

Book Reviews

Barth's Earlier Theology: Four Studies by John Webster (*London: T&T Clark, 2005*), v + 144 pp.

IN THIS LATEST installment from master theologian and interpreter of Karl Barth *par excellence*, John Webster, we are presented with a commanding study of the early years of Barth's career, 1921–1925, as Honorary Professor of Reformed Theology at the University of Göttingen. Taking a fresh look at the mostly neglected writings of this period, Webster focuses on Barth's early lecture cycles on Zwingli (chapter 2), the Reformed Confessions (chapter 3), 1 Corinthians (chapter 4), and nineteenth-century Protestant thought (chapter 5). In a study that combines the rare gift of readability with sophisticated academic nuance, each chapter shows how Barth gained an early and impressive command of the historical, biblical, and ethical issues that helped form the bedrock of his later theological knowledge in the *Church Dogmatics* (CD).

Most impressive about Webster's latest foray into Barth's theology is not only his ability to show the influence of these formative years on Barth's later theological development, but also the way in which he implements Barth's own hermeneutical principles in his study. Not content to present Barth's thought according to general thematic expositions, changing socio-historical and cultural contexts, or theological common denominators (though these too have their place), Webster simply offers close and attentive readings of specific texts in order to grasp "what Barth is seeking to communicate in a single piece of writing" (9). Like Barth, Webster learns and teaches us to listen, to hear, and to question relentlessly after the divine subject matter of Christian theology to which the text itself bears witness. In essence, then, these studies are not simply academic representations of neglected strains in Barth's thought or attempts to overcome common misunderstandings; they are the reflections of a seasoned expert endeavoring to give "theological

readings of Barth” that need to be “read with an eye for the interpretation of the Christian gospel” (9) in various periods of Christian thought. In this Webster follows Barth and seeks to grasp (or to be grasped by!) the divine activity that underlies all genuine theological reflection. It is precisely this activity that brings forth the “astonishment” and “shock” that “stands at the beginning of every theological perception, inquiry, and thought,” whenever “the mind is seized” by the object of its investigation (9). As Webster makes clear throughout this work, for Barth theological investigation in historical, biblical, and moral theology derives the perception of truth from the self-communicative and “revelatory presence of God” (3). This crucial observation makes Webster not only an astute reader of Barth’s theology, but also a sagacious interpreter of the key *theological* and *spiritual* foundation of God’s activity that sustains and nourishes all theology that adequately conveys its divine subject matter.

Although their purpose is principally theological, these essays also go a long way toward correcting common misperceptions of Barth’s thought. From the beginning, Webster notes, Barth was seen as a “theological dissident whose natural genre is the polemical essay or highly charged address, and whose presentation of the Christian faith is dominated by an oppositional view of the world” (3). However, as each chapter so clearly demonstrates, from the very start of his career Barth was determined to rebuild a positive theological foundation for the human and ethical challenges of modern theology. Eschewing a one-sided theology of divine freedom, transcendence, and aseity, Barth was always concerned with the other side of the dialectic: the human ethical response to divine sovereignty and grace. As Webster repeatedly argues, Barth by no means championed the wholesale rejection of the anthropological, historical, and ethical preoccupations of nineteenth-century theology. Rather, he sought to take these concerns seriously and to develop a positive response on the solid foundation of God’s prior *and* present revelatory activity in and for the world in Jesus Christ. Such issues are confronted head-on throughout this volume, nowhere less so than in Barth’s interpretation of his fellow Swiss Reformer Huldrych Zwingli.

According to Webster, when Barth arrived at Göttingen and began to teach Zwingli, he became immediately embroiled in the controversy between the Lutherans and his own Swiss Reformed tradition. Unwilling to enter the debate, either as a partisan defender of Zwingli or as a detractor of Luther, Webster shows how Barth relativized the differences among Protestant theologians by focusing his attention directly on Zwingli’s text and the *Sache* of the Reformation itself, even as he remained sensitive to prevailing Lutheran criticism at that time. What first fascinated Barth

about Zwingli was his unique way of handling the human and ethical challenges that constituted the “distinctive genius of the Reformed tradition” (17) on the basis of God’s radical transcendence, freedom, and aseity. Indeed, for Barth, Zwingli could remain a “*total* Humanist, a *total* man of the Reformation, a *total* politician, [and] a *total* Swiss” (17) precisely because he understood that God was *God* and cannot be confused or commingled with any created reality, as in Lutheran and medieval Catholic thought. Thus, it was Zwingli who nurtured the seed that had already germinated during the writing of Barth’s *Römerbrief*, the seed that God’s radical transcendence and sovereignty do not undermine human agency but rather constitute and engender it by preventing its absorption or divinization in the divine being and activity, and by demanding the free ethical response for others. As Barth states, “[t]he majesty and transcendence of God allowed, even required, humankind to live on the earth in an earthly way . . . and it was precisely from justification by faith alone that Zwingli derived the duty of such obedience” (26).

The remainder of the chapter focuses on Zwingli’s theology of Eucharist, providence, and Baptism. Here, Webster shows that despite Zwingli’s strong influence on Barth’s understanding of God’s relation to the world, Barth did not assume Zwingli’s thought *tout court*. In particular, he objected to the way in which Zwingli was too eager to resolve dialectical tensions and settle theological disputes once and for all through applying regulative concepts or principles that dominated his thought. For example, although Barth appreciated Zwingli’s theology of the Eucharist to avoid the “false adoration of creaturely realities” (29) that would replace ethical responsibility with cultic participation, he thought that Zwingli’s denial of the bodily presence of Christ in the Eucharist risked vitiating the doctrine by relegating it to the psychological domain of the believer’s faith. Barth also criticized Zwingli’s theology of providence for being founded upon a concept of God’s absolute originality that failed to give sufficient weight to the doctrine’s Christological core. Confronted by Zwingli’s pure and abstract theocentrism, Barth believed Zwingli incapable of developing a sufficiently positive doctrine of God’s relation to the world. Thus, while Zwingli may indeed have taught Barth not to identify God and the world in order to protect both God’s absolute originality and the integrity of creaturely agency, Barth still needed to take what he had learned from Zwingli and move on, so as to develop further the implications of sovereign grace for the concrete life of ethical action.

In the third chapter Webster offers a penetrating analysis of Barth’s lectures on the Reformed Confessions during the summer semester of

1923. Following Barth's analysis, Webster groups his discussion thematically and as follows: "the debate with Rome; the positive doctrine of Christianity; the controversy with Lutheranism; and the battle against modern Christianity" (44). More important, however, are Barth's two preliminary discussions on the nature of the Confessions in the Reformed Church and the scripture principle, both of which set the tone for Barth's lectures and elucidate his clear and distinct grasp of the power and promise of Reformed theology in opposition to Roman Catholic and Lutheran thought.

According to Webster, what is distinctive of the Reformed approach to the confessions in Barth's view is that they are "less institutionally settled and more transparent" (45) than those of Catholicism or Lutheranism. "Essential to the *Reformed* church," Barth writes, "is the fact that . . . it is *not* a pure and *not* a secure church. . . . [T]here is no victorious confession like that of the Augsburg Confession" (45). Rather, framing the discussion in the context of God's revelatory presence and action, Webster shows that Barth "reinterpreted [the confession] as [an] event" that is made known by God through "the constant process of attending to Holy Scripture" (45). As such, it eschews any easy identification with "a given reality in a well-seated religious culture" and makes no claim at an absolutism or finality that would sanctify or enthrone a religious or social culture. Indeed, as Barth would proclaim throughout his career, the significance of the Reformed confession is that it makes "merely provisional, improvable and replaceable *offerings* [which are] never . . . an authority" in themselves (46). The confession is simply a human work that speaks humbly from below and does not bellow from above. Its significance consists in its "essential *nonsignificance* . . . relativity, humanity, multiplicity, mutability and transitoriness" (46), which must ever appeal to scripture and the voice of the living God. Thus instead of seeing the confession as a secure possession of a Church that is "at home in public history," Barth understands that the reality to which it points is *disruptive* of church and social life so that the Church always stands under God's judgment and receives its authority from God's Word in scripture, "the *viva vox Dei*," through "the self-communicative presence and activity of God" (46–47).

Hence, for Barth, the conditional and relative character of the Reformed confession is not something that can be separated from the life of the church and the voice of God, but stands in absolute dependence upon the continuing activity of God, of which no person or church can lay claim as exclusive property. The heart of the Reformed confession, then (and what is lacking in some Lutheran and Catholic quarters), is the

life of utter dependence upon God's continuing activity, which comes to fruition in the church. Without sundering the activity of God from the human response and responsibility, the remainder of this chapter develops Barth's criticisms of Catholic, Lutheran, and modernist shortcomings in their tendency to identify God's activity with Church or culture. Positively stated, the Reformed confession tolerates no mediation of creaturely realities that would usurp the freedom and sovereignty of God and thereby undermine the human responsibility to turn to God's continuing, authoritative presence and action in the church. There is no human or ecclesial mediation because God alone provides that possibility through the gracious presence of the Word of God itself, who brings the transcendence of the Father and the immanence of the Spirit together in Jesus Christ.

In the fourth chapter Webster offers an insightful analysis of Barth's exegetical lectures on 1 Corinthians, also given in the summer of 1923. Although these lectures have been published for more than eighty years, Webster notes that few interpreters have grappled with the key exegetical and theological issues that had occupied Barth's mind during this time. Even recent studies of Barth's hermeneutics and theology prior to the *Church Dogmatics* have failed to offer careful readings of the specific content of Barth's study, preferring instead to offer "excessively conceptual" interpretations that subject his work to abstract intellectual schemas (69). Hence, Webster's exposition is concerned to uncover Barth's *Erklärung* of this important epistle, particularly as it pertains both to the unique manner of scripture and to Barth's centering theme of 1 Corinthians 15 on the resurrection of the dead for understanding the relation between eschatology and ethics.

