Introduction

It remains uncertain how Master Peter of Troyes (d. 1178) first came to be called Comestor or Manducator, 'the Eater.' Some modern historians rather unimaginatively observe that *Comestor* was a family name in twelfth-century Champagne, where our master may have been born before he was sent to study in Troyes.[1] Truer to the medieval imagination, however, is the opinion that Peter's disciples could best account for the master's encyclopedic knowledge of the sacred page by alleging that he devoured books whole.[2] However he came by his excellent sobriquet, Peter appears to have received his early instruction in Troyes, where he became dean of the city's cathedral chapter by 1147.[3] Little more is known about this initial period of Peter's life, excepting that he likely pursued his studies in Tours under John of Turonia, a disciple of Anselm of Laon.[4] Equally obscure

1. See Saralyn R. Daly, "Peter Comestor: Master of Histories," *Speculum* 23 (1957), 62–73, at p. 62.

2. This latter provenance also better accounts for the fact that Peter's contemporaries addressed him by two Latin synonyms (*Comestor, Manducator*) amounting to the same epithet. Moreover, Peter's epitaph, quoted by Robert of Auxerre, seems morbidly to pun on the master's reputation for devouring wisdom: "Petrus eram, quem petra tegit, dictusque Comestor, | nunc comedor. Viuus docui, nec cesso docere | mortuus ..." – "I was Peter ["the rock"], whom this stone now covers, once called the Eater, now I am eaten. While living I taught, nor dead do I cease to teach." See Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, MGH.SS, 26 (Hannover, 1882), p. 242.

3. Daly, "Master of Histories," p. 65.

4. See Ignatius Brady, "Peter Manducator and the Oral Teachings of Peter Lombard," *Antonianum* 41 (1966), 454–490, at p. 485.

is the exact date that Peter came to study in Paris, where he would pass the remainder of his academic career. Some scholars are inclined to suggest that Comestor already began to frequent the Parisian schools in the late 1130s, before Peter Abelard's notorious departure from the city.[5] In any event, it is clear that Comestor commenced his theological training well before 1158 (Peter Lombard's final year in the classroom), since Comestor witnessed the Lombard's oral teaching for a considerable length of time before succeeding him as a master of the sacred page at Notre Dame, the cathedral school of Paris.[6] Here, Comestor held the chair of theology until 1169, when he delegated it to his student Peter of Poitiers – likely on account of the additional responsibilities that our master had inherited with his appointment to the chancellorship of the cathedral school in the preceding year.[7] After a long and distinguished career of teaching *sacra pagina* in Paris, Peter retired to the Abbey of St. Victor in 1178, where he died some time later.[8]

5. See for example, Matthew Doyle, *Peter Lombard and His Students* (Toronto, 2016), pp. 168–169; David Luscombe, "Peter Comestor," in *The Bible in the Medieval World: Essays in Memory of Beryl Smalley*, ed. Katherine Walsh and Diana Wood (Oxford, 1985), pp. 109–129, at 110.

6. Brady, "Peter Manducator," *passim*, but see for example p. 457. Alexander Andrée suggests that Comestor was in the Lombard's classroom by at least the early 1150s; see Alexander Andrée, "*Sacra Pagina*: Theology and the Bible from the School of Laon to the School of Paris," in *A Companion to Twelfth-Century Schools*, ed. Cédric Giraud (Leiden, 2020), pp. 272–314. Furthermore, a mid-thirteenth century chronicler asserts that the two masters were teaching side-by-side in 1158, the year before Lombard's elevation to the city's bishopric; see Otto of St. Blaise, *Continuatio San-Blasiana*, ed. Roger Wilmans, MGH.SS, 20 (Hanover, 1868), p. 308.

7. Daly, "Master of Histories," pp. 65–67.

8. The master's death is generally dated to 1178, although contemporary records are not unanimous on this date; see Daly, "Master of Histories," pp. 72–73.

