



The Bodies of Adam and Eve: The (Missed?) Encounter of Natural Philosophy and Theology in the Account of Albert the Great¹

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ABSTRACT: Around 1242 Albert the Great writes his anthropological summa *De homine*, which deals with the human soul, human body, and their connection. The section on the body is entirely dedicated to the bodies of Adam and Eve in paradise. A few years later Albert investigates the same topic in his second commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. In this article I take a closer look at Albert's treatment of the topic, focusing on the questions of the bodily immortality; the question whether Adam was able to feel sadness; the physiological functions of the body in paradise; and the body of Eve, created from Adam's rib. Despite Albert's later pronounced interest in natural philosophy, and despite the naturalistic interpretations of the biblical account provided by other authors in the same period, Albert prefers to stay close to the traditional theological interpretation, following the authority of Augustine.

KEYWORDS: Natural Philosophy, Theology, Albert the Great, Immortality, Human Body

ABSTRACT: Intorno al 1242 Alberto Magno scrive la sua *summa* antropologica *De homine* avente come tema l'anima umana, il corpo umano e la loro unione. La sezione sul corpo è interamente dedicata ai corpi di Adamo ed Eva nel paradiso. Un paio di anni più tardi Alberto studierà lo stesso problema nel suo Commentario al secondo libro delle *Sentenze* di Pietro Lombardo. L'articolo indaga l'interpretazione di Alberto di questo tema, concentrandosi sul problema dell'immortalità del corpo, la questione se Adamo fosse capace di provare tristezza, le funzioni fisiologiche del corpo nel paradiso e il corpo di Eva creato

¹ This article has been written within the project *Human Being As a Cross-Point: The Beginnings of the Modern Concept of Man in the Middle Ages* (PN-III-P1-I.1-TE-2016-2351), Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

dalla costola di Adamo. Nonostante l'interesse marcato di Alberto per la filosofia naturale – e a differenza di altri commenti di tipo naturalistico alla storia biblica composti in questo stesso periodo –, Alberto preferisce mantenersi vicino alla tradizionale interpretazione teologica, seguendo l'autorità di Agostino.

KEYWORDS: filosofia naturale, teologia, Alberto Magno, immortalità, corpo umano

The story of Adam and Eve and the lost paradise is a myth that the Christian culture has deeply appropriated. All of its elements – the creation of Eve from Adam's rib, the disobedience, resulting in an original sin transmitted to all the human generations after, and the ensuing loss of Eden – have had lasting cultural, social and political implications².

But what about their bodies? What kind of body could they possibly have had in the terrestrial paradise, in the state of innocence? In what follows I will focus on the naturalistic interpretation of the Biblical story. I will sketch the position of Albert the Great on the condition of human body before the Fall. Albert discusses the topic of Adam's and Eve's bodies at length in at least two occasions, first in his summa *De homine* and few years later in his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. The questions Albert regards are parallel, with few exceptions, which is why I am going to divide this paper into topics rather than diachronically. Before that I will briefly sketch the state of the art and the context in which Albert's treatment of the problem took place.

I. *State of the art*

When I first started digging into the topic on Adam's body, I thought it was a minor issue. As one could have expected, I was proven wrong, almost. The framework for the research, regarding the period of interest, is set by J. Ziegler and I. Resnick³. Ziegler demonstrates an arising

² Cfr. I. Rosier-Catach-G. Briguglia (eds.), *Adam, la nature humaine, avant et après: Epistémologie de la Chute*, Éditions de la Sorbonne, Paris 2016; G. Briguglia, *Stato d'innocenza: Adamo, Eva, e la filosofia politica medievale*, Carocci, Roma 2017; K. Flasch, *Eva und Adam: Wandlungen eines Mythos*, C. H. Beck Verlag, München 2004; D. Perler, *Was Adam Prone to Error? A Medieval Thought Experiment*, in A. Speer-M. Mauriège (eds.), *Irrtum-Error-Erreur*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2018, pp. 197-215.

