at least be the partial object of an assent that “the devil is the devil”, which would require a partial assent to the devil. But Wodeham replies that it does not follow. If it did, then it would follow that “God is the partial object of my hatred in ‘I hate God not being,’ and, however, I neither totally nor partially hate God.”

To the second, he claims that a judgment is not possible until either the proposition or the assented to thing has been apprehended. This also holds for things directly apprehended. Just as sound is not the object of vision, so too an object of a direct apprehension is not the sort to be an object of judgment.

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102 Ibid. 197, 12-15: “Dices contra: saltem ex quo diabolus est objectum partiale assensus, sequitur quod tu assentias diabolo partialiter. Dico quod non sequitur, sicut patet in exemplo ‘Deus est objectum partiale odii quo summe odio Deum non esse’, et tamen nec partialiter nec totaliter odio Deum.”

103 Ibid. 198, 22-28: “...dicendum quod nec propositio sufficit ad causandum assensum propositioni nec rei donec ipsa apprehenditur. Dico tamen quod utrobique propositio—si sit evidens simpliciter ex terminis—cum apprehensione illius propositionis sufficiant causare assensum tali propositioni. Sed ex hoc non sequitur [quod] aequae aut prope sufficiat causare assensum rei, quia res directe non est nata esse objectum assensus sed apprehensionis tantum, sicut nec sonus objectum visionis.”

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To the third, he agrees that the Old and New testament follow from different reasons, but he does not agree that there need be a difference in reason between infused faith then and now.

To the sixth, he concedes that an assent to a proposition being true presupposes assent to things being so in re as the proposition signifies, for the very reason that a true proposition is one that accurately signifies things being so in reality.

Finally, to the seventh, he claims that the premises are not the cause of assent to the conclusion, nor do the premises represent the conclusion. But, an apprehension of the conclusion and assent to the premises is enough to cause an assent to things being so as the conclusion signifies.\[104\]

§ 3.3: What, Exactly, is “Being So”?

The publication of D.1, Q.1 sparked a brief period of interest in Wodeham’s work, possibly for the first time since the Renaissance. The target of this new interest unfortunately remained almost exclusively the type of being of the complexe significabile. Wodeham clearly referred to it as something like an extra-mental referent for mental complexes that serves as the total and immediate object of a judicative act, but the ontological status of this seemingly novel entity remained an open question. He did not set out a transparent vision of how his theory of the total object might graft onto the traditional Aristotelian ontology of

\[104\] Ibid. 198, 44-46: “...concedo quod praemissae non causant assensum conclusioni sicut nec eam reprezentant, ut accipis, sed praececum apprehensione conclusionis et assensu respectu praemissarum ad hoc bene sufficiunt.”

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substances and accidents in D.1, Q.1. How could an entity be “neither something nor nothing?”

The positions that have been taken by commentators vary, but they can be roughly placed into two camps. On the one hand there are those who think that Wodeham was proposing the *complexe significabile* as a novel class of entities in addition to substances and accidents. And on the other hand there are those who think that Wodeham was not proposing the *complexe significabile* to be an entity at all.

Elizabeth Karger is the principal proponent of the former interpretation. She takes issue with Gál’s characterization of Rimini’s account of the *complexe significabile* as a “mutilated presentation.” According to her, Rimini was only making the “ontological commitments” that were implicit in Wodeham’s version of the theory “explicit.” Wodeham was not so radical that he would altogether replace substance and accident ontology with something new. Rather, he simply doesn’t deal with its ontological status in a coherent way, and Rimini’s version is accurate to what is implied by Wodeham:

> [If] one says of an x that it is neither something nor nothing, then either one is asserting a contradiction, or one is using the indefinite terms “something” and “nothing” as restricted quantifiers, presupposing a wider universe of discourse than the class of entities they range over. By denying that the complexly significable is something, is not then Wodeham taking the word “something” in a narrow sense, making it applicable to some entities, but not to all? It seem that such is precisely how a later Parisian theologian, Gregory of Rimini, felt about the issue. While fully subscribing to the main tenet of Wodeham’s theory of knowledge and belief, according to which what is known or believed is the total significate of some sentence, and is thus not a thing, substance or quality, he introduced a wide sense of “something”, enabling one to say not only of a thing, substance or

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Chapter III: The Objects of Knowledge

quality, but also of a complexly signifiable that it is something. In doing so, I suggest, Rimini was not making any real addition to Wodeham’s theory, rather he was making explicit its ontological commitment.\(^{106}\)

Hence, while the concept may originate with Wodeham, it does not change the fate of the *complexe significabile*. If in Rimini’s rendition it remains possible to reduce the *complexe significabile* for the sake of parsimony, then the total object is similarly vulnerable in Wodeham’s account, because Rimini’s version is faithful to Wodeham’s.

The most persuasive treatment of Wodeham’s theory of the *complexe significabile* to date comes from Susan Brower-Toland. Her paper, “Facts vs. Things: Adam Wodeham and the Later Medieval Debate about Objects of Judgment”, gives a detailed analysis of D. 1, Q. 1 of the *Lectura Secunda*, and she adopts a view similar to Karger’s. According to Brower-Toland, Wodeham was indeed positing a novel *sui generis* type of entity, a class of facts and states of affairs familiar in modern philosophy.\(^{107}\) Furthermore, he was not attempting to supplant Aristotelian substance/accident ontology. He did, however, reverse the order of Rimini’s ontological hierarchy by making *complexe significabilitia* the “fundamental structures of reality”:

> [It] should be clear that Wodeham’s account of objects of judgment in d.1, q.1 constitutes both a significant departure from and challenge to the substance-accident framework presupposed by his contemporaries. In fact, it appears that Wodeham is not merely arguing for the addition of one more category of being to be included alongside (or somehow dependent on) the categories of substance and accident but is rather re-conceiving the “standard” Aristotelian framework itself—re-conceiving, that is, the very building blocks of reality. The world, at its most fundamental level, is not, according Wodeham, a world of *things*—that is, of substances and accidents, but of “*things being such-and-such*”—

\(^{106}\) Ibid. 193.
that is, a world of *complexe significabilia* or, as we would put it nowadays, a world of facts or concrete states of affair.\(^{108}\)

The primary proponent of the competing view is Dominik Perler, who makes a claim similar to that of John Buridan.\(^{109}\) Wodeham was not seeking to posit a new class of entities; he was not, as Perler puts it, attempting a “reification of facts.”\(^{110}\) The theory must be understood in relation to the distinction between “truth-bearers” and “truth-makers.” The truth-bearer, that which is true, would be the mental proposition, while the truth-maker, that which causes something to be true, would be the *complexe significabile*.\(^{111}\) The mental proposition signifies its *dictum*, something that directly supposes for an extra-mental state of affairs, being so, or, in the case of a false proposition, something not being so. “Being so is, thus, not itself an entity, but is that which ‘signifies a fact insofar as it supervenes on a thing as it is in reality’.”\(^{112}\) The *complexe significabile* primarily should be understood according to its logical function, rather than its ontological status.

Ultimately, because of Wodeham’s cryptic writing, no reading can be ruled in or out conclusively. However, Wodeham’s holistic mereology supports the view that Brower-Toland’s interpretation is correct.

\(^{108}\) Ibid. 42-43.

\(^{109}\) Perler, “Ontologies of Fact”, 149-169; Jack Zupko explains Buridan’s treatment of the total object in relation to his rejection of Rimini’s version (“How it Played in the Rue de Fouarre”, 211-225). Buridan felt that there was no need to posit a class of entities in addition to substances and accidents, and that the total object is best understood as a supervening quality on substances and accidents. Zupko does, however, claim that Buridan’s rejection of Rimini’s account does not apply to Wodeham’s, and that if Buridan had read Wodeham’s account he would have seen that it was an entity irreducible to substances and accidents, in the same manner that Brower-Toland argues. Zupko’s position is persuasive, but, as I argue later in the dissertation, it is unlikely that Buridan lacked a first-hand account of the *Lectura Secunda*. It seems more likely that Buridan rejected all versions of the *complexe significabile* on the basis of parsimony, including Wodeham’s.

\(^{110}\) Ibid. 159.

\(^{111}\) Ibid. 161.

\(^{112}\) Ibid. 163.
Chapter III: The Objects of Knowledge

Elsewhere in the Lectura Secunda, in explaining how a soul can be an indivisible unity with distinguishable powers in Q.1 of the Prologue, Wodeham claims that wholes are a third type of entity distinct from their individual constitutive parts and the sum of those parts:

[The] whole is a third entity resulting from parts really distinct from it but not totally. Because it is an entity resulting from them precisely, so that in the whole there is no entity except its parts, although the whole itself is an entity which is not these parts.\(^{113}\)

So, if we read this as applicable to the objects of knowledge, what is apprehended in an act of belief is not a sum of parts. Rather, in a judicative act what is apprehended would be the whole significatum of the proposition, which is an entity indistinguishable from its parts, but at the same time a non-decomposable unity that can stand as the single object of an apprehension.

Wodeham's arguments given in the Tractatus de Indivisibilibus, a short work on the problem of continua, add further support to this view. Imagine a continuous straight line, \(c\). It would seem that, because it is extended, \(c\) could be divided into halves, let's say lines \(a\) and \(b\), which we would naturally say are parts of the original line, \(c\). And, of course, \(a\) and \(b\) would be further divisible into halves, which would in turn be divisible, and so on. The age-old question was whether the process of division terminates in something that is not further divisible.

It seems that it must. Because any and every line is composed of lines, there must be something indivisible to terminate the process of division, otherwise the lines could not arise in the first place. But, on the other hand, if a thing is extended, it must therefore be divisible; otherwise

\(^{113}\) Wodeham, LS I 12, 33-36: "...verum reputo, totum est entitas tertia resultans ex partibus realiter distincta ab eis sed non totaliter. Quia est entitas [resultans] ex eis praecise, ita quod in toto nulla est entitas nisi ipsae partes, licet ipsum totum sit entitas quae non est ipsae partes."
it would not be extended. So, that which explains extension cannot itself be extended. Unfortunately, if there is something simple and unextended, then it could not account for extension. An infinite number of un-extended things could be added to one another without resulting in extension.

Wodeham dealt with this problem by positing what Norman Kretzmann has called “macro indivisibles.” When we say that something extended like line \( c \) is divisible into halves, we are speaking improperly. Properly speaking, halves \( a \) and \( b \) are separable from each other, but line \( c \) cannot be divided without being destroyed:

I hold that although the halves of a continuum can be divided from each other and can have been divided, yet literally speaking a continuum can neither naturally be divided nor have been divided into its halves, nor indeed into any other of its parts whatever. The proof of this is that the predicate cannot agree with what it supposits for by means of the verb ‘is’, therefore we have what we proposed to show.

...[If] a part perishes, the whole will not exist. But after division of half from half, and (and so on) has begun, some part of \( c \) has ceased to exist; [any alternative] is naturally impossible. Because some parts, which previously constituted something which they do not now constitute, are separated from each other by such division, some part of \( c \) has ceased to exist. Although in the case in question some parts which were previously continuous would remain, nevertheless the continuum itself, or the one independent whole itself—which resulted from such constituent [parts] being continuous with each other—would not remain (Rega Wood’s translation).

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114 Kretzmann, “Adam Wodeham’s Anti-Aristotelian Anti-Atomism”, 388.
115 Wodeham, TI 214-218, 34-5: “Quarto dico quod licet medietates continui possunt ab invicem dividi et esse divisae, tamen de virtute sermonis loquendo continuum non potest naturaliter nec dividi nec dividum esse in suas medietates, nec etiam in quascunque alias partes suas. Cuius probatio est quia praedicatum non potest convenire illi pro quo subiectum supponit mediante hoc verbo ‘est’, ergo propositum.” Ibid. 216 & 218, 24-1: “...si pars perit, totum non erit. Sed postquam incohata est divisio medietatis a mediate et sic deinceps, aliqua pars illius c cessavit esse, quia impossible est per naturam quod iam sit facta aliquis divisio, quantumcumque parva, quin aliqua entitas quae prius fuit iam non sit. Quia tali
Take the following proposition, “line \( c \) is divisible into halves \( a \) and \( b \).” In one sense the proposition would not be entirely false, because \( a \) and \( b \) are separable from one another. But properly speaking it is false, because \( c \) is not divisible into \( a \) and \( b \). If \( c \) were so divided, it would cease to exist, and so the predicate term “divisible into halves \( a \) and \( b \)” and the subject term “line \( c \)” cannot be in agreement. It is simply an improper locution according to Wodeham. Properly speaking, line \( a \) is *separable* from line \( b \) but line \( c \) is indivisible. His point in these passages is, of course, that continua and similar wholes are not infinitely divisible. That’s because no whole is divisible.

The same conclusions are, *mutatis mutandis*, applicable to the total object. Take the following proposition that expresses an act of belief: “I believe the wall to be white.” The object of the belief in a statement such as this is “wall to be white”, not “wall” and “whiteness” nor “wall is white” to Wodeham. Hence, in the same way that it would be improper to say that line \( c \) can be divided into halves \( a \) and \( b \), so too a *complexe significabile* such as “wall being white” cannot be divided into its constitutive parts, namely “wall” and “whiteness.” If it were so divided in reality, the entity referred to by the *dictum* would be destroyed. And if it were not the *unum per se* the *dictum* supposits for apprehended in an act of belief, then it would not be an apprehension of the fact.

This is not to say that Wodeham eliminates substances and accidents from his ontology. It simply further confirms Brower-Toland’s interpretation of the *complexe significabile* as a type of entity with a

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divisione separatae sunt ab invicem aliquae partes constituentes aliquid prius quod non constituint modo, ergo aliqua pars istius c esse cessavit. Licet ergo in propositio maneret partes aliquae quae prius continuabantur, tamen ipsum continuum vel ipsum per se unum totum non maneret quod prius erat ex talibus ad invicem continuatis constituum resultans....”

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part/whole relation to substances and accidents, but not reducible to substances and accidents.

Perler is certainly correct that Wodeham posited the *complexe significabile* for reasons of logical function, but from that it does not follow that he did not consider facts to be their own class of entities. He may not have been trying to “reify facts”, because facts and things (*res*) are distinct types of entities, but he does seem to have been claiming that the extra-mental world is populated by facts, and that they do not neatly reduce to things. His texts support the view that he was positing facts as a *sui generis* type of entity, supervening, “spooky”\(^\text{116}\) or otherwise.

§ 3.4: Concluding Remarks

While influenced by Chatton’s *res* theory and Ockham’s mental complex theory, Wodeham took a different approach in answering the question of the objects of belief. He rejected the idea that scientific knowledge is only of a mental complex, accepting instead that a presupposition of knowledge is that it is of the extra-mental world, or reality. However, he also felt the extra-mental significatum of the subject term to be insufficient to give rise to a judicative act. Rather, the object of a judicative act was the total significatum of the conclusion, or, as he would put it, “being so” as the conclusion signifies. He further claimed that the conclusion alone was insufficient to necessitate assent. And so the *complexe significabile* consisted of the conclusion plus what the premises of a demonstration giving rise to a conclusion signified.\(^\text{117}\)

\(^\text{116}\) Perler, “Ontologies of Fact”, 158.
\(^\text{117}\) Wodeham, *LS* I 209, 5-8: “Habito...quod scientia realis causata per apprehensiones tantum rectas habet pro objecto sic esse a parte rei et non complexum, nec tantum sic esse sicut significatur per conclusionem sed etiam sicut significatur per praemissas....”
Chapter III: The Objects of Knowledge

While there is general agreement that the *complexe significabile* is something like a fact or state of affairs, the ontological status of this novel type of entity and its relation to the then accepted ontology of substances and accidents is opaque. Wodeham’s writings on the matter are resistant to conclusive interpretation.

There are, however, two general categories of interpretation available. The first generally considers Wodeham to have been proposing the *complexe significabile* as a novel type of entity in addition to substances and accidents. The second is that its ontological status is not in question precisely because he was not positing the total object as a type of entity distinct from substances and accidents. Rather, Wodeham saw facts as either modes of substances and accidents or as supervening qualities. Wodeham posited the total object for functional reasons; to give it the status of an entity is to miss the point.

While there are compelling reasons to consider each of the proposed interpretations correct, and there doesn’t really seem to be any way to conclusively rule any out, it seems as though Brower-Toland has it right, owing to textual evidence from Wodeham’s work on the problem of the composition of continua. For Wodeham argues in the *Tractatus de Indivisilibibus* and elsewhere in the *Lectura Secunda* that a whole is an entity composed of parts, yet it is an *unum per se* that is not reducible to its parts. If Wodeham does conceive of a fact as a composite of simple apprehensions of substances and accidents, it does not mean that facts reduce to substances and accidents.
CHAPTER IV: DIVINE DECEPTION

In this chapter I defend the claim that Wodeham does not argue in favour of divine deception to argue for skepticism,¹ or because he wanted to avoid limiting God’s power,² or for simple lack of an argument. Rather, Wodeham argues in favour of divine deception because of the function it serves in his epistemology. If it were the case that only natural causality were possible, then any proposition formed from intuitive apprehensions would be *per se nota*, necessary and not open to doubt. This would include propositions formed on the basis of optical illusions. Such a situation would leave us unable to sort veridical from deceptive sensory intuitions. Moreover, scientific knowledge to Wodeham is demonstrative knowledge

¹ Karger, “Ockham and Wodeham on Divine Deception”, 229.
² Panaccio & Piché, “Ockham’s Reliabilism”, 116. Panaccio and Piché argue that this is why Ockam ultimately accepted divine deception. Divine deception may have been attractive to Wodeham for similar reasons. Implied motivations aside, however, Wodeham gives divine deception a special function in his account of science, which is why he argues as vehemently as he does in its favour.
distinguishable from intellectual intuition of self-evident principles, and it is of the extra-mental world. If intuition is infallible, then all mental propositions regarding the extra-mental world are self-evidently known to be true without demonstration. And if all propositions regarding the extra-mental world are self-evidently true without demonstration, then there is no scientific knowledge distinguishable from intellectual intuition. Hence, if intuition is infallible, then there is no scientific knowledge. And so, Wodeham argues against the infallibility of intuition by arguing in favour of divine deception to, perhaps ironically, maintain the mind’s ability to separate true from false sensory perceptions and to maintain demonstrative science’s specific function.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first, a brief description of the problem of divine deception and the usual solution to it, namely to make intuition infallible, is given. Then, Wodeham’s repudiations of Ockham’s and Chatton’s arguments in favour of the infallibility of intuition and his arguments for divine deception are provided.

The second provides a brief description of the reading of Wodeham as a skeptic based on his endorsement of divine deception. Marilyn Adams has implied that if they don’t openly advocate for it, then Wodeham’s arguments lead to skeptical conclusions, while Elizabeth Karger has read Wodeham’s arguments for divine deception as arguments directly for skepticism.

The third section deals with Wodeham’s theory of science. To him, scientific knowledge is of the conclusion of a demonstration known to be

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true because of the demonstration. Taken alone, any scientific truth is such that it is not, by itself, known to be true, but is knowably true, meaning that it must be, by itself, doubtable. It is the demonstration that makes the conclusion be seen to be true and necessitates assent or dissent to it. If intuition is infallible, then demonstrations would not be needed, and all scientific knowledge would lapse into intellectual intuition of self-evident propositions. It is only by way of divine deception that intuition becomes doubtable and demonstration finds its proper function. In other words, to Wodeham divine deception is not a problem solved by making intuition infallible; divine deception is the solution to the problems infallibilism pose to demonstrative knowledge.

§ 4.1: The Problem of Divine Deception

The first line of the Nicene Creed, “I believe in God the Father, Almighty”, resonated in early-fourteenth century theology as the principle of God’s omnipotence. The principle was expressed in a twofold way. First, God can do anything that does not expressly result in a contradiction. God can do anything that is possible. But what is contradictory is not possible. Hence, God can do anything unless it expressly results in a contradiction. Article 98 of the Condemnations of 1277 added a further dimension to the principle. It stated that “whatever can be done mediately by a proximate cause, can be done immediately by the distant cause.” A proximate cause is whatever mediately causes an

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5 Ockham, OTh IX 604, 13-16: “Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem.’ Quem sic intelligo quod quodlibet est divinae potentiae attribuendum quod non includit manifestam contradictionem.”

6 Hyman, Walsh & Williams, Philosophy in the Middle Ages, 545. The article could alternatively read, “whatever can be caused by a secondary cause can be caused by a primary
effect, while the distant cause originates the mediate cause or causes the proximate cause. To illustrate, if I were to draw a line in the sand with a stick, I would be the distant cause from whence the causal sequence originates while the stick would be the proximate cause, since it is what I would be using to realize the effect. Because God is omnipotent and ultimately the distant cause of everything and anything that happens, then whatever is possible can be done immediately by God.

The principle of God’s absolute power had a major impact on epistemology in the early-fourteenth century. If an intuitive apprehension can be caused directly in the mind of the *viator* by God without a corresponding proximate cause, the extra-mental object as the efficient cause of the intuition, then existential inferences had through intuitive apprehension would be questionable. It would mean that God could create a vision without a corresponding object in the world, and the mind would be deceived into thinking the object was there. This is the problem of divine deception. Wodeham describes the potentially devastating implications of the problem in the following way:

There are no simple cognitions in the mind that God could not cause or one earlier caused conserve with its object non-existent. If, therefore, by virtue of such cognitions a judgment certifying the existence of such things could be had, then by a [really] non-existent thing a person could have a certain judgment that it exists, which includes a repugnance.7

The problem of divine deception results in a situation similar to other scenarios intended to argue for global scepticism, such as Descartes’
evil demon argument or the brain-in-a-vat scenario. Descartes argued that it is possible for an evil demon to have created us and the world in such a way that all of our beliefs are deceptive. The result is that even the most secure beliefs we have are open to doubt.\(^8\) The brain-in-a-vat scenario shows that no matter how secure our inferences regarding the extra-mental world may be, no matter how well we come to understand the psychological process involved in belief formation—no matter the degree of certainty we might have—it is always possible that we are brains in vats in some laboratory blissfully unaware that the phenomenal world we experience is merely the result of stimulation of the brain.\(^9\) The result: everything we believe and experience of the world could be deception, and all knowledge of anything other than our own states of mind lapses into insoluble doubt.

