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**Generality and What Porphyry Defines.
On a Recurring Question in Realist *Isagoge* Commentaries
around 1100**

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Realist logical commentaries from 1080–1150 (referred to below as twelfth-century commentaries) mention properties corresponding to the five Porphyrian predicables (genus, species, difference, proprium, and accident), properties such as generality (*generalitas*), speciality (*specialitas*), etc. These properties—predicable properties hereafter—point to what makes each predicable the predicable that it is: generality, for instance, makes a genus a genus. As Peter Abelard tells us, the authors of these logical commentaries view names of predicables as derivatives (*sumpta*), deriving from predicable properties, so that “genus” derives from generality just as “white” derives from whiteness.¹ Abelard sees the talk about predicable properties as harmless if put in a vocalist context, i.e.

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¹ Peter Abelard, *Logica ingredientibus*, p. 125. This constitutes an innovation because nothing in Aristotle or Porphyry implies that “genus” and “species” are derivatives. Following Porphyry, only names of differences can have such a status (Porphyry, *Isagoge*, I, p. 3, ll. 11–12). In Avicenna, this would apply to generic names, in a wide sense, as genera identify with *differentiae*. See Thom 2016, esp. pp. 140–41, 156.

if predicable properties amount to properties of words.¹ But he advocates that realist commentators stop putting such properties in the extra-vocal world, since it leads to many intricacies.²

Realist commentators mention predicable properties in various contexts: 1. When wondering what Porphyry actually defines in the *Isagoge*; 2. When asking whether predicable properties should exist in individuals (based on the principle from *Categories* 5 that everything found in secondary substances must also exist in some primary substance); 3. When addressing ontological issues following from the admission of such properties (usually in *Categories* 7, since generality and speciality were often thought to be relations); 4. When dealing with argumentative loci, since for William of Champeaux properties of things warrant the validity of inferences, as the property of generality warrants the locus *a genere* (e.g.: if this stone is not an animal, it is not a man).³ The passages from context 2., i.e. the Descent Problem, have been studied elsewhere.⁴ Here, I tackle context 1: the mention of predicable properties, like generality, in connection with what Porphyry defines, or the Definitum Problem.⁵ I shall consider texts from contexts 3. and 4. in future studies.

Various *Isagoge* commentaries mention the Definitum Problem when dealing with the definition of genus given by Porphyry: “genus is what is

¹ Peter Abelard, *Logica ingredientibus*, pp. 35, 39, and 125. Others thought that “genus” derives from the aptitude of predication. See Anonymus, *Glossae secundum vocales* (P11), Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana M63 sup., f. 77ra. For an edition of P11, see *Testi medioevali inediti*.

² Peter Abelard, *Logica ingredientibus*, p. 125.

³ On this see Guilfooy 2005.

⁴ See Girard, forthcoming.

⁵ I take definition and description as equivalent here. Sometimes commentators speak of a description of genus, since genus was considered undefinable, usually on the grounds that definitions require a genus and a difference. Most of the commentaries that I analyse here mention the argument: Pseudo-Rabanus, *Super Porphyrium* (only P3 hereafter), p. 93; P14, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France 17813, f. 4rb; P16, München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 14458, f. 87ra. They follow Boethius on this: Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii commentorum editio secunda*, p. 180, ll. 20–22. See Barnes’s introduction in Porphyry, *Introduction*, pp. 58–62.

predicated of many differing in species in answer to the question ‘What is it?’”¹ But no authority (either Porphyrian or Boethian) suggests raising such a problem, let alone that generality should play any part in its resolution. Thus the Definitum Problem constitutes an non-authoritative topic of discussion. This implies that commentaries preserving such peculiar discussions are likely to be connected in some way.

The Definitum Problem has philosophical relevance: it has to do with what words like “genus” and “species” actually stand for. Where one might think that such words only stand for second-order concepts, these texts consider how “genus” as used in Porphyry’s definition refers to other words like “animal” but also to real beings. The heart of the matter is to understand what exactly in the complex meaning of “genus” should be prioritized if one want to glose Porphyry’s definition right.

I first specify which commentaries I study here, formulate hypotheses as to why they might have come to formulate the Definitum Problem in the way they did, and separate the commentaries into two groups; in the second and third section, I describe the texts from each group in turn; in the fourth, I analyse the late evolution of the Definitum Problem; in the fifth, I conclude and add further remarks about what this study teaches us about each group of commentaries, as well as about textual data still reported missing.

1 The Definitum Problem in P3, P14, P16, and P28

Four extant twelfth-century *Isagoge* commentaries preserve a rather similar treatment of the Definitum Problem: P3, P14, P16, and P28.² They all raise the Definitum Problem in relation to the first predicable (genus), mention as potential answers both what I will call the Generality Answer (Porphyry defines generality) and the Bearer Answer (Porphyry defines the bearer of generality), and develop some nearly identical initial objections against one or the other solution. P3 introduces the problem as follows:

¹ Porphyry, *Isagoge*, I, p. 2, ll. 15–17.

² For the sigla, see Marenbon 2018, pp. 172–88.

We ask here what is being described in this description: the thing that bears generality, generality itself, or the word that is “genus.”¹

All four commentaries also present two versions of the Bearer Answer: the Singular Bearer Answer (Porphyry defines some bearer of generality, for instance animal), and the All Bearers Answer (Porphyry defines all the bearers of generality at once, collectively).

Only P3 and P14 seriously consider a third solution, the Word Answer (Porphyry defines “genus”). As I emphasise below, the Word Answer amounts to an underdetermined and realist-compatible *de voce* answer where Porphyry defines “genus” without any determinate reference to what “genus” signifies. None of the twelfth-century commentaries tackles the more radical and challenging claim that Porphyry defines generic names signified by the name “genus” (except maybe for P17’s addition, which I won’t cover in detail).²

Out of context, the fact that the Definitum Problem revolves around generality, as in both the Generality Answer and the two versions of the Bearer Answer, may puzzle you. Two (speculative) hypotheses might help.

(Hypothesis 1) Realist commentators use predicable properties in *Isagoge* commentaries’ prologues to solve another problem, the Counting Problem.³

¹ P3, p. 95: “Hic quaeritur quid in hac descriptione describatur, utrum illa res quae generalitatem suscipit vel ipsa generalitas vel vox quae est ‘genus.’”

² But elsewhere, at the very beginning of the commentary, the Sankt Gallen version of P3 (Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek 134) tackles the radical *de voce* approach; the Paris version (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 13368) also seems to talk about signified names in an addition similarly located, but less clearly. On these additions, see Iwakuma 1992, p. 43–46 and Marenbon 2018, p. 163. On the Sankt Gallen version, see the article by Podolak in this volume. On the radical *de voce* approach, with contrasting views on its significance, see Cameron 2011 and Marenbon 2011.

