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*Daniel Heider
Claus A. Andersen
(eds.)*

COGNITIVE ISSUES IN THE LONG SCOTIST TRADITION

SCHWABE VERLAG

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Decretum Concomitans

Bartolomeo Mastri on Divine Cognition and Human Freedom

Claus A. Andersen

Introduction

The *Disputationes theologiae* from 1655 of Bartolomeo Mastri (1602–1673) is structured after the model of the medieval commentaries on Peter Lombard’s *Four Books of Sentences* and hence has a large section in the first part on divine knowledge.¹ Within this section, called *Disputation on the Divine Intellect* (*Disputatio de divino intellectu*), Mastri’s long and nuanced discussion of divine foreknowledge merits particular attention. In the time of Mastri, the theological issue of divine foreknowledge and its relation to human freedom had gained particular prominence, with the Jesuits and the Thomists each opting for their particular doctrine on this subject as well as the related topics of grace and predestination, thereby competing to establish the definitive Roman Catholic reaction to the Protestant and Reformed views on these matters. Mastri, entering the debate at a rather late stage (almost half a century after Paul V’s famous attempt in 1607 to call off the controversy *De auxiliis* by prohibiting any further polemics on the subject of grace), sets out to locate a clearly Scotist position in this rather peculiar historical landscape called Early Modern theology.²

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1 For the publication history of Mastri’s *Disputationes Theologiae*, see Forlivesi, *Scotistarum Princeps*, 394–426. The work had seven editions until 1757. I quote from the 1731 edition.

2 The literature on this aspect of Early Modern theology is abundant; recent survey studies include Leinsle, *Introduction to Scholastic Theology*, 323–46 (especially regarding Mastri, see 331–34); Marschler, “Providence, Predestination, and Grace” (regarding the period’s Dominican and Jesuit theology); and Ballor, Gaetano, Sytsma, “Introduction: Augustinian Soteriology in the Context of the *Congregatio De Auxiliis* and the Synod of Dordt” (overview of the theological interaction, in particular in regard to questions of free will, grace, and predestination, across confessional boundaries in the decades around 1600; for case studies, see their volume).

Baroque Scotism itself may be seen as a somewhat delayed Franciscan reaction to intellectual developments that had already taken place within the aforementioned as well as other Catholic intellectual schools. The very endeavor to write an entire *Cursus philosophicus ad mentem Scoti* was an attempt, supported by the Franciscan Order, to equal the philosophical *cursus* literature that for decades had been standard among the Jesuits and others – and with Mastri, together with his colleague and Conventual confrere Bonaventura Belluto (1603–1676), and John Punch (1599 or 1603–1661), who by contrast belonged to the Observant Franciscans, competing to be the first to complete a Scotist textbook of philosophy.³ Not surprisingly, in theology we see a similar need to catch up with what had been going on in the other religious orders in recent times. At the same time, however, the Franciscans, contrary to the Jesuit newcomers, could boast of their long Scotist tradition. This historical constellation is the background of Mastri’s discussion of divine foreknowledge, as is easily seen in his preliminary presentation of what he perceives as *the* Scotist approach to this topic:

We say [...] that God from eternity concomitantly has been determining free future events that stem from a created will, and that such a decree is a sufficient and appropriate means of knowing them with certainty, also insofar as they happen freely. Since, however, this position certainly occupies the middle ground between the extremes represented by the Thomists and the Neutrals [i. e., the Jesuits] – for the first group only admits antecedent decrees, whereas the second group only admits subsequent decrees based on middle, or conditional, knowledge, and also for some people among the Scotists this position appears to be altogether new, something that has only recently been introduced into our school – let me first show that this is not something new, but rather was the approach of Scotus and the old Scotists.⁴

By contrast, there is only scarce literature on the place of the Franciscan and Scotist positions in this debate; see, besides the mentioned chapter by Leinsle, also Becker, *Gnadenlehre*; Anfray, “Prescience divine, décrets concomitants et liberté humaine;” and Forlivesi, “The Creator’s Decrees and Foreknowledge” (with a helpful summary of the most important events in the controversy *De Auxiliis*, 216–19).

3 Cf. Forlivesi, “The *Ratio Studiorum* of the Conventual Franciscans in the Baroque Age,” and Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 16–18 and 33–38. Other Franciscan authors competed in this race, as well; cf., particularly as regards the Scotist Gaspare Sghemma, Forlivesi, *Scotistarum Princeps*, 154–55.

4 Bartholomaeus Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 168, 135b: “Dicimus itaque in hoc sensu, Deum ab aeterno concomitanter determinasse eventus liberos a creata voluntate futuros, & tale decretum esse sufficiens, ac idoneum medium ad eos certo cognoscendos, etiam quatenus libere eventuros. Quoniam vero sententia haec mediat inter extremas Thomistarum & Neutralium, admittentibus illis sola decreta antecedentia, istis vero sola subsequentia ratione scientiae mediae, seu conditionatae; & nonnullis etiam ex Scotistis omnino nova videtur, ac noviter introducta in nostra schola, prius ostendam, non esse novam, sed fuisse Scoti, & anti-

Mastri goes on to explain that the first to advocate this Scotist doctrine as a solution to the contemporary debate was his own teacher at Naples (in the Conventual *studium*) Giuseppe Napoli from Trapani on Sicily (1586–1649), in a manuscript treatise on the harmony between the first and the second causes, and that Trapani’s solution was adopted by another of Mastri’s teachers at Naples, Angelo Volpe from Montepeloso († 1647), who discussed divine foreknowledge in the second volume of his vast twelve-volume exposition of Scotist theology.⁵ In his discussions of divine foreknowledge, Duns Scotus himself employs the terminology of ‘concomitance,’ though not yet making this term the key concept of his doctrine and even himself later discarding one of the most important passages in question, along with the rest of distinction 39 of *Ordinatio* I, which was nevertheless included in all historical prints of this work.⁶ Neither is the announced support from the earlier Scotist tradition overwhelming: Mastri, reproducing references already given by Volpe, merely adduces Giovanni Vigerio’s (Minister General of the Franciscans 1525–1530) explicit talk of the *created will* as a “con-

quorum Scotistarum.” Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 4, n. 109, 120b, defines the ‘Neutrals’ as Jesuits, who are neither Thomists nor Scotists.

⁵ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 168, 135b–36a. Mastri’s references to Angelo Volpe at this place are partially inaccurate. Volpe’s commitment to the doctrine of the concomitant decree, however, is beyond doubt; cf., e.g., Angelus Vulpes, *Sacrae theol. summa*, I, vol. 2, disp. 30, art. 7, n. 8, 35a, and *ibid.*, art. 11, n. 7, 56b. In their logical discussion of the truth value of propositions concerning contingent future events, Mastrius / Bellutus, *Disp. Log.*, disp. 10, q. 2, art. 5, n. 58 (*Cursus philosophicus* I), 308b, likewise refer to Trapani and Volpe, and additionally mention Anteo Sassi as another of their teachers who also subscribed to Trapani’s doctrine. Regarding Trapani and Volpe at Naples, see Forlivesi, *Scotistarum Princeps*, 85–93; according to Forlivesi, *ibid.*, 102–3, Sassi may have been a kind of supervisor (rather than a proper teacher) to the young Mastri, when the latter taught logic in his order’s *studium* in Bologna. Marco Forlivesi confirmed to me that no manuscript with Trapani’s treatise is presently known to have been preserved.

⁶ Cf., for instance, Duns Scotus, *Ord.* I, dist. 39, qq. 1–5, n. 27 (ed. Vat. VI), Appendix A, 434; cf. also Duns Scotus, *Ord.* I, dist. 40, q. unica, n. 10 (ed. Vat. VI), 313. Becker, *Gnadenlehre*, 64–68, has a useful survey and discussion of the Scotus passages quoted by Mastri in this context; cf. especially Becker’s remark that ‘concomitance’ in Scotus does not seem to hold the same technical value as it does for Mastri (*ibid.*, 67). For a recent discussion of the reason why Scotus ended up inserting blank leaves in lieu of his discussion of divine knowledge of contingents in his personal copy of the *Ordinatio* (the famous Assisi codex), see Frost, “John Duns Scotus on God’s Knowledge of Sins”; Frost, *ibid.*, 34, concludes that it was Scotus’s reflection on human sinful volition that made him realize that his doctrine of human and divine co-causality in regard to human actions could not universally explain how God knows contingents by knowing His own will. Among Mastri’s contemporaries, I have not detected any awareness of Scotus’s later abandonment of his doctrine in the *Ordinatio*, which was indeed, throughout the Early Modern period, the prime source of information concerning his view on divine foreknowledge.

comitant second cause” of divine predestination,⁷ and – as a response to contemporaneous attempts to interpret Scotus as a proponent of the doctrine of antecedent divine decrees – quotes the early Scotist John of Bassol († 1333) who likewise stresses the created free will’s genuine, albeit secondary, causal power.⁸

In other words, Mastri fails to deliver the promised evidence of a long Scotist tradition supporting the doctrine of the concomitant decree. It is therefore not surprising that Mastri’s Scotist contemporaries from other Franciscan milieus did not support that particular interpretation of Scotus’s doctrine proposed by Trapani. Mastri reports that Gaspare Sghemma (1590–1657), who was one of Belluto’s early teachers, was critical toward the idea of proper concomitance, and rather emphasized the subordination of the second causes to the primary cause (which then seems to pull in the direction of antecedent divine causality).⁹ We further learn that other Scotist theologians, such as Filippo Fabri (1564–1630), Hugh McCaghwell (1571–1626), and the aforementioned John Punch, instead opted for the Jesuit position.¹⁰ Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz clearly – though most

7 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 168, 136a; cf. Ioannes Vigerius, *Lectura resolutissima*, dist. 41, q. unica, 185va: “[A]dde concomitante voluntate creata volente bene uti et sic est aliqua causa quare istum praedestinat [...]. Nam voluntas divina non determinat nisi voluntas creata se determinaverit, quia voluntas creata concurrat ut causa secunda.” Angelus Vulpes, *Sacrae theol. summa*, I, vol. 2, disp. 30, art. 8, n. 6, 37b, already has this quote from Vigerio.

8 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 172, 136b; cf. Ioannes de Bassolis, *Sent.* I, dist. 38, q. unica, 198vb: “Ad secundum dubium dicitur quod maior est falsa quando prima causa continet et ambit virtualiter totam virtutem et differentiam cause secunde, que requiruntur cum ipsa, sicut est in proposito de voluntate divina et libero arbitrio.” Angelus Vulpes, *Sacrae theol. summa*, I, vol. 2, disp. 30, art. 8, n. 13, 41b, already has this quote from John of Bassol.

