

María Jesús Soto-Bruna (ed.), *Causality and Resemblance. Medieval Approaches to the Explanation of Nature*, Europaea Memoria, Reihe, I, Band: 127. Hildesheim, Zürich, and New York, Georg Olms Verlag, 2018, 182 pp. ISBN: 9783487156866. Cloth: €34.99

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Causality and Resemblance. Medieval Approaches to the Explanation of Nature is an edited volume consisting of eleven articles – in both English and Spanish – on accounts of causality in late classical and medieval thinkers such as Gregory of Nisa, Augustine, Eriugena, Philip the Chancellor, and Thomas Aquinas. In the introduction, María Jesús Soto-Bruna, the editor, explains that the theme of this collection prioritizes the question of unity and multiplicity within the cosmos. The emphasis on causality in Neoplatonic accounts on the unity and multiplicity of the Logos, Soto-Bruna explains, presents a «new perspective in medieval studies» which manifests the diverse understandings of medieval views of causality, particularly within a Neoplatonic framework.

The first article, «Teología del Logos: Unidad y Distinción en la Exégesis de Gregorio de Nisa Sobre Jn. 10,30» by Miguel Brungarolas addresses key theological and trinitarian debates concerning God as one and triune. Brungarolas begins the article with a brief overview of the major positions: the Antiochean tradition tended to affirm the unity of God at the cost of the distinction of the three Divine Persons. Modalism maintained that God is only one Person. A doctrine of hypostasis arose from the Alexandrian tradition wherein the equality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was obscured, a position which presented itself radically in Arian and post-Arian subordinationism. Thus, Brungarolas states, the contributions of Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nisa were key in developing a Trinitarian theology. Brungarolas's essay then dials in specifically on the question of unity and plurality in God in the thought of Gregory of Nisa with regard to two biblical texts from the Gospel of John. Through this analysis Brungarolas shows how Gregory of Nisa can show that there is a perfect existing unity between the Father and the Son. The Son proceeds from the Father, but there was never a time when the Word did not exist, for it is beyond space and time. This unity, however, does not prevent a distinction of persons between the Father and the Son. The Son proceeds from the Father but does not exist outside of the Father. Further, nothing of the Father exists outside of the Son. Brungarolas's essay thus highlights key theological issues relating to the theme of this volume.

Agnieszka Kijewska, in her article, «The Path of Mystical Experience in Augustine's Confessions», turns to the question of the nature of mystical experience as expressed by Augustine in his *Confessions*. She does so, however, in an unexpected manner by utilizing conceptual tools found in William Alston's 1991 book *Perceiving God. The Epistemology of Religious Experience*. Drawing upon Alston's explication of mystical experience as perception, Kijewska explains five features of mysticism as perception in relation to Augustine's

own experience. First, mystical perception is experiential. God as the object of Augustine's mystical experience is present to him from the outset. Second, there is a sense of immediacy. Alston identifies three degrees of immediacy: absolute immediacy, mediated immediacy, and mediate perception. Augustine's experience in the garden of Milan is an example of a mediate perception whereas Augustine's addressing of God in the second person is an example of a mediated immediacy since Augustine is aware of the distinction between him and God. His vision at Ostia, however, begins as a mediate perception and moves to absolute immediacy. The third and fourth features are awareness and «object-orientedness.» The last feature is the personal relationship between two subjects, between Augustine and God. In the last part of her article, Kijewska evaluates changes within Augustine's renderings of his mystical experiences from the period Pierre Courcelle calls *les vaines tentatives d'extases poliniennes* and the vision of Ostia. These changes are a result of a change in his understanding of God and of himself. Kijewska's use of Alston as an epistemic tool allows for a deepened understanding of Augustine's own mystical experience as he himself expressed it.

In Francisco O'Reilly's article, «Causality, Flux and Procession. An Unexpected Encounter among Proclus, Eriugena, and Avicenna», the *Liber de causis primis et secundis* takes center stage as O'Reilly revisits D'Alverny's proposal that this early thirteenth century Latin work is a result of three Neoplatonic accounts: Proclus in the Arabic paraphrase *Liber de bonitate pura* or *Liber de causis*, Eriugena's *Periphyseon*, and Avicenna's metaphysics. The article treats this topic by examining its explanations of the origins of the world through the themes of the creator of the universe as a source of unity and explanation of simplicity and multiplicity. O'Reilly approaches the *Liber de causis primis et secundis* not simply as a result of translation efforts from Arabic to Latin but rather as an integrated text which was read and incorporated within the context of already existing authorities.

In the fourth article, «Harmony in the Conception of the Universe. Unity and Plurality in Eriugena», María Jesús Soto-Bruna looks at the concept of *processio* within the harmonious order of unity and multiplicity of the universe in the thought of John Scotus Eriugena. Soto-Bruna begins by explaining that in medieval ontology the harmony of the universe links together multiplicity and unity. Thus, the notion of *processio* reveals the relationship and dependence of multiplicity upon its origin in the first principle. She then turns to the role of harmony in Eriugena's account of the universe and expands upon it by looking at three roles of harmony: causal, processive, and theophanic.

