Ad aliquid and *relatiuum*
Relation and Theory of Supposition in Petrus Hispanus's *Tractatus*

Mário João Rosas Rebelo Correia
Universidade do Porto
mariojoaorrc@gmail.com

Abstract

Petrus Hispanus discusses relation in two different contexts of the *Tractatus*. The first context is treatise III, about categories. The second is treatise VIII, where he theorizes the relative terms inside the context of supposition and the properties of terms. In this paper, after identifying Petrus Hispanus's theories and sources, the two contexts are compared with each other. It is concluded that there are similarities of treatment between the two different issues and that they are a shortcut to understand metaphysical tendencies. Also, in what concerns a specific kind of relative terms — relatives of diversity — there is a clear distinction between reference and supposition, which opens a space to some kind of mediation between things and language.

Keywords: *Ad aliquid*; *relatiuum*; categories; supposition; Petrus Hispanus

Resumen. Ad aliquid *y* relatiuum. *Relación y teoría de suposición en el* Tractatus *de Petrus Hispanus*

Petrus Hispanus aborda la relación en dos contextos distintos del *Tractatus*. El primer contexto es el tratado III, sobre las categorías. El segundo es el tratado VIII, donde teoriza sobre los términos relativos dentro del contexto de la suposición y la propiedad de los términos. En este artículo, tras identificar las teorías y fuentes de Petrus Hispanus, se comparan ambos contextos. Se concluye que hay semejanzas en el modo de tratar las dos distintas cuestiones y que ayudan a entender tendencias metafísicas. Por otro lado, en cuanto a un específico tipo de términos relativos —relativos de diversidad— se da una distinción clara entre referencia y suposición, que abre un espacio para algún tipo de mediación entre las cosas y el lenguaje.

Palabras clave: *Ad aliquid*; *relatiuum*; categorías; suposición; Petrus Hispanus

Summary

Introduction

The *Tractatus* (also known as *Summulae logicales*) were probably the most read and commented companion to logic of the whole Middle Ages. In addition to transmitting the fundamental contents of the Aristotelian logic (interpreted in the light of Boethius' commentaries), we find in some of these treatises elements that constitute a true innovation of scholasticism — the treatises on the properties of terms. There seems to be a clear division between those treatises that report the doctrines of the Aristotelian *Organon* and those that develop the theory of supposition and its consequences, but this division is not absolute at all. On the one hand, the theory of supposition (and of the properties of terms in general), although based on grammatical theories transmitted by Priscian (especially the so-called *Priscianus minor*, i.e., the last two books of the *Institutiones Grammaticae*), deals with the contextual variation of the scope of a term. There are in this treatment many procedures which, although not explicitly formulated, could be considered Aristotle's implicit semantic rules, as De Rijk did (cf. De Rijk, 2013: 15-28). One of the most operative tools to overcome difficulties in the Aristotelian thought is ambivalence of language. It is this ambivalence that allows Aristotle to overcome some dead ends of Platonic ideas. Just to give an example, he can coherently use the same noun to point out either some particular feature of an individual or this same feature intellectually separated from its inherence in that individual without having to posit a separate existence. De Rijk considers the example of the ambivalent use of *ousia* for three different things: a physical particular (or a primary substance), the *eidos* that is responsible for the subsistence of something and 'being-ness' in general (cf. De Rijk, 2013: 16-17). This ambivalence demands strict rules to know what is being said, for the sake of philosophical righteousness. This is precisely the purpose of the medieval theories of the properties of terms. Thus, it can be said that the theories of the properties of terms are simultaneously innovative and in continuity with Aristotelian basic assumptions.

Hereupon, I intend to set up a possible parallel between an element of aristotelian logic and another element of the theory of supposition in the *Tractatus*, namely, the treatment of the category of relation in *Tractatus III* (*De praedicamentis*) and the treatment of relative terms in *Tratactus VIII* (*De relativis*). Although early on the *Tractatus VIII* Petrus Hispanus makes the remark that one must clearly distinguish relation as a category from relative terms as "reminder of a thing before said" (*rei antelate recordativum*), there are however similarities in the theoretical approach to this two themes.

1. *De ad aliquid*

As mentioned before, Petrus Hispanus starts his *Tractatus VIII* about relatives distinguishing two kinds of relative:

> Relativum est duplex. Uno enim modo est relativum cuius esse est ad aliud quodammodo se habere; et sic relativum est unum de decem predicamentis.

> Alio autem modo relativum est rei antelate recordatio […]. Omissis autem relativis secundum primum modum, de relativis secundo modo intedimus hic (Petrus Hispanus, 1972, VIII, 1: 185).

The most natural attitude of the interpreter should be to separate this two topics, i.e., relation as category and relation as "reminder of a thing before said". In a first stage of this investigation, I will do so. I will start by exposing the category of relation in the third treatise and then relative terms in the eighth, contextualizing it inside the more general theory of supposition. Then, I will compare this two elements and identify the parallelisms between them.

