

# Univocity in Scotus's Quaestiones super Metaphysicam: The Solution to a Riddle

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Scotus's *Questions on the Metaphysics* have always exerted a special fascination on scholars. Its effects can be described as a mixture of attraction and repulsion. Certainly, the work looks promising. Scotus, renowned as a profound metaphysician, is expected to have sized the opportunity of commenting on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* to express his original views on metaphysics itself, especially as no theological preoccupation was there to prevent him from developing his doctrines from a purely philosophical point of view. As Gilson remarked, when we study an important point in Scotus's thought, we would better start with what Scotus says in his *Questions on the Metaphysics*<sup>1</sup>. Soon, however, their attractiveness turns out to be deceptive. Their dense web of arguments discourages even the most enthusiastic reader. Sometimes their obscurity makes difficult to guess what Scotus was aiming at. Other times, it is even questionable whether a statement should be regarded as Scotus's own thought or as somebody else's opinion. What is worse, even when we succeed in understanding what Scotus held to be the case, we might be surprised at finding that Scotus's position is different from what we would expect and from what he states in his most celebrated work, i.e. in the various versions of his commentaries on the *Sentences*. In brief, Scotus's *Questions on the Metaphysics* do not seem to live up to the high expectations that they arouse.

Univocity is probably the best example to illustrate the surprising and at times frustrating character of Scotus's *Questions on the Metaphysics*. As is well known, Scotus is the first and most important upholder of the doctrine of the univocity of the concept of being. In contrast with a long and well-established Aristotelian tradition, he was the first to maintain that being is not analogous in its different applications. There is only one concept of being, common to God and creatures and to all the ten Aristotelian categories. Students and scholars of Scotus built an entire Scotistic metaphysics on this position, both in old and in recent times. Scotus

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<sup>1</sup> É. Gilson, *Avicenne et le point de départ de Duns Scot*, «Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge», 2 (1927), 89-149: 91.

presents his view on univocity in his commentaries on the *Sentences*, which are theological works. But the metaphysical implications of this view are so evident that scholars have suggested that one should speak of a ‘second beginning of metaphysics’ with reference to the very doctrine of the univocity of being and to Scotus’s notion of being as what is logically possible<sup>2</sup>. It may be surprising, however, to find out that when we turn to the *Questions on the Metaphysics*, and specifically to the question in which Scotus dealt with this issue, Scotus’s treatment is much more complicated than we would expect, and in the solution to this question he even ended up dismissing univocity in favor of what he called ‘logical equivocity’ and ‘metaphysical’ or ‘real analogy’<sup>3</sup>.

Scotus’s position on univocity in his *Questions on the Metaphysics* has embarrassed his interpreters since the first half of the fourteenth century<sup>4</sup>. In Gilson’s words, Scotus’s explicit rejection of univocity “a fait le désespoir de générations de scotistes”<sup>5</sup>. In order to obviate this and similar problems, in the 1330s Scotus’s pupil, Antonius Andreae, provided a corrected edition of his master’s *Questions on the Metaphysics*, where Scotus’s original position on univocity was substituted with what he said on the same topic in the *Ordinatio*<sup>6</sup>. Of course, contemporary scholars cannot adopt Antonius Andreae’s solution, no matter how sympathetic they can be

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<sup>2</sup> See L. Honnefelder, *Der zweite Anfang der Metaphysik. Voraussetzungen, Ansätze und Folgen der wiederbergründung der Metaphysik im 13./14. Jahrhundert*, in J.P. Beckmann et al. (eds.), *Philosophie im Mittelalter: Entwicklungslinien und Paradigmen*, F. Meiner, Hamburg 1987, 165-186; Id., *Scientia transcendens: die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit: Duns Scotus, Suárez, Wolff, Kant, Peirce*, F. Meiner, Hamburg 1990, 3-199; O. Boulnois, *Métaphysique: le tournant?*, «Les Études philosophiques» (1992), 4, 553-562. See, on this regard, the careful and illuminating assessment by S. D. Dumont, *Scotus’s Doctrine of Univocity and the Medieval Tradition of Metaphysics*, in J.A. Aertsen - A. Speer (eds.), *Was ist Philosophie im Mittelalter? Akten des X. Internationalen Kongresses für mittelalterliche Philosophie der Société Internationale pour l’Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale*, de Gruyter, Berlin - New York 1998 (Miscellanea Mediaevalia, 25), 193-212. See also O. Boulnois, *Être et représentation. Une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l’époque de Duns Scot (XIII<sup>e</sup>-XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Presses universitaires de France, Paris 1999, 457-504

<sup>3</sup> Ioannis Duns Scoti *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis. Libri I-V*, edd. R. Andrews et al., The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 1997 (*Opera Philosophica*, III), L. IV, q. 1 (= *QMet.* IV.1), n. 70, 315-316.

<sup>4</sup> Such a palpable sense of embarrassment is witnessed by several marginal notes to Scotus’s solution contained in the manuscripts; see *QMet.* IV.1, 315, ll. 12-17: «Haec non est opinio istius Doctoris sicut patet diligenter consideranti. Opinio propria quam tamen non tenet modo. Item nota quomodo tenet analogiam. Alias tamen tenuit univocationem quod in aliis magis manifestat. Item nota solutionem rationum probantes univocationem ulterius per totam columnam. Responso ad quaestionem quam non tenuit in *Sententiis*».

<sup>5</sup> Gilson, *Avicenne et le point de départ de Duns Scot*, 105.

<sup>6</sup> See G. Pini, *Sulla fortuna delle «Quaestiones super Metaphysicam» di Duns Scoto: le «Quaestiones super Metaphysicam» di Antonio Andrea*, «Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale», 6 (1995), 281-361: 301-303.

with it. But the problem which Antonius Andreae saw and to which he attempted to find a solution is still there. Scotus's position on univocity in the *Questions on the Metaphysics* is at odds with the doctrine he maintained elsewhere and for which he became famous. Historians of medieval thought cannot ignore this fact.

Several solutions have been proposed. Some tried to reconcile the position of the *Questions on the Metaphysics* with that of the commentaries on the *Sentences*, others have suggested that the *Questions on the Metaphysics* should be considered as a youth work and that afterwards Scotus changed his mind on the decisive subject of univocity. The critical edition of Scotus's *Questions on the Metaphysics* in the fourth and fifth volume of his *Opera philosophica* gives us the opportunity to reconsider this issue. An attentive study of the philological data made available by the editors can help us find a solution to this riddle. Much light is also to be gained from Silvia Donati's recent research on the debate on univocity in the arts faculty in Oxford and Paris between the thirteenth and fourteenth century<sup>7</sup>.

It might be objected that the contrast between Scotus's position in the *Questions on the Metaphysics* and his doctrine in the commentaries on the *Sentences* amounts to a mere historical curiosity, which does not change the philosophical significance of the position for which Scotus is deservedly famous, i.e. his doctrine of univocity. This is probably true. All the same, I would like to stress that the contrast between two positions on the univocity of being emerges from within Scotus's own works, not from a consideration of the historical context in which Scotus wrote. Since there happens to be a contradiction in his works, this contradiction must be reckoned with. If the contradiction can be explained away on the basis of textual and historical evidence, it is to this sort of evidence that we must turn in order to interpret Scotus's position correctly and in order to avoid a misunderstanding concerning the value and significance of his arguments.

In what follows, I will first present the problem of univocity in a philosophical context. Second, I will describe the debate on univocity in the Oxford arts faculty on the basis of recent research. Third, I will present Scotus's position in his questions on the *Categories* and on the *Sophistical Refutations* against this background. Fourth, I will provide evidence that the current version of the question on univocity in Scotus's *Questions on the*

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<sup>7</sup> S. Donati, *La discussione sull'unità del concetto di ente nella tradizione di commento della "Fisica": commenti parigini degli anni 1270-1315 ca.*, in M. Pickavé (ed.), *Die Logik des Transzendentalen. Festschrift für Jan A. Aertsen zum 65. Geburtstag*, de Gruyter, Berlin - New York 2003 (Miscellanea Mediaevalia, 30), 60-139.

*Metaphysics* is actually the result of the conflation of two distinct drafts and I will reconstruct the first draft on the basis of philological data. Fifth and finally, I will consider the additions testifying to the existence of a second draft of this question, which Scotus never finished but whose elements can be clearly singled out. These textual and historical considerations will help us reconstruct the argumentative structure of the question on univocity in the *Questions on the Metaphysics*. Accordingly, this paper will confirm a hypothesis that has already been formulated by several scholars, namely that Scotus worked on the *Metaphysics* (or at least on some parts of the *Metaphysics*) more than once. It is now difficult to establish whether Scotus actually commented on the *Metaphysics* a second time or he only started revising his work with the intention to prepare an edition that he was not able to complete. Be that as it may, the first version of the question on univocity is very likely to have been written in Oxford in the 1290s. I will argue that the second version should be regarded as posterior to the commentaries on the *Sentences* (the *Lectura* and a part of the *Ordinatio*). This suggests a late date. As to the place, it might have been Paris or Cologne.

### 1. *The theological and the philosophical approach to univocity and analogy*

Scotus's classic treatment of the univocity of being is to be found in his theological works, and Scotus's most famous use of this notion is theological. In his commentaries on the *Sentences*, Scotus introduces univocity when he asks whether God is the first natural object of knowledge for the human intellect in the present state and whether the claim that God or anything formally said of God is in a genus is compatible with divine simplicity<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Scotus deals with these two questions both in the *Lectura* and in the *Ordinatio*. See Ioannis Duns Scoti *Lect.*, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1-2, nn. 21-34 in Eiusdem *Lectura in librum primum Sententiarum. Prologus et distinctiones a prima ad septimam*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Civitas Vaticana 1960 (Opera omnia, XVI), 232-237; *Lect.* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, nn. 60-88, in Eiusdem *Lectura in primum librum Sententiarum. A distinctione octava ad quadragesimam quintam*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Civitas Vaticana 1966 (Opera omnia, XVII), 20-30; *Ord.* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, nn. 131-166, in Eiusdem *Ordinatio. Liber primus. Distinctio tertia*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Civitas Vaticana 1954 (Opera omnia, III), 81-103; *Ord.* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, nn. 44-89, in Eiusdem *Ordinatio. Liber primus. A distinctione quarta ad decimam*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Civitas Vaticana 1956 (Opera omnia, IV), 171-195. Scotus also deals with univocity applied to God and creatures in the so-called *Collatio* 24, which is not one of the *Collationes parisienses* and was therefore probably discussed in Oxford. See C.R.S. Harris, *Duns Scotus*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1927, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Humanities Press, New York 1959, II, 317-375; C. Balic, *De Collationibus Ioannis Duns Scoti Doctoris Subtilis ac Mariani*, «Bogoslovni

In these two places, Scotus presents his doctrine of the univocity of being and of other transcendental concepts as a criticism of the so-called doctrine of analogy. According to the standard version of the doctrine of analogy, the names by which we describe God originally pertain to creatures and are applied to God in an analogical way. This means that to one name said of God and of creatures, e.g. 'being' or 'good', there correspond two different concepts (*rationes*). Thus, there is one concept applied to God and another, distinct concept applied to creatures. These two concepts, however, are connected, because the things they represent are connected. For created being is a participation of divine being and created goodness is a participation of divine goodness. This relationship of participation can be also seen as a cause/effect relationship. Divine being is the cause of created being and divine goodness is the cause of created goodness. Because of this ontological relationship, we can start from the concepts of created attributes and arrive at some knowledge of divine attributes. Thus, we can say that God is being and good because God is the cause of created being and good. Consequently, the ontological gap between God and creatures can be bridged by the analogical application of names of created attributed to God thanks to the causal relationship that links God and creatures. Behind analogy as a semantic relationship linking a name and two concepts there is an ontological relationship between the two things represented by those two concepts<sup>9</sup>.

