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John Duns Scotus, Philosopher

Proceedings of "The Quadruple Congress" on John Duns Scotus

Part 1

Edited by
Mary Beth Ingham
and Oleg Bychkov

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Introduction

John Duns Scotus, Philosopher

In April 2005, Franciscan Institute Director Michael Cusato, O.F.M., convened an international group of scholars to discuss plans for the 2008 celebration of the seventh centenary of the death of the Subtle Doctor, Blessed John Duns Scotus (1265–1308). The result of this initial planning session came to be called "The Quadruple Congress": a series of conferences in North America and Europe, bringing together scholars and experts in a symposium-like reflection on the life, philosophy, theology and influence of John Duns Scotus. Four sites were selected for the congress: St. Bonaventure, NY, Oxford, England, Bonn-Cologne, Germany and Strasbourg, France. Each site agreed to focus on a particular aspect of Scotist thought, from its historical context to its historical legacy. Coordinators for each celebration would frame their conference according to their own preferred organizational style, inviting international as well as regional scholars. The papers from each conference would appear in a separate volume, part of a four volume set, published jointly by Franciscan Institute Publications (St. Bonaventure, New York) and Aschendorff Verlag (Münster, Germany).

The Quadruple Congress celebrated the work of Scotus according to a thematic focus and chronological frame:

I. The first conference, held at St. Bonaventure, NY in October 2007, opened the Congress with a focus on Scotus's philosophical inheritance and his *Opera Philosophica*.
II. The second conference, held at Oriel College, Oxford in July 2008, dealt with Scotus's theological writings.
III. The third conference, co-hosted by the University of Bonn and the Thomas Institut, Cologne in November 2008, focused specifically on the Metaphysical and Ethical investigations of Scotus's *Opera*. This conference also marked the seventh centenary of his death.
IV. Finally, the fourth conference, co-hosted by the University of Strasbourg (France) and the University of Mainz (Germany) explored the legacy of Scotist thought, from the fourteenth – twentieth centuries.

These four conferences brought together an international group of scholars, both junior and senior specialists, in a joint effort to assess the significance of the work of this great medieval metaphysician and philosopher-

theologian. Other international celebrations also took place in Brazil, in Italy and at the Antonianum in Rome.

The articles contained in the present volume represent the first of the four conferences, held at St. Bonaventure University, NY in October 2007. The purpose of this conference was three-fold:

First, it would open the Quadruple Congress with an exploration of Scotus's philosophy: both in terms of his own philosophical inheritance as well as his Franciscan identity.

Second, it would celebrate the completion of the *Opera Philosophica*, under the direction of Timothy Noone, Catholic University of America.

Finally, it would celebrate the life and work of the eminent American Franciscan scholar, the late Allan B. Wolter, O.F.M. Wolter's work on Scotus's philosophical theology has marked generations of scholars in North America and throughout the world.

Scotus and Philosophy

We have chosen to entitle this first volume *John Duns Scotus, Philosopher*. This is, of course, subject to some debate, for Scotus is as much a theologian as he is a philosopher. However, in approaching the question of Scotus's philosophy, we must recall the particular role played by philosophy and by natural reasoning in the medieval university, and especially its central relationship to theology (*sacra doctrina*). For medieval masters like Bonaventure, Aquinas and Scotus, philosophical reasoning played a central role in approaching and discussing theological questions, such as the trinity of persons in God, Eucharistic transubstantiation, the nature of language about God and the possibility of theology as a science. Philosophical theology even today, as then, uses philosophical arguments for a conversation *ad extra*, in order to involve in a dialogue any intelligent observer, even non-Christian: as medieval theologians did in respect to pagan, Muslim and Jewish philosophers. However, Scotus's philosophical insights, most often tied to theological questions, are also philosophically important in their own right.

Situating Scotus in light of his predecessors always involves placing him within the context of theological and philosophical debates of post-1277 era: debates that involve a critique of Aristotelian philosophy and in which figures such as Henry of Ghent, Giles of Rome, Godfrey of Fontaines play a prominent role. It also means situating him in the context of his own Franciscan predecessors, Alexander of Hales, Peter John Olivi, Richard of Middleton, William of Ware, and Bonaventure of Bagnoregio. Most importantly, Scotus's philosophical predecessors also include non-Franciscan masters such as Robert Grosseteste and Islamic thinkers such as Avicenna (Ibn Sînâ).

Three plenary addresses at St. Bonaventure that are part of the present volume drew our attention to both these contexts of his thought and major

thematic elements in Scotus's philosophical vision. In "Reflections on Franciscan Sources for Scotus's Philosophical Commentaries," Stephen Brown presents the Franciscan philosophical backdrop for Scotus's own Aristotelian commentaries. In "Ibn Sînâ (Avicenna) and John Duns Scotus," Thérèse-Anne Druart explores the Islamic backdrop to Scotus's metaphysics of being, and the nature of his relationship to Avicenna. In "Scotus on Doing Metaphysics *in statu isto,"* Giorgio Pini traces Scotus's systematic argument for the univocity of being as it appears within the philosophical context of substance and accidents.

The remaining papers in this volume either expand the themes of the plenary addresses or fill out our understanding of Scotus as a philosopher in several important ways. Continuing the theme of Scotus's Franciscan heritage, the influence of Scotus's Franciscan identity is traced in the contributions of Mary Beth Ingham, Seamus Mulholland, and Timothy Noone. The philosophical context for Scotus's theological insights is central to the papers of Marilyn McCord Adams, Thomas Hipp, and Thomas Möllenbeck. Francesco Fiorentino, Severin Kitanov, and Graham McAleer explore the logical, metaphysical and psychological elements of Scotist thought. Finally, Cruz Gonzalez-Ayesta, Andrea Robiglio, and Antonie Vos deal with Scotus's ethical innovations, the notion of freedom and synchronic contingency.

The current selection thus provides the background and sources for, as well outlines, in a preliminary way, the philosophical issues which are important to Scotus's specific theological and philosophical teachings discussed in two subsequent volumes based on the Oxford and Bonn-Cologne conferences. For example, although the Oxford meeting focused on Scotus's theology, many topics discussed there were expressly philosophical, such as will and intellect, aesthetics and theory of relations, epistemology, and the nature of practical knowledge. The Bonn-Cologne meeting specifically focused on several major themes of Scotus's philosophy, most of which can be linked with the initial discussion provided by the papers at St. Bonaventure meeting: metaphysics, ontology, epistemology/theory of cognition, logic (including issues in semantics and predication), aesthetics, the status of science and the nature of theology as science, contingency theory and causality, and ethical issues such as will and emotions.

Our hope is that the current volume and the rest of the series will reinvigorate the discussion about John Duns Scotus's philosophical and theological inheritance and provide a useful tool for all those daring to study the thought of the Subtle Doctor.

