CHAPTER 12

Ethical structures and issues

12.1 Introduction

In antiquity, ethical interests were different from what they are now in Western thought. In Greek *philosophia*, ethics is more something given than a set of problems and issues to be reflected on, because the connection between *nature* and customs, commands, precepts, or law is intrinsic. What is at stake here depends on the ontological impact of the ideas of *being essential* and *reality*. If natural law is invoked as a standard, what kind of rule is to be invoked? Does the validity of this rule consist in being invoked or is reality as such law-like and natural? The non-Christian type of *natural law* is clearly expressed by the Roman philosopher Cicero (106–43 BC): true law is right reason in agreement with nature. It is of universal application, unchangeable and everlasting; it summons to duty by its commands, and averts from wrongdoing by its prohibitions.[1] We may put the key notions of *law*, *reason*, *truth*, and *nature* within the contexts of Platonism, Aristotelianism, Stoic or Neoplatonist thought and we find that still the same pattern of absolute reality obtains, although the nature of this reality is interpreted in different ways.

The decisive point is whether *being natural* is seen as an ethical or political rule in its own right or *nature* itself is a kind of society and social reality truly natural.[2] According to ancient thought, everything is necessary, law-like and natural. This necessitarianism is the hard core of every important movement of ancient philosophy, apart from patristic thought, and even the philosophy of the church fathers only deviates from it on an intuitive level, although its rejection of the necessitarian view of reality is clear.

[1] See Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De re publica*. Cf. Sturm, 'Natural law,' *ER* X 318–324, and Finnis, 'Natural law,' *REP* VI 685–690.

[2] See Beth, 'Metafysica en wetenschap' en 'Algemene beschouwingen over causaliteit,' in *Door wetenschap tot wijsheid*, 28–36 and 74–81. Cf. Beth, *De wijsbegeerte der wiskunde van Parmenides tot Bolzano*, 5–92, and Finnis (ed.), *Natural Law* I–II.

It is a remarkable fact that the history of Western ethics possesses a main alternative. It is even more remarkable that this alternative mainstream of thought in Augustine, Anselm, and Duns Scotus has largely been forgotten.[3] Anselm and Scotus are conspicuous by their absence in Alasdair MacIntyre's *A Short History of Ethics* (1966). Duns' theory of virtues is missing in his *After Virtue*. Neither Anselm nor Duns Scotus are mentioned in *After Virtue* at all, Augustine is mentioned once and Thomas Aquinas is only marginally dealt with.[4] This situation drastically changed in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988) and in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (1990), where Augustine and Aquinas keep Aristotle company.

> While scholastic writers other than Aquinas continue to receive comparatively little attention, Aquinas's own thought is discussed at considerable length. No more is MacIntyre's tragic hero the Aristotelian tradition; it is now the Thomistic tradition. The 'Thomistic dialectical synthesis', which reconciles the radical conflict between Aristotelianism and Augustinianism, yields to increasingly incoherent and indefensible rivals, until the West finally degenerates into liberal individualism, the worst tradition of them all.[5]

MacIntyre is fair enough to make a disclaimer. 'My account of Aquinas's work as the culmination and integration of the Augustinian and Aristotelian traditions is not at all how Aquinas was understood by much the greater part of both his contemporaries and his immediate successors.'[6] However, there is still a *bête noire*: Duns Scotus who rejected Aristotle's psychology. The consequences of this rejection were of primary importance for future history. MacIntyre sees Scotus' ethics as a type of ethics founded on a command theory and 'if the answer is that the command is God's and that God is wholly good, then the questions arise as to whether, counterfactually, we would still be morally obliged if God had not so commanded.'[7]

In their *History of Ethics*, Abelson and Nielsen signaled only Scotus' 'voluntarism.'[8] Duns Scotus' ideas are not discussed in Gene

[3] The recent change of climate, however, is remarkable. See Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality* (1986), Shannon, *The Ethical Theory of John Duns Scotus* (1995), Möhle, *Ethik als scientia practica nach Johann Duns Scotus* (1995), and Ingham, *The Harmony of Goodness* (1996).

[4] See MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 165–168 and 186–189.

[5] Kent, *Virtues of the Will*, 20 (19–25). Cf. Vos, 'De ethische optie van Duns Scotus,' *Kerk en Theologie* 44 (1993) 17 f., 24–28 and 31 f., and *DS* 84 and 101 f.

[6] MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 151.

[7] MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 155 (154–157). Cf. §§12.3–12.6.

[8] See Abelson, 'History of Ethics,' *EP* III 90 (81–117).

Ouka's fine *Agape* (1972), although his ethics is an ethics of love (see §§12.4–12.5). The written history of Western thought shows a one-sided view, which is not matched by acknowledging the influence of Thomism in later European thought. Indeed:

> It was the achievement of St. Thomas Aquinas that he managed, within a certain framework of thought, to solve what might be called the 'selectivity' problem of natural-law theory by grafting on to the Stoic principle of 'Follow nature' the Aristotelian concept of nature as a teleological system. The general principles of the law of nature are, St. Thomas argued, known equally to all through their use of reason. [. . .] That phenomena are divided into natural kinds, that each natural kind is distinguished by the possession of an essence, that the essence stipulates an end, that virtue and goodness are necessarily linked with the fulfillment of these ends – these are some of the assumptions behind St. Thomas' *lex naturae*.[9]

Thomas Aquinas and Scotus shared substantial views of the *patrimonium fidei* on an intuitive level, but their theoretical outlook was quite different. Moreover, the sphere at Oxford at the close of the thirteenth century differed markedly from what was the case in Paris more than one generation before. Oxford was not battered by internal conflicts as Paris's university had been during the 1260s and the 1270s. Oxford followed its own semantic and logical tracks.

In the next section the bare challenge of Scotian ethical dilemmas is presented. §12.3 interprets the key words of Duns Scotus' ethical terminology with a view to his language of argumentation in ethics, for the technicalities of this language are the foundation stone in order to explain the natural law expressions *lex naturalis* (*natural law*), *lex naturae* (*law of nature*) and *recta ratio* (*right reason*).[10] In §12.4 the outlines of Scotian ethics are presented. The essentials of his philosophy of love are sketched in §12.5 and a theme, typical of Duns Scotus passionately rejecting slavery, is dealt with in §12.6. The *Quintonian* and *Harrisian fallacies* are solved in the next section (§12.7) and §12.8 treats of the Scotian solution of the problem of dispensation from law. §12.9 deals with the structure of virtue and §12.10 with the unity of virtue, before we conclude with 'Perspective' (§12.11).

[9] Wollheim, 'Natural law,' *EP* V 451–452.

[10] For *ratio, ratio recta* and *ratio erronea*, *ratio necessaria* and *ratio naturalis*, *propositio per se evidens* and *persuasio*, see §9.2.

12.2 Duns' ethical paradox

We read in many handbooks of church and dogma history that 'his criticism of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas was utterly intelligent and he taught in Oxford, Cambridge, Paris and, at last, as *lector* at the *Studium* of his Order in Cologne.'[11] Traditional research found it difficult to discover the inner coherence of Scotus' thought. The reputable Gilson confesses in the introduction of his famous *Introduction* that the reader will fail to find the sketch of a 'system.' The simple reason, he wrote, is that he found none.[12] De Bruin's characterization sees Scotus' strength in his acute analysis and critical mind as his weakness. The same tone we also learn from Knowles's *The Religious Orders in England*: 'Unfortunately, he found it necessary to express himself in novel technical terms, and to create a forest of metaphysical forms which make it next to impossible for a reader to comprehend his thought unless he is willing to "bolte him to the bren".'[13]

In ethics, the central dilemma concerns the traditional complaint of Duns Scotus' alleged voluntarism. What is good is good because God has willed it so. God's will would have been subjected to God's intellect, if He would have willed it, because it is good. Historians and philosophers meet in this choir. A black–white contrast with Thomas Aquinas also belongs to this picture.

> Over and against Thomas Aquinas who adhered to the primacy of the intellect, Duns was a fiery protagonist of the priority of the will. This is especially crucial in the doctrine of God and in anthropology. The will enjoys primacy in God too. This divine will is the ultimate ground of all being and itself without any ground. Something is good, because God has willed so, and the reason that God has willed it, is not that it is good.[14]

Of course, divine will enjoys a key position in Duns Scotus' ontology, but, nevertheless, things are different (see §§12.3–12.5).

Understanding Scotus depends on accompanying him on his ways of terminological and systematic proposals. He explores his own ideas within his own personal framework of concepts and theories. Simple

[11] C. C. de Bruin, *Handboek der Kerkgeschiedenis* II, Franeker [5]1981, 174.
[12] Gilson, *Jean Duns Scot. Introduction à ses positions fondamentales*, 7–10.
[13] Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England* I, 237.
[14] A. D. R. Polman, 'Johannes Duns Scotus,' *Christelijke Encyclopedie* II, Kampen [2]1977 (first printing [2]1957), 520.

summaries and easy catchwords are not of any help. In mapping his ethical viewpoints, we have to start where the medieval scholars started themselves, namely in the subjects of the *trivium* (see Chapters 4–6 and 9). There is also an ontological center – the *infinite being* who is identical with the theological center – *God* in his own identity, the historical center of his own salvation history. All this is common Christian heritage and there is the central theoretical tool in the concept of *logical possibility* and the theory of *synchronic contingency* which lends coherence and clarity to the whole of Scotus' systematic fabric. Reality is open whether it be open or closed according to experience. Individuals and institutions may feel that they are locked in, but we can only be locked in if there is open space. Freedom and contingency are essential characteristics of reality. There is no logical room to ignore them. The same holds good for God, his free will and love. Divine will is full of unselfish and abundant love in willing people who serve through free will.