Notoriously, Scotus developed his doctrine of the univocity of the concept of being as a reaction to Henry of Ghent's specific version of analogy, according to which the human intellect mistakes two concepts of a divine and of a created perfection for one and the same concept. For example, the human intellect is misled into believing that one and the same

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Vestnik», 9 (1929), 185-219: 212-219. For a commentary on *Collatio* 24 and on the two questions from the *Ordinatio* see *Duns Scot. Sur la connaissance de Dieu et l'univocité de l'étant. Introduction, traduction et commentaire par Olivier Boulnois*, Presses universitaires de France, Paris 1988.

<sup>9</sup> The literature on analogy is vast. See B. Montagnes, *La doctrine de l'analogie de l'être d'après saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Publications universitaires, Louvain - Paris 1963 (Philosophes médiévaux, 6); P. Aubenque, *Sur la naissance de la doctrine pseudo-aristotélicienne de l'analogie de l'être*, «Les Études philosophiques» (1989), 3-4, 291-304; A. de Libera, *Les sources gréco-arabes de la théorie de l'analogie de l'être*, «Les Études philosophiques» (1989), 3-4, 319-345; E.J. Ashworth, *Signification and Modes of Signifying in Thirteenth-Century Logic: A Preface to Aquinas on Analogy*, «Medieval Philosophy and Theology», 1 (1991), 39-67; Ead., *Analogy and Equivocation in the Thirteenth-Century: Aquinas in Context*, «Mediaeval Studies», 54 (1992), 94-135; Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 265-280; J.F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas. From Finite Being to Infinite Being*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C. 2000, 65-93; G. Pini, *Scoto e l'analogia. Logica e metafisica nei commenti aristotelici*, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa 2002, 25-49; Donati, *La discussione sull'unità del concetto di ente*, 64-71.

concept of good is applied to God and creatures when we say that God is good and that a creature is good, even though these are actually two different concepts. These concepts are not distinguished from one another, because they are characterized by two kinds of indeterminacy that the human intellect fails to discern. For the concept of divine goodness is negatively indeterminate (i.e., it is contradictory for it to have any determination and limitation whatsoever), whereas the concept of created goodness is privatively indeterminate (i.e., it abstracts from any determination and limitation, even though by its own nature it is determinate and limited). Thus, Henry of Ghent supplements the classic doctrine of analogy with a psychological explanation of why we believe that we apply the same concept to God and creatures when we actually are dealing with two analogical concepts<sup>10</sup>. Against Henry's doctrine, Scotus argues that a concept representing a perfection such as being is ultimately simple and distinct from its being infinite or finite, because we can know that something is a being while ignoring whether it is infinite or finite. Accordingly, Scotus concludes that one and the same concept is used to describe a created and a divine perfection such as being. Since 'being' and similar terms signify just one concept, they are univocal terms. The concept the term 'being' signifies is called 'univocal' because it is only one concept, not two concepts confused with one another<sup>11</sup>.

In order to avoid a possible misunderstanding, it must be noted that Scotus's doctrine of univocity, even in a purely theological context, presupposes the Aristotelian doctrine of signification according to which a term signifies a mental concept, which in turn represents a thing. This notion of signification should not be confused with the contemporary notion of the meaning of a term. Whereas meaning is a linguistic entity that can be described as the entry of a dictionary, the signification of a term in an Aristotelian context is a psychological entity, i.e. a concept present in the mind, which can be developed into a definition capturing the essence of an extra mental thing<sup>12</sup>. This amounts to a big difference between the contemporary linguistic approach to definitions and the medieval one. Whereas a linguistic meaning defines a term, an Aristotelian definition capturing the essence defines an extra mental thing. So, univocity is a three-

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<sup>10</sup> Henrici de Gandavo *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, apud Badium, Paris 1520, repr. The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 1953, I, art. 21, q. 2, ff. 124vO-125rS.

<sup>11</sup> See S.D. Dumont, *Henry of Ghent and Duns Scotus*, in J. Marenbon (ed.), *Routledge History of Philosophy*, 3, Routledge, London - New York 1998, 219-328; O. Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 281-291.

<sup>12</sup> See G. Pini, *Signification of Names in Duns Scotus and Some of His Contemporaries*, «Vivarium», 39 (2001), 20-51.

place relationship among names, concepts and things that cannot be reduced to the two-place relationship between a term and its meaning<sup>13</sup>.

Both conceptually and terminologically, the theological discussions on univocity are deeply indebted to philosophical treatments of the same topic. For univocity and equivocity were also the objects of careful scrutiny in a specifically philosophical context, namely the analysis of the first chapter of Aristotle's *Categories*, where the distinction between homonymy and synonymy is drawn. Aristotle calls two or more things 'synonymous' if their names and definitions (*logoi tes ousias*) are identical. For example, two men are synonymous because both are called 'man' and both are defined in the same way (e.g., as rational animals). By contrast, Aristotle calls two or more things 'homonymous' if their name is the same but their definitions are different<sup>14</sup>.

It is well known to Aristotelian interpreters that homonymy can be interpreted in two ways. In a strict sense, homonyms are things whose name is the same and whose definitions are unrelated one to the other. It is merely due to a linguistic accident that these things are called in the same way. For example, let us take the English term 'bank'. That term stands for two unrelated things (a credit institution and the side of a river), whose definitions are completely unrelated. In a large sense, however, homonyms are any two or more things whose names are identical and whose definitions are different, no matter whether these definitions are unrelated or not. So described, homonyms include things whose definitions are related one to another. The standard Aristotelian example is the term 'healthy', which can be said of an animal, a complexion or a sign of health such as urine. A different definition is associated to each of these attributions; but among these definitions there is a basic one, to which all the others are related as to a focus (in the case of 'healthy', this definition is that of the health attributed to an animal)<sup>15</sup>.

The philosophical interest of the latter group of homonyms is noteworthy. Their definitional link points to a parallel ontological order of the utmost importance for those who want to describe the structure of

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<sup>13</sup> Univocity is interpreted in the light of the contemporary notion of meaning for example by J. Thomas, *Univocity and Understanding God's Nature*, in G.H. Hughes (ed.), *The Philosophical Assessment of Theology: Essays in Honor of Frederick C. Copleston*, Search Press - George Town University Press, Turnbridge Wells - Washington, D.C. 1987, 85-100; see also R. Cross, *Duns Scotus*, Oxford University Press, New York - Oxford 1999, 33-39.

<sup>14</sup> Aristotle, *Cat.* 1a1-12. See *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione*. Translated with Notes and Glossary by J.L. Akrill, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1963, 1985<sup>8</sup>, 71-72.

<sup>15</sup> See W. Leszl, *Logic and Metaphysics in Aristotle. Aristotle's Treatment of Types of Equivocity and Its Relevance to His Metaphysical Theory*, Antenore, Padova 1970; T. Irwin, *Homonymy in Aristotle*, «Review of Metaphysics», 34 (1981), 523-544.

reality. Such families of things constitute the foremost case of *pollachos legomena* considered by Aristotle in book V of the *Metaphysics*. Among Aristotelian interpreters, there has been some debate over whether this “ordered multiplicity” is to be considered as a case of homonymy or not. If homonyms are taken to include these things, we have a large notion of homonymy, including all the things that are called by the same name and have a different definition, no matter whether their definitions are related or not among them. By contrast, if ordered multiplicity is considered as intermediate between synonymy and homonymy, we have a strict notion of homonymy. This is not a small difference. According to which alternative we prefer, homonymy includes philosophically significant *pollachos legomena* such as being, or, alternatively, homonyms are only uninteresting items such as the credit institution and the river side. In the former case, the study of homonyms gives access to the structure of the world. In the latter case, the study of homonyms is at best something preliminary to the real research, which must be carried out only in order not to be misled by verbal similarities<sup>16</sup>.

These two possible interpretations of homonyms are well known to Aristotle’s contemporary interpreters. They were also known to Aristotle’s medieval interpreters. Some facts must be taken into account in order to understand the way the Aristotelian doctrine of homonymy was interpreted in the Middle Ages. Boethius, who was the main vehicle through which the doctrine became known to Latin authors, stressed that the relationships of equivocity (= homonymy) and univocity (= synonymy) are three-place relationships, involving names, concepts and things. Accordingly, not only things but also terms and concepts can be called ‘equivocal’ and ‘univocal’. A term is univocal when it signifies a concept corresponding to a definition proper to only one kind of things. A term is equivocal when it signifies several concepts corresponding to different definitions, each one of which is in turn proper to a different kind of things. Similarly, a concept is univocal or equivocal, respectively, if it is one and the same concept signified by one term or if it is actually more than one concept signified by only one name, to which there correspond several kinds of things<sup>17</sup>. This reformulation of univocity and equivocity in terms of concepts rather than of terms does not change the problem. It is still possible to ask whether ordered multiplicity is a case of equivocity or it identifies a third class of items, intermediate

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<sup>16</sup> See C. Shields, *Order in Multiplicity. Homonymy in the Philosophy of Aristotle*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1999.

<sup>17</sup> Anicii Manlii Severini Boetii *In Categorias Aristotelis libri quatuor*, ed. J.-P. Migne, apud Garnier fratres, Paris 1847, repr. Brepols, Turnhout 1979 (*Patrologia Latina*, 64), 164B, 167B-D. See Ashworth, *Analogy and Equivocation*, 97-98.



between equivocals and univocals. Boethius himself opted for the former solution. He distinguished between *aequivoca casu* (equivocals in the strict sense, with no relationship among their definitions) and *aequivoca consilio* (whose definitions, although different, are connected among them)<sup>18</sup>. By contrast, if a third class of items is posited between equivocals and univocals, there is room for a third relationship between terms, concepts and things, and this relationship – identified with the *Aristotelian pros hen relationship* – was called ‘analogy’ or (as in the translation of Averroes’ commentary on the *Metaphysics*) ‘*attributio*’. Two or more things are called ‘analogous’ if they are all named in the same way and each one of them has a proper concept and a proper definition, and these concepts and definitions are related to one another. The typical case is that of being. Both substance and accident are called ‘being’. The definition of a substance (e.g., a self-subsistent thing) is different from the definition of an accident (e.g., an inhering thing), and each definition is captured by a different concept (e.g., the concept of a self-subsistent thing and that of an inhering thing, respectively). But these definitions and concepts are related to one another, because the definition of an accident (an inhering thing) contains a reference to a substance (since the inhering thing inheres in a substance). So being is often regarded as an analogous concept, i.e. a concept that is actually constituted by a family of related concepts or definitions (*rationes*), to which there corresponds a family of related things, i.e. all the accidents that are related to substance because they all depend on substance as on that in which they inhere<sup>19</sup>.

