

The history of logic in Lithuania: the theory of universals in the 16th century

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The paper draws on the theory of universals involved in scholastic logic in Lithuania in the 16th century. The author focuses on the ontological and epistemological levels of the theory. Namely, interpretations of the nature of the universals and its relation to human cognition are scrutinized. The author comes to a conclusion that the ontological level of the above theory cannot be strictly attributed to any classical variant of realism or nominalism. Similarly to the position of Francisco Suarez, it would rather be regarded as an intermediate model between moderate realism and conceptualism. As for the epistemological level of the theory, it varies from Thomistic to Ockhamistic.

Key words: universal, objective being in intellect, logic in the old Vilnius University

INTRODUCTION

Logic in Lithuania began to be taught, at least in 1507, in a particular school of the Vilnius Dominican Monastery. Nevertheless, the development of this science up to the European level of the time should be attributed to the Jesuit Order. In 1570, the latter founded an academic gymnasium (college) in Vilnius, which nine years later was reorganized into the Academy, or University, containing the faculties of philosophy and theology. It was from the very beginning that scholastic logic of high standard was lectured within the walls of this university. The high standard can be proven by the course on logic, delivered at the Vilnius University in 1586 / 1587 by Professor Marcin Śmiglecki (*Martinus Smiglecus*), one of the most prominent scholastic philosophers in Lithuania (Smiglecus 1987). It was exactly this course that served as a basis for the famous “Logic” of Śmiglecki. The latter, issued in Ingolstat in 1618 and reissued in Oxford in 1634, 1638 and 1658, spread in European Catholic and Protestant universities of the time.

The above-mentioned Śmiglecki’s lectures on logic will make the main subject of this article. The author will also investigate the other hitherto extant sources of scholastic logic in Lithuania in the 16th century. These sources consist of lectures on logic delivered at Vilnius University in 1596 / 1597 by Professor Diego Ortiz (*Iacob Ortizius*) and philosophical theses prepared by students of the Vilnius Jesuit College under the guidance of Professor Pedro Viana (*Petrus Viana*) in 1578. The author will analyse theory of universals (*universalia*, sing. – *universe*) included in the above-mentioned texts. Namely, the ontological and epistemological levels of this theory will be scrutinized. At the end of the article, some words will be said about the logical level which can be easily deduced from the ontological one.

It should be noted that the theory of universals in logic in Lithuania in the 16th century still remains insufficiently explored. Among historians of Polish philosophy, it is only Roman Darowski who briefly surveyed its ontological level (Darowski 1994). As for historians of Lithu-

anian philosophy, the situation is somewhat better. Namely, the recently published first volume of history of Lithuanian philosophy by Romanas Plečkaitis presents the ontological level of the conceptions of universals involved in the above-mentioned sources (Plečkaitis 2004). Plečkaitis analyses the whole heritage of scholastic logic in Lithuania without focusing on any particular period or subject. Also the present writer has published three separate articles dealing with the ontological (Valatka 2005), epistemological (Valatka 2006) and logical (Valatka 2007) levels of the theory of universals included in logic in Lithuania in the 16th century. Nevertheless, we still lack a thorough research devoted exclusively to the entire theory of universals of that logic. This paper is just an attempt of such a research.

THE PROBLEM OF UNIVERSALS IN CLASSIC AND SECOND SCHOLASTICISM

The problem of universals, inherited from antique and patristic philosophy, was one of the main problems of scholastic logic. The latter dealt with three operations of human intellect: apprehension, proposition and discourse. A universal was considered an object of the first intellectual operation. Inquiry into universals embraced three fundamental levels: ontological, epistemological and logical. The epistemological level concentrated on the relation between the universal and human cognition. The logical level analysed the properties of the universal, such as eternity, immateriality, predicability, etc. Nevertheless, the status of the essential level was ascribed to the ontological one, which served as the basis for the rest. This fundamental level investigated the nature of universals and their relation to a multitude of particular things. The results of such an investigation determined four principal trends in the theory of universals. These were extreme and moderate forms of realism, which honoured universals with the status of real entities (*entia realia*), opposed by extreme nominalism and conceptualism both regarding a universal as a mere construct of human intellect (*ens rationis*). Extreme realism maintained universals to exist irrespectively of individual things (*ante res*), whereas moderate realism asserted the existence of universals also within these things. Conceptualism, in turn, regarded a universal as a common concept, while extreme nominalism identified it with a common term having no equivalent in reality.

