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Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum: Nature and Love as Foundations
of Human Society in the Preaching of Giordano de Pisa (14th Century)¹

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ARTICLE

*DILIGES PROXIMUM
TUUM SICUT TE IPSUM:*
NATURE AND LOVE
AS FOUNDATIONS OF
HUMAN SOCIETY IN
THE PREACHING OF
GIORDANO DE PISA
(14TH CENTURY)¹

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to analyse how nature and love were presented and employed as foundations of human society by the Dominican friar Giordano de Pisa (c. 1260–1311) in his preaching in the early fourteenth-century Florence, Italy. It will be analysed the *reportationes* of three of his sermons preached on the same liturgical date (Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday), between 1303 and 1305, which adopts as *thema* the verse *Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum* (Love your neighbour as yourself); a model-sermon of the same liturgical date (c. 1267–1286) by the also Dominican Iacopo de Varazze (1228–1298); and a homily of Augustine of Hippo (354–430) from the early fifth century. Thus, it is stressed that Giordano approached the subject both by the use of an Aristotelian–naturalist theory as well as by an Augustinian–voluntarist conception, and it is concluded that the greater emphasis given to the first line of thought is due to its more positive character as regards the city, which allowed a treatment more consistent with the preaching *thema* and with its internal composition mechanisms.

Keywords

Giordano da Pisa – Preaching – Sermon – Love – Nature.

¹ Article not published on a preprint platform. All sources and bibliography used are referred to in the article.

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ARTIGO

*DILIGES PROXIMUM
TUUM SICUT TE IPSUM: A
NATUREZA E O AMOR
COMO FUNDAMENTOS DA
SOCIEDADE HUMANA NA
PREGAÇÃO DE GIORDANO
DE PISA (SÉC. XIV)³*

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Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é analisar como a natureza e o amor foram apresentados e empregados como fundamentos da sociedade humana pelo frade dominicano Giordano de Pisa (c. 1260–1311) em suas pregações ocorridas em Florença, Itália, no início do século XIV. Serão analisadas as *reportationes* de três sermões seus pregados em uma mesma data litúrgica (Décimo Oitavo Domingo após o Domingo da Trindade), entre 1303 e 1305, e que adotam o versículo *Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum* (*Amarás o teu próximo como a ti mesmo*) como *thema*; um sermão-modelo (c. 1267–1286) do também dominicano Iacopo de Varazze (1228–1298), de mesma data litúrgica; e uma homilia de Agostinho de Hipona (354–430) do início do século V. Assim, destaca-se que Giordano abordou o assunto tanto pelo emprego de uma teoria aristotélico-naturalista, quanto pelo uso de uma concepção agostiniana-voluntarista e se conclui que o maior destaque dado à primeira linha de pensamento se deve ao seu caráter mais positivo em relação à cidade, o que permitia um tratamento mais consistente com o *thema* da pregação e com os seus mecanismo internos de composição.

Palavras-chave

Giordano de Pisa – Pregação – Sermão – Amor – Natureza

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On October 6th, 1303, the Florentines that attended the late-afternoon Sunday sermon of friar Preacher Giordano da Pisa on the *love due to neighbour* (Mt. 22, 39) (DELCORNO, 1975, p. 295) heard, at different points of his speech, the following phrases: “It should not be necessary [for Christ] to give this commandment (...) but, yet, he commanded it, for he wanted us to be under the law of love, because our soul and our good nature is corrupted by sin (...)”; “Amongst all animals, man is called a social and assemblable animal (...)” (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 80, 85)⁵. Not everyone present must have been aware – for the preacher’s audience was formed by all sorts of people –, but what they heard was, respectively, direct references to two different approaches to the subject of human sociability: a Christian thinking tradition, which had Augustine of Hippo (354–430) as its main representative, and to Aristotle’s political theory according to the first book of *Politics*.

Proceeding in this way, ideas that circulated within and amongst the universities and learning centres on both sides of the Alps, restricted to few literates, reached a part of Florence’s population that could not afford to study them⁶ – although they might not know it. Moreover, in this sense, Giordano’s preaching stands as a special case for at least two reasons. First, ever since he arrived in Florence in the Fall of 1302 until 1307 when he left for his hometown, Giordano Preached on a weekly basis, not only in the church of the Dominican Convent of Santa Maria Novella, but also in the cathedral, other local churches, as well as in public squares. According to the *Chronica antiqua* of the Saint Catharine convent in Pisa, which began to be written at the end of the fourteenth century, his words “were full of wisdom” (BONAINI, 1845, p. 451).⁷ Moreover, his documentary *corpus* consists exclusively of sermons preserved in the form of *reportationes*, that is, annotations made by the audience of his speeches delivered in the vernacular: “just as when God made manna rain out of the sky, so in Florence and Pisa and everywhere his words resonated, they were collected, retained and written

⁵ “Or e’ non dovea disognare di darne comandamento (...) mas però il comandò, che volle che noi fussimo sotto la legge d’amore, perochè l’anima nostra e la nostra buona natura è corrotta per lo peccato (...)”; “Intra tutti gli animali l’uomo è detto animale sociale e congregale (...)”.0

⁶ The convent of the Order the Friars Preachers in Florence, Santa Maria Novella, had its *studium* open to the laymen, where Dante probably studied, besides “being the head of a dense network of Lay Confraternities, that had place preaching in the centre of their devotional activities” (DELCORNO, 1975, p. 19).

⁷ “Erant enim plena sapientie”.

in the vernacular". (BONAINI, 1845, p. 451).⁸ His 731 known sermons, which survived in more than 40 manuscripts from the fourteenth and fifteenth century and that today are mostly found in archives in Italy, but also in France and England, could be read and reread by those who did not know Latin, a feature that gave his preaching a greater reach in terms of public: his voice – and with it, his wisdom – did not fade away in the air, but was encrypted in words. Through them, the Florentines came in touch with the ideas of Aristotle, Augustine, and many other authorities.

Augustine, Sin and Human Sociability

As regards human sociability, according to Augustine and the Christian thinking tradition of which he is the main representative, once immortal and good according to his creation by God, man have turned into evil and mortal by means of sin. Having acted in disobedience to God because of his *desire* to ordain himself and as an inferior being no longer submitting himself to the higher Being, the consequence of this act was his own disobedience against himself:

In seeking to ordain himself, the human being establishes disorder in himself which is, so to speak, an openness to the succession of disorders arising from the first one (...) whose externalization is the injustice or disorder of life in society. Thus, by nature there would be no conflict in each man with himself and, consequently, in the community of men (SILVA FILHO, 2012, p. 84, 95).⁹

Once human nature had been corrupted by the Original Sin, at least within the limits of the *civitas terrena*, man had become prone to discord and to quarrel (NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 4). Having acted selfishly, man's sins are then fundamentally antisocial and unjust, which hinders the formation of a society. Thus, a *natural* propensity for association is severely impaired. According to political scientist Carry J. Nederman, "it is necessary, therefore, for men to introduce political institutions in order to enforce peace and earthly justice, compelling submission to a coercive power capable of suppressing

⁸ "Sicut enim olim quando Deus pluit manna de celo, sic Florentie et Pisis et omnibi ubi eius verba resonabant, colligebantur, servabantur, vulgariter scribebantur".