## 2. *The English tradition on univocity and analogy*

So the problem concerning the so-called ordered multiplicity (the *pollachos legomena* whose definitions are different but interrelated) for a medieval interpreter of Aristotle boiled down to the following question: is analogy a case of equivocity or not? Typically, thirteenth-century thinkers proposed several classifications of analogous items. According to some classifications, analogy should be seen as a special case of equivocity (according to a large sense of ‘equivocity’). According to other classifications,

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<sup>18</sup> Boetii *In Categorias*, 166B-C. A similar classification of equivocals is introduced in the pseudo-Augustinian *Categoriae decem*. See Ashworth, *Analogy and Equivocity*, 101-102.

<sup>19</sup> See de Libera, *Les sources gréco-arabes*; Ashworth, *Signification and Modes of Signifying*; Ead., *Analogy and Equivocity*; C. Marmo, *Semiotica e linguaggio nella Scolastica. Parigi, Bologna, Erfurt 1270-1330. La semiotica dei Modisti*, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, Roma 1994, 271-328; Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 223-243; Pini, *Scoto e l'analogia*, 28-49; Donati, *La discussione sull'unità del concetto di ente*.

analogy should be distinguished from equivocity (according to a strict sense of ‘equivocity’) and rather considered as intermediate between equivocity and univocity<sup>20</sup>.

Thanks to Donati’s recent research, we are now in a condition to identify a specifically English tradition, which includes Aristotelian commentators active from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards. The peculiarity of this English tradition was to combine the equivocity/analogy relationship with the difference between logic, on the one hand, and metaphysics and physics, on the other hand. These authors distinguished between a logical and a real approach to ‘being’ and similar analogous terms. Logic considers the relationship of signification between terms and concepts and the way in which terms and the corresponding concepts are predicated of one another. Logic, however, does not take into account the real link holding between the things signified by the subject- and the predicate-term. By contrast, metaphysics and physics consider, in addition to the relationship between names and concepts, the real link between the things signified by terms and represented by concepts. Thus, according to the logical approach, any term signifying several things is equivocal if each of the things signified is defined in a different way and is represented by a different concept. Accordingly, logic regards a term like ‘being’ as equivocal, because it signifies things belonging to different categories, each one of which is defined in its own way and is represented and understood by way of its own concept. By contrast, real philosophy (i.e., metaphysics and physics) take into account the real relationship holding between substance and accidents; consequently, according to the metaphysical and physical approach, ‘being’ is an analogous term, since it signifies things belonging to different categories that are nonetheless connected to one another (for all accidents inhere in substance)<sup>21</sup>.

Before the influence of Thomas Aquinas’s commentaries, the doctrine that being is equivocal according to logic and analogous according to real philosophy was well established in the English tradition. Geoffrey of Aspall, whose commentaries on the Physics and Metaphysics date from 1250-70, clearly expressed this point of view:

[...] the logician only requires, in order to consider [a term] as equivocal, that [that term] be said of its contents according to different accounts. This is because the logician only considers the predicate or the mode of predicating. As to univocity, [the logician] only requires that [a

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<sup>20</sup> See Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 236-239; Pini, *Scoto e l’analogia*, 33-42.

<sup>21</sup> Donati, *La discussione sull’unità del concetto di ente*, 71-81.

term] be said of its contents according to the same definition. So, since 'being' has different definitions according to which it is said of its contents [...], for this reason the logician says that 'being' is said equivocally. By contrast, the natural philosopher and the metaphysician consider things not only with regard to the predicate, but also according to how they really are. For this reason, they add two other conditions [scil., to the condition required by the logician], which 'being' fails to satisfy [*the two additional conditions are that the definition of one thing be independent of the definition of the other and that what is attributed to something be not attributed because of something else*]. For this reason they say that 'being' is not said equivocally, but analogously<sup>22</sup>.

Thus, thanks to the distinction between a logical and a real approach to analogy, the authors belonging to the English tradition devised a new solution to the classic question of the classification of *pollachos legomena* such as being. Since the time of Aristotle, as we have seen, it was asked whether such items were to be regarded as equivocal or not. Rather than distinguishing between two kinds of equivocality (*a casu* and *consilio*), the English authors answered that these *pollachos legomena* were both equivocal and analogical, depending on whether they were considered from a logical or from a real point of view.

The distinction between a logical and a real consideration of terms such as 'being', first developed in the 1250s-70s, remained a constant feature of the English tradition of commentators up to the end of the thirteenth century, when English authors came to be influenced by Thomas Aquinas's treatment of analogy. As Donati has shown, it is in this late period that some authors of the Oxford arts faculty developed a peculiar analysis of the signification of terms usually considered as analogous. Since logic considers predication and signification, and, as we have seen, according to logic any term that signifies and is predicated according to different definitions is equivocal (no matter whether these definitions or the corresponding things

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<sup>22</sup> Galfridi de Aspull *Quaestiones super Physicam*, I, q. 26, ms. Oxford, Merton College, 272, f. 91ra (edited in Donati, *La discussione sull'unità del concetto di ente*, 74, n. 22): «[...] logicus non requirit ad suam aequivocationem nisi quod dicatur de suis contentis secundum diversas rationes, et hoc quia solum respicit praedicatum sive modum praedicandi. Et ad univocationem non requiritur nisi quod dicatur de eis secundum eandem definitionem. Et ideo, quia ens habet diversas definitiones secundum quod dicitur de contentis [...] ideo logicus dicit ens dici aequivoce. Naturalis autem et metaphysicus considerant de rebus non solum secundum praedicatum, sed secundum rei veritatem, et ideo superaddunt alias duas condiciones, quae deficiunt a parte entis. Et ideo non dicunt ens dici aequivoce, sed analogice». The English translation is mine. On Geoffrey of Aspull, see R. Plevano, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall and Geoffrey of Aspull. Two Questions on the Instant of Change*, «Medioevo», 19 (1993), 167-232. See also the question from the anonymous commentary on the Physics in ms. Siena, Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati, L.III.21, f. 8va-8vb, in Donati, *La discussione sull'unità del concetto di ente*, 74, n. 22.

are related to each other), authors such as William of Chelvestun and (probably) William of Bonkes concluded that there is no analogy from the logical and semantic point of view. Only the metaphysician and the physicist, who consider the real links among the things signified by a term such as 'being', can speak of analogy. By contrast, the logician considers only the logical and semantic relationships of predication and signification, but not the real relationships among the things that terms signify and concepts represent; accordingly, no term is analogous according to the logician<sup>23</sup>.

According to the English authors of the late thirteenth century, it follows that analogy can be described as a real relationship captured by the metaphysician, not as a logical and semantic relationship. It also follows that the real relationship between substance and accident is not reflected in the way the term 'being' is predicated and signifies. This explains why 'being' is an equivocal term for the logician and an analogous term for the metaphysician. Here is as William of Chelvestun made this point:

To the question it is answered that this sort of analogy holds neither from the point of view of the signification of being itself nor from the point of view of its mode of signifying [...]. By contrast, there is analogy from the point of view of the things signified. It is because the accident itself is attributed to substance that 'being' signifies these two things [scil., substance and accident] analogously, not because this analogy properly is grounded in the one who bestows a name or in the linguistic expression. For analogy concerns neither signification nor the mode of signifying, but only the things signified. And for this reason the metaphysician holds that 'being' is said analogously, whereas the logician, who considers the mode of predicating and the mode of signifying and also what linguistic expressions signify, holds that 'being' is said equivocally of substance and accident<sup>24</sup>.

Some authors in Paris, too, referred to the distinction between a logical and a physical/metaphysical approach to analogy, but only in order to deal with particular cases, such as the notion of genus. Parisian authors

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<sup>23</sup> Donati, *La discussione sull'unità del concetto di ente*, 76-77.

<sup>24</sup> Guillelmi de Chelvestun *Quaestiones super Physicam*, ms. Cambridge, Peterhouse, 192, I, f. 17ra (edited in Donati, *La discussione sull'unità del concetto di ente*, 76, n. 28): «Ad quaestionem dicitur quod ista analogia non est ex parte significationis ipsius entis nec ex parte modi significandi [...]. Analogia tamen est ex parte rerum significatarum: quia ipsum accidens attributionem habet ad substantiam, pro tanto dicitur quod ens significat ista duo analogice, non quia ista analogia proprie sistat ex parte imponentis nec ex parte vocis, quia nec quo ad significationem nec quo ad modum significandi, sed solum se tenet ex parte rerum significatarum. Et ideo dicit metaphysicus quod ens dicitur analogice, logicus vero, qui considerat modum praedicandi et modum significandi et etiam significationes vocis, dicit quod ens dicitur aequivoce de substantia et accidente». The English translation is mine. See also the question on the *Physics* probably by William of Bonkes as edited by Donati and analysed in Pini, *Scoto e l'analogia*, 46-49.

did not seem to appeal to the distinction between logic and metaphysics as a strategy to treat analogy in general<sup>25</sup>. Similarly, no author active in Paris seemed to have denied the possibility of logical and semantic analogy concerning the mode of signification of terms, as opposed to metaphysical analogy concerning the relationship of dependence among things. Quite the contrary, the Parisian approach to analogy was characterized by the recognition of a strict parallelism between the way a term such as 'being' signifies and the way the things that such a term signifies are connected among them. Accordingly, Parisian authors maintained that analogy is a relationship holding both on a real and on a logical level. The way things are interrelated is faithfully reflected in the way they are signified by an analogous term<sup>26</sup>.

### 3. Scotus's Logical Commentaries

In his *Opera philosophica*, Scotus dealt with equivocity, univocity and analogy on at least three occasions: in his *Questions on the Categories*, q. 4 (= *QCat.* 4); in his *Questions on the Sophistical Refutations*, q. 15 (*QSE* 15); and in his *Questions on the Metaphysics*, Bk. IV, q. 1 (= *QMet.* IV.1)<sup>27</sup>. For the moment, let us leave aside the *Questions on the Metaphysics*. If we turn to *QCat.* 4 and *QSE* 15, we realize that Scotus's approach to the equivocity and analogy of being in these two works can be easily seen as part of the Oxford tradition that we have just considered.

Similar to William of Chelvestun and William of Bonkes (?), in *QSE* 15 Scotus denies the possibility of logical and semantic analogy, of which he

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<sup>25</sup> See A. Maurer, *St. Thomas and the Analogy of Genus*, «The New Scholasticism», 29 (1955), 127-144; Ashworth, *Analogy and Equivocation*, 129.

<sup>26</sup> See for example Gaudefridi de Fontibus *Quodlibet* II, q. 8 in *Les Quodlibets cinq, six et sept de Godegroy de Fontaines*, edd. M. De Wulf - J. Hoffmans, Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, Louvain 1914 (Philosophes Belges, 3), 162. See J.F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines. A Study in Late Thirteenth-Century Philosophy*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C. 1981, 22; Pini, *Scoto e l'analogia*, 42.

