

# Abstracts

## 1. Timothy Chappell - *Jesus and philosophy in Aquinas*

**Abstract:** In this paper I shall present some thoughts--possibly quite tentative ones--about the place(s) of Jesus in Aquinas' philosophical thought.

## 2. Gabriele De Anna - *Political things: on the individuation of political communities in Thomas Aquinas*

**Abstract:** The talk is about metaphysics and it deals with the principles of unity of political communities in Thomas Aquinas. It highlights the importance of intentionality, reason and authority for the existence of communities and it discusses the importance of this ontological stand for the study of political dynamics and the foundation of political science.

## 3. Peter Dvořák - *Is „God exists“ broadly logically necessary for Aquinas?*

**Abstract:** It is a well-known fact that for Aquinas “God exists” is not self-evident for humans and has to be deduced a posteriori (in the traditional sense, i.e. from effects; e.g. *Sth* I, 2, a. 1, *De Ver.* 10, a. 2, co.). Once proved, can we say that it is broadly logically necessary that God exists? In other words, does God exist in all possible worlds for Aquinas? There can be a strong case made for the view that this is indeed so. But is Thomas entitled to hold such a view? Granted that once there are contingent actual entities, there is also God to back them up ontologically, still, couldn't there be an absolutely empty world, sheer nothingness? If this be possible, “God exists” is not broadly logically necessary. Also, an a posteriori proof (in the modern sense of having at least one factual premise) makes the conclusion conditionally necessary, not absolutely necessary. Does Aquinas's a posteriori derivation of divine existence require additional strengthening by a move inherent in the ontological argument as Kant thought? In relation to that there arises the question whether the “essence includes existence” notion implies logically necessary existence or some weaker type of necessary existence (subsistent, i.e. causally independent, etc.) compatible with logical contingency. The paper will deal with all these questions. The background problem is that of the status of Aquinas's a posteriori reasoning, the conclusion derived and its relationship to an a priori proof (in the modern sense of not including factual statements).

#### **4. Michał Głowala** - *What is it for a Tendency to be Blocked? Some Remarks on the Distinction of *inclinatio in actu primo* and *in actu secundo**

**Abstract:** It is an important trait of tendencies (*inclinatio, appetitus*) that they are defeasible, but a tendency which is just blocked remains ready to be released. Now the analysis of frustration of a tendency of a power by interference of a factor preventing its fulfilment poses some interesting problems for ontology of tendencies. Three questions are of importance here. (i) Does the power prevented from F-ing retain in the presence of the obstacle any tendency to F which is ready to be released? (It is clear that *in some sense* the power does *not* have a tendency to F in the presence of the obstacle, because in some sense it is natural for the power *not* to F in the presence of the obstacle: a particular mode of defeasibility is an internal property of the tendency.) (ii) Does the power have any tendency not to F (or to stop it) in the presence of the obstacle, comparable to its tendency to F in the absence of obstacles? (It is clear that a tendency to F in given circumstances and a tendency not to F in other circumstances *may be* one and the same tendency.) (iii) What is the relation between the tendency to F retained by the power (and ready to be released) and the manifestation of the power in activity directed towards removal of the obstacle (*renitentia actualis*)?

I would like to discuss three strategies of answering these questions developed in the 16-17<sup>th</sup> century thomism. They are to be found in commentaries on *Summa theologiae* I-II, 6, 4: *Utrum violentia voluntati possit inferri?* – especially in the important discussion whether Aquinas' thesis that it is logically impossible to coerce an agent's *will* holds also for other kinds of powers. These strategies shed much light on the issues of various kinds of powers and tendencies and their identity criteria; they show also the role of the scholastic distinction of *inclinatio in actu primo* (a constant tendency which is manifested from time to time) and *inclinatio in actu secundo* (an actual manifestation of the former).

#### **5. Christian Kanzian** - *Incomplete Natures - a Thomistic Idea and its Relevance in Contemporary Philosophy*

**Abstract:** In the second article of his famous question 75 (*Summa theologiae, prima pars*) St. Thomas distinguishes between a *hoc aliquid* which subsists as a complete nature (*completo in natura alicuius speciei*) and a *hoc aliquid* for which this is not the case.

In my talk I intend (as the *finis proximus*) to investigate the context of the Thomistic theses and to discuss the relevance of the idea of incomplete natures for a systematic theory of the individual form of persons. The *finis remotus* of my talk is a hylomorphic account on human persons.

