

**the univocity of substance  
and the formal distinction of  
attributes: the role of duns  
scotus in deleuze's reading  
of spinoza**

nathan widder

This paper examines the role played by medieval theologian John Duns Scotus in Gilles Deleuze's reading of Spinoza's philosophy of expressive substance; more generally, it elaborates a crucial moment in the development of Deleuze's philosophy of sense and difference. Deleuze contends that Spinoza adapts and extends Duns Scotus's two most influential theses, the univocity of being and formal distinction, despite neither appearing explicitly in Spinoza's writings. "It takes nothing away from Spinoza's originality," Deleuze declares, "to place him in a perspective that may already be found in Duns Scotus" (Deleuze, 1992, 49).<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the historiographic evidence is clearly lacking, leaving Deleuze to admit that "it is hardly likely that" Spinoza had even read Duns Scotus (359n28). Indeed, the only support he musters for his speculation is Spinoza's obvious interests in scholastic metaphysical and logical treatises, the "probable influence" of the Scotist-informed Franciscan priest Juan de Prado on his thought, and the fact that the problems Duns Scotus addresses need not be confined to Christian thought (359–360n28).

The paucity of evidence supporting this "use and abuse" of history, however, does not necessarily defeat the thesis. Like other lineages Deleuze proposes, the one he traces from Duns Scotus to Spinoza, and subsequently to Nietzsche, turns not on establishing intentional references by one thinker to his predecessor, but instead on showing how the borrowings and adaptations asserted to create the connec-

tion make sense of the way the second philosopher surmounts blockages he faces while responding to issues left unaddressed by the first. With Deleuze's reading of Spinoza, univocity and formal distinction become the means to deliver on the immanence and unity Spinoza attributes to substance within the infinite diversity of its products, but they can do so only if adjusted away from their Scotist formulations, which shy away from the full implications the two concepts present as a consequence of Duns Scotus's aim to secure divine transcendence. Casting the issue in this manner, I maintain that a close reading of Duns Scotus's ontology, one that makes clear how he limits univocity and formal distinction particularly in relation to individual difference, can redeem Deleuze's claim that Spinoza "uses and transforms" (66) both concepts. Through such a reading, one can see how Spinoza, without using these terms and without perhaps not even having Duns Scotus in mind, "restores formal distinction, and even gives it a range it didn't have in Scotus" (66), and liberates univocity from a Scotist position that "seems compromised by a concern to avoid pantheism...freeing it from the indifference and neutrality to which it had been confined by the theory of a divine creation" and making it "the object of a pure affirmation" (67). These achievements, in turn, set the stage for Deleuze to bring Duns Scotus and Spinoza to bear on broader ontological questions concerning difference and multiplicity.<sup>2</sup>

The following will first establish the context in which Deleuze seeks to bring Duns Scotus and Spinoza into conversation before elaborating the concepts of univocity and formal distinction, moving from their Aristotelian origins to the theological concerns that lead Duns Scotus to limit their range. It will then examine how Deleuze reads Spinoza as revising and extending both concepts via the concept of expression. The conclusion will highlight the limitations Deleuze still finds in Spinoza's univocal being, and how this leads him to Nietzsche as the figure who completes the doctrine by reversing the Spinozist priority of substance over modes. In this way, as will be seen, connecting Duns Scotus, Spinoza, and Nietzsche together allows Deleuze to formulate an ontology in which difference is both foundational and productive.

## IN THE SERVICE OF "A GENERALIZED ANTI-HEGELIANISM"

Deleuze frequently posits non-intuitive and seemingly fanciful links between thinkers in order to develop unorthodox and creative readings of figures in the history of philosophy. Nonetheless, the connection he draws between Duns Scotus and Spinoza might seem particularly surprising. Smith believes Deleuze to be

the first commentator to have proposed it.<sup>3</sup> Yet specific, albeit passing references from sources influential to Deleuze suggest a basis for it. Étienne Gilson's *Jean Duns Scot: Introduction à ses positions fondamentales*, which serves as Deleuze's primary reference for Duns Scotus's philosophy, twice mentions Spinoza, first holding that Spinoza's substance, acting as the complete cause of all its effects, entails precisely the kind of absolute monism Duns Scotus rejects by reserving power for secondary causes, and later aligning Spinoza and Hegel as exemplars of a sort of modern dialectical systematization that Duns Scotus refuses.<sup>4</sup> Martial Gueroult, whose work Deleuze is known to have admired,<sup>5</sup> twice mentions Duns Scotus or Scotism in his influential study of Spinoza's divinity, first to reject Scotist formal distinction as applicable to the relations among substance's attributes, and later, having endorsed univocity between substance and its attributes, to reject it between substance and its modes in order to maintain substance's transcendence and ontological distinctness.<sup>6</sup> Deleuze's reading of the Duns Scotus–Spinoza relationship challenges Gilson and Gueroult on all these fronts: modes, he argues, are not subsumed by substance but instead are univocal in form with substance while being distinct in essence by virtue of their power or *conatus*; formal distinction is real distinction, and so not “merely” formal in the way Gueroult contends; there is univocity between substance, its attributes, and its modes; and finally, Spinoza's system is in fact a challenge to modern dialectical philosophies. With this last point, Deleuze follows Gueroult in positioning Spinoza against Hegel and contesting the Hegel's dialectical dismissal of Spinozist substance.<sup>7</sup>

This use of Spinoza against Hegel speaks to the broader aims of Deleuze's interpretive strategy, which, while superficially appearing to reconstruct the nuanced positions of historical figures from within their historical contexts, ultimately involves placing them within another, more contemporary one. With Spinoza, this leads him to build his reading around the problem of expression. Historically, Deleuze holds, the concept of expression is the basis of a broader anti-Cartesian movement in which Spinoza and Leibniz both participate (17). But he also maintains that “what is expressed is sense” (335). The concept of sense, which recurs throughout Deleuze's early works, relates to a unity of differences that holds together traditional oppositions between the universal and individual, material and conceptual, subject and object, etc., and in which what is expressed in sense has no existence outside its expression. It thus concerns the constitution of the Absolute. Sense as an ontological concept has its roots for Deleuze in his Hegelian teacher, Jean Hyppolite's thesis that Hegel establishes the Absolute as an immanent ontological sense by way of speculative contradiction.<sup>8</sup> In conceiving expres-

sion as the expression of sense, Deleuze holds that Spinoza and Leibniz develop notions of the Absolute that go beyond the Cartesian clear and distinct idea of God's infinite perfection. This makes them "Postcartesians in the same sense that Fichte, Schelling and Hegel are Postkantians" (325), as they seek a foundation for Cartesian thought just as these later thinkers seek one for Kantian transcendental philosophy. Spinoza in particular, Deleuze contends, challenges the post-Kantian and specifically Hegelian idea of the Absolute.<sup>9</sup> The focus on expression thereby allows Deleuze to deploy Spinoza against Hegel, putting Spinoza in the service of "a generalized anti-Hegelianism" that Deleuze identifies in his own time.<sup>10</sup>

Aligning Spinoza with this post-Kantian project requires an objectivist rather than subjectivist reading of the attributes. Deleuze thus privileges Spinoza's definition of God as "substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which *expresses* eternal and infinite essence" over both the definition of the attribute as "that which the intellect perceives of substance as constituting its essence" and the statement that "nothing exists except substance and modes."<sup>11</sup> Expression is epistemological as well as ontological, since knowledge is expressive (14). In being more than epistemological, however, it invokes metaphors of not only the mirror and reflection, which aligns it with the intellect and understanding, but also the seed remaining within and expressing the whole it will become, which aligns it with an internal ontological genesis (80–81). Expression denotes ideas of manifestation and demonstration, which accord with the first metaphor, but more significantly, Deleuze argues, it includes corollary notions of involvement and explication, implication and explication, which accord with the second (15–16). Involvement and implication are not opposed to evolution and explication, but rather "imply a principle of synthesis: *complicatio* [complication]" (16). Implication and explication are in fact the same synthetic process understood from different perspectives or levels, akin to the way in the process of weaving or knitting the intertwining of the threads is at the same time the unfolding of the larger garment. Spinoza's substance, for Deleuze, involves and explicates itself in an infinity of attributes that express its essence, and further in an infinity of modes that express this expression (14), with substance complicating all of these (16) in a production in which the expressed has no existence outside of or apart from its expression (42).