Webster begins by posing two pointed questions: (1) "What kind of text does Barth consider himself to be interpreting?" and (2) "What is the relation between the biblical text and Barth's *Erklärung*?" (69) These questions are significant because they show Barth trying to break free from the hegemony of much historical-critical studies to forge a new path toward theological exegesis. Webster points out that Barth understood himself to be interpreting a unique text, that is, *scripture*, which has its origin in the manifestation of divine revelation that creates a new relationship with human beings after the fall (70). As such, his exposition of 1 Corinthians is concerned both with God's revelatory economy in its direct address to Paul and with its contemporary reception for the faithful interpreter. Aware of Barth's concern over understanding the theme and content of Paul's address, Webster shows that biblical exegesis cannot ignore important historical and philological questions as Barth is so often

accused of doing. Instead, Webster argues, Barth understands Paul's epistles as a form of "apostolic address" that is not simply "a religious text from the past" but also provides "the occasion and means of present divine revelation" (71) in which God makes the past revelation in Jesus Christ known through the apostle Paul in the present event of revelation. Clearly, this has immediate consequences for the life of the faithful believer, for it "requires that the interpreter adopt a particular stance before or, better, beneath the matter to whose active presence the text testifies" (71).

But what kind of interpretation is Barth offering here? According to Webster, it is neither a standard biblical commentary that comments on every line nor simply a thematic study of Paul's epistle. Citing its location as somewhere between a commentary and a theological exposition, Webster shows that Barth's intention is "to re-present the matter of the text, not to articulate it in a more secure or coherent or potent way than Paul himself" but to "re-state what the text itself states . . . in order to allow the inherent clarity and force of the matter of the text to make itself felt" (77). Through "paraphrase, imagery, and conceptual restatement or analysis" (78), Webster explains how Barth attempts to get to the heart of biblical revelation by "drawing the reader into his own process of discovering the *Sache*" of the text itself, in order that the subject matter make itself known. In this sense, then, Webster offers a valuable exposition of some of Barth's most ingenious expositions of scripture that shine forth with the sheer originality and creativity of Barth's project and its promise for returning biblical exegesis to its proper theological foundation in God.

The latter half of this chapter offers a dense and compelling reading of Barth's exegesis of 1 Corinthians 15 as the culmination of Paul's argument on the resurrection of the dead. Here especially Webster is concerned to vindicate Barth from charges that he has underestimated Paul's eschatology in favor of an unhealthy obsession with God's pretemporal eternity and that Barth has little to say with regard to the general resurrection of the dead. Rather, as Webster insists, Barth's point is not to offer general comments on ethics or the resurrection but to reestablish human action comprehensively "on the basis of a theological-eschatological ontology and corresponding moral anthropology" (87). It is not that we are simply to turn to Paul's discussion of love in 1 Corinthians 13 to understand Christian ethics apart from God's raising Jesus from the dead, but rather to understand the ethical command in light of God's reconciling work in Christ and promise for future redemption. Positioned, as it were, between "the perishing of the old" and "the becoming

of the new" (86) human beings are to recognize that they are already dead in sin, yet alive in the newness of eternal life. To misunderstand the ethical ontology of the resurrection is to understand Christian ethics in a general and abstract manner that overlooks "the all-determining reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead [which] is rich in recreative power" (85). Hence, Easter Day itself enables those who are already dead to live anew in a life that is not yet. This dialectical juxtaposition of the "already" and the "not yet" not only prevents establishing Christian ethics in general virtue ethics or in a psychological/sentimental moral theory of love but also enables Christians to see that the miracle that God performs in the resurrection of Christ has already set them free from death. In redrawing ethical ontology in terms of Christ's resurrection, Barth is well on his way toward developing a fully theological and biblical vision of God's re-creative power in Christ between present reconciliation and future redemption in the *parousia*.

The final chapter on Barth's *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century* offers an original and important exposition on the nature and task of historical theology. It also shows that Barth is a far more "perceptive, sophisticated and modest" (91) historian than is usually thought to be the case. According to Webster, one of Barth's reasons for publishing this collection of essays in 1947 was not to denigrate or dismiss his Protestant forbears of the previous century, for those giants of the nineteenth century also belong to the church in the communion of saints and had grappled with common theological tasks and responsibilities that occupy theology in every age. Rather, it was to admonish Barth's followers to be more loving, attentive, and appreciative of their theology. Thus against every misperception of Barth as a theological iconoclast and polemic despiser of natural and experiential theology, Webster shows Barth to be a careful and lovingly attentive reader of nineteenth-century Protestant thought as he struggles to see the issues of their day, clearly and on their own terms.

Most important, however, is Webster's treatment of Barth's explicitly *theological* understanding of historical theology. Against the modern trend to ground historical theology in the neutral and detached investigation of the non-partisan observer (e.g., Harnack), Barth understands historical theology to be concerned with the investigation of the Christian gospel, an investigation that comes only from the event of divine revelation. Just as Barth in the *CD* sought to ground world history in the history of the church and salvation, so too does he seek to establish historical theology in terms of God's activity in the history of the church. Historical theology is thus a theological task "because it is concerned with the history of

the church not simply in its externality, but in its character as an episode in the divine knowing and forming of creaturely occurrence" (102). This means that historical theology is not "directly perceptible" to human eyes, but is only indirectly conceived when its own historical investigation is gripped by the power and the presence of its subject matter. As Webster writes, "a theological interpretation of the history of the church does not simply read off its verdicts from the empirical surface of events; rather it reaches its judgments on the basis of a perception that those events are caught up in the divine governance of things" (104). Therefore, the present perception of theological truth in the past is possible only through God's acts of justification and sanctification "in the event of grace" itself (104).

Crucial to this interpretation of historical theology, however, is that "the visibility of the history of the church is spiritual visibility" (105). Yet this does not "remove Church history from . . . history generally," as Peter Hodgson has argued, so that the church is relegated to a private sphere that is cut off from the general study of history. As Webster shows, Barth's point is simply to recenter historical theology around its divine object so that the perception of church history is seen through God's eyes. In other words, it is a matter of distinguishing God's primary agency from the secondary agency of created beings in order that history is understood as the object of God's gracious action and presence. As such it does not preclude the possibility of general historical investigation but places that investigation in a theological ontology of the church. Moreover, since the present perception of truth in the past depends upon the presence of God's revelatory activity, historical theology, just like biblical interpretation, requires a specific attitude on behalf of the interpreter who must be "caught up in God's reconciling activity" and enabled to see the "the spiritual visibility of the divine work taking shape in forms of human life and activity" (110). In this Webster offers an unparalleled interpretation of Barth's timeless contribution to the theological and spiritual foundation of historical theology in that historical interpretation requires a "special participation" with a "certain attitude" of openness, attentiveness, and loving trust to see that the theologians of the past also belong to the church of the present. As Barth puts it, "Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Schleiermacher and all the rest are not dead but living. . . . There is no past in the Church, so there is no past in theology. 'In him they all live' " (112).

With the four studies of this text, Webster brings his characteristic lucidity, depth, and nuance to the some of the most neglected writings of Barth's corpus. Though he is chiefly concerned to bring forth the early

insights, which Barth would develop brilliantly in his later years, this book makes a long-lasting and significant contribution to one of the most fruitful periods in Barth's theological career. Yet despite Webster's obvious agreement with Barth on the issues that pervade Barth's work, Webster is no slavish admirer who holds back criticism in favor of praise. He is quick to point out lectures that were hastily put together near the end of the semester, when Barth was running out of time and steam or where Barth had lost control of his material by indulging in sweeping historical generalizations, not to mention the occasional unkind polemic (e.g., Albrecht Ritschl). Webster's analyses are also accompanied by a continuous stream of excerpts from Barth's own letters that show Barth's understanding of these texts and the development of his thought in such a short and intense period of study. Webster's book thus offers a fair and balanced look at these earlier lectures with a clear and profound presentation of Barth's early integration of biblical, historical, and ethical materials according to the self-communicative and revelatory presence of God. Unfortunately, and this is the work's greatest shortcoming, it is far too short, covering only a fraction of Barth's earlier writings and leaving untouched the rest of Barth's lectures of that period (e.g., Anselm, Aquinas, Calvin, Schleiermacher, etc.). We can only hope for a companion volume to these compelling studies. N.V.

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The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture by Brevard Childs (*Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004*), xii + 332 pp.

THE STRUGGLE to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture studies the hermeneutical issues that have arisen throughout the history of Christian attempts to understand Isaiah as a tradent of the Gospel. Profiting from a broad slew of recent scholarship as well as his own work, Childs's concern is twofold. First, he attempts to understand the *unifying features* of the Christian exegetical tradition by focusing on a particularly important book. Second, he wants a reading of this tradition that is both *theological* and *ecclesial*. His main interlocutor is the *Religionsgeschichte* school of thought insofar as it tends to dismiss Christian exegesis as eisegesis, thus ignoring theology. Indeed, the book responds to J. F. A. Sawyer's *The Fifth Gospel* on this very point. Part of this double project involves probing the viability of allegory (x) and answering to some degree the charge of eisegesis.