Disputes on the nature of universals did not abate in the so-called second scholasticism which lasted from the 16th to the 18th century. True, this scholasticism basically abandoned the radical forms of nominalism and realism, dwelling on the controversy of moderate realism and conceptualism. On the other hand, second scholasticism popularized one more variant of the theory of universals. We could define it as an intermediate version between moderate realism and conceptualism, which connected particular elements of both the above-mentioned trends. Like moderate realism, such an eclectic position asserted existence of universals in a multitude of individual things. On the other hand, this existence was affirmed absolutely impossible without activity of human intellect. This means that universal natures exist *in rebus* just insofar as the intellect abstracts them from individuating conditions of particular things and cognizes beyond the frame of individuality. The most prominent adherent of this intermediate position was Francisco Suarez (*Franciscus Suarezius*), one of the greatest philosophers of second scholasticism. According to him, “universal unity of nature, insofar as it is universal, neither possesses reality nor inheres in things inasmuch as they really exist and precede every operation of intellect” (Suarez 1614: disputation 6, section 2, subsection 13; p. 133).

The epistemological level of the theory of universals has also given rise to an ardent scholastic quarrel. The participants of this quarrel sought an answer to the question: “How does human intellect abstract universal from particular things?” The Thomistic answer to this ques-

tion was based on the conception of sensible and intelligible species. Meanwhile adherents of the Ockhamistic position rejected mediation of the above-mentioned species in the process of abstraction of a universal. According to them, human senses directly cognize individual things. Thereupon data of this sense perception serve as a basis for the intellectual abstraction of universals – the common concept of similar particularities.

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL OF THE THEORY OF UNIVERSALS. IS A UNIVERSAL GIVEN IN THE MULTITUDE OF THINGS?

In which way the ontological level of the theory of universals was interpreted in scholastic logic in Lithuania in the 16th century? Namely, how did the authors of the above-mentioned logic explain the very nature of universals? According to Śmiglecki (1987: fascicle [further – f.] 1, p. 24), “it is a common conception among all [philosophers] that a universal is a thing common to a multitude [of things], which, being one, nevertheless sustains relation to a multitude”. Ortiz defined a universal in an analogous way. In his words, “universal in the general sense is what is common to a multitude” (Ortizius 1596–1597: leaf [further – l.] 49). Thus, a universal is a nature inseparable from a multitude of particular things and unifying this multitude.

Śmiglecki and Ortiz marked out two essential modes, or ways of being, of the universal: a universal in being (*universale in essendo*) and a predicative universal (*universale in praedicando*). The former was defined as unity common to the elements of a certain multitude and existing within these elements. Meanwhile a predicative universal was regarded as unity attributed to a multitude because of its existence in such a multitude. It is evident that these modes of the universal do not essentially differ from one another – the same universal nature exists within particularities and bears the status of their predicate (Smiglecius 1987: f. 1, p. 25; Ortizius 1596–1597, l. 50). Thus, *universale in essendo* and *universale in praedicando* are just two separate sides of the same generality. Therefore, hereafter in this article we will not distinguish between these modes and talk straight about the universal as general nature.

Do scholiasts of Vilnius considered this universal a real entity? It might seem at first sight that Śmiglecki and Ortiz followed the tradition of realism. Namely, they rejected the fundamental thesis of nominalists that individual things alone have real existence. According to Śmiglecki (1987: f. 1, p. 30), “a universal in being is given in the nature of things”. It is evident that particular things of the universe are not totally different – they differ in certain aspects, but in other aspects they correspond to one another. Such a correspondence is determined exactly by universals – the general nature and essences of things. For example, resemblance of human beings is determined by the universal human nature, namely, being a rational animal. Ortiz ratiocinates analogous. In his opinion, “natures on the same basis suiting the multitude are universal, but natures suiting the multitude on the same basis are given [in natural order of things], hence universal natures are given” (Ortizius 1596–1597: l. 50).

