

The Metaphysical Concept of Nature by John Duns Scotus and its Epistemological Implications

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Abstract

The concept of nature plays in the theory of knowledge of John Duns Scotus a very important role, because it is the metaphysical foundation of his realistic view of knowledge. The nature is in Scotus's Philosophy not something universal nor individual itself, but common. It can be universal or individual. In this paper I will work out the concept of common nature by Scotus and to point out its consequences for the theory of knowledge. Through this analysis I want to show how the concept of nature is the foundation of Scotus's realism in the theory of knowledge.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The most important question¹ in the theory of knowledge is the question about the connection between our knowledge, our universal concepts,

through which we know the world, and the reality itself, which consists of many individual things. It is the problem of intentionality of knowledge. This is one of those eternal questions of philosophy itself: how can we know the real world, the individual things through universal concepts?

In his *Comment on the Sentences of Peter Lombard* within the questions about the principle of individuation explains Duns Scotus what he understands under the concept of nature. The principle intention of Scotus in these texts is not to make the concept of nature clear or to explain, what universals are. His intention in these questions is to solve the problem of the principle of individuation. He wants above all to answer two questions: is it necessary a principle of individuation? Or from another perspective: are things as such not already individual? Is there something in them, which has to be individuated? The second question is: which is this principle of individuation in the things? Is it the being, or matter, or some form? Scotus doesn't think, that the real things as such are just individual, or not in every respect. There is something in the real things, which must be individuated. In this context deals Scotus with the concept of nature, or more precisely of common nature, as he says. Many other scholars in the Middle Ages share this opinion.² They differentiate principles and aspects in the reality, to explain, why we know real individual things through universal concepts. The purpose of this differentiation is not only metaphysical, namely to establish, a principle of difference and a principle of sameness in the things,³ but it also has an epistemological purpose, namely to explain why it is for us possible to know the reality through universal concepts.

In this paper I want to speak in the first place about the relationship between intentionality and the concept of nature. I will also discuss at this point, which role plays the concept of nature in the explanation of intentionality by the most of Scotus's experts. In the course of the paper I will concentrate later my attention in the concept of common nature in the scotist philosophy, and then show its epistemological implications. This analysis will allow us to define, which role the concept of nature plays in the scotist theory of knowledge and above all in his explanation of the intentional character of abstractive cognition.

2 THE INTENTIONALITY OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE CONCEPT OF NATURE

Scotus takes the conception of Avicenna⁴ about nature and uses it to explain what universal concepts are, and which relationship there is between

universal concepts and individuals. For Scotus is there a very close relation from universals to nature, and therefore from nature to knowledge. The nature is for him the metaphysical foundation of a realism in the theory of knowledge, more precisely in the abstractive knowledge. How it is possible, that we know the real world through universal concepts? The answer to this question is for Scotus very simple: because there is a common nature.

In the different studies about the theory of knowledge of Duns Scotus doesn't play the concept of nature an important role. There are some Scholars, who mention the concept of nature with reference to knowledge. Some of them even identify the common nature as object of our abstractive knowledge.⁵ But the relationship and the meaning of the concept of common nature for the theory of knowledge of John Duns Scotus haven't been deep examined. The relation from the concept of common nature to knowledge by Scotus has been almost completely ignored. In the most important studies about his theory of knowledge is scarcely any reference to the common nature or there is just a cursory mentioning of it.⁶ But Scotus's explanation of the intentionality of knowledge can't be understood without the consideration of the common nature. This becomes specially clear by the consideration of the *noetic-noematic* parallelism, as it has been called by Honnfelder.⁷ Other authors speak of an Isomorphism between thinking and reality.⁸ This is a central characteristic of Scotus's philosophical thought. Scotus thinks, that there is a correspondence between our thinking and what we think about with regard to their structure.⁹ We can transfer on the basis of this principle all real structures to knowledge and the other way too: from knowledge to reality.¹⁰ If we are able to know real things through universal concepts, there must be something in the real things, which corresponds to these universal concepts. For example: if we know all trees through a universal concept of tree, there must be something real in all trees, which makes it possible, to know and name all trees as such trees. A consequence of this conception is clearly the assumption of a plurality of substantial forms, which corresponds to the generic and specific concepts, through which we can denote things.¹¹

There is a significant discussion between the Scotus's experts about the question, whether the scotist conception of knowledge must be describe as a realism or as a representationalism.¹² The most of the experts mean that Scotus is a realist.¹³ There is just one important actual scholar, who means, that Scotus's conception of the *species intelligibilis* ist representationalistic: Lee Spruit.¹⁴ The argumentation of the Scholars, who defend a realist view of Scotus's theory of knowledge is that Scotus means that the intelligible species makes the object present to the intellect, when he uses the term rep-

resentation,¹⁵ and that Scotus conceives the *species intelligibilis* as a device of knowledge and not as object of knowledge at all.¹⁶ This is surely right. But this position is not fully comprehensible, when we don't integrate the concept of common nature in the explanation of knowledge, because these two ideas don't explain, how it is possible, that the intelligible species doesn't represent but just makes present the object, and how Scotus conceive the relation between the *species intelligibilis* and the object, so that the object and not the intelligible species is that what we know. An analysis of this relationship would be make possible to understand, how the intelligible species can be a device of knowledge.

Bevor we analyse the relationship between our knowledge and the nature, we should consider some arguments for a representationalistic understanding of Scotus's conception of the intelligible species. Scotus's conception of the intelligible species may definitively entail some risk of a representationalism. There are two characteristics of the scotist concept of intelligible species that can make us think, that it is a typical case of representationalism: 1. The real character of the intelligible species. 2. Scotus speaking about representation of the object through the intelligible species.