Conceiving substance's productivity as an internal or immanent synthesis allows Deleuze to argue that Spinoza offers an alternative to the post-Kantian Absolute. If his value to this project has gone unnoticed, Deleuze contends, it is due to pre-judgments against Spinoza that suggest, first, that he fails to achieve an immanent

ontology because he retains an external relation between substance and modes, and, second, that he remains at the level of predication, whereby attributes are simply properties inhering in substance.

Postkantian philosophers would seem to have been well placed to recognize the presence in Spinozism of that genetic movement of self-development for which they sought anticipations everywhere. But the term “explication” confirmed their view that Spinoza had been no more able to conceive a true evolution of substance, than to think through the transition from infinite to finite. Spinoza’s substance seemed to them lifeless, his expression intellectual and abstract, his attributes “attributed” to substance by an understanding that was itself “explicative.” (18)

The concept of expression, for Deleuze, answers these criticisms. Expression’s explication never entails the externalization of substance’s products; rather, substance continues to complicate its products, which cannot be without it. And given their expressive role, attributes cannot be confused with properties or *propria*, which “express nothing” (50). Properties result from a division of the world into genus and species, subject and predicate, which “carries over mere *distinctions of reason* into substantial reality” (36) and leads to merely nominal definitions (73). They touch only the most superficial attributes of reality, even in the case of divine properties such as Descartes’s infinite perfection, which characterizes all of God’s attributes without saying anything about what God *is* (69–70). In contrast, the unity of expression, which denies any separation of expression from expressed, provides the ground that the conceptual distinctions that relate thought to its object take for granted (18–19).

For Deleuze, the univocity—that is, the singleness of voice or expression—of being and formal distinction ensure expression’s immanence. Invoking Duns Scotus thereby aids Deleuze in advancing his own agenda of introducing Spinoza into this post-Kantian milieu. Like Heidegger before him, Deleuze finds in Duns Scotus an alternative to analogical conceptions of being, which organize a diversity of senses of being in order to sustain the eminence and transcendence of a highest Being.<sup>12</sup> The historical debate between univocity and analogy reflects medieval theological concerns about how to conceive the separation of the transcendent from the mundane. Yet it remains relevant to more recent philosophical debates inasmuch as it originates in metaphysical problems bequeathed by Aristotle concerning the unity of the categories and the nature of definition, which themselves

connect to post-Kantian concerns regarding the ground of judgment.<sup>13</sup> For Deleuze, although Duns Scotus's formulations of univocity and formal distinction are shaped for the purpose of retaining divine transcendence, the concepts really lend themselves to an ontology of immanence, which is the direction he holds Spinoza to take them.

## UNIVOCITY VERSUS ANALOGY

Univocal and analogical conceptions of being respond to quandaries in Aristotle's account of definition. For Aristotle, definition involves the division of the indeterminate identity of a genus into the determinate identities of contrary species by way of specifying differentiae: thus man and bird divide the indeterminate genus "animal" into distinct types by way of the qualifications "winged," "bipedal," and "rational." A definition is the formula for a substance's essence,<sup>14</sup> and it is characterized by a reciprocal adequacy, in that man is never anything other than a two-footed rational animal and a two-footed rational animal can only be a man. Further predication only qualifies an already defined entity and is therefore extraneous: "white man" is not be amenable to definition inasmuch as whiteness is added to a fully delineated essence. "White man" is nevertheless a formula, and indeed anything that can be named can be given a formula to describe it. But only at the species level can this formula be a definition.<sup>15</sup> With specification limited in this way to what determines a genus as a species, specific differences become the contraries that mark the extreme forms species can take while remaining within the common identity of their genus: an animal can be bipedal, quadrupedal, winged, etc., and still be an animal. For this reason Aristotle declares that contrariety is the greatest and most perfect form of difference.<sup>16</sup> Strictly speaking, contradiction is a larger difference, but as contradictories cannot both be predicated of species within the same genus, Aristotle considers them imperfect and extraneous to definition and essence.<sup>17</sup> Difference is thereby constitutive, with specific difference *making* the species a species, but only insofar as it fits within the requirements of the broader commonality of a genus.

The precariousness of this arrangement is underscored by the difficulties that arise when considering identities and differences beyond those involving a species nested within its genus, considerations that move one direction towards the individual and in the other direction towards the most general categories and ultimately to being itself. Insofar as definition applies to substance understood as formula or essence but not as "the concrete thing" capable of generation and

destruction, it indicates that “there is neither definition nor demonstration of sensible individual substances.”<sup>18</sup> Predicates involved in delineating an individual of a species cannot fulfil the requirement of definition that each predicate applies generally even while together they refer only to one single being,<sup>19</sup> and no enumeration of general predicates can provide an account of the individual with the reciprocal adequacy that obtains for the species defined by the combination of genus and differentiae. Ultimately, there remains an irreducible “thisness” to the individual, an existence *hic et nunc* that cannot be signified by general predicates, making possible not the definition but only a designation of the individual: Socrates is a man with these distinct properties *who is standing over there*. Aristotle effectively concedes this point by admitting that while there can be knowledge of species belonging to a genus, there can only be recognition of individuals belonging to a species.<sup>20</sup> He thus identifies but leaves unresolved the problem of accounting for individual uniqueness and thus the primary diversity among individuals of the same species—for the way Socrates and Plato remain irreducibly different despite sharing a common human essence, and thus the way that, as human beings, they belong under a common identity, and yet, as singular beings, they also do not.

Conversely, while diverse genera are subsumed under the most general categories such as substance, quantity, quality, and relation, which comprise the categories of being, neither being nor oneness, which is coextensive with being, can be their common identity—in short, there is no highest genus. As Deleuze summarizes, this is “because differences *are*.”<sup>21</sup> While genera are predicated of their species but not their differentiae—we say “man is an animal” but not “rational is an animal”—being is predicated of all genera, species and differentiae, of terms for both identity and difference—and so we do say “winged is.” Aristotle states:

But it is not possible that either unity or being should be a genus of things; for the differentiae of any genus must each of them both have being and be one, but it is not possible for the genus to be predicated of the differentiae taken apart from the species (any more than for the species of the genus to be predicated of the proper differentiae of the genus); so that if unity or being is a genus, no differentia will either be one or have being.<sup>22</sup>

This points to an equivocation in the nature of being, to an irreducible plurality of meanings or senses as it applies to its categories, and thus to an irreducible diversity among the categories themselves. Definition as the specification of a larger

identity is undermined inasmuch as identity does not obtain at the highest levels of generality. Yet it seems also that being must be more than a shared epithet with completely disconnected meanings. It is not merely a homonym like “dog,” which names entities as unrelated as an animal and a star, or “bank,” which names a river’s edge, a financial institution, and the cushion of a pool table. Aristotle states: “there are many senses in which a thing may be said to ‘be.’ but they are related to one central point, one definite kind of thing, and are not homonymous.”<sup>23</sup> This common sense appears in the universality of the law of contradiction: no substance, quality, or other being can simultaneously be and not be under the same relation. Such a commonness without identity offers a way to restore order to being’s categories and their subdivisions.