The *Glosae super Euangelia glosata*

While a number of extant works bear witness to Comestor's teaching at various stages of remove from the classroom (in particular, a manual on the sacraments, a sizeable corpus of sermons, a collection of *quaestiones*, and an *accessus* to Peter Lombard's *Sentences*),[9] the extraordinary celebrity that 'the Master of Histories' would enjoy in the final years of his life (and indeed, for the remainder of the Middle Ages) was due to his monumental textbook of biblical history, the *Historia scholastica*. First 'published' between 1169 and 1173,[10] the *Historia* became one of the most frequently cited works in the scholastic period, as attested by its preservation in some eight hundred manuscripts.[11] The *Historia* represents the culmination of Comestor's magisterial activity in the Parisian schools, and it was here that Master Peter first earned his formidable reputation and attracted a 'multitude of scholars' to witness his biblical teaching.[12] Although, in all

9. Many other works have been ascribed to Comestor, although their attribution remains doubtful. Perhaps the most thorough census to date of Comestor's literary corpus appears in David Luscombe, "Peter Comestor," pp. 109–129. For the *accessus*, see Riccardo Saccenti, "The *Materia super libros Sententiarum* Attributed to Peter Comestor: Study of the Text and Critical Edition," *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 54 (2012), 155–215.

10. See Mark Clark, *The Making of the Historia scholastica, 1150–1200* (Toronto, 2015), pp. 5–6.

11. Agneta Sylwan notes that there are over 800 Latin manuscripts preserved of the *Historia scholastica*, not to mention the numerous translations into over a dozen vernacular languages; see Agneta Sylwan, "Petrus Comestor, *Historia scholastica*: Une nouvelle édition," *Sacris erudiri* 39 (2000), 345–382, at pp. 351–353.

12. This phrase (*collecta est multitudo scolarum*) occurs in a laudatory *Introitus super Historiam scholasticam* produced by an anonymous disciple, which circulated in some early copies of the master's work. For example, Troyes, Médiathèque du Grand Troyes, MS 290, fols. 51rb–52ra.

probability, Peter Comestor was the first disciple of Lombard's to deliver a course of lectures on the *Sentences*,[13] the only known records of the master's oral lectures are the student reports of his courses on the four Gospels, the *Glosae super Euangelia glosata* (henceforth the *Glosae*).[14] Until now, scholars have been unable to fix a certain date to Peter's *Glosae*, particularly since the master is known to have lectured on the Gospels continuously and on multiple occasions throughout his career. Nevertheless, it is most probable that the lectures as they have been preserved were delivered in the 1160s, before the initial publication of the *Historia scholastica*.[15]

Originally recorded by students in the classroom, each set of lectures – one set for each Gospel – is extant in approximately twenty manuscript witnesses, spanning on average from fifty to ninety folia. Although these student reports contain no indication of where one lecture ends and another begins, a number of Comestor's remarks appearing in the prefatory materials edited below (to Matthew, Mark, and John)[16] suggest that the average

13. See for example, Matthew Doyle, *Peter Lombard and His Students* (Toronto, 2016), pp. 172–173.

14. But see Alessia Berardi, "The *Glose super glosas Ysaie*: A New Work by Peter Comestor?," *Scriptorium* 74 (2020), 159–209, who suggests that a commentary on Isaiah previously attributed to Stephen Langton may in fact represent Comestor's *lectiones* on the Isaiah Gloss.

15. For the assertion that the *Historia scholastica* presupposes Comestor's lectures on the glossed Gospels, see Clark, *The Making of the Historia scholastica*, pp. 84–156. For the most extensive discussion yet undertaken of the dating of the *Glosae super Euangelia glosata*, see David M. Foley, *Peter Comestor's Lectures on the* Glossa 'ordinaria' *on John (ca. 1165): An Historical Introduction with a Critical Edition*, PhD Thesis (University of Toronto, 2020), Chapter I.3.

