

The aim of my dissertation is to investigate how universal concepts are formed according to the later medieval Franciscan theologian Peter Auriol (d. 1322). Specifically, in the dissertation I inquiry into the relation between Auriol's ontology - according to which only individuals, and not universals, have real, extra-mental existence - and his philosophical psychology, a study of how extra-mental particulars can give rise to universal concepts, according to Auriol's view. In the past academic year I refined the topic of my PhD thesis in two ways : first, I have delineated the definitive table of content ; second, I have wrote down the results of my research. The thesis comprises two volumes. The second one contains a collation of Peter Auriol's, *Reportatio II*, d. 9, qq. 2 - 3. The text has been obtained by confronting two manuscripts, considered as the exemplars of the two main families that convey his Second Book of the Sentences: ms. Firenze, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, ms. conv. soppr. A.3.120 (Fb); (iii) il ms. Padova, Biblioteca Antoniana, ms. 161 scaff. IX (Pg). The first volume, instead, has been divided into five chapters: the first two offer a historical introduction, while the remaining three are dedicated to the study of Auriol's doctrine, starting from the analysis of the text proposed in the collation, then extending the investigation to all the documentary heritage available relating to the Franciscan master. The first chapter provides a survey of the main theories of the universals of the early fourteenth century, taking into account in particular the opinions of those thinkers who, like Duns Scotus, in addition to marking a philosophical era, have been significant for Auriol's developing of his theory of universals. These are: John Duns Scotus, Henry of Harclay, Walter Bulery and Hervaeus Natalis. In order to properly understand the philosophical proposal of the Doctor facundus, it is necessary to know how it fits into a debate that in the academic debate of the fourteenth century. The second chapter is mainly aimed at the identification of the sources of *Rep. II*, d. 9, qq. 2 - 3. In the *quaestio secunda*, Auriol deals with the foundation of the universals. In a.1, he discusses the opinion of multiwho he labels as 'platonico'. We tried, therefore, to detect the targets of his criticism. Burley, Wylton, Bacon, Duns Scotus have been identified as possible addresses. In a. 2 of the same question, Auriol analyzes the position of Duns Scotus on the common nature. It has been then hypothesized that the two articles - aa. 1-2 - has to be considered as a general presentation and specific case of it; as a thesis common to several forms of realism and the realism of one of its most important interpreters. The third chapter focuses Auriol's criticism of the different forms of realism reported in a. 1 and of Duns Scotus's theory, as it is found in a. 2. In both cases, Auriol reproaches the realists for breaking the unity of substance, into a multiplicity of formalitatesreally occurring in reand corresponding to the concepts of genus and difference. On the contrary, Auriol maintains that universal concepts have no unity in the extra-mental reality. Only individuals really exist and numerical unity the only fully existing unity. As a consequence, the unity of the universal concept is just similitudinaria,that is only given a concept. Successively, the criticisms that Auriol makes to the principle of individuation are considered. Generally speaking, everything that exists, insofar as it exists, is singular, according to him. It is a primitive fact and it is not, therefore, necessary to search for the causes of its individuation. Thus, mirroring the structure of the *quaestio secunda*, in q. 3, Auriol discusses, in the first place, Duns Scotus's position and secondly a group of theories, arisen during the scholastic debate between the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century. Interestingly, to reconstruct this set of doctrines, Auriol follows almost literally the reconstruction that Scotus himself makes of the same theories in his *Ordinatio*. Now, relying on the assumption that everything that exists is individual, Auriol gives shape to the notions of individuality and singularity and their mutual difference. This is one of the hubs of the dissertation. According to Auriol, a singularity is an entity that does not admit the existence of other realities that can be considered as similar with it. In this sense, God is the only authentic singularity. Ordinary reality, on the other hand, is made up of individualities. An individuality is an entity that, being finite, does not exhaust in itself the totality of the species to which it belongs (as far as the species as such exists only in virtue of an act of the intellect), admits the existence of other realities conceivable as similar with it. Thus, inasmuch as reality is made up of individuals or individualities, the mind is

