

The Individuating Factor

Ownness, *Jemeinigkeit*, *Haecceitas*

Alessio Montaruli

Preprint, Version 1.0 — 26 July 2026

Contents

1. Two infants and two bands	3
2. The objection, at full strength	4
3. Scotus	5
4. Heidegger	7
5. The conjunction	12
6. What ownness is	14
7. Objections	16
8. What would falsify this	18
9. The ward	19
References	19
Note on the state of the bibliography	20

Author identifier: ORCID 0009-0008-5435-3692 (<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-5435-3692>)

Persistent identifier: DOI 10.5281/zenodo.21608145

Copyright: © 2026 Alessio Montaruli. Licensed CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

Suggested citation: Montaruli, Alessio. “The Individuating Factor: Ownness, *Jemeinigkeit*, *Haecceitas*.”
Preprint, Version 1.0, 2026. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.21608145.

Provenance. Montaruli’s doctrine of modal coincidence, the category of the who, and the programme of a-metaphysical ontology are the author’s own, developed in *Positive No-Ground: The Common and the Locus of Answerability* (2026a) and in *Ethical Ontology, Volume I: The Modal Coincidence* (2026b), and stated in *Montaruli’s Calculus of Modal Coincidence* (2026c), which is deposited and citable. An earlier work, *Koinonia: A Phenomenology of Being-With* (2026d), derives the shared world from being-with and is bibliographically relevant to §4.2 for the reason given there. **A reader who wants the doctrine rather than its defence should go to 2026c;** the two volumes are unpublished manuscripts and are cited here by chapter so that inherited claims can be located within them on publication.

This article does not summarise that work. It defends one of its results against the objection

most likely to be brought against it, and states that result only as far as the defence requires.

Where the argument below inherits from those volumes it says so and names the chapter; where it constructs, it says that too. The distinction is kept because the objection this article answers is precisely an objection about inheritance.

A note on the two interlocutors. The disagreements recorded below are narrow, and their narrowness is the point rather than a courtesy. Each rival is engaged at one premise; everything else the article takes from him and says so.

Scotus is called *Doctor Subtilis*, and the epithet is exact rather than honorific. He separates two questions that his predecessors ran together — what makes a particular indivisible into subjective parts, and what makes it distinct from other particulars — and then argues that the same thing answers both. He gives seven arguments for a unity less than numerical, one of which turns on the observation that nothing is similar to itself. He notices, and says, that the accidents of a substance are individuated by their own individuating entities, which most of his commentators pass over. And he raises against his own position the objection that would be used against it for the next two centuries: *if there is some real unity less than numerical unity, it belongs to something that is either in what is numerically the same or in something else* — and then answers it. The author does not suppose he would have constructed the formal distinction, and is certain he would not have seen that objection coming.

A remark on what that subtlety is, since it is usually misdescribed. Scotus's distinctions are commonly read as feats of analysis — a mind dividing more finely than other minds divide — and the formal distinction tells against that reading. He reaches for it because **neither available instrument fits**: the nature and its individuating entity are not really distinct, since they are inseparable; and they are not distinguished by the mind, since the difference obtains on the side of the thing. **An instrument invented because the two available ones failed is not a feat of division. It is a report.** A logician has no need of the formal distinction. Someone describing what he has found does — and a reader who pushes an analysis of these phenomena as far as it will go tends to discover that Scotus went one step further, and that the further step was not another division but another observation.

The subtlety is therefore the subtlety of what was found — and the finding was not on that account nothing. To remain in a region with the question standing, declining every instrument already to hand that would close it by folding the phenomenon into machinery built for something else, is not an exercise of cleverness. **It is nearer to courage**: what such an instrument offers is relief, and refusing relief is not an intellectual operation. The epithet is thus exact twice over — of what he found, and of what it took not to stop early. **And it is why this article can decline the machinery while keeping every one of the findings.**

Heidegger is engaged here on the question this article's own thesis concedes to him. He asked what the sense of being is and answered that it is temporal, and the answer is right; what is disputed is one step taken after it. The existential analytic is the most careful account of a deixis that anyone has written, and the vocabulary in which the question below can even be posed — manner, disclosure, access, the being for whom being is at issue — reaches this article through him. He also withheld the third division of *Sein und Zeit* and said why, in his own words, rather than publishing something that did not work.

And there is a fact about both men on which this article has quietly depended. **Each of them states, in his own text, the strongest objection to his own position.** Scotus raises the problem of the nature's unity in its instantiations. Heidegger anticipates at SZ 275 exactly the reading of conscience offered here and refuses it in terms. **The article's two most contested moves are therefore made against objections its interlocutors supplied,** and a reader may judge them on evidence neither party had to be persuaded to produce. Thinkers who do that are rarer than thinkers who are right, and the debt is the larger of the two.

1. Two infants and two bands

Two infants lie in a ward. They are twins, and they were banded on the first day, because to every route available in that room — appearance, weight, the times recorded before the bands went on — they are indiscernible. And they are two. No one on the ward doubts this, and nothing on the ward settles it.

The question is not how the staff tell them apart. The bands do that, and they do it badly: bands are exchanged, and when one is, the room's whole apparatus of identification goes with it and the two infants do not. The question is what it is about each of them that the other's indiscernibility does not touch. What makes each of them *this one*?

Before any answer is offered, ask the same question of the bands. The two bands are also indiscernible — same batch, same printing, same weight in the hand. They are also two. Whatever makes one band this band rather than that one, something makes it so, and no one is tempted to think a person has been produced.

An answer to *which one* is not yet an answer to *someone rather than merely something*, and an account that supplies only the first has explained the bands.

This is the article's whole problem in one sentence, and the three answers it examines divide on it. **Scotus:** what makes the individual individual is a positive individuating entity contracting a common nature, the two formally distinct realities of one thing. **Heidegger:** the being of Dasein is in each case its own — *Jemeinigkeit*, mineness, the formal structure of a being for whom its own being is at issue. **Montaruli's doctrine of modal coincidence** (Montaruli 2026a, 2026b): nothing individuates. Ownness is not an individuating factor at all; it is the character of a coincidence that was never assembled, and so has nothing in it for an individuator to be.

