

**Gyula Klima and Alexander W. Hall, ed.** *Metaphysical Themes, Medieval and Modern* Vol. 11, Proceeding of the Society for Medieval Logic and Metaphysics. Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2014. 128 pp. £39.99 GBP (Hardcover ISBN 9781443853866).

This volume is the latest instalment of the *Proceedings of the Society for Medieval Logic and Metaphysics*. It is comprised of original papers presented at the 2012 sessions of *The International Congress on Medieval Philosophy* and *The American Catholic Philosophical Association* by members of the *Society of Medieval Logic and Metaphysics* (S.M.L.M.). Parts I and II focus on the metaphysics of substance as developed over the last eight centuries, shedding light on the transition from medieval to modern philosophy. Part I provides some critical discussion of Robert Pasnau's *Metaphysical Themes: 1274-1671*, with replies from Pasnau. Part II discusses competing theories in contemporary substance ontology, with special attention given to substratum theory, bundle theory, primitive substance theory and hylomorphism. Part III centres on conflicting contemporary interpretations of the metaphysical and logical presuppositions of Aquinas' natural theology.

For those unfamiliar with the S.M.L.M, it was founded in 2000 by Gyula Klima, Joshua Hochschild, Jack Zupko, and Jeffery Brower with the aim of promoting research based on the assumption that it is both possible and desirable to recover the metaphysical insights of medieval thinkers, but that this recovery is possible only if the logical framework in which these metaphysical insights are embedded is properly appreciated, for there are paradigmatic differences between medieval and modern logical theories. The S.M.L.M thus takes a clear although nuanced stance on an issue that divides contemporary specialists of the medieval period. There are some in the field who doubt whether the project of recovery is indeed possible. It is also wondered whether any recoverable material would prove useful to contemporary philosophical reflection. The root intuition here is that the differences between the philosophical mind-sets of the medieval and contemporary periods are so great as to preclude fruitful exchange. This attitude arose in large part as a necessary correction to the historically naïve approach of some who read medieval thinkers as though they wrote only last week. Now the S.M.L.M. is of the view that recovery of medieval material is possible, and desirable, but that the project must be handled with both philosophical and historical acumen. I, for one, find this eminently sensible.

This volume opens with Andrew Arlig's discussion of Pasnau's treatment of two themes, holenmerism and nominalist approaches to identity over time. Hologenmerism is the claim that one thing can be wholly present in distinct and separate things. Popular examples were the rational soul, said to be wholly present in each of a body's integral parts, and God, said to be present in everything. The relevance of holenmerism to contemporary thought is twofold: first, there is a similarity between alleged holenmers and some accounts of universals—thus arguments for or against either might go some way to defending or critiquing the other; second, if immaterial objects exist, holenmerism might be a principled way to distinguish them from material things. Arlig, following Henry More, argues that holenmerism is in fact incoherent, thereby threatening commitments to both universals and immaterial objects. As for nominalism and theories of identity over time. Arlig takes issue with Pasnau's claim that Buridan denies persistence across time for humans and other animals. The issue here centres on whether there can be different metaphysically respectable senses of 'being numerically the same thing,' a topic of abiding interest.

The second paper of Part I is Paul Symington's discussion of Aquinas' interpretation of the Aristotelian categories. Aristotle says that the categories are divisions of 'things that are,' but whether

these ‘things’ are meant to be extramental, linguistic, or mental entities is not as clear as one might like. The situation is confused by the fact that Aristotle maintained that there is an isomorphism between thought and thing, although this isomorphism is far from complete. It is generally accepted that Aristotle maintained that reality shapes our concepts by literally informing the intellect via perception and the process of abstraction; but it is also maintained that not all of our concepts map on to reality in any straightforward fashion. The result is that tracing the relations between thought and thing requires delicate handling. Various ways of interpreting what the categories categorize were developed, with varying implications for their ontological import. Some scholastics maintained the view that each category, including the accidental categories, picks out a distinct kind of real, i.e., extramental, thing; but others sought to reduce the number of irreducible kinds of entities (often leaving only substance, quantity and quality) while defending deflationary or even eliminativist views of at least some of the accidental categories. Olivi, for example, doubts whether the accidental categories categorize anything at all. Pasnau argues that Aquinas held a deflationary view of many of the categories, the accidental categories picking out what he calls ‘features’ or ‘structures’ of reality but not a *res* or even a mode of a *res*. Symington disagrees, and maintains that Aquinas thinks the accidental categories are at least modes of substances. Along the way issues regarding methodology are raised, particularly the role of linguistic analysis as a guide to ontology.

