

Jefferson, who, after all, was also the one who said that no nation ever was, or could be, governed without religion.

The great service Strehle does with his impressive research, massive documentation, and convincing, insightful quotes from original sources is to establish clearly that the predominant contemporary perspective about church–state separation, far from its claimed purpose of pushing aside intolerance and allowing reason to flourish, actually was based in almost visceral antipathy to Christianity and Judaism. He exposes how in this area the Enlightenment and its legacy really was an “endarkenment.” I wish he would have brought his analysis up right to our time to consider the “dark side” of our current arch-secular Western culture’s treatment of religion.—Stephen M. Krason, *Franciscan University of Steubenville*

VAN INWAGEN, Peter. *Existence: Essays in Ontology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.—This collection of clearly written essays from 2001 through 2012 begins with personal reflections on metaphysics (chapter one, “Five questions”) and a response to critics of the field (chapter two, “The new antimetaphysicians”). The focus turns to articulating ontological method and applying it to issues including nominalism, Meinongianism, fictional discourse, properties, ontological categories, mereological sums, and causation.

The essays assume a context of utterance—“the ontology room,” where discussants are obliged to eliminate ambiguity by speaking Tarskian—far removed from the business of ordinary life. The ontology room insulates ontological discourse and corrals reductionists who would reform ordinary discourse (“Introduction: inside and outside the ontology room”).

Quine’s thought is prominent in chapters three through six, which include statements and illustrations of the metaontology referred to throughout the collection. “Being, existence, and ontological commitment” presents five theses of Quinian metaontology: (1–3) being is not an activity, is the same as existence, and is univocal; (4) the existential quantifier adequately captures the sense of being; (5) ontological disputes can be settled by determining the ontological commitments implied by established beliefs (this last is restated and illustrated in chapters four, eight, and ten). This metaontology is applied to the problem of sentences about works of fiction in “Existence, ontological commitment, and fictional entities,” which argues against Meinongian doctrine on the basis of the univocality of existence and for the existence of fictional characters, understood as relating to properties in a special way. “Can variables be explained away?” disputes Quine’s contention that sentences of first-order logic can be translated into a language of predicates and predicate operators to produce a “full and explicit analysis” of the

variable, because understanding a predicate assumes a prior understanding of variables. "Quine's 1946 lecture on nominalism" judges the lecture a failed defense of nominalism but an outstanding presentation of Quine's metaontology.

Paraphrasing appears in chapters three and six as an unsuccessful tactic to eliminate commitments to entities objectionable to nominalists (classes, relations, species, and so on) and is taken up explicitly in previously unpublished chapter seven, "Alston on ontological commitment." It rejects the following ideas: (1) that the purpose of paraphrasing is to eliminate real (as opposed to apparent) ontological commitments, and (2) that a paraphrase must have the same meaning as the original. Rejecting these ideas obviates Alston's dilemma between making a correct paraphrase and retaining the same ontological commitments or making an incorrect paraphrase.

Chapters eight through ten articulate van Inwagen's ontology. "A theory of properties," though acknowledging the attractiveness of nominalism, concludes that common beliefs commit us to the existence of properties. Properties are characterized as *unsaturated assertibles*—nonpropositions "that can in principle be said of things." Properties are abundant, possibly uninstantiated, and necessarily existent. Existence is a property, and things have haecceities. "What is an ontological category?" conceives ontology as the discipline specifying ontological categories that provide terms in which to answer the question "What is there?" An ontological category is a natural class and somewhat independent of historical contingencies (it need not exist necessarily). On this view, Aristotle's question of the nature of being as being becomes "What is it for a category . . . to be nonempty?" "Relational vs. constituent ontologies" classifies ontologies as monocategorical or polycategorical, based on number of primary categories. Polycategorical ontologies are further classified as constituent (concrete particulars have constituents not belonging to the category of concrete particulars) or relational (concrete particulars have parts that are only other concrete particulars). Van Inwagen's ontology is relational and presented not as explaining anything but as a statement of "the system that we tacitly appeal to in our everyday and our scientific discourse."

Chapter eleven, "Can mereological sums change their parts?" challenges the notion that asking the title question involves a conceptual confusion. Arguing that every object is a mereological sum, the essay contends that "an object cannot change its parts" is no conceptual truth; hence, "every object that can change its parts is a mereological sum that can change its parts," and there is no conceptual confusion in claiming such.

Chapter twelve, "Causation and the mental," outlines implications of van Inwagen's ontology for ideas about the title topics. There are only substances (with no parts that are not substances) and relations (including one-place relations or properties and zero-place relations or propositions). Mental states or properties belong in the second category.

There are causal relations, causal explanations, but no causation. Causal relations hold between substances, but these are no phenomena of causation. Causal explanation can be understood in terms of substances and relations, and there is no reason to think they are undermined by accounts such as an omniscient being might give of the complete arrangement of elementary particles on which events related in ordinary accounts supervene.—Martin Coleman, *Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis*