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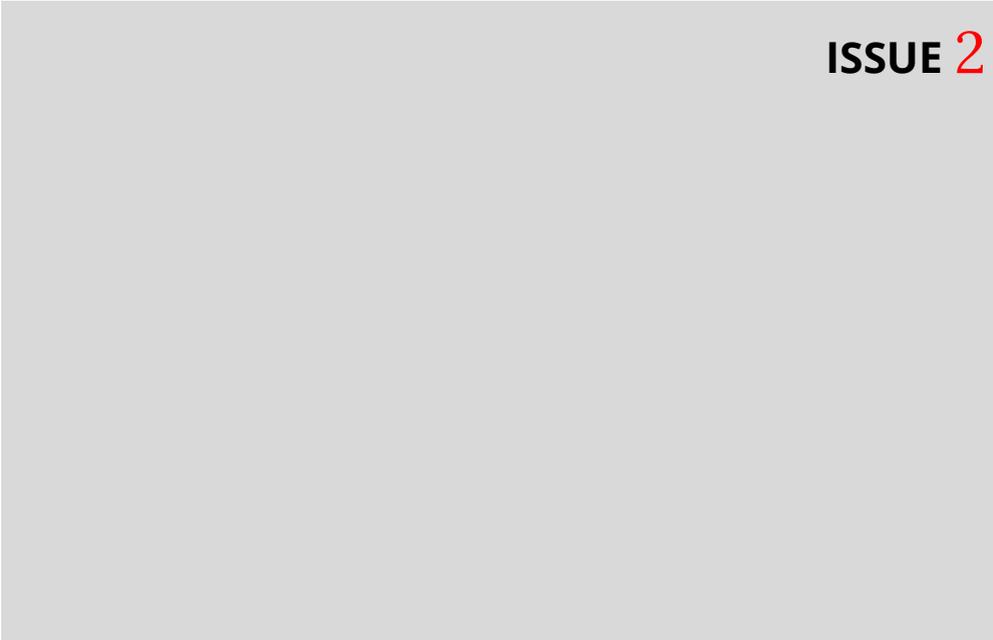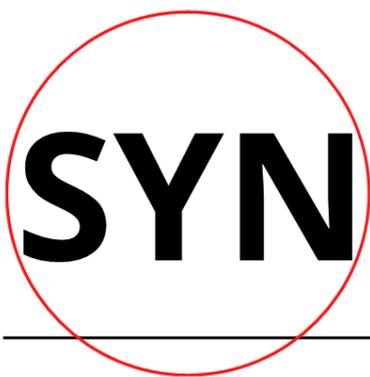
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Res, Ens, Obiectum

List of contributions

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The Notion of *Res* in the Medieval Theories of Signification:
A Reconstruction of Duns Scotus's and Antonius Andreae's Contributions

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is twofold, first, to assess the role that the notion of *res* played in the medieval semantic theory, specifically in the interpretation of the Boethian triad *vox-intellectus-res*, namely, concerning the signification of words. After an annotated reconstruction of the controversy, we will present Duns Scotus's approach to signification and, along with other conceptions of *res*, the notion of *res ut concipitur*. Second, this paper aims to present and study the contribution of one of Scotus's most faithful followers, Antonius Andreae, as it appears in his *Scriptum in Artem veterem*. In addition to being more definitive than his master's proposal, Antonius's solution to signification of words seems to move away from Scotus's – or, at least, from its traditional understanding – and to open a new perspective on the signification of words that led the way for other relevant proposals.

Keywords: *Duns Scotus*; *Boethian triad*; *res ut concipitur*; *Antonius Andreae*; *theory of signification*

1. *The Medieval Controversy over the Signification of Word: Two Models*

Whether words signify concepts or things is one of the main issues debated by the philosophers of language in the late thirteenth century. This dichotomy can also be understood as a discussion about the proper relationship between words, concepts, and things.[1] This question determines what are and how to understand the notions of meaning and signification of words. This issue arose from the following Aristotelian passage, in its Latin translation, which corresponds to the first lines of *De Interpretatione*: 'Sunt ergo ea quae sunt in voce earum quae sunt in anima passionum notae' (Aristotle, *Peri hermeneias*, 16a3-8).[2] It means that spoken words –i.e., verbs and nouns which are in the

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[1] About the medieval debate on the signification of names, see Mora-Márquez (2011, 2015 and 2016), Pini (1999), Rosier-Catach (1995), Panaccio (1992) and Ashworth (1987).

[2] Here the full text: 'Sunt ergo ea quae sunt in voce earum quae sunt in anima passionum notae, et ea quae scribuntur eorum quae sunt in voce. Et quemadmodum nec litterae omnibus eaedem, sic

voice– are marks or conventional signs (*notae*) of a mental experience or that, in other words, the words are direct expressions of the affections of the soul, as the term *passiones animae* is usually translated. Aristotle did not clarify the semantic relationship between things and words, so Boethius's (ca. 470-525) translation and interpretation of the Aristotelian work on logic opened a debate that continued through the medieval and modern periods. The terminology that arose to address this debate along with most of its theoretical problems were introduced by Boethius himself along with the interpretational tradition that followed his work.[3]

First, before delving into the discussion and its two principal positions, and prior to analyzing the role played by the notion of *res* within that discussion, it is important to note that the controversy concerned the words that seek to signify or have signification, that represent or immediately refer to things that exist in the extramental world, outside the intellect and independently of the fact of our knowledge of them. In medieval terminology, these are called names of 'first intention' or common names. Second, we encounter the terms known as 'second intentions', which refer to purely mental concepts in our intellects or ideas in their intentional content. These are logical concepts, such as 'genus' or 'species', as well as *relationes rationis*, which are not based on the reality *extra animam*. The difference between the names of first and second intention was fundamental for Scholastic philosophy: while the former relates to something real, the latter is a meta-concept related to a name of first intention, indicating the type of logical class to which it belongs. For example: 'animal' is a name of first intention and 'genus' is instead a name of second intention, because it

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nec eaedem voces; quorum autem hae primorum notae, eaedem omnibus passiones animae sunt, et quorum hae similitudines, res etiam eaedem' (Aristoteles II, 1-2, 5). For the Arabic and Medieval interpretation of Aristotle's *Peri hermeneias* see Mora-Márquez (2011) and Black (1991).