Childs assigns one chapter apiece to Christian theologians who have written a commentary or homilies on Isaiah and who also influenced subsequent tradition or interpretation of previous tradition. The introductory chapter discusses the Christian reception of the Hebrew bible. The theologians studied include Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, Jerome, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret of Cyrus, Thomas Aquinas, Nicholas of Lyra, Martin Luther, and John Calvin. The next three chapters consider seventeenth- and eighteenth-century, nineteenth- and twentieth-century, and post-modern interpretations. A final chapter draws broad hermeneutical conclusions. At various points, Childs acknowledges his own limitations, stresses the introductory character of the study, or admits the somewhat distorted perspective that arises from focusing on Isaiah alone. Each chapter possesses a bibliography of primary and secondary sources roughly two and a half pages in length. The chapters themselves vary somewhat in quality and are sufficiently autonomous that they can be consulted individually. Childs maintains, however, the unity of his study. What follows is a representative selection from among the best chapters.

In chapter five on Origen, Childs makes allegory and history within the context of the Alexandrian school the prominent theme. With laudable clarity he discusses the Alexandrian background, the controversy over allegory (here referring to Danielou, Hanson, and Lampe, as well as the allegory-typology distinction), and the current rehabilitation of allegory. He calls upon the aid of scholars such as Louth, de Lubac, and Frances Young. He argues that misunderstanding about Origen's hermeneutical principles arose because Origen meant something different by "literal" than do modern scholars. He also argues that Origen taught the organic unity of literal and spiritual senses and that the multiple "senses" in Origen's usage are in fact multiple referents. As in other chapters, he limits actual consideration of Isaiah's text to a few specific passages. Childs's strength in this chapter is his ability to synthesize quite a bit of scholarship in a clear and concise fashion.

In chapter ten on Theodoret, spiritual sense and history are again a prominent theme—now within the context of the Antiochene school. Childs emphasizes that Theodoret sought a *via media* between the historicizing of Theodore of Mopsuestia and the excesses of Origen, a response that "called forth remarkably sophisticated reflection on proper exegetical methods" (134). Childs rehearses some of Theodoret's contributions: for example, irony as a part of the literal sense, the figurative sense as a metaphorical extension of the literal, and rules within scriptural idiom governing the move to figurative exegesis. Thus, for instance, in a sample

prophecy from Isa 32, Childs observes that Theodoret “seeks to show that the promise of a royal figure could not apply to Hezekiah, Josiah, or Zerubbabel. . . . Rather, the virtues of the ruler depicted . . . only find fulfillment outside of the Old Testament. . . . [T]he hyperbolic nature of the language . . . indicates to the reader the need to transcend the ordinary historical sense” (144–45). According to Childs, Theodoret does not regard the figurative sense “as a separate meaning, unlike Origen, but rather as an extension of the word or concept being interpreted” (143). Childs helps to clear up some confusion regarding Theodoret’s terminology for the spiritual sense, and also shows his occasional use of “double fulfillment” of prophecy.

In chapter eleven on Thomas Aquinas, Childs recalls his limited intention “to raise certain basic hermeneutical issues of theological importance” (148). He first considers Thomas’s Augustinian and Hieronymian background as a combination of Alexandrian and Antiochene elements. He structures the chapter on the debate over novelty and tradition in Aquinas’s interpretation. The first position points to his emphasis on the literal sense and the univocity of biblical words. The other position, represented by de Lubac, points to his retention of the fourfold schema in his actual commentaries. Discussing Isa 40–66, Childs responds that Thomas’s interpretation “is not primarily directed to the text itself . . . but to [its] substance. He does not distinguish between literal and figurative senses according to the Alexandrian tradition, but passes through the words . . . to their theological substance, which inevitably transcends the verbal sense” (159). Childs characterizes this approach as “ontological” (160). He regards Aquinas’s philosophical reflection as useful for theological precision in this context. In the end, Childs concludes that “Thomas’s largely non-allegorical manner of penetrating to the figurative sense by means of an ontological, intertextual move shaped by the substance of the witness itself” (162) is his chief innovation. Childs leaves to one side the somewhat confusing status of the literal sense in Aquinas’s thought based on *ST I Q. 1 a. 10*, in which Thomas acknowledges that even the literal can contain many senses.

Chapter thirteen on Martin Luther reveals a certain shift in Childs’s analysis; he is clearly more comfortable analyzing Luther than discussing some of the fathers. The chapter is one of the longest in the book. He first discusses Luther in light of his medieval roots. Then, Childs points out some general characteristics. First, Luther rejected the fourfold scheme: “It was pushed to the periphery as a result of his focus on the theological content” (183). Second, Luther employed a dialectical hermeneutic (between Law and Gospel, in its final developed form).

Gospel is whatever preaches Christ. As for the dialectic itself, "Luther regarded this distinction as a flexible one, in the sense that the recovery of the gospel within scripture was never a static given, lest it itself turn once again into law. For this reason scripture remains the active dynamic preached Word that continues to free" (188). He also discusses philological analysis, paraphrase, and rhetorical tropes in Luther's exegesis (193). An example of the dialectical method in Isaiah is Luther's exegesis of the first two chapters. Childs shows how he juxtaposes corrupt Jerusalem with "the picture of Zion, the faithful city" (196). In the end, Childs emphasizes the dialectical method, because Luther used it to keep the existential force of the Old Testament such that it could also teach the gospel. Childs critiques modern readings for failing to recognize the theological character of Luther's exegesis: "Ever since the Enlightenment, Luther's Christological approach has often been rejected as a naïve distortion. . . . Such a criticism has failed to grasp the heart of Luther's approach. Rather, . . . he was able to evoke from the ancient text a rich Christian texture in a fresh, close reading of its words" (203).

The final chapter draws hermeneutical conclusions. Childs concludes that on at least seven counts the Christian exegetical tradition possesses a basic family resemblance. The first five are familiar (hence, a bit pedestrian): 1. the authority of Scripture; 2. the literal and spiritual senses; 3. the two testaments as Christian Scripture (although their relationship has been variously articulated); 4. the divine and human character of scripture; and 5. the Christological content of Scripture. The last two points relate rather more clearly to his own concerns: 1. the dialectical nature of history (understood in a non-technical sense in order to articulate the importance of sacred history), and 2. exegesis as a theological task based on the final form of the text.

In general, Childs's scholarship is careful, and he is quite frank about his own limitations so that there is little to critique. He emphasizes the continuities in Christian exegesis, without glossing over the discontinuities. It is worth, however, rehearsing a certain weakness of the study (admitted by Childs himself), so that readers will know what not to expect. Since the criterion of inclusion is that the theologian be influential and that he write some form of commentary or homily on Isaiah, the result is that certain thinkers very significant for hermeneutics in general remain unconsidered. For example, the Cappadocian fathers receive no attention. Augustine and Gregory the Great are also missing. Bernard of Clairvaux is absent. Additionally, since Childs had to work outside his own specialties in many cases, as he acknowledges, the text is bound to disappoint any with specific expertise in patristics or medieval theology—

at least to some degree. This is a caution to potential readers, not a criticism of Childs, who deserves commendation for drawing so well on a vast range of scholarship.

Since, however, the book is a contribution in favor of theological exegesis, Childs himself remains vulnerable to a small theological criticism. He tends to assume that it makes sense to speak of a strong opposition between history and allegory, implied in the assumption that distinct spiritual senses blunt the "plain sense" (304), or in his assumption that allegory contained an anti-historical tendency that needed to be moderated (303–304). What epistemology underlies such assumptions? Is there, perhaps, an unstated opposition between universal and particular (i.e., nominalism) at work? Why does a hermeneutic of multiple senses blunt existential force or plain meaning? In short, his seeming preference for Luther's opposition between history and allegory undercuts his interest in rehabilitating allegory and colors how he views the history of exegesis to the point that he sees Theodoret as challenging "the *traditional* denigration of the Old Testament as, in principle, 'carnal' or peripheral to Christian theology" (133, emphasis added). No one expects Childs to renounce his preference for Luther, but the crucial issues left unstated are what differing epistemologies are at stake, how *we ourselves* employ these in analyzing the history of interpretation (so that some can view denigration of the Old Testament as somehow traditional!), and whether they accurately characterize the history of interpretation. Otherwise, it is difficult to see how to overcome modern and postmodern objections to Christian allegory or "eisegesis" except by bracketing the truth claim of theology. In all fairness, however, it is clear that he desires to overcome false Alexandrian-Antiochene dichotomies, and moreover the criticism does not imply that we should embrace all allegory uncritically, only that the epistemological issue of multiple senses needs recognition and careful handling lest we distort history. He *has* shown that the tradition, with broad unanimity, seeks theological content transcending the merely literal.

Overall, the book possesses the advantage of comparing theological, hermeneutical, and modern critical ideas in a cohesive, sympathetically handled synthesis of scholarship. The book should be a useful resource for students and scholars seeking familiarity with the Christian exegetical tradition and for anyone doing specialized work in Old Testament hermeneutics or Isaiah. Moreover, it should provide a starting point with concrete examples for theologians interested in recovering traditional theological exegesis. (A welcome feature in this regard is Childs's demonstration that patristic exegetical tradition, both Alexandrian and Antiochene, saw the need for careful philological and textual work.) In the final

analysis, however, it is imperative to realize that the book is fundamentally introductory and to judge its usefulness accordingly. N.V

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Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke by C. Kavin Rowe (*New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006*), 277 pp.