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Reflections on Franciscan Sources for Duns Scotus's Philosophical Commentaries

Stephen F. Brown

In his *Prolegomena* to the *Summa fratris Alexandri*, Victorin Doucet notes that the editors of the *Summa* have indicated over 1100 citations from Aristotle in this monumental work of the 1240s (sixty-two citations from Aristotles's *Categories*, nine from the *Perihermeneias*, 188 from the *De anima* and 256 from the *Metaphysics*, etc.).[1] Doucet then cites Roger Bacon who confirms the vast presence of Aristotle in the text that is attributed to Alexander of Hales.[2] However, Bacon tells us that the large number of references to Aristotle (particularly his natural philosophy) should not overwhelm us: they are poorly understood and quoted only out of vanity.[3]

Bacon's judgment needs to be put in context. Many of the same citations from Aristotle are found in the theological writings of Philip the Chancellor, William of Auvergne and Roland of Cremona.[4] Were they, too "guilty of poor understanding and vanity"? Or did their use of Aristotle, and Alexander's as well, serve a different purpose than understanding the mind of Aristotle?

Surely Bacon points correctly when he declares that Alexander never studied Aristotle in the Arts Faculty at Paris.[5] And Bacon himself also had the requisite knowledge of Aristotle's texts in themselves when he was invited to Paris in the early 1240s to introduce certain works of Aristotle into the curriculum of the Arts Faculty.[6]

Still, Alexander, Philip the Chancellor, William of Auvergne and Roland of Cremona were working in a theological context. They did not expect statements of Aristotle to prove Christian truths. They worked within the framework set long before by St. Augustine – in the opening chapter of Book XIV of the *De Trinitate* where he counseled: "Do not pursue every form of

1 V. Doucet, "Prolegomena in librum III necnon in libros I et II," in Alexander de Hales, *Summa theologica*, vol. 4/2 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1948), xcvii-cxviii.

2 Op.cit., xcviii.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Rogerus Bacon, *Opera quaedam hactenus inedita*, ed. J.S. Brewer (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1859), 326: *Et si ipse eam (id est, Alexander Summam) fecisset vel magnam partem, tamen non legit naturalia nec metaphysicalia nec audivit ea, quia non fuerunt libri naturales harum scientiarum nec commentarii translati, quando rexit in artibus. Et diu postea fuerunt excommunicati et suspensi Parisius, ubi ipse studuit.*

6 F. Van Steenberghen, *Aristotle in the West* (Louvain: E. Nauwelaerts, 1955), 109-13.

knowledge, but search for the kind of knowledge by which our most wholesome faith ... is begotten, nourished, defended and strengthened."[7] Alexander and his contemporaries pursued Aristotle with this goal in mind. Aristotle's philosophy was an *ancilla*, that is, a handmaid to their theology, as were Cicero and Seneca,[8] whom they called upon as well to beget, nourish, defend and strengthen the faith.

Now a servant or handmaid should not be abused or treated in a willy-nilly way. In our theological context this is effectively indicated by the improvements that theologians searched for in the argumentation that they used "to beget, nourish, defend and strengthen" our most wholesome faith. They wanted sacred Scripture's servants to be strong supports. Such improvements might be found in the clearer definitions they pursued, the more accurate analogies they might discover, the stronger arguments they could marshal, and the clearer manifestation of the errors in the arguments of heretics. For instance, the Franciscan Petrus de Trabibus, as Father Gedeon Gàl long ago showed us, brought a great advance in understanding when he spoke of *potentia absoluta* and *potentia ordinata* as not implying two distinct powers in God. God does nothing by his divine power. *Potentia absoluta*, Petrus de Trabibus underscores, is not a power that acts; it is an expression indicating that God had many other possible ways of acting, but chose and acted the way he actually ordained.[9] Authors, including Franciscan authors, were continually searching for better ways to support the faith, by clarifying terminology, finding better analogies to explain truths of the faith, developing supporting arguments, and by refuting errors. Olivi makes his intention in writing his *Quaestiones logicales* very clear to Brother Germanus, to whom he addresses his work:

> Here, Brother Germanus, are eighteen brief questions. I have, at your urging, written them for you in a logical mode. They are also reminders of things that I usually do not treat, because in following the teachings of the Christian faith, I do not willingly spend my energy on such matters. Nor is it advantageous for you or anyone else dedicated to our religious way of life to give themselves over to these or like matters, except only to the degree that they lead and guide us to the sublime mysteries and glories of our Christian faith – to which all science is a servant.[10]

7 S. Augustinus, *De Trinitate* XIV, c. 1, n. 3 (PL 42, 1037): *Non utique quidquid sciri ab homine potest in rebus humanis, ubi plurimum supervacuae vanitatis et noxiae curiositatis est, huic scientiae tribuo, sed illud tantummodo quo fides saluberrima, quae ad veram beatitudinem ducit, gignitur, nutritur, defenditur et roboratur.*

8 V. Doucet, op.cit., lxxxv.

9 G. Gàl, "Petrus de Trabibus on the Absolute and Ordained Power of God," in *Studies Honoring Ignatius Charles Brady, Friar Minor*, ed. R.S. Almagno and C.L. Harkins (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1976), 289-90.

10 S.F. Brown, "Petrus Ioannis Olivi, 'Quaestiones logicales': Critical Text," *Traditio* 42 (1986): 383: *Ecce frater Germanus duodeviginti quaestiunculas ad tuam instantiam more logicali et tamquam memorialia quaedam contra nostrum morem tibi scripsi, quia iuxta Christianae fidei*

Franciscans usually did not write commentaries on Aristotle aimed solely at deepening their understanding of his philosophy. We do, nonetheless, find some friars who have left commentaries on Aristotle's works and produced independent *quaestiones* dealing with the same subject matter as Aristotle. For instance, Peter John Olivi has left us eighteen *Quaestiones logicales*.[11] Annaliese Maier described them as a "mixture of sober logic and spiritualist ingenuity."[12] This work of Olivi shows its sober logic in question 4: "Whether the names of things primarily and in a prior way signify things or concepts of the intellect concerning these same things?"[13] Here, as Olivi delivers his verdict, you find the only authority he quotes – Aristotle's *Perihermeneias*. There is no indication, at this point, of how this plays out in theology. A theological link to his *Quaestiones logicales* starts to peek through in question 6: "Whether the name '*album*' (a white thing) or any other concrete accidental name principally signifies the subject (the thing that is white), or the inhering form (whiteness), or the inherence or 'having' by which the form is connected to the subject, or all three of these equally?"[14] If there is any theological concern related to this question it is not explicitly and directly indicated by Olivi's treatment, since he himself informs us that this is a question presented and answered by the *De grammatico* of St. Anselm.[15] In this work, St. Anselm develops his views on supposition to be able to deal with the problems, the theological problems, of language raised by St. Augustine in the opening chapter of the *De Trinitate*. There, St. Augustine (perhaps also a sober logician) analyzes the proposition: *Deus generat Deum* (God begets God) which, using concrete nouns, is not the same as *Deitas generat deitatem* (Deity begets Deity). In the first statement, what does '*Deus*' stand for? In the same statement, what does '*Deum*' stand for? The 'Father'? The 'Son'? The 'Holy Spirit'? Or perhaps all three persons of the Trinity? What '*Deus*' and *Deum*' stand for or supposit

dogmata non libenter effundor nec tibi aut cuicumque nostrae professionis expedit in his vel consimilibus immorari nisi solum pro quanto conferunt vel manuducunt ad sublimia spectacula et lumina fidei nostrae quibus omnis scientia famulatur.