12.3 Scotian ethical language

12.3.1 An analytical family of terms

In philosophy Duns Scotus mainly acknowledges as philosophy what we may call 'necessary philosophy.'[15] In theology things are different. In theology, contingency is decisive and the theoretical framework of contingency is used to build up an alternative methodology. In terms of the basic phenomenon of contingent propositions or states of affairs the important role of necessary propositions in theology is discovered. Here, we have to distinguish *necessary theology* from *contingent theology*. Likewise, we have to distinguish *necessary ethics* from *contingent ethics*. This role yields the solution to a fundamental problem in ethical theory, namely, that of key terms like *lex naturae*, *ius naturae,* and *ratio recta*.

The hypothesis I propose is that the semantic background of these terms is to be clarified with the help of the terms *ratio naturalis* and *ratio necessaria*. These terms belong to a family of analytical terms and we need an introduction of some other members. In order to explain the notion of *ratio naturalis*, we need to explain the family of *ratio*, but the modern notion of *the reason* (*Vernunft*) is not helpful.

[15] *Necessary philosophy* is that part of philosophy which consists of necessary propositions and what can be derived from them.

12.3.2 Natural and necessary

We observe the duality of necessity and contingency in ethics. The duality of *necessary ethics* and *contingent ethics* constitutes the methodological ellipse of Scotian ethics. It is the key to a proper understanding of Scotus' *natural reason* and *natural law* terminology and to solving the difficulty of Scotus' so-called 'voluntarism.' The viewpoint of *de lege naturae* is at the center of defining elementary terms of necessary ethics, but what does it mean that something is valid in terms of *natural reason* and *natural law* (*de lege naturae*)? The analytical and semantic expositions of §§9.2–9.3 function as an introduction to the line of reasoning in *Lectura* III 37, where the ethical question runs as follows:

> *Do all commands belong to the law of nature*?

We read a short answer to this question about natural law:

> What is known on account of the terms used is structurally [*naturaliter*] known, before any act of will [volition].[16]

The context of this statement is Duns' refutation of the idea that the commands of the Decalogue as such embody the first principles of ethics. For the moment, I only select the elements which concern his technical terminology:

> We may say that some elements belong to *natural law* [*de lege naturae*] as they follow from its proper principles. In this way they belong to natural law even if there were no understanding or will. In this sense the Decalogue is not part and parcel of natural law. What is good in terms of a correct will does not belong to natural law, but other elements belong to natural law, because they can be derived from the first principles of practical thought.[17]

This definition is simple and basic. What belongs to natural law necessarily follows from the axioms of ethics. Such derivable propositions are necessarily true because they are deduced from necessary

[16] *Lectura* III 37.13: 'Item, que sunt nota ex terminis, sunt *naturaliter nota* ante omnem actum voluntatis.' On *Lectura* III, see §2.3.1.

[17] *Lectura* III 37.16: 'Potest autem dici quod aliqua sunt de lege nature ut sequentia ex propriis principiis, talia autem etsi nullus intellectus, nec voluntas esset, sunt de lege nature. Et sic non est Decalogus de lege nature. Que autem sunt ex voluntate recta, non de lege nature, sed alia sunt de lege nature, quia sunt bene consona cum lege nature, quia stant cum principiis primis practicis.' Cf. §8.4.

propositions. Of course, the ethically necessary principles are themselves also part of natural law, as Duns explicitly states when he refutes an alternative theory. In a typically Scotian way, necessary truth and will are connected.

What is necessarily true is true even if there were no will. Duns Scotus assigns a fundamental part to the will, in particular to God's will, but he does not do so in an arbitrary manner. He does not preach: everything is will. Duns is not a 'voluntarist.' He does not praise will to the skies; he only acknowledges the will, in particular the will of God, and spells out its functions. The starting point of this analysis is precisely to be found in necessary propositions. Why is talk of '*after* (*post*) an act of will' meaningful? Talk of '*after* an act of will' is meaningful, since talk of '*before* (*ante*) an act of will' is indispensable, for the truth-value of a necessary proposition is not will based:

> Their truth does not depend on that act of the will and they would have been known by God's intellect, if God were not to be a willing God – although that is impossible.[18]

There are propositions which are true *before an act of willing*, for if it is impossible that a certain proposition is false, there is no alternative possible to be willed. So, they cannot be will based and the point of view of *ante actum voluntatis* is indispensable. However, if it is impossible that necessary propositions are the only possible ones, since the truth value of many propositions is neither necessary nor impossible, the point of view of *post actum voluntatis* is indispensable too.

Goodness in terms of will or an act of willing (volition) does not belong to the goodness of 'the law of nature,' because the law of nature is true 'before any act of will' (*ante omnem actum voluntatis* – *Lectura* III 37.13). Its truth is 'naturally' known and this '*naturally* (*structurally*)' *known* is being known on account of the terms which the proposition under consideration consists of. So, the necessary truth of such basic propositions depends on the analysis of the involved terms. The necessity of such propositions is analytical. When we apply this pattern to the ethical content, the result is as follows:

> When we completely leave out the act of will and the intellect of God grasps the terms of those principles, then it grasps the power and correctness of those principles before an act of will.[19]

[18] *Ordinatio* I 39.23: 'Eorum veritas non dependet ab illo actu et essent cognita ab intellectu, si – *per impossibile* – non esset volens.'

[19] *Lectura* III 37.13: 'Igitur, circumscripto omni actu voluntatis, cum intellectus Dei apprehendit terminos illorum principiorum, apprehendit virtutem illorum et rectitudinem ante actum

Basically, a truth is naturally (*naturaliter*) true if it is true in terms of the intrinsic nature or structure of the proposition involved, and not in terms of an absolute concept of nature, derived from cosmology. Natural truths are truths which are true in terms of their own nature, for a *recta ratio* is a correct piece of reasoning from a correct basis.

12.3.3 Conclusions

Duns defines what he calls a truth *de lege naturae*. The analytical meaning of *ratio naturalis* is the key to explaining what is true *de lege naturae/naturaliter*. This key is not the absolute notion of natural law or of absolute reason. In this analytical vein, Duns strips off the old notion of natural law. If a correct reasoning is built upon a necessary basis which is also self-evident, then it constitutes a *ratio naturalis* (see §9.2.2). This self-evident basis is constituted by the specific identity or essence of God's personal character. Scotus' treatment presents an important chapter of the history of the concept of *natural law*, for he gets rid of the notion of *absolute law* of ancient Greek philosophy (see §12.4).

12.4 Ethical structures

It is a pity that Duns' ethics is not well known. Like other areas of his thought, his ethical thought never reached completion. Nevertheless, it is impressive. It is built on the distinction between *necessary theology* and *contingent theology*:

> Not only knowledge of necessary propositions belongs to this doctrine, but also knowledge of contingent propositions. Indeed, for the largest part of theology deals with contingent propositions.[20]

The divine essence is the first subject of the necessary and contingent truths of theology. One already finds the structure of necessary and contingent theology illustrated by an *ethical* example in the *Prologue* of Duns' *Lectura* I–II:

voluntatis.' The last part of this section runs as follows: 'Igitur, vel voluntas necessario vult hoc, si est recta, cum intellectus dicit illud esse rectum, vel erit nonrecta, si discordet.' On principles, see §8.4, and on the notion of *ratio naturalis*, see §9.2.

[20] *Lectura Prologus* 111: 'Ad istam doctrinam non tantum pertinet cognitio necessariorum, sed contingentium, immo maxima pars theologiae est de contingentibus.' Cf. *Lectura Prologus* 114 and 118. For the theme of *philosophy, theology*, and *scientia*, see Chapter 14 and §§16.2–16.3.

> Therefore, I say that there are necessary truths about what is contingent:
>
> *A stone is falling down*
>
> is contingent and yet there are necessary truths about falling, for example, that it looks for the center and that it falls down according to a straight line. In the same way,
>
> *I love God*
>
> is contingent and yet there can be a necessary truth about it, for example, that I must love God above all. This thesis can be proved as follows:
>
> *God is the greatest one we can think of.*
>
> Therefore, He is most lovable and I ought to love Him most.
>
> In this way I can have knowledge of contingent propositions. Then this knowledge really regards contingent contents in its first object, although it is not a content in the first sense. Yet, it concerns necessary truths which can be concluded about what is contingent.[21]

In terms of the basic distinction between *necessary theology* and *contingent theology*, it is to be seen that, with Duns, there are also two kinds of ethics: *necessary ethics* and *contingent ethics*. So, necessary ethics is a part of necessary theology and contingent ethics is a part of contingent theology. We may suggest that the incisive problems of the status of the commandments of the Decalogue and the nature of revocation of law will be treated in terms of this distinction.[22]

Besides Duns' renewal of ontology, the other main ingredient of Scotian ethics is the Anselmian revolution which turns around the distinction between the agreeable good (*bonum commodum*) and the good of justice (*bonum iustitiae*). The first kind of goodness is related to what we feel to be pleasant and agreeable to ourselves.

