

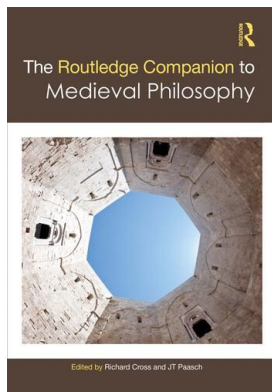
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Publisher: *Routledge*

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The Routledge Companion to Medieval Philosophy

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Freedom

Publication details

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315709604-35>

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Published online on: 13 Jan 2021

How to cite :- Tobias Hoffmann. 13 Jan 2021, *Freedom from: The Routledge Companion to Medieval Philosophy* Routledge

Accessed on: 22 Mar 2023

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315709604-35>

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FREEDOM

Tobias Hoffmann

What is free will? What grounds our free will and what threatens it? What increases or diminishes it? How must free will be conceived of in order to account for moral responsibility? These were the principal questions that animated the highly innovative and increasingly complex discussions about free will in the medieval Latin tradition.¹ Other, more particular questions arose from these, such as whether free will consists in the ability to choose between alternatives, whether it implies that the will moves itself, and whether non-human animals are free. There is hardly a question concerning free will that did not prompt a lively and at times passionate debate, for the notion of free will was considered foundational for moral theology and moral philosophy.

To a large extent, the different theories of free will depend on different conceptions of the will and its relation to the intellect (or to reason, that is, to the intellect in its discursive function). In the period considered in this chapter, from the eleventh to the early fourteenth century, three approaches to free will became successively dominant. At first, while most thinkers still conceived of the will in a simplistic way, the main concern was to find an adequate definition of free will which would meet commonly accepted theological requirements. Later, the interest shifted to the psychological foundation of free will. Consequently, the debate centered on the relation between intellect and will and their respective contributions in grounding free will: “intellectualists” saw free will principally rooted in the intellect, “voluntarists” in the will, and others took intermediary positions. Voluntarists outnumbered intellectualists, and among them a theory of free will became dominant that was based upon the conception of the will as a cause that has the unique property of controlling its effects, while all causes other than the will are “natural” causes, which do not control their effects.

Most medieval thinkers hold that free will presupposes the ability to will or do otherwise only when it is narrowly conceived as freedom of choice, to which they generally referred as *liberum arbitrium* (free decision, literally “free adjudication”). Free will broadly conceived does not imply the ability to choose; when one necessarily loves the perfect good, one does so freely. This chapter focuses on freedom of choice. It outlines the most characteristic and influential Latin medieval theories and discusses a few exemplary ones in detail.² The account given here is inevitably provisional, for many medieval texts about free will are still unedited and little studied, including those of thinkers who were very important in their time.

Definitions of Free Decision

In the late eleventh century, Anselm of Canterbury puts a question on the table that will be of central concern for Latin medieval thinkers until about the mid-thirteenth century. What is

free decision (*libertas arbitrii*)? Is its definition the ability to sin or not sin? Augustine had written that free decision enables us to do good and evil (*De correptione et gratia* 1.2, CSEL 92: 220). But Augustine did not define free decision by this ability, for if free decision included the ability to do evil, then it could not be ascribed to God and the saints in heaven, who in fact cannot sin (*Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 6.10, CSEL 85/2: 312, cf. *ibid.*: 5.38, CSEL 85/2: 237). In his own writings on freedom, without acknowledging Augustine, Anselm rejects this definition for the same reason: God and the good angels are unable to sin; yet, they are free. In fact, Anselm holds that a will that is unable to sin is freer than one that can be swayed to sin (*De libertate arbitrii* 1, *Opera omnia* 1: 207–208; cf. *ibid.*: cap. 9, *Opera omnia*: 1: 221). According to Anselm, instead of defining free decision by its possible deficiency, one must look to its purpose; and the will's purpose is not to pursue what one wants, but rather what one ought to want (*De libertate arbitrii* 3, *Opera omnia* 1: 211). Accordingly, he defines free decision in a normative sense:

Freedom of decision [*libertas arbitrii*] is the ability [*potestas*] to maintain the rectitude of the will for the sake of rectitude.

(*De libertate arbitrii* 3, *Opera omnia* 1: 212; cf. *ibid.*: cap. 13, *Opera omnia* 1: 225)

If free decision is defined in this way, is it by free decision that one sins? Anselm admits that one sins by free decision, but not insofar as it is free, that is, not insofar as one is able to maintain rectitude. The sense of “free decision” applicable to sins is different from the normative definition reported in the aforementioned quote. The normative definition is in line with a Gospel passage to which Anselm refers (John 8: 34–36), according to which a sinner is a slave to sin, and Christ brings freedom from sin. In addition, however, Anselm tacitly uses a second, descriptive definition of free decision, according to which free decision is understood as the power by which one acts of one's own accord without external coercion.³

In explaining the sin of the devil, Anselm furthermore argues that willing justly or unjustly presupposes alternative possibilities—the ability to will otherwise or, in willing the same thing, to be motivated otherwise.⁴ According to Christian teaching, the angels were created free, and at the beginning of their existence, some angels sinned and others did not. Anselm argues that God gave the angels not only the will (*voluntas*) for happiness, but also for justice. Had God given them only the will for happiness, they would have been neither just nor unjust in willing happiness. In willing to achieve happiness, they would have desired something beyond what God wanted them to desire. Such unbound desire is unjust; even so, the angels would not have been unjust, because they would have so desired of necessity. If instead they had only been given the will for justice, then again they would be neither just nor unjust, because they could not have willed otherwise. For Anselm, the angels could be just or unjust precisely because they were able to will either happiness or justice, or to will something either for the sake of happiness or of justice (*De casu diaboli* 4, 13–14, *Opera omnia* 1: 240–242, 255–258).⁵

In a later work, Anselm clarifies that the will for happiness or justice—which he now calls “affection” (*affectio*)—is a dispositional desire, not an occurrent (that is, actual) desire. He distinguishes the will-as-affection from two other senses of “will”: the will as the instrument (*instrumentum*) by which we will something (that is, the will as a power of the soul), and the will as the employment (*usus*) of the will-as-instrument to elicit an act of occurrent desire. He specifies that it is by means of its affections that the will-as-instrument moves itself to will something particular.⁶

Anselm emphasized the importance of a definition of free decision that addresses theological concerns. Some twelfth-century theologians, including Peter Abelard, show concern about the psychological foundation of free decision by introducing into the discussion a definition that is found in Boethius. Abelard writes:

In order to define free decision (*liberum arbitrium*), the philosophers said: “a free judgment about the will.”⁷

(*Theologia Scholarium* 3.87, CCCM 13: 536)

As Abelard explains, the judgment by which one considers doing or not doing something is free because it is not by nature forced upon those who make the judgment and because they equally have the power to make it or not. Non-human animals, too, can either want something or not, but they lack free decision because they lack the judgment of reason (*Theologia Scholarium* 3.87, CCCM 13: 536). Abelard also proposes his own definition of free decision:

In general and most truthfully free decision [*liberum arbitrium*] is called the ability voluntarily and without coercion to act upon that which one has decreed [*decreuerit*] by reason.

(*Theologia Scholarium* 3.90, CCCM 13: 537)

Abelard writes that God, no less than humans, possesses free decision so defined, and that it is greater in those who are unable to sin than in those who can sin. Abelard cites Augustine, who distinguishes between the free decision of the first man, Adam, who was “able not to sin,” and the greater free decision of the blessed in heaven (who enjoy the beatific vision, the knowing and loving union with God), who are “unable to sin” (*Theologia Scholarium* 3.90–91, CCCM 13: 537–538). According to Augustine, these degrees of free decision are analogous to the immortality of Adam, who was “able not to die” (by not sinning), and the higher immortality of the blessed, who are “unable to die.”⁸ At the root of Augustine’s account is the understanding of freedom as freedom from the slavery to sin (John 8: 34–36), an idea which, as we have seen, also inspired Anselm of Canterbury.⁹

Abelard thus holds that free decision consists precisely in the freely made judgment of reason and in the ability to follow this judgment. By contrast, his contemporary Bernard of Clairvaux locates free decision in the will, which in Bernard’s view can act according to reason or contrary to reason. For Bernard, the will

is not always moved by reason (*ex ratione*), although it is never moved without reason, and thus it does many things by means of reason against reason, that is, as it were with its assistance, but against its counsel or judgment.

