

JOHN DUNS SCOTUS

Selected Writings on Ethics



*Edited and
translated by*

THOMAS
WILLIAMS

intencōne finis s; equocat' intencō q; nālic' a
m finē s; cē dīant' v; ducant' ab intelligēcia
q; ppe intencōne finē s; dīgant' ab intencō
de qua loquit' Augr' ē ipius voluntatis et n
tā concurre volucō distincta q; saltem pū
intencō distincta voluntatis non potest ēē
s; an distincta; intellcōm potest ēē visio
p; in opere a distincta intencōne copulan
p; ēē an eam id non ē necē q; solum sic u
requirē tēā intencō s; deb; ēē tēā visio h
intencōne finis s; equocat' intencō q; nālic' a
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p; ēē an eam id non ē necē q; solum sic u
requirē tēā intencō s; deb; ēē tēā visio h
ao requir' tēā pūa v; saltem rēōi ē. Ad
ppe est vltimū finis p tunc et pōt ē q; eod
tas ad finē et in ei que sunt ad finē et a
forte qū eod' actū collatus vlt' finem. Alio
alio actū vult ea que sunt ad finem.

Dominum illud in no
resistit malo sit i
sic. Ieronim' i po
q; illud in nobis semper

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Attu v; voluntate.
tate. quia consc

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Topical guide to the translations

The decision to present mostly complete questions rather than primarily shorter excerpts meant that it was not practical to organize the material under general topical headings, since most of the chapters cover two or more major topics in some detail. Here I provide a list of major topics and the numbers of the chapters in which those topics are treated extensively. This guide is meant to help in selecting and organizing readings that focus on particular themes; I hope it will be especially useful for those preparing syllabi for courses on Scotus, medieval philosophy, the history of ethics, and so forth. For every discussion of a topic, even in passing, the index will be a better guide.

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Introduction

John Duns Scotus (1265/66–1308) did not write systematically about ethics and moral psychology, but he did write extensively. In this volume I offer translations that cover the whole range of ethical topics that Scotus discusses, including happiness, freedom, moral responsibility, the virtues, the metaphysics of goodness, practical reason, the moral attributes of God (such as love, justice, and mercy), the will and its acts and affections, the foundations of morality, sin, and such practical matters as marriage, truth-telling, promise-keeping, and sacramental confession. To the extent that space would allow, I have translated entire questions, or at least extended selections, rather than shorter excerpts.

I begin with a brief overview of Scotus's life and works, with particular emphasis on the works from which the selections in this volume are drawn. I then discuss the editions and manuscripts I have used, and finally I explain some conventions I have adopted in the translations.

Scotus's life

We have relatively little clear and uncontested information about Scotus's life. The first certain date that we have is 17 March 1291, on which Scotus was ordained to the priesthood by Oliver Sutton, Bishop of Lincoln, at the priory of St Andrew in Northampton. Bishop Sutton had held ordinations in Wycombe (somewhat closer to Oxford, where Scotus was studying) on 23 December 1290, so the conjecture—and it is no more than a conjecture—is that Scotus reached the canonical age of twenty-five between those two dates.¹ Thus his birth is commonly said to have taken place between 24 December 1265 and 17 March 1266, and although there is certainly nothing to rule out the possibility that Scotus was in fact older than twenty-five when he was ordained,² these dates fit well with other accounts that Scotus was born “about the year 1265”³ in Duns, in the Scottish Borders.

Accounts of Scotus's early studies are so contentious and rely so heavily on conjecture that I will simply pass over them in silence⁴ and turn to the culmination of his studies,

¹ Callebaut, “A propos du Bx. Jean Duns Scot,” 319; Wolter, “Reflections,” 5.

² Sheppard, “Vita Scoti,” 294. ³ Wolter, “Reflections,” 6 n.

⁴ See Sheppard, “Vita Scoti,” 297–311, for details of the controversies.

for which we have better information. Scotus lectured on the first two Books of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard at Oxford in 1298–99 and began revising those lectures for publication almost immediately, probably completing his revisions of Book I by the end of 1300.⁵ In 1302 Scotus left Oxford for Paris and lectured on the *Sentences*—probably in the order Book I, Book IV, Book II, Book III—completing his lectures in 1303.⁶ In late June of 1303 Scotus, along with eighty-two other Franciscan friars, was forced to leave Paris for taking the pope’s side in the dispute between Philip IV of France and Pope Boniface VIII. Where Scotus went during his exile is not clear, though most scholars believe that he returned to Oxford.⁷ He was back in Paris in 1304.

In a letter dated 18 November 1304, the newly elected Minister General of the Franciscan order, Gonsalvus of Spain (Gonsalvo de Balboa), nominated Scotus to be the next Franciscan regent master at the University of Paris. This nomination was successful, and Scotus accordingly received his doctorate and incepted as master, probably in early 1305. It was the privilege of regent masters to conduct quodlibetal disputations, and we have one set of *Quodlibetal Questions* from Scotus, which must have been disputed between Lent 1305 and Lent 1307.⁸

In 1307 Scotus left Paris for the Franciscan house of studies at Cologne. Though a number of intriguing theories have been suggested to account for the “suddenness of his departure from Paris at the height of his career,”⁹ there is almost certainly no real mystery about it: it was common practice for the Franciscans to move their best theologians from one house to another. Scotus died at Cologne in 1308; the date of his death is traditionally given as 8 November. His remains rest in the *Minoritenkirche* in Cologne in a sarcophagus that bears the epitaph *Scotia me genuit, Anglia me suscepit, Gallia me docuit, Colonia me tenet*: “Scotland begot me, England received me, France taught me, Cologne holds me.”

Scotus’s works

We have at least three distinct versions of Scotus’s commentary on the *Sentences*. The earliest is the *Lectura*, which presents the text of his Oxford lectures on Books I and II. (There is also a *Lectura* on Book III, sometimes called the *Lectura completa*; it is apparently a separate work.) Scotus revised his Oxford lectures for publication and added commentary on Books III and IV. This text is known as the *Ordinatio* (from *ordinare*, to set in order). We have student reports of his lectures at Paris, known as the *Reportatio*.

⁵ For the evidence that Scotus was at Oxford from 1298 through 1302, see Sheppard, “Vita Scoti,” 311–13.

⁶ Cross, *Duns Scotus’s Theory of Cognition*, 1–2.

⁷ Wolter, “Reflections,” 11; Sheppard, “Vita Scoti,” 316–18.

⁸ Quodlibetal disputations were held in Lent and Advent. For the dates, see Noone and Roberts, “John Duns Scotus’ *Quodlibet*,” 132.

⁹ Wolter, “Reflections,” 12–13. For details of the theories, see Sheppard, “Vita Scoti,” 319–23.

Given that the Paris lectures were later than the Oxford lectures, one would expect that the *Reportatio* represents Scotus's most mature thought. But in fact Scotus was still revising the *Ordinatio* while at Paris—a task he never completed—and there is reason to think that Books III and IV of the *Ordinatio* are actually later than the corresponding texts of the *Reportatio*. Both the *Reportatio* and the *Ordinatio* exist in various manuscript traditions that transmit competing annotations, additions, cancellations, and corrections, as do the *Quodibetal Questions*.