[3] See Boethius, *Comentarii in librum Aristotelis Peri hermeneias* (1880, vol. II), the work where he discussed the question of whether words refer immediately to concepts or things and said that 'vox vero conceptiones animi intellectusque significat [...] licet voces nomina rerum sint, tamen non idcirco utimur vocibus ut res significemus, sed ut eas quae ex rebus nobis innatae sunt animae passiones'(Boethius 1880: II, 20 and 41), *i.e.* 'although sounds are names of things, but we don't use sounds in this way to signify things, but to signify those impressions of things in the soul which are within us (translation by Read 2015: 20). For the Boethian interpretation of the afore-mentioned Aristotelian text, see Magee (2013, 2010) and (1989: 7-48); see also Suto (2012).

indicates the logical relationship relating to the subjects to which 'animal' refers. Thus, we can say that animality seems to be a property that determines a class, so we cannot say that 'Socrates is a genus' but only that 'Socrates is an animal'.

As has been said, the majority of medieval theories on the signification of words, usually set out as such in the several commentaries on the *Peri hermeneias* (or *De interpretatione* in its Latin version), were based on or were in full agreement with the semantic model that had begun with Boethius's interpretation. He presupposed an interrelation of the elements of the famous triad: vocal sound (*vox*), the concept it expresses (*intellectus*), and the essence that defines what we seek to know and talk about (*res*), which is what words signify and concepts represent. Accordingly, reality is fundamentally intelligible and, thus, that which has been comprehended mentally can be expressed verbally. The Boethian triad shaped the semantic aspect of the linguistic process *status quo*. While the first element of this triangle is the object studied by grammarians, the second is the object of logic, and the third is the object of physics and metaphysics. Despite the complexity of the debate about the meaning of words, it undoubtedly raises philosophical and substantive issues that are essential to language theory and metaphysics, and, by extension, to any field that requires precise definitions of what one is talking about; since it requires us to study and describe what we understand by *res* or by *passio*, for example. This issue also involves how Aristotelian categories are to be considered with regard to logic.

Boethian readings had a substantial impact on medieval philosophy and the history of logic, for example, we can see how the Modist philosophers reinterpreted them as *modi significandi, modi intelligendi et essendi*.[4] Within this theoretical context, authors such as Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas (Ashworth 1991), among many others, called into question the nature of the triad by proposing that names immediately and primarily signify a concept in the intellect. This is the concept or mental representation of the extramental thing

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[4] 'Les *modi significandi* des mot parlés étant parallèles aux *modi intelligendi* des concept, eux-mêmes parallèles aux *modi essendi* des choses, on pouvait diré que les manières de signifier étaient *fondées* sur les manières de pensar et celles-ci à leur tour sur les manières d'être des choses' (De Libera 1996: 354). For the *modistae*, see Marmo (1994) and Rosier-Catach (1984, 1995).

–which is translated into *species intelligiblis* or *passio animae*, even though these two elements are distinct from each other and from the concept.[5] Therefore, the words can only indirectly, mediately, and secondarily signify the thing in the world or real thing. According to this traditional and common position, which can be called the indirect signification of words, the affection of the soul or concept (*conceptus*) lies somewhere between the thing (*res*) and the term or word (*sermo*), which is taken as a conventional and arbitrary symbol. In other words, there is a connection between terms and mental content or intellectual representation, through which things arise in our intellects. The mental content, in turn, is associated with the thing outside the mind, such as in cases like an icon or likeness. In this sense, things are usually understood as the *suppositum* or *res subiecta* from which the concept arises in our minds and of which it is a sign. In sum, words mediately signify extramental things and immediately signify concepts (Ashworth 1991: 43). As it proposes the connection between word and thing is through something mental, this semantic model could be described as a mentalistic or cognitive approach to language. Even though we will explore Scotus's contribution to the debate below, it is worth noting that the most relevant part of this semantic model is to describe and determine how to understand what we have called mental content or affection of the soul, precisely because of its importance in the signification of words. The medieval discussion partly focussed on the interpretation of the intermediate element of the Boethian triad –'medium inter rem et sermonem vel vocem est concepus' (Scotus, *In Praed.*, q. 1, vol. I, 438) –, differences in that interpretation and the nature of that element's relationship with words and things. This in-between element has been denominated in many different ways: concept, idea, definition, thought, or more precisely, intelligible species and *passio animae*, although we know there is not a clear identification between them.

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[5] Based on the difference between signifying and understanding, Aquinas's views on intelligible species changed and, in an advanced stage of its career, he distinguished them from the concept – which is a distinction that Scotus also will recognize (see Pini 1999: 43-47). The distinction between the mental word and the *species intelligibilis* led to the discussion on whether consider Aquinas as a realist instead of a *representationalist*, or vice versa. See Baltuta (2013), Hochschild (2010) and Panaccio (2001).

