A Defense of Intellectualism: Will, Intellect, and Control in Late Thirteenth-century Philosophy

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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2019

Abstract

The question of whether our volitions are caused by the activity of our cognitive powers was the subject of tremendous controversy for medieval philosophers. By answering in the affirmative, Thomas Aquinas, Thomas of Sutton and Godfrey of Fontaines, the so-called intellectualists, face what I call the Problem of Control. If my wanting some object is caused by my apprehending it as good through some cognitive act, then it seems that I am not able to will otherwise than I do. For to will otherwise than I do, it would be necessary that I apprehend some other object as good. If, however, I am not able to will otherwise than I do, then I do not seem to have control over my actions. But if I do not have control over my actions, then I do not act freely, since having control over one’s actions is necessary for acting freely.

My dissertation addresses the Problem of Control. I first argue that Thomas Aquinas’s notion of “perfect cognition of the end” gives the intellectualists the resources to explain how a human being has control over her actions. Second, I argue that Aquinas does not adequately explain a central feature of his intellectualism, namely, how the will “moves itself” to the exercise of its act, and discuss how the “self-motion” of the will is addressed by Thomas of Sutton and Godfrey of Fontaines. Third, I consider whether the control that a human being has over her action when she has perfect cognition of the end of that action is the kind of control that matters for free will.
I argue in the affirmative by defending the intellectualist claim that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free. In general, scholars have neglected intellectualism and praised the philosophical innovations of so-called voluntarists such as John Duns Scotus. But I show that intellectualism is worth careful attention, for although they were very much criticized by their contemporaries, the intellectualists have a more plausible understanding of the relationship between volition and the activity of our cognitive powers, and of human free will.
Acknowledgments

First and foremost, thank you to Martin Pickavé for his patience and his guidance these past years. I would also like to thank Peter King and Deborah Black (for teaching me what I know about medieval philosophy), Stephen Dumont (for our discussions about intellectualism and voluntarism), Peter Eardley (for comments, advice, and support), Peter Hartman (for helping me make sense of some issues in Chapter 3), Mark Johnson (for feedback on some parts of Chapters 1 and 2), Francesco Pica (for our very many helpful conversations), Alexander Pruss (for comments on a very early version of Chapter 2), David Sanson (for comments on some parts of Chapters 4 and 5), Michael Siebert (for comments on an early version of Chapter 5), the members of the Collaborative Program in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy, the participants in the uOttawa Summer Conference in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy (for feedback on some parts of Chapters 2 and 5), the graduate students in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Toronto, and anyone else who has helped me along the way.
# Table of Contents

**Introduction** .................................................................................................................................1

Chapter 1 The Intellectualism of Thomas Aquinas ..........................................................13

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................13
2. What Is the Will’s Relationship to the Intellect ........................................................................15
3. What Does It Mean That the Will Is Passive? ........................................................................21
4. How Does the Intellect Move the Will? .....................................................................................25
5. Does the Will Move Itself? ........................................................................................................32
6. Conclusion ................................................................................................................................39

Chapter 2 Thomas Aquinas on Control .................................................................................41

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................41
2. A “Conditional” Power for Opposites? ....................................................................................44
3. Human Beings, Brute Animals, and Power for Opposites ....................................................48
4. Control and Power for Opposites .............................................................................................51
5. Two Sorts of Control ..................................................................................................................56
6. Perfect Cognition of the End ......................................................................................................59
7. Conclusion ................................................................................................................................69

Chapter 3 Intellectualism after Thomas Aquinas I – Thomas of Sutton ..........................72

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................72
2. Specification, Exercise, and Self-Motion ..................................................................................77
3. The Doctrine of the Will’s Twofold Self-Motion ....................................................................79
4. The Plausibility of Sutton’s Intellectualism ..............................................................................91
5. Conclusion ................................................................................................................................98
Introduction

Why do I want something? Presumably, I want it because it is good, or rather, appears to me to be so. But not everything that I want appears to me to be good the same way. I want to work at home this morning, for example, because I think that it would be good for me to work someplace that’s comfortable, and my home is such a place. But I also want to work at the cafe down the street because I think that it would be good for me to work someplace that serves coffee, and the cafe does so. Why might I want to work at one place rather than the other? Perhaps I have a very urgent deadline to meet. I deliberate about where to work and judge that, since I would be more productive if I were to work at the cafe rather than at home, I should do that. That is, all other things being equal, I think that it would be good for me to work at that place where I will be more productive. I want to meet this very urgent deadline, and thus, I want to work at the cafe rather than at home.

My wanting to work at home, my wanting to work at the cafe, and my wanting to work at the cafe rather than at home each stand in some relation to a cognitive act. It is on account of my believing that it would be good for me to work someplace that’s comfortable, and that my home is such a place, that I want to work there this morning. And if I were to think otherwise, that is, if I were to think that my home is not a comfortable place, or that it is such a place, but that it would be bad for me to work there, then I would not want to work at home. Similarly, it is on account of my believing that it would be good for me to work at that place where I will be more productive, and that working at the cafe is more productive than working at home, that I want to work at the cafe. And if I were to think otherwise, I would want something different. There is a relationship between my acts of volition and my acts of cognition. But what is it?

This question has drawn the attention of thinkers in every period of Western intellectual history. In the last quarter of the thirteenth century, however, the relationship between acts of volition and cognition was so controversial that it became the subject of ecclesiastical censure. Indeed, one of the “manifest and accursed errors” (manifesti et execrabiles errores) condemned by Bishop Étienne Tempier in 1277 was a particular view of how volition is related to the activity of
our cognitive powers, namely, that the former is necessitated by the latter.\(^1\) Consider, for example, the following two condemned articles:

**Article 159 (164).** That the will of a human being is necessitated by her cognition, just as the appetite of a brute.\(^2\)

**Article 163 (163).** That the will necessarily pursues what is firmly believed by reason; and that it cannot abstain from that which reason dictates. This necessitation, however, is not coercion, but the nature of the will.\(^3\)

By putting these articles on his syllabus, Tempier condemned a conception of volition as necessitated by one’s cognitive acts. Put differently, following the condemnation of 1277, scholars at the University of Paris were prohibited from teaching that a human being’s believing that some object is good for her necessitates her wanting that object, that is, necessitates an act of her will. Although the syllabus itself does not explain why individual articles were deemed forbidden, it is not hard to imagine what motivated Tempier’s condemnation of these articles in particular.

Tempier takes it for granted that we have free will, as all his contemporaries do. But for a human being to exercise her free will, it seems to be necessary that she have control over her actions. For if she does not have control over her actions, then she does not seem to be the agent of them; indeed, she does not act, so much as she is acted upon, as a brute animal is acted upon by its environment. If a human being is not the agent of her actions, however, then she does not seem to do those actions freely.

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\(^2\) *La condamnation parisienne de 1277*, ed. Piché, p. 126: “Quod uoluntas hominis necessitatur per suam cognitionem, sicut appetitus bruti.”

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 128: “Quod uoluntas necessario prosequitur quod firmiter creditum est a ratione; et quod non potest abstinere ab eo quod ratio dictat. Hec autem necessitatio non est coactio, set natura uoluntatis.”
Supposing that having control over one’s actions is necessary for exercising free will, we should like to know what it means for a human being to have such control. A brute animal seems to lack control over its actions because it acts by natural instinct and is thus not able to do otherwise than it does; the sheep, upon seeing the wolf, cannot but flee from it. That a human being has control over her actions suggests that, although she does this, she could have done that. That is, having control over one’s actions seems to mean having a power to do otherwise.

If, however, volition is necessitated by the activity of our cognitive powers, then it seems to follow that a human being is not able to do otherwise than she does. For to do otherwise, she would have to be able to cognize otherwise. But it seems that her cognition is determined by how the world appears to her and is therefore not “up to her.” If a human being is not able to do otherwise than she does, however, then she does not have control over her actions and is not able to act freely. Since we are morally responsible for just those actions that we do freely, it also seems to follow that she is not morally responsible for her actions, which is absurd.\(^4\) The upshot is that, if a human being is to exercise free will and be morally responsible for her actions, then volition must not be necessitated by acts of cognition.

Many philosophers in the late thirteenth century, particularly in the Franciscan school, agreed with the view implicitly endorsed by Tempier: since human beings are free, volition cannot be necessitated by acts of cognition, for such necessitation is opposed to human freedom. Although they held that there is some relationship between volition and acts of cognition, these philosophers denied that it is causal, for they supposed that such a relationship implies that a human being is not able to do otherwise than she does. Rather, they held that volition is something that human beings bring about de novo. Call this position “voluntarism,” and its proponents, “voluntarists.”

\(^4\) As Hissette notes, the psychological determinism implied by the condemned articles is also opposed to Christian doctrine. See the encyclical *Libertas praestantissimum* (June 20, 1888), in *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, eds. Heinrich Denzinger et al, 43rd edition (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), p. 645: “Liberty, the highest of natural endowments, being the portion only of intellectual or rational natures, confers on man this dignity—that he is in the hand of his counsel and has power over his actions. But the manner in which such dignity is exercised is of the greatest moment... Man, indeed, is free to obey his reason, to seek moral good, and to strive unservingly after his last end. Yet he is free also to turn aside to all other things; and, in pursuing the empty semblance of good, to disturb rightful order and to fall headlong into the destruction that he has voluntarily chosen... No one proclaims liberty more loudly or argues for it more persistently than the Catholic Church, which... protects [it] as a dogma...”
Not all the philosophers of the late thirteenth century agreed with the view implicitly endorsed by Tempier. Motivated by Aristotelian models of appetition, some of them argued that, since there has to be a causal relationship between volition and acts of cognition, there is a sense in which the former is necessitated by the latter. However, they held that human beings are nonetheless free. Call this position “intellectualism,” and its proponents “intellectualists.”

Since the intellectualists, but not the voluntarists, think that volition is caused by the activity of our cognitive powers and that there is therefore a sense in which the former is necessitated by the latter, they have to address what I call the “Problem of Control,” namely, that if volition is so necessitated, then a human being is not able to do otherwise than she does. If, however, she is not able to do otherwise than she does, then she does not have control over her actions. But if a human being does not have control over her actions, then she does not have free will. How, then, is it possible for a human being to have control over her actions, and thus, free will, if volition is necessitated by the activity of our cognitive powers? My dissertation develops an intellectualist response to this problem.

* * *

The scholarship on later medieval moral psychology is extensive. But the overwhelming trend has been to focus on the voluntarists, and in particular, how they conceive of free will. The most notable general studies are Ernst Stadter’s *Psychologie und Metaphysik der menschlichen Freiheit* and Bonnie Kent’s *Virtues of the Will.* Stadter draws attention to Franciscan

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5 Whereas intellectualism is “ground-up,” voluntarism is “top-down,” as Robert Pasnau puts it. The intellectualists provide comprehensive accounts of the various faculties involved in human action, and the causal relationships between those faculties,” and then proceed to explain how it is that human beings are free, while the voluntarists begin by declaring what human freedom requires, and proceed to construct theories that ensure these requirements are satisfied.” Robert Pasnau, “Olivi on Human Freedom,” in *Pierre de Jean Olivi (1248–1298): Pensée scolastique, dissidence spirituelle et société*, eds. Alain Boureau and Sylvain Piron (Paris: J. Vrin, 1999), p. 15.


7 Ernst Stadter, *Psychologie und Metaphysik der menschlichen Freiheit* (München: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 1971). Bonnie Kent, *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995). Let me also draw attention to two other studies, namely, Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1957) and Johannes Auer, *Die menschliche Willensfreiheit im Lehrsystem des Thomas von Aquin und Johannes Duns Scotus* (München: Max Hueber, 1938). Although the former continues to be a valuable resource for scholars of medieval moral psychology, Lottin’s attention is primarily focused on how the concepts of free decision (*liberum arbitrium*)
voluntarists in particular (such as Walter of Bruges, John Peckham and Peter John Olivi) with the goal of understanding how they thought about the nature of the will and its activity. Kent is similarly focused on the development of voluntarism and its relationship to Aristotle’s teachings, but her study has a broader scope, extending to secular voluntarists, such as Henry of Ghent. Although she does make some remarks about the intellectualists, her goal in discussing them is primarily to demonstrate that, following Tempier’s 1277 condemnation, theologians and philosophers were more concerned with the freedom of the will (libertas voluntatis) than free decision (liberum arbitrium). The voluntarists Henry of Ghent, John Duns Scotus, and Peter John Olivi have also been the objects of many individual studies about the will’s nature. In particular, the work of Raymond Macken on Henry of Ghent, Stephen Dumont on John Duns Scotus, and Robert Pasnau on Peter John Olivi, has improved our understanding of the voluntarist tradition immensely.

However, there are no general studies about the intellectualists. François-Xavier Putallaz’s *Insolente liberté* provides what is perhaps the most comprehensive introduction to their thought. Putallaz’s remarks on Siger of Brabant and the so-called *Correctoria* controversy are particularly important for establishing that there was indeed an intellectualist tradition in the late-

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and freedom (libertas) developed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Auer is primarily concerned with Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus, but many of his remarks apply generally to the intellectualist/voluntarist debate.


10 Pasnau, “Olivi on Human Freedom.”

thirteenth-century. Moreover, his analysis of the disputes between Henry of Ghent and Godfrey of Fontaine, and between Godfrey of Fontaine and Giles of Rome, is a good overview of the late thirteenth century debate about free will, as well as its socio-historical context.

Of the intellectualists, Thomas Aquinas has by far drawn the most attention from scholars. There have been, in particular, many studies that aim to understand the roles played by the powers of volition and cognition in Aquinas’s theory of human freedom. But comparatively few studies have examined what he says about the control that a human being has over her actions, and in particular, its relationship to how she pursues her end, namely, with cognition of the character of her end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two, or what he will call “perfect cognition of the end.” Curiously, the role played by perfect cognition of the end in Aquinas’s views of control and free will has yet to be closely examined by any scholar.

Other intellectualists, and in particular, Godfrey of Fontaine and Thomas of Sutton, have been mostly neglected. John Wippel’s work on Godfrey of Fontaine is extensive, but does not engage with the Parisian master’s moral psychology. Paul-Émile Langevin and François-Xavier Putallaz have both contributed to our understanding of free will in the thought of Godfrey of Fontaine and Thomas of Sutton, but neither scholar considers how intellectualism is able to make sense of the control that a human being has over her actions. My dissertation addresses this lacuna in the scholarship on medieval moral psychology by drawing attention to some late

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13 One exception is Jamie Spiering, “‘Liber est causa sui’: Thomas Aquinas and the Maxim ‘The Free is the Cause of Itself’.” Review of Metaphysics 65, no. 2 (2011): pp. 351-76.


thirteenth-century intellectualists and showing that they have a defensible view of the relationship between volition and the activity of our cognitive powers.\textsuperscript{16}

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Before I discuss the structure of my dissertation, I would like to make note of two caveats about medieval psychology. First, in the mid-thirteenth century, with Aristotle’s \textit{De anima} having become established as part of the curriculum at the Universities of Paris and Oxford, a new approach was adopted to analyzing psychological phenomena, namely, as the product of the interaction of (generally) “sub-personal and semi-autonomous” psychological mechanisms, or \textit{faculties}.\textsuperscript{17} In this “faculty psychology,” the \textit{will} became the faculty of human volition, and the \textit{intellect} the faculty of human cognition. Thus, I grasp the apple as healthy and the piece of chocolate as not healthy, for example, in virtue of having an intellect, and I want the apple rather than the piece of chocolate in virtue of having a will. But since talking about volition and cognition this way is somewhat unwieldy, the later medieval Aristotelians adopted a shorthand, describing the will as the subject of volition, and the intellect as the subject of cognition: \textit{the intellect} grasps the apple as healthy and the piece of chocolate as not healthy, and \textit{the will} wants (wills) the apple rather than the piece of chocolate. But this does not mean that the intellect \textit{itself} is what grasps the apple as healthy or that the will \textit{itself} is what wants (wills) the apple rather than the piece of chocolate. In my dissertation, I will occasionally use the “medieval shorthand” when talking about volition and cognition. I ask the reader to understand these passages with this caveat in mind.

\textsuperscript{16} I follow the trend in the scholarship of focusing on the philosophers and theologians of the late thirteenth century, first, for practical purposes, and second, because this was a particularly rich period for philosophical theorizing about the will and its exercise, as I noted above.

\textsuperscript{17} See Peter King’s remarks on the “neo-Aristotelian synthesis” of the mid-thirteenth century in “Later Medieval Philosophy of Cognitive Psychology,” in \textit{Questions on the Soul by John Buridan and Others: A Companion to John Buridan’s Philosophy of Mind}, ed. Gyula Klima (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2017), p. 2: “The fundamental principle of the neo-Aristotelian synthesis is that psychological phenomena are to be explained in terms of internal psychological mechanisms that bring them about: roughly speaking, that psychological explanations should be couched in terms of the interaction of (perhaps only postulated) psychological mechanisms. In the case of cognition, these mechanisms are for the most parts sub-personal and semi-autonomous, that is, they do not involve the whole person as agent but only some psychological mechanism, and further that these mechanisms have a degree of independence from one another in their operation. Introspectible psychological phenomena are the product of the interaction of such inner mechanisms.” Also, see the introduction to Robert Pasnau, \textit{Theories of Cognition in the Later Middle Ages} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
Second, the later medieval Aristotelians applied to psychological changes the same schema that they used to analyze change in natural philosophy, namely, that of *potency* and *act*. Consider the following example of a physical change: The water in the pot is not hot in *actuality*, say, but it is able to become hot, that is, it is hot in *potentiality*. When I put the pot on the hot stove, the water’s potency to be hot is actualized by the stove that is hot in actuality. Put differently, the water is changed from being hot in potentiality to being hot in actuality by the hot stove when the “form” of heat, which exists in the latter, comes to exist in the former.

For some medieval philosophers, this schema seemed to make good sense of psychological change as well. I do not cognize the apple now, for example, and so my intellect has to be changed, or “moved,” from potentially cognizing the apple to actually cognizing it. And my intellect is changed, “or moved,” from potentially cognizing the apple to actually cognizing it when the “form” of the apple comes to exist in my intellect. Similarly, I do not have a volition for the apple now, and so my will has to be moved from potentially willing the apple to actually willing it. How, then, is my will changed from potentially willing the apple to actually willing it? Since I will just what I have cognized, it seems that the apple, inasmuch as it is apprehended by my intellect, has to move my will.

The upshot is that, for later medieval Aristotelians, the question of the relationship between volition and the activity of our cognitive powers became a question about whether, and if so, how, the intellect *moves the will*. I adopt the labels “intellectualism” and “voluntarism” as labels for two broad approaches to understanding this relationship. They are two answers to the question, “Does the intellect move the will?” The intellectualists answer in the affirmative, the voluntarists in the negative. Although these are the terms in which the philosophers of the later Middle Ages discussed the relationship between volition and the activity of our cognitive powers, it is important to remember that the question of whether the intellect moves the will is not *just* a question for medieval philosophers. For what it asks is whether my wanting something is caused by my believing that it is good, and this has been a question for thinkers throughout the history of philosophy.

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18 “Intellectualism” and “voluntarism” have been used by scholars of medieval philosophy in many ways. For some remarks on “voluntarism” in particular, see Bonnie Kent, *Virtues of the Will*, pp. 94-5. My use of these labels is similar to that of John Wippel.
My dissertation begins by examining the intellectualism of Thomas Aquinas. In Chapter One, I show that he conceives of the will as a passive power of the soul. I argue that there are four theses Aquinas held throughout his career that affirm that the will is passive with respect to the intellect, in particular: (A) The intellect moves the will; (B) The object apprehended as good moves the will; (C) The will follows the intellect; and (D) The will follows the apprehension of the intellect. I show that these theses are more and less abbreviated forms of the same claim, namely, that the will is moved by the object apprehended as good by the intellect. I consider whether Aquinas changes his view of what it means that the object apprehended as good by the intellect moves the will and conclude that he does not: the object apprehended as good by the intellect “moves” the will by actualizing the will’s potency to the specification of its act, that is, to willing this or that. I also consider whether Aquinas changes his view about whether the will is able to move itself and conclude that he does not: the will is not able to move itself directly, but it is able to move itself indirectly by moving the intellect. The upshot is that Aquinas holds the same view of the relationship between the intellect and the will throughout his career, but in more and less abbreviated forms.

In Chapter Two, I consider the Problem of Control, as presented by William de la Mare in his Correctorium fratris Thomae, or “Correction of Brother Thomas.” The Dominican authors of the so-called Correctoria corruptorii fratris Thomae, or “Corrections of the Corruption of Brother Thomas,” who defend Aquinas against the Correctorium fratris Thomae, seem to acknowledge William de la Mare’s criticism of Aquinas’s intellectualism. But none of the authors of the Correctoria presents an answer to the Problem of Control that appreciates (1) how important the first two articles of the Disputed Questions on Truth are for making sense of Aquinas’s thoughts about human freedom and control; and (2) that although Aquinas does think that a human being

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has a type of control over her actions that depends on having “alternative possibilities,” he also thinks that she has another type of control that does not.

I find an answer to the Problem of Control not in the so-called Correctoria, but rather in Aquinas’s own writings. I first argue that there is a sense in which the will is necessitated by the intellect for Aquinas, namely, conditionally: it is necessary that, if the intellect judges that something is to be willed, then the will wills that thing. It follows that there is also a sense in which a human being is not able to do otherwise than she does, namely, she is not able to will contrary to the judgement of her intellect.

Second, I argue that it does not follow that she lacks control over her actions, for she acts with “perfect cognition” of the ends of those actions. Aquinas explains in the Prima secundae of his Summa theologiae that perfect cognition of the end is an apprehension of the “character” (ratio) of one’s end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two. Drawing on the Prima secundae and the Disputed Questions on Truth, I argue that, when a human being has perfect cognition of the end of her action, she has a twofold control over that action: she acts in a way that is rationally self-directed and has the power to act otherwise because she would have acted otherwise if she had (rationally) judged otherwise than she did. I conclude that the Problem of Control does not seem to be a problem for Aquinas’s intellectualism.

Chapter Three considers the plausibility of Aquinas’s intellectualism. Aquinas says that the will is in potency to the specification of its act, that is, to willing this or that, and to the exercise of its act, that is, to willing or not willing. He argues that the former potency is actualized by the intellect and that the latter potency is actualized by the will. That is, the will “moves” itself to the exercise of its act. However, Aquinas is committed to the Aristotelian principle that everything moved is moved by another. So, how is it possible for the will to move itself?

Aquinas does argue that, when it wills some end, the will moves itself indirectly to willing the means to that end by moving the intellect, which then “specifies” the act of the will. But since the will, willing some end, is also in potency to the exercise of its act of willing the means to that end, Aquinas also owes us a story about how that potency is actualized.

Although Aquinas does not tell us such a story, Thomas of Sutton, an early Oxford Thomist, does. According to Sutton, the will does not just move itself indirectly (or per accidens) to the
exercise of its act, but also “consecutively” (*consecutive*). Just as the act of heating is a natural consequence of fire’s being hot, so one act of the will, namely, willing the means to some end, is a natural consequence of another act of the will, namely, willing that end. Sutton’s doctrine of the will’s twofold self-motion is an attempt to explain how it is possible for the will to move itself when everything moved is moved by another. But given how Sutton conceives of the relationship between the intellect and the will, I argue that he fails to explain how the will “moves itself” in any sense.

**In Chapter Four**, I consider the intellectualism of Godfrey of Fontaines, a secular Parisian Master of Theology. Godfrey of Fontaines upholds the Aristotelian principle that everything moved is moved by another, as Thomas Aquinas and Thomas of Sutton do, but he denies that the will moves itself to the exercise of its act. Rather, he argues that the intellect moves the will both to the specification and to the exercise of its act.

Since he adopts this “extreme” intellectualism, Godfrey of Fontaines does not have to explain how it is possible for the will to move itself to the exercise of its act. But he does have to address the Problem of Control. For if the will is moved by the intellect both to the specification and to the exercise of its act, then there is a sense in which a human being is not able to will otherwise than she does. So, how does she have control over her actions? I show that Godfrey of Fontaines follows Thomas Aquinas by arguing that a human being has control over her actions because she has perfect cognition of the ends of those actions.

Since Godfrey of Fontaines holds that the will is moved to the exercise of its act not by itself but by another, he also has to address what I call the “Problem of Attributability.” If willing “happens” to the will just as heating does to the wood, then why is heating not an act of the wood, but willing an act of the will? I draw on Godfrey of Fontaines’s remarks about the intentionality of willing to explain how he might answer this question.

**In Chapter Five**, I observe that the Problem of Control is not simply that, if the will is necessitated by the intellect, which seems to act deterministically, then a human being lacks control over her actions. Rather, the problem is that, if the will is necessitated by the intellect, then a human being lacks the kind of control over her actions that matters for free will, and thus, being morally responsible.
Is the control that a human being has over her actions when she has perfect cognition of the ends of those actions the kind of control that matters for free will? I argue that, for Thomas Aquinas and Godfrey of Fontaines, it is, since having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free. I also consider the theoretical, theological and philosophical motivation for the claim that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free, and an objection to it, namely, that it seems possible for a human being to act freely but not have perfect cognition of the end. I reply to this objection by examining what it means to have perfect cognition of the end and distinguishing it from “science” (scientia). I then conclude by discussing a consequence of the intellectualist view of free will, namely, that there are degrees of freedom.

One might think that intellectualism is primarily, or perhaps, exclusively, motivated not by considerations about what it means to be a free human agent, but rather by broader metaphysical principles, and in particular, the Aristotelian principle that everything moved is moved by another. For how could intellectualism, by conceiving of the will as an essentially passive power, possibly make sense of free human agency? Although they were very much criticized by their contemporaries and have been generally ignored in the scholarship on medieval moral psychology, my dissertation shows that the intellectualists have a defensible understanding of human free will and of the relationship between volition and the activity of our cognitive powers, which does not merely do justice to Aristotelian metaphysics, but also to the experience that free human agents have of being in control.
Chapter 1
The Intellectualism of Thomas Aquinas

1 Introduction

Whether or not Thomas Aquinas was targeted by Étienne Tempier’s 1277 condemnation, there were philosophers and theologians in the period following the bishop’s promulgation who imputed condemned theses to him. Most notably, in his so-called Correctorium fratris Thomae (“Correction of Brother Thomas”), the Franciscan William de la Mare calls attention to a wide range of “suspect” views that Aquinas seems to have defended, mostly in his Summa theologiae. Perhaps the most prominent of these views is that the human will is determined, or necessitated, by the intellect. That the will is necessitated, in general, had already been condemned by the Bishop of Paris in 1270:

Article 3. That the will of a human being wills or chooses from necessity.¹

But that the will is necessitated by the intellect in particular was only condemned in 1277:

Article 159 (164). That the will of a human being is necessitated by her cognition, just as the appetite of a brute.²

Article 163 (163). That the will necessarily pursues what is firmly believed by reason; and that it cannot abstain from that which reason dictates. This necessitation, however, is not coercion, but the nature of the will.³

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¹ Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis, eds. Heinrich Denifle and Emile Châtelain, vol. 1 (Paris: Delalain, 1889), p. 487: “Quod voluntas hominis ex necessitate vult vel eligit.” Articles 4 (“Quod omnia, que hic in inferioribus aguntur, subsunt necessitati corporum celestium”) and 9 (“Quod liberum arbitrium est potentia passive, non activa; et quod necessitate movetur ab appetibili”) are also relevant.


³ Ibid., p. 128: “Quod uoluntas necessario prosequitur quod firmiter creditum est a ratione; et quod non potest abstinere ab eo quod ratio dictat. Hec autem necessitatia non est coactio, set natura uoluntatis.” Also, see articles 129 (169); 130 (166); 131 (160); 135 (161); 158 (165); 194 (151).
William was well aware of the Parisian condemnations and often makes reference to them in his *Correctorium*. In article 24 regarding the First Part of the *Summa theologiae*, which is about the view that “the appetitive power is proportioned to the apprehensive [power] by which it is moved just as moved to mover,” he says this:

If [Aquinas] wishes to say that, in every being, the apprehensive [power] determines appetite to one thing by necessitating it, then [what he says] is an error that has been condemned publicly in Paris, for neither the sensitive nor the rational apprehensive power determines or necessitates the will to one thing. Therefore, after reason shows and judges about two things that only one should be willed, the will, having dismissed it, remains free to will the opposite. So, this position is to be avoided.4

Similarly, in article 7 regarding the First Part of the Second Part of the *Summa theologiae*, which is about view that “man determines himself by reason to willing this or that,” he says this:

[... ] if by the act of determining [Aquinas] understands that reason, concluding that one of [two] contraries is to be willed and pursued, thereby determines (that is, necessitates) the will to that thing in such a way that it is not able to will or pursue the contrary, then [what he says] goes against chapter 3 of Bernard of Clairvaux’s *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, and book 9 of the Philosopher’s *Metaphysics*. Moreover, it is erroneous and has not long ago been condemned with many articles, [namely,] in chapter 9 on the will, where it has been condemned as an error that, following a conclusion about something to be done, the will does not remain free.5


5 Ibid., *In primam secundae*, a. 7, p. 232: “Si vero per actum determinandi intelligat quod ratio conclusens unum contrariorum esse volendum aliqui [om. P, A] et prosequeundum, per hoc determinet, id est necessitet voluntatem ad illud ita quod contrarium voluntas non possit velle nec prosequi, hoc est contra Bernardum, de Gratia et libero arbitrio, capitulo 3°, et contra Philosophum, IX° Metaphysicae; et erroneum et damnatum nuper cum pluribus articulis, capitulo 9° de voluntate, ubi pro error condemnatum est quod post conclusionem de alioquo faciendo voluntas non manet libera.”
William suggests in these two articles that it is possible to read Aquinas as saying that the will is determined, or necessitated, by the intellect. If that is so, however, then Aquinas seems to hold a view that has not just been condemned by Tempier, but is also opposed to the authority of Aristotle, Bernard of Clairvaux and others, for it seems to suggest that the will is not free.

Richard Knapwell, the Dominican author of the so-called Correctorium corruptorii (“Correction of the Corruption”) ‘Quare,’ the first response to William’s Correctorium, calls the latter’s criticism of Aquinas a mere “fiction” (fictio). Although Richard does not think that it is necessary to respond to this “fiction,” it seems to me that it is worth careful attention. For as I will argue in this and the following chapters, William gets something right, but he also gets something wrong. The will is, in a sense, necessitated by the intellect on Aquinas’s psychology, but it does not follow that the will is not free, as William supposes.

In this chapter, I would like to take a step towards understanding how the will is necessitated by the intellect for Aquinas. Because the sense in which the will cannot act otherwise than it does will become clearer if we know the senses in which the will acts and in which it is acted upon, my goal here is to explain Aquinas’s view of how the will is active and how it is passive. In the following chapter, I will consider the consequences this has for Aquinas’s psychology and evaluate William’s criticism.

2 What Is the Will’s Relationship to the Intellect?

There is good evidence that Aquinas conceives of rational or intellective appetite, that is, the human will, as passive. The will’s passivity is clearest in Aquinas’s discussions of how the species of appetite differ. In the Prima pars (First Part) of his Summa theologiae, he argues that, in general, “an appetitive power is a passive power, which is naturally moved by [something] apprehended” (potentia enim appetitiva est potentia passiva, quae nata est moveri ab

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6 Richard Knapwell, In primam secundae, a. 7, p. 233: “Non cesso mirari quomodo isti trahunt verba Thomae ad sensum suum falsum, cum ipse in toto processu doceat oppositum. Unde huic fictioni non est respondendum.”

7 For the claim that will is rational or intellective appetite, see Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 1, a. 5, co.; q. 26, a. 1, co.; q. 46, a. 4, ad 1; q. 66, a. 4, co.; QDV, q. 22, a. 4, co.
apprehenso). Since the “proper character” (propria ratio) of a passive power depends on the relationship that it has to its “active principle” (activum) and sensitive appetite is moved by what is apprehended by sense, the will by what is apprehended by the intellect, he concludes that “intellective appetite is a different power from sensitive appetite (appetitus intellectivus sit alia potentia a sensitivo).” Aquinas’s remark about the “proper character” of a passive power is worth careful attention, for it suggests that, if we wish to understand what it means that the will is a passive, appetitive power, it is necessary to understand its relationship to the intellect, which is “prior to the will as mover to movable, and [as] active to passive” (prior voluntate, sicut motivum mobili, et activum passivo). So, what is the will’s relationship to the intellect?

At first glance, it seems that Aquinas did not have just one view of that relationship. He rather seems to have held four theses about how these two faculties are related: (A) the intellect moves the will; (B) the object apprehended as good by the intellect moves the will; (C) the will follows the intellect; and (D) the will follows the apprehension of the intellect. My goal in this and the following section is to better understand what it means that the will is passive (and in particular, passive with respect to the intellect) by examining these theses.

A. The intellect moves the will.

Thesis (A) appears in both Aquinas’s earlier and later works, including the Disputed Questions on Truth, the Prima pars and the Prima secundae (First Part of the Second Part) of his Summa

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8 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 80, a. 2, co.: “Respondeo dicendum quod necesse est dicere appetitum intellectivum esse aliam potentiam a sensitivo. Potentia enim appetitiva est potentia passiva, quae nata est moveri ab apprehenso, unde appetibile apprehensum est movens non motum, appetitus autem movens motum, ut dicitur in III de anima, et XII Metaphys.” See further Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 25, a. 1, co.; ST, I, q. 105, a. 4, co.; QDM, q. 8, a. 3, co. All citations are from the Corpus Thomisticum (http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/). I use the standard internal divisions and the following abbreviations: Scriptum super libros Sententiarum (=Super Sent.); Summa contra Gentiles (=SCG); Summa theologiae (=ST); Quaestiones disputatae de veritate (=QDV); Quaestiones disputatae de potentia (=QDP); Quaestiones disputatae de malo (=QDM). The translations are mine.

9 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 80, a. 2, co.: “Passiva autem et mobilia distinguuntur secundum distinctionem activorum et motivorum, quia oportet motivum esse proportionatum mobili, et activum passivo; et ipsa potentia passiva propriam rationem habet ex ordine ad suum activum. Quia igitur est alterius generis apprehensum per intellectum et apprehensum per sensum, consequens est quod appetitus intellectivus sit alia potentia a sensitivo.”

10 See, for example, Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 82, a. 3, ad 2.

11 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 22, a. 12, co.: “Unde intellectus movet voluntatem per modum quo finis movere dicitur, in quantum scilicet praecipit rationem finis, et eam voluntati proponit.”
theologiae. Addressing the question of whether the will moves the intellect (utrum voluntas moveat intellectum) in the Prima pars, for example, Aquinas says:

Something is said to move in two ways. In one way, [it moves] in the manner of an end, as when it is said that the end moves the agent. And in this way the intellect moves the will, for the good [that is] understood is the object of the will, and moves it as an end.\(^\text{13}\)

The intellect, according to Aquinas, moves the will. Moreover, it does so “in the manner of an end” (per modum finis). Aquinas means to distinguish this manner of movement from the manner than an agent moves (movere per modum agentis).\(^\text{14}\) For example, while I draw water by moving the rope as an agent, thirst is what moves me as an end to do so. In Section 4, I will examine what it means for the intellect to move the will in such a manner. Here, I simply wish to draw attention to this, that Aquinas does hold that the intellect moves the will. It is worth noting that, in general, Aquinas qualifies his claim that the intellect moves the will, specifying that it does so “in some manner” (aliquo modo) or “this/that manner” (hoc/isto modo). He also generally prefers the active voice (the intellect moves the will) to the passive (the will is moved by the intellect) but there are some exceptions.\(^\text{15}\)

B. The object apprehended as good by the intellect moves the will.

Thesis (B) also appears in both Aquinas’s earlier and later works. For example, in the Disputed Questions on Truth, Aquinas makes the general remark that, in animals, the good apprehended by a cognitive power moves appetite, of which will (rational or intellective appetite) is a species.\(^\text{16}\) Similarly, in the Prima pars, he says that the appetitive power, or appetite, of an animal is a passive power that is “naturally moved by [something] apprehended” (nata est

\(^{12}\) Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 1, co: “Et ideo isto modo motionis intellectus movet voluntatem, sicut praesentans ei obiectum suum.”

\(^{13}\) Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 82, a. 4, co: “Respondeo dicendum quod aliquid dicitur movere dupliciter. Uno modo, per modum finis; sicut dicitur quod finis movet efficientem. Et hoc modo intellectus movet voluntatem, quia bonum intellectum est obiectum voluntatis, et movet ipsam ut finis.”

\(^{14}\) Ibid.

\(^{15}\) See, for example, Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 3, ad 3.

\(^{16}\) Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 22, a. 3, co: “[...] in [animalibus] inventur et appetitus, et movens appetitum. Ipsum enim bonum apprehensum est movens appetitum [...]”
In particular, while the “sensitive” appetite of a non-rational animal is moved by something apprehended by the senses, the will is moved by something apprehended by the intellect. Later in the Prima pars, Aquinas explicitly says that “the good [that is] understood” (bonum intellectum) moves the will:

That which is prior without qualification and according to the order of nature is more perfect, for act is so prior to potency. And in this way the intellect is prior to the will, as mover to moved, and active to passive, for the good [that is] understood moves the will. 18

Presumably, since this passage appears in his discussion of the will in particular, rather than the appetitive powers in general, Aquinas prefers the more precise “intellectum,” as opposed to the generic “apprehensum,” which applies to any object apprehended by whatever cognitive power. But the upshot is the same: the will is moved by something apprehended by the intellect. I should note that, in at least one passage, Aquinas remarks that the will is “moved by the object” (voluntas movetur ab obiecto) without specifying that the object is apprehended (or understood) by the intellect. 19 However, the context of the passage suggests that he means the object moves the will inasmuch as it is apprehended by the intellect. 20 Let me be clear: Aquinas does not mean that just any apprehension of the intellect moves the will, for we apprehend many things without willing them. When he says that the object apprehended by the intellect moves the will, he means the object apprehended as good (and in particular, as good for me here and now). 21

C. The will follows the intellect.

Thesis (C) is not as prominent in Aquinas’s corpus as theses (A) and (B), but it does make some appearances in his earlier works. For example, in the second book of his commentary on Peter

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17 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 80, a. 2, co.
18 Ibid., q. 82, a. 3, ad 2: “Sed illud quod est prius simpliciter et secundum naturae ordinem, est perfectius, sic enim actus est prior potentia. Et hoc modo intellectus est prior voluntate, sicut motivum mobili, et activum passivo, bonum enim intellectum movet voluntatem.” Cf. QDM, q. 6, co.
19 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 4, co.
20 Aquinas explains in Article 2 of the same question that what the intellect apprehends as “good and fitting” moves the will “in the manner of an object” (per modum obiecti) See ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 2, co. It makes sense, then, that he would say that the will “is moved by the object.”
21 See, for example, Thomas Aquinas, Super Sent., lib. 3 d. 17, q. 1, a. 1, qc. 2, ad 2.
Lombard’s Sentences, Aquinas takes it for granted that “the will follows the intellect” (intellectum voluntas sequitur) when discussing whether Lucifer’s sin was to desire to be like God. Of course, Lucifer’s will is angelic, not human, but the claim that the will follows the intellect seems to be a general one. Similarly, Aquinas argues that, “since the will follows reason, the course of the will is proportioned to that of reason” (cum voluntas sequatur rationem, processus voluntatis proportionatur processui rationis) when discussing the wills of Christ in the third book of his commentary. Thesis (C) also appears in the third book of Aquinas’s Summa contra Gentiles:

In any being that has understanding, the intellect moves appetite by a natural order, for the proper object of the will is the good [that is] understood. However, the good of the will comes from this, that it follows the intellect, just as in us the good is that which is according to reason, [and] the bad that which is contrary to [reason].

As the reader will have noticed, thesis (A) makes an appearance in this passage: Aquinas tells us that, in intellectual substances, the intellect moves appetite, that is, the will. But what I would like to draw attention to is his remark that the will follows the intellect. Aquinas seems to assume this, using it as a premise to argue that intellectual substances will the good “by a natural order,” and thus, that an intellectual substance “whose help the magical arts use” (cuius auxilio magicae artes utuntur) is not naturally wicked.

D. The will follows the apprehension of the intellect.

As the previous thesis, thesis (D) describes the will as a “follower.” However, what the will “follows,” is not the intellect, but its “apprehension” of some object. The thesis usually appears

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22 Thomas Aquinas, Super Sent., lib. 2, d. 5, q. 1, a. 2, co.

23 Ibid.: “Quidam namque simpliciter et absolute concedunt, quod peccatum Angeli fuit ex hoc quod Deo simpliciter aequalis esse voluit. Nee obstat quod hoc est impossibile: quia, secundum Augustinum, caeca ambitio semper praesumit plus quam possit. Sed hoc non videtur conveniens: quia quamvis homo possit plus desiderare quam possit habere, non tamen plus potest velle quam possit aestimare: quia intellectum voluntas sequitur, et non excedit.”

24 Thomas Aquinas, Super Sent., lib. 3, d. 17, q. 1, a. 2, qc. 1, co. The language of mover and moved being “proportionate” to one another also appears in SCG, lib. 2, cap. 48, n. 6.

25 Thomas Aquinas, SCG, lib. 3, cap. 107, n. 7: “In unoquoque habente intellectum, naturali ordine intellectus movet appetitum: proprium enim objectum voluntatis est bonum intellectum. Bonum autem voluntatis est in eo quod sequitur intellectum: sicut in nobis bonum est quod est secundum rationem, quod autem est praeter hoc, malum est.”
in contexts where Aquinas wants to say something general about the various types of appetite. For example, in the first book of his commentary on the *Sentences*, he argues that whatever being has the power of cognition (*virtutem cognoscitivam*) is able to distinguish between (*dijudicare*) what is fitting and not fitting for it, and whatever is apprehended by such a being as fitting is desired or willed necessarily. 26 Therefore, Aquinas says:

There is a twofold appetitive power in human beings, which corresponds to the two varieties of cognition in them, namely, that of sense and that of intellect: one [appetitive power], which is called *will*, follows the apprehension of the intellect; the other, which is divided into the *irascible* and *concupiscible* powers, follows the apprehension of sense. 27

Whether or not Aquinas’s argument is valid, the conclusion he draws is significant, for he takes himself to have shown that there is an appetitive power in human beings that follows the apprehension of the intellect, namely, the will. In the *Disputed Questions on Truth*, taking up the question of whether the will (or rational appetite) and sensitive appetite are different powers, Aquinas similarly argues that the former “follows the apprehension of reason” (*sequitur apprehensionem rationis*). 28 In question 24 of the same work, he makes the more general remark that, since (presumably, animal) appetite is of something good that has been apprehended by a cognitive power, “appetite follows cognition” (*appetitus cognitionem sequitur*). 29 Thesis (D) also appears in Aquinas’s mature works, and in particular, the *Disputed Questions on Evil*, where he draws a comparison between “natural appetite” and the will, arguing that both are inclinations that “follow” a form, but the latter follows an “apprehended form,” (*consequens formam apprehensam*) that is, the intellect’s apprehension of the object of appetite. 30

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26 Thomas Aquinas, *Super Sent.*, lib. 1, d. 45, q. 1, a. 1, co.: “Respondeo dicendum, quod in omni natura ubi invenitur cognitio, invenitur etiam voluntas et delectatio. Cujus ratio est, quia omne quod habet virtutem cognoscitivam, potest dijudicare conveniens et repugnans; et quod apprehenditur ut conveniens oportet esse volitum vel appetitum. Et ideo in nobis secundum duplicem cognitionem sensus et intellectus est duplex appetitiva; una quae sequitur apprehensionem intellectus, quae voluntas dicitur; alia quae sequitur apprehensionem sensus; quae dividitur in irascibilem et concupiscibilem.”

27 Ibid.: “Et ideo in nobis secundum duplicem cognitionem sensus et intellectus est duplex appetitiva; una quae sequitur apprehensionem intellectus, quae voluntas dicitur; alia quae sequitur apprehensionem sensus; quae dividitur in irascibilem et concupiscibilem.”

28 Thomas Aquinas, *QDV*, q. 22, a. 4, co.

29 Ibid., q. 24, a. 2, co.

30 Thomas Aquinas, *QDM*, q. 6, co.
3 What Does It Mean That the Will Is Passive?

I would like to show that theses (A) – (D) are more and less abbreviated forms of one and the same claim, namely, that the will is moved by the object apprehended as good by the intellect. First, I would like to argue that, in those contexts where Aquinas states that the intellect moves the will, “intellect” is shorthand for “the object apprehended by the intellect.” I draw my evidence for this conclusion from both Aquinas’s earlier and later works.

