

Book Reviews

Cosmology by Édouard Hugon, O.P., trans. Francisco J. Romero Carrasquillo (*Neunkirchen-Seelscheid, Germany: Editiones Scholasticæ, 2013*), 376 pp.

ÉDOUARD HUGON, O.P., taught at the Angelicum from 1909 to 1929, being a confrère of Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., Pope John Paul II's thesis advisor. Hugon produced, with Garrigou-Lagrange's approbation, a six-volume scholastic manual entitled *Cursus Philosophiæ Thomisticæ*,¹ which Popes St. Pius X, Benedict XV, and Pius XI all heartily recommended. Pope St. Pius X said it contains "the unadulterated teaching of Saint Thomas." (2). He praised the "wealth and coherence of [Hugon's] arguments and the clarity of [his] style, . . . particularly for applying ancient scholastic principles to shed light on new advances in philosophy and to the judicious refutation of errors" (ibid.). Garrigou-Lagrange called Hugon the "*theologus communis*," the "faithful echo of the Common Doctor of the Church."²

Francisco J. Romero Carrasquillo of Opus Dei's Universidad Panamericana in Guadalajara, Mexico, has translated, in collaboration with the German publisher Editiones Scholasticæ, the *Cosmology* volume of Hugon's opus. Why translate the *Cosmology* volume first and not, say, the *Logic* or *Metaphysics* volumes? Carrasquillo has two aims: (1) to show that natural philosophy—not metaphysics, as Christian Wolff et al. thought—must be taught before ethics, metaphysics, and theology,

¹ Édouard Hugon, O.P., *Cursus Philosophiæ Thomisticæ*, 6 vols. (Paris: Sumptibus P. Lethielleux, 1927), http://liberius.net/auteur.php?id_auth=25.

² Thomas Poinçoc, O.P., "Presentazione," in *Fuori della Chiesa non c'è salvezza*, ed. Édouard Hugon, O.P., trans. Claudio Fauci (Chieti: Edizioni Amicizia Cristiana, 2007), <http://www.edizioniamiciziacrisciana.it/presfuoridellachiesa.htm>.

being their basis; and (2) to disprove those who think manuals neglected modern developments in the natural sciences.

The most important part of *Cosmology* is its prolegomena because this is where Hugon shows the necessity of studying natural philosophy, not just for further philosophical and theological studies, but also for modern science:

In modern times, however, the natural sciences having been wondrously developed, Philosophy was banished from Physics; hence it happens that scientists, in exploring facts or at least aiming at proximate causes, have neglected ultimate causes and first principles. For this reason, a philosophical regard in the study of nature is more than ever desired today. (34)

However, Hugon advocates a strict distinction between philosophy and modern science, saying that “many topics that today are taught in the physical sciences” are “outside of Philosophy.” Because of the importance of the prolegomena, Carrasquillo has added many of his own footnotes to help explain Hugon’s scholastic terminology for the beginning student. Thus it becomes clear why St. Thomas said boys must learn, in this order: logic, mathematics, the natural sciences, the moral sciences, and, lastly, the sapiential and divine sciences (theology).³

Hugon splits up the bulk of *Cosmology* into three treatises, according to Aristotle’s four causes:

1. On the World with Respect to Its Efficient Cause
2. On the World with Respect to Its Material and Formal Causes
3. On the World Insofar as It is Ordered to an End

The first treatise covers such questions as monism, the contingency of the world, pantheism, the author of the world, whether the world emanates from God, creation, and the eternity of the world. The third treatise covers such questions as nature, motion, art and violence, the laws of nature, miracles, the end of nature, and evolution. In all the questions Hugon treats, he employs clear, syllogistic proofs of every principle, the objections to which he distinguishes, concedes, denies, contradistinguishes, etc., in solid scholastic form.

³ *Sententia Ethic.*, lib. 6 l. 7 no. 17 [1211.]

The second treatise is where scholastic natural philosophy meets modern science. It is where Hugon shows his more-than-superficial familiarity with the philosophy of physics of Pierre Duhem,⁴ especially where Hugon argues that modern science does not disprove hylemorphism, which avoids the pitfalls of both atomism and dynamism. Hylemorphism is a “stable notion” the Council of Trent “consecrated” in its teaching on justification.⁵ Hugon defends it against attacks from some scientists:

X. - DIFFICULTIES RESOLVED; WHETHER THERE IS A CONTRADICTION BETWEEN THE SCHOLASTICS AND THE SCIENTISTS. . . . 3rd Objection. Apart from the Scholastics who are ignorant of natural things, no one else professes hylemorphism. Therefore, it is prudent to mistrust this system. *Reply.* In this question we must believe the philosophers more so than the physicists and the chemists, as is evident from the previous reply [“the adversaries . . . think that the question of principles is a physical and experimental one, whereas it is really a properly philosophical one”]. Further, the greatest philosophers, Aristotle, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas, adhered to this system. Even today many outside of the Scholastics support it. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire presents this testimony of the Aristotelian doctrine: “For me, I find it to be simple and true, and it does not have the fault of being obscure; at most, I will grant that it has a certain subtlety, without being in any way sophistical. Matter and form are the logical and real elements of being.” (*Préface de la Physique*, p. 28.) (173, 175-76)

One can only imagine what Hugon would have written had this book been published after the rise of quantum mechanics. It would further

⁴ Roger Ariew, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* [online], s.v. “Pierre Duhem,” <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/duhem/>. Hugon cites, e.g., Duhem’s *Mixture and Chemical Combination: And Related Essays*, trans. Paul Needham (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2002), and *The Evolution of Mechanics*, trans. Michael Cole (Germantown, MD: Sijthoff & Noordhoff, 1980).

