Introduction

Is moral wrongdoing ever genuinely unavoidable? That is, will anyone ever experience real conflicting obligations at a given moment and thereby be compelled to act wrongly? This study considers several medieval theorists who dealt with the question of whether moral dilemmas are part of the moral life. As it is often assumed that serious theorizing about moral dilemmas was first achieved in modern philosophy, only to be refined further by contemporary thinkers, this book analyzes a rather neglected part of the history of Western ethical thought. The common view assumes that during the medieval period all moral theorists adhered to the maxim "ought implies can." In contrast to that view, this book identifies medieval adherents to "ought but cannot." Several medieval thinkers not only wrestled with the problem of reconciling the experience of moral conflict with the widespread assumption that no one should ever be forced to do wrong, but they also propounded their solutions with a level of sophistication that may be surprising to present-day philosophers. In light of these overlooked medieval contributions, the history of moral dilemma theory must be re-written. This book discloses that much of what seems particular to twentieth-century moral theorizing was quite well known long ago.

The present volume offers a sampling of these medieval debates, with particular attention to the diversity of examples of moral dilemmas central to those discussions. Many of them are surprisingly vivid, extraordinary, and at times quite shocking. As shall be seen in the chapters that follow, collectively they depict an exotic cast of agents oftentimes in unusual circumstances. While it should be expected from medieval thinkers that we hear of situations involving monks, priests, and heretics, we also hear of murderers, adulterers, thieves, and lovers (some of whom are monks, priests, and heretics). These moral dilemmas involve a full range of human activities: sex, commerce, friendship, promises, political maneuvering, crimes, secrets, and religious observances. We hear of curious unwitting individuals tricked by powerful demons, as well as everyday individuals whose

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consciences issue contradictory commands. Since these cases were proposed by some of the best teachers of philosophy and theology in the Middle Ages, undoubtedly a pedagogical concern accounts for many of the more unusual examples, as students often take a greater interest in entertaining and memorable situations. Some of these cases even developed a quasi-canonical status in the Middle Ages, becoming stock examples revisited by later generations of medieval theorists.

The strongest defenders of moral dilemmas in the medieval period tethered their arguments to an ancient moral principle: that of the lesser evil. While the principle of the lesser evil was understood in a variety of ways, it was generally invoked to counsel individuals caught in moral dilemmas to strive to minimize wrongdoing when its complete avoidance is impossible. Even though the principle of the lesser evil is proverbial today and appeals to it are not difficult to find in politics and in law, its long ancestry is not well known. In the medieval period, the history of appeals to the principle of the lesser evil is inseparable from the history of moral dilemma theory.

That this book could be written will be a surprise in some quarters of philosophy, as historians of the discipline have too often assumed that the medieval period has little to offer on the question of moral dilemmas. The present volume attempts to overturn this prevalent assumption. Plato's brief but well-known mention of a moral dilemma in the *Republic* – featuring an agent who wonders whether he should fulfill a promise to return a weapon to an owner who has suddenly become insane – is largely regarded as the beginning of the history of moral dilemma theory. This history then traditionally continues with Immanuel Kant's succinct denial that a strict conflict of duties is possible, followed thereafter by John Stuart Mill's contention that all moral dilemmas can be solved simply by appealing to the notion of utility.[1] While at times this leap from ancient Greek philosophy to the modern period is shortened with a passing footnote to Thomas Aquinas, it is generally assumed that medieval thinkers were not concerned with the issue of moral dilemmas in any substantive way, if at all.[2] The high point of the history of moral dilemma theorizing is usually

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[1] These classic texts are: Plato, *Republic* 1, 331e–332a; Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 16: "a *collision of duties* and obligations is inconceivable (*obligationes non colliduntur*)"; John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, in *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. J. M. Robson, 33 vols. (University of Toronto Press), x: 226: "If utility is the ultimate source of moral obligations, utility may be invoked to decide between them when their demands are incompatible."

[2] For an overview, see Christopher W. Gowans, "The Debate on Moral Dilemmas," in *Moral Dilemmas*, ed. Christopher W. Gowans (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 3–33, esp. 4–12, and

considered to be the latter half of the twentieth century, when the topic becomes one of the key issues of the period's philosophical ethics.[3] It can be said that the medieval period either gets a footnote (at best) or is entirely ignored (at worst) in the history of moral dilemma theory. The present work challenges that history.