³ J. Ziegler, *Medicine and Immortality in Terrestrial Paradise*, in P. Biller-J. Ziegler

interest in a medical approach towards the prelapsarial condition of man in the 12th and 13th centuries, focusing on Adam's corporeal complexion. I. Resnick goes into the details of the humoral theory applied to Adam, and points to a probable 12th-century source that incentivized that interest, suggesting it took clue from Petrus Alfonsi, a covert from Judaism and an important source for the introduction of Arab medical knowledge to the West alongside with Constantinus Africanus. Now, Ziegler points to the importance of Peter Lombard's questions 19 and 20 from *II Sent.* that regarded Adam's complexion as a source of medical and natural philosophical knowledge. However, Albert who is otherwise a standard authority in questions of natural philosophy is barely mentioned, and the reader can't be sure if Albert is omitted for any particular reason. In this short article, then, I would like to address Albert's treatment and suggest my take on the place of Albert the Great in the debate on Adam's complexion in the middle of 13th century.

2. Context

Let me first shortly introduce the context and the history of the debate⁴. The authoritative stance on Adam was provided by Augustine (354-430) in his commentary on *Genesis*, by discussing the nature of immortality of Adam's body. Augustine formulated the distinction between the natural mortality of Adam's animal body and his ability *not* to die (*potest non mori*), a kind of immortality, provided to him by God's benevolence. Thus Augustine addressed the question what it should mean that Adam needs to consume food in Eden, which points to a natural weakness and corruptibility of the body. However, in Eden Adam and Eve had the gift of the tree of life, which had also the physical effect of preserving their bodies in perfect balance⁵. In his second book of *Sentences* Peter Lombard (1096-1160) resumes Augustine's set of problems with regard to Adam's body and the problems posed by

(eds.), *Religion and Medicine in the Middle Ages*, York Medieval Press, York 2001, pp. 201-242; I. M. Resnick, *Humoralism and Adam's Body: Twelfth-Century Debates and Petrus Alfonsi's Dialogus contra judeos*, «Viator» 36 (2005), pp. 181-195; cfr. A. Robert, *Le corps d'après: la Chute entre théologie et médecine XIIe-XIVe siècle*, in I. Rosier-Catach G. Briguglia (eds.), *Adam, la nature humaine*, cit., pp. 173-204.

⁴ For a detailed survey, cfr. J. Ziegler, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-224.

⁵ Augustine, *De genesi ad litteram*, 6, 6, 36, CSEL 28/1, ed. Zycha (CSEL, XXVIII/1), F. Tempsky, Vindobonae 1894, p. 197.

it, i.e. if it was immortal by nature or by grace; if its natural functions (eating, copulation, birth etc.) were a result of the sin, or a part of Adam's natural condition in Eden. In the footsteps of Augustine, Peter discussed also the creation of Eve, focusing on the problem whether it was a miraculous deed or if it possibly was a natural process, whether it was done by the creator himself or by the angels, and its significance for the role of the woman towards man⁶.

Also in 12th century, Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), leaning towards the medical learning transmitted by 11th century physician Constantine the African, interpreted the Fall of Adam in terms of bodily complexion. As a result of the original sin, his blood lost its balanced and pure complexion and was infected by melancholy⁷. In the treatise *De corpore humano*, part of the *Summa theologica* attributed to the Franciscan theologian Alexander of Hales (1185-1245), prevails the focus on the complexion of Adam. Alexander discusses whether the complexion of Adam was perfect, or if it was just (*a iustitia*), i.e. not mathematically perfectly balanced, which would be impossible for a living body, but tempered to Adam's individual soul-body unity and his prelapsarian condition. This complexionist interpretation serves as a naturalistic explanation of the standard Augustinian view that Adam was immortal not by nature (as he couldn't have a perfectly balanced complexion), but was immortal by grace⁸.

So, by the time Albert was writing his summa *De homine* in 1242, he encountered a relatively complex and detailed picture of the problem of Adam's body. So let's turn now to his position on the topic.

3. Albert's Works

Albert explicitly addresses the topic of the human body in its prelapsarian condition in two longer text sections. *De homine*, as the title

⁶ Petrus Lombardus, *Sent.* II, 2, 19, 4; 2, 19, 5; 2, 18, 2, ed. Grottaferrata 1971.

