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SCOTUS'S ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE WILL IN THE LIGHT OF 14TH-CENTURY PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS

Abstract. This article addresses the issue of the two-level nature of acts of the will, i.e. its ability to voluntarily refer to its own acts. First, we will examine the ancient sources of the concept of the two-level will (Plato and Augustine). Then, we will focus on the views of John Duns Scotus on the types of acts of will, with particular emphasis on the concept of *non velle* and its application in philosophical and theological issues. Against the backdrop of Scotus's concept, we will examine the ways in which 14th-century thinkers engaged with his position and developed his account of the two-level acts of will and types of acts of will. Finally, the article discusses a significant change in the function of *non velle* and the use of this type of volitional act in 14th-century ethics by exploring the views of Buridan and Kilvington.

Keywords: free will; medieval philosophy; acts of will; complexity of the will; 14th-century ethics

1. Introduction. 2. The complex structure of acts of will. 3. John Duns Scotus: Types of acts of will and the act of *non velle*. 4. Applying the concept of *non velle* to the metaphysics of free will. 5. *Non velle* in ethical discourse and moral psychology. 6. Conclusions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Medieval philosophical debates on free will address a wide range of specific issues. Contemporary research on these debates focuses on the relationship of the will to the intellect (Hoffmann 2010; Hoffmann, Michon 2017; Ingham 2002; Kieřbasa 2017), the problem of neglect (Barnwell 2010), the issue of *akrasia* (Hoffmann 2004; Hoffmann, Müller, Perkams 2006; Holopainen 2006; Saarinen 1994; Saarinen 2011) and volitional virtues (Kent 1995), among other issues. One of the most complex problems concerns the structure of acts of free will, which was considered in the context of both philosophical

and theological issues. The complexity of the will is manifested in its ability to perform self-reflexive acts, especially in a situation of conflict of desires. The multifaceted nature of desires and acts of will was already examined by St. Augustine, Anselm of Canterbury and in the 12th- and 13th-century theories of Peter of Poitiers, Stefan Langton and William of Auxerre (Michałowska 2017). This article will first illustrate the ancient sources of the concept of the two-level will; then, it will focus on John Duns Scotus's account; lastly, it will assess the impact of his views on certain 14th-century thinkers.

2. THE COMPLEX STRUCTURE OF ACTS OF WILL

The question of the complex structure of acts of will become clear in the context of the agent's actions in a situation of a conflict of desires. It should be emphasized that a conflict of desires can be variously described depending on the anthropological model adopted. When Plato in the *Republic* describes the experience of Leontios, who at the same time wanted and did not want to see the corpses around the executioner's house (Plato 1998, 440a), he uses his model of the tripartite soul, in which the human *psyche*, in addition to reason, comprises two extra-mental elements: *thymos* and *epithymia*. Plato describes the situation of an internal conflict of desires as a dispute between the appetitive and spirited parts. The latter, which is closer to reason, is capable of cooperating with it. Although in Plato's thought the will is not an autonomous faculty, it is hard to disagree with Sorabji (Sorabji 2004) that Plato's description of *thymos* makes it analogous to the volitional sphere understood as a powerful and driving force, as it satisfies two conditions: it is a desire that usually stands on the side of reason and it does not work against it when it fights against the appetitive part of the soul (*epithymia*). It is true that *thymos* may oppose reason or ally itself with the inferior part of the soul when it is corrupted or lacks proper upbringing. However, in and of itself *thymos* supports reason. Sorabji thus assumes that

thymos can be interpreted as the will, since it is neither reason nor sensual lust and it is characterized by a certain rationality. Such an understanding finds some justification, especially in the first books of the *Republic*. Sorabji refers specifically to the fourth book, in which Plato presents *thymos* as an assistant of reason, citing the metaphor of the dog and the shepherd – when reason recognizes that desires try to take over the agent, it begins to work with *thymos* until desires and improper appetites are overcome (Plato 1998, 440b–d). *Thymos* is therefore not a fully autonomous faculty, since it only acts if guided by reason. However, Sorabji emphasizes that *thymos* is not the source of choices (which is the primary function of the will), and that Plato does not use this concept to describe freedom and responsibility, which he analyzes later in the *Republic*. It is worth adding that *thymos* was not translated as “will,” but as “anger” or “temperament.” In Plato’s model of the soul, conflicting desires can be interpreted without resorting to the concept of the will, at least as an autonomous volitional decision-making faculty.

Plato’s suggestive description of the conflict experienced by Leontios could be expressed with other models of the soul: in particular, as a conflict between reason, will and sensual appetites. Under the influence of reason, the will does not want to have certain desires, which the agent experiences simultaneously as his own and not his own, and which derive from a sensual sphere separate from the will. The same conflict can be illustrated as a struggle between the opposing desires of the will itself, one of which is recognized by the agent’s reason as proper. A classic author who proposed a new model of the human soul, in which the will is a separate faculty of the soul irreducible to either feelings or reason, was St. Augustine. Both Greek and Roman anthropology described the phenomenon of desire or choice. However, despite many interesting intuitions about volitional actions, none of Augustine’s predecessors formulated the concept of the will as clearly as he did. The originality of Augustine’s theory was that he consciously and clearly articulated the concept of the will

as a separate faculty, not reducible to feelings or reason. As Irwin aptly points out, the Augustinian concepts of will (*voluntas*) and free will (*liberum arbitrium*) do not fit the Aristotelian or stoic views of the nature of choice. In Aristotle's thought, we do not find a separate faculty of the will independent of the rational and irrational parts of the soul. Analogously, the stoics, despite their concept of assertion did not deviate as far as Augustine from ethical intellectualism (Irwin 2007). Augustine's anthropology rejects strong ethical intellectualism. In his works, we can find many passages showing that knowledge is not a sufficient motive for action, and recognizing the truth does not mean that the will has to make the right choice. In the *Confessions* he writes: "I was certain of your truth. Yet I was still bound to earth and refused to enlist in your service" (Augustine 2019, 127).

Augustine introduces the concept of true weakness of will, true *akrasia*, in his writings. Augustine uses the image of a moral agent who is weak not because he acts under the influence of emotions against his convictions. Rather, he is morally weak because he does not have enough willpower to act according to his convictions. The will turns out to be unable to make the right decision and act in accordance with it. Augustine compares an akratic agent to a sluggish and sleeping agent who responds to Christ's call in the following way: "I was convinced by the truth, and I had no answer at all to give but sluggish and sleepy words: 'in a little while;' 'really, in a little while;' 'give me just a moment longer.'" However strong our beliefs about goodness may be, they alone cannot stimulate us to act if our will is weak: "The thoughts in which I would meditate on you were like the efforts of those who try to awaken but are overcome and sink back into the depths of sleep" (Augustine 2019, 127). It seems that Augustine, like Aristotle, contrasts reason with the passions that prevent the agent from acting in accordance with the knowledge of good. However, the Augustinian agent depicted in the *Confessions* is not just an Aristotelian akratic agent. As Noone (Noone 2008) notes, there is no historical evidence that Augustine was familiar

with the problem of *akrasia*. In the light of what he wrote, e.g., in *De libero arbitrio*, there seems to be no place for classically understood *akrasia* in his anthropology. For according to him, a lower faculty cannot influence a higher one. Hence, if we succumb to passions it is because our will consented to their victory. In *De libero arbitrio* Augustine states: "I believe you recall that in Book 1 we were in full agreement that the mind becomes a slave to lust only through its own will: it cannot be forced to this ugliness by what is higher or by what is equal, since it is unjust; nor by what is lower, since it is unable" (Augustine 2010, 74). Taking his statements literally, the internal conflict takes place within the will, while according to ancient moral psychology it was a conflict between *ratio* and the extra-rational elements of the soul. In Aristotle's anthropology, reason is the real agent and the true "I," while non-rational elements such as emotions are somehow external. Augustine's agent consists of intellect, memory and will, and is therefore both the thinking and the loving "I" (Kent 2001).

The weakness of will described in the *Confessions* is the inability to make the right decision, it is the lack of decisiveness of the "half-wounded will" (*semisaucia voluntas*) (Augustine 2019, 132), which is still willing but not strong enough. The Augustinian agent is not only a rational agent who succumbs to passions; he is an agent whose will, a faculty independent of reason and passions, is torn between its various desires. Augustine illustrates these levels of desire as a conflict of two wills experienced by one person. He writes about the stage of his life after conversion, when he experienced an internal struggle between the old will, identified with negative habits, and the new will, wanting to do good. The conflict also concerns the agent's internal identity: he knows that both desires are his own, although depending on the degree of his moral development he treats one of the desires as more his own: "Thus I understood by my own experience what I had read: that the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. I was indeed in both, but I was more in the one of which

I approved in myself than I was in the one of which I disapproved in myself. For the latter was no longer so much myself, since to a great degree it was something happening to me against my will rather than something I was doing willingly” (Augustine 2019, 126). An agent torn between desires approves (*approbo*) one and rejects (*improbo*) the other. The desires illustrated by the struggle of the body against the spirit can be interpreted after Frankfurt (Frankfurt 1971) as first-order desires, and approval and rejection as second-order acts of wills. The Augustinian agent may, therefore, approve of his willing or will his willing, which means that the will has the ability to self-reflexively refer to its own acts (Michałowska 2017). Such a concept of the will, which had its roots in Augustine’s writings, found its place in philosophical debates. At the turn of the 14th century, the concept of a two-level structure of acts of will became an important element of John Duns Scotus’s theory of the will.

3. JOHN DUNS SCOTUS: TYPES OF ACTS OF WILL AND THE ACT OF *NON VELLE*

In his theory of free will, Scotus distinguishes between different kinds of acts and affections of the will. As for the latter, he refers to Anselm of Canterbury’s concepts of affection for justice (*affectio iustitiae*) and affection for the advantageous (*affectio commodi*). Moreover, he distinguishes between two kinds of desires when he talks about love as friendship (*amor amicitiae*) and love as attraction (*amor concupiscentiae*). Lastly, Scotus differentiates between positive and negative acts of will. That is, he describes two types of voluntary acts: willing (*velle*) and willing against something (*nolle*). According to him, these acts are positive in the sense that by willing, the will accepts an object that suits it; conversely, by willing against something it rejects what is inappropriate or withdraws from it (Joannis Duns Scoti 2001, d.6, q.1, n.34). However surprising, an act of willing against something has a positive character, as opposed to the state of will that Scotus

calls *non velle*. This state will be the subject of a detailed analysis in my article.

Scotus formulates his view on the nature of the will as a reaction to of Stefan Tempier's condemnations of 1277, which included the theses concerning the relationship of the will to the intellect. Thesis 163 is particularly relevant in this context: "The will necessarily follows what its reason decisively gives it; nor can she refrain from acting according to her mind. This necessity is not a compulsion, but is in the very nature of the will" (Hissette 1977, 255). Scotus believed that the independence of the will from the intellect and its ability to oppose its judgment is a necessary condition for the preservation of freedom. The possibility of suspending (*suspendere*) an act is an internal, essential (*ex se*) quality of the will – without it the will could not suspend any act after the intellect's deliberation (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.20). Scotus further clarifies his position, stating that the will cannot voluntarily suspend its every act, but may voluntarily not will (refrain from willing) a given object. Suspension, however, means having a different will with respect to the first level of the will. The act of will that suspends another act has the following form: "I simply will not to exercise an act regarding this object". Thus, willing and lack of willing take place on different levels of the will: on the first level (not exercising an act) and on the second level (willing) in an act of reflexion, i.e. an act referred to the first level. I therefore will to refrain from exercising an act regarding object *a* and indeed I do so, by refraining from willing *a*: i.e., I will not to will (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.20).

According to Scotus, the will is able to oppose and reject the judgment of reason; at the same time, it influences the acts of the intellect itself. It is only unable to suspend the act of cognition that is necessary for the act of willing that suspends cognition. Although the will can't suspend every willing, it can suspend any willing that is not necessary for the willing by which it suspends another willing (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.20). Hence the double structure of the (in)

dependence of the will from the intellect – the will is only unable to suspend the cognition and willing by which it can suspend another act of cognition or willing, but it is able to suspend, in an act of reflexion, other acts of willing and cognition. The will, then, is self-reflexive and has the power to influence the intellect. The possibility of suspending an act of will proves that the state of suspension is the effect of an active state (e.g., the state “I will”) – so the will still has the nature of an act. The capacity of the will to exercise a meta-act in relation to acts regarding objects seems manifold. In the above case, it is a willing to suspend an act of willing that results in a non-willing. The state of non-willing would be a third way the will can refer to an object, according to which the will chooses not to choose as a result of a meta-act of reflexion. This also applies to acts of willing against something (*nolle*) and willing (*velle*). This is Ingham’s interpretation of the state of *non velle*. According to her, in Scotus’s account the will can perform three types of acts: *velle* (willing – choosing), *nolle* (nilling – rejecting) and *non velle* (non-willing – abstaining), i.e. choosing not to choose (Ingham 2017, 93). *Non velle* is not a passive state. Rather, it is a state in which the will exercises no act. The will suspends the act in question through another act.