DEFINING MORAL DILEMMAS

The procedure of this book is historical and exegetical, yet it seeks to consider moral dilemmas in terms that are consistent with contemporary philosophical discussions. To this end, the notion of a moral dilemma assumed throughout is the following:

A moral dilemma is any situation in which an agent cannot fulfill all genuine impending moral obligations.

This definition is intentionally general to cover all situations in which, whatever one does, one will commit a moral wrong. More specifically, it applies to at least two classes of moral conflict examined by contemporary theorists.[4] The first consists of situations where an agent is obliged to perform more than one action, can perform each one singly, but cannot perform all of them jointly. In these cases, an agent is bound to perform actions {*a*, *b*, *c* . . . } but due to some accidental feature of the world cannot do all of them, as the performance of one obligatory action precludes the performance of at least one of the remaining obligatory actions. An agent experiencing such a situation might say, "I should do *a*, I should do *b*, and I should do *c*, but I cannot do all of them together." As the simultaneous performance of all the obligatory actions is impossible, the agent is thereby judged to be in a moral dilemma. By extending the term *dilemma* to

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P. S. Greenspan, *Practical Guilt: Moral Dilemmas, Emotions, and Social Norms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 11–23.

[3] After Gowans's *Moral Dilemmas*, a second anthology of contemporary articles is *Moral Dilemmas and Moral Theory*, ed. H. E. Mason (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). Significant monographs on the problem of moral dilemmas include: Daniel Statman, *Moral Dilemmas* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995); Christopher W. Gowans, *Innocence Lost: An Examination of Inescapable Moral Wrongdoing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, *Moral Dilemmas* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988); Edmund N. Santurri, *Perplexity in the Moral Life: Philosophical and Theological Considerations* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1987). See also Daniel McInerny, *The Difficult Good: A Thomistic Approach to Moral Conflict and Human Happiness* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006).

[4] For the distinction between these two types of moral dilemma, see Bernard Williams, "Ethical Consistency," in *Problems of the Self: Philosophical Papers 1956–1972* (Cambridge University Press, 1973), 166–86, at 171.

cover these situations where more than two jointly unfulfillable obligations impend for an agent, this book follows contemporary theorists who have used the term beyond its etymological sense of a *double-proposition*. In the analyses that follow, the term *dilemma* will be used in this wider sense, rather than using *trilemma*, *tetralemma*, or similar terms to refer to situations where an agent encounters several obligations that cannot be simultaneously fulfilled.[5]

The second class of moral conflict covered by the aforementioned definition consists of situations where an agent is simultaneously obliged to perform an action and not perform that very action.[6] In such situations, an agent discovers equally compelling moral reasons to perform and to desist from an action, and these compelling moral reasons cannot be voided. Most of the medieval theorists treated in this volume examine situations falling under this second kind of moral conflict, as they often consider moral dilemmas to be a set of contradictories, where an act and its omission are simultaneously obligatory. In these cases, an agent fails by acting or not acting, since at least one prong of the dilemma will not be fulfilled with the selection of the other prong. The notion of moral dilemma adopted here accounts for such moral dilemmas composed of contradictory prongs, as well as situations where an agent is subject to

[5] Some philosophers define moral dilemmas in a way that offers the possibility of more than two obligations in conflict. See, for instance, Thomas Nagel, "The Fragmentation of Value," in *Mortal Questions* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), 128–41, at 128: "The strongest cases of conflict are genuine dilemmas, where there is decisive support for two or more incompatible courses of action or inaction"; Greenspan, *Practical Guilt*, 9: "cases in which all of the agent's alternatives, through no fault of his own, turn out to be morally wrong"; and Santurri, *Perplexity in the Moral Life*, 2: "a moral dilemma is a situation in which it actually *is* the case (rather than merely *seems* to be the case) that a moral transgression is unavoidable." Other theorists offer definitions that highlight situations consisting of simply two prongs. Consider Terrance C. McConnell, "Moral Residue and Dilemmas," in *Moral Dilemmas and Moral Theory*, 36–47, at 36: "A moral dilemma is a situation in which each of two things ought to be done but both cannot be done"; Ruth Barcan Marcus, "Moral Dilemmas and Consistency," *The Journal of Philosophy* 77 (1980), 121–36, at 122: "In the one-person case there are principles in accordance with which one ought to do x and one ought to do y, where doing y requires that one refrain from doing x"; and Earl Conee, "Why Moral Dilemmas are Impossible," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 26 (1989), 133–41, at 134: "There is a moral dilemma just if someone morally ought to take each of two incompatible alternatives . . . This is the sort of moral dilemma that philosophers have argued about."