IN ACCORDANCE with Greek-speaking Judaism, Luke the evangelist refers to the God of Israel as κύριος. What does it mean, then, when Luke also names Jesus κύριος, and when he records the speech of others who address Jesus as κύριε prior to Jesus' Resurrection? Is Luke purposefully inscribing Jesus' identity into YHWH's? If so, has Luke conflated pre- and post-Resurrection epistemology, with the result that readers of the Gospel must construct alternative bridges to the identity of Jesus prior to the apostolic faith in his Resurrection? Or has Luke, in writing his Gospel, anticipated this problem and addressed it by means of his use of κύριος

In lucidly engaging these questions, Kavin Rowe's book goes significantly beyond the standard studies of Luke's Christology. Discussing one such study, Joseph Fitzmyer's two-volume commentary on Luke, Rowe observes that Fitzmyer distinguishes between three stages in the development of the Gospels: (I) the historical Jesus, (II) Jesus as proclaimed by his followers after the Resurrection, and (III) the written gospels (in the context of the other writings collected in the New Testament). Fitzmyer aims to focus his commentary on stage 3, but his treatment of *kyrios* frequently takes its bearings not from hypotheses related to the earlier two stages. Rowe points out that "Fitzmyer translates κύριε in Luke 5:12 ('κύριε, if you will, you can make me clean') as 'Sir,' and then in the Notes writes, 'The translation, "Sir," suits the Gospel tradition in Stage I; for Luke, writing at Stage III, it may have the connotation of "Lord"' (210). As Rowe remarks, the problem here is the translation "Sir": If intended as a translation of the actual Gospel of Luke, then it should have been translated as "Lord," assuming that the goal of translation is to convey accurately the intended meaning of the Gospel itself. Otherwise the translation risks becoming a mixture of what Luke aims to convey (Stage III) and what the contemporary biblical scholar construes as befitting the situation of the historical Jesus (Stage I). At this point the translation ceases to be a translation, and instead stands as a historical-critical reconstruction that, because of its inattention to Luke's narrative artistry, distorts the Christology of Luke's Gospel.

Fitzmyer is not, of course, alone in this mistake. In light of this situation, Rowe aims to trace the use of κύριος in Luke's Gospel with the systematic goal of uncovering "the meaning of the word in its Lukan context and literary development" (210). He argues that Luke, in light of the post-Resurrection connotations of κύριος, carefully employs the ambiguity of the term throughout the Gospel to assist his readers in perceiving the dramatic ironies involved in the use of κύριος with regard to Jesus. For Luke, "κύριε is . . . both Christologically 'Lord' and historically 'sir/master'" (216). Since the word has these diverse meanings in Greek, Luke allows his readers to discover in and through his use of κύριος both that Jesus is fully man and that Jesus is fully Lord. As Rowe concludes, "The life of the Lord, for Luke, is not written without explicit, post-resurrection christological claims, but neither is pre-resurrection history thereby annihilated anachronistically with spiritualizing theology" (216). Focusing on the precise way in which Luke has constructed his narrative shows how he unites appreciation for pre-Resurrection historical context with post-Resurrection theological reflection.

The bulk of the book consists in Rowe's four chapters of detailed exegesis of the Gospel of Luke. Chapter one treats the birth and infancy narratives, along with the role of John the Baptist (Luke 1–3). Chapter two treats Jesus' mission in Galilee (Luke 4–7). Chapter three explores Jesus' journeying toward Jerusalem (Luke 10–14, including Jesus' parables). Lastly, chapter four examines Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, Passion, and Resurrection (Luke 19–24). As he proceeds through the Gospel, Rowe seeks to show that Luke's narrative "[binds] together the κύριος of Israel and the life of Jesus κύριος" (121). As Rowe intends, it is the cumulative weight of his examples that impresses; and as he points out, this means that those who wish to dispute his interpretation henceforth must interpret κύριος through the entire narrative of Luke's Gospel.

Commenting on Luke 1, Rowe observes that "prior to 1:43 κύριος is used of the God of Israel (ten times; on 1:17 see below), but now as Jesus himself enters the narrative he is given the name/title ὁ κύριος" (40; cf. 48–49 for theological commentary). Luke, however, does not explain this. Indeed, commenting on Luke 3:4 (which quotes Isaiah 40:3), Rowe finds that the ambiguity in κύριος cannot be resolved. Even so, "due to the movement of the narrative, our initial tendencies to resolve the ambiguity move from God in 1:17 to Jesus by 3:4" (74), with the result that the ambiguity itself "expresses the fundamental correlation and continuity between the God of Israel and Jesus" (76). To what degree was this correlation and continuity known before Jesus' resurrection? Commenting on Luke 5:8, Rowe notes that while Peter's use of κύριε

cannot mean merely “sir,” Luke retains sufficient ambiguity to leave “open the possibility that the one in whose mouth κύριε occurs need not possess ‘post-resurrection’ fullness of knowledge at every point in the story—or, indeed, at any point prior to the resurrection” (89).

As Luke’s Gospel proceeds, Rowe finds that the theological conclusion becomes increasingly evident. Commenting on Luke 10:21–22, Rowe states, “The tensive agility of κύριος in the movement of the narrative creates a unity such that both Jesus and God the Father are κύριος with respect to who they are in Luke’s story (i.e., the narration of their character is inseparable from their identity as κύριος)” (137). They possess their identity as κύριος, however, within the distinction of Father and Son. Again, commenting on Luke 19:31–34, Rowe shows (with N. T. Wright’s research in the background) that Jesus’ royal and messianic entry into Jerusalem “takes on the character of an embodied coming of the God of Israel as κύριος through his χριστός κύριος” (165).

Rowe arrives at three central conclusions. First, he argues that Luke employs κύριος in a sophisticated manner to communicate his understanding of Jesus. Second, he proposes that Luke’s literary sophistication is such that one needs to study all instances of κύριος in Luke’s Gospel before offering an assessment of Luke’s Christology. Here Rowe draws upon Martin Buber to highlight “the dynamic of verbal repetition, a word’s recurrence and the intrinsic significance of its unfolding pattern for meaning” (199). Third, he emphasizes that the ambiguity of the meaning of κύριος at particular places in Luke’s Gospel, and especially in the infancy narrative, purposefully opens up a dual referent: κύριος has to do both with Jesus and with God. Taken as a whole, the narrative of the Gospel reveals that Jesus’ entrance into the world is the entrance of the κύριος of Israel; heaven and earth meet in Jesus.

As Rowe points out, Jesus κύριος remains always distinct from God κύριος: Luke’s distinction between Θεός/πατήρ and χριστός/υἱός is confirmed by Luke’s sophisticated use of κύριος. But how can the true κύριος suffer and die? Luke’s answer is that the true κύριος manifests himself through cruciform power, a power defined by self-giving love. This redefinition of power assists Luke in identifying the suffering κύριος with the exalted κύριος after his Resurrection and ascension. As Rowe says, “Through the depiction of the human Jesus as κύριος, Luke shapes the understanding of ‘Lord’ to include, by definition of his life on earth, misunderstanding, opposition, and even crucifixion in the identity of the heavenly Lord” (206–7). Rowe has in view not a Hegelian dialectic within God, but the continuity between the earthly and risen Jesus, a continuity that includes the inclusion in the identity of God. Thus the

ambiguities in κύριος assist Luke in narrating the extraordinarily complex identity of the Jesus whom the Gospel proclaims. Luke achieves what Rowe terms “a narrative *Verbindung*, a coherent pattern of characterization that binds God and Jesus together through the word κύριος such that they finally cannot be separated or abstracted from one another in the story” (201). Rowe’s conclusion fits both with the Gospel and with the account of identity that Rowe derives from Hans Frei and Paul Ricoeur (as well as from the novelist Henry James). As Rowe puts it, “this study rejects the notion that the question ‘who is the κύριος?’ can be settled beforehand, as if we can arrive at the answer in abstraction from the narrative, without the story” (19).

In a postscript to his book, Rowe observes that scholars generally assume that the Christologies of Paul and John diverge significantly from Luke’s. As Rowe points out, however, evidence from Paul’s letters indicates that “by the time Luke wrote his Gospel, Christian communities would thus have been confessing Jesus as κύριος for several decades” (220). Paul’s reliance upon κύριος in speaking about Jesus fits well with Luke’s approach, and refutes any attempt to divide Paul and Luke along Christological lines. John only rarely identifies Jesus as κύριος, but Rowe persuasively recounts the importance of κύριος both in the footwashing scene in John 13 and in Mary Magdalene’s and the disciple Thomas’s recognition of the risen Jesus. Rowe concludes that John, like Luke, “uses dramatic irony as the literary glue for post-resurrection κύριος christology and pre-resurrection history” (229). Even though John does not develop κύριος throughout his narrative, John’s account of Thomas’s words upon recognizing Jesus—“ὁ κύριος μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου” (Jn 20:28)—confirms “the direction in which Luke’s use of κύριος points—the ‘pressure’ of the Lukan narrative logic—but John is the one who actually says it explicitly” (229–30). For Rowe, then, Luke is joined by Paul and John in judging that Jesus, as experienced by his disciples in his earthly ministry and in his heavenly exaltation, “shares an identity with God as κύριος” (231).

How might theologians respond to Rowe’s book? First, theologians should learn from Rowe and others that any easy dichotomy between “low Christology” and “high Christology” in the New Testament needs to be put to pasture. Second, this step, rather than solving our theological difficulties, leads to deeper ones. Granted that Luke’s narrative gives Jesus an identity recognizably in continuity with later dogmatic (creedal) judgments, why should we accept Luke’s claim as true? Similarly, what is the relationship of Luke and his Gospel to the Church that later made those dogmatic judgments? Given that dogmatic judgments are propositional

and metaphysical, even if grounded in narratives, does dogma diverge from Luke's own understanding of how to appropriate Jesus' identity? Did the Councils and the Fathers, in their exegesis, interpret Luke well? Again, what does it mean to say that Luke belongs to the canonical Bible? If Luke "[binds] together the κύριος of Israel and the life of Jesus κύριος," what about Jesus' followers? Do they participate through the Holy Spirit as a visible communion in the crucified and risen κύριος of Israel?

