

JOHN DUNS SCOTUS ON GOD'S WILL: ORDERLY AND MOST REASONABLE

SOBRE A VONTADE DE DEUS EM JOÃO DUNS SCOTUS: ORDENADA E A MAIS RACIONAL

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to analyze some of Scotus' key texts which allow a better understand of his idea of a God orderly and most reasonable willing. The argumentation moves from the assumption that God's acting *ad extra* owes its reasonability not only to divine ideas, but, most importantly, to the intrinsic rationality of his will. Such rationality, understood according to Duns Scotus' theory of potencies, as a perfection *simpliciter simplex*, offers a better understanding of all those passages where Scotus, in order to explain theological issues involved, takes into account God's orderly willing.

Keywords: *Ordinate. Rationalis. voluntas Dei ordinate.* John Duns Scotus. Orderly. Most Reasonable.

Resumo

O objetivo do presente estudo é analisar alguns textos-chave em que Scotus permite um melhor entendimento de sua ideia de uma vontade de Deus mais racional e ordenada. A argumentação se orienta para a afirmação de que a ação de Deus *ad extra* permite a sua razoabilidade não somente em relação às ideias divinas, mas, principalmente, à intrínseca racionalidade de sua vontade. Tal racionalidade, entendida de acordo com a teoria das potências em Duns Scotus, enquanto uma perfeição *simpliciter simplex*, oferece um melhor entendimento de todos as passagens em que Scotus, a fim de explicar intrincadas questões teológicas, toma em consideração a vontade ordenada de Deus.

Palavras-chave: *Ordinate. Rationalis. voluntas Dei ordinate.* John Duns Scotus. Ordenadamente. Mais Racional.

Introdução

What exactly does Duns Scotus intend when he qualifies divine acting and willing as *ordinatus*, *ordinatissimus* and *rationalis*? With regard to what reality may one speak of an "orderly action" of God and what are the principles determining it? Moreover, if God is really totally free in relation to contingent realities *ad extra*, can we still say that He acts in a most orderly and reasonable way towards them, and that the reality itself is orderly and rational?

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Etienne Gilson, was probably one of the most influential scholars of XX century to offer elucidations relative to Scotus' position on such questions, especially in order to shield him against the accusation of promoting a harmful ethical voluntarism. According to the French scholar, nowhere in Scotus' works is to be found a statement that God acts with an arbitrary and capricious will. On the other hand, it is rather clear that for Scotus the origin of the moral laws do not depend ultimately on God's will, but rather on His intellect². God, *de potentia absoluta*, could wish nothing contradictory, while *de potentia ordinata* could wish nothing which is not ordered according to the laws previously established by His wisdom. Therefore, whatever exists does not owe its nature to God's will, but it is rather God who has chosen among an infinite number of essences the ones He actually created³. And this is the reason - affirms Gilson - because according to Duns Scotus "[...] there can be no arbitrary irrationality in God's acting, but is rather His choice (and not the essence) of each rational order to depend upon his will" (GILSON, 1952, p. 611).

The interpretation offered by Gilson certainly offered a rather objective and reliable analysis of Scotus' thought on this point, which helps to better understand many aspects of his ethical system.

But, at the same time, no less well motivated were the observations made to Gilson a few years later by Walter Hoeres⁴. Our scholar, although recognizing the high value of Gilson's work, considered it still partial and limited, above all because it did not answer the "the fundamental and most pressing objection raised by Scotus' formulations, that is, how can it be possible that God's works *ad extra* are always connected with his wisdom, because such position ends up overlooking expressions such as "everything is good only because it is willed

² GILSON Etienne. **Jean Duns Scot**. Introduction a ses positions fondamentales. Paris: Vrin, 1952, p. 613: "On dit souvent que Duns Scot est "volontariste", parce qu'il soumet à la volonté de Dieu une partie du Décalogue et, par là même, une partie de la loi morale naturelle. En fait, Duns Scot refuse d'inclure dans cette loi tout ce dont Dieu lui-même a parfois dispensé les hommes, précisément parce que la loi morale naturelle ne dépend que du seul entendement de Dieu, non de sa volonté"

³ Cf. GILSON, 1952, p. 611: "Parlant *de potentia absoluta*, Dieu peut vouloir tout ce qui n'implique pas contradiction; parlant *de potentia ordinata*, Dieu ne peut vouloir que ce qui s'accorde avec les natures qu'il a choisi de créer et les règles de sa justice ou de sa sagesse telles qu'il les a établies. Ce n'est pas sa volonté qui a fait que les natures sont ce qu'elles sont, mais c'est elle qui, entre l'infinité des essences possibles, a librement choisi celles qui seraient créées".

⁴ Cf. HOERES Walter. **Der Wille als reine Vollkommenheit nach Duns Scotus**. Muenchen: Anton Pustet, 1962 [italian edition: *La volontà come perfezione pura in Duns Scoto*. Padova: Liviana, 1976. I will quote the Italian edition, which has updates made by the Author.

by God”, that the divine will is the first rule of whatever he may create and that every action *ad extra* is good just because it is willed» (HOERES, 1976, p. 113).

According to Hoeres, therefore, the real solution in order to comprehend Scotus' thought does not rely much upon a strict link between God's acting and his wisdom. But rather, what really helps to understand why and how God wishes always and necessarily what is good – and, for that matter, to explain his rational and orderly acting - is the intrinsic rationality and self-determination (*selbstbestimmung*) of the will as a pure perfection⁵. In other words, the will possesses already by itself an intrinsic rationality and perfection, to the point that even when God acts *de potentia absoluta*, even then He is acting *de potentia ordinata*⁶.

In our opinion, Hoeres's position highlights a very important facet of Scotus' conception of the will which accounts for many original aspects of his theological as well as philosophical thought. In the present research, although not discussing directly Hoeres' position, we will analyze some of the texts that seem to fully support the conception of an orderly and rational acting of God rooted in the very nature of His own will.

1. The concept of *ordo* and *ratio*

The notion of *ordo*, in all the grammatical forms deriving from it such as *ordinate*, *ordinatus*, *ordinatissime* (orderly, ordered, most orderly), is certainly among the terms recurring with greater frequency in the works of Scotus, in many cases with a specifically relevant key role, as for example in the use made of it to qualify divine activities *ad intra* and *ad extra*: the willing and acting of God. Particularly significant is the fact that in the greater number of instances it is found linked with another term employed in a complementary way,

⁵ Cf. HOERES, 1976, p. 113ss. For an updated summary of his position, cf. HOERES Walter. Die innere Vernunft des Willens nach Duns Scotus - eine systematische Interpretation. In: **Einzigkeit und Liebe nach Johannes Duns Scotus: Beiträge auf der Tagung der Johannes-Duns-Scotus-Akademie vom 5. - 8. November 2008 in Köln zum 700. Todestag von Johannes Duns Scotus.** ed. H. Schneider. Mönchengladbach: Butzon und Bercker, 2009, p. 133-176.

⁶ Cf. HOERES, 2009, p. 148: “Denn wenn der göttliche Wille schon in sich vollkommen und vernünftig ist, dann ist auch alles, was er *de potentia absoluta* beschließt, immer schon *de potentia ordinata* gewollt”.

that of *ratio*. This last term is found in grammatical forms such as *rationalis*, *rationabilissime*, *rationaliter* (reasonable, most reasonably, reasonably)⁷.

The concepts expressed by these terms, notwithstanding their various grammatical forms, are in the final analysis often employed by Scotus to convey a single idea concerning the being and operation of God: the fact that these are absolutely not casual and happenstance, but as it were “actuated” in conformity with determined principles or norms. Precisely these make an action “orderly and reasonable.”

