

# Dominic of Flanders' Critique of John Duns Scotus' Primary Argument for the Univocity of Being

*Domenic D'Ettore*

Marian University, Indianapolis, USA

*ddettore@marian.edu*

## Abstract

This article considers the attempt by a prominent fifteenth-century follower of Thomas Aquinas, Dominic of Flanders (a.k.a. Flandrensis, 1425-1479), to address John Duns Scotus' most famous argument for the univocity of being. According to Scotus, the intellect must have a concept of being that is univocal to substantial and accidental being, and to finite and infinite being, on the grounds that an intellect cannot be both certain and doubtful through the same concept, but an intellect can be certain that something is a being while doubting whether it is a substance or accident, finite or infinite. The article shows how Flandrensis' reply in defence of analogy of being hinges on a more fundamental disagreement with Scotus over the division of the logically one. It also shows how Flandrensis' answer to this question commits him to a position on the unity of the concept of being that lies between the positions of Scotus and of Flandrensis' earlier Thomistic sources.

## Keywords

Dominic of Flanders (Flandrensis) – John Duns Scotus – univocity – analogy – metaphysics – Scotism – Thomism

John Duns Scotus (1265/66-1308) premises one of his arguments for the univocity of being said of God and creatures and across the categories by affirming that an intellect cannot be certain and doubtful through the same concept.

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Early Scotists considered Scotus' argument beginning from the above premise to be decisive,<sup>1</sup> and some would adopt the premise as a rule for supporting their own arguments for the univocity of being, including Francis of Meyronnes (ca. 1288-ca. 1328)<sup>2</sup> and Nicholas Bonet (ca. 1280-1343).<sup>3</sup>

As would be expected, an argument that Scotists believed to be so forceful became the object of criticism and re-interpretation among the opponents of Scotus and Scotism. The overall history and range of responses coming from Thomists alone is worthy of a volume in its own right. This article's concern is the response of Dominic of Flanders (1425-1479), called the "Prince of Thomist Philosophers," a student of John Versor (died after 1482), and a teacher of philosophy at the Dominican *studium* at Bologna.<sup>4</sup> Flandrensis' writing expresses

1 See S.D. Dumont, "Henry of Ghent and Duns Scotus," in *Routledge History of Philosophy*, vol. 3: *Medieval Philosophy*, ed. J. Marenbon (London, 1998), 291-328, at 308.

2 See Franciscus de Mayronis, *Prologus in Sententias*, q. 4 (*In quatuor libros Sententiarum* ..., ed. Venice, 1520, f. 4rb): "Dico ergo istis suppositis quod subiectum primi principii, quod est ens, habet conceptum unum et univocum Deo et creaturae. Et hoc probro sic: primo supponitur una regula doctoris quae est talis: quandocumque aliquis intellectus est certus de uno conceptu et dubius de duobus, habet conceptum unum de quo est certus alium a duobus de quibus est dubius." See similar remarks in Franciscus de Mayronis, *Tractatus de univocatione entis* (ed. Venice, 1520, f. 271va). On Francis of Meyronnes, see C.H. Lohr, "Medieval Latin Aristotle Commentaries: Authors A-F," *Traditio* 23 (1967), 313-413, at 409; R. Lambertini, "Francis of Meyronnes," in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. J.J.E. Gracia and T.B. Noone (Oxford, 2003), 256-257; and W.O. Duba, "Francis of Meyronnes," in *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy: Philosophy Between 500 and 1500*, ed. H. Lagerlund, 2 vols. (Dordrecht, 2011), vol. 1, 364a-366b (Lambertini and Duba note points on which Meyronnes follows or parts from Scotus).

3 See also Nicholas Bonetus, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 2 (*Habes Nicholai Bonetti viri perpeticissimi quattuor volumina* ..., ed. Venice, 1505, f. 2va). On Nicholas Bonet, see C.H. Lohr, "Medieval Latin Aristotle Commentaries. Authors: Narcissus-Richardus," *Traditio* 28 (1972), 281-396, at 285-286, and W.O. Duba, "Three Franciscan Metaphysicians After Scotus," in *A Companion to the Latin Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, ed. F. Amerini and G. Galluzzo (Leiden, 2014), 413-493, at 464-488. Duba emphasizes that Bonet, unlike Antonius Andreas, for example, was not a strict Scotist (413-414). For specific treatment of Bonet on the univocity of being, see I. Mandrella, "La controverse sur l'univocation de l'étant et le surtranscendental: La métaphysique de Nicolas Bonet," *Quaestio* 8 (2008), 159-175, at 165-170. I point here to passages from Meyronnes and Bonet not because they are notably faithful Scotists, but because Dominic of Flanders cites them as though they are representative Scotists.

4 Dominic of Flanders is called the "Prince of Thomist Philosophers" in the title page illustration of the 1621 edition of his book of metaphysical questions (cited in full below). On Dominic, see L. Mahieu, *Dominique de Flandre (xv<sup>e</sup> siècle) sa métaphysique* (Paris, 1942); M. Tavuzzi, "Some Renaissance Thomist Divisions of Analogy," *Angelicum* 70 (1993), 93-121, at 96-97; and F. Riva, "L'Analogia dell'ente in Domenico di Fiandra," *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*

both the reception of a tradition of Scotist-Thomist debate over the merits and implications of what one early Scotist called Scotus' "famous argument concerning a doubtful and certain concept," or the '*Certain and Doubtful*' Argument (henceforth *CDA*; see section 2 below), and Frandrensis' own influence on the direction of that tradition.<sup>5</sup>

This article presents Flandrensis' treatment of the *CDA*, highlighting how Flandrensis applies his understanding of proportional unity in a way that distinguishes his response from those of his Thomist sources,<sup>6</sup> and showing how Flandrensis' reply to Scotus' argument presumes that Scotus has made a more fundamental error in his division of the modes of logical unity. Flandrensis' attempt to answer Scotus' *CDA* leads him to embrace a distinct overall position on the unity of the concept of being that lies between the Thomistic position, represented by the likes of Hervaeus Natalis (ca. 1260-1323) and John Versor, and the position of Scotus. The case of Flandrensis' criticism further shows that attention to the diverse positions held by Thomists and Scotists on logical unity is necessary for evaluating the merits of their respective positions on the analogy or univocity of being.

## 1 Underlying Issues: Concepts and Univocal Names

The Thomists and Scotists alike agree that names signify things through concepts.<sup>7</sup> When a name is said of many through the same concept (and

86 (1994), 287-322. On John Versor, see P. Rutten, "*Secundum processum et mentem Versoris*': John Versor and His Relation to the Schools of Thought Reconsidered," *Vivarium* 43 (2005), 293-336. Rutten identifies Flandrensis as one of Versor's students (295, n. 9). This connection is also made in E.J. Ashworth, "Analogical Concepts: The Fourteenth Century Background to Cajetan," *Dialogue* 31 (1992), 399-413, at 406.

5 *Petri Thomae Quaestiones de ente*, q. 10, a. 2 (ed. G.R. Smith, Leuven, 2018, 262): "ista ratio famosa de conceptu dubio et certo." Stephen D. Dumont had cited this passage in "The Univocity of the Concept of Being in the Fourteenth Century: John Duns Scotus and William of Alnwick," *Mediaeval Studies* 49 (1987), 1-75, at 8, n. 19.

6 In a future study, I plan to compare Flandrensis' response to those of his contemporary Thomists, such as Paul Soncinas and Thomas di Vio Cajetan.