While it has been argued that skepticism was not taken very seriously in the time period in which Wodeham worked,\(^10\) the problem of divine deception and the consequence of skepticism were nevertheless thought to be unacceptable. Arguments against skepticism were well known and often cited. For dealing with Academic skepticism there was always recourse to St. Augustine’s arguments. While I may be mistaken that the horse which appears to be standing in front of me really is standing in front of me, I cannot be mistaken that I have the appearance or mental image of a horse standing in front of me, which makes beliefs of states internal to the mind infallible.\(^11\)

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\(^8\) Descartes, *Philosophical Works (vol. I)*, 148.
\(^11\) Wodeham, *LS I* 169, 32-34: “Tamen de sic esse sicut significatur per propositionem contingentem significantem ipsam animam vel rem in anima potest quandoque haberi evidens
Chapter IV: Divine Deception

But, because the problem of divine deception threatened knowledge of the extra-mental world, which was thought to be the ultimate object of scientific knowledge to many and to Wodeham in particular, new arguments were required to respond to the threat to knowledge of the world specifically posed by the problem of divine deception.

One common strategy for dealing with the problem was, as with Descartes, to make intuition in some way infallible. A contemporary of Wodeham’s, William Crathorn (fl. 1330), used the notion of a guarantor God in an argument similar if not identical to the one later used by Descartes to refute the evil demon argument. It cannot be the case that all we see around us is false, because that would mean that God would act without purpose; and God cannot act without purpose. In other words, it would lead to a contradiction of the cognition of God, and so God cannot deceive: “From a sensitive cognition and by this self-evident (per se nota) proposition: God or the first cause never acts pointlessly and supernaturally to lead humans into error, such sensitive things can evidently be concluded to be.”

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12 Descartes, *Philosophical Works* (vol. I), 171.

13 Qtd. in Pasnau, *Theories of Cognition in the Later Middle Ages*, 233-234: “Ex cognitione sensitiva et isto complexo per se nota: Deus vel prima causa nihil agit frustra et supernaturaliter ad inducendum homines in errorem, potest evidenter concludere tales res sensatas esse.” It should also be noted that even before Crathorn, Aquinas had used Descartes’ argument. In “Skepticism and Metaphysics” (555), Perler writes the following: “Aquinas is well aware of the fact that God, unlike an angel, can manipulate every cognitive process. In principle, God could arbitrarily implant an intelligible species in my intellect and make me have a false belief. Should he do so, he would clearly deceive me, which is bad, and a bad action is always a deficient action. But God is a perfect being, as Aquinas points out, and
“Nisi Deus Decipiat”: *Adam Wodeham on Evident Knowledge*

Ockham used the same strategy but with different tactics, namely the theory of the intuition of non-existents. As mentioned, according to the definition of intuition Ockham adapted from Scotus an intuition is what supplies evident cognitions of what exists and is present, but, according to Ockham, also supplies cognitions for what does not exist and is not present. In case God destroyed its natural object while conserving an intuition in the mind, the intuition would inform the mind that its object does not exist and is not present. Ockham’s theory in one stroke maintains the principle of God’s omnipotence while neutralizing the problem of divine deception. Wodeham notes the use of the intuition of non-existents to avoid the problem of divine deception thusly:

>In favour] of Ockham’s response, I argue: For unless by virtue of an intuitive cognition could be had a certain judgment of the existence of a thing when it exists and of its non-existence when it does not exist, it would be a contradiction that God certifies us of contingent truths. I prove the consequence: because just as God can conserve a vision without the existence of its object so too he can conserve whichever other cognition in the mind, whether incomplex or complex, without its existence. Therefore through no cognition in the mind could we be made certain.

But Wodeham adopts a different posture than that of his predecessors, instead arguing against the view that intuition is, on any

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14 Ockham, *OTh* I 31, 10-16: “...notitia intuitiva rei est talis notitia virtute cuius potest sciri utrum res sit vel non, ita quod si res sit, statim intellectus iudicat eam esse et evidenter cognoscit eam esse, nisi forte impeditur propter imperfectionem illius notitiae. Et eodem modo si esset perfecta talis notitia per potentiam divinam conservata de re non existente, virtute illius notitiae incomplexae evidenter cognosceret illam rem non esse.”

level, infallible. Not only does he fail to provide arguments against the problem of divine deception, he goes as far as to argue in favour of it as an irreducible possibility.

To argue for divine deception means to argue against Ockham’s theory of the intuition of non-existents. Wodeham begins his repudiation of the theory by stating it and reiterating Ockham’s defence of it, saying that “with a non-existent thing, an intuitive cognition alone [the vision without the corresponding thing existing in re]—if it is perfect and conserved miraculously by God—is enough with the power [of vision] and God’s general influence to cause an evident cognition that the thing does not exist.”

It could be argued against Ockham that it is not possible for one thing, an intuitive apprehension, to cause a judgment that its corresponding object exists, and then to also cause the contrary judgment. This is especially true when the causality at work is natural, and involves the passive power to apprehend without the additional agency of the will. In natural causality, according to the principle of the uniformity of nature, causes give rise to the effects uniformly, and cannot but do so. In the case of existential cognitions had through intuitive apprehensions alone, it is not possible for contrary effects to arise. An intuitive apprehension can therefore only give rise to judgments that a corresponding object exists in re.

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16 Ibid. 38, 24-28: “Ad hoc respondetur quod re existente, ipsa notitia intuitiva cum re ipsa causant huiusmodi iudicium et non notitia sola cum potentia. Sed re non existente, ipsa notitia intuitiva sola—si sit perfecta et conservatur miracule a Deo—sufficit cum potentia et generali Dei influentia ad causandum notitia evidentem quod res non existit.”

17 Ibid. 38, 19-23: “...causa naturalis eadem omnino in passivo eodem et uniformiter disposito uniformem casat effectum. Sed visio illa si sit causa iudicii evidentis quod res existit seu primi assensus, est causa non libera sed mere naturalis; et potentia iudicativa est eadem et uniformiter disposita. Igitur causabit semper huiusmodi assensum et numquam dissensum.”
But this objection to Ockham’s position assumes that the cause of a judgment that a thing exists or does not exist are uniformly the same, namely the intuitive apprehension alone, which is not Ockham’s position. The intuitive apprehension is the immediate cause of existential cognitions, but according to Ockham the co-causes of cognitions of existence and non-existence are distinguishable.  

With an intuitive apprehension of a corresponding object that exists in re, the inference is that the thing exists and is present. In cases where God’s power is working to maintain an intuition of an annihilated object, the contrary inference is made, that the corresponding object does not exist. “Nor is it inconvenient that some causes with other co-causes can be contrary in effect from those in which it [intuition] alone can be.”

Taken by themselves, intuitive apprehensions invariably cause judgments of existence and presence. However, the co-causes of cognitions of existence and non-existence break this uniformity and make the causes of each

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18 Ockham, OTh I 56, 9-21: “Septimum dubium est, quia non videtur quod per notitiam intuitivam de re non existente possit evidenter cognosci res non esse. Quia quero: a quo causatur illud iudicium quo intellectus iudicat rem non esse quando non est? Aut a sola potentia intellectiva, aut a notitia intuitiva rei, aut a re intuitive nota. Non primum, quia illa manet invariata sive res sit sive non sit. Igitur cum sit causa naturalis, in eodem passo non habebit effectus oppositos etiam in diversis temporibus, sed quando res est tunc iudicat rem esse; ergo sive res sit sive non, non erit causa totalis actus oppositi. Per idem patet quod non potest dici quod notitia intuitiva sit causa totalis illius iudicii. Nec potest dici tertium, quia illa res est simpliciter non-ens; igitur nullius effectus potest esse causa efficiens.” Ibid. 70-71, 21-9: “Ad septimum dubium dico quod per notitiam intuitivam rei potest evidenter cognosci res non esse quando non est vel si non sit. Et quando quaeritur a quo causabitur illud iudicium potest dici quod potest causari a notitia intuitiva rei. Et quando dicitur quod illa habet causare effectum si res sit, potest dici quod non est inconveniens quod aliqua causa cum alia causa partiali causet aliquem effectum et tamen quod illa sola sine alia causa partiali causet oppositum effectum. Et ideo notitia intuitiva rei et ipsa res causant iudicum quod res est, quando autem ipsa res non est tunc ipsa notitia intuitiva sine illa re causabit oppositum iudicum. Et ideo concedo quod non est eadem causa illorum iudiciorum, quia unius causa est notitia sine re, alterius causa est notitia cum re tamquam cum causa partialis.”

19 Wodeham, LS I 38, 28-29: “Nec hoc est inconveniens quod causa aliqua cum aliqua concausa possit in effectum contrarium illi in quem sola possit.”
distinct. In case the co-cause is the corresponding object in re, the judgment is existence and presence; in case the co-cause is God, the judgment is non-existence.\(^{20}\)

Wodeham quickly replies that Ockham’s position “does not appear true to me.”\(^{21}\) He begins by stating his general conclusion that intuitive apprehensions exclusively and invariably lead to judgments of existence and presence, although he does qualify his initial claim by positing two instances in which intuition can confirm non-existence. In cases in which a form has left a body it can be said on the basis of intuition that the union of the two no longer exists, as when “through a vision by which the [dead] body of Socrates is seen I know that Socrates does not exist.”\(^{22}\) And in cases where a body has taken on contrary qualities successively, it can be known that the supplanted quality no longer exists, as when “through a vision by which I see what is now a black Socrates who earlier was white I know that the whiteness previously seen in Socrates does not exist.”\(^{23}\) But Wodeham is quick to note that this does not apply to cases in which God has preserved an intuition after the annihilation of the corresponding object in re, reiterating that “there is no way for an intuitive cognition, which is that by virtue of which a thing is naturally

\(^{20}\) Ibid. 38, 24-28: “Ad hoc respondetur quod re existente, ipsa notitia intuitiva cum re ipsa causant huiusmodi iudicium et non notitia sola cum potentia. Sed re non existente, ipsa notitia intuitiva sola—si sit perfecta et conservetur miraculose a Deo—sufficit cum potentia et generali Dei influentia ad causandum notitiam evidentem quod res non existit.”

\(^{21}\) Ibid. 38, §4, 3: “Sed illud non videtur mihi verum.”

\(^{22}\) Ibid. 39, 7-8. See n. 23.

\(^{23}\) Ibid., 38-39, 6-10: “...licet una notitia intuitiva possit esse virtute cuius sciatur res non existere, puta per visionem qua videtur cadaver Sortis scio quod Sortes non existit, et per visionem qua video Sortem iam nigrum qui prius erat albus scio quod albedo prius visa in Sorte non existit, et sic de similibus.”
known to be when it exists, to be, if conserved, that by virtue of which a thing is known not to exist when it doesn’t exist.”

Wodeham claims Ockham’s argument is a dodge (evasio), and he further asserts that the previous argument, that an intuition cannot cause contrary effects, holds. According to Wodeham there are only two ways for it to be discovered that intuition can have the co-causes of the object in re or God immediately, through experience or reason, and neither of these gives any evidence that a judgment of non-existence is possible on the basis of an intuition. In experience, we have only the intuitive apprehension to go by, and it uniformly gives rise to judgments of existence, never of non-existence. And reason only obtains concepts from existence, so reason also could not have the concept of a co-cause for evident cognitions.

Moreover, Wodeham claims that the co-causes of judgements regarding existence and non-existence Ockham posits could also lead to the contrary judgments, which would again leave the same contradiction that was made evident in the first argument against the intuition of non-existents. As Elizabeth Karger has noted, Ockham argued in the Reportatio that when a visible object has receded a sufficient distance from the eye, rendering the intuition too weak to serve as the basis of a judgement that a singular thing either exists or does not, then God can intervene and conserve an intuition supporting the judgment that the

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24 Ibid. 39, 14-17: “Licet, inquam, ita sit, nullo tamen modo notitia intuitiva, quae est virtute cuius scitur res esse naturaliter quando existit, esset si conservatur virtute cuius scirem [rem] non existere quando non existit.”
25 Ibid. 39, 17-19: “Primo, propter argumentum iam factum, cuius responsio non est nisi evasio, quia nec per experientiam nec per rationem scitur.”
27 Ockham, OTh V 258, 20-23: “...si Deus causaret in me cognitionem intuitivam de aliquo objecto existentemente Romae, statim habita cognitione eius intuitiva possum iudicare quod illud quod intueor et video est, ita bene sicut siilla cognitione haberetur naturaliter.”
thing exists. But, Wodeham observes, if this is the case, then God is the co-cause along with intuition of judgments of existence, not just of non-existence. Hence, the same cause, namely an intuition with God as co-cause but with the object at a distance insufficient to cause an apprehension, could result in judgments of either existence or non-existence, which violates the principle of the uniformity of nature.28

Moreover, it remains possible for God to destroy the natural causal relation that exists between an intuition and a judgment of existence through His absolute power:

Because no creative act, however much present to a disposed power [vision], can have a certain effect in such a power, unless with God’s (who can freely not act as coagent) coagency. This is clear through the experiment in Scripture of the three boys in the fire, and is a principle even with him [Ockham].29

The idea is that any cause and effect relationship is such because God wills it, and His willing things to be so is a form of co-agency along with any natural cause.30 God can, however, remove His co-agency, and

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29 Ibid. 40, 44-48: “...quia nullum activum creatum, quantumcumque praesens passo dispositivo, agit aliquem effectum in tali passo, nisi Deo (qui potest libere tunc non coagere) coagente. Haec patet ex experimento Scripturae de tribus pueris in camino, et est principium etiam apud eum.”

30 It should be noted that this does not require a reading of either Ockham or Wodeham as an occasionalist. My coffee cup is sitting on the table right now, and one could say that this is only because I am tacitly agreeing in the present instant not to throw the cup across the room. Hence, although my cup’s being where it is depends on my agreement, and therefore my willing that it be so could be seen as a sort of coagency, I am doing nothing in
therefore remove natural causal relations as He sees fit. It is therefore possible for God to remove the natural cause of an intuition while simultaneously directly causing the same intuitive apprehension that the present object would have. In such an instance, according to Ockham’s own argument, which has an intuition with God alone as co-cause leading to judgments of non-existence, we would have a judgment of non-existence and absence while the thing in re both exists and is present.

Wodeham concludes that Ockham’s argument for the possibility of intuition of non-existence does not follow. Against the thesis that intuitions uniformly cause judgments of existence, Ockham argued that the co-causes allow for a uniformity of causes to the effect of both existence and non-existence because the co-causes made the causes, and therefore the effects, distinct. Wodeham shows, however, that according to Ockham’s own principles an intuition with a co-cause of a thing in re and an intuition directly caused by God can lead to both judgments of existence and non-existence. The uniformity of effects Ockham sought to break through distinguishable co-causes does not work, and the original argument Ockham was arguing against, namely that intuitions can only lead to judgments of existence, holds, and is the position Wodeham will adopt:

Clearly it is never possible by virtue of an intuitive cognition of some object to judge the cognition’s object to not exist, nor also by virtue of whatever other intuitive cognition, unless in the way conceded above, when one part appears separated from other parts [as the case with Socrates’ dead body], or when something that appeared earlier through a vision inhering in something which

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terms of efficient causality to make it such that it is on the table. The natural efficient causes fully explain why the cup is there without recourse to anything besides.
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now does not inhere [as the case of one colour being replaced with another].\(^{31}\)

Wodeham’s position is that there are no intuitive apprehensions from which the non-existence of a singular thing \textit{in re} could be inferred. In the case of first-mode evident proposition, there would be no means for learning that the object had been annihilated and was being maintained by God. In the case of a second-mode evident proposition, which includes the inference that “I have my eyes open and nothing is impeding, therefore I would see it if it was to be present”, it does not follow that “it is not present such that it would be naturally possible to be seen from a non-impeded power, therefore it is non-being.”\(^{32}\) Wodeham further claims that even if it were possible to take in the whole universe and all things in it in a single glance, inferences to non-existence would not follow, because “God may have placed it [the object of the intuition] outside the world.”\(^{33}\)

While Wodeham may have refuted the thesis of the intuition of non-existents, his work is only half done. Chatton also argued against the intuition of non-existents, but in a way that secured sensory intuition against the threat of divine deception. By the principle of God’s omnipotence God can do whatever can be done. But not even He can do the impossible. Divine power is limited by the principle of non-

\(^{31}\) Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 40, 51-56: "...scilicet numquam virtute notitiae intuitivae objecti alicuius potest iudicari obiectum illius notitiae non existere, nec etiam virtute cujuscumque alterius notitiae intuitivae, nisi per modum superius concessum, ubi una pars videtur a qua separatur alia pars, vel videtur aliquid cui prius per visum apparuit aliquid illi inhaerens quod modo non inhaeret."

\(^{32}\) Ibid. 40-41, 64-67. See n. 33.

\(^{33}\) Ibid. 40-41, 62-68: "De intuitiva primitam patet ex quarta conclusione. De intuitiva alterius patet etiam per hoc quod tale iudicium non haberetur sine tali vel consimili deductione: 'habeo oculos apertos and nihil impedit, igitur viderem hoc si esset praesens'. Non plus sequitur. Sed mihi non valet 'hoc non est praesens sic ut possit naturaliter videri a potentia non impedita, igitur non-ens', sed est fallacia consequentis. Ponamus etiam quod videres omnia, et totum mundum simul, adhuc non sequitur, quia Deus posset illud ponere extra mundum."
contradiction. While Chatton may have agreed that God might create any
type of entity *ex nihilo* without its usual secondary cause if He so wished,
the case is different when it comes to intuitive apprehensions of singular
things. It was to Chatton impossible for God to create a vision of a
singular thing without that thing both existing and being the direct
cause of the effect.

In his article, “Can God Make a Picasso?,” Rondo Keele gives an
excellent account of Chatton’s argument against Ockham. According to
Keele, the two held opposing readings of Article 98 of the Paris Articles.\(^\text{34}\) Ockham took the Article to mean that any and every possible effect of a
secondary cause can be brought about directly by God, which, claims
Keele, results in a form of occasionalism. Chatton, on the other hand,
read the article as directed primarily against the emanationist theory of
creation; it was not applicable to cases of natural causality of singular
things.

Keele uses the metaphor of a Picasso painting to illustrate the
contending positions. On the one hand, it could be argued in an
Ockhamist line of reasoning that God could create Picasso’s painting
*Guernica* down to the last molecule without Picasso acting as an
intermediary, because to say that God could not would imply that Picasso
has capabilities that God lacks. *A fortiori*, if Picasso can create *Guernica*,
then surely an omnipotent being can. Chatton’s position, on the other
hand, is that God could indeed make a painting materially identical to
*Guernica*, but not even He could make a genuine Picasso without Picasso
both existing and acting as the cause of the painting, because an

\(^{34}\) Keele, “Can God Make a Picasso?”, 404.
irreducible part of what makes a Picasso painting a Picasso is that Picasso himself painted it:

[It] might [to Chatton for instance] seem a part of Guernica’s identity conditions that Picasso painted it; hence, it would be a contradiction that Guernica would exist without Picasso making it; hence, it would be impossible for Guernica to exist unless Picasso existed; hence, it is no limitation on God that he cannot make Guernica without Picasso, since even God cannot do the impossible.35

Chatton, claims Keele, used this line of reasoning to argue in favour of real relations against Ockham’s reductionist tendencies, and the same reasoning applies to instances of intuitive apprehensions of singular things.36 Just as a Picasso painting cannot be brought about without the existence and agency of Picasso, so too an intuitive apprehension of a singular thing cannot be brought about without the existence and agency of its object. It would be to say that “this intuition of this whiteness is not an intuition of this whiteness”, because this whiteness does not exist and is not causing the intuition, which is a clear contradiction.

Chatton’s arguments against the intuition of non-existents apply equally to divine deception, and form another horn in a dilemma Wodeham faces when accepting its possibility. If it were the case that God could not create an intuitive apprehension without a corresponding object existing and acting as cause, then God would be incapable of deceiving us. For in every intuitive apprehension of a singular thing it would follow that the corresponding object would be required to exist.

Wodeham lists Chattonian arguments, and deals with them in order. First, Wodeham notes, it would follow for someone like Chatton

35 Ibid. 396-397.
36 Ibid. 396.
that “I see Peter, therefore Peter is.” The idea is that if I see Peter, then I must see something, and I don't see anything besides Peter. So, Peter must be something, namely that which I see, and everything that is exists, so Peter must exist. Wodeham quickly dismisses the first argument as a *secundum quid* fallacy. In the same way that “Homer is a poet, therefore Homer is” does not follow, Peter's existence does not follow from having a vision of him. If intuition were infallible, perhaps it would, but Wodeham notes that “the middle through which it is held is false, clearly that ‘Peter is something’.”

The second is similar to the first. Wodeham cites an argument by which it is contradictory to hold by the same vision by which I see Socrates running, I judge Socrates not to be running. Wodeham's rejection of this argument is a bit more involved. As mentioned, he along with Ockham denies that motion is an absolute entity; it is, rather, a being of judgment. We see Socrates in successive visions and judge motion to be taking place, in this instance running. Hence, in this case, the error at work is not located with intuition but with judgment, because

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38 Ibid. 48, 22-25: “Ad primum istorum respondeo. Prima consequentia peccat secundum quid et simpliciter, sicut etiam ista ‘Homerus est poeta, igitur Homerus est’. Ad probationem etiam nego consequentiam, quia medium per quod teneret falsum est, hoc scilicet ‘Petrus est aliquid’.”

39 Ibid. 47, 7-10: “Item, qua ratione visio qua video Petrum posset per potentiam Dei existere Petro non existente, eadem ratione visio qua video Sortem currere Sorte non currente. Consequens includit contradictionem, quia repugnantia est quod Sortes non currat, et tamen quod video Sortem currere.”
we never see motion, we only judge there to be motion from successive intuitions.\(^{40}\)

The third is that when we see something like non-existent whiteness, we must be either seeing something or nothing. If something, then it can be nothing besides this whiteness, which implies that the whiteness must exist, since the existent thing can be nothing besides this whiteness. If, on the other hand, it is nothing, then nothing is seen, which is absurd.\(^{41}\) Wodeham responds by saying that a singular can be noted in different ways, and that a term such as “a or this appears” does allow for a non-existent object, while a common term such as “Peter” or “whiteness” does not allow for it. If it is the former in the proposition, a demonstrative pronoun or proper name, then a non-existent object is possible. If it is the latter, a common term that connotes a singular, then it is an example of false implication:

Because it is certain that “this,” is to denote a conserved vision of a non-existing object, and is causable by God, and per consequence it is nothing. Therefore it is not something, therefore it is not a being, therefore it is not a quality, therefore it is not white.\(^{42}\)

A Chattonian line of reasoning against Ockham applies to Wodeham only if it is presupposed that the theory of divine deception is to

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\(^{41}\) Ibid. 48, 14-17: “Item, quando video hanc albidenem non existentem, aut aliquid videtur a me aut nihil. Si aliquid, et nonnisi haec albedo, igitur haec albedo est aliquid, igitur non est aluid ab albedine. Si nihil, igitur non video aliquid, igitur non albedinem, igitur non haec albedinem, quod est propositum.”