Fortunately, Luke himself recognized the pressing nature of these questions and paired his Gospel with the Book of Acts. Not surprisingly, then, after reading Rowe's book theologians and exegetes will find themselves eager to turn to Luke's witness to the Church in the Book of Acts, and to reflect on this basis also upon the liturgy, exegesis, and doctrine of the patristic Church. Indeed, we can hope that Kavin Rowe, having offered a rich reading of the Gospel of Luke, will in due time turn his considerable talents to Luke's second volume—and thus to the ongoing problem of how to understand the union of believers, in the Holy Spirit, with "the κύριος of Israel and the life of Jesus κύριος." N V

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Bound to Be Free: Evangelical Catholic Engagements in Ecclesiology, Ethics, and Ecumenism by Reinhard Hütter (*Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004*), x + 313 pp.

THIS is an impressive work of constructive theology: committed, rigorous, vigorous, and, for the most part, beautifully wrought. That the author, an associate professor of theology at Duke Divinity School, has become a Roman Catholic since its publication should, for readers of these pages, be an occasion of confident hope. He is one of a number of astute, bold, and committed theologians to have taken such a step in recent years (others include Bruce Marshall, Douglas Farrow, Alvin Kimel and R. R. Reno). This should legitimately be the cause of some theological optimism for Roman Catholics, coming as it does, strikingly, at the same time as a very public and very painful dark night of the sinfulness of the Church's members, reminding us, had we forgotten, that the Church is a *corpus permixtum*.

One of the most exciting things about this book is how the balance between "theologology" and theology proper is redressed. Too much contemporary theology is concerned with getting theology's story right (where things went wrong) that it becomes exclusively preoccupied with

exegesis of itself and society, becoming a self-obsessive and self-pleasuring discourse, forgetting its primary justification as a *ministerium Verbi*. Of course these two directions are not mutually exclusive, nevertheless, it is comparatively rare to read a work that gives determining priority to *kerygma*. Let us hope and pray that the Church may realize (in both senses) the gifts she has received.

That Hütter has now become a Roman Catholic accounts for something of a feel of ecclesiological schizophrenia in the essays he has gathered to form this book: sometimes more clearly addressed toward Protestants and at others more clearly toward Catholics; the book seems to come from something of an ecclesiological ivory tower. The essays are all previously published and roughly span ten years, but are not presented in chronological fashion. By and large their editing together has been well done, though there is some repetition (for instance essays 7 and 8 might have been better presented as a single essay).

The essays have been marshalled into three sections which deal with Church (*ekklēsia*), freedom (*eleutheria*), and truthful ecumenical speech (*parrhēsia*). The initial introductory essay outlines the reasoning for this threefold division, and is itself an excellent piece, arguing for the reintegration of these three aspects of Christian thought as mutually indwelling.

The first section is “*Ekklēsia*—or, Free to be Church” and comprises five essays. In the first Hütter argues that the Church should see herself as a “public,” in a manner analogical to the way ancient *poleis* have been described by Hannah Arendt. They are defined by a common telos, core practices, and binding convictions. Using the exchanges between Erik Peterson and Karl Barth, Hütter shows how these two tended toward either ecclesiological objectivism or ecclesiological subjectivism, both of which end up not taking God with the seriousness he demands and deserves. Although Barth helps one to see that God is only the object of theology insofar as he is its subject, his ecclesiology has the consequence of avoiding all purchase on reality: it is too abstract as Hütter notes in a subsequent essay. Hütter goes on in this essay to explore and expand on what Luther saw as core practices of the Church. Here, as throughout the book, Hütter is at pains to emphasize the Spirit’s role in the economy, strikingly adapting Kant: “Pneumatology without ecclesiology is empty; ecclesiology without pneumatology is blind” (38). Nevertheless he is adamant that it is crucial, to safeguard God’s freedom, not to identify the Spirit’s actions with one ecclesial body.

In the next essay Hütter is keen to reverse the modern paradigm, shared by Kant and Schleiermacher in their different ways, which makes the subject the end of the Church. Rather, Hütter argues, it is the practices of

the Church that save and transform and therefore antecede us. We come to the Church, not *vice versa*. Likewise, we do not own knowledge of God, it owns us. Indeed, Hütter goes further: strictly speaking there is no neutral knowledge of God. Theological reflection does not, therefore, occupy some “ideal *locus standi*” (Rowan Williams), but rather is stretched out between memory and hope, one might say in a posture of cruciform imprecation. Theology occurs within the Church and is therefore subject to her practices: it has no negative freedom.

Chapter four deals with the themes of hospitality and truth. True hospitality, like God’s hospitality into which we are invited, Hütter argues, is never “mere entertaining”; it always involves truth, about ourselves and others. Hütter uses a story from C. S. Lewis and the account of the Lord meeting the disciples on the way to Emmaus to make his point. Truth and hospitality belong together and perichoretically point to each other, as do word and sacrament, worship and doctrine. Rightly, Hütter reckons that one of our greatest needs at the present time is good catechesis. He also argues that practitioners of theology (and, incidentally, that includes all the baptized) should go about their theologizing *joyfully*. It is worth repeating his quotation of Barth on this point: “A theologian who has no joy in his work is no theologian at all. Sulky faces, morose thoughts, and boring ways of speaking are intolerable in this science” (214, note 34). Hütter goes on, in chapter five, to take a closer look at Karl Barth’s “dialectical catholicity,” tracing Barth’s real sense of the question posed by Catholicism to the Protestant ecclesial communities: to what extent are they “churches”? Of course time has passed since Barth, and even Hütter, wrote, but this is still a question, perhaps even more so now. For Hütter, Barth is an evangelical catholic (a description Barth applies to himself), and the theology of the Reformers helps him avoid the excesses of Catholicism on the one hand and neo-Protestantism on the other, though consistently preferring Catholicism. Both fail, however, because they instill principles to which God is answerable: they undercut or ignore God’s sovereignty. Within a focus on God’s majestic freedom, conversion is always to Christ, and anthropology and ecclesiology are Christologically relocated. Such a Christological relocation allows a dialectic between Israel and the Church, between grace and judgment. The problem, as already alluded to, is that Barth’s ecclesiology is thus led to stand on a knife-edge, between God’s saving activity and human witness to it. Shy of ecclesiological embodiment, it is too abstract.

The sixth chapter moves beyond Barth’s knife-edge dialectic to an investigation of apophatic theology, a surer way, Hütter suggests, of avoiding conceptual idolatries. Hütter provides a good account of the close relationship between positive and negative theology, closely following the

account of Denys Turner's *The Darkness of God*. He shows that the relation is not symmetrical, and that positive theology rightly enjoys a priority. Negative theology is not a cancellation of the positive, but rather a reminding of the creaturely contours of positive theological formulations, a shaking of the carpet under theology's feet. It polices the creature/Creator distinction. Interestingly Hütter relates the dynamic he sees between the positive theology of *est*, as he puts it, and the negative theology of God's *esse*, to icons that also share the same, Christologically mandated and configured, hiddenness in revelation. This is the sort of textured and careful understanding of apophatic theology that is needed to counter the common understanding that such theology simply peddles negative statements and bad mystery.

The second section, "*Eleutheria*—or, Free to Live with God," deals largely with freedom and seeks to counter the pared down caricatures that are found in society under that name today. In the first of the three essays of the section Hütter distinguishes between three types of freedom: (negative) freedom from interference; (positive) freedom from determination; and the divine freedom in which creatures participate—real freedom one might say. To be genuinely free is to live our existence as creatures truthfully. Hütter turns to an appreciative engagement with John Paul II's *Veritatis Splendor* (his comments about the late pontiff are mixed in this book, perhaps accounted for by the jumbled chronology of the essays), which he argues puts a timely challenge to the largely antinomian Protestant ethics of today. Spurred on by Kant and Fichte, the Promethean self dissolved itself in Nietzschean bile and is now on a manic-depressive rollercoaster ride veering from relativism to totalitarianism. The solution, proposed by the Polish pontiff, is to realize that the right ordering of the relation between freedom and law is teleological, that is to say, law is ordered to freedom. The relation is most definitely not oppositional in an exclusive sort of way. Human freedom, Hütter argues, is only fulfilled when it is encountered by a limit that grounds and shapes it. The shape of freedom is not to be grasped by a self-originating human being, but received from the Creator. Freedom seized is freedom lost. Here Hütter strongly emphasizes the role of the Commandments, and especially the first. Indeed one might say that arguing for the recognition and affirmation of the importance of the first commandment is the most important subplot of this book. To counter the unbalanced modern reading of Luther as tending toward antinomianism, Hütter rereads his *Theses Against the Antinomians* and his *Lectures on Genesis*. He concludes by giving his own ten theses for the relation of freedom and law, emphasizing the role communities play in the practice of both.

Essay eight overlaps significantly with the previous one and tackles what Hütter calls the “license of autarky” and the impoverished understanding of freedom that it bespeaks. Again he emphasizes what we might call the *terribile commercium* of modernity whereby sovereignty has been reassigned to the human being and contingency to God, and the replacing of the moral law with one of unexamined desires. Hütter says, following his Duke colleague Stanley Hauerwas, that we need to learn to be sinners again. This requires a new way of seeing, a new optic. Such a vision does not see desire as bad per se, but does see that it needs to be harnessed and (re)educated. He concludes the essay with a brief look at natural law and a commendation of the daily meditation of Psalm 119.

The last essay of this section considers the tongue: a small organ of inordinate power. He argues that the eighth commandment indicates three orderings of right speech: political or natural, concerned with what we do as creatures; moral, to do with sin; and thirdly good works that lead the tongue to be free for praise. This chapter includes a searing indictment of moral euphemization: bang on target.

