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THE MODERATING WILL IN JOHN DUNS SCOTUS

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"Why, the isolation that prevails everywhere, above all in our age – it has not fully developed, it has not reached its limit yet. For everyone strives to keep his individuality as apart as possible, wishes to secure the greatest possible fullness of life for himself; but meantime all his efforts result not in attaining fullness of life but self-destruction, for instead of self-realization he ends by arriving at complete isolation. All mankind in our age have split into units, they all keep apart, each in his own groove; each one holds aloof, hides himself and hides what he has, from the rest, and he ends by being repelled by others and repelling them. He heaps up riches by himself and thinks, 'how strong I am now and how secure,' and in his madness he does not understand that the more he heaps up, the more he sinks into self-destructive impotence. For he is accustomed to rely upon himself alone and to cut himself off from the whole; he has trained himself not to believe in the help of others, in men and in humanity, and only trembles for fear he should lose his money and the privileges that he has won for himself. Everywhere in these days men have, in their mockery, ceased to understand that the true security is to be found in social solidarity rather than in isolated individual effort. But this terrible individualism must inevitably have an end, and all will suddenly understand how unnaturally they are separated from one another.

Fydor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Book 6, chapter 2
(The Constance Garnett translation, revised by Ralph Matlaw)

THESIS ABSTRACT

Title: "The Moderating Will in John Duns Scotus"

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The thesis examines what counts as a moral act for John Duns Scotus when he considers the two innate affections (or propensities) of the will, the affection for the advantageous (*affectio commodi*) and the affection for justice (*affectio iustitiae*). The affection for the advantageous inclines us to love an object as suitable to us. This affection tends naturally to produce excessive desires. The affection for justice inclines us to love its object for its own sake. In Scotus' various treatments of natural law, he does not indicate that the only moral motives are selfless motives. Selfless motives seem necessary only in certain circumstances. Friendship is one such circumstance. Scotus claims otherwise, however, in his various treatments of the will's two affections. We never act morally from self-interest alone – that is, on motives provided by the affection for the advantageous alone. But since we cannot long choose apart from the affection for the advantageous, living a moral life depends upon using the affection for justice to moderate (or order) the excesses of the propensity for the advantageous. The most sustained application of the will's two affections is found in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2. The first half of the thesis provides a commentary on this crucial text. We discover that moral disorder has three basic moments. The first moment is the decision to love ourselves inordinately; the second, the decision to love a particular good inordinately; the third, the decision to hate God or neighbor as threats to our unjust desires. We also discover that Scotus has two ways of explaining each of the three moments of moral disorder. He can explain them in terms of the will's two affections, but he can also explain them in terms of the will's two positive acts, the love of desire (*velle-concupiscentiae*) and the love of friendship (*velle-amicitiae*). By an act of the love of desire, we want or wish or choose an object for the sake of something else. By an act of the love of friendship, we want or wish or choose the good of an object for its own sake. This explanation better accounts for the first moment of moral disorder, in fact, than does the former. In Chapter Three, we examine the alterations that Scotus would need to make to his conception of natural law morality in order to accommodate it to the two affections. In Chapter Four, we flesh out Scotus' stipulation in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, that no sin proceeds from the affection for justice. The work done in this thesis is a necessary first step to further critical analysis of Scotus' treatment of the will's two affections.

INTRODUCTION

For Scotus two affections comprise the will. The affection for the advantageous (*affectio commodi*) is the stronger of the two and represents the natural propensity to seek happiness. It represents, in other words, the will's propensity to seek the proper perfection of our nature. The affection for justice (*affectio justitiae*) is weaker and represents the propensity to love something selflessly or altruistically. Through the affection for justice, the will seeks something for its own sake and independently of self-interest. The affection for justice inclines the will to love lesser goods honestly. It inclines the will to elicit an object in accord with right reason.

The two affections of the will never attach themselves to the same object of desire for the same reason. They never cooperate to produce a single common motivation. They represent the two basic and overarching engines of human motivation. Each has its proper end. Each has its own governing principle. Each serves as a center of attraction for whatever happens to be conducive to its pre-set end. What is more, the will cannot freely move itself to act unless it is motivated by at least one of these affections. Scotus is convinced that we are capable of acting on either affection alone and in isolation from the other. Ideally, however, the two affections should provide us with different reasons for pursuing the same object of desire. Or again, they should motivate us to pursue complementary ends.

For Scotus, a moral choice need not be reflexive. It need not necessarily refer back to the goodness and happiness of the person choosing. The will can choose on the basis of the propensity for justice alone and in a pristine isolation from our natural inclination to happiness. Thanks to the affection for justice, the will is free to elicit an act that does not regard our human nature and its exclusively self-interested concerns and preoccupations.

Scotus does not accept that we cannot help but choose our own happiness. The only thing that we cannot help but choose is goodness, in the sense that whatever we will, must itself at least appear to be good. Otherwise, we could not find it desirable and so we could not motivate ourselves to seek it.

Scotus formulates a very distinctive account of moral motivation in terms of the will's two affections. In order to fully understand his theory of moral motivation, we will be preoccupied with *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2. In this text, Scotus treats the Fall of both Lucifer and Adam. Here Scotus provides the most celebrated, as well as the most extensive concrete application of the will's two affections that he ever attempted.

The first half of the present work offers a detailed commentary on *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2. In the second half we undertake two important tasks. First of all, we explain why Scotus' conception of the two affections cannot be married to the naturalism he articulates in his various treatments of natural law without altering one or the other. We then examine the alterations that have to be made to Scotus' naturalism if we are to reconcile it to the two affections. Secondly, we take Scotus' stipulation that no moral disorder proceeds from the affection for justice and show how the stipulation presupposes a special relationship between the affection for justice and the intellect. We then examine how we actually put the affection for justice to use in moderating an excessive affection for the advantageous.

The speculative side of the latter endeavor should be admitted from the outset. In the sphere of morality, Scotus often seems to keep two related conversations going, but without ever telling us how he would definitively relate the one to the other. For example, when Scotus addresses the naturalism that underlies his treatment of natural law, he does not deny the possibility that strictly self-interested behavior could be moral behavior, neither does he assert that some strictly self-interested behavior might count as a lesser form of

moral behavior. And yet, as we shall see, there is good reason to believe that strictly self-interested behavior cannot be moral behavior, or, at the very least, not the highest form of moral behavior, given the way in which Scotus understands the will's two affections. We attempt to reconcile the differences between *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2 and certain other texts by favoring the arguments in the former. Yet Scotus himself might have reconciled the texts differently given the opportunity.

We employ *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2 as our controlling text in the interest of fleshing out Scotus' theory of moral motivation as fully as possible. This will allow us to imagine more precisely what a moral life built on Scotus' moral point of view might look like, as well as how it might be lived. This seems particularly important in Scotus' case, where so much scholarly attention is given to narrow technical concerns.

In *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, Scotus explains the existence and logical progression of moral disorder (or sin). He identifies three principal moments of moral disorder. The moral disorder of the first moment is an inordinate self-love, that of the second, an inordinate desire for a person or thing which we may not deserve to possess, perhaps either now or later. The moral disorder of the third moment is hatred – a hatred for anyone who seems to be an obstacle to the fulfillment of our unjust desires.

Scotus offers two complementary explanations of moral disorder and its three moments in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2. The first explanation appeals to the will's two positive acts of attraction, the love of friendship (*velle-amicitiae*) and the love of desire (*velle-concupiscentiae*). Through the first explanation, Scotus makes the following three points.

(1) First, he makes it clear that we never love things for their own sake. The object of friendship-love is always a person, never a thing. By 'thing', we mean every object that is not a person. Material objects are things, but so, too, are states of being, states of

character, activities, operations, properties, and so on. Scotus is convinced that only persons are lovable for their own sake.

(2) Second, we always desire things in the name of someone that we already love through an act of friendship-love. The love of desire can be directed to a person or to a thing, but every act of the love of desire presupposes an act of friendship-love. Take friendship, for example. The principal reason we want to unite ourselves to our friend is, according to Scotus, a selfless love of this person's goodness. The principal reason is not the interests and concerns we may have in common. Neither is it our own moral betterment.

(3) Third, it follows that God is not, strictly speaking, our happiness. Happiness is a state and so we cannot love it exclusively for its own sake. We always desire and pursue happiness in the name of someone we already love for his own sake. Consequently, while we are right to desire God as the most important means to our own happiness, we must never do so without desiring happiness, first and foremost, as a means to better love God for his own sake. For Scotus, the same moral obligation applies in most cases to our fellow human beings. In most cases, it is morally disordered to desire a created person as a means to our own happiness without loving that person for his own sake first and acting in a way that is true to this attachment. If a person is implicated in our behavior, then more often than not Scotus thinks we ought to treat that person as we would a friend – even if he is not, in fact, our friend.

The second explanation offers an explanation of moral disorder and its three moments in terms of the two affections of the will. The second explanation builds and expands upon the first. Here Scotus drives home the following points.

(1) First, the only moral motivations are selfless motivations. Scotus rejects a two-tier system of morality in which some exclusively self-interested behavior would count as moral behavior, although not as the highest and most noble form of moral behavior. The

exclusive provenance of selfless motivations is the affection for justice, while the exclusive provenance of self-interested motivations is the affection for the advantageous.

(2) Second, moral disorder cannot be attributed to the affection for justice. We do not necessarily fall into moral disorder every time we act exclusively on the affection for the advantageous; and yet every time we do fall into moral disorder we act exclusively on this affection. Scotus explains moral disorder, as well as each of its three principal moments, as the effect of acting exclusively on an immoderate and inordinate affection for the advantageous.

(3) Third, the affection for justice attaches us to persons, not things. This cannot be otherwise since we cannot love things selflessly. We always love things in the name of persons. Since the affection for justice always attaches us to its object for selfless reasons, it cannot attach us to things.

(4) Fourth, it follows then that happiness can be neither the object nor the end of morality. The object and end of morality is the person implicated in our behavior. Ultimately, it is God. Whenever God is implicated in our behavior, happiness must be willed as a secondary or subordinate end of our action. It must be willed as both an end in its own right and as a means to a further end. It must be willed, before all else, as a means to better loving God for God's sake. For Scotus, a similar obligation applies in most cases to created persons. In most cases, we ought to will happiness as a secondary or subordinate end whenever a rational creature is implicated in our behavior.

(5) Fifth, it is better for us, we are better moral agents, if we are consistently able to act on both affections for the will. We can act on the affection for justice alone. Whenever we do, we act for moral reasons. However, acting exclusively on the affection for justice is always a sign of imperfection. We have to act in opposition to fully half of our motivational self. We do not act wholeheartedly since we have not managed to reconcile the affection for

the advantageous to the affection for justice. This inner division is an impediment to doing the good promptly and efficiently.

(6) Sixth, we cannot build a life on the exclusive exercise of the affection for justice. Scotus is convinced that we cannot avoid willing our own happiness most of the time. We can act on the affection for justice alone from time to time. We might even act on this affection alone for brief stretches of time. Consistently acting on the affection for justice alone is, however, impossible.

(7) Seventh, consistently moderating the affection for the advantageous is our principal moral exercise. We succeed in moderating the affection for the advantageous when we order its desires and preferences to those of the affection for justice. Where the desires of the affection for the advantageous were formerly excessive or immoderate, they are now orderly. They now exist in peaceful subservience to the desires found in the affection for justice. As a result, we act on both affections and so wholeheartedly. If we can succeed in moderating the affection for the advantageous consistently, then we will succeed in building a moral life. We will possess what might be called the moderating will. On the one hand, we can speak of the moderating will as the affection for justice since we moderate the excesses of the affection for the advantageous by employing the affection for justice. On the other hand, we can speak of the moderating will as the frame of mind needed to successfully and consistently moderate the affection for the advantageous. Here possessing the moderating will means possessing the will power needed to moderate the affection for the advantageous on a consistent basis. It means possessing a morally virtuous character. Those who possess the moderating will in this second sense will habitually succeed in moderating the excesses of the affection for the advantageous.

(8) Finally, Scotus claims that the affection for the advantageous naturally tends to produce excessive desires for happiness. God has designed the affection in this way in

order to provoke a moral conflict in rational creatures. A conflict needs to arise in rational creatures between natural desire and their moral obligation to love and serve God if they are to make an honest or meritorious choice for God. A naturally excessive affection for the advantageous makes this conflict unavoidable. Furthermore, if this affection naturally tends to excess, then it cannot serve as a reliable guide to its own end. We cannot act on the affection for the advantageous alone and hope to be happy. A life lived off of this affection alone cannot help but be morally disordered. It follows, then, that we cannot hope to live either a well-ordered life or a happy life apart from the exercise of the affection for justice. Both types of life presuppose a committed selflessness in us. Scotus divorces happiness from morality in the sense that happiness is not in and of itself a moral motive. And yet the tendency of the affection for the advantageous to produce excessive desires for happiness means that the successful pursuit of happiness cannot be divorced from the pursuit of morality.

In the third chapter, we turn our attention to Scotus' denial that exclusively self-interested behavior is moral behavior. The problem here is that Scotus does not seem wedded to this denial when he speaks as a natural law moralist. There is nothing in his discussion of either suitability relations or right reason that would compel such a denial. On the contrary, when discussing both, he sounds very much like a traditional natural law moralist. He raises no explicit impediment to accepting that most of our moral behavior is self-interested. Reading these texts, we might well believe that we are morally obligated to muster selfless motivations only when the circumstances call for them. Friendship, for example, is one such circumstance. Sadly, Scotus never takes this conversation and reconciles it with his conversation about the two affections of the will.

Likewise, Scotus never attempts to reconcile the two conversations when discussing the two affections of the will. We would expect Scotus to argue that there are

circumstances in which we can act on the affection for the advantageous and act morally. In large part, this would give him a way of reconciling the two affections to the naturalism he presupposes in his treatment of natural law. But he does not explicitly make this argument. In fact, any attempt to apply the principle of charity and argue that Scotus presumes that we can act morally on the affection for the advantageous lacks sound textual support.

"If" we take *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2 as our controlling text, as we will do in this dissertation, then what would Scotus' position on natural law look like? Scotus has a problem to resolve. He needs to restrict moral motives to selfless motives and he needs to do so on naturalistic grounds. He is committed to a naturalism that obliges us to pursue our own self-interest in an orderly fashion. Human nature dictates what is suitable to it and what is not. It is in our self-interest to acquire whatever is suitable to our rational nature and to avoid whatever is not. Such an obligation appeals directly to our happiness, and so it is self-interested and, for Scotus, non-moral.

Scotus needs a naturalism that allows for two types of obligation, one non-moral and the other moral. As a natural law moralist, Scotus is convinced that the moral obligation is derived from neutrally determinable facts about the world. These facts obligate us to love and pursue them from more than our own self-interest. They obligate us to love and pursue them selflessly and for their own sake. For Scotus, these facts are persons (or rational individuals). If the circumstances call for us to act morally, then acting from strict self-interest is not enough. Even if we perform the opportune act, performing it from self-interest alone would be immoral. For Scotus, we are often called to act morally if a rational individual is implicated in our behavior.

In the fourth chapter, we turn our attention to Scotus' stipulation that no moral disorder can proceed from the affection for justice. Scotus cannot mean by this stipulation that we always perform the opportune act when we are motivated by the affection for

justice. If this were so, then acting on this affection would grant us a sort of moral infallibility. It seems right to think, rather, that the exercise of this affection cannot guarantee that the intellect will always reason to the opportune act. Scotus' point is different. Acting on the affection guarantees that we act on moral motives. It guarantees a "good will." It guarantees a proper "inner disposition" to the choice we make and to the course of action we pursue. It also guarantees that we follow a clear conscience and that we do so after having made a sincere effort to form conscience properly. If the latter were not the case, we could act on the affection for justice and act immorally. In short, acting on the affection for justice serves, at minimum, as a guarantee of our moral innocence.

Scotus' stipulation points to the importance of the attachment provided by the affection for justice. If we can exercise the affection for justice then our insight into any moral circumstance will be better than it would otherwise be. For, while the exercise of this affection cannot guarantee that we reason to the opportune act, it does improve our chances of doing so. It improves our chances because the quality of its attachment improves the quality of our understanding.

Through the affection for justice we attach ourselves selflessly to a person implicated in our behavior. We actually love that person selflessly. Making a choice on the basis of this attachment guarantees that we make a good will effort to act rightly by this person. It also attunes us to the central element in any moral circumstance. Once attuned, we are assured of making a good will effort to read, as we should, the moral circumstance in terms of its most important fact. We can better understand the moral picture before us if we can identify the rational individuals implicated in it and then relate (and subordinate) all the other elements at play in the moral picture to them. By so doing, we better understand that part of the moral picture we already recognize. We may even find our moral field of vision expanded so that we come to see parts of the moral picture that we had not seen

before – or, if we had noticed them, we had thought unimportant or even incongruous. The exercise of the affection for justice is consciousness-raising. The principal beneficiary of this consciousness-raising is the practical intellect.

If reason influences the exercise of the will, it is also true to say that the will influences what the intellect sees as good. If we exercise the affection for the advantageous exclusively, then this affection will work to keep our attention focused on our own self-interest. Eventually, our consciousness will be morally corrupted. Indeed, the content of our deliberation, as well as the practical judgments we make, will be morally corrupted. The nature and quality of its attachment separate the exercise of the affection for justice from the affection for the advantageous, so too does the end that it presents to the intellect. This affection positively influences the intellect by presenting it with particular ends that are in harmony with its ultimate end, which is the selfless love of the infinitely good, namely, God.

We close the fourth chapter with an examination of how we can succeed in moderating an excessive affection for the advantageous. We examine the various tools that may be at the disposal of the affection for justice first. The affection for justice may be able to appeal to our sensible emotions for support. It may also be able to appeal to the emotions that are found, not in the sensible appetite, but in the will. These rational emotions are semi-permanent qualities and they arise passively and in response to our actions. If well-ordered, both sets of emotions will help us do the right thing more readily and fluently. They will also encourage us to correct any excessive desires in the affection for the advantageous.

The affection for justice can also appeal to any good habits that might exist in the will. These habits are habits of choice. They are moral virtues. The moral virtues are long-lasting and stable. They remove impediments to choosing rightly and raise impediments to choosing wrongly. They provide us with motivations for acting in an orderly fashion. They

are also capacities for resisting and overcoming any and all adverse inclinations or desires. For Scotus, there are three reasons why the moral virtues are absolutely essential for "consistently" moderating the affection for the advantageous. First, the will needs good habits to consistently determine itself to its own proper object. Second, the will needs good habits if it is to take rational pleasure in action rightly. Third, the will needs good habits to enable it to act with ease. They moral virtues can serve as partial or secondary causes of an act of volition.

The intellectual virtue of prudence is another indispensable tool for "consistently" moderating the affection for the advantageous. For Scotus, the intellect deliberates not only about means to particular ends, but also about particular ends. A prudent intellect will consistently deliberate about particular ends that are in harmony with the affection for justice. It will also provide a rule for behavior that can accommodate the ends of both affections. A prudent intellect also works to conform excessive desires to right reason. Finally, the habits of judgment in the intellect resemble the habits of choice in the will in that both can serve as partial or secondary cause of an act of volition. So the will can allow the moving force of a prudent intellect to lead it to a morally virtuous act.

We close the fourth chapter with a consideration of the two general tactics that the affection for justice can utilize in moderating an excessive affection for the advantageous. The affection for justice can divert our attention from the object that is provoking our excessive desire, but without eliminating the illicit pleasure we take in the object. It can also attack the pleasure we take in desiring something excessively in the hope of eliminating it. Both tactics hang upon the ability of the affection for justice to take control of the intellect and then direct its attention. But only the second tactic is ideal. Only this tactic can be successfully employed on a consistent basis. For it alone is able to eliminate our amorous servitude to illicit pleasures and excessive desires. If successful, the second tactic succeeds

in diminishing the chances of loving or desiring an object of desire excessively in the future.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FIRST EXPLANATION OF MORAL DISORDER

All moral disorder, according to John Duns Scotus, is rooted in an inordinate self-love. Scotus' most extensive discussion of inordinate self-love takes place in the second book of the *Ordinatio*, his mature Oxford commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard.[1] Here, in connection with his treatment of Lucifer's fall, we learn that moral disorder (moral evil, or sin) reveals itself in three principal moments. The first of these moments, itself the root and the source of all the disordered acts we are capable of committing, occurs when we make a conscious decision to love ourselves more than we deserve to be loved; the second moment, when we willingly allow ourselves to be dominated by an inordinate and immoderate desire for a particular good which we desire to possess. The third and culminating moment arrives when we begin to hate God and neighbor as obstacles to our unjust desires.[2] Scotus' treatment of the fall of Lucifer in the *Ordinatio* amounts to a detailed explanation, in fact, of each of these three moments and of their interconnection.

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[1] *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2 (24-81), *Opera Omnia*, Volume VIII (Civitas Vaticana: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis), pp. 35-67. Unless other otherwise noted, all citations from Scotus are taken from this critical edition, and they are cited according to paragraph number. Scotus treats this same question from the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard in his earliest work, the *Lectura* lectures he delivered at Oxford early in his academic career, and also in one of his latest works, the *Reportatio parisiensis*. *Lectura* and *reportatio* are class notes taken by students of a master's live lectures. Normally speaking, these lecture notes were not reviewed by the master. An *ordinatio* is a work either written or dictated by the master himself. The *Sentences* of Peter Lombard is the most celebrated compilation of its kind produced in the Middle Ages. As Jean Leclercq points out in *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, 3rd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982), the schoolmen were professors and they compiled *sententia* because they "were seeking important, concise, and interesting extracts for doctrinal studies, something of value for the *quaestio* and the *disputatio*. In this way the master or student acquired a capital of arguments and proofs already conveniently ready for use" (p.182). The *sententia* eliminated the need, for example, to rifle constantly through bulky manuscripts. The other prominent intellectual culture of the Middle Ages, the monastic culture, produced a distinctive compilation of its own. The monastic *florilegia* were not compiled as aids to research, but rather as aids to spiritual reading: and so as aids to prayer.

[2] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (38). Prima ergo radix 'civitatis diaboli' fuit inordinatus amor amicitiae, quae 'radix' germinavit usque ad contemptum Dei, – in quo consummata est malitia.

Lucifer's first disordered act of will is an act of inordinate self-love (*inordinatus amor amicitiae respectu sui ipsius*).[3] According to Scotus, inordinate self-love promotes by its very nature a desire to confer good things upon ourselves in a way which is itself inordinate. In Lucifer's case, he first wishes to confer upon himself, before all other goods, his own perfect happiness.[4] Lucifer permits his will (that is, he permits himself) to be ruled (*regulo*) by an inordinate or immoderate desire for his greatest beneficial good (*illius maximi commodi*), that is, for his own perfect happiness (*maximum commodum est beatitudo perfecta*).[5] Lucifer, now loving himself in a way which is unjust, now pursuing happiness in a way which is unjust, finally begins to hate God as an obstacle to his inordinate desires.[6]

The three moments of moral disorder identified by Scotus apply, not only to the fallen angels, but to human beings, as well.[7] They account for the full trajectory of original sin among both angels and human beings, as well as for the moral turmoil of the human condition as we know and experience it.

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[3] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (38). Igitur primus actus, inordinatus, fuit actus amicitiae respectu sui ipsius... Sic patet de inordinatione simpliciter prima, quae fuit simpliciter in primo velle inordinato.

[4] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (39-40). Nunc restat videre de prima inordinatione ipsius 'velle concupiscentiae'. Et videtur ibi esse dicendum, quod primo concupivit [Lucifer] sibi immoderate beatitudinem.

[5] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40). Maximum commodum maxime appetitur a voluntate non-sequente regulam iustitiae, et ita primo, quia nihil aliud regulat illam voluntatem non-rectam nisi appetitus inordinatus et immoderatus illius maximi boni commodi; maximum autem commodum est beatitudo perfecta; ergo etc. – Et haec ratio habetur ab Anselmo *De casu diaboli* cap. 4 (quaere ibi).

[6] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (63). [E]t ex consequenti, nolendo subesse Deo, – et tandem, nolendo Deum esse, in quo tamquam in summo malo consummata videtur malitia: sicut enim nullus actus formaliter melior et quam Deus diligere, sic nec aliquis actus formaliter peior est quam Deum odire.

[7] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q.2 (38). Et hoc est quod dicit Augustinus, XIV *De Civitate Dei* capitulo ultimo [PL 41, 436]: 'Duo amores fecerunt duas civitates: civitatem Dei amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui, et civitatem diaboli, amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei'. Scotus appeals to Augustine's authority in support of his application of the first and third of moments of moral disorder to human beings. Scotus' failure to cite Augustine in support of the second moment is not insignificant. Scotus understanding of the second moment of moral disorder is bound up with his conviction that all rational creatures are endowed with a naturally excessive desire for happiness – a desire which they possess independently of the Fall. There is nothing in Augustine to support such a conviction.

In *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, Scotus offers what he believes are two complementary explanations of moral disorder and its three moments. The first explanation grows out of the conviction that moral disorder could not possibly originate in an act of aversion. The will's act of aversion cannot explain the existence of moral disorder, nor of original sin. Scotus, like other medieval masters, is convinced that every one of the will's acts of aversion (*nolle*) presupposes an act of attraction (*velle*). So the first moment of moral disorder could not have begun in the repulsion felt for what appears distasteful, neither could it have begun in the repulsion felt for what appears threatening. An act of attraction lies at the root of the first moment of moral disorder: and so at the root of all moral disorder.

Scotus identifies two distinct and ordered acts of attraction in the will: the love of friendship (*velle-amicitiae*) and the love of desire (*velle-concupiscentiae*). Briefly, the love of friendship is the act of the will through which we will an object we think of as good, while the love of desire is the act of the will through which we will an object only because we want to give it to, or confer it upon something else.[8] Now just as every act of aversion presupposes an act of attraction, so too every act of the love of desire presupposes an act of the love of friendship. Therefore, the first moment of moral disorder has to originate in one specific act of attraction, namely, an inordinate act of the love of friendship. Scotus goes on to argue that an inordinate act of the love of desire gives rise to the second moment of moral disorder, while a very blatant act of aversion (*nolle*) lies at the root of the third moment of moral disorder.

We cannot hope to live a moral life if we cannot succeed in ordering the desires which lie behind and motivate each of the will's acts of attraction. Prior to acting on our

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[8] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (34). Et est, ulterius – duplex 'velle', quod potest nominari velle-amicitiae et velle-concupiscentiae, ut dicatur 'velle amicitiae' esse illius objecti cui volo bonum, et 'velle concupiscentiae' esse illius objecti quod volo alicui alii amato.

excessive desires for the objects of both sensible and intellectual appetite, we must order them. Now since every act of the love of desire is a byproduct of an act of friendship-love, before all else we must commit ourselves to the proper ordering of our acts of friendship-love. The moderating function of the will is the treatment Scotus prescribes against any moral disorder. When the will effectively exercises its moderating function, it puts order into formerly excessive desires. It conforms to what we think is suitable in any given circumstance, and it then brings the excessive desire into line with this judgment. Moderated desires are worthy motivations.

If the moderating will is exercised effectively and consistently, a moral life will result. But leading a moral life is difficult. If the first moment of moral disorder originates in an inordinate self-love and the second in an inordinate desire for something that promises happiness, then the crucial targets of the moderating will must be the desires motivating our own acts of self-love, as well as the desires motivating our pursuit of happiness. It follows, then, that living morally demands a high degree of both self-discipline and self-sacrifice. The exercise of the moderating will always amounts to an exercise in moral asceticism.[9]

The first explanation of moral disorder in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, is brief and extremely condensed.[10] And yet it can stand on its own, offering a viable explanation of each of the three moments of moral disorder. The second explanation presupposes the content of the first explanation. It covers some twenty-five paragraphs in

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[9]Theophilus Boehner, OFM, *The History of the Franciscan School,* Part Three: Duns Scotus (St. Bonaventure, N.Y., 1943), pp. 120-24. In the attempt to portray Scotus' intellectual personality, Boehner comes to the conclusion that it is marked, among other things, by humility and asceticism. This cannot be otherwise since we tend both in our actions and in our reasoning toward nothingness: and so toward error. Boehner refers us to *Ordinatio* II, dist. 23, q. 1 (Vivès XIII, 161): *Dico igitur, quod omnis creatura potest tendere in nihil et non esse, eo quod de nihilo est, et sua actio, similiter tendit in non esse, et huiusmodi tendentia surgit necessario ex natura rei.* One of the goals of the present study is to demonstrate that humility and asceticism, understood as rigorous self-denial, strongly mark Scotus' moral theory.

[10]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (34-38).

the Vatican critical edition.[11] Scotus is clearly more interested in the second explanation than he is in the first. In fact, he seems to race through the first explanation in his rush to move onto the second. Not surprisingly, scholarly attention has tended to focus almost exclusively on the second explanation.[12] The second explanation offers an account of moral disorder and its three moments in terms of the will's two affections.[13] These affections are the affection for justice (*affectio justitiae*) and the affection for the advantageous (*affectio commodi*). The affection for the advantageous is the stronger of the two affections. Through the affection for the advantageous we are attracted to a good solely in reference to the self (the Ego) and its wants and needs – that is, in reference to our natural desire for happiness. The affection for justice represents the inclination to love something for its own sake and as good in itself, independently of self-interest.

The second explanation looks past the first explanation and its concern for the acts

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[11] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (39-63).

[12] Scotus' treatment of the two affections of the will in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, figures prominently the following articles. Allan Wolter's "Native Freedom of Will as the Key to the Ethics of Scotus" and "Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality" are collected by Marilyn McCord Adam in *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 142-62 and 181-206, respectively. Marilyn McCord Adams has written "Duns Scotus on the Will as Rational Power," *Via Scoti: Methodologica ad Mentem Joannis Duns Scoti,* Vol. II, L. Sileo (Ed.) (Rome: Antonianum, 1995), pp. 839-54. John Boler has written three influential articles. They are the following: "The Moral Psychology of Duns Scotus: Some Preliminary Questions," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990), pp. 31-56; "Transcending the Natural: Duns Scotus on the Two Affections of the Will," *The American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1993), pp. 109-26; and "An Image of the Unity of Will in Duns Scotus," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 32 (1994), pp. 23-44. Three influential articles have also been contributed by Thomas Williams. They are the following: "How Scotus Separates Morality from Happiness," *The American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 69 (1995), pp. 425-45; "The Libertarian Foundations of Scotus's Moral Philosophy," *The Thomist* 62 (1998), pp. 193-215; and "From Metaethics to Action Theory," in *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*, T. Williams (Ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 332-51.

[13] The following passage is taken from Allan Wolter's *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality* (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 1986), p. 178, – hereafter "W" followed by the page. *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 26. In voluntate secundum Anselmum assignantur duae affectiones, scilicet affectio iustitiae et affectio commodi, de quibus tractat *De casu diaboli*, capitulo decimo quarto et *De concordia*, undevigesimo, diffuse. Nobilior est affectio iusititiae quam commodi, non solum intelligendo de acquisita et infusa, sed de innata, quae est ingenita libertas secundum quam potest velle aliquod bonum non ordinatum ad se. Secundum autem affectionem commodi nihil potest velle nisi in ordine ad se, et hanc haberet si praecise esset appetitus.

of the will and fixes our attention on the motivations which lie behind the will's acts. These motivations provide the impetus the will needs to move itself to act. All our various motives for acting fall under and are organized by one or the other of the will's two affections.

The centerpiece of the second explanation is Scotus' treatment of moral motivation. Scotus' theory of moral motivation is also at work in the first explanation. However, in the second explanation, Scotus uses the two affections of the will to give full voice to this theory. The proper exercise of the affection for justice not only produces a moral life, it produces morality itself. Morality stands or falls on the affection for justice since any choice motivated by this affection is a moral choice. The ideal moral choice is not, however, the choice motivated by the affection for justice alone. Every choice based on the affection for justice alone reveals an unhealed conflict in our motivations and so in our very selves. It reveals an argument between the affection for justice and the affection for the advantageous. It tells us that one part of us is divided against another. The ideal moral choice occurs when the self-interested motives proposed by the affection for the advantageous are properly subordinated to the higher selfless (or purely altruistic) motives proposed by the affection for justice.[14]

Living a moral life, as opposed to performing discrete moral acts, rests upon the ability of the affection for justice to moderate effectively the affection for the advantageous. Simply put, the affection for justice is the "moderating will." In the effort to subordinate the affection for the advantageous to its own higher agenda, the affection for justice often

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[14] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 320-40). Scotus does not reject the classical ideal of internal harmony, although he does seem to deny the possibility of a perfect internal harmony in this life. Temperance and continence, for example, are different grades of the same moral virtue. Temperance grows out of continence and surpasses it. The continent person derives either no pleasure or a minimum of satisfaction from willing rightly. The temperate person not only derives pleasure from willing rightly, his moral virtue acts as a partial efficient cause of his free act. However, if we can never forego having to moderate the affection for the advantageous, then we can never go without experiencing some degree of inner turmoil – no matter how virtuous we may become.

confronts an entrenched resistence – one that is not easily won over. If the moderating function of the affection for justice involves subordinating or even suppressing the affection for advantageous, then here, too, we see that the moral life will necessitate, on a routine basis, a rigorous moral asceticism.

In the first half of this work, we will provide a close reading of *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2. We will examine Scotus' first explanation of moral disorder and its three moments in the first chapter. In the second chapter, we will tackle the second explanation. A thoroughgoing examination of these complimentary explanations of moral disorder will bring Scotus' theory of moral motivation fully to light. It will also fill out our understanding of "the" activity upon which moral behavior most depends. We cannot hope to live a moral life if we cannot succeed in consistently moderating our rational desire for happiness. Before all else, we must manage to establish an inner harmony between the self-interested pursuit of happiness and the selfless pursuit of the good for its own sake.

1. The Will's Two Acts of Attraction

In *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, Scotus argues that the will is capable of two positive acts.[15] Attraction is one of these, aversion, the other. Scotus then goes on to argue that the will is, in fact, capable of two distinct acts of attraction, an act of the love of friendship and an act of the love of desire. Logically speaking, every act of aversion presupposes an act of attraction. Likewise, every act of the love of desire presupposes an act of the love of friendship. Therefore, Scotus concludes that moral disorder has to originate in a disordered (or inordinate) act of the love of friendship. Furthermore, the very first disordered act of the love of friendship could not have been directed to a thing. It could

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[15] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (34-38).

only have been directed to a person. This cannot be otherwise since an act of friendship-love is never directed to things.

Moral disorder cannot grow in just any soil. It cannot root itself, for instance, in the aversion we feel toward what we may find distasteful or even harmful. For Scotus, attraction and aversion are both positive human acts. But, moral disorder, absolutely speaking, cannot originate in an aversion. Scotus never provides us with a detailed examination of human behavior, but he clearly wants to say that human behavior attests to this ordered and hierarchical relation between attraction and aversion. For him, human behavior testifies to the fact that every act of aversion or dislike necessarily presupposes an act of love in rational creatures. For the sake of convenience we will refer to this ordered and hierarchical relation between attractions and aversions as "the logic of attraction and aversion."

Given the logic of attraction and aversion, moral disorder must originate in an attraction, when after turning toward what attracts us, we begin to love that object immoderately. Lucifer does not begin to love himself inordinately, for example, either as a reaction to what disgusts him or as a reaction against what appears to threaten him. It is of the nature of this logic that we cannot dislike anything at all if we do not love something else first. If this is right, then an act of self-love must lie behind every act of self-aversion, just as an act of self-love must lie behind any excessive act of self-attraction.[16] Self-hatred, as well as inordinate self-love, exist as perversions of self-love, as perversions of our natural attraction to love ourselves. None of us can hate himself completely. At worst, we mix hatred with love. And the love always precedes the hate and gives it life.

The dependence of aversion upon attraction serves as the starting point of Scotus'

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[16] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q.2 (35). Et istorum 'actuum' patet ordo, quia omne nolle praesupposit aliquod velle: a nullo enim refugio, nisi quia non potest stare cum aliquo, quod accepto tamquam conveniens; et hoc dicit Anselmus, *De casu diaboli*, capitulo 3 [ed. Schmitt, I, 239], ponens exemplum de avaro, nummo et panne.

conception of the will. The logic of attraction and aversion is manifested in a very real distinction "in" the will itself. There are two distinct and positive acts of the will and between them a very definite order exists.[17] The first of these is the positive act of attraction (*velle*) by which the will loves or approves of an object; the second is the positive act of aversion (*nolle*) by which the will dislikes or shuns a particular object.[18] An act of *nolle* is a positive act of the will by which we freely refuse to will, or not-will, a particular object. But while we turn away, often quite spontaneously, from objects we dislike, when we love something, we turn our attention toward it and we seek to possess it.

The will loves those objects which the intellect considers suitable (*conveniens*) to the human person.[19] Those objects which the intellect considers unsuitable or distasteful (*disconveniens*) the will dislikes. What truly suits us, what we desire by nature, is what is good for us. Here to speak of good and bad is to speak of a relation between two beings: the one lacking something which by virtue of its own design it both needs and wants, and the other which is capable of satisfying this lack. The good makes actual what before was present only in potential. Apart from it, human nature (and so the human person) neither

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[17] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (34). [V]idendum est primo de ordine actuum volunatatis. Et circa hoc dico quod est in communi duplex actus voluntatis, scilicet velle et nolle: est enim nolle actus positivus, quo fugit disconveniens sive quo resilit ab objecto disconveniente; velle autem est actus quo acceptat objectum aliquod conveniens.

[18] *Lectura* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (24). [D]ico quod ille actus fuit volendi et non actus nolendi, quia omne 'nolle' praesupponit 'velle'. Licet actus nolendi sit positivus, non tamen communiter actus nolendi est primus; non nego tamen quin possit esse primus, – sed si voluntas sit in puris naturalibus, quia vult aliquid cum quo non potest nolitum, secundum illud Anselmi *De casu diaboli*: 'Avarus non vult denarium, quia vult panem, quem non potest habare simul cum denario'. Primus igitur actus voluntatis in angelo fuit actus volendi.

[19] *Quodlibetal Question* 18 (9). Et est differentia, quia illud quidem quod conveniens est alicui, dicitur ei bonum, hoc est, illi perfectio vel bonitas, sed non dicitur denominative vel accidentaliter bonum, in se. Illud autem, cui aliquid convenit, dicitur denominative bonum, eo quod habet illud quod sibi convenit. Et est denominatio quasi formae a subiecto, sicut anima dicitur 'humana', sic aliquid dicitur bonum homini, quia bonum 'humanum'; sed in secundo, e converso, est denominatio subiecti a forma, cum dicitur, 'homo est bonus secundum illud bonum suum'. Unless otherwise specified, the paragraph numbering for the *Quodlibetal Questions* follows that of Alluntis and Wolter in *God and Creatures: The Quodlibetal Questions*, translated with an Introduction, Notes, and Glossary by F. Alluntis and A.B. Wolter (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

functions well, nor to the highest degree possible. A good can be desired for its own sake or for the sake of something else: for a good either directly perfects human nature, or, by possessing it, it allows us to acquire some other good which directly perfects human nature. Consequently, a "real" good is something actually suitable (*conveniens*).[20] It is good for human beings – it is a human good.

Unlike a real good, an "apparent" good is something which is actually bad for us, but which we wrongly take to be good for us. Whether we are culpable for this error or not, it never benefits us to love or pursue an apparent good. An apparent good is bad either for all human beings – or, at the very least, it is bad for certain persons given the particular circumstances of their individual lives. A glass of poisoned water may be a good for numerous microorganisms, but it is always bad or evil for a thirsty human being. A single shot of whiskey, on the other hand, is normally thought to be bad only for the alcoholic, or for someone who is allergic to alcohol, and so on.

An object which is truly *conveniens* is consistent with our natural wants and needs and so is perfective of both human person and the human nature. An object which is truly *disconveniens* is inconsistent with our natural wants and needs and so is destructive of both the human person and human nature. Whatever truly goes against the grain of an inbuilt inclination or tendency of human nature is called bad or evil (*disconveniens*). Evil mutilates or deforms. It impairs or truncates human potential: and so the human person. Just as the body of a child has the potential to achieve a certain adult shape or form, so too a child's mind or soul has the potential to achieve a certain common and recognizable moral shape or form. Whatever stunts the realization of this potential, whether freely chosen or not, is evil. The body of an athlete in his prime provides the measure for what the human body has the potential to become, while the measure for the moral goodness we can achieve in this

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[20] *Quodlibetal Question* 18 (21).

life is found in the good person. The good person is the one who is most fully active in this life – in the choices he makes, in the way he behaves, human nature in its rational aspect is most fully present for us to observe.

The logic of attraction and aversion tells us that every act of *nolle* invariably presupposes an act of *velle*. Every aversion presupposes an attraction; every dislike, a like. When the distinction between *conveniens* and *disconveniens* is considered in the light of the logic of attraction and aversion, it follows that nothing can be disliked (*nolle*) as being distasteful (*disconveniens*), if we do not love (*velle*) love some other object which we happen to think of as being suitable (*conveniens*) first. In the context of the original sin, it follows that the first act of moral disorder had to have been directed to an object that was "really" suitable to a rational nature and so really loveable. However, this object was knowingly desired to an excessive degree and so unjustly.

Scotus believes that what we love and how we love it will effectively "determine" the quality of our dislikes. An act of dislike, for instance, which grows out of an orderly act of love – an act, that is, in which both the object and the circumstances of the act are loved properly – will also be orderly. Orderly likes generate orderly dislikes, while disorderly likes generate disorderly dislikes.[21] The logic of attraction and aversion leads unavoidably to the following conclusion. What we love and how we love it will dictate what we dislike and how we dislike it. Our likes always precede our dislikes and so determine their character. For the moral life, then, it is of paramount importance that we get our "likes" right.

We may be mistaken, of course, about what is in fact suitable for us (*conveniens*). We are able to love what should be hated and hate what should be loved. We are capable, as well, of improperly loving what we should and do, in fact, love. We can love what suits us

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[21] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (36). Nullum enim 'nolle' est primus actus voluntatis deordinatis, quia non posset habere 'nolle' nisi in virtute alicuius velle, – et si 'velle' esset ordinatum (acceptando objectum cum circumstantiis debitis), 'nolle' quod haberetur consequenter, similiter esset ordinatum.

in a way which is either excessive or defective. So not only must we learn to love what actually suits us, we must also learn to love it properly, in an orderly fashion. The quality of the love we direct to a particular object must be appropriate to that object. We must love as it deserves to be loved, neither more, neither less. Our love for it must be "just." Put differently, we must make sure that our "attachment" to good things is not disordered.

What we love and how we go about loving it lies at the very root of moral order and moral disorder in each of us.[22] More precisely, the quality of love we direct, not toward things, but toward ourselves and others lies at the very root of moral order and moral disorder in each and every one of us. This conclusion is unavoidable since Scotus wants to argue that the love of persons always precedes and gives life to the love of things. When we say 'things', we mean every object that is not a person. Material objects, activities, operations, states of being, states of character, and properties are all, for instance, things.

Our attachment to things, whether this attachment happens to be ordered or disordered, is always and only founded on our attachment to a person or persons. Just as every aversion presupposes an attraction, so too every attraction to a thing presupposes an attraction to a person. To Scotus' way of thinking, we are incapable of "choosing" things in and for themselves alone. We choose them only for the sake of someone whom we love first. It follows, then, that the root and origin of all moral disorder must be situated, not in a disordered love for a thing, but rather in a disordered love for a person.

If the desire for things presupposes the desire for persons, then we must recognize that another order exists "in" the will beside that existing between the will's acts of attraction and aversion. There must be restrictions in practice on how the will acts when it loves. The will's act of loving (*velle*) must itself be twofold. Just as there is a twofold act of the will,

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[22] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (36). Et ex isto, probato, sequitur ulterius quod similis est processus in actibus voluntatis deordinatis: nullam enim 'nolle' est primus actus voluntatis deordinatus, quia non posset habere 'nolle' nisi in virtute alicuius velle.

loving (*velle*) and disliking (*nolle*), the will's act of loving can itself be divided up into two distinct and ordered acts.[23] One act of loving involves willing an object we think of as good. Here, the will tends to (or loves) a good considered absolutely. Through this act of the will, we love an object for its own sake.[24] To this act of *velle*, Scotus gives the name *velle-amicitiae*, the love of friendship. From Scotus' treatment of Lucifer's first sin, we learn that an act of friendship-love, whether ordered or disordered, can be directed to one of only three possible objects: God, neighbor, or self.[25] That these three happen to exhaust the category of persons strongly suggests that friendship-love is directed exclusively to persons – never to things.[26]

The other act of *velle* Scotus calls *velle-concupiscentiae*. *Velle-concupiscentiae* is commonly translated as the love of desire. The love of desire is an act of the will which involves willing an object only because we want to "confer" it upon ourselves or upon something else. An object of *velle-concupiscentiae* becomes desirable when we begin to think of it as being either useful or pleasant or good for some other object. It becomes

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[23] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (34). Et est – ulterius – duplex 'velle', quod potest nominari velle amicitiae et velle concupiscentiae, ut dicatur 'velle amicitiae' esse illius obiecti cui volo bonum, et 'velle concupiscentiae' esse illius objecti quod volo alicui alii amato.

[24] *Lectura* II, dist.6, q. 2 (25). Actus volendi concupiscentiae est actus quo quis vult bonum sibi vel alteri bonum; sed actus volendi amicitiae est actus quo voluntas tendit in bonum absolute quando quid diligit se vel aliud absolute.

[25] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (37). Sequitur igitur simpliciter primus actus voluntatis inordinatus fuit 'primum velle amicitiae' respectu eius cui voluit bonum. Hoc autem objectum non fuit Deus, quia non potuit Deum inordinate – ex intensione – amare ex amicitia, nam Deus est tale amabile quod ex sola ratione sui, ut objectum est, dat completam rationem bonitatis actui perfecte intenso. Nec est verisimile quod aliquod aliud a se nimis intense dilexerit actu amicitiae: tum quia inclinatio naturalis magis inclinavit ad se quam ad aliquid aliud creatum sic amandum, – tum quia non videtur quod aliquid aliud a se 'creatum' sic intellexerit sicut se, – tum quia amicitia fundatur super unitatem (VIII *Ethicorum*) et etiam 'amicabilia ad alterum' procedent ex amicabilibus ad se ipsum (ex IX *Ethicorum*). Igitur primus actus inordinatus fuit actus amicitiae respectu sui ipsius.

[26] Aquinas, too, thinks that love is properly divided into two distinct movements or acts, the love of desire and the love of friendship *(Summa Theologica* I-II, q. 26, art. 4). Furthermore, Aquinas also seems to think that the love of friendship is directed exclusively to persons, not things. Jordan Aumann defends this conclusion in his "Thomistic Evaluation of Love and Charity," *Angelicum* 55 (1978), pp. 541-47.

desirable when we begin to see it as something which we would like to confer on or give to someone we love. By an act of friendship love we want an object for its own sake, whereas we want an object for the sake of some other object we already love by an act of the love of desire. The love of desire involves willing an object solely for the sake of something else – ultimately, for the sake of "someone" already desired by an act of the love of friendship.

Scotus accepts Aristotle's division of the good into what is either useful, delightful, or good.[27] A gift, for example, may be solely desired for the sake of the friend to whom we give it. We may love a friend not only for his own sake, but also because we find his friendship either pleasant or profitable, or both. We may even will one thing for the sake of another, but if and only if the last is willed for the sake of some person willed by an act of friendship-love. Anytime we desire an object by an act of the love of desire, whether that object be a person or a thing, we do so ultimately for the sake of someone whom we love with an act of friendship-love. The love of desire never comes first: it always follows on and presupposes an act of the love of friendship for the same person or for a different person.

There are two ways in which the order existing between acts of the love of friendship and acts of the love of desire parallels the order existing between acts of attractions and aversions. As should be clear, every act of the love of desire presupposes an act of friendship-love, just as every aversion presupposes an attraction.[28] The love of desire is just as much a byproduct of the love of friendship, as aversion is of attraction. Secondly, in both cases, beginning well is a guarantee of success in what follows. Just as an orderly attraction guarantees the orderliness of any act of aversions following on it, so too an

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[27] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (41). See also *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 2 (1155b 18-21).

[28] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (35). Et istorum 'duorum velle' patet ordo, quia concupiscentia praesupponit illud velle amicitiae: cum enim 'amatum' sit – respectu concupiti – quasi finis cui volo bonum (nam propter amatum concupisco sibi bonum, quod sibi volo), et cum finis habeat primam rationem voliti, – patet quod velle amicitiae praecedit velle concupiscentiae.

orderly act of friendship-love guarantees the orderliness any act of the love of desire following on it. If we love someone with a friendship-love which is orderly, then any act of the love of desire that flows from it will itself be orderly. But, if our friendship-love for someone is disorderly, then, of course, our love for whomever or whatever we want for the sake of this object will be disorderly, as well.[29] For the sake of convenience, we will call the ordered relation between the will's two acts of love "the logic of the two acts of attraction."

2. The Object of the First Moment of Moral Disorder

In an unqualified sense, the first possible disordered act of will, the very origin of moral disorder itself, is rooted in a disordered love of a person, not a thing. It is rooted in a disordered act of friendship-love for a person. The existence of moral disorder represents a failure of friendship. It represents a failure of friendship-love. Expressed in more picturesque terms, the fall took place at the moment angels and men consciously decided to will someone's good considered in and of itself in a way which was disordered. A sinful friendship-love is the root of all that is morally disordered in the human condition. We might even go as far as to say that the moral disorder in every individual life is built upon this same foundation.

Clearly "whom" we love and the "manner" in which we love them is matter of ultimate importance for Scotus. Nothing could be more telling in human experience. Now if a disordered act of friendship-love had to be, absolutely speaking, the very "first" disordered act of the will, then we need to ask whether this act had to be directed toward a particular

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[29] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (36). [E]t si 'velle' esset ordinatum (acceptando obiectum cum circumstantiis debitis), 'nolle' quod haberetur consequenter, similiter esset ordinatum; eodem modo, si velle amicitiae esset ordinatum, velle concupiscentiae consequens illud, esset ordinatum, – nam si ordinate amo illud cui amo bonum, ordinate volo quod concupsico sibi cui volo bonum.

person. As we have already mentioned, Scotus thinks that an act of friendship-love, whether this act is ordered or disordered, can be directed toward one of only three possible candidates: God, neighbor, or the self. If so, the following question presents itself: Could Lucifer, or Adam, for that matter, have directed his first disordered act friendship-love toward any one of these three objects? Or could he have directed this act toward only one of the three?