The Subtle Doctor's immediate reply to the questions above formulated is offered in different parts of his works, where a sufficiently clear idea of his thought, particularly when analyzed in reciprocal relationships, is present. A first example of this kind can be found in a number of passages in 44 of *Ordinatio* I⁸. Nonetheless, an ampler explicative presentation of these concepts, with clear examples of the logical nature and structure of the process of divine willing, is offered by Scotus in a number of passages drawn from d. 20 of *Lectura* I, from d. 41 of *Ordinatio* I, and from d. 32 of *Ordinatio* III, where the Subtle Doctor asks whether God loves all things in the same manner with the love of charity⁹.

After a short look at the concept of *ratio* and *ordo* as presented in texts taken from *Ordinatio* I d. 35 e 44, we will move to d. 20 e 41; and then, we will offer an in-depth analysis of d. 32.

⁷ A quantitative digital analysis of the theological works of Scotus so far critically edited: the *Ordinatio* e the *Lectura*, show the adverb *ordinate* to recur at least 135 times; the adjective *ordinatus* at least 46 times; the expression *ordinate volens* recurs at least 7 times in key contexts. As an example of especially interesting texts, in addition to those analyzed in this chapter, see also IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS, *Ordinatio* IV d. 1 pars 2 q. 2 n. 256, **Opera omnia** XI, ed. B. Hechich et al., Civitas Vaticana (2008, p. 86): “Lex autem posterior semper fuit perfectior, quia Deus *ordinate agens*, procedit de imperfecto ad perfectum”; and IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* IV d. 15 q. 1 n. 25 (2011, p. 63): “Deus per causam efficientem secundam, potest immediate; ergo sine illa posset iuste et *ordinate remittere culpam*”. The italics are ours. These passages, even if not directly pertinent to themes treated in the present study, contribute to forming a more complete view of the use made by Scotus of the notion of *voluntas ordinata* in relation to God.

⁸ See also IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* II d. 38 q. n. 15, XIX (1993, p. 376).

⁹ Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. 1 (2007, p. 129): “*Utrum Deus diligat omnia ex caritate aequaliter*”. Cf. also IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* III d. 32 (2004, p. 254).

2. *Ordo and ratio in Ordinatio I d. 44*

One of the first texts to provide clear indications to this effect is *Ordinatio I d. 44*:

In omni agente per intellectum et voluntatem, potente conformiter agere legi rectae et tamen non necessario conformiter agere legi rectae, est distinguere potentiam ordinatam a potentia absoluta; et ratio huius est, quia potest agere conformiter illi legi rectae, et tunc secundum potentiam ordinatam (ordinata enim est in quantum est principium exsequendi aliqua conformiter legi rectae), et potest agere praeter illam legem vel contra eam, et in hoc est potentia absoluta, excedens potentiam ordinatam. Et ideo non tantum in Deo, sed in omni agente libere - qui potest agere secundum dictamen legis rectae et praeter talem legem vel contra eam - est distinguere inter potentiam ordinatam et absolutam; ideo dicunt iuristae quod aliquis hoc potest facere de facto, hoc est de potentia sua absoluta, - vel de iure, hoc est de potentia ordinata secundum iura.¹⁰

This text centers on the nature of God's power and on the possibilities pertaining to divine volition in relation to realities already willed by him. Scotus asks whether or not God, after a willing act of choice, still remains free to act on the object willed and in what manner.

This distinction, especially important for the purpose of this discussion, has already been amply studied¹¹. Here we will consider only those points particularly relevant to the present analysis.

As shown by Scotus, the *potentia Dei* can be understood in a twofold manner: as *absoluta* or as *ordinata*. In the first sense God's action is considered from the viewpoint of those capacities pertaining to his nature, apart from every other link (*ab-soluta*: from-detached) with any order previously established by him. In the second sense, however, one considers only what God can do within a certain *ordo*, understood by Scotus as the entirety of the universal laws established by God as legislator.

Now this first of Scotus' distinctions sufficiently enables us to understand how the *potentia Dei* enjoys the qualification *ordinata* from the moment God acts in conformity with a law or on the basis of an existing norm and never in their absence.

¹⁰ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio I d. 44 q. un. n. 3, VI* (1963, pp. 363-364).

¹¹ Cf. PICH, Roberto. Scotus on Absolute Power and Knowledge. in **Patristica et Mediaevalia** 31 (2010), p. 3-27; Idem. Scotus on Absolute Power and Knowledge (Continuation and End). in **Patristica et Mediaevalia** 12 (2011), p. 1 -22. PICH, Roberto. Scotus sobre o conceito de onipotência – um estudo sobre o Quodlibet VII, in **Thaumazein**. n. 8, 2011, p. 3-28; VELDHUIS, Henry. Ordained and Absolute Power in Scotus' *Ordinatio I 44*, in **Vivarium** 38 (2000), p. 222-230; COURTENAY, William. **Capacity and Volition: A History of the Distinction of Absolute and Ordained Power** (Quodlibet 8). Bergamo: P. Lubrina, 1990.

There is, however, a further affirmation of Scotus which with greater richness of detail clarifies the concept of “acting in orderly manner”.

Scotus says:

Aliquid esse ordinatum et ordinate fieri, hoc contingit dupliciter: Uno modo, ordine universali, - quod pertinet ad legem communem [...]. Secundo modo, ordine particulari, - secundum hoc iudicium, ad quod non pertinet lex in universali, quia lex est de universalibus causis; de causa autem particulari non est lex, sed iudicium secundum legem, eius quod est contra legem¹².

Now, according to this passage, something may be said to be ordered (*esse ordinatum*) or that it “occurs in an orderly way” (*ordinate fieri*) in two manners: in relation to an order of common laws (*ordo universalis*), or in relation to a particular law (*ordine particulari*).

In the first case (*ordinate fieri*) conformity with a universal order is present, and in the second case conformity with a judgment (*secundum hoc iudicium*), in the first instance divine judgment.

Now in both cases God's action, whether *de potentia absoluta* or *ordinata*, would always be *ordinate*. How?

Here attention must be focused on the use of the term *ordinatum*, which in this distinction is employed by Scotus in two ways slightly different in meaning. For convenience we will call these meaning one **(1)** and meaning two **(2)**. In fact, the Subtle Doctor himself refers to various types of normative principles, according to which something is ordered. On the one hand there are those contained in the *ordo universalis* or common laws **(2)**, established *pro statu isto* (for this present state of existence) and in conformity with which one may speak of a *potentia Dei ordinata*; or there are still other principles which qualify divine action as *praeter vel contra ordinem legis universalis* (beyond or contrary to the order of the common law), as an action equally ordered, and which in so far as they regulate the *potentia Dei absoluta*, we may define as *lex absoluta*, **(1)**:

Potest [Deus] ordinate **(1)** agere, quia tam illa quae sunt praeter illum ordinem **(2)**, quam illa quae sunt contra ordinem **(2)** illum [universalem], possent a Deo ordinate **(1)** fieri potentia absoluta. Potentia tamen ordinata **(2)** non dicitur nisi secundum ordinem **(2)** legis universalis [...]¹³.

¹² IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 44 q. un. n. 9, IV (1963, p. 366-367).

¹³ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 44 q. un. n. 10, IV (1963, p. 367).

How can the *potentia Dei absoluta* be activated in an orderly manner (*ordinate fieri*) outside the common law, if *ordinate fieri* or *esse ordinatum* consists – as Scotus himself states – in conformity to an order of laws (*legem communem*) or to a judgment according to laws (*iudicium secundum legem*) willed by God?

The answer is evident: by the fact that divine action arises out of the infinite divine will¹⁴, and by that fact that is always in conformity with the “absolute” normative principles which form a unity with the divine essence and permit God to establish *ordinate* also *alium ordinem*¹⁵.

