

# Contents

Acknowledgments XI

Introduction 1

- 1 Innovations in the Early Modern Era 6
- 2 Plurality and Pluralism 9
- 3 Modern Approaches to the 'Use of Opinions': Social Epistemology, Testimony, and Others 11
- 4 Sources, Genres, and Interpretations 13
- 5 Chapter Preview 16

1 Medieval Antecedents 22

- 1 Medieval Scholastic Attitudes to the Variety of Opinions 23
- 2 Knowledge, Faith/Conviction (*fides*), and Opinion in the Middle Ages 30
- 3 Probability as Standard for the Acceptability of Opinions 37
  - 3.1 *The Endoxon and Probable Opinion* 37
  - 3.2 *Both-Sided Probability and Greater or Smaller Probability* 40
  - 3.3 *Endoxical Probability and Authority* 43
- 4 'Medieval Tutorism' 46
- 5 A Medieval Pluralism of Opinions 55
- 6 Conclusion 58

2 The Road to Probabilism—A New Doctrine on the Use of Opinions 60

- 1 From the Late Fifteenth to the Late Sixteenth Century 61
  - 1.1 *Trends on Use of Opinions in Early Modern Scholastic Thought* 63
  - 1.2 *Other Trends with a Possible Impact on Probability and the Use of Opinions* 66
  - 1.3 *Melchor Cano (1509–1560)* 72
- 2 Probabilism 78
  - 2.1 *Is Probabilism Irrational or Inconsistent?* 80
  - 2.2 *Uses of Probabilism* 83
  - 2.3 *Epistemological and Moral Justifications of Probabilism* 91
- 3 Discussion and Conclusion 99

- 3 Probabilism and Anti-Probabilism—Interlocked Lifecycles 104**
- 1 1577–1620: The Rise of Probabilism 106
- 2 1620–1656: Probabilism as Dominant Mainstream 109
- 2.1 *The 1640s: First Stirrings of Opposition to Probabilism and Response of Probabilists* 112
- 2.2 *'Laxism' and Its Critics* 116
- 2.3 *On the Widening of the Scholastic Pluralism of Opinions* 119
- 3 1656–1700: Probabilism Under Fire. The Rise of Anti-Probabilism. Probabilism's Defenses. The Epistemological Debate Unfolds 121
- 3.1 *Anti-Probabilism: Key Claims* 126
- 3.2 *Probabilists Respond: 1656–1678* 130
- 3.3 *Probabilism 1656–1678: Sympathy for Modern Science and a Focus on Epistemology* 134
- 3.4 *1670–1700: 'Civil War' among the Jesuits* 137
- 4 1700–1773: More Debate, New Developments, and the Geography of Persistence 141
- 5 1773–Present: Living On in Catholic Moral Theology 147
- 4 The New Dual Concept of Probability and the Demise of the Endoxon 149**
- 1 The New Dual Concept of Probability 151
- 2 Maryks' Claim of the Jesuit Origins of Dual Probability 155
- 3 Ciceronian Influences? 163
- 4 The Heyday of the (Unrefined) Dual Concept of Probability 166
- 5 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Probability 169
- 6 Leaving Aristotle without Saying Goodbye 173
- 7 Conclusion 181
- 5 Selection Criteria, Common Opinion, and Ordinary Persons 184**
- 1 Selection Criteria for Authors and Opinions 185
- 1.1 *The 'Checklists' of Konrad Summenhart (c. 1450–1502) and Martín de Azpilcueta (1493–1586)* 186
- 1.2 *Juan Azor's (1535–1603) List of Scholastic Classics* 192
- 2 Sets of Criteria from the Seventeenth Century 197
- 3 Common Opinion 202
- 4 Ordinary Persons and Non-Experts (*Illiterati, Idiotae*) 206
- 4.1 *Women* 212
- 5 Conclusion 214