<sup>27</sup> See Ioannis Duns Scoti *Quaestiones super Praedicamenta Aristotelis*, q. 4 in *Eiusdem Quaestiones in librum Porphyrii Isagoge et Quaestiones super Praedicamenta Aristotelis*, edd. R. Andrews et al., The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 1999 (*Opera philosophica*, I), 273-292; *In libros Elenchorum quaestiones*, q. 15, in *Eiusdem Opera omnia*, II, L. Vivès, Paris 1891, 20-23; *Quaest. super Metaph.* L. IV, q. 1 (*Opera philosophica*, IV), 295-320. Scotus also deals with these issues in his *Quaestiones de anima*, q. 21. The authenticity of this work has sometimes been disputed, but the editors maintain that they have very good reasons to attribute them to Scotus. Since this issue deserves careful scrutiny by itself, here I will not deal with it. See now on this topic T. Noone, *L'univocité dans les Quaestiones De anima. Une étude comparative*, in J.-L. Solère - G. Sondag (eds.), *Duns Scot à Paris. Actes du Colloque international, Paris 2-4 septembre 2002*, Brepols, Turnhout (forthcoming). I wish to thank Prof. Timothy Noone for making a copy of his paper available to me before publication.

provides a detailed confutation. The way the things signified by a term are really linked among them is not reflected by the way in which the term signifying those things signifies them. Analogy is a real relationship holding among things, it is not a semantic relationship between a term and the things it signifies. For signifying, according to Scotus, requires understanding. What is signified is first understood. But since understanding is the operation of distinguishing one thing from another, the intellect always understands its objects by distinct and determinate concepts, i.e. by concepts that are clearly distinguished from other concepts. Thus, there is no possibility of signifying something except than by distinct and determinate accounts and definitions. Consequently, there is no place for analogy (i.e., signification *per prius et posterius*) with regard to signification:

To the question it must be answered that, as far as significant linguistic expressions are concerned, it is impossible for a linguistic expression to signify a certain primarily and another thing secondarily. For “signifying is representing something to the intellect”; therefore, what is signified is conceived by the intellect. But the intellect conceives whatever it conceives by way of a distinct and determinate account, because the intellect is an act and therefore it distinguishes what it understands from something else. Therefore, whatever is signified, is signified by way of a distinct and determinate account. Therefore, if an analogous linguistic expression is imposed to signify different things, it is necessary for this linguistic expression to be imposed to different things by way of different accounts. Therefore, if an analogous linguistic expression is imposed by way of different accounts, it is necessary, as far as the significant linguistic expression is concerned, for it to represent equally [all the things it signifies]. Hence there can be analogy in reality, but in a linguistic expression that signifies something there is no priority and posteriority. For there are properties that pertain more to one thing than to another, but there is no property that pertains more to the substance of a linguistic expression than to another [i.e., there is no property that pertains to a linguistic expression more in one of its applications than in another]<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> QSE 15, n. 6, 22a: «Ad quaestionem dicendum quod quantum est ex parte vocis significantis, non est possibile vocem significare unum per prius et reliquum per posterius. Nam “significare est aliquid intellectui repraesentare”; quod ergo significatur, ab intellectu concipitur. Sed omne quod ab intellectu concipitur, sub distincta et determinata ratione concipitur, quia intellectus est quidam actus et ideo quod intelligit ab alio distinguit. Omne ergo quod significatur sub distincta ratione et determinata significatur. [...] Unde in re potest esse analogia, sed in voce significante nulla cadit prioritas vel posterioritas. Aliqua enim est proprietas quae magis convenit uni rei quam alteri, sed non est aliqua proprietas quae magis conveniat substantiae vocis quam aliae (*ed.*: alia)». See R. Prentice, *Univocity and Analogy according to Scotus’s Super Libros elenchorum Aristotelis*, «Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge», 35, 1968, 39-64; Ashworth, *Analogy and Equivocation*, 120-122;

It follows that we cannot make any inference concerning the way things are from the mode of signifying of a term. Specifically, we cannot make any inference from the way the term 'being' signifies to the way things are in the world. In this respect, Scotus rejects the possibility of a logico-semantic investigation of reality. His belonging to the English tradition that distinguishes between a logical and a metaphysical approach to analogy clearly separates him from the Paris modist tradition, according to which there is a some parallelism between modes of signifying, modes of understanding and modes of being (*modi significandi, intelligendi* and *essendi*)<sup>29</sup>.

Scotus's position ceases to appear extravagant as soon as we consider the authors active in the Oxford arts faculty in the late thirteenth century. Scotus's denial of logical or semantic analogy turns out to be part of a well-established tradition.

Similarly, Scotus's treatment of the controversial issue of the equivocity/analogy of being in *QCat.* 4 is closely parallel to similar treatments in the English commentaries that I have mentioned. In *QCat.* 4, Scotus maintains that 'being' is an equivocal term for the logician, because there is no single definition and no single account (*ratio*) corresponding to it. Rather, to the term 'being' there correspond several definitions and concepts, one for each category. Thus, substance has its own definition and concept, quality has its own definition and concept, and so on for all the other categories. Consequently, 'being' signifies each category according to its own account. The absence of a single *ratio* is sufficient to classify the term 'being' as equivocal according to a logical consideration. Only the metaphysician, who considers not the way terms signify but the way the things signified really are, considers the term 'being' as analogous, because all the accidents are dependent on substance. The real relations among categories, however, are not captured by the way the term 'being' signifies, for 'being' equally signifies each item in each category. Accordingly, the real relations holding among categories elude the logician:

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Marmo, *Semiotica e linguaggio*, 325-328; Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 242-249; Pini, *Scoto e l'analogia*, 52-75. See also *QCat.* 4, nn. 32-33, 282-283.

<sup>29</sup> On modism, see I. Rosier, *La Grammaire spéculative des Modistes*, Presses universitaires de Lille, Lille 1983; Ead., *Res Significata et modus significandi. les implications d'une distinction médiévale*, in S. Ebbesen (ed.), *Sprachtheorien in Spätantike und Mittelalter*. Gunter Narr Verlag, Tübingen 1995 (Geschichte der Sprachtheorie, 3), 135-168; Marmo, *Semiotica e linguaggio*.

For this reason, it must be said that the name 'being' is simply equivocal to these ten categories according to the first mode of equivocation [...]. It must be understood, however, that a linguistic expression that for the logician is simply equivocal, because it signifies many things equally primarily, for the metaphysician or the natural philosopher – who do not consider linguistic expressions according to their signification but consider what they signify with regard to what they are – is analogous, because of what is signified, although not insofar as it is signified; these things [scil., the things signified], however, are ordered one to another insofar as they exist. Thus, in *Metaphysics* IV and VII 'being' is posited by the metaphysician as analogous to substance and accident, namely because the things that are signified are ordered one to another with respect to their being. But according to the logician, 'being' is simply equivocal, because those things are signified equally primarily [i.e., each in the same way] insofar as they are signified by the linguistic expression<sup>30</sup>.

Scotus's claim that being is equivocal has always bewildered his interpreters, who know that Scotus was a staunch defender of univocity. Scotus's position in the *Questions on the Categories* can be now seen as part of the English tradition concerning 'being' and such terms. Scotus's agreement with these authors testifies to Scotus's belonging to the English tradition as far as his logical commentaries are concerned. Thus, Scotus's position on the issue of the equivocality/analogy of being both in the *Questions on the Sophistical Refutations* and in the *Questions on the Categories* confirms the traditional hypothesis that both works were composed during Scotus's stay in the Oxford Franciscan *studium*, probably in the 1290s (the traditional date is around 1295)<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> *QCat.* 4, nn. 37-38, p. 285 (translation mine): «Propter hoc dicendum quod hoc nomen 'ens' simpliciter est aequivocum primo modo aequivocationis ad haec decem genera [...]. Intelligendum tamen quod vox, quae apud logicum simpliciter aequivoca est, quia scilicet aequae primo importat multa, apud metaphysicum vel naturalem, qui non considerant vocem in significando sed ea quae significantur secundum illud quod sunt, est analogica, propter illud quod ea quae significantur, licet non in quantum significantur; tamen in quantum existunt habent ordinem inter se. Ideo 'ens' a metaphysico in IV et VII *Metaphysicae* ponitur analogum ad substantiam et accidens, quia scilicet haec quae significantur, in essendo habent ordinem; sed apud logicum est simpliciter aequivocum, quia in quantum significantur per vocem, aequae primo significantur».

<sup>31</sup> On the date of Scotus's logical works and the probable English origin of at least his *Questions on Porphyry's Isagoge*, see the *Introduction* to *Duns Scoti Quaestiones in librum Porphyrii Isagoge et Quaestiones super Praedicamenta Aristotelis* (Opera philosophica, I), xxix-xxxiv, xli-xlii.



#### 4. *Reconstructing the first draft of the question on univocity in Scotus's Quaestiones super Metaphysicam*

What about Scotus's question on univocity in the *Questions on the Metaphysics*? At first sight, a great confusion characterizes the text of *QMet. IV.1*. On the one hand, the question does not look very different from *QCcat. 4*. After a series of arguments in favor and against univocity, Scotus endorses the doctrine of the logical equivocity and metaphysical analogy of being. But there are also several objections to univocity to which Scotus does give an answer. Moreover, many passages simply do not fit in with the usual structure of a question, whether in favor or against of univocity.

As it reads in the critical edition, the structure of *QMet. IV.1* can be summarized as follows<sup>32</sup>:

parr. 1-16: arguments against the equivocity of being, with some objections and answers to the objections;

par. 17: Porphyry's text in favor of equivocity;

parr. 18-19: an alternative interpretation of Porphyry, an objection to this interpretation and an answer to this objection;

parr. 20-22: three texts of Aristotle against the univocity of being;

parr. 23-26: different interpretations of these texts, which make them compatible with univocity;

par. 27: an opinion according to which the question on univocity, since it concerns the signification of the term 'being' and since signification is a matter of convention, cannot be solved by rational arguments;

parr. 28-30: arguments against this opinion;

par. 31: Avicenna's position in favor of the univocity of being;

parr. 32-39: arguments in support of Avicenna's position;

par. 40: a remark concerning one of the arguments in support of Avicenna's position;

parr. 41-45: a remark and several arguments concerning the relationship between being and its differences;

parr. 46-49: other arguments in support of Avicenna's position;

parr. 50-69: seven objections to univocity, each one of which is followed by one or several answers;

par. 70: solution to the question, according to which being is said equivocally for the logician and analogously for the metaphysician;

parr. 71-85: answers to the arguments against the equivocity of being given at parr. 1-16;

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<sup>32</sup> I refer to the paragraph numbers in the critical edition in *Opera philosophica, IV*. What follows is a revision of some material already presented in Pini, *Scoto e l'analogia*, 88-95.

parr. 86-88: answers to three of the arguments in support of Avicenna's position in favor of univocity (parr. 32, 35, 46; it should be noted that the answer to the argument at par. 46 is introduced as *ad tertium*);

parr. 89-91: an objection to the third answer against Avicenna, followed by a reformulation of the answer, followed again by an objection to this reformulation.

As is apparent from this outline, *QMet.* IV.1 can be regarded as an example of Scotus's *chaos metaphysicum*, as the first editor of the *Questions on the Metaphysics*, Maurice O'Fihely (Mauritius de Portu, ca. 1460-1513), effectively described the state of the text<sup>33</sup>. Given this situation, Scotus's interpreters have tried to exploit any hint to find their way through Scotus's words. Since the question ends with an argument in favor of univocity (specifically, an objection against the answer to an argument in favor of univocity), the first editor of Scotus's *Quaestiones*, Maurice O'Fihely, took it as an indication of Scotus's endorsement of univocity, even though such an argument comes only after a long-winded series of counter-arguments. By contrast, the exposition of analogy and equivocity was interpreted as Scotus's rehearsal of the standard opinion, which he eventually rejects<sup>34</sup>.

This interpretation failed to convince everybody. Some have suggested that *QMet.* IV.1 should be seen as an intermediate stage in Scotus's evolution with regard to the univocity of the concept of being. In *SEQ* 15 and *QCat.* 4, as we have seen, Scotus held that 'being' is logically equivocal and metaphysically analogous. By contrast, in the commentaries on the *Sentences* he argued for the univocity of being. According to this reconstruction, *QMet.* IV.1 belongs to a period of transition between these two positions. In *QMet.* IV.1, Scotus still officially endorsed the *Categories* solution but added several arguments in support of univocity to which he did not give an answer<sup>35</sup>. This evolutionary hypothesis has the great merit of taking into account the strange nature of *QMet.* IV.1 without trying to conceal the problems inherent in the structure of the question. Still, even this hypothesis does not seem to give a completely satisfactory answer to the technical problems presented by the structure of *QMet.* IV.1. The confusion to which I have called the attention could be explained as the result of a

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<sup>33</sup> See the *Introduction* to Duns Scoti *Quaest. super Metaph.* (Opera philosophica, III), xxxii-xxxvii.

<sup>34</sup> See Maurice O'Fihely's adnotation to *QMet.* IV.1 in Ioannis Duns Scoti *Opera omnia*, IV, ed. L. Wadding, Ludguni 1639, p. 580a. For an ingenious but not more convincing attempt to reconcile Scotus's position in the *Questions on the Metaphysics* and in his commentaries on the *Sentences* see A.B. Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus*, The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 1946, 45-48.

<sup>35</sup> See S.P. Marrone, *The Notion of Univocity in Duns Scotus's Early Writings*, «Franciscan Studies», 43 (1983), 347-395.

transitional stage in Scotus's position only if *QMet.* IV.1 were a *reportatio* faithfully recording the master's hesitations while probing his previous solution. But this is not the case. From a textual point of view, the *Questions on the Metaphysics* are not a *reportatio*. Even though they are the result of Scotus's teaching, they come from Scotus's desk, not from his classes.

But the solution to the riddle of *QMet.* IV.1 does come from textual considerations. It was once observed that some marginal notes to the manuscripts were hints of a double draft of *QMet.* IV.1<sup>36</sup>. Now, this hypothesis can be substantiated on different and more solid grounds. Scholars have long noticed the presence of many 'additions' that Scotus himself made to the original text of the *Questions on the Metaphysics*. These passages, usually singled out by a line running along the margins of some of the manuscripts, were known to the first editor of Scotus's *Questions*, Maurice O'Fihely, and have been carefully marked in the critical edition of the *Opera philosophica*<sup>37</sup>. Apart from these texts explicitly marked as additions in the manuscripts, there are also other passages that should be considered as additions. Some passages are out of place in some manuscripts and their position in the structure of the *Questions on the Metaphysics* is currently not clear. This fact can be easily explained if we suppose that those passages were other additions Scotus made and that they were originally written in the margins of Scotus's own copy of the *Questions on the Metaphysics* or, alternatively, on separate *cedulae*. When the scribes were confronted with these additions, they tried to insert them into the original question, but sometimes they did not have a clue as to where to insert them. Some manuscripts just report these passages at the end of the question. Sometimes, entire questions are misplaced<sup>38</sup>. Scholars and editors have regarded these additions and misplaced paragraphs and questions as evidence that Scotus never revised the *Questions on the Metaphysics* for publication. So, as they stand now, these passages just add to the confusion

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<sup>36</sup> See T.B. Barth, *Zum Problem der Eindeutigkeit*, «Philosophisches Jahrbuch», 55 (1942), 300-321, in part. 314-315; Id., *De argumentis et univocationis entis natura apud Joannem Duns Scotum*, «Collectanea Franciscana», 14 (1944), 5-56, in part. 24, n. 21; Marrone, *The Notion of Univocity*, 390-391.

<sup>37</sup> See F. Pelster, *Handschriftliches zur Ueberlieferung der Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum und der Collationes des Duns Scotus*, «Philosophisches Jahrbuch», 43 (1930), 474-487: 478, 482, 485; *Introduction to Duns Scoti Quaest. super Metaph.* (*Opera philosophica*, III), xxviii-xxxii. Maurice O'Fihely's edition of Scotus's *Quaestiones* in 1497 was to constitute the basis of the successive editions of Scotus's *Quaest. super Metaph.* (by Hugh McCaughwell, Luke Wadding and Louis Vivès) until the recent critical edition, which still seems to be influenced by O'Fihely's editorial choices.

<sup>38</sup> A list of the misplaced paragraphs and questions is given in *Appendix II* and *Appendix III* to the critical edition. See *Duns Scoti Quaest. super Metaph.* (*Opera philosophica*, III), 699-705.

of the work. Surprisingly little attention, however, has been paid to these additions from a textual point of view. Now, there is evidence that the *Questions on the Metaphysics* were composed during a long period of time and that the present text is the result of the conflation several drafts, which the scribes assembled into one composite version. The first edition of Scotus's *Questions on the Metaphysics* reflect very closely this composite version. Some studies have successfully shown that certain questions should be attributed to a very late date in Scotus's career (notably, question VII.13 on individuation), whereas others were presumably written in an early stage<sup>39</sup>. After a detailed consideration of the additions and misplaced paragraphs, the same conclusion can be drawn for other questions. By separating the additions and the adventitious paragraphs from the text critically edited, it is possible to distinguish between two stages through which one and the same question passed, i.e. a first draft and the successive additions that Scotus made to it with the intention of preparing a revised version of the question. The fact that Scotus never completed such a revision is the reason why the current text of the *Questions on the Metaphysics*, as presented by the critical edition, is sometimes the result of the juxtaposition between sections that were supposed to belong to different drafts. Thus, what we now have is a composite text, which must be carefully disarticulated into its original constituents. Fortunately, manuscript evidence and the editors' careful notes and observations allow us to reconstruct these different stages, at least in most cases<sup>40</sup>.

*QMet.* IV.1 on univocity is one of these fortunate cases. Several passages are marked as *additiones* in some manuscripts, notably in mss. Oxford, Merton College 292 (= A) and München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, CLM 15829 (= G). Other passages were marked as additions by Maurice O'Fihely, who probably had access to more manuscripts than we now have. His remarks are consequently to be taken

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<sup>39</sup> See S.D Dumont, *The Question on Individuation in Scotus's «Quaestiones super Metaphysicam»*, in L. Sileo (ed.), *Via Scoti. Methodologica ad mentem Joannis Duns Scoti*. Atti del Congresso Scotistico Internazionale, Roma 9-11 marzo 1993, Edizioni Antonianum, Roma 1995, I, 193-227; T. Noone, *Scotus's Critique of the Thomistic Theory of Individuation and the Dating of the «Quaestiones in libros Metaphysicorum» VII q. 13*, in Sileo, *Via Scoti*, I, 391-406. In general, on dating the *Questions on Metaphysics*, see *Introduction to Duns Scoti Quaest. super Metaph.* (Opera philosophica, III), xlii-xlvi; S.P. Marrone, *The Light of Thy Countenance. Science and Knowledge of God in the Thirteenth Century*, Brill, Leiden – Boston – Köln 2001, II, 400.

<sup>40</sup> See the editors' criteria to single out additions in the *Introduction to Duns Scoti Quaest. super Metaph.* (Opera philosophica, III), xxxi. On the importance of a study of these additions for the history of the text of the *Quaestiones*, see G. Pini, *Critical Study. Duns Scotus's Metaphysics: The Critical Edition of His Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, «Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales», 65 (1998), 353-368: 365-367.

into account as an additional witness. Moreover, several paragraphs are written at the end of the question or in the margin of the manuscript in ms. Oxford, Balliol College 234 (= B). Most of these passages have been indicated in the critical edition. Some, however, have escaped the attention of the editors. All these passages point to the existence of two drafts of *QMet.* IV.1. More precisely, we can single out a first draft and the beginning of an interrupted revision.

The following paragraphs can be considered as additions<sup>41</sup>:

parr. 18, 19, 23-26: at the end of the question in B;

parr. 27-30: marked as *additiones* in A and G; considered as *additiones* by O’Fihely and in the critical edition;

par. 36: missing in A and written in the margin in B;

par. 40: marked as an *additio* in A and G; considered as an *additio* by O’Fihely and in the critical edition;

parr. 41-45: marked as *additiones* in A and G; considered as *additiones* by O’Fihely and in the critical edition;

parr. 51-53: marked as *additiones* in A and considered as *additiones* by O’Fihely;

parr. 55 and 56: misplaced (after 57) in B;

parr. 58-61: marked as *additiones* by O’Fihely;

par. 69: written in margin in B and marked as an *additio* by O’Fihely;

par. 91: marked as an *additio* A and G and in the *apparatus* of the critical edition.

If we remove these additions from the text of the question, we obtain the first version of the question. The structure of this first version turns out to be surprisingly neat:

(1) Arguments against the equivocacy of being (parr. 1-16): Scotus gives 14 arguments *contra*. 10 of these 14 arguments (i.e., parr. 1, 5-7, 9-12, 14, 16) are present in *QCat.* 4 (see *QCat.* 4, parr. 1-3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 7, 10, 12).

(2) Against univocity (parr. 17, 20-22): Scotus introduces four passages against the univocity of being, one from Porphyry and three from Aristotle. Two of these passages (17, 20) are present in *QCat.* 4 (see *QCat.* 4, parr. 16, 17)

(3) Exposition of Avicenna’s position in favor of univocity (parr. 31-35, 37-39, 46-49): Scotus introduces Avicenna’s position, which is supported by six arguments and a *confirmatio*. Avicenna’s position and one of the

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<sup>41</sup> The numbers refer to the paragraph numbering of the critical edition.

arguments (parr. 31, 35) are present in *QCat.* 4 as arguments in favor of univocity (see *QCat.* 4, parr. 14, 13).

(4) Objections against Avicenna's position (parr. 50, 54, 57, 62-68): Scotus presents seven objections against univocity. The first five objections (parr. 50, 54, 57, 62, 64) are present in *QCat.* 4 as arguments against univocity given before the solution (see *QCat.* 4, parr. 18, 19 second half, 20-22, 24, 19 first half). In *QMet.* IV.1, Scotus answers two of these arguments (parr. 63, 65), which in *QCat.* 4 remained unanswered.

(5) Solution (par. 70): Scotus gives his solution to the question, according to which 'being' is equivocal for the logician and analogous for the metaphysician. This solution is identical to the solution of *QCat.* 4, where Scotus also gives an analysis of the notion of analogy and demonstrates the impossibility of a logical notion of analogy (see *QCat.* 4, parr. 37-38).