The third answer invites an objection that is obvious, strong, and correct as far as it goes. It runs: the doctrine of modal coincidence is haecceity plus *Jemeinigkeit*, and it is the conjunction renamed. Haecceity supplies *this one*; mineness supplies *someone*; strip the constituent from the first and the first-person requirement from the second, put them together, and you have what the doctrine calls ownness. Two doctrines, two subtractions, one new word.

This article exists to answer that objection, and it will do so in the only way an objection of that shape can be answered: by taking both rivals at full strength, trying the conjunction the objection proposes, and showing what the pair yields and what it leaves standing in the ward. The order

is: Scotus (§3), Heidegger (§4), the conjunction (§5), the positive account (§6). Objections are answered in §7 and the article's own falsifiers printed in §8.

One orientation is owed before the argument begins. **The engagement with Heidegger in §4 turns on two passages that are not, so far as the author is aware, standardly read as they are read here:** the formalisation of *Schuldigsein* at SZ 283, and the call of conscience at SZ 273–276. The first carries the greater weight, and for a reason worth stating in advance — **it rests on a printed methodological instruction rather than on an interpretation of doctrine**, which is the property that makes a new reading worth advancing at all. Both are stated so that they can be checked against the text and defeated by it, and §8 records which of the two is the likelier to fail.

2. The objection, at full strength

The crude version of the objection is not the one being answered. It runs: *you have taken two familiar doctrines and given them a new name*. This is answered by reading either rival, since the doctrine of modal coincidence denies a constituent Scotus requires and denies a first-person structure Heidegger requires, and a renaming denies nothing.

The version worth answering is sharper:

Ownness is *Jemeinigkeit* minus the first-person requirement, and haecceity minus the constituent. You have subtracted from two doctrines. Subtraction is not a contribution.

What is right in this must be conceded before anything is said against it. **The two subtractions are real.** The doctrine does drop the constituent: there is no individuating entity, no contracting difference, nothing in the occurrence that makes it this one. And it does drop the first-person requirement: the cat is a who, the newborn is a who, and neither is a being for whom its own being is at issue in Heidegger's sense. A reader who noticed those two denials noticed something true, and an article that began by disputing them would be defending the wrong thing.

The objection has been answered once already, and the difference between that answer and this one locates what this article adds. Montaruli 2026c answers it **on cases**: the newborn, the sleeper, the feline region, each showing that constitutive ownness obtains where Heidegger's conditions on mineness are absent. **This article answers it on the mechanism and on the texts** — why the conditions were there, and what the analytic does at the two places where the with is in its hands.

The reply is this, and it is not proved until §6:

The two subtractions are not independent, and neither is a subtraction: both follow from one positive claim — that the coincidence is not assembled. Once nothing is assembled there is no constituent to contract, and no completed structure to index. One claim, two consequences.

And the reply carries its own condition of failure, which should be stated now rather than discovered later. If the claim that the coincidence is not assembled turns out to be nothing

more than the conjunction of the two denials — if it says only *no constituent* and *no first-person structure* and nothing further — then the objection stands and this article fails. §6 must therefore show the claim doing work that neither denial does.

3. Scotus

Scotus is engaged in one paragraph of Montaruli 2026c (§7.1), where the Scotist datum is accepted in full and the Scotist machinery refused. **The architectural argument below, the vocabulary correction, and the three-term reading are constructed here**, and nothing in the doctrine of modal coincidence was formulated with his position in view.

3.1 The doctrine

The doctrine must be stated as one system, because the version usually attacked is a compound with a seam in it and Scotus's has none.

A common nature — humanity, felinity — has of itself a real unity, and that unity is **less than numerical**. It is not the unity of one individual, and it is not a unity conferred by the intellect: the nature is common before any act of thinking makes it so. Of itself the nature is indifferent to being in the intellect and to being in a particular, and it is never found without one of the two while being naturally prior to both. An **individual difference** contracts it to this one. And the nature and the difference are not two things: they are **formally distinct realities of the same thing**, distinguished on the side of the thing and not merely by our regarding, and yet not separable as two items are separable.

The loci are *Ordinatio* II, d. 3, p. 1: the common nature at q. 1, nn. 32–34 (Vatican VII, 403–405; Spade 63–65); the rejection of qualitative individuation at q. 4, nn. 87–89 (432–434; Spade 79–80); the individual difference and the formal distinction at qq. 5–6, n. 188 (483–484; Spade 107).

One correction of vocabulary belongs here and is made once, because this article is about individuation and *haecceitas* is the tradition's name for the individuating factor.

The *Ordinatio* does not use the word. Its terms are *entitas individualis*, *differentia individualis*, *ultima realitas entis*. Cross states the point directly: *Scotus does not use the term 'haecceity' [haecceitas] in the work that I am using here — the Ordinatio. He talks rather about the individual difference, or individual entity. But he does elsewhere talk about this entity as a haecceitas [a term of Scotus's own invention]* (Cross 2022, §3), referring the change in terminology to Dumont (1995). Dumont himself, in the encyclopedia article on Scotus, calls it *a term used seldom by Scotus himself*; and Robert Adams, introducing *thisness* into recent metaphysics, notes that *haecceitas so far as I know was invented by Duns Scotus* (Adams 1979, 6). **Three independent attestations, and none of them from a reader hostile to the doctrine.**

And where he does use it, it is not doing the job the tradition gave it. In the *Quaestiones super Metaphysicam* VII the word appears at various points but **not in reference to the individuating factor**: Scotus uses it there to speak of individuality, not of the principle or cause of an individual's individuality. So the tradition's name for the individuating factor is a

word its author coined, used rarely, and did not use to name the individuating factor.

Nothing in the argument turns on this. It is recorded because a reader who knows only the tradition's usage will otherwise take *haecceitas* to be the thing under discussion, and it is not: **the thing under discussion is the individual difference, and Scotus named it.**

3.2 What is endorsed

Three results of this doctrine are endorsed here without reservation, and it matters that they are stated before the cost.