⁹ "Ao pretender ordenar-se, o ser humano instaura a desordem em si mesmo que é, por assim dizer, abertura para sucessão de desordens decorrentes da primeira [...] cuja exteriorização é a injustiça ou a desordem da vida em sociedade. Assim, por natureza haveria ausência de conflito em cada homem consigo mesmo e, por consequência, na comunidade de homens".

behaviour which arises from wrongly ordered passions" (NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 4). Moreover, it is important to note that if by nature there is no conflict of man with himself and, consequently, with his fellow men, for this reason the rule of one over the other is fundamentally unnatural. In other words, the creation of an institution that regulates common life and the relationships that men establish with each other through it would be something artificial and conventional, that naturally would not exist. The categories of nature and identity, according to Augustine's political reflection in *De civitate dei*, would only appear indirectly in history through vestiges and could only be seized as a transcendent expectation (NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 4; SILVA FILHO, 2012, p. 93,95), for "there is nothing so unsocial by its corruption, so social by nature, as this race" (*De civitate Dei*, XII, xxvii).¹⁰

However, in this damned condition of man, the *officium imperandi* (the ruling of man over another in communities endowed with political institutions) could only be just if rulers and ruled served in reciprocal *charity*, the former advising and the latter obeying (NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 4; SILVA FILHO, 2012, 96). Politics, practiced as the state's *just* action, would therefore act as a bridle on the evil and antisocial human propensities for discord, conflict and injustice, and would ensure the existence of a just and orderly human society on Earth. On the other hand, if practiced by unjust intentions for improper purposes subordinated to man's sinful will, politics would be a detestable means of domination that should be avoided. Thus, according to the bishop of Hippo, a people will "be a superior people in proportion as it is bound together by higher interests, inferior in proportion as it is bound together by lower" (*De civitate Dei*, XIX, xxiv).¹¹ From this, then, arises Augustine's distrust of politics: although there is a possibility that it may be good, man's historical experience showed that, on the contrary, it often happened in a perverse and unjust way (*De civitate Dei*, XIX, xxi; SILVA FILHO, 2012, p. 99).

Aristotle and the Human Natural Sociability

Although Augustine remained for centuries as major authority for all literate Christian men of the West (Giordano da Pisa included), his approach to human sociability coexisted with a naturalist one, inherited from Classical and Late Antiquity, even before the thirteenth-century translations of Aris-

¹⁰ "Nihil enim est quam hoc genus tam discordiosum vitio, tam sociale nature".

¹¹ "(...) tanto utique melior, quanto in melioribus, tantoque deterior, quanto est in deterioribus concors".

totle. Besides being know be means of his own work, for he diverged from it, this approach was already appreciated through the known works of Seneca, the Latin poets and Lactantius. But it was known in a *conventionalist* fashion and it came to knowledge specially by means of two works of Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC), *De officiis* and *De inventionis* (NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 3–11). Thus, according to this line of thought, for the Christian authors that adopted it

(...) while men always retained their natural inclination to congregate – even after the Fall – the recognition of this nature and its implications for their lives needed to be awakened in and drawn out of them by means of reason and persuasion. Men will only unite, in other words, when they become expressly aware that it is natural (not to mention beneficial) for them to do so (NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 5–6).

Therefore, this conventionalist feature allowed Christian authors to conjugate the notion of human sinfulness with a naturalist approach to human sociability. The need for persuasion would exist precisely because of sin: men's antisocial attitudes would only occur because they did not recognize the beneficial consequences of their common nature (NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 6, 15).

Translated into Latin around 1260 by friar Preacher William of Moerbeke (1215/35–c. 1286) at the University of Paris, Aristotle's *Politics* was soon commented by Albert the Great (c. 1193–1280), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), Peter of Auvergne (1240s–1304), John of Paris (c. 1250–1304) and Giles of Rome (c. 1243–1316), and taught at the universities, mendicant *studia* and other literate environments. As a consequence, the naturalistic approach to human sociability was reinforced amongst the learned men who could now, literally and at will, quote the Philosopher on their treatises, whatever was their subject, to support whatever was their intent (GILLI, 2013; NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 3).

According to the beginning of the first book of *Politics*, nothing could stop the associative impulse of human nature, because to associate would be the means to reach the supreme level of fulfilment of human needs, both physical and spiritual. The human community, as a perfect and complete group, would make it possible not only to live, but to live a life of virtue and to attain the common good since it was assumed that nature did not reproduce in many human beings the ability to do certain actions which could be sufficiently performed by an individual (*Politics*, I, 1252b; KEMPSHALL, 1999, p. 6, 24; NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 5). Thus, for each specific work there would be few who could perform it, so that in order for all to be accomplished, a society would be required. Therefore, individually the human being would not possess the capacity to be self-sufficient and that is precisely the specificity

of the human condition: one who does not need political associations must invariably be either an animal or a god (KEMPSHALL, 1999, p. 33). The family then exists for economic security; the village for protection and exchange; and the *polis*, the perfect association and ultimate goal of all previous communities, for the intellectual and moral development of its citizens. "In other words it is only in the context of a fully articulated social and political system that the complete and self-sufficient life of human happiness ordained by God is to be found" (NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 5). The fact that man sometimes acts unfairly and antisocially would not be an impediment; in no way could his associative nature be prevented from expressing itself.

Politics, Nature and Sin in early fourteenth-century Florence

In 1302, probably at the end of the year, about two decades after taking the habit of the Friars Preachers, Giordano da Pisa arrived in Florence, where he would remain continuously until 1307 when he returned to his hometown. Settled in the convent of Santa Maria Novella, he was entitled Preacher General (*predicator generalis*) one year after his arrival during the Provincial Chapter held in Spoleto, and again in 1305, in the Provincial Chapter of Rieti. In addition to serving as a preacher, the friar was also *lector sententiarum*, between 1302 and 1304, and *lector principalis*, from 1304 to 1307 (DELCORNO, 2001; IANNELLA, 1999, p. 26; CORBARI, 2008, p. 55).

In the intellectual environment of Santa Maria Novella of the very beginning of the fourteenth century, two names stand out: Ptolemy of Lucca (c. 1236–c. 1327) and Remigio dei Girolami (1235–1319), whom Giordano surely met. Ptolemy was prior of the convent from mid 1301 until the second half of 1302 and is known as the major author of *De regimine principum* (1301–1303), a very popular and influential book attributed to Thomas Aquinas until the twentieth century. According to James M. Blythe, "Thomas wrote at most only the first part, known also as *On the Kingdom to the King of Cyprus*, and Ptolemy of Lucca continued it from the middle of Book 2, chapter 4" (BLYTHE, 1997, p. 1). Relying heavily on Aristotle's political thought, *Politics* was employed by Ptolemy as the foundation of his argument on the primacy of the city and of the *politicum* government over the royal/monarchical regime by emphasizing the naturalness of the human sociability, which existed already in the Earthly Paradise. But, while the Philosopher is taken as one of his main authorities, it is also possible to observe the great influence of a Christian thinking tradition regarding the Original Sin and human's social nature in the State of Innocence. Deviating from the statements of his pro-

fessor Thomas Aquinas, for he does not describe the constitution of human society before the Original Sin, according to Ptolemy before the Fall there was no king, but a *politicum* regime in which men gathered, freely and naturally, and submitted themselves to those who had greater merit in disposing and governing the multitude. Contrariwise, a regal government is only fruitful in a corrupted nature, where limits are required (*De regimine*, II, ix, 4–5; BLYTHE, 1997, p. 49–50 GILLI, 2013, p. 45).