9 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 169, 135b, with reference to Sghemma, *Scoticum opusculum*, q. 4, 23a. For Sghemma’s profile, see Forlivesi, *Scotistarum Princeps*, 154–55; his criticism of the doctrine of the concomitant decrees was noted in Becker, *Gnadenlehre*, 68.

10 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 4, n. 110, 120b, referencing these three authors; cf. similarly in regard to Punch and Fabri *ibid.*, q. 4, art. 3, n. 229, 151b. In the case of McCaghwell, Mastri refers to a manuscript treatise (“P. Cavellus tract. de peccatis in manuscriptis q. an Deus sit causa peccati”) that does not seem to have attracted any attention from modern scholarship; it is uncertain whether it indeed has been preserved to the present day. As for Fabri, Mastri’s references are inaccurate; cf. however Philippus Faber, *Disp. theol.*, I, disp. 54, cap. 4, n. 42, 364b, with direct reference to Molina, and *ibid.*, cap. 5, n. 50, 365b, where Fabri explicitly subscribes to the view that the divine decree follows upon God’s insight into the human will; both passages are quoted in Anfray, “Molina and John Duns Scotus,” 364. As for Punch, see Ioannes Poncius, *Integer theol. cursus*, I, disp. 5, q. 7, nn. 36–37, 81a–b, where he (with some reservations that shall not occupy us here) supports the idea of a middle knowledge that precedes the decrees of the divine will. Note that the Wadding edition’s *scholia* to Scotus’s *Ord.* I, dist. 39 and 41, which suggest Scotus endorsed middle (or conditional) knowledge even though he did not call it thusly, were not written by Punch (as claimed by Frost, “John Duns Scotus on God’s Knowledge of Sins,” 28–29), but rather by McCaghwell; they are already included in McCaghwell’s edition of 1620; cf. Duns Scotus, *Sent.* I, dist. 39, q. 5 (ed. McCagh-

likely by indirect acquaintance – draws upon this latter tradition when he says in his *Essais de théodicée* from 1710 that the “modern” Franciscans in general agree with the Jesuits in accepting the doctrine of middle knowledge (as opposed to the predeterministic position of the Dominicans and the Augustinians).¹¹ From this perspective, Mastri (with Trapani and Volpe) would seem to hold a rather exotic minority position within the Scotist tradition. Leibniz, however, fails to notice Mastri’s huge influence on Baroque Franciscan scholasticism. Scotist authors with Mastrian sympathies did not fail to follow him also on this issue. One of them, in this case a writer who was active decades after Leibniz’s death, Crescentius Krisper (1679–1749), remarked that someone might object that the doctrine is rather more Mastrian than Scotistic (“hoc non esse Scoticum sed Mastrianum”), since the relevant terminology is so infrequent in Scotus; in reply, he points out that the equivalent terminology of ‘cooperation’ and ‘co-causality’ is common enough in Scotus.¹² The type of criticism mentioned by Krisper is in fact frequent among those 17th- and 18th-century Scotists who reject the doctrine of the concomitant decree, or rather “Mastri’s decree,” as one particularly fierce critic calls it.¹³ Sometimes, this critique (in continuation of the tradition mentioned by Leibniz) goes hand in hand with overt acceptance of the

well), 420b (with explicit reference to Fabri), and Duns Scotus, *Sent.* I, dist. 41, q. unica (ed. McCaghwell), 431b. Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 172, 136b, acknowledges that Punch in his *Integer theol. cursus*, I, disp. 5, q. 6, n. 27, 79a–b, along with his support for middle knowledge, also has an alternative explanation of the doctrine of the concomitant decree.

11 Leibniz, *Essais de théodicée*, I, n. 39, 124 (I retain the spelling of the Gerhardt edition): “Les Dominicains et les Augustins sont pour la predetermination, les Franciscains et les Jesuites modernes sont plustost pour la science moyenne.”

12 Crescentius Krisper, *Theol. scholae scotisticae*, I, tract. 1, dist. 13, q. 5, n. 10, 187a. Other Scotist supporters of the doctrine of the concomitant decree include, e.g.: Bernardus Sannig, *Schola theol. scotistarum*, I, tract. 2, dist. 1, q. 7, n. 1, 115b–16a (reproduces Mastri’s allusions to the earlier tradition, but strangely fails to mention Mastri at this place); Sebastian Dupasquier, *Summa theol. scotisticae*, I, disp. 8, q. 5, concl. 4, 567 (employs the term ‘decretum concurrenti’), and *ibid.*, disp. 10, q. 4, concl. 2, 662 (here ‘decretum concomitans’); Kilian Kazenberger, *Assertiones centum*, assertio 9, 11 (1906 reprint, first published 1726). Regarding these authors’ Mastrian sympathies as seen in the realm of metaphysics, see Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 914–15 (Sannig), 919–21 (Dupasquier), 930–31 (Krisper), 932–33 (Kazenberger); regarding Sannig, see also Dvořák, “Sannigovo scotistické řešení,” 132.

13 Emmanuel Perez de Quiroga, *Quaestiones theol. selectae*, q. 16, sect. 2, n. 8, 187b: “Hoc decretum Mastrii, & Scotistarum non esse Scoti, ut asserunt Scotistae illud tuentes, patet.” This author has a long and critical discussion of Mastri’s arguments for the concomitant decree; cf. *ibid.*, sect. 5, nn. 53–70, 195a–98b. He is generally critical toward Mastri; cf. Forlivesi, *Scotistarum Princeps*, 322–23.

Jesuit doctrine of middle knowledge,¹⁴ while at other times, it is rather complemented by adherence to the Thomist doctrine of antecedent decrees.¹⁵ The whole spectrum of available positions is represented in the Scotist discussions. With his doctrine of the concomitant decree, Mastri occupies a central, albeit controversial, place in these discussions.

As Mastri introduces the doctrine of the concomitant decree, it is intended to ensure equal consideration of both God's certain knowledge of future events as well as human free will as the (partial) cause of such events. Exactly for this reason it would seem to hold a middle position between the Thomist approach of Domingo Báñez (1528–1604) and the Jesuit approach of Luis de Molina (1536–1600), each seen by Mastri as overemphasizing one or the other of the key elements under discussion, i. e., either the predetermining element (God's infinite power) or the element of human freedom (as embraced by God's infinite knowledge). With its double focus, the doctrine of the concomitant decree strikingly resembles Mastri's fairly well-known doctrine of the double origin of possibility in creatures. Drawing on a distinction made by Scotus, Mastri explained, first in his *Disputations on Metaphysics* and then later in the *Disputation on the Divine Intellect*, that creatures are possible *ex se*, but not *a se*, since their possibility is not entirely independent of the divine intellect.¹⁶ Both in the case of creaturely possibility and in the case of divine foreknowledge of contingent future events, Mastri is concerned with finding the right balance between the divine and the created spheres. However, in the case of divine foreknowledge vs. human freedom, the stakes are higher.

Mastri on various occasions, and both in philosophy and theology, thus makes the point that freedom of will is both what makes a human act specifically

14 Cf. Alipius Locherer, *Clypeus philosophico-scotisticus*, II, Phys. II, disp. 4, art. 3, concl. 4, n. 22, 298b (rejection of Mastri's doctrine), and *ibid.*, concl. 5, n. 23, 300a (acceptance of the Jesuit doctrine). Locherer is generally not biased against Mastri; cf. Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 933–35.

15 Cf. Franciscus Macedo, *Collationes doctrinae*, I, collat. 9, diff. 4, sect. 6, 346a–b; Macedo reproduces some of Mastri's references to other authors (including the references to Trapani's and McCaghwell's respective manuscript treatises) and adds some of his own. The Thomist flavor of Macedo's position was critically noted by Crescentius Krisper, *Theol. scholae scotisticae*, I, tract. 1, dist. 13, q. 5, n. 1, 184a; cf. also Sebastian Dupasquier, *Summa theol. scotisticae*, I, disp. 10, q. 4, 666. According to Tropia, *La teoria della conoscenza*, 10, Macedo's thought in general is "impregnated with eclecticism"; cf. also Tropia's article in this present volume.

16 Mastrius, *Disp. Met.*, disp. 8, q. 1, art. 3, n. 36 (*Cursus philosophicus* V), 26b: "Dicendum itaque est res possibilitatem, vel impossibilitatem non omnino ex seipsis, & a seipsis habere independentem prorsus a Deo, sed nec omnino a Divina omnipotentia, aut Divino intellectu mediantibus Ideis; sed intrinsece, & formaliter ex seipsis, extrinsece vero, & principiative ab intellectu divino." Cf. similarly Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 2, art. 2, n. 57, 106b; cf. Duns Scotus, *Ord.* I, dist. 43, q. unica, n. 7 (ed. Vat. VI), 354.

human and makes it morally relevant, since only free actions have a moral value; only such acts can be praised or rebuked.¹⁷ One of the contexts where we find such a statement is the *Disputations on De anima*, which is a part of the *Cursus philosophicus* that Mastri co-authored with Bonaventura Belluto (Belluto is believed to have been responsible for the part on *De anima*, but the passage here in question is found in an “appendix” later inserted by Mastri). In contrast to most commentaries on Aristotle’s *De anima*, and indeed to this very work by Aristotle, their work includes a long disputation on the power of will in the human soul, in which we also find a consideration of the sources of the freedom of will: whereas its extrinsic cause is God’s own freedom (this is in accordance with Scotus’s rule that there would be no contingency in the world, were it not exactly for God’s own contingent way of operating),¹⁸ its intrinsic cause rather lies in the nature of the will itself (and this again is in accordance with Scotus’s own notion of the will as an irreducibly autonomous, rational, and non-natural power of the soul).¹⁹ As for the other side, concerning divine cognition, Mastri maintains – following, as he says, “all theologians” (*cum omnibus theologis*) – that God has most perfect, that is, quidditative, distinct, and comprehensive knowledge of all possible creatures, both their essences and their individual differences; these are all eminently contained in the divine essence itself, the implication being that God inevitably knows them and knows everything about them when he comprehends Himself.²⁰ What remains to be seen is how exactly this perfect divine cognition applies to future events caused by free agents.