⁵ Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., “Les Notions Consacrées par les Conciles,” *Angelicum* 24 (1947): 217–30, <http://bit.ly/YPIBff>.

confirm what Hugon cited of Duhem:

Meanwhile, let it be clear that scientists that are true to their name do not contradict hylemorphism: “Current physics tends to recover a certain form of peripateticism” [i.e., Aristotelianism] (P. Duhem, *Le mixte*,⁶ p. 200). (177)

Hugon shows that modern spectral analysis does not disprove hylemorphism:

Explanation of many things that are necessary for the complete understanding hylemorphism . . . III. - ON THE PERMANENCE OF ELEMENTS IN THE MIXTURE . . . 3rd Objection. From spectral analysis it has been established that in the composite there appear the colors of the simple elements. But this fact shows that the powers of elements remain in act in the composite. *Therefore. Reply.* I distinguish the major. That the colors of the elements appear in the composite while the composite remains at rest in the compound state, I deny; that these colors appear while the mixed body begins to be resolved through the action of light or heat, I concede. I *contradistinguish the minor*: that this fact shows that there are powers in act in the mixed body, if this happens in the compound state itself, I concede; but that this shows there are powers in act in the mixed body if this happens only when the mixed body begins to be resolved and destroyed, I deny. *And I deny the conclusion.* That only implies that the powers persist in similar entities. (209-10, 214)

Following this (215-16), Hugon admiringly cites Duhem,⁷ proving again his up-to-date knowledge of modern science. Praising Duhem, Hugon writes:

IV. - THE SCHOLASTIC SYSTEM IS SUBSTANTIALLY RETAINED TODAY . . . It is also appropriate to write the following testimony of the most learned P. Duhem: “Little by little, however, by the

⁶ Duhem, *Mixture and Chemical Combination*.

⁷ Duhem, *Mixture and Chemical Combination*, 115–16.

very effect of this development, mechanical hypotheses came up against obstacles on all sides which were more and more numerous and difficult to surmount. The atomic, Cartesian, and Newtonian systems gradually lost favour with physicists and made way for methods analogous to those advocated by Aristotle. Present-day physics is tending to return to a peripatetic form" (P. Duhem, *Le mixte*,⁸ p. 200). (225, 227)

This edition of Hugon's *Cosmology* is a scholastic, logically sound work that will help philosophers and modern scientists better understand the relationship between philosophy and modern science, especially modern physics. Hugon upholds the Second Vatican Council's call that "philosophical disciplines are to be taught in such a way that the students are first of all led to acquire a solid and coherent knowledge of man, the world, and of God, relying on a philosophical patrimony which is perennially valid" and that "account should also be taken of the more recent progress of the sciences."⁹ Carrasquillo's translation is the best English-language manual in print enabling beginning and advanced students alike to have "St. Thomas as a teacher."¹⁰ 

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Thomas Aquinas and the Philosophy of Punishment by Peter Karl Koritansky (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012), ix + 209 pp.

PETER KORITANSKY'S "CENTRAL GOAL" is "a presentation of Aquinas's theory of punishment as superior to that of utilitarianism and modern retributivism" (8). He makes real progress toward this, and even though *Thomas Aquinas and the Philosophy of Punishment* will appeal most to those already sympathetic to the Thomistic tradition, it provides

⁸ Ibid., 119.

⁹ *Optatam Totius* §15.

¹⁰ 1983 *Code of Canon Law* can. 252 §3.

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an excellent foundation for dialogue with rival theories of punishment.

According to utilitarianism, punishment is a purely instrumental good justified by its promotion of the greatest good for the greatest number. It is therefore possible that an innocent person must be punished in order to promote this greater good. For most of us, argues Koritansky, the absence of a concept of desert renders this account of justice untenable. For this reason, "purely utilitarian theories of punishment are rare" (33). Koritansky then considers the popular compromise theory of H. L. A. Hart, who introduces the concept of desert as a limiting principle: you cannot be punished for more than you deserve. Nevertheless, if in fact you are punished, it can only be for utilitarian reasons, and therefore "desert" does not justify punishment, but instead prevents its unjust distribution, thereby protecting the innocent as well as those who might otherwise suffer more for their crimes than they deserve. But Koritansky argues that Hart cannot have it both ways; once we admit that desert must play a role, we can no longer eliminate it from our account of the justification of punishment more generally: "Hart's position is that because retribution is not part of punishment's general justifying aim, we should only consider desert insofar as it protects criminals (or noncriminals) from the excessively harsh punishments that utility might require. What Hart fails to consider is the inseparability between saying that criminals should not receive more punishment than what they deserve and saying that they deserve some amount of punishment" (37).

Those who reject the utilitarian justification of punishment typically accept some form of retributivism, a position Koritansky traces to Kant, according to whom we can (and must) punish others only if (and to the extent that) they deserve it. But we need an explanation of the foundation and content of this desert (Kant offered little more than the *ius talionis*), and the modern formulation Koritansky discusses is the "unfair advantage" theory. According to this theory, society is, at least in part, an agreement among citizens regarding the distribution of benefits and burdens to its members. Criminals violate this agreement by avoiding their fair share of the burdens and acquiring an unfair share of the benefits. Punishment eliminates this imbalance introduced by the criminal. Nevertheless, none of the proponents of this theory, argues Koritansky, "are able to explain in any compelling way how criminal actions constitute a 'benefit' to the criminal himself" (64). Neither material nor psychological benefits will work; because the casual murderer

gets little material or psychological benefit from his crime, he would be punished less severely than the enthusiastic bank robber. "The pivotal question seems, then, to be this: Can the mere performance of an action prohibited by law, considered independently from that action's material benefits or any pleasure derived from it, constitute a meaningful benefit?" (66). John Finnis and others have suggested that the criminal possesses greater freedom of choice, which is itself a great human good, but this is a peculiar sort of freedom; all of us are free to commit murder, so the murderer does not have that freedom in a way we do not. And if it is the freedom enjoyed *in the act of murder*, it is much harder to see that this "freedom" is any sort of extra benefit or advantage to the murderer. This form of retributivism remains unable to explain the ground of our insights regarding desert: precisely *why* does one person deserve to be punished simply because he or she violated the law?