By contrast, the semantic model just outlined is in opposition to a new theory that emerged at the end of the thirteenth century that was quite distinct from the Boethian interpretative tradition. According this second view, a word signifies and refers to the extramental thing in its primary, immediate and direct form; i.e., words exclusively apply to (or are imposed on) the concrete individual objects and not to the concept. As stated by this new approach, which is an extensional interpretation of the issue, things have primacy in the signification of words, so that mental content is merely a representation of the *extra animam* thing, with the latter thus remaining necessary for understanding and knowing it. So, unlike the previous model, what matters in this model is identifying how to understand the thing (something to which we will devout substantial attention), as well as facing and trying to resolve more specific problems that arise therefrom, such as how to signify a thing that no longer exists or a thing that has no existence in the extramental world. We will look more closely at the contributions to this model in the final part of this text, by outlining the proposals of Roger Bacon and William of Ockham.

2. Scotus's *Treatment of Signification of Words*

Now, having introduced the two main alternative positions of the debate – that is, words directly signify a mental content and indirectly the thing; or words immediately signify the thing– we will shortly examine Scotus's contribution and the proposal of one of his most distinguished followers, Antonius Andreae (ca. 1333).

Scotus's treatment of the signification and meaning of words has been very well studied and described by Pini (1999 and 2001)[6] and Marmo (1989), among others (Perler 2003 and 1993; Andrews 2003; Salinas Leal 2011; Vos 2006: 156-

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[6] As we shall see by our several bibliographical references, the research of Giorgio Pini, who has extensively worked on Scotus's theory of cognition and metaphysics, is largely important for any study on the signification of words in medieval philosophy. In addition to these two papers about signification in the thirteenth century, he is the author of the two most comprehensive studies on Antonius Andreae's metaphysics (1991, 1995) and has recently published the critical edition of an unedited commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics by Scotus: Notabilia super Metaphysicam (Turhout: Brepols, 2017).

168). Among many other issues, these studies deal with and raise the question of the originality (or lack thereof) of Scotus's proposal, and whether that would reconcile the positions of the aforementioned debate. Given these comprehensive studies, we will summarize Scotus's main concerns on the question of the signification of words, as these are the issued that are most relevant to Antonius's treatment of the subject.

Although Scotus did not write a treatise specially devoted to semantic questions or about the semantic use of words, a linguistic theory can be reconstructed from passages of his youthful early philosophical works, which are his commentaries on the Aristotelian logic works and on *Metaphysics*. In his early commentary on *Peri Hermeneias*, which is divided into two treatises, Scotus dedicated two *quaestiones* to the topic as follows: 'Utrum nomen significet rem vel speciem in anima' (Scotus, *In Peri herm.* I, q. 2, vol. II, 47-59) and 'An nomen significet rem an passionem' (Scotus, *In Peri herm.* II, q. 1, vol. II, 137-145). In these texts, Scotus provides a systematic and comprehensive treatment of the debate on the signification of words, including a summary of the main contemporary theories and alternative approaches on the matter. This review and reconstruction, which was very influential for future philosophers (Ashworth 1981), has been read as a neutral and objective presentation of the discussion (Pini 1999 and 2001),[7] but also as carrying out Scotus's own interpretation of the issue (Perler 2003: 167-171). However, Scotus also briefly referred to and treated the signification of words in his mature theological works, which are the various versions of his commentary on Petrus Lombardus's *Sentences*. The issue of the signification of words does not appear to have been of the same interest to Scotus in these works as it had been in the early ones. Specifically, in the *Ordinatio*, Scouts seems to support an extensional point of view or the second semantic model: 'verbum autem exterius est signum rei et

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[7] According to Pini (1999, 2001), Scotus would be a fair judge who examined both positions of the debate without choosing or favouring one to other and, what's more, seems to show that they are not irreconcilable: two 'variants of the same theory' or 'two presentations of the same position' (Pini 1999: 27, 43).

non intellectionis' (Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 27, 1, n. 83).[8] Although some scholars consider that it is Scotus's final solution to the debate (Salinas Leal 2011), others do not (Pini 1999), since it seems to contrast with his statements in the mentioned logical commentaries. In fact, as with other philosophical issues – as, for example, the question of the univocity of being – Scotus seems not to offer a definitive or clear *determinatio* on the matter.

In any case, what we most wish to stress here is the way and the extent to which Scotus's proposal allows a reconciliation of the two distinct positions or modes of considering the signification of words. In Scotus's first description of the second semantic model, the extensional one, he tried to explain in what way we should understand that a word immediately signifies and refers to the *res*. To do this, he proposed to understand the *res* as a *res ut concipitur*, which is a fundamental notion that he brought from the Aristotelian preceding tradition. The 'res ut concipitur vel intelligitur' (Scotus, *In Peri herm.* I, q. 2, n. 39), i.e., thing that is conceived or considered, corresponds to the thing as conceived by the human intellect and it is identified with the concept in the mind. This kind of *res* refers to the intelligible thing, the thing that is understood, apprehended, and taken into consideration in its function of signifying, i.e., the representational content of the language in our intellect (*esse cognitum*). It is the thing as it exists in our minds, the quiddity as a concept associated with qualities in its mental existence. Since it refers to an entity or something that is in our soul as a likeness of a thing (Dahlstrom 1980: 85), the *res ut concipitur* is an object of the intellect that Scotus identified with the Aristotelian *passio animae*. Nevertheless, contrary to what a mentalistic approach would suggest, the *res* is not just a mental product of our intellect, which may resemble the extramental thing, but rather the intellectual conception or *conceptus* viewed as a soul's property with its own entity. Our first understanding of the real world is based on this concept abstracted from the individuals and entities that actually exist in it that we experience. Thus, it is what is meant by a definition of a thing: that which defines

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[8] 'Licet magna altercatio fiat de voce, utrum sit signum rei vel conceptus, tamen breviter concedo quod illud quod signatur per vocem proprie, est res' (Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 27, q. 1-3, n. 83-84, vol. VI, 97-98); see also the corresponding passage in *Lectura* I, d. 27, q. 1-3, n. 51, vol. XVII, 357.

a thing as what it is, or the answer to the question 'what is it? (*quid*). On an ontological level of analysis, the *res ut concipitur* is understood as the common nature or essence of the thing perceived. That is the *essentia rei* or *ratio rei* that we abstract from the objects of the world. In this sense, the *res* is conceived as the nature of the thing. Therefore, in a sense, it could be external to the mind, without being itself identical with the extramental thing that exists as an individual, as we shall now examine.