In his *Ordinatio*, Scotus states that the will itself, through its willing, can order an inferior faculty to act or abstain from acting, but it cannot stop willing altogether, because if it were to do so it would not will anything and it would will something at the same time.¹ As in *Quodlibetum*, Scotus treats the suspended act of will as the effect of another act. According to him, the will can suspend any act regarding a given object by a specific willing. Illustrating this position, he notes that in such a case “I do not will (*nolle*) now to cause an act (a willing) regarding this object that presents itself

1 “Posset tamen dici quod ipsa voluntas per aliquod velle elicited imperat actionem potentiae inferioris vel prohibet. Non autem potest sic suspendere omne velle, quia tunc simul nihil vellet et aliquid vellet” (Joannis Duns Scoti 1963, d.1, p.2, q.2, n.150).

to me clearly.”² He gives the example of suspending an act of will by an act of willing against something (*nolle*), which is, according to Scotus, an act caused by the will, a kind of reflexive act (meta-act) concerning the willing of an object. Scotus emphasizes that in this situation this willing of an object is not actual and present nor is it past. It is merely possible.³ It is probably for this reason that he calls an act concerning a possible willing *quasi*-reflexive, because it is not an act referring to an act that exists or has been exercised, but to a possible act. Thus, it is difficult to speak of a proper relation of reflexion.

Juxtaposing fragments from *Quodlibetum* and *Ordinatio* provides us with the following possible ways the will may refer to its acts: by an act of willing (*velle*) not to cause a given act of willing, or by an act of willing against (*nolle*) a given act of willing. Both are types of meta-acts that result in abstaining from a given willing (*non velle*). Interestingly, Scotus’s analysis in *Ordinatio* shows not only that the will can refer by appropriate acts of reflexion to present or past acts, but also to acts that could happen but will not actually happen, because they will be suspended. Scotus’s analysis thus reveals a wealth of possible ways the will may refer to its own acts.

2 “Sed quidquid sit de suspensione omnis velle, saltem potest suspendere omnem actum circa istud obiectum per aliquod velle elicatum, et hoc modo nolo nunc aliquid elicere circa istud obiectum quousque distinctius ostendatur mihi” (Joannis Duns Scoti 1963, d.1, p.2, q.2, n.150).

3 “Et istud nolle est quidam actus elicatus, quasi reflexus super velle obiecti, non quod inest vel inquit, sed quod posset inesse; quod etsi in se non ostendatur, ostenditur tamen in sua causa, scilicet in obiecto ostenso, quod natum est esse principium actus in aliquo genere principii” (Joannis Duns Scoti 1963, d.1, p.2, q.2, n.150).

4. APPLYING THE CONCEPT OF *NON VELLE* TO THE METAPHYSICS OF FREE WILL

Scotus applied the above concept of types of will to solve various kinds of difficulties in the metaphysics of free will. It seems that the postulate of the existence of a state of *non velle* and its special causal nature allowed Scotus to defend freedom and reject various types of determinism: on the one hand, to defend the unnecessary nature of desire for the redeemed's final goal (the relation of man's will to God); on the other, to explain the relation of God to the will of man who commits moral evil and the relationship of God's will to the will of man in the context of predestination. Let's take a look at these three situations.

Doctor Subtle considers the problem of whether the finite will must produce an act of necessary love for the infinite good. He asks, therefore, whether every will necessarily wills an ultimate end, both when it knows this end clearly and when it grasps it in a general way.⁴

Scotus poses the question of whether the will necessarily desires the ultimate end in the context of the general view that action flows necessarily from what is in itself (*per se*) the principle of action. According to Scotus, the object itself cannot be the active principle of the action of the will. Therefore, the necessity of a desire for an object cannot depend solely on the object itself because the active cause of willing, the active power, can only be the will. This does not mean that the object is not relevant in the process of willing, which is intrinsically intentional rather than objectless. The object itself, however, is not the reason for the necessity of willing, which, according to Scotus, depends on fulfilling two conditions: the will must be perfect and infinite, and the object of such will equally infinite

⁴ "De primo dicitur quod omnis voluntas necessario vult finem ultimum, et hoc vel clare visum vel etiam a nobis in universali apprehensum" (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.8).

and perfect. Thus, the finite will, that is, the power of any created person, does not have to perform a necessary act for the highest good. This applies both to the human will and its operation in earthly life, and to the beatific vision of the redeemed. Scotus suggests that whatever we may say about the action of the beatified created will and its supernatural perfection by which it pursues a perfect object, we must admit that the created will of man acting in earthly life absolutely pursues that object only in a contingent manner, and therefore not necessarily. The will has a general grasp of its object, but this is rather different from determining the will to necessarily will the object. Further, the will does not necessarily determine itself to do the opposite, and does not necessarily continue to will.⁵

Hence, Scotus builds his argument about the non-necessary nature of the desire for the ultimate goal by analyzing the specific conditions of the earthly cognition of man in the present life. They are in no way determinative, even if the vision of the ultimate good is general. Thus, the general good is also not the necessary object of the will of a finite subject acting in earthly life. All actions of such a will – willing, the opposite of willing and the continuation of willing – are contingent, that is, not necessarily produced by the will.