[21] *Prologus* 172: 'Ideo dico quod de contingentibus sunt veritates necessariae, quia contingens est *lapidem descendere*, et tamen de descensu eius veritates necessariae, ut quod appetit centrum et quod descendit secundum lineam rectam. Similiter, *me diligere Deum* est contingens, et tamen de hoc potest esse veritas necessaria, ut quod debeam Deum diligere super omnia. Et hoc demonstrative potest concludi sic: *Deus est quo maius cogitari non potest*; igitur est summe diligibilis; igitur summe debeo eum diligere. Et sic secundum hoc possum habere scientiam de contingentibus. Ista igitur scientia est vere circa contingens contentum in primo obiecto, quamvis non sit primo ibi contentum, et tamen est de veris necessariis quae possunt concludi de contingentibus.' Cf. the much later parallel text in *Ordinatio* III 27 (= *Opus Oxoniense* III 27): see Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 424 (Latin) and 425 (English).

[22] See Duns Scotus' *Opus Oxoniense* (= *Ordinatio*) III 37 and IV 17. For the philosophical ramifications of his ethical theory, see Ingham, *Ethics and Freedom*.

It presupposes the spontaneous and almost instinctive experience of *nice!* and is constitutive of the whole of ancient non-Christian ethics.

For Anselm, the second kind of goodness is decisive: just goodness is good, for the objective goodness of the other appeals to us and absorbs us in order to respect and to love it. In depth, its character is defined by being *in line with* divine goodness. Anselm interprets *iustus* as *rectus*: right, straight, not bent. He did not despise the first dimension, but concentrated on the second one. Duns took over this distinction and saw that the first kind of goodness is not moral at all, neither is it immoral. It is to be reckoned with as a real human phenomenon, but ethics can only be based on moral goodness. Such ethical goodness focuses on the other who is our neighbor, and the Other in a contingent world.

There is a double shift from the ego to orientation on the other and the neighbor and from natural inclination to an open-ended deed. *Being free* becomes a central notion of Scotian ethics and anthropology, but it is also a distinctively *new* concept. Freedom in this sense is not longer opposed to sin, but precisely *sinning* presupposes freedom and so *being free* is essential to a human person.[23] *Being free* is, of course, also essential to God, but He is also impeccable. How are the ethical dimensions related to his essence and will?

12.5 Love of God and love of neighbor

Duns Scotus' contingency thought has nothing to do with an unsound preference for arbitrariness or capriciousness. Reality is open reality and just as open reality it has to be ordered. Ordering reality is warranted from its center and its center is personal. The center of reality is God. This central focus points at ethical and anthropological meaning and consequences. God is not only the ontological but also the existential and ethical center. God is as good as possible and *not loving God* is deontically impossible.

It is also a natural perception that love is a basic category of Christian life. Duns Scotus expresses this in his medieval style by asserting that to love God is a theological virtue. 'The disposition by

[23] For an elaboration of this point, see Dekker and Veldhuis, 'Freedom and Sin. Some Systematic Observations,' *European Journal of Theology* 3 (1994) 153–161.

which God is loved is a theological disposition,'[24] and the word Duns uses to express this theological virtue is *caritas* ('charity'), for 'the disposition by which we hold God to be dear (*carus*) is called *caritas* (love).'[25] It is a present from God. It is primarily ordered towards God and we ought to love our neighbor as ourselves.

12.5.1 Love of God

Loving God is not only something we ought to do, but it also takes pride of place in Duns Scotus' necessary ethics.

> I say that to love God above all is an act which follows from a correct and a priori argument which prescribes that what is best must be loved most of all. Consequently, it is an act which is right of itself, nay, it is self-evident that it is right, just as a first principle of ethics is right. What ought to be loved most of all is nothing but the highest good, just as nothing but the highest good must intellectually be held to be true most of all.[26]

Just as is the case in his philosophical theory of what God is, Duns starts with an axiomatic basis in his necessary ethics and what is valid in his necessary ethics is either self-evident, or axiomatic, or a priori. There is always the duality of *ratio* – argumentation, analysis, and proof – and *auctoritas*. Philosophy and revelation, logic and faith are hand in glove. We have already met the proof, a revelation which coincides with Revelation:

> This is confirmed by the fact that moral commandments belong to the law of nature [*de lege naturae*], and, consequently, the commandment: *Love the Lord, your God*, and so on, belongs to the law of nature [*de lege naturae*]. Therefore, it is evident that this act is right. It follows from this that there can be a virtue which directs essentially towards this act, and this virtue is theological, for it concerns God

[24] *Ordinatio* III 28 *obiectum* 2 (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 446): 'Ille habitus quo diligitur Deus est habitus theologicus.' On love of God, neighbor and self, see Wolter, ibid., 89–98.

[25] *Ordinatio* III 28 *articulus* 1 (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 448): '*Caritas* dicitur habitus quo Deus habetur *carus*.'

[26] *Ordinatio* III 27 *articulus* 1 (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 424): 'Dico quod diligere Deum super omnia est actus conformis rectae rationi naturali, quae dictat optimum esse summe diligendum, et, per consequens, est actus de se rectus. Immo, rectitudo eius est per se nota, sicut rectitudo primi principii in operabilibus. Aliquid enim summe diligendum est nihil aliud a summo bono est maxime tenendum tamquam verum apud intellectum.' Cf. §9.2.2 and §§12.3–12.4.

> immediately. This is not all, since it is immediately based on the first rule of human acts and has to be given by God. Such a virtue as such aims at perfecting the highest part of the soul.[27]

There is still more to it. We ought to love God and this love is not only a primary preference, theoretically to be proved, but also an existential preference. We do not love God to satisfy ourselves and to congratulate ourselves: how nice we are!

> This virtue of *love* is distinct from faith, for its act is one neither of knowing nor of believing. It is also distinct from hope, for its act is not one of desiring a good for the lover as far as it fits the lover himself, but it directs towards its object for its own sake and it would do so – to assume the impossible – even when its benefit for the lover were excluded. Therefore, I call this virtue which perfects the will as far as it appreciates justice: *love*.[28]

12.5.2 Love of neighbor

Loving God and *loving our neighbor* seem to be rather different realities. Duns deals with this issue economically according to the requirements of the principle of parsimony (see §8.2). Are *loving God* and *loving our neighbor* dispositionally different realities or do they concern one and the same attitude? The theology of love belongs to the ethical theory of the virtues and the starting point is the disposition *love* (*caritas*). The qualification *theological virtue* is strict and clear, for loving *God* is at stake.

Loving someone can take place in two ways. It may be a personal and private love which is built on jealousy. It may also be a love which is not reserved for one lover or a happy few. The first love does

[27] Ibid. (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 424 and 426): 'Confirmatur etiam istud quia praecepta moralia sunt *de lege naturae*, et, per consequens, istud: *Diliges Dominum Deum tuum*, etc., est de lege naturae, et ita notum est hunc actum esse rectum. Ex hoc sequitur quod ad illum actum potest esse aliqua virtus naturaliter inclinans, et haec est theologica, scilicet circa Deum immediate. Nec hoc solum, sed etiam innititur immediate primae regulae humanorum actuum, et infundi habet a Deo. Huiusmodi enim natura est perficere supremam portionem animae quae non est perfectissime perficitur nisi immediate a Deo.' 'Love the Lord, your God' refers to Matthew 22: 37 and Luke 10: 27; cf. Deuteronomy 6: 5. For the term *de lege naturae*, see §12.3.

[28] Ibid.: 'Haec virtus distincta est a fide, quia actus eius non est *intelligere* vel *credere*. Distincta est etiam a spe, quia actus eius non est concupiscere amanti bonum inquantum est commodum amantis, sed tendere in obiectum secundum se, etiamsi – *per impossibile* – circumscriberetur commoditas eius ad amantem. Hanc itaque virtutem perficientem voluntatem inquantum habet affectionem iustitiae voco: *caritatem*.'

not wish that there is any co-lover (*condiligens*). This love does not wish that the beloved is loved by anyone else. Duns Scotus addresses two aspects of such a love. Such a love is not orderly. This love is not only incorrect, but also not complete or perfect (*perfectus*). Such a love is not the love whereby God is loved, for God is not a private interest for us. He is a common good, a good for all (*bonum commune*).

> Since God is a common good, He does not will to be a good which is the property and the private good of someone, not is it rationally permissible that anyone appropriates a common good to himself. For this reason, a disposition, namely this love, would be a love which is not orderly, if it would direct towards that good as a good exclusive to himself, not to be loved by anyone else, not to be had by anybody else.[29]

It is not permissible to privatize God, because He is God in a universal way, because a common good is a universal good. Having a private God is logically faulty. A love of God which does not want any co-lovers (*condiligentes*), is not acceptable; it is a wrong love (*amor inordinatus*).

If anything is wrong qualitatively, it may also be wrong quantitatively. So, we have to ask, in the second place, *who* are to be loved, if this love is in order. Why ought I to love my neighbor? Duns Scotus' answer reads: I ought to will that the other wills to be just and righteous and that the other person wills on account of himself to perform righteous acts.

The first idea is that the other person ought to wish to be just and righteous, but which righteous act is involved? What is a righteous act? God is the center of possible reality. So, everything gets content and meaning in relationship with Him. A *righteous* act is an act which is aligned with God's character (*recte*). God defines *righteousness* and He is also the source of righteousness, for if He is the best possible, He ought to be treated in an optimal way. So, the act to be considered here is the act of love, for God is optimally good and lovable.[30]

[29] *Ordinatio* III 28.7 *articulus* 1 (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 448): 'Deus quia est bonum commune, non vult esse bonum proprium et privatum alicuius personae, nec secundum rectam rationem debet aliquis sibi appropriare bonum commune; et ideo habitus vel amor iste inclinans ad illum bonum, ut ad bonum proprium, non condiligendum, nec habendum ab aliquo, esset amor inordinatus.' Cf. Vos et al., *Duns Scotus on Divine Love*, chapter 2.