The other work from which I have translated material for this collection, the *Questions on the Metaphysics*, cannot be dated as a whole to any particular point in Scotus's career, but Book IX is at least later than 1300.¹⁰

The texts

Happily, the critical edition of the *Questions on Aristotle's Metaphysics* is excellent, and I have translated directly from it, without adopting so much as a single variant reading.

After that, things get more difficult. There is no critical edition yet of the *Quodlibetal Questions*, so for *Quodlibet* 18 I have used the editions of both Alluntis and Frank, along with three manuscripts from the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek: Clm 8717 (consulted by both Alluntis and Frank), Clm 23572, and Clm 26309 (consulted by Frank). I am very grateful to Tobias Hoffmann for providing me with scans of the Frank edition and of these manuscripts. I have resolved discrepancies between Alluntis and Frank by appeal to the manuscripts and by a consideration of the sense.

For *Reportatio* IA I have used the edition of Wolter and Bychkov. Although I have adopted a few variant readings in the complete translation that appears on the website, I have not done so in the excerpt presented here. I have not included any texts from *Reportatio* II, III, or IV; the lack of a modern edition and the confused state of the texts made this decision seem the only responsible one.

As for the *Ordinatio*, there is a critical edition, completed at last in 2014; but it is not without problems. The editors' punctuation and paragraphing is unreliable, and one sometimes cannot help but draw the conclusion that they do not understand the argument at hand. As Richard Cross has noted, the editors so privilege Codex A (Assisi, Biblioteca comunale 137) that they will print nonsense from A when other manuscripts—sometimes even *all* the other manuscripts—give a sensible reading.¹¹ And this privileging of A continues even after *Ordinatio* III, d. 7, the point at which the editors themselves admit that A becomes unreliable. Since about half the material translated in this volume comes from the *Ordinatio* after Book III,

¹⁰ *Quaestiones Super Libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis I–V*, ed. R. Andrews, G. Etzkorn, G. Gal, R. Green, F. Kelley, G. Marcil, T. Noone, R. Wood (St. Bonaventure: The Franciscan Institute, 1997), xlii–xlv.

¹¹ Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, 218–19 n. 37.

d. 7, it is important for me to elaborate on the deficiencies of the edition and to justify my frequent recourse to the readings of other manuscripts, among which Codex Q (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. lat. 15854) is paramount.¹²

In their prefatory matter for volume X, which contains their edition of Book III, dd. 26–40, the editors note that after the first seven distinctions in Book III, the scribe of Codex A apparently no longer had access to the *Liber Duns* or *Liber Scoti* by which he had, up to that point, been able to correct the text before him. Instead, he relied on some other manuscript. And that he does not fully trust either the text before him or this other (unidentified) exemplar is evidenced by the fact that the scribe “frequently manifests his hesitation either in the margin or in the text itself.” After offering twenty-something examples of this phenomenon, the editors go on to say that

the scribe’s uncertainty and (to a certain extent) his lesser degree of faithfulness in transmitting a text that he has compared not with the *Liber Scoti* but with some other exemplar is also evident from the rather frequent errors or incongruities, such as omissions of words, changes, additions, substitutions, clarifications, repetitions, incorrect interpretations of abbreviations, etc., as can be readily seen by looking at the apparatus of variants.

Note the oddity of this argument. The fact that there are “frequent errors or incongruities” in the text of A is supposed to be evidence that the scribe grew uneasy with his text, and less faithful to it, in the absence of the *Liber Scoti* with which to compare it. Surely, though, what the errors and incongruities tell us about the scribe’s text—namely, that it wasn’t very good—is more important than what they tell us about the scribe’s state of mind.

In any event, the editors acknowledge that the text of A after III, d. 7, is marred by “frequent errors or incongruities.” And yet the very next thing they say is this: “Be that as it may, Codex A, on account of its origin and authority, always remains the foremost leader and guide in discovering the text of Scotus.” This is an exceedingly strange statement. By the editors’ own lights, the text of A from III, d. 8, on is full of mistakes, it was transmitted in the absence of the very thing that made the earlier parts of A reliable and authoritative—the availability of the *Liber Scoti* as a source by which to correct the text at hand—and *the scribe of A himself knew he had a bad text on his hands*. It is therefore irresponsible for them to insist, in spite of all these things, on continuing to privilege A over all the other manuscripts.

After the passage just quoted, the editors turn to “the text of Scotus in other codices.” They first note three kinds of involuntary scribal errors: misinterpretations of abbreviations (because the scribes are either bad at theology or bad at paleography), double- or even triple-barreled renderings of over-abbreviated abbreviations (just to be safe), and the omissions and repetitions occasioned by homoioteleuton, line-jumpings, and the like. That brings us to Codex Q:

¹² I have written about this at much greater length, with an analysis of a number of examples, at <http://ethicascoti.com/edition.pdf>.

A fourth category of variants comprises all those voluntary changes that certain redactors introduced into the text of Scotus, and especially the redactor of the text that Codex Q and others along with it transmit. They did this, to be sure, with the intention of making certain difficult statements easier to understand, rendering more elegant the occasional awkward manner of expression, correcting errors or infelicitous forms in style or grammar, explaining a rather obscure meaning, or, finally, completing certain expressions.

In other words, the frequent errors of A have been corrected in Q, the frequent infelicities made felicitous. But these changes, the editors tell us, were *voluntary*: the redactor made them for purposes of his own, and therefore presumably they lead us further away from, rather than toward, the authentic text of Scotus.

So what the editors would have us believe is that the error-ridden text of A presents the authentic text of Scotus—notwithstanding the reasons the editors themselves offer us for concluding that something was amiss in the text(s) the scribe had before him, *and that the scribe himself knew this and was bothered by it*—and that the far more satisfactory text of Q represents an unauthorized tidying-up that leads us away from the authentic text. But we have absolutely no reason to believe that the text transmitted in A is closer to Scotus's or that the text transmitted in Q departs from Scotus's. We have no reason to believe that the superior readings in Q are the products of an interventionist scribe rather than faithful transmissions of a better text than the one possessed by the dissatisfied scribe of A.

Notice, indeed, what the editors are asking us to believe. They are asking us to believe that an otherwise unknown fourteenth-century scribe was a more capable thinker than John Duns Scotus, better able to supply the right kinds of examples, to complete arguments consequentially, to treat the difference between necessary and sufficient conditions properly. For the Scotus of A is frequently bad at all those things; the Scotus of Q is quite adept. If it were just a matter of grammar and style, the editors' view would not be quite so implausible; all of us who work on Scotus know that his Latin can be pretty rough (though even Scotus knows the difference between *enim* and *autem*, between *vel* and *et*, which are frequently confused in A). But we are talking about basic philosophical skill here. *The Scotus of Codex A is a frequently inept reasoner; the Scotus of Codex Q is a capable philosopher and theologian.* And the Subtle Doctor was not a frequently inept reasoner.

For these reasons I have treated the Vatican edition as a tremendously useful point of departure but by no means as a last word, and I have ventured to adopt a fair number of variant readings—especially, though by no means exclusively, in Books III and IV—as indicated in the notes.