11 S.F. Brown, "Petrus Ioannis Olivi...," 335-88.

12 A. Maier, "Ein logischer Tractat Olivis," in idem, *Ausgehendes Mittelalter: gesammelte Aufsätze zur Geistesgeschichte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 2 (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, 1964), 229: "...eine seltsame Mischung von nüchturner Logik und tollstem Spiritualismus." The application to theology is not what Maier means by "spiritualist ingenuity." She is referring to the sermon provided as an epilogue at the end of the questions. Cf. Brown, op.cit., 383-88.

13 Brown, op.cit., 346-47: *Post haec quaeritur: An nomina rerum prius et principalius significent res vel conceptus intellectus de ipsis rebus.*

14 Brown, op.cit., 349-52: *Post hoc quaeritur: An hoc nomen 'album' vel quodcumque aliud nomen accidentale concretive acceptum significet principalius subiectum, vel formam inhaerentem, aut ipsam inhaerentiam, aut habere sive habitionem qua forma illa subiecta habetur, aut omnia haec significet aequaliter prout in unum insimul aggregata?*

15 Anselmus Cantuariensis, *De grammatico*, cap. 19, in *Opera Omnia*, ed. F.S. Schmitt, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T. Nelson & Sons, 1946), 164s.

for would determine the truth or falsity of the proposition *Deus generat Deum*.[16] Every medieval theologian who wrote a commentary on Book I, distinction 4 of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* had to deal with the question *Utrum Deus generat Deum*.[17] Not all wrote a *De grammatico* or unfolded the theory of supposition they depended upon for their evaluation of such propositions. But they had at least an implicit theory that provided them with a suitable handmaid or servant to deal with their theological issues.

If you study Olivi's logical questions, which besides the sober logic, have theological ramifications, you can see that he is searching for a better handmaid. It is a search that is built into the very nature of the medieval *quaestio*. Give the *pro* (for) and *con* (against) arguments, the *Sic* et *Non* of Abelard, and see if both together cannot give you a better understanding through their individual strengths and the awareness of their individual deficiencies. As you page through Olivi's *Quaestiones logicales*, you can see him, in Question 3, presenting the positions of Richard Rufus and Roger Bacon and see how this debate will help him form his own answer to the question. You can also see the way it plays out in his theological works when you examine Question 13 of his *Quaestiones in secundum librum Sententiarum*.[18] The *Quaestiones logicales* are not for Olivi a first preparation for work in theology. Question 9 of these *Logical Questions* tells us that these questions are written after Olivi's commentary on *Book II of the Sentences*. At the end of his response to the same question, he informs us that "the truth of this response is well enough shown in the question concerning universals (i.e., in Question 13 of his commentary on *Book II of the Sentences*.[19] In Question 14 of the *Logical Questions* he also refers back to Question 8 of his *Sentences*.[20] Again, when he asks in Question 15: "Whether 'being' is a genus to all beings?" he explicitly refers to the theological application

16 S. Augustinus, *De Trinitate* I, c. 1, n. 1 (PL 42, 820; CCSL 50, 28): *Qui putant eius esse potentiae, Deum ut se ipsum ipse genuerit, eo plus errant, quod non solum Deus ita non est, sed nec spiritualis nec corporalis creatura. Nulla enim res est, quae se ipsam gignat ut sit.*

17 Cf. S.F. Brown, "Medieval Suppostion Theory in its Theological Context," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 3 (1993): 121-57.

18 Petrus Ioannis Olivi, *Quaestiones in II librum Sententiarum*, q. 13, ed. B. Jansen, Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica 4 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1922), 231-55: *... An universalia sint in individuis suis secundum suam universalitatem an tantum in intellectu.*

19 Brown, "Petrus Ioannis Olivi...," 357: *Huius autem veritas in quaestione* De universalibus *est satis abunde monstrata.*

20 Brown, "Petrus Ioannis Olivi...," 366: *Si enim diceretur quod ratio per se entis esset univoca ad utrumque, contra hoc est quod sicut essentia simplex non habet commune univocum cum essentia composita, quod scilicet univoce possit praedicari de ipsis, sic nec per se exsistentia simplex potest univocari cum per se exsistentia composita, et maxime quia unius essentia et per se exsistentia erit purus actus, alterius vero non, <quia> in ea erit actus compositus ex potentia et actu, sicut alibi diffusius est probatum.* Cf. Petrus Ioannis Olivi ..., q. VIII, 146-59: *... An esse et essentia sint idem?*

of his response that is already present in Questions 7-15 and Question 50 of Book II of his *Sentences* commentary.[21]

Not all of these logical questions of Olivi are related to the texts of Scotus dealing with *Perihermeneias* issues. However, in Question 3 of Olivi's *Quaestiones logicales*, as we have mentioned, you find earlier Franciscan treatments of a *Perihermeneias* issue: "Whether for the truth of affirmative necessary propositions there is implied the actual existence of the subject and the predicate?" *or* "Does it follow: 'Man is an animal, therefore he actually exists'?"[22] Here Olivi seems to pit Roger Bacon against Richard Rufus. In his account Rufus, whose position he prefers as more common and more reasonable, follows the position of Anselm in his *De veritate*, contending that when we say "Man is an animal," we do not mean that an actually existing man is an animal but only that the *ratio* of animal is so connected with the *ratio* of a man that it is a part of man and that in some way they are identical.[23] On the other hand, Olivi summarizes Bacon's position as follows: "If a man is actually existing, then man is an animal; otherwise, to say this is false."[24] In Question 4, Olivi asks whether the names of things signify things in a prior and more principal way than they signify concepts of the mind concerning these same things? When he himself answers that the name 'man' more principally signifies a man in the concrete rather than his humanity, he seems more to be a possible source for William of Ockham rather than for Duns Scotus.[25]

21 Brown, "Petrus Ioannis Olivi...", 368: *Post hoc quaeritur: An ens sit genus ad omnia entia?* Cf. Petrus Ioannis Olivi..., qq. VII-XV, 133-290; q. L (Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica 5), 23-101.

22 Brown, ibid., 344-6: *Post hoc queritur: <An> ad veritatem propositionum necessariarum et affirmativarum sequatur actualis entitas subiecti et praedicati? Utpote: An sequatur 'Homo est animal, ergo est actu.'*

23 Brown, "Petrus Ioannis Olivi...", 344-45: *Alii vero communius et rationabilius dicunt quod per verbum essendi quando sumitur sub sola ratione copulativae duorum non semper intendimus significare exsistentiam actualem, sed potius eorum identitatem sive essentialem habitudinem et cohaerentiam. Unde cum dicimus 'Homo est animal' non intendimus dicere quod homo sit actu animal, sed solum quod animalis ratio sic cohaeret rationi hominis quod est pars eius, et aliquo modo sunt idem.* This position is attributed to Rufus by Roger Bacon, *Compendium Studii Theologiae*, ed. H. Rashdall (Aberdoniae: Typis Academicis, 1911), 52-59.Cf. Anselmus, *De veritate*, c. 2 (ed. F.S. Schmitt; vol. 1, 179).