\(^{42}\) Ibid. 49, 53-56: “Quia certum [est] quod ‘hoc’, denotando objectum non existens visionis conservatae, est causabile a Deo, et per consequens est nihil. Igitur non est aliquid, igitur non est ens, igitur non est qualitas, igitur non est albedo...”
be avoided and that God cannot be a deceiver. Chatton’s arguments are powerful against the theory of the intuition of non-existents, because that theory makes intuition infallible. However, if intuition is fallible, and God can deceive, then there is no reason why God could not create an image directly in the mind that would be seen to exist and be present, which exists nowhere in creation.

Let’s take the metaphor of the Picasso again. If we were to have before us two paintings, both of which were materially identical down to the last atom, and we knew that one was created by Picasso and the other created ex nihilo by God, but we were not given further information to help decide which was which, then what additional feature of the true Picasso painting would alert us of the fact? Wodeham’s point is that there is no such additional information. It would be quite possible for us to select the painting created ex nihilo under the impression that it was a Picasso, in which case we would believe falsely. People are deceived everyday by counterfeiters less adept than God.

Chatton assumes that intuition of singulars must be of existing, acting things, because those are the truth conditions for propositions formed from them. However, if God can deceive, then the truth

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43 This follows from Chatton’s “anti-razor.” The idea behind the anti-razor is that the required causes of a true proposition must be posited, which seems to beg the question. Again, if we assume that there is knowledge, and our task is to simply explain its conditions, then we would need to posit an extra-mental object causing any given intuition that supports a proposition expressing knowledge. If such an object were not posited, then the proposition expressing knowledge of the extra-mental world would be false, and non-knowledge. So, the extra-mental object must be posited. An example of the anti-razor is found here: RP 33-34, 464-479: “Ubi propositio affirmativa verificatur pro rebus, si pauciores uniformiter praesentes sine alia re non poterunt sufficere, oportet plures ponere; sed haec propositio ‘Petrus credit’ est affirmativa et verificatur pro rebus in anima; sed ad verificandum eam non sufficit quod articulus fidei sit in mente; igitur etc. Probo istud assumptum per istam propositionem, quae declarabatur inferius, d.3, q.1, art. 1: illae res non sufficiunt ad hoc quod propositio sit vera, cum quibus qualitercumque praesentibus sine alia re, stat quod ipsa sit falsa; nam hoc intelligo per
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conditions are not applicable, and the inference to existence and agency does not follow from the intuitive apprehension. Keele writes that Chatton might say that “while an omnipotent God can bypass the electorate in directly bringing it about that Smith is President of the United States, he cannot bypass the electorate in bringing it about that Smith is *elected* President of the United States.” Wodeham might respond that if we were presented with the fact that Smith is President of the United States, we would assume that Smith was elected President of the United States, because being elected is how one becomes President in normal circumstances. However, if God made Smith President without an election, then from Smith’s being President we would naturally infer that he was elected, because that's how one becomes President. We would therefore be deceived.

A final objection to Wodeham’s position is that accepting the possibility of divine deception has devastating consequences for certainty: “Because then it would be a contradiction that God would make me certain of whatever exists distinct from him, and thus all philosophical certainty would perish.” If Wodeham does endorse divine deception, then a hopeless type of skepticism would seem unavoidable. Unfortunately, Wodeham does not deal with this consequence of the

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44 Keele, “Can God Make a Picasso?”, 409.
45 Wodeham, *LS I* 48, 18-19: “Qvinto, quia tunc contradictio esset quod Deus certificaret me de existentia cuiuscumque ab eo distincti, et ita periret certitudo omnis philosophica.”
acceptance of divine deception while dealing with Chatton’s arguments, and assumes divine deception in many other places in the *Lectura Secunda*,

which has led several commentators to read him as a skeptic.

§ 4.2: The Skeptic Ockham Once Was

According to the “traditional account”, the high-point of medieval Christian Scholasticism was the synthesis between Aristotelian philosophy and Church doctrine achieved by St. Thomas Aquinas. Precipitated by the Condemnations of 1277, and with initial first steps by Duns Scotus, this synthesis was wrought asunder by Ockham, and the skeptical implications his methodical use of the principle of divine omnipotence entailed. Keele does as good a job as any of summarizing this view:

Ockham’s appeal to God’s omnipotence has a special bite to it in the context of fourteenth-century philosophy and theology. After a period of optimistic synthesis between Aristotle and Christian theology in the mid-thirteenth century, there was a period of increasing skepticism and conservatism, of which John Duns Scotus (d. 1308) represents a moderate first step, and Ockham several steps further.

Even prior to the publication of the critical editions of Ockham’s philosophical and theological works in the 1990s, some, such as

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46 Ibid. 169, 24-34: “Concedo illud quod infertur de iudicio correspondenti veritati contingenti, significant rem extra. Nullum enim tale iudicium est simpliciter evidens evidentia excludente omnem dubitationem possibiliem. Quia cum hoc quod Deus vel natura causaret in mente omnem notitiam et iudicium possibile, starat quod de potentia Dei absoluta non sic esset in re sicut per tale notitiam apprehensam significaretur. Et concedo quod omnis intellectus creabilis est ita diminuatae natruae quod decipi potest circa quamcumque veritatem de re extra si sic esset categorice esse vel non esse. Et in isto casu intelligo quod dictum est supra. Tamen de sic esse sicut significatur per propositionem contingentem significamentem ipsam animam vel rem in anima potest quandoque haberis evidens et infallibile iudicium.”

47 Keele, “Can God Make a Picasso?”, 405-406.
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Philotheus Boehner and Sebastian Day argued it to be inaccurate and grossly unfair to hold Ockham responsible for the breakdown of medieval scholasticism leading into the Renaissance, because Ockham is simply not the skeptic he was commonly assumed to be. Skepticism is incompatible with his direct realism. The interpretations of Ockham as a skeptic were more the result of the prejudices of his interpreters, mainly Étienne Gilson and Anton Pegis, rather than anything based on his work.

Interpretations that have taken place since the publication of critical editions of Ockham’s theological and philosophical works confirm this view. Marilyn Adams, amongst others, has taken a more nuanced approach that neither blames Ockham for the breakdown of the medieval synthesis nor avoids the seemingly obvious conclusion that there are skeptical consequences to his work. Ockham did not specifically address skepticism nor did he seek to make his position secure from it, because he was just not interested in it and found the Academic standard of knowledge absurdly high:

I have found no positive reason to suppose that Ockham was interested in showing that Academic certainty is possible for human beings.... Instead, I am inclined to believe that Ockham

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50 The most well-known account of Ockham as a skeptic responsible for the breakdown of the medieval synthesis comes, of course, from ch. III of Gilson’s The Unity of Philosophical Experience, “The Road to Skepticism”, 49-72.
52 Adams, William Ockham, 682: “Finally, historians have found it attractive to associate the rise of scepticism with ecclesiastical rebelliousness—and this whether they have regarded the latter developments as good or bad. Of the philosophers discussed in this chapter [Scotus, Henry of Ghent, Ockham, Wodeham, Autrecourt], Ockham is ecclesiastically the most rebellious. For he was excommunicated by Pope John XXII over the issue of Franciscan poverty. ...Given these historical facts, historians have found it natural to cast Ockham in the role of medieval sceptic and destroyer of the medieval synthesis.”
was familiar with the views of the Academics...but he judged, as Sco
tus did, that no reasonable person would adopt the Academic’s
standard for certainty. ...Ockham does not explicitly discuss these
points [Academic standards of certainty], because they do not
expose in this theory a failure to do what he intended to do: it is no
objection to a theory that attempts to show how we can have
certain knowledge according to one standard, that it does not
succeed in showing how we can have certain knowledge according
to another standard—especially where the latter is a standard
that no reasonable person would accept.\textsuperscript{53}

Adams concedes, however, that because of the inconsistencies
present in Ockham’s position, skeptical consequences, which Wodeham
pointed out, are implicit in his work. But, Ockham was merely one
amongst many theologians in his general time period to handle skepti
cism is a less-than-adequate way. She concludes that “the attempt to identify
Ockham as the chief of medieval sceptics is largely misguided and highly
misleading and should, accordingly, be abandoned.”\textsuperscript{54}

The situation regarding Wodeham has, however, been left an open
matter, although interpretations lean towards holding him to be the
skeptic Ockham was once thought to be. After all, as Adams notes, it was
Wodeham who worked out the negative consequences Ockham’s
arguments had on certainty in detail, and he did nothing to show how,
despite the possibility of divine deception implied by God’s omnipotence,
evident knowledge might still be attainable.\textsuperscript{55}

This reading of Wodeham as “embracing”\textsuperscript{56} the skepticism that
Ockham either ignored or actively sought to avoid is most strongly
endorsed by Elizabeth Karger. Following an analysis of Wodeham’s

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid. 601.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid. 629.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid. 602.
\textsuperscript{56} Karger, “Ockham and Wodeham on Divine Deception”, 230.
refutation of Ockham’s arguments supporting the theory of the intuition of non-existents, Karger claims the following:

What we have here [i.e. with Wodeham’s arguments in favour of divine deception] is a standard skeptical argument, in which the possibility of divine deception just described provides the skeptical hypothesis. Surprisingly perhaps, Wodeham regarded this argument as valid. He granted, therefore, that we cannot know of any external thing—more precisely, of any thing other than our own mind—that it exists.57

Her goal in the particular paper this was taken from, and in her analysis of Wodeham’s endorsement of divine deception at the level of intuitive apprehensions, is to demonstrate that there are skeptical consequences to Ockham’s thought, namely, the ones that Wodeham pointed out. But the implication is clear: Ockham was no skeptic, insofar as he never openly endorsed skepticism and took steps to avoid it. Wodeham, by contrast, vigorously argued in favour of it. His acceptance of the omnipresent possibility of divine deception proves it. If it is possible that every intuition we have is false, then how is certainty at all possible?

Wodeham’s own words seem to verify Karger’s thesis. He writes that there “is no cognition that can make us certain of something which could not be a deception, if He so wills it.”58 Even more damning is his claim made in a later section of the Lectura Secunda that there are no categorical judgments of contingents that are evidently true:

The intuitive is not such a cognition by virtue of which would be had an evident judgment in the said first mode unless it is simultaneously evident that God is not miraculously conserving the vision, with its subject annihilated or absent—whether or not this is possible, I don’t care now. But otherwise it does not exclude

57 Ibid. 229.

58 Wodeham, LS I 41. 27-28: “[Ad primam instantiam igitur] concedo quod per nullam notitiam potest nos sic certificare quin possimus decipi ab eo si voluerit.”
doubt in respect of categorical truth. ...By virtue, however of intuitive [cognitions], by a proposition formed from them, whiteness to be can be evidently judged, unless God deceives us. And so I have always said in the above material. It would seem from what Wodeham says that knowledge depends on God’s will. And because there is no way to discern what God wills, there is no way to conclusively rule out that all of our beliefs may be false. It would appear that global doubt follows.

Not only should Ockham’s skepticism be attributed Wodeham, perhaps his influence in Paris should too. Katherine Tachau has claimed that it was Wodeham’s thought as presented in the Lectura Secunda that first made inroads at Paris. Where Ockham was once blamed for the breakdown of the medieval synthesis, maybe Wodeham should be instead? Or, does he at least garner some culpability because he was responsible for making explicit and then disseminating the skepticism implicit in Ockham’s arguments?

§ 4.3: Knowable Truth

But such a reading of Wodeham is a rush to judgment, and ignores key aspects of his epistemology that assign an irreplaceable function to divine deception in the production of scientific knowledge.

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60 Tachau, Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham, 353-357.
Chapter IV: Divine Deception

It seems fair to say that one of the main tasks of theory of knowledge is “replying to arguments for scepticism.” If epistemology’s task is to show what knowledge is, then skepticism, which entirely rules out the possibility of knowledge, would be approached as something to be avoided. The test of a theory of knowledge is how successfully it neutralizes potential sources of doubt.

However, the historical situation Wodeham found himself in was unusual. He was a respondent primarily to Ockham and Chatton, both of whom solved the problem of divine deception by making knowledge had from intuition infallible. Rather than argue against the unacceptable consequence of skepticism, Wodeham was arguing against what he considered to be the equally problematic position of infallibilism inherited from his teachers.

In Book VI, Chapter 3 of the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle lists science alongside four other intellectual virtues: “Let it be assumed that the states by virtue of which the soul possesses truth by way of affirmation and denial”, meaning by way of a judicative act, “are five in number, i.e., art, scientific knowledge, practical wisdom, philosophic wisdom, intuitive reason.” Art is evident knowledge of how to make things. Scientific knowledge is evident knowledge produced by demonstration. Practical wisdom is evident knowledge of how to behave. Intuitive reason is the intellectual apprehension of first principles.

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61 Feldman, “Naturalized Epistemology.”
62 It should be pointed out that Claude Panaccio and David Piché have recently argued in “Ockham’s Reliabilism” that Wodeham’s view of Ockham as an infallibilist regarding intuition—a view adopted by Elizabeth Karger in “Ockham and Wodeham on Divine Deception”—is wrong. While Karger and Wodeham are correct that he formed the theory to combat skepticism, Ockham ultimately claimed that God could deceive if he so wished, even with a false sensory intuition. Ockham should, therefore, be read as a reliabilist rather than an infallibilist.
63 Aristotle, A 1024; Nicomachean Ethics 1139b15-1139b19.
Philosophic wisdom is something of a combination between intellectual intuition and practical wisdom.

Accordingly, the defining characteristic of scientific knowledge is that it is knowledge produced through demonstration, while the principles that demonstration relies on are incapable of demonstration, but are had by intellect alone and are presupposed by scientific knowledge:

Scientific knowledge is judgment about things that are universal and necessary, and the conclusions of demonstration, and all scientific knowledge, follow from first principles (for scientific knowledge involves apprehension of a rational ground). This being so, the first principle from which what is scientifically known follows cannot be an object of scientific knowledge...for that which can be scientifically known can be demonstrated.... If, then, the states of mind by which we have truth and are never deceived about things invariable or even variable [or contingent] are scientific knowledge, practical wisdom, philosophic wisdom, and intuitive reason [intellect], and it cannot be any of the three (i.e. practical wisdom, scientific knowledge, or philosophic wisdom), the remaining alternative is that it is intuitive reason [intellect] that grasps first principles.⁶⁴

In order for a true conclusion to be demonstrated to be so, the premises of the demonstration must be true and known to be such. But to show that the premises are true, they must also be demonstrated. And the premises of those demonstrations must themselves be shown to be true, and so on ad infinitum. Only with a proposition that is known to be true from itself alone would the regress be stopped, and if there were no such principles grounding demonstration, then scientific knowledge would not arise in the first place.⁶⁵ Hence, science as demonstrative reasoning presupposes intellectual intuition of self-evident propositions (principles) that are non-demonstrable, and therefore non-scientific.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 1027; Nicomachean Ethics 1140b31-1141a8.
⁶⁵ Ibid. 113-114; Posterior Analytics 72b5-73b35.
Chapter IV: Divine Deception

It is the Aristotelian view of science as demonstrative knowledge distinguished from intellectual intuition that Wodeham defends by way of divine deception. He elaborates that scientific knowledge is demonstrative knowledge, and that unless scientific truths are not, taken alone, open to doubt, there is no function for demonstration. All knowledge of the extra-mental world would be had through intellectual intuition of self-evident propositions alone. Hence, science presupposes doubt. To argue for infallibilism is to argue against doubt, which inadvertently deprives science of its function.

He begins D.1, Q.3, a question entirely dedicated to defending the claim that scientific knowledge presupposes doubt, by claiming that scientific truth is knowable truth, and that knowable truth must be doubtable.\footnote{Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 227, 10: "...dico quod omnis veritas scibilis est dubitabilis.”} He writes that “by doubtable truth I understand a mental proposition with all other cognitions circumscribed not of a nature to necessitate the intellect to form such a proposition to assent it to be thus \textit{(sic esse)} as is signified through it.”\footnote{Ibid. 227, 3-6: "Dico quod per veritatem dubitablem intelligo propositionem mentalem quae omni alia notitia circumscripta non est nata necessitare intellectum formantem talem propositionem ad assentiendum sic esse sicut per ipsam significatur.”} He claims that the reason for this is that “such a proposition neither formally nor virtually excludes all doubt.”\footnote{Ibid. 227, 6-8: “Talis enim propositio non excludit formaliter nec virtualiter omnem dubitationem.”} It would be a doubtable truth if, taken by itself, the mental proposition alone were not enough to cause a judicative act, at least not to a degree that assent would be necessitated.

He gives four reasons to hold all knowable truth to be doubtable. The first stems from Aristotle’s distinction between the intellectual virtues of scientific knowledge and intellectual intuition from the
Wodeham holds scientific knowledge to fall entirely upon the conclusion of a demonstration. However, if a proposition that could serve as the conclusion of a demonstration were formed alone, without a demonstration or any other mental act that inclines the mind to judgment, then the belief would be doubtable:

For whatever thus necessitating the mind is either of a principle per se nota from the terms and act corresponding to it. Or a habit, and such is not knowledge, but intellect, and such...is not called knowable [because not demonstrable]. Or in case the proposition is of some contingent experience, and such also is not knowable, nor the conclusion of such a demonstration.70

His second reason stems from his view of the total object of judgment and the function of judicative acts. The object of a judicative act is never merely the conclusion of a demonstration, but of the conclusion plus the premises. He writes that “no scientific evident assent has for its total object [the sic esse] that precisely which is signifiable through the conclusion of a demonstration, but that and more.”71 He further adds that “no assent is a first apprehension of a part of its object.” However, he further adds “I say no assent that is scientific” to further distinguish science from intellectual intuition.72

His third reason follows from Aristotle’s dictum that knowledge works from what is more familiar and certain, namely the premises of a demonstration, to what is less familiar and certain, namely the

69 Aristotle, A 1027; Nicomachean Ethics 1140b31-1141a8.
70 Wodeham, LS I 228, 24-28: “Quaelibet enim sic necessitans vel est principium per se notum ex terminis et actus sibi correspondentes. Vel habitus, [et talis] non est scientia sed intellectus, et talia—per [praedictam] conclusionem—non vocatur scibilis. Vel est propositio aliqua experimentalis contingens, et talis etiam non est scibilis, nec conclusio talis demonstrationis.”
71 Ibid. 228, 33-34: “...nullus assensus evidens scientificus habet pro objecto totali illud praecise quod est significabile per conclusionem demonstrationis, sed illus et plus.”
72 Ibid. 228, 34-36: “Et nullus assensus est prima apprehensio alicuius obiecti sui partialis, nullus inquam scientificus.”
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conclusion. If this is true, then the evident truth of the conclusion of a demonstration is only seen to be so through the premises of the demonstration. Hence, the conclusion taken alone is not evidently known, and must therefore be open to doubt.

The fourth is worth quoting at length:

Fourth—and in this stands all those preceding—everything signifiable through the conclusion of a demonstration making knowledge different from that which the mind naturally would assent that it is so or it is not so (sic est vel non sic est)—I am not saying “all” but those apprehensions signifying something to be so (sic esse)—is doubtful. And all knowable truth, that is all truth which is the conclusion of a demonstration making knowledge, is such an apprehension. Therefore, it is doubtful.\(^\text{73}\)

Following this claim, he responds to several objections. The first stems from the ontological proof of the existence of God that he himself holds is open to the viator through a divinely implanted abstractive cognition of God that is proper to God. Wodeham’s position is that from such a cognition, God’s existence and His attributes can be known in the form of a self-evident (per se nota) proposition, such as “God exists.” God’s existence is a knowable truth from a proposition formed from the concept of God alone, and propositions of this sort would be knowable and not doubtful, contradicting his claim that all knowable truth can be doubted:

God to be is a per se nota truth even from an simple abstractive [cognition] distinct [from] and proper to God; to us, however, it is doubtful and knowable. Therefore an evident assent from intrinsic evidence can be had of it [the proposition] without more that signifies through a knowable truth. For such a signifiable, that is sic esse, can be signified through a proposition composed of

\(^{73}\) Ibid. 228, 44-49: “Quarto—et in hoc stant omnia illa praecedentia—omne significabile per conclusionem demonstrationis facientis scire absque hoc quod mens naturaliter assentiat evidenter quod sic est vel non est—non dico ‘omni’ sed aliqua apprehensione significante sic esse—[dubitabilis] est. Et omnis veritas scibilis, id est omnis veritas quae est conclusio demonstrationis facientis scire, est talis eius apprehensio. Igitur [est] dubitabilis.”
intuitive intentions, simple abstractive [cognitions] and common abstractive [cognitions] a congregation of which would be proper. And one of these could be an evident apprehension, others not existing evidently, and so to necessitate the intellect, others not necessitating a conforming assent.74

Hence, in certain ways, according to how the proposition is constructed, the proposition would allow doubt, and would therefore be doubtable. However, the numerically identical proposition composed of terms from a different sort of apprehension would be per se nota, and not open to doubt. Hence, a single proposition is at the same time doubtable, and therefore demonstrable and knowable, but also not open to doubt, a contradiction.

Wodeham tackles this problem in two ways. The first is through an analogy argument. He distinguishes between a proposition that predicates something to be possible and one that asserts something to be impossible. He writes that “it is one thing to say ‘every surface can be made white’, and another to say ‘no surface can be made black’.”75 He further writes that “from the first [proposition] the second is not inferred, but allows that some surfaces could be made black.”76 Just as it is one thing to say that every surface can be made white does not rule out the possibility that there are surfaces that can be made black, so too it is one thing to say that “everything signifiable through the conclusion making knowledge is doubtable” and another to say that “no such’ when

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74 Ibid., 229, 3-10: “Deum esse est verum per se notum etiam habentibus abstractivam distinctam et propriam simplicem Dei; nobis autem dubitabile [est] et scibile; igitur assensus evidens evidentia intrinseca potest haberi de illo sine pluri quod significatur per veritatem scibilem. Tale enim significabile, id est sic esse, potest significari per propositionem compositam ex intentionibus intuitivis, abstrativis simplicibus et abstractivis communibus quarum congregatio sit propria. Et una illarum potest esse evidens apprehensio, alia non existente evidenti, et ita necessitare intellectum, alia non necessitante ad assensum conformem.”

