WILLIAM OF SHERWOOD'S

Treatise on Syncategorematic Words

translated with an introduction and notes by

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TO MY FATHER AND MOTHER
Preface

In this volume I am presenting an advanced treatise in medieval logic in much the same format as that in which I have already presented the corresponding elementary treatise in William of Sherwood's *Introduction to Logic* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966). The most natural route to an understanding of the more difficult and more rewarding material in this book is through the introduction, translated text, and notes of that earlier volume. But because many of the problems with which Sherwood deals in his treatise on syncategorematic words closely resemble problems of twentieth-century philosophical logic and philosophy of language, a reader with some background in those inquiries and very little knowledge of medieval logic may acquire as much specialized information as he needs in the notes to this translation.

In preparing the translation I made use of J. Reginald O'Donnell's edition, published as "The Syncategoremata of William of Sherwood" in *Mediaeval Studies*, III (1941), 46–93. I am grateful to Father O'Donnell and to the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies for granting permission to publish this translation. I compared Father O'Donnell's edition with a microfilm of the better of the two surviving manuscripts of the treatise, and I wish to thank the administration of the Bibliothèque Nationale for permitting the microfilming of the manuscript.

I am grateful also to Marilyn McCord Adams and to the members of my seminars in medieval logic at Cornell University, the University of Illinois, and Wayne State University for their many helpful criticisms and suggestions; and to my wife, Barbara, who again helped in countless ways with the preparation of the book; and to Professor Gareth Matthews of the University of Minnesota and the editorial staff of the University of Minnesota Press, who were, as before, unfailing in their encouragement.
This book was already in the press when the long-awaited Volume II of L. M. De Rijk’s *Logica Modernorum* appeared. As its subtitle—“The Origin and Early Development of the Theory of Supposition”—indicates, De Rijk’s Volume II provides historical material directly relevant to Chapter Five of *William of Sherwood’s Introduction to Logic* and to the whole of the present treatise. If I had had access to it while preparing these two books on Sherwood’s logic, I am sure I should have found it even more valuable than De Rijk’s Volume I—“On the Twelfth Century Theories of Fallacy”—which I so frequently cite. Research in twelfth- and thirteenth-century logic will for a long time to come take the two volumes of De Rijk’s *Logica Modernorum* as its point of departure. I urge the reader of this book to familiarize himself with De Rijk’s work, particularly with his Volume II.

Since the publication of *William of Sherwood’s Introduction to Logic*, I have received many discerning criticisms and comments on it from Professor Peter Geach. Because of the close connection between that earlier book and this one it seems appropriate and valuable to present here some of the more important corrections Professor Geach has communicated to me.

Page 64, note 30: The syllogistic reduction employed by Sherwood here is not mistaken. Conversion of the premisses of *Fapesmo* yields a weaker pair of premisses; if the conclusion follows from this pair, then *a fortiori* it follows from the original pair. This shows that since *Ferio* is acceptable, *Fapesmo* is so as well. But the converse does not hold; what follows from the (stronger) premisses of *Fapesmo* need not on that account follow from the corresponding (weaker) premisses of *Ferio*.

Page 83: A scribe’s error has evidently caused a ‘nisi’ to be dropped from the Latin provided in parentheses at the end of Section 3.2.6. It should be emended to read “. . . nec fiunt plura nisi adverbialiter . . .” The corresponding English would then read “and they become many only adverbially . . .” Some of the difficulties discussed in note 64 are thereby alleviated.

Page 101: In the example at the end of Section 5.1 the premiss “*sedens est albus*” is to be translated not as ‘seated is a white man’ but as ‘one who is sitting is white.’

Page 118: A printer’s error has caused the correct second line of Rule V (on page 119) to appear incorrectly as the second line of Rule IV. The second line of Rule IV should read “supposition does not follow, but [only] to merely confused supposition.”
Page 119: The Latin provided in parentheses at the end of Section 13.4—"ut si videat unum solum"—is to be translated not as 'as if there is only one he might see' but as 'e.g., if Socrates sees one man only.'

Page 128: The final sentence of Section 16.3 is misinterpreted and most of the attempted explanation in note 94 is on the wrong track. The sentence should read "A common term standing before [a future-tense verb] supposits for either present or future things as a consequence of composition and division, but when standing after [the verb] it supposits only for future things." 'Socrates will see something white' is an example of the second (ex parte post) case; in it 'something white' supposits only for such white things as there will be at that future time. 'Something white will be seen by Socrates' is an example of the first (ex parte ante) case; in it 'something white' may supposit, in the compounded sense, for such white things as there will be at that future time or, in the divided sense, for such white things as there are now, at least one of which (although it may then no longer be white) will be seen by Socrates at that future time.

Page 130, note 102: The compounded sense is misstated. It should be 'it is, or it is possible for it to be, the case that there is at least one individual such that it is a man and it is running.'

Pages 141–142: The translation beginning with the last two lines of text on page 141 should be revised in the following way. "For in that case 'a white thing' is divided from the predicate 'is' (an omnitemporal verb) by the word 'possible.' As a result, 'a white thing' does not derive its supposition from the 'is,' so as to supposit for white things belonging to the time [consignified by the omnitemporal verb—i.e., any and every time]; instead it supposits for those things that are white now. Consequently, the minor premiss [taken as] divided is true; and since the premiss [taken as] compounded is one and the same with respect to the substance [of discourse], people believe that it is one and the same absolutely and that it signifies the same [whether taken as divided or as compounded]. And just as it would be a good syllogism if it were taken as compounded, they believe that it is good taken as divided."

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