Scotus realizes that the belief that the will can reject or will against an object that is fully perfect, i.e. in which there is no principle of evil or lack of good, is incomprehensible, because according to him good is the object of an act of willing (*velle*). In turn, the act of willing against something (*nolle*), or the act of rejection, refers to evil (or something

5 “Et quidquid sit de voluntate creata beata et de perfectione eius supernaturali qua tendit in illud obiectum, tamen diceretur quod voluntas creata viatoris simpliciter contingenter tendit in illud, et etiam quando est in universali apprehensum, quia illa apprehensio non est ratio determinandi voluntatem ad necessario volendum illud. Nec ipsa voluntas necessario se determinat in opposito, sicut nec necessario continuat illud positum” (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.22).

that is known to be evil) or lack of good.⁶ However, in the opinion of the Subtle Doctor, it does not follow that if the will “cannot not will this [highest] good, it necessarily wills it,” because – as he states referring to the authority of St. Augustine in his *Retractationes* – the will can either will it or will against it.⁷ In addition to these two states of will, a third state is possible – willing against the act of willing the most perfect good. The latter act, which Scotus earlier called reflexive, i.e. referring to willing or willing against an object, entails that the will does not necessarily desire an object that is fully perfect. In *Lectura* Scotus calls the *velle/nolle* acts positive acts of will, while the *non-velle* act, according to him, refers to an object (in which there is no evil) in a negative way. He notes in this context that while the will cannot will against (*nolle*) happiness, it may not will it (*non velle*).⁸ It seems that if the will could only perform an act of willing or an act of willing against, it would have to necessarily desire a perfect good. The third possibility makes it possible to justify the idea that the will not necessarily desires such a good.

Scotus offers the following counterargument to his position. If something cannot be the object of an act of willing against something, it is because the object necessarily has some feature that excludes such an act. This feature can only be something that causes the act

6 “Tamen ista posset concedi quod voluntas non potest resilire ab obiecto sive nolle obiectum in quo non ostenditur aliqua ratio mali nec aliquis defectus boni, quia sicut bonum est obiectum huius actus qui est velle, ita malum vel defectus boni, quod pro malo reputatur, est obiectum huius actus qui est nolle” (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.22).

7 “Et tunc non sequitur ultra, ‘non potest nolle hoc, ergo necessario vult hoc’, quia potest hoc obiectum neque velle neque nolle, ut tactum est supra, pertractando illam auctoritatem de I Retractationum” (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.22).

8 “Item dico quod duo sunt actus voluntatis positivi, scilicet nolle et velle; ... tamen voluntas potest negative non velle obiectum in quo est nihil mali ...; unde licet non potest nolle beatitudinem, potest tamen non velle illud” (Joannis Duns Scoti 1960, d.1, p.2, q.2, n.118).

of willing the object. Consequently, it would be necessary to will it. Such an argument presupposes that if one of two incompatible elements is excluded, the other necessarily holds.⁹ According to this view, the states of willing and willing against a perfect being cannot occur simultaneously, so one must be excluded. In Scotus's terminology, the state of *nolle* is excluded; therefore, the state of *velle* is necessary.

Scotus's answer shows the complexity of his position. In the process of willing and willing against something he puts more emphasis on the essence of the will than on the object to which the will refers. The will, understood as the power to will, is that which opposes the act of not willing the object. Scotus admits that the will can perform an act of willing only in relation to an object that is a possible object of willing (*volibilis*), and an act of willing against only in relation to that which is absolutely undesirable (*nolibilis*). Therefore, an act of willing or willing against is possible only in relation to such objects. Could an end in which there is no evil or lack of good be willed against? Scotus states that it gives no grounds (*ratio*) for inducing an act of willing against. He considers "willing against an end" to be a self-contradictory and meaningless expression, just like the expression "to see sound."¹⁰ Acts of will such as willing and willing against are therefore also dependent on the nature of the object, although the object is not, as has been said, the active principle of volitional acts. However, one cannot

9 "Contra hoc potest argui sic: si non potest nolle hoc obiectum, hoc ideo est quia necessario habet in se aliquid cui repugnat istud nolle; tale autem repugnans non potest esse nisi actu velle hoc obiectum; igitur illud necessario sibi inest. Maior probatur: quia si unum impossibile repugnat, alterum necessario inest" (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.23).

10 "Hic dici potest quod illud repugnans actui nolendi finem est ipsamet potentia volendi, quia ipsa non potest habere nisi velle respectu obiecti volibilis, vel nolle respectu obiecti nolibilis, quia nullum aliud velle vel nolle est possibile fieri; nunc autem finis non habet rationem nolibilis quia nec malitiam, nec defectum boni; unde hoc quod est 'nolle finem' includit contradictionem, sicut 'videre sonum'" (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.24).

actively will against happiness. Here, Scotus remains faithful to St. Augustine's view, according to which the essence of the desire for happiness is not only that we do not want to be unhappy; rather, it is that we are not even able to want to be unhappy (Augustine 2006, 403). Both acts – willing and willing against – can refer to specific objects. Just as an act of willing can't be directed toward unhappiness, so an act of willing against can't be directed toward happiness. Perhaps the latter would be even more problematic, because unhappiness is less likely to be willed than happiness to be willed against.¹¹ How does this view relate to the concepts of willing and willing against, in which when one of the two non-combinable elements is excluded, the other necessarily occurs? Scotus's solution, which rules out the necessity of the desire for happiness (an end), is based on the rejection of this strict dichotomy – for, as indicated, a third state of the will is possible, that is an act of *non-velle*, which consists in neither willing (*velle*) nor rejecting (*nolle*) a perfect being (happiness). Therefore, if the will wills happiness, it does not mean that it wills it necessarily. Even when the will cannot perform an act of willing against happiness, this does not necessarily mean that it wills happiness. Willing and willing against something are mutually exclusive categories, but not complementary – they are opposite, but not contradictory. Vos proposes a logical square model reflecting the formal relations between the sentences *velle*, *nolle* and *non velle*. The sentences expressed by *velle* and *nolle* are opposite. Vos (Vos 2018, 291) proposes their following formalization: aWp (a wills that p) is equivalent to *velle* and $aW\sim p$ (a wills that not p) is equivalent to *nolle*. The sentence expressed by $a\sim Wp$ is inconsistent with aWp (a does not will p), because the sentences expressed by *velle* and *non velle* are

¹¹ "Augustinus vult in *Enchiridion* 86 vel 52: 'Sic beati esse volumus, ut miseri esse non solum nolumus, sed nequaquam velle possumus'. Sicut repugnat ipsi actui volendi tendere in miseriam, ita videtur repugnare actui nolendi tendere in beatitudinem, vel forte magis, quia non ita caret miseria omni ratione volibilis, sicut beatitudo omni ratione nolibilis" (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007b, q.16, a.1, n.24).

contradictory, and the sentence expressed by $a\sim W\sim p$ is inconsistent with $aW\sim p$ (a does not will not p). In this formalization, willing against means “willing that not,” so the sentence “ a hates p ” translates as “ a wills that not p .”