The **datum** is honoured: two indiscernibles are two. Scotus does not explain the twins away, does not make their duality a function of our failure to discriminate, and does not treat the question as confused. He takes it as a question and answers it.

The **insufficiency of qualitative individuation** stands. No accumulation of qualities, however complete, makes one of two indiscernibles the one it is; and Scotus establishes this at q. 4 by argument rather than by assertion. This article inherits the result and does not re-argue it.

And the **reality of common natures prior to any act of intellect** is left standing. The doctrine of modal coincidence is not a nominalism, and the manner it speaks of is truly said of many before anyone says it.

What is declined is not any of these conclusions. It is the warrant offered for the first — the machinery of nature, difference, and formal distinction — and the article says which is which because a reader entitled to the conclusions is entitled to know they are not being taken back.

3.3 The cost, which is architectural

Begin with the term the rest of the article will use.

A structure **factorises** when it resolves without remainder into separately complete determinations plus a subject that bears them and is not itself one of them.

And the guard, which must travel with it: factorisation adds to analytic distinguishability exactly two things the coincidence never had — separate completeness, and a bearer that is not one of them. What is refused is the addition, never the analysis. That a nature and a difference can be distinguished in thought is not in question here and never has been.

Now the pressure, and it comes from Scotus's own precision rather than from any looseness in him. Nature and difference are formally distinct realities **of the same thing**. The formula is exact, and the exactness is what exposes it: *the same thing* is a term the machinery has not supplied. Ask what the contraction contracts *in*, and the answer is the occurrence whose being-this the contraction was recruited to explain.

This is not the objection that the formal distinction is obscure, which is an old objection and a poor one. It is narrower. Grant the formal distinction entirely; grant that the nature has less-than-numerical unity; grant the contraction. **The contracting still happens somewhere, and that somewhere is what was to be accounted for.**

That the doctrine has three terms where the question concerned one is not a hostile reading.

Cross, expounding Scotus and defending him, counts them in his own voice: *There are three things here: the nature in the particular, the haecceity, and the particular itself. Each of these is numerically one* (Cross 2022, §3). The individuating entity is *primarily* numerically one; the particular is *per se* numerically one, *because it includes the component in virtue of which it is numerically one*; the nature in the particular is *denominatively* numerically one.

Read the middle term. The particular is numerically one *because it includes* the component. Inclusion is a relation between a whole and a part, and a whole that includes a part is already a this — already the particular whose being-this the component was introduced to explain. **The explanation is not circular; it is one term short.**

The reply available to Scotus is that the subject is not a third term but the composite itself — nature-as-contracted, and nothing further. This is the strongest version and it should be taken seriously. But then the composite’s being-this is not explained by the contraction; it is the contraction’s having occurred here rather than there, and *here* has done the work the difference was hired for. The machinery has been paid and the account is still open.

3.4 The ward again

Return to the twins and to the bands beside them.

On this doctrine, each twin is a common nature contracted by an individual difference, in a subject. Each band is a common nature contracted by an individual difference, in a subject. The natures differ — humanity, whatever the nature of a printed plastic band is — but the architecture is the same, and it is the architecture that was supposed to explain being-this.

So the doctrine gives the twins exactly what it gives the bands: a *which one*. That is a real achievement and §1 has already ruled it insufficient. Nothing so far tells us why one pair of indiscernibles is two whos and the other is two objects, and Scotus’s answer to that lies elsewhere in his system, in the nature contracted, not in the individuating factor. Which is precisely the point: **the individuating factor is not where the who-question is answered, on his account or on any.**

4. Heidegger

One prior engagement must be distinguished from this one, since both are the author’s, and the relation is a sequence rather than a repetition. Montaruli 2026c contests Heidegger’s binding of mineness to *Existenz* and does so **on cases** — the newborn before anything can be at issue for her, the dreamless sleeper whose ownness does not flicker, the feline region. It states that the binding is made *by design*, and leaves it there.

This section asks why the binding was there. Its answer is that it was not a choice but a constraint of the starting point (§4.2) — which is a different kind of reply from a counterexample, since it explains the doctrine rather than objecting to it. **And it argues from the pages rather than from the position:** the formalisation of *Schuld* at SZ 283 (§4.3) and the call of conscience at SZ 273–276 (§4.4) appear in no prior work of the author’s, and neither does Heidegger’s own exclusion of the other-in-the-world as candidate caller. **The earlier statement asserts what**

this one undertakes to show.

4.1 The doctrine

Jemeinigkeit is not a claim about ownership and not a claim about introspection, and both misreadings are common enough that the doctrine must be stated before anything is charged against it.

The being of Dasein is in each case **its own** — and *its own* here means that this being is one for which its own being is **at issue**. Dasein is *ausgeliefert*, delivered over to that being: it has to be it, and cannot decline to. Mineness belongs to **any Dasein whatsoever**, and belongs to it as the condition in virtue of which authenticity and inauthenticity are alike possible — which is why it is not lost in inauthenticity. The they-self is a *mode* of *Jemeinigkeit* and not its forfeiture. Dasein absorbed in the *Man* has not mislaid its mineness; it is being mine in the mode of not being its own.

Read as a possession that can be mislaid, it has not been met.

One scope note belongs here, because §5 will need it. Heidegger's clause that Dasein's characters are not properties admitting of degrees is given at H. 43 with its own list of concretions — *when busy, when excited, when interested, when ready for enjoyment*. Every item is a state of intact capacity. What the clause governs is the modes of a Dasein that has its capacities, and it is silent about a Dasein that does not.

4.2 What a deictic starting point can and cannot reach

The diagnosis that follows is this article's, and it must not be mistaken for an exposition of Heidegger. It is stated in three steps and then guarded.