³ Commentaries’ prologues also employ predicable properties to explain how some given thing is said to be some (intermediate) genus, for instance, when it is at the same time an (intermediate) species. See for instance P3, p. 61.

For these commentators, Porphyry deals with things, either directly or ultimately (as signified by names); and since Porphyry deals with five items, they want to identify *five things exactly*.¹ But genera, species, etc. are far more than five in number. To get to five and no more, commentators sometimes summon predicable properties: Porphyry deals with all the genera, species, etc. inasmuch as they possess one of the five predicable properties.² But then someone might have said: if the predicable properties are what is five in the subject matter of the Porphyrian treatise, Porphyry should describe these things, and not the genera, species, etc. So this whole set of discussions might have been primarily built in reaction to the presence of this terminology in prologues.

(Hypothesis 2) These realist commentators understand “genus” as a derivative (*sumptum*), and the analysis of *all* derivatives requires the distinction between a property, its bearer, and the derived word.³

This second hypothesis suffices to explain why the Definitum Problem might have popped up in such a form: if there are three ways to consider a derivative, it makes sense to ask what the definition of the derivative “genus” defines exactly. But the Counting Problem might have played some part as well. Anyhow, it played some part later in the development of the Definitum Problem.

¹ On the subject matter in prologues to *Isagoge* commentaries, see Podolak 2024.

² P17, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 3237, f. 125ra: “Praeparans Porphyrius introductiones ad praedicamenta Aristotelis habuit materiam in hoc opere quinque res: genus, speciem, differentiam, proprium et accidens. Nec intelligendum est quinque res discretas personaliter, cum generales de quibus agit innumerabiles sint et aliae similiter. Sed quinque dicuntur secundum quinque diversas proprietates, id est generalitatem, specialitatem et alias, secundum quas de rebus hic agitur.” Cf. f. 123ra (the beginning of the commentary has been copied twice). All transcriptions are my own.

³ The view of “genus” as a derivative could originate from Porphyry’s treatment of genus and species as relatives. Porphyry, *Isagoge*, p. 4, ll. 7–9. Since genus and species are relatives, there should be relations that make them relatives. In the *Categories* commentaries from the same period, the relative “father,” for example, is the derivative of the relation of paternity. On this, see Erismann 2014 and Martin 2016.

I use precisely this later influence of the Counting Problem as one of the two main criteria allowing the division of P3, P14, P16, and P28 into two groups. The other criteria is textual proximity. On the one side, there are:

1. P3 and P14, two connected commentaries that have been associated with William of Champeaux's school. They share the same basic text for this question about Porphyry's definition of genus, even if P14 sometimes innovates as well as modifies the structure of the section.¹ Both commentaries put forward a similar version of the Bearer Answer and both attempt to acknowledge alternative answers by ordering them in relation to the right one, i.e. the Bearer Answer. Another commentary, P17, can be associated with this group.

On the other side, we find:

2. P28 and P16, two commentaries that present different texts and replies but give more importance to the Counting Problem in the resolution of the Definitum Problem than texts from the first group do. Elements from another commentary, P20 (and by extension P19), seemingly depend on something resembling P16.

I now turn to the texts.

2 P3 and P14: The All Bearers Answer and the Ordering of False Opinions

P3 first raises objections against the Singular Bearer Answer (Porphyry defines some bearer of generality), the All Bearers Answer (Porphyry defines all bearers of generality collectively), and the Word Answer

¹ On the connection between P3 and P14, see Iwakuma 1999, pp. 121–22, Cameron 2015, pp. 51 and 60, Marenbon 2018, p. 165, and the article of Podolak in this special issue. I should mention that the Sankt Gallen version of P3, although sometimes closer to P14 than the three other versions of P3, gives the same text as the other versions of P3 here.

(Porphyry defines “genus”).¹ These initial objections rely on two basic rules for definitions:

Conversion Rule: if “*s* is *d*” is the definition of *s*, then every *d* is *s*.

Substitution Rule: if “*s* is *d*” is the definition of *s*, if *x* is *d*, *x* is *s*.

The objection to the Singular Bearer Answer runs as follows: Porphyry defines genus as what is predicated of many differing in species etc; if Porphyry defines some bearer of generality, for instance, animal, then according to the conversion rule animal would be predicable of everything that is predicated of many things differing in species etc. (for future reference, I tag the argument as [EVERYTHING PREDICATED OF MANY ETC. IS ANIMAL]). By extension, as P14 spells out, animal could also directly be predicated of every genus—of stone for instance.²

To the All Bearers Answer, one can object that if all generality bearers are collectively defined, then, according to the Substitution Rule, we would end up predicating the collection of generality bearers of anything that can be predicated of many differing in species, for instance of animal (hereafter [ANIMAL IS ANIMAL AND STONE ETC.]).³

¹ Interestingly, P14 already gives the gist of the determination when listing the options. See P14, f. 4va (my italics): “Sed prius considerandum est quid hic definiatur et quomodo definitio cum definito convertatur, <an> omnes res generales, scilicet animal et quaelibet aliae *in quantum participant generalitate* hic definiuntur, vel ipsa generalitas *in quantum est in subiectis*, vel haec vox ‘genus’ *secundum quod significat res generales*.”

² P3, p. 95 (text quoted without the small addition from Assisi): “Si dicamus quod res quae suscipit generalitatem hic definiatur, tunc animal hic definitur; et si animal hic definitur, tunc definitio illa est cum eo convertibilis; et sic omne quod praedicatur de pluribus differentibus specie etc est animal, quod falsum est.” Compare with P14, f. 4va (differences underlined): “Sed obicitur quod si omnes res generales hic definiuntur, tunc vel unaquaeque per se vel omnes insimul. Si unaquaeque, tunc animal, et si hoc est, tunc definitio illa est convertibilis {communitabilis ms.} cum eo, et sic omne quod praedicatur de pluribus etc. est animal, et ita lapis est animal, quod falsum est.”

³ P3, ed. Iwakuma, p. 95: “Si vero dicamus quod omnes res quae suscipiunt generalitatem insimul definiantur, similiter sequitur inconueniens, scilicet de quocumque praedicatur definitio, et definitum; et ita si definitio illa praedicatur de animali, et omnes res quae suscipiunt generalitatem, quae sunt definitum, praedicabuntur de eodem, quod est inconueniens.” Compare with P14, f. 4va (differences underlined): “Si vero omnes

Then, P3 lists two objections to the Generality Answer.¹ First, if Porphyry defines generality, then the definition will be predicated of generality, and so generality will be predicated of many differing in species. This is impossible, since generality is not predicated of many differing in species, for it is an (inferior) species in the category of relation. The second objection relies on the Substitution Rule, like in [ANIMAL IS ANIMAL AND STONE ETC.]: since being predicated of many differing in species etc. can well be predicated of animal, then, if being predicated of many differing in species etc. defines generality, generality can be predicated of animal (hereafter [ANIMAL IS GENERALITY]).²

Against the Word Answer, P3 mentions the following objection: since Porphyry said he would deal with things, he cannot deal with words only in the definitions he provides for the predicables (hereafter [PORPHYRY'S REALIST INTENTION]). As we will see below, the objection targets commentaries claiming that Porphyry deals with words (*voces*), but

simul dicantur hic definiri videtur inde inconueniens sequi per hanc regulam 'de quocumque praedicatur definitio et {id est *ms.*} definitum:' si enim definitio illa praedicatur de animali, et omnia quae ibi definiuntur de eo praedica<n>tur, quod non est verum." Here P14's text is clearer than all four P3 manuscripts, spelling out the *inconueniens* as separated from the rule.

