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STEPHEN LANGTON
ON COMMON SUPPOSITION*

Various theological *quaestiones* and other texts produced by Stephen Langton and his school in Paris around 1200, especially those devoted to trinitarian language (the "semantics of the Trinity"), are a veritable mine of semantic concepts, problems, and solutions.[1] Sten Ebbesen and later Luisa Valente have unearthed many of them, but a lot of spadework is still needed.[2] One of the more interesting aspects of Langton's semantic thought is his intensive use of supposition

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[1] On Langton's works and academic career, cf. R. Quinto, *Doctor Nominatissimus: Stefano Langton († 1228) e la tradizione delle sue opere*, Münster i.W.: Aschendorff, 1994; idem, "Stefano Langton e la teologia dei maestri secolari di Parigi tra XII e XIII secolo: *Status quaestionis* e prospettive di ricerca," *Archa Verbi*, vol. 5 (2008), p. 122–142; idem, "Stephen Langton," *Medieval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, ed. P.W. Rosemann, vol. 2, Leiden: Brill, 2010, p. 35–78; idem, "Stephen Langton," *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy: Philosophy between 500 and 1500*, ed. H. Lagerlund, Dordrecht: Springer, 2011, p. 1215–1219; Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones theologiae: Liber I*, ed. R. Quinto, M. Bieniak, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

[2] Cf. S. Ebbesen, "The Semantics of the Trinity according to Stephen Langton and Andrew Sunesen," *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains: Aux origines de la logica modernorum*, ed. J. Jolivet, A. de Libera, Napoli: Bibliopolis, 1987, p. 401–434; L. Valente, *Logique et théologie: Les écoles parisiennes entre 1150 et 1220*, Paris: Vrin, 2008, especially p. 337–384; eadem, "Logique et théologie trinitaire chez Étienne Langton: *Res*, *ens*, *suppositio communis* et *propositio duplex*," *Étienne Langton, prédicateur, bibliste, théologien*, ed. L-J. Bataillon et al., Turnhout: Brepols, 2010, p. 563–585; eadem, "La terminologia semantica nella teologia del XII secolo," *Medioevo e filosofia: Per Alfonso Maierù*, ed. M. Lenzi, C.A. Musatti, L. Valente, Roma: Viella, p. 97–101; for a summary, cf. R. Quinto, "Stephen Langton" (2010), p. 54–62; idem, "Stephen Langton" (2011), p. 1216–1217.

theory and his views on lateral semantic influences — that is, on situations in which the semantic content of a word or phrase depends on the contents of other words forming the same complex expression.[3]

A paradigm case of lateral semantic influence in trinitarian theology occurs within the sentence "deus generat" ("God begets"), where the predicate is supposed to affect the reference of the subject term. Although Langton avoids speaking of the reference of "deus" in isolation (outside of a complex expression), he clearly regards the divine being (*essentia*) as the default referent determined by signification.[4] *Significatio* — the way a word should be understood according to its literal meaning — is invariable across linguistic contexts; what varies is *suppositio*, which can roughly be described as context-sensitive reference. Even if "deus" has no extrasentential, "natural" supposition, it stands for the divine being in the minimal linguistic context "deus est" ("God is").[5] Now, the verb "generat" denotes a distinctive property of the Father and attaches it (*copulat*) to the referent of the subject term of "deus generat." But every proposition in which a distinctive property (*notio*) is attributed to the divine being is false or nonsensical, since only divine persons are viable bearers of such properties. Accordingly, in "deus generat," the predicate "generat" is said to force the subject term "deus" to refer to a divine person, thereby removing any threat of falsity or incongruity.

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[3] On the notion of lateral semantic influence, cf. F. Recanati, *Truth-Conditional Pragmatics*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2010, p. 27–47. For an overview of supposition theory (and further references), cf. E.J. Ashworth, "Terminist Logic," *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. R. Pasnau, vol. 1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 152–157; C. Dutilh Novaes, "Supposition Theory," *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy: Philosophy between 500 and 1500*, ed. H. Lagerlund, Dordrecht: Springer, 2011, p. 1229–1236; C. Kahn, "Supposition and Properties of Terms," *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Logic*, ed. C. Dutilh Novaes, S. Read, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, p. 220–244. For a list of studies that touch upon the relation between developments in logic (including supposition theory) and theology in the second half of the twelfth century, cf. M.L. Colish, "Scholastic Theology at Paris around 1200," *Crossing Boundaries at Medieval Universities*, ed. S.E. Young, Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2011, p. 45–46, n. 42 and 43; see also the papers collected in: *Vestigia, Imagines, Verba: Semiotics and Logic in Medieval Theological Texts (XIIth–XIVth Century)*, ed. C. Marmo, Turnhout: Brepols, 1997.

[4] In this respect, his view on the semantics of "God" is the mirror image of the model endorsed by Alan of Lille, for whom the "proper" (primary) referent of "God" is a person, and the "improper" (secondary) one is the divine being, cf. Alan of Lille, *Summa 'Quoniam homines'*, I, pars 2, tr. 2, 56, ed. P. Glorieux, "La somme 'Quoniam homines' d'Alain de Lille," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, vol. 20 (1953), p. 199; L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 310–311, 314–318; see also below, section 6 and n. 80.

[5] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Summa magistri Stephani*, ed. S. Ebbesen, L.B. Mortensen, "A Partial Edition of Stephen Langton's 'Summa' and 'Quaestiones' with Parallels from Andrew Sunesen's 'Hexaemeron'," *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin*, vol. 49 (1985), p. 58; idem, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 2d, p. 251–252; L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 372, 373, 378–379.

The precise nature of this contextual reference of "deus" in "deus generat" is, however, rather elusive. Langton's own views on this point seem to have vacillated or evolved throughout his career and, as Ebbesen put it, he appears to have been "engaged in a debate both with others and with himself."[6] My reconstruction will mainly be based on two *quaestiones* (2d and 8) and the so--called *Summa magistri Stephani*. The chronological relation between them is difficult to establish, although some suggestions are made in section 4. When it comes to absolute chronology, all we know is that the *Quaestiones* and the *Summa* are products of Langton's teaching activity during the quarter-century before his departure to Rome in 1206.[7]

Some thinkers, most notably Praepositinus of Cremona († 1210), would simply claim that "deus" in "deus generat" stands for the Father and only for the Father.[8] Yet there are reasons to believe that it stands for any person (*pro qualibet persona*). There is also a third, even less straightforward possibility: "deus" might supposit both for the divine being and for a person (or the Father). Besides, how should we describe the semantic mechanism at work here? This last issue depends on how we construe the pre-propositional, default supposition of "deus" (if there is any).[9] Assume for a moment that the initial referent of "deus" is the divine being.[10] (1) Does the predicate "generat" somehow narrow down

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[6] Cf. S. Ebbesen, "The Semantics of the Trinity," p. 421.

[7] Cf. R. Quinto, "Stephen Langton" (2010), p. 39–49; "General Introduction," in: Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, p. 5; Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 25–26. Certain questions can be assigned a more precise *terminus post quem*, but it is not the case either with q. 8 or with q. 2d. After being elected archbishop of Canterbury in 1207, Langton lived for six years "in exile" at the abbey of Pontigny, where he reportedly wrote, or reworked, some texts.

[8] Cf. Praepositinus of Cremona, *Summa 'Qui producit ventos'*, I, 4.1, ed. G. Angelini, *L'ortodossia e la grammatica: Analisi di struttura e deduzione storica della Teologia Trinitaria di Prepositino*, Roma: Università Gregoriana, 1972, p. 215; ibidem, 4.3, p. 216: "Notandum autem quod hoc vocabulum deus ubique [*read:* ubicumque] potest supponere pro essentia, potest supponere pro persona, vel pro personis. Sed non convertitur; quia ex adiuncto supponit tantum pro persona. Unde cum dico: deus generat, ibi supponit tantum pro patre; quia talia sunt subiecta qualia predicata permittunt". Stephen F. Brown mentions the Praepositinian thesis (in connection with Aquinas) while presenting some snapshots from the history of the problematic statement "Deus genuit Deum," cf. S.F. Brown, "Medieval Supposition Theory in Its Theological Context," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology*, vol. 3 (1993), p. 126–128. On the semantic principle invoked by Praepositinus in the above passage, cf. L. Valente, "'Talia sunt subiecta qualia praedicata permittunt': Le principe de l'approche contextuelle et sa genèse dans la théologie du XIIᵉ siècle," *La tradition médiévale des Catégories (XIIᵉ–XVᵉ siècles): Actes du XIIIᵉ Symposium européen de logique et de sémantique médiévales (Avignon, 6–10 Juin 2000)*, ed. J. Biard, I. Rosier--Catach, Louvain – Paris: Peeters, 2003, p. 289–311. For further literature on Praepositinus, cf., e.g., M.L. Colish, "Scholastic Theology," p. 32–34, n. 8; L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 29.

[9] The term "pre-propositional" is borrowed from E.J. Ashworth, "Terminist Logic," p. 155.

[10] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 1, p. 275: "Tria sunt genera nominum. Quedam sunt essentialia significatione et suppositione, ut hoc nomen 'deus'."

(*restringit*) the supposition of the subject term "deus"? If not, then perhaps (2) the predicate *stretches* the subject, so that "deus" supposits for an additional item — that is, for the Father or a person? Or maybe (3) the predicate just prompts or forces the subject term to *switch* the supposition, so that "deus" stands for something else without any overlap with the initial referent? The two latter theories (but perhaps also the first one) are compatible with the oft-used phrase "trahit ad supponendum pro patre / pro persona."

All these questions will be addressed in this paper, albeit indirectly. The main goal is different: by focusing on "deus generat" and its semantical intricacies, I seek to emphasize and rethink Langton's distinction between, on the one hand, sentences that are ambiguous and, on the other, sentences that are referentially unambiguous but linked with two potential truthmakers (*causae veritatis*). In some cases, Langton clearly tries to avoid admitting that a statement in question is *duplex* or *multiplex*. The implicit reason is that the truth-value of an ambiguous sentence (*propositio duplex*) can vary depending on interpretation, and this dependence would sometimes count as an unwelcome consequence given that certain statements are supposed to be simply true (or false), without any relativization. One such statement is arguably "deus generat."

The article begins by sorting through various ideas about "deus generat" that can be found in Langton's writings (sections 1–4). The remaining sections (5–8) aim to show that Langton's notion of "common" supposition does not involve ambiguity (*duplicitas*, *multiplicitas*) but should be couched in terms of general or disjunctive truth conditions.[11] In particular, section 6 tries to make sense of the analogy between "deus generat" and the semantic statement "homo supponitur" ("Human being is the object of discourse"). Section 7 focuses on some other cases of unambiguous statements with multiple potential truthmakers ("haec res est genita" and Caiaphas's prophecy). Section 8 treats Langton's student Geoffrey of Poitiers and his account of "homo supponitur."[12]

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[11] As will become clear, the relevant sense of "common supposition" is only loosely related to the more familiar notion of common supposition discussed by logical treatises, cf. below, section 4; on common supposition in logic, cf. n. 46.

[12] For basic information on Geoffrey of Poitiers, cf. J.W. BALDWIN, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and His Circle*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 31–32; P. GLORIEUX, *Répertoire des maîtres en théologie de Paris au XIIIe siècle*, vol. 1, Paris: Vrin, 1933, p. 298 (No. 132); L. HÖDL, *Die Geschichte der scholastischen Literatur und der Theologie der Schlüsselgewalt*, vol. 1, Münster: Aschendorff, 1960, p. 355; A.M. LANDGRAF, *Introduction a l'histoire de la littérature théologique de la scolastique naissante*, transl. L.-B. Geiger, Paris: Vrin, 1973, p. 171–172. For a fuller list of manuscripts containing Geoffrey's *Summa 'Ego novissimus'*, see the bibliography at the end of this paper. For further references, cf. "Gaufridus Pictaviensis," *Mirabile: Digital Archives for Medieval Culture*, online at https://bit.ly/2XheQUk. According to my preliminary research, five manuscripts contain an earlier version of the *Summa*: Bo, Br, Kl, Li, and To. Kl lacks the brief prologue present in Bo, Br, Li, and To, so its incipit is not

1. *Restringere, trahere*, and standing for "any person"

As highlighted by Luisa Valente,[13] Langton adopts at least two accounts of "deus generat" that are not obviously compatible. One of them commits him to the notion of common supposition and will be discussed in sections 2–8. According to the other, already suggested in different terms by Peter Lombard[14] and endorsed by several subsequent theologians,[15] "deus" always *signifies* the divine being, but its reference shifts to a divine person under the influence of the linguistic context.

Sometimes, Langton called the latter mechanism "restriction," yet he was well aware that this terminological choice might lead to embarrassing conclusions if taken literally. First, it is unclear what should serve as the starting supposition that is said to be narrowed down. There are at least two possibilities. The first one is that the initial, pre-propositional supposition consists in a set containing both the divine being and the three persons. On this account, the narrowing down amounts to excluding the divine being from the initial set. In the next step, one must decide whether the final supposition includes all the three persons or just the person who actually satisfies the predicate "generat" — namely, the Father. The second possibility is that the initial supposition straightforwardly mirrors signification and consists in the divine being. On this account, the notion of restriction turns on the idea that the divine being somehow encompasses all the three persons. The secular analogy here is between the form of humanity and particular human beings. *Mutatis mutandis*, just as the general name "homo" indeterminately comprises many particular humans, so the term

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"Ego novissimus" but "Cum voces sint signa rerum." Kl strikes me as particularly reliable (alongside To), but this impression must be confirmed by systematic collation and critical edition. A description of Kl containing the list of rubricated titles of *quaestiones* can be found in F. Lackner et al., *Katalog der Handschriften des Augustiner Chorherrenstiftes Klosterneuburg*, vol. 3: *Cod. 201–300*, Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2012, p. 287–297 (the catalogue can be accessed online via links provided at https://bit.ly/2VkXzKJ). Li has been described and cross-referenced with Av and Pa in: *Catalogue général des manuscrits latins*, ed. M.T. D'Alverny, vol. 4, Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1958, p. 219–233 (see also https://bit.ly/33ceOkg). Codices Av and Pa, or at least the first part of Pa, preserve a revised text, in which some *quaestiones* were replaced and others extended by adding new elements to selected solutions. These modifications were 'authorized' by Geoffrey in a new prologue. Unfortunately, Book IV on the sacraments is replaced in Pa by the corresponding part of William of Auxerre's *Summa aurea*. Av has numerous mistakes. Reproductions of Av and Pa are online. For quoting Geoffrey, I use the orthography and punctuation style employed in Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*.

[13] Cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 362.

[14] Cf. Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, I, dist. 27, c. 2, 4, ed. I. Brady, vol. 1, Grottaferrata: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1971, p. 205; L. Valente, "Logique et théologie trinitaire," p. 581, n. 46.

[15] Cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 325–326, 336.

"deus" gathers, without distinction, all the persons and can be narrowed down to each one of them. Thus, the process of restriction goes from the shared *essentia* embracing the persons, in isolation from their distinctive properties, to a person regarded as a bearer of one of those properties. And again, in the next step one needs to decide whether the output reference of "deus" in "deus generat" includes any person or just the Father, who makes the sentence true.

