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William J. Courtenay

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This study of the social, geographical, and disciplinary composition of the scholarly community at the University of Paris in the early fourteenth century is based on the reconstruction of a remarkable document: the financial record of a tax levied on university members in the academic year 1329–30. Containing the names, financial level, and often addresses of the majority of the masters and most prominent students, it is the single richest source for the social history of a medieval university before the late fourteenth century.

After a thorough examination of the financial account, the history of such collections, and the case (a rape by a student) that precipitated legal expenses and the need for a collection, the book explores residential patterns, the relationship of students, masters, and tutors, social class and levels of wealth, interaction with the royal court, and the geographical background of university scholars.

WILLIAM J. COURTENAY is C. H. Haskins Professor of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison. His many publications include *Adam Wodeham, An introduction to his life and writings* (1978), *Covenant and causality in medieval thought: Studies in philosophy, theology and economic practice* (1984), *Schools and scholars in fourteenth-century England* (1987), *Teaching careers at the university of Paris in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries* (1988), and *Capacity and volition: A history of the distinction of absolute and ordained power* (1990).

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Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought

PARISIAN SCHOLARS IN THE
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A social portrait

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CAMBRIDGE
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[More information](#)PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United KingdomCAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK <http://www.cup.cam.ac.uk>
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA <http://www.cup.org>
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

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First published 1999

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeset in 11/12pt Monotype Bembo [CE]

*A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library**Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Courtenay, William J.

Parisian scholars in the early fourteenth century: a social portrait / William J. Courtenay.

p. cm. — (Cambridge studies in medieval life and thought: 4th ser.)

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN 0 521 64212 4 (hardcover)

1. Université de Paris — History.

2. Education, Medieval — France — Paris.

3. Education, Higher — Social aspects — France — Paris — History.

I. Title. II. Series.

LF2165.C68 1999

378.44'361-dc21 98-34292 CIP

ISBN 0 521 64212 4 hardback

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PREFACE

For more than a century, the history of the university of Paris and of medieval universities in general has been reconstructed largely from statutory evidence and from the written products of their schools and convents. This type of documentation initially led historians to focus their attention on questions of origin, constitutional structure, curriculum, and secondarily on intellectual activities and the conjectured daily life of students. Once the early stages of development had taken place, the institutional structure of each university was thought to be set, and descriptions of those structures were presumably as applicable to the late fourteenth century as they were to the early thirteenth. Where changes in degree requirements or administrative authority were noted, these were viewed as slight variations that did not significantly alter the continuity of basic structures. Change lay in the growth of colleges, the introduction and accommodation of the mendicant orders into universities, and the different intellectual currents and schools of thought that arose, waned, or reappeared as one moved from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century.

In recent years the interests of historians have shifted more to questions of social background, geographical recruitment, careers of students and masters, and the interaction of universities with the surrounding society. This shift is evident in the work of A. B. Cobban, Guy Lytle, Jürgen Miethke, Peter Moraw, Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, Rainer Schwinges, Jacques Verger, and numerous others. Yet the tendency to bring all the medieval evidence together into one picture has remained strong, as can be seen in the first volume of *A History of the University in Europe* (1992).

The broad, comparative approach covering several centuries – whether it be of one or several universities – allows one a synthetic overview of university structure and development. That approach has also been sustained in part by a belief among scholars that there is not

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sufficient and balanced information from any single university at one point in time to be able effectively to address questions of social composition. This is why evidence derived from prosopographical research – perhaps the single most important development in the history of universities in the previous generation – has primarily been used to establish general trends within university populations over time. Such studies provide a means of arriving at a more quantitative, less impressionistic picture of social composition, geographical background, or career patterns of graduates than had previously been possible. And since biographical data is quantitatively richer for the fifteenth century, the previous two centuries have been passed over as largely unknowable in terms of social composition. When the question of what preceded the university world of the fifteenth century has been posed, the generalizations of earlier historians have been accepted as sufficiently descriptive and accurate.

There are two serious flaws with the broad, comparative approach built on a supposedly in-depth knowledge of fifteenth-century universities. First, one cannot, on the basis of fifteenth-century evidence, assume that earlier universities were substantially the same or substantially different. Second, if information drawn from one university at one point in time is too meager and unbalanced for substantive conclusions, how can the cumulative weight of such evidence have greater demonstrative validity? As A. B. Emden remarked on the eve of the computerization of the data in his biographical registers of Oxford and Cambridge, the resulting picture can be highly misleading. Raw statistics obscure and ignore the imbalances produced by different types of documentation and sources from which biographical registers are of necessity compiled. Moreover, a general, composite picture, even one concerned with trends over time, often ignores the fact that the amount and type of evidence from which such data bases are derived vary enormously from decade to decade and from university to university.

The most troubling aspect of the composite picture of the social and regional structure of a university is the assumption that it was relatively uniform across time, with the exception, in the case of the university of Paris, of the supposed effects of the Hundred Years War, the Black Death, and the Papal Schism in the course of the fourteenth century. But if we do not know what the university of Paris was like before those events, how can we realistically discuss continuity and change? Until time-specific studies are done for universities, we simply have no base lines from which to determine in what areas and to what degree change took place in the social composition of a university between the thirteenth and fifteenth century.

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The following work grows out of the “recovery” of a document that permits just such a base line to be established for the upper echelon of the university of Paris at one point in time in the early fourteenth century. The document has long been known but largely ignored because the form in which it survived hid its meaning, importance, and precise date. The document in question is a financial record compiled during a general collection from members of the university of Paris in the 1329–30 academic year. When the document is restructured, reedited, and the persons listed are identified and their biographies compiled through other evidence, there emerges the most detailed picture yet of an academic generation of scholars resident at Paris – or indeed at any medieval university – before the last years of the fourteenth century. Put simply, the *computus* of 1329–30 is the single richest source for the social composition and topography at one point in time of arguably the most important university in medieval Europe.

Although many other documents have been used in this study to augment the information in the 1329–30 document, the uniqueness and richness of the document, as well as the difficulties in interpreting its content, merit its being made the principal object of study. In its present archival state and as previously edited, the document is analogous to the torn pieces of an old photograph. Even when reassembled, the nature and purpose of the event as well as the identity of the persons in the picture are not immediately evident. The photograph contains some faces we recognize immediately, others who look distantly familiar, and others in the passing crowd whose names, almost as facial expressions, evoke striking images in the mind (“Johannes sense lettres,” “Prior Berdoniss cum suis rebellibus,” and “Henricus sine amors”) but might not otherwise be remembered or brought back to life. Some figures have their faces hidden or cropped off and are identifiable only by their clothing or livery. Some are obviously together as friends or associates, but the precise link is uncertain.

The first step in identifying the meaning of the document – the subject of Chapter One – is to reassemble the pieces in proper order, to determine when, where, and why the record was made, and to ascertain what proportion of the total university population, or at least its academic leadership, is covered by the persons listed in this document. The second step – the subject of Chapter Two – is to understand the ritual that was being recorded, namely university collections as they developed in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The third step – the subject of Chapter Three – is to uncover the circumstance that provoked a chain of events, one of which created the document in question. Chapter Four explores the topographical placement of the

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figures in the photograph, which helps us to understand something of the disciplinary and social arrangement of the university community. From there the work builds in several directions: into the residential structures and relationships of Parisian scholars, into their social and economic background, and finally into their geographical and regional origins – that wider world from which they came and to which most eventually returned. The resulting picture could be presented in terms of percentages and general trends, distilled from the individual histories from which such statistics are compiled. A conscious effort has been made, however, to retain a sense of place and time, and the human dimension that is often a more authentic and honest echo of the past.

In the end we have not only a window in time, a micro-history of one year in the life of a medieval university – which in this case included the rape of a young woman by a student and the consequent legal disputes between the university, the bishop, and the chapter of Notre Dame that led ultimately to the papal court at Avignon – but, more importantly, an in-depth picture of the social, economic, and residential structure of the university community at Paris as it existed in the early fourteenth century.

Because of the complexity and duration of the project, many individuals and groups have provided invaluable support and advice. The initial research was begun at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton and at the Institute for Research in the Humanities at Madison, and in those two institutes I would especially like to thank Giles Constable and David Lindberg. The work also profited by a *Forschungspreis* from the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung and the collaboration and hospitality of Professor Jürgen Miethke at Heidelberg. The final stages of research were completed in Rome, where I was a visiting scholar at the American Academy, and in Paris. In those two settings, I am especially grateful to Caroline Bruzelius, then Director of the American Academy in Rome; Leonard Boyle, then Prefect of the *Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana*; Sergio Pagano, Vice Prefect of the *Archivio Segreto Vaticano*; the administrative staff of the *Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne*; M. Pierre Petitmengin, director of the *Bibliothèque de l'École Normale Supérieure*; Jacques Verger, professor of medieval history at the *Université de Paris*; and Madame Le Maresquier of the *Centre de Topographie Historique de Paris* for her advice on the map of Paris in 1329. I am also grateful to Astrik L. Gabriel, director emeritus of the Medieval Institute at Notre Dame; to John Van Engen, its past director; and to Louis Jordan, curator of the Ambrosiana Collection at Notre Dame, for the photographic reproductions from the microfilm of the register of the English-German nation in which the 1329–30