¹ In general, the structure of P14's text differs from P3's: for whereas P3 exposes all initial objections first, P14 replies to each set of objections before exposing and replying to the next.

² P3, ed. Iwakuma, pp. 95–96: "Si autem velimus generalitatem ipsam hic definiri, tunc definitio sua de ea praedicabitur, et ita generalitas praedicatur de pluribus speciebus etc; quod falsum est, quia est specialissima species in praedicamento relationis, et item de quocumque praedicaretur illa definitio et generalitas, et sic animal est generalitas, et sic non est substantia, quod est inconueniens." Compare with P14, f. 4vb (differences underlined): "Rursus opponitur quod si dicatur 'generalitas hic definitur,' tunc definitio sua praedicatur de ea, et ita generalitas praedicatur de pluribus differentibus specie, quod falsum est, quia est species specialissima {alissima *ms. p.c.*} in praedicamento relationis. Item, secundum supradictam regulam de quocumque praedicatur illa definitio, et generalitas, et sic animal est generalitas, et sic non est substantia, quod est inconueniens."

without spelling out what these words signify, and so in a way that is compatible with realism.¹

When P3 and P14 give their own reply to the Definitum Problem, both commentaries defend all three answers, or more precisely, provide tools (italicised in the next quotation) to make all three answers entertainable.

We resolve this in diverse ways. For we say that this very thing that bears generality is described here *according to this bearing*, such as this thing, animal (and stone), has the description “what is predicated of many etc.,” not inasmuch as it is an animal but inasmuch as it can bear generality; the same goes for the other things that bear generality. ... Generality itself can also be defined, not in its proper being, but *inasmuch as it attaches to things*, that is, inasmuch as is shown in this description what things are its bearers. Indeed, “generality is defined here” is nothing other than “generality is determined in the things to which it attaches.” ... Moreover, we say that this word “genus” is described here *according to its signification*. For in this description is shown what are the significates of this word that is “genus.” And “the word is defined” is nothing other than “is shown for which thing it is a name.”²

¹ P3, p. 96: “Item si vox hic tantum definiatur sine respectu rerum, iam suum propositum egressus est, quia de rebus, scilicet de genere, de specie et differentia et cæteris se tractaturum proposuerat.” Compare with P14, f. 4vb (differences underlined): “Item, si ‘genus’ haec vox definitur, obicitur quod suum propositum Porphyrius egressus videtur, cum de rebus tractare proposuerit.” P14 misses the *tantum* that makes the point sharper in P3.

² P3, pp. 96–98: “Quod solvitur diversis modis. Dicitur enim quod revera illa res quae generalitatem suscipit secundum illam susceptionem hic describitur, ut animal et lapis haec res, non in eo quod animal est, sed in eo quod generalitatis susceptibile est, hanc descriptionem habet ‘quod praedicatur de pluribus etc’; eodem modo de ceteris quae generalitatem suscipiunt. ... Potest etiam ipsa generalitas esse definita, non in proprio esse, sed in quantum adiacet rebus, scilicet in eo quod in hac descriptione quae sint eius susceptibilia demonstratur. Nihil enim aliud est ‘generalitas hic definitur’ nisi generalitas determinatur in quibus adiaceat. ... Rursus dicitur quod haec vox ‘genus’ hic secundum suam significationem describitur. In hac enim descriptione quae sint huius vocis significata quae est ‘genus’ demonstratur, et nihil aliud est ‘vox definitur’ nisi ‘demonstratur quibus sit nomen.’” The first part from *diversis modis* to *generalitatem*

At first glance, this threefold answer seems neutral. The thing that bears generality can be defined inasmuch as it bears generality; generality itself can be defined inasmuch as it attaches to some bearer; the word “genus” can be defined inasmuch as it signifies some things. But at a closer look, the first answer (the Bearer Answer) is the main one, and all other answers are only acceptable if made compatible with it. To be able to say that Porphyry defines generality, the things that bear generality must appear in the description. To grant that “genus” is the *definitum*, one must concede that the description mention the *things* called “genus”; and these things do not differ from the bearers of generality themselves.

But what about conversion and substitution? In indirect reply to [EVERYTHING PREDICATED OF MANY ETC.] and [ANIMAL IS ANIMAL AND STONE], P3 claims that the definition of genus does not play by the general rules of definition. For if the Substitution Rule were to apply, we would end up granting predications like “Man is predicated of many differing in species,” because animal is predicated of many differing in species, and man is an animal. The Substitution Rule works when we attribute to animal its natural definition, not the definition of genus, which definition animal only receives through the property of generality (having nothing to do with the nature of animal).¹

Conversion is a different matter: Boethius says that any definition, including the definition of genus, must exhibit this feature.² Hence P3 leans towards the All Bearers Answer, because it allows for maintaining conversion somehow.

suscipiunt is absent from the reorganised text of P14. Corresponding to the other portions of text, P14 has (4vb): “Ad quod responde quod generalitas non in proprio esse sed secundum quod adiacet rebus hic definitur, et nihil aliud intelligi quando dicitur generalitas hic definiri nisi ea quibus adiacet determinari. ... Sic solve: in hac descriptione quae sit significatio huius vocis quae est ‘genus’ demonstratur, et nihil aliud est vocem hic definiri nisi quibus sit nomen determinari.”

¹ P3, p. 96: “Si vero huic opponitur definitioni quod superius diximus, scilicet de quocumque praedicatur definitio, et definitum, sciendum est quod regula illa nihil nocet huic sententiae, quia regula illa data est de definitionibus attributis secundum proprium esse rerum, non secundum aliquam extrinsecam proprietatem.”

² Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii commentorum editio secunda*, pp. 196–97.

