

«Machtmissbrauch» gekommen ist. Es scheint jedoch zumindest fragwürdig, ob bspw. der in dieser Zeit gehörte Vorwurf von mangelnder Solidarität tatsächlich (allein) darin begründet lag, dass manche Menschen «den Befehlen von Regierungen nicht folgten» (217, Fn. 371). Damit soll weder gesagt werden, dass «Solidarität» während der Pandemie nicht auch zu einem Kampfbegriff wurde, noch dass dieser Vorwurf in dieser Form nicht vorgekommen sei. Vielmehr geht es darum, dass die Komplexität der Thematik hier einer nuancierteren Analyse bedurft hätte. Was ist bspw. wenn der Vorwurf in der wahrgenommenen Gefährdung anderer begründet gewesen ist? Man mag entgegenhalten, dass diese Wahrnehmung wesentlich von zuvor erwähnten Machtausübungen geprägt ist, dennoch scheint es fragwürdig, ob sich diese Begründung ohne Weiteres auf den Missachtungsvorwurf reduzieren lässt.

Am Ende des Tages tun solche Meinungsverschiedenheiten dem Projekt als solchem jedoch keinen Abbruch. Vielmehr handelt es sich, gerade gemessen an Mosimanns eigenen Ansprüchen, um einen Aspekt, welchen *Macht verstehen – Macht entgegenreten* lesens- bzw. bedenkenswert macht.

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Matthew Tugby, **Putting Properties First: A Platonic Metaphysics for Natural Modality**, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2022, 270 pages.

In *Putting Properties First: A Platonic Metaphysics for Natural Modality*, Tugby introduces and supports a «metaphysical package» (p.66) he calls «Modal Platonism», supposed to account for natural modality, i.e. the modality stemming from the laws of nature and the dispositions of objects. He defends a non-Humean *property-first* view, where natural modality is directly grounded in the nature of properties and not in the observed regularities (as Lewis and the neo-Humean would argue) or laws (as the Drestke-Tooley-Armstrong theory or primitivism about laws would have it). Although this type of approach is not new, the originality and strength of Tugby's theory is that it is based on two central assumptions: 1) the commitment to fundamental Platonic universals, and 2) the idea that properties are not essentially dispositional, but they are grounded in the fundamental categorical qualities of things, a conception known as *the grounding theory of powers*. In themselves, these two assumptions are «largely independent of each other» (p. 35). Yet it is precisely their combination which enables Tugby to provide a broad and solid foundation to natural modality. The general metaphysical picture is one according to which there are fundamental Platonic qualities which ground internal second-order relations of dispositional directedness between them.

This is an excellent and challenging book. I cannot give full justice, in the limited space of this review, to the many contributions it brings to the metaphysics of science. Thus, I will focus on the two main features of Tugby's Modal Platonism and the arguments supporting them. Although the latter are very convincing, it seems to me that they are not entirely sufficient to refute rival theories.

First, the Platonist claim. In chapter 2, Tugby argues that if we want to ground natural modality on dispositions, it is essential to adopt a Platonist conception of dispositions, rather than a trope theory or an Aristotelian one¹⁵. He contends that Platonism is the only view that can solve an important tension between two principles indispensable to any metaphysics of dispositions: the *Central Principle*, according to which a particular can instantiate a disposition, even if it never manifests it; and the *Intrinsicness Principle*, according to which many dispositions are intrinsically instantiated by their possessor. In order to reject the tropist account, Tugby stresses the fact that the *Central Principle* implies that dispositions are individuated by a directedness relation towards a certain manifestation, even in cases where this manifestation does not come about. Given that tropes are construed as concrete particulars, it seems that in cases where the manifestation is absent, they would be related to nothing. To avoid this predicament, Tugby suggests that dispositions be taken as universals individuated by second-order relations of dispositional directedness. For instance, the universal *fragility* is individuated by its directedness relation towards the universal *breaking*. Having established this, the further target is the Aristotelian conception of dispositions, especially defended by Ellis, Mumford and Vetter. These could easily accommodate the *Central Principle*, given that for an Aristotelian universal to exist it must be instantiated at least once. So, if a fragile glass never breaks, this raises no problem since other objects were, are, or will be broken. However, problems arise with the *Intrinsicness Principle*. Tugby uses a «rough definition» (p. 56) of intrinsicness: P is intrinsic to *x* iff *x*'s having P is independent of the existence of distinct particulars and *x*'s relations to them. Now, suppose that the fragile glass is located in a world where nothing ever breaks. The Aristotelian would probably have to acknowledge that in this world, since the universal *breaking* does not exist, the glass cannot be said to be fragile, thereby contradicting the intrinsicness of the disposition. The Platonist conception, asserting that universals are necessary existents, seems to be the only theory able to resist this difficulty.