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document was bound. And without the map work of Qingling Wang and the Cartographic Lab of the University of Wisconsin, with the support of its director, Onno Brouwer, the visualization of detailed information would be lacking.

Finally, I am much indebted to present and former students who read through various chapters, to Thomas Sullivan for his help with the identification of several monasteries, to Robin Gold for the initial copy-editing, to my colleagues in the Department of History at Wisconsin for their continuing confidence and support, and to the Research Committee of the Graduate School, which funded the initial prosopographical data base for the university of Paris in the fourteenth century, which in turn led to the reconstruction, dating, and study of the 1329–30 *computus*.

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ABBREVIATIONS

I. Words

archbp.	archbishop
archdioc.	archdiocese
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BDecr	Bachelor of Canon Law (Decrees)
BMed	Bachelor of Medicine
bp.	bishop
BTh	Bachelor of Theology
Comp.	<i>Computus</i> of 1329–1330, as edited in Appendix 1
DCiv	Doctor of Civil Law
DDecr	Doctor of Canon Law (Decrees)
<i>den.</i>	<i>denarii</i>
dioc.	diocese
DMed	Doctor of Medicine
DTh	Doctor of Theology
DUJ	Doctor utriusque juris
f.	folio
<i>i.e.m.</i>	<i>in eodem modo</i>
<i>lib.</i>	<i>libra</i>
MA	Master of Arts
n.	note
O. Carm.	Carmelite Order
O.F.M.	Franciscans (Ordo Fratrum Minorum)
O.P.	Dominicans (Ordo Praedicatorum)
O.S.B.	Benedictine (Ordo Sancti Benedicti)
prov.	province
<i>sol.</i>	<i>solidus, solidi</i>
univ.	university, <i>universitas, université</i>

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Livre des Grands-Augustins = Paris, Archives Nationales, S 3640: *Livres des Contrats des Grands-Augustins*

Paris, Arch. Univ. = Paris, Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne

Reg. Aven. = Vatican, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registra Avenionensia

Reg. ND = Paris, Archives Nationales, LL 105: *Registre du chapitre de Notre Dame, Paris*

Reg. Suppl. = Vatican, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registra Supplicationum

Reg. Vat. = Vatican, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registra Vaticana

III. Printed sources and reference works

AN Reg. *Fils* = Archives nationales, *Registres du Trésor des Chartes*, vol. II: *Règnes des fils de Philippe le Bel*, pt. 1: *Règnes de Louis X le Hutin et de Philippe V le Long* (Paris, 1966).

AN Reg. *Phil. IV* = Archives nationales, *Registres du Trésor des Chartes*, vol. I: *Règne de Philippe le Bel* (Paris, 1958).

AN Reg. *Phil. VI* = Archives nationales, *Registres du Trésor des Chartes*, vol. III: *Règne de Philippe de Valois* (Paris, 1978–84).

AUPI = *Auctarium Chartularii Universitatis Parisiensis*, ed. H. Denifle and E. Chatelain, vol. I (Paris, 1894).

Baluze-Mollat = Etienne Baluze, *Vitae paparum avenionensium*, ed. G. Mollat, 4 vols. (Paris, 1914–22).

Berty and Tisserand, *Topographie* = A. Berty, H. Legrand, L.-M. Tisserand, C. Platon, *Topographie historique du vieux Paris* (Histoire générale de Paris), 6 vols. (Paris, 1866–97).

BRUO = A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to 1500*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1957–59).

Bulaeus, *Historia Univ. Par.* = C.-E. Du Boulay, *Historia universitatis parisiensis*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1665–73).

CPL III = *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland. Papal Letters*, ed. W. H. Bliss and C. Johnson, vol. III (London, 1897).

CPP I = *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland. Petitions to the Pope*, ed. W. H. Bliss, vol. I: *A.D. 1342–1419* (London, 1896).