The translations

I have adopted a few conventions that I should explain here. I have frequently (though not invariably) translated *videtur* as “evidently,” which has a similar semantic range in

English, from “It seems to be the case (but isn’t)” through “It seems to be the case (and indeed is)” to “It is obviously the case.” For *evidenter*, then, I have had to make do with “manifestly.” “Immediately” always represents *immediate* and has the sense “directly, without any intermediate”; *statim*, which indicates temporal rather than logical, causal, or epistemic immediacy, is always translated as “straightaway.”

I translate *rectus* as “correct” and *rectitudo* as “correctness” whenever possible, though sometimes “right,” “rightness,” and even “rectitude” were unavoidable. No difference in meaning is intended (though likewise none is ruled out—how Scotus uses his terminology, and whether it has near analogues in the use of cognate words in present-day ethics, are large questions that I do not mean to pronounce on here). *Honestum* is either “intrinsically worthy” or “honorable,” depending on which characterization of the *honestum* is most prominent in a given passage. *Nolle/nolitio* is always “will-against”/“willing-against” (with the hyphen), so that there can be no confusion with *non velle*, “not to will,” “fail to will.” It is particularly in such contexts that the distinction between “I can not φ ” and “I cannot φ ” is crucial, the former meaning “I am able not to φ , I can refrain from φ -ing” and the latter “I am unable to φ .”

I have silently expanded Scotus’s references, giving (for example) the verse in addition to the chapter when he cites Scriptural texts and section numbers in addition to book and chapter numbers when he cites Augustine. References to civil and canon law often conclude with the relevant paragraph’s opening word(s), which I have left in Latin (the words are not typically significant in themselves, but only as a way to pinpoint a particular paragraph, and so an English translation would simply be mystifying).

Other texts not included

Two texts not translated here deserve particular mention. I have not included a translation of Book II, d. 25, in which Scotus discusses the causal contributions of intellect and will to the act of choice. There is a critical edition of the *Lectura* version of this discussion, but Scotus did not revise that question for the *Ordinatio*. We know that Scotus changed his mind on this topic when he lectured on it again at Paris,¹³ and so the Oxford discussion is superseded by the Paris discussion; but (as I have noted) I am not confident enough in what we know about the *Reportatio* to venture on a translation of the Paris discussion here. It is interesting to note that the references to II, d. 25, that occur in the *Ordinatio* material translated here all seem to suggest Scotus’s Oxford view rather than his Paris view—though, as it happens, only minor cosmetic changes would be required if all those references were to be either removed or else updated to reflect the changes in Scotus’s teaching at Paris.

¹³ Dumont, “Did Scotus Change His Mind?”

The situation is somewhat similar for Scotus's discussion of two questions in Book IV: "Do all human beings will happiness supremely and necessarily?" and "Is everything that is desired, desired on account of happiness?" There is no *Lectura* on Book IV, and Scotus did not dictate those questions for Book IV of the *Ordinatio*. We therefore have only the *Reportatio* text for these questions (IV, d. 49, qq. 8–9), and that text exists in two notably different manuscript traditions: *Reportatio* IV A (found in the Wadding edition) and *Reportatio* IV B (found in the Mair edition). I find the A text to be much more philosophically competent than the B text—the reasoning is clearer, the writing is less elliptical, and the arguments are set forth more fully¹⁴—but in the absence of a critical edition and a definitive accounting of the manuscripts, I have chosen not to include these questions. Instead, I have provided the A text in English (the Latin is readily available) and the B text in both Latin and English on my website (ethicascoti.com); anyone who takes the time to compare the A and B texts will agree, I think, that I was wise to leave this material out of this volume. Fortunately, the topics covered in those questions are fully discussed in other selections included here.

For reasons of space I have left out several interesting, but arguably less central, texts that I have translated for the website. Of particular interest are Scotus's discussion of hope in *Ordinatio* III, d. 26, q. un., "Is hope a theological virtue distinct from faith and charity?" and his analysis of the obligation to love our enemies in *Ordinatio* III, d. 30, q. un., "Must we love our enemies through charity?" I have also included sections omitted from questions translated only in part in this volume.

¹⁴ In his new edition of *Reportatio* IV (which at the time of this writing is complete through d. 17), Oleg Bychkov likewise prefers A, for both textual and pragmatic reasons: "The reasons for choosing the 'A' version, or *Rep.* IV-A, are that this version was used for the Wadding-Vivès edition; that the Vatican edition of the *Ordinatio* refers to this version (as it was occasionally excerpted for inclusion in the *Ordinatio*); and that Allan Wolter used this version for his work" (*The Report of the Paris Lecture: Reportatio IV-A*, ed. Oleg V. Bychkov and R. Trent Pomplun, 2 vols. [St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 2016], x–xi).

1

Questions on Aristotle's Metaphysics IX, q. 15

“Is the distinction Aristotle draws between rational and non-rational powers appropriate?”

Is the distinction that Aristotle draws between rational and non-rational powers—that rational powers are powers for opposites, whereas non-rational powers are for one of a pair of opposites¹—appropriate?

Arguments that it is not:

1

First, that it is not correct as regards rational powers: something that has a power can do what the power is for; therefore, it could do opposite acts [simultaneously].

One might say, just as Aristotle appears to say in the text [*Metaphysics* IX.5, 2 1048a5–10, 21–4], that it does not have the power to do opposites at a given time, but rather that it has the power at a given time to do opposites.

But on the contrary: take the ‘now’ in which one opposite is present. I ask whether the other can be present in that very same ‘now’ or not. If it can, the conclusion has evidently been established: there are opposites at the same time. If it can’t, it follows that this power *in this ‘now’* is for only one of the pair of opposites.

Also, second: there is no power that cannot issue in some act. But since this power for 3 opposites can’t issue in opposite acts at the same time, it evidently cannot issue in any act at all unless it is determined, as is argued in the text in chapter 4 [*Metaphysics* IX.5, 1048a5–10, 21–4]. But having been determined, it is clearly a power for only one of the opposites. Therefore, insofar as it is a power at all, it is evidently a power for only one of the opposites.

Also, third: it would then follow that the will could will the opposite of the end and 4 could will evil under the aspect of evil, just as it can will their opposites. The

¹ *Metaphysics* IX.2, 1046b2–6.

consequent is false, because, as Aristotle says in XII.4 [XII.10, 1075a20], “freemen are not allowed to act at random,” etc.

- 5 Against the other part of the division, that is, non-rational powers, first:

The sun can issue in opposite effects here below, for it melts ice and hardens clay. Nonetheless, the sun’s power is non-rational.

- 6 Also, later, in chapter 7 [*Metaphysics* IX.8, 1050b8], the Philosopher claims that “every power is a power for contradiction,” and he makes it clear that this is true even of active powers.
- 7 Also, according to Aristotle [*Metaphysics* IX.2, 1046b7–15], a rational power is not said to be a power for opposites per se, but a power for one opposite, a positive feature (*habitus*), per se, and for the other, a privation, per accidens. But a non-rational power can be a power for opposites in exactly this way: for example, cold is a per accidens cause of heat and throwing a ball against the wall is a [per accidens] cause of its rebounding. Therefore, the distinction Aristotle draws is not appropriate.
- 8 In favor of the affirmative view are the Philosopher’s words in the text [*Metaphysics* IX.2, 1046a36–b3].

