

MODI SIGNIFICANDI

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A. Charlene Senape McDermott, ed.

*Godfrey of Fontaine's Abridgement of Boethius of
Dacia's 'Modi Significandi'*

GODFREY OF FONTAINE'S ABRIDGEMENT
OF
BOETHIUS OF DACIA'S

MODI SIGNIFICANDI
SIVE
QUAESTIONES SUPER PRISCIANUM MAIOREM

An edition
with introduction and translation by

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TO MY
MOTHER AND FATHER

PREFACE

This work, comprising an English translation and brief philosophical explication of Godfrey of Fontaine's abridgement of Boethius the Dane's *QUAESTIONES SUPER PRISCIANUM MAIOREM*, purports to make available to contemporary linguists and philosophers of language, as well as to historians of medieval thought, Boethius' philosophical prolegomena to a scientific grammar. The present study emerged from earlier excavations of mine into 13th century modal logic, and was further shaped by my subsequent comparative investigations of logic, grammar and language, based on a group of late medieval Latin writings on the one hand, and certain Buddhist Sanskrit and Tibetan texts on the other.

It is with pleasure that I acknowledge my indebtedness to the publisher G. E. C. Gad of Copenhagen for permission to use the Latin text as established by Pinborg and Roos in *Boethii Daci Opera Modi Significandi sive Quaestiones Super Priscianum Maiorem* (Copenhagen, 1969), pp. 311-65. My thanks are also due to Professor Jan Pinborg of the University of Copenhagen for the painstaking care with which he read and criticized my translation and to Professor E. F. Konrad Koerner of the University of Ottawa for his special encouragement and help. Linda Peterson helped prepare the manuscript for printing. Other friends and colleagues have also contributed less directly to the writing of this book, as has The Research Allocations Committee of the University of New Mexico, whose material support made possible the final preparation of the typescript.

Albuquerque, New Mexico
September 1979

A. Charlene Senape McDermott

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* * * * *

Like reflections in a mirror, [real objects]
manifest themselves through speech.

Bhartrhari (*Vākyapadīya* I,20)

Propositions cannot represent the logical form;
this mirrors itself in the propositions. Logic
is not a theory, but a reflexion of the world.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* 4.121 and 4.126)

INTRODUCTION

I

When Charles Peirce began his work as a "backwoodsman," so he termed it, in the field of semiotic theory, he acknowledged his debt to the forays into the linguistic thicket made by a group of late 13th and early 14th century grammarians, the so-called "Modistae," by dubbing his own theory of the nature and meaning of signs "speculative grammar," after the Modistic grammatical treatises of the same name. Modistic grammatical systems (and by now these have come to be fairly well known, thanks to the efforts of G. Bursill-Hall and J. Pinborg, *inter alia*) are those which devolve on the pivotal notion of "modes of signifying" (*modi significandi*).¹ As for the epithet "speculative," speculative grammatical theory (*speculatio*) views the framework of language as a mirror (*speculum*)—image of human conceptual structures, the structures themselves reflecting those of the real world.

With the recently growing rapprochement between the independent semiotic disciplines initiated by Peirce and de Saussure, and with the further impetus given to the scientific study of language by the cresting of the Chomskyan "revolution," interest in all branches of linguistic theory and philosophy of language, and in particular in the history of linguistic theory, is at an unprecedented high in the West. Moreover, some of the most significant and provocative by-products of

this interest have been the investigations of those scholars in whose research there is a marriage of linguistic and logico-epistemological skills and aims. Now while there has always been a symbiotic relationship between grammar and philosophy in India, the same degree of reciprocity between the two activities is to be found only episodically in the West. The examples that come immediately to mind are the developments of the past two decades of the current century, on the one hand, and those of the period from about 1265-1320 on the other. The focal point of the present study, Boethius of Dacia's *Modes of Signifying or Questions on Priscian Major* (hereafter abbreviated as *CPDMA-IV*),² a work written around or slightly before 1270-72, purports to present a strong case *for* (indeed is itself an object lesson *in*) the value of utilizing a hybrid philosophical-grammatical approach to the development of a theory of discourse.

