of the self-fissuring of the infinitesimals, and his implied ecstatic naturalism. Yet I find Delaney's precise and masterful account of mind, knowledge, and method in Peirce highly compelling. Here is clearly the work of a scholar who has lived with these texts for a long time and who has seen their unfading power without becoming blind to their flaws. At the same time, Delaney has a healthy architectonic sense and shows how these three areas of inquiry connect in terms of Peirce's categories and his semiotics. The community of Peirce scholars is fortunate in having this balanced and subtle account from the hand of a master interpreter.

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THE METAPHYSICS OF BEING OF ST. THOMAS IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE. By Leo J. Elders, S.V.D. Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1993. Pp. viii + 317 with index. $85.75. U.S.

This book " ... is intended as an introduction for those who wish to become acquainted with Aquinas' doctrine of being." [vii] In his "Introduction," Elders explains that the proper content of metaphysics is " ... being (*ens*) as common to all things (*ens commune*)." [14] The proper starting point of metaphysics provides a special problem: Elders disagrees with the Gilsonian position which holds that Aquinas' doctrine of being " ... is dependent on Revelation." [25] Nevertheless, Elders does believe that, for Aquinas, " ... the insight into the existence of immaterial things [is] a condition for entrance into and the exercise of metaphysics." [18-19] In the twenty chapters which comprise the rest of the book, Elders explains various metaphysical issues in Aquinas and offers a critical appraisal of several views which pre-date and post-date Aquinas in the history of philosophy.

"To be", writes Elders in Chapter One, does not simply mean "to be real" or "to be present", but " ... signifies the dynamic source and principle which makes real whatever is demanded by the essence of the subject it actualizes." [37] Being, furthermore, is the first concept apprehended by the intellect. According to Elders, our direct grasp of being " ... excludes all doubt about what is immediately perceived" and thus implies that " ... the position of critical realism is untenable." [39]

Chapter Two provides a history of the transcendental concepts up to the time of Aquinas, as well as a discussion of Aquinas' own derivation of the transcendentals in *De Veritate*. In Chapter Three, Elders discusses the theory of the transcendental concepts from Scotus to Sartre. According to Elders, Scotus failed to acknowledge the analogy of being, and because of this " ... Scotus' system tends to cut being loose from its properties." [65] This tendency, according to Elders, is later manifested in the thought of Kant and others who give priority to our consciousness of being instead of being itself.

The next major section of the book, encompassing Chapters Four through Nine, provides a more detailed analysis of the transcendentals. According to Elders, the transcendental concept of "thing" (*res*) is derived from the fact that " ... one may add to being a general positive

mode which expresses that which is found within all beings, namely essential content." [78] A second transcendental property of being is that of unity, which also manifests itself on the level of human knowing: "A thing can only be known to the extent it is. Our intellect seeks to reduce multiplicity to a certain unity...." [88] The transcendental property of "something" is obtained from the notion of separation: " ... Thomas argues that as soon as we have formed the concept of separation (*divisio*) we can compare one being with another and form the concept of 'something.'" [92] A fourth transcendental property of being is truth: "... truth is in the first place in the intellect insofar as the intellect is in agreement with that which it knows. We also use the term 'true' in a second and derived sense to denote things insofar as they are ordered to the intellect." [105]

While being in its relation to the intellect is truth, " ... being in its relation to the will is good." [110] According to Elders, Aquinas combines the merits of the Aristotelian and Plotinian notions of the good: "Whereas Aristotle makes desirability the essential characteristic of goodness, Plotinus gives priority to self-communication." [114] This discussion leads immediately to a consideration of the problem of evil. The Platonists were right to understand evil as a kind of privation, but wrong to understand this privation as subsistent and identical with matter. Following Aristotle, Aquinas argues that privation is always in a subject. Furthermore, " ... evil has no formal cause because it is the privation of form, but it has an efficient cause" *per accidens*. [133]

