

- **Freedom and Sin: Some Systematic Observations<sup>1</sup>**
- ***Liberté et Péché: observations systématiques***
- ***Freiheit und Sünde: systematische Überlegungen***

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## RÉSUMÉ

*Une bonne compréhension de la liberté humaine présuppose la théorie de la contingence synchronique, telle que Duns Scot (1256–1308) l'a présentée. En ce qui concerne la liberté humaine, il faut distinguer la liberté formelle: la volonté n'est libre que si elle peut aussi choisir le contraire de ce qu'elle veut au même moment, et la liberté matérielle qui implique la possibilité de réaliser les choix faits par la volonté parmi les possibilités.*

*Sur la base de cette distinction, il est possible d'expliquer comment l'individu doit être considéré comme 'libre' pour pouvoir commettre un péché, et en même temps 'non libre' en raison du péché. La liberté formelle est un élément inaliénable de l'être humain, tandis que la liberté matérielle a un caractère*

*accidentel. Au niveau formel, l'homme ne peut pas augmenter ou diminuer sa liberté; au niveau matériel, il le peut. Sans le secours de la grâce pourtant, et du moment qu'il est pécheur, il ne peut que diminuer sa liberté. Nous ne pouvons effectivement choisir le bien que si Dieu intervient dans notre condition pécheresse de façon à nous restituer la possibilité concrète de faire le bien.*

*Une personne qui se noie pour s'être jetée à l'eau volontairement sans savoir nager (elle jouit de la liberté formelle) peut vouloir être sauvée, mais ne peut pas se sauver elle-même (pas de liberté matérielle). Sa volonté ne peut être réalisée que si quelqu'un d'autre lui lance une bouée de sauvetage (rétablissement de la liberté matérielle par la grâce).*

## ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

*Eine korrektes Verständnis menschlicher Freiheit setzt die Theorie der synchronen Kontingenz voraus, wie sie von Johannes Duns Scotus (1266–1308) entwickelt worden war. Im Hinblick auf die menschliche Freiheit müssen die folgenden Aspekte unterschieden werden:*

*I. Formale Freiheit: Auf jeden Willensakt trifft zu, daß der Wille im gleichen Augenblick auch das Gegenteil wollen kann. II. Materielle Freiheit, die die Fähigkeit betrifft, die möglichen Zustände zu erkennen, die der Wille wählt.*

*Mit Hilfe dieser grundlegenden Unterscheidung ist es möglich darzulegen, warum Menschen 'frei' genannt werden müssen, um in der Lage zu sein zu sündigen, während sie gleichzeitig wegen der Sünde 'unfrei' genannt werden müssen. Es wird*

*aufgezeigt, daß die formale Freiheit eine wesentliche Eigenschaft des Menschen ist, materielle Freiheit jedoch nur eine akzidentielle Eigenschaft. Auf der formalen Ebene kann ein Mensch seine Freiheit weder steigern noch verringern, auf der materiellen Ebene kann er das jedoch. Ohne die Hilfe der Gnade—und insofern als ein Mensch ein Sünder ist—kann er seine Freiheit jedoch nur verringern. Das Gute wird nicht zu einer wirklichen Option, sofern Gott nicht selbst in unserer sündigen Lage die Hand nach uns ausstreckt, indem er das Gute eine für uns wieder realisierbare Möglichkeit werden läßt.*

*Ein Beispiel: Ein Ertrinkender, der aus freier Wahl ins Wasser sprang (er hat formale Freiheit), ohne schwimmen zu können, kann zwar wollen, gerettet zu werden, kann sich*



*jedoch nicht selbst retten (keine materielle Freiheit). Das Objekt seines Willens kann nur verwirklicht werden, falls ihn jemand*

*entdeckt und eine Rettungsleine zu ihm ins Wasser läßt (materielle Freiheit, durch Gnade wiederhergestellt).*

## 1. Introduction

In the centuries-old theological discussions of the extent of human freedom people have always sensed that 'being free' and 'being unfree' have several aspects which are often difficult to distinguish. Living in faith man is free we usually say, since 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'; as a slave of sin, however, we say he is unfree. Yet, sinning presupposes the fact that one has the freedom to sin. Involuntary or necessary sinning is a *'contradictio in adjecto'*. On the other hand, although freedom is necessarily presupposed, if one stresses it too much, one's position soon comes down to advocating a kind of autonomy, often labelled as 'Pelagianism'. Again, in reaction to such labelling one could come to deny human freedom. So what aspect of 'freedom' can be retained? How do we pilot our thinking between the cliffs of determinism and 'autonomism' (ways of thinking in which the key-notion is human autonomy)?<sup>2</sup> Is it possible to show that man is both unfree under sin and free to sin?