Univocity and analogy offer rival understandings of this commonness. The choice of one to resolve the problem of the categories shapes the answers offered for not only the problem of individual diversity but a later Christian theological difficulty of the relationship within irreducible disparity between God and His creatures. The latter concerns how to connect finite beings to an infinite and transcendent Creator without reducing the latter to the former yet while also allowing qualities such as goodness and wisdom, which can only be known through creatures, to be applied to the divine. A lack of connection would entail a negative theology widely rejected by the Scholastics, where no qualities apply; an indiscriminate connection would create an equally intolerable pantheism, where all qualities apply equally.

Aquinas is the most prominent champion of analogy.<sup>24</sup> He takes his cue from Aristotle’s statement that being’s many senses refer to a single idea, and also borrows Aristotle’s elaboration of this point through the example of “health,” which applies differently when speaking of healthy organisms, of diets that cause health, and of symptoms that indicate health, but in all cases expressing a common idea of healthiness. From this, Aquinas maintains that being applies primarily to substance and analogously to the other categories, which exist only by adhering to substance, and so too that it applies to God primarily and to creatures secondarily as they depend on Him for their existence. This same reasoning is then used to conceive a proportional relation for qualities positively predicable of both God and creatures: there is an analogy or proportion between God’s infinite wisdom and humanity’s finite wisdom, and so on.<sup>25</sup> In this way, analogy establishes a unidirectional relation of resemblance, whereby creatures resemble God by bearing His mark as their Creator, but God does not resemble and continues to transcend

His creatures, just as “a portrait can take after a man but a man does not take after his portrait.”<sup>26</sup> Analogy thereby offers a middle position, Aquinas contends, between the extremes of equivocity, which allows no connection between God and creatures, and univocity, which allows no separation.

Against this, Duns Scotus argues that while analogy pertains to judgment, and so to complex propositions such as “Socrates is wise,” this attribution presupposes simple apprehension or cognition of being, which allows no middle position of analogy: even granting a proportionality between God’s and Socrates’s wisdom, between the statements “God is” and “Socrates is” there can only be equivocity or univocity, with the former precluding the very connection being sought. Any analogy of predicates must therefore be grounded in a prior univocity between infinite and finite substance: “we must look beyond all our ideas of attributes or quasi-attributes, in order to find a quidditative concept to which the former may be attributed.”<sup>27</sup>

Duns Scotus also claims Aristotle as the authoritative source of this very different univocal conception of being, referring to the passage from the *Metaphysics* quoted earlier and holding that in arguing that being cannot be a genus because it is predicated of differentiae, Aristotle shows that this is “not...because of any equivocation, but because it [being] has a greater commonness and univocation than the commonness of a genus.”<sup>28</sup> As this commonness is not an identity, it does not reduce the diversity of differences it encompasses. Univocal being is able to serve as an indeterminate foundation for definition because it “possesses sufficient unity in itself, so that to affirm and deny it of one and the same thing would be a contradiction.”<sup>29</sup> It is also, as already indicated, a quidditative concept, meaning that univocal being is predicated *in quid* and signifies the entire essence of its subject, be it at a generic, specific, or individual signification: an animal; a man; this man; God. It therefore, in accordance with its role in apprehension, refers specifically to substances, or to the sense of substantial being, to anything for which the question, “What is it?” has the answer, “It is a being.” In this way, it applies to all beings before any enquiry into their finitude or infinity, and before enquiry into whether their essences can be known.<sup>30</sup> Being also has *in quale* senses, which are expressed when it is said of differentiae and accidents that qualify substance. There is no univocity between the sense of their being and that of the being of substance, and so no one sense of being is common to all intelligible things.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, Duns Scotus holds, an order obtains amongst these different senses, with the quidditative sense having priority, first, in a direct manner

as it applies univocally to substances that need not share a common identity, and second in an indirect or “virtual” manner as the *in quale* senses refer to substance as that which has the power (the *virtus*) to give them being. The *in quale* senses are in this way “virtually included” in the quidditative sense.<sup>32</sup>

Being’s univocity for Duns Scotus is transcendental rather than generic. A transcendental is characterized by its indifference to the difference between the finite and infinite. Being’s transcendental univocity thus applies to God and creatures without gathering them under an identity. In contrast, generic univocity is a sense of shared identity, which characterizes the categories and subcategories of finite being. As Deleuze says, for Duns Scotus, “univocal being is understood as neutral, *neuter*, indifferent to the distinction between the finite and the infinite, the singular and the universal, the created and the uncreated.”<sup>33</sup> Those predicates that similarly cross the infinite/finite divide, and so can be said of God alone or of God and some or all of His creatures, are also transcendentals. Unlike being itself, they need not be predicated of all things, but must simply avoid being subsumed by a genus: “not to have any predicate above it except ‘being’ pertains to the very notion of a transcendental. That it be common to many inferior notions, however, is purely incidental.”<sup>34</sup>

Whatever pertains to “being.” then, in so far as it remains indifferent to finite and infinite, or as proper to the Infinite Being, does not belong to it as determined to a genus, but prior to any such determination, and therefore as transcendental and outside any genus. Whatever [predicates] are common to God and creatures are of such kind, pertaining as they do to being in its indifference to what is infinite and finite. For in so far as they pertain to God they are infinite, whereas in so far as they belong to creatures they are finite. They belong to “being.” then, prior to the division into the ten genera. Anything of this kind, consequently, is transcendental.<sup>35</sup>

In this way, Duns Scotus extends univocity beyond being to various classes of transcendentals: first, to those predicates coextensive with being, namely oneness, goodness, and truth; second, to disjunctive binaries such as necessary/contingent, which together apply to all beings even if, for example, only the one infinite being is necessary and all others are contingent; and, finally, to pure perfections such as wisdom and potency that can be predicated of God and some or all creatures because they are capable of modal variation, there being an infinite wisdom and power along with various finite forms ordered by degrees of intensity. These

terms are all said univocally of the different beings they predicate, but with the third class of modal variations, being is also said univocally of them, because the degrees of intensity distinguishing these modes do not create separate types the way differentia divide a genus into distinct and diverse species: different intensities of the colour white all express the *same* whiteness; different luminosities are all light.<sup>36</sup> The theological upshot is that one can say “God is wise” and “Socrates is wise” with wisdom carrying a common sense and common mode of being but without it establishing a common identity, since infinite and finite wisdom are not species of a shared genus: “And so ‘wisdom.’ or anything else, for that matter, which is common to God and creatures, can be transcendental. A transcendental, however, may also be predicated of God alone, or again it may be predicated about God and some creature. It is not necessary, then, that a transcendental as transcendental be predicated of every being, unless it be coextensive with the first of the transcendentals, namely ‘being.’”<sup>37</sup> For Deleuze, Duns Scotus’s extension of univocity to modal variation allows it not only to express a common sense of different substantial beings, but of the being of difference itself.<sup>38</sup>

Duns Scotus employs univocity to secure the unity of the categories and the relation between God and the world, but not to address the problem of the primary diversity of individuals. The same indifference by which univocity extends to certain modal differences also justifies this limitation. Predicates such as materiality, which apply only to finite creatures, do not count as transcendentals and cannot be considered univocal. Nor do the individuating differences that make a finite thing *this* finite thing—being is said univocally of Socrates as an individual substance but not of the “Socraticity” that makes him so—because God’s individuation follows from His infinity and simplicity rather than some final finite determination.<sup>39</sup> The theological reason is obvious: without the principle of indifference limiting univocity to transcendentals, every predicate could be considered univocal, making it impossible to limit what can be affirmed of God and resulting in precisely the pantheism univocity and analogy both seek to avoid. As Deleuze states, “we can see the enemy he [Duns Scotus] tried to escape in accordance with the requirements of Christianity: pantheism, into which he would have fallen if the common being were not neutral.”<sup>40</sup> In contrast, Deleuze reads Spinoza as revising univocity precisely so as to extend it to individual differences, so that Spinozist pantheism rests on a univocity not only of substance, attributes, and modes, but of difference itself.