In the following, I shall discuss the cognitive aspects of Mastri’s doctrine of the concomitant decree. Having introduced this doctrine, shown (presumably) that it is indeed in conformity with Scotus’s teaching, and comprehensively de-

17 Mastrius / Bellutus, *Disp. De anima*, disp. 7, q. 4, appendix, n. 95 (*Cursus philosophicus* III), 231b–32a: “[I]llae ergo actiones proprie humanae dicuntur, quae ex volitione deliberata procedunt; si autem aliae actiones homini conveniunt, possunt quidem dici actiones hominis, sed non proprie humanae, cum non sint hominis, in quantum est homo.” The same point is made in Mastrius, *Sent.* II, disp. 5, q. 1, n. 1, 212a.

18 Mastrius / Bellutus, *Disp. De anima*, disp. 7, q. 3, art. 1, n. 33 (*Cursus philosophicus* III), 218b: “[D]ivina libertas est prima, & praecipua causa extrinseca nostrae libertatis, & contingentiae in rebus.” Cf. Duns Scotus, *Ord.* I, dist. 39, qq. 1–5, n. 14 (ed. Vat. VI), Appendix A, 416; a longer elaboration of the same issue, but especially emphasizing that the contingency of human acts stems from both the divine and the human will, in Duns Scotus, *Rep.* I-A, dist. 39–40, qq. 1–3, nn. 31–37 (ed. Wolter / Bychkov II), 473–75.

19 Mastrius / Bellutus, *Disp. De anima*, disp. 7, q. 3, art. 2, n. 43 (*Cursus philosophicus* III), 220b: “[R]adix libertatis sit ipsa natura potentiae de se utrumlibet indifferentis”; with explicit reference to Duns Scotus, *Quodl.*, q. 16, n. 16 (ed. Wadding XII), 457–58, where Scotus says there is no reason why the will is free other than itself; cf. similarly Duns Scotus, *Ord.* I, dist. 8, pars 2, q. unica, n. 299 (ed. Vat. IV), 325.

20 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 1, n. 2, 91a.

fended it against objections from the other Catholic schools (none of which I shall dwell on now), Mastri, in a separate article within his *Disputation on the Divine Intellect*, addresses the question of “how God with certainty knows free future events through the decrees of His own will without injuring our freedom.”²¹ While questions relating specifically to the relation between divine and human will are discussed in the next disputation, which is devoted to the divine will,²² this *articulus* offers much of what one would like to know regarding the relationship between divine cognition and human freedom. I shall therefore focus on this article. I shall complement my treatment with some remarks on Mastri’s specialized discussion included within the last *quaestio* of the *Disputation on the Divine Intellect* concerning the Jesuit doctrine of God’s middle knowledge of conditional future events.

1. Divine Volition as the Medium of Divine Foreknowledge

Mastri’s article on God’s certain knowledge of contingent future events is structured as a discussion of four assertions. The fourth assertion is that there is a fine coherence between the certitude of divine foreknowledge and both the contingency of things in general and the freedom of our will in particular.²³ This is the overall conclusion of the article. The other three assertions, all of which have a basis in Scotus’s thought on future contingents and divine cognition in general, rather serve as its premisses. They all focus on how contingent future events can be objects of divine knowledge.

The first assertion, in accordance with Scotus, states that the primary object of divine knowledge is the divine essence itself. Only the divine essence can have a motivating (or *causal*) effect on the divine intellect. This means that all other objects must enter divine cognition in some way other than by being its primary object. From this, Mastri infers that “God knows the future contingents in the decree of His will like in the medium that determines future events to one of two members of a contradiction.”²⁴ These “two members of a contradiction” are

21 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, 143b, heading of the article: “Articulus decimus. In quo declaratur modus, quo Deus certo cognoscit liberos eventus per decreta suae voluntatis absque laesione libertatis nostrae.”

22 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 4, 165, heading of the disputation: “Disputatio quarta. De divina voluntate.”

23 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a: “Quarto tandem constat ex dictis, quomodo cum certitudine divinae praescientiae bene adhuc cohaereat, & rerum contingentia, & nostrae voluntatis libertas.”

24 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 197, 143b: “Primo [...] dicendum est, Deum non praescire eventus liberos in determinatione suae voluntatis, tanquam in objecto, quia unicum tantum habet divinus intellectus primum objectum primitate adaequationis in movendo,

whether a certain state of affairs will occur or not. The divine will decides, and its decision, or decree, somehow offers an object to the divine intellect: the decree of the divine will is a medium of knowledge, because it determines that the divine essence “represents” to God’s own intellect this or that future event.²⁵ Mastri reports that Scotus has two explanations of how this process may work. There is either a discursive process, where God sees some contingent thing or state of affairs that His own will has decreed, and by reminding Himself that His decree cannot be impeded (so that whatever has been decreed is bound to come into being), He arrives at certain and infallible knowledge of this contingent state of affairs. Or, God rather has a simple intuition of the state of affairs decreed by His will. Scotus introduces this latter intuition as a viable solution if the assumption of discursivity in God’s cognition is too problematic; and since Mastri at the outset describes divine cognition as instantaneous and immediate (and indeed often refers to it as intuitive),²⁶ it is clear that this approach better suits his purposes, although he does not discuss in detail which one of the two approaches is preferable. Mastri’s most important objective clearly is to ensure that divine cognition is something that takes place wholly “within God Himself” (*intra ipsum Deum*).²⁷

There is, however, a serious problem with this perspective considered from within God, one that Mastri does not really solve. His discussion of it is important anyway. The Jesuit theologian Gabriel Vázquez (1549–1604) had objected, against the doctrine of God’s decrees as the medium of divine foreknowledge,

& illud est essentia divina accepta sub ratione mere absoluta, & ideo nil aliud neque realiter, neque formaliter ab ea distinctum potest esse ratio motiva intelligendi divino intellectui, novit ergo Deus futura contingentia in decreto suae voluntatis, tanquam in medio determinante futura ad alteram contradictionis partem.” Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, n. 72, 112a, mentions the question of the cognitive medium of future events as one of the important issues to be dealt with in the discussion of divine foreknowledge.

²⁵ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 200, 144a: “[R]atio tamen, & medium, per quod procedit Deus ad cognoscendum futura, est ipsum divinum decretum, seu divina essentia per voluntatem efficacem determinata ad repraesentandum hoc, vel illud futurum.”

²⁶ Cf., e.g., Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 200, 144a, and *ibid.*, n. 201, 144b.

²⁷ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 197, 143b, referencing Duns Scotus, *Ord.* I, dist. 38, pars 2, nn. 22–23 (ed. Vat. VI), Appendix A, 427–28; Duns Scotus, *Rep.* I-A, dist. 38, qq. 1–2, n. 45 (ed. Wolter / Bychkov II), 460. Mastri refers to Maurice O’Fihely and Antonio Trombetta as proponents of the discursive approach; cf. Antonius Trombetta, *Quaest. de divina praescientia*, art. 4, 8va and 9ra. As Schabel, *Theology at Paris*, 44–49, shows, Scotus essentially borrowed the discursive approach from Henry of Ghent; it was, according to Schabel, this approach that enjoyed most popularity among fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Scotists. Its popularity, however, faded with time, as Francesco Fiorentino shows in his contribution to this present volume. For Scotus’s doctrine of divine cognition, see the article by Giorgio Pini in this present volume.

that a decree does not add anything to the divine essence beyond a relation of reason toward future events. This relation of reason is one conceived by human beings (one would suspect that the people Vázquez has in mind are theologians grappling with divine cognition and its relation to divine volition, which is not, in reality, anything different than the divine essence), and not so conceived by God Himself; and even if God would conceive such a relation, He would first have to grasp the extremes of the relation, because a relation, generally, cannot be conceived without prior knowledge of the items between which it holds. Vázquez concludes that the divine decrees cannot be more than a “remote” cause of God’s cognition of future events, its “proper” cause rather lying in the intelligibility of these future events themselves; intelligibility pertains to them qua being embraced by God’s infinite intellect. As Mastri summarizes, a future event then is “immediately knowable in itself” (*in seipsa cognoscibilis*), and as such may be directly intuited by God.²⁸ Possibly provoked by the fact that Vázquez rather emphatically claimed to be following Scotus as regards the intelligibility of future events, Angelo Volpe (as mentioned, Mastri’s teacher at Naples) replied both that God’s relation to creatures is not merely a relation of reason, but indeed something real in God, a real inclination toward creatures that, however, does not add a new reality to the divine essence; he further replied that future events that formally are nothing apart from God’s decrees cannot in themselves hold any truth value, whereby the decrees, rather than the events, must terminate the acts of divine cognition.²⁹ Interestingly, Mastri here intervenes on behalf of the Jesuit: if a decree of the will does not represent a new reality, then this exactly

28 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 198, 143b, referencing Gabriel Vázquez, *In primam partem*, I, disp. 65, cap. 2, nn. 11–13, 519a–b; Vázquez’s own solution (stating the *per se* intelligibility of future events) is presented in *ibid.*, disp. 65, cap. 4, n. 18, 521a–b; his point that the decrees only add a relation of reason to the divine essence is reiterated in *ibid.*, disp. 67, cap. 4, n. 20, 535b (“ut saepius diximus [...] decretum Dei de re facienda nihil omnino addit supra suam nudam essentiam, nisi respectum rationis ad rem futuram”), and disp. 80, cap. 2, n. 6, 645b (where he also explains that God’s free volition, as a vital act, is in fact God’s very substance). For a possible response to the view that a relation of reason cannot be a medium of cognition, Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 199, 144a, refers to Franciscus de Mayronis, *Conflatus*, dist. 38, q. 2, art. 4, 229–30, who says that a relation of reason, when conceived in the manner of a being of reason with a foundation in reality, may indeed serve as a basis for cognition; Mastri, however, dismisses this point of view with an eye to Scotus’s doctrine of relations, accepted by Vázquez, according to which a relation cannot be conceived without first conceiving its foundation.