[6] Many contemporary theorists frame their discussions with this type of moral dilemma in mind. See, for instance, E. J. Lemmon, "Moral Dilemmas," *The Philosophical Review* 70 (1962), 139–58, at 148: "My third class of moral situation constitutes what I take to be the simplest variety of moral dilemma in the full sense. The characterization of this class is as follows: a man ought to do something and ought not to do that thing." See also Alan Donagan, "Moral Dilemmas, Genuine and Spurious: A Comparative Anatomy," *Ethics* 104 (1993), 7–21, at 9: "Given what morality is, what would a moral dilemma be, if there were such a thing? A common answer – indeed the one that immediately comes to mind – is that it would be a situation in which, according to the true principles of morality, a moral agent was obliged both to perform an action of a specified kind, and not to perform it."

a greater number of impending obligations that cannot be consistently fulfilled.[7]

The number of philosophers and theologians of the medieval period who discussed situations satisfying this general definition of moral dilemma is large, so some selection has been necessary for a volume of this sort. In one way it would be premature to attempt a comprehensive history of moral dilemma theory of the Middle Ages, since the writings of a great number of canonists, philosophers, and theologians are not yet available in critical editions. Even though the account given here is far from exhaustive, it seeks to be representative of the medieval period, as the principal figures covered in this book satisfy several criteria. They each: (1) are presently recognized as major figures in the history of medieval philosophy, theology, or canon law; (2) have theorized with a view to what their predecessors have said on the subject; (3) have expanded what they have received from their predecessors in a significant or noteworthy way; and finally, (4) represent a major school of the period (e.g., Dominican, Franciscan, Thomistic). What follows, therefore, can be viewed as a set of snapshots of select medieval thinkers who epitomize moral dilemma theorizing during the medieval period. While not a comprehensive history, the chapters that follow can be viewed collectively as an argument to establish the neglected medieval period in its rightful place in the history of moral dilemma theory.

Even though this work looks to an earlier time for theorizing on a subject of great interest to contemporary philosophers, it attempts to avoid the anachronistic pitfall of projecting present-day assumptions onto the medieval period. This concern is particularly important given that the very project of assembling a history of medieval philosophy has fallen under scrutiny in recent years, as some have alleged that current philosophical categories do not necessarily best explain how medieval thinkers viewed their

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7 Some theorists also have general definitions broad enough to include both kinds of moral dilemmas. See Earl Conee, "Against Moral Dilemmas," *The Philosophical Review* 91 (1982), 87–97, at 87: "Call an agent's predicament a 'moral dilemma' just when the agent cannot do everything that it is morally obligatory for him to do in the situation, though he can carry out each obligation"; Christopher W. Gowans, "The Debate on Moral Dilemmas," in *Moral Dilemmas*, ed. Gowans, 3–33, at 3: "A moral dilemma is a situation in which an agent *S* morally ought to do *A* and morally ought to do *B* but cannot do both, either because *B* is just not-doing-*A* or because some contingent feature of the world prevents doing both." Also notable is the definition offered by Daniel Statman, *Moral Dilemmas* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995), 16: "We are speaking of a situation in which the agent must choose between two courses of action, A and B, and the following conditions obtain: 1. The agent ought to do A and also ought to do B. 2. A and B are incompatible in this situation. 3. Both A and B involve doing evil. 4. The evil is serious, 'dramatic.' 5. No moral consideration allows us to say that one of the options overrides the other. 6. The agent knows conditions 1–5." Statman does not preclude the possibility that A and B could be contradictories.

own projects.[8] Medieval theorists possessed their own set of assumptions, and their conceptions of the boundaries of particular intellectual disciplines (including philosophy) differ greatly from our own.