First, ownness as the doctrine of modal coincidence has it is **non-vicarious** (Vol. I, Ch. 7): the finite-living articulation is that this life cannot be somebody else's living. And non-vicariousness is stated **against a possible substitute who cannot substitute**. That is not an illustration of the concept but a term the concept cannot be formulated without: a refusal of substitution has no sense where no substitute is possible. Another who is therefore carried inside the concept, and the refusal would be empty without one.

Second, a deictic index carries nothing of that kind. *Da, jetzt, je* point; they do not relate. An index is applicable **each time, to any occurrence**, and no occurrence stands in any relation to any other by being one of its applications.

Third, therefore: **iterability is not plurality**. A structure run over a domain, however large the domain, is not a manifold of relations.

The positive contrast is what the distinction is for:

Je meinigkeit yields **every instance** — one structure run over a domain. *Ognuno a modo suo* yields **each in its own way** — a plurality of manners. These differ in kind, not in degree. And the second need not be run at all: no every-instance pointing stands between the phenomenon and its being reached, because what is reached is a character and not a tally.

And now the guard, which belongs in the body and not in a note:

The seriality is no feature Heidegger asserts, and no sentence of his says so. It is what ownness looks like from a deictic starting point — a diagnosis belonging to the present account and to no page of *Sein und Zeit*.

One corroboration belongs here, and it is not a remark about the author. **The diagnosis says that a deictic starting point cannot reach the with. It does not say the with is unreachable** — and the route by which the present account arrived at the differentia ran through a phenomenology of being-with: through the very structure the analytic named as equiprimordial and left underived (Montaruli 2026d). That work takes up the derivation from the other side, at the perimeter where the shared field fails — the withheld greeting, the greeting that does not land, the animal that responds and cannot be greeted, the speech with no one answerable behind it. **It was written before the present diagnosis was formulated**, and it is offered here as an exhibit rather than a credential: what §4.2 claims is foreclosed from one starting point has been reached from another, in print, by a route a reader can inspect.

An objection to this diagnosis is obvious and is answered at §7.3: the doctrine of modal coincidence is itself deictic through and through, and appears to commit what it diagnoses. The short form of the answer is that Volume I distinguishes deictic **determination**, which is what is reached, from deictic **reaching**, which is the access, and holds that the reaching never constitutes what it reaches (Vol. I, Ch. 11). The longer form is at §7.3.

4.3 The formalisation of *Schuld*

Everything in §4.2 is reconstruction: a claim about what an architecture required, inferred from what it did. This section is not.

The reading of SZ 283 that follows is constructed here. It appears in neither volume, and nothing in the doctrine of modal coincidence depends on it.

Consider first what is in the concept of *Schuldigsein* when Heidegger begins its analysis.

SZ 281: *Man soll dem Andern etwas zurückgeben, worauf er Anspruch hat. Dieses »Schuldigsein« als »Schulden haben« ist eine Weise des Mitseins mit Anderen.*

One ought to give back to the other something to which he has a **claim**. This being-guilty as *having debts* is a **way of being-with-others**.

The analysis continues into a second sense at SZ 282, and the second is stronger than the first. Beyond owing something, one can be **guilty toward another** — *Schuldigwerden an Anderen* — and Heidegger gives the formal concept of it: *Grundsein für einen Mangel im Dasein eines Andern*, being the ground of a lack in another's Dasein, where the ground itself is determined as deficient from what it is for. He adds that this becoming-guilty toward others is possible without any violation of public law, which is to say that the phenomenon is not borrowed from a legal order but disclosed in the relation.

Two pages of the analysis are therefore conducted in the with, and are conducted there by him. Owing; a claim; another with a title against me; being the ground of a lack in another's life. This is the addressive structure entire — the structure in which something is asked of me by

someone, and cannot be passed on — and it is not read into the text. It is what the text says the phenomenon is.

Then the operation:

SZ 283: Zu diesem Zwecke muß die Idee von »schuldig« soweit formalisiert werden, daß die auf das besorgende Mitsein mit Anderen bezogenen vulgären Schuldphänomene ausfallen.

To this end the idea of *guilty* must be formalised to such an extent that the vulgar phenomena of guilt **related to concerned being-with-others drop out**.

The sentence names its own subject-matter. What is to drop out is not a level of discourse and not a vagueness: it is *die auf das besorgende Mitsein mit Anderen bezogenen* phenomena — those referred to being-with-others. And the same sentence and its sequel remove the relation to *Sollen und Gesetz*, ought and law, on the same ground.

What survives the formalisation is stated a page later: *Grundsein für ein durch ein Nicht bestimmtes Sein — das heißt Grundsein einer Nichtigkeit*. Being the ground of a nullity. The analysis that began at owing another has arrived at grounding a nothing.

And the order then inverts. At SZ 286 the existential *Schuldigsein* is said to *gibt allererst die ontologische Bedingung dafür, daß das Dasein faktisch existierend schuldig werden kann* — to give, first of all, the ontological condition for Dasein's being able to become factually guilty. What was disclosed in the with is thereby made derivative of what is reached alone. And when *Mitsein* returns at SZ 288, it returns as that toward which one has always already become guilty, *auf dem nichtigen Grunde seines nichtigen Entwerfens je schon im Mitsein mit Andern an ihnen schuldig geworden* — on the null ground, already, in every case.

The claim this article makes about the passage is exact and modest, and both qualities matter.

Everything else in this article is reconstruction — a claim about what an architecture required, inferred from what it did. **This is an instruction, printed, followed by its execution.**

It is not claimed that Heidegger overlooked the with here. The opposite: he finds it, states it with precision, gives its formal concept, and then removes it by name as a stated requirement of the method. Nor is it claimed that the removal is illegitimate on his own terms; a fundamental ontology that means to reach an existential structure has reason to formalise away what belongs to concerned dealings. What is claimed is narrower and, for this article's purposes, sufficient: **at the one place where the analytic had the addressive structure in hand, the method required it to drop out, and it dropped out.**

One reply must be met, because it is the strongest available and a reader will reach for it. It is that *vulgär* marks a **level** — the everyday, pre-ontological understanding of guilt — and not a subject-matter, so that what drops out is a way of taking the phenomenon rather than anything relational. Two things answer it. The sentence specifies its own scope, and the specification is relational: the phenomena *related to concerned being-with-others*. And what precedes it, at SZ 281–282, is not a vulgar understanding of guilt but Heidegger's own formal concept of *Schuldigwerden an Anderen* — the ground of a lack in another's Dasein — which is an ontological determination

and drops out with the rest.