## FORMAL DISTINCTION AND INDIVIDUATION

Although Duns Scotus does not apply univocity to the problem of individual difference, Deleuze holds that his account of individuation similarly follows from the inadequacies of analogy. Individuals within a species are related by equality rather than proportion, since what makes Socrates this individual man does not make him more or less of a man than Plato. The analogical conception falters here, as it must consider the individual difference that makes a thing a unique and concrete reality to be inessential or accidental.

It is henceforth inevitable that analogy falls into an unresolvable difficulty: it must essentially relate being to particular existents, but at the same time it cannot say what constitutes their individuality. For it retains in the particular only that which conforms to the general (matter and form), and seeks the principle of individuation in this or that element of the fully constituted individuals.<sup>41</sup>

In contrast, Duns Scotus insists on a positive concept of individual difference, even though he bars this positive difference from expressing the univocal sense of being in order to preserve divine transcendence (67, 166). He must also provide an account that reconciles it with the quidditative entities it qualifies. For this task he turns to the concept of formal distinction. The extension of univocity to individuals and individuating differences that Deleuze attributes to Spinoza must therefore be accompanied by a revision to this corollary Scotist concept.

Duns Scotus formulates the problem of individuation as involving the relation within the concrete individual between its common nature and its “thisness” or *haecceity*. Common nature is not a species, which the intellect draws from abstraction and then predicates of individuals, but a real unity that is less than numerical unity and that is implied by the real similarities and differences that exist between individuals. It therefore has a reality independent of the intellect, whereas species are products of the intellect. Real individuals, Duns Scotus argues, must have similarities and differences with other individuals, and this implies generalities that serve as their measures. The latter must be real, “because what are measured are real and are really measured,”<sup>42</sup> and because the absence of such real measures would entail the absurdity of all things being equally distinct, making it impossible to say, for example, that Socrates is more like Plato than he is like a line.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, unless things are *really* similar and different, they cannot be *re-*

*ally* individual.

*Haecceity* is the positive aspect of a thing that ensures it is finally different from everything else. It has numerical unity and therefore is incommunicable, applying only to one thing, whereas common nature with a unity less than numerical unity is communicable and so compatible with being part of many things.<sup>44</sup> *Haecceities* are therefore primarily diverse, meaning that nothing may be abstracted from them to form a common notion or general idea,<sup>45</sup> and making them the reason individuals are irreducibly different even if they belong together at higher levels of identity.<sup>46</sup> Duns Scotus opposes *haecceity* as a principle of individuation<sup>47</sup> to various alternatives that account for individuation on the basis of formless matter, quantity or some other accidental trait of the concrete thing, an existence added to the thing's essence, or a two-fold negation that purports to unify the thing and to separate it from everything it is not.<sup>48</sup> Although *haecceity* "constitutes something precisely in material being,"<sup>49</sup> it is neither matter nor form nor a combination of them,<sup>50</sup> as these principles fall on the side of common nature and the composition of quiddities. It is nevertheless a formal principle, or a principle of a form's final reality—*haecceity*, Deleuze states, is "the 'ultimate actuality of form'"<sup>51</sup>—and thus it belongs to the lowest order of a categorical hierarchy that passes through genus and species to reach the individual.<sup>52</sup> Duns Scotus maintains that *haecceity* is "added" to common nature and "contracts" it into a singular existence with numerical unity, similar to the way specific differentiae contract a genus into a species; in both cases the differentia or *haecceity* is the active principle for a nature that is potentially further determinable.<sup>53</sup> *Haecceity* is thus a difference that, distinct from the differences and similarities relating diverse individuals, acts upon the common nature constituted by these latter relations to make a singular being. In doing so it constitutes a reality that goes beyond the quidditative, and thus, pace Aristotle, beyond the realm of essence understood as definition: whereas quiddity marks the thing as a thing, *haecceity* marks it as *this* thing.<sup>54</sup>

Concrete common nature and concrete *haecceity* compose the individual without being really distinct, since they form a single reality. Yet their distinction is not merely conceptual, since they are not products of the mind but the real foundation of the mind's abstractions. Duns Scotus thus holds them to be formally distinct,<sup>55</sup> this being his contribution to a wider medieval debate seeking to formulate an intermediate distinction between real distinction and conceptual distinction.<sup>56</sup> While offered as a solution to the problem of individuation, it also plays a broader role in explaining unity and simplicity within diversity. Indeed Duns Scotus also

uses formal distinction to account for the diversity of divine attributes or names, the paradox of the Trinity, and the relations between genus and differentiae, essence and its proper attributes, the soul and its faculties, and more.<sup>57</sup> But there are crucial differences in these various applications.

The understanding of formal distinction to which most interpretations of Duns Scotus refer, sometimes without further elaboration, is taken from its use in the *Ordinatio* to account for the plurality of divine attributes.<sup>58</sup> This is the case also with interpreters who consider Deleuze's application of Scotist formal distinction to Spinoza.<sup>59</sup> On the face of things, of course, this seems to be an appropriate approach to reading Deleuze, since he deploys formal distinction in his discussion of the attributes in Spinoza. But it is neither representative of the varied ways Duns Scotus presents the concept nor is it the most useful for revealing how Deleuze sees Spinoza revising and extending it. In Duns Scotus's discussion of divine attributes, formal distinction is presented as a distinction between two realities (*realitates*) or formal reasons (*rationes formales*)<sup>60</sup> within a thing, wherein the essences of these realities—and thus their definitions in cases where they are susceptible to formulation by genus and differentia—do not include each other and yet no real distinction obtains between them as would be the case between thing and thing. Formally distinct *relata*, then, can be *essentially* disparate but *really* the same; as such, formal distinction is a difference internal to a thing that does not render the thing composite. If accepted as a legitimate distinction,<sup>61</sup> this is enough to provide an understanding of how the simplicity of God's essence still admits a qualitative multiplicity. The infinity of each attribute entails that none can be considered a potential that is actualized by another, which explains how no composition is involved.<sup>62</sup> This is very different to the case of formal distinction within the Trinity, where the infinite divine essence is shared by each divine figure but still forms no composition with the personal property that formally distinguishes them. Unlike the attributes, then, with the divine persons there is essential though not formal identity: the Father essentially *is* the Son and the Son *is* the Spirit.<sup>63</sup> In both cases, however, Scotist formal distinction within the divine reflects a neutrality and indifference of *relata* comparable to the univocity Duns Scotus asserts between the divine and His creatures.

Such neutrality, however, cannot apply in the account of individuation, where formal distinction is not required to sustain the simplicity of the divine but instead to account for a real construction. In the composite finite individual, not only are formally distinct common nature and *haecceity* neither essentially the same nor

essentially distinct (since essence applies only to one of the terms), but they are also actively related, as one is the principle that actualizes the other. Moreover, in the case of the individual, no real identity can be posited alongside the formal difference between its distinct realities. Were such an identity between common nature and *haecceity* allowed, it would validate Ockham's critique of formal distinction as Duns Scotus uses it with concrete individuals: namely, that if common nature and *haecceity* were not really but only formally distinct, then they would be really identical, which would entail such absurdities as common nature being really individual and contracting difference being common to many things.<sup>64</sup> Formal distinction in the individual must therefore involve a proper, non-neutral difference between the components it brings together.