Thus, on both accounts of the nature of restriction, we face the problem of how specific the supposition of "deus" in "deus generat" should be. The theory according to which "deus" only stands for the Father here, which was endorsed, for instance, by Praepositinus,[16] is apparently rejected as naïve in Langton's *quaestio* on essential names.[17] The reason, in a nutshell, is that if "generat" were to narrow down "deus" to stand exclusively for the Father, then we would be forced to concede that in a sentence such as "homo currit" ("A human being is running") the subject term supposits just for the running men. But that would make the sentence trivial and uninformative: the point of supposition theory as applied to subject terms is to establish the contextual reference of the term in question *before* checking whether the predicate actually applies to that referent. If the naïve restriction theory were adequate, then any attempt to verify whether the subject satisfies the predicate would be pointless, since the predicate would be satisfied *automatically* by virtue of the preceding restriction: if the reference of "homo" in "homo currit" were just the running men, then there would be no point in asking whether they are running. As already pointed out by Valente, a similar remark is found later in William of Auxerre and — regarding the case of "homo currit" — in Peter of Spain.[18] It is worth keeping in mind, however, that Peter borrowed this passage (as well as the bulk of his treatise on supposition) from an earlier source, the so-called *Summule antiquorum*.[19]

Consequently, Langton contended that "deus" fails to supposit specifically for the Father: it only "makes the sentence true with regard to the Father."[20] By the same token, according to the *Summule antiquorum*, "homo" in "homo currit" does not specifically refer to the running men but stands for all humans

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[16] Cf. Praepositinus, *Summa*, I, 4.1, p. 215; ibidem, 4.3, p. 216; quoted above, n. 8. S.F. Brown, "Medieval Supposition Theory," p. 126–127.

[17] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 1–2, p. 277.

[18] Cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 370, 380–381; William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea*, I, tr. 4, c. 4, ed. J. Ribaillier, Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1980, p. 48; Peter of Spain, *Tractatus*, ed. L.M. de Rijk, Assen: Van Gorcum, 1972, p. 82.

[19] Cf. L.M. De Rijk, "On the Genuine Text of Peter of Spain's 'Summule logicales': I. General Problems Concerning Possible Interpolations in the Manuscripts," *Vivarium*, vol. 6 (1968), p. 1–34, here p. 10.

[20] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 2, p. 277: "supponit pro qualibet persona et reddit locutionem ueram pro illa cui inest notio" (see also below).

and makes the sentence true with regard to the running ones.[21] This solution introduces or presupposes the important distinction between referents (*supposita*, objects of discourse) and truthmakers (*causae veritatis*).[22] Although Langton's formulation is metalinguistic ("['deus'] reddit locutionem ueram pro illa [persona] cui inest notio"),[23] it is just a fancy way of saying that the Father serves as the actual *causa veritatis*: he makes "deus generat" true because he instantiates the distinctive property attached by "generat." But he is not a *suppositum* of "deus," or at least not the only *suppositum*.

Since the argument involving the analogy to "homo currit" has been discussed elsewhere,[24] I will take it for granted that if we ascribe the *restringere*-theory of "deus generat" to Langton, then we should understand this mechanism in terms of narrowing "God" down to *any person* (*quaelibet persona*), not to the Father. But this only leads to new interpretative problems, since in his most careful passages Langton distances himself from the language of restriction (in the case of "deus generat") and favors another terminology — namely, that of "pulling" or "drawing" a term to stand for something, *trahere ad supponendum*. We encounter this turn of phrase in Langton's question 8 on essential names.[25] There, the *restringere*-theory is explicitly contrasted with the *trahere*-theory, and the *restringere*-account is rejected because it commits one to the claim that the default supposition of "deus" includes both the divine being and a person ("hoc nomen 'deus' per se positum supponit pro essentia et pro persona").[26] Admittedly, the objection in Langton's question is raised by the opponent, so we cannot be sure whether this is how Langton himself conceptualized and criticized the restriction of "deus" in "deus generat." Still, Langton's student, Geoffrey of Poitiers,

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[21] Cf. Anonymous, *Summule antiquorum*, 6.09, ed. L.M. De Rijk, "On the Genuine Text," p. 10: "Aliud est enim supponere, aliud locutionem reddere veram pro aliquo. In supradictis enim, ut dictum est, iste terminus 'homo' supponit pro omni homine tam currente quam non currente, sed reddit locutionem veram pro currente solum."

[22] The importance of this distinction for Langton was first noticed by S. Ebbesen, "The Semantics of the Trinity," p. 423–424. Cf. also L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 371.

[23] It is metalinguistic for the sake of uniformity: we are dealing with the semantics of the term "God," so it is convenient to say that the term "God," on the one hand, supposits for *X* and, on the other, makes the sentence true with regard to *Y*.

[24] Cf. W. Wciórka, "Wczesna teoria supozycji — problemy z zawężaniem odniesienia," *Przegląd Filozoficzny – Nowa Seria*, vol. 25 (2016), p. 451–462.

[25] Precise wording might have come from Langton's assistant who edited the report, as the *quaestio* probably originated in the classroom, cf. "Introduction to q. 8," in: Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, p. 102–106.

[26] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, p. 277; idem, *Summa*, p. 58. I leave Langton's explanation of why this might be a problem for another occasion.

adopts this criticism and identifies its target with Praepositinus of Cremona.[27] Geoffrey dismisses the *restringere*-theory accordingly and contrasts it with the *trahere*-account, which he associates with Langton.[28] In the early thirteenth century, the allegedly Praepositinian theory of the natural supposition of "deus," as including both *essentia* and *persona*, was endorsed by William of Auxerre.[29]

The *trahere*-theory in Langton's question 8 is presented by the opponent in terms of switching, not stretching: "deus" is prompted to shift its reference from the divine being to a person. At this point, the theory is formulated in a characteristically vague way, so that it is difficult to say whether "trahitur ad personalem suppositionem" (or "trahere ad supponendum pro persona") involves "any person" or just the Father. It is here that the opponent mounts the challenge described above, which compares the sentence "deus generat" to "homo currit." Thus, he tries to attack the *trahere*-theory with a type of argument (involving "homo currit" or "homo est albus"[30] or "homo est Petrus"[31]) that was probably meant, originally, to undermine the *restringere*-theory. In this situation, Langton feels obliged to safeguard the terminology of *trahere ad supponendum* by

[27] Cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa 'Ego novissimus'*, I, Kl 6ra (Bo 5ra, Br 5vb, Li 4vb, To 7ra; the abbreviations are explained in the bibliography; cf. also n. 12): "Sequitur de ipsis nominibus supponentibus diuinam essentiam. De hoc termino 'deus' dicit Prepositinus quod semper supponit pro essentia et pro persona, nisi restringatur ad supponendum pro persona, quod sit cum circa suppositum datur notio intelligi, ut cum dicitur 'deus generat' — hic supponit tantum pro persona. Set si dicam 'deus est', supponit pro essentia et pro persona. Set secundum hoc uidetur quod hec debeat concedi 'deus et deus sunt' sicut hec 'homo et homo sunt'. Set si hoc, ergo dii sunt. Item, secundum hoc uidetur quod hec sit concedenda 'deus non est tres persone', quia 'deus' supponit pro persona, et est hic talis descensus: pater non est tres persone, et ita uidetur quod hec sit uera 'deus non est tres persone'. Preterea, cum dicitur 'deus generat', hec dictio 'deus' restringitur ad supponendum pro persona, quia generatio conuenit tantum persone. Ergo eadem ratione si dicam 'homo est albus', 'homo' restringitur ad supponendum tantum pro albis, quia albedo conuenit tantum albis"; ibidem, Kl 6rb (Bo 5rb, Br 5vb, Li 4vb, To 7ra–rb): "Set cum dicitur 'deus est', hic supponit tantum pro essentia. Set queritur quare non supponat pro essentia et persona simul, cum predicatus [*sc.* terminus] conueniat tam essentie quam persone. Vbi enim conuenit tantum persone, supponit etiam pro essentia, ut dictum est. — Solutio. Dicimus quod non habet supponere pro persona nisi ex adiuncto hoc ei conferatur, sicut iste terminus 'homo' numquam pro significato supponit, set semper pro appellato, nisi hoc contrahat ex adiuncto. Vnde sicut cum dicitur 'homo est', iste terminus supponit tantum pro appellato, licet etiam significato conueniat predicatus, ita cum dicitur 'deus est', iste terminus 'deus' supponit tantum pro essentia, licet persone conueniat predicatus."
[28] Cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, Kl 6ra–rb (Bo 5ra–rb, Br 5vb, Li 4vb, To 7ra), quoted at the beginning of section 8.
[29] Cf. William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea*, I, tr. 4, c. 4, p. 48–49; L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 381–383.
[30] Cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, Kl 6ra (Bo 5ra, Br 5vb, Li 4vb, To 7ra): "eadem ratione, si dicam 'homo est albus', 'homo' restringitur ad supponendum tantum pro albis, quia albedo conuenit tantum albis."
[31] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 57–58.

questioning the analogy between "deus generat" and "homo currit."[32] Never-theless, his reaction to the same type of argument is different a few lines later when the opponent comes back with the objection that, according to the *trahere*--theory, the term "deus" in "deus generat" is "drawn to personal supposition by virtue of the distinctive property attached by the verb, and so it seems that it is drawn to stand only for that person in which the property inheres."[33] When the opponent repeats the argument involving "homo currit" in this new, more ex-plicit setting, Langton is provoked to abandon the vague way of talking about supposition "pro persona" and clarifies that "deus" in "deus generat" (a) sup-posits for any person (*pro qualibet persona*) and (b) makes the sentence true with regard to the person in which the property inheres (the Father).[34] A medieval student who probably edited question 8 seems to be marking his distance from this magisterial solution by framing it in the third person ("dicit magister quod"). It might also be meant as a signal that the solution is idiosyncratic in comparison to other masters. Alternatively, the expression is just a remnant of a *reportatio*.[35]

In light of question 8, Langton upholds a *trahere*-theory according to which the linguistic context forces "deus" to switch the supposition from the divine be-ing to *quaelibet persona*. Unfortunately, even if we assume that "master" stands for Langton here, we can never be sure — due to the character of the collec-tion containing question 8[36] — whether that text faithfully represents Langton's views. There might be some distortion originating in a defective report or in the process of redaction. More importantly, further suspicions could be raised by the fact that Langton's so-called *Summa* puts forward a rather different account of "deus generat." I will try to show, however, that the apparent conflict might be resolved by *quaestio* 2d.

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[32] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 1, p. 277: "<Si dicat> quod non restringitur set trahitur ad suppositionem, et hec est causa quia notio et essentia quam significat hoc nomen 'deus' sunt in eadem persona: set pari causa uidetur quod in hac 'homo currit' iste terminus 'homo' supponit tantum pro currentibus, quia cursus inest homini. — Dicimus quod non est simile, quia essentia est notio, et cursus non est homo"; W. Wciórka, "Wczesna teoria supozycji," p. 459–460.

[33] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 2, p. 277: "Item. Cum dicitur 'deus generat', hoc nomen 'deus' trahitur ad personalem suppositionem ex uirtute notionis quam copulat uerbum; ergo uidetur quod tantum trahatur ad supponendum pro illa persona cui inest illa notio. Quod si est, eadem ratione cum dico 'homo currit', iste terminus 'homo' restringitur ad supponendum tantum pro eo cui inest cursus."

[34] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 2, p. 277: "ideo dicit magister quod supponit pro qualibet persona et reddit locutionem ueram pro illa cui inest notio."

[35] One can find many other instances of "magister dicit" in the collection of *quaestiones* con-taining question 8, and in most of those cases the teacher in question seems to be Langton, as opposed to some other master invoked by Langton himself. The issue will be discussed in the introduction to the forthcoming edition of Books II–IV of Langton's *Quaestiones theologiae*.

[36] Cf. "Introduction to q. 8," in: Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, p. 102–106.

2. The semantics of "Deus generat" in *quaestio* 2d

The critical edition of Book I of Langton's *Quaestiones theologiae* incorporates a question labeled "2d" (taken from a collection of anonymous *quaestiones*), which might well be attributed to Langton, though some of its elements (in part II) seem slightly problematic. Let us set aside those doubts here and focus on the fact that question 2d accepts neither the *restringere*-theory nor the *trahere*-theory understood in terms of *swapping* the supposition. Instead, the account put forward in question 2d assumes that what happens in "deus generat" is that the predicate amplifies or extends (*augmentat*) the supposition of "deus":

> [Problem] When one says, "God begets," let us ask whether the supposition is only for that person to which the relevant distinctive property belongs or whether the supposition includes both a person as such and the divine being (and not just the specific person). It is approved that when one says, "God is," "God" supposits for the divine being. Thus, when one says, "God begets," "God" supposits for the divine being and for any person.
>
> [Response] We concede it — namely, that "God" supposits for the divine being and for any person — although the utterance is made true only with respect to one person. By contrast, the utterance "God does not beget" is made true by the divine being. We claim, therefore, that such distinctive verbs extend (*augmentant*) the supposition of this word "God" without removing the previous supposition. Also, when one says, "God is" or "God begets," we assert that this word "God" never changes its signification but always signifies the divine being despite having greater or smaller supposition.[37]

The part about the invariable signification (and flexible supposition) is a platitude that nobody denies. Langton himself repeats it regularly.[38] What is interesting are the specific claims about supposition. First, the supposition of "deus"

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[37] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 2d, 11, p. 252: "Queratur ergo, cum dicitur 'deus generat', utrum fiat suppositio tantum pro persona illa cui conuenit illa notio, uel pro persona <in> generali et pro essentia, et non tantum pro illa. Probatur quod cum dicitur 'deus est', hic supponit pro essentia; ergo si dicatur 'deus generat', supponit pro essentia et pro persona qualibet. — Et hoc concedimus, quod scilicet supponit pro essentia et pro qualibet persona; set ibi redditur hec locutio uera tantum pro una — hec autem redditur uera pro essentia 'deus non generat' — unde dicimus quod talia uerba notionalia augmentant suppositionem huius dictionis 'deus' nec auferunt priorem. Item, si dicatur 'deus est' uel 'deus generat', dicimus quod hec dictio 'deus' nunquam mutat significationem suam, immo semper significat essentiam, licet maiorem habeat suppositionem uel minorem."

[38] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Commentarius in I Sententiarum*, dist. 17, ed. A.M. Landgraf, *Der Sentenzenkommentar des Kardinals Stephan Langton*, Aschendorff: Münster i.W., 1952, p. 18; idem, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 1, 5, p. 238; L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 362–363.

is neither narrowed down nor *replaced*; rather, it is extended. Second — and this element is common to questions 8 and 2d — "deus" in "deus generat" does not pinpoint a specific person but indefinitely refers to any person.

Are the accounts in questions 2d and 8 incompatible with one another? Not necessarily. If we assume it was the opponent (not Langton) who couched the *trahere*-theory in terms of switching the reference in question 8, then one might argue that Langton (or his assistant, or the person who revised question 8) just failed to mention the point about *augmentare*, which is made explicit in question 2d. Alternatively, Langton might have wanted to grant as many of the opponent's assumptions as possible. One could argue that the *trahere*-theory has at least two varieties: the one that involves supposition-switch and the one involving amplification. The things said by the master in question 8 are neutral in this respect: the controversy concerns the contrast between suppositing for a specific person and suppositing for any person. Whether or not this personal supposition is accompanied by the supposition of the divine being is, arguably, irrelevant for the argument. As we will see in section 8, when Geoffrey of Poitiers describes Langton's views, he uses the terminology of "trahere" in the sense of extending the supposition.