First of all conceives Duns Scotus the *species intelligibilis* as a real absolut entity.¹⁷ It is a quality of the soul,¹⁸ which represents the object in the intellect, so that the object is accessible to our knowledge.¹⁹ At this point we have to ask, what understands Scotus under "absolut"²⁰? In which sense or in reference to what can we say, that the intelligible species is an absolut entity? It is surely not absolut in the sense that it is a substance. Scotus says clearly that the intelligible species is an accident of the soul.²¹ If the *species intelligibilis* is an absolut form, it is not relativ, and so it is independent too, independent from other entities. But it is not clear in his writings, from what or in what way the intelligible species is independent. Scotus rejects through this conception of the species as an absolut entity a purely relational understanding of the species. This is clearly connected to his conception of the causality of knowledge. The object of knowledge appears as an entity produced by the mind, through the causation of a representational device of the object in the mind.²² The understanding of the process of abstraction by Scotus has nothing to do with a separation of individual and material properties of the object, in which the same object comes out purified or released from such material and individual properties. Scotus conceives the process of abstraction as a productive process, by which a representative form is made, and this form makes the object present to the intellect as for the intellect knowable.²³ In this causal process we find a chronological priority of the intelligible species with respect to the act of knowledge. This is in

Spruit's opinion specially problematic.²⁴

The second problem is, what we should understand under the word "represent". This could be understood in very different forms, but there is surely the possibility to understand it as a picture in the mind, a sort of copy of the real objects. This would be problematic because we wouldn't know the reality, but just these pictures in our mind. A very important question in this conception would be the relation between the picture and the original real existent object. The understanding of representation as a sort of *Doppelgänger* in the mind,²⁵ is obviously suggested by Scotus' isomorphic conception of the structures of knowledge and reality, which seems to have some similarities with representationalistic theories of knowledge of early modern philosophy.²⁶ This conception involves, that the knowledge is not a relation, what Scotus clearly say, although he conceives the species as some sort of similarity, and in this sense it includes some relation, even though it is not a relation in itself.²⁷

But the more important question with respect to intentionality is: which is the object of our knowledge? Do we know the intelligible species? Or do we know through the intelligible species the real things? Crucial for the explanation of the intentionality of knowledge with a such concept of intelligible species, and for the answering of the question about the object of our knowledge, is to clarify which is the relationship from the species to the real objects, so that it is in fact possible that we don't know the species intelligibilis in itself, which is a representational device, but we can know through it the reality. At this point becomes the concept of nature in the scotist conception involved.

In this paper it is not possible to answer all aforementioned questions and it is not my intention to do so. I want to propose an explanation of the intentionality of knowledge in connection with the concept of common nature in the scotist philosophy and its relation to the concept of species intelligibilis. I think that the concept of nature contains Scotus's solution to the problem of intentionality. I will try to show this in two steps: first of all I will analyse the metaphysical concept of nature on the basis of Scotus's texts about the principle of individuation.²⁸ Then I want to draw some important conclusions from this conception of nature for the understanding of knowledge and of its intentionality.

3 THE CONCEPT OF NATURE

But what understands Scotus under the concept of nature? Why talks he about common nature, and not just about nature? In what way is nature common? What means he with this attribute “common”. Scotus takes for his explanation of the concept of nature, as I already said, a quote from Avicenna in his *Metaphysics*, on which he says: «*equinitas est tantum equinitas*»²⁹: equity is just equity. This word obviously doesn’t exist in English. And this expression seems quiet obscure. What Avicenna wants to say, and following him also Scotus, becomes clear, when we analyse the complete quotation of Avicenna: «The definition of *equinity* is independent from the definition of universality, and universality isn’t contained in the definition of equity. The equity has a definition, which doesn’t need the universality, it is rather the universality something, which is added to the equity. So is the equity nothing more as simply the equity: it isn’t in itself many nor one, it doesn’t exist in the sensorial perceptible things nor in the soul. It isn’t a potentiality or an effect of these things, so that they would be contained in the essence of equity, but it is just that, what the equity is.»³⁰

Avicenna makes clear what he actually means with this rear expression. With the word *equinitas* means he the essence or the nature of a horse. The essence is what makes a thing to be that sort of thing it is, and so also to belong to a specific kind.³¹ Avicenna, and Scotus as well, defines the nature through negative characteristics: he doesn’t say, what the nature is, but what it isn’t. The concept of nature doesn’t include universality or singularity. Both, universality and singularity, have their cause in an external principle to nature.³² What makes a horse to a horse is not universal nor individual, but is just that, the essence of a horse. As such it doesn’t exist in the individual things nor in the intellect.³³ This is a very important point, because the nature as independent principle from universality or individuality is not given in the real or mental world. The nature is itself capable of becoming individual or universal, but what makes the nature universal or individual is something different as the nature itself, it is an extrinsic principle, which is added to it.³⁴

As real existent nature in the real individuals is the nature individuated by a principle of individuation, which is not included in the common nature itself. This principle of individuation has been called in the scotist tradition *haecceitas* or the thisness.³⁵ The difference between this two principles is not strictly real, but just formal.³⁶ These are not two different things, but just two different formalities in the real things, because they are not really separable from each other.³⁷ As universal exists the nature just as object of

our knowledge.³⁸ And so is the universality connected with the intentional being, that the nature becomes by being the object of our cognitive acts.³⁹ The common nature exists just together with a determining mode of being: the universality and the individuality, and so as intentional existent reality in the soul or as real existent thing individuated in the real individuals.⁴⁰ Behind this understanding of the common nature as indifferent principle to individuality or universality is the thesis, that the very same thing exists intentional in our knowledge as universal concept, which real exists in the individual things. When we know a horse und understand what this word means, we have in our minds the same nature of the horse, which exists in the individuals, but we have it in mode of universality with intentional being. And the same nature of the horse is in all horses that real exist in the world, but individuated.