DO UNIVERSALS EXIST ANTE RES?

So universals exists in individual things as the whole of their essential attributes. Consequently, it might seem that Śmiglecki and Ortiz belonged to the camp of moderate realists. True, they did not stick to the Thomistic moderate realism which asserted the ternary existence of universals: a) in God’s Mind, b) in particular things, c) in human intellect. These Jesuit thinkers were considerably closer to Aristotelian moderate realism negating the existence of universals *ante res*. They univocally rejected the Platonic–Augustinian position which ascribed the status

of universals to eternal ideas, or prototypes of things, existing in the divine intellect. According to Śmiglecki (1987: f. 1, p. 32), “as universals are essences of things, they are not separated from these things”. Ortiz (1596–1597: l. 61) reasons in a similar way: “...essences of things cannot exist beyond these things, for nothing is as intrinsic [to thing] as essence...”, whereas the prototypes of the Divine Mind are separate from things. Neither God himself nor the content of his intellect possess an immediate existence within things. In such a case, the whole creation of God were divine, still God is one and only. Thus, the divine idea cannot be a universal nature of things. On the other hand, “a universal is predicated of its particular things as what they are” (Smiglecius 1987: f. 1, p. 32). Yet such predicability is not characteristic of divine prototypes. It is false to affirm that Peter is an idea of human being lying in God’s Mind. In the meantime, the proposition “Peter is a human being” raises no doubts – this proposition attributes to Peter the general human nature residing in all human beings as their essence. Thus, the human nature in Peter and the human idea in God’s Intellect are not identical objects: the human prototype, not containing the whole of Peter’s essential attributes, cannot be predicated of Peter.

IS THE UNIVERSAL A CONCEPT OF HUMAN INTELLECT?

Thus, Śmiglecki and Ortiz rejected the existence of the universal before particular things in the shape of an eternal idea. Nevertheless, it would be false to assert that these scholiasts adhered to Aristotelian moderate realism. For such realism announced existence of universals not only within but also after individual things. The status of universals existing *post res* was acknowledged to common concepts (*notiones, conceptiones*) of human intellect. Meanwhile Jesuits of Vilnius refused to regard these concepts as universals. According to them, common concepts are mere creations of human intellect, possessing no existence beyond its frames. In the meantime, universals are not pure constructs of reason. They must be considered as intellect’s objects – as nature abstracted by the intellect from particular things, on the basis of which their common concept, i. e. an image of such a nature, is created. So, universals may be affirmed to exist after things merely as nature abstracted from them. Therefore, a common concept cannot be *universale in essendo*. Nor is it a predicative universal. For, as Śmiglecki (1987: f. 1, p. 34) maintains, “through predication intellect attributes to [particular] things what it conceives to exist within them, but it is not its concept but the thing itself that intellect conceives as existing within things. Therefore, not a concept but the thing conceived by intellect is what is predicated of [particular things]”. Such a conceived object is the very nature of individual things separated by intellect from any individuating factors. An example of this nature may be the human being existing in Peter, Paul and Thaddeus as a rational animal.

The course of Ortiz delivers an analogous view. In his opinion, the definition of the universal suits not the common term, or concept, but a thing itself, for a thing alone exists in a multitude and is predicated of it (Ortizius 1596–1597: l. 53). Such a thing is identified with the common nature of particular objects.

HOW DOES THE UNIVERSAL EXIST *IN REBUS*? SPECIFIC AND FORMAL UNITY

Thus, Śmiglecki and Ortiz did not take the concept of intellect as a universal. The latter was regarded as a common nature, or essence, of individual things. Now, Jesuits of Vilnius had to find an answer to the final question. How does a universal exist within particular things? In other words, does it have a real or only a mental existence?