I have already noted that Aquinas generally qualifies his statements of thesis (A) with the phrases “in some manner” (aliquo modo) or “this/that manner” (hoclisto modo). When he explains the manner in which the intellect moves the will, he adds the specification that the intellect moves the will through its apprehension. So, for example, in the Summa contra Gentiles, Aquinas affirms that the intellect moves the will, but explains that it moves “through the apprehended form” (per formam apprehensam).31 In the Prima pars, he argues that the intellect is prior to the will as mover to moveable and as active to passive, “for the good [that is] understood moves the will.”32 In the following article, Aquinas says that the intellect moves the will “in the manner of an end” (per modum finis) because “the good [that is] understood is the object of the will, and moves it as an end.”33 And in the Prima secundae, he makes the general remark that the (proper) object of a power moves “in the manner of a formal principle” (ad modum principii formalis) and that this is how the intellect moves the will, namely, “as presenting its object to it” (sicut praesentans ei obiectum suum).34

So, why does Aquinas say that the intellect moves the will, and not just say that it is moved by the object apprehended by the intellect? Here is a plausible explanation: Aquinas holds that animal appetite is a passive power that is moved by the good inasmuch as it is apprehended by a cognitive power.35 But the appetite of a rational animal is distinguished from that of a non-

31 Thomas Aquinas, SCG, lib. 2, cap. 48, n. 6.
32 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 82, a. 3, ad 2.
33 Ibid., a. 4, co.
34 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 1, co.
35 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 80, a. 2, co.: “Potentia enim appetitiva est potentia passiva, quae nata est moveri ab appetendo, unde appetibile apprehensum est movens non motum, appetitus autem movens motum, ut dicitur in III De anima, et XII Metaphys. Passiva autem et mobilia distinguuntur secundum distinctionem activorum et motivorum, quia oportet motivum esse proportionatum mobili, et activum passivo; et ipsa potentia passiva propriam
While sensitive appetite is moved by the good inasmuch as it is apprehended by the senses, rational appetite, or will, is moved by the good inasmuch as it is apprehended by the intellect. Although the will is, strictly speaking, moved by the apprehended good, it makes sense for Aquinas to (loosely) say that the intellect moves the will, since it is precisely the intellect that apprehends something as good and presents it to the will. And to my knowledge, nowhere in his corpus does Aquinas affirm that the intellect moves the will without at least implying that it does so by apprehending some object as good and presenting it to the will. (Put differently, he does not seem to acknowledge that the intellect could move the will in any other way than by apprehending some object as good and presenting it to the will.) In the following section, I will have to analyze what it means to move “as an end” or “as a formal principle,” but regardless of how the will is moved, it is evident that what moves the will is the object apprehended as good by the intellect.

Second, I would like to argue that in those contexts where Aquinas says that the will “follows” the intellect, or rather, the object apprehended as good by the intellect, “to follow” simply means “to be moved by.” Aquinas seemingly prefers the former when discussing the relationship between cognition, appetite and action. But he consistently paraphrases his assertion that the will, in particular, “follows” the intellect by saying that the former is moved by the latter. So, for example, we know that Aquinas distinguishes between natural and rational appetite in the Disputed Questions on Evil, arguing that, although both are inclinations to the good that “follow a form,” the latter follows a form apprehended by the intellect. As Aquinas will explain, however, the will follows such a form inasmuch as it is moved by “the good [that is] understood”
Similarly, we know that, in question 24 of the *Disputed Questions on Truth*, Aquinas says that appetite in animals (both rational and non-rational) follows cognition, “since [animal] appetite is just of the good that is proposed to it by a cognitive power.” However, he had already specified in question 22 that animal appetite is moved by the good apprehended by a cognitive power, and that the will in particular is moved by the good apprehended by the intellect. It is worth noting that, regarding the relationship between volition, cognition and action, Aquinas’s language in question 22 is generally loose. As is clear from the beginning of his response to article 4, for example, he will use “moved,” “inclined” and “directed” (*motus vel inclinatus aut directus*) without drawing a distinction between them.

There does not seem to me to be good evidence that, for Aquinas, the will could “follow” the intellect, or the object apprehended as good by the intellect, other than by being moved by it. So, why would he use “follow” rather than “moved by”? Aquinas was no doubt aware that whether (and if so, to what extent) the will is passive with respect to the intellect was a controversial question. Aquinas does have a well-worked out view of how it is possible for the will to be moved in a way that preserves the freedom of the will, but in contexts where he wishes to say something about the relationship between cognition, appetition and action, it makes sense that he would use “follows” rather than the more theory-laden “moved by.” Also, as I will explain in Section 5, the will is not just passive for Aquinas, since he conceives of it as a moved mover. It is possible that Aquinas uses “follow” rather than “moved by” in some contexts to intimate that the

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38 Ibid.: “Unde et ipsum bonum, in quantum est quaedam forma apprehensibilis, continetur sub vero quasi quoddam verum; et ipsum verum, in quantum est finis intellectualis operationis, continetur sub bono ut quoddam particulare bonum. Si ergo consideremus motum potentiarum animae ex parte objecti specificantis actum, primum principium motionis est ex intellectu: hoc enim modo bonum intellectum movet etiam ipsam voluntatem.”

39 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.

40 Ibid., q. 22, a. 3, co.: “[...] in [animalibus] invenitur et appetitus, et movens appetitum. Ipsum enim bonum apprehensum est movens appetitum.”

41 Ibid., a. 12, co.: “Unde intellectus movet voluntatem per modum quo finis movere dicitur, in quantum scilicet praecipit rationem finis, et eam voluntati proponit.”

42 Ibid., a. 4, co.: “Quanto enim aliqua natura est Deo propinquior, tanto expressior in ea divinae dignitatis similitudo invenitur. Hoc autem ad divinam dignitatem pertinet ut omnia moveat et inclinet et dirigat, ipse a nullo alio motus vel inclinatus aut directus. Unde, quanto aliqua natura est Deo vicinior, tanto minus ab alio inclinatur et magis nata est seipsam inclinare.”

43 Note that, although Aquinas often draws a distinction between senses of “move,” he never draws a distinction between senses of “follow.”
will is both active and passive, for it is possible to understand “follow” actively or passively (actively, as when the chef follows a recipe, and passively, as when the cart follows the horse). Whatever the explanation for why Aquinas sometimes says that the will “follows” the intellect (or the object apprehended as good by the intellect) and sometimes that the will is “moved” by it, the difference seems to me to mark a shift in his precision, rather than his thought.

The upshot is that theses (A) – (D) seem to be more and less abbreviated versions of the same claim, namely, that *the object apprehended as good by the intellect moves the will*. The claim is not implausible, for it seems to be (at least partly) motivated by a general observation about appetition in animals, both non-rational and rational. A thirsty horse, upon grasping the water in the trough by means of its senses, pursues the water; there is a “good” (namely, the water) apprehended by a cognitive power (namely, the power of sight) that seems to “move” the sensitive appetite of the horse to pursue the water. Similarly, a human being, having thought about how late to stay at the office tonight, might judge that he should leave as soon as the traffic clears up, and thus, work until it does; there is a “good” (namely, leaving the office as soon as the traffic clears up) apprehended by a cognitive power (namely, the power of intellection) that seems to “move” the rational appetite of the human being to work until the traffic clears up. In each example, a cognitive act, in one way or another, grounds an appetitive act—animals, in general, seem to have appetites for just those things which they grasp by cognition. The two differ because the cognitive act in the first example is an act of sensation, but the cognitive act in the second is an act of intellection; the horse senses, but the human being deliberates and makes a judgement. Put differently, the sensitive appetite of the horse seems to be “moved” by the good apprehended by sense, but the rational appetite of a human being by the good apprehended by the intellect.

Regardless of what motivates Aquinas, it is evident that he holds the will is moved by the good apprehended by the intellect, and moreover, that he does so throughout his career. But “to be moved” is said in many ways. For example, one billiard ball is moved by another, I am moved by some artwork, and you are moved by hunger to have your lunch. The claim that one thing is “moved” by another might mean something mechanical, something affective, something metaphorical, or something else entirely. What, exactly, does Aquinas mean when he says that the will is *moved* by the apprehended good?
4 How Does the Intellect Move the Will?

When we consider Aquinas’s most comprehensive treatments of the movement of the will, there appears to be an “earlier” view and a “later” view of what it means that the object apprehended by the intellect moves the will, namely, the view of the Disputed Questions on Truth and the Prima pars, and the view of the Prima secundae and the Disputed Questions on Evil, respectively. The “earlier” view is that the intellect, or the object apprehended by the intellect, moves the will “in the manner of an end,” as Aquinas explains in the following:

In every action, two things have to be considered, namely, the agent (agens) and the reason for acting (ratio agendi). For example, in heating, fire is the agent and heat is the reason for acting. [That is, fire heats because it is hot.] With respect to moving, an “end” is said to move as the reason for moving (ratio movendi), but the efficient [cause] (efficiens) [moves by] bringing the motion about (agens motum), that is, [by] “educing” the movable [thing] from potency to act. However, the reason for acting is the form of the agent by which it acts. Thus, it is necessary that it be in the agent so that it might act. But it is not [in the agent] according to the perfect being of its nature, since motion ceases when [the end is had this way]. Rather, it is in the agent by the mode of intention. For the end is prior in intention, but posterior in being. And therefore, the end appropriately pre-exists in the mover according to the intellect, to which [power] it belongs to receive something by the mode of intention, and not according to the being of [its] nature. Thus, the intellect moves the will in the manner in which an end is said to move, namely, inasmuch as it first conceives the nature of the end and presents it to the will.44

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44 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 22, a. 12, co.: “[...] in qualibet actione duo considerentur: scilicet agens, et ratio agendi; ut in calefactione ignis est agens, et ratio agendi calor. In movendo dicitur finis movere sicut ratio movendi, sed efficiens sicut agens motum, hoc est educens mobile de potentia in actum. Ratio autem agendi est forma agentis per quam agit; unde oportet quod insit agenti ad hoc quod agat. Non autem inest secundum esse naturae perfectum, quia hoc habito quiescit motus; sed est agens per modum intentionis; nam finis est prior in intentione, sed posterior in esse. Et ideo finis praeexistit in movente proprie secundum intellectum, cuius est recipere aliquid per modum intentionis, et non secundum esse naturae. Unde intellectus movet voluntatem per modum quo finis movere dicitur, in quantum scilicet praeconcept rationem finis, et eam voluntati proponit.” The reader will remember that Aquinas makes a similar remark in ST, I, q. 82, a. 4, co.: “Et hoc modo intellectus movet voluntatem, quia bonum intellectum est obiectum voluntatis, et movet ipsam ut finis.”
The intellect, Aquinas says, moves the will in the manner that a goal, or “end,” moves. Moreover, an end moves inasmuch as it is a “reason for moving,” or “reason for acting.” What does Aquinas mean here? Well, suppose that my end is to finish writing an article I have been working on. This end, namely, finishing the article, is my reason (ratio) for writing, that is, the form by which I act, or move. The language of “form” is very much significant here. Put simply, what “moves” me to write is the idea that I have of the completed article (the “form” without the “matter,” as it were) rather than the completed article itself (the “form” with the “matter”). For the completed article does not exist yet, and if it did, it would certainly not “move” me to write—why would I write something that I have already written? So, Aquinas explains, the “reason for moving,” or acting, has to exist in the agent not according to the “perfect being of its nature” (secundum esse naturae perfectum) but rather by the “mode of intention” (per modum intentionis). What he means is that, for an end to move an agent to act, it has to have some sort of existence in that agent, and in particular, it has to exist intentionally in her soul, or mind—the agent has to have a mental representation of the end, which moves her towards that end.

How, then, does an end acquire such “intentional” existence? Roughly, the agent represents the end to herself by means of her intellect, for it belongs to that power of the soul to “receive something by the mode of intention” (recipere aliquid per modum intentionis). That is, by means of her intellect, an agent is able to conceive of a thing in abstraction from whatever existence it might have outside the mind. So, for example, I have yet to finish the article I have been working on, but I am able to conceive of the completed article (to some extent) as the end of my writing; this “conception” of the completed article, and in particular, as of something that it would be good for me to have, provides me with a reason for writing. Aquinas concludes that the intellect, by first conceiving (or “preconceiving”) the end abstractly and presenting it to the will, moves the will to its act. But as I argued in Section 3, Aquinas is speaking loosely here. The intellect moves the will inasmuch as it first conceives the end abstractly and presents it to the will, for it is the end, so conceived, that moves the will, and in particular, as a “reason for moving” (ratio movendi). Strictly speaking, the intellect is not itself the will’s reason for moving and therefore

45 Aquinas seems to use “ratio movendi” and “ratio agendi” interchangeably.
does not move the will. However, inasmuch as it does conceive of a reason for moving and present it to the will, the intellect can be said to move the will as an end. (And indeed, it is much easier to talk this way.)

The story that Aquinas tells us in the *Disputed Questions on Truth* about the movement of the will is plausible, so far as it goes, for it does seem right that I am drawn towards those things that I first conceive of as good for me. The story is also vague, however. In particular, we should like to know more about the relationship between the intellect’s conceiving of something as good and presenting it to the will, and the will’s willing that thing. Aquinas’s remark that the reason for acting (or moving) is the “form of the agent by which it acts” (forma agentis per quam agit) suggests that there is a very close relationship between the two (as does the analogy to heat and fire). But what, exactly, does the intellect’s conceiving of something as good and presenting it to the will do to the will, such that the former can be said to move the latter? The question is worth careful attention, for there were many philosophers and theologians in the later Middle Ages who agreed with Aquinas that the intellect is responsible for conceiving of something as good and presenting it to the will, but (vehemently) denied that the former moves the latter. How, if at all, does Aquinas differ from them? The “earlier” view of the *Disputed Questions on Truth* and the *Prima pars* does not give us a clear answer.

In the *Prima secundae* of the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas Aquinas again takes up the question of whether (and if so, how) the will is moved by the intellect. The view that he presents in this work, a view that also appears in the *Disputed Questions on Evil*, is that the intellect’s conceiving of something as good and presenting it to the will moves the will by “actualizing” its potency to the determination, or specification, of its act. Aquinas explains as follows:

> Something has to be moved by another to the extent to which it is in potency to many, for it is necessary that what is in potency be reduced to act by something that is in act. And this is [what it means] to move. However, a power of the soul is found to be in potency to many in two ways. First, [it is in potency] with respect to acting and not acting. Second, [it is in potency] with respect to doing this or that. For example, sometimes sight actually

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46 As I noted in Section 3, Aquinas does not seem to acknowledge that the intellect could move the will other than by apprehending some object as good and presenting it to the will.
sees, and sometimes it does not see. And sometimes it sees white and sometimes it sees black. Therefore, a “mover” is necessary with respect to [these] two, namely, with respect to the exercise, or use, of its act, and with respect to the determination of its act. The first of these belongs to the subject, which is sometimes found to act and sometimes to not act, and the second belongs to the object, inasmuch as the act is specified […] But the object moves by determining the act in the manner of a formal principle, by which action is specified in natural things, as heating [is specified] by heat. However, the first formal principle is universal being and truth, which is the object of the intellect. And it is by this manner of motion that the intellect moves the will, as presenting its object to it.47

As in the “earlier” view of the Disputed Questions on Truth and the Prima pars, Aquinas affirms that the intellect moves the will by presenting the will’s object to it. But the “later” view of the Disputed Questions on Evil and the Prima secundae is more explicit about what it means for the powers of the soul (and in particular, the will) to be “moved.” For the Aristotelians of the later Middle Ages, “movement,” in general, is any reduction of potency to act. That is, something is “moved” inasmuch as its potency to φ-ing is actualized by something that is actually φ-ing. For example, the heating of a pot of water is, for them, a kind of movement—the water is now in potency to being hot, but when I put it on the stove, which is already hot, this potency is actualized; the water, “moved” by the hot stove, becomes hot.

What about the powers of the soul? Well, like the pot of water, they too are in potency, and thus, have to be “reduced” to act by something that is itself “in act” (actu). The potency of a power of the soul, however, is twofold, for it is in potency to acting or not acting, that is, in potency to the exercise, or use, of its act, and in potency to acting this way or that way, that is, in potency to the

47 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 1, co.: “Respondeo dicendum quod intantum aliiquid indiget moveri ab aliquo, inquantum est in potentia ad plura, oportet enim ut id quod est in potentia, reductur in actum per aliiquid quod est actu; et hoc est movere. Dupliciter autem aliqua vis animae invenitur esse in potentia ad diversa, uno modo, quantum ad agere et non agere; alio modo, quantum ad agere hoc vel illud. Sicut visus quandoque videt actu, et quandoque non videt; et quandoque videt album, et quandoque videt nigrum. Indiget igitur movente quantum ad duo, scilicet quantum ad exercitium vel usum actus; et quantum ad determinationem actus. Quorum primum est ex parte subjecti, quod quandoque invenitur agens, quandoque non agens, aliud autem est ex parte objecti, secundum quod specificatur actus […] Sed objectum movet, determinando actum, ad modum principii formalis, a quo in rebus naturalibus actio specificatur, sicut calefactio a calore. Primum autem principium formale est ens et verum universale, quod est objectum intellectus. Et ideo isto modo motionis intellectus movet voluntatem, sicut praesentans ei objectum suum.”
determination, or specification, of its act. As Aquinas explains, the power of sight, for example, is in potency to seeing or not seeing (the exercise of its act) and in potency to seeing white or seeing black (the specification of its act). Accordingly, for it to act, it has to be moved in two respects. First, it has to be moved so that it actually sees rather than does not see, and second, it has to be moved so that it sees white rather than black, or vice versa. Similarly, the will is in potency to willing or not willing and to willing this or that, and thus, it has to be moved both to the exercise and to the specification of its act.

I want to bracket for a moment the will’s potency to the exercise of its act, which I will discuss in Section 5, and call attention to its potency to the specification of its act. What “reduces” the will from potentially willing this or that to actually willing this rather than that? Aquinas makes a general remark that the specification of a power’s act “belongs to,” or “is on the part of,” the object of that power (est ex parte obiecti). The object, Aquinas says, moves by determining, or specifying, the power’s act “in the manner of a formal principle” (ad modum principii formalis). So, the object of sight, namely, colour, determines whether I see black, white, or whatever; and it does so by “informing” our power of sight. The object of the will, however, is the good inasmuch as it is apprehended by the intellect. Thus, by apprehending and presenting something as good (or better than another) to the will, the intellect is responsible for “reducing” the will from potentially willing this or that to actually willing this rather than that. The will, then, is moved by the intellect to the specification of its act.48

The “later” view of the Disputed Questions on Evil and the Prima secundae seems to describe the movement of the will by the intellect in a different way than the “earlier” view of the Disputed Questions on Truth and the Prima pars. The upshot of the earlier view was that the intellect moves the will “in the manner in which an end is said to move” (per modum quo finis

48 Aquinas argues similarly in QDM, q. 6, co.: “Secundo considerandum est quod potentia aliqua dupliciter movetur: uno modo ex parte subiecti; alio modo ex parte obiecti. Ex parte subiecti quidem, sicut visus per immutationem dispositionis organi movetur ad clarius vel minus clare videndum; ex parte vero obiecti, sicut visus nunc videt album nunc videt nigrum; et prima quidem immutatio pertinet ad ipsum exercitium actus, ut scilicet agatur vel non agatur aut melius vel debilius agatur: secunda vero immutatio pertinet ad specificationem actus, nam actus specificatur per obiectum. Est autem considerandum, quod in rebus naturalibus specificatio quidem actus est ex forma; ipsum autem exercitium est ab agente, quod causat ipsam motionem. Movens autem agit propter finem. Unde reliquitor quod primum principium motionis quantum ad exercitium actus, sit ex fine. Si autem consideremus obiecta voluntatis et intellectus, inveniemus quod obiectum intellectus est primum principium in genere causae formalis, est enim eius obiectum ens et verum.”
movere dicitur) and of the later view that the intellect moves the will “in the manner of a formal principle” (ad modum principii formalis), that is, by “actualizing” its potency to the specification of its act.

According to some modern commentators, this difference marks a shift (of one kind or another) in Aquinas’s thought. Roland Hissette, for example, writes the following in his Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 mars 1277:

Pour souligner le caractère actif et libre de la volonté, S. Thomas a modifié quelque peu, dans ses dernières œuvres (De malo, q. 6 et Prima secundae, q. 9 et 10) la formulation de sa doctrine. Alors que, dans ses écrits antérieurs, il voyait dans l’objet connu la cause finale de l’acte volontarie, dont la volonté était, bien entendu, la cause efficiente, il voit désormais dans la volonté à la fois la cause efficiente et finale du vouloir, tandis qu’à la raison revient exclusivement une tâche d’information, de spécification de l’acte, ce qui est le propre de la cause formelle.49

For Hissette, the change between Aquinas’s describing the intellect as a final cause of the act of the will in his “earlier” view and as a formal cause in his “later” view marks a change in the formulation, but not the substance, of his doctrine. However, for other scholars, such as David Gallagher, Aquinas “develops a fundamentally new analysis of the intellect-will interrelationships” in the Prima secundae and Question 6 of the Disputed Questions on Evil.50 What are we to make of this seeming difference in Aquinas’s account of the intellect’s causality on the will?

Consider, again, Aquinas’s “earlier” view that the intellect moves the will “in the manner in which an end is said to move.” What, exactly, is this “manner” in which an end is said to move? As the reader will remember, according to Aquinas, an end moves as an agent’s “reason for


moving” (or acting). In general, the “reason for moving” has to exist (intentionally) in the agent for it to act, since it is the “form of the agent by which it acts” (forma agentis per quam agit).

The concept of the “form of the agent by which it acts” is not very clear in Aquinas’s “earlier” view. However, he does seem to try to make better sense of it in his “later” view. In the Prima secundae, Aquinas tells us a story about what it means for the object of a power to move “as a formal principle,” namely, that it brings about a form in the will determining, or specifying, the act of that power. The object apprehended as good by the intellect, the will’s “reason for moving” (or willing), moves the will by actualizing its potency to the specification of its act, causing it to will this rather than that. But since the will is a rational appetite for the good apprehended by the intellect, the object so apprehended does not just move the will as a formal cause, actualizing its potency to the specification of its act, but also as a final cause, for the end of the will is the good (in general).

Aquinas’s view in the Prima secundae and the Disputed Questions on Evil about how the object apprehended as good by the intellect moves the will does not seem to me to be different from his view in the Prima pars and the Disputed Questions on Truth. Rather, in the former, he seems to present the same view as in the latter, but more precisely. I glossed his remark that an agent’s “reason for moving” (or acting) is the “form of the agent by which it acts” using an example: my end, namely, the completed article, moves me (or my will) inasmuch as it exists “intentionally” in my soul, that is, as a representation of something that is good for me, which I conceive of by means of my intellect, and which “informs” my will. It seems to me that what Aquinas says in the Prima secundae makes sense of something that was not clear in his “earlier” view, namely, what the intellect’s conceiving of something as good and presenting it to the will does to the will, such that the former can be said to move the latter. By conceiving of something as good and presenting it to the will, the intellect is responsible for actualizing the potency of the will to the specification of its act. The object that the intellect apprehends, or conceives of, as good is

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51 As a side note, let me say that we should not be surprised that Aquinas would have taken care to precisify his understanding of how the intellect moves the will in the Prima secundae and Question 6 of the Disputed Questions on Evil, for both were written during his second Parisian regency, after the emergence of so-called “Latin Averroism” and the ensuing controversy concerning free will (liberum arbitrium). For the dating of these works, see Jean-Pierre Torrell, Saint Thomas Aquinas, vol. 1, trans. Robert Royal (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), pp. 107-207. For the emergence of “Latin Averroism,” see Fernand Van Steenberghen, Maître Siger de Brabant (Louvain: Publications universitaires, 1977), pp. 31-49.
indeed the will’s “reason for willing,” as Aquinas says in the *Disputed Questions on Truth*. In particular, it is the will’s reason for willing *this* rather than *that*. Moreover, the object apprehended as good by the intellect, a particular good, is pursued as an end by the will, the rational appetite for the good.

*Pace* Gallagher, there does not seem to me to be any pressure to read Aquinas as changing the substance of his view about how the intellect moves the will between his earlier and later works. It seems to me that he consistently holds that the intellect, or rather, the object apprehended as good by the intellect, moves the will with both formal and final causality; the object has to be represented to the will to move it “as an end,” but it is represented to the will by means of a mental representation that informs the will. At most, there is a difference in the precision with which Aquinas explains his doctrine.

## 5 Does the Will Move Itself?

Aquinas probably did not change his thoughts about how the intellect moves the will. But perhaps he did change his thoughts about the movement of the will more generally. In the *Prima secundae* and the *Disputed Questions on Evil*, Aquinas says that the will is not just in potency to willing *this* or *that* (the determination, or specification, of its act) but also to willing or not willing (the use, or exercise, of its act). As we already know, the intellect moves the will to the specification of its act. But what about the exercise of the will’s act? In the *Disputed Questions on Evil*, Aquinas writes:

> If we consider the movement of the powers of the soul on the part of the exercise of the act, then the principle of motion comes from the will. For the power to which the principal end pertains always moves the power to which the means to the end pertain to act, just as military [power] moves the maker of harnesses to acting. And in this way the will moves itself and all the other powers [of the soul].

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52 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, co.: “Si autem consideremus motus potentiarum animae ex parte exercitii actus, sic principium motionis est ex voluntate. Nam semper potentia ad quam pertinet finis principalis, movet ad actum potentiam ad quam pertinet id quod est ad finem; sicut militaris movet frenorum factricem ad operandum, et hoc modo voluntas movet se ipsam et omnes alias potentias.” Cf. ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 1, co.: “Bonum autem in communi,
Aquinas makes a general remark about the relationship between the power that is related to the “principal end” (*finis principalis*) and the power that is related to the means to that end: The former moves the latter to the exercise of its act, that is, moves it from not acting to acting. In the rational soul, the will is the power that is related to the principal end, namely, the common good, for the common good (*bonum in communi*) is the object of the will. That is, the will is not an appetite (specifically) for this or that good in particular, but rather good in general, of which each particular good is a species. The other powers of the soul, however, are related to the means to that end, for the end of each power is a *particular* good, and thus, belongs to the “common good,” or good in general. So, Aquinas concludes, the will moves each of the powers of the soul to the exercise of its act, including itself. That is, the will is a *self-moving* power. Aquinas is explicit about this, saying the same later in Question 6 of the *Disputed Questions on Evil*:

“Therefore, with respect to the exercise of its act, it is in the first place manifest that the will is moved by itself, for just as it moves the other powers, so, too, does the will move itself.”

Similarly, in the *Prima secundae*, he says that “the will is not moved by the intellect and by itself in the same manner. For it is moved by the intellect according to the nature of the object, but [it is moved by itself] with respect to the exercise of its act, according to the nature of the end.”

The upshot is straightforward: The will, qua rational appetite, is not always willing. Just as it has to be moved from willing *this or that* to willing *this* rather than *that*, so it has to be moved from not willing to willing. What matters for our purposes here is that, according to Aquinas, the intellect moves the will to willing *this* rather than *that*, but the will moves itself to willing.

Aquinas is not very clear about whether the will moves itself in the *Disputed Questions on Truth* and the *Prima pars*. There are passages in both that are similar to those I have just quoted from

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53 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, co.: “Quantum ergo ad exercitium actus, primo quDEM manifestum est quod voluntas movetur a seipsa; sicut enim movet alias potentias, ita et se ipsam movet.”

54 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 3, ad 3: “[...] non eodem modo voluntas movetur ab intellectu, et a seipsa. Sed ab intellectu quidem movetur secundum rationem obiecti, a seipsa vero, quantum ad exercitium actus, secundum rationem finis.”
the *Disputed Questions on Evil* and the *Prima secundae*. For example, in a passage that the reader is already familiar with from the *Disputed Questions on Truth*, Aquinas says the following:

The intellect moves the will in some manner, and the will moves the intellect and the other powers in another manner. For this to be clear, it has to be understood that both an end and an efficient [cause] are said to move, but in different ways, since in any action, two things have to be considered, namely, the agent and the reason for acting. For example, in heating, fire is the agent and heat is the reason for acting. With respect to moving, an “end” is said to move as the reason for moving, but the efficient [cause] moves as that which brings motion about, that is, [as that which] “educes” the moveable from potency to act [...] Thus, the intellect moves the will in the manner in which an end is said to move, namely, inasmuch as it first conceives the nature of the end and presents it to the will. But to move in the manner of an agent cause belongs to the will, not the intellect.55

The will, for Aquinas, moves as an “agent,” or “efficient” cause. While the intellect moves as an “end,” that is, as the “reason for moving,” the will moves as that which brings motion about. Aquinas’s remarks here parallel those in the *Disputed Questions on Evil* and the *Prima secundae*; in both his earlier and later works, he seems to hold that the will moves each of the powers of the soul from not acting to acting, that is, to the exercise of its act. However, whereas Aquinas is explicit that the will moves itself in his later works, he makes no such remark in his earlier works. Compare: in the *Disputed Questions on Evil*, Aquinas tells us that “the will moves itself and all the other powers,” and that “just as it moves the other powers, so, too, does the will

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55 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 22, a. 12, co.: “Dicendum, quod intellectus aliquo modo movet voluntatem, et aliquo modo voluntas movet intellectum et alias vires. Ad cuius evidentiam sciemendum, quod tam finis quam efficiens movere dicuntur, sed diversimodo; cum in qualibet actione duo considerentur: scilicet agens, et ratio agendi; ut in calefactione ignis est agens, et ratio agendi calor. In movendo dicitur finis movere sicut ratio movendi: sed efficiens sicut agens motum, hoc est educens mobile de potentia in actum [...] Unde intellectus movet voluntatem per modum quo finis movere dicitur, in quantum scilicet praeconcipit rationem finis, et eam voluntati proponit. Sed movere per modum causae agentis est voluntatis, et non intellectus.” Cf. ST, I, q. 82, a. 4, co.: “Respondeo dicendum quod aliquid dicitur movere dupliciter. Uno modo, per modum finis; sicut dicitur quod finis movet efficientem. Et hoc modo intellectus movet voluntatem, quia bonum intellectum est obiectum voluntatis, et movet ipsam ut finis. Alio modo dicitur aliquid movere per modum agentis; sicut alterans movet alteratum, et impellens movet impulsionem. Et hoc modo voluntas movet intellectum, et omnes animae vires [...]”
moves itself. But in the *Disputed Questions on Truth*, he just says that “the will moves the intellect and the other powers,” and in the *Prima pars*, that “the will moves the intellect and all the powers of the soul.” Aquinas does *not* explicitly tell us in his earlier works that the will moves itself.

A possible explanation for why Aquinas does not explicitly state that the will moves itself in his earlier works is simply that he does not think it does. In the *Disputed Questions on Truth* and the *Prima pars*, Aquinas very clearly commits himself to the general Aristotelian principle that *everything moved is moved by another*, as is well-known from his proofs for God’s existence, and in particular, the so-called “First Way.”\(^{56}\) For Aquinas, violating the principle that everything moved is moved by another is like violating the principle of non-contradiction. For a thing moves inasmuch as it is actual, or “in act,” and is moved inasmuch as it is “reduced” from potency to act. (For example, the fire heats inasmuch as it is hot, and the wood is heated inasmuch as the actually hot fire makes the potentially hot wood actually hot.) It follows that, for a thing to move itself, it would have to be in act and potency at the same time and in the same respect. (So, for the wood to heat itself, it would have to be both actually hot and potentially hot.) However, this is impossible, and thus, self-motion is impossible.

Suppose, then, that the principle that everything moved is moved by another, which I, following Wippel, will call the “act-potency axiom,” holds.\(^{57}\) The consequence for Aquinas’s psychology is straightforward. Again, qua rational appetite, the will is not always willing. So, for it to will, the will has to be moved from potentially willing to actually willing. But it is not possible for something to “educe” itself from potentiality to actuality, that is, to move itself. Thus, the will has to be moved from potentially willing to actually willing by something other than the will itself. The upshot is that Aquinas’s commitment to the act-potency axiom seems to have a

\(^{56}\) Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 2, a. 3, co. The principle that everything moved is moved by another is also prominent in QDV, q. 19, a. 1, where Aquinas takes up the question of whether it is possible for the soul to understand (*intelligere*) after death.

consequence for his psychology that is in tension with his claim in the *Disputed Questions on Evil* and the *Prima secundae* that the will moves itself.

So, did Aquinas change his thoughts about the movement of the will? In particular, did he come to hold that the will moves itself later in his career, having earlier denied (at least implicitly) that it could? Some scholars seem to draw evidence from the *Disputed Questions on Evil* and the *Prima secundae* for the claim that the will moves itself for Aquinas. Tobias Hoffman, for example, concludes from question 9, article 3 of the *Prima secundae* that “the efficacy of a specific motive is in fact not to be traced to ever more specific reasons, but rather to the inclination of the will to the ultimate end. It is by virtue of the desire for an end that the will moves itself to consider what is apt to attain the end.”\(^{58}\) At least in Aquinas’s “later” view, there seems to be a sense in which the will is *spontaneous*, that is, a sense in which the will is able to move itself *by itself.*\(^{59}\) However, it is not clear in Aquinas’s “earlier” view that the will is spontaneous. For he says in *Prima pars*: “it is necessary that an apprehension precede every motion of the will, but not that a motion of the will precede every apprehension.”\(^{60}\) Aquinas suggests that, since the motion of the will follows an act of the intellect, it is not possible for the will to move itself spontaneously. Is there, then, a change in Aquinas’s thoughts about the movement of the will?

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\(^{59}\) Cf. Gallagher, “Free Choice and Free Judgment in Thomas Aquinas,” p. 277: “What Thomas's theory does not do is to attempt to find another, prior judgment which would explain why the will acted according to this judgment and not according to that. Rather, he sees that it belongs to the very nature of will to so act. The will is precisely that sort of power which, while always acting according to a reason or a good, is not determined to any particular act by any particular reason or good. It belongs ultimately to the will, or better, to the willing person to determine which judgment will govern an action. If we consider the agent's judgment or his reason for acting as the explanation of his act, in that the agent would explain his act by appealing to his reason for acting, and if we say that the will itself in choosing determines which reason will govern the agent's choice, then we can say that the will, in an act of choice, brings about its own explanation. We cannot give a reason other than the will itself, why the will acts according to this particular reason.” For a response to Gallagher, see Peter Eardley, Thomas Aquinas and Giles of Rome on the Will,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 56, no. 4 (2003): pp. 835-862. For more on the “self-motion” of the will, see Daniel Westberg, “Did Aquinas Change his Mind about the Will?” *The Thomist* 58 (1994): pp. 41-60; Yul Kim, *Selbstbewegung des Willens bei Thomas von Aquin* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2007); Thomas M. Osborne, Jr., *Human Action in Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014), esp. pp. 1-18.

\(^{60}\) Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, a. 82, a. 4, ad 3: “Omnem enim voluntatis motum necesse est quod praecedat apprehensio, sed non omnem apprehensionem praecedet motus voluntatis […]”
I have my doubts, for Aquinas does not give up his commitment to the act-potency axiom in his later works. Presumably, if he did come to hold that the will moves itself, then he would have (very clearly) qualified the act-potency axiom in some way or other. But to my knowledge, nowhere in the corpus does Aquinas suggest that he does not hold the act-potency axiom in its generality. Rather, he upholds the general axiom, but qualifies “self-motion.”

We see this in question 6 of the *Disputed Questions on Evil*, where Aquinas draws a distinction between two types of self-motion. The first, call it “direct” self-motion, is when “the same moves itself according to the same [respect]” (*idem secundum idem movet seipsum*). The second, call it “indirect” self-motion, is when the same moves itself “according to a different [respect]” (*secundum aliud*). Direct self-motion is impossible, for it implies that the self-mover, which is actually φ-ing, moves itself from being potentially φ-ing to actually φ-ing, which violates the act-potency axiom. But indirect self-motion is possible, for it merely implies that the self-mover, which is actually φ-ing, moves itself from being potentially ψ-ing to actually ψ-ing. The self-mover does not move itself “according to the same respect” (*secundum idem*) in which it already exists, namely φ, but “according to a different respect” (*secundum aliud*) in which it does not yet exist, namely ψ. Thus, the self-mover is not in act and potency in the same respect (φ and φ), but in different respects (φ and ψ). Indirect self-motion, then, preserves the act-potency axiom.

In the *Disputed Questions on Evil* and the *Prima secundae*, Aquinas does claim that the will moves itself, but he specifies that it does so indirectly: “inasmuch as [the will] wills the end, it reduces itself to act with respect to the means to the end.” Put differently, by actually willing the end, and thus, being in act in one respect, the will moves itself from potentially to actually

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61 See, for example, ST, I-II, q. 1 a. 2 co.: “Prima autem inter omnes causas est causa finalis. Cuius ratio est, quia materia non consequitur formam nisi secundum quod movetur ab agente, *nihil enim reducit se de potentia in actum*.”

62 For example, Aquinas could have drawn a distinction between the corporeal movement of bodies and the “spiritual” movement of the rational soul (as Henry of Ghent does). Perhaps the act-potency axiom describes the former, but why suppose that it also describes the latter? Do “act” and “potency” mean the same when they are used in the context of corporeal movement as when they are used in the context of “spiritual” movement? Cf. Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet IX*, q. 5, *Opera omnia*, vol. 13, ed. Raymond Macken (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989), pp. 99-139.

63 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, ad 20: “Ad vicesimum dicendum, quod idem secundum idem non movet seipsum; sed secundum aliud potest seipsum movere.”

64 Ibid.: “[...] voluntas in quantum vult finem, reducit se in actum quantum ad ea quae sunt ad finem.”
willing the means, that is, from being in potency to being in act in another respect. The self-
motion of the will, then, preserves the act-potency axiom, for the will is not in potentiality and 
actuality in the same respect. But how does the will, inasmuch as it wills some end, “reduce” 
itself to act with respect to the means to that end? Aquinas gives us the following example:

By willing health, [a human being] moves himself to will to take medicine; from this, that 
he wills health, he begins to deliberate about those things which are conducive to health, 
and when he concludes his deliberation, he wills to take the medicine.65

Suppose that I am sick and will to be healthy. Since I am not healthy now, I have to deliberate 
about what sorts of things might make me so. Perhaps I should go to the gym and exercise, eat 
more vegetables, etc. But suppose I judge that, here and now, taking medicine is the best means 
to my end. So, I will to take the medicine.

How would we analyze the example using Aquinas’s faculty psychology? First, the will actually 
wills the end, namely, health, and potentially wills some means to that end. Second, the will 
moves the intellect to deliberate about the means to the end. Third, having deliberated about the 
means, weighing them against each other, the intellect judges that this means, namely, taking 
medicine, should be willed. Fourth, the will actually wills the means that the intellect judges 
should be willed, that is, it actually wills to take the medicine. So, the will, by willing the end, 
moves the intellect to deliberate about the means to that end and judge that this means should be 
willed, thereby moving itself to will that means. When the will so moves itself, it is not in act and 
potency in the same respect, for it first actually wills the end and potentially wills the means and 
then actually wills the means, having moved the intellect to deliberate about how to bring about 
the end. The upshot is that the indirect self-motion of the will preserves the act-potency axiom.

65 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, co.: “[...] sicut per hoc quod vult sanitatem, movet se ad volendum sumere 
potionem; ex hoc quod vult sanitatem, incipit consiliari de his quae conferunt ad sanitatem; et tandem determinato 
consilio vult accipere potionem.” The same example appears in ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 4, co.: “Et quidem, sicut dictum est, 
ipsa movet seipsam, inquantum per hoc quod vult finem, reducit seipsam ad volendum ea quae sunt ad finem. Hoc 
autem non potest facere nisi consilio mediate, cum enim aliquis vult sanari, incipit cogitare quomodo hoc consequi 
possit, et per talem cogitationem pervenit ad hoc quod potest sanari per medicum, et hoc vult.”
Although Aquinas does not explicitly say that the will moves itself in the *Disputed Questions on Truth* and the *Prima pars*, he does acknowledge that the will and the intellect move each other. There seems to be no obstacle to his attributing indirect self-motion to the will in these earlier works, since the will moves itself indirectly by moving the intellect, which does not violate the act-potency axiom. Aquinas’s claim that the will moves itself in the *Disputed Questions on Evil* and the *Prima secundae* does not mark a shift in his thought. Rather, it marks a shift in his precision (as before). In both his earlier and later works, Aquinas holds that the will is both passive, inasmuch as it is moved by the intellect, and active, inasmuch as it moves the intellect and the other powers of the soul. What he draws attention to in the later works is that, by moving the intellect in particular, there is a sense in which the will is able to move itself.

6 Conclusion

I started this chapter by describing a criticism of Aquinas’s psychology by William de la Mare, namely, that it is possible to read him as saying that the will is necessitated by the intellect, which seems to act deterministically. If, however, the will is so necessitated, then it seems to follow that human beings do not have free will, for they are not able to will otherwise than they do. Is this a well-justified criticism?

To answer this question, it is necessary that we first make sense of how Aquinas understands the relationship between the intellect and the will—and this is what I have aimed to do in the present chapter. As I hope to have shown, Aquinas affirms that the will is passive with respect to the intellect throughout his career. According to his most mature statement of the will’s passivity, the will’s potency to the specification of its act is “actualized” by the object apprehended as good by the intellect. That is, the will is moved by the intellect’s apprehension from potentially willing *this* or *that* to actually willing *this* rather than *that*. Since the will has to receive a “specification” from the intellect, the former is essentially passive with respect to the latter, in Aquinas’s most

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66 See, in particular, Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 22, a. 12 and ST, I, q. 82, a. 4.
general sense of “passive.” This means that the view of some modern commentators, namely, that the will is able to move itself spontaneously, is false; since the will’s potency to the specification of its act is actualized by the apprehension of the intellect, the will is not able to move itself by itself, that is, without having been moved by the intellect.

Although the will does receive a “specification” from the intellect, the latter does not bring the act of the former about. That is, according to Aquinas, the intellect does not move the will to the exercise of its act. Rather, the will moves itself to the exercise of its act. But as I have argued, this “self-motion” is merely apparent. For the will only moves itself indirectly, that is, by moving the intellect. Moreover, when the will does move the intellect, it does so having first been moved by the intellect; every act of the will, as Aquinas explains in the Prima pars, follows an act of the intellect, but not vice versa. The upshot is that, both with respect to the specification and the exercise of its act, the will seems to follow the intellect; the will, again, is an essentially passive, appetitive power.

Does this mean that William de la Mare’s criticism of Aquinas is well-justified? If the act of the will is so closely tied to that of the intellect, is the former necessitated by the latter? And if it is, does it follow that human beings do not have free will? In the following chapter, I aim to answer these questions.

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67 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 22, a. 1, co: “Respondeo dicendum quod pati dicitur tripliciter. Uno modo, communiter, secundum quod omne recipere est pati, etiam si nihil abiiciatur a re, sicut si dicatur aerem pati, quando illuminatur. Hoc autem magis proprie est perfici, quam pati.”

68 Thomas Aquinas, ST I, q. 82, a. 4, ad 3.
1 Introduction

In his Correctorium fratris Thomae, the Franciscan William de la Mare challenges Thomas Aquinas’s view of the relationship between our powers of cognition and volition, that is, between our intellect and will. As I explained in Chapter 1, William argues that Aquinas could be understood as holding a view that had been condemned by the bishop of Paris in the 1270s,\(^1\) namely, that the will is necessitated by the intellect, and thus, that human beings are not free:

[…] if by the act of determining [Aquinas] understands that reason, concluding that one of [two] contraries is to be willed and pursued, thereby determines (that is, necessitates) the will to that thing in such a way that it is not able to will or pursue the contrary, then [what he says] goes against Chapter 3 of Bernard of Clairvaux’s De gratia et libero arbitrio, and Book 9 of the Philosopher’s Metaphysics. Moreover, it is erroneous and has not long ago been condemned with many articles, [namely,] in Chapter 9 on the will, where it has been condemned as an error that, “following a conclusion about something to be done, the will does not remain free”; also, that “the will of a human being is necessitated by her cognition, just as the appetite of a brute”; also, that “the will necessarily pursues what is firmly believed (firmiter creditum) by reason, and is not able to abstain (abstinere) from that which reason determines.”\(^2\)

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\(^1\) See, in particular, the following condemned articles from the Condemnation of 1277, edited in David Piché (ed.), La condamnation parisienne de 1277 (Paris: J. Vrin, 1999): 129 (169); 130 (166); 131 (160); 135 (161); 158 (165); 159 (164); 163 (163); 194 (151). Also, see articles 3 and 9 from the Condemnation of 1270, edited in Heinrich Denifle and Emile Châtelain (eds.), Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis, vol. 1 (Paris: Delalain, 1889).