Despite the fact that Boethius was a leading figure in the heterodox Aristotelian philosophical movement known as Latin Averroism as well as "the most important theoretician of the (Modistic) group"³ critical editions of his grammatical treatise as well as some of his other major works have only recently become available.⁴ This circumstance can be explained, at least in part, by the esclandre that surrounded Boethius' name after the condemnation in 1277 of 219 philosophical propositions, many of which had been explicitly put forth and defended by Boethius and his fellow "left-wing" Aristotelians in their published writings.⁵

Although the contents of some of the other speculative grammatical treatises have already been subjected to reasonably detailed examinations, to date no translation of Boethius' *Modes of Signifying* has appeared, much less a gloss of the tract or a detailed evaluation of his philosophy of language and grammatical theory in their entirety. Moreover, even when Boethius' contributions to a "scientific" grammar are discussed in relation to those of his compeers, the emphasis is for the most part on history and philology, rather than on metaphysics and logic.⁶

Yet, if we are to take Boethius at his word, the ability to come to an understanding of the critical interface between *philosophy* and grammar, is a *sine qua non* for one who attempts to lay the foundations of an adequate *scientia sermocinalis*. He says:

Neither the pure grammarian nor the pure philosopher is able to impose on vocal expressions [the ability] to signify. Rather, [the person who does this] ought to be both: namely a philosopher concerned with real things in order that he can consider the properties of objects from which he derives modes of signifying, under which he imposes a vocal expression to signify. He ought also to be a grammarian so that he may be able to consider modes of signifying.⁷

Again in question 18, page 63.22 below (*CPDMA-IV*, page 69) he outspokenly advocates a duality of roles:

One ought to be grammarian, in order that he might consider modes of signifying; a philosopher, so as to consider the properties of objects, and a philosopher-grammarian so as to derive the modes of signifying from the properties of objects.

Moreover, as he has already told us in an earlier passage: "The grammarian does not ascertain [the truth of his own first] principles... Rather, [it is] the metaphysician who considers the principles of grammar, ascertaining and confirming them...and likewise the principles of any particular science."⁸

In other words, a grammatical theory which aims at scientific status (and Boethius explicitly rebukes Priscian for falling short of this status)⁹ must be grounded on and proceed deductively from the metaphysician's appraisal of the way things are; the more so because, according to the tradition from which Boethius descends, the formal features of language are not only derived from, but faithfully *reflect* or mirror corresponding structures of reality.

The reflection motif is, of course, neither original with nor peculiar to the Modistae. It plays a prominent role in Western philosophy of language from Aristotle (who describes spoken sounds as the variable signs of the affections or mental experiences common to all human beings, these, in turn being symbols or likenesses

[*homoiōmata*] of things or states of affairs in the external world)¹⁰ through Leibniz and Peirce to the early Wittgenstein, to name but a few of its better known expositors. Examples from the Indian grammatico-philosophical tradition might also be added (as the quotation from Bhartrhari with which we begin our essay will attest); but a detailed cross-cultural study lies beyond the limits of this investigation. Suffice it to note that while grammar seems to have provided a continuous impetus for the Indian tradition's proto-philosophical speculation and debate, on those occasions when the two fields *have* interpenetrated in the West, an initial interest in metaphysics has more often restimulated grammatical thinking rather than vice versa.

