



Internationale Gesellschaft für Theologische Mediävistik e.V.
International Society for the Study of Medieval Theology



ERZBISCHÖFLICHE
DIÖZESAN- UND DOMBIBLIOTHEK KÖLN
MIT BIBLIOTHEK ST. ALBERTUS MAGNUS

Annual conference of the
International Society for the Study of Medieval Theology (IGTM)
20-21 June 2025, Cologne

Albertus Magnus and his writing *De intellectu et intelligibili*
Call for Papers

Dear Colleagues,

Albert de Great's two-part treatise *De intellectu et intelligibili* will soon be published as the 34th volume of the *Opera Omnia Alberti Magni* (Ed. Colon. 7/2b). This means that a text that was highly esteemed both by Albert's contemporaries and by modern scholars is now available in a critical edition that meets scholarly standards. Albert the Great's treatise *De intellectu et intelligibili* is part of his plan for an encyclopaedia developed according to the principles of peripatetic philosophy. This project, which he completed around 1250-1267, was intended to systematically cover the entire spectrum of Aristotelian knowledge and required Albert to comment where Aristotelian reference works were available and to make additions where they were lacking. According to the scheme outlined by Albert at the beginning of his commentary on physics, *De intellectu et intelligibili* belongs to the psychological part of natural science. More precisely, it belongs to that area of psychology which, after examining the soul and its parts – i.e. its various faculties – deals with the study of the activities or affections that the soul performs or suffers in connection with the body. According to Aristotle's understanding, the intellectual faculty is not an organic faculty, unlike the other mental faculties, all of which also have a physical dimension insofar as they are located in bodily organs. Aristotle therefore refrains from elaborating a relevant treatise, leaving a gap, in Albert's perception, that needs to be closed for the sake of the consistency of the system.

With regard to *De intellectu et intelligibili*, it was important to Albert to provide a systematic place for theoretical reflection on the purely spiritual soul, which was conveyed by the late antique and Arabic tradition of treatises on the intellect. A second reason lies in the clearly intellectualist character of his thought: since the true essence of man consists in his intellectual nature – as Albert states, following a passage he frequently quotes from the 'Nicomachean Ethics': "homo est solus intellectus" – and

intellectual activity represents the pinnacle of human happiness, the theoretical discussion and definition of the intellect is of fundamental importance for both anthropology and ethics. The importance of the subject of the work for mankind is reflected in the extent of its reception. The treatise *De intellectu et intelligibili* is one of Albert's works of which more than ninety textual witnesses have survived and which was made available in printed editions early on. The scientific, philosophical and theological discussions among Albert's contemporaries and especially among the Albertists of the 15th century, and not least the intensive research debate that lasted more than 100 years, testify to the status and importance of this work.

For this reason, the topics and questions of this publication will be the subject of a conference organized by the Albertus Magnus Institute in conjunction with the IGTM and the Archbishop's Diocesan and Cathedral Library of Cologne from 20-21 June 2025 in Cologne. The following questions will be considered in detail:

Sources of Albert's theory of intellect

Origin and nature of the intellectual soul

Creation of the intellectual soul

The intellectual soul as Imago Dei

Objects of the intellect

The intellect and its faculties

The intellectual act of cognition

The completion process of the intellectual soul

Intellectual bliss and 'bios theoretikos'

Intellectualist anthropology ("homo est solus intellectus")

The position of man between God and nature based on the intellect.

The proposed questions offer numerous starting points for philosophical and theological research, in particular the doctrine of creation, cosmology and anthropology as well as epistemology and eschatology.

We invite you to participate in this conference with a presentation and/or a contribution for the planned publication. (The congress languages are German, English and Latin.)

Please send your paper proposal with an exposé of approx. 2000 characters (incl. spaces) by **October 01, 2024** to Ms. Susana Bullido del Barrio

bullido@albertus-magnus-institut.de

We will make our decision on the topics of our conference lectures shortly after October 1 in order to ensure the most diverse treatment of this challenging text.

Yours sincerely, Marc-Aeilko Aris

Director of the Albertus Magnus Institut