4.4 Conscience, and the objection Heidegger himself supplies

The call of conscience has three features that readers have long found puzzling, and each has a locus.

The call **says nothing** and speaks only in silence: *Der Ruf sagt nichts aus, gibt keine Auskunft über Weltereignisse ... das Gewissen redet einzig und ständig im Modus des Schweigens* (§56, SZ 273). It comes from me and yet over me: *Der Ruf kommt aus mir und doch über mich* (§57, SZ 275). And the caller is determinable by nothing worldly: *Der Rufer ist in seinem Wer »weltlich« durch nichts bestimmbar* — he is Dasein in its uncanniness, *das ursprüngliche geworfene In-der-Welt-sein als Un-zuhause, das nackte »Daß« im Nichts* (§57, SZ 276).

On the diagnosis of §4.2, these three are not three oddities. They are the signature of an addressive structure whose addresser has been removed. Address is a relation with a term: someone claims me, and the claim is not deputable. Begin at the *Da*, and the addresser has nowhere to stand. So the addressive form survives intact and arrives empty. From me, because there is nowhere else it can be from. Over me, because it is genuinely not mine to author. Unworldly, because the missing item is precisely a who. And silent, because a relation stated without its term has no content to deliver: non-vicariousness itself says nothing — it refuses.

Heidegger anticipates this reading and refuses it, in the same section, in terms. The sentence must be quoted before any reply, and a defender of the analytic should lead with it:

SZ 275: *Die eigentümliche Unbestimmtheit und Unbestimmbarkeit des Rufers ist nicht nichts, sondern eine positive Auszeichnung.*

The peculiar indefiniteness and indeterminability of the caller is not nothing, but a **positive distinction**.

It marks, he says, that the caller is wholly absorbed in the calling — *daß der Rufer einzig aufgeht im Aufrufen zu ..., daß er nur als solcher gehört und ferner nicht beschwätzt sein will*. And a page earlier: *Das Dasein ruft im Gewissen sich selbst*. The emptiness is not a lack; it is the mark of a caller who wants to be heard only as caller.

This is a good answer and it is not evaded here. The reply to it stands three lines above the sentence just quoted, in Heidegger's own hand.

SZ 275: »Es« ruft, wider Erwarten und gar wider Willen. Andererseits kommt der Ruf zweifellos nicht von einem Anderen, der mit mir in der Welt ist.

On the other hand the call comes, without doubt, **not from an other who is with me in the world**.

He raises the other-in-the-world as a candidate caller and excludes it by name. The with is not overlooked at the decisive moment; it is considered and ruled out — and that exclusion is evidence the present reading could not have manufactured.

So the finding must be stated in its honest form. Heidegger saw the emptiness of the caller, denied that it was privative, and explained it by the caller's absorption into the calling — **having**

already excluded the one candidate that would have filled it. The *positive Auszeichnung* is what an amputated relation looks like when the amputation has been ruled out in advance rather than overlooked.

5. The conjunction

The objection of §2 proposes a division of labour: let haecceity supply *this one* and let *Jemeinigkeit* supply *someone*. Taken at its word, this is a serious proposal, and it deserves to be tried rather than dismissed.

5.1 The bands

Return to §1. Two bands, indiscernible, two.

Haecceity delivers a verdict here: each band has its own individual difference contracting whatever nature a band has, and each is this one rather than that. *Jemeinigkeit* delivers nothing, and is not supposed to: a band is not Dasein, its being is not at issue for it, and no reading of Heidegger extends mineness to plastic.

So the pair yields, for the bands, a numerically distinct something. That is right, and it is right because it is all there is. The case is not a counterexample to the conjunction; it is the control that shows what the conjunction's first half does on its own.

5.2 The cat, the infant, the one whose capacities have receded

Now the cases where the second half is supposed to do its work and does not.

A cat is a who. This is not a rhetorical concession but a result of the doctrine's regional trials (Vol. I, Chs. 2, 20), and someone who has lost one knows the result without the argument: what fails to be restored by another cat is not a bundle of qualities, and the failure is not a failure of resemblance. On Heidegger's own terms, the cat is not Dasein, has no *Jemeinigkeit*, and is no *who* that the analytic recognises. Nothing here is smuggled past him; the departure is deliberate and open.

An infant in the first hour is a who. Nothing about her being is yet at issue for her in the sense the analytic requires — she does not project, does not understand herself from possibilities, has no relation to her own death. The care that reaches her reaches someone, and reaches her now rather than a future speaker concealed inside her.

And a person whose capacities have receded — through injury, through dementia — is a who. This is the case on which the doctrine of modal coincidence and the analytic part company most sharply, and it is worth stating that Heidegger says nothing about it: the anti-degree clause at H. 43 is scoped by its own concretions, all of them states of an intact Dasein (§4.1). He is not convicted here of a doctrine he did not hold. But *Jemeinigkeit* is a structure of being-at-issue-for-itself, and where that structure is not available, the conjunction's second half has nothing to contribute.

In all three cases the pair yields a numerically distinct living thing, and no who. The first half works and the second is silent, exactly as at the bands. And the whos are there anyway.

One further case belongs here, from the other side of a life, and it is entered for what it shows about the question rather than for a verdict.

In a chapel of rest the body is unambiguously this body. **Haecceity delivers which one with no ambiguity whatever** — there is no case in which numerical distinctness is less in doubt. And nothing at all is at issue for anyone: **Jemeinigkeit has no application here on any reading**, Heidegger's least of all. **So the pair yields, exactly and completely, a numerically distinct body.**

Whether it yields anything further is what anyone who has stood in such a room already knows to be the question. **The practice of the room is not intelligible on the pair's answer.** People speak there, and they speak to her — not about her, and not to the body. Whether they are right, and what they are doing if they are, this article does not settle: it belongs to a doctrine of definitive perimetralisation, of indelible having-been, and of address that reaches no recipient, which lies outside the present argument (Vol. I, Chs. 17–18, 23).