The consideration of the final transcendental property of being, beauty, is fraught with some difficulties, since Aquinas "... does not mention beauty as one of the transcendental properties of being although he does say that all beings are beautiful." [136] Elders addresses this difficulty by considering the content of the beautiful: " ... it is proper to the good to satisfy our striving when we attain it, while it is proper to the beautiful to do so when it is known. Consequently the beautiful adds something to the good, namely the ordering towards the cognitive faculty. Hence that which pleases our appetite is called good, while the object the knowledge of which pleases is called beautiful." [138] This combination of the true and the good in the concept of beauty " ... explains why [beauty] is not mentioned by Aquinas as a special transcendental." [142]

Moving beyond his consideration of the transcendentals, Elders acknowledges (in Chapter Ten) the necessity of a "first evident principle as the starting point of departure of scientific knowledge." [146] This principle, the principle of contradiction, is not susceptible to any direct proof, but may be demonstrated indirectly by means of a *reductio ad absurdum*.

In Chapter Eleven, Elders argues that for Aquinas the division between act and potency is the first and most proper division within being and thus grounds all other divisions. The first of several derivative divisions within being, that between essence and existence, clearly has its ground in the division between act and potency: " ... we speak of essence and of existence as two components of being, which are related to one another as are potency and act...." [180] Since the doctrine of the real distinction between essence and existence " ... is intimately connected with that of the particpation of all things in God's being" [183], Elders turns next to the Thomistic doctrine

of participation (Chapter Fifteen). The dual point of departure for the Thomistic doctrine of participation is " ... the Aristotelian concept of substance" on the one hand, and the Christian notion of "the dependence of all things on God" on the other. [224] "In order to express this dependence St. Thomas uses the Platonic idea of participation...." [224]

Another derivative distinction within being is the distinction between that which orders and that which is ordered (Chapter Sixteen). From this distinction, Thomas is able to develop a doctrine of the hierarchy of beings: "... the perfections and powers on a lower level are integrated in beings on a higher level." [234] An example of this is that of " ... certain sense faculties which obtain a higher activity in man than they do in animals." [234]

Next, Elders considers the distinction between substance and accidents (Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen) and argues that nominalism, which denies the reality of substance, has its remote roots in Scotus. In the final two chapters of this book, Elders analyzes the concept of cause, or "... the thing from which something proceeds in such a way that the being of what proceeds is dependent on it." [270] In the ensuing discussion, Elders offer arguments for the reality of causality, including the following one: "There are many things which did not exist originally and later came to be; now, we know with certitude that nothing comes from nothing. It follows that the coming into being of something requires a cause." [279] This argument, unfortunately, is more circular than Elders seems to realize. Insofar as one of the premises asserts that "nothing comes from nothing," this argument for the reality of causality really presupposes what it seeks to prove.

One weakness in Elders' book is the circularity of some of his arguments (as seen above). Another weakness is the superficiality of some of the criticisms which he levels at several figures in the history of philosophy. Elders is particularly critical—and sometime unfairly so—of the German Idealists, the transcendental Thomists, and representatives of twentieth century phenomenology. For example, Elders asserts (incorrectly) that Hegel's dialectical ontology " ... scowls at the principle of contradiction." [214] Elders also misrepresents transcendental Thomism when he suggests that certain of its adherents reduce the basic principles of being to the subjective principles of the human intellect: "The [principle of] contradiction is found in our thinking, K. Rahner writes, not in the order of things. This position shows disregard for being, because the human mind 'manipulates' things and imposes its view on them." [146] Finally, Elders is unfair when he asserts: "For Heidegger being ends up in appearance." [103]

In spite of some flaws, this book does succeed in achieving its stated purpose, which is to introduce the metaphysical thought of Aquinas. Elders's rather ambitious project of showing the broad relevance of Thomistic metaphysics vis-à-vis the history of philosophy sometimes prevents him from doing full justice to some modern thinkers. Nevertheless, Elders's work remains admirable for showing the far-reaching scope and vitality Thomistic thought.

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