Part II is devoted to substance ontology, medieval and modern. Dumsday takes substance ontologies to come in four main varieties: (a) Substratum theorists maintain that substances are bare substratum-attribute compounds; (b) Bundle theorists hold that substances are aggregates of properties; (c) Primitive substance theorists claim that substances are neither compounds nor aggregates but are primitively unified and individuated; and (d) advocates of Hylomorphism maintain that substances are prime matter-substantial form compounds. Dumsday’s contribution argues that what motivates contemporaries to plumb for the substratum theory ultimately forces them into an uncomfortable dilemma: either one must abandon the substratum theory for hylomorphism, or one can hold onto the substratum theory but abandon naturalism, here understood as the view that there are no causal agents operating outside the laws of nature. The upshot is that Dumsday has an argument for hylomorphism or a form of non-naturalism based on the presuppositions of the substratum theorist.

The argument is as follows (82):

1. According to substratum theory, substrata are receptive of properties.
2. If substrata are receptive in this fashion, there must be a truthmaker which explains this receptivity (after all, that properties need grounding is the main difference between substratum theorists and bundle theorists).
3. So, there is a truthmaker which explains the receptivity of substrata.
4. Whatever explains the receptivity of substrata must be either internal to substrata or external to substrata (the exclusive sense of ‘or’ is in operation here).
5. Now, if the truthmaker is internal, one has abandoned the idea of a genuinely bare particular, i.e., the core claim of substratum theory, and one is on the road to hylomorphism (which claims that prime matter is that component of a substance which explains its receptive capacity).
6. However, if the truthmaker is external, adherence to the bare particular is saved but at the expense of positing the existence of something which operates outside the laws of nature. For

in this case one is forced to accept that there exists something which is able to bestow properties upon a bare particular despite that particular having no natural receptive capacity for properties.

7. So, substratum theory leads to either hylomorphism or to non-naturalism (inclusive sense of 'or' is in operation here).

In his reply to Dumsday Gyula Klima accepts the conclusion of the foregoing argument, and goes on to suggest that the ease with which the substratum theorist has been compromised is symptomatic of much contemporary metaphysics. To the obvious question, namely: Why do otherwise sensible and intelligent people uphold such flimsy theories? Klima offers a cynical, hilarious, but all too plausible answer. Philosophers have a taste for 'revolutionary' philosophies, and we venerate the philosophers that produce them. Moreover, such philosophies are easy to generate. In his 'recipe for modern metaphysics' (85) he sets out an algorithm for attaining philosophical celebrity. First, choose any category of entity you like—being careful *not* to choose Aristotelian primary substance. Second, claim that entities in this category are primary or ontologically basic. Third, make the 'bold' i.e., nonsensical, claim that everything else is a collection—or, to sound even better, a 'mereological whole'—of the basic entities. Fourth, anticipate the obvious objections your incredulous audience is likely to raise. Fifth, 'interpret', i.e., mangle, ordinary language in an effort to give your thesis at least the appearance of coherence while not making it too plausible (since that detracts from its revolutionary *bona fides*). Sixth, get yourself an agent who knows something about marketing. Modifying the old adage, attaining philosophical celebrity is 1% inspiration, 9% perspiration, and 90% marketing.

