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Angelology

Michael Heffernan

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Two Poems · *Michael Heffernan*

ANGELOLOGY

When Robert Grosseteste comments on the angels
and whether more than one might coexist
in the same place or body, he seems to think
such fine points are important because they test
the seriousness of our preoccupations,
in this case with the business of the spirit,
of spirits generally, and the spirit of God.
The main idea posits medial forms
between God and ourselves, and furthermore
appropriates the model of the soul
as mover of the body, coextensive
as the body and the soul appear to be,
supposing here the soul's reality,
which was hard to question in the 13th century,
though equally impossible to prove,
yet Robert argues the relationship
of angels to material elements
as casually as a man walking his dog,
showing us angels everywhere at once,
numberless angels all over the place
impinging on this world from the other world,
as the eye receives a vision of bare trees
mantled with mist, or the nostrils catch the savor
of a loved woman's delectable inner thigh
from mounds of mown grass in a stranger's yard.