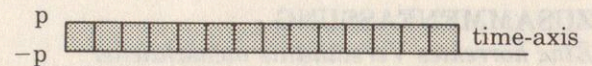
In this article we offer a concise systematic account of some important distinctions which make clear why man can be free and unfree at the same time. In doing this we elaborate on insights which are drawn from the history of theology and philosophy, sometimes by correcting them. We only mention names in passing.<sup>3</sup>

In section 2 some presuppositions are explained which we consider to be essential for an adequate discussion of freedom. Section 3 connects our presuppositions with the concept of freedom. Section 4 discusses the heart of the matter, in which we explain how man can be said to be a sinner and yet to be free. In sections 5 and 6 some related issues are discussed.

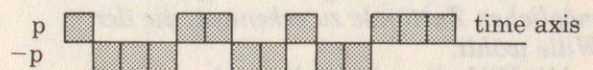
## 2. Contingent reality

The concept of freedom can only be analyzed within a wider ontological-metaphysical framework which maps the presupposed view of reality on a basic level. Then the primary questions will be whether such a view has sufficient openness for something like 'freedom' and how this openness is conceived. We present very briefly, therefore, three modal-ontological models which offer three fundamental alternatives.<sup>4</sup> Parmenides formulated the first model, Aristotle the second, Duns Scotus the third. Aristotle's view stands out as being representative of Ancient thought in general and still has an impact on christian theology.

According to Parmenides *being* is immutable and necessary. To his mind change and contingency are mere phenomena of sense-deception ('doxa'). We can transpose this ontology in the following model in which *p* designates the only possible state of affairs<sup>5</sup>:



Aristotle did not follow Parmenides in his radical necessitarianism and looked for an alternative ontology in which openness to change and contingency does occur. With respect to contingent states of affairs this ontology can be transposed in the following model, in which *p* designates a mutable state of affairs:

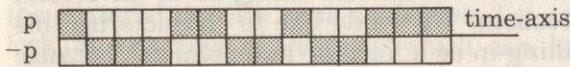


Aristotle agrees with Parmenides that necessity and immutability are equivalent. Holding on to this equivalence and starting from the assumption, over against Parmenides, that there are mutable states



of affairs *as well*, he arrives at the equivalence of mutability and contingency. However, when we take a closer look at this Aristotelian view of contingency, a state of affairs  $p$  turns out to be contingent if  $\neg p$  can be the case at a *different* moment. The possibility of the opposite is valid for a later moment, not for the same moment at which  $p$  is the case.<sup>6</sup> But if  $\neg p$  is not possible for the same moment at which  $p$  is the case, it is implied that  $p$  is *necessary* for *that* moment', just as  $\neg p$  is necessary for any other moment at which  $\neg p$  is the case. In the Aristotelian model contingency only means change through time, a change which consists of a succession of states of affairs which are necessary in themselves,—a change, therefore, which is itself necessary.<sup>7</sup> Because of this change through time we call the Aristotelian view of contingency 'diachronic contingency'.<sup>8</sup>

Duns Scotus (1266–1308) was the first philosopher and theologian who extensively elaborated on 'real' contingency, which is synchronic. He states that a state of affairs  $p$  is contingent if  $\neg p$  is possible for the *same* moment. Visualized in the following model,  $p$  being an example of a contingent state of affairs (which changes in the same way as did the last example), we get this picture:



The empty spaces in this drawing indicate the alternative synchronic possibilities which are not actualized, but could have been actualized instead of their counterparts. When we compare this Scotian model with the Parmenidian and the Aristotelian, we see that only in the Scotian model empty spaces occur, meaning: possibilities which are not or will not be actualized, but which are nevertheless real possibilities. At any moment at which reality exists in the way it exists, it can be different from what it factually is. Thus, only within the Scotian model of christian thought the principle of plenitude is not valid, for not every real possibility is actualized.<sup>9</sup> Since real contingency, as Scotus shows, implies that there is an opposite possibility for the *same* moment, we call this contingency *synchronic*.<sup>10</sup>

### 3. Contingency and freedom

The divine and the human will can be understood to be free only on the basis of a synchronic view of contingency. For only in this model can one conceive a will which, willing something at a certain moment, can will something else or the opposite for the same moment.

