

Hume would deny that even an uninterrupted, invariable succession of resembling appearances can yield an idea of identity (i.e. ‘perfect identity’, p. 203). (3) Since Hume classified identity as a relation, it is surprising that Allison does not mention, much less consider, Hume’s attribution of the confusion between affective dispositions to the fact that the ‘very nature and essence of relation is to connect our ideas with each other, and upon the appearance of one, to facilitate the transition to its correlative’ (p. 204). The thesis that facility is essential to relation is stated no less than four times in the *Treatise*, in connection with causal inference (p. 99), continued existence (p. 204), complex individuality (p. 220), and personal identity (p. 260). Given the centrality of relation to Hume’s account of thought and cognition generally, Allison’s neglect of this thesis represents a potentially major lacuna.

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Doing and Being: An Interpretation of Aristotle’s Metaphysics

Theta, by Jonathan Beere. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. 384. H/b £50.00.

‘*What I do is me*’. This powerful line by Gerard Manley Hopkins, which Beere quotes as a foreword to his monograph, captures the very essence of his interpretation of Aristotle’s theory of powers. The question Beere engages with is: What is the relation between an item having the power to ϕ but not exercising it, and that item engaged in ϕ -ing? The solution he puts forward on behalf of Aristotle is that for an item to exercise the power to ϕ is for it to be qualified by that power in a certain way. To use a paradigmatic Aristotelian example: for a person who has the power to build a house, exercising that power in housebuilding is a *way of being* a housebuilder. In short, *doing is being*.

Beere frames Aristotle’s question within a broader investigation into the nature of being initiated by Plato — which is in itself an interesting and useful contribution to the field of both Platonic and Aristotelian scholarship. In Plato’s *Sophist* two views on the nature of being are presented in opposition to each other, as a battle between the Giants and the Gods. The Giants hold that ‘a thing really is if it has any capacity at all ... to do something to something else or to have even the smallest thing done to it’ (247d8-e4). As Beere puts it: ‘the Giants ... associate being with change’ (p. 7). The other view, attributed to the Gods, is that ‘that which wholly is, is at rest’ (248e), which we can understand as the claim that being is (causally) inert. Who is right

between the Giants and the Gods? What is the relation between being and change?

Beere argues that Aristotle's theory of powers has in the backdrop the very question that Plato had raised. The battle is not to be fought out with arguments, but to be undermined by a new insight into the nature of being Aristotle puts forward. Things are the way they are in virtue of the properties they possess. But at least for some properties, the powers, there are *two ways of having them*, and thus two ways of being qualified by them: through merely having the power, but not exercising it; and through exercising that power. The housebuilder at rest *is-in-capacity* a housebuilder, through having the capacity to build; when building he exercises that capacity and *is-in-energeia* a housebuilder, bringing about a change in virtue of his power. Being-in-capacity a housebuilder and being-in-*energeia* a housebuilder are ways in which someone is a housebuilder. Being-in-*energeia* is the answer to the question raised by Plato, says Beere, because it is a way of being which 'has two aspects ... [It] is supposed, on the one hand, to be a way of being, but it is also supposed to encompass doing and changing' (p. 21).

The term *energeia* is a neologism coined by Aristotle which Beere has reasons for leaving un-translated. Making a radical departure from the mainstream interpretation, Beere argues that *energeia* 'does not correspond to any concept that is readily available to us' (p. 156) and it is 'unacceptable' to assume that Aristotle uses it ambiguously to mean sometimes activity and sometimes actuality. 'It would be utterly astonishing if Aristotle had coined a term, given it an importance second to none in his writings, and then used it in a systematically ambiguous way, without any comment whatsoever on that fact' (p. 159).

How are we then to understand the concept of *energeia*? Not only is it 'radically foreign to us' (p. 3), says Beere, but 'there is no definition of *energeia* to give ... we cannot do better than to consider the particular cases and to comprehend them by analogy' (p. 184): *as* what is building is to what can build, *so* what uses knowledge of geometry is to what merely has knowledge of it, etc. How then is what is building to what can build?

We have seen above that Beere, on behalf of Aristotle, accounts for the difference between the power to build in capacity and the power to build in exercise in terms of it *belonging* in two different ways to the housebuilder. But this raises a set of questions: In what way does a property, say being a housebuilder, belong to the housebuilder in capacity? If there is a single item, housebuilding, that belongs to someone when he is housebuilding, how does this item belong to him when he is not housebuilding? Both his states are of course related to housebuilding, since the power itself is defined in terms of it. But if the potentiality of the housebuilding power (when not being exercised) is to be understood as a way in which housebuilding belongs to the housebuilder, more needs to be explained than his becoming qualified

as a housebuilder. How is it that housebuilding qualifies the housebuilder by belonging to him even when it is not occurring?