29 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 198, 143b, referencing Angelus Vulpes, *Sacrae theol. summa*, I, vol. 2, disp. 30, art. 10, nn. 8–10, 52b–54b, who, in turn, quotes Gabriel Vázquez, *In primam partem*, I, disp. 65, cap. 4, n. 19, 521b; Vázquez stresses that he has, for a long time and both in Spain and in Rome, taught that propositions about the future must have a definite truth value and that he in this is following Scotus, *Ord.* I, dist. 38 (the locus referred to in note 27).

means that it is only a relation of reason. Also, future events indeed can be known in themselves, though only as secondary objects, not as the divine intellect's primary object (how this works is explained in Mastri's discussion of the second assertion).³⁰

If the divine decrees only add relations of reason to the divine essence, then what exactly do they have to offer to divine foreknowledge? They must convey some cognitive content, rather than just knowledge of the decree itself. Mastri resorts to the notion of *connotation*: the divine decrees connote – bear some reference or allusion to – what has been decided regarding future states of affairs within creation. God's perfect knowledge of "all the power of His will" (called "knowledge of simple intelligence"), taken as such, is not the same as His knowledge of "all of His reasons for determining what to make or not to make" (called "knowledge of vision"), which rather *connotes* the contingent future events that will take place within creation.³¹ As vague as this solution is, it is in accordance with the general assumption stated at the beginning of the *Disputation on the Divine Intellect*, in which Mastri explains that God's omnipotence and omniscience do not imply any "transcendental order toward creatures," but rather only "something absolute" that connotes possible creatures. While such a connotation does not establish a real relation to possible creatures, it does signal these creatures' dependence upon the divine powers. These powers are therefore relational in some qualified sense only; they carry a relation of reason toward creatures, even though this relation is found entirely on the side of *us*, that is, human beings trying to understand the workings of divine cognition. We cannot, Mastri says, understand the divine powers without their extrinsic connotations.³²

³⁰ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 198, 143b–44a.

³¹ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 199, 144a: "[Q]uia ergo Deus perfecte scrutatur totam suae voluntatis potentiam scientia simplicis intelligentiae, & omnes rationes determinationis ejus circa fienda, vel non fienda scientia visionis, sciens voluntatem suam non simpliciter, & nude sumptam, sed, cum connotatione talis creaturae, quam libere voluit, in tali differentia temporis esse." God's knowledge of simple intelligence is traditionally seen as being concerned with everything possible, whereas His knowledge of vision rather is seen as being concerned with such things that actually come into being; cf. section 5 below.

³² Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 1, n. 9, 92b: "Respondendum ergo est [...] omnipotentiam, & omniscientiam non esse perfectiones relativas secundum esse, itaut essentialiter includant ordinem realem transcendentalem ad creaturas, sed esse perfectiones relativas tantum secundum dici, quae de principali significato aliquid absolutum important, connotando creaturas possibiles, non ob aliquem respectum realem, quem fundent ad illas, sed ob dependentiam essentialem creaturarum a Deo, ut a primo ente; & haec est causa, cur perfectiones hujusmodi nequeat a nobis saltem quidditative concipi sine creaturis possibilibus; haec est enim natura relativorum secundum dici, ut nequeant quidditative concipi sine suis extrinsecis connotatis." Regarding the notion of 'transcendental order,' Mastri refers to the discussion in Mastrius / Bellutus, *Disp. Log.*, disp. 8, q. 5, art. 1, n. 66 (*Cursus philosophicus* I), 255a.

It would thus seem that one and the same model applies both to God's knowledge of possibles and to His knowledge of contingent future events. The analogy, however, not explicitly drawn by Mastri himself, rather holds between our human understanding of God's relationship to possibles and God's own foreknowledge. This leaves open whether Mastri actually thinks that God's foreknowledge is a recipient (or quasi-recipient) of the divine decrees' connoted content, or, alternatively, his talk of connotations merely is meant to provide an explanation that satisfies our human understanding of how the divine decrees may work as a cognitive medium. Mastri's intervention on behalf of Vázquez (who stressed that the relation of reason in question is only on the part of human understanding) would seem to incline towards the latter position, while inclining towards the first position is the fact that his discussion of the ontological status of future contingents is based, in this instance, on an explicit comparison with possibles. Mastri's position on the issue of the medium of foreknowledge appears to be ambiguous and may be interpreted as having a dual purpose.

2. The Ontological Status of Contingent Future Events

The second assertion shifts focus from the medium of divine cognition of contingent future events to these events themselves. It states that they indeed can be objects of divine cognition, albeit only "secondary objects" (objects that are eminently contained in the primary object, the divine essence). They can be so, because of "that being, which they shall be having in themselves at this or that point in time."³³ As already mentioned, Mastri's explanation now rests on an explicit comparison with God's cognition of possibles:

The reason is that – just like the possible things are said to pertain to the secondary object of the divine intellect, because they indeed terminate the divine cognition according to that real being, which to have for some time does not contradict them – thus future things through this are said to pertain to the secondary object of the divine intelligence, because they indeed terminate it according to that real being, which they, per divine decree, will have for some certain and determined time.³⁴

33 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 200, 144a: "Secundo dicendum est, quod licet Deus futura contingentia cognoscat in essentia sua, tanquam in objecto primario prius cognito, prout tamen a voluntate determinata est ad hanc partem potius futuri contingentis ostendendam, & non aliam, adhuc tamen ea cognoscit etiam in seipsis per modum objecti secundarii secundum illud esse, quod sunt in se habitura pro hac, vel illa temporis differentia." Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, n. 72, 112a, mentions the ontological status of future events (especially the problem that they would seem not to be knowable, since they do not have proper existence themselves) as one of the issues to be addressed in his discussion.

34 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 200, 144a: "[R]atio est, quia sicut res possibles ideo spectare dicuntur ad objectum secundarium divini intellectus, quia re vera terminant di-

Most important in this analogy between possibles and future events, of course, is the status of this being which possibles *can have* at some time and which contingent future states of affairs *will be having* at some time. Mastri, at the outset (in the above quote), calls it “real being” (*esse reale*). In his *Disputations on Metaphysics*, he explained that real being is usually defined as “non-repugnancy toward existing,” and that this relationship with existence is characteristic of that essential being which all possible things have, regardless of whether they actually exist or not.³⁵ We now learn that God’s intellect, overarching all periods of time and intuiting all things before they actually exist, extends to future events with their future real existence, and does so “as if they had real presence [in God’s intellect] in eternity owing to their own proper existence.”³⁶ A little later, Mastri phrases this so that the divine intellect, following upon the divine will’s decision, makes the future events “objectively present in the divine essence.”³⁷ This objective presence or being that future events may enjoy in eternity, though only subsequent to the pertinent decree of the divine will, is crucial. The being that the future events have in the divine intellect is clearly *not exactly* the kind of being which they have in themselves. There is rather a certain resemblance between the two, as appears from Mastri’s expression that it is “as if” (*ac si*) they had real presence in the divine intellect. Here also the terminology of foundation applies: Mastri says that truths concerning contingent future events decreed by the divine will are *founded* on these same events’ future real being.³⁸

vinam cognitionem secundum esse reale, quod eis non repugnat habere pro aliqua temporis differentia, ita res futurae per hoc attingere dicuntur ad objectum secundarium divinae intelligentiae, quia re vera eam terminant secundum esse reale, quod habebunt pro aliqua certa, & determinata temporis differentia ex decreto divinae voluntatis.” Mastri refers his readers to the explanation of divine cognition of possibles in Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 1, art. 3, n. 36, 98b; regarding the termination of acts of divine cognition, see similarly Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 202, 144b.

³⁵ Mastrius, *Disp. Met.*, disp. 3, q. 1, n. 2 (*Cursus philosophicus* IV), 99b: “[D]efiniri solet ens reale per non repugnantiam ad existendum, per quam non repugnantiam explicari solet realis essentia rerum.” For the motif of non-repugnancy toward being in Mastri’s metaphysics, see Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 251–68 and 450–51.

³⁶ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 200, 144a: “[D]ivinus intellectus, qui ob ejus infinitatem praecurrit temporum differentias, & intuitu suo praevenit rerum existentias, re vera attingit futura in seipsis secundum illud esse realis existentiae, quod habent in certa temporis differentia, perinde ac si forent rei realiter praesentia in aeternitate secundum propriam existentiam.”

³⁷ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 202, 144b: “[D]ivinus intellectus omnia super-grediens tempora praeveniens eorum existentias facit sibi eas objective praesentes in divina essentia post decreta divinae voluntatis.”

³⁸ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 200, 144a: “[Q]uamvis futura ante tale decretum nullam habeant determinatam veritatem, eam tamen habent post tale decretum, & talis veritas

Mastri is confident that Scotus agrees with him regarding the divine cognition of future events in themselves qua secondary objects of the divine intellect.³⁹ But regarding the status of these future events in God's intellect, he finds himself in disagreement with both Angelo Volpe and Filippo Fabri. Volpe argued that the truth about future events cannot be founded on properly real and actual being in God's intellect, for to claim this would be an error of faith: it would imply eternal existence for creatures, something that infringes upon the divine power of both creation and annihilation. Such truth, then, must rather be founded on "virtual being" (*esse virtuale*), that kind of being which future events possess owing to the pertinent efficient decrees of the divine will and which cannot properly be said to belong to the future events in themselves, but rather to the divine essence that virtually contains them.⁴⁰ Thus, according to Volpe, future events are not known by God in themselves at all. Mastri's reply is that this is indeed true, if we speak of the divine intellect's primary object, which is God's own essence; but certainly not if we speak of its secondary objects.⁴¹ Volpe developed his position partly in reaction against Fabri, who had taken a different route: he argued that future things, subsequent to the divine decree, are intelligible and hence must have some kind of being, and since they only have this being in the divine intellect, the kind of being in question must be "being of reason or cognized being" (*ens rationis sive cognitum*).⁴² Volpe replied that since God's foreknowledge is real, it must also terminate in something real. Mastri agrees with this criticism; he objects that this kind of being does not properly belong to the future events themselves, but is rather only an extrinsic denomination imposed on them solely due to their relationship with the divine intellect.⁴³ Volpe's

per modum objecti secundarii fundatur in esse reali, quod habebunt in tali temporis differentia."

³⁹ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 200, 144a.

⁴⁰ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 201, 144b, referencing Angelus Vulpes, *Sacrae theol. summa*, I, vol. 2, disp. 30, art. 10, n. 9, 53b; cf. also *ibid.*, vol. 1, disp. 28, art. 1, n. 4, 417b–18a (where Volpe spells out that the *error in fide* concerns the theological notions of creation and annihilation).

⁴¹ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 200, 144a, and *ibid.*, n. 202, 144b.

⁴² Both Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 201, 144a–b, and Angelus Vulpes, *Sacrae theol. summa*, I, vol. 2, disp. 30, art. 10, n. 9, 53b, refer to Philippus Faber, *Disp. theol.*, I, disp. 54, cap. 4, n. 44, 364b: "Ita dico, hoc esse verum, & intelligibile, quod habent futura contingentia in intellectu divino per decretum divinae voluntatis esse ens rationis, sive cognitum ipsarum rerum futurarum, secundum existentiam." For literature on Fabri's metaphysics, see Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 869–75.