24 Brown, "Petrus Ioannis Olivi...," 344: *Quidam dixerunt quod ad veritatem huiusmodi propositionum praeexigitur praesuppositio actualis exsistentiae subiecti, ut sit sensus: Si homo est actu vel homine actu existente, homo est animal; alias dicunt istam et consimiles esse falsas.* Cf. Bacon, ibid.

25 Brown, "Petrus Ioannis Olivi...," 346-47: *An nomina rerum prius et principalius significent res vel conceptus intellectus de ipsis rebus? ... Unde hoc nomen 'homo' principalius significat hominem in concreto quam eius humanitatem. Et 'lapis' prius significat substantiam quae est lapis quam vim laesivam pedis a qua proprietate nomen lapidis est acceptum. Hoc autem probatur non solum ab intentione imponentium nomina rebus sed etiam ex communi sensu locutionum. Cum enim dicitur 'Homo currit' non intendimus dicere quod conceptus quem habeo de homine vel homo prout*

In truth, if I were searching for Franciscan sources for the *Perihermeneias* commentaries of John Duns Scotus, I would not expect to find many texts beyond those of Roger Bacon and the *Quaestiones logicales* of Peter Olivi. Yet, even with these works we do not find verbatim sources for Scotus's treatises on the *Perihermeneias*. Some of the questions Scotus puts to himself are in germ the same: "Whether a common term is predicated univocally of existing and non-existing beings?"[26]; "Whether there are any pure supposits of a common term that signify a true nature independent of existing things?"[27]; "Whether these propositions are true 'Caesar is a man,' 'Caesar is an animal,' if Caesar does not exist?"[28]; "Whether these propositions 'Man is a man,' 'Caesar is Caesar,' if neither exists?"[29]; and "Whether a noun signifies univocally a thing, whether the thing exists or does not exist?"[30] Yet the treatment of each of these questions in Scotus is tied to the text of Aristotle, and to his commentator Boethius, in a more direct way. Unlike the manner of Roger Bacon, Richard Rufus and Peter John Olivi, in dealing with *Perihermeneias*-linked questions, Scotus in both sets of his *Quaestiones* keeps close to the text of the Philosopher.

In considering the search for logical sources for Scotus's two commentaries on the *Perihermeneias*, none of the Franciscan sources we have studied seem to have played a part. They deal with issues that are related to the *Perihermeneias* text of Aristotle and the commentaries of Boethius, but their treatments seem only indirectly related to the Philosopher's work. If I were looking for more influential sources, I would rummage through the collections of many different treatises which get unified titles, such as William of Sherwood's *Introductiones in logicam*, Peter of Spain's *Tractatus* or *Summulae logicales*, the *Summa* of Lambert of Auxerre, the *Summulae dialectices* of Roger Bacon,[31] and the commentaries on this specific work of Aristotle by non-

est in intellectu nostro currit aut quod humanitas abstracta currit, sed potius quod res quae est homo concretive acceptus currit.

26 Ioannes Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones in primum librum Perihermeneias*, q. 5, ed. R. Andrews, et al., Opera philosophica 2 (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2004), 71-73: *Utrum terminus communis dicatur univoce de exsistentibus et non-exsistentibus?*

27 Ibid., q. 6, 73: *Utrum sint aliqua simpliciter supposita termini communis significantis veram naturam praeter existentia?*

28 Ibid., q. 7, 75: *Utrum hae sint verae 'Caesar est homo,' 'Caesar est animal,' Caesare non existente?*

29 Ibid., q. 8, 79: *Utrum hae sint verae 'Homo est homo,' 'Caesar est Caesar,' neutro existente?*

30 Ioannes Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones in duos libros Perihermeneias*, q. 2, ed. R. Andrews, et al., Opera philosophica 2 (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2004), 147-52: *An nomen univoce significet rem, re exsistente et non-exsistente?*

31 Peter of Spain, *Tractatus*: called afterwards *Summulae Logicales*, ed. L.M. de Rijk (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1972); C. Lohr, P. Kunze, and B. Mussler, "William of Sherwood, *Introductiones in Logicam*: Critical Text," *Traditio* 39 (1983): 219-99; Lamberto d'Auxerre, *Logica* (*Summa Lamberti*), ed. F. Alessio (Florence: La nuova Italia, 1971); Roger Bacon, *Summu-*

Franciscans, such as Simon of Faversham.[32] This is what the editors of Scotus's logical works have done and done with a respected thoroughness.

Generally, then, Franciscans did not write treatises on Aristotle's logic or on his more properly philosophical works before Scotus. This does not mean that there are not logical or philosophical elements in earlier Franciscan works, i.e., in their theological works. It is in this direction that I then turned my search, looking at the manuscripts of Scotus's possible Franciscan teachers. Among the manuscripts of William of Ware's *Sentences* commentaries, one of them, the Milan codex, has this title on the frontispiece: "*William of Ware, Teacher of Scotus, on the Four Books of the Sentences.*"[33] In examining the Prologue to Book I, what do we learn from its content, i.e., what do we learn from its content in relation to Scotus's Philosophical Commentaries? William, in Question 2 of the prologue reports the opinion of Peter of Alvernia who holds that our first conceptual knowledge is of 'being' and that he here follows Avicenna.[34] William does not discuss in detail this opinion: he simply states it. In Question 7, reporting a debate between Giles of Rome and Henry of Ghent, William answers one of the arguments presented by simply declaring that in eliciting an act of understanding the intellect and the object as presented in the species both contribute to the act of understanding.[35] He,

lae dialectices, ed. A. de Libera, Archives d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale du Moyen Age 53 (1986), 139-289 and 54 (1987), 171-278.

32 Simon of Faversham, *Quaestiones super libro Perihermeneias*, ed. P. Mazzarella (Padua: A. Milani, 1957). For citations of this work in Scotus's texts, see Ioannes Duns Scotus, *Periherm* II, 231.

33 Mediolani, Bibliotheca Ambrosiana, *cod. C 78*, f. 1r: "Guilielmus Varro, Scotti praeceptor in quattuor libros senentiarum."