16. In each of the following instances, Comestor is explaining to his students why he saw fit to lecture first on the prologue (or *proemium*) from the

lecture would constitute approximately 1,800 to 2,000 words. In the case of John, Comestor's *Glosae* comprise some 87,000 words, suggesting that the entire lecture course would have been delivered in approximately forty-eight lectures.[17] It is possible, therefore, that Comestor could have lectured on all four of the glossed Gospels within a single academic year. These classroom lectures (*lectiones*) were originally taken down in the form of rough student transcripts (*reportationes*) by one or more student-reporters, who were probably appointed to this function by their master or colleagues. Following this dynamic, in-class process of *lectio* and *reportatio*, the notes were likely presented to the master (on wax tablets or parchment) for him to revise

glossed Gospel at hand in preference to the other glosses that it contains. In every case, Master Peter's concern is to provide his students with a lecture of satisfactory length – neither too long nor too short: Matt., § 3, 333–335: "Et de hac glosa sumptus est introitus, nec alia ratione legitur proemium ante eam nisi quia proemium sufficit uni lectioni, glosa autem non sufficeret"; Marc., § 5, note at 370 (appearing as an accretion in MS *I*, 36rb): "Proemium legit magister [Comestor] ante alias glosas, quia ille non sufficerent ad unam lectionem et prologus satis sufficit"; Ioh., § 2, 111–113: "... nimis modica esset lectio si quis ante prologum legeret solum introitum, nimis prolixa si quis cum introitu legeret prologum. Primo ergo legemus prologum." The example from Mark above represents a student's third-person explanation Comestor's procedure, which was originally written in the margin of a copy of the *Glosae*.

17. This calculation is elaborated more fully in Alexander Andrée, "Peter Comestor's Lectures on the *Glossa 'Ordinaria'* on the Gospel of John: The Bible and Theology in the Twelfth-century Classroom," *Traditio* 71 (2016), 203–234, at pp. 211–214. Andrée makes a similar calculation for Comestor's Matthew lectures; see Alexander Andrée, "*Caue ne facias uim in tempore!* Peter Comestor and the Truth of History," in *Felici curiositate. Studies in Latin Literature and Textual Criticism from Antiquity to the Twentieth Century in Honour of Rita Beyers*, ed. Guy Guldentops, Christian Laes, and Gert Partoens (Turnhout, 2017), pp. 515–550, at 524.

and approve, prior to their subsequent diffusion as cleanly-edited glosses.[18]

Despite the revision that these student notes underwent before their distribution, the *Glosae* as they have been preserved bear all the marks of the classroom in which they originated. In particular, oral formulae of various kinds appear regularly throughout them. The single interjection with which the student-reporter regularly betrays his presence in the *reportationes* is the *inquit*-formula, which appears whenever the student wishes to emphasize one of Comestor's magisterial opinions (*sententiae*) or to clarify the object of a personal reference. For instance, in the prologue to Luke, § 1, 72–73, the master addresses the class directly, which the student then signals with the use of *inquit*: "Legite, inquit, Iuuencum, qui similiter fuit uersificator euangelicus" – "Read, [the master] says, Juvencus, who was likewise a versifier of the Gospels." Another formula that scholars have long associated with student notes is the use of *magister* (*noster*), which in the *Glosae* represents Comestor's own speech as he refers to one of his own masters.[19] As historians have found elsewhere in Comestor's writings, these simple references to 'the master' or 'our master' are invariably traceable to Peter Lombard's *Sentences* or oral teachings.[20] Moreover, forms of the first-

18. A famous account of this process is provided by one Lawrence, Hugh of St. Victor's officially appointed student-reporter in the 1120s. See *Epistola Laurentii*, ed. Ambrogio Piazzoni, in "Ugo di San Vittore auctor delle *Sententie de Diuinitate*," *Studi Medievali* 23 (1982), 861–955.

19. For the first discussion of the *inquit*- and *magister*-formulae in reference to Comestor's *Glosae*, see Beryl Smalley, "Some Gospel Commentaries of the Early Twelfth Century," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 45 (1978), 147–180, at p. 154.

20. See Brady, "Peter Manducator," pp. 465–479.

person singular (particularly *dico* and *inquam*) represent Comestor's speech, serving to emphasize a point that he is making to his students. Similarly, with the third-person plural Peter refers to the course of lectures as a collective enterprise (for example, *diximus*, 'we have discussed' and *legemus*, 'we will read') – a convention still observed in any modern classroom. Perhaps most evocative of the classroom setting are the imperative and jussive subjunctive forms of the second person (for example, *intelligite*, *nota*, *caue ne construas*), occurring most frequently in the singular, but occasionally in the plural, which represent Comestor's direct address to his students. These forms sometimes occur when the master is conducting the class through a particularly important or intricate interpretation; nevertheless, Peter most commonly addresses his auditors to provide instructions about how to follow his lecture from their biblical textbook, the *Glossa ordinaria* (or simply 'the Gloss').