For both angels and men, the object of the very first disordered act of friendship-love, the original sin, was almost certainly the self. Scotus argues against the possibility that the object of this act could have been either God, or a neighbor, or, more specifically, a friend. Here in full is the text in which he discusses this question:

> It follows, then, that the first inordinate act of the will was simply 'the first [inordinate] act of friendship-love' that he directed toward someone to whom he wished well. This object was not God, however, as [Lucifer] was not able to love God inordinately, that is, too intensively, through an act of friendship-love. For God is so loveable that solely on account of the object he is, he confers the complete perfection of goodness to a perfectly intensive act. Neither does it seem likely that [Lucifer] loved any other thing but himself by an inordinate act of friendship-love. First of all, natural inclination inclined him more to himself than it did to any other creature; secondly, it does not seem that he could have understood any other creature as well as he understood himself. Furthermore, [it is unlikely that Lucifer first loved any other creature but himself by an inordinate act] because friendship is built on unity (*Ethics*, Bk. VIII), and also because 'the amicables for another' are outgrowths of the amicables for one's self (from *Ethics*, Bk. IX). Therefore, the first inordinate act was an act of friendship-love toward himself.[30]

God is so loveable (*tale amabile*) that he could not have been the object of the first disordered act of friendship-love. God cannot be loved either excessively or immoderately through an act of friendship-love. God is goodness itself, infinite goodness, and infinitely

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[30] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (37). Sequitur igitur simpliciter primus actus voluntatis inordinatus, fuit 'primum velle amicitiae' respectu eius cui voluit bonum. Hoc autem objectum non fuit Deus, quia non potuit Deum inordinate – ex intensione – amare ex amicitia, nam Deus est tale amabile quod ex sola ratione sui, ut objectum est, dat completam rationem bonitatis actui perfecte intenso. Nec est verisimile quod aliquid aliud a se nimis intense dilexerit actu amicitiae: tum quia inclinatio naturalis magis inclinavit ad se quam ad aliquid aliud creatum sic amandum, – tum quia non videtur quod aliquid aliud a se 'creatum' sic intellexerit sicut se, – tum quia amicitia fundatur super unitatem (VIII *Ethicorum*), et etiam 'amicabilia ad alterum' procedunt ex amicabilibus ad se ipsum (ex IX *Ethicorum*). Igitur primus actus inordinatus fuit actus amicitiae respectu sui ipsius.

loveable as such.[31] God deserves to be loved most of all, first and foremost, for whom he is, for his own sake. And he deserves to be loved most of all apart from any hope we may have of benefitting from him and apart from any friendship with him. According to Scotus, rational creatures even possess a natural virtue inclining them to love God most of all, not only as their final end, but also as the highest good.[32] We can and ought to love God more than we love ourselves, even most of all. We must do so even if we should need God's grace in order to do so in this life.[33]

Our love for God fails only by being deficient. God can be loved less than he deserves; God can even be hated. But God cannot be loved too much. We cannot direct an inordinate act of friendship-love toward God since we cannot love God, as a friend, too much.[34] Among all those we can love by an act of friendship-love, Scotus believes that this can be said of God alone. In brief, then, since Scotus clearly thinks that the first disordered act of will failed, not through deficiency, but rather through excess. It follows that God could not have been the object of the first disordered act of the will.

The first disordered act of the will involves an alteration in the way we love someone.

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[31] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (37).

[32] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 426). Haec virtus distincta est a fide, quia actus euis 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. Hance itaque virtutem perficientem voluntatem inquantum habet affectionem iustitiae voco "caritatem."

[33] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 443-44). In our present state, grace might be required to love God more than we love ourselves. And, while Scotus is quite confident that we can love God most of all, he is reluctant to affirm we can do so apart from grace in our present fallen state. It may very well be that human nature through the natural exercise of its own powers is only capable of loving God most of all in its original just state (*ex statu naturae institutae*). If this happens to be the case, then God can be loved most of all only through the divinely infused habit of charity. Charity (supernatural love) would then provide the needed connection, the needed common ground between God and us. In recognition of its divine origins, Scotus calls the friendship with God which grows out of charity a super-friendship (*superamicitia*).

[34] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q.2 (37).

From loving a person properly and in an orderly fashion, we come to love that same person inordinately. Perhaps, Scotus' reasoning here is that we cannot begin to love someone "less" than he deserves without first loving someone else "more" than he deserves. If God was the object of the first disordered act of the will, then a transition would have taken place from loving God properly to loving God deficiently. If the rationale for such a transition is to have the proper foundation, then loving something else inordinately must have provoked this devaluation of God. Whenever we love someone less than before, whether we are justified in doing so or not, some act of aversion (*nolle*) must be involved. Loving a friend less than we did before would seem to imply that we now dislike him – or, at least, that now we dislike him more than we did before. But the logic of attraction and aversion means that the "first" disordered act of will cannot involve an aversion, not even in part.

Scotus also rejects the possibility that the first inordinate act of friendship-love could have been directed toward any created person other than the self. He supports this claim by very briefly offering two reasons against the possibility that another created person could have been the object of such an inordinate act of will.[35]

First of all, it is virtually impossible that Lucifer could have directed his first inordinate act of friendship-love toward a neighbor since angelic nature inclines its possessor more toward himself than toward any other creature. The same natural inclination has been built into human nature. We can love a neighbor or a friend more than he deserves to be loved or less; yet we are not naturally inclined to love him more than we love ourselves, much less most of all.[36] Every rational creature is naturally inclined to love God most of all. He can and

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[35] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (37).

[36] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 28 (W, 453). Scotus defines who our 'neighbor' is in openly theological terms. A neighbor (our *proximus)* is anyone God would be pleased to befriend. God cannot be our neighbor, but we determine who is or who is not our neighbor by reference to him. A neighbor is someone whose love pleases God – or, at the very least, someone whose love does not displease God. Those whose love God does find displeasing are not our neighbors. The devils fall

ought to do just this. But the nature of every rational creature inclines him to love himself more than any other rational creature. In part, this may simply mean that each of us is responsible for himself in a way which is unique. Within the limits of our freedom, each of us is uniquely entrusted to himself. Each of us makes the free choices that shape his life and forms his character. The responsibility we bear for the person we are – both for the choices we make and for the actions we take – is unique. So there is something appropriate about being more preoccupied with our own good than with the good of our neighbors or friends.

Now a natural inclination to love ourselves more than any neighbor or friend does not compel us to love ourselves more than we deserve. Neither would it compel us to love others less than they deserve. Inclination is not, after all, determination. We are free to act on our predispositions or not. But, that being said, natural inclination can be extremely difficult to resist. And this seems to be Scotus' point. The weight of natural inclination is massive. It persistently and forcefully directs every single rational creature toward his own happiness, toward the fulfillment of his nature. Both angelic nature and human nature directs its bearer toward the good which he is meant or designed to accomplish, as well as toward the state in which this good shall be fully and concretely effected.[37] The Scholastics called this good our intrinsic end (our *finis operis*). Given this, natural inclination makes it very difficult, even in normal circumstances, to love a neighbor or friend inordinately. Indeed, natural inclination would seem to make it extremely easy for us to love ourselves more than we deserve – and, as a consequence, everyone else less than he deserves. We might argue that human experience offers ample evidence of how easily we fall into the

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into this camp, so do the damned, and so do those fellow pilgrims (*viatores*) whose blindness to God in this life is incorrigible. We ought not to will that these should love God. However, since we never know in this life whose moral disorder (or sin) is incorrigible and whose it not, we are obligated to will that every person love God, on the condition that God would want his love, whether now or later.

[37] *Quodlibetal Questions* 13 (8-11).

habit of doing just this.

The logic of attraction and aversion provides further justification for such a conclusion. If we are more naturally attracted to ourselves than we are to others, then this natural predisposition makes it highly likely that, if an inordinate attraction arises, its object will be the self, and not another creature. Such an inordinate attraction will breed egoists. What is more, since a disordered attraction gives rise to a disordered aversion, it follows that once we love ourselves too much, then we cannot help but dislike, in extreme cases, even hate, those among our friends and neighbors who seem to oppose our exaggerated claims. Inordinate self-love will necessarily drag some of our friends and neighbors into the circle of those whom we find distasteful or harmful (*disconveniens*).

The logic of the two acts of attraction also applies here. Our natural disposition to love ourselves more than other creatures means that we are more likely to direct an inordinate act of the love of friendship toward ourselves, rather than toward our fellow human beings. Now an inordinate act of friendship-love makes any act of the love of desire that springs from it, inordinate. So loving ourselves too much makes it practically impossible for us not to desire our own advantage, our own happiness, too much – and at the expense of others, if need be. An inordinate self-love makes the will unrighteous; and an unrighteous will is more easily ruled or driven (*regulat*) by excessive desires.[38]

Scotus' second reason for believing that no other creature, generally speaking, could have been the object of the first inordinate act of friendship-love turns on a question of knowledge. Lucifer, and presumably Adam, would have understood himself better than any other created person before they fell. Certainly, each would have been better

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[38] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40). Maximum commodum maxime appetitur a voluntate non-sequente regulam iustitiae, et ita primo, quia nihil aliud regulat illam voluntatem non-rectam nisi appetitus inordinatus et immoderatus illius maximi boni commodi; maximum autem commodem est beatitudo perfecta; ergo etc. – Et haec ratio habetur ab Anselmo *De casu diaboli* cap. 4 (quaere ibi).

acquainted with his own inner life than with that of another creature. Accordingly, each would have probably loved himself more than any other creature.

In the late *Reportatio parisiensis*, Scotus tells us that the more perfectly we know another person, the more efficaciously we desire (or will) him, all things being equal.[39] What is more, in the same question from the *Reportatio parisiensis* Scotus adds that Lucifer enjoyed an "intuitive cognition" of himself (*intuitive cognoscit se*). Adam would have enjoyed an intuitive cognition of himself, as well. But, while Adam had the potential to enjoy an intuitive cognition of others, he might not have been able to exercise this potential before the Fall. Lucifer, on the other hand, is incorporeal. He would have certainly enjoyed an intuitive cognition of other rational individuals. He would have known, therefore, that no other created person was either greater and more deserving of love than he.[40] Consequently, he would have rightly loved himself more than any other creature: and so it would have been virtually impossible for him to fall by loving another creature inordinately.

It seems right to think that, "if" the first inordinate act of friendship-love could have been directed toward a neighbor, then it would have been directed toward a very special sort of neighbor, that is, toward a friend. We seldom love strangers or even acquaintances immoderately. And, normally, we do not begin to love another person excessively if we do not "already" know and love that person intimately -- if that person, in other words, is not "already" a friend. Scotus offers two specific reasons for rejecting the possibility, however, that a friend could have been the object of the very first inordinate act of friendship-love.[41]

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[39] *Reportatio parisiensis* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (Vivès XXII, 619).

[40] *Reportatio parisiensis* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (Vivès XXII, 619). Nullum aliud a se habet tantam amicabilitatem ad ipsummet, quam Angelus in se; tum quia quantum quis perfectius intelligit aliquid, efficacius vult illud, caeteris paribus. Sed primus Angelus intuitive cognoscit se, et nihil aliud a Deo fuit amabile.

[41] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (37).

In asserting these two reasons, Scotus effectively asserts that the very nature of friendship counts against the possibility that a friend could have been the object of the first inordinate act of friendship-love. (1) First of all, friendship is built on unity (*amicitia fundatur super unitatem*). (2) Secondly, the friendly feelings we have for another (*amicabilia ad alterum*) are an outgrowth (*procedent*) of the friendly feelings we have for ourselves, for our own selves.

Scotus' understanding of friendship, like the two reasons just cited, bears a heavy debt to Aristotle's celebrated account of friendship in Books VIII and IX of the *Nicomachean Ethics.* The critical edition of the *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, explicitly links Scotus' first reason to a passage from the sixth chapter of Book VIII.[42] Here Aristotle argues that perfect (or true) friendship is something extremely rare by comparison with the relative omnipresence of the two inferior forms of friendships: the friendship of pleasure and the friendship of utility.[43] These inferior forms of friendship counterfeit true friendships. Each is founded upon the pleasure or utility that we can hope to gain from the other.[44] In friendships of pleasure and utility, we do not love our friend in himself, for whom or what he is, and independently of our own self-interest. Rather, we love our friend for some quality of

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[42]*Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 6 (1158a 10-13). "It is not possible to have many friends in the full meaning of the word friendship, any more than it is to be in love with many people at once (love indeed seems to be an excessive state of emotion, such as is naturally felt toward one person only)." (Here as elsewhere, Rackham's translation, as given in the Loeb Classical Library edition of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is used).

[43]*Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, chs. 2-5. Aristotle argues that true friendship exists only among the virtuous. Among the three possible motives for loving another – goodness, pleasure, and utility – goodness alone provides the proper soil for true friendship. Aristotle usually refers to true friendship as the friendship of virtue (or good character). Friendships of pleasure or utility are not friendships in the strict sense of the term. Aristotle calls them friendships only because not doing so would clash with popular thought and speech. By calling them friendships, he also acknowledges the fact that each displays some – though never all – of the marks that distinguish a true friendship.

[44]*Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 3 (1156a 6-24).

his which is merely "accidental" to his character.[45] We love him as a "means" to getting at our own personal advantage. The minute he stops serving this end, we go our separate way.

A perfect friend, on the other hand, is someone who is prepared to act in the best interest of his friend. Perfect friendship presupposes something much more permanent and lasting than an accidental quality. It presupposes the good moral character of friends.[46] For Aristotle, only the virtuous can even hope to be friends in the strictest and fullest sense of the word. Only they can hope to muster – on a rational and consistent basis – the motivation which makes true friendship possible. A true friend desires his friend's good, promotes it by his actions, and does so for his friend's sake (ἐκείνου ἕνεκα).[47] A true friend is virtuous and, while he is not prepared to sacrifice his virtue for his friend, he is prepared to put his happiness, even his life, at risk for his friend.[48] Friendship is stronger even than death. It is stronger than our instinct for self-preservation.

Scotus explicitly links his first reason to Book VIII of the *Nicomachean Ethics.*[49] The

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[45]*Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 3 (1156b 7-15). We can wish a friend's good either accidentally, or in respect of his goodness, or for his own sake.

[46]*Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 9 (1169a 18- 1169b 2). Unlike inferior or secondary friendships, friendships of virtue are not easily broken off. A true friendship might end, for instance, if two friends lose contact, or if their interests changed, or if one of them were to lose his virtue. Indeed, a perfect friend will remain a friend even when it costs him dearly.

[47]*Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 2 (1156a 1-5), ch. 3 (1156b 25-33), ch. 4, (1157b 14-25). In Book IX, ch. 4 (1166a 1-18), Aristotle identifies six important marks of friendship: (1) friends must have enough in common; (2) mutual goodwill and affection must exist between them; (3) they must desire to share in each other's joys and sorrows; (4) they must desire to know each other better and to spend time together; (5) they must want to see each other live and keep on living; and (6) they must desire their friend's good, whether real or apparent, and promote it by their actions, and they must do so for their friend's sake (ἐκείνου ἕνεκα). The sixth mark is the distinguishing mark of the friendship of virtue. It is never found in friendships of pleasure or utility.

[48]*Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 8 (1169a 5 - 1169b 3)

[49]*Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 6.

editors of the critical edition also refer us to the last chapter of Book IX.[50] For Aristotle, every type of friendship, whether perfect or inferior, testifies to the fact that friends copy or imitate each other. Friends increasingly resemble each other as their friendship grows and develops. Aristotle compares friends to schoolchildren with their wax tablets. As a child copies what is written on another's tablet onto his own, so a friend takes the traits which he admires in his friend and engraves them into his own character. As a child erases what displeases other children from their own tablets, a friend tends to score those traits out of his character which displease his friend. Friendship changes the way a friend acts toward himself. A friend tends to become what he beholds with satisfaction in his friend. A friend holds his friend in such high regard that he changes himself in order to become more like him. As Aristotle puts it, a friend is another self – an ἄλλος αὐτός in Greek, an *alter ego* in Latin.[51]

The "imitative" nature of behavior among friends has disastrous consequences for the vicious. The more each come to resemble the other, the more debased each of them grows. Not so for the virtuous. Virtuous friends correct each other's faults. They actually become more virtuous by putting their friendship into practice. The virtuous person, who is good in himself, is thereby good for his friend. He knows what goodness is and so he knows

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[50] *Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 12 (1171a 10-13). "Thus the friendship of inferior people is evil, for they take part together in inferior pursuits [being unstable,] and by becoming like (ὁμοιούμενοι) each other are made positively evil. But the friendship of the good is good, and grows with their intercourse. And they seem actually to become better by putting their friendship into practice, and because they correct each other's faults, for each takes the impress (ἀπομάττονται) from the other of those traits in him that give him pleasure – whence the saying: "Noble deeds from noble men."" The Greek word ἀπομάττονται comes from ἀπομάσσω, meaning to take an impression of or from, to copy or imitate.

[51] *Nicomachean Ethics*, IX, ch. 4 (1166a 30-33). "It is therefore because the good man has these various feelings toward himself, and because he feels toward his friend in the same way as towards himself (for a friend is another self), that friendship also is thought to consist in one or other of these feelings, and the possession of them is thought to be a test of a friend."

what to wish for his friend.[52]

Before Lucifer and Adam fell, they were both virtuous. All their friends would have been virtuous, too. Every one of their friendships would have been properly ordered. It seems practically impossible, then, that the first inordinate act of friendship love could have been directed toward a friend. Lucifer and, presumably, Adam, as well, would have known that he could not hope to "better" his friend by loving him inordinately. They could not have benefitted their friend by loving him inordinately. What is more, they should have known that a virtuous friend would not be disposed to accept their disordered love, if offered. If the will's first sinful act had been directed toward a friend, it would have had the odd effect of ending or, at least, damaging and imperiling, the very friendship it had hoped to further strengthen and intensify. If friendship is built upon unity or oneness of the other with the self, loving a friend inordinately effectively weakens, perhaps even ends, this unity.

Let us now consider Scotus' second reason for rejecting the possibility that a friend could have been the object of the very first act of friendship-love. The high regard in which we hold our friend makes it virtually impossible that the first inordinate act of the love of friendship could have been directed toward a friend. So, too, does the high regard which a friend must have for himself. Virtue is something earned, and the virtuous should rightly take pride in their achievement. What is more, becoming virtuous involves loving ourselves rightly. It involves loving ourselves enough to want to be virtuous. Friendship is imitative in the sense that a true friend works to develop the virtues he admires in his friend. But, importantly, there is also a sense in which friendship begins in the self and moves outward from there. If we do not love ourselves enough, if our self-love is not healthy enough, then we cannot befriend others since we have not first befriended ourselves. In other words,

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[52]*Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 3 (1156b 7-25). See also *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 4 (1157b 1-10) and VIII, ch. 13 (1162b 7-10).

friendship cannot exist apart from greatness of soul – it cannot exist, that is, apart from the virtue of magnanimity.[53]

Scotus' second reason rests on the claim that the friendly feelings we have for a friend are outgrowths of the friendly feelings we feel for ourselves.[54] In the critical edition of *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, this claim is linked to that section of Book IX of the *Nicomachean Ethics* devoted to the connection between friendship and self-love.[55] For Aristotle, the virtuous person not only loves himself to a high degree, he "ought" to love himself most of all.[56] He ought to love himself most of all since the love we owe a friend is a direct function, according to Aristotle, of the contribution he makes to our own moral advancement (or moral betterment). Reason obliges us to love the person – the friend – who best promotes our own virtue more than any other. This person is our best friend, and we ought to love our "best friend" most. Accordingly, reason obligates us to rank our friends and the love we owe them according to how well each serves our virtue. We owe our greatest debt of love and gratitude to our best friend and so we must love him most of all – even if he should be less virtuous than another friend.

For Aristotle, no one can be a better friend to the good person (to the good person's

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[53]*Nicomachean Ethics* II, ch. 7 (1107b 22- 1108a 9); IV, ch. 3 (1123b 1- 1125a 16); IX, ch. 8 (1168b 12 - 1169a 18).

[54]The same point is made in *Reportatio parisiensis* II, dist. 6, q.2 (Vivès XXII, 619). Tum, quia 9. *Ethicorum, cap. 8. Amicabilia ad alterum accipiuntur ex amicabilitate ad se*; igitur ex amicabilitate ad se, est amicabilitas ad alterum.

[55]*Nicomachean Ethics* IX, chs. 4-9. The critical edition of *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (37), refers us explicitly to passages from chapters 4 (1166a 1-2) and 8 (1168b 1-10) of Book IX.

[56]*Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 8 (1168b 1-1169a 7): "For we admit that one should love one's best friend most; but the best friend is he that, when he wishes a person's good, wishes it for that person's own sake, even though nobody will ever know it. This condition is most fully realized in a man's regard for himself, as indeed are all the other attributes that make up a definition of a friend; for it has been said already that all the feelings that constitute for others are an extension of regard for self. Moreover, all the proverbs agree with this; for example, 'Friends have one soul between them,' 'Friends' goods are common property,' 'Amity is equality,' 'The knee is nearer than the shin.' All of these sayings will apply most fully to oneself; for a man is his own best friend. Therefore he ought to love himself most."

virtue) than the good person himself.[57] The good person is his own best friend. Indeed, Aristotle goes as far as to claim that we best understand what friendship is, as well as how its "obligations" should be fulfilled, by directing our attention to the way in which the good person cares for himself.[58] The best "measure" of friendship is found in the way the virtuous person acts toward himself. If the distinguishing mark of true friendship is the ability of a friend to desire the other person's good, to promote it by his actions, and to do so for the other person's sake (ἐκείνου ἕνεκα) – then what friend could better fulfill this obligation toward the good person than the good person himself? He can devote more time and energy to his own cause than can any friend. His own virtue makes him more single-mindedly devoted to his own virtue than any friend could be. No other friend could be, so to speak, "closer" his own moral goodness than the good person himself.[59] The virtuous person is in good company with himself. He can fail himself in many ways, but he certainly never leaves his own side. And, as already noted, there is something appropriate about the virtuous being preoccupied with their own desires and interests, with their own goodness. In their case, the self's devotion to its own best interests has the best chance of bearing good fruit.

Aristotle builds friendship, in part, on the unity of the other with the self. He seems to imply that the more another is "united" to the self, the more he is treated like the self, the more he is loved. Does this mean, however, that we can never love another as much as we love ourselves? If profound alterations are not made to Aristotle's understanding of

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[57] *Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 4 (1166a 30-35). This appears problematic given the role Aristotle assigns to mutuality or reciprocity in friendship. Aristotle is aware of the oddity of saying that we can be our own friend, but he decides to defer examining the question.

[58] *Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 4 (1166a 1- 1166b 30).

[59] *Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 8 (1168b 1-10).

friendship, Scotus fears the answer is 'Yes'.[60]

In the following section, we will look at the alterations Scotus felt compelled to make in order to insure that we are not bound to love ourselves most of all.

3. Friendship, Lovability, and the Self

As we know, the object of the first inordinate act of the friendship-love was probably not a friend. And yet a precise understanding of what makes this unlikely is crucial to our purposes. Scotus' theory of moral motivation is heavily indebted to Aristotle's treatment of friendship in books eight and nine of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Indeed, one of the best ways of appreciating Scotus' theory of moral motivation is to compare and contrast his understanding of friendship with that of Aristotle.

Scotus believes that Aristotle errs when he makes the self's relationship with itself the "essential" measure of every kind of friendship. Aristotle believes that the good person's relationship with himself provides the essential measure of true friendship. What is more, Aristotle also seems to make the self's relationship with itself the essential measure of inferior friendships. After all, at the root of any inferior friendship, no matter whether it is a friendship of pleasure or a friendship of utility, we unearth motivations which are profoundly egocentric. In friendships based exclusively on mutual benefit and mutual advantage, no friend, if he is rational, could love, or could be prepared to love, his friend more than himself.

According to Scotus, Aristotle errs when he fails to recognize the existence of other

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[60]Scotus is concerned that the measured (that is, other selves) can never be considered more perfect (or more loveable) than the measure (that is, the self) [*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 422)]. If Aristotle is right about friendship, he fears that the commandment to love our neighbor as we love ourselves, for example, has to be read as an implicit acknowledgment of our inability to love another more than we love ourselves [*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 29 (W, 454)].

types of true friendship than the one he actually singles out. Aristotle fails to see that "true" friendship is built "principally" on goodness – and not on the self's relationship with itself.[61] A friend is loveable because he returns our love; he is even more loveable because he himself is morally upright (*honestas*).[62] For Scotus, friendship presupposes an object which is good and which is worthy of being loved. Goodness in the beloved (in a friend) provides the very root and cause of being loveable (*prima ratio amabilis*).[63] In other words, a person's lovability (*amabilitatem*) is primarily a function of moral goodness.

Now a person is morally good because he is morally upright (*honestas*) or morally excellent (*excedentia*).[64] And we find (or ought to find) moral uprightness both beautiful and compelling. Accordingly, Scotus speaks of two concurrent conditions in a loveable object (*in obiecto amabili*): goodness (*bonitas*) and unity (*unitas*).[65] To be united with any friend is to be united "principally," not to whatever interests and concerns we may have in common, but to his moral goodness. Consider the angels who did not fall. They moderated their desire for perfect happiness. This act was perfect for through it they came to better love God for

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[61] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27. (W, 446). Honestas quippe in diligibili et redamatio in delecto sunt conditiones per se in diligibili. Sed aequalitas in istis est conditio concomitans, non perfectionis.

[62] If Aristotle fails, he does so in spite of the tremendous emphasis that he places on the role of virtue in friendship. As we have seen, he makes virtue the *sine qua non* condition for the very possibility of friendship. Virtue is the very reality which gives a friend the opportunity to act, on a rational and consistent basis, in the best interest of his friend.

[63] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 444). Immo [caritas] non perfectior esset si redamaret; Deus autem habet redamationem et honestatem sive amabilitatem excellentius, et ad ipsam potest esse amicitia ut dicatur superamicitia. Et si arguatur quod aequalitas est ratio amicitiae, verum est supposita honestate quae est prima ratio amabilis; aequalitas est ratio amicitiae stricte sumptae, sed excedentia est magis ratio habitus similis vel perfectioris, quam sit amicitia; talem in proposito dico caritatem.

[64] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 444). Et si arguatur quod aequalitas est ratio amicitiae, vero est supposita honestate quae est prima ratio amabilis; aeqalitas est ratio amicitiae stricte sumptae, sed excedentia est magis ratio habitus similis vel perfectioris, quam sit amicitia; talem in proposito dico caritatem.

[65] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 444). Cum arguitur ibi unitate dico quod duae sunt conditiones concurrentes in obiecto amabili, scilicet bonitas et unitas et licet quandoque unitas [ad seipsum] superet unitatem [ad alterum], bonitas tamen ex alia parte recompensat.

God's own sake.[66] First and foremost, God ought be loved for his own sake on account of his supreme lovability. Only when this moral obligation is met can we legitimately proceed to love God for our own sake. That is, if we meet this moral obligation, we can then legitimately desire to be united perfectly to him. In addition, we can legitimately desire God as a means to our own perfect happiness.[67] As we proceed, it will become increasingly clear that the priority of goodness over both unity and happiness is crucial to Scotus' theory of moral motivation.

Scotus alters Aristotle's understanding of friendship. These alterations diminish the role that similarity has to play in a "true" friendship.[68] Feeling united to another demands that we are similar in certain important and fundamental ways. Aristotle speaks, therefore, of friendship as necessitating an adequate fund of common desires and concerns.[69] In his

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[66]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (62). Et si obicias 'ergo nollo modo bene appetebant sibi beatitudinem, sed tantum bene moderabantur illud appetere', – respondeo quod habere actum perfectum appetendi bonum sibi, ut per illum magis ametur obiectum in se, hoc est ex affectione iustitiae, quia unde amo aliquid in se, inde volo aliquid in se. Et ita boni potuerunt appetere beatitudinem, ut – habentes illam – perfectius amarent summum bonum: et iste actus concupiscendi beatitudinem, esset meritorius, quia non utitur 'fruendo' sed fruitur est, quia bonum quod concupisco mihi, ad hoc concupisco ut plus amem illud bonum in se.

[67]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 29 (W, 456). Hoc etiam confirmatur, quia pensatis rationibus bonitatis et unitatis, quae sunt rationes delectionis et primo bonum infinitum in quo est perfectissima ratio bonitatis, occurit in seipso alia ratio maxima, scilicet unitas, quae est perfecta identitas. Quilibet enim naturaliter inclinatur ad dilectionem sui post bonum infinitum. Inclinatio naturalis est semper recta; ergo, etc.

[68]Friendship is one of the most privileged connections we can experience with another person. We often appeal to figurative language in the effort to capture what makes this connection special. We speak of being "closer" to our friends than to others; we speak of our friends a being "a part" of us. We identify with a friend; and he, with us. A friend somehow lives within the circle of the self and its desires, concerns, and values. So it seems right to think that friends would have to resemble each other in some non-trivial way.

[69]This represents the first of the six marks of friendship identified in *Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 4 (1166a 1-18). If two people do not have enough in common, then each will remain isolated in his individuality, in his own personal ghetto. The fact that some friendships admit a wider disparity than others, simply tells us that no precise limit can be fixed *a priori* for the gap that may exist between two friends (see also *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 2 (1156a 1-5). This does not mean, however, that all disparities are, in principle, bridgeable. No friendship is possible between two people if the disparity between them is sufficiently wide – no matter whether the disparity dividing them boils down to differences of lifestyles, of sentiment, of education, of wealth, and so on (*Nicomachean Ethics*, VIII,

turn, Scotus also speaks of friendship as taking place between equals in some way or other (*inter aequales aliquo modo*).[70] For Scotus, too, friendship takes place between two individuals who are "sufficiently" similar and in non-trivial ways. However, given the role he assigns to goodness (or lovability) in friendship, Scotus can accept a lower threshold of similarity than Aristotle.

This is clearly the case with respect to friendship with God. Aristotle considers the extreme disparity between God and creatures and argues that this extreme disparity makes friendship impossible.[71] Scotus argues that the extreme excellence of God's goodness can "compensate" (*recompensat*) for the minimum of similarity (*aequalitas*) that exists between God and any one of us.[72] The extreme nature of God's goodness somehow makes up for the differences between us, licensing friendship where friendship would otherwise be impossible.[73]

The alterations that Scotus makes to Aristotle also diminish the role played by the

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ch. 4, 1157b 14-20).

[70] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 422). See also *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 444).

[71] *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, ch. 7 (1158b 32 - 1159a 6). See *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 422): [S]ed secundum Philosophum VIII *Ethicorum*, c. 7 [1159a 4-8], non est amicitia ad Deum, quia Deus improportionabiliter excedit; et talis excessus prohibet amicitiam secundum eum, quia ipsa est inter aeqales aliquo modo.

[72] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 444). Deus autem habet redamationem et honestatem sive amabilitatem excellentius, et ad ipsum potest esse amcitia ut dicatur superamiciatia... Cum arguitur ibi de unitate dico quod duae sunt conditiones concurrentes in obiecto amabili, scilicet bonitas et unitas et licet quandoque unitas [ad seipsum] superet unitatem [ad alterum], bonitas tamen ex alia parte recompensat.

[73] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 443-44). Scotus believes that God can indeed interact with us and we, with him. The measureless gap existing between God and us can be bridged through the mutual exchange of love. The mutual exchange of love makes friendship between God and us possible. It can establish a real connection between God and us. A friend returns his friend's love, and he desires things for his friend which are similar in some way or other to what he desires for himself. For Scotus, God is the sort of agent who can both receive our love and return it. In this way, Scotus affirms the existence of a common ground for intelligent interaction, even conversation, between agents of very different orders. Unfortunately, Scotus affirms this common ground without explaining either how the line of communication between us is possible or how it might function in practice.

self in certain types of true friendship. For Scotus, it is wrong to think that the self's relationship with itself is the essential measure of every type of true friendship. On the contrary, he insists that, generally speaking, we need only acknowledge that the self's relationship with itself (its love for itself) serves as the point of recognition for every friendship.[74] We could not befriend another if we did not love ourselves first. But we only "see" a friend when we find ourselves directing the same (or similar) friendly feelings toward him as those we feel for ourselves. We only "see" a friend when we find ourselves desiring the same (or similar) goods for him as those we desire for ourselves. We feel united to a friend only when we are consciously able to recognize that we regard him and treat him in a way which resembles how we regard and treat ourselves.

A friend is, as Aristotle says, like another self (ἄλλος αὐτός). If the self's relationship with itself is merely the point of recognition for a friendship, then Scotus can acknowledge that a friend is another self without thereby having to concede that we always love ourselves more than we love others. Self-love is a precondition for a friendship; but it need not be a limiting condition. Scotus can stave off such an unflattering possibility since he builds friendship "principally" on the goodness (or lovability) of friends, and not on the self's relationship with itself.

Scotus grants that there is one type of true friendship in which the self provides the essential measure of the friendship. The self's relationship with itself is a "limiting condition" on how much we can love a friend "only" in friendship between equals (*inter aequales*).[75] Only in this type of friendship does self-love actually serve as more than the point of

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[74] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 443-44). Et ad principium Philosophi, IX [*Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch.9 (1170b 6-9; 1166a 1ff)], dico quod auctoritas debet intelligi quantum ad innotescentiam amicitiae. Innotescit quippe amicitia ad alterum quando similia alteri appeto qualia appeto mihi ipsi, sed non quantum ad per se rationem eius quasi non sit alia amicitia nisi stricte loquendo de ea quae est inter aequales (ibi siquidem est mensura amati et non econverso).

[75] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 444).

recognition for the friendship. Here the self's relationship with itself is the measure of our love for the other, and not the love the other has for us. Here we cannot love a friend more than we love ourselves. A friendship between equals differs greatly from our friendship with God, for instance. When we befriend God, God's love for us provides the measure for the friendship. In friendship between non-equals, Scotus shifts the center of gravity of friendship away from the self, to the goodness of the better party.

Scotus understands friendship in a way that allows him to reject Aristotle's claim that the good person ought to love himself most of all. We can love God most of all, even in this life – even if we should need God's grace to do so. We naturally desire to love God most of all. Furthermore, we are morally obligated to love God most of all on account of God's supreme lovability. We are obligated to do so apart from any hope of personal betterment. Scotus does not make the moral betterment of the self the focal point of friendship. Rather the goodness of the friends involved, considered either each in itself or each in relation to the other provides the focal point.

It would seem to follow that Scotus must reject Aristotle's claim that the good person ought to love himself more than any other creature. In other words, there is some reason for believing that we can and, in some cases, indeed ought to love a friend (a fellow creature) more than we love ourselves. We would seem to be obligated to love a friend who is more virtuous than we are more than we love ourselves. The conclusion seems unavoidable, in fact, "if" we assume that each and every friendship between human beings (or between angels, for that matter) is not a friendship between equals – where 'equal' means metaphysically equal.[76]

If so, Scotus would have to commit himself to one of the following positions. On the

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[76]With respect to our fellow human beings, it seems odd, even inhuman, to think that right reason could compel us to love a complete stranger, no matter how virtuous, "more" than we love ourselves or our friends.

one hand, the good person fails to cultivate his own virtue better than any other creature and so is not own best friend. In this case, the creature would resemble God in promoting our virtue more than we ourselves do. On the other hand, the good person is his own best friend, but being his own best friend does not obligate him to love himself more than any other friend. In other words, "if" we measure the love we owe our friends according to their goodness, that is, according to their relative lovability, and not according to their success in cultivating our virtue, then we have reason to believe that we can be obligated to love a friend more than ourselves.[77]

The problem is the following. Any obligation to love a friend more than we love ourselves seems to be in open conflict with our natural inclination to love ourselves more than any other creature. Indeed, in the course of his treatment of Lucifer's Fall, Scotus speaks of natural instincts as being "always right" (*semper recta*). He argues that our natural desire for happiness is always right, in spite of the fact that God has designed it to run (or tend) naturally to excess.[78] This naturally excessive desire is always right because it does not represent an elicited act. It would not be always right only if it necessarily entailed an elicited act of will. It is never right to act wilfully on an excessive desire.[79] We are morally

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[77]Presumably, the more a friend is good, the greater the disparity that can exist between us. The more morally excellent a person is, the more his goodness would "compensate" for the lack of common ground between potential friends of lesser virtue. By extension, the more virtuous a person is, the greater his opportunity for making friends.

[78]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (57). Quando ergo accipitur quod 'voluntas, consona voluntati, naturali, semper est recta (quia et illa semper est recta)', respondeo et dico quod consonat sibi in eliciendo actum, sicut illa eliceret si ex se sola ageret; non est tamen recta, quia habet aliam regulam in agendo quam illa haberet si ex se sola ageret; tenetur enim sequi voluntatem superiorum, ex quo – in moderando illam inclinationem naturalem – in potestate eius est moderari vel non moderari, quia in potestate eius est non summe agere in quod potest.

[79]We might say that an inordinate desire is an excessive desire which we will "effectively." Anselm argues that there are four types or modes of willing: (1) the effective, (2) the approbative, (3) the concessive, and (4) the permissive. Willing something effectively necessarily involves willing it in the other three ways, as well. Willing something effectively is not simply a matter of willing to do what we will – to the extent that this may or may not be possible. Willing something effectively also involves approval, concession, and permission. See *Philosophical Fragments*, 334-335.

obligated to "moderate" our excessive desires before acting on them.[80]

Perhaps Scotus believes that our natural inclination to love ourselves more than any other creature, like our natural desire for happiness, runs naturally to excess. Perhaps he believes that it is not always right to act on this inclination to love ourselves more than others outside of certain circumstances in which doing so would not be disordered or immoderate. Acting on this instinct is always right, for example, within the context of the divinely infused habit of charity.[81] The "only" object of charity is God. Through charity, God and only God is loved directly, everyone else, indirectly. Charity fixes an order in which we are able to love others only in and through God's love for them. This order is just. We love God first and directly for whom he is in himself. We then love ourselves through the intermediary of God, since we want to love and to be united with God. Lastly, we love our friends and neighbors through the intermediary of God, since we want them to love and possess God.[82] Charity produces a superhuman friendship with God (a *superamictia*, as

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[80] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (68). As we will see in the following chapter, the express function of our naturally excessive desire for happiness is, according to Scotus, to provoke moral conflicts or crises in which nature is set at odds with moral obligation. A love of happiness is more "meritorious" if we love it or desire primarily as a means of better loving God.

[81] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 29 (W, 454-55). Caritas autem ex hoc quod principium est immediate tendendi in Deum actu directo, est principium super actus illos, quibus tenditur in Deum; et in hoc, sicut dictum est ibi, est principium volendi cuilibet potenti diligere, quod diligat Deum. Hoc est principium diligendi proximum, cuius amor est sibi grata vel non displicens, et inter omnes autem actus eiusdem rationis principium tendendia in Deum est principium immediatissime reflectendi super actum quem elicit; ille est actus quo haben caritatem, diliget Deum; igitur 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 diliget sibi bonum iustitiae. Igitur, immediate ex caritate diligit se post dilectionem Dei.

[82] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 28 (W, 450). Ex hoc apparet qualiter habitus caritas sit unus, quia non respicit primo plura obiecta, sed solummodo respicit pro obiecto Deum ut est in se bonum et primum bonum, et secundario velle eum diligi a quocumque, si est perfecta delectio 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 bonum obiectum est solus Deus in se. Omnia autem sunt quaedam media obiecto quasi actuum reflexorum, mediantibus quibus tenditur in infinitum bonum, quod est Deus. Idem est autem habitus qui est principius actus recti et reflexi.

Scotus calls it) in which we are right to love ourselves most after God.[83]

Outside of the context of this infused virtue, perhaps there is some reason to believe that it is not always right to love ourselves more than any other creature. In the context of our mundane lives, for example, we might be obligated in certain circumstances to love another creature more than we love ourselves. Scotus' treatment of the heroic citizen, of heroic self-sacrifice, seems to give credence to such a claim. Aristotle's heroic citizen is motivated principally by virtue – by his own virtue.[84] Reason apprises him that he must risk life and limb for the public good – as long as doing so does not require him, either now or later, to act viciously. Right reason apprises him of the fact that his long-term happiness, along with many other cherished goods, is in reality less important than the common or public good. He can only dodge the challenge if he is prepared to sacrifice his virtue and his honor. A life abbreviated in the accomplishment of a great act of virtue is to be preferred to a longer life purchased by an act of cowardice. Aristotle's heroic citizen prefers to achieve the highest good, even if only for a brief moment. He does not actually choose death itself. Rather, as Scotus points out, he chooses a particular act of virtue, along with the goodness, the delight, and the other advantages which the act itself will bring.[85] In this light, it makes good rational sense for the heroic citizen to risk his life for his country – even if he is not animated by the hope of being rewarded in the next life. Self-sacrifice is in his own moral self-interest.

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[83] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 443-44).

[84] *Nicomachean Ethics*, IX, ch. 8 (1169a 19 - 1169b 2); see also Book III, ch. 6 (1115a 30-35).

[85] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 436). Hic dicitur quod fortis, in exponendo se morti propter bonum virtutis, maximum bonum virtutis experitur, et maximum delectationem et propter haec bona maxima licet brevia, magis debet eligere et diligere actum talem quam vitam ignominiosam; melior est enim actus intentius, ut habetur ex IX *Ethicorum*, c. 8 [1169a 22-27], quam quotcumque remissi. In hoc ergo fortis politicus non eligit suum non esse, sed suum optimum esse secundum autem virtutis, quia quidem optimum secundum rectam rationem magis eligendum est quam carere actu virtutis cum multis aliis commodis.

Scotus' heroic citizen is not principally motivated by self-interest. He is principally motivated by a love for the good. In particular, he is motivated by his love for the common good. He loves the common good "more" than himself or the virtuous act (or acts) he rightly desires to accomplish (*simpliciter magis diligit bonum publicum, quod vult salvari, quam se, vel actum virtutis*).[86] Indeed, right reason places him under the obligation to love the public or common good more (*magis diligendum*) than his own.[87] Right reason obligates him to place his entire personal good (*totum bonum proprium*) at risk in order to save the common good.[88] When Scotus' heroic citizen displays his heroic virtue, he does so risking total non-existence (*totaliter non esse*) for something he loves more than himself.

If Scotus truly thinks, as we have argued, that the object of the love of friendship can never be a thing, but only a person, then to say that we ought love the common good more than we love ourselves should mean, first and foremost, that we ought to love the morally good life of the multitude of individual human beings within a community or body politic.[89] In other words, at the root of our love for the common good, we ought to find a love for the

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[86]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 436). Contra illud hic simpliciter magis amatur pro cuius salvanda salute, etc., et cui ne male sit, volo aliud non esse, quam illud aliud quod volo propter ipsum non esse; sed talis fortis ne male sit reipublicae, vult et se et actum virtutis non esse; igitur simpliciter magis diligat bonum publicum, quod vult salvari, quam se, vel actum virtutis pro cuius salute non se exponit, sed pro salute reipublicae; et ita stat argumentum.

[87]*Ordinatio* IV, dist. 43, q. 2 (Vivès XX, 48). Unde ex illo probatur evidenter, quod bonum commune secundum rectam rationem est magis diligendum quam bonum proprium, quia totum bonum proprium debet homo exponere destructioni simpliciter, etiamsi neciat animam immortalem, propter salvationem boni communis, et illud magis diligitur simpliciter, propter cuius salutem esse alterius contemnitur vel negligitur.

[88]*Ordinatio* IV, dist. 43, q. 2. Unde ex illo probatur evidenter, quod bonum commune secundum rectam rationem est magis diligendum quam bonum proprium, quia totum bonum proprium debet homo exponere destructioni simpliciter, etiamsi nesciat animam immortalem, propter boni communis salvationem, et illud magis diligitur simplicter, propter cuius salutem esse alterius contemnitur. The text is taken from Allan Wolter's *Duns Scotus: Philosophical Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987), p. 153.

[89]See Jacques Maritain, *La Personne et le bien commun* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1947), pp. 44-56.

moral good of individual persons. Loving the common good should mean wanting to confer a good moral life upon them by an act of the love of desire *(velle-conscupiscentiae)* and wanting to do so, first and foremost, because we love them first by an act of friendship-love (*velle-amicitiae*). If this is correct, loving the common good necessarily might involve loving (at least, some) human beings more than we love ourselves.[90]

In conclusion, Scotus' understanding of the nature of friendship actually makes a stronger case for the possibility that a friend could have been the object of the first inordinate act of the love of friendship than does Aristotle's. If Scotus was strictly Aristotelian on this score, both Lucifer and Adam would have been their own best friends. Each of them would have loved himself more than anyone else, no matter how virtuous. Rationally speaking, it would have been almost impossible for either of them to have fallen by deciding to love another too much. Odds are they would have fallen by making a conscious decision to love the very person they already loved most of all to excess, namely, themselves.

Scotus does not appropriate Aristotle's understanding of friendship whole cloth. He has to alter it, at the very least, in order to make it possible for us to love God most of all. But, in making these alterations, he seems to open up the possibility that we can love another created person more than we love ourselves. Lucifer and Adam had to have loved

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[90]Scotus is clearly attacking Aristotle's claim that the motivation behind moral acts can be entirely self-interested. For him, the heroic citizen must be principally motivated by a love for the common good which is greater than his love for himself. Someone else could act heroically or morally for other reasons in similar circumstances. When the state is endangered, a person may act heroically as parent, as friend, or as neighbor, and so on, but not as a citizen. The person who loves the common good selflessly, but less than himself, cannot act heroically in his capacity as citizen. However, if we consider acts of heroic self-sacrifice of one person for another, then reason would not seem to demand that every such heroic act be motivated by a love for the other which exceeds love for the self. It seems entirely possible for a friend to love himself more than his friend and still lay his life down heroically for him. Furthermore, we have ample evidence of strangers risking their life for strangers. It seems unreasonable to demand that anyone love a complete stranger more than he loves himself. Or, even worse, it seems unreasonable to think that an heroic stranger acts neither heroically nor virtuously if he fails to love the other person more than himself.

God most of all before they fell. But Adam could have loved a friend (another creature) more than he loved himself. The same is not true for Lucifer, who would have "justly" loved himself most after God as the greatest and most "loveable" of God's creatures. If Adam did, in fact, love another creature more than himself before he fell, the likelihood would be increased that a friend could have been the object of the first inordinate act of friendship-love. This possibility need not disturb Scotus unduly, however, since he claims that such an eventuality is extremely unlikely – not nonexistent. Both Lucifer and Adam would have still had to deal with the weight of natural inclination inclining each of them to love himself more than any other creature. Both would have been discouraged from loving a friend inordinately by the awareness that such a disordered love could not have possibly benefitted his friend. Indeed, both would have realized that a disordered love directed toward a friend who is just – and all friends were just before the Fall – would have either ended or endangered the very friendship that they would have wanted to strengthen and intensify. A virtuous friend cannot rest easy with a disordered love.

4. The Second Moment of Moral Disorder

Scotus' conception of the will establishes the connection between the first and second moments on solid logical grounds. These two moments are bound together by what we earlier called the logic of the two acts of love. Every inordinate act of the love of desire is connected to an act of inordinate friendship-love either immediately or through a series of acts whose point of origin is an inordinate act of friendship-love for someone. Like the first moment of moral disorder, the second involves an inordinate desire for some good which positively attracts (*velle*) us. The first moment takes root in an inordinate act of the love of friendship for the self (*inordinatus amor amicitiae respectu sui ipsius*); the second, in an

inordinate act of the love of desire (*velle-conscupiscentiae*) for a good we covet for the self. Just as we can love ourselves or others more than we or they deserve, so too we can want to possess a particular object, whether a person or a thing, more than it deserves to be wanted.

The principal aim of the second moment of moral disorder is to wrongfully acquire something for the self which we love and value, but which we lack at present and which we may not deserve to possess, either now or later. We come to want this object so badly that we willingly develop an excessive and immoderate desire for it. We do not set out to lose what we already have; and yet we want to possess the good we wrongly seek badly enough that we are prepared to tolerate the loss of some other good for its sake. In Lucifer's case, he so badly wants to enjoy perfect happiness and on his own terms that he is willing to tolerate even the loss of God, as well as his own misery.

In the second moment of moral disorder, Lucifer becomes adverse (*nolle*) to obeying God on account of something which he values and loves, but which he lacks. At some point, he comes to see God as a threat to this valued end. Scotus is convinced that Lucifer's very "first" disordered act of the love of desire could only have been directed to a perfectly happy state – that is, to his own perfect happiness (*beatitudo perfecta*).[91] In seeking this supremely delightful state, he was seeking the greatest beneficial good for himself (*maximum commodum*). He was seeking his own proper perfection (*propria perfectio*).[92]

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[91] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (39-40). Nunc restat videre de prima inordinatione ipsius 'velle concupiscentiae'. Et videtur ibi esse dicendum quod primo concupivit sibi immoderate beatitudinem ... Maximum commodum maxime appetitur a voluntate non sequente regulam iustitiae, et ita primo, quia nihil aliud regulat illam voluntatem non rectam nisi appetitus inordinatus et immoderatus illius maximi boni commodi; maximum autem commodum est beatitudo perfecta; ergo etc., – Et haec ratio habetur Anselmo *De casu diaboli* cap. 4 (quaere ibi).

[92] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (41). Secundo probatur hoc, quia primum peccatum in 'concupiscendo' fuit aliquod velle; nihil enim refugit a se – hoc est ne sibi aliquid contingat – nisi quia eius oppositum concupiscit sibi. Aut ergo illud concupivit amore honesti, aut amore utilis, aut amore delectabilis (quia non est nisi iste triplex amor quo aliquid amatur): non amore honesti, quia tunc non pecasset; nec amore utilis, quia ille non est primus amor (ex quo enim 'utile' respectu alicuius est

What is more, given the power of the angelic intellect and his own incorporeality, he could not have pursued any other object by an inordinate act of the love of desire. The angelic will is free from any attachment to sense appetite: and so the angel only feels the tug of rational desires. Accordingly, before all else, the angel is naturally inclined to seek to confer upon himself (*velle-conscupiscentiae*) that "state" which is most suitable or lovable (*conveniens*) to the mind or intellect.[93] This is perfect happiness, the beatific vision. The intellect hungers naturally after God and is naturally inclined to love God most of all. And yet the intellect also hungers naturally after the perfect state of bliss that comes from being united to God.[94] Happiness, for both angels and humans alike, is a state of being or existence – a thing, not a person. The pursuit of happiness as an end falls, then, under the love of desire.

Unlike Adam, it would seem that Lucifer possessed a proper conception of his own perfect happiness. The human intellect, even an intellect unsullied by sin, is weak by comparison with the power and clarity of the angelic intellect. The human intellect may be

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utile, nullus primo concupiscit utile, sed illud ad quod est 'utile'). Primo ergo peccavit amando aliquid excessive tamquam summum delectabile; delectabile autem summum est bonum honestum et ipsa beatitudo unde talis; ergo etc. – Et ista ratio potest accipi a Philosopho VIII *Ethicorum* [c. 2, 1155b 18-21], ex illa communi distinctione boni: utilis, delectabilis et honesti.

[93] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (45). Voluntas igitur separata ab omni appetitu sensitivo, et per consequens ad nihil inclinata propter inclinationem appetitus sensitivi, ipsa – deserta a iustitia – sequitur inclinationem absolutam voluntatis unde voluntatas; et illa videtur esse ad maximum conveniens voluntati sive potentiae cognitivae, – nam in quo maxime perficitur cognitiva, in illo maxime perficitur appetitiva correspondens illi cognitivae. Fuit igitur immoderata concupiscentia beatitudinis, quia beatitudo est obiectum voluntas.