⁷ Hildegard of Bingen, *Causae et curae*, ed. P. Kaiser, Teubner, Leipzig 1903, p. 145. Cfr. F. Gabriel, *Genèses de la mélancolie: la figure d'Adam et sa réinterprétation aux 16e et 17e siècles*, «Gesnerus» 63 (2006), pp. 61-72. On Hildegard cfr. further D. Jacquart, *Hildegarde et la physiologie de son temps*, in Ch. Burnett-P. Dronke (eds.), *Hildegard of Bingen: The Context of her Thought and Art*, The Warburg Institute, London 1998, pp. 121-134; L. Moulinier, *Le manuscrit perdu à Strasbourg: Enquête sur l'oeuvre scientifique de Hildegarde*, Publications de la Sorbonne, Paris 1995.

⁸ Cfr. J. Ziegler, *op. cit.*, p. 218,222; A. Robert, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

suggests, is a summa that deals entirely with the human being⁹. It is divided in two general parts, dealing, firstly, with the human status as such (*in seipso*), and, in the second part, in paradise; the first, and substantial, part, is divided, in turn, in three parts, the first dealing with the soul, the second with the body and the third with the union between the both. The part on the human body, clearly shorter than the other two, is going to be treated «from the viewpoint of the theologian» (*quantum pertinent ad theologum*). Accordingly, it deals not with the human body in its own right, as one might expect from the division, but with the body of Adam¹⁰. The three chapters dedicated to that topic deal with the questions on bodily composition (and this part is actually dedicated to a great extent to Eve's bodily composition, i.e. whether its creation from Adam's rib was a miraculous deed and what its meaning was); the problem of immortality and, consequently, the influence of the tree of life on Adam's immortality; and, in a third place, with the problem if Adam ate and procreated in paradise.

As one can notice already by the structure of the problem, the text remains close to the theological source-material. The second big textual section discussing Adam's body, the commentary on *Sent. II*, also bears, not surprisingly, structural and thematical resemblance to its source material. The *Sentence*-commentaries of Albert refer to the same early period, before Albert engaged around 1250 with his life-lasting project to comment on the entirety of the Aristotelian works¹¹. Written not long after *De homine*, around 1246, the commentary closely follows Peter Lombard's take on the topic. Distinction 18

⁹ On Albert's view on human body in *De homine*, cfr. H. Anzulewicz, *Grundlagen von Individuum und Individualität in der Anthropologie des Albertus Magnus*, in J. Aertsen-A. Speer (eds.), *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter*, De Gruyter, Berlin-New York 1996, pp. 124-160, pp. 139-142; Id., *Der Anthropologieentwurf des Albertus Magnus und die Frage nach dem Begriff und wissenschaftssystematischen Ort einer mittelalterlichen Anthropologie*, in J. A. Aertsen-A. Speer (eds.), *Was ist Philosophie im Mittelalter? Qu'est-ce que la philosophie au Moyen Âge? What is Philosophy in the Middle Ages?*, Akten des X. Internationalen Kongresses für mittelalterliche Philosophie der S.I.E.P.M. (25. bis 30. August 1997 in Erfurt), De Gruyter, Berlin-New York 1998, pp. 756-766, pp. 759-761.

¹⁰ Albertus Magnus, *De homine, De corpore hominis quantum pertinent ad theologum*, ed. H. Anzulewicz-J. Söder, Aschendorff, Münster 2008, p. 557, ll. 3-4.

¹¹ L. Sturlese famously coined the phrase "the 1250 turn" in Albert's work, in *Vernunft und Glück: Die Lehre vom „intellectus adeptus“ und die mentale Glückseligkeit bei Albert dem Großen*, Aschendorff, Münster 2005, pp. 1-31, pp. 9-10; Id., *Die deutsche Philosophie im Mittelalter: Von Bonifatius bis zu Albert dem Großen (748-1280)*, C. H. Beck, München 1993, p. 326.

discusses the formation of the woman from the man, and distinction 19 – the nature of Adam’s immortality.