(*De gratia et libero arbitrio* 2.3, SBO 3: 168)

If reason could impose any necessity on the will, that is, if reason could impede the will from making its own choice (according to reason or not), then it would destroy the will (*De gratia et libero arbitrio* 2.4, SBO 3: 168). This is, then, how Bernard defines free decision:

This consent [of the will], on account of the will’s imperishable freedom and of reason’s unbending judgment which always accompanies reason wherever it goes, is called, I think not falsely, free decision [*liberum arbitrium*]: it is free of itself because of the will, and it is judge of itself because of reason.

(*De gratia et libero arbitrio* 2.4, SBO 3: 169).

According to Bernard, free decision does not admit of any increase or decrease. Yet as we have seen, for Augustine (and for Anselm and Abelard), there can be more and less freedom. Bernard agrees, but only if freedom is taken to mean something other than free decision. He reworks Augustine’s teaching, which compares the degrees of freedom from sin to the degrees of immortality, into an account of three kinds of freedom: freedom from necessity, freedom from sin, and

freedom from misery. Bernard also calls these, respectively, free decision (*liberum arbitrium*), free counsel (*liberum consilium*), and free delight (*liberum complacitum*) (*De gratia et libero arbitrio* 3.6–7, 4.11, SBO 3: 170–174). The first kind of freedom belongs to human nature and cannot be diminished even by sin (*ibid.*: 4.9, 4.12, 5.15, 7.21, 8.24, and 9.28, SBO 3: 172, 174, 177, and 182–185). The second and third kinds of freedom can be enjoyed more or less fully: freedom from sin is either “being able not to sin” or “being unable to sin”; freedom from misery is either “being able not to be distressed” or “being unable to be distressed” (*ibid.*: 7.21, SBO 3: 182). Through Adam’s sin, the second and third kinds of freedom were lost, and we have become “unable not to sin” and “unable not to be distressed” (*ibid.*: 7.21 and 8.24, SBO 3: 182–183). Through grace, the second kind of freedom is restored, but the third kind is attained only in the heavenly glory, although those who live a contemplative life can have on rare occasions a moderate anticipation of it in this life (*ibid.*: 5.15, SBO 3: 177). Even though salvation, that is, the restoration of freedom from sin and from misery, is above all the work of God, it is not achieved without the consent of our free decision. God cooperates with our free decision not as though grace and free decision were each partly at work, but rather, grace and free decision are each fully at work, yet in such a way that the work of free decision itself originates in grace (*ibid.*: 14.46–47, SBO 3: 199–200).

The definition of free decision most valued among later medieval theologians was transmitted by Peter Lombard, author of the *Sentences*, which he composed in the mid-twelfth century. Though Peter Lombard was not a particularly original thinker, he was immensely influential, because the *Sentences* became in essence the principal theology textbook from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century. His definition of freedom was highly esteemed in part because thirteenth-century theologians thought it was originally by Augustine.¹⁰

Free decision [*liberum arbitrium*] is the faculty [*facultas*] of reason and will by which one chooses good with the help of grace, or evil when grace is lacking. And it is called “free” with respect to the will, which can be turned in either direction, and “decision” [*arbitrium*] with respect to reason, of which it is the faculty or power and to which it belongs to discern between good and evil.

(Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae* 2.24.3 n. 1, *Sent.* 1: 452–453)

Peter Lombard also handed on to later medieval theologians Bernard’s teaching on the three kinds of freedom (*Sententiae* 2.25.8–9, *Sent.* 1: 464–469). Another influential idea he passed on is taken from Hugh of St. Victor: we have free decision only about “future contingents,” not about present or past events, because the present and past are fixed and not in our power to change (*Sententiae* 2.25.1 n. 3, *Sent.* 1: 461).¹¹

Clearly, there is no free decision without reason; the task of reason is to know what rectitude consists in (Anselm), to deliberate and judge (Abelard), and to discern between good and evil (Bernard and Peter Lombard).¹² Nevertheless, for these eleventh- and twelfth-century theologians, the role of reason in free decision is rather preparatory and ancillary.¹³ Later, some thinkers will give reason a much more central role with regard to free decision, and how central its role should be becomes a hotly debated question.

The Psychological Foundation of Free Decision

In the thirteenth century, discussions about free will attained an unprecedented philosophical depth, mainly thanks to the contribution of Aristotle’s works which had become available in Latin translation in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Although Aristotle did not discuss free decision in its own right, his *Nicomachean Ethics* became a constant point of reference, especially for its accounts of voluntariness, deliberation, and choice, and more generally for the relation between knowledge and action, and between ignorance and wrongdoing. Aristotle’s

theory of causality and motion or change in the *Physics*, his account of the relation between desire and thought in the *De anima*, and his discussion of contingency in the *De interpretatione* further enriched discussions of free decision.¹⁴

Free Decision and the Early Reception of Aristotle

Initially, Aristotle's action theory was known in the Latin West only through the medium of translations of works by Greek theologians influenced by Aristotle. Among these, the mid-twelfth-century Latin translation of John of Damascus's *De fide orthodoxa* was particularly important. It contains an influential treatment of action theory for which John of Damascus largely compiled texts by Nemesius of Ephesus and Maximus the Confessor, both of whom incorporated Aristotelian ideas. Around the same time, the first Latin translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* was produced, but only books 1–3 and fragments of some other books had survived. (It was not until Robert Grosseteste's translation in 1246/1247 that the *Nicomachean Ethics* would become fully accessible to Latin theologians).

John of Damascus introduces to Latin medieval theologians the notion of the will as a “rational appetite” (*De fide orthodoxa* 36 nn. 8–9, 12, Buytaert: 135–136, 138). The word “appetite” (*appetitus*) is generally understood as the capacity for desire, but it can also mean occurrent desire. He makes an influential distinction between the behavior of non-rational animals, which do not act by free decision, because rather than acting, they are acted upon by nature, and the behavior of humans, who act upon nature rather than nature acting upon them (*De fide orthodoxa* 41 n. 1, Buytaert: 153). John of Damascus also offers a psychological account of choice-making which, with some minor variations, is generally accepted by later authors. First, there is the desire (*voluntas*) for an end, then there are inquisition and examination (*inquisitio et scrutatio*) about whether the end can be achieved by us; if it can, there is deliberation (*consilium*) about how to achieve the end, which leads to the judgment (*iudicium*) about how best to achieve the end, and the decree (*sententia*) by which what is judged best is loved. After that follows the choice (*electio*), that is, the preference of one thing over another. Then comes the impulse (*impetus*) to act, and finally the employment (*usus*), apparently of whatever the action is concerned with. John of Damascus emphasizes that all these steps are free (*De fide orthodoxa* 36 nn. 11–12, Buytaert: 137–138).¹⁵

These ideas found in John of Damascus have their principal root in Aristotle's theory of the relation between wish, deliberation, and choice (*Eth.* 3.2–4) and in his theory of choice as desiderative understanding or intellectual appetite (*Eth.* 6.2, 1139b4–5). Latin theologians appropriated them especially from the thirteenth century onward.

At first, Aristotelian ideas only enriched the traditional inquiry about the definition of free decision, but gradually they transformed the entire approach to the problem of freedom. Philip the Chancellor, building upon the work of his contemporary William of Auxerre,¹⁶ is a key figure in this transition, and many of his ideas echo in the later debate. In his discussion of free decision (*liberum arbitrium*) and freedom (*libertas*) in his *Summa de bono* (composed around 1225–1228), Philip still rarely cites the first three books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* but instead makes ample use of John of Damascus.