[94] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (42). Tertio persuadetur hoc sic, quia omnia potentia appetitiva, consequens in actu suo actum potentiae apprehensivae, appetit primo delectabile convenientissimum suae cognitivae, – vel delectationem in appetibili, quia in tali appetibili maxime quietatur; quod patet de appetitu consequente apprehensionem gustus vel auditus vel tactus, – quia quidlibet talis appetit obiectum perfectissimum potentiae apprehensivae, cuius actum consequitur in appetendo. Ergo voluntas separata ab omni appetitu sensitivo, primo omnino appetit illud est convenientissimum intellectui, cuius convenientiam sequitur illud 'appetere', – vel primo appetit delectationem in tali obiecto, et per consequens beatitudinem, includentem obiectum et actum et delectationem consequentem.

mistaken about the true nature of both imperfect and perfect happiness.[95] We may even feel compelled to deny the existence of one or both types of happiness. It seems right to think that not even Adam could have possessed a proper conception of what his perfect happiness would be like. Even if he could have spoken of union with God or perfect happiness, he surely would have done so with little realization of what either would consist in or be like. But Lucifer must have known in what perfect happiness would consist before the Fall. Indeed, for his own perfect happiness to be a direct object of desire, it seems right to think that he would have known what was lacking in the happiness he enjoyed before the Fall. And so the first thing he would have wanted to confer upon himself in a disordered way would have been the missing pieces to his own perfect happiness.

We are all familiar with excessive desires in need of "moderation," whether they are our own, those of others, or even those of the state or societies in which we live.[96] We all recognize that excessive desires can produce disastrous consequences if acted upon – consequences which can harm the lives of others, as well as our own life. Acting on an excessive desire for food or for drink or for sex, for example, can lead to negative consequences which are readily imaginable. But it is important to note that, for Scotus, not

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[95]Scotus seems to have followed Augustine and believed that happiness is best reserved for those enjoying the beatific vision. This happiness cannot be merited. Nevertheless, Scotus did believe that our virtue can merit us a state in this life which is extremely desirable. If virtue is combined with enough of the goods of fortune, then we can even hope to achieve a state in this life which is the best and most pleasant possible. Aristotle speaks at length of this state in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. We can think of no better term for this state than imperfect happiness. Likewise, we can think of no better term to describe the state Lucifer and Adam enjoyed before the Fall. Unlike Augustine and Scotus, Aquinas provides a sustained defense of imperfect happiness in this life. Virtue is a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition, of both imperfect and perfect happiness. See *Summa Contra Gentiles* III, chapters 25-26, 37, 51, 62-63; *Summa Theologica*, I-II, questions 1-5.

[96]*Lectura*, prologue, pars 4, qq. 1-2 (122-87). In particular, see *Lectura*, prologue, pars 4, q. 2 (157): Praeterea, non ponitur habitus practicus ut dirigat circa substantiam actus, sed circa circumstantiam actus, sicut moralis non dirigit circa actum comedendi absolute, sed ut sic – scilicet temperate – comedat. Quamvis ergo voluntas esset determinata ad habendam substantiam actus respectu finis in particulari, requirit tamen habitum directivum propter actum modificatum et circumstantionatum.

all excessive desires are disordered. We can desire certain things excessively without being culpable for doing so. For Scotus, this is unavoidably the case with respect to happiness. In fact, among all the things we naturally desire, our desire for happiness is unique. Some of us may, for example, desire food or drink to excess, others may not. But each and every one of us desires happiness to excess. No matter how different the circumstances of our lives, each and every one of us "naturally" desires happiness immoderately.

Scotus accepts the common view, held by both Augustinian and Aristotelian alike, that human nature is constructed in such a way that we cannot help but desire (*velle*) happiness and want to enjoy it to the fullest degree possible. Every nature seeks the perfection proper to it. For Scotus, it is meaningless to speak of a nature apart from a natural inclination to its own self-fulfillment.[97] What separates Scotus from these others is the conviction that natural desire for happiness naturally tends to be excessive. This naturally excessive desire for happiness stands as an integral part of our natural make-up.[98] Nothing caused it to become naturally excessive. We do not possess it as a consequence of the Fall. It does not appear as the result of any choice made or experience undergone. On the contrary, it forms an integral part of our nature, and it is present there *a priori* and by God's design.

Scotus obliges us, then, to distinguish between excessive desires which are inordinate and those which are not. Inordinate desires represent a special sort of excessive

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[97] *Ordinatio* IV, suppl. dist. 49, qq. 9-10 (W, 184). De isto appetitu non libero sed naturali patet, quia voluntas necessario sive perpetuo et summe appetit beatitudinem et hoc in particulari. Quod necessario, patet; quia natura non potest manere natura quin inclinetur ad suam perfectionem; tolle enim istam inclinationem et tolle naturam; sed appetitus naturalis non est nisi talis inclinatio ad propriam perfectionem; ergo voluntas ut natura necessario appetit suam perfectionem quae maxime est beatitudo, and hoc appetitu naturali.

[98] Perhaps, this is why Scotus does not appeal to the authority of Augustine in order to support the connection between first and second moments of moral disorder, as he had done with respect to the connection between the first and third moments [*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (38)]. The inspiration behind the second moment is Anselm, not Augustine.

desire. They are the excessive desires to which we assent. We want to act upon them and we will act upon them, given what appear to be the right circumstance. We may possess an excessive desire by nature or by choice or as a result of forces or circumstances beyond our control. But an excessive desire only becomes inordinate through a free act of will, by assenting to it. The moral obligation falls on each and every one of us, then, to "moderate" an excessive desire before acting on it.

For Scotus, there is nothing contradictory about affirming that a natural inclination can naturally tend to desire happiness excessively and that what is natural is always right (*semper recte*).[99] It is right that we possess such a desire; it is there by design and so for a purpose. What can never be right is assenting to any natural inclination (or natural appetite) which is naturally excessive. If we choose to act on our naturally excessive desire for happiness without moderating it beforehand to fit it to the circumstances facing us, for example, then this excessive desire becomes vicious (or sinful). All excessive desires, whether ours by nature or not, must be "moderated" before we assent to them.

The virtue of moderation is most closely associated with the desires of the body, for the objects of the sensible appetites. But we also recognize the need to restrain rationally our desire for intellectual goods, for the objects of intellectual appetite. The desire for happiness is one example of an intellectual desire which can be both harmful and dangerous if acted upon. Pride, the desire to be thought of as superior to others, is another. The moral obligation to moderate our excessive desires extends, then, to any excessive desire for any good we might think about conferring upon ourselves.

Lucifer could have moderated his desire for happiness but he chose not to. As is now clear, his excessive desire for happiness was not generated by his act of inordinate self-love. His inordinate self-love simply made this naturally excessive desire much harder

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[99] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q.2 (46 & 57)

to resist. An inordinate self-love succeeds in altering the way in which he consciously experiences the appeal of his excessive desires. Inordinate self-love weakens the will, making it more difficult for us to resist willing our excessive desires inordinately. As Scotus puts it, inordinate self-love makes the will unrighteous (*voluntas non-recta*) and an unrighteous will is more easily directed or driven (*regulo*) by an excessive desire for happiness – or, for that matter, by an excessive desire for any particular object of the sensible or intellectual appetites.[100]

Propelled by inordinate self-love, an "unmoderated" desire for happiness, or for any other good, may govern the will: and so govern consciousness, coloring and ultimately distorting our feelings and desires, our deliberations and judgements, our choices and actions. Inordinate-self love attacks the will and makes the task of moderating our excessive desires, whatever their point of origin happens to be, harder to accomplish. We may eventually succeed in rooting out some of the excessive desires we have to moderate, while our efforts to moderate others (our desire for happiness, for instance) may involve us in a lifelong struggle to regulate or modify what we cannot effectively root out.[101]

Scotus follows Anselm in believing that Lucifer falls while undergoing a period of probation (or trial) before the Fall.[102] This period of probation began either at the moment of

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[100]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40).

[101]The Latin word for moderate is derived from the verb *moderor,* meaning to guide, manage, mitigate, measure, to take with moderation, temper, to moderate, diminish, direct, govern, to conduct, play an instrument. We should also keep in mind the following related words: *modeste,* meaning discreetly; *moderamen,* meaning management, direction; *modestia,* meaning moderation, orderly, within bounds, moderate, restrained; and *modica,* meaning moderate, within bounds, limited, undistinguished.

[102]Anselm of Canterbury, *The Fall of the Devil*, 6. "Therefore, the angels that loved the justice they had, rather than the "more" that they did not have, received as reward in justice that good their will "renounced" out of love of justice, and they remained in secure possession of what they had. And they were so elevated that they could have whatever they willed and not see what "more" they could have willed, and thus they cannot sin. But those who preferred to the stability of justice in which they had been created what God did not yet will to give them according to his just decision, lost the good that they had and did not obtain that which induced them to depreciate justice." Here as elsewhere, I

their creation or sometime later. God decides to deal out happiness in stages, in fact, in order to provoke a moral conflict in his creatures. A conflict must be provoked between the natural desire for happiness and moral obligation. If rational creatures did not feel torn between God and something else which they badly desired, they could not make an "honest" choice for or against God. Their choice of God would not be fully meritorious, if they did not feel tempted to choose against God. By implanting in them a naturally excessive desire for the state they most desire to possess, God insures that every rational creature will arrive at such a dilemma. A rational creature's desires will eventually cause the road he is traveling to fork. He will have to turn his back to one of the paths and take the other. If he chooses wisely, he will turn away from a path that greatly excites his self-interest, and he will do so principally for love of God.

According to Scotus, Lucifer's desire for happiness could have been excessive or immoderate in one of at least three ways.[103] First of all (1), he could have coveted happiness for himself alone – and not for the sake of anyone beyond himself, namely, God. If happiness is a "state" rather than a "person," then strictly speaking God cannot be called our happiness. God can be called our happiness only loosely speaking.[104] Perfect happiness is the state that results when we are united to God through the love of friendship – it is the state of knowing and of delighting in God. Perfect happiness follows and is

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use Ralph McInerny's translation of *The Fall of the Devil*, as it appears in *Anselm of Canterbury: Major Works*, edited by B. Davies and G.R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[103] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (52). Potest autem voluntas – potens se ipsam moderari – immoderate velle beatitudinem quae sibi congruit, tripliciter: vel quantum ad intensionem, puta volendo eam maiore conatu quam sibi congruat; vel quantum ad accelerationem, puta volendo eam citius quam sibi congruat; vel quantum ad causam, puta volendo eam sibi aliter quam sibi congruat, puta sine meritis; – vel forte modia aliis, de quibus omnibus non oportet hic curare.

[104] *Lectura*, prol., pars 4, q. 2 (158). Praeterea, cuius dilectio principaliter intenditur extra genus cognitionis, eius cognitio principaliter intenditur intra genus cognitionis; sed dilectio Dei, per ipsum, est huiusmodi [scil. principaliter intenta extra genus cognitionis]; igitur cognitio Dei est finis [scil. principaliter intentus intra genus cognitionis]. Sed Deus est obiectum primum; igitur principia hic sunt practica; ergo etc.

subordinate to being united to God in friendship-love, just as marital bliss follows and is subordinate to the friendship-love of one's spouse. To upset this ordered relation is to desire or love God simply as a means to our own happiness. Lucifer should have desired (*velle-concupiscentiae*) perfect happiness primarily in order to love (*velle-amicitiae*) God better.[105]

Secondly (2), Lucifer could have wanted to enjoy perfect happiness immediately, rather than at some later time of God's own choosing. He would have known that he ought not will this state before God wanted him to will it. But he could have resented the delay and rebelled against God.

Finally (3), Lucifer's desire for happiness could have been excessive or immoderate if he had wanted to possess perfect happiness in the wrong way. For instance, he could have wanted to earn happiness for himself, by natural means, by his own powers, and not by earning it in cooperation with God's grace. With respect to each of these three ways of desiring happiness excessively, Lucifer could have moderated his desire for perfect happiness by force of will and in accordance with right reason, that is, in accordance with what he knew to be objectively right.

The second moment of moral disorder applies to Lucifer at the very moment he willfully chooses to act upon his excessive desire for happiness. Once having failed to moderate his inordinate desire for happiness, Lucifer proceeds to desire for himself other intellectual or rational goods inordinately. Scotus speculates that he may well have immediately gone on to the sin of pride, to the sin of desiring his own superiority over others

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[105]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (62). Et ita boni potuerunt appetere beatitudinem, ut – habentes illam – perfectius amarent summum bonum; et iste actus concupiscendi beatitudinem, esset meritorius, quia non utitur 'fruendo' sed fruitur eo, quia bonum quod concupisco mihi, ad hoc concupisco ut plus amem illud bonum in se.

inordinately (*excellentiam respectu aliorum*).[106] Scotus' point is this: an initial inordinate desire has the potential to engender both inordinate likes (*velle*) and inordinate dislikes (*nolle*).

Lucifer's inordinate self-love, like his inordinate pursuit of happiness, engenders the pursuit of many goods inordinately. These inordinate desires also engender a very real dislike for whatever or whomever stands in the way of their satisfaction. Lucifer would have a reason for disliking anyone who appears to stand in the way of his unjust and exaggerated claims to the goods he covets. This follows from the logic of attraction and aversion. Finally, like inordinate self-love, any inordinate desire for a good thing – whether it be for happiness, for sexual pleasure, or for something else – has the potential, if left unmoderated, to engender ultimately a very real contempt for God and others (*germinavit usque ad contemptum Dei*). Here we see how the second and third moments of moral disorder are logically connected in Scotus' mind.

We have given due attention to the second moment of moral disorder as it applies to Lucifer. We will conclude this section by considering Adam's behavior in the second moment. The scope of the moderating will is much broader in us than it is in the angels. An angel bears the moral obligation to moderate any excessive desires he might experience for an object of the intellectual appetite, whereas our moral obligation extends to any excessive desires we might possess for the objects of the sense appetites. As complex beings, combinations of mind and body, we must moderate excessive desires for the objects of both intellectual and sense appetites. The human will, unlike the angelic, is joined to the sense appetite. What is more, experience tells us, according to Scotus, that the sense

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[106] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (63). Viso igitur primo inordinate concupito, potest poni quod inordinate ulterius concupavit sibi aliquod bonum, scilicet excellentiam respectu aliorum. Vel habuit inordinatum nolle, nolendo scilicet opposita eorum quae concupivit: scilicet nolendo sibi beatitudinem minus inesse quam Deo in se (sive quam Deus esse), vel nolendo eam habere ex meritis sed ex se; et ex consequenti, nolendo subesse Deo.

appetite is stronger in us than is the intellectual appetite.[107]

It seems extremely unlikely that "perfect" happiness, in and of itself, could have been the object of the very first disordered act of the love desire committed by a human being. Happiness, as we have already mentioned, is an object of the intellectual appetite. The weakness of the intellectual appetite relative to the sensible works against the possibility that the first sin of the love of desire could have been an inordinate desire for perfect happiness, for the beatific vision. On the contrary, it is likely that the very first inordinate act of the love of desire committed by a human being was directed toward one of the objects of the sense appetites and in the name of some imperfect happiness.

In each and every one of us, one sense appetite tends to dominate. Adam probably first coveted an object of whatever happened to be "his" dominant sense appetite. Scotus speculates that Adam might well have first coveted sexual pleasure for himself. He would have thought of this sexual pleasure as a means to happiness; but desiring it would not have involved desiring perfect happiness in and of itself inordinately. Given the obvious limitations of the human intellect, he could not have possessed a proper conception of perfect happiness. Should he have recognized that he was not perfectly happy, he could not have even remotely understood what it would be like to be perfectly happy – much less what it would be like to be united to God in the beatific vision. He could not have known (in the strongest sense of the word) all that was lacking in the happiness he was then enjoying. It seems more likely that Adam possessed a proper conception of imperfect happiness

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[107] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (44). Et ideo in hominibus, secundum diversitatem complexionum, est dominium appetituum sensitivorum: si quidem quaelibet cognitiva habet appetitum proprium et secundum diversitatem complexionum est diversitas dominii in cognitivi diversis et in earum appetitivis, in quodlibet – inquam – voluntas, secundum praedominium appetitus sensitivi, maxime inclinatur ad actum eius; et ideo quidam, sequentes inclinationem primam sine regula iustitiae, primo inclinatur ad luxuriam, quidam primo ad superbiam et quidam aliter.

only.[108] He probably knowingly failed to moderate an inordinate desire for an object of a sensible appetite which he knew God had forbidden, but which he wrongly thought would contribute to his happiness. So he did not sin by desiring a "proper" conception of imperfect happiness inordinately. Rather, his inordinate desire for a particular object of sense appetite would have been in opposition to his proper conception of imperfect happiness. The first disordered human act of the love of desire would have involved, then, two rival conceptions of imperfect happiness, a proper conception at odds with a faulty conception, itself developed under the influence of passion.

5. Egoism and Self-hatred

Scotus calls on the authority of St. Augustine to support the connection between the first and third moments of moral disorder.[109] In Book XIV of the *City of God*, Augustine speaks of two loves and the city each engenders. The city of God is built upon the love of God (*amor dei*), and the city of the devil, the earthly city, upon self-love (*amor sui*).[110] Moral disorder begins in inordinate self-love and ultimately produces a very real hatred for God (*amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei*). A just moral order, either for society at large or within

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[108] *Lectura*, prologue, pars 4, q. 2 (163). [S]ed omnis cognitio de fine ultimo et eorum quae sunt ad finem tanto plus ordinat hominem bene dispositum ad dilectionem Dei, quanto plura cognoscit de eo. Unde beati qui plus cognoscunt, plus diligunt; et hic, qui plura magnalia Dei cognoscit, magis ordinatur ad laudandum et diligendum Deum.

[109] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q.2 (38). Et hoc est quod dicit Augustinus, XIV *De civitate Dei*, capitulo ultimo [PL 41, 436]: 'Duo amores fecerunt duas civitates: civitatem Dei amor Dei usque contemptum sui, et civitatem diaboli amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei'.

[110] *De Civitate Dei*, XIV, 28 [PL 436]. Fecerunt itaque ciuitates duas amores duo, terrenam scilicet amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei, caelestem uero amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui. Denique illa in se ipsa, haec in Domino gloriatur. Illa enim quaerit ab hominibus gloriam; huic autem Deus conscientiae testis maxima est gloria. Illa in gloria sua exaltat caput suum; haec dicit deo suo: *Gloria mea et exaltans caput meum.* Illi in principibus eius uel in eis quas subiugat nationibus dominandi libido dominatur; in hac seruiunt inuicem in caritate et praepositi consulendo et subditi obtemperando.

each person, begins in the love of God and demands what could be called a "healthy" self-hatred *(amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui)*.[111]

If Scotus were writing today, he might speak of inordinate self-love as making egoists of us all. Like the egoist, the person who loves himself inordinately is more or less drunk on self, more or less isolated from others inside a self-centeredness which is systematic, and more or less determined to appraise everything and everyone in terms of his own selfish thoughts and goals. The instant we begin to love ourselves too much is the instant the self begins to dominate our consciousness unjustly. When the self dominates our mental field of vision, it blots some things out, alters the appearance of others, and generally distorts our perspective on reality. The self comes to occupy a place in our lives which is disproportionate to its actual worth. An inordinate self-love corrupts consciousness.[112]

Egoism itself testifies to the fact that we are, to a greater or lesser extent, strangers to ourselves, to our own nature and to its wants and needs. It throws some of what we like (*velle*) and some of what we dislike (*nolle*) into disorder. Whether we know it or not, we come to hate what we should love and to love what we should dislike. To love ourselves too much is unjust. So, too, are the likes and the dislikes that proceed from this unjust love.

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[111]One of the more fascinating aspects of Scotus' moral theory is the way in which he attempts to marry the Aristotelian virtue of magnanimity with that most important of all Judeo-Christian virtues, humility. We address this matter in Chapter Four.

[112]Alan Donagan, *The Theory of Morality* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 139-40: "A man may avert his attention from something presented to him, not because it is irrelevant to the subject at hand, or insignificant in itself, but because it is disturbing. To think about it would call in question things he does not want to question, usually from vanity, shame, or fear. Merely to divert attention from something disturbing to something undisturbing is not in itself objectionable: there are times when what is disturbing must be confronted, and others when it need not be. But for a man utterly to exclude from his attention some disturbing object does give rise to error: the error of disowning what he cannot bring himself to face... Corruption of consciousness reaches a further stage when it becomes inveterate: when a man is unable to recognize his deed or his situation for what it is, even when pointed out to him. And it is not necessarily confined to individuals. A whole society may refuse to face plain facts, not only about its own actions as a society, but about its institutions."

Egoism isolates us from God and others. Egoism encourages us to appraise God and others in terms that are callously selfish. It encourages us to value God and others simply as "means" to our own happiness. An inordinate self-love causes us to place undue importance on the self, thereby upsetting the just balance of love that should exist between God, neighbor, and self. The extent of this alienation varies from person to person, but all suffer from it. All of us are more or less isolated from God and others in an egoism which is systematic.

Egoism reaches its zenith in the unremitting hatred of God and neighbor, as obstacles to the fulfillment of our disordered loves. We cannot help but dislike (or hate) whatever seems to oppose what we love. This follows from the logic of attraction (*velle*) and aversion (*nolle*). Now a malicious act is the most morally disordered of acts. Taken to its logical conclusion, maliciousness leads to the complete isolation of the self from others. It leads to a self-absorption in which we can no longer appreciate others for who they are in themselves. The moral disorder arising from egoism is a sort of hell.[113] Egoism carried to its logical conclusion is hell itself. The isolation it produces is deadly.

We can manage our egoism with a "healthy" self-hatred. This healthy self-hatred implies a specific attitude and a specific skill. We are naturally prone to deceive ourselves in the pursuit of happiness because our desires for happiness naturally run to excess. We always run the danger of becoming inordinately attached to a good that we seek in the name of happiness. Our inordinate self-love, our egoism, adds to our difficulty by making it harder to resist any excessive desire whatsoever. Now, as we shall see in the next chapter, Scotus is convinced that every excessive desire is conceived in the name of happiness. So

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[113]As John Ciardi writes in his introduction to *The Divine Comedy*, "Another fixed principle of Hell is that no soul can care for another or find comfort in another. Hell is the exclusion of others, as Heaven is the active out-going love of others (*Caritas*), and as Purgatory, though it includes *Caritas*, is the condition of the joyous acceptance of pain that purifies the soul." See *The Divine Comedy*, the John Ciardi Translation (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1970), p. xiv.

an inordinate self-love increases our chances of acting on an excessive desire for our own happiness. If we are not to be deceived by our desires for our own happiness, then, we must presume that these desires are untrustworthy until they are properly tested and ratified. An attitude of healthy suspicion toward our desires for happiness is fully warranted. In addition to this attitude, we need to have the skill needed to moderate our excesses of desire before acting on them. We cannot hope to be moral, much less happy, if we cannot consistently succeed in moderating our excessive desires for happiness before acting on them.

In the next chapter, we will see that Scotus identifies our natural desire for happiness with the affection for the advantageous, while he identifies the moderating will with the affection for justice.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SECOND EXPLANATION OF MORAL DISORDER

In *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, Scotus provides two complementary explanations of moral disorder and of the three principal moments in which moral disorder logically unfolds itself. The sin of the first moment, the original sin, is inordinate-self love, the sin of the second moment is an inordinate desire for a good which we seek in the name of happiness, while the sin of the third moment is hatred – a hatred of God and neighbor as obstacles to the fulfillment of unjust desires. Scotus' first explanation accounts for the existence and progression of moral disorder in terms of the will's two positive acts, namely, attraction (*velle*) and aversion (*nolle*).[1] Moral disorder cannot begin in act of aversion, Scotus argues, since every act of aversion presupposes an act of attraction. We referred to this ordered relation between attraction and aversion as the logic of attraction and aversion. Moral disorder can only begin in an act of attraction. Now the will is capable of performing two distinct acts of attraction. Through an act of the love of friendship (*velle-amicitiae*) the will loves an object we think of as good. The object of an act of friendship-love is loved absolutely and for its own sake. What is more, the object of this friendship-love is always a person, never a thing. Through an act of the love of desire (*velle-concupiscentiae*) an object is willed for the sake of some person we already love through an act of friendship-love.[2] As every act of aversion presupposes an act of attraction, so, too, every act of the love of desire presupposes an act of the love of friendship. We referred to this ordered relation

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[1] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (34-38).

[2] *Lectura* II, dist.6, q. 2 (25). Actus volendi concupiscentiae est actus quo quis vult bonum sibi vel alteri bonum; sed actus volendi amicitiae est actus quo voluntas tendit in bonum absolute quando quid diligit se vel aliud absolute.

among the will's two acts of attraction as the logic of the two acts of attraction. The logic of the two acts of attraction entails that the first moment of moral disorder has to be produced by an inordinate act of the love of friendship is directed toward the self. Accordingly, the second moment has to be produced when an inordinate act of the love of desire is directed toward an object which promises to bring the self happiness either now or later. The third moment involves a strict act of aversion (*nolle*) for something that repels us, and it is explained exactly as such.

The second explanation turns our attention back from the "acts" of the will to the "motivations" which drive these acts. In fact, it turns our attention back to the two basic overarching "engines" of human motivation, both of which are located or housed in the will itself. It offers us an explanation of moral disorder and its three moments in terms of the will's two affections.[3] These affections are the affection for the advantageous (*affectio commodi*) and the affection for justice (*affectio jusititiae*).[4] The will cannot freely move itself to act apart from the direct involvement of one or both of these affections. Each has its own governing principle. Each is a center of attraction for whatever appears conducive to its pre-set or pre-determined end. And each can motivate the positive acts (*velle*) and the negative acts (*nolle*) of the will.

But the two affections do not cooperate and produce a single common motivation. Both affections can attach us to the same object of desire, but never for the same reason. The affection for the advantageous has its own lodestar, so does the affection for justice.

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[3]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (39-63). See also *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 26 (See W, 178-80).

[4]Scotus follows Anselm in arguing for the existence of these two affections. Anselm's most detailed treatments of the will's two affections are found in *De Concordia*, 11-13, and in the *Fall of the Devil*, 12-14. As Stanley Kane points out, however, Anselm does not often speak about the two affections of the will; and, when he does, he does not always speak clearly. Stanley Kane, *Anselm's Doctrine of the Will* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1981), p. 62.

Each is continually offering us reasons why we should navigate toward its lodestar. Ideally, the two affections should provide us with different reasons for pursuing the same or complementary ends. We achieve this harmony of purposes or intentions when we succeed in using the affection for justice to "moderate" the affection for the advantageous.

Scotus' second and preferred explanation of moral disorder will occupy us in this chapter. We will examine how the use of the will's two affections allows Scotus to give a fuller and more exact explanation of moral disorder and its three moments. Three very specific reasons can be given for this. Each of them reveals just how central the two affections of the will are to Scotus' theory of moral motivation.

(1) First of all, Scotus lays out his theory of moral motivation in terms of the two affections of the will. The affection for justice provides us with motivations for loving and doing which are selfless.[5] The affection for the advantageous formulates its motivations in terms of our proper perfection or happiness. It provides us with motivations which are narrowly self-interested. Scotus is convinced that if we act on the affection for the advantageous alone, we do not necessarily behave immorally, as in the case of morally neutral acts, like shooting a basketball or lifting a heavy object. But we certainly never behave morally.

For Scotus, we cannot behave morally if our behavior is not motivated, at least in part, by the affection for justice. Only this affection provides moral motivations, and it does so unfailingly. Scotus wants to claim that whenever we act on the affection for justice, our reasons for acting are well-ordered and so moral. Moral disorder itself, as well as each of its

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[5] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 26 (W, 178). In voluntate secundum Anselmum assignantur duae affectiones, scilicet affectio iustitiae et affectio commodi, de quibus tractat *De casu diaboli*, capitulo decimo quarto et *De concordia*, undevigesimo, diffuse. Nobilior est affectio iusititiae quam commodi, non solum intelligendo de acquisita et infusa, sed de innata, quae est ingenita libertas secundum quam potest velle aliquod bonum non ordinatum ad se.

three moments, has to be explained, then, as the consequence of acting on the affection for the advantageous in isolation from the affection for justice. At the "root" of every moral disorder, we find an inordinate self-love and the inordinate desire for our own self-interest (for our own proper perfection or happiness) which it manufactures. In more contemporary terms, the root of moral disorder is egoism, and egoism expresses itself primarily through selfish desires.

(2) Secondly, Scotus makes the possibility of living a moral "life" dependent on one particular activity. The addition of the two affections gives shape and color to the moderating function of the will. We cannot live a moral life if we cannot consistently "moderate" our naturally excessive desire for happiness. Moderating our naturally excessive desire for happiness can now be explained as the need to moderate the affection for the advantageous by the affection for justice. We can and sometimes ought to act simply on the affection for justice. But such behavior cannot be long sustained. It runs too much against the grain of our natural desire for happiness, just as it runs too much against the grain of our natural desire to seek pleasure and avoid pain, whether physical or mental. Furthermore, even if we could somehow sustain a life based on the affection for justice alone, such a life would be grossly imperfect since it would have to be lived in open defiance of fully half of our motivational life. If we live out of harmony with the affection for the advantageous, we live out of harmony with fully half of ourselves. We cannot live and act as "whole" persons if we do not commit ourselves to moderating the affection for the advantageous consistently by means of the affection for justice. This is our principal moral task – our principal spiritual exercise.[6] If we are to master our life, we must constantly

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[6]Pierre Hadot argues that philosophy, especially in the ancient world, is best understood as an art of living, as a "spiritual exercise." Philosophy provides a method of training (the spiritual exercises) by which a person can modify himself and, by so doing, raise himself up to a higher level of living. See *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Albin Michel, 2002). Influenced

renew our effort to moderate the affection for the advantageous by ordering it to the affection for justice.

(3) Finally, by appealing to the two affections of the will, the second explanation of moral disorder leaves no doubt that the principal division in the life of the human person is that which takes place between the two affections of the will. The principal division is not that between the will and the passions (or emotions) of the sense appetite. When the sense appetite is itself pliable to the commands of the will, virtue and vice are played out in taming and controlling the passions of the sense appetite. However, such pliability is not a given. The primary arena of virtue and vice is the arena we control directly. This is the arena of the will. The free acts of the will are always in our own direct control. The morally virtuous succeed in consistently bringing the affection for the advantageous and its rational desires into concord with the affection for justice and its rational desires. Only when they establish this concord within the will can they hope to order an inferior power properly like the sense appetite. It should come as no surprise, then, that Scotus locates the moral virtues of justice, temperance, and courage in the will. Neither should it surprise us that the moral virtues will express themselves principally in the moderating function of the will, that is, in using the affection for justice to moderate the excesses of the affection for the advantageous rather than in moderating our sensible passions. If we do not manage the divide between the two affections well, then we cannot live a well-ordered life, much less a morally virtuous life.

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by Hadot. Michel Foucault speaks of philosophy as a *technique du soi* consciously designed to alter body, mind, conduct, as well as modes of existence. See "Technologies of the Self", in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, edited by L. Martin, H. Gutman, and P. Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), pp. 16-49.

1. Moral Motivation

When Scotus turns his attention to the second moment of moral disorder, he abruptly changes the focus of the discussion. He stops talking about the "acts" of the will; and, instead, he begins talking about the two "affections" of the will. The two affections are mentioned here for the first time in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2. Scotus appeals to the two affections in order to prove that Lucifer's first inordinate act of the love of desire had to have been directed toward his own perfect happiness.

> We still need to determine what the object of the first inordinate act of the love of desire was. It seems right to say that he first coveted his own happiness immoderately. This is proved by the following. First of all, the first inordinate [love of] 'desire' was not motivated by the affection for justice, just as no sin proceeded from it (*sicut nec aliquod peccatum processit*). Therefore, the first inordinate act of the love of desire had to have been motivated by the affection for the advantageous, as Anselm points out in Chapters 13 and 14 of *The Fall of the Devil*. Every voluntary act, every elicited act, is elicited in accordance with either the affection for justice or the affection for the advantageous. Now a will which does not follow the rule of justice (*regulam iustitiae*) will seek most what is most advantageous to it (*maximum commodum maxime*). And it will seek this before all else, for nothing else governs (*regulat*) the unjust (*non-rectam*) will but an inordinate and immoderate appetite for its own greatest beneficial good. And that which is most beneficial [to any rational creature] is perfect happiness. Therefore, etc. The rationale (*ratio*) for this proof is derived from chapter 4 of Anselm's *The Fall of the Devil*.[7]

Lucifer's first inordinate act of the love of desire involves willing a good which he desires to confer on someone he already loves through an act of friendship-love, namely, himself. The good he wants most to confer on himself is his own proper perfection or

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[7] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (39-40). Nunc restat videre de prima inordinatione ipsius 'velle concupiscentiae'. Et videtur ibi esse dicendum quod primo concupivit sibi immoderate beatitudinem. Quod probatur: Primo sic, nam primum 'concupiscere' inordinatum non processit ex affectione iustitiae, sicut nec aliquod peccatum processit; ergo ex affectione commodi, quia 'omnis actus voluntatis elictus, aut elicitur secundum affectionem iustitiae aut commodi' , secundum Anselmum [*De casu diaboli* c. 4 (ed. Schmitt I 241; PL 158, 332-333)]. Maximum commodum maxime appetitur a voluntate non sequente regulam iustitiae, et ita primo, quia nihil aliud regulat illam voluntatem non rectam nisi appetitus inordinatus et immoderatus illius maximi boni commodi; maximum autem commodum est beatitudo perfecta; ergo, etc. – Et haec ratio habetur ab Anselmo *De casu diaboli* cap. 4 (quaere ibi).

perfect happiness. Scotus believes that Lucifer could not have chosen a different object given the metaphysical make-up of the angels. An angel lacks a body and so the angelic will is neither hindered nor distracted by the sensible appetite.[8] The angels are not troubled by matter. They only feel the tug of rational desires. Now when the will of any rational creature is free from all attachment to the sensible appetite, it will necessarily seek perfect happiness "first."

Perfect happiness is the proper perfection of a rational nature. Perfect happiness is the object most suitable or desirable to the intellect (*convenientissimum intellectui*).[9] And, for Scotus, perfect happiness is a "state," not a person. It is the state which the union with God effects. Scotus even goes so far as to argue that perfect happiness, as an object of our natural desire for fulfillment of our nature, is actually more suitable (*conveniens*) to the intellect than is God.[10] Now it is tempting to think that the intellect will concern itself with perfect happiness more than it will with any other "state" – although not more than any "person." In other words, it is tempting to think that God ought to be "the" object most suitable to the intellect. If Scotus believes this, he does not bother to argue for this conclusion here.

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[8] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (44). In human beings, sensible appetite is more strongly felt than is rational appetite. Scotus concludes, therefore, that Adam's first inordinate act of the love of desire was probably directed toward the object of whatever happened to be his dominant sense appetite.

[9] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (42). [Q]uia omnia potentia appetitiva, consequens in actu suo actum potentiae apprehensivae, appetit primo delectabile convenientissimum suae cognitivae, – vel delectationem in appetibili, quia in tali appetibili maxime quietatur; quod patet de appetitu consequente apprehensionem gustus vel auditus vel tactus, – quia quilibet talis appetit obiectum perfectissimum potentiae apprehensivae, cuius actum consequitur in appetendo. Ergo voluntas separata ab omni appetitu sensitivo, primo omnino appetit illud quod est convenientissum intellectui, cuius convenientiam sequitur illud 'appetere', – vel primo delectationem in tali obiecto, et per consequens beatitudinem, includentem obiectum et actum et delectationem consequentem.

[10] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q.2 (45). [N]am in quo maxime perficitur cognitiva, in illo maxime perficitur cognitiva, in illo maxime perficitur appetitiva correspondens illi cognitivae. Fuit igitur immoderata concupiscentia beatitudinis, quia beatitudo est objectum voluntatis.

Given the above, Lucifer's first inordinate act of the love of desire had to have been directed either toward the state of perfect happiness or toward the joyous state arising from it.[11] He would have desired one or the other, neither "justly," nor from "utility," but, rather, excessively and "hedonistically." He would have desired one or the other as an end, as the supreme delight.[12] Furthermore, he would have desired one or the other inordinately and strictly according to the affection for the advantageous.

Scotus is convinced that any time a rational creature acts on an inordinate desire, it acts exclusively on the affection for the advantageous and thereby falls into moral disorder. Moral disorder is also always perpetrated in the name of happiness. Whenever justice does not regulate the will of any rational creature (that is, whenever the rational creature does not succeed in using the affection for justice to "moderate" the affection for the advantageous), it cannot help but want happiness (or delight) first and immoderately. In other words, if we exercise the affection for the advantageous apart from the moderating influence of the affection for justice, it will naturally tend to produce excessive desires for our own happiness. No other object could appear more desirable to us.[13] What separates the angels from us is that they are able to will their own perfect happiness directly.

Scotus raises high the bar of moral conduct. Lucifer's desire for perfect happiness is

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[11]The superiority of the angelic intellect probably has a role to play here, as well. It is powerful enough to form a proper conception of perfect happiness. Lucifer would have known all the missing ingredients to his own perfect happiness and pursued them.

[12]*Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2 (41). Scotus accepts Aristotle's division of the good into what is honorable (or just), what is useful, and what is delightful (*Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, chs. 3-4). Lucifer's first inordinate act of the love of desire was obviously not just. Neither was it utilitarian for it was an inordinate desire for an end, not for a means to an end. His first inordinate act of the love of desire involved loving something excessively and as his supreme delight (*summum delectabile*). This act had to have been hedonistic, then.

[13]*Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2 (43). [I]llud primo appetitur a voluntate non-regulata per iustitiam, quod – si esset solum – solum appeteretur, et nihil aliud sine eo. Tale est delectatio; non enim excellentia nec quodcumque aliud – si esset 'triste' – appeteretur, sed delectatio vel aliquid tale appeteretur.

inordinate and so sinful because the motivation behind it is too "narrow." Both affections of the will should have motivated his pursuit of perfect happiness. Instead, he was motivated by the affection for the advantageous alone. For Scotus, we never act morally if we act on the affection for the advantageous alone in isolation from the affection for justice. We may follow our conscience and perform the opportune or timely act – the act that is called for in a given circumstance – and yet we may not act morally in doing so. If we do not act on the affection for justice, we do not act for the right reasons – for moral reasons. Such an act is not moral because it does not meet all the requirements or dictates of right reason. And yet it is not necessarily immoral. Scotus does seem to allow for the possibility that acting on the affection for the advantageous, while never moral, need not always be immoral.

In the second moment of moral disorder, Lucifer sins when he decides to pursue his own perfect happiness on the affection for the advantageous alone. He could not have avoided sinning in pursuing perfect happiness in this way. In doing so, he expressly violates God's command, as well as the clear judgment of his own conscience.

Our external acts are neither sinful nor meritorious if they are not freely caused. If an external act is produced by free choice, then the relation it bears to other acts, as well as to its own circumstances, has a harmony or a disharmony of its own. This harmony is something distinct from the will's free act and additional to it.[14] Not every action that we might want to perform will actually be the opportune or timely act for a given circumstance. The good news is that we can often make out this harmony if "right reason" is alive and working in us.[15] Right reason shows us the external act that is relevant to the circumstance

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[14] *Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, (62-67) – W, 206-09. See Marilyn McCord Adams and Rega Wood, ""Is to Will It as Bad as to Do It?" The Fourteenth Century Debate." *Franciscan Studies* 41 (1981), pp. 5-60

[15] *Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, (62-67) – W, 208. [Habitus] inclinat ad actum qui sit conformis rectae rationi, si recta ratio insit operanti.

of a particular action. It also shows us the manner in which this act needs to be performed. It tells us the end or ends to which we need to direct the action. It also tells us what our "inner disposition" toward the act ought to be.

Scotus believes that we can attribute three types of goodness to an external act: a generic goodness, a specific goodness, and a moral goodness. The "generic" goodness of an act is something the act receives from its object when right reason judges that the object is, generally speaking, suitable to will. Right reason judges that in and of itself the object is a worthy subject for the act.[16] The "specific" goodness of an act is something it receives from being properly related to the following circumstances: its end, the manner in which it is performed, the time at which it is performed, and the circumstance of the place in which it is performed. Finally, the "moral" goodness of an act is something it receives when it is in harmony with all of its relevant circumstances. The two affections of the will testify to the fact that our motivation or motivations for performing the act ought to included by right reason among these circumstances.

Scotus compares the moral goodness of an act to the quality of physical beauty. As beauty comes from a harmonious combination (*aggregatio*) of all its elements, so the moral goodness of an external act comes from harmonious combination of all that pertains to it.[17] A single defect or a single deficiency will prevent the act from being moral or good.[18] Just as an object of desire is good for us if it is suitable (*conveniens)* to human nature, so an act is morally good because of its appropriateness (*convenientia*) to all its circumstances. For

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[16]*Quodlibetal Question* 18 (14-22) – (W, 214-16) and *Ordinatio* II, dist. 40 (W, 226-228).

[17]*Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, (62-67) – W, 206.

[18]*Quodlibetal Question* 18 (W, 216). Unde Dionysius De divinis nominibus prima parte, quarta [PG 3, 806]: "Bonum ex una et tota est causa, malum autem ex particularibus defectibus." Tota, inquit, causa, hoc est, integra ex omnibus circumstantiis.

this reason, Scotus speaks of the "moral" goodness of an external act as a kind of "decor" (*quasi quidem decor*).[19] An external act must go with all its relevant circumstances in a way similar to which a particular piece of furniture must go with a room and all the furnishings in that room.[20] Put differently, an act cannot be morally good if it is not placed in the appropriate setting. For example, we can perform an opportune act, but this act will not be morally good if it is not motivated by the affection for justice.

Since there is no moral merit for the agent performing an act unless the act is matched with the affection for justice, right reason will always dictate that acting on the affection for justice is one of the circumstances required for the moral merit of the agent. Reason's role is to try to identify the appropriate act, as well as how it ought to be performed. Right reason dictates the appropriate act (the opportune or timely act) in light of all the relevant circumstances.[21] The dictates of right reason are the dictates of prudence. These dictates are the end product of a line of moral reasoning which begins with the general and universal rules of morality provided by *synderesis*, which then proceeds to less general judgments about right and wrong, and which finally concludes in a particular judgment about the appropriateness (*convenientia*) of an individual action in the present circumstance.[22]

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[19]*Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, nn. 16-17 (W, 206).

[20]This fashion of regarding the external act has been called Scotus' "aesthetic model of morality." See Francis J. Kovach, "Divine and Human Beauty in Duns Scotus' Philosophy and Theology," In *Deus et Homo ad mentem I. Duns Scoti* (Rome: Societas Internationalis Scotistica, 1972), pp. 445-59. Also Marilyn McCord Adams and Rega Wood, ""Is to Will It as Bad as to Do It?" The Fourteenth Century Debate." *Franciscan Studies* 41 (1981), pp. 5-60.

[21]*Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, (62-67) – W, 206-09. See also *Quodlibetal Question* 18 (W, 212, 218). For the notion that right reason commends actions on the ground of their "apparent" justice, see Marilyn McCord Adams, "Duns Scotus on the Will as Rational Power," *Via Scoti: Methodologica ad Mentem Joannis Duns Scoti,* Vol. II, L. Sileo (Ed.) (Rome: Antonianum, 1995), pp. 851.

[22]Vernon Bourke, *History of Ethics*, vol. 1, Chapter 6 (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1970), pp. 89-91.

Scotus offers a standard version of the right reason morality – one fully in agreement with that of Thomas Aquinas, for example.[23] The standards of suitability for any given nature follow logically and necessarily from the nature itself.[24] Human nature itself dictates, for example, what is suitable to it and what is not. God's intellect perceives this suitability or unsuitability prior to any act of his own will. The divine will does not impose one set of suitability relations on a nature rather than another.

Scotus is neither a voluntarist about suitability relations nor a voluntarist about moral obligation. When it comes to the source of the moral law, Scotus, a celebrated voluntarist in other areas, is not a voluntarist, but a realist. The moral law is not issued on subjective grounds. Scotus' theory of morality is not a "good will" theory of morality. Morality is more than good intention. The right is not prior to the good. Like the standards of suitability, the standards of morality, what is good and right for us as human beings, follow logically and necessarily from the nature of a particular thing.

The moral law is not something issued by the will of a legislator – whether God's will or the will of an individual or a group of individuals. The font of moral obligation, our intrinsic rule of rectitude, is the judgment of the intellect. Ultimately, it is the judgment of God's intellect and the perfect knowledge informing it. On a day to day basis, the font of moral obligation for each and every one of us is his own best judgment as to what is the best thing to do in the given circumstance. Just as we are morally obligated to inform our conscience properly, so too we are morally obligated to follow our conscience when we are certain of it – even when, unknown to us at the time, it is out of harmony with what is objectively right

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[23]Vernon Bourke, *History of Ethics*, vol. 1, Chapter 6 (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1970), pp. 89-91.

[24]*Quodlibet* 18.3-4 (W, 210) and *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 268-86, especially 274-6). See C.P. Ragland, "Scotus on the Decalogue: What Sort of Voluntarism?" *Vivarium* 36 (1998), pp. 67-81.

and so with right reason. Scotus is fully committed to the Aristotelian model of moral obligation as rational self-command.[25] We are creatures who regulate our own behavior in the light of what we know. The goal is to make a judgment, to formulate and follow a rule of action, which is actually in harmony with right reason. We ought always to follow the dictates of right reason because these dictates are never erroneous. What is more, it seems likely that Scotus thinks of 'rightness' as requiring more than simply following the norms or rules of suitability as dictated by human nature. Rightness seems inseparable from following the rule of justice to which the affection for justice inclines us.[26] One person may perform an appropriate act under the influence of the affection for justice, another may perform an appropriate act on the basis of the affection for the advantageous. Both acts are efficacious. But only the first person acts rightly and righteously.

Scotus makes morality live exclusively off of the affection for justice. The affection for justice never fails to provides us with moral motivations. No matter whether we act on the affection for justice alone or in concord with the affection for the advantageous, we always choose and act for moral reasons.[27] Moral behavior is behavior motivated by the affection for justice – whether by the affection for justice alone or in concord with the affection for the advantageous. The pursuit of happiness, on the other hand, does provide a rationale for loving and for acting. But this rationale is not moral. We could not act morally if we did not possess the affection for justice. Scotus will not even allow for the possibility that acting exclusively on the affection for the advantageous might count, in very select

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[25]C.P. Ragland, "Scotus on the Decalogue: What Sort of Voluntarism?" *Vivarium* 36 (1998), p. 69.

[26]Marilyn McCord Adams, "Duns Scotus on the Will as Rational Power," *Via Scoti: Methodologica ad Mentem Joannis Duns Scoti,* Vol. II, L. Sileo (Ed.) (Rome: Antonianum, 1995), pp. 851-52.

[27]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, question 2 (39-40).

circumstances, as a "inferior grade" of moral behavior. He will not allow for a two-tier system of morality.

The affection for the advantageous is the seat of our natural desire for our own proper perfection. It is the seat of our natural desire for perfect happiness – for the state in which the good that we are both meant and designed to accomplish shall be fully and concretely effected. Perfect happiness is the ultimate and proper object of the affection for the advantageous.

Every nature has a natural appetite for its own proper perfection: and so every thing – whether a rational creature or a stone – tends towards its own proper perfection. Now a natural appetite in a rational creature is not an inclination to "act" toward its proper perfection. As Scotus points out, a natural appetite is an inclination that inclines a rational creature to "tend" toward its own proper perfection.[28] Unlike the natural appetite of a stone, for example, the affection for the advantageous inclines us to tend toward a proper perfection which lies primarily in the satisfaction and fulfillment of rational desires. The affection for the advantageous is the driving propensity behind our quest for the beatific state.

The affection for the advantageous cannot offer us a platform for morality because of its complete absorption with the self and its needs and wants. The affection for the advantageous orders everything it desires to the self (*nisi in ordine ad se*).[29] It orders every object of desire to the needs and the wants of the self, no matter whether these needs and

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[28] *Ordinatio* III, dist. 17 (W, 180-83). Sed quid de voluntate naturali et libera? Suntne duae potentiae? Dico quod appetitus naturalis in qualibet re generali nomine accipitur pro inclinatione naturali rei ad suam propriam perfectionem, sicut lapis inclinatur naturaliter ad centrum... Dico quod voluntas naturalis... [esse] inclinationem potentiae ad tendendum in propriam perfectionem suam, non ad agendum ut sic.

[29] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 26 (W, 178). Secundum autem affectionem commodi nihil potest velle nisi in ordine ad se, et hanc haberet si praecise esset appetitus intellectus sine libertate sequens cognitionem intellectivam, sicut appetitus sensitivus sequitur cognitionem sensitivam.

wants are innate or acquired. Ultimately, it orders every one of its objects the "state" which is most advantageous to the person willing. In this state, his nature will be realized most perfectly (and so most blissfully).[30] The affection for the advantageous treats everything outside of the self as a means to the happiness of the self. As Scotus' treatment of Lucifer makes clear, not even God is exempt. Lucifer's greatest sin in the second moment of moral disorder is to treat God as nothing more than a means to his own happiness. Treating God in this way is unavoidable since Lucifer's pursuit of perfect happiness is motivated exclusively by the affection for the advantageous.

From the point of view of the affection for the advantageous, no person or thing is desirable or attractive apart from self-interest. Something is good because it serves our end. Something possesses meaning or value only in so far as it seems capable of advancing our cause. Anytime we are motivated exclusively by the affection for the advantageous, we necessarily choose and act out of naked partiality. The motives it provides are wholeheartedly self-seeking. If an object cannot be consciously related to our happiness, the affection for the advantageous cannot bring us to desire it. We cannot even love another if some advantage does not appear to accrue to us in the process. In sum, choice and act are contingent upon real or apparent self-interest.

The affection for the advantageous never permits us to love and pursue an object selflessly, for what it is in itself.[31] Indeed, the goodness of a thing considered in and of itself is something impalpable to the affection for the advantageous. It cannot, so to speak, either

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[30] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (54).

[31] Our position here and throughout this chapter is that the affection for the advantageous is entirely self-regarding. Perhaps, the most powerful argument against such a claim is the inability of the affection for the advantageous to achieve its proper object apart from the affection for justice. We will examine this argument later on. For a defense of the notion that the affection for the advantageous is not as entirely self-regarding, see Thomas Williams' article, "How Scotus Separates Morality from Happiness," *The American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 69 (1995), pp. 432-35. Williams admits that the textual support for this reading is not strong.

taste or see the intrinsic goodness or worth of the objects of its desire. Whenever we act exclusively on this affection, we always act with calculation, with both eyes fixed firmly on our own advantage. The affection for the advantageous dooms us to seek every good beyond the self as a "means" to our own happiness.[32] This affection would, so to speak, "dominate" all that it engages.