75 Ibid. 229, 23-24: “Ad primum dico quod aliud est dicere ‘omnem superficiem esse deallabilere’, et aliud est dicere ‘nullam superficiem esse denigrabilem’.”

76 Ibid. 229, 24-25: “Prima enim non infert secundum, sed bene permittit quod aliqua superficies sit denigrabilis.”
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apprehended per se ‘is evidently cognizable’.”\(^7\) In other words, from the fact that there is a class of propositions that could serve as the conclusion of a demonstration open to doubt, it does not follow that no proposition is self-evident. He cites Scotus to this effect, whom, he claims, held that “to us [those in the viator state] the proposition ‘God exists’ is not per se nota, but a proposition of the beatified signifying the same is per se nota.”\(^7\)

But, an opponent might persist, “the act which is of a nature to be caused by medium of a per se proposition—that is, which necessitates the mind (all other cognition circumscribed) to assent that it is so just as it signifies to be—is an act by which it is evidently assented to be just as it signified through the conclusion of a demonstration.”\(^7\) A proposition per se nota necessitates the mind to assent, and can therefore be known from nothing beyond the proposition. But, a proposition of this sort can also be the conclusion of a demonstration. Thus “a proposition per se nota, from that which adequately signifies it to be so just as the conclusion of a demonstration making knowledge, can be the conclusion of a demonstration making knowledge. Therefore it is a knowable truth...and,

\(^{77}\) Ibid. 229, 26-29: “Similiter dico in proposito: aliud est dicere ‘omne significabile per conclusionem demonstrationis facientis scire esse dubitabile’ quando ipsum apprehenditur nullo alio apprehenso, et aliud est dicere quia ‘nullum tale’ quando apprehenditur per se ‘est evidenter cognoscibile’.

\(^{78}\) Ibid. 230, 39-41: “Unde, et hoc vult Doctor noster secunda distinctione primi, quod haec [propositio] nostra ‘Deus est’ non est per se nota, sed propositio beatorum idem significans est per se nota.”

\(^{79}\) Ibid. 230, 6-11: “Sed ille actus qui natus est causari mediante propositione per se nota—id est quae necessitate mentem (omni alia cognitione circumscripta) ad assensum quod sic est sicut significat esse—est actus quo evidenter assentitur sic esse sicut significatur per conclusionem demonstrationis. Igitur est scire. Igitur veritas quae sic significat esse, mediante qua natum est causari et non plus, est veritas scibilis.”
however, it is not doubtable.” If that’s the case, then Wodeham must be wrong.

He responds to this objection by raising Aristotle’s distinction between scientific knowledge and the other four intellectual virtues from the *Nicomachean Ethics*, claiming that the objection confuses the genera, the intellectual virtues, with the species, demonstrative knowledge. He writes that “whichever proposition sufficient for this [to necessitate the mind to assent], that is altogether intelligible and not knowable.” This is to say that propositions *per se nota*, or those which are true and known from the terms alone, are simply understood, and do not require a demonstration to necessitate an assent. The situation with knowable truth, however, is quite different, and requires a demonstration to necessitate the mind to assent. Hence, Wodeham does alter his original position by adding a condition: there are no knowable truths not open to doubt that are distinct from intellectual intuition.

He then addresses several of Chatton’s objections. Two are worth noting. The first runs as follows: “Some proposition can be *a priori* immediate, and, however, be mediate *a posteriori*. Therefore it can be knowable *a posteriori*, and, however, not be doubtful *a priori*.” The idea is that a proposition can be demonstrated to be true by way of a

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80 Ibid. 230, 12-15: “Praeterea, illa propositio per se nota, ex quo significat adaequate sic esse sicut conclusio demonstrationis facientis scire, potest esse conclusio demonstrationis facientis scire. Igitur est veritas scibilis—quia sic exponis—et tamen non est dubitabilis. Igitur non omnis veritas scibilis est dubitabilis.”
81 Aristotle, A 1024; *Nicomachean Ethics* 1139a14-1139a19.
82 Wodeham, *LS I* 231, 17-18: “…dico quod illa conclusio non distinguit inter actum sciendi et actum sapientiae et intellectus.”
83 Ibid. 231, 26-27: “Quaecumque enim propositio ad hoc sufficit, illa est intelligibilis tantum et non scibilis.”
84 Ibid., 232, 13-15: “…alia propositio potest esse immediata a priori, et tamen esse mediata a posteriori. Igitur potest esse scibilis a posteriori, et tamen non esse dubitabilis a priori. Igitur multo fortius hic.”
syllogism or experience, in which case it would fit Wodeham’s definition of a knowable truth. But, at the same time, it could be immediately known to be true a priori without a demonstration. So, Wodeham’s position, that there are no knowable truths in the sense of truths demonstrable through a syllogism or experience that are not open to doubt cannot be true, because there is a class of beliefs that are per se nota, but that can also be demonstrated.85

In the same line of reasoning, Chatton claims that a proposition could be formed from visions, and therefore be a knowable truth demonstrable by experience, but the same proposition when formed from the definition of the propositions extremes could still be true a priori. “Every whole is greater than its parts” would be of this type. One could, for instance, be seeing a whole chair and notice that it is greater than any of its parts. But, the proposition so formed could also be known from the definition of “whole” and “part”, and would therefore be undoubtable.86

It could be objected to Chatton that the class of propositions that are known a priori and are capable of being demonstrated serve no purpose and should be eliminated through parsimony, but he precludes this by noting that “in propositions per se nota there are degrees. Therefore one can be more evident than another.”87 Hence, a proposition

85 Ibid. 232, 27-29: “Sed premissae consequentes istam ‘omne totum est maius sua parte’ sunt huiusmodi—puta, quod continet partem et plus est maius eo, sed omne totus est huiusmodi, igitur.”

86 Ibid. 233, 46-51: “Item, probatur quod non omnis scibilis sit dubitabilis, etiam isto non addito. Et primo supponitur quod alia est propositio quam format videns rem et ‘alia quam post visionem conceptu complexo (si per istum causet conceptum simplicem) et alia forte quam format quando simul concurrunt visio cum descriptione.’ Secundo supponitur ‘quod ista ‘omne totum’ etc. sit per se nota, quocumque istorum modorum formatur’.”

87 Ibid. 233, 35-36: “Item, ‘in propositionibus per se notis sunt gradus. Igitur una potest esse evidentior alia, et per consequens probare [eam]’.”
that is *per se nota* because true by definition of the terms can be clarified and become more evident with a demonstration.\(^8^8\)

Moreover, the distinction between demonstrations *quia* and *propter quid* also assumes that some conclusions are demonstrable but not doubtable. Briefly, Aristotle explained that *quia* demonstrations work from the effect, given in the premises, to the cause, given in the conclusion, while in a *propter quid* demonstration the cause is used to reason to the effect.\(^8^9\) Take the following two claims: (1) “the planets do not twinkle, because they are near”, and (2) “the planets must be near, since they do not twinkle.” The first would be *propter quid* and the second *quia*, and their corresponding demonstrations would run as follows:

**Quia:**

- Heavenly bodies that are near do not twinkle.
- The planets do not twinkle. *(effect)*
- So, the planets are near. *(cause)*

**Propter quid:**

- Heavenly bodies that are near do not twinkle.
- The planets are near. *(cause)*
- So, the planets do not twinkle. *(effect)*

Chatton claims that while in a *propter quid* demonstration the conclusion with premises circumscribed could be open to doubt, in a *quia* demonstration the conclusion is not. Because the conclusion of a *propter quid* demonstration is caused by the premises, were the premises to be circumscribed, the conclusion would be doubtful, since insufficient on its own to cause assent. But because the conclusion of a *quia* demonstration is the cause of the premises, were the premises to be circumscribed, the

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\(^8^9\) Aristotle, A 129; *Posterior Analytics* 78a22-79a16.
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conclusion would be just as certain, for the very reason that demonstrations follow from the certainty of the conclusion in that sort of demonstration. Chatton claims that Wodeham’s position applies for *propter quid* demonstrations, but that “it [the conclusion] is not doubtable *quia*, for it is one thing for a proposition to be doubtable *quia* when the question is about ‘whether it be true’ and another to be doubtable ‘whether it be true because of such or such a cause’.” A demonstration *quia* does not ask “whether it [the conclusion] be true” because it presupposes it; rather, it is formed in response to the question “whether it be true because of this or that cause”, which may be doubtful.\(^9^0\) The point is that the same proposition would be at the simultaneously demonstrable and undoubtable.

Wodeham’s response to all of Chatton’s objections is to reassert Aristotle’s distinction between scientific knowledge and intellectual intuition. He writes the following:

I hold that no proposition *per se nota*—that is of a nature to necessitate an assent that it is just as signified—is knowable, but causes an assent which is not knowledge distinct from intellectual intuition. For every assent in respect of something signifiable through a *per se* proposition—because the *per se nota* proposition itself is of a nature to cause an assent, in necessitating the intellect to itself, or concausing—is a type of intellecit.\(^9^1\)

The idea is that an assent to a *per se nota* proposition and a knowable truth are necessitated by different means. With the *per se nota* proposition, it is nothing beyond an understanding of the proposition that


\(^{91}\) Ibid. 234-235, §6 3-8: “...teneo quod nulla propositio per se nota—id est nata necessitare ad assensum quod sic est sicut significat—est scibilis, sed causat assensum qui non est scire distinctum contra intelligere. Omnis enim assensus respectu significabilis per propositionem per se notam—quia ipsa propositio per se nota nata est causare [assensum], necessitando intellectum ad ipsum, vel concausare—est quoddam intelligere.”
necessitates the mind to assent. With a knowable truth, which is defined as a proposition that taken alone is not enough to necessitate the mind to assent, the situation is different. A *per se nota* proposition does not require a demonstration to cause an assent, while a knowable truth does require ancillary acts and propositions to be so necessitated. So, while it may be true that a proposition *per se nota* can serve as the conclusion of a demonstration, the demonstration is not required to cause the assent. A knowable truth requires the demonstration for the assent, and such are scientific truths.

Therefore, in response to Chatton’s main argument, that there is a class of beliefs between intellectual intuition and scientific knowledge that cannot be doubted but are demonstrable, Wodeham claims that in one sense this is true, but with *per se nota* propositions there is no requirement for a demonstration, while with scientific truths it is required.”92

Following this, Wodeham responds to two *dubia*. The first is whether all scientific knowledge is discursive. He writes the following:

For one doubt is whether discourse may be of scientific reason. And from what has been said one conclusion follows through which it [the *dubium*] is solved. For it follows from the aforesaid above that scientific reason is to objectively discourse, that is that the act of science itself is a certain collection of these objectives (*illativa objectiva*), although the act may be simple in itself, so that it does not have for its object being so just as is signified through a conclusion, but just as is signified also through the premises. And here in the same habitude amongst what is signified (*significata*) which was amongst their order, that is the connexion between the premises.93

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92 Ibid. 236, 10-11: “Sed illa probatio non erit syllogismus faciens scire, condistinguendo [scire] contra intelligere.”
93 Ibid. 245, 4-11: “Unum enim dubium est utrum discursus sit de ratione scientiae. Et ex praedictis sequitur una conclusio per quam solvitur. Sequitur enim ex praedictis supra quod de ratione scientia est discurrere objective, hoc est quod ipse actus sciendi est collatio quaedam
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Hence, scientific reasoning involves discursively joining together the terms in the proper order corresponding to the order in what they signify, through premises and inferences arising from those premises, such to cause an act of apprehension of being so (sic esse) as the conclusion of a demonstration signifies. It is not only the conclusion that is the object of the judicative act, although the judicative act supervenes only on the conclusion; it is, rather, the object of the conclusion plus the premises and ancillary apprehensions that causes the judicative act that renders things to be so as the conclusion signifies.

A corollary conclusion he makes regarding the first dubium is that there are per se nota propositions such as “every whole is greater than its parts” that are also discursive. Wodeham notes that this is Henry Harclay’s position. All belief is habit, and the habit of the per se nota proposition is intensified to such an extent that the ancillary acts needed to necessitate an assent are done so quickly by the mind that it seems immediate. However, the per se nota proposition is in fact mediated by ancillary mental acts that necessitate the assent:

For the intellect does not cognize a whole to be greater than its parts unless it is brought together with neighbouring intentions of a whole and part and intentions of greater and lesser. Whence the syllogism by which this conclusion is demonstrated accordingly is this: everything containing something and added above itself is more than it. But every whole contains parts and something more. Therefore every whole is greater than its parts. However, just as he himself [Alhazen] said, the intellect having proposed this conclusion ‘every whole is greater than its parts’ so quickly

illativa obiectiva, licet in se sit actus simplex, ita quod non praecise habet pro obiecto sic esse sicut significatur per conclusionem, sed sicut significatur etiam per praemissas. Et hoc in eadem habitudine inter significata quae erat inter eas ordinative, id est connexione inter praemissas.”
cognizes it that it appears to itself not to syllogize, nor does it perceive itself to syllogize.\(^\text{94}\)

Wodeham agrees that ancillary intentions may be required even for \textit{per se nota} propositions, but disagrees that this means that there therefore are no \textit{per se nota} propositions. Rather, Wodeham thinks that propositions of this sort are \textit{per se nota}, but that they are “remotely” \textit{per se nota}, insofar as they contain their own evidence, but ancillary acts of unpacking the terms is required:

Following this it is to be said that he takes it in the false way, clearly that if this conclusion were immediately cognized, all other cognition circumscribed, it would be doubtful. It is, however—I say—\textit{per se nota}, not immediately, but remotely. Because this with the terms suffice perhaps to necessitate to evident apprehension, which posited in the mind are of a nature to necessitate to assent.\(^\text{95}\)

\textit{Per se nota} propositions that can be demonstrated \textit{a posteriori} can be evidently known, insofar as an intuitive apprehension is available to supply an evident cognition of their validity. But those that are purely \textit{a priori}, such as would be had through an abstractive cognition of God available to the \textit{viator} through supernatural causality, would be \textit{per se nota} but non-evident because non-provable. If they were evident, then a proof that would necessitate an assent in the infidel would be available,

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\(^{94}\) Ibid. 238, 7-11: “Nam intellectus non cognoscit totum esse maius sua parte nisi conferendo ad invicem intentiones totius et partis et intentiones maioritatis et minoriatatis. Unde syllogismus quo demonstratur ista conclusio secundum ipsum est iste: omne continens alius et addens supra ipsum est maius illo. Sed omne totum continet partem et addit supra illam. Ergo omne totum est maius parte. Tamen, sicut ipse dicit, intellectus proposita ista conclusione ‘omne totum est maius parte’ ita velociter cognoscit eam quod videtur sibi non syllogizare, nec percipit se syllogizare.”

\(^{95}\) Ibid. 238-239, 12-16: “Secundum hoc dicendum quod ille falsum accipit, scilicet quod si haec conclusio esset immediate [cognita], omni alia cognitione circumscripta ipsa esset dubitabilis. Est tamen—dico ego—per se nota, non immediate sed remote. Quia ipsa cum terminis sufficit forte ad necessitandum ad evidentias apprehensivas, quae positae [in mente] natae sunt necessitare ad assensum.”
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and, clearly, there are infidels who have formed cognitions of God, seen various proofs, and have still not been convinced.

§ 4.4: The Solution of Divine Deception

It is Wodeham’s view of science that motivates his arguments in favour of divine deception. For if intuitive apprehensions are infallible, as Ockham and Chatton would have it, then mental propositions formed from them would not be knowable truths and would therefore not be scientific. Rather, propositions formed from infallible intuitions would be *per se nota*, necessarily assented to and undoubtable, but, strictly speaking, understood rather than known. This would make all knowledge of the extra-mental world necessary, undoubtable and unscientific.

Wodeham specifically addresses this in D.3, Q.4 of the *Lectura Secunda*. The question is about the ontological proof. The idea behind the proof is that the proposition “God exists” is *per se nota*, or self-evident. He claims “that every proposition and it alone is a proposition *per se nota* which when posited in the mind, and with God not impeding but with cooperation of [His] general influence, necessarily necessitates the mind to assent that it is so just as such a proposition signifies.”96 He further clarifies that such a proposition is not itself knowledge, insofar as it is not itself alone a judicative act of assent nor is it the proposition itself that is true, but that it is virtually knowledge, such that if it is explicitly formed by the mind and reflected on, assent to things being so is necessitated and

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96 Wodeham, *LS II* 176, 3-9: “Circum primum videtur mihi dicendum—licet in modo loquendi sit aliqualis improprietas—quod omnis illa proposition et sola illa est proposition per se nota quae posita in mente, et Deo non impediente sed generali influenza cooperante, necessario necessitat mentem ad assentiendum quod sic est sicut talis proposition significat, ita quod per nullam causam creatam potest fieri quin ipsa posita in mente, mens ipsa cum propositione tali necessitetur adalem assensum, sicut superius multitotiens tactum est.”
the proposition is seen to be a necessarily veridical sign of a fact of the world.\textsuperscript{97} Moreover, he makes it clear that such a proposition acts as a necessitating efficient cause of assent, so that with it alone posited in the mind and with all other ancillary mental acts circumscribed it is “not possible by nature to be doubted.”\textsuperscript{98} Simply forming such a proposition in the mind, and with nothing beyond that, an act of assent is necessitated to an extent that excludes all doubt.

Wodeham then provides several \textit{dubia} regarding self-evident propositions. He first asks if the apprehension of the terms of a mental proposition lie outside of a \textit{per se nota} proposition. A self-evident proposition is such that simply apprehending it is enough to necessitate assent. But, ancillary acts that the formation of a mental proposition presuppose must be posited, such as those that supply the terms. If that’s the case, then no proposition is \textit{per se nota}, because each and every mental proposition presupposes distinct acts of apprehending of the terms. Wodeham, in response, agrees with his predecessors that the acts of apprehending the terms are included in apprehension of the complex:

To this Scotus responds that through the term “\textit{per se}” whatever causes [of the proposition] are not excluded, and so not the terms of the proposition. For no necessary proposition is exclusive of cognitions of the terms, a \textit{per se nota} proposition is not so \textit{per se nota} that the term “\textit{per se}” would be exclusive of cognitions of the terms, because from I of the \textit{Posterior Analytics}, we cogize first principles in as much as we cognize the terms."\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{97} Ibid. 176, 10-15: “Aliqualis, inquam, est in modo loquendi imporprietas, quia talem haberi assensum non est formaliter illam propositionem esse notam, sed quod sic est sicut propositio significat, virtualiter tamen est hoc illam propositionem esse notam, quia tali assensu positio, intellectus potest statim, si homo velit, reflectendo se super talem propositionem perpendere quod ipsa est signum verum.”

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid. 176, 21-23: “...non potest per naturam dubitari quin ita sit sicut talis propositio significat; non quod per istam formaliter, sed causaliter sic assentiat.”

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid. 177, 7-14: “Ad quod respondet Scotus quod per ly ‘per se’ non excluditur quaecumque causa, quia non termini propositionis. Nulla enim propositio necessari est
Chapter IV: Divine Deception

Wodeham’s view on the matter seems innocent enough, but Chatton had raised an important objection against such a view, aimed at Ockham and the theory of the intuïtion of non-existents. If it’s the case that intuition is infallible, then any and every proposition formed through such cognitions would be *per se nota*, insofar as apprehension of the terms would necessitate the mind to assent to a necessary truth to a degree that would exclude all doubt.\(^{100}\)

A foundationalist might say that this is exactly what we need. We want a type of apprehension that infallibly conveys the facts of the extra-mental world to the mind. Intuition does this, which allows for infallible knowledge on its basis.

But for Wodeham it would leave us hopelessly naïve. It would mean that the mind would be necessitated to any and every vision, including optical illusions and other sense deceptions. He writes that “no such proposition [formed from visions alone] is evident with the requisite evidence for a *per se nota* proposition, although perhaps it would be made to necessarily appear to be so just as it signifies; just as it is of those [intuitions] that signify a stick to be broken, of which part is in the water composed from a vision of the stick.”\(^{101}\)

100 Ibid. 180, 26-30: “Ex hoc sequitur quod falsum est quod dicunt hic quidam contra Ockham, quod contingentia tunc non obstat quin—scilicet, stante visione—alia propositio contingens sit per se nota. Et hoc arguunt: ‘quia stante [visione], causantur propositiones quae sunt ita evidentes quod ita sufficient ad causandum evidentem assensum rei sicut quaecumque aliae,’ etc.”

101 Ibid. 180, 36-40: “Sed nulla talis propositio est evidens evidentia requisita ad propositionem per se notam, licet forte faciat necessario apparere sic esse sicut significat; sicut
To this a foundationalist might respond that just because there is a certain set of intuitions that are false, doesn’t mean they all are. Judicative acts that assent to an object’s presence and existence may not be *per se nota*, because false, but a clear vision with the object at an optimal distance from a passively disposed eye, etc., is a *contingent per se nota* proposition: “because a proposition having the same signification can sometimes be true [as with perfect intuitions] and sometimes false [as with sense deception],’ but however, ‘always it is in re just as such a proposition signifies when it is, nor could it be otherwise through created nature, because of this it is *per se evident,*’ therefore.”

To explain, a *per se nota* proposition is known to be true with nothing beyond an understanding of its terms. One would assume that all *per se nota* propositions would therefore be *a priori* and necessarily true. A contingent proposition, such as “my car is red” is typically not verifiable by only framing the terms “my car” and “red” in the mind. If it were, then “my car is red” would be either true or false for all time, which is absurd. Clearly, I could paint my car. But, someone arguing in favour of contingent *per se nota* propositions might say that when the proposition is formed immediately from intuitive acts, then a proposition could be the same in signification but have different truth values at different times in a way that allows for the proposition to be *per se nota*. I know that “my car is red” is true because it is self-evidently true while I am staring at it. Clearly, I could paint my car, which would make what was at one time true, “my car is red”, at another time false.

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est de ista quae significat baculum esse fractum, cuius pars est in aqua composita ex visione baculi sic se habentis, igitur.”