In his turn, shortly after the tumultuous passage of Charles of Valois through Florence in November of 1301, acting on the behalf of Pope Boniface VIII and his Florentine allies to put an end to the conflicts between the Black and White Guelfs factions, friar Preacher Remigio dei Girolami composed at Santa Maria Novella his *De bono communi*, a treatise founded upon “a desire to re-found political ties in a city torn apart by factionalism” (GILLI, 2013, p. 45).¹² In it, his main argument on the supremacy of the common good over the good of the part, as well as a praise of civic life, is once established upon Aristotle’s conceptions of man as a political animal in such a radical way that the friar inverts its original logic: “if he is not a citizen he is not human, since human is naturally a political animal, following what the Philosopher says in book eight of *Ethics* and in the first book of the *Politics*” (REMIGIO DEI GIROLAMI, 2014, IX);¹³ for Remigio, “it is the citizenship/civility that defines humanity and conditions it” (GILLI, 2013 p. 45). Such a radical Aristotelianism, none the less, coexisted in the same work with the idea of a corrupted human nature which seeks first the good of the individual. Confronting Bernard of Clairveaux’s statement that “human nature is bent back onto itself”, always preferring the private over the common good, Remigio says that this is true only in a corrupt nature and regarding false love – which is exactly what characterizes the time after the Fall.

Giordano da Pisa’s Preaching and the World of Cities

The study of the reflection on human society in Giordano da Pisa’s preaching – which occurred in his hometown and in Florence in the first decade of the fourteenth century – has so far been extensively done only by

¹² “(...) une volonté de refonder en raison les liens politiques dans une cité déchirée par le factionnalisme”.

¹³ “Et si non est civis non est homo, quia homo est naturaliter animal civil, secundum Philosophum in VIII *Ethicorum* et in I *Physicorum*”.

historian Cecilia Iannella (1999, p. 29–61).¹⁴ However, it incurs some problems. In general, the *reportationes* (notations of the preacher's speech) were not approached as individual texts with particular logics. Their analysis consisted of the exposition of various arguments conveyed by the preacher and the somewhat free association of them with ideas by other Dominican authors, usually Thomas Aquinas and Remigio dei Girolami. Iannella did not consider at any time the preaching's *thema* (the evangelical passage from which the sermon is developed) and the implications that this liturgical context could bring to the arguments formulation: often the texts were alluded to without any mention to it.

In this regard, according to a research method proposed by historian David D'Avray (1994) and subsequently tested by fellow historian Jussi Hanska (2002; 2008) and myself (ALVES, 2018) – which consists in first comparing sermons of a same liturgical date – to a large extent Sunday sermons repeated certain themes and *topoi* characteristic of a specific liturgical date as they deal with the same biblical passage. To pay attention to this is important because to some extent the contents expressed by sermon discourses were primarily inserted within predetermined composition norms. By not analysing the sermons as individual texts which should be approached as speeches that have an internal logic concerning the *thema* and liturgy, Iannella freely used excerpts from different preaching in an apparent quest to construct a finished giordanian theory on the world of cities.¹⁵ In this sense, the Italian historian approached the *reportationes* not as results of preaching, but almost as thesis' chapters that seek to establish a unique logic and reason for the subjects discussed. In so doing, Iannella did not satisfactorily explain the distinctive views or contradictions present in different sermons.¹⁶

For example, to the sermon *Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum* preached on October 6th 1303, it was devoted only about two pages when addressing the *common good* subject. Iannella did not properly investigate the discourse

¹⁴ Earlier, historian Daniel Lesnick (1989), in a study on the mendicant preaching in Florence in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, also devoted himself to Giordano's sermons, taking them as representatives of Dominican preaching. However, he did it less systematically.

¹⁵ In apparent disagreement with this, the author came to alluded to the fact that, in Giordano's case, supposedly one could not speak of a *political consciousness and ideology* such as that shown by Remigio dei Girolami. Iannella states that, as an ethical discourse, Giordano's preaching would respond to a primarily practical instance (IANNELLA, 1999, p. 16).

¹⁶ According to her conclusion, this would be as much due to the authorities employed as to the confrontation with the reality of Florence (IANNELLA, 1999, p. 203–205).

and arguments employed, but only used this sermon as a starting point for the analysis of another preaching done on another liturgical date and year. Thus, the author presented in sequence two passages of different sermons on the concept, however, without regard to the fact that they represented different meanings of the same expression (IANELLA, 1999, p. 85–88). In exposing the idea of *common good* present in the first sermon, Iannella did not emphasize that in it the *common good* is understood as achievable only when *particular goods* are realized. She then presented a consideration on the matter in the sermon *In vita suam suffulsit domum* (*In his life he propped up the house*) (Ecclus. 50, 1) of 28 August 1304, which shows that the *common good* must precede – if not even counter – the *private good*. In other words, there are two clearly distinct notions of *common good* presented by two different sermons by the same preacher and the author has not even drafted any explanation at all.¹⁷ Faced with the apparent desire to build a finished giordanian political theory (which proved impossible in the end), Iannella presented a planned view of the friar's discourse and thus did not reveal its characteristics which, besides exposing his discursive depth, show contradictions and a non-systematization of political ideas.

Finally, if according to Nederman the three main lines of approach to the problem of man's social nature (Aristotelian, Ciceronian and Augustinian) virtually crossed all Western socio-political thought until at least the fourteenth century, it is of the utmost importance, in addressing the political ideas expressed by Giordano in his preaching, to examine whether he has dealt with them and, if he did so, how this was done. The influence of an Aristotelian thought on his preaching was very well identified and demonstrated by Iannella (1999, p. 15), but is it also possible to verify the presence of an Augustinian and/or a Ciceronian thought? And, if so, how

¹⁷ This difference may be due to the use of ancient Roman examples in the second sermon. According to a Roman tradition, which had Cicero and Augustine among its greatest exponents, on the basis of Roman Law it was stated that the *common good* was superior to the *particular good*. See KEMPSHALL, 1999, p. 14–15. In the case of the sermon *In vita suam*, it is extremely important to realize that it was preached precisely on the feast of St. Augustine. From this, then, arises the serious problem of Iannella's analysis: by not considering the liturgy, she did not realize the fact that the conception of common good presented in this sermon was given in accordance with the principles defended by the saint himself. In the case of the sermon *Diliges proximum tuum*, in adopting the Aristotelian political theory, Giordano employed the notion according to the Greek philosopher's thought. In other words, the liturgy and *thema* can have a significant influence on the contents developed in sermons and offer a plausible explanation for the different political conceptions presented in them.

was it managed? By reading the *reportationes* of the sermons under analysis in this article it was not possible to identify a clear nod to the Ciceronian line of thought. However, regarding the Augustinian thought, it is possible to observe the great influence it had on his speeches. Thus, this article will seek to demonstrate how the preacher employed both the Aristotelian-naturalist and the Augustinian-voluntarist conceptions – which in the end, by combining both theories, somehow brought him closer to a Ciceronian approach to the problem – and why he gave more prominence to the first one.