Significantly, Comestor's are the earliest known lectures to comment, not simply on the Gospels, but on the glossed Gospels, or *Euangelia glosata* – that is, the sacred text as it circulated from the mid-twelfth century with a 'standard' (*ordinaria*) apparatus of marginal and interlinear glosses drawn from patristic writings.[21] In the prefatory material edited below, Comestor lectures on a series of prefaces drawn from the relevant book of the *Glossa ordinaria*. Here, Comestor provides a continuous, verse-by-verse exposition of each preface in a fashion resembling the 'literary' (*i.e.* composed rather than orally delivered) commentaries of the period. However, when the lectures turn to the Gospel text itself – a transition that the reader will not encounter

21. See for example, Beryl Smalley, "Peter Comestor on the Gospels and His Sources," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 46 (1979), 84–129, at p. 129.

in the present volume – Comestor's spirited application of the *Glossa ordinaria* as a biblical textbook becomes almost indecipherable without a familiarity with the master's *modus legendi* and direct access to the text of the Gloss. Taking the biblical lemmata as the foundation of his *lectio*, Comestor proceeds to reorder the marginal and interlinear glosses corresponding to each verse to provide a continuous exposition of the text according to a theological theme or particular sense of Scripture (one traditional schema being literal, allegorical, and tropological). This process often involves Comestor extracting and interweaving portions from various glosses into his discussion, as he directs his students to follow along in their own copies of the Gloss with a series of oral instructions: *lege glosam, hic dimitte, post hanc illam, resume ubi dimisisti*, etc.[22]

Despite the fact that Peter lectured on the *Glossa ordinaria* (rather than merely on the Gospels as such), manuscript copies of the four lecture courses tend to exhibit the generic title *Glosae super Euangelia*, which more properly describes simple commentaries on the biblical text.[23] Due to the novelty of

22. For several apt descriptions of Comestor's method of 'reading' the Gloss, see Gilbert Dahan, "Une leçon biblique au XII[e] siècle: Le commentaire de Pierre le Mangeur sur Matthieu 26, 26–29," in *Ancienne Loi, Nouvelle Loi*, ed. Jean-Pierre Bordier, Littérature et revelation au Moyen Âge 3 (Paris, 2009), pp. 19–38; Clark, *The Making of the Historia scholastica*, pp. 59–71; Andrée, "Peter Comestor's Lectures on the *Glossa 'ordinaria,'*" pp. 215–228. All of these accounts are careful to emphasize the physical presence of the students' personal Gloss books in the classroom.

23. Thus, for instance, Anselm of Laon's commentary on John (which would subsequently serve as the basis for much of the John Gloss) circulated under the title *Glosae super Iohannem*; see Alexander Andrée, "Introduction," in *Anselmi Laudunensis Glosae super Iohannem*, CCCM 267 (Turnhout, 2014), pp. xxv–xxvii.

'glossing the Gloss' in the mid-twelfth century, it should come as little surprise that contemporary scholars had not yet devised a specific nomenclature for identifying such lectures. Nevertheless, the witness that serves as the basis for the present edition (Troyes, Médiathèque du Grand Troyes, MS 1024, detailed below) describes Comestor's glosses as being, not 'on the Gospels,' but *super glosas Euangeliorum*. By the end of the twelfth century, other such glosses on the glossed Bible came increasingly to be identified as *glosae super glosas*, as a commentary on the Isaiah Gloss and another on the glossed Psalms (both attributed to Comestor) testify.[24] A similar formulation appears in a thirteenth-century codex containing a different commentary on the glossed Psalter, also ascribed to our master Peter: "Notule quedam super Psalterium glosatum. Petrus Manducator."[25] In keeping with this practice, as well as that observed by medieval librarians of cataloguing individual books of the *Glossa ordinaria* as *glosatus* to distinguish them from simple copies of the biblical text,[26] Peter Comestor's lecture courses on the four glossed Gospels may be most appropriately rendered as *Glosae super Euangelia glosata* or *Lectures on the Glossed Gospels*.

24. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 14417, fol. 210r: "Expliciunt glose super glosas Ysaie"; Troyes, Médiathèque du Grand Troyes, MS 770, fol. 1r: "Postille magistri Petri Manducatoris super glossas Psalterii." The attribution of the former to Comestor is a modern one. See again Berardi, "The *Glose super glosas Ysaie*."

25. Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 129 (A. 518), fol. 5r.

26. See for example, Lesley Smith, *The Glossa Ordinaria: The Making of a Medieval Bible Commentary* (Leiden, 2009), p. 3.

The Text of the Present Edition

Until now, excepting short fragments of the *Glosae super Euangelia glosata* published in the form of appendices and articles, not even a partial edition of any of Comestor's lectures may be found in print.[27] Encompassed in this initial venture into Peter Comestor's *Glosae*, then, are the prefatory materials with which the master's lecture courses on the glossed Gospels commence, together constituting a series of *accessus* to the four Gospels.[28]

27. Gilbert Dahan has provided transcriptions of the four initial prologues to Peter Comestor's lecture courses on the glossed Gospels in "Les exégèses de Pierre le Mangeur," in *Pierre le Mangeur ou Pierre de Troyes: Maître du XII^e siècle*, ed. Gilbert Dahan, Bibliothèque d'histoire culturelle du Moyen Âge 12 (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 49–87, at 73–87. Likewise, Mark Clark has printed a transcription and translation of the prologue to Comestor's lecture course on the John Gloss in "The Search for Peter Lombard's Glossed Bible," pp. 94–97. Alexander Andrée has also provided a transcription of one of Comestor's prefatory lectures on the John Gloss in "Peter Comestor's Lectures on the Glossa 'Ordinaria,'" pp. 230–232. Finally, Hans Hermann Glunz printed the initial prologue to Comestor *Glosae super Marcum glosatum* (albeit under a misattribution to Robert Grosseteste) as an appendix in *History of the Vulgate in England from Alcuin to Roger Bacon, Being an Inquiry into the Text of Some English Manuscripts of the Vulgate Gospels* (Cambridge, 1933), pp. 356–359.

28. Although the term *accessus* underwent significant development in the literature of the medieval schools and universities, we are here using this term in a simple sense, like Comestor does in these lectures (see below, Ioh., § 2, 106–108), to signify a general introduction to a text, its structure, and its author. For further reading on the *accessus ad auctores* in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Edwin A. Quain, "The Mediaeval *accessus ad auctores*," *Traditio* 3 (1945), 215–264; and Richard W. Hunt, "The Introductions to the *Artes* in the Twelfth Century," in *Studia mediaevalia in honorem Raymundi Josephi Martin* (Bruges, 1948), pp. 84–112. For the use of the *accessus* in biblical commentaries, see Gilbert Dahan, "Les prologues des commentaires bibliques (XII^e–XIV^e siècles)," in *Lire la Bible au moyen âge. Essais d'herméneutique médiévale* (Geneva, 2009), pp. 57–101, at 63–68.

Each lecture course begins with a magisterial prologue (or *ingressus*, to use Comestor's term), which provides a general introduction to the Gospel at hand. These prologues are stylistically quite distinct from the conspicuously oral lecture material that follows; bearing all the marks of deliberate, literary composition, each *ingressus* displays a varied and elegant Latinity, an extensive use of sources, and a studied typological structure based on an Old Testament theme. In fact, the four *ingressus* represent some of the earliest known examples of an emergent style of scholastic prologue identified by Alastair Minnis as the 'sermon-type': a kind of prologue mysteriously originating in the mid-twelfth century that introduces biblical commentaries with a pericope from another book of Sacred Scripture, and which achieved notable popularity throughout the thirteenth century at the University of Paris.[29] In the prologue to Comestor's *Glosae super Iohannem glosatum*, for instance, the master begins with the figure of old and new fruit drawn from the Song of Songs 7:13: "Omnia poma noua et uetera seruaui tibi, dilecti mi," which he then relates to the Old and New Testament, before dextrously drawing the four Gospels and, finally, John the Evangelist into his typological edifice. All four of the *ingressus* exhibit this same general structure and exegetical movement from an Old Testament figure to the evangelist at hand. Additionally, each *ingressus* concludes with a set of *circumstantiae*, or 'arts headings,' which represent an innovation within the realm of biblical exegesis derived from the tradition of liberal arts commentary stretching back to antiquity. The three *circumstantiae* that the master defines in relation to each Gospel are the *materia* (subject matter), *intentio* (the author's intention for writing), and *modus*