Having and using an adequate theory of contingency is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition to develop an elaborated theory of (un)freedom of the will. The contingency of reality is the ontological condition of the will's freedom, for if a state of affairs actualized by the will is not contingent, one cannot hold that its opposite could have been actualized by the will.<sup>11</sup>

Now it is important, next, to distinguish the act of willing from effecting what is willed. For, strictly speaking, the freedom to *will* something does not imply that I also factually actualize the thing I want. One of the most important christian notions is, in this connection, man's being directed to God. Man can desire God and can long for the fulfilment of that desire as well. Yet this fulfilment is not in his own power, but is a gift of God.<sup>12</sup> So the systematic question is, to what extent man also has the power and the means to effect what he wills.

### 4. Formal and material freedom

We have come to three important systematic ideas: 1) the theory of synchronic contingency, 2) the power to will which can produce a volition in a synchronically contingent way, and 3) the distinction between a volition and the factual effectuation of the object willed. By means of these three elements it is possible to give an accurate account of the 'unfreedom' under sin, the freedom presupposed in sin and the freedom given by grace. In order to do that we start with a new distinction, namely the distinction between 'formal' and 'material' freedom.<sup>13</sup>

#### 1. Formal freedom

Formal freedom is a property of the human *subject*, namely the freedom to *will* or *not to will* or *to will the opposite* of a state of affairs<sup>14</sup>



—a freedom which is there regardless of whether that state of affairs (or its opposite) can or cannot be actualized. The freedom of the power to will is expressed by stating that any possible act of the will has an alternative: someone can will something, but it is (synchronically) possible that he can not will it, or will something else.<sup>15</sup>

Formal freedom is an essential property of every person, whether he does or does not believe in God, whether he is or is not in prison etc.<sup>16</sup> A sinner too is and remains a 'person', a mind-gifted creature, and as such possesses formal freedom.

Some situations can be so extreme that any freedom of choice seems to be missing. What is missing is, in fact, the physical-mental power to exercise the formal freedom. When people lack this power, through no fault of their own, they cannot be made morally responsible (not even by God) for this inability and for the effects resulting from it, any more than children who die young.

## II. Material freedom

Material freedom is freedom with regard to *objects* of choice<sup>17</sup>. 'Material' refers to the material field of possible objects of choice which can be *effectuated* by free choice.<sup>18</sup> The range of this field differs from person to person.<sup>19</sup> Only a part of the options within this field are characterized by being good or bad.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to make a further distinction within 'material freedom'.

### a Perfect material freedom

This freedom is a free actualization of only good possibilities which are given by God (by way of creation and grace). In the position of perfect material freedom we *can* choose something bad, but led by love we do *not want* ('will') that.<sup>21</sup>

The essential difference between divine and human perfect freedom can be formulated as follows: For God goodness is an essential property; so He cannot sin. He knows the field of bad options, but it is not open to his will. Because for man goodness is not an essential but an accidental property—he indeed lives by received goodness—a

perfectly free man has access to the field of bad options, but he does not enter it (anymore).<sup>22</sup>

### b) Neutral material freedom

This concept of 'neutral freedom' has been and is advocated, but cannot be sustained. For it presupposes that we stand outside the two fields of good and bad possibilities, that both fields are at our command and that we can choose between them from a neutral point of view. This is, however, impossible, because we always are situated, somehow, in both fields. We cannot help choosing from a position which is materially occupied by actualized good and bad possibilities. So the 'formal freedom' is in any case materially situated, a good and/or bad material object has been internalized by personal choice or by many other internal or external factors ('original sin'). Additionally, anything evil which we have chosen changes our material position, so that a part of the good possibilities is no longer attainable. These good possibilities can only become accessible by new acts of God's grace and by the beneficial acts of other people.