Out of all animals, man is called a social and assemblable animal: Nature and Love as Foundations of Human Society

On October 6th, 1303, following the Dominican liturgy, Giordano preached from Matthew 22, 39, a verse designated for the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday (ORDO PRAEDICATORUM, 1484, p. 165–165v; 1921, p. 188).¹⁸ In this passage a Pharisee doctor in law asks Christ what would be the great commandment of the Law, and Jesus, answering it, states that it would be to love God with all the heart, soul, and mind. And he added, “you must love your neighbour as yourself” (*Diliges proximum suum sicut te ipsum*). From this sentence Giordano delivered a sermon which, divided into three parts, dealt with: 1) the characteristics of this love and the briefness of the commandment (for it sums up all the others) (*Diliges*); 2) who is the *neighbour* and the reasons why man is led to love him (*proximum tuum*); and 3) how this should be done (*sicut te ipsum*) (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 79–80).

In discussing the second part, the preacher presented three reasons why this love exists. First, it occurs because of the similarity shared by all men. According to Giordano, “(...) to the love of our neighbour we are induced in that which we are made of one nature and one likeness”. Secondly, unlike the other animals that assemble solely for this reason, men form societies for the assistance and convenience one can offer to the other and for this

¹⁸ According to the Dominican Liturgical Calendar, the Trinity Sunday is the following Sunday after the Pentecost Sunday, which are movable dates in regards the civil calendar, and thus must be determined every liturgical year. Pentecost happens fifty days after Easter, which has its date calculated according to the lunar calendar, being fixed on the first Sunday after a full moon occurs on/or after the 21 March.

reason, “out of all animals, man is called a social and assemblable animal (...)” (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 84–85).¹⁹ According to the preacher,

(...) this is because of the many defects we have, so that if I have one defect and you have another, you assist me with my defect and I assist you with yours. Man cannot live alone, because he is not enough for himself. At the same time, he needs the assistance of others and that is why castles and cities, villages and families are made, because people cannot live alone. In the city there are many Arts [Craft Corporations]: I have a good from the other arts and the others have a good of mine and thus men assist themselves together (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 85).²⁰

Moreover, the assistance that one can offer to the other would not be restricted to material things, but would also be given as regards spiritual needs, “enduring the vices of others and the ways you do not like (...) And this keeps friends and the community”. Finally, “the third reason is given to the end” that all men have in common and, therefore, one must love his neighbour until eternal life, for that would be “the most effective reason there is” (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 84–86).²¹

Altogether, what these statements present is a conception of society and human sociability anchored in the Aristotelian naturalistic political theory according to the beginning of *Politics*. First of all, there is the fact that similarity *induces* (*induce*) men to love each other and, consequently, to live together. In other words, the primary cause of *human association* is solely and exclusively *nature*, for the *impulse* to form a *community* is naturally present in all human beings (*Politics*, I, 1252a–1253a).²² No conscious effort is necessary, no act of will is required for an association to be formed, because men are

¹⁹ “(...) all’amore del prossimo siamo indotti in ciò che siamo d’una natura e a una simiglianza fatti (...) Intra tutti gli animali l’uomo è detto animale sociale e congregale (...)”.

²⁰ “(...) e questo è per gli molti difetti che avemo; che s’i’ho uno difetto e tu n’hai un altro, tu sovviene al mio difetto e io al tuo. Non potrebbe l’uomo vivere solo, peroché non basta a sé stesso, abbisogna dell’aiuto degli altri: e questa fue la cagione perchè si facieno le castella, e le cittadi, e’borghi e le famiglie; peroché non poteano le genti vivere soli. Nella città sono le molte arti: i’hoe bene dell’altrui arte e altri ha bene della mia, e cosi s’aiutano gli uomini insieme”.

²¹ “(...) sopportare i vizii altrui e i modi che non ti piacciono (...) e cosi si mantengono gli amici e le comunanze (...) La terza ragione se è considerando il fine (...) questa è la più efficace ragione che ci sia”.

²² Aristotle used the terms *phísis* (φύσις), whose meaning, besides *origin* and *birth*, may also be that of *nature* (the meaning adopted by Giordano in this sermon), as well as *principle of movement*, as Thomas Aquinas in *Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum*; *hormé* (ὁρμή), whose translation is *impulse*, *dynamics*, *force*, *violent pressure*; and *koinonía* (κοινωνία), which means *association/community* (THOMAS DE AQUINO, 1954, p. I, 3).

induced to group together by a *natural impulse*. And since such a formation is something natural, the development of human societies would undoubtedly occur at some point – except by virtue of a simultaneously artificial and unnatural action.

Next, two other premises of the Aristotelian political theory were presented: man as a *social and assemblable animal*; and the fact that man associates due to the need to obtain all that is necessary for his life, all that is indispensable for the community to be self-sufficient. Regarding self-sufficiency, this principle is the reason why man is said to be a *political animal*: one who has no need of others is either an irrational animal or a god, because man alone is not enough for himself. This would be, as Aristotle states, the reason of the creation of the family, the village, and the city; as well as it was also stressed by the preacher in assuming that this is the reason why the various categories of human association are formed – family, village, castle, and especially the city, the most perfect form of association since it is self-sufficient and *self-sufficiency* (*autarkés* – *αὐτάρκης*) is its end and greater good. Thus, in line with the Aristotelian assumption that everything created by nature turns itself only to one purpose and that it, not serving multiple ends, but only one, attains to the finest perfection (*Politics*, I, 1252b–1253a), the preacher stressed the need for the Arts to complement each other in the city, for only then could it be self-sufficient. In socioeconomic terms, not all men can do all the works necessary for the human life; yet some are perfectly attainable by some man, while others by others: from this comes the need for association that occurs by *natural impulse*; from this reason arises the need for Craft Corporations. In discussing this, more than simply presenting the Aristotelian theory to the Florentine public, Giordano used the city's own commercial-economic configuration to *illustrate* these abstract principles and intelligibly update the reason why men formed the cities – and, ultimately, the reason why Florence itself would have been founded. This argumentation, more than clarifying the theory, underlines the importance of a correct articulated functioning between the Arts, a better way of living in society, so that all would act in accordance with their natural reason of existence.

Still regarding this argument, Giordano presented a *common good* conception that becomes attainable only to the extent that the *private goods* of each citizen have been realized. This is due to the affiliation with the Aristotelian political theory about the *polis*: according to it, society's *common good* is only accomplished once that of the house (*oikía* – *οἰκία*) of each citizen, whose end is the *polis*, has already been achieved (*Politics*, I, 1252b–1253a). Therefore, the Latin translations of the Philosopher's texts established that

the collective action of the body of citizens would par excellence be the only means to this end, for the *polis* is the perfect group whose end is *to live well, to live the life of virtue*. Individual action alone and focused solely on the private good could thus in no way achieve the same results (KEMPSHALL, 1999, p. 4–6). In addition to implications in the political thought sphere, this conception also had implications in the theological debate as regards man's relationship with God and his salvation:

If the life of perfect virtue, the common good of political society, is the goal of the imperfect individual, and God is the goal of the life of perfect virtue, then it would seem possible to conclude that the individual can secure union with God only by means of incorporation into the common good of society (...) The perfectly virtuous human community is then closer to union with God than the individual human being in that it occupies a higher grade in the hierarchy, because the greater the perfection, the closer the similitude to God (KEMPSHALL, 1999, p. 6).