Philip starts from Peter Lombard's definition of free decision as the faculty of will and reason by which one chooses good or evil. The principal issues he raises are these. (1) The definition states that free decision is a “faculty”—does this mean that it is a disposition (*habitus*) or a power (*potentia*)? (2) It states that it is a faculty “of will and reason”—are these two distinct powers which are combined in free decision, or are they a single power? (3) Is free decision only in the will or only in reason? (*Summa de bono*, 165–166, 170, and 172).

Philip's response to (3), which he sees confirmed in the definitions of Anselm, Bernard, and Peter Lombard, is that freedom (*libertas*) is primarily in the will and secondarily in reason. It is primarily in

the will, for after reason's judgment that something is good, the will remains free to want it or not. Reason cannot impose any necessity on the will (*Summa de bono*, 173–174). Although reason too is free (as John of Damascus attests; cf. *Summa de bono*, 173), the will is freer than reason, for truth can force reason to consent, but the good cannot force the will to consent (*ibid.*: 177–178). In asserting that the will is not obliged to follow reason, Philip might mean simply that it remains free to abstain from willing after the judgment of reason. Is the will also free to will contrary to reason? On this, Philip is ambiguous. He writes that the will, being a *rational* appetite, cannot contradict reason. Appetite can go against reason, but then it is not “will” (i.e. appetite according to reason), but rather “desire” (i.e. appetite according to imagination) (*ibid.*: 175). Shortly thereafter, he writes that the will can choose contrary to what reason has judged (*ibid.*: 180).

As to (2), for Philip reason and will are essentially the same power, only conceptually (*ratione*) distinct. They are named differently only because judging and willing are different kinds of acts (*ibid.*: 173–174, 179–180).

Finally, as regards (1), Philip argues that whether freedom (*libertas*) is a power or disposition depends on which of Bernard's three kinds of freedom is under consideration: freedom from necessity, from sin, or from misery. The definition of free decision concerns freedom from necessity, which cannot be increased or diminished, and so free decision is defined as a power. In contrast, freedom from sin and from misery can be seen as dispositions of being more or less able to do good and being more or less slave to sin or misery (*ibid.*: 174; cf. 175, 189). So free decision can be defined as *potentia habitualis*, a power endowed with a disposition (*ibid.*: 174).

Philip offers a definition of freedom that applies analogously not only to the freedom of free decision (that is, freedom from coercion), but also to freedom from sin and from misery: “not to undergo any deficiency except by one's own consent.” Philip argues that it is one's own fault not only if one undergoes the deficiency of sin, but also if one undergoes the misery that follows upon sin (*ibid.*: 188–189).¹⁷

Philip is an innovative thinker, but he does not yet offer a coherent account of free decision. In particular, later theologians will clarify the relation between reason and will. In the later debate, the definition of freedom loses its importance; instead, the crucial question will be how to conceive of the will and its relation to reason. Theologians become increasingly divided regarding the respective contributions of reason and will to free decision, and this division partly aligns with the two new religious orders, the Franciscans and Dominicans, which will take as authoritative reference points Bonaventure (later superseded by Duns Scotus) and Thomas Aquinas, respectively.

A New Focus: The Foundation of Freedom in Reason and Will

In the early 1240s, about a decade after Philip's *Summa de bono*, it became common to ask whether non-human animals have free decision in order to clarify its psychological basis. The Dominican Albert the Great argues that non-human animals lack free decision because their judgment and desire are necessary and not open to contraries. In fact, they are fixed upon the sensory good, which is always something determinate. Hence, they cannot help judging something as pleasant or harmful, nor is their desire free to be inclined or disinclined toward what they judge pleasant or unpleasant. Furthermore, free decision, which is the principle of morality, cannot be restricted to the pleasant and unpleasant, but rather must extend to what is noble or base (*honestum vel inhonestum*). Since non-human animals lack the ability to judge the noble and base, they lack free decision.¹⁸ These observations imply that free decision presupposes knowledge of universals (by which one can know something under the general description of good and evil, or of noble and base) and the desire for the universal good (rather than merely for some specific good). Accordingly, sensory knowledge and sensory desire are insufficient foundations for free decision; rather, free decision presupposes reason and will.

How are reason and will related? Albert allows for some independence of the will vis-à-vis reason. Without assigning it central importance, he adopts the notion of the will as rational appetite. Yet for Albert, this does not imply that the will necessarily follows reason, but only that it is supposed to follow reason. In fact, the will follows reason only when it wants to. So the will is not always reasonable (*rationabilis*), but only when it wills what reason has previously determined.¹⁹ Because of the possible discrepancy between reason and will, Albert posits a third power, distinct from reason and will, whose task it is to arbitrate between the “decree of reason and the desire of the will [*decretum rationis et appetitum voluntatis*]” and so to make a choice that follows one or the other. This third power is free decision (*liberum arbitrium*).²⁰

About 1250, the Franciscan Bonaventure likewise clarifies the psychological foundation of free decision by means of the comparison with non-human animals. Free decision requires full control (*dominium plenum*) of what one desires and of the very act of desiring. Control of what one desires presupposes that one’s desire is not restricted to any particular domain, and so it involves the ability to desire not only what is useful or pleasurable, but also what is noble (*honestum*). Since only rational beings can desire the noble, they alone have free decision. To control one’s own desiring implies the ability to desire or not desire a certain thing, and thus to have control over starting and stopping to desire the same thing. Non-human animals lack such control because their appetite is caused not by themselves, but by the desirable thing.²¹ But humans have this control: since the will moves itself, one can start willing something one did not previously will; since reason can reflect upon its own act, one can stop willing what one currently wills. Free decision therefore comprises both reason and will (*In Sent.* 2.25.1.1.3 co., *Opera omnia* 2: 598b–599b). But for Bonaventure, free decision does not constitute a third, distinct power (*In Sent.* 2.25.1.1.2 co., *Opera omnia* 2: 596b–597a). In fact, there is no need for an arbiter between reason and will. The will elicits its own act of approval or rejection, or of choice or refusal, to the extent that reason judges doing so as good or evil. Nevertheless, the efficacy of reason’s judgment depends on the will: “the definitive judgment that something ought to happen or not can never exist apart from the will; for no matter how much reason may deliberate, the definitive judgment will come down on the side favored by the will” (*In Sent.* 2.25.1.1.6, *Opera omnia* 2: 605a–606a). In granting the principal role in free decision to the will rather than to reason or the intellect, Bonaventure’s theory sets the program for voluntarist thinkers of the next generations.

It must be noted, however, that although Bonaventure holds that rational beings have the freedom to choose between alternative possibilities, he does not define free decision by this ability. Free decision is compatible with the inability to do otherwise, and it is experienced in this way by God, Christ, and the angels and blessed in the beatific vision, who cannot but love God and yet love him freely. What is essential to free decision is only that one moves oneself by one’s own command to will something, and this, in turn, implies the second-order willing of one’s own willing (*In Sent.* 2.25.2.1.2 co., *Opera omnia* 2: 612b). What presupposes the ability to do otherwise is only freedom of choice, which Bonaventure calls “free decision insofar as it deliberates.”

The Will Strictly Conceived as Rational Appetite

Thomas Aquinas, Albert’s student and confrère in the Dominican order, elaborates a particularly rich theory of free decision over the course of his career, which spans from the 1250s to the early 1270s. His theory sets the terms of an energetic debate about the foundation of free decision. Aquinas defines free decision by the ability to choose between alternatives;²² so for him, contrary to Bonaventure, free decision is incompatible with the inability to do otherwise. But the disagreement is merely terminological. Like Bonaventure, Aquinas thinks that freedom, taken in a more general sense, does not require alternative possibilities. For this general notion of freedom, he employs the term “free will” (*libera voluntas*).²³ We desire necessarily to be happy; the angels and

blessed love God necessarily; and God loves himself necessarily. Nevertheless, for Aquinas, these acts are free because the will elicits them without coercion.²⁴

Aquinas develops systematically the idea expressed less explicitly by Albert and Bonaventure that free decision, that is, the freedom to choose among alternatives, follows upon knowledge of universals and desire for the universal good. Aquinas not only assumes the existence of free decision (as a necessary condition for moral responsibility).²⁵ He also argues for its existence directly, since he considers the ability for universal knowledge to be not only the necessary, but also the sufficient condition for freedom of choice. Aquinas reasons that, while knowledge is of universals, the will's acts concern particulars, and so universal knowledge leaves room for willing something particular or not. For example, the realization that one needs a house does not determine the will to want a round house or a square house.²⁶ Hence, a person is free to choose among alternatives and accordingly has free decision.