As already mentioned, a universal was interpreted as one and the same nature existing in a multitude of things. According to Śmiglecki (1987: f. 1, p. 35), “there is no doubt that nature

really exists in a multitude, still it is questionable whether it really exists as one in a multitude”. Śmiglecki presents two variants of the unity of nature, which exists in a multitude. The former is entitled as a specific unity (*unitas specifica*). Nature, possessing this kind of unity, remains one and the same in every element of multitude just like a species within its individuals. The second variant bears the name of formal unity (*unitas formalis*). Nature, possessing such a unity, varies in every element of a multitude. Nevertheless, this nature sustains the same formal and essential predicates (*praedicata formalia et quidditativa*), i. e. the same aggregate of essential properties. Ortiz marks out the same kinds of unity. True, in his version they acquire somewhat different titles. Namely, the specific unity of Śmiglecki is substituted by a formal positive unity (*unitas formalis positiva*). Meanwhile, the formal unity is entitled as a formal negative unity (*unitas formalis negativa*).

Which of these unities is characteristic of nature existing in a multitude of particular things? According to Jesuits of Vilnius, this nature does not possess a specific unity because nature is always individual within particular things – “it is deduced that nature, existing in things, is really inseparable from singularity because it is really connected with singularity” (Smiglecius 1987: f. 1, p. 36). Nature within a particular thing is inseparable from the latter’s individual difference (*differentia individualis*), which makes such a nature an individual entity. Thus, nature consisting of particular things cannot be one and the same. This means that a universal does not possess real existence in a multitude – “nature, existing in a multitude of particular things, for example, human nature in Socrates and Plato, is not actually and formally universal” (Ortizius 1596–1597: l. 59). Namely, the human natures inherent in Socrates and Plato differ in their subjects, occupied places and executed operations; moreover, these natures come into existence and disappear in different ways (Ortizius 1596–1597: l. 59).

Thus, nature, existing in a multitude, is individual and not universal. On the other hand, a universal goes prior to an action of human intellect. Nevertheless, such priority does not make universal nature a real entity because a universal is prior to passive intellect (*intellectus possibilis*) alone. This cannot be said about active intellect (*intellectus agens*). The latter abstracts universal nature from particular things by creating its intellectual species (*species intelligibilis*), i. e. a certain image of that nature. Such intellectual species actuates passive intellect. The latter, resting on the image of abstracted nature, cognizes this nature and produces its concept.

Hence, a universal cannot be regarded as an entity independent of intellect, i. e. an entity possessing real existence in particular things. Universal nature is posterior to active intellect which abstracts it from a thing’s individual difference which provides nature with particularity. According to Śmiglecki (1987: f. 1, p. 39), “with respect to active intellect, which produces intellectual species, [universal] nature is a completing object posterior to that intellect”. Ortiz (1596–1597: l. 67) holds the same position: “natures are not universal unless they are abstracted by intellect”. Thus, universals really move the passive intellect. Yet they do not exist in particular things before the abstracting operation of the active intellect.

So a universal lacks a real existence. No nature can exist as one and the same in particular things before the abstracting action of active intellect. No nature existing in a multitude possesses a specific unity. This nature disposes of formal unity alone – separate individuals of such a nature sustain the same essential features. In other words, nature existing in a multitude is one just according to its essential predicates. Therefore, the “human nature that exists in Peter does not really differ in essential and formal attributes from the human nature that exists in Paul since whatever is included in Peter’s nature is also included in Paul’s nature, and one nature does not possess any formal predicate in which it would differ from another nature”

(Smiglecius 1987: f. 1, p. 40). Namely, the human nature of both Peter and Paul is in all essentials *animal rationale*.

Thus, nature existing in a multitude possesses a formal unity. According to Ortiz (1596–1597: l. 66), it is a real unity, i. e., a unity existing beyond human intellect. On the other hand, such unity cannot be regarded as a unity in the literal sense of this word: even sustaining essential predicates, nature does not exist as one and the same in each element of a multitude.