Neutral freedom as explained in this way is different from the formal freedom which we have already discussed. It is a *materially neutral* (but unreal) 'filling-in' of the formal freedom. We would like to characterize this filling-in as a form of 'autonomism', because it situates the human subject in an independent position.

c The material freedom of man as a sinner Insofar as a person is a *sinner*, he can only choose from the field of bad possibilities. The fact that someone who does not have faith can live and work in spite of this fact, is due to the (partly actualized) good possibilities, not all of which have not been lost by sinning. He may be a sinner, but he is and remains a creature too and as such lives by God's grace.

However, much has been lost by sin, and because of that it is not an option of material freedom anymore. Formally the sinner still possesses freedom of choice, but materially he himself has limited the field of options which can be effected. Therefore it can be said that we have become slaves of sin,



because by sin the material field of good possibilities shrinks; by sinning we enclose ourselves in the dungeon of bad possibilities.

In 'perfect material freedom' we are 'held' by the 'irresistible' evidence of the good, even if we can choose and effect bad things (but we do not want it). Conversely, the sinner is a slave of sin; he can will the good, but he cannot effect it anymore, because he has moved out of range of those possibilities which can be actualized. The material freedom of sinner and believer, therefore, are not symmetrical. The 'irresistibility' of grace is an entirely different bond than that of sin's tyranny.

d Restoring the material freedom by grace Inasfar as a person is a sinner, his material freedom comprises only the possibilities of the bad. The good does not become a real option unless God himself reaches out for us into our sinful situation, by making the good a real possibility to us again. Formal freedom regains a material field of choice by grace. An example may clarify this: a drowning person who jumps into the water by his own free choice without being able to swim, can will to be rescued, but cannot rescue himself. What he wills can only be actualized if someone locates him and lowers a life line.

Another example of limiting freedom in the material domain runs as follows. Let us look at the field of volitions which can be effected. This field has a certain extension at a certain moment. We may simplify the scene by supposing that the dividing line between 'good' and 'bad' can be indicated uncomplicatedly as running right through the middle. Now we assume a specific sin  $p$  (for instance adultery): this  $p$  is located on one side of the line. The alternative of not-sinching,  $-p$ , is on the other side. When a man commits adultery, he has the choice between doing or not doing it. However, when he does do it, he cannot just go back to the position of being loyal to his partner. His field of possibilities has been reduced;  $-p$  does not belong to it anymore. The adulterer can will that  $-p$  is the case (and  $-p$  ontologically still is a real possibility), but he cannot effect  $-p$  by his own powers. First he needs the forgiveness of his partner, by which the possibility of restoring the

relationship will be opened. There are situations in which there is so much damage suffered by the partner, that it lastingly limits the material field (when, for instance, the partner is not prepared or able to forgive).

Apart from this reduction of the material range of freedom of choice, there can be various different limitations, internally as well as externally. One of them is habit formation.<sup>24</sup> The possibility of not repeatedly committing the sin is there, yet the will has got the disposition of continually sinning. This disposition is a psychological category.

This distinction between formal and material freedom can be reduced, as we have seen, to the distinction between subject and objects (the field of options which can be actualized). In order to show, once again, that we have two factors which are related, yet in principal different, let us imagine the following case. As the field of options which can be actualized, a person has only *one* possibility,  $p$ . Formally, he is still *completely* free; for he can will  $p$  or may not will  $p$ .<sup>25</sup> His material field, however, is extremely limited.

We must clearly distinguish, therefore, between the field of *objects willed* (formally) and the field of *willed objects which can be effected by the will itself* (materially). Someone can be absolutely powerless in effecting options, but free in willing them. Imagine a person, tied and blindfolded. This person can will many things which he cannot actualize, for instance to be not tied or to know his position, etc.<sup>26</sup> The formal freedom is complete, while the material field of options is reduced to a minimum.

*Summarized:* Every person is formally free and has the power to will. This power to will, however, does not become a blessing unless we are able to will and choose the *material* good, thanks to God and other people—by grace.

The 'perfect believer'<sup>27</sup> is materially the most free: in his case only good possibilities are chosen and actualized; besides, he has the largest field of good and bad options.

The hardened sinner is materially the least free: He has chained himself to that which is bad; the good can still be willed, but as a possibility which can be actualized it is not present anymore.



Finally we briefly formulate all kinds of freedom formed by I and II and which are grounded on the ontological level of synchronic contingency:

—There is synchronic contingency. Contingency is an essential property of contingent things.

—There is formal freedom: to any human choice it applies that one could have chosen differently from the choice actually made. This freedom is an essential human property.