And that Scotus not only highly esteems the value of these “absolute” normative principles, but that they play as well a fundamental role at the very heart of his philosophical and theological system, seems to be out of discussion. One may find an example of the position ascribed to them by the Subtle Doctor in the ethical realm, where such absolute principles not admitting exception whatsoever are defined also as *lex naturalis* in the strict sense¹⁶.

3. A logical sequence of God's willing

But in the ambit of the present discussion we want to consider another example, very clear and complete, of the reasonable action of God in conformity with the *lex absoluta*, one offered by Scotus in these three passages taken from his works: *Ordinatio* I d. 41; *Lectura* II d. 20; *Ordinatio* III d. 32, which we will present in a synoptic version here below.

¹⁴ Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 44 q. un. n. 10 (1963, p. 367).

¹⁵ Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 44 q. un. n. 11 (1963, p. 368): “Iudam enim non potest praescire salvandum de potentia ordinata, sed non isto modo ordinata sed absoluta ab isto modo, et alio modo ordinata secundum aliquem alium ordinem, quia secundum alium ordinem tunc possibilem institui”.

¹⁶ Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 37 q. un. (2007, p. 271-292) and IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* IV d. 17 q. un. n. 17-44 (2011, p. 161-170). For an excellent analysis of the *lex naturalis* and of the entire scotistic system of ethics cf. MÖHLE, Hannes. Scotus's Theory of Natural Law, in **The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus**, ed. T. Williams, Cambridge 2003, p. 312-331; and MÖHLE, Hannes. **Ethik als scientia practica nach Johannes Duns Scotus: Eine philosophische Grundlegung**. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters. Neue Folge 44. Münster: Aschendorf, 1995, p. 330-414; WOLTER, Allan, **Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality**. Translation edition. ed. W. Frank. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America. 1997, p. 57-63; 195-207.

In d. 41 Scotus asks whether the *actus praedestinationis*, or *reprobationis* on God's part is in some fashion determined by merit¹⁷. The passage quoted comes from the corpus of the *quaestio* where Duns Scotus offers his own view (*opinio propria*) of the state of the question discussed. Its value is due above all to the fact that Scotus intends to present his own solution to the problem as fundamental reference for demonstrating the reasonableness of divine action in the *actus praedestinationis* or *reprobationis*¹⁸.

The theme, instead, of *Lectura* II d. 20 concerns the condition of men born in the state of original innocence. Scotus poses two queries, represented by the *quaestiones* into which the *distinctio* is subdivided, namely: *utrum filii procreati statu innocentiae fuissent confirmati in iustitia sive in gratia*¹⁹; and: *utrum in statu innocentiae fuissent iidem geniti qui modo sunt electi a Deo*²⁰. Within his exposition the Subtle Doctor discusses whether to be born in the state of innocence can bring privileges of grace in view of a perfection to be acquired different or superior than those of the elect born after the fall. In the corpus of the *quaestio* he offers a single reply to the two *quaestiones* and clarifies how God's act of willing, both with regard to those who might have been born in the state of innocence and to those born after original sin, is the same. And even here, as in d. 41 of the first book, Duns Scotus, to explain the nature of God's action in relation to those so born, employs the principle of *ordinate volens*²¹.

Lastly, there is d. 32 in the third book of the *Ordinatio*. This *quaestio* deals with the love of God, in particular whether God loves everything with the same love of charity: *utrum Deus diligent omni ex caritate aequaliter*²². The passage which interests us is found in the corpus of the *quaestio*, where Scotus explains how it is possible that an act of love from God, although proceeding from a single act, can however be variously related to the nature of the objects loved. Even here Scotus moves from the principle that God's act of love in view of created realities must be intrinsically reasonable, in accordance with the more general

¹⁷ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 41 q. un. (1963, p. 315).

¹⁸ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 41 q. un. n. 40-43 (1963, p. 332-333).

¹⁹ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* II d. 20 q. 1. (1993, p. 187): "Circa distinctionem vigesimam quaeritur utrum filii procreati statu innocentiae fuissent confirmati in iustitia sive in gratia".

²⁰ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* II d. 20 q. 2. (1993, p. 192): "Utrum in statu innocentiae fuissent iidem geniti qui modo sunt electi a Deo".

²¹ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* II d. 20 q. 1-2 n. 22 (1993, p. 195).

²² IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 1 (2007, p. 129).

principle based on the intrinsically ordered nature of the divine will. Here Scotus refers to God as *rationabilissime volens*²³.

The importance and interesting features of these passages for the purposes of our study is due to the fact that in them it is possible to individuate with sufficient clarity:

- 1) The sense ascribed by Scotus to the two concepts of *ordo* and *ratio*
- 2) The logical structure of acts of the divine will.

A	B	C
<p><i>Ordinate volens finem et ea quae sunt ad finem, prius vult finem quam aliquod entium ad finem, et propter finem vult alia; ergo cum in toto processu quo creatura beatificabilis perducitur ad perfectum finem, finis ultimus sit perfecta beatitudo, Deus volens huic aliquid istius ordinis – (II) primo vult huic creaturae beatificabili finem, et quasi (III) posterius vult sibi alia, quae sunt in ordine illorum quae pertinent ad illum finem. Sed gratia, fides, merita et bonus usus liberi arbitrii, omnia ista sunt ad istum finem (licet quaedam remotius et quaedam propinquius). Ergo prius vult Deus isti beatitudinem quam aliquod istorum; et prius vult ei quodcumque istorum quam praevideat ipsum habiturum quodcumque istorum, ergo propter nullum istorum praevisum vult ei beatitudinem.</i>²⁴</p>	<p><i>Omnis ordinate volens, post volitionem finis vult immediatum fini; Deus autem est summe 'ordinate volens', et finis quem ipse primo vult est (I) ipsemet, quod autem immediate postea vult, est (II) beatitudo creata naturae beatificabili (sicut possumus loqui ibi secundum prius et posterius); in secundo igitur instanti vult aliquos praedestinare, quia hoc est 'ipsum praedestinare aliquem', velle sibi beatitudinem (unde praedestinatio est prima actio).</i>²⁵</p>	<p><i>Deus rationabilissime, licet non diversis actibus, unico tamen actu, in quantum ille diversimode tendit super obiecta ordinata, (I) primo vult finem, et in hoc est actus suus perfectus et intellectus eius perfectus et voluntas eius beata; (II) secundo vult illa quae immediate ordinantur in ipsum, praedestinando scilicet electos, qui scilicet immediate attingunt eum, et hoc quasi reflectendo, volendo alios condiligere idem obiectum secum (sicut prius dictum fuit de caritate, d.ne 28 huius III): qui enim primo se amat ordinate (et per consequens non inordinate, zelando vel invidendo), secundo vult [...].</i>²⁶</p>

²³ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 21 (2007, p. 136-137).

²⁴ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 41 q. un. n. 41 (1963, p. 332).

²⁵ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* II d. 20 q. 1-2 n. 22 (1993, p. 195).

The three passages here arranged in synoptic form, although dealing with three contexts somewhat diverse from one another, constitute the fundamental reply of Scotus to a single and identical query: to explain the order of divine action. And all this because the mode of acting (*ratio agendi*) of God (as well as his very being), is a factor determining comprehension (in so far as this is possible for our intellect *pro statu isto*) of contingent truths about the mystery of salvation²⁷.

Now, the first aspect to need our attention is the above mentioned correspondence between the terms *ratio* and *ordo*. In all three cases, in fact, the two terms have an almost identical meaning, i. e. of rendering account of the fact that God, a being most highly *intelligens et volens*, cannot not act in a manner most highly in conformity with his very nature. For this reason, every act of his will, as with any other intelligent agent²⁸, necessarily responds to the laws proper to a nature of that kind, namely reasonable, recalling, however, that in God intelligence and will constitute an absolute unity with the infinite essence and there subsist in infinite manner²⁹.