While the notion of the will as rational appetite is marginal in the writings of Albert and Bonaventure, it is at the core of Aquinas's theory of free decision. As rational appetite, the will follows by nature what reason apprehends as good, just as the sensory appetite follows by nature what the senses apprehend as good. It is, of course, possible to will something evil, but only if it is apprehended as good (*Summa theologiae* 1a2ae.8.1, Leonine 6: 68). It is also possible to act incontinently, that is, to act contrary to one's better knowledge. But an evil will and evil action presuppose ignorance or at least a lack of consideration for what is good and what ought to be done here and now. So when the incontinent act contrary to their dispositional and general knowledge that fornication is evil, it is because their passions prevent them momentarily from realizing that it is not good to commit this act of fornication.²⁷

An important implication of this conception of the will as rational appetite is that there cannot be discrepancy between reason's particular judgment of what is good here and now and what the will desires or chooses at this moment (*De veritate* 24.2 co., Leonine 22: 685). Since universal knowledge of some good does not determine the will to choose something specific, one must deliberate to discover what is worth choosing in this particular situation. The deliberation of reason results in a decree or judgment (*sententia vel iudicium*) that something is to be chosen here and now, and the will's choice follows this judgment (*Summa theologiae* 1a2ae.13.3 co., Leonine 6: 101, and 3a.18.4 ad 2, Leonine 11: 234). Choice does not follow the judgment of reason chronologically, as though there were a gap between what reason judges as choiceworthy here and now and what the will chooses. Rather, Aquinas considers the judgment of reason and the choice of the will to be simultaneous (*De malo* 16.4, Leonine 23: 299.279–281). In fact, they are inseparable, since they are related as form and matter (*Summa theologiae* 1a2ae.13.1 co., Leonine 6: 98; 1a.2ae.17.4, Leonine 6: 121). When we are not ready to make a choice, this simply means for Aquinas that our deliberation has not come to an end and produced a concluding judgment.

That the will's choice follows the judgment of reason implies that freedom of choice presupposes freedom of judgment. For Aquinas, one is free to choose or not choose something precisely because one is free to judge something as choiceworthy or not. He moreover explains that free judgment is rooted in the capacity to judge one's own judgment, that is, to evaluate or re-evaluate how a certain means (typically, a certain action) relates to the end pursued (*De veritate* 24.1 co. and 24.2 co., Leonine 22: 681, 685–686; *Summa theologiae* 1a.83.1, Leonine 5: 307). As Aquinas also puts it, free judgment is rooted in reason's practical deliberation, which can result in this or that concluding judgment (*Summa theologiae* 1a2ae.6.1 co. and ad 2, Leonine 6: 58; 1a2ae.109.2 ad 1, Leonine 7: 291). Aquinas accordingly argues that the root and cause of freedom is reason (*De veritate* 24.2 co., Leonine 22: 685; *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae.17.1 ad 2, Leonine 6: 118).

In his later writings on freedom of choice, Aquinas refines certain ideas. In order to show in which sense the will is not moved of necessity, he distinguishes between two ways in which the will is in potentiality: with respect to the exercise of its act (willing or not willing) and with

regard to the specification (also called determination) of its act (willing this or that). Regarding its exercise, the will moves itself, for in virtue of already actually willing some end (e.g. health), it can move itself to will whatever promotes the end. The will also moves the intellect to exercise its act, for example, to deliberate or to think about something.²⁸ Regarding its specification, the will's act is moved by the intellect, which proposes to it some particular good, for example, seeing a doctor.²⁹ Aquinas argues that nothing moves the will of necessity to exercise its act, because one can always stop thinking about an object and hence stop willing it. As to the specification of its act, the will is moved of necessity only by an object that is good from every point of view; and the only objects that have this characteristic are happiness, or God clearly seen in the beatific vision.³⁰ As we have seen, Aquinas considers the necessary acts of willing these goods to be free, although one cannot will otherwise.

Though Aquinas admits that the will can move itself to exercise its act, that is, to will something after not willing it, he does not think that it can do so by itself. Rather, this self-motion is mediated by the deliberation of reason: for example, when one wants health, one's will moves reason to deliberate about what is conducive to health, and upon the conclusion of deliberation one wants to take medicine. But the desire to start deliberating, in turn, requires a cause: a prior deliberation that his was worth doing, which again must have been initiated by the will. To avoid an infinite regress, Aquinas assumes that this mutual causation of willing and deliberating needs to be traced ultimately to God who acts on the will. He also thinks that tracing it to God does not undermine free decision, but rather grounds it, because God moves the will without necessitating it and without preventing its own contribution.³¹

Whether Aquinas was successful in defending free decision has been debated from his own time up through the present day. While Aquinas gives detailed explanations about why certain choices are not made necessarily, he explains less clearly how one controls whether or not an object appears as choiceworthy, and hence how one controls which choice one makes.³²

While Aquinas dedicates much space to the psychological basis of free decision and to the argument that human choices are not bound by necessity, the traditional problem of finding the most adequate definition of free decision loses the central place it occupied earlier, although Aquinas still dedicates a *quaestio* to it in the *Summa theologiae* (1a.83, Leonine 5: 307–312). Also, Aquinas does not discuss at any length the notion of freedom from sin, although this notion is very important to him. He endorses the Augustinian doctrine that it represents greater freedom to be unable to sin than to be able to sin (*Summa theologiae* 1a.62.8 ad 3, Leonine 5: 118), and he calls freedom from sin the “true freedom” (e.g. *Summa theologiae* 2a2ae.183.4 co., Leonine 10: 449).

Siger of Brabant, an influential philosopher who taught in the faculty of arts at Paris, professed a view about free decision that resembles Aquinas's, although Aquinas seems to attribute to the will a more active role in free decision. Commenting on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in the mid-1270s, Siger argued that the will is not the first cause of its act, and so something else causes the will's act. This cause is the apprehension of some object, and it causes the will's act necessarily. In fact, Siger cites Avicenna and Aristotle to the effect that every cause, when it is in the disposition in which it is set by nature to produce its effect, produces its effect of necessity. Hence, when a desirable object is present through the knowledge of reason and when it meets the necessary and sufficient conditions to move the will, then the will cannot but will it. Yet, the necessity in the causal relation is not absolute necessity, but only conditional necessity, and therefore Siger considers it no threat to free decision. It is conditional necessity because the causal relation can be impeded by the deliberation of reason, and this guarantees in fact that the will is free.³³ Apparently, what Siger intends to say is that deliberation allows one to revise one's judgment and thus to make a different choice. In any event, according to Siger, as long as reason proposes a particular judgment that something is to be willed or not, the will is determined to will accordingly. The will is free to will otherwise only because reason can judge otherwise.³⁴

Intellectual Determinism?