If it is objected that the definition must be convertible with what is defined, there is no objection, because if animal and stone and tree and the others that possess generality are defined here, the definition can well be convertible with these by the term that is “genus.” So, when I say “every genus is predicated of many differing in species etc.” it is as if was said “every genus,” that is every significate of “genus,” that is animal, stone, tree, and the rest, “has this property,” that is to be predicated of many etc. But the conversion will be under a disjunction, as such: everything that is predicated of many etc. is a genus, that is either animal, or stone, or tree, and the rest. And don’t be amazed if the regular <predication> is without disjunction and the converse <one> with disjunction. Indeed, this is found in many cases, like here “every rational and irrational is an animal” and “every animal is either rational or irrational.” And Boethius says in the *Commentary* that this definition must necessarily convert with what it defines.¹

So, first we have to sustain the All Bearers Answer. P3 believes that Porphyry’s definition can define all bearers of generality at the same time through the word “genus.” Then conversion can well occur, but under a special condition. For we cannot say that everything predicated of many things differing in species is animal *and* stone *and* tree etc. collectively. But the conversion works under a disjunction, meaning by replacing conjunctions with disjunctions: what is predicated of many things differing in species is animal *or* stone *or* tree *or* one of the other bearers of generality.

¹ P3, p. 96–97: “Si iterum obiciatur quod definitio debet esse convertibilis cum suo definito, nihil obest, quia si animal et lapis et arbor et omnia quae habent generalitatem hic definiuntur, bene potest definitio esse convertibilis cum illis per hoc vocabulum quod ‘genus’ est; ut quando dico ‘omne genus praedicatur de pluribus differentibus specie etc.’ est quasi diceretur: omne genus, id est omne significativum generis, id est ‘animal’ ‘lapis’ ‘arbor’ et cetera habet illam proprietatem, scilicet quod praedicatur de pluribus etc. Sed conversio erit sub disiunctione, ita scilicet: omne quod praedicatur de pluribus etc est genus, id est vel animal vel lapis vel arbor et cetera. Ne mireris, si sine disiunctione recta est et conversa cum disiunctione; in multis enim sic invenitur, ut hic ‘omne rationale et irrationale est animal’ et ‘omne animal est vel rationale vel irrationale.’ Et quod necessario debet converti haec definitio cum suo definito, dicit Boethius in commento.”

Now, P14 modifies that portion of text and ends up providing a choice between two distinct solutions. The second one is identical to P3's, i.e. that conversion could work if the definitum is collective and the conversion happens under a disjunction.¹ The first answer, arguably P14's own take on the issue, argues that neither of the two rules (substitution *and conversion*) applies here because the definition of genus is not a proper definition.² This option makes the Singular Bearer Answer adoptable.

Turning to the substitution-based objection against generality [ANIMAL IS GENERALITY], P3 rules it out because the definition defines generality only inasmuch as it attaches to things:

And according to this opinion, the aforementioned rule “of whatever we predicate the definition, we predicate what's defined” does not fall short, since generality is here subjected to that definition by its derivative (*sumptum*), it is by this same <derivative> that if it is predicated of something, its definition will also be predicated of that thing. For instance, since generality is predicated of animal by its derivative, that is by the term that is “genus,” the definition will be predicated of animal. And when I say that every genus is predicated of many etc., generality is indeed put as subject by its derivative, but the meaning of the proposition regards the

¹ P14, f. 4vb (differences underlined): “Vel potest dici quod ipsae res generales per hoc nomen quod est ‘genus’ cum hac definitione convertuntur, ut bene convertatur cum omnibus illis hoc modo: omne significatum generis, id est animal, lapis etc., praedicantur de pluribus est vel animal vel lapis vel aliquid tale. Nec turbet te quod recta est cum coniunctione et conversa cum disiunctione. In multis enim sic invenitur, ut hic ‘omne rationale et irrationale est animal’ et ‘omne animal vel est rationale vel irrationale.’ Quod autem converti debeat haec definitio in commento Boethius dicit.”

² P14, f. 4va–b: “Quod sic solvitur: quia cum hic describitur animal illa res communis secundum quandam suam accidentalem proprietatem et secundum hoc quod est genus non est necessarium converti descriptionem cum animali. Illae enim descriptiones tantum convertuntur cum descriptis quae notant omnes illas proprietates quae plenum esse descriptum faciunt. Nec cogit supradicta regula {i.e. *substitution*}, quia non est data nisi de definitionibus expressum esse rei explicantibus, non aliquam extrinsecam proprietatem.” On the placement of additions *before* complemented passages in such texts, see Grondeux and Rosier-Catach 2017, for instance pp. 65, 265, 318, 365, 397.

foundation, just as when I say “every white is a body,” whiteness indeed is put as subject, but the meaning of the proposition concerns the foundation (*invenitur circa fundamentum*).¹

We find explicitly expressed here the fact that “genus” and “species” are derivatives (*sumpta*), as in the realist texts described by Peter Abelard.² “Genus” works like “white.” When saying “every white is a body,” the accidental form whiteness is used as a subject, but this form is signified relative to its foundation (*circa fundamentum*), i.e. its bearer, i.e. body. Similarly, when saying “every genus is etc.,” generality is used as a subject, but generality is only signified in connection to its foundation. Thus, since derivatives signify the form they derive from, when Porphyry uses “genus” as a subject in his definition, he defines generality here as well, but still generality cannot be directly predicated of animal or stone, because generality is signified *circa fundamentum* by “genus.”

To the [PORPHYRY’S REALIST INTENTION] objection, P3 replies that Porphyry’s intention to deal with things cannot prevent anyone from saying that Porphyry defines the word “genus,” provided consideration of what “genus” signifies. For, as a derivative, “genus” points to generality and signifies it in relation to its bearer. Signification specified, P3 even

¹ P3, p. 97: “Et secundum hanc sententiam non fallat regula supradicta ‘de quocumque praedicatur definitio, et definitum,’ quia generalitas per suum sumptum illi definitioni subicitur et per idem si de aliquo praedicatur, de eodem definitio sua praedicabitur; ut <cum> {*add. Assisi*} de animali praedicatur generalitas per suum sumptum, id est per hoc vocabulum quod est ‘genus,’ de eodem praedicabitur definitio; et quando dico ‘omne genus praedicatur de pluribus etc,’ generalitas quidem subicitur per suum sumptum, sed tamen sensus propositionis circa fundamentum versatur, sicuti, quando ego dico ‘omne album est corpus,’ albedo quidem subicitur, sensus vero propositionis circa fundamentum reperitur.” P14’s text is essentially the same.

² See the introduction of this paper.

promises unproblematic conversion.¹ Why so? Arguably, because the solution preserving conversion for the significate of “genus” can apply.²

Apart from P3 and P14, the commentary P17 also preserve traces of the first group’s way of dealing with the Definitum Problem. But P17 only hints at the issue, and only four lines, which might easily go unnoticed, remain:

Described here are all general things, all of which the description converts with under a disjunction. And generality is here described regarding the foundations (*circa fundamenta*). And the name “genus” is here explained with its signification.³

The summary keeps the apparent neutrality of P3 and P14 answers, entertaining all three options under certain conditions. But as in P3, the All Bearers Answer, with the conversion under a disjunction that comes along with it, prevails.⁴ Yet, after these four lines, P17 adds a new, lengthier development where a possible new answer appears, this time incompatible with the other three. It consists of a radical vocalist reading: general names are being defined. This option can be developed into a threefold answer similar to the realist reading presented in P3 and P14: Porphyry defines all the general words, their properties, and the word “genus” itself.