34 Guiellmus de Ware, *In I Sent.*, prol., q. 2 (Vindobonae, Bibliotheca Nationalis, *cod. Lat. 1424*, f. 6rab): *Hic fuit error aliquorum dicentium quod non oportet ponere aliquod donum supernaturale ad hoc quod cognoscimus quaecumque cognoscibilia, immo ad omnia cognoscenda naturalia et supernaturalia sufficiunt scientiae adquisitae et potentia naturalis cum lumine naturaliter sibi indito. Cuius ratio est quia omnia quae sunt in universo sunt ordinata et connexa, et haec ordinatio est per nexum causae ad causatum et per influentiam superiorum ad inferiora. Sed haec connexio vero cum sit relatio non potest cognosci nisi cognoscuntur extrema. Sequitur quod omnia possunt cognosci naturaliter.*

Item, quando est ita quod aliqua principia secundum se naturaliter sunt cognita, omnes conclusiones quae possent elici ex illis principiis possunt naturaliter cognosci. Sed primum principium incomplexum est ens, secundum Avicennam. Primum vero principium complexum est de quolibet affirmatio vel negatio vera secundum Philosophum, IV Metaphysicae. *Sed illa principia naturaliter cognoscuntur, igitur nulla est conclusio quae ex illis possit elici quin naturaliter possit cognosci. Sed non est aliqua cognitio supernaturalis quae virtualiter non sit in suis principiis; igitur etc.*

Item, omnia quae sunt in universo vel sunt aeterna vel temporalia vel corporalia vel spiritualia. Sed de omnibus his sunt scientiae adquisitae per lumen naturale intellectus. Frustra igitur ponitur aliud lumen.

35 Ibid., f. 9vb: *Ad primum principale dicendum quia maior non est inconveniens a parte obeicti, dummodo tamen non videatur per scientiam creatam quantum visibilis est vel intelligibilis intensive, sicut videtur scientia increata. Et cum accipitur quod sicut scientia ad scientiam finite et infinite, sic obiectum scientiae finitae ad obiectum scientiae infinitae, patet quod non est simile,*

however, lets the statement stand on its own. Also, throughout the prologue, William at times refers to positions that speak of 'being' as common to all the categories, and even that God is a being contained under 'being,' but he never provides any discussion or explanation of such points.[36]

Given that William of Ware was a *Scoti Praeceptor*, one might hope that more discussion on the points just listed would be found in Scotus's *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* and *Quaestiones super Secundum et Tertium De Anima*. Certainly there is a temptation to see Question 1 of Book IV of *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* as a major advance on the issue of considering 'being' as the first object of the intellect and Avicenna's role in the portrait of the univocity of the concept of being. Likewise, Scotus's treatment here still is more a summary of arguments and counter-arguments rather than a firm defense of univocity on his own part.[37] Furthermore, Questions 21 and 23 of the *Quaestiones super II et III De anima* also supply some needed contributions. They make explicit what William left unsaid. With these two Questions (Q. 21: "Whether being is the first object of our intellect? and Q. 23: Whether in effecting acts of understanding the intellect is the moving cause or the intellect and the object that is present in the species both together effect the act of understanding?[38]) William's silence is remedied by the Subtle Doctor. The content of these two Questions of Scotus bring greater understanding to the issues mentioned in the preceding paragraph. William of Ware is not a source for Scotus's philosophical commentaries in the sense of providing positions and arguments that Scotus used; rather William was a prodding source insofar as he raised certain questions that begged for further discussion and resolution. In his philosophical commentaries on Aristotle's works, Scotus

quia scientia non accipit finitatem ab obiecto sed magis ex actu et subiecto in quo. Et ideo scientiae finitae potest esse obiectum infinitum, sicut superius dictum est.

36 Cf., ex. gr., ibid., f. 9rb: *Quod non, quia sicut subiectum sit ad subiectum ita scientia ad scientiam de subiecto, ex* I Posteriorum. *Sed Deus est aliquod ens contentum sub ente, et metaphysica considerat de ente secundum quod ens sub quodammodo continetur Deus.*

37 Ioannes Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* IV, 1, ed. R. Andrews, et al., Opera philosophica 3 (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1997), 295-320. Note the judgment of the annotator regarding Scotus's response: *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 solutiones rationum probantes univocationem ulterius per totam columnam. Responsio ad quaestionem quam non tenuit in* Sententiis. Cf. Duns Scotus, *Lect.* I, d. 3, p. 1, q. 1-2, n. 97-104 (ed. Vat. XVI, 261-4); *Ord.* I, d. 3, p. 1, q. 3, n. 131-151 (ed. Vat. III, 81-94).

38 Ioannes Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones super Secundum et Tertium De anima*, ed. C Bazán, et al., Opera philosophica 5 (Washington, DC/St. Bonaventure, NY: The Catholic University of America Press/Franciscan Institute Publications, 2006), 207-25 (Q. 21, *Utrum ens sit obiectum primum intellectus nostri*), and 241-45 (Q. 23, *Utrum in elicitione actus intelligendi intellectus sit movens motum ab obiecto vel intellectus et obiectum relucens in specie concurrant ad actum intelligendi*).

brought greater understanding to the positions held theologically by William of Ware and many of his contemporaries. To this extent, Scotus continued the Franciscan tradition from Alexander of Hales to Peter John Olivi, treating philosophy as a handmaid. Following the advice of St. Augustine, he pursued "the kind of knowledge by which our most wholesome faith ... is begotten, nourished, defended and strengthened."[39]

Theology, nonetheless, had recently taken a more demanding direction, focusing on the kind of knowledge that also goes beyond finding more suitable analogies, better explanations, stronger defenses and confirming arguments. Theologians also pursued the kind of knowledge that caused assent: either assent regarding the existence of God and of certain divine attributes that might be demonstrated by reason or assent in regard to truths that can be deduced with certainty from articles of the faith by the companion use of necessary demonstrated premises. This further approach to the study of divine truths originated with Thomas Aquinas, and was pushed a step forward by Godfrey of Fontaines.[40] Truths of the faith, such as the Trinity and the Incarnation cannot be demonstrated. But, they asked: Can any other truths of the faith, such as God's existence or His unicity be proved so that they may be affirmed by reason on the basis of evidence? Furthermore, can a believer start with an article of the faith as a premise and add a necessary and certain philosophical premise that would lead him to deduce a conclusion that would be a necessary and certain truth of the Christian faith? Both these procedures pushed theologians to accentuate more fully metaphysical principles or premises. Anything less would not demonstrate a truth or lead to a conclusion that must be accepted on faith. In the first case, we would only be offering persuasions, not demonstrations. In the second case, our deductions would give us theological opinions, not certain conclusions that we must accept on faith.

The philosophical commentaries of Scotus seem still to belong to the tradition of Augustine's approach to theology. This is not totally the case as we move on to certain questions in Scotus's commentaries on the *Sentences* or to his *Quodlibet*. They contain elements of the new direction in theology. The existence of this new direction is well-supported by Father Allan B. Wolter's two-part article written over sixty years ago: "The 'Theologism' of Duns Scotus."[41] This long essay, a response to Etienne Gilson's charge of 'theologism' against Scotus, shows the metaphysical strengths of the Subtle Doctor.

39 Cf. supra, n. 7.

40 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I, 1, 8: *Utrum sacra doctrina sit argumentativa*? Godefridus de Fontibus, *Quodlibet IX*, q. 20, ed. J. Hoffmans, et al., Les Philosophes Belges 4/9 (Louvain: Éditions de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie de l'Université, 1924), 282-93: *Utrum inter scientias quibus perficitur intellectus magis proprie debet dici scientia ipsa scientia philosophiae naturalis quam scientia theologiae*?