Returning briefly to the larger context of Modistic grammatical theory as a whole, if we accept Pinborg's appraisal of the achievement of the group as a synthesis, culminating in a full-fledged and coherent grammatical theory,¹¹ then Boethius' special contribution to the development of this theory is his delineation of its metaphysical and epistemological foundations. Boethius' "prolegomena to Modistic grammar" (as Bursill-Hall describes the *Questiones Super Priscianum Maiorem*) stands in much the same relationship to the projected late medieval *scientia sermocinalis* as does Edmund Husserl's "a priori universal grammar" to the modern counterpart of this science, (though justifying this claim is no part of our present concern).¹²

And while the affinities Boethius' treatise bears to the grammars of his predecessor Simon and his contemporary Martin are obvious to anyone acquainted with the works of the three Danish thinkers, the cogency, lucidity and specificity of detail of Boethius' analysis render it far superior to the efforts of his countrymen, as does the painstaking care with which he attempts to delimit and characterize the respective realms of the metaphysician, the logician, the natural scientist and the grammarian. (See especially questions 1, 11, 12 and 18, pages 25, 43, 47, 63 (*CPDMA-IV*, pages 6-9, 44-48, 50, 67-69).¹³ Nor does it detract from the originality and worth of the grammatical writings of Boethius' *successors* in the tradition to concur with the

judgement of other scholars in the field as to the seminality of Boethius' work which, in our opinion, contains prolepses of all the significant grammatical insights subsequently to be refined and ramified by Thomas of Erfurt, Siger de Courtrai, and others.

Our approach in what follows is as unabashedly philosophical as is Boethius'; whence our primary goal will be to provide a brief elucidation of the general remarks comprising questions 1-28 with which he opens the treatise—his overview of grammatical theory: its status, metaphysical presuppositions, methodological principles, subject matter, aims and the nature of the theoretical constructs employed in the service of those aims. Boethius' detailed examination of the traditional word classes (or *partes orationis*)¹⁴ will be utilized chiefly as a source of additional data in support of the principles and conclusions set forth in the earlier part of his work. It is hoped that these programmatic expository efforts, and our translation of Godfrey's *conspectus* of Boethius' theory, will, along with Bursill-Hall's "Notes on the Grammatical Theory of Boethius of Dacia," provide the groundwork for a full and linguistically oriented study of the particular features of each of the eight word classes. It would be precipitous to embark on such a study, without first attaining to a more adequate understanding of Boethius' "philosophical grammar" as a whole—and this in the light of his own problematic and purposes rather than ours.¹⁵ Similarly, while not denying the need for a critical and comparative historiography which includes an assessment of Boethius' role in the evolution of a viable theory of language, a critique of this sort can only be successfully undertaken upon the completion of the more basic hermeneutic task¹⁶ to which we here restrict ourselves.

A final anticipatory comment: Boethius' syntactic theory proper is bound to seem jejune in comparison with Thomas of Erfurt's elaboration of the subject, since in the absence of the former's *Priscian Minor* commentary, which contains the architectonic of his syntax (see question 7, page 39.9 (CPDMA-IV, page 31), we can at best "assemble

reminders" (in the Wittgensteinian sense) from the tantalizing incidental remarks on *constuctio* and its principles with which the second part of the *Priscian Maior* commentary is interlarded.

II

"Grammar," Boethius tells us in question 6, page 37.4 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 27), "is a science of discourse because in it is taught the congruous concatenation of words through their modes of signifying as expressed in speech via a *vox*, the concatenation truly reflecting the ordering of intelligibles in the intellect through their modes of understanding (*modi intelligendi*)."

A point by point explication of this affirmation reveals that grammar, since it has been shown to conform to the condensed statement of the Aristotelian criteria for scientific knowledge enunciated in question 3, page 31.3 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 16), is indeed a *science*: i.e., grammar comprises a nexus of causes essentially ordered in reference to a subject matter comprehensible by the human intellect.¹⁸ Here, "causes essentially ordered" is construed as "causes invariably or necessarily yielding those objects which are the subject matter of grammar." In his adaptation of a well-known adage, the contemporary British philosopher P. T. Geach observes that "if we are to get a scientific insight into syntax, we mustn't be afraid to break Priscian's head."¹⁹ We have already remarked on Boethius' fearlessness in this regard (page 3 above and note 9). The traditional Priscianic taxonomy of Latin grammar is adopted, to be sure, by Boethius and his fellow Modistae, but as quickly transformed by the infusion of those technical devices to be examined in the remainder of this introduction, into a model which, unlike that of Priscian, purports to yield a pure knowledge of the causes operative in its own special domain, a model which at least aspires to, if it does not actually attain, the level of "explanatory adequacy."

