

If these arguments have any validity, then the *De nuptiis* makes most sense in the second or third decade of the fifth century, the age of Rutilius Namatianus, Servius, and Macrobius.³⁸

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38. The fact that Martianus knew Iamblichus while Augustine did not hardly proves that "a text of Iamblichus had found its way to North Africa" after Augustine's lifetime (Shanzer, *Beiträge*, p. 111). If Martianus had a copy of his own, why should Augustine have known—or cared? The best parallel for an African writer of this period with a wide education in the Neoplatonists is (of course) Macrobius, now generally dated to the early fifth century (see n. 18, above).

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A NOTE ON *DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIAE*

In Book 4, prose 6 of *De consolazione philosophiae*, Lady Philosophy discusses the difference between *providentia* and *fatum*: the latter is the temporal unfolding of events as seen by men, while the former is this same temporal sequence as perceived instantaneously by the divine mind. This distinction between the temporal, earthly sequence and the unified, divine moment is central to Lady Philosophy's argument, as her illustrative example indicates; the relationship between *providentia* and *fatum* is like that between a craftsman's initial, instantaneous conception of what he will make and the chronological sequence through which he produces the object:

sicut enim artifex faciendae rei formam mente praecipiens mouet operis effectum et quod simpliciter praesentarietque prospexerat per temporales ordines ducit, ita deus prouidentia quidem singulariter stabiliterque facienda disponit, fato uero haec ipsa quae disposuit multipliciter ac temporaliter amministrat.¹

This stress on the sequential quality of *fatum* is already apparent when Lady Philosophy uses the word *generatio* to begin the discussion of *fatum* and *providentia* (4p6. 18–21):

omnium generatio rerum cunctusque mutabilium naturarum progressus et quicquid aliquo mouetur modo causas, ordinem, formas ex diuinae mentis stabilitate sortitur.

She then continues: "haec [i.e., mens diuina] in suae simplicitatis arce composita multiplicem rebus gerendis modum statuit" (4p6. 21–23). A good deal of manuscript variation surrounds *rebus gerendis*; some manuscripts omit *rebus*, while others have, in place of *gerendis*, *gerendi*, *regendis*, and *regerendis*.² Weinberger, as well as Bieler, reads *rebus gerendis*, Stewart reads *rebus regendis*, and Peiper emends to *regendi*. One manuscript of the early fifteenth century, Cambridge

1. L. Bieler, ed., *Philosophiae Consolatio*, CCSL 94 (Turnhout, 1957), 4p6. 39–44. All quotations from the *Consolatio* are from this edition.

2. See the variants in Bieler, p. 79.

University Library MS li.3.21,³ reads *rebus generandis*, which, since it is not recorded among the variants of any edition, apparently has gone unnoticed by all editors of the *Consolatio*. Initially, to be sure, one may be reluctant to accept the authority of this reading. Not only is *generandis* unique to this manuscript, but also the manuscript itself is late, and as such it reflects the “vulgate tradition” of the *Consolatio*—a distinct redaction which developed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁴ However, it has been axiomatic for some time in textual criticism that, because of the complexities of textual transmission, authorial readings can exist in manuscripts which otherwise lack textual authority. Moreover, Kottler, who first identified the “vulgate tradition,” has noted that since the tradition developed gradually, old and new readings exist side by side in some late medieval manuscripts.⁵ Since this is the case, one would also expect that on occasion a correct reading might survive in a late manuscript where other, earlier manuscripts contain corruptions.

The advantages of *rebus generandis* over *rebus gerendis*, or any of the other variants, are clear. First, the conception of *fatum* as the temporal process of creation, which Lady Philosophy stresses through the example of the craftsman and the *facienda res*, is suggested better by *generandis* than by either *gerendis* or *regendis*. And second, *generandis* nicely connects this sentence, through *an-nominatio*, with *generatio* in the preceding sentence (see above). It would be tendentious to argue that *regendis* and *gerendis* are scribal corruptions of *generandis*, for any of the forms could be a corruption of the others. However, the superior sense of *generandis* suggests that it is in fact the word Boethius wrote.

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3. For descriptions of the MS and its scribes, see C. Hardwick and H. R. Luard, *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1858), pp. 424–25; and E. T. Silk, “Cambridge MS li.3.21 and the Relation of Chaucer’s *Boethius* to Trivet and Jean de Meung” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1930), pp. 44–60.

4. See B. Kottler, “Chaucer’s *Boece* and the Late Medieval Textual Tradition of the *Consolatio Philosophiae*” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1953). For an abbreviated version of Kottler’s conclusions, see his “The Vulgate Tradition of the *Consolatio Philosophiae* in the Fourteenth Century,” *MS 17* (1955): 209–14. Kottler’s demonstration of the “vulgate tradition” qualifies much of what Silk says about the significance of C. U. L. MS li.3.21.

5. “The Vulgate Tradition,” p. 211.