7 The *locus classicus* on the signification of names is Aristotle, *De interpretatione*, ch. 1: 16a. For Thomas on signification, see especially Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio libri Peryermenias* I, lec. 2 (*Opera Omnia*, vol. 1\*/1, ed. R.A. Gauthier, Rome, 1989, 9-13). For Scotus, see especially John Duns Scotus, *In primum librum Perihermenias quaestiones*, q. 2 (*Opera Omnia* I, Paris, 1891, 540a-544b). The differences between Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, and other figures of the thirteenth to early fourteenth century on signification are treated in G. Pini, "Species,

thereby according to the same signification), the name is said of many univocally. When a name is said of many through diverse concepts, the name is said equivocally.<sup>8</sup> John Duns Scotus does not acknowledge any middle ground between predicating a name of many through one concept, and therefore univocally, and predicating a name of many through diverse concepts, and therefore equivocally.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, for Scotus, to establish that 'being' is said univocally about created and uncreated being, finite and infinite, substance and accident, it is sufficient to show that the name is said of the members of these pairs through one concept.

Fifteenth-century Thomists distinguish different senses of 'one' or 'unity'. They restrict univocity to cases wherein a name is said of many through one 'equally participated' concept; names said of many through one 'unequally participated' concept, on the other hand, they group among those that are said analogously rather than univocally or purely equivocally.<sup>10</sup> For these Thomists,

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- Concept, and Thing: Theories of Signification in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 8 (1999), 21-52. See also E.J. Ashworth, "Signification and Modes of Signification in Thirteenth-Century Logic: A Preface to Aquinas on Analogy," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 1 (1991), 39-67, at 43-53, and R. van der Lecq, "Logic and Theories of Meaning in the Late 13th and Early 14th Century Including the Modistae," in *Handbook of the History of Logic*, vol. 2: *Mediaeval and Renaissance Logic*, ed. D.M. Gabbay and J. Woods (Amsterdam, 2007), 347-388, at 349-353.
- 8 For an excellent survey of the dispute over the distinction between the univocal, equivocal, and analogous signification of terms from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, see the series of articles by E.J. Ashworth, "Signification and Modes of Signifying in Thirteenth-Century Logic"; "Analogy and Equivocation in Thirteenth-Century Logic: Aquinas in Context," *Mediaeval Studies* 54 (1992), 94-135; and "Metaphor and the Logicians from Aristotle to Cajetan," *Vivarium* 45 (2007), 311-327.
- 9 For a discussion of analogy as semantically reducible to univocity in the writings of Scotus, see R. Cross, "Duns Scotus and Analogy: A Brief Note," *The Modern Schoolman* 89 (2012), 147-154. See also Ashworth, "Analogical Concepts," 405-406. There are many scholarly treatments of Scotus' doctrine of univocity that are used and cited in A. Hall, "Scotus on Knowledge of God," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (accessed 14 June 2017); URL = <http://www.iep.utm.edu/scotuskg/>
- 10 There is considerable disagreement among the fifteenth-century Thomists over what it means for a concept to be participated in equally or unequally. Some of these are treated in D. D'Ettore, "The Fifteenth-Century Thomist Dispute over Participation in an Analogous Concept: John Capreolus, Dominic of Flanders, and Paul Soncinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 76 (2014), 241-273. For a brief treatment of Peter Auriol, an important influence on Capreolus' treatment of the concept of being, see especially S.F. Brown, "L'unité du concept d'être au début du quatorzième siècle," in *John Duns Scotus: Metaphysics and Ethics*, ed. L. Honnfelder, R. Wood, and M. Dreyer (Leiden, 1996), 336-344. For a more general discussion of Auriol as an influence on Thomist theory of knowledge by way of his impact

establishing that a name is said of many through one concept invites further questions about the way in which the concept is one. Flandrensis' reply to the *CDA* illustrates one way in which a Thomist finds the 'one concept' Scotus argues for in his *CDA* to be insufficiently one for univocity.

## 2 Scotus' '*Certain and Doubtful*' Argument for a Univocal Concept of Being

Before proceeding further, I briefly relate the '*Certain and Doubtful*' Argument (*CDA*) as it appears in two texts by Scotus. In his *Ordinatio*, the *CDA* is the first of five arguments for the univocity of being in the question "Can the intellect of the wayfarer have a simple concept in which God is conceived?"<sup>11</sup> The argument reads as follows:

Every intellect that is certain about one concept and doubtful about other concepts has a concept about which it is certain that is other than the concepts about which it is doubtful—the subject includes the predicate. But the intellect of the wayfarer can be certain about God that God is a being while doubting [whether God is a] finite or infinite being, created or uncreated. Therefore, the concept of being [that the intellect of the wayfarer has] about God is other than the former and the latter concept [that is, infinite being and uncreated being], and so [the concept of being is] neither of them and it is included in both of them. Therefore, [it is] univocal.<sup>12</sup>

The argument's major premise denies that an intellect can be certain and doubtful through one and the same concept at the same time. The minor premise adds that an inquirer can be certain that God is a being and, at the

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on Capreolus, see S.-T. Bonino, "Capreolus contre Pierre Auriol: une certaine idée de la connaissance," in *Jean Capreolus en son temps (1380-1444)*, Colloque de Rodez, Mémoire Dominicaine (Paris, 1997), 139-158.

11 Iohannes Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1-2 (*Opera Omnia* III, ed. C. Balić et al., Vatican City, 1954, 11).

12 Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1-2, n. 27 (ed. Balić, 18): "omnis intellectus, certus de uno conceptu et dubius de diversis, habet conceptum de quo est certus alium a conceptibus de quibus est dubius; subiectum includit praedicatum. Sed intellectus viatoris potest esse certus de Deo quod sit ens, dubitando de ente finito vel infinito, creato vel increato; ergo conceptus entis de Deo est alius a conceptu isto et illo, et ita neuter ex se et in utroque illorum includitur; igitur univocus."

same time, be uncertain of whether God is a finite being or an infinite being, a created being or an uncreated being. The syllogism concludes that the concept of being through which the inquirer is certain that God is a being must not be the same concept as the concepts of finite being or infinite being, created being or uncreated being, about which the intellect is uncertain. Scotus infers that the concept of being is both different from the concepts of infinite being and finite being, etc., and yet included in these diverse concepts. From this conclusion, Scotus draws the further inference that the concept of being is univocal.

Scotus proceeds to prove his premises. Regarding the major premise: "The proof of the major [is] that no one and the same concept is certain and doubtful. Therefore, either it is one of these, which is our position, or none—and then there will be no certainty about any concept."<sup>13</sup> Moving on to the minor premise:

The proof of the minor: each philosopher was certain that what he affirmed to be the first principle was a being. For example, the one [who affirmed] about fire [that it was the first principle] and the other [who affirmed the same] about water were certain that it was a being. But he was not certain that it was a created or uncreated being, first or not first. For he was not certain that it was first, because then he would have been certain about the false, and the false is not knowable; nor [was he certain] that it was not the first being, because then he would not have affirmed the opposite.<sup>14</sup>

Scotus observes that the ancient philosophers were certain that fire or water was a being, although they were uncertain whether fire or water was the first principle. They were able to be certain about something (e.g., fire) that it was a being, while uncertain about whether it was created or uncreated, etc., because the concept of being is other than, but included in, the other concepts.

13 Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1-2, n. 28 (ed. Balić, 18): "Probatio maioris, quia nullus idem conceptus est certus et dubius; ergo vel alius, quod est propositum, vel nullus—et tunc non erit certitudo de aliquo conceptu."

14 Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1-2, n. 29 (ed. Balić, 18-19): "Probatio minoris: quilibet philosophus fuit certus, illud quod posuit primum principium, esse ens,—puta unus de igne et alius de aqua, certus erat quod erat ens; non autem fuit certus quod esset ens creatum vel increatum, primum vel non primum. Non enim erat certus quod erat primum, quia tunc fuisset certus de falso, et falsum non est scibile; nec quod erat ens non primum, quia tunc non posuissent oppositum."

