INSOLUBLES

WALTER SEGRAVE

CRITICAL EDITION WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY BARBARA BARTOCCI AND STEPHEN READ





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Falsum est,

et ita posito alio falso, foret hec falsa:

Falsum est;

consequens est falsum, et ita patet falsitas illius dicti voluntarii et absque ratione.

Capitulum Tertium

(Solventes secundum peccatum in forma)

3.0 Preter positiones iam dictas sunt alie ponentes insolubilia peccantia in forma, et illi sunt bipartiti. Quidam solvunt illa secundum quid et simpliciter, et quidam secundum fallaciam accidentis.

(Solventes secundum fallaciam secundum quid et simpliciter)

3.1 Solventes secundum quid et simpliciter negant consequentiam:

Hoc falsum dicitur a Sorte, ergo falsum dicitur a Sorte.

Dicunt quod pars in talibus ubi accidit reflexio eiusdem supra se cum verbo pertinente ad motus anime non supponit pro toto, et ideo dicens hoc falsum non dicit falsum simpliciter sed secundum quid. Isti etiam sic dicentes diversimode dicunt.

3.2 Quidam dicunt quod dicens se dicere falsum nihil dicit, nec aliquale dicit nec propositionem dicit; sed dicit hoc aliquid, et hoc est dicere aliquid secundum quid et (non) simpliciter, hoc aliquale et non simpliciter aliquale. Sed constat quod isti errant. Talis enim sic dicens loquitur, ergo aliquid loquitur. Similiter sic dicens dicit litteras et sillabas, ergo aliquid dicit et aliquale. Similiter videns istam:

² alio falso] alia falsa E_4 6 Capitulum Tertium] in marg. E_8 8 positiones] ponentes E_4 || dictas corr.] dictis E_8 dicto E_4 || alie] alii E_4 || peccantia] peccante E_4 9 Quidam] enim add. E_4 15 reflexio] inflexio E_4 23 loquitur] om. E_4

A falsehood exists,

and so supposing there is another falsehood, this:

A falsehood exists,

will $\langle still \rangle$ be false.²² The conclusion is false, and thus the falsity is clear of that claim $\langle that 'A falsehood exists' signifies itself to be false <math>\rangle$, one which is arbitrary and without reason.

Chapter 3

(Solutions according to defects in form)

3.0 Besides the solutions already described there are others claiming that insolubles are defective in form, and they are of two kinds. Some people solve them by the fallacy of the conditional and the unconditional, and some by the fallacy of accident.

\langle Solutions according to the fallacy of the conditional and the unconditional \rangle^{23}

3.1 Those who solve (insolubles) by the fallacy of the conditional and the unconditional deny the inference:

This falsehood is said by Socrates, so a falsehood is said by Socrates.

They claim that in such propositions where reflection occurs of a part on itself with a verb pertaining to intentional acts, that part does not supposit for the whole, and so anyone saying this falsehood does not say a falsehood unconditionally but conditionally. There are also different ways in which those advocating this solution sustain it.

3.2 Some claim that anyone saying that he says a falsehood says nothing, that he neither says anything true or false nor says a proposition;²⁴ but he says a this-something,²⁵ and this is to say something conditionally and not unconditionally, a this-something true or false and not just anything true or false unconditionally. But it is certain that they are wrong. For anyone speaking like this is speaking, so saying something (unconditionally). Similarly, anyone speaking like this is uttering letters and syllables,

²² By Bradwardine's second conclusion. See n. 11 above.

²³ On the fallacy *secundum quid et simpliciter* (that is, of the conditional and the unconditional), see, e.g., Bradwardine, *Insolubilia*, 'Introduction', 5–6.

 $^{^{24}}$ We have followed Nuchelmans, 'The Distinction *actus exercitus/actus significatus* in Medieval Semantics', p. 76 in translating 'aliquale' (literally, 'of some kind') as 'true or false', since those are the kinds that are relevant here.

²⁵ 'A this-something' is the standard English translation of a classic Aristotelian term of art, 'tode ti', rendered into Latin as 'hoc aliquid', referring to the primary substance. For discussion, see, e.g., Cohen and Reeve, 'Aristotle's Metaphysics', §6.

Falsum videtur a me,

scriptam in litteris aureis, videt aurum, ergo aliquid videt. Sic igitur dicentes negant sensum.

