

The book concludes with chapters on “neurophenomenology” (a hybrid research program integrating third-person and first-person methods) and on the mechanisms by which we understand others and their mental states.

Colombetti attempts to situate her approach historically along a number of dimensions. Whether she succeeds is in part a matter of taste. We are treated, for example, to an exegesis of Spinoza on *conatus* and Heidegger on *Dasein*. But the exegesis does not go deep, and one is left with little sense of whether or why Spinoza and Heidegger were correct in their views on these topics.

This is a thought-provoking book. It raises at least as many questions as it proposes to settle. For example: suppose Colombetti is right and that all living things enjoy some degree of affectivity. What (if any) normative consequences follow? How does the enactive approach impinge on debates in animal or environmental ethics? And what are the consequences of Colombetti’s enactive approach for the metaphysics and philosophy of mind? Do they bear on debates about pan-psychism and the ubiquity of mind it alleges? And do they support any precise view about how we relate to our bodies, whether by identity, parthood, constitution, or something else besides? These are interesting questions. Researchers swimming in Colombetti’s wake will, no doubt, take them up and find them fruitful.—Andrew M. Bailey, *Yale-NUS College*

KOSMAN, Aryeh. *The Activity of Being: An Essay on Aristotle’s Ontology*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013. xv + 277 pp. Cloth, \$47.50—Kosman’s *The Activity of Being* presents a careful and reflective reading of the central arguments regarding the primacy of activity in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*. Kosman intends to overcome what he believes is a bias in interpretations of the *Metaphysics*, namely, the tendency to utilize motion (*kinesis*, that is, becoming) as the dominant concept for understanding being instead of activity (*energeia*). The overall theme is developed by eschewing the more traditional terminological pairing of act and potency (or actuality and potentiality) for activity and ability (or capacity). However, these two terms must be carefully troped through their various senses. This troping is the main task of Kosman’s text.

Kosman openly reads the *Metaphysics* as presenting a unified text. He does not engage in lengthy debates regarding the composition of the work. Likewise, he relegates most discussion of secondary literature to footnotes. When he does engage other viewpoints, he does so as part of weighing interpretive options for certain passages, always referring to his implied interlocutors indirectly and with great courtesy.

The central concern of the work is to show how a proper understanding of substance in terms of activity and capacity illuminates the nature of being as such. Thus, Kosman opens by carefully emphasizing and

illustrating at length a point that is important for what will follow in the work as a whole: namely, that *per se* being—in whatever category—is being by virtue of itself. He argues that the central point of the *Metaphysics* must be viewed in terms of the distinction between accidental coincidence and perseity, not merely the distinction between substance and the other categories. The point is deceptively simple. However, it will play a key role as he carefully develops his argument, ultimately showing how activity and capacity are of pivotal importance to the overall project of the *Metaphysics*.

The task of the next five chapters of Kosman's text is a careful explication of the central books of the *Metaphysics*. He begins with a careful discussion of motion in terms of imperfect activity—privative in nature but still constitutive insofar as it is the activity of a capacity (though only insofar as it is a capacity). He contrasts this to the case of activity in the proper sense, such as when someone exercises a power that he has for speaking French. Such activity is the exercise of *what something is* (even though it may not be exercising that capacity at this current time). Therefore, the latter senses of activity and capacity are different from the aforementioned imperfect case of motion.

A chapter contrasting artifacts and animals helps to focus on the fact that, for Aristotle, "unity in number" does not imply a strict "unity in being." Hence, neither a threshold nor even a gray horse is a substance. Instead, each is a coincidence of beings of different categories. While this assertion is nothing monumental at first sight, Kosman carefully uses the point to construct a lucid argument for the "conceptual" (that is, not merely ontological) priority of substance over the other categories. Because substance remains steadfast in being in the midst of receiving contraries, it is the paradigmatic and conceptual principle of *per se* being in all the categories. It is the perseity of substance that permits and explains the qualified perseity of the other categories (as well as the possibility of accidental coincidences).

The core argument of Kosman's text is that the discussions of activity and capacity in book 9 of the *Metaphysics* provide at least two important conclusions. First, they solve the problem of the unity of substance, noted at the close of book 8. More importantly, the unity of substance is grounded in the fact that matter is ability (or capacity) proportioned to the activity of substantial form. Importantly, it is not ability in the sense of "ability to be other," as in the case of motion. Instead, it is the ability of something to be itself. The internal unity of substance is understood in terms more akin to that of ability and exercise mentioned above, though Kosman importantly discusses the fact that, in the case of substance, there is no distinction between first-level and second-level realization.

Kosman carefully tropes the senses of ability and activity from their usage in motion to their use in capacity and exercise (that is, first and second realization) to their applicability in the case of the unity of substance. Bearing in mind this careful argumentation, the reader can then understand the reflections on divine being with which he closes the

text—that is, reflections on the pure activity proper to the so-called Unmoved Mover of the *Physics* (though, here, viewed with an eye to the exposition in book 12 of the *Metaphysics*). Kosman's final expository chapter expresses a quasi-contemplative perspective that sees thought and even substance itself as *vestigia dei*. He argues that the upshot of a careful reading of book 12 of the *Metaphysics* is that the divinity of divine thought is, above all else, based on the fact that it is pure activity—that is, always being what it is. Thus, Kosman concludes that all forms of activity, insofar as they express a kind of steadfastness in being, are reflections of the activity of divine thought. It is a matter of viewing the assertion “the Divine is thought” as “thought is divine.”

The Activity of Being captures the noble simplicity of the Stagirite's own method and tone—at once accessible and profound. While Kosman's basic interpretive moves at first appear to reiterate distinctions that are quite familiar to readers of Aristotle, this seeming simplicity is deceptive. His careful exposition masterfully tropes the various meanings of activity and ability (or, capacity) such that a noble and contemplative view of all activity is made possible at the conclusion of the work. Quite accessible to the trained philosopher, the text is an edifying read for anyone who wishes to ponder these matters along with an author who is clearly a life-long companion of Aristotle.—Matthew Miner, *The Catholic University of America*

JOHNSON, Mark. *Morality for Humans: Ethical Understanding from the Perspective of Cognitive Science*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014. xii + 261 pp. Cloth, \$35.00; paper, \$21.00—In the 1970s and 1980s, cognitive psychologists shattered economists' illusion of “homo economicus,” the ideally rational agent of economic activity. In a similar way, Johnson seeks to shatter the illusion of what we might call “homo philosophicus,” the ideally rational (and epistemically privileged) agent of moral-philosophical inquiry. To this end, Johnson gives us a treatise on how and why some recently discovered limitations of human understanding support a pragmatist, naturalist ethics.

The book is in large part a defense of John Dewey, to whom Johnson devotes more than two dozen block quotes. As usual, Johnson's prose is eminently readable and quite lucid. He makes plain his main theses in the introduction and summarizes his arguments concisely in the final chapter. He believes that moral judgment requires a form of problem-solving, one that involves not only reason and emotion, but also “dramatic imaginative rehearsal,” a concept he borrows from Dewey. I found this concept intriguing, but would have liked more explanation of just what it is supposed to be.

Johnson ultimately argues that findings in cognitive science demand a major overhaul of Western moral theories. He opines that philosophy

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