#### **6. Tomasz Kąkol** - *Aquinas and the ontological argument*

**Abstract:** Aquinas is widely recognized as a philosopher who rejects the ontological argument. However, he clearly sets conditions under which such an argument *can* be accepted – namely, it can, provided that the thesis that God (or God's essence) is His existence can be *per se* obvious. So the reason for his alleged rebuttal of the ontological argument seems to be purely technical – Aquinas himself tries to *prove* the aforementioned thesis (three arguments in *Summa theologiae* and six arguments in *Summa contra gentiles*). Elsewhere I argued that all these arguments are problematic (*Is God His Essence? The Logical Structure of Aquinas' Proofs for this Claim*, “Philosophia”, vol. 41(2013), 2), but the real question is: if we succeeded in establishing the thesis that God's essence is His existence would we construct the sound ontological argument? In my talk I justify my answer ‘no’ by analyzing the *formally* valid Spinozian Gut's ontological argument (for details see my *W kwestii dowodów Spinozy na istnienie Boga i dowodu na jedyność Spinozjanskiej substancji* [1], “Filo-Sofija”, 17 (2012/2)) with the premise stating that *whenever something's essence involves its existence, then this very thing exists*.

[1] *On Spinoza's Proofs for (Spinozian) God's Existence and the Proof for the Uniqueness of the Spinozian Substance*

## **7. Piotr Lichacz - *On the ontological status of moral vice***

**Abstract:** In this paper I shall explore several issues concerning the manner of existence of moral vice according to St. Thomas Aquinas. My main interest will be in the kind of relations involved in the existence and knowability of vice.

## **8. Anna Marmodoro - *Aquinas on causal powers, composition and emergence***

## **9. Uwe Meixner - *An Axiomatization of Thomas Aquinas's Theory of Ontological Composition***

**Abstract:** Thomas distinguishes substances by the manner and degree of their compositeness. The paper presents a formal representation of his teaching on (the varieties of) ontological compositeness and simplicity (relative and absolute), the possible main elements of ontological composition being the following four: matter, form, essence, existence. The paper shows that his teaching on compositeness and simplicity can be put together in a consistent, formally axiomatized theory.

## **10. Roger Pouivet - *Was Thomas Aquinas a Virtue Epistemologist?***

**Abstract:** The idea of an "analytically oriented Thomism" implies a certain conception of the history of philosophy, more reconstructive than

commemorative. We can take, as an example, the understanding of the "epistemology" of St. Thomas posited by contemporary, analytical virtue epistemology. Does viewing Thomas in this way yield a good understanding of his thought, or is it just one more Thomism, to be added to those we experienced during the Twentieth century under the influence of different philosophical trends? This paper defends the idea that we are often unable to understand what a philosopher of earlier times said if we simply read him attentively with a certain knowledge of his historical context. There must also be something in the philosophy of our time that makes such a philosopher understandable for us. Here we examine why, and to what extent, recent virtue epistemology might help us to make sense of Aquinas' thought.

## 11. Christian Tapp - *Aquinas' account of Divine infinity*

**Abstract:** According to Aquinas, infinity occupies a central place in the range of divine attributes. In the *Summa theologiae*, for instance, infinity is discussed immediately after divine goodness and before ubiquity and immutability. However, it seems to me that the sense of „infinity“ is much more abstract than the senses of most of the other divine attributes (except the identity of *esse* and *essentia*, perhaps). Many divine attributes derive their meaning from mundane properties that we understand quite well (at least to quite an advanced degree, so that discussions of problems concern only minor problems of precision). For example, immutability simply means not to be subject of change, omniscience to know whatever can be known, and incorporeality not to have a material body (like we do). Infinity, in contrast, means not to be finite or limited (STh I,7,1). But what is a limitation? Of course we can say that my powers are limited iff there are possible states of affairs that I can not bring about. But is this extensional account of limitations applicable in general? One of Aquinas' arguments for divine infinity is that God is pure form, i.e., form without the limitation by matter. Because it is hard to conceive of an extensional interpretation of this doctrine, we must look for other conceptions of limitation. Does it make sense to say that something is limited in a certain respect while it is unlimited in another respect? Does a limitation presuppose a total linear ordering, a topology or a metric? Finally, does it make sense to say that God is infinite in that He is unlimited in every respect? What about the limits, logic imposes on God?