The above account of types of acts of will – willing, nilling and not-willing – allowed Scotus to depart from the classical tradition, according to which ultimate happiness (the highest good, God) is necessarily the object of the desire of the will. For example, according to Thomas Aquinas happiness is a perfect good that completely satisfies the desire of the will. The will necessarily tends to the ultimate end, which is also the common good, and when it is reached the will no longer desires anything. The will of man can be satisfied by nothing but the common good, which is not found in worldly good but only in God, since every creature has only a partial good (Sancti Thomae de Aquino 1962, I-II, q.2, a.8, resp.). The will is free regarding the means to the ultimate end, but not regarding the choice of the end itself. For Scotus, the contingent action of a finite will is an essential condition for preserving its freedom, as is the principle of alternatives. These conditions must apply to the will in its relation to both the means and the end. The perception of God by the rejoicing redeemed has a special cognitive-volitional character. Scotus claims that even the necessity of this perception is not absolute, because it occurs only when the object of perception itself remains cognitively accessible. His presence for the created intellects has a contingent character because it moves them in a voluntary and contingent way. Although the Divine being itself is necessary, it is not necessarily the object of the cognizing intellect. Scotus also makes the knowledge of God in the beatific vision dependent on God’s will. He states that the contingently created will rejoices in this vision and contingently combines mental cognition with memory.¹² Since God contingently presents Himself

12 “Neque etiam illa necessitas videndi est simpliciter necessitas, sed tantummodo necessitas si obiectum praesens maneat, et istud, si est mere contingens, quia obiectum illud

to the subjects for whom He is the object of cognition, it follows that the intellectual cognition directed at God is also not strictly necessary, even though the created intellect is a power acting out of natural necessity (it cannot fail to cognize). However, since the presentation of an object of cognition depends on the will of God, such cognition should be thought of as contingent. The finite will is also contingent in its operation, because this is the essence of the will. In turn, this contingently affects the relationship of the intellect to memory, thanks to which the intellect knows that the object of its cognition is God. The contingency of the cognitive-volitional character of the perception of God by the redeemed occurs on many levels. As Gainé argues, Scotus wants to emphasize both the freedom of God and the freedom of the created will in the beatific vision. The perfection of the object, which is God, does not determine the necessity of willing in the created will, even when such a perfect object is distinctly and clearly cognized (Gainé 2003, 58).

The theological discussions of the 14th century concerning the problem of the necessity of the desire for the ultimate goal more or less faithfully referred to Scotus's distinctions and solutions. The disputes focused on the nature of freedom, the concept of contingency and the influence of reason on the decision to turn away from God in the beatific vision (Alliney 2005). The concept of different types of volitional acts developed by Scotus was used in philosophical analysis. Peter of Aquila, also known as Scotellus, considered an unoriginal and not very independent disciple (Schabel 2002, 259), in his *Commentary on Peter Lombard's Sentences*, ponders the problem of whether the created will necessarily pursues the ultimate goal or whether it is free. He suggests that freedom and necessity, because of their opposing principles of operation, are not necessarily

voluntarie et contingenter movet quemcumque intellectum creatum. Si etiam voluntas contingenter fruitor illo viso, contingenter etiam copulat intelligentiam cum memoria" (Joannis Duns Scoti 2013, d.49, p.1, q.6, n.342).

compatible in the same thing. Therefore the will, being free, wills nothing necessarily.¹³ He remains faithful to Scotus's account, and justifies the view that the desire for the ultimate goal is not necessary through the will's ability to perform meta-acts and its reflective ability to relate its acts to itself. Peter of Aquila states that, although the will cannot will against (*non velle*) such an object (the highest good), it should not be assumed that it must necessarily will it. For the will can suspend its action by saying "I do not will (*nolo*) to will it (*velle*)".¹⁴ He accepts Scotus's understanding of *velle* and *nolle* as positive acts of will,¹⁵ but does not explore the meaning of the negative act of *non velle*. It seems that he uses *non velle* interchangeably with *nolle*, for instance when he says that the will cannot will against (*non velle*) the highest good.

The issue of the (non-)necessity of an act of will in the redeemed's beatific vision became the center of discussion in the Oxford community in the 14th-century. Among theologians, including Robert Cowton and Richard Drayton, the prevailing opinion was that the vision of the redeemed is necessary. According to Drayton and Richard of Conington, this is due to the lack of reasons that would allow the will to turn away from the most perfect object. Among the supporters of Scotus's view was John Reading, who accepted Scotus's view of the contingent nature of the beatific vision and defended his account against Aurelius's arguments (Alliney

13 "Contra: libertas et necessitas propter oppositum modum principiandi, non sunt compossibilia in eodem; sed voluntas aliquid libere vult; ergo nihil vult necessario" (Petri de Aquila 1907-1909, II, d.24, q.1).

14 "[D]ico quod quamvis voluntas non possit tale objectum non velle, tamen non oportet necessario velle, quia potest suspendere actionem suam dicendo: nolo me velle" (Petri de Aquila 1907-1909, II, d.24, q.1, p.334).

15 "Nunc secundo oportet distinguere de actibus voluntatis. Et dico in communi quod duplex est actus voluntatis, scilicet velle et nolle. Est ergo nolle actus positivus voluntatis quo fugit disconveniens; velle autem est actus voluntatis quo acceptat omne conveniens" (Petri de Aquila 1907-1909, II, d.6, q.1, p.183).

2005). Scotus's position was also supported by Henry of Harclay (Henninger 2009).

According to Scotus, the positive volitional acts of *velle/nolle* can also be defined as love (*amare*)/hate (*odire*) (Frost 2010). For this reason, Scotus will consider the possibility of a (hateful) volitional act of rejecting God. The theological context of such an issue was the problem of hatred toward God in the case of fallen angels and the damned. Such a state of will is possible and, according to Scotus, it concerns the will that reverses the order of love. Ultimately, Scotus interprets the fall of angels as a series of acts of will, the first of which was their immoderate love for themselves and the last and greatest sin their hatred of God – for as long as God existed, the evil angel could not have what he wanted. As he says, it can be assumed that the evil angel wanted a certain good for himself, namely superiority to others. Either he had a disordered nilling (*nolle*) – he did not want happiness to a lesser degree than God himself – or he did not want to wait for happiness any longer, or he did not want to achieve it by merit but by himself. As a result, he had a nilling of being subordinate to God, and ultimately a nilling of the existence of God.¹⁶ Thus, the redeemed can perform an act of *non velle* toward God, but not an act of *nolle*, i.e. a positive act of rejecting God, which can instead be performed by the damned.