Scotus dedicates a considerable part of his speculative research to explaining the intrinsic nature of the intellect and will, and above all how God is *intelligens et volens*, with all which necessarily pertains to these two faculties in an infinite mode. It is, then, inevitable that to comprehend properly God's *ratio agendi*, one must first understand well Scotus' psychology of potencies and his theory of the will³⁰.

²⁶ IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 21 (2007, p. 136-137).

²⁷ Cf. HONNEFELDER, Ludger. **Johannes Duns Scotus**. München: 2005, p. 23-26; and with more references to the text of Scotus, cf. HONNEFELDER, 1989, p. 3-19.

²⁸ Cf. the application made by Scotus to the angels: IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* IV d. 1 pars 1 q. un. n. 115 (2008, p. 42): "Si etiam ponatur in angelo aliqua potentia exsecutiva tertia, alia ab intellectu et voluntate, hoc non impedit propositum, quia per illam nihil potest produci nisi in virtute intellectus et voluntatis, pro eo quod omne per se agens agit propter finem quem cognoscit, vel in quem dirigitur a cognoscente, – et ita omne principium per se activum, quod non est cognitivum, videtur dirigi in actione sua a principio cognitivo; saltem hoc est planum, quod illa tertia potentia, si esset, esset subordinata in agendo intellectui et voluntati, et sic non posset per ipsam aliquid produci sine actu intellectus vel voluntatis, et stat ratio".

²⁹ Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* IV d. 1 pars 1 q. un. n. 114 (2008, p. 41): "Natura mere intellectualis nihil producit nisi intelligendo et volendo, sive per actum intellectus vel voluntatis (vel alterum vel utrumque, non curo). Unde etiam persona divina nihil producit ad intra vel ad extra sine actu istarum potentiarum".

³⁰ For an introduction to Scotus' theory of the will, supported by useful selection of texts, see IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS, **Freiheit, Tugenden und Naturgesetz**. *Lateinisch – Deutsch*. Übersetzt, eingeleitet und mit Anmerkungen versehen von Tobias HOFFMANN, Freiburg: Herder Verlag, 2012, and HONNEFELDER, 2005, p.

Now, the central point demonstrated by Scotus in the passages quoted, that every intelligent being acts for an end, is a fundamental principle already found in Aristotle³¹. On the basis of such principle Scotus explains that God, as an intelligent being, perfectly knows himself, his own essence, and consequently the goodness of his nature. And since such goodness is infinite, that nature is not only the first, but also the only object capable of moving his will and satisfying it. The act of an intelligent agent (*sapientis*), as also Aristotle says, must consequently also be ordered, above all if this being is infinite³². For this reason, in the order of divine volition, God can't help willing first of all himself, apart from the nature and value of any other object which might possibly be willed *ad extra* by his infinite power **B (I)**³³.

The second principle, intrinsically immutable and so admitting of absolutely no exceptions, regards instead the relation between “end” and “means.”

The very possibility of being able to distinguish between an end and a means logically presupposes, as we have just seen, that there be an intelligence capable of distinguishing, organizing, orientating something to an end. This is the case of God in relation to all contingent realities.

Now, it is in the very nature of the “end” that it be necessarily and absolutely “prior” to the “means,” from a logical point of view. And in fact, there can be an end without a “means,” but it is absurd and therefore impossible that there could be a “means” *qua talis* without an “end,” from the moment the “means” is conceived as such by an intelligence only in view of an “end.”

113-131; for more specific aspects see: NOONE Timothy. Nature and Will: Nature Revisited. In: *Johannes Duns Scotus 1308 - 2008: Die philosophischen Perspektiven seines Werkes/Investigations into his Philosophy, Proceedings of the 'Quadruple Congress' on Duns Scotus* (Archa Verbi 5). part 3. ed. Ludger Honnefelder, Hannes Möhle, Andreas Speer, Theo Kobusch, and Susana Bullido del Barrio, Münster/St. Bonaventure, N.Y., Aschendorff/Franciscan Institute Publications, 2010, p. 391- 402; HOFFMANN Tobias. The Distinction between Nature and Will in Duns Scotus. in: *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 66 (1999) 189-224.

³¹ Cf. the corresponding passages from Aristotle in the editors' notes IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 2 n. 75-78 (1950, p. 175-176).

³² IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 2 n. 78 (1950, p. 176): “Ipsum primum efficiens dirigit effectum suum ad finem [...] cognoscendo et amando illum finem. Non naturaliter, quia non cognoscens nihil dirigit nisi in virtute cognoscentis: ‘sapientis enim est prima ordinatio’, I Metaphysicae”.

³³ From here on, for reasons of convenience, we will refer to the logical order of the citations in the synoptic table via these conventional signs. **A**, **B**, **C** refer to the three sections of the table, and **(I)**, **(II)** e **(III)** refer to the logical order outlined by Scotus.

For this reason, on the basis of this second principle, Scotus can bring to light, for example, the relation existing between grace, faith and merits on the one hand, and predestination to the beatific vision on the other³⁴. Therefore, if the Revelation tells us that every human being is willed by God “for glory” (*predestinatio*), and also tells us that grace, faith, merits and the good use of free will have been willed by God as “conditions” (and hence as “means”) so that human being might be capable of glory (*beatificabilis*), it follows from the point of view of his intrinsic logic, that the first thing willed by God (in logical order) is the predestination of the creature capable of beatitude and not the means (grace, faith, merit, etc.) or the sensible world.

And here, too, the logical structure of the argumentation, to a degree simple and obvious, does not seem to leave any space to doubt.

Finally, the third logical aspect that must be emphasized is the relation which runs between the absolute end willed by God, defined by Scotus also as “primary object” of the divine will, and the end of the creature *beatificabilis*, “secondary object” of the divine will³⁵ and which in our case consists in the predestination of a human being to be sharer in the infinite glory of God³⁶.

Beatitude, as the following passage from the *Ordinatio* further explains, consists in permitting the human creature to love the same object which God loves (*condiligere*), namely his infinite essence:

“Secundo vult illa quae immediate ordinantur in ipsum, praedestinando scilicet electos, qui scilicet immediate attingunt eum, et hoc quasi reflectendo, volendo alios condiligere idem obiectum secum” (Iohannes Duns Scotus, 2007, p. 137)³⁷.

Also this final logical link between the *volitio* of the “primary object” and that of the “secondary” on God’s part is only valid to the degree it presupposes the Revelation. In fact, since all acts of the divine will *ad extra* are contingent, it is not possible for the human intellect to know contingent realities from the knowledge of their first causes. This is because

³⁴ Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 41 q. un. n. 41 (1963, p. 332): “Primo (I) vult huic creaturae beatificabili finem, et quasi (II) posterius vult sibi alia quae sunt in ordine illorum quae pertinent ad illum finem. Sed gratia, fides, merita et bonus usus liberi arbitrii...”.

³⁵ On the primary and secondary object of divine willing cf. above, section 3.2.

³⁶ Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* II d. 20 n. 22 (1993, p. 195).

³⁷ Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 21 (2007, p. 137).

between the first Cause, God, and the created cause there is no necessary connection. On the other hand, instead, the inverse process is possible, namely that starting from contingent realities really existing one may arrive at the knowledge of their cause³⁸.

Thus also the predestination of man to glory is a *datum* acquired only from Revelation. Nonetheless, at the moment when a predestination to glory is given concretely, the concept of predestination is set within a determined relationship to the subject on whom it is conferred. This is done in accordance with the logical relation which can be established between the terms and their meaning within the proposition "God predestines man to glory". The logical structure described by Scotus in the passages under consideration intends to express schematically, but properly, an intrinsic relation linking the two terms of the proposition.

The logical structure³⁹, therefore, may be schematically summarized thus:

- I) God first comprehends and wills (loves) himself **B, C (I)**,
- II) Wills the creature capable of beatification to be sharer of his glory **A, B, C (II)**,
- III) Wills the means for the creature to be beatified **A (III)**.