Yet the problem with acting on the affection for the advantageous alone is not that we treat objects of desire as means rather than ends. After all, this is the only way that the affection for the advantageous can treat its objects. The problem is that when we act on the affection for advantageous alone, certain objects of desire are treated as a means only, when they "ought" to be treated as both means and ends. Or, again, the problem resides in treating an object as an end only, when it ought to be treated as a means to a further end, as well. When Lucifer desires his own perfect happiness inordinately, he effectively treats God as nothing more than a "means" to this end.[33] If Lucifer had been motivated by both affections, he would have loved both God and his own happiness in the right way and in the right order. His own self-interest would have rightly been "ordered" to the love of God for God's own sake. Happiness would have been desired as an "end" in its own right, and yet

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[32]Scott MacDonald, "Egoistic Rationalism: Aquinas's Basis for Christian Morality," in *Christian Theism and the Problems of Philosophy*, M.D. Beaty (Ed.) (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1990), pp. 327-54 – especially 338-40. MacDonald believes that Thomas' egoism is not narrowly individualistic since the good of others is part of our own good: "Aquinas seems to claim that a human being's own desires will remain unsatisfied, and hence its own good will remain unfulfilled, so long as the good of certain others remains unfulfilled. Hence, a human being's good, i.e., the ultimate end that a human being seeks, includes the good of certain others as constituent parts" (p. 340). MacDonald thinks this reading of Aquinas' egoism can "account for the *apparent* altruistic concerns of Christian morality" (p. 340, my emphasis). MacDonald cites *Summa Theologiae* Iallae, q. 1, art. 1&3, q. 19. art. 3&10, q. 47, art. 10-11, as well as Thomas' commentary on Book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (L. IX, n. 112). It should be noted, however, that at least one prominent scholar of the *New Testament* believes that purely altruistic motivations play a prominent role in the teachings of Jesus. See Rudolph Schnackenburg's *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament*, 2nd ed., J. Holland-Smith and W.J. O'Hara, trans. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), pp. 103-09, 144-45.

[33]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (62).

also as a "means" to a further end. If the affection for justice had motivated Lucifer, he would have desired his own perfect happiness primarily as a means of coming closer to God – as a means of better loving God. God would still have been desired as a "means" to perfect happiness, but also and more importantly as an end in himself – as "the" end, in fact.

Unlike the affection for the advantageous, the affection for justice provides us with motives for loving and for acting which are thoroughgoingly selfless (or altruistic). Scotus thinks of it as being the more "noble" affection, as the will's "more perfect" point of view.[34] Unlike the affection for the advantageous, the affection for justice does not order the love we feel for an object to the self and its concerns (*secundum quam potest velle aliquod bonum non ordinatum ad se*).[35] Rather, it inclines us to tend toward an object for the sake of the value and worth to which the object can lay claim in its own right.

And yet the affection for justice, like the affection for the advantageous, also seems limited to desiring what is suitable (*conveniens*) to us and to our nature. We only find desirable what at least appears suitable to us. Indeed, one of our greatest struggles is to learn to distinguish between real goods and apparent goods. A real good actually contributes to the perfection of our nature. We must learn to want what we actually need.[36] The difference between the two affections is this: the affection for the advantageous loves

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[34] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 26 (W, 178). Nobilior est affectio iusititiae quam commodi, non solum intelligendo de acquisitia et infusa, sed de innata, quae est ingenita libertas secundum quam potest velle aliquod bonum non ordinatum ad se. And *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (60). Ad tertiam dico quod in bonis [angelis] erat inclinatio naturalis ad beatitudinem, quanta erat in malis, ... [S]ed utebantur voluntate secundum eius perfectam rationem (quae est libertas), agendo secundum voluntatem eo modo quo congruit agere libere in quantum liberum agit: hoc autem erat secundum regulam superioris voluntatis determinantis, et hoc iuste.

[35] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 26 (W, 178). Secundum autem affectionem commodi nihil potest velle nisi in ordine ad se, et hanc habetur si praecise esset appetitus intellectus sine libertate sequens cognitionem intellectivam, sicut appetitus sensitivus sequitur cognitionem sensitivam.

[36] *Quodlibetal Question* 18 (9-21).

an object of desire in so far as the object appears suited to us, while the affection for justice loves the suitable object for its own sake.[37]

Whatever we pursue through the affection for justice, we pursue it as part of a quest for goodness. Since real degrees of goodness exist, this affection must be sensitive to them. If so, it must necessarily urge us to desire some objects more than others. It seems right to think that the affection for justice attaches us to an object based on a frank assessment of its innate goodness, taken both in itself and in relation to an objective and absolute standard of goodness. The affection for justice need not attach us to others based on one common or generic trait. And yet the attachment of the affection for justice can be based on nothing more than a common and generic trait. As we explore in detail in the next chapter, the affection for justice can attach us to any human being we happen to meet, whether friend or stranger. It can do so on the basis of the fact that every person implicated in our behavior is either a rational individual or possesses a rational nature, as well as being a creature of God. Loosely speaking, this trait might be spoken of as impersonal: for through it the affection for justice can attach us to anyone we happen to meet – even to those we do not know well or even at all.

It seems right to say that the proper object of the affection for justice is goodness. More specifically, the proper object of the affection for justice seems to be goodness itself, infinite goodness. If so, the affection for justice urges us to love and desire a person most of

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[37]We have in mind here Scotus' distinction between an object's primary goodness (*bonitas primaria entis*) and its secondary goodness (*bonitas entis secundaria*) in *Quodlibetal Question* 18 (9) – (W, 210): Haec descriptio declaratur: Sicut enim bonitas primaria entis, quae dicitur bonitas essentialis, quae est integritas vel perfectio entitatis in se, importat positive negationem imperfectionis, per quod excluduntur imperfectio et diminutio, sic maior bonitas entis secundaria, quae est accidentalis sive superveniens entitati, est integritas convenientiae vel integra convenientia eius [alteri cui debet convenire vel alterius sibi] quod debet sibi convenire. [Et istae duae convenientiae communiter sunt connexae.]

all, not a state.[38] In other words, even though Scotus never identifies the proper object of the affection for justice in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, it seems right to think that its proper object and ultimate end has to be God.

The affection for justice is more perfect and more noble than the affection for the advantageous because it frees us to love and to will an object for itself, as something good in itself, rather than as something merely good for the self.[39] It provides us with reasons for loving and acting which are impartial. And yet this impartiality should not be confused with indifference. True enough, the affection for justice requires an objective assessment of at least some aspects of its objects. It presupposes the critical distance of the intellect – a critical distance which allows for cool and dispassionate judgments. However, the affection for justice is itself a special type of attachment to an object and this attachment is passionate. The affection for justice does not loosen our commitment to the objects of our desire, neither does it effectively distance us from these objects. On the contrary, the energy of the affection for justice is "practical." The affection for justice communes (*actus communicativus*) with its objects, it participates in them.[40]

Both the affection for justice and the affection for the advantageous seek to engage their objects. However, for all the passion and intensity of the affection for the advantageous, its engagement with its external object is no more profound than that of the affection for justice. In fact, it is weaker by comparison. The strongest engagement of the affection for the advantageous is the engagement with the self – with the willing subject.

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[38] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (42).

[39] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (58, 62).

[40] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. Dist. 26 (W, 178). Ex hoc volo habere tantum quod, cum amare aliquid in se sit actus liberior et magis communicativus quam desiderare, illud sibi et conveniens magis voluntati inquantum habet affectionem iustitiae saltem innatae.

The affection for the advantageous skews whatever it seeks to the self and its interests and concerns. It never wholly embraces its object. The affection for justice, on the other hand, strives to embrace its object in its entirety. When we love an object of desire for selfless reasons, the love we feel for it is actually more proportionate to the objective goodness of the object. Through it, we see the object in its greater totality and love it accordingly. The affection for justice begins with a passionate perception of its object. This passionate perception gives rise in its turn to a passionate appreciation or a passionate admiration of the object. For Scotus, an act motivated by the affection for justice is more suitable (*conveniens*) to the will since it allows for greater communication with or participation in (*magis communicativus*) the objects of our desire.[41]

Now Scotus does not speak of the affection for justice only in terms of selflessness and selfless attachment. He also speaks of it in law-like terms. "Moderating" the affection for the advantageous means ordering or subordinating our self-interested motives to our selfless motives. For Scotus, it also means preventing it from acting only on its own "rule" of action in isolation from another and higher "rule" of action.[42] Where morality is concerned, we are obliged to follow this higher rule. The intellect formulates this higher rule. As we will see in the fourth chapter, it often does so under the influence (or direction) of the affection for justice. Once formulated, the affection for justice becomes the principal advocate of this higher rule. If the affection for justice succeeds in moderating the excesses of the affection for the advantageous, it does so by employing or imposing this rule on the affection for the advantageous. It is with this in mind that Scotus speaks of moderating the affection for the

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[41] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. Dist. 26 (W, 178). Ex hoc volo habere tantum quod, cum amare aliquid in se sit actus liberior et magis communicativus quam desiderare, illud sibi et conveniens magis voluntati inquantum habet affectionem iustitiae saltem innatae. Perhaps, a celebrated use of the word *'communicativus'* is in the Axiom, *bonum est diffusivum et communicativum.*

[42] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (57).

advantage according to a rule of justice which has been "received" from a higher or superior will (*secundum regulam iustitiae, quae accipitur ex voluntate superiore*).[43]

The good angels acted justly and they did not fall. They acted on the affection for justice. They acted in the way that had been ordained by a higher will.[44] Lucifer could have moderated his affection for the advantageous. He could have ordered this affection to the affection for justice. He could have done so because he was in possession of right reason; and right reason was telling him exactly what he needed to do in order to put the right measure and order into his desires (*quas recta ratio habuit ostendere*).[45]

2. Three Areas of Freedom

Scotus is convinced that the possession of the affection for justice frees us for morality. The act of loving something for the pleasure or enjoyment it brings (*desiderare*) is less free as an act than is the act of loving something in itself (*amare aliquid in se*).[46] Possessing the affection for justice allows us to do what is right and just and to do so for the right reasons. For Scotus, there are three interconnected ways in which the affection for justice frees us for morality.

First of all, the affection for justice frees us for morality by freeing us from the need to always will our happiness. It frees us, in other words, from the affection for the

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[43] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (51).

[44] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (60).

[45] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (54).

[46] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. Dist. 26 (W, 178). Ex hoc volo habere tantum quod, cum amare aliquid in se sit actus liberior et magis communicativus quam desiderare, illud sibi et conveniens magis voluntati inquantum habet affectionem iustitiae saltem innatae.

advantageous. We are so ordered to happiness that we can never directly nil (*nolle*) our own happiness or will (*velle*) our own misery.[47] If presented with happiness, especially with perfect happiness, we cannot help but feel attracted to it. But the attraction is never so overwhelming, Scotus argues, as to cause us to lose the power of freedom not to choose it. The will always has the power (the innate freedom) "not to act" toward what naturally attracts it.

We cannot hate perfect happiness if presented with it, but we need not embrace it. We can choose not to choose it; we can choose to act toward something else instead. By the same token, we cannot "knowingly" choose misery directly. We cannot choose it for what it is in and of itself. And yet we can refuse to act on our natural aversion to misery. We can refuse to push it away. We can accept it as an unavoidable "side-effect" of our pursuit of something else. According to Scotus, a rational creature can even refuse to will God. No object, no matter how good, can compel the will to will it in fact. Even if Lucifer had enjoyed the beatific vision before he fell, it is possible that he could have still fallen. The desire to will something at odds with God could have led to a decision not to continue to will his union with God.[48]

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[47] *Ordinatio* IV, suppl. dist. 49, q. 9-10 (W, 192-93). Dico ergo quod voluntas sic determinatur ad volendum beatitudinem et nolendum miseram, quia si eliciat aliquem actum circa objecta ista, necessario et determinante elicit actus volendi respectu beatitudinem et actum nolendi circa miseriam. Non tamen absolute determinatur ad unam actum eliciendum nec ad alium. Ad rationem opinionis quando accipitur quod illud in quo non est aliqua ratio mali nec defectus boni necessario est volitum a voluntate, dico quod falsa est huiusmodi, quia voluntas respectu cuiuscumque actus volendi aut nolendi libera est, et a nullo obiecto necessitatur. Non potest tamen voluntas nolle aut odire beatitudinem, nec velle miseram.

[48] Robert Prentice, "The Degree and Mode of Liberty in the Beatitude of the Blessed," *Deus et Homo ad mentem I. Duns Scoti* (Rome: Societas Internationalis Scotistica, 1972), pp. 327-42. Unlike Aquinas or Henry of Ghent, Scotus insists that the blessed do not necessarily will or pursue beatific state. The intellect first makes contact with God, the beatifying object; it presents God to the will as being in the intellect's possession. The will then elicits an act by which it actively (not passively) chooses to adhere to God or not (p. 329). If the will chooses to adhere to God, then it takes possession of God by adhering to God for his own sake (p. 330). The will is always free to will or not will, to act or not act – even in the face of an object free of any evil (p. 335). The blessed cannot fall

Possessing the affection for justice means that we are not compelled to seek what we think of as being most conducive to our own happiness. Scotus follows Anselm and thinks of the will as the motor or moving cause of the mind. Possessing the affection for justice can prevent the affection for the advantageous from keeping the intellect always and only "focused" on happiness.[49] We cannot help but desire our own happiness. It would be absurd to imagine, as Scotus admits, that a rational nature could exist apart from the desire to seek its own proper perfection. It is nonsensical to think that a rational creature could exist without the affection for the advantageous. What the presence of the affection for justice guarantees is this: it guarantees that the affection for the advantageous cannot determine out of hand either the nature of our deliberations or the scope of our choices. Consequently, our relations with everyone besides the self need not be "contingent" on our own advantage.

The affection for justice makes this possible. It frees us from the influence of human nature and its intrinsic end (our *finis operis*). It allows us to keep our natural desire for happiness at a distance – at arms' length, so to speak. Just as we feel the force of our senses urging us to satisfy their egocentric concern with pleasure and usefulness, so too we feel the force of our intellectual nature (the affection for the advantageous) incessantly urging us to satisfy our egocentric concern with happiness. The affection for justice frees our hand, so to speak, with respect to the affection for the advantageous. It frees the power of the will from the need to seek self-perfection exclusively, as our primary goal and

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because God cuts off this possibility: "There is no reason internal to the will which renders it impeccable, since internally it remains a free faculty; The reason for its impeccability is sought outside the will itself, namely, in the action of God which restricts the zone of its activity: the will retains the potency to sin, but God prevents the realization of this potency" (p. 338).

[49] *Opus oxoniense* II, qq. 1-4, nn. 1-2 (Vivès XIII, 448-49) and *Opus Oxoniense* II, dist. 42, qq. 1-4, nn. 10-11 (W, 172-74). See Allan Wolter's "Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality," in *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, M.M. Adams (Ed.) (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 181-208.

supreme value.

If necessary, the affection for justice can even free the will to divest itself from "all" egocentric concerns. Just as we have it in our power to choose and to act on the basis of the affection for the advantageous alone, so too we have it in our power to choose and to act on the affection for justice alone. Scotus is convinced that rational creatures are capable of desiring, choosing, and then doing what they do not believe is in any way in their own self-interest.[50] Unlike Aristotle, Scotus believes that purely selfless motivations alone can provide the trigger we need in order to move ourselves to choose and to act.[51]

In certain circumstances, we may even find ourselves morally obligated to do what we believe is in the interest of others, but not in any way in our own. True enough, a moral agent should never be prepared to act immorally. But a moral agent is capable of doing the morally right thing without any hope of benefitting himself in the process. Indeed, the presence of two affections of the will means that in this life we can never rule out the possibility of having to choose between our happiness, on the one hand, and acting for a good which we value independently of self-interest, on the other.

The moral agent can stand in the breach and sacrifice his happiness, even his life, for the good. He can do so in the hope that he will receive his reward later – either later on in this life or in the next. If we conceive of God as Scotus does, then being moral is always

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[50]Scotus rejects the notion that we cannot help but always do what we believe is in our own self-interest (*psychological egoism*). He believes that we can do what we believe is not in our own self-interest. And yet, ideally, we should always act for both self-interested and selfless reasons. So Scotus is not necessarily opposed to the claim that we always ought to do what is in our own self-interest (*ethical egoism*). These terms are taken from *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, Robert Audi (gen. ed.) (Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 218.

[51]*Nicomachean Ethics*, IX, ch. 8 (1169a 19 - 1169b 2). Aristotle's treatment of the heroic citizen certainly seems to imply that the moral agent could not bring himself to act if acting did not appear to be in his self-interest.

in our long-term self-interest.[52] In principle, the believer ought to be capable of convincing the affection for the advantageous that every self-sacrifice for the sake of morality is worth it. This is one reason why Scotus places so much emphasis on "moderating" the affection for the advantageous. In practice, however, the believer may not be able to convince himself that doing the right thing is always in our ultimate and long-term self-interest. Believer and unbeliever alike may find themselves called to make a choice between the two affections of the will.[53] Accordingly, the moral person could well stand in the breach, convinced that there is absolutely no benefit to him in the good he is about to perform, – and still bring himself to perform the act on entirely selfless grounds.

If Lucifer had been motivated by the affection for justice, he might have succeeded in "moderating" the affection for the advantageous. If this had been so, then Lucifer's choice of his own perfect happiness would have been necessarily moral. He would have still desired his own perfect happiness, but not immediately and contrary to God's will.[54] He

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[52]This conclusion follows logically if we believe, as Scotus does, that God is a voluntary agent, who is both almighty and infinitely good, as well as being providential. Given such a conception of God, it would be foolish to think of doing evil so that good may come. As Peter Geach points out, "A defiance of an Almighty God is insane: it is like trying to cheat a man to whom your whole business is mortgaged and who you know is well aware of your attempts to cheat him... We cannot balance against our obedience to God some good to be gained, or evil to be avoided, by disobedience. For such good or evil could in fact come to us only in the order of God's Providence; we cannot secure good or avoid evil, either for ourselves or others, in God's despite and by disobedience." Peter Geach, "The Moral Law and the Law of God," *God and the Soul* (New York: Schoken Books, 1969), pp. 126 & 129.

[53]This is important. It tells us that our conception of "self-interest" depends as much on what we believe, as it does on how well we, in fact, reason. If Scotus makes room for the possibility of "rational" self-sacrifice even when self-sacrifice seems completely at odds with self-interest, he seems to do so as a concession to the poverty of our faith or our intellect.

[54]If he had not been able to moderate his excessive desires for perfect happiness, then could he have acted on the affection for justice alone and in direct and painful opposition to his own desire to enjoy perfect happiness immediately? One of the oddities of Scotus' treatment of the Fall is that he never considers whether Lucifer or Adam could have remained righteous by acting on the affection for justice alone. After all, Scotus believes that we always act for moral reasons when we act on the affection for justice alone. The oversight can be attributed, perhaps, to the way in which Anselm had previously framed the discussion of original sin. According to Scotus, Anselm believes that we cannot not will according to the affection for the advantageous (See *Ordinatio* II, dist. 39 – W, 196).

would have been motivated by more than his own self-interest and he would have behaved morally.

The second way in which the affection for justice frees us for morality is this: it makes us free for morality by providing us with the only motivations which are moral, namely, selfless motivations. Indeed, for Scotus, every selfless motivation is a moral motivation. A selfless motivation expresses, at bare minimum, our love for an object which we find loveable, first and foremost, for the sake of some goodness that it enjoys. Just as Scotus wants to shift the focal point of friendship from the self and its interests to the goodness of a friend considered in and of himself, so too he wants to shift the focal point of moral action from the self and its interests (no matter how praiseworthy) to a selfless love for the good we seek. Since Scotus is convinced that all moral action has to involve a selfless motivation, it follows that moral behavior is behavior motivated by at least one selfless motive.

Scotus' theory of moral motivation owes a heavy debt to Aristotle's discussion of friendship in books VIII and IX of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. It appears that Scotus takes Aristotle's account of friendship, reads in selfless or altruistic terms, and then applies it to the whole of morality. For Aristotle, what sets true friendship apart from other forms of human association is the true friend's willingness and ability to act in his friend's best interests. A true friend is able to treat his friend on par, or almost on par, with himself and his own wants and needs. He acts toward his friend differently because the "motivation" behind his loving and his acting is different. He is able to muster more than narrowly self-

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Therefore, Anselm had no reason to raise the question of whether the fall could have been averted by acting on the affection for justice alone. Scotus might have simply let Anselm's discussion direct his own – even without accepting all of Anselm's presuppositions. Or Scotus might have thought that the imperfection involved in willing exclusively according to the affection for justice could not be explained non-sinfully prior to the Fall.

interested reasons for pursuing the good of his friend. A friend can act in this noble and selfless manner, in part, because of the quality of his "attachment" to his friend. Such behavior would be impossible apart from this attachment. Apart from this attachment, a true friend could not desire his friend's good, promote it by his actions, and do so for his friend's sake (ἐκείνου ἕνεκα).[55]

Aristotle does not believe that we are capable of either "choosing" or "acting" for another's good on purely selfless or altruistic grounds. Whatever we do, we do, at least in part, because we believe it is in our self-interest. Even if Aristotle should admit that some of our motives could be selfless, he would most certainly deny that we could move ourselves to a rational act on the basis of such motives alone and in isolation from self-interest. A selfless motive cannot be brought to act if it cannot be married, so to speak, with a self-interested motive. In every rational act, we always find at least one self-regarding motive, calling us to perform the action because it appears, at the very least, to be in our best interest. If we could act on purely selfless motives, our behavior would not be rational. The virtuous are never obliged to do what they believe is in the interest of others and not in any way in their own.[56] For Aristotle, all rational behavior is triggered by self-interest.

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[55]*Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 4 (1166a 1-18). To recapitulate what we discussed in Chapter 1, Aristotle identifies six important marks of friendship: (1) friends must have enough in common; (2) mutual goodwill and affection must exist between them; (3) they must desire to share in each other's joys and sorrows; (4) they must desire to know each other better and to spend time together; (5) they must want to see each other live and keep on living; and (6) they must desire their friend's good, promote it by their actions, and they must do so for their friend's sake (ἐκείνου ἕνεκα). The distinguishing mark of the friendship of virtue is the sixth and last. We never find it present in friendships of pleasure or utility.

[56]Aristotle seems confident that acting virtuously is always best for both individual and society – even when the positive consequences for doing so are not always immediately apparent. Reason gives no grounds for demanding that the virtuous person act viciously in extreme circumstances for the sake of the common good. One person or a thousand acting virtuously is always in the best interest of the common good – even if disastrous consequences for others or for society should ensue in the short term. If the virtuous never act selfishly in guarding their virtue, then acting virtuously can never cost us or others too much. For a counter argument, see Peter Geach's exploration of the argument that the virtuous ought to act immorally for their country, for the common good, in certain

Scotus makes true friendship impossible apart from motives which are purely selfless. A true friend must always act, at least in part, out of pure selflessness. When virtue demands, he can even act for completely selfless or altruistic reasons. Friendship in its highest and most sublime form is inseparable from the constant exercise of the affection for justice.

But morality itself is also inseparable from the exercise of this same affection. We cannot act morally if we do not act according to the affection for justice. It seems to follow, then, that we must treat others as if they were true friends, whenever we act morally. Morality seems to demand that we desire the other's good, that we promote it by our actions, and that we do so for the other's sake (*ἐκείνου ἕνεκα*). The demand seems to hold even when the other is not our friend – that is, even when the profound attachment binding friend to friend is not present to enable or, at least, encourage such selfless behavior. Furthermore, if Scotus is right, then simple friendships of pleasure or utility are immoral. Indeed, much of everyday human behavior seems hopelessly immoral.

Scotus' refuses to allow a two-tier system of morality. He refuses to allow a lower or inferior grade of moral behavior since he refuses to allow that there are certain circumstances in which we can act on the affection for the advantageous alone and act morally. Consequently, he seems vulnerable to charges of moral rigorism. On philosophical grounds, Scotus defends a system of morality that he might have thought of as being fully in tune with some of the most rigorous moral injunctions in the New Testament. Jesus' command to love our neighbor as we love ourselves come immediately to mind – as does

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extreme circumstances. Geach concludes that it is only rational to always act morally given a certain conception of God. Peter Geach, "The Moral Law and the Law of God,"in *God and the Soul* (New York: Schoken Books, 1969), pp. 117-129.

his command to love our enemies rather than hate them.[57]

The third way in which the affection for justice also frees us for morality is this: it frees us to divest ourselves from "some" of our egocentric concerns. Scotus does not set up purely selfless behavior as his ideal. We may well find ourselves in a situation where we are morally obligated to act on the affection for justice alone. If we do the right thing, our action is certainly praiseworthy, perhaps, even noble. And yet acting exclusively on the affection for justice reveals a flaw or an imperfection in the agent.[58] It betrays an absence of concord between the affections. The person who has to constrain himself to act for entirely selfless reasons is out of harmony with himself and with his own interests and desires. He is divided against himself. In one way or another, he is at war with himself. Every time he brings himself to act exclusively on the affection for justice he inevitably finds himself knotted in an inner struggle between his two motivational faces or sides. Whenever we constrain ourselves to act on selfless desires, we always do so against a backdrop of internal division

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[57]One way to avoid this rigorism would be to allow for circumstances in which we could act exclusively on the affection for the advantageous and act morally in doing so. Either the affection for the advantageous would be thought of as providing selfless and so moral motivations; or it would be thought of as providing motivations which are self-interested and yet also moral. Interestingly, With respect to the latter, it is worth noting that Rudolph Schnackenburg finds what might be called a "two-tier" system of morality at work in the teachings of Jesus. Altruistic or selfless motivations represent the best and highest reason for loving and acting, while purely self-interested motivations represent a lower, though still a moral reason for loving and acting. See *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament*, 2nd ed., J. Holland-Smith and W.J. O'Hara, trans. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), pp. 144-167.

[58]There are those who would disagree. Montaigne opens his essay on cruelty (2.11) by calling into question the virtue of those who do the right thing with little or no struggle. He asks us to considers whether virtue is only rightly claimed by those who fight against strong opposing desires. Kant claims that we are morally worthy if we simply do what we ought to do. If we do what we ought to do by going against his own desire, we are not morally less worthy. The highest good we can achieve in this life is a good will and a good will is good for its own sake. The moral choices of some will be motivated almost entirely "from above" and so will involve them in a perpetual struggle with themselves, with their desire for happiness and with all the pleasures that can be imagined to fall under it. However, since we possess this natural desire for happiness, and since it would be inhuman to have to always deny it, Kant sees our "moral task" as extending beyond simply obeying the moral law from above. For very practical reasons, we must learn to "want" to obey the moral law. It is in our advantage to be motivated both from above and from below. See *Metaphysics of Morals* 387-88, 391-393, 401-2, 441, 449-52.

or discord. Whenever we act exclusively on the affection for justice, our motives for acting are moral. But we never act wholeheartedly.

Furthermore, we cannot long hold out against the stiff resistance offered by the affection for the advantageous. The effort required would be mammoth. No one can possibly summon the willpower needed to act consistently against the affection for the advantageous. No one can build a life out of purely selfless motivations and acts. In short, living solely on the motivations provided by the affection for justice can work only as a short-term stratagem. Our natural desire for happiness is neither easily nor frequently denied. For Scotus, a careful observation of human behavior teaches us that we cannot avoid willing our own happiness most of the time and for the most part (*in pluribus vult*).[59] Our wills cannot be inclined or habituated to will any "state" to a greater degree than it is to happiness. This explains why even the just person (*iustus*) finds death, or any other state that runs against our natural inclination (*appetitus naturalis*) to our proper perfection, difficult to choose (*cum difficultate eligit*).[60]

The pursuit of self-interest always threatens to corrupt our ability to make moral choices since it can be pursued on the basis of the affection for the advantageous alone. But, for all that, the pursuit of happiness is compatible with morality. Self-interest can be a

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[59]*Ordinatio* IV, suppl. dist. 49, qq. 9-10 (W, 190). Quod autem ut in pluribus velit beatitudinem, hoc ideo est quia voluntas ut in pluribus sequitur inclinationem appetitus naturalis; impossibile est enim quod voluntas per aliquem habitum habilitetur sive inclinetur ad volendum aliquid magis quam per inclinationem appetitus naturalis. Cum ergo per habitum potest voluntas tantum habilitari, quod ut in pluribus sequitur inclinationem illius habitus; immo, delectabiliter operatur secundum eius inclinationem; multo magis voluntas vult ut in pluribus illud ad quod inclinat appetitus naturalis; et ideo iustus, etiam habito quocumque dono vel quocumque habitum, cum difficultate eligit mortem et est sibi materia patientiae, quia est contra inclinationem suam naturalem; cum ergo omnis appetitu naturali appetant beatitudinem, ut praedictum est, sequitur quod volunatas ut in pluribus vult beatitudinem.

[60]*Ordinatio* IV, suppl. dist. 49, qq. 9-10 (W, 190). In every circumstance, the more virtuous a person is the more he will do the good with fluency and ease. However, when heroic virtue is called for, the more virtuous a person is, then he will act more readily. Yet no matter how virtuous he is, he cannot avoid hesitating to some extent, as he will have to fight part of himself in order to do the good.

legitimate motivation, even though a motivation devoid of any moral significance. Self-interest becomes a legitimate motivation for action when we succeed in moderating the affection for the advantageous before acting on it.

Now we are morally obligated to moderate the affection for the advantageous for three important reasons. To begin with, we need to moderate the affection for the advantageous because we are capable, as we already know, of willing and acting on it alone and in isolation from the affection for justice. We have two inner rules of action implanted in us: the rule of action expressed by the affection for the advantageous and the rule of action expressed by the affection for justice.[61] We have been made in such a way that when we act freely, we are always morally bound to follow the rule of action expressed through the affection for justice. Consequently, when morality is at stake, we must never consciously and freely act exclusively on the rule of action provided by the affection for the advantageous. Whenever we freely choose not to follow the affection for justice, we fail to act morally. We fail even when we follow our conscience and produce an act that is itself good. Moral goodness and moral merit, that is, righteousness, is inextricably tied to the affection for justice.

The affection for the advantageous must also be moderated in order to be able to make its desires agreeable to those of the affection for justice. This is not always easy. The two affections are both situated in the will, but they do not collapse one into the other. We have not been programmed, so to speak, to give the priority to the affection for justice. What is more, the affection for the justice labors under a disadvantage. Just as the sensible appetite is stronger than the rational because its desires are more strongly felt, so, too, the affection for the advantageous is stronger than the affection for justice. Its desires are more

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[61] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (56).

strongly felt than those of the affection for justice. The propensity for justice is the weaker, the less forceful of the two propensities: and so its act of moderating the propensity for the advantageous might be compared to a rider guiding a horse. The analogy limps badly since the propensity for the advantageous is not brutish. However, it does succeed in conveying the difficulty had in moderating an attachment whose appeal is visceral and whose force palpitates through us. The force of the affection for justice can be increased through continued use. But it remains fair to say that the natural torque of the mind disadvantages it and favors instead the propensity for the advantageous. The difficulty of persuading ourselves, for example, that self-denial (whether for the sake of another or for the common good) is in our self-interest should never be underestimated.

Last of all, we must moderate the affection for the advantageous because this affection of the will is inherently immoderate or excessive. This fact further increases the disadvantage under which the affection for justice labors. Scotus commits himself to the notion that the affection for the advantageous runs naturally to excess in rational creatures. No doubt Scotus thinks that the human condition testifies to the existence of such a naturally excessive desire. But Scotus is not content to argue that we possess such a desire either *de facto* or as a result of the Fall. In fact, he denies that it stands as a negative inheritance of the Fall. He is convinced, rather, that God has designed a naturally excessive desire for happiness into the nature of every rational creature. This alone explains why the affection for the advantageous runs naturally to excess in all rational creatures. We possess this natural inclination to produce excessive desires for happiness *a priori.* Experience triggers it, experience is the *sine qua non* condition for its expression, but experience is not the cause of its existence.

If God has designed us to have a naturally excessive affection for the advantageous, then the possession of it cannot be counted as an imperfection. God has

built it into our nature and so it has to be right and good that we possess it. To say that the affection for the advantageous tends to produce excessive desires for happiness need not imply that these desires are morally disordered. For Scotus, the existence of a naturally excessive affection for the advantageous in no way conflicts with the axiom that natural appetite is always right (*semper rectus*).[62]

In order to defend this claim, Scotus introduces a distinction between excessive and inordinate desires. Inordinate desires represent a special sort of excessive desire. They are the excessive desires which we freely and consciously will. All inordinate desires are morally disordered. They are the excessive desires which we are bound and determined to bring to act, circumstances permitting. It follows, then, that an excessive desire for happiness only becomes inordinate when we elicit such a desire without first moderating it.[63] Just as we must right or moderate any excessive desire before acting on it, we must right or moderate the affection for the advantageous before acting on it. This natural appetite naturally tends to formulate excessive desires for happiness. However, because all rational creatures possess the affection for justice, we need not act on any immoderate desire for happiness. Possessing the affection for justice means that we need not act in the most intense way possible (*non summe agere in quod est potest*).[64] The affection for justice gives us the freedom we need to moderate our excessive desires for happiness.

Neither Lucifer nor Adam was determined to act on the excessive desires produced

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[62] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (46 & 55-57).

[63] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (57). Quando ergo accipitur quod 'voluntas, consona voluntati, naturali, semper est recta (quia et illa semper est recta)' respondeo et dico quod consonat sibi in eliciendo actum, sicut illa eliceret si ex se sola ageret; non est tamen recta, quia habet aliam regulam in agendo quam illa haberet si ex se sola ageret: tenetur enim sequi voluntatem superiorum, ex quo – in moderando illam inclinationem naturalem – in potestate eius est moderari vel non moderari, quia in potestate eius est non summe agere in quod potest.

[64] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (57).

by the affection for the advantageous. Neither had to fall. Each possessed an affection for the advantageous that naturally tended to produce excessive desires for happiness. Each was subject to the influence of this affection and its desires and preferences. God had made this affection run naturally to excess in order to force a moral conflict in rational creatures. If a conflict were never to arise between natural desire and moral obligation, then no rational creature would find himself in the position of having to choose freely and meritoriously for God or against God. If rational creatures did not feel torn between God and something else that they desired badly, then no "honest" choice could be made, so to speak, either for or against God.[65] There would be no merit in choosing God, Scotus seems to be saying, if we never felt tempted to choose against him.

Once a naturally excessive affection for the advantageous is implanted, then the conflict between the two affections becomes inevitable for those living either before or after the Fall. It is only a question of time before an impasse is reached between the two affections. The desires of a rational creature will eventually cause a fork in the road he is

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[65]Anselm, who is Scotus' inspiration for the two affections of the will, believes that the freedom of choice is impossible apart from times of moral conflict. If we possessed only the affection for the advantageous, we would not be free. Neither would we be free if we possessed only the affection for justice. Each of the affections necessarily seeks what appears most suitable to its end. However, not even the simple possession of both affections guarantees free choice. When both seek the same object, we seek this object necessarily. A free choice arises only in times of moral conflict when each of the affections is attracted to different objects. At such times, we must choose one of the objects or we must moderate the affection for the advantageous in such a way that it settles on the same object as the affection for justice. See *Fall of the Devil*, 12-13. See also *De Concordia*, 11-13. Scotus understands things differently. As already mentioned, the affection for justice frees us for morality by freeing us from the affection for the advantageous. Now the presence of the affection for justice also accounts for the metaphysical freedom of rational creatures. Like Anselm, Scotus thinks we would not be free if we possessed only the affection for the advantageous. The will would follow the best judgment of the intellect necessarily (See *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40 & 49); and *Ordinatio* III, dist 17 – W, 180). We are free, then, because we possess the affection for justice. Without the affection for justice, the will would not be an unrestricted power for opposites. But, since no nature can exist apart from the inclination to seek its own happiness, it makes no sense to speak of possessing the affection for justice alone. The above explains why we speak of moral conflict as provoking an honest choice, rather than a free choice. For Scotus does follow Anselm in believing that Lucifer and Adam fell while in a period of temptation or probation ordained by God. The good angels, the angels who remained faithful, are now by God's gift of *firmitas* incapable of falling, for instance.

traveling. Then he will be forced to take one path and turn his back on the other. If he chooses wisely, he will turn his back on a path that greatly excites his self-interest and his desire for happiness, and he will do so principally for the love of God.

We must exercise our freedom to moderate the affection for the advantageous. An unmoderated affection for the advantageous lies at the root of every moral disorder. Each of the three moments of moral disorder has to be explained, for example, as a failure to moderate the affection for the advantageous by ordering it to the affection for justice. In each of the three moments, both Lucifer and Adam wilfully decide against moderating an excessive desire for happiness produced by the affection for the advantageous.

The process of moderating the affection for the advantageous is usually described in one of two ways. (1) We can say that our desire for a particular intellectual or sensible good – a desire which falls under the affection for the advantageous – is now moderate, where before it was excessive. Or (2) we say that we have now found a selfless reason for wanting an object of the intellectual or sensible appetite, where before we wanted it for self-interested reasons only – that is, solely as a means to our proper perfection. For Scotus, moderating the affection for the advantageous has as much to do with our motives for desiring something, as it does with how much we happen to desire it.

We need only consider *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, and the six ways in which a rational creature – whether it be Lucifer and Adam, or anyone else – can will something inordinately.[66] We can will something inordinately by wanting it more passionately than it deserves, by wanting it sooner than is becoming, by wanting to possess it in an unbecoming way, by wanting it without meriting it, by wanting it in blatant disregard for the proper causal way of obtaining it. Last of all, we can will something inordinately by

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[66] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (52-53, 58, 62).

wanting something only for self and not as something good in itself, as well. Whenever we act on the affection for the advantageous alone and will something inordinately, our behavior is morally disordered.

Willing something inordinately always entails a failure of moral motivation, and vice versa. Scotus appears to believe that our desire for happiness (unlike, for example, our desire for the good) is rarely if ever deficient.[67] Every time we lack the proper motivation for seeking happiness, every time we would act on the propensity for the advantageous alone, the danger of seeking happiness inordinately mounts and mounts precipitously. Indeed, there might be some reason for believing that every time we act on the propensity for the advantageous alone, we seek happiness inordinately. After all, in the passage that opened this section, Scotus tells us that "a will which does not follow the rule of justice (*regulam iustitiae*) will seek what is most advantageous to it and that most of all (*maximum commodum maxime*)."[68]

If there is a problem here, it is that Scotus' conception of the two affections seems awkward when applied, not to the second and third moments of moral disorder, but to the first. According to Scotus, the Fall is not triggered by an inordinate desire for happiness. The Fall is caused by an inordinate act of the love of friendship for the self. An act of

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[67]It is interesting to compare this position with Augustine's emphasis on the weakness (*difficultas*) of the soul. As John Rist points out,"The original Platonic theory of Forms depended on two beliefs: (a) that there is something 'solid' within us which we can grasp: that is the 'meaning' (in more than one possible sense) of the Forms; (b) that our love (*eros*) of the Forms is infallibly strong enough to drive us on to successful self-improvement. Between the time of Plotinus and that of Augustine, prominent Platonists – notably Iamblichus, but to a degree even Porphyry, Plotinus' most influential pupil – came to doubt, or to deny, that any part of the soul is 'undescended'. As Augustine would see it, that was not only a weakening of the Platonic claim that the soul may now be cognitively incapable of returning to the One or God (that is, its capacity to think or 'know' the Forms may be deficient); it also implied an incapacity in *wanting* to know, an incapacity of desire, of eros." John Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 151-52.

[68]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40). Maximum commodum maxime appetitur a voluntate non sequente regulam iustitiae, et ita primo.

friendship-love, whose object is always a person whom we love for his own sake, is perverted. This act should have been motivated by both of the affections of the will, instead it was motivated by the affection for the advantageous only. It could not have been motivated by the affection for justice since Scotus clearly stipulates in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, that no sin ever proceeds from this act of will.[69] And yet the affection for justice seems better suited to an act of friendship-love. After all, through this affection, as well as through an act of friendship-love, we pursue an object for its own sake. But, as the presence of the word 'friendship' implies, the object of an act of friendship-love is loved and pursued for its own sake. We do not pursue it as a "means" to our own happiness or advantage.

It is not clear, then, how the sin of an inordinate self-love could be motivated by the affection for the advantageous alone. The sins of the second and third moments of moral disorder are bound up with the pursuit of happiness. It is appropriate, then, that each should be explained as an act of the love of the desire motivated by the affection for the advantageous alone. Whenever we act on the affection for the advantageous alone, we pursue our own happiness. The affection for the advantageous motivates us to seek either a person or a thing as a means to our own happiness. Conversely, it motivates us to flee (or even to hate) what threatens our happiness. Now, if the first moment of moral disorder has to be motivated by the affection for the advantageous, both Lucifer and Adam must have decided to love themselves to excess in the pursuit of their own happiness.

The problem is that Scotus never speaks of the object of the first inordinate act of friendship-love as being pursued as a means to happiness. Instead, Scotus speaks of the first moment as a failure to moderate an excessive self-love. He gives the impression that

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[69] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40).

the self alone and of itself was the object of the original sin, not the happiness of the self. Yet the failure of the first moment must be a failure to moderate, not only an excess self-love, but also an excessive desire for happiness. With this conundrum in mind, it is worth noting that Scotus only begins to speak of a conflict between the desire for happiness and moral obligation when he turns to the second moment of moral disorder.[70] What is more, he does not introduce the two affections of the will until he begins to examine the second moment of moral disorder.

3. The Moderating Will

In the context of Scotus' moral theory, we can speak of the "moderating will" in two senses. First of all, we can speak of the "moderating will"' as the affection for justice. As we have seen, Scotus denies that the affection for justice itself ever stands in need of moderation. On the contrary, the affection for justice always provides moral motives. If we act on it, we cannot help but act for moral reasons. In other words, the affection for justice never appears to be out of concord with clear conscience – and in such a way as to make culpable (or vincible) ignorance impossible. In the fourth chapter, we will turn our attention to the relation between the affection for justice on choice and the intellect.

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[70]The treatment of the first moment of moral disorder betrays a stillness, an opacity of reasoning when compared with the violent expression of emotion and conflict, with the *sturm and drang*, of the other two. Perhaps, this explains why Scotus' treatment of the first moment in *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2, is so brief. The treatment of the first moment seems better suited to Ovid's tale of Narcissus in *Metamorphoses* III (339- 44), while the treatment of the second and third moments seems better suited to Milton's depiction of Lucifer in *Paradise Lost*. It is also worth noting that anger seems appropriate to the second and third moments since real external obstacles stand in the way of attaining an object of desire. The first moment does not provoke anger or hatred since the object of desire is internal and always available. Indeed, Scotus opens *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (24-32) by denying that pride could have been the original sin since the irascible passions of which pride is one always presupposes a concupiscible passion. For Scotus' understanding of anger, hatred, and other emotions, see Alan Perreiah's "Scotus on Human Emotions," *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998), pp. 325-345.

Secondly, we can employ the term "moderating will" to designate the frame of mind that all of us need in order to successfully and consistently moderate the affection for the advantageous. Here it makes sense to speak of possessing or not possessing the moderating will. All those who are in full possession of the moderating will have the determination, the willpower needed to moderate the affection for the advantageous on a consistent basis. In short, all those who possess the moderating will in this sense are morally virtuous. When we apply the term "moderating will" to those who habitually succeed in moderating the affection for the advantageous, the term designates a morally virtuous character.

A person's character might be thought of as an expression of the overall shape and structure of his intellectual and emotional world. Scotus wants to get at the dynamic forging or undergirding character. From this perspective, our character is best thought of as expression of how well or how poorly we manage the affection for the advantageous. It seems right to think, then, that the moderating function of the will must aim to ultimately establish more than the proper conditions for a particular moral choice. It must ultimately aim at doing more than just altering a particular preference or correcting a particular error which happens to stand in the way of moral choice and action. Ultimately, the moderating function of the will must aim at molding and managing the overall relation or balance between the two propensities.[71] Moral character is principally this overall relation or balance between the two affections.

For Scotus, we cannot hope to live a moral "life" if we do not find our sustaining motivations in both affections of the will. Not only must we do the right thing for the right

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[71]The Latin verb *moderor* can be translated as follows: to manage, mitigate, measure, to take with moderation, temper, to moderate, diminish, direct, govern, to conduct, play an instrument. In addition, *moderamen* means management, direction, while *modestia* means moderation, orderly, within bounds, moderate, restrained.

reasons and do so promptly and consistently, we must do so as a part of our pursuit of happiness. In other words, the very possibility of living a moral life comes to rest on our ability to moderate the affection for the advantageous consistently. No other spiritual exercise could be more important to the moral life. There will be times, of course, when our attempts to establish concord between the two affections fail. At such times, morality demands that we act on the basis of the affection for justice alone and in open resistance to the affection for the advantageous. But forcing ourselves to act in this way betrays, as already noted, an inner turmoil which can only be debilitating if too long protracted. The absence of concord between the two affections must be counted as a flaw or an imperfection in the moral agent.

For Scotus, it is impossible to act consistently on the affection for justice alone. No one can build a life by acting on it alone. Likewise, Scotus is convinced that we lack the necessary willpower needed to manhandle the affection for the advantageous on a consistent basis. Even if this were possible, however, any protracted effort to moderate the affection for the advantageous by manhandling it seems both horribly inefficient and doomed as a long-term stratagem.

The greatest results are often achieved through the most efficient exertion of effort. This is as true for the movements of the body, as it is for moral behavior. The best among us, therefore, will exert the minimal effort to achieve the maximal result. They will do so because they will move themselves to act readily and promptly. The "pinnacle" of the moral life must consist, then, in establishing a habitual concord between selfless and self-interested motivations and then acting on the basis of this concord. This concord can only be established if we learn to manage the two affections of the will well. We manage them well when we learn how to facilitate the compliancy of the affection for the advantageous to

the affection for justice. Just as we cannot move a heavy, awkward object efficiently by manhandling it, so, too, we cannot manage the intransigence of the affection for the advantageous efficiently by manhandling it. Managing the affection for the advantageous demands finesse rather than brute force.

The best among us will exert the minimum effort in moderating the affection for the advantageous. We cannot live a moral life if we do not inculcate virtues of will which facilitate using the affection for justice to moderate the affection for the advantageous. The more we succeed in moderating the affection for the advantageous on a consistent basis, the less we will find ourselves divided against ourselves. We will be able to give ourselves more wholly to the moral act, as well as to the moral life. Now we succeed in moderating the affection for the advantageous by preventing it from acting "on its own," in accordance with its own internal rule of action, and in isolation from the rule of action expressed through the affection for justice.[72]

The affection for justice frees us to change our desires and so our preferences where necessary. It also frees us to act toward a different end than the one proposed by the affection for the advantageous. When we moderate the affection for the advantageous, we divest ourselves of its errors of desire. In other words, we decide to disinvest ourselves in its errors. When we moderate the affection for the advantageous, two very different motives, the self-interested and the self-less, and two very different ends, the state of happiness and the goodness of rational individuals, are thereby ordered hierarchically, one to the other.

The more our moral behavior flows out of a pre-established concord in us between the two propensities of the will, the better it is for us as moral agents, as well as well for those around us. However, we cannot hope to reach a point where moderating the

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[72] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (58).

excesses of the propensity for the advantageous ceases to require any effort on our part. Two obstacles stand in the way: these are our naturally excessive affection for the advantageous and the Fall. Although the Fall does not cause this affection to run naturally to excess, it has made it impossible for any of us, apart from grace, to avoid entirely either feeling or acting on an excessive desire championed by this affection. We are all morally disordered in one way or another: we are all sinful to a greater or lesser degree. With greater or lesser frequency, each of us will pursue an inordinate desire for our own happiness and so fall into moral disorder or sin.

Scotus is deeply committed to the importance of inner harmony for virtuous behavior. The more virtuous we become, the more effortless it will be to do the good. However, Scotus cannot embrace the classical Aristotelian ideal of perfect inner harmony. He cannot do so because he does not believe that acting morally can ever become entirely and completely effortless.[73] Such heroic virtue is far beyond our grasp in this life.

The oddity of Scotus' claim that all rational creatures naturally tend to desire happiness excessively and that they do so independently of the Fall comes to the fore here. If what is natural – specifically, our natural desire for happiness – has been purposely designed to tend to excess, then it cannot serve as a trustworthy guide to its own predetermined end. Wanting happiness too badly, like wanting anything too badly, can prevent us from acting morally. An excessive desire is dangerous precisely because it can tempt us to act immorally.

The problem is this: rational creatures cannot avoid generating naturally excessive

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[73]Aquinas would agree. In his commentary on *Romans* 7, he argues that even the saint does not do the good effortlessly. For Aquinas, this famous passage from St. Paul does not reveal that he is an incontinent person. Rather, it reveals that he is a a virtuous person and that no virtuous person is exempt from internal conflict in this life. See Norman Kretzmann's "Warring Against the Law of My Mind: Aquinas on *Romans* 7," in *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*, T. Morris (Ed.) (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1988), pp. 172-95.

desires for happiness on a regular basis. The affection for the advantageous is the source of these desires, and it naturally tends to excess. This fact effectively sets rational creatures apart from the rest of nature. While the excesses in other created natures would seem to be naturally self-correcting over time and in reaction to the environment, we cannot avoid having to correct our desires for our proper perfection consciously and rationally over and over again. The affection for the advantageous inclines us so excessively to happiness, Scotus tells us, that we could not help but choose to seek happiness immoderately and in the most forceful way possible if we possessed only it alone.[74] The excessive tendency driving this affection can never be rooted out. Indeed, we are morally obligated to spend our lives moderating it.

A life lived consistently out of an unmoderated affection for the advantageous is clearly not in the least advantageous. Left unmoderated, this affection will eventually direct both angels and men away from happiness and instead toward states of being or character which they are neither meant nor designed to attain. Left unmoderated, the affection for the advantageous will eventually formulate desires which make it impossible to realize its own proper object. Frustration and failure are inevitable. An unmoderated affection for the advantageous has to be regarded as a real and potent threat to our "need" for happiness.

If Scotus makes it impossible to live a moral life apart from the exercise of the affection for justice, he also makes it impossible to live a "well-ordered" or "happy" life apart from the exercise of this affection. Even though the propensity for the advantageous seeks

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[74] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (56). Quando ergo accepit quod voluntas naturalis est respectu beatitudinis, concedo, – sed non actualiter immoderata actu elicito; non enim est 'inclinatio appetitus naturalis' aliquis actus elicitus, sed est sicut perfectio prima, – et haec non est immoderatus, sicut nec natura cuis est. Tamen ita inclinatur affectione commodi in obiectum suum, quod – si ex se haberet actum elicitum – non potest illum moderari quin eliceretur summe, quantum posset elici; sed voluntas ut habens solum affectionem commodi, naturalem, non est causa alicuius actus eliciti, sed tamen ut libera, et ideo 'ut eliciens actum' habet unde moderatum passionem.

happiness as an end, and virtue as a means to this end, neither can be achieved if we cannot muster selfless reasons for pursuing them.

If the affection for the advantageous did not run naturally to excess, we could hope to live a well-ordered life – maybe even a happy life, maybe even a sort of virtuous life, if Scotus would allow that the pursuit of self-interest alone could make us virtuous. From the outside, such a well-ordered life would be indistinguishable from a morally virtuous life. Nothing in the external behavior of the morally virtuous person could distinguish him from the person living a merely ordered life well. The one would appear as morally virtuous as the other. Only by directing our attention to their respective motives for doing what they do, could we hope to single the one out from the other.