Regarding Adam, the *Sentences* offer also a longer discussion on the way the first man knew God and the creatures; how he was resisting evil and whether it was his merit, or he was helped by grace; traduc-tionism or creationism of human soul (i.e. whether all souls had their origin from Adam’s soul, transmitted through generation, or were cre-ated individually by God) and other topics, which are not going to be a subject of the present paper, dealing with Adam’s body.

Apart from *De homine* and the *Sentences*, there are several referenc-es in some other works, mostly from the same period (before 1250), originating from the Biblical commentaries, and – most relevantly for the present topic – from *De resurrectione* (ca. 1242-1245). In the later works, references to Adam are found above all in the late work *Summa theologiae* (after 1268), mostly on the role of grace on Adam’s actions. To my knowledge, in none of Albert’s works on natural philosophy (most significantly, *De animalibus*, which contains large sections on human body) we can find mentions of Adam’s body, diet or procreation.

Let me now turn to the single topics within the larger discussion on Adam’s body.

4. *The Immortality of the Body*

In *De homine*, the question is formulated in a particularly straightfor-ward manner: how is it possible that Adam’s body was immortal, if it was composed by contrary principles? We know that it was composed, since it had brain, heart and liver – all of these different organs with dif-ferent composition of warm and cold, moist and dry. Albert supports the premise that Adam’s body was indeed composed with a biblical reference: «it is said in *Genesis* that ‘God created man from the earthly mud’; mud of the earth sounds like something composed by contraries; hence, the first man was composed by contraries»¹². Light elements would go up and heavy elements would go down, which would lead to the corruption of Adam’s body. So what was it that made Adam’s immortality possible? In *De homine*, after several *pro et contra*, Albert gives a concise response: «We shall say to the first with no prejudice that according to Augustine’s opinion the man is created mortal by

¹² Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, p. 557, ll. 17-20.

nature, but [was made] immortal by the help of God's grace»¹³. In the next phrase, however, Albert adds a little interpretation of Augustine: in the graceful state of innocence the body used to be completely obedient to the soul, and, hence, the *will* could hold the contrary components of the body together, so that the contrary elements would not fall apart¹⁴.

Does Albert mention the human will (in the state of innocence and helped by grace) as a cause for the immortality of Adam's body also in *Sent. II*? In the later text, Albert provides a systematic treatment of the causes of immortality and defines five of them. These are drinking from the perpetual source of life; the specific *habitus* in which Adam's body was created, such that it kept his bodily proportions, composition and complexion always alive; the tree of life, which removed all signs of aging, stiffness of the limbs and decay of the humors; the fourth cause was the consumption of the fruits of all the other paradise trees that kept the radical moisture at a reasonable level; the fifth cause was God's grace, without which all the precedent causes would have remained only natural predispositions for immortality, but not necessarily causing it¹⁵.

There is no mention of the will at this point. However, there is a whole article, linking the immortality after resurrection – which is of a different kind than the immortality of the original state¹⁶ – to free will. In his discussion of free will Albert refers to another authority, Bernard of Clairvaux. If free will could either sin or not, the body could either die or not. But in the prelapsarian state men did not have the disposition of sinning, since they stayed in a graceful innocence. Therefore, they did not have the disposition to die, but had instead the disposition of not dying. Albert follows Augustine's wording, *dispositio ad non moriendum*.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 561, ll. 53-56: «Solutio: (1) Dicendum est ad primum sine praeiudicio quod secundum opinionem Augustini homo per naturam mortalis creatus est, sed immortalis beneficio gratiae conditoris».

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 561, ll. 56-61: «Sicut enim anima in gratia innocentiae stans in ordine suo per omnia fuit ad imperium dei, ita corpus stans sub anima per omnia fuit ad imperium animae; unde voluntas cohibuit contraria componentia corpus, ne per actionem et passionem mutuum dissolverentur».

¹⁵ Albertus Magnus, *Sent. II*, ed. Borgnet, vol. 27, Vivès, Paris 1894, p. 334 a-b.

¹⁶ Albertus Magnus, *Sent. II*, d. 19 art. 3, p. 332 a-b; *De homine*, 2.2, p. 566, ll. 30-33: «Adhuc autem dispositio proxima in una est spiritualis corporis glorificati, in altera vero corpus animale, susceptibile tamen vitae perpetuae per iustitiam innocentiae».