After arguing that this experience of certitude and doubt applies even to the one listening to the philosophers,<sup>15</sup> Scotus concludes by addressing an objection according to which the philosophers in Scotus' proof of the minor did not have one concept of being, but instead two proximate concepts that seem to be one "due to their proximity of analogy." Scotus counters that this line of reasoning would render it impossible to establish that any concept has univocal unity. Even in what should be a clear example of univocal unity—such as a single concept for Socrates and Plato—one could claim that there is not one concept (i.e., 'human') but two concepts that appear to be one "due to their great likeness."<sup>16</sup>

Scotus gives a similar argument in his questions on the *Metaphysics* IV, question 1, on "Whether being is said univocally about all things." This time the argument focuses on 'being' said across the categories. Scotus finds evidence for one concept of being across the categories in our ability to doubt whether some being, such as light, is a substance or an accident.<sup>17</sup>

Dominic of Flanders engages questions about the unity of being and how it is said across the categories and about God and creatures in book IV of a work known as *Summa divinae philosophiae*.<sup>18</sup> The CDA first appears in *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, question 2, article 3, "Whether being is predicated

15 Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1-2, n. 29 (ed. Balić, 19).

16 Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1-2, n. 30 (ed. Balić, 20). On the background for this objection in Henry of Ghent, see S.D. Dumont, "Transcendental Being: Scotus and the Scotists," *Topoi* 11 (1992), 135-148, at 136-140. Dumont observes (143) that followers of Scotus, especially Peter of Aquila (†1361), explicitly direct Scotus' arguments for univocity of being against the writings of Thomas Aquinas.

17 Iohannes Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* (= *In Meta.*) IV, q. 1 (*Opera Philosophica* III, ed. R. Andrews, G. Etzkorn, G. Gál, R. Green, F. Kelley, G. Marcil, T. Noone, and R. Wood (St. Bonaventure, NY, 1997, 306-307): "Item, patet aliter: experimur in nobis ipsis quod possumus concipere ens, non concipiendo hoc ens esse in se aut in alio, quia dubitatio est quando concipimus ens, utrum sit ens in se vel in alio; sicut patet de lumine, utrum sit forma substantialis per se subsistens vel accidentalis existens in alio sicut forma. Ergo aliquid indifferens concipimus primo ad utrumque illorum, quia utrumque illorum postea invenimus quod in isto salvatur primus conceptus: quid sit ens."

18 References are taken from Dominic of Flanders and Cosmas Morelles, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicae Aristotelis, secundum expositionem eiusdem Angelici Doctoris, lucidissimae atque utilissimae quaestiones* (henceforth, I use its alternative title *Summa divinae philosophiae*) (ed. Cologne, 1621). The text was first published in Venice in 1499.

univocally about God and creatures, [and] similarly about substance and accident." The article takes up thirty objections.<sup>19</sup> Objection 9 reads as follows:

Further, every intellect [that is] certain about one concept and doubtful about diverse [concepts], among which the certain one is included according to quiddity, has that concept about which it is certain different from and univocal to those concepts about which it is doubtful. [This is] because it is impossible that the same concept is certain and doubtful to the same intellect. But the intellect of a human can be certain about something that it is a being while doubting whether it is God or creature, as is clear from the ancient philosophers when they conceded [that there was] one first principle, but some affirmed [that it was] air, others fire, etc. And similarly about substance and accident, for there are some who concede that light is a being, but doubt whether it is a substance or an accident. Therefore, 'being' expresses one concept univocal to substance and accident, and, consequently, it will be predicated univocally. If it is said that 'any such person had in his intellect two proximate concepts, which, because of the proximity of analogy, seem to be one concept, and he seems to be certain about one—that is, about those two doubtful concepts', to the contrary: from that evasion, every way of proving the univocal unity of any concept seems to be destroyed. For if you say that 'human' has one concept about Socrates and Plato, it will be denied to you and said that they are two concepts, but they seem to be one because of great proximity and likeness.<sup>20</sup>

19 The objections themselves come from a variety of sources, including passages from Thomas Aquinas' own work.

20 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 3, ob. 9 (ed cit., 147a): "Praeterea, omnis intellectus certus de uno conceptu, et dubius de diversis, in quibus ille certus secundum quidditatem includitur, habet conceptum illum de quo est certus alium a conceptibus de quibus est dubius univocum illis: quia impossibile est eundem conceptum eidem intellectui esse certum et dubium: sed intellectus hominis potest esse certus de aliquo quod sit ens, dubitando utrum sit Deus vel creatura, ut patet de antiquis philosophis, cum concesserunt unum primum principium, sed aliqui posuerunt aerem, aliqui ignem etc. Et similiter de substantia, et accidente: nam aliqui sunt qui concedunt de luce quod sit ens, tamen dubitant an sit substantia vel accidens. Ergo ens dicit unum conceptum univocum substantiae et accidenti: et per consequens praedicabitur univoce. Si dicatur quod quilibet talis habuit duos conceptus in intellectu suo propinquos, qui propter propinquitatem analogiae videtur esse unus conceptus, et videtur esse certus de uno, hoc est de illis duobus dubiis conceptibus, contra: quia ex ista evasione videtur destrui omnis via probandi unitatem univocam alicuius conceptus. Si enim dicis hominem habere unum

Flandrensis' version of the *CDA* is not a direct quotation of either passage from Scotus discussed above, nor is it derivative from his Scotist sources Meyronnes and Bonet.<sup>21</sup> Flandrensis' Thomist source, Thomas Anglicus, provides an almost word-for-word version of the *CDA* in Scotus' *Ordinatio*.<sup>22</sup> Flandrensis' version of the *CDA* is primarily an abbreviation of the *CDA* in Scotus' *Ordinatio*, but one that adds Scotus' questions on the *Metaphysics* IV, question 1's concern with being as common to the categories, including the example about light. I take the distinctive abbreviations and additions in Flandrensis' version of the *CDA* to indicate that the primary target of Flandrensis' arguments is Scotus' argument, rather than the arguments of the Scotists whom he mentions in the reply (i.e., Meyronnes and Bonet). Indeed, Flandrensis passes over the Scotists' variations and developments of the argument, and he appeals to their doctrines only as support for his own criticism of the *CDA*.

The detail and length of Flandrensis' reply (nearly two full columns) reveal the gravity of the *CDA* in his eyes.<sup>23</sup> I will focus on the parts of Flandrensis' reply that employ his doctrine of logical unity.

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conceptum de Sorte et Platone, negabitur tibi, et dicetur quod sunt duo conceptus, sed videntur unus propter magnam propinquitatem et similitudinem."

- 21 Neither Bonet nor Meyronnes presents close renderings of either passage from Scotus in their works cited by Flandrensis.
- 22 See Thomas Anglicus, *Contra Joannem Scotum primo sententiarum*, d. 3, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 1523, f. 35vb). A portion of d. 3, q. 1, can be found in *Zur Diskussion über das Problem der Univocität in Umkreis des Johannes Duns Scotus*, ed. M. Schmaus (Munich, 1957), 126-129. Other parts of this work by Thomas Anglicus have also been edited by Schmaus in *Der Liber propugnatorius des Thomas Anglicus und die Lehrunterschiede zwischen Thomas von Aquin und Duns Scotus*. II. Teil: *Die trinitarischen Lehrdifferenzen* (Münster, 1930). I am unaware of any modern editions of Thomas Anglicus' work that contain the particular passages cited in this article.—Flandrensis could also have come across a similarly complete version of the *CDA* in Scotus' *Ordinatio* from reading Iohannes Capreolus, *Defensiones theologiae divi Thomae Aquinatis* I, d. 22, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. C. Paban and T. Pegues, 7 vols., Tours, 1900-1908; reprint Frankfurt, 1967, vol. 2, 173a-b). Hervaeus Natalis gives a sampling of 'certain and doubtful' based arguments, but no extended quotation or paraphrase of Scotus' argument in a *Quodlibet*, which Flandrensis cites later in the question. See Hervaeus Natalis, *Quodlibet* II, q. 7 (*Quolibeta Hervei: subtilissima Hervei Natalis Britonis*, ed. Venice, 1513; reprint Ridgewood, NJ, 1966, f. 44v). John Versor gives a version of the argument derivative of Scotus' *Ordinatio*, but the examples that Versor adds in the minor premise suggest that Versor is not Flandrensis' source for the argument: Iohannes Versor, *Quaestiones super metaphysicam Aristotelis* IV, q. 1 (ed. Cologne, 1494; reprint Frankfurt, 1967, ff. 24vb-25ra).
- 23 The only other reply that takes up a full column's worth of text is *ad 10*: Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 3, *ad 10* (ed. cit., 151b-152a).