102 Ibid. 180, 43-46: “...’quia propositio eadem sibi in significando potest aliquando esse vera et aliquando falsa,’ quia tamen ‘semper ita est in re sicut talis propositio significat quando ipsa est, nec aliter potest esse per naturam creatam, propter hoc ipsa est per se evidens,’ igitur.”
But to Wodeham, to simultaneously accept that sense deception is possible but that the senses are nevertheless reliable is to accept that doubt must be possible regarding any and all propositions composed from sensory intuitions, especially visions. In order to distinguish between a class of deceptive and a class of veridical visions, there must be a discursive process at work and some sort of standards by which the visions are demonstrated to be either deceptive or veridical. And because this is the case, propositions formed from visions cannot be per se nota, but can only be assented to through a discursive process, which means that they are the conclusions of demonstrations. They are scientific in a way that is distinguishable from intellectual intuition, which arguments in favour of contingent per se nota propositions presuppose. More to the point, in order for the initial vision to not immediately cause an irrevocable assent, vision in general must be doubtable. Distinguishing between true and false visions presupposes that there is an initial stage of hesitation or doubt regarding any and all propositions formed from visions. The hierarchy of evident propositions and his solutions to the problem of natural sense deception presuppose it.  

Moreover, on Wodeham’s part intuition must, in any and all forms, be doubtable in order to allow for science. And this is the broader reason why in every instance in which the infallibility of intuition is argued for Wodeham responds by arguing in favour of divine deception:

But this [arguments in favour of contingent per se nota propositions] does not prove that such a proposition is per se evident or per se nota, by cognitions or evidence which fully certifies the mind that it is so just as it signifies, and excludes all doubt and hesitation of thus to be. And thus I accept a proposition per se notam, and the common School [so] accepts; because it is one error to hear that some proposition could be per se nota false and

103 Wodeham, LS I 163-164: Please refer to chapters III and V for a fuller explanation.
true. Although therefore such a proposition is not possible through creation to be conserved in the mind unless while it is true, however because the mind knows that God could conserve it in him when it is itself false, accordingly the mind is not certain that it is so just as is signified, except conditionally: if God is not miraculously conserving such a proposition. Because of this these [sorts] of categoricals do not exclude all doubt, therefore they are not per se nota.\footnote{Wodeham, \textit{LS II} 180, 47-57: "Sed istud non probat quod talis propositio sit per se evidens vel per se nota, notitia vel evidentia quae plene certificaret mentem quod sic est sicut significat, et omnem excludat dubitationem vel haesitationem de sic in essendo. Et sic accipio propositionem per se notam, et Schola communis [sic] accipit; quia error unus esset audire quod aliqua propositio falsa esset per se nota et vera. Licet igitur talis propositio non possit per creaturam conservari in mente nisi dum est vera, quia tamen mens novit quod Deus eam potest conservare in se quando ipsa falsa est, ideo non est mens certa quod sic est sicut ipsa [significat], nisi conditionaliter: si Deus propositionem talem non conservet miraculose. Propter quod ista categorica non excludit omnem dubitationem, igitur non est per se nota."}

His use of divine deception as a trope is most evident in D.3, Q.4, because there he uses it directly against arguments for contingent \textit{per se nota} propositions. Either vision as a class is infallible and therefore not scientific, or it is doubtable and therefore scientific. Wodeham argues that vision is not infallible to argue that it is scientific, open to discursive reasoning.

To safeguard scientific knowledge Wodeham argues that there simply are no categorical contingent propositions that are undeniably true, but there are hypothetical third-degree evident propositions: “Such [a contingent categorical proposition formed from intuitions] is not doubtable by nature—and so I say now. But through the absolute power of God I do not deny that there may not be doubt permitted of it to be so just as is signified through it.”\footnote{Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 230, 46-48: "Talis non est dubitabilis per naturam—et sic loquor modo. Sed per potentiam absolutam Dei non nego quin permetteret dubitationem de sic essendo sicut per eam significatur."}

This does not, however, mean that knowledge is unobtainable. Rather, contingent knowledge that excludes all doubt is possible, but only
in hypothetical form, never categorical. And such hypotheticals presuppose a discursive process; to arrive at scientific knowledge regarding extra-mental facts and states of affairs requires syllogizing. Knowledge is not simply given but requires thought.

§ 4.5: Concluding Remarks

The chapter began with the historical origins of the notion of divine deception in the Condemnations of 1277 and the principle of God’s omnipotence. It was thought that God could act in place of any cause, including the efficient cause of intuitive apprehensions, the extra-mental object in re. If this were the case, then existential inferences had through intuition would be short of secure. And if it could be that what one intuition portrayed could be false, then it could be that they are all false. It was faced by most as a problem that could lead to global skepticism. The strategy most often used in solving the problem was to make intuition infallible, but tactics varied. Ockham solved the problem through the

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106 Ibid. 170, 47-60: “...distinxi in illa materia de iudicio uno modo supra pro assensu, dissensu vel dubitatione, alio modo pro apparitione qua formaliter—velit homo nolit—apparet homini et videtur ita esse sicut significatur per propositionem ipsam compositam ex visione et notitia multum clara et evidenti, quae propositio, ut dictum fuit, est ipsa apparatio complexa. Intuitiva non est [talis notitia] virtute cuius possible haberi iudicium evidens primo modo dictum nisi simul evidens quod Deus non miraculose conservat visionem, adnihilando vel absentando subiectum eius—quod utrum possit vel non, non curo modo. Sed aliter non excluditur dubitatio respectu categoricae veritatis. Sed bene intuitiva, formata propositione, cuius visio sit pars, significante albedinem esse, ponit evidens iudicium secundo modo dictum. Et hoc sufficeret ad differentiam intuitivae ab abstractiva. Virtute tamen intuitivae, formata propositione ex ea, potest evidenter iudicari albedinem esse nisi Deus decipiat nos. Et sic dixi semper supra in illa materia.” I apologize for repetitiveness. I’ve used this quote earlier in the dissertation. But, this passage makes it clear that hypotheticals count as evident knowledge in the highest sense for Wodeham, and that such mental propositions are the result of a process of reasoning, since divine deception is apparent to reason rather than experience. There must be a discursive process at work in the production of such propositions. Moreover, he makes it clear that such hypotheticals count as evident judgments. Ibid. 170, §17, 11-13: “...aliquod iudicium est evidens posita intuitiva, puta iudicium quo iudicatur quod haec albedo est nisi Deus decipiat me, demonstrata albedine visa.”
intuition of non-existents. Crathorn did so by positing a guarantor God. And Chatton did so by claiming that not even God could deceive in instances of intuition of singular things. If it were to happen, a contradiction would result. Not even God can do what is contradictory, so not even God can deceive on the level of intuition.

Wodeham, however, argued that divine deception is an ever-present possibility. Against the intuition of non-existents, Wodeham used Ockham’s own principles to show that intuition invariably leads to inferences of existence and presence, and that inferences to non-existence could never be safely had. Against Chatton, he argued that a contradiction only arises in case it is presupposed that the intuition is true. There is no reason to suppose that God could not deceive if He so wished, and deception remains possible.

Commentators have read Wodeham’s arguments in favour of divine deception as also being in favour of skepticism. But such an assumption is based on a partial reading of Wodeham and on a false dichotomy between infallibilism and skepticism. One need not be either a skeptic or an infallibilist, and a broader reading of the Lectura Secunda demonstrates that Wodeham chose a third path. His arguments may appear to endorse skepticism, but this is because of who he was arguing against, namely Chatton and Ockham, both of whom approached divine deception as a problem to be avoided. Wodeham, on the other hand, faced the opposite extreme, the problem of infallibilism, which posed a threat to scientific knowledge on par with that of skepticism. If doubt regarding the extra-mental world is not possible, then demonstrative science is not possible. Hence, divine deception isn’t a problem for Wodeham; it’s a solution. He used it as a trope to supply any and every proposition
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regarding the extra-mental world a degree of doubt. This does not, however, mean that he lapses back into skepticism. No proposition composed of intuitions alone is enough to necessitate assent. However, an entire demonstration, premises plus conclusion, and a discursive process that involves evidence from reason is sufficient to do so.
CHAPTER V: WODEHAM’S RELIABILISM

In this chapter I argue that the reliabilism commentators have read into John Buridan’s epistemology is not a repudiation of Wodeham’s infallibilist standard of knowledge, as has been suggested in the secondary literature. Rather, Buridan for the most part adopts Wodeham’s reliabilism and defends it from those who read skepticism into his position on the basis of an infallibilist standard.

The chapter is split into three sections. The first provides Wodeham’s three-fold classification of evident complexes and their corresponding judicative acts. Only a third-mode evident proposition, one that completely excludes doubt and falsity, is capable of causing a third-mode evident judgment, the only type of judgment that, strictly speaking, provides evident knowledge. He further claims that there are no third-mode contingent categorical propositions, but that there are third-mode contingent hypothetical propositions.

How to read Wodeham on this is a matter of debate, and the second section outlines two interpretations that have emerged: Rega Wood’s

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1 Karger, “A Buridianian Response to a Fourteenth Century Skeptical Argument,” 221-223.
reliabilist reading and Adams and Karger's infallibilist reading. Rega Wood claims that Wodeham's position allows for genuine knowledge about the extra-mental world that is reliable, but, owing to divine deception, not infallible. But opponents of her reading have been quick to point out that only an absolutely evident proposition can cause what can properly be considered knowledge according to Wodeham, and that hypotheticals do not constitute assertions about the extra-mental world. Hence, Wodeham ultimately argues that there are no assertions about anything extra-mental that constitute knowledge. Wodeham’s position therefore falls into the skepticism outlined by Nicolaus of Autrecourt. Moreover, John Buridan’s reliabilist standard of “natural evidentness” should be read as repudiation of Wodeham’s infallibilist standard of knowledge.

Although Rega Wood’s reliabilist reading does not fully treat the criterion of third-mode evident propositions and the threat of divine deception in a manner adequate to refute Karger’s arguments, in the third section it is argued that ultimately Wood is correct and that Wodeham should be read as a reliabilist. Third-mode evident propositions are sufficient to cause a third-mode judicative act, which expresses a degree of certainty regarding the extra-mental world in keeping with Buridan’s natural evidentness. The implicit condition that Buridan and other realiabilists accept, that assertions regarding the extra-mental world constitute knowledge only in case God is not deceiving, is made explicit in Wodeham’s hypotheticals. Moreover, there is textual evidence sufficient to make the plausible claim that Buridan took relevant aspects of his

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1 Wood, “Adam of Wodeham,” 78: “Wodeham was a reliabilist, who believed that cognition is reliably though not infallibly caused by its object.”


3 Ibid. 217-219.

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epistemology—his strategy for dealing with the natural threats to the reliability of intuition—directly from the *Lectura Secunda*. Buridan should perhaps be read as a defender of Wodeham rather than an opponent.

§ 5.1: The Hierarchy of Evident Complexes

While Wodeham’s *complexe significabile* may have received the most attention from scholars, it would be incorrect to consider Q.1, D.1 to be the most important section of the *Lectura Secunda*, at least for the purposes of a comprehensive interpretation of Wodeham’s epistemology and psychology. That honour falls to Q.6 of the Prologue and the description of the three modes of evident complex along with their corresponding judicative acts.\(^6\) The question asks whether “God can immediately cause every evident complex in the intellect without a vision of Him which could be caused by way of a vision of Him.”\(^7\) How the question is asked makes clear that the focus of his discussion is sensory intuitive cognition, vision, which is that by which the mind is informed of extra-mental reality. After a discussion of Ockham’s theories, Chatton’s counter-arguments, and the usual back and forth between his two teachers’ views, Wodeham gives his own theory of the evident complex, and distinguishes between three types, which together form a hierarchy according to the degree to which the complex inclines the mind to assent.


\(^7\) Wodeham, *LS I* 143, 7-9: “Utrum Deus sine visione sui possit immediate causare in intellectu omnem evidentiam complexam quam potest causare mediante visione sui.”
Wodeham writes of first-mode complexes that they are composed of “simple apprehensions, such that in informing the mind it cannot not appear to it [the mind] to be so in re just as it itself signifies, whether it is true or false.”⁸ He offers a proposition expressing the optical illusion of the break that appears in a stick partially submerged in water as an example.⁹ Propositions of this sort are had from sensory intuition alone, and, because equally open to truth and falsity, they are unreliable. But there is a corrective to the first-mode evident complex.

Wodeham writes that “through reason or by way of another experience it is possible to be convinced that it is not so whenever [it is false].”¹⁰ For a proposition had from intuitive apprehensions alone, such as “there is a break in the stick”, deliberation would allow for the formation of the opposite belief, that “there is not a break in the stick”, or “there (merely) appears to be a break in the stick.” Because the second proposition would be based on the intuition plus past experience and deliberation, it would be more evident, and compel the mind to assent over the first. However, Wodeham notes that a modified proposition such as “the stick [merely] appears to be broken” would remain true—indeed it would be per se nota—because even with the contrary judgment, namely that “the stick is not broken”, the break remains seen.¹¹

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⁸ Ibid., 163, 11-13: “...componitur simplicibus apprehensionibus, et taliter quod ipsa informante animam non potest sibi non apparere sic esse in re sicut ipsa significat, sive ipsa sit vera sive falsa.”

⁹ Ibid. 163, 15-17: “Sicut est illa propositio quam format videns baculum cuius pars est in aqua, significans baculum esse fractum, quae quidem, ut supra dixi, habet visionem baculi et aquae [ut] partem sui.”

¹⁰ Ibid. 163, 14-15: “[Per] rationem vel experientiam aliunde posset convinci non sic esse quandoque.”

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As for the second mode, Wodeham writes that it is “more strict: it is an evident proposition which when posited neither can not appear to be so just as it signifies nor not be just as it appears.”\textsuperscript{12} In this second mode, evident propositions are not susceptible to deception from optical illusion, since second-mode propositions not only accurately convey an appearance, but necessarily accurately convey an appearance.

Although he writes that “perhaps every proposition evident in this second mode signifies a thing to be categorically and necessarily”,\textsuperscript{13} he should not be taken to mean that second-mode propositions altogether exclude doubt and falsity:

Just as it stands at the same time that by one proposition posited in the mind signifying it to be thus (\textit{sic esse}), it necessarily appears to be so, and however it is known by another (evident complex of equal or greater degree) that it is not so, so it stands possible that one proposition can signify it to be so, existing in the mind, although it would necessarily be just as it signifies to be, the mind doubts it to be so because of that other which with equal necessity appears to it to be so just as signified by [another] proposition, the the other having certified it not to be so.\textsuperscript{14}

Thus, second-mode evident complexes may be categorical and necessary, but can be open to doubt by a contrary proposition that is of an equal or greater degree of evidence, the sort that expresses the possibility

\textsuperscript{12} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 163, 17-19: “Aut magis stricte: illa est evidens propositio qua posita nec potest non apparere sic esse sicut ipsa significat nec non esse sicut appararet.”

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid. 163, 19-20: “Et ideo forte omnis propositio evidens isto secundo modo significans rem esse categorice et necessaria.”

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid. 163-164, 25-31: “...sicut stant simul quod posita propositione aliqua in mente significante sic [esse], necessario appareat sic esse, et tamen sciatur aliunde non ita esse, ita stare potest quod aliqua propositione significante sic esse, existente in mente, quamvis necessario ita sit sicut ipsa significat esse, mens dubitet ita esse propter hoc quod alibi, ubi aeque necessario apparuit sibi ita esse sicut significavit propositio, aliunde certificata est non ita esse.”
of divine deception, for instance. They are not enough to necessitate the mind to assent to a degree that would constitute evident knowledge.

The third-mode evident complex necessitates the mind to assent to a degree that it would be physically impossible for the viator to doubt. Wodeham writes of the third-mode complex that “it is an evident proposition which has these two conditions [cannot not but appear as the complex signifies, nor can it not be as it appears]; and beyond that, by God’s general influence, is of a nature to necessitate the intellect in which it is to assent to being so just as it signifies.”15 He further adds that third-mode complexes “necessitate the intellect to assent to being so just as it signifies, which excludes all doubt and clearly certifies the intellect of being so.”16 The third mode of evident complex corresponds to the highest degree of knowledge available and beliefs had with this degree of evidence fully constitute evident knowledge.

He claims that third-mode evident propositions are “propositions necessary per se nota”, and he distinguishes these from “contingents...signifying extra-mental things, and whatever may be of contingent signification of the mind or intra-mental things.” He finally gives as further examples of things evident in the third mode the “perfect syllogisms”, or the first-figure self-evident syllogism forms like Barbara, and “many consequences” owing to the “regulation of rules.”17

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15 Ibid. 163, 20-23: “Tertio modo, adhuc strictius: illa est evidens propositio quae habet duas istas condiciones; et ultra hoc, stante generali Dei influentia, nata est necessitare intellectum in quo est ad assentiendum sic esse sicut ipsa significat.”

16 Ibid. 163, 31-35: “Et ideo illa propositio evidentior est quam prima vel secunda quae cum hoc quod per eam necessario apparet sic esse sicut ipsa significat et necesario conformiter significat sicut est, et ita necessitat intellectum ad assentiendum sic esse sicut significat, quod omnem excludit dubitationem et plene certificat intellectum de sic essendo.”

17 Ibid. 164, 35-39: “Tales sunt propositiones necessariae per se notae. Contingentes autem non sunt tales significantes rem extra, quidquid sit de contingentibus [significantibus]
Moreover, he notes that while a judicative act corresponding to any of the three modes can accurately be called evident—because had from propositions composed of intuitions—properly speaking an evident assent or evident judgment is only had from a third-mode proposition:

Correspondingly distinctions can be made of evident judgments—if they are had in this way—clearly, in following or of a nature to follow an evident proposition so [first mode] or so [second mode] or thus [third mode]. However, it is not called, as is commonly, an evident assent or [evident] judgment unless it arises following an evident apprehension in the third mode described [my italics].

But how might a third-mode evident proposition of being so in extra-mental reality be possible? Wodeham claims explicitly that in this question he is talking about evidence had from sensory intuition. But because of his acceptance of divine deception, it would seem that owing to the omnipresent possibility of divine deception there could be no third-mode evident proposition of the facts of the world. This would either make evident knowledge impossible, or it would mean that only logical and self-evident truth could be evident knowledge. He seems to verify this when he says that “I say that every objective complex judgment...that God can cause by way of intuition he can cause without it [intuition], because of the same [absolute causal power].”

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animam vel rem intra. Tales etiam evidentiae sunt syllogismi perfecti et consequentiae multae debitis regulis regulatae.”

18 Ibid. 164, 40-43: “Correspondenter posset distinguere de iudicio evidentie—si huiusmodi haberetur—sequente scilicet vel nato sequi propositionem evidentem sic vel sic vel sic. Non vocatur tamen, ut communiter, evidens assensus vel iudicium nisi quod natum est sequi evidentiam apprehensivam tertio modo dictam.”

19 Ibid. 164, 53-62: “Secundo concedo quod omnem evidentiam complexam apprehensivam tantum quolibet istorum trium modum quam Deus potest causare posita visione, potest Deus causare illa circumscripita tam in essendo quam in causando, et hoc tam respectu rei extra animam quam respectu rei in anima, cuius evidentiae complexae visio ipsa non est pars. Probatur per principium saepve allegatum: quidquid potest Deus mediante efficiente secundo etc. Tertio dico quod omne iudicium complexum obiective—quod addo,
The problem is more of a threat than would first appear to be the case. It is possible through supernatural causality for the *viator* to obtain reliable cognitions without intuitive apprehensions. God could of course place abstractive cognitions directly in the mind without the intuitive apprehension to cause it, and those of us in the *viator* state could have some reliable knowledge on their basis. However, if intuitive apprehension is unreliable, or if it could be the case that God could deceive in any and all intuitions, including interior intuition of mental states, then it is difficult to see how any evident scientific knowledge could naturally be had. As mentioned, Wodeham holds it as a principle that whatever is naturally in the mind has been the object of an intuitive apprehension, and he holds all external intuitive apprehensions to be sensory and of singulars.\(^{20}\)

He claims that divine deception is always possible regarding intuitive apprehensions of extra-mental things, and he recognizes that this could lead to the conclusion of the “Academics”,\(^{21}\) namely that all things should be doubted. And, predictably, he rules out the absolute skepticism of the Academy by restating St. Augustine’s arguments.\(^{22}\) But

\[\text{quia adversarii frequenter vocant etiam apprehensiones simplices ‘iudicare evidens’—quod potest Deus causare mediente intuitiva postest per se causare sine ea, propter idem.}^{20}\]

\[\text{Ibid. 23, 55-57: “Hoc tamen semper dico quod nihil imaginamur sensitive nisi illud quod prius sensimus exterius vel cuuis partes sensimus.”}^{20}\]

\[\text{Ibid. 169, 11-14: “Nisi enim aliqua talis esset formabilis ab intellectu de re extra quae possit formaliter vel causaliter patefacere quod non sic esse includeret repugnantiam, nunquam possemus certificari sic esse. Et ita essemus academici.”}^{21}\]

\[\text{Ibid. 169, 24-39: “Concedo illud quod infertur de iudicio correspondenti veritati contingenti, significanti rem extra. Nullum enim tale iudicum est simpliciter evidens evidentia excludente omnem dubtationem possibilem. Quia cum hoc quod Deus vel natura causaret in mente omnem notitiam et iudicium possibile, staret quod de potentia Dei absoluta non sic esset in re sicut per talem notitiam apprehensam significaretur. Et concedo quod omnis intellectus creabilis est ita diminutae naturae quod decipi potest circa quamcumque veritatem contingentem de re extra si sic assentiat categorie esse vel non esse. Et in istu casu intelligo quod dictum est supra. Tamen de sic esse sicut significatur per propositionem.
}\]
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it still stands that if all intuitive apprehensions of extra-mental things are subject to error, then all natural knowledge of the world evident in the third degree, the only category that necessitates the mind to assent and makes for evident knowledge, would be ruled out.

To address this, he claims that while there are no third-mode evident categorical contingent propositions, there are third-mode evident hypothetical contingent propositions. If not for the omnipresent possibility of divine deception, our intuitions would be infallible, and categorical propositions regarding contingent states of affairs would be undeniably true. But, divine deception introduces enough doubt to render all second-mode evident categorical contingent propositions insufficient to cause an evident assent. A hypothetical contingent proposition, “if God is not deceiving, then x is y”, where x and y are intuitive apprehensions, is third-mode evident, and is enough to cause a proper evident assent.

contingentem significantem ipsam animam vel rem in anima potest quandoque haberi evidens et infallibile iudicium. Evidens enim est animae—formata hac propositione de se ipsa ‘ego sum’ vel ‘vivo’—ita esse sicut significatur per eam, maxime si subiectum illius propositionis esset visio animae, quae est sibi possibilis absolute. Nunc autem est hoc sibi evidens vel esse potest aliunde. Utrum autem posset habere aliquod iudicium evidens et infallibile de veritate contingenti circa actus suos alios, non discutio modo.”