3.3 Sed alii concedunt quod sic videns aliquid videt simpliciter et aliquale simpliciter, et negant consequentiam: ergo verum simpliciter vel falsum simpliciter, et [tamen] (ratio) est quia pro aliquo supposito huius termini 'verum' vel huius termini 'falsum' potest iste terminus 'aliquid' supponere simpliciter pro quo non potest iste terminus 'verum' vel 'falsum'. Non enim, ut dicunt, si dicere hoc falsum sit | dicere aliquid simpliciter, propter E₈ 24ra hoc dicere hoc falsum est dicere falsum simpliciter.

- 3.3.1 Et ratio istorum est quia Aristoteles secundo Elencorum videtur solvere huiusmodi paralogismos quales dicuntur insolubiles secundum quid et simpliciter, ut iurans se esse periurum aut est periurus aut non. Similiter dicens se mentiri aut mentitur aut non.
- 3.4 Sed isti, etsi probabilius dicant inter omnes, constat quod non recte solvunt quia recta solutio est manifestatio falsi sillogismi secundum quemlibet defectum (secundum quem) accidit falsum, ut patet secundo

² videt²] om. E_4 9 si] sic E_8 dub. E_4 10 hoc²] est add. E_4 14 mentitur] mentitus E_8 15 probabilius] probabiliter E₄

so he says something and (something true or false). Similarly, anyone seeing this:

A falsehood is seen by me,

written in gold letters sees gold, so he sees something \langle unconditionally \rangle . Therefore, those advocating this \langle solution \rangle deny the evidence of the senses. ²⁶

- **3.3** But others grant that anyone seeing in this way sees something unconditionally and something true or false unconditionally, and they deny the inference: "therefore a truth unconditionally or a falsehood unconditionally". This is because the term 'something' can supposit unconditionally for some suppositum of the term 'truth' or the term 'falsehood' for which the term 'truth' or 'falsehood' cannot supposit. For, they claim, if saying this falsehood is saying something unconditionally it does not follow that saying this falsehood is saying a falsehood unconditionally.²⁷
- **3.3.1** Their reason is because Aristotle in the second book of the *Sophistical Refutations* seems to solve paralogisms of the kind called insolubles by the fallacy of the conditional and the unconditional, e.g., anyone swearing that he is forsworn is either forsworn or not.²⁸ Similarly, anyone saying he is lying is either lying or not.²⁹
- **3.4** But even if they have the most plausible claim of everyone, it is certain that they do not solve the insolubles correctly, because the correct solution is the exhibition of a false syllogism according to whatever defect yields falsehood, as is clear from the second book of the *Sophistical Refutations*.³⁰

²⁶ Segrave's criticism here echoes and expands on Bradwardine's attack on the second group of cassationists (cassantes actum): see Bradwardine, *Insolubilia*, §5.6. They may be one of the groups of those appealing to the fallacy of the conditional and unconditional discussed by ps.-Sherwood (ed. Roure, 'La problématique des propositions insolubles', pp. 253–61): see Nuchelmans, 'The Distinction *actus exercitus/actus significatus'*, p. 76 ff. See also the solutions offered by Scotus in his *Questions on the Sophisticis Elenchis*, Qq. 52–53 (*Opera Omnia*, ed. Vivès, vol. II, pp. 73–76): see also Nuchelmans, op. cit., pp. 78–80.

²⁷ This may be a reference to Richard Kilvington's solution. He wrote: "I say, then, that no insoluble that is presently under discussion is absolutely true or absolutely false; instead each is true in a certain respect and false in a certain respect" (Dico, igitur, quod nullum insolubile de quo praesens est locutio est simpliciter verum vel simpliciter falsum; sed quodlibet est verum secundum quid et falsum secundum quid). See B. and N. Kretzmann, *The Sophismata of Richard Kilvington*, p. 142. More generally, the restrictivist claim is that what the terms 'true' (or 'truth') and 'false' (or 'falsehood') can supposit for is restricted in a way that other terms, like 'something', are not restricted.

²⁸ Segrave explains what he means by 'being forsworn' ('periurare') in §3.6.1 below.

²⁹ Sophistical Refutations, ch. 25, 180a38–b7.

³⁰ See Aristotle, *De Sophisticis Elenchis*, tr. Boethius, 40: "Quoniam autem est recta quidem solutio manifestatio falsi sillogismi secundum quemlibet interrogationem accidit falsum." Cf. *Sophistical Refutations*, ch. 18, 176b29–30 (see also 176b31–a8 and ch. 24, 179b6–33, esp. 23–24).

