

ZITA VERONIKA TÓTH

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EDUCATION

- 2017 PhD in Philosophy, FORDHAM UNIVERSITY (expected in April).
Dissertation: “Medieval Problems of Secondary Causation and Divine Concurrence.”
Advisor: Giorgio Pini.
Dissertation Committee: Marilyn McCord Adams (external reader, Rutgers), Brian Davies, Christopher Cullen, Dana Miller.
- 2016 Diploma Programme in Manuscript Studies, PONTIFICAL INSTITUTE OF MEDIAEVAL STUDIES, Toronto.
Advisor: Timothy Noone (CUA).
- 2010 MA in Medieval Studies, CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY (with distinction).
Thesis: “The Concept and Role of *Experimentum* in John Buridan’s *Physics* Commentary.”
Advisor: György Geréby.
- 2009 BA/MA in Philosophy, EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY (Budapest, HU).
Thesis: “Empiricism in the Middle Ages.”
Advisor: Gábor Borbély.
- 2009 BSc/MSc in Mathematics, EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY (Budapest, HU).
Thesis: “Descartes’s *Geometry* and Some of Its Applications.”
Advisor: Gábor Kutrovátz.

AWARDS AND GRANTS

- 2012–16 Teaching Fellowship, FORDHAM UNIVERSITY.
- 2014–15 Tomasic Research Fellowship, FORDHAM UNIVERSITY (competitive research fellowship for Medievalists at Fordham, amount: \$24,500).
- 2010–15 HUNGARIAN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FUND, “Theories of Perspective and Cognition in Early Modern Philosophy,” participating member (project leader: Dániel Schmal) (competitive Hungarian national grant in the sciences and humanities, \$10,000 for the whole project).
- 2013 Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Travel Grant, FORDHAM UNIVERSITY (competitive grant within Fordham, amount: \$1,200).
- 2012 Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Summer Fellowship, FORDHAM UNIVERSITY (competitive grant within Fordham, amount: \$4,000).
- 2011–12 MELLON Summer Fellowship (competitive international grant, amount: \$11,000 total).
- 2010–12 Presidential Scholarship, FORDHAM UNIVERSITY (amount: \$22,500).
- 2010 Outstanding Academic Achievement Award, Central European University, SOROS FOUNDATION (awarded for the student with the best GPA; amount: ca. \$250).

2005–06 Erasmus Grant, University of Tübingen, TEMPUS PUBLIC FOUNDATION (competitive European international grant).

PUBLICATIONS

- 2016 “Peter of Palude on Divine Concurrence: An Edition of His *In Sent.* II, d.1, q.4,” *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 83, 49–92.
- 2015 “Descartes’s *Optics* and Medieval Theories of Vision: What Makes an Explanation Causal?” In *Perspective in Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Tamás Pavlovits and Dániel Schmal, Budapest: Gondolat Kiado, 51–65.
- 2011 “Scientific Method in John Buridan,” *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 17, ed. Alice Choyke and Daniel Ziemann, Budapest: CEU Press, 23–40.
- 2010 “Aquinas and Buridan on the Possibility of Scientific Knowledge,” In *Thomas Aquinas and Thomism Today*, ed. Bulcsú K. Hoppál, Budapest: L’Harmattan, 163–174.

BOOK REVIEWS

- 2016 *Aristotle in Aquinas’s Theology*, ed. Gilles Emery and Matthey Levering, OUP 2015, *Themalios* [forthcoming].
- 2010 “Borbély Gábor és a középkori filozófia” [Gabor Borbely, *Medieval Philosophy*], *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* [Hungarian Philosophical Review] 54, 157–160.

PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSLATIONS

- 2016 Descartes, *Dioptrique* (with Daniel Schmal, Tamas Pavlovits, and Balint Kekedi). Budapest: Gondolat (Translation from French to Hungarian).

PRESENTATIONS

INVITED TALKS

- 2016 “William Ockham and Pierre d’Ailly on Genuine and Sine Quibus Non Causes,” *Medieval Natural Philosophy*, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN.
- 2015 “Was Giles a Thomist about Divine Concurrence?” *The University of Toronto Colloquium in Medieval Philosophy*, Toronto.
- 2014 “Aquinas on Secondary Causes,” *Dissertation Colloquium*, Fordham University.
- “Descartes and Late Medieval Explanations of Vision: What Makes a Causal Explanation Causal?” *Early Modern Perspectives*, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest.

ACCEPTED UNDER ANONYMOUS REVIEW

- 2016 “Nebuchadnezzar’s Fire and Causal Powers,” *Canadian Society of Christian Philosophers*, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB.
- “Peter of Palude on Secondary Causes and Divine Concurrence,” *51st International Congress on Medieval Studies*, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI.
- 2015 “Aquinas on Divine Concurrence and Qualitative Change,” *33rd annual joint meeting of the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy with the Society for the Study of Islamic Philosophy and Science*, Fordham University, New York.

