Francesco Fronterotta, L'ontologia prima dell'ontologia: il caso di Parmenide

Abstract: In this article I examine the possibility of identifying an 'ontology' within the context of Ancient Greek thought. Usually considered as a discipline introduced only in the Early-Modern philosophy, I seek here to demonstrate that the reflection on being conducted by Parmenides is already based on some of the theoretical assumptions characteristic of the ontology of the moderns, namely first and foremost the thesis of the univocity of being and the universality of the science concerning it, to which is added the assumption of its full thinkability, whereby being ends up coinciding with what can actually and fully be thought.

Franco Ferrari, Essere, gerarchia e causalità nell'ontologia di Platone. Un'introduzione

Abstract: Although the term ontology is absent from Plato's works, his thinking undoubtedly belongs to the prehistory of this discipline. In his dialogues, one finds many observations concerning what exists and how it exists. Plato's metaphysics is based on the fundamental distinction between two kinds of entities, namely intelligible forms and sensible particulars. This *diairesis* is presented in different but all compatible ways. The ontological difference between forms and sensible objects implies a causal priority: according to Plato, this priority corresponds to the proteron-hysteron scheme mentioned by Aristotle. The last part of the essay is devoted to the idea of the good and the problems related to its ontological status.

Christof Rapp, Two Levels of Aristotle's Ontology

Abstract: This paper suggests that within Aristotle's well-known contribution to the history of ontology two different levels should be kept apart, an analytic-critical and a constructive level. On the first level Aristotle mainly provides analytic-critical tools for overcoming the main problems of all dealings with the notions of being and to be, while the second level consists in Aristotle's ambitious project of conducting first philosophy (i.e. the specific part of his philosophy that is meant to continue the old and time-honoured project of identifying what Aristotle calls 'first principles and causes') as ontology, i.e. as an inquiry into being qua being.

Marwan Rashed, Philosophies universelles et philosophies premières selon Alexandre d'Aphrodise

Abstract: This article is devoted to the interpretation of the object of metaphysics and theoretical sciences proposed by Alexander of Aphrodisias (fl. 200 AD). I shall propose two conjectures on crucial passages from his commentary on the *Metaphysics* (*In Metaph.* 245.37-246.6 et 246.6-13) and, on this new textual basis, defend the thesis according to which Alexander articulated a primary fundamental philosophy, devoted to immobile substances and treated by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* Λ, and a philosophy, if one can say so, more primary but less ontological, hence less fundamental, devoted to the general structure of being and treated by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* Γ. The latter seems to differ from the *Categories*, according to Alexander, in that in the *Categories*, Aristotle studies the general classes of beings as *general*, while in *Metaphysics* Γ, he studies them as *beings*.

Riccardo Chiaradonna, Predicazione e ontologia nel primo Neoplatonismo (Porfirio e Giamblico)

Abstract: The article focuses on debates concerning ontology and predication in early Neoplatonism (Porphyry and Iamblichus). Evidence coming from Simplicius' Commentary on the *Categories* and from the *Categories* Commentary in the Archimedes Palimpsest suggests that Porphyry and Iamblichus interpreted Aristotle's theory of synonymous predication (*dici de subiecto*) and specific differentia within the framework of their ontology (doctrine of the hierarchy of being). While Porphyry possibly suggested that a slightly emended version of Aristotle's predication could express the relation between *ante rem* and *in re* items (*akatatakton*, *katatetagmenon*), Iamblichus argued that different metaphysical levels cannot in any way be conceived of as species ranked under the same genus (hence Iamblichus' emphasis on paronymous predication). Further evidence coming from Iamblichus' *Reply to Porphyry* and from the Anonymous Commentary on Plato's *Parmenides* attributed to Porphyry confirms these conclusions.