29. Alastair J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (London, 1988), p. 64.

agendi (his manner of treatment).[30] Although scholars had previously assumed, not unreasonably, that these four prologues prefixed to Peter's lecture courses represent the master's own compositions, recent scholarship suggests that they were, in fact, originally produced by Comestor's master, Peter Lombard – a theory which will be examined below.

Following the prologue in each set of *Glosae*, Peter proceeds to lecture on a series of prefaces drawn from his biblical textbook, the *Glossa ordinaria*. At this stage of his lecture course, Comestor begins to 'read' (*legere*) the prefaces individually, offering a continuous, lemmatic treatment of their contents in order to clarify points of grammar and interpretation. With the exception of his lectures on the Mark Gloss, Peter begins each course by reading the 'Monarchian' prologues that circulated in all four of the glossed Gospels.[31] These ancient prefaces were misattributed by medieval scholars to Jerome, and Comestor identifies them in each case as the *proemium* or *prologus Ieronimi*.[32] After the prologue, each glossed Gospel includes one or more additional prefaces which precede the biblical text itself. These texts derive indirectly from a variety of ancient sources (principally the Latin Fathers), and they all serve to provide a general introduction to the sacred text and its author. Unlike the 'Monarchian' prologues, these prefatory materials bear no relation to one another, and the number and length of introductory glosses varies

30. This particular series of *circumstantiae* conforms to the "type C" accessus defined by Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, pp. 40–58.

31. In the *Glosae super Marcum glosatum*, Comestor lectures on the 'Monarchian' prologue only after reading the other prefaces from the Gloss.

32. For a history of the so-called 'Monarchian' prologues, see John Chapman, *Notes on the Early History of the Vulgate Gospels* (Oxford, 1908), pp. 217–288.

amongst the glossed Gospels.[33] Master Peter's estimation of these glosses is equally variable; whereas, for instance, he lectures on three prefaces from the Mark Gloss, he disdained to read the single preface from the Luke Gloss, which elsewhere he laconically describes as *adhuc obscurum*.[34] Peter generally refers to these prefaces simply as *glosa*, the same term that he later uses to identify marginal glosses on the biblical text.

Glossing the Gloss

Even in the introductory sections of Peter's lecture courses on the four glossed Gospels, in which the master 'reads' a series of glosses individually and in a linear fashion, it is essential for the reader to have some familiarity with Comestor's method of 'glossing the Gloss.' When commenting on the prefatory materials from the Gloss, Comestor's exposition typically begins with a short passage (generally between three and six words) from the gloss at hand. After isolating his lemma, Peter might proceed to elucidate its contents in a number of different ways and at various levels of interpretation, ranging from simple explanations of syntax to extended theological discursions. At all times, how-

33. In some cases, most notably that of the Matthew Gloss, different copies of the same glossed book circulated in a "bewildering number of versions," especially in the prefatory material; see Andrée, "*Sacra Pagina*," p. 286. Remarkably, we have even discovered an early s. XIII copy of the Matthew Gloss that begins with what appears to be an adaptation of the magisterial prologue to Comestor's *Glosae super Matthaeum glosatum* (Matt., § 1); the copy is Durham, Dean and Chapter Library, MS A. III. 25, 3ra–4ra.

34. Marc., § 4, 340–341: "... proemium ante prologum Luce, ubi habetur: *Lectorem obsecro* et cetera, quod adhuc obscurum est."