I. Reply to the question

A. Article 1: The distinction as Aristotle drew it

- 9 In reply to this question, granting that the distinction is appropriate, we must investigate, first, how it ought to be understood and, second, what its cause is.

1. HOW THE DISTINCTION OUGHT TO BE UNDERSTOOD

- 10 Regarding the first topic, it is important to know that an active power, whether it is a power for an action or for a terminus that is produced, is a power *for* X in the following way: so long as its nature remains intact, it cannot be an active power for anything other than X, and it has the power for X in its own right. For example, so long as coldness remains coldness, it cannot be an active power for heat or a power that elicits heating, given that it is not an active [power for heat] in its own right. For whatever the circumstances might be with respect to coldness, although something else might contribute something to the being of heat, coldness would never contribute to it.
- 11 So an active power is called a power for opposite products (whether contrary or contradictory) which, while remaining one nature, has a first terminus under which both opposites equally fall. But an active power is a power for opposite actions which, while remaining one, is sufficient to elicit such actions. And if the action of a power that is properly active is called an act in the sense I explained in the reply to the third

argument in question 4,² then every power that is a power for opposite actions is a power for opposite acts, but not vice versa.

But you must understand this: a power is for opposite actions—that is, for an action 12 and its negation—in the way that will become evident in the discussion of the second topic [nn. 24–5, 31–4]. And what I am calling an active power here is not a relation that is counted according to the number of correlatives, but rather the absolute nature that is the proper foundation of the multiple relations that are to opposite effects.

2. THE CAUSE OF THE DISTINCTION

Concerning the second topic, Aristotle [*Metaphysics* IX.2, 1046b10–15] evidently 13 claims that the cause of the distinction is this: a natural form is only a principle for assimilating to one opposite in terms of natural similarity, as the form is what it is and not the opposite.

By contrast, a form in the intellect, for example, knowledge, is a principle for 14 assimilating opposites in terms of intentional similarity, as the form itself is virtually a likeness (*similitudo*) of opposite objects of cognition. For there is one and the same science of contraries, as there is of privative opposites, since one of two contraries includes the privation of the other. Now an agent is active with respect to that which it can assimilate to itself in accordance with the form by which it acts; and it is on that ground, apparently, that Aristotle accounts for the difference under discussion.

But there are quite a few arguments against this explanation of the distinction: 15

First, a natural form can be a principle for assimilating virtual opposites, as is evident in the case of the sun.

Second, this explanation evidently means that only intellect or knowledge is a 16 rational power, which is false, as I shall explain below [n. 41].

He also seems to make this claim more explicitly in chapter 4 [*Metaphysics* IX.5, 17 1048a10–11], where he concludes that a rational power is for opposites. It will do nothing unless it is determined to one or the other, and what determines it, he says, is “appetite or *prohairesis*.” So he apparently excludes *prohairesis* from counting as a rational power in the sense of a power for opposites.

This becomes even more explicit through what follows [*Metaphysics* IX.5, 18 1048a11–16], where he evidently says that a rational power, once it is determined in this way, acts necessarily, just as a non-rational power acts necessarily by its very nature. Therefore, it seems that the aggregate of the intellect (which he says is a power

² See qq. 3–4, nn. 48–9. Scotus has in mind here the sense of ‘act’ as the actuality (first act, or form) brought about in a patient by the active power.

for opposites) and the appetite that determines it (which he says acts necessarily) is unqualifiedly not a rational power.

- 19 Third, the proof that the intellect has to do with contraries is evidently not valid, though the intellect does have to do with privative opposites. For a contrary, even if it does include the privation of the other contrary, does not do so strictly. Rather, it is a positive nature, and thus there is a proper cognition of its own entity, not a cognition strictly through the other opposite. Indeed, it is cognized only per accidens when it is cognized through the other opposite.

B. Article 2: The distinction in itself

1. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NATURE AND WILL

- 20 As for the second article, we must investigate, first, the difference in itself, and second, what Aristotle meant.
- 21 On the first topic, it is important to know that the fundamental distinction within active powers is on the basis of the different ways in which they elicit their activity—the fact that they act with respect to this or that [object] does distinguish powers in a way, or at least show that they are distinct, but it does not distinguish them as immediately [as does the distinction in how they elicit their activity]. For the relation of a power to the object with respect to which it operates is mediated by the activity that the power elicits in this way or that.
- 22 Now there can be only two different ways in which a power elicits its proper activity: either (1) it is of itself determined to acting, such that, as far as it depends on the power itself, it cannot not act when it is not impeded by something extrinsic, or (2) it is not determined of itself, but can do this act or an opposite act, and can also act or not act. The general term for the first sort of power is ‘nature’; the second is called ‘will.’
- 23 Hence, the fundamental division of active principles is into nature and will. In keeping with this, Aristotle in *Physics* II [197a32–b13] identifies two per accidens moving causes: chance, which pertains to nature, and fortune, which pertains to purpose or will.
- 24 Now if one were to ask what causes this distinction—why, that is, nature is only of one (that is, of itself it is determinately a power for whatever effect or effects it is a power for) whereas will is of opposites (that is, of itself it is indeterminately a power for this action or its opposite, or for action or non-action)—the right answer is that there is no cause. For just as an immediate effect is related to its immediate cause per se and primarily and without any intermediate cause—since otherwise there would be an infinite regress—so too an active cause is evidently related in the most immediate way possible to its own action insofar as it elicits that action. Nor are we to assign any cause of why it elicits in this way other than simply that it is that kind of cause, which is the very thing whose cause this question is asking about.

Therefore, just as what is hot heats because it is hot, and the proposition "what is hot heats" is not mediate, but instead is a primary proposition that is per se in the fourth mode,³ so too is the proposition "what is hot heats determinately of itself." And the same goes for "the will wills" and "the will does not of itself will determinately by a necessary determination."⁴

To this one might object, first: the proposition "a will wills" is contingent. If the will is not of itself determined to willing, how is any contingent proposition [to the effect that it wills] immediate?

And second: Why is this indeterminacy posited in the will if it can't be proved on the basis of the nature of the will?

Reply to the first objection [n. 26]: a contingent truth does not follow from necessary truths, obviously. So take some contingent truth. If it is immediate, my point is made. If not, set forth the intermediate. At least one premise that supports it will be contingent; otherwise, a contingent truth would be inferred from [only] necessary truths. Now if that contingent premise is itself mediate, one premise that supports it will be contingent, and thus there will be an infinite regress unless it terminates in some immediate contingent truth.

Confirmation: in *Posterior Analytics* I [89a21–2] Aristotle holds that there can be belief *propter quid*, that is, on the basis of immediate propositions, and belief *quia*, on the basis of mediate propositions. Thus in the present case, take "the will wills *a*." If there is no cause between the extremes, my point is made. If there is a cause, say, "the will wills *b*," one must go further. But one must come to a stop somewhere. Where? Why does the will will that? [At the point at which one comes to a stop] there will be no cause other than that the will is the will. And yet if that last proposition were necessary, it would not be the only antecedent for a contingent proposition.