To continue with our explication, rather than constituting an essential part of philosophy as do the natural, mathematical and

divine sciences, grammar is an *introductory* or preliminary science (question 3, page 31.28; *CPDMA-IV*, page 18),²⁰ a tool for cognizing the three theoretical sciences just enumerated. In this as well as in several other respects grammar lends itself to ready comparison with logic; though in obvious contrast to logic, which is concerned with the truth conditions of discourse, grammar's cognitive focal point is the "modes of expressing an intended concept through congruous discourse in every field."²¹ Grammar is thus, by virtue of the special subject with which it is concerned, and because of its general utility in all the arts and sciences, at once a special science and a common art.²²

Moreover, while it is true that Modistic grammar abstracts from particular languages (e.g., Greek and Latin) taken singly, it is nonetheless a genuine science of discourse, since it does not abstract from these languages collectively considered. Rather, Boethius and his fellow Modistae focus on the logico-grammatical structure of discourse as such—on its *substance*, relegating its accidental features, the *figurationes vocum* (or surface forms of the phonetic elements) to the realm of the natural scientist. Phonetics having thus been summarily dismissed as anterior to grammar, there remains for the grammarian to consider not the *vox* as emitted sound, but the *vox* in its capacity to serve as sign of an object and subject of the modes of signifying.²³ In other words, the grammarian's enterprise as such excludes, though it presupposes: (1) the imposition upon the *vox* of the function of signifying something, whence it becomes a meaningful sound (*vox significativa*) or *dictio* (which is to say it acquires lexical meaning); and (2) the further imposition of modes of signifying. These modes confer on each *dictio* a functional meaning by placing it in one or another of the grammatical categories of a particular language, whereupon the *dictio* in question becomes a full-fledged unit of meaningful discourse, assuming the status of a word class (*pars orationis*).²⁴

On page 183 of his "Notes on the Grammatical Theory of Boethius of Dacia," Bursill-Hall gives the following useful description of the

interrelationships between the *modus significandi*, *dictio*, *pars orationis* and *vox*:

The *vox* is the *signum rei*, and the *dictio* too is a *signum*, not just any one but one possessing meaning. A thing has properties, all of which can be signified, having been understood, by means of the modes of signifying, and these properties are therefore represented in speech by means of the *dictio*. The modes of signifying and the expression are part of the word; the word (*dictio*) is thus the sign of a thing realised by means of the *vox*... The *dictio* is the material representation of the more abstract *pars orationis*.

A *pars orationis*, then, in Boethius' sense of the term, comprises a certain *vox*, a *significatum* and a group of modes of signifying including its specific essential mode of signifying. (See, for example, question 29, page 79.4 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 88).) But it is the specific essential mode of signifying of a given *pars* that distinguishes it from all others.²⁵ The eight *partes* so construed constitute the machinery which Boethius feels will yield not merely a scientific description of the scholarly Latin of his day, but *the* most general and perspicuous grammatical theory possible, a theory whose unique framework and principles provide the universal foundation for all languages.²⁶

Turning next to a consideration of the modes of signifying as reflective of the regularities of our ideational complexes (the "modes of understanding" alluded to in the opening remark of the present section), these modes of understanding have themselves been abstracted from the real properties of objects.²⁷ From this it follows that the alleged universality of speculative grammar has its ultimate basis, not in the *directly* reflected configurations of the human psyche (pace Chomsky, Lenneberg and company),²⁸ but in the extramental realm of the structural features of objects comprehended by the mind. Nor is there any question of reciprocity in this regard; i.e., of language projecting its own forms upon, and thereby molding, as well as being molded by, reality.²⁹ An appropriate and fixed degree of fidelity of the modes of signifying (via the modes of understanding as intermediaries)

to the modes of being is simply taken for granted by the speculative grammarians.