The first level presents the type of relation existing between the will of God and his own essence. At the same time this relation is given as well on the basis of the ontological statute of his infinite essence and of the nature of God's infinite intellective and volitional powers. Scotus describes this relation in these terms: God wills/loves necessarily, although freely, his own infinite essence in so far as this is the only object proportionate to and capable of satisfying an infinite will⁴⁰.

³⁸ Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* I d. 39 q. 1-5 n. 39 (1966, p. 491): "Si illa pars sit ignobilior pars illius passionis, ex hoc quod inest suo subiecto potest concludi quod pars nobilior illius passionis insit subiecto sibi appropriato, licet non e contra (quia non potest pars ignobilior passionis inesse alicui nisi pars nobilior insit, licet e contra possit). Unde sequitur, si ens causatum sit finitum, quod aliquod ens sit infinitum; sed non sequitur e contra, si aliquod ens sit infinitum, quod aliquod ens sit finitum, quia ad veritatem primi non requiritur veritas secundi; et sic etiam sequitur, si aliquod ens sit contingens, quod aliquod ens sit necessarium, et non e contra".

³⁹ It is always important to recall that this schematization of divine willing does not indicate different acts of the will in God. Cf. IOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 21 (2007, p. 136): "Non diversis actibus, unico tamen actu".

⁴⁰ Cf. ad esempio IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Quodlibet* q. 16 n. 36, in NOONE.Timothy.; ROBERTS, H. Francis. John Duns Scotus' Quodlibet. A brief study of the manuscripts and an edition of question 16, in **Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages: The Fourteenth Century**, ed. C. Schabel, Leiden – Boston: 2007, p. 19: "Voluntas divina necessario vult bonitatem suam, et tamen in volendo eam est libera; ergo cum ista necessitate stat libertas". From now on quoted as *Quodlibet* q. 16 n. 36 (NOONE; ROBERTS, 2007, p. 19).

The relation, instead, between the divine will and a contingent can be established to the extent one also knows the ontological statute of the latter. The contingent, being finite, cannot be willed/loved except contingently by God, and this for the same reason God loves himself necessarily: because the finite being does not satisfy the infinite will⁴¹.

Lastly, the third step or level of logical order derives all its meaning from being ontologically willed as instrument for man. For this reason its entire meaning derives from its being ordered to an instrumental finality, that is, so that the human being can reach his beatitude.

4. *Dilectio as ordo volitionis in the Ordinatio III d. 32*

In almost all the texts of Scotus regarding the will analyzed up to this point there is constantly present an element which only with difficulty will escape the scholar's attention: the intrinsic unity between volition and love (*dilectio*)⁴². And this hardly comes as a surprise, above all if one understands the nature of volition as *dilectio boni*, both in the infinite mode, that of God's love/choice of his own essence and in the finite mode, and hence of the two *affectiones* of the human will⁴³.

Nonetheless, at the moment God is defined as essentially *intelligens et volens*, and his volitional activity becomes the essential point of reference for judging and defining, as does Scotus, the relationship between God and the world, then divine volition as *dilectio* (choice)

⁴¹ Cf. *Quodlibet* q. 16 n. 39 (NOONE; ROBERTS, 2007, p. 21): "Voluntas divina contingenter vult bonitatem seu existentiam alterius; et hoc, quia ipsa est talis voluntas et istud est tale bonum - nisi addamus generaliter unum breve, quod voluntas infinita necessario habet actum circa obiectum infinitum, quia hoc est perfectionis, et pari ratione non necessario habet circa obiectum finitum, quia hoc esset imperfectionis".

⁴² For a further reflection on the theme based on the text of Scotus see the excellent selection of passages with commentary in: VOS, Antoine. et al (ed.), **Duns Scotus on Divine Love: Texts and Commentary on Goodness and Freedom, God and Humans**, Aldershot-Burlington 2003; and SCHNEIDER, Herbert. **John Duns Scotus and the Question: Can I Love God Above All?** (Veröffentlichungen der Johannes-Duns-Skotus-Akademie für franziskanische Geistesgeschichte und Spiritualität Mönchengladbach 9). Kevelaer: Butzon und Bercker, 1999.

⁴³ On the two affections cf. KING, Peter. Scotus's Rejection of Anselm: The Two- Wills Theory, in **Johannes Duns Scotus 1308-2008: Die philosophischen Perspektiven seines Werkes/Investigations into His Philosophy. Proceedings of "The Quadruple Congress" on John Duns Scotus**, part 3 (Archa Verbi. Subsidia 5), ed. L. Honnefelder, H. Möhle, A. Speer. T. Kobush, S. Bullito del Barrio, St. Bonaventure (N.Y.); Münster: 2010, p. 359-378; and CERVELLON, Christophe. *L'affection de justice chez Duns Scot: justice et luxure dans le péché de l'ange*. In: **Duns Scot à Paris, 1302-2002**. Actes du colloque de Paris, 2-4 septembre 2002 (Textes et études du Moyen Âge 26), ed. O. Boulnois, E. Karger, J.-L. Solère, G. Sondag. Turnhout: 2004, p. 425-468.

requires special attention, above all because, as we have seen above, the will is found in God as a pure perfection in the infinite mode, and precisely as such it differs from finite *volitio*. Divine willing determines the *status* of contingent good, not vice-versa.

If in fact the love of God is unique and already in act, can he still will/love contingent beings with a diverse measure? And further, on the basis of what intrinsic principles does the divine will decide the *ordo dilectionis*? What determines the diverse *desirability* of contingent realities?

In *Ordinatio* III d. 32 in which Scotus asks *utrum Deus diligat omnia ex caritate aequaliter*, intends to give a reply to such queries⁴⁴.

Before all else – Scotus states - it is necessary to keep in mind that God, a being essentially *intelligens et volens*⁴⁵, has a will already in act and loves his own infinite essence. Nor could he do otherwise, because no other object is capable of satisfying his infinite will, unless it be an object whose intrinsic goodness is infinite⁴⁶.

On the other hand, however, the fact that the infinite will is in itself *simpliciter perfecta*, a pure perfection, does not prevent her from freely and contingently willing also all that which participates in the nature of the good (*quod continetur sub ratione boni*)⁴⁷.

This means that the will has no limit as to objects capable of being chosen, and also no limits on the contrary choices, even if this does not mean, however, loving all, even the not chosen, with the same efficacious love. Otherwise we would have to admit that the chosen

⁴⁴ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. (2007, p. 129-140); and *Lectura* d. 32 q. un. (XXI, 253-265).

⁴⁵ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 2 q. un. n. 74-88 (1950, p. 174-180); *Ordinatio* II d. 1 q. un. n. 30-31 (VII, 16-18);

⁴⁶ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 32 q. un. n. 19 (2007, p. 135-136); *Ordinatio* I d. 1 q. un. n. 15 (1950, p. 9-10).

⁴⁷ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 7-8 (2007, p. 130-131): “Primum probatur, quia – sicut ostensum est distinctione 2 I libri – Deus ex se naturaliter est intelligens et volens, et per consequens beatificabilis; non autem praecedit in eo potentia actum, quia tunc esset imperfectus; ergo est actu beatus, – et non nisi volendo et intelligendo se, quia nullum aliud obiectum potest creaturam rationalem beatificare (ex distinctione 1 quaestione 2 I libri); ergo actu intelligit et diligit se. Quod etiam alia, probatur, quia sicut omnis intellectus potest in quodlibet intelligibile, ita omnis voluntas potest in quodlibet volibile; voluntas igitur divina potest diligere omnia diligibilia, et non potentia ante actum; ergo diligit omnia diligibilia alia a se”. Cf. also IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* d. 32 q. un. n. 12 (2004, p. 255): “Omnis potentia simpliciter perfecta, quae habet aliquod bonum commune adaequatum, potest in omne illud quod continetur sub communi ratione boni, alioquin non esset simpliciter perfecta; potest igitur habere actum circa omne bonum diligibile”.

and not chosen both also really exist in the same subject. Such a thing is also impossible for the divine intellect⁴⁸.

