scientific ideal of objectivity. The historical-critical method also becomes the scientific standard for theology, and all attempts to reconcile Christian faith and historical methods had to try to integrate the results of the historical studies with the theological framework of Christian faith. Ritschl, who argued against this ideal of objectivity in theology, was concerned to revive a more idealistic synthesis of history and theology. Zachhuber's present work, however, demonstrates that the background of the theological and philosophical synthesis of Baur and Ritschl is not, as many theologians think, the concepts of Schleiermacher and Hegel, but the idea of history and science according to Schelling's concept of history as the process of the self-revelation of the absolute. Nevertheless, it is obvious to Zachhuber that all attempts to synthesize the different positions in theology fail in the praxis of theology itself, because the historical-critical method had come to dominate the study of church history. But these approaches to church history are in general a-theological, claims Zachhuber.

So the question emerges of why church history remains a part of theology. This is a question, according to Zachhuber, which has not changed since the 19th century. Indeed, Zachhuber is able to show that the problem of theology as a science is still relevant today. He himself calls in the end for a concept of a non-foundational theology, which abstains from verifying its propositions by an outside institution and which interprets as theological hermeneutics the internal content of Christian faith and communication in a systematic way. Zachhuber's idea of theology is, in this sense, the result of the discussion of the 19th century and the separation of comparative studies of religion on the one hand from theology as internal hermeneutics of Christian faith on the other.

In the end I have only one slightly critical remark, which concerns the almost total lack of references to the parallel development in Catholic theology in the 19th Century. It is, of course, understandable that the author had to narrow the focus of his work and that he restricted his research to the Protestant Tübingen School and its successors. But when Zachhuber writes that before Ritschl only the Reformed theologian Johannes Cocceius (1603 –69) uses the concept of the Kingdom of God as the central principle of theology, he obviously forgets Johann Sebastian Drey, who is using the idea of the Kingdom of God exactly in this way as the central idea of theology as a scientific system in his *Brief Introduction to the Study of Theology*, published for the first time in 1819. The parallels between both traditions at this time, like for instance the influence of Schelling's philosophy on the idea of theology as a science, are indeed remarkable. It would be a worthwhile project to compare the developments of both models of theology as a science in Germany. This outstanding work of Johannes Zachhuber has, however, laid the ground for such a project from the Protestant point of view, and every attempt to develop the academic debate on this subject must build upon this remarkable piece of research.

CARSTEN BARWASSER OP

METAPHYSICS AND GRAMMAR by William Charlton, *Bloomsbury*, London, 2014, pp. 234, £19.99, pbk

Responding to the logical positivists' denigration of metaphysics in the 1950s, Alex Oliver recently commented that 'the show is over and serious metaphysics flourishes once more' in Anglo-American philosophy, but went on to add that there remain ' serious unanswered questions about its methods of inquiry.' William Charlton suggests that the answer to this methodological question is grammar – that grammar provides a sound basis on which to build metaphysics. In doing so,

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as he points out, he is simply returning to the tradition established by Plato and Aristotle, both of whom carried out a rigorous study of language in order to find out how truth and falsity got into language, an activity that gave rise to such questions as 'What is Being? Becoming? Thought?' etc. By 'grammar' Charlton means 'the rules for the construction of sentences out of words'. It is by looking closely at such constructions expressed in questions, statements, commands and counsels that we can form an understanding of the issues addressed by metaphysics – truth, existence and goodness, each of which is examined in chapters 5-7, as well as change, time, causation, materiality, thinking and saying, which are the subject matter of chapters 8-13.