This is the reason, why Scotus speaks of nature as common. He wants to differentiate the common character of the nature from the universality. Universals can be said of many things, many individuals, but they are not able to be individuated, and so to exist in many individuals. The predicability is the essential characteristic of the universals. The universal can't be real existent, because it is a being of reason. But the common nature may become real existent, in the individuals. It is although not just capable of existence in many individuals, but also to become universal, to be thought, to exist intentionally in the mind. This distinction from that what is in many and that what can be said of many comes from the aristotelian conception of universals. Aristotle defines the universal as that, what can be in many and can be said of many.⁴¹

Wolter makes a important point about the common nature clear: «It is clear from all this why Scotus insisted that what is the *given* in what we understand about things is not the intelligible nature as formally individualized but as formally indifferent to being just this.»⁴² What Scotus claims through this thesis is that there is something in the reality, that is not exclusively individual. Not everything in the individual things is itself individual. There is something that is in the individuals individuated, but it is not individual itself. This is the nature of the things, which is common. This is the crucial point, which makes it possible to know the reality through universal concepts. If everything in the reality would be individual itself, there would be not a correspondence to our universal concepts in the real world. There is so a direct connection between the individual real things and the universal concepts. What we know, what is present in our intellect through the *species intelligibilis* is the nature itself, the very same nature, which is individuated in the real existent individual things, and it is not merely represented in our

intellect, but present. It is sure not real present, but just intentional present. It is the same nature but insofar it is universal, as it is actually thought, actually known.⁴³ And precisely this point is what make possible, that we know reality through universal concepts. That what we know through this universal concepts is nothing that was created by our mind, but something that is given in the reality. It doesn't exist in the reality separate from the haecceity, but it is formally different from the haecceity, and is therefore something that we find in the real thing, and not something that we produce, although it is not as universal given in the reality.⁴⁴

But Scotus doesn't just say, that there is a correspondence between the universal concepts of our knowledge and something in the reality, but there is an identity between the nature in the real things and the nature in our minds. This is a much more stronger claim. The difference between the nature in these two states is a modal one: the nature has a different mode and a different sort of being in the real things and in the mind.⁴⁵ Scotus's argumentation for the common nature reveals, that he considers it necessary for knowledge. The most important argument is that if the nature of the things would be individual, it couldn't become universal and so it couldn't be the object of our intellectual knowledge.⁴⁶

This doesn't mean, that we can't speak of a universal in things at all. This expression is although an improper use of the term "universal". We can say, that there is a universal in things, insofar there is something in the things, which can become universal because it is not contradictory for it, to be universal, namely the nature of the thing.⁴⁷ But we can't say, that there is a universal in the thing as an actual universal. The universal is in the thing merely potentially. The universal as such cannot be in the things, because it is not a metaphysical category, but a logical category. Universality is properly considered not a mode of being of the common nature but rather a mode of being known, it is a mode of representation or of cognition of the thing.⁴⁸

4 THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF SCOTUS'S CONCEPT OF NATURE

In the first instance I muss make a remark bevor I can speak of the epistemological consequences of this conception of nature. The epistemological consequences of Scotus's concept of nature are just valid for what he names abstractive cognition. Scotus defines abstractive cognition in distinction to intuitive cognition. This distinction has been wide treated by actual schol-

ars.⁴⁹ The difference between abstractive and intuitive knowledge concerns the formal object of knowledge: through the intuitive knowledge we know the thing as and insofar it is real existent.⁵⁰ But real existent things are always individuals. This means, that we know intuitively always individuals. The object of abstractive knowledge is the thing with disregard of the existence of the thing, and so also of its individuality.⁵¹ This difference with reference to the object of knowledge implicates a different sort of approach of the intellect to the object. Since the object of intuitive knowledge are the individual real existent things, it doesn't require any kind of mediation.⁵² In this case knows the intellect the things like they are: as individuals and as real existent things. On the contrary needs the abstractive knowledge a mediation, because we know through an act of abstractive knowledge things under an aspect, that is not as such real and actual present in the things.⁵³ The intelligible species, which is this mediating entity, serves the purpose of an absolute consideration of the nature, apart from any added properties and determinations of it, which don't belong to its definition.⁵⁴

Once that we have cleared this point, we can go back to the concept of nature. The analysis of the concept of nature let see, that there is a direct reference in the concept of nature to knowledge, or more precisely to abstractive knowledge. The concept of nature tries to give an answer at this point to the question, what universal concepts are. And we speak of universals primary with reference to our knowledge of things, to our abstract concepts.

With Scotus's conception of nature is connected a very strong epistemological thesis: we can know the real existent individual things through abstract universal concepts, because there is something in the real things which is not simply individual.⁵⁵ This principle of the things, which is not simply in itself individual, and because of that it can become universal, is the common nature. This claim has two important consequences: 1. the object of our abstractive knowledge is in the end nothing else than the common nature of the things.⁵⁶ 2. The very same nature is in our mind and in the real things, just with a different mode. What we know, and we have in our mind ist the nature of the real things.

