

tion of many passages and problems. The book is very well printed and produced: a *magnum opus* and a bargain at the price.

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ABAILARD ON UNIVERSALS. By MARTIN M. TWEEDALE. Amsterdam, North-Holland Publishing Company, 1976. Pp. x, 337. \$41.50.

The current revulsion from empiricism may limit our interest in the nominalism of the fourteenth century, but ought to augment our interest in the twelfth-century nominalism of Abailard, a nominalism that refuses to handle apparent references to universals with the claim that the sentences containing them really refer to words or ideas, and that refuses to make words or ideas the real subject of our knowledge of general propositions. Abailard held that universal predication speaks of the world, not of words or ideas, yet involves no reference to any real universal outside the mind and language of the speaker. A modern philosopher can't help but like the sound of this, and Tweedale, alert to this fact, draws many a just parallel between modern logical thought and Abailard, even including an entire chapter comparing Abailard to Frege. But, although Tweedale's understanding of modern thought contributes materially to the success of his enterprise, these explicit parallels are not really necessary to make Abailard interesting to the nonspecialist. We are closer to thinking Abailard's thoughts now than at any time since the thirteenth century, and a close study of his thought in its own terms will richly repay a twentieth-century philosopher.

Tweedale's book, a model of care and clarity, is an ideal vehicle for such study. Tweedale provides an extensive discussion of the background of Abailard's work with treatments of Plato, Aristotle, and Boethius' commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and a perceptive and accurate summary of scholarly work on Abailard in this century. Dealing with Abailard and the other medieval figures of whom he treats (aside from Boethius, he discusses Garlandus Compotista, the *Ars Meliduna*, and other twelfth-century sources), he quotes the relevant texts at length in the original Latin with an accurate English translation in parallel columns. His own discussion is interspersed between citations, with summaries at the end of each block of material. The detailed ex-

amination of the texts exhibits the industry and honesty he brings to his work, and the periodic summaries are succinct, clear, perceptive, and often brilliant. Occasionally I felt some lack of connection between summary and detailed discussion, but even Tweedale's falsehoods are generally of the enlightening kind, and he almost always qualifies them sufficiently to neutralize their tendency to mislead. The history of philosophy often suffers from a certain lack of digestion, degenerating into mere doxography. Tweedale's digestion is superb. He makes Abailard's reasoning, not his "doctrines," the heart of his book, and the result is an accurate and subtle exposition of his doctrine as well as its grounds in semantic theory.

I have some small complaints. Tweedale's treatment of Abailard's attack on "identity theories" in Chapter III misses an important point, and leaves a more favorable view of Abailard's opponents than they deserve. In his discussion of the passage quoted on pages 124–25 Tweedale's persistent interest in self-referentiality draws his attention away from the first sentence, which contains an argument independent of that in the rest of the paragraph. Abailard points out that if we are to say that a man considered as a universal is the same thing as the man considered as an individual, then we must be prepared to say what that thing is in itself. It must be something in itself, and since it is an individual in a nonequivocal sense (else it could not be considered qua individual) it must be, whatever else it is, an individual in itself. (The thirteenth-century Avicennan version of the identity theory, rooted in an interpretation of *Metaphysics Z*, countered Abailard's move by denying that everything that is particular is particular in itself. It claimed that only existing things must be particular in themselves to be particular, but natures, which are and are available as objects of reference, but do not really exist, can have particularity without being in themselves particular. But Abailard's view seems the right one.) Now whatever is particular in itself cannot be universal at all (not even accidentally and in some respect) in any sense that contradicts this particularity. Thus the man can be universal in the way that a particular utterance is, or in the way that a common possession is, or we could say he is universal, meaning only that he resembles other men in a certain respect, but he cannot be universal in any fashion useful to a metaphysical realist.

Again, Tweedale speaks in several places as though Abailard thought that a statement always expresses the structure of its subject or of the world. (See pages 234 and 245. He is more careful, for instance, on page 237.) On page 245 this actually results in a mistranslation. Abailard does not say that "propositions express the way things relate

to one another," but only that "as it were" (*quasi*) they do this. Tweedale clearly does not mean to attribute the "picture theory of meaning" to Abailard, and his final summary of Abailard's views in Chapter IV does very nicely without it. But Abailard himself sometimes uses the picture theory as a metaphor for his position, and Tweedale is guilty of occasional carelessness in his use of the metaphor.

I noted a lack of explicit attention to the development of Abailard's views over the twenty years spanned by his works, although Tweedale does consistently expisit the most sophisticated of the various views expressed in them. I was especially aware of this lack in the discussion of Abailard's treatment of the copula, due to my familiarity with some of Norman Kretzmann's work in this area. I cannot forbear to remark that the book is full of misprints, although I found only one in the Latin and most of them are easily corrected by the reader.

The book is a fine one, essential for specialists in medieval philosophy, and of interest to anyone involved in metaphysics and philosophy of language. In view of its price, however, I would not recommend that anyone purchase a private copy. Borrow it from the library.

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WILLIAM HEYTESBURY: ON "INSOLUBLE" SENTENCES. Translated with an introduction and study by PAUL VINCENT SPADE. Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1979. Pp. 111. Price not given.

The work translated here is the first portion of Heytesbury's (fl. 1340) *Regulae solvendi sophismata*,¹ which deals with *insolubilia*, i.e., paradoxes, of which the Liar is the prototype, where a sentence (called the *insolubile*) in conjunction with a description (called the *casus*) of apparently possible circumstances surrounding its existence as a token seems to imply things about itself that lead to contradiction. The translation of this work, widely studied in its day, will be useful to students of paradoxes, although it is difficult reading, and it is to be regretted that no Latin

¹ Curtis Wilson has studied other portions of this work in his *William Heytesbury: Medieval Logic and the Rise of Mathematical Physics* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1960).