¹ P3, ed. Iwakuma, p. 98: “Et tunc bona est conversio in definitione consignificando circa res; nec ideo tamen propositum egreditur, quia per vocem ipsam, cui definitio illa dicitur convenire ut suum significans, proprietates illa inesse rebus demonstratur.” P14’s text is essentially the same, but closer to the P3 version of Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 17813).

² The mention of conversion here is unexpected. Conversion was not mentioned in the initial arguments as playing against the *vox* option.

³ P17, f. 126vb: “Describuntur autem hic omnes res generales cum quibus omnibus sub disiunctione descriptio convertitur. Generalitas et hic circa fundamenta describitur. Et hoc nomen ‘genus’ cum eius significatio declaretur.”

⁴ P17, f. 126vb: “Potest autem dici quod in {utraque *del. ms.*} praedicta definitione de rebus non agitur sed de vocibus generalibus. ... Et secundum hanc expositionem voces generales et earum proprietates et earum nomen describitur.” The last sentence makes clear that the significates of general names are also signifying items themselves, and no signified *thing* is mentioned.

3 P28 and P16: Concerns with the Counting Problem

The Definitum Problem also appears at the very beginning of P28. The commentary begins by disqualifying the underdetermined vocalist answer altogether: no one entertains it. Some few elements from the old P3 text remain (italicised below) despite the reworkings:

We wonder therefore what Porphyry describes when he says “Genus is what is predicated of many differing in species in answer to ‘What is it?’ (*in eo quod quid sit*),” that is whether he defined generality, as some <thought>, or he defined animal and the other genera, the things that are the bearers of generality, as some thought, or this word “genus,” without connecting it to its significate. But this no one says: when we say that words are being defined we want to mean that by a phrase is explained what this word signifies. *Defining a word is nothing other than* making its significate clear <by> a phrase. But one can only make a significate clear by the collected properties; also, collecting the properties of something is making clear what the thing of which these are the properties is. Defining <then> is the same as making clear what the word “genus” signifies and making clear its significate. Therefore, the question remains: if <Porphyry> defines the significate of “genus,” is it animal and the others, or, <as> some thought, generality?¹

¹ P28, Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek 833, p. 4: “Quaeratur itaque quid describat Porphyrius dicens ‘Genus est quod de pluribus differentibus specie in eo quod quid sit praedicatur,’ utrum scilicet definiat generalitatem ut quibusdam <videtur>, an definiat animal et cetera genera, haec quae {quidem *ms.*} generalitatis susceptiva sunt, ut quibusdam videtur, an vocem istam ‘genus,’ non respiciendo ad eius significatum. Sed hoc nullus dicit. Quando voces definiri dicimus hoc intelligi volumus ut scilicet per orationem quod vox illa significet explicetur. Nihil quippe aliud est vocem definire quam eius significatum <per> orationem aperire; significatum quoque aperiri non possit nisi per suas proprietates collectas; proprietates quoque alicuius colligere hoc sit <aperire> quid {quod *ms.*} est illud cuius proprietates sunt illae. Definire idem <quod> quid ‘genus’ haec vox significat aperire et eius significatum aperire. Restat igitur quaestio quod si ‘generis’ definiat significatum, utrumne animal et cetera, vel, <ut> quibusdam videtur, generalitatem.”

P28 builds upon some section where P3 and P14 try to explain what defining a word amounts to. Since defining a word necessarily implies its significate, saying that Porphyry defines “genus” without any respect to its significate is no viable option. Sooner or later one will have to specify the significate of “genus”—and there, for P28, words are not a candidate worth mentioning. So, only the Bearer Answer and the Generality Answer remain. Interestingly, P28 reports that some thinkers indeed thought that Porphyry defines generality. But it remains unclear whether the commentary refers to some specific position whereby Porphyry defines generality as such, or if it merely targets the nuanced answers found in texts from the first group.

Some of P28’s initial objections stand close to those of P3 and P14. Against the Generality Answer, P28 develops a slightly different version of [ANIMAL IS GENERALITY]. But in P16’s version, the problem is not that if animal is generality, then animal would not be a substance anymore, but rather that then generality could not be an accident anymore, since accidents, Aristotle and Boethius say, cannot be predicated directly of substances.¹ Also, conversion issues constitute the main threat against the Singular Bearer Answer, as in P3’s [EVERYTHING PREDICATED OF MANY ETC. IS ANIMAL] argument.²

¹ P28, p. 4: “Sed neutrum definire videtur Porphyrium. Et prius de generalitate dicemus quod illa quam dat Porphyrius sua definitio non est. Si enim illa esset definitio generalitatis, tunc possit generalitas cum illa definitione de subiectis (animali scilicet et aliis) praedicari eorum accidens, <et> eorum accidens generalitatem non esse constaret. Quod Aristoteles testatur nullum scilicet accidens de subiecto praedicari nomine et ratione, huiusmodi verbis ‘eorum, inquit, quae sunt in subiecto in pluribus quidem neque nomen neque ratio etc.’ Testatur idem Boethio in Commento. Ait enim: ‘quicquid est in subiecto aequivoce dicitur de subiecto.’ Unde si dicamus generalitatem de animali praedicari cum praedicta definitione, cum constet generalitatem esse accidens eorum, quod est inconueniens, videmus auctoritati contraire. Non igitur dicendum est quod generalitatis sit illa definitio.”

² P28, p. 4: “Sed neque animalis neque aliorum esse videtur. Si enim definitio animalis aut alicuius aliorum esse<▷, cum eo converteretur; sed cum nullo convertitur; quare non est eorum definitio.”

But against the All Bearers Answer, P28 puts forward a new argument, based on the Counting Problem: if Porphyry defines all the genera at the same time, Porphyry does not deal with five things, but with many more.

And it is not the definition of all at once, that is of whatever has generality, as others want it. For Porphyry would not deal with five only, but with many more (*plura*), that is {with} all the genera.¹

The reference to other thinkers points towards texts from the first group. More specifically, P3 is targeted (P14 also introduces another answer; and P17 only gives a summary of P3's position before adding his take on a more radical vocalist reading).

Instead of the All Bearers Answer, which conflicts with the Counting Problem, P28 prefers speaking of a single collection of genera. However, because this collection does not itself bear generality but collects all generality bearers, P28's reply constitutes a variant of the All Bearers Answer.