With regards to the individual, then, Scotist formal distinction becomes a principle of *synthesis*, where the formalities it brings together “form not a mere aggregate of intelligible items which the mind lists in catalogue fashion, but they are so ordered to one another that they constitute a single intelligible whole.”<sup>65</sup> It does not involve a real distinction between thing and thing—indeed, such a notion of real distinction would be unsuitable as it applies only to fully formed individuals—nor a real identity. Instead, it involves a difference that weaves together, on the one hand, the real similarities and differences between such individuals and, on the other hand, a second form of difference that appears within their composition and enables individuals and the concepts abstracted from them to correspond. In this regard, and despite Duns Scotus's description of formal distinction, offered in his discussion of divine persons,<sup>66</sup> as being weaker than real distinction between things but stronger than the conceptual distinction between beings of reason, it is not simply a halfway house between the real and the conceptual. Rather, as it applies to the individual, it is a second order difference that relates the ways real individuals are both similar to and different from what they are not. It holds together the orders of identity and primary diversity, common nature and *haecceity*, without being subsumable under the former (since it is not a distinction comprising a common nature) and without fulfilling the requirements of the latter (as it is not a unique difference or “thisness”; rather, formal distinction is a principle). In doing so, it engenders their concrete unity.

Although Deleuze discusses formal distinction in the context of Duns Scotus's answer to the problem of divine names, and generally avoids examining its very different role in individuation, he nevertheless reads Spinoza's adaptation of the concept as one that treats it as a principle of synthesis. Deleuze thereby takes a

non-neutral configuration of formal distinction, which in Duns Scotus appears only in the composition of the finite individual, and reads Spinoza as introducing it into the domain of the divine. This allows Deleuze to answer Gueroult's dismissal of Scotist formal distinction as being an indifferent, "merely formal" difference that is insufficient to account for the combination of real unity and real incommensurability that characterizes Spinoza's attributes,<sup>67</sup> while also allowing him to follow Gueroult in positioning Spinoza against Hegel.<sup>68</sup> Formal distinction is now a real, intrinsic, genetic and synthetic difference, a constitutive difference that retains univocity across the differences it brings together,<sup>69</sup> thereby rivalling the constitutive difference of dialectical contradiction. When introduced into the infinity of the Absolute it becomes a "labor of the concept" that answers Hegel's labour of the negative (28). Together with a concept of univocity being extended to include attributes, modes, and individuating differences, this reworking of Scotist formal distinction sets the stage for Deleuze to present Spinoza as fulfilling the post-Kantian demands for an immanent and productive Absolute.

## DELEUZE'S SPINOZA

Deleuze's argument that Spinoza pushes univocity and formal distinction past Duns Scotus's limited theorizations works through the concept of expression. His presentation of Duns Scotus often seems manifestly to confuse Duns Scotus's differentiations of the quidditative and the qualitative, and to conflate the formal reason for qualities, which is the quiddity in which they inhere, and the formal distinction that Duns Scotus sets out between the thing's quidditative and non-quidditative realities. Deleuze thus holds "rational" and "animal" to be distinct quiddities composing a finite unity that, when taken to infinity, also designate formally distinct quiddities composing the divine (63–64), all of which prefigures the claim that Spinoza's picture of substance consisting of an infinity of distinct but ontologically univocal attributes is Scotist in origin. This might seem to be a Scotism bereft of its fundamental distinctions. But Deleuze suggests that these distinctions are theological in origin and have no further justification. As a theologian, Duns Scotus still maintains the equivocation and eminence characteristic of analogical conceptions of being, along with "a subtle anthropomorphism" (46) that seeks to assign human qualities to God. For Deleuze, this entails that divine attributes are misunderstood as properties, which cannot say what God is but only what he has (49–51, 66–67). Spinoza's break with Duns Scotus and others, he argues, comes by distinguishing attributes from properties, insisting on the expressive nature of the former and holding the latter, which theology seeks to attri-

bute to God, to belong to the inessential realm of signification and predication.<sup>70</sup>

If Spinoza's attributes, which most certainly are qualitative, can also be considered quidditative, a sense of being pertaining only to substance, it is because each attribute expresses *the entirety* of God's essence, rather than merely a part or a qualification of it. This allows Deleuze to claim a Scotist inheritance for Spinoza when holding that the being of Spinoza's attributes is said in the same sense as the substance they express and that this univocity further extends to the modes that express substance's expressions. But this post-Scotist univocity is no longer neutral, common to God and creatures only because the sense of substantial being is indifferent to the difference between them. Instead, it is expressive, the common sense between substance and mode resulting from their immanent connection by way of the attributes. Attributes are "*forms of being common to creatures and to God, common to modes and to substance*" (46). This does not mean, however, that by way of the shared attributes a creature's form is merely an eternal Idea thought by God or in some other way an image or copy of the divine. Univocity ensures "the identity of form between creatures and God, while permitting no confusion of essence" (47), because while attributes constitute the essence of God and cannot be thought without Him, they are only implied by the modes that involve them, and so "can very easily be conceived outside their modes" (47).<sup>71</sup> In this way, even though substance produces and remains implicated in its modes, they remain distinct in essence from one another and from substance itself, even while they are all univocal in form. In effect, modes are virtually included in the attributes, "*belonging to them insofar as they constitute the essence of God*" (47), but this *virtus* is the power of an immanent causality, as attributes "contain or comprehend the essences of modes, and this formally, not eminently" (47). There is thus also an equality among substance's products, as the attributes are prior to but not higher than the modes. In contrast, analogical conceptions of being confuse divine and created essences by distinguishing them only by proportion or degree (48), with created essences of finite creatures being copies, emanations, or degradations falling away from the divine.

If formal distinction, in turn, can be pushed beyond the neutral character it retains when Duns Scotus applies it to divine perfections, it is because of the genetic aspect of expression. As concrete expressions of substance's sense, Spinoza's attributes are, pace Duns Scotus, formally distinct in that they can be neither separated into distinct realities apprehended under different subjects nor treated as different orders of abstraction of the same reality where each order would be de-

fined independently were it susceptible to such formulation.<sup>72</sup> Spinoza, however, explicitly calls this a real distinction between attributes, not a formal one.<sup>73</sup> What allows Deleuze to infer a Scotist inspiration despite Spinoza's terminology is his contention that formal distinction within the Absolute *is* real distinction, not only because, in being more than a conceptual distinction, formal distinction was already "a minimally real distinction" (64) in Duns Scotus, but because the Absolute is now conceived as a synthesis. This redefinition of formal distinction as real distinction that is synthetic without implying separate entities or substances<sup>74</sup> also lays the foundation for Spinoza's critique of Cartesian real distinction. The basis of this critique, Deleuze contends, is the idea that Descartes confuses real and numerical distinction by treating real distinction as what obtains between independent finite substances. This allows two substances to share the same attribute, which makes them only numerically distinct and demands an external cause that determines that they exist in this particular number, contradicting substance's fundamental character as self-sufficient being (32). But this problem reflects the error of treating attributes as properties, Descartes holding that only a distinction of reason exists between a substance and its attributes, a distinction that moreover is the product of abstraction (29). The result is a fundamental ambiguity in the Cartesian idea of attributes, which are sometimes qualifications of substance and sometimes modalities that diversify substance (29–30).<sup>75</sup> Against all this, Deleuze continues, Spinoza insists that if real distinction and substance's primacy are to be taken seriously, then "numerical distinction is never real," and, "conversely, real distinction is never numerical" (34). Real distinction is "purely qualitative, quidditative or formal," and "excludes any division" (38). In this way, it is carried into the Absolute. Even Descartes's real distinction is a positive or affirmative difference, as "the terms distinguished each retain their respective positivity, instead of being defined by opposition, one to another" (60). Real distinction in the Absolute is a positive constitutive internal difference rather than an extrinsic distinction between already constituted things or a negative dialectical difference that only purports to be constitutive.<sup>76</sup>

Substance's immanent production is not a creation (104), as "the things that are produced are not imitations any more than their ideas are models" (180–181). Substance's self-expression, through which it involves and explicates itself in attributes that it also complicates, is formal and qualitative (185), as attributes themselves are qualitative and indivisible. But inasmuch as they are matter or pure potentiality for the modes that further explicate them, attributes have a corresponding non-numerical infinite quantity that allows them to be divided

through the production of modes (191). The production of modes, or the expression of substance's expression, is thereby quantitative (186), with modes being divisible and hence numerical (33–34). Although they are part of an immanent genesis, modes are the externalization or exteriorization of this process, essences posited “*outside* the attribute” (213). They are expression going outside itself to produce what is numerically and extrinsically distinct.