23 Ibid. 230, 46-48: “Talis non est dubitabilis per naturam—et sic loquor modo. Sed per potentiam absolutam Dei non nego quin permetteret dubitationem de sic essendo sicut per eam significatur.”

24 Ibid. 170, 47-60: “…distinx in illa materia de iudicio uno modo supra pro assensu, dissensu vel dubitatione, alio modo pro apparitione qua formaliter—velit nolit homo—apparet homini et videtur ita esse sicut significatur per propositionem ipsam compositam ex visione et notitia multum clara et evidenti, quae propositio, ut dictum fuit, est ipsa apparitio complexa. Intuitiva non est [talis notitia] virtute cuius possit haberi iudicium evidens primo modo dictum nisi simul sit evidens quod Deus non miraculae conservat visionem, adnihilando vel absentando subiectum eius—quod utrum possit vel non, non curo modo. Sed aliter non excluditur dubitatio respectu categoricae veritatis. Sed bene intuitiva, formata propositione, cuius visio sit pars, significante albedinem esse, ponit evidens iudicium secundo modo dictum. Et hoc sufficeret ad differentiam intuitivae ab abstractivae. Virtute tamen intuitivae, formata propositione ex ea, potest evidenter iudicari albedinem esse nisi Deus decipiat nos. Et sic dixi semper supra in illa materia.”
would seem that we can have evident knowledge of the extra-mental world, but that it is conditional.

§ 5.2: The Infallibilist Reading

The contemporary philosopher, Alvin Goldman, has defined reliabilism as the view that what constitutes knowledge is justified belief, and that justified belief is the product of a reliable causal process. A reliable causal process, in turn, is one which in natural, non-manipulated environments tends to produce true beliefs:

[Which] species of belief-forming (or belief sustaining) processes are intuitively justification-conferring? They include standard perceptual processes, remembering, good reasoning, and introspection. What these processes seem to have in common is reliability: the beliefs they produce are generally true. My positive proposal, then, is this. The justificational status of a belief is a function of the reliability of the process or processes that caused it, where (as a first approximation) reliability consists in the tendency of a process to produce beliefs that are true rather than false.\(^{25}\)

He contrasts the reliabilist approach to “Cartesian” or infallibilist accounts of knowledge, which hold that a belief must not only be true to count as knowledge, but that a belief is knowledge if and only if it is necessarily true. Because of scenarios that produce global skepticism, such as those posited by Descartes’ evil demon argument and the brain-in-a-vat thought experiment, the infallibilist Cartesian standard of knowledge should, Goldman implies, be rejected in favour of a reliabilist standard, and that supernatural threats to knowledge such as are proposed by divine deception should be ignored, since they pose no threat to naturally justified belief:

\(^{25}\) Goldman, 37.
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[The] suitability of a belief-forming process is only a function of its success in ‘natural’ situations, not situations of the sort involving benevolent or malevolent demons, or any other such manipulative creatures.\footnote{Ibid.}

Based on a close reading of Q.3 of the Prologue in conjunction with the three-degrees of evident proposition outlined in Q.6 of the Prologue, Rega Wood has claimed that Wodeham is a reliabilist.\footnote{Wood, “Adam of Wodeham”, 78; “Adam Wodeham on Sensory Illusions”, 213-252. It should be mentioned that Wood’s reading of Wodeham is similar to that of Onorato Grassi in Intuizione e Significato, insofar as both claim that natural scientific certainty is had on the basis of naturally occurring intuitions tested through deliberation. Grassi, however, largely ignores the threats posed to scientific knowledge posed by divine deception. It was enough, he seems to assume, for Wodeham to have shown how natural certainty is possible. Grassi does not, for instance, discuss third-mode evident hypothetical propositions at all, assuming, one can suppose, that the dividing line between natural and absolute certainty is between second-mode and third-mode evident propositions.} First-mode evident propositions are formed from sensory intuitions alone, and are unreliable, because of natural sense deception. But deliberation on past experience in conjunction with sensory intuition acts as a corrective, from which necessary categorical propositions can be formed, corresponding to second-mode evident propositions. These would be naturally undoubtable if not for divine deception, but divine deception opens enough doubt on second-mode propositions such that they do not constitute infallible evident knowledge. Wodeham’s position is therefore, according to her, that we can have reliable but not infallible evident knowledge:

Wodeham defined three degrees of certainty. The greatest degree that compels the intellect is not possible regarding contingent propositions, since the intellect is aware of the possibility of error and deception. The least degree of certainty is compatible with error; I may be in some degree certain of a mistaken proposition, as for example, when I judge that a straight stick half submerged in water is bent. Despite his preoccupation with the possible natural and supernatural obstructions in the perceptual process and the concessions he made to them, Wodeham was a reliabilist, who believed that cognition is reliably though not infallibly caused
by its object. His basic reply to the sensory illusions adduced by Auriol was that reason and experience allow us to recognize illusions and not to be systematically misled by them. Illusions will continue to incline us to make false judgments, but we can correct our judgments by reference to reason and experience.  

Wood thus seems to imply that the proper way of understanding Wodeham’s hypotheticals is that they constitute beliefs evident to the third degree and are the ultimate expressions of validity and conviction. That only God could make assertions about the world false is just another way of saying that the belief in question is entirely justified and must be valid. Barring a miracle, it is so. Moreover, by making third-degree evident propositions hypothetical Wodeham is not placing evident knowledge in question, but is ensuring its accuracy. There is no instance in which a proposition of that sort could signify falsely or leave out of account anything regarding the state of affairs.

Unfortunately, Wood’s reading of Wodeham adequately addresses the threats to knowledge posed by natural causality, but does not fully address divine deception and Wodeham’s seeming insistence on an infallibilist standard of knowledge in the form of third-mode evident propositions. An opponent of Wood’s reading could easily respond with a

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28 Rega Wood, “Adam of Wodeham”, 78. Wood argues her position fully in “Adam Wodeham on Sensory Illusions”, 213-252. She doesn’t explicitly call Wodeham’s position “reliabilism” in the article, and it is unclear in that paper whether Wodeham thinks knowledge to be ultimately possible or not. However, in subsequent papers and articles she gives a summary of her reading of Q.3 of the Prologue in which she explicitly claims that he is a reliabilist, such as the quote above and in “Epistemology and Omnipotence”, Popes Teacher and Canon Law in the Middle Ages (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 160-178.

29 I should point out that this must be the assumption regarding Wood’s reading. As mentioned, she argues that intuition is naturally reliable, and concedes that divine deception is possible. This is prima facie similar to reliabilism, but, unfortunately, the possibility that divine deception makes any and every belief unrealiable, including those that are otherwise naturally reliable, is one she does not address. This leaves her realiabilist reading open to Karger’s counter-argument that Wodeham’s standard of knowledge makes it such that unless he can rule out divine deception, there can be no evident knowledge.
dilemma argument that might run along the following lines: Hypothetical third-mode evident propositions expressing contingent belief either have the function of asserting something of the world or they do not. If they do not, then there are no assertions about the world that count as evident knowledge, which is just another way of saying that we can have no knowledge of the world. If, on the other hand, they do assert something of the world, then knowledge still would not be possible, because through divine deception Wodeham allows for instances in which what is asserted as evident knowledge is open to falsity. And he himself denies that assertions open to falsity count as evident knowledge. So, even if Wodeham intends to express certainty and avoid falsehood by making third-mode evident propositions hypothetical rather than categorical, the result in doing so is to make assertions about the world either empty or mere opinion. In either case knowing something about the world would be impossible. A position such as Wodeham’s is indiscernible from skepticism. With hypothetical third-mode evident propositions one would

30 Wodeham, LS I 164, 40-43: “Correspondenter posset distinguere iudicium evidenti—si huiusmodi haberetur—sequentia scilicet vel nato sequi propositionem evidentiem sic vel sic vel sic. Non vocatur tamen, ut communiter, evidens assensus vel iudicium nisi quod natum est sequi evidentiam apprehensionem tertio modo dictam."

31 Adams, William Ockham, 452-454. The idea is that Wodeham’s hypothetical contingent propositions are equivalent in what they assert of the extra-mental world to Ockham’s de possibile propositions and syllogisms. Only God is necessary, implying that everything else must be contingent, which further means categorical propositions regarding contingents must be possible rather than necessary. So, Adams writes, demonstrations regarding contingents have the following form for Ockham: “It is possible that every hot thing is calefactive; It is possible that every fire is hot; Therefore, it is possible that every fire is calefactive.” She further writes that “the conclusion [of such a demonstration] tells us rather less than we wanted to know. Cast anachronistically into possible worlds semantics, it asserts only that there is a possible world w in which fire exists, and every fire in w is such that in some possible world w’ (which may or may not be identical with w) it is calefactive, whereas the natural scientist had hoped to show that every fire (if any) in the actual world has the power (virtus) to produce heat (is calefactive) in the actual world. The necessity of the premises and conclusion has thus been bought at the price of considerable information!” (454)
have to verify the antecedent, and to do so one would have to know if God is deceiving. Such a thing cannot be done.

Elizabeth Karger has recently suggested a similar objection, arguing that Wodeham was, in fact, putting forth a “skeptical argument.” Wodeham defines evident knowledge in-line with justified true belief. In order for a belief to count as knowledge distinct from mere opinion, it must true, it must be held with a degree of conviction that excludes all doubt, and its cause must be such to necessitate assent or dissent such that it would be naturally impossible for a *viator* to believe otherwise. But, Karger notes, according to Wodeham’s three-tiered schema of evident propositions there are no beliefs regarding the extra-mental world that are evident in the third-degree, the only degree in which belief can be said to be evident, and thus constitute knowledge. His standard of knowledge is, then, hopelessly high to allow for knowledge distinct from opinion:

> Only a strictly evident judgment [those evident in the third-degree], caused by a strictly evident proposition is, however, according to Wodeham, an act of knowledge, indeed an act of immediate knowledge. Judgments evident to a lesser degree are acts merely of opinion. Because a strictly evident proposition certifies that things are as it signifies them to be, it is, moreover, impossible that, in judging accordingly, the subject be mistaken. Wodeham’s conception of knowledge, in particular of immediate knowledge is, then, infallibilist.33

32 Karger, “A Buridanian Response to a Fourteenth Century Skeptical Argument”, 220: Karger outlines two skeptical arguments floating around in Wodeham’s time. “Skeptical argument A” was based on God as the cooperating agency of any cause, and required belief in God’s existence to follow. “Skeptical argument B”, on the other hand, did not require God’s existence, and follows from the possibility of a all-powerful or otherwise supernatural being’s ability to act alone in creating an effect, such as a vision (216-217). Karger singles out Wodeham as advocating argument B (220).

33 Ibid. 220.
And as Gyula Klima has noted, an argument that hypotheticals cannot constitute a valid type of knowledge was put forward by Nicolaus of Autrecourt in his *First Letter to Bernard of Arezzo*. Autrecourt wrote the following:

Since from that antecedent it cannot be inferred evidently by way of intuitive cognition ‘therefore there is whiteness’, one must add, then, something to the antecedent, namely what you suggested above, viz. that the whiteness has not been produced or conserved supernaturally. But from this it is clear that I have proved my point. For: When somebody is certain of some consequent only in virtue of some antecedent of which he is not evidently certain whether or not the case is such as <the antecedent> states <it to be>—because that antecedent is not known by the meaning of its terms, nor by experience, nor deduced from such knowledge, but is only believed—, such a person is not evidently certain of the consequent. <Now>, this is the case, if that antecedent is considered together with its modification, as is clear to everybody. Therefore etc (*Klima’s translation*).

A hypothetical proposition merely expresses a possible state of the world, and in order for us to say that we have knowledge of the world we must know what is actually an extra-mental state of affairs or fact. And we can only do so by confirming or denying the antecedent—whether or not God actually is deceiving—and this, according to the case, is precisely what cannot be done. We therefore do not have knowledge of actual states of the world, but only possible states, which may allow us to say that we

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35 Autrecourt, 50: “Item. Ex quo ex illo antecedente mediate notitia intuitiva non potest inferri evidenter ‘igitur albedo est’, tunc oportet aliquid addere ad antecedens, scilicet illud quod supra inuistis, scilicet quod albedo non est supernaturalt in esse posita aut conservata. Sed ex hoc manifeste habetur propositum. Nam: Quando aliquid non est certus de aliquo consequente nisi mediate aliquo antecedente de quo an ita sit sicut significat, non est certus evidenter—quia nec illud est notum ex terminis nec experiendia nec ex talibus deductum sed tantum est creditum—talis non est evidenter certus de consequente. Sic est, si consideretur illud antecedens cum sua modificatione, ut clarum est cuilibet. Igitur etc.”
know some things with absolute certainty, but that knowledge would be vacuous.\(^{37}\)

An opponent of Karger’s reading might respond that although Wodeham does not allow for contingent \textit{per se nota} categorical propositions evident in the third degree, which means that no proposition with an extra-mental object is, on its own, capable of causing an evident assent, he does so because an entire demonstration is required to necessitate an evident assent to such a proposition:

When it comes then to a truly evident judgment, propositions which are \textit{per se nota} can cause evident judgments because the truth of those propositions can in no way be doubted. However, besides propositions \textit{per se nota} there are certain mechanisms through which originally dubitable propositions can come to be evident in the third degree, thereby necessitating assent and causing a truly evident judgment.

The most obvious mechanism is the demonstrative syllogism, which leads us finally to Wodeham's conception of a science and the immediate object of this act of assent. In article two of question one, he discusses whether a scientific act of knowing (the evident assent given to the conclusion of a syllogism) has as its immediate object “that which is signified by only one proposition, i.e., the conclusion” or “that which is signified by the conclusion and the premises joined together at the same time through a syllogism” (LS I:199, ll. 5–11). Wodeham's conclusion is decidedly in favor of the latter; namely, in order for a previously dubitable proposition to be elevated to the third degree of evidence, whereby the intellect is necessitated to assent, it must acquire that evidence from the force of the syllogism as whole. The conclusion by itself is not \textit{per se nota}. Thus, for a truly evident judgment to take place, a single evident proposition cannot be its cause, rather all three propositions of the syllogism must be taken together in order for the concluding proposition to have the evidence it needs to not only appear true, but to compel the mind's assent (LS I:199–208).\(^{38}\)

\(^{37}\) See n. 31.
\(^{38}\) Slotemaker & Witt, “Adam de Wodeham.” It should be noted that this is a position similar to that of Onorato Grassi. Grassi notes that to Wodeham a single proposition is never enough to necessitate an assent. Rather, the entire demonstration and its significatum, being so as the demonstration signifies, is enough to necessitate an assent. However, Grassi stops
But this counter-argument is not enough to save Wodeham from the charge of skepticism. The same regress that Aristotle claimed requires us to posit non-demonstrable principles of demonstration would require us to posit third-degree evident propositions that are assented to with a third-degree evident judgment without the aid of a demonstration. Aristotle claimed that demonstrations work from what we know as premises to what we don’t already know as conclusion, but that each premise also requires demonstration in order to make all knowledge demonstrative. But the premises of those demonstrations, assuming they are not self-evident, presuppose their own demonstrations, and so on. So, there must be propositions that are undeniably true but in a non-demonstrative way in order to allow for demonstrative knowledge, and these are principles of demonstration known by intellectual intuition alone.

short of claiming that this rules out divine deception as a threat to certainty. He holds instead that the distinction between the natural and supernatural to provide a solution. Scientific knowledge is a natural phenomenon, one that supernatural causality does not affect. Karger’s arguments, however, demonstrate that Grassi’s reading isn’t quite right. Without undoubtable certainty there can be no scientific knowledge in Wodeham’s account. Grassi’s reading would make Wodeham’s work incoherent.

39 Aristotle, A 112; Posterior Analytics 71b19-72b24.
40 Ibid. 71b27-71b30.
41 Ibid. 72b5-72b22: “Some hold that, owing to the necessity of knowing the primary premises, there is no scientific knowledge. Others think there is but that all truths are demonstrable. Neither doctrine is either true or a necessary deduction from the premises. The first school, assuming that there is no way of knowing other than by demonstration, maintain that an infinite regress is involved, on the ground that if behind the prior stands no primary, we could not know the posterior through the prior (wherein they are right, for one cannot traverse an infinite series): if on the other hand—they say—the series terminates and there are primary premises, yet these are unknowable because incapable of demonstration, which according to them is the only form of knowledge. And since thus one cannot know the primary premises, knowledge of the conclusions which follow from them is not pure scientific knowledge nor properly knowing at all, but rests on the mere supposition that the premises are true. The other party agree with them as regards knowing, holding that it is only possible by demonstration, but they see no difficulty in holding that all truths are demonstrated, on the ground that demonstration may be circular and reciprocal. Our own doctrine [and the one
What Slotemaker and Witt propose would give us a parallel regress: The third-degree judgment of a conclusion of a demonstration presupposes similar third-degree judgments of the premises, which would require third-degree judgments of those premises, and so on. Unless we come to a type of proposition that just is non-demonstratively third-degree evident, then we never get third-degree evident judgments. One could say that the object of a third-mode judicative act is the significate of the demonstration as a whole, the *complexe significabile*, and that this causes the judicative act, but Wodeham himself claims that such extra-mental objects are not immune to divine deception, and we therefore do not get judicative acts that exclude all doubt from the total object.⁴²

that Wodeham adopts] is that not all knowledge is demonstrative: on the contrary, knowledge of the immediate premisses is independent of demonstration. (The necessity of this is obvious; for since we must know the prior premisses from which the demonstration is drawn, and since the regress must end in immediate truths, those truths must be indemonstrable.)"

⁴² Wodeham, *LS I* 220-221, 3-19: “Sed contra ista [opinioem auctoris]. Primo contra illud quod ponis scientiam possibilem per viam experientiae absque demonstratione. Superius enim dixisti non posse haberi evidens iudicium categorici de significato propositionis contingenti, significantis rem extra. Igitur per propositionem sic significantem non potest haberi iudicium de alia. Tum quia unumquodque propter quod et illud magis, secundum Philosophum, *I Posteriorum*, ubi per hoc probat quod principia sunt magis nota quam conclusio. Igitur si evidens est mihi quod luna est eclipsibilis per hoc quod video luminum eclipsari, evidentius erit mihi luminum esse eclipsatum vel aequae evidens. Tum quia conclusio sequitur condicionem infirmioris praemissae. Igitur sicut assensus sibi correspondens sequitur condicionem assensus correspondendis infirmiori praemissae, et ita cum ille non sit evidens sic quod [sit] excludens omnem incertitudinem et dubitationem, quia ipso stante in mente posset aliter esse quam significat, igitur. Tum tertio, quia per Philosophum, *I Posteriorum*, necessarium non potest sciri per veritatem contingentem, licet ex eas posit inferri.” And he responds to these objections at ibid. 222, 47-58: “Ad primum dico quod non habeat iudicium evidens categoricum quod luna eclipsatur, habetur tamen evidens iudicium hypotheticum, scilicet quod ida est nisi Deus decipiat nos. Et ex hoc statim est mihi evidens quod ita esse est possibile et non impossibile. Et per hoc ad illud “unumquodque” etc., concedo. Et sic est hic, hypothetice, licet non categorie. Ad secundum: illud habet—tantum ad propositum loquendo—veritatem quod iudicium ad quod cogitur et necessitatur homo per praemissas et iudicia correspondentia praemissae. Quia aliter loquendo, certum est quod ex praemissis et contingentiis et falsis et impossibilibus potest inferiri syllogistica conclusio necessaria. Et in proposito concessi hypotheticum esse aequae evidens quod correspondet praemissae, sicut est quod correspondet conclusioni.”
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Take the following argument for example:

P1) A natural cause is that which uniformly give rise to its effect.
P2) The presence and existence of a visible object at a sufficient distance from a passively disposed eye, etc., is the natural cause of judicative act of assent to the existence and presence of the object.
C) The presence and existence of a visible object, etc. uniformly gives rise to a judicative act of assent to the existence and presence of the object.

Wodeham’s repudiation of the intuition of non-existents assumes that this or a similar argument is sound.\(^{43}\) The argument clearly makes use of the principle of the uniformity of nature, which, if it is to cause a third-mode evident judgment, must also be evident in the third mode. But it isn’t, and it doesn’t take Hume to tell us why. It could be that intuition of the terms “natural cause” and “that which uniformly gives rise to its effect” do, in fact, follow from comprehension of the terms, but this is not Wodeham’s position. The argument above only follows if such natural causes actually exist, and if such visible objects exist. Neither of these claims is immune from divine deception.\(^ {44}\) The regress holds, and such a demonstration, for Wodeham, if everything involved in the judicative act were made explicit, would look more along the lines of the following:

P1) Unless God deceives, a natural cause is that which uniformly give rise to its effect.
P2) Unless God deceives, the presence and existence of a visible object at a sufficient distance from a passively disposed eye, etc., is the natural cause of an intuitive apprehension.

\(^{43}\) Ibid. 38, 19-23: “Causa naturalis eadem in omnino passivo eodem et uniformiter disposito uniformem causat effectum. Sed visio illa si sit causa iudicii evidentis quod res existit sue primi assensus, est causa non libera sed mere naturalis; et potentia iudicativa est eadem et unifromiter disposita. Igitur causabit semper huiusmodi assensum et nunquam dissensum.”