Amos Bertolacci, On the Arabic Titles of Aristotle's Metaphysics: The Case of "Book of Letters"

Abstract: The article has three interrelated aims. First, to document that the title "Book of Letters", despite its fame, was far from being 'traditional' in Arabic philosophy, as it is often presented, but it rather served as a temporary designation of the *Metaphysics* in Arabic. Apart from later derivatives, this title is attested only four times, in different forms, in writings of the IV/X century, with no trace beforehand and a life-span of a few decades, from the time of the translation activity of Abū Bišr Mattā (d. 328H/940) until the composition of an ethical work by Miskawayh (written between 358H/968 and 360H/970) and of the *Fihrist* (377H/987-8). This title soon disappeared from the philosophical scenario in the course of the V/XI century, when it apparently lost currency in philosophical contexts. The second aim is to shed some light on the origin of this expression. "Book of Letters" as a title of the *Metaphysics* comes, in fact, from a cultural environment different from the Arabic-Islamic one, namely from the Syriac tradition of Greek philosophy, or from its Pahlavi offshoots. The Syriac provenience is indicated by the first known user of this expression, Paul the Persian (VI c. CE). It is corroborated by the Syriac background of some parts of Alexander of Aphrodisias' commentary on the *Metaphysics* preserved in Arabic, in which all the treatises of the *Metaphysics* are systematically designated through letters. The third aim is to explain the waning of the title under discussion with reference to Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā, d. 428H/1037) and his renewal of philosophical nomenclature in the V/XI century. The author of the *Book of the Cure/Healing* (*Kitāb al-Šifāʾ*) not only neglected the title at stake, as already others had done before him: in his masterpiece on metaphysics, he also proposed a new and alternative denomination of Aristotle's eponymous work ("First Teaching", *al-taʿlīm al-awwal*), which condemned to irrelevance the textual content of the *Metaphysics* and *a fortiori* its material arrangement in distinct treatise designated by means of letters.

Massimiliano Lenzi, 'Essere' in regime di teologia. Per una breve introduzione all'ontologia medievale

Abstract: This paper is the brief introduction with which I chaired the medieval session of the Conference on the history of ontology. It proposes some simple and general considerations, which aim to provide an absolutely essential historical-conceptual outline of medieval metaphysical thought, and to express a way of envisaging its unity. My thesis is that medieval ontology is indifferently theological (theocentric) in character, and that one of the tasks of the historian is to understand how an "Aristotelian" metaphysics could have been formed in correspondence with a theological and Christian knowledge, and through what theoretical and conceptual transformations this Aristotelian metaphysics could have constituted the instrument of elaboration and justification of such a knowledge (and its historical evolutions).

Francesco Marrone, Sullo statuto del concetto di ente nelle *Questiones super XII libros Metaphisice* di Antonio Andreae

Abstract: Due to its innovative content, Duns Scotus' thought spread rapidly, thanks above all to the contribution of his pupils and disciples, who immediately undertook to edit his writings and to rework and disseminate his thought. In this process of dissemination of Scotism, a very important role was played by Antonius Andreae, a Spanish Franciscan and a Scotist. His importance is mainly historical. The widespread diffusion of Scotus' metaphysical thought – at least in a first phase – is essentially linked to his name: many authors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries will know Duns Scotus' metaphysical thought through the mediation of his *Questiones in XII libros Metaphisice*. This paper examines Andreae's discussion concerning the subject of metaphysics (*Questiones*, I, q. 1), trying to show in what sense and in what way he contributed to providing a simplified yet systematic formulation of some of Duns Scotus' doctrines.

Giovanni Ventimiglia, La riabilitazione metafisica dell'essere come vero: Tommaso dopo Frege

Abstract: Unlike being as act of being, being as true does not seem to belong to the object of metaphysics but only to that of logic. However, according to Aquinas it has a greater extension and universality than the act of being (and it is well konwn that universality is a characteristic of the object of metaphysics). For whereas being as act of being is a *passio entis*, namely a property of things, being as true is, according to Aquinas (and Frege), a *passio enuntiationis*, that is a property of propositions, including (true) propositions about negations and non-being, such as 'non-being is non-being'. Being as true is expressed in terms of 'it is the case that p' or 'it is true that p', where p can be any (true) proposition. Being as true is made most clearly evident in the affirmative answer to a question, when we say '(sic) est', where 'est' refers to the whole proposition put in question, and intends to express the existence of a relation between the content of the proposition and reality, which is in fact the truth.