N.B. Our use of the locution "degree of fidelity" is intended to underscore the fact that for Boethius and his compeers, Latin, and by implication other natural languages as well, fall short of *perfectly* replicating the world's ontological structures. First, there is the possibility of abstracting from (and thereby excluding) certain structural features of objects in the process of conceiving of and signifying those objects.³⁰ In the same vein, in question 64, page 135.8 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 160), Boethius observes that not every property of an object need be designated by a mode of signifying. Again in some instances many properties or modes of being (*modi essendi*) may be designated by a single mode of signifying.³¹ Thus there need not be a relationship of one-to-one correspondence or strict isomorphism between modes of being and modes of signifying. Furthermore, it is not necessary that the *order* of occurrence of properties in the real world be faithfully reflected either in the corresponding cognitive or linguistic orderings.³²

The most that can be said is that if a particular combination of modes of being is *not* possible, *neither* is the corresponding combination of modes of signifying³³ or, equivalently, by contraposition, for a group of modes of signifying to be compossible, the linguistic aggregate in question must have a self-consistent prototype or source. However, Boethius allows that in certain instances the source may be merely mental.

This last point, both because of its intrinsic importance and the energy with which it has been discussed in contemporary philosophical literature³⁴, deserves a few words of elaboration. As is implicit in what has already been said, it is the associated mental intermediary (more precisely, the *intellectus*),³⁵ rather than any particular object existent in the real world which, in the Modistic view, functions as the direct interpretant or *per se significatum* of a given *pars orationis*.³⁶ However, alike in those cases where a given *intellectus*

has (lacks) ontological backing in the form of a specific, congruously structured, extramental counterpart, the question of the existence (or non-existence) of such a counterpart is irrelevant to the grammarian's concerns as such,³⁷ has, as it were, "no such place in the language game at all."³⁸ This simply means that a *pars* which does possess a real interpretant is, for that reason, no more and no less significant than one which does not. In the former case, the *pars* is buttressed by both an interposed mental configuration and a congruous assemblage of modes of being cohering in a single real object. In the latter, there is only the mental array, whose component modes of understanding must therefore function as modes of being as well;³⁹ and though, in this case there is *no single real* paradigmatic source which the constellation of modes reflects, the individual modes nonetheless *do* have their respective origins in the properties or modes of being of real, albeit disparate, objects.⁴⁰ I.e., each mode of understanding is the cognition of some mode of being or another.

Resuming our discussion of the formal relationship between modes of signifying, modes of understanding, and modes of being, it should be clear that, whatever else the Modistae intend by "mirroring" or "imitation," the use of the word in the contexts under analysis does *not* always entail *exact reproduction* of the structure of an *extra-mental* original. In fact, a one-to-one correspondence between an object's properties or modes of being and the modes of signifying which designate them obtains only when the former is *adequately* signified by the latter.⁴¹ In cases where the systems of conceptual intermediaries and of linguistic icons fall short of both *adequacy* and *completeness*,⁴² we nonetheless follow Boethius in using the cluster of notions "mirroring," "reflection," "imitation," "isomorphism," albeit with his Pickwickian overtones. But in view of the just noted deviations from their usual senses, how, precisely, is this family of notions to be interpreted? In particular, the root metaphor of mirroring, as used by the Modistae, appears to have "kicked up a quantity of philosophical dust," thereby obscuring, rather than clarifying the

relationship between words and the world.⁴³

A few comments and a question are in order. First, in marked contrast to the efforts of contemporary theoreticians of language to shore up their claims of universality with comparative empirical data, there seems to be no additional explicit support for the "universalistic pretensions" of the Modistae, beyond the above discussed overburdened and nebulous figures of speech. True, Boethius nods once or twice towards certain differences between Latin and Greek. However, he quickly and perfunctorily dismissed these differences as merely superficial or accidental.⁴⁴ Thus the assumption of a common reality, the primordial donor of the structures universally reflected in the mental and linguistic realms, is never subjected to serious challenge by him (or the other speculative grammarians), very likely because the metaphysical theory from which this assumption derives has had too long and venerable a history of entrenchment.