\(^{44}\) See n. 42 & 45.
C) Unless God deceives, the presence and existence of a visible object uniformly gives rise to an intuitive apprehension.\(^\text{45}\)

He himself, however, seems to apply the condition to the conclusion as a sort of short-hand, “Unless God deceives, this whiteness exists and is present”, but what he argues is clear: the condition, the collection of propositions that count as scientific knowledge, plus the demonstrations and premises, and everything involved, are open to doubt, however slightly, because of divine deception.\(^\text{46}\)

Here’s an analogy to illustrate: According to Witt and Slotemaker, Wodeham’s position is that in the same way that no single dollar but a group of ten single dollars makes ten dollars, so too does Wodeham, they imply, hold that no single contingent evident proposition is enough to necessitate a proper evident judgment but that a collection of such propositions organized in the right way, a demonstration, is so capable. The correct view, however, is that in the same way that no aggregate of

\[^{45}\text{Wodeham, LS I 223-224, 3-26: “Ad primum argumentum illorum quaestionis praeecedentis, probantium scientam esse tantum respectu conclusionis, dicendum [est] quod actualis notitia principii, id est significati per principium, requiritur ad evidentem actum sciendi illum qui est causabilis per principium respectu sic esse sicut significatur per conclusionem. Aliter nunquam habebitur actualis evidentia ex natura terminorum vel significatorum per terminos, signantia praeclara rem extra qui non sunt actus reflexi. Et forte simul habere notitiam multarum conclusionum non repugnaret intellectui. Sed sive sive [sic], non habebit evidentiam nisi habituali, modo praeexposito circa sextam conclusionem. Sed evidentiam extrinsecam et extraneam actualis notitiae termini habere potest per hoc quod novit se habitualiter scire vel novit scivisse. Contra: Deus posset eum decipere, causando in eo actum quo assentiret se scire habitualiter vel scivisse actualiter, licet neutrum esset verum: Item, aequaliter posseum assentire quod habitualiter scirem hominem esse asinum vel quod hoc prius sciverim per potentiam Dei. Quia non minus [est] hoc quam [quod] alii firmissime assentiunt oppositis principiorum. Igitur non plus sci primo assensu quam isto: Ad primum concedo quod assumitur, quia potest facere immediate etc., et ideo propositio talis categorica non est simpliciter evidens sed hypothetica: nisi Deus decipiat me. Et ex hac infertur aequae ‘triangulum habere tres’, id est posse habere tres aequales duobus rectis, sicut ex prima. Ad secundum: talis assensus licet sit firma adhaesio, tamen non est evidens cum [ei] subit falsum. Et ideo non aequaliter [possem assentire], quia ex alia parte assensus hypotheticus est evidens.”}\]

\(^{46}\text{See n. 45 & 48.}\)
ten loonies makes a ten-dollar bill, so too no number of categorical propositions is capable of necessitating a third-mode evident judgment in a way that completely excludes all doubt, owing to divine deception.

This should not be taken to mean that principles of science are not *per se nota* to Wodeham. As noted in the previous chapter, he distinguishes between propositions immediately and remotely *per se nota*, and one can read a similar distinction between principles that follow deductively, or from a definition, and inductive generalizations.\(^\text{47}\) Significantly, Wodeham defines *per se nota* propositions as those that immediately cause assent in such a way that only God could make it otherwise.\(^\text{48}\) This definition of a *per se nota* proposition means that what has been the result of a demonstration or repeated experiences exists in the mind as a habit, and increasingly inclines the mind to such a degree

\(^\text{47}\) Wodeham, *LS* I 238-239, 12-16. Ibid. 222, 59-76: "Aristoteles non vult nisi quod non posset sciri necessarium per contingens, id est demonstrative probari, quo modo ibi tractat de scire. Quia fere ubique distinguendo et loquendo de scire, loquitur de scire a priori et raro de a posteriori, et maxime a posteriori per experientiam contingentem.—Et hoc patet per quartum argumentum hic: 'Scientis signum' etc. Talis non posset docere aliquem nec a priori nec a posteriori nisi posset sibi ad oculum ostendere lunam esse eclipsatam. Unde nec Paulus post raptum, non obstante quod multa sciverit per experientiam, illa docere potuit, sicut nec caecus natus doceri potest quod albedo est color disgregatavis visus. Verum est igitur quod talis non habet ex hoc scientiam cuius signum sit doctrina, sed huiusmodi scientiam quae est experimentum, quae minus habet rationem scientiae quoad illum conditionem quam scientia a priori, quia habens illum docere potest.—Istud probo esse de intentione Philosophi in prologo *Metaphysicae*, ubi dicit illud verbum allegatum. Nam dicere experimentum esse minus scientiam quam artem vel scientiam a priori, non est negare sed assumere experimentum, id est cognitionem per experimentum, esse scientiam. Sed hoc dicit ibi immediate post verbum praeallegatum, addens: 'et ob hoc artem magis experimento scientiam esse existamus. Possunt [autem] hi, hi autem docere non possunt." Ibid. 223, 86-91: “Et hoc potest fieri evidens intellectui, propositionibus in mente quiescentibus et habitualiter notis, id est quod sic sit sicut per eas significatur. Quia habitualiter notum est quod nulla species impossibile vel potest esse impossibilis cuius sensatio indubitabilis [est] nisi Deus me decipiat. Et etiam nulli individuo repugnat simile quale convenit alteri aequalis perfectionis. Forte etiam ista est nata fieri evidens 'ille ignis est calefactivus', sive ille sit sive non sit.”

\(^\text{48}\) Wodeham, *LS* II 176, 4-7: "...omnis illa proposito et sola illa est proposito per se nota quae posita in mente, et Deo non impediente sed generali influenza cooperante, necesario necessitat mentem ad assentiendum quod sic est sicut talis propositio significat.”
that what was once a doubtable propositions, such as “the whole is always greater than its parts” become *per se nota.* This is just what learning is.

The point is that principles of natural science are available in Wodeham’s estimation by way of his definition of *per se nota* propositions in a way that does not compromise his empiricism, but also does not render scientific knowledge immune from divine deception, at least in categorical form. Rather, the natural sciences as a whole hold true on condition that God is not deceiving. So, although scientific knowledge is the result of a demonstration, scientific knowledge *in toto* is not immune to divine deception, and Karger’s accusation against Wodeham stands.

Moving back to Karger, in addition to arguing that Wodeham is a skeptic, she further claims that John Buridan offered a response to Wodeham. While Buridan accepted many aspects of Wodeham’s account, including, it would seem, divine deception, Buridan, unlike Wodeham, posited two degrees of evidentness: “absolute evidentness” and “natural evidentness.” Propositions that are absolutely evident are *per se nota:* they are necessarily true, and they necessarily give rise to assents that exclude all doubt. Naturally evident propositions are those about which it would be “naturally impossible” for us to be mistaken, but that “this is not something absolutely impossible.”

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49 See infra. p. 194.
51 Ibid. 156-161.
Chapter V: Wodeham’s Reliabilism

And it should be noted this [natural] evidence is not properly called “evidence” because the intellect can be deceived about such evident propositions through supernatural causality, because God can make fire without heat, and can make and conserve in my senses a sensitive species without an object, and thus through this evidence you could judge as if the object were present, and you would judge falsely. However, this evidence can well be called “natural”, because according to it, it is not possible for a person to be deceived in the regular course of nature, although he would be deceived through a supernatural cause, and this evidence is enough for natural knowledge.54

The main insights underlying what Goldman says of process reliabilism are therefore present in Buridan’s epistemology. For just as Goldman argues that beliefs had through a reliable natural causal process are justified and constitute a valid form of knowing, so too Buridan argues. Moreover, both Buridan and Goldman hold that while justified belief is a type of knowledge, there is nevertheless no way to account for the threats to knowledge posed by supernatural causality. The reading of Buridan’s epistemology as a form of process reliabilism intended as a repudiation of infallibilist conceptions of knowledge, such as Wodeham’s, is the current consensus view. Giorgio Pini recently wrote the following:

[A] solidly established fact about medieval skepticism is the role played by Buridan in challenging the infallibilist theory of knowledge that prompted the skeptical scenario [of divine deception] just evoked. Buridan distinguished between two kinds of evidentness, which came to be known as “absolute” and “natural” evidentness, respectively. Since it is always possible for God to create a certain effect directly and, specifically, to create in us a perception to which no object corresponds in the external

54 Buridan, Quaestiones in Analytica Posteriora, 1. 1, q. 2: “Et notandum est quod haec evidentia non dicitur proprie ‘evidentia’: quia circa tales propositiones evidentes intellectus posset decipi per causam supernaturalem; quia deus posset facere ignem sine caliditate, et posset facere in sensu meo et conservare speciem sensitivam sine objecito, et ita per istam evidentiam tu iudicares ac si objectum esset praesens, et iudicares falsum. Tamen illa evidentia naturalis bene dicitur naturalis, quia secundum illam non potest homo decipi stante communi cursu naturae, licet deciperetur per causam supernaturalem; et haec evidentia sufficit ad naturalem scientiam.”
world, Buridan conceded that we cannot reach absolute evidentness and that the judgments we make on the basis of sensory evidence may always turn out to be false (e.g., I think that the heat I feel is caused by the fire in front of me, but it is possible for such heat to be caused directly by God; as a matter of fact, it is not even certain that there is a fire in front of me, for God may be causing my act of seeing that fire even in the absence of fire). But Buridan also contended that ordinarily we do not need absolute evidentness and can be satisfied with the so-called “natural” evidentness, according to which a certain judgment is evidently true if it appears so to our faculties, provided that God does not interfere in the natural causal story. Lagerlund, Klima, and Karger all stress Buridan’s role in shaping this answer to the skeptical challenges that emerged in the fourteenth century. It should be mentioned that, as Lagerlund rightly remarks, the originality and importance of Buridan’s position was already emphasized by Jack Zupko several years ago.

Because the infallibilist standard of knowledge Wodeham maintains does not allow for instances in which anything beyond a third-mode evident proposition could cause an evident judgment, knowledge of the world is not possible according to his account. Hypothetical third-mode evident propositions are not assertoric, and therefore cannot be considered to constitute a genuine type of knowledge of the world. Since scientific knowledge is precisely knowledge of the world to Wodeham, Wodeham, therefore, must not think that scientific knowledge is

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possible.⁶⁰ Buridan, however, approaches divine deception by way of a reliabilist standard of knowledge that allows certainty on the basis of consistently justified beliefs, and allows for divine deception in a way that does not affect natural certainty. Buridan should therefore be read as repudiating Wodeham’s infallibilist standard of knowledge and the skepticism it entails, in favour of a reliabilist standard of knowledge.

§ 5.3: Wodeham’s and Buridan’s Reliabilism

This current view of the situation is not entirely correct. There are two arguments available for the conclusion that Buridan by and large adopted Wodeham’s reliabilism as his own, and defended it from the likes of Autrecourt.

The first is textual, and is intended to demonstrate that Buridan adopts Wodeham’s solution to the problem of natural deception and his general strategy for dealing with skepticism.

Gyula Klima’s description of Buridan’s distinction between absolute and natural evidentness is derived exclusively from T. 8.4-8.4.4 of the Summulae de Dialectica.⁶¹ The section of text begins with Buridan assuming one of Wodeham’s signature theses: the view that contradictory propositions are compossible in one soul, but that both cannot be simultaneously believed. He gives the following argument against the possibility of a judicative act, which he calls an “assent”, being identical to a proposition:

Now, that these assents are not those propositions is clear, because contradictory propositions can exist in the same subject at

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⁶¹ Klima, John Buridan, 243-245.
the same time, as for example in your intellect, although they cannot both be true at the same time, given that assents of opinions supporting both such contradictories are by nature incompatible with or contrary to their being in the same [subject] at the same time. Hence it is impossible for the same person to believe two contradictories at the same time, as is stated in bk. 4 of the *Metaphysics*.62

Buridan presents this position as a reading of Aristotle. But it is far from obvious that this was what Aristotle had in mind in the relevant passage of the *Metaphysics* identified by Klima:63

From the same opinion proceeds the doctrine of Protagoras, and both doctrines must be alike true or alike untrue. For on the one hand, if all opinions and appearances are true, all statements must be at the same time true and false. For many men hold beliefs in which they *conflict with one another, and think those mistaken who have not the same opinions as themselves; so that the same things must both be and not be. And on the other hand, if this is so, all opinions must be true; for those who are mistaken and those who are right are opposed to one another in their opinions; if, then, reality is such as the view in question supposes, all will be right in their beliefs.*

*Evidently, then, both doctrines proceed from the same way of thinking.*64

One could object at this point that although Buridan adopts one of Wodeham’s positions, that it is not a position unique to Wodeham, and it is therefore not the smoking gun it’s being made out to be. Walter Chatton also argued against Ockham’s two-souls view in favour of one soul on the basis of the compossibility of opposites in the same subject:

But while Chatton argued a position similar to Wodeham’s, they are not the same. Chatton’s point is that a volitional inclination given

62 Buridan, *SD* 703-704.
63 This is the relevant passage Klima identifies in his translation of the *Summulae* (see the n. on pg. 704), namely Aristotle, *Metaphysics* bk. 4, ch. 5, 1009a10-15, but, a more relevant, but again far from clear passage, seems to be *Metaphysics* bk. 4, ch. 4, 1008a34-1008b1.
64 Aristotle, *A 743; Metaphysics* 1009a6-1009a15: I gave more here than Klima cites as relevant (see immediately preceding n.), to give some context to the passage. I’ve italicized the section Klima identifies.
rise to by the sensitive power is not incompossible with a contrary volitional inclination given rise to by the intellect, but that contrary inclinations given rise to by the sensory power alone, or by the intellect alone, would be. But even if Buridan is making essentially the same point as Chatton, the main purpose of the argument, to claim that contradictories are compossible in the same soul, is used by Wodeham and picked up by Buridan for purely epistemic use, to explain the possibility of entertaining contrary and even contradictory propositions that incline to assent or dissent to varying degrees. It is only assent to contraries that is incompossible.

Moreover, the passage from which the conclusion was in all likelihood taken by Buridan can even be pinpointed in Wodeham’s text. Again, Buridan posits Wodeham’s thesis in a discussion of assent:

...neither knowledge nor opinion is a proposition but is some superadded assent, by which we agree to a proposition. And it is clear that we assent in this way, for every opinion is some belief or some credulity by which we hold or believe about a proposition that it is true, or that things are as it signifies, in the sense given elsewhere, and it is this belief or credulity (or whatever you may call it) that we call ‘assent’.

65 Chatton, *RP* 113, 236-249: “Ad probationem dico quod de virtute sermonis magis est concedendum quod actus appetitus sensitivi et aliquis actus voluntatis inclinat in opposita quam quod inter se contrarientur. Concedo enim quod passio sensitiva inclinat in aliquam prosecutionem, quam tamen voluntas non vult prosequi; ideo illa passio sensitiva inclinat in prosecutionem vel fugam cui actus voluntatis est incompossibilis. Ad argumentum igitur dico quod aliqua contrariari potest intelligi dupliciter: vel virtualiter, quia unum inclinat in prosecutionem vel fugam alteri incompossibilem; vel essentialiter et formaliter intrinsece, sic quod naturae suae absolutae sunt naturaliter incompossibilites, sicut velle et nolle. Primo modo contraria possunt inter se simul esse in eodem, non tamen contraria secundo modo. Sed passio sensitiva et actus voluntatis non contrariantur sic, sicut alias dictetur; ideo simul possunt esse.” Ibid. 114, 257-260: “Similiter, posito quod loquatur ibi de passionibus in anima, tunc dicendum quod contrariantur, non formaliter, sed virtualiter. Dicuntur in usu loquendi hominum contrariari ex hoc quod inclinat ad prosecutiones et fugas quas recta ratio prohibet.”

66 Buridan, *SD* 701.
It is in the context of judicative acts that Buridan then, immediately after this passage, posits that assents cannot be propositions because contradictory propositions are compossible in a subject but cannot both be believed. We can contrast this with what Wodeham writes about “evident judgment.”

Wodeham says that “evident judgment” is used in three ways. The first refers to the judicative act as a mental nod that things are either so or not so as a proposition signifies (sic esse vel non sic esse). The second is type of successive judicative act, posited to explain via negativa knowledge of God. The third, which he will reject, is the confusion some make of proposition with a judgment:

The third way possible to be posited is perhaps that a judgment simply evident (evidens simpliciter) does not differ from an evident complex apprehended in the said third mode, so that when these prior ways place a proposition of a nature to necessitate the intellect to assent, in this third way it could be said that the proposition itself so evident would be the judgment itself. The idea is that a judgment has the logical form of an assertion, and that a proposition evident in the third-mode, which necessitates assent, requires no act in addition to apprehension. And “it is superfluous to

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67 Wodeham, LS I 173, 14-19: “Sed est tantum adnuitio quaedem qua mens adnuit sic esse sicut propositio vel propositiones significant, absque hoc quod illa adnuitio sit apprehensio aliqua de sic essendo. Et est quaedem mentalis concessio vel negatio semper per naturam praexigens et etiam coexigens apprehensionem complexam, qua posita potest adnuere vel non adnuere, quasi mentaliter dicendo ‘sic’ vel ‘non’ vel haesitando.”

68 Ibid. 175, 29-34: “Quia potest formare successive infinitas negativas quarum ista intuitiva sit pars, et illis mediantibus causare successive infinita iudicia intuitiva (quibus iudicetur Deus non esse lapis, non esse asinus et sic de aliis) et etiam iudicium abstractivum idem significans, quod utique erit evidens sed non tantum. Et sicut potest de Deo [formare taliu iudicia] meidante visione eius, ita potest de quolibet alio visio.”

69 Ibid. 176, 3-6: “Tertia posset poni via forte quod iudicium evidens simpliciter non differt ab evidentia complexa apprehensiva tertio modo dicta, ita quod ubi istae priores viae ponunt propositionem natam necessitare intellectum ad assentiendum, diceret ista tertia via quod ipsamet propositio sic evidens esset ipsum iudicium.”
posit more when fewer are sufficient.”70 By forming something like “a triangle has three angles” assent can be posited, because the proposition just is an assertion and invariably conditions assent.

He immediately claims that he does not regard the apprehension of a proposition as tantamount to judgment:

This does not appear evident to me, because no less would a judgment be of one proposition than another. But a judgment is not such a proposition, just as it is clear of a judgment by which is judged a stick to be broken of which part is in the water. Otherwise someone, as I proved elsewhere, would assent and dissent to it being so at the same time.71

If it were the case that propositions alone were judgments, then there could be contradictory beliefs constituting knowledge in the same subject, which would be impossible. Take the example of the break in the submerged stick as an example. Sensory intuition alone would inform the mind that there is a break in the stick. And, since a proposition formed through composition and division from sensory intuition would constitute a judgment, the mind would by that alone judge the break to be there. However, the sensory intuitions plus deliberation on natural processes of vision and past experience would form the exact opposite belief, that there is no break in the stick, and that the break only appears to be there because the species is being affected by the medium in transit from the object to the eye. Therefore, if it were the case that propositions alone were judgments, then the mind would simultaneously judge the break to be there and the break not to be there, which is a contradiction. The mind may be able to entertain contrary beliefs; but it cannot know something to

70 Ibid. 176, 8: “…superfluit ponere plura ubi pauciora sufficunt.”
71 Ibid. 176, 12-15: “Sed istud non appare mihi evidens, quia non minus unum iudicium esset talis propositio quam aliud. Sed aliquod iudicium non est talis propositio, sicut patet de iudicio quo iudicatur baculus esse fractus cuius pars est in aqua. Aliter aliquis, ut alias probavi, simul assentiret et dissentiret sic esse.”
both be and not be at the same time, on pain of violating the most fundamental law of thought:\textsuperscript{72}

It would be possible to assent and dissent to be so at the same time. Because at the same time, the same proposition which you posit assent, it would stand with the proposition which you would posit dissent, and the propositions also which are the media of assent and dissent [the demonstration]. For no propositions are more repugnant than contradictories, but these [contradictory propositions] are at the same time compatible in the mind.\textsuperscript{73}

What’s more, even if it were granted that Chatton and Wodeham’s positions were identical, meaning that Buridan could have picked up the thesis and adapted it from one or the other, there is additional persuasive textual evidence supporting the claim that Buridan took the thesis from the \textit{Lectura Secunda}. In his commentary on the \textit{Nicomachean Ethics} Buridan uses the example of a dog with contrary inclinations towards a morsel of food to illustrate that contrary inclinations are possible in one subject.\textsuperscript{74} The example originates with Scotus,\textsuperscript{75} but so far as I have been able to discover it is only used to argue the claim that contrary

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid. 176, 15-21: “Probatio consequentiae: quia eadem propositio numero vel eiusdem rationis potest manere in assentiente sic esse prius [et] postquam certificatus est per demonstrationem vel aliiunde quod non sic sit. Et tamen sicut nec prius, ita nec modo potest sibi non videri ita esse, licet certus sit quod non ita sit. Prius assensit et modo non, et tamen modo habet omnem propositionem formatam in mente quam prius. Igitur propositio prius habita non erat suus assensus.”

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid. 177-178, 50-55: “Immo simul possem assentire et dissentire sic esse. Quia simul cum propositione eadem quam ponis assensum, staret propositio quam poneres dissensum, et propositiones etiam aliae quae ponerentur media assentiendi et dissentienti. Nullae enim propositiones plus repugnant quam contradictoryae, sed istae simul in mente compatiuuntur se, per Commentatorem, VI \textit{Metaphysicae}, commento ultimo.”

\textsuperscript{74} John Buridan, \textit{Quaestiones in Decem Libros Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum} (Oxford: H. Cripps, 1637), 76: “Dicendum est; quod eundem appetitum simul in opposita inclinari immediate, & propter se, est impossibile: Sed non impossible quod ad unum oppositorum inclinetur immediate, & propter se; & simul inclinetur ad ad oppositum, gratia aliquius alterius ad quod inclinatur: verbi gratia: canis videns cibum, inclinatur ad ipsum propter se; sed tamen propter timorem domini inclinatur ad fugiendum.”

\textsuperscript{75} Simo Knuuttila, \textit{Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy}, 267.
inclinations are possible in a single soul in the Lectura Secunda.\textsuperscript{76} Even more compelling is that the reference to the dog is placed alongside Aristotle's example of the sea-merchant by Buridan, in the same way as is done in the Lectura Secunda by Wodeham.\textsuperscript{77} So, we have Buridan using both of Wodeham's examples to support a position that both hold, and seem to hold against all of their predecessors.

Hence, not only does Buridan adopt a thesis unique to Wodeham, he does so for the same reasons as Wodeham, and uses the same illustrations as Wodeham. Moreover, the thesis is a required aspect of their identical strategies in dealing with natural threats to knowledge. Buridan, in the same manner as Wodeham, feels that threats to knowledge posed by natural causality can be neutralized by the corrective powers of the intellect. A requirement of this would seem to be that contradictory propositions can be entertained by the mind simultaneously, one assented to on the basis of superior evidence.\textsuperscript{78} There are other parallels in doctrine between the two. Buridan's natural per se nota propositions are found in Wodeham as “remotely per se nota propositions”, discussed in chapter IV of this dissertation.\textsuperscript{79} And while I don’t think the textual evidence to be conclusive,\textsuperscript{80} I do think it enough to demonstrate that Buridan was no critic of Wodeham. Rather, he seems to have

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\textsuperscript{77} Buridan, Quaestiones in Decem Libros Ethicorum, 76.
\textsuperscript{78} Zupko, John Buridan, 186-187; Perler, “Skepticism and Metaphysics,” 557-558.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid. 192.
\textsuperscript{80} Henrik Lagerlund, “John Buridan and the Problems of Dualism,” 387: Lagerlund also notes coincidences between Wodeham and Buridan on the issue of intuitive apprehensions and the unity of the soul. And, he also notes the difficulty, in the absence of direct citations in Buridan's text, in demonstrating a direct influence. He write, “Wodeham might have had an influence on Buridan who can be seen to follow him in holding the soul to be a single substantial form, although any direct influence is, of course, hard to show.”
assumed many decisive and idiosyncratic theses from the *Lectura Secunda*, including the general strategy of dealing with skepticism.

In the *Summulae de Dialectica* Buridan follows his adoption of Wodeham’s position regarding contradictory propositions in the same subject, which, to stress the point, is a requirement for their shared strategy of dealing with the natural threats to knowledge, with a strong rejection of Aurtrecourt’s reading of hypotheticals as leading to skepticism.

Aurtrecourt’s arguments clearly hold hypotheticals to be incapable of expressing knowledge: “And if it is said that the consequence is evident, if to the antecedent we add ‘God is not performing a miracle,’ this is disproved by what we have said on this point.”\(^{81}\) To stress the point again, Wodeham presents them as being capable of causing a third-mode evident judgment regarding contingents. It is immediately after describing Aurtrecourt’s argument that Buridan marks his distinction between absolute and natural evidentness.

But, against the reading being argued for here, it could obviously be the case that Buridan adopted parts of Wodeham’s approach to skepticism, but rejected Wodeham’s solution to divine deception. And this is where the second argument is needed. It pertains to the assumptions underlying the reliabilist position. The current view, especially that argued for by Karger, overlooks an obvious fact about reliabilism. The reliabilist standard of knowledge presupposes—and Goldman clearly concedes\(^{82}\)—that knowledge of the extra-mental world according to an infallible standard is not possible. That’s the point of reliabilism: to explain how we can have knowledge despite the inability to meet that

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81 Aurtrecourt, 75.
82 Goldman, 37.
standard. In other words, the antecedent of Wodeham’s third-mode evident contingent propositions, “unless God deceives”, is implicit in the reliabilist position, and Buridan himself clearly concedes it, stating that “supernaturally it is possible for my [act of] knowledge to be turned into non-knowledge.”

Natural evidentness is enough to provide knowledge, but it is tacitly conceded by Buridan that if it were actually the case that God was deceiving in any given instance or in every instance, then obviously the belief formed through the deception would not constitute knowledge of any sort.

Karger correctly claims that Wodeham places the distinction between knowledge and opinion between second-mode evident contingent propositions, which are categorical, and those of the third mode which are hypothetical in form. But she seems to have where the reliabilist and infallibilist standards apply in reverse order. In Wodeham’s account, contingent categorical propositions evident in the second mode do not constitute knowledge precisely because they presuppose an infallibilist standard of knowledge, which they fail to meet owing to divine deception. Contingent hypothetical propositions are evident in the third mode, the only one adequate to cause a truly evident assent, exactly because they meet a reliabilist standard. The only difference between Buridan’s “natural evidentness” and Wodeham’s “contingent hypothetical third-mode evident propositions”—besides the characteristic pedantic wordiness on Wodeham’s part—is that the reliabilist criterion implicit in natural evidentness is enough to provide knowledge, but it is tacitly conceded by Buridan that if it were actually the case that God was deceiving in any given instance or in every instance, then obviously the belief formed through the deception would not constitute knowledge of any sort.

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83 Buridan, *SD* 709.
84 Kreitzmann, “Adam Wodeham’s Anti-Aristotelian Anti-Atomism”, 389-390: Kreitzmann claims of Wodeham’s discussion of macro-indivisibles that “Good scholastic philosophers, like all other good philosophers, split hairs when they have to; it is only ignorant critics who have for centuries condemned scholastic philosophy in general for frivolous hair-splitting. But in the vast literature of scholastic philosophy there are bound to be occasional
evidentness is explicitly stated in hypotheticals. Wodeham provides scenarios demonstrating that hypotheticals are enough to cause a variety of assents to things being so in the extra-mental world:

...those alone, and all of those, propositions which, all other cognitions circumscribed, beyond it itself and beyond those of its parts, of a nature to necessitate assent conforming to it, such that God alone could impede such an assent, are per se nota. But such appears to me to be with these contingent conditionals ‘I see whiteness unless I am deceived’ or ‘unless God is miraculously maintaining a vision with a different object and present objects,’ ‘white is present unless I am deceived’ and even this categorical ‘it appears to me that the stick [partially submerged in water] is broken,’ and many similar [propositions], which have vision as a part of it. And, however, if the vision is carried away, and abstractive [cognitions] remain, which would be adequate and precise in respect of the same object, it signifying the same, [but] composed from abstractive cognitions, would not necessitate an assent conforming to it. And, however, as I touched on elsewhere, it cannot be granted of a type of purely [my italics] categorical affirmative [proposition] of which the subject and predicate are signs of things extra-mental and not of things in the mind. And the reason is because such, of which you posit that they are per se notae, do not leave behind some hesitation that it may not be so as they signify.  

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passages to which the ignorant critic could smugly point, and I’m afraid this is one of them.” This is also noted in ch. II, where I give Wodeham’s rejection of Aureol’s “esse apparens” on the grounds that it is simply an improper locution.

85 Wodeham, *LS II* 183, 8-22: “...quia sola illa, [et] omnis [illa], propositio quae, omnia notitia circumscripta, praeter ipsam et praeter suas [partes], nata est necessitare ad assensum sibi conformem, ita quod solus Deus potest talem assumsum impedire, est per se nota. Sed talis mihi videtur esse illa condicionalis contingens ‘ego video albedinem nisi decipiar’ vel ‘nisi Deus miraculose manuteneat visionem absque obiecto et praesentia objecti’, ‘album est praesens nisi decipiar’; et ista categorica etiam ‘apparet mihi quod baculus sit fractus’, et multae consimiles, quae habent partem sui visionem. Et tamen si illa visio tolleretur, et maneret abstractiva, quae esset aedequate et praecise respectu eiusdem objecti, illa idem significans, [sed] composita ex abstractiva, non necesitaret ad assensum sibi conformem. Et tamen, ut alias tetigi, hoc non potest dari de aliqua categorica affirmativa mere cuius subiectum et praedicatum sunt signa rerum extra animam et non rei in anima. Et ratio est quia tales, de quibus ponis quod sint per se notae, non relinquunt aliquam haesitationem quin ita sit sicut significant.”
Moreover, despite the hypothetical formulation of third-mode contingent propositions, the inferences made on their basis remain unaffected:

...I argue for my conclusion thusly: He who has an habitual concept of whiteness, if he intuitively sees whiteness from a distance, indistinctly and imperfectly, by virtue of this vision and habitual cognition of whiteness, if he were to compose this hypothetical ‘this is white unless I am deceived,’ would not be necessitated to assent. But, however, if he were to see precisely the same thing distinctly and perfectly, assuming [this is] when owing to the closer proximity to him, he would be necessitated to assent. And, however, according to the case precisely the same would be cognized in both visions, but one perfectly, the other imperfectly. ²⁶

And, again, it is clear that Buridan only holds natural evidentness to constitute an adequate degree of evidence with the condition that God is not deceiving. Here’s how Buridan might put an argument dealing with contingents:

(Unless God deceives) (X is Y; Y is Z; so, X is Z).

Here’s how Wodeham would put the same argument:

Unless God deceives, X is Y; Unless God deceives, Y is Z; So, Unless God deceives, X is Z.

While there admittedly is a superficial difference between these arguments, they are identical insofar as neither syllogism follows in case God actually is deceiving, and both concede that we can have knowledge of the extra-mental world even if we lack the ability to assert or deny the antecedent. So while there are differences in expression, in essence

²⁶ Ibid. 183-184, 30-36: “Secundo arguo pro conclusione mea sic: Ille qui haberet conceptum habitualem albedinis, si intuitive videret albedinem a remotis, indistincte et imperfecte, virtute illius visionis et notitiae habitualis albedinis, si componeret istam hypotheticam ‘hoc est album nisi decipiari’, non necessitaretur assentire. Et tamen si praecise videret eandem distincte et perfecte, puta quando debite approximatur sibi, necessitaretur assentire. Et tamen per positum praecise idem cognoscetur utraque visione, sed per unam perfecte, per aliam imperfecte.”
Buridan’s and Wodeham’s positions are the same. And while impossible to prove conclusively, I think there is textual support for the claim that Buridan was well aware of it.

By arguing that knowledge cannot be had if hypothetical in form, Autrecourt was, then, arguing against Wodeham. Buridan was not responding to Wodeham’s skepticism, but was, instead, defending Wodeham’s reliabilism from Autrecourt.87

§ 5.4: Concluding Remarks

Let me conclude the chapter and dissertation by trying to illustrate how Wodeham’s reliabilism works.

Imagine two billiard balls sitting side by side on a pool table. They are both entirely red, and the only distinguishing feature is their separate locations. In standard cases such as this, Ockham and Wodeham would agree that the extra-mentally existing balls in conjunction with the powers of the eye and mind would form intuitive apprehensions generating the belief that both of the balls exist and are present.

Now imagine that, unbeknownst to you, God, through a supernatural act, annihilated one of the balls, while maintaining the expected sensory intuitions of it. You could still pick up both balls, smack them around the table. You could play a whole game. God would have it in his power to maintain all of the intuitive apprehensions of the non-existent ball and all its expected effects in perfect sequence with how one would expect a game to unfold.

87 This would also explain why Buridan seems to have little to say about the matter of skepticism (Zupko notes in John Buridan, 184). He didn’t need to fully formulate a position, since Wodeham had done that for him. He simply clarified Wodeham’s position and defended it from Autrecourt through the absolute/natural evidentness distinction.
Chapter V: Wodeham’s Reliabilism

In such a case, Ockham thinks that on the basis of the intuitive apprehensions you would know which of the two balls had been annihilated.\[^{88}\] While this is counter-intuitive, it has the benefit of safeguarding truth. In no instance is it possible for you to be deceived on the level of intuitive apprehensions, and your beliefs would meet an infallibilist standard of knowledge.\[^{89}\]

Wodeham, because intuitive apprehensions invariably lead to inferences of existence and presence,\[^{90}\] would thus say that in such a case you would continue to believe that both balls exist and are present. Without additional evidence from intuition to tell you which of the balls, if any, has been annihilated—perhaps your cue passes straight through one of the balls when you shoot tipping you off, in which case, it would not be an instance of divine deception—you would continue to believe as you had originally. You would be deceived. Moreover, because he accepts the possibility of divine deception, he would hold that this situation applies to both balls, to the table, and everything in the world. God could maintain intuitive apprehensions of any and everything, and so long as there is no

\[^{88}\] Ockham, *OTh* I 70, 21-24: “...dico quod per notitiam intuitivam rei potest evidenter cognoscire res non esse quando non est vel si non sit. Et quando queritur a quo causabitur illud iudicium, potest dici quod potest causari a notitia intuitiva rei.”

\[^{89}\] Wodeham, *LS* I 169, 42-44: "Nec mirum, quia [Ockham] ipse ponit quod per intuitivam albedinis scitur evidenter ipsam esse quando est et non esse quando non est. Et ideo habet circa talia ponere iudicium infallibile.”

\[^{90}\] Ibid. 170, 45-46: “...pono quod, sive albedo sit sive non sit, visio eius semper inclinat ad uniforme iudicium vel propozitio formata ex eius visione.” Buridan: *SD* 709-710: “For some human evidentness is such that in accordance with it the cognitive power is compelled either by its own nature or by some evident argument to assent to a truth or a true proposition that cannot be falsified by any power; but this is not required for natural science. Another [type of evidentness] is such that in accordance with it the cognitive power is compelled either by its own nature [or by some evident argument] to assent to a truth or a true proposition that cannot be falsified naturally, although it could be falsified supernaturally. And this is what is required for natural science. ...you would ask whether, when I clearly see Socrates running, I know that Socrates is running or whether I merely opine this. And I reply that then I do not opine this, but I know. For everybody speaks in this way: ‘I know that this iron is hot, for I clearly feel that is is hot’.”
further evidence that something is amiss, all of your beliefs regarding the extra-mental world could be false.\textsuperscript{91} Make no mistake, this position has the potential to result in global skepticism, for the very reason that we could be deceived in any and everything if God so willed it, and we are well aware of this omnipresent possibility.

According to Wodeham, knowledge is the result of a natural causal process. If a certain set of conditions are in place, then according to the principle of the uniformity of nature knowledge distinguishable from opinion invariably ensues. The condition for knowledge of the existence and presence of a contingent, extra-mental thing is an intuitive apprehension, meaning that when an intuitive apprehension is posited, then belief in the existence and presence of the corresponding object as efficient cause \textit{in re} invariably results.\textsuperscript{92} Doubt is only naturally possible in case of counter-belief from additional evidence, deliberation or past experience. When there is a natural obstruction to vision, such as would be had by an impairment in the eye or in case of optical illusion, then the intellect forms a counter-belief and doubt regarding the initial contingent belief follows.\textsuperscript{93} But with instances of divine deception, additional, counter-active evidence that would allow for a move from assent to either dissent or hesitation is not given. Therefore, while divine deception is always possible according to Wodeham, doubt would never ensue.

But it could be said in response that with Wodeham there is an additional cause in such cases to provide doubt, namely the proposition

\textsuperscript{91} Wodeham: \textit{LS I} 41, 27-28: “[Ad primum instantiam igitur] concedo quod per nullam notitiam potest nos sic certificare quin possimus decipi ab eo si voluerit.” Buridan: \textit{SD} 709: “Accordingly, it seems to me possible to conclude as a corollary that supernaturally it is possible for my [act of] knowledge, while it remains the same, to be converted into non-knowledge.”

\textsuperscript{92} See n. 89.

\textsuperscript{93} See ch. II.
that expresses possibility of divine deception itself. It may be impossible
to entertain doubt regarding existential beliefs had on the basis of
standard circumstance intuitions in a first-order intention, but the
addition of deliberation about the possibility of divine deception allows a
contrary set of causes and can result in a different effect in the soul,
namely doubt regarding the intuitive apprehension. Wodeham himself
raises just such a concern in later questions of the Lectura Secunda, and
claims that knowledge evident in the third degree, according to which the
possibility of any deception or fallibility has been removed, is not
naturally possible for a viator.\textsuperscript{94} He accordingly concludes that only
conditional evident knowledge of contingents follows in a way that
completely excludes falsity.\textsuperscript{95}

Buridan, on the other hand, accepts that a lower standard of
evidentness can allow for knowledge, which is precisely what allows him
to escape the skeptical conclusion that Wodeham’s position entails. But,
Wodeham need only ask whether Buridan’s categorical assertion could be
non-knowledge if it were known that God were deceiving, and Buridan,
along with all other reliabilists, would, I think it safe to say, concede.\textsuperscript{96}
Wodeham’s hypotheticals express a condition implicit in natural
evidentness. Hypotheticals are third-degree evident, insofar as they

\textsuperscript{94} Wodeham, \textit{LS I} 170, 51-55: “Intuitiva non est [talis notitia] virtute cuius possit haberi
iudicum evidens primo modo dictum nisi simul sit evidens quod Deus non miraculose
conservat visionem, adnihilando vel absentando subiectum eius—quod utrum possit vel non,
non curo modo. Sed aliter non excluditur dubitatio respectu categoricae veritatis.”

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid. 179, 24-30: “[Assumptum] non est verum de evidentia complexa terto modo
dicta, nec de iudico ab eo causabili, hoc adiecto ‘si Deus non decipiat me’. Et ideo dico quod
illa circumscrippta manet eadem evidentia. Vera est enim propositio condicionalis cuius
antecedens componitur ex visione visionis Dei, etiam illa visione Dei circumscrippta qua
figurat Deus videri, nisi Deus continue decipiat. Sed illa categorica contingente dico quod
illa non est sic evidenter cognoscibilis.”

\textsuperscript{96} Buridan, \textit{SD} 709; Goldman, 37.
cannot fail to signify truly, but express a degree of certainty regarding extra-mental reality in keeping with “natural evidentness” with the explicit concession that it is logically possible for all such to be false.

Truly, the key to understanding his position is the target of doubt regarding intuitive apprehensions, which is to intuitions as a class. In order to naturally entertain doubt regarding singular instances of intuitive apprehensions, there would need to be some additional evidence that something is amiss, like some naturally occurring causal relationship no longer holding, to tip off the deception or some other supernatural intervention at work and provide sufficient cause to move the mind from assent to hesitation or dissent. But, if such evidence were available even if divine deception were actually occurring, it would no longer be a case of divine deception, because an intuitive apprehension would inform you of the fact that the causal relationship between the extra-mental efficient cause and the intuition had been suspended. Because each and every instance of intuition is a singular instance, in no instance is it possible for there to be a cause that would move a viator from a position of natural certainty to doubt. Hence, while deception is always possible, there is no singular instance in which divine deception would cause anything other than assent, even if hypothetical in form.

Wodeham clearly concedes—along with Buridan—that supernatural intervention could make it such that there are actual instances of evident knowledge that are false. But he does not think that this threatens natural knowledge.97 We have no access to whether our

97 Wodeham, LS I 66, 3-13: “Quoad primum teneo duas conclusiones. Prima est quod non potest visio naturaliter causari sine existentia et praeentia rei visibilis. Probatio, quia tunc, etiam circumscripto omni miraculo, nunquam posset haberi certitudo aliqua naturaliter de existentia vel quacumque condicione contengenti rei sensibilis per viam sensus nec per consequens per viam intellectus [In other words, if natural sensory intuition is deceptive, only
contingent beliefs are true, but knowledge is still possible in terms of justified belief. In his estimation, while it is always possible that we are deceived, doubt is never justified and could not arise regarding contingent belief to a degree that would cause anything other than certain assent. In a nutshell, while deception is always possible, doubt sufficient to move from assent to dissent or hesitation is never justified.

*then would contingent knowledge be naturally doubtable*. ...Et si sic, igitur nulla certitudo [esset] in huiusmodi, et tunc periret omnis scientia accepta per viam experientiae, quia omnis notitia est notitia certa.*
Concluding Remarks

Let me begin the end by restating what has been said in the dissertation as succinctly as possible. To Wodeham, sensory intuition is the source of all mental cognitions and is that by which the extra-mental world is apprehended. We only have scientific knowledge—knowledge of an extra-mental fact or state of affairs had through an evident judgment caused by demonstration—if we have accurate apprehensions of the extra-mental world. So, we only have evident knowledge if we have accurate sensory intuitions.

Experience, however, tells us that the senses can be deceptive and lead to false judgments. So it would seem that one of the conditions of scientific knowledge, accuracy on the part of sensation, cannot be met, and that we cannot conclude that we have scientific knowledge.

Wodeham counters by saying that just because there are sensory intuitions that are deceptive, does not mean that they all are. While
Concluding Remarks

sensations can be deceptive when something is amiss with the natural causal processes that gives rise to them, in normal operating conditions they are accurate. Deliberation is capable of sorting out deceptive sensations. And so we have a class of accurate sensations. It follows that we have scientific knowledge.

But, of course, it is always possible that an omnipotent being is immediately creating sense intuitions in the mind without corresponding extra-mental objects in a manner that would leave us incapable of separating the accurate from the deceptive. Because of this we cannot conclude that any sensation is accurate. And so it would again seem that we cannot meet the condition of scientific knowledge.

Wodeham accepts this situation, and admits in response that categorical propositions formed from intuitive apprehensions, e.g. “this whiteness exists and is present”, are insufficiently evident, because open to doubt, to cause a strictly evident judgment. But, he claims, hypothetical propositions formed in part from intuitive apprehensions, “if God is not deceiving, then this whiteness exists and is present”, are sufficiently evident, because not open to doubt, to cause a strictly evident judgment. In this way, he claims, scientific knowledge is possible.

Wodeham was attacked by Nicolaus of Autrecourt. Autrecourt argued that we can neither confirm nor deny the antecedent of Wodeham’s hypotheticals, which means that we cannot assert the consequent. If scientific knowledge is of the extra-mental world, then hypotheticals cannot count as scientific, precisely because they assert nothing. Hypotheticals may be undeniably true, but not in a way that saves knowledge of the extra-mental world from divine deception.
Whether intentional or not, Wodeham’s position is tantamount to skepticism regarding the extra-mental world.

There is currently a consensus that John Buridan responded to Autrecourt, and, some claim, Wodeham, by positing two types of evidentness, absolute and natural. Absolute evidentness meets the infallibilist standard of knowledge and cannot be had in natural science because of divine deception. Naturally evident propositions, which are naturally infallible but supernaturally falsifiable, can be had, and are sufficient for knowledge in the natural sciences. Wodeham’s infallibilist standard for knowledge is unattainably high, and leads to the absurd conclusion that we have no knowledge of the world. Buridan’s position was thus a form of reliabilism, which represented a legitimate third option between the extremes of skepticism and infallibilism and was ahead of its time.

But this reading is not quite right. Wodeham’s hypotheticals are undoubtable and may seem to be trivially true propositions, but they function to assert something of the world with a degree of certainty identical to Buridan’s natural evidentness. Buridan, and this is true of reliabilism in general, considers that we can have reliably justified but ultimately false beliefs that count as knowledge. Moreover, reliabilism implicitly accepts that something akin to divine deception is possible and, Buridan specifically accepts, could make all naturally evident knowledge non-knowledge. What is an implicit condition with Buridan is simply made explicit by Wodeham. Both say that we have undeniably true knowledge through natural means on condition that divine deception is not occurring. With hypothetical propositions we get evident judgments regarding the truth of the proposition, and evident judgments regarding
extra-mental world with a degree of certainty akin to Buridan’s “natural evidentness.”

The proper reading of the situation is not that Buridan was responding to Wodeham’s skeptical arguments through the intermediary of Autrecourt. Rather, Buridan was defending Wodeham from those who had either misunderstood him or argued against him.

Now, my original plan for the dissertation was to simply explain that Wodeham is a reliabilist through exposition of the Prologue and D.1. of the Lectura Secunda. It was never my intention to say a word about Buridan, let alone challenge the dominant view of him as having been an innovator who formulated a unique variety of reliabilism. But, as work on the dissertation progressed it became clear that the current reading of the situation cannot be correct as it stands, and that Buridan’s reliabilism is, in large part, simply a defence of Wodeham. Moreover, many other aspects of Buridan’s epistemology, notably his strategy in dealing with the natural threats to sensory intuition and the problem of induction, seem to have been lifted from the Lectura Secunda. I say “seem”, because I don’t think the textual evidence is conclusive. A study specifically devoted to a close textual examination of the works of the two thinkers would be required to truly confirm or deny influence. But, I think the parallels noted in this dissertation point towards a future direction for research.

FIN
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