Vincent Carraud, Dall'ὀντολογία all'*ontologia*: un'introduzione

Abstract: This article briefly presents and contextualises the essays on the history of ontology in the Early-Modern age contained in this dossier. First of all, the different periods in the history of ontology in the Early-Modern age are examined, with their different characteristics and problems. Finally, an attempt is made to focus on the specific meaning of the term ontology, which was coined in 1606, and the scope of the discipline it designates, in order to establish the limits and boundaries of the legitimacy of its use in reference to other moments in the history of philosophy.

Alice Ragni, L'astrazione per indifferenza e l'ontologia moderna. Dalla scolastica cattolica alla *Schulmetaphysik*

Abstract: A recent study by P.R. Blum suggests the hypothesis of an ideal line from Scotus to Mastri, passing through Perera, which would tend towards a new concept of metaphysics attainable through the use of abstraction by indifference. This essay intends to test this hypothesis starting from the way in which Perera questions the unity of metaphysical abstraction through a series of innovative interpretations that are widely received in both Catholic and Reformed and Protestant domains. A first interpretation, less radical, advances a model of metaphysical abstraction, taken up by Mastri and Micraelius, which maintains the unity of metaphysics; a second interpretation, more radical, breaks the methodological unity of metaphysics through a clear distinction between 'real' abstraction from matter (*secundum rem et rationem*) and 'mental' abstraction by indifference (*secundum rationem tantum*) and, consequently, between metaphysics and ontology.

Arnaud Pelletier, Sur l'ontologie rayée de Leibniz

Abstract: The term 'ontology' appears only twice in Leibniz's immense corpus. The most significant occurrence of 'ontology', as well as one crossed-out occurrence of 'ontosophy', follow the mention of a 'general science' (written either with small or with capital initials). Leibniz's conception of a General Science makes clear why ontology lacks generality and is thus to be rejected. First, as a division of what is thinkable, or "small general science", ontology cannot fulfill the program of a real metaphysics that goes back to the principles of things. Second, even this real metaphysics cannot fulfill the program of the "capital General Science" understood as a reform of the art of inventing itself. The neologism 'ontology' was thus to be dismissed as the absurd name of an abstract metaphysics of being. Much more important for Leibniz was to reconsider the program associated with one of the established names of 'ontology': that of a true General Science.

Donald L.M. Baxter, Hume's Empiricist Metaphysics

Abstract: Hume's empiricist reason for rejecting "school metaphysics" makes it natural to assume that Hume rejects all metaphysics. A.J. Ayer certainly reads Hume this way. The natural assumption is wrong, however. Hume only rejects the aprioricity of metaphysics, and not the science itself. I will argue that his empirical science of human nature supports three basic metaphysical principles.

(1) *The Contradiction Principle*: The clearly conceivable implies no contradiction.
(2) *The Conceivability Principle*: The clearly conceivable is possible.
(3) *The Conceptual Separability Principle*: Things are different if and only if distinguishable, and distinguishable if and only if separable in conception.

On these principles the rest of Hume's metaphysics is based, including his atomistic ontology and his denial of necessary connection. And so, for Hume metaphysics is an empirical science.

Francesco Valerio Tommasi, L'incondizionato contaminato. Kant e la metafisica senza ontologia

Abstract: The thesis of a "metaphysical" Kant has been repeatedly affirmed by historiographic research and is now a given. Contrary to what is often assumed, however, Kant's relationship to metaphysics should be interpreted as the search for an unconditioned outside ontology. Kant realises the inevitable correlation between foundation and limit. "Absolute position", "a priori synthesis", "fact of reason" and "highest good in the world" are four expressions that highlight the repetition of this correlation and the impossibility of placing an unconditioned in Kant's passage from ontology to criticism, ethics and history.

