

CONTINGENCY AND FREEDOM

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JOHN DUNS SCOTUS

CONTINGENCY AND
FREEDOM

Lectura I 39

Introduction, Translation and Commentary
by

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Preface

During the seventies, there was a revival of systematic philosophy in general and of ontology in particular. At the same time, especially in Anglo-Saxon thinking, systematic philosophy interacted very creatively with the history of medieval philosophy. It seems to us that the work of John Duns Scotus (1266-1308) could substantially benefit these developments. Not only this, but his works cries out to be developed across the whole spectrum of theology - that science which, in the Middle Ages, ruled all others ('regina scientiarum').

This book is the outcome of several years of scholarship and friendship during which, guided by Dr. A. Vos, we have studied the work of Scotus. Our research group is connected to the *Theological Faculty* of Utrecht and to the Dutch *Franciscan Study Centre (Stichting Franciscanaans Studiecentrum)*. This study presents a translation and commentary of *Lectura I 39*, which, in our view, is notable as one of the key texts in the history of systematic theology and philosophy.

In this book we have used specialist language and argumentation, but at the same time have taken pains to make it useful to a circle of interested readers wider than simply that of those well-versed in medieval scholasticism. In this way, we hope to present the difficult but instructive work of the 'subtle master' ('doctor subtilis') in such a way as to make it attractive to other scholars and students in theology and philosophy.

Writing in a foreign language is quite a task, which turns into really hard work when it has to be a language full of precisely used words and nuanced details as it is needed for a book like this one. Our research group was so fortunate as to meet someone who is familiar with medieval texts, experienced in translating books into English and quite a good writer herself: Sister Frances Teresa osc. She has been helpful beyond our expectations, both in correcting our mistakes and in suggesting improvements in our text.

A. Vos Jaczn.
H. Veldhuis
A.H. Looman-Graaskamp
E. Dekker
N.W. den Bok

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