—There is material freedom: being able to effect the *good* (and bad) possibilities which are chosen. This is a property which is accidental.

## 5. God's image and freedom

It is indeed possible to relate the theory which we have advanced to the classical thesis of man as the *imago Dei*, made in the image of God. The desire for God which we mentioned is a part of this *imago*, as is formal freedom.<sup>28</sup> As far as a human being, however, chooses against God and because of that runs counter to his natural desire, he does not seek his destiny, the *similitudo Dei*, to become real. Yet the *imago Dei* remains as the essential mould of his nature, but without being 'filled'.<sup>29</sup> We could call the 'perfect material freedom' an aspect of the *similitudo*.<sup>30</sup> *Imago* and *similitudo* relate as 'formal freedom' to 'perfect material freedom'.

## 6. Some related terms

Traditionally the concept of 'freedom as indifference' has often been used.<sup>31</sup> This term (or its meaning) is popular in the position which is sometimes called 'libertarianism'.<sup>32</sup> The Jesuit Luis de Molina (1535–1600) formulated its classical definition: 'That man is called free who, when all conditions to act are there, can or cannot act, or can or cannot do something in such a way that he can also do the opposite'.<sup>23</sup>

The content of the term 'libertarianism' is unclear for two reasons. Firstly, it is not clear whether we should think of the level of *volition* which can be willed or the level of *effecting* the objects of the will. When we

give the latter interpretation and equate this freedom with the formal freedom, then again we see a kind of 'autonomism' arising. For then, apart from having an inadmissible formal freedom, man always has the 'power' to actualize his objects of will as well. The christian tradition has continually rejected such a concept of freedom.

Second, it is not clear whether the possibility of the opposite obtains for the same moment or just for a later one. If the latter is the case, freedom as indifference

can still be explained deterministically. Therefore, this freedom is not useful without further qualification, because it can lead to 'autonomism' and/or determinism.

From the foregoing it becomes evident that so-called 'compatibilism', an alternative to 'libertarianism', must be disclaimed as well. In this view human freedom is 'compatible' with determinism. The only freedom which can be retained in this case is freedom as spontaneity. This freedom can be described as: voluntarily doing what one wants ('wills') to do.<sup>34</sup> Here, however, the crucial key of the alternative is missing: doing what you do because you want it, does not imply that you could have chosen not to do it—in the sense that your deed has a (synchronic) alternative.

## 7. Conclusion

From the exposition given above it seems to us that we have created a framework, in which various insights from diverse traditions may gain their proper places—and some, if necessary, may be rejected on positive grounds. We can accommodate the insight that the sinner is a 'slave of sin', while at the same time the freedom of will is maintained on the other level. This does not imply 'autonomism', for material freedom depends on God's grace as an essential condition.

Additionally we are enabled to test certain theories of freedom. This test consists of a pair of questions: Does this theory deal with formal or material freedom? Is formal freedom mistakenly taken as neutral material freedom? We should keep at the back of our minds that only formal freedom can be a safeguard against ontological determinism. From the christian theological standpoint



where concepts such as love, grace and forgiveness are central so that determinism must be excluded, this is an insight of great importance.<sup>35</sup>

1 The ideas of this article have been developed in an Utrecht theological study-group in which, apart from the authors, N. W. den Bok, H. W. de Knijff, A. H. Looman-Graaskamp, B. van den Toren and A. Vos participate. An earlier draft of this article has been published in Dutch, in *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 47 (1993) 2 [April], 119–127.

2 A sketch of this dilemma is provided by Roger Trigg, in: 'Sin and Freedom', *Religious Studies* 20 (1984), 191–202.

3 For some historical enquiries concerning the concept of freedom which is presented in this article, see J. Duns Scotus, *Contingentie en vrijheid. Lectura 139*, Ingeleid, vertaald en van commentaar voorzien door A. Vos Jaczn., H. Veldhuis, A. H. Looman-Graaskamp, E. Dekker en N. W. den Bok, Zoetermeer: Meinema, 1992 (for this study we use the abbreviation CV in the text of the present article; an English translation is forthcoming. Its title will be: J. Duns Scotus, *Contingency and freedom. Lectura I 39*, Introduction, translation and commentary by [same authors]); E. Dekker, *Rijker dan Midas. Vrijheid, genade en predestinatie in de theologie van Jacobus Arminius (1559–1609)*, Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1993.