The final section of the book, “*Parhēsia*—or, Free to Speak Ecumenically,” contains three detailed and largely sympathetic—but by no means uncritical—engagements with recent documents of the Magisterium: *Ut Unum Sint*, *Fides et Ratio*, and *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*. Given the detailed textual work they contain (the latter two essays are gems of close reading), it is impossible to review them adequately here, but a few comments may be in order. The first essay on the Petrine ministry now feels a little dated; we have yet to see the effects that the way the current pontiff exercises it may have on ecumenical relations. Given the course of the current pontificate so far (and the overwhelmingly *theological* nature of the current pontiff), there is cause for hopeful optimism. It may be an indictment of my naivete as a Catholic born in the year of the three popes, and thus well after Vatican II, but I found Hütter’s repeated plea that the papacy be exercised “under the gospel” astonishing, perhaps almost offensive.

His engagement of *Fides et Ratio* complains, rightly, about the various translations offered of the text and suggests convincingly that what is missing from this important text is an engagement of the relation of the will to the operations of faith and reason.

His comments on *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible* are most interesting and are part of something of a wave of interest in the documents of the inobtrusive but quietly influential Pontifical Biblical Commission. He suggests that the document could have been titled “In,” arguing as it does for a much closer relation of mutual

indwelling between Israel and Church, a cause championed recently by John Paul II as well as a number of contemporary Catholic theologians, and a matter of no small controversy. Dialogue with Judaism thus becomes an ecumenical, and not interreligious, affair. Still, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible* argues that the relationship is not one of complementarity, nor is it dialectical, but rather one of promise and fulfillment; and thus both parties are eschatologically conditioned.

It is here in the last essay that we get closest to a clear expression of the logic that operates throughout the volume and seems to guide its content and structure. I would term it a paradoxical logic of the both/and, a logic of perichoresis and participation that does not look on theological topics with zero-sum spectacles. It is a profoundly Catholic logic: *et . . . et* rather than *aut . . . aut*. We see this in Hütter's book-long argument for the perichoretic relation of Church, freedom, and truth, and more particularly in the relations between hospitality *and* truth, between positive *and* negative theology, freedom *and* commandment, Israel *and* Church, and, overarchingly, knowledge *and* practice. These "ands" are fundamentally Chalcedonian, that is they are Christologically grounded. If the Incarnation is the principle of this logic, as Hütter suggests (for instance on 213) and I would strongly agree, then an essay on this logic and the Incarnation would have been very welcome. If *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible* could have been titled "In," then Hütter's book could have been called "And."

My only significant irritation with this book is the dislocation of notes and text. I can see no good theoretical reason for "Nestorian" endnotes—especially when the notes themselves are so rich. It is ironic and unfortunate that a book which argues so strongly for the mutual indwelling of theory and practice should effectively separate them in its own text, thus giving the main body a Docetic air.

That niggle aside, this is an inspiring book that will repay careful reading. But—*cave lector!*—it is also a convicting book: I frequently found myself judged and found wanting. Yet because of the "and" logic of the book, we are also strongly reminded that we are bound for freedom. **NV**

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The Contested Theological Authority of Thomas Aquinas: The Controversies between Hervaeus Natalis and Durandus of St. Pourçain by Elizabeth Lowe (*New York & London: Routledge, 2003*), xviii + 259 pp.

Durandus of St. Pourçain: A Dominican Theologian in the Shadow of Aquinas by Isabel Iribarren (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005*), xiv + 311 pp.

DURANDUS of St. Pourçain, if he is known to theologians at all, is generally known as the master of the *opinio singularis*. He makes sporadic appearances in the dogmatic textbooks of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the sole purveyor of views that would make even the most committed Ockhamist blush. Indeed, at a recent gathering of Thomists in Utrecht, when someone blurted, “Well no one has ever believed *that*,” a veritable chorus raced to the punch line, “*Durandus did!*” A kind friar from California cried out, “Poor Durandus!” after this exchange. I thought he lamented the unfortunate abuse suffered by his departed confrere, but the Thomist sitting to my left quickly pointed out that I had let my Franciscan sympathies mislead me. The sun-drenched Dominican, he assured me, merely lamented the fact that Durandus was *always wrong*.

Two new works by Elizabeth Lowe and Isabel Iribarren do much to dispel the darkness surrounding the renegade Dominican theologian. They are two substantially different books and are best read in tandem.

Lowe provides a historical account of the controversy between Hervaeus and Durandus with a broad view of the theological issues involved. Her account outlines the educational structures of the Dominican order, its intellectual traditions, the political background of the controversy, and the way it affected—and was affected by—the promotion of Aquinas as a theological authority. Lowe also devotes a chapter to selected issues in the controversy, briefly focusing on debates about relations, cognition, and the scientific nature of theology.

Although Iribarren’s work is ordered chronologically and has much interesting historical detail besides, its strength lies in its detailed reconstruction of the *minutiae* of early-fourteenth century scholastic arguments. Accordingly, the first part of Iribarren’s book outlines the doctrinal and philosophical background from the Fourth Lateran Council to the inception of the controversy between the two Dominicans. She begins with the twin influences of St. Augustine and St. Anselm on Lateran Trinitarian theology, follows with a chapter devoted to St. Thomas Aquinas, and then one on the respective contributions of St. Bonaventure, Henry of Ghent, and Bl. John Duns Scotus to Trinitarian theology.

In these chapters—and those that follow on Hervaeus and Durandus—Iribarren carefully describes each theologian's account of the divine relations, processions, and persons, and traces the kaleidoscopic path of these Trinitarian issues as both Dominicans refine their terms and definitions over the course of their twenty-year argument. Iribarren also backs all of her interpretations with a truly impressive array of quotations from the primary sources.

The general story one hears of the controversy between Hervaeus and Durandus casts the former as a partisan of Thomas and the latter as a nominalistic defender of the more traditional Augustinian theology. Such accounts, as Lowe characterizes them, “soar along the plane of ideas and abstractions, dipping now and then into [conventual politics] to acknowledge the occasional capitular *acta* or ecclesiastical censure” (67). By contrast, Lowe's account focuses quite squarely on the two men's personalities, neither of whom come off as particularly likable people. She judges both Dominicans “volatile” and likely to “rant and rave” (74). Durandus, by all accounts a brilliant man, mitigates his own admirable defense of free inquiry within the bounds of tradition with his propensity to refer to his detractors as *idiotas*. In any event, after reading Lowe's account of the two men's difficulties with each another, one can only conclude that the Dominican order was not big enough for the both of them. Pope Clement V made Durandus Bishop of Limoux in 1317, thus freeing him of his Dominican duties; the *Doctor resolutissimus* went on to antagonize a series of papal patrons. Lowe's story is convincing, in part because she spends time discussing several Dominicans, like Dietrich of Freiburg, James of Metz, and Meister Eckhart, who criticized Aquinas's teachings without suffering censure.

The picture that emerges in Iribarren's telling is complex, to say the least. Rather than a dispute between one man who is faithful to the teachings of Thomas Aquinas and one man who is not, we are treated to a fascinating exchange between a Thomist who deploys Scotist insights in a battle with another theologian attempting to remain true to the earlier Augustinian language found in Bonaventure and Henry of Ghent even as he turns this language to his own ends. Iribarren shows uncommon mastery of the technical vocabulary of scholasticism, and a truly remarkable skill in heading off misunderstandings that come from a hasty translation of one scholastic vocabulary into another. “This is not to say . . .” is a steady—and welcome—refrain in her technical discussions of Trinitarian theology. Of course, one can quibble with her readings of Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, but scholastically inclined theologians can always quibble. I for one would have liked to see Iribarren turn her fine mind more to the Trinitarian theology

found in Scotus's quodlibetal questions, although she rightly focuses on Scotus's *Lectura* for historical reasons. I, too, am inclined to shade Durandus a tad closer to Henry of Ghent than Iribarren does. The Ghentian insistence that *esse* is not said properly of relations in no way mitigates the strong use of analogy that pervades Durandus's exotic recasting of the language of divine relations. In fact, the Ghentian *dictum* supports Durandus's account, since the *esse* of relations would be said *secundum quid* even if they possessed a distinct modal reality (cf. 64, 121).

Beyond such technical details, two issues in the controversy between Hervaeus and Durandus make Lowe's and Iribarren's works of some significance for the interpretation of Thomas Aquinas today. First, both books provide interesting perspectives on the construction of Thomas's theological authority in the early fourteenth century. It should go without saying that this construction required no small amount of skillful negotiation, especially since Thomas did not agree with the "magisterial" teaching of his day—that is to say, the teaching of the masters, primarily at the University of Paris—nor did Hervaeus always follow the Angelic Doctor to the letter. In light of the role Thomas has assumed in theology after *Aeterni Patris*, the way in which Hervaeus replaced the common teaching with a highly individual common teacher in order to bolster his own political machinations is eye-opening, to say the least. Secondly, the controversy between Hervaeus and Durandus raises similar issues about the normative role of Thomistic metaphysics in Catholic philosophy. Over the last century, we have seen Wittgensteinian Thomists attack allegedly Cartesian ones, and these supposed Cartesians set themselves against a wide variety of Kantian Thomists. We have seen Thomists build their metaphysics on Bergsonian insights, and we have seen a Thomist with distinctive Sartrean and Heideggarian overtones write a history of metaphysics in which everyone, Augustine and Bonaventure included, stands accused of falling into the abyss of essentialism. Even as more scholastically inclined theologians return to the commentarial tradition, one is confronted with the multifarious interpretations of Capreolus, John of St. Thomas, Cajetan, Bañez, Garrigou-Lagrange, and—it must be acknowledged—Francisco Suárez. Of course, nothing less than the proper understanding of Aquinas is at stake in these squabbles, but as the increasingly elusive quarry of "Thomistic metaphysics" assumes dogmatic stature, I fear we run the risk of repeating the paradox of Jorge Luis Borges's story "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*." One can imagine a Thomist, like poor Pierre Menard, so concerned to understand the thought of his master, that his lifelong researches produce, free of any outside influence, every single word, and no more, of the saint's *Opera Omnia*.