Stefano Bancalari, Essere e senso. La critica di Heidegger all'ontologia

Abstract: The paper aims to argue that, despite his imposing elaboration of the question of Being, Heidegger's major contribution to ontology is a critical one. The restatement of the *Seinsfrage* rests on presuppositions that are radically non-ontological i.e. phenomenological. Notwithstanding his suspicion of transcendental reduction, Heidegger subscribes to the Husserlian idea of a priority of the sense over the being. This thesis is supported by both the evolution of Heidegger comprehension of ontology and by the pivotal role of the *Dasein* in the *Seinsfrage*.

Claudio Majolino, Λόγος καταστηματικός. Sui molteplici sensi di 'ontologia' in Husserl e sul perché alla fine non bastano

Abstract: In a manuscript published as an appendix to *Ideen III*, Husserl distinguishes and articulates the concepts of "phenomenology" and "ontology" by stating, quite surprisingly, that one is "kinetic" while the other is "katastematic". By tracing the multiple senses in which Husserl understands and subdivides ontology, this paper aims at grasping the exact meaning and function of such distinction within Husserl overall philosophical project. Additionally, having identified its Epicurean origin, it also seeks to show the general strategy by means of which Husserl appropriates, distorts and adapts some key concepts of the history of ontology.

Tito Magri, Ontology, Pragmatism, and the Quest for Metaphysical Depth

Abstract: Analytic metaphysics displays a meta-metaphysical pattern: A shift *toward* a foundational conception of the aims and methods of metaphysical enquiry and *away* from a pragmatic understanding of foundational questions of metaphysics. Pragmatism looms large in Carnap's and Quine's metaphysics, across the differences between ontological pluralism and antirealism and extensionalist ontological realism. The two philosophers share the pairing of a deflationary take on ontology and a pragmatist rendering of foundational issues. In particular, Quine complements his quantification-based ontology, which denies ontological pluralism, with a pragmatic understanding of cognitive and explanatory significance. This pattern is traceable in Lewis's modal realism. A different line in analytic meta-metaphysics is characterized by easing of pragmatist commitments and redefining the object of enquiry, from what there is to what is fundamental. I give and discuss examples of this different theoretical line and illustrate their contribution to the ineludible task of a philosophical revision of pragmatism.

Guido Alliney, *Angeli mali*. Ostinazione al male e libertà del bene secondo Duns Scoto

Abstract: This paper aims at exploring Duns Scotus' view on the limits of freedom in creatures by focusing on the issue of demons' obstinacy, which plays an important role in Scotus' thought: in fact, the finitude of creatures' freedom must imply contingency, even when it comes to beatitude, which must be made permanent through God's causation. Why, then, should the will of fallen angels lose its capability to direct itself towards what it prefers and thus be able of good actions? Scotus's *Lectura*, *Ordinatio* and *Reportatio parisiensis* provide partially different versions of his difficult attempt to conciliate the traditional solution to the obstinacy to evil and the metaphysical thesis that states the will's contingency: in *Lectura* and *Ordinatio*, divine interference merely consists in God's not conceding grace, which alone can make whatever act a good act; *Reportatio parisiensis*, on the other hand, provides a different solution, according to which the demons' will receives the capability to accomplish single objectively good acts, but, because of the will's perpetual disorder, coming from its dependence on an external causation – namely, God's will –, such acts are never worth.