Furthermore, in examining another Aristotelian example which he considers a touchstone for his own interpretation of *energeia* and analogous to the case of housebuilding, Beere writes: ‘There is a single property—in this case being a knower—that can be had in two ways ... Consider, for instance, being a knower of geometry. There are two ways of having this property. There is the way characteristic of geometers at lunch ... and there is the way characteristic of geometers at work ... Aristotle thinks that using one’s knowledge of geometry ... constitutes ... being a knower of geometry’ (p. 177). So *using* or *not using* the property is *having* the property in this way or in a different way. Beere dismisses the alternative view to the one he attributes to Aristotle: ‘One might think there is only one way of, say, being a geometer (namely, having the science), and that the exercise of the science does not constitute a further distinct way of being a geometer. But Aristotle’s view is not a ludicrous one’ (p. 177). It would be helpful to hear more on the background theory of when the *use* one makes of a property one possesses translates into *a way of possessing* that property, and when *not*.

When addressing the issue of how the states of being in capacity and being in *energeia* relate to each other, Beere suggests that ‘being in capacity has the *energeia* as part of its essence: what it is to be in capacity F is partly a matter of what it is to be in *energeia* F’ (p. 303). This however seems to be a different approach to the explanation of what a power in capacity is from the account of it given in terms of being another way of having a property. The focus now is on the difference in the *constitution* of the states of being in capacity F and being in *energeia* F, rather than on the way that F *belongs* to the subject. This seems to introduce divergence between two aspects of Beere’s reconstruction of Aristotle’s view, and a puzzle. The puzzle is this: If *f* belongs to an object *a* in two different ways, w_1 and w_2 , is it possible for *f*-as-attached-to-*a*-through- w_1 to have *f*-as-attached-to-*a*-through- w_2 as part of its essence? It would seem that making this possible would require the differentiation of *f* into f_1 and f_2 , or that *f* have itself as (a proper) part of its essence (or that one way of possessing *f* has the other way of possessing *f* as part of its essence?).

Furthermore, how are we to take the part-relation between these two states, when being in capacity has the *energeia* as part of its essence? In the case of a boy, being in capacity a man has being a man as part of his essence; namely, what it is to be a man *is part of* what it is to be a boy. Is the boy then a man in capacity *because* he has only part of the essence of man? If so, how does the presence of a part of the essence generate *potentiality* for the whole essence?

Not all these questions are answered in Beere’s monograph. But this is not a complaint, given the steepness of the metaphysical difficulties it addresses.

Beere argues for his overall interpretation of Aristotle's theory of powers by offering an excellent textual analysis of the ninth book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. The format is very interesting: much more closely related to the text than Charlotte Witt's *Ways of Being: Potentiality and Actuality in Aristotle's Metaphysics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), and yet different from the Clarendon tradition of Stephen Makin's *Aristotle: Metaphysics Book Θ* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006). With great scholarly mastery Beere sheds new light on the tread of two main arguments in *Theta*: the one leading to the claim of the priority in being of *energeia*, and the other leading to the goodness of *energeia*. Both are positive contributions to the attainment of wisdom — namely, knowledge of the nature of being — which Aristotle is pursuing in the central books of the *Metaphysics*. There is yet a further contribution that emerges from Beere's interpretation of *Theta*: Aristotle has broken new ground in the understanding of the nature of being by showing that the battle of the Gods and the Giants is simply not a battle to be fought; for, doing is being.

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Predicative Minds: The Social Ontogeny of Propositional Thinking, by Radu J. Bogdan. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009. Pp. xiii+156. H/b \$25.00/£18.95.

To predicate is to attribute one represented item of another — for example, to say of a book that it is exciting. Only human minds are predicative minds. But we are not natural-born predicators; we become so by a process of socialization into linguistic practices. That is the central hypothesis of this book.

The book is divided into three parts. The first sets the stage, introducing a problem with all existing accounts of predication. Here Bogdan distinguishes acts of mere co-instantiation, in which two simultaneously represented items are held in mind together, from predication proper. He complains that traditional treatments — including those that might be provided by Fregeans, Fodorians, and Davidsonians — necessarily fall short of what is required for explaining the special sort of unity that predication requires. In a nutshell, this is because such accounts only deal with the formal and semantic features of mental representations, whereas — if Bogdan is correct — what is required is attention to the psychopragmatic features of predicative thinking as well. To highlight the difference he makes two lists detailing the necessary features