

«Sicut exterior plica panni occultat aliam»

Pietro di Giovanni Olivi e l'oblio dei demoni

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Abstract: Can angels and demons forget what they knew? Do they need to reactivate their knowledge through memory? Well known is Dante Alighieri's thesis that angels have no need to remember. Medieval thinkers responded to these questions in a variety of ways, depending on their different conceptions of knowledge and the role of memory in it. This contribution proposes a first examination of the position of Peter John Olivi, who in question 44 of his commentary on the second book of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* argues that demons (and angels) are subject to forgetfulness and must therefore resort to the memory of the past to reactivate their knowledge. His argument in favour of this thesis unfolds as a phenomenological description of the mechanism of remembering and forgetting, based on the analogy with certain physical processes such as heating water or reshaping a piece of wax.

Keywords: Peter John Olivi, Angel, Demon, Knowledge, Memory, Forgetfulness, Oblivion.