In the early chapters 1-4, Charlton sets out his method of approach, which is rooted in the history of Western philosophy, on which he is an outstanding authority – he clearly knows Aristotle and Plato in their original Greek and he has also made an extensive study of such modern authorities on language as Wittgenstein and Chomsky as well as a great many others. He applauds the way in which Wittgenstein has brought grammar back into philosophy and agrees with his comments that 'our grammar is lacking in perspicuity', that 'philosophy . . . is a fight against the fascination which forms of expression exert upon us', that problems arise 'through a misinterpretation of our forms of language' and are solved by 'looking into the workings of our language'. The centrality of grammar had been a dominant feature of philosophy well into the Middle Ages but was lost in the Enlightenment period when it was widely assumed that Descartes had proved that all we have direct and certain knowledge of are our own mental states and activities. Broadly speaking, post-Cartesian philosophers from Locke to Russell shared this assumption, but Wittgenstein decisively shifted the focus of philosophy away from mental states and activities by placing 'forms of language' at the centre of philosophical inquiry. The great advantage of this is that it gets philosophers out of their own heads, so to speak, and into the public world of meaning. Bernard Lonergan achieves the same result by means of his firm distinction between sensation and understanding.

As an example of how Charlton argues, let us look briefly at his comments on time. In typical fashion, he begins by indicating his own line of argument before turning to the arguments of philosophers who take different views. Again and again he supports his own position by engaging with opposing views and pinpointing exactly where and how they differ from his own. J.E. McTaggart famously argued that holding that time is real is incoherent or self-contradictory. After setting out his opponent's argument, Charlton points out that McTaggart takes 'past' and 'future' to be words like 'red' or 'pale', denoting certain properties of things or events. Making use of Aristotle, Charlton demonstrates that this is a mistaken view and shows that they are grammatical terms relating to tensed verbs: to understand 'past' we need to consider how we express temporal relations and we do that by using the past tense. He writes, 'saying that something is past, present or future is not predicating anything of it, but merely relating it temporally to your utterance.' 'Presentness' is not a property of events; it relates to *the way* in which we predicate something. We can also denote time by relating events to each other, using terms like 'earlier' or 'later'. Predictions of future events can be judged to be true if *it becomes true* that they occur as predicted – they are judged in relation to the utterance. In this way grammar helps us grasp the concept and reality of time.

Charlton's arguments are well supported and illustrated by examples and his work is enriched by his grasp of the grammars not only of ancient Greek and Latin but of a range of modern languages, European and other. He writes with good humour and lets his opponents down gently; and there are occasional jokes. Among the many insights is this, which I particularly enjoyed: 'Many philosophers today write as if the one big task that remains for them is to show that these phenomena (perceiving, thinking and feeling) can be accounted for in purely physical terms; when they have

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done that they can hand over to cognitive scientists and go home.' He challenges this physicalist tendency in modern philosophy by arguing that things like belief and desire are more intelligible when argued for on teleological rather than causal grounds – they explain how we act for a reason or a purpose – and teleological explanation cannot be reduced to causal explanation. Whenever we attribute beliefs or desires to a person we are not predicating anything of the person but offering an explanation of the person's behaviour. The tendency towards physicalist-causal reasoning reflects the growing importance of science in our culture and science's pervasive use of causal-neurological explanations of human behaviour (pp. 207-8). The value of adopting grammar as a key to understanding second-order realities like truth, existence and goodness – second-order because we do not come to understand these things in the same way as we come to understand such first-order realities as gravity or cows but by reflecting on *how we speak or write* about gravity and cows – is because 'grammar is a bridge that takes us from matter to mind without requiring us to sign up either to spiritualism or materialism.' And it is because he takes a teleological rather than a causal view of language acquisition and use that Charlton differentiates his own position from those, respectively, of Chomsky and Wittgenstein. By contrast, his criticism of crude conceptions of thought on p. 179 suggests that he might be a natural ally of Bernard Lonergan's, despite his quite different approach to metaphysics.

This is a book that comes with a good many endorsements from distinguished philosophers, such as Alasdair MacIntyre ('a book to be reckoned with'), Martha Nussbaum ('fascinating and full of insights . . . provocative and original'), Paolo Crivelli ('engages in debates with the most authoritative contemporary philosophers'), and others. It is a major work of philosophy, the fruit of long years of reading about, studying and pondering the issues under discussion. It deserves to be read and re-read by all those interested in the renaissance of metaphysics in modern analytic philosophy.

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