HOW DOES A UNIVERSAL EXIST *IN REBUS*? OBJECTIVE BEING WITHIN INTELLECT

Thus, Śmiglecki and Ortiz do not consider a real being universal. Universal nature cannot be separated from the operation of active intellect; consequently it is only a mental being (*ens rationis*). What status does a universal acquire in the intellect? According to Śmiglecki, within intellect, nature may exist in two ways: subjectively and objectively. Nature that has a subjective existence in human intellect is not nature in the full sense of this word. It is just an image, representation, a common concept of nature, conceived by passive intellect. In the meantime, nature that objectively exists in the intellect is exactly a universal. It should be noted that Jesuits of Vilnius did not use the concept of objectivity in its present sense. Namely, they did not identify objectivity with reality, veracity or truthfulness. Speaking about nature, which exists objectively within the intellect, they only meant an object of the latter, i. e. nature to a degree conceived by the intellect. This nature cannot be regarded as any image or representation. It is the nature of particular things itself; the active intellect abstracts it from them, and the passive intellect afterwards cognizes it, also creating its representation. It is the nature liberated by the active intellect from individual differences of particular things. Such a nature, devoid of any individuality, exactly exists within things as one and the same; moreover, it is predicated of them as their essence. Therefore, this nature is precisely a universal. So, as Śmiglecki (1987: f. 1, p. 47) asserts, “a universal is not a thing existing beyond intellect, nor is it a thing existing subjectively within intellect; hence, it will be a thing possessing objective existence in intellect”. Ortiz (1596–1597: l. 69) holds the same position. According to him, universals exist objectively within intellect.

It should be stressed that nature, bearing objective existence in intellect, is by no means a thing excogitated by intellect (*res conficta ab intellectu*). Fictions of human reason, for example, centaurs, sphinxes, chimeras, etc., have no equivalents in reality. Meanwhile, a universal existing objectively within intellect “is the nature itself without particularizing conditions” (Smiglecius 1987: f. 1, p. 44). In other words, a universal is a nature existing in particular things; intellect abstracts it from individuating factors and makes one and the same in every thing. Ortiz (1596–1597: l. 69) delivers an analogous view: “I respond that universals... are natures, naturally existing in particular things themselves, yet abstracted from the latter by intellect”.

DIGRESSION FROM MODERATE REALISM

Resting on the aforesaid things, we may affirm that Śmiglecki and Ortiz digressed from Aristotelian moderate realism. They did not ascribe the status of a universal to a common concept, regarding the latter only as an image of a universal. True, these Jesuits asserted universals to exist within particular things as their essence. Nevertheless, neither Śmiglecki nor Ortiz recognized a real existence of universals in a multitude. In their opinion, a universal exists in things only because of intellect: “Universals ... are said to exist in both the thing and the intellect, because they are suited for a thing insofar as it is an object of intellect” (Smiglecius 1987: f. 1, p. 60).

A similar interpretation of universals' existence was presented also by P. Viana. The only thesis of his students, devoted to universals, asserts: "Having rejected the figment of Plato and others, we consider together with Aristotle and other most learned [men] that universals exist in things, and that they are not only vocables and concepts but also certain natures signified by concepts and prescinded from particular things only by a discourse of intellect; and no nature can be considered universal before the operation of intellect" (Viana 1578: thesis 58). Thus, like Śmiglecki and Ortiz, Viana affirmed that a universal exists in a multitude just as really as it is conceived by human intellect. On the other hand, differently from the above-mentioned scholiasts, Viana attributed the status of universals also to common terms and concepts. Thus, in this point he was somewhat closer to moderate realism than were Śmiglecki and Ortiz.

However, the interpretation of the ontological level of theory universals, given by the above-mentioned authors, cannot be strictly ascribed to any of the classical variants of realism and nominalism. Such an interpretation, similar to that of Francisco Suarez, would rather be regarded as an intermediate model between moderate realism and conceptualism. Like moderate realists, Śmiglecki, Viana and Ortiz maintained that universals are given in the very nature of individual things. But, contrary to moderate realism, they refused to acknowledge the real existence of universals. In their opinion, universal nature exists *in rebus* just as really as it is cognized by intellect. On the other hand, together with conceptualists, scholiasts of Vilnius affirmed existence of universals in human intellect. But, differently from conceptualism, these authors, with the exception of Viana alone, did not attribute the status of a universal to a common concept. A universal was regarded as the very nature of real things, abstracted by our intellect from particularizing conditions and cognized beyond the frame of individuality.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND LOGICAL LEVELS OF THEORY OF UNIVERSALS

