

Guglielmo di Ockham, Gualtiero di Chatton e i concetti dimostrativi

Fabrizio Amerini

Università di Parma

Abstract: Walter Chatton criticizes William of Ockham's theory of knowledge extensively, and also the nature of demonstrative concepts (i.e., the concepts that correspond to the demonstrative pronouns of language, such as 'this' or 'that') does not escape his criticism. Whereas, for Ockham, demonstrative concepts precede any abstract operation of our mind, functioning thus as 'rigid deictics,' to borrow an expression of Claude Panaccio, for Chatton, they express concepts that logically depend on a definite description, and this reveals that they are complex and derivative concepts, which follow and not precede the operation by which our mind abstracts universal concepts. In spite of this, Chatton believes that, once formed, demonstrative concepts express simple and individual concepts, capable of expressing the knowledge that is proper to the thing that is pointed to and only to it. The present paper reconstructs Chatton's account of demonstrative concepts and his criticism of Ockham, and proves that his account anticipates some significant aspects of the modern discussions on the nature of demonstrative concepts.

Keywords: Walter Chatton, William of Ockham, Theory of Knowledge, Concepts, Demonstratives.