(6) Replies to the arguments against equivocality (parr. 71-85): Scotus replies to the arguments introduced at the beginning of the question. 8 out of 11 replies (parr. 76-81, 84, 85) are present in *QCat.* 4 (see *QCat.* 4, parr. 40, 41, 43, 44, 47, 50, 48-49, 52)

(7) Replies to the arguments in support of Avicenna (parr. 86-90): Scotus replies to the arguments supporting Avicenna's position in favor of univocity. Scotus only replies to 3 out of 6 arguments (i.e., to parr. 32, 35, 46). Two of these responses (parr. 87 and 88) are present in *QCat.* 4 (see *QCat.* 4, 53, 54).

Thus, when the additions are removed, the original draft of *QMet.* IV.1 emerges as a fairly standard question. Its structure is the following: arguments *contra*, arguments *pro*, presentation of the Avicenna's position, confutation of Avicenna's position, solution to the question, replies to the arguments *contra*, replies to the arguments in support of Avicenna's position. It is also remarkable that most of the arguments are parallel to arguments present in *QCat.* 4.

Scotus's solution to *QMet.* IV.1 is also very similar to that of *QCat.* 4. On this regard, it must be noted that the editors adopted a reading that is supported by the minority of the manuscripts. Presumably, this was done with the intention to weaken Scotus's original statement in favor of equivocality, because of the embarrassment that a flat denial of univocity provoked in scholars who expected Scotus to endorse the doctrine of univocity. As we have seen, however, there is nothing surprising in this denial univocity. Scotus's position, in both *QCat.* 4 and *QMet.* IV. 1, is in agreement with the standard late thirteenth-century English view, according to which 'being' is equivocal for logicians and analogous for real

philosophers. If we restore the reading of the majority (and most authoritative) of the manuscripts, it becomes even clearer how close Scotus's solution in *QMet.* IV.1 is to his solution of *QCat.* 4:

To the question, I concede that being is not said univocally of all things, even though it is not said equivocally either, because something is said equivocally when those things of which it is asserted are not attributed to one another. But when such an attribution exists, then something is said analogously. Since it does not have one concept, therefore it signifies all things essentially according to their proper meaning and simply equivocally according to the logician. But because those things it signifies are attributed essentially among themselves, it follows that it is attributed analogically according to the metaphysician, who deals with reality<sup>42</sup>.

In the original draft of *QMet.* IV.1, Scotus did not endorse univocity. He took the English approach to the issue of whether 'being' is equivocal, as he had done in *QCat.* 4. This explains why Scotus successfully replies to the arguments against the equivocality of being stated at the beginning of the question. Quite simply, 'being' is equivocal, even though only according to the logician, even though the logical approach can be supplemented with a real consideration. Under no respect, however, is 'being' univocal. Scotus presents Avicenna's position only to reject it.

The parallelism between *QMet.* IV.1 and *QCat.* 4 suggests that these two works are chronologically close. Both of them belong to the English tradition concerning the issue of the equivocality of being. Because Scotus still shows no sympathy for univocity, which he comes to endorse in the *Lectura*, the first draft of *QMet.* IV.1 almost surely antedates the first version of Scotus's commentary on the *Sentences*. Scotus is thought to have composed the first book of the *Lectura* in Oxford, around 1297-98. He probably wrote

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<sup>42</sup> *QMet.* IV.1, n. 70, pp. 315-316: «Ad quaestionem, concedo quod ens non dicatur univoce de omnibus entibus, non tamen (univoce... tamen] mss. BCD<sup>2</sup>EHKL; om. critical edition) aequivoce, quia aequivoce dicitur aliquid de multis quando illa de quibus dicitur, non habent attributionem ad invicem; sed quando attribuuntur, tunc analogice. Quia ergo non habet conceptum unum, ideo significat omnia essentialiter secundum propriam rationem, et simpliciter aequivoce secundum logicum. Quia autem illa quae significantur, inter se essentialiter attribuuntur, ideo analogice secundum metaphysicum reale». I have modified Etzkorn and Wolter's translation, which follows the critical edition, in order to adapt it to the reading I have chosen. See *Questions on the Metaphysics of Aristotle by John Duns Scotus*. Translated by G.J. Etzkorn and A.B. Wolter, Franciscan Institute Publications, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 1997, I, 271. On the textual point, see the apparatus to the edition in *QMet.* IV.1, 315, ad l. 6. See also Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function*, 46, n. 35; Pini, *Critical Study. Duns Scotus's Metaphysics*, 364; Marrone, *The Light of Thy Countenance*, II, 503-504, n. 39.

the first draft of *QMet.* IV.1 slightly earlier, when he must have been lecturing on the *Metaphysics* in the Oxford Franciscan *studium*<sup>43</sup>.

There are some differences between *QCat.* 4 and *QMet.* IV.1, however. First, in *QMet.* IV.1 Scotus presents Avicenna's position not anymore among the arguments *contra* but as an autonomous *opinio*. Second, Scotus replies to one of the objections against Avicenna that in *QCat.* 4 remained unanswered. Third and most important, Scotus only replies to three out of six arguments in support of Avicenna's position (so, in support of univocity). This last fact is clear evidence that Scotus did not revise the first draft of *QMet.* IV.1 for publication. From what we can judge now, Scotus's *Questions on the Metaphysics*, even in their first version, did not have any official circulation during their author's lifetime. Only afterwards were they copied and arranged for publication. In that form, they had some circulation within the Franciscan order<sup>44</sup>. In this respect, the *Questions on the Metaphysics* met a different fate from the *Questions on the Categories*, whose text is so polished that it must have been the result of Scotus's own revision.

Scotus probably intended to provide a similar revision of his *Questions on the Metaphysics*. The additions to the first version of *QMet.* IV.1 – probably originating from a new course on the *Metaphysics* – should be seen as the first steps to prepare a second and definitive version of the question in view of an official publication. Such a revision was never accomplished. Even the solution to the question was not revised. Consequently, the additions in the manuscripts are more or less clumsily

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<sup>43</sup> The relationship between the *Questions on the Metaphysics* and the *Lectura* has been an object of debate among scholars. See L. Modric, *Rapporto tra la «Lectura» II e la «Metafisica» di G. Duns Scoto*, «Antonianum», 42 (1987), 504-509; *Prolegomena to Ioannis Duns Scoti Lectura in librum secundum Sententiarum. A distinctione septima ad quadragesimam quartam*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Civitas Vaticana 1993 (Opera omnia, XIX), 41\*-46\*; Dumont, *The Question on Individuation*; R. Wood, review of Duns Scoti *Opera omnia*, XIX, «Archivum Franciscanum Historicum», 88 (1995), 319-323; A.B. Wolter, *Reflections about Scotus's Early Works*, in L. Honnefelder - R. Wood - M. Dreyer (eds.), *John Duns Scotus. Metaphysics and Ethics*, Brill, Leiden - New York - Köln 1996, 37-57: 38-39; *Introduction to Duns Scoti Quaest. super Metaph.* (Opera philosophica, III), xlii-xlvi. The prevailing opinion is now that there can be no straightforward solution, since the *Questions* were not composed on a single occasion. Accordingly, it is commonly admitted that at least some parts of the *Questions* follow the *Lectura*. Scotus composed the first two books of the *Lectura* before moving to Paris (where he also started the revision that would result into his *Ordinatio*), probably in the years 1297-1300; see Wolter, *Reflections*, 45 (which corrects the later date proposed by the *Commissio Scotistica*). On philosophical teaching among the Franciscans, see B. Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education (c. 1210-1517)*, Brill, Leiden - Boston - Köln 2000, 137-146.

<sup>44</sup> See the quotations from Scotus's *Questions on the Metaphysics* by John Reading, Petrus Thomae, William Ockham and Adam Wodeham in the *Introduction* to Duns Scoti *Quaest. super Metaph.* (Opera philosophica, III), xxiv-xxviii.



inserted into the first version. All this resulted into a somewhat incoherent jumble of arguments coming from two different drafts. Accordingly, the textual situation of the *Questions on the Metaphysics* is quite similar to that of Scotus's theological masterpiece, the never completed *Ordinatio*. As far as the *Ordinatio* is concerned, the task of preparing a revised edition was carried out by Scotus's students and followers, as witnessed by the famous ms. Assisi, Biblioteca Comunale 137<sup>45</sup>. With regard to the *Questions on the Metaphysics*, the revision was carried out by Scotus's pupil, the Catalan Antonius Andreae, who did not hesitate to modify, delete and substitute the words of his master in order to provide a complete and really "Scotist" set of questions on the *Metaphysics*. He also inserted Scotus's questions into a literal commentary on the *Metaphysics*, which he produced by revising Thomas Aquinas's commentary in the light of Scotus's doctrines as presented mostly in his *Ordinatio*. Not surprisingly, Antonius Andreae's revised edition of Scotus's *Questions on the Metaphysics* was extremely successful, especially in the fifteenth century. Antonius Andreae's edition was clear and simple where Scotus's original work was muddled and at times forbiddingly difficult<sup>46</sup>. Scotus's original *Questions on the Metaphysics* did have some circulation, however, in a version combining the several drafts through which they had gone. It is this composite version that Maurice O'Fihely published for the first time in 1497 (GW 9065). O'Fihely's composite text formed the basis for all successive editions, including the critical edition of the *Opera philosophica*.

##### 5. *The additions to the question on univocity: the case of the differences of being*

Let us now turn to the additions to *QMet. IV.1*, which testify to Scotus's interrupted revision of his question on the univocity. One of these additions makes a general point. Somebody could answer to the question that the question whether being is univocal or not concerns the signification

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<sup>45</sup> See *De Ordinatione I. Duns Scoti disquisitio historico-critica*, in Ioannis Duns Scoti *Ordinatio. Prologus*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Civitas Vaticana 1950 (Opera omnia, I), 259\*-270\*; A.B. Wolter, *Reflections on the Life and Works of Scotus*, «The American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly», 47 (1993), 1-36: 26.

<sup>46</sup> Some 49 manuscripts of Antonius Andreae's *Quaestiones super Metaphysicam* are extant. See G. Pini, *Una lettura scotista della Metafisica di Aristotele: l'Expositio in libros Metaphysicorum di Antonio Andrea*, «Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale», 2 (1991), 529-586; Id., *Sulla fortuna delle «Quaestiones super Metaphysicam» di Duns Scoto*. On the success of Antonius Andreae's *Quaestiones* in Oxford and Cambridge in the fifteenth century, see D. Riehl Leader, *Philosophy at Oxford and Cambridge in the Fifteenth Century*, «History of Universities», 4 (1984), 25-46.

of the term 'being'. Since signification is a matter of convention, such a question cannot be answered by rational arguments, but only by an appeal to common usage. Scotus objects that this view misses the point of the question, which asks whether there is a *concept* common to all the ten categories, no matter how such a concept is called. Admittedly, the decision as to how to call the concept of being is a matter of convention; the existence of such a concept, however, is not<sup>47</sup>. Scotus is here implicitly referring to Aristotle's theory of signification, to which I have already called the attention. According to Aristotle, the terms by which things are signified are a matter of convention, as they change from language to language; but the concepts primarily signified by terms are not a matter of convention, for they are identical for all human beings<sup>48</sup>.