Alternatively, one might just acknowledge certain fluctuations in Langton's views; or one could question the "authenticity" of question 2d. One textual argument, however, for the claim that the master in question 8 actually subscribes to basically the same *augmentare*-account as the one presented in question 2d is that the master in question 8 does not object when the opponent assumes further in the text that "deus" in "deus generat" has a supposition that includes both the divine being and a person. This double supposition is called "common" or general (*communis*). Since the same assumption appears twice in two different objections, and it is never denied, one might argue that the master of question 8 endorsed it.[39]

Furthermore, another version of the *augmentare*-theory is adopted in Langton's so-called *Summa*.[40] Before turning to that text, however, let me speculate about the reasons for which someone would feel obliged to include the divine being in the supposition of "deus generat." Why not just say, as the master in question 8 seems to imply, that "deus" supposits just for any person, to the exclusion of the divine being?

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[39] Cf. STEPHEN LANGTON, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 3, p. 278, and ibidem, 5, p. 279.
[40] Cf. STEPHEN LANGTON, *Summa*, p. 57.

3. "Deus non generat," Praepositinus, and the reason
to include the divine being in the supposition

This section is more speculative in character. Also, it will pass over various details and complications that would obscure the basic idea. What it tries to explain is why Langton felt the need to maintain that the reference to the divine being is preserved in the context "deus generat." Note that the point is not about signification, which indisputably remains constant across contexts. The question only concerns supposition (context-dependent reference) of "deus," whereas its signification is held fixed.

One possible conjecture is that Langton's strategy relates to Praepositinus of Cremona's claim, expressed in his influential *Summa 'Qui producit ventos'*, that the sentence "deus non generat" is false.[41] One reason to think of Langton as reacting to Praepositinus is that Geoffrey of Poitiers explicitly contrasts their views on the semantics of the Trinity.[42] As we saw, Praepositinus upheld the "naïve" thesis that in "deus generat" the term "deus" supposits for the Father and only for the Father. In the same breath, he extended this analysis to the sentence "deus non generat." In Langton's terms, the negative particle in "deus non generat" is postposed (*postposita*), thereby constituting predicate negation, in contrast to the preposed "non" constituting propositional negation in "non deus generat."[43] Praepositinus deems the sentence "deus non generat" false on the grounds that "deus" supposits exclusively for the Father in this context, just as it does in "deus generat."

This might have triggered theologians like Langton, who insisted that the sentence "deus non generat" is intuitively true. At the same time, in this dialectical context, Langton would be reluctant to give up the intuition, expressed by Praepositinus, that the reference of "deus" changes between "deus est" and "deus non generat." In fact, the supposition of "deus" in "deus non generat" should be the same as in "deus generat" — namely, to Langton's mind, it should include "any person" or the Father. Now, if "deus" were to supposit discretely for the Father, as Praepositinus postulated, then the only interpretative strategy that preserves the truth of "deus non generat" would be to insist that "deus" does not lose its original reference to the divine being associated with signification.

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[41] Cf. Praepositinus of Cremona, *Summa*, I, 4.3, p. 216: "Unde cum dico: deus generat, ibi supponit tantum pro patre; quia talia sunt subiecta qualia predicata permittunt. Eodem modo in negativa. Unde hec falsa: deus non generat."

[42] Cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, Kl 6ra–rb (Bo 5ra–rb, Br 5vb, Li 4vb, To 7ra); the part about Praepositinus is quoted in section 1, n. 27; the part about Langton — at the beginning of section 8, in the main text.

[43] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 5, p. 279. The negation is "postposed," of course, with respect to the subject term.

This makes room for the claim that "deus non generat" is true because (a) "deus" has a common supposition combining two referents, and, (b) for the sentence to be true, it is enough that only one of these referents satisfies "non generat."

The second part of this claim — condition (b) — amounts to what was said in the passage from Langton's question 2d quoted above; namely, the utterance "deus non generat" is made true with regard to the divine being (*redditur vera pro essentia*). The divine being is the actual truthmaker of "deus non generat" because one cannot apply any distinctive properties to the *essentia*. In what follows, I will argue that such statements, recurring in Langton's works, do not express any form of truth-value relativity (as suggested by Valente) but are just a characteristic feature of the notion of common supposition. Langton never says that "deus non generat" is false with regard to the Father. Rather, the sentence is simply true — due to the fact that "deus" in "deus non generat" stands both for a person and for the divine being, and one of those referents happens to make the sentence true.

By the same token, the affirmative sentence "deus generat" is absolutely true, since the supposition of "deus" is extended to supposit for both the divine being and a person, while for the truth of the proposition it is enough that one of the referents makes the proposition true. In this respect, the common supposition might well be called "indefinite" or "disjunctive," since the logical form of "deus generat" could be envisioned as a disjunction: "The divine being begets or a person begets." Similarly, "deus non generat" is tantamount to "The divine being does not beget or no person begets."

By contrast, the preposed, propositional negation in "non deus generat" requires that *none* of the referents satisfy the predicate. This condition could be encapsulated in another artificial formula: "Neither the divine being begets nor any person begets." So paraphrased, the sentence is false, since one of the persons does beget. Now, the standard criterion of ambiguity (*multiplicitas*, *duplicitas*), endorsed by Langton, is met when two contradictory statements are claimed to be true.[44] But this criterion is not satisfied in the case of "deus generat" and "non deus generat," since the former is true and the latter false.[45] In contrast to "non deus generat," "deus non generat" is indeed true, but it is not contradictory to "deus generat." In what follows, I will point to some other examples in which a statement is not to be construed as ambiguous (*duplex*) even though the relevant term has common supposition.

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[44] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 67–68; cf. below, section 7.1.
[45] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 5, p. 279.

4. Common supposition in Langton's *Summa*

Instead of a disjunctive construal, one may simply invoke the idea that underpins the term "communis," which in the semantic context stands for "general" or "universal." A "common term" is just a general term, such as "donkey." Hence, medieval treatises speak of "common" supposition, understood as a kind of supposition characteristic of common terms, in contrast to "discrete" supposition characteristic of singular terms (such as "Brunellus" or "this").[46] Langton is familiar with this terminology.[47] Accordingly, instead of the disjunctive analysis one could simply appeal to the nature of generality. Assume for the sake of discussion that "fruit" supposits for any individual fruit, or for all individual fruits. Next, imagine that Socrates[48] has an apple in his left pocket and an orange in his right pocket. Plato knows that there is an apple in Socrates's left pocket, but he is completely unaware of the orange. Now, consider Plato's utterance "Socrates has a fruit in his left pocket." By assumption, the name "fruit" stands both for the apple and for the orange, but only the apple makes the sentence true. This is analogous, in a relevant respect, to "deus generat": the orange is the

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[46] The account that makes common supposition a mode of *personal* supposition is sometimes presented as the medieval standard, at least for the later period, cf. C. Kahn, "Supposition and Properties of Terms," p. 228. Yet, in the first half of the thirteenth century, the terminology was rather unstable. Although some textbooks classified common and discrete supposition as subdivisions of *personalis* (e.g., the *Logica 'Cum sit nostra'* and the *Logica 'Ut dicit'*, cf. L.M. De Rijk, *Logica Modernorum*, vol. 2.2: *Texts and Indices*, Assen: Van Gorcum, 1967, p. 447 and p. 409, respectively), in other writings *communis* served as a broader category encompassing both personal and simple supposition (e.g., in the aforementioned *Summule antiquorum*, 6.04, p. 9, in the so-called *Dialectica Monacensis*, cf. L.M. De Rijk, *Logica Modernorum*, vol. 2.2, p. 607, and in the so-called *Summe Metenses* by Nicholas of Paris, cf. L.M. De Rijk, *Logica Modernorum*, vol. 2.1: *The Origin and Early Development of the Theory of Supposition*, Assen: Van Gorcum, 1967, p. 445); cf. J. Brumberg-Chaumont, "The Role of Discrete Terms in the Theory of the Properties of Terms," *Medieval Supposition Theory Revisited*, ed. E.P. Bos et al., Leiden: Brill, 2013 (also *Vivarium*, vol. 51), p. 173–185, 190–191, 201–203, where it is argued that the latter classification is more consistent when it comes to discrete supposition: *discreta* can hardly be a species of *personalis* if personal supposition is defined in terms of standing for a term's *inferiora* (things falling under the term) as opposed to standing for the common form (reserved for simple supposition); both these functions are tailored to common terms. Yet, even on the account from the *Summule antiquorum* etc. (adopted by Peter of Spain), "the concept of discrete supposition appears just as a thread artificially connecting discrete terms to the theory of supposition" (ibidem, p. 202). Cf. also L. Valente, "Supposition Theory and Porretan Theology: 'Summa Zwettlensis' and 'Dialogus Ratii et Everardi'," *Medieval Supposition Theory Revisited*, ed. E.P. Bos et al., Leiden: Brill, 2013, p. 132, n. 35; C. Dutilh Novaes, "Supposition Theory," p. 1233b.

[47] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 60: "haec dictio 'homines' communem habet suppositionem in qua conveniunt Socrates et Plato, et praeter hanc notat diversitatem singularium personarum."

[48] From now on, I use "Socrates" to refer to an arbitrary human being, but in transcribing Latin texts I preserve the scholastic form "Sortes."

counterpart of the divine being, and the apple — of the Father. Now, consider the rather artificial sentence "A fruit is not in Socrates's left pocket." We might say that this sentence is also true — this time by virtue of the orange. The latter sentence is analogous to "deus non generat."

The same point could also be made in terms of quantifiers:

1. deus generat = there is a referent of "deus" that satisfies "generat"
2. deus non generat = there is a referent of "deus" that fails to satisfy "generat"
3. non deus generat = no referent of "deus" satisfies "generat"

Langton employs the same idea in his so-called *Summa*: "deus" in "deus generat" has "a kind of common supposition."[49] We learn again that both sentences are true — "deus generat" and "deus non generat."[50] Langton's formulation may initially strike one as sloppy, since in the opening sentence he uses the term "restringere," which seems to be at odds with the idea of common supposition. But this awkwardness could be explained away by saying that he is using "restringere" in a loose technical sense of affecting or modifying supposition regardless of the nature of this mechanism. As we shall see in a moment, *restringere ad supponendum personaliter* is contrasted not with amplification of the term (resulting in the common supposition) but with *restringere ad supponendum pro persona tantum* (i.e., uniquely for a person, to the exclusion of the divine being). Still, we might as well concede that the wording is imprecise here.

It is worth noting that Langton never says in this fragment that the common supposition encompasses the divine being and *the Father*. He only mentions *essentia* and *persona*. This choice of words allows for interpreting *persona* in an indeterminate way like in the *Quaestiones* — that is, as short for "any person." Most probably, however, his intention is that the common supposition comprises the divine being and the specific person salient in the context (the Father); as we shall see in section 8, the *Summa* was interpreted in this way by Geoffrey of Poitiers.[51]

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[49] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 57: "Item notandum: cum haec dictio 'deus' restringitur ad supponendum personaliter, habet quandam suppositionem communem ad essentiam et ad personam."

[50] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 57: "Eodem modo haec est vera 'deus generat' habito respectu ad personam, et haec est vera 'deus non generat' habito respectu ad essentiam."

[51] Cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, Kl 6ra–rb (Bo 5ra, Br 5vb, Li 4vb, To 7ra): "Magister dicit quod iste terminus 'deus' supponit pro essentia ubicumque ponatur, set quandoque trahitur — non dico 'restringitur' — ad supponendum pro persona, quando scilicet circa suppositum datur intelligi notio. Et ibidem supponit tam pro essentia quam pro persona. … Set nota quod cum dicitur 'deus generat', 'deus' supponit pro essentia et trahitur ad supponendum pro patre, ita quod non pro alia persona."

Either way, Langton goes on to contrast his view about common supposition of "deus" with the claim that "deus" in "deus generat" is restricted to supposit exclusively for *persona*. The latter position is criticized by invoking the "homo currit" type of analogy, though this time the example is "homo est Petrus": if "deus" were to supposit exclusively for *persona*, we would have to admit that "homo" in "homo est Petrus" only supposits for Peter, which would amount to confusing actual truthmakers with referents (i.e., treating the actual *causa veritatis* of "homo est Petrus" as if it were the exclusive *suppositum* of "homo" in this context).[52] Langton's underlying assumption is that Peter serves as the unique truthmaker of "homo est Petrus," but he is only one of many referents of the subject term.

This passage is remarkable since it might be taken to suggest that the *Summa* is earlier than the corresponding discussions in the *Quaestiones*. First, it fails to draw an explicit distinction between suppositing discretely for the Father and suppositing for "any person." In question 2d, Langton (if it is Langton) also subscribes to the idea of common supposition (without using the term "common") but makes it clear that the other component of the extended supposition is "any person." Second, the argument about "homo est Petrus" in the *Summa* is clearly meant to offer a reason for maintaining that "deus" needs to keep its reference to the divine being in the personal context of "deus generat." But the argument loses its force once we introduce the idea that "deus" supposits for any person: the argument is only effective against theories that constrain supposition discretely to the Father. If so, question 8 might represent the final stage of Langton's theorizing, in which he realized that he no longer needed the notion of common supposition to avoid the argument involving "homo currit." (Still, he might have needed it for another reasons, one of which has been discussed in section 3.)

Having said that, let us focus on common supposition. The aim of the remaining part of the paper is to argue that common supposition does not entail ambiguity.

5. Is "deus generat" a *propositio duplex*?

In her rich and thought-provoking study devoted to the "theologicians" of the second half of the twelfth century, Luisa Valente has suggested that, according to Langton, "deus generat" is subject to a sort of truth-value relativity: it is true

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[52] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 57–58: "Si dicatur quod in hac 'deus generat', iste terminus 'deus' restringitur ut supponat pro persona tantum, eadem ratione cum dicitur, 'homo est Petrus', iste terminus 'homo' supponit tantum pro Petro."

with regard to the Father and false with regard to the divine being. In Valente's view, Langton sometimes claims that:

> *Deus* always signifies and supposits for the essence [i.e., the divine being]; in certain sentences it can supposit for the essence but also for a person. Some sentences are true only when interpreted in the sense in which *Deus* stands for the essence, others — only when interpreted in the sense in which *Deus* supposits for a person. The context does not "determine" the correct *suppositio*: the interpreters can read them as they wish. As a result, it might turn out that a sentence would be true according to certain [referential] interpretations and false according to others.[53]

It is clear from the discussion that follows, as well as from Valente's paper devoted specifically to Langton,[54] that she subsumes the analysis of "deus generat" in the *Summa* under the latter category. At the end of her presentation of Langton's semantic views, which is full of convincing observations regarding other cases, Valente invokes the popular logico-exegetical notion of *propositio duplex* ("ambiguous sentence"). This notion, vague as it may be as a theoretical concept, is ubiquituous in Langton's works, where it serves as a useful tool for solving conceptual and exegetical puzzles.[55] Valente defines *propositio duplex* as a sentential expression that denotes two propositional contents that could differ in terms of truth-value: "it could be the case that one of them is true while the other is false."[56] She then applies this concept to "deus generat" and concludes: "The sentence is true if *Deus* is taken as standing for a person, false if it is taken as standing for the essence [i.e., divine being]."[57]

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[53] Cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 362.

[54] Cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 366–370, 374–379; eadem, "Logique et théologie trinitaire," p. 581–584 (see below).

[55] By way of illustration, let me quote a non-trinitarian example from an unedited *quaestio* on Adam's condition before the original sin, cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, II, q. 29, in preparation: "Hec est duplex 'Adam in primo statu tenebatur habere caritatem'. Si 'tenetur' importat omissionem, falsa est. Set alio modo uera est, et est sensus: 'tenetur habere caritatem', idest sine ea non posset saluari, quia sine ea non posset deo frui." For a commentary on some examples of *propositio duplex* in Langton, cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 366–367, 374–379; eadem, "Logique et théologie trinitaire," p. 583–584.