If we think of conscience as the intellect's last and best judgment of what we ought or ought not do in a particular circumstance, and if conscience happens to be informed rightly on a consistent basis, then it seems right to say that we could live a well-ordered life – even if the motivation behind such a life was morally bankrupt. True enough, living such a life would put us at odds with one of our two motivational sides. But this internal division might not be experienced as an incessant war. Living in opposition to the affection for justice seems much more manageable, more liveable, so to speak, than living in opposition to the mammoth visceral appeal of the affection for the advantageous. The affection for the advantageous is the stronger of the two affections, and we cannot long repress acting on it. This does not seem true for the affection for justice. Indeed, our egocentrism seems so effortless and untroubled, at times, that we might be forgiven for thinking that we can reduce the protesting voice of the affection for justice from a scream to a whisper.

The fact is, however, that we cannot actually live either a well-ordered life or a happy life on the lights offered by the affection for the advantageous. No doubt, we can

occasionally behave in an orderly fashion on the basis of this affection alone, assuming, that is, that we do not always act in a disordered fashion when motivated exclusively by affection for the advantageous. Whatever the case may be, we certainly cannot hope to behave consistently in an orderly fashion if we act exclusively on this affection. Because it naturally tends to excess, the affection for the advantageous cannot help but lead us astray. Left to its own devices, it is unable to champion ordered and measured desires consistently. On the contrary, it seems right to think that its natural tendency to excess would lead it, more often than not, first to generate and then to champion excessive desires. If so, it cannot provide us with the wherewithal to piece together a well-ordered life or a happy life. By acting on the affection for justice alone, we cannot consistently follow right reason – no matter how lucky we might be, no matter how judicious our intellects might be.

We can possess a proper understanding of what happiness is and so understand how it should be pursued in any given circumstance, and yet we may not actually moderate our natural desire for happiness. We can fail in our pursuit for happiness, not because we fail to desire this conception of happiness strongly enough, nor because we are pursuing a mirage, that is, some false understanding of happiness, – but, rather, because we may want happiness too badly and we may act on this excessive desire. If we sit down to a meal without moderating our hunger first, then the excessive force of our hunger may overwhelm our better judgment and cause us to eat too quickly, thereby preventing us from enjoying our meal. By comparison with this failure of moderation, the effect of an unmoderated affection for the advantageous produces an outright catastrophe. The failure to moderate the affection for the advantageous will prevent us from even sitting down and eating the meal we by nature "need" to eat.

The affection for the advantageous cannot attain its natural end independently of the

affection for justice. The pursuit of unmoderated self-interest cannot order our life or make us happy. Lucifer wills his own perfect happiness inordinately in the second moment of moral disorder. And yet willing his happiness in this way effectively cuts him off from the actual realization of it. Lucifer must have known this. He effectively estranges himself from the one person who could give him what he cannot realize by his own powers or efforts. The best he could have hoped for is that God would perhaps act like an indulgent father and let him have what he wanted – instead of dishing out the punishment he deserved.[75] Scotus finds it intelligible to believe that Lucifer could have refused to moderate his excessive desire for happiness and that he could have done so with full knowledge – and without failing to take anything into account.[76] So badly does Lucifer want to enjoy the state of perfect happiness on his own terms that he is prepared to risk eternal and unremitting misery rather than submit to happiness on God's terms.[77]

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[75]Anselm speaks of this in *The Fall of the Devil* 21-24. Given the superiority of Lucifer's intellect, he could not have willed what God had forbidden if he had thought he would actually receive the just punishment for doing so. The superiority of the angelic intellect also makes it difficult to see how he could have failed to realize that possessing what he wanted could not be counted to his good unless acquired in accordance with God's will.

[76]The premeditation of Scotus' Lucifer stands out in marked contrast to what might be called the impulsiveness and negligence of Aquinas' Lucifer. For Aquinas, Lucifer becomes engrossed in a good and chooses it while refusing to consider all the relevant facts. If he had decided to consider all the relevant facts, he would have recognized that he ought not to choose it. He defies God when he knowingly "withdraws consideration" from facts that would rule out choosing the good so absorbing him at the moment. These facts are available to him for use on call, but he refuses to direct his attention to them. He does not sin by valuing the good he seeks "disproportionately," but by excluding relevant and discouraging information from consciousness. As Justin Gosling points out, the use of "withdrawing consideration" or "partial consideration" to explain Lucifer's first sin seems to rule out the possibility that Lucifer could have chosen to defy God while also attending to the fact that it is wrong to defy God (p. 78). But it is difficult to see how Aquinas' Lucifer could have failed to take into account that he could not benefit himself by defying God. See Justin Gosling, *Weakness of Will* (London: Routledge,1990), Chapter 6, pp. 69-86. See also Jacques Maritain, *Saint Thomas and the Problem of Evil* (The Aquinas Lecture 1942) (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1942), pp. 20-39.

[77]The superiority of the angelic intellect makes it difficult to believe that Lucifer could have knowingly risked eternal and unremitting misery for the sake of finding some "personal satisfaction" in the knowledge that he had not submitted himself to God's agenda. Particularly, if he was confident that a loving, providential, and almighty God would grace him with perfect happiness eventually.

The only well-ordered life is a morally well-ordered life. Scotus divorces happiness from morality, in the sense that a self-interested motivation is never a moral motivation.[78] No desire for our own happiness qualifies as a moral motive, ever.[79] However, Scotus does not thereby commit himself in turn to divorcing the "pursuit" of happiness from morality. The way in which we habitually manage and pursue our desire for happiness is a moral matter. If we consistently pursue excessive desires for happiness, we do not just err pragmatically, we also err morally. The persistent lack of harmony between the two affections represents a failure of moral virtue. If we do not consistently bring the affection for the advantageous into concord with the affection for justice, we cannot be morally virtuous. What is more, we cannot be happy, either.

Like Aristotle and Aquinas before him, Scotus believes that moral virtue is the most important prerequisite of an orderly life. Moral virtue is also the most important single pre-condition of the special type of orderly life we call the happy life – that is, a precondition for the best life we can enjoy here and now. Happiness is not simply a subjective state. Feeling happy is not the same thing as being happy. If it were, then the immoral as well as the moral could hope to be happy – however fleetingly. Happiness depends, rather, on pursuing ends and performing acts which are moral. It depends, that is, on performing acts whose motivation is at least in part selfless. From this perspective, happiness resembles

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[78]The most sustained treatment of this point is found in Thomas Williams' "How Scotus Separates Morality from Happiness." *The American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 69 (1995), pp. 425-45.

[79]John Boler, "Transcending the Natural: Duns Scotus on the Two Affections of the Will." *The American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1993), p. 110. For Scotus, as Boler points out, "morality cannot be an extension or refinement of a project of self-realization and/or eudaimonism (as that Aristotelian theme had been developed in the Middle Ages) but requires precisely going beyond it." And yet it should be noted that Scotus' emphasis on proper internal motivation does not mean that his ethic is not eudaimonistic and teleological. It is eudaimonistic in the sense that internal well-being is an end – even if not the ultimate end. Vernon Bourke make a similar point in his *History of Ethics*, vol. 1., Chapter 6 (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1970), pp. 98-99.

friendship. We cannot attain happiness or the benefits it has to offer apart from a commitment to selflessness and self-denial. In other words, happiness and friendship remain always beyond our reach if we are not committed to moderating consistently the affection for the advantageous by the affection for justice .

4. Moral Virtue and the Moderating Will

We cannot live a moral life if we do not cultivate the habits of mind that establish a consistent inner harmony between the affections of the will. The most important habits of the mind are the three moral virtues: justice, temperance, and courage.[80] Other medieval masters locate either some or all of the moral virtues in the sense appetite.[81] Scotus locates the moral virtues exclusively in the will, however. He locates them exclusively in the will since the only acts we have direct control over are the free acts of the will.[82] Scotus fully

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[80]The cardinal virtues are traditionally prudence, justice, temperance, and courage. Prudence is an intellectual virtue. The others are the moral virtues. Scotus follows Augustine (*De Civitate Dei* XIV, ch. 5-6; PL 41, 409) in considering the moral virtues to be various kinds of orderly loves. See *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 325).

[81]Godfrey of Fontaines locates all the moral virtues in the sense appetite. The moral virtues constrain the will to follow the dictates of right reason promptly and faithfully. Thomas Aquinas places only temperance and courage here. They are habits of feeling. Justice he locates in the will. It is a habit of choice. Justice primarily disposes the will to will what is good for others. Aquinas thinks that each moral virtue is needed by one particular power. The concupiscible appetite (feelings of sensual desire and repulsion) needs temperance; the irascible appetite (feelings of alarm toward a sensible object that seems threatening) needs courage; the will needs justice. The concupiscible appetite and the irascible appetite together make up the sense appetite. See Bonnie Kent, "The Good Will according to Gerald Odonis, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham," *Franciscan Studies* 46 (1986), pp. 122, 126-27, 132.

[82]Scotus treats the location of the moral virtues in *Ordinatio* III, dist. 33, q. 1 (W, 318-47). Aristotle's treats the location of the virtues in *Nicomachean Ethics* I, ch. 13 (1102a 26 - 1103a 10). As Bonnie Kent points out, "The location of the virtues is less a problem of where virtue is than of what virtue is – of what it is to be a virtuous man. When a medieval tells us where the virtues are found, he tells us a good deal about his conception of human goodness." Bonnie Kent, "The Good Will according to Gerald Odonis, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham," *Franciscan Studies* 46 (1986), pp. 119-20.

commits himself to the principle that morality must be restricted to what lies in the direct control of the agent.[83]

The other powers of the soul, like the intellect and the sense appetite, are not within our direct control. Our control over the sense appetite, for instance, is at best indirect. We control the sense appetite indirectly through the mediating influence of the will. But some of us will find it difficult to exercise such an indirect control over this appetite. They will find the passions of this appetite harder to manage. The circumstances of our lives can cause the sense appetite to resist proper ordering unduly. The same effect can be attributed to certain ways in which our bodies are constituted. If our sense appetite does unduly resist proper ordering, we will continually be forced to commit a disproportionate amount of time and energy to bring it under control.

But things could be worse than this. We could be unlucky enough to possess a sense appetite that cannot be mastered, at all.[84] The negative effects of either nature or nurture could make it impossible to order the sense appetite properly, no matter the effort we make. Our sensible passions will simply resist taking on good habits. In this case, we cannot avoid suffering greatly for our morality. Our efforts to act virtuously will be severely hobbled by a disobedient sense appetite. We will not be responsible, however, for this lack of inner harmony in the sense appetite itself. Nor will we be responsible for the lack of

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[83]Medieval masters borrowed this principle from the Stoics, not from Aristotle. See Bonnie Kent, *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 206-12.

[84]According to the Franciscan Gerald of Odonis, the sense appetite cannot acquire habits in accord with reason. The will alone can acquire the moral virtues. If so, it will experience rational or spiritual pleasure in choosing rightly. But the exercise of moral virtue must always take place against a backdrop of the chronic internal protest offered by passions of the sense appetite. No matter how virtuous we may become, we will always have to fight off strong temptations to immorality coming from the sense appetite. Gerald appeals to the example of St. Paul, in particular to *Romans* 7, to justify his conclusions. See Bonnie Kent,"The Good Will according to Gerald Odonis, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham," *Franciscan Studies* 46 (1986), pp. 124-32, 136.

harmony between the sense appetite and a good will. Such chronic disorder is the product of circumstances beyond our control. And yet this chronic disorder cannot prevent us form attaining the moral virtues. After all, the moral virtues are located in the will, and the will can possess them independently of a well-ordered sense appetite.[85] But, clearly, we would be better, more effective moral agents if our sense appetite could be ordered to the moral virtues in the will.

The role played by a well-ordered emotional life in our moral lives is undeniably positive. Disordered passions in the sense appetite can negatively affect the will. Through the will, they can also have a negative affect on the deliberation of the intellect, as well as the judgment of the intellect. The opposite is true, of course, for properly ordered passions. A chronically disordered emotional life creates inner division and inner discord. It divides us against ourselves. It impedes right action. It prevents us from acting wholeheartedly. Chronic emotional disorder is a grave imperfection, it is a character flaw, no matter whether we are culpable for such disorder or not.

Scotus offers us a virtue ethic, not an ethic of good will.[86] We are better moral agents if we succeed in putting the passions of the appetite into good order. If Scotus argues that moral goodness depends entirely upon the will, he does not deny, in turn, that the passions of the sense appetite neither increase nor diminish our moral worth. Fortunately, many of us are lucky enough to have been endowed with a pliable sense

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[85] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 320). [H]abitus est illius potentiae cuius est per se illius operatio; ergo habitus moralis est per se ipsius voluntatis. Praeterea, virtus habet pro per se obiecto bonum honestum; illud est per se obiectum voluntatis. Praeterea, virtus est principium actus laudabilis, II Ethicorum [c. 5, 1106a 1-3]; nulli debetur laus nisi quia voluntatis ait; ergo eius est virtus per quam laudabiliter agit, cuius est per se libere agere; illud est voluntas; igitur.

[86] This thesis is defended at length by Bonnie Kent in *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995). The good will ethic is often associated with Kant.

appetite. A pliable sense appetite is one which we can bend to the direction of the will. It can take on habits which mirror the virtues and vices of the will.[87] If we possess a pliable sensible appetite, then more than likely than not we are morally responsible for the shape it takes. At a minimum, we are morally responsible for that part of the sense appetite which is in fact disposed to obey the will. If we fail to engender good habits in a pliable sense appetite, we fail morally – whereas we are better moral agents if we succeed in engendering good habits in the sense appetite. The passions of the sense appetite have a positive role to play in our moral lives. So they must be cultivated whenever possible.

The will controls the inferior powers of the soul – like the sense appetite or the intellect – only partially and indirectly. Scotus speaks, therefore, of the will's act of choosing and the will's act of commanding.[88] The will's act of free choice takes place within itself, so to speak. A free choice made is not causally determined, either from within or from without the will. The will determines itself freely to the choice. If the will's free choice is always efficacious, however, its act of commanding is not. The will can give its commands, but these commands may not always be obeyed by a lesser power. Choosing to help another is good and virtuous in its own right – even when something beyond our control prevents us from actually helping. Our good intention may be frustrated by a rebellious sense appetite, by certain physical limitations, and so on. Yet it would be better for us (and for the person who needs help, of course) if the will's command were executed. However, the obedience

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[87]Ordinatio III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 324). Appetitus sensitivus, non tantum est persuasibilis, sed etiam obedibilis est, et haec verba bene possunt ponderari, quia bene librum est persuasibile; set non proprie persuasibile, sed obedibile, appetitus autem sensitivus. Qui non est liber, non est proprie persuasibilis, sed obedibilis, quia subiciitur imperio voluntatis.

[88]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 338). Alio modo potest dici quod duplex est volitio: una simplex, quae est quaedam complacentia obiecti; alia efficax, qua scilicet volens prosequitur ad habendum volitum in se, si non impediatur... Potest igitur dici quod in habentibus appetitum sensitivum voluntas potest esse principium electionum multarum respectu boni moralis; et ista volitio efficax est electio quae sola nata est generare habitum, qui licet sit prior omni habitu in appetitu sensitivo, tamen natus est esse principium imperandi tali appetitui.

of powers which are not in our direct control can never be absolutely guaranteed. Here we have Scotus' rationale for arguing that only the habits of the will deserve to be called virtuous. If we have the desire to be morally virtuous, we can always engender morally virtuous habits through the choices we make. But no matter how much we desire to properly order the sense appetite, success may remain elusive, perhaps even impossible.

The moral virtues are habits of choice – they are elective habits.[89] The will generates morally virtuous habits by frequently making free choices in accordance with right reason.[90] If the commands of a virtuous will often succeed in moderating the sense appetite, then the sense appetite will take on good habits of its own. These good habits are not elective habits: so they are not moral virtues, strictly speaking. But they do participate in moral virtue. They are the "images" or "impressions" of moral virtue left on an obedient sense appetite.[91] The will generates the good habits of the sense appetite indirectly, through the repeated commands it gives to an obedient sense appetite. It goes without saying, of course, that a vicious will can generate bad habits in the sense appetite.

Now since the good habits of the sense appetite stand as the correlatives of the moral virtues in the will, it follows that only those who already possess the moral virtues (the virtues of the will) can hope to engender their likenesses in the sense appetite. The commands of the will generate "habits of obedience" in the lower powers of the soul. A habit of obedience in the intellect could be called a habit of thinking or reasoning, while a habit of

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[89] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 320).

[90] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 326). Cum igitur voluntas non sit ex se potentia magis determinata ad unum quam intellectus ex actibus eius frequenter elicitis, potest in ipsa habilitas quaedam generari recta inclinans ad similes actus illam voco virtutem.

[91] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 340). Ad argumenta principalia: ad omnes auctoritates concedo illud quod affirmant, scilicet quod in appetitu sensitivo est quaedam qualitas quae potest dici virtus, tamen minus perfecte huius rationem virtutis quam illa qualitas quae est in voluntate inclinans ad electionem.

obedience in the sense appetite could be called habit of feeling.

Good habits of obedience in the sense appetite greatly benefit us as moral agents. They make the passions of the sense appetite sensitive to the virtuous commands of the will. A good habit of feeling inclines the sense appetite to attach itself to the sensible object commanded by a good will. A good habit in the sense appetite inclines us to desire the sensible objects which are in harmony with right reason. It inclines the sense appetite to attach itself to this object promptly and with pleasure.[92]

For Scotus, then, there is a real difference between the continent person and the temperate person. Both continence and temperance are virtues. In fact, temperance grows out of continence and completes it. However, the temperate person has ordered his sense appetite, his lower appetite, to his higher power, the will, and through the will and its virtuous choices to right reason. In normal circumstances, he feels no significant resistance – either before or during the will's act of choosing – to doing the right thing. The will always makes the temperate choice with pleasure. When heroic virtue is not called for, he normally makes the temperate choice promptly, as well. We should quickly note that the pleasure the will feels here is rational, and not emotional. It feels this pleasure within itself and so on its own terms, that is, as rational pleasures. Likewise, a well-ordered sense appetite normally executes the will's command promptly, just as it normally takes pleasure in bowing to the will's command.

The continent person may move himself promptly to make the right choice. He may feel the appropriate rational pleasure in himself (in his will) while doing so. What he may not feel at all is any sensible pleasure in acting virtuously. His own sensible passions are disordered and they can very easily revolt and trouble both his deliberations and his

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[92] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 326). Praeterea, habitus non tantum ponuntur ut potentiae per eos recte agant, sed ut delectabiliter et prompte.

choices. If this happens, he will move himself to the right choice – although, perhaps, he will do so with less promptness than he would when he felt no resistance to what he knows to be the right course of action. He could even find less rational pleasure in choosing rightly. What he cannot avoid is feeling the passions of his sense appetite as they revolt against the will's command. When the continent person executes his will, he normally does so without any accompanying pleasure in the sense appetite. By comparison with the temperate person, he executes his will inefficiently, often by sheer force of will.

Like all habits, the moral virtues are qualities of the soul which are long-lasting and extremely stable.[93] Aristotle believed that a moral virtue may become so much a part of us that they can eliminate the capacity for free choice.[94] When this happens, we can speak of a virtue becoming "second nature" in the strongest sense of the phrase, namely, ineradicable. Aristotle had no problem accepting that a moral virtue could causally determine choice. He did not believe that absence of a free choice would make moral responsibility or moral merit impossible.[95] The virtuous, like the vicious, generate their habits of the will through the free choices they make. Afterwards, the force of their habits may become strong enough to compel the choices they make. Their behavior can still be praised or reprehended, however. They themselves can still be praised or blamed because they acted freely in the past and so freely set up the habit or the character trait that causes their present behavior. For this reason, Aristotle thinks that such compelling habits can

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[93]Scotus' understanding of a 'habit' depends on *Nicomachean Ethics* II, ch. 5-6 (1105b 29 - 1107a 27).

[94]Bonnie Kent, *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 200-06.

[95]Bonnie Kent, *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 224-26. She cites *Nicomachean Ethics* 1100b 19-20, 34-35; 1128b 28-29; 1114a 11-21; 1150a 21-22.

make us either infallibly virtuous or incurably vicious.

Medieval Christian masters rejected the idea that virtue and vice could be exercised apart from free choice. If moral virtues can become so thoroughly ingrained in us that they become indelible or unalterable, then we can become so locked into a virtue or a vice that we become unable to shake ourselves free of it. For the medieval Christian, both faith and human behavior give the lie to the supposition. They do not believe that the doors either to conversion or corruption are ever locked. The saint can always become a sinner, the sinner, a saint. In addition, the nature of the will prevents a moral virtue from ever becoming so natural to the will as to move it to act independently of a free choice.

A moral virtue cannot serve as the total cause of the will's act. If it could, the choice made and the behavior produced would not be moral. Scotus believes that the habits of the will, both virtuous and vicious, act only in the manner or fashion of a nature (*per modum naturae*).[96] They do not act as strict natural causes. Natural causes always produce the same effect, that is, unless impeded by something exterior to them. A habit of the will has no power to compel the will to act. Even if nothing is there to impede it, a habit of the will can never serve as the "total cause" of the will's act. Moral virtue is never a door to moral infallibility.

Moral virtue can neither be acquired nor exercised apart from the will's free choice. This claim is of a piece with Scotus' denial that we have no choice but to will our own happiness. Scotus believe that we cannot help but desire our happiness; he does not believe we are determined to will our own happiness with each and every act of the will. Our natural attraction to happiness never overwhelms the will, causing it (causing us) to lose the freedom not to choose it. The will is free not to choose happiness even if presented with

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[96] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 320).

perfect happiness itself, just as if it is free not to choose God if presented with God. Nothing (no object of desire) determines it from without. The will is self-determining power for opposites and so determines itself freely from within.

But this need not mean that the will is itself the "total cause" of each of its free acts. The virtues of the will do not determine the will to act. They do not cause us to choose in accordance with right reason. And yet Scotus argues that they can do more than simply "incline" the will to act in accordance with right reason. The habits of the will, whether virtuous or vicious, have a causal role in volition. They can contribute causally to the production of a free act of volition by acting as a partial efficient cause in conjunction with the free power of the will. The principal efficient cause of the will's act is the free power of the will. What this means is that the will itself does not need a habit to act.[97] If this were not so, Scotus contends, then we could never begin to develop virtuous habits in the will. Before the virtue is present, the will must be able to choose rightly if it is to generate a virtuous habit. The virtuous habits of the will are generated by repeatedly making right choices in accordance with right reason. Once a virtue is "in place," however, the free power of the will can allow the moving force of the habit to lead it, but only in part. The habits of the will can function like the object presented by the intellect.[98] They can serve as a partial

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[97] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 332).

[98] In *Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, pt. 1, q. 2 (158, 181), Scotus also concedes the possibility that the habits of the will may simply "incline" the will to choose in accordance with right reason and nothing more. He does not favor this position, however. See Bonnie Kent, *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 243-44. The need to make such a concession seems connected with another and related concession. Scotus writes his early *Lectura* convinced that the will alone (*nihil aliud a voluntate*) cannot be the sole or total efficient cause (*causa totalis*) of its own act (*actus volendi*). He attacks radical voluntarists like Henry of Ghent and argues for a middle position between extreme voluntarists and extreme intellectualists. He argues for a moderate voluntarism. The will is a partial cause (*causa partialis*) of the act of willing (*actus volendi*) along with the object presented by the intellect. The two together (*utraque simul*) are a unified, total cause (*causa totalis*). He maintains his middle position throughout his teaching career. However, from his Paris days on he concedes that radical voluntarism is also viable as a position – even if not his favored position. See Stephen

or secondary efficient cause of a free act of volition.

For Scotus, the virtues of the will take an active part in the choices we make and in the actions we perform. They are central to a moral life. They make us better moral agents. The virtuous act which is caused both by the free power of the will and by a virtuous habit is more perfect and more intense than it would be if it were caused by the free power of the will alone.[99] The moral virtues work on the will (on us) prior to choice. Like all good dispositions, the moral virtues remove impediments to choosing rightly. They also raise impediments to immoral behavior. The virtuous are pleased by the thought of doing good, just as they are troubled by thoughts of doing wrong. What is more, the moral virtues work on the will (on us) in the process of choosing. Like all habits, the virtues enable a power to act with ease and with pleasure. They increase the speed at which a choice is taken and the act performed. The exercise of a moral virtue allows the will to move itself more readily and fluently to the right act than would be the case without it. Indeed, the exercise of a moral virtue means that the will in choosing virtuously will experience delight – a rational delight or satisfaction – in the choice. When the virtuous person acts viciously, moral virtue has the opposite effect. It saddens the will, and the will has to force itself to act.

Scotus gives three reasons why the will needs good habits even more than does either the intellect or the sense appetite. First of all, the will has more need of good habits

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Dumont, "Did Duns Scotus Change His Mind on the Will." *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 28 (2001), 719-94. In this work, we do not explore either of the above concessions. Instead, we have opted for a critical examination of what we take to be Scotus' most winning positions.

[99] *Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, pt. 1, q. 2 (40). Concedo, propter istas rationes, quod tenendo habitum esse causam partialem respectu actus, esset causa secunda et non prima, sed ista potentia esset causa prima et absolute non indiget habitu ad operandum; tamen minus perfecte operatur sine habitu quam cum habitu (et hoc, posito aequali conatu ex parte potentiae), sicut quando duae causae concurrunt ad effectum unum, una sola non potest per se in ita perfectum effectum sicut ambae simul. Et hoc modo salvatur quare actus est intensior a potentia et ab habitu quam a potentia sola. See Bonnie Kent, *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 243-44.

since it is a self-determining power, not only for opposite objects, but also for opposite ways of acting, that is, acting rightly and not acting rightly.[100] Nothing in the nature of the will determines it to will its own proper object. Nothing determines it to choose what the intellect presents as good. Nothing determines it to follow conscience – to follow our (the intellect's, that is) last and best judgment about the choice we ought to make in the present circumstance. The will needs good habits if it is to determine itself rightly and on a consistent basis.[101]

Secondly, the will stands in greater need of good habits than either the intellect or the sense appetite because the will left to itself cannot take delight in acting virtuously. Apart from moral virtue, the will can choose rightly on rational and passionless grounds. The will needs virtuous habits in order to take pleasure in acting virtuously.[102] The first righteous acts of the new convert to morality do not completely destroy his vicious habits. This explains why he acts rightly only with great difficulty and without any delight.[103]

Finally, the will needs good habits more than the lower powers since it is the "ruling power" of the soul.[104] The will stands to the lower powers of the soul as a ruler does to his subjects. The will issues its commands to the inferior powers, just as it issues commands to

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[100]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 324).

[101]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 324). Hoc enim est sola necessitas ponendi virtutes in potentiis ut per ipsas regulentur potentiae quae de se possunt recte et non recte agere.

[102]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 326). Praeterea, habitus non tantum ponuntur ut potentiae per eos recte agant, sed ut delectabiliter et prompte. Etsi autem voluntas posset determinari a ratione ad recte eligendum, non tamen ad delectabiliter et prompte sine habitu proprio ... igitur ad hoc voluntas delctabiliter agat dictatum a ratione, requiritur habitus in ea ad conformiter eligendum actum illi habitui.

[103]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 326).

[104]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 319, 342-6). See Aristotle's *Politics,* Book I, ch. 5 (1259a 37- 1260b 27) and Book VII, ch. 13 (1332b 12 - 1334b 28). See also Bonnie Kent, *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 218-21, 227-29.

the body. So the will has more need of good habits than any of the inferior powers since the good governance of the entire soul depends on developing and maintaining a good and morally virtuous will.

Unfortunately, Scotus never spells out the connection between the habits in the will and the habits in the sense appetite.[105] This is hardly surprising since in his brief life he never managed to produce a systematic treatment of his own moral theory. However, we can better understand the connection between habits of will and habits of feeling by considering Scotus' treatment of the two affections in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2.[106]

What becomes immediately clear when we turn to this text is that the hope of implanting good habits in either the will or the sense appetite depends entirely on how successfully we moderate the affection for the advantageous. A moderate sense appetite enjoys an inner harmony because it is in harmony with a moderate (or virtuous) will – with a will in which the affection for the advantageous is habitually and virtuously ordered to the affection for justice. Indeed, it also seems right to think that the orderly passions of the sense appetite principally mirror the good order found in the affection for the advantageous. The affection for the advantageous is, after all, the affection for those things which are *commoda*.[107] The will directs the passions of the sense appetite to an end. Now the ends which speak to these "pleasure" seeking passions, the end which cries out to them, seem to

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[105]Bonnie Kent, *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 241.

[106]Scotus applies the Latin word *affectio* to the two affections of the will and to the rational emotions we feel "in" the will. These rational emotions, unlike the two affections of the will, are passive rather than active. They are semipermanent qualities that arise from our actions. Alan Perreiah makes this point in his "Scotus on Human Emotions." *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998), p. 331.

[107]The adjective *commodus* can be translated as easy, pleasing, or agreeable. The *commoda vitae* are the goods of life, while the noun '*commodum*' can be translated as convenience, gain, reward, profit, comfort, or as what is in one's self-interest.

fall under the pursuit of happiness.[108]

Adam's original sin is an inordinate self-love. The object of this act is not a sensible object, but the self. His next sin involves an inordinate desire for an object of his dominant sense appetite. He might well have inordinately desired an object of sexual desire, for instance. But no matter what the object actually was, it was desired in the pursuit of happiness. In short, for those with a pliable sense appetite, it seems right to say that the condition of the sense appetite will always mirror the condition of the affection for the advantageous "principally." If we actually succeed in consistently moderating this affection by the affection for justice consistently, then we would have a better chance of properly ordering our sensible passions. The opposite will be the case, of course, if we do not succeed in consistently moderating the affection for the advantageous. Given a pliable sense appetite, the following conclusions seem right: as the affection for the advantageous goes, so, too, goes the sense appetite.

We can conclude by saying, then, that Scotus conceives of the two affections of the will in a way that rules out the possibility that the division we feel between the sensual and the rational could be the principal division in the human person. The way in which he conceives of the two affections tells us instead that the principal division in the human person has to be the division we feel between the two affections of the will. The principal arena of virtue and vice is found on the level of our rational desires. It is found in the struggle to moderate the excesses of the affection for the advantageous.[109]

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[108] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 330).

[109] This would seem to imply that even angels can be virtuous – or, at least, that they could have been before being elevated to the beatific vision. In *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 334-340), Scotus argues both sides of the question without deciding whether the angels can be virtuous or not. One of the objections (W, 336-38) he raises is that angels lack a sense appetite and so they experience no "difficulty" in tending to what is morally good: *[Q]uia virtus est non circa quodcumque bonum, sed circa difficile; bonum autem tale quod ponitur obiectum tale voluntatis non est difficile*

alicui nisi habenti appetitum sensitivum, qui natus est ferri in oppositum illius boni, saltem quantum ad aliquam circumstantiam et ex hoc quod appetitus sensitivus sicut inclinatur in eodem nata est voluntas ei se condelectari; et hoc difficile est voluntati tendere in bonum debite circumstantionatum. Angelus ergo quia non habet appetitum sensitivum, voluntas euis non est nata condelectari alicui tali habitu vel appetitu, et ideo sine difficulte tendit in bonum morale; hoc est circumstantionatum ratione.

CHAPTER THREE

THE MORAL POINT OF VIEW

In *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, Scotus is determined to draw a clear line between morality and self-interest. In every human person, there are two overarching points of view: a self-interested point of view and a moral point of view. The self-interested point of view is driven by the affection for the advantageous, while the affection for justice is the engine driving the moral point of view. The self-interested point of view cannot be a moral point of view since this affection considers its object only in terms of how it can benefit us. The only motives provided by the affection for the advantageous are self-interested motives. And self-interested motives are too biased toward the self and toward its needs and desires (whether natural or acquired) to make the grade as moral motives. For Scotus, we can attach ourselves to the objects of morality through these motives, but the attachment (the love) is always partial to self. Self-interested motives never take the whole object into account. They never permit us to love an object for itself and independently of our own self-interest.

Scotus is determined to move the moral center of gravity away from the self and onto the object of morality, considered for what it is in itself and of itself. We have already seen this same determination at work in Scotus' treatment of friendship, where the "lovability" (*amabilitatem*) of the friend replaces moral betterment as the center of gravity in true friendship. Scotus wants to empty morality proper of any preoccupation with our own self-interest. Therefore, he makes morality stand or fall on the exercise of the affection for justice. All selfless motives are moral motives, and all moral motives are provided by the affection for justice. Furthermore, the affection for justice never provides us with anything but moral motives. So whenever we act on this affection, our motives for acting are moral.

This cannot be otherwise since Scotus stipulates that no sin ever proceeds from the affection for justice (*sicut nec aliquod peccatum processit*).[1] We never act sinfully when we act on the affection for justice. And this is true whether we act on the affection for justice alone or in combination with the affection for the advantageous.

Scotus divorces morality from the desire for happiness, but he does not divorce morality from the pursuit of happiness. Self-interested motives have no role to play in moral behavior if they are not first ordered to moral motives. When they are so ordered, they become, not moral motives, but legitimate motives. They become legitimate motives for moral choice and moral action when ordered to the selfless motives provided by the affection for justice. Indeed, *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, makes it clear that the affection for the advantageous naturally tends to produce excessive desires for happiness.[2] Excessive desires become inordinate and so morally disordered when the will elicits them. It follows, then, that any sustained attempt to live exclusively off this affection will amount to an exercise in futility.[3] Self-interested motives are unable to lead us to the very end they purport to order us to (happiness, that is) if they are not first ordered to selfless motives. We cannot even hope to be happy if we cannot muster moral motives for pursuing happiness.

We do not fall into moral disorder every time we act exclusively on the affection for the advantageous. But Scotus does insist that every morally disordered choice is the result

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[1] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40) . Et videtur ibi esse dicendum quod primo concupivit sibi immoderate beatitudinem. Quod probatur: Primo sic, nam primum 'consupiscere' inordinatum non processit ex affectione iustitiae, sicut nec aliquod peccatum processit; ergo ex affectione commodi, quia 'omnis actus voluntatis, elicitus, aut elicitur secundum affectionem iustitiae aut commodi', secundum Anselmum.

[2] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40, 49, 51, 54-60).

[3] Expressed in more contemporary terms, Scotus does not believe that "pure prudential egoism" is either moral or effective. As a strategy for living, it is ultimately bankrupt. It should be noted, of course, that Scotus thinks of prudential reasoning as something carried out in the light of the gains and benefits of the next life. For "pure prudential egoism," see G.J. Warnock's *Contemporary Moral Philosophy* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 49 & 79.

of acting on this affection alone. Furthermore, Scotus does not seem to make room for a two-tier system of morality. As much as we might like to see Scotus argue that we can, in certain circumstances, act on the affection for the advantageous and act morally, he does not speak in these terms. He does not make room for an inferior grade of moral behavior in certain circumstances – not even when the motives it offers us are properly ordered. Consequently, Scotus seems very Augustinian in his embrace of what seems to be a breathtakingly demanding moral rigorism.

Scotus is a natural law moralist. Therefore, he is also a naturalist about both the content of morality and its obligatory force. He is convinced that an 'ought' can be derived from an 'is'. And yet given the line he draws between the two affections of the will, his own version of natural law morality and the naturalism it presupposes must differ in important respects from the standard version offered by Aquinas and others. On the one hand, Scotus has to affirm that human nature obliges us to pursue our own self-interest, while, on the other, he has to affirm that this obligation is not a moral obligation. The moral 'ought' must be related to real facts about the world; and these facts must obligate us to pursue them, to attach ourselves to them, in the name of more than our self-interest or happiness. They must obligate us to pursue them for selfless reasons.

Scotus needs a naturalism that makes room for two distinct types of obligation: a self-interested obligation and a moral obligation. Objectively speaking, the proper province of the affection for the advantageous is the good and the bad for the human person. Human nature itself dictates what actually suits us and what does not, and we are obliged to seek what is objectively good for us and avoid what is objectively bad. It is in our self-interest to do so. For Scotus, it seems that the 'ought' of self-interest is not the moral 'ought'. The pursuit of self-interest is not a moral obligation; therefore, a self-interested motivation is not a moral motivation.

And yet, within the confines of classical natural law theory, a self-interested motivation can be a moral motivation. But if the pursuit of self-interest is not a moral obligation, as Scotus implies, then a clear line has to be drawn between self-interested obligation and moral obligation (between the affection for the advantageous and the affection for justice). And the act of drawing the line here rather than elsewhere has to be justified on naturalistic grounds.

Scotus is a moral naturalist because he is committed both to the objectivity of suitability relations and to the morality of right reason. However, there is nothing in his defense of either of these positions that implies that his naturalism differs significantly from the standard version employed by natural law moralists of the time. Classical natural law theory presupposes a naturalism that considers exclusively self-interested behavior to be moral behavior in most circumstances. What is more, when Scotus speaks of natural law apart from the two affections of the will, he does not deny either that purely self-interested behavior can be moral or that happiness is the end of morality. When we try to make the two affections of the will fit the naturalism presupposed by classical natural law theories, we realize that these two cannot be married together without altering one or the other. It is as if Scotus were carrying on two related conversations, but without ever explicitly linking the two.

We will consider the alterations that need to be made to Scotus' naturalism in order to support his conception of the two affections. We will argue that the two affections of the will can be married to a naturalism on two conditions. First of all, morality cannot be concerned with promoting what is, objectively speaking, harmful to us. Morality requires the exercise of the affection for justice, and the affection for justice can only love and pursue objects for their own sake. But all such objects are human goods. They are objects which can benefit us and they are desirable on this ground. After all, one reason why acting

morally is often so painfully difficult is that acting morally demands that we look beyond our self-interest when considering the object of morality.

Secondly, morality cannot be concerned with things. Rather, morality must concern itself with rational individuals or, more generally, with those who possess a rational nature – whether created or uncreated. Scotus' treatment of the will's two acts (namely, the love of desire and the love of friendship) tells us that we are incapable of loving a thing selflessly and for its own sake. Only persons can be loved selflessly. It follows, then, that rational individuals must be the objects of morality.

Nothing in the nature of a thing could oblige us to love it selflessly. The same is true for the created person. In no circumstance can the innate goodness (or intrinsic worth) of the rational individual necessitate that we ought to attach ourselves to him by means of the affection for justice. And yet it remains fair to say that possessing a rational nature is a necessary prerequisite for moral obligation.

Possessing a rational nature is the most important fact in the world when the person who possesses it is someone God wants us to love selflessly. No circumstance can dispense us from the moral obligation to love and act toward God on the basis of the affection for justice. The moral obligation here is necessary, not contingent.

Our obligation to act morally toward our neighbor is contingent, however. But it is contingent on one circumstance only. It is contingent on whether a person has so definitively cut himself off from God that he is beyond redemption. The exercise of the affection for justice is inappropriate with respect to the damned, for instance. In this life, however, it the only way to know that our neighbor is an inveterate sinner is if God decides to reveal it to us. For all practical purposes, then, we seem morally obligated to exercise the affection for justice whenever a created person is implicated in our behavior.

Scotus' morality is a morality of inspiration. We never act morally when we act on

bloodless grounds. We never act morally when reason alone (when cold calculation alone) persuades us to act. We never act morally from a cool devotion to duty. We do not act morally if we act selflessly and if we do so on the basis of a rational commitment to a principle or idea. For Scotus, we cannot act on such grounds even if we wanted to. It is an illusion to think that we are capable of acting selflessly and so morally apart from an actual selfless "attachment" to a person. The affection for justice provides us with the energy, with the impetus to act morally. Morality demands selflessness, and selflessness demands a selfless attachment to a rational individual.

1. Suitability Relations

The struggle to define the moral point of view is traditional to philosophy.[4] One more recent and controversial effort tries to distinguish the moral point of view according to four rough and very general marks.[5] This attempt to clarify the nature of the moral point of view will provide us with a helpful tool for distinguishing what is unique to Scotus' moral point of view, particularly in comparison with the standard medieval understanding. With these marks at our disposal, we will be able to respond clearly to important questions like, What does Scotus mean by 'moral'? What does Scotus think is the object of morality? How does Scotus distinguish moral principles from other principles? What does Scotus think is distinctive about moral discourse?

According to this account of the moral point of view, the first mark is the distinctive

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[4]G.J. Warnock's *Contemporary Moral Philosophy,* (London: Macmillan. 1967), Chapter V, pp. 44-61. Mary Midgley directly addresses Warnock's treatment of the moral point of view in her "Is 'Moral' a Dirty Word," *Philosophy* 47 (1972), pp. 206-228.

[5]G.J. Warnock, *Contemporary Moral Philosophy* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 53-58.

attitude or the inner disposition that the moral point of view necessarily implies. Broadly speaking, the moral point of view is matter of great seriousness.[6] We take seriously matters having to do with what we believe to be the right and the wrong way. The moral always wears a solemn or grave aspect. It is never a joking matter in the sense that we never consider its subject matter unimportant or trivial. One sign of the seriousness with which we take morality is this: when we fail to do what we think is right, we are troubled by remorse and guilt.

The second mark is closely related to the first. The moral point of view not only demands a high and noble resolve, but its principles and judgments merit our utmost attention. Indeed, not only are they important to us, they should also be central to how we go about living our lives. The moral point of view is or, at least, ought to be the ultimate guide to how each of us conducts his life.

The third mark of the moral point of view addresses the scope of its prescriptions. Moral prescriptions are the sorts of prescriptions that we naturally want to apply not just to ourselves, but to everyone. Here, the commitment to a moral principle or to a moral judgment cannot be separated from the belief that it applies universally. This belief is part and parcel of the moral point of view. To advocate a particular morality is to think that it is true for everyone – no matter whether everyone is aware of this or not.

The fourth mark of the moral point of view concerns itself with the subject matter or content of morality. Moral principles and moral judgments are not just about anything. If they were, morality would be a trivial matter. The moral has a specific content: and so it has a specific range of concern. On this view, the moral point of view must, at the very least, purport to tell us what actually suits the human person and what does not. To champion a

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[6]Mary Midgley, "Is 'Moral' a Dirty Word," *Philosophy* 47 (1972), pp. 206-228.

moral principle is to make a particular sort of a public profession. It is to profess that some sort of good will come to the human person from its observance – or, again, that some sort of harm will come to him from violating it. The content of the moral, its subject matter, is simply the good and bad for human beings. This cannot be otherwise, the argument goes, since the only hope we have of providing a rational justification for a moral principle rests on the claim that it aims expressly at aiding rather than harming the human person. To feel attracted to a morality that sets out to harm us would be irrational. A moral system is rationally defensible only if it claims to forbid what harms us and command what benefits us.[7]

The preferred mark for natural law moralists is the fourth mark since it is concerned with claims about what suits and what does not suit the human person.[8] When properly understood, the argument goes, the fourth mark is the most centrally important of the four and it logically implies the other three marks. Now natural law moralists are moral naturalists. They reject Hume's Law, the so-called Naturalistic Fallacy, and the claim that an 'is' cannot logically entail an 'ought'. On the contrary, they root morality in the claim that neutrally determinable "facts" about the world do, indeed, entail particular moral judgments. On a natural law reading of the fourth mark, human nature tells us what is good and bad for us. It tells us what benefits us and what harms us. Here what is suitable and unsuitable is a matter of fact. These matters of fact "obligate" us. They oblige us to seek what is objectively good for us and avoid what is objectively bad. It is obviously in our self-interest that we do so. The obligation is not something arbitrarily imposed on us from without; it is not something extraneous to us. Rather, there is an objective correlate for this obligation.

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[7]G.J. Warnock, *Contemporary Moral Philosophy* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 54-55, 57, 59, 60-61.

[8]G.J. Warnock, *Contemporary Moral Philosophy* (London: Macmillan, 1967), p 60-61, 79.

Now Scotus is a natural law moralist. He, too, is convinced that neutrally determinable facts about the world do entail particular moral judgments. In order to make this clear, we need to examine further his commitment to two associated positions, namely, his commitment to the objectivity of suitability relations, as well as he commitment to a morality of right reason. A clearer understanding of the two positions will also prove useful in understanding why Scotus' naturalism has to deviate in important respects from the classical position. Just how it deviates will become clear when we consider these two positions in the light of the two affections of the will.

Scotus is not a voluntarist about suitability relations.[9] He is convinced that human nature (or the nature of any other thing, for that matter) cannot be subtracted from its built-in suitability relations. So it makes no sense at all to speak of any "nature" apart from the laws according to which it has to function.[10] If God could change the suitability relations of

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[9]The claim remains controversial. One text cited in defense of a voluntarism regarding suitability relations is *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 19, n. 7 (Vivès, 417): Dico quod sicut omne aliud a Deo ideo est bonum quia a Deo volitum, et non e converso, sic meritum illud tantum bonum erat pro quanto acceptabatur, et ideo meritum, quia acceptatum, non autem e converso, quia meritum est et bonum, ideo acceptatum. The statement appears in a discussion, not of natural or moral goodness, but of meritorious goodness. Meritorious goodness is the goodness that leads to eternal life with God – something we can never merit. As C.P. Ragland points out, the opening phrase of this passage can be translated in one of two ways (p. 70):

> (1) I say that just as everything other than God is (actually) good because it [that is, the thing] is willed [to exist] by God and not vice versa; or
>
> (2) I say that just as everything other than God (qua possible) is good because it [that is, its goodness] is willed [to inhere in that thing] by God and not vice versa.

Those who take Scotus for a voluntarist about suitability relations prefer the second translation. In his "The Unmitigated Scotus," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 80 (1998), pp. 162-181, Thomas Williams, argues that Scotus is a voluntarist about suitability relations based, in part, on the second translation. Williams' reading is briefly rebutted in C.P. Ragland's "Scotus on the Decalogue: What Sort of Voluntarism?" *Vivarium* 36 (1998), pp. 71-73. A sustained rebuttal is offered by Allan Wolter in his "The Unshredded Scotus: A Response to Thomas Williams," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (2003), pp. 315-56.

[10]Allan Wolter, "The Unshredded Scotus: A Response to Thomas Williams," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (2003), pp. 315-56. Wolter defends Scotus' ethical realism on the basis of a close examination of the following texts: *Lectura* I, dist. 8, n. 285 (108); *Lectura* I, dist. 39 (401-44); *Lectura* II, dist. 2, n. 312-13 (193), n. 321 (195); *Lectura* II, dist. 25, n. 46 (243); *De Primo Principio* 4, conclusion 3; *Ordinatio* I, dist. 8, n. 114 (206), n. 306 (328); *Ordinatio* I, dist. 43, nn. 6-9 (354-5); *Ordinatio* I, dist. 48 (387-9); *Ordinatio* II, dist. 1, n. 141 (71-72); *Ordinatio* II,

human nature, human nature would itself be destroyed. It would be another nature, the nature of another kind of thing, not the same nature with different suitability relations. In other words, God cannot alter the essential goodness of any nature, where essential goodness is "the goodness any being has by reason of its nature, essence, or substance."[11]

Scotus does not espouse a divine command theory of morality. Suitability relations are not foisted on us by the divine will. Instead, suitability relations are already there; they belong necessarily to the logic of the nature itself. The divine intellect simply beholds the suitability relations which inhere in human nature. It reads, so to speak, what is already written into human nature. So God does not impose suitability relations on human nature by divine fiat.[12] God's will (God's arbitrary decision) does not explain why we possess this set

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dist. 3, n. 251 (513-4); *Ordinatio* III, dist. 7, q. 3; *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 18 (Vivès XIV, 702); *Ordinatio* III, dist. 19 (Vivès XIV, 718); *Ordinatio* III, dist. 26, q. un (Vivès XV, 341); *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 32 (Vivès XV, 426-27, 428ff); *Ordinatio* IV, dist. 1, q. 1 (Vivès 16, 86);*Ordinatio* IV, dist. 46; *Quodlibetal Question* 3 (61); *Reportatio parisiensia* Ia, dist. 48; *Reportatio parisiensia* IV, dist. 46, qq. 1-4, n. 10 (Vivès XXIV, 585). A text that Wolter does not consider is *Quodlibetal Question* 18 (W, 210-12): Ista convenientia vel est ex natura extremorum vel, si debeat generaliter reduci ad iudicium alicuius intellectus – cum intellectus sit mensura convenientiae, hoc erat illius intellectus iudicium, qui est regula totius naturae, qui est intelletus divinus. Iste quidem sicut perfecte cognoscovit quodcumque ens, ita perfecte cognoscit convenientiam vel disconvenientiam unius entis ad alterum.

[11]Allan Wolter, "The Unshredded Scotus: A Response to Thomas Williams," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (2003), pp. 330. Essential goodness, Wolter continues (p. 330) "is a proper attribute of its quiddity. It is something that a thing retains by reason of its formal constitution, and this – as Scotus states explicitly [*Ordinatio* I, dist. 43, n. 6-7 (354-5)] – is something it possesses formally of itself, and not by reason of anything willed by God." In other words, "possibles" are dependent solely on the divine intellect, while the fact that something exists (the existence of "actuals") is dependent on the divine will (pp. 326-332). Both the essential goodness of a possible, as well as the grade of goodness it has in relation to other possibles in the hierarchy of their relative perfection is something it owes "originatively (*principiative*) only to the divine intellect" (p. 332).

[12]Allan Wolter, "The Unshredded Scotus: A Response to Thomas Williams," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (2003), pp. 315-56. Contrary to Williams, Wolter argues that neither the goodness of almost all "things" nor the rightness of almost all "acts" depends on the divine will. Rather, what God wills with respect to those things and those acts are to be explained solely in reference (1) to the divine intellect and (2) to the divine essence. The divine intellect considers human nature and its inbuilt suitability relations. The divine will in willing what it actually wills is directed both by the divine intellect and by divine justice, that is, by its own "affection for justice." Since Scotus models the divine will on the human will [*Lectura* I, dist. 39 (401-44)], God's

of suitability relations rather than another. God's command does not explain why some things are good for us and others bad. If this were so, good and bad would be entirely irrational. Not only would God's choice be beyond our comprehension, there would actually be no rational basis for God's choice. And the human intellect could not hope to acquire knowledge of suitability relations through an act of discursive reasoning. But the human intellect can, in fact, read some of what is written into human nature. A discursive understanding of suitability relations is possible.[13] By its own efforts, the human intellect can come to understand that certain behaviors suit us and others do not. Yet the intellect is fallible. So success will vary from person to person, from one context to the next.

It would also be wrong to think of Scotus as a naturalist about suitability relations and a voluntarist about moral obligation. He would not accept the claim that suitability relations tell us what is good and bad for the human person, but that they do not also inform us about our moral obligations. In other words, he does not separate good from right. God's command is not needed to explain, for example, why this particular good act obliges us morally and another does not. Neither would Scotus attribute our knowledge of human values exclusively to God's revelation. That is, he does not think that suitability relations actually determine what is good and right for the human person, but that the human intellect cannot access or decode this information. If such were the case, our knowledge of our

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affection for justice, too, is a natural propensity to follow the dictates of right reason. The divine will is not "determined" to act in certain way toward creatures [*Ordinatio* IV, dist. 46, q. 1 (Vivès XX, 425)]; but it does always "freely" follow right reason (pp. 335 & 350). God "freely" puts himself under the obligation to act justly toward creatures (pp. 342, 348-49). God, who owes a debt to no creature, always stands in debt to his own goodness [*Ordinatio* IV, dist. 46, q. 1 (Vivès XX, 428)].

