

Summaries

GYÖRGY HEIDL

Faith, Reason and Touch

From the start, philosophers were appalled by the Christian effort to have their teaching recognized as a philosophy, what is more, as the only true and genuine philosophy, given that the cornerstone of their philosophy was the concept of faith, and they expected their followers to have faith. Irrationalism was a recurring charge made by philosophers against Christians. The aim of this paper is to point to the various meaning of the term faith used by the Christians and the parallels between the Christian and non-Christian philosophy from this viewpoint. I offer a brief overview of the Biblical meanings of “faith,” including a discussion of the philosophical concepts of faith that may have influenced early Christian spirituality. Then, I further characterize the distinctive Christian understanding of “faith” from several points of view. Finally, I draw a strong connection between “faith” and the metaphor of “touch,” which will lead to fundamental questions about Christian and Platonic mysticism.

GYULA KLIMA

Words and What Is Beyond Words

This paper, “Words and What Is Beyond Words”, directly addresses the extraordinary hermeneutical scenario generated by the improper, but not illegitimate uses of language required to talk about what is beyond the grasp of the ordinary meanings of our ordinary words. To provide a sufficiently general theoretical framework for the discussion of this hermeneutical scenario, I distinguish three typical interpretational practices, and argue for what I regard as the “the golden mean” between two bad extremes.

JOSHUA P. HOCHSCHILD

Thomas Aquinas, *Magister Ludi*: The Relation of Medieval Logic and Theology

This paper seeks to articulate the relationship between medieval logic and theology. Reviewing modern scholarship, we find that the purpose of medieval logic, when it is even inquired about, has proven difficult to articulate without reference to theology. This prompts reflection on the metaphors of logic as a “tool” and a “game”: a tool is not merely instrumental, insofar as it can have its own intrinsic goods and can shape and be shaped by that which it serves; likewise a game, with its own intrinsic goods, may yet contribute to extrinsic goods as well. After reviewing some distinctive ways in which theology shaped developments of medieval logic, this paper summarizes key examples from the work of Thomas Aquinas where medieval logic shaped the articulation of, and is therefore crucial to a proper understanding of, theological arguments and claims. The conclusion suggests implications for future philosophical and theological work.

GÁBOR BORBÉLY

The Triumph of Renouncement

The purpose of this paper is to explore some of the basic assumptions that, I believe, Aquinas’s ambitious work, the *Summa contra Gentiles* greatly depends on. These assumptions appear to form the bedrock of Aquinas’s deep personal convictions, and as such they may have been the driving force behind his attempt to manifest the truth and eliminate all human error in this work. By casting light upon these assumptions, I aim to clarify some aspects of his „odd project” that has so stubbornly resisted attempts at contextualization. The first of these assumptions concerns the reliability of religious signalling: handicapped signals provide reliable information about the quality they display, for only high-quality signallers can afford to send them. In his attempt to justify religious commitment, Aquinas relied on the same insight that – centuries later – led to the formulation of the handicap principle in evolutionary biology. I will thus take a closer look at both the handicap principle itself and the subsequent debates on the principle in evolutionary biology in order to reveal that Aquinas addresses problems in the *Summa contra Gentiles* that can be seen at different levels of biological organization and cultural complexity in signalling systems, especially when doubts arise about the reliability of the signals, i.e., when the possibility of error and deception appears. The second of Aquinas’s assumptions that I will investigate is that mental states and processes exist, yet they are principally hidden from fellow human beings to the extent that only the willing and thinking subject and God have full access to them. It thus also follows that errors (as misrepresentations of reality resulting from defective mental operations) are principally hidden and – aside from the thinking subject – they, too, can only be known by God. However, if error and deceptive intent are hidden, then how can they be identified and eliminated? What can human beings do to promote cautious and accurate communication that is in the best interest of cooperative signallers, as it reduces the chance of costly, occasionally even fatal mistakes? These are both epistemological and ethico-theological problems for Aquinas, since he holds – and this is the third assumption that I examine – that errors are chiefly responsible for human misery. In Aquinas’s view, only religion can

unite people in a common form of life that, in turn, can lead them to ultimate happiness. Uniting people in a common form of life by eliminating principally hidden errors: this is the agenda that links Aquinas's deep personal convictions with his vocation as a Dominican friar and spiritual warrior.