What the case establishes here is narrower and sufficient: the question survives the life. *Which one* has been answered as completely as it will ever be answered, and precisely there the other question stands at its greatest pressure. **The bands are two and were never anyone; the body is one and was someone. The pair returns the same verdict for both — and no one who has been in either room does.**

5.3 A manner that passes between whos and fails to arrive

The third case is less familiar and shows a different kind of gap.

Take it in a trade. A wheelwright dies, the last in his town. Two apprentices survive him: one drives a delivery van now, the other builds kitchens. The tools hang in a shed nobody has cleared. A retired schoolteacher photographed the work across one summer, and the photographs are good — every stage of truing a wheel, in sequence, in focus.

And the craft has not been transmitted. The photographs record what the hands did and not the pressures, the resistances, the tolerances, the corrections a learner would not know to look for. Someone can be shown them and learn nothing he could work by. **What passed between whos, for two centuries, was something the photographs do not contain** — and its failing to pass is not the loss of an object, since no object is missing, and not the loss of a person, since both apprentices are alive.

So something was carried between whos and did not arrive. **The case is ordinary — it happens somewhere every year — and neither rival has a term for what failed.**

Haecceity has no term for this. Individual differences do not pass; that is what makes them individual differences. *Jemeinigkeit* has no term for it either, and the reason is instructive rather than incidental: in *Sein und Zeit* the handing-down of a heritage is **reflexive**. *Dasein* hands *itself* its own inherited possibility — *sich selbst die ererbte Möglichkeit überliefernd* (SZ 385) — and no second who receives from a first. When Heidegger does reach a thing that has passed

between people and been borne along, at SZ 388–389, he says that its movedness has *bislang völlig im Dunkel* remained, and defers the question.

So on the third case the pair yields nothing at all.

5.4 What the pair is, and why it cannot be repaired

The pair is not two halves of one answer. Haecceity answers *which one*; the question is *someone rather than merely something*. A which-one answer completed by an at-issue-for-itself answer yields a numerically distinct self-relating thing — which is a good description of a Dasein and not a doctrine of who-hood, since the cat, the infant and the one whose capacities have receded are whos and none of them is one.

The conjunction cannot be repaired by adjustment, because its two halves are given in different registers. Scotus's answer is **constituent**: something in the thing makes it this. Heidegger's is **relational-to-itself**: the being of this being is at issue for it. Conjoin a constituent with a self-relation and you obtain a thing with an inside — and the article's cases are not about insides. The cat is not a who because of what is in it, and the infant is not a who because of what she does with herself.

6. What ownness is

This section must discharge the condition set at §2.4: it must show the claim that the coincidence is not assembled doing work that neither of its consequences does alone.

6.1 The claim

The coincidence is not assembled.

An open and repeatable manner — living, in the regions tried — coincides completely with this finite, historical, embodied occurrence, and non-repeatability obtains in the modalisation. There is no bearer beneath the coincidence and no constituent within it, and not because a search was made and came back empty: **there was no assembly for either to be part of**. A bearer is what parts are parts of; a constituent is what a whole is composed from; and where nothing is composed, neither term has an application.

Three terms belong to this and must be held apart, since collapsing them is the standing error in reading the doctrine (inherited: Vol. I, Ch. 7). **Ownness** names the event in the register of possibility: an open manner coinciding completely with this occurrence, so that non-repeatability arises. **The who** is the **mode** of that coincidence — how it obtains, not a thing that has it. **Non-vicariousness** is the **differentiating character** of the who-category: what marks that category off from the others.

6.2 A differentia that is not an archē

That a differentia is constitutive of the difference it splits is not a further claim; it is what the word says. And nothing archic follows from it.

Non-vicariousness grounds no who, produces none, and stands beneath none. It is the **mode by which the category is the category it is**, as the who is the mode by which the coincidence obtains. A mode is not a principle.

This bears directly on the objection. **A differentia that grounds nothing cannot be the constituent Scotus requires.** It is not a weakened haecceity, not a haecceity with its ontological weight reduced, not the same office filled more modestly. It is a different kind of item — or rather not an item, which is the point. The first subtraction alleged at §2 is therefore not a subtraction from Scotus: there is no common measure on which the doctrine has less of what he had.

6.3 Two faces

From that character the who's uniqueness comes in two directions at once.

Turned **toward the manner**, it refuses that the coincidence recur. The manner is open and may obtain again — feline living obtains in the next cat, and truly — and this coincidence of it with this occurrence may not. **Non-repeatability.**

Turned **toward the mode**, it refuses that anyone stand in this place. **Non-replaceability.**

One character, two faces. And the trials disclosed both before either was named: the substitution cases press the second, the recurrence cases the first, and they were treated for years as separate results.

6.4 The differentia carries plurality twice

This is the section's central claim and it is not an inference.

Inward. The finite-living articulation is *this life cannot be somebody else's living*. A refusal of substitution is empty where no substitute is possible, and a possible substitute is another who. **Other whos are therefore carried in the formulation**, not added to it.

Outward. The unrestricted formulation is *the whole modal coincidence as someone rather than merely something*. A differentia is stated against a contrast class, and this one's contrast class is not other species within a kind but **things that obtain in another way** — a stone, a river, a tool.

Neither is inferred. Both are read off formulations already given — which matters, because an inference can be attacked at the inference, and a reading-off must be attacked by showing the term dispensable in the formulation, which it is not.

One guard travels with this and prevents the obvious misreading. **Co-inclusion is not identity.** Plurality is never the differentia: a maximally plural obtaining with nothing own about it would be a rich something, not a who. Plurality is a **condition of the statement** and never the character stated.

And the consequence, which is the largest thing this article claims:

The contrast is categorial. A category whose differentia is stated against other categories cannot be seen apart from them — so to see the who as a category

is already to have seen that being obtains in more than one way.

6.5 Scope

Two scopings travel with non-vicariousness and neither may be dropped.

The **finite-living articulation** — *non-vicarious living* — is not carried to untried regions. Whether and how ownness is articulated in civic, machine, sacred or divine candidatures is open in both directions, and this article decides none of it.

And the boundary is **provisional**. It is drawn at *living*, on an account of living that the work has not renewed. It marks where the trials have gone, not where the character stops.

6.6 Discharging the condition

The condition set at §2.4 was that the claim must do work neither of its consequences does.

The claim that the coincidence is not assembled is not the conjunction of two denials, because it yields something neither denial yields: a differentia that carries plurality in two directions and grounds nothing. Neither Scotus's constituent nor Heidegger's self-relation has a contrast class outside its own category, and that is why neither could reach the who as a category among categories.

Scotus's individual difference contrasts with other individual differences; it is what distinguishes this member of a nature from that one, and it says nothing about what distinguishes members of that nature from what obtains otherwise. *Jemeinigkeit* contrasts with nothing at all: it belongs to any Dasein whatsoever and is the condition of Dasein's modes, so there is no class it marks Dasein off from. **The doctrine's differentia does what neither does, and does it because the coincidence was never assembled: there being nothing composed, the character that marks the category is not a part of anything and is free to face outward.**

7. Objections

7.1 — You have renamed the conjunction. §5. The pair yields a numerically distinct self-relating thing. The cat, the infant and the one whose capacities have receded are whos and none of them is that; and the manner that fails to arrive is nothing the pair can state.

7.2 — You have merely subtracted. §6.6. One positive claim, two consequences — and the claim yields a differentia with an external contrast class, which neither rival's answer has and neither denial supplies.

7.3 — Your own account is deictic throughout; you commit what you diagnose. This is the best objection to §4.2 and has two answers, of which the second is the stronger.

The first is that Volume I distinguishes three things which the objection runs together (Vol. I, Ch. 11). **Deictic determination** is the ontological determination of the coincidence as this — the result presupposed. **Deictic reaching** is the regional route by which this occurrence becomes the one at issue — perceptual tracking, address, memory, record. **Linguistic deixis** is one vehicle

of that reaching among several. Determination is what is reached; reaching is the access; the demonstrative is a vehicle. The doctrine's deixis is access to an already determinate occurrence, and it is defined as non-constitutive, with the corrigibility of misreaching as the evidence: what answers to something beyond itself does not constitute what it answers to.

The second answer is sharper and does not depend on that architecture. **The phenomenon in question need not be run through instance by instance to be reached.** An index applied again and again yields every instance and never a second way. What the doctrine states is a character and not a tally — and a character is not reached by enumeration, because there is nothing to enumerate until the character has been seen.

7.4 — *Jemeinigkeit implies others too: je meines distinguishes what is mine from what is another's.*** It does, and the distinction it makes is not the one at issue. **Iteration distinguishes; substitution-refusal relates.** Two applications of an index differ without either standing in any relation to the other, and that is all the distinguishing *je* performs. Non-vicariousness cannot be stated at all without a possible substitute who cannot substitute, and that is a relation to someone who could have stood here and cannot.

7.5 — *Scotus's individuating entity is not a constituent in your sense; you have attacked a reification he avoids.* Two replies, and the first is not the one usually expected.

The constituent reading is his own commitment, and it has a reason. The standard treatment puts it plainly: Scotus holds that the individuating entity **must** be a constituent, because he grants reality to common natures, and the reality of a common nature requires the reality of the individuating entity, **both as constituents of the particular.** The realism about universals and the constituent reading stand or fall together, and he was not in a position to take one without the other.

And even granting the objection entirely, the cost-claim of §3.3 is architectural and does not depend on the individuating factor's ontological weight. However light the item, the contraction occurs in a subject, and that subject's being-this is what the contraction was recruited to explain. **The objection improves Scotus and leaves the argument where it was.**

7.6 — *SZ 275 gives the caller's indeterminacy a positive Auszeichnung.* §4.4, where the sentence is quoted in full before any reply and its force conceded. The answer is not that Heidegger failed to consider the point but that three lines earlier he excludes the other-in-the-world by name as a candidate caller.

7.7 — *All analysis formalises; you have found nothing but ordinary method at SZ 283.* §4.3. The question is not whether formalisation occurred but what was formalised away, and the sentence answers it in its own words: the phenomena *related to concerned being-with-others*, together with the relation to ought and law. And what precedes it is not a vulgar understanding but Heidegger's own formal concept of being-guilty toward another.

7.8 — *You claim a phenomenon nobody noticed in twenty-five centuries.* No. Three levels must be kept apart. A character constitutive of the who cannot fail to **operate** — that is not a claim about texts, and no textual finding bears on it. It **appears** to any thinker who genuinely encounters the phenomenon, and both rivals plainly did. And it **appears ontologically** only where it is reached ontologically, as the differentia of a category of being. The register in which

a constitutive character can appear is fixed by the route through which it is reached: a moral route delivers it as dignity, a deictic route as mineness, and only an ontological route as a differentia. **The contribution claimed is the categorial seeing, not the phenomenon.**

7.9 — Then Kant had it: Würde* is non-substitutability.* Yes — and the criterion is his: *Im Reiche der Zwecke hat alles entweder einen Preis, oder eine Würde. Was einen Preis hat, an dessen Stelle kann auch etwas anderes, als Äquivalent, gesetzt werden; was dagegen über allen Preis erhaben ist, mithin kein Äquivalent verstattet, das hat eine Würde* (AA 4:434). That is non-substitutability stated as a refusal, which is its native form.

And then he restricts it, twice and in two ways. At **AA 4:435** by a capacity clause: *Also ist die Sittlichkeit und die Menschheit, sofern sie derselben fähig ist, dasjenige, was allein Würde hat.* At **AA 4:436** by a ground: *Autonomie ist also der Grund der Würde der menschlichen und jeder vernünftigen Natur.* Nothing in the *Groundwork* carries *Würde* past rational nature.