\(^2\) William de la Mare, Correctorium fratris Thomae, In primam secundae, a. 7, p. 232: “Si vero per actum determinandi intelligat quod ratio concluens unum contrariorum esse volendum alicui [om. P, A] et prosequendum, per hoc determinet, id est necessitet voluntatem ad illud ita quod contrarium voluntas non possit velle nec prosequi, hoc est contra Bernardum, de Gratia et libero arbitrio, capitulio 3o; et contra Philosophum, IX XI Philosophyae; et erroneum et damnatum nuper cum pluribus articulis, capitulo 9o [om. S] de voluntate, ubi pro error condemnatum est quod post conclusionem de aliquo faciendo voluntas non manet libera; item quod voluntas hominis necessitatatur per suam cognitionem sicut appetitus bruti; item, quod voluntas necessario prosequatur quod firmiter creditum est a ratione, et non potest abstinere ab eo quod ratio determinat.” See further, Bernard of Clairvaux, De gratia et libero arbitrio, III.6, in L’amour de Dieu et La grâce et le libre arbitre, eds. F. Callerot et al., S. Bernardi Opera omnia 29 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1993), pp. 256–9; Aristotle, Metaphysics VIII, 5, 1048a1–1048a24. William quotes articles
The reasoning that motivates William de la Mare’s criticism seems to be this: If the will is necessitated by the intellect, and the intellect operates deterministically, “as everyone in this debate would admit,”\(^3\) then contra Bernard and Aristotle, a human being is determined to will what she judges is to be willed, such that she is not able to will the opposite. So, if I, by means of my intellect, judge that I should take some medicine, for example, then I cannot but will to take that medicine. If, however, it is not possible for me to *not* will to take the medicine, then it seems that I do not really have control over my willing to take the medicine, and thus, my taking the medicine. But if I am to be free, then it seems to be necessary that I have control over my actions. It follows that, if my will is necessitated by my intellect, then I am not free. Call this the *Problem of Control*.

The Problem of Control takes it for granted, first, that control is necessary for freedom,\(^4\) and second, that control involves having a *power for opposites*.\(^5\) At first glance, both assumptions are well-founded. To adopt an example from John of Damascus’s *De fide orthodoxa* that was very prominent in the Middle Ages, the reason why a brute animal is not free seems to be that its actions are not “up to it,” as it were, and the reason why its actions are not “up to it” is that it acts by *natural instinct* and is thus not able to act otherwise than as nature has determined that it act. When a sheep sees a wolf, for example, it cannot but flee from it. Thus, the sheep seems to lack both a power for opposites and control over its actions.

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\(^5\) As I will discuss, for William de la Mare, the reason why a brute animal is not the “master” (*dominus*) of its actions, such that it has control over them, is that it lacks the power of either “restraining its appetite or following it” (*refrenandi appetitum suum vel sequi eum*). So, a brute animal does not act so much as it is “acted upon” (*agitur*) by nature. See *Correctorium fratris Thomae, In primam secundae*, a. 6, p. 231. Here, William is drawing on John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa*, cap. 41, n. 1, p. 153.
But is the Problem of Control a problem for Aquinas? Well, it seems so. I argued in Chapter 1 that, when it is not willing an object, the will is in potency to willing this or that object, that is, to the specification of its act. For it to act, then, the will has to be “moved” from potentially willing this or that object to actually willing this object rather than that one. According to Aquinas, this potency of the will to the specification of its act is “actualized” by the object apprehended as good by the intellect; by apprehending an object as good, the intellect moves the will by specifying its act. It follows that, for the will to will (or nill) some object, it is necessary that the intellect apprehend that object as good (or bad) and thereby move the will to the specification of its act. The intellect, then, seems to determine the will, for as Aquinas acknowledges in question 24 of his Disputed Questions on Truth, “judgement about this particular thing-to-be-done, as [here and] now, can never be contrary to appetite.”

Although Aquinas does argue that the will moves itself to the exercise of its act, he makes it clear that it does so by moving the intellect, that is, it moves itself indirectly. Also, when the will does move itself to the exercise of its act by moving the intellect, the will’s very act of moving the intellect, as every act of the will, follows an act of the intellect. What this means is that, for Aquinas, the activity of the will is bound up with that of the intellect, both with respect to the specification and with respect to the exercise of its act. But since the intellect is a cognitive power and cognition, in general, is the passive “reception of forms from without,” its operation

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6 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 10, a. 2, co. and QDM q. 6, co.
7 As I pointed out in Chapter 1, to the extent that it receives a specification from the intellect, the will is passive in Aquinas’s most general sense of the term. See Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 22, a. 1.
8 In Chapter 3, we will see that some philosophers, such as Henry of Ghent, agree with Aquinas that, for the will to will, it is necessary that the intellect apprehend an object as good and present it to the will, but disagree that the intellect thereby actualizes a potency of the will.
9 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.: “Sed iudicium de hoc particulari operabili, ut nunc, nunquam potest esse contrarium appetitui.”
10 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, ad 20.
11 Thomas Aquinas, ST I, q. 82, a. 4, ad 3.
12 Robert Pasnau, Theories of Cognition in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), p. 129. Pasnau quotes Aquinas’s remark in his commentary on Lombard’s Sentences that “knowledge is nothing other than the impression or conjunction of the known onto the knower.” See Thomas Aquinas, Super Sent., lib. 1, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3: “[...] sed prout consideratur ipsum intellectum, prout non deest sibi intelligenti, sed est in seipso, quodammodo sic est intelligentia vel scientia: quia scientia nihil aliud est quam impressio vel conjunctio sciti ad scientem.” Aquinas does distinguish between a “passive” and “active” intellect, as in ST, I, q. 79, a. 3, co. But to my knowledge, he does not ever suggest that we have control (dominium) over the latter.
seems to be deterministic; my cognition of the world depends not on me but how the world appears to me.¹³

At first glance, then, the Problem of Control is a problem for Aquinas. A human being is not able to will otherwise than she does, for her will follows her intellect, which seems to act deterministically. But if it is necessary that a human being have the power to will otherwise than she does for her to have control over her actions, then Aquinas is in trouble. For if a human being does not have such control, then she does not seem to have free will.

In this Chapter, I would like to explain how Thomas Aquinas might address the Problem of Control. In Section 2, I will present my first response to the problem, arguing that there is a sense in which a human being is able to will otherwise than she does. In Section 3, however, I will show that this response does not adequately address the Problem of Control. I will then consider more generally how it is possible for a human being to have control on Aquinas’s psychology in Section 4. And in Sections 5 and 6, I will present my second response to the Problem of Control, arguing that, for Aquinas, a human being has a sort of control over her actions that does not involve having a power for opposites.

2 A “Conditional” Power for Opposites?

Suppose that I will health, but am not healthy now, and so I deliberate about how to become healthy. At the conclusion of my deliberation, I judge, say, that I should take this medicine as a means to health. As I have argued, such a judgement of the intellect, its apprehension and presentation of some means as good to the will, seems to determine the will for Aquinas; to be precise, it actualizes the will’s potency to the specification of its act, moving it to will this means to health rather than that or some other means. While I judge that, here and now, I should take this medicine as a means to health, I cannot but will to take the medicine. But is my will so determined prior to my judging that I should will to take the medicine? Aquinas says the following in the Disputed Questions on Evil:

¹³ See Eleonore Stump, Aquinas (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 265-6 for some remarks about Aquinas’s seeming assumption “that a great deal of human cognition is built into us.”
From this, that someone wills health, he begins to deliberate about the means to health, and having concluded his deliberation, he wills to take the medicine. Therefore, deliberation precedes the will to take medicine, which itself proceeds from the will of the willer to deliberate. Therefore, since the will moves itself to deliberation, [which] is a sort of non-demonstrative inquiry, open to opposites, the will does not move itself necessarily.14

I would like to draw the reader’s attention to this, that for Aquinas, deliberation is a “sort of non-demonstrative inquiry” (inquisitio quaedam non demonstrativa) that is “open to opposites” (ad opposita viam habens). His thought is more or less clear: means-end deliberation is practical, not demonstrative. It is possible that some means are better than others, but there is no “proof,” as it were, from the premise that I will some end to the conclusion that I should will this means rather than that or some other means.15 So, if I will health, but am not healthy now, I deliberate about the means to health. I might will to take medicine, stick to a specific diet, exercise at the gym, etc., as means to my end. But which of these means should I will in particular? Well, that depends on other considerations. (For example, do I have the time to exercise at the gym?) Before I judge that, here and now, I should will to take the medicine as a means to health, I might will some other means; if I were to judge that I should exercise at the gym rather than take the medicine, then I would will that instead.

As Thomas Williams rightly puts it, there are prospective alternative possibilities “open” to the will on Aquinas’s psychology.16 Before I make a “here-and-now” judgement that I should will

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14 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, co.: “…ex hoc quod vult sanitatem, incipit consiliari de his quae conferunt ad sanitatem; et tandem determinato consilio vult accipere potionem. Sic ergo voluntatem accipiendi potionem praecedit consilium, quod quidem procedit ex voluntate volentis consiliari. Cum ergo voluntas se consilio moveat, consilium autem est inquisitio quaedam non demonstrativa, sed ad opposita viam habens, non ex necessitate voluntas seipsam movet.” Also, see QDV, q. 22, a. 13, co.

15 But Aquinas does sometimes compare the relationship of end to means to that of premise to conclusion. See, for example, ST, I, q. 83, a. 4, co.: “Eligere autem est appetere aliquid propter alterum consequendum, unde proprie est eorum quae sunt ad finem. Sic autem se habet in cognitiis principium ad conclusionem, cui propter principia assentium; ita in appetitivis se habet finis ad ea quae sunt ad finem, quae propter finem appetuntur.” In Chapter 3, I will examine how Thomas of Sutton, an early Thomist at the University of Oxford, develops this comparison further.

16 “The alternative possibilities to which he [Aquinas] appeals are not actually available to the agent at the very moment of choice, but only prospectively.” See Thomas Williams, “The Libertarian Foundations of Scotus’s Moral Philosophy,” p. 208.
this rather than that or the other thing, I am not determined to will something; when I will some end, I am in potency to willing any means to that end. Since there are prospective alternative possibilities open to me, I am, in a sense, able to will otherwise than I do. Supposing that I judge that, here and now, I should will this thing, determining myself to will it, if I had judged that I should will something else, then I would have been determined to will that instead.

In this way, Aquinas seems to have an answer to the Problem of Control. Again, the problem states that, if the will is necessitated by the intellect, which seems to operate deterministically, then a human being is not able to will otherwise than she does, but if she is not able to will otherwise than she does, then she does not have control over her actions. Aquinas could draw a distinction between two types of necessity:

(Conditional Necessity) It is necessary that-(if the intellect judges that the will should will $x$, then the will wills $x$).

(Absolute Necessity) If the intellect judges that the will should will $x$, then it is necessary that-(the will wills $x$).

There is nothing in Aquinas’s psychology that commits him to Absolute Necessity. However, his claim that the intellect moves the will by actualizing its potency to the specification of its act does seem to commit him to Conditional Necessity. That is, since the intellect moves the will to willing this rather than that, it is necessary that, if the intellect judges that, here and now, the will should will this, then the will wills this. But if Aquinas is merely committed to Conditional

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17 Eleonore Stump seems to arrive at the same conclusion. “Even where there are alternative possibilities available, on Aquinas’ account of the will’s relations to intellect they will be open to the agent only because she can be in a different intellective state from the one she is in fact in. For Aquinas, alternative possibilities for the will are dependent on alternative possibilities for the intellect; it is not possible for the determination of the intellect to be that doing A is what is good now and for the will (with that determination of the intellect still in place) to will not to do A.” See her “Aquinas’s Account of Freedom: Intellect and Will,” *Monist: An International Quarterly Journal of General Philosophical Inquiry* 80, no. 4 (1997): p. 592. Jeffrey Hause makes a similar remark: “On Aquinas’s view, the will cannot, by any innate capacity, direct the intellect’s attention, keep the intellect from issuing judgments about what one ought to do, or keep itself from willing what the intellect has determined one ought to do. Nor can it select one from among a variety of alternatives unless the intellect has first settled on that one as the alternative to be pursued. Which, if any, of a set of objects the will wills, and whether it wills anything or nothing at all, depends not on any voluntaristic capacity of the will, but on how the intellect judges the object in question.” See his “Thomas Aquinas and the Voluntarists,” *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 6, (1997): p. 168.

18 Aquinas begins his response to Question Six of the *Disputed Questions on Evil* as follows: “Quidam posuerunt, quod voluntas hominis ex necessitate movetur ad aliquid eligendum; nec tamen ponebant quod voluntas cogeretur.
Necessity, then there is a sense in which it is possible for a human being to will otherwise than she does. In particular, although it is necessary that, if the intellect judges that the will should will $x$, then the will wills $x$, the will would have willed otherwise if the intellect had judged otherwise. For example, although I might judge that I should bring something sweet to the dinner party and will to do so, if I had judged that I should rather bring something savoury, then I would have willed that instead. Put differently, Aquinas is able to offer a “conditional analysis” of the power to will otherwise:

(Conditional Analysis of Power to Will Otherwise) “S could have willed otherwise” means “If S had judged otherwise, S would have willed otherwise.”

The will is not necessitated by the intellect in such a way that a human being is not able to will otherwise than she does, for the will is not absolutely, but conditionally necessitated by the intellect. Furthermore, if the will is merely conditionally necessitated by the intellect, then it is possible for a human being to will otherwise than she does, since she would have willed otherwise if she had judged otherwise.

At this point, someone might object that my interpretation is anachronistic. The objector might observe that a “conditional analysis” of the power to do otherwise is a common tool in the toolbox of the so-called “compatibilists” of the twentieth century; to read it back into medieval philosophical texts seems unwarranted. Note, however, that although Aquinas himself does not explicitly use such a conditional analysis of the power to will otherwise, he does use similar conditional analyses elsewhere in his corpus. One such example can be found in Question 25 of the Prima pars, where Aquinas suggests that “God is able to do evil” (potest Deus prava agere) can be understood “conditionally” (sub conditione) so that “God is able to do evil” means “If

Non enim omne necessarium est violentum; sed solum id cuius principium est extra; unde et motus naturales inveniuntur aliqui necessarii, non tamen violenti: violentum enim repugnant naturali sicut et voluntario, quia utriusque principium est intra, violenti autem principium est extra. Haec autem opinio est haeretica: tollit enim rationem meriti et demeriti in humanis actibus. Non enim videtur esse meritorium vel demeritorium quod aliquis sic ex necessitate agit quod vitae non possit.” The upshot is that, in this passage, Aquinas denies that the will is moved necessarily. But is he denying Conditional Necessity, Absolute Necessity, or both? It seems more likely to me that Aquinas just wants to deny Absolute Necessity.

God were to will to do evil, then he would do evil.”\textsuperscript{20} And as Aquinas says, such a conditional, the antecedent and consequent of which are not possible, \textit{can} be true.\textsuperscript{21} God would neither ever will to do evil nor ever do evil, but \textit{if} he were to will to do evil, then he would do it.

Whatever the usefulness of such a conditional analysis of “God is able to do evil,” a conditional analysis of “S could have willed otherwise” seems to be very powerful. For if the will is conditionally necessitated by the intellect, it is nonetheless possible for a human being to will otherwise than she does. Thus, it does not follow that she has no control over her actions, as the Problem of Control concludes. William de la Mare’s criticism of Aquinas is right about something, namely, that the will \textit{is} necessitated for Aquinas. My suggestion is that this necessity is \textit{not} to be understood as absolute, but rather \textit{conditional}. And since Aquinas does not hold that the will is necessitated in an \textit{absolute} sense, it makes sense that he himself never says that the will \textit{is} necessitated by the intellect.\textsuperscript{22}

\section{Human Beings, Brute Animals, and Power for Opposites}

How plausible is this reply to the Problem of Control? Is having such a \textit{conditional} power for opposites really sufficient for a human being to have control over her actions? William de la Mare’s answer seems to be “No.” Consider the following passage from his \textit{Correctorium}:

If [Aquinas] wishes to say that, in every being, the apprehensive [power] determines appetite to one thing by necessitating it, then [what he says] is an error that has been condemned publicly in Paris, for neither the sensitive nor the rational apprehensive power determines or necessitates the will to one thing. Therefore, after reason shows and judges

\begin{footnotes}
\item[20] Thomas Aquinas, \textit{ST}, I, q. 25, a. 3, ad 2: “Quamvis philosophus dicat, in IV Topic., quod potest Deus et studiosus prava agere. Sed hoc intelligitur vel sub conditione cuius antecedens sit impossible, ut puta si dicamus quod potest Deus prava agere si velit, nihil enim prohibet conditionalem esse veram, cuius antecedens et consequens est impossible; sicut si dicatur, si homo est asinus, habet quatuor pedes.”
\item[21] Ibid.
\item[22] See note 18.
\end{footnotes}
about two things that only one should be willed, the will, by disregarding it, remains free to will the opposite. So, this position is to be avoided.23

What sort of power for opposites does William mean to attribute to the will here? Well, it does not seem to be (merely) conditional, for he says that, after (postquam) the intellect judges that the will should will this rather than that, the will, by disregarding this, is able to will that. Put differently, William conceives of the will in such a way that it does not necessarily follow the judgement of the intellect. Supposing that I, by means of my will, will this, I could have willed otherwise not because I would have willed otherwise, if I had judged otherwise. Rather, I could have willed otherwise because it was “up to” my will, as it were, to follow the judgement of my intellect and will this, or disregard that judgement, and will that. The will, according to William, does not merely have a conditional power for opposites, but an absolute one as well. That is, the will is able to will (or not will) this or that no matter the judgement of the intellect.

As William suggests elsewhere in his Correctorium, if the will did not have such an absolute power for opposites, then it would be necessitated just as the appetite of a brute animal is necessitated.24 And at first glance, he seems to be right. As I showed in Chapter 1, Aquinas holds that appetite in both rational and non-rational animals follows cognition, the passive “reception of forms from without.”25 While the rational appetite of a human being follows the rational judgements of her intellect, the sensitive appetite of a brute animal follows the natural judgements of its senses and natural estimation.26 To the extent that the sensitive appetite of brute animals follows such “natural judgements,” Aquinas says that there is in them a “semblance” or “imitation” of free choice, or liberum arbitrium,

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23 William de la Mare, Correctorium fratris Thomae, In primam partem, a. 24, p. 106: “Si autem velit dicere quod vis appetitiva [apprehensiva A, S] in omnibus determinat appetitum ad unum, necessitando ipsum, error est condemnatus Parisiis publice, quia nec vis apprehensiva sensitiva nec rationalis determinat vel necessitat voluntatem ad unum; ideo postquam ratio ostenderit et iudicaverit de duobus alterum tantum volendum, voluntas manet libera ut illo dismisso velit oppositum; unde positio haec cavenda est.”

24 See, for example, William de la Mare, Correctorium fratris Thomae, In primam secundae, a. 7, p. 232.

25 See note 12.

26 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 1, co.: “Eorum autem quae a seipsis moventur, quorumdam motus ex iudicio rationis proveniunt, quorumdam vero ex iudicio naturali. Ex iudicio rationis homines agunt et moventur; conferunt enim de agendis; sed ex iudicio naturali agunt et moventur omnia bruta.”
So, for example, if a horse is thirsty, it will judge, by means of its senses and natural estimation, that it should drink the water in the trough, and thus, want to do so, since appetite follows cognition. (And if there are no obstacles to the horse’s drinking the water, then it will move itself to drink the water, since motion follows appetite.)

But if the horse is not thirsty, then it will not judge that it should drink the water, and thus, not want to do so. The horse, then, has a conditional power for opposites, just as human beings do. If having a conditional power for opposites were sufficient for human beings to have control over their actions, then it would seem to follow that brute animals should have control over their actions too. But Aquinas denies this. As John of Damascus says in a well-known passage from his De fide orthodoxa, endorsed by Aquinas and many other medieval philosophers, “brute animals do not act so much as they are acted upon,” and in particular, acted upon by nature. Although they have a conditional power for opposites, brute animals are not able to “contradict” the natural appetite that they have for those things that they naturally judge as good for them; indeed, they act by the “impetus of nature.” Tobias Hoffmann and Cyrille Michon observe that the possibility for an animal to do otherwise does not depend on anything that is in the animal’s

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27 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.: “[...] in quantum possunt agere vel non agere unum et idem, secundum suum iudicium, ut sic sit in eis quasi quaedam conditionata libertas: possunt enim agere, si iudicant esse agendum, vel non agere, si non iudicant.” Cf. SCG, lib. 2, cap. 48, n. 3.

28 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.


30 But to the extent that Aquinas does attribute a “semblance” of liberum arbitrium to brute animals, he would likely concede that they also have a semblance of dominium, that is, a semblance of the sort of control necessary for free will and moral responsibility.

31 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 22, a. 4: “Animal enim ad aspectum delectabilis non potest non concupiscere illud; quia ipsa animalia non habent dominium suae inclinationis; unde non agunt, sed magis aguntur, secundum Damascenum [...]” Cf. John Damascene, De fide orthodoxa, cap. 41, n. 1, ed. Eligius M. Buytaert (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1955), p. 153. William de la Mare quotes the same text in Correctorium fratis Thomae, In primam secundae, a. 6, p. 231: “[...] quod patet per auctoritatem Damasceni, libro III, capitulo 26, ubi ita dicit: Irrationalia non sunt libera arbitrio, aguntur enim magis quam agant, et ideo non contradicunt naturali appetitu, sed simul cum appetirint aliquid et appetitum faciunt et actum [...]”


33 Thomas Aquinas, SCG, lib. 1, cap. 88, n. 3.
control.\textsuperscript{34} Although the horse would not have drunk the water if it had not been thirsty and judged that it should drink the water, its being thirsty and judging that it should drink water is not “up to” it. But if the horse’s being thirsty and judging that it should drink water is not up to it, then neither is the horse’s drinking (or not drinking) the water; it does not seem to follow from the horse’s conditionally being able to do otherwise that it has control over its actions. Thus, it is not likely that a human being has control over her actions by having such a conditional power for opposites, which she shares with brute animals.

4 Control and Power for Opposites

So, how does a human being have control over her actions? Well, we know that Aquinas conceives of the will as a rational appetite. That is, the will is an appetite for the good that is moved by the apprehension of the intellect, and thus, the act of the intellect is naturally prior to that of the will.\textsuperscript{35} Although the will moves the intellect and the other powers of the soul as an efficient cause, “educing” them from potentiality to actuality, it does so as a mover moved by the intellect.\textsuperscript{36} Indeed, the intellect is naturally prior to the will even in the will’s “self-motion.” As I argued in Chapter 1, although Aquinas says that the will moves itself, he takes care to make the qualification that it does so secundum aliud, or “indirectly,” not per se, or “directly,” since per se self-motion violates the Aristotelian axiom that everything moved is moved by another, which Aquinas seems to uphold throughout his career. The will, willing some end, moves itself to will some means to that end by moving the intellect. Moreover, the movement of the intellect by the will presupposes a prior movement of the will by the intellect, for the intellect is, again, naturally prior to the will.\textsuperscript{37} The upshot is that, on Aquinas’s psychology, for a human being to have

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{34} Tobias Hoffmann and Cyrille Michon, “Aquinas on Free Will and Intellectual Determinism,” Philosophers’ Imprint 17, no. 10 (2017): pp. 1-36, esp. 26-7.
\item \textsuperscript{35} For a good discussion of the intellect’s priority with respect to the will, see Hause, “Thomas Aquinas and the Voluntarists,” and T. H. Irwin, “The Scope of Deliberation: A Conflict in Aquinas,” The Review of Metaphysics 44, no. 1 (1990): pp. 21-42 (esp. Section II).
\item \textsuperscript{36} Aquinas describes the will as a moved mover (movens motum) throughout his corpus. See, for example, ST, I, q. 80, a. 2, co.; ST, I-II, q. 50, a. 5, ad 2; QDP, q. 6, a. 6, co.
\item \textsuperscript{37} Aquinas is aware that, since the will and the intellect move each other, but neither moves itself per se, the interaction between the two powers seems to regress infinitely. He seems to take the problem posed by such an infinite regress very seriously, for he addresses it throughout his career. See, for example, QDV, q. 22, a. 12, ad 2;
\end{itemize}
control over her actions, she has to have control over her will, but to have control over her will, *she has to have control over the judgements of her intellect*. How does she have such control?

It is natural to suppose that, for a human being to have control over the judgements of her intellect, she has to have a kind of power for opposites.\(^{38}\) If she judges that *this* is good, and thus, to be willed, for that judgement to be in her control, she had to have been able to either judge that *this* is good or that it is bad; a human being is supposed to differ from the sheep that *necessarily* judges by sensation and natural estimation that it is good to flee from the wolf. But when a human being judges that something is good (or bad) it is because that thing appears to her so. Thus, for her to have control over the judgements of her intellect, it seems that she has to have control over *how things appear to her*; by controlling how things appear to her, she controls whether she judges that those things are good (or bad).

Suppose that a human being does have control over the judgements of her intellect by having a power for opposites. Does she, then, have control over how things appear to her? Thomas Williams is skeptical that such control is possible:

> [...] actions are determined by inclinations, and inclinations are determined by judgements. So we must ask whether the intellect itself is free with respect to its judgement about which of the available conceptions of happiness it will adopt. The answer is “Of course not.” The intellect, as everyone in this debate would admit, operates deterministically. To put it in more modern terms, in a given set of circumstances, we have no control over how things look to us. If in a given set of circumstances my intellect presents the life of aesthetic experience to me as the perfect and complete human life, it is not physically possible for it in that set of circumstances to present any other life to me as embodying happiness.\(^{39}\)

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Williams is right that, for Aquinas, motion (or action) follows the will, which follows the intellect, and thus, for a human being to have control over her appetites and actions, she has to have control over her judgements. But Williams argues that a human being does not have such control, for her intellect “operates deterministically.” Indeed, her judgement that she should will this is determined by how it appears to her, which is not “up to her,” and so neither is her judgement that she should will this “up to her,” nor her willing this and doing it. Since Aquinas conceives of the will as a rational appetite that follows the intellect, it seems that a human being does not have control over her actions on his psychology.

Other scholars share Williams’s assumption that a human being has control over the judgements of her intellect by having a power for opposites but argue that she does have control over how things appear to her. Notably, David Gallagher says the following:

[...] it seems that an intellectualist understanding of will and choice results in a kind of psychological determinism, unless we attribute to the agent some control over the judgement which governs the will’s act. This in turn implies some control over how the good appear to that particular agent. It is [...] clear Thomas does indeed allow for such control.

40 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.

41 Colleen McCluskey has argued against Williams’s reading of Aquinas, rejecting the claim that “the intellect acts deterministically in any sense detrimental to libertarian freedom,” and the claim that “the intellect must present the best option to the will.” See her “Intellective Appetite and the Freedom of Human Action,” The Thomist 66, (2002): 421-456. McCluskey’s rejection of each of these claims strikes me as controversial. First, she says that there is “nothing in Aquinas’s view that prohibits him from arguing that the intellect has synchronic alternatives,” but it seems to me that, since the intellect is not now judging that something is good, it has to be moved from potentially to actually judging that it is so by something other than itself, for everything moved is moved by another. Thus, the intellect seems to have diachronic, not synchronic alternatives. Also, it is curious that, when Aquinas explains how human freedom is grounded in the intellect, as in the Disputed Questions on Truth, he draws attention not to synchronic alternatives in the intellect, but rather to its mode of cognition, as I will show in Section 5. Second, it is not clear to me why “it is quite a leap to move from the claim that one chooses on the basis of what one sees good to the claim that one chooses on the basis of what one sees best” (p. 436). For the intellect might apprehend this and that as good. What, then, moves the will from potentially willing this or that to actually willing this and not that, since both are good? I presume McCluskey would say that some criterion is necessary “in virtue of which one alternative becomes prominent,” and moreover, that “prominent” is ambiguous and “need not be taken to imply that one alternative appears better than the other” (p. 437). But the will is a rational appetite for the good, not the “prominent.” If the will is to be moved from potentially willing this or that to actually willing this and not that, then it has to be through some criterion according to which the former is not merely good, but better than the latter.

But how does Aquinas allow for such control? According to Gallagher, a human being has control over how things appear to her through her will:

[..] agents most fundamentally control how goods appear to them by exercising control over their consideration of actions. With respect to their goodness or desirability, all actions appear differently if considered differently. But whether or not an action will be considered in one particular light is voluntary.**43**

Gallagher is drawing on Aquinas’s later works, and in particular, his remarks about whether a human being wills necessarily in the *Prima secundae* and *Disputed Questions in Evil*:

If an object is proposed to [the will] that is not good according to every consideration, then the will is not necessarily “carried” to it. And since the lack of whatever good has the nature of [something] not good, it follows that only that good which is perfect and lacks nothing, namely, beatitude, is such a good that the will is not able to not will [it]. However, it is possible to consider any other particular goods as not good, inasmuch as they lack some good. And according to this consideration, they can be either rejected or accepted by the will, which can be “carried” to the same thing according to different considerations.**44**

With the exception of beatitude, no particular good is “all good,” as it were; in some respects, a particular good will appear good, but in others, it will appear bad. Bitter medicine, for example, will appear good, if it is “seen” as a means to health, but bad, if it is “seen” as means to pleasure. The will, as a rational appetite for the good, will be “carried” (*fertur*) to the medicine as a means to health, not as a means to pleasure.

**43** Ibid.

**44** Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 10, a. 2, co.: “Si autem proponatur sibi aliquod objectum quod non secundum quaelibet considerationem sit bonum, non ex necessitate voluntas feretur in illud. Et quia defectus cuiuscumque boni habet rationem non boni, ideo illud solum bonum quod est perfectum et cui nihil deficit, est tale bonum quod voluntas non potest non velle, quod est beatitudo. Alia autem quaelibet particularia bona, inquantum deficiunt ab aliquo bono, possunt accipi ut non bona, et secundum hanc considerationem, possunt repudiari vel approbari a voluntate, quae potest in idem ferri secundum diversas considerationes.”
What determines the way that a thing is considered by the intellect, and thus, whether that thing is judged to be good or bad? According to Gallagher, the will does. He argues that, for Aquinas, the will is able to spontaneously “direct” the intellect to consider a thing this way or that way. For example, the will is able to direct the intellect to consider the bitter medicine as a means to pleasure, so that the intellect judges that the medicine is bad. By directing the intellect, the will is able to control how things are “seen,” and thus, how the intellect judges them. Since it has such control over the intellect, Gallagher argues that the will is that power “by which actions are in control of an agent,” “the source of anything done freely.”

However, I am skeptical of this reading of Aquinas’s psychology. For as I argued in Chapter 1, Aquinas conceives of the will as essentially passive with respect to the intellect throughout his career. I concede that the will is able to “direct” the intellect; Aquinas makes it very clear that the will is able to move the intellect and the other powers of the soul as an agent, or efficient, cause. But to my knowledge, nowhere in the corpus does Aquinas suggest that will is able to move the intellect spontaneously, that is, having not been moved by the intellect. That Aquinas commits himself (without making any qualification) to the act-potency axiom seems to me to be evidence against such a reading.

But suppose that the will is able to spontaneously move the intellect to consider a thing this way or that way. Before it so moves the intellect, the will is in potency to moving the intellect to consider the thing this way or that way (the specification of its act). That the will spontaneously moves the intellect to consider the thing this way rather than that way suggests that the will has

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45 David Gallagher, “Free Choice and Free judgement in Thomas Aquinas,” p. 267. Tobias Hoffmann presents a similar interpretation, which “does not exclude a certain spontaneity in the will to direct the focus on one rather than the other consideration, albeit without stipulating that such an activity of the will is unmotivated and unmoved,” arguing that Aquinas “nowhere posits a chain of motives to consider a specific aspect of an object. The efficacy of a specific motive is in fact not to be traced to ever more specific reasons, but rather to the inclination of the will to the ultimate end.” See Tobias Hoffmann, “Aquinas and Intellectual Determinism: The Test Case of Angelic Sin,” Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie 89, (2007): pp. 148-9. Roland Hissette also seems to suggest a similar interpretation. See his Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 mars 1277 (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1977), esp. pp. 243-246.


47 See, for example, QDV, q. 22, a. 12, co.; ST, I, q. 82, a. 4, co.; QDM, q. 6, co.

48 I agree with Jeffrey Hause that Aquinas is a “thoroughgoing intellectualist.” See his “Thomas Aquinas and the Voluntarists,” p. 168.
to move *itself* to the specification of its act. But in the *Prima secundae* and the *Disputed Questions on Evil*, Aquinas makes it clear that, for the will to act, it has to be moved to the specification of its act *by the intellect*. It follows that either the will is sometimes moved to the specification of its act by the intellect and sometimes by itself, or it is not necessary for the will to act that the intellect move it to the specification of its act, for it is able to so move itself. But it seems unlikely that Aquinas would endorse the one or the other.

As Eleonore Stump has suggested, it seems that the power to do otherwise is not, by itself, very helpful for understanding Aquinas’s theory of action. In the following two sections, I would like to take a different approach to understanding that theory, one that takes his commitment to the act-potency axiom, in general, and the passivity of the will, in particular, seriously.

### 5 Two Sorts of Control

I agree with modern scholars of Aquinas that he does think that a human being has a kind of control (*dominium*) over her actions because she has a power for opposites. There is good evidence of this throughout Aquinas’s writings:

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49 See Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 10, a. 2, co.; QDM, q. 6, co.

50 Thomas Williams makes a similar point about the will’s ability to “avert” the intellect, as described in QDM, q. 6, ad 15, for example: “But perhaps in this case Aquinas could say that the will can act on its own steam. The will can simply avert the intellect as its discretion. If he can say that here, however, why could he not say it anywhere else?” See his “The Libertarian Foundations of Scotus’s Moral Philosophy,” p. 207.


52 Notably, David Gallagher, but also see Eleonore Stump & Norman Kretzmann, “Absolute Simplicity,” *Faith and Philosophy* 2, (1985): p. 362: “So the self-directedness or freedom of the will considered as its partial independence from the intellect is manifested in three capacities: (1) to choose among alternative presented as equally good, (2) to refrain from pursuing a subsidiary end presented as good, and (3) to direct the intellect’s attention.” Also, see Colleen McCluskey, “Intellective Appetite,” p. 453: “What I would argue is that the intellect is likewise not constrained. Although the world shapes the alternatives the intellect considers, the world does not determine the judgment the intellect makes. Thus, this discussion shows that Aquinas can defend the view that we control how we act on the information we obtain from the world and that we do so ultimately in virtue of the intellect.”
It is a “characteristic feature” (*proprium*) of the will that it has control over its acts, namely, so that it is able to act or not act.\(^ {53} \)

Animals, at the sight of something delectable, cannot *not* desire that thing because they do not have control over their inclination. Thus, according to John Damascene, they do not act, but are rather acted upon.\(^ {54} \)

For only rational substances have control of their acts, in such way that it is in them to act or not act. But other substances are acted upon rather than act.\(^ {55} \)

We are the masters of our actions insofar as we are able to choose *this* or *that.*\(^ {56} \)

The control that the will has over its acts, through which it is in its power to will or not will, excludes the determination of the power to one thing and the violence of a cause acting externally.\(^ {57} \)

Since a human being has a rational appetite, or will, she has a kind of control over her actions that involves *alternative possibilities* (that is, *facere et non facere; agere et non agere; velle vel non velle; hoc vel illud eligere*). I argued in Section 1 that this “power for opposites” is a conditional one; that a human being could have willed otherwise means that, if she had judged otherwise, then she would have willed otherwise. But I argued in Section 2 that human beings seem to share such a conditional power for opposites with brute animals. So, if a human being

\(^{53}\) Thomas Aquinas, *Super Sent.*, lib. 2, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, co.: “Habere autem dominium super suos actus, ut scilicet possit facere et non facere, voluntatis proprium est.” See further, *Super Sent.*, lib. 2, d. 25, q. 1, a. 1, co.; d. 34, q. 1, a. 3, ad 4.

\(^{54}\) Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 22, a. 4, co.: “Animal enim ad aspectum delectabilis non potest non concupiscere illud; quia ipsa animalia non habent dominium suae inclinationis; unde non agunt, sed magis aguntur, secundum Damascenum [...]”

\(^{55}\) Thomas Aquinas, QDP, q. 9, a. 1 ad 3: “Nam solae substantiae rationales habent dominium sui actus, ita quod in eis est agere et non agere; aliae vero substantiae magis aguntur quam agant.”

\(^{56}\) Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 82, a. 1, ad 3: “Ad tertium dicendum quod sumus domini nostrorum actuum secundum quod possimus hoc vel illud eligere. Electio autem non est de fine, sed de his quae sunt ad finem, ut dicitur in III Ethic. Unde appetitus ultimi finis non est de his quorum domini sumus.”

\(^{57}\) Thomas Aquinas, SCG, lib. 1, cap. 68, n. 8: “Dominium autem quod habet voluntas supra suos actus, per quod in eius est potestate velle vel non velle, excludit determinationem virtutis ad unum, et violentiam causae exterius agentis [...]”
has control over her actions because she has a conditional power for opposites, then so do brute animals. But does having control just mean having a power for opposites?

Consider the following example described by John Martin Fischer and Mark Ravizza in their *Responsibility and Control: A Theory of Moral Responsibility*:

Let us suppose that Sally is driving her car. It is functioning well, and Sally wishes to make a right turn. As a result of her intention to turn right, she signals, turns the steering wheel, and carefully guides the car to the right. [...] In this ordinary case, Sally guides the car to the right, but she could have guided it to the left. She controls the car, and also she has a certain sort of control over the car’s movements. Insofar as Sally actually guides the car in a certain way, we shall say that she has “guidance control.” Further, insofar as Sally also has the power to guide the car in a different way, we shall say that she has “regulative control.”

Suppose that, to get to the grocery store, Sally has to make a right turn at the intersection. Sally wishes to do her groceries, knows that she has to turn right to get to the grocery store, and thus, decides to make a right turn. When she makes a right turn, Sally “guides” her car in a certain way, namely, towards the grocery store. If her car is working well, however, Sally could have guided the car in a different way. That is, before she makes a right turn, she is able to make a right turn or a left turn.

But now suppose that Sally is in a “driver instruction” car that has dual controls. Although Sally’s instructor lets her make the car go to the right, say, if it had seemed as if she were going to make it go to the left, he would have intervened and made it go to the right. Here, it seems that, when Sally makes the car go to the right, she does guide the car in a certain way, but she could not have guided the car in a different way; her instructor would have not let her do so.

Fischer and Ravizza’s example suggests that there are two kinds of control that Sally could have over her making a right turn. Insofar as Sally’s making a right turn is the conclusion of her


59 Ibid., p. 32.
reasoning about how to get to the grocery store, she has “guidance control” over her action; she is not coerced or compelled to make a right turn, but rather does so because she judges that it is a means to her end. Insofar as Sally is able to make a right turn or a left turn before she makes a right turn, she has “regulative control” over her action; she could have done otherwise, that is, although she guides her car in one direction, she could have guided it in the other.

Fischer and Ravizza observe that, although it is not possible for Sally to have regulative control over her action without having guidance control, since her being able to guide the car in one direction or the other presupposes that she is able to guide her car at all, it is possible for Sally to have guidance control over her action without having regulative control. For when she makes a right turn in a driver instruction car, it is not true that, before she turns, she is able to make a right turn or a left turn; her instructor only lets her make a right turn. But if she makes the turn because she judges that doing so is a means to her end, she does guide her action. Thus, “one can have a certain sort of control without having the sort of control that involves alternative possibilities.”

In the following section, I would like to show that Aquinas shares Fischer and Ravizza’s insight. There is a kind of control that a human being has over her actions because she has a power for opposites. But there is another kind of control for Aquinas that seems to be more basic than this one and does not involve alternative possibilities.

6 Perfect Cognition of the End

Aquinas draws a distinction in the Prima secundae of his Summa theologiae that is important for understanding his views about control, namely, the distinction between perfect and imperfect cognition of the end (cognitio finis):

Cognition of the end is perfect when it is not just the case that the thing that is the end is apprehended, but [when] the character (ratio) of the end, and the relationship (proportio) of that which is ordered to the end to [the end] itself are also cognized. Such cognition of the end belongs only to a rational nature. But imperfect cognition of the end is that

60 Ibid., my emphasis.
[cognition] which consists only in the apprehension of the end, without this, that the character (ratio) of the end is cognized, or the proportion of the act to the end. Such cognition of the end is found in brute animals through sense and natural estimation.\textsuperscript{61}

Although the language of “perfect” and “imperfect” cognition of the end appears only in the \textit{Prima secundae}, Aquinas does discuss the kind of cognition of the end that belongs to “rational natures” (that is, human beings) elsewhere in his corpus. There are some small differences between Aquinas’s few descriptions of (distinctively) human cognition of the end,\textsuperscript{62} but how such cognition is supposed to differ from brute animal cognition of the end is more or less clear: a human being and a brute animal are both able to act for the sake of an end that they apprehend by means of some cognitive act. But whereas a brute animal merely apprehends “the thing that is the end” (\textit{res quae est finis}) of its action, a human being is able to apprehend the “character” (\textit{ratio}) of the end and its relationship to her action, that is, the means to the end.

Aquinas calls this cognition of the end “perfect,” but note that it is not “perfect” in the sense that a human being apprehends the “nature” (\textit{natura}) of the end, which would suggest that she has scientific knowledge (\textit{scientia}) of it.\textsuperscript{63} It is rather “perfect” in the sense that she does not merely apprehend the end of her action, but also \textit{what it means} for that end to be an end and how it is related to her action. For example, a brute animal might apprehend some food by means of its senses and naturally judge that it is to be pursued because it is hungry. But by means of her intellect, a human being might apprehend the satisfaction of her hunger as an end to be pursued, and eating some food as a means to it; she is able to (intellectually) “see” the end as a thing she wants that is ordered to other things she wants; as a thing that might get her other things she

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{61} Thomas Aquinas, \textit{ST}, I-II, q. 6, a. 2, co.: “Perfecta quidem finis cognitio est quando non solum apprehenditur res quae est finis sed etiam cognoscitur ratio finis, et proportio eius quod ordinatur in finem ad ipsum. Et talis cognitio finis competit soli rationali naturae. Imperfecta autem cognitione finis est quae in sola finis apprehensione consistit, sine hoc quod cognoscatur ratio finis, et proportio actus ad finem. Et talis cognitione finis inventur in brutis animalibus, per sensum et aëstimationem naturalem.”
  \item \textsuperscript{62} See, for example, Thomas Aquinas, \textit{Super Sent.}, lib. 2, d. 25, q. 1, a. 1, co.: “Sic ergo patet quod haec est differentia in agentibus quia quaedam determinat sibi finem et actum in finem illum, quaedam vero non: nec aliquod agens finem sibi praestituisse potest nisi rationem finis cognoscat et ordinem ejus quod est ad finem ipsum, quod solium in habentibus intellectum est [...]”; ST I, q. 103, a. 1, ad 1: “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod aliquid movetur vel operatur propter finem dupliciter. Uno modo, sicut agens seipsum in finem, \textit{ut homo et aliae creaturae rationales, et talium est cognoscere rationem finis, et eorum quae sunt ad finem [...]”
  \item \textsuperscript{63} I discuss this more in Chapter 5.
\end{itemize}
wants but might also be in tension with them; as a thing that she does not have now, but will have if she thinks about how to get it and chooses the appropriate means.

I said that the distinction between “perfect” and “imperfect” cognition of the end is important for understanding Aquinas’s views about control. This is because Aquinas thinks (A) that human beings are able to form meta-j judgements; (B) that they are able to form meta-j judgements inasmuch as they have perfect cognition of the end; and (C) that they have a kind of control over their actions because they are able to form meta-j judgements.64

(A) and (B) are clear from the first article of Question 24 of Aquinas’s Disputed Questions on Truth. There, he argues as follows:

Judgement about what is to be done is attributed to brute animals in the same manner that motion and action [are] attributed to natural, inanimate bodies. For just as heavy and light objects do not move themselves such that they are, by this fact, the cause of their motion, so brute animals do not judge about their own judgement, but follow the judgement put in them by God. And thus, they are not the cause of their own decision and do not have the freedom of decision. But man, judging about what is to be done by the power of his reason, is able to judge about his own decision, inasmuch as he apprehends the character of the end and of the means, and the relationship and order of the one to the other.65

As we already know, appetite in animals, both non-rational and rational, follows the apprehension of an object by a cognitive power. If the object is apprehended as good, the animal pursues that object, but if it is apprehended as bad, the animal avoids it. Put differently, both sensitive and rational appetite is “moved” by a cognitive power’s judgements about what is good

64 I defend a similar view in Section 2 of my “Peter John Olivi, Free Will, and the Threefold aspectus,” forthcoming in Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales.