[13]Thomas Williams, "The Unmitigated Scotus," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 80 (1998), pp. 180-81. Williams makes the controversial argument that Scotus denies that we can know the moral law by natural reason (that is, discursively). According to Williams, Scotus believes that the moral law follows from the divine will. Yet we do not necessarily need divine revelation to know the moral law since we can know the law non-discursively, by means of moral intuitions. We follow Wolter and argue that Scotus does believe that discursive knowledge of the moral law is possible.

moral obligations would rest solely on the moral obligations God decided to reveal to us.[14]

As we have already seen in the first section of Chapter One, Scotus does believe that human values exist independently of the will and they can be "discovered" by the intellect. For Scotus, the good for human beings, the human good, is what suits (*conveniens*) human nature, while the evil for human beings is whatever is unsuitable *(disconveniens)* to human nature.[15] Because they are consistent with the "facts" of human nature, human goods are perfective of both human nature and the human person. We need to possess them if we are to satisfy our objective needs as human beings. Human evils, on the other hand, are inconsistent with the "facts" of human nature. Objectively speaking, they are destructive of both human nature and the human person. An act is good or bad depending on whether it respects the facts about human nature. Goodness and badness always respect human nature and its suitability relations. Scotus does not attribute the existence of human values to an act of divine or human will.[16] A voluntarist in other matters,

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[14]C.P. Ragland, "Scotus on the Decalogue: What Sort of Voluntarism?" *Vivarium* 36 (1998), pp. 70-76. For Ragland, *Quodlibetal Question* 18 rules out a divine command theory of morality. So we must reject the following readings: either (1) that Scotus is a voluntarist about suitability relations and so about the moral law; or (2) that Scotus is a naturalist about the content of the moral law, but a voluntarist about its imperative force. Ragland finds the first reading in Thomas Williams' "The Unmitigated Scotus," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 80 (1998), pp. 162-181. The second reading is attributed to Frederick Copleston's treatment of Scotus in *A History of Philosophy*, Vol. II: Augustine to Scotus (Garden City, New York: Image Books), Chapter L: Scotus – VI: Ethics.

[15]See, for example, *Quodlibetal Question* 18 (9-21).

[16]Alexander Broadie, *The Shadow of Scotus: Philosophy and Faith in Pre-Reformation Scotland* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), pp. 19-51. Broadie argues that Scotus is a realist about values. That is, Scotus rejects divine command theory and argues, instead, for an "ethical rationalism." As a consequence, Scotus implicitly rejects moral relativism. Broadie calls moral relativism the modern secular version of divine command morality: "The modern secular version is to the effect that it is we human beings who create our values by an act of choice; and that, contrary to appearances, we are not merely confronted by our values, as if they had a totally distinct reality, existing independently of our will, and constraining us from the outside" (p. 22).

Scotus is an intellectualist (that is, a realist) about suitability relations.[17]

Because the connection between a nature and its suitability relations is unbreakable, we can speak of two possible categories of human behavior. One such category of human behavior has to do with exceptionless behavior. Human nature could be designed in such a way that some ways of behaving will always factually suit it, while others will never do so. The other category has to do with behavior that does admit of exceptions in certain circumstances. Human nature could be designed in such a way that some ways of behaving will factually suit us in certain circumstances but not in others. Performing such an act is objectively good for us in certain circumstances and objectively bad in others. If both categories of behavior apply, as Scotus and other natural law moralists believe is the case, then each must necessarily respect the innate laws according to which the nature is made to function and function properly.

We can take the liberty of speaking of three distinct levels to the natural law in Scotus' thought.[18] First of all, behavior that is either always suitable or always unsuitable requires exceptionless moral precepts. These moral precepts bind us necessarily, rather

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[17]Alexander Broadie, *The Shadow of Scotus: Philosophy and Faith in Pre-Reformation Scotland* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), pp. 19-26. As Broadie points out, we should not let crude categories like voluntarism and realism prejudice our understanding of a thinker. Voluntarism is often associated, for example, with both nominalism and anti-realism. But Scotus is both a voluntarist of sorts and an intellectualist of sorts. He is realist rather than a nominalist about human values. This makes him an intellectualist, not a voluntarist, about human values.

[18]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 276). Scotus is in agreement with the definition of natural law found in the *Decrees of Gratian*: *"ius naturale coepit ab exordia rationalis creaturae nec mutatur tempore, sed immutabile permanens."* As Mark Jordan points out in "The *Pars moralis* of the Summa theologiae as *Scientia* and as *Ars*," *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 22/1 (1994), p. 472, "Medieval readers learned about natural law not from vague intimations in the Latin Stoics, but from specific and detailed legal authorities. Both of the compilations of Roman law commissioned by Justinian begin with remarks on a law of nature and a law of peoples."

than contingently. They are necessary truths.[19] The first and most general practical principles of the natural law are exceptionless moral precepts – so, too, are the conclusions that follow necessarily from these precepts. An example of a first and most general practical principle is the principle that good is always to be done and pursued and evil avoided.[20] For Scotus, every exceptionless moral precept belongs to the natural law in the strictest sense.[21] Nothing can justify violating one of them. No circumstance could arise which could dispense us from the precept and its obligation. Not even God can dispense us from heeding an exceptionless precept. Nothing could possibly justify doing the opposite of what it either commands or prohibits. As examples of exceptionless moral precepts, Scotus directs our attention to the first table of the Decalogue.[22] These commandments express our absolute and irrevocable obligation to love God above all else.[23]

A necessary connection exists between exceptionless moral precepts and the

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[19] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 274). Item, quae sunt vera ex terminis, sive sint necessaria ex terminus sive sequentia ex talibus necessaris, praecedunt in veritate omnem actum voluntatis, vel saltem habent veritatem suam circumscripto per possible vel impossible omni velle.

[20] "The good is to be done and pursued and evil avoided" is often called the first principle of practical reasoning. See *Summa Theologiae* Iallae, q. 94, a. 2. For Scotus, the obligation to love God above all stands as the first rule of human action, as the first imperative of practical reason. See Fernand Guimet, "Conformité à la droite raison et possibilité surnaturelle de la charité," *De Doctrina I. Duns Scoti* (Vol. III) (Rome: Societas Internationalis Scotistica, 1968), pp. 542-44. Guimet examines *Ordinatio* III, dist. 27, q. un, as well as *Reportatio parisiennsis* III, dist. 27, q. un.

[21] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 278).

[22] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 276). The first table covers the first three commandments of the ten commandments. Scotus is certain that the first two commandments are exceptionless, but he has doubts about the third. The third commandment calls for the observance of the sabbath. See *Exodus* 20:2-7.

[23] In contrast to Scotus' restrictive list of exceptionless moral precepts, Aquinas' list of first and most common precepts is broad enough to include each of the ten commandments. The commandments of both the first and the second table are exceptionless. See *Summa Theologiae* Ia-IIae, q. 94, aa. 2-6, and q. 100, a. 8. Scotus' critique of Thomas is examined by Robert Prentice in "The Contingent Element Governing the Natural Law on the Last Seven Precepts of the Decalogue, According to Duns Scotus," *Antonianum* 42 (1967), pp. 278-84.

goodness of God.[24] The very nature of God, God's infinite goodness, binds us necessarily. It is a necessary truth that we ought never do anything that could estrange us from God. So we can say that exceptionless moral precepts state our moral obligations toward God, primarily, and toward ourselves, secondarily. (1) First of all, whenever we disobey an exceptionless moral precept, we fail to love God as God deserves to be loved. Whenever we violate one of these commandments, our motivation for acting is disordered with respect to God. In other words, when we violate one of these commandments, the affection for justice does not motivate how we behave toward the Good itself, which is God. (2) Secondly, breaking an exceptionless moral precept is never compatible with the pursuit of our ultimate end. Breaking such a precept will not help us to attain God in the beatific state; it will only further distance us from its realization.

In *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, Lucifer wills his own perfect happiness inordinately and, in doing so, he loves God only as a means to this end. He does not love his own happiness primarily as a means of better loving God for God's sake. This failure to love God as God deserves to be loved stands as his most grave act of moral disorder.

The second level of moral precepts is the level of changeless moral precepts. Changeless moral precepts admit of no exceptions in normal circumstances. They do admit of exceptions, however, in exceptional circumstances. These precepts are not part of the law of nature in the strictest sense. Their rightness does not follow necessarily from the strict precepts of the natural law. In most cases, however, their rightness is consistent with (*valde consonat* or *multum consona*) these precepts.[25] These precepts function like general rules. It has always been and always will the case that we are obligated to follow these

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[24] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 280-85).

[25] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 278-81).

precepts by and large.[26] They always bind us morally in more or less normal circumstances. When exceptional circumstances arise, the human intellect will have to judge whether violating one of them is the right and good thing to do. A stock example of this kind of changeless moral precept is the obligation to return borrowed property. Under normal circumstances, we should return whatever we have borrowed to its proper owner. Yet we may find ourselves in a situation in which we are morally obligated to do the opposite. If we borrow a car from a friend, for instance, it would be wrong to return the car to him if we have good reason to believe that he intends to drive in a reckless or suicidal manner. In such a circumstance, we must hang onto the car until he returns to his good senses.

Scotus also recognizes a second class of changeless moral precepts. These moral precepts can be distinguished from the first class of changeless moral precepts in two ways. First of all, they are more general (or less specific) than the first class: and so they cover a much broader spectrum of human acts and human behavior. Secondly, Scotus expressly ties their dispensation to God. God can dispense us from what they command or prohibit in exceptional circumstances. In other words, God can dispense us from their observance only temporarily. If he could permanently dispense us from these precepts, exceptional circumstances would have become the norm. The world would be turned upside down and these precepts would no longer function as general rules of behavior. This class of changeless moral precepts greatly occupies Scotus' attention since he is anxious to demonstrate why they are dispensable and not, contrary to the opinion of many, exceptionless. Scotus finds examples of the second class of changeless moral precept in

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[26] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 278). Et hoc modo certum est omnia praecepta etiam secundae tabulae esse de lege naturae, quia eorum rectitudo valde consonat primis principiis practicis necessario notis. Sed isto modo habet intelligi illud *Decretorum*, distinctione sexta, canone tertio, "His," ubi dicitur quod "moralia praecepta ad naturale ius pertinent atque ideo ea nullam mutabilitatem recepisse montrant" [PL 187, 42].

the commandments of the second table of the Decalogue.[27] These commandments express our obligation to love our neighbor as ourselves. 'Do not kill', 'Do not lie', 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself' and so on, are classed among the moral precepts that Scotus believes God can dispense us from.[28]

For Scotus, the changeless or dispensable character of a moral precept like 'Do not kill' is clearly revealed when God commands Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. If God had actually ordered Abraham to go through with the sacrifice, he would have licitly killed his own son. He would have willed that Isaac love God; and he would have loved Isaac as he loved himself. He would have been morally obligated to will both of these things. Neither obligation necessitates that Abraham has to will that Isaac continue his corporeal life.[29] God can command Abraham kill Isaac in order that Isaac might quit this life and enter the next. In this circumstance, it would be licit for Abraham to kill Isaac. It would be a good thing for him to do. It would be a good thing for Isaac, as well. God would have made it a good thing to do by changing his will for Isaac. In so doing, he would have created a circumstance in which the "facts" do not add up in a way that make the taking of an innocent life, illicit. Finally, it is important to note that God would not be behaving in either an arbitrary or irrational manner. Whenever God dispenses us from a changeless moral precept, he always does so in accordance with his own affection for justice and so in accordance with

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[27] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 280-85).

[28] For Aquinas, we can also speak of three levels of the natural law: (1) the first and most common precepts, (2) the common precepts, and (3) the secondary precepts. Scotus does not differ from Aquinas on account of his attitude toward the precepts that fall under either (1) or (3). Rather, he differs from Aquinas in his attitude toward the precepts that fall under (2). Scotus refuses to grant that the common precepts of the natural law are exceptionless – that is, that they follow necessarily from the first and most common precepts.

[29] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 284). Nam possible est me velle proximum diligere Deum, et tamen nolle vel non velle ipsi vitam corporalem.

right reason.[30] All that is will-dependent in our relationship with God is moderated by God's affection for justice.[31]

Now the question arises, when can we legitimately presume that we have been dispensed from one of the more general changeless precepts? Can we presume that we are legitimately dispensed from one of these precepts only if we should receive a special divine revelation to that effect? Or if we should simply have good reason to believe that God has dispensed us from it? Scotus himself is not clear on the matter.

On the one hand, we today might want to argue that these precepts ought always to be treated as if they were exceptionless. After all, by comparison with the first class of changeless precepts, claiming that one of these precepts does not apply is a much graver matter. The specificity of the one class leaves less room for abuse than does the generality of the other. We have every reason to think that the harm resulting from a mistaken belief as to whether we ought not return our friend's car will be less than that resulting from a mistaken belief as whether we ought to take an innocent life. Furthermore, the human intellect is fallible, just as our knowledge of the present relevant circumstances can often be grossly fallible. Our knowledge of the future is also grossly fallible – and this is true whether we are speaking of individuals or societies. We calculate and predict poorly. And we are also often unduly biased toward our own cause as to be incapable of being objective. In short, we might want to argue that we are not competent enough to make out the conditions under which one of these precepts would cease to apply. We might want to deny that we

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[30]See Allan Wolter, "The Unshredded Scotus: A Response to Thomas Williams," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (2003), pp. 315-56. Even when God withholds justice from individual persons for the sake of the common good, the exceptions "are always in accord with right reason and in the last analysis are a manifestation of his goodness" (p. 347) [*Ordinatio* IV, dist. 46, q. 1 (Vivès XX, 427)].

[31]Allan Wolter, "The Unshredded Scotus: A Response to Thomas Williams," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (2003), p. 321.

possess the wherewithal to determine when and where God will decide to dispense us from one of these changeless precepts. If we are so convinced, then disregarding one of these precepts could only be justified on God's express command. Otherwise, we would not presume to violate one of these precepts in the name of achieving any good or avoiding any evil.

On the other hand, we also might want to argue that human reason can sometimes amass enough evidence to justify acting against one of the commands of the second table fo the Decalogue, for example. This may be Scotus' position when it comes to a legitimate authority, at least according to one prominent Scotist.[32] God's special intervention would still be required from time to time. But there would also be times when right reason could legitimately presume that God has dispensed us from one of these commandments. Indeed, it could be argued that the day-to-day governance of individual lives, as well as political societies, depends upon placing this trust in right reason.

Most of us today would probably presume the rightness of not telling the truth, for example, when doing so saves an innocent life. And yet we might also fear our competence in legitimately presuming divine dispensation in other circumstances. We are happy to be moral as long as being moral does not hurt (or cost) too much. When the cost mounts too high, immorality can be appealing since it can offer us a way to reduce our risk. So we might fear our capacity to justify as licit what is, in fact, illicit. We might well fear our capacity to "rationalize" unjust means. Claiming a divine sanction for the taking of innocent lives in wartime, for example, can be all too convenient.

By making the commandments of the second table of the Decalogue contingent, Scotus runs contrary to the intuition that some of the acts covered by these commandments

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[32]Allan Wolter, "The Unshredded Scotus: A Response to Thomas Williams," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (2003), pp. 353-55.

are acts that never ought to be done in order to secure any good or avoid any harm. He overturns the intuition that some of these acts are intrinsically evil.[33]

As we will later see, there is at least one case in which God would need to reveal to us when we may violate a moral precept.

2. Right Reason

The second position in favor of Scotus as a natural law moralist is his theory of right reason.[34] Scotus champions a conception of right reason that is fully in line with the standard medieval position. Scotus' theory of right reason has been called an aesthetic model of morality since he speaks of the "moral" goodness of an external act as a kind of "decor."[35] The analogy at play here is that between physical beauty and moral goodness. Just as a physical object is beautiful when all of its elements exist together in a harmonious combination (*aggregatio*) – so, too, an act is morally good when all that should pertain to it

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[33]Bernadine Bonansea, *Man and His Approach to God in John Duns Scotus* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1983), pp. 214-15: "While Scotus' teaching is in line with that of St. Bonaventure [*Sentences* I, d. 47, a. un., q. 4] and other masters of the Franciscan Order, it represents a departure from the doctrine of St. Thomas [*Summa Theologiae* Ialiae, q. 100, especially art. 8], who claims that none of the precepts of the decalogue admits of any dispensation, for they are all concerned with what is formally good or evil and therefore necessary for the attainment of man's final end. The things that are commanded, Aquinas says, are not good because they are commanded, but they are commanded because they are good of themselves; similarly, the things that are forbidden are evil of their nature, and not just because they are forbidden. On such an assumption, no dispensation from God is possible, not even as regards the second table. If a dispensation seems to have occurred ... He will see then that God did not really permit or command any wrongdoing, but he simply willed to transfer directly to himself the subject matter of the command. Thus God, as supreme ruler and arbiter of man's life, his institutions, and material goods, could order Abraham to slay his son, Hosea to marry a woman of fornication, and the Israelites to despoil the Egyptians without violating any principle of the natural law."

[34]See *Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, nn. 62-67 (W, 206-09), *Quodlibetal Question* 18 (8–22) – (W, 210-19), *Ordinatio* II, dist. 7, nn. 28-29 (W, 218-25), *Ordinatio* II, dist. 40 (W, 224-29), and *Ordinatio* I, dist. 48 (W, 234-37).

[35]*Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, nn. 62-67 (W, 206-209). See also *Ordinatio* I, dist. 48 (W, 234-37).

exists together in a harmonious combination. The analogy fails on one point, however. The absence of a single element may simply rob a physical object of some of its beauty; but a human act cannot be morally good if it lacks even a single element necessary for its moral goodness.[36] Moral goodness is matter of all or nothing. Just as an object cannot be a human good if it is not suitable (*conveniens)* to human nature, so, too, an act cannot be morally good if it is not appropriate (*convenientia*) to each and every one of the elements in play.

A free act cannot be morally good if it is not, first of all, both generically and specifically good. An act is generically good when it targets an object which right reason judges to be a worthy object for it.[37] It is specifically good if it is properly related to all of the following circumstances. The most important circumstance is the end. The other circumstances are the manner in which it is performed, the time at which it is performed, and, finally, the place in which it is performed. For an act to be morally good, however, it has more requirements to satisfy than those of generic and specific goodness. The moral goodness of an act is the combination (*ex aggregatione*) of all that is becoming to the act (*omnium convenientium actui*), as dictated by right reason.[38] Moral goodness is an integral suitability (*integra convenientia*).[39]

The very best of moral acts include elements that are not strictly required by right

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[36]*Quodlibetal Question* 18 (20) – (W, 216). Unde Dionysius De divinis nominibus prima parte, quarta [PG 3, 806]: "Bonum ex una et tota est causa, malum autem ex particularibus defectibus." Tota, inquit, causa, hoc est, integra ex omnibus circumstantiis.

[37]*Quodlibetal Question* 18 (14-22) – (W, 214-19); *Ordinatio* II, dist. 40 (W, 226-228). See also Allan Wolter, "Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality," in *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, M.M. Adams (Ed.) (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990d), pp. 197-202.

[38]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 40 (W, 226).

[39]*Quodlibetal Question* 18 (21) – (W, 218).

reason in a given circumstance. They are exemplary acts because they express two or more moral virtues. One virtue alone and in combination with all the other elements demanded by right reason would have been enough to ensure the moral goodness of such an act. But where two or more of the moral virtues motivate an act, the act is even better. It is directed prudentially toward two or more ends. As Scotus points out, the person who goes to church not only to fulfill an obligation, but also to both worship God and edify his neighbor, performs only one act. This single act, however, is motivated by more than one virtue and so it directed to more than one end. Scotus refers to the moral goodness of such exemplary acts as a manifold moral goodness (*multiplex bonitas moralis*).[40]

Now we are able to perform the opportune or timely "external" act for the wrong reasons. In other words, we can perform the act which we ought to do, which the present circumstance demands, but the act is not a morally good act -- nor do we act morally in carrying it out. The act is objectively good. And, like all objectively good acts, it is not only true to the external circumstances in which it is performed. It is also true to "some" of the facts about human nature. After all, an opportune act is the act demanded of a human being in a given circumstance. If we perform the opportune act for right reasons, we act morally and the act itself is morally good. However, we can also do the right thing for the wrong reasons, by going against the judgment of conscience and performing the opportune act.[41]

Conscience is a stimulus to the good. Conscience is an act of the intellect.[42] It is a

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[40] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 40 (W, 226).

[41] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 39 (W, 198).

[42] The conviction that conscience is an intellectual act and not an act of the will is standard among proponents of right reason. It is found in Aquinas, Scotus, and others. See Vernon Bourke, *History of Ethics*, vol. 1, Chapter 6 (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1970), pp. 89-91.

practical conclusion. It is an intellectual habit whose aim is to draw proper practical conclusions as a basis for right choice.[43] In any given circumstance, when the judgment of conscience is clearly formed, it represents our last and best judgment as to the choice we ought to make – and so of the action we ought to take. This evident conclusion (*evidenter conclusam*) may itself be objectively correct or not, but it is inferred from first practical principles which are necessarily true and so exceptionless.[44] The inference is drawn by way of a practical syllogism, while our knowledge of these first practical principles, of principles that are always true, is provided by a habit of the intellect called synderesis.[45]

A clear conscience binds us morally both to a choice and to a course of action. We are morally obligated to follow our conscience whenever we are ourselves certain of it.[46] We are justified in acting against it only when it is plagued by doubts, that is, only when its conclusion is not evident to us. Right reason may demand that we go against conscience and follow instead an opinion backed, for instance, by a trustworthy authority – the authority of divine revelation, for instance.[47] However, we never act morally when we act against a

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[43] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 39 (W, 202). Secundum hoc etiam conscientia potest poni habitus proprius conclusionis practicae, secundum cuius actum nata est conformari electio recta in agibilibus, et ita dicitur stimulare ad bonum, inquantum liberum arbitrium totum habet causam partialem [practical knowledge] dispositam, et sequeretur recta volitio et bona, nisi esset defectus alterius causae partialis concurrentis respectu voluntatis.

[44] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 39 (W, 198). Contra aliud de conscientia arguitur primo quia habitus appetitivus non generatur ex uno actu, sed ex uno syllogismo practico deducendo evidenter aliquid conclusam ex primis principiis practicis est conscientia; ergo non est habitus appetitivus acquistans.

[45] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 39 (W, 200). [I]gitur [synderesis] est in intellectu; et non potest aliud poni quam habitus principiorum, quia semper est rectus, quia ex ratione terminorum virtute et lumine intellectus naturalis statim intellectus acquiescat illi.

[46] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 39 (W, 200). [Q]uod etiam videtur manifeste velle Apostolus, ex illa glossa ad Romanos, "Quidquid est contra conscientiam," etc., ex quo patet quod peccatum aliquod committi potest contra conscientiam."

[47] Scott MacDonald discusses this position as articulated by Aquinas. See his "Egoistic Rationalism: Aquinas's Basis for Christian Morality," in *Christian Theism and the Problems of Philosophy*, M.D. Beaty (Ed.) (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1990), pp. 340-47. He focuses his discussion on *Summa Theologiae* Ialiae, q. 19, a. 4

binding conscience, even when we perform the external act that the circumstances demand of the human person.

Conscience is fallible because the intellect is fallible. The human intellect's appreciation of the facts about human nature will vary from person to person. The same is true for the ability to appreciate the facts about a given circumstance fully. Indeed, a thorough understanding of all the facts at play cannot guarantee that the intellect will actually make the objectively right judgment. There is no guarantee that the intellect will always reason its way to the opportune or timely act. We cannot guarantee that following our conscience will not lead us to commit an evil unknowingly. And yet regardless of whether the intellect gets it objectively right or not, we are always morally obligated to follow what the intellect judges to be the best and right thing to do in a given circumstance.

Following conscience cannot guarantee the goodness of either the act or its consequences. Yet we could not be "better" persons by refusing to follow conscience.[48] The belief that we could be better persons by refusing to do what we clearly think we ought to do conceals a contradiction. When we act against a binding conscience, we always act viciously. Acting virtuously (or morally) never means doing the right thing from chance or utility or malice. But only chance, utility, or malice can explain doing the right thing by going against conscience. For every time we go against a clear conscience we fail to do what we believe with all sincerity is the right thing to do. Instead of doing the good we think we ought to do, we knowingly choose to do what we think of as a lesser good, or even an evil. The good person does not act in this way. He knows why he chooses the good and why he does the good. All those who follow their conscience display personal integrity. Even the person

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[48]The discussion of conscience that follows is indebted to Eric D'Arcy's *Conscience and its Right to Freedom* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961) and to Germain Grisez's *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, Vol. 1, *Christian Moral Principles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983), pp. 73-96, 173-204, 289-309.

of poor moral character is being true to himself and his convictions when he follows his conscience.[49]

For Scotus, as for other natural law moralists, the font of moral obligation for the human person is the individual human intellect.[50] The individual human intellect is the font of moral obligation in the sense that no moral law binds us except by knowledge alone – unless, however, our ignorance is something we choose and so is blameworthy. In this light, when it comes to assessing our moral fault, the crucial point is not whether conscience errs in matter of fact or law. Rather, the crucial point is whether the error of conscience is blameworthy or not. If conscience is doubtful, then the crucial point is whether the error in the intellect's assessment of our moral obligation is blameworthy or not.

The intellect may fail to make out that a particular act is objectively bad for the human person. Indeed, the intellect may not know any better, and it may decide that an objectively bad act is the act that ought or must be performed at this moment. In this case, we are not morally culpable for the wrong done if our ignorance is not chosen. We did not know any better at the time, and we never had the chance to know any better. When we are invincibly ignorant, we bear no moral fault or moral responsibility for the wrong done. However, we would be morally culpable for the wrong done if we could have corrected our

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[49]However, we are in the greatest moral danger when we are committed to immorality and refuse to know any better. We do evil, thinking it good, and we do so without any pangs of conscience. But it is our fault that conscience is silent: we refuse to consider information that might change our mind about what we are doing. It would be better to feel guilty. Feeling guilty is healthy when it calls attention to immoral behavior and incites us to act morally.

[50]If human reason is the measure of right action, God's reason is the measure of right reason. God's intellect has perfect knowledge both of human nature and of what suits it in any given circumstance. Some objective wrong always results from failing to act in accordance with God's knowledge. However, we are morally culpable for the wrong done only when our conscience is in agreement (whether knowingly or unknowingly) with God's judgment and we act against it willfully. We are also morally culpable when our ignorance prevents us from agreeing (whether knowingly or unknowingly) with God's knowledge and our ignorance is culpable. See Scott MacDonald, "Egoistic Rationalism: Aquinas's Basis for Christian Morality," in *Christian Theism and the Problems of Philosophy*, M.D. Beaty (Ed.) (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1990), pp. 342.

ignorance prior to the judgment of conscience and we had freely refused to do so. In this case, we would be willfully (or vincibly) ignorant and so fully blameworthy for the wrong done. Our ignorance would not have been invincible.

It is our moral obligation to try to form conscience properly. The conscience of the invincibly ignorant is erroneous, but they are not culpable for the error since they have made a sincere effort to form conscience properly prior to choosing and acting. The willfully ignorant are culpable for their erroneous judgment conscience since they refused the opportunity to form their conscience properly prior to choosing and acting. In spite of the fallibility of the human intellect, we can hope to form our conscience properly since the intellect does have access to many of the facts about our objective reality. These truths may not always be easy to grasp, but they are not subjective. Where we cannot grasp these truths, or where we can grasp them only with great effort, divine revelation compensates for our inability.[51] So we can hope to form our conscience correctly, just as we can hope to discover an erroneous conscience and then correct it. A good conscience draws practical conclusions which are suitable (*convenientiam*) to the will.[52]

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[51]Mark D. Jordan, "The *Pars moralis* of the Summa theologiae as *Scientia* and as *Ars*." *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 22/1 (1994), pp. 475-78. Jordan argues that, for Thomas, natural law cannot serve as "an autonomous, scientific guide to human happiness" (p. 477). This same conclusion must be even more applicable to Scotus.

[52]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 39 (W, 204). [D]ico quod habitus intellectus practici dicuntur boni vel mali propter convenientiam eorum ad voluntatem, sicut econverso voluntas potest dici recta vel curva propter convenientiam eius ad rectum speculativum vel non rectum speculativum, qui est formaliter in intellectu; tamen bonitas est voluntatis sicut rectitudo intellectus, sed bonitas magis transumitur ad intellectum practicum quam ad speculativum.

3. Scotus' Naturalism

Scotus' commitment to naturalism seems uncomplicated when we consider the position he takes on both suitability relations and right reason. Complications rush in, however, the moment we bring the affections of the will to bear on these two positions. One way of taking the two affections of the will is as two overarching points of view, one self-interested and the other moral. The self-interested point of view is that of the affection for the advantageous, while the moral point of view is that of the affection for justice. The affection for justice always provides us selfless motives and selfless motives are moral motives. They motivate us to love and pursue an object in and of itself, for its own sake, for what it is in itself.[53] Moral behavior, then, is any behavior motivated by at least one selfless motive. Scotus insists that every time we act on the affection for justice, whether we act on it alone or in a tandem with the affection for the advantageous, our inner disposition for acting is moral.

The self-interested point of view is represented by the affection for the advantageous. It cannot be "the" moral point of view; it cannot even be "a" moral point of view. The motives for choice and action offered by the affection for the advantageous are never moral. At best, this affection provides us with ordered, but narrowly self-interested motives. At worst, it provides us with excessive and so potentially inordinate desires. If we act on an excessive desire, it becomes inordinate and every inordinate desire is morally disordered (sinful).[54] It follows, then, that if we act on the affection for the advantageous, we never behave morally. True enough, we do not necessarily behave immorally. And yet if we

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[53] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (58, 62).

[54] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (46 & 55-57).

do not always act immorally when we act on the affection for the advantageous alone, every morally disordered act (every sinful act) is an act motivated by the affection for the advantageous alone.[55] Moral disorder is never found apart from a decision to take only the self-interested point of view seriously. More precisely, moral disorder always involves taking the self-interested point of view too seriously.

Amazingly, Scotus' pessimism regarding the strict pursuit of self-interest is not justified by the classic natural law version of naturalism that we have assumed up to this point. The affection for the advantageous and so the self-interested point of view can be easily fitted to each of the four marks of the moral point of view mentioned earlier. We can even fit Scotus' self-interested point of view to the argument for the centrality of the fourth mark. Once again, there is nothing in the nature of the naturalism we have discussed so far that would exclude a self-interested point of view from being a moral point of view.

If the moral point of view is principally concerned with what is factually good and factually bad for the human person, then the self-interested point of view can be a moral point of view. It would seem foolish to deny that the subject of the self-interested point of view could be anything else. Indeed, if the subject matter of morality is the suitable and the unsuitable for the human person, then it seems impossible to divorce morality from the pursuit of self-interest. The appeal to our own self-interest seems to be a necessary part of any concern with the beneficial and the harmful for human beings. Furthermore, if we have good reason for believing that acting morally is always in our self-interest, and Scotus certainly thinks he does, then morality could ostensibly do without selflessness, except for where the circumstances specifically call for selflessness. Only in a very specific setting, like

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[55] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (39-40). Nunc restat videre de prima inordinatione ipsius 'velle concupiscenitiae'. Et videtur ibi esse dicendum quod primo concupivit sibi immoderate beatitudinem. Quod probatur: Primo sic, nam primum 'concupiscere' inordinatum non processit ex affectione iustitiae, sicut nec aliquod peccatum processit.

friendship, for instance, would we be morally obligated to act selflessly, as well as from self-interest. Otherwise, morality could live off the affection for the advantageous exclusively.

So Scotus has a problem to resolve. He needs to find a way to restrict moral motives to selfless motives and he needs to do so on naturalistic grounds. Scotus is firmly committed to a naturalism that obliges us to pursue our own self-interest in an orderly fashion. Human nature tells us what is, objectively speaking, good and bad for the human person. When we apply human nature to any given circumstance, we often discover the act that is true to both set of facts. It is in our best interest to perform this act. However, if the circumstances call for us to act morally, then acting from strict self-interest is not enough. Even if we perform the opportune act, performing it from self-interest alone would be immoral. We would act immorally, while the external act we perform would itself be good, though not "morally" good.

If we bring right reason to bear, the conclusion is obvious. We would not have acted morally since our motivations for acting were not true to "all" of the facts involved. A moral act demands selfless motivations. Or, again, a fact which is implicated in our behavior demands selfless motivations of us. If the opportune act demands a selfless motive and if we fail to supply this motive, then the act we perform will be good, but not morally good, because we will not have performed it with an eye to "all" of the facts involved. All that is becoming to the act (*omnium convenientium actui*) would not, objectively speaking, be present.[56]

Conscience ought to commit us to performing the good moral act for selfless reasons. The obligation to pursue our own happiness is a "natural obligation," but it is not a "moral obligation." For this reason, we are not morally blameworthy for acting exclusively on

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[56] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 40 (W, 226).

the affection for justice – even though, as we argued in the previous chapters, doing so always reveals a flaw or shortcoming in us. Each of us is a better person if he does what morality demands of him for both selfless and self-interested reasons. He is a better person because he succeeds in "moderating" the affection for the advantageous. He is not at war with himself; instead, he acts wholeheartedly – or, at least, more wholeheartedly. In brief, in order to make a clear distinction between his two points of view, Scotus needs to argue that naturalism – that neutral facts about the world – can obligate us in two distinct ways, only one of which is moral.

Scotus does not have to deny that the self-interested point of view concerns itself with what is factually good and factually bad for human beings. He simply has to find a way of denying that the self-interested point of view counts as a moral point of view. Likewise, Scotus does not need to deny the seriousness of the self-interested point of view. He must simply find a way of denying that this point of view is "the" most serious. Neither does Scotus need to deny that the self-interested point of view has an essential role to play in how we conduct our lives. He must simply find a way of denying that it "the" point of view most central to the conduct our lives. Finally, Scotus does not have to deny that the self-interested point of view can be applied universally to all human beings. He simply has to find of way of denying that this point of view is "the" most important of all universalizable points of view.

Sadly, Scotus never spells out the naturalism presupposed by a moral point of view that includes the two affections. There is no one place in Scotus' work where he explicitly sets out to marry the two affections of the will to his natural law morality. And yet it is possible, we think, to make out the position which is implied, but never actually stated. To begin, we need only return to the treatment of moral disorder in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6,

question 2. We have already tied this text to the objectivity of suitability relations, as well as to Scotus' morality of right reason. We should now be able to isolate, from among all the facts that can be implicated in our behavior, just those facts that demand our selfless love. The nature of these facts will have to justify making moral behavior inseparable from the exercise of the affection for justice.

A couple of things come immediately to mind when we consider the text in this light. First of all, the concern we have for what objectively harms us is a deeply serious matter, but it cannot be, for Scotus, a moral matter. Moral judgments and moral behavior presuppose the objectivity of suitability relations. Apart from them, we could not hope to identify human goods or human evils. But if something is a human evil in and of itself, it ought not to be an object of desire. We cannot be in debt to it. We certainly do not owe it our love. Nothing in the nature of an objective human evil demands that it be loved or pursued. Only real goods can demand this. So acting morally must mean loving and pursuing an "objective good" according to the affection for justice, that is, for its own sake and from purely selfless motives. It seems right to think that Scotus' moral point of view concerns itself exclusively with human goods – although it does not concern itself with human goods in terms of how they benefit us.

The next thing that jumps to mind from the text is our inability to love "things" for their own sake. For Scotus, the will is capable of two acts of attraction (*velle*). These acts are the love of desire (*velle-concuspiscentiae*) and the love of friendship (*velle-amicitiae*).[57] By an act of the love of desire we strive to confer some good, whether real or apparent, on ourselves or on something else. The good we would confer could be either a person or a thing – whether the thing happens to be a physical object, a state, a relation, or so on. But

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[57] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (34).

every act of the love of desire presupposes an act of the love of friendship.[58] Every act of the love of desire refers back ultimately to a good we love by an act of friendship-love. This follows from the logic of the two acts of attraction. By an act of friendship-love, we love an object for its own sake.[59] Furthermore, Scotus thinks that an act of friendship-love can never be directed toward a thing.[60] We can only love a person selflessly.[61] Even if we can appreciate a thing in more or less objective terms, we still cannot choose a thing for what it is in and of itself. When it comes to choice and action, a thing is desirable only for the sake of some person or persons we already love. Things are always loved in the name of persons.

Since all moral motivations are selfless motivations, and since we can only love persons selflessly, morality must be concerned with how we treat persons. Compare Scotus' treatment of morality to his treatment of friendship.[62] Friendship does not turn around self-interest, even though a friend is of great benefit to his friend. The moral betterment of the self is not the focal point of friendship. The focal point is the "goodness" of the friends involved. Scotus shifts the center of gravity in friendship away from the self, and he places it squarely on the lovability (*amabilitatem*) of the friends involved, where lovability is primarily a function of moral uprightness (*honestas)* or moral excellence *(excedentia*).[63]

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[58]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (35).

[59]*Lectura* II, dist.6, q. 2 (25).

[60]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (37).

[61]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (34) and *Lectura* II, dist.6, q. 2 (25).

[62]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 422, 443-46) and *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 29 (W, 454-56).

[63]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 444). Et si arguatur quod aequalitas est ratio amicitiae, vero est supposita honestate quae est prima ratio amabilis; aeqalitas est ratio amicitiae stricte sumptae, sed excedentia est magis ratio habitus similis vel perctioris, quam sit amicitia; talem in proposito dico caritatem.

True friendship is impossible apart from the willingness to love and pursue the other's good and to do so for the sake of the other. True friendship demands a committed selflessness from us; it demands the affection for justice. Scotus treatment of the affection for justice makes it clear that morality, too, is inseparable from selfless love for a person. The self-interested point of view is not a moral point of view. Scotus shift the focal point of moral action away from the self-interest of the moral agent (no matter how praiseworthy) to the selfless love that we may owe to a person who is implicated in our behavior.

For Scotus, the moral point of view is concerned with the quality of love that we owe rational individuals. Being a person is a "fact" that may compel the affection for justice. It compels the affection for justice irrespective of whether the person who possesses it happens to be morally upright (*honestas*) or morally excellent (*excedentia*). We may find that we are morally obligated to love the person implicated in our behavior selflessly and to act accordingly. For Scotus, being a person (possessing a rational nature) is the only "fact" in the world that can entail a particular moral judgment.

We should not forget that the root and origin of all moral disorder is located, for Scotus, in a disordered love for a person. Our love is morally disordered when we love a person solely according to the affection for the advantageous, that is, when we love him not for his own sake, but simply in terms of our own advantage. Whenever our love is morally disordered it must be because we "owe" a person a selfless love and we refuse to give it. If given, such an attachment would certainly change our motivation for acting, if not our choice of action.

In the second moment of moral disorder, Lucifer fails morally when he stops loving God in the way God most deserves to be loved. He stops loving God for God's own sake. He no longer "loses" himself in sheer wonderment at the fact of God's person. Instead, he

comes to love God simply as a means to his own perfect happiness. He considers God simply in terms of the objective benefits that will accrue to his nature (to his person) if he were to possess and enjoy God in the manner needed to bring about perfect happiness. Nothing could be more in our self-interest than is the love and pursuit of God. Yet we only love and pursue God morally, when we do so selflessly, that is, when we look past our own self-interest and attach ourselves to God for God's sake.

4. Moral Obligation and Circumstance

For Scotus, there are two broad categories of facts in the world, persons and things. When each comes into relation with human nature, each obliges us differently. Things oblige our self-interest only. Rational individuals may oblige our self-interest. They may also oblige us morally. Indeed, we might wonder whether they always oblige us morally. We might wonder, that is, whether the circumstance in which we encounter others has any role to play in assessing moral obligation. By circumstances, we mean the concrete situation in which we find ourselves, as well as any accident or relation that might be in force. If Scotus assigns a large role to circumstance, then the scope of morality will be larger, for example, than that of friendship. But there will still be any number of situations in which we bear no moral obligation toward the person implicated in our behavior. If Scotus assigns little or no importance to the role of circumstance in the assessment of moral obligation, then acting freely will more often than not require us to act morally toward whomever is implicated in our behavior.

Scotus' moral theory is deeply influenced by his treatment of friendship. Scotus believes that we ought to pursue our friend's good and that we ought to do so for our

friends sake. Now right reason itself certainly dictates that friendship fits certain circumstances (certain relationships) and not others. There is nothing farfetched in thinking that we can owe someone our friendship. We fail to act morally if recognize that we ought to give our friendship and yet we choose not to do so. If we fail to see that the circumstances call for us to offer our friendship, we are morally culpable for the failure if we our ignorance is vincible. We are culpable for the failure when we could have known better, but refused the opportunity.

Morality differs from friendship in obliging us to treat rational individuals, who may or may not be our friends, in some of the same ways we are obliged to treat a friend. It differs from friendship in demanding that we exercise the affection for justice and form an actual selfless attachment to the person implicated in our behavior and act accordingly. Clearly, circumstance figures less prominently in morality than it does in friendship. Indeed, with respect to God, for example, the circumstances in which we encounter God have no role to play at all. The commandments of the first table of the Decalogue are exceptionless. These commandments express our moral obligation to love God as he deserves to be loved and to act accordingly. God deserves to be loved for his own sake. So if God is implicated in our behavior, conscience ought to dictate that we engage ourselves with him through the affection for justice. Circumstances cannot impinge on this obligation. They can never "dispense" us from it. No doubt, we may fail to love and act toward God on the basis of the affection for justice, but our ignorance removes neither the moral law nor its obligation. In such a case, we would not be culpable for the wrong committed since we would be invincibly ignorant.

Now do circumstances matter when it comes to the created person who is

implicated in our behavior? Consider Scotus' definition of 'neighbor'.[64] Scotus defines who our neighbor is in openly theological terms. He does so in consideration of one particular circumstance. The circumstance considered is the nature of the relationship between a created person and God. According to Scotus, a neighbor (our *proximus)* is anyone whom God would be pleased to befriend. Our neighbor is anyone whose love pleases God. A person is not our neighbor if his love does not please God. In other words, an incorrigible sinner is not our neighbor. It would be morally wrong for us to will that such a person love God. The incorrigible sinner is beyond redemption. He has already damned himself – no matter whether he is among the living or the dead. Our obligation to love God does not necessarily imply that we ought to want everyone to love God indiscriminately.[65] We love God wrongly if we wish God to be loved by those whose love displeases God. For while Scotus agrees with the maxim that "He who loves perfectly, wishes his beloved to be loved," he is quick to add that when the beloved is God, we should only will that the beloved be loved by his friends – that is, by those whose "friendship" pleases the beloved.[66]

If we could be certain that a person implicated in our behavior is an incorrigible sinner, then, presumably, we bear absolutely no moral obligation to attach ourselves to such a person through the affection for justice. We are free to ignore him or to act toward him simply in virtue of the affection for the advantageous. It would certainly be wrong to love

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[64] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 28 (W, 452).

[65] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 282). Secundo modo respondere potest quod ex illo praecepto "Diliges Dominum Deum tuum," non sequitur "Debeam velle proximum diligere Deum." Cum tamen probatur quia zelus non potest esse ordinatus nec perfectus amor, respondeo: Non debeo velle bonum commune esse bonum alterius et ita amari ab alio. Sed non oportet me velle illud bonum esse alterious, puta quia non placet illi bono esse alterius, quemadmodum Deus praedestinatus unum et non alium, vult esse bonum unius praedestinari et non alterius.

[66] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 282). Et per idem patet ad illud quod perfecte diligens vult dilectum diligi. Potest dici quod hoc est verum ab omni eo cuius amicitia placet dilecto. Non est autem certum ex lege naturae de quocumque quod eius dilectio acceptetur a Deo dilecto vel diligendo.

him as we love ourselves, which is the point of the commandments of the second table of the Decalogue.

However, if God does not reveal the inveterate sinner to us, we have no way of arriving at the knowledge on our own. We also need to remind ourselves that Scotus, like other medieval Christian masters, denies that habits of the will can ever become so much a part of us as to be ineradicable.[67] Habits of the will are long-lasting and extremely stable but they can never eliminate the capacity for free choice. They never become second nature to us in this strong sense.[68] Our habits of choice cannot make us either infallibly virtuous or incurably vicious. For someone like Scotus, both faith and human behavior have a different story to tell. The door is never locked either to conversion or corruption. A vicious habit of the will, for example, can never move us to act viciously apart from the free exercise of the will. If it could do so, the resulting choice and course of action would not qualify as immoral. For Scotus, the habits of the will, both virtuous and vicious, act only in the manner or fashion of a nature (*per modum naturae*).[69] They never function like natural causes.

Is our relationship with God the only circumstance which can impinge on our moral obligation toward created persons? The commandments of the second table address the second half of the Great Commandment. They are expressions of the Golden Rule – they express our moral obligation to love our neighbor as ourselves. When God dispenses human beings from one of these commandments, he tells us that we can now perpetrate an act against another person that would be illicit in other circumstances. The question that

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[67]Bonnie Kent, *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 200-06, 224-26.

[68]Aristotle had argued that virtues or vices may become so much a part of us that they can eliminate the capacity for free choice. See *Nicomachean Ethics* 1100b 19-20, 34-35, 1105b 29 - 1107a 27, 1114a 11-21, 1128b 28-29, 1150a 21-22.

[69]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 320).

arises is whether being free to perform one of these acts also dispenses us from our moral obligation to attach ourselves to another person through the affection for justice. The answer seems to be that such a dispensation does not seem to free us from loving our neighbor selflessly unless he is an incorrigible sinner. We need only remind ourselves of an example that weighed heavily in Scotus' denial that the precepts of the second table are exceptionless. If God had not decided against it, Abraham could have licitly killed Isaac. The dispensation, however, would not have freed Abraham from his moral obligation to act toward Isaac on the basis of the affection for justice.[70]

For all practical purposes, then, whenever a created person is implicated in our behavior, we are obligated to attach ourselves to that person through the affection for justice and to act accordingly. Unlike God, a created person does not deserve to be loved selflessly simply in virtue of being the person he is. The fact that another person possesses a rational nature is not enough to obligate us morally toward him. Nothing in the created person himself necessitates the exercise of the affection for justice. Our moral obligation to created persons depends upon one circumstance. It is a contingent matter. It is dependent on our neighbor's standing before God. But, since we have no reason to expect that God will identify the incorrigible sinners among us, we bear the same moral obligation toward all. So, if a rational individual is implicated in our behavior, right reason ought to dictate that we engage ourselves with him through the affection for justice.

We now need to determine what information the affection for justice needs in order to justify attaching itself (and so us) to a rational individual. If Scotus' moral point of view is workable, the intellect must be capable of providing the affection for justice with an impartial and accurate assessment of a person's intrinsic worth, as well as his relation to God. A

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[70] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 37 (W, 284).

curious relationship pertains between the affection for justice and the intellect. The affection for justice does not formulate an assessment of any person or thing. We must avoid confusing it with the intellect. However, when the affection for justice latches onto a person, it always latches onto the facts about that person. Or, more precisely, it latches onto all the relevant facts it needs to justify a selfless attachment. Its attachment to a person never fails, in this sense, by being partial. The affection for justice attaches us to a person on the basis of an intellectual assessment which is correct in its essentials.

Presumably, if a correct assessment is not ready on call, the affection for justice will not be tempted to attach us to it. The affection for justice does not seem susceptible to the intellect's unjust assessment of rational individuals – save with respect to the person's relationship with God. Somehow the affection for justice avoids attaching us, then, to faulty conceptions of rational individuals. It has a nose for error, so to speak. To exercise the affection for justice is to exercise a highly advantageous skill. We can loosely speak of the affection for justice, then, as an instrument of (or capacity for) "right perception."

The operation of the affection for justice appears less mysterious if we can make the following restriction. We have already hinted at this restriction. The attachment of the affection for justice to rational individuals appears less mysterious if it is based principally on a correct assessment of the nature of a rational individual. Here, the intellectual assessment needed in order to love one human being selflessly would make it possible to love every human being, if we choose to do so, selflessly.

If the attachment of the affection for justice to rational individuals is an attachment to the nature of a rational individual, then the intellect actually needs very little information in order to produce the assessment needed by the affection for justice. Basically, the intellect needs to know enough about a rational nature to recognize it when it is seen. The affection

for justice would then be able to attach us to the person in the manner and degree to which that kind of person deserves. After all, we must be able to distinguish between the love owed God and the loved owed all others. As for human beings, each would merit being loved selflessly just by virtue of being a human being. If one human being is more virtuous or more graced than another, then we could argue that he deserves to be loved more than the other. What would not be debatable, is whether either deserved to be loved selflessly. Even if the intellect should commit an error of fact in its larger assessment of a person – if it should mistake, for instance, vice for virtue in a person – this would not change the basic fact that we ought to love that person selflessly and act toward him accordingly. The very fact that our neighbor possesses a rational nature, together with the fact that we have no proof that he is an incorrigible sinner, requires us to love him selflessly.

Scotus seems to be defending some of the most rigorous moral injunctions in the New Testament. For example, it does not seem at all farfetched to regard his moral point of view as a philosophical expression of the *Great Commandments*, that is, with the commandment to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves.[71] Not just intimate relationships, like friendship, call for selfless attachment and selfless motives. Every human relationship calls for this most exalted and most demanding of attachments. It is our obligation to act with the other's best interest in mind in every human interaction. Every time we act toward our neighbor, morality seems to demand that we desire that person's good and promote it by our actions, and we have to do so for the other's sake.

The circumstances of our everyday life cannot eliminate our obligation to the persons implicated in our behavior. In fact, it must be admitted that they often make more

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[71] *Mark* 12:28-34; *Matthew* 22: 35-40; *Luke* 10:25-28. See also *Deuteronomy* 6:4-5; *Levitucus* 19:18.

difficult to fulfill this obligation. It is not always easy to act in a selfless manner even toward our friends. But bonds of familiarity and admiration make it easier for us to act selflessly. We cannot help but find the moral goodness (*honestas* or *excedentia*) of a true friend makes him loveable.[72] His moral goodness is beautiful and so compelling. It inspires us to act rightly by him.[73]

The more distant the relationship between two human beings, the more difficult it is for us to act as inspired lovers do. The greater the distance, the fewer reasons we have for attaching ourselves to another through the affection for justice. We might even say that the more distant we are from our neighbor, the more "circumstances" get in the way of such an attachment. Circumstances can impede moral behavior. The stranger we meet today may be a person of great moral goodness. If we had the time to come to appreciate this, it would be easier for us to attach ourselves to him and then act accordingly. At the other extreme, when someone we detest is implicated in our behavior, all our reasons for disliking him can make it extremely difficult to engage the affection for justice.