That free decision is grounded in reason and will was undisputed. But Aquinas's claim that the will's freedom to choose differently is derived from reason's freedom to judge differently became highly controversial, as did Siger's contention that the judgment of reason necessitates the will's act. At the center of the subsequent debate was the question of whether the will's activity is primarily caused by the intellect or by the will itself.³⁵

Some of the opposition was voiced not by argumentation, but by censure. The views of Siger of Brabant and of other arts masters at Paris regarding free decision and other philosophical topics became the direct target of the famous condemnation of 219 statements ("articles") in 1277 by Etienne Tempier, the bishop of Paris.³⁶ Indirectly, some of Aquinas's positions are affected by the condemnation as well. Tempier took a decidedly voluntarist stance by condemning assertions which claimed that the will's acts depend strictly on the judgment of reason, and that an evil will presupposes ignorance. Two condemned propositions received particular attention in the subsequent debate about free decision: "As long as passion and particular science are in act, the will cannot act against them" (art. 129); "If reason is right, the will is also right" (art. 130).³⁷

Reactions that targeted Aquinas's theory of free decision directly and that were brought forth by theology masters rather than by ecclesiastical officials tended to be better articulated. Still during Aquinas's lifetime, Walter of Bruges, a Franciscan and student of Bonaventure, rejected Aquinas's idea of tracing free decision to free judgment. Walter objects that reason, to the extent that it is antecedent to the will, is not free to judge, because reason is bound by the "rules of truth." Walter argues that reason is only free to judge to the extent that it is moved by the will. So the will's ability to prefer (*praeoptare*) one thing over another, which is essential to freedom of choice, is not derived from reason, but rather innate to the will. The will is free, not because it is rational appetite, but rather because it is will.³⁸

Opposition to Aquinas's theory intensified after his death in 1274. For example, in 1278, the Franciscan William de la Mare published the *Correctory of Brother Thomas*, a book critiquing numerous positions of Aquinas, including his views on the primacy of the intellect over the will. Though the *Correctory* is not philosophically profound, it was influential, since in 1282 it became obligatory reading for Franciscans who were authorized to read Aquinas. Dominicans published several responses entitled satirically *Correctory of the Corruptory*.

The most systematic critique of Aquinas's theory of free decision was advanced by Henry of Ghent, a secular priest (i.e. not affiliated with a religious order) whose influence in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries rivaled that of Aquinas. Henry began his prolific career as a master of theology just prior to the 1277 condemnations, for which he helped draft the list of positions to be censured. In his first *Quodlibet* of 1276, Henry further develops Walter of Bruges's critique of Aquinas's earlier account of free decision.³⁹ According to this critique, free decision cannot be traced to free judgment because, unless reason is moved by the will, it is not free. In fact, reason does not control whether or not it apprehends simple concepts, nor whether or not it apprehends self-evident statements or those that necessarily follow from them; as to non-evident statements, reason does not control to what extent it doubts about them.⁴⁰ To safeguard the will's freedom, Henry insists like Walter that the will's freedom is not derived from reason, but rather innate to the will. The will is accordingly free to follow the judgment of reason or not (*Quodlibet* 1.16 co., Opera omnia 5: 103–106). Henry repeats this argument throughout his career; he clarifies that after the adjudication (*arbitrium*) of reason, the will itself makes its own adjudication (*Summa* 45.4 co., Opera omnia 29: 123; cf. *Quodlibet* 1.16 co., Opera omnia 5: 102). In Henry's eyes, Aquinas's mature account of free decision, in which he distinguishes between the exercise and the specification of the will's act, does not fare any better. Henry argues polemically in later *Quodlibets* against Aquinas and his student Giles of Rome, who professes a theory similar to

Aquinas's: if the will depended strictly on reason, Henry argues, then its exercise would be as dependent on reason as its specification.⁴¹ Thus, the problem remains: if reason is not free to judge otherwise, then a will that completely depends on reason is not free to choose otherwise.

Henry still considers the will to be a rational appetite, but he understands this in a broader sense than Aquinas: it only means that the will's choice presupposes the decree of reason and that it can choose something only under the aspect of the good. It does not mean that it necessarily chooses in conformity with the judgment of reason (*Quodlibet* 1.15 co., Opera omnia 5: 93; 1.16 co., Opera omnia 5: 106–107, 110). In fact, Henry later defines the will not as rational appetite, but as “free appetite” (*Summa* 45.3 co., Opera omnia 29: 115). How can the will choose something under the aspect of the good but not as reason directs? An object can appear desirable in simple cognition, prior to the considered judgment that results from deliberation, and the will can act either on that first appearance or on the considered judgment (*Summa* 45.4 co., Opera omnia 29: 123; cf. *Quodlibet* 10.10 co., Opera omnia 14: 256–258). Whatever cognition the will acts on, Henry is adamant from the beginning of his career that the will's choice is not caused by the intellect. The intellect only proposes a desirable object to the will, but it does not move it to will it. The intellect is like a servant who carries a lamp before his master, while the will is the master who directs the servant (*Quodlibet* 1.14 ad 2, ad 5, Opera omnia 5: 89–90). As Henry specifies later, the object presented by the intellect is only a *causa sine qua non* of the will's act, that is, a cause that does not itself efficiently cause the act, but only removes the obstacle impeding the genuine cause from acting. The cognition that presents some desirable object removes the ignorance that impeded the will to *move itself* to its act of willing.⁴²

Henry also clarifies what is at stake in defending the will's sovereignty with respect to reason by considering the relation between deficient knowledge and disordered willing. If one holds, as Aquinas does, that the judgment of reason entails inevitably the corresponding choice of the will, then one must also hold that a disordered will proceeds from disordered reason; therefore if reason is well-ordered, the will cannot be disordered, that is, sinful (*Quodlibet* 1.17 co., Opera omnia 5: 123–124). But according to Henry, there is a counterexample: Adam, the first man, sinned without having first had a disordered reason, for, as Henry and his contemporaries generally assumed on the authority of Augustine, prior to sinning, Adam was not subject to ignorance.⁴³ The sin of Adam must therefore have consisted in willing against the correct judgment of reason. From this example, Henry generalizes that every disorder in reason is ultimately to be traced to a disorder of the will (*ibid.*: 116, 128–129). Only thus can one safeguard moral responsibility: if an evil action is caused by inculpable ignorance, then one is excused, but if an evil action is caused by culpable ignorance—which must be traced to the will that blinded reason—then and only then is one responsible for it (*Quodlibet* 1.17 ad arg., Opera omnia 5: 142). In fact, while Henry thinks that sin does not presuppose disordered reason, he believes that sin always corrupts reason. Hence in his view, a disorder in reason and a disorder of the will are always simultaneous. He therefore later gladly subscribes to a statement by Giles of Rome that the masters of theology at Paris officially endorsed in 1285, the so-called “magisterial proposition,” according to which “there is no evil in the will without error in reason.”⁴⁴ According to Henry, this statement is true not because the error in reason makes the will evil, but rather because an evil will blinds reason. Henry thinks that, if the magisterial proposition is understood in this way, it is not in conflict with the censure of 1277.⁴⁵

While it may appear that Henry is above all interested in defending the ability to do otherwise, his greatest concern is to argue that the will's act has its ultimate source in the will itself, rather than being caused from outside the will. Henry of Ghent systematically develops the distinction between “freedom of the will,” which is compatible with the “necessity of immutability” (i.e. the inability to do otherwise), and “free decision,” which is not. Like his contemporaries, Henry holds that God loves himself necessarily, but freely; the blessed in the beatific vision adhere to

God necessarily, but freely.⁴⁶ Necessity of immutability does not take away freedom, only coercion (*coactio*) does, because it “saddens” the will. What is characteristic for freedom of the will is delight, and what is essential is that the will’s acts have their ultimate source in the will itself rather than being determined or moved from without. For Henry, even in its necessary acts, the will cannot be moved by the intellect or by a natural impulse.⁴⁷ Henry goes so far as to say that even God’s act of willing himself would not be free if, instead of springing from his will, it sprang from God’s nature or from a determination from the willed object, which in the case of God is his own essence (*Summa* 47.5 co., *Opera omnia* 30: 32.203–207). Henry thus distinguishes sharply between will and nature and anticipates a theory that, as we will see, is fundamental in Duns Scotus’s thought.

Henry’s reflections on free decision center on the psychological foundations of free decision. His emphasis on the psychology of free decision leads him to make the problematic assumption of the will’s self-motion:

If by nature the will were moved by something else, then it would be determined to its act without any freedom, and so it would not control its acts . . . therefore it must be said straightforwardly that the will is moved to its act by nothing else, but only by itself.