65 Ibid., q. 24, a. 1, co.: “[...] per quem modum attribuitur motus et actio corporibus naturalibus inanimatis, per eumdem modum attribuitur brutis animalibus iudicium de agendis; sicut gravia et levia non movent se ipsa, ut per hoc sint causa sui motus, ita nec bruta iudicant de suo iudicio, sed sequuntur iudicium sibi a Deo inditum. Et sic non sunt causa sui arbitrii, nec libertatem arbitrii habent. Homo vero per virtutem rationis iudicans de agendis, potest de suo arbitrio iudicare, in quantum cognoscit rationem finis et eius quod est ad finem, et habitudinem et ordinem unius ad alterum [...]” The passage seems to develop an idea from QDV, q. 22, a. 4, co.: “Quod autem aliquid determinet sibi inclinationem in finem, non potest contingere nisi cognoscat finem, et habitudinem finis in ea quae sunt ad finem: quod est tantum rationis. Et ideo talis appetitus non determinatus ex aliquo alicui de necessitate, sequitur apprehensionem rationis; unde appetitus rationalis, qui voluntas dicitur, est alia potentia ab appetitu sensibili.”
and bad. What I would like to draw attention to here is that, while brute animals do make natural judgements about what they should do, which their (sensitive) appetite follows, they do not “judge about their own judgement” (iudicant de suo iudicio) but “follow the judgement put in them by God” (sequuntur iudicium sibi a Deo inditum). As Aquinas says, brute animals judge “by a natural instinct” (ex naturali instinctu). It follows that they “do not have the choice between different judgements about one and the same thing. All members of one species judge in the same way about like stimuli.”

A brute animal, then, is not able to reflect on its judgements about what to do but is rather but “programmed” by nature to act as it does. A human being, however, “judging about what is to be done by the power of his reason,” is able to “judge about his own decision” (de suo arbitrio iudicare). That is, since decisions are judgements about what to do, a human being is able to form meta-judgements (judgements about his first-order judgements about what to do).

Aquinas says that a human being is able to form meta-judgements “inasmuch as he apprehends the character of the end and of the means, and the relationship and order of the one to the other,” or has so-called “perfect” cognition of the end. But why would he think that the ability to form meta-judgements and perfect cognition of the end are related in this way? Well, consider what it means for a human being to have perfect cognition of the end. He knows what it is for his end to be an end and what it is for his means to be a means to that end. So, he seems to have the resources that are necessary for evaluating his judgement that some means is to be pursued for the sake of some end. It is possible that, by pursuing this means, he is not able to meet some other end, which he wants more. He might then think about what means to pursue such that he is able to meet both of these ends. If he cannot think of such a means, then he might have to give up on one of his ends. Since he “sees” his end as an end, that is, as a thing that he wants but does

66 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 83, a. 1, co.
not have, and that is related to other things that he wants (and things that he does not want), and
his means as a means to that end, that is, as a thing that will get him what he wants, and might
also get him other things that he wants (or things that he does not want), he is able to think about
whether his judgement that this means is to be pursued for the sake of that end is a good
judgement or a bad one.

For example, if he rationally judges that he should take a taxi to get to the airport, apprehending
his end as an end and his means as means to that end, then he might think to himself, “I want to
get to the airport, but I also don’t want to spend a lot of money. But if I take a taxi to the airport,
then I will have to spend a lot of money. There are cheaper ways of getting to the airport,
however, like taking the bus. So, I now judge that I judged poorly. I should take a bus to get to
the airport.” But he might also think to himself, “I want to get to the airport, and I want to get
there quickly. If I take a taxi to the airport, then I will get to the airport as quickly as possible.
So, I now judge that I judged well. I should take a taxi to get to the airport.” The upshot is that he
is able to judge that, since taking a taxi is more expensive than other ways of getting to the
airport, his first-order judgement is bad, or since taking a taxi is quicker than other ways of
getting to the airport, his first-order judgement is good. But for him to be able to make either of
these meta-j judgements, it is necessary that he know what it is for getting to the airport to be an
end (it is somewhere that he is not now but wants to be and that it is related to other things that
he wants and things he does not want) and what it is for taking a taxi to be a means to that end (it
is a way of getting that thing that he wants, which is related to other things he wants and things
he does not want).

Thus far, I have shown that, for Thomas Aquinas, (A) human beings are able to form meta-
j judgements, and (B) they are able to form meta-j judgements inasmuch as they have perfect
cognition of the end. I would now like to show that (C) human beings have a kind of control over
their actions because they are able to form meta-j judgements. In the first article of question 24 of
his Disputed Questions on Truth, Aquinas argues that there is a sense in which a human being is
“the cause of herself” (causa sui) because she is able to form meta-j judgements. The passage
quoted above continues:

But man, judging about what is to be done by the power of his reason, is able to judge
about his own decision, inasmuch as he apprehends the character of the end and of the
means, and the relationship and order of the one to the other. Therefore, he is not just the cause of himself in moving, but in judging as well.  

Aquinas says that, since a brute animal does not judge about its own judgement, it is not the cause of its own decision, that is, its judgements about what to do. But since a human being is able to judge about her own judgement, she is “not just the cause of herself in moving, but in judging as well.” What does Aquinas mean?

Many of Aquinas’s uses of “causa sui” appear in passages quoting Aristotle’s remarks in the *Metaphysics* about how a free man (liber) differs from a slave (servus). The free man, but not the slave, Aquinas says, is causa sui (liber est causa sui). But in these passages, being causa sui does not seem to mean that the free man brings about his own existence or essence, which Aquinas denies is possible elsewhere. Rather, it means acting causa sui. That is, in these passages, being “the cause of oneself” means acting “for one’s own sake.” Consider, for example, Aquinas’s claim in the third book of his commentary on Lombard’s *Sentences* that, when the slave acts not “by his own motion” (proprio motu) but is rather moved as an instrument of his master, he is not causa sui, but causa alterius. It makes sense here that the slave is causa alterius not because he is “the cause of another,” but rather because he acts “for the sake of another,” and in particular, his master. A very similar idea appears in the *Prima pars*. Aquinas contrasts the free man, who is causa sui, with the slave, who is “ordered to another” (ordinatur

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70 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 1, co.: “Homo vero per virtutem rationis iudicans de agendis, potest de suo arbitrio iudicare, in quantum cognoscit rationem finis et eius quod est ad finem, et habitudinem et ordinem unius ad alterum: et ideo non est solum causa sui ipsius in movendo, sed etiam in iudicando.”

71 See note 65.

72 Aquinas draws similar conclusions in SCG, lib. 2, cap. 48, n. 3 and ST, I-II, q. 6, a. 1, co.

73 See, for example, SCG, lib. 1, cap. 18, n. 5; *Sententia Metaphysicae*, lib. 3, l. 8, n. 19. For a discussion of the phrase “causa sui,” see Jamie Spiering, “‘Liber est causa sui’: Thomas Aquinas and the Maxim ‘The Free is the Cause of Itself’”, *Review of Metaphysics* 65 (2011), pp. 351-376, esp. pp. 353-357.

74 Thomas Aquinas, *Super Sent.*, lib. 3, d. 9, q. 1, a. 1, qc. 1, ad 1: “Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod secundum philosophum in principio Metaph., liber est qui sui causa est; unde servus dicitur qui causa alterius est, et servitium quod causa alterius agitur. Sed alterius causa agi est dupliciter: vel sicut finis, sicut servus non lucratur sibi sed domino: vel sicut moventis, sicut servus non proprio motu, sed motus sicut instrumentum domini, operatur. Servitium ergo quantum ad hoc secundum tollit libertatem voluntatis, et per consequens virtutem; sed quantum ad primum non, quia homo potest propter alterum operari quod ei debet, etiam propria voluntate; et secundum hoc latria dicitur servitus.”
The slave, he says, does not direct himself to his own advantage, but is rather directed by his master to the master’s own advantage. Aquinas’s suggestion here is that the free man is *causa sui* not because he is “the cause of himself,” but rather because he “orders” or “directs” himself, that is, because he acts for his own sake. And in the Second Part of the Second Part of his *Summa theologiae*, the so-called *Secunda Secundae*, Aquinas argues that the slave does not act *causa sui*, but is rather moved, as it were, “extrinsically” (*ab extrinseco*). The free man, however, is *causa sui*. Here again, his suggestion is that the free man is *causa sui* because he is moved “by his own inclination,” that is, because he acts for his own sake.

So, when Aquinas says that the free is *causa sui*, he ties being *causa sui* to “self-motion,” “self-direction,” “self-determination,” and so on. In sum, he seems to me to think that the free man is *causa sui* not because he brings about his own existence or essence, but because he has a kind of control over his actions that the slave does not. The slave does act and his actions do have ends, but since he acts as an instrument of his master, neither his actions nor his ends are “his own.”

Is it possible that Aquinas has a similar meaning in question 24, article 1 of his *Disputed Questions on Truth* when he says that a human being is not just “the cause of herself in moving, but in judging as well” (*causa sui ipsius in movendo, sed etiam in iudicando*) because she is able to form meta-judgements? I think so. Consider the following argument from article 2:

Judgement is in the power (*in potestate*) of the one judging insofar as he can judge about his own judgement, for we can judge about that which is in our power. To judge about one’s own judgement is unique to reason, which reflects on its own act and apprehends the relationships of those things about which and by which it judges.

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75 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 96, a. 4, co.: “Cuius ratio est, quia servus in hoc differt a libero, quod liber est causa sui, ut dicitur in principio Metaphys. servus autem ordinatur ad alium. Tunc ergo aliquis dominatur alicui ut servo, quando eum cui dominatur ad proprium utilitatem sui, scilicet dominantis, refert.”

76 Thomas Aquinas, ST, II-II, q. 19, a. 4, co.: “Servitus enim libertati opponitur. Unde, cum liber sit qui causa sui est, ut dicitur in principio Metaphys. servus est qui non causa sui operatur, sed quasi ab extrinseco motus. Quicumque autem ex amore aliquid facit, quasi ex seipso operatur, quia ex propria inclinatione movetur ad operandum. Et ideo contra rationem servilitatis est quod aliquis ex amore operetur.”


78 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.: “Iudicium autem est in potestate iudicantis secundum quod potest de suo iudicio iudicare: de eo enim quod est in nostra potestate, possimus iudicare. Iudicare autem de iudicio suo est solius rationis, quae super actum suum reflectitur, et cognoscit habitudines rerum de quibus iudicat, et per quas iudicat [...].”
According to Aquinas, we are able to judge “about that which is in our power” (*de eo quod est in nostra potestate*). It follows that, if something is in my power, then I am able to make judgements about it, and (conversely) if I am not able to make judgements about it, then it is not in my power. Aquinas’s thinking seems to be that, if a thing is in my power, then I am able to “do something about it,” as it were. But if I am able to “do something about it,” then it seems that I am able to think about it and decide *what* I am going to do about it. (For example, I am not able to do something about my being startled when I am surprised, and this seems to be because I am not able to think about it and decide whether I will [or won’t] be startled when I am surprised—it *just* happens.) Judgement, however, is one of those things that *is* in my power, and so I am able to make judgements about it. Aquinas argues that this ability to judge about one’s own judgement, or form *meta-judgements*, is appropriate to rational animals, since they are able to reflect on their own acts and apprehend the relationships of those things “about which” (*de quibus*) and “by which” (*per quas*) they judge. Here, he seems to be affirming his claim from article 1 of question 24, namely, that having perfect cognition of the end is necessary for the ability to form meta-judgements; in particular, rational animals apprehend the relationships of their ends and means. But what I would like to draw attention to is Aquinas’s claim that the judgements of the one judging are in his power *insofar as* he is able to “judge about his own judgement.” That is, for Aquinas, the one judging has a kind of *control* over his judgements because he is able to form meta-judgements.

Why would he think this? Consider, again, my example of someone rationally judging that he should take a taxi to get to the airport, such that he apprehends his end as an end and his means as means to that end. Because of his so-called “perfect” cognition of the end, he has the resources to evaluate his judgement that he should take a taxi to get to the airport; he is able to think about whether his judgement is good or bad. What this means is that it is possible for him to make not just any judgement, but a *judgement that he thinks he should make*. A brute animal makes many judgements about what to do, but none of them are judgements it thinks it should make. Since it judges about what to do naturally, a brute animal is not able to evaluate its judgements and think about whether they are good or bad; it merely follows them. So, there

79 See note 65.
seems to be a sense in which a rational animal has its judgements in its power that a brute animal does not; the former, but not the latter, is able to make a judgement “its own.”

It is crucial to note here that, for Aquinas, a human being has power over his judgements because he is able to form meta-judgements, not because he forms actual meta-judgements. If it were necessary for a judgement to be in his power that he form an actual meta-judgement, then for that meta-judgement to be in his power, he would have to form another meta-judgement about it, and so on. It follows that his having power over a judgement would require an infinity of actual higher-order judgements. But it is not possible that he form an infinity of actual higher-order judgements, and so his having power over a judgement would also not be possible. Fortunately, this is not a problem for Aquinas. His claim is simply that a human being has power over his judgements insofar as he is able to form meta-judgements.

Since the ability to form meta-judgements gives a human being power over his judgements, however, it also gives him power over his willings and actions. Aquinas argues in the second article of question 24 that the appetite of both non-rational and rational animals follows a cognitive power’s judgements about what is good and bad, and (assuming that there are no obstacles) appetite is followed by motion, or action. So, Aquinas says, “if the judgement of a cognitive faculty is not in the [animal’s] power, but determined by something else, then the [animal’s] appetite is not in its power, and consequently, neither is its motion, or activity, absolutely in its power.” But a human being has power over his judgements insofar as he is able to form meta-judgements. Aquinas suggests that, since motion follows (rational) appetite, which follows (rational) judgement, by having power over his judgements, a human being also has power over his appetite and motion, that is, over his willings and actions.

Consider, one more time, my example of someone rationally judging that he should take a taxi to get to the airport. I argued that he is able to judge about his own judgement insofar as he has so-

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80 I also make this observation in Section 2 of my “Peter John Olivi, Free Will, and the Threefold aspectus.”

81 Ibid.: “Appetitum autem, si non sit aliquid prohibens, sequitur motus vel operatio.”

82 Ibid.: “Et ideo, si iudicium cognitivae non sit in potestate alicuius, sed sit ei aliunde determinatum, nec appetitus erit in potestate eius, et per consequens nec motus vel operatio absolute.” NB: Aquinas qualifies his statement. A brute animal does not have its appetite or activity absolutely in its power. Nonetheless, its appetite and activity are in its power to some extent. In particular, it has more power over its appetite and activity than an inanimate body does.
called “perfect” cognition of the end, and that it is therefore possible for him to evaluate his judgement and make a judgement that he thinks he should make. Since his rational appetite follows his rational judgement, however, it is also possible for him to will according to a judgement that he thinks he should make. And since motion follows rational appetite, it is also possible for him to act on a judgement that he thinks he should make. He takes a taxi to the airport because he rationally desire to do so, and he rationally desires to do so because he thinks that it would be good to do so; by being able to form meta-j judgements and make this judgement “his own,” he is able to make his rational desire and his action “his own” as well.

I agree with Scott MacDonald that the ability to form meta-j judgements is key to understanding Thomas Aquinas’s argument in the first two articles of question 24 of the Disputed Questions on Truth. But pace MacDonald, it does not seem to me that meta-judgement is supposed to make room for “genuine incompatibilist indeterminacy” in Aquinas’s action theory. According to MacDonald, “our choices can’t be free if our meta-j judgements are causally determined,” for if they are determined, then so are our judgements, choices, and actions. But I have argued that, for a human being to have power over her choices (that is, her rational appetite) it is necessary that she have power over her rational judgements because she is able to form judgements about them. Whether meta-j judgements are determined or not seems to be irrelevant. When a human being has perfect cognition of the end and the ability to form meta-j judgements, she is (ultimately) able to act on a rational judgement that she judges she should act on. (A brute animal, however, is not able to act on a judgement that it judges it should act on, for it does not have the cognitive capacities necessary for forming meta-j judgments; in particular, it is not able to apprehend what it is to be an end or what it is to be a means to some end.) Supposing that meta-j judgements are determined, a human being nonetheless has her choices in her power if she has perfect cognition of the end; it does not follow that her rational appetite is determined the very same way that a brute animal’s sensitive appetite is determined. The upshot of the first two articles of question 24 does not seem to be that there is “genuine incompatibilist indeterminacy” in the causal history of a human action.

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84 Ibid., p. 328.
Aquinas’s conclusion is rather that, by being able to form meta-judgements, a human being has a kind of control over her actions (and choices) that a brute animal does not.

But what kind of control? Is it the kind that a human being has over her actions because she “could have done otherwise,” that is, so-called “regulative” control? I do not think so. A human being does not need an ability to do otherwise to have the kind of control I have described. What matters for this control is that a human being be able to form meta-judgements. Again, if she is able to form meta-judgements, then it is possible for her to act on a judgement that she, as it were, “approves.” Whether her meta-judgements, her first-order judgements, her rational desires, or her actions are necessitated is irrelevant. For wherever necessity might be posited in the causal history of an action, a human being is nonetheless able to act for the sake of an end in a way that a brute animal is not. So, it seems to me that the kind of control that a human being has over her actions because she is able to form meta-judgements is more like so-called “guidance” control. In the example considered in Section 5, it is false that, before Sally turns her car, she is able to make a right turn or a left turn. When she does make a right turn because that is the direction she has decided to turn, however, she nonetheless “guides” her car. Similarly, regardless of whether a human being has a “power to do otherwise,” by having the ability to form meta-judgements, she nonetheless “guides” her actions by making them “her own.”

7 Conclusion

Since a human being’s will is conditionally necessitated by her intellect, which seems to act deterministically, there is a sense in which she could not have done otherwise for Thomas Aquinas. Nonetheless a human being is able to form meta-judgements inasmuch as she has so-called “perfect” cognition of the end. I have argued that, since she is able to form meta-judgements, a human being has a kind of control over her actions that a brute animal does not have over its actions. Since a human being is able to form meta-judgements and have control over her actions regardless of whether her will is so necessitated by her intellect, it follows that the Problem of Control is not a problem for Aquinas.

I said that the power to do otherwise is not, by itself, very helpful for understanding Aquinas’s action theory. Now that we see how a human being has control over her actions by being able to
form meta-judgements, however, we can better understand the sense in which she is able to do otherwise. Although human beings and brute animals both have a conditional power for opposites, it does not follow that they have the very same conditional power for opposites. Indeed, it makes a difference that the power for opposites human beings have is conditional on a rational judgement, but the power for opposites brute animals have is conditional on a natural judgement. That is, the power for opposites human beings have should be analyzed as follows:

(R-Conditional Analysis of Power for Opposites) “S could have done otherwise” means “If S had rationally judged otherwise, S would have done otherwise,” where “to rationally judge” is to judge with perfect cognition of the end, which puts S in a position to form a judgement about her judgement.

But the power for opposites that brute animals have should be analyzed as follows:

(N-Conditional Analysis of Power for Opposites) “S could have done otherwise” means “If S had naturally judged otherwise, S would have done otherwise”, where “to naturally judge” is to judge with imperfect cognition of the end.

Since a human being judges by the power of reason, she judges with perfect cognition of the end and is able to make judgements about her judgements. Thus, she is the “cause” of the (rational) judgements on which her power for opposites is conditional. A brute animal, however, judges with imperfect cognition of the end and is not able to make judgements about its judgements. Thus, it is not the “cause” of the (natural) judgements on which its power for opposites is conditional. According to R-Conditional Analysis and N-Conditional Analysis, both human beings and brute animals could have done otherwise because they would have done otherwise if they had judged otherwise. A human being, but not a brute animal, however, could have judged otherwise if she had judged that she judged poorly and revised her judgement. I agree with Hoffmann and Michon, then, that Aquinas does contrast the “conditional freedom” (that is, the conditional power for opposites) that brute animals have with the kind of freedom that human beings have, and that he “considers it a mistake to restrict human freedom to conditional
freedom.”\textsuperscript{85} But it seems likely to me that Aquinas would also consider it a mistake to think that human beings and brute animals share the very same conditional power for opposites. If, in general, conditional freedom is “bound by necessity,”\textsuperscript{86} it nonetheless seems possible to draw a distinction between the sense in which a brute animal could have done otherwise because it would have done otherwise if it had judged otherwise, and the sense in which a human being could have done otherwise because she would have done otherwise if she had judged otherwise. Again, the (conditional) possibility for an animal to do otherwise does not depend on anything that is in the animal’s control, for the animal’s actions follow its sensitive appetite, which follows its natural judgement. But it seems that the possibility for a human being to do otherwise does depend on something that is in her control, for her action follows her rational appetite, which follows her rational judgement, and that rational judgement is in her power, since she judges with perfect cognition of the end. Put differently, it would be a mistake to dismiss the conditional power for opposites that human beings have merely because it is conditional.

\textsuperscript{85} Hoffmann and Michon, “Aquinas on Free Will,” p. 26. My concern in the present chapter is somewhat different from that of Hoffmann and Michon, however, for I am concerned with control more than freedom.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid.
Chapter 3  
Intellectualism after Thomas Aquinas I – Thomas of Sutton

1 Introduction

I have argued that, for Thomas Aquinas, a human being has control over her actions because she acts with “perfect cognition” of the end of those actions.\(^1\) Perfect cognition of the end, as Aquinas explains in the *Prima secundae*, is cognition of the character of the end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two.\(^2\) A human being, but not a brute animal, is able to have such cognition because she has an immaterial *intellect*.

Aquinas’s doctrine of control has a very attractive feature, namely, that it is compatible with his intellectualist psychology of action, according to which action, *in general*, “follows” appetite, which “follows” cognition.\(^3\) A human being does *this* because she wills to do it, and she wills to do it because she judges that it would be good for her to do so. Although her action follows her act of volition, which follows her judgement, she has control over that action, for she is able to “judge about her own judgement” insofar as she has so-called “perfect” cognition of the end of that action.\(^4\)

But how plausible is Aquinas’s intellectualist psychology of action? One of its features is that the will, the faculty of volition, is in potency in two respects, namely, to the “specification,” or “determination,” of its act and to the “exercise” of its act.\(^5\) That is, the will is in potency to willing *this* or *that* and to willing or not willing, respectively. A human being wills when these potencies to the specification and to the exercise of willing are actualized.

\(^1\) See my discussion in Chapter 2, *Thomas Aquinas on Control*. I will briefly discuss the views of some of Aquinas’s “voluntarist” opponents in the conclusion of my dissertation.

\(^2\) Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 6, a. 2, co. For more on cognition of the end, see *Super Sent.*, lib. 2, d. 25, q. 1, a. 1; ST I, q. 103, a. 1, ad 1; QDP, q. 1, a. 5, co.

\(^3\) “Follows” is ambiguous, for it could be understood passively, when the cart follows the horse, or actively, as when the chef follows a recipe. But here, “to follow” means “to be moved by.” See my remarks in Chapter 1, Section 3.

\(^4\) My argument is based on the first two articles of question 24 of Aquinas’s *Disputed Questions on Truth*.

\(^5\) Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 1, co.; QDM, q. 6, co.
Aquinas says in the *Prima secundae* that, in general, the object of a power is responsible for the specification of that power’s act (*est ex parte obiecti*). In particular, the good apprehended by the intellect is responsible for the specification of the act of the will; when it apprehends an object as good and presents it to the will, the intellect “actualizes” the will’s potency to willing *this* or *that*, such that it wills *this* rather than *that*. Since “movement” in Aristotelian metaphysics is the “reduction” of potency to act, Aquinas says that the intellect *moves* the will to the specification of its act.

What about the will’s potency to the exercise of its act? Aquinas explains in the *Disputed Questions on Evil* that,

[i]f we consider the movement of the powers of the soul on the part of the exercise of act, then the principle of motion comes from the will. For the power to which the principal end pertains always moves the power to which the means to the end pertain to act, just as military [power] moves the maker of harnesses to acting. And in this way the will moves itself and all the other powers [of the soul].

While the intellect moves the will to the specification of its act, such that it wills *this* rather than *that*, the will moves itself to the exercise of its act, such that it wills rather than does not will.

The will, then, is a *self-moving* power of the soul.

But how is that possible? Movement, again, is the “reduction” of potency to act: *x* moves *y* inasmuch as *y*, which is φ-ing in potency, is “reduced” to φ-ing in act by *x*, which is already φ-

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6 Ibid. See Chapter 1, Section 4 for more on the distinction between specification and exercise.

7 Aquinas’s conception of the will, then, is consistent with a general Aristotelian theory of appetite as a passive power of the soul; the rational appetite of a human being and the sensitive appetite of a brute animal differ because the former is moved by the good apprehended by the intellect, while the latter is moved by the good apprehended by the senses. See, for example, ST, I, q. 80, a. 2, co. Note, however, that in QDV, q. 22, a. 4, ad 1, Aquinas argues that the will is not “directly” (*directe*) distinguished from sensitive appetite in this way.

8 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, co.: “Si autem considereremus motus potentiarum animae ex parte exercitii actus, sic principium motionis est ex voluntate. Nam semper potestia ad quam pertinet finis principalis, movet ad actum potentiam ad quam pertinet id quod est ad finem; sicut militaris movet frenorum factricem ad operandum, et hoc modo voluntas movet se ipsam et omnes alias potentias.” According to Aquinas, then, the will is a “moved mover” (*movens motum*). See, for example, QDV, q. 5, a. 10, co.; ST, I-II, q. 50, a. 5, ad 2.

9 As I explained in Chapter 1, it is clear in Aquinas’s earlier works that the will moves the *other* powers of the soul, but not that it moves *itself* as well. It seems to me that he has a consistent view of the will’s self-motion, however.
ing in act. For a thing to move itself, then, it would have to be in act and potency in the same respect. But this violates the Aristotelian principle that nothing can be in act and potency in the same respect, the so-called “act-potency axiom,” which Aquinas upholds throughout his career.\textsuperscript{10} Self-motion, in general, is not possible.

So, how is the will supposed to move itself to the exercise of its act? In \textit{Prima secundae}, question 9, article 4, Aquinas affirms that, since the will comes to will things that it was not willing, it is necessary that it be moved from willing those things in potency to willing them in act, and in particular, that it moves itself to willing them in act. But he specifies that

\begin{quote}
the will moves itself to this extent, [namely,] that by willing the end, it reduces itself to willing the means to [that] end. But it is not able to do this without the mediation of deliberation (\textit{nisì consilio mediate}), for when someone wills to be healed, [for example,] he begins to think about how it is possible to achieve this, and by means of such deliberation, he comes to this [judgement], that it is possible to be healed through medicine, and wills this.\textsuperscript{11}
\end{quote}

Suppose, for example, that I will to be healthy. Since I am not now healthy, I deliberate about the means to my health. Suppose further that the conclusion of my deliberation is my judgement that exercising is the (most) appropriate means to my health. So, I will to exercise. Here, my will does not move itself directly, but rather indirectly (by moving my intellect). That is, by willing the end ($\phi$-ing) and moving my intellect to deliberate about the means to that end, my will moves itself from potentially to actually willing some means to that end ($\psi$-ing). Since my will, which is $\phi$-ing in act, moves itself from $\psi$-ing in potency to $\psi$-ing in act, it does not, as Aquinas says in the \textit{Disputed Questions on Evil}, move itself “according to the same [respect]” (\textit{secundum idem})

\textsuperscript{10} For Aquinas’s commitment to this Aristotelian principle, see my remarks in Chapter 1, section 5.
\textsuperscript{11} Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 4, co.: “Manifestum est autem quod voluntas incipit velle aliquid, cum hoc prius non vellet. Necesse est ergo quod ab aliquo moveatur ad volendum. Et quidem, sicut dictum est. ipsa movet seipsam, inquantum per hoc quod vult finem, reducit seipsam ad volendum ea quae sunt ad finem. Hoc autem non potest facere nisi consilio mediate, cum enim aliquis vult sanari, incipit cogitare quomodo hoc consequi possit, et per talem cogitationem pervenit ad hoc quod potest sanari per medicum, et hoc vult.” Also, see QDM, q. 6, co.
but rather “according to a different [respect]” (secundum aliud).12 My will is not in act and potency in the same respect, and thus, the act-potency axiom is preserved.

But has Aquinas explained how the will moves itself to the exercise of its act? I am skeptical. Aquinas says that the will moves itself by moving the intellect to deliberate about the means to some end that the will wills. The intellect, having concluded its deliberation, makes a judgement that some means in particular is to be willed, which the will then wills. What is it, then, that brings about the will’s act of willing that means? It seems that, at most, by judging that this means in particular is to be willed, the intellect is able to specify the act of the will, such that it wills this means rather than some other one; the object of a power, again, is responsible for the specification of the act of that power.13 And even if the intellect, by making such a judgement, were able to move the will to the exercise of its act, Aquinas would still owe us a story about how it does so. What does it mean that, by willing the end, the will moves itself to willing the means to that end “with deliberation mediating” (consilio mediate)? Put differently, what is the causal story between willing some end, judging that some means to that end is to be willed, and then willing that means? Aquinas is simply not clear about this.14 If the will, by willing some end, merely moves itself to the exercise of its act by moving the intellect to deliberate about the means to that end and judge that some means in particular is to be willed, which judgement merely specifies the will’s act, we should still want to know why the will is moved to the exercise of its act of willing that means.

If intellectualism is to be a plausible view of the relationship between the intellect and the will, as I think it is, then it has to do more than tell us how it is possible for a human being to have control over her actions. Intellectualism has to be able to make sense of the psychology of action, and in particular, of what happens between the acts of willing some end and willing some means to that end. Aquinas’s intellectualism, however, seems not to do so.

12 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, ad 20: “Ad vicesimum dicendum, quod idem secundum idem non movet seipsum; sed secundum aliud potest seipsum movere.” The objection to which Aquinas is replying argues that, since the will does not move itself, but has to be moved by something, it is necessary that it be moved by another.

13 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 1, co.

14 See his example in ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 4, co., where he says that “[...] per talem cogitationem pervenit ad hoc quod potest sanari per medicum, et hoc vult.”
In this chapter and the following one, I would like to consider how intellectualism developed after Thomas Aquinas. In particular, I wish to draw attention to two thinkers, the early Oxford Thomist Thomas of Sutton and the secular Parisian master Godfrey of Fontaines. Thomas of Sutton and Godfrey of Fontaines are both intellectualists to the extent that they hold that the will is moved by the intellect (in some way). But they are much clearer than Aquinas about the dynamics of that relationship.

Thomas of Sutton, in particular, adopts what seems to be an essentially Thomistic intellectualism. He draws a distinction between the will’s potency to the exercise and to the determination, or specification, of its act, and argues that the will moves itself with respect to the former. He is, however, more precise than Aquinas about the sense in which the will is in potency to the exercise of its act, and the sense in which the will moves itself “with deliberation mediating,” and thus, has (at the very least) a clear story about what happens between the acts of willing the end and willing some means to that end. Sutton is worth careful study, then, for without such a story, the intellectualist has little hope of presenting a plausible view of the relationship between the intellect and the will. Unfortunately, Sutton’s intellectualism has drawn almost no scholarly attention. My aim in what follows is to address this gap in the scholarship and demonstrate the importance of Sutton to the intellectualist tradition.

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16 The exact dates of Godfrey’s birth and death are not known. For an overview of Godfrey’s life and writings, see Maurice De Wulf, Un théologien-philosophe du XIIIe siècle. Étude sur la vie, les œuvres et l’influence de Godefroid de Fontaines (Brussels: M. Hayez, 1904). For something more recent, see the introduction of John Wippel, The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines.

2 Specification, Exercise, and Self-Motion

Sutton follows Aquinas by arguing that every passive power of the soul is in potency both to the specification and to the exercise of its act. In things that do not have cognition, he says that a passive power is moved to the specification and to the exercise of its act by the same object. So, for example, something that is able to be heated (calefactibilis) is moved by something that heats (a calefaciente) in such a way that its change, namely, becoming hot, is both specified and “impressed on it” (imprimitur sibi) by the thing that heats. Put differently, the thing that heats explains why the thing that is able to be heated (1) is heated to some temperature rather than another, and (2) is actually heated. Sutton argues that, since such a passive power is moved by the same object “with respect to everything” (quoad omnia) it is moved necessarily.

Similarly, the will, since it is a passive power of the soul, “having no actuality from itself,” (nihil habens de se actualitatis) is in potency to the specification and to the exercise of its act. However, if the will were moved to the specification and to the exercise of its act by the same object, as happens with passive powers in things that do not have cognition, then it would be moved necessarily by that object, and thus, it would not will freely. But if the will were to not will freely, then Sutton says that all the principles of moral philosophy would be subverted. That is, there would be no merit or demerit, punishment or reward, praise or blame, and so on, which is absurd.

\[\text{18 Thomas of Sutton, Quodlibet III, q. 13, p. 424: } \text{“Sciendum est igitur quod potentiae animae, quae sunt passivae, sunt de se in duplici potentia, scilicet uno modo ad operari et non operari. Allo modo quantum ad hanc speciem operationis vel ad illam [...] Indiget igitur movente aliquo modo, ut ducatur de potentia utraque ad actum, scilicet et ad exercitium vel usum actus et etiam ad determinatam speciem actus.”}\]

\[\text{19 Thomas of Sutton, Quaestio ordinaria 6, p. 169: } \text{“In rebus enim non habentibus cognitionem potentia passiva ab eadem activo movetur et quoad specificationem actus, et quoad exercitium actus.”}\]

\[\text{20 Ibid.}\]

\[\text{21 Ibid.: “[...]} \text{et ideo tale passivum, quod sic movetur a suo activo quoad omnia, necessitatur ad motum prae sente passivo, et non libere movetur.”}\]

\[\text{22 Ibid. p. 168: ”Propter hoc, tenendo cum philosopho quod nihil movet se ipsum effective, et quod voluntas sit potentia passive [...]” Also, see Quaest. ord. 7, pp. 211-2: “[...] necesse est ponere voluntatem non esse actum, sed puram potentiam nihil habentem de se actualitatis.”}\]

\[\text{23 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 6, pp. 164-5: ”Non enim potest dici quod ex necessitate movetur voluntas ad volendum tale bonum, sed est in potestate ipsius velle ipsum vel non velle: aliquin tolleretur meritum et demeritum in humanis actibus, quod fides ponit. Non enim est meritorium vel demeritorium, quod aliquis ex necessitate agit, sic quod vitare non possit [...]} \text{et subverterentur omnia principia philosophiae moralis.” Thomas of Sutton seems to draw on Thomas Aquinas, Quaestionibus disputatibus de malo, q. 6: ”Hec autem opinio est heretica. Tollit enim rationem}\]
Supposing that it does will freely, then, how is the will moved to the specification and to the exercise of its act? Sutton follows Aquinas again by arguing that the will is moved to the specification of its act by the good apprehended by reason and to the exercise of its act by itself.\(^{24}\) The will is similar to other passive powers inasmuch as it is moved by its object (or rather, its \textit{activum}) with respect to the specification of its act,\(^{25}\) but it differs from them inasmuch as it is moved to the exercise of its act by itself.\(^{26}\) Since the will is moved to the exercise of its act by itself, it is possible for reason to apprehend some object as good, but the will not will that object. Thus, the will is not necessitated by the good apprehended by reason, but rather wills freely.

Sutton sees that there is a problem here. He rigidly adheres to the act-potency axiom,\(^{27}\) according to which it is not possible for something to be in act and potency at the same time and in the same respect. The axiom has the consequence that nothing, \textit{the will included}, is able to move itself, at least not “effectively” (\textit{effective}), that is, in the way an efficient cause moves. For effective movement is the “reduction” of potency to act, or the actualization of potency, and thus, for something to move \textit{itself} effectively, it would have to actualize its own potency. But to actualize its own potency, it would have to be in act and potency at the same time and in the same respect, which violates the act-potency axiom.\(^{28}\)

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\(^{24}\) Thomas of Sutton, \textit{Quaestio ordinaria} 7, p. 212: “Unde oportet hic uti quadam distinctione, quam ponit magnus doctor in ista materia, quod quantum ad determinationem actus voluntas movetur ab obiecto determinato, cum de se sit indeterminata, sed quantum ad exercitium actus vel usum movetur a se ipsa.” There are similar remarks throughout Sutton’s corpus. See, in particular, \textit{Quodl.} III, q. 13, pp. 426-8; \textit{Quaest. ord.} 6, pp. 168-70; \textit{Quaest. ord.} 24, p. 671.

\(^{25}\) To be more precise, the will must be moved to the specification of its act by the good apprehended by reason together with the \textit{plenum iudicium} of reason. See \textit{Quaest. ord.} 6, p. 178: “[... ] dico quod bonum particulare non est de se sufficiens activum ad movendum voluntatem, nisi adiungatur sibi plenum iudicium rationis et imperium, quo adiuncto necesse est voluntatem velle.” I discuss “\textit{plenum iudicium}” more in what follows.

\(^{26}\) Ibid.: “Sed in hoc differt ab aliis potentiis passivis, quod obiectum suum non imprimit sibi actum volendi, nisi ipsa velit impressionem suam admittere, et sic non habet usum vel exercitium sui actus ab obiecto, sed a se ipsa.”

\(^{27}\) Thomas of Sutton, \textit{Quaest. ord.} 6, p. 166: “[... ] quidam conantur respondere, dicentes quod verum est in corporalibus nihil posse movere se ipsum, sed non est verum in spiritualibus, quae sunt abstracta a materia. Haec autem responso est contra rationem, primo quia rationes philosophi, per quas probat quod omne quod movetur ab alio movetur, se extendunt ad omnia, in quibus est processus de potentia ad actum.” For Aristotle’s arguments, see \textit{Physics} VIII, 257a33-257b13.

\(^{28}\) That \textit{effective} self-motion is reduction of potency to act is evident from \textit{Quaest. ord.} 6, p. 166: “Propter hoc, tenendo cum philosopho quod nihil movet se ipsum effective, et quod voluntas sit potentia passive, videndum est quomodo voluntas movetur ab obiecto apprehenso, et quomodo movetur a se ipsa.” Also, see \textit{Quaest. ord.} 7, p. 219:
Like Aquinas, Sutton has the task of explaining how the will is able to move itself. On the one hand, he thinks that the will is passive, but not able to move itself effectively, since he adheres to the act-potency axiom (without any qualification). On the other hand, since a passive power that is moved both to the specification and to the exercise of its act by the same object is moved necessarily, Sutton thinks that the will is moved to the specification of its act by the good apprehended by reason, but to the exercise of its act by itself. But how does the will move itself to the exercise of its act if nothing moves itself effectively?

3 The Doctrine of the Will’s Twofold Self-Motion

In Quaest. ord. 7, Thomas of Sutton argues that, although it does not move itself effectively, the will nonetheless “moves itself in a twofold mode” (dupliciter movet se):

It is evident from what has been said that the will moves itself in a twofold mode. First, [it moves itself] “accidentally” by moving reason to deliberate through counsel about what should be willed. [Second,] with deliberation having been concluded, the will, by willing the end, moves itself to willing that which was arrived at through deliberation, not “effectively,” but “consecutively.”

Let us unpack the twofold mode the will moves itself, beginning with the first mode. The will, according to Sutton, moves itself per accidens, or “accidentally,” by moving reason to deliberate about what should be willed. While the appetite of a brute is moved immediately to pursue or avoid an object that is grasped as good or bad, respectively, the will, a rational appetite for the good, is not necessarily moved to will an object grasped by reason, unless that object is grasped

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“Ad secundum dicendum quod bene probat quod voluntas de se non movet se effective ad suum actum, quia tunc secundum idem esset in actu et in potentia.”

29 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 7, p. 218: “Patet etiam ex dictis, quod voluntas dupliciter movet se: Uno modo per accidens movendo rationem ad deliberandum per consilium, quid sit volendum. Diffinito autem consilio movet se ad volendum praeconsiliatum per hoc, quod vult finem non effective, sed ut dictum est, scilicet consecutivi.”

30 Ibid., p. 214: “Statim enim ad apprehensionem obiecti boni vel mali consequitur desiderium vel fuga in appetitu bruti.”
as good “according to every consideration” (secundum omnem considerationem).\textsuperscript{31} Outside of the beatific vision, however, an object is only grasped as good “under some aspect” (sub aliqua ratione boni). So, for example, going to the beach might be apprehended as good for relaxation. If the will wills relaxation, it moves reason to consider whether or not, here and now, going to the beach should be willed, that is, whether (in the circumstances) going to the beach is appropriate (conveniens) or inappropriate (inconveniens) for the will’s end.\textsuperscript{32} If reason judges that going to the beach should be willed, then the will wills it, but if reason judges that going to the beach should not be willed, then the will does not will it. The upshot is that, by moving reason, the will is able to indirectly move itself. The will’s per accidens self-motion is not a violation of the act-potency axiom, for the axiom merely rules out the will’s actualizing its own potency.

Thus far, Sutton’s doctrine of the self-motion of the will says no more than that of Aquinas; the former’s per accidens self-motion is just the latter’s secundum aliud self-motion. If the will, by willing some end, moves reason to deliberate about means to that end, and wills the means that reason judges should be willed, then there is a sense in which the will “moves itself” to will that means. That the will moves itself this way, however, merely explains how it is the indirect cause of its volitions. But the will, when it wills some end, is in potency with respect to the exercise of its act of willing some means to that end. We should like to know how this potency is actualized.

Where Sutton’s doctrine of the self-motion of the will does seem to say more than that of Aquinas is in the “second mode” according to which the will moves itself: “with deliberation having been concluded, the will, by willing the end, moves itself to will the means to that end, not ‘effectively,’ but ‘consecutively.’”\textsuperscript{33} That is, the will moves itself “in such a way that one of

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.: “Sed non sic necessario consequitur actus volendi in voluntate, quia bonum apprehensum per intellectum non imprimit in voluntatem ex hoc ipso quod apprehenditur, nisi sit secundum omnem considerationem bonum, quia non statim eo modo iudicatur bonum, ut necessario voluntas flectatur in ipsum, sed apprehenditur sub aliqua ratione boni, et simul cum hoc apprehenditur finis, quem semper habitualiter vult voluntas.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.: “Et cum actu vult illum finem, movet rationem ad deliberandum et inquirendum, utrum illud bonum apprehensionem sit conveniens vel disconveniens illi fini. Et si per consilium, omnibus consideratis, ratio finaliter sententiet illud esse nunc melius ad illum finem, tunc primo voluntas per hoc, quod vult finem, vult illud, si non, non.”

\textsuperscript{33} See note 29. Sutton will sometimes use “illative” instead of “consecutive.” The two are synonymous. For Sutton, this mode of self-motion is only “effective” according to a “similitude.” See Quaest. ord. 7, p. 213: “Et dico aliquo
its acts [namely, willing the means] is consequent to another of its acts [namely, willing the end].” This mode of self-motion is special, for when a thing moves itself “consecutively,” such that one of its act its consequent to another of its act, it does not (strictly speaking) educe itself from potency to act. Thus, consecutive self-motion does not violate the act-potency axiom.

Let us analyze some of Sutton’s examples to better understand consecutive self-motion:

In the generation of fire, there is no middle potency that must be actualized between the induced substantial form and the heat that is consequent to that form, but the generator giving the substantial form [also] gives heat and the other accidents that are consequent to that form. It also happens in heavy and light objects that the generator giving weight gives the consequent motion, unless it is impeded. And if it is impeded, as soon as that impediment is removed, the same generator gives that motion effectively, as is said in Physics VIII. Thus, a heavy object does not move itself effectively, by drawing itself from potency to act. And therefore, that a heavy object moves itself consecutively is neither inappropriate, nor against the Philosopher, since [if it moves itself consecutively] it does not follow that it draws itself from potency to act.35

Sutton makes use of a passage from Physics VIII that medieval philosophers generally understood as drawing a distinction between two kinds of potency: essential potency and accidental potency.36 Consider, for example, an object that is cold, but able to become hot. The

modo, quia non movet se effective nisi secundum quandam similitudinem vel metaphoram, et sic movet se ad volendum.”

34 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 7, p. 215: “Ad quod siendum quod aliquid movere se ipsum effective est impossibile, sed aliquid bene potest se movere consequentie, scilicet sic quod ad unum eius actum consequatur alius eius actus, sicut in intellectu ad principium sequitur conclusio.” Here, Sutton seems to be drawing on Aquinas’s analogies between ends and means on the one hand and premises and conclusions on the other; the movement of the will from willing the end to willing some means to that end, and the movement of the intellect from understanding the premise to understanding the conclusion are both a mode of self-motion, namely, consecutive.

35 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 7, p. 216: “Et ita, quando aliquid sic movet se, non ducit se ipsum de potentia ad actum, sicut enim in generatione ignis inter formam substantialialem inductam et calorem consequentie ipsum non est potentia media, quae debet duci ad actum, sed generans dans formam substantialialem dat calorem et alia accidentia consequentia formam. Ita est etiam in gravibus et levibus, quod generans dans gravitate ad motum consequentem, nisi impeditur; et si impediatur, statim amoto impedimento idem generans dat illum motum effective, sicut dicitur in VIII Physicorum. Unde grave non movet se ipsum effective, ducendo se de potentia ad actum. Et ideo quod grave moveat se ipsum consequentie, non est inconveniens, nec contra philosophum, quia tunc non sequitur quod duci se ipsum de potentia ad actum.”

36 Namely, Physics, VIII, 255a27-255b23. But also see De Anima, II, 5, 417a22-417b1.
object is in one kind of potency, namely, “essential potency” to being hot. If something hot is made present to the object, then the object’s essential potency to being hot is actualized; the object undergoes an “essential reduction” from potentially being hot to actually being hot.37 (The reader might imagine throwing a piece of wood into a fire.) The now hot object is also able to make other things hot. But suppose that there is nothing present to the object that is able to heat something else. The object, then, is in a second kind of potency, namely, “accidental potency” to heating, that is, “it is now something able to make other things hot but (provided there is nothing around for it to heat up) it is not something actually making other things hot.”38 If something that is able to be heated is made present to the object, then the object’s accidental potency with respect to heating is actualized; the object will undergo an “accidental reduction” from potentially heating to actually heating.39 (The reader might imagine bringing a candle close to the hot piece of wood.)

The two kinds of potency, essential and accidental, are not “reduced” the same way. When the object undergoes an essential reduction, becoming hot, it receives a new form; the object is changed from cold to hot. But when it undergoes an accidental reduction, heating a thing that has been made present to it, the object does not receive a new form. For the object has everything that is necessary for it to heat, but it will not heat if there is nothing around for it to heat; when a thing that is able to be heated is made present to the object, however, its accidental potency to heating is actualized.


38 Ibid., p. 246.

39 The difference between “accidental” and “essential” potency corresponds to the difference between “first” and “second” actuality. For example, compare (1) someone who does not know English, (2) someone who knows English, but is not using it, and (3) someone who knows English and is using it. The first person is neither in first nor second actuality with respect to using English; the second, in virtue of knowing English, is in first actuality with respect to using it; and the third, by using English, is in second actuality. Alternatively, the first is in essential (or, if you like, “first”) potency with respect to using English; the second is in accidental (“second”) potency; and the third is neither in essential nor accidental potency.
Let us come back to what Sutton says in *Quaest. ord. 7* about the generation of fire and the generation of heavy and light objects.\textsuperscript{40} He continues his explanation of these examples by noting that, when fire is generated, there is no “middle potency” (*media potentia*) between the induced substantial form and the heat that follows upon that form. What Sutton means is that it is impossible to generate fire that is not hot, for “being hot” is a necessary accident of fire’s substantial form. That is, when the fire is generated, there is no potency that must be “reduced” for it to be hot. Moreover, the fire will naturally heat in virtue of its substantial form, but if there is nothing present to the fire that is able to be heated, then the fire will be in accidental potency to heating. Similarly, a heavy object will naturally move downwards in virtue of its substantial form, but if there is an obstacle preventing the object from moving downwards, say, a board, then it will be in accidental potency to moving downwards.

Now, the fire and the heavy object do not have to receive new forms to heat and move downwards, respectively. That is, neither has to undergo an “essential reduction.” When a thing that is able to be heated is made present to the fire, the fire will naturally heat that thing in virtue of being hot, and when the board preventing the heavy object from moving downwards is removed, the heavy object will naturally move downwards in virtue of being heavy. The fire and the heavy object move themselves “consecutively” inasmuch as heating and moving downwards are naturally consequent to being hot and being heavy, respectively; neither moves itself “effectively,” that is, neither educes itself from *essential* potency to first actuality, but rather from *accidental* potency to second actuality. Consecutive self-motion is, then, accidental “self-reduction.”\textsuperscript{41}

The will’s consecutive self-motion is supposed to be like the consecutive self-motion of the fire and the heavy object. Let us, then, try to explain the former using the latter as a model. Just as there is no “middle,” or *essential*, potency between being hot and heating or between being heavy and moving downwards, so there is no essential potency between willing the end (*velle*

\textsuperscript{40} I will focus on fire and heavy objects, but the argument for light objects is analogous.

\textsuperscript{41} Sutton does not draw the distinction between essential and accidental potency in *Quaest. ord. 7* and seems to take “potency” to mean “essential potency.” Thus, he affirms that it is possible for something to move itself consecutively but denies that something is able to reduce itself from potency to act. It seems he should want to say that a thing is able to reduce itself from accidental potency to act, but not from essential potency to act.
finem) and willing the means (velle quod est ad finem). Thus, just as fire, by being hot, moves itself consecutively to heating, since heating naturally follows being hot, and the heavy object, by being heavy, moves itself downwards consecutively, since moving downwards naturally follows being heavy, so the will, by willing the end, moves itself consecutively to willing the means, since willing the means naturally follows willing the end. No essential potency is actualized when the will moves itself consecutively from willing the end to willing the means, and thus, it does not educe itself from potency to act and is not in potency and act with respect to the same thing. The act-potency axiom, then, is preserved.

To sum up: according to Sutton’s doctrine of the will’s twofold self-motion, the will moves itself (1) per accidens by moving reason and (2) consecutively, such that one of its acts naturally follows another. Note that the will’s consecutive self-motion is accidental self-reduction, but not per accidens as in (1). For the will moves itself indirectly when it moves itself per accidens, but not when it moves itself consecutively.

Sutton tackles the self-motion of the will again in the reply to the eleventh objection of Quaest. ord. 24. The reply is worth our attention, for it presents a position that is not obviously the same as that of Quaest. ord. 7. The objection simply argues that, “just as the will is in potency to the determination of its act, so it is in potency to the exercise of its act.” Thus, if the will moves itself to the exercise of its act, then it is in act and potency in the same respect, for it “reduces” itself from potency to act. But this is impossible (or if it is not “inappropriate” [inconveniens] then it is also not inappropriate that the will move itself to the determination of its act, which Sutton denies). The objection is an opportunity for Sutton to say more about what is really “doing the moving,” as it were, in the self-motion of the will. Let us analyze his reply in steps:

42 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 7, p. 216: “Et sic est de voluntate, quia cum dicitur movere se illative vel consecutive, non sequitur quod ducat se de potentia ad actum, nec quod sit in potenti et in actu respectu eiusdem. Nulla enim potentia media est inter velle finem actum perfecte et velle id quod est ad finem.” It is not clear why Sutton makes the qualification “perfecte.” Sutton might mean to acknowledge that an agent could will conflicting ends, in which case there seems to be a potentia media between velle finem and velle id quod est ad finem.

43 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 24, p. 658: “Sicut voluntas est in potentia ad determinationem actus, ita est in potentia ad exercitium actus. Si igitur movet se ad exercitium actus, idem ducit se de potentia ad actum, et ita est in potentia et in actu respectu eiusdem, quod est impossible. Vel si non sit inconveniens, ergo non est inconveniens quod moveat se quoad determinationem actus.”
The will moves itself with respect to the exercise of its act, and so it draws itself from potency to act in a certain way. But the \textit{per se} motive principle here is not the will itself, but the act of the will, which is \textit{velle finem}. Through this, that the will wills the end, it is drawn from potency to the act of willing that which is for the end, with respect to the exercise of its act. And it does not follow that the will draws itself from potency to act \textit{per se}, as if through an active principle, but only \textit{per accidens}, namely, through its act. Nor does it follow that, \textit{secundum se}, the will is in potency and in act with respect to the same thing. As risibility follows humanity, so the exercise of [the will’s] act with respect to that which is for the end naturally follows volition of the end, and thus, properly speaking, there is no drawing from potency to act here, except from an accidental potency.\footnote{Ibid., p. 675: “Ad undecimum dicendum quod voluntas movet se quoad exercitium actus, et ita ducit se quoadammodo de potentia ad actum. Sed principium motivum per se non est ibi ipsa voluntas, sed actus voluntatis, qui est velle finem. Per hoc enim quod vult finem, ducitur de potentia ad actum volendi id quod est ad finem, quoad exercitium actus. Et ita non sequitur quod voluntas ducat se de potentia ad actum per se tamquam per principium activum, sed tantum per accidens, sicut risibile consequitur ad hominem, et ideo non est ibi proprie ductio de potentia ad actum nisi de potentia accidentali.”}

At first glance, the passage confuses the picture of the will’s twofold self-motion presented in \textit{Quaest. ord.} 7. Sutton begins by describing what appears to be the consecutive self-motion of the will. With respect to the exercise of its act, the will does, “in a certain way” (\textit{quodammodo}), move itself from potency to act. By willing the end, the will moves itself from potency to the act of willing the means to that end. However, it does not follow that the will moves itself \textit{per se}, since the \textit{per se} “motive principle” (\textit{principium motivum}) of this motion is not the will itself, but rather its act, namely, willing the end. Thus, the will moves itself \textit{per accidens} with respect to the exercise of its act of willing the means to that end.

The upshot seems to be that the consecutive self-motion of the will is self-motion \textit{per accidens}. But “\textit{per accidens}” here does not mean the same as “\textit{per accidens}” in \textit{Quaest. ord.} 7. In that question, Sutton uses “\textit{per accidens}” broadly to signify that the will moves itself indirectly by moving reason. In \textit{Quaest. ord.} 24, however, Sutton is using “\textit{per accidens}” narrowly to signify that the \textit{principium motivum} of the will’s consecutive self-motion is the act of the will, not the
will itself. Sutton, I take it, means to distinguish his position from that of Henry of Ghent, according to whom the will can move itself from the actuality of its essence, rather than its act.\textsuperscript{45}

But what does it mean to say that the will’s act of willing the end is the \textit{per se} motive principle, or power,\textsuperscript{46} in virtue of which the will moves itself (consecutively) to willing the means? In \textit{Quaest. ord. 7}, Sutton had used the examples of the fire and the heavy object to explain the consecutive self-motion of the will. But in \textit{Quaest. ord. 24}, he uses the example of risibility, a \textit{proprium} of human beings. The examples of these two questions are similar. The fire and the heavy object, in virtue of their substantial forms, naturally heat and naturally move downwards, respectively. Likewise, a human being, in virtue of her substantial form, is capable of laughter. That is, being capable of laughter naturally follows humanity. The consecutive self-motion of the will is best understood on the model of these examples. By willing the end, the will moves itself to willing the means to that end, inasmuch as willing the means naturally follows willing the end; the thought seems to be that, since one wills some means to an end (as means to that end) just because she wills that end, willing the end is the \textit{per se} motive principle of willing the means.

But according to Sutton, the will, willing the end, is not in essential potency to willing the means, but rather in accidental potency, as he goes on to explain:

> There is something else that must be added here. When the will, through its act of willing the end, is drawn from potency (with respect to the exercise of its act) to the act of willing that which is for the end, that potency is not an essential potency, but only accidental, in such a way that the will, through one act, as if through a principle moving \textit{per accidens}, is moved to the exercise of another act.\textsuperscript{47}

The “\textit{per accidens}” here is puzzling, since Sutton had just argued that willing the end is the \textit{per se} motive principle with respect to the exercise of the will’s act of willing the means. It seems to

\textsuperscript{45} I briefly discuss Henry’s position in Section 4. For him, the will itself is the \textit{per se} motive principle of its motion.

\textsuperscript{46} See Thomas of Sutton, \textit{Quaest. ord. 24}, p. 671: “Non enim movet se [sc. voluntas] per actualitatem, quae sit de eius essentia, sed per actualitatem suae operationis, quia per hoc quod vult finem, ducit se ad volendum id quod est ad finem, ita quod volitio finis est virtus motiva per se, voluntas autem non nisi per suum actum volendi.”

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., p. 675: “Aliud est etiam hie adiungendum quod, quando voluntas per actum volendi finem ducitur de potentia ad actum volendi id quod est ad finem, quod exercitium actus, illa potentia non est potentia essentialis, sed tantum accidentalis, ita quod voluntas per unum actum tamquam per principium movens per accidens movetur ad exercitium alterius actus.”
me that he is using “per accidens” narrowly here. That is, he is not using it to signify that the will is moving itself indirectly, as in Quaest. ord. 7. Rather, his claim is that there are two species of movement: essential reduction and accidental reduction. When the will, willing the end, wills the means, it undergoes the latter and is therefore moved to the act of willing the means “as if through a principle moving per accidens.” Put differently, when the will wills the means, it is not moved effectively, such that it undergoes an essential reduction, but rather consecutively, such that it undergoes an accidental reduction. The “per accidens,” then, is supposed to indicate what sort of movement the will undergoes in its consecutive self-motion, when it is drawn from potentially willing the means to actually willing them; the will’s act of willing the means is not caused by the will itself, but rather naturally follows its act of willing the end.

Now, the examples of consecutive self-motion we have been discussing seem to suggest that, for the will to undergo an accidental reduction, there has to be some obstacle, which prevents the will’s act of willing the means from naturally following its act of willing the end, that has to be removed. That there is such an obstacle makes sense, for it does seem to happen that we will some end without willing any means to that end. But what is this obstacle? The reply to the eleventh objection continues:

The apprehended good does move the will per se, but the will is blocked from willing it because of the bad that is joined to that good. Thus, the will, since it wills the end, moves reason to judge that that good is to be pursued, regardless of the bad joined to it. When this judgement has been made, the obstacle is removed, and the act of willing that good, which is for the end, follows. So, the will, through its act, does not move itself per se, but moves [itself] per accidens, as if removing an obstacle. 48

The obstacle that prevents the will’s act of willing the means from naturally following its act of willing the end is that the means, a particular good, has some bad joined to it. Let us consider the example Sutton provides in Quaest. ord. 6. Suppose that the will has a volition for health (the

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48 Ibid., pp. 675-6: “Bonum enim apprehensum per se movet voluntatem, sed voluntas prohibetur velle illud propter malum adiunctum illi bono. Et ideo voluntas per hoc quod vult finem, movet rationem ad iudicandum quod illud bonum sit prosequendum, non obstante malo adiuncto. Facto autem hoc iudicio iam remotum est prohibens, et sequitur actus volendi illud bonum quod est ad finem, et sic voluntas per suum actum non est per se movens se ipsam, sed movens per accidens tamquam removens prohibens.”
end) and reason apprehends bitter medicine (the means). The medicine is not immediately willed
as a means, for it is not apprehended as good “according to every circumstance” (secundum
omnes circumstانتias). Indeed, the medicine is apprehended as good because it contributes to
health, but it is also apprehended as bad because it tastes unpleasant. The will, then, moves
reason to deliberate. While reason deliberates, it is not necessary for the will to will the particular
good about which reason is deliberating. But when deliberation has been concluded and reason
makes a “complete judgement” (plenum iudicium), that is, a judgement that the good is to be
pursued or to be avoided here and now, then the will necessarily wills or nils that good.

So, let us suppose that reason deliberates and concludes that the medicine is to be taken, that is,
reason makes a complete judgement that, although it tastes unpleasant, it is better to take the
medicine than not; this particular good, as Sutton puts it in Quaest. ord. 24, is to be pursued non
obstante malo adiuncto. When reason makes a complete judgement, the obstacle preventing the
actualization of the will’s accidental potency is removed, and the will’s act of willing the means
necessarily follows its act of willing the end. The will, then, by willing the end, does not move
itself per se, but rather per accidens, as if removing an obstacle. “Per accidens” here seems to
have the “broad” meaning of Quaest. ord. 7, where Sutton says that the will “moves itself per
accidens by moving reason.” For the will does not directly reduce itself from potentiality to
actuality, but rather indirectly, that is, by moving reason to deliberate and make a complete

\footnotesize

49 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 6, p. 170: “Potest enim voluntas talia bona [bona particularia], cum
apprehenduntur, velle vel non velle, et potest velle quodlibet ipsorum vel suum oppositum. Quia enim quodlibet
ipsorum potest apprehendi sub aliqua ratione boni, potest voluntas quodcumque ipsorum appetere, et quia quodlibet
ipsorum potest apprehendi sub aliqua ratione mali, potest voluntas quodlibet ipsorum respuere [...] Quando tale
bonum apprehenditur, non statim iudicatur esse appetendum simpliciter, quia non apprehenditur bonum secundum
omnes circumstantias, sed sub aliqua ratione mali [...]”

50 Ibid, p. 171: “Sed quandiu est in consulendo, non oportet quod voluntas feratur in bonum [...] Sed cum
determinatum fuerit consilium, et plenum iudicium sit in ratione cum pleno imperio rationis ad volendum
determinate hoc bonum, non potest voluntas in illo momento non velle illud.” That reason makes a complete
judgement does not imply that it has considered all the bad that might be joined to some particular good. Sutton’s
thought seems to be that the “complete judgement” of reason is a judgement that some particular good is to be
pursued, and that pursuing that good is preferable to pursuing other goods. The judgement is “complete” because it
is a judgement that this good is to be pursued here and now, rather than any other good.

51 Sutton does not, to my knowledge, use the language of “plenum iudicium” in Quaest. ord. 24, but I adopt it as
shorthand for a judgement that some particular good is to be pursued non obstante malo adiuncto.

52 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 7, p. 218.
judgement. However, since the act of willing the end is the per se “motive principle” with respect to the will’s act of willing the means, when the will moves itself per accidens, as if removing an obstacle, it also moves itself consecutively.

Sutton summarizes this complex view of the self-motion of the will in the last part of his response to the eleventh objection of Quaest. ord. 24:

Nevertheless, inasmuch as the end is the principle of that which is for the end, through this, that it wills the end, the will is moved illative to willing that which is for the end, not per accidens, but per se by [this] volition of the end. Or rather, since the will willing the end removes an obstacle, as if moving per accidens, volition of that which is for the end follows per se from volition of the end by a certain natural consequence. And I say [that the will moves itself] to this extent, because nothing moves itself consecutively de novo, unless the consequence of one thing to another is blocked by something else, with which having been removed [the first] follows naturally. Therefore, I said now that the will, by willing the end removes an obstacle, and the exercise of its act of willing that which is for the end follows. And so, the will, through its act, draws itself from accidental potency to act, but not from essential potency, and it does this not by moving itself immediately, but by moving reason to judging, upon which judgement the exercise of the act of the will, to which [the will] was in accidental potency, follows.

53 Note that this marks a very important difference between the “self-motion” of the will and that of the fire, for example. If there is nothing present to the fire for it to heat, then the fire will not heat. Just as the bad joined to a particular good is an obstacle preventing the will from willing that good, the absence of something that is able to be heated is an obstacle preventing the fire from heating. But whereas the fire is not able to do something to remove the obstacle preventing it from heating, the will is able to do something to remove the obstacle preventing it from willing, namely, move reason to deliberate. Thus, while the fire and the will both move themselves consecutively to heating and willing, respectively, the will alone is able to move itself per accidens to willing.

54 See note 44.

55 From this point on, unless otherwise indicated, I use “per accidens” broadly.

56 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 24, pp. 675-6: “Tamen in quantum finis est principium eius quod est ad finem, per hoc quod voluntas vult finem, movetur illative ad volendum id quod est ad finem, non per accidens, sed per se a volitione finis; vel potius per hoc, quod voluntas volens finem removet prohibens tamquam movens per accidens, consequitur per se volitio eius, quod est ad finem, ad volitionem finis quadam naturali consequentia. Et hoc pro tanto dico, quia numquam aliquid movet se consecutive de novo, nisi consequentia unius ad alterum per aliquid prohibeat, quo remoto illud naturaliter consequitur. Ideo nunc dixi quod voluntas volendo finem removet prohibens, et consequitur exercitium actus volendi id quod est ad finem. Et sic voluntas per suum actum ducit se ipsam de potentia accidentalis ad actum, non autem de potentia essentiali, et hoc etiam facit non movendo se ipsam immediate, sed movendo rationem ad iudicandum, ad quod iudicium consequitur exercitium actus voluntas, ad quem
Suppose that the will has a volition for some end and that reason apprehends some means to that end. Although willing the means is a natural consequence of willing the end, the will is in accidental potency to the former because the means are not apprehended as good according to every circumstance. Rather, there is some bad joined to the means, which prevents the will from willing them. The will, then, by moving reason to judge that the means are to be pursued non obstante malo adiuncto, removes that obstacle, “as if moving per accidens.” With the obstacle having been removed, the act of willing the means follows from the act of willing the end. The will undergoes an accidental reduction, moving itself consecutively, or “illatively,” to the act of willing the means. Since the “motive principle” of this accidental reduction is the act of willing the end, not the will itself, the act-potency axiom is preserved; strictly speaking, the will does not educe itself from potency to act. Although the will does not move itself from the actuality of its essence, it nonetheless moves itself in two, related, modes.

The reader will have noticed that, whereas in Quaest. ord. 7, Sutton says that, in one mode, “the will moves itself per accidens by moving reason,” in Quaest. ord. 24, he suggests that the will moves itself “as if” (tamquam) per accidens. It is possible that Sutton’s use of “tamquam” in the latter but not the former might be indicative of the shift in his focus, namely, from the will to the “motive principle” (principium motivum) of the will. Since the principium motivum of the will is not the will itself, but rather its act of willing the end, it does make sense that Sutton would qualify any attribution of self-motion to the will using “tamquam.” But it is also possible that his

fuit in potentia accidentali.” The conclusion of the response, which I do not quote, is as follows: “Et sic possimus dicere generaliter quod potentia imperans movet illud cui imperatur ad actum, ducendo ipsum de potentia accidentali, non de potentia essentiali, sive illud cui imperatur sit voluntas, sive ratio, sive potentia organica.”

57 The text is somewhat obscure about whether or not the will moves itself in two ways. In Quaest. ord. 7, the will is said to move itself per accidens and consecutive, or illative. In Quaest. ord. 24, however, Sutton says that volitio finis moves the will illative and that this movement is not per accidens, but per se. But then he suggests that, when volitio eius quod est ad finem follows volitio finis, it is the will that moves itself consecutively. What is obvious from the text is that the will moves itself per accidens, as if removing an obstacle, and that the will is moved per se by volitio finis. Sutton seems to think that the latter motion could be described as the will moving itself consecutively, or illatively.

58 The will moves itself “through the actuality of its activity,” not “through the actuality of its essence”. See Quaest. ord. 24, p. 671: “Non enim movet se per actualitatem, quae sit de eius essentia, sed per actualitatem suae operationis, quia per hoc quod vult finem, ducit se ad volendum id quod est ad finem, suo quod volitio finis est virtus motiva per se, voluntas autem non nisi per suum actum volendi.” This is crucial, for Sutton does suggest that the act-potency axiom bears upon every reduction from potency to act, essential or otherwise. See note 27.

59 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 7, p. 218: “Patet etiam ex dictis, quod voluntas dupliciter movet se: Uno modo per accidens movendo rationem ad deliberandum per consilium, quid sit volendum.”
use of “tamquam” in *Quaest. ord.* 24 is not doing much work at all. Note that Sutton begins his reply to the eleventh objection of that question by denying that “the will draws itself from potency to act *per se*, as if through an active principle” (*voluntas ducat se de potentia ad actum per se tamquam per principium activum*). Rather, it “draws itself” from potency to act *per accidens*, namely, “through its act” (*per suum actum*). The distinction that Sutton wants to make here is between being moved through an active principle and being moved through a principle moving *per accidens*, not between being moved through a principle and being moved “as if,” or “as it were,” through a principle. That is, Sutton seems to be using “tamquam” as part of his specification of the manner in which the will moves, or “draws itself,” from potency to act. (How does the will move itself? Well, not just any way, but as if moving itself *per accidens*, for example.) In either case, there does not seem to be much pressure to read him as modifying his doctrine between *Quaest. ord.* 7 and *Quaest. ord.* 24.

4 The Plausibility of Sutton’s Intellectualism

Sutton’s intellectualism tells a more precise story than Aquinas’s about what happens between willing some end and willing some means to that end. The will, when it wills some end, is in potency both with respect to the specification and to the exercise of its act of willing some means to that end. The will is moved to the specification of its act by the intellect and, as he says in *Quaest. ord.* 7, moved *per accidens* and consecutively to the exercise of its act by itself.\(^60\) Since the will’s *per accidens* and consecutive self-motion are not “essential reductions” from potency to act, Sutton’s doctrine of the will’s twofold self-motion allows him to preserve the act-potency axiom, explain how it is possible for the will to move itself to the exercise of its act, and thus, conclude that the will is not necessitated by its object, but wills freely.

I suggested that Sutton’s *per accidens* self-motion is just Aquinas’s *secundum aliud* self-motion. But his consecutive self-motion seems to be novel, and moreover, I think that it is the “missing piece,” as it were, in the puzzle that is Aquinas’s doctrine of the will’s self-motion. For it makes

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\(^60\) Thomas of Sutton, *Quaest. ord.* 7, p. 218: “Patet etiam ex dictis, quod voluntas dupliciter movet se: Uno modo per accidens movendo rationem ad deliberandum per consilium, quid sit volendum. Diffinito autem consilio movet se ad volendum praeconsiliatum per hoc, quod vult finem non effective, sed ut dictum est, scilicet consecutive.”
sense of how the will, by willing some end, moves itself “with deliberation mediating” (*consilio mediante*); indeed, when reason’s deliberation concludes in a judgement that *this* means to that end is to be willed *non obstante malo adiuncto*, the will’s act of willing that means “naturally follows” its act of willing the end. Sutton’s consecutive self-motion also has the advantage of explaining how the will is able to move itself without attributing a “mysterious” power for essential self-reduction to the will; rather, the will “moves itself” in what is fundamentally the same (and very familiar) way that fire “moves itself” to heat, for example.

However, I am skeptical about what Sutton says concerning the will and its relationship to reason. First, let me make this observation. According to his doctrine of the will’s twofold self-motion, when reason apprehends some means to the will’s end, unless that means is apprehended as good according to every consideration, the will’s act of willing that means will *not* follow its act of willing the end. The will has to move reason to judge that the means is to be pursued *non obstante malo adiuncto*. By moving reason to make this complete judgement, Sutton says that the will removes the obstacle preventing it from willing the means. But I find this claim puzzling, for the will is *not* removing any obstacle, at least not directly. Indeed, the will is the power of rational appetition for the good, and the obstacle preventing the will from having a volition for *this* means is that it is judged to be bad according to some considerations. The will is not itself the power that removes this obstacle, since the obstacle arises from how a particular good is judged. That is, judged without qualification, a particular good might be pursued, but it might also be avoided, since it is not judged to be good according to *every* consideration. Judged by a complete judgement, however, a particular good must be pursued, since a complete judgement is a judgement that the good is to be pursued *non obstante malo adiuncto*. The upshot is that *reason* removes the obstacle preventing the will from willing some means to its end; the will is only able to remove that obstacle indirectly by moving reason.

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61 The text is actually ambiguous here. See, Thomas of Sutton, *Quaest. ord.* 24, pp. 675-6: “Facto autem hoc iudicio iam remotum est prohibens, et sequitur actus volendi illud bonum quod est ad finem, et sic voluntas per suum actum non est per se movens se ipsam, sed movens per accidens tamquam removens prohibens.” Later, he says, “vel potius per hoc, quod voluntas volens finem removet prohibens tamquam movens per accidens,” and “voluntas volendo finem removet prohibens.” Does the will move itself *per accidens*, as if removing an obstacle, or does it remove an obstacle, as if moving itself *per accidens*?
Just as it is necessary for the fire to heat that a thing be present for it to heat, and for the heavy object to move downwards that the board blocking it be removed, so it is necessary for the will to will some means that reason make a complete judgement that the means is to be willed non obstante malo adiuncto. But neither the presence of the thing to the fire, nor the removal of the board blocking the heavy object, nor the complete judgement of reason is the per se cause of the fire’s act of heating, the heavy object’s act of moving downwards, or the exercise of the will’s act of willing the means, respectively. The fire heats because it is hot, the heavy object moves downwards because it is heavy, and the will wills the means because it wills the end.

It is curious that Sutton, for whom the will is “pure potency having no actuality from itself,” would adopt such a model of the relationship between reason and the will. According to this model, reason does not have a per se causal role in bringing about the act of the will; rather, it merely removes an obstacle preventing the will from bringing about its own act. The reader will have noticed that this is the very same model adopted by so-called voluntarist philosophers such as Henry of Ghent.

Indeed, Henry of Ghent argues in question 17 of his first Quodlibet that, in an important sense, the movement of the will is similar to that of a stone. A stone will naturally move downwards, but not if it is being blocked by a board, say. Suppose I remove the board blocking the stone from moving downwards. Consequently, the stone moves downwards. What role do I play in bringing about its downward movement? In particular, do I cause it to move downwards? Well, yes and no. No, because the stone naturally moves downwards, and it is not because of me that the stone has the nature that it does. Yes, because the stone was blocked from naturally moving downwards, and I remove the obstacle blocking it. My removing the obstacle blocking the stone from moving downwards is what Henry of Ghent (and other, like-minded voluntarists) would call a “causa sine qua non.” It is necessary for the downward movement of the stone that the obstacle blocking it be removed, but my removing that obstacle does not, strictly speaking, change the stone; I do not, if you like, impress a new form on it.

62 See note 22.

63 Here is a similar example: Suppose that I turn the stove on. The stove is hot, but it will not heat, unless there is something present for it to heat, say, a pot of water. My putting the pot of water on the stove, then, is a causa sine qua non of the stove’s heating.
While the stone, since it is heavy, naturally moves downwards, the will, since it is free, naturally has the ability to move itself to willing. But as the stone might be blocked from moving downwards, so the will might be “blocked” from moving itself to willing. For willing has intentionality, or is about some object, and thus, if the will is to move itself to willing, there has to be an object present to the will for its willing to be about. If there is no object present to the will, then it is, as it were, “blocked” from moving itself to willing.

The obstacle “blocking” the will, namely, the absence of an object, is removed by reason, which apprehends and presents objects to the will, making it possible for its willing to be about some object. Suppose, for example, that I have the goal of preparing a meal that is quick and healthy, and for which I already have the ingredients. What should I prepare? Well, I don’t know. I have to think about what kinds of quick and healthy meals I could make with the ingredients I already have. There is a sense in which I am “blocked” from willing. I have the goal of preparing a meal, but I am not able to will to prepare this or that meal, since I have to first think about what kinds of meals I could make. Suppose I do think about it and judge that I could prepare a salad or soup. (Reason, as it were, “presents” these to the will as meals that I could prepare.) Whereas I was “blocked” from willing before, I am now able to will to prepare a salad or soup.

According to Henry of Ghent, then, reason acts as a mere causa sine qua non of willing; the will is a sufficient cause of its act of willing, and reason (merely) removes the obstacle “blocking” the will from moving itself to that act; it does not impress some form on it, as a per se cause would.

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64 NB: the will is able to move itself to will that object. It does not have to will that object, and thus, the self-motion of the will differs from the “self-motion” of gravia and levia. See Henry of Ghent, Quodlibet I, q. 17, Opera omnia, vol. 14, ed. Raymond Macken (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1981), p. 127: “Et hoc convenit ei ex naturali proprietate voluntatis, ut cum vult, ex se per se sic moveatur, sicut lapidi quod semper deorsum nitatur. Sed differit in hoc quod lapis non potest de se aliter moveri, voluntas autem potest [...]” See further Quodlibet IX, q. 5, Opera omnia, vol. 13, ed. Raymond Macken (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1983), pp. 130-1: “Sed cum, ut dictum est, si voluntas moveretur ab alio naturaliter, determinaretur ad actum absque omni libertate, nec posset resilire ab ipso, et ita non esset domina suorum actuum, nec appetitus qui est voluntas, haberet potestatem refrenare appetitu quae sunt citra visionem ultimi finis, cuius contrarium dicit Damascenus, cap. 29º praedicto, simpliciter ergo dicendum quod voluntas in actum volendi a nullo alio, sed a se ipsa sola movetur.”

65 Also, see Henry of Ghent, Quodlibet X, q. 9, Opera omnia, vol. 14, ed. Raymond Macken (Leuven University Press, 1981), p. 239: “Nisi enim ratio ostenderet obiectum, voluntas non posset illud velle vel eligere propter aliqua quae placent, aut refutare propter aliqua quae disprincet [...]”

66 Henry of Ghent does not explicitly call reason’s apprehending and presenting an object to the will a “causa sine qua non” in Quodlibet I, but the phrase is very much prominent in later Quodlibeta. See, for example, Henry of Ghent, Quodl. IX, q. 5, p. 123: “[...] nec operatur intellectus ad hoc quod fiat in suum actum ipsa voluntas, nisi ostendendo sive offerendo ipsum obiectum, et hoc non nisi sicut causa per accidens et sine qua non.” Henry’s target
Thomas of Sutton seems to conceive of the role of reason in the will’s consecutive self-motion using a similar “causa sine qua non” model as Henry of Ghent. For the latter, the will is able to move itself effectively to will some means to its end, but reason has to present that means to it. For the former, the will moves itself consecutively to will some means to the end, but reason has to judge that the means is to be pursued non obstante malo adiuncto. For neither Henry of Ghent nor Thomas of Sutton does reason act as an effective cause of the will’s act of willing some means to the end.

But whereas reason acts merely as a causa sine qua non of the will’s act of willing some means to the end for Henry of Ghent, this is not so for Thomas of Sutton. As we already know, Sutton adopts Thomas Aquinas’s distinction between the will’s potency to the specification of its act and its potency to the exercise of its act. Although reason seems to act merely as a causa sine qua non with respect to the exercise of the will’s act of willing some means to the end, Sutton makes it clear that, in general, reason acts as a causa per se with respect to the specification of the will’s act. As he argues in question 13 of Quodlibet III, “because of the distinction of the will’s act, it is necessary to posit that the will is moved by the object, as by a causa per se with respect to the specification of its act.” Indeed, the apprehended good “impresses” the act of willing that good rather than some other good on the will.

is the Thomistic thesis that the will is in potency both with respect to the specification and to the exercise of its act, and that the intellect is responsible for actualizing the former potency.

67 The two differ, however, with respect to what happens when the obstacle preventing the will from willing is removed: for Henry, the will is able to move itself to will; for Sutton, the act of the will naturally follows from a prior act of the will. In this respect, Sutton’s will acts as a natural agent does for Henry. See Henry of Ghent, Quodl. IX, q. 5, p. 116: “Sed intellige: quod non per se et immediate dat motum, sicut dat formam, sed quod dando formam dat motum, quia forma non impedita est sufficiens in eis [i.e. gravia et levia] causa motus. Unde, cum perfectam habuerit formam extra suum locum naturalem ad absentiam generantis, si cesset prohibens, statim se ipso absque omni alio movente movetur ad locum suum [...]”

68 Sutton seems to be skeptical of the notion of a causa sine qua non, as used by voluntarists such as Henry of Ghent. Indeed, according to Sutton, it is “much more appropriate” (multo convenientius) to call a causa per se, not a causa per accidens, a causa sine qua non, for without a causa per se, there is never an effect. See Thomas of Sutton, Quodl. III, q. 13, p. 421.

69 For Henry of Ghent’s criticism of the distinction, see Quodlibet XII, q. 26, Opera omnia, vol. 16, ed. J. Decorte (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1987), p. 150. See further, Henry of Ghent, Quodl. IX, q. 5 and Quodl. X, q. 9.

70 Thomas of Sutton, Quodl. III, q. 13, p. 428: “Et ideo propter distinctionem actuum voluntatis, necesse est ponere voluntatem moveri ab obiecto, sicut a causa per se quoad specificationem actus, sicut aliae potentiae passivae moventur a suis per se obiectis, a quibus actus habent speciem, ut patet in sensibus etiam in intellectu.”

71 Ibid.
It also seems that reason does not merely act as a *causa sine qua non* of the will’s act of willing the end. Again, according to Sutton, the will, by willing the end, “moves itself” to the exercise of its act of willing the means to that end; one act of the will “naturally follows” another. But it does not “move itself” to the exercise of its act of willing that end, for there does not seem to be an act that the will’s act of willing the end “naturally follows,” the way that its act of willing the means to the end naturally follows its act of willing that end. Rather, Sutton suggests that the will has to be moved “effectively” (*effective*) by the apprehension of reason with respect to its act of willing the end; that is, by apprehending the end as good, reason “reduces” the will from willing that end in potency to willing it in act. Because the intellect, by apprehending the end as good, moves the will “effectively,” or “in the manner of an efficient [cause]” (*per modum efficientis*) Sutton argues that it does not move the will “metaphorically,” as Henry of Ghent says, but rather “properly” (*proprie*). In this regard, Sutton seems to be a more radical intellectualist than Aquinas, who never suggests that it is possible for reason to move the will as anything more than a formal and a final cause (even with respect to the will’s act of willing the end).

The upshot is that, although Sutton says that the will, by willing the end, “moves itself” *per accidens* and consecutively to the exercise of its act of willing the means to that end, reason is responsible for (1) moving the will effectively to its act of willing that end; (2) moving the will to the specification of its act of willing the means to that end; and (3) removing the obstacle that prevents the will’s act of willing the means from naturally following its act of willing the end.

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73 Here, I draw on Sutton’s remarks about how reason’s apprehension of health moves the will. See Thomas of Sutton, *Quest. ord.* 7, p. 222: “Sed si loquamur de fine, qui est bonum apprehensionem existens extra animam, ipse proprie movet intellectum et per consequens voluntatem. Si autem non sit extra animam, sed solum in apprehensione intellectus, adhuc secundum esse apprehensum movet proprie voluntatem, quia effective, non formaliter. Verbi gratia, voluntatem aegrotantis movet sanitas corporis sui, quae non est nisi in apprehensione intellectus, sed secundum esse apprehensum movet voluntatem ipsius proprie, quia per modum efficientis; sed postquam sanitas acquisita est in corpore, non movet corpus nisi secundum metaphorum, quia tantum formaliter, quia perficit corpus tamquam forma corporis, non tamquam efficiens respectu corporis.” See further, Thomas of Sutton, *Quaest. ord.* 7, p. 218: “Patet etiam quod contrarium eius, quod alia positio ponit, ponendum est, scilicet quod obiectum movet voluntatem proprie, quia effective.”

74 Henry of Ghent, *Quodl.* I, q. 14, p. 89.

75 Thomas of Sutton, *Quest. ord.* 7, p. 218, p. 222.

76 At most, Aquinas says that there is an act of the intellect that precedes an act of the will and is not itself preceded by another act of the will; that is, the act of the intellect is “first.” But he does not suggest that the intellect therefore moves the will *per modum efficientis.* See Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 82, a. 4, ad 3.
And I emphasize that, when the will’s act of willing the means *naturally* follows its act of willing the end, the will’s act of willing the end, which is effectively caused in the will by reason’s apprehension, is the “motive principle” (*principium motivum*) of the will’s “self-motion.” Reason has a pervasive role in the will’s coming to will the means to the end. Indeed, its role is so pervasive for Sutton that it is difficult to see how the will is supposed to “move itself” to its act of willing the means to the end *at all*. Rather, it seems more appropriate to say that reason is the effective cause of the exercise of the will’s act of willing the means. That is, it seems that reason brings about the will’s act of willing the means and that the will is reason’s instrument. The will, again, “moves itself” to the exercise of its act of willing the means to this extent, that when reason “reduces” the will from potentially willing the end to actually willing it, specifies the will’s act of willing the means, and judges that the means is to be willed *non obstante malo adiuncto*, the will’s act of willing the means follows its act of willing the end as a “natural consequence.”\(^{77}\) (Indeed, the will’s act of willing the means so follows *if and only if* reason makes such a judgement.)

It matters for Sutton that the will moves itself to the exercise of its act. For he assumes that, if the will were moved both to the specification and to the exercise of its act by the apprehension of reason, the way that something that is able to be heated is both heated to some particular temperature and actually heated by something that heats, then it would be moved necessarily.\(^{78}\) As a consequence, the will would not will freely, which is absurd. But it seems that, in just the same way that the thing that heats explains both why the thing that is able to be heated is heated to some particular temperature and why it is actually heated, so reason explains both why the will is moved to will some means in particular and why it actually wills that means. I am not convinced that Sutton has shown that the will really does move itself.

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\(^{77}\) Thomas of Sutton, *Quaest. ord.* 24, pp. 675-6.

5 Conclusion

At first glance, Thomas of Sutton’s intellectualism is essentially that of Thomas Aquinas: the will is moved to the specification of its act by the object apprehended as good by reason and to the exercise of its act by itself. But whereas Aquinas is not very clear about how the will, when it wills some end, moves itself to willing some means to that end, Sutton explains that it moves itself *per accidens* and consecutively: by moving reason to judge that *this* means is to be pursued *non obstante malo adiuncto*, the will removes the obstacle that prevents its act of willing the means from naturally following its act of willing the end.

Sutton’s doctrine of the will’s twofold self-motion attempts to clarify the psychology of Thomistic intellectualism. But as I suggested, there is good reason to question Sutton’s doctrine. Since reason brings about the will’s act of willing some end, the *principium motivum* of the will’s “self-motion,” specifies the will’s act of willing some means to that end, and removes the obstacle that prevents one act from naturally following the other, it does not seem that the will is really “moving itself” to the exercise of its act of willing the means at all; it rather seems that the will is moved as the instrument of reason.

As I noted, Sutton’s doctrine of the will’s twofold self-motion is motivated by his assumption that, since the will is free, it has to move itself to the exercise of its act, for it would not be free if it were moved by its object both to the specification and to the exercise of its act. But why think that the will free because it moves itself *per accidens* and consecutively to the exercise of its act? The will moves itself *per accidens* to the exercise of its act by moving reason to deliberate about how to achieve some end. But this *per accidens* self-motion is compatible with the will’s being effectively moved by reason both to the specification and to the exercise of its act, for if reason did so move the will, it would still move the will by first being *moved* by the will. Thus, it does not seem that the will is free because it moves itself *per accidens*. Also, the moves itself consecutively to the exercise of its act in such a way that one act of the will (willing the means) naturally follows a prior act (willing the end). But this consecutive self-motion is supposed to be shared by heavy and light objects, fire, etc., which are *not* free. Thus, it does not seem that the will is free because it moves itself consecutively. Sutton’s doctrine of the will’s twofold self-motion does not obviously do the work that he wants it to do.
The intellectualist has to make a choice. Affirm that the will *does* have to move itself to the exercise of its act, but deny that the will moves itself as Sutton says it does, or deny that the will would not be free if it were moved by its object both to the specification and to the exercise of its act. Godfrey of Fontaines, as we will see in the following chapter, does the latter.
Chapter 4  
Intellectualism after Thomas Aquinas II – Godfrey of Fontaines

1 Introduction

Godfrey of Fontaines is a faithful disciple of Thomas Aquinas in many respects.¹ He follows Aquinas by arguing that human beings have a will, or rational appetite, by which they pursue what is good for them inasmuch as it is apprehended by reason.² But since the will is “of itself” (de se) indifferent to willing or not willing this or that good, it is necessary for it to will that it be “actualized by something determinate according to one of them” (per aliquid determinatum fiat in actu secundum alterum horum).³ Put simply, the will, when it is not willing, is in potency to its act, and thus, for it to will, it has to be “moved” from potency to act.

