

Perjurer Paradox and other “insolubilia” in Stephen Langton’s *Quaestiones*.

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May 8, 2024

Abstract:

Stephen Langton’s (d. 1228) speculation often crosses the boundaries between ethics and logic. In one of Langton’s *Quaestiones* on perjury (the text will soon be published in volume III.3 of his *Quaestiones theologiae*, OUP – British Academy 2024), Langton discusses a situation in which a broken oath leads to a logical paradox. To solve it, Langton applies the same logical tool he uses to analyse a class of problematic sentences, namely, nonsensical *propositiones implicitae*. He avails himself of the sentence “Sortes de quo nemo enuntiat est homo” and suggests it works similarly to the analysed case. I aim to show that, in Langton, the focus on the intricacies of theological language goes together with remarkable attention to intentions and extra-mental contexts of the examined utterances.

The paper will be structured in the following way: first, I will briefly recall some of the 12th-century definitions of *propositio implicita*; second, the case of the paradoxical oath will be described, together with some of Langton’s caveats that help to determine the ethical constraints of the problem; third, Langton’s solution will be analysed and put in the context of the discussion on the *insolubilia*. Finally, I will show some typical strategies used to solve difficulties involved in the critical edition of Langton’s *Quaestiones* and similar texts.

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