Koritansky now turns to Aquinas's position, and argues that the primary theoretical foundation of the Thomistic theory of punishment is the political common good. This common good, for which we have a natural inclination, is itself an intrinsic part of our overall good (here Koritansky's defense of this disputed claim draws in part on Lawrence Dewan's work). This has significant consequences: "Only by living in political society is man capable of achieving his full natural potential. Thus understood, politics is no mere instrumental good (as in the teachings of Kant, Bentham, and the unfair advantage theory of punishment [whose adherents include John Finnis]), but is part of the very fabric of the human person, and thus the individual's participation in political society is a great intrinsic good for the individual as well as for society" (101).

Given this context, punishment is a kind of evil or suffering that must be contrary to the will of the one being punished and imposed because of and in accordance with that person's wrongdoing. The Thomistic account of punishment therefore has a retributive core dependent on desert. Further, since the political common good is an intrinsic part of human flourishing (rather than a merely instrumental good), a citizen who commits a crime harms his own good by harming the common good. "To become a criminal who prefers his own immediate interests to those of others is actually to frustrate one's own happiness as a 'naturally civic and social animal'" (149). Contrary to Finnis, therefore, "it is quite wrong to suggest that, for Aquinas, actions that deliberately harm

the common good constitute, in themselves, an advantage or a benefit to the criminal. Criminals are, on the contrary, supremely *disadvantaged* by their criminal actions which, precisely because they fly in the face of one's natural inclination to serve and promote the political common good, make those who perform them into *a worse person*" (150). Punishment, consequently, does two things. It is first of all retributive in that it "restores the equality of justice by inflicting a punitive evil upon a criminal against his will" (164). And it is medicinal, for it is "designed to restore criminals back to willfully law-abiding citizens . . . , protect society, and deter other potential criminals" (167). The criminal through punishment realizes the equality of justice and is restored to his place within the political order and its pursuit of the common good.

But it would be a mistake to conclude that Aquinas has a straightforwardly retributive account of punishment, as the central case of the death penalty demonstrates. Koritansky shows that Aquinas does not use the language of retribution in his defense of capital punishment, an absence about which we can only "speculate" (164). Koritansky's conclusion is that the retributive features of punishment are foundational (you can only punish the guilty), but the medicinal consequences of punishment (in this case the protection of society) are more clearly apparent, and so in the temporal order retribution has a secondary place. The striking result is that "Aquinas can only recommend a retributive theory of punishment that considerably understates the necessity of retribution" (169).

This has implications for the recent debate over the Catholic Church's view of the death penalty. While some have argued that John Paul II's *Evangelium Vitae* conflicts with Aquinas's justification of the death penalty, Koritansky argues that according to a Thomistic account of punishment, "public officials *do* have the right to inflict death but . . . such a right is better not exercised when retribution is the only foreseeable good from such a penalty" (185). Because retribution requires knowledge of the internal dispositions of criminals, knowledge that is for us never absolutely certain, in the extreme case of the death penalty the guilt of the criminal is not itself enough to justify his execution. This interpretation of Aquinas is compatible with a straightforward reading of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as well as John Paul II's *Evangelium Vitae*, and it allows for retribution to remain the

justificatory core of punishment while nevertheless accepting that today the death penalty is almost never justifiable.

Other than a strange and frequent typographical error (random words in almost all the quotations from the *Summa Theologiae* are italicized for no apparent reason), this is a clear and compelling study, and Koritansky does an excellent job explaining why utilitarian and Kantian theories of punishment (including the unfair advantage theory) are problematic. Let me conclude, however, with two different challenges Koritansky's account faces: first, many contemporary non-Thomistic accounts of punishment will remain untouched by Koritansky's criticisms. Utilitarians, for example, have long faced the objection that utilitarianism allows for the sacrifice of the innocent. Many responses have been developed, including denying that practically speaking any such cases will come about (R. M. Hare), admitting the objection and suggesting that our moral intuitions should be revised (Peter Singer), and transforming utilitarianism into a rule-based moral theory (Brad Hooker). Koritansky cannot of course be faulted for not following up on the many branches of utilitarian and Kantian moral theory, but this is a reminder that his readers will most likely be less diverse than he would like, a fact expressed in another way in his final paragraph: "To accept Aquinas's theory of punishment without removing it from its proper philosophical context requires a reconsideration of moral and political theories, such as natural law and the political dimension of human nature, that by many have long since been considered discredited" (198). Koritansky's study is a necessary first step, but if the enemy is to be engaged the fight will need to be brought to his own territory.

