*Dialectic and the Meanings of ‘Is’*

Since Knuuttila-Hintikka (1986), not many studies have been devoted to the meanings of ‘is’ in medieval authors. From a linguistic viewpoint, the Greek *estin* has a locative-existential meaning, a predicative meaning and the assertive value and scholars discuss which (if any) of these senses is more fundamental. The Latin *esse* bears many analogies with the Greek *einai* and the same linguistic ambiguity can be found also in the Latin ‘est’. A tradition that in Hintikka’s view goes back to G. Frege and B. Russell distinguishes between an identity ‘is’, a predicative ‘is’ and an existential ‘is’. Ancient philosophers also dealt with the problem of the ambiguity of ‘is’, even though they proposed different distinctions to dispel it. In *Metaphysics* V 7, Aristotle distinguishes between the ‘is’ of accidental predication and of *per se* predications. The latter includes ‘is’ according to the figures of the ‘categories’, ‘is’ according to potentiality and actuality and ‘is’ of truth/assertion. In Medieval times, there are several discussions about the ambiguity of ‘est’. A common place is the discussion about the syntactic distinction between verbs *de secundo adiacente* and *de tertio adiacente*. When applied to ‘est’, this distinction seems to bring about semantic distinctions that are helpful in solving some paradoxes (cf. e.g., Buridan, *Qu. In An. Post.* 4a). In addition, while commenting on *De Int.* 3, medieval philosophers have to decide whether the copulative ‘est’ is or not a verb and while commenting on *Met.* V 7, they need to decide on what basis the many senses of ‘is’ are to be distinguished.

As shown in Hansen (2017), there might be a normative theory behind many theories of disambiguation of ‘is’. In this workshop, we would like to explore pragmatic and dialectical reasons to dispel these ambiguities. As was already clear in the ancient discussion, the disambiguation of ‘is’ may solve many paradoxes and it is not far-fetched to think that ‘being is said in many ways’ also in order to avoid to commit fallacies (cf. e.g. *Soph. Ref.* 10). We invite papers on arguments by medieval authors where the disambiguation of ‘is’ plays a crucial role, and we invite perspective contributors to explore the hypothesis that the pragmatic and dialectical context might have been the *rationale* for the theory of meanings of ‘is’ in an author or a series of authors in the first place. We are open to submissions on authors from the V to the XVII century and we would be happy to welcome papers on the so-called second scholasticism. We would like to have papers that explore the above issue in many linguistic traditions (Greek, Arabic, Latin, etc.)

Anonymous abstracts of up to 700 words may be sent to both Luca Gili (UQÀM, [gili.luca@uqam.ca](mailto:gili.luca@uqam.ca) ) and Barbara Bartocci (St. Andrews/Geneva, [bb66@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:bb66@st-andrews.ac.uk)) by December 15, 2021. We expect to select papers by December 30, 2021. The workshop will take place online (platform: ZOOM) on April 2022, 7-8 at 14h-19h CET (Paris) = 8am-13am Eastern (Montreal/New York). If everything goes well, we will be happy to consider publishing the proceedings of the workshop.

Organizers: Barbara Bartocci (Genève/St. Andrews) - Luca Gili (UQÀM, Montreal)

Confirmed keynote speakers: Fedor Benevich (University of Edinburg), Alessadro D. Conti (Università degli studi dell’Aquila), Gyula Klima (Fordham University), Paloma Pérez-Ilzarbe (Universidad de Navarra)