[30] The saying *A good husband makes a good wife* reads in Dutch: *He who does well, encounters goodness*.Thus, in terms of Scotus' philosophy of *love*, we may say: *He who acts in a loving manner encounters love*.

Let us spell out the logic of love among human beings. *I* ought to will that *I* love God, but this love is no private matter. God is not only lovely and lovable for me, but also for anyone else. It is love which matters. So, the Beloved is the point of orientation and the criterion of love too. God's will and preferences are the moral and existential center, for God is the ontological center.

> Love wills that God be loved by anyone whose love is perfect, and directed to loving Him [*dilectio*] as He is in Himself. Loving Him is orderly and, by willing so, I love [*diligere*] both myself and my neighbor out of love [*caritas*], by willing that both of us love God for Himself. This act is simply good and a righteous act. The good object of love is only God in Himself.[31]

I ought to will that *you* acquire the good act of loving God, and, so, *I* ought to *will* that *you will* acquire this disposition of love as a source and principle of acts of love. However, if *I* ought to will that you are filled by this love, then *I* also ought to will that I love you. Then, you are what you ought to be in God's eyes and loving 'look.' Just as I ought to love Him above all, because He is above all, then it is true that *you* ought to love Him above all because it is his goodness to will so. You are also lovely and lovable and, of course, I ought to love you too. Then, you *are* what you deserve to be: somebody who loves God, you are what God appreciates you to be. This point of view again defines your goodness and worth and that valuable goodness can only be done justice by me, if I recognize this by loving you.

The conclusion that God and our neighbor ought to be loved through the one and the same disposition of love follows from this universalized attitude of love. The love of the neighbor works through the existential worth of divine love. The existence, character, and work of God are the cornerstone of a contingent and open reality. The priority of God places everything else in its own light.

Scotus' thinking is lucid. He faces the challenges and dilemmas of an open and risky reality from the axiomatic dimension of reality. God gives unity to open, contingent reality. It is faith which gives unity to human life. Christian thought and critical theology serve the elementary predicament of human life to reach out for 'the unity of

[31] *Ordinatio* III 28 *articulus* 1 (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 450): 'Velle eum diligi a quocumque, si est perfecta dilectio eius, et velle eum haberi per dilectionem a quocumque, quantum est in se. Est ordinata dilectio eius et in hoc volendo, diligere me ipsum et proximum ex caritate, volendo mihi et sibi diligere Deum in se, quod est simpliciter bonum et actus iustitiae, ita quod bonum obiectum est solus in se.'

life' (Gunning). Human existence is the source for theoretical thinking and its secret is to be there in love with God and to be there for God and our fellow men. The way of God discloses the road to neighbors and to ourselves, for I am also my own neighbor. I am even my nearest neighbor.

> Most directly after loving God someone wills that by which he is stretching out to God or by which he wills that he loves God. He loves himself out of love in willing that he loves God, since he loves what is good for himself in a just way. Therefore, he loves himself out of love, immediately after loving God.[32]

Duns Scotus' theological view on *loving God* turns on the logic of *willing*, since *loving* is an act of will. Within this context, the concept of *being a neighbor* is defined. The neighbor is he who loves God as far as God appreciates his love. Love is not only something which can only be given freely, but is also something which can only be received freely and it is he who receives love who decides whether that love is desirable and adequate.

> I say that my neighbor is anyone whose friendship is pleasing to the Beloved so that He is loved by him. It is not reasonably permissible to will that the one loved above all by me is also to be loved [*condiligi*] by anyone else by whom He does not want to be loved or by anyone whose love does not please Him.[33]

Dictatorship is unwanted and a dictatorship of love is impossible. Everything turns on the Other and the understanding for the Other determines the relevant understanding of the others and of ourselves. It is one and the same disposition which matters

> for there is only one goodness which motivates to tend towards God for Himself and towards the neighbor as he is tending towards God.[34]

Duns Scotus again pays a great deal of attention to concept formation. If we misuse our tools, our activities may fail too. The main

[32] *Ordinatio* III 29, *c.a.*(Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 456): 'Post Deum immediatissime vult quis ex caritate se illud diligere quo tendit in Deum sive quo vult se diligere Deum. In volendo se diligere Deum, diligit se ex caritate, quia diligit sibi bonum iustitiae. Igitur, immediate ex caritate diligit se post dilectionem Dei.'

[33] *Ordinatio* III 28 *articulus* 2 (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 452): 'Dico quod proximus est quilibet, cuius amicitia grata est dilecto, ut scilicet ab eo diligatur. Non autem debeo velle rationabiliter a me summe dilectum ab alio condiligi a quo non vult diligi vel cuius dilectio sit ei non grata.'

[34] *Ordinatio* III 28 resp. 3 (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 454): 'Tantum est una bonitas quae est ratio tendendi in Deum in se et in proximum ut tendat in Deum.'

theme of *Lectura* I 17 is that God's eternal happiness is an answer to love, but the love Duns discusses is a certain kind of *disposition* (*habitus*), and not an act of love. Missing this point means losing the match. The same dilemma is at stake here. The issue Duns Scotus discusses is not that the acts of *loving God* and of *loving our neighbor* are the same acts; they certainly are not. These acts are different as to their object and their status, but they are anchored in the same soil, the *disposition* of love as such. The basis is the self-evident goodness of the act of *loving God* because of himself, without any concerns of utility and self-interest. This act has its own identity and its own character. This act is good without further ado. In Scotus' terminology, derived from Anselm, this act is essentially a righteous act (*actus iustitiae*). However, an act can be essentially good, only if the object, to which the act is related to is essentially good. God is the only one to fulfil this condition. The relation towards the object determines the status of a relational act. If an act is related to God, the act can only be good in an absolute sense. So, *hating God* can only be forbidden.

Duns Scotus does not place God in a higher structure of reality. God is relevant to all aspects of reality. So, he is not a *nature-supernature* thinker. Nothing is neutral. Everything is related to God. Nothing can be cut off from his friendly countenance. Grace is no encore. It is not secondary. Grace is crucial and decisive. The goodness of our neighbor is defined in terms of the relationship with God. There is neither identity, mysticism, nor monism. *Loving God* is not the same as *loving the neighbor*. Whether the source is the same does matter. The persons of God's loving attention are interwoven in the relationship with God and the goodness and the radiance of his countenance illuminate the whole of reality.

12.6 Slavery

When we survey Duns Scotus' inspired output during the last years of his life (1305–08), we discover a general trend already visible in comparing *Lectura* III with *Ordinatio* III (= *Opus Oxoniense* III): a spectacular increase of interest in ethical, social, and even economic issues. John the Scot delivered an elaborate course on *Book* IV for the first time in his life at Paris during the first half of 1303. Treating of a problem of the quality of the life of a slave, he simply sided with canon law in *Reportatio Parisiensis* IV 36.1. Apparently, he had seen no opportunity to go deeply into it, but *Ordinatio* IV 36.1 offers

a totally different picture. In order to appreciate Duns Scotus' views properly, I select some elements from the history of slavery.

Slavery was a much respected social institution in antiquity which maintained itself for many centuries in some parts of the world. Slaves and the majority of women did not enjoy an enviable status in ancient society. Aristotle discussed various models of government (democracy, oligarchy, tyranny) and their existing varieties, and introduced fundamental questions of political theory in his pioneering *Politics*, which remained influential even in the thirteenth century: the nature and function of the state, the meaning of citizenship, what it is to be a good citizen, and elements of constitution. As to slavery, he held that the master can sell his slave like an animal, for a slave cannot exercise acts of manly excellence because he has to perform servile actions at the command of his master. Political philosophy looked on slavery as a natural phenomenon. Ancient culture could hardly imagine a world without slaves. In parts of Greece, about 90 per cent of the population might have been slaves, responsible particularly for manual labor.

The old Hebrew Law tells us not to 'covet' (the Hebrew term means to hook, to nab) our neighbor's house, our neighbor's wife, his slave, his slave-girl, his ox, his ass, or anything that belongs to him. What belongs to a possessor matters. Although the Law of the Old Testament shows interest and mercy concerning the situation of slaves,[35] yet, at the time of Jesus, the situation of the slave was not easy. Jesus' parable of the so-called 'unprofitable/unworthy servant' sketches all the hardships of these 'servants,' as the New English Bible still rather mildly translates.[36] There were two kinds of slaves in the Jewish countries: 'Canaanite' slaves who were foreigners, and *Israelite* slaves who were Jews themselves. 'There were relatively few slaves in the Land of Israel, but many people found a use for them. *Jewish* slaves were apt to be burdensome, and they were less popular.'[37]

In contrast with the 'Israelite' slaves, the 'Canaanite' slaves were not only excluded from the religious community, but also from all

[35] See Wright, *God's People*, chapter 8. Cf. Job 31: 15 with the Akkadian saying 'A man is the shadow of a god, a slave the shadow of a man.' Cf. Wright, *God's People*, 239 ff.