Nicola Polloni shows how Dominicus Gundissalinus's view of cosmology is grounded within two opposed ontological theories: Avicenna's universal hylomorphism and Avicenna's modal ontology in his article, «Nature, Souls, and Numbers: Remarks on a Medieval Gloss on Gundissalinus's *De processione mundi*». As Gundissalinus's mature cosmological work, *De processione mundi* marks a distancing from Avicenna with regard to cosmology. Yet, Polloni writes, although this is quite evident in Gundissalinus's cosmology, the last portion of his treatise seems to contradict it. Polloni shows this by examining Gundissalinus's treatment of cosmology through his use of numbers. Through a numerological proof, Gundissalinus shows that there is a one, namely God, because there is a «two». In other words, because one is prior both logically (and ontologically) to two, since there

is a two, there must be a one. This reasoning is reflected in the Neoplatonic principle of diversity: a cause is «one», which its effect is «two», thus harolding in diversity within creatures. Restricting the use of numbers to the *ratio numerorum*, Polloni writes that Gundissalinus is able to show, through the influence of al-Farabi, how the universe is complete and further how the cosmos is related to this numerical series, for example how the four causes relate to the first four numbers. Through a second numerical explanation, Gundissalinus connects the first four numbers to four substances: intelligence, rational soul, sensible soul, and nature. Herein lies the seeming contradiction; for, in this second numerical explanation, Gundissalinus seems to embrace Avicbron's cosmology which he had earlier distanced himself from. Polloni suggests that a possible way to avoid this contradiction is to interpret the passage as referring to psychological and not hypostatical entities. This interpretation is, however, not without its difficulties, namely how can nature, the fourth substance, be given a psychological explanation. Polloni ends the article by looking at a glossarist's psychological interpretation of this passage in Gundissalinus. The glossarist interprets it as pertaining to the individual soul. Polloni's article thus not only explicates the thought of Gundissalinus himself on the theme of this volume but also provides an example of how others understood and interpreted a crucial and difficult passage within Gundissalinus's mature work on cosmology.

In «Hermann de Carintia (Siglo XII): Una Encrucijada en la Explicación de la Causalidad», Elisabeth Reinhardt looks at Hermann of Carintia, a twelfth century disciple of Thierry de Chartes. She particularly looks at Hermann's work *De essentiis* in the context of its approach to natural science and cosmology, which is marked by both its original approach and high specification. This is due to the fact that Hermann was a well-educated scientist who also had access to sources that were not well-known yet in the West, as he was also a translator from Arabic to Latin of texts from the Islamic World. Reinhardt further points out that although Hermann was a natural scientist, in contrast to Thierry who was a theologian, he did not overlook the tenets of his faith. For example, he sought to both distinguish and confirm the harmony between faith and reason. The essay ends with two questions: what happened to Hermann after he wrote *De essentiis* and why is he so little studied. Reinhardt's essay on this lesser-studied figure brings a fresh perspective to the themes visited within this volume.

In «The Ciceronian Tradition of *Ius Naturae* in the Diffusion of the *Bonum*. The Lecture of Philip the Chancellor», Laura Corso de Estrada examines Philip the Chancellor's early thirteenth century work, *Summa de bono*. She looks at a particular definition of virtue that Philip the Chancellor attributes to Cicero: virtue as the «habit of the soul in harmony with the order of nature and reason». This definition can be found in Cicero's *De inventione Rhetorica* II, 53. Here Philip wishes to understand exactly what *ratio* and *natura* mean. This analysis is further grounded in the question of how human moral actions relate to and participate in the goodness of God. Corso de Estrada thus shows the influence of Cicero for Philip's thought on natural law.

The next essay turns to the thought of Bonaventure in Isabel María León-Sanz's «La Mediación creadora del Verbo, Origen de la Belleza expresiva de las criaturas en S. Buenaventura». León-Sanz begins by focusing upon the depth in Bonaventures's thought on

the similarity between creatures and the First Cause, which is rooted in Christology. The *filial rhythm* of the world leads it from its origin to its ultimate and final recapitulation in Christ. The Word, as mediator, is the way to access God. The role of Christ as mediator comes, in the thought of Bonaventure, not from the fact of the Incarnation but rather from the position of the Word in the Trinity of Persons. León-Sanz examines Bonaventure's thought in its continuity and discontinuity within the history of thought by looking at his understanding of the creator and creation in terms of the artist and art and the novelty of his Trinitarian framework. The themes, then, of unity and multiplicity are discussed in the framework of history and theology. In the first part of her essay, León-Sanz explicates the comparison of the origin of the universe with art, noting that it is an «intuition» found in history and different cultures and greatly developed by Platonism. She then turns to Bonaventure on art. In speaking of human artists, Bonaventure defines art as a productive habit according to reason. The operation of art is directed by affection towards the idea in the mind of the artist. Art is applied analogically to God as both an operation and a habit. As an operation, it has a trinitarian characteristic. León-Sanz thus stresses that creation for Bonaventure is not an act of the unity of God as in the philosophers but rather an act of the Trinity. As a habit, Bonaventure ascribes it to the Word. León-Sanz ends her essay by pointing out consequences on the relationship between the beauty of what is created with the Word.