The structural point follows and is not a polemic. **Ground a categorial character in a capacity and the character tracks the capacity's distribution.** Kant's does. The doctrine's does not, because non-vicariousness is declared and grounded in nothing — which is why the newborn, the one whose capacities have receded, and the cat retain it, and why *Würde* cannot reach them. (The reach of the 4:435 clause is currently debated; the debate is noted and not enlisted, belonging to another paper.)

8. What would falsify this

Four findings would defeat the argument, and they are printed because an argument that does not say how it fails has not said what it claims.

First. A text in which non-vicariousness is reached **ontologically** — stated as the differentia of a category of being. The originality claim of §7.8 fails outright, and with it the article's reason for existing.

Second. A passage in which Scotus's contraction does not presuppose the subject in which nature and difference are formally distinct. §3.3 collapses from an argument to a preference.

Third. A passage in which the existential analytic reaches singularity through the other's irreplaceability rather than through what the analysts can enact alone. §4 fails.

Fourth. A reading of SZ 283 on which the formalisation removes nothing relational — for instance, that *vulgär* marks a level of discourse rather than a subject-matter, so that the ontological concept of being-guilty toward another survives it.

The fourth is the one to watch, and the article says so. It is the sharpest available reply to the strongest evidence offered here, and it is why §4.3 quotes SZ 281–282 at length before quoting SZ 283: a reader must be able to see what was in the concept before the sentence removed it, and judge for himself whether what dropped out was a way of speaking or a phenomenon.

9. The ward

Two infants; two bands beside them. The bands are two, and are not anyone.

The question was never *which one*. It was what an answer to *which one* leaves out — and both of the great answers to individuation leave out the same thing, for reasons that do them credit rather than discredit. Scotus's individual difference distinguishes this member of a nature from that member, which is what he built it to do. Heidegger's mineness articulates a being for whom its own being is at issue, which is what he found. Neither was answering the question the ward asks, and neither pretended to.

What the ward asks is answered by a character that faces two ways: inward, against a substitute who cannot substitute; outward, against what obtains in another way. And the outward face is the larger of the two.

To see the who as a category is already to have seen that being obtains in more than one way. That is why an account committed to one way could not reach it — and why the two greatest attempts, made from within such accounts, reached everything else.

References

Primary

Duns Scotus, John. *Opera omnia* [the Vatican edition]. Ed. C. Balić et al. Vatican City: Vatican Polyglot Press, 1950–. *Ordinatio* II, d. 3, p. 1 is at vol. VII (1973), cited by question, paragraph number and page.

Duns Scotus, John. *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*. Ed. R. Andrews et al. *Opera philosophica* III–IV. St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 1997. Book VII, q. 13 for the question on individuation; this edition prints *haecitas*.

Heidegger, Martin. *Sein und Zeit*. 11th ed. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1967. Cited by section and by the pagination of that edition, which is reproduced in the margins of *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 2 (ed. F.-W. von Herrmann, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1977) and is standard in the literature.

Kant, Immanuel. *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (1785). *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, Akademie-Ausgabe, Bd. IV. Berlin: Reimer, 1911. Cited as AA IV with page.

Translations consulted

Spade, Paul Vincent, trans. *Five Texts on the Mediaeval Problem of Universals: Porphyry, Boethius, Abelard, Duns Scotus, Ockham*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994. Renderings of *Ordinatio* II, d. 3 checked against this translation and cited alongside the Vatican pagination.

Secondary

Dumont, Stephen D. "The Question on Individuation in Scotus's *Quaestiones super Metaphysicam*." In *Via Scoti: Methodologica ad mentem Joannis Duns Scoti*. *Atti del*

Congresso Scotistico Internazionale, Roma 9–11 Marzo 1993, ed. Leonardo Sileo, 2 vols., 1: 193–227. Rome: Antonianum, 1995.

Dumont, Stephen D. “Duns Scotus, John (c.1266–1308).” *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London: Routledge, 1998. doi:10.4324/9780415249126-B035-1.

Cross, Richard. “Medieval Theories of Haecceity.” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. First published 31 July 2003; substantive revision 18 January 2022. Cited as Cross 2022, by section.

Adams, Robert Merrihew. “Primitive Thisness and Primitive Identity.” *The Journal of Philosophy* 76 (1979): 5–26.

Author’s own

Montaruli, Alessio. *Positive No-Ground: The Common and the Locus of Answerability*. Unpublished manuscript. [2026a]

Montaruli, Alessio. *Ethical Ontology, Volume I: The Modal Coincidence*. Unpublished manuscript. [2026b]

Montaruli, Alessio. *Montaruli’s Calculus of Modal Coincidence*. Version 6. Zenodo, 2026. doi:10.5281/zenodo.21497200. Also deposited at PhilArchive: <https://philarchive.org/archive/MONTCO-41> [2026c]

Montaruli, Alessio. *Koinonia: A Phenomenology of Being-With*. 2026. Registered with the United States Copyright Office. Complete text available at <https://kitalent.com/research/koinonia> [2026d]

Note on the state of the bibliography

Every item is complete. The three claims taken from Cross (2022) — that the *Ordinatio* does not use the term, that the coinage is Scotus’s own, and that Scotus holds the individuating entity must be a constituent — are attributed to him in the body, and the fourth use, his three-term count at §3.3, is quoted.

Two items are unpublished and are described as such; two are available in full. The author’s two volumes are cited as manuscripts rather than as forthcoming works, since neither has a publication date, and where the argument inherits from them the chapter is given in the body so that the claim can be located on publication. **Montaruli 2026c is deposited on PhilArchive and is the reachable statement of the doctrine;** §4 states precisely where its engagement with Heidegger differs from this one’s, and §3 records that Scotus figures in none of the prior work.

The remaining items are standard editions, and the two that matter most to the argument — *Sein und Zeit* in the Niemeyer pagination and the *Ordinatio* in the Vatican — are the editions from which every quotation in this article was read.