[56] Cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 367–368; eadem, "Logique et théologie trinitaire," p. 581: "Pour Langton, il y a un grand nombre de *propositiones duplices*, et parfois les deux propositions 'signifiées' par la même proposition 'vocale' peuvent être l'une vraie et l'autre fausse. C'est le cas de 'Deus generat'."

[57] Cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 369. Cf. also eadem, "Logique et théologie trinitaire," p. 582: "Ce qu'Étienne semble affirmer ici est que le contexte ne détermine pas de façon univoque la *suppositio* d'un terme mais que le terme a toujours une sorte de *suppositio communis*, où 'commun' doit être interprété ... dans le sens de non déterminé par rapport à l'essence ou à la personne. 'Deus generat' donc, pour Langton, est une proposition vraie si *Deus* y est pris comme

There are reasons to believe, however, that this account falls short of doing justice to Langton's views on "deus generat" in the *Summa*. As a preliminary remark, it is worth noting that Langtonian *duplicitas* rarely, if ever, stems from mere availability of two suppositions (i.e., two alternative readings in terms of reference). *Propositio duplex* usually requires some indeterminacy at the level of meaning or grammar. Although there are cases in which ambiguity involves two suppositions, these alternative suppositions are triggered by two different interpretations in terms of meaning or grammar, and so the ambiguity does not *spring from* mere availability of two referential readings.[58] In other words, supposition seems to "supervene" on meanings and structure: any difference regarding the supposition of a term seems to entail a difference at the level of signification, connotation (secondary signification), or grammatical function of some elements of the compound expression (phrase or sentence) that encompasses this term. Nonetheless, for the sake of discussion, I assume that the sentence "deus generat" might, in principle, be considered as a candidate for a Langtonian *propositio duplex* even though the significations and grammatical categories of both "deus" and "generat" are single, stable, and well-defined. I also assume Valente's understanding of *duplicitas*, which is centered on the idea of truth-value relativity: a typical *propositio duplex* is true in one sense but false in another.[59]

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ayant une *suppositio* pour la personne du Père, fausse s'il y est pris comme ayant une *suppositio* pour l'essence divine : c'est en fait le Père qui engendre et non l'essence. Par conséquent, 'Deus non generat' est vrai si 'Deus' y est pris comme ayant une *suppositio* pour l'essence. Ce qui est déterminé par le contexte propositionnel, selon cette conception, ce n'est pas la suppositio des termes, qui reste communis, mais la valeur de vérité de la proposition : selon que les termes sont entendus par les interprètes dans l'une ou dans l'autre de leurs suppositiones possibles, les propositions peuvent présenter différentes valeurs de vérité." What the author probably meant here was that it is the broader *non-linguistic* context that determines the truth value (and the specific "single" supposition), and not really "the propositional context" as the text suggests. The extrasentential context might include the interpreters and their intentions. By contrast, the propositional context, by which I understand the verbal surroundings of "deus," fails to fix any unique, non-common reference, and on that point Valente would certainly agree ("le contexte ne détermine pas de façon univoque la *suppositio* d'un terme").

[58] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 2d, 10, p. 252 (cf. *Summa*, p. 57): "Hec est duplex: 'deus est pater', quia hec dictio 'pater' potest teneri adiectiue uel substantiue; si substantiue, hec dictio 'deus' supponit pro essentia; si adiectiue, hec dictio 'deus' supponit pro persona, scilicet pro patre."

[59] *Duplicitas* is usually invoked in order to safeguard a desired truth-value in the face of objections. Notice, however, that the sentence mentioned in the previous footnote, "deus est pater," is classified by Langton as *duplex* despite being true in both senses, so truth-value relativity is not a requisite of *duplicitas*. Cf. also Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, II, q. 38: "Dicimus ergo quod hec est duplex 'ignorantia affectata fuit in Paulo'. Hec enim uox 'ignorantia affectata' potest circumloqui uitium quod prouenit ex eo quod aliquis affectat nescire aliquid ex aliqua causa cum tamen spectet ad illum scire illud. Et tunc hec uox non contrahit ex partibus significationem, et tunc uera est prima propositio. Si autem hec uox contrahat significationem ex partibus, prima

What follows is a summary of an alternative account of "deus generat," according to which this sentence fails to be *duplex* in the sense defined by Valente. Instead of denying in advance that *duplicitas* could arise from two different suppositions of "deus," I focus on features that rule out *any kind* of ambiguity:

1. Fixity. The interpreters of "deus generat" have no genuine choice about the referential interpretation of "deus" in terms of supposition theory. The supposition of "deus" is already fixed: it includes both the divine being and a person. Hence, the linguistic context does indeed determine the supposition of "deus." There is only one "correct" supposition — the common one.

2. Objectivity. Supposition need not be discrete or singular in order to be fixed by the context and unmalleable for the interpreters. Thus, there is no element of subjectivity in the case of "deus generat."[60] Admittedly, some additional factors like a broader textual or extra-linguistic context (or the speaker's intention, *sensus ex quo fiunt verba* as opposed to the *sensus quem faciunt verba*) might theoretically override the common supposition; but this is purely speculative.

3. Absolute truth-value. The most important corollary of (1) and (2) is that the sentence "deus generat" is simply true. It is true in virtue of one of the *supposita* — namely, a person (the Father). It is not susceptible to any truth-value relativization. In particular, no one is in a position to construe "deus" in such a way that the sentence "deus generat" would come out false, since for that to happen "deus" would need to stand exclusively for the divine being (or exclusively for the Son, or exclusively for the Holy Spirit). But no such referential interpretation is allowed precisely because the supposition is common and encompasses both the divine being and a person.

4. Disjunctive character. Even if "deus generat" indeed expresses two propositional contents (*dicta*), such that "it could be the case that one of them is true while the other is false," it expresses them disjunctively, which means that overall the sentence would be true even if one of the propositional contents were false. In other words, the proper propositional

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uera est secundum magistrum, quia hoc nomen 'ignorantia' supponit tantum nescientiam et connotat quod teneatur scire ille qui habet ignorantiam, et hec dictio 'affectata' non respicit nisi suppositum. Et ideo uera est, et sequens argumentatio non ualet, cuius hec est conclusio 'ergo affectat ignorare hoc'."

[60] *Pace* L. Valente, "Logique et théologie trinitaire," p. 584: "La notion de *propositio duplex* s'accompagne ainsi de celles de *suppositio communis*, en introduisant dans une théorie assez mécaniste du langage des considérations sur la subjectivité des interprètes et ainsi des germes de contextualisation pragmatique."

content of "deus generat" is general — it is a *dictum commune* (cf. below, section 7.2). This general *dictum* expressed by "deus generat" amounts to something like: *the divine being or a person begets*.

5. SYMMETRY. The same analysis applies to "deus non generat": it has a fixed, "correct" supposition. This supposition is probably the same as in the case of "deus generat." The only difference is that "deus non generat" is true in virtue of a different element of the common supposition — that is, in virtue of the divine being. Hence, both "deus generat" and "deus non generat" are simply true.

6. LACK OF AMBIGUITY. Ambiguity would only arise if Langton were forced to admit that "non deus generat" is true. But, as we saw, "non deus generat" (as opposed to "deus non generat") is false, since it amounts to the denial of both disjuncts.

7. LACK OF ARBITRARINESS. One can point to analogous cases in which Langton explicitly states that a given sentence is not ambiguous (cf. below, section 7). So, his approach in the *Summa* is not necessarily *ad hoc*.

6. THE ANALOGY: "HOMO SUPPONITUR," "HOMO NON SUPPONITUR"

Valente's interpretative situation was complicated by the text of the *Summa*, which provides an incorrect reading "homo supponit" in the crucial secular analogy given by Langton. The proper reading is "homo supponitur" ("Human being is referred to" or "Human being is the object of discourse"). This fact has become clear thanks to the critical edition of *Quaestiones theologiae* and to Geoffrey of Poitiers, who employs this example in several questions from his unedited *Summa* (cf. below, section 8). The partial edition of Langton's *Summa* reads, however:

> et est simile cum dicitur 'homo supponit' [*read:* supponitur]: iste terminus 'homo' communiter se habet ad simplicem et ad personalem suppositionem. Unde utraque istarum est vera 'homo supponit' [*read:* supponitur], 'homo non supponit' [*read:* non supponitur].[61]

As the editors accurately signal in the apparatus, one of the manuscripts preserving the *Summa* (the one used as the primary source) reads "supponit,"[62] whereas

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[61] Cf. STEPHEN LANGTON, *Summa*, p. 57.
[62] Cf. ms. Cambridge, St. John's College Library, C.7 (57), f. 149vb.

another one has "supponitur."[63] This applies to all the three instances of "supponit" in the passage. "Supponitur" could have been heavily abbreviated in the exemplar ("sup" with a superscript curl standing for the passive voice, just like in the Chartres manuscript).

Valente tries to make sense of "homo supponit," which leads her to suggest that Langton understands simple supposition in terms of what is usually called *material* supposition.[64] Accordingly, she interprets the sentence "homo supponit" as ambiguous (*duplex*) in the following way: if we choose to construe "homo" as having simple supposition, "homo" supposits for the name "homo," and so "homo supponit" can be regarded as true, since the word "homo" indeed supposits in various contexts. Yet, once we interpret the sentence "homo supponit" as having the default personal supposition, the sentence counts as false, since obviously no human being supposits anything.

This reading seems untenable once we realize that Langton uses the notion of simple supposition in a relatively standard way. There is some independent evidence to that effect in the *Quaestiones*, including those not yet available in print. Likewise, there is much direct evidence that the correct reading should be "homo supponitur" and "homo non supponitur."

We learn from the *Quaestiones* that the natural (initial, pre-propositional) supposition of "homo" is personal; that is, "homo" refers by default to particular human beings. However, in the peculiar context "homo supponitur," "homo" takes on simple supposition.[65] Langton tends to think of simple supposition in terms of indefinite reference, so my impression is that the only relevant criterion for him is "immobility": one cannot make a valid descent (*descensus*) from indefinite statements with a general term in simple supposition to any corresponding singular or particular statements. Contemporary or slightly later logical textbooks tried to distinguish various types of simple supposition and illustrated them with familiar examples:

- *homo est species.*
- *homo est dignissima creaturarum.*

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[63] Cf. ms. Paris, BnF, lat. 14556, f. 202vb. The two other manuscripts from the same family also have "supponitur," cf. ms. Chartres, Bibliothèque municipale, 430, f. 96ra–rb; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lyell 42, f. 34va.

[64] Cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 368–369; eadem, "Logique et théologie trinitaire," p. 581–582. Cf., e.g., Lambert, *Logica (Summa Lamberti)*, VIII, ed. F. Alessio, Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1971, p. 209: "Simplex suppositio est illa secundum quam tenetur terminus pro se vel pro re sua non habito respectu ad supposita sub se contemplata."

[65] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones* I, q. 8, 3, p. 278: "Cum iste terminus 'homo' supponat simpliciter in hac 'homo supponitur' ex uirtute uerbi, non ideo iste terminus 'homo' amittit naturalem suppositionem, scilicet personalem."

– *piper venditur hic et Romae.*[66]

All these indefinite sentences involve immobility: they do not license a straight-
forward descent to statements about particulars,[67] or, as Ebbesen puts it, it is
impossible to prefix "man" or "pepper" with the pronoun "some" and preserve
the truth-value of the original sentence[68]:

– [Some] human being is a species.
– [Some] human being is the noblest of creatures.[69]
– [Some] peppercorn (or portion of pepper) is being sold in Paris and in
   Rome.

I believe that Langton was committed to an even broader notion of simple sup-
position, which would also be considered, for instance, by the *Summa Lamberti*:

– *scio hominem esse in Anglia* = I know [a] human being is in England.[70]

It is unclear whether Lambert was right in equating this example with the one
about pepper.[71] Either way, as it happens, Langton uses a very similar example
in one of the unedited texts from Book III of the *Quaestiones*:

> cum dicitur "diligo habitatores illius terre", hoc nomen 'habitatores' simplicem
> habet suppositionem. Similiter aliquis potest dampnari pro fraterno odio et
> tamen neminem odit, ut si odio habeat alios in generali, ut Teutonicos.[72]

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[66] Cf., e.g., WILLIAM OF SHERWOOD, *Introductiones in logicam*, ed. H. Brands, C. Kahn, Ham-
burg: Felix Meiner, 1995, p. 140–144; LAMBERT, *Logica*, VIII, p. 209.

[67] Langton is familiar with the notion of immobile supposition; cf. STEPHEN LANGTON, *Quaes-
tiones*, II, q. 38: "... Et ita predictus qui abstinet ab auditu sermonis dei peccabit ex ignorantia
affectata. — Quod bene concedimus per consequens. Non enim tenetur audire istum sermonem
uel illum set tenetur scire regulam bene uiuendi, quam non potest scire nisi ex auditu sermonis.
Et ita tenetur audire sermonem, ut accusatiuus immobilem habeat suppositionem, nullum tamen
tenetur audire."

[68] Cf. S. EBBESEN, "Early Supposition Theory (12th–13th cent.)," *Histoire Épistémologie Lan-
gage*, vol. 3 (1981), p. 42.

[69] William of Sherwood allows for a descent with qualification "in quantum homo," cf.
WILLIAM OF SHERWOOD, *Introductiones*, p. 142; E.J. ASHWORTH, "Terminist Logic," p. 154.

[70] Cf. LAMBERT, *Logica*, VIII, p. 209.

[71] Cf. LAMBERT, *Logica*, VIII, p. 209: "Alia vero est suppositio simplex in qua terminus com-
munis non respicit supposita determinate, habet tamen respectum ad illa indeterminate: hanc
suppositionem habet ille terminus 'homo' cum dicitur: 'scio hominem esse in Anglia'; similiter
'piper' cum dicitur: 'piper venditur hic et Rome': hec enim minus proprie dicitur suppositio sim-
plex quam prima."

[72] Cf. STEPHEN LANGTON, *Quaestiones theologiae*, III, q. 72, ed. M. Bieniak, A. Nannini,
M. Trepczyński, in preparation. Cf. also ibidem, q. 130: "Ad rationem inductam dicimus quod

The only constraint on simple supposition here is that one cannot go from "Socrates hates Germans (or Teutonic Knights)" to anything like "For some particular Germans *X, Y, Z*, Socrates hates *X, Y, Z*." The point is that Socrates's love or hatred is directed, as it were, at the property of living in that region or at the property of being German, and not at any individuals having those properties. By the same token, in Book I, Langton gives a counterexample in which someone makes an invalid move from simple supposition in "homo supponitur" to specific individuals.[73] We encounter something similar in question 2d, where the simple supposition of "homo" in "homo supponitur" is contrasted with referring to an individual in a definite or "determinate" way (*determinate*).[74]

With this in mind, let us focus on the analogy between "deus generat" and "homo supponitur." First, imagine a simple scenario in which Plato is talking about humans in general and says, "homo est dignissima creaturarum." Socrates reacts by asserting "homo supponitur." In this scenario, Langton's assumption that Socrates's statement "homo supponitur" involves simple supposition is even more intuitive than *in abstracto*, because the supposition of "homo" in "homo supponitur" is just a function of Plato's utterance. The idea is that Socrates's statement relates to Plato's utterance and inherits its mode of supposition, so that "homo" does not pick out any individuals.