Naturally arises the question, how we have the nature in our mind, when we know it. It is a sort of double of the real existent nature in our mind? If this would be the case, we would have again a kind of representationalism. But I don't think that this is what Scotus means. For Scotus is it absolutely clear, that we know the real things. So is the species intelligibilis by which the nature in mode of universality becomes present to our intellect not a veil between our mind and the reality, which prevent us to know the real

things, as Spruit says.⁵⁷ It is much more a device, through which we know the reality. But for defending this claim, we have to explain, which is the relationship between the intelligible species and the nature, so that we are also able to say, how is the nature present in our mind.

The intelligible species and the intelligible object, which can be identified with the nature in mode of universality, are real different things. The intelligible species exists in our intellect real, as a accidental property of it.⁵⁸ It is naturally not a material property, but it is real. The object, or the nature in our intellect exists merely intentional, insofar it is presented by the intelligible species in the intellect. What the intelligible species represents is the real thing but just under the aspect of its universality. For this reason says Scotus that the object is intentional existent in the species intelligibilis, or that in the intelligible species is the object with intelligible being present.⁵⁹ The object with intelligible being, which could be identify with the nature in mode of universality, is so to say the content of the intelligible species, and so also the object of our knowledge. The function of the intelligible species is to make present the object.⁶⁰ But the intelligible species isn't the object of our knowledge. The object as intentional present and existent in our mind is the object of our knowledge.⁶¹ So is the intelligible species not a sort of copy of the thing, but just so to say the porter or bearer of the object. The Nature in mode of universality is the content of the *species intelligibilis*.⁶²

The nature is only intentional present and existent in our intellect, through the intelligible species.⁶³ Scotus says, that the act of knowledge is not a relation itself, but it includes a relation.⁶⁴ The *species intelligibilis* is a similar case, it is also a real quality of the soul. Therefore we may say, that the intelligible species is not a relation itself, but it contains a relation. With help of the intelligible species build our intellect a relation to the real nature but just considered in itself, independently of its existence or of any accidental qualities. And this relation is real but not actual. It is rather a potential relation to the nature of the thing.⁶⁵

The existence of the common nature individuated in the things is what makes things knowable to our intellect. So is the common nature in the Philosophy of John Duns Scotus the foundation of his epistemological realism. Right in the concept of common nature becomes the noetic noematic parallelism something real. In the nature is the concordance, or more exactly the identity between knowledge and reality.

5 CONCLUSION

The analysis of the metaphysical concept of nature by Scotus and its epistemological consequences have shown us, that the concept of nature plays a central role in the explanation of the intentionality of knowledge, although Scotus doesn't introduce explicitly the concept of nature in his questions about the knowledge. This is comprehensible, because he didn't ask expressly the question about the intentionality of knowledge. The centrality of the concept of nature in the theory of knowledge consists in the foundation of Scotus's epistemological realism. Scotus himself says, that the nature is the immediate foundation of universality.⁶⁶ We can truly know the real things through universal concepts because the nature is not itself individual. The concept of nature is, saying it in Kantian terms, the condition of possibility of abstractive knowledge, when we understand knowledge as knowledge of the real world, and not just of subjective internal ideas. The subject is able to transcend himself and interact with the world. And knowledge is a form of interaction with the real world, just if it is not simply knowledge of intrinsecal ideas, which exist in the mind. In this case we wouldn't be capable to affirm, that we know the world, because we can't be sure that there is a real relation from our concepts to the real things. We can know the real world, because we have in our concepts intentionally the very same nature of the things, which really exists individuated in the things themselves.

Therefore it is right to affirm with Perler, that «Scotus's position becomes representationalist in the strong sense only if one abandons the thesis that the material thing itself has a common nature, responsible for the thing's universal aspect.»⁶⁷ Scotus defends without any doubt a realism in the theory of knowledge, and his explanation of the intentionality of knowledge implicates essentially the concept of common nature as its foundation.

NOTES

1. Published on February 22, 2018. This article is based on a part of the Doctoral Thesis defended at the Universität zu Köln on January 24, 2018.
2. Many Scholars in the Middle Ages speak of a principle of individuation and of something which has to be individuated through this principle. For example: Bonaventure, *In Sententiarum* II d. 3 p. 1 art. 2 q. 3; Thomas Aquinas *Super sent.* II d. 3 q. 3 q. 3 co.; Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* V q. 8; Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* VII q. 5; Francisco Suárez, *Disputationes Metaphysicae* V, just to say some of them. More about the medieval theories of the principle of individuation, and the discussions between the Scholars, who admit a such principle and them who deny it see: J. Garcia (ed.), *Individuation in Scholasticism. The later*

- Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation, 1150-1650*, State University of New York Press, New York 1994; J. Aertsen; *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter*, de Gruyter, Berlin/New York 1996; M. Pickavé, *The controversy over the principle of Individuation in Quodlibeta*, in C. Schaben (ed.), *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages: The Fourteen Century*, Brill, Leiden 2007, pp. 17-80; P. King, *The problem of Individuation in the Middle Ages*, «Theoria» 66 (2000), pp. 159-184; T.W. Köhler, *Der Begriff der Einheit und ihr ontologisches Prinzip nach dem Sentenzenkommentar des Jakob von Metz O.P.*, Herder, Rom 1971.
3. Cf. P. King, *The problem of individuation in the Middle Ages*, «Theoria» 66 (2000), pp. 159-164.
 4. Cf. *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1 n. 31 “Qualiter autem hoc debeat intelligi, potest aliquantulum videri per dictum Avicennae V *Metaphysicae*, ubi vult quod ‘equitas sit tantum equitas, – nec est de se una nec plures, nec universalis nec particularis’. Intelligo: non est ‘ex se una’ unitate numerali, nec ‘plures’ pluritate opposita illi unitati; nec ‘universalis’ actu est (eo modo scilicet quod aliquid est universale ut est obiectum intellectus), nec est ‘particularis’ de se.” He refers to Avicenna *Metaph.* V c. 1.
 5. For example: Wolter A. B. Wolter, *The realism of Scotus*, «The Journal of Philosophy» XXIII/59 (1962) pp. 725-736; R. Cross, *Duns Scotus’s theory of cognition*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014; G. Pini, *Scotus on the objects of cognitive acts* «Franciscan Studies» 66 (2008) pp. 281-315; D. Perler, *Things in the mind. Fourteenth-Century controversies over “intelligible Species”* «Vivarium» II/34 (1996) pp. 231-253; P. Minges, *Der angebliche exzessive Realismus des Duns Scotus*, Aschendorff, Münster 1908; Ch. Rode, *Drei Theorien des Allgemeinen um 1308. Ein historischer Querschnitt*, «Miscellanea Mediaevalia» 35 (2010) pp. 402-416; D. Perler, *Theorien der Intentionalität im Mittelalter*, Klostermann, Frankfurt a. M. 2002, pp. 185-230; M. Chabada *Epistemologisch-Ontologische Verankerung von objektiven Begriffen nach Johannes Duns Scotus*, in L. Honnefelder et al. (ed.), *Johannes Duns Scotus 1308-2008. Die philosophischen Perspektiven seines Werkes/Investigations into his philosophy*, Arca Verbi Münster 2010 vol. 5 pp. 227-245.
 6. Some examples of this absence or merely cursory mentioning of the common nature in the treatment of Scotus’s theory of knowledge are: L. Honnefelder, *Johannes Duns Scotus* Beck, München 2005. Honnefelder mentions briefly the common nature with reference to knowledge. As well is there just a remark of the common nature in his treatment of the principle of individuation, although there is a very wide treatment of knowledge in L. Honnefelder, *Ens in quantum ens: Der Begriff des Seienden als solchen als Gegenstand der Metaphysik nach der Lehre des Johannes Duns Scotus*. Aschendorff, Münster 1979. Other examples are the works of L. Spruit, *Species intelligibilis: From perception to knowledge*, Brill, Leiden 1994 and the work of M. Chabada, *Cognition intuitiva et abstractiva: Die ontologischen Implikationen der Erkenntnislehre des Johannes Duns Scotus mit Gegenüberstellung zu Aristoteles und I. Kant*, Kühlen, Mönchengladbach 2005.
 7. Cfr. L. Honnefelder, *Johannes Duns Scotus*, cit., p. 42.
 8. Cf. A. B. Wolter. o.c. p. 727; T. Noone, *Universals and individuation*, in T. Williams

- (ed), *The Cambridge companion to Duns Scotus*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2003. pp. 111-112; C. Normore, *Duns Scotus's modality theory*, in T. Williams (ed.), o.c. p. 146; M. Chabada, o.c., p. 238.
9. Cf. L. Honnefelder, *Ens in quantum ens*, cit. pp. 376-377; L. Honnefelder, *Johannes Duns Scotus*, cit. p. 42; A. B. Wolter, o.c., p. 727.
 10. This conclusion about the possible transfer of the structures from knowledge to reality and the other way around is explicitly drawn by Möhle, when he speaks of the noetic noematic parallelisms by one of the most famous pupils of Scotus: Francis of Mayronnes. See H. Möhle, *Formalitas und modus intrinsecus. Die Entwicklung der scotischen Metaphysik bei Franciscus de Mayronis*, Aschendorff, Münster 2009 pp. 341-342.
 11. This thesis has been defended by Scotus in *Ordinatio* IV d. 11 q. 3.
 12. For example the discussion between Perler and Spruit which is perhaps the most prominent of them. Cf. D. Perler, *Theorien der Intentionalität im Mittelalter*, cit., pp. 208-209. Perler refers to L. Spruit, o.c., p. 266.
 13. For example D. Perler, *Things in the mind*, cit. pp. 241-242; A. Schmidt, *Der Denkansatz des Johannes Duns Scotus*, in H. Schneider et. al. (ed.) *Duns-Scotus-Lesebuch* Kühlen, Mönchengladbach 2008 pp. 42-43; M. Chabada, o.c. pp. 75-76.
 14. Cf. L. Spruit, o.c., p. 266.
 15. Cf. D. Perler, *Theorien der Intentionalität im Mittelalter*, cit. pp. 209-210; D. Perler, *Things in the mind*, cit. pp. 251-252.
 16. Cf. L. Honnefelder, *Johannes Duns Scotus*, cit., pp. 37-38; D. Perler, *Theorien der Intentionalität im Mittelalter*, cit. pp. 209-210.
 17. Scotus *Super II et III de anima* q. 17 n. 11 "Item, cuiuslibet potentiae realis activae est actio realis; intellectus agens est potentia activa realis; igitur operatio eius est realis et terminus realis [...] operatio eius est facere intelligibilia in potentia actu intelligibilia; fiunt autem aliqua intelligibilia actu per abstractionem speciei; abstrahere igitur speciem est actus eius et species intelligibilis abstracta est terminus eius [...]"
 18. *Ordinatio* I d. 3 p. 3 q. 1 n. 396 "[...] Nec incongrue species in qua relucet quiditas dicitur 'scientia', non tantum virtualiter quia totam continet, sed formaliter potest dici 'habitus cognitivus', quia qualitas mansiva in intellectu, disponens quantum ad actum."
 19. *Super II et III de anima* q. 17 n. 16 "[...] Verum est autem quod species repraesentat obiectum in illa ratione agendi sub qua nata est imprimi; hoc autem est sub ratione naturae absolute consideratae, non autem sub ratione agentis, quod est particulare, et ideo species repraesentat universale [...]"
 20. As we have seen, is the intelligible species a quality of the soul, and Scotus says, that every quality is an absolute form. Therefore can we apply what he says of the act of cognition to the intelligible species too: *Quodlibet* 14 n. 1 "Contra, talis actus est qualitas, omnis autem qualitas est forma simpliciter absoluta quia genera sunt impermixta: ergo, etc."
 21. *Lectura* I d. 3 p. 3 q. 2-3 n. 370 "[...] quia una causa partialis est accidens, ut species, et aliud non, ideo requiritur esse in eo sicut in suo subiecto, et non propter indigentiam causalitatis."