Petrus Hispanus is not an innovator in his exposition of the Aristotelian doctrine of the categories or predicaments. Comparing the Aristotelian text with his, it could be said that it is almost a copy, with some additions from *Physics* in the explanation of inherence (*being in*), and from *Liber sex principiorum* when expounding two accidents, namely action and passion. Nevertheless, it must be said that he was one of the first authors of a compendium of logic that considered important to include a treatise on categories. Indeed, it was not a unanimous practice.

Let's begin wih the comparison between the Aristotelian text translated by Boethius and the text from *Tractatus III*:

ARISTOTLE (translatio Boetii)	PETRUS HISPANUS
Ad aliquid vero talia dicuntur quaecumque hoc ipsum quod sunt aliorum dicuntur, vel quomodolibet aliter ad aliud, ut maius hoc ipsum quod est ad aliud dicitur (aliquo enim maius dicitur), et duplex ad aliud dicitur hoc ipsum quod est (alicuius enim duplex dicitur); similiter autem et quaecumque alia talia sunt (Aristoteles Latinus, 1961: 13).	Ad aliquid vero talia dicuntur quecumque hoc ipsum quod sunt, aliorum esse dicuntur, vel quomodolibet aliter ad aliud. Ut duplum dimidii duplum et dimidium dupli dimidium, et pater filii pater et filius patris filius, et maius minore maius, et simile simili simile (Petrus Hispanus, 1972, III, 17: 34).

The only difference is in the examples. After giving the definition of the category of relation (*ad aliquid,* literally "to something" or "towards something") copied from Boethius' translation, Petrus Hispanus makes a threefold division of the relative things (or twofold, because two of them are correlatives):

> Relativorum quedam dicuntur secundum equiparantiam, ut que eodem nomine dicuntur, ut similis simili similis et equalis equali equalis et vicinus vicino vicinus. Alia vero secundum superpositionem, ut dominus, duplum, triplum. Alia vero secundum suppositionem, ut servus, subduplum, subtriplum, quia ista supponuntur aliis et alia superponuntur istis. Dominus enim superponitur servo et pater filio et duplum dimidio; servus vero supponitur domino et filius patri et dimidium duplo (Petrus Hispanus, 1972, III, 18: 34)

Also this division is not original. It can be found both in the book V of *Metaphysics* and in Boethius' commentary to *Categories.* Petrus Hispanus probably inspires himself in Boethius. This author makes a similar classification, although with different names. Boethius points out that there are things that we relate by predicating the same name in different cases (nominative, genitive, etc.) and other things by predicating different names. In his own words:

> Eorum autem quae secundum casus convertuntur, alia sunt quae eodem nomine praedicantur, alia vero quae dispari: cum enim dico simile simili simile est, et aequale aequali aequale est, et dissimile dissimili dissimile est, eisdem vocabulis eisdemque nomine tota fit praedicatio. Cum autem dico duplum medii duplum, vel majus minore majus, disparibus vocabulis facta est praedicatio (Boetius, 1997: 219B-C).

In the first type of things, that "are converted according to the case" (*quae convertuntur secundum casus*), we can find the petrinian relatives of equiparance, as "similar", which is similar to the similar; in the second, we have the pair *superpositum-suppositum*, such as "double", which is the double of its half. Boethius also mentions certain things that, without being convertible in the case, still can be considered relations, although not univocally. They are relations denominatively, such as position, which ends up being a proper category.

Petrus Hispanus continues establishing the common properties of relation. It is also a copy, almost *verbatim,* of the boethian translation, in which the only differences are the fact that he doesn't take care of a discussion about the necessity of inventing names to some correlatives that don't have a proper word, and the fact that he resumes some long expositions in a small phrase. Here is what he considers common to relation: some relative things admit contrariety and others don't; some relative things admit grading (more and less) and others don't; all the relative things are said with respect to their correlative, i.e., *ad convertentiam*; they have a simultaneous nature, and so they reappear in the explanation of the various meanings of simultaneity in the post-predicaments; when someone poses or supresses some relative thing, he poses or supresses equally its correlative; if someone knows the definition of a correlative, he knows the definition of the other. Between the fifth and the sixth properties, Petrus Hispanus gives, copying Aristotle, a slightly different definition of relation: *ad aliquid sunt quibus hoc ipsum esse est ad aliud quodammodo se habere* (Petrus Hispanus, 1972, III, 20: 35). This second definition is more restrictive, since only those things that are related in their own being (*hoc ipsum esse*) are considered *ad aliquid.*

Through this brief exposition *suppositio* appeared in a conceptual pair as a class of relatives, that is, posed under the things that are posed above them. This *suppositio* is not the same as the fundamental property of terms, which shows that Petrus Hispanus is mixing terminology from different origins.[1] However,

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1. The translators to English, Brian Copenhaver, Calvin Normore and Terence Parsons took the option to use the words "subordinate" and "superordinate" to translate the pair *suppo-*

as we shall see, supposition is a relation of subordination, or of "putting under", i.e., a *suppositum* is put under a term. Of course that this is not a relation as it is treated in the third treatise. Still, this parallelism is not innocuous. Before we get to a more concrete conclusion, we shall enter in the eighth treatise, devoted to relative terms as "reminders of things before said".

2. *De relativis*

Before we can start talking properly about relatives, we must contextualize the appearance of the theories of supposition, present Petrus Hispanus's definition of it and enframe the function of relative terms on it. Breafly (cf. De Rijk, 1996: 161-173; Ebbesen, 2007: 136-152), the development of a semantic theory about the properties of terms, especially between the 13th and the 14th centuries, is due to the use of classifications imported from grammar. The main sources of this classification are the last two books of Priscian's *Institutiones Grammaticae*. In this work, Priscian is deeply influenced by a grammarian with strong stoic influences: Apollonius Disculus. Maybe because of that, and given the fact that his knowledge of Aristotelianism and Platonism was precarious, much of his doctrines is incompatible with the medieval Aristotelian conceptual framework. This inadequacy made medieval logicians look for ingenious solutions to overcome flaws and incoherences (cf. Ebbesen, 2009: 85-107). In Priscian, supposition is an attempt to explain the need for a substrate in which qualities occur (in the stoic sense of quality) and so, for him supposition is positing a name as a subject of qualities (cf. Luhtala, 2009: 109-124). However, as was stated above, it is possible to find within the works of Aristotle implicit semantic strategies that inspire the treatment of supposition.

But what is supposition? It must be compared to signification. Petrus Hispanus defines it like this:

> Suppositio vero est acceptio termini substantivi pro aliquo. Differunt autem suppositio et significatio, quia significatio est per impositionem vocis ad rem significandam, suppositio vero est acceptio ipsius termini iam significantis rem pro aliquo (Petrus Hispanus, 1972, VI, 3: 80).

Signification is the conventional representation of a thing by a *vox* (elocution, word). Signification transforms a *vox* in a term. The term, in turn, can supposit. In other words, it can be in the place of something else in a certain context. A term *signifies* some form and *supposits for* a class of things that have this form in common. This class supposited by the term can vary according

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situm-superpositum. In the introduction, they identify three different uses of *suppositio*. Two of them are syntactical distinctions made with the pair *supponere-apponere*. This pair is used sometimes to distinguish the subject from the object and other times to distinguish the subject from the predicate. When *supponere* appears alone, it is used as a property of terms. They also identify all the passages where this name occurs. Cf. Copenhaver *et al.*, 2014, Intr. V, I: 62-63.

to context. Also, in particular uses, the term can also be taken separately from its contextual variations, or absolutely. It is the case of *suppositio naturalis,* where a term is taken in all its scope, in all the possibilities that are natural to it[2]. To give a simple example, the term "man" has only one signification, but according to its use, it can supposit for many different things: for a universal shared by all the things naturally fit to being called "man" (past, present and future, real and hypothetical) or it can supposit for present actual men existing at this moment; if it supposits for real actual existing men, it can supposit for them without suppositing for what underlies them, such as being bald, hairy, black, white, thin, fat, etc. According to the different kind of supposition, the truth conditions of a predication completely alter. I will not enter deeply on the petrinian taxonomy of the divisions of supposition (common and discrete, the common in natural and accidental, etc.). It is enough for our purpose to say that this classification is highly variable from author to author and that this variation is due to both logical (for example, the problem of discrete terms) and metaphysical problems (for example, to know if some terms supposit for some *ratio* or *intentio* of a thing that does not depend on the way this thing is but on the way we have access to it).

The approach to relative terms in the eighth treatise is due to the attempt to find rules to identify the kind of supposition envolved in the use of a term that is replacing another term. A relative term, following Priscian's *Institutiones Grammaticae*, is defined as *rei antelate recordatio,* "remembrance of the thing before said", such as *qui, ille, talis, alius, alter.* They are said with relation to an antecedent and either they repeat their *suppositum* or exclude it. In this context of relative terms, Petrus Hispanus explicitly distinguishes reference from supposition in order to explain the relatives of diversity. Hence, it is not very useful to use supposition and reference as synonyms. He divides relative terms in terms of substance and terms of accident. The first ones *refer* to something equal in number to its antecedent and the second ones *refer* an accident equal in species (not in number) to its antecedent. Both, if they are relatives of identity, *supposit for* the same as their antecedent; if they are relatives of diversity, they *supposit for* something different from their antecedent. The relatives of identity are subdivided in reflective and non-reflective. What is important to underline for our purpose is that Petrus Hispanus distinguishes the fact that relative terms point out to the content of other terms (reference) from their aptitude to "be in the place of something else" (supposition). This two features don't always coincide, as in the case of terms like "other", "different", "diverse", etc. When we use them, we must recall the term they refer to, but they supposit exactly for what this term doesn't supposit for. Although Petrus Hispanus doesn't say it in this context, this shows our intelectual capacity to separate three elements: the linguistic representation of a thing by means of a term (*significatio*); that which this representation demands to