⁴³ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 201, 144b. It should be noted that Fabri actually had an answer to this criticism: the *ens rationis* in question should be understood as something absolute, rather than as something relative; cf. Philippus Faber, *Disp. theol.*, I, disp. 54, cap. 4, n. 44, 364b. This could be what the 'secundum existentiam' in the quote in the previous foot-

virtual being, however, does not do the job either, because it does not properly belong to the future events; their virtual being rather *is* the formal being of the divine essence, their cause.⁴⁴

It is against the backdrop of these competing positions that Mastri stresses the *real* character of future events. Yet, even his discussion of the views held by Volpe and Fabri does not fully solve the riddle of the ontological status of future events in the divine intellect. Since Mastri's whole argument is based on a parallel to God's cognition of possibles, one wonders why he does not resort to his view, expressed in his *Disputations on Metaphysics*, that possible creatures can be said to be "partly real beings, partly beings of reason" (*partim entia realia, partim entia rationis*): as contents of divine cognition they are beings of reason, while as taken in themselves they are real beings and can, exactly for this reason, terminate the acts of divine cognition.⁴⁵ The context of this statement is Mastri's famous debate with John Punch over the ontological status of possibles, the most and best researched aspect of Baroque Scotism. Whereas Punch maintained the view that possibles from all of eternity possess a kind of "diminished" or "intentional being" whose status ranks in the middle inbetween real being and being of reason,⁴⁶ Mastri rather denied that there can be any particular kind of being between real being and being of reason, since these two do not have any univocal

note is alluding to; a few lines later Fabri says that "obiectum determinativum non est solum secunda intentio, & relatio rationis; sed est ens rationis absolutum." Mastri fails to notice this point; possibly, this is because he has studied Fabri's position through Volpe's summary.

⁴⁴ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 201, 144b: "[S]ecundum esse tale nequeunt constitui futura obiectum secundarium divini intellectus, quia per hoc non attingeretur ab eo aliquod esse formale; & proprium ipsorum futurorum, sed tantum esse formale ipsius divinae essentiae." Ironically, Mastri here picks up a tenet from Volpe's own criticism of a Thomist view of God's knowledge of possibles; cf. Angelus Vulpes, *Sacrae theol. summa*, I, vol. 1, disp. 27, art. 4, n. 12, 383a.

⁴⁵ Mastrius, *Disp. Met.*, disp. 8, q. 1, art. 2, n. 21 (*Cursus philosophicus* V), 23b: "[C]reaturae ipsae [...] partim entia realia, partim entia rationis dici possunt, entia quidem realia secundum illud esse, quod a divino intellectu noscitur eis non repugnare; entia vero rationis, prout secundum illud esse substant denominationi cogniti, quia sic considerantur solum, ut habent esse obiectivum in divina mente." For the context of this quote, see Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 262–63.

⁴⁶ Cf. especially Ioannes Poncius, *Integer phil. cursus, Tract. in Met.*, disp. 69, q. 5, n. 52, 903b: "Illud esse, quod habent creaturae ab aeterno, est esse quoddam diminutum, quasi medium inter esse rationis, et esse simpliciter reale. [...] [P]otest autem vocari esse intentionale, quia sufficit ad terminandam intellectionem." For a summary of the debate and references to the comprehensive literature on this aspect of Mastri's thought, see Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 257–68. The debate between Mastri and Punch over the ontological status of possibles has a parallel in early Scotism; cf. the articles by Richard Cross and Francesco Fiorentino in this present volume.

concept in common.⁴⁷ That position does not, however, exclude that possible real beings may be seen as objective content of the divine mind. This seems to be the key also to the status of future events. These may then be seen as real beings when taken in themselves and as the immediate products of the divine will, yet as beings of reason when taken as objects of divine cognition. Mastri's talk of them being "objectively present" (cf. above) in the divine essence owing to their own real future existence seems to support this interpretation, since to have objective being, in Mastri's conception, is exactly to be an object of cognition – which does not, of course, alter anything as regards the reality of the cognized thing itself.⁴⁸ Mastri's corrective thus consists in a differentiation: he does not seem to deny the status of future events as cognitive content in the divine intellect, but rather only insists that this status has a foundation in that real being which eternally pertains to the future events themselves, due to their future state of actual existence as decreed by the divine will. The ontological character of future events taken in themselves is thus one of reality.

3. Infallibility and Necessity of Immutability

Mastri next addresses the obvious problem, how God's knowledge of contingent future events can be certain and infallible, while these per definition are contingent and thus can be otherwise. There would seem to be a manifest incongruence between infallible knowledge and an object that can yield only uncertain and changeable knowledge. Mastri's third assertion is intended to solve this problem. It states that, although contingent future events are intrinsically and essentially indifferent toward becoming or not becoming, an extrinsic cause may very well contingently determine whether they come into being or not.⁴⁹ The contingent events' indetermination, or indifference, in the state of possibility thus does not exclude determination in the state of actual being. The principle that "indetermination in regard to possibility is combinable with determination

⁴⁷ Cf. Mastrius, *Disp. Met.*, disp. 8, q. 1, art. 2, n. 13 (*Cursus philosophicus V*), 21b, and *ibid.*, disp. 2, q. 1, n. 1, (*Cursus philosophicus IV*), 25. For the context of these quotes, see Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 251–52 and 259–60.

⁴⁸ Cf. Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 280–83.

⁴⁹ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 203, 144b: "Tertio, quia dubitari solet, quomodo scientia Dei respectu contingentium dici possit certa, ac infallibilis, cum ejus objectum sit contingens; quod potest aliter se habere, praesertim cum scientiae certitudo, ac infallibilitas ab objecto sumatur, siquidem ab eo, quod res est, vel non est, cognitio dicitur vera vel falsa; notandum est, quod futurum contingens, quamvis ex sua ratione formali, & intrinseca possit esse, & non esse, cum ejus essentia consistat in indifferentia, ac indeterminatione ad fore, & non fore, potest tamen habere determinationem extrinseca a causa libera, & contingenter ponente ipsum in esse."

in regard to actual being” is one Mastri employs and discusses in various contexts.⁵⁰ The principle itself rests on a distinction introduced, as recent scholarship suggests, by the early and rather independent Scotist Francis of Marchia († after 1344) between two kinds of determination, one called ‘de possibili’ and the other ‘de inesse.’ Mastri clearly is unaware of the precise origin of the principle, for he refers to it as some principle commonly employed by “logicians.”⁵¹ In our present context, Mastri uses the principle to strike the right balance between necessity and contingency as regards pre-known future events. He explains:

This determination is certain and infallible, because the free effect, once it is posited outside of the cause, is said to be necessary when it is, though not due to plain necessity, since then it would not be contingent, but rather due to necessity in a certain regard and under the presupposition that it exists – according to that dictum of the Philosopher in *De Int.* I, that “all that is, when it is, necessarily is.” Therefore, since God from eternity knows the contingent event owing to that present and actual being which it has at such and such a time, it is already clear in which way He has an object that is certain, determinate, and infallible.⁵²

⁵⁰ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 203, 144b: “[L]ogici dicunt cum indeterminatione de possibili stare determinationem de inesse.” This same principle is discussed in (the list is likely incomplete) Mastrius / Bellutus, *Disp. Log.*, disp. 10, q. 2, art. 5, nn. 52 and 56 (*Cursus philosophicus* I), 307a–8a; *id.*, *Disp. Phys.*, disp. 14, q. 1, art. 1, n. 6 (*Cursus philosophicus* II), 352b; Mastrius, *Disp. Met.*, disp. 9, q. 4, art. 2, nn. 103 and 106 (*Cursus philosophicus* V), 104a–5a; *id.*, *Sent.* I, disp. 4, q. 4, art. 1, nn. 76–77, 186a; *id.*, *Sent.* I, disp. 5, q. 4, nn. 298–99, 288b. Some of these *loci* have been commented upon in recent scholarship, though without mention of the origin of the underlying distinction; cf. Anfray, “Prescience divine, décrets concomitants et liberté humaine,” 562, (use of this principle in the context of the discussion of contingent propositions in logic), and Heider, *Universals in Second Scholasticism*, 206–7 (use of this principle in the discussion of universals in metaphysics).

⁵¹ Cf. the previous note. For the origin of the principle, see Duba, “The Ontological Repercussions of Francis of Marchia’s Distinction,” here especially 179–80 (with the crucial passage from Marchia’s *Scriptum in I Sententiarum*, dist. 35). Schabel, *Theology at Paris*, 200–1, 209, 211, 218–19, 268, reports the distinction and documents its diffusion in fourteenth-century discussions of foreknowledge; for this distinction in William of Rubione, see also Fiorentino, *Francesco di Meyronnes*, 207. At the time of the Reformation, non-Scotist authors still ascribed the doctrine to Francis of Marchia; cf. Ioannes Eckius [Johannes Eck], *Chrysopassus*, centuria quarta, n. 52, [unpaginated] H2v–3r (Marchia’s doctrine is discussed under the heading *Alia responsio Francisci de Marchia*). Eck refers to his contemporary Konrad Wimpina as his source for Marchia. For Eck’s role in the transmission of knowledge about Scotism among Protestants, see the article by Arthur Huiban in this present volume. The Scotists rather tend to treat this doctrine as common property of their tradition; cf., e.g., Petrus Tataretus, *Sent.* I, dist. 39, qq. 1–5, 347a, and Antonius Trombetta, *Quaest. de divina praescientia*, art. 2, 4rb; like Mastri, these Scotists do not mention Marchia as the author of the distinction.

⁵² Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 203, 144b–45a: “[H]aec autem determinatio est certa, & infallibilis, nam effectus liber semel positus extra causam dicitur necessario esse, quando est, non quidem necessitate simpliciter, alioquin contingens non esset, sed necessitate se-

In order to explain how God can have certain and infallible knowledge of contingent objects, Mastri has recourse to a determination that itself is certain and infallible (Marchia's determination *de inesse*). This determination renders the contingent object certain, infallible, and determinate. It is somewhat surprising to find these attributes on the part of the object, rather than on the part of the knowing subject. Mastri says that "this is the certitude and necessity that recent authors attribute to a future contingent object, insofar as it can be an infallible object of God's foreknowledge."⁵³ But how does the *object* become infallible? Mastri makes this dependent on the *determination*. This determination cannot be too strong, for then it would override the contingency of the object, and God would then not have infallible knowledge of a *contingent* object at all. Yet, without determination, there is no infallibility. As already seen in the above quote, to solve this Mastri resorts to yet another distinction, this time one he knows from Duns Scotus: the distinction between plain necessity and the necessity of immutability. Plain necessity belongs only to objects that cannot be otherwise, and hence is not relevant in our present context. Necessity of immutability rather pertains to the divine will in its workings *ad extra*, that is, "after it has once from eternity determined that something shall come to be."⁵⁴ We already know that it is the decrees of the divine will that give real being to contingent future events. Now we learn that the divine decrees also bestow necessity of immutability on these events. This kind of necessity that is grounded in the divine will's unchangeability does not, on the one hand, override the contingency of the future

cundum quid, & ex suppositione, quod existat, juxta illud Philosophi, omne quod est, quando est, necesse est esse 1. Perihier, cum ergo Deus ab aeterno cognoscat futurum contingens secundum hoc esse praesens, & actuale, quod habet in tali temporis differentia, jam patet, quomodo habeat objectum certum, determinatum, ac infallibile." Cf. Aristotle, *De int.*, ch. 9, 19a23–24.