### 3 Flandrensis Replies to the *CDA*

#### 3.1 *Flandrensis Denies the Major*

The first part of Flandrensis' *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, question 2, article 3, ad 9 consists in a series of attacks on the *CDA*'s major premise: that an intellect cannot be certain and doubtful through the same concept. These criticisms rely on (unoriginal) counter-analogies intended to show the absurd consequences that follow from the proposition.<sup>24</sup> Flandrensis' doctrine of unity first appears after these counter-analogies, within an argument charging the *CDA*'s major premise with equivocation on the terms 'one' and 'common':

[I]t labors in equivocation. First, with regards to [the use of] the term 'one'. For 'one' is said in many ways (as is clear in the fifth [book] of this [work], lecture 6). But there are two ways that are relevant to the matter at hand. In the first way, [it is said] for one by the unity of univocation. In the other way, [it is said] for one by the unity of proportion. For given that one has to assert, by virtue of what is assumed, one concept of being, by unity of analogy, in addition to the proper concepts of substance and of accident, nevertheless, such a concept does not have to be one by the unity of univocation. Similarly, [it labors in equivocation] regarding the term 'common', because something is said to be common in two ways. In one way, [something is said to be common] by the community of abstraction. In another way, by the community of proportion. Granted that one concept of being is asserted, nevertheless, it is not required on account of this to concede that such a concept is common by the community of abstraction (as will be clear below in the following article), although it is common by the community of attribution, so that such a concept is attributed properly and primarily to substance, but secondarily to accident. Also, the aforementioned major premise commits the fallacy of turning many questions into one: because it seeks to give one numerically singular answer about diverse proposals.<sup>25</sup>

24 See Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 3, ad 9 (ed. cit., 150b). Some of Flandrensis' arguments in this first part of his *ad 9* also appear as refutable objections in Franciscus de Mayronis, *Prologus*, q. 2 (ed. cit., f. 4rb-va).

25 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 3, ad 9 (ed. cit., 150b-151a): "Secundo praeterea, laborat in aequivocatione. Primo ex parte huius dictionis, unum: nam unum dicitur multis modis, ut patet 5 huius, lectione sexta. Sed ad propositum, duobus modis. Primo modo pro uno, unitate univocationis. Alio modo pro uno, unitate proportionis. Dato enim quod oportet ponere virtute assumpti, praeter conceptus proprios substantiae

To understand Flandrensis' argument here, first recall the two stages of Scotus' *CDA*. In the first stage, Scotus concludes from the impossibility of being certain and doubtful through the same concept (i.e., the major premise), and the experience of being certain that something is a being while uncertain if it is finite or infinite, created or uncreated, substance or accident (i.e., the minor premise), that the concept of being is different from but common to the concepts of finite and infinite being, etc. The second stage of the argument consists in the inference that such a concept is univocal to finite and infinite being, etc. Flandrensis grants that the first stage of the *CDA* succeeds in showing that there is a concept of being that is in some respect distinguishable from and common to the concepts of substance and accidents, etc., but Flandrensis denies Scotus' further inference that such a common concept is necessarily univocal.

Flandrensis proposes instead that a common concept can be one either by unity of univocation (which he ties to community of abstraction) or by unity of analogy (which he ties to community of proportion). According to Flandrensis, the inference at the second stage of the argument assumes a different sense of one or unity than the first stage of the argument succeeds in establishing for the concept of being. That is, the first stage of the argument shows only that there is one concept of being in some sense of 'one', not necessarily the one/unity of univocity. Put briefly, Flandrensis' argument charges the *CDA*'s major premise with overlooking unity of analogy and, thereby, equivocating on the terms 'one' or 'unity'. Although one cannot be certain and doubtful through a concept that is one univocally, one can be both certain and doubtful—according to Flandrensis—through a concept that is one analogously.<sup>26</sup>

By following Flandrensis' reference to his *Summa divinae philosophiae* v, question 6, the reader finds a treatment of unity that counts unity of proportion as a mode of unity. In this question, closely modeled on Thomas Aquinas'

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et accidentis, conceptum unum entis, unitate analogiae, non tamen oportet quod talis conceptus sit unus, unitate univocationis. Similiter ex parte huius termini communis. Quia aliquid dicitur commune dupliciter. Uno modo, communitate abstractionis. Alio modo, communitate proportionis. Concesso autem quod ponatur unus conceptus entis, non tamen oportet propter hoc concedere quod talis conceptus sit communis, communitate abstractionis, ut infra patebit in sequenti articulo, licet sit communis communitate attributionis, ita quod talis conceptus proprie et primo attribuitur substantiae, secundario vero accidenti. Peccat etiam praedicta maior, secundum plures interrogationes, ut unam. Quia petit de diversis in singulari numero propositis, dari unam responsionem."

- 26 It should be noted here that Flandrensis does not explain positively that the *CDA* establishes that the concept of being has unity of analogy. He tries within his reply only to show that arguments raised against his position fail to provide convincing grounds for abandoning his position.

*In v Metaphysics*, lecture 8,<sup>27</sup> Flandrensis specifies that the one or unity divides into the one *per accidens* and the one *per se*. The one *per se* subdivides into the one naturally and the one logically,<sup>28</sup> and the one logically further subdivides into four modes: numerical, generic, specific, and "proportion or analogy."<sup>29</sup> Concerning the last mode, Flandrensis writes:

In the fourth mode, some things are called one by proportion or analogy, namely all things that agree in this, that this relates to that in the same way as something else relates to another. And this happens in two ways. In the first way, in that [fourth way], [some things are called one by proportion] because some two things have different relations to some one thing. And this [happens] in three ways. Either they relate to some one thing as to an end, as when different things are said to be healthy. Or they relate to one efficient [cause], as [occurs with] medicative things. Or they relate to one subject, as accidents to a substance. In the second way, [they relate] insofar as there is the same proportion of two things to diverse things, as tranquillity [relates] to the sea, and serenity [relates] to the air. For tranquillity is calmness of the sea, and serenity is calmness of the air.<sup>30</sup>

Flandrensis proceeds to defend the sufficiency of the four-fold division of the logically one as follows:

For an intellect understanding something under the *ratio* of one understands it either under the *ratio* of incommunicable or under the *ratio* of communicable. If the first, then some things are one in number. If the second, this is in two ways. The intellect understands it under the *ratio* of

27 See Thomas Aquinas, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio* v, lec. 8 (ed. M.-R. Cathala and R.M. Spiazzi, 2nd ed., Torino-Rome, 1971, 236).

28 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* v, q. 6, a. 1 (ed. cit., 241a-b).

29 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* v, q. 6, a. 3 (ed. cit., 244b-245a).

