In the previous two chapters, I have attempted to reconstruct Wyclif’s controversial discourse on civil dominion from the first part of the third tract of his trilogy on dominion in community. My reading and reconstruction were based on the assumption that his programme of restoring original justice based on natural life by predicing the ordered love of universals, the order of loving and wanting the greater goods than the lesser ones, and by the reading of the script of humanity could be made evident through his own prose rather than according to categories of later historians of ideas, if it is placed in the context of his academic debate with Fitzralph and Bradwardine, and in the broader political context of the problems of his scholarly and secular audience as regards the good life.1 His words could speak for themselves in respect of the three problems modern critics have been confounded by: his universalism, his determinism and his scriptural dogmatism.

In the course of reading Wyclif’s works on the metaphysics of divine and human dominion, the underlying concept was identified as the “idea of man and nature,” with the moral consequence that “the natural man does not sin,” and the political consequence that “there is no natural priority among persons.” In Wyclif’s actual teaching no trace was found of the monstrous concept of the universal man enjoying independent being and the heavenly kingdom existing somewhere out of time and space. According to him, “all being was in material form” and present in the community of singular beings, the metaphor of God meaning being and generation, besides the many other names Wyclif attributed to it by equivocation: being, pure creative potential, lord of the created universe, lord of time, lord of the universals, pure natural being, faith in reason and order in nature, the sum of divinity and nature, perfect nature, pure volition, intelligence and science, justice,

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1 Cf. Wyclif’s programme in DD, 1, paraphrased in Chapter One.
right and law—anything but the divine entity of the creative light or intelligence of neo-platonic emanationist Weltauschang. He understood divine dominion as the generation of everything, the force that gives growth to natural beings, and the created universe, in which divine will and the life-giving sense of the holy spirit become intelligible for rational natures. The consequences of this insight are most directly present in Wyclif’s interpretation of communal ownership and the use and enjoyment of one’s natural being and civil property as well as his views of man and woman, who, being in (ordered) love with each other, constitute the centre of the universe, as well as the precondition of the continuity, growth, peace and tranquillity of the republic.

His determinism was also found to be less ultimate than believed by Leff, and others. On the contrary, not only did Wyclif’s theory of the growth of grace imply a rather liberal interpretation of predestination, it also prefigured a theory of a dynamic, dialectical and living reality of communal being in which the heavenly kingdom was always present, and enjoyed by the just ones in its fullness, instead of access to its transcendental reality through the temporal dominion of the architecturally constructed hierarchy of the church and the monarch. In Wyclif’s theory, the spiritual reality of the integrity of created and uncreated being was not understood as a reality separated and distanced from actual natural being in time and space: to the innocent state of man before the fall, to justification after the last judgement in time, or to a metaphysical presence beyond the crystal heavens in space. Tranquillity, the balance of forces, was always being created in the community by the order of love, knowing and teaching the ordered love of universals, and the use and enjoyment of the gifts of grace, nature and fortune according to the reason for their being. The continuous presence of the heavenly kingdom, derived from the logic of three times, was maintained by the chain of love and by reciprocal service. Grace, also understood as the condition of rightful dominion, was being redistributed in every generation through the spirit of the common man, *persona humana*.

As regards Wyclif’s scriptural dogmatism, for him the scripture was the script of humanity, but, philosophically, natural and therefore free life enjoyed priority even to it: “the law of nature was to be human.” The priority of its literal sense was not Wyclif’s characteristic theological innovation by any means: it had been understood almost as self-evident in late medieval theology, although the relative importance attributed to ‘tradition’ in addition to scripture distinguished *via mod-