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Eleonore Stump's innumerable contributions to philosophy of religion, Thomism, and Christian thought more generally receive a fitting tribute in this impressive collection of fourteen essays. The works are invariably clear and well-written. A number of them interact with Stump's own recent and past works, and many succeed in making original contributions to important debates. I cannot hope to summarize them all here, and will instead attempt a representative sampling of what is on offer.

Peter van Inwagen leads off with "God and Other Uncreated Things." He argues that there are abstract objects, at least some of which are real even though not created by God or causally dependent on Him. One implication van Inwagen draws from this is a theological one: when the Nicene Creed proclaims that God is creator of all things, both visible and invisible, this must be interpreted as allowing for an implicit restriction to concrete entities.

He first gives an argument for the independence of abstracta based on a theory of properties that he has developed in detail elsewhere. According to this view, a property is similar to a proposition, in that they are both things that are assertible. But they differ in that a proposition is a 'saturated' assertible; it can be asserted without qualification. One can simply assert the proposition that the earth goes around the sun. But a property is an unsaturated assertible. It always requires qualification, because a property can only be asserted of something. So, "a property of something *x*, a property that *x* has or instantiates or exemplifies, I say, is simply an unsaturated assertible that can be said truly of *x*" (p. 9). Now, the question of whether there are independent abstracta is closely related to the question of whether such abstracta can ever exist uninstantiated. Given his theory of properties, van Inwagen believes they can: "An uninstantiated or unexemplified property, therefore, is a thing that can be said of things but cannot be said truly of anything. And obviously there are such assertibles if there are any unsaturated assertibles at all. One of the things you can say about something, for example, is that it

is a woman who was the president of the United States in the twentieth century. . . . But that thing, although it can be said of things, can't be said truly of anything. It is therefore an uninstantiated property, and its existence refutes the thesis that properties can exist only in the things that have them" (pp. 9-10).

He then gives an argument for independence that he takes to be neutral between his own particular theory of properties and other such theories: "Properties and other abstract objects themselves have properties, and many of the properties of abstract objects could not be properties of concrete objects. The number 510 has such properties as being an even number and having irrational square roots, for example, and the property ductility has the property of being instantiated and the property of entailing the property solidity. It cannot be true of *these* properties – being an even number and being instantiated, and so on – that they exist only in the concrete objects that have them, for they are not had by concrete objects at all" (p. 10). Given that this is the case, God cannot create all abstracta by virtue of creating concrete objects.

Van Inwagen then points out that the defender of the idea that abstracta depend on God could press her case in two ways: first by arguing that God creates abstracta *ex nihilo*, just as He creates concrete objects. Van Inwagen sees this idea as strictly irrefutable but immensely implausible. Another option would be to stipulate that abstracta are ideas in God's mind, and so causally dependent on that mind. So just as we might be taken to be the creators of our thoughts – or more precisely, the events that are our acts of thinking – so God might be seen as the creator of His thoughts, and hence of the abstracta that figure in them. But in addition to worries arising from what van Inwagen sees as the dubious ontological status of events, this account of the situation makes no progress over the idea that God simply creates abstracta *ex nihilo*. Granting that events are a legitimate category, and granting that God's thoughts are events, such events still have abstract objects as constituents. "If thoughts have constituents, and if God is the creator of his thoughts, then, surely, God must be the creator of all the constituents of his thoughts?" (p. 16). So van Inwagen reaches the conclusion that at least some abstracta are necessary beings existing independently of any concrete entity, including God.

In "Aquinas, Divine Simplicity and Divine Freedom," Brian Leftow lays out the problem of reconciling God's freedom with His simplicity.

(As appropriate for a volume dedicated to Stump, about half of the contributions focus on some aspect of Thomistic thought.) For Aquinas, God is simple, such that His essence is ontologically identical with His will. “So if God has His essence necessarily, it seems to follow that for Thomas He has His actual volition necessarily. But then it seems that He necessarily wills what He does: that it is not possible that He do otherwise.” (p. 21) This conflicts with divine freedom. Leftow lays out some strategies Aquinas employs to get around this problem (which exposition includes a clear and helpful discussion of the relationship between Aquinas’ modal concepts and those employed in contemporary possible worlds analysis). He then engages with Stump’s own creative interpretation of Aquinas on this point, where she argues that the differences in God’s will between our world and other possible worlds is one in which the differences in divine volition are not real differences involving changes in God’s intrinsic traits across worlds, but only differences in God’s relation to extrinsic objects – mere Cambridge changes across possible worlds. Leftow critiques this proposal and puts forward one of his own, according to which there is a real difference in the content of God’s volition across possible worlds, and that this entails real intrinsic differences in God across possible worlds, but only minor differences in the *manner* of God’s willing rather than in its essential content. Leftow initially takes it that allowing for such a fine-grained intrinsic difference in God is not destructive of divine simplicity, but he also acknowledges that it remains in tension with that doctrine, and calls for further work on the issue.