We can solve this in the following way, saying that Porphyry defines all genera inasmuch as they participate in generality, but yet he does not deal with many more things (*plura*). For the collection of all the genera inasmuch as they participate in generality is one, and so we can say that all genera at the same time are defined by Porphyry and that the definition is not convertible with any of them, and the things that are being defined are not many (*plura*), but one. The same can be said for species.²

¹ P28, p. 4: "Neque [omne] est definitio omnium insimul secundum hoc quod {sed hoc quod quod *ms.*} habe<n>t generalitatem, ut alii volunt. Non enim iam tractaret Porphyrius tantum de quinque, sed de pluribus, scilicet omnibus generibus."

² P28, p. 4: "Quod sic possumus solvere, ut dicamus eum omnia genera definire secundum hoc quod generalitate participant, et tamen non de pluribus agere. Collectio enim omnium generum {genus *ms.*} <secundum> hoc quod generalitate participant unum est, et ita omnia genera insimul possumus dicere a Porphyrio definiri, neque definitionem cum singulis convertibilem, neque plura esse quae definiuntur, sed unum. Idem de specie dici convenit."

The unity of the collection helps P28 solve the Definitum Problem without failing the Counting Problem. P28 does not care to spell out how convertibility fares with its reply.

Another text, P16, also tackles the Definitum Problem. I group P16 with P28 because I think that, as in P28, the Counting Problem influences P16's reply more than conversion issues.

P16 considers the Singular Bearer Answer, the All Bearers Answer, and the Generality Answer.¹ Uniquely, P16 separates from the start the two bearer solutions, as if they were well-known candidates. It does not mention the Word Answer once, not even only to eliminate it.

No new initial objections are raised. Against the Singular Bearer Option, P16 reports an argument identical to P3's [EVERYTHING PREDICATED OF MANY ETC. IS ANIMAL], but with the explicit further consequence that then any genus, like colour or stone, would be animal, a consequence also spelled out in P14.² P16 also summons something similar to P3's [ANIMAL IS ANIMAL AND STONE ETC.] against the All Bearers Answer,³ and something similar to [ANIMAL IS GENERALITY] against the Generality Answer.⁴

In reply to the Definitum Problem, P16 first reports two opinions it will reject. According to the first opinion (a version of the Singular Bearer Answer), Porphyry can well define some singular bearer of generality, like animal, since definitions that do not present the nature of some thing do not require conversion.

¹ P16, f. 87ra-b: "Videndum est quid sit quod hic definitur, videlicet si hic definiatur aliquod genus, ut animal, corpus et ita de aliis singulis, vel si omnia collectim accepta definiantur, vel ipsa generalitas."

² P16, f. 87rb: "Animal vero hic definiri non potest: sic enim quicquid praedicatur de pluribus differentibus specie in eo quod quid sit est animal, cum definitio debeat esse convertibilis cum suo definito; adeo si ita est, color est animal, quod est inconueniens. Sic de aliis singulis quod hic non definiantur com<pro>bari potest."

³ P16, f. 87rb: "Collectim etiam definiri non possunt: quicquid enim praedicaretur de pluribus differentibus specie in eo quod quid sit esset omnia genera collectim accepta, et ita animal esset omnia genera insimul accepta quod esse non potest."

⁴ P16, f. 87rb: "Generalitas etiam hic non videtur definiri: sic enim animal esset generalitas."

On this topic, some are of the following opinion: they say that animal and the other genera are being defined here and they do not concede that definitions can be converted, but only those that present the being of the thing. But we say that this definition is convertible, even if other definitions can be found that cannot be converted. For Porphyry himself shows this in what follows, where it is said “Thus nothing either superfluous etc.”¹

The wording suggests acquaintance with something similar to P14’s suspected own reply. In rejecting this reply, P16 sides with P3: conversion has to occur here. It does not matter that one can give examples of definitions without conversion: for P16, you cannot reduce Porphyry’s definition of genus to one of them.

Then P16 reports P3’s reply, more precisely its first step: conversion can occur thanks to the name “genus.”

Others say that all singular genera are defined here under the name that is “genus,” and they say that the definition is convertible with them under the name that is “genus.”²

To be fair, P16 does not give much detail to hang on to and does not even mention conversion under a disjunction. Yet, the “all” (*omnia*) clearly points to the All Bearers Answer; and P3, P14, and even P17’s four-line summary preserve the expression “under the name that is ‘genus’ (*sub hoc nomine quod est ‘genus’*).” Even if P16 chooses to resolve the matter differently, it does not directly attack this position—maybe because it prefers it to P14’s first reply since it saves conversion.

¹ P16, f. 87rb: “De hac re talis quorundam est sententia. Dicunt enim animal et alia genera hic definiri nec concedunt definitiones posse converti nisi eas solas quae exponunt esse rei. Nos vero dicimus istam convertibilem esse, etsi aliae invenirentur quae converti non possent. Hoc enim ipse Porphyrius ostendit in sequentibus ubi dicitur ‘Nihil igitur neque superfluum etc.’”

² P16, f. 87rb: “Dicunt alii omnia singula genera hic definiri sub hoc nomine quod est ‘genus,’ et sub hoc nomine quod est ‘genus’ cum illis dicunt definitionem esse convertibilem.”

Instead P16 replies as follows: Porphyry defines a genus common to all genera, a meta-genus, so to speak:

But we say that a certain universal is being defined that contains this genus that is animal and that genus <that is> body and the others in the same way. To this universal the name that is “genus” is imposed so that it means the same as “that which participates in generality.” And when such a universal is defined, animal, body, and the others that participate in generality, inasmuch as they participate, are being defined through their universal.¹

Porphyry defines the prime bearer of generality, the meta-genus, or universal genus, that contains every other genera. Through the definition of this prime bearer of generality, Porphyry defines all other bearers of generality.² So the Singular Bearer Answer prevails, provided that the singular bearer is identified as the meta-genus.³

Although P16 does not speak about the Counting Problem, the solution developed immediately dissolves it: with one property for each predicable, we get five predicable properties, primarily belonging to five meta-bearers only. Now, the exact ontological status of such universals as meta-genus remains undiscussed here. P16’s author merely says that this is an issue to be treated when speaking about denominatives (commenting on the *Categories*?).⁴

¹ P16, f. 87rb: “Nos vero dicimus definiri quoddam universale quod continet hoc genus quod est animal et hoc genus corpus et cetera similiter, cui universali imponitur hoc nomen quod est ‘genus’ ut idem sit quod participans generalitatem. Dum autem huiusmodi universale definitur, animal, corpus, <et> cetera participantia generalitatem, secundum hoc quod participant, per illud suum universale definiuntur.”

² The lexicon of participation is present in P14 (partially), P28, and P16. I purposely choose not to read too much into it now, and I take participating in generality to mean the same as being a bearer of generality.