Scotus contrasts the *res ut concipitur* with another possible mode of a *res*, that of the *res ut existit*. This is the particular, individual and concrete existing thing in the world, which exists as an individual with all its particular qualities or accidents: 'res particulariter existens sub condicionibus individuantibus' (Scotus, *In Peri herm* II, q. 1, n. 4, 583), i.e., a thing that exists in a particular way and with individualizing conditions. It is the *res* that actually exists in the material world (*esse materiale*) and which can be experienced by us. It is the individual in its objective and extramental being whose existence is independent of our understanding of it. Because it exists *individualiter* and *per suam rationem propriam*, we can say that the *res ut existit* is the nature of things *per se* or the real and ultimate subjects. The *res ut existit* cannot be understood or signified,[9] because a thing in this sense 'nec per se intelligitur, sed secundum quod per se percipitur ab intellectu' (Scotus, *In Peri herm.* I, q. 2, n. 8, 543), i.e., is not understood *per se*, but is understood insofar as it is perceived *per se* by the intellect (Pini 1999: 41). This is so even for the supporters of the second semantic model: the thing as existent in itself is not signified by the word. This *individualiter* existing *res* in the external world is signified by the word only since as conceived by the intellect or which is mind-dependent. Even Ockham coincides, since only one of his four given senses of the term *significare* clearly guides us towards a purely extensional semantic model, where the signification of words depends on the extramental existence of the object they stand for (Eco 1984: 19).

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[9] 'Ad omnes auctoritates in contrarium dicitur quod per speciem vel passionem vel conceptum vel quodcumque aliud in aliis auctoritatibus significatur "res ut intelligitur", ad denotandum quod "res ut existit" non significatur' (Scotus, *In Peri herm.* I, q. 2, n. 39, 56).

This distinction between the *res ut concipitur* and the *res ut existit*, which have been identified with the Avicennian metaphysical distinction between essence and existence (Perler 1993: 110-115), is not an original contribution by Scotus, but could conceptually be found in Aristotle and, more precisely, in other authors before Scotus, like Siger of Brabant, who had previously proposed it (Pini 1999: 41-43). In any case, the *res ut concipitur* and the *res ut existit* are two modes or ways to be or to understand one and the same thing. They are not two different entities. Each *res* refers to the same entity or nature but this is conceived or understood in two different ways: as it is conceived by the intellect within itself – which is the concept – and as it exists outside the intellect, *extra animam*. It is worth stating that the nature of a thing could be in agreement with just one of these modes: someone who has already died is not a *res ut existit* but, inasmuch we have a mental representation of this person, is still a *res ut concipitur*. This idea, which is the basis of the Scotist theory of the common nature is closely related to or is inspired by Avicenna's metaphysical distinction of the three ways to be an essence or three states of the essence (Avicenna, 1980: V, 1, 227-229). Latin versions of Avicenna's texts introduced the notion of *res* to medieval philosophy. He described it as the proper reality of a thing and one of the many multivocal names to refer to being, understood as a synonym with the notion of *ens* (O'Reilly 2019). Both *res* and *ens*, together with the notion of *necesse*, have epistemological primacy. They are the first impressions of our intellect.[10] According to Pini (2011), Avicenna's description of the notion of *res* leads to a dual definition or two meanings of the term: as the quiddity and essence of something (what it is), and as the existence of something (the fact that it exists). But what concerns us now is his distinction of the three modes of considering the nature of the thing, which are not three different kinds of essences, natures, or entities. In addition to the *res* as conceived by the intellect and the *res* as it is in the sensible particulars as an individual, in Avicenna's threefold distinction there is the essence considered *absolutely*, which corresponds to the third way of understanding a thing: the *res absolute*. In essence, it is a thing that exists in itself and independent of its existence in

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[10] For an introduction to the notion of *res* as a transcendental concept, see Aersten (2002).

individuals or within our understanding, and thus it constitutes the so-called essential predicate. According to Scotus's own formulation of this Avicennian threefold distinction in his commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge* (Scotus, *In Porphyrii Isagoge*, q. 9-11, nn. 16-17), the *res absolute* is the thing conceived according to its *esse quiditativum* and refers to the things that can exist in themselves devoid of any mode of existence, the quiddity *qua* quiddity of a thing. We will return to this notion further on.

Considering the term 'thing' to be equivocal, Scotus also reshaped or rearticulated the threefold division of modes to have originated with Henry of Ghent, which he introduced in his *Summa* (*Quaestiones Ordinariae*). Although they differ from the Avicennian distinction, Henry distinguished three levels of reality: 1) *res a reor reris* or *realitas opinabilis* which is the reality purely mental and includes everything that can be conceived or supposed; 2) *res existens in actu*, *res naturae*, or *realitas existentiae*, which included things that actually and individually exist and can be experienced by us; and 3) *res a ratitudine* or *realitas quiditativa* or the 'certified' thing, which is Henry's own contribution and refers to things which *could* be or are possible to be, opening thus the field of the possibility. In a sense, they are the thinkable things that do not necessarily have to correspond to their extramental existence, and instead correspond to the objects of intellection and to those things that at least have the proper being of an essence (*esse essentiam*) (Marrone 1988).