30 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* v, q. 6, a. 3 (ed. cit. 245a): "Quarto modo, aliqua dicuntur unum proportionem sive analogiam, quaecumque scilicet in hoc conveniunt quod hoc se habet ad illud, sicut aliud ad aliud. Et hoc contingit duobus modis. Primo modo, in eo quia aliqua duo diversas habent habitudines ad aliquod vnum. Et hoc tripliciter. Vel ad aliquod unum, tanquam ad finem, sicut diversa sanitiva. Vel ad unum efficiens, sicut medicativa. Vel ad unum subiectum sicut accidentia ad substantiam. Secundo modo, in eo quod est eadem proportio duorum ad diversa, sicut tranquillitatis ad mare, et serenitas ad aerem: tranquillitas enim est quies maris, et serenitas, est quies aeris." See also his five-fold division of similitude in *Summa divinae philosophiae* v, q. 10, a. 1 (ed. cit., 275a).

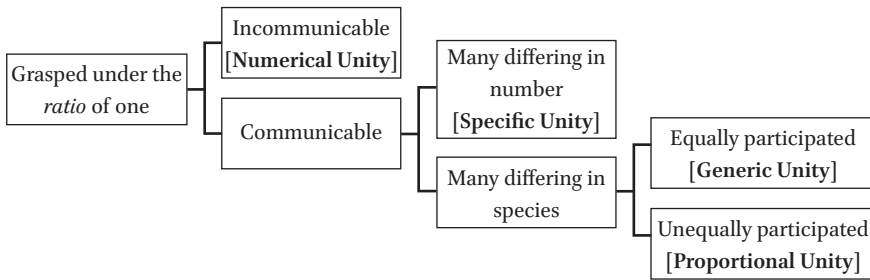
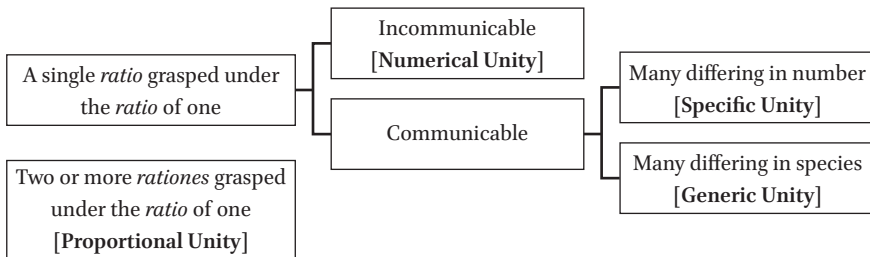
the communicable either in many things different only in number, and then they are one in species, or in many things different in species. And this is in two ways. It is communicable either according to the same name and according to the same *ratio* equally participated, and then they are one in genus, or according to the same name and according to the same *ratio* participated in diverse ways, and then some things are one by proportion. From this it is clear that the aforementioned division is well assigned, since it contains nothing lacking nor superfluous.<sup>31</sup>

Flandrensis offers no sources behind his argument for the sufficiency of this four-fold division of the logically one. There is none like it in Thomas Aquinas' *Commentary*. The argument, however, would be familiar to the reader of John Duns Scotus' questions in *Metaphysics* v. A comparison of the Dominican's argument with the Franciscan's is instructive. Regarding the same four-fold division of logical unity, Scotus writes:

And then the sufficiency is assigned, because the intellect, understanding something under the *ratio* of one, understands either under the *ratio* of incommunicable, and this is numerical unity, or under the *ratio* of predicable of many. In the latter case, [it understands] in one of two ways: either [about many] things differing numerically, and then [it is] specific unity; or about many things differing in species, and then [it is] generic unity. Beyond this unity there is not found one predicable concept; nevertheless, by taking one most common concept and comparing it to another most common concept, unity of proportion is found in relating similarly to other things, namely, [to] their inferiors in predicating about them *in quid*. Thus, the division is sufficient.<sup>32</sup>

31 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* v, q. 6, a. 3 (ed. cit., 245a): "Nam intellectus, intelligens aliquid sub ratione unius, aut intelligit illud sub ratione incommunicabilis aut sub ratione communicabilis. Si primum, sic sunt aliqua unum numero. Si secundum, hoc est dupliciter. Aut intelligit illud sub ratione communicabilis, in pluribus differentibus numero solum, et sic sunt unum specie. Aut in pluribus differentibus specie. Et hoc est dupliciter. Aut illud est communicabile, secundum idem nomen, et secundum eandem rationem, aequaliter participatam, et sic sunt unum genere. Aut secundum idem nomen, et secundum eandem rationem, diversimode participatam, et sic aliqua sunt unum proportionem. Ex quo patet quod praedicta divisio est bene assignata, cum nihil diminutum neque superfluum contineat."

32 Scotus, *In Meta.* v, q. 4 (ed. Andrews et al., 439.2-11): "Et tunc assignatur sufficientia, quia intellectus intelligens aliquid sub ratione unius, aut intelligit sub ratione incommunicabilis, et haec est unitas numeralis; aut sub ratione praedicabilis de pluribus, tunc dupliciter:

FIGURE 1 *Dominic of Flanders' division of the logically one.*FIGURE 2 *John Duns Scotus' division of the logically one.*

Flandrensis' argument is clearly written with Scotus' in mind.<sup>33</sup> As in Flandrensis' *Summa divinae philosophiae* v, Scotus' questions in *Metaphysics* v affirm proportional unity as part of the sufficient four-fold division of unity alongside numerical, specific, and generic. There is a significant difference, however, between Scotus and his Thomist critic.

Scotus and Flandrensis share the common premise that the intellect grasps something "under the *ratio* of one" either "under the *ratio* of incommunicable"—and then the *ratio* is predicable only of a single individual—or "under the *ratio* of communicable"—and then the *ratio* is predicable of many. Both identify the predicable of one with numerical unity. Both divide the communicable through

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aut differentibus numero, tunc unitas speciei; aut de pluribus differentibus specie, tunc unitas generis. Ultra hanc unitatem non est invenire unum conceptum praedicabilem; tamen unum conceptum accipiendo communissimum comparando alii communissimo, invenitur unitas proportionis in similiter se habendo ad alia, scilicet sua inferiora in praedicando in quid de eis. Sic divisio sufficiens est."

33 Bonet discusses unity in his *Metaphysica* v, c. 1 (ed. cit., ff. 27ra-28rb), but this chapter features no treatment of logical unity parallel to those in Flandrensis' *Summa divinae philosophiae* v or Scotus' *In Meta.* v.

the difference “many-differing-in-number,” and they assign specific unity to the *ratio* predicated of many-differing-in-number. Scotus and Flandrensis part ways on the status of the *ratio* predicated of many-differing-not-only-in-number, with Flandrensis alone dividing the many-differing-not-only-in-number through the difference “equally participated,” and, consequently, into generic and proportional unity. Proportional unity is lesser than generic unity because the common *ratio* among the proportionally one is “participated in diverse ways.” By contrast, Scotus claims that proportional unity requires two diverse *rationes* or concepts.<sup>34</sup> The comparison between Scotus’ and Flandrensis’ divisions of the logically one reveals that Flandrensis’ appeal to proportional unity against the *CDA* depends on Flandrensis’ understanding of diverse participation in a *ratio* or concept—an understanding that he does not share with Scotus.<sup>35</sup>

The above has shown that Flandrensis rejects the major premise of the *CDA* by appealing to proportional unity. The success of this strategy, however, is limited, since Flandrensis does not address the difference between his own and Scotus’ understandings of proportional unity. Since Scotus explicitly excludes proportional unity from among the modes of logical unity through which a single *ratio* can be predicated of many, from Scotus’ perspective, Flandrensis’ appeal to proportional unity simply misses the mark by begging the question on a more fundamental disagreement over a name’s signification. For Flandrensis to convince a follower of Scotus of the weakness of the *CDA*’s major premise, he would first have to convince such a Scotist that a single *ratio* can be diversely participated and, therefore, predicated of many proportionally. When he attempts later in *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV to explain diverse participation in a single *ratio*, Flandrensis will find himself opposing his Thomist predecessors’ on the unity of the concept of being. I will treat this point below, after first considering Flandrensis’ arguments against the *CDA*’s minor premise.