Tobias Hoffmann, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus on the First Cause of Moral Evil

Abstract: While it is unproblematic that someone evil causes further evil, it is difficult to explain how a good person can cause his or her first evil act. Augustine, denying that something good can be the cause of evil, concludes that the first moral evil has only a 'deficient cause', not an efficient cause, which is to say that it has no explanation. By contrast, Aquinas and Scotus hold that the first moral evil has a cause, that the cause is something good, and that it is an efficient cause: the will. For Aquinas, the will can cause its first evil act only if it is momentarily non-culpably deficient, in that it does not make the intellect actually consider the moral rule relevant to the choice. For Scotus, no such occurrent deficiency is presupposed in the will causing its first evil act; the will's freedom suffices. Yet there is surprising agreement: at bottom, Aquinas and Scotus both trace the first moral evil to the will's ability for alternatives and no further. Thus their view converges with Augustine's claim that evil ultimately has no efficient cause.

Giorgio Pini, Sense, Intellect, and Certainty: Another Look at Henry of Ghent and John Duns Scotus on Divine Illuminatio

Abstract: The disagreement between Henry of Ghent and John Duns Scotus on divine illumination is usually recognized as a high point in the history of medieval epistemology. Still, there is much obscurity surrounding that debate, including the specific nature of the disagreement between those two thinkers. In this paper, I argue that the point at issue is the relationship between sense and intellect. Henry of Ghent, who posits a close tie between sense and intellect, holds that the senses are the only natural source of both content and certainty for the intellect. By contrast, Duns Scotus holds that, in our natural state, the senses are the source of content but not of certainty for the intellect, which can achieve knowledge of the truth of first principles true by virtue of the meaning of their terms independently of the sensory input it receives.

Olivier Boulnois, La volonté selon Duns Scot. Indétermination, illimitation et infinité

Abstract: Medieval philosophers admit a physical indeterminacy of natural powers, because they can be determined by something else. However, rational powers have a metaphysical form of indeterminacy, which allows the will to be determined by reason (Thomas Aquinas), or to determine itself (Duns Scotus). Yet, what distinguishes the two main forms of self-determination in Duns Scotus – the unlimited will and the infinite God? In finite beings, the will is unlimited because it always depends on something else, on an object that is a partial cause of its determination, whereas God depends only on Himself for self-determination. Hence, the concepts of indeterminacy, unlimitedness and infinity are strictly distinct in Duns Scotus.

Andrea Colli, Alle origini della riflessione medievale sul tempo. Il caso delle *Explanationes in Ciceronis Rhetoricam* di Mario Vittorino

Abstract: Thirteenth-century debates on time are frequently reduced to the opposition between an Ancient tradition, embodied by Augustine, and the Aristotelian philosophy as "physicalist" reading of the problem. However, before the diffusion of the Latin translation of Aristotle's *Physics*, notions such as 'time', 'eternity', '*aevum*', and 'present' have a rich range of meanings and nuances which cannot be considered a mere repetition of an 'Augustinian model'. A systematic analysis of selected passages of Marius Victorinus' *Explanationes in Ciceronis Rhetoricam* provides a representative example of this complexity, making available new conceptual material to reconstruct the sources of the medieval discussions about time and durations.

Marilena Panarelli, Converting Death into Life: Spontaneous Generation from Aristotle's Biology to Albert the Great's Analysis of Plants

Abstract: The theory of spontaneous generation was developed by Aristotle, mainly in his biological works. In Aristotle, this issue was linked with some significant doctrines, such as that of *pneuma*. In medieval thought, the theory was known as *generatio ex putrefactione*. Albert the Great addresses it not only to explain the generation of certain animals, such as insects, but also to elucidate the generation of certain plants. Moreover, in Albert the Great's *De vegetabilibus*, putrefaction is conceived as a process that simply pertains to the life of plants: *putredo* is one of the three principles of plant generation, meaning that plants need putrefaction to germinate and grow, even if seeds initially bring them about. In Albert's explanation, there is only a thin line between spontaneous and conventional generation in plants, so that putrefaction and generation are two symbiotic concepts in the vegetal world.

