Late medieval ethical and theological concepts have already been recognized as highly original and thought-provoking. Among the issues debated in the High Middle Ages, the nature of the will itself provoked continuous and passionate disputes during the 14th century. They resulted in developing most original and sophisticated concepts of the will that focused on the complexity of the will and its inner structure. Late medieval masters pointed out to a multi-layered and multi-dimensional structure of the will providing definitions and explanations of first and second order acts of the will, the relation between levels of moral acts and their role in moral decision making - the issues that in the history of ethics appeared much later, and came under scrutiny in 20th century works of Harry Frankfurt and Gerald Dworkin.

The present project will point to the novelty of arguments and ideas with respect to the concepts of the will in late medieval ethics and theology. It will concentrate on the pioneering theories of the complexity of the will developed in late medieval works that are original not only against the background of medieval concepts of the will, but they also are pioneering when compared to contemporary ethical theories.

The present project will study the concept of the will of Richard Kilvington, who was one of the most prominent English fourteenth century scholars and also one of most influential logicians of that time. Employing the whole range of new arguments taken from the field of logic and mathematical physics, Kilvington formulated a most-extraordinary and complex concept of the will.

The project will show how and to what extent this new methodology allowed him to formulate a unique line of argumentation and develop a sophisticated theory of the will. Then, the project will go beyond Kilvington's thought and it will study the theories of the will in the works of Kilvington's predecessors and followers with a special focus on its complexity. We will concentrate on the concepts of the will of John Duns Sotus, William of Ockham, Henry of Ghent, Walter Chatton, Walter Burley, Richard FitzRalph, Gabriel Biel, Roger Roseth and John Buridan.

We will study the emergence of the new approach taken in late medieval ethics that concentrated on the complexity of the will and an atypical method adopted by Kilvington and his followers against the mainstream of the argumentation of that time. We will answer the question: To what extent did the new method became a motor for doctrinal innovation in late medieval concepts of the will in ethics and theology?

The project is a novelty in the Polish and international academic realm where researchers mostly concentrate on ethical concepts up to the thirteenth century and especially on the issues such as moral weakness and intellect-will relation.

Although scholars working on Kilvington's philosophy have already recognized Kilvington as an influential and original medieval master, they mainly focused on his logic and natural philosophy neglecting his concepts from ethics and theology, as well as the employment of the new methods in practical philosophy. There have been no works devoted to the complexity of the will in the later Middle Ages nor to the Kilvington's achievements in ethics and theology.

The project will also be a unique opportunity to point to the philosophical and theological traditions of the High Middle Ages that so far remain understudied. By making the texts of Kilvington's theological questions on the will available and by providing the analyses of late medieval concepts of the complexity of the will and of the main tendencies in argumentation in late medieval concepts of the will, it will fill the 'blank spot' in contemporary research on medieval ethics and theology. In this way, the project will also provide valuable information on still largely unknown achievements of late medieval ethics and theology as well as on the original methods that allowed approaching old dilemmas from a new and original perspective and created a possibility for developing new solutions and novel ideas in late medieval philosophy.