5. *The Impassibility of the Body: Did Adam Prove Sadness?*

Closely linked to the question of Adam's corporeal immortality is the one of his bodily impassibility. There would be several signs indicating that Adam was *passibilis* at least in the sense of being susceptible – the first man ate, i.e. received food; he was able to know, i.e. to receive knowledge. Such reception is a passive process. Moreover, he was able to experience the emotion of joy, and hence, also the opposite emotion of sadness¹⁷. The idea that Adam could be sad was not appealing in any way to Albert. Sadness was regarded, without any discussion, as a punishment (*poena*). And there was no punishment before the sin. Sorrow and fear are only common to humans after they sinned. In their original state they only experienced joy but no suffering – and, surely, they did not experience immoderate joy. It was only after the sin that people became able to suffer immoderately and to rejoice immoderately.

What was, philosophically speaking, the change that the original sin brought upon Adam and Eve? According to Albert, it was the disposition of passibility. Receptivity is a neutral – and actually necessary – faculty of the body and the soul¹⁸. But being affected, or suffering are not regarded as natural conditions, but rather as a punishment for a sin. If Adam's body was, indeed, impassible, this was only through a gift by the grace of innocence¹⁹. Hunger, sorrow, pain, and death *should* not be part of life; they were not in the original state, by the mercy of innocence, and were not to be, in the glorious state after resurrection.

¹⁷ Albertus Magnus, *Sent.* II, d. 19 art. 2, p. 330b: «Contraria nata sunt fieri circa idem: et gauderi potuit: ergo et tristari; ergo sentire poenam, quia tristitia est de sensu poenae». Cfr. *De incarn.*, Ed. Colon. 26, tr. 6 q. 1 a. 3, 221, 36-43: «Videtur, quod non, quia Adam non potuit contristari, nisi prius peccaret. Tristitia enim poena quaedam est, et non potuit puniri, antequam peccaret, in statu autem peccati tristitiam habuit et timorem»; p. 222, 49-53: «in primo statu dispositionem habuit ad nullo modo tristandum et ad non immoderate gaudendum, post peccatum autem dispositionem habuit ad immoderate gaudendum et tristandum immoderate».

¹⁸ Albertus Magnus, *Sent.* II, d. 19 art. 2, p. 331 a: «tamen potest hic dici, quod pati dicitur a Graece pathein, quod est recipere Latine; et sic passibilitas fuit et in corpore et in anima: quia in anima recepit species, et in corpore cibum».

¹⁹ Albertus Magnus, *Quaestiones*, ed. Colon. 25/2, *De peccato originale*, art. 5, p. 203, ll. 74-75: «Et ideo dicendum, quod ex primo peccato in nobis est duplex corruptio, scilicet vicii et passibilitatis». Cfr. *ibidem* e ss.; *De resurrectione*, art. 14, §1, ed. Colon. 26, p. 336, l. 85-p. 337, l. 3.

6. Eating, Drinking, Urinating, Growth, Generation in Eden

One could speculate if Christian authors might have suspended all bodily functions in Eden as well, if it weren't for the Bible itself. From a theological point of view, it all rather brings unnecessary complications, and one had to look elsewhere, into other texts by Albert, or other authors in order to find positive treatment and even fascination with the corporeal²⁰.

In *Genesis*, as Albert reminds us, God gives three commands to Adam: «eat freely from every tree of the garden» (Gen. 2, 16), «be fruitful and multiply» (Gen. 9, 7), and «you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil» (Gen. 2, 17)²¹. Thus we know that men ate and had children in paradise, but what about all the natural processes linked to eating and procreating? In fact, as Adam's body is actually kept in a perfect complexion, age and health by grace, the question arises as to why he should eat in paradise. Why would humans need to eat – and if it was not for recovering of the consumed radical moisture, wouldn't more food only let them grow beyond measure? And if, on the contrary, they digested and absorbed in their bodies the food they ate, wouldn't they need to emit the digested rests through sweat, urines, and excrements²²? Albert is not entirely sure how to address this topic (*opinando nihil asserendo dico*), but confirms that nothing was created in vain, and if man had digesting organs as stomach, liver and veins, it meant Adam's body digested the food. The food, however, was probably not becoming part of Adam's corporeal substance, but was rather evaporated *per poros occultos*. The food did not add *humidum nutrimentale* to the body, but *humidum radicale*, useful for the generation of children – which apparently also occurred in Eden. What kind of children were born, and if they were as small and imperfect as ours, is another topic that Albert just mentions, following once again Augustine's solution that the new-borns were small only for the needs of birthing, not because of