⁵³ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 203, 145a: "Et haec est certitudo, ac necessitas, quam Recentiores tribuunt futuro contingenti, ut possit esse objectum infallibile praescientiae Dei." Mastri does not specify which recent authors he is thinking of.

⁵⁴ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 203, 145a: "Ex quo sequitur, necessitatem divinae praescientiae, ac etiam futuri contingentis, quod ponitur ejus objectum, non esse necessitatem simpliciter, qualis est ejus objecti, quod impossibile est, aliter se habere ex 1. Post. cap. 2. sed necessitatem immutabilitatis, qualis est necessitas divinae voluntatis ad extra, postquam semel ab aeterno determinavit, aliquid fore." Cf. Aristotle, *Anal. post.*, I, ch. 2, 71b9–16. For this distinction, Mastri refers to Duns Scotus, *Quodl.*, q. 16, n. 7 (ed. Wadding XII), 451–52; Scotus here distinguishes between "necessitas immutabilitatis" and "necessitas omnimodae evitabilitatis sive determinationis"; the terminology used by Mastri is rather found in Duns Scotus, *Ord.* I, dist. 39, qq. 1–5 (ed. Vat. VI), 438, and Duns Scotus, *Rep.* I-A, dist. 39–40, qq. 1–3, n. 25 (ed. Wolter / Bychkov II), 471–72. Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 2, q. 4, art. 1–4, nn. 133–218, 40b–59a, has a long discussion of God's immutability.

events themselves – but it is, on the other hand, sufficient for a termination of divine infallible cognition.⁵⁵

The determination (the one *de inesse*) that bestows extrinsic necessity of immutability on contingent future events expresses the choice of a will; but why must this will be God's will? Mastri argues that a "proximate cause," such as a human will, is not sufficient here, because it is only operative for the period of time when the contingent event enjoys actual existence, whereas God knows the event, in itself and with its own real being, during the (endless) time that precedes the event.⁵⁶ However, although the proximate cause is not sufficient to render the future infallibly knowable, it is not entirely irrelevant either. This becomes clear from Mastri's explanation of the interplay of divine and created causation (note that Mastri here draws upon yet another distinction, the traditional one between a composite and a divided sense of propositions, which in its application here squares with Marchia's distinction):

Hence, recourse is to be had to the extrinsic and absolute decree of the divine will, insofar as the active determination of the proximate cause also virtually accompanies this [decree] due to its virtual inclusion in the divine will. And because this [decree] is immutable and unimpedible, also the future contingent event, under the aspect of something to come, receives such objective certitude that suffices for terminating God's infallible knowledge. For given this decree, the future event cannot not occur, in the composite sense, for a given period of time, even though absolutely and simply speaking it could not occur, if separated from this decree.⁵⁷

55 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 203, 145a: "[U]t igitur scientia Dei libera respectu contingentium sit certa, & infallibilis, opus non est, quod ejus objectum sit necessarium necessitate simpliciter, sed sufficit, quod sit necessarium necessitate immutabilitatis, quale in proposito est futurum contingens, ut a divino decreto dependens; nec ei talis necessitas repugnat, sed sola necessitas simpliciter."

56 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 203, 145a: "Verum quia, ut saepe dictum est, futurum contingens, non tantum attingitur a Deo, ut objective praesens pro tali temporis differentia, sed etiam quatenus futurum pro toto tempore praecedenti talem temporis differentiam, in qua futurum habet esse actuale extra suam causam, assignanda adhuc est causa extrinseca talis determinatae futuritionis, ut & ipsa quoque possit esse objectum certum, ac infallibile divinae cognitionis; & quidem haec esse nequit formalis; & actualis determinatio causae proxima, quia haec non habetur, nisi in ea certa temporis differentia, in qua effectum ponit in esse, & toto tempore praecedenti manet formaliter indeterminata."

57 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 203, 145a: "[I]deo recurrendum est ad decretum extrinsecum, & absolutum divinae voluntatis, quatenus virtualiter ipsum comitatur etiam determinatio activa causae proxima ob continentiam ejus virtualement in divina voluntate, & quia hoc immutabile est, ac inimpedibile, hinc futurum contingens etiam sub ratione futuri sortitur certitudinem objectivam talem, qualis sufficit ad terminandam scientiam Dei infallibilem, nam stante tali decreto non potest futurum non fore in sensu composito pro tali temporis differentia, licet absolute, & simpliciter possit non fore facta praecisione talis decreti." Regarding virtual

It is the divine will that infallibly decrees some future event to occur. It is accompanied by a proximate cause, a human choice of will that itself only is exerted at a certain point in time. Mastri understands this accompaniment in terms of virtual inclusion, that is, the free human act of will is included in the divine act of will that from eternity wills what the human will wills at some point in time. Because of this inclusion, the human choice and its effect are objects of infallible divine cognition. Mastri's explanation of the objective certitude of contingent future events is thus based on Marchia's distinction between two kinds of determination, Scotus's distinction between two kinds of necessity, and the notion of virtual inclusion. With the introduction of this latter motif, we have in fact arrived at Mastri's doctrine of the concomitant decree.

4. Harmony Established – Mastri's Doctrine of the Concomitant Decree

The fourth assertion, as we know, draws the conclusion that there is fine coherence between divine foreknowledge and contingency in the created world, including the contingency that comes with the freedom of our human will.⁵⁸ Mastri, at this place, gives the possibly clearest formulation of his doctrine to be found anywhere in his discussion of this subject; he in particular spells out the role of foreknowledge:

For because God's foreknowledge is not the cause why things shall be in the future, but rather on the contrary – since it is only apprehensive and not determinative of the righteousness of the agents, according to Scotus [...] –, therefore it is not assumed as antecedent to the future state of things, but rather as concomitant or consequent, and therefore it does not simply impose necessity upon things, but rather only in a qualified sense and as a consequence, namely insofar as it is warranted to infer *a posteriori* from the divine foreknowledge and as if from a sign that a thing determinately shall come to be. And likewise, since the decree of the divine will is not antecedent, but rather altogether concomitant with the free determination of our will, therefore it neither overrides our freedom nor imposes any necessity upon it, other than in a qualified sense and as a consequence.⁵⁹

inclusion of the human will in the divine one, see similarly Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 3, n. 108, 120b; cf. further Leinsle, *Introduction to Scholastic Theology*, 333.

⁵⁸ Cf. note 23.

⁵⁹ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a: “[Q]uia enim praescientia Dei non est causa, quod res sint futurae, sed potius e contra cum sit tantum apprehensiva rectitudinis agendorum, non autem determinativa ex Scoto 1. d. 38. ad 1. prin. ideo ejus suppositio non est antecedens rerum futuritionem, sed concomitans, vel consequens, ideo rebus necessitatem simpliciter non imponit, sed tantum secundum quid, & consequentiae, quatenus ex divina praescientia valet a posteriori inferre, & velut a signo rem esse determinate futuram. Et pariter,

Mastri's overall message is clear enough: neither divine cognition nor divine volition imposes any plain necessity on contingent future events, and therefore they do not endanger human freedom. Some aspects, though, deserve to be highlighted. We learn that foreknowledge is *not* antecedent to some future event; it is not properly *foreknowledge* at all. It is rather concomitant with or consequent upon future events, because these have already, from eternity, been decreed. The formulation "concomitant with or consequent upon" is somewhat surprising, since it would seem to make a difference whether foreknowledge accompanies or rather follows upon future events (or rather, their determination). It would seem that Mastri thinks that foreknowledge follows upon the determination of the future events, for else his talk of an *a posteriori* inference from foreknowledge to its content (future events) would not make much sense. As for divine volition, we learn that it is "altogether concomitant" with the determination of our own will. Whereas divine volition is strictly simultaneous with human will, divine cognition is slightly slower, as it were, and this is due to its dependence on the decrees of the divine will.

This rather counterintuitive *a posteriori* character of divine foreknowledge occasions an objection, clearly one of Thomist provenance, according to which foreknowledge, and indeed also divine decrees, must be altogether antecedent to the events foreseen and decreed, including human free actions.⁶⁰ Mastri's reply is that theologians do not, generally, understand antecedent necessity as that which precedes in a temporal sense, but rather that which precedes under the aspect of causation in the divine cognition, "and in this sense," Mastri says, "neither foreknowledge nor the divine decree precedes my will today or tomorrow."⁶¹ Foreknowledge rather presupposes that which shall come to be as its "proper object" (*proprium obiectum*); it does not *make* that which shall come to be.⁶² As for the divine decree, it does not belong to what is necessary for carrying out an action, but rather only to what is concomitant to the action. This is not because the

quoniam decretum divinae voluntatis non est antecedens, sed omnino concomitans liberam nostrae voluntatis determinationem, ideo nec ipsa nostram libertatem tollit, nec necessitatem imponit, nisi secundum quid, & consequentiae." Cf. Duns Scotus, *Ord.* I, dist. 38, q. unica, n. 11 (ed. Vat. VI), 308; Scotus does not here speak of a determinative, but rather of a *directive* habitus. The metaphor of the sign has a basis in Boethius, *Philosophiae consolatio*, V, prose 4.11, 95–96; a few lines later, Mastri explicitly refers to Boethius.

⁶⁰ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a; cf. the description of the Thomist position in *ibid.*, art. 8, n. 168, 135b, as quoted in note 4.

⁶¹ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a: "Resp. negando assumptum cum ejus probatione, non enim apud Theologos dicitur suppositio, aut necessitas antecedens, quae simpliciter antecedit ordine durationis, & aeternitatis ad tempus; sed quae antecedit in ratione causae in divina cognitione, in hoc autem sensu neque praesentia, neque divinum decretum praecedat volitionem meam hodiernam, vel crastinam."