Since *res ut concipitur* has been described as the essence of a thing abstracted from a particular object in the world, it can be identified with the Platonic universal or common forms or ideas. However, as Pini pointed out (Pini 1999: 44-45) with regard to Scotus and the interpretive tradition developed that followed, this identification does not appear to apply, precisely because of the distinction between the *res ut concipitur* or essence, and the *res ut existit* or existence. Scotus maintains that the mental content referenced by this notion of *res ut concipitur* is partly distinct from the extramental thing, or that it is distinct from the existing thing as an individual as it relates to the world. While in his examination of the relationship between words and what they refer to, Plato seems not to distinguish between the *res ut concipitur* and the *res ut existit*, or the essence and the existence. According to Plato, the universal form

is the only mode of existence of a thing, thereby eliminating the threefold distinction between word, concept, and thing.

To return to our main topic and to apply the distinction between the *res ut concipitur* and the *res ut existit* to the question of the signification of words, we find that, in Scotus's reconstruction, words primarily and immediately signify the thing as it is conceived or thought (*res ut concipitur*) by the intellect, and not the extramental thing, which is secondarily signified by the word. In other words, according to Scotus, and Siger de Brabant before him, words signify extramental things but only as comprehended by the mind. In this sense, *res ut concipitur* corresponds to mental phenomena regarded as the affections of the soul or the *conceptiones intellectus* which are primarily signified by the word. They are universally abstracted from the particular, while *res ut existit* is the thing that particularly exists in the world as an individual. As a result, Scotus's solution would state that the immediate and primary signification of words is the nature of the thing, but as that thing is understood (*res ut concipitur*). This is because a thing can be conceived in different ways. Accordingly, this *res* becomes the essence of what is outside the intellect. In this sense, Scotus seems to have supported an extensional view of the signification, as presented in his *Ordinatio*. In other words, Scotus would consider that a word primarily signifies things, but in a certain manner: as it is understood by the human intellect. In this sense, the meaning of a word is found outside the intellect and thus leads to the essence of the real thing.

Although we will not address it here, Scotus's review makes another distinction that is relevant for the debate about the signification. He states that the *conceptus* or *res ut concipitur* is defined as an intellectual conception, while the intelligible species is distinct but closely related to that conception. The *species intelligibilis* is a very significant, but complex, notion for the epistemology and the philosophy of language (see Perler 1996 and Spruit 1994; and for Scotus's conceptualization of this notion, see Pini 2004 and 1999: 27–35). Basically, it refers to the result of the abstraction from the sensory or perceived information we receive from the world around us and its objects. It is a cognitive entity that we form or produce and through which we access, understand, and represent the nature of the real and extramental thing in our intellects. The

intelligible species, traditionally identified with the notion of *intentio*, is the notion 'by virtue of which a thing is understood' (Pini 1999: 45); the *signum rei in mente*, or the cognitive presence of the thing in our intellects (Pini 1999: 44). This concept is referred to by Scotus in his presentation of the first semantic model (i.e., the intentional approach to the signification) in such a way that according to him words signify the *species intelligibiles* which are in the intellect and, thus, their meaning is in the mind –'significare est alicuius intellectum constituere' (Scotus, *In Peri herm.* II, q. 1, 541).

For that matter, when generally considering Scotus's contribution, we see that the debate – or *magna altercatio* as described by him (see no. 7) – was focused on the way we should understand the notions of intelligible species, concept or affection of the soul – what we mean by *passio animae* – their distinctions and the role they play in the signification of words. His proposal deals both with the notion of the soul along with its functions and operations, as well as with our knowledge, as his main goal is to properly conceptualize the intermediate mental content involved in signification. At least in Scotus's early proposal, the connection between the signification of words, or semantics, and the understanding or knowledge of our intellects, or epistemology, is fundamental. However, this cognitive dimension of the issue partly disappears or subsides when considering the second semantic model. This is especially true when analyzing the contribution of one of Scotus's most distinguished disciples, Antonius Andreae. When addressing the issue of the signification of words, Antonius seems to move the focus towards the nature of the thing signified. This is an issue that can also be found in some of Scotus's interpretations and reviews. Therefore, the concept of thing (*res*) and its role in the signification of names are introduced as essential elements for handling the discussion.

3. *Antonius Andreae's Contribution to the Debate*

We have only limited information concerning Antonius's life, but as is testified by some manuscripts (e.g., Pamplona, Cathedral, ms. 6), it seems unquestionable that Antonius was born in Aragon and that he joined the Franciscan order. We also know that Antonius lived in the *custody* of Lleida, in

the *stadium* of Monzón, where he probably spent the majority of his career, and where his death was documented sometime before the year 1333 (Mensa i Valls 2017: 65-67; Pini 1991: 529-530). Like most of his contemporaries, he also commented on both books of Aristotle's *Peri hermeneias* or *De interpretatione* in the form of a literal exposition and eighteen embedded *quaestiones*. This commentary is part of his *Scriptum in Artem Veterem*, a generic title for a set of five treatises related to the *Logica Vetus*, each one with the same general structure consisting of an *expositio litteralis* and several interspersed *quaestiones* (Gensler 1996)[11]. This *Scriptum* is one of Antonius's most significant works, together with his commentary on Aristotelian *Metaphysics*, and a physical treatise called *Tractatus quaestionum de principiis naturae*. The treatises that form the *Scriptum*, which had already been composed in 1346 (Courtenay 2011: 212), are the *Scriptum super librum Porphyrii* (on Porphyry's *Isagoge*), the *Scriptum super librum Praedicamentorum* (commentary on the *Categoriae* of Aristotle), the *Scriptum super librum Perihermeneias* (commentary on the *De interpretatione* of Aristotle), the *Scriptum super librum sex principiorum* (commentary on the *Liber sex principiorum* of Gilbert de la Porrée), and the *Scriptum super librum Divisionum Boethii* (commentary on the *De divisionibus* of Boethius).