And yet the whole point of the simile in the *Summa* was that "homo" in "homo supponitur" somehow retains its natural personal reference to particulars, just as "deus" in "deus generat" keeps the reference to the divine being. Similarly, in question 8, Langton says (or at least does not deny; the relevant statement occurs as a thesis used by the opponent as a starting point for a *reductio*):

> Although this term "homo" supposits simply in this sentence "homo supponitur" by virtue of the verb, it is not the case that the term "homo" loses its natural supposition — namely, the personal one. So, it has a supposition that is common

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hec est duplex 'fornicari est tam malum quantum pene est meritorium'. Si hec dictio 'quantum' determinet genitiuum, nugatoria est, quia fornicari non est aliquante pene meritorium. Si uero determinet hanc uocem 'meritorium', uera est, ita tamen quod iste genitiuus 'pene' simplicem habeat suppositionem, ut sit sensus: fornicari est aliquantum dignum puniri; ut hec dictio 'aliquantum' determinet hanc uocem 'dignum', non hanc uocem 'puniri' (quia sic esset falsa)."

[73] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 7, p. 280: "'Deus generat deum, ergo se deum uel alium deum'. ... hic potest dari instantia: posito quod Sortes dicat 'homo supponitur', Sortes loquitur de homine, ergo de se homine uel de alio homine."

[74] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 2d, 12.3, p. 253: "Cum dicitur 'homo est hic', '<homo> supponitur', iste terminus 'homo' in utraque istarum communem habet intellectum; et cum dicitur 'homo est hic', supponit pro homine determinate; cum autem dicitur 'homo supponitur', supponit pro homine simpliciter et non pro aliquo determinate, et hoc conuenire ex natura potest. A simili dicimus quod in hac 'deus genuit' predicatum notionale facit quod iste terminus 'deus' supponit pro persona; set non in hac 'deus est', quia hoc uerbum 'est' magis se habet ad essentiam quam ad personam."

to personal and simple supposition.[75] Thus, by the same token, the term "deus" in "deus generat" has common supposition in relation to the divine being and to a person.[76]

But how is it even possible? Surely, if we account for "homo supponitur" in terms of the above scenario, in which Plato uttered "homo est dignissima creaturarum," then Socrates's statement "homo supponitur" lacks any genuine personal reference whatsoever. In this light, Langton's position looks like a case of having one's cake and eating it too. If so, maybe we should simply take it for granted that he believed — at least in the *Summa* and in question 8 — that "homo" in "homo supponitur" preserves its personal supposition in some loose sense,[77] and leave it at that. Fortunately, however, there are at least four ways in which we might make sense of Langton's idea. It seems that the fourth one reveals the actual rationale underlying the analogy between "deus generat" and "homo supponitur."

1. Perhaps Langton intended something along the following lines: "homo" in "homo supponitur" could be said to retain or "not to lose" (*non amittere*) its personal supposition in a sense similar to that in which someone can be said to remain bipedal after amputation.[78] On this reading, the personal supposition of "homo" in "homo supponitur" would boil down to a mere potentiality, which is stable due to its being embedded in the very nature of a general term (namely, the essential capability of "homo" to stand for particulars).

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[75] Langton's manuscripts have "habet communem suppositionem ad simplicem et personalem." The editors have suggested removing the preposition "ad," but it seems that "ad" goes with "communem," not with "suppositionem," and so the sense is that the term "homo" has a supposition that is common to (*communis ad*) simple and personal supposition. Thus, the emendation seems unnecessary. Note that Langton's *Summa* reads "communiter se habet ad simplicem et ad personalem suppositionem" (p. 57).

[76] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 3, p. 278: "Cum iste terminus 'homo' supponat simpliciter in hac 'homo supponitur' ex uirtute uerbi, non ideo iste terminus 'homo' amittit naturalem suppositionem, scilicet personalem; ergo ibi habet communem suppositionem ad simplicem et personalem; ergo iste terminus 'deus' a simili in hac 'deus generat' communem habet <suppositionem> ad essentiam et personam." Valente was aware of this passage, but she tried to interpret it in terms of material supposition as well, cf. L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 371–372.

[77] In the fragment from question 2d quoted before, "homo supponitur" had simple supposition and did not refer to any particular in a determinate way, in contrast to "homo est hic." It is unclear, however, whether lack of determinate reference rules out "retaining" personal supposition in a broader sense.

[78] Cf. C. Martin, "An Amputee Is Bipedal! The Role of Categories in the Development of Abelard's Theory of Possibility," *La tradition médiévale des Catégories (XII e–XV e siècles): Actes du XIII e Symposium européen de logique et de sémantique médiévales (Avignon, 6–10 Juin 2000)*, ed. J. Biard, I. Rosier-Catach, Louvain – Paris: Peeters, p. 225–242.

2. One could also toy with an interpretation in which the personal supposition in "homo supponitur" would be something less abstract. Imagine the following scenario as an intuition pump. Suppose that Socrates listened to Plato talking about Archytas. Plato said, "homo optimus!" But Socrates misunderstood Plato and thought he was talking about Alcibiades. Like in the previous scenario, Socrates has Plato's utterance in mind while asserting "homo supponitur." Now, we could make a case that, although Socrates misidentifies the relevant human being, Socrates's statement is true because Plato is talking about a human being by means of the same general name used by Socrates himself ("homo"). In this sense, "homo" in "homo supponitur" has simple supposition in Langton's sense and is made true thanks to the indeterminate relation to humans that is shared by both expressions ("homo optimus!" and "homo supponitur"). Even so, it is possible to argue that in the same scenario "homo" somehow retains personal supposition, since both Plato and Socrates have particular humans in mind (Archytas and Alcibiades, respectively). So, in a way, "homo" in "homo supponitur" personally supposits for Alcibiades, but of course the sentence is not made true by Alcibiades, since Plato is talking about Archytas.[79] By analogy, "deus" in "deus generat" stands both for a person and for the divine being, but is made true only in virtue of a person.

3. Alternatively, one could relate "homo supponitur" not to one but to at least two different utterances in the object language — one in personal supposition, e.g., "Socrates est", and the other in simple supposition, e.g., "homo est dignissima creaturarum." We can then declare that "homo supponitur" has personal supposition with respect to the former utterance and simple supposition with regard to the latter. This way of understanding "homo supponitur" was suggested by Geoffrey of Poitiers (cf. sections 8.2 and 8.3).

4. Understanding the relation between "deus generat" and "homo supponitur" is by no means made easier by the fact that in Langton's analogy the contextual *suppositio simplex* of "homo" is the counterpart of the contextual reference of "deus" to a person, while *suppositio personalis* of "homo" is analogous to the reference of "deus" to the divine being. This "reverse" mapping stems from the fact that the natural supposition of "homo" comprises individual human beings, while the natural supposition of "deus" is the divine being. As was mentioned above, Langton inverts the intuitive analogy drawn, for example, by Alan of Lille († 1202/3), who assumed that "deus" properly stands for a person and only improperly for the divine being.[80] Alan's parallel was more intuitive

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[79] The above scenario is inspired by Langton's treatment of Caiaphas's prophecy, which will be discussed in section 7.2.

[80] Cf. ALAN OF LILLE, *Summa*, I, pars 2, tr. 2, 56, p. 199: "Sunt alia nomina essentialia que naturam predicant et personam appellant, ut hoc nomen Deus; et tale nomen dicitur essentiale

since the divine being was pictured in Langton's milieu in "Porretan" fashion as a quasi-form shared by the three persons, by analogy to the way the form of humanity inheres in particular humans.[81] This picture favors the commonsensical correspondence between divine persons and particular humans (as primary referents of "deus" and "homo") and between the divine being and humanity (as secondary referents of "deus" and "homo"). Yet Langton is adamant that the reference of "deus" to divine persons is secondary, prompted by the context. That said, I think the key to the analogy between "deus generat" and "homo supponitur" is hidden in plain sight. Namely, it is enough to realize that Langton's analogy is drawn primarily between two *pairs*, "deus generat," "deus non generat" and "homo supponitur," "homo non supponitur". It is not merely a comparison between two affirmative sentences or between two negative ones.

As I have argued in section 3, Langton's account of "deus non generat" helps us understand his reason for retaining the reference to the divine being in "deus generat." Namely, the underlying assumption is that "deus" has the same reference in "deus generat" and in "deus non generat." But the reference to *essentia* is needed to make the sentence "deus non generat" true, since only the divine being, as opposed to the Father, satisfies "non generat." If so, the divine being must also be among the referents of the affirmative counterpart "deus generat."

By analogy, the underlying assumption — the root of Langton's analogy — is that "homo" has the same reference in "homo supponitur" and in "homo non supponitur." But personal supposition is needed to make "homo non supponitur" true. In section 8.1, after some necessary preparatory discussion, I will try to explain why this is the case. As we shall see, Geoffrey of Poitiers makes it explicit that "homo non supponitur" is true with regard to personal supposition (*ratione personalis suppositionis*), at least in a scenario in which there is only one speaker who says something like "homo est dignissima creaturarum." For now, assume for the sake of argument that "homo non supponitur" is true only if "homo" is taken in personal supposition, just as "deus non generat" is true only if "deus" stands for the divine being. Furthermore, like in the case of "deus non generat", Langton takes it for granted that "homo non supponitur" is true, at least with respect to some contexts.[82] As a result, "homo" in "homo non supponitur" has personal supposition. This means that its affirmative counterpart

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ratione predicationis et significationis. Pro qualitate autem significat naturam, pro substantia vero significat personam; supponit autem pro persona, inproprie autem pro essentia."

[81] Cf., e.g., S. Ebbesen, "The Semantics of the Trinity," p. 414; L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 314–318 and passim.

[82] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 57: "Unde utraque istarum est vera 'homo supponit' [*read:* supponitur], 'homo non supponit' [*read:* non supponitur]."

must retain personal supposition alongside the simple one, just as "deus generat" retains the reference to the divine being.

If nothing else, the above reasoning identifies Langton's motive for juxtaposing these two *pairs* of theological and semantic statements. It is worth noting that the idea of combining two kinds of supposition is not as exotic as it may sound: some logicians felt forced to admit that even in some non-metalinguistic cases the rules require that a term should have double supposition — both simple and personal.[83]

Let us now focus on other examples similar to "deus generat" and "deus non generat" that can be found in Langton. The overarching goal is to argue that Langton did not regard these sentences as ambiguous (*duplices*).

7. Ambiguity versus disjunction and generality

7.1. *"Haec res est genita" and two potential truthmakers of a non–ambiguous sentence*

Let us move from the semantics of the Trinity to the semantics of the hypostatic union. According to Langton, the Christological statement "haec res est genita" ("This thing is begotten") has two potential truthmakers — the uncreated nature and the human nature (or, less precisely, the divine person and the human being). We could express this idea by means of non-exclusive disjunction:

- "haec res est genita" is true when (1) the divine person, the Son, is begotten or (2) the human being, Jesus, is begotten.

The disjunctive character of "haec res est genita" is crucial in solving certain conceptual puzzles connected with the demonstrative phrase "haec res." It is the subject term "this thing" that serves as the semantic troublemaker, not the predicate "is begotten," which is understood univocally in disjuncts 1 and 2 and denotes the property characteristic of the Son (it is never used in the biological sense here). One problem with "haec res est genita" is that it has only one actual truthmaker before the Incarnation and two thereafter. Imagine that we are at the time of the Incarnation: someone points at the new human being and states

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[83] It is the case of Nicholas of Paris and "tantum homo currit" ("Only [a] human being is running") mentioned by S. Ebbesen, "Early Supposition Theory (12th–13th cent.)," p. 43. The issue deserves a separate discussion. Cf. also C. Dutilh Novaes, "Supposition Theory," p. 1234b–1235a, where a more general question is raised: "Is there always only one (correct) kind of supposition for a term in a given propositional context?" As Dutilh Novaes points out, many fourteenth--century logicians answered in the negative. Of course, it is one thing for the rules to *permit* two types of supposition and quite another to *demand* those types in tandem.

that at this very instant the sentence "haec res est genita" is true for the first time. Langton denies this claim because this human being (Jesus) is only one of two truthmakers, and so the sentence "haec res est genita" was true even before the conception.[84]

The discussion around this case is fascinating, but its details go beyond the scope of this paper. The important lesson here is that we are dealing with a situation in which ambiguity is explicitly denied and contrasted with having two truthmakers ("haec non est duplex 'haec res est genita', ... sed duas habet causas veritatis"). Moreover, Langton seems to presuppose that the sentences "haec res est genita" and "deus generat" are analogous.[85]

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[84] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 67: "Solutio: haec non est duplex 'haec res est genita', quia unum solum significat, sed duas habet causas veritatis, i.e. ratione naturae humanae et ratione naturae increatae. Unde haec est falsa 'nunc primo haec res est genita'; similiter et haec 'nunc primo est verum hanc rem esse genitam', quia una causa veritatis prius fuit." Geoffrey of Poitiers elaborates on Langton's text and ends up with a more nuanced account, cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, To 9vb–10ra (Bo 7ra, Br 7va, Kl 8ra, Li 6ra): "Item, demonstrato filio dei in instanti incarnationis hec est uera 'hec res est ab eterno genita', quia filius dei ab eterno est genitus, quo supposito supponitur hec res, ergo hec res ab eterno est genita. Contra, nunc primo hec res est genita, quia nunc primo est uera hec propositio 'hec res est genita', quod patet, quia numquam potuit uere proponi usque modo. Et hec est uera 'hec res ab eterno est genita', uidetur ergo quod sit duplex. Set non habet multiplicitatem nisi ex hoc termino 'hec res', ergo iste terminus 'hec res' diuersas habet significationes demonstrato filio dei. Item, si hec res est genita, hec res est filius dei. Set nunc primo hec res est genita, ergo nunc primo hec res est filius dei. Contra, ab eterno hec res est filius dei, quia ab eterno hec res est, demonstrata essentia diuina. — Solutio. Dicimus quod reuera hec est duplex '<nunc primo> hec res est genita', set hoc non est ex hoc termino 'hec res', set ex hoc quod hec uox 'nunc primo' potest determinare tantum predicatum, et sic est falsa, uel potest determinare totam propositionem, et sic uera. In prima est sensus: hec res nunc primo est genita et ante hoc instans non fuit genita. Et hoc falsum est, quia hec humana essentia ab eterno fuit genita, quia filius dei ab eterno est genitus. In alia est sensus: nunc primo est uera hec propositio 'hec res est genita'; et hoc uerum est quia numquam potuit uere sumi hec propositio 'hec res est genita' usque in instanti incarnationis. Item, non ualet hec argumentatio 'nunc primo hec res est genita, ergo nunc primo hec res est filius dei'. Hec enim propositio 'hec res est genita' non est uera tantum nisi pro hac causa: hec humana essentia est genita [*the human being is contrasted here with the divine being, not with the Son*]. Alia autem, cum habeat duas causas ueritatis, uera est pro utraque, quia pro hac 'hec diuina essentia est filius dei' et pro hac 'hec humana essentia est filius dei'. Et est simile hic: nunc primo uterque istorum uidet se, ergo nunc primo isti uident se, posito quod Sortes modo uideat se, et Plato similiter, set semper ante hoc tempus uterque uidet reliquum tantum [*the analogy is taken from Langton*]. Vt patet per predicta, michi uidetur quod argumentatio sit necessaria sumpto uniuoce hoc termino 'res'." The last sentence is found in mss. To, Bo, and Li; it is absent from Kl and Br.