### 3.2 *Flandrensis Denies the Minor*

The *CDA*’s minor premise is that one can be certain that something is a being while uncertain if it is finite or infinite, created or uncreated, substance or

34 I have searched in vain for a contemporary treatment of Scotus’ understanding of unity of proportion. Other aspects of this passage from Scotus are discussed in J. Aertsen, “Being and One: The Doctrine of the Convertible Transcendentals in Duns Scotus,” *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998), 47–64.

35 Equal participation in a *ratio* appears as a requirement for univocity in Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio libri Peryermenias* 1, lec. 8 (ed. Gauthier, 40.53–72). For a parallel passage in Flandrensis’ work, see *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 3, ad 10 (ed. cit. 151b–152a).

accident. Among Flandrensis' objections to the minor premise, a pair claim to observe fallacies<sup>36</sup> in Scotus' defence of the minor premise and one objection appeals to yet another form of unity in addition to the modes of unity discussed in *Summa divinae philosophiae* v. Flandrensis' first argument appeals to the fallacy of *ignoratio elenchi*,<sup>37</sup> and I pass over it to his second argument in which he once again invokes his doctrine of proportional unity. This second argument claims to find an equivocation in the *CDA*'s minor premise:

If we are speaking about being that is divided immediately into the ten categories or about being that is divided into God and creatures, this [being] can be understood in two ways. In one way, [it can be understood] by taking 'being' only for its own proper and primary significate, without understanding it together with the secondary significate. For the 'being' that is predicated of God, [and] all other names, signify the divine essence first and properly, but [they signify] participatively the perfections of creatures. Likewise, real created being, which is divided into the ten categories, signifies substance itself first, principally, and immediately and [it signifies] accident itself consequently or secondarily. But it is thus impossible for our intellect to be certain about something that it is a being without knowing whether it is substance, when the significations of the terms are known. Indeed, it implies a contradiction. In another way, we can speak about 'being' insofar as it is extended to what it signifies secondarily, by the extension of proportion, not of abstraction, and thus, the intellect can be certain that something is a being, namely a substance or an accident, nevertheless without knowing determinately whether it is a substance or an accident. Nevertheless, it is not required because of this to posit a single concept by the unity of univocation, but only to posit a single concept by the unity of proportion. For the concept of substance and the concept of accident are one by the unity of analogy, which is meant by the name 'being', not such that from those

36 For Flandrensis' own understanding of the fallacies mentioned in the arguments that follow, see Dominic of Flanders, *In divi Thomae Aquinatis fallaciarum opus perutiles quaestiones*, qq. 9 (equivocation), 14 (figure of speech), 17 (accident), 19 (*ignoratio elenchi*), and 20 (begging the question) (*In d. Thomae Aquinatis commentaria super libris Posteriorum Analyticorum Aristotelis, quaestiones perutiles*, ed. Venice, 1587, 344a-347b, 359a-362a, 367a-369b, 371b-373a, 373a-374a).

37 See Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 3, ad 9 (ed. cit., 151a). He also argues that the minor premise fails by the fallacies of begging the question, figure of speech, and accident (151a-b).

two concepts is constituted a third, composite, concept that is abstracted from both.<sup>38</sup>

Flandrensis' argument grants that an intellect can have one concept of real being, whether that is real categorical being or real being common to God and to creatures; however, this concept is only one proportionally. The *CDA*'s minor premise treats the concept of being through which a person is certain that something is a being in the same way as it treats the concept about which the person is uncertain that the thing in question is created or uncreated, or substance or accident. Yet according to Flandrensis, the certain and doubtful person is certain about 'being' taken proportionally, but not certain about 'being' taken absolutely or without proportion. The minor premise generates the conclusion by missing this shift in the signification of the word 'being'—i.e., a shift from its merely proportionally one signification across the categories, or its proportional signification of God and creatures, to its absolute signification of one category, or its absolute signification of either God or creatures exclusively.

As noted above in the case of Flandrensis' appeal to proportional unity against the major premise, Flandrensis' argument here presumes his doctrine of signification through a concept with proportional unity, which Scotus does not share. Consequently, this reply to the minor premise suffices to show that Flandrensis (or others who hold that a single concept can have primary and secondary significations that have unity of proportion) need not regard the

38 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 3, ad 9 (ed. cit., 151a): "Similiter minor peccat, secundum fallaciam aequivocationis ex parte entis ... Si vero loquamur de ente quod immediate dividitur in decem praedicamenta, vel de ente quod dividitur in Deum et creaturas, hoc potest intelligi dupliciter. Uno modo, accipiendo ens pro suo proprio et primario significato tantum, non simul intelligendo significatum secundarium. Ens enim quod praedicatur de Deo, omnia alia nomina, significant primo et proprie divinam essentiam, participative vero perfectiones creaturarum. Similiter ens reale creatum, quod dividitur in decem praedicamenta, significat primo, et principaliter, et immediate ipsam substantiam, et ex consequenti sive secundario ipsum accidens, sic autem, impossibile est quod intellectus noster sit certus de aliquo quod sit ens, ignorando an sit substantia, cognitio significationibus terminorum, imo contradictionem implicat. Alio modo, possumus loqui de ente secundum quod extendit se ad suum secundarium significatum, extensione proportionis, non abstractionis, et sic intellectus potest esse certus de aliquo quod sit ens, videlicet substantia vel accidens, ignorando tamen an esset substantia determinate vel accidens. Non tamen propter hoc oportet ponere conceptum unum unitate univocationis, sed solum unum unitate proportionis. Conceptus enim substantiae et conceptus accidentis sunt unus unitate analogiae, qui importatur nomine entis, non quod ex illis duobus conceptibus constituatur unus tertius conceptus compositus ex illis duobus qui sit abstractus ab ambobus."

CDA as demonstrating the univocity of being. As with the unity-based argument against the major premise, however, a follower of Scotus need not accept Flandrensis' reply to the minor premise as long as their differences persist over the signification of a single concept and proportional unity.

In the final portion of his reply to objection 9, Flandrensis gives examples of things that are outside the essences of (i.e., accidental to) different modes of being and appeals once again to a non-univocal mode of logical unity:

Whence, inhering relates to an accident as a certain relation [*habitus*], but not as belonging to the essence of an accident, as they themselves [i.e., the Scotists] claim; also similarly, not inhering relates to substance, because the negation of inherence cannot belong to the formality of something positive. But nevertheless such a certain concept, with respect to inhering or not inhering, not only can be had concerning being taken in common (it having been conceded that such a being can have one concept), but one can have a certain concept of this special being [...] without knowing whether it inheres or does not inhere, and so there is variation of the essential concept in the accidental. For it does not follow, 'Being has one concept, therefore being is univocal', just as it does not follow, 'It is an animal, therefore it is a man'. For one applies to more than one by the unity of univocation, as is clear from the fifth [book] of this [work], lecture 6. From which it is clear that the aforementioned argument, which among them [the Scotists] is reputed to be difficult and the Achilles, is weak and nothing, whatever may be the truth of the conclusion.<sup>39</sup>

As the reference to *Summa divinae philosophiae* v, question 6 (i.e., to his discussion of logical unity), indicates, Flandrensis' criticism here assumes that