Antonius's sources in writing his commentary on the *Peri hermeneias* are Scotus's commentary on the same work, but also Scotus's commentaries on the *Categoriae* and Porphyry's *Isagoge* (Gensler 1996: 52). The result is a reworking of Scotus' early work on logic, which was closely related both doctrinally and textually, and whose doctrinal ambiguities Antonius solves by reformulating and

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[11] In this study, which is one of the few global presentations of Antonius's logical commentary, Marek Gensler studies the text in relation or comparison to the logical works by Scotus. In fact, it should be noted that Gensler precisely studied Antonius's interpretation of some of Scotus's main doctrines and his position in the formulation of Scotism, with particular attention to natural philosophy. Gensler concluded that, overall, Antonius was a faithful pupil of Scotus. Gensler defines Antonius's mains philosophical issues in his *Scriptum in Artem Veterem* in two: the problem of the categories as real genres of being, and the problem of the universals and their relationship with the individuals. He also published the first catalogue of works by Antonius or ascribed to him (*Mediaevalia philosophica Polonorum* 31, 1992), which was subsequently refined by the comprehensive bibliographical bulletin and review by Mensa i Valls (2017).

reorganizing them. He does this by taking (almost literally) some passages from Scotus's mature works, primarily from the *Ordinatio* and the *Lectura*. He extracts some passages from their theological and metaphysical anchoring and resituates them within a different textual and doctrinal framework, which in this case is the commentary on an Aristotelian logical text. Furthermore, Antonius's commentary is also composed of *quaestiones* or passages that do not correspond to any of Scotus's works and, therefore, may be regarded as original. Thus, Antonius's commentary is a coherent, clear, and decisive text composed of different passages taken from Scotus's early and mature works, along with from Antonius's own contribution. In this sense, and following the studies of the commentary (Gensler 1996; D'Ors 1995; Carreras i Artau 1943), its structure fits and closely resembles the structure and composition of Antonius's other works (see the description of Antonius's commentary on *Metaphysics* in Pini 1991 and 1995 or the study of his physical treatise in Gensler 2016). It seems clear that Antonius followed the same process in writing these works, thereby demonstrating a precise effort of interpretation, selection, and intervention in Scotus's texts.

Based on this rigorous exegesis of Scotus's texts, Antonius's contribution to the history of philosophy is his systematization, reconstruction, and reformulation of some of the main Scotist theses, with the aim of clarifying their ambiguities and enhancing their exposition and intelligibility, an idea that is reflected in his pseudonyms: *Doctor dulcissimus*, *dulcifluus*, and *fundatissimus* (Mensa 2017: 66). Furthermore, Antonius's works were completely accessible to and very didactic for his students. Some of these texts became handbooks in the Franciscan Studia, thus laying the groundwork for later developments in Scotist philosophy. Beyond simply being a vehicle for transmitting the Scotist doctrine, many studies on Antonius's works (see Pini 1991 and 1995) prove that he had his own conception and gave his own solutions to some questions, that he indeed had his own philosophical project. The question we are addressing here is very illustrative of this fact.[12] Indeed, this study wants to underline the importance of

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[12] Where 'Antonio Andrés, así pues, conservando la letra de Escoto, modifica por completo el sentido de su doctrina' (D'Ors 1995: 19).

Antonius Andreae in the history of philosophy as an author and not as a mere faithful follower and writer *ad mentem Scoti*.

Antonius dealt with the aforementioned debate in the fourth *quaestio* of his commentary on the *Peri hermeneias*, in which he asked, 'whether a name signifies a thing or an affection of the soul?' ('Utrum nomen significet rem vel passionem in anima'). This text has been transcribed and studied by D'Ors (1995),[13] who analyzed the structure of the *quaestio* and its content in detail. D'Ors showed that Antonius used the same set of arguments to discuss the question as Scotus (see them in Pini 2001). Unlike him, whose solution to the debate, as we have already pointed out, is unclear or has not been clearly exposed, Antonius instead proposes a conclusive solution to the *quaestio*, which is the following:

> Et dico breviter quod illud quod proprie significatur per vocem est res, non res ut intelligitur, nec res ut existens, aut ut non existens, sed res absolute, ut abstrahit ab istis et est extraneum ei quodlibet illorum.

Therefore, Antonius attributed the immediate signification of the words to the *res absolute*, the thing described, 'as indifferent to actual existence and external attributes.'[14] Consequently, on the one hand, it refers to an alternative conception of the thing separate from what can be found within sensible

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[13] The philosopher-historian Ángel D'Ors (d. 2012) studied the structure and the content of two *quaestiones* of Antonius's *Scriptum in Artem veterem* as are in the manuscript 2340 of the Biblioteca Universitaria de Salamanca in two distinct articles (see 1995 and 1996), where D'Ors additionally raised questions about the manuscript features and the textual problems of its tradition. He defended that the author of this manuscript from Salamanca is completely different from the author of another significant manuscript for reconstructing Antonius's textual tradition, which is ms. 6 of the Biblioteca del Archivo de la Catedral de Pamplona. Among others, D'Ors also explored many issues related to logic and medieval semantics; for instance, the different interpretations of the Aristotelian doctrines in *Peri hermeneias*, which clearly includes Antonius's commentary.
For the study and transcription of another *quaestio* of Antonius's commentary on the *Peri hermeneias*, which is 'Utrum signum possit poni ex parte praedicati', see Pérez-Ilzarbe (1995).