(Quodlibet 9.5 co., Opera omnia 13: 130–131)

Henry conceives of the will’s self-motion not in some incidental sense, as though the will only controlled somehow the real mover of the will. Rather, the will’s self-motion is *per se* self-motion, which means for Henry that “it can move and reduce itself from the potentiality of willing to the act of willing” (*Quodlibet* 10.9 co., *Opera omnia* 14: 225). This is a problematic assumption, because it seems to contradict the Aristotelian actuality-potentiality axiom that one and the same thing cannot be in the same respect in actuality and in potentiality (i.e. not in actuality), and that it cannot reduce itself from potentiality to actuality. Aquinas, too, had professed the will’s self-motion, but he had specified that the will is in actuality and in potentiality in different respects; for Aquinas, in virtue of willing an end, the will can move itself to will the means to the end (*Summa theologiae* 1a2ae.9.3 co. and *De malo* 6 co.). In later *Quodlibets*, Henry maintains that the will is not in potentiality and in actuality in exactly the same respect, but he nevertheless denies that the will as mover and the will as moved are really distinct.⁴⁸ Hence, while Henry believes his theory does not violate the actuality-potentiality axiom, he is aware that it violates another closely related Aristotelian axiom, according to which “whatever is moved is moved by another.” But Henry argues that this axiom does not apply to immaterial substances such as the will (*Quodlibet* 13.11 ad arg., *Opera omnia* 18: 131–133).

Henry provoked the strong critique of Godfrey of Fontaines (likewise a secular priest), who becomes master of theology about ten years later than Henry and who is Henry’s biggest rival. Godfrey takes opposite stances on almost every one of Henry’s views concerning free decision. According to Godfrey, Henry’s theory of the will’s self-motion clearly violates the actuality-potentiality axiom.⁴⁹ In Godfrey’s view, the will does not move itself to its act, but it is rather moved by the “cognized good”: the same object that moves the intellect to the act of understanding also moves the will to the act of willing.⁵⁰ For Godfrey, the will moves itself not *per se*, but only incidentally, by moving the intellect to deliberate.⁵¹ But the will’s control of the intellect is, in turn, strictly dependent upon the intellect.⁵² In fact, contrary to Henry, Godfrey denies that the will can act differently from the intellect’s judgment.⁵³ To those who think that free decision is threatened by a theory that rejects the will’s self-motion, Godfrey responds that one must not deny the most certain and primary principles, such as the actuality-potentiality axiom, in the attempt to explain what is metaphysically less primary, such as the psychological foundation of free decision.⁵⁴ What is more, far from safeguarding free decision, positing that the will moves itself

per se threatens free decision, for the will would move itself without being able to control how it moves itself.⁵⁵ Godfrey has his own difficulty, however: to explain how a person controls his or her acts and how the acts can be imputed to the individual, given that Godfrey traces all activity of intellect and will to the things known and willed.⁵⁶

At the same time that Henry and Godfrey debated their extreme views, identifying as total cause of the will's act either the will itself (Henry) or the object cognized by the intellect (Godfrey), Giles of Rome, John of Morrovalle, and others proposed intermediary positions, assigning to both the will and the cognized object an active role in choice-making. But Henry and Godfrey found these attempts unconvincing and critiqued them, each from opposite perspectives.⁵⁷

Nature and Will

Though Henry of Ghent died in 1293, his influence is still strongly felt in the early fourteenth century, when the majority of theologians defend voluntarist positions that depend on various degrees on Henry. As John of Pouilly, a faithful student of Godfrey of Fontaines, witnesses, at that time the intellectualist position was highly unpopular among theologians. He remarks: "Not long ago I saw that in Paris only one man dared to maintain the view I hold."⁵⁸

Duns Scotus, a Franciscan, develops some of Henry's key insights into a particularly original way. Scotus explicitly abandons the notion of the will as a rational appetite and calls the will instead a free power or, occasionally, a free appetite. His conception of the will as free power is a combination of the Aristotelian distinction between rational and irrational active powers (*Metaphysics* 9.2 and 9.5) with Augustine's distinction between nature and will (*De libero arbitrio* III.1.2.9, CCSL 29: 275). Following a point made by Henry (*Quodlibet* 3.17 co., Badius 78vG), Scotus argues that an active power (a power that acts as an efficient cause) is best characterized by the way in which it elicits its activity, not by the object it is concerned with. There are only two fundamental ways to elicit activity: either a power is of such a kind that it is determined to act (by whatever may determine it), without being able not to act when it is so determined; or a power is of such a kind that it is not determined to act, but rather controls whether it does this or that act or whether it does any act at all. Scotus calls the first kind of power "nature" and the second "will." Scotus's example for a power that falls under "nature" is a source of heat.⁵⁹ Every active power other than the will falls under "nature" (*Lectura* 2.25 n. 93, Vat. 19: 261), including intellect, as is shown by a consideration we have already encountered in Henry of Ghent: the intellect does not control whether or not it understands something or whether it assents to or dissents from a proposition.⁶⁰

Since the intellect falls under "nature," and since natural powers are not free, for Scotus, a strictly intellectual appetite would not be free. Scotus admits that the will is in a sense an intellectual appetite, but holds that it is better characterized as a free appetite. He reinterprets Anselm of Canterbury's distinction between the two dispositional desires, the "affection for advantage" and the "affection for the just," as two essential characteristics of the will itself: respectively, "they are nothing but the will itself insofar as it is intellectual appetite and insofar as it is free" (*Ordinatio* 2.6.2 n. 50, Vat. 8: 50). If the will were characterized only by the affection for advantage, that is, if it were only intellectual appetite, then the will would not control its act, but rather would necessarily desire what is thought to be most to the individual's own advantage. But then it is impossible to do otherwise, and therefore desiring only one's own advantage would not count as a sin (nn. 49–51, pp. 48–51).⁶¹

For Scotus, a finite will (that is, a human or angelic will) wills everything contingently. He holds the novel view that even the desires for the ultimate end and the enjoyment of God in the beatific vision are contingent.⁶² As a free power, the will can fail to want to be happy, although it cannot want not to be happy (since in happiness there is nothing evil and no deficiency of good).⁶³ Even in the beatific vision, the will could sin, and thus the blessed could fall away from God, if

God did not impede their will from doing so.⁶⁴ The divine will, too, acts freely in all its acts, but for God this does not imply that God wills everything contingently. As a general rule for Scotus, all of God's acts "toward the outside" (*ad extra*) are contingent (e.g. whether or not God creates, or predestines Peter to happiness), while all his acts "toward the inside" (*ad intra*) are necessary.⁶⁵ For Scotus, necessary willing has three necessary and jointly sufficient conditions: the will must be infinite, the loved object must be infinite, and it must be perfectly known. These conditions are met in God's self-love, by which according to Trinitarian theology, the Holy Spirit is "produced."⁶⁶ So God loves himself necessarily, and the Holy Spirit is produced necessarily. Though necessary, God's act of self-love is free, because it is an act elicited by the will, for which it is characteristic to act freely and not by natural necessity. What this means is that all acts of the will—even if they are necessary—are self-determined by the will.⁶⁷ So for Scotus, what characterizes the will is that it acts freely rather than naturally, not that it acts contingently rather than necessarily. There can be free but necessary acts, but there cannot be free acts that are elicited by *natural* necessity.⁶⁸

William of Ockham develops many of his views about free will and free decision in dialogue with Scotus. Ockham, too, considers the will to be fundamentally distinct from any natural cause: the will alone can produce contrary effects in precisely the same circumstances.⁶⁹ Ockham accordingly calls freedom "the ability by which I can posit indifferently and contingently different alternatives, so that I can cause the same effect or not cause it, without there being any difference elsewhere outside of this power."⁷⁰ But Ockham rejects Scotus's claim that freedom is compatible with the inability to do otherwise, and so he collapses Scotus's twofold distinction between on the one hand freedom and nature and on the other contingency and necessity into a single distinction: for Ockham, what is "free" is "contingent" or "indifferent," and so freedom is incompatible with necessity. Accordingly, *pace* Scotus, the Holy Spirit, who is produced necessarily, is not produced freely (*Ord.* 1.10.2, *Opera theologica* 3: 335–341, 344).