As I have shown, according to Thomas Aquinas and Thomas of Sutton, the will has two different potencies, one to the specification of its act and another to the exercise of its act; for the will to will, it has to be moved with respect to both the specification and the exercise of its act. The will’s potency to the specification of its act is actualized by reason; that is, by apprehending this as good, or better than that, reason moves the will from potentially willing this or that to actually willing this rather than that.⁴ But the will actualizes its potency to the exercise of its act by itself; that is, the will moves itself from potentially willing this to actually willing it. Because Aquinas and Sutton uphold the act-potency axiom, they have to tell a story about how the will is able to move itself, given that it cannot be both in act and in potency at the same time and in the same

¹ See Lottin, Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles, vol. 1, 331-339.
² Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodlibet VIII, q. 16, Le huitième Quodlibet, Le neuvième Quodlibet, Le dixième Quodlibet, ed. Jean Hoffmans (Louvain: Institut Supérieur de Philosophie de l’Université, 1924-1931), 145: “Ex praedictis patet quid sit appetitus rationalis qui specialiter voluntas dicitur, quia est potentia per quam appete natus est inclinari in id quod est sibi conveniens in quantum est apprehensum a ratione secundum modum et formam rationis; et cetera.”
³ Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodlibet VI, q. 7, Les Quodlibet cinq, six et sept de Godefroid de Fontaines, eds. Maurice De Wulf & Jean Hoffmans, (Louvain: Institut Supérieur de Philosophie de l’Université, 1914), 158: “Cum ergo voluntas de se sit indifferens ad duas volitiones secundum duo volita, vel ad volendum vel ad nolendum aliud unum, et in hoc habeat rationem materiae secundum Commentatorem, oportet quod per aliquid determinatum fiat in actu secundum alterum horum.”
⁴ Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 1, co; QDM, q. 6, co.
respect. But as I have intended to show in earlier chapters, neither Aquinas nor Sutton is successful in this regard.

Godfrey of Fontaines also upholds the act-potency axiom, arguing that it applies "to every reduction from potency to act, to every genuine change, all apparent difficulties notwithstanding."\(^5\) However, he avoids the challenge that Thomistic intellectualism faces, namely, explaining how the will is able to move itself, by denying that such a thing is possible.\(^6\) For Godfrey of Fontaines, the will moves itself neither to the specification nor to the exercise of its act, but is rather moved by another.

Since he denies the possibility of the will’s self-motion, Godfrey of Fontaines has to answer three questions. First, how does a human being who wills an end come to will some means to that end? Second, if the will is moved by another with respect to both the specification and the exercise of its act, how does a human being have control over her actions? Third, if the will is moved by another with respect to both the specification and the exercise of its act, are a human being’s actions even her actions? In this chapter, I hope to show that Godfrey of Fontaines has a plausible answer to each of these questions.

2 “Extreme” Intellectualism

Question 7 of Godfrey of Fontaines’s sixth Quodlibet is key to his intellectualism. The question asks whether the will is able to move itself through some disposition, assuming that it cannot do so without one.\(^7\) In his response to the question, Godfrey makes a familiar observation about the

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\(^5\) John Wippel, “Godfrey of Fontaines and the Act-Potency Axiom,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 11, no. 3 (1973): pp. 299-317, at p. 299. For some remarks on Godfrey’s application of the axiom to volition, see John Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines*, pp. 182-3; De Wulf, *Un théologien-philosophe du XIIIe siècle*, p. 106. Godfrey thinks there are a number of arguments against the self-motion of the will, but this one is “primary” (*principalis*). See *Quodl*. VI, q. 7, p. 152: “[...] idem autem et idem secundum idem non potest esse tale respect sui ipsius, ideo sic dicitur de voluntate secundum se, scilicet quod non potest se movere.”

\(^6\) Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl*. VI, q. 7, p. 164: “Sed illud magis est ad nostrum propositum, scilicet ad ostendendum quod voluntas non moveat se, sed quod moveatur ab objecto apprehenso […]”

\(^7\) *Utrum voluntas potest se movere per aliquam dispositionem dato quod non potest sine dispositione*. The question is (at least in part) a response to the Franciscan John of Murro.
human will, namely, that it is “of itself” indifferent to either willing or nilling something or other. What, then, explains the will’s coming to have some determinate act, such as willing exercise as a means to health, for example? That is, how is the will “reduced” from potentially willing exercise as a means to health to actually willing it?

According to voluntarists such as Henry of Ghent, supposing that the intellect apprehends exercise as a means to health, the will is able to “reduce” itself from potentially willing exercise as a means to health to actually willing it. In general, by apprehending something as good or bad, the intellect is a causa sine qua non of the will, making it possible for the will to move itself to a determinate act of willing what has been apprehended as good by the intellect or nilling what has been apprehended as bad. By conceiving of the will as a self-moving power, voluntarists such as Henry of Ghent seem to be able to make sense of (1) what happens between willing some end and willing some means to that end, and (2) how the will has control over its own acts, for if the will moves itself to its act, whenever it does will, it could have willed otherwise.

Godfrey is skeptical of such “voluntarism,” however. For if the will is able to move itself to a determinate act, that is, without the apprehension of the intellect bringing about a “change” (mutatio) in the will, whereby the indifference of the will is “settled,” then not only is the act-potency axiom violated, but it also seems that one could apply the same reasoning to other things “just as easily and reasonably” (aeque faciliter et rationabiliter).

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8 Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl.* VI, q. 7, p. 158: “Cum ergo voluntas de se sit indifferens ad duas volitiones secundum duo volita, vel ad volendum vel ad nolendum aliquid unum, et in hoc habeat rationem materiae secundum Commentatorem, oportet quod per aliquid determinatum fiat in actu secundum alterum horum.”

9 For more on Henry of Ghent’s voluntarism, see my comments in Section 4 of Chapter 3.

For example, Godfrey asks, “Who will prove that wood, or some other body, is heated by fire?”

Suppose I claim that the presence of fire is merely a *causa sine qua non* that makes it possible for the wood to heat *itself*. The claim is absurd, but it seems to explain the phenomenon of heating. How would you prove that I am wrong? Put differently, how would you prove that the potency of the wood to being hot is actualized by the fire, not by the wood itself?

Godfrey assumes that, in general, just one thing shows that something is active with respect to another, namely, that when the former is present, the latter actually comes to be some way that it was only potentially when the former was not present. In particular, what shows that the fire is active with respect to the wood is that, when the fire is not present to the wood, the wood is not hot and only hot in potency, but when the fire *is* present to the wood, it is hot in act. The wood, then, does not heat itself, but is rather heated by the fire.

However, if *that* is why the fire “moves” the wood from potency to act, namely, that the wood comes to be actually hot when the fire is present, then it seems that something similar must be said about the will. For the will, as Godfrey argues,

is not actualized unless according to the mode and form of reason because one does not avoid something unless he judges it to be harmful, and likewise, one does not pursue something unless he judges that it is fitting, [and] because [the will] is not in act unless the object is present, but the object of avoidance is just that which is apprehended as bad and harmful [and] the object of pursuit is that which is apprehended as good and fitting.

Godfrey observes, first, that I pursue something just when I judge that it is good and fitting, and avoid something just when I judge that it is bad and harmful. Second, he observes that the will is “in act,” or wills, just when some object is present for it to will. When the will pursues some object, that object has been apprehended as good and fitting (that is, the object of pursuit is what reason apprehends as good and fitting). When the will avoids some object, that object has been

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11 Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl.* VI, q. 7, p. 158: “[…] per nihil potest probari aliquid esse activum respectu alterius nisi quia, illo praesente, alius est in actu aliquid quod prius erat in potentia.”

12 Ibid., pp. 158-9: “[…] nec umquam fit in actu nisi secundum modum et formam rationis; quia nihil fugit nisi iudicit illud esse nocivum, nihil etiam prossequitur nisi iudicit illud esse conveniens; quia non est in actu nisi praesente obiecto, obiectum autem fugere not est nisi id quod sub ratione mali et novici apprehenditur, obiectum autem prosecutionis est id quod ratione boni et convenientis apprehenditur.
apprehended as bad and harmful (that is, the object of avoidance is what reason apprehends as bad and harmful). But since the will is not actualized unless “according to the mode and form of reason” (secundum modum et formam rationis) Godfrey concludes that

there does not seem to be an argument by which it can be proved that some being is active with respect to another which could not also be used to show [that the object is active] with respect to the will. It does not seem, therefore, that it must be denied that the will is truly moved by the object as regards the act of volition.¹³

That is, if the will pursues just those things that reason apprehends as good and fitting, and avoids just those things that reason apprehends as bad and harmful, then it is not necessary to deny that the object apprehended by reason “truly” (vere) moves the will from potency to act, just as the fire moves the wood from potency to act. Rather, as Godfrey says in question 2 of Quodlibet XV, the will is “truly and really moved effectively by [its] object, namely, the good apprehended [by reason], as by [its] immediate mover in every act of willing.”¹⁴

The reader will have noticed that Godfrey does not draw the distinction between the will’s potency to the exercise of its act and its potency to the specification, or determination, of its act the way that Thomas Aquinas does. There is a good reason for this. Aquinas’s distinction between specification and exercise was a controversial topic in the late thirteenth century. Thomas of Sutton adopted the distinction, but other philosophers, such as Henry of Ghent, opposed it. Indeed, since the will is “uniformly related” (uniformiter se habet) to its specifications and its exercises by free decision, Henry of Ghent argued in question 26 of Quodlibet XII that specification of act and exercise of act do not differ “with respect to the will” (respectu voluntatis).¹⁵

¹³ Ibid., p. 159: “Non videtur ergo ratio per quam probari possit quod aliquod ens sit activum respectu alterius per quod non possit etiam probari de obiecto respectu voluntatis. Non videtur ergo esse negandum quin voluntas vere ab obiecto moveatur quantum ad actus volitionis.”

¹⁴ Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodlibet XV, q. 2, Le Quodlibet XV et trois Questions ordinaires de Godefroid de Fontaines, ed. O. Lottin (Louvain: Instut Supérieur de Philosophie de l’Université, 1937), p. 7: “Supposito quod voluntas vere et realiter moveatur effective ab obiecto, scilicet a bono cognito sicut ab immediato motore in omni actu volendi [...]”

Godfrey of Fontaines would similarly oppose Aquinas’s specification/exercise distinction in question 2 of Quodlibet XV. Supposing that the apprehended object does “truly” move the will from potency to act, he argues, if there is a distinction between “being moved to exercise” (moveri ad exercitium) and “being moved to determination” (moveri ad determinationem) in the will, it has to either be a distinction secundum rem or secundum rationem. That is, either being moved to exercise and being moved to specification are different things or they are the same thing but considered differently.

Seemingly drawing on his contemporaries, Godfrey argues that there are three ways to understand a distinction secundum rem between being moved to exercise and being moved to determination: (1) there are two acts in the act of willing itself, namely, exercising the act of willing and determining the act of willing; (2) the apprehended object moves the will to the determination of its act by impressing on the will a “special form,” and the will, having been so impressed, moves itself to the exercise of its act by using that form “as it pleases to go out into the act of willing” (pro libito ad exeundum in actum volendi); and (3) the exercise of the act of the will is the motion by which the intellect and phantasia are “impelled” (impelluntur) to apprehend the object that moves the will, and its determination is that motion by which the apprehended object moves the will to the act of willing.

But Godfrey rejects each of these ways that being moved to exercise and being moved to determination could differ secundum rem. Briefly, it is not possible for the exercise of the act of willing to “really” (realiter) be a part of the act of willing. For every act of willing is itself an exercise of the act of willing, and in general, no part is predicated of the whole. So, (1) has to be rejected. (2) suggests that the will moves itself to the exercise of every act of willing, for willing is just the will moving itself to the act of willing according to the form that is impressed on it by the apprehended object (that is, secundum formam habitam). In particular, it follows that the will moves itself to the exercise of its “first act” (in primo actu) of willing, that is, its act of

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16 Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. XV, q. 2, p. 7.
17 Ibid., pp. 7-9
18 The language of “impression” and “affection,” and the idea that the will, having received such a form, moves itself pro libito, suggests to me that Godfrey’s (2) comes from John of Murro. (Note that John of Murro does endorse the specification/exercise distinction. See his Quaest. disput., p. 491.) It is not obvious where (1) and (3) come from. The former is arguably Aquinas’s view, and the latter seems to be close to what Godfrey endorses.
willing an end (rather than some means to an end it is already willing). But such a thing is not possible. For either the act of willing necessarily follows the impressed form or it does not. If it does, then the will does not move itself so much as it is moved by whatever gives it that form. And if the act of willing does not necessarily follow the impressed form, then the will together with that form is not a “sufficient principle” (sufficiens principium) of its first act. To move itself to that act, then, the will would have to have power over it. But according to Godfrey, the will does not have power over its first act, and so (2) also has to be rejected.¹⁹ Lastly, it follows from (3) that exercise and determination are not both in the will as a subject. (The former is rather in the intellect and phantasias.) But the question that concerns Godfrey is whether the will’s being moved to the exercise of its act and its being moved to the determination of its act are the same thing. So, (3) also has to be rejected.

Since each of (1) to (3) has to be rejected, it seems that “being moved to exercise” and “being moved to specification” do not differ secundum rem. Put differently, it does not seem possible that one thing “really” (realiter) be the cause of the act of willing inasmuch as it is a “determinate act” (actus determinatus) but not inasmuch as it is an “exercise” (exercitium).

Does that mean that there is no difference between “being moved to exercise” and “being moved to specification”? No. Godfrey argues:

“Exercise of act” and “determination of act” in the will can be understood as a difference secundum rationem, that is, in such a way that [the same act] is called an exercise inasmuch as it is a “certain going out into act” (quoddam exire in actum) and is called a determinate act inasmuch as it is a determinate act with respect to a determinate object. And when we understand the difference secundum rationem in this way, it is impossible that being moved to one differs from being moved to the other secundum rem, or that something secundum rem moves [the will] to one in such a way that it does not move it to the other. But since such an act, as will be shown, has to be reduced to different causes, it

¹⁹ Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. XV, q. 2, pp. 8-9. Note that, if the act-potency axiom holds, the will is not able to move itself, in general, but Godfrey is presenting an argument against (2) that does not presuppose the act-potency axiom.
can be reduced more according to one aspect \((ratio)\) in one cause than according to another.\(^{20}\)

As Godfrey has shown, the apprehended object does move the will from potency to act. Supposing, then, that there are two potencies in the will, namely, one to the specification and another to the exercise of its act, it is not possible that the apprehended object actualize one of these potencies but not the other; that is, by actualizing one of them, the apprehended object actualizes the other.

But there is a \textit{sense} in which being moved to exercise and being moved to specification differ in the will. Godfrey draws an analogy between the act of heating and that of willing. Consider that what applies fire (\textit{applicans ignem}) to something that is able to be heated and the fire having been applied to that thing (\textit{ipse ignis applicatus}) are both called “heating” (\textit{calefacere}). When I “apply” the fire to the wood, I am said to heat the wood, since I am mediately responsible for the wood’s becoming hot by bringing the fire, which is hot, and the wood, which is able to be heated, together. But the fire is also said to heat, since it is what is immediately responsible for the wood’s becoming hot. Similarly, Godfrey argues, both what applies the object to the will by impelling the cognitive powers, and the object itself, presented in such powers, move the will to the act of willing, but the former as that which brings the will and its proper “motive principle” (\textit{motivum proprium}) together, and the latter as that from which the act comes immediately.\(^{21}\)

Godfrey’s thought is that, as a “certain going out into act,” the act of willing is more fittingly “traced back” (\textit{reduci}) to what applies the object to the will, that is, the \textit{applicans obiectum},

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\(^{20}\) Godfrey of Fontaines, \textit{Quodl.} XV, q. 2, p. 10: “Et ideo sciendum quod exercitium actus et determinatio actus in voluntate possunt accipi ut differentia secundum rationem, ita scilicet quod prout est quoddam exire in actum, dicatur exercitium; prout vero est determinatus actus respectu determinati obiecti, dicatur actus determinatus; et accipiendo sic istam differentiam secundum rationem, impossibile est quod moveri ad unum differat a moveri ad alium secundum rem, vel quod aliquid secundum rem moveat ad unum ita quod non moveat ad alterum; tamen talis actus, cum, sicut ostendetur, habeat reduci in diversas causas, potest reduci magis secundum unam rationem in unam causam quam secundum aliam.”

\(^{21}\) Ibid.: “[...] sicut applicans ignem ad quam dicitur calefacere et ipse ignis applicatus, ita etiam applicans objectum ad voluntatem impellendo vires cognitivas ad considerandum fugiendum vel prosequendum, et objectum ipsum in talibus viribus praesentatum movent voluntatem [...] in omni actu voluntatis objectum praesentatum in intellectu movet voluntatem sicut illud a quo immediate est actus volendi, sed movens praedictas virtutes ad considerandum aliquid prosequendum vel fugiendum movet in quantum hoc faciendo applicat motivum proprium voluntatis suo passive, scilicet voluntati [...]”
which is able to “indifferently apply this or that [to the will].”\textsuperscript{22} But as a determinate act of willing, it is more fittingly traced back to the applied object itself, which has the “determinate character of a good or bad to be pursued or avoided, [respectively].”\textsuperscript{23} Put differently, the will is said to be moved to the exercise of its act by whatever “impels” the cognitive powers to apprehending an object as a good to be pursued or a bad to be avoided, the remote cause of the act of willing, and moved to the determination of its act by that apprehended object, the proximate cause of the act of willing.\textsuperscript{24}

In this way, it seems possible to draw a distinction between the will’s being moved to the exercise and to the determination of its act. This distinction is merely secundum rationem, however, since applicans obiectum and obiectum applicatum are the same act considered differently, namely, as a thing’s applying some object to the will, and as that object’s having been applied to the will by that thing. But strictly speaking, one and the same object “really” (realiter) causes the act of willing both inasmuch as it is a “determinate act” (actus determinatus) and inasmuch as it is an “exercise” (exercitium).\textsuperscript{25}

Since the apprehended object “really” causes the act of willing both inasmuch as it is a “determinate act” and inasmuch as it is an “exercise,” it would not make sense for the will to move the intellect to the exercise of its act, as Aquinas and Sutton claim, for then the act of the intellect, which brings about the act of the will, would be brought about by the act of the will. According to Godfrey, properly and per se, the will does not move the intellect and the intellect does not move the will. Rather, one and the same object moves both the intellect to the act of intellection and the will to the act of volition.\textsuperscript{26} But since the will is a rational appetite for the good inasmuch as it is apprehended by the intellect, the object’s movement of the intellect has to be prior to its movement of the will. Godfrey explains that this priority is not in time, however,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid., pp. 10-11
\item \textsuperscript{24} For more on the distinction between determination and exercise in Godfrey of Fontaines, see Paul-Émile Langevin, “Nécessité ou liberté chez Godefroid de Fontaines,” \textit{Sciences Écclésiastiques} 12 (1960): pp. 176-7.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Godfrey of Fontaines, \textit{Quodl.} XV, q. 2, p. 10.
\item \textsuperscript{26} Godfrey of Fontaines, \textit{Quodl.} VI, q. 7, p. 170: “Unde quantum ad praesens est dicendum quod voluntas proprie et per se non movet intellectum nec e converso, sed obiectum quod intellectum movet ad actum intellectionis movet etiam voluntatem ad actum volitionis.”
\end{itemize}
but in nature; one and the same object, secundum rem, “brings about a double action in the order of nature, the one [naturally] prior to the other, but at the same time and in the same subject, that is, the soul, by reason of its powers, the intellect and the will.”

The upshot is that, when the intellect apprehends some object as good, the will is immediately moved to will that object by the intellect’s apprehending it as good.

Although one and the same object secundum rem moves both the intellect and the will, Godfrey does admit that there is a sense in which these two powers move each other. First, the intellect is said to move the will because it plays a necessary role in bringing about the act of willing; the intellect is moved by the object, but the will is moved by that object insofar as it is apprehended by the intellect.

Second, according to Godfrey, the intellect is not moved by the object as such, but rather the object insofar as it is represented in a “phantasm,” or sense image. The will, then, is said to move the intellect because it moves “the sensitive powers subservient to the intellect, which are organic, to the required formation of phantasms.” (Presumably, the will does this by moving the body and thereby directing the attention of these sensitive powers. My will “moves” my intellect to judge that eating the cake is good, for example, by moving my body to the bakery, where I see the cake.) The will does not move the intellect per se, as Thomas Aquinas suggests, but rather per accidens.
By adopting this “extreme” intellectualism, according to which the apprehended object moves the will not merely as a formal and final cause, as Aquinas and Sutton hold, but as an efficient cause as well. Godfrey is able to avoid the challenge of having to explain how it is possible for the will to move itself, supposing that the act-potency axiom holds. Godfrey is thereby able to make sense of the psychology of human action, and in particular, of what happens between willing some end and willing some means to that end in a way that Aquinas and Sutton are not.

The will, when it wills some end, is in potency to willing some means to that end. Although the will does not move the intellect properly and per se, it is able to move “the sensitive powers subservient to the intellect” so that they form phantasms, the “material” for thinking, as it were. When the intellect apprehends some object as good, and in particular, as means to the end, that object, which itself causes the act of the intellect, also causes the act of the will. That is, the object apprehended as good by the intellect moves the will (1) to will that object rather than some other object, and (2) to will it rather than not. And since the will does not move itself, the act-potency axiom is preserved.

3 The Problem of Control

In Chapters One and Two, I examined a problem that Aquinas’s intellectualism seems to face, namely, the Problem of Control. If my willing some object is caused by my apprehending that object as good by means of my intellect, then it seems that I do not have control over my actions. For according to the Problem of Control, to have control over my actions, it is necessary that I have the ability to will otherwise than I do. But since my intellect seems to act deterministically, I am not able to will otherwise than I do. Thus, I do not have control over my actions.

Godfrey of Fontaines must answer the Problem of Control. For he seems to commit himself to a radical “psychological determinism,” as his remarks in Question 11 of Quodlibet VI suggest:


33 Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl.* VI, q. 7, p. 164: “[...] bonum secundum quod apprehensum movet voluntatem vel ad actum volitionis ut hoc dicitur secundum rationem causae efficientis, licet secundum quod est in se ipso moveat in ratione finis.”
It is therefore necessary to always posit conformity between the act of the intellect and that of the will so that which it chooses or rejects the intellect judges as to-be-pursued or to-be-rejected. So, it is necessary to posit that, since a power is determined to its act by the object, the will is directly determined in every act by the intellect, that is, by the object first apprehended by the intellect […]34

The will does not just will what the intellect apprehends as good and nill what it apprehends as bad, but is rather “directly determined in every act” (directe in omni actu suo determinatur) by the object apprehended by the intellect. According to Godfrey’s intellectualism, it seems possible to draw an analogy between a human action and the action of a mechanism. For both (remotely) begin with some external, natural mover acting with efficient causation that brings about a sequence of motions, which terminates in an action (a human action in the former, a natural action in the latter). Perhaps the mechanism has a very minimal control over its action, since it is in virtue of its having such-and-such powers and such-and-such parts arranged in such-and-such a way that this action is produced and not that one. But there has to be more to the control that a human being has over her actions, for human beings, but not non-rational (natural or sensitive) agents, are able to act freely and be morally responsible. How is it possible on Godfrey’s intellectualism for human beings to have the control necessary for them to act freely and be morally responsible?

Because Godfrey holds that the will is moved both to the specification and to the exercise of its act by the object apprehended as good by the intellect, he has to affirm that, necessarily, if the intellect apprehends some object as good, then the will has to will that object.35 That is, he is not able to argue that the will moves itself to the exercise of its act and thereby has the power to not will that object. So, how does Godfrey answer the Problem of Control?

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34 Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VI, q. 11, p. 220: “Oportet ergo semper ponere conformitatem inter actus intellectus et voluntatis ut illud quod eligat vel refugiat voluntas intellectus iudicet fugiendum vel proseguendum. Et sic oportet ponere quod, cum potentia ad actum determinetur per obiectum, voluntas directe in omni actu suo determinatur ab intellectu, id est ab obiecto apprehenso prius ab intellectu [...]”

35 Indeed, Godfrey argues that there is always some necessity found in the act of the will. See his Quodl. VIII, q. 16, pp. 164-165.
In Chapter Two, I argue that Thomas Aquinas has a theory of control that is compatible with the will’s being moved by the apprehended object. According to Aquinas, action, in general, follows appetite, which follows cognition. For a human being to have control over her actions, then, she has to have control over her appetite, or will. But for her to have control over her will, she has to have control over her intellect, that is, over her rational judgements about what is good and bad, which her will follows. I showed that, for Aquinas, a human being has such control over her rational judgements by having “perfect cognition of the end,” that is, by apprehending the character (ratio) of her end, the means to that end and the relationship between the two, and being able to “judge about her own judgement.”

Although for Aquinas the apprehended object is not an efficient cause of the will’s act, but a formal and final cause, his theory of control does seem to suggest that, even if the intellect is an efficient cause of the will’s act, a human being has control over her actions. For she has control over her actions by having control over her rational judgements, and she has control over her rational judgements because she has perfect cognition of the end and is able to form meta-judgements. But it seems that, regardless of whether the will is moved by the apprehended object as by an efficient cause, a human being is able to have such cognition of the end, and thus, control over her judgements, appetites, and actions.

So, it is not very surprising that Godfrey adopts Aquinas’s notion of perfect cognition of the end, quoting the Prima secundae verbatim in Question 16 of Quodlibet VIII:

[In] perfect cognition of the end, which is only had by [something with] an immaterial nature, not only is the thing which is the end apprehended, but the nature of the end and the relationship of the means to that end is cognized as well.

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36 See Chapter 2, Section 5 of my dissertation.
37 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.
38 Ibid.
39 Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 16, p. 146: “[...] perfecta enim cognitio finis, quae non habetur nisi a natura immateriali, est quando non solum apprehenditur res quae est finis, sed etiam cognoscitur ratio finis et proportio eius quod ordinatur in finem ad ipsum.” Jean Hoffmans fails to acknowledge that Godfrey is quoting ST I-II, q. 6, a. 2 here. Note that, in the text that follows, Godfrey makes it clear that perfect cognition involves an apprehension of the end, the nature of that end, the means to it, and the relationship between the means and the end.
Godfrey, following Aquinas, argues that the perfection of cognition is opposed to materiality. For both intellectualists, a brute animal is able to apprehend “the thing that is the end” (*res quae est finis*) by means of its (material) senses, but not the character of the end (*ratio finis*) or the relationship between the end and the means to that end.\(^{40}\) However, by means of her (immaterial) intellect, a human being apprehends “each and every thing and the character of each and every thing, both in itself and in the order and relationship it has to another.”\(^{41}\) She does not just apprehend “the thing that is the end,” but the character of the end, that is, *what it is for the end to be an end*, and the relationship between the end and the means to it. That is, a human being has “perfect cognition” of the end.

Godfrey also follows Aquinas by arguing that there is a relationship between perfect cognition of the end and control (*dominium*). Since brute animals apprehend neither “the character of the end nor the relationship of that which is for the end to the end itself,” they do not act so much as they are acted upon by the “impetus and instigation of nature” (*impetu et instinctu naturae*).\(^{42}\) However, because of their abstraction, human beings are self-reflexive and able to cognize the end, the character (*ratio*) of that end, the means to it and the relationship between the means and the end, [and] so they are able to order themselves to something else and have control (*dominium*) over their actions.\(^{43}\)

Because of the immateriality of her rational soul, a human being is self-reflexive and able to have perfect cognition of the end. Although a brute animal apprehends and pursues the end and

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\(^{40}\) Ibid., p. 147. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 6, a. 2, co.: “Perfecta quidem finis cognitio est quando non solum apprehenditur res quae est finis sed etiam cognoscitur ratio finis, et proportio eius quod ordinatur in finem ad ipsum. Et talis cognitio finis competit soli rationali naturae. Imperfecta autem cognitio finis est quae in sola finis apprehensione consistit, sine hoc quod cognoscatur ratio finis, et proportio actus ad finem. Et talis cognitio finis invenitur in brutis animalibus, per sensum et aestimationem naturalem.”

\(^{41}\) Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl.* VIII, q. 16, pp. 146-7: “Sed rationabilia, quia ratione suae abstractionis et immaterialitatis non ordinantur ad aliquid ens aut bonum particular, sed ad omne ens et bonum universaliter se extendunt, universalem rationem entis et boni apprehendentia et etiam appetentia, possunt cognoscere unumquodque et rationem uniuscuiusque et in se et in ordine et habitudine unius alterum […]”

\(^{42}\) Ibid., p. 147.

\(^{43}\) Ibid.: “Sed immaterialia, quia ratione suae abstractionis sunt conversiva supra se ipsa et possunt cognoscere finem et rationem finis et ea quae sunt ad finem et proportionem eorum ad ipsum finem, ideo talia possunt se ipsa ordinare in aliud et habere dominium suorum actuum.” For more on immateriality as the “root” of freedom, see Langevin, “Nécessité ou liberté,” p. 188.
the means to that end, it is not able to apprehend and pursue the end as an end and the means as 
means to that end. Thus, for Godfrey, while a brute animal does not have control over its actions, 
a human being does have control over her actions.\footnote{Note that, for Godfrey, human actions “simultaneously proceed from an act of the intellect and [an act] of the will, 
which are always in agreement, such that the mode and form of the will follows the mode and form of the act of the 
intellect.” Thus, an action is not in one’s power through the intellect or the will alone, but rather through the intellect 
and the will together. See Quodl. X, q. 13, p. 373.}

But what is this control that a human being has because she apprehends the character of the end, 
the means, and the relationship between the two? Godfrey seems to follow Aquinas again by 
suggesting that it is twofold. First, to the extent that a human being acts “for her own sake” 
\textit{(causa sui)} when she acts with perfect cognition of the end, she has what might be called 
“guidance control” over her actions.\footnote{John Martin Fischer & Mark Ravizza, Responsibility and Control: A Theory of Moral Responsibility (Cambridge: 
Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 30-31.} As Godfrey explains in Question 16 of Quodlibet VIII, 
with reference to Aristotle’s remarks in the Metaphysics on the difference between a free man 
\textit{(liber)} and a slave \textit{(servus)}:

\begin{quote}
Just as that man is said to be a slave who exists not for his own sake, but [for the sake of] 
another, who does not know how to direct himself, and, when he does something, is not 
completely acquainted with the character \textit{(ratio)} of those things which he does and [of 
those things] for the sake of which he does them, and does not direct himself to them, but 
is principally directed and moved by another, so that man is free who knows how to 
direct himself, cognizing the end, the character of the end, of those things which are for 
the end, and the proportion of those things to the end itself, etc.\footnote{Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 16, Le huitième Quodlibet, Le neuvième Quodlibet, Le dixième Quodlibet, 
dicitur servus, secundum Philosophum, primo Politicorum, qui non sui ipsius gratia est, sed alterius, qui se ipsum 
nescit regere nec faciens aliqua habet plene notitiam rationis eorum quae facit et propter quae facit, nec se ipsum in 
illis dirigit, sed dirigitur et movetur principaliter ab alio; ita ille liber est qui se ipsum regere scit, cognoscens finem 
et rationem finis et eorum quae ad finem et proportionem illorum ad ipsum finem, et cetera.”}

When a human being has perfect cognition of the end, she “knows how to direct herself,” acting 
not “for the sake of another” \textit{(causa alterius)} but rather “for her own sake” \textit{(causa sui)}. What 
does Godfrey mean here? Suppose that my end is health. Since I have so-called “perfect” 
cognition of the end, I apprehend health as an end. That is, I “see” health as something that I do
not have now but might come to have if I choose the right means. So, what do I have to do to be healthy? Well, I have to think about it. Perhaps I will diet or go to the gym and exercise. I have reasons to do either, but suppose that, having deliberated about what I should do to be healthy, I conclude that I should exercise rather than diet. I “see” exercising as a means to my end, that is, as something that I am able to do (and should do) to be healthy. When I do exercise, my action is an expression of my practical rationality. I do not exercise “by accident,” as it were, or because I was coerced to do so. Rather, I exercise because I want to be healthy and judge that exercising is what I should do to bring about that end; I do what I do because I judge that it will get me something that I want. As Godfrey says, I am not directed to act as I do by another but by myself. When I have perfect cognition of the end, then, there seems to be a sense in which I guide my actions.\footnote{Note that, although a human being has guidance control over her doing this or that as a means to some end, Godfrey denies that she has control over “what first comes to her mind.” See Quodl. X, q. 14, p. 381: “Cum ergo incipit aliquis velle et prius non volebat, hoc est quia cogitat de aliquo de quo prius non cogitabat. Hoc autem per se non habet causam determinatam, quia variæ et plurimæ possunt huiusmodi esse causæ; unde non est in potestate nostra quid nobis veniat primo in mentem.” On this point, see Lottin, Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles, vol. 1, pp. 324-5.}

Second, to the extent that a human being has a certain “power to do otherwise” because of his perfect cognition of the end, he has what might be called “regulative control” over his actions.\footnote{See note 45.} As Godfrey argues in Question 4 of Quodlibet XV, a human being has [regulative] control \textit{(dominium)} over his actions,

\begin{quote}
first, because by moving himself through such a universal principle, he has an indifference to many when he moves himself and, by nature, settles on one thing or another through deliberation. Second, because, by moving himself through such a universal principle, that is, because he wants to pursue that which is advantageous for him and to consider how he should pursue [it], he is able to reject those things which, while he is still engaging in such deliberation, occur to and, by nature, incline his will, such that, if a woman, a delectable thing, or some such thing occurs to a man deliberating
\end{quote}
about how he ought to live his life he is able to reject such things through that principle, and if he does not, then he should be blamed (imputandum est sibi).  

First, a human being has a kind of “indifference to many” (habet indifferentiam ad multa) that is settled by means of deliberation, for he does not pursue some particular good, but rather the good in general, that is, he moves himself through a “universal principle.” Second, Godfrey says that he is able to “reject” (repellere) whatever might incline his will when he is deliberating. Suppose, for example, that I think that eating something sweet is good, and so I want to have something sweet to eat. Now, I could have the piece of cake that I see in the bakery, but I do not have to. By means of my intellect, I apprehend both the object that is fitting (conveniens) in some way, that is, the piece of cake, but also the character (ratio) of its “fittingness,” namely, that it is something sweet, which is what I want to have. So, I could also think about what other things are sweet and which of them are worthy of choice: “That piece of cake does look good, but it is far too expensive; I have some cookies at home, but I want to eat something sweet now; I could have a donut from the coffee shop, but they are usually not very tasty; etc.”

Suppose that I do have some sweet thing. I have regulative control over my action to the extent that I could have acted differently. So, could I have acted differently? Yes, for as Godfrey says, before I conclude my deliberation about which sweet thing I ought to have, I am “indifferent” to many sweet things, the “secondary objects of volition” (secundaria volibilia); I do not necessarily will to have this sweet thing or that one. Although I might judge that I ought to have this sweet thing and will to have it, I could have willed to have that one.

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49. Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. XV, q. 4, p. 30: “Primo quia per hoc quod movet se per tale principium universale in movendo habet indifferentiam ad multa et natus est sistere quousque deliberet. Secundo quia ex hoc quod movet se per tale principium universale, quia scilicet vult tendere in illud quod sibi expedit et inquirere quomodo tendat, ea quae durante tali deliberatione occurrunt et nata sunt inclinare voluntatem potest repellere, ut si homini deliberanti quam vitam teneat occurrat vel mulier vel aliquid delectabile vel aliquid tale potest per illud principium talia a se repellere, et si non repulit imputandum est sibi.”

50. See note 41.

51. See Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VI, q. 12, p. 234: “Item, intellectus apprehendens aliquid sub ratione alieius convenientiae propter quod etiam voluntas furtur in illud, habet cognoscere non solum illud quod est sic conveniens et inclinari in illud per voluntatem, sicut contingit in brutis, sed etiam rationem huiusmodi convenientiae [...]”

52. As Thomas Aquinas says in the Disputed Questions on Evil, deliberation is a “sort of non-demonstrative inquiry” (inquisitio quaedam non demonstrativa) that is “open to opposites” (ad opposita viam habens). See his QDM, q. 6.
Since the will is “directly determined in every act by the intellect,” however, I could have willed to have *that* sweet thing just because I would have willed to have it, if I had judged that it, and not *this* sweet thing, is to be willed.\(^{53}\) And as Godfrey suggests, I could have made such a judgement, for I am able to “reject” (*repellere*) what my intellect apprehends as good. Although he does not make reference to “judgement about judgement,” as Aquinas does in the *Disputed Questions on Truth*,\(^ {54}\) it makes sense to think of Godfrey’s remarks about “rejecting” as involving such second-order reflection. I could judge, for example, that I should eat a donut from the coffee shop down the street, but since I want something sweet and prefer convenience to tastiness, I could also reject that judgement if I figure out that the donuts are a week old, say. I do not prefer convenience to tastiness *that* much, and so I now judge that my judgement was bad. Godfrey stresses that, “every will, just as it wills something, so it wills for the sake of something. Thus, just as *what* it wills must be considered, so must *why* it wills.”\(^ {55}\) When I “reject” what my intellect apprehends as good, I judge that there is a better “*what*” (*quid*) to my “*why*” (*cur*) and then will that better “*what*.”

Both of the aspects of the control that a human being has over her actions because she apprehends the character of the end, the means, and the relationship between the two, namely, guidance control and regulative control, are compatible with Godfrey’s “extreme” intellectualism, according to which the apprehended object moves the will as an efficient cause. This is because a human being is able to apprehend the character of the end, the means, and the relationship between the two, or have perfect cognition of the end, and (sometimes) “reject” her judgement that *this* is to be willed rather than *that*, even if her will is so moved by the apprehended object.\(^ {56}\) So, like Aquinas, it seems to me that Godfrey has an answer to the

\(^{53}\) See note 34.

\(^{54}\) But Godfrey does affirm that a human being is able to reflect on her own acts in *Quodl.* XV, q. 4, p. 30.

\(^{55}\) Ibid., p. 235: “Et ideo subditur ibi: omnis quippe voluntas sicut vult aliquid, ita vult propter aliquid; et sicut considerandum est quid velit, ita considerandum est cur velit, quippe non magis recta debet esse volendo quod debet, quam volendo propter quod debet.” While every will, then, has a “*what*” (*quid*) and a “*why*” (*cur*), the appetites of non-rational animals, which fail to apprehend the nature of the end and the relationship of the means to that end, just have a “*what.*” The result is that they are not the causes of their willing or pursuing the end. The text continues: “Et per hoc innuit Anselmus quod hoc non contingit in brutis, scilicet appetere aliquid et cur id appetunt; quia rationem finis non apprehendunt nec ordinem ipsum in illum; propter quod etiam non sunt sibi causa volendi vel appetendi suum finem, sicut contingit in rationalibus.”

\(^{56}\) The relevant section of *Quodl.* XV, q. 4 concludes: “Et his potest patere Anselmus quod hoc non contingit in brutis, scilicet appetere aliquid et cur id appetunt; quia rationem finis non apprehendunt nec ordinem ipsum in illum; propter quod etiam non sunt sibi causa volendi vel appetendi suum finem, sicut contingit in rationalibus.”
Problem of Control; it does not follow that, if my willing an object is caused by my apprehending that object as good, then I do not have control over my actions; rather, since I have so-called “perfect” cognition of the end, I have a twofold control over my actions.

4 Passivity, Activity, and Intentionality

I have argued that, by adopting Thomas Aquinas’s doctrine of perfect cognition of the end, Godfrey of Fontaines is able to address the Problem of Control, in much the same way that Aquinas himself seems to be able to. But Godfrey’s “extreme” intellectualism (according to which the will is efficiently moved by the object apprehended by the intellect) seems to have a consequence that Aquinas’s more moderate intellectualism does not, namely, that the grammar of sentences of the form “I want (or will) [an object] by means of my will” seems to be misleading. For the grammar of such sentences suggests that I am doing something (namely, willing the object) and the object of my volition is having something done to it (namely, being willed by me). But since my will is moved by the object apprehended by my intellect, it is rather the apprehended object that is really doing something (namely, moving my will to the act of willing) and me, or rather, my will, that is really having some done to it (namely, being moved to the act of willing). That is, the grammatical object of such sentences is really acting and the grammatical subject is really being acted upon, whereas in sentences of the form “[Some object] heats [some other object],” the grammatical subject is acting (that is, heating) and the grammatical object is being acted upon (that is, being heated).

But if my will is merely the grammatical subject of willing and is not really “doing the willing,” as it were, then it seems to follow that willing is not really the act of my will. Rather, it seems to be the act of the apprehended object, that is, the efficient cause, of that act; willing is something that “happens” to my will, as heating does to the wood, and just as heating is not really the act of the wood, so willing is not really the act of my will. Call this the Problem of Attributability.

praedictum universale proponere haec vel illa obiecta secundaria volilibia in quibus solis est homo simpliciter dominus sui actus et repellere obiecta occurrentia, ideo motion quae est ab obiectis talibus est etiam in potestate voluntatis, propter quod homo per voluntatem una cum intellectu potest habere dominium sui actus, non obstante quod voluntas moveatur ab obiecto.”
The Problem of Attributability challenges Godfrey’s claim that a human being (ever) has control over her actions, since it calls into question his assumption that her actions are really her actions. When a human being apprehends something as good by means of her intellect and wills that thing by means of her will, the agent of that willing does not seem to be her, but rather the apprehended object that brings it about; rather than say that a human being has control over her actions, it seems more appropriate to say that the apprehended object has control over its actions. Godfrey owes us a story about why the will is not merely the grammatical subject of willing. Indeed, if the will is not, in some sense, really doing the willing, then it seems that the actions of a human being are not hers to control.

Although Godfrey does not take up the Problem of Attributability, he does address a very similar problem for intellectual cognition. Since the intellect and the will are both reduced from potency to act by one and the same object,⁵⁷ the grammar of sentences of the form “I apprehend [an object] by means of my intellect,” or “My intellect apprehends [an object]” also seems to be misleading. As with sentences of the form “I want (or will) [an object] by means of my will,” or “My will wills [an object],” sentences of this form similarly suggest that I am doing something (namely, apprehending the object) and the object of my cognition is having something done to it (namely, being apprehended by me). As Godfrey puts it, the power (my intellect) is denominated by its act (apprehension) “according to the active mode” (secundum modum activi) and the object of that act is denominated “according to the passive mode” (secundum modum passivi).⁵⁸ However, since the act of my intellect is efficiently caused by the object of that act, the grammatical subject of such sentences, which is denominated “according to the active mode,” is really being acted upon, and the grammatical object, which is denominated “according to the passive mode,” is really doing the acting; the object of my cognition is what really brings that act about in my intellect.

So, why do we say, “I apprehend [an object] by means of my intellect,” or “My intellect apprehends [an object]”? That is, why not just say, “Apprehension of [an object] happens to me,”

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⁵⁷ Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VI, q. 7, p. 170.
⁵⁸ Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. IX, q. 19, p. 277.
or something similar? In Question 19 of Quodlibet IX, which concerns whether intellec
(intelligere) comes about through the reception of some species, Godfrey explains that,

with respect to [the acts of the powers of the soul], the powers are passive simpliciter and
the objects have an active nature (habent rationem activi). The powers are nevertheless
denominated by such acts according to the active mode and the objects according to the
passive mode. For in such acts, the act really (realiter) depends on the object and is
referred to it, but not conversely, and so the object is related to the act as [its] true and
real terminus (in ratione veri et realis termini), but not conversely. However, what has
the nature of a terminus with respect to some act is, in some way, passive (habet modum
passivi) with respect to it, and simpliciter, that which “looks to another” (aliud respicit)
as [to] a terminus seems to be, in some way, active with respect to it.59

According to Godfrey, the act of a power of the soul, such as the will or the intellect, is related to
its object in two ways. First, the act “really depends” (realiter dependet) on its object, but not
conversely, for it is efficiently caused by that object. Second, the act is “referred” to its object,
but not conversely, for it has that object as its “true and real terminus” (verus et realis terminus).

Godfrey gives us the example of an intellectual apprehension of a stone (intellectio lapidis).60
First, the act of apprehension is effectively caused in the intellect by the stone rather than by the
intellect itself; if the intellect were to be its cause, then it would have to reduce itself from
potency to act in the same respect, which violates the act-potency axiom. The act of
apprehending the stone, then, “really depends” on the stone, that is, as its efficient cause. Second,
acts of the powers of the soul, in general, have intentionality. In particular, the act of
apprehending a stone is about that stone. Therefore, it does not just “really depend” on the stone,
but is also referred to it as its “true and real terminus,” as its intentional object.

59 Ibid.: “[...] respectu illorum sunt potentiae simpliciter passivae et objecta habent rationem activi; et tamen ipsae
potentiae denominantur a talibus actibus secundum modum activi et objecta secundum modum passivi. Quia enim in
talibus ipse actus realiter dependet ab objecto et refertur ad ipsum, non autem e converso, et sic objectum se habet in
ratione veri et realis termini respectu ipsius actus, non autem e converso; illud autem quod habet rationem
terminantis respectu alicuius actus aliquo modo habet modum passivi respectu illius et simpliciter illud quod aliu
drespicit quasi terminum aliquo modo modum activi videtur habere respectu illius [...]”