22. Perler affirms, that Scotus doesn't think that an act of knowledge establish any relation to the real things, but just to an object with intentional being, which is produced by the mind. This statement suggests that we cannot know the reality, but we just know something in our minds. Cf. D. Perler, *What am I thinking about? John Duns Scotus and Peter Aureol on Intentional objects*, «Vivarium» I/32 (1994), p. 74.
23. The complete process of causation of knowledge is described by Scotus in *Ordinatio* I d. 3 p. 3 q. 2.
24. Cf. L. Spruit, o.c., p. 266.
25. Why this conception of the object in the mind as double of the real object is so problematic, shows Perler in his interpretation of Descartes's theory of ideas. Cf. D. Perler, *Spiegeln Ideen die Natur? Zum Begriff der Repräsentation bei Descartes*, in «Studia Leibnitiana» (1994) 26 pp. 195-198.
26. Cf. J. Haag, *Nachwort Ideen. Systematischer Ausblick*, in D. Perler, J. Haag (ed.), *Ideen: Repräsentationalismus in der frühen Neuzeit. Texte und Kommentare*, De Gruyter. Berlin, New York 2010, Vol. 2 p. 481.
27. *Quodlibet* 13 n. 32 “Exemplum, species intelligibilis est qualitas absoluta; quod saltem oportet eos concedere, qui ponunt speciem esse formalem rationem intelligendi, scilicet per se principativam actus, et tamen communiter vocatur similitudo obiecti: non quod illa sit relatio, quam per se importat hoc nomen similitudo: sed quia ipsa ex natura sua est quaedam formam imitativa, et repraesentativa obiecti; ideo dicitur similitudo talis, scilicet per imitationem, et etiam cum significatur per hoc nomen species, adhuc non significatur sub ratione absoluti praecise, sed includendo illam relationem, sub qua communiter intelligitur. Unde etiam species dicitur alicuius obiecti species, Consimiliter est de vocibus significantibus operationem.”
28. I will take for this purpose primarily the texts of the principle of individuation in Scotus's Comment to the Sentences of Peter Lombard in the version of the *Ordinatio*. See: *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1-7.
29. *Lectura* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1 n. 30.
30. Cf. Avicenna *Metaph.* V c. 1 “Definitio enim equinitatis est praeter definitionem universalitatis, nec universalitas continetur in definitione equinitatis; equinitas etenim habet definitionem quae non eget universalitate, sed est cui accidit universalitas; unde ipsa equinitas non est aliquid nisi equinitas tantum: ipsa enim in se nec est multa nec unum, nec est existens in his sensibilibus nec in anima; nec est aliquid horum potentia vel effectu, ita ut hoc contineatur intra essentiam equinitatis, sed hoc quod est equinitas tantum.”
31. Cf. T. Kobusch, *Sein und Sprache. Historische Grundlegung einer Ontologie der Sprache*, Brill, Leiden:1987, pp. 107-108; G. Pini, *Scotus on the objects of cognitive acts*, in «Franciscan Studies» 66 (2008) p. 293.
32. *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1 n. 42 “Ad confirmationem opinionis patet quod non ita se habet communitas et singularitas ad naturam, sicut esse in intellectu et esse verum extra animam, quia communitas convenit naturae extra intellectum, et similiter singularitas, – et communitas convenit ex se naturae, singularitas autem convenit naturae per aliquid in re contrahens ipsam; sed universalitas