[85] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 67: "Item, quod haec sit duplex 'deus generat' sic probatur: ... [*the aforementioned difficulty concerning "haec res est genita" is presented*], ergo haec appellatio 'hanc rem esse genitam' duo dicta supponit; ergo haec est duplex 'haec res est genita', ergo et haec res est genita. Sed illa duplicitas non provenit nisi ex hoc quod iste terminus 'res' potest significare essentiam et supponere personam vel significare essentiam et supponere essentiam, ergo eadem ratione debet haec esse duplex 'deus generat'. — Solutio: haec non est duplex 'haec res est

To see this analogy more clearly, imagine that we are *before* the Incarnation. Let us set aside the issue of assertibility: assume for simplification that the demonstrative phrase "haec res" can be successfully used even before the Incarnation to refer to the Son. The truth condition remains the same, but this time "haec res est genita" is true only in virtue of the first disjunct, involving the divine person, since the relevant human being does not yet exist. Similarly, "deus generat" is made true only by virtue of the Father.

The case is similar with "haec res non est genita."[86] This sentence is also disjunctive in nature (although Langton does not put it this way):

- "haec res non est genita" is true when (1) it is not the case that the Son is begotten or (2) it is not the case that the human being is begotten.

Suppose we are before the Incarnation. Since the human being does not yet exist as such, the whole sentence is true by virtue of the second disjunct.[87] In the next step, Langton expressly prevents the inference from "haec res non est genita" to "non haec res est genita," just as he did in the case of "deus non generat" and "non deus generat." The propositional negation "non haec res est genita" has a conjunctive truth condition:

- "non haec res est genita" is true when (1) neither is it the case that the Son is begotten (2) nor is it the case that the human being is begotten.

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genita', quia unum solum significat, sed duas habet causas veritatis, i.e. ratione naturae humanae et ratione naturae increatae."

[86] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 67–68.

[87] I am setting aside certain problems and finer points associated with the second disjunct. First, can a future thing be a referent of "haec res" and a truthmaker of a sentence involving postposed negation? To sidestep this difficulty, I have used propositional negation. Second, according to Geoffrey of Poitiers, Langton claimed that "haec res non est genita" is *always* true — namely, by virtue of the divine being, cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, Kl 7vb (Bo 6vb, Br 7rb, Li 5vb, To 9rb; the whole context is quoted in the next footnote): "Similiter dicit de hac 'hec res non est genita', quia uera est ratione diuine essentie." As a result, in three manuscripts we find a short refutation of Langton's account of "haec res non est genita," cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, To 9va (Bo 6vb, Li 5vb): "Salua pace magistri uidetur michi duplex. Dico enim quod demonstrata essentia diuina filii dei non demonstratur filius dei nec econuerso, cum ea supposita non supponatur filius dei nec econuerso, set demonstrata humana essentia filii dei demonstratur filius dei et econuerso, et ea supposita supponitur ille et econuerso. Est ergo multiplex ex diuersa demonstratione. Et utraque tamen istarum in eodem sensu est uera 'res est genita', 'res non est genita'. In eodem enim sensu supponit iste terminus 'res' pro essentia increata et pro creata, sicut iste terminus 'homo' in eodem sensu pro Sorte et pro Platone, set tamen alius est sensus huius termini 'iste homo' demonstrato Sorte et alius demonstrato Platone. Similiter alius est sensus huius termini 'hec res' demonstrata humana essentia et alius demonstrata diuina."

We are told that ambiguity (*multiplicitas*) would arise only if both "haec res est genita" and "non haec rest est genita" — the genuine contradictories — were simultaneously true. But it is not the case, so the sentence is not *multiplex*. To explain why "non haec res est genita" is false, Langton compares it to a sentence involving the general term "colored." In a nutshell, in order to accept "non hoc coloratum est" (or "non hoc coloratum erit tale") one would have to reject the disjunction of all the potential truthmakers of "hoc coloratum…" — that is, all the relevant colors.[88]

In general, one should not conclude, as the hypothetical opponent in Langton's *Summa* tried to do,[89] that "haec res est genita" is *duplex* on the grounds that it expresses two propositional contents (*dicta*):

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[88] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 67–68 (modified punctuation): "Cum ergo utraque istarum sit vera 'hoc est genitum' — 'non hoc est genitum', est ibi multiplicitas; ergo haec est duplex 'haec res est genita'; ergo et 'haec res \<non\> est genita'; ergo et haec 'deus generat'. — Solutio: haec est vera 'haec res non est genita' ratione humanae naturae, et haec vera ratione divinae 'haec res est genita', et hoc argumentum non valet 'haec res non est genita, ergo non haec res est genita', quia licet iste terminus 'res' sit substantialis, tamen secundum quod de deo dicitur, utimur eo quasi accidentali. Et est simile: hoc coloratum non est, ergo non hoc coloratum est. Et ita non erit ibi multiplicitas." Cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, Kl 7vb (Bo 6va–vb, Br 7ra–rb, Li 5vb, To 9rb–va): "Item, quod hec est duplex probatur: 'deus non generat'. Cum enim dicitur 'hec res est genita', hec est duplex demonstrato filio dei, et non est duplex ex alio nisi quod iste terminus 'hec res' potest teneri pro essentia uel pro persona. Eadem ratione hec duplex 'deus non generat', cum iste terminus 'deus' pro essentia possit teneri uel pro persona. Set quod sit prima duplex sic probatur: 'hec res est genita' demonstrato filio dei — hec non est dubia, quia humana essentia est genita. Similiter hec res non est genita, quia diuina essentia non est genita. Ergo hec res non est genita, ergo non hec res est genita. Set hec est uera 'hec res est genita' et hec 'non hec res est genita', ergo ibi est multiplicitas. Et ita hec est duplex 'hec res est genita', quod prenegatum est. — Dicit magister quod non est multiplex, set duas habet causas ueritatis, quod deo uolente plenius tractabitur cum agemus de homine sumpto. Similiter dicit de hac 'hec res non est genita', quia uera est ratione diuine essentie. Nec ualet hec argumentatio: hec res non est genita, ergo non hec res est genita. Ita enim iudicat magister de hoc termino 'hec res' circa filium dei sicut de hoc termino 'hoc coloratum' circa Sortem. Instantia argumenti: hoc coloratum non erit tale, demonstrato Sorte qui erit niger et modo est albus et de cetero non erit tale, ergo non hoc coloratum erit tale. Quod prima sit uera — 'hoc coloratum non erit tale' — patet per hunc descensum 'hoc album non erit tale', duas enim habet causas ueritatis, quarum utraque negatur cum dicitur 'non hoc coloratum erit tale'." In a later version of his *Summa* (Av 8ra–rb, Pa 6rb), Geoffrey writes: "Videtur quod hec sit duplex 'deus non generat', quia potest fieri suppositio pro essentia uel pro persona, sicut hec est duplex 'hec res est' demonstrato filio dei, quia potest fieri suppositio pro essentia humana uel pro essentia diuina. — Dico: cum dicitur 'hec res est' demonstrato filio dei, non potest supponi nisi essentia humana uel persona, qua supposita supponitur persona et econuerso. Numquam enim demonstrato filio dei supponitur essentia diuina nec econuerso. Vnde \<cum dicitur\> 'hec res est' demonstrato filio dei, iste terminus 'res' non habet nisi unicam suppositionem, set circa filium dei potest demonstrare uel essentiam ipsius creatam uel increatam, quare supposita essentia humana non supponitur diuina nec econuerso. Set iste terminus 'deus' propter adiunctum non uariat significationem."

[89] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 67, quoted above in footnote 85.

1. The Son is begotten.
2. The human being is begotten.

Rather, we are dealing here with one general *dictum* that encompasses 1 and 2 in a disjunctive way and can be made true either by the Son (with respect to the divine nature) or by the human being. By the same token, there is no evidence for the claim that according to Langton "deus generat" is a *propositio duplex*.

Interestingly, in a purely trinitarian context, where Christology does not interfere, Langton explicitly couched the semantics of "res" in terms of common reference: "res" is in a general relation to the divine being and a person ("communiter se habet ad essentiam et personam").[90] In this case, however, he seems to be considering a weaker claim that the supposition of "res" is variable across contexts ("hoc nomen 'res' in se habet et ex se quod modo supponat essentiam modo personam"), while in the case of "deus generat" and "haec res est genita" we are dealing with one particular context. Thus, I am leaving aside the complex discussion that surrounds this term.[91]

7.2. Caiaphas's prophecy and dictum commune

Langton seems to be employing a similar strategy in other places as well. A good example is his analysis of Caiaphas's prophecy (John 11, 50): "It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." The problem is that the same utterance might be considered as stemming both from the Devil and from the Holy Spirit. Thus, one might be led to believe that the sentence is ambiguous, because it expresses two propositional contents with different origins:

1. *From the Devil*: One person must die to preserve Caiaphas's land and people.
2. *From the Holy Spirit*: One person must die to redeem many.

Again, Langton explicitly denies this putative ambiguity. The sentence in question expresses a common, or general, propositional content (*dictum commune*) — namely, that one should die for many — which disjunctively encompasses more

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[90] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 71–72; cf. also ibidem, p. 60: "hoc enim nomen 'res' commune est ad essentiam et personam."

[91] The semantic difference between "res" and "ens" has been discussed by L. Valente, "Logique et théologie trinitaire," p. 574–576.

specific contents like 1 and 2. The fact that contents 1 and 2 are more specific does not mean that the less specific general *dictum* expressed by Caiaphas's prophecy is *underspecified*. It is specific enough to be true.[92]

Langton drives home the point, as usual, by invoking a secular example. Suppose that someone, say Archimedes, utters the sentence "homo currit" while having Plato in mind or, as Langton puts it, "he intends to say something true with regard to Plato." Now, as it happens, it is Socrates who is running, not Plato. Still, Archimedes's utterance is true in virtue of Socrates. The reason for this assessment is that the sentence "homo currit" expresses a general *dictum* that a human being is running (*hominem currere*). Langton even contends that Archimedes "says what he wants to say," since what Archimedes intends to convey is not so much that Plato is running as that some human being is running. The latter claim allows Langton to insist that Caiaphas understood what he said — namely, the general content (*dictum commune*) that one must die for many. The only thing that Caiaphas failed to grasp was which specific event would make this general *dictum* true.[93]

A similar analysis in terms of *dictum commune* is applied to Jonah's prophecy as one of possible solutions. In this case, the disjunctive character is even more explicit since it is present in the suggested paraphrase. As Langton puts it, on this account, "Jonah asserted a common propositional content

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[92] STEPHEN LANGTON, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 21c, 1.4, p. 432–433: "Responsio. Dictum commune dixit et tantum unum dixit et illud dixit quod significabatur propositione, scilicet quod unum expediret pro populo mori, set pro alio putabat dicere uerum, scilicet ne amitteret locum et gentem, et pro alio fuit uerum, scilicet pro redemptione multorum"; STEPHEN LANGTON, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 21a, 2, p. 426: "Solutio. A spiritu sancto hoc dixit, licet mala intentione; dictum enim commune subfuit illi propositioni propter duplicem euentum: uera potuit esse, set pro quo euentu diceret Cayphas nesciuit. Istud ergo quid diceret fuit a spiritu sancto; pro quo euentu diceret, hoc fuit a diabolo."

[93] STEPHEN LANGTON, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 21c, 1.4, p. 432–433: "sicut ille qui dicit hominem currere, licet intelligat dicere uerum pro Sorte, et tamen sit uerum pro Platone, nichilominus tamen dicit uerum et dicit quod uult dicere, scilicet hoc dictum commune 'hominem currere'. Dicimus etiam quod Cayphas intellexit quid diceret et quid uellet dicere; uoluit enim dicere dictum commune 'unum hominem mori pro populo', set non intellexit pro quo euentu esset uerum, et ideo dixit auctoritas, ut dicit, quod prophetabat nesciens." Another version of this *quaestio* offers a more "pessimistic" diagnosis: Archimedes says something *false* even if his utterance expresses a truth, cf. STEPHEN LANGTON, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 21a, 2, p. 426: "sicut est si dicam 'homo currit': uerum est pro Sorte et ego dico pro Platone. Verum quidem subest uoci, set, quia pro alio euentu quam sit dico, dico falsum."

encompassing two events, which is equivalent to: Nineveh will be destroyed corporally or spiritually."[94]

The aim of this final section is to look at Stephen Langton's ideas through the lens of one of his students. Geoffrey of Poitiers applied the distinction between ambiguity and generality, which he inherited from his master, even to some cases that had been construed by Langton in different terms (see below, section 8.4). The problematic sentence "homo supponitur" takes center stage here. One of the tasks is to check whether Geoffrey's remarks shed light on Langton's analogy between "deus generat" and "homo supponitur." I should hasten to add that section 8 is slightly more technical and analytic due to the complexity involved.

In the question on God's essential names — in an earlier version of his unedited *Summa*, probably from the 1210s[95] — Geoffrey summarizes Langton's views on "deus generat" as follows:

> Magister dicit quod iste terminus 'deus' supponit pro essentia ubicumque ponatur, set quandoque trahitur — non dico 'restringitur' — ad supponendum pro persona, quando scilicet circa suppositum datur intelligi notio. Et ibidem supponit tam pro essentia quam pro persona, sicuti iste terminus 'homo', cum dicitur "homo supponitur", potest reddere locutionem ueram tam pro simplici suppositione quam pro personali.

> Set nota quod cum dicitur "deus generat", 'deus' supponit pro essentia et trahitur etiam ad supponendum pro patre, ita quod non pro alia persona. Vnde utraque istarum est uera "deus generat", "deus non generat". Affirmatiua est uera habito respectu ad personam, negatiua habito respectu ad essentiam, sicuti utraque istarum est uera — "homo supponitur",[96] "homo non supponitur", posito quod aliquis loquatur de homine indeterminate. "Homo supponitur" — hec est uera ratione simplicis suppositionis, similiter "homo non supponitur" ratione personalis suppositionis. Habet enim iste terminus 'homo' cum tali adiuncto

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[94] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 22, 2, p. 435: "Rationibus hoc sic astruitur: aut Ionas dixit quoddam dictum commune conuertibile cum hoc 'Niniue subuertetur corporaliter uel spiritualiter', aut dictum condicionale, scilicet 'Niniue subuertetur nisi peniteat', aut dictum cathegorice [*sc.* propositionis] hoc 'Niniue subuertetur corporaliter'. Si dictum commune: set ipse falsam causam intellexit, quia corporalem subuersionem, et nichilominus dixit uerum. Eadem ratione, si sciens et prudens dico falsum, ipsa tamen propositio significat uerum, ego dico uerum, sicut deus intellexit quoddam uerum uoce quam Ionas protulit. ... — Respondeo dupliciter. Primo sic: Ionas dixit uerum dictum commune complectens duos euentus, conuertibile cum hoc 'Niniue subuerti corporaliter uel spiritaliter'."

[95] Cf. above, n. 12.

[96] Ms. Kl has "supponit" here, but only in this single case. Bo, Br, Li, and To have "supponitur."

suppositionem communem ad simplicem et ad personalem. Similiter, cum dicitur "deus generat", 'deus' habet communem suppositionem ad essentiam et ad personam.[97]

The first thing to notice is that, according to Geoffrey, Langton made a point of distinguishing the *trahere*-theory from the *restringere*-theory. As we saw, the *restringere*-theory was attributed to Praepositinus.[98] Second, the *trahere*-theory is understood in the sense of extending or amplifying, just like in the relevant passages of Langton's *Summa* and in question 2d (where, however, the *trahere* terminology was not used). Third, we learn from the second paragraph that, according to Geoffrey, the additional element in the common supposition of "deus" in "deus generat" is not "any person" but a specific person — namely, the Father. There are two possibilities here: either this is the way he understood Langton's *Summa* (as we saw, he would be justified in this reading) or in the second paragraph he is starting to put forward his own view.

