Liber Uricrisiarum

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The translation in this appendix renders the Latin epilogue in the edition above, taken from M7 because of the lost folio at the end of the text in R. Other witnesses contain additional lines or omit some of the lines in the M7 epilogue or both, though most of them run to similar lengths of twenty-one to twenty-nine lines, aside from the simple couplet in the beta texts EW and the sixteen lines in M7.¹

The translation is heavily indebted to a literal English version provided by Professor A.G. Rigg to Harvey in the early 2000s. Professor Rigg notes that the verse is sometimes ungrammatical or unmetrical, perhaps with a deliberately jocular purpose not untypical in poems of this type and period.

If² I have omitted anything or transmitted it on a slanted path,
If I have left out anything, if I have erred in the writing,
Let those who are not of wicked speech emend it,
But only those who are skilled in wit and letters.
Writing does not teach, nor will nature teach
If the fetus of a pregnant woman is a priest’s or a knight’s,
Or if a priest or someone else debauched her;
You can know that she has often had sex, but never how many times,
Nor if a calf will be black or red or male.³
Whoever proposes the opposite will be an arrogant fool.

¹ The Epilogue appears in M7 GTSa (alpha texts); AG6 (beta); the final couplet only in EW (beta); and M6G3 HBCg (beta³). Some omissions are caused by loss of leaves (e.g., R, Sc, and possibly Sb), while others appear to be deliberate exclusions (e.g., Cf, J).
² All other copies of the Epilogue except EW begin with four or five lines, omitted in M7, expressing Daniel’s purpose of passing along everything he has learned about urines to those who cannot understand it in Latin.
³ M7’s reading masculusve “or male” is probably an error for maculosve “or spotted,” found in other witnesses. See the explanatory note on 1.4.502–7.
One thousand, three hundred, and seventy-nine,
In the second year of King Richard the Second,
The first year that constantly had two popes,⁴
The Frenchmen’s pope an “anti,”⁵ but the Romans’ pope not an “anti.”⁶
Praise to You among the people” because this work is over.
May You who remain eternally deign to protect this.

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⁴ The Great Western Schism, which led to the election of competing popes by cardinals of different nationalities, began in the fall of 1378, but the first full year of two popes would have been 1379.
⁵ M7’s reading “Aut” is nonsensical and clearly an error for “Anti.” Later versions of the epilogue alter this line to refer to popes of the Franci and the Angligeni, the French and English people (England supported the pope who resided in Rome, not the Avignonese pope).
⁶ Later versions of the epilogue add up to four lines here referring to events in 1380 (a brawl of some kind among preachers), 1381 (the Peasants’ Revolt or Great Uprising), and 1382 (the earthquake in May of that year), suggesting that Daniel added dating lines as he continued to revise his text or that scribes may have inserted the updated lines.
⁷ “Among the people,” translating M7’s in gente, makes a certain amount of sense, but most witnesses read ingenite, the vocative form of “unbegotten one,” or God the Father.