Nevertheless, Deleuze argues, there are two forms of quantity pertaining to the modes, one extrinsic and the other intrinsic or intensive. The first relates to the mode's actuality, its existence as a thing divisible into extrinsic parts and enduring in time and space (191–192, 196). The second relates to the mode's essence or being, and thus to its *conatus*, its power to affirm its essence in existence.<sup>77</sup> Spinoza holds this intensive quantity to be a quantitative infinity or indefiniteness of things such that “they cannot be equated with any number, yet they can be conceived as greater or less” (Spinoza, quoted in Deleuze, 1992, 192). While numerical quantity refers to modal distinction as a distinction between individuals, intensive quantity presents it as “an intrinsic principle of individuation” (196) and thus as a positive constitutive difference—a *haecceity*, but one that is very different from the *haecceity* that for Duns Scotus establishes the uniqueness of the fully constituted individual within the numerical diversity of its common nature. By virtue of this difference, the individuality of modes is consistent with their univocal connection to the substance they express. Modes are distinct and singular by way of intensive differences in the same way that, pace Duns Scotus's discussion of modal variation, different intensities of whiteness are singular in themselves but still univocally express the *same* whiteness (196). The univocity between substance and primarily diverse individuating differences is based on a common sense of power expressed by this non-numerical intensive quantity: “each finite being must be said to *express the absolute*, according to the intensive quantity that constitutes its essence, according, that is, to the degree of its power” (197). A mode expresses and explicates the essence of substance according to an intensity of power, a quantity that corresponds to the infinite quality of the attributes that express and constitute divine essence (199). This is how the distinction of essences remains consistent with the community of form by way of attributes, as “only a quantitative distinction of beings is consistent with the qualitative identity of the absolute” (197).

## CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A UNIVOCITY OF DIFFERENCE

Deleuze seems to find formal distinction to have been adequately worked out in Spinoza—at the very least he does not seem to offer further revisions of the concept when he returns to it in later works—but with respect to univocity he explicitly states that the formulation he draws out of Spinoza is inadequate and incomplete. While Spinoza transforms Duns Scotus’s neutral univocal being into an expressive sense, Deleuze maintains that he continues to give priority given to identity over difference: “Spinoza’s substance appears independent of the modes, while the modes are dependent on substance, but as though on something other than themselves. Substance must itself be said *of* the modes and only *of* the modes.”<sup>78</sup> While substance is defined as that which exists and is conceived only through itself—only substance *is* substance—modes are defined as differences dependent on substance and existing only through it—they are precisely *substance’s* modes.<sup>79</sup> An equivocation thus persists between substance and modes, wherein they express different senses of being and ultimately a sense of difference belonging to identity. Against this, Deleuze proposes a reversal wherein substance is said of the modes and only of the modes. This would entail identity being said of difference, making it *differences’ identity*, a commonness and univocity of differences, and specifically of intensive quantitative differences. “Such a condition can be satisfied,” Deleuze contends,

...only at the price of a more general categorical reversal according to which being is said of becoming, identity of that which is different, the one of the multiple, etc. That identity not be first, that it exist as a principle but as a second principle, as a principle *become*; that it revolve around the Different: such would be the nature of a Copernican revolution which opens up the possibility of difference having its own concept, rather than being maintained under the domination of a concept in general already understood as identical.<sup>80</sup>

Only difference can be said univocally of both itself and that which differs from it. The latter would amount to difference being said of what differs from difference—that is, of identity. Expression must express the sense of difference, said of all things equally and univocally in a world of difference produced immanently. For Deleuze, this is achieved by Nietzsche’s philosophy of will to power and eternal return. Nietzsche envisions a world in which a will to power installed in all beings compels them to strive beyond their limits and overcome themselves. This is the becoming of all beings, whereby any identity, “produced by difference, is de-

terminated as ‘repetition.’”<sup>81</sup> It requires being to be conceived as becoming, that is, as eternal return. The eternal return, for Deleuze, is not a return of identical beings and events over an infinity of time, but instead a return of difference wherein any appearance of identity or self-sameness is a product of becoming different. The eternal return is equated with a series of dice throws that are “formally distinct, but with regard to an ontologically unique throw.”<sup>82</sup> While Spinoza’s system of formally distinct attributes and modes that relate to substance while remaining ontologically one matches this eternal game point-by-point, what Spinozism still required, Deleuze contends, was “*to realise univocity in the form of repetition in the eternal return.*”<sup>83</sup>

In this way, Deleuze’s lineage of univocity leads to a univocity of difference through the progressive elimination of theological and identitarian assumptions. Removing the crutch of a transcendent divinity entails the immanence of an Absolute that is not a simple and indifferent substance but a synthesis of formally distinct internal differences. Against a dialectical synthesis wherein difference returns an identity of identity and difference, Deleuze proposes a univocity of formally distinct differences that return only difference. As univocal differences are primarily diverse, their distribution “must be called nomadic...without property, enclosure or measure.”<sup>84</sup> They are “equal” inasmuch as each difference expresses a power of overcoming. For Deleuze, this is how the lineage of univocity dovetails with the generalized anti-Hegelianism that guides his thought: “Univocal Being,” he declares, “is at one and the same time nomadic distribution and crowned anarchy.”<sup>85</sup>

NATHAN WIDDER is Professor of Political Theory at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is author of *Genealogies of Difference* (University of Illinois Press, 2002), *Reflections on Time and Politics* (Penn State University Press, 2008), and *Political Theory after Deleuze* (Continuum/Bloomsbury, 2012). He is currently working on a monograph on the role played by the concept of sense across Deleuze’s solo and collaborative works.