Moreover, a marginal gloss in one of the manuscripts indirectly confirms the above analysis of "deus generat" as a true disjunction as opposed to a *propositio duplex*. With reference to "homo supponitur," the unidentified reader notes: "Non dico 'est multiplex', set 'habet duas causas ueritatis'."[99]

Let us then turn to Geoffrey's own account of "homo supponitur." In order to bring some order to the discussion, it is necessary to distinguish three types of scenario that Geoffrey seems to have in mind when he appeals to this semantic example in his *Summa*. These scenarios are specified in terms of the number of contexts of utterance, in terms of the number of speakers, in terms of what and how they utter, and in terms of how the sentence "homo supponitur" relates to the utterances:

1. The first scenario has one context in which one speaker, Plato, says something in the mode of simple supposition (e.g., "homo est dignissima creaturarum").

   – "Homo supponitur" relates to the object of Plato's utterance.

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[97] Cf. Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, Kl 6ra–rb (Bo 5ra–rb, Br 5vb, Li 4vb, To 7ra). The last sentences are copied almost verbatim from Langton's question 8. Ms. Li even reads "habet *quandam* communem suppositionem" like in Langton's *Summa*.

[98] Cf. above, n. 27.

[99] This comment (found in ms. Kl, in the left margin of folio 6ra) is meant to supplement Geoffrey's text, as shown by the addition of "nam" at the end; let me put it in the intended spot by means of square brackets: "iste terminus 'homo', cum dicitur 'homo supponitur', [non dico est multiplex, set habet duas causas ueritatis, nam] potest reddere locutionem ueram tam pro simplici suppositione quam pro personali." Cf. also below, section 8.3.

2. The second scenario has one context with two speakers: (i) Socrates says something in the mode of personal supposition (e.g., "Socrates est"), and (ii) Plato says something in simple supposition (e.g., "homo est dignissima creaturarum").

   – "Homo supponitur" relates jointly to the object of Socrates's utterance and to the object of Plato's utterance.

3. The third scenario has at least two separate contexts. In the first context Socrates says something in personal supposition (e.g., "Socrates est"), in the second Plato utters something with simple supposition (e.g., "homo est dignissima creaturarum").

   – "Homo supponitur" can relate either to the object of Socrates's utterance or to the object of Plato's utterance.

In sections 8.1–8.3, these scenarios will be assigned to five excerpts from Geoffrey's *Summa*. The person who asserts or assesses "homo supponitur" will always be called Archimedes.

8.1. First scenario: one context, one speaker

speaker	statement	supposition	truthmaker
Plato	homo est dignissima creaturarum	simple	HUMAN BEING
Archimedes	homo supponitur	common	HUMAN BEING
Archimedes	homo non supponitur	common	Socrates, Alcibiades, etc.[100]

Table 1. Geoffrey of Poitiers's first scenario
Archimedes is the person who asserts or assesses "homo supponitur"

The scenario specified in Table 1 seems to fit the above-quoted passage from Geoffrey's question on essential names:

> [Fragment 1] utraque istarum est uera — "homo supponitur", "homo non supponitur", posito quod aliquis loquatur de homine indeterminate. "Homo supponitur" — hec est uera ratione simplicis suppositionis, similiter "homo non supponitur" ratione personalis suppositionis. Habet enim iste terminus 'homo' cum tali adiuncto suppositionem communem ad simplicem et ad personalem.[101]

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[100] See the explanation below.
[101] Cf. GEOFFREY OF POITIERS, *Summa*, I, Kl 6ra–rb (Bo 5rb, Br 5vb, Li 4vb, To 7ra).

Although Fragment 1 lends itself to diverse interpretations, I propose that we consider the semantic statement "homo supponitur" in relation to a context in which someone (Plato) says something in the object language. The point is that Plato talks about HUMAN BEING ("aliquis loquitur de homine indeterminate") by saying something different from "homo supponitur": Table 1 assumes, for uniformity, that Plato utters "homo est dignissima creaturarum."[102] In other words, let us set aside the reading on which Geoffrey's "aliquis" refers to the person who asserts "homo supponitur" (Archimedes).

According to Table 1, Archimedes's statement "homo supponitur" inherits its supposition — both its type and its content — from Plato's utterance. Thus, it is the case both that (1) "homo" in "homo supponitur" has simple supposition (namely, it refers to HUMAN BEING as such) and that (2) HUMAN BEING makes "homo supponitur" true, because Plato talks about HUMAN BEING in our context.

And yet, somewhat paradoxically, the "homo" in "homo supponitur" must also retain its personal supposition alongside the simple one. To see this, recall from section 6 that "homo supponitur" and "homo non supponitur" must have the same supposition, just like "deus generat" and "deus non generat." But as we shall see in a moment, "homo non supponitur" has personal supposition in our context. If so, personal supposition must also linger in "homo supponitur." On the other hand, "homo supponitur" has simple supposition, so — by the same token — "homo" in "homo non supponitur" must also have simple supposition apart from the personal one. Of course, the only way to reconcile these postulates is to claim that "homo" has common — simple and personal — supposition both in "homo supponitur" and in "homo non supponitur." As we saw in section 6, this is the root of the analogy between the latter pair of semantic statements and the corresponding pair of trinitarian theses — "deus est generat" and "deus non generat."

But why does "homo non supponitur" have personal supposition in our context? Both Langton and Geoffrey take it for granted that "homo non supponitur" is true, at least in a scenario like the one specified in Table 1 ("posito quod aliquis loquitur de homine indeterminate"). But in our context, "homo non supponitur" is true only when two conditions are met: (1) the subject term of "homo non supponitur" refers to some particular human being, and (2) this human being is not the object of Plato's utterance "homo est dignissima creaturarum." In other words, if "homo non supponitur" is true, "homo" in "homo non supponitur" must have personal supposition. This is what Geoffrey means when he says

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[102] Alternatively, we may just suppose that Plato said something using the term "homo" without having any particular human being in mind. Or at least Plato's utterance must not *per se* (by purely linguistic means) reveal the identity of any particular human being.

that "homo non supponitur" is true with regard to personal supposition (*ratione personalis suppositionis*).

By way of illustration, let us take an arbitrary human being, call him Socrates, and assume that "homo non supponitur" is about Socrates. Clearly, in our context it is true that Socrates is not supposited (*Socrates non supponitur*), since Plato is not talking about Socrates. Thus, on the assumption that "homo" personally stands for Socrates, Socrates makes "homo non supponitur" true.

By contrast, even though Socrates is somehow included in the common supposition of "homo supponitur," he is not the actual truthmaker of "homo supponitur." "Homo supponitur" is made true by HUMAN BEING.

8.2. Second scenario: one context, two speakers

speaker	statement	supposition	truth value
Socrates	Socrates est	personal	(irrelevant)
Plato	homo est dignissima creaturarum	simple	(irrelevant)
Archimedes	homo supponitur a Socrate	personal	true
Archimedes	homo supponitur a Platone	simple	true
Archimedes	aliquis homo supponitur ab istis[103]	personal	false!
Archimedes	aliqui homines supponuntur ab istis	personal	false!
Archimedes	homo supponitur ab istis	common	true?
Archimedes	homo supponitur	common	true

Table 2. Geoffrey of Poitiers's second scenario

Table 2 is designed to represent the use of "homo supponitur" in two versions of Geoffrey's question on the term "principium":

[Fragment 2]	[Fragment 3]
Item, pater est principium spiritus sancti, ... filius est principium spiritus sancti, ergo sunt aliquod principium spiritus sancti uel aliqua principia ...	Et non ualet hec argumentatio: pater est principium spiritus sancti, filius est principium spiritus sancti, ergo sunt aliquod principium uel aliqua principia.

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[103] "Ab istis," i.e., both by Socrates and by Plato (jointly).

Et instamus argumento hoc modo: ponatur quod aliquis dicat "homo est dignissima creaturarum" et alius dicat "Sortes est". Homo supponitur ab isto, homo supponitur ab illo, ergo aliquis homo supponitur ab istis, uel aliqui homines; quorum utrumque falsum est.[104]

Instantia: homo supponitur a Sorte, homo supponitur a Platone. Vnus dicit "Sortes est", et alius dicit "homo est",[105] ergo aliquis homo supponitur a Sorte et a Platone uel aliqui homines.[106]

The sentence "aliquis homo supponitur ab istis" is false because, according to Table 2, Socrates speaks of a particular human being (Socrates), while Plato talks about HUMAN BEING, so they do not refer to the same human being. By contrast, "homo supponitur ab istis" might be deemed true since both Socrates and Plato appeal to the same signification of "homo" albeit in different supposition modes.

Arguably, Archimedes's statement "homo supponitur" is also true with regard to this context. It is made true both by the object of Socrates's utterance and by the object of Plato's utterance. What, then, is the supposition of "homo" in "homo supponitur" given that Archimedes's statement is meant to relate to *both* utterances? We might imagine Geoffrey saying that Archimedes's "homo" has a common supposition, since it refers both personally to the object of Socrates's utterance and simply to the object of Plato's utterance. Both components of the common supposition of "homo supponitur" are inherited, so to speak, from the sentences uttered by Socrates and Plato.

Is "homo supponitur" in this scenario analogous to "deus generat"? Perhaps. If so, then the object of Socrates's utterance (Socrates) would be the counterpart of the divine being, and the object of Plato's utterance (HUMAN BEING) would correspond to the Father (or "any person"). Of course, the analogy would only be partial, because "deus generat" is made true only by the Father, not by the divine being, whereas "homo supponitur" in the context specified by Table 2 is made true both by the object of Socrates's utterance and by the object of Plato's utterance. Another problem with the analogy would be that in Langton the verb "supponitur" was said to amplify the supposition of "homo," so that "homo" not only referred to particular humans but also to HUMAN BEING as

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[104] Cf. GEOFFREY OF POITIERS, *Summa*, I, Kl 19va (Bo 18rb, Br 17vb, Li 13vb, To 25vb). This earlier version of the question is also copied in the margins of folio 19 of ms. Pa.

[105] In the left column of the table we have "homo est dignissima creaturarum." I will leave aside this difference here, assuming that both are cases of simple supposition in a broad sense. Or perhaps the text in the right column should be emended.

[106] GEOFFREY OF POITIERS, *Summa*, I, Pa 19vb (Av 24vb).

such. In the present case, the simple and personal suppositions of "homo" in "homo supponitur" seem more symmetrical.

8.3. *Third scenario: two contexts, two speakers*

context	speaker	statement	supposition	*suppositum*	truth value
S	Socrates	Socrates est	personal	Socrates	(irrelevant)
P	Plato	homo est dignissima creaturarum	simple	HUMAN BEING	(irrelevant)
A→S	Archimedes	Socrates supponitur	personal	Socrates	true
A→S	Archimedes	homo supponitur	personal	Socrates	true
A→P	Archimedes	Socrates supponitur	personal	Socrates	false!
A→P	Archimedes	homo supponitur	simple[107]	HUMAN BEING	true
A→{S,P}	Archimedes	homo supponitur	common?	Socrates, HUMAN	true

Table 3. Geoffrey's third scenario

"A" is an Archimedean point outside of S and P at which Archimedes asserts or assesses "homo supponitur." "A→S" means that Archimedes relates "homo supponitur" to S. If what Archimedes is doing is *asserting* "homo supponitur," then "A→{S,P}" means that he relates "homo supponitur" to S and P in a disjunctive or indefinite way. If Archimedes *assesses* "homo supponitur," then "A→{S,P}" means that Archimedes has two possibilities: he can relate "homo supponitur" to S and he can relate it to P.

Consider an excerpt from Geoffrey's question on the essential names, which was quoted at the beginning of this section and belongs to Geoffrey's summary of Langton's views:

> [Fragment 4] iste terminus 'homo' cum dicitur "homo supponitur" potest reddere locutionem ueram tam pro simplici suppositione quam pro personali.[108]

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[107] Geoffrey seems to rule out the possibility that "homo supponitur" could be taken in personal supposition in relation to P. He assumes that the proper referential interpretation is determined by the mode of supposition in Plato's utterance (or by the principle of charity), see Fragment 5.

[108] Cf. GEOFFREY OF POITIERS, *Summa*, I, Kl 6ra (Bo 5ra–rb, Br 5vb, Li 4vb, To 7ra).

This statement is extremely succinct (like in Langton), but it seems that the author might be envisioning scenario 3. There is, however, a text that fits Table 3 more explicitly. It is found at the beginning of the same version of Geoffrey's *Summa*, where he discusses the predicate "sunt unus aeternus" ("are one eternal", where the point is that "one" and "eternal" are masculine). Fragment 5 is crucial for my primary purpose, because it both employs the analogy with "homo supponitur" and constitutes an indirect argument for the claim that "deus generat" was not ambiguous (*duplex*) to Langton's mind:

> [Fragment 5] Solutio. Dicunt magistri nostri quod masculinum ponitur pro neutro, sicut cum dicitur "unus patri cum filio", 'unus' ponitur pro 'unum', et generaliter ponunt regulam quod ubicumque substantiuatur masculinum pro essentia, ponitur masculinum pro neutro.

> Nos dicimus quod sine aliqua distinctione hec est uera "pater et filius et spiritus sanctus sunt unus eternus", quia cum tali adiuncto potest teneri pro essentia uel pro persona indifferenter, et tantum pro illo tenebitur pro quo locutio erit uera. Vnde non dicimus quod hec sit duplex "pater et filius et spiritus sanctus sunt unus eternus", set habet duas causas ueritatis, quia cum significet tantum essentiam hec dictio 'eternus', ita quod non connotet aliquem intellectum de distinctione, bene potest supponere pro essentia; et cum sit masculini generis, quantum ad accidens bene potest supponere pro persona. Et ita, cum utrolibet modo possit reddere locutionem ueram, tantum hec erit uera "pater et filius et spiritus sanctus sunt unus eternus," quia non poterit teneri ibi nisi pro illo pro quo locutio erit uera.[109] Vnde non est duplex.

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[109] There are at least three ways of understanding this statement. (1) "Tantum hec erit uera" could mean that only this affirmative statement ("…sunt unus eternus," where "eternus" refers to the divine being) is true, presumably in contrast to its negative counterpart ("non … sunt unus eternus"), which might be wrongly regarded as true on the grounds that "eternus" could refer to a person. Recall that a situation in which both an affirmation and the corresponding propositional negation are true is a criterion for ambiguity. (2) Geoffrey could be contrasting the true assertion "…sunt unus eternus," in which the predicate term refers to the divine being, with an affirmative statement in which the same or similar predicate term is taken to refer to a person instead of the divine being. (3) Geoffrey could be saying that this sentence ("…sunt unus eternus") is *only true*, in contrast to being both true and false. Being true and false at the same time is a symptom of ambiguity. But then a more appropriate word order would be "hec erit tantum uera," like in the following paragraph: "hec est tantum uera 'homo supponitur'."