able to form the corresponding universal concepts. Being finite, for Auriol, is the condition of the validity of universals. In this respect, the relation between the concept of individuality and that of singularity is taken into account. Subsequently, we analyze the function of the category of Quantity, as it is related to individuality. According to Auriol, Quantity has no individuating capacity. At most, in bodily substances, it functions as principle of distinction. Being, in fact, discrete realities, a material substance spatially ends where another one begins. The fourth chapter is a kind of juncture between the third one, in which the structure of the concrete individual is analyzed, and the fifth one, in which the cognitive side of the process of concept formation is discussed. What is discussed here are the rationes. According to Auriol, the rationes are the basic units that constitute the quiddity of each individual and serve to direct our thought to form certain concepts. Each concept is the concept of a ratio, indeed. In this respect, Auriol claims that, say, Socrates has the rationes substance, corporeality, sensitivity, rationality. Additionally, rationes of the same type occurring in different objects are "maximally similar" (*simillimae*). For example, the rationes of Socrates are utterly similar with those of Plato (Cf. *Scriptum*, d. 2, q. 1, a. 4). Therefore, although these rationes are non-universal characteristics - inasmuch as a ratio belongs to one and only one individual - due to their maximal similarity they do count as the extramental ground for our general concepts (Cf. *II Sent.*, d. 9, q. 3, a. 1). According to these premises, Auriol can hold that different singulars can be mutually highly similar, without participating in the same common nature (Cf. *II Sent.*, d. 9, q. 3, a. 3). At the same time, it is relevant to note these rationes do not compromise the unity of an existing particular. Rather each ratio coagulates into each other giving birth to the individual's ultimate ratio. This final ratio is an indivisible ratio (*ratio atoma*), which cannot be further specified or divided (*II Sent.*, d. 9, q. 3). According to Auriol, then, the rationes *qua* rationes do not exist in extra-mental reality. Rather, they exist as such only in virtue of an act of the intellect. This means that they have an ambiguous being. On the one hand, they indicate a nature that cannot be altered by the intellect. On the other, they need the mind's activity to exist as rationes. According to Auriol, therefore, the rationes are independent of any cognitive act, with regard to the content they express, while they depend on mind's activity with regard to their unity and their existence. Now, the opacity concerning the ontological consistency of rationes directly depends on Auriol's understanding of cognition. Chapter five mainly deals with the different stages of the process of formation of the universal concept. In this respect, the notion of *impressio* is what is firstly analyzed. The *impressio* can be considered, for Auriol, as the rationes that are 'deposited' in the intellect and constitute, in cooperation with the cognitive faculty, what the Franciscan theologian calls the *actus intellectus*. The intellectual act, according to Auriol, is an entity composed of the impressed similarity of the object and the intellectual power, in fact. Moreover, in his view, it is really identical to the intelligible species. Now, the identity that the Franciscan theologian establishes between these two noetic tools, which were traditionally considered as distinct, imposes a reinterpretation of the notion of species. Coinciding with the act, the species can no longer be considered as an entity juxtaposed to it, deputed to the activation of the cognitive process performed by the intellect. Indeed, all those theories of universal concepts that add other noetic tools to the act, be they a species, a quality, or something else, would necessarily compromise intellection, preventing it from having acquaintance with extra-mental reality. According to Auriol, considering intellectual cognition as a connotation allows us to avoid such inconveniences. According to this view, the intellectual cognition must be regarded as an activity that poses nothing but to allow something to appear to the cognizer. In this respect, the concept, for Auriol, is nothing but the real object *qua* appearing to the intellect, fully identical with the intellectual act in *recto*, while denominatively distinct in *obliquo*. In this perspective, the definition of intellection that the Franciscan theologian proposes is analyzed, trying, in particular, to determine the ontological status of the concept and its epistemological function. In conclusion, with this study we have tried to give an account of Auriol's philosophical attitude, of the scope of his theory of universals, focusing on the relationship between ontology and philosophical psychology. Using Auriol's texts and specifically the collation of *Rep. II*, d. 9, qq. 2 - 3, the answers to these questions were searched for

in the words of the Franciscan theologian himself. The picture emerged is that of an autonomous, critical thinker, but perfectly inserted in the historical context in which he lives. A thinker who places himself, so to speak, halfway between Duns Scotus's realism and Ockham's nominalism, nevertheless succeeding, albeit with some opacity, in balancing an ontology in which the metaphysical priority is granted only to the individual and the universal concepts have a solid foundation and validity.