

Nevertheless, the failure to find a convincing proof of idealism in Husserl's work is hardly a reason for condemning an otherwise splendid book, one which should be essential reading for anyone studying Husserl's text.

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*Aquinas*, by Eleonore Stump. London: Routledge, 2003. Pp. xx + 611. H/b £65.00.

Until now, Eleonore Stump's considerable reputation has depended on her well-known brilliance as a philosophical interlocutor as much as on anything she has written. Her early work in medieval logic has been influential, but only among specialists, and her more recent work on Aquinas, philosophy of religion, and free will has been spread over so many far-flung journals and edited volumes that its overall impact has been diminished. All that should change now that we have this massive entry in Routledge's *Arguments of the Philosophers* series. Although the book consists largely in a compilation of some of those far-flung articles (often rewritten extensively), its overall impact is—to use a notion she regularly ascribes to Aquinas—more than the sum of its parts. This is by far the best book we have on Aquinas's philosophy as a whole, and it will undoubtedly become a standard point of reference for anyone interested in his work.

The book's sixteen chapters range widely over Aquinas's metaphysics, theology, psychology, epistemology, and ethics. No attempt is made to touch upon all of Aquinas's thought; indeed, major topics such as the Five Ways are omitted entirely. Stump's plan instead is to provide representative discussions from different areas of Aquinas's thought. For instance, instead of a cursory survey of Aquinas's discussion of the different virtues, she offers a chapter on justice, a chapter on wisdom, and a chapter on faith—thus covering one moral virtue, one intellectual virtue, and one theological virtue. In addition to these philosophical topics, Stump ranges quite far into matters of revealed theology such as grace, the incarnation, and atonement. Even so, the book is written throughout from the vantage point of contemporary philosophical debates. As Stump remarks at the start, 'Its explicit purpose is to explicate the views of Aquinas with some historical accuracy and to bring them into dialogue with the corresponding discussions in contemporary philosophy' (p. ix). Throughout, the latter aim dominates. Although Stump has serious credentials as a medieval scholar, and is a close and careful reader of the text, this is more a

philosophical than an historical book. She pays little attention to the chronology of Aquinas's writings, to the broader scholastic context in which he was writing, or to the historical antecedents that shaped Aquinas's thought.

For some, these observations (most of which Stump herself recognizes in the preface) will count as serious criticisms. What makes this a wonderful book, however, is Stump's willingness to sacrifice these sorts of scholarly details for something else, an extended argument that Aquinas's work remains philosophically interesting today over a wide range of topics. To my mind, one of the most successful chapters in this regard is the one on justice. Stump begins with the contemporary divide between the impersonal, egalitarian standpoint and the personal standpoint represented, for instance, by the ethics of care. Rather implausibly, at first glance, she contends that Aquinas's work points to a way out of this impasse. She then proceeds to set out Aquinas's views on distributive and commutative justice. In contrast to views that give a larger role to property rights, Aquinas believes that for someone in need it is morally permissible to take goods from another:

In cases of need, all things are common. And so it does not seem to be a sin [of any kind] if one person [in great need] takes a thing belonging to [the abundance of] another, for it has been made common as a result of [his] need. (p. 322, translating *Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, 66.7sc)

Correspondingly, alms-giving is morally obligatory. But this leads Stump to consider a puzzle: how can alms-giving be made consistent with Aquinas's views on commutative justice, with its requirement that all exchanges be of equal value? The answer turns out to be that such cases concern distributive and not commutative justice, because they are 'a matter of distributing what ultimately belongs to God in accordance with God's purposes' (p. 326).

Next, to make matters even more interesting, Stump turns to consider cases of spiritual alms-giving, and takes as her example the obligation of fraternal correction. This is one of those topics that only Stump would think to incorporate in a discussion of this sort, but it turns out to be marvellously apt, because once again a puzzle arises: why should I expose myself to the risk of confronting another, potentially sacrificing my social standing or economic well-being, simply in order to offer (probably unwanted) moral guidance to another? Does this not again violate principles of justice? The solution in this case is analogous: '[O]ne can justly devote oneself to one's own projects and plans, but only up to a certain point. At that point, one's life belongs to the community, and it is lived justly only insofar as it furthers God's purposes, which include the well-being of the whole community' (p. 332). With this material in hand, Stump makes a surprisingly strong case for the initial claim that Aquinas sheds light on how to reconcile the personal and impersonal standpoints.