The second challenge arises in response to his arguments against Finnis and the unfair advantage theory. Let us assume, as Koritansky argues, that the political common good is indeed an intrinsic good, and therefore a criminal harms himself in harming the common good. Punishment is retributive (it reestablishes the "equality of justice") and medicinal (it promotes the good of the criminal and of society more generally). But whereas Finnis explains the "equality of justice" in terms of advantage, Koritansky leaves obscure the precise nature of this equality. Punishment is inflicted within the context of the political order and because that order has been violated in some way. We punish, says Koritansky, because we have a natural desire to protect that order, a desire that makes

punishment part of natural law. But once we set aside the medicinal action of punishment, how can we explain the need for retribution? Saying merely that we have a natural desire to protect the common good is not enough, since “protection” refers to the medicinal aspect of punishment and not its retributive aspect. Bentham’s criticism of retributivism is that it is merely revenge, and if the Thomistic account is to avoid this charge it must be clear precisely why retributive punishment is morally good and even morally required aside from its medicinal properties. This is what Finnis’s account accomplishes, though only at the cost of other problems. Koritansky’s account needs to fill out the “equality of justice” such that achieving that equality is an obvious good that would justify punishment without appealing to its medicinal effects.

But these challenges are less criticisms of Koritansky than they are indications of where we must go from here. It is a real virtue of *Thomas Aquinas and the Philosophy of Punishment* that it makes these problems evident and compelling, and future discussion of Aquinas and punishment will need to take Koritansky’s work as an important starting point. 

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A Defense of Dignity: Creating Life, Destroying Life, and Protecting the Rights of Conscience by Christopher Kaczor (*Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013*), x + 220 pp.

IN *A DEFENSE OF DIGNITY*, Christopher Kaczor provides a good introduction to several pressing issues in biomedical ethics, some of which are alluded to in the subtitle: *Creating Life, Destroying Life, and Protecting the Rights of Conscience*. The book is a collection of articles previously published by Kaczor, now conveniently collected under the rubric of human dignity, a principle that indeed has bearing upon any issue in biomedical ethics. Kaczor begins with a brief discussion of dignity, which he then applies to the question of animal rights. For the remainder of the book he treats topics under the three headings of creating life, destroying life, and conscience. Creating life concerns “fertility treatment,” that is, issues surrounding in vitro fertilization. Destroying

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life concerns abortion, euthanasia, and organ transplantation. Finally, conscience concerns the right of a doctor to refuse to provide an abortion (or other procedures to which he has a moral objection).

Kaczor consistently provides readily accessible arguments in clear concise prose. He tends to use the Napoleonic strategy of giving a little grapeshot, that is, he fires at his opponents with argument piled upon argument, with the surety that something will hit its mark. Some arguments prove stronger than others, but for any particular issue, Kaczor is likely to have at least a number of conclusive points in his favor.

In his brief treatment of dignity Kaczor takes on Steven Pinker, the Harvard psychology professor notorious for claiming that man is now kinder and gentler, despite the Holocaust, the Russian genocide of Ukrainians, the Chinese one child policy, and modern organized crime. Pinker entered what might be called the “dignity wars” with the brazen claim that dignity is stupid. He thinks that those who use dignity as a principle in bioethics (especially Catholics) have overlooked obvious features of dignity that undermine their case. Kaczor reveals that Pinker is the one with myopic vision. Pinker’s attack against dignity can equally be turned upon his own favored moral principle of autonomy. Furthermore, Pinker overlooks distinct uses of the word dignity, some of which have little or no bearing upon questions of bioethics. Pinker props up his case by focusing upon these irrelevant meanings, and ignoring the morally significant meaning.

Kaczor argues that dignity is rooted in human nature, such that each human being has dignity simply by being human, apart from any accomplishments he might achieve. The most brilliant scientist is equal in human dignity to the Down syndrome individual, or even to someone who is persistently unconscious. These latter individuals retain an orientation toward freedom and reason, even if they are unable to exercise these capacities.

In chapter 2, Kaczor argues that human beings are distinctive in their dignity. However clever other animals might prove to be, they are not equal to human beings. He shows that Peter Singer, in arguing against so-called “speciesism,” often relies upon bare assertion, beginning with his definition of speciesism, which is— by stipulation— “prejudice” and “bias”; Singer implies that because racism and sexism are wrong, so “species” becomes wrong by adding the suffix “-ism”; he asserts, without

justification, that religious arguments in defense of human dignity are irrelevant; and he falsely attributes to Kant the view that human beings have dignity only insofar as they are actually conscious.

In chapters 3, 4, and 5, under the rubric of “creating life,” Kaczor addresses several issues surrounding IVF. He takes on Savulescu, who argues in favor of “procreative beneficence,” which is nearly the contrary of what it sounds: when using IVF, parents have an obligation—so says Savulescu—to select the child who will be best off, which means, in the concrete, that they should choose to have the more intelligent, healthier, and stronger child (as well as, one suspects, the child most disposed to accept the views of Savulescu), and to eliminate—or kill—those children less endowed. It does not bother Savulescu that the idea of killing off the unfit and selecting the fit sounds more than vaguely familiar.

Kaczor shows that if Savulescu really believed that parents should always seek a child who is expected to have the most advantageous life, then he would oppose IVF, which leads to higher risks of birth defects; he would also oppose having children outside of wedlock, which leads to a host of complications for children. If Savulescu were really concerned about people being better off, he would devote his efforts toward the relief of poverty, which has a much better chance of improving conditions than the exorbitantly expensive and ineffective IVF.

Chapter 5 presents one of the few issues over which this reviewer must part ways with Kaczor. He defends so-called embryo adoption, in which a woman has an embryo (conceived by IVF) implanted in her womb, in the hope of bringing the child to term. The woman has not herself conceived the child; that was done (unethically) by someone else, and the child is a “spare,” left over after a couple has had all the children they want. Embryo adoption is an attempt to save the lives of these children from the limbo of deep freeze. A noble goal, no doubt. The question is whether implanting a child in one’s womb is a morally reprehensible act, despite the great good one hopes to achieve by it. Kaczor adeptly addresses many of the objections raised against this adoptive implantation, but I fear he may have begged the question by defining “procreation” as simply creating new human life and not as “impregnating.” This is the very question that must be resolved.