Continuing the Aristotelian argument, Giordano then added that it is not only because of material self-sufficiency that men associate themselves; but above all to help one another as regards the soul. In parallel with the Aristotelian theory, this would lead to an existence analogous to the *good life*, for the city's goal, according to the Philosopher, is not only to live, but precisely *to live well* (*Politics*, I, 1252b). And the life that the city makes possible is *good* because, by offering satisfactory economic stability, it also offers man the freedom to seek goods that, besides being useful and serving his existence, are valid and pleasant in themselves (GRAAFF, 2014, p. 32). As the preacher himself stated, by helping one another in matters of the soul, man fulfils the law of God, because in this way man loves his neighbour through divine love. Therefore, by approaching and loving others in this way, man also becomes closer to God Himself. This double approach and love had already been attested in the sermon itself, even before the passage based on the Aristotelian political theory was introduced. Shortly before it, in addressing the third characteristic of the love of neighbour, Giordano stated that it "(...) joins the soul with God (...) and that we approach God when we are like Him" (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 82).²⁵ This would be the perfect synthesis between the Aristotelian socio-political theory and the precepts of Christian love that the friar sought to spread through his preaching. It is

²⁵ "(...) che congiugne con Dio l'anima (...) che noi siamo presso a Dio, quando noi siamo simiglianti a lui".

also the very foundation that the Italian communes – as political entities, as well as sacred civic bodies – sought and created for themselves.

Finally, the third reason why man is led to love his neighbour is the consideration of the same end that every human being has. However, the argument was not developed: according to the transcription of the preacher's speech it is impossible to know if it was Giordano himself who did not address it or if it was the *reportator* who did not write it down. After presenting it, the preacher seems to have continued with the third part of the sermon. Nevertheless, Giordano attested that this common end is *eternal life* and that, precisely because it is the end common to all, it is "the most effective reason there is" (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 86). Regarding Aristotle's political theory, the topic of the end to which human associations turn themselves is an important turning point in his appreciation of the *polis* as the most perfect community. According to him, it is the end of all other *associations* (*koinonia* – *κοινωνία*); similarly, *nature* (*phísis* – *φύσις*) is also an *end* (*télos* – *τέλος*) and, once something reaches its full degree of growth, that is said to be its nature. Then he attested that the object by which a thing exists, its end, is its *best end* (*télos beltiston* – *τέλος βέλτιστον*) (*Politics*, I, 1252b). Thus, being what other associations become when they reach their maximum growth and nature, the *polis*, their *end*, is undoubtedly the best of communities, for it is the *best end*. In Giordano's case, the *end* of all men is *eternal life*, and since the soul is immortal according to its creation by God, its nature is eternity. Therefore, *eternal life* is the *best end* that can absolutely exist for all human beings and, therefore, is the *most effective reason* for loving each other through divine love. In this perspective, the city becomes a means to the attainment of salvation because it provides a favourable environment for the exercise of this love prescribed by Christ.

Despite this substantial consistency with the Aristotelian political theory, a closer examination of these considerations reveals some very particular points in Giordano's argument that demonstrate the complexity upon which his discourse was founded. Regarding *similarity* as a motive for the love of neighbour, although the friar does not openly name Aristotle, it is possible to find in his ethical theory a basis for this postulate. In the eighth book of *Nicomachean Ethics* the Greek philosopher begins his argument on *philia* (*φιλία*) by enumerating six reasons for ethics to discuss it. In listing the third, he states that the *philia* that exists between parents and children is natural and thus identifiable in all animals of the same species (*Ethics*, VIII, 1155a.3–1155a.2). As regards this, there is an apparent incongruity in Giordano's argumentation in listing this reason as the first one among

those that induce to the love of neighbour – a love which he himself calls “*amore divino*”. The Greek concept of *philia* – according to Robert Grosseteste’s translation of *Ethics* (ARISTOTELES, 1973) into Latin made around 1240, and the commentary on this work by Thomas Aquinas (THOMAE DE AQUINO, 1969, VIII) – would be more precisely translated by the Latin term *amicitia* (friendship). Thus, what the friar did in this preaching was the transferral of one of the reasons for the existence of *philia* – which in the Tuscan vernacular through which he preached could be expressed by the words *amistade* or *amistà* (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 285, 290)²⁴ – to *dilectio/amore divino*. Therefore, in a radical sense, what Giordano did was to equate *amicitia* and *dilectio*, two different types of love, what in an evangelical grounding would be absurd. Firstly, because the very passage of which he spoke about uses, in the Latin translation, the verb *diligere* and not the expression *habere amicitiam* (to have friendship) or any other similar to that. Second, in its genetic-semantic path, the word *diligere*, as an expression of *charity*, was used by classical Latin as a direct translation of the Greek verb *agapan* (ἀγαπάω), so that *caritas* would be the Latin correspondent precisely equivalent to the love expressed in Greek by the word *agápe* (ἀγάπη) and not by *philia*. In its turn, the translation of the New Testament into Latin, in addition to employing the identifications between *agápe* and *caritas* and *agapan* and *diligere*, added a new one and translated the noun *agápe* also by the term *delectio* – and thus the verb *diligere* came to refer to the two nouns, *caritas* and *dilectio* (NOGUEIRA, 2008, p. 21–23). In other words, Matthew 22: 39 deals with the *agápe* love, not with *philia*; it regards *caritas/dilectio/amore divino*, not *amicitia/amistade/amistà*.²⁵ Therefore, contrary to what is affirmed by the Aristotelian theory, in Giordano’s preaching the similarity and the same nature would not lead to the formation of *amicitia/philia*, but of *caritas/dilectio*, the love that should form the new basis of human society on Earth.

Despite this *apparent* conceptual confusion, the distinction between loves was evident to the preacher. An indication of this is that he speaks of “divine love”. In addition, some passages of his speech show similar evidence. In the first part of the sermon Giordano used precisely the word *carità*

²⁴ The terms were used by the preacher, for example, in a sermon given on 26 February 1305 in the Church of Santa Maria Novella.