4 This section is a summary of CV, 32–36. In CV, we elaborate on insights, formulated before by Simo Knuuttila and Antonie Vos. See for example: Simo Knuuttila, *Modalities in Medieval Philosophy*, London/New York: Routledge, 1993, 143–145 (Topics in Medieval Philosophy Series); Simo Knuuttila, 'Time and Modality in Scholasticism', in S. Knuuttila (ed.), *Reforging the Great Chain of Being. Studies of the History of Modal Theories*, Dordrecht/Boston/London: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1981, 163–257, esp. 225–228 (Synthese Historical Library 20); A. Vos, *Kennis en noodzakelijkheid. Een kritische analyse van het absolute evidentialisme in wijsbegeerte en theologie*, Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J. H. Kok, 1981, 81–87, 269–273.

5 Shaded spaces represent actualized states of affairs, empty spaces denote possible, but not actualized, states of affairs (empty spaces do not occur in the Parmenidian and Aristotelian model).

If  $p$  is a mutable state of affairs, in the modal

theory of Parmenides the following logical formulas are valid:

- a)  $\neg M(pt1 \ \& \ pt1)$
- b)  $Mpt1 \Diamond \neg M-pt1$
- c)  $pt1 \Diamond \neg M-pt1$
- d)  $\neg M(pt1 \ \& \ -pt2)$

The meaning of the symbols is as follows.  $M$ : modal-logical possibility operator;  $p$ : a state of affairs;  $t$ : the moment (of time) at which a state of affairs is the case;  $\neg$ : negation;  $\&$  conjunction;  $\Diamond$ : strict implication. For more detailed information on the logic we use, see G. E. Hughes, M. J. Cresswell, *An Introduction to Modal Logic*, London/New York: Methuen, 1968<sup>5</sup> (1968); CV, 48–49.

6 In the drawing this is expressed by the non-shaded alternative spaces opposite to the shaded spaces (the non-actualized alternative possibilities as counterparts of the actualized possibilities).

7 If  $p$  is a mutable state of affairs, the following logical formulas are valid in the modal theory of Aristotle:

- a)  $\neg M(pt1 \ \& \ -pt1)$
- b)  $Mpt1 \Diamond \neg M-pt1$
- c)  $pt1 \Diamond \neg M-pt1$
- d)  $M(pt1 \ \& \ -pt2)$

8 For a more detailed account of this concept, see CV, 34, esp. note 48.

9 The principle of plenitude maintains that every real possibility is actualized. For literature about this principle, see CV, 29 note 40.

10 For further reflections, see CV, 35 especially note 49. If  $p$  is a mutable state of affairs, the following logical formulas are valid in the modal theory of Duns Scotus:

- a)  $\neg M(pt1 \ \& \ -pt1)$
- e)  $M(pt1 \ \& \ -pt2)$
- f)  $Mpt1 \Diamond M-pt1$
- g)  $pt1 \Diamond M-pt1$

Formula a is the only one which Scotus has in common with Parmenides, formulas a and e with Aristotle.

11 When we extrapolate formula g which is valid in Scotus' theory, we get as a result for the freedom of the will:

$sWat1 \ \& \ MsW-at1$

$s$  symbolizes a Subject,  $W$  an act of willing,  $a$  the object (of willing). Cf. the extended formula in note 14.

12 We refer to the Augustinian theory of *desiderium naturale*. On this, cf. a.o. H. de Lubac, *Augustinis et théologie moderne*, Paris 1965 (Théologie 63); H. Veldhuis, *Een verze-geld boek. Het natuurbegrip in de theologie van J. G. Hamann (1730–1788)*, Slidrecht: Merweboek, 1990, 28–36.



