

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris

In the thirteenth century, the University of Paris emerged as a complex community with a distinctive role in society. This book explores the relationship between contexts of learning and the ways of knowing developed within them, focusing on twelfth-century schools and monasteries, as well as the university. By investigating their views on money, marriage and sex, Ian Wei reveals the complexity of what theologians had to say about the world around them. He analyses the theologians' sense of responsibility to the rest of society and the means by which they tried to communicate and assert their authority. In the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, however, their claims to authority were challenged by learned and intellectually sophisticated women and men who were active outside as well as inside the university, and who used the vernacular – an important phenomenon in the development of the intellectual culture of medieval Europe.

IAN P. WEI is Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Bristol. His publications include two co-edited volumes, *Authority and Community in the Middle Ages* (with Don Mowbray and Rhiannon Purdie, 1999) and *Medieval Futures: Attitudes to the Future in the Middle Ages* (with John Burrow, 2000).

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the  
University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris

*Theologians and the University c. 1100–1330*

---

Ian P. Wei



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press,  
New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107009691](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107009691)

© Ian P. Wei 2012

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception  
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,  
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written  
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2012

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

Wei, Ian P.

Intellectual culture in medieval Paris : theologians and the university,  
c.1100-1330 / Ian P. Wei.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-00969-1

1. Education, Higher—France—Paris—History—To 1500.

2. Church and college—France—Paris—History—To 1500.

3. Université de Paris—History—To 1500. 4. Paris (France)—Intellectual  
life—History—To 1500. I. Title.

LA698.W43 2012

378.443'610902—dc23

2011052386

ISBN 978-1-107-00969-1 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or  
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet websites referred to in  
this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,  
or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the  
University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

For Betty R. Wei and Teh-Hsing Wei

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the  
University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xiii
Introduction	1
1 The twelfth-century schools of northern France	8
Competition, student power and the emergence of a new career	9
The lure of logic	17
Texts: interpreting authorities	33
Sense perception	37
Myth and poetry	40
Diversity and conflict	44
Towards universities	47
2 The twelfth-century monasteries and Hugh of Saint Victor	52
Anselm of Bec and Canterbury	53
Bernard of Clairvaux	59
William of Saint Thierry	65
Hildegard of Bingen	68
Conflict between monks and schoolmen	72
Hugh of Saint Victor	78
3 The University of Paris in the thirteenth century	87
Institutionalization, cultural identity and a new discourse of learning	87
Bonaventure	124
Aquinas	143
Conflict and condemnation	161
4 Communication and control	170
Self-image	174
Generating a need for masters of theology and their judgements in Christian society	184
Means of communication	228
Conclusion	245
	vii

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the  
University c. 1100–1330  
Ian P. Wei  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

viii	Contents	
5	Sex and marriage	247
	The nature of men and women	248
	Marriage	250
	Marital sex	260
	Marital problems	272
6	Money	293
	Exchange	296
	Usury	306
	Annuities: a case study	323
	Living with usury: tolerating a lesser evil	345
	Living with usury: usurious money	348
	Conclusion	353
7	Anti-intellectual intellectuals in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries: a new context	356
	Jean de Meun and the <i>Romance of the Rose</i>	357
	Marguerite Porete and <i>The Mirror of Simple Souls</i>	374
	Eckhart	392
	Conclusion	408
	<i>Bibliography</i>	415
	<i>Index</i>	437



Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Preface

---

The arguments that I present in this book have been developed in the course of both teaching and research. I owe a great debt to successive generations of students at the universities of Edinburgh and Bristol in whose company my thinking has developed. I hope that former students who read this book will hear echoes of the passionate debates in which they helped me to refine my ideas and find the best way to present them. Although the students who have contributed to my work are too numerous to mention by name, I must offer very special thanks to those whose research at doctoral level has greatly enriched my understanding of medieval intellectual culture: Helen Casey, Mark Kauntze, Richard Lambert and Don Mowbray. I must also express my thanks to colleagues at the universities of Edinburgh and Bristol. I began my teaching career at the University of Edinburgh and I will always be immensely grateful to my former colleagues for showing me how the job should be done, especially Michael Angold, Tom Brown, Gary Dickson, Ken Fowler, Tony Goodman, Angus Mackay, Nicholas Phillipson and John Stephens. I must also offer heartfelt thanks to former and current colleagues at the University of Bristol who have commented on my work and stimulated my thinking. In the Centre for Medieval Studies, I would like to thank especially Elizabeth Archibald, Kenneth Austin, Marcus Bull, Fernando Cervantes, Gillian Clark, James Clark, Emma Dillon, George Ferzoco, Anke Holdenried, David Hook, Evan Jones, Pam King, Carolyn Muessig, Ad Putter, Anne Simon, Brendan Smith, Denys Turner, Carol Meale and Beth Williamson. I have, however, received support and encouragement from many quarters in the university, and I am especially grateful to Bernard Alford, Robert Bickers, Bill Doyle, Bob Fowler, Ronald Hutton, Michael Liversidge, Chris McLeod, Josie McLellan, Kirsty Reid, Philip Richardson, Richard Sheldon, Eric Thomas and James Thompson. A list of medievalists from other universities to whom I am indebted for advice would extend over many pages, but I am especially grateful to David d'Avray, Alan Bernstein, Peter Biller, Mishtooni Bose, Laura Cleaver (who helped

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x Preface

me find an image for the cover), Anne Cobby, David Ditchburn, Jean Dunbabin, Fionnuala Sinclair, Spencer Young and Nicolette Zeeman. I must also thank those who read the book on behalf of Cambridge University Press for excellent advice; two readers remained anonymous, but Peter Denley revealed his identity when offering specific help on Italian universities.