²⁰ Cfr. J. Ziegler, *op. cit.*, p. 202, discussing James of Viterbo, *Disputatio de quodlibet*, disp. 4, q. 18 on the use of medical knowledge in Eden. Cfr. T. W. Köhler, *Homo animal nobilissimum: Konturen des spezifisch Menschlichen in der naturphilosophischen Aristoteleskommentierung des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts*, Teil 1, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2008, pp. 183-225, showing numerous examples from Albert the Great on the nobility and the perfection of the human body.

²¹ Cfr. Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, p. 561, l. 66-p. 562, l. 4.

²² Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, p. 568, ll. 11-36; *Sent. II*, d. 20 art. 5, p. 345 a-b.

insufficiency of their bodies²³. As for liquids emitted by the body – some had to be admitted, like urine or saliva, but, unlike the postlapsarian state, they were not attached to shame (*sine pudore*); as for other fluids, like menstrual blood or ejaculate that were considered impure, that was just not happening in paradise²⁴. With regard to child-conceiving and childbearing, Albert follows once again Augustine's view on sex without lust, and childbirth without pain in paradise²⁵.

7. *The Body of Eve: A Miracle*

Albert dedicates some good part of his treatment of the human body in *De homine* to the body of Eve. Once again, this happens within a theological frame that defines also the topics at stake. Was Eve the first woman of Adam? Why was she formed from the rib and not some other part of the body? Was she created personally by God, or by secondary agents like the angels? Was it an act of miracle when she was created from Adam's rib? The first two questions are discussed only in *De homine*, the second set of questions is common for *De homine* and *Sent. II*. The creation of Eve from Adam's rib was a miracle, since it was done neither by the laws of nature nor by the laws of free will. Albert takes the opportunity to distinguish «*miraculum, mirabile, signum, portentum, prodigium, et monstrum, et virtus*» in the next article, and even though the case of Eve is not further taken into consideration, it is clear by the definition that as an act of creation it falls under the category of miracle²⁶. The miracle of creating Eve was accomplished by God, while the angels did the technical work (*per ministerium et preparando materiam*)²⁷. This miracle is not against the principles of nature, instilled by God himself as he created the nature of man as a man and woman²⁸. That is why Eve is going to resurrect in her own nature, not in the

²³ Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, p. 569, ll. 50-61.

²⁴ Albertus Magnus, *Sent. II*, d. 20, art. 5, p. 345b.

²⁵ Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, p. 569, ll. 46-47: «sine concupiscentia fuisset conceptus et gravidatio sine gravamine et puerperium sine dolore».

²⁶ Albertus Magnus, *Sent. II*, d. 18 art. 5, p. 319a. Cfr. *De homine*, p. 562, ll. 56-58.

²⁷ Albertus Magnus, *Sent. II*, d. 18 art. 2, p. 312b.

²⁸ Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, p. 663, l. 23: «non est contra naturam». Cfr. *Sent. II*, d. 18 art. 6, p. 321a: «nihil fieri videtur contra naturam primo insitam rebus; quia etiam miraculorum causales rationes et primordiales indidit eis Deus».

nature of Adam, from whose rib she was created²⁹.

The curious question from *De homine*, treating whether there was another woman, created before Eve, is meant to settle an apparent unclarity in the Bible. The first mention of the creation of the woman in the passage «male and female he created them» (Gen. 1, 27) is followed by the account of Eve's creation of from Adam's rib, in the second chapter of *Genesis*. Does that mean that there was another, first woman, created before Eve? Albert reports a popular legend according to which the name of that first woman was Lilith, but she was disobedient to Adam and was thus given to a demon with whom she had demonical children, called "asmodeans". Albert eventually refutes this as a «tale of the Jews» and a lie³⁰.