The epistemological level of the theory of universal dealt with the question: "How does human intellect abstract a universal?" Śmiglecki took the Thomistic answer to this question. According to him, the process of abstraction of a universal includes both sensual perception and intellect which, in conformity with Aristotelian tradition, is divided into active and passive. First of all, particular things send their partial images – sensible species – to five external senses. These fragmentary images are transferred to internal senses (common sense and phantasy) which create phantasmata – complete images of the above-mentioned particularities (for example, the complete images of individual human beings Peter, John and Andrew are composed). Then comes the turn of active intellect (*intellectus agens*) – "in phantasy, from the object of phantasy, which is called phantasm, an intelligible species is produced by active intellect" (Smiglecius 1987: f. 1, p. 43), i. e., active intellect, resting on similar phantasmata of similar individual things, produces their common image – an intelligible species. Creation of this image is identical to the abstraction of a universal: the common image of similar things represents their nature without the individuating and particularizing conditions, thus making that nature universal. Hence, nature, inasmuch as it is in active intellect, is both abstracted and universal (Smiglecius 1987: f. 1, p. 46).

Thus, it is the active intellect that abstracts a universal. Such an action turns on the passive intellect (*intellectus possibilis*). Leaning on intelligible species, this intellect cognizes a universal itself, herewith creating its common concept.

Thereby Śmiglecki presented the Thomistic interpretation of the epistemological level of theory of universals. A similar position is found in the course of Ortiz. Like Thomists, this scholiast maintained that active intellect needs intelligible species to abstract a universal from particular things. Nevertheless, contrary to the Thomistic position, Ortiz denied participation

of sensible species in the abstraction of a universal, accepting in this aspect the Ockhamistic point of view. According to him, external senses directly cognize particular things and, resting on data of this sense perception, internal senses create phantasmata of cognized things. So sensible species, allegedly sent to external senses by things themselves, are a mere fiction of Democritus and his followers (Ortizius 1596–1597: l. 245).

At the end of the article, some words must be said about the logical level of theory of universals which investigated the properties (*propria*) of a universal as such. The representatives of scholastic logic in Lithuania in the 16th century presented a traditional interpretation of this level. They attributed to a universal traditional scholastic *propria*, i. e. a universal was regarded as immaterial and incorruptible nature predicabile of its individuals as well as an object of sciences.

CONCLUSIONS

The authors of logic in Lithuania in the 16th century – M. Śmiglecki, P. Viana and D. Ortiz – proposed an interpretation of the ontological level of theory of universals, which cannot be strictly attributed to any classical form of realism or nominalism. This interpretation, similar to that of Francisco Suarez, should rather be regarded as an intermediate position between moderate realism and conceptualism.

Śmiglecki presented the Thomistic interpretation of the epistemological level of the theory of universals, based on the conception of sensible and intelligible species and a distinction between active and passive intellect. Meanwhile, the interpretation presented by Ortiz may be regarded as an intermediate variant between the Thomistic and the Ockhamistic positions.

Śmiglecki and Ortiz traditionally interpreted the logical level of the theory of universals. They attributed to universals the traditional scholastic *propria*: immateriality, incorruptibility, predicability and being an object of scientific knowledge.

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VYTIS VALATKA

Logikos istorija Lietuvoje: universalijų teorija XVI amžiuje

Santrauka

XVI a. logikoje Lietuvoje atrandama vieninga ontologinio universalijų teorijos lygmens interpretacija negali būti griežtai priskiriama nė vienam klasikiniam realizmo bei nominalizmo variantui. Antrosios scholastikos grando Suareso pažiūroms artimą šios logikos atstovų Smigleckio, Ortizo ir Vianos poziciją veikia turėtume laikyti tarpiniu modeliu tarp nuosaikaus realizmo ir conceptualizmo. Tuo tarpu epistemologinį universalijų teorijos lygmenį minėti autoriai aiškino skirtingai. Štai Smigleckis pasirinko tomistinę interpretaciją, paremtą juslinių ir intelektinių specijų koncepcija bei aktyvaus ir pasyvaus intelekto distinkcija. Ortizas, atmetęs juslines specijas, tačiau pripažinęs intelektinių specijų realumą, pasiūlė eklektinę epistemologinio lygmens interpretaciją, laikytiną tarpiniu variantu tarp tomistinės ir okamistinės pozicijos.

Raktažodžiai: universalija, objektyvi būtis intelekto, logika senajame Vilniaus universitete