- non convenit rei ex se. Et ideo concedo quod quaerenda est causa universalitatis, non tamen quaerenda est causa communitatis alia ab ipsa natura; et posita communitate in ipsa natura secundum propriam entitatem et unitatem, necessario oportet quaerere causam singularitatis, quae super addit aliquid illi naturae cuius est.”
33. *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1 n. 35 “Una, quia videtur ponere universale esse aliquid reale in re (quod est contra Commentatorem I *De anima* commento 8, qui dicit quod ‘intellectus facit universalitatem in rebus, ita quod non existit nisi per intellectum’, et sic est tantum ens rationis), – nam ista natura secundum quod ens in isto lapide, prior tamen naturaliter singularitate lapidis, est ex dictis indifferens ad hoc singulare et illud.”
34. *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1 n. 34 “Et sicut secundum illud esse non est natura de se universalis, sed universalitas accidit illi naturae secundum primam rationem eius, secundum quam est obiectum, – ita etiam in re extra, ubi natura est cum singularitate, non est illa natura de se determinata ad singularitatem, sed est prior naturaliter ipsa ratione contrahente ipsam ad singularitatem illam, et in quantum est prior naturaliter illo contrahente, non repugnat sibi esse sine illo contrahente [...]”
35. This concrete term cannot be found by Scotus in his *Ordinatio*, or in his *Lectura* but just in his *Reportatio Parisiensis* II, d. 12, q. 6, nn. 8, 13, which haven’t been critical edited till now. But it is the common denomination of Scotus’s principle of individuation by his pupils, like Francis of Mayronnes and also in the secondary literature. Cf. A. B. Wolter, o.c., pp. 732-733; D. Perler, *Duns Scotus on signification*, in «Medieval philosophy and theology» 3 (1993) p. 113; H. Möhle, o.c., p. 271.
36. Cf. D. Perler, *Theorien der Intentionalität im Mittelalter*, cit. pp. 201-202.
37. Cf. D. Perler, *Duns Scotus on signification*, cit., p. 113.
38. *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* VII q. 18 n. 51 “[...] Similiter, numquam obiectum erit abstractum nec universale prius natura quam intelligatur [...]”
39. *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* VII q. 18 n. 44 “De isto igitur tertio modo accipiendi universale restat videre primo an sit in intellectu. Et distingo quod dupliciter potest aliquid esse in intellectu obiective, sicut modo loquimur de ‘esse in’ [...]”
40. Cf. A. B. Wolter, o.c., pp. 735-736.
41. Cf. Aristoteles, *Metaphysics* VII 13 1038 b 1 - 1039 a 20; *Peri hermenias* c. 7, 17 a 32 - 17 b 5.
42. A. B. Wolter, o.c., p. 733
43. *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1 n. 33 “Non solum autem ipsa natura de se est indifferens ad esse in intellectu et in particulari, ac per hoc et ad esse universale et particulare (sive singulare), – sed etiam ipsa, habens esse in intellectu, non habet primo ex se universalitatem. Licet enim ipsa intelligatur sub universalitate ut sub modo intelligendi ipsam, tamen universalitas non est pars eius conceptus primi, quia non conceptus metaphysici, sed logici [...]”
44. Cf. A. B. Wolter, o.c., pp. 733-734.

45. *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1 n. 33 “[...] Prima ergo intellectio est ‘naturae’ ut non cointelligitur aliquis modus, neque qui est eius in intellectu, neque qui est eius extra intellectum [...]”
46. *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 7 n. 228 “Praeterea, quaelibet quiditas creaturae potest intelligi sub ratione universalis, absque contradictione; si autem ipsa de se esset ‘haec’, contradictio esset quam intelligere sub ratione universalis [...]”
47. *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 5-6 n.187 “[...] Omnis entitas quiditativa – sive partialis sive totalis – alicuius generis, est de se indifferens ‘ut entitas quiditativa’ est naturaliter prior ista entitate ut haec est, – et ut prior est naturaliter, sicut non convenit sibi esse hanc, ita non repugnat ex ratione sua suum oppositum [...]”
48. *Ordinatio* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1 n. 33 “[...] licet illius intellecti modus intelligendi sit universalitas, sed non modus intellectus!”
49. More about these two types of knowledge, which Scotus differentiates in the *Quodl.* 13 and also in the *Ord.* II d. 3 p. 2 q. 2 n. 318-321, see: M. Chabada, *Cognition intuitiva et abstractiva: Die ontologischen Implikationen der Erkenntnislehre des Johannes Duns Scotus mit Gegenüberstellung zu Aristoteles und I. Kant.* Kühlen, Mönchengladbach 2005; R. Cross, o.c., pp. 43-101; L. Honnefelder, *Johannes Duns Scotus*, cit. p. 34.
50. *Quodlibet* 13 n. 10 “[...] quia cognitione intuitiva res in propria existentia est per se motiva obiective [...]”
51. *Ordinatio* II d. 9 q. 1-2 n. 65 “[...] cognitio abstractiva per speciem potest esse de re non existente nec in se praesentialiter, et ita non perfectissime cognoscit nec attingit [...]”
52. Therefore speaks Scotus of a relation of contact or of union (*relatio attingentiae*) in the intuitive cognition. There is a real actual relation to the object through this act of knowledge. *Quodlibet* 13 n. 11 “In speciali autem videtur esse duplex relatio actualis in isto actu ab obiectum. Una potest dici relatio mensurati, vel verius mensurabilis ad mensuram. Alia potest dici relatio unientis formaliter in ratione medii ad terminum, ad quem unit, et ista relatio medii unientis specialiori nomine potest dici relatio attingentiae alterius, ut termini vel tendentiae in alterum, ut in terminum.”
53. *Reportatio Parisiensis* I A d. 3 q. 4 n. 116 “Respondeo quod non sunt supponenda plura ubi sufficit unum; necessitas autem ponendi speciem intelligibilem est duplex: prima est propter intellectum universalis ut universale est, quia si non est species, non plus relucet obiectum universale in phantasmate quam in pede, nec plus intelligit intellectus in phantasia quam in alia parte, quia ibi non est magis repraesentativum obiecti universalis quam alibi. Alia necessitas ponendi speciem intelligibilem est propter praesentiam obiecti in intellectu, quam habet ex nobilitate potentiae et naturae suae; natura enim superior vel potentia non dependet ab inferiori, et ideo oportet quod habeat praesentiam sui obiecti, sive suum obiectum intrinsece, quod non potest esse nisi per speciem.”
54. Cf. L. Honnefelder, *Johannes Duns Scotus*, cit. p. 44.
55. Cf. A. B. Wolter, o.c., p. 729; This is also what Perez-Estevéz wants to say, but it is not, in my opinion, the universal which exists in our intellect and in the real things, but the nature: Cf. A. Pérez-Estévez, *Entendimiento y universalidad en*