On the one hand, then, all realities are possible (*possibilia*) which God loves with a love of simple complacency (*amor complacentiae*). The *possibilia* are loved in the measure in which they reflect the goodness of the divine essence, in accord with the intrinsic value the divine intellect assigns them⁴⁹. And among these are obviously all realities, even the contraries.

On the other hand, instead, there is the “efficacious love” or “effective love” with which God loves some things among these possible realities, calling them thus into existence:

[Deus] non diligit eas [contraria] inesse simul eidem susceptivo, quia hoc non est diligibile. Quaedam etiam diligit voluntate, et hoc volitione efficaci, puta illa quae aliquando producit in esse; quaedam volitione quadam simplicis complacentiae, non efficaci, quae tamen numquam producet in esse, quae tamen ostenduntur ab intellectu suo ut *possibilia* habere tantam bonitatem sicut illa quae diligit volitione efficaci.⁵⁰

In this passage there is an expression of Scotus worthy of special attention, the statement according to which some realities “*ostenduntur ab intellectu suo [divino] ut *possibilia* habere tantam bonitatem sicut illa quae diligit volitione efficaci*”.

This passage highlights the thought of the Subtle Doctor on the origin of the ontological value not only of possible realities, but also and above all of those which really exist. The intrinsic value of real entities is founded originally in their very content, and this apart from any consideration of their actual existence or less. Nonetheless, as Scotus underscores, only the really existing is worthy of real value, precisely because existing⁵¹. The

⁴⁸ Cf. SÖDER, R. Joachim. **Kontingenz und Wissen. Die Lehre von den “futura contingentia” bei Johannes Duns Scotus** (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters. Neue Folge 40). Aschendorff. Münster 1999, p. 109-124, p. 167-182; e HOFFMANN, Tobias. **Creatura intellecta: Die Ideen und Possibilia bei Duns Scotus mit Ausblick auf Franz von Mayronis, Poncius und Mastrius** (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters. Neue Folge, 60). Aschendorff Munster 2002, p. 173-216.

⁴⁹ Cf., e.g., *Quodlibet* q. 16 n. 32 (ed. Noone-Roberts, 176). Cf. also IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 47 q. un. n. 3-9 (1963, 381-384) and IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* d. 32 q. un. n. 8-10 (2007, p. 130-131).

⁵⁰ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 32 q. un. n. 10 (2007, p. 131).

⁵¹ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 13 q. un. n. 34 (1959, p. 81): “[Ens cognitum] non habet esse nisi in intellectu, quia est ens deminutum, ex VI Metaphysicae. Nihil autem secundum quod est ens deminutum, est propria ratio entis veri et propria causa entis perfecti: et istud probatur, quia omne causans verum ens oportet quod habeat aliquod esse existentiae, in quantum est causa; ens autem deminutum, quod scilicet est ens cognitum, non habet esse realis existentiae; ergo nec in quantum tale, potest esse causa propria alicuius realis entis”; and IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 36 q. un. n. 13 (1963, p. 276): “Creatio est productio de

ideal *esse* possessed by realities merely possible has no “effective” value, simply because it does not exist.

In the divine mind, however, the intrinsic value of ideas, conferred on them to the degree they reflect the divine being, establishes among them a hierarchy. This hierarchy becomes effective and real when God by an act of his efficacious will makes these ideas exist in reality.

Now, as Scotus stresses, from the point of view of the divine act of willing, there is but a sole act of love which, though necessarily finding rest in the love of his own infinite essence, remains open to all other possible beings⁵².

But if one regards this, instead, from the point of view of the real object of this love (*ea super quae transit*), then one notes a diversity of degrees⁵³.

In other words, there are three factors reciprocally linked reflecting the various degrees in which God loves contingent realities:

- 1) The intrinsic value (*quia illa volita sunt inaequalia*);
- 2) The various goods willed for each being, even within the same species (*quia inaequalia bona sunt eis volita*);
- 3) The order according to which they receive divine love (*secundum ordinem quemdam transit super ea*).

In the first case the love of God is reflected in the being of each “single” entity. To the degree each single entity enjoys being on the ontological scale, such also is the degree of goodness or loveableness possessed by it. And since the *esse existentiae* of each entity has its source only in the will of God, who wills given entities to exist at a certain moment, consequently their transcendental good derives from the efficacious will of God. This is why

nihilo; sed si lapis ab aeterno prae habuit verum esse reale, ergo quando producitur ab efficiente, non producitur de nihilo simpliciter”.

⁵² Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 32 q. un. n. 19-21 (2007, p. 135-136): “Tam autem intellectui divino quam voluntati sola essentia potest esse prima ratio agendi, quia si aliquid aliud posset esse prima ratio, vilesceret illa potentia. Ex hoc patet quod non est inaequalitas Dei in diligendo omnia, comparando actum ad agens”.

⁵³ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 32 q. un. n. 21 (2007, p. 136): “Comparando actum ad connotata sive ad ea super quae [dilectio Dei] transit, est inaequalitas, non tantum quia illa volita sunt inaequalia vel inaequalia bona sunt eis volita, sed etiam quia secundum ordinem quemdam transit super ea”.

Scotus adds that there are differences in the love God has for these entities, *quia inaequalia bona sunt eis volita*.

In the second case the existing realities are diversified also by their various participations in the good willed for each of them. Scotus uses the example of the diversity existing within an identical species between predestined and non predestined⁵⁴, but the same example could be applied to the difference dividing the *praedestinatio* of Christ and that of other men from the moment Christ is predestined to be Him who more than any other man must love God⁵⁵.

The third case, instead, regards the reception of the love of God “within the whole” of all existing realities considered in their reciprocal relations. Each occupies that determined level in the scale of ontological values which it has received from the creating will of God. For this reason, e.g., that which is “ideated” and then “efficaciously” willed, possesses exactly that ontological structure and hence also that degree or intensity of being which God has willed for that precise reality and not for another. An angel has that degree of being proper to an angelic nature, one diverse from that of a human being, although both are intelligent beings; or a man, in so far as willed to be man, possesses a degree of being, and so also of goodness, different from that of a tree⁵⁶.

One must, however, remember that the three levels remain profoundly interconnected, above all in virtue of the fact that all factors of ordering proceed in every case from a single principle.

Now, as regards the *ratio* according to which the existing realities are ordered, each is presented by Scotus within the following hierarchical order, which represents the sequence of divine acts motivating the existence of the order of creation. For Scotus, then, God, in so far as he is *ordinatissime volens*,

D). “Primo vult finem, et in hoc est actus suus perfectus et intellectus eius perfectus et voluntas eius beata;

⁵⁴ Cf. also IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 32 q. un. n. 25 (2007, p. 139).

⁵⁵ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 7 q. 3 n. 61 (2006, p. 287).

⁵⁶ Ontological diversity obviously is a reflection of diversity of love which God has for diverse entities, and which determine their status in the hierarchy of values. An example of this diversity in types of love is that between a vegetable and an intelligent creature. Both are loved, but only the latter with a love of friendship. Cf. *Ordinatio* I d. 32 q. un. n. 24-25 (2007, p. 138-139).

II). secundo vult illa quae immediate ordinantur in ipsum, praedestinando scilicet electos, [...] volendo alios condiligere idem obiectum secum [...].