Later 14th-century discussions concerning the possibility of an act of hatred directed at God focused, among other things, on the very concept of hatred. In this context, Henry of Harclay formulated

16 “Viso igitur de primo inordinate concupito, potest poni quod inordinate ulterius concupivit sibi aliquod bonum, scilicet excellentiam respectu aliorum. Vel habuit inordinatum nolle, nolendo scilicet opposita eorum quae concupivit: scilicet nolendo beatitudinem sibi minus inesse quam Deo in se (sive quam Deum esse), vel nolendo exspectare beatitudinem usque ad terminum viae, vel nolendo eam habere ex meritis sed ex se, et 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 est quam Deum diligere, sic nec aliquis actus formaliter peior est quam Deum odire” (Joannis Duns Scoti 2001, d.6, q.1, n.63).

an interesting analysis. An act of hatred directed at God seems absurd, because the will must perform an act radically inconsistent with the nature of the object to which it refers. However, Harclay notes, hatred can be considered not only in terms of the nature of the object of hatred, but also, for example, in terms of the evil that can come from it. There is no evil in God, but haters may hate Him because of the evil that comes from Him, such as the punishment they suffer (Henninger 2009). A radical interpretation of the issue of *odium Dei* and the non-necessity of the beatific vision is formulated by William of Ockham. Accepting the non-necessary character of acts of the will, Ockham recognized that the will freely and contingently enjoys the ultimate end and therefore can love and not love happiness, desire it and not desire it. Thus, we can perform an act of willing against (*nolle*) happiness, because we can recognize, for example, that happiness is impossible.¹⁷ According to Ockham, the volitional rejection of the beatific joy by those redeemed in heaven is also possible when the redeemed perceive the essence of God. For God may will that their will should not enjoy happiness, and the will of the redeemed may agree with God's will in what it wills. If God willed that some will should not achieve beatific fulfilment (*fruitio*) in heaven at a certain time, the will of that redeemed person could then perform the act of rejecting happiness (*nolle*) without wanting it absolutely.¹⁸

17 "Prima igitur conclusio erit ista quod voluntas contingenter et libere – modo exposito – fruitur fine ultimo ostenso in universali, quia scilicet diligere beatitudinem potest et non diligere, et potest appetere sibi beatitudinem et non appetere. Ista conclusio persuadeatur primo sic: illud potest esse nolitum a voluntate quod potest intellectus dictare esse nolendum; sed intellectus potest credere nullam beatitudinem esse possibilem, quia potest credere tantum statum quem de facto videmus esse sibi possibilem; ergo potest nolle omne illud quod isti statui quem videmus repugnat, et per consequens potest nolle beatitudinem" (William of Ockham 1967, I, d.1, q.6).

18 "Quarta conclusio est quod videns divinam essentiam et carens fruitione beatifica potest nolle illam fruitionem. Haec probatur, quia, sicut prius dictum est, quaelibet voluntas potest conformari voluntati divinae in volito; sed Deus potest velle ipsum pro semper

In more refined accounts, the possibility of a state of hatred directed at God must contain an element of justification of this possibility. Authors refer, for example, to the nature of the act of hatred or the intellectual resources of the agent. For instance, according to Harclay hatred does not have to entail the necessity of denying someone's existence – it is enough to deny some trait that they justly possess. Likewise, as mentioned above hatred of God can be motivated by the punishment that He inflicts on the hater (Henninger 2009). There are voluntaristic threads in Ockham's position. According to him, God can order a creature to perform an act of hatred directed at God. Such a command may even be morally right: any created will can conform to a divine command; God can command a created will to hate Him; so, a created will can do so. Moreover, anything that qualifies as a right action in this life can also qualify as a right action in the next life. Hatred of God, as commanded by God, may in this case be the right action in this life; thus, it can also be the right action in the next life.¹⁹ Ockham departs from the moderate voluntarism of Scotus, who believed that God cannot command a will to hate Him. According to Scotus, the first two laws of the first tablet of the Decalogue have a different status than the laws of the second tablet, as they belong to natural law in the strict sense. It necessarily follows from this that “if God exists, He alone should be loved as God,” and therefore that “nothing else

carere fruitione beatifica; ergo etc. Praeterea, quidquid potest esse volitum vel nolitum pro uno tempore, et pro semper; sed voluntas talis potest nolle habere beatitudinem pro aliquo tempore determinato, puta quamdiu Deus vult eam non habere fruitionem beatificam; ergo potest nolle eam simpliciter” (William of Ockham 1967, I, d.1, q.6).

- 19 “Praeterea, omnis voluntas potest se conformare praecepto divino. Sed Deus potest praecipere quod voluntas creata odiat eum, igitur voluntas creata potest hoc facere. Praeterea, omne quod potest esse actus rectus in via, et in patria. Sed odire Deum potest esse actus rectus in via, puta si praecipatur a deo, igitur in patria” (William of Ockham 1984, IV, q.16, lin.5-10, p.352).

can be worshiped as God, nor should God be insulted.”²⁰ The first two commandments of the Decalogue result from a self-evident judgment, the truth of which depends on a correct understanding of the concept of God. Scotus refers to Anselm’s definition of God, according to which “God is a being than which none greater can be imagined.” He states that such a being is most worthy of being loved, and concludes that God should be loved most and above all else.²¹ “Loving God above all else” is an act in accordance with natural reason, which commands to love what is best. It follows that such a love is a right act in itself. The unconditionality of these commandments makes it impossible for God to grant dispensation to break them and order someone to do the opposite, that is, to hate God.²² Ockham radicalized Scotus’s view: his concept of the action of the will in the beatific vision does not coincide with the opinion of traditional theologians. As a result, the dissemination of Ockham’s doctrines caused a crisis in Scotist philosophy (Alliney 2005).