Ockham's most significant departure from earlier thinkers lies in the fact that in his view, the will has no natural inclinations at all, that is, it is not by nature inclined to any one effect rather than to another, nor does it have a natural inclination toward the ultimate end.⁷¹ It can will something evil even if it is not a real or apparent good (*Quaestiones variae* 8, *Opera theologica* 8: 442–444). So the will can want not to be happy, and even in the beatific vision it could want not to enjoy God and reject God. What prevents the will from doing so is the fact that God himself causes the will's adherence to him in the beatific vision.⁷² So Ockham makes a strong link between freedom and the ability to sin, despite Anselm's claim that "being able to sin is not freedom, nor is it a part of freedom." Ockham subscribes to this statement, for God, and (because of God's intervention) the blessed are not able to sin, and yet they are free. But he argues that the ability to sin implies freedom, although freedom does not imply the ability to sin.⁷³

Conclusion

Medieval accounts of freedom and free decision have a strong metaphysical underpinning that most contemporary accounts lack. The human will was thought to be by nature oriented toward the good. In this perspective, the will exists chiefly not to make free decisions, but to attain complete happiness, which consists in the possession of God, the universal good. In adhering to God, the will is free in the sense that it is not coerced, but rather acts of its own accord. This present life is a path toward happiness and the beatific vision, the ultimate end. Free decision concerns particular goods, which move us closer toward our ultimate end (if assisted by grace), or further away from it. Most medieval thinkers hold that while free will in a broad sense is compatible with the inability to do otherwise, free will in the narrow sense requires alternative possibilities. They furthermore hold that without the ability to do otherwise, our actions would not be meritorious. Latin medieval thinkers were by and large in agreement about this general account, which they

received mostly from Augustine and which Aristotle's writings, once available, helped formulate with greater precision.

Within this widely shared outlook, different inquiries were central in different periods. The dominant approach by eleventh- and twelfth-century thinkers was to understand the nature of free decision in light of premises from speculative and moral theology: namely, the fact that God, who cannot sin, has free decision, and yet that free decision is what makes it possible either to sin or act meritoriously. The reception of Aristotle's writings in the thirteenth century allowed for a new approach to free decision, starting not from theological premises, but rather from the nature of intellect and will: since we can consider a particular thing as choiceworthy or not, we are free to choose it or not. The question then became whether choosing is essentially making a rational calculation, and whether making an evil choice is simply a miscalculation. There was a wide consensus that the story must be more complex than this, for the most intelligent person is not necessarily the most moral person. But it was debated what precisely is missing if rational calculation alone does not account for free decision. This debate, in turn, led some fourteenth-century thinkers to put into question certain presuppositions of previous accounts. They expanded the scope of the will beyond the necessary pursuit of happiness and loosened its bond to the good. In so doing, they started a development that profoundly shaped modern and contemporary conceptions of free will, and by implication, of ethics.

Notes

- 1 For theories of free will in the Arabic tradition, see Adamson (2010: 400–406). For more comprehensive treatments of medieval theories of free will in the Latin West, see Lottin (1957), Hoffmann (2021, chs. 1–5), and the studies indicated in note 35.
- 2 Regarding freedom without alternative possibilities, see the overview in Hoffmann (2019).
- 3 Anselm of Canterbury, *De libertate arbitrii* 2, Opera omnia 1: 209–210. For an analysis and discussion of the distinction between the normative and descriptive definition of free choice, see Visser and Williams (2004).
- 4 Interestingly, Anselm here avoids calling this ability *liberum arbitrium*; see Kent (2017: 1083, 1086).
- 5 For Anselm's account of voluntary action in *De casu diaboli*, see Ekenberg (2016).
- 6 *Concordia praesentiae et praedestinationis et gratiae Dei cum libero arbitrio* 3.11, Opera omnia 1: 279–284.
- 7 Cf. Boethius, *Commentarii in librum Aristotelis Peri Hermeneias* 3.9 (2: 196); Lottin (1957: 22–24).
- 8 Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 22.30, CCSL 48: 863–864; see also *De correptione et gratia* 12.33, CSEL 92: 259.
- 9 See, e.g., Augustine, *De correptione et gratia* 12.35, CSEL 92: 261–262; *Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 1.82, CSEL 85/1: 96; *Enchiridion* 28.105, CCSL 46: 106.
- 10 For the widespread view among thirteenth-century theologians that this definition originates in Augustine, see Lottin (1957: 64, note 3). Instead, Peter Lombard took it from the *Summa sententiarum*; see Lottin (1957: 25, 28). Lottin misidentifies its author with Otto of Lucca, a hypothesis which Marcia Colish has demonstrated to be virtually impossible; see Colish (2013).
- 11 Cf. Hugh of St. Victor, *De sacramentis* 1.5, *Corpus Victorinum Textus historici* 1: 125–126.
- 12 Anselm of Canterbury, *De libertate arbitrii* 4, Opera omnia 1: 214; Peter Abelard, *Theologia Scholarium* 3.87, CCCM 13: 536; Bernard of Clairvaux, *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 2.4 and 4.11, SBO 3: 169, 173–174; Peter Lombard, *Sententiae* 2.24.3 n. 1, *Sent.* 1: 453.
- 13 The subordinate role of reason is discussed explicitly in Robert of Melun, a student of Abelard; see Perkams (2012).
- 14 For an overview of the translations of Aristotle's works from Greek to Latin, indicating their translators and dates, see Trizio (2010).
- 15 For John of Damascus's action theory, see especially Gauthier (1954); see also Frede (2002).
- 16 William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea* 2.10.1–4, vol. 2: 274–285.
- 17 For Philip's theory of free choice, see McCluskey (2001a) and Saccenti (2013).
- 18 Albert the Great, *De homine*, “De libero arbitrio,” q. 1 arg. 1, co., and ad 1, Editio Coloniensis 27/2: 507.9–18, 508.5–26. Cf. *Summa Halensis* 1a2ae n. 403, 2: 480a–481b.
- 19 Albert the Great, *De homine*, “De voluntate,” q. 2 co. and ad 10, Editio Coloniensis 27/2: 491.14–43, 492.11–19; “De libero arbitrio,” q. 4.2 ad 2, *ibid.*: 522.10–11.