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2. "Suppositio naturalis est acceptio termini communis pro omnibus a quibus aptus natus est participari" (Petrus Hispanus, 1972, VI, 4: 81).

be presented in order to be in the place of something else, or its reference; the "something" that the term supposits for (the *suppositum*). We can find in this little intermediate step between signification and supposition the idea that there is something intentional or mental that mediates the relation between words and things. Petrus Hispanus doesn't speak about this mediation when speaking about supposition, and didn't theorize explicitly about it, but he surely makes use of it many times, as when he needs to explain some fallacies in the seventh treatise[3].

3. Parallelisms

Through the explanation of Petrus Hispanus's theory of supposition, "being in the place of something else" was central. It is this "being in the place of something else" that makes me consider that supposition in general and relative terms in particular have similarities of treatment with a particular kind of the category of relation — the relatives according to *superpositio* and *suppositio*. A term "puts under" it a *suppositum.* Supposition can be seen as the relation of subordinating a reality to a term that signifies it. Here, the keyword is reality: the discussion about supposition becomes a matter of metaphysical frameworks.

This understanding of supposition as a relation doesn't intend to mix and ambiguate the matter of categories with the matter of properties of terms. I only intend to say that there are going to be parallel treatments between the category of relation and supposition[4]. There are subdivisions of supposition in which it is hard to understand the bridge between signification and supposition without an intermediate step that could be called intentional, as in the relatives of diversity. Also, if the category of relation is treated as a mere act of comparison of the intellect, it will have a parallel effect in what concerns the relation between signification and supposition.

I don't mean to say that we shouldn't separate the two contexts. They are clearly distinct. Nonetheless, they have a parallel structure of treatment. I also don't mean to make an interpretation of Petrus Hispanus. My only intention is to make patent what is promising about a text that will be used hundreds of times as a basis for further developments. And in fact, we can see this gaps, ambiguities and promises being developed in Petrus Hispanus' commentators. Finally, I also want to claim that this two fields, namely the category of relation

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3.   Just to give an example, in one of the seven fallacies *extra dictionem,* i.e., the fallacy named as *accidens*, Petrus Hispanus says the following: "Item: / '*risibile est proprium / homo est risibile / ergo homo est proprium*'; / nam *homo* accidit *risibili,* quia *risibile* ita est subiectum huius intentionis *proprium* quod non ratione *hominis;* et sic *homo* accidit *risibili*; et sic convertibile accidit convertibili" (Petrus Hispanus, VII, 114: 153).

4.   It is interesting to notice that this two matters are so close to each other that some commentators of the *Tractatus* felt the need to justify the place of categories in the order of the treatises. John Buridan and John Versor, among others, say that the treatise about categories should appear immediately before the treatise on supposition, as it is also about terms and their properties (Cf. Johannes Buridanus, 1998, 4.1.1.: 7; Petrus Hispanus and Johannes Versor, 1572: 207vE).

and relative terms, function as shortcuts to understand an author's metaphysical tendencies.

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Mário João Correia has a master degree in Philosophy (Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, 2015), where he studied, edited and translated the *Questio perutilis de cuiuscumque scientie subiecto, principaliter tamen naturalis philosophie* by Gomes of Lisbon (Gometius Hispanus, Gometius Portugalensis, Gometius Ulixbonensis). In his master dissertation, he also did the first transcription of Gomes of Lisbon's unpublished work *Scriptum super Questiones Methaphisice Antonii Andree*. He is preparing a PhD thesis on the problems of the sufficiency and derivation of the Aristotelian categories in medieval and late scholasticism.

Mário João Correia tiene un máster en Filosofía (Faculdade de Letras en la Universidade do Porto, 2015), durante el cual estudió, editó y tradujo la *Questio perutilis de cuiuscumque scientie subiecto, principaliter tamen naturalis philosophie* de Gomes de Lisboa (Gometius Hispanus, Gometius Portugalensis, Gometius Ulixbonensis). En su disertación de máster también realizó la primera transcripción de la obra inédita *Scriptum super Questiones Methaphisice Antonii Andree* de Gomes de Lisboa. Actualmente está preparando su tesis de doctorado sobre los problemas de la suficiencia y derivación de las categorías aristotélicas en el escolasticismo medieval y tardío.