The non-necessary character of the redeemed’s actions of the will in the beatific vision is, according to Scotus, a guarantee of the contingency of the action of the will as well as the freedom of the redeemed agents. Scotus’s concept of *non velle* preserves the possibility of rejecting God in heaven. It became one of the essential elements of Scotist metaphysics of free will.

20 “Duo quidem prima, si intelligantur tantum esse negativa, primum scilicet *Non habebis deos alienos*, et secundum *Non accipies nomen Dei tui in vanum*, hoc est ‘non facies Deo irreverentiam’, illa sunt de lege naturae, stricte sumendo legem naturae, quia necessario sequitur ‘si est Deus, est amandus ut Deus solus’, similiter sequitur quod ‘nihil aliud est colendum ut Deus, nec Deo est irreverentia facienda’” (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007a, d.37, q.un., n.20).

21 “[P]otest esse veritas necessaria, ut quod debeam Deum diligere super omnia. Et hoc demonstrative potest concludi sic: ‘Deus est quo maius cogitari non potest’; igitur est summe diligibilis; igitur summe debeo eum diligere” (Joannis Duns Scoti 1960, p.4, q.2, n.172).

22 “Et per consequens in istis non poterit Deus dispensare, ut aliquis possit facere oppositum huius vel illius prohibiti” (Joannis Duns Scoti 2007a, d.37, q.un., n.20).

The concept of *non velle* is also important for explaining the causal relationship between the will of God and the will of man in the context of sin and predestination. The Scotist concept of types of acts of will distinguishes effecting (*efficax*) and non-effecting (*remissa*), restrained acts of will. God can have an effecting volition (*velle efficax*) and an effecting nollition (*nolitio efficax*) with respect to objects. The former causes the existence of an object, the latter its annihilation. In addition, we can distinguish between restrained volition (*voluntas remissa*), in which the will is pleased by what it wills but does not actualize it, and restrained nollition (*nolitio remissa*), in which the will is not pleased by the unwilled thing, but in such a way that the will does not prevent it from existing even if it could.²³ As for God's volitional acts, when God wills (*velle*) the object of willing will be realized because willing is a positive and effecting act of will; when God wills against something (*nolle*), it will not be realized because a *nolle* act is a positive and effecting act of willing against something. If such volitional acts existed, when a sinner committed a sin God would have to perform an effecting act of volition. Hence, its existence would be determined by God. Otherwise, He would have to perform an effecting act of nollition for the sin not to be committed. Both options would make it difficult to preserve the sinner's free will. Similarly for predestination: by an effecting negation (nollition) of grace God would determine the damnation of a person.

Scotus uses the concept of *non velle* to build a model of God's free will, which is not determinative in the above cases. When the divine will entertains a proposition about sin, e.g. "This one sins," it neither wills for (*velle*) nor against (*nolle*) it. Thus, God lacks a positive act

23 "Dicatur 'velle efficax' quo voluntati non tantum complacet esse voliti, sed si potest statim ponere volitum in esse, statim ponit; ita etiam 'nolitio efficax' dicitur qua non tantum nolens impedit aliquid, sed si possit, omnino illud destruit. 'Voluntas remissa' est qua ita placet volitum, quod tamen voluntas non ponit illud in esse, licet possit ponere illud in esse; 'nolitio remissa' est qua ita displicet nolitum quod non prohibeat illud esse, licet possit" (Joannis Duns Scoti 1963, d.47, n.4).

of will toward propositions about sins (Frost 2010, 21). According to Vos, the concept of a negative act of will is related to the concept of an act of will of the second order, i.e. a reflective act. God knows His will as non-willing and can will His will to will against sin. As Vos writes, it is “divine non-willing which is willed by God.” God cannot will sin (*velle*). If he willed against it (*nolle*), there would be no sin. He can will to allow sin, i.e. a non-willing (*non velle*) which his will wills (*potest velle voluntatem suam non velle hoc*) (Vos 2018, 297-299). According to Scotus, the act of allowing evil is a second-order act. That God is “willing to allow” (*volens sinere*) sin does not necessarily mean that God directly wills what he allows. Rather, He has an act of willing subordinate to his non-willing that the agent should sin. In such a case, God’s intellect presents to His will the fact that a person is sinning or wills sin. His will does not perform an act of willing this sin, because it cannot will that any agent should sin. His intellect understands His will, which does not will it, and God can will that His will wills to “non-will” (*non velle hoc*) this sin. In this sense, we can speak of God as willing to allow evil (*volens sinere et volens permittere*).

This model of the will, in which *non velle* is non-determining, is also used by Scotus in his account of predestination. The problem of Judas’s sin is articulated by Scotus as follows: first, God abstains from willing (*non velle*) his glory, but does not will against it (*nolle*); then He can reflect on this negative act and will it, thus choosing neither Judas to be the ultimate sinner nor to will against (*nolle*) his glory. Rather, God chooses to abstain from willing (*non velle*) his glory.²⁴

24 “Primo Deus habet non velle sibi gloriam, et non primo nolle (secundum illam ultimam positionem, distinctione 41); et potest tunc secundo reflectere super istam negationem actus, et velle eam, – et ita volens (sive voluntarie) non eligit Iudam finaliter peccatum et nolitionem gloriae, sed non volitionem gloriae” (Joannis Duns Scoti 1963, d.47, n.9).

It is worth emphasizing that such an act of *non velle* is not hesitating before making a decision, or indecision, or a general suspension of the will. It is a reflective act of the second order, which plays an important role in the causal system of relations between the will of God and the volitional acts of created beings. In Scotus's system, it is one of the conditions establishing the possibility of preserving the freedom of both God and creation. Additionally, it is also key in Scotus's theodicy.

5. NON VELLE IN ETHICAL DISCOURSE AND MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

Lastly, it is worth noting the important role that the concept of *non velle* began to play in 14th-century ethical considerations.

Contemporary scholarship on Buridan debates to what extent his views are Scotist. According to Pironet a Scotist interpretation of Buridan's ethics should be rejected, even if he used a Scotist conceptual apparatus. Buridan, unlike Scotus, did not think that the will was freer than the intellect, and argued that every decision of the will depends directly on the intellect. This position is very different from that of Scotus, according to whom the will can give orders to the intellect and make it, for example, ignore the highest good (Pironet 2001, 210). Discussing Pironet's view, Bonnie Kent points out that solving the problem of Scotus's influence on Buridan's thought would require an in-depth analysis of Scotus's source texts (Kent 2007). Examining Buridan's account of moral weakness, Saarinen looks for Scotist sources of the idea of the will's self-determination ability and believes that Buridan's position is an attempt to reconcile Franciscan voluntarism and Thomist intellectualism (Saarinen 2011, 39). Zupko, in turn, states that Buridan's ethics is intellectualist, but not because the will is never able to act directly against the dictates of reason. Rather, Buridan's intellectualism has to do with Buridan's concept of an act of deferment, which makes the will autonomous and free (Zupko 1995, 79-80).