- 20 Albert the Great, *De homine*, “De libero arbitrio,” q. 2 co., *ibid.*: 513.39–514.24. On Albert’s theory of free choice as a distinct power, see McCluskey (2001b).
- 21 Bonaventure, *In Sent.* 2.25.1.1.1 co., ad 3 and ad 4, *Opera omnia* 2: 593a, 594a.
- 22 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a.83.4 co., Leonine 5: 311; *De malo* 16.5 co., Leonine 23: 304.215–217.
- 23 Aquinas, *De veritate* 24.1 ad 20, Leonine 22: 684; *Summa theologiae* 1a.82.1 ad 1, Leonine 5: 293.
- 24 For the necessary but free desire for happiness, see Aquinas, *De potentia* 10.2 ad 5, in QD 2: 260; *De veritate* 24.1 ad 20, Leonine 22: 684; cf. *Summa theologiae* 1a.81.1 ad 1, Leonine 5: 288; for the necessary but free love of God by the blessed, see *Summa contra Gentiles* 3.138, Leonine 14: 415–416, *Contra doctrinam retrahentium a religione* 13, Leonine 41: C 64.24–28; for the necessary but free divine self-love see *De potentia* 10.2 ad 5, cf. *Summa theologiae* 1a.19.3 co., Leonine 4: 235.
- 25 See, e.g., Aquinas, *De malo* 6, Leonine 23: 148.253–268.
- 26 Aquinas, *De malo* 6 co., Leonine 23: 148.269–296; cf. *De veritate* 23.1 co.; *Summa theologiae* 1a.59.3 co. Leonine 5: 95. For a detailed analysis and discussion, see Gallagher (1991).
- 27 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae.77.2 co., Leonine 7: 62–63; *De malo* 3.9 co., Leonine 23: 86–87; cf. *De malo* 16.2 co., *ibid.*: 23: 288.261–289.269.
- 28 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae. 17.1 co., Leonine 6: 118; *De malo* 6 co., Leonine 23: 149.343–354.
- 29 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae.9.1 and 3, Leonine 6: 74–75 and 77–78; *De malo* 6 co., Leonine 23: 148.308–149.377.
- 30 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a.82.2 co., Leonine 5: 296; 1a2ae.10.2, Leonine 6: 85–86; *De malo* 6 co., Leonine 23: 149.418–150.449.
- 31 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae.9.4 co., 9.6 co., 10.4 co., Leonine 6: 78, 82, and 89; *De malo* 6 co., ad 3, and ad 4, Leonine 23: 149.363–416, 150.498–516.
- 32 Some interpreters consider Aquinas to be a compatibilist about free choice (that is, for Aquinas determinism is true and yet we have free choice); see, e.g., Pasnau (2002: 221–233). Others argue that he has a Libertarian account (that is, for Aquinas, we have free choice, and free choice is incompatible with determinism); see, e.g., Hoffmann and Michon (2017).
- 33 Siger of Brabant, *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* (Cambridge Report), 6.9, Maurer: 320–326, *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* (Vienna Report) 7.1, Dunphy: 378–386. Siger’s account has striking similarities to an argument briefly discussed by Aquinas; see *De malo* 6 arg. 15 and ad 15, Leonine 23: 146, 151–152.
- 34 Siger of Brabant, *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* (Vienna Report) 5.8, Dunphy: 330–331. For Siger’s theory of free choice, see Ryan (1983).
- 35 For more detailed studies of these late thirteenth-century debates on free choice, see Kent (1995, ch. 3), Putallaz (1995), Eardley (2006), Perler (2020, chs. 5–6), and Hoffmann (2021, chs. 2–4).
- 36 For a detailed analysis of the relevant articles and their sources, see Hissette (1977).
- 37 The articles condemned in Paris are edited in Piché (1999).
- 38 *Quaestiones disputatae* 5 co. and ad 5, 51–54. Cf. Lottin (1957: 243–247); Lottin points to evidence that Walter Bruges read Aquinas’s *De veritate*.
- 39 For a detailed account of Henry’s indebtedness to Walter, see Decorte (1983); for Henry’s theory of free will, see Teske (2011) and Hoffmann (2021, section 3.2).
- 40 Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 1.16 co., *Opera omnia* 5: 107–108; cf. *Summa* 45.4, *Opera omnia* 29: 124.
- 41 Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 9.5 co., *Opera omnia* 13: 123.2–6; *Quodlibet* 10.9 co. ad arg., *Opera omnia* 14: 239.98–00; *Quodlibet* 12.26 co., *Opera omnia* 16: 150–151. For Giles’s theory to which Henry responds, see Giles of Rome, *Quodlibet* 3.15, 176–180; for a discussion, see Eardley (2003, 2016).
- 42 Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 10.9 co., 14: 225–226; *Quodlibet* 12.26 co., *Opera omnia* 16: 152–153; *Quodlibet* 13.11 co. and ad arg., *Opera omnia* 18: 88, 131. On the notion of *causa sine qua non*, see Solère (2014).
- 43 Cf. Augustine, *De libero arbitrio* 3.18.52.177–179, CCSL 29: 305–306.
- 44 R. Wielockx (1985: 79–80) argues that the “magisterial proposition” was conceded in 1277, but in a forthcoming publication, S. Dumont provides solid evidence that it was conceded only in 1285.
- 45 Henry of Ghent takes great pains to reconcile the affirmation of the magisterial proposition with the condemnation of articles 129 and 130 (cited in note 36); see *Quodlibet* 10.9 ad arg., 10.10 co., 10.13 co., *Opera omnia* 14: 245–248, 258–271, and 287–289.
- 46 Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 3.17 co. and ad arg., Badius: 78vG and 79rH–K; *Quodlibet* 9.5 co., *Opera omnia* 13: 135; *ibid.*: 47.5 co., *Opera omnia* 30: 26–27.
- 47 Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 3.17 co. and ad arg., Badius: 78vG and 79rI; *Summa* 45.3 co., *Opera omnia* 29: 119; *ibid.*: 47.5 co., *Opera omnia* 30: 27; *Quodlibet* 14.5 co., Badius: 565rB.
- 48 Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 10.9 ad arg., *Opera omnia* 14: 231; *Quodlibet* 12.26 co., *Opera omnia* 16: 154–155; *Quodlibet* 13.11 ad arg., *Opera omnia* 18: 127–133.
- 49 E.g., Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* 6.7 co., PhB 3: 149; *Quodlibet* 8.2 co., PhB 4: 19–20.

- 50 Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* 6.7 co., PhB 3: 163, 170; *Quodlibet* 10.13, PhB 4: 375.
- 51 E.g., Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* 6.7 co., PhB 3: 161; *Quodlibet* 8.16 co., PhB 4: 156; *Quodlibet* 15.4 co., PhB 14: 28–29.
- 52 E.g., Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* 6.10 co., PhB 3: 209; *Quodlibet* 10.14 co., PhB 4: 380.
- 53 E.g., Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* 6.11 co., PhB 3: 220; *Quodlibet* 8.2 co., PhB 4: 22.
- 54 Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* 6.7 co., PhB 3: 170. Cf. Wippel 1973.
- 55 Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* 15.4 co., PhB 14: 26–28.
- 56 Cf. Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* 10.13 co., PhB 4: 373 and 376; *Quodlibet* 15.4 arg. 3, PhB 14: 21.
- 57 For these intermediary theories and their critique by Henry and Godfrey, see Hoffmann (2021, ch. 4).
- 58 John of Pouilly, *Quodlibet* 2.13 (second redaction), quoted in Hoffmann (2021, section 5.2).
- 59 Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* 9.15 nn. 21–22, n. 25, OPh 4: 680–681.
- 60 Ibid.: n. 36, OPh 4: 684–685.
- 61 On Scotus's transformation of Anselm's affections-theory, see King (2010).
- 62 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* 1.1.2.2 n. 80, nn. 143–145, Vat. 2: 60, 96–97; *Ordinatio* 4.49.1.6 n. 341, Vat. 14: 375.
- 63 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* 1.1.2.2 nn. 82, 85, 149, Vat. 2: 62–63, 100.
- 64 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* 4.49.1.6 nn. 352, 364–371, Vat. 14: 378, 380–383.
- 65 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* 1.2.2 n. 239, Vat. 2: 272; *Quodlibet* 16 n. 39, in Noone and Roberts (2007: 179–180).
- 66 Duns Scotus, *Quodlibet* 16 nn. 6–7, *ibid.*: 162–163; *Ordinatio* 1.10 nn. 47–49, Vat. 4: 359–361.
- 67 Duns Scotus, *Quodlibet* 16 nn. 36–37, 62–63, in Noone and Roberts (2007: 178–179, 192–193).
- 68 Duns Scotus, *Quodlibet* 16 n. 40, *ibid.*: 180. For Scotus's twofold distinction of will/nature and contingency/necessity and for its early reception by Franciscan thinkers, see Alliney (2015).
- 69 Ockham, *Expositio in librum Perihermeneias Aristotelis* 2.7 n. 5, Opera philosophica 2: 481; *Expositio in libros Physicorum Aristotelis* 2.5 n. 9 and 2.8 n. 1, Opera philosophica 4: 290 and 319–322.
- 70 Ockham, *Quodlibet* 1.16, Opera theologica 9: 87; cf. *Ord.* 1.1.6, Opera theologica 1: 502.
- 71 Ockham, *Ord.* 1.1.6, Opera theologica 1: 507; *Quaestiones in Tertium Librum Sententiarum* 3.6, Opera theologica 6: 175; *Quodlibet* 4.1, Opera theologica 9: 300.
- 72 Ockham, *Ord.* 1.1.6, Opera theologica 1: 503–507; *Quaestiones in Quartum Librum Sententiarum* 4.16, Opera theologica 7: 350–353.
- 73 Ockham, *Quaestiones in Quartum Librum Sententiarum* 4.16, Opera theologica 7: 354–355. For a more detailed account of Ockham's theory of freedom and for its implications, see Adams (1999).

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