⁶² Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a.

decree of the divine will does not make that which shall come to be, but it is rather the case that it makes it from eternity “simultaneous, at least virtually, with free will” (*simul saltem virtualiter cum libero arbitrio*); together, the two of them bring it about in time, “in simultaneous concourse” (*concurso simultaneo*).⁶³ Mastri’s reply confirms that, whereas the decree is simultaneous with the actions of our free will, foreknowledge rather presupposes the product of the human and divine wills’ joint effort. Additionally, it is now clear that the relationship between God’s foreknowledge and the decrees of His will should be understood in terms of dependence rather than in temporal categories, which are only relevant in connection to the actual exertion of those contingent events which are our actions. The temporal dimension enters only owing to human will.

A new problem arises: if God’s decrees and foreknowledge are simultaneous with, or even, as in the case of foreknowledge, consequent upon the use of human free will, would it then not lie “in our power” (*in nostra potestate*) to change both God’s foreknowledge and the divine decrees?⁶⁴ Mastri replies that it is certainly not the case that we can make invalid what God has once decreed, such that God would not know what He has once decreed, but rather the opposite.⁶⁵ There may, however, be another way of putting the issue so that it is not about us humans changing what God has decreed, but rather about God adapting, at the outset, His decree to the free choices of human will:

In another way, insofar as nothing determines what shall come to be through us, unless it, with us, at least virtually and by pre-established law, accommodates itself to free causes and thus allows them to carry out their movements. And nothing determinately foreknows what shall come to be through us, except after the absolute determination of His own will, which also virtually includes the free determination of our will; and in this sense one can say correctly that both the divine decrees and divine foreknowledge are founded in our power, from which, however, it does not follow that we can change or

⁶³ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a. The simultaneity is also emphasized in Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 167, 135b, where he speaks of God’s “co-determination” together with the created will: “[N]on determinet voluntatem meam hoc volituram, sed cum voluntate mea condeterminet hoc volendum fore.” Note that Forlivesi, “The Creator’s Decrees,” 215, warns his reader not to understand the concomitance in question in terms of “collaboration or simultaneousness between the decrees of God’s will and the choices made by the created will,” but rather as “the fact that none of them [...] precedes the other as a cause of the acts of the latter.” Given Mastri’s explicit talk of “simultaneous concourse” and “codetermination,” it would seem more adequate to me to understand the *simultaneousness* and the *collaboration* in question not in temporal or causal terms, but rather only in terms of virtual inclusion. Anfray, “Prescience divine, décrets concomitants et liberté humaine,” 591–92, aptly calls the coherence described by Mastri a “preestablished harmony.”

⁶⁴ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a.

⁶⁵ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a.

impede them, but rather only that if we, at some time, would want differently than we shall be wanting, then He would also determine this differently with us from eternity, and He would foreknow it differently.⁶⁶

Only after God has issued His decree, it becomes unchangeable and established law; it is, however, at the outset accommodating of, and virtually including, human free choices, so that whatever we may, with our own free will, choose to do, this will be exactly what God both decrees and foreknows. Human freedom is at the outset and from eternity encapsulated into divine law, which then in a sense is dependent upon and indeed *changeable* according to our choices. Mastri's example: if I shall be reading tomorrow, then this has been decreed by God; but that He has decreed and known my reading from eternity stems from my own free will. I shall thus be reading freely, "as if there were no foregoing decree or foreknowledge regarding my reading tomorrow"; "all of this," both my reading and whatever part God has in it, "is made dependently upon my will."⁶⁷ The example confirms and illustrates what Mastri said just a little earlier, namely that the decree and the foreknowledge do not belong to what is necessary for carrying out some action, in this case my reading. Despite Mastri admitting that my reading tomorrow takes place only "as if" (*ac si*) God had no part in it, in his understanding, genuinely practical (*in exercitio*) human freedom of will is a fact.⁶⁸

66 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a: "[A]lio modo, quatenus nihil determinat a nobis futurum, nisi nobiscum saltem virtualiter ex lege jam statuta se se accomodandi causis liberis, ut eas suos motus agere sinat, & nihil determinate praescit futurum a nobis, nisi post absolutam determinationem suae voluntatis, etiam involentem virtualiter determinationem liberam voluntatis nostrae, & in hoc sensu recte dici possunt, tam divina decreta, quam praescientia divina in potestate nostra constituta, ex quo tamen non sequitur, nos posse illa mutare, aut impedire, sed tantum quod si aliter nos voluissimus in tempore ab eo, quod sumus volituri, aliter etiam ipse nobiscum determinasset ab aeterno, & aliter praescivisset." Cf. similarly Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 206, 145b ("talis determinatio fuerit ab aeterno in nostra potestate, [...] ut poneretur, vel non poneretur").

67 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145a.

68 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 204, 145b: "[L]ibere legam, ac si nullum praecessisset decretum, vel praescientia de mea crastina lectione, quia hoc totum factum est dependenter a voluntate mea." This genuinely practical nature of human freedom is emphasized vis-à-vis the charge levelled by the Augustinian theologian Gabrielle Pennotti (1574–1639), a member of the Roman Curia, in his *Propugnaculum*, IV, cap. 23, n. 8, 233a, as quoted in Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 10, n. 205, 145b, that all previous efforts at reconciling human freedom with divine foreknowledge have failed to prove that the human will is indeed free *in exercitio*. Forlivesi, "The Creator's Decrees," 216, directs a similar charge against Mastri's own solution: "[D]espite Mastri's opposing claims, every particular possible free will and 'its' choices plainly appear to be nothing but aspects of God's will." The critical point may come down to the question of whether the virtual inclusion of human will in the divine will renders the former a mere aspect of the latter; to claim that this is the case does not seem to me to adequately take

5. God's Free Conditional Knowledge

Mastri offers his doctrine of the concomitant decree as a Scotist alternative to the two predominant approaches to the problem of divine foreknowledge in the Catholic scholasticism of his time. That Mastri rejects the Thomist approach of Domingo Báñez is not so surprising, given that it rests on an assumption of antecedent and predetermining decrees. On this model, according to Mastri, God first decides what the created will is going to will, and then afterwards, through subordination of the second causes to the first cause, the created will wills just this.⁶⁹ Mastri rather seems to find competition in the Jesuit approach of Luis de Molina, acknowledging that this model indeed does operate with “absolute concomitant decrees,” albeit understood in a different way than on the Scotist account and not intended as a solution to the problem of divine cognition of future events, which is rather the task of the so-called “middle knowledge” (*scientia media*). Mastri describes this middle knowledge as that knowledge with which God, on the Jesuit account, “knows, before any decree, be it absolute or conditional, what the created will determinatively is going to do, if it is placed in such and such circumstances and concurrence on the part of God is not denied.”⁷⁰ Con-

into consideration Mastri's view that human free decisions may in a certain way indeed change God's will and foreknowledge.

⁶⁹ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 166, 135b. This is how Mastri summarizes the doctrine of the recent Thomists (as opposed to the older Thomists in the wake of Cajetan); he has a long and nuanced discussion of the versions and aspects of this doctrine in *ibid.*, art. 4, nn. 141–65, 129a–35a. For Báñez's doctrine, see Matava, *Divine Causality and Human Free Choice*, 37–101; for the further development of the Thomist doctrine of *praedeterminatio physica*, see Leinsle, *Introduction to Scholastic Theology*, 342–46, and Marschler, “Providence, Predestination, and Grace,” 93–96, both with references to further literature.

⁷⁰ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 166, 135b: “Neutrales quoque decreta concomitantia admittunt absoluta respectu absolute futurorum, non tamen eo modo explicant hanc concomitantiam, sicut Scotistae; neque decretum concomitans volunt, esse rationem primam, & adaequatam cognoscendi futura, sed hanc vim habere a scientia media; qua divinus intellectus ante quodcunque decretum sive absolutum, sive conditionatum cognoscit, quid sit factura determinative creata voluntas, si cum his, vel illis circumstantiis poneretur, & concursus ex parte Dei non negaretur.” Mastri's description roughly squares with the introduction of “middle knowledge” as an explanation of God's conditional knowledge of human actions in Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, disp. 52, n. 9, 340. Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 3, n. 228, 151b, reports that Molina is often regarded as the inventor of the doctrine of middle knowledge, though some people believe that the doctrine really originated with Molina's teacher Fonseca. It should be noted that neither of authors occupy any special place in Mastri's discussion, which rather tends to draw on more contemporaneous authors. For the development of the doctrine of middle knowledge in the seventeenth century, see Knebel, *Scientia Media*, 27–129. There has been some discussion of the way in which Scotus's teaching on foreknowledge relates to Molina's conception of middle knowledge; cf. Frost, “John Duns Scotus on God's Knowledge of Sins,”

comitance here, according to Mastri, means that the divine decrees presuppose the decrees of the human will as these are viewed in the divine hypothetical or conditional knowledge (*divina scientia ex hypothesisi*) of what a human will under any given circumstances shall choose to do. The absolute divine decrees concerning the actions of the created will then follow upon God's conditional knowledge of them. That is, God does not make an absolute decision about some person's future actions prior to God's knowledge of what that person would do under such and such circumstances. On this model, therefore, the divine decrees should strictly speaking rather be called 'consequent' than 'concomitant,' Mastri concludes.⁷¹

This issue of whether the divine decrees follow upon or rather precede God's conditional knowledge of free agents is crucial. Whereas, as professed by Mastri, there is consensus among the scholastic schools that God has infallible knowledge of conditional future events,⁷² he identifies the issue of the order among the decrees of the divine will and the divine conditional knowledge as the main point of contention "between us and the Fathers of the Society," i.e., the Jesuits.⁷³ God's knowledge of conditional future events, according to Mastri (who also in this assessment agrees with contemporaneous Jesuits and Thomists alike), never really was an issue for the "old scholastics" (*veteres scholastici*).⁷⁴ In order to countersteer effectively the Jesuit doctrine of middle knowledge that centers on this kind of knowledge, and indeed to demonstrate the timely relevance of Scotist theology, Mastri must show how the results from his discussion of absolute future events translate into conditional language. This is basically what he sets out to do in the last part (the fourth *quaestio*) of his *Disputation on the Divine Intellect*.⁷⁵

28–29, and most recently Anfray, "Molina and John Duns Scotus" (with references to further literature).

⁷¹ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 8, n. 166, 135b.

⁷² Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 1, n. 208, 146a. The scholastic consensus on this issue is confirmed by Knebel, *Scientia Media*, 28–29.