[14] It is worth saying that Antonius's position and account of the debate are identified by Pini (2001: 30-31) with the proposal of the English theologian Simon of Faversham (ca. 1240-1306). In his commentary on *De interpretation*, he also exposed that a word signifies a thing inasmuch as it is something in itself and not as it is understood. For Faversham's position on *suppositio*, see Murè (2013).

particulars or individuals. So, this is not the thing *ut existit individualiter* in the real and extramental world. On the other hand, Antonius claimed that words should properly signify a thing as such, and not, as Scotus and others proposed, a thing by means of an intelligible form or as it is conceived by the intellect that can be universally predicated. The *res absolute* is the *res* in itself, indifferent to the mode of conception and the mode of signification, but it is also indifferent or previous to its determinations or realization, to its actual existence or nonexistence.[15] Indeed, it is precisely for its indifference that, according to Antonius, it can be said that *res* means both the individual and actually existing thing *extra animam* and the *passio animae* or *conceptus*. This solution is far from Scotus's early considerations, where, as we have already seen, he states that it makes no sense to say that words signify things absolutely if we do not specify that things are signified insofar as they are understood (Pini 1999: 25), 'sed dicere quod res absolute significatur, est omnino inconveniens' (Scotus, *In Peri herm.* II, q. 1, n. 14, 585).

With this solution, which leads to a simplification of the discussion, Antonius moved the focus of the debate to the understanding and definition of the notion of *res*. This idea, which seems to be concerned with the extramental world, is related to the ontological considerations of the notion of essence and existence, but also to the consideration of universals, which appear to have primarily originated in the thing and secondly in the representational form given by the intellect. However, it is first worth noting the relationship between the notion of a thing absolutely considered (or the thing in its indifference) and the Scotists notion of a univocal concept of being, which has a proper conceptual unity. Without falling into logical contradictions, univocity postulates a conceptual community of being, that is, a universal unity behind everything that *is*. Thus, the univocity of being provides the foundation for a conceptual object common to all intelligible beings that is equated with the first concept known by the intellect. The concept of being, understood in this way, is independent from or indifferent to the determinations of its properties or accidents – as is

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[15] Even this aspect of the *res absolute*, *i.e.* its indifference from the actual existence, seems to be also a characteristic of the *res ut concipitur* described by Scotus: 'cui extraneum est existere, vel non existere', (Scotus, *In Peri herm.* I, q. 3, n. 6, 90). See Marmo (1989: 164).

its existence – or to the real diversity or multiplicity of its real applications. In other words: the *res* that *individualiter* exist have something univocally in common. This common concept of being, which has its own identity, is simple, neutral, and indeterminate. It is for this reason that it is univocally applied to all objects that *are* and to which it is indifferent. So, this concept is also indifferent to the intrinsic modes of being, which are, for example, the finite and the infinite. This distinction precedes the categorical division of reality. This Scotist notion, which is indifferent and common to everything, refers to the being at the time before its division into categories; it could be understood as being in its last grade of abstraction. However, specifically according to Antonius, being, instead of deriving solely from our modes of conception, is also a real concept or has a real unity. Since Antonius proposed a real community behind the univocal concept of being, he is favourably disposed to metaphysical realism.

In any case, the ontological indifference to the existence and the essence of this conceptual notion of being involves or indicates a common and neutral intelligibility, which deals with metaphysics and it is under this light that *res absolute* must be understood. This unique and common intelligibility, which Avicenna had already pointed out, reports and denotes a common nature upon which all beings are based and attributed. The common nature, identified with the principle of individuation in the Scotist framework, is understood in terms of formality or being *formaliter*. It could be defined as an intermediate entity between the *ens rationis* or being of reason and the singular existent or real being, while it is also indifferent to both of those. The formality, arising from investigating the contraction of the univocal being to the singular and created reality, could be understood as a distinct and real entity that exists *extra animam* but with less reality than a real being. All these concepts which we noted from Antonius's proposal were fundamental for Scotist metaphysics and were treated and studied to a greater or lesser extent by all Scotus's followers or members of the Scotist school during the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries.

Beyond this, as D'Ors (1995) has already mentioned, it is also important to note that Antonius, unlike his *magister*, sees no difference between the *passio animae* or affections of the soul, and the intelligible species, which are notions

that could be interchangeable and are firmly associated in defining the *res ut concipitur* or concept. This identification, which is seen by D'Ors as an omission that leads to nonsense (D'Ors 1995: 27), can also be found in Roger Bacon's proposal.

We can see that Antonius's proposal fits perfectly within the second semantic model, which had already been presented by Bacon, whose contribution to the question of the signification and nature of words as signs was different from the thirteenth-century majority opinion (see Rosier-Catach 2018, 1997 and 1984; Maloney 1983a and 1983b). According to his work *De signis*, where Bacon talks about the *res absolute considerata*, signs immediately signify things themselves rather than mental representations or concepts in our intellects (*res ut concipitur*). In other words, a significative term refers to or directly points to actually existing things, which can be in the mind (as, for example, a chimaera or something that has died) or not; i.e., the term is not limited to referring to concrete physical things that exist *individualiter* (Eco 1984: 15-16). In Bacon's own words: 'vox significativa ad placitum potest imponi non ens et non creato et creato et accidentiis et substantiis et materiae e composito et omnibus rebus extra animam et in animam' (Roger Bacon, *De signis*, V, 162, 132-135; see also Eco 1984: 14-17, n. 11). Furthermore, according to him, a significative term is a natural sign or symptom of the thing produced by the mind and it signifies by convention. There is no mental mediation between words as signs and the reference of their signification.[16] In this extensional approach, the concepts – which could also be identified with the *intentio* in Bacon and Ockham – are ontological weaker or have less being than the extramental thing from which they have been abstracted or upon which they are founded.