A propos, whether or not the repeated accusation that speculative grammar is too heavily oriented in the direction of a prescriptive theory is warranted in general, at least with respect to the central issue here being considered, the charge seems well founded. Further evidence of Boethius' Procrustean adherence to theory is his tendency to hold up one or another of the *partes*, as if to an ideal yardstick, whereupon the Latin vernacular is seen to lack some of an apparently canonical set of predelineated possibilities.⁴⁵ This calls to mind the Sanskritist Benfey's depiction of Panini's linguistic science as a grammar without a corresponding language (as opposed to the pre-classical Indian dialects which, in Benfey's view, comprise a language without a grammar).⁴⁶

Finally, the question must be raised as to the general utility of the apparatus (*modi essendi, modi intelligendi, and modi significandi*) devised by the speculative grammarians. I.e., can a grammarian who is agnostic or even inimical towards the moderate realist metaphysics espoused by the Modistae, appropriate the utensils originally forged on the basis of this metaphysics to concoct a very different sort of grammatical repast?⁴⁷

NOTES

1. Among the dozen or so grammarians numbered as Modistae are Simon of Dacia, Martin of Dacia, Boethius of Dacia, Siger de Courtarai and Thomas of Erfurt. (See G. L. Bursill-Hall, *Speculative Grammars of the Middle Ages*, Mouton, The Hague, 1971, page 31ff.) Although the Modistae endowed the phrase "*modi significandi*" with a special meaning and set of functions, as the analysis below will reveal, references to modes of signifying antedate the appearance of the Modistic writings and can be found in the works of such 12th century theoreticians as Peter Helias and Peter Abelard.

2. *Modi significandi sive Quaestiones super Priscianum Maiorem Cum Abbreviatione Quaestionum Confecta a Godefrido de Fontibus*, ed. J. Pinborg and H. Roos, *Corpus Philosophorum Danicorum Medii Aevi*, vol. IV, Copenhagen, 1969. We have chosen to translate Godfrey of Fontaines' abridgement of Boethius' treatise rather than the Boethian work itself because the former faithfully replicates the latter in all essential respects, while omitting many of Boethius' expatiations and those flourishes peculiar to the scholastic format which make the fuller version prohibitively long. (For convenience, references to the corresponding Boethian material in *CPDMA-IV* accompany citations of passages from our translated abridgement.) For a discussion of other examples of Godfrey's summaries of Boethian opuscles, see Bruce Braswell's "Godfrey of Fontaines' Abridgement of Boethius of Dacia's 'Quaestiones supra librum Topicorum Aristotelis'," *Medieval Studies*, Volume 26, 1964, pages 302-314. See also P. Wilpert, "Ein Compendium des 13. Jahrhunderts (Gottfried von Fontaines als Abbeviator)." *Mittelaltersches Jahrbuch* 11, 1965, pages 165-180.

3. Page 164 of G. L. Bursill-Hall's "Some Notes on the Grammatical Theory of Boethius of Dacia," (*History of Linguistic Thought and Contemporary Linguistics*, H. Parret, ed., de Gruyter, Berlin, 1976, pages 164-188).

4. For the most complete bibliography of writings by and about Boethius of Denmark, see pages 468-74 of volume VI, part 2, *Corpus Philosophorum Danicorum Medii Aevi* (ed. by A. Otto, H. Roos and J. Pinborg) Copenhagen, 1976. The volume itself consists of the critical editions of Boethius' *De Aeternitate Mundi*, his *De Summo Bono* and his *De Somnis*.

5. A list of the most important of the condemned propositions is contained in a A. Hyman and J. J. Walsh, *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Harper and Row, New York, 1967, pages 540-49.