³ An immediate issue with the meta-genus gloss of Porphyry’s definition is that the definition does not seem to apply to it: the meta-genus cannot be defined as something predicated of many things differing in species.

⁴ P16, f. 87rb: “Huiusmodi universale et similium natura in denominativis {denominativus *ms.*} discutienda. Hoc solum hic sufficit determinare: quid hic definiatur.”

4 Evolution of the Definitum Problem

The treatment of the Definitum Problem proposed by P28 and P16 suggests that, at some point at least, the introduction of predicable properties was not seen as enough to solve the Counting Problem. What was needed was not only five properties but five subjects bearing these properties.

Looking downstream, one passage of the commentary connected to the school of Alberic, P20, elaborates on something like P16's view. P16's opinion implies that the meta-genus itself plays the part of a genus: it itself possesses generality, since it is the thing on which the name "genus" is imposed with the meaning "that which participates in generality." P20 denies that the meta-genus is itself a genus: if it were, it would have species and be predicated of them; but we cannot find a species of which such a genus would be predicated.¹ It must be a universal, but not a genus.

P20 then reports the following objection: if the meta-genus is not itself a genus, the definition of "genus" both defines genus and not a genus. The reply provided is that only genus is being defined. That this universal genus *is not a genus* cannot be added in a proposition expressing what is being defined, precisely because it is already subintended that what is being defined here is not a genus; indeed, the universal genus can be

¹ P20, Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek 2486, f. 48vb–49ra: "Quid praedicta definitione definiatur quaeritur, singulare scilicet vel universale. Sed quod singulare non sit manifestum est ... Quod ergo universale sit quod definitur ibi patet. Sed quaeritur cum sit universale an sit genus vel aliud universale. Si concedatur genus esse, ergo aliquam speciem de qua praedicatur in quid habet; sed non est ratio qua habeat unam speciem de qua praedicatur quin eadem de omni specie praedicetur, quia vel de omni vel de nulla praedicabitur. Quod de nulla praedicatur satis constat, quia cum quaeritur quid homo sit vel quid equus nequaquam potest respondi genus nec potest fieri praedicatio 'homo est genus' vel 'equus est genus,' nec de aliqua specie potest dici. Constat ergo quod aliud est universale quam genus quod definitur."

defined precisely because it is not itself a genus.¹ This is the only way the Definitum Problem can be solved.²

Some elements of P19 are also connected to this discussion about the meta-genus. P19 argues that the matter of the Porphyrian treatise is composed of five genera of universals that are not themselves universals, only commonly present in things. Otherwise, there would be such things in the world as a universal genus, a universal species, etc.³ So, for P19, the meta-genus cannot be an universal, it is only common to all genera. The drawback of that view, from a realist perspective, is that what Porphyry defines is not exactly a thing anymore (it is neither a substance nor an accident, and it does not add some thing in reality), even if it is *naturally* present in universals.

These passages from P20 and P19 suggest that at some point in the twelfth century, at least for one school, the meta-genus claim became a topic of discussion that, from our very limited perspective, overshadowed the old discussion, seemingly grounded on old opinions, whether Porphyry defined generality or its bearer.

¹ P20, f. 49ra: “Ad hoc dicendum est quod talis locutio, scilicet ‘definitur hic genus et universale quod non est genus, et sic genus et non genus,’ falsa est. Quia postquam dictum est ‘definitur hic genus’ non postea subdendum est ‘et non genus,’ quia hoc inde concessum est, scilicet definiri quod non est genus. Ut dictum est, genus definitur hic, quia hoc ipsum genus quod definitur non est genus.”

² For a parallel discussion of the generic paradox: Anonymus, *Summa sophisticorum elencorum*, liber I, c. 1, p. 296: “Et sciendum quod non debet concedi hec disiunctio, ut cum dicitur est generis et non-generis, quia cum dicitur quod est generis, tunc dicitur quod est non-generis.”

³ P19, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud. Lat. 67, f. 6rb: “Materia sunt eius quinque genera universalium, id est universalia quinque generum, id est maneriarum. Ea autem genera universalium non sunt universalia, sed communia universalibus. Significantur etiam istis nominibus ‘genus,’ ‘species,’ ‘differentia,’ ‘proprium,’ ‘accidens,’ nec sunt substantiae nec accidentia, sed naturaliter universalibus inhaerentia. Dico autem ea non esse universalia licet sint communia, quia ex eis non habeant aliqua existere {exististere *ms. a.c.*} nec propter ea rerum numerus crescit.”

5 Concluding Remarks and Further Developments

I hope to have shown how a similarly formulated version of the Definitum Problem has been preserved in four twelfth-century *Isagoge* commentaries. P3 values the All Bearers Answer, maintaining conversion via the word “genus” through a disjunction; P14 adds another option, allowing for the Singular Bearer Answer to hold, namely that Porphyrian definitions do not require conversion any more than they require substitution. P28 attacks the likes of P3: there must be a single thing defined, since Porphyry dealt with five things only, so one must speak of a collection of genera, a collection of generality bearers, rather than of a collective of genera. P28 does not describe this collection as a bearer of generality. P16 moves away from both P14’s and P3’s replies. But contrary to P28, it favours a variant of the Singular Bearer Answer: Porphyry defines some unique prime bearer of generality, a meta-genus, in which all other bearers of generality (animal, stone, etc.) participate. Texts from P20 and P19 seem to depend on this P16 development: they report discussions over the status of this meta-genus: is it really a genus, is it a universal, is it a thing?

Let me now add three final remarks: one about the connection between these texts; one about the link of P3 and P14 to the school of Champeaux; one about things yet to be found.

First, the presence of the same question in P28 and P16 as in P3 and P14 provides new information regarding the context, sources, and dating of the former two commentaries. For currently very little is known about P28 and P16. Although more work on other topics would be needed, dating them not too far apart from P14 seems reasonable enough. Anyway, one has to explain how all four commentaries are acquainted with the same opinions and initial arguments on this matter. For P16 at least, there is evidence, as seen, to suggest the mediation of something like P14.¹

¹ Marenbon 2018, pp. 160–61 (for P16) and 169–70 (for P28). More precisely, for P16, not much is known about the few non-Boethian bits—and the passage analysed here is one of these non-Boethian bits. Still, P16 is also known as being indirectly connected to P3 through P15, a commentary mainly made up of bits taken from P3 and P16 (Tarlazzi, forthcoming). But the connection I am now highlighting should be different. Moreover,

Second, about the connection of P3 and P14 to the school of William of Champeaux, I need to add two things. First, that the doctrine of the signification of derived terms found in both texts (signification of the form *circa fundamentum*) seemingly matches what we know about William. Abelard says that for William the derivative term does not name the quality, but determines it with respect to the foundation (*determinando circa fundamentum*).¹ But we also know that, for William, “white” signifies both the substance and the quality, but the quality first by representing it, and the substance secondarily, by naming it.² P3 and P14 do not make such distinctions explicitly, even if the idea that the derivative signifies the form and determines it towards the foundation seems at least compatible with them. Second, the way P3 and P14 raise the Definitum Problem bears strong connections to another commentary linked to William of Champeaux’s school: B8. At some point, the commentary wonders whether the locus *a genere* warranting *a genere* arguments amounts to generality itself, the bearer of generality, or the name “genus.”