Chapters 6, 7, and 8 concern various issues surrounding abortion. Kaczor takes on the infamous violinist argument of Judith Jarvis Thom-

son, in which pregnancy is compared to the state of being hooked up, involuntarily, to a violinist, who needs your kidneys to stay alive for nine months. In such a situation, argues Thompson, you surely have a right to disconnect the violinist rather than undergo the inconvenience of being continually hooked up to him. In this argument, abortion is treated not so much as killing the baby as it is disconnecting the baby, with the consequence that he dies.

Kaczor picks apart the various attempts to justify this right to disconnect the baby. If this right is based upon bodily integrity (such that one should never be forced to donate a kidney), then we must also consider the bodily integrity of the baby. Furthermore, the argument is based upon an unrealistically dim view of what a mother must undergo during pregnancy. Most essentially, the idea that an abortion involves removing a baby with the side effect of death ignores the reality of what happens in the act of abortion in the world today. Quite simply, the baby is cut up or otherwise physically attacked; there are no shades of merely permitting death.

Chapters 9 and 10 address euthanasia. Kaczor tackles Tristram Engelhardt, the former Catholic become Antiochian Orthodox, who maintains an extreme form of fideism. He upholds the correct conclusion concerning euthanasia—we are not allowed to put people to death even if they wish it—but he denies that human reason alone can reach this conclusion; we know it by faith alone. Kaczor shows that faith itself, as revealed in the Scriptures, teaches that reason can attain moral truths. Furthermore, theology does not answer all questions, leaving room for philosophy in our moral understanding. Indeed, theology—including the theology of Engelhardt—inevitably presupposes some philosophy. Finally, an honest appraisal of philosophical arguments concerning euthanasia reveals that they can conclude to the moral truth that euthanasia is unacceptable.

Chapter 11 concerns the practice of organ donation after cardiac death. In this case, cardiac death is contrasted to brain death. Because of a shortage of organs, the transplant community has searched for new sources, and they have turned to the practice of disconnecting an individual from life support, waiting for his heart to stop beating, waiting another two minutes (or so), and then cutting him open to retrieve his organs. Kaczor calls into question (correctly, it seems) the widespread

acceptance of brain death as the true death of the individual. Medical evidence indicates that an individual can maintain his integrity long after his brain has died. Kaczor is also skeptical about donation after cardiac death, as currently practiced. He thinks there might be some room for it, however, if the practice is modified. It seems unlikely that the individual is dead only two minutes after his heart stops beating; something like twenty to thirty minutes seems more realistic. The trouble is that after such an extended time the organs are often unusable. Consequently, Kaczor recommends injecting the individual with certain organ preserving drugs prior to his death (a recommendation that raises ethical issues of its own). Then the organs might be still viable after twenty minutes.

Chapters 12 and 13 focus upon conscientious objection, primarily to the practice of abortion. There seems to be a concerted effort to force doctors to perform abortions, or short of that, at least to refer patients to doctors who will perform an abortion. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, for instance, maintains that patients have a right to demand a treatment, so that doctors should be obliged to comply with this demand. Kaczor points out that patients do not have the right to demand all and any treatments. The wishes of those with bodily integrity identity disorder, for instance, who wish to have some healthy limb removed, should not be complied with. Too often arguments against conscientious objection presume the very conclusion they wish to reach, namely, that abortion is a central part of what it means to be a physician. Those physicians who conscientiously object are claiming precisely the reverse: it is essential to a physician to refuse to perform an abortion.

I have presented only a brief sample of the many topics that Kaczor covers. He also addresses the following topics: the idea that everyone should have equal access to fertility treatment; the thorny question of treatments of ectopic pregnancy; the ethics of fetal surgery; and artificial nutrition for patients in so-called persistent vegetative state.

For a wide variety of topics in bioethics, then, Kaczor's collection (which would be very useful in a college bioethics course) provides a good introduction, relying upon sound ethical principles, grounded in human dignity. The book does not probe to the underlying source of these principles (Kaczor has done that elsewhere), which would be out of

place at an introductory level, but it does provide sound argumentation in defense of the dignity of human individuals, which dignity is, sadly, too often attacked in our world today. Kaczor has done a service for all of us confronted with the perplexities of modern bioethics. 

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Sacrifice as Gift: Eucharist, Grace, and Contemplative Prayer in Maurice de la Taille by Michon M. Matthiesen (*Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013*), xiii + 320 pp.

UNTIL THE LATE 1960s or so, when they went to church on Sundays, Catholics offered the sacrifice of the Mass. Then, some time in the 70s or 80s, when they went to church they “offered the sacrifice” of the Mass. They stopped doing something real, and started doing something symbolic. They stopped doing something real by way of signifying the reality, and started enacting an elaborate metaphor. If Michon Matthiesen has her way, we will drop the quotation marks, hear the Eucharistic teaching of Paul VI and his successors with unarched eyebrows, speak concordantly with the fathers, and once again start *doing* something on Sundays. We will offer the Sacrifice. That is, I think, the most important consequence her recent monograph on the Eucharistic theology of Maurice de la Taille could have.