39 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 3, ad 9 (ed. cit., 151b): "Unde inhaerere se habet ad accidens sicut quaedam habitudo, non autem sicut id quod est de essentia accidentis, ut ipsimet asserunt, similiter etiam, non inhaerere se habet ad substantiam: quia negatio inhaerentiae non potest esse de formalitate alicuius positivi. Sed tamen talis conceptus certus, respectu inhaerendi vel non inhaerendi, non solum potest haberi de ente communiter sumpto, concesso quod tale ens possit habere unum conceptum. Sed de hoc ente speciali, puta de terna dimensione, potest haberi conceptus certus, ignorando utrum inhaereat, et non inhaereat, et sic ibi est variatio conceptus essentialis in accidentale. Non enim sequitur: 'Ens habet unum conceptum, ergo univocum', sicut non sequitur: 'Est animal, ergo est homo'. Unum enim in plus se habet quam unum unitate univocationis: ut patet quinto huius, lect. 6. Ex quo patet quod ratio praedicta, quae apud eos difficilis reputatur, et achilles, debilis et nulla est, quicquid sit de conclusionis veritate."

a single concept can have proportional unity in addition to numerical unity and the univocal modes of logical unity (generic and specific). The examples of how 'inherence' relates to the essential concepts of accidents and of 'three-dimensional' serve to continue the argument that the *CDA*'s minor premise mistakes what is accidental to a concept for what is essential. Since 'inherence' is outside the concept of 'accidental being' and varies it, one can be certain that something is an accident and uncertain if it inheres. But it would be a fallacy to conclude that the concept 'accidental being' is essentially common and univocal to inhering and non-inhering accidents. Likewise, since 'inherence' is outside the concept of 'three-dimensional being', one can be certain that something is three-dimensional without being certain that it inheres, and, consequently, it would be a fallacy to conclude that three-dimensionality is univocally common where it inheres and where it does not inhere.<sup>40</sup> Given Flandrensis' account of logical unity, both univocation and analogy are outside of the concept of unity. Hence, he proposes that it is a fallacy to infer that the concept of being common to substance and accidents, God and creatures, is one by the unity of univocation rather than by the unity of analogy on the grounds that one's intellect can be certain through this concept that something is a being, while remaining uncertain whether the thing is a substance or an accident, created or uncreated.

Having found the major premise and the proof of the minor premise fallacious, Flandrensis concludes that—whatever might be the truth of the matter—Scotus' argument fails to live up to its reputation among the Scotists as a strong and even decisive proof of the univocity of being.

#### 4 Flandrensis vs the Thomists

As has been seen, Dominic of Flanders' reply to the *CDA* draws on an understanding of logical unity that permits primary and secondary signification through a single *ratio*, an understanding of logical unity that is foreign to Scotus. In fact, Flandrensis' doctrine of logical unity brings him into conflict with other Thomists over the unity of the concept of being.

Within *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, question 2, articles 3-6, Flandrensis identifies a range of positions held by Thomists on the unity of the concept of being, each one developed in response to Scotus and having no common points beyond contradicting Scotus' conclusion about the univocity of being.

40 On non-inhering dimensive quantity, see the discussion of Eucharistic accidents in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* III, q. 77, a. 2.

The position closest to Scotus' own is addressed in article 5, "Whether there can be some concept of being, either analogous or univocal, that is separate from the concept of all beings and common through abstraction."<sup>41</sup> In the language adopted in the article, Scotus' univocally common concept is "separate" from the concepts proper to the categories, etc. Argument 14 of article 5 features a modified version of the *CDA*: "Further, the intellect can be certain that something is a being without knowing whether it is a substance. Therefore, there is a separate concept of being, at least an analogous [one]."<sup>42</sup> As reported by Flandrensis, this argument belongs to an "Archbishop Antonius," the Dominican Antonio de Carlenis of Naples, archbishop of Amalfi (†1460).<sup>43</sup> The latter concluded from the *CDA* that Scotus rightly affirmed that the concept of being about which he was certain was separate from the proper concepts of substantial being, accidental being, and so on, about which he was doubtful. The archbishop refrained, however, from drawing the further conclusion that this separate concept is univocal, rather than analogous, to substance, etc.<sup>44</sup>

On Flandrensis' account, Antonio de Carlenis grants too much to Scotus by accepting a separate concept of being. In his reply to argument 14, Flandrensis reaffirms his own position:

Although our intellect can be certain that something is a being, that is, a substance or an accident, and not know whether any determinate member is a substance, on these grounds one does not have to affirm a separate concept, but rather one has to concede that being signifies by its own

41 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 5 (ed. cit., 154b): "Utrum sit dabilis conceptus aliquis entis, sive analogus, sive univocus, qui sit praecisus a conceptu omnium entium, et communis, per abstractionem."

42 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 5, ob. 14 (ed. cit., 155b): "Praeterea, intellectus potest esse certus de aliquo quod sit ens, ignorando an sit substantia. Igitur entis est conceptus praecisus, saltem analogus."

43 See Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 5, ad 14 (ed. cit., 159a). Other references in the text establish the identity of the archbishop, a master of theology and author of some questions on the *Metaphysics*. See Lohr, "Medieval Latin Aristotle Commentaries: Authors A-F," 365, and the introduction to *Antonius de Carlenis, O.P.: Four Questions on the Subalternation of Sciences*, ed. S.J. Livesey (Philadelphia, 1994), ix-xxv.

44 Flandrensis' Thomist critic, Chrysostom Iavelli, will make a similar argument. He maintains that the separate concept is not univocal, because it is unequally participated by substance, etc. See Chrysostom Iavellus, *In libros Metaphysicos Aristotelis* IV, q. 1 (Wittenberg, 1609, esp. 102). Thomas de Vio Cajetan demonstrates awareness of this position and lists it third among three positions on analogy that he rejects at the outset of *De nominum analogia*, c. 1, n. 1 (*Scripta philosophica*, ed. P.N. Zammit, Rome, 1934, 3-4).

unique concept not just substance, but substance with accident, the one indeed primarily and the other secondarily, as was said.<sup>45</sup>

In the following article, Flandrensis shows that he knows of two methods besides his own that are employed by Thomists to avoid admitting (like Scotus and Antonio) a separate concept of being.<sup>46</sup> One method says that the diverse concepts of being have unity of disjunction. Flandrensis attributes this first view to the early fourteenth-century Thomist Hervaeus Natalis. Flandrensis had discussed Hervaeus' position already in article 3, in reply to argument 9, while raising objections to the minor premise of the *CDA*:

Some affirm a disjunctive concept of being, about which they concede that the intellect can be certain while being in doubt concerning substance and accident taken individually, as is clear from Hervaeus in his *Quodlibeta*, quodlibet 11,<sup>47</sup> where he says: "A disjunctive concept can be certain, while the truth of each part of the disjunction taken *per se* is in doubt. Thus, I can be certain that Socrates stands or sits and not know which of those parts is true, and, nevertheless, to stand or to sit does not express one simple concept that essentially corresponds to some thing."<sup>48</sup>

Disjunctive unity does not belong to individual concepts, but is a unity between two or more concepts joined in the disjunction. Hence, the appeal to

45 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 5, ad 14 (ed. cit., 159a): "Licet etiam intellectus noster potest esse certus de aliquo quod sit ens, id est substantia, vel accedens, et ignorare de quolibet membro determinato an sit substantia, non propter hoc oportet ponere conceptum praecisum, sed bene oportet concedere quod ens significat suo unico conceptu, non solum substantiam, sed substantiam cum accidente, unum quidem primario, et aliud secundario, sicut dictum est."

46 See Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 6 (ed. cit., 160a-b). On this passage, see E.J. Ashworth, "Suarez on the Analogy of Being: Some Historical Background," *Vivarium* 33 (1995), 68-70.

