Abstract
In 1981 I published an article called Early Supposition Theory. Then as now, the magisterial work on the subject was L.M. de Rijk’s Logica Modernorum, and then as now any discussion of the topic would have to rely to a great extent on the texts published there. This means that many of the problems that existed then still remain, but a couple of important new studies and several new texts have been published in the meantime, so it may be time to try to take stock of the situation. I will first look at the origin of the term suppositio and then at the chronology of our source texts.

Keywords
supposition, appellation, causa apparentiae, causa non existentiae

1. Whence suppositio?
In 1981 I tried to weaken L.M. de Rijk’s case for supposition in the logical sense being derived from Priscianic grammar, and more specifically his claim that in Priscian suppositum means ‘grammatical subject’. I think I was reasonably successful on that score. I did not, however, deny that twelfth-century grammarians’ use of suppositum was relevant, or that De Rijk’s ‘put as a subject’ was a good translation of their supponere, but I suggested that a common idea underlay the grammatical and the logical use of supposition, namely that the suppositum is or is claimed to be the bearer of a certain form: in the case of grammar the subject would then be called suppositum because it is claimed to be the bearer of the form indicated by the predicate; in the case of logic, the supposita of homo would be the individuals that bear the form of humanity, and which might be the bearers of whichever form is predicated of them in a sencence with homo for its subject. This idea of mine was not based on much hard evidence, but I continue to cherish it somehow.
In 1987, however, Kneepkens with his usual meticulous care argued forcefully for the view that the logicians’ use of *supponere* was developed from the grammatical use of *supponere verbo* with an understood *personam*, and that ultimately the grammarians’ usage should be traced back to their musings over a passage in Priscian\(^1\) containing the word *suppositum*.\(^2\) But he also demonstrated that the *suppositum–apposatum* analysis of sentences is not as old as we had previously thought. One of the key passages in Peter Helias turned out to be a later interpolation, and generally speaking, the *suppositum–apposatum* analysis only becomes prominent some time after the middle of the twelfth century. There remained a couple of places in which Peter used *supponere* in a relevant way, and, following a suggestion of Pinborg’s,\(^3\) Kneepkens proposed that Peter had borrowed the terminology from Gilbert the Porretan. De Libera’s paper for the 1987 symposium added more information about the Porretan trail, and more recently, Valente has further investigated that part of the history of supposition.\(^4\)

While Kneepkens was not very keen on my idea that the key idea is that something is the bearer of a form, his suggested connection to the Porretans was, in fact, grist to my mill. To the Porretans the metaphysics of form and bearer is quite central, and predicates introduce a form—substantial, accidental or individual—for the subject to bear.\(^5\)

---


\(^3\) Pinborg (1968) and (1972), 47-49. See also Nielsen (1982), 105.

\(^4\) De Libera (1987), 455; Valente (2008), esp. 275 ff. See also Valente’s contribution to this volume.