Part III deals exclusively with technical issues concerning Aquinas' proofs for the existence of God. What sparks this extended discussion are claims made by Catherine Pickstock and John Milbank to the effect that the proofs are not demonstrative but only probable. The rationale for these claims is that demonstration proper requires univocity in order to avoid the fallacy of equivocation. Since Aquinas does not think that any term can be applied to God and creatures univocally, but at best only analogically, the proofs fail to meet the standards of a demonstrative syllogism. The lesson they draw from this is that Scotus was right to insist, *pace* Aquinas, that some sense of 'exists' must be applicable univocally to both God and creatures if there is to be a 'God science'.

Alexander Hall takes up this challenge on behalf of Aquinas, arguing that one can continue to uphold Aquinas' views regarding analogical predication while maintaining that the proofs are demonstrative. The key is that the arguments move from effects to causes, and while it is true that terms do not apply univocally to the cause and effects in this particular case, analogical predication is sufficient because there is a prior commitment to the principle that 'effects must be proportionate to their causes'. That is, Aquinas accepts the dictum that there must be at least as much being in a cause as there is in its effects on pain of violating the principle that nothing comes from nothing. This means that, whatever the precise sense of 'exists' that is predicated of God, it must at least match the level of being or existence found in the effects from which the proof starts, and that is good enough for the proof to count as demonstrative. That this is so can be seen from the fact that analogical predication *per se* is not taken to be problematic in other cases of inferring the existence of causes from effects. This is because there are various ways in which an effect can be proportionate to its cause, not all of which require univocal predication. One example of a property existing in an effect and its cause in the same mode of being, and thus univocally, is the case of man begetting man.

In such cases a father is proportionate to son, and so the term ‘humanity’ applies univocally to both. But not all cases are like this. A property in an effect may exist in its cause but not in the same mode of being, as when the form of a house exists in one way in the mind of the architect but another in the house itself. In this case the form of house exists in both cause and effect, but not in the same mode of being, and so the term is not applied univocally. Still, the architect is (one of) the causes of the house, and from the existence of a house one can infer the existence of the form of house in the architect. Sometimes the cause exceeds the effect, as the heat of the Sun was said to exceed the heat of a fire; but what you cannot have is the effect exceeding the cause. Finally, a property of an effect may exist ‘virtually’ but not actually in its cause, as when friction produces heat. There is no heat literally in the bodies subjected to friction, nonetheless friction is the cause of the generated heat. Now the idea is that in some of these cases of mundane causation analogical predication is in play, but the inference from effect to cause does not seem to be compromised. The same applies to the move from creatures to God. We don’t know anything about the manner of God’s existence, but we know that it cannot fail to match the level of existence attributed to creatures known immediately. Whether this thin sense of existence is all that Scotus is asking for is another matter.

But by far the greater amount of space is devoted to the issue of whether, on Hall’s rendering, Aquinas’ first way is valid. At issue is whether establishing that there is a first mover is enough to establish the existence of God. There follows a detailed discussion between Hall and Sirilla as to whether the terms ‘first mover’ and ‘God’ are convertible or not, with various considerations being brought forward on either side. But it is far from clear, at least to this reviewer, that Aquinas thought the first way on its own was sufficient to establish the existence of God. It seems far more likely that he would have accepted that additional considerations are needed to show, for example, that God, and only God, could be this first mover. And he, along with other scholastics, routinely supplemented the first way with additional considerations to show precisely this. Aquinas, for instance, maintained that the first cause is immaterial, and, since matter is the principle of individuation, there could only be one first cause, an indefinite number of entities that could play the role of first cause being a metaphysical impossibility. Later Scotus would argue that multiplying first causes would amount to multiplying universes, since each first cause would support its own set of dependent entities, these latter entities having no ontological relation to the first cause of the other set dependent entities. Since no one takes the actual world to be more than one world, there can only be one first cause in this world. In any case, all parties to this dispute agree that the argument can be rendered valid once the necessary background commitments are recognized.

All in all this is a solid and stimulating collection of papers, and a good addition to the *Proceedings*.

**Stephen Boulter**, Oxford Brookes University