Mario Loconsole, Accidia e malinconia. Le radici mediche nella descrizione degli accidiosi nel canto VII dell'*Inferno* dantesco

Abstract: The relation between the moral account of the capital vices and the philosophical analysis of the passions of the human soul undergoes an important turning point from the 11th century onwards during the recovery of medical knowledge in the medieval West. In this wave of fervour towards a physiological approach in the investigation of the nature of man, the vice of acedia – as described by the Christian moral tradition – and the melancholic temperament – the result of a millenary reworking and technicalisation of medical knowledge – found a point of contact in the passion of sadness. If authors such as Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas, following the Christian heritage, characterised acedia as an escalation of the passion of sadness, the medical tradition from Hippocrates and Galen to Avicenna and Constantine recognised sadness as one of the most distinctive manifestations of the melancholic temperament. The aim of this study is to demonstrate, by retracing some aspects of this interweaving of traditions after the year 1000, how Dante's description of the sinners of acedia in Canto VII of the *Inferno* takes up the legacy of this hybridisation between the Christian description of acedia and the physiological description of melancholy.

Maria Evelina Malgieri, Dalle *Tabulae* ai *Summistae*. Sul ruolo delle *concordantiae* e dei commenti alla *Summa theologiae* nella configurazione della tradizione tomista

Abstract: This article draws on the perspectives opened up by two recent collective volumes, one dedicated to the *Tabula Aurea* and the *Concordantiae textuum discordantium* [...] *Thomae Aquinatis* produced in the 15th century by Peter of Bergamo, and completed by his confrère Ambrose 'de Alemania' (Mario Meliadò / Silvia Negri [Hrsg.], *Widersprüche und Konkordanz. Peter von Bergamo und der Thomismus im Spätmittelalter*), and the other focusing the tradition of the *Summistae*, i.e. the Renaissance and modern commentators on the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas (Lidia Lanza and Marco Toste [eds], *'Summistae'. The Commentary Tradition on Thomas Aquinas' 'Summa Theologiae' from the 15th to the 17th Centuries*). On this basis, I propose to examine the way in which certain genres and specific types of theological and philosophical writings can mark an often decisive shift in the content and orientation of a particular tradition of thought (in this case, the Thomist tradition).

MARCO LAMANNA, From Avant-Garde to Rear-Guard. Debates on the Concept 'Thing' (*res*) in Protestant-Reformed Scholasticism

Abstract: The article provides a survey of texts on the debates concerning the concept of 'thing/res' in German and Swiss scholastic metaphysics during the early modern age. Even in the vernacular of today, 'thing' is a key concept for thinking about reality. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, 'thing' was the most extensive concept within ontology: everything is a 'thing'. Protestant Reformed universities inherited the debates of the medieval schools, and brought a similar *status quaestionis* to Kant, who defines God as a 'thing in itself', as something that can be thought, but not (more) known. From "avant-garde," the concept of 'thing' passed to rear-guard.

ROBERTO TERZI, Storia e riproduzione della vita. Patočka tra Arendt e Heidegger

Abstract: In this article, I seek to account for the importance of a principle which governs a significant part of Patočka's philosophy of history. For Patočka, history is characterised by an alternation of rises and falls; this is determined, on the one hand, by the attempt of the existence to rise above the simple imperatives of biological life; and, on the other, by the ever-present risk of falling back into what Patočka calls the project of "bare life," bound to itself. I analyse the presence of these claims in Patočka's work at three levels: first, the role of the dynamic of life within the dynamic of existence, and in particular within the practice of work; second, the transition from prehistory to historical existence proper; and finally, the description of two striking phenomena of modern life, namely the domination of technology and war. I conclude by raising some critical questions, concerning in particular the ambiguity of the notion of life and the ethical perspectives that Patočka outlines as a way out. In my analysis I try to show that Patočka's position is constructed in a dialogue with Arendt and Heidegger and implies in some respects an anticipation of the problems of biopolitics.