All the other additions to *QMet.* IV.1 are arguments in favor of univocity. This clearly shows that Scotus's revision of the question, if it had been completed, would have probably resulted in a full endorsement of univocity. This accounts for the curiously mixed character of *QMet.* IV.1. As it is now, *QMet.* IV.1 combines a first draft in favor of the equivocality of being and the first elements of a defense of univocity.

When did Scotus write the additions? Probably after the *Lectura*, as we have seen. There is evidence that Scotus had already become acquainted with some theological technical notions, which he imported into the philosophical discussion on univocity. So, the first draft of *QMet.* IV.1 probably reflects Scotus's first teaching on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* at the Franciscan house in Oxford slightly before 1297-98 and belongs to the same philosophical environment in which William of Chelvestun and William of Bonkes (?) composed their commentaries on Aristotle. By contrast, when we turn to the additions that were to constitute the second draft of the question, we perceive a real change. Several conceptual tools, completely extraneous to the arts faculty tradition, have been wholesale exported from theological discussions. Scotus is now able to face the old problem from a new perspective.

Scotus's adoption of theological conceptual tools in a philosophical discussion would have lasting effects, possibly even more than his specific solution to the question of univocity. After Scotus, the debate on univocity became much more sophisticated than it used to be, even when the discussion moved on merely philosophical ground.

An example can clarify the character of Scotus's additions. As we have seen, in the first draft of the question on univocity, the exposition of

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<sup>47</sup> *QMet.* IV.1, nn. 27-30, p. 301.

<sup>48</sup> Aristotle, *De int.* 1, 16a3-9.

Avicenna's position in favor of univocity was followed by seven objections. Let us focus on the third objection against Avicenna's position. This objection centers on the classic problem of the differences of being, which can be considered as one of the most formidable stumbling block against the adoption of the univocity of being.

Scotus formulates the argument of the differences as follows. Saying that the concept of being is univocal amounts to positing one and the same concept as common to all the categories into which being is divided. Now, a concept is divided into the things to which it is common by way of differences added to it, i.e. external to its concept. For example, the concept *animal*, which is common to its species, is divided into them by way of differences not included in the concept *animal*. These are differences such as *rational* and *irrational*. Similarly, if one and the same concept of being is common to all categories, being is divided into the categories by way of differences. So, what about these differences by which being is divided into the categories? They are either beings or non-beings. If these differences are beings, the concept of being is included in their concepts; but then, being is included in the concept both of the categories into which it is divided and of the differences by which it is divided. For example, the concept of being is included both in the notion of the category of substance and in the difference by which being is divided into substance. But then, when we say that a substance is a being of such-and-such a kind, e.g. a substantial being, we say the same thing twice, because being is also included in the difference 'substantial'. Thus, we are actually saying that a substance is "a being being of such-and-such a kind". This redundancy in the concept of substance (technically called '*nugatio*') is evidence that something has gone wrong in the analysis of how being is divided into the categories. Alternatively, we may say that the differences by which being is divided in the categories are non-beings and the concept of being is not included in them. But then, since these differences constitute the categories and since their concepts are included into the concepts of the categories, it follows that each category is constituted by non-being and that the concept of each category *per se* or formally includes non-being, which is something absurd, given that the categories are the highest genera of being<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> *QMet.* IV.1, n. 57, p. 310: «Item, arguitur sic: omne unum in se, si distinguitur in diversis, distinguitur per aliqua addita sibi. Conceptus entis est unus de se in omnibus generibus. Quaero igitur de addito *a*: aut est ens, et sic ens erit de intellectu eius, scilicet *a*, quia ens praedicat substantiam cuiuslibet entis, IV huius; ergo substantia est ens, et sic nugatio. Si sit non-ens, tunc omne genus generalissimum est formaliter non-ens, quia illud formale est non-ens, et omnis species formaliter non-ens». Cf. *Ord.* I, d. 3, pars 1, a. 3, n. 157 (*Opera omnia*, II), 95: «Item, per rationem: si ens esset univocum ad decem genera, ergo descenderet in illa

Scotus had already formulated this argument against univocity in *QCat.* 4<sup>50</sup>. Both there and in the first draft of the *QMet.* IV.1 this argument was one of the most powerful arguments against the adoption of the univocity of being. But Scotus now has an answer to this argument. As a matter of fact, Scotus has not just one, but four different answers. After evaluating each one of these answers, he concludes that none is completely satisfactory if taken by itself. Accordingly, he proposes a composed solution, resulting from a combination of the third and the fourth answer, which avoids the defects that each one of them presents when taken separately. Thanks to this combined answer, Scotus holds that he can solve the problem of the differences of being and that he can consequently remove the most powerful obstacle against the adoption of the univocity of the concept of being<sup>51</sup>.

Now, it is remarkable that Scotus's answer hinges on a distinction that is standard in a theological context but sounds novel in a philosophical discussion. He resorts to the distinction between formal and identical predication, which was usually introduced in Trinitarian discussions in order to account for predications such as '*Essentia est Pater*', '*Divina natura est homo*' or '*Verbum est homo*'<sup>52</sup>. A formal predication (*praedicatio*

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per aliquas differentias. Sint ergo duae tales differentiae, a et b: aut ergo istae includunt ens, et tunc in conceptu cuiuslibet generis generalissimi includitur nugatio, aut ista non sunt entia, et tunc non-ens erit de intellectu entis». Interestingly, in the *Ordinatio* the answer to this objection is missing. See *ibid.*, 103, note 8. But it is basically in order to meet this objection that Scotus develops his doctrine of the double primacy of being, on which see below.

<sup>50</sup> *QCat.* 4, nn. 20-22, 279.

<sup>51</sup> *QMet.* IV.1, nn. 58-61, pp. 310-313.

<sup>52</sup> See for example S. Bonaventurae *In I Sent.*, d. 5, a. 1, q. 1, ad 2um, in *Eiusdem Commentaria in quatuor libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi*, I, Ex Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, Ad Claras Aquas 1882 (Opera omnia, I), 113b; S. Thomae Aquinatis *Super Sent.*, lib. III, d. 5, *expositio textus*, in *Eiusdem Scriptum super Sententiis magistri Petri Lombardi*, III, ed. M.F. Moos, P. Lethielleux, Paris 1933, 210: «Et dicendum, quod differentia est inter nomina substantiva et adjectiva. Substantiva enim significant non tantum formam, sed etiam suppositum formae, unde possunt praedicari ratione utriusque; et quando praedicantur ratione suppositi, dicitur praedicatio per identitatem; quando autem ratione formae, dicitur per denominationem, sive informationem: et haec est magis propria praedicatio, quia termini in praedicato tenentur formaliter. Adjectiva autem tantum significant formam; et ideo non possunt praedicari, nisi per informationem: unde haec est falsa: essentia est generans; quamvis haec sit vera: essentia est Pater. Cum igitur dicitur, Filius Dei est homo, est praedicatio et per informationem et etiam per identitatem; cum vero dicitur: essentia divina est homo, est praedicatio per identitatem, quia est idem secundum rem cum supposito hominis; non autem per informationem, quia natura divina non significatur ut suppositum subsistens in humana natura. Et ideo dicit Magister, quod non est una vera sicut alia; nec tamen dicit eam simpliciter esse falsam». On the distinction between formal (or adjectival) and identical (or substantive) predication, see A. Maierù, *Logic and Trinitarian Theology: De Modo Praedicandi ac Sylogizandi in Divinis*, in N. Kretzmann (ed.), *Meaning and Inference in Medieval Philosophy. Studies in memory of Jan Pinborg*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht - Boston - London 1988, 247-295: 251-254 and 259, n. 12; S. Knuuttila, *The Question of the Validity of Logic in*

*formalis*) is a standard *per se* predication, which is true in virtue of what its terms (i.e., subject and predicate) signify. Specifically, in a true formal predication the *significatum* of the predicate-term is included in the *significatum* of the subject-term. Since the *significatum* of a term is a form captured by a concept, a formal predication can also be described as one in which what is predicated is the form signified by the predicate-term. By contrast, an identical predication (*praedicatio identica, praedicatio per identitatem*) is a predication that is true in virtue of what its terms stand for (*supponunt*). So an identical predication is true if the *suppositum* of the subject-term and that of the predicate-term is the same or identical. For this reason, an identical predication can also be described as a statement of identity between subject and predicate. In an identical predication, what is predicated is not the *significatum* of the predicate-term, but its *suppositum*; an identical predication is not a relationship of intentional inclusion between concepts, but a relationship of identity between things described differently by the subject- and the predicate-term.

Standard *per se* predications are formal. ‘Man is animal’ and ‘White is a color’ are formal predications, since what is predicated of the subject is the form signified by the predicate-term. By these predications, we state that the concept (or form) of animal is included in that of man and the concept (or form) of color is included in that of white. Identical predications were usually invoked to account for the truth of special statements concerning the Trinity. A predication such as ‘*Natura divina est homo*’ is not accidentally true in the case of Christ. All the same, such a predication is not formal, for the concept of man is obviously not included in the concept of the divine nature. According to Christian dogma, two distinct natures, one human, the other divine, are both present in the same supposit, Christ. So, for this predication to be true, the term ‘*homo*’ must be taken not for what it signifies but for what it stands for (*supponit*). In Christ, the divine nature is identical with the human supposit.

It is typical of Scotus’s new approach to univocity that he takes the distinction between formal and identical predication from the theological context in which it was of common usage to apply it to the case of being and its differences. This application, however, is not unproblematic. Some people (including Scotus himself in the *Ordinatio*) explicitly restricted identical predications to God. In the *Ordinatio*, Scotus extended the use of

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*Late Medieval Thought*, in R.L. Friedman - L.O. Nielsen (eds.), *The Medieval Heritage in Early Modern Metaphysics and Modal Theory, 1400-1700*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht – Boston - London 2003, 121-142; M. Mühling, *Praedicatio identica*, in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Vierte, völlig neu bearbeitete Auflage*, VI, Tübingen 2003, 1533-1534. I wish to thank Russell L. Friedman for kindly directing me to the relevant bibliography.

identical predications from the Trinity to transcendental attributes said of God. But he held that in creatures it is impossible to distinguish between identical and formal predications, for only in God, because of His infinity, there are predications that are identical but not formal. This is the reason why Aristotle never introduced predications by identity as a distinct kind of predications. As Scotus remarked in the *Ordinatio*, a predication by identity, in creatures, is true if and only if the subject-term and the predicate-term both stand for (*supponunt pro*) a third thing, different from each one of them. For example, a genus (e.g., animal) can be exceptionally predicated of its *differentiae* (e.g., rational) because the genus and its *differentiae* are identical in a third entity, namely the species (e.g., man), for which they stand. Such predications are also formal, however, because the genus can be predicated of its *differentiae* only insofar as the *differentiae* are conceived as concrete terms signifying the species constituted by them. If the genus and the *differentiae* are taken as abstracted entities, no such predication is true for creatures. Accordingly, ‘*animalitas est rationalitas*’ is false<sup>53</sup>.