Simile est cum dicitur "homo supponitur". Hec enim habet duas causas ueritatis. Si enim aliquis dicat "Sortes est",[110] iste terminus 'homo'[111] supponit tantum pro Sorte. Similiter, si aliquis dicat tantum "homo est dignissima creaturarum", et non fiat sermo de aliquo homine[112], hec est tantum uera "homo supponitur".[113]

In the last paragraph, Geoffrey asks us to imagine two separate situations (contexts of utterance) S and P, and "homo supponitur" is considered from an Archimedean point outside of S and P. In other words, this time we are not saying that "homo" in "homo supponitur" actually refers both to Socrates and to HUMAN BEING. Rather, the point is that the sentence-type "homo supponitur" is both *capable* of being about Socrates and *capable* of being about HUMAN BEING, depending on the context to which it is related.

The last sentence of Fragment 5 calls for some explanation. According to Table 3, Geoffrey's diagnosis regarding context P ("hec est tantum uera 'homo supponitur'") could be understood as follows: in relation to context P, in which Plato utters "homo est dignissima creaturarum," Archimedes is only entitled to say that the object of discourse is HUMAN BEING. In particular, Archimedes is in no position to hold that Socrates is the object of discourse in P. Accordingly, Geoffrey could contend that "hec est tantum uera 'homo supponitur'" — that is, the only true statement is "HUMAN BEING is the object of discourse." On this construal, "homo supponitur" is implicitly contrasted with "Socrates supponitur," which was true in context S.[114] On an alternative reading, which better matches the word order, "hec est tantum uera 'homo supponitur'" says that the

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[110] This reading, i.e., si enim aliquis dicat "Sortes est", iste terminus 'homo' supponit tantum pro Sorte, is preserved in the original version of the Bologna manuscript (Bo 1va). Subsequently, someone inserted {homo} between the lines in the same manuscript to the effect: si enim aliquis dicat "Sortes est *homo*", iste terminus 'homo' supponit tantum pro Sorte. We find the latter variant in the Brugge manuscript (Br 2ra). By contrast, mss. Klosterneuburg (Kl 2va) and Toledo (To 1vb) have: si enim aliquis *homo* dicit "Sortes est", iste terminus 'homo' supponit tantum pro Sorte. The Paris codex (Li 2rb) reads: si enim aliquis *homo* dicat "Sortes est *homo*", li 'homo' supponit tantum pro Sorte. In my view, in all these cases the additional *homo* is a mistake. Presumably, someone thought that {iste terminus 'homo'} lacks reference and added {homo} in the margin or between the lines (like in the Bologna manuscript). But Geoffrey's point had been that {iste terminus 'homo'} refers to {homo} in {"homo supponitur"} in the previous sentence. Kl and To put the spare {homo} after {aliquis}, where it makes slightly more sense. Unnervingly, Li has {homo} in both places. Cf. Fragments 2–3, where we have "Sortes est". Only Br and Li have "Sortes est homo" there.

[111] On my reading, 'homo' = the subject term in "homo supponitur."

[112] Mss. Li, Kl, and To have de aliquo homine *alio*. Ms. Bo also has de aliquo homine *alio*, but *alio* has been deleted by a reader. Ms. Br has de aliquo *alio* homine. Again, I suspect *alio* is an interpolation from the margin.

[113] Cf. GEOFFREY OF POITIERS, *Summa*, I, Kl 2rb–va (Bo 1va, Br 2ra, Li 2rb, To 1va–vb).

[114] In contrast to P, context S renders both sentences true: "homo supponitur" and "Socrates supponitur."

sentence "homo supponitur" uttered in context P is *only true* (i.e., simply true), in contrast to being both true and false. Being true and false at the same time would be a symptom of ambiguity.[115]

Either way, the upshot is that with respect to a given context S or P "homo supponitur" has a single, non-common supposition, but in isolation from S and P it might be said to have a double supposition in the sense that the sentence-type "homo supponitur" can equally relate either to the object of Socrates's utterance in S (i.e., to Socrates) or to the object of Plato's utterance in P (i.e., to HUMAN BEING). Still, Geoffrey is silent about common supposition here. He only assigns referents of "homo" in relation to single contexts S or P.

Someone willing to ascribe common supposition to "homo supponitur" in this scenario might point out that, according to Geoffrey, both the object of Socrates's utterance in S and the object of Plato's utterance in P are potential truthmakers of "homo supponitur." This is why he says that "homo supponitur" has two *causas veritatis*. But the set of potential *causae veritatis* should perhaps form a subset of the set of referents of the subject term (or be identical with this set). If so, Geoffrey might as well admit that from the perspective of the Archimedean point A the two relevant truthmakers are at the same time two *supposita* of "homo" in "homo supponitur," even though each of them is the exclusive referent of "homo" in one of the contexts: Socrates is the unique referent in context S, and HUMAN BEING is the unique referent in context P.

8.4. *"Unus aeternus": ambiguity vs two potential truthmakers*

Regardless of the manner in which we flesh out the semantic model in Fragment 5, it is clear that Geoffrey postulates a disjunctive or general analysis both in the case of "homo supponitur" and in the case of "pater et filius et spiritus sanctus sunt unus aeternus." In both cases, the key idea is that there are two potential truthmakers, which translate into disjunctive truth conditions:

1. "Homo supponitur" is true when either (a) "homo" in "homo supponitur" supposits for the object of Plato's utterance in context P or (b) "homo" in "homo supponitur" supposits for the object of Socrates's utterance in context S.

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[115] On yet another interpretation, "hec est tantum uera 'homo supponitur'" would mean that "homo supponitur" is true in contrast to its negative counterpart "non homo supponitur." Geoffrey's point would be that the propositional negation "non homo supponitur" might be wrongly regarded as true on the grounds that "homo" fails to refer to any particular human being in context P. Again, a situation in which both the affirmation and the negation are true would be a symptom of ambiguity. Cf. above, n. 109, for similar troubles with Geoffrey's assessment of "...sunt unus eternus," where, however, we had "tantum hec est uera" instead of "hec est tantum uera." This is a vexed issue, given that inversion is a common copy error.

2. "Pater et filius et spiritus sanctus sunt unus aeternus" is true when either (a) the three persons are one eternal being or (b) three persons are one eternal person.

One can immediately see that the analogy goes only so far, because in the theological case it is *a priori* clear that condition (b) cannot be satisfied. So, the only way for "pater et filius et spiritus sanctus sunt unus aeternus" to be true is for it to be true in virtue of (a).

The key point here is, as Geoffrey emphasizes, that the sentence is not ambiguous (*duplex*). The term "aeternus" can be taken to stand either for the divine being or for a person ("potest teneri pro essentia uel pro persona indifferenter").[116] This disjunctive or general reference does not lead to ambiguity ("sine aliqua distinctione est hec uera," "non est duplex, immo simpliciter uera"). Ambiguity — the property of being a *propositio duplex* — is clearly contrasted with having two potential truthmakers ("non dicimus quod hec sit duplex ... set habet duas causas ueritatis"). In other words, the sentence in question expresses only one disjunctive or general propositional content that has two potential sources of truth. We may call it a *dictum commune*, following Langton's account of Caiaphas's and Jonah's prophecy (section 7.2). Of course, in the present case, one of the theoretical truthmakers will never actually generate a true statement. What Geoffrey seems to have in mind, then, is that "aeternus" in the sentence in question has two *referents* and that the truth of the whole disjunctive sentence requires that at least one of those referents should make its own disjunct true.

Geoffrey obfuscates this point to some extent by overdoing his analysis in terms of the exegetical principle of charity: he argues that the correct reference of "aeternus" is determined in a top-down manner by the truth of the whole sentence ("tantum pro illo tenebitur pro quo locutio erit uera"). Once we know that the sentence is true, we can conclude — according to the principle of charity — that "aeternus" must supposit for the divine being.[117] This approach, however, seems to be at odds with the account in terms of a disjunctive or general propositional content that has two equally legitimate referents but happens to be true in virtue of one of them.

Nevertheless, the important observation here is that the situation described above might well be applied to our initial case of "deus generat." Langton's

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[116] "Indifferenter" might go either with the whole disjunction or just with "ponitur pro persona." On the first reading, the sentence means that "aeternus" could stand *equally* — *without distinction* — either for the divine being or for a person. On the second construal, the point is that the term "aeternus" can stand either for the divine being or *indefinitely* for a person, i.e., for any person (*pro qualibet persona*).

[117] A similar method of determining the correct *type* of supposition was later favored by some logicians (e.g., Paul of Venice), cf. C. Dutilh Novaes, "Supposition Theory," p. 1234b–1235a.

idea could be expressed in Geoffrey's terms as follows: "deus" in "deus generat" stands — without distinction — either for the divine being or for a person. We might also add that "deus generat" has two potential truthmakers (*causae veritatis*), but only in the sense explained above; that is, "deus" has two referents — the divine being and the Father — such that: (a) both are involved in the disjunctive truth condition of "deus generat" and (b) one of them happens to be the actual source of truth (i.e., the Father). Alternatively, the referents are the divine being and "any person," while the Father only counts as the actual truthmaker.

<center>CONCLUDING REMARKS</center>

If the above analysis has been on the right track, then Stephen Langton's notion of common supposition from the *Summa* does not involve ambiguity (*duplicitas*, *multiplicitas*) but should be explained in terms of generalized or disjunctive truth conditions. This means that a sentence like "deus generat" is true even if just one of the *supposita* of the subject term renders the sentence true. Accordingly, we are in no position to claim that on Langton's model "deus generat" is true with regard to a divine person but *false* with regard to the divine being. The sentence is simply true, just because one of the elements of the common supposition (namely, a person) happens to satisfy the predicate. As we just saw, some aspects of Langton's views were developed by Geoffrey of Poitiers, whose *Summa* throws light on several tricky issues, including the analogy between "deus generat" and "homo supponitur."

One of Langton's contemporaries, Peter Capuano († 1214), reports four different theories of the supposition of "deus" in "deus generat."[118] Three of them might be associated, at first glance at least, with some passage from the writings attributed to Langton. If the "disjunctive" interpretation of Langton's notion of common supposition is correct, it might perhaps be equated with the fourth theory of "deus generat" mentioned by Peter.[119] This theory certainly dovetails with Geoffrey's account of Langton's view.

It is worth noting that some dialecticians used disjunctive analysis to account for the generalized personal supposition, standardly called "determinate," which occurs in the case of sentences like "homo currit." The idea here is similar to what

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[118] Cf. PETER CAPUANO, *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 2, 4, ed. C. Pioppi, *La dottrina sui nomi essenziali di Dio nella 'Summa Theologiae' di Pietro Capuano: Edizione critica delle quaestiones I–XXIV*, Roma: Edizioni Università della Santa Croce, 2004, p. 113–117.

[119] Cf. PETER CAPUANO, *Summa*, I, q. 2, 4, p. 117: "Quarti dicunt quod hoc nomen 'Deus', ubicumque ponatur, supponit essentiam; ampliatur tamen eius suppositio quandoque ex verbo cui adiungitur ad supponendum pro illa persona determinate cui res verbi convenit; ut cum dicitur: 'Deus genuit', sensus est: 'essentia vel Pater genuit'; et de aliis huiusmodi iudicatur in hunc modum."

Langton had in mind in the case of "deus generat": "homo" stands for many humans *sub disiunctione*, so that the sentence "homo currit" is true if at least one singular sentence of the form "Socrates currit" is true, where Socrates is one of the disjunctive *supposita*.[120] Remarkably, Langton himself uses the phrase "sub disiunctione" to account for the common signification of the verb "est" encompassing both the uncreated and created being ("illud commune quasi sub disiunctione significat duas speciales").[121] It is also worth mentioning that the underlying tension between the disjunctive analysis and ambiguity in the case of "deus generat" would have its counterparts in logic; for instance, sentences like "a white thing was black" were standardly interpreted as unambiguous disjunctions in which "white thing" underwent ampliation ("either what is white was black or what was white was black"), whereas Ockham regarded them as ambiguous.[122]

One potential problem with Langton's notion of common supposition is that he elsewhere endorses the principle according to which suppositing for the divine being rules out standing for a person and vice versa.[123] Although this certainly poses a threat to the idea of internal consistency of Langton's oeuvre, it does not directly undermine the above interpretation. Besides, the rule seems to exclude suppositing jointly for the divine being and for a *specific* person, so Langton's account is invulnerable insofar as the common supposition was meant to encompass the divine being and "any person" (*quamlibet personam*).[124]

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[120] Cf., e.g., Roger Bacon, *Summulae dialectices*, II, 499, ed. A. de Libera, "Les 'Summulae dialectices' de Roger Bacon: I. *De termino*. II. *De enuntiatione*," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, vol. 53 (1986), p. 264: "Quod ad determinatam suppositionem duae condiciones exiguntur, scilicet, quod terminus supponens sit communis, et quod stet pro aliquibus sub disiunctione unius ad aliud, et ita, quod ad sui veritatem exigit solum unicam singularem veram." Cf. also E.J. Ashworth, "Terminist Logic," p. 156; C. Kahn, "Supposition and Properties of Terms," p. 230–231; W. Wciórka, "Wczesna teoria supozycji," p. 455, 459.

[121] Cf. Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 8, 6, p. 280.

[122] Cf. C. Kahn, "Supposition and Properties of Terms," p. 234–235.

[123] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Summa*, p. 74: "Persona est essentia ita quod non ea supposita supponatur essentia et econverso"; idem, *Commentarius in I Sententiarum*, dist. 34, p. 45: "Et nota, quod, licet persona sit essentia, non tamen supposita persona supponitur essentia vel econverso"; idem, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 1, 9, p. 239. Cf. also L. Valente, *Logique et théologie*, p. 349.

[124] Cf., e.g., Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, I, q. 5, 1, p. 263: "sicut 'essentia est pater', non tamen supposita essentia supponitur pater uel filius"; Geoffrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, I, Pa 6va (Av 8va): "Ad secundo obiectum dicimus quod licet hec argumentatio teneat in naturalibus 'hec res est illa, ergo hac re supposita supponitur illa', non tenet in theologicis duplici de causa: quia persona naturalis commetitur se sue essentie, quia in naturalibus una essentia est unica persona, ut essentia que est Sortis est unica persona, set essentia diuina est plurium personarum quelibet, et propter hoc necesse est quod supposita essentia non supponatur *aliqua* persona. Nulli enim persone conuenit quod conuenit essentie nature, scilicet esse tres personas uel esse trium personarum quamlibet. Si autem uellet dicere quod aliqua essentia, scilicet aliquis homo, est plures

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persone, quia est archidiaconus, cantor, decanus, ex hoc sequeretur quod illo homine supposito non supponeretur aliqua illarum personarum."

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STEPHEN LANGTON ON COMMON SUPPOSITION

Summary

This paper argues that the notion of the "common" supposition employed by Stephen Langton (fl. ca 1200, † 1228) does not involve ambiguity (*duplicitas*, *multiplicitas*) but should be explained in terms of generalized or disjunctive truth conditions. This means that a sentence such as "deus generat" ("God begets") is true even if just one of the referents of the subject term has the property attributed by the predicate. The common supposition of "deus" in this context encompasses both the divine being (*essentia*) and a person, whereas the distinctive property attached by "generat" inheres only in the Father. And yet we are in no position to claim that on Langton's model "deus generat" is true with regard to a divine person but *false* with regard to the divine being. The sentence "deus generat" is simply true, just because one of the elements of the common supposition happens to satisfy the predicate and make the sentence true. Some aspects of Langton's views were developed by his student Geoffrey of Poitiers, whose unedited *Summa 'Ego novissimus'* sheds light on several tricky points, including the analogy between "deus generat" and the semantic statement "homo supponitur," which is said to involve both simple and personal supposition.