Maurice de la Taille (1872–1933) entered the Jesuits in 1890. After the First World War, he taught at the Gregorian University until 1930. His great work, *Mysterium Fidei*, runs to 773 double columned imperial octavo pages in its last edition (1934; 1st ed., 1921). Henri de Lubac describes it as “an essay in the liquidation of the over-complicated systems worked out in modern times, indeed ever since the Council of Trent, about the sacrifice of the Mass.” Understood in this way, its aim was remarkably similar to Anscar Vonier’s *A Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist* (1925) or Charles Journet’s *La Messe: Présence du Sacrifice de la Croix* (1957), an English edition of which appeared in 2008. English translations of the first two of the three “books” or parts of *Mysterium Fidei* were published in 1940 and 1950, but it seems to have had little impact in the last fifty years in English language theology. Matthiesen aims

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to change that, to recover a way of speaking about the Eucharist that was consigned after the council to the rubbish bin or at any rate abandoned.

She begins with de la Taille's understanding of sacrifice in a Thomist framework, an understanding that integrates Scripture and the Fathers, as well as observations from modern sociology and the history of religions. In this respect, it provides a sort of model of theological method, where authorities are appreciated according to their relation, proper or extraneous, to theology. Sacrifice is the premier exterior exercise of religion, visibly signifying both the worship exclusively due to God (*latreia*) and propitiation for sin. The visible signification includes both an offering of a gift and its immolation or destruction, though these can be separated in time: the offering is either coincident with immolation, or offers an already immolated or a to-be-immolated gift. The gift is not a victim without immolation. Immolation connotes the painful, mortifying aspect of sacrifice, and so its second motivation, propitiation. Here, de la Taille is strong, for such self-denial is necessarily signified when worship is given by self-centered, sinful men. Such creatures cannot justly worship God without acknowledging their culpable unworthiness even to address him. Together with worship, there are also petitionary and thankful motivations for sacrifice, and these come to further visible expression in the acceptance of the sacrifice by and the return sharing of benefits from God. Sacrifice is not accomplished unless accepted, and it is not accepted unless the good God both forgives and blesses. The blessing in its visibility consists most typically in the communion banquet, and in this way, de la Taille acknowledges the "meal theory" of sacrifice.

All of this is a welcome reintroduction of the older discourse on sacrifice known to Western theology, at least since the time of St. Augustine. The next two chapters take up the more controversial aspects of de la Taille's Eucharistic theology, as his analysis of sacrifice is deployed for understanding the sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Church. First, there is his thesis that the Supper and Cross form one sacrificial act, wherein the Supper enacts Christ's offering of himself, and the Cross compasses his willing immolation. The unity of the Supper and the Cross is supported by patristic and liturgical witness, and de la Taille does not think that Session 22 of Trent requires a numerical distinction between the sacrifice of the Supper and the sacrifice of the Cross. He

wants to include the oblation of the Supper in a single action of sacrifice extending to the Cross, since the Supper is necessary to declare fully and exactly the interior intention of the Lord's submission to death. Further, since priest and victim are the very same at the Supper and the Cross, differing only in the actuality but not the promise of the immolation, the question of multiplying sacrifices does not even arise.

The second thesis, that of the eternity of the Lord's sacrifice, acts similarly to explain how the Church's sacrifice is empowered by the sacrifice of the Cross; it makes the sacrifice of the Mass strictly dependent on the sacrifice of the Cross. The Father's acceptance of the victim of Calvary in the resurrection and ascension of the Lord means that he is present eternally as victim in the heavenly sanctuary. This does not imply for de la Taille any new celestial action by the Head of the Body, but it does make the victim of Calvary available to be offered in the many Masses of his members.

The first and third parts of Matthiesen's book work well together, since, as she claims, de la Taille's understanding of contemplative prayer and baptism shows how he situates the Eucharist within Christian life as a whole. Worthy offering of the sacrifice of the Mass depends on our own willingness to die to self and live to God, and the spiritual good of our reception of communion depends also on our interior attitudes, on the devotion with which we welcome the benefits of the sacrifice. But the same pattern of interior acts is also at work in Christian prayer and contemplation. In passive contemplation, especially, there is a marked ascetical parallel to the self-denial involved in the propitiatory aspect of the Mass, and the union of the mystic with God replays in another key sacramental union with God in communion. Prayer and the sacramental life do not only delimit parallel trajectories, but also (in a non-Euclidian geometry!) converge on each other. De la Taille also insists that baptism includes a promise of our self-denial and education of desire after the pattern of Christ, a promise that we cannot fulfil without living from and toward the Eucharistic celebration.

I wish Matthiesen had confined herself to these two and truly complementary parts of de la Taille's thought. In the second part of her book, however, she undertakes to explain his theology of the Hypostatic Union, of sanctifying grace, and of the beatific vision by way of expounding his account of how uncreated Act gives itself to created reality (the humanity

of Christ, the soul of the Christian, or the justified mind in heaven) in a created actuation of the same. She claims that this contested metaphysical speculation is in fact systematically connected with his theology of Eucharistic sacrifice and sacrament, but she does not show that it is. Moreover, it leads her into territory in which she soon becomes lost.

She begins by explaining de la Taille's remarks on the habitual grace of Christ—the grace that the Eucharist gives us to share in—in Book Three of *Mysterium Fidei*, and so is led to explicate his distinction between pure and mixed perfections. Pure perfections are things like being and intellection. Mixed perfections include some potency in their definition, like rationality. They perforce have their highest instance beneath God (*infra Deum*—not “in God,” as Matthiesen has it). Sanctifying grace, since it bespeaks inherence in a subject to which it is not owed, and therefore a nature that is composed with potency, is a mixed perfection. She finds a text in de la Taille at this point that proves, she supposes, that he would have stood with Henri de Lubac on the relation of nature and grace. Here is her rendering: “Now [the pure natural perfection] is so from the nobility of grace, by which such goodness is brought in, so that every natural perfection whatsoever is always supernatural and gratuitous, marking therefore the unworthiness of the subject.” The identification of the subject in brackets is Matthiesen's. She finds here “a robust statement against the notion of ‘pure nature’” (168). The statement is robust, if contradictions can be so, but it is not de la Taille's. What she is translating is in italics in the following and fuller citation from *Mysterium Fidei*.