Readers acquainted at first hand with Stump's work will recognize that such summaries fail to do justice to its richness. Almost every page is animated by vivid examples, often drawn from real life, that both illustrate the philosophi-

cal issues and establish their relevance to the real world. This style, combined with her constant emphasis on connecting Aquinas's thought to our own modern philosophical preoccupations, should win this book a large and appreciative audience. But perhaps I have now said enough about the book's merits to be able to turn to some of its faults, without the risk that these criticisms will overshadow the initial praise. A first negative observation is that Stump neglects too much of the recent secondary literature. This is another one of those scholarly limitations that she expressly acknowledges in the preface, but this one I find harder to overlook. For instance, her chapter on Aquinas's epistemology, based on an article initially published in 1992, neither cites nor seems to take into account an important paper published the very next year by Scott MacDonald (in the *Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, of which Stump is co-editor), even though that paper reaches the opposite conclusion to her own (she defends a reliabilist reading of Aquinas; he defends a foundationalist reading). Elsewhere in the book Stump does cite this paper, but the point is not merely that she ought to mention it, but that she ought to have taken this and other important recent work more seriously into account.

A second criticism is that Stump has not really succeeded in writing a unified book. Although the chapters are connected by pro forma transitions, and a common style and method, there is no larger picture that emerges from the chapters taken together, and so no reason other than convenience for why these various discussions should be bound together. Moreover, Stump occasionally fails to notice ways in which the different chapters might seem to contradict each other. For instance, Aquinas's dualism is said to be non-Cartesian in large part because 'there is no efficient causal interaction between the soul and the matter it informs' (p. 210), but in subsequent chapters it turns out to be important that the soul's agent intellect exercises efficient causality on the body's phantasms (p. 264), and that the will is the efficient cause of motion in the body (p. 279). There is no express contradiction here, inasmuch as the first claim refers to prime matter, the others to informed matter (the body). But the point of the original observation was to show that Aquinas does not face the Cartesian problem of soul-body interaction, and the latter claims do very much seem to undermine that point. Indeed, one might cynically conclude that Aquinas faces all the difficulties of Cartesian dualism *plus* all the obscurities of Aristotelian hylomorphism.

Finally, and inevitably in a book of this sort, Stump takes positions that strike me as implausible and only weakly defended. An example is her analysis of Aquinas's claims that my soul is not me, and that the soul alone, when separated from its body at death, is not a human being. Until recently, the literature on Aquinas has been content to accept these claims at face value, but a recent flurry of discussion—perhaps largely provoked by Stump herself—has called attention to just how problematic these claims are. (Here I will attend only to her detailed discussion of this matter in chapter one. Later, in a chapter first published in 1995, Stump offers what looks to be a very different account of

these matters, according to which I partly survive in virtue of my soul's surviving without my body (p. 211, especially n. 96). Although this strikes me as the right thing to say, it no longer seems to be Stump's considered view. At a minimum, if the passages can be reconciled, that should have been made explicit.) In chapter one, Stump cites a great many passages where Aquinas seems committed to treating the separated soul as the same human being as when embodied (pp. 52–3). She then suggests that the first set of claims has been misunderstood: 'For Aquinas, in the case of human beings, the persistence of one metaphysical part of the whole thing is sufficient for the existence of that thing. Because constitution is not identity, however, it does not follow from this claim that the part is identical to the whole, or that a soul by itself is identical to a human being' (p. 53). The idea is that Aquinas's view should be understood as anticipating recent theories of constitution to account for the metaphysics of the part–whole relationship.

The idea is ingenious, and might account for some of the texts. If the parts of a substance are never identical to the whole, then even in the case where the whole person is constituted by just one part (that is, by the soul), it would not be the case that the soul *is* the human being. Instead, the soul would *constitute* the human being. Here and throughout many stretches of her book, however, Stump offers the reader surprisingly few actual texts to consider. And once we look into some of the texts, it becomes doubtful whether this interpretation can be defended. When Aquinas remarks, for instance, that 'Abraham's soul is not, strictly speaking, Abraham himself' (*IV Sent.* 43.1.1.1 ad 2), can this really be read as making a point about the distinction between constitution and identity? In context, that seems not just unlikely but positively impossible, because he insists on this point precisely so as to argue that bodily resurrection is necessary for human immortality. Hence he immediately concludes, 'So Abraham's soul's having life would not suffice for Abraham's being alive.' This flatly contradicts Stump's claim, quoted above, that the persistence of the soul 'is sufficient for the existence' of the human being. So if Aquinas does draw a distinction between constitution and identity, it seems plain that he would deny that a human soul could constitute a human being.

There are sure to be many more such criticisms of this book, for each one of its chapters, because this is sure to be one of the most stimulating and influential studies of medieval philosophy published for years to come.

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