In reply to the second objection [n. 27]: it is proved a posteriori. For someone who wills experiences that he is able not to will, or to will-against, as I have explained in discussing the freedom of the will at greater length elsewhere.⁵

Second, what I said above [n. 24] raises a question: how is such a cause reduced to act if it is indeterminate of itself to acting and not acting? I answer: there is an indeterminacy of insufficiency, which comes from potentiality and a lack of actuality; this is the way in which matter that does not have a form is indeterminate with respect to carrying out the action of that form. There is another indeterminacy of superabundant sufficiency, which comes from unlimitedness of actuality, whether unqualifiedly or in a certain respect.

³ Thomas Aquinas, *Anal. post.* I lect. 10 n. 7.

⁴ Cf. *Ordinatio* I d. 8 p. 2 q. un. n. 299; *Quodl.* q. 16 nn. [13–14].

⁵ *Lectura* I d. 39 qq. 1–5 n. 54; *Reportatio* IV d. 49 q. 9 nn. 24–40; *Quodl.* q. 16 nn. [1–18].

- 32 Something that is indeterminate in the first way is not reduced to act unless it is first determined to a form by something else; something that is indeterminate in the second way can determine itself. For if it could do this if it had a limited act, how much more could it do so if it had an unlimited act, since then it would lack nothing that was unqualifiedly a principle of acting? Otherwise, God, who is supremely undetermined—with the indeterminacy of unlimitedness—to any action, could not do anything, which is false.
- 33 Here is an example of this. Fire causes heat, and there is no question of something extrinsic by which it is determined to acting. If it were then given the perfection of cold, without losing any of the perfection of heat, why could it not be determined by itself to heating just as before? Granted, this example is not a perfect analogy, as I will explain in replying to the preliminary argument [n. 43].
- 34 Now the indeterminacy that is ascribed to the will is not the indeterminacy of matter or of imperfection insofar as the will itself is active; rather, it is the indeterminacy of exceptional perfection and of a power that is not bound to a determinate act.

2. WHAT ARISTOTLE MEANT

- 35 But how do the things I have just said comport with Aristotle's view? He does not distinguish between nature and will but between non-rational and rational powers, and he understands only the intellect as a rational power, as the second argument given above [nn. 16–18] evidently shows.
- 36 Response: intellect and will can be understood as related either to the proper acts that they elicit or to the acts of other, inferior powers over which they exercise some causality: the intellect by presenting and directing, the will by inclining and commanding. The first relationship is obviously the more essential one. And the intellect, so considered, counts as nature. For it is of itself determined to understanding, and it is not in the intellect's power to understand and not to understand [simples] or, with regard to propositions, where it can have contrary acts—assent and dissent—those contrary acts are not in the intellect's power. Accordingly, even if (as Aristotle evidently says) there is a single cognition of opposite objects, the intellect is still not indeterminate of itself with respect to that cognition. Indeed, it necessarily elicits that intellection, just as it would necessarily elicit another intellection that would be of only one of those opposites. The will elicits its proper act in exactly the opposite way, as I explained earlier [nn. 22–34]. Hence, speaking of the two powers in this way, we affirm only two productions in the Godhead,⁶ and we say that intellect is the same principle as nature. But Aristotle was evidently not speaking in terms of this first relationship.

⁶ *Lectura* I d. 2 pars 2 qq. 1–4 nn. 202–5; *Ordinatio* I d. 2 pars 2 qq. 1–4 nn. 300–3.

The second relationship seems quasi-accidental, for two reasons. First, these powers 37 are evidently related to acts of other powers only through their own acts, which are prior to the acts of the other powers. Second, the intellect in particular, understood in terms of this second relationship, does not have the character of an active power, properly speaking, as we discussed in Book VII, question 2, chapter 6.⁷

Aristotle was evidently speaking in terms of this second relationship when he claimed 38 that some sort of knowledge of opposites is required first. But that knowledge is of itself insufficient for causing any external effect, for, as he argues in chapter 4 [Metaphysics IX.5, 1048a8–10], if it were sufficient, it would bring about opposite effects. This evidently does not follow unless the causality of the intellect, even when it knows opposites, is such that the intellect is determined to bring about as external effects the things it knows. And thus not only is it not rational with respect to its own act, it is also not completely rational with respect to the external act that it directs. Indeed, strictly speaking, it is also non-rational with respect to the external act; it is rational only in a certain respect, insofar as it is a prerequisite for the act of a rational power.

What follows [this prerequisite act on the part of the intellect] is the will as 39 determining: not that the power of the will is of itself determined to one—and that consequently the aggregate of the intellect, which is of opposites, and the will is [determinately] of one [of the pair of opposites], as was claimed above [n. 18]—but that the will, which is indeterminate with respect to its own act, elicits that act and through that act determines the intellect's causality with respect to bringing about its external effect.

This is why Aristotle says, "I call this desire or *prohairesis*," that is, choice; he does not 40 call it "will," that is, a power. And so if Aristotle does call the intellect a rational power, the distinction between rational and non-rational powers must be understood in the way explained above [nn. 38–9]: the intellect is not a rational power either with respect to its own act or insofar as through its own act it cooperates with the act of an inferior power (taking "its own act" strictly), but rather in both respects it counts as nature. It does, however, count as a rational power insofar as its own acts are prerequisites for acts of the will.

If, by contrast, we understand 'rational' as meaning "with reason," then the will is 41 properly rational. And the will is a power for opposites, not only with respect to its own act but also with respect to the acts of inferior powers. It is not a power for opposites in the way that nature is, like the intellect, which cannot determine itself to one or the other of a pair of opposites; rather, it can freely determine itself. And this is why it is a power: it can do something, for it can determine itself. The intellect, by contrast, is not a power with respect to external things; for if it has to do with

⁷ Or rather, see Book VI q. 2 nn. 27–8, 32.

opposites, it cannot determine itself, and unless it is determined, it cannot do anything externally.

C. Reply to the objections against Aristotle's approach

- 42 On the basis of these remarks I can reply to the arguments given above against Aristotle's approach.
- 43 To the first argument, the one about the sun [n. 15], I reply that if a natural form is unlimited and is a principle of opposites in materials disposed to receive such opposites, it is determined to produce the opposites just as a form that is a principle of one thing is determined to produce that one thing. For it does not have the power to bring about either this or that form when a patient that is receptive to both forms is present, just as it would not have such power if it could bring about only one form. The will, by contrast, is not a principle that is of itself determined to its action, whichever of the two opposites within its power it actually does; rather, it has the power to determine itself to either of them. And this shows clearly how the analogy given above, about heat and cold contained unitively in one and the same thing [n. 33], fails. And indeed, not to belabor the point, there simply is no suitable analogy that could be offered, since will is distinguished from the class of active principles that are not will on the basis of their opposite ways of acting.
- 44 And for this reason it seems perfectly ridiculous to apply universal propositions about active principles to the will on the grounds that there is no counterexample to those propositions in anything other than the will. For the will is unique in being unlike other active powers, and so one should not deny that the will is *F* just because other active powers are not *F*. There is, after all, no contradiction involved in asserting that a created active principle is capable of the perfection that I have attributed to the will, namely, that not only is it not determined to one effect or act, because it has many effects and acts in its power, but it is also not determined to any of the effects and acts for which it has sufficient power. For who would deny that an active principle is more perfect the less dependent, determined, and limited it is with respect to its act or effect? And if you grant this to be true of a power that is unlimited with respect to many, contrary effects, though naturally determined to any given one of them, how much greater perfection should you acknowledge in a principle that, in addition to this first kind of unlimitedness, has a second? For this contingency is nobler than necessity, as I discussed in Book V in the question raised there about the chapter "On the necessary,"⁸ arguing that it is a matter of perfection in God that he causes nothing necessarily. Therefore, given that this perfection that we attribute to the will is not impossible for a created active principle, and that the will is supreme among such principles, reason demands that we attribute such

⁸ Book V q. 3 nn. 26–9.

perfection to the will. And this explanation is better than the one given earlier about heat and cold united in a single thing [n. 33].

On this basis the argument that Aristotle seems to give in the text [n. 2] can be given a more expansive treatment, as follows. If the intellect through one and the same cognition has in some way to do with opposites, as presenting them, it follows that a more indeterminate active power can have to do with opposites in a more excellent way: namely, that such a power, while remaining a single power, can determine itself to either of the opposites presented to it. Otherwise, the first power for opposites would evidently have been given in vain, since without the second power it could not do either of them. Thus, this is an argument from the lesser, not an argument from the proper cause, since knowledge is not the proper cause of this distinction.

Reply to the second argument [nn. 16–18]: Aristotle excludes the will from counting as a rational power only if you are talking about what is *incompletely* a rational power, namely, what has knowledge of opposites. Now he says that this incomplete rational power does not cause an external effect unless it is determined by something else. I ask: what is the source of this determination through choice? It has to be from a power that chooses, and thus a power distinct from reason. For reason is not what determines, since reason has to do with opposites with respect to which it cannot determine itself, let alone determine something other than itself; or, if it did determine itself, it would bring about opposites at the same time, as Aristotle argues about action [*Metaphysics* IX.5, 1048a21–4]. And the intellect does not necessarily determine that other thing to that opposite, since if it did, the intellect would not be even in remote potentiality to opposites. So the other thing contingently determines itself, and once it has become determinate through its own act, it consequently determines the intellect.

So Aristotle indicates that a rational power is of itself a power for opposites in the sense that it determines itself to one or the other, and he affirms that once it has determinately elicited its act, it is determined with respect to the act of an external power that of itself was a power for opposites in the sense that, necessarily, it could not determine itself. And thus in the course of showing in chapter 4 how an incomplete rational power proceeds to act, he evidently indicates quite clearly that there is another rational power that is complete in terms of the distinction he draws here, and that those two powers, with their acts, cooperate in producing the external effect. Properly speaking, the executive power, which is rational by participation, has no power for the opposite; rather, the full character of a power for opposites is formally in the will.

As for what Aristotle goes on to say [*Metaphysics* IX.5, 1048a11–15]—that a rational power that has been thus determined is necessarily a power for one thing, and that “what it chiefly desires is what it will do”—one could say that this is not true with absolute necessity. For just as the antecedent, “It wills this,” is not necessary (if it is

true at all), so too the consequent is not necessary. If the antecedent is true necessarily, the consequent, “It does this external act,” is also necessary. But if what follows necessarily is “One wills this external thing, therefore, if not impeded, one does it,” Aristotle would merely be claiming that no effect is brought about except by a cause that has been determined to that effect before producing it (understanding ‘before’ as indicating natural priority), with the sole exception of the will, which follows the apprehension of opposites and, according to Aristotle, determines which external effect will follow.

- 49 One could explain his remarks at the end of chapter 4 [*Metaphysics* IX.5, 1048a21–4]—“Hence, it is not the case that if one wills opposites, one necessarily does them,” etc.⁹—along the same lines. For why *doesn’t* this follow in the case of the will? And yet he argues earlier, in the beginning of the chapter on rational powers [*Metaphysics* IX.5, 1048a8–10], that doing opposites at the same time is a good basis for the distinction [between rational and non-rational powers], because a power will act as it has the power to act, though in fact no power can act in this way.¹⁰
- 50 But as I have explained [nn. 36, 41, 46–7], an incomplete rational power is of itself a natural power with respect to opposites. For that reason, as far as the power itself is concerned, it is not only a power at the same time for opposites but even a power for opposites at the same time.¹¹ And so if of itself it did those things, it would do them at the same time, in the same way that the sun is a power for opposites at the same time in diverse recipients and would bring about those opposites at the same time if those recipients were brought close to it; and if it were a power for both opposites equally and one and the same patient equally receptive of both were brought near to it, either it would do nothing or it would bring about both opposites in it at the same time. So it is in the present case.
- 51 One might object that the intellect is not a power for both opposites equally, and so it would act according to whichever has more influence over it. I reply that in the case of the one cognition of a positive feature and its privation, the intellect is indeed not

⁹ The gist of the argument as we have it in both the Latin Aristotle and the exposition of Antonius Andreas is that someone who wills two opposites will not do them, because there is no power to do two opposite things simultaneously. There is nothing about *necessity* in either version of the text, and the editors wonder whether Scotus is citing a corrupt text; but the notion of necessity plays no role in what follows, so the point seems to be moot.

¹⁰ The argument here is opaque even by Scotus’s standards, and if there were better MS support for doing so, I would delete the last clause. The argument in Aristotle to which Scotus refers here goes as follows (I quote Ross’s translation): “For the nonrational potencies are all productive of one effect each, but the rational produce contrary effects, so that if they produced their effects necessarily they would produce contrary effects at the same time; but this is impossible.” (Note that necessity *does* play a role in this argument; that Scotus has jumbled this passage together with the one he quotes in the first sentence of the paragraph is a better explanation for the intrusion of necessity in that sentence than a speculative appeal to a corrupted text.)

¹¹ Cf. *Lectura* II d. 25 q. un. nn. 36–7; *Ordinatio* I d. 2 pars 2 qq. 1–4 nn. 346–51; *Reportatio* II d. 25 q. un. ad 4 n. [23]; *Additiones magnae* II d. 25 q. un. nn. [10, 25].

related to both equally: it cognizes the positive feature per se and the privation per accidens. But it can also have a cognition of one opposite and a distinct knowledge of the other, and thereby it can be the cause of opposites.

One might also object, "How, then, will Aristotle's inference [that rational powers 52 deal with opposites, though] not in the same way, be any good?" [I reply:] this is not how things are in the case of the will. For if it is a power for opposites virtually, it is at one and the same time a power for both of them, though not a power for both of them at one and the same time. For it is not a power for both in the mode of a natural power; rather, it can determine itself to one in preference to the other and therefore act accordingly. And perhaps this gives us a way to interpret chapter 4 so that it speaks very much in favor of the will [as a rational power], though there is evidently some material there that speaks against the will.

But then one might ask why Aristotle so frequently calls the intellect a rational power 53 and does not do so for the will, even though (if my previous exposition is correct) he does imply that the will is a rational power. One could reply that an act of the intellect is typically prior to an act of the will, and it is better known to us. Aristotle quite often spoke in terms of what is more evident, and that is why we find him saying so little about the will, even though there are certain implications of what he did say which he would have drawn explicitly if he had discussed those issues.