Ne quis autem stomachetur, quod (1) intellectio naturalis potest progredi in infinitum, gratia autem non ita; aut quod (2) in perfectionibus mixtis recensetur gratia, cum inter puras [perfectiones] multae numerentur naturales. *Hoc alterum enim ex nobilitate est gratiae, qua tantum importatur bonum, ut omni perfectioni cuilibet naturali semper sit supernaturale seu indebitum, connotans igitur subjecti indignitatem.* Primum autem in laudem gratiae pariter redundat (520b)

Let no one be disturbed (1) that natural intellection can make progress unlimitedly but that grace cannot do so; or (2) that grace is counted among mixed perfections, although there are many natural perfections that are counted among pure perfections. *For this second thing is from the nobility of grace, by which so great a good is introduced such that it is always supernatural or unowed relative to every natural perfection whatsoever, so connoting the unworthiness of the subject.* But the first thing likewise redounds to the praise of grace

Matthiesen wants de la Taille (who died in 1933, remember) to have the cachet of belonging to the “new theologians,” who came to prominence as such in the late 1940s. This leads her to make him say something that neither he, nor de Lubac, nor any Catholic theologian whatsoever could possibly have said in the first half of the last century.

Such a lapse raises questions. Matthiesen’s book began as a dissertation. Did the director of her dissertation and her readers at Boston College see this translation? What of CUA Press, the editorial board, and those engaged to review her manuscript? To be sure, an author takes responsibility for his own work, but it looks like Matthiesen has been very ill served by her mentors and publisher.

In the 1950s and 60s, Prudentius de Letter, S.J., explained and defended de la Taille’s theory of created actuation by uncreated Act. In Matthiesen’s bibliography and text, he has unaccountably become “Prudence de Letter.” There are also many other errors and solecisms a copy editor should have caught.

But let us end on a happier note, in gratitude that Matthiesen has made audible once again an important voice in twentieth-century sacramental theology. Here is how she gives us to understand with de la Taille how the great Sacrifice takes up our smaller sacrifices:

when the smallest acts and efforts to direct one’s life and love to God are lifted up and exhibited to God in the ecclesial sacrifice, when they are conjoined with *devotio* to the external ritual offering of Christ’s sacrifice, then not only do they invest this ecclesial oblation with truth and sincerity, but they also are themselves transformed into “wine” and share in the liberating efficacy of the cross.

This is the theology of sacrifice, realist, sober, both heavenly and down to earth, that will serve us for the next, and every, century. 

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Jesus and the Demise of Death: Resurrection, Afterlife, and the Fate of the Christian by Matthew Levering (*Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012*), x + 228 pp.

WITH *JESUS AND THE DEMISE OF DEATH*, Matthew Levering offers another excellent and thought-provoking contribution. This time, his topic is Christian eschatology. As outlined in the Introduction, Levering sets out to provide a contemporary statement of classic Christian eschatology, “a theology of resurrection and eternal life” (1), which simultaneously highlights its biblical foundations and (to a lesser extent) defends the tradition’s subordinate use of Greek philosophical concepts to explicate the substance of biblical teaching. Similar to his other works, Levering makes his case dialogically by putting various theological thinkers (past and present) into conversation with Thomas Aquinas.

The book is divided into two major sections concerning respectively “Jesus’ passage” from death to glorified life and “the Church’s passage” (2). This structural division itself reflects a key concern of the book: the passage of Jesus from death to glorified life with the Father is the cause of the Church’s own passage into eternity.

The first section—“The Passage of Jesus Christ” (13)—comprises three chapters. Chapter 1 takes up Jesus’s descent among the dead and the so-called intermediate state between death and resurrection. Levering uses Aquinas’s account of Holy Saturday, wherein Jesus’s soul enters the intermediate state and vindicates the deceased righteous of Israel by his Passion, to strike a middle ground between N. T. Wright’s “other-worldly portrait of inactive sameness” (26) in the intermediate state and “the fully historicized accounts of Christ’s damnation [i.e., Balthasar] or Christ’s preaching in the intermediate state [i.e., Clement, Athanasius, et al.]” (22).

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The eschatological nature of Jesus's Resurrection is the subject of chapter 2. Here Levering brings Aquinas into conversation with Jon Levenson and N. T. Wright. He tracks out lines of convergence between these three thinkers, who all treat the topic of resurrection (albeit in different ways and contexts) under the heading of eschatology and in connection with the ultimate vindication of the people of God.

Chapter 3 concerns Jesus's "ascending in his glorified flesh to the right hand of the Father" (43). This chapter treats a variety of issues related to Jesus's being at the Father's right hand, including the bodiliness of the God of Israel (in light of the work of Mark Smith and Benjamin Sommer), the exegetical use of philosophy to identify when Scripture speaks metaphorically, and the theological significance of Jesus as being "at the Father's right hand." Levering argues that this expression signifies Jesus's sharing fully in God's power and glory in his glorified humanity and his continuing action on behalf of his Church to bring her to eschatological fulfillment with him.

The major section of the book—"The Passage of Christ's People" (61)—comprises four chapters. In chapter 4, Levering discusses the eschatological nature of the Church's life in the world on the basis of New Testament testimony. Drawing largely (although not exclusively) on the summary statements in Acts 2:42–47 and 4:32–35, Levering identifies three markers of the Church as an eschatological community: devotion to the apostolic teaching and fellowship (i.e., faith), the Eucharist, and the sharing of possessions (i.e., charity and almsgiving). Levering then explores the eschatological dimensions of these three markers in Aquinas's theology. On the basis of this analysis, Levering concludes, "The central eschatological reality is that we live already in union with Jesus and we allow our passage to be configured to his" (83).

Before turning to the passage of the blessed into heavenly glory (chapter 7), Levering takes up two attendant issues: whether and in what sense Christians can "merit" eternal life (chapter 5) and the existence of a human spiritual soul on both philosophical and biblical grounds (chapter 6). With regard to merit, Levering summarizes the work of Gary Anderson to show that merit is a thoroughly biblical category, and he then develops Anderson's work theologically with Aquinas. Following Aquinas, Levering argues that any consideration of Christians' merit must presuppose God's prior, unmerited action to justify sinners and in-

corporate them into Jesus's own life and merits of his Passion. Regarding merit, Levering concludes, "the action of the Holy Spirit in us enables us to merit this reward [of eternal life] in justice, not because we have become self-sufficient, but because God rewards his work in us" (94). With regard to the topic of the human spiritual soul, Levering defends the existence of the soul against Nancey Murphy's denial by employing the Thomistic account of the soul as the form of the body and (following W. Norris Clarke) "a formal cause" (101) for the brain's neurological activity. On biblical grounds, Levering responds to Joel Green's denial that the New Testament teaches the existence of a spiritual soul, which survives bodily death. While New Testament authors do not provide a well-developed account of a spiritual soul, Levering argues, many authors and texts (e.g., Mt 10:28; Lk 23:43; 2 Cor 5:1–8; Phil 1:21–24) do "include certain anthropological assumptions and claims" (107) that imply the existence of a human soul that passes through death into the intermediate state. The implications of such New Testament texts invite further theological and philosophical thinking on the topic, which is exactly what early and medieval Christians did by means of appropriating Greek philosophical reasoning.

Chapter 7 takes up the general resurrection of the dead, the purification and renewal of creation, the beatific vision, and the state of glorified humanity. Levering returns the tripartite typology of the Church as an eschatological community (faith in the apostolic teaching, the Eucharist, and almsgiving) to show how these markers reach fulfillment respectively in the beatific vision, the renewal of material creation into a cosmic liturgy, and the state of glorified human nature as being for others and shining "with glory in accordance with the person's degree of self-giving love" (123). The book ends with a brief conclusion about the importance of Christian eschatology and hope for life in the present world.

Levering makes an illuminating and persuasive case for the biblical character and abiding value of traditional Christian eschatology. Although the body of the text is less than 130 pages, *Jesus and the Demise of Death* interweaves biblical, theological, and philosophical elements into an intricate, theologically sophisticated synthesis. In doing so, Levering once again showcases marvelously the enduring vitality and biblical shape of Thomas Aquinas's theology. He creatively uses Aquinas, showing how his thought can encompass, correct, and integrate many

modern insights into a fruitful theological account. It is a showcase example of “*Ressourcement* Thomism.”

Two things, which are not included in this book, come to mind as ways to enhance Levering’s accomplishment. First, Levering’s treatment of Jesus’s Resurrection and Ascension delves a good bit into their biblical dimensions. But he does not consider the complex array of New Testament evidence concerning Jesus’s exaltation to heaven. As Pierre Benoit has shown, while the New Testament gives consistent witness that the risen Jesus has been exalted to heaven, there are differences (though not contradictions) over how that exaltation is parsed vis-à-vis what is traditionally called the Ascension: the event narrated in Acts 1:6–12.¹ The complexity of the situation is highlighted by considering when different New Testament authors locate the risen Jesus’s entrance into glory. For instance, the conclusion of the Gospel of Luke (similar to the Gospel of John) locates Jesus’s entrance into heavenly glory as following right upon his Resurrection on Easter Sunday (Lk 24:50–51; cf. Jn 20:17). By contrast, in Acts 1, Luke narrates the Ascension of Jesus as an event (1:6–12), which he locates forty days after Easter (1:3). Admittedly, Levering’s interests in Jesus’s sitting at the Father’s right hand lie elsewhere than a parsing of New Testament evidence or “when” the risen Jesus took his place at the Father’s right hand. Nevertheless, the New Testament provides a complicated body of evidence for thinking about this mystery, some further consideration of which could help fill out the theological picture.

A second area concerns the cumulative character of Levering’s theological exposition. Structurally, the book holds together well, first charting out Jesus’s passage into the Father’s glory and then that of the Church by virtue of her sharing in Jesus’s own passage. The book comes to its thematically appropriate conclusion with a discussion of the beatific vision and the heavenly glory of the blessed. But given Levering’s dialogical approach and very unassuming prose, one can overlook (or underappreciate) the intricacies of the account that he works out cumulatively over the course of the whole book. A concluding chapter that

¹ Pierre Benoit, O.P., “The Ascension,” in *Jesus and the Gospel*, 2 vols., trans. Benet Weatherhead (New York: Herder and Herder, 1973 [1961]), 1.209–253; reprinted from *Revue Biblique* (1949): 161–203.

brings together the different components of Levering's account into a single, synthetic statement would be a welcome addition in this regard.

These concerns notwithstanding, Levering has accomplished much in making a strong case for traditional, biblically founded Christian eschatology. 

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