## NOTES

1. This and all subsequent parenthetical references are taken from Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*. Trans. Martin Joughin. New York: Zone Books, 1992.
2. Within Deleuze scholarship exploration of the connections between Duns Scotus and Spinoza has focussed almost exclusively on univocity (i.e., Daniel W. Smith, *Essays on Deleuze*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012, ch. 2; Philip Tonner, “Duns Scotus’ Concept of the Univocity of Being: Another Look.” *Pli*. 18 (2007), 129–146; Nathan Widder, “The Rights of Simulacra: Deleuze and the Univocity of Being.” *Continental Philosophy Review*. 34:4 (2001), 437–453) and has also tended towards the discussion of the lineage from Duns Scotus to Spinoza to Nietzsche presented in *Difference and Repetition* (Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*. Trans. Paul Patton: London: Athlone Press, 1994, 36–42), and away from Deleuze’s Spinoza dissertation. Smith is an exception to the second point, as he outlines the three axes on which univocity appears in Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza, but he builds off a more cursory reading of Duns Scotus that outlines univocity as a heterodox idea within broader medieval philosophy. Within recent scholarship on Duns Scotus and Spinoza, Deleuze’s thesis has been addressed and even given support, but these authors often only consider how the general features of Scotist univocity and formal distinction can be applied to Spinoza’s substance ontology, without much consideration of Deleuze’s contention that Spinoza adopts but also modifies them (see Andreas Schmidt, “Substance Monism and Identity Theory in Spinoza.” *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza’s Ethics*. Ed. Olli Koistinen, 79–98. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2009; Jason Waller, “Spinoza’s Attributes and the ‘Intermediate’ Distinctions of Henry of Ghent and Duns Scotus.” *Florida Philosophical Review*. 9:1 (2009), 91–105).
3. Smith, *Essays*, 368n9.
4. Étienne Gilson, *Jean Duns Scot: Introduction à ses positions fondamentales*. Paris: J. Vrin, 1952, 273, 627n1. A long overdue English translation of this seminal text has recently been published as *John Duns Scotus: Introduction to His Fundamental Positions*. Trans. James G. Colbert. London: T&T Clark, 2019, where the references to Spinoza are found at 208, 492n4.
5. François Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: Intersecting Lives*. Trans. Deborah Glassman. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010, 97, 109.
6. Martial Gueroult, *Spinoza I. Dieu*. Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1968, 238n38, 299–300. Although Gueroult’s *Spinoza I* was published the same year as Deleuze’s *Spinoza et le problème de l’expression*, the former is based on lectures given at the Collège de France from 1950 to 1962 (Knox Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology: French Rationalism from Cavallès to Deleuze*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013, 67), which coincides with the time when Deleuze is thought to have largely completed his Spinoza thesis (Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, 118, 143).
7. As Peden notes, Gueroult devotes some 200 pages of *Spinoza I* to an account of the opening propositions of the *Ethics* in order to refute the Hegelian reading that sums up the post-Kantian rejection of Spinoza, while also, like Deleuze, holding Spinoza’s substance to be “genetic, in other words synthetic” (Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology*, 82, translating Gueroult, *Spinoza I*, 457). On both these points, and on Gueroult’s thesis on Spinozist univocity, see Peden, *Spinoza contra Phenomenology*, 82–88, 193–195.
8. See Jean Hyppolite, *Logic and Existence*. Trans. Len Lawler and Amit Sen. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997, which includes Deleuze’s 1954 review of the work, one of his own earliest publications, in the Appendix.
9. In his Spinoza work, Deleuze seems to dismiss the idea of Leibniz playing a similar role, hold-

ing that Leibniz extends sense in such a way that the upshots gained by a univocal sense of being are lost (Deleuze, 328–330). However, in *Difference and Repetition*, Leibniz features as the thinker who goes further than Hegel towards a conception of difference needed for the thesis of univocity (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 42–50).

10. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, xix.

11. See Baruch Spinoza, *The Ethics*, in *The Ethics, Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect, and Selected Letters*. Trans. Samuel Shirley. Ed. Seymour Feldman. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1992, 1d6 (emphasis added), 1d4, and 1p15p. Deleuze holds that Spinoza’s initial definitions of substance and attribute (Spinoza, *Ethics*, 1d3, 1d4) are merely nominal, and it is the sixth definition alone that is a real definition (Deleuze, 20; see also 61–62).

12. Heidegger holds medieval analogy to be merely “a welcomed means of formulating a religious conviction in philosophical terms” (Martin Heidegger, *Aristotle’s Metaphysics, Theta 1-3: On the Essence and Actuality of Force*. Trans. Walter Brogan and Peter Warnek. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995, 38; see generally 34–39).

13. This is the direction Heidegger takes his account of Duns Scotus’s theory of the categories in the conclusion of his *Habilitationsschrift* (Martin Heidegger, *Duns Scotus’s Theory of the Categories and of Meaning*. Trans. Harold Robbins. Unpublished PhD thesis. Chicago: DePaul University, 1978, 242–257)—a thesis, it should be noted, based largely on writings found in the pre-critical Wadding edition of Duns Scotus’s work that are no longer considered authentic.

14. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*. Ed. Jonathan Barnes. 2 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, 1017b.

15. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1030a.

16. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1055a; see also Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 30–32.

17. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1055a–b.

18. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1039b. Concrete things are separate and individual, and “separability and individuality are thought to belong chiefly to substance” (1029a).

19. Definition for Aristotle requires that “the substance of a thing is the last such predication to hold of the atoms” (Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, in *The Complete Works*, 96b), but these predicates must be general, extending further than the subject predicated, even though “each will belong further but all of them together will not belong further” (96a).

20. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1935b–1936a.

21. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 32.

22. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 998b.

23. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1003a.

24. Although Duns Scotus’s critique of analogy applies to Aquinas, it should be noted that his direct aim is the neo-Augustinian critic of Aquinas, Henry of Ghent (Tonner, “Duns Scotus’ Concept,” 140).

25. Aristotle writes: “Everything which is healthy is related to health, one thing in the sense that it preserves health, another in the sense that it produces it, another in the sense that it is a symptom of health, another because it is capable of it....So, too, there are many senses in which a thing is said to be, but all refer to one starting-point” (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1003a–b). And Aquinas states: “Such words [predicates such as ‘wisdom’ that may be said of God and creatures] apply to God and creatures neither univocally nor equivocally but by what I call analogy (or proportion). This is the way a word like *healthy* applies to organisms (in a primary sense) and to diets (as causing health) or complexions (as displaying it)” (Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: A Concise Translation*. Ed. Timothy McDermott. Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1989, 32).

26. Aquinas, *Summa*, 18.
27. John Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings: A Selection*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Trans. Allan Wolter, OFM. Indianapolis, Hackett, 1987, 19.
28. Duns Scotus, quoted in Robert P. Prentice, *The Basic Quidditative Metaphysics of Duns Scotus as Seen in His De Primo Principio*. Rome: Antonianum, 1970, 54; translating Duns Scotus's *Lectura* 1, d. 3, p. 1, q. 2, n. 123.
29. Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, 20.
30. Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, 20.
31. Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, 4.
32. Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, 4.
33. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 39.
34. Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, 3.
35. Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, 2.
36. Étienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*. London: Sheed and Ward, 1955, 456–457; C. R. S. Harris, *Duns Scotus*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1927, Vol. 2, 64–68.
37. Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, 3.
38. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 39–40.
39. “It has often been noted that univocal being allows the distinction of its ‘modes’ to subsist: when it is considered in its individuating modalities (infinite and finite), rather than in its nature as Being, it ceases to be univocal” (Deleuze, 359n19)
40. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 39.
41. Deleuze 1994: 38.
42. John Duns Scotus, “Six Questions on Individuation from His *Ordinatio*, II. d. 3, part 1, qq. 1–6.” In *Five Texts on the Medieval Problem of Universals*. Ed and Trans. Vincent Spade, 57–113. Indianapolis: Hackett 1994, n. 12
43. Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” n. 23.
44. Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” n. 169.
45. Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” n. 185.
46. Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” n. 170.
47. But see Jorge Gracia's argument that while “principle of individuation” was commonly used at the time, Duns Scotus actually avoids it, and only occasionally speaks of a “cause of individuation” (Jorge J. E. Gracia, “Individuality and the Individuating Entity in Scotus's *Ordinatio*: An Ontological Characterization.” In *John Duns Scotus: Metaphysics and Ethics*. Eds. Ludgar Honnefelder, Rega Wood, and Mechthild Dreyer, 229–249. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).
48. These various positions, whose advocates include Henry of Ghent, Giles of Rome, Godfrey of Fontaines, and Aquinas, are addressed and answered in Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” nn. 43–141.
49. Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” n. 182.
50. Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” n. 188.
51. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 38.
52. The individual reality constituted by *haecceity* is unlike specific reality in that “it is never taken from an added form, but rather precisely from the last reality of the form” (Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” n. 180). *Haecceity*'s formal status also makes it intelligible, albeit only to the divine rather than any human intellect (n. 192).
53. Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” nn. 176–180.
54. Hence, “this reality of an individual is primarily diverse from every quidditative entity....Therefore, this [individual] entity, which of itself is another entity than the quiddity or the quidditative