The greatest divide between medieval moral dilemma theory and its present-day counterpart concerns the basic moral category under which moral dilemmas are considered. For medieval thinkers it was sin, rather than simply moral failure or moral transgression. The theorists examined in this volume considered moral dilemmas primarily for what their existence might entail for the state of one's soul in the afterlife. For example, medieval proponents of moral dilemmas frequently had to counter the objection that claimed moral dilemmas cannot exist, for their existence would make sin necessary and salvation impossible. These otherworldly concerns of sin, salvation, heaven, and hell are almost never broached by twentieth-century philosophers engaged in moral dilemma theory. In one way, the search for moral dilemma theory in the Middle Ages is much like the search for moral philosophy in the Middle Ages. Admittedly, some have argued that there is no such moral philosophy in the Middle Ages – only moral theology. Nevertheless, the sophistication of medieval argumentation and the clear analogues to contemporary concerns cannot be avoided. Both medieval and present-day theorists are concerned with whether moral dilemmas exist, how their existence might be demonstrated, and what implications their existence might have for such issues as free will, the development of the virtues, and general moral theory.

The present book is sensitive to these historiographical concerns. While my interests are primarily philosophical, I draw from a range of sources that include documents in theology and canon law, in addition to those that are more easily recognized as philosophical. I have provided relevant biographical information for each of the principal medieval thinkers considered in this volume, and I have attempted to be sensitive to aims and presuppositions guiding the various medieval discussions and to note them when necessary.

TERMINOLOGY

Bringing medieval thinkers into a contemporary debate first presents a problem of terminology. Medieval thinkers who discuss moral dilemmas

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[8] Works of particular note include John Inglis, *Spheres of Philosophical Inquiry and the Historiography of Medieval Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); John Marenbon, *Later Medieval Philosophy (1150–1350): An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1991), 83–90; John Marenbon, *Early Medieval Philosophy (480–1150): An Introduction*, rev. edn (London: Routledge, 1991), vii–xii; and Mark D. Jordan, "Medieval Philosophy of the Future," in *The Past and Future of Medieval Studies*, ed. John Van Engen (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 148–65.

customarily speak of an agent as being perplexed (*perplexus*) or suffering from perplexity (*perplexitas, perplexio*). For instance, a thirteenth-century compendium of theological terms offers the following definition:

> Perplexity is an entrapment between opposites, so that one seems always to be bound to sin, in whatever side one might choose (*Perplexitas est involutio inter opposita, ita quod videtur semper vergere in peccatum, quamcumque partem eligat*).[9]

This definition is consistent with the one adopted for this volume, although the presence of the qualifier "seems" offers the possibility that situations of moral entrapment might be apparent rather than real. In contrast to the standard medieval nomenclature that speaks of an agent as *perplexed* when unable to avoid wrongdoing, contemporary philosophers tend to state simply that an agent is *in a moral dilemma*. These expressions are not inconsistent, but some clarification is required to forestall confusion. A difficulty is that *perplexitas* and its cognates admit of two meanings. First, the literal or etymological meaning of *perplexitas* is the condition of being entangled, ensnared, or intertwined, as when one is caught in a trap without the means of escape. This sense of the word is of particular relevance to the present volume. Second, the extended or metaphorical sense of *perplexitas* is the condition of being confused.[10] It could be said that the first sense is primarily ontological, and the second is epistemic. Of particular concern for this study are those situations where an agent is described as *perplexus* in the sense of being confused because the agent is *perplexus* in the sense of being trapped by conflicting moral obligations. Of course, an agent may be confused in the absence of genuine moral entanglement, since what an agent initially judges to be a moral dilemma may, upon reflection, be realized to be merely an apparent one with the discovery of some previously unrecognized and morally permissible option. In those cases, the perplexity would be subjective, but not objective.