“Who Is Responsible for Change? The Debate Between Durand of St.-Pourcain and Peter of Palude,” *Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-century Thought on Change*, KU Leuven.

“Thought Experiments in John Buridan’s *Treatise on the Void*,” *Medieval Thought Experiments: Poetry and Speculation in Europe, 1100–1450*, New College, Oxford.

“Understanding the Tongues of Fire: What Nebuchadnezzar’s Fire Can Tell Us about Divine Concurrence and Causal Powers,” *Change and Its Challenges: An Interdisciplinary Academic Conference*, Fordham University.

2014 “Mere Conservationism and Its Metaphysical Commitments,” *Divine Action in the World*, Analytic Theology Project, Innsbruck, Austria.

“Why to Get Rid of the Small Flitting Images: Descartes’s *Optics* and Some Medieval Theories of Vision,” *Southwest Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy*, University of New Mexico.

2013 “Scotus on Modality and the Argument for God’s Existence,” *31st annual joint meeting of the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy with the Society for the Study of Islamic Philosophy and Science*, Fordham University, New York.

2012 “The Role of *Species* in Descartes’s *Optics*,” *Scientiae: Disciplines of Knowing in the Early Modern World*, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver.

2011 “Are Horse-legs Horses? Buridan on Material Constitution,” *Graduate Symposium*, Fordham University.

2009 “Aquinas and Buridan on the Possibility of Scientific Knowledge,” *Thomas Aquinas and Thomism of Today*, Conference of the Hungarian Thomas Aquinas Society.

2007 “Ockham, Autrecourt, and Modern Skepticism,” *National Students’ Conference on Science and Humanities*, Pécs, HU.

TALKS RELATED TO PEDAGOGY

2014 “Reflection Exercises in a Philosophy Class,” invited paper, Conference on Jesuit Pedagogy, Fordham University.

2013 “Challenges in Teaching Philosophy,” invited panel participant, Fordham University.

PUBLIC TALKS

2016 “Experiments in Medieval Science and Alchemy,” Hungarian Consulate, NYC.

TEACHING AND PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD

Philosophical Ethics, Fordham University, 3 semesters (2015 Summer, 2015 Fall, 2016 Spring, 2016 Fall).

Philosophy of Human Nature, Fordham University, 4 semesters (2012 Fall, 2013 Spring, 2013 Fall, 2014 Spring).

ADVANCED PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES

2014 Jesuit Pedagogy Seminar, participant, Fordham University.

2012 *Eloquentia Perfecta* certification, Fordham University (certification to teach speaking- and writing-intensive courses).

OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

SUMMER SEMINARS

- 2014 Divine Action in the World. ANALYTIC THEOLOGY PROJECT (Templeton), Innsbruck, Austria (competitive summer seminar funded by the Templeton Foundation).
- 2011–12 Diploma Programme in Manuscript Studies. THE PONTIFICAL INSTITUTE OF MEDIAEVAL STUDIES, American Academy, Rome; PIMS, Toronto (competitive summer seminar funded by the Mellon Foundation).
- 2011 Aquinas and Peter Geach. THE WITHERSPOON INSTITUTE, Princeton University (competitive summer seminar funded by the Witherspoon Institute).
- 2008 Religion and Politics: The Presence of Sacred and Secular Traditions in Europe and the Middle East. CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY, Budapest (competitive summer seminar funded by the Soros Foundation).

ACADEMIC OFFICES HELD

- 2016 Intern, Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, with Consuelo Dutschke.
- 2013–14 Graduate Assistant editor for *Traditio: Studies in Ancient and Medieval Thought, History, and Religion* (editor: Joseph Lienhard)
- 2010–12 Graduate Research Assistant, Fordham University, with Brian Davies.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

- 2016–17 Faculty Meetings Graduate Student Representative (elected position).
- 2015–16 Organizer, **Workshops in Philosophy of Religion** (recent speakers: Marilyn McCord Adams, John Pittard, Samuel Lebens, Eleonore Stump, John E Hare). **Website:** <http://zitavtoth.com/public/archive/Religion/>.
- 2015–16 Coordinator, Dissertation Colloquium, Fordham University.
- 2014–16 Member of the departmental Climate Committee (elected position).
- 2012–15 Coordinator, Latin reading group, Fordham Philosophy Department.
- 2014–15 Faculty Meetings Graduate Student Representative (elected position).
- 2013–14 Vice President, Fordham Philosophical Society (elected position).