CUP = *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, ed. H. Denifle and E. Chatelain, 4 vols. (Paris, 1889–94).

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- DBF = *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française*, ed. J. Balteau, M. Barroux, and M. Prévost, 17 vols. to date (Paris, 1933–).
- Desportes, *Amiens* = P. Desportes and H. Millet, *Diocèse d'Amiens, Fasti Ecclesiae Gallicanae*, I (Paris, 1996).
- Eubel, *Hierarchia* I = C. Eubel, *Hierarchia Catholica Medii Aevi et Recentioris Aevi*, vol. I (Münster, 1913).
- Gall. Christ. = *Gallia Christiana*, 16 vols. (Paris, 1715–1865).
- Glorieux, *Sorbonne* = P. Glorieux, *Aux origines de la Sorbonne*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1966, 1965).
- Gorochov, *Navarre* = Nathalie Gorochov, *La Collège de Navarre de sa fondation (1305) au début du XV^e siècle (1418)*. (Paris, 1997).
- Jacquart, *Milieu* = D. Jacquart, *Le milieu médical en France du XII^e au XV^e siècle. En annexe 2^e supplément au <<Dictionnaire>> d'Ernest Wickersheimer* (Geneva, 1981).
- Jacquart, *Supplément* = D. Jacquart, *Supplément au <<Dictionnaire biographique des médecins>> d'Ernest Wickersheimer* (Geneva, 1979).
- LC Benoît XII = *Benoît XII (1334–1342), Lettres communes*, ed. J.-M. Vidal, 3 vols. (Paris, 1902–6, 1911).
- LC Clém. VI, *Belge* = *Lettres de Clément VI (1342–1352)*, vol. I: 1342–1346, ed. U. Berlière and Ph. Van Isacker, *Analecta Vaticano-Belgica*, vol. 6 (Rome–Bruxelles–Paris, 1924).
- LC Grég. XI = *Grégoire XI (1370–1378), Lettres communes*, ed. A.-M. Hayez (Rome, 1992–).
- LC Jean XXII = *Jean XXII (1316–1334), Lettres communes*, ed. G. Mollat et al., 16 vols., incl. indices (Paris, 1904–1947).
- LC Urbain V = *Urbain V (1362–1370), Lettres communes*, ed. M.-H. Laurent et al., 13 vols. (Rome, 1954–1989).
- LS Innoc. VI = *Innocent VI (1352–1362), Lettres secrètes et curiales*, ed. P. Gasnault, M.-H. Laurent, and N. Gotteri (Paris, 1959–).
- Millet, *Laon* = H. Millet, *Les chanoines du chapitre cathédral de Laon, 1272–1412* (Rome, 1982).
- Picot, *Documents* = G. Picot, *Documents relatifs aux Etats-Généraux et assemblées réunis sous Philippe le Bel* (Paris, 1901).
- Reg. Clem. V = *Regestum Clementis Papae V*, 8 vols. (Rome, 1885–87, 1957).
- Reg. Grandisson = *The Register of John de Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter, 1327–1369*, 3 vols., ed. F. C. Hingeston-Randolph (London and Exeter, 1894–99).
- Rouse = R. H. Rouse and M. A. Rouse, “The Book Trade at the University of Paris, ca. 1250–ca. 1350,” in *La Production du livre universitaire au Moyen Age: Exemplar et Pecia*, ed. L. J. Bataillon, B. G. Guyot, and R. H. Rouse (Paris, 1988), pp. 41–114.

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- Snape's Formulary* = *Snape's Formulary and other Records*, ed. H. E. Salter, Oxford Historical Society (Oxford, 1923).
- Suppl. Clém. VI, Belge* = *Suppliques de Clément VI (1342–1352)*, ed. U. Berlière, *Analecta Vaticano-Belgica*, vol. 1 (Rome–Bruges–Paris, 1906).
- Vat. Quel.* = *Vatikanische Quellen zur Geschichte der päpstlichen Hof- und Finanzverwaltung 1316–1378*, edd. E. Göller et al. (Paderborn, 1910 ff.).
- Viard, *Documents* = J. Viard, *Documents parisiens du règne de Philippe VI de Valois (1328–1350)*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1899–1900).
- Watt = D. E. R. Watt, *A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates to A.D. 1410* (Oxford, 1977).
- Wickersheimer = E. Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique des médecins en France au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1936; repr. 1979).