This twofold sense of *perplexitas* to mean entanglement as well as confusion is quite ancient, as it is found in the Roman legal tradition of the

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[9] The authorship of the *Statement of the Terms of Theology* (*Declaratio terminorum theologiae*) is contested. A modern edition of this work is printed in Bonaventure, *Opera omnia*, ed. A. C. Peltier, 15 vols. (Paris: Vivès, 1864–1871), VII: 232–9, with the cited text at 237.

[10] For the various senses of the terms *perplexus* and *perplexitas*, see *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, vol. X, 1, fasc. XI *pernumero-persuadeo* (Stuttgart and Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1998), 1650–3. An instance of *perplexus* in its primary sense of "entangled" is present in Lucretius's *On the Nature of Things* (*De rerum natura*). The philosophical poem accounts for the origin of visible objects by stating that atoms falling through the void become *perplexi*. See Lucretius, *De rerum natura* 2, 102. See also the appearance of *perplexus* in Vergil, *Aeneid* 9, 391.

casus perplexus or "perplexing case."[11] The expression was used to designate
instances where jurists were left to render a decision in confusing situa-
tions where laws conflicted or where litigants had equally pressing claims.
One classic example is the case of a testator who leaves a will containing
mutually inconsistent prescriptions, thereby leaving jurists to wrestle with
a conflicting set of instructions. Juridical perplexity is, of course, a topic of
interest well beyond the ancient Roman period. The best-known philoso-
pher to approach the issue was Gottfried Leibniz, whose 1666 doctoral *On
Perplexing Cases in Law* (*De casibus perplexis in jure*) set forth an ambitious
method for resolving difficult or uncertain cases.[12] The present volume
will touch upon legal perplexity only to the extent that it concerns agents
obliged to select among morally impermissible options.

A PRÉCIS OF CHAPTERS

This book divides into six chapters. It begins with the thought of Gratian,
the twelfth-century founder of the science of canon law. The influence of
the canon law tradition on medieval philosophical and theological thought
is at times unrecognized, but this chapter establishes its clout through
several centuries of medieval moral dilemma theorizing. In the thirteenth
distinction of his *Decretum*, Gratian argues that agents who find themselves
in moral dilemmas should appeal to the principle of the lesser of two evils.
In support of his view, Gratian marshals the authority of Gregory the
Great, and in doing so inaugurates a controversy over the meaning of
Gregory's texts that will persist for centuries. The multi-authored medieval
commentary on Gratian's *Decretum*, known as the *Glossa ordinaria*, is
surprisingly quite critical of Gratian, precisely because the glossators who
authored it reject the possibility that agents are ever inescapably bound to
commit moral transgressions. The adoption of Gratian's *Decretum* as the
standard medieval textbook for the study of canon law, together with the
widespread reading of it with the *Glossa ordinaria*, set forth two opposing

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[11] For a discussion of *casus perplexus* in the Roman legal tradition, see Reinhard Zimmermann, *The Law of Obligations: Roman Foundations of the Civilian Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 721–2; Ralph Backhaus, *Casus perplexus: Die Lösung in sich widersprüchlicher Rechtsfälle durch die klassische römische Jurisprudenz* (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagbuchhandlung, 1981); and Stéphan Geonget, *La notion de perplexité a la Renaissance* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2006), especially chap. 1: "*Casus perplexus* et antinomies des lois," 23–59.

[12] Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Disputatio de casibus perplexis in jure*, in *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe* (Berlin: Darmstadt: Otto Reichl Verlag, 1930), VI.1: 231–56. For an evaluation of this work, see Hanina Ben-Menahem, "Leibniz on Hard Cases," *Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie* 79 (1993), 198–215.

yet equally authoritative positions as the intellectual inheritance for later medieval theorists on the question of moral dilemmas. Gratian and his critics framed the issue of moral dilemmas for generations of medieval thinkers.