- entity, cannot constitute the whole of which is it [*sic*] a part in its quidditative being, but only in another kind of being” (Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” n. 181; see also nn. 193–194).
55. Duns Scotus, “Six Questions,” n. 188.
56. On Duns Scotus’s place within this historical context, see Maurice J. Grajewski, OFM, *The Formal Distinction of Duns Scotus: A Study in Metaphysics*. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1944.
57. Peter King, “Scotus on Metaphysics.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*. Ed. Thomas Williams, 15–68. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, 23.
58. John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio I d.4-10 Volume Four of the Critical Edition*. Trans. Peter J. Simpson [online], 2016, d. 8, p. 1, q. 4, n. 193. (available at: <http://www.aristotelophile.com/current.htm>; last accessed: 8 August 2017). Marilyn McCord Adams’s translation of the definition of formal distinction (found in her “Ockham on Identity and Distinction.” *Franciscan Studies*. 36 (1976), 5–74, 34–35) is taken up by Mark Henninger (*Relations: Medieval Theories 1250–1325*. New York: Clarendon Press, 1989, 82) and supplemented by Schmidt (“Substance Monism,” 90n33). See also King, “Scotus on Metaphysics,” 22–25.
59. Schmidt, “Substance Monism,” 90; and Waller “Spinoza’s Attributes,” 94.
60. Duns Scotus uses no fewer than seven different terms for the non-identical elements involved in formal distinction. See Adams, “Ockham on Identity,” 31–32; King, “Scotus on Metaphysics,” 23–24.
61. I will not address various critiques of Duns Scotus’s doctrine, save a brief mention of Ockham’s, nor the changes Duns Scotus makes between the *Ordinatio* and the *Reportata*, considered by some to be a response to criticisms that formal distinction is incompatible with divine simplicity, but see Adams, “Ockham on Identity,” 37–43.
62. See Adams, “Ockham on Identity,” 36; King “Scotus on Metaphysics,” 24–25; Allan Wolter, OFM, “The Formal Distinction.” In *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy, Vol. 3: John Duns Scotus, 1265–1965*. Eds. John K. Ryan and Bernadine M. Bonansea, 45–60. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1965, 53.
63. See John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio I d.1-2. Volume Two of the Critical Edition*. Trans. Peter J. Simpson [online], 2012, 1, d. 2, p. 2, q. 4, nn. 411–439 (available at: <http://www.aristotelophile.com/current.htm>; last accessed: 8 August 2017).
64. See William of Ockham, “Five Questions on Universals from his *Ordinatio*, d.2, qq. 4–8.” In *Five Texts on the Medieval Problem of Universals*. Ed. and Trans. Vincent Spade, 114–231. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994, q. 6, n. 24–90. Ockham also rejects formal distinction among divine attributes but accepts it for the Trinity.
65. Wolter, “The Formal Distinction,” 54.
66. See John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio I d.1-2*, d. 2, p. 2, q. 4, nn. 388–410.
67. “C’est pourquoi Dieu n’est pas un être absolument simple où les attributs cesseraient de se distinguer. Leur distinction n’y est pas simplement virtuelle, et actuelle seulement dans leurs effets,—comme le professent les thomistes,—ni simplement formelle (par leur définitions),—comme le veulent les scotists,—car il ils y demeurent des *réalités diverses*, incommensurables, ne s’intégrant dans un être, indivisible et non pas simple, que par l’identité de l’acte causal par lequel ils se donnent l’existence et produisent leurs modes” (Gueroult, *Spinoza*, 238n38).
68. See note 7.
69. Deleuze thus holds that Scotist formal distinction, like modal distinction, allows univocal being to be related directly to difference (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 39–40).
70. “Spinoza is able on this basis to distinguish attributes and *propria*. His starting point is Aristo-

telian: a *proprium* is what belongs to a thing, but can never explain what it is. Thus the *propria* of God are just ‘adjectives’ which give us no substantial knowledge; God would not be God without them, but is not God through them. Spinoza could, in accordance with a long tradition, give to these *propria* the name of attribute; but there would then still be, according to him, a difference of nature between two sorts of attribute” (Deleuze, 49).

71. This is all in agreement with Spinoza, who holds that all modes of an attribute agree in that they involve the conception of that same attribute – thus, for example, “all bodies agree in this, that they involve the conception of one and the same attribute [that is, extension]” (Spinoza, *Ethics*, 2L2p). However, by being equally common to all its modes, an attribute cannot constitute the essence of any particular one of them (2p37), for if it did, it could not be conceived outside that particular thing (2p37p).

72. Duns Scotus’s formal distinction “relates to the apprehension of distinct quiddities that nevertheless belong to the same subject. This must obviously be referred to an act of understanding. But the understanding isn’t merely expressing an identical reality under two aspects that might exist separately in other subjects, or expressing an identical thing at different degrees of abstraction, or expressing something analogically in relation to some other realities. It objectively apprehends actually distinct forms which yet, as such, together make up a single identical subject” (Deleuze, 64).

73. “From this it is clear that although two attributes be conceived as really distinct, that is, one without the help of the other, still we cannot deduce therefrom that they constitute two entities, or two different substances. For it is in the nature of substance that each of its attributes be conceived through itself, since all the attributes it possesses have always been in it simultaneously, and one could not have been produced by another; but each expresses the reality or being of substance. So it is by no means absurd to ascribe more than one attribute to one substance” (Spinoza, *Ethics*, 1p10s).

74. Although he does not employ the terminology of synthesis, Gilson devotes several pages to refuting interpretations of Duns Scotus’s understanding of the concrete as a “mosaic” (*mosaïque*) of separate pieces or substances. See Gilson *Jean Duns Scot*, 467–477; *John Duns Scotus*, 362–370).

75. The ambiguity is encapsulated in Descartes’s “Principles of Philosophy” when he writes: “And indeed, we here understand by modes the same with what we elsewhere designate attributes or qualities. But when we consider substance as affected or varied by them, we use the term modes; when from this variation it may be denominated of such a kind, we adopt the term qualities [to designate the different modes which cause it to be so named]; and, finally, when we simply regard these modes as in the substance, we call them attributes” (Rene Descartes, “Principles of Philosophy.” In *A Discourse on Method; Meditations on the First Philosophy; Principles of Philosophy*. Trans. John Veitch. Intro. Tom Sorell, 145–228. London: Everyman’s Library, 1986, 186). See also 190–191 where Descartes describes how thought and extension may on the one hand be considered attributes constituting the essence of thinking and corporeal substance respectively and as modes of substance.

76. Deleuze suggests that Spinoza speaks of real rather than formal distinction because “it was to Spinoza’s advantage to use a term that Descartes, by the use he had made of it, had in a sense neutralized theologically. So that the term ‘real distinction’ allowed great audacity without stirring up old controversies which Spinoza doubtless considered pointless or even harmful” (Deleuze, 66).

77. “Thus *conatus* is not in Spinoza the effort to persevere in existence, once existence is granted. It designates [an] existential function of essence, that is, the affirmation of essence in a mode’s existence” (Deleuze, 230).

78. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 40.
79. Spinoza states: “By substance I mean that which is in itself and is conceived through itself; that is, that the conception of which does not require the conception of another thing from which it has to be formed” (Spinoza, *Ethics*, 1d3). In contrast, “By mode I mean the affections of substance; that is, that which is in something else and is conceived through something else” (1d5).
80. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 40–41.
81. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 41.
82. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 304.
83. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 304.
84. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 36.
85. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 37.