60 Ibid.
Apprehending, then, differs from so-called “absolute actions” (*actus absoluti*) that “really depend,” or are efficiently caused, by some object, but do not have that object as a terminus, such as shining (*lucere*).\(^{61}\) (In particular, Godfrey explains that shining depends on a luminous body [*corpus luminosum*] as the efficient cause of the light in the air, but does not have an essential relation to that body as a terminus. Similarly, heating is efficiently caused by the fire but is not *about* that fire.) Since the act of apprehending *does* have a terminus, or “regards” (*respicit*) some object,” it is not absolute, but rather “transitive” (*transitivus*).\(^{62}\)

However, apprehending also differs from transitive acts that, as it were, “go outside,” such as striking (*percutere*). Striking regards some object, namely, the thing struck (*percussum*), both as a terminus and as the subject of the striking (*subiectum percussionis*).\(^{63}\) That is, every striking is the striking *of* some object, in which that striking “happens.” According to Godfrey, striking is said to be an action inasmuch as it regards some object as a terminus, and it is said to “go outside” (*transiens extra*) inasmuch as it regards that object as the subject of the striking, or the “subject in which” (*subiectum in quo*) the striking happens.\(^{64}\) Although apprehending does regard some object, namely, the thing apprehended (*apprehensum*), it regards that object merely as a terminus and not as the subject of apprehension, that is, the “subject in which” apprehension happens. For apprehending does not happen in the object apprehended, but rather in the intellect (nor does apprehending do anything to the apprehended object). Since the “subject in which” apprehension happens is what the act denominates “as the agent” (*sub ratione agentis*) of that act, namely, the intellect, apprehending is said to be a transitive act that regards some object merely as a terminus and therefore “stays inside” (*manens intra*) the intellect.\(^{65}\)

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\(^{61}\) Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl.* XII, q. 1, p. 80.  
\(^{62}\) Ibid.  
\(^{63}\) Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl.* XIII, q. 3, p. 202: “Sicut enim percutiens respicit percussum ut terminum et etiam ut subiectum percussionis, ideo dicitur esse actio in quantum respicit aliud ut terminum ad quem; et dicitur transiens extra in quantum respicit illud ut subiectum in quo.”  
\(^{64}\) Ibid.  
\(^{65}\) Ibid: “Sed quia illud non respicit ut subiectum, sed eius subiectum est illud quod sub ratione agentis denominat, ideo dicitur manens in agente, id est in eo quod per modum agentis denominatur, licet non sit vere agens.” Godfrey says this about seeing, but it applies just as well to the other acts of the powers of the soul. Cf. *Quodl.* XII, q. 1, 80: “Non sic autem de visione est respectu objecti; quia non requirit ipsum solum ut causam effectivam, sed etiam ut objectum ad quod terminatur. Propter quod videre non dicit actum simpliciter absolutum sicut lucere, sed actum transitivum, non ut in subiectum sicut actio transiens extra, sed ut ad terminum sicut actio manens intra.”
Since apprehending is efficiently caused in the intellect by object of apprehension, there seems to be a sense in which the former is passive and the latter active, that is, a sense in which apprehending is something “done to” the former and “done by” the latter; with respect to efficient causality, the “direction” of apprehension is from the object to the intellect. But as Godfrey argues, since apprehending is not about the intellect, but the apprehended object, which is its “true and real” terminus, there also seems to be a sense in which the former is active (aliquo modo modum activi) and the latter passive (aliquo modo habet modum passivi). That is, there seems to be a sense in which apprehending is something “done to” the object of apprehension and “done by” the intellect; with respect to intentionality, the “direction” of apprehension goes from the intellect to the object, not from the object to the intellect.

The upshot is that both “Apprehension of [an object] happens to me” and “I apprehend [an object] by means of my intellect” describe my apprehending some object, but in different ways. While the former describes the act in terms of efficient causality, the latter does so in terms of intentionality. The act of apprehending some object is efficiently caused in me by the object of that apprehension, but it also about that object, not about me.

I think it is possible to apply what Godfrey says about apprehension to willing and address the Problem of Attributability. As with apprehension, willing is efficiently caused in the will by the object of volition, that is, the object apprehended as good by the intellect, and so there seems to be a sense in which the former is passive and the latter active, that is, a sense in which willing is something “done to” me, or my will, and “done by” the object of volition. But just as apprehension is not about me (or my intellect) but the object of apprehension, so willing is not

66 See note 59.

67 Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. XIII, q. 3, p. 202: “[...] ideo licet intelligere lapidem vel intellectio lapidis sit actus effective causatus a lapide in intellectum, tamen per hoc dicitur lapis intelligi ab intellectu quasi passiva ac si ab intellectu quasi intelligitur fieri vel esse factum in ipso, et intellectus dicitur intelligere lapidem quasi activa ac si ab ipso alicui procedat vel transeat in lapidem” Cf. Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 2, p. 32: “Item, quia huismodi perfectiones in esse suo dependunt ab obiecto, non solum ut ab efficiente, sed illud respicit ut terminum suae dependentiae, et sic, licet non transeant in aliud sicut in id quod actioni subicitur vel quod movetur; quia tamen respiicit aliud ut terminum, hoc autem convenit actioni verae quae consistit in fieri, quod verbaliter significatur et enunciatur de agente, et agens significatur ut subjectum, licet in illo non sit realiter ut in subjecto; et passivum, quod realiter est subjectum, sub ratione termini enunciatur.” As Wippel notes, Godfrey seems to offer “two possible causal explanations for immanent operations” in Quodl. VIII, q. 2, but assigning efficient causality to the objects of such operations is Godfrey’s “personal choice.” See his The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines, p. 195.
about me (or my will) but the objection of volition. So, there also seems to be a sense in which the former is active and the latter passive, that is, a sense in which willing is something “done to” the object of volition and “done by” me, or my will; with respect to efficient causality, the object apprehended as good is active and my will is passive, but with respect to intentionality, my will seems to be active and the object passive.

Here is a sense in which willing is an act of the will that is not grounded in efficient causality, but is also not (merely) grounded in grammar. Rather, it is also grounded in the intentionality of willing, which “looks to” some object as its “true and real terminus.” Put differently, it is not just a feature of our language that we say, “I want (will) [some object]” but a feature of the act of willing itself, namely, that it is caused in the will by some object, but is also directed towards that object intentionally. The upshot is that the will is not just the grammatical subject of willing. There is also a sense in which it is really doing that act, for when it wills some object, that object “terminates” the will’s attention.

Now, by itself, this might not be a very convincing answer to the Problem of Attributability. But it is also worth considering that the act of willing that is caused in me by some object is related to other acts that are caused in me and (proximately) by me. Suppose, for example, that a piece of cake causes in me an act of willing that piece of cake. Now that I will the piece of cake, however, each of the following is possible: I think about whether it would be better to eat the piece of cake or something else; I remember how tasty cake can be; I think about how to get the piece of cake; I feel frustrated because I am dieting and should not have the piece of cake; I wish that I did not want to have the piece of cake; I move my body towards the piece of cake; I eat the piece of cake; etc. Is the act of willing the piece of cake, then, my willing or the willing of the piece of cake? Put differently, am I really “doing the willing,” as it were? While the act of willing the piece of cake seems to be related to other acts that are caused in me and (proximately) by me, it is not so related to other acts that are caused in and by the piece of cake; the act of willing the piece of cake, which is about that piece of cake and not about me, causes me and not the piece of cake to pursue it, for example. Since the act of willing the piece of cake stands in such causal relationships focused on me and not the piece of cake, there does seem to be a sense in which the act of my willing the cake is mine to control. More generally, although I am not the efficient cause of any of the acts of my will, it seems that I have a much better claim to “owning” them than the objects of those acts do.
5 Conclusion

For Thomas Aquinas, Thomas of Sutton and Godfrey of Fontaines, the will is moved by the intellect and is therefore a passive power of the rational soul. But the will is “more passive” for Godfrey than for Aquinas and Sutton. While Godfrey holds that the will is moved both to the specification and to the exercise of its act by the object apprehended by the intellect, Aquinas and Sutton hold that the will is moved to the specification of its act by the object apprehended by the intellect and to the exercise of its act by itself.

All parties adhere to the act-potency axiom, that is, the Aristotelian principle that nothing “educes” itself from potency to act, or that everything moved is moved by another. I have argued that neither Aquinas nor Sutton tells a plausible story about how the will is supposed to move itself to the exercise of its act that preserves the act-potency axiom. But Godfrey is able to avoid the challenge of explaining how the self-motion of the will is possible by denying that the will moves itself (directly) to the exercise of its act.

By arguing that the will is moved by the object apprehended by the intellect as by an efficient cause, however, Godfrey seems to encounter two problems, namely, the Problem of Control and the Problem of Attributability. First, Godfrey’s claim that the will is efficiently moved by the object apprehended by the intellect seems to imply that the will is necessitated. But if the will is necessitated, then a human being is not able to will otherwise than she does, which suggests that she does not have control over her actions. Second, if the intellect and the will are efficiently moved by the same object secundum rem, as Godfrey says, then apprehending and willing do not seem to be acts of the intellect or the will, respectively, but rather acts of that object.

By drawing on Aquinas’s remarks about perfect cognition of the end and control, or dominium, Godfrey shows how it is possible for a human being to have control over her actions even if her will is efficiently moved by the object apprehended by her intellect. Since a human being is able to cognize the end “perfectly,” that is, apprehend the character of the end, the means, and the relationship between the two, she has guidance and regulative control over her actions. And since a human being is able to have such an apprehension of the end even if her will is efficiently moved by the object apprehended by her intellect, she is also able to have guidance and regulative control over her actions. And these actions are indeed her actions. For every human action, as such, begins with some apprehension of the intellect and some volition of the will.
Although apprehension and volition are efficiently caused in the intellect and the will by some object, they are *about* that object, and thus, “immanent” transitive acts of which the intellect and the will are the agents. Godfrey, then, has an answer both to the Problem of Control and to the Problem of Attributability.
1 Introduction

Intellectualism is the view that acts of volition are caused by acts of cognition, that my willing this is caused by my apprehending it as good for me here and now, and my nilling that is caused by my apprehending it as bad for me here and now. Thomas Aquinas, Thomas of Sutton and Godfrey of Fontaines are all intellectualists. For Aquinas and Sutton, the will, the faculty of volition, is moved by the intellect to the specification of its act, that is, to willing one thing rather than some other thing. For Godfrey, the will is also moved by the intellect to the exercise of its act, that is, to willing that thing rather than not. More precisely, for Aquinas and Sutton, the intellect is the formal and final cause of the act of the will, but for Godfrey, it is the efficient cause as well.

By making the intellect the efficient cause of the act of the will, Godfrey makes the will more passive with respect to the intellect than Aquinas and Sutton do. But he thereby avoids a major obstacle that Thomistic intellectualism faces. Aquinas and Sutton hold (1) that the intellect moves the will to the specification of its act, but the will moves itself to the exercise of its act, consecutively for Sutton, and indirectly for both Sutton and Aquinas; (2) the Aristotelian principle that everything moved is moved by another, the so-called “act-potency axiom.” These two commitments seem to be in tension and, as I have argued, neither Thomas Aquinas nor Thomas of Sutton has a plausible story to tell about how the will is able to move itself (consecutively or indirectly) to the exercise of its act, and in particular, of willing some means to some end, when everything moved is moved by another.

1 For the apparent shift from Aquinas’s attributing “final causality” to the intellect over the will in his earlier works to his attributing “formal causality” in his later works, see my comments in Chapter 1, Section 5. I agree with Rosemary Zita Lauer when she says that, “no matter what terms St. Thomas chooses to apply to the intellect’s causality, the thought that is expressed seems to be consistent throughout his writings.” See her “St. Thomas’s Theory of Intellectual Causality in Election,” The New Scholasticism 28, (1954): pp. 297-319 at p. 317.

Since he denies that the will moves itself to the exercise of its act, Godfrey’s intellectualism does not encounter such an obstacle. But Godfrey is not able to avoid the criticism that William de la Mare makes against Thomas Aquinas’s intellectualism, which I have called the Problem of Control. Godfrey admits that, on his psychology, the will is necessitated by the intellect. But as I explained in Chapter 2, if the will is necessitated by the intellect, then a human being is not able to will otherwise than she does, since the intellect, a passive cognitive power, acts deterministically. And if she is not able to will otherwise than she does, then she does not seem to have control over her actions. If she does not have control over her actions, however, then she does not have free will, since having control over one’s actions is necessary for having free will. But this is absurd, for if human beings do not have free will, then “all the principles of moral philosophy [would be] subverted,” as Aquinas says.

In Chapter 4, I showed that, by adopting Aquinas’s notion of “perfect cognition of the end,” Godfrey is able to address the Problem of Control. Although there is a sense in which the will is necessitated by the intellect on Godfrey’s “extreme” intellectualism, by apprehending the character of the end, the means to that end and the relationship between the two, or having perfect cognition of the end, a human being nonetheless has control over her actions. In particular, she has control over her actions (1) because they are rationally self-directed, and (2) because she has a “conditional” power for opposites, that is, because she would have done otherwise than she did if she had judged otherwise. Therefore, it does not follow that, if the will

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3 Rather, as I showed in the previous chapter, the will is moved both to the specification and to the exercise of its act by the intellect for Godfrey of Fontaines. Moreover, “being moved with respect to exercise” and “being moved with respect to determination” differ merely secundum rationem. See Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. XV, q. 2, p. 10.

4 For William de la Mare’s criticism, which I discuss in Chapter 2, see Correctorium fratris Thomae, In primam secundae, a. 7, p. 232.

5 Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 16, p. 164: “Similiter etiam deliberando de eo quod est volendum propter finem, facta conclusione et stante tali apprehensione, voluntas non potest illud non velle [...]” Later, Godfrey concludes that “there is always some necessity to be found in every act of the will” (in omni actu voluntatis semper aliqua necessitas invenitur).

6 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6: “Est etiam annumeranda inter extraneas philosophiae opiniones: quia non solum contrariatur fidei, sed subvertit omnia principia philosophiae moralis. Si enim non sit liberum aliquid in nobis, sed ex necessitate movemur ad volendum, tollitur deliberatio, exhortatio, praeceptum et punitio, et laus et vituperium, circa quae moralis philosophia consistit.”

7 For “perfect cognition of the end” in Aquinas, see ST, I-II, q. 6, a. 2, co. For “perfect cognition of the end” in Godfrey, see Quodl. VIII, q. 16, pp. 146-7. As I noted in Chapter 4, Godfrey quotes Aquinas verbatim in his description of this cognition.
is necessitated by the intellect, which acts deterministically, then a human being lacks control over her actions.

But the Problem of Control is not simply that, if the will is necessitated by the intellect, which acts deterministically, then it follows that a human being lacks any kind of control over her actions. Rather, it is that, if the will is so necessitated, then a human being lacks the kind of control over her actions that matters for free will (and thus, being morally responsible).

Presumably, a brute animal has a kind of control over its actions that an inanimate being lacks, for it moves itself to pursue those objects that it apprehends as good through its senses and natural estimation, and avoid those objects that it apprehends as bad. But it does not follow from its having such control that it also has free will. Perhaps a human being does have a kind of control over her actions that a brute animal lacks, but it does not necessarily follow from her having such control that she also has free will.

Is the control that a human being has over her actions when she has perfect cognition of the end the kind of control that matters for free will? In this chapter, I will complete my defense of intellectualism by answering this question. I will first show that, at least for Thomas Aquinas and Godfrey of Fontaines, having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free, and so the control that she has over her actions when she has such cognition is the kind that matters for free will. Then, I will consider what motivates this claim and explain how an intellectualist might address the objection that some human beings seem to exercise free will without having perfect cognition of the end. Finally, I will briefly discuss what seems to be a consequence of this intellectualist view of free will, namely, that there are degrees of freedom.

2 An Intellectualist View of Free Will

For Thomas Aquinas and Godfrey of Fontaines, it seems that the kind of control that a human being has over his actions when he has perfect cognition of the end is the kind that matters for

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8 See, for example, Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 1, co.

9 Note that Aquinas does hold that brute animals have “a certain similitude of free will” (quaedam similitudo liberi arbitrii). See Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.
free will. I will show this by arguing that, for both Aquinas and Godfrey, having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free.

As we already know, in question 24 of the Disputed Questions on Truth, Aquinas argues that a human being is “the cause of himself” (causa sui) in moving and in judging:

But man, judging about what is to be done by the power of his reason, is able to judge about his own decision, inasmuch as he apprehends the character (ratio) of the end and of the means, and the relationship and order of the one to the other. Therefore, he is not just the cause of himself in moving, but in judging as well.  

I argued in Chapter 2 that, since she apprehends the character (ratio) of the end, the means and the relationship between the two, a human being is able to judge about her own (rational) judgements about what to do and therefore has power over them. But since motion “follows” appetite, which “follows” cognition, by having her judgements in her power, she also has her appetites and actions in her power. Whereas a brute animal merely follows its (natural) judgements about what to do, a human being is “the cause of herself” (causa sui) in judging, and thus, in willing and acting as well.

What does it mean that a human being is causa sui in this way? As I have argued, Aquinas’s claim is not that she is the cause of her essence or existence, that is, of her being a rational animal that pursues the good apprehended by her reason. Rather, when he describes a human being as causa sui in the Disputed Questions on Truth, Aquinas seems to tie being causa sui to “self-direction,” or “self-determination.” Again, that a human being has perfect cognition of the end and is able to form meta-judgements means that she is able to evaluate her judgement about

10 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 1, co.: “Homo vero per virtutem rationis iudicandus de agendis, potest de suo arbitrio iudicare, in quantum cognoscit rationem finis et eius quod est ad finem, et habitudinem et ordinem unius ad alterum: et ideo non est solum causa sui ipsius in movendo, sed etiam in iudicando.”
11 Ibid, a. 2, co.
12 Ibid.
13 For more of Aquinas’s uses of “causa sui,” see, for example: Super Sent., lib. 3, d. 9, q. 1, a. 1, qc. 1, ad 1; ST, I, q. 96, a. 4, co.; ST, II-II, q. 19, a. 4, co. See further Jamie Spiering, “‘Liber est causa sui’: Thomas Aquinas and the Maxim ‘The Free is the Cause of Itself.’” Review of Metaphysics 65, no. 2 (2011): pp. 351-76, esp. 374: “The human is most fully the originator of her own action because she originates its initial judgment; simultaneously, and for the same reason, she is most fully the one who acts for her own sake.”
what to do and make a judgement that she thinks she should make. That is, she does not merely follow her judgements, as a brute animal does, but is able to make them “her own.” And since action follows rational appetite, which follows rational judgement, she is able to make her rational desires and actions “her own” as well.¹⁴

What I would like to draw attention to now is that Aquinas upholds the Aristotelian maxim that the free is the cause of itself (liberum est quod sui causa est). In question 24 of the Disputed Questions on Truth, he argues:

The following difference is found among things that are moved or do something, [namely,] that some have in themselves the principle of their motion or operation (principium sui motus vel operationis). But some [have it] outside of themselves, as those things which are moved violently, [...] in which we cannot posit free decision (liberum arbitrium) because they are not the cause of their own motion (causa sui motus). The free, however, is the cause of itself (liberum autem est quod sui causa est) [...]¹⁵

Aquinas says that “free decision” (liberum arbitrium) is not attributed to a thing that does not have in itself the principle of its motion, like a stone thrown upwards. The argument for this conclusion is more or less straightforward. Aquinas assumes that the free is the cause of itself. But whatever does not have in itself the principle of its motion is not the cause of itself, and in particular, the cause of itself in moving (that is, the cause of its motion). For the cause of its motion is rather whatever does have in itself the principle of that thing’s motion (as whoever throws the stone upwards, for example).

Aquinas does not specify how the free is the cause of itself. But it seems that it would not make sense if it were just causa sui in moving. For Aquinas suggests in this passage that, although brute animals are “moved by themselves” (a seipsis) and so are causa sui in moving, they do not

¹⁴ I develop this argument in Chapter 2, Section 6.

¹⁵ Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 1, co.: “In rebus enim quae moventur vel aliquid agunt, haec invenitur differentia: quod quaedam principium sui motus vel operationis in seipsis habent; quaedam vero extra se, sicut ea quae per violentiam moventur, in quibus principium est extra, nil conferente vim passo, secundum philosophum in III Ethic. in quibus liberum arbitrium ponere non possimus, eo quod non sunt causa sui motus; liberum autem est quod sui causa est, secundum philosophum in Princ. Metaphys.” Cf. SCG, lib. 3, cap. 112; lib. 1, cap. 72, n. 8; ST, I, q. 96, a. 4, co.; ST, II-II, q. 19, a. 4, co.; De regno, lib. 1, cap. 2, co.; Compendium theologiae, lib. 1, cap. 76, co.
have the “freedom of decision” \((\textit{libertatem arbitrii})\).\(^\text{16}\) The reason that brute animals do not have such freedom, moreover, is that they do not “judge about their own judgement” \((\textit{iudicant de suo iudicio})\). Indeed, since they do not judge about their own judgement, Aquinas argues, they are not \textit{causa sui} in judging, that is, they are not “the cause of their own decision” \((\textit{causa sui arbitrii})\).\(^\text{17}\) But human beings, apprehending the character of the end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two, \textit{are} able to judge about their own judgement, and so they are \textit{causa sui} both in moving \textit{and} in judging. Aquinas concludes that, although a brute animal does not have “free decision,” a human being does \((\textit{est liberi arbitrii})\).\(^\text{18}\) The upshot of the passage seems to be that the free is not merely \textit{causa sui} in moving but in judging as well, and the free is \textit{causa sui} in judging because it has so-called “perfect” cognition of the end and is able to judge about its own judgement. So, it makes sense that, in the following article of the \textit{Disputed Questions on Truth}, Aquinas says:

> To judge about one’s own judgement is unique to reason, which reflects on its own act and apprehends the relationships of those things about which and by which it judges.

> Thus, the whole root of freedom is based in reason \((\textit{in ratione constituta})\).\(^\text{19}\)

Since a human being is free because she is \textit{causa sui} in judging, and she is \textit{causa sui} in judging because she is able to judge about her own judgement, and she is able to judge about her own judgement because she has \textit{reason}, Aquinas concludes that the “whole root of freedom” \((\textit{totius libertatis radix})\) is in reason.

We find a similar argument in Question 16 of Godfrey of Fontaines’s \textit{Quodlibet VIII}, which (again) concerns whether the appetite of a brute animal is free:

> Just as that man is said to be free who is the cause of himself and not of another, so in general that which is the cause of itself and not of another is said to be free. Just as that

\(^{16}\) Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 1, co: “[...] sicut enim gravia et levia non movent seipsa, ut per hoc sint causa sui motus, ita nec bruta iudicant de suo iudicio, sed sequuntur iudicium sibi a Deo inditum. Et sic non sunt causa sui arbitrii, nec libertatem arbitrii habent.”

\(^{17}\) Ibid.

\(^{18}\) Ibid.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., a. 2, co.: “Iudicare autem de iudicio suo est solius rationis, quae super actum suum reflectitur, et cognoscit habitudines rerum de quibus iudicat, et per quas iudicat: unde totius libertatis radix est in ratione constituta.”
man is said to be a slave who exists not for his own sake, but [for the sake of] another, who does not know how to direct himself (se ipsum regere), and, when he does something, is not completely acquainted with the character (nec habet plene notitiam rationis) of those things which he does and [of those things] for the sake of which he does them, and does not direct himself (se ipsum dirigit) to them, but is principally directed and moved by another, so that man is free who knows how to direct himself, cognizing the end, the character of the end, of those things which are for the end, and the proportion of those things to the end itself, etc. And similarly, that is said to be free which, according to its own nature, is not determined to something or does not have a nature which is determined by another in such a way that it cannot determine itself to something, namely, in such a way that it apprehends its end and the character of its end and the order to it.20

Godfrey of Fontaines thinks that there is a very close relationship between freedom and perfect cognition of the end. The free, he claims, is the cause of itself (causa sui). But as for Aquinas, the free is not the cause of itself because it brings about its own essence or existence. Rather, according to Godfrey, being causa sui means having a power for self-determination, or self-direction. And the free has such a power because it apprehends the character of its end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two. But the slave, who is not “completely acquainted” with the character of what he does and why he does it, lacks such a power for self-determination; he is not determined by himself, but rather by his master. The slave, Godfrey argues, is not free, for he exists for the sake of another (causa alterius) and not for his own sake (causa sui). Similarly, brute animals, which do apprehend “the thing that is the end,” but not its

20 Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 16, p. 145: “Et quantum ad primum autem sciendum quod, prout dicitur primo Metaphysicae, sicut homo dicetur liber qui suimet et non alterius causa est, ita generaliter dicetur liberum illud quod suimet et non alterius causa est. Sicut ergo ille dicetur servus, secundum Philosophum, primo Politicorum, qui non sui ipsius gratia est, sed alterius, qui se ipsum nescit regere nec faciens aliquam habet plene notitiam rationis eorum quae facit et propter quae facit, nec se ipsum in illis dirigat, sed dirigatur et movetur principaliter ab alio; ita ille liber est qui se ipsum regere scit, cognoscens finem et rationem finis et eorum quae ad finem et proportionem illorum ad ipsum finem, et cetera. Et similiter etiam liberum dicetur generaliter id quod secundum suam naturam non est determinatum ad aliquid vel non habet naturam quae ex alio sic determinatur quod se ipsum determinare non possit ad aliquid, sic scilicet quod finem suum apprehendat et rationem finis et ordinem ad ipsum.”
character, lack a power for self-determination.\textsuperscript{21} Thus, according to Godfrey, brute animals do not have freedom, but rather “servitude.”\textsuperscript{22}

The upshot of these passages seems to be that, for Aquinas and Godfrey, having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free. This suggests that, for these intellectualists, the control that a human being has over her actions when she has perfect cognition of the end is indeed the kind of control that matters for free will.

### 3 The Motivation for an Intellectualist View of Free Will

There seem to me to be philosophical, theoretical and theological reasons for why Thomas Aquinas and Godfrey of Fontaines think that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free. The philosophical reason is straightforward. It is natural to conceive of freedom as bound up with rational agency. Consider that an agent does not seem to be free because she acts “randomly,” that is, in a way that is \textit{not} explained by her own beliefs and desires. For the actions of such an agent are not “up to” her, but rather a matter of chance—her actions are ones that she neither believes she ought to do nor desires to do. Rather, an agent seems to be free because she acts in a way that \textit{is} explained by (or makes sense in the context of) her own beliefs and desires; her actions are “up to” her because they are ones that she believes she ought to do for some reason or other and so desires to do. When a human being has perfect cognition of the end, she apprehends the character of her end, the means to that end and the relationship between the two, rationally judging that she ought to do \textit{this} (rather than \textit{that}) because it is related to her end in the appropriate way. Since action follows rational appetite, which follows rational judgement, when she acts with perfect cognition of the end, her action is one that is explained by her own beliefs and desires about what she ought to do. So, if having

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{21} Godfrey of Fontaines, \textit{Quodl.} VIII, q. 16, p. 146. Godfrey says that, whereas human beings “are able to cognize each thing and its nature, both in itself and in the order and relationship of one to the other,” brute animals “are not abstract in such a way that they are able to cognize being as something abstract and universal, or the character of the order and relationship of one thing to another.”

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.: “[...] bruta quae aliquo mono finem cognoscunt, tamen finem sub ratione finis non apprehendunt, nec ordinem eorum quae sunt ad finem; et ideo licet sint quaedam animalia quae agunt operentur propter finem, respectu illius tamen libertatem habere non possunt, sed quasi servitutem, in quantum scilicet respectu illius se non agunt sed aguntur [...]”
perfect cognition is what makes human beings free, then it seems that the intellectualist is able to make sense of the relationship between free will and rational agency.

Moreover, if having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free, then it also seems that we have a very plausible explanation of why brute animals and slaves, for example, are neither free nor the objects of praise and blame, namely, that they lack the kind of control that someone has when she has perfect cognition of the end. Although there does seem to be a sense in which the action of a brute animal is “up to” it, for it acts according to the apprehension of its own senses and the natural judgement of its own estimative faculty, it does not have the kind of control that matters for free will. Why? As Oelze explains, a brute animal, having perceived an object by means of its senses, “does not pause for a moment and cogitate about what would be the best thing to do.” Rather, it immediately judges by a judgement that is “put [in it] by nature” (*a natura inditum*) and acts accordingly. While brute animals, having imperfect cognition of the end, are “programmed” by nature, as it were, to act as they do, human beings are “capable of making a decision about what they should do before doing something.” In this regard, the action of a brute animal does not seem to be in its control, but the control of nature. The action of a human being is “up to” her, however, for she acts not according to a judgement “put in her by nature,” but rather a rational judgement that she arrives at through her own practical reasoning (and is able to “evaluate,” as it were) about what is to be done here and now.

Similarly, although there does seem to be a sense in which the action of a slave is in his control, for he is the one that moves his body to act as his master commands that he act, he does not have the kind of control that matters for free will. Why? Well, it seems that the end of the slave’s action is not, strictly speaking, the end of the slave, but that of his master, which means that the


slave does not have perfect cognition of the end. For as both Aquinas and Godfrey suggest, what matters for perfect cognition of the end is not that a human being have cognition of whatever end, but rather her end. Indeed, although the object of the will is the good, the will is not moved by what is apprehended as good *simpliciter*. As Aquinas says in the *Disputed Questions on Evil*:

If the motion of the will is considered on the part of the object determining the act of the will to willing *this* or *that*, it has to be consider that the object moving the will is the apprehended *fitting* good (*bonum conveniens apprehensum*). Thus, if some good is proposed [to the will] that is apprehended as good, but not as fitting (*in ratione boni, non autem in ratione convenientis*), it will not move the will.26

Similarly, Godfrey says the following in Question 10 of Quodlibet VI:

However much something might be apprehended as “being” (for example, [as] concerning bodily health or things of this sort, and concerning spiritual science or things of this sort) and as “perfect,” or as “being that is perfect and good in itself and absolutely,” unless it is apprehended as “suitable to the one apprehending” (*sub ratione convenientis ad ipsum apprehendentem*), it is not able to move his will to willing it, [since] otherwise no one would apprehend something as good and as perfect in itself without willing that thing, either as the end for its own sake, or as a means for the sake of the end, which is false.27

There are many things that I apprehend as good, but do not will. For example, I might apprehend health and judge that it is good, but not will it, since I do not judge that it is good for me; indeed, I might prefer to engage in activities that are inimical to my health. Similarly, I might apprehend

26 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, co: “Si autem consideretur motus voluntatis ex parte objecti determinantis actum voluntatis ad hoc vel illud volendum, considerandum est, quod objectum movens voluntatem est bonum conveniens apprehensum; unde si aliquod bonum proponatur quod apprehendatur in ratione boni, non autem in ratione convenientis, non movebit voluntatem.”

27 Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodl*. VI, q. 10, p. 201: “Quantumcumque enim aliquod apprehendatur non solum sub ratione entis, puta circa corporalia sanitas vel huiusmodi, et circa spiritualia scientia vel huiusmodi, sed etiam sub ratione perfectionis sive ut ens perfectum et bonum secundum et absolutum, nisi apprehendatur sub ratione convenientis ad ipsum apprehendentem, non potest movere voluntatem eius ad volendum ipsum, alioquin nullus apprehenderet aliquod sub ratione boni et perfecti secundum se quin illud vellet et hoc vel ut finem propter se, vel ut ad finem propter ipsum finem; quod est falsum.”
some medicine and judge that it is good, but not will it, since I do not judge that it is good for me; indeed, I might be healthy, and thus, not require any medicine.\footnote{Ibid.: “Unde, sicut apprehensio potionis alieius inductiae sanitatis non moveret appetitum ad eligendum eam et ad sumendum, nisi apprehenderetur ut sic in ordine ad sanitatem appetitam ut finem, ita etiam apprehensis ipsius sanitatis, vel sanitas apprehensae, non moveret voluntatem ad volendum ipsam, nisi apprehenderetur sub ratione convenientis ad ipsum apprehendentem.”} Put differently, I do not will something just because I apprehend that thing as good, but rather because I apprehend it as good \textit{for me} here and now, that is, as “appropriate,” or “fitting” (\textit{conveniens}). Although the slave might have some cognition of the end, and although he might deliberate about the means to that end, if the end for the sake of which he acts is his master’s end, then he does not have perfect cognition of \textit{his} end; that is, he does not apprehend the end of his action as his end. Thus, he seems to act as an instrument of his master and is therefore not free.\footnote{Compare the slave who does what his master tells him to do because his master tells him to do it and the slave who does what his master tells him to do because he wants to preserve his own life. The former might apprehend the nature of his master’s end, the means, and the relationship between the two. But unless he also apprehends them as good for him, he does not act with perfect cognition of his end. The latter apprehends what his master wants him to do and why he has told him to do it, but this does not explain why he does it. Rather, the slave acts because he wants to preserve his own life and judges that following the master’s command is the best means to this end. That is, he acts with perfect cognition of his end.}

So, again, my suggestion is that, by thinking that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free, Aquinas and Godfrey are able to make sense of the relationship that seems to exist between freedom and rational agency, and moreover, they have a plausible story to tell about why brute animals and slaves, for example, are neither free nor the objects of praise and blame. That is, the claim that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free seems to be philosophically motivated.

I would like to show that it is also theoretically and theologically motivated. First, the theoretical motivation comes from a commitment to the act-potency axiom, the Aristotelian principle that nothing is able to reduce itself from potency to act with respect to the same thing. This is particularly clear in the writings of Godfrey of Fontaines, for whom the act-potency axiom is a \textit{general} metaphysical principle.\footnote{According to Wippel, Godfrey’s metaphysics “might well be described as one that ultimately rests on the act-potency theory.” See John Wippel, \textit{The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines}, p. 379.} As Wippel says, “[e]ven if one finds it difficult to resolve certain more particular issues that seem to arise from its rigid application, Godfrey insists that
this principle itself can never be denied.”31 When he applies the axiom to willing in Question 7 of Quodlibet 6, Godfrey argues as follows:

if it seems to someone that, having supposed that the will does not move itself, it is difficult to preserve the freedom which, by his estimation, he wishes to posit in the will, as it is agreed from this posterior thing, he should not proceed to the negation of prior and more certain things, but on account of the certitude of those prior things, which he has to suppose, he should study how they might agree with those posterior things.32

Godfrey is committed both to the act-potency axiom and the freedom of the will, but not in the same way. Whereas the act-potency axiom is “prior and more certain,” the freedom of the will is “posterior,” presumably because it is known from experience, and thus, less certain. If it seems that the freedom of the will is in tension with the act-potency axiom, one should not reject the former in favour of the latter. As Godfrey says, one should rather consider how the two might be made to agree.

Since the act-potency axiom plays such a fundamental role in Godfrey’s metaphysics, some conceptions of free will are simply “off the table” for him. If a human being were free because she has a self-moving will, for example, then free will would be incompatible with the act-potency axiom, which is prior and more certain. But if she were free because she has perfect cognition of the end, that is, because she apprehends the character of the end, the means, and the relationship between the two, then free will would be compatible with the act-potency axiom. For I can have such an apprehension, regardless of whether everything moved is moved by another. That is, if nothing “reduces” itself from potency to act in the same respect, it is not possible that my will move itself, but it is possible that I have perfect cognition of the end.


32 Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VI, q. 7, p. 170. “Si ergo alicui videatur quod, supposito quod voluntas non moveat se ipsam, difficile sit servare libertatem quam sua aestimatione vult ponere in voluntate sicut placet ex hoc posteriori, non debet procedere ad negationem priorum et certorum, sed propter certitudinem priorum quae supponere habet debet studere quomodo illis posteriora concordet.”
Assuming, then, that one has a general commitment to the act-potency axiom, there is a theoretical motivation for claiming that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free. Since apprehending the character of the end, the means to that end and the relationship between the two, as opposed to, say, self-motion, is compatible with the act-potency axiom, so is free will. Indeed, to the extent that the act-potency axiom implies a kind of determinism, where every “movement” but the first is caused by a prior one, intellectualism might be described as a compatibilist view of free will (in the sense of the modern debate).

Second, the theological motivation for the claim that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes someone free comes from a particular understanding of the freedom of God and the blessed in heaven. As Godfrey explains in Question 16 of Quodlibet VIII, although God cannot but will himself, he nevertheless has freedom “most truly” (verissime). Similarly, although the blessed are “drawn to God by an immutable necessity” (necessitate immutabili feruntur in Deum), they are truly said to have freedom of the will. Drawing on Anselm’s De libertate arbitrii, he concludes that

To be able [to do] something and to be able [to do] the opposite, and to will something and to be able to will something opposite, insofar as [it is] of this kind, do not belong to the nature of freedom (non sunt de ratione libertatis). Therefore, to will something immutably, and thus, from necessity, is not repugnant to freedom, since [this] alone is required for freedom on the part of the will, that the thing willed (volitum) is that in which the character of the end (ratio finis) is found [either] for its own sake or for the

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33 Some philosophers of the late-thirteenth century draw a distinction between physical and “spiritual” movement, and restrict the act-potency axiom to the former. See, for example, Henry of Ghent, Quodlibet IX, q. 5, Opera omnia, vol. 13, ed. Raymond Macken (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989), 99-139.

34 Although the act-potency axiom is not as central to Aquinas’s metaphysics as it is to Godfrey’s, Aquinas does seem to hold that it is a general metaphysical principle. See my comments in Chapter 1, Section 5.

35 Such labels must be used with care, however, for the concerns that motivate contemporary philosophers of free will (especially with respect to causation) are not necessarily the same as those that motivated medieval philosophers. Scholars such as Brian Shanley argue that, in particular, Aquinas’s account of human freedom is “outside the box of the libertarian-compatibilist debate.” See Brian Shanley, “Beyond Libertarianism and Compatibilism: Thomas Aquinas on Created Freedom,” Freedom and the Human Person, ed. R. Velkley (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), pp. 70-89 at p. 89.

36 Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 16, p. 163.

37 Ibid.
sake of the character of the end which is apprehended by the willer, or that the thing willed is that in which the character of the end is preserved, inasmuch as it is ordered to the end and desired because of its order to the end.\textsuperscript{38}

Godfrey of Fontaines argues that what is (solely) required for the one willing (\textit{volens}) to will freely, that is, for freedom “on the part of the will,” is that the object of volition be willed either (1) for its own sake, since it is apprehended as having the character (\textit{ratio}) of the end, or (2) for the sake of the end, since it is apprehended as having an order (or being a means) to that end.

Godfrey seems to be suggesting that, for an agent to will a thing freely, it is necessary (and sufficient) that she will that thing with perfect cognition of the end. I think that this is evident from earlier in the passage, where he explains that a heavy object, which is not able to apprehend the object of its appetite, and a brute animal, which is able to apprehend the object of its appetite but not its character, do not have freedom simply for the reason that neither is “actively the cause or principle” of its appetite; the former pursues the object of its appetite purely naturally (\textit{pure naturaliter}) with no cognition, and the latter as-if naturally (\textit{quasi naturaliter}) with some cognition (but not the kind of cognition that matters for free will).\textsuperscript{39}

But if, in general, it is necessary and sufficient for an agent to will a thing freely that she will it with perfect cognition of the end, then that she wills that thing in such a way that she is not able to will the contrary, and so wills “from necessity,” does not take her freedom away.\textsuperscript{40} For it is possible for her to have such cognition whether or not she wills from necessity. In particular, then, it does not follow that, since God cannot but will himself and the blessed in heaven cannot but will God, they do not will freely. So, assuming that God and the blessed in heaven do will

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.: “Posse ergo aliquid et posse oppositum et velle aliquid et posse velle aliquid oppositum secundum quod huibusmodi non sunt de ratione libertatis. Ergo velle aliquid immutabiliter et sic de necessitate non repugnat libertati, cum solum requiritur ad libertatem ex parte voluntatis quod volitum sit illud in quo ratio finis reperitur propter se sive propter ipsam rationem finis quae apprehenditur a volente, aut quod volitum sit illud in quo salvatur ratio finis, in quantum illud est ordinatum ad finem et appetitur propter ordinem ipsius in finem.” Aquinas makes similar claims about the blessed in SCG, lib. 3, cap. 138, n. 2; Compendium theologiae, lib. 1, cap. 174.

\textsuperscript{39} Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 16, p. 162: “Unde quod aliquid sic velit aliquid quod non possit velle contrarium et ita de necessitate, non tollit rationem libertatis, sed hoc solum quod aliquid appetat aliquid sic simpliciter et absolute quod illius actus appellendi non sit sibi causa vel principium active sed pure naturaliter, sicut contingit in gravi, vel quasi naturaliter ex sola apprehensione rei quae finis est, prout contingit in brutis, hoc tollit libertatem.”

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
freely and necessarily, there is a theological motivation for the claim that having perfect
cognition of the end is what makes someone free.

4 A Problem for an Intellectualist View of Free Will

The intellectualist claim that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes someone free has
a philosophical, theoretical, and theological motivation, for it makes sense of (1) the relationship
between freedom and rational agency, and why non-rational animals and slaves, for example, are
neither free nor the objects of praise and blame; (2) how the exercise of free will is possible if the
act-potency axiom holds; and (3) how it is possible for God and the blessed in heaven to will
both freely and necessarily. But there is a problem.

The intellectualist view that I have been describing suggests that having a particular kind of
knowledge is what makes us free, and that acting freely is a matter of acting with that
knowledge. This, in itself, is not a very plausible claim, however. For although it seems that
human beings are free in general, not all of them are great (or even good) “knowers,” as it were.
In particular, it seems possible for a human being to act freely without having perfect cognition
of the end.

Consider the following example. I am ill and wish to be healthy. I think about the means to my
end and judge that taking this particular medicine will make me healthy. Moreover, I judge that
taking the medicine will make me healthy because I believe that the cause of my illness is an
imbalance of my humours and that my taking the medicine will balance them. Also, whenever I
have been ill in the past, I became healthy after taking the medicine. So, I take the medicine now.

What is to be said about my taking the medicine? Well, it seems to be an exercise of my
freedom. I am not coerced to take the medicine, but rather want to do so. And I want to do so
because I judge that it is a good (maybe even the best) means to my end, namely, being healthy.
But is my cognition of the end “perfect”? Although a medical doctor could tell me a story about

41 Consider that, for Aquinas, a human being has power over her actions (ultimately) because she has perfect
cognition of the end and is therefore able to judge about her own judgements about how she should act. See my
discussion in Chapter 2, Section 6.
how I will become healthy after taking the medicine because its chemical compounds will have such-and-such effects on my body, this is a story that I myself do not know. (If you were to ask me why I think that taking the medicine will make me healthy, I would tell you that my illness is caused by my having too much yellow bile, say, and that taking the medicine will cause my body to purge that excess yellow bile.) My taking the medicine is a means to my end of being healthy, but do I apprehend the character of my end, the means and (especially) how the two are related? I seem to be acting freely, but my cognition of the end is far from “perfect.”

The more general worry that the example draws attention to is that perfect cognition of the end, which is simply a kind of knowledge, “asks too much.” Indeed, if having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free, as the intellectualists suggest, then it does not seem possible for a human being to act freely if she does not apprehend the character of her end, the means to that end and the relationship between the two. For without such an apprehension, a human being does not have her rational judgement in her power. And if she does not have her rational judgement in her power, then she has neither her will nor her action in her power. But if she does not have her action in her power, then she does not act freely. The problem is that it is doubtful that human beings typically have perfect cognition of the end, for coming to know the character of an end, the means to that end and (especially) the relationship between the two seems difficult. So, if having perfect cognition of the end is what makes someone free, and acting freely is a matter of acting with such cognition, then it seems that human beings typically do not act freely, which is absurd.

I think that the intellectualist has the resources to address this worry. I would like to consider, again, what it means for someone to have perfect cognition of the end. Aquinas explains in Question 6 of the Prima secundae that cognition of the end is imperfect when what is apprehended is merely “the thing that is the end” (res quae est finis). But it is perfect when the character of the end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two are apprehended

42 Here, I draw especially on Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 1, co. See my discussion in Chapter 2, Section 6.
43 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 6, a. 2, co.: “Perfecta quidem finis cognitio est quando non solum apprehenditur res quae est finis sed etiam cognoscitur ratio finis, et proportio eius quod ordinatur in finem ad ipsum. Et talis cognitio finis competit soli rationali naturae. Imperfecta autem cognitio finis est qua in sola finis apprehensione consistit, sine hoc quod cognoscatur ratio finis, et proportio actus ad finem. Et talis cognitio finis invenitur in brutis animalibus, per sensum et aestimationem naturalis.”
as well. When Aquinas qualifies cognition of the end as “perfect” in this context, he means to draw a distinction between how human beings and brute animals pursue ends. Both human beings and brute animals pursue an end with some cognition of it. But the (intellectual) cognition of human beings is “abstract” and the (sensitive) cognition of brute animals is not; the former, but not the latter, apprehend the “character” (ratio) of the end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two. Since human beings, but not brute animals, apprehend more than “the thing that is the end,” Aquinas concludes that human beings have perfect, and brute animals imperfect, cognition of the end.