What is an act of deferment in Buridan's ethics? As Zubko notes, according to Buridan the will performs primary and secondary acts. A primary act of will is an agreement (*complacentia*) or a disagreement (*displacentia*). However, these are not, respectively, acts of willing (*actus volendi*) and nilling (*actus nolendi*). Only secondary acts of will constitute freedom of choice. The will can perform an act of acceptance (*acceptatio*), rejection (*refutatio*) or deferment (*differre*). An act of acceptance is identical with an act of willing (*velle*), and an act of rejection with an act of nilling (*nolle*) (Zupko 1995, 81-82). Thus, we get three basic acts of the will: willing, rejection and deferment. Pironet interprets the state of *non velle* as a passive state of the will, which occurs when the will does not will before moment *t*, but it wills at moment *t*. According to her, in many cases not-willing (*non velle*) means deferring the act of willing until the intellect has further deliberated. Pironet argues that Buridan extends the scope of *non velle*: the will is active when it does not will because it has chosen to defer the act of willing (*non volo* is the same as *volo differre*). At the same time, the will remains in a passive state towards the external object of the will, because it neither wills nor nills it (Pironet 2001, 201-202). For Pironet, an act of deferment is a *non velle* state of the will. Zupko argues instead that an act of deferment is one of the three active acts of the will mentioned earlier, and clarifies that a state of deferment may be a state of *non velle*, when a good appears to the will due to bad circumstances, or a state of *non nolle*, when a good appears to it due to good circumstances (Zupko 1995, 83-84). If in a situation of cognitive uncertainty something appears as good, but could be bad without being recognized as such, the will may not-will (*non velle*) this good, i.e. it may defer willing. Similarly, if I am unsure of the actual goodness of an object, in the context of good circumstances, I can non-reject (*non nolle*) it, that is, I can defer rejection. The acts of deferring an act of willing and rejecting depend on the epistemic imperfection of the agent. When he knows something as unquestionably good, his will must perform an act

of willing. In a situation of moral doubt, which seems common, the ability of the will to defer an act of willing/rejecting is a rational attitude, even an obligation. Buridan writes: “It is certain that often something seems good to us that is not good, and bad that is not bad; and often, too, something seems good to us that is simply good, and bad that is simply bad. It would therefore not be good for us either to accept everything that seems good to us or not to accept everything such. Freedom of opposition, therefore, as was said in Question 3 of Book III (f. [42v] [misnumbered 62], ‘*alia ratio*’), has not been given to us so that we should not accept the seeming good, nor also so that we should accept what seems because it seems, because in that way it would be given to our hurt – sometimes we would not accept what we should accept and sometimes we would accept what we should not accept. Rather, it has been given to us for our good in this way, that if something is not steadily and clearly judged to be simply good or simply bad, we should defer acceptance or rejection until we have investigated as best we can whether the seeming good or bad is simply good or simply bad, so that we may finally accept the simply good and not the bad and reject the simply bad and not the good” (Buridan 2000, 531). The innate ability of the will to defer acceptance and reject is most useful to an agent in situations of doubt and cognitive ambiguity. If an agent suspects that the intellect may be wrong in assessing the situation, or it has not sufficiently assessed the circumstances, and has reasonable doubts as a result, his will can and should suspend or defer further positive acts of will (Michałowska 2017, 153). A similar feature of the will, manifested in the ability of the will to be in a *non velle* state that allows the will to waver before making a decision, can be found in Kilvington’s ethics. As Michałowska writes, this state of uncertainty and the suspension of acts of *velle/nolle* are aimed at examining the reasons behind a given choice (Michałowska 2017, 105-106).

As we can see, in 14th-century ethics the term *non velle* became a useful tool for describing the internal states of an agent who faces a choice, but his epistemic situation does not allow him

to unambiguously assess whether he is dealing with a good or bad object. *Non velle* is a state of will that means hesitation, not making or deferring a decision, suspending the agent's decision in a morally uncertain situation. The meaning of *non velle* no longer coincides with its function in the metaphysics of John Duns Scotus. For him, the redeemed in heaven are not in a state of hesitation or deferment of the decision to will the highest good. Analogously, God does not hesitate to grant salvation to Judas. It seems that in the development of the ethical doctrines of the 14th century, there was a significant change in the function of the state of *non velle*.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In this article, I attempted to show the development pattern of a concept that can be described as the two-level nature of the will. The starting point was an experience described by Plato concerning the inconsistent desires of an agent. Plato's description resonates with Augustine, whose suggestive account of the internal struggle of the will, and not only between the will and the intellect or between the will and feelings, became a point of reference and inspiration for the later scholastic tradition. In Scotus's philosophy, we find an extensive analysis of volitional acts, both of the first and second order. This article examines his views on the state of *non velle*, which found application in the Scotist indeterministic theory of the will. This concept proved particularly useful in defending the freedom of the redeemed, who, according to Scotus, are not determined by a necessary desire for the highest good. Scotus argued that the causal nature of this state is non-deterministic, and it allows to build a model of God's will that tackles the problem of the possibility of sin and condemnation. Such a metaphysics of volitional acts gave rise to debates concerning the interpretation of the notion of hatred (Henry of Harclay) and the possibility of performing a positive *nolle* act directed toward the most living good (Ockham). Lastly, I tried

to show how the concept of *non velle* was applied in the ethical theories of the 14th century, especially in the debates about the state of hesitation before making a decision (Buridan, Kilvington).

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This work has been supported by the grant: *The Will and its Acts in Late Medieval Ethics and Theology. New Ideas and Methods*, Narodowe Centrum Nauki (NCN) [National Science Centre], Poland. Contract no. UMO-2017/27/B/HS1/00066.

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DOI 10.21697/spch.2023.59.A.09



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Received: 29/01/2023. Reviewed: 30/03/2023. Accepted: 18/04/2023.