6. The only significant exceptions to this statement of which we are aware are the already-cited Bursill-Hall article (note 3) and J. Pinborg's *Die Entwicklung der Sprachtheorie im Mittelalter* (= *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters*, XLII:2). Münster/Copenhagen, 1967, pages 77-86, each of which makes frequent allusions to Boethius' *philosophy of language*. Our indebt-

edness to both Bursill-Hall and Pinborg (*inter alia*) in what follows is obvious. However, except for those reduplications of their efforts which are unavoidable in the course of producing a coherent and self-contained essay, we hope to avoid reworking the ground they have so carefully plowed, and to go on to ramify and deepen some of their insights.

7. Question 12, page 47.5 below. (See also *CPDMA-IV*, page 50.) See the discussion which follows for more information on the "modes of signifying" (*modi significandi*) as well as some of the other technical terms which comprise the apparatus devised by the speculative grammarians to analyze one facet of the connection between words and the world, viz., the relation of "signifying." The logician will subsequently build on the foundation provided by the grammarian and carry the analysis one step further by elucidating the so-called "suppositional" aspect of the term-object relationship, but that subject is beyond the scope of this paper.

8. Question 1, page 27.3 (See also *CPDMA-IV*, page 8.)

9. Because Priscian fails to assign causes for his constructions, the Priscianic model is incapable of yielding the desiderated demonstrative knowledge. (See question 9, page 41.28; *CPDMA-IV*, page 39). For "nothing is perfectly known until it is arrived at in the light of its primary causes (page 23.1 below.) While Boethius is a glossator on Priscian—indeed most medieval grammarians were strongly influenced by, and often wrote commentaries on, the texts of Donatus and Priscian (see R. H. Robins, *Ancient and Medieval Grammatical Theory in Europe*, London, 1951)—Boethius takes his orientation, but also his *departure* from Priscian, differing from him in many important respects, both methodological and substantive.

10. *De Interpretatione*. 16a 3-8, page 40. *Basic Works*, R. McKeon, ed., New York, 1941.

11. In Pinborg's own words, in the Modistic synthesis: "*Alle Begriffe werden in eine zusammenhängende Theorie hineinbezogen.*" *Die Entwicklung der Sprachtheorie im Mittelalter*, page 56.

12. See especially Husserl's *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (trans. by D. Cairns). Nijhoff, The Hague, 1969.

13. It goes without saying, and here we are again following Boethius' lead, that only after the grammarian's sphere of operation has been clearly delineated and differentiated from those of the other theoreticians named, can the precise nature of the kind of interaction that obtains (and *ought to obtain*) among their domains be determined.

14. To be found in questions 29-134, of which questions 19-116 treat of the declinable *partes* whereas questions 117-134 treat of the indeclinable *partes*. More specifically, material pertaining to the *noun* is contained in questions 29-77, to the *verb* (questions 78-95), to the *participle* (questions 96-101), to the *pronoun* (questions 102-

107), to the *preposition* (questions 108-116), to the *adverb* (questions 117-126), to the *interjection* (questions 127-129) and to the *conjunction* (questions 130-134). It suffices for the present purpose merely to note that *formal* as well as *semantic* criteria figure in Boethius' account of his taxonomical scheme. This is especially evident in questions 117-134.

15. We here insert a (perhaps gratuitous) caveat against unbridled "precursorism" and the overdrawn comparisons which usually attend it. Among the writers who have addressed this issue at some length are: E. F. K. Koerner ("Towards a Historiography of Linguistics," Parret, *History of Linguistic Thought*, pages 685-718), J. A. Trentman ("Speculative Grammar and Transformational Grammar," *Ibid.*, pages 279-301) and R. G. Godfrey ("Late Medieval Linguistic Meta-theory and Chomsky's Syntactic Structures," *Word* 21, 1966, pages 251-266.)