LANGUAGES

Hungarian	Native
English,	Full professional proficiency
Latin	
German,	Professional working proficiency
Italian	
French,	Limited working proficiency
Greek	

SELECTED GRADUATE COURSEWORK

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: ANCIENT

Presocratics: From Parmenides to Plato	K. Steiger (Eötvös Loránd [=ELTE], 2003F)
Plato	A. Szlezák (Tübingen, 2006S)
Ancient Natural Philosophy	D. Miller (Fordham, 2011S)
Aristotle's <i>Metaphysics Z</i>	I. Bodnar (ELTE, 2005S)
Hellenistic Philosophy	B. Johnson (Fordham, 2012S)

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: MEDIEVAL

Introduction to Saint Augustine	G. Pini (Fordham, 2011S)
Anselm, Aquinas, and Ockham	G. Borbély (ELTE, 2005S)
Aquinas: Questions on God	B. Davies (Fordham, 2011F)
The Nominalism of John Buridan	Gy. Klima (Fordham, 2010F)
Scotus on Causation	G. Pini (Fordham, 2012F)

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: EARLY MODERN

From the Royal Society to Hume	G. Boros (ELTE, 2005F)
Leibniz and Spinoza	D. Balestra (Fordham, 2011F)
Descartes and Contemporary Issues	D. Rosenthal (CUNY, 2012F)

CONTEMPORARY TOPICS

Modal Logic	A. Máté (ELTE, 2004S)
Philosophy of Science	M. Rédei (ELTE, 2005F)
Mind-Body Problem	W. Jaworski (Fordham, 2011F)
Topics in Contemporary Metaphysics	B. Frances (Fordham, 2011S)
Moral Intentionality	J. Drummond (Fordham, 2010F)
Philosophy of Religion and Judaism	Gy. Tatár (ELTE, 2005S)
Topics in Philosophy of Religion	B. Davies (Fordham, 2010F)
Reason and Religions	S. Cahn (CUNY, 2013S)

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Do things in the world exercise causal powers? Are the manifestations of these powers necessary? What if one also wants to maintain that there is an omnipotent agent (God) who created and maintains this world? In my dissertation I present various solutions to this cluster of problems as they appeared in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, centered around three debates. I show that the focus of the question itself, as well as the related notions changed considerably in the period: while in the thirteenth century, the main concern was the metaphysical one to avoid mere conservationism and occasionalism, by the early fifteenth century it became the more epistemological one about the demonstrability of genuine causal relations. These three debates represent the three most important aspects of the medieval problem of divine concurrence, which is a significant problem both in the medieval metaphysics of causal powers, and in contemporary theories of divine action — since neither mere conservationism nor occasionalism is compatible with theism classically understood.

After motivating the problem by reviewing the Latin medieval reception of Arabic occasionalism (Chapter 1), the first debate I present concerned whether God is immediately active in every action of a creature, and if yes, what this divine concurring action amounts to (Chapter 2). Most thirteenth-century thinkers thought that the answer to the first question was affirmative. They disagreed, however, on how to understand God's concurring action, and, consequently, on the response to their mere conservationist contemporaries. Apart from their specific concern, their arguments also shed some light on how to understand the necessary connection between cause and effect in the medieval framework.

The second debate focused on divine concurrence as present in human actions (Chapter 3). Although human actions present special problems, interestingly, most arguments against the claim that we need divine concurrence in the production of every volition apply to created causes in general. In this debate, the focus expanded to questions about divine foreknowledge, but the main aim remained the same: to account for concurrentism that can avoid falling into occasionalism or mere conservationism.

Occasionalism and the indemonstrability of the causal relation became a central problem in the third debate (Chapter 4). I show that although some fourteenth-century thinkers have been regarded as occasionalists, most of them preserve a clear distinction between genuine, *sine qua non*, and occasional causes. Gabriel Biel, the pre-reformation theologian seems to be the first one to explicitly argue that God is the only genuine causal agent in the world, but even his evaluation is more complicated than it is usually assumed.

In summary, I show that although the focus of the debate and the employed conceptual apparatus shifted, concurrentists remained occupied with avoiding both occasionalism and mere conservationism. Different versions of concurrentism entail different sorts of metaphysical commitments about actions, substances, and powers, and thus whether one thinks any of the concurrentist attempts are successful will turn on whether one thinks these commitments are plausible ones.

REFERENCES

Confidential letters of recommendation can be retrieved directly via Interfolio or from Suzanna Appenzeller at the Fordham Philosophy Department: appenzeller@fordham.edu. I provide the e-mail address first by which Interfolio will send you the letter; referees might also be contacted, if necessary, by their personal address.

Name (Affiliation)	Email address
Giorgio Pini (Fordham)	send.Pini.990C1C4480@interfolio.com pini@fordham.edu
Marilyn McCord Adams (Rutgers)	send.Adams.352DA4DEC9@interfolio.com mccordadams@gmail.com
Brian Davies (Fordham)	send.Davies.CBE4DE815F@interfolio.com bd01725@gmail.com
Stephen Grimm (Fordham)	send.Grimm.05E1166C91@interfolio.com sgrimm@fordham.edu
Gloria Frost (U St. Thomas)	send.Frost.BC837255AC@interfolio.com fros0034@stthomas.edu
Daniel Schmal (PP Catholic U, HU)	send.Schmal.43324F010E@interfolio.com schmal.daniel@upcmail.hu
Nathan Ballantyne (Fordham) (teaching letter)	send.Ballantyne.4A9EF48FE0@interfolio.com ballantyne@fordham.edu