- Duns Escoto*, in M.C. Pacheco, J.F. Meirinhos (ed.), *Intellect et imagination dans la Philosophie Médiévale / Intellect and imagination in Medieval Philosophy / Intellecto e imaginação na Filosofia Medieval. Actes du XIe Congrès International de Philosophie Médiévale de la Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale (S.I.E.P.M.), Porto, du 26 au 31 août 2002, (Rencontres de philosophie Médiévale, 11)* Brepols Publisher, Turnhout 2006, vol. III, p. 1507.
56. Cf. R. Cross, o.c., p. 75.
57. Cf. L. Spruit, o.c., p. 266.
58. *Super II et III de anima* q. 17 n. 17 “Ad secundum dicendum quod aequivocatio est de praesentia obiecti et speciei; obiectum enim est causa praesentiae realis speciei in intellectu in quo eam imprimit, in virtute tamen intellectus agentis; species autem impressa est causa praesentiae obiecti in esse intelligibili, et ut sic obiectum est praesens intellectui ratione speciei.”
59. *Ordinatio* I d. 27 q. 1-3 n. 54 “[...] ipsum autem obiectum ‘ut in intelligentia’ non gignitur nisi quia aliquid prius gignitur in quo obiectum habet esse, quia sicut dictum est distinctione 3, istae actiones et passionis intentionales non conveniunt obiecto nisi propter aliquam actionem vel passionem realem, quae convenit ei in quo obiectum habet esse intentionale.”
60. *Ordinatio* I d. 3 p. 3 q. 1 n. 366 “Ex secundo membro, scilicet praesentia obiecti, probatur illa consequentia prima, – primo sic: aut intellectus potest habere obiectum sibi praesens in ratione obiecti intelligibilis, absque hoc quod sit praesens alicui potentiae inferiori, aut non. Si non, ergo non potest habere aliquam operationem sine potentiis inferioribus (quia non potest habere obiectum praesens sine eis), et si non potest habere operationem sine illis, ergo nec esse sine eisdem, secundum argumentum Philosophi in prooemio libro *De anima*. – Si autem potest habere obiectum praesens absque eius praesentia potentiae inferiori, ergo habet; consequentia probatur, qui agentia talis praesentiae obiecti – scilicet phantasma et intellectus agens – sunt sufficienter approximata intellectui possibili, et agunt per modum naturae, et ita causant necessario in illo illud cuius ipse est receptivus.”
61. *Lectura* I d. 3 p. 3 q. 2-3 n. 392 “Aliter potest dici, et forte melius, quod species intelligibilis non terminat actum intelligendi primo, sed actus intelligendi terminatur ad obiectum secundum ‘esse intelligibile’ quod habet in actuali intellectione et in notitia genita [...]”
62. Cf. A. B. Wolter, o.c., p. 735. Scotus uses explicitly the term *continere* in *Quodlibet* 14 n. 22 “Ad ista. Ad primum dico, quod nihil sufficienter continet continentia virtuali ipsam notitiam, nisi contineat obiectum cognoscibile, tanquam proprium repraesentativum eius, scilicet formale, vel eius repraesentativum virtuale: species autem propria obiecti, etsi sit respectu eius diminuta in entitate tamen continet ipsum primo modo, tanquam, scilicet repraesentatum per ipsam formaliter, sed quando non est repraesentativum formale obiecti, oportet quod virtualiter contineat tale repraesentativum proprium, et quando est repraesentativum, sicut obiectum cognitum: tunc oportet quod contineat illud obiectum, quod per ipsum debet cognosci.”
63. *Reportatio parisiensis* I A d. 3 q. 4 n. 118 “Ad aliud dicendum quod aequivoco-

catio est de praesentialitate; quaedam enim est praesentialitas realis obiecti et potentiae, sive activi ad passivum; et alia est praesentialitas obiecti cognoscibilis, et haec non requirit praesentiam obiecti realem, sed bene requirit aliquid in quo obiectum relucet. Dico ergo quod praesentia obiecti realis est causa realis speciei et in illa est obiectum praesens. Unde in prima praesentia obiectum est causa efficiens, sed in secunda praesentia est speciei praesentia formalis. Species enim est talis naturae quod in ea est praesens obiectum cognoscibiliter, non effective vel realiter, sed per modum relucens.

64. *Quodlibet* 13 n. 24 “[...] igitur videtur, quod actus talis non sit essentialiter relativus, sicut per se includens relationem [...]”
65. *Quodlibet* 13 n. 13 “Secundus actus cognoscendi, qui scilicet non est necessario existentis, ut existentis, non necessario habet relationem actualem ad obiectum, quia relatio realis actualis requirit per se terminum realem, et actualem; tamen iste secundus actus potest poni habere ad obiectum relationem realem potentialem, et hoc primam, de qua in praecedenti membro dictum est, scilicet mensurabilis, vel deperdentiae: non autem secundam, scilicet unionis, vel attingentiae. Potest etiam ista cognitio habere ad obiectum relationem rationis actualem, sed illam necessario requirit ad hoc, quod sit ipsius obiecti.”
66. *Lectura* II d. 3 p. 1 q. 1 n. 34 “Dico quod talis est ‘universalitas in re’ cui non repugnat ‘esse universale’; sed istud non est universale formaliter, nam ‘universale est unum in multis et de multis’. Unde universale secundum unam rationem numeralem dicitur de multis, quia secundum unum ‘esse intelligibile’ numero dicitur de Socrate et Platone, non tamen est unum ens numero in eis. Unde natura quae est in Socrate secundum se nec determinat sibi ‘esse’ in hoc vel in illo, nec ‘esse universale’, alterum tamen ipsorum ‘esse’ habet: sicut color non determinat sibi quod sit congregativum vel disgregativum visus, tamen alterum illorum habet, sic in proposito est de natura secundum se; et ipsa sic est proximum fundamentum universalitatis.”
67. D. Perler, *Things in the mind*, cit. p. 252.

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