In recent years my work on medieval universities has been greatly enriched by collaboration with colleagues in the Ideas and Universities project which runs as part of the Worldwide Universities Network and compares universities in different cultures and periods. I must thank especially Isobel Howe, Susie Jim, Glen Jones, Lisa Lucas, David Shepherd, John Taylor, Tony Welch and Xu Xiaozhou.

In 2009–10 I enjoyed the huge privilege of being a member of the School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. I am extremely grateful to Danielle Allen for inviting me to work in an immensely stimulating environment, and for the intellectual and personal generosity with which she received my work. She and her colleagues, Didier Fassin, Joan Scott and Michael Walzer, were endlessly perceptive and encouraging in their comments. As if this were not enough, Caroline Bynum and Giles Constable made me equally at home in the School of History and generously took a lively interest in this book. In both schools extraordinarily brilliant scholars had been gathered together, and I am grateful to all of them for the atmosphere of intellectual excitement in which I had the opportunity to rework the final draft of this book.

This book would not have reached fruition without the help and encouragement of staff at Cambridge University Press. Michael Watson waited patiently for this book for a long time, gently enquiring how it was coming along, but always careful to make it clear that it must be the book that I wanted it to be. Once I had submitted the book, Liz Friend-Smith oversaw crucial rewriting and her sound judgement has been of immense value. Chloe Howell has guided me through the production of the book with great care and kindness.

I must express my particular gratitude to some very special friends whose relentless kindness and intellectual energy have turned moments of intellectual uncertainty into passionate conversations that have shaped my work: Julie Cooper, Rita Copeland, Rosemary Deem, Marilyn Desmond, Ka Ho Mok, Adam Nelson, Matt Nelson, Miri Rubin and David Wallace.

My greatest intellectual debt is to two wonderful teachers. Peggy Brown ‘adopted’ me when I was a graduate student in Paris, decided that I had something worth saying when others might reasonably have

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the  
University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

xi

had their doubts, and has been unwavering in her support for over twenty-five years. Her intellectual power and generosity have been the making of many of us, and the challenge has always been to live up to her expectations. The late Jeff Denton introduced me to medieval history when I was an undergraduate at the University of Manchester. He had the extraordinary gift of making every single student feel as if she or he were embarking on a personal mission to understand the past in a new way. He combined intellectual rigour with a free spirit of great generosity and enthusiasm. He pointed me in many of the directions that I have subsequently followed and, though I miss him, I hear his voice whenever I read his work.

I must conclude by thanking my family. They have lived with this book for a long time, whether or not they were aware of it, and they give meaning to everything that I do. I offer many thanks to my sister and her family: Anne, Phil, Alex and Beth. My final, greatest and most important thanks go to my mother and father. They taught me to value education and appreciate university culture in its many forms. They are my closest friends, on whose love and support I have always depended. It is to Betty R. Wei and Teh-Hsing Wei that I dedicate this book.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Acknowledgements

---

I am grateful to the publishers of the following articles for permission to re-use material in this book: ‘The self-image of the masters of theology at the university of Paris in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46 (1995): 398–431; ‘Intellectuals and money: Parisian disputations about annuities in the thirteenth century’, *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 83, no. 3 (2001), a special edition further titled P. D. Clarke (ed.), *Owens’s Historical Essays in Honour of Jeffrey H. Denton*, pp. 71–94; ‘Gender and sexuality in medieval academic discourse: marriage problems in Parisian quodlibets’, *Mediaevalia* 31 (2010): 5–34; ‘From twelfth-century schools to thirteenth-century universities: the disappearance of biographical and autobiographical representations of scholars’, *Speculum* 86 (2011): 42–78.

Abbreviations

<i>Chartularium</i>	<i>Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis</i> , ed. H. Denifle and E. Chatelain, 4 vols. (Paris, 1889–97)
B. N. lat. Peter Lombard, <i>Sententiae</i>	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin Peter Lombard, <i>Sententiae in IV libris distinctae</i> , Spicilegium Bonaventurianum 4 and 5 (Grottaferrata, 1971 and 1981)
PL	<i>Patrologia cursus completus, series Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne, 221 vols. (1844–61)
ST	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologiae: Latin Text and English Translation</i> , ed. T. Gilby <i>et al.</i> , 61 vols. (London, 1964–80). With volume and page numbers in brackets
<i>University Records</i>	L. Thorndike, <i>University Records and Life in the Middle Ages</i> (New York, 1944)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00969-1 - Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the  
University c. 1100–1330

Ian P. Wei

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---