As for the question why precisely the rib: Eve was taken by Adam's rib rather than from his foot or some other organ, because it is in the middle part of Adam's body, which means that none of them is superior, and none is inferior to the other, neither dominating nor serving³¹. This optimistic view on the position and the role of the woman is almost a miracle in its own right, considering that Albert's view on women is overall negative. In the rest of his works Albert refers to woman's nature by defining it as a *mas occasionatus*, a man who failed to be properly formed for some organic or other failure of embryonic formation³².

8. Conclusion

In all of his later works Albert showed a predominant interest in natural phenomena, and an on-going focus on explaining the natural principles of any such phenomena, even fascination or magic. However, when it

²⁹ Albertus Magnus, *De resurrectione* t. 26, tr. 1 q. 6 a. 1, art. 9, pp. 255-57, p. 257, ll. 5-9: «Dicimus ergo, quod costa illa numquam fuit de veritate illius personae, sed in ipso facta fuit, inquantum per Evam fuit principium humanae naturae; et ideo resurget in Eva et non in Adam».

³⁰ Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, p. 559, ll. 44-55, and p. 562, ll. 51-55: «Ad aliud dicendum quod Gamaliel mentitur et sequitur fabulam Iudaeorum dicentium quod Lilith creata fuit ante Evam, quae nolens consentire Adae assignata est daemone, et genuit ex daemone illos daemones qui dicuntur Asmodaei et Asmodaei filii et nepotes».

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 561, ll. 20-24, and p. 563, ll. 29-5.

³² Albertus Magnus, *Qu. super De animal.*, l. 15 qu. 11, p. 265, 81-82: «Mulier etiam est vir occasionatus et habet naturam defectus et privationis respectu maris». Cfr. T. W. Köhler, *Homo animal nobilissimum*, cit., pp. 487-509.

comes to his treatment of the problem of Adam and Eve's bodies, Albert remains strictly in the frame of theology, following closely Augustine, Bernhard of Clairvaux, and Peter Lombard, without venturing into humoral therapy or Peripatetic philosophy in commenting on the biblical story. Naturalistic explanations are rare, and bound to Augustine's treatment of these questions.

A passage from Albert, often quoted for its clear and resolute manner, gives the following explanation:

One should know that in matters of faith and morality one should trust Augustine more than the philosophers, if they hold a different view. But if Augustine were speaking about medicine, I would rather trust Galen or Hippocrates; and if he speaks about the natures of things I trust Aristotle more, or any other expert in natural philosophy³³.

Albert did not stick to this principle all too tightly³⁴, and it is only a coincidence that the quote comes from Albert's commentary on the second book of the *Sentences*; a place where he did exactly what he planned: in matters of faith, and the biblical story of Adam and Eve is of this category, one should follow Augustine. Regarding this potentially fruitful topic for a naturalistic interpretation, Albert sticks to the theological authority, even if, at times, he might be unsure (as in his *solutio* regarding the bodily processes, seen above), or even when he was not all too convinced: *quod tamen ego non credo, licet sustineam propter Magistrum*³⁵.

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³³ Albertus Magnus, *Sent. II*, d. 13 a. 2, p. 217a: «Unde sciendum, quod Augustino in his quae sunt de fide et moribus plus quam philosophis credendum est, si dissentiunt. Sed si de medicina loqueretur, plus ego credere Galeno vel Hippocrati; et si de naturis rerum loquatur, credo Aristoteli plus vel alii experto in rerum naturis».

³⁴ Cfr. e.g. my article on the Albert's attempt of "smuggling" Galen into an Aristotelian framework: «*Iam patet igitur veritas eius quae dixit Aristoteles, et causa deceptionis Gallieni*»: *Philosophers vs. Medics in Albertus Magnus Account on Human Body*, in M. Mauriège-A. Speer (eds.), *Irrtum-Error-Erreur*, cit., pp. 107-122.

³⁵ Albertus Magnus, *Sent. II*, d. 24 art. 2, p. 397b. The context of the passage is – not unrelated – the capacity of Adam to remain unchanged in Eden without the help of divine grace.