III). Tertio autem vult illa quae sunt necessaria ad attingendum hunc finem, scilicet bona gratiae;

IV). quarto vult – propter ista – alia quae sunt remotiora, puta hunc mundum sensibilem pro aliis ut serviant eis”.⁵⁷

The hierarchical order, then, represents the ontological structure of the real, but which in turn, says Scotus, is naught else but the reflections of the diverse degrees in which God's ordered love is realized in reality.

That this structure further expresses as well and above all the rationality of divine volition, is beyond any doubt one of the aspects Scotus most strives to make evident. In fact, if overall d. 32 has the aim of demonstrating the *inaequalitas* according to which God's love becomes concrete in the realm of contingent realities, it is also true that the passage cited here shows that such *inaequalitas* does not lack an intrinsic logic; rather it corresponds to a need for rationality and order due both to the content of each single entity, and to its origin in the divine will.

But how should God's love be constituted as the necessary intrinsic *ratio* of this hierarchical order? Why, according to the outline presented by Scotus, should there necessarily be a reasonable link between the first level: the love of God for his own essence, and the second, the predestination? Or, in other words, what rational need must in every instance link necessary realities (first level of the hierarchical order) and contingent realities (all the other levels)?

In our view, to reply to these questions, one must keep in mind that what functions as directive principle in this hierarchical order is the fact that there is but one first principle: “God's infinite will with which he loves himself with infinite love,” and in that love for his own essence possesses an object proportioned to his infinite will⁵⁸. This notwithstanding, with

⁵⁷ For the complete passage cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 32 q. un. n. 21 (2007, p. 136-137).

⁵⁸ IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 32 q. un. n. 19 (2007, p. 135): “Tertium apparet, quia una est potentia et unum obiectum primum, et habet unum actum infinitum adaequatum sibi”. In this regard the concept of will as explained by Scotus, and set forth by us above, should be kept in mind. Cf. above, chapters 1 e 2.

one and the same act by which he loves himself, he also loves all other contingent realities⁵⁹. The unity of this act is important first of all to underscore the independence of God in respect to the contingent. If God were to have two distinct intellectual acts and two separate volitional ones, one for his essence and the other for contingent realities, this would make of him a being subject to change, in the sense that new existence of non eternal contingent realities would determine the origin of a new act in God previously non-existent. This, obviously, would introduce into his nature change which is incompatible with a perfect and eternal being such as God is. Further, a new and distinct act of volition originating from something contingent would presuppose in contingent realities an independent principle of action, capable of moving the divine power of willing to an act different from that already orientated to the divine essence. In both cases a relative imperfection would accrue to God⁶⁰.

The singularity of the principle, and hence of the divine act of willing precisely as singular, becomes as well the unique normative principle (*ratio agendi*) of the entire consequent order of contingent realities⁶¹.

In this sense, states Scotus, what is the fundamental *ratio* of the divine act of willing in regard to God's infinite essence, "necessarily" must be also the very same *ratio* of that one and the same divine act in regard to contingent realities: love. There is, however, one important difference. While in regard to the divine essence this act is necessary, in regard to finite entities it is entirely contingent and gratuitous, in no way necessitated by reason of an ordering to God's perfection.

All responding to this principle is defined by Scotus as "ordinated" and "reasonable" according to the will of God, precisely because "logically concatenated" in conformity with the principle of ordered choice by God⁶². This unique act of divine choice (*dilectio*) is the core

⁵⁹ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* III d. 32 q. un. n. 33 (2004, p. 261): "In Deo est unus actus diligendi omnia, quia est unum obiectum primum, uno actu perfecte comprehensum, et per consequens in ordine ad omnia quibus est ratio diligibilitatis, cuiusmodi sunt omnia quocumque modo diligibilia: unum tantum obiectum primum et necessarium, alia contingenter, quia nullo modo causant actum distinctum ab actu perfectissimo et primo".

⁶⁰ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* III d. 32 q. un. n. 33 (2004, p. 261): "Nam si unum intelligeret vel vellet actu uno, et aliud alio, respiciendo ea sic ut obiecta principalia, sic vilesceret eius [Dei] intellectus".

⁶¹ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 19 (2007, p. 135): "Solummodo ex perfectione huius actus consequitur hoc quod perfecte tendit in primum terminum; tendit etiam in omnia circa quae primus terminus est totalis ratio agendi".

⁶² Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* II d. 34-37 q. 1-5 n. 29 (1993, p. 331): "Quidquid Deus facit, propter finem facit et ex caritate summa; igitur omnis actus causatus ab eo est ordinatus, quia est propter finem

point of reference determining as well the hierarchy of values and any order, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, of the divine nature. Precisely in virtue of his intelligent and volitional nature (*intelligens et volens*), God could not will into existence anything but what is, at same time, most reasonable and ontologically good, although in every instance, within the ambit of such most orderly omnipotence, there is no limitation except the contradictory⁶³. This *dilectio* is the only thread necessarily linking God and all contingent realities actually existing:

Omnis potentia simpliciter perfecta, quae habet aliquod bonum commune adaequatum, potest in omne illud quod continetur sub communi ratione boni, alioquin non esset simpliciter perfecta; potest igitur habere actum circa omne bonum diligibile. [...] Et ideo necessario ab aeterno ordinate terminabatur ad omne diligibile, quia licet cognitio vel dilectio cognoscibilis vel diligibilis, quod est aliud ab essentia sua, non faciat causaliter ad perfectionem cognitionis divinae vel dilectionis, tamen consequitur de necessitate, ita quod non esset actus summe perfectus si non extenderet se ad alia obiecta⁶⁴.

In other words, not any hierarchical ordering of contingent realities may constitute an absolutely adequate ordering, but only one corresponding to the unique, concrete ordering principle: the love of God for himself.

At this point, then, it is possible to reply also to the second of the questions posed above, namely: what is the “reasonable” link between the first of the two levels: the love of God for himself, to the second: the predestination of man to glory.

Scotus' reply is: because the predestined is him who is nearest to the primary end (*propinquissime in finem ordinatur*), or the predestined is the first to be ordered to that end (*immediate ordinantur in ipsum [finem]*)⁶⁵. But why is the man predestined to love the

perfectum et ex caritate perfecta; igitur nullus actus est a Deo nisi actus ordinatus”; further cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* III d. 32 q. un. n. 39 (2004, p. 263): “In omnibus his gradibus, unus est actus qui est ‘diligere’, et dicit non actum absolute, sed transeuntem in obiecta, – quae quidem naturaliter non aequae sed aliqua immediatius aliis ordinantur ad finem”.

⁶³ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 9-10 (2007, p. 131): “Obicitur contra hoc, quia si sic, simul diligeret contraria, quia utrumque habet rationem diligibilis. Conclusio est de se concedenda in naturis illis quae sunt in se contraria; sed non diligit eas inesse simul eidem susceptivo, quia hoc non est diligibile”. HOFFMANN, 2002, p. 192-200; see also HONNEFELDER Ludger. **Scientia transcendens: Die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit** (Paradeigmata 9). Aschendorff. Hamburg 1990, p. 45-55.

⁶⁴ IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* III d. 32 q. un. n. 12 (2004, p. 255).

⁶⁵ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* III d. 32 q. un. n. 12 (2004, p. 255). IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* III d. 32 q. un. n. 37 (2004, p. 262); *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 21 (X, 136). Cf. also IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* II d. 20 n. 22 (1993, p. 195); IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 41 q. un. n. 41 (1963, p. 332).

essence of God, to be co-lover with God, the closest to the end? What confers such “closeness”?

The reason for this primacy of the intelligent creature, immediately after God, is due to two factors, intrinsically and reciprocally related, but which for motives of clarity should be distinguished:

- 1) “an act of the will”. God “has willed to predestine” man to be sharer of his glory, and “has willed the existence” of the sensible world in view of man;
- 2) “the degree of perfection in being”. The fact is that among all existing entities the intelligent creature is the one ontologically standing above all others in the hierarchy of values.