The third argument offered against Aristotle [n. 19] has a true conclusion, namely, 54 that in the case of simple apprehension there is distinct cognition of two contraries, each being cognized through its proper species. Nonetheless, if one contrary is naturally prior to the other, discursive cognition can be a source of knowledge about the other [posterior] contrary. And this is a way to interpret Aristotle's dictum in *De anima* I [411a4–5] that "the straight is the judge both of itself and of the curved." For judgment does not pertain to simple apprehension but to a comparison of propositions. For with respect to knowledge secundum quid, one thing can be apprehended by simple apprehension through the species of something else, in terms of the privation that that species includes, not of course within its essence or essential character, but as a concomitant.

In the first way, then, there is a single cognition of contraries: cognition of one 55 formally and of the other virtually, as in the case of cognition of a principle and a conclusion. And if some volition—say, perhaps, choice—requires a prior judgment about what is to be chosen, one of the contraries can be cognized through the other as far as that cognition is concerned, even though one might sometimes choose contrary to that judgment.

In the second way there is a single cognition of contraries: cognition of one secundum quid and of the other unqualifiedly. And this cognition is all that the will needs 56 in order to will either of the contraries, insofar as each is presented in that cognition.

And the will can will contraries in this way; therefore, it can also do so unqualifiedly. For the contraries are not incompatible absolutely, except perhaps by reason of such privation; they are evidently not incompatible as willable, since both are evidently willable as positive beings.

- 57 You might say that a rational power is a power for opposites *unless* it has been determined to one, and then it isn't. On the contrary: from this it follows that there is no distinction between rational and non-rational powers on the basis of their being or not being a power for opposites. The consequent is false according to *Metaphysics* IX; therefore, so is the antecedent.
- 58 Proof of the inference: non-rational powers, both active and passive, as naturally prior to a determining act, can produce opposites, as is evident from Aristotle, *De interpretatione* II [c. 13, 23a4–5], and Boethius, *Commentary on De interpretatione* VI, second edition [c. 13], where he offers the example of water, which can both chill and heat.
- 59 Also, if [a rational power] could not produce opposites when it is actually determinate—that is, in and for this instant—no effect in actual being would be actually contingent. The consequent is false; therefore, so is the antecedent. The falsity of the consequent is evident from the Philosopher in *De interpretatione* I [c. 9, 19a23–4], where he holds that one must qualify the proposition “Everything that is, when it is, necessarily is,” because something exists contingently. Proof of the inference: an effect is said to be contingent in potentiality only in virtue of the fact that its cause has the power for the opposite; therefore, an effect is not contingent in actuality unless its cause, in actually causing, could cause the opposite in the very ‘now’ in which it causes that effect. But on your view it cannot now cause the opposite, because at that point it has been determined. Therefore, etc.
- 60 You might say that an effect is called contingent because it can fail to come about. On the contrary: it wasn't a being before [it was brought about]; therefore, it wasn't an actually contingent effect before [it was brought about]. For we are speaking now of contingency as a mode of a being in actuality, when it is in actuality, and in the very ‘now’ in which it is in actuality.
- 61 Also, the opposite of what belongs to something per se and primarily does not belong to that thing either per se or per accidens as long as the thing remains itself. Otherwise, propter quid demonstration, which derives a passion from its subject, would not proceed from necessary truths. Now being a power for opposites belongs to a rational power in its own right and primarily, as a proper passion of a rational power qua rational; for this is precisely how a rational power is distinguished from a non-rational power, according to *Metaphysics* IX. Therefore, etc.
- 62 Also, God can not predestine someone who is predestinate, in and for the very ‘now’ in which he predestined that person, notwithstanding the determination of his will

through an act of predestining.¹² Everyone agrees with this. Therefore, this determination does not take away the power for opposites.

II. Replies to the preliminary arguments

Replies to the preliminary arguments.

63

In reply to the first argument [n. 1] it is evident that a power, insofar as it is called will, is not a power for bringing about contraries at the same time, but rather a power that can determine itself to either of them. The intellect is not like this.

One might object, "Can I be not-sitting now, given that I am in fact sitting?" I reply: 64
A proposition to the effect that this is possible, understood in the composed sense as affirming that the two opposites are possible together, is false; for such a proposition states that there is a power for opposites to be true at the same time. As for the divided sense, some would say¹³ that when there is sitting, the sitting exists necessarily, in keeping with the statement in *De interpretatione* I [c. 9, 19a23–4] that "Everything that is, when it is, [necessarily is]," and that nothing [that is not in fact true] is possible in that very moment, but only in some prior instant in which it was possible for [what in fact comes about] not to come about at the time in question. They evidently cannot sustain the claim that the will is *now* a power for the opposite of what is in the will. At this point it would be tedious to explain the absurdity of this position—that necessity and contingency are not proper conditions of beings when they exist, but only necessity is, and contingency never is, given that when something does not exist, *it does not exist either necessarily or contingently*—as well as how the authoritative passage from *De interpretatione* does not support their view, which rests on the fallacy of confusing the composed and the divided sense and the fallacy of inferring something unqualifiedly true from something true in a certain respect.

Alternatively, one could say that when the will has a certain volition, it has that 65
volition contingently, and that volition is contingently from the will at that time: for if it is not from the will contingently *at that time*, it is *never* from the will contingently, since it is not from the will at any *other* time. And just as that volition is in the will contingently, so too the will is at that time a power for the opposite of that volition, understanding "at that time" in the divided sense. That is, I do not mean that the will can will the opposite simultaneously with willing what it in fact wills, but rather that—again, understanding this in the divided sense—in the very instant in which it wills one thing it has the power to will the opposite rather than willing what it in fact wills, not necessarily, but contingently.

¹² Cf. *Lectura* I d. 40 q. un. nn. 4–10; *Ordinatio* I d. 40 q. un. nn. 4–10.

¹³ Thomas Aquinas, *ST* II-II a. 49 a. 6 in corp.

- 66 To the second argument [n. 3], if this argument is meant to apply to the will, I say that the will can act without any determination prior to its act; thus, the first determination—first both in time and in nature—is in the will's performing of its own act. And so if "it cannot issue in any act at all unless it is first determined" is applied to the will, it is false.
- 67 If, on the other hand, the argument is meant to apply to the intellect as cognizing opposites, then it's true that the intellect cannot act with respect to something external unless it is determined by something else, since of itself the intellect has to do with external things in the mode of nature; it lacks the power to determine itself to one or the other of a pair of opposites. Therefore, it will do either both or nothing. And if one should conclude from this that the intellect is not a full-blown rational power, I will grant that conclusion in keeping with my prior discussion. Indeed, if, *per impossibile*, the intellect existed by itself, without the will but together with the inferior powers, nothing would ever come about otherwise than determinately, in the mode of nature, and there would be no power sufficient for bringing about either of two opposites.
- 68 In reply to the third argument [n. 5], some say that a power can have an act concerning opposites that are within the scope of its first object, which in the case of an act of willing they identify as the good, either genuine or apparent, but not an act concerning the opposite of its first object, which they identify as the bad qua bad. Similarly, with respect to acts they say that the will can have opposite acts, willing and willing-against, concerning anything in which something of the character of the first object of each act—namely some aspect of good [in the case of willing] and some aspect of bad [in the case of willing-against]—is found. There is no aspect of bad found in the ultimate end, and they¹⁴ evidently hold that the will is not a rational power with respect to the ultimate end. Similarly, they evidently hold that the will can be immobilized by a habit with respect to certain things other than the ultimate end. I will not here pursue a discussion of these matters,¹⁵ or of whether the will is determined to will the end and to will-against what is bad qua bad.
- 69 The reply to the fourth argument [n. 5], the one about the sun, is clear above in my response to the first objection against Aristotle [n. 43].
- 70 To the fifth argument [n. 7] it can be said, in keeping with what I say at the beginning of the first article [nn. 10–19], that cold never does anything toward the being of heat; it does, however, do something such that, once it has been done, something else can

¹⁴ Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *ST* I q. 82 a. 1 in corp.; Giles of Rome, *Quodl.* III q. 15; Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl.* VI q. 1 in corp., q. 6 in corp., q. 7 in corp., VIII q. 16; Henry of Ghent, *Quodl.* XII q. 26 in corp. (though see also *Quodl.* XIII q. 5 in corp.).