- 13 These concepts have no connection with the Aristotelian distinction of 'matter' and 'form'.
- 14 'Not willing x' must be distinguished from 'willing not x', because these two things, in spite of what everyday language often suggests, do not coincide. It does make a difference whether I have no volition with respect to something, or have a volition with respect to the non-occurrence of something. For instance, the expression 'I do not want you to smoke' does not express indifference as to whether someone else is smoking, but an actual wish that someone else should not smoke. In formula:  $sW-a$  over against  $s-Wa$ .
- 15 In formula:  $MsWat1$  &  $Ms-Wat1$  &  $MsW-at1$ .
- 16 We mean the power of free will as formalized in the last note. Its essentiality can be expressed by:  

$$N(sWat1 \rightarrow (MsW-at1 \vee Ms-Wat1)).$$

$$(\rightarrow : \text{material implication}; \vee : \text{disjunction})$$

For a more detailed explication of 'essential', cf. CV, 49 and, more extensively, Vos, *Kennis en noodzakelijkheid*, 279–313, esp. 282–287.
- 17 These possible objects of choice can be outside or within human mind. A certain state of mind, for instance, can be such an object of my freedom of choice, which is immanent.
- 18 These material possibilities for choice are alternatives to one another within one possible world. So the question whether the field of options at some moment could have been different is independent of this subject.
- 19 Both the extent of options which can be effectuated and their nature differ from person to person. Extent and nature are determined by various factors which occur 'inside' as well as 'outside' man.
- 20 The question whether or how good and bad options can be recognized or known is too complex to be dealt with in this article. We assume the statement that there are good and bad possibilities to be a given;
- 21 This is Augustine's 'non posse peccare'. The 'can' ('posse') in this assertion, therefore, does not bear a modal intention. For if that were the case, then 'cannot sin' would mean that it would be logically impossible to sin. This would imply that a change of structure within the human will would have taken place, which is impossible (essential properties are necessarily essential; they can never become accidental; for greater detail, see for instance Hughes and Cresswell, *Introduction to Modal Logic*, 49 f.f.; Vos, *Kennis en noodzakelijkheid*, 286–287). Cf. also Antonie van den Beld, 'Non posse peccare: On the inability to sin in eternal life', *Religious Studies* 25 (1989), 521–535.
- 22 Seen from the diachronic (Aristotelian) theory of contingency the perfect material freedom becomes an essential property of man—since all possibilities which are not actualized (in the present case: something bad) are impossibilities.
- 23 In this connection, cf. note 17 and 18 as well.
- 24 The *consuetudo* which is of great importance in Augustine's work.
- 25 In formula:  $sWp \vee s-Wp$ . The alternative:  $sW-p$  is not there because  $-p$  is not an option which can be actualized within the present field of options.
- 26 In his *Institutio* 11.4.8 Calvin uses a classical example: a powerful emperor is as free as the man who stands in a narrow barrel in which nails have been driven so that he cannot move.
- 27 We understand this concept as an eschatological category.
- 28 We avoid using the term 'liberum arbitrium'. In the course of history it has been used ambiguously, so that the reader is easily misled.
- 29 Man can refuse the bond with God; he cannot, however, accomplish it by himself. For that he needs God himself to visit him by gracious love (condescension). See a.o. Veldhuis, *Een verzegeld boek*, 28–32; 339–340.
- 30 If the *imago* which remains (partly) complete under sin is interpreted, with Emil Brunner, as 'autonomism', then we miss the right perspective on a long patristic and medieval tradition. Cf. his *Der Mensch im Widerspruch*, Berlin: Furcht-Verlag, 1937, 519–531. Furthermore, it is also a matter of definition: Brunner seems to follow Calvin who equates *imago* and *iustitia originalis*.
- 31 Cf. for instance A. van den Beld, *Filosofie van het menselijk handelen*, Assen: Van Gorcum, 1982, 87–91 (he calls freedom as indifference 'freedom as alternativity', which means the same thing); A. J. Kenny, *Will, Freedom and Power*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975, 122 f.f.
- 32 Cf. a.o. A.J. Freddoso, *Luis de Molina. On Divine Foreknowledge. Part IV of the Concordia*, translated with an Introduction and notes, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988, 'Introduction', 24.
- 33 Molina, L. de, *Liberi Arbitrii cum Gratiae Donis, Divina Praescientia, Providentia, Praedestinatione et Reprobatione Concordia*, J. Rabeneck (ed.), Oña/Madrid 1953 (Societatis Iesu selecti scriptores: Ludovicus Molina), 1.2.3 (p. 14).
- 34 This notion was advanced in discussions between Reformed and Roman Catholic theologians by



the former, while it was rejected by the latter on account of the above mentioned reason. In present *thinking* the notion of 'spontaneity' is interpreted as less strict than 'necessity'. Cf. Van den Beld, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*, and Dekker, *Rijker dan Midas*, 133–156.

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