The second chapter examines a pair of major summaries of theology from the early thirteenth century, the *Summa aurea* of the Parisian secular master William of Auxerre (*c.* 1140–1231), and the later Franciscan compendium known as the *Summa Halesiana*, associated with Alexander of Hales (*c.* 1185–1245). Both works were quite influential in forming the philosophical and theological thought of the high scholasticism of the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and both contain extended discussions of moral dilemmas. The authors of those works demonstrate a familiarity with Gregory's defense of moral dilemmas, perhaps through the work of Gratian, and they put Gregory's words to various uses. Particularly valuable in these *summae* are analyses of twenty alleged moral dilemmas. Most of these dilemmas ultimately are judged to be merely apparent, as the authors of both works propose that there exists a previously unconsidered and morally permissible option for the agents described in the majority of cases. A few of the dilemmas, however, are deemed true moral dilemmas by the authors of each work, as the agents in those remaining cases are judged to be unable to escape some degree of moral wrongdoing. Both works promote the principle of the lesser evil as a way for agents trapped in moral dilemmas to minimize their moral transgressions.

The quasi-autobiographical *Vita coaetanea* or *Contemporary Life* of Raymond Lull (*c.* 1232–1316) is the subject of the third chapter. This quite remarkable medieval work was dictated by Lull to monks near the end of his life, and in it the philosopher and Christian apologist recounts four moral dilemmas he experienced, adding in each case an explanation of how he was miraculously saved from committing wrongdoing. In describing his dilemmas, Lull uses the philosophical terminology of thirteenth-century discussions of perplexity of conscience, so his work manifests an acquaintance with moral psychology controversies of the period. Lull's *Vita* asserts the existence of moral dilemmas as part of the moral life and exhibits a highly unusual theological strategy for how agents should deal with them. The *Vita* suggests that agents who find themselves trapped in situations of inescapable moral wrongdoing should engage in petitionary prayer, for God is able to remove prayerful agents from the dilemmas they experience. In Lull's account, moral dilemmas admit of no intrinsic resolution, but only an extrinsic one where agents are supernaturally extracted by divine intervention. In the absence of providential

interventions, individuals remain hopelessly trapped and unable to avoid wrongdoing.

Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) is the subject of the fourth chapter of the present volume. Shortly before Easter in 1272, Aquinas conducted a quodlibetal disputation on a variety of issues, one of which was *Whether Someone is Able to be Perplexed* (*Utrum aliquis posit esse perplexus*). Unfortunately, no authentic text survives for this portion of Aquinas's disputation beyond the title. Had the full text survived, it would be the only autonomous treatment of moral dilemmas in the corpus of Aquinas's writings. Nevertheless, Aquinas broaches the subject as a side issue in several works throughout his career, so it is possible to piece together what he might have said at this disputation, assuming that his remarks there were consistent with his other considerations of the subject. In the surviving texts, Aquinas analyzes eighteen moral dilemmas. Many such dilemmas ultimately are judged by him to be merely apparent, as he often discerns previously unconsidered options that individuals can perform to keep all obligations fulfilled. Central to Aquinas's analysis of the remaining cases is his denial that innocent agents will ever find themselves in moral dilemmas and that guilty ones often will. Some texts suggest that the lingering after-effects of prior faults can render the fulfillment of future obligations impossible. In all his examples of these prior-fault or self-imposed dilemmas, however, Aquinas identifies a way in which agents can somehow still undo the ill-effects of the past wrongdoing to allow all future obligations to be fulfilled. While Aquinas's examples are consistent in this regard, Aquinas never categorically states that all agents in prior-fault dilemmas can so escape an additional moral failure. Not surprisingly, twentieth-century commentators on Aquinas have disagreed over whether Aquinas allows for strictly irresolvable prior-fault dilemmas.

The penultimate chapter explains more fully Aquinas's account of a mistaken conscience. In particular, it investigates a potential problem of Aquinas's moral psychology: how is his doctrine of the infallibility of the habit of self-evident principles (synderesis) compatible with his admission that malformed-conscience dilemmas exist? This chapter highlights Aquinas's view that errors in minor premises are the common source for errors in practical reasoning, and it concludes with a consideration of similar views in later medieval moral dilemma theory.

The last chapter examines the principal issue left unresolved by Aquinas's explicit texts on moral dilemmas, namely, whether the Thomistic ethical framework allows for the existence of irresolvable prior-fault dilemmas. As Aquinas's texts provide no categorical answer to this question, a solution is sought in the work of Johannes Capreolus (*c.* 1380–1444), whose massive