As I observed in Chapter 2, Aquinas’s qualification of some cognition as “perfect” in Question 6 of the Prima secundae is not the same qualification that he makes in his commentary on Aristotle’s Posterior Analytics:

[...] it must be considered that to know (scire) something is to cognize it perfectly, that is, to apprehend its truth perfectly. For the principles of the being and the truth of a thing are the same, as it clear from Metaphysics II. Therefore, if the knower (sciens) is to cognize perfectly, it is necessary that he cognize the cause of the thing known. However, if he were to cognize just the cause, he would not yet cognize the effect actually (in actu), which is to know (scire) simpliciter, but only virtually, which is to know (scire) “in a sense” and, as it were, accidently (secundum quid et quasi per accidens). Therefore, it is necessary that the one who knows (sciens) simpliciter also cognize the application (applicatio) of the cause to the effect. For knowledge (scientia) is also certain cognition of the thing (certa cognitio rei). But it is not possible to cognize something that could be otherwise with certitude. Therefore, it is also necessary that what is known (scitur) cannot be otherwise (non possit aliter se habere).
In his commentary on the *Posterior Analytics*, Aquinas defines “knowledge” (*scientia*) as perfect cognition: I “know” (*scio*) something just when I cognize that thing perfectly (*perfecte*). Aquinas explains that, for me to cognize something perfectly, it is necessary (1) that I cognize the cause of the thing known, (2) that I cognize the “application” (*applicatio*) of the cause to the effect, that is, the thing known, and (3) that it not be possible for the thing known to be otherwise, for *scientia* is “certain cognition” (*certa cognitio*) of the thing known, and it is not possible to have a certain cognition of something that could be otherwise. The upshot of the passage is that, for Aquinas, *scientia* is cognition of a necessary thing, where the cause of that thing and its application to the thing itself are cognized as well.\(^{48}\)

Aquinas’s qualification of some cognition as “perfect” in his commentary on the *Posterior Analytics* distinguishes *scientia* from other species of *cognitio*, such as the “false cognition” (*falsa cognitio*) described in the Prima pars.\(^{49}\) In general, a cognitive power cognizes (*cognoscere*) by means of a similitude of the thing cognized.\(^{50}\) In particular, the intellect cognizes by means of a similitude of the “what-ness” (*quidditas*) of the thing cognized. Although Aquinas argues that the intellect is not deceived about the “what is” (*quid est*) of the thing cognized, he says that it is possible for it to be deceived “in composing or dividing, [as] when it attributes to the thing, the what-ness of which it understands, something that does not follow from or is opposed to it.”\(^{51}\) Suppose, for example, that I apprehend some dog and compose the definition “rational four-footed animal.” According to Aquinas, my intellect is false in


\(^{49}\) Thomas Aquinas, ST, I, q. 17, a. 3, co.

\(^{50}\) Ibid.

\(^{51}\) Ibid: “Unde circa quod quid est intellectus non decipitur, sicut neque sensus circa sensibilia propria. In componendo vero vel dividendo potest decipi, dum attribuit rei cuius quidditatem intelligit, aliquid quod eam non consequitur, vel quod ei opponitur.”
composing this definition, for it is false of the dog and “false in itself” (falsa in se).\textsuperscript{52} And such false cognition is not perfect. That is, it is not “knowledge” (scientia).

The intellectualist claim that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free would not be very plausible if my having such cognition were supposed to mean that I know (scio) the end, the means and how the two are related, for such knowledge is very difficult to acquire. Rather, for Aquinas, having perfect cognition of the end simply means that I apprehend my end in a way that is appropriate to a rational animal; again, I do not merely apprehend “the thing that is the end,” but the character of the end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two. What does that mean?

As I suggested in Chapter 2, I apprehend the “character” (ratio) of the end insofar as I “see” it as an end, that is, as a thing that I want but do not have, and that is related to other things that I want (and things that I do not want). Similarly, I apprehend the character of the means to that end insofar as I “see” it as a means to that end, that is, as a thing that will get me what I want, and might also get me other things that I want (or things that I do not want). And I apprehend an “order,” “proportion,” or “relationship” between the two insofar as I deliberate about how to bring about my end and conclude that this means is to be willed for such-and-such a reason.\textsuperscript{53}

Now, it does not follow from my apprehending the character of the end, the means and the relationship between the two that I know everything (or much of what) there is to know about the end, the means or how the two are related. That is, I might have perfect cognition of the end, but nonetheless be deceived, as when I believe that the health of a human being is caused by the proper balance of humours, and that I should take the medicine because it will balance my humours and is therefore a means to my health. Although I am deceived about health, the medicine, and how the two are related, I nonetheless “see” my end as an end, my means as a means, and I apprehend some “order,” “proportion” or “relationship” between the two; I think

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{53} See Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 16, pp. 145-7: “sic scilicet quod finem suum apprehendat et rationem finis et ordinem ad ipsum,” “propter quod ista sui finis et rationis eius et ordinis vel habitudinis eorum quae sunt ad ipsum cognoscunt,” “sed etiam cognoscitur ratio finis et proportio eius quo ordinatur in finem ad ipsum,” “bruta quae, licet finem cognoscant, non tamen rationem finis nec proportionem eorum quae sunt ad finem ad ipsum finem.” Also, see Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 6, a. 2, co.; Super Sent., lib. 2, d. 25, q. 1, a. 1, co.; QDP, q. 1, a. 5.
that, by taking the medicine, I will get something that I want but do not have, namely, my health, since it will balance my humours, which is the cause of the health of a human body. Although I “get it wrong,” as it were, I nonetheless have perfect cognition of the end; I am deceived about my end, my means to that end, and how the two are related, but I nonetheless have a kind of cognition that is not possible for brute animals.

To my knowledge, neither Aquinas nor Godfrey ever suggest that having perfect cognition of the end means anything more (like having scientia). In this regard, calling such cognition of the end “perfect” is somewhat misleading. To avoid any confusion, it would be more appropriate to call the apprehension of the character of one’s end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two “abstract cognition of the end.” When a human being has abstract cognition of her end, it is possible for her to be deceived about her end, the means to that end, or the relationship between the two. So, if having such an apprehension of the end is what makes human beings free, and acting freely is a matter of acting with that apprehension, then it seems possible to do something freely, but “get it wrong.” The upshot is that abstract (or perfect) cognition of the end does not, as I suggested, “ask too much,” for what it “asks” is simply that I reason from my end, which I apprehend as such, to some means to that end, which I also apprehend as such. But I might reason from a more or less complete understanding of my end, the means to that end, and how the two are related.

The upshot is that, although I might not know everything (or much of what) there is to know about my end, the means to that end, and how the two are related, it is nonetheless possible for me to act freely. However, it is not possible for me to act freely if I act without an apprehension of my end as an end, my means as means to that end, and an “order,” “proportion,” or “relationship” between the two. That is, it is not possible for me to act freely if I act without (any) abstract cognition of the end. But I will fail to act with such cognition if my action is not the conclusion of my practical reasoning, that is, if I act but do not “see” my action as a means to some end. And it seems that many of my actions are such that I do not “see” them as the means to some end.54 For example, when I am getting dressed in the morning and put the purple shirt on

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54 For a similar criticism, see William de la Mare, Correctorium fratris Thomae. In primam secundae, a. 6, in Les premières polémiques thomistes: I. Le Correctorium Corruptorii “Quare,” ed. Palémon Glorieux (Le Saulchoir, Kain: Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques, 1927), p. 230: “Et sic videmus in valde malis et pessimis
rather than the blue one, it does not seem very plausible that I do so with an apprehension of my putting on the purple shirt as a means to some end, which I also apprehend as such. It rather seems that I put the purple shirt on because I am attracted to it more than the blue one; there is no apprehension of ends as ends, means as means, or how the two are related—I just act. If acting freely is a matter of acting with abstract (or “perfect”) cognition of the end, then it seems that such actions are not free. Intuitively, however, they are free. This suggests that intellectualism does not have a plausible story to tell about human freedom.

But I am not convinced that the intellectualist has a problem here. First, consider that abstract cognition of the end is appropriate to human beings because they have an intellect, an immaterial power of cognition. When a human being acts with such cognition, she acts in a way that is appropriate to her as a human being. (She “sees” her action not merely as an action, but rather as a means among other means related to some end among other ends.) But when she acts without abstract cognition of the end, then it does not seem that she is acting in a way that is appropriate to her as a human being; for brute animals (and even inanimate beings) act without abstract cognition of the end. Indeed, it does not seem that her action differs essentially from that of a brute animal; my putting on the purple shirt rather than the blue one because I am attracted to it more is much like a brute animal’s eating this piece of food rather than that one because it is attracted to it more—neither I nor the brute animal seem to act in a way for which having an immaterial cognitive power is necessary. But if the brute animal’s action is not free, why suppose that my action is?

Second, although it is not possible for a human being to act freely if she acts without abstract cognition of the end, it is nonetheless possible for her to be “the cause of herself in acting” (causa sui ipsius in movendo). Put differently, it is nonetheless possible that she act in a way that is appropriate to animate beings (and in particular, animals). She is not moved “by a rational judgement” (ex iudicio rationis) but she does “move herself,” for when she acts, there is one part of her that moves, namely, the (non-intellectual) cognitive, appetitive and motive powers of her

hominibus quod mox cum aliquod malum appetierint, verbi gratia detrahere, blasphemare, maledicere et conviciare, et similia, incontinenti, sine omni deliberatione, si possunt perficiunt quod desiderant; et constat quod libere.

55 Thomas Aquinas, ST I-II, q. 6, a. 2, co.; Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 16, p. 146.

56 Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 1, co.
soul, and another part that is moved, namely, the members of her body. While, for example, heavy and light objects (gravia et levia) are not themselves “the causes of acting or moving” (causa agendi vel movendi) because there is not in them a part that moves and a part that is moved, both rational and brute animals do have these two parts and so they are “self-causes” in this way. So, although it is not possible for a human being to act freely if she acts without abstract cognition of the end, since she does not act in the way that is appropriate to her as a rational animal, she nonetheless does act in the way that is appropriate to her as an animal.

Third, since she is a rational animal whether or not she acts as a rational animal, it is possible that, although she did act without abstract cognition of the end, she could have acted with such cognition. Whereas a brute animal acts without abstract cognition of the end and could not have so acted because it lacks an intellect, which (again) apprehends the character of the end, the means to that end and how the two are related, when a human being acts without abstract cognition of the end, before she acted, she nonetheless could have considered why (and indeed, whether) she should act that way; “What am I trying to accomplish here and now, and is this really the best way to do it?” Put differently, although a human being might not act freely because she does not act with abstract cognition of the end, she could have acted with such cognition, since she has an intellect, and so she could have acted freely.

In sum, if acting freely is a matter of acting with abstract cognition of the end, then I will fail to act freely if I do not act with such cognition. However, when I do so act, (1) I am not acting in the way that is appropriate to me as a rational animal; (2) I am still a “self-cause” with respect to that action, since I move myself to it; and (3) since I am a rational animal whether or not I act with abstract cognition of the end, I could have acted with such cognition and therefore could have acted freely. So, it does not seem to me to be a problem for the intellectualist that a human being does not act freely if she acts without abstract cognition of the end.

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57 Ibid: “Eorum autem quorum principium motus et operis in ipsis est, quaedam talia sunt quod ipsa seipsa movent, sicut animalia; quaedam autem quae non movent seipsa, quamvis in seipsis sui motus aliquod principium habent, sicut gravia et levia: non enim ipsa seipsa movent, cum non possint distingui in duas partes, quarum una sit movens et alia mota, sicut in animalibus invenitur [...]”

58 Ibid.

5 Degrees of Freedom?

A consequence of the intellectualist view of free will that I have been describing seems to be that there are degrees of freedom. Admittedly, I am speculating somewhat, since neither Aquinas nor Godfrey explicitly endorse there being degrees of freedom. But both thinkers do make some remarks that suggest as much.⁶⁰

In the example above, I take some medicine as a means to health because I believe that doing so will balance my humours. Although I have a false belief about health and how it is related to the medicine, I nonetheless reason from my end, which I apprehend as such, to some means to that end, which I also apprehend as such. But suppose that a medical doctor, who is also ill, takes the very same medicine as a means to health. Suppose further that the doctor has no false beliefs about health, the medicine, or how the two are related. How is the doctor’s taking the medicine like (and unlike) my taking the medicine?

Both the doctor and I have abstract cognition of the end, that is, we both apprehend the character of the end, the means to that end, and the relationship between the two. But the doctor seems to have a more complete understanding of the end than I do. Although we both “see” health as an end, the doctor knows more about health (and in particular, its causes). When the doctor reasons about how to bring his own health about, he does not have the false belief that health is caused by the proper balance of humours. He takes the medicine not because he believes that it will balance his humours, but because he knows the physiological story that explains why taking the medicine is a means to health. The doctor’s abstract cognition of the end seems to be more “complete” than my abstract cognition of the end.

Now suppose that you are also ill and wish to be healthy. You take the medicine for the sake of that end, but do so because someone (who happens to have it out for you) tells you that you should take it. Suppose further that taking the medicine does not make you healthy. Since you are, say, allergic to the medicine, taking it rather makes you more ill. How is your taking the medicine like (and unlike) my taking the medicine or the doctor’s?

⁶⁰ As I have already noted, in QDV, q. 24, a. 2, Aquinas says that brute animals have a “certain conditioned freedom” (quaedam conditionata libertas). And in Quodl. VIII, q. 16, Godfrey says that God has freedom “most truly” (verissime). These remarks seem to (at least) invite talk of freedom as coming in “degrees,” or “grades.”
You, too, apprehend health as an end, think about how to bring it about and judge that you should take the medicine as a means to that end. Thus, when you take the medicine, you act with abstract cognition of the end. Whereas the doctor and I both act with the true belief that the medicine is a means to our health, however, you act with the false belief that it is a means to your health. While the doctor “gets it all right,” as it were, since he acts with no false beliefs, and I both “get it right” and “get it wrong,” since I act with the true belief that taking the medicine is a means to my health and the false belief that it is a means to my health because it will balance my humours, you “get it all wrong,” since taking the medicine is not a means to your health; indeed, the medicine did not do what you thought it did, and if you had known what it did, you would not have taken it. Your abstract cognition of the end, then, is the least “complete” of the three, the doctor’s the most, and mine is in the middle.

Insofar as you, the doctor and I all have abstract cognition of the end, we act freely. What I would like to suggest, however, is that I act more freely than you do and the doctor acts more freely than the both of us. According to the intellectualist view of free will that we have been considering, being free is a matter of having abstract cognition of the end, and thus, a kind of control over one’s actions. But it seems that I have more control over my action than you have over your action, but not as much control as the doctor has over his action, for the doctor’s abstract cognition of the end is the most “complete.” Let me explain.

When I act with abstract cognition of the end, the more ignorant I am about my end, the means to that end or the relationship between the two, the more likely it is that there is something I do not know about that would have made me act otherwise than I did if I had known about it.61 But the

61 It seems to me that there is a very close relationship between the “completion” of one’s abstract cognition of the end and what Thomas Nagel refers to as the “development of an objective will.” Put simply, Nagel observes that there is a tension between an internal, or subjective, and an external, or objective, view of action. “Viewed from inside,” as it were, I am the author of my actions, but “viewed from outside,” they are rather events in the world, “happenings” more than “doings.” The development of an objective will, which Nagel stresses is not a completable task, is a way of “making the most objective standpoint the basis of action: subordinating it to my agency instead of allowing it, and therefore me, to stay outside of my actions as a helpless observer. Given that I cannot do this by acting from outside the world, on the basis of a complete objective view of myself and it, the next best thing is to act from within the world on the basis of the most objective view of which I am capable—the incomplete view—in such a way as to guard against rejection by its successors in the objective sequence, both those that I can achieve and those that I can’t.” See Thomas Nagel, The View From Nowhere (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 129.
more complete my abstract cognition of the end, the more closed my action is to this possibility. I claim that, the more closed my action is to this possibility, the more control I have over it.

Consider, again, the example of “guidance control” presented in Responsibility and Control:

Let us suppose that Sally is driving her car. It is functioning well, and Sally wishes to make a right turn. As a result of her intention to turn right, she signals, turns the steering wheel, and carefully guides the car to the right. [...] Insofar as Sally actually guides the car in a certain way, we shall say that she has “guidance control.”

Suppose, as in Chapter 2, that Sally wishes to do her groceries and so she makes a right turn at the intersection to go to the grocery store. According to Fischer and Ravizza, when Sally makes such a turn, she guides her car “in a certain way.” But suppose further that Sally has made a mistake. The grocery store is not to her right, but rather to her left. Thus, making a right turn is not a means to going to the grocery store. Sally does guide her car “in a certain way,” namely, to the right. But she does not guide her car to the grocery store, which is her goal. If Sally were not mistaken, then she would not have merely guided her car “in a certain way,” but rather in the way that takes her to the grocery store; she would have had more guidance control. But since Sally is mistaken, she fails to guide her car towards her goal.

My suggestion is that, the more complete a human being’s abstract cognition of her end, the better she is at “guiding” herself towards that end. When a human being acts with abstract cognition of her end, the more she knows about her end, the means to that end and the relationship between the two, the more likely it is that her action and the end for the sake of which she acts are related as means and end. If it is possible for abstract cognition of the end to be more or less “complete,” then it seems to me that human beings are able to act more or less freely. But again, I would like to emphasize that a human being does act freely even if her abstract cognition of the end is not “complete,” that is, even if she does not know everything (or much of what) there is to know about her end, her means to that end and how the two are related. If she does apprehend her end as an end, her means to that end as means, and an “order,” “proportion,” or “relationship” between the two, then she acts freely.

6 Conclusion

My goal in this chapter has not been to analyze the theories of freedom of Thomas Aquinas and Godfrey of Fontaines. Such an analysis would have to begin by considering whether either thinker even has a “theory of freedom.” Rather, my goal has been to show that the intellectualist has a plausible answer to the Problem of Control, which is that, if the will is necessitated by the intellect, then a human being is not able to will otherwise than she does, since the intellect seems to operate deterministically. But if she is not able to will otherwise than she does, then she does not have control over her actions. For her to have free will, however, it is necessary that she have control over her actions. Since the intellectualist holds that the will is necessitated by the intellect, then, it seems to follow that human beings do not have free will.

By way of summary, my defense of intellectualism is as follows. I concede that there is a sense in which the will is necessitated by the intellect, namely, conditionally. Put differently, it is necessary that, if a human being judges that she ought to will something, then she wills that thing. Nonetheless, she does seem to have free will. For when a human being has abstract cognition of the end, she has the kind of control over her actions that matters for free will. Moreover, having abstract cognition of the end, that is, apprehending the character of the end, the means to that end and the relationship between the two, is possible for a human being even if her will is conditionally necessitated by her intellect.

63 Although Aquinas does make some remarks about the *ratio libertatis*, as in QDV, q. 24, aa. 1-2, he does not ever take up the question, “What is freedom?” See Jamie Ann Spiering, “‘What is Freedom?’: An Instance of the Silence of St. Thomas,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 89, no. 1 (2015): pp. 27-46. See further Bonnie Kent, *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), pp. 98-110 for a discussion of how philosophers and theologians changed focus from *liberum arbitrium* to *libera voluntas* and *libertas voluntatis* in the 1270s. As I have already noted, Godfrey attributes *libertas* in different senses to the intellect, the will, the rational soul and the human being as a whole. To my knowledge, there has yet to be a study that examines the relationship between these many uses of “libertas.” For my part, I doubt that Godfrey has a systematic theory of freedom but agree with Odon Lottin and Paul-Émile Langevin that *immateriality* plays an essential role. See Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1957), pp. 329-331; Paul-Émile Langevin, “Nécessité ou liberté, chez Godefroid de Fontaines,” *Sciences Ecclésiastiques* 12 (1960): p. 188.
Conclusion

The starting point of my dissertation is a criticism that was made by William de la Mare against Thomas Aquinas, which I have been calling the “Problem of Control.” The Problem of Control is that, since the intellect seems to act deterministically, if the will is necessitated by the intellect, then a human being is not able to will otherwise than she does. (If, for example, I judge that exercise is good for me here and now, then I cannot but will to exercise.) But if a human being is not able to will otherwise than she does, then she does not have control over her actions. If she does not have control over her actions, however, then she does not have free will, since having control over one’s actions is necessary for free will. Since the will is necessitated by the intellect on Thomas Aquinas’s psychology, it follows that human beings do not have free will. But this is an absurd consequence, for if human beings do not have free will, then they are not morally responsible for their actions.¹

In my study of the Problem of Control as a criticism of Aquinas’s psychology, I have arrived at five major results. First, by examining how Aquinas conceives of the relationship between the will and the intellect, I determined that he consistently holds that the will is a passive power of the soul. In particular, the will is passive because it is “moved” by the object apprehended as good by the intellect; in the language of the Prima secundae and the Disputed Questions on Evil, the object “actualizes” the will’s potency to the specification of its act. Since the will is so moved in each of its acts, that is, since there is no act of the rational appetite that is not specified by the rational apprehension of some object as good,² that view of some modern commentators, namely, that the will has the power to will spontaneously for Aquinas, is false.³ It also follows that, in a sense, William de la Mare’s criticism of Aquinas is right, namely, the will is necessitated by the intellect. But I argued that this necessitation of the will by the intellect is conditional, not

¹ As I noted in the introduction to my dissertation, such “psychological determinism” is opposed to Christian doctrine. See the encyclical Libertas praestantissimum (June 20, 1888), in Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals, eds. Heinrich Denzinger et al, 43rd edition, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), p. 645.

² Thomas Aquinas, ST I, q. 82, a. 4, ad 3.

³ See my discussion in Chapter 2, Section 4.
absolute; it is necessary that, if a human being judges that she should will some object, then she wills that object, but it is not necessary that she will some object if she judges that she should will that object. Since the will is conditionally necessitated by the intellect, it does follow that there is a sense in which a human being is not able to will otherwise than she does, namely, she is not able to will contrary to the judgement of her intellect.4

Second, by examining how Aquinas conceives of control, I determined that, although the will is conditionally necessitated by the intellect, a human being nonetheless has control over her actions. The view of some commentators, namely, that a human being has a kind of control over her actions because she has a “power for opposites” is right, but not all right. Aquinas does seem to think that a human being has a conditional power for opposites: I could have willed otherwise because I would have willed otherwise if I had judged otherwise. But commentators have neglected that Aquinas also thinks that a human being has a kind of control over her actions because she apprehends the character of her end, her means to that end and the relationship between the two (so-called “perfect” cognition of the end). That is, for Aquinas, by knowing what it is for her end to be an end, for her means to be a means to that end, and how the two are related, she is able to judge about her own judgement that this means is to be willed for that end, and thus act on a rational judgement that she judges should be acted on. A human being therefore has a kind of control over her actions that a brute animal does not have over its actions, for a brute animal merely apprehends “the thing that is the end,” not its character.5 But a human being apprehends the character of her end, her means to that end and the relationship between the two regardless of whatever necessity there might be in the causal history of her actions, and so she also has control over her actions regardless of whatever necessity there might be in the causal history of her actions. Aquinas, then, has a response to the Problem of Control; it does not follow

4 If it does seem that a human being wills contrary to the judgement of her intellect, it is because her will and her judgement concern different things. As Thomas Aquinas explains in QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.: “Et quod quandoque appetitus videatur cognitionem non sequi, hoc ideo est, quia non circa idem accipitur appetitus et cognitionis iudicium: est enim appetitus de particulari operabili, iudicium vero rationis quandoque est de aliquo universali, quod est quandoque contrarium appetitui. Sed iudicium de hoc particuli operabili, ut nunc, nunquam potest esse contrarium appetitui.” It also seems possible that a human being might judge that something is to be willed but change her judgement and will accordingly. Here, she would will contrary to a prior judgement of her intellect.

5 Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 6, a. 2, co.
that, if the will is necessitated by the intellect, which seems to act deterministically, then a
human being does not have control over her actions.

Third, by examining how Thomistic intellectualism makes sense of why the will, when it wills
some end, is moved to the act of willing some means to that end, I arrived at a complete analysis
of Thomas of Sutton’s doctrine of the will’s twofold self-motion, which has yet to be carefully
studied in the scholarship on later medieval moral psychology. I explained that, for Sutton, the
will moves itself to the exercise of its act both “accidentally” (per accidens) and “consecutively”
(consecutive). Sutton’s claim that the will moves itself accidentally is the same as Aquinas’s
claim that the will moves itself “indirectly” (secundum aliud). However, his claim that the will
moves itself consecutively, such that its act of willing the means is “consequent” to its act of
willing the end is novel. When the will moves itself consecutively to its act of willing the
means, it is “reduced” from accidental potency to second actuality, in the way that fire, which is
not heating now, “moves itself” to heating when a heatable object is presented to it. Although
Sutton’s doctrine is compatible with the act-potency axiom, that is, the Aristotelian principle that
everything moved is moved by another, I argued that Sutton fails show how the will really
moves itself to the exercise of its act.

Fourth, by examining Godfrey of Fontaines’s “extreme” intellectualism, according to which the
will is moved both with respect to the specification and with respect to the exercise of its act by
the object apprehended by the intellect, I determined that Godfrey has the resources to explain
(1) how the will, when it wills some end, is moved to will some means to that end; (2) how a
human being’s actions are her actions, although her will and her intellect are both efficiently
moved by one and the same object (secundum rem); (3) how she has control over those actions.
The will is more passive with respect to the intellect for Godfrey than it is for Thomas Aquinas

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8 Thomas Aquinas, QDM, q. 6, ad 20.
9 Thomas of Sutton, Quaest. ord. 7, p. 215: “Ad quod scirendum quod aliquid movere se ipsum effective est impossible, sed aliquid bene potest se movere consecutive, scilicet sic quod ad unum eius actum consequatur alius eius actus, sicut in intellectu ad principium sequitur conclusio.”
and Thomas of Sutton, for the will is moved by the intellect not only as by a formal and final cause, but also as by an efficient cause. But by drawing on Aquinas’s doctrine of “perfect” cognition of the end and some observations about the intentionality of the acts of the intellect and the will, Godfrey develops the most plausible intellectualism of the three, one that is not only able to address the Problem of Control, but also makes sense internally.

Fifth, by examining what Thomas Aquinas and Godfrey of Fontaines say about the relationship between free will and perfect cognition of the end, I determined that, for both intellectualists, having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free. At first glance, this view is very restrictive, for having perfect cognition of the end means having a particular kind of knowledge, namely, knowledge of the end, the means to that end and how the two are related. But it seems that not all (maybe few) human beings have such knowledge. I argued that it is possible to apprehend the end as an end, the means to that end as means and a “order,” “proportion,” or “relationship” between the two and be wrong about the end, the means or how the two are related.\textsuperscript{10} Perfect cognition of the end, as understood in the \textit{Prima secundae} and Question 16 of Godfrey of Fontaines’s Quodlibet VIII, does not seem to be “perfect” in the sense that science (\textit{scientia}) is perfect.\textsuperscript{11} For \textit{scientia} is perfect because it involves apprehending the truth of the thing known perfectly. But perfect cognition of the end is “perfect” because it involves apprehending the “character” (\textit{ratio}) of the end, not simply the “thing that is the end” (\textit{res quae est finis}). And it is possible to apprehend the character of a thing and have false beliefs about it. The upshot is that the view of Thomas Aquinas and Godfrey of Fontaines that having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free is not as restrictive as it might seem at first glance.

\textsuperscript{10} For the language of “order” (\textit{ordo}), “proportion” (\textit{proportio}) and “relationship” (\textit{habitudo}), see Godfrey of Fontaines, \textit{Quodl. VIII}, q. 16, pp. 145-7: “sic scilicet quod finem suum apprehendat et rationem finis et ordinem ad ipsum,” “propter quod ista sui finis et rationem eius et ordinem vel habitudinis eorum quae sunt ad ipsum cognoscent,” “sed etiam cognoscitur ratio finis et proportio eius quod ordinatur in finem ad ipsum,” “bruta quae, licet finem cognoscant, non tamen rationem finis nec proportionem eorum quae sunt ad finem ad ipsum finem.” Also, see Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 6, a. 2, co.; \textit{Super Sent.}, lib. 2, d. 25, q. 1, a. 1, co.; QDP, q. 1, a. 5, co.

\textsuperscript{11} See, for example, Thomas Aquinas, \textit{Expositio Posteriorum}, lib. 1, l. 4, n. 5.
I agree with Tobias Hoffmann and Cyrille Michon that Aquinas (in particular) is “certainly not explicitly advocating a compatibilist account” of free will. But it seems to me that, if, as I have argued, having perfect cognition of the end is what makes human beings free, and a human being is able to have perfect cognition of the end regardless of whatever necessity there might be in the causal history of her actions, then there is good evidence that Aquinas’s understanding of free will is at least “compatibilist-friendly.” (Godfrey of Fontaines, who thinks that there is always some necessity in the act of the will, and whose commitment to the act-potency axiom is more rigid than that of Aquinas, seems to have no choice but to be a compatibilist, however.)

Perhaps the most compelling reason for resisting a compatibilist interpretation of Aquinas is that he clearly thinks a human being has a kind of control over her actions because she has a power to do otherwise. But it seems that this power has to be absolute, for if it were merely conditional, then human beings would have the same power to do otherwise that Aquinas attributes to brute animals. The problem is that brute animals do not have any kind of control over their actions because they are able to do otherwise conditionally. Why would Aquinas think that a human being does have a kind of control over her actions because she is able to do otherwise if she is only able to do otherwise conditionally? I have argued that it is a mistake to assume that, since Aquinas attributes a conditional power to do otherwise to brute animals, then he must not think that human beings also have a conditional power to do otherwise. For it does not follow that, if human beings have such a power, then it must be the same power that brute animals have. Indeed, there is a difference between the conditional power to do otherwise that brute animals have and the one that human beings have, namely, that the former is conditional on a natural judgement, but the latter on a rational judgement; it is worth our attention that Aquinas emphasizes the difference between these two types of judgement in question 24 of the Disputed Questions on Truth, which is where he attributes to brute animals a conditional power to do


\[13\] Godfrey of Fontaines, Quodl. VIII, q. 16, pp. 164-165.


\[15\] See my discussion in Section 5 of Chapter 2.

\[16\] Thomas Aquinas, QDV, q. 24, a. 2, co.
otherwise. Aquinas thinks that, while brute animals do not have power over their natural judgements, human beings do have power over their rational judgements. What this means is that the judgement on which the conditional power for opposites that human beings have is one over which they have power, but the judgement on which the conditional power for opposites that brute animals have is not one over which they have power. Although human beings have a conditional power to do otherwise, then, the sense in which they are able to do otherwise is different from the sense in which brute animals are able to do otherwise; human beings have power over whether they do this or that, but brute animals do not. The upshot is that it seems possible to interpret Aquinas as a compatibilist, affirm that a human being has a kind of control over her actions because she is able to do otherwise, and deny that she is only able to do otherwise in the sense that applies to brute animals.

Now, I admit that an adequate answer to the question of whether Aquinas is a compatibilist or an incompatibilist would require a thorough examination of what he thinks about freedom (that of God, of angels, of human beings, of the powers of the soul, etc.) and about liberum arbitrium, which is not what I have aimed to present in my dissertation. But it does seem to me that there is not as much resistance to interpreting Aquinas as a compatibilist as some contemporary scholars have supposed. 17

My study of The Problem of Control and the intellectualism of Thomas Aquinas, Thomas of Sutton and Godfrey of Fontaines shows that intellectualism is a defensible view of how the human faculties of volition and cognition are related. My aim has not been to show that intellectualism is preferable to the alternative, voluntarism, according to which human volition is not caused by the activity of our cognitive powers. 18 But is it? I would like to conclude my study with a few thoughts about why intellectualism might not just be a defensible view, but also preferable to (at least) some species of voluntarism.

17 I am thinking of Scott MacDonald, Tobias Hoffmann and Cyrille Michon, in particular.

18 In the following, I focus on Henry of Ghent, but I also include, among others, Gonsalvus of Spain, John Peckham, Matthew of Aquasparta, Peter John Olivi, Richard of Middleton and Roger Marston in this tradition. For a study of the Franciscan voluntarists, see Ernst Stadter, Psychologie und Metaphysik der menschlichen Freiheit (München: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 1971).
As I said in Chapter 3, for voluntarists such as Henry of Ghent, the will is a *self-moving* power.\(^\text{19}\) Henry of Ghent agrees with Thomas Aquinas that human beings only will what they apprehend as good by means of some cognitive act. But whereas the latter thinks that, by apprehending an object as good, the intellect “actualizes” a potency of the will, the former thinks that the intellect merely acts as a “*causa sine qua non*” of willing; the will is a sufficient cause of willing and the intellect merely removes an obstacle blocking the will from moving itself to that act.

So, why prefer, for example, Thomas Aquinas’s intellectualism to Henry of Ghent’s voluntarism? Here is one reason. I assume that *some* acts of the will are rationally motivated. That is, I assume that human beings sometimes will something *for a reason*. If I want to get to the airport, for example, I could take a taxi, which is quicker but more expensive, or I could take the bus, which is cheaper but slower. Suppose that I want to get to the airport as quickly as possible and so I will to take a taxi rather than the bus. My willing to take a taxi is rationally motivated: I will to take a taxi because it is quicker, that is, I do so for a reason.

What is going on here, psychologically? According to Thomas Aquinas, there is a *causal* relationship between my volition and my cognitive act. In particular, when I think about how to get to the airport and judge that, all things considered, it would be better to take a taxi rather than the bus, my intellect “reduces” my will from potentially willing to take a taxi or the bus to actually willing to take a taxi rather than the bus; if I had judged that, all things considered, it would be better to take the bus because it is cheaper, then my will would have rather been “reduced” to actually willing to take the bus rather than the taxi. (In the language of the *Prima secundae* and the *Disputed Questions on Evil*, my intellect moves my will to the determination, or specification of its act.\(^\text{20}\))

Thomas Aquinas has a more or less clear story to tell about what makes acts of the will, like my willing to take a taxi to the airport, rationally motivated. When I deliberate about how to bring about my end and judge that *this* is to be willed rather than *that* for such-and-such a reason, my


\(^{20}\)Thomas Aquinas, ST, I-II, q. 9, a. 1, co.; QDM, q. 6, co.
judgement *causes* me to will that thing. I will *this* rather than *that* because I judge that it is to be willed for such-and-such a reason, and if I had judged otherwise, then I would have willed otherwise; my willing “tracks” my reasons for willing.

What about Henry of Ghent? Well, he does not seem to have as clear of a story to tell about what makes some acts of the will rationally motivated. Consider, in particular, question sixteen of Henry of Ghent’s first Quodlibet, which concerns whether, with a greater and a lesser good having been presented to the will by the intellect, the will is able to choose the lesser good. Having argued that choice depends both on the will and on the intellect, but the former principally, Henry of Ghent says that,

if choice principally depends on the will, then it is naturally free (*ipsa ex natura sua libera est*), and what is principal in it is its freedom. Freedom, then, principally belongs to the will, so that, if it wishes, it may act through choice by following the judgement of reason, or against it by following its own appetite, in such a way that, for willing *simpliciter*, the intellect does not do anything except propose objects of volition, but for willing through choice, it is necessary that the judgement of the intellect come first, since otherwise the appetite of the will would not be elective, [and moreover,] it would neither be properly rational, nor [would it] properly [be] a will.21

Henry of Ghent draws a distinction between willing “simply,” or willing *simpliciter*, and willing “by choice,” or willing *per electionem*. For a human being to will simply, it is necessary that the intellect “propose” objects of volition to the will; indeed, the intellect does *nothing* more (*nihil faciat ratio nisi quod proponat volibilia*). But for a human being to will by choice, it is necessary that the intellect also make a judgement that precedes the choice; that is, it is necessary that the intellect judge that, from those objects of volition, *this* one in particular should be willed for such-and-such a reason.

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21 Henry of Ghent, *Quodl*. I, q. 16, pp. 105-6: “Si ergo electio principaliter dependet a voluntate, et *ipsa ex natura sua libera est*, et quod principale est in *ipsa*, libertas eius est. Libertas ergo principaliter est ex parte voluntatis, ut si velit, agat *per electionem sequendo iudicium rationis*, vel contra ipsum sequendo proprium appetitum. *Ita quod ad volendum simpliciter nihil faciat ratio nisi quod proponat volibilia, licet ad volendum per electionem necessae est praecedere rationis sententiam, quia aliter voluntatis appetitus non esset electivus nec aliter proprae est rationalis nec proprie voluntas [...]”
By drawing a distinction between willing “simply” and willing “by choice,” Henry of Ghent seems to acknowledge that the intellect is able to influence the will in different ways. Sometimes, the intellect has a weak influence on the will: it merely proposes objects of volition to the will. Sometimes, the intellect has a strong influence on the will: it also judges that one of those objects should be willed, which judgement precedes the act of willing. That is, sometimes willing is not rationally motivated; one wills something not for a reason, but rather “simply” wills it, as when I will to pick the Two of Diamonds from a deck of cards. But sometimes willing is rationally motivated; one wills something for a reason, that is, “by choice,” as when I will to take a taxi to the airport rather than the bus. Although Henry of Ghent acknowledges that there is such a distinction between different ways that the intellect is able to influence the will, I am not convinced that he has explained what makes some acts of the will rationally motivated.

Henry of Ghent argues that, when a human being chooses by means of her will, the judgement of her intellect does not move her will, but merely “precedes” (praecedit) her choice. Since the will is free, it is the “first mover with respect to those things that are able to be chosen” (primus motor in eligibilibus). So, if the intellect’s judgement were to move the will to choose this rather than that, then the will would not be such a “first mover,” and thus, it would not be free. The will “takes the occasion” (sumit occasionem) to will from the intellect’s judgement, but is not caused to will by anything other than itself. Again, for Henry of Ghent, the will is the sufficient cause of its act of willing.

Is my willing to take a taxi to the airport rather than the bus rationally motivated? That is, do I will it for a reason? I am skeptical. An act of willing something does not seem to be rationally motivated by some reason just when it is preceded by a judgement that it is to be willed for that reason, but when it is also done because of that judgement. For it seems possible that an act of willing something be preceded by a judgement that it is to be willed for some reason, but not be

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22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., p. 114: “Et quod amplius est, si essent duo apprehensa in omnibus aequalia, et aequalis experientia in eis habenda eidem proposita, tamen ex libertate illa qua voluntas est primus motor in eligibilibus, posset unum assumere et reliquam dimittere.”
24 Ibid., p. 112: “In praeeligendo ergo inter aequalia bona alterum, vel minus bonum magis bono, vel bonum ut nunc bona simpliciter, sola voluntas sibi in hoc causa est, et si aliquando sumit occasionem a sententia rationis vel ex tractu passionis vel ex habitus inclinatione...”
motivated by that reason, as when someone judges that he ought to volunteer at the food bank because it is the right thing to do, but then wants to volunteer at the food bank to impress his girlfriend. (His judgement that he ought to volunteer at the food bank because it is the right thing to do precedes his wanting to volunteer at the food bank, but it does not explain why he wants to volunteer at the food bank.) More generally, if the judgement of the intellect merely precedes the act of willing and the will moves itself to that act, then it seems to be a matter of luck or chance that a human being wills according to that judgement (or in any way at all); after all, the will is moved by nothing other than itself.

Since Henry of Ghent conceives of the will as the sufficient cause of willing, the will is naturally able to move itself to willing when the intellect has proposed some object of volition to it, just as the stone naturally moves downwards when there is nothing blocking it from doing so. But when a human being wills for a reason, that is, when her act of willing is rationally motivated, it seems that her will is not a sufficient cause of willing, for she has to be motivated by a reason to will this rather than that; her intellect has to do more than remove the obstacle that blocks her will from naturally moving itself to willing and make a judgement that (merely) precedes that willing.25 There seems to be a step missing from Henry of Ghent’s picture of willing “by choice.” What happens between my judging that something is to be willed for some reason and my willing that thing, such that I can be said to will that thing for that reason? It is not clear to me what makes some acts of willing rationally motivated on Henry of Ghent’s voluntarism, or indeed, any voluntarism that conceives of the will as a sufficient cause and the intellect a (mere) causa sine qua non of willing.

I admit, however, that there is a sense in which willing per electionem is “reason-guided,” for as Mikko Yrjönsuuri puts it, “the will makes its choices among things already evaluated by the understanding as good in varying degrees and in relation to different given ends.”26 When the intellect (that is, the “understanding”) deliberates about some end, apprehends this and that as

25 I note here that Peter John Olivi seems to me to face the same problem as Henry of Ghent in his reply to Objection 18 of Summa II, Question 57. See, Peter John Olivi, Quaestiones in secundum librum Sententiarum, q. 57, ed. Bernard Jansen, vol. 2 (Quaracchi: Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1924), pp. 360-2.

means to that end, and judges that this is to be willed rather than that for such-and-such a reason, the will has a reason to will either this or that, for both are means to its end. (I have a reason to will to take a taxi to the airport, namely, that it would get me there quickly. I also have a reason to will to take a bus, namely, that it would get me there cheaply.) Since the intellect judges that this is better than that, however, the will does not just have a reason to will this and a reason to will that, but also a reason to will this rather than that. (I would miss my flight if I were to take a bus to the airport, for example.) The upshot is that, since the objects that the intellect “makes available” to the will are objects that the intellect apprehends by deliberating about the means to some end, the will has a reason to will either one of those objects and a reason to will one rather than the other. The act of willing per electionem is thus “reason-guided.”

But it seems to me that an act of willing is notrationally motivated simply because it is reason-guided in this way. As Michael Smith observes, having a reason does not necessarily mean that one is motivated by that reason.27 Suppose, for example, that I have to wake up early tomorrow to get to a meeting. I have a reason to go to sleep before midnight, then, but I might nonetheless stay up late watching movies; my having a reason to go to sleep before midnight does not necessarily motivate me to go to sleep before midnight. Also, I might have a reason to go to sleep before midnight and do so, but not because I have to wake up early tomorrow to get to a meeting; rather, I might go to sleep before midnight to wake up early and watch the sunrise. Similarly, I might deliberate about how to get to the airport and judge that there is a reason to take a taxi, a reason to take the bus, and a reason to take a taxi rather than the bus. But it does not necessarily follow from my having these reasons that I am motivated by either one of them. That

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27 Michael Smith draws a distinction between “normative” and “motivating” reasons in “Valuing: Desiring or Believing?” in Reduction, Explanation and Realism, eds. David Charles and Kathleen Lennon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 327-8: “Note that we ordinarily distinguish two senses in which we can be said to have a reason for action. The first is the sense in which we are happy to acknowledge that to do something intentionally is simply to do that thing for a reason. Here our talk of reasons is talk about the psychological states that motivate what we do, the complex of psychological states that teleologically, and perhaps causally, explain our actions. Or rather, and more accurately since we need not act on our reasons, such talk of reasons is talk about psychological states with the potential to motivate or explain behaviour. Let’s call these our ‘motivating’ reasons. In the second sense, however, we say we have a reason to do all and only those things for which we can construct a certain sort of justification. Justifications may, of course, be of quite different kinds. An action may be judged according to standard of rationality, morality, the law, etiquette, and perhaps according to other standards as well. If we are not to beg any questions, we should therefore be prepared to admit that each of these may give rise to reason claims, though such claims may not, of course, be autonomous—one kind of reason may reduce to another. Let’s call these our ‘normative’ reasons.”
the will chooses “among things already evaluated by the understanding,” as Yrjönsuuri puts it, does not explain why the will makes the choice that it does. Since my having a reason does not mean that I am motivated by that reason, it seems to me that Henry of Ghent owes us a story about what makes some acts of the will rationally motivated.

My claim is not so much that Henry of Ghent (or any voluntarist) is not able to tell such a story, as it is that intellectualists such as Thomas Aquinas do so straightforwardly. At least to the extent that the job of a psychology of human action is to explain how a human being’s rationality is manifested in her free agency, it seems to me that intellectualism is not just a defensible view of the relationship between the will and the intellect, but also preferable to voluntarism.
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