¹⁵ Cf. *Ordinatio* I d. 1 pars 2 q. 2 nn. 82–158; *Reportatio* IV d. 49 qq. 8–9.

cause greater heat: for example, it constricts something so that its interior heat will not be diffused, and thus the concentrated heat causes greater heat.

As for the throwing of a ball, although there is indeed a certain contrariety between 71 the rebounding motion and the direct motion—as much contrariety as is required between the *wheres* that terminate local motion—there is no formal contrariety, since one who moves something violently toward some *where* moves it toward every *where* that can be attained through that motion. If it can attain every such *where* through its direct motion, that is how it will be moved; if not, it will rebound, and the rebounding motion will continue until a motion proportionate to the violence of the mover has been completed.

This and any other contingency in reflected and refracted rays—and in other 72 contexts—does not introduce in any non-rational power the sort of indifference characteristic of a rational power.

As for the last argument,¹⁶ all passive powers, without exception, are of themselves 73 powers for contradiction. Granted, if a necessarily existing form necessarily depended on matter, the composite would be incorruptible, and the matter would necessarily be actualized by that form; but that would not be in virtue of any necessity on the part of the matter, but rather on the part of the form. Active powers, by contrast, are powers for contradiction in the way that Aristotle explains with the words “being and not being.”¹⁷ If one understands “being and not being” to indicate a passive power that is brought close or not brought close, then every active power whose action depends on a passive power can be a power for contradiction, not of itself but in virtue of something else. If one understands it to indicate an impediment, then every natural, corruptible active power can be impeded, even by another natural active cause. But no natural power has of itself the power to elicit opposite actions concerning one and the same object or has of itself the power to act and not act; that is the way in which a rational power is a power for contrariety or contradiction. Therefore, that proposition¹⁸ does not undermine the distinction as Aristotle intended to draw it.

¹⁶ Actually the next-to-last argument [n. 6].

¹⁷ That is, active powers are powers for being and not being. The edition cites *Metaphysics* IX.5, 1050b10–11: “What therefore is possible to be can (*contingit*) be and not be.”

¹⁸ Namely, “every power is a power for contradiction.”

2

Ordinatio prologue, part 5, qq. 1 and 2 (omitting nn. 270–313)

“Is theology a practical or a speculative science?”

“Is a science called practical per se because it is ordered to praxis as its end?”

Question 1: “Is theology a practical or a speculative science?”

217 The question is whether theology is a practical science or a speculative science.

Arguments for the claim that it is not a practical science:

John 20:31 says, “These things are written in order that you might believe.”

Believing is speculative, for what comes after believing is seeing. Therefore, etc.¹

218 Furthermore, we find in *De anima* III [433a26–30] and *Ethics* I [1094b7, 21–2] that a practical science is about something contingent,² whereas the object of this science is not contingent, but necessary. Therefore, etc.

219 Also, in *On the Trinity* [c. 2] Boethius says that there are three parts of speculative science, and one of them, he says, is theology. And it is clear that he is talking about the theology we are considering in this question, because he goes on to say that the subject of theology is the first substance, and he says concerning the first substance that “the substance of God lacks matter.”³

220 Also, any speculative science is nobler than any practical science; no science is nobler than this one; therefore, etc. Proofs of the first premise: (1) speculative science is for its own sake, whereas practical science is for the sake of use; (2) speculative science is more certain, according to *Metaphysics* I [982a14–16, 25–8].⁴

¹ Cf. Richard Middleton, *Sent.* prol. q. 4 arg. 3.

² Cf. Henry of Ghent, *Summa* a. 36 q. 4 in corp.

³ Cf. Henry of Ghent, *Summa* a. 8 q. 3 arg. 1 in opp.; a 19 q. 1 arg. in opp.

⁴ Cf. *Ibid.* a. 8 q. 3 arg. 2 in opp.; a. 7 q. 2 arg. in opp.; William of Nottingham, *Sent.* prol. q. 5

Also, this science was discovered once all the needs of life had been provided for, for 221
the sake of avoiding ignorance, as is obvious from the fact that concern for such
needs detracts from inquiry into this teaching. It follows that this science is specu-
lative. For this is how Aristotle argues in *Metaphysics* I [982b19–25] that metaphysics
is speculative.⁵

On the contrary:

222

Romans 13:10: “Love is the end of the law.”

Also, Matthew 22:40: “On these two commandments hang all the law and the
prophets.”

Also, Augustine, *In Praise of Charity*: “One who preserves charity in his behavior
upholds all that is hidden, and all that is evident, in the divine words.”⁶

Now these authorities prove that this science is not strictly for the sake of
speculation. And a speculative science aims at nothing beyond speculation, according
to Avicenna in *Metaphysics* I a. (Look up his commentary in that passage.)⁷

Question 2: “Is a science called practical per se because it is ordered to praxis as its end?”

The second question is whether a science is called practical per se because it is 223
ordered to praxis as its end.

I argue that it is:

In *De anima* III [433a14–15] the Philosopher says, “The intellect becomes prac-
tical by extension, and it differs from the speculative because of its end.”⁸

Also, *Metaphysics* I [982a14–16]: “A practical science is less noble than a speculative 224
science because it is for the sake of use.” This argument would not hold unless use
were per se the end of this habit.

Also, *Metaphysics* II [993b20–1]: “The end of a speculative science is truth, whereas 225
the end of a practical science is action.”⁹

On the contrary:

226

In *Metaphysics* VI [1025b18–28] the Philosopher distinguishes practical sciences
from speculative sciences on the basis of their objects, as is evident; for there he
distinguishes practical science, both active and productive, from speculative science
on the basis of its object and not on the basis of its end.

⁵ Cf. Henry of Ghent, *Summa* a. 1 q. 1 arg. 4 in opp.; a. 7 q. 10 in corp.

⁶ Augustine, *Sermon* 350, *De caritate* II n. 2.

⁷ Avicenna, *Metaph.* I c. 1. Cf. Richard Middleton, *Sent.* prol. q. 4 in corp.

⁸ Cf. Henry of Ghent, *Quodl.* VIII q. 1 in corp., *Summa* a. 36 q. 4 in corp.

⁹ Cf. Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl.* X q. 11 in corp.; Henry of Ghent, *Quodl.* VIII q. 1 in corp., *Summa* a. 8 q. 3 arg. 1; Richard Middleton, *Sent.* prol. q. 4 arg. 1 in opp.