¹⁵ Although there are nominalist conceptions of dispositions (e.g. Lisa Vogt: Nominalist Dispositional Essentialism, in: *Synthese* 200 (2) (2022)), Tugby claims that since he assumes a properties-first approach, his starting point is realism about properties.

This final argument seems, however, disputable. His definition of intrinsicity appears quite sketchy here. Drawing on Langton and Lewis, he claims that one crucial feature of intrinsicity is the *independence of company* criterion, according to which even if every circumstance surrounding a particular happened to change, it would retain the same intrinsic properties. It looks as if this presupposes the Humean idea that properties could be separated without consequence. Aristotelian dispositionalists could use another definition of intrinsicity that is more consistent with a non-Humean interconnected world. Ellis¹⁶ for example suggests a causal definition of intrinsicity where P is intrinsic to x iff x would display P in the absence of any accidental forces that might otherwise affect the properties x would display. Given this definition, the scenario of a *breaking-free* world would be simply irrelevant for evaluating the intrinsicity of *fragility*. It seems, then, that Tugby's argument does not quite reach its target and is less decisive than he would like it to be.

Second, let us focus on the *grounding theory of powers* claim. In chapter 3, Tugby argues that dispositions are better understood as grounded in fundamental categorical properties. His main contention is against Dispositional Essentialism (especially Ellis, Mumford and Bird), i.e. the theory according to which the essence of a disposition is exhausted by its dispositional relations of directedness. Tugby highlights a circularity issue: on the one hand, dispositional essentialists argue that dispositions essentially depend on their modal relations; on the other, dispositions are supposed to ground natural modality. This seems to lead to circles of dependence which, according to Tugby, severely limit the explanatory power of the theory. He suggests therefore that the relations of dispositional directedness are grounded in categorical properties.

As I understand it, the main issue concerns the *explanatory* power of the theory. The grounding relationships are conceived as providing a metaphysical explanation of the link between the grounded and its ground. They are postulated because of their theoretical virtues. And as Tugby claims, «in many cases we have a clear intuitive grasp of how the qualities of a thing necessarily constrain its dispositions» (p. 20). The canonical example that he takes is sphericity: this is a qualitative property which intuitively grounds its disposition to roll. The link is easy to see here. Yet, sphericity is plausibly not a fundamental property, and, in accounting for natural modality, Tugby is in fact primarily concerned with fundamental physical properties, such as *mass* or *spin*. But in those cases, the grounding link is far less intuitive. Actually, it is likely that we cannot even describe those properties without using dispositional predicates. It would have been good to be given more details here. When he considers this objection, Tugby simply claims that this is an epistemological issue which cannot be decisive in a metaphysical debate (p. 83

¹⁶ In Brian Ellis: *Scientific Essentialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 28.

or p. 134). This argument appears, however, precarious if dispositional essentialists are able to provide a more direct explanation for those fundamental properties. All the more so, if they also have the resources to resist the circularity objection: for example, Vogt¹⁷ argues that essential dependence and metaphysical explanation can go in different directions in the case of dispositional essence.

These two restrictions are, of course, not decisive, but they reveal that Tugby's arguments are not the last word on the debate. Still, one of the greatest merits of the book is that of showing how Modal Platonism can be *applied* to account for the repeatability of the laws (chap. 7), probabilistic laws (chap. 8) and determinable and functional laws (chap. 9). Tugby's theory is thus able to be systematically applied to other important problems in the metaphysics of natural modality, and this is what might perhaps give him a theoretical advantage.

However, what seems to me to be a significant benefit of Modal Platonism is that, in chapter 10, Tugby presents an extension of his theory from natural modality to metaphysical modality. With the addition of three other relations between universals (metaphysical necessitation, compatibility and incompatibility), he could presumably account for every metaphysical modality, *de dicto* and *de re*. A very attractive feature, not explicitly discussed, is that it would immediately validate the S5 axiom of modal logic, according to which, if *p* is possible, then *p* is necessarily possible, since Platonic universals are conceived as necessary existents. This axiom provides arguably the correct logic for metaphysical modality. This seems to be an advantage over other dispositionalist theories which struggle with S5¹⁸.

The book thus constitutes a substantive addition to the debates surrounding the dispositional foundation of modality and defends a very strong theory. Anyone interested in those debates should engage with it.

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Antoine, Vuille, **Qu'est-ce qu'une manière ? Une approche métaphysique et linguistique.** Lausanne : Épistémé, 2024, 207 pages.

Issu de sa thèse de doctorat, le livre d'Antoine Vuille vient combler une lacune importante de la littérature philosophique contemporaine en offrant une étude de la notion de manière. En effet, comme le note l'auteur, « il n'existe pas de débat philosophique contemporain sur la nature des manières » (p. 13). Pourtant, la notion de manière constitue une pierre angulaire de

¹⁷ In Lisa Vogt: Dispositional Essentialism and the Connection Between Essence and Ground, in: (ms.)

¹⁸ Especially Barbara Vetter: Potentiality: From Dispositions to Modality (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).