

Matthias Kaufmann and Alexander Aichele, eds.

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Matthias Kaufmann and Alexander Aichele, the editors of this volume, have compiled a series of twelve articles that are separated into three parts: "Freedom of Will and God's Providence," "A Rights-Based Theory of Law," and "Molina's Medieval Sources and the Following Debates in Modern Times." The subject, Luís de Molina, whose fame has diminished despite his prominence within the first century of Jesuit history, is effectively illuminated with respect to several key elements of his philosophical and moral thought. While a vigorous debate about Molinism has resurfaced since Alvin Plantinga's rediscovery of Molina, this collection focuses on the Jesuit scholar's prodigious and at times controversial writings. "One of the primary aims of this *Companion*," the editors comment in the introduction, "is to hone the senses of the interested reader such that they can pick up on traces persisting in the form of concepts and arguments at places one would hardly expect to find them" (xiv). It might also be added that another goal for Kaufmann and Aichele is to foster a greater understanding of Molina's own intellectual development, as separate from the legacy that bears his name.

As this volume attests, Molina's prominence within early modern European theological circles and as the leading Jesuit theologian of his generation cannot be overstated. Influenced by the work of the Dominican friar Francisco de Vitoria, Molina formulated the concept of *ius gentium*, which topic comprises the first part of this book, with particular emphasis upon the absolute liberty of the human person. The first essay, by Aichele, offers an extensive analysis of the way Molina crafted a both real and logical possibility of human liberty that posited God's concurrence as first cause in all human actions; it was a position that, taken to its extreme, Jansenists would highlight in their condemnation of the order. Petr Dvorák, in the second essay, focuses on the concept of *scientia media*, indicating the points where Molina departed from Aquinas's understanding of divine foreknowledge in order to create a position wherein humans could be morally responsible for their actions. Dvorák notes that this was a critical contribution to Thomistic studies and was influential for subsequent Jesuit moralists, such as Suárez, Vázquez, Valencia, and Arrubal. In the last essay of the section, Juan Cruz Cruz excellently historicizes Molina's writings within the broader Jesuit context, which included the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*, the contemporary debate with the Dominicans on human freedom, and the standard of orthodoxy that Molina provided for doctrinal teaching and to which Claudio Acquaviva requested the order adhere. Foreshadowing essays

in the latter part of the book, Cruz notes that Molina's influence is evident even in the writings of Protestant scholars and later philosophers like Leibniz and Kant. In this section, the volume takes a critical step toward filling the notable gap in modern historiography regarding the contributions of Molina to modern theology.

In the next part, "A Rights-Based Theory of Law," the contributors concentrate on Molina's conception of so-called personal rights in relation to the broader discourse of Iberian Scholasticism. Jörg Alejandro Tellkamp begins with an argument that *dominium*, as it relates to *ius* and *iustitia*, provides a critical lens for approaching the development of the language of rights in Molina's thought, language that is identified as having a central influence on the writings of the Jesuit cardinal Juan de Lugo regarding the foundations of political power in 1652. Such a position, according to Tellkamp, required Molina to go well beyond a straightforward commentary on the *Summa Theologica*. Annabelle Brett subsequently argues on behalf of Molina's "revolutionary contribution" to the moral-theological and political discourse that began with Vitoria and the School of Salamanca; concurrently, Brett also details Molina's description of *respublica* as a genuine good according to natural law, a conceptualization that was instrumental for his younger contemporary and colleague Francisco Suárez's employment of a Thomistic teleology. Next, the editor Kaufmann analyzes the historical context in which Molina operated and the judgments he made while writing *De iustitia et iure*, during which time he was studying in Portugal and receiving correspondence from merchants and fellow Jesuits in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Accordingly, Molina provides a lens into the social and moral sensibilities of the Iberian academy at a time when slavery and just war were still being hotly debated in relation to non-Christians in distant lands. Next, João Manuel Fernandes, adeptly developing his subject from the starting-point of Molina's classroom in Évora in the 1570s, examines how Jesuits played a critical geopolitical role in the imperial courts of Europe by acting as confessors of court (Nicolas Caussin, for one, is highlighted). While rights language is the topic that receives the greatest attention in most studies of Molina, Ronald Schüssler aptly underscores that Molina also provided a catalyst for the liberal-trending Catholic moral theology of the seventeenth century and thus emphasizes Molina's influence both on subsequent generations of Jesuits and on the development of theories of international trade.

In the final part on medieval sources and subsequent debates, the Dominican theologian Romano Cessario employs the hermeneutic lens of Jesuit practice, pedagogy, and historical origins to explain why Molina, in the matter of *concursum*, moved so creatively beyond the letter of Thomas Aquinas's writings. "Molina introduced a phase wherein the human will is left to take some

initiative," Cessario attests (308), while also concluding that the Jesuit did not fully comprehend Aquinas on secondary causes. Although Aquinas provides the Catholic standard of theological unity and is a bedrock element of Jesuit education, Jean-Pascal Anfray contends that Molina sometimes jettisoned him in favor of John Duns Scotus, particularly regarding the formation of the *media scientia* as it relates to free will and God's *praescientia*. Completing the volume, Francesco Piro and Wolfgang Ertl each offer an essay on Molina's reception within seventeenth-century philosophical discourse beyond Catholic intellectual circles.

As a whole, the *Companion* succeeds according to its own criteria. As Kaufmann and Aichele note in the introduction, any compilation will suffer some gaps, and a noticeable lacuna in this volume is its dearth of biographical detail. In general, the appreciation shown for Molina's identity and work as a Jesuit varies with each essay; whereas some excel in this regard (Dvorák's and Cessario's, in addition to those previously mentioned), others omit reference to it almost entirely. And while the Jesuits of Molina's age were diligent in correspondence—and in the recording of that correspondence—this volume pays scant attention to that resource. The letters between Molina and Suárez, for example, present a particularly tantalizing opportunity for further research into not only Molina's work, but also its influence on the younger Jesuit—an opportunity that is mostly ignored. Still, this volume does much to demystify the work of Molina by separating it from the complex question of his broader legacy, and provides a useful tool for any scholar looking to situate Molina within his Iberian Scholastic context—a context that would have global effects.

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