In a previous chapter, we wondered whether Scotus raises the bar of moral conduct too high. After all, it is not clear that any one of us, by his own efforts, could hope to live up to the exacting standards of this moral point of view. On the one hand, Scotus eliminates the possibility of acting morally on the affection for the advantageous alone. The self-interested point of view can be put into harmony with the moral point of view, but it itself is not a moral point of view. Strictly self-interested never qualifies as a "lower" grade of moral

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[72] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 444).

[73] John Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 153: "[I]f I say that I am in love with someone and then add that I feel no obligation to act rightly by her, it would be natural to infer that I am not in love at all. Plato's model for the action of the Guardian – as well as for Socrates in the Symposium and the demiurgic God in the Timaeus – is the inspired lover. In Platonic and Platonically inspired ethics the Greek word *kalon* (often rendered misleadingly and inadequately in Latin as *honestum*) means 'inspiring' and hence 'compelling'."

behavior. This seems problematic. Other than Scotus' stipulating that it is so, it is not clear why the only moral situations are the situations in which we love our neighbor for his own sake and act on that basis. We need only remind ourselves that Scotus' self-interested point of view qualifies as a moral point of view given the standard medieval version of naturalism. On the standard view, the moral obligation to the exercise of the affection for justice would depend upon circumstances. Friendship would certainly demand it, for instance, while giving useful directions to a tourist might not.

On the other hand, Scotus makes breathtaking demands on our ability to attach ourselves to others through the affection for justice. The circumstances in which we are expected to act selflessly (and so morally) are vast and seemingly all-encompassing. For all practical purposes, it seems that if a rational individual is implicated in our behavior, then we bear a moral obligation toward him.

What our recent speculations reveal, perhaps, is that Scotus himself might not believe that we can live up to every moral obligation through our own efforts. It could be that, for Scotus, morality cannot be separated from God. We have reason to believe that we cannot hope to fulfill all our moral obligations apart from divine grace.[74] After all, by defining who our neighbor is in openly theological terms, Scotus seems to be telling us that there are moments in our lives where we will fail morally apart from some appeal to God. Scotus' definition of 'neighbor' seems to make it impossible to divorce morality from belief in God. Expressed in even more forceful terms, it means that morality cannot be divorced from a real selfless attachment to God.

This attachment seems a prerequisite for moral behavior especially when the circumstances of our lives make it extremely difficult for us to attach ourselves to another

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[74]Rudolph Schnackenburg's *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament*, 2nd ed., J. Holland-Smith and W.J. O'Hara, trans. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), pp. 81-89.

through the affection for justice. In this attachment, we find an incentive for the exercise of the affection for justice toward all others. All are created in God's image. The recognition of this particular circumstance provides a rationale for moral behavior. The goodness of God can also be so compelling that it can make up for the lack of compelling qualities in our neighbors. It can inspire us to exercise the affection for justice in the most discouraging circumstances. Inspired in this way, we can either attach ourselves to another selflessly and act accordingly, or we can ask for the grace needed to do so.

5. A Morality of Inspiration

Scotus' moral point of view cannot be captured apart from the naturalism it presupposes. But the attempt to do so can further educate us to the intricacies of Scotus' moral point of view. If Scotus were not himself a committed naturalist, for example, he might well have argued for the centrality of the first mark of the moral point of view. In the absence of naturalism, the first mark provides us with the means of severing the moral point of view from the self-interested point of view. If the inner disposition associated with the moral point of view, for example, is made to include acting on selfless motives, then we can come close to capturing what Scotus means by the affection for justice.

Here acting on selfless motives would be a moral obligation, but this obligation could not be traced back to any neutral facts about the world. In the absence of moral naturalism, the moral sphere is autonomous. Moral behavior would not be dictated "necessarily" by any of the facts implicated in our behavior.[75] On the contrary, moral choice expresses our freedom from all natural wanting – from the desires, both sensible and rational, calling us to

[75]Here and in what follows we have Kant loosely in mind. The position we articulate is a caricature – but, hopefully, a caricature suitable to our purposes, as well as instructive.

serve our self-interest. Our choices are freed from the objective order. Even if the intellect should have access to the nature of things, we could not hope to derive moral principles and moral judgments from the way in which things are constituted. In short, moral choice expresses our free commitment to the strict demands of reason. Morality is a matter of the will – of the will of legislating for itself. The will is the font of moral obligation, not the intellect.

On this view, morality stands as an exercise in rational self-legislation. Facts do not obligate us. Goodness does not obligate us. On the contrary, this view separates goodness and rightness. Each individual bears the responsibility of imposing moral obligations and duties on himself. Acting on moral motives represents the highest good we can achieve in this life. The highest good is a good intention or in a good will. We might even go as far as argue that moral worthiness is all about acting sincerely on selfless motives. We would act as moral agents by simply doing what we believe we ought to do and doing so for the right reasons (with the right inner disposition). Accordingly, while the external act has practical importance, it has no moral value of its own. Willing any particular act is as good or bad as actually doing it.[76]

And yet those who champion the centrality of the first mark need not necessarily abandon the fourth mark. They might want to argue that whenever we act on selfless motives, we aim at benefitting rather than harming human beings. As already noted, it would make little sense to claim, on the one hand, that acting selflessly represents our highest good and, on the other, to claim that we do not at least aim at doing good rather than harm in acting selflessly. Acting selflessly must have its beneficial effects – even if the

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[76]As we already know, Scotus rejects such a claim. See Marilyn McCord Adams and Rega Wood, ""Is to Will It as Bad as to Do It?" The Fourteenth Century Debate," *Franciscan Studies* 41 (1981), pp. 5-60.

act performed has no moral import. Indeed, the benefits of acting selflessly must explain, at least in part, why we would want to see everyone adopt the moral point of view.

If it is possible to avoid naturalism in doing so, those who champion the centrality of the first mark might argue that it would be better for all concerned if we were to turn our backs on the pursuit of happiness and act morally. Or, at the very least, it would be better for all concerned to give the priority to acting morally. In order words, they could try to justify or validate selfless behavior on purely pragmatic grounds. The argument is not that the facts of human experience morally oblige anyone. Rather, the argument would be that we find a constant conjunction, perhaps even a relation of cause and effect, between certain behaviors and certain consequences. And the intellect can make out the associated patterns. Certain behaviors always seem beneficial to human persons (or to human society), while others seem beneficial more often than not, depending on the circumstances. The same applies to harmful behaviors. Practically speaking, some behaviors are better for all concerned than others. They are better for the common good, as well as for our own good – even if we do not always see them as being to our own immediate advantage. So "if" we choose to be concerned with human good and human harm, it can never be "rational" for us to do evil and avoid good. The compulsion felt here is not moral, but logical. In this way, we would come close to capturing Scotus' conviction that the strict pursuit of self-interest is bound to lead to disaster, given the fact that the affection for the advantageous is deceptive since it naturally tends to excess.[77]

Important differences come quickly to mind if we compare this moral point of view to Scotus'. Scotus, for example, leaves no room for the possibility of acting morally on principle alone. We need not embrace Scotus' naturalism to see the importance of

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[77] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (49-60).

selflessness to morality. Selfless motives are transformative. The possession of a selfless motive can transform us. It can transform the choice we make and the action we take. No doubt, they introduce crucial propositions to the practical syllogism. Once introduced, these propositions can change the conclusion at which the practical syllogism arrives. If we commit ourselves to follow the logic of the argument, then these propositions change more than our argument. The choice we make and the action we take will also be different.

Interestingly, if we accept the centrality of the first mark, then it seems entirely possible to act morally when we are primarily "attached," not to a person, but to a moral principle. At its most basic, acting morally might simply require a determined, yet bloodless attachment to a conviction or to an ideal. It need not require an actual loving attachment to the person or persons implicated in our behavior. Nothing prevents us, of course, from acting on the basis of both kinds of attachment. For Scotus, though, we never act morally when motivated exclusively by our attachment (no matter how noble) to an idea.

Indeed, Scotus takes this one step further. He denies that we can even muster selfless motivations (that is, moral motivations) apart from a real selfless attachment to a rational individual. All selfless motivations are derived from the affection for justice. This means that every selfless motive is the offspring of an actual selfless attachment to some person. What is more, this attachment is not an option. It is a moral obligation.

Scotus makes it impossible to act morally on rational, yet bloodless grounds. Saying that we are morally obligated to do something must surely mean, among other things, that we ought to be prepared to carry this thing out whether we want to or not, whether it is in fact pleasant or horrifying to do so or not.[78] Scotus does not question this. Sometimes we do have to deny ourselves and act morally from the strict demands of duty. We do so with a

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[78]Vincent Cooke, "Moral Obligation and Metaphysics," *Thought* 66 (1991, No. 260), pp. 65-74.

bitter taste in our mouth, so to speak. But Scotus would deny that we act morally when acting from a cool, rational "devotion" to duty alone. A bloodless devotion to a moral principle or to an ideal cannot explain why we act morally. For example, we do not (in fact, we cannot) act morally based strictly on a strictly rational commitment to the principle that we ought to act in the best interest of others and for their sake. In fact, Scotus denies that acting from duty is even possible apart from, at the very least, an actual selfless attachment to a rational individual.[79] There can be no morality apart from selflessness and no selflessness apart from an actual selfless attachment.

Apart from a loving attachment to a rational individual (no matter whether the attachment is self-interested or selfless), we could not muster the energy for either self-interested or selfless behavior. We could not find the impetus to act – much less act morally. For Scotus, devotion and attachment are inseparable – whether we attach ourselves to something by means of the affection for the advantageous or the affection for justice.

In a tradition that stretches back to the Greeks, Scotus' ethics is an ethics of inspiration.[80] Acting morally always engages our emotions. At the very least, it always engages our rational emotions (most assuredly, love) since we cannot act morally if we do

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[79]As Iris Murdoch points out, "The exercise of duty is not a cold look at the facts and a jump to a moral intuition or dictate of reason: the picture implied by a sharp distinction between fact and value." See "Notes on Will and Duty," in her *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), p. 304.

[80]John Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 153-58, 168, 180-81. "In Augustine's time no moralist would have supposed that his choices were limited to something like utilitarianism (or more broadly consequentialism), Kantian obligations or a form of contract theory. Even the original ancient versions of what is now called virtue-ethics were far from a mere ethic of good training inducing good habits. Aristotelians, as well as Platonists, dealt in the ethics of inspiration, and even the Stoics paid tribute to the tradition when defining eros as not just any desire, but specifically as an impulse aroused by beauty" (pp. 154-54).

not act on the affection for justice.[81] Among our reasons for acting will be the emotions we feel "in" the will in connection with our love for a rational individual. If the moral virtues are present "in" the will, then the attachment flowing from the affection for justice, as well as the emotions associated with this attachment, would appeal directly to them.

The moral virtues are inextricably tied to the affection for justice. They are formed through the exercise of the affection for justice. If our sensible appetite is ordered to the moral virtues, then we will also feel the pull of sensible emotions in support of acting morally. Acting on the affection for justice is never a bloodless affair.

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[81] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 318-47) and *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 34 (W, 346-77). See also Alan Perreiah's "Scotus on Human Emotions," *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998), pp. 325-345.

CHAPTER FOUR

MORALITY AND ATTACHMENT

If all moral disorder is rooted, as Scotus claims, in an inordinate self-love, then moral order ought to be rooted, at least in part, in an ordinate self-love. Now the strict pursuit of self-interest cannot, according to Scotus, order our self-love. It cannot do so because the affection for the advantageous naturally tends to excess.[1] We cannot root this tendency to excess out, we can only manage it well. For Scotus, then, our self-love cannot be orderly (or just) apart from the exercise of the affection for justice. We cannot come to love ourselves in an orderly fashion if we cannot find selfless reasons for choice and action.

An ordinate self-love is an expression of the virtue of justice. Now both Scotus and Aristotle agree that justice is unique among the virtues in having a selfless or altruistic aspect.[2] Justice disposes the will to act according to right reason with respect to ourselves, as well as with respect to others.[3] We could not give ourselves to others in friendship, for

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[1] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40, 49, 51, 54-60).

[2] *Nicomachean Ethics* V, ch. 1 (1129b 31-35, 1130a 4-9). There is, as Bonnie Kent points out, a tension in Aristotle's ethical thought between his "eudaimonism" and the other-benefitting virtue of justice. She examines how various medieval masters responded to this problematic. See her "Justice, Passion, and Another's Good: Aristotle Among the Theologians," *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 28 (2001), pp. 704-718.

[3] *Ordinatio* IV, dist. 46 (W, 240): [Defintio justitiae] – Hic primo de definitione iustitiae rationem generalissimam ponit Anselmus, *De Veritate* c. 12, quod "iustitia est rectitudo voluntatis proper se servata." Haec ratio specificatur per iustitiam secundum quod de ea tractat Philosophus V *Ethicorum*, qui addat ultra istam rationem hoc quod eset "esse ad alterum... [Iustitia ad alterum] – Ista secunda subdivititur, quia [a] vel est quasi universalis ad alterum, puta ad legislatorem et ad legem inquantum est regula quaedam determinatur a legislatore, et hoc dicitur quibusdam "iustitia legalis" ; [b] vel est particularis, puta in aliquo determinato pertinente ad legem, rectitudo ad alterum. Et haec secunda subdividitur quia postest esse simpliciter ad alterum, vel ad se quasi ad alterum. See also *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 34 (W, 358).

example, apart from the virtue of justice.[4] As a virtue, in fact, friendship is the most perfect form of justice. First and foremost, then, the good person follows the counsel of the affection of justice – the counsel of his better self. He is right to hold himself in high regard for doing so; he is right to love himself for doing so. And yet the good person also needs the virtue of humility. Humility opposes every excessive estimation of our own worth. It moderates (*moderatur*) our desire for the praise and esteem of others (*honor*).[5] The good person will have to humble himself with respect to his meaner self – that is, with respect to the affection for the advantageous and the exaggerated claims it makes for the self.[6]

The need to mortify and discipline the will is a theme found in different philosophical and religious traditions. There can be no doubt that the Judeo-Christian tradition inherited by Scotus is strongly marked by this appeal. We need only remind ourselves of the emphasis that Jesus himself places on the necessity of self-denial.[7] Of all Jesus'

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[4]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 34 (w, 368). Ubi sciendum est quod ordine ad alterum postest aliquis primo se habere recte, communicando se illi quantum potest communicare vel communicando illi aliquid alterum it sua; virtus inclinans ad primum est amicitia, qua quis dat seipsum proximo quantum potest dare se, et quantum potest proximus habere eum; et haec est perfectissime virtus moralis, quia tota iustitia est perfectior his quae sunt ad seipsum, et haec est perfectissime iustitia.

[5]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 34 (W, 366). Itaque prima concupiscibilia, ut dictum est, a natura rationali sunt honor et delectatio stricta vel stricte sumpta. Ergo primae species tempera, quae moderatur circa honores dicitur humilitas; quae circa voluptates retinet nomen generis [temperantia].

[6]The presence of the affection for justice in the will gives Scotus a way of accommodating the Aristotelian virtue of magnanimity without having to deny the virtue of humility. Like every other virtue, friendship demands greatness of soul (*Nicomachean Ethics* II, ch. 7 (1107b 22- 1108a 9); IV, ch. 3 (1123b 1- 1125a 16); IX, ch. 8 (1168b 12 - 1169a 18). True friendship would be impossible apart from the ordinate self-love of friends. A friend can befriend others only if he befriends himself first, only if he first loves himself more or less justly and seeks his own virtue. The ordinate self-love of friends plays an important role in enabling a friend to act in the best interest of his friend and at his own expense – and to do so on rational grounds. The magnanimous have the self-confidence needed, for example, to master their adverse inclinations in reality. Friendship, whether with God or our fellow human beings, demands virtue and virtue demands a healthy self-love. As Aristotle tells us in *Nicomachean Ethics* IX, ch. 8 (1169a 2-7), the virtuous person is morally obligated to love himself to an exceptional degree.

[7]*Matthew* 6:25, 7:14, 10:39, 16:24-25; *Mark* 8:34-38, 9:43; *Luke* 9:23,12:22-25; *John* 12:24-26.

statements on self-denial, perhaps the most forceful is found in John's gospel.[8] Here, he first warns his disciples against the dangers of self-love and then states the remedy in emphatic terms. He tells them that all those who would walk in his footsteps must "hate" their life (or their self) in this world.[9]

In his treatment of the two affections of the will, Scotus finds a very precise way of rendering the often repeated (and, all too often, vaguely imagined) link between moral progress and vigorous self-denial. In *Ordinato* II, distinction 6, question 2, Scotus follows Augustine and argues that a proper love of God and of self demands self-hatred or self-contempt. On account of its salutary effects, this self-hatred is "healthy."[10] The existence of the City of God – or, for that matter, the existence of any well-ordered state or person – rests on the love of God before all else (*amor Dei usque contemptum sui*). For Scotus, the obligation to love God above all is a strict command of the natural law. It also stands as the

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[8] *John* 12:25. Qui amat animam suam perdet eam et qui odit animam suam in hoc mundo in vitam aeternam custodit (Vulgate).

[9] The importance of self-denial is repeated over and over again in the Christian tradition, both in philosophical and theological treatises, as well as in works on prayer. The *Rule* of St. Benedict (6th century) opens (*Prologus* 3) by emphasizing that obedience to God is impossible if we do not give up our own will (*abrenuntius propriis voluntatibus*). In one commentary on the Rule, the fact that the phrase is in the plural means that it is referring "to particular promptings or suggestions of the will." See *RB 1980: the rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with notes*, T. Fry, O.S.B. (Gen. Ed.) (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1981), p. 157. This sentiment is repeated in various forms throughout the *Rule*. A thousand years later, in the *Spiritual Exercises* (week two, no. 189), Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) confidently claims that all spiritual progress depends upon the extent to which we are willing to divest ourselves not only of our self-love, but also from our affection for what we find advantageous and pleasing. Ignatius approved of a Latin translation of this passage that runs as follows: *Hoc enim unusquisque persuasum habeat, tantum se in studiis spiritualibus promotorum esse, quantum ab amore sui ipsius et commodi proprii affectione sese abstraxerit.*

[10] In *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (37-38), Scotus cites with approval Augustine's formulas for moral order and disorder as they are found in Book XIV, chapter 28, of the *City of God*: *Igitur primus actus inordinatus fuit actus amicitiae respectu sui ipsius. Et hoc est quod dicit Augustinus, XIV* De Civitate Dei *capitulo ultimo* [PL 41, 436]: *'Duo amores fecerunt duas civitates: civitatem Dei amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui, et civitatem diaboli, amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei'.*

first rule of human action (or the first imperative of practical reason).[11] This natural obligation provides the measure according to which we ought to regulate all of our human acts. In our present state, at least, this love necessarily generates a profound self-contempt.

For Augustine, the self that needs hating is the self corrupted by the Fall. Augustine opens the fourteenth book of the *City of God* with a meditation on the Letters of Paul and the distinction that Paul makes between the "spirit" and the "flesh."[12] According to Augustine, when Paul speaks of the flesh, he is speaking of the self, of the human person, more precisely, Augustine believes that when Paul speaks of the flesh, he is speaking of the self in so far as the self is the expression of our corrupt and fallen nature. The flesh stands in for the fallen self. This part of us is corrupt and it cannot be rooted out through any effort of our own. So we must commit ourselves to disciplining and mortifying the fallen self consistently.

For Scotus, the self that primarily needs hating has to be the affection for the advantageous. In every rational creature, as we already know, two overarching engines of desire exist, the affection for the advantageous and the affection for justice. The affection for the advantageous is the stronger of the two. Unlike the affection for justice, it cannot be trusted. God has designed the affection for the advantageous in such a way that it naturally tends to produce excessive desires for happiness. Therefore, we ought to "hate" this affection and its self-interested point of view.

Unlike Augustine's appeal for a healthy self-hatred, however, Scotus' appeal is not a

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[11]Fernand Guimet, "Conformité à la droite raison et possibilité surnaturelle de la charité," *De Doctrina I. Duns Scoti* (Vol. III) (Rome: Societas Internationalis Scotistica, 1968), pp. 542-44. Guimet examines *Ordinatio* III, dist. 27, q. un, as well as *Reportatio parisiennsis* III, dist. 27, q. un.

[12]*De Civitate Dei* XIV, chs. 1-4. See also *Romans* 3:7-11; *Galations* 5:19-21; 1 *Corinthians* 2:11-14, 3:13; 2 *Corinthians* 4:1-16.

function of the Fall. The Fall does not explain why the affection for the advantageous naturally runs to excess. But the Fall has left us with less will to resist the excesses of this affection. All moral disorder is ultimately rooted in an inordinate pursuit of happiness, in an inordinate self-love (or egoism). An inordinate self-love makes the will unrighteous (*voluntas non-recta*); and an unrighteous will is more easily driven (*regulo*) by an excessive desire for happiness – or for almost anything we can pursue in the name of happiness.[13] The combination of an inordinate self-love and a naturally excessive affection for the advantageous is combustive, not to mention morally debilitating.

From the manner in which Scotus conceives of the two affections, it is clear that hating the affection for the advantageous does not imply any morbid or ill-defined exercise in self-loathing. Hating this affection implies, in fact, a specific attitude and a specific skill. Since we cannot hope to root out its natural tendency to excess, hating the affection for advantageous demands that we hold it and its desires in constant suspicion. The desires produced by the affection for the advantageous (and so the motives it offers for choice and action) need constant monitoring in order to distinguish the trustworthy from the untrustworthy.

We must not only monitor the affection for the advantageous, we must also manage it well. Hating the affection for the advantageous is a skill as much as it is an attitude. This skill is displayed when, prior to choosing a course of action, we successfully "moderate" the affection for the advantageous. Because we possess the affection for justice, we need not act in the most intense way possible (*non summe agere in quod est potest*).[14] The affection for justice gives us the freedom we need to moderate the affection for the advantageous

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[13] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40).

[14] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (57).

and its excessive desires for happiness. We succeed in moderating this affection when we alter (or, perhaps, even completely recast) its preferences in order to them bring them into "peaceful subservience" with those expressed by the affection for justice.[15]

For Scotus, the exercise of the moderating will is the healthiest possible exercise in self-hatred.[16] It is better for us, we are better moral agents, if we can act on both affections at the same time. From time to time, we may be forced to act on the affection for justice alone. Whenever we do so, our reasons for acting are moral. But none of us has the willpower to live exclusively off the affection for justice. No amount of ascesis could make it possible for us to deny the visceral appeal of the affection for the advantageous consistently. Scotus is convinced that we will our own happiness most of the time and for the most part (*in pluribus vult*).[17] The will itself is both inclined and habituated to will happiness to a greater degree than any other state. This explains why even the just person, for example, finds it difficult to choose a state that runs against our natural inclination to our proper perfection.[18]

Even if we had the willpower to act on the affection for justice alone, an imperfection or a flaw is always revealed when we do so. It reveals a failure to mend an inner division

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[15]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (49, 51, 54, 56-57, 60).

[16]Aristotle has been criticized for claiming that injustice is motivated by one and only one special passion or emotional disorder, namely, *pleonexia* [*Nicomachean Ethics* V, ch. 1 (1129b 1-2); 1130a 16-32] – that is, greed or the desire to have more (than others). Aristotle should have recognized, the argument goes, that the virtue of justice is a corrective for more than just *pleonexia*. See Bernard Williams, "Justice as a Virtue," in Essays on Aristotle, A.O. Rorty (ed.) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 189-200. Now Scotus appeals to the moderating function of the will as a corrective for every particular moral disorder. But, since only what is excessive needs moderation, might Scotus be telling us, in his own way, that every moral disorder involves a sort of *pleonexia*. For Aristotle's conception of *pleonexia* and the medieval reaction, see Bonnie Kent's "Justice, Passion, and Another's Good: Aristotle Among the Theologians," pp. 704-18.

[17]*Ordinatio* IV, suppl. dist. 49, qq. 9-10 (W, 190).

[18]*Ordinatio* IV, suppl. dist. 49, qq. 9-10 (W, 190).

between our two motivational sides (or selves). It also reveals an inability to reconcile what should never be found apart, namely, happiness and morality. For Scotus, acting morally is always in our self-interest. Furthermore, we are lesser persons if we cannot find a way to pursue openly our own happiness in every circumstance. Properly moderated, the affection for the advantageous directs us toward goods and in an orderly fashion. These goods are perfective of human nature and the human person. We are meant to pursue them; we need to pursue them. It is better for us, we are better moral agents, if we can succeed in acting on a moderate affection for the advantageous.

Living a moral life, as opposed to performing discrete moral acts, depends upon consistently acting on both the affection for justice and the affection for the advantageous. The more virtuous we are, the greater our leverage on the affection for the advantageous will be. The more virtuous we are, the less resistance we will meet in properly ordering its desires. But the moral life never becomes effortless. In varying degrees, living a moral life will always require us to discern, disapprove, and then discipline the affection for the advantageous.

In this chapter, we will explore the mechanics of the moderating will. That is, we will identify the tools at our disposal for moderating an excessive affection for the advantageous, as well as the tactics by which we put these tools to work. These tools come from or by means of the following sources: the will, the sensible appetite, and the intellect. Putting these tools to use will necessarily involve the intellect. More specifically, the affection for justice makes use of the various tools at its disposal through the intellect as intermediary.

Before we begin our examination of the mechanics of the moderating will, we will examine two important issues. The first of these concerns Scotus' bald stipulation that no sin proceeds from the affection for justice. This stipulation effectively eliminates the

possibility that we can act on the affection for justice and be guilty of vincible or willful ignorance. Acting on the affection for justice cannot guarantee that we always perform the opportune act, but it can guarantee, at a minimum, that we are never guilty for any evil that we may commit unintentionally. Acting on the affection for justice guarantees a good, moral disposition to the choice we make and the action we take. Finally, we will show how the exercise of the affection for justice always improves our chances of performing the opportune act. A selfless attachment is consciousness-raising. It improves our chances of forming conscience correctly. For Scotus, the quality of our understanding is a function of the quality of our attachment.

1. Moral Innocence and Inner Disposition

One of the most intriguing aspects of Scotus' treatment of original sin in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, is the stipulation that no sin can proceed from the affection for justice (*nam primum 'concupiscere' inordinatum non processit ex affectione iustitiae, sicut nec aliquod peccatum processit*).[19] At the root of moral disorder and each of its three moments, we find the failure to moderate the affection for the advantageous. In each of these three moments, for instance, Lucifer and Adam make a willful decision not to moderate an excessive desire for happiness produced by the affection for the advantageous. We do not necessarily fall into moral disorder whenever we act on the affection for the advantageous alone. But it is true to say that every time we do fall into

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[19] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40). Et videtur ibi esse dicendum quod primo concupivit sibi immoderate beatitudinem. Quod probatur: Primo sic, nam primum 'concupiscere' inordinatum non processit ex affectione iustitiae, sicut nec aliquod peccatum processit; ergo ex affectione commodi, quia 'omnis actus voluntatis, elicitus, aut elicitur secundum affectionem iustitiae aut commodi', secundum Anselmum.

moral disorder, we act on the affection for the advantageous alone. By contrast, if we act on the affection for justice we never fall into moral disorder. And this is true whether we act on the affection for justice alone or in combination with the affection for the advantageous. In *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, Scotus clearly seems to imply that whenever we act both affections simultaneously, the affection for the advantageous has been properly ordered to affection for justice.[20]

In Chapter 2, section 2, we discussed one problem with Scotus' stipulation. Briefly, Scotus' stipulation makes it difficult for him to provide an explanation of the first moment of moral disorder the in terms of the will's two affections.[21] In the first moment of moral disorder, an inordinate or disordered self-love is expressed through an act of friendship-love. This sinful act of friendship-love cannot be motivated by the affection for justice. But it is not clear how an inordinate self-love can be motivated by the affection for the advantageous alone. An act of friendship-love never involves pursuing a person as "means" to our own happiness or advantage. It involves us in pursuing a person for his own sake. And yet, if the first disordered act of the love of friendship was motivated exclusively by affection for the advantageous, then both Lucifer and Adam would have loved themselves to excess in the name of their own happiness. Oddly, Scotus does not frame his discussion of the first moment of moral disorder in terms of happiness. In fact, he only introduces the two affections in connection with his discussion of the second moment of moral disorder.[22] In his brief treatment of the first moment of moral disorder, Scotus calls our attention to a

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[20]This seems implied in *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (49-60), where Scotus refers to the affection for justice as the first checkrein (*prima moderatrix*) on the affection for the advantageous (49), that gives us the means of acting justly (60).

[21]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (37-38).

[22]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40).

failure to moderate an excessive self-love. In so doing, he gives the impression that the object of the original sin was not the happiness of the self, but, rather, simply the self. He gives the impression that the self was pursued on the basis of an exaggerated estimation of its own lovability.

Regardless of how Scotus would have answered this criticism, he clearly desires to shield the affection for justice from the taint of moral disorder. We need only consider four important consequences that follow from his stipulation about the affection for justice. (1) First of all, whenever we act on the affection for justice, we always follow a morally binding conscience. (2) Secondly, we always do so after having made a sincere and honest effort to form conscience properly. (3) Third, whenever we act on the affection for justice, it is always the case that our "inner disposition" to the choice we make, as well as the act we would perform, is well-ordered. Scotus does not hold a good will theory since he does not believe that the highest good is a good intention. And yet his theory of moral motivation has affinities to such a theory since he does allow that we never behave immorally by doing what we believe we ought to do and doing so for the right reasons – that is, with the right inner disposition. (4) Finally, when we act on this affection, our "insight" into any moral circumstance will always be better than it would otherwise be. Scotus' conception of the affection for justice is consistent with the notion that the exercise of this affection is consciousness-raising.

(1) If no moral disorder can be attributed to the affection for justice, then we can never act on the affection for justice and, at the same time, act against our better judgment. Contrary to what many of us might think, if we act on our selfless love for another, we always follow our conscience – or, at least, we always follow a clear and morally binding conscience. Acting on the affection for justice does not encourage, but, rather, removes any temptation we might feel to act in a way that we consider immoral.

If we could act on the affection for justice and willingly go against conscience, it would be right to attribute moral disorder to this affection. We would be able to act on it, and yet knowingly refuse to do what we honestly think we ought and must do. Scotus' stipulation makes this impossible, however. So anytime we are motivated by the affection for justice, we follow our conscience – unless our conscience is plagued by doubts. In this case, we will follow whatever judgment of the intellect happens to be morally binding on us. Whatever the case may be, the affection for justice is always true to what we take to be our moral obligation.

A peculiar relationship clearly exists between the affection for justice and conscience. The affection for justice is an inclination to follow right reason.[23] It is a propensity to love and pursue a good strictly in terms of what justice (or right reason) alone demands. We might think, then, that whenever we act on this affection, we follow right reason. After all, we always will our own happiness when we act on the affection for the advantageous. Why would we not, then, always follow right reason when we act on the affection for justice? For one thing, the dictate of right reason is not always ready on call when we need it. Our better judgment (that is, the judgment of the intellect that we are morally bound to follow) is not always objectively correct. Just as we can sincerely pursue a false image of happiness in the name of true happiness, so too we can pursue what is wrong in the name of the right.

(2) If acting on the affection for justice always meant following right reason, then acting on this affection would confer a sort of moral infallibility on us. It would assure, not only that we only follow our clear conscience, but that we also perform the opportune act. This is obviously not the case. The judgment of conscience or the dictate of the intellect is

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[23] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 39 (W, 196-205).

often based on the intellect's assessment of a highly complex circumstance. The mere exercise of the affection for justice cannot rule out errors of fact or reasoning on the part of the intellect. The very fact that our intellect is finite and limited makes this impossible.[24]

Now if no moral disorder can proceed from the affection for justice, then acting on the affection for justice cannot simply guarantee that we follow a clear conscience. If we are to avoid being culpable for any moral disorder that might inadvertently arise from the course of action we undertake, it must also guarantee that we make a sincere effort to arrive at the best and most accurate judgment of conscience possible.[25] In other words, acting on this affection presupposes, not only that we follow a clear conscience, but that we make a good faith effort to form conscience properly. The will is dependent on the intellect and the intellect is fallible. If a disordered external act follows from a choice ordered to the affection for justice, then the error lies with the intellect. And the error is unavoidable and so non-culpable. Through no fault of our own, we could not have arrived at the opportune act through the exercise of intellect. We did our able best to know better. We are not morally culpable for any wrong since our ignorance was invincible.

When we choose to act on the affection for justice, we always do what we sincerely

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[24]As Allan Wolter makes clear in his "The Unshredded Scotus: A Response to Thomas Williams," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (2003), Scotus believes that when God freely chooses to exercise his affection for justice, he always wills according to right reason (pp. 346-53). Wolter also points out that Scotus, in *Lectura* I, dist. 39 (401-44). Scotus models his understanding of God's will on that of the human will (see pp. 317-18, 335, 346-53). Yet it seems right to say that acting on the affection for justice cannot guarantee that we always follow right reason since the human intellect is finite and prone to error.

[25]As Iris Murdoch, "Notes on Will and Duty," *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), points out, "A study of moral change is a useful mode of reflection here. In this context we may go on to reflect upon the part played in our lives by desires and attachments. Here we make sense of the idea that it is our duty to have good desires and remove or weaken bad ones. A good desire includes the urge to see truly. Truthful vision prompts right action" (p. 295). What we are arguing here is that, for Scotus, good, moral desires are the offspring of our selfless attachment to a rational individual. This attachment rests on a truthful vision of a person implicated in our behavior. It also urges us to see truly, in the sense that it urges us to determine whether the act we have in mind, as well as its motivations, are true to the person in the circumstance at hand.

believe is the right thing to do. And we always do so after having made a sincere effort to inform our conscience properly. At the very least, acting on this affection does assure our moral innocence. It assures our moral innocence even when we wind up doing something evil. Acting on the affection for justice presupposes an honest effort to seek our moral obligation, as well as the intent to carry it out. Whenever we act on the affection for justice, we make a "good will" effort to form conscience rightly.

(3) The affection for justice provides selfless motives and selfless motives are moral motives. These are never deceptive nor disingenuous. Acting on the affection for justice cannot assure that we perform the opportune or timely act. With the best of intentions, we may wind up choosing a course of action which is not true to all of the facts involved. Such an act cannot be opportune, much less morally good. But our reasons for performing cannot be anything less than moral. If we act on the affection for justice, our inner disposition to the intellect – and through right reason to choice and act – is always orderly and so moral. What is more, the logic of the will's two acts of attraction applies here. If an act of will happens to be motivated by the affection for justice and if this act of the will engenders others, then the motives behind these acts will also be moral.[26] Scotus is convinced that orderly acts of the will invariably engender other orderly (and so, in this case, moral) acts of the will.

2. Attachment and Insight

Scotus speaks of the affection for justice in terms of appraising and appreciating the innate goodness of a rational individual. But he also speaks of it in as giving expression to

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[26] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (35-36).

what we think is right. He speaks of the affection for justice as providing us with a rule for moral behavior. From this perspective, acting according to the affection for justice means acting according to a superior and ordained rule of justice: and so justly (*secundum regulam superioris voluntatis determinantis, et hoc iuste*).[27] When we moderate the excesses of the affection for the advantageous by appealing to the affection for justice, we moderate them according to a rule of justice that we take from the affection for justice (*moderari secundum regulam justitiae, quae accipitur ex volunatate superior*).[28] In Chapter Two, section 1, we argued that this rule of justice is nothing other than a binding judgment of conscience. All rational creatures regulate their own behavior based on what they know. The exercise of reason "creates" a personal or individual rule of rectitude, and this inner rule of rectitude binds each of us morally.

In this section, we go on to argue that the affection for justice, if exercised, always plays a positive role in the formation (or reformation) of conscience. The affection for justice has something positive to contribute to the practical intellect. Conscience can arrive at its judgment under the direct influence of either or both of the affections of the will. If it does so under the influence of the affection for the advantageous alone, this judgment is more likely to be erroneous. However, when conscience is formed under the influence of the affection for justice, its judgment will always be truer or more faithful to the circumstances at hand. This is so, we shall argue, because Scotus thinks of the quality of our understanding as being a direct function of the quality of our attachments.

The Fall has nothing to do with the fact that the affection for the advantageous runs naturally to excess. God has intentionally designed to function in this way. The Fall merely

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[27] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (60).

[28] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (51).

makes the will more susceptible to being ruled or driven by excessive desires. Only at the moment of the beatific vision and only through God's intervention will it no longer be capable of deceiving us.[29] Until then, it merits our constant suspicion. If we are not careful, the excesses of the affection for the advantageous can cause us to violate our conscience willfully. In the first two moments of moral disorder, for example, both Lucifer and Adam give heed to an excessive affection for the advantageous and act against the judgment of conscience. They knowingly do what they know to be wrong. Under the influence of the affection for the advantageous, their intellect proposes a choice and a course of action that fits the excesses of this affection, but which is irreconcilable with the choice and course of action proposed by conscience (or right reason).

Interestingly, there is no reason to believe that the proposal advocated by conscience was formed, for either of them, under the influence of the affection for justice only. In the context of the first and second moment of moral disorder, Scotus insists that both Lucifer and Adam could have moderated the affection for the advantageous and then acted on both affections. So the proposal advocated by conscience must have been fashioned with the desires of a moderated affection for the advantageous in mind. If the affection for the advantageous ever openly advocated this proposal, however, it no longer does so at the moment of choice.

In the situation in which both Lucifer and Adam find themselves, the intellect has exhausted its role. It has nothing left to contribute to their inner debate.[30] In their respective decisions to act against conscience, we meet a failure of will. More specifically, we meet a failure of the moderating will since Scotus does not consider the possibility that either of the

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[29]See Robert Prentice, "The Degree and Mode of Liberty in the Beatitude of the Blessed," *Deus et Homo ad mentem I. Duns Scoti* (Rome: Societas Internationalis Scotistica, 1972), pp. 327-42.

[30]Justin Gosling, *Weakness of Will* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 86.

two could have acted on the affection for justice alone. The affection for justice wins over neither person. It does not succeed, in other words, in winning over their affection for the advantageous. The affection for justice loses its "tug of war" with the affection for the advantageous.

One can easily imagine another scenario in which an excessive affection for the advantageous can lead us to violate conscience. In this scenario, the choice is between a proposal that is suited to an excessive affection for the advantageous and a judgment of conscience that repels this affection *tout court*. Here there is no question of moderating the affection for the advantageous: acting morally requires complete and utter self-denial.

Scotus believes that God is providential: and so he believes that it is always in our self-interest to act morally. It is always in our self-interest to act on the affection for justice. For Scotus, as for other medieval masters, it is never rational to be immoral. And yet Scotus accepts that we may find ourselves in circumstances in which the intellect cannot discover how acting morally is, in fact, in our self-interest. We can stand in the breach and bring ourselves to do the right thing on entirely selfless ground. We can do so in the conviction that there will be no benefit to us in what we are about to perform. We can risk total non-existence (*totaliter non esse*) for something we love at least as much as we love ourselves.[31] Acting on the affection for justice to the exclusion of the affection for the advantageous demands a great deal of will-power. Conversely, the temptation for us to act exclusively on the affection for the advantageous (and against our better judgment) grows to the extent that its opposite, acting morally, calls for self-sacrifice.

The desires and motives produced by this affection deserve to be regard with suspicion since an excessive affection for the advantageous can tempt us to violate a

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[31] *Ordinatio* IV, dist. 43, q. 2. See also *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 27 (W, 436).

morally binding conscience. But these desires and motives deserve our suspicion for another reason. It seems entirely possible for us to act on an excessive affection for the advantageous and, at the same time, follow a corrupt conscience. In this scenario, we fail to exercise the affection for justice effectively. With this affection silent, it becomes easier for us to follow our conscience and act immorally – and to do so without a second thought. Consequently, we seem more than capable of making a judgment of conscience that actually suits an excessive affection for the advantageous. Our consciousness has been corrupted by the excesses of the affection for the advantageous. Accordingly, we make our judgment of conscience "under the influence" of an excessive affection for the advantageous. When this happens, conscience is clearly erroneous. We will be culpable for this error if ignorance is vincible. An excessive affection for the advantageous can clearly "distort" the judgment of conscience. Whenever the practical deliberations of the intellect are influenced by an "unmoderated" affection for the advantageous, then any practical conclusion we reach is likely to be untrustworthy.

With this danger in mind, perhaps the greatest implicit advantage that comes from tying morality to the affection for justice has to do with the positive effect that it has on the quality of our understanding. The simple fact of acting on the affection for justice guarantees that we follow our conscience. It also guarantees that our inner disposition both to choice and act is moral. It guarantees that our inner disposition both to choice and act is pleasing to God.

The moral goodness of an external act depends, however, on more than how we orientate ourselves to it. The act must also be true, not only to its internal setting, but also to its external setting. For Scotus, an external act is morally good when it combines all that

right reason dictates as being becoming to it (*omnium convenientium actui*).[32] The moral goodness can be called its integral suitability (*integra convenientia*).[33] It is a kind of "decor" (*quasi quidem decor*): for an act to be moral, the act has to "fit" or "match" (*convenientia*) all of its relevant circumstances.[34] A moral act is true to all the facts implicated in the concrete circumstance in which it is performed.

The exercise of either of the will's two affections cannot guarantee that the intellect can and will reason, in any given circumstance, to the opportune act. And yet the influence that each of the affections has on the practical intellect is not, for that reason, negligible.[35] Indeed, as we have just observed, the influence that an unmoderated affection for the advantageous has on the intellect is often negative. By contrast, the influence of the affection for justice is always positive.

The influence that each of the affections exercises on the practical intellect is a function of the way in which each attaches itself to the objects of morality. "The quality of our attachments," according to one contemporary philosopher, "is the quality of of our understanding."[36] Scotus, in his own peculiar fashion, is fully attuned to this statement.

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[32]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 40 (W, 226).

[33]*Quodlibetal Question* 18 (21) – (W, 218).

[34]*Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, nn. 62-67 (W, 206).

[35]Mark D. Jordan, "The Transcendentality of Goodness and the Human Will," in *Being and Goodness: The Concept of the Good in Metaphysics and Philosophical Theology*, S. MacDonald (Ed.) (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 137-49. Jordan calls our attention to "the interlocking of intellectual and appetitive acts in a continuous and self-perpetuating activity" that is presumed in Thomas' treatment of the interplay between the intellect and the will (p. 141). We cannot want something in particular if we do not want it as a means to end that we already want to attain. So some "prior" act of the will had to have fixed this end as an end for deliberation (*consilium*). And this act of the will had itself required a prior act of deliberation in order to act, and so on. Even though Scotus' conception of the relation between and the will and the intellect differs markedly, they agree on this basic point.

[36]Iris Murdoch, "Notes on Will and Duty," *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), p. 295.

Through the attachment provided by the affection for the advantageous, we can understand many things well. We can appreciate, for instance, how a person or a thing can satisfy our desires. But the affection for the advantageous is incapable of providing a thoroughgoing understanding of rational individuals. Neither is it capable of providing a proper understanding of how to act toward them. The affection for the advantageous attaches us to rational individuals, but only in a way which is partial and one-side. If we consistently base our behavior on the affection for the advantageous alone, we will form attachments that corrupt our consciousness.

Unlike the affection for the advantageous, the affection for justice is neither excessive nor defective in its attachments. Therefore, it is never excessive or defective in its desires or motives. As previously noted, these are always properly ordered to the rational individuals implicated in our behavior. The affection for justice needs only a minimum of correct information about a rational individual in order to attach us properly to him. Basically, we need to recognize the presence of a rational nature. The exercise of the affection for justice assures us of loving and pursuing a rational individual on strictly objective grounds.[37]

The affection for justice is the will's more noble or perfect aspect.[38] The exercise of this affection always assures us of moral motives. It also gives us a fighting chance to moderate the excesses of the affection for the advantageous. It is worth noting, for example, that Scotus never argues that the affection for justice itself stands in need of moderation.

The affection for justice seems to possess what might be called a "nose" for disorder in the affection for the advantageous. This seems clearly implied in *Ordinatio* II, distinction

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[37]As Iris Murdoch points out, "Unselfish attention breaks the barrier of egoism." See her "Notes on Will and Duty," *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), p. 301.

[38]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 26 (W, 178).

6, question 2.[39] Scotus never speaks as if the affection for justice could be brought to act in conjunction with an excessive and disordered affection for the advantageous. On the contrary, it seems clear that the affection for justice never acts in a tandem with an affection for the advantageous unless the affection for the advantageous has already been properly subordinated both to it, as well as to the choice and the course of action we are obligated to perform. The act of moderating the affection for the advantageous consists in subordinating its desires to those of the affection for justice, as well as ordering its desires to conscience (or right reason). Correcting these excessive desires must involve altering them in order to make them fit those found in the affection for justice. If an excessive desire cannot be fitted to those of the affection for justice, it must be abandoned. So, whether we act on the affection for justice alone or on both affections, the choice we make and the motivations behind it are, at the very least, moral and properly ordered to a morally binding conscience.

The affection for justice exerts a positive influence on the intellect because it exerts a positive influence on our consciousness.[40] Selfless attachments are consciousness-raising. A selfless attachment to a rational individual gives rise to desires and motives that alter our understanding of what we should do in a concrete circumstance. It alters this understanding for the better. It insures that our inner disposition toward a rational individual implicated in our behavior is properly ordered. It insures that we make a sincere and honest effort to do right by him. Selfless attachments focus the intellect on our moral obligation toward the most important fact(s) in any given moral circumstance. They introduce crucial

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[39]Once again, this seems implied in *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (49-60), where Scotus refers to the affection for justice as the first checkrein (*prima moderatrix*) on the affection for the advantageous (49), that gives us the means of acting justly (60).

[40]As Alan Donagan points out, "Were we obliged to bring morality into toasts, we should not refuse to drink to conscience; but we should beg to drink to a truthful consciousness first." Alan Donagan, *The Theory of Morality* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 142.

propositions into the practical syllogism. Inductively speaking, these propositions may increase the felt certainty of the conclusion of the practical syllogism. They may also change the practical conclusion that we actually reach. They may change or alter the judgment of conscience.

Selfless attachments cannot guarantee that we perform the opportune act, but they do bring us closer to it. In any given context, they compel us to make an assessment of the act we have in mind, as well as our reasons (or motivations) for wanting to carry it out. It compels us to ask whether either coheres with our selfless attachment to a rational individual. As a consequence, we stand a better chance of reasoning our way to the opportune act. The attachment of the affection for justice to a rational individual provides us with the moral vantage point we need if we hope to discover and then perform the opportune act. If the will is rightly and properly orientated to the rational individual implicated in our behavior, then it will be easier for us to orientate ourselves properly to all the other circumstances in play.

A selfless attachment can increase our understanding of a concrete moral circumstance by improving our understanding of how its elements are to be related one to the other. It gives us the ability to rank and order these elements. At the very least, it allows us to rank and order the elements of a concrete circumstance that we already recognize. It may also compel us to recognize the relevance of elements which we had previously noticed, but thought unimportant or even incongruous. A selfless attachment may even open our eyes to those elements of the moral circumstance to which we were previously blind. We cannot fully understand or appreciate what we cannot first see and then order to its context. A selfless attachment facilitates seeing a circumstance properly, as well as ordering its various elements properly. The exercise of the affection for justice gives us a better chance informing conscience rightly. In other words, it gives us a better chance of

discovering what right reason would dictate.

In the second moment of disorder, Scotus speculates that Adam sinned by inordinately coveting sexual pleasure for himself.[41] Indulging in this sexual pleasure would have presented itself as an illicit means to happiness. Two rival conceptions of happiness were probably attracting him, each associated either with a different external act or with the same act done for different motives. He decides to act on the faulty conception of happiness. This conception of happiness would have been developed under the influence of passion, and it would have been motivated by the affection for the advantageous alone. Keep in mind that Scotus often equates acting on an inordinate desire with acting from self-interest alone. Moderating the affection for the advantageous has as much to do with our motives for desiring something, as it does with how much we happen to desire it.[42]

The act Adam performs is not true to himself. If another person is involved, it is not true to her, either. Given that the act was motivated by the affection for the advantageous alone, she would have been pursued merely as a means to his own pleasure. In this context, as in any other, he would have owed her his selfless love.

Interestingly, if Adam had been motivated by the affection for justice, he could well have performed the same act and experienced the same pleasure. This would have been possible since he would have had another and higher reason (or end) for acting as he does.

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[41] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (44).

[42] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (52-53, 58, 62). The process of moderating the affection for the advantageous is usually described in one of two ways: either we moderate a formerly excessive desire for a particular intellectual or sensible good – a desire which falls under the affection for the advantageous; or we find a selfless reason for wanting an object of the intellectual or sensible appetite, where before we wanted it for self-interested reasons only – that is, solely as a means to our proper perfection. Consider the six ways in which a rational creature can will something inordinately. We can will something inordinately (1) by wanting it more passionately than it deserves, (2) by wanting it sooner than is becoming, (3) by wanting to possess it in an unbecoming way, (4) by wanting it without meriting it, (5) by wanting it in blatant disregard for the proper causal way of obtaining it, or (6) by wanting something only for self and not as something good in itself, as well. Once again, it seems to follow that a failure of moral motivation is always involved in willing something inordinately.

The principal reason (or end) for his action would have been to express his selfless love for the other person.

In Lucifer's case, as well, acting on the affection for justice means acting on a higher end. If Lucifer would have pursued this higher end, he would have had no choice but to perform a different act than the one he performs in actual fact. In the second moment of moral disorder, Lucifer desires and pursues the state of his own perfect happiness inordinately.[43] He wants to enjoy this state immediately. He is repulsed by the idea of waiting on God's good pleasure to enjoy it. But he cannot will his own immediate perfect happiness without willing God solely as a "means" to this state. It means loving God solely according to the affection for the advantageous. This is what Lucifer decides to do. He decides not to love God selflessly. This is his most egregious sin.

Lucifer could not have willed to enjoy his own perfect happiness immediately had he been motivated by the affection for justice. In the immediate future, he would have willed another, less pleasurable state for himself instead. And he would have done so for God's sake – for the sake of his own selfless attachment to God. He would have willed God both as a means to this state, and this state as a means to loving God better.[44] Perfect happiness is the kind of state that cannot be willed without willing God, as well. It follows, then, that willing this state as an end morally obligates us to also will it as a means to a further and higher end, namely, God. For Scotus, where a rational individual is concerned, whether God or anyone else, a state ought always to be willed as an intermediate or secondary end. The only exception allowed is for those created persons who have permanently fallen from God's good graces.

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[43] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (40-63).

[44] *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (54 & 62).

The manner in which Scotus assesses the moral goodness of an act has been criticized because it subordinates the end of the agent (his reason or ideal for acting) to the object of the action (the agent's performance).[45] The end is the most important of all the circumstances of an action, but it is considered less importance than is the object of an action in assessing the moral goodness of the action. By privileging the object rather than the end, Scotus is unable, the argument goes, to relate all the factors of a morally good action (that is, a good object, a good end, the appropriate circumstances) in a way "that properly takes the dynamic of the human will and reason into consideration."[46]

The criticism is directed at the texts in which Scotus treats moral goodness in its relation to both generic goodness and specific goodness. This criticism of Scotus does not take into account his treatment of the two affections of the will.[47] In response, we want to argue that this criticism loses some of its force when we bring the two affections of the will to bear on the assessment of the moral goodness of an act. For, as should be clear from our examination of Lucifer and Adam in *Ordinatio* II, distinction 6, question 2, when the moral goodness of an act is considered from the perspective of the two affections, what we plan to do is less important than the end we are acting toward. The end is the thing, so to speak. To consider the moral goodness of an act in the light of the two affections is, before all else, to be concerned with the end of a proposed action and the means of attaining it.