It must be known whether the word that is “genus” or that thing that bears generality or generality itself is rightly called a locus, that is the seat of the argument (and the same for the others).³

The commentary argues there that things properly warrant arguments, and names only inasmuch as things are signified by them. B8 also insists that words must not be detached from the things they signify.⁴ Moreover,

(as far as I can tell) P15 does not preserve any version of the question about what Porphyry defines.

¹ Peter Abelard, *Logica ingredientibus. Glossae super Topica*, p. 272.

² See Grondeux and Rosier-Catach 2017, pp. 190–91.

³ B8, Vatican, Reg. lat. 230, f. 72ra (cf. Orléans, Bibliothèque municipale 266, p. 43a; Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal 910, f. 105ra): “Sciendum tamen est utrum illa vox quae est ‘genus’ vel res illa quae generalitatem {generaliter *ms. a.c.*} suscipit vel ipsa generalitas recte locus, id est sedes argumenti, dicatur <et> eodem modo de ceteris.”

⁴ B8, Vatican, Reg. lat. 230, f. 72ra (cf. Orléans, Bibliothèque municipale 266, p. 43a–b; Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal 910, f. 105ra): “Quod a diversis diversis modis dicitur.

according to B8 all three answers can be maintained, as both the bearers of generality and generality itself can be called a locus, but here the power of proof seems to come primarily from the real connection (*habitudo*) generality adds to its subject. All of this corresponds to what we know of William's teachings on argumentative warrants from commentary B9, i.e. arguments are warranted by things, or more precisely, by real connections (*habitudines*).¹ And all of this matches with the way P3 and P14 set the Definitum Problem, view signification as undetachable from words, and try to coordinate all potential answers to the same problem by specifying relations they bear to the correct one.²

Finally, three notes on things reported missing. First, according to P28, some authors readily accepted that Porphyry defines generality. I haven't been able to locate such an opinion, if it ever existed. Finding it would considerably increase our understanding of why the Definitum Problem

Quidam enim dicunt solas voces recte locos iudicari. Quidam vero dicunt rem ipsam esse sedem argumenti, non vocem, nisi gratia suae rei, ut <in> hoc sillogismo 'Omnis homo {oratio *ms.*} est animal; omne animal animatum; ergo omnis homo {oratio *ms.*} est animatus,' non hanc vocem quae est 'genus,' nec hanc vocem quae est 'animal,' dicunt esse sedem argumenti. Ipsae enim voces nihil probant nisi ad significata respiciant {respiciatur *ms.*}. Sed rem illam quae est animal vel ipsam generalitatem animali adiacentem sedem argumenti esse confirmant, ex quibus argumentum suam recipit firmitatem. Nos vero concedimus et ipsas voces gratia rerum et ipsas res proprie esse sedem argumenti, ut hanc vocem quae est 'genus' et hanc vocem quae est 'species' et cetera huiusmodi gratia suorum significatorum, et sua significata proprie dicimus esse argumentorum sedes. Rem vero illam quae est animal ideo dicimus esse sedem argumenti quod per eam habitudinem quam habet ad suas species, quod eorum genus est, {et *del. ms.*} ex ea trahitur firmitas argumenti; generalitatem vero animali adiacentem ideo locum {locus *ms.*} dicimus, quia per illam habitudinem sibi adiacentem ex animali suae species comprobantur, per quod ex ea argumenti firmitas recte trahi dicitur. Hanc vocem quae est 'genus,' ut dictum est, non proprie, sed tantum gratia rei sedem dicimus argumenti."

¹ B9, Orléans, Bibliothèque municipale 266, pp. 210b–11a: "Dicamus igitur rem esse locum, non tamen propter habitudinem, quod vult magister W., cum secundum nos quaedam habitudines nihil sint, ut generalitas et specialitas et cetera." For a lengthier transcription of this passage, see Green-Pedersen 1974, p. 18. On this topic, see Guilfooy 2005.

² A particular passage of the *Glosulae V* (Grondeux and Rosier-Catach 2011, pp. 313–14) stands as another interesting parallel, which I will tackle in a future study.

came to display the form it does in our four texts. Second, P16 says that the status of meta-genus should be discussed when dealing with denominatives, so not while commenting Porphyry, but rather Aristotle's *Categories*. There is no indication that such a treatment ever existed, and I have not been able to find a matching passage anyway. Third, I have also searched in vain for P3's conversion under a disjunction *as applied to definitions*. The view is surprising, to say the least: even if definitional conversion and conversion under a disjunction are sometimes compared to one another, conversion under a disjunction has a specific use, maintaining conversion between unequal terms, such as a genus and its species or its differences, and definitions just seem a wrong match for the part.¹ Moreover, according to P3 the usual example of a conversion under a disjunction is: "every rational and irrational is an animal" converting to "every animal is rational or irrational." But the claim that propositions about the division of the genera into species convert *from a conjunction to a disjunction* itself is questionable: according to the *De divisione* commentary D6, for instance, you make a mistake if you think that the proposition "every rational and irrational is an animal," even if it can be granted, has anything to do with the conversion into "every animal is rational or irrational." Rather, division conversions involve the disjunctive proposition "every rational or irrational is an animal."² From that perspective, even division conversions, operated under a disjunction,

¹ For a comparison: D6, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 7094A, f. 88va: "Ostenso quod genus per species et per differentias quandoque sive sicut posita nomina dividitur et etiam quod definitiones vel exempla sunt subdenda, intendit subsequenter dare quoddam praeceptum de divisione generis, hoc scilicet quod neque diminuta neque superflua debet esse ut convertatur sicut terminus, id est sicut definitio, videlicet divisum cum dividendis sub disiunctione convertatur et dividenda cum diviso, quemadmodum definitio cum suo definito."

² D6, f. 88va: "Sub disiunctione subicitur, ut cum dicimus 'omne animal aut est rationale aut irrationale,' et rursus quaelibet species est suum genus, id est qualibet species suo generi universaliter subicitur sub disiunctione, ut si dicamus 'quicquid est aut rationale aut irrationale est animal,' ideo hic dicimus sub disiunctione speciem subici suo generi, quia quamvis etiam sine disiunctione subiciatur, tamen nihil illud ad conversionem divisionis." On D6, see Iwakuma 1999, pp. 98–99.

cannot help one pass from a collective subject to a disjunctive one—which was the whole point for P3. Anyhow, more information on the use of disjunctions in conversions could prove precious.

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