²⁵ The Gospel passage, in its original Greek, uses exactly the verb *agapan* which in Latin was translated by the verb *diligere*: “Αγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτὸν” (“*Agapeseis ton plesion sou hos seauton*”): “*Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum*”.

to express the cause of all the Creator's acts: the friar knew very well that all the love expended by God was exactly *charity love*. And it was precisely this kind of love that Christ's law required to have not only towards God, but also regarding one's neighbour for they are one: "(...) the love of God makes the love of neighbour, and that of the neighbour makes the love of God and all is one thing only (...)" (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 80).²⁶ Still in the first part of the sermon, in dealing with its third and last argument – about how love is the soul's conjunction with God – the preacher showed even more clearly that he knew very well that he was preaching about *caritas*. He said:

(...) love unites more than knowledge (...) One who has much love is nearer [to God], though he is not aware, than one who has knowledge and has no love. Those who have knowledge are close to God by this similarity, but these are closer to Him by *charity*; and thus the more they have *divine love*, the closer they are to Him and the more alike they are (...) (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 82–83, emphasis added).²⁷

This shows that the correspondence between *carità* and *amore divino* is straightforward, they are perfect synonyms. It also allows one to see that in speaking generically of *love* in this sermon Giordano referred to *divine love*. Still on this statement, it is important to note that the foundation of the human community that the preacher here proposed to his audience makes it possible to gain greater closeness to God. And this would be done through the love of neighbour: by loving him, one also and above all loves God. Thus, within the logic of this sermon, living in the city would enable man to acquire greater identity with the Creator. The preacher did not neglect that the exercise of reason for the purpose of understanding God also makes it possible, but he made it clear that *charity love* does this most excellently and it is it that must primarily form the foundation of human societies. This is why *divine love*, and not the exercise of reason or any other love, was established by Christ as the great commandment in divine law.

Being these examples enough to eliminate any doubt about Giordano's correct understanding about the kind of love of which he spoke, it is possible to see that, in order to speak of this love expressed by the words *caritas*

²⁶ "(...) l'amore di Dio fa l'amore del prossimo, e quello del prossimo fa l'amore di Dio, e tutto è una cosa (...)".

²⁷ "(...) l'amore congiugne più che la isciencia (...) uno che abbia amore assai è più presso, avvegnaché non abbia isciencia, che quegli che hae la scienzia e non hae l'amore. Quegli c'ha la isciencia è presso a Dio per questa cotale simiglianza, mas questi gli è presso per *carità*; e però quanto più hai dell'*amore divino*, tanto gli se' più presso e più simigliante (...)".

and *carità*, the friar used a logic that Aristotle employed to explain the existence of a love that, for the preacher, would be of another category. However, if one considers that both understood the love which they were speaking of as excellent and the basis of human societies to *live well*, it is possible to speculate that the friar thus developed his argument to, besides having the support of ancient philosophy, offer to the *dilectio/caritas*' analysis the same appreciation that Aristoteles dedicated to *philia*. If the ancient philosopher thus approached that love which he understood as the foundation of human sociability and the path to the *good life*, it would be convenient for Giordano to do so as regards *caritas* and adapt the Greek theory to the precepts of the Christian faith – for the love he was dealing with should also be the reason of the human community – besides certainly leading to salvation. In first instance it seems that the preacher wished to use the knowledge produced by the Stagirite even though it was not the most appropriate for the matter treated; and, secondly, it seems a rhetorical-discursive need or prerequisite to resort to the Aristotelian thought at any cost, even if it needed to be adapted to the precepts of charitable love. However, there is still a third and perhaps more plausible and explanatory hypothesis: in Aristotle's philosophical-political theory, the *polis* naturally tends to be something good, aimed at a larger and equally good end; thus, in proposing the love of neighbour as the foundation of the *civitas*, resorting to an Aristotelian thought would be a way to ensure that a society formed on these bases would also naturally tend to be good, as well as turned to a larger and equally good end.

Going beyond these speculations, it must be stated that listing similarity as a reason for the *dilectio* that one must have for his neighbour was not exceptional. This shows that not only did Giordano not misunderstand Aristotle, but that he may have relied on reflections already well established by a Christian thought tradition on charity. Within the Dominican Order itself, an example can be found in a model sermon collection entitled *Sermones de omnibus evangelis dominicalibus*, composed between 1267 and 1286 in Italy by friar Iacopo de Varazze (1228–1298). The second model sermon dedicated to the same Sunday here in question argues on verses 37 and 39 of chapter 22 of the Gospel of Matthew: “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” and “You must love your neighbour as yourself”. On the *dilectio* that is due to God, the friar stated that one of its reasons

(...) is *similitudo*: ‘Every animal loves that which is like him’ [Ecclus. 13:19]. Between Christ and us three similarities are considered. Christ was made in our likeness by reason of assuming the flesh (...) We must be like him by reason of imitation (...) And equally

true is that we are similar by reason of the image, but very different (...) (JACQUES DE VORAGINE, 1572, p. 335–336).²⁸

If in the second part of this sermon, which is devoted to the love of neighbour, Iacopo assured that “what was said of the love of God is also said of the love of neighbour” (JACQUES DE VORAGINE, 1572, p. 336v.)²⁹, this means that man must love the others through *dilectio* and that he naturally loves his neighbour because they are similar. There is no doubt that for Iacopo the similarity is also a reason of the *dilectio* due to others. Thus, the same argumentation employed by Giordano in 1303 had already been proposed as a model at least 17 years ago.

Still regarding similarity, in the second part of his sermon Iacopo attested, according to Augustine’s authority, that there are four kinds of love of neighbour (*delectio*): carnal, natural, social or customary, and rational. Of these, the natural love exists between a father and a son and is identifiable also among irrational animals (JACQUES DE VORAGINE, 1572, p. 336v.–337). As already seen, the love that exists between a father and a son is the love between similar, at the same time as it is also the *philia* analysed by Aristotle in *Ethics*.

If one takes the referred Augustine’s sermon, it can be noted that, in addition to the argument of *similarity* as a determining factor for love’s existence, the use of the love vocabulary in it is much more precise as regards the evangelical doctrine. The bishop of Hippo states that according to the Gospel passage of Matthew 22, perfect *charity* is needed. However, he points out that there are *right* and *perverse* ways of loving (AUGUSTINUS, 1749, p. 233–234). Considering this together with the fact that this same formulation also figures in his most famous work – *De civitate Dei* (XIV, ix, 3; vi; viii) – as well as the reference to his authority by the mendicant friars in general, it seems safe to assume that both Iacopo and Giordano knew very well that in an Augustinian perspective love itself is neutral, and may acquire positivity or negativity.

In the specific case of Giordano’s sermon, this discernment was explicitly shown in the third and last part of his sermon – on how the love of neighbour should exist. Since it should happen according to one’s love for himself, the preacher stated:

²⁸ “(...) est **similitudo**. Omne animal **diligit** sibi simile. Inter Christum et nos triplex similitudo consideratur. Christus enim factus est nobis similis ratione assumptae carnis (...) Nos debemus ei esse similes ratione imitationis (...) Ipse vero et nos sumus similes ratione imaginis, sed tunc differenter (...)”.

²⁹ “Dicto de dilectione dei dicendum est de dilectione proximi”.

There is no one who does not love himself, even those who kill themselves do not hate themselves, but, on the contrary, truly love themselves. And for the love that they have for themselves, though they kill themselves, they do so to escape the things that seem very grave to them; but it is a *mad and insane love* (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 86, emphasis added).⁵⁰

In other words, in the case of those who commit suicide, love has acquired negativity; while that which is called *amore divino* elsewhere in the sermon is endowed with the greatest positivity imaginable. Therefore, when dealing with love in their sermons, both friars must have been aware that the love of which they were speaking of was among those listed as lawful by the bishop of Hippo. Perhaps the fact that they did not address those illicit loves was due to the fact that *thema* refers to a love endowed with positivity and, therefore, lawful.