In “Narrative, Liturgy, and the Hiddenness of God,” Michael Rea first argues that the terminology of the ‘hiddenness’ debate should be shifted. Speaking of divine ‘silence’ rather than divine ‘hiddenness’ carries less negative baggage. “To say that something is hidden implies either that it has been deliberately concealed or that it has been concealed (deliberately or not) to such a degree that those from whom it is hidden can’t reasonably be expected to find it.” (P. 80) Clarifying further, he writes that “God is evidently not making any special effort to ensure that most of us receive communicative content from him. A man who chooses to whisper rather than shout instructions to his children, knowing all the while that they cannot (yet) hear him over the racket they are making, is being silent toward his children in the sense that I have in mind. . . . As I understand it, then, divine silence is compatible with God’s having

provided some widely and readily accessible way for his creatures to find him and to experience his presence, albeit indirectly, despite his silence” (P. 81). Also, Rea challenges the idea that one must come up with some explanation for God’s hiddenness (or silence) that explains how, in the end, it is actually being done for our greater well-being. In fact, the answer might be that, while hiddenness is done for a greater good, it’s not done for *our* greater good. Rather, it might be for the greater good that is God’s communicating via the modes of communication that are proper for Him, which may not include the kind of evidence provision (via natural theology and / or personal religious experience) that we expect or even demand. “If, as I am suggesting, divine silence is an outgrowth of the divine personality or of God’s preferences about how to interact with creatures like us, then divine silence is plausibly thought of as good in and of itself, or good as a means to the expression of the perfectly good and beautiful divine personality” (P. 86). Further, there might be reasons here that we just aren’t privy to. “God is as alien and ‘wholly other’ from us as it is possible for another person to be. Thus, it is hard to see how we could say with any confidence at all what his silence indicates” (P. 83).

But what about the fact that we suffer from this divine silence? Well, if it is reasonable for God to be silent, for reasons we don’t understand, then it is unreasonable for us to be upset about it. Rather, we should charitably assume that there is a good reason God is remaining silent, just as we would adopt such a principle of charity for a person whose modes of communication seemed odd to us. Further, there may be ways we can experience the divine silence such that it is of benefit to us, helping us to grow in maturity or in our ability to relate to others (P. 87).

On top of all this, Rea is inclined to think that God does in fact communicate with us, just not in the direct ways we might expect. This mitigates the worry that God’s silence indicates a lack of concern on His part. And what are the indirect methods? Here Rea draws on Stump’s recent work concerning biblical narrative. Stump develops an account according to which narrative provides us with second-person experience; through narrative, another’s experience can actually be made available to us, and the biblical accounts supply us with potent examples of experience of God. Rea also suggests liturgy as another means of mediate experience of the divine. He further suggests that since these methods of divine communication are “readily and widely accessible”

(p. 93) we can conclude that God's silence is not total, but only partial, and we can have faith that the reason behind it is a good one, even if we are not privy to it.

Rea's chapter provides a good deal of material for further reflection here, particularly on the idea that God's silence is justified not because it furthers our well-being but because it is appropriate to or fitting for God in some way. However, the reliance on narrative and liturgy to mitigate the worry seems problematic to me. After all, for most of the human race, and for most of human history (and pre-history), the biblical narratives and Christian liturgy were wholly unknown and far from readily accessible. Even today they are inaccessible for a great many. (One thinks here of Maitzen's demographic version of the problem of hiddenness.) Something more is required to buttress the account supplied by Rea – perhaps the notion, favoured by C. S. Lewis among others, that God revealed Himself, at least to a degree, in pre-Christian pagan religious narratives?

The final two essays, "Love and Damnation" by C. P. Ragland, and "Friendship in Heaven: Aquinas on Supremely Perfect Happiness and the Communion of the Saints," by Christopher Brown, are also the two most impressive in the collection. The former provides incisive analyses and sympathetic critiques of the theodicies of hell provided by Stump, C. S. Lewis, and Richard Swinburne. The latter supplies both an exegetical tour de force, reconciling seemingly conflicting doctrines in Aquinas' understanding of the beatific vision, and an original philosophical contribution in its own right.

On the whole, a worthy tribute to a scholar who has given so much to the field.