

VOLUME LXXVIII, Number 1

September 2024

Finding the Means: Socrates in Dialogue with Simonides, LYDIA BARRY

This article explores Socrates' long analysis of Simonides' "Ode to Scopas," found near the end of Plato's *Protagoras*. Socrates misinterprets the poem to suggest that virtue is akin to technical knowledge, whereas the poem suggests instead that a wholly virtuous life is impossible, and that the good life is divine, achievable only by the gods. The author argues that Socrates' exegesis dialectically opposes the idea that virtue is knowledge, along with his suggestion that the good life can be secured through a hedonistic calculus, with the poem's emphasis on the insurmountable limitations to human flourishing. Socrates' misreading highlights the provisional and aporetic nature of philosophical accounts of virtue, suggesting that continuous inquiry in the face of misfortune is constitutive of human goodness. The article concludes by proposing that philosophical speech must be self-disclosive and poetic, indicating its own limitations, while engaging in a dialogical pursuit of truth.

Richard Lynch, S.J. on the Community of Being, VICTOR SALAS

This study considers the thought of Baroque Jesuit philosopher Richard Lynch regarding the community of being. Insofar as he extends the analogy of being to include not only real being but also beings of reason, some have suggested that Lynch embraces a supertranscendental conception of being. Such an account of being would ultimately construe being in terms of the "thinkable" or objectivity, rather than actual, extramental reality. The author argues that, despite his affirmation of the community of being, Lynch does not advance a supertranscendental metaphysics. The reason for this is the peculiar meaning he attributes to beings of reason, which, he thinks, are ultimately resolved in terms of real being. For Lynch, then, the community of being remains fixed to the structures of what is truly real.

Hegel and the Ought, RYAN FROESE

It is often assumed that Hegel is opposed to "the ought" because he privileges actuality over and against what merely ought to be and what is merely possible. In this paper, the author argues that, far from denying or dismissing their existence, the ought and unactual possibility are ineliminable parts of his metaphysics as laid out in his *Science of Logic*. However, although Hegel argues for the existence of the ought and unactual possibility, he also demonstrates why the good itself cannot be captured with these concepts alone. His account of the good demonstrates why his metaphysics is open to an ought which is not a mere beyond, and unactual possibility that is not abstract. This in turn allows him to conceive of a metaphysical account of the good that surpasses these categories by framing the good in terms of actuality and truth.

The Multilayered Context of Leszek Kolakowski's Hermeneutical Metaphysics, GUIDO VANHEESWIJCK

In 1988, the Polish philosopher Leszek Kołakowski published his essay *Metaphysical Horror*, conceived as a philosophical and historical interpretation of the vicissitudes of metaphysics in Western philosophy. At the same time, Kołakowski's attempt to map out the history of that metaphysical horror was a way to escape from it. Put differently, he traced the evolution of metaphysical horror—from metaphysics to antimetaphysics—in Western philosophy while simultaneously pleading for the preservation of metaphysics, be it in a very specific shape. To clarify Kołakowski's idiosyncratic position regarding the status of metaphysics, the author's exposition falls into two parts, each in three steps. In the first part, mainly drawing upon a textual analysis of *Metaphysical Horror*, Kołakowski's portrayal of the evolution of Western metaphysics toward its marginalization in contemporary philosophy is summarized. Subsequently, his own concept of hermeneutical metaphysics in relation to the everlasting importance of man's metaphysical need for the Absolute is presented. In the second part, set up as an exercise in intellectual history, Kołakowski's concept of hermeneutical metaphysics is situated against the double background of his Oxford environment and of that of an Eastern-European ally regarding the vicissitudes of the metaphysical tradition. The conclusion is double. First, this twofold background makes it clear why his hermeneutical metaphysics is at the same time a historical metaphysics and a moral ontology, dependent on man's everlasting metaphysical need for the Absolute. Second, it clarifies why his hermeneutical metaphysics takes a unique position in contemporary philosophy, different from the current concept of analytic metaphysics, on the one hand, and from the present-day concept of post-metaphysics in Continental philosophy, on the other.

F. H. Bradley and the Metaphysics of Nonreductive Physicalism, KEVIN MORRIS

With a few exceptions, F. H. Bradley has become a forgotten figure in the history of philosophy. The author argues that Bradley's thoughts on relations are at least relevant to assessing the status of nonreductive physicalism as a comprehensive metaphysic and, moreover, that they can be seen to raise some nontrivial challenges to nonreductive physicalism so understood. In pursuing this line of thought, he considers two of Bradley's regresses in *Appearance and Reality*—the better known “chain” regress and the lesser known “fission” regress—and explains their relevance to nonreductive physicalism.