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Elencorum. Sed isti solventes secundum quid et simpliciter non manifestant quemlibet defectum. Peccant enim secundum accidens quia sic arguendo:

Hoc dicitur a Sorte et hoc est falsum, ergo falsum dicitur a Sorte,

iste terminus 'falsum' pro aliquo supponit in minori pro quo non supponit in conclusione. Similiter sic arguendo:

Nullum falsum dicitur a Sorte, hoc est falsum, ergo hoc non dicitur a Sorte,

variatur medium quia pro alio supponit iste terminus 'falsum' in maiori et minori, et hoc secundum sic dicentes. Et ita patet quod isti habent solvere huiusmodi paralogismos secundum fallaciam accidentis, scilicet ex variatione medii vel extremi.

3.5 Preterea: non videtur quod convenienter solvantur secundum quid et simpliciter quia in talibus non arguitur a quo ad simpliciter quia si sic, dicens hoc falsum diceret falsum secundum quid. Consequens est falsum quia si ista determinatio 'secundum quid' determinet li dicere, falsa est. Dicere enim hoc falsum est simpliciter dicere. Si determinet li falsum, falsa est, quia hoc falsum est falsum simpliciter. Similiter in omni paralogismo secundum quid et simpliciter accipitur aliquis terminus cum aliquo privative vel diminute ab | eodem accepto simpliciter, sicut ens ymaginabile et ens simpliciter. Sic hec conditio 'mortuum' privat significatum huius[modi] termini 'homo' et ita de omnibus paralogismis illius fallacie. Sed in proposito determinatio addita termino non est diminuens sed ponens quia respicit predicationem eiusdem accepti simpliciter. Omne enim quod est hoc falsum est falsum, quod non est in paralogismis illius fallacie. Non enim omne ymaginabile est ens nec omne album secundum dentes est album, et hoc magis patet in hoc exemplo:

Hoc falsum est, ergo falsum est,

demonstrata in antecedente ista:

Falsum est

E₈ 24rb

But those solving them by the fallacy of the conditional and the unconditional do not exhibit every defect. For it commits the fallacy of accident because by arguing like this:

This is said by Socrates and this is a falsehood, so a falsehood is said by Socrates,

the term 'falsehood' supposits in the minor premise for something it does not supposit for in the conclusion. Similarly, in arguing like this:

No falsehood is said by Socrates, this is a falsehood, so this is not said by Socrates,

there is a variation in the middle term because the term 'falsehood' supposits for one thing in the major premise and another in the minor, according to those advocating this solution. And thus it is clear that they have to solve these kinds of paralogisms according to the fallacy of accident, namely, from a variation of the middle term or of an extreme term.³¹

3.5 Moreover: it does not seem that such paralogisms are feasibly solved by the fallacy of the conditional and the unconditional because in such cases it is not argued from something conditional to something unconditional, for if so, anyone saying this falsehood would say a falsehood conditionally. The conclusion is false because if this delimitation 'conditionally' delimits 'say', it is false. For to say this falsehood is to say it unconditionally. If ('conditionally') delimits 'falsehood', it is false, because this falsehood is a falsehood unconditionally. Similarly, in every paralogism of the conditional and unconditional some term is taken with another term taken privatively or diminishingly with respect to the same term taken unconditionally, e.g., imaginable thing and thing unconditionally.³² In this way, the qualification 'dead' is privative of the significate of the term 'man' and thus in all paralogisms committing this fallacy, but in the present example the delimitation added to the term is not diminishing but positive because it refers to its predication of the same thing taken unconditionally. For everything which is this falsehood is a falsehood which is not (so) in the paralogisms of this fallacy. For not everything imaginable is a thing nor is everything with white teeth white. This is clearer in this example:

This falsehood exists, so a falsehood exists, where the premise does not refer to:

A falsehood exists

³¹ The identification of the fallacy of accident with a variation (in the supposition) of the middle term or one of the extremes in a syllogism was a popular explanation of this fallacy in the thirteenth century, but was strongly rejected by Ockham. See, e.g., Gelber, 'The Fallacy of Accident and the "dictum de omni"', esp. §II.

