



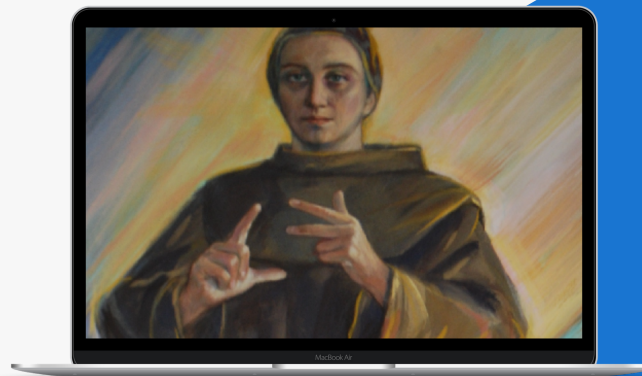
BIOGRAPHY

One of the most significant and influential philosopher-theologians of the Middle Ages was John Duns Scotus (1265/66–1308). **His extraordinarily intricate and subtle reasoning gave him the moniker "the Subtle Doctor," and it made an indelible influence on debates of themes as diverse as religious language semantics, the problem of universals, divine illumination, and the essence of human freedom.**

John Duns Scotus was born into a landowning family in Scotland's southeastern portion, an area heavily impacted by England's social, political, and religious institutions.

His father, according to legend, was Ninian Duns, who had an estate at Maxton in Roxburghshire. After getting his early schooling, presumably at Haddington, John Duns attended the Franciscan monastery at Dumfries about 1277-1280, where his paternal uncle, Elias Duns, provided him with instruction. John Duns was sent to Oxford shortly before 1290, most likely to finish his liberal arts studies.

He may have earned the moniker "Scotus" or "the Scot" while at Oxford. Oliver Sutton, Bishop of Northampton, consecrated him to the priesthood on March 17, 1291, while he was still at Oxford.



JOHN DUNS SCOTUS

#12 STEM 8 PHILO



METAPHYSICS

SCOTUS saw **METAPHYSICS** as the **branch of philosophy concerned with the essence of being itself, rather than any particular object holding existence in the external world.** Being, in this sense, was a concept that **both God and man shared.** Furthermore, antinomies or disjunctive qualities like "infinite-finite" or "necessary-contingent" might be assigned to being. He provided a proof for God's existence based on the nature of being, based on his opinion that the term "being" applied to God and man in the same way and that one component of a disjunctive required the other part.



In order for finite, contingent entities to exist, an infinite, necessary entity, namely God, must also exist. According to Scotus, **metaphysics is a "real theoretical science"** in the sense that it deals with things rather than concepts, is theoretical in the sense that it is pursued for its own sake rather than as a guide for doing or making things, and is scientific in the sense that it proceeds deductively from self-evident principles to conclusions. The subject matter distinguishes the other actual theoretical disciplines, and Scotus spends a lot of time figuring out what makes

metaphysics unique. He comes to the conclusion that **metaphysics is concerned with "being as being" (*ens inquantum ens*).** That is, rather than studying, instance, material as material, the metaphysician examines being merely as such.



Prince Aaron Kobe
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