The first reason appears in all its clarity: man depends on the “act of God’s will”, God who willed to predestine man, or better, the intelligent creature⁶⁶, to glory, and every other reality beneath man ordered to man as a means more or less directly⁶⁷.

But how is it possible to know this will of God who has predestined man and has ordered the world to man? In other words, how can we make known that God has willed man to be the summit of creation, as Scotus affirms, and that all following on this divine choice is secondarily, in an instrumental role, ordained to man?

As far as we know, Scotus’ reply is not given *expressis verbis*, but can be deduced from the context of his general theological synthesis and from his very theory of the divine will expounded up to this point. The only way to know the finality of the volitional act whereby God created the universe, has predestined man to glory and the sensible world to the service of man, is Revelation. This is because all “outside” of God, all which is not necessary like God himself, is fruit of a contingent act of God, namely the volitional act whereby he has chosen to determine himself to one of two contraries present to his infinite will⁶⁸. The motive

⁶⁶ To be more precise we should speak of predestination of the intelligent being because the angels as well are object of predestination and among men is also counted the man-God, Jesus Christ. Cf. *Ordinatio* III d. 7 q. 3 n. 67 (IX, 288-289). Cf. also IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 7 q. 3 n. 72 (2006, p. 291).

⁶⁷ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 21 (2007, p. 136-137): “Illud etiam quod est propinquius fini ultimo, consuevit dici finis eorum quae sunt remotiora. Sive ergo quia in ordine ad hominem praedestinatum vult Deus mundum sensibilem esse, sive quia quodammodo immediatius vult hominem amare se quam mundum sensibilem esse, homo erit finis mundi sensibilis”.

⁶⁸ Cf. SÖDER, 1999, p. 121-124; VOS, Antoine. et all. (ed.). **Contingency and Freedom: Lectura I 39** (Synthese Historical Library 42). Dordrecht-Boston-London 1994, pp. 23-31.

of such a choice on the part of God is thus impossible to determine by human reason. According to Scotus, the very attempt to do so would be considered absurd:

Et si quaeras quare ergo voluntas divina magis determinabitur ad unum contradictoriorum quam ad alterum, respondeo: 'indisciplinati est quaerere omnium causas et demonstrationem' secundum Philosophum IV Metaphysicae), 'principii enim demonstrationis non est demonstratio'. Immediatum autem est voluntatem velle hoc, ita quod non est aliqua causa media inter ista, sicut est immediatum calorem esse calefactivum (sed hic naturalitas, ibi autem libertas), et ideo huius 'quare voluntas voluit' nulla est causa nisi quia voluntas est voluntas.⁶⁹

In this sense, then, it cannot be affirmed that Scotus followed the principle: *bonum diffusivum sui* for the purpose of explaining the universe⁷⁰.

On the other hand, however, it is also necessary stress that realities actually existing are distinguished among themselves via a hierarchical ordering, one based on the degree of being possessed by them, or according to the intensity of their being⁷¹.

Scotus emphasizes, however, that this should not induce us to believe the act of man's predestination, and also the act of the material world's finalization to man, are acts of the divine will "bestowed", so to say, *ab extrinseco* on realities already ontologically independent, in such wise that their hierarchical or ultimate orientation is decided subsequently to their

⁶⁹ IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 8 pars 2 q. un. n. 299 (1956, p. 324-325). Cf. also IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* I d. 8 pars 2 q. un. n. 297 (1966, p. 105); IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* II d. 1 q. 2 n. 91 (1973, p. 47); IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* II d. 1 q. 2 n. 89 (1982, p. 29). On the necessity of Revelation cf. PICH Robert. Scotus on the sufficiency and credibility of the Scripture. in: **Florilegium mediaevale**. Études offertes à Jaqueline Hamesse à l'occasion de son éméritat (Textes et Études du Moyen Age 50), ed. J. Meirinhos, O. Weijers, Louvain-La-Neuve 2009, 469-490; MANN W. E., Believing Where We Cannot Prove: Duns Scotus on the Necessity of Supernatural Belief. In: **The Proceedings of the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy**. Volume 4: Philosophies of Religion, Art, and Creativity, ed. K. L. Stoehr, Bowling Green State University 1999, 59-68; HONNEFELDER Ludger. **Ens in quantum ens**: Der Begriff des Seienden als solchen als Gegenstand der Metaphysik nach der Lehre des Johannes Duns Scotus (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters. Neue Folge 16). Aschendorff. Münster 1989, p. 22-42.

⁷⁰ It has often been believed, erroneously, that Scotus held the origin of creation, and hence of Christ as well, finds its basis in the neo-platonic axiom: *bonum diffusivum sui*. But this axiom stands in direct contradiction to the concept of God who acts freely, a notion developed by Scotus to counter Greek necessitarianism, according to which the world was a necessary manifestation of God. In this regard cf. ESCAPA R. Jaime. Pensar la Encarnación. Un acercamiento a la posición de Juan Duns Escoto. In: **Naturaleza y Gracia** 54 (2007), p. 734 nota 64. On the difference in the use of the axiom by Bonaventure and Scotus cf. VEUTHEY Leon. **Giovanni Duns Scoto tra aristotelismo e agostinismo** (I maestri francescani 6). Miscellanea Francescana. Roma 1996, p. 51-52; For more in general on Scotus and Greek necessitarianism, cf. HONNEFELDER Ludger. **Die Kritik des Johannes Duns Scotus am kosmologischen Nezzesarismus der Araber**: Ansätze zu einem neuen Freiheitsbegriff, in: Die abendländische Freiheit vom 10. zum 14. Jahrhundert. Der Wirkungszusammenhang von Idee und Wirklichkeit im europäischen Vergleich (Vorträge und Forschungen 39), ed. J. Fried. Jan Thorbecke Verlag. Sigmaringen 1991, p. 249-263; and SÖDER, 1999, p. 15-34.

⁷¹ Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* I d. 19 q. 1 n. 8 (1959, p. 267); IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Lectura* I d. 19 q. 2 n. 50 (XVII, 280). Cf. also HONNEFELDER, 1989, p. 365-382.

ontological statute. Rather, as Scotus points out, the exact contrary is the truth, simply because accepted/willed according to their degree of being, therefore they are also ontologically good (in the transcendental sense) according to that degree⁷².

By reason of this *voluntas simplicis complacentiae*, God certainly is already “pleased” with the essential goodness of the single ideas in an orderly way, according to their intrinsic value, or according to the degree in which they reflect the goodness of his essence. And yet, it is also certain that the “real goodness” possessed by them, as also their desirability, with regard to their actual existence, depends only on divine free will. That free will has willed them to exist, without in any way determining God to will in this way rather than in another⁷³.

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⁷²Cf. IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 22 (X, 137-138): “Et ita patet inaequalitas volubilium – quantum ad ipsa volita – non ut volitio est ipsius volentis, sed ut transit super obiecta modo praedicto. Nec tamen ista inaequalitas in actu est propter bonitatem praesuppositam in obiectis quibuscumque aliis a se, quae sit quasi ratio quare sit sic vel sic volenda, sed ratio est in ipsa voluntate divina sola: quia enim ipsa acceptat aliqua in tali gradu, ideo ipsa sunt”.

⁷³ IOANNES DUNS SCOTUS. *Ordinatio* III d. 32 q. un. n. 22 (X, 138): “Vel si detur quod in eis – ut ostensa sunt ab intellectu – sit aliquis gradus bonitatis essentialis, secundum quem rationabiliter debent ordinate complacere voluntati, saltem hoc certum est quod beneplacencia eorum, quantum ad actualem existentiam, mere est ex voluntate divina, absque aliqua ratione determinante ex parte eorum”; Cf. also *Lectura* III d. 32 q. un. n. 38-40 (XXI, 262-263).

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