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[16] 'Certum est inquirenti quod, facta impositione soli rei extra animam, impossibile est quod vox significet speciem rei tamquam rei signum datum ab anima et significativum ad placitum, quia vox significativa ad placitum non significat nisi per impositionem et institutionem. Sed concessum est vocem soli rei imponi et non speciei' (Bacon, *De signis*, V, 163, 132-133). For Roger Bacon *De signis*, see Rosier-Catach (2021) and Cesalli and Rosier-Catach (2018).

With his consideration of concepts and words as signs, Bacon opened the way for Ockham to develop in the fourteenth century.[17] In the switch from an intentional approach to the signification to an approach that is extensional, in which Antonius also seems to participate, Ockham stands out as an insightful author. He represents the terminist interpretation of logic and semantics, which is of significant relevance for the conceptualization of the problem of universals. He believes both words – be they written, spoken, or mental – and concepts or mental content have the same signification. Both signify the singular and extramental thing, which is all that is. Words and concepts function analogously in this sense: both represent the same thing, though the word does so conventionally in the form of a sign, and the concept, naturally. This idea, which is a reinterpretation of the Boethian semiotic triangle, closely relates to Ockham's theory of the subordination of words, concepts and things, to one another, regarding signification; i.e., a word has signification because of this subordination to a concept and this, in turn, to the thing. Concepts, which are not the primary meaning of words, are mental objects in the soul that resemble or are similar to the perceived objects of the world, through which they have been efficiently produced. However, concepts are not things and do not exist as real things, but as intellectual actions (Kaufmann 2003).[18] The starting point of this idea, which we will not discuss in detail, is Ockham's denial that there is a universal essence of actually existing things as individuals. He defended an ontology without real essences. Ockham's position, in this sense, is contrary to conceptualism because inasmuch as there is nothing but the singular thing, "there is no need for a special device or mediating entity to represent the universal aspect of a thing" (Perler 1996; see also Friedman and Pelletier 2014 and Panaccio 2004). This is because Ockham says that the perception of an extramental object and its resemblances results in our intellects causing

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[17] For Ockham's theory on signification, see Flórez (2002), Kaufmann (2003), Muñoz García (2000), Rayman (2005) and Tabarroni (1989).

[18] 'Dico autem voces esse signa subordinata conceptibus seu intentionibus animae, non quia proprie accipiendo hoc vocabulum 'signa' ipsae voces semper significent ipsos conceptus animae primo et proprie, sed quia voces imponuntur ad significandum illa eadem quae per conceptus mentis significantur' (Ockham, *Summa Logicae*, pars 1, ch. 1, n. 7-8, 26-31).

concepts, which are the universal essences. In any case, regarding the signification of words, Ockham proposed an immediate relation between words and things, even words secondarily signify the thing which is primarily signified by the concept –'*voces imponuntur ad significandum illa eadem quae per conceptus mentis significantur*' (Ockham, *Summa Logicae*, pars 1, ch. 1, n. 7, 26) i.e., the extramental thing. Additionally, according to Ockham, *res absolute* corresponds to the ultimate principles of the ontological analysis, and thus it corresponds to the substances as well as the qualities, but without it being identified as being *qua* being or transcendental being – something Antonius's proposal seems to lack clarity on. In fact, in Ockham, the only things which really exist outside the mind are individual substances and particular qualities.[19]

In talking about the theory of signification in Ockham, we must note the relationship between his semantic model and the theory of the supposition elaborated by Peter of Hispania and Ockham himself.[20] Based on this theory, the words refer to an extramental thing's universal nature, not its actual existence as an individual. In philosophy, *supposita* are the different references or realities that are associated with a concept, thus indicating its extensional diversity. In Ockham's view, one way to understand signification is that a sign signifies a thing when it *supponit* or is suited to *supponit* for that thing.[21] In fact, the extramental objects are not the objects of scientific knowledge, but the word with this referential function. Moreover, according to him, there is no real knowledge of the external thing, which is the thesis of realism. Ockham's referential approach to language, then, seems to abolish the distinction between the field of references or *supposita* and the field of signification or semantics.

We have seen that the idea that words signify something real and not an *ens rationis* started with Scotus's solution through the *res ut concipitur* – although others proposed it before – with which he distanced himself from the representational view of the first semantic model. This approach was simplified

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[19] For remarks on Ockham's ontology, see Amerini (2005), Maurer (1981) or Moody (1954).

[20] For the theory of supposition and its relationship with signification, see Panaccio (2013), Amerini (2013), Marmo (2013) and Dutilh Novaes (2009).

[21] 'Nam uno modo dicitur signum aliquid significare quando supponit vel natum est supponere pro illo' (Ockham, *Summa Logicae*, pars 1, ch. 33, n. 1, 95).

and defined by one of his followers, Antonius Andreae. By doing so, he contributed to opening a new perspective on the signification of words. In this sense, and taking into account his analysis, we now understand D'Ors's thesis (D'Ors 1995) as it is described by Gensler, which is that, in writing his logical book, Antonius 'departs from the teaching of Scotus […] and defends a doctrine different from that of his master and anticipating that of William of Ockham' (Gensler 1997: 55). Due to this last approach, namely Ockham's new theory and its preceding contributions, the discussion or debate about what a word primarily signifies was not so much focused on the role played by signification in knowledge or on its epistemological implications, but rather it was characterized by its ontological relevance.

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