[36] 'Unprofitable' and 'unworthy,' let alone 'useless,' are also ill-chosen translations. *Achreios* is an expression of modesty and humility: 'We are poor/sorry figures.' Dennett's witty translation is 'profitable.'

[37] Derrett, 'The Parable of the Profitable Servant (Luke XVII.7–10),' *Studies in the New Testament* IV, 158.

the considerations to which a Jewish slave had to be entitled. A 'Canaanite' slave did not have the right to marry and did not belong to the formal context of the household as the parable shows. At any rate, there was food for him afterwards, but even this was not a right as the parable of the Prodigal Son proves. His was a duty-bound life, but there was more to the life of slavery for by serving in a friendly and attentive manner, the slave could win the affection of the foreign master. A harsh foreign master may also become grateful to his slave who did more than simply carry out his orders. There was already a synagogue, called the *Synagogue of the Freedmen* (*liberti*) in gratitude on the part of their masters (Acts 6: 9), during the 30s in Jerusalem, and

> Christian ethical attitudes and principles did something for the interests of both (slaves and women) without, however, pressing for changes in their legal rights. The Church had enough trouble repelling the charge of sedition without giving the accusation this degree of plausibility. [. . .] St Paul expressly lays down that, while within the Christian family all are equal to their heavenly Father, the Church makes no change in the civil status of slaves (I Cor. 7: 21).[38]

However, this concession was not to the taste of Duns Scotus.[39]

Nevertheless, the Christian faith elicited a movement to improve on the position of the slaves, and in particular the Western Church was much more critical of the customs of lords and noblemen. Leo I (440–461) suggested that a true calling for the religious life was a proper reason to free a slave.[40] Reform movements of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries confirmed this tendency. Duns Scotus eloquently defended the right of a slave to marry, even the right to marry a free woman.[41] Moreover, while it is true that the Church came into being in a world where slavery was universally accepted as a social and economic institution pertaining to the very structure of society, it is simply wrong to assert, as the general view does, that in Duns Scotus' days slavery was still a universal social fact. Even during the Dark Ages, slavery was scarcely found in Flanders, the

[38] Chadwick, 'Christian doctrine,' in Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c.350–c.1450*, 15 (11–20), cf. 21–47.

[39] See the last *responsum* of *Ordinatio* IV 36 *quaestio* 1 (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 526 (Latin) and 527 (English)).

[40] See Robert Somerville, 'Leo I,' *ER* VIII 514 f.

[41] Cf. *Reportatio Parisiensis* IV 36, 1 in *Codex* 206 of *Balliol College* with *Ordinatio* IV 36, 1, found in Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 522–533, where a fine exposition is given on the issue whether slavery can or must obstruct marriage.

Brabantine Counties, Holland and Zealand (The Netherlands), and the Rhineland, and there was also a strong sense of liberty in John Duns' Scotland and England.[42]

12.6.1 Duns Scotus on slavery

After the introductory pros and cons, the fundamental question of the justice of slavery is dealt with within the contexts of the law of nature and positive law made by those entitled to govern (*Ordinatio* IV 36). All people are born free *de lege naturae* (see §12.4), but slavery is imposed by virtue of positive law. *De lege naturae*, *being free* is an essential property of men, to be derived from primary necessary truths regarding *being human*. It is asked in the light of what is essential to man whether slavery can be acceptable at all. Duns restricts slavery to two cases:

> I say that this worthless slavery can only be imposed in a just way in two cases: on the one hand, someone has voluntarily subjected [*subiecit*] himself to such slavery. However, such subjection is irresponsible. More than that, it runs counter to the law of nature that a man would give up his freedom. Nevertheless, once he has done so, it is necessary to keep it.[43]

This reluctant admission that slavery can be accepted in a couple of cases is quite different from a wholehearted defense of it. Scotus does not defend giving up our freedom, but *this* is just: keeping to our word. This side of slavery was a topical subject by then. Members of some new religious orders, for instance the Mercedarians (1218), 'not only specialized in working with the slaves, but added a fourth vow to the usual three of poverty, chastity, and obedience, the vow to act as captives themselves if necessary to free those Christian slaves of the Moors whose faith was in danger.'[44] It seems not to have been pleasant to Duns' ear, although he accepted drastic sacrifices on our part, but not as a rule.

[42] The semantic field of *servus* is rather broad (slave, serf, workman's mate, servant, tenant, officer, employee – compare 'being a servant, to serve' (*servire*)). The use of *servus* in a medieval text in itself does not tell us which kinds of people are dealt with.

[43] *Ordinatio* IV 36 *quaestio* 1 in the body of the article (Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 522): 'Dico quod ista vilis servitus non potest esse iuste inducta nisi dupliciter: uno modo, quia aliquis voluntate subiecit se tali servituti, sed talis subiectio est fatua. Immo, forte contra legem naturae est quod homo libertatem suam a se abdicaret. Postquam tamen facta est, necesse servare, quia *hoc* est iustum.'

[44] Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 116 (114–120).

The second case concerns freedom as a possible source of damage to the involved persons and the public good. The authorities can punish vicious people by slavery. The first case amounts to a very cautious acknowledgement of the right of self-determination to accept *freely* captivity and the second case is a counterpart of the prison of modern society. In this latter case, slavery is prevention by means of punishment. Ancient society did not have many means to prevent crimes, with the exception of slavery and the death penalty:

> On the other hand, if anyone rules justly over society and sees that some are so criminal that their freedom harms both themselves and the public, then he can justly punish them by slavery, just as he could justly execute them in certain cases for the welfare of the public.[45]

Duns also makes unambiguously clear what he thinks of the hard core of slavery: taking prisoners in war as a source for the slave trade. The text is too fascinating not to be quoted in full:

> If you say that there is a third good reason for slavery, for instance, if someone has been taken a prisoner of war and he, preserved from death as he is, becomes a slave, destined to serve, I doubt this, unless 'serf' [*servus*] is here taken to mean *preserved* [*servatus*]. Neither is this a clear case of justice. The captor might have killed his prisoner of war bravely, if he carried on a just war of self-defense, and not a war of aggression, and his adversary persevered in doing so. Nevertheless, it seems inhuman to inflict on a prisoner of war a punishment running counter to natural law inasmuch as he ceases to be an enemy, since he wills to be a captive. The third reason for slavery does not apply here, for in this second case he would neither abuse his freedom, since he does not continue to rebel strongly, but he would become obedient strongly, and use well the freedom given to him.[46]

[45] Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 524: 'Alio modo, si quis iuste dominans communitati, videns aliquos ita vitiosos, quod libertas eorum et nocet eis et rei publicae, potest iste punire eos poena servitutis, sicut et iuste posset eos occidere in ceteris casibus propter bonum rei publicae.'

[46] Ibid.: 'Si dicas quod est etiam tertia causa servitutis, utpote si captus in bello servetur et sic servatus a morte, fiat servus deputatus ad serviendum, de hoc dubito, nisi dicatur " servus " ibi "servatus". Nec apparet hic manifeste iustitia, quia etsi forte captor potuisset occidere captum, si habuit bellum iustum defendendo se, sed non invadendo, et hoc stante pertinacia ipsius contrabellantis, tamen ex quo desinit esse pertinax quia est in voluntate iam captus, inhumanum videtur sibi infligere poenam contra legem naturae. Non enim est haec ratio quia in isto secundo casu, quia forte non permanet iste rebellus, nec abuteretur sua libertate, sed forte fieret obediens, et libertate sibi donata bene uteretur.'

There is a great distance here from the views of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas who offered a kind of Christian synthesis: Aquinas did not put the defense that slavery belongs to natural law (Aristotle), but that it is part and parcel of the *ius gentium* (Ulpianus). However, this *ius gentium* obtains universally among nations. So, the ethical profit is limited. In Duns' ethics, there is no room for a *ius gentium*.[47] Something running counter to the law of nature cannot be justified. Old customs cannot save something wrong; on the contrary, it is much more reasonable to stop old injustice. An appeal to the apostle Paul cannot mollify Duns. He not only offers a clear view, but his pathos is the more striking, because his objective mentality always shines out: slavery is inhuman, worthless, and something to be cursed.

12.7 The Quintonian and Harrisian fallacies

The main structure of Scotus' ethics belongs to the most pressing problems of his ethics. In general, it has often been suggested that his theory of will and freedom is one of the most distinctive foundations of his ethics and this is patently true. However, in this light the paradoxes of contingency, will, and freedom are seen as the roots of his ethics, and many consider the priority of will over intellect to be the basic element. According to this view, the freedom of the act of creation runs parallel to the role of freedom in constituting what is good. During a century of neoscholastic revival, the charge that only the will constitutes moral truth has been repeated again and again.

> Perhaps the most persistently recurring objection to the moral philosophy of John Duns Scotus is voiced most succinctly by Anthony Quinton in his article in the new *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*: 'Things are good because God wills them and not vice versa, so moral truth is not accessible to the natural reason'.[48]

However, the conceptual structures, treated in §12.3, and the distinction between necessary and contingent ethics are the solution to those well-known puzzles of Scotian ethics, the *Quintonian* and *Harrisian fallacies*, and the notion of ethically neutral propositions.

[47] For Aristotle, see *Politics* I chapter 4, and for Thomas Aquinas, see *Summa Theologiae* I II 94, *Summa Theologiae* II II 57 *articulus* 3, and *Summa Theologiae* III 51 *articulus* 1. See Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 114–123.

[48] Wolter, 'Native Freedom of the Will,' in *The Philosophical Theology of Scotus*, 148, quoting Quinton, 'British philosophy,' *EP* I 373.

12.7.1 The nature of the Quintonian fallacy

Quinton's section 'Duns Scotus and Scotism' is part of an impressive overview of British philosophy full of remarkable insights and judgements and his general attitude is certainly not unfair to Duns.

> It was John Duns Scotus (*c.*1266–1308), the first major British philosopher since Erigena and perhaps the most powerful philosophical intellect of the Middle Ages, who initiated a new system of ideas which led English thought in a fresh direction, away from the conflict of Aristotle and Augustine.[49]

Quinton points to Scotus' fertile innovations of terminology. In spite of this prudent insightfulness, the complex terminology of Duns Scotus is not taken into account. Quinton hypostasizes natural reason. According to Quinton's analysis, Duns separates goodness from necessity. However, Duns does not link goodness and will from an extremely nominalistic bias. The allegation of an exclusive connection of will and goodness is an unwarranted claim which not only runs through the whole history of neothomistic thought, but also dominates nineteenth-century history of Western philosophy. Wolter notices that this claim has also been periodically refuted; he mentions Minges, Longpré, De Wulf, Copleston, and Hoeres. In fact, Wolter's 'Native Freedom of the Will as a Key to the Ethics of Scotus' (1972) is directed against Quinton's distortion.

Wolter followed two paths of argumentation. First, his opponents consulted rather unreliable texts.[50] Second, Scotus' basic distinction is the distinction between *natura* and *voluntas*.

> Natural agents [. . .] have their action specified by what they are in themselves, and given the same set of extrinsic conditions or circumstances, their action is uniform. Self-determination on the contrary presupposes two things: (a) logically alternative modes of behavior, specifically the possibility of acting or not-acting (liberty of contradiction) or acting now this way, now that (liberty of contrariety); (b) in freely determining itself to one or the other of these several alternatives, the free agent acts with, but is not determined by, knowledge.[51]

This basic distinction between 'nature' and will constitutes the systematic background of Scotus' use of the Anselmian distinction of the

[49] Quinton, 'British Philosophy,' *EP* I 372–373.
[50] See Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 2 ff.
[51] 'Native Freedom of the Will,' in *The Philosophical Theology of Scotus*, 149.

twofold inclination of the will: the *affectio commodi* and the *affectio iustitiae*.

> It is the *affectio iustitiae* that represents the ultimate specific difference, as it were, of the will as free. This native liberty or root freedom of the will, in short, is a positive bias or inclination to love things objectively.[52]

12.7.2 The solution of the fallacy

In spite of these important insights into Scotus' ethics Wolter is unable to solve the Quintonian fallacy. He touches on several aspects of goodness as will-dependent as Duns seemingly sees it, but although these remarks are helpful and true, they cannot solve the complaint of 'voluntarism' because they are restricted to the impact of the will.

The solution lies in the basic distinction between contingency and necessity and the concepts of contingent and necessary ethics. In terms of necessary ethics, goodness cannot be will-dependent. Contingent ethical propositions, for example:

a loves God

are based on a conjunction of necessary propositions, for example:

Necessarily, *God has to be loved*

and contingent truths, for example:

a exists and *a* knows God.

Necessary propositions are not will based (see §12.4). There are also ethically open propositions, belonging to contingent ethics, for they are will-dependent. Will and goodness are only linked if they can be linked and must be linked. They must be linked intrinsically

[52] Wolter, 'Native Freedom of the Will,' in *The Philosophical Theology of Scotus*, 152. 'Objectively' has to be taken in the medieval sense. Compare some recent restatements of Duns Scotus' 'voluntarism': Santogrossi, 'Scotus's Method in Ethics,' *Theological Studies* 55 (1994) 314–325, Williams, 'Reason, Morality, and Voluntarism in Duns Scotus,' *The Modern Schoolman* 74 (1997) 73–94, and idem, 'The Unmitigated Scotus,' *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 80 (1998) 162–181. If the structures expounded in §§12.1–12.5 hold, Williams's reconstruction of Scotian ethics is misguided. See Vos et al., *Duns Scotus on Divine Love*, 58–64.

if the situation is contingent and open and a certain solution must be found. The relevant decision must be made and accordingly is only made in agreement with the best possible will. This basic point can be appropriately illustrated with the Sabbath commandment. There is no intrinsic element of a particular day which entails the sanctification of that particular day. This particular choice must be made by divine revelation as, according to Duns Scotus, the Bible as document of revelation tells us. The Quintonian fallacy is an unwarranted allegation against Scotus' ethics. A systematic bias as supposed in the Quintonian fallacy is quite foreign to his mind. The refutation of the fallacy has two aspects: the necessary good cannot be willed contingently and the contingent good can only be constituted by God. So, the Quintonian complaint is unfounded. Duns' ethics is not based on 'voluntarism' in its simplistic sense.

12.7.3 The Harrisian fallacy

Quinton overlooked the pivotal role of necessary theology and necessary ethics within Scotian thought and thus the essential interaction between necessary and contingent propositions in Scotus' theories of intellect, will, and ethics. If we miss one of the two banks, we cannot build the bridge. In contrast to Quinton, Harris had fruitfully discerned the kernel of Scotus' ethical philosophy in his *Duns Scotus* II, while stressing the so-called Anselmian core of his ethics:

> His insistence on the distinction between will and desire enables him to grapple more adequately with the psychological analysis of ethical problems and lends his thinking a deeper insight into the facts of moral experience than was displayed by any Christian thinker since the days of Augustine.[53]

Harris sees the importance of the distinction between will and desire and the proper role of the will in the theory of action and in ethics, and he warns not to look at Duns as a simple voluntarist. Therefore, Harris judges the interpretation of Landry and Jourdain, Schwane and Werner to be mistaken. Moreover, he discerns the flip side: Scotus' statement that the goodness of an act depends on conformity with 'right reason.' So far, so good, but then Harris concludes that the

[53] Harris, *Duns Scotus* II, 303.

conjunction of both sides constitutes a contradiction. So, Harris replaces the dilemma of an arbitrary voluntarism with the complaint of inconsistency. 'It is only by a frank recognition of this antinomy that we can hope to avoid the one-sided interpretation in which his teaching has so often been distorted.'[54]

However, if the fault does not exist, there is no need of a one-sided interpretation to put it right. Duns does not work with an exclusive disjunction of intellect and will. The key lies in the distinctions between necessary and contingent propositions in ethics. There is a realm of necessary propositions which is not constituted by contingent acts of will. Both dimensions of necessity and contingency in ethics are themselves necessary. The systematic upshot is that there is no separate heaven of 'the right reason.' This heaven is demythologized and made empty, for 'natural reason' and 'right reason' are both adequately unpacked in terms of logical, ontological, and epistemological characteristics of propositions.

The ethical structures expounded in §§12.3–12.4 solve the Harrisian fallacy. It is a paradox that traditional interpretations of Duns' ethics and theory of will show so many deficiencies. There is no gulf between will and reason. There is only the indispensable distinction between necessary and contingent propositions and the right ways in which knowledge and will can be related to them. *Ratio necessaria*, *ratio naturalis* and, *ratio recta* are related to certain logical, ontological, and epistemological characteristics of arguments. The will fills in the realm of contingency, constituted by what is not necessary. Moreover, 'natural law' and 'natural reason' have completely different meanings with Duns in comparison with the Aristotelian and (neo)thomistic traditions.

12.8 Ethical revocation

In 'Die Bestimmung der *ratio legis* bei Thomas von Aquin und Duns Scotus,' Berthold Wald sees the essential divergence between Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus in the perennial conflict between realism and idealism in philosophy.[55] In terms of idealism, the weakness of

[54] *Duns Scotus* II 335. For criticisms of 'voluntarist' interpretations, see Vos et al., *Duns Scotus on Divine Love*, chapter 2, part 2.

[55] Wald, 'Die Bestimmung der *ratio legis* bei Thomas von Aquin und Duns Scotus,' in Zimmermann and Speer (eds), *Miscellanea Mediaevalia 21/2. Mensch und Natur im Mittelalter*, 681.

realism is to be seen in claiming real insight into the true nature of things. Thus it is liable to skeptical criticisms. Here, the theological voluntarism of Scotus comes to the fore. Duns looks for freedom for theological propositions, but the choice of such a philosophical starting point cannot be decided in a philosophical way. In spite of this deep divergence the practical differences between Aquinas and Duns are seen to be very limited.

The remedy is found in a far-reaching reversal of viewpoints. If Scotus' logical and analytical approach is seen as an ontological demythologization – a demythologization of 'metaphysics' – the entire dilemma of idealism and realism disappears. Duns does not speak in a substantialist vein of *the natural law* as the law of *nature* (*Naturgesetz* and *Naturrecht*) and the natural reason altogether. In the same general sense, there is no rock-bottom philosophy. There are only sound and unsound arguments and there is necessary and contingent truth, both to be discovered in a contingent way. The ontological structure of Scotian thought is not to be neglected in reconstructing his ethics. The basic importance of a comparison between Aquinas and Duns is not to be looked for in practical differences, although, for instance, the differences in the theory of slavery must not be minimized. On the contrary, they are substantial ones.[56] In general, they share the same patrimony of faith, but the decisive point is whether their theoretical contributions explain or undermine what they both believe. The problem of ethical revocation is just one case of it.

Duns Scotus' criticism of Thomas Aquinas' theory is precisely that his ethics cannot explain the ethical character of the divine command in Genesis 22.[57] In this case, the problem does not arise from a specific theory of Thomas or Duns, but from biblical evidence. If the command of Genesis 22 rests on 'historical' and ethical revelation, the sixth commandment of the Decalogue must be contingent. Thomas Aquinas' theological explanation is not acceptable to Duns,[58] because according to Aquinas that commandment

[56] See Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 114–123 and 522–533, and *DS* 99–101.

[57] See Hedwig, 'Das Isaak-Opfer,' *Miscellanea Mediaevalia 21/2. Mensch und Natur im Mittelalter*, 647–651.

[58] The logical core of Thomas' argumentation has been adequately formulated by Hedwig: 'Die Kritik zielt auf den Begriff, um den es letzlich geht: die *dispensatio*, die – nach Thomas – die allgemeine Norm der Gerechtigkeit nicht verändert, während dagegen der Einzelfall dem Gesetz "entzogen" werden kann. Diese Konstruktion ist für Scotus nicht mehr annehmbar' ('Das Isaak-Opfer,' *Miscellanea Mediavalia 21/2. Mensch und Natur im Mittelalter*, 651). However, the point of Scotus' evaluation of the Thomasian argumentation is not a historical (*nicht mehr*), but a logical one: the involved derivation is invalid.

belongs to the natural law. So, Duns concludes that it must be a part of necessary ethics. However, a necessary truth of ethics cannot be revoked or dispensed with. When there is alternative biblical information, contingency seems the only logical way out and Duns utilizes it. In fact, it is not ethical *revocation* that matters, but *dispensation*.[59] In sum, their interrelations are contingent ones. It is the same logical relation which yields the answer to the question of the next distinction (*Lectura* III 37 and *Ordinatio* III 37): it is not true that all commandments of the Decalogue belong to natural law. For instance, the commandment of the Sabbath would belong to natural law, if sanctifying the Sabbath could be proven to be a necessary truth in terms of the meanings of 'Sabbath,' 'seven,' 'week,' 'rest,' 'sanctification,' 'God,' 'creation,' and so on. Then it would be derivable from the precious gift of regular rest. The commandment that only the seventh day of a week of seven days could give the opportunity of a day of rest for God, one another, and ourselves would be a piece of necessary ethics.

Modern systematic theology has alternative means of handling such a dilemma by dealing with it in a purely historical way, but the historical way of thought was not available in the Middle Ages, and not before Niebuhr and Ranke in the first half of the nineteenth century at all.[60]

12.9 The structure of the ethics of virtue

During the last years of his short life (1305–08), Duns Scotus paid a lot of attention to ethics and social and political theory. The central texts are to be found in the drafts of *Ordinatio* III–IV. If we concentrate on *virtue*, we have to realize that modern schemes are not simply applicable to Duns Scotus' thought. In particular, the modern dualism of philosophy and theology is not congenial to his mind. He would not have favored the distinction of modern Renaissance theology between nature and supernature. With Duns Scotus, the central logical-methodological distinction is that between necessary and contingent ethics. Duns' theory of

[59] *Lectura* III 37 (Balic, *Les commentaires de Jean Duns Scot*, 344): 'Si precepta omnia Decalogi illo modo haberent *bonitatem intrinsecam* talem essentialiter, non ut posset Deus contra ipsa dispensare, quia non subessent voluntati divine posita illa ratione, quinimmo actus contrarius esset de se malus essentialiter, sequeretur quod lex non esset in potestate divina, sed supra ipsam existens, et hoc saltem quoad decalogum.'

[60] Cf. Rodd, *Glimpses of a Strange Land: Studies in Old Testament Ethics*.

virtue also moves along the lines of his own conceptual and logical structures.[61]

We observe three dominant tendencies. The first tendency is the theocentric and christocentric character of Duns' thought. The second tendency is a tendency on the formal level, inspired by the central position of his contingency theory. The third tendency is the biblical outlook of his theory of virtue. Everything has a personal touch. We conclude with the personal note close to Duns' heart.

As to the second tendency, we ask what kind of structural interrelationship demarcates the theory of virtue. We meet questions as whether the moral virtues are connected or whether natural law coincides with the Ten Commandments. Ancient tradition treated the virtues as an organic whole. Cicero and Seneca and many Fathers of the Church praised the interconnection and harmony of the virtues. Peter Lombard confirms that according to Jerome and Augustine all the virtues are somehow one. We read in the beginning of Jerome's Commentary on Isaiah: 'All the virtues hang together, so that if one is missing, all are. Hence, if somebody has one virtue, he has them all.'

Philip the Chancellor specified this type of solution by distinguishing between a broad and narrow sense of the cardinal virtues. In the broad sense every virtue is a necessary condition of any virtue, but, in the narrow sense, a cardinal virtue is defined by its specific object. The early Franciscan and Dominican masters of theology followed his lead.[62] After 1245, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* changed the ethical scene. The Aristotelian solution is that the four cardinal virtues are interconnected by the way prudence gives rise to the moral virtues. According to Thomas Aquinas, the cardinal virtues are tightly connected in their perfect state (*Summa Theologiae* I II 65).

Duns considers these questions in *Lectura* III 36 and in *Ordinatio* III 36. His answers are thoroughly determined by his views on contingency. First, the so-called theological virtues (faith, hope, and love)

[61] The best literature is found in Ingham, *Ethics and Freedom*, part II, and Kent, *The Virtues of the Will*, chapter 5, while Dumont correctly refuted Lottin's monolithic interpretation of Scotus' theory of the virtues in 'The Necessary Connection of Prudence to the Moral Virtues,' *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 55 (1988) 184–206. Cf. McCord Adams, 'Scotus and Ockham on the Connection of the Virtues,' in Honnefelder et al. (eds), *Scotus. Metaphysics and Ethics*, 499–522.

[62] See Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XII et XIII siècles* IV, 551–742, and idem, 'L' "Ordinatio" de Jean Duns Scot sur le livre III des Sentences,' *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 20 (1953) 102–119, and Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 78–89.

clearly do not entail the acquired virtues. They belong to the reality of conversion and the sacraments and these contingent phenomena have their own impact on the moral life. There is no imperialism of faith destroying all traces of prudence and justice, temperance and courage. 'The moral virtues do not require the theological virtues in order to be complete with respect to their own specific nature, though without them they do not have that further extrinsic perfection they could have.'[63]

So, there are no necessary entailments between the theological and the moral virtues, but nor are there necessary relations between the theological virtues themselves. The interplay between faith, hope, and love is vital to us, but in heaven we shall be filled by love and 'the dispositions and acts of love exist without the dispositions and acts of faith and hope.'[64] Our present life is contingent and nuanced and open too. There may be an accident in our history of love and grace, but still we can act in virtue of hope and faith. Duns sketches the Christian life as an open life and as a dynamic reality. In the same light he looks on human life in general.

Nor do the moral virtues form a monolithic block. Lottin had already pointed out that Duns had completely broken with the line of the Fathers and Philip the Chancellor, and Wolter correctly concurs with his analysis. Nevertheless, we have to nuance this picture somewhat. Indeed, all traces of necessitarianism have been wiped out. His ontological view of contingent dynamics opens up all the virtues. There is no single process of massive growth or decline. We grow and stumble on rather different paths. Nevertheless, Duns sticks to the perspective of one mature and harmonious growth. There is one open and vulnerable reality, which promises much, but there is no chaos or arbitrariness. According to the spirit, Duns keeps to the old wisdom; according to the ontological letter, he breaks new ground, summarizing it in *Ordinatio* III 36 in the body of the article:

> I grant there is no connection either of the categorically different moral virtues, commonly referred to as justice, courage and temperance. [. . .] This can be proved as follows: virtue is a perfection of man, which is not complete, because then one moral virtue would be sufficient.

[63] For this conclusion of article 3 in *Ordinatio* III 36, see Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 416.

[64] For the answer in Duns' article 4 in *Ordinatio* III 36, see Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 418.

> When something has several partial perfections, it can of course be perfect according to one perfection and incomplete according to another, as is clear with a man who has many organic perfections and can have one perfection maximally, while having nothing of another one, for instance: he is maximally disposed as to sight or touch, although he cannot hear anything. Someone can have a maximal perfection as to temperance, without having any perfection which would be required regarding a different perfection and, consequently, he can be temperate, just like that, even as to every act of temperance, although he is not courageous. If he has none, he is not simply moral, as he is not simply sensory without any sense. [. . .] However, he is not less temperate, because he is morally weaker, just as he does not see less and not hear less, because his sensory power is weaker.[65]

At the end, Duns concludes that no virtues are specifically incompatible (*incompossibiles*) and the different kinds of moral and theological virtues are not necessarily connected. This insight also yields the answer to the question of the next distinction (*Lectura* III 37 and *Ordinatio* III 37): do all Ten Commandments belong to natural law? Duns' contingency model presents the key to his ethics too. He sees that no particular day embodies this splendid gift of rest of a certain pattern. Theological and ethical values are not exclusively and necessarily present in things or times, persons or structures.[66] This insight does not signal voluntarism, it only acknowledges a necessary trait of reality.