Would Aquinas himself have welcomed non-Thomistic innovations in order to make his own theological insights clearer? To raise the philosophical stakes somewhat, was Aquinas—as A. G. Sertillanges once put it, “hardly an author, or even a man, but rather a channel connecting us directly with intelligible truths”? Did the Angelic Doctor achieve the most perfect form of metaphysics possible *in via*? I think it of no small significance that these two studies demonstrate that the Angelic Doctor’s earliest and most fervent defenders did not think so. N V

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Ecumenism and Philosophy: Philosophical Questions for a Renewal of Dialogue by Charles Morerod, O.P. (*Naples, FL: Sapientia Press, 2006*), xxiii + 199 pp.

Tradition et unité des Chrétiens: Le dogme comme condition de possibilité de l’œcuménisme by Charles Morerod, O.P. (*Paris: Parole et Silence, 2005*), 248 pp.

ECUMENICAL theology is challenging precisely when it obliges us to justify, or conversely tempts us to neutralize, the most fundamental principles of our confessional traditions. When Thomistic theology has functioned at its best in this domain as, for example, in the work of Charles Journet, and Yves Congar, it has provided an impetus toward Christian unity, but it has done so precisely by discerning ultimate theological commitments and perennial ecclesiological principles. Swiss Dominican Charles Morerod has recently produced an important and provocative contribution to ecumenical theology that seeks to follow in this tradition. This two-volume project skillfully employs ideas from the Thomist tradition to examine the causes of ecumenical division. Likewise, it considers possible resources for *future* Christian unity in ecclesiological “places” typically dismissed all too readily: living tradition, developing dogma, and the dynamic role of the papacy. Perhaps most atypically, Morerod’s work shows the relevance of recourse to Thomistic philosophy for the diagnosis of contemporary problems in ecumenism, and second, uses convincingly Thomas Aquinas’s ideas about the theological virtues to suggest ways to reinvigorate this latter project. Evidently, then, this is an interesting contribution worthy of attentive study.

The first book of this two-volume series (itself originally published in French as *Oecuménisme et philosophie* by *Parole et Silence* in 2004) recognizes

two phases in the development of modern ecumenism (xiii–xix). The first phase, generally dated from the early decades of the twentieth century to the mid-1970s, was marked by a progressive recognition among Christians of a shared set of beliefs and practices, in the midst of an increasingly post-Christian modern world. The movement sought to emphasize the common heritage of the diverse Christian traditions and aspired (genuinely, but sometimes prematurely) to a profound unity that could overcome historically conditioned differences. A second phase, however, of the last thirty years, has been marked by an increasing recognition of a crisis: There exist so-called “fundamental” differences intrinsic to diverse confessional traditions that seem insurmountable. In light of this realization, the temptation exists to abandon the pursuit of Christian unity, a temptation definitively rejected by the late Pope John Paul II in *Ut Unum Sint* (1995). However, Morerod argues here (xix–xxii) that continuation of the project requires a third phase characterized by research into the nature and origins of such fundamental differences. In view of this goal, he proposes to examine an often-neglected dimension of the Protestant/Catholic divide: the competing *philosophical* conceptions of the ontological relationship between God and creatures in the two traditions. In short, Morerod poses the question: What are the effects of diverse *philosophical* perspectives upon the theological differences of Catholic and Protestant ecclesiology, respectively? Can a better understanding of these historically received, sometimes unexamined philosophical tendencies facilitate a better understanding of the difficulties confronted in ecumenical discussion?

In order to approach the doctrinal question, however, it is first necessary to see how actual notions of “ecumenical dialogue” themselves are permeated by a contemporary epistemology stemming from the philosophy of the natural sciences. In the first part of the book (3–46), then, Morerod examines the theories of Karl Popper, Thomas Kuhn, and Paul Feyerabend concerning progress in scientific knowledge. These theorists underscore the fact that science rarely has cause to exclude absolutely any given theory, because there exist no sure criteria by which to verify every aspect of a given theory. Instead, through a historical process of experimentation, the *partial* truths of various hypotheses in the sciences need to be adopted, while experts *may* find one theory more useful to the organization of data than another. Plausible explanations can be found to be intrinsically incommensurable with one another (in physics, for example), even as their hypotheses remain *simultaneously* useful as “paradigms” of explanation. The danger, therefore, is to prematurely exclude the legitimate diversity of theories through the pretense to any kind of “totalitarian”

explanation. Instead, a dialogue between persons holding partial perspectives is the inevitable route toward any form of longstanding truth.

It is easy to see the parallels between this account of epistemic certitude and one that prevails among many ecumenists (27–34). Dogmatic truth-claims in various confessional traditions seem like unverifiable “hypotheses,” with each tradition presenting itself as a true interpretation of Christianity. These traditions themselves, however, could be seen as partial “adaptations” of the Christian religion, drawn from diverse historical experiences. No one tradition, then, can claim to have a “totalitarian” grasp of the doctrinal truth of Christianity, or the fullness of means of salvation. Rather, “the very idea of a specific ecclesiological model [or] sacramental model—is perceived as violence” (34). However, in contrast to such perspectives, Morerod notes that ecumenical dialogue itself is only possible if one presupposes a method and object of faith other than the one present in the experimental sciences (38–41). As Aquinas points out, knowledge of this object is not acquired through experimental research, but received uniquely through faith in divine revelation. But this revelation must be expressed in some kind of doctrinal, ecclesial form. Consequently, because there exists a universal, saving truth given in Christ, a doctrinal Christian confession of faith is both possible and necessary (42–44). The unity of that confession is precisely what is sought in ecumenical dialogue, and is the presupposition for the existence of the latter.

In the second part of the book, the author peers into the more classical philosophical divide that exists between the Reformers and the Catholic Church: that concerning the relation between human and divine agency. The first sections of this part deal principally with the unstated philosophical presuppositions of Luther, and the diagnostic of these views by Cajetan during their theological debates in 1518 (59–93). Essentially, Morerod provides evidence that Luther’s reaction to the Nominalist theology of merit, particularly that of Gabriel Biel, safeguarded a “left-over” presupposition from that same theology. Following a derivative metaphysics of univocity (indirectly inherited from Duns Scotus), Luther often conceived of the activity of divine and human agents as intrinsically exclusive of one another: Where God acts by grace to justify us, free will is excluded, and vice versa. This theology of “concurrence” or rivalry between divine and created causality was deeply to affect Luther’s theology of justification, his political doctrine of the two kingdoms, his sacramental theology, and even (according to Congar) his Christology.

Meanwhile, Cajetan perceived this metaphysical issue to be present in Luther’s thought even during their initial debates, which concerned the sacrament of penance. His own approach to the question was marked,

therefore, by a self-consciously Thomistic application of the doctrine of analogical causality. "For Cajetan, it is essential for all sacramental theology to understand the relation between God and his creatures in terms of subordination and not concurrence" (80). In this view, God and the creature can be simultaneous causes of the same effect in analogical, not univocal, ways. God is the total cause of the existence of any creature, and *therefore* he can create that reality *in such a way* that it is itself the origin of genuine actions and results. When this process is "elevated" by God so as to produce works of grace, the "instrumental" causality of the created agent truly produces effects of grace. Yet it does so in strict dependence upon God, without rivalry vis-à-vis Jesus Christ, and through no previous merit of its own. This "metaphysics of participation" allows us to envisage an ecclesiology in which ministers are the delegated mediators of grace, and yet no human act produces any effect except in complete dependence upon the primary agency of God.

Morerod goes on to document the continued historical effects of a "metaphysics of concurrence" in Calvin's theology of the sacraments and his ecclesiology (94–102). He then notes the ironical reapplication of the principle in modern philosophers such as Hobbes and Kant (103–15). Whereas the Reformers excluded the possibility of human agency in certain domains in order to safeguard the transcendence of God, these philosophers do the inverse. They interpret the absence of a discernable causal analogy between God and the world as the occasion for a moral and/or intellectual autonomy on the part of man, who must operate without reference to either grace or speculative knowledge of God. Finally, Morerod charts the continued and unmistakable influence of an ontology of divine-human rivalry in twentieth-century Protestant thought (117–51). Here, illustrations from Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, modern ecumenical documents, and contemporary Protestant responses to the *Joint Declaration* (1999) all offer ample evidence of the actual vitality of this original idea. The observation is noteworthy and the issue itself deserves to become a standard point of reflection among ecumenists.

Finally, Morerod finishes with a discussion on the *theological* defensibility of a metaphysics of participation (153–71). Is it licit to relate so intimately a metaphysical conception of creation with the Catholic, theological affirmation of human instrumental cooperation with God? Here he makes two main points (161). First, philosophy is as unavoidable as human nature, and therefore its reception into theology should be self-conscious and well-discerned, so as to be better proportioned to the service of divine revelation. Second, the reality of a human ministerial participation in the work of salvation is manifest upon every page of the

New Testament: in the acts of Christ and the apostles. Indeed, without such a metaphysical perspective, it is impossible to conceive even of the mystery of inspired Scripture as a composition that is simultaneously human and divine. Most important, it provides the foundation for thinking ontologically about the Incarnation. Therefore, "where another metaphysics would obscure the Gospels . . . this metaphysics provides the basis for a peaceable understanding of the relationship between causalities, as expressed in the Gospels and the life of the Church" (162).