Regarding these righteous loves, contrary to what Iacopo stated, Augustine did not declare that there are four types of *dilectiones*, but that there are four forms of loving – an action taken in a generic sense and expressed by the Latin word *amor*. Among them, there are two kinds of love that, although lawful, would still be carnal since they are observable also among irrational animals: that which occurs between man and woman and that which happens between parents and their children. This means that the love between creatures alike is natural and lawful, although also carnal. The other two, besides being lawful, would not be carnal and, therefore, are better. Regarding them, Augustine states that one is *amicitia* and the other is *charitas*. *Amicitia* may be rational or not: in the latter case, as can be observed among irrational animals, it occurs solely on account of custom. However, when this *amicitia* is the fruit of reason and one loves (*diliges*) his neighbour freely, by faith and benevolence, it becomes superior and henceforth is called *charitas*, whose action is described by the verb *diligere*. Moreover, this *charity love* is also an act of reason (AUGUSTINUS, 1749, p. 233–234). Thus, beyond expecting nothing in return, the practice of divine love is first of all a *benevolent and consciously good-willed act of will*. And Augustine makes it clear that it is through this kind of love that both man and God are simultaneously loved.

To pay attention to this wilful feature of love puts a final challenge to the problem of human sociability in this sermon by Giordano. As has been

⁵⁰ “Non é nullo che non s’ami, eziandio coloro che s’uccidono sé medesimi, non s’odiano, anzi s’amano bene, e per amore che hanno a loro proprio, però s’uccidono, fanolo per schifare più grave cosa a loro parere, mas è **matto amore e pazzo**”.

seen, the friar attested that similarity and shared nature lead to the love of neighbour and, consequently, to the congregation of men in excellent form. In this sense, human society would be a work of nature. However, in addressing the characteristics of this love in the first part of the sermon, the preacher explained why Christ's double commandment is necessary: as he said, when God created man there was no such rule, because at that time the human soul and reason were together and charity was practiced spontaneously, naturally. Thus, once Original Sin was committed by an act of evil will, man's soul and good nature was corrupted and henceforth it would no longer be sufficient to turn man to the love of neighbour and neither to the love of God. Therefore, the divine commandment was necessary (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 80; SILVA FILHO, 2012, p. 73). This points to the impossibility that human society on Earth, as well as politics, could be taken as natural. Therefore, in contradiction to the Aristotelian naturalistic political theory, in this sermon Giordano also alluded to another thought on human sociability: after the Fall man would suffer injustice and disobedience of himself against himself and consequently would conflict with himself; moreover, the externalization of this sinful blemish would be injustice and disorder on a social level (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 81).⁵¹ Thus, according to this Augustinian line of thought, men would need an external force to induce them to this divine love: from this, it would follow that the foundation of societies endowed with Earthly political institutions to control the common life would be something artificial. Moreover, it would also be unnatural, for man, by nature and according to the Scriptures, should rule only over irrational animals, not over other men; man should not be king, but shepherd (Gen. 1, 26; 4, 2; 46, 32-34; 47, 3; Exo. 3, 1; SILVA FILHO, 2012, p. 95). From this perspective, at a post-lapsarian stage there would be no way for similarity and a shared nature to induce charity as Giordano stated in this sermon; there would be no way for society to be formed naturally by an *impulse* that leads to charity love and mutual assistance, precisely because nature itself is corrupted. And from this follows the imperative of Christ's commandment. Society, therefore, in order to be understood and indeed to exist, would have to have as its principle something other than nature, as well as it would be necessary to ground human relations on another basis

⁵¹ In Augustine's homily, it is stated: "so he who loves himself wickedly, also loves his neighbour like so. But he who correctly loves himself, so correctly loves his neighbour" [*Ipse perverse amat alterum, qui et se perverse amat: qui autem recte se amat, alterum recte amat*"]. (AUGUSTINUS, 1749, p. 233).

so that men could be reconciled with God: it would take will, it would be necessary to unite mind and soul in the rational love determined by the commandment of the sermon's *thema*.

As can be noted, there are at least two perspectives on society and human sociability in this sermon by Giordano. One was indirectly presented, while the second was openly exposed in a more or less explanatory manner. The first, featured in the early part of the preaching, points to the lack of natural sociability in post-lapsarian man and the need for the action of an external force (the commandment) to lead man to form a society based on the love of God and of the neighbour. Consequently, it follows that in the absence of this divine love foundation, society could exist only in negativity, by the desire of domination of one man over another. On the other hand, even if artificial and unnatural, society could be good if based on this divine precept.

The second perspective is of Aristotelian provenance and was presented in the second part of the sermon. According to it, the city would be something natural, formed by an *impulse* independent of reason and the sociable nature of man would remain unchanged even after the Fall. Above all, society is taken in a positive sense, as it is founded on this love towards a similar creature and on mutual assistance. In this explanation of the friar there are no elements that point to a power structure and/or domination of one or some men over the others. In short, human society would thus be good, harmonious, turned to its best end, and guided by a divine law precept.

At first glance, therefore, there would be a contradiction in the preacher's argument, for it would not be possible for man to associate for the sake of nature since he is in a stage of its corruption. For Giordano, however, there would be no contradiction between the need to prescribe Christ's commandment and the naturalness with which men are *driven* to aggregate and to love each other by an *amor divino*: this naturalness would still be present to some extent and in some way. However, even if it was still present, sin would also be and there would exist a kind of confrontation between the two. As Nederman states, as a result of this arises the need for the establishment of political institutions to force man to conform to his natural and original inclinations (NEDERMAN, 1988, p. 25). In the case of Giordano's sermon, such clash of forces is evident in the first two parts of the sermon: as stated in the first, because of sin Christ had to establish the commandment to force man to act according to his original nature; however, according to the second part, the *natural impulse* would still be present in man. In other words, he who follows his original nature does so without having the law as the agent of his action; contrarywise, he who does not do it will be forced

(or convinced) by the commandment. In either case, the end is the same: the return to the man's original condition.⁵²

However, the Aristotelian naturalistic conception of human sociability was expounded in a more open and explanatory way. This is probably because it leaves no doubt about the city's positivity. Thus, given the fact that Giordano intended to construct a positive image of society in this preaching to serve as a model, as well as to leave little room for the possibility that it could deviate and acquire negativity, the greatest evidence for this line of thought finds a reasonable explanation. Even though this confrontation between nature and sin, which requires the creation of mechanisms of coercion in order to return man to his original state, is implicit in his argument, the emphasis on the natural aspect of human sociability indicates that Giordano's goal was to offer a positive city appreciation and to establish it as a model for the early fourteenth-century Florence.⁵³

The Absence of Society

After these analyses, it is useful to compare this sermon by Giordano with others preached by the friar himself on the same Gospel passage, so that it would be possible to identify continuities and differences in the arguments. However, although there are two other *reportationes* of his sermons that adopt the pericope of Matthew 22: 37–39, both are incomplete and do not represent the preacher's total speech.