41 Allan B. Wolter, "The 'Theologism' of Duns Scotus,' *Franciscan Studies* 7 (1947): 257-73, 367-98.

That a new direction in theology that had significant ramifications for philosophy was underway is already evident in Robert Kilwardby's *Quaestiones in Librum Primum Sententiarum*, where he pointed to the tension between the two senses of *ancilla*: "This is not a case where one thing has merely priority over another, but rather a case where one thing has a ruling function and the other a serving function."[42] Henry of Ghent likewise stressed the differences between the two cases when he declared in his *Summa*, a. 7, q. 5:

> Assistance (*subministratio*) and submissive service (*famulatus*) are altogether different from subalternation; and it is nonsensical to say that assistantship is a form of subalternation. The only one who would say this is a person who does not know Aristotle's position regarding the subalternation of the sciences.[43]

One of the significant aspects of subalternation is that it provides certainty. In the case of 'assistance' and 'submissive service' there is no guarantee of certainty coming from the helper. In the traditional Augustinian approach to 'science,' the type of science to be pursued was the knowledge that begets, nourishes, defends and strengthens what is held as certain because of faith. With the new form of theology its followers also pursue the kind of knowledge that gives certitude by providing evidence that makes a person assent.

This assent might be direct as in the case of the demonstrations of God's existence and certain of his attributes. It might be indirect as in the case of a conclusion drawn from a faith premise and a metaphysical premise.

When we turn to Scotus's *Sentences* commentaries, we find that his philosophical arguments in the theological contexts of these works much more aim at the certainty fostered by metaphysics. His argumentation, in areas where this is possible, goes beyond the level of supporting or confirming arguments and reaches higher. His ideal of science tightens, as we can see from Book Three of the *Sentences*:

> Taking 'science' properly, as is the case in Book I of the *Posterior Analytics*, four conditions are required for science. First, that it be certain, excluding all doubt and deception. Second, that it be necessary knowledge. Third, that it be by means of a cause that is evident to the intellect. Fourth, that it be by means of an evident necessary cause that leads to a conclusion through syllogistic reasoning.[44]

42 Robert Kilwardby, *Quaestiones in Librum Primum Sententiarum*, q. 14, ed. J. Schneider (München: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1986), 35: *Respondeo: Non est hic continentia subalternationis, sed continentia principalitatis et famulatus est hic.*

43 Henricus de Gandavo, *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum* a. 7, q. 5 (Parisiis: I. Badius Ascensius, 1520), vol. 1, f. 54rH: *Subministratio enim et famulatus omnino aliud est a subalternatione; et est fatuum dicere quod subministratio sit aliquis modus subalternationis. Hoc enim nullus dicit nisi ignorans Philosophi determinationem circa scientiarum subalternationem.*

44 Ioanes Duns Scotus, *In III Sententiarum*, d. 24, q. unica: *Sed accipiendo scientiam proprie, ut accipitur primo Posteriorum, requiruntur quatuor conditiones in scientia. Prima, quod sit certa, excludendo omnem dubitationem et deceptionem. Secunda, quod sit cognitio necessaria. Tertia, quod*

His arguments also tighten as he strives to demonstrate the existence of God or God's principal attribute of infinity.[45] His arguments for theological points also aim higher, as when he argues for the necessity of revealed knowledge, where he not only argues against the philosophers who oppose it, but also against theologians like Henry of Ghent who, from his viewpoint, overstress the need of acquired faith.[46] In effect, then, Scotus's strongest philosophical teachings can be found in their fuller metaphysical strength in his theological writings. His philosophical commentaries are nonetheless still very useful and important as keys to understand the Augustinian or declarative mode of theology they support and that still remains an essential theological partner with the deductive theology instituted by Aquinas.

sit per causam evidentem in intellectu. Quarta, quod sit per causam necessariam evidentem applicatam ad conclusionem per discursum syllogisticum.

45 W.A. Frank and A. B. Wolter, *Duns Scotus, Metaphysician* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1995), ch. 3, 40-107.

46 Allan B. Wolter, "Duns Scotus and Revealed Knowledge," *Franciscan Studies* 11 (1951): 240-72.

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Ibn Sînâ (Avicenna) and Duns Scotus

Thérèse-Anne Druart

Eighty years ago, in September 1926 at Harvard, Etienne Gilson pleaded for proper editions of the Medieval Latin translations of Arabic philosophical texts and, in particular, for those of Avicenna.[1] The following year he published his famous long article on "Avicenna and the starting point of Duns Scotus" that launched serious studies of Avicenna's influence on Duns Scotus.[2] Soon after, scholars began editing Averroes but continued to neglect Avicenna and, therefore, in 1969 Gilson repeated his plea for the preparation of an Avicenna Latinus.[3] Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny[4] and Simone Van Riet responded by beginning the critical edition of the *Avicenna Latinus* in 1968. The last volume of this important enterprise, continued by Jules Janssens after Simone Van Riet's death, recently came out.[5]

A few years ago Jean-Michel Counet wrote on the influence of Avicenna on Duns Scotus's thought and Gérard Sondag published two articles, the first a general study of Duns Scotus's reception of Avicenna and the second, a more specific consideration of Duns Scotus's reception of Avicenna's *Metaphysics*.[6]

1 "L'étude des philosophies arabes et son rôle dans l'interprétation de la scolastique," in *Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Philosophy, Harvard University, September 13-17, 1926*, ed. Edgar Sheffield Brightman (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1927), 596.

2 *Archives d'Histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 2 (1927): 89-149; reprint in Etienne Gilson, *Pourquoi Saint Thomas a critiqué Saint Augustin* suivi de *Avicenne et le point de départ de Duns Scot* (Paris: Vrin, 1986), 129-89.

3 "Avicenne en Occident au Moyen Âge," *Archives d'Histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 44 (1969): 115-16.

4 See a collection of previous studies in Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, Simone Van Riet and Pierre Jodogne, *Avicenna latinus. Codices* (Louvain-la-Neuve/Leiden: Peeters/Brill, 1994).

5 *Avicenna Latinus. Liber primus naturalium, tractatus secundus: De motu et de consimilibus*, ed. S. Van Riet, J. Janssens and A. Allard (Brussels: Académie Royale de Belgique, 2006).

6 Jean-Michel Counet, "Avicenne et son influence sur la pensée de Jean Duns Scot," in *Avicenna and His Heritage. Acts of the International Colloquium, Leuven – Louvain-la-Neuve, September 8-September 11, 1999*, ed. Jules Janssens and Daniel De Smet (Louvain: Leuven University Press, 2002), 225-52. Gérard Sondag, "La Réception d'Avicenne (Ibn Sînâ) chez Duns Scot," *Veritas* 49, no. 3 (2004): 529-43 and "La Réception de la *Métaphysique* d'Avicenne par Duns Scot," in *Wissen über Grenzen: Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, ed. Andreas Speer and Lydia Wegener, Miscellanea Mediaevalia 33 (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 591-611.