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[45]Tobias Hoffman, "Moral Action as Human End: End and Object in Aquinas in Comparison with Abelard, Lombard, Albert, and Duns Scotus," *The Thomist* 67 (2003), pp. 73-75, 89-94.

[46]Tobias Hoffman, "Moral Action as Human End: End and Object in Aquinas in Comparison with Abelard, Lombard, Albert, and Duns Scotus," *The Thomist* 67 (2003), p. 93.

[47]We have already explored Scotus' treatment of moral goodness in *Quodlibetal Question* 18 (14-22) – (W, 214-16) and *Ordinatio* II, dist. 40 (W, 226-228). In addition to these two texts, Hoffman also refers us to the following: *Ordinatio,* prol., p. 5, q. 1-2 (228-34, 252, 262, 264); *Ordinatio* II, dist. 7, q. un (28-33); *Ordinatio* II, dist. 41, q. un; *Ordinatio* IV, dist. 49, suppl. qq. 9-10, n. 8; *Lectura,* prol., p. 4, q. 1-2 (147); *Lectura* II, dist. 7, q. un (24); *Reportatio* II A, dist. 7, q. 1-3, n. 27; and *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* IX, q. 15 (20-21).

Indeed, whenever rational individuals are implicated in our behavior, the application of the two affections to any concrete circumstance demands the pursuit of two ends – a principal end and a secondary or intermediate end.

Happiness is the object of the affection for the advantageous. This affection will not allow us to love and pursue rational individuals for their own sake. They are loved and pursued solely as means to our own happiness. In addition, the pursuit of happiness is morally vacant, not to mention ultimately futile, if directed by the affection for the advantageous alone. The affection for the advantageous naturally tends, after all, to produce excessive desires for happiness. As a result, we cannot even hope to be happy apart from the exercise of the affection for justice. Only a moderated affection for the advantageous is a reliable guide to happiness.

Unlike other medieval masters, Scotus argues that happiness is neither the end of morality nor its subject.[48] We should quickly add, though, that how we go about pursuing our happiness is a moral matter.[49] The end of morality is the rational individual – a person, not a state. More specifically, the end of morality is God. The primary value of the beatific state is the opportunity it gives to live our selfless love for God in all its fullness and to do so without interruption. Happiness (whether imperfect or perfect) is the kind of state that always ought to be willed as a secondary or intermediate end.

The application of the affection for justice to any moral circumstance serves to clarify and then order the ends that we ought to act for. The application of the affection for justice

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[48]Tobias Hoffman, "Moral Action as Human End: End and Object in Aquinas in Comparison with Abelard, Lombard, Albert, and Duns Scotus," *The Thomist* 67 (2003), p. 90. Hoffman thinks that Scotus makes the end of morality happiness. This is not an unreasonable conclusion when Scotus' moral theory is considered apart from the two affections. It also reveals the extent to which the two affections alter Scotus' moral viewpoint.

[49]*Ordinatio* prol., p. 5, q. 1-2 (262).

gives us the insight we need in order to evaluate better whether the action we consider performing is, in fact, moral. It allows us to evaluate better whether the act we consider performing, as well as the end for which we consider performing it, is true to the rational individuals that may be implicated in our behavior. If not, then we either have to abandon the act or develop additional moral reasons for wanting to perform it.

A contemplative exercise lies behind every moral act. If we are to form our conscience properly, we must consider whether a proposed course of action is true to all its circumstances – especially, whether it is true to any rational individual that might be implicated in our behavior.[50] Just as we can better appreciate a painting if we can identify what is central to it and then go about relating the rest of the painting to this central element, so too we can better understand the moral picture before us if we can identify the the rational individualsss implicated in it and then relate (and subordinate) all the other elements at play in the moral picture to them. If we do so, we can come to a better understanding of that part of the moral picture we already recognize. What is more, if we do so, we may find our moral field of vision expanded, allowing us to see parts of the moral picture that we had not seen before – or, if we had noticed them, we had thought unimportant or even incongruous. The exercise of the affection for justice is, once again, consciousness-raising. And the most important beneficiary of having our consciousness raised is the practical intellect.

In his short life, Scotus never attempts to marry the two affections to his treatment of moral goodness. If he had, he would have arrived, we believe, at a perspective on moral

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[50]According to Scotus, God first looks to his own essence (or goodness) in doing whatever he does. See Allan Wolter's "The Unshredded Scotus: A Response to Thomas Williams," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (2003), pp. 336, 340, 342, 346. Perhaps, when we act morally, we resemble God. While God looks first to his own essence before acting, we look first to the essence or goodness of the rational individualsss implicated in assessing whether the act we have in mind, as well as our reasons for wanting to carry it out, are in accord with what they deserve.

goodness that is, in fact, true to the dynamics of will and reason in moral action. Contrary to the criticism leveled against him, Scotus has a way to argue that a consideration of the good and evil of our actions does concerns itself, first and foremost, with the good we desire and the means we select to achieve it.[51]

3. The Tools of the Moderating Will

There are two reasons why we ought to commit ourselves to moderating the propensity for the advantageous. First of all, this propensity naturally tends to produce excessive desires for happiness. Whenever we knowingly act on an excessive desire, we commit a moral disorder (or a sin). Secondly, if the desires produced by the affection for the advantageous naturally tend to be excessive, then this affection cannot serve as a trustworthy guide to its own end, namely, happiness. Left to itself, the only way this affection could serve us reliably would be if it could consistently produce ordered desires for this state. But Scotus thinks this is impossible apart from the moderating influence of the affection for justice. And so it follows that unless we succeed in consistently moderating the affection for justice, we cannot hope to become happy, whether in this life or the next.

The success or failure of the moral life also rests upon the ability of the propensity for justice to moderate the excesses of the propensity for the advantageous. For Scotus, the only moral motivations are selfless motivations, and selfless motivations are the exclusive provenance of the affection for justice. The affection for justice provides us, in fact, with nothing but moral motives. The object of morality is not happiness (whether perfect happiness or imperfect happiness), but rather the good of rational individuals. The

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[51]Tobias Hoffman, "Moral Action as Human End: End and Object in Aquinas in Comparison with Abelard, Lombard, Albert, and Duns Scotus," *The Thomist* 67 (2003), pp. 93-94.

end of morality is not a state, but rather a person. To be specific, the end of morality is "the" rational individual, namely, God. We need only remind ourselves, after all, that the affection for justice is an active inclination to love someone for his own sake and as good in himself, independent of self-interest. It actively inclines us to love a person "honestly," that is, in accordance with right reason and in terms of a person's intrinsic worth (as is the case with God) or in terms of the person's worth before God (as is the case with rational creatures).

Now none of us possesses the will power needed to deny consistently the visceral attraction of the affection for the advantageous. We can refuse to will our happiness from time to time, but we cannot help willing our own happiness more often than not. If we do not succeed in consistently moderating the affection for the advantageous, therefore, we can act on the affection for justice in only a sporadic fashion. So living a moral life depends on doing the human good from dual motives – that is, for reasons both selfless and self-interested.

The moderating will clearly aims at establishing more than just the proper conditions for a particular moral choice. It aims at more than just correcting a particular preference or a particular error standing in the way of moral action. Ultimately, it aims at molding the overall relation between the two propensities. This overall relation is in fact what we are referring to when we speak of someone's character.

We now direct our attention to what might be called the mechanics of the moderating will. That is, we now direct our attention to the "tools" and the "tactics" that we might be able to employ in the struggle to moderate the excesses of the affection for the advantageous. The tools at our disposal may come from any of four possible sources, namely, (a) the moral virtues, (b) the rational emotions, (c) the sensible appetite, and (d) the intellect. As for the tactics, they are derived from the will's ability to control thought.

(a) In moderating the affection for the advantageous, we can appeal to any virtuous

habits that might exist in the will. Such habits are long-lasting and extremely stable. They remove impediments to choosing rightly and raise impediments to choosing wrongly. On the one hand, through the medium of the two affections, they can provide us with motivations for acting rightly; and, on the other, they can further our capacity to resist and overcome adverse inclinations.[52]

Now there are three additional reasons why virtuous habits of the will make useful tools in moderating the affection for the advantageous. To begin with, nothing in the nature of the will, according to Scotus, determines it to will its own proper object.[53] If the will is to determine itself rightly and if it is to do so on a consistent basis, it needs good habits. Secondly, good habits of will enable the will to take pleasure in action rightly. If we do not feel pleasure in acting rightly, then, more likely than not, we will not be able to continue to act rightly. Without good habits of will, we cannot experience pleasure in the will for acting virtuously. In and of itself, the will is incapable of taking delight in acting virtuously.[54] Last of all, good habits of the will enable the will to act with ease. Not only do they work on the will prior to choice, inclining it to act in a certain way. But they may also serve as the partial or secondary efficient cause of an act of volition. The moral virtues act in the manner or fashion of a nature (*per modum naturae*).[55] Once a virtuous habit is established in the will,

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[52]Robert C. Roberts, "Will Power and the Virtues," *The Philosophical Review* 93 (1984), pp. 227-28. "There are broadly two ways in which we employ 'will' or its cognates. In the first kind of case we designate inclinations and disinclinations, desires and aversions, motivations... In the second kind of case 'will' designates not motivations, but a family of capacities for resisting adverse inclinations. When we say someone has a "strong will" we are often referring to the presence in her of such virtues as perseverance, resoluteness, courage, patience, and self-control. When we speak of "efforts of will," we refer to the acts or activities which correspond to such virtues.

[53]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 324).

[54]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 326).

[55]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 320).

the free power of the will can allow the moving force of the habit to lead it, in part, to act.[56] Scotus even adds that if a virtuous act is caused both by the free power of the will and by a virtuous habit, it is more "perfect" and more "intense" than if it were caused by the free power of the will alone.[57]

(b) Other handy tools for moderating an excessive affection for the advantageous are our rational emotions. These well-ordered emotions exist in the will. Scotus identifies two species of emotion (*affectio*) in the will, one active, the other passive.[58] The active emotions are, of course, the affection for justice and the affection for the advantageous. These two actively dispose us to certain kinds of activity. The other species of emotion in the will are semi-permanent qualities and they arise from or in response to our actions.[59] Like good habits, well-ordered rational emotions incline the will to act rightly. They incline the will to desire those things that are in accord with right reason. They help the will to move itself more readily and fluently to the right act. With respect to the affection for the advantageous, they would discourage any excess of desire or preference.

(c) The next set of tools for moderating the affection for the advantageous is derived from the sensible appetite. These tools are our well-ordered sensible passions or emotions. If we possess a pliable sense appetite, we can bend it to the direction of the will. It will take

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[56]*Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, pt. 1, q. 2 (W, 158, 181).

[57]*Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, pt. 1, q. 2 (154). See Bonnie Kent, *The Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 243-44.

[58]As Alan Perreiah points out, Scotus accepts Aristotle's basic definition of an emotion or passion (*passio*). He differs from Aristotle, however, in allowing for passive emotions in the rational appetite, as well as in the sensible appetite. A (passive) emotion is a semipermanent quality produced either in the sensible appetite or the rational appetite. It is the "result of apprehending an object in a certain way." Alan Perreiah, "Scotus on Human Emotions." *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998), p. 327.

[59]Alan Perreiah, "Scotus on Human Emotions." *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998), p. 331.

on habits which mirror or reflect the virtues and vices of the will.[60] These habits are not themselves virtues and vices since they are habits of feeling rather than habits of choice. The will can engender good or bad habits indirectly in a pliable sense appetite.

Those of us who succeed in properly ordering our emotional life will have an important advantage in moderating an excessive affection for the advantageous. The sense appetite more directly mirrors the affection for the advantageous than it does the affection for justice. The will directs the passions of the sense appetite to an end, and the end which speaks to the sensible emotions (or passions) is pleasure: and so happiness.[61] Consequently, if we can succeed in moderating the affection for the advantageous consistently, then we can expect that our sensible passions will be properly ordered. Well-ordered emotions in the sensible appetite will, in their turn, support our effort to moderate the excesses of the affection for the advantageous. These excesses will run against the grain of our good emotional habits.

(d) An indispensable tool for moderating the affection for the advantageous is the intellect. While we cannot hope to moderate this affection consistently without the ready aid of the moral virtues, for instance, the very possibility of moderating this affection depends upon what the intellect has to contribute. Moderating the affection for the advantageous cannot go forward if a harmony has not first been established between the affection for justice and our judgment about what we ought to do.

Scotus follows Aristotle and argues that the intellectual virtue of prudence deliberates about the means to "particular" ends. Scotus goes Aristotle one better, however, and argues that prudence may also deliberate about particular ends. Prudence is a

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[60]Ordinatio III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 325).

[61]*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 330).

deliberative habit. It is generated from dictates of right reason and it concerns either means "or" ends.[62] Prudence reasons discursively from a particular end to the means of bringing about this end. But prudence may also engage in a prior deliberation. This prior deliberation or first deliberation of prudence involves reasoning to a particular end from a practical principle which has itself been derived from a universal or general end.[63] In other words, prudence presupposes "synderesis." It presupposes the intellect's habitual and non-deliberative knowledge of practical principles that are always right.[64]

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[62]Stephen D. Dumont's "The Necessary Connection of Moral Virtue to Prudence According to John Duns Scotus – Revisited." *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 55 (1998), p.199. Scotus is convinced that a single act of right reason can engender the habit of prudence. But, as Dumont points out, if Scotus thinks this possible, he need not think that it actually happens on a regular basis (p. 189). Dumont's examination of Scotus' understanding of prudence is based on a careful reading of *Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un (Vivès, XV, 595-737).

[63]*Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un (Vivès, XV, 654). Licet istud videatur probabiliter dictum de distinctione scientiae practicae et prudentiae, tamen quia non solum est prudentia circa media ordinata ad consequendum finem ultimum, sed etiam dictando de ipso fine saltem particulari, puta de castitate, quod probatur primo sic, nam virtus moralis semper sequitur ordine quodam naturae prudentiam aliquam. Ex electione autem finis particularis, puta castitatis, generaliter virtus moralis. Igitur illam electionem praecedit aliqua prudentia. Ideo non videtur proprie tantum restringenda prudentia ut ponatur tantummodo habitus circa media determinata et dictata quae ordinantur ad finem particularem electum, sed etiam circa ipsum finem per se et proprie. Hoc etiam secundo probatur, quia tunc non esset una prudentia correspondens uni virtute morali, nam una virtus moralis est ex unitate finis ad cuius electionem principaliter inclinat. Si autem ad dictandum de illo fine nulla esset prudentia, sed tantum de mediis ad illum finem, nullum esset obiectum a quo esset unitas prudentiae dictativae, sed multae essent prudentiae de multis mediis dictatis ad finem, ubi tamen esset una virtus ex unitate finis. Tum igitur propter prioritatem prudentiae naturalem ad virtutem moralem, tum propter unitatem prudentiae respectu unius virtutis moralis, videtur esse concedendum quod ille actus practicus qui est recte dictativus de fine particulari sit proprie prudentia. Nec obstat quod dicitur prudentiam esse habitum consiliativum, et ita ad finem et discursivum, nam de finibus propriis vel proprie virtutum moralium dictatur discurrendo a principio practico sumpto a <179ra> fine universalis particulari politico (?). Et iste discursus est prima consiliatio licet communius dicatur consilium de mediis virtutum. Assisi 137, ff. 178vb-179ra. This passage is taken from Stephen D. Dumont's "The Necessary Connection of Moral Virtue to Prudence According to John Duns Scotus – Revisited." *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 55 (1998), pp.194-95.

[64]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 39 (W, 200). Si synderesis ponatur aliquid habens actum elictum semper necessario tendentem in actum iustum et resistentem peccato, cum nihil tale est in voluntate, non potest ibi poni: igitur est in intellectu; et non potest aliud poni quam habitus principiorum, quia semper est rectus, quia ex ratione terminorum virtute et lumine intellectus naturalis statim intellectus acquiescit illi.

Now the exercise of the virtue of prudence does not guarantee correct choice.[65] It cannot guarantee a prudent choice. Scotus does not follow Aristotle and argue that prudence always requires the actual operation of the will (that is, a choice) in accord with it. As we already know, Scotus follows other medieval masters in denying that virtue and vice can be exercised apart from free choice. A moral virtue cannot become so second nature to us as to compel the will to act. Habits of choice can act as the partial cause of volition, but not as the total cause of volition. For this reason, Scotus argues that the habits of the will, whether virtuous or vicious, do not act as natural causes. Rather, they act only in the manner or fashion of a nature (*per modum naturae*).[66] The same can be said for the habits of the intellect. No habit, however forceful, can rob the will of its freedom. The will can freely perform either contradictory acts or contrary acts. What is more, the will can deliberately refuse to act when all the conditions for its acting are in place.[67] Consequently, there need be no constant conjunction between a prudential command in the intellect and a correct (or prudential) choice in the will.

Scotus acknowledges a connection between prudence and moral virtue, but he denies that prudence presupposes moral virtue. Prudence can exist in the absence of moral

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[65] *Lectura*, prol., pars 4, qq. 1-2 and *Ordinatio*, prol., pars 5 (236-37). For Scotus, only the will's elicited act is both formally and primarily an act of praxis (*Lectura*, prol., pars 4, qq. 1-2 – W, 128). The intellect, on the other hand, is practical when, through a movement of the will, it apprehends an object according to rules from which praxis can be caused: "Et ideo intellectus apprehendens obiectum secundum regulas ex quibus potest causari praxis per motionem voluntatis, est practicus" (*Lectura*, prol., pars 4, qq. 1-2 – W, 136).

[66] *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 33 (W, 320).

[67] *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* IX, q. 15 (W, 146). Illa ergo potentia activa dicitur oppositorum, sive contrariorum sive contradictoriorum productorum, quae manens natura una habet terminum primum sub quo potest utrumque oppositum aeque cadere. Sed illa est oppositarum actionum, quae manens una est elicitivum sufficiens talium actionum. Et si actio potentiae propriae activae dicatur "actus,"... tunc omnis quae est oppositarum actionum, est oppositorum actorum, non e converso. Hoc autem debet intelligi, quod potentia sit oppositarum actionum seu actionis et negationis eius, sicut patebit in secundo articulo.

virtue since it presupposes right reason alone.[68] Moral virtue is impossible, however, apart from prudence.[69] If prudence presupposed moral virtue, then we could not explain how we start making the choices that eventually inculcate a moral virtue. If the intellect does not consistently present the will with the standards of right choice, then we cannot hope to either generate or guard habits of right choice.

One of the reasons we ought to desire a prudent intellect is that prudence commands practical acts correctly.[70] Scotus denies that our practical knowledge (our practical cognitions) extends directly to praxis. The only true practical act is an elicited act of the will. Only this act is directly in the will's control. Through this act the will extends itself directly to praxis. However, our practical knowledge is related to our practical acts as what directs is related to what is directed, or as what gives the rule is related to what is governed by it.[71] Practical knowledge directs our practical acts and serves as their rule. In addition,

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[68] *Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un (Vivès, XV, 648-650). See Stephen D. Dumont's "The Necessary Connection of Moral Virtue to Prudence According to John Duns Scotus – Revisited." *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 55 (1998), pp.184-205. For Scotus to say that prudence can exist in the absence of moral virtue does not commit him "to the position that prudence is compatible with a morally vicious will" (p. 190).

[69] *Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un (Vivès, XV, 654-655). See Stephen D. Dumont's "The Necessary Connection of Moral Virtue to Prudence According to John Duns Scotus – Revisited." *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 55 (1998), p. 194: "Scotus argues that to each moral virtue there corresponds one prudence. A moral virtue in turn derives its unity from its end. Therefore, if prudence does not issue commands about the end of moral virtue, but only about means to that end, then to each virtue would correspond not one but many prudences, one for each of the several means to that end."

[70] *Ordinatio* III, dist. 3, q. un., n. 19 (Vivès XV, 455). Et ad Philosophum praeferentem prudentiam, respondeo, prudentia quodammodo est regula aliarum virtutum, pro quanto ipsa, vel actus eius praecedit generatione habitum et actum virtutis moralis. Ex ista prioritate actus et habitus moralis confomatur sibi tamquam priori et non econverso.

[71] *Ordinatio*, prol., pars 5 (237). Hoc declaratur, quia conceditur communiter cognitio practica extendi ad praxim ut directiva ad directum sive ut regulativa ad regulatum. Cognitionem autem esses priorem naturaliter praxi et ei conformem, non est esse conformatam praxi quasi posterioris, sive est esse cui praxis sit conformanda, quod est cognitionem dirigere et regulare in praxi. Utrum autem sic dirigere vel conformare praxim sibi sit aliqua effiecientia in cognitione respectu praxis, de hoc distinctione 25 sedundi libri [*Ordinatio* II, dist. 25, q. un].

Scotus argues that a prudent intellect works toward conforming our desires to right desire. Prudence "conforms" a desire by directing or regulating a desire "so that it is correct."[72]

When it comes to moderating the excesses of the affection for the advantageous, the benefits of a prudential intellect are obvious. Prudence conforms excessive desires to right reason. Now the exclusive provenance of excessive desire "in" the will is the affection for the advantageous. It stands to reason then that a prudent intellect should be of help in any attempt to moderate the excesses of the affection for the advantageous. Prudence faithfully reveals the dictates of right reason in a given circumstance. Taken together, these dictates are objectively correct. They represent the superior and ordained rule of justice which is employed by for the affection for justice in moderating the affection for the advantageous. They provide the rule by which the higher will (our higher self) can correctly moderate the desires and preferences of our lower will (our lesser self).[73]

Prudence faithfully identifies all that is becoming to an act.[74] By identifying all that the external act must itself be true to, as well as how these facts are related one to the other, it tells how to act morally in a given circumstance. By comparing these facts to the desires originating in the affection for the advantageous, we can make out excessive desires and try to correct them. Put differently, prudence makes it clear that the affection for justice must be exercised in the circumstance at hand. It also points out incompatibilities between the two affections.

Each of the will's affections serves as a center of attraction for all that is conducive

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[72]Stephen D. Dumont, "The Necessary Connection of Moral Virtue to Prudence According to John Duns Scotus – Revisited." *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 55 (1998), p. 198.

[73]*Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (60). See also *Ordinatio* II, dist. 6, q. 2 (51)

[74]*Ordinatio* I, dist. 17, nn. 62-67 (W, 206); *Ordinatio* II, dist. 40 (W, 226);*Quodlibetal Question* 18 (21) – (W, 218).

to its pre-set or pre-determined end. The end of the affection for the advantageous is happiness; the end of the affection for justice, the rational individual – ultimately, God. Now, for Scotus, prudence is generated from the dictates of right reason about either means or ends. And the intellect can act prudently irrespective of whether we make a prudent choice or not. It follows, then, that prudence addresses the distinctive ends of each of the will's affections. Importantly, it tells us that we cannot successfully pursue true happiness apart from the affection for justice. It tells us that we ought to pursue happiness from dual motives.

Each of the affections has its own end. They never cooperate in producing a single common motivation. If both affections attach us to the same object of desire, they never do so for the same reason. In any given circumstance, then, prudence should tell us why the two affections ought to attach us to the same person and how. It should tell us why and how we ought to order the lower end of the affection for the advantageous to the higher end of the affection for justice.

4. Turning the Intellect

A selfless attachment is difficult to form. It is also difficult to live up to. A selfless attachment to another person can oblige us to make difficult sacrifices. In certain circumstances, we might have to renounce, for the sake of another, our claim to things that are objectively good for us. We might have to renounce some of the good things of this world (*commoda vitae*) for the sake of another. In other circumstances, we might even have to suffer some of the evils of this world for another's sake. At such moments, we are likely to experience a conflict between the affection for justice and an excessive affection for the

advantageous. When we do, neither the action nor the end proposed by the affection for justice can be the same as that proposed by an unmoderated affection for the advantageous (*affectio commodi*).

Initially, the course of action formed under the influence of an unmoderated affection for the advantageous will seem more advantageous and pleasing than that proposed by the affection for justice. The best among us will in general moderate the excesses of the propensity for the advantageous with less effort. They will exert the minimal effort to achieve the maximal result. However, since the affection for the advantageous naturally tends to run to excess, no one, no matter how virtuous, is exempt from the need to moderate this affection. Living a moral life never becomes an effortless affair. The affection for the advantageous will always need to be moderated, and the exercise of the moderating will always remain an exercise in personal asceticism.

It seems right to think that the moderating will can be exercised in several different circumstances. The first of these occurs when the intellect has nothing left to contribute. We have already discussed this possibility in connection with the Fall of Lucifer and Adam. Here the moderating function of the will is called into action after all the intellectual pieces are already firmly in place. All that is left is to negotiate is the battle of wills between the two affections. The affection for the advantageous has to be won over to a choice and a course of action that is properly suited to it, as well as the affection for justice, and away from a choice and a course of action that satisfies its excesses alone.

We can also imagine another circumstance in which the intellect has nothing left to contribute. In this scenario, there is no hope of winning over the affection for the advantageous to a proposal that is suitable to both affections. The proposal could exist and the affection for the advantageous could feel little or no attraction to it. The affection for the advantageous is not torn between two competing proposals. Or it could be that the intellect

has reasoned to the correct proposal, but that it has failed to do so in the name of both affections. We recognize the moral act, but we fail to see how carrying it out could possibly be in our self-interest or lead to our happiness.

Now it seems right to think that the moderating will does not come into play only after the intellect has done all that it can. We must also be able to exercise the moderating will while the intellect has something left to contribute. In this circumstance, we can imagine a "hearing" of sorts taking place between the two affections of the will. Each has some or all of the tools we discussed at its disposal. Each brings the tools it has to the hearing. Utilizing these tools, putting them to work, so to speak, will depend on the ability of each affection to capture our attention. More precisely, it will depend on the ability of each to seize control of our thought by seizing control of the intellect.

An orderly intellect always conforms itself to the truth – or, at least, to what appears to be the truth. It gives its assent necessarily and in proportion to the evidence that happens to be moving it. What is more, the intellect has no way to temper or moderate its own assent. Left undisturbed, the intellect acts with all available force when all the external conditions for its action are met. Scotus also insists that the intellect is not an active potency for opposites. While it can know opposites, it cannot freely produce opposite effects.[75] Unlike the will, it cannot freely perform acts that are either contradictory or contrary. Neither can it deliberately refuse to act when all the conditions for its acting are in place. For this reason, Scotus argues that when the intellect acts, it acts passively or irrationally.[76] With respect to its own movements, then, the intellect is not free.

The intellect differs from the will in one further respect. Unlike the will, it does not

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[75] *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* IX, q. 15 (W, 146).

[76] *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* IX, q. 15 (W, 156).

move itself to act deliberatively.[77] The intellect acts naturally. It is not free with respect to its object. The object of the intellect is the intelligible species – that is, the common nature (or quiddity) that exists in particular things without itself being particularized.[78] The intelligible species moves the intellect naturally.

If the intellect cannot move itself freely, it can be moved by the free action of the will. The will can alter the activity of the intellect.[79] The will cannot directly control acts of thought (*cogitatio* or *intellectio*) in the sense of starting or restarting the act of thinking itself.[80] The will is never responsible for a thought simply occurring to us. It is never responsible for the first thought (*cogitatio prima*) that pops into our head and begins a new series of thoughts.[81] The appearance of first thoughts such as these always precedes our willing it. In other words, the will is never responsible for a thought simply coming into our mind from out of the blue – as if from nothing or from nowhere.[82]

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[77] *Lectura*, prol., pars 4, qq. 1-2 (W, 135). Quamvis ergo volunata esset determinata ad habendam substantiam actus respectus finis in particulari, requirit tamen habitum directivum propter modificatum et circumstantionatum.

[78] *Quodlibetal Question* 15 (19-37). The intelligible species is the only medium of knowledge in this life since we are not at present capable of intuitive cognition. Scotus examines how the intellection is formed, along with the nature of the act of cognition, in *Quodlibetal Questions* 14 and 15.

[79] A sustained discussion of the extent of the will's ability to control thought is provided by Alexander Broadie in his "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), p. 291-310. Broadie focuses on *Opus oxoniense* II, dist. 42, qq. 1-4 (ed. Vivès, 446-71). Allan Wolter translates a small section of this text (ed. Vivès, 460-461) in his *Duns Scotus on Will and Morality* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1986), pp. 172-75.

[80] *Opus oxoniense* II, dist. 42, qq. 1-4 (ed. Vivès, 454a-56b). See Alexander Broadie's "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), p. 296-300.

[81] *Opus oxoniense* II, dist. 42, qq. 1-4 (ed. Vivès, 454a-56b). Dicitur igitur quod aliqua intellectio vel cogitatio est a voluntate imperata; et cum possit distingui cogitatio generaliter in primam et secundam, de prius probo quod non potest esse in potestate voluntatis, quia aliqua cogitatio praecedit necessario omne *velle* (saltem natura); sed quod praecedit omne *velle*, et est prius, natura saltem, non est in potestate nostra; hoc etiam dicit Augustinus 3. *De lib. arbit.* cap. 15. *Non est in potestate nostra, quin visis tangamur.*

[82] Alexander Broadie, "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), p. 297.

A very specific principle is at work here. The will cannot will unless an intellectual act is already in place.[83] If it is to will, the will needs a thought to will. Before the will wills, this thought must not only be in the mind, it must be present in the conscious mind. It must be conveniently ready-to-hand, so to speak. This explains why the intellect rather than the will has to be the direct cause of every train of thought that starts or restarts out of the blue.

The will can exercise its control over our thoughts by either intensifying or weakening its "attachment" to a particular thought. On the one hand, the will can refuse to take pleasure in the current thought or it can nil that thought – that is, it can refuse to will it. On the other, it can marry the attention of the intellect either to a thought in our mental field of vision or to the object that such a thought refers to. The will can either take pleasure in a particular thought within our mental field of vision; or, through the medium of the intelligible species, it can take pleasure in the external object to which this act of thinking refers. If the will happens to be attracted by the same thought or object as the intellect, it takes pleasure in it and, by so doing, strengthens the intellect's focus on it.[84] The will confirms or concurs with the action in which the intellect is engaged. If it is not attracted to the same thought our object as the intellect, then it creates the conditions for the possibility for a new thought to appear out of the blue. It can create conditions which encourage the intellect to turn itself away from the thought that currently occupies it, thereby creating an opportunity for a new thought to appear out of the blue. If a new thought appears, the will succeeds in controlling

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[83] *Opus oxoniense* II, dist. 42, qq. 1-4 (ed. Vivès, 451). Ex istis respondeo ad primam queastionem, ubi primo videndum est, si cogitatio sit in potestate voluntatis et quomodo... Non videtur quod subsit [cogitatio] imperio voluntatis, quia omnis volitio requirit necessario intellectionem naturaliter priorem, licet simul duratione. See Alexander Broadie's "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), pp. 292 & 304.

[84] See *Opus oxoniense* II, dist. 42, qq. 1-4; nn. 10-11 (W, 172-74) and *Quodlibetal Question* 16 (16-17).

thought "indirectly."[85]

The will is also able to turn the attention of the intellect toward a thought (or toward the object that this thought refers to) which the intellect was only vaguely conscious of before. It turns the intellect toward this thought by taking pleasure in the thought. In either case, similar results ensue. The thought occupying the intellect loses some of its intensity. The intellect either comes to regard it with weakened attention or not at all. In the first scenario, the stage is prepared for an unplanned thought to slip in out of the blue; in the second scenario, the stage is prepared for the dominance of the will's favored or favorite thought.

The will can control thought in another way. It may not be attracted to the same thought as the intellect; instead, it may be attracted by another thought of which we are only half conscious. Scotus compares the intellect to the eye. Just as the eye is only being able to focus perfectly and distinctly on only one object at a time, so, too, the intellect can focus on only one thought at a time.[86] Every other thought in its mental field of vision remains peripheral. These thoughts are present to the intellect's gaze, but only imperfectly and indistinctly. Now the will can control thought by commanding the intellect to turn itself away from its current thought and toward a peripheral thought that happens to be attracting its attention. The will can command the operation of the intellect with respect to acts of thinking that are ready-to-hand, but which are not the current focus of the intellect. Even if we are not attending directly to a particular act of thinking, one or more of its features can be attracting our attention. At this point, the will is free to decided whether to turn the intellect toward it or away from it.

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[85]Alexander Broadie, "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), p. 298.

[86]*Quodlibetal Question* 15 (61).

Now thoughts are not the only things in which the will can invest or divest itself. It can do the same with respect to means, as well as ends. Scotus argues, for instance, that the will can blind the intellect and rob it of the virtue of prudence.[87] It need not do so by causing the intellect to reason erroneously. The will causes the intellect to err, not in the way it reasons, but in its manner of acting or proceeding.[88] The will can corrupt consciousness even when the intellect is itself certain of the correct moral judgment.[89]

The will can blind the intellect in one of two ways. In the first way, a malicious will turns the intellect away from a consideration of what is right and toward a consideration of sophistical or probable arguments to the contrary. It then proceeds to make a choice that is in direct opposition to a dictate of right reason.[90] Here the will controls the intellect in a way that does not permit it to stand or rest in the dictate of right reason for very long (*non permittit intellectum diu stare*). If this behavior is repeated often enough, the intellect will become accustomed to giving little time and consideration to what is right. The intellect will gradually grow less prompt in reasoning to the dictates of right reason. In the end, the intellect loses the habit of prudence.

The will may also blind the intellect by first choosing an evil end and then directing

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[87]*Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un. (Vivès XV, 640-41).

[88]*Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un. (Vivès XV, 641).

[89]Stephen D. Dumont, "The Necessary Connection of Moral Virtue to Prudence According to John Duns Scotus – Revisited." *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 55 (1998), pp. 189-190.

[90]*Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un. (Vivès XV, 640). Et si tunc quaeritur quomodo malitia excaecat intellectum secundum illas auctoritates, potest dici quod excaecat dupliciter: Uno modo privative; alio modo positive. Privitate, quia avertit a consideratione recta; voluntas enim eligens oppositum alicuius recte dictati, non permittit intellectum diu stare in illo recto dictamine, sed avertit ipsum ab illo, and convertit ad considerandum rationes pro opposito, si quae possint esse sophisticae vel probabiles; saltem avertit ad considerationem aliud pertinens, ne stet illa actualis displicentia, quae stat in remorsu illo, qui habetur in eligendo oppositum dictati.

(*praecipit*) the intellect to deliberate about the means necessary to attain it.[91] The habit of prudence is generated in the intellect when the intellect consistently discovers the proper means to good ends. Another habit is generated, however, when the intellect is consistently called upon to discover delightful means to evil ends.[92] Scotus calls the resulting intellectual habit imprudence or foolishness (*stultitia*).

A will that consistently makes bad choices generates foolishness in the intellect. A foolish intellect promptly selects the means necessary to bring about the end presented by an evil will. The problem with a foolish intellect is not that it reasons poorly. Asked to deliberate about a good end, it will reason to the appropriate means. Rather, the problem with the foolish intellect is the way in which it has come to act or proceed on a habitual basis (*error in agibilibus*).[93] It has acquired a habit of thinking that promotes the pursuit and attainment of evil ends. It takes pleasure deliberating about evil ends. It can stand, so to speak, the company of evil ends.

When Scotus speaks of an evil will, he is speaking, of course, about an excessive or disordered affection for the advantageous. In the first and second moments of moral

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[91] *Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un. (Vivès XV, 640-41). Positive autem excaecat sic: nam sicut voluntas recte eligens finem praecipit intellectui considerare illa, quae sunt necessaria ad illum finem, et intellectus sic inquirendo media ordinata ad illum finem rectum, generat in se habitum prudentiae; ita voluntas eligens sibi malum finem... praecipit intellectui considerare media necessaria ad consequendum illum finem... hoc est, voluntas praestituens ibi malum finem, praecipit intellectui invenire media necessaria ad delectabilia prosequenda et tristia opposita fugienda.

[92] *Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un. (Vivès XV, 641). Et sicut imperio voluntatis bene eligentis generatur intellectu bene dictante, circa media ad illum finem bene electum perquirendum, habitus, qui est prudentia, ita in voluntate male eligente, habitus acquisitus ex dictamine circa ea quae ordinantur ad malum finem electum, est error, et habitus directe oppositus habitui prudentiae, et potest vocari imprudentia vel stultitia... quia sicut prudens habet habitum, quo recte eligit ordinata ad finem debitum, ita imprudens vel stultus habet habitum, quo prompte eligit ordinata ad finem praestitutum a voluntate male; et talis habitus generatur ex imperio voluntatis male eligentis.

[93] *Ordinatio* III, dist. 36, q. un. (Vivès XV, 641). Pro tanto igitur verum est quod voluntas mala excaecat, on quidem faciendo errare circa aliqua compexa, sed faciendo intellectum habere habitum conisderandi aliqua media ordinata ad malum finem; et totus ille habitus est error in agibilibus, licet non sit error deceptivus, quantum ad considerationem, sive speculationem.

disorder, both Lucifer and Adam make a choice in direct opposition to right reason – a choice motivated exclusively by an excessive affection for the advantageous. They do so by raising sophistical or probable arguments in opposition to the dictate of right reason. In each of them, the affection for the advantageous chooses an evil end and succeeds in directing the intellect to deliberate about the means to this end.

Each of them knew what the right end was, as well as the proper means of attaining it. They could have succeeded in moderating the affection for the advantageous if the affection for justice could have seized the intellect's attention and held it. As it is, the affection for justice loses its battle for supremacy with the affection for the advantageous. This leaves the affection for the advantageous with an unfettered influence on the intellect's gaze and so on consciousness.

5. The Tactics of the Moderating Will

When it comes to moderating the affection for the advantageous, handing the intellect over to the influence of the affection for justice is half the battle. But there do not seem to be any obvious tactics that would cause us to employ or engage the affection for justice in a particular circumstance. The intellect has to recognize that the rational individual implicated in our behavior ought to be loved selflessly. And conditions have to exist in our inner life that respond to the invitation. We can always turn down the invitation. If we already love the person selflessly, we can always refuse to act on this attachment. The most we seem able to say is that we will find the affection for justice easier to engage if we actually love a rational individual implicated in our behavior selflessly. Loving one person selflessly can provide a springboard for loving whomever else might be implicated in our

behavior. Short of an actual selfless attachment, we will be closer to employing the affection for justice to the extent that we feel drawn to love (or to the extent that we desire to love or want to love) those implicated in our behavior selflessly.

If we can engage the affection for justice, we can hope to moderate an excessive affection for the advantageous. We can hope to prevent this affection from acting on its own, in accordance with its own internal rule of action (a rule of action that is itself immoderate) – and in isolation from the rule of action expressed through the affection for justice. If we should succeed in moderating the affection for the advantageous, then we succeed in correcting its desires and preferences by bringing them into line with the rule of action expressed through the propensity for justice. Since this rule of action faithfully expresses what we think our moral obligation is, success in moderating the affection for the advantageous will depend on our ability to persuade the affection for the advantageous that a particular course of action (or even a way of life) which is less appealing or even repulsive initially, is upon further reflection more to our advantage than any other.

In moderating the affection for the advantageous, we can appeal to one of two general tactics. In each of them, we can employ the various tools at our disposal. However, the first way has serious deficiencies when compared to the second. The first tactic for moderating an excessive affection for the advantageous works by taking our mind off the object that is provoking our excessive desires. The second tactic works by waging a full frontal assault on the pleasure we taking in desiring something excessively. This tactic aims at vanquishing our excessive desires for good by rooting out their source in our own person. Where before we took pleasure in our excessive desires for a person or a thing, we now hate the thought of desiring it excessively.

Consider Adam's sin in the second moment of moral disorder. Adam's first inordinate act of the love of desire was probably directed to an object of his dominant sense

appetites. As Scotus speculates, it is entirely possible that he coveted sexual pleasure excessively. He would have wanted to pursue this particular end in the name of happiness. This conception of happiness would have been at odds with the proper conception of happiness – a conception of happiness that he had formulated under the influence of both affections of the will. Now Adam could have moderated the affection for the advantageous by turning the gaze of the intellect from the object of his excessive sexual desires. He would have succeeded in moderating the affection for the advantageous by turning it from the source of its temptation and toward something which is amenable to both affections. He would have succeeded by employing a diversionary tactic.

This tactic is less than ideal. It is less than ideal because it succeeds by simply taking his mind off whatever happens to be provoking excessive desires in the affection for the advantageous.[94] Adam succeeds in temporarily ordering this affection to the affection for justice, but not with respect to the object of his sexual desire. He does not succeed in properly ordering the affection for the advantageous to this object. In the next moment, he could find himself in front of this object and his affection for the advantageous can generate, once again, the same or similar excessive desires in response to it.

As a tactic for moderating the affection for the advantageous, diverting the gaze of the intellect can prevent us from falling into moral disorder. Yet it will lead to disaster if employed on a consistent basis. On the one hand, we will find it hard to keep this up. Whenever the object pops into consciousness, we will have to keep a close eye on this object, and we have to do so without letting it become the center of our attention.[95] Should

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[94]Alexander Broadie, "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), pp. 307-09.

[95]Alexander Broadie, "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), pp. 307. Broadie considers the tactic of averting the gaze in connection with, not the moderating will, but sinful thoughts. He argues that this tactic is intellectually ambivalent, as well as

it become the center of our attention, we risk engendering excessive desires toward it. In addition, the tactic of averting the gaze of the intellect can be morally damaging, even cowardly. We are confronted by a danger, namely, our excessive reaction to a particular object, and we decide to run rather than stand and fight. Our response was not true to the object, yet we do not manage to correct our response.[96] In short, the tactic of averting the gaze of the intellect is best as a holding action. It serves us well when it prepares us to fight another day.

When it comes to moderating the affection for the advantageous, the best tactic is to confront our excessive desires and try to overcome them. This tactic is true to the Aristotlean schema of the virtues, where between excess and defect we find "the virtuous mean which consists in squaring up to the enemy, but doing so while properly prepared in the light of an intelligent appraisal of the situation."[97] Here we bring all the tools at our disposal in order to present the object in its true light. A proper understanding of the object will help us correct the faulty understanding that underlies and promotes our excessive desires for it. A proper understanding of an object will tell us how we ought to focus our attention on it. It will also tell us how we are obligated to act toward it. We need only add that, for Scotus, the quality of our understanding is not simply a function of how well we

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morally damaging (or cowardly). This critique is equally valid, we believe, when applied to the moderating will. In fact, moderating sinful thoughts would seem to be one of the functions of the moderating will.

[96]Alexander Broadie, "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), pp. 307. As Broadie points out, "We should be clear that the moral damage caused by failure to face up to the source of danger runs deep, for such failure leaves untruth in the soul. The fact that untruth remains is bound to have moral implications if, as I shall assume here, we have a duty to truth, a duty which stands in close relation to the duty to be careful in our reasoning, this relation being secured by the fact that we reason as a way of reaching the truth" (p. 307).

[97]Alexander Broadie, "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), p. 308. Broadie criticizes Scotus for not considering this tactic in relation to sinful thoughts. What we want to argue is that this tactic is implicit in Scotus' conception of the moderating will.

reason, it is also a function of the quality of our attachments.

Consider Adam, once again. It seems possible that he could have moderated his excessive sexual desires if he seized on the understanding of the object provided by the affection for justice, or that provided by both affections, and used it to explode the faulty understanding provided by an excessive affection for the advantageous. If this object was a person, he could have focused on what he had not sufficiently heeded before, namely, her worth and his moral obligation to her. He could have appealed to the proper understanding of her that was ready on call. He could have also appealed to his selfless attachment to her in order to muster and intensify his determination to do rightly by her. In other words, he could have used the tools at his disposal to overturn the pleasure he felt in desiring her excessively.

He would have succeeded in moderating the affection for the advantageous. He would have come to hate what he formerly loved and served. Importantly, in so doing, he would have succeeded in diminishing the chances that he would desire the object excessively in the future.[98] If he was unable to break his attachment to (his love for) this illicit pleasure quickly and cleanly, then he might have gradually chipped away at the appeal of this illicit pleasure over time. As an example, what come to mind is Petrarch's ongoing struggle to "hate" the illicit desires he had loved for so long:

> Many dubious and troublesome things are still in store for me. What I used to love, I no longer love. But I lie: I love it still, but less passionately. Again have I lied: I love it, but more timidly, more sadly. Now at last I have told the truth; for thus it is: I love, but what I should love not to love, what I should wish to hate. Nevertheless I love it,

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[98]Alexander Broadie, "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996), p. 309. As Broadie points out in relation to sinful thoughts, "This better response is however also in one respect a form of indirection, for the agent is now focused upon aspects of the object that had not previously held or even attracted his attention. But there remains all the difference in the world between on the one hand redirecting one's gaze by averting it totally from an object, and on the other hand gazing more deeply at some aspect of it with a view to gaining a deeper understanding of its moral character and status."

> but against my will, under compulsion and in sorrow and mourning. To my own misfortune I experience in myself now the meaning of that most famous line: "Hate I shall, if I can; if I can't, I shall love though not willing." The third year has not elapsed since that perverted and malicious will, which had totally seized me and reigned in the court of my heart without an opponent, began to encounter a rebel offering resistance. A stubborn and still undecided battle has been long raging on the field of my thoughts for the supremacy of one of the two men within me.[99]

At the end of this process, too, he would come to hate the desires he formerly loved. From the moment he does, he would have severely diminished the chances of loving the object of his desire excessively in the future.

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[99]The translation is by Hans Nachod and is found in *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, E. Cassirer, P. O. Kristeller, J.H. Herman (eds.) (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 42-43. The Latin runs as follows: *Mihi quidem multum adhuc ambigui molestique negotii superest. Quod amare solebam, iam non amo; mentior: amo, sed parcius; iterum ecce mentitus sum: amo, sed verecundius, sed tristius; iamtandem verum dixi. Sic est enim; amo, sed quod non amare amem, quod odisse cupiam; amo tamen, sed invitus, sed coactus, sed maestus et lugens. et in me ipso versiculi illius famosissimi sententiam miser experior: "Odero, si potero; si non, invitus amabo"* (Ovid, *Amores* 3, 11, 35). *Nondum mihi tertius annus effluxit, ex quo voluntas illa perversa et nequam, quae me totum habebat et in aula cordis mei sola sine contradictore regnabat, coepit aliam habere rebellem et reluctantem sibi, inter quas iamdudum in campis cogitationum mearum de utriusque hominis imperio laboriosissima et anceps etiam nunc pugna conseritur. (The Ascent to Mount Ventoux*, 21-22). For the source of Augustine's notion of two rival wills, see *Confessions* 8.5.10 and 10.22-23. As another example, we might also cite Alypius' obsession with the gladiatorial fights (Augustine, *Confessions*, 6.13-14).

CONCLUSION

When we look at Scotus' moral point of view through the prism of the two affections of the will, it is surprisingly pessimistic. We find this surprising since Scotus' various treatment of natural law, of suitability relations and right reason, do not leave this impression. The tone of those discussions is confident in the sense that they display what might be loosely called an Aristotelian confidence in reason and in our ability to live a virtuous life by the sweat of our own brow. But our examination of the will's two affections reveals the overriding influence of Augustine and the Augustinian tradition on Scotus' theory of moral motivation. That we possess the affection for justice tells us something extremely positive (perhaps, even unexpected) about the human person. It tells us that we are capable of loving ourselves and others selflessly. It tells us that we are capable of acting from more than our own self-interest. It tells us that we can even move ourselves to act on entirely selfless grounds if need be. And yet by insisting that we only act morally if we are motivated by the affection for justice, Scotus rudely notifies us that acting selflessly is not something we are called upon to do only in rarefied circumstances. The selflessness demanded of us is breathtaking in its scope and range.

Scotus would have been better to served to allow that some strictly self-interested behavior can be moral. He could lighten our moral burden considerably if he were to allow for a broad range of circumstances in which we could act morally on the affection for the advantageous alone. But even then we still might wonder whether most of us could manage to live a moral life. Consider the fact that we need to exercise the affection for justice if we hope to moderate our excessive desires. Irrespective of whether the affection for the advantageous naturally tends to produce excessive desires for our own happiness, most of us experience excessive desires frequently enough to wonder whether we can muster the

selflessness needed to properly moderate them.

Scotus' theory of moral motivation is striking for its ability to capture the most demanding moral injunctions found in the *New Testament*. And to justify them on philosophical grounds. The call to selflessness we find there is not limited to rarefied circumstances. On the contrary, the call to selflessness respects few or no circumstances. We are called upon to be selfless even in spite of circumstances. Where other moral systems might restrict selflessness to friendship or other seemingly appropriate settings, Jesus demands that we love friend and enemy, acquaintances and strangers, as we love our very selves. And yet there is reason to believe that Jesus does not think doing so is possible apart from God's grace. The same might be said for Scotus. If acting morally requires a near constant selflessness of us, then it seems reasonable to conclude that living a moral (or a virtuous) life is impossible apart from God's grace. For this reason, the tone or character of Scotus' moral theory seems decidedly theological.

Interestingly, Scotus is often seen as paving the way for Kant. Kant does not formulate his moral theory in dialogue with that of Scotus. There is no reason to believe that Kant ever read Scotus. The role Scotus assigns to the will in morality, however, is thought to have contributed to the philosophical tradition Kant inherited. At first glance, the link seems surprising given Scotus' theory of moral motivation. After all, Kant's moral theory hides a great confidence in the exercise of cool reason. His optimism clashes with Scotus' pessimism. And yet the lineage is there. The connection gradually materializes when we excise the following convictions from Scotus' moral theory. First of all, we excise the conviction that the moral act has a goodness of its own. Secondly, we excise the conviction that we are better moral agents if we actually succeed in performing the opportune act. Third, we excise the conviction that we cannot muster moral motives apart from an actual selfless attachment to another person. Fourth, we excise the conviction that we cannot

move ourselves to act morally apart from an actual selfless attachment to another person. In other words, we have to excise Scotus' morality of inspiration.

With the above successfully excised, the connection with Kant becomes clear. Just as Scotus is convinced that we cannot act morally on the affection for the advantageous, Kant is convinced that we cannot act morally in willing our own self-interest. Here lies the key to the distinctiveness of Scotus' point of view: He thinks that we are better moral agents when we are motivated to do the right thing for both selfless and self-interested reasons. But it is his insistence on selflessness (or altruism) that is the defining point of his theory of moral motivation. Consider the affection for justice. Scotus is convinced that no moral disorder (or sin) proceeds from the affection for justice. Acting on this affection does not guarantee that we always perform the opportune act, but it does guarantee, at a bare minimum, our moral innocence. It guarantees a morally good inner disposition to the choice we make and the act we take. It guarantees a good will.

The rigorous asceticism required of us in order to actually possess a good will makes Scotus' theory of moral motivation one of the most challenging ever formulated in the Middle Ages.

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