

most consistent defenses of metaphysical libertarianism in the history of philosophy to this day. But Hirvonen nowhere uses the term 'metaphysical libertarianism', and he seems either unaware of, or unconcerned with, Ockham's place in the broader debate over the freedom of the will.

So, while Hirvonen exhaustively supplies the texts for an insightful analysis, he does not actually provide one himself. That part is left to the reader.

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Giulia Belgioioso, editor. *René Descartes: Tutte le lettere, 1619–1650*. Testo francese, latino, e olandese. Milano: Bompiani/ Il Pensiero Occidentale, 2005. lviii + 3104. Cloth, € 48.00.

The publication of a new scholarly edition of important primary sources is an event to be celebrated. This new edition of Descartes's correspondence—the fruit of decades of close textual study by Giulia Belgioioso and her team at the University of Lecce—should be greeted with congratulations all around. This Cartesoam cube (the book contains almost 3200 pages) adds letters to the list of Descartes's published correspondence and includes formidable scholarly apparatus. Belgioioso and her team at the University of Lecce have made an enormous contribution to scholarship on Descartes and on early modern philosophy more generally.

Belgioioso has published 732 of Descartes's letters that were originally written in Latin, French, and Dutch. It eliminates the editorial confusion found in the new edition of Charles Adam's and Paul Tannery's *Oeuvres de Descartes* (1974), which contained 586 letters, plus additional ones in the appendices and supplements. Belgioioso and her colleagues (Igor Agostini, Francesco Marrone, Franco A. Meschini, Massimiliano Savini, and Jean-Robert Armogathe) have, thus, significantly rationalized access to the letters in print.

Each letter appears in its original language, accompanied by a facing-page Italian translation. Extensive footnotes identify individuals and events mentioned in the letters, as well as giving information about the publication history and provenance of each letter. In addition to the details provided in these footnotes, the book's introduction describes every published edition of Descartes's letters, starting with Claude Clerselier's collection, published in three volumes between 1657 and 1667, and ending with the two editions of Adam and Tannery. The introduction also describes some of the important topics addressed in the letters—such as mathematics and philosophy—as well as the broader intellectual and international contexts within which Descartes worked.

Almost 300 pages of scholarly apparatus follow the original texts and the translations of the letters. In tables edited by Siegrid Agostini, there are concordances between this edition of the letters and the earlier published collections, as well as a concordance with the letters between Descartes and Regius. There are also a list of new attributions and an alphabetical listing of the correspondence (edited by Agnese Alemanno). The last section of the book includes a biographical profile of Descartes, a very useful biographical index of his correspondents, a bibliography of both primary and secondary sources, and a lexicon of key terms used in the letters. These tables and indices are the result of enormous labor and enhance the usefulness of this volume.

Although most of these letters have been published in earlier collections, the present volume gathers them all in one place and puts them in a coherent order, thereby overcoming the confusion generated by the appendices and supplements added to successive editions of Adam and Tannery's *Oeuvres de Descartes*. Basing their editorial decisions on close study of the manuscripts, Belgioioso's team has put the letters in chronological order and provided new dates for a number of letters. Not only will students of Descartes find the material more coherent, but they will also be better able to trace the development of his ideas and his relationships with his contemporaries. The letters provide an image of

the private Descartes, his intellectual concerns, and the network of savants with whom he communicated. At a time when historians of philosophy are taking a more contextualized approach to their subject, a new, more accessible edition of Descartes's letters is a welcome addition to the available scholarly resources.

This beautifully produced and reasonably-priced new edition of Descartes's letters is an essential resource for the study of Descartes and early modern philosophy. It is a major scholarly achievement that should find a place on the bookshelves of scholars, as well as in research libraries, around the world.

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Graeme Hunter. *Radical Protestantism in Spinoza's Thought*. Aldershot, UK – Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005. Pp. vii + 196. Cloth, \$89.95.

If this book's announced and modest aim—"to present the Christian dimension of Spinoza's thought positively and directly" (3)—were all the author meant to achieve, he was clearly successful. Any reader of the *Theological Political Treatise* (henceforth, *TTP*) cannot fail to see that Spinoza engaged seriously with Christianity, its sacred texts, and its internal divisions and disputes. Throughout his mature life, Spinoza lived among the Collegiants, the radical Dutch reformers, and it is clear that his dialogue with this circle played a significant role in shaping his writing on religion, Judaism, and Christianity. In this sense, it is trivially true that Christianity played a significant role in Spinoza's thought. But the author seems to be pushing a much bolder thesis. In claiming that Spinoza did not seem to have "heretical doubts about the divinity of Christ" (83), and in considering seriously that Spinoza was a practicing Christian (though in its radical Protestant form) (6), Hunter insinuates that he takes Spinoza to be a Christian philosopher. Indeed, Hunter concludes the book with the claim that "Spinoza's radicalism is still internal to protestant Christianity" (182). Obviously, the latter, and stronger, claim is both interesting and disputable.

The first two chapters of the book deal with Spinoza's Jewish background. Hunter's discussion in these chapters, while consistently fair, is not free from inaccuracies (such as his assumption that any Rabbinic court would have agreed to convert Uriel Da Costa to Judaism, knowing that the latter intended to keep only the ten commandments [26]). Chapters three to six deal with some of the central topics of the *TTP*, e.g., Spinoza's interpretation of the Bible, his view of Judaism, the relation between church and state, miracles, and the value of obedience. The picture we get from these chapters is of a Spinoza who is deeply influenced by the New Testament, accepts a Christian outlook on the issue of miracles, believes in the divinity of Christ, has *some* heretical views (such as rejecting the resurrection), believes in divine justice, mercy and grace, and preaches obedience to the teachings of Christ as the way to salvation. In the seventh chapter, Hunter attempts to show that the doctrines of the *Ethics* are consistent with his interpretation of Spinoza as a Christian philosopher.

The issue of Spinoza's relation to Christianity is complex. On the one hand, it is clear that he entertained a genuine sympathy for the figures of St. Paul and Christ (if he believed that Christ was an historical figure). There is also little doubt that he preferred Christianity to Judaism, by virtue of the former's (at least, alleged) universalism. On the other hand, some of his claims about Christ in the *TTP* can hardly be read at face value, and indeed, were not read in this way by his contemporaries, as when Oldenburg says, in a letter to Spinoza, that "many are of the opinion that . . . you are concealing your opinion with regard to Jesus Christ" (Letter 71). Furthermore, Spinoza's discussion of the nature of Christ in his late correspondence (1675–77) contains several assertions that would be quite offensive to a Christian believer. Some scholars have explained these tensions by taking the later, private correspondence to reveal Spinoza's real view of Christianity, while suggesting that his sympathy towards Christianity in the *TTP* stems from rhetorical and political considerations. Indeed, there is little doubt that in the *TTP* Spinoza adapted his claims to the beliefs of his