 $^{^{32}}$ Segrave gives examples both of terms taken privatively, as when we speak of a dead man, who is not a man at all, and of terms taken diminishingly (diminutive), as when we speak of an imaginable thing, which is nonetheless a thing.

non simpliciter. Et ita patet quod quelibet conditio ibi posita est ponens et non diminuens. Non sunt igitur solvendi huiusmodi paralogismi secundum quid et simpliciter, reverentia tamen sic dicentium salva.

ad 3.3.1 Ad rationem istius positionis que videtur probabilis quia Aristoteles videtur tales sillogismos solvere secundum hanc fallaciam, dico quod nullus paralogismus quem Aristoteles ponit in capitulo de fallacia secundum quid et simpliciter est insolubilis, sicut nunc loquimur de insolubili.

3.6 Insolubile enim de quo modo loquimur servat dispositionem modi et figure secundum vocem, antecedente existente vero, conclusione tamen falsa, vel saltem reducibile est ad talem. Pro quo sciendum quod Aristoteles ponit ibi tres paralogismos qui videntur insolubiles et non sunt. Ut pateat veritas, formo illos:

3.6.1 Ponatur quod Sortes sic dicat iurando per dictum:

Ego sum periurus.

Querit Aristoteles an bene iurat aut male. Si bene ergo verum est quod iurat, ergo est periurus quia hoc iurat. Si periurat, ergo verum est | quod iurat, ergo bene iurat, ergo non periurat. Et licet iste videatur insolubilis, tamen non est.

E₈ 24va

- Pro quo sciendum est quod periurare est male iurare; male autem iurat non solum qui iurat falsum, sed et ille qui iurat verum cuius veritas dependet ex actu suo iurandi et cum hoc idem negatur ponit ipsum male facere. Unde constat quod sic iurans temere iurat. Veritas enim iuramenti debet dependere ex veritate iurati et non iuratum ex iuramento.
- Dico ergo quod sic iurans periurat simpliciter. Ergo iurat verum. Concedo. Et cum | arguitur: Ergo bene iurat, nego consequentiam quia iurare verum non est simpliciter bene iurare, sed secundum quid, sicut albus secundum dentem non est albus simpliciter, sed requiritur plus, sicut dictum est, quod sit verum et quod non contrahat veritatem ex illo actu suo, et maxime si sit tale verum quod ponat ipsum male facere; bene tamen iurat secundum hoc quod est iurare verum, et hoc est quo et non simpliciter.

E₄ 159vb

unconditionally. And thus it is clear that any condition placed there is positive and not diminishing. Therefore paralogisms of this kind are not to be solved by the fallacy of the conditional and the unconditional, with due respect to those who claim it is.

- **ad 3.3.1** Against the ground adduced by this solution, which seems plausible because Aristotle seems to solve such syllogisms by this fallacy, I say that no paralogism which Aristotle considers in the chapter (of the *Sophistical Refutations*) on the fallacy of the conditional and the unconditional is an insoluble as we are now speaking of an insoluble.
- **3.6** For an insoluble of which we are speaking observes the syntactic arrangement of mood and figure, where the premises are true but the conclusion false, or at least is reducible to that. In this regard, it should be noted that Aristotle there presents three paralogisms which seem to be insoluble but are not.³³ To make the truth plain, I form them:
- **3.6.1** Suppose that Socrates says this in swearing through (his own) proposition:

I am forsworn.

Aristotle asks whether he swears well or badly.³⁴ If well, then what he swears is true, so he is forsworn because this is what he swears. If he is forsworn, then what he swears is true, so he swears well, so he is not forsworn. And although this $\langle paralogism \rangle$ seems to be insoluble, it is not, in fact.

Here it should be noted that to be forsworn is to swear badly; but someone who swears badly is not only one who swears a falsehood, but also one who swears a truth whose truth depends on his act of swearing and when that very thing is denied he claims that he acts badly. Hence it is certain that anyone swearing in this way swears rashly.³⁵ For the truth of an oath should depend on the truth of what is sworn, not what is sworn (depend) on the oath.

Therefore, I say that someone swearing in this way is unconditionally forsworn. So I grant that he swears the truth; and when one infers: "so he swears well", I deny the inference, because to swear the truth is not unconditionally to swear well, but conditionally, just as 'having white teeth' is not being white unconditionally. For it requires more, as was said, both that it is true and that it does not derive (its) truth from that act of his—and most particularly if it is the very truth that he claims that he acts badly. However, he does swear well insofar as he swears a truth—conditionally and not unconditionally.

³³ Aristotle, Sophistical Refutations, ch. 25 180a32–6.

³⁴ Sophistical Refutations, ch. 25, 180a35.

³⁵ See, e.g., Aquinas, *In III Sent.*, ed. Centre Traditio Litterarum Occidentalium, dist. 39.