In «The Exemplarity of God: Between Nature and Intellect», Juan José Herrera addresses what can be identified as a twofold perspective on divine exemplarity, namely ideas in God's intellect and the exemplary character of God's nature or essence. Approaches to understanding this twofold perspective are represented in two main groups of Thomists: those who hold the interdependence of these two types of divine exemplarity and those who highlight the divine ideas whereby God understands his own nature and those of created beings. Herrera's goal is to show «how the causality of God's essence and God's ideas are articulated and united in him». He does this by arguing that the essence of God, the *exemplar primum*, is the basis for and origin of the ideas. Through Aquinas's understanding of divine causality, God's essence and his ideas are not to be understood as different causal influences upon creatures. Rather, God, as artist, determines forms by the ideas and it is these ideas which creatures strive to imitate.

Alice Ramos writes on Thomas Aquinas's treatment of the presence of God and the likeness of God found in his effects, with a particular emphasis on the human being in Aquinas's explanation of Genesis 1:26. This passage states that God made man in his image and likeness. By looking at Aquinas's statement that the human soul is «all-in-all», Ramos connects her analysis to the *exitus-reditus* schema by which creatures come from God and return to him. She thus approaches this Neoplatonic framework through a philosophical-theological lens. Ramos begins by examining how God is «in all things» as the cause of their being. Referring back to Genesis 1:26, Ramos looks at the human being as made not only in the image and likeness of God's essence but also of the Trinity, the three Divine Persons, and expands upon what it means to say that man and woman are made to the image of the Trinity. Although the presence of God is found throughout all of creation, these are traces of God. In the human being, on the other hand, is the image of God which

is «impressed on the mind of man» and grants man and woman the ability to grasp *all* there is. Further, the presence of God in all of creation, as the cause of being – and thus the result of diversity of perfection within the world – is also the ultimate end of creation, though this end is realized differently in creatures of varying perfections. Through God's grace the human person finds his or her ultimate end and happiness in the Beatific Vision.

The collection of essays ends with Mirela Oliva's article, «Beauty and Meaning: From Aquinas to Gadamer and Nancy», which carries forth the theme of the volume into dialogue with contemporary thought. Oliva makes a twofold argument: 1) she argues against a separation of aesthetic experience from cognitive experience (as Gadamer did) and 2) argues that there is continuity from the medieval paradigm of beauty with Gadamer's views on beauty and Nancy's philosophy of meaning. She argues for these two points by looking at the actuality of being and the reflective nature of light. In the first half of the article, Oliva looks at Gadamer's *Truth and Method* in which he defends the medieval paradigm of beauty. For, in response to the separation between aesthetic and cognitive experience by which art has lost its metaphysical value, Gadamer argues that beauty should be integrated into our very being. The association of beauty with the actuality of being recalls, most especially, Thomas Aquinas's account of beauty as a transcendental. The Neoplatonic tradition comes into play when Oliva shows that Gadamer connects the medieval paradigm of beauty with a metaphysics of light. As light is reflective – as seen through the *exitus-reditus* scheme – so beauty is also reflective. In the second half of the article, Oliva turns to Nancy whom Oliva believes preserves an Aristotelian-Thomistic idea of the actuality of being, although Nancy himself did not make a direct mention of the medieval tradition. In *The Sense of the World* Nancy states that there is a loss of the sense (*sensus*) of the world. It is from sense, however, that individual significations (*significatio*) arise. Oliva shows this through the examples of sound and touch. Sound, as seen especially in music, «has no hidden surface» but is «pure presence». Everyone is captivated by music even when each person is not able to know its signification. Further, music breaks the barrier between both the interior and exterior – as we feel the beat of the music within our bodies and yet it also deeply touches the interior through its intelligibility. Through music, the world can be opened to sense. Second, touch shows the «circularity of sensorial experience». When one touches an object, one does not feel only the object but also one's self. Oliva concludes by arguing that beauty should therefore be understood within a hylomorphic perspective.

The eleven articles in *Causality and Resemblance. Medieval Approaches to the Explanation of Nature* provide a variety of medieval accounts on the question of unity and plurality in the universe from historical, theological, philosophical, and aesthetical perspectives. Other important medieval contributions to this subject matter, such as from the Islamic tradition, are, however, not represented in this volume, though the importance of their influence is certainly attested to as sources in the accounts of the thinkers represented. Overall, this volume provides a stimulating selection of essays upon Neoplatonic accounts of nature and causality that is certain to be of interest to scholars working in Neoplatonism as well as those interested in medieval philosophy in general.