The first of these sermons was delivered almost a year later, on September 27th 1304, again in Florence. This time, however, he spoke not only about the love due to others (verse 39), but also about the commandment

⁵² This then brings his approach close to the logic of the Ciceronian line of thought on the subject, although there are no explicit nods to it.

⁵³ To state this is not to say that the subjects and judgments of his sermons were determined by the immediate historical-political context of the city. As the sermon demonstrates, the idea that human nature has been corrupted and therefore men do not love perfectly was taken for granted. Thus, the heavenly city, as an ideal, will always be opposed to the earthly city, always non-ideal. In other words, the friar assumed beforehand that human relations on Earth are not based on charity and, therefore, it was necessary to propose this model of coexistence based on Christ's commandment. In this sense, according to Francesco Bruni, the correlation between the effective horizon of the listeners and the doctrinal plan in Giordano's preaching occurred in the sense that "these references to a common reality are invested (...) with a new meaning that projects itself upon the scenario of the eternal struggle between man and evil, as well as with the devil" (BRUNI *apud* PALERMO, 2016, p. 192). This, according to Massimo Palermo, would be typical of preaching and moral treatises (PALERMO, 2016, p. 192).

to love God with all the heart (verse 37). The preaching was developed as an explanation of the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses, for in them one would find the guidelines for the fulfilment of the two gospel commandments. As Giordano explained, the decalogue was written on two tablets: one containing the first three precepts, regarding the love of God; and the second containing the other seven, regarding the love of neighbour (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1831, p. 56–57). In an overview, however, it should be noted that the *reportatio* does not explain the commandments concerning others, but merely announces that they would also be dealt with when the preacher presented the sermon's structure. Apparently, it was not Giordano who did not speak on this matter, but the *reportator* himself who did not write it down. At the transcription's end, the following statement is found: "We will say no more; we will say nothing about the seven, what beautiful things they were; and what is said here is nowhere near that [which was said by Giordano], so to speak. And see: beautiful things they were; what is said here is almost nothing" (GIORDANO DE PISA, 1831, p. 64).³⁴ Thus, due to this fact, the part of this sermon that could most likely be compared to the previous year sermon is lost. The little evidence that the *reportatio* offers does not allow any conjecture to be drawn about the social nature of man – if this theme was indeed addressed in 1304.

In turn, the third and last sermon on Matthew 22 was preached on October 17th 1305, also in Florence (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 379).³⁵ Very similar to that of 1303, it would have a tripartite structure according to the words and expressions of the Gospel passage: what must be done (*Diliges*); who is to be loved (*Proximum*); and how one should love (*Sicut te ipsum*). However, unlike the 1304 sermon, here it seems that Giordano himself did not speak according to his own division. As the *reportator* noted, shortly after announcing it he said: "To say everything now would take a long time, only one will be enough. I say, first it shows the work we must do and that is

³⁴ "Non diciamo più; n' de sete non diciamo nulla, ch'è bellissime cose erano; e questo che detto è, non è nulla appo quello, che così potrebbe dire, e vederli: belle cose erano; quel ch'è detto è quasi nulla".

³⁵ The sermon reads: "Friar Giordano preached this day after the ninth hour in Santa Maria Novella" ["Predicò frate Giordano questo dì dopo nona in Santa Maria Novella"]. The former informs the date: "Friar Giordano preached, in 1305, 17 September, Sunday morning in Santa Maria Novella" ["Predicò frate Giordano, 1305, dì 17 di settembre, Domenica mattina, in Santa Maria Novella"]. However, according to the lectionary, the verses in Matthew 22: 34–46 were assigned to the Eighteenth Sunday after the Trinity Feast, which in 1305 was 17 October.

love" (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 380).⁵⁶ Since the sermons' divisions are very similar, if in the preaching of 1303 the open consideration on human sociability and the Aristotelian political theory figured in the argument of the sermon's second part, the most likely part to find it in this 1305 sermon would be in its second section – which Giordano did not address. The only difference in the sermons' structures lies in the fact that the 1303 discourse presented – still in its first part – a reflection on the briefness of Christ's command. In terms of content, in this sermon of 1305 there is no reason why the commandment of love was established by Jesus as happened in 1303.

Conclusion: on Society's Positivity in *Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum*

Having made the comparisons allowed by the available evidence of Giordano's preaching on the passage of Matthew 22 between 1303 and 1305 in the city of Florence, some final questions remains to be addressed: is there any possibly identifiable relationship between the positive view of human society presented in the first sermon and *thema* "*Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum*"? In other words, has the biblical passage conditioned to some extent Giordano's appreciation of the human congregation? If so, what would this relationship be and what would be its level of influence?

As seen, from the same evangelical *thema* the friar gave three very particular sermons in three straight years: in the first he dealt with the love of neighbour (what it is, to whom it is addressed and how it should be done); in the second he spoke about the Ten Commandments; and in the third he said only of what this love would consist of. However, as far as can be observed, only in the first he alluded to nature and love as foundations of human society. That is enough to show that, in general, despite imposing some

⁵⁶ "*Ora a dire di tutti sarebbe troppo lungo, basterassi l'uno bene. Dico prima che ne mostra l'opera che dovemo fare, e questo è l'amore*". It is interesting to note that Aristotle was invoked in this sermon as the authority that underpinned the preacher's analysis method. Before spelling out the three parts of the commandment, Giordano said: "And willing to see this, we can see it and consider it in three parts, because there are three sides. For the Wise said that to see and have a full understanding of a thing, one ought to approach it and see it from all parts, because there is great variety from all parts" [*Ed a volere vedere ciò, si potemo vedere e considerare da tre parti, perocchè ha tre lati. Chè disse il Savio, che a vedere e aver pieno entendimento dela cosa, si si conviene cercala e vederla da tutte le sue parti; perocchè da ogni parte ha grande varietà*] (GIORDANO DA PISA, 1867, p. 179). For this method, see *Politics*, I, 1252a.

boundaries on what should be said, the sermon's *thema* does not absolutely limit the contents that can be employed in preaching. In a different way, the liturgical context seems to form a *flexible matrix* (DELCORNO, 2015, p. 18) from which certain subjects may be drawn.

However, it must be evident that in the first preaching the most coherent argumentation would certainly be to build a positive image of society – as actually Giordano did. From *thema* there is the fact that Christ's commandment demands from man the love of neighbour and establishes divine love as law. The friar then stated that similarity and the same nature – all that is minimally shared with one's neighbour – leads to this love and to congregation. Therefore, the love of neighbour must be something natural, as well as human society which would thus be taken invariably in a positive sense. In other words, this means that to present a different image of human community would require a greater rhetorical effort on the part of Giordano and, most likely, would make this procedure almost impracticable. Obviously, the friar had the talent needed for it: he could start from an evaluation of the Earthly society's condition regarding all its conflicts, contradictions and its lack of the love of neighbour (as in the case of the factionalism between Black and White Guelfs and between Guelfs and Ghibellines, very familiar to the Florentines) to present a negative image it. However, if it did so, he would certainly do it to counteract this view of society with an ideal model of congregation based on charity. In dealing with the love of neighbour, when addressing the city topic, a *civitas*, in its ideal state, could only be established on this love and, consequently, it could only be good.

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