⁷³ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 3, n. 227, 151a: "Hic est praecipuus punctus propositae quaestionis de scientia futurorum conditionatorum inter nos, & Patres Societatis." Cf. similarly *ibid.*, art. 5, n. 282, 163a.

⁷⁴ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 5, n. 283, 163b. Cf. Hieronymus Fasolus (a Jesuit defender of middle knowledge), *In primam partem*, vol. 1, q. 14, art. 13, dub. 20, n. 483, 276a, and Ioannes Paulus Nazarius (a Thomist critic of the Jesuit doctrine), *In primam partem*, q. 14, art. 13, controv. 2, 469a; Mastri references both of these authors in the relevant context.

⁷⁵ Note that Mastri already has a lengthy section on the concept of 'middle knowledge' within his *quaestio* on God's absolute knowledge of contingent future events; cf. Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 3, art. 4, 120b, heading: "An scientia media Neutralium sit sufficiens, & prima ratio ad habendam certam notitiam eventus liberi." In Baroque Scotist theological literature, discussions of conditional knowledge as such are often treated as a supplement to the

God only knows conditional future events *after* the conditional decrees of His will, because these decrees bestow a determined conditional truth on the conditional future events, for which it suffices that these events *follow* from some condition.⁷⁶ This formulation is a conditional rendition of Mastri's view of the divine will as the medium of divine foreknowledge and as the determining factor that enables God's infallible knowledge of future events, despite their contingent character (cf. above chapters 1 and 3). It forms the basis for Mastri's position regarding the issue of whether God's conditional knowledge is natural or free, or perhaps instead can be said to constitute a third kind of knowledge that is to be located in the middle between the two others. Mastri does acknowledge the possibility of making room, on a purely terminological level, for a third kind of knowledge between God's knowledge of possibles (traditionally called 'scientia simplicis intelligentiae') and His knowledge of what shall actually come to be ('scientia visionis'). Since the objects of conditional knowledge, future conditionals, ontologically stand between possibles and future absolutes, conditional knowledge itself may indeed be granted a middle position (although, even here, God's conditional knowledge then would be closer, even reducible, to His knowledge of possibles, since future conditionals are more akin to possibles than to future absolutes).⁷⁷ But if the problem is treated as a real one, rather than just

discussion of absolute divine foreknowledge; this is indeed what we find in the final part of Mastri's *Disputation on the Divine Intellect*.

76 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 3, n. 231, 152a: "Vera itaque, ac germana Scoti sententia est Deum futura conditionata libera non cognoscere in ratione futurorum, nisi post decreta conditionata, a qua determinatam accipiunt veritatem conditionatam, secundum quam actum divini intellectus terminate possunt" (note that one would expect 'a quibus' rather than 'a qua'). Cf. further Mastri's discussion of conditional truth in *ibid.*, art. 1, n. 216, 148a ("ut enim aliqua propositio dicatur vere conditionalis, sufficit quod consequens aliquo modo sequatur ex antecedenti"), where he refers back to the discussion of conditional propositions in Mastrius / Bellutus, *Dial. inst.*, pars 1, tract. 2, cap. 6, n. 64 (*Cursus philosophicus* I), 20a. See also Leinsle, *Introduction to Scholastic Theology*, 334.

77 Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 5, n. 287, 164b; cf. similarly *ibid.*, n. 284, 163b. Mastrius, *ibid.*, n. 279, 162b, following Hieronymus Fasolus, *In primam partem*, vol. 1, q. 14, art. 13, dub. 20, n. 480, 275a, informs us that most Jesuits agreed that God's conditional knowledge is not a wholly distinct kind of knowledge, but rather one that is a part of His knowledge of possibles. Mastri stresses that the Thomist critique is wrong that holds that the Jesuits have invented a new kind of divine knowledge that cannot be reduced to the members of the traditional division. The terminology of 'scientia simplicis intelligentiae' and 'scientia visionis' is frequently employed by Mastri; cf. Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 1, n. 1, 91a (at the very outset of the *Disputation on the Divine Intellect*), and *ibid.*, q. 3, art. 10, n. 198, 144a, as quoted in note 31. As for the distinction between a real and a purely terminological aspect of the problematic concerning the status of God's conditional knowledge, see Mastrius, *ibid.*, q. 4, art. 5, n. 282, 163a (where he describes the problem as being "de solo nomine, ac etiam aliquo modo de re"; cf. similarly *ibid.*, n. 284, 163b, and n. 287, 164b. Regarding this distinction, Mastri draws

as one concerning traditional terminology, something else decides the matter, namely whether God's conditional knowledge is free, or not – for the principle of the excluded middle (*inter contradictoria nullum datur medium*) excludes any middle between free and non-free knowledge.⁷⁸

Mastri's argument favors God's conditional knowledge as an aspect of His knowledge of contingent future events. It thus prompts a distinction on the part of divine free knowledge between God's "free absolute knowledge" and His "free conditional knowledge." These two kinds of free knowledge have in common that they follow upon decrees of the divine will; they differ from one another in that the first one follows upon absolute decrees, whereas the second one follows upon conditional decrees.⁷⁹ In Mastri's discussion of future absolutes, we learn that they, in themselves, possess some real being owing to their future state of actual existence (cf. above chapter 2). For a successful analogy between free absolute knowledge and free conditional knowledge, one would expect that future conditionals likewise have some kind of real being, despite their status as conditionals. What is their ontological status? Mastri briefly states that future conditionals do indeed possess "some proportional actuality in themselves and outside of their causes."⁸⁰ Notably, this position on the status of the objects of God's free

(again) on Hieronymus Fasolus, *In primam partem*, vol. 1, q. 14, art. 13, dub. 20, n. 501, 285b, as quoted by Knebel, *Scientia Media*, 27. The differentiation between a terminological aspect of this issue and the thing itself was common among Baroque Scotists; cf., e.g., Gaspare Sghemma, *Scoticum opusculum*, q. 2, 6b, and Ioannes Poncius, *Integer theol. cursus*, I, disp. 5, q. 7, nn. 34–35, 81b.

⁷⁸ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 5, n. 284, 163b. Sebastian Dupasquier, *Summa theol. scotisticae*, I, disp. 8, q. 7, concl. 2, 592, follows Mastri's approach to the *de re* aspect of the issue and explicitly refuses to discuss whether one can speak of 'middle' knowledge in any other sense ("an alio sensu dicitur media, non curamus"). Crescentius Krisper, *Theol. scholae scotisticae*, I, tract. 1, dist. 14, q. 4, n. 10, 232a, rather accepts the whole of Mastri's differentiated argument. Mastri's option that God's conditional knowledge enjoys the status of free knowledge is in line with Angelus Vulpes, *Sacrae theol. summa*, I, vol. 2, disp. 31, art. 3, n. 5, 76b. Philippus Faber, *Disp. theol.*, I, disp. 54, cap. 5, n. 51, 365b, rather teaches that God's conditional knowledge belongs under His knowledge of simple intelligence. This also seems to be the position of the French Scotist Claude Frassen; cf. Dvořák, "Frassenova třetí cesta," 110. The positions of both Volpe and Fabri are referenced by Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 5, n. 284, 163a.

⁷⁹ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 5, n. 284, 163b: "[S]cientia visionis coincidit cum scientia libera, quae subsequitur decreta divinae voluntatis; & quae subsequitur decreta conditionata, & non ultima, dicitur scientia libera conditionata, quae vero subsequitur decreta absoluta, & ultima, dicitur scientia libera absoluta; sed inter scientiam naturalem, & liberam in hoc sensu, non datur medium."

⁸⁰ Mastrius, *Sent.* I, disp. 3, q. 4, art. 5, n. 285, 164a: "Potest etiam ulterius dici, etiam creaturas, ut actu futuras sub conditione, habere sub conditione aliquam actualitatem in seipsis extra causas sibi proportionatam."

conditional knowledge may be seen as a coherent extension of Mastri's stance on the ontological status of possible creatures that, from eternity, possess real possible being, rather than occupying a middle position between real being and being of reason, and despite being describable also as objects of the divine intellect. Mastri's reflections on conditional knowledge and its objects thus draw upon and contribute to his overall Scotist ontology, with its focus on real being and its exact nuances, an endeavor that may be summed up in the insight that "not everything that exists in reality, exists in the same way."⁸¹

Conclusion

The main theses of Mastri's doctrine of divine knowledge of future events are: 1) God knows future events through His decrees; they are the medium of His cognition of future events, and they are included in the divine essence. 2) Future events are, in themselves, secondary objects of God's knowledge; their ontological status is real, owing to their future state of real existence. 3) Despite their contingent character, future events are known infallibly by God due to the extrinsic determination which His own will bestows on them. 4) There is a perfect coherence between God's infallible knowledge of contingent future events and free choices of created wills; this coherence is guarded by the relation of concomitance that holds between the decrees of the divine will and those of the human will.

Mastri intends his Scotist doctrine of the concomitant decree as a viable alternative to the two competing school doctrines of divine foreknowledge that dominated Catholic theology in the decades around 1600: the Thomist doctrine of antecedent decrees (also called the doctrine of physical predetermination), and the Jesuit doctrine of middle knowledge. The latter is founded in a view of God's knowledge of conditionals as being prior to God's free decrees regarding future events. According to Mastri, there is no genuine middle knowledge, but rather knowledge that is either natural or free. All of God's knowledge of future events is posterior to His free decrees, including His knowledge of future conditionals. Like future absolutes, future conditionals have their own real being.

Out of this emerges a seemingly coherent theory of divine cognition running throughout Mastri's reflections on God's knowledge of possible creatures and of contingent future events, both the absolute and conditional ones. The latter are free actions of creatures. Mastri's Baroque version of Scotism thus includes a comprehensive defense of the reality of human freedom. His theology of

⁸¹ Mastrius, *Disp. Met.*, disp. 6, q. 7, art. 3, n. 166 (*Cursus philosophicus IV*), 277b: "[N]on quicquid a parte rei existit, eodem modo existit"; for the context of this quote, see Andersen, *Metaphysik im Barockscotismus*, 669.

freedom clearly belongs under the most sophisticated doctrines in that spectrum of positions that, at the opposite end of the spectrum, has Martin Luther famously dismissing the very notion of ‘free will.’⁸²

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⁸² Luther, *De servo arbitrio*, 615. This clear opposition is not representative for the relationship between Scotism and Reformation theology; cf. the contributions by Ueli Zahnd and Arthur Huiban to this present volume.

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