The opposition between *Something is good, because God wills it* and *God wills something, because it is good* rests upon misunderstanding these propositions. Duns does not defend that we do not need a Sabbath or a Sabbath commandment, but *Sabbath* is not derivable from the proper nature of any day. Because the will cannot

[65] Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 388: 'Concedo quod nec virtutes morales secundum genera sua, quae communiter assignantur iustitia, fortitudo et temperantia, [. . .], sunt necessario connexae. Ad quod est persuasio talis, quia virtus est perfectio aliqua hominis et non totalis, quia tunc sufficeret virtus una moralis. Quando autem sunt plures perfectiones partiales alicuius, illud potest esse perfectum simpliciter secundum unam perfectionem et imperfectum simpliciter secundum aliam, sicut apparet in homine, cuius est habere multas perfectiones organicas et potest habere unam perfectionem in summo, nihil habendo de alia, puta esse summe dispositus ad visum vel tactum, nihil habendo de auditu. Potest sibi aliquis habere perfectionem respectu materiae temperantiae in summo, non habendo de perfectione quae requireretur respectu materiae alterius perfectionis et per consequens potest esse simpliciter temperatus, etiam quantum ad quemcumque actum temperantiae, etsi non sit fortis. [. . .] Sed non est minus perfecte temperatus, licet sit minus perfecte moralis, sicut non est minus perfectus videns, nec est minus perfectus audiens, licet sit minus perfectus sentiens.'

[66] See *Ordinatio* III 37 in Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 278: Latin, and 279: English.

be excluded in constituting what is good, the will comes in. By stating the role of the will in ethics and anthropology we have reached the heart of the matter. If a necessitarian structure of ethical reality is rejected, new questions of structure arise. Broadly speaking, both Thomas Aquinas and John Duns move within the boundaries of teleological ethics, but the very different structures of their thought fill this teleological outlook in a rather different way. In the contingency model the act-potency structure is replaced by a theory of concrete action.

12.10 The unity of virtue

How shall we give coherence and unity to our moral life, if contingency entrenches it? The second, formal, tendency points to the first theological tendency. Reality is God's reality. He is the necessary center of everything. In Duns' Christian view the doctrine of God is trinitarian theology (*Lectura* I). His doctrine of the Trinity is characterized by the theory of will and his theory of will dominates his anthropology too. The ethical link is put forward in *Lectura* III 34 and *Ordinatio* III 34: the will is the seat of moral virtues.

Scotus' argumentation can be easily followed, as long as we discern the Anselmian foundations of his ethics.[67] In ethics, Anselm had brought into prominence the basic distinction between something good which is pleasant for us (the *bonum commodi*) and something good which is good as such (the *bonum iustitiae*). As regards the *bonum commodi* we view what is agreeable to us and is doing us well. It serves the continuity of our existence and our well-being. We discern the interest of the other. What serves the good of our neighbor is here put central. A basic distinction between two kinds of *willing* runs exactly parallel to this distinction of two kinds of goodness. The first kind of will is seen in the classical meaning of *velle*: to be inclined to, to be disposed; compare 'to want' or 'to wish' in English as a translation of *velle*. The second kind of will is seen in the strong and specific meaning of *velle* and *voluntas*, presupposing a definite choice between alternatives on the basis of contingency.

The *bonum iustitiae* of Anselm and the Scotian *velle* make a couple and when we are familiar with the equivalence of *bonum iustitiae* and *bonum honestum* we understand Duns saying: 'Virtue has the *bonum*

[67] See Wolter 'Native Freedom of the Will' and 'Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality,' in *The Philosophical Theology of Scotus*, 148–162 and 181–206, respectively.

honestum = bonum iustitiae as its proper object. That (good) is the essential object of will' (*Ordinatio* III 33.8). The will is the proper rational faculty and endeavor and in deciding it enjoys a structural priority.[68] God's presence bestows inner coherence on this position. God is love, so the essential axiom reads:

God has to be loved above all.

Therefore, the virtue of love comes in as the virtue structuring and coloring the whole of Duns Scotus' ethics of virtue. This ethical overall structure of his thought is already clear from *Lectura Prologus* 172, 164, and 163. The theocentric structure also explains the Scotian conclusion that theology is a practical discipline. Basically, theology is a philosophical ethics of love.[69] The virtue of love is the center of the theological and moral virtues. Duns' theory of virtue is a phenomenology of existential functions, in terms of flourishing and maturity.

If we flourish in a rational way with a view to the other person, we possess prudence (*prudentia*). If we flourish rationally with a view to the Other, we have faith. If we flourish in our willing with a view to God because of Himself, we enjoy love. If we flourish in our willing with a view to our neighbor because of herself or himself, we possess justice. If we flourish in our willing with a view to our neighbor for our own good, we possess the virtue covering both temperance (*temperantia*) and courage (*fortitudo*). All these virtues are combined with the fruits of faith, the beatitudes, and the gifts of the Spirit. They are not ordered according to the pattern of nature and supernature, but in terms of simplification.[70]

12.11 Perspective

The specialist literature on Duns Scotus' ethics has produced a rich harvest of paradoxes and antinomies for which Duns might be blamed. The general cause of such allegations consists in overlooking the logical and ontological center and structure of Scotus' thought. Exact exposition of Scotus' thought also shows that qualifications

[68] See the *responsio propria* of *Ordinatio* III 33, and consult Wolter, 'Duns Scotus on the Will as Rational Potency,' in *The Philosophical Theology of Scotus*, 163–180.

[69] The perfect summary is found in *Ordinatio* III 27 – see Wolter, *Scotus on the Will and Morality*, 424: Latin, and 423: English. Cf. §12.4.

[70] Cf. *DS* 92–97.

like 'voluntarism' and 'skepticism' easily miss the point. Mary Elizabeth Ingham's systematic approach of analyzing theories which Duns Scotus' ethics presupposes is preferable. She presented a fine survey of the basic parts of Duns Scotus' systematic thought wherein the whole of his ethical thought is rooted.[71] The historical context shows that these essentials closely fit in with the Condemnations of 1277 and its implications, although Scotus did not adhere to them because external authority had spoken. He was wholeheartedly convinced that this stance was true and that he was able to prove this. In fact, he saw it as his life-task to reveal the inherent reasonableness of all of the affiliated ideas and theories. Yet Ingham's final assessment is rather ambiguous. At the end of her fine exposition she concludes that 'Scotus corrects from a theological perspective certain philosophical errors; he does not appear to replace the Aristotelian tradition with something else.'[72] This was not Duns Scotus' conviction, not the view of the main tradition of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century thought he belonged to.

With John Duns, theory and life, head and heart point in the same direction. His scientific passion consists of truth and consistency. The whole of truth as he sees it is anchored in basic propositions about God and the essential propositions about God are necessary. If true, it is impossible that they are false. The fundamental truths of Duns' ethics are to be located on the same level, for faith and logic hold out a hand to each other. This basic dimension solves the allegations of paradox and antinomy. Ludger Honnefelder's thesis in *Scientia transcendens* characterizes Duns' ontology of contingency as the second start of the grand metaphysical tradition in the West.[73]

[71] Part I: 'The initial intuition' of Ingham, *Ethics and Freedom*, contains the following chapters: 1 – 'A philosophical context,' 2: 'The primacy of freedom,' 3: 'Divine freedom,' and 4: 'Freedom and the law.' An extrapolation of the Wolter and Ingham type of interpretation of Scotus' ethics is delivered by Shannon, linking Scotian ethics with the method of proportionalism: 'Method in Ethics,' *Theological Studies* 54 (1993) 272–293.

[72] Ingham, *Ethics and Freedom*, 143 (141–143). See §10.8 and Chapter 14.

[73] *Scientia transcendens. Die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, XI–XII: 'In zunehmendem Mass erwies sich vor allem seine Metaphysik als eine denkerische Leistung eigenen Ranges, die hinter der des Thomas nicht zurücksteht und die als der zweite grosse Entwurf bezeichnet werden muss, zu der die Auseinandersetzung mit der aristotelisch-arabischen Metaphysik im 13./14. Jahrhundert führte. Deutlicher als zuvor wurde damit auch die Voraussetzung sichtbar für das Übergewicht, dass im Spätmittelalter nicht die thomistische, sondern die scotische Schule gewann, sei es in Form der mit Antonius Andreas, Franz von Mayronis u.a. beginnenden – oft epigonalen – Fortführung, sei es in Form der mit Wilhelm von Ockham einsetzenden kritischen Transformation.'

John's personal spirituality shows the broad profile of an Augustinianism colored in a Franciscan way. For about thirty years, Duns lived and worked in Franciscan communities, in North England and Oxford, in Paris and Cologne. When he writes on hope, love, and faith, he almost unintentionally sketches his personal life of faith. The impersonal 'he' is changed into the personal 'ego' and this personal 'ego' is supported by his own desire that looks for God. The *summum bonum* or *bonum infinitum* deepens our desire for what is infinitely good. Hope is that desire, full of expectation, which is immediately directed towards God Himself for Himself. He gives Himself and Duns tells us: *I long for Him*, *I do not long for Him because of something else*, *but because of Himself*. 'I desire that this good (which is Himself) is mine' (*Lectura* III 26.19). He is my objective and 'I do not stop desiring it, desiring Him' (*Lectura* III 26.14). 'Non recedo.' It is the Augustinian sphere of *Cor nostrum est inquietum, donec requiescat in Te*. It is stable, dynamic, and very personal: 'I do not give up the act of desiring.' Duns' emotional life confirms the love structure of his theology, which is an expression of his life and experience. It is sensational to view reality through such eyes. We have to look after virtue. Reality is contingent and open.