Still more recently, Robert Podkoński has discussed whether Al-Ghazali's *Metaphysics* is the source of the anti-atomistic proofs in Duns Scotus. Since, as a matter of fact, Algazel's *Metaphysics* does not represent al-Ghazali's own thought but rather the views of Avicenna and al-Farabi, we have here another trace of Avicennan influence.[7] Finally, Pasquale Porro has discussed Duns Scotus's reactions to some views of Henry of Ghent in his "Duns Scotus and the point of rupture from Avicenna," which by its clever title recalls Gilson's famous article.[8] As I have already indicated, the *Avicenna Latinus* may need to include the so-called Algazel's *Metaphysics*. It may also include the *Liber de causis*, since, as Counet points out, Duns Scotus may have thought that the *Liber de causis* presents Avicennan views.

Beyond summarizing these learned articles by scholars of Duns Scotus, nothing much seems left to do for someone who is no Duns Scotus scholar, but rather a scholar in Arabic philosophy who happens to have some interest in the Subtle Doctor. In my research, I noticed as well that the three famous Avicennan scholars sometimes irreverently called Avicenna's harem, i.e., Amélie-Marie Goichon, Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, and Simone Van Riet, explored the influence of Avicenna on the West but were surprisingly brief or altogether silent about his influence on Duns Scotus.[9] Dag Nikolaus Hasse, in his 2000 book entitled *Avicenna's* De Anima *in the Latin West: The Foundation of a Peripatetic Philosophy of the Soul 1160-1300*,[10] does not even offer a single reference to the Subtle Doctor, despite the dating of Scotus's *Quaestiones super secundum et tertium de anima* to the early 1290s by Tim Noone and his team.[11] In addition, another scholar even claims that Duns Scotus never read Avicenna, since all the Avicennan quotations he uses can be found in Henry of Ghent. Needless to say, at this point I fell into despair, but, as al-Ghazâlî

7 Robert Podkoński, "Al-Ghazali's '*Metaphysics*' as a Source of Anti-atomistic Proofs in John Duns Scotus's Sentences Commentary," in *Wissen über Grenzen: Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, 612-25.

8 Pasquale Porro, "Duns Scot et le point de rupture avec Avicenne," in *Duns Scot à Paris, 1302-2002. Actes du colloque de Paris, 2-4 septembre 2002*, ed. Olivier Boulnois, Elizabeth Karger, Jean-Luc Solère and Gérard Sondag, Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, Textes et Études du Moyen Âge 26 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 195-218.

9 Amélie-Marie Goichon, *La philosophie d'Avicenne et son influence en Europe médiévale*, 2nd revised ed. (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1951); Marie-Thérèse D'Alverny, *Avicenne en Occident*, Études de philosophie médiévale 71 (Paris: Vrin, 1993), and Simone Van Riet, the entry "Avicenna. The Impact of Avicenna's Philosophical Works in the West," in *Encyclopedia Iranica*, 104-07.

10 Warburg Institute Studies and Texts (London/Turin: The Warburg Institute/Nino Aragno Editore).

11 *Quaestiones super secundum et tertium De anima*, ed. C. Bazán, et al., *Opera philosophica* 5 (Washington, D.C./St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Catholic University of America Press/Franciscan Institute Publications, 2006), 139-43*.

says in his famous *Deliverance from Error,* the Lord cast a light to resolve my doubts on how to proceed.

One of the main concerns in Arabic philosophy is the question of causation. Pious Muslims, such as al-Ghazâlî (not to be confused with the Latin Algazel) strongly object to the Aristotelian conception of cause. Often the Asha'arites defend atomism and a form of occasionalism, which makes of God the only efficient cause and (in Humean fashion) denies that what we ordinarily call a cause, such as fire in the burning of a piece of cotton, has a necessary connection with what we call an effect. Ibn Sînâ, therefore, works out a careful analysis of the causes and their relations at the beginning of his natural philosophy, in what is known in Latin as his *De causis et principiis naturalium.*[12] But Ibn Sînâ is still more famous for his distinction between physical and metaphysical causes, which he elaborates in the sixth book of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifâ'*.[13] This distinction is a key element for the various versions of Duns Scotus's proofs for the existence of an infinite being and for his distinction between accidentally and essentially ordered causes.[14] Late in his too short life Duns Scotus wrote the superbly crafted *De primo principio,* in which he attempts to determine the type of knowledge of God our natural reason (*nostra ratio naturalis*) (I, 1) can reach.[15] In the first chapter of this work he introduces a fourth division: that of the four causes. In the second chapter, Scotus carefully works out the relations between these causes, overtly referring to Avicenna on three occasions.

Making use of these two chapters of the *De primo principio*, I wish to argue here that the *Avicenna Latinus* certainly influenced Duns Scotus's elaboration of the relationship between metaphysical causes. However, at least on one important account, the Latin work misled the Subtle Doctor about what Ibn Sînâ thought. On a key point the Latin version differs from the Arabic origi-

12 *Avicenna Latinus. Liber primus naturalium, tractatus primus. De causis & principiis naturalium*, ed. S. Van Riet (Louvain-la-Neuve/Leiden: Peeters/Brill, 1992).

13 For an overview of the influence of Avicenna's *Metaphysics* of the *Shifâ'*, see Bertolacci in Avicenna (Ibn Sînâ), *Libro della guarigione. Le cose divine*, ed. and trans. Amos Bertolacci (Turin: UTET, 2007), 78-87.

14 See for instance, Thérèse-Anne Druart, "Avicenna's influence on Duns Scotus' Proof for the Existence of God in the *Lectura*," in *Avicenna and his Heritage*, 252-66. On Ibn Sînâ's conception of causes, see Robert Wisnovsky, "Final and Efficient causality in Avicenna's Cosmology and Theology," *Quaestio* 2 (2002): 97-123 and Amos Bertolacci, "The Doctrine of Material and Formal Causality in the "Illâhiyyât" of Avicenna's "Kitâb al-Shifâ'," *Quaestio* 2 (2002): 125-54. On the dispute in Islam between philosophers and theologians on the issue of causality, see Olga Lizzini, "Occasionalismo e causalità filosofica: la discussione della causalità in al-Ghazâlî," *Quaestio* 2 (2002): 155-83.

15 Johannes Duns Scotus, *Abhandlung über das erste Prinzip*, ed. and trans. Wolfgang Kluxen (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1974) and John Duns Scotus, *A Treatise on God as First Principle*, ed. and trans. Allan B. Wolter, O.F.M., 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1984). I shall be quoting Wolter's translation but at times with modifications.

nal. I shall, therefore, first present the influence of the *Avicenna Latinus* on this passage of Duns Scotus and, following this, explain the translation problem as well as its impact on Duns Scotus's reception of Ibn Sînâ. Finally, I shall explain how Scotus unknowingly operates a type of reconciliation between Avicenna and Ibn Sînâ. In what follows, when I refer to Avicenna, I mean the text as received in Latin and, when I use the name Ibn Sînâ, I am referring to the original Arabic text and, ultimately, to the Latin version only in so far as it is faithful to the original.