47 See Hervaeus Natalis, *Quodlibet* 11, q. 7 (ed. cit., f. 45v).

48 Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae* IV, q. 2, a. 3, ad 9 (ed. cit., 151a): "Aliqui tamen ponunt conceptum disiunctum entis, de quo concedunt quod intellectus potest esse certus, ipso existente dubio de substantia, et accidente, sigillatim sumptis, ut patet per Hervaeum in suis quodlibetis, quodlibeto 2. Ubi sic dicit. Conceptus disiunctus potest esse certus: dubia veritate cuiuslibet partis disiunctae, per se acceptae: unde possum esse certus quod Sortes stat vel sedet, et ignorare quae illarum partium sit vera: et tamen stare vel sedere non dicit unum conceptum simplicem, essentialiter alicui rei convenientem."

disjunctive unity allows Hervaeus to deny, in the face of the *CDA*, that there is any concept of being with simple unity.<sup>49</sup>

The second Thomist method for rejecting a separate concept of being belongs to John Versor. Versor proposes that there are ten different concepts of being proper to the different categories. These ten concepts have unity of analogy because one among them (i.e., the concept proper to substance) is included in all the others.<sup>50</sup> The analogous unity among these ten concepts could also be called "unity of attribution."<sup>51</sup>

The key point of difference between Hervaeus' disjunctive unity and Versor's unity of analogy as contrasted with Flandrensis' own view is that Hervaeus and Versor affirm multiple concepts of being that properly signify the diverse modes of being. According to Flandrensis, however, not only is there no concept of being separate from the concepts of substance and accidents, but there is no concept of accidental being separate from the concept of substantial being. Rather, being is only signified through the concept that primarily signifies substantial being.<sup>52</sup> So, whereas Flandrensis rejects Antonio de Carlenis' position for giving too much to Scotus, Flandrensis rejects the positions of Hervaeus Natalis and John Versor for not granting Scotus enough.<sup>53</sup>

49 Hervaeus mentions that some say that there is analogy where one thing does not belong equally, but only proportionally, to what contains it. He rejects this position—which at least resembles the one that Flandrensis will defend—on the grounds that it would make the names of genera analogous when said of species. For Hervaeus, it is attributive unity between diverse concepts that grounds analogy and distinguishes it from what he calls "essential univocity." See Hervaeus Natalis, *Quodlibet* 11, q. 7 (ed. cit., f. 44ra-b).

50 See Iohannes Versor, *Quaestiones super metaphysicam Aristotelis* IV, q. 1 (ed. cit., f. 25vb).

51 Although Flandrensis focuses on Hervaeus' use of unity of disjunction, Hervaeus' overall position is quite similar to Versor's insofar as both hold that there are ten distinct concepts of being corresponding to each category, and both hold that each concept is one by its relation to the concept of substance. Hervaeus calls this unity "unity of attribution." See Hervaeus Natalis, *Quodlibet* 11, q. 7 (ed. cit., f. 46va).

52 See especially Flandrensis, *Summa divinae philosophiae*, IV, q. 2, a. 6 (ed. cit., 160a-b): "ens significet, unico conceptu, et unica impositione, substantiam et accidens. Significat enim substantiam cum habitudine ad accidens, habitudo autem non potest significari: cum non possit intelligi, sine eo. Ad quod determinatur: ideo significat secundario accidens. Et talis conceptus entis non est praecisus a conceptu substantiae, sed est proprius conceptus substantiae, cum alio modo significandi et concipiendi, videlicet cum concrezione et habitudine ad accidens."

53 Scotus himself responded to criticisms of the *CDA* that rely on attributive or disjunctive unity: Iohannes Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, nn. 62-69 (*Opera Omnia* III, ed. C. Balić et al., Vatican City, 1956, 181-184). See also Scotus' argument that unity of attribution contains univocation (n. 83, 191). I have not found Flandrensis directly noting these

## Conclusion

With the '*Certain and Doubtful*' Argument, John Duns Scotus challenged his opponents to account for how someone's intellect could be at once certain that something is a being and yet uncertain of whether that same thing belongs to this or that mode of being. Scotus' own explanation affirms that there is one separate, and therefore univocal, concept of being that is predicated across the categories and about God and creatures. Flandrensis denies Scotus' inference from the unity of the concept of being to the univocity of the concept of being on the grounds that, even if the *CDA* proves that there is one concept of being, it fails to prove that this one concept of being has the unity characteristic of univocity rather than the lesser unity of proportion or analogy.

Flandrensis' rejection of the *CDA* rests on his disagreement with Scotus over how to interpret unity as understood in its numerical, generic, specific, and proportional or analogous modes. Flandrensis holds that a single concept can be predicated in each of these modes of logical unity, and Scotus specifically excludes predicating a single concept with proportional unity. I think that it should be granted that, if indeed Scotus does misunderstand or overlook proportional unity in the way that Flandrensis charges him, then, as an argument for univocity against analogy, the *CDA* is "weak and nothing." Yet, insofar as Flandrensis neglects to explain why his own doctrine of proportional unity is to be preferred over Scotus', Flandrensis fails to make a case that would be compelling to Scotus.

Flandrensis' criticism of the *CDA* serves to show that assumptions about logical unity, including proportional unity, underlie the rival positions on univocity and analogy between the schools of Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus, as well as within the school of Thomas Aquinas itself. Hence, evaluation of the merits of these rival positions on univocity and analogy requires understanding their positions on logical unity. I have not found any systematic treatment of Scotus' doctrine of proportional unity, nor have I seen it discussed in contemporary treatments of Scotus' doctrine of the univocity of being.<sup>54</sup> Flandrensis' own doctrine concerning the proportional unity of the concept of

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arguments from Scotus, but they could in part explain why Flandrensis adopts a different approach from his predecessors Hervaeus and Versor.

- 54 The closest that I have seen to someone treating this point is in Joshua P. Hochschild's discussion of Cajetan's doctrine of proportional unity in *The Semantics of Analogy: Rereading Cajetan's De Nominum Analogia* (Notre Dame, 2010), 139. Still, Hochschild discusses Cajetan's doctrine of proportional unity as responding to Scotus' definition of univocity, and not to Scotus' own discussion of proportional unity.

being, as was shown above, led him into conflict with other Thomists, including Hervaeus Natalis and John Versor. Flandrensis' doctrine would prove to be influential on, if not convincing to, his contemporary Thomists.<sup>55</sup> I hope that greater light will come to be shed on the dispute over the analogy or univocity of being through investigation of the dispute over logical unity, especially the unity of proportion or analogy.

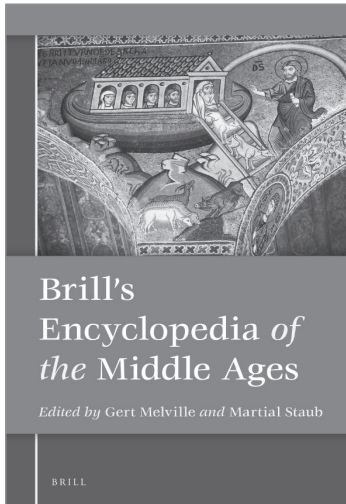
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55 Within a few years of the first publication of the *Summa divinae philosophiae*, another representative of the Dominican Bologna *studium*, Thomas di Vio Cajetan, defended a position between Flandrensis' and Versor's, proposing with Versor that there are diverse concepts of being for the diverse categories, yet attributing proportional unity, rather than attributive unity, to these concepts, such that there is one concept of being proportionally. See especially Cajetan, *De nominum analogia*, c. 6, n. 70 (ed. Zammit, 57).

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Edited by **Gert Melville**, Technische Universität Dresden,  
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