It follows from what has been said that *Ecumenism and Philosophy* contains excellent analysis and offers numerous, significant insights. A chief complaint is that there is not enough of it. The topic under consideration would well merit at least another fifty to one hundred pages from such a competent author. Detailed treatment of Aquinas's theology of primary and secondary causality would have strengthened the argument. The work discusses Scotus, Luther, and Hobbes too briefly (in sometimes quite controversial terms); and in doing so contains no treatment of William of Ockham, though he is a central figure in the story. The discussions of Nietzsche and Barth are really too brief to be helpful, and a more thorough treatment of each would have better illustrated the contemporary applicability of the author's point with respect to postmodernist theology and atheology. With these reserves in mind, however, the book is recommendable and important.

Morerod's second volume, *Tradition et unité des Chrétiens*, is more internally unified and is perhaps the more original of the two works. It contains a great deal of persuasive argument, and reveals the author's competence in engaging contemporary theological topics with resources drawn from the Thomist tradition. The volume is very thought-provoking through its consistently insightful use of Aquinas, John of St. Thomas, Journet, Congar, and Jean-Marie Tillard in discussion with actual ecumenical questions.

The basic goal of *Tradition et unité* is to show that helpful resources for Christian unity exist in three interrelated places that are commonly considered uniquely as sources of division: tradition, dogma, and the papacy. In fact, as the subtitle of the work suggests, the argument ultimately seeks to make a more radical point: There is no possibility of an authentic ecumenism without a quest for dogmatic unity. Therefore, some kind of doctrinal universalism is the condition of possibility for any perennial form of Christian communion. What is especially compelling about the argument is how Morerod demonstrates its simultaneous applicability from within both a Thomistic theology of ecclesial faith *and* the framework of contemporary ecumenical research.

The first part of the book (11–44) deals with the philosophical and theological question of "memory." What is the nature and mode of human

memory in its individual and collective forms? How does this dimension of human anthropology function under the effects of grace as a necessary element in the transmission of divinely revealed truth? The author draws upon contemporary research in cognitive psychology to demonstrate that the selections human beings make in our stored memories are highly conditioned by what we consider the present and future importance of our actual experiences. The act of memory connects both the body and human reason with a set of expectations about the future, in light of a person's past. Likewise, on the collective level, the retelling of history serves as a principle for cultural orientation toward a perceived future, with reference to a common patrimony. Yet if "history" as a collective memory is to help us negotiate the future, it must not be rendered ideologically simplistic or artificially uniform, as is often the case in a homogenized totalitarian (or consumerist) society.

On a theological level, numerous consequences follow from these observations. This "natural" dimension of human culture is not destroyed by grace, but in fact is present from the beginning of Christianity. The New Testament writings themselves are products of "tradition" in the sense that they are the self-conscious expression of a collective patrimony, ordered toward the transmission of saving truth. The specifically Christian memory, then, is centered on Christ and has an "eschatological" orientation toward the future. Because this supernatural center of Christian memory and expectation is present in the Eucharist, the liturgy thereby becomes an acute expression (in spiritual and corporeal terms) of the Christian collective identity. If this patrimony is to be communicated intellectually (even within the liturgy itself), then the Church must order its received beliefs synthetically, as in the Creed and other ecclesial forms of doctrine.

The second part of Morerod's study (45–105) treats a difficult and important question: How should we understand the Church's traditional insistence on the unity of the Catholic faith in light of Vatican II's affirmation of a doctrinal "hierarchy of truths"? According to Aquinas, the Church's articles of faith are "material" expressions of revealed truth given by God, while God is the "formal object" of divine faith, as the one who reveals himself. The rejection of even one of these truths, then, carries with it an implicit rejection of the formal object: the divine source of the teachings. "The act of confidence in God who reveals himself is the existential foundation of every act of faith in this or that particular article" (50). In fact, any genuine ecumenism necessarily presupposes a divine origin of faith insofar as it must be based upon some kind of objective truth claim. But paradoxically, this could lead us to the conclu-

sion that those who do not adhere to the fullness of the Catholic faith in fact lack faith as such. Morerod develops a response to this problem by appeal to Cajetan and Journet. He develops their distinction between heresy, a willful and obstinate refusal to assent to Catholic teaching, and the non-culpable, sincere promotion of a Christian patrimony along with erroneous or misguided conceptions.

For ecumenism, this raises the question of discerning an authentic doctrinal patrimony. Morerod examines the seventeenth-century debate between Pierre Jurieu and Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet on this question (filled with fascinating arguments), and notes an irony in the Protestant theologian's solution. Jurieu claims that a common patrimony should be discerned by the political consensus of a confederation of churches, and the use of natural reason. But this means that the very elements that the original Reformers wished to exclude from the process of divine revelation (extra-apostolic, human mediators/ecclesial tribunals) now become arbiters of the content of divine revelation without any assurance of divine assistance. Bossuet points out that this makes ecumenism (and its doctrinal formulations) a matter of human politics. A study of the contemporary Magisterium (from *Unitatis Redintegratio* to *Ad tuendam fidem*) suggests an alternative Catholic perspective. In fact the "hierarchy of truths" proclaimed by Vatican II implies a center to revelation—Christ and the Trinitarian mystery—which is shared by all Christians. "Subordinate truths" of the Catholic faith are not subordinate because they are in any way less true, but because they can only be understood in light of these "higher" truths. Catholic ecumenism, therefore, has the task of illustrating the implicit necessity (or fittingness) of the whole deposit of faith in light of the commonly received "center" of the faith: the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

This conclusion leads to the third part of the book (117–41), which concerns developing dogma as a vehicle for Christian unity. The first point the author makes is that the Catholic Magisterium and Protestants such as Calvin and Barth share a common aspiration: to formulate all ecclesial, dogmatic assertions uniquely in reference to divine revelation. For the Catholic Church, however, "it is because dogma defines what is implicitly contained in the revelation, that its authority is inseparable from that of the revelation" (111). The presupposition here is that the Christian community is capable of resolving theological divisions by recourse to some kind of internal process, discussion, and doctrinal formulation. But this is the very presupposition of the ecumenical movement as well: "Whether these formulas are called 'dogmas,' or of some other name with less negative connotations for certain Christians, the fact

remains that one cannot revoke such formulations of faith without at the same time revoking ecumenism as such" (131). True, the expression of dogma is heavily conditioned at times by historical circumstances and a reactive climate. Therefore, theology can seek to reformulate and nuance the acquisitions of the Christian historical patrimony. This process is continually undertaken not only by ecumenists, but also by the Catholic Magisterium in dialogue with sister churches. However, the teleological aim of such reconsideration is the more perfect, more explicit, and more profound expression of shared Christian truth. It is a dogmatic procedure.

The need for dogma poses the painful ecumenical question of how a unified body of Christians might finally have recourse to an ecclesial means in order to determine the content of the doctrinal unity that they share. For the Catholic theologian, this inevitably raises the question of the Petrine ministry. In parts 4 and 5 of the book (139–217), Morerod discusses a Catholic understanding of the exercise of the Petrine ministry in a global, ecumenical context. Particularly interesting is his discussion (in response to John Zizioulas) of the historical and theological arguments in favor of the papacy. Appealing here to Cajetan's and John of St. Thomas's commentaries on Aquinas, he delineates extremely interesting Thomistic "arguments of fittingness" in favor of a singular figure of final doctrinal recourse. Following thinkers such as Marie-Joseph Le Guillou and Tillard, he suggests ways in which the gift of such an authority is one of the preconditions needed for a visible ecclesial communion. For Catholic theology, the pope acts precisely as a principle of authentic communion amidst diverse churches. His office seeks to safeguard the unity of the "universal" Church, made up of particular churches, in and through charity.

This vision need not translate into the early-modern Catholic request that non-Catholic Christian churches "return to Rome." The latter idea was characteristic of Roman theology prior to Vatican II, but has, in a certain sense, been definitively abandoned by the Magisterium (in particular with regard to the Orthodox churches, as Morerod points out). Yet if today the Catholic Church insists that unity can be discovered only through mutual conversion to Christ, does this not render superfluous the unique role of the successor of Peter?

A double element is clearly present: the ministry of the successor of Peter is necessary, but we must continually seek to better understand the exercise of this ministry. . . . The renunciation of a call to "return to Rome" as an ecumenical stance does not imply that full, visible unity of all baptized persons would somehow be possible without the pope. It should signal above all that non-Catholics must not think that the

Catholic Church expects from them an acceptance of the ministry of the pope identical with that which existed at the time when their community became separated. (208–9)

Indeed, it is this question of the historically dynamic form of the Petrine ministry that makes its “mode of exercise” a living question for ecumenism. Those who seek a common doctrinal teaching and a fundamental unity of life among Christians need to reflect on the role of the successor of Peter as one who may safeguard and facilitate that unity.

Finally, we can say that there is a harmonious unity between these two books by Morerod. The first helps us to identify the underlying epistemological questions that differentiate the Protestant and Catholic understandings of human mediation in the Church. The second studies how such mediation functions in the important forms of tradition, dogma, and ecclesial authority. This allows the author to argue that there is an inevitable role that communal agreement, doctrine, and the papacy must play if there is to be some form of lasting Christian unity. Morerod’s vision of a Thomistically inspired ecumenism is compelling and competent. One would look forward to the translation of other eventual works by this author into the English language. N.V.

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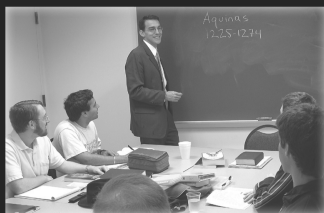
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