- 6 **Stand-Alone Authority and Majorities as Guide to Truth** 217
- 1 Aquinas on Following One's Teacher 218
  - 2 Stand-Alone Authority in Probabilism 220
  - 3 Anti-Probabilism: Opponents of Stand-Alone Authority 230
  - 4 Numerical Thresholds of Extrinsic Probability 236
  - 5 The Early Modern Philosophical Avant-Garde on Stand-Alone Authority 238
  - 6 Epistemic Majoritarianism: Scholastic and Modern 241
    - 6.1 *Digression: Epistemic Democracy* 248
  - 7 Conclusion 250
- 7 **Ancient and Modern Opinions—Which to Prefer?** 255
- 1 *Antiqui* and *Moderni* in Scholastic Thought 257
  - 2 Probabilism as Vector of Modernization 265
  - 3 Caramuel and the Moderns 272
  - 4 Anti-Probabilist Backlash 277
  - 5 The *querelle des anciens et des modernes*: Parallels and Influence 286
  - 6 Conclusion 290
- 8 **The Great Debate on Probable Opinions (1656–1700)** 293
- 1 New Conceptions of Probable Opinion and Probability 296
  - 2 Kinds of Probability 305
    - 2.1 *Speculative and Practical Probability* 305
    - 2.2 *Probability in Itself (quoad se) and for Us (quoad nos); Subjective and Objective Probability* 308
    - 2.3 *Probability and Probabilism: Direct or Indirect/Reflexive* 311
  - 3 Key Assumptions of Anti-Probabilism 313
    - 3.1 *Bianchi, Mercori, Fagnani (and Some Non-scholastics)* 316
    - 3.2 *Miguel de Elizalde (1617–1678)* 321
    - 3.3 *Tirso Gonzalez de Santalla (1624–1705)* 326
  - 4 Conclusion 333
- 9 **Delimiting the Space of the Reasonable—The Challenge of Probable Probability and Slight Probability** 335
- 1 The Debate on Slight and Probable Probability 336
  - 2 An Argument of Infinite Regress 351
  - 3 The Spectre of Skepticism 354
  - 4 Caramuel and Probable Probability 358
  - 5 Conclusion 365

10	<b>Believing What We Want—A New Doxastic Voluntarism</b>	368
1	Scholastic Doxastic Voluntarism before the Seventeenth Century	369
1.1	<i>Digression: The Modern Debate on Doxastic Voluntarism</i>	374
2	Probabilist Doxastic Voluntarism after Bianchi	376
3	Mature Probabilist Doxastic Voluntarism: Anthony Terill's Approach	381
3.1	<i>Question 8: Assent to Equally Probable Propositions</i>	384
3.2	<i>Question 9: Assent to a Less Probable Opinion</i>	393
3.3	<i>Question 10: The Reasonableness of Assent to a Less Probable Opinion</i>	396
4	Terill Further Considered	400
5	Conclusion	405
11	<b>Assessing Probabilism—Between Liberty and Tutelage</b>	407
1	Modern Views on Probabilism: Liberty, Tutelage, Extrinsicism	408
2	The Perspective of Normative Theory	415
2.1	<i>Probabilism as a Liberty-Favoring Doctrine</i>	415
2.2	<i>The Duties of a Confessor: Absolution against His Own Moral Views</i>	419
2.3	<i>Extrinsicism</i>	429
3	The Perspective of Practice and the Historical Perspective	433
3.1	<i>Obedience to Orders and to Authorities</i>	434
3.2	<i>The Spectre of the Counter-Reformation</i>	437
3.3	<i>Probabilism and the Language of Liberty</i>	441
4	Conclusion	443
12	<b>The Scholastic Background of Modern Probability</b>	445
1	Gambling Problems and Interpretations of Probability	447
1.1	<i>The Art of Gambling and the 'Problem of Points'</i>	447
1.2	<i>Modern Interpretations of Probability</i>	451
2	Caramuel's Contribution	453
3	A New Scholastic Frequentism	459
4	Scholastics on Aleatory Contracts and Expected Value	472
5	Other Developments	478
6	Why Did a Mathematical Theory of Probability Emerge in the Middle of the Seventeenth Century?	480
	References	485
	Index	523