3.6.2 Alius paralogismus quem ponit Aristoteles est iste: dicat Sortes contra mentem:

Ego sum mendax.

Aut mentitur aut non. Si mentitur, ergo dicit verum, ergo non mentitur. Si non mentitur, ergo dicit falsum, ergo mentitur. Pro quo est sciendum quod non solum mentitur qui dicit falsum, sed qui dicit verum contra mentem est mendax. Mentiri enim est contra mentem ire, unde qui unum credit in mente et aliud dicit ore mentitur etsi dicat verum, sicut patet de significato nominis. Dico ergo sicut dicit Aristoteles quod Sortes est mendax simpliciter, et cum arguitur: Ergo iurat verum quia iurat hoc solum, concedo. Et ideo est verus secundum quid | et simpliciter tamen mendax quia dicit illud verum contra mentem suam. Et sic solvit Aristoteles.

E₈ 24vb

Si tamen solveretur sicut solvuntur insolubilia, non concederetur quod Sortes est mendax. Sed si ponatur quod 'mendax' et 'dicens falsum' convertuntur, tunc est ibi insolubile, et non debet concedi quod Sortes sit mendax, sicut patebit post. Hunc casum videtur Aristoteles concedere, et ideo constat quod hec non supponit Aristoteles, ut quidam putant.

3.6.3 Alius paralogismus quem ponit est iste: dissuadeat Sortes Platoni aliquid et suadeat eidem ut idem faciat, ergo illud simul suadet et dissuadet. Et solvitur quod suadere negationem non est suadere simpliciter sed secundum quid, et ideo simpliciter dissuadet et secundum quid suadet. Suadere enim est aliquem per verba allectiva ad aliquid concitare, et iste paralogismus manifeste non facit aliquid ad propositum.

3.7 Et ita patet quod Aristoteles huiusmodi insolubilia non solvit penes fallaciam secundum quid et simpliciter.

3.6.2 Another paralogism which Aristotle presents is this:³⁶ let Socrates, contrary to his own mind, say:

I am a liar.

Either he is lying or not. If he is lying then he speaks the truth, so he is not lying. If he is not lying, then he says a falsehood, so he is lying. Here it should be noted that not only one who says a falsehood is lying, but also one who speaks the truth contrary to his own mind is a liar. For to lie is to go against one's mind, and so anyone who believes one thing in his mind and says another with his mouth is lying even if he speaks the truth, as is clear from the meaning of the word.³⁷ I say, therefore, just as Aristotle says, that Socrates is unconditionally a liar; and when one argues: "therefore he swears a truth because he swears only this", ³⁸ I grant it. And so he is conditionally truthful, but unconditionally a liar, because he speaks that truth contrary to his own mind. And this is how Aristotle solves it.

However, if one were to solve it as insolubles are solved, one would not grant that Socrates is a liar. But if it is claimed that 'liar' and 'saying a falsehood' are interchangeable, then there is an insoluble there, and it should not be granted that Socrates is a liar, as will be clear later. Aristotle seems to grant this scenario and so it is certain that Aristotle does not make these assumptions, as some people believe.

3.6.3 The other paralogism he presents is this: let Socrates dissuade Plato from something and persuade him to do the same thing, so he persuades and dissuades about it at the same time.³⁹ The solution is that persuading not, 〈that is, dissuading from doing something,〉 is not persuading unconditionally but conditionally, and so he dissuades unconditionally but persuades conditionally. For persuading someone is spurring him to do something by tempting words, and this paralogism manifestly does not say anything about that.

3.7 And thus it is clear that Aristotle does not solve insolubles of this sort by the fallacy of the conditional and the unconditional.

³⁶ Sophistical Refutations, 180b3–7; cf. Ockham, Expositio super Libros Elenchorum, II 10, §5. ³⁷ Segrave's suggested etymology here, reading 'mentire' (lying) as '(contra) ment(em) ire' (going against the mind), is found in, e.g., the twelfth-century Derivationes by Uguccione de Pisa (vol. I, M77 §13). On the claim that speaking against your own mind is lying, even if what you say is true, is found in Augustine's De mendacio, ed. Zycha, §3.

³⁸ Sophistical Refutations, 180b1.

³⁹ *De Sophisticis Elenchis*, tr. Boethius, 49: "Ergo possibile est eundem simul eidem suadere et dissuadere, aut non et esse quid et esse idem?"