Preface: Medieval Logic

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The present issue of *Logica Universalis* goes back to the workshop on *Medieval Logic*, which took place in April 2013 as part of the 4th World Congress on Universal Logic, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Many papers gathered here were first presented and discussed in preliminary form during that meeting. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participants and the audience for their interest in the discussions, especially the keynote speaker of the event, Stephen Read, who deserves our sincere gratitude. In the present volume, other contributions written by scholars of the area of medieval logic have also been added in order to give to the reader a wider perspective of the logic produced during the Middle Ages.

The diversity of logic presented throughout the Middle Ages has already been noticed and recognized during the last decades. In fact, the area has been studied in various specific directions, including topics as distinct as quantification, obligations (*obligationes*), syllogistic, logical consequences (*consequentia*), relations, insolubles (*insolubilia*), and modal logic.¹ This way of dealing with logic assumed by medieval philosophers should not make us fail to remember that their position regarding the nature of logic has also changed. In the first paper presented in this issue, Alfredo Storck (Porto Alegre) follows some of these different logical approaches developed in the thirteenth century, through which we can observe an important historical shift from an understanding of logic as a science of human discourse to its understanding as a science of mental acts.

The following articles deal with different aspects of the works of two major figures of medieval logic: Peter Abelard and William of Ockham. On the one hand, exploring some semantic positions of these nominalists, Guy Hamelin (Brasília) and Danilo Maia (Brasília) compare the theories of sign and signification of these authors, identifying the main points of agreement and disagreement between them, so that we can discern the specific relations that exist in the Middle Ages between logic, semantics and nominalism. On the other hand, stressing the “modernity” of medieval logic, Wolfgang Lenzen (Osnabrück) shows us, in a systematic reconstruction, how deeply Ockham has

¹ For a recent but not necessarily exhaustive view of medieval logic, see [1].

developed a system of propositional modal logic, in which almost all theorems of a modern calculus of strict implication are present.

The next contributions present elaborate analyses of the language developed by some medieval logicians in the thirteenth century. First, Ana María Mora-Márquez (Gothenburg) examines the syncategorematic term “*omnis*” (every/all), now known as a universal quantifier, in the works of the Parisian masters Boethius of Dacia and Radulphus Brito. We can thus observe the remarkable dynamism of the discussions on universally quantified statements, which represent a significant rupture with earlier analyses. Written by Frédéric Goubier (Geneva and Paris) and Ernesto Perini-Santos (Belo Horizonte), the following paper is dedicated to another aspect of the use of universal quantifier, namely its relation to the so-called principle of *sufficientia appellatorum*, which seems to entail, under certain conditions, a reference to the realm of nonexistent entities. Indicating some reactions to this principle, the paper sheds light both on the medieval theory of supposition and on the way one may deal with the alleged sphere of nonexistent things.

In the penultimate contribution of the issue, Stephen Read (St Andrews) examines Thomas Bradwardine’s solution to logical paradoxes, giving a negative answer to the question whether a revision of logic is needed for the treatment of such *insolubilia*. In fact, to solve the problem of semantic paradoxes, the only requirement, according to Read, is some kind of restriction of the idea that a sentence signifies everything that follows from what it signifies, an indication which surely should be taken into account by anyone interested in the logic of paradoxes.

The last contribution consists in a study done by Julie Brumberg-Chaumont (Paris) on some debates which took place in the thirteenth century on the ontology of syllogism. The background of those discussions involves the question on the universality of logic, especially its establishment both as a universal method for all sciences and as a science in itself. Needless to say, such an inquiry on what medieval logicians intended by defending the universality of logic is appropriate for a journal like *Logica Universalis*.

The combination of the articles gathered in this special issue does not pretend to be an exhaustive survey of the logic produced in the Middle Ages. It is instead a modest sample of the diversity and richness of the reflections on logic accomplished by some leading medieval philosophers of the Western world. If the present contribution can increase current knowledge and future interest in this area of philosophical reflection, our effort will not have been in vain.

Reference

- [1] Parsons, T.: *Articulating Medieval Logic*. Oxford University Press, Oxford (2014)

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