NICOLAS FAUCHER

Voluntary Belief and Moral Duty in Peter John Olivi

The aim of the present paper is to examine the foundational character of the notion of voluntary belief in Peter John Olivi's conception of the moral and social life of the individual subject. Voluntary belief is a form of belief that is produced because the believer wills it to occur for moral reasons rather than in response to epistemic reasons. It is considered essential for fulfilling the most basic moral duties (such as having faith or having filial piety) and for many common human activities. It is problematic, however, for the promotion of such a belief risks undervaluing respect for objective truth. It may also entail an infinite regress. If a moral belief is caused by an act of the will, as Olivi thinks, and if something is justified only when what causes it is justified, then the justification of this moral belief will entail the justification of the corresponding act of the will. But it seems the justification of an act of the will must be moral rather than epistemic in nature and ultimately rest on a moral belief. If this moral belief is itself caused by an act of the will, and so on ad infinitum, there will be an infinite regress. In this paper, I will deal with these problems by first recalling the already studied Olivian doctrine of faith, which is the context in which his view on voluntary belief, be it faithful or otherwise, is detailed; second, I will examine a moral conundrum Olivi presents in two of his works: the question whether it should be revealed that an adulterous son is adulterous; third and last, I will put forward hypotheses accounting for the Franciscan's view that, in the vast majority of cases, it should not be revealed that the adulterous son is indeed adulterous and draw broader consequences from this case regarding the general link between moral life and voluntary belief that Olivi's texts suggest.

MAGALI ROQUES

William of Ockham on the Ontology of Social Objects (in His Academic Writings)

This paper deals with the ontology of social realities as found in William of Ockham's academic writings. It focuses on one class of social realities, namely, those that are called "voluntary signs" in the Middle Ages. For Franciscan theologians, like Peter John Olivi, Roger Bacon or William Ockham, voluntary signs are signs that depend on human convention to have a social function. They include not only linguistic signs, but also monetary price (*pretium*), property right (*dominium*), and the sacraments. For these theologians, the question is how something material like a sign, a coin, or a ritual, can have any social function at all. I will argue that for Ockham they have a social function because a mental state is part of their nature, namely the decision to endow a material object with a social function for the first time or to follow an established social practice. How does this social process

work? For Ockham and other Franciscan theologians before him, the question is whether the model of the covenant that grounds social reality (economic and other kinds of social exchanges, including linguistic exchanges) is to be conceived analogously to the model of the covenant between God and human beings (concerning what is required for salvation, and therefore especially the sacraments). I will argue that it is, contrary to the opposite view defended in the literature that conceives of the analogy in the reverse direction.

GYÖRGY GERÉBY

**The Changeability of the Past: Medieval and Modern.
A Common Theme between Peter Damian and Hans Jonas**

Against the common view Hans Jonas (1903–1993) and Petrus Damiani (c. 1007–1072/3), independently from each other argued for the possibility of a contingent past. In this paper, I reconstruct and compare their positions. In the case of Jonas, the changeability is implicit, based on two considerations: the first is the result of his analysis of the conditions of truth in historical statements, while the second is the consequence of his reflections on the theological implications of the *shoah*. In Damiani's case, the changeability is explicit, an original idea against the views of Aristotle, Jerome and Augustine, based on his understanding of divine omnipotence, which is then supported with an ingenious logical analysis. While Jonas and Damiani reached their conclusions independently, both were based on theological considerations, albeit on widely different ones. The contingency of the past had also exercised the minds of most medieval theologians, as I will show this briefly by Peter of Ailly's dilemma concerning prophecies. Finally, I argue that the non-standard views of Jonas és Damiani imply consequences for the concepts of God, time, and freedom.

DÁNIEL SCHMAL

**Tradition and Novelty in Early Modern Scholasticism:
The Case of Nicolás Martínez and Leonard Lessius**

Comparisons between late scholastic authors and seventeenth-century philosophers belonging to the “modern” camp are often limited to the analysis of their respective ideas either in terms of continuity and discontinuity or, in a more sociological vein, in relation to their methodology and social background. Taking another perspective, in this article I propose to analyse some literary and argumentative techniques employed by late scholastic writers to integrate new elements into traditional wisdom. The authors chosen for this study, Nicolás Martínez SJ (1617–1676) and Leonard Lessius SJ (1554–1623), illustrate how late scholastic writers treat the Patristic and medieval heritage when they use authoritative texts for innovative purposes. Although ecclesiastical *auctoritas* continues to serve as the basis for theological argumentation in their texts, the case studies highlight how making distinctions among meanings allegedly present in the tradition, along with other “techniques of alignment,” are employed to integrate new ideas and fulfil the need for conformity at the same time.