In *De primo principio*, chapter one, fourth division, Duns Scotus introduces the famous subdivision of causes into four, which he declares to be sufficiently known. He also indicates that he has more abundantly treated of this division somewhere else, and, therefore, will only touch upon it as far as its topic requires. Both Allan Wolter and the French/Swiss team (Cavigioli, Meilland and Putallaz), in their respective commentaries, ignore this remark and provide no reference to another text where Duns Scotus discusses this division in greater detail.[16] Kluxen, more honestly, indicates that it is not easy to determine the location for this reference.[17] In addition, no previous learned study of Avicenna's influence on Duns Scotus has shed much light on the division of the causes. Therefore, in the absence of any solid information about this other treatment, I limit my present remarks to the *De primo principio*.

I. Duns Scotus's Avicennan orthodoxy

In chapter two of the *De primo principio*, Scotus examines the four orders of cause to effect in conclusions four to nine. In the fifth conclusion, which claims that "what is not an effect is not ordered to an end," Duns Scotus concludes that "Hence only what the efficient cause brings into existence for love of the end is caused by the end." He then draws the following corollary: that one should distinguish a true final cause, which moves the efficient to give existence to the effect, from a false conception of it, which equates it with a being's ultimate operation or the object reached by this operation. This distinction leads him to clarify how Aristotle deals with the Intelligences:

> Aristotle would not maintain that the Intelligences, while lacking an efficient cause, nevertheless have an end in the proper sense of the term. If he would admit that they had only an end, however, it would be in an improper sense where end is understood as the object of their most perfect operation. Or if he would grant them a proper efficient cause, the latter

16 Wolter, ed., *A treatise on God...*, and Duns Scot, *Traité du premier principe. Tractatus De primo principio*, ed. Ruedi Imbach, trans. Jean-Daniel Cavigioli, Jean-Marie Meilland and François-Xavier Putallaz, Bibliothèque des Textes Philosophiques (Paris: Vrin, 2001). This second translation uses the Latin text by W. Kluxen.

17 *Abhandlung*, 141.

would not be one which produces movement or change, because the four causes are treated in metaphysics where abstraction is made from any physical considerations concerning them.[18]

This passage, of course, alludes to Ibn Sînâ's famous distinction between causes of motion and causes of existence announced in *Metaphysics*, Book VI, chapter one, and developed in chapter two. But Ibn Sînâ's influence on this passage goes much further, as Duns Scotus goes on to state:

If he assumes them to be eternal and necessary, he would not admit that the First Being gives the Intelligences being after non-being, at least if "after" is taken in a temporal sense. "After" could only be taken in the sense of posterior in the order of nature, according to Avicenna's explanation of the meaning of creation in the sixth book of his *Metaphysics*, chapter two.[19]

Indeed, in the passage referred to Ibn Sînâ says:

And this is the intention that the wise call creation: the giving of existence to some thing, after its absolute non-existence. For it belongs to the effect in itself not to be, but in relation to its cause it belongs to it that it be. What belongs to some thing from itself is for the mind prior in essence but not in time to that which belongs to it from something else; therefore any effect is existing after not existing by an essential priority.[20]

This priority is essential and not chronological, since for Ibn Sînâ the world is eternal and emanation is necessary. Yet, Ibn Sînâ himself in Book VI, chapter 2, had carefully argued that any metaphysical cause, be it efficient, final, formal, or material, is simultaneous with its effect and maintains it in existence. He thereby not only introduces continuous creation but also applies the simultaneity of causes to their effects to every type of metaphysical cause.

Duns Scotus does not hesitate to draw from this position the corollary that constitutes his ninth conclusion, i.e. "the four kinds of causes are essentially ordered in their causation of one and the same thing." He spells out his reason for such a position in the following way:

... it seems to be reasonable enough in itself that if something essentially one depends upon more than one cause, some order should prevail.... For a plurality of causes which are not related to one another as act and potency or possess no unity of order whatsoever cannot be expected to produce something essentially one. Since the four causes are not constituent parts of a composite of act and potency, how then will they produce the same thing if they not at least cause together? In so far as they are causing the effect, then, they possess a unity

18 Wolter's trans., 20; Kluxen's ed., 14.

19 Wolter's trans., 20; Kluxen ed., 16.

20 Avicenna, *The Metaphysics of the Healing*, trans. Michael E. Marmura, 2nd ed., Islamic Translation Series (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2005), based on Cairo ed. Arabic text; Marmura's trans. with modifications, n. 9, 203.

of order. By reason of this order they become a functional unit as regards causation even as many things in the universe become an essential unit through order. The type of order that obtains in the case of these various causes should be clear from what was said of the mutual relations of end and efficient cause.[21]

Even if Ibn Sînâ did not clearly draw this corollary, it was hinted at or assumed in his *Metaphysics*, VI, 2, when he explains that it is the *dator formarum* (i.e., the Agent Intellect or tenth Intelligence) which bestows existence on the effect by emanating the form into appropriately disposed matter. How the efficient and final causes are related to the effect, or more precisely, how the final cause causes, will be the topic of our next section, where we consider how, in his closeness to the *Avicenna Latinus*, Duns Scotus actually distances himself from Ibn Sînâ.

II. Duns Scotus unorthodox Avicennism (or, perhaps more accurately, unorthodox Ibn Sînism)

In his fourth conclusion that "what is not ordered to an end is not an effect," Duns Scotus asserts that "the end is the first cause in causing (*causa in causando*), wherefore Avicenna calls it the cause of causes."[22] Indeed, Ibn Sînâ calls the final cause "the cause of causes" three times in VI, 5[23] but here, Ibn Sînâ does not exactly understand this claim in the way the later *Avicenna Latinus* would. Both Ibn Sînâ and Avicenna use this same formula, but its explanation reveals the split personality the Latin version forced on poor Ibn Sînâ. Duns Scotus himself may have felt that Avicenna's text was not fully satisfactory, for he moves immediately to a confirmation by reason for this rather cryptic statement. What's more, his confirmation by reason owes far more to Aristotle than it does to Ibn Sînâ.

In his long commentary of this paragraph,[24] Allan Wolter explains that one should turn to Avicenna's chapter, VI, 5. Oddly enough, Wolter had used the 1508 Venice version, and not Van Riet's critical edition that had come out several years earlier.[25] Wolter finds this chapter of "intrinsic philosophical and historical interest." Such a turn to Avicenna allows him "to consider to what extent the Persian's version needs modification in view of Scotus's confirmation from reason."[26] Wolter rightly indicates that Duns Scotus as well as

21 Wolter, 24, 26; Kluxen, 20.

22 Wolter, 16; Kluxen, 12.

23 Avicenna, *The Metaphysics of the Healing*, Marmura's translation, Arabic 229, at lines 6, 11 and 14.

24 Wolter, 182-91.

25 *Avicenna Latinus, Liber De philosophia prima sive scientia divina*, V-X, ed. S. Van Riet (Louvain/Leiden: Peeters/Brill, 1980).

26 Wolter, 182.