16. A task still in its early stages, pending the availability of certain key texts.

17. Thomas of Erfurt, *De Modis Significandi sive Grammatica Speculativa*, ed. Fr. M. Fernandez Garcia (Florence, 1902).

18. In the *Nichomachean Ethics* 11 39^b 22-27 (*Basic Works*, McKeon, pages 1024-25) Aristotle speaks at some length about scientific knowledge as knowledge whose: "object is of necessity....Every science is thought to be capable of being taught and its object of being learned. And all teaching starts from what is already known, as we maintain in the *Analytics* also; for it proceeds sometimes through induction and sometimes by syllogism." Again in *Nichomachean Ethics* 1140 b 31 (McKeon, page 1027) we have: "Scientific knowledge's judgement about things that are universal and necessary, and the conclusions of demonstration, and all scientific knowledge, follow from first principles (for scientific knowledge, involves apprehension of a rational ground)."

19. See Geach's "A Program for Syntax," page 497 in *Semantics of Natural Language*, D. Davidson and G. Harman (eds.), Reidel, Dordrecht 1972.

20. In classical Aristotelian taxonomy, the *theoretical* (in contradistinction to the *practical* and the *productive*) sciences are listed as physics, mathematics and theology. (*Metaphysics* 1026^a 18, McKeon, page 779).

21. This is not only the subject, but also the ultimate goal of grammar. See question 7, page 39.4 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 31). See also question 5, page 35.7 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 22).

22. Question 8, page 41.7 (*CPDMA-IV*, pages 33-34).

23. See question 6, page 37.21, and *CPDMA-IV*, page 27. See also question 10, page 43.1 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 41).

24. Question 114, page 209.13 (*CPDMA-IV*, pages 262-263). Note, however, that *vox*, *dictio*, *pars* and the objective and conceptual

structures from which they derive are all simultaneous (question 1, page 25.33; *CPDMA-IV*, page 8). Hence the impositions just mentioned are logically and not temporally ordered *inter se*.

25. In question 14, page 51.10 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 56) Boethius remarks that the *per se significatum* (which is to say the *significatum* plus that property thereof designated by the *specific* essential mode of signifying) of a *pars* is (a principle) necessary to the *pars* as a member of its species. He then goes on to say that the distinguishing of *partes* into species is done in accordance with the respective (specific) modes of signifying of the *partes*.

26. Question 2, page 29.1. (*CPDMA-IV*, page 12-13). For further comments on the putative uniqueness (apart from accidental variations) of grammatical theory, see question 16, page 57 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 61).

27. See, e.g., question 77, page 151.1 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 182). For more on the nature of the "differences" among the modes, see question 26, page 73.1 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 81).

28. A fact already noted in the literature. See, for instance, M. Bloomfield's review of Bursill-Hall's *Speculative Grammars of the Middle Ages*, *Speculum*, Jan., 1974, pages 102-105.

29. Much less of Boethius' countenancing the more radical alternative according to which language, and not extra-linguistic reality is the primordial donor of all forms. (More precisely, according to the Bhartrhari school, prototypical sound essences give rise to and order all else in the world.)

30. Question 24, page 71.12 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 78).

31. Question 45, page 113.3 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 128).

32. Question 38, page 101.15 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 115) and question 71, page 145.4 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 173).

33. Question 80, page 163.6 (*CPDMA-IV*, page 192). Similarly, from the fact that a mode (or modes) of understanding is (are) impossible, it follows that the corresponding mode (modes) of signifying is (are) impossible. (Question 20, page 65.39; *CPDMA-IV*, pages 72-73). Compare this with: "We cannot think what we cannot think, so what we cannot think, we cannot say either." (L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 5.61, London, 1922.)

34. See, for instance, the select bibliography at the conclusion of my *An Eleventh Century Buddhist Logic of 'Exists'* (Reidel, Boston & Dordrecht, 1969).

35. "*Intellectus*" is defined by Boethius as "a mental concept together with its associated mode of understanding." (*Sophisma*, f. 75 rb), noted by J. Pinborg, *Die Entwicklung der Sprachtheorie im Mittelalter*, page 80. (In other words, the *intellectus* is the mental concept or *conceptus mentis*, the *significatum* of the *dictio*, as rendered determinate by a specific mode of understanding.) A psychologi-