

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

On November 12, 2009, the Editorial Board was notified by Dr. I. Kantola, the Finnish Luther-Agricola-Society, and Prof. M.V. Dougherty (Ohio Dominican University) that Dr. Kantola's monograph, *Probability and Moral Uncertainty in Late Medieval and Early Modern Times* (Helsinki, Luther-Agricola-Society, 1994) was plagiarized by Dr. M.W.F. Stone in his article «The Origins of Probabilism in Late Scholastic Moral Thought: A Prolegomenon to Further Study», published in our journal some nine years ago¹.

The evidence of plagiarism provided to the Editorial Board is overwhelming and irrefutable. Stone not only adopted the general structure of Kantola's study and discussed the very same authors, but also copied numerous and extensive passages from Kantola's book (mainly *verbatim*) without ever referring to Kantola and without having obtained permission to copy Kantola's work. Apparently, only the brief introduction, some transitional paragraphs, and the short epilogue were not taken from Kantola's book.

Moreover, it has become clear that in this same article Stone made unacknowledged use of at least one other study. On p. 117, Stone's argument on the meaning of the technical term *probabilis* is clearly indebted to the analysis given by J. Mahoney in his study *The Making of Moral Theology*², to which Stone refers only at p. 143.

The Editorial Board has unanimously decided that M.W.F. Stone's article must be retracted. His paper will no longer be made available electronically by the Publisher, and labels indicating the plagiarism and the retraction will be sent by the Publisher to all subscribers to the journal. We urge all subscribers to place these labels on both the first and the last page of Stone's article so as to prevent further references to the article in future publications.

1. M.W.F. STONE, «The Origins of Probabilism in Late Scholastic Moral Thought: A Prolegomenon to Further Study», in: *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales* 67 (2000), pp. 114-157.

2. See J. MAHONEY, *The Making of Moral Theology. A Study of the Roman Catholic Tradition*, Oxford 1987, p. 136. – After this incident was first reported to the Editorial Board of the *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales*, many other of Stone's articles have been revealed to contain extensive plagiarized material from various authors.

It should go without saying that the Editorial Board deeply regrets this incident, and we offer our apologies to Dr. Kantola, the Luther-Agricola-Society, and all other affected parties. We have always attempted to avoid the publication of plagiarized material, and we will continue to make every possible effort to detect and stop authors who make unacknowledged use of others' work. To help ensure that we publish exclusively articles based on solid and original research, we subject every paper submitted to a strict system of double blind peer review. Still, as we have learnt, even this procedure cannot guarantee perfect immunity to plagiarism. In the end, we have to rely on the intellectual integrity of our contributors. For this reason, among others, the Editorial Board wants to emphasize that it unequivocally condemns plagiarism, considering it, with Michael Grossberg, «an offense against our entire community that undermines our scholarship and our teaching»³.

3. See M. GROSSBERG, «Plagiarism and Professional Ethics – A Journal Editor's View», in: *The Journal of American History* 90 (2004), pp. 1333-1340, esp. 1340. On critical attitudes towards 'plagiarism' in the Middle Ages, see e.g. Z. KALUZA, «Auteur et plagiaire: quelques remarques», in: J.A. AERTSEN – A. SPEER (eds.), *Was ist Philosophie im Mittelalter?*, Berlin / New York 1998, pp. 312-320.