By contrast, in the additions to *QMet.* IV.1 Scotus admits of non-formal identical predications even in creatures. An example is the relationship among transcendental concepts. Being is predicated of transcendentals such as one and true, even though the concept of being is not included in the concepts of other transcendentals, for being, one and true are all simple concepts, which cannot be analyzed into more basic components. Being, however, is predicated by identity of both one and true. ‘*Ens est unum*’ and ‘*ens est verum*’ are true predications not in virtue of what ‘being’, ‘one’ and ‘true’ signify but in virtue of what they stand for (their *supposita*). Such predications are true identity statements concerning the *supposita* of their terms. It follows that being is common to transcendental concepts not formally (i.e., because it is included in them) but by identity (i.e., because its *supposita* are identical to the *supposita* of the other transcendentals)<sup>54</sup>. Interestingly, while Scotus had denied the possibility of such non-formal predications by identity in creatures in the main text of the *Ordinatio*, he had admitted of them in an addition to the *Ordinatio* itself, where he had precisely referred to the case of ‘entity’, ‘oneness’ and ‘truth’<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> Duns Scoti *Ord.* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 4, nn. 218-277 (*Opera omnia*, IV), 274-276. See also *Ord.* I, d. 5, pars 1, q. unica, n. 32 (*Opera omnia*, IV), 29, *adnotatio a*. On these passages and more in general on the notion of identical predication in Scotus, see S.D. Dumont, *The Univocity of the Concept of Being in the Fourteenth Century: II. The De ente of Peter Thomae*, «*Mediaeval Studies*», 50 (1988), 186-256: 212; Maierù, *Logic and Trinitarian Theology*, 253.

<sup>54</sup> *QMet.* IV.1 n. 58, 310, ll. 16.

<sup>55</sup> Duns Scoti *Ord.* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 4, *Adnotatio Duns Scoti* (*Opera omnia*, IV), 274: «*Contra: entitas est unitas vel veritas; si sint passionis absolutae entis, et eadem sibi*».

In the additions to *QMet.* IV.1, Scotus uses the distinction between formal and identical predications to solve the problem of the differences of being. Scotus's third and favorite solution to the problem is that the concept of being is included *per se* in each nature conceived as something by itself. So, being is predicated formally of every category and every categorial item and is consequently univocally common to every category and every categorial items. But being is also formally predicated of and univocally common to the differences insofar as they are conceived *in abstracto*, i.e. as natures by themselves. For example, let us posit that being descends into the category of substance by the difference of substantiality. If conceived *in abstracto* as substantiality, this difference includes the concept of being in itself; consequently, being is univocally common to it and to all the other things included *per se* in any category. By contrast, when differences are conceived not as natures but insofar as they denominate other things, the concept of being is not included in them but can be nevertheless predicated of them by identity. For a difference, when it denominates and modifies another thing, stands for a being and consequently is really identical with what the term 'being' stands for. For example, if the difference of substantiality is conceived as denominating and modifying something, i.e. as *substantial* and not as *substantiality*, the concept of being is not formally predicated of it (because *substantial* does not contain the concept of being, since it modifies it). Nevertheless, the concept of being is predicated of *substantial* by identity (because what 'substantial' stands for is a being, and so it is identical with that for which the term 'being' stands)<sup>56</sup>.

By applying the distinction between formal and identical predication to the differences of being, Scotus can conclude that the concept of being is common to everything. For being is common to all the things of which it is predicated *per se* by formal commonality. But being is also common to all the things in which it is included and to its differences by identical commonality, because each categorial item and each difference of being is identical to being, if we take 'being' not as a concept but as a supposit<sup>57</sup>.

This reply to the problem of the differences successfully avoids the redundancy objection, according to which, when we say that a substance is a being of such-and-such a kind, we say the same thing twice. Scotus can now answer that the difference *of-such-and-such a kind* is denominatively predicated of substance. Consequently, the concept of being, even though it

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<sup>56</sup> *QMet.* IV.1, n. 58, 310, ll. 16-19: «Tertia [scil., responsio]: quod commune est essentialiter et formaliter cuicumque naturae conceptae ut est aliquid in se; non tamen conceptae ut denominat aliud, est formaliter commune, sed tantum per identitatem». See also *ibid.*, n. 60, 311-312.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

is not included in the concept of such a difference, is nevertheless predicated of it by identity. Moreover, Scotus maintains that, if this reply is combined with another tentative reply to the problem of the differences, according to which the concept of being is divided into its inferiors not by something added and external to itself, we obtain the perfect solution to the problem of the differences of being. Being is formally common to all the things conceived as natures or essences by themselves and is divided into them by nothing added, i.e. by no difference external to its own concept. Moreover, being is common to everything – including its differences conceived as denominating other things – by identical commonality, as it is predicated by identity even of its own differences taken as modifying things<sup>58</sup>.

Scotus also remarks that this double commonality of being – formal and identical – also answers another classic objection against univocity, namely that if being is univocal then it is a genus, against Aristotle’s explicit statement that being is not a genus<sup>59</sup>. Being is not a genus precisely because, unlike a genus, it is predicated of its own differences, even though not formally but by identity. For the differences of being can be regarded as essences to which being is formally common, and this is enough to single them out as beings no matter how they are considered (i.e., whether in themselves or as denominating items). This is not the case with the *differentiae* of a genus, such as for example rational or irrational, which can never be regarded as animals<sup>60</sup>.

Scotus’s statement of the double commonality of being in the additions of *QMet.* IV.1 is strongly reminiscent of the view Scotus adopted in the *Ordinatio* to solve the very problem of the differences of being, namely the doctrine of the double primacy of being, by commonality and by virtuality<sup>61</sup>. It is difficult to establish which treatment came first, whether

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 60, 311-312: «Tertia responsio videtur probabilis, quia ex quo conceptus entis est absolutus, non est inconueniens quod claudatur in aliquo quod concipitur tanquam absolutum in se, non autem ut concipitur tanquam denominativum alterius. Sicut in albedine includitur formaliter color, non tamen in albo. Unde non est nugatio ‘color albus’. Et si isti iungatur quarta responsio quod respectu illorum quibus est formaliter commune est ‘tale commune quod non descendit per additum’ vitatur tam nugatio quam procesus in infinitum. Illam nota».

<sup>59</sup> Aristotle, *Metaph.* III, 3, 998b22-27. On this objection to univocity, see Pini, *Scoto e l’analogia*, 110-112; Donati, *La discussione sull’unità del concetto di ente*, 83-84.

<sup>60</sup> *QMet.* IV.1, n. 61, 313, ll. 4-9: «Haec etiam communitas tam formalis quam identica, satis prohibet ens esse genus. Sufficit etiam communitas identica ad hoc quod illa, quibus est sic commune, proprie numerentur, quia numerus magis est ratione essentialium quam modum concipiendi; essentialiter autem uno modo conceptis est ens commune formaliter».

<sup>61</sup> The similarity between Scotus’s position in *QMet.* IV.1 and his classic doctrine of the double primacy has been noted by Marrone, *The Notion of Univocity*, 386-388. Scotus formulates his doctrine of the double primacy of being in *Lect.* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, nn. 97-104 (*Opera omnia*, XVI), 261-264; and *Ord.* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, nn. 137-151 (*Opera omnia*, III), 85-



the double primacy of the *Ordinatio* or the double commonality in the additions to *QMet.* IV.1. The fact that in the main text of the *Ordinatio* Scotus denies that identical predications hold for creatures whereas both in an addition to the *Ordinatio* and in the additions to *QMet.* IV.1 he admits of such identical predications even in creatures suggests that Scotus's additions to *QMet.* IV.1 may be posterior to the main text of the *Ordinatio* and may be contemporary to its never completed revision of the *Ordinatio*. Since the last stages of the revision of the *Ordinatio* took place during or even after Scotus's stay in Paris, Scotus's re-working on the *Questions on the Metaphysics*, at least as far as *QMet.* IV.1 is concerned, may have occurred in the same late period<sup>62</sup>. It is interesting to remark that the issue of the differences of being remained a controversial one among Scotus's students, who disagreed in their reconstruction of Scotus's on this issue<sup>63</sup>. Apparently, Scotus's students could find support for different doctrines in Scotus's several treatments of the topic.

In any case, Scotus is very likely to have developed his solution to the problem of the differences of being in *QMet.* IV.1 when he had already acquired proficiency in theology, for it is from theological discussions that he imported the powerful conceptual tool of the distinction between formal and identical predications. It has often been often claimed that Scotus's approach to philosophical issues has a theological flavor. Sometimes, this has even been considered as a consequence of the 1277 crisis. It is not my intention to enter the never-ending debate over the theological versus philosophical character of Scotus's thought. My point is much more limited. What emerges from an analysis of *QMet.* IV.1 is only a particular case of the influence of theological discussions over philosophy. Scotus imported some notions that were standard in a theological context into a well-established philosophical debate. The result was a complete renewal of the issue of the univocity of being, as becomes apparent if we compare the technicality and sophistication of Scotus's additions, on the one hand, to the discussions on univocity in the Oxford arts faculty at the end of the thirteenth century and

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94. See Wolter, *The Transcendentals*, 77-99; S.D. Dumont, *The Univocity of the Concept of Being in the Fourteenth Century: John Duns Scotus and William Alnwick*, «*Mediaeval Studies*», 49 (1987), 1-75: 20-24.

<sup>62</sup> Similarly, Dumont convincingly argues for a late dating of q. VII.13 concerning individuation. See Dumont, *The Question on Individuation*.

<sup>63</sup> See Dumont, *The Univocity of the Concept of Being in the Fourteenth Century: John Duns Scotus and William of Alnwick*, 19-31; Id., *The Univocity of the Concept of Being in the Fourteenth Century: II. The De ente of Peter Thomae*, 205-216 (210 for Peter Thomae's relying on the particular passage from Scotus's *QMet.* IV.1 that I have taken into consideration); S.F. Brown-S.D. Dumont, *Univocity of the Concept of Being in the Fourteenth Century: III. An Early Scotist*, «*Mediaeval Studies*», 51 (1989), 1-129: 19-35.

to Scotus's own treatment of univocity in the *Questions on the Categories* and in the first draft of the *Questions on the Metaphysics*, on the other hand. Even more than Scotus's personal endorsement of univocity, this new depth and technical sophistication is Scotus's long-standing legacy to the debate concerning univocity. Even those who rejected Scotus's doctrine of the univocity of being had to take into account his solution to the problem of the differences.

Probably, if Scotus had been able to complete the revision of his *Questions on the Metaphysics*, his four tentative answers to the problem of the differences of being would have been replaced by a single treatment. Also, the first draft would have been replaced by a new solution and would have consequently disappeared. Thanks to the contingencies of Scotus's career and of the textual history of his works, we can still have a glance on the actual way Scotus worked. This requires much patience and attention on the part of the interpreter. Certainly, much work has still to be done on the *Questions on the Metaphysics*. By this little example concerning the univocity of being and the